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Entering the Fifth Dimension: modular modernities, psychedelic sensibilities, and the architectures of lived experience

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In this paper, we elaborate on the Fifth Dimension, an extraordinary, largely overlooked architectural example of 1960s psychedelia that was installed in a small Scottish resort town. Made up of 17 domed chambers, each designed to stimulate psychedelic sensory experiences for its intrepid visitors, the Fifth Dimension was the creation of London-based environmental artist Keith Albarn using his experimental “Ekistikit” modular building system. We argue that the qualities and impacts of this highly inventive, utopian “fun palace” interrogate stereotypical depictions of countercultural, psychedelic creativities. We discuss how they also intersect with current geographical scholarship concerned with sensation, play, and the built environment. Two key elements of the Fifth Dimension are examined. First, building on critical geographies of architecture, we focus on Albarn's innovative system to exemplify how pioneers of environmental design used advanced modular technologies to radically re-configure the possibilities of dwelling and working in flexible building structures. Second, drawing on aesthetic theories of the sensory, we demonstrate how the structure was designed to stimulate transformative psychedelic sensibilities as a novel form of disruptive politics to induce critical dispositions towards the built environment. Our argument is underpinned by the call for a recuperation of sensational and affective experience in the design and inhabitation of built environments. We contend that this bears particular significance for an emergent geography of play and enchantment.

KEYWORDS

architecture, enchantment, modularity, play, psychedelia, senses

1 | INTRODUCTION

In May 1969, a large, multi-coloured, fibreglass structure was incongruously installed on the shorefront of Girvan, a South Ayrshire town of roughly 7,000 people situated on the West coast of Scotland (Figure 1). Made up of 17 domed chambers, each designed to stimulate psychedelic sensory experiences, the Fifth Dimension was the creation of London-based environmental artist Keith Albarn using his experimental “Ekistikit” modular building system. Anticipating the arrival of this striking new “light and sound project,” the centrepiece for the summer season, the Parks Committee of Girvan Town Council debated various names put forward by Albarn – “Coloured Plastic Dream,” “Dream Circus,” “Fifth Dimension,” or “Metal Orchid” – alongside a proposal from one councillor who gamely suggested calling the structure “Girvana,” before they

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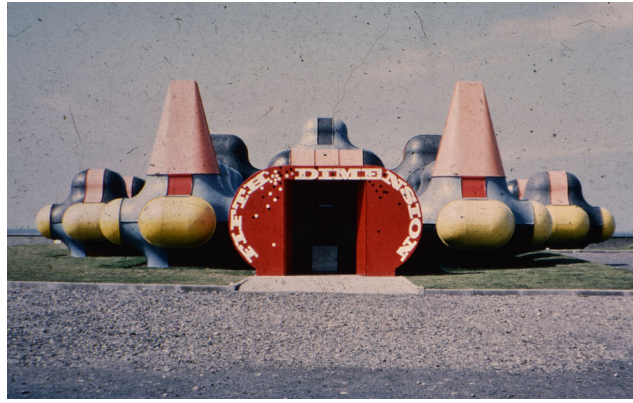


FIGURE 1 The Fifth Dimension, Girvan seafront, April 1969.

Source: Keith and Hazel Albarn, reproduced with permission

settled on the Fifth Dimension.¹ Its arrival on Girvan's foreshore was followed closely by the local press, which recorded responses of controversy and excitement, largely divided along generational lines. Reporting that "spies from other resorts" had travelled to the town to witness the structure, one councillor proudly noted that: "They feel, when they see what Girvan is doing, that it is a very progressive little town" (*Ayr Advertiser*, 13 June 1969). Its progressive credentials were further burnished in September 1969, when Girvan's ambitious experiment featured on the BBC's *Tomorrow's World* programme to an estimated 20 million viewers, encouraging the council that their £10,000 investment was money well spent (*Carrick Herald*, 26 September 1969d).² The installation remained in place until 1974, when a storm damaged it beyond repair and it was consigned to landfill.³

In this paper, we elaborate on this extraordinary, largely overlooked episode of 1960s psychedelia and its surprising establishment in a Scottish resort town to develop substantive historical insight into recent engagements with the eventful, embodied, emotional, and sensory registers through which built environments are experienced (Degen et al., 2008; Dekeyser, 2017; Kraftl & Adey, 2008; Kullman, 2019; Lees & Baxter, 2011; Rose et al., 2010; Thibaud, 2011) and the impacts of such effects, following earlier calls for a critical geography of architecture (Jacobs, 2006; Lees, 2001). Specifically, our analysis of Albarn's inventive, utopian structure explores current geographical notions about sensation, affect, and play to explore how sensing bodies may be aroused or constrained by the built environment. As Kraftl and Adey observe, a scholarly focus on the "textual, symbolic and iconographic" qualities of architecture has often neglected to grasp the "more than representational, haptic, performative, embodied, material and affectual qualities" of buildings (2008, p. 214). These concerns echo critiques mobilised by architect Juhani Pallasmaa, who laments how the "unconscious, situational and tacit understanding of the body" is overlooked (2017, p. 103), causing normative architectural practices to "discourage fantasy" and "suppress the senses" of a building's inhabitants (2017, p. 108). Such notions align with wider investigations into how particular architectural materialities and urban places can offer opportunities for enhancing affective experience. Thus, as Latham and McCormack insist, "the affective ecology of these sites is not just a by-product of the activity that takes place there. It is part of the felt materiality of the site, part of what gives it its distinctive quality" (2017, p. 307). These material and structural elements may order practice, entrain perception, and delimit sensory and affective experiences, but other spaces may alternatively cajole bodies to perform a range of possible movements and actions through which usual, habitually apprehended experiences are confounded.

In his quest to reconsider the potential of modern architecture as a mode of imagination centred on the body's sensory capacities, Lefebvre asks:

What does it mean to 'inhabit' a modern building? The body has no point of reference ... What is needed is a practice, addressed to lived experience, to lead it to the level of the perceived world. How can we reeducate bodies for space? (1973/2014, p. 34)

In addressing such questions, we argue that the Fifth Dimension was an exemplary realm that sought to encourage fantasy, revitalise sensory experience, and multiply affective intensities. It therefore signals potential avenues for producing the conditions for more innovative, stimulating, and ludic architectural engagements that disrupt tendencies to produce sensorially-sterile, functional built environments. Our focus thus aligns with recent notions about re-enchantment (Bennett, 2001;

Pyry & Aiava, 2020) that foreground how delight and reflection may be induced by architectural encounters that unsettle habitual sensory apprehension. In the next section, we outline our approach in expanding on this argument. In Section 3, we consider Girvan council's motivations for commissioning the Fifth Dimension and outline the historical context within which Albarn's creation emerged. In Section 4, we focus on Albarn's innovative approach to environmental design and its alignment with wider practices of producing what we call "modular modernities." In Section 5, we consider the experiences of those entering the Fifth Dimension to reclaim the political concerns of psychedelia in advancing a progressive redistribution of sensation. Our conclusion highlights the significance of modularity and psychedelia as ludic disruptions with potential to recuperate sensorial experience in the design and inhabitation of built environments.

2 | PLAYING WITH THE ARCHITECTURES OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

In his study of 20th-century architecture's engagement with ludic practices, Pérez de Arce traces "a constant flow of initiatives [that] pushes play into the streets and ordinary spaces whilst opposite forces draw it into specialised enclaves ... a period of setting play apart rather than fusing it with the flow of ordinary life" (2018, p. 235). Yet he also notes an important exception, observing that "the mid-1960s brought the issue of play to a climax, when the city itself was conceived as a monumental ludic mechanism" (2018, p. 232). It is the implications of this exception, which elaborate directly on a ludic disposition to the inhabitation and perception of built environments, that we seek to develop here. In most highly regulated urban environments today, besides limiting sensory experience, play remains neglected by urban designers, perhaps, because as Stevens asserts, it "involves controversial expenditures of time and energy" that are deemed "inefficient, impractical and socially unredemptive activities" (2007, p. 1). Moreover, where play does feature it is increasingly intended to ameliorate the most overbearing effects of commercially produced environments, making them "playable" or perhaps "playful" rather than more deeply orientated towards play (2007, p. 1). Yet, as Woodyer argues, play can be "a vehicle for becoming conscious of those things and relationships that we would otherwise enact or engage without thinking," becoming "an area ripe for rupture, sparks of insight and moments of invention, which present us with ways to be 'otherwise'" (2012, p. 322). Accordingly, our analysis advances a ludic sensory geography of the built environment along two lines of inquiry.

First, we examine Albarn's architectural experiments in terms of a countercultural turn in the 1960s towards modular modernities: an emerging multiplicity of flexible, capsular, and interactive built forms – shelters, scaffolds, domes, bubbles – and their urgent emphasis on affording new socio-spatial conditions for life in a radical break from orthodox modernist and functionalist practices (Blauvelt, 2016a; Murphy, 2016; Šenk, 2017). We outline how pioneers of these structural systems used advanced modular technologies to produce flexible and human-scaled units that could be reassembled in multiple configurations by both architects and users. Interactive, malleable structures like the Fifth Dimension could thus be deployed to produce lived spacetimes with highly variable, immersive intensities of sensation and affect, prefiguring recent geographical concern with the more-than-visual sensibilities within architectural experience (Paterson, 2011) and the wider role architects and others might play as "spatial agents" (Awan et al., 2011; Lorne, 2017). As such, we elaborate on how Albarn's distinctly curvilinear approach to modularity became a sustained speculative experiment with design, pattern, and perception, disavowing notions that modular modernist forms have invariably been mobilised as components in producing a serial, rectilinear architectural uniformity (Albarn & Miall Smith, 1977; Albarn et al., 1974). Crucially, as we demonstrate, Albarn's approach to modularity was not merely a counterpoint to modernist architectural styling but part of wider efforts among a countercultural underground elite in London and elsewhere to re-claim, re-learn, and re-deploy the life-affirming power of play (Neville, 1970).

Second, we seek to decentre psychedelia's associations with LSD, psilocybin, and other consciousness-altering substances in order to reclaim its political and aesthetic commitment to expanding sensory experience. While a preoccupation with the art, music, and "happenings" generated by experiments with these hallucinogenic drugs dominate understandings (Neville, 1970), such stereotypical visions have minimised the sheer depth and diversity of psychedelia's cultural influence. Indeed, Albarn's motivations for the creation of the Fifth Dimension, though certainly intended to shift perceptual experience, were not drug-inspired at all, exemplifying that we ought to consider "psychedelias and countercultures, plural rather than singular" (Moist, 2018, p. 202). Developing Blauvelt's suggestion that "psychedelia promises something different – access to more deeply hidden truths of reality and different planes of existence" (2016b, p. 16), we attend to the affective, sensational, often unsettling and potentially transformative experiences of moving through the Fifth Dimension's interactive chambers. Here, we draw on notions of sensation and affect, the use of particular materials, lights, textures, and sounds to solicit such effects, and the consequent capacity of such realms to break habitual ways of sensing, conceiving, and attending to place. As such, we examine how psychedelic design practices and technological innovations from this period

constituted a novel, compelling expression of sensory politics. Our analysis thus resonates with Rancière's (2004) arguments about the distribution of the sensible, which "[revolve] around what is seen and what can be said about it, around who has the ability to see and the talent to speak, around the properties of spaces and the possibilities of time" (2009, p. 13). Accordingly, our elaborations of psychedelia as sensorily disruptive advance Kullman's articulation of "an alternative architectural politics around instances of dissensus that disrupt the present configuration to create temporary sites for the demonstration for new equities" (2019, p. 295; cf. Dekeyser, 2017; Kraftl, 2014).

Methodologically, this research was initiated by the chance discovery of our shared interest in Albarn's work and progressed through archival study of public and personal collections, ethnographic explorations of Girvan and the southern English resort town of Margate, and interviews with Keith and Hazel Albarn and those who had encountered the Fifth Dimension, often as children. We detail this process as a re-enchanting of our own geographical research (Bennett, 2001; Geoghegan & Woodyer, 2014), tracing moments through which we grew attuned to the excessive im/materialities that produce what we describe in this methodological reflection as "dreamlands" (see Dickens & Edensor, forthcoming).

3 | THE FIRST REAL FUN PALACES

In the late 1960s, Girvan still functioned as a resort, despite the advent of cheap European destinations and the declining popularity of British seaside holidays. Pursuing competitive advantage in a shrinking market, the town was keen to find a notable attraction that would place it "really big on the 1970s holiday map" and boost its tourist economy (*Carrick Herald*, 13 June 1969c). Aware of national media attention towards Keith Albarn's installations, a delegation from Girvan council visited his London studio hoping to persuade him to bring similar attention to their town. As Albarn recalled:

When they opened their mouths, I realised they really were outsiders, because it was a broad Scots accent. They'd come down that day from ... Girvan. So, I said '... Girvan?' 'Yes, I hope you've heard of Girvan.' So, I said, 'well, er ...' So, one of them said, 'Well, that's why we're here, because you should have done! We are a very fine little town.' He said, 'we want you to build what you call a Fun Palace on our beach ...' They were dead serious, [and he said] 'Can you do it for next season?' So, I said 'yes' ... They wanted anything to get Girvan on the map ... They'd had a meeting and he had sold the idea to his gang in the council ... by this time, I was getting a lot of publicity in serious papers. (Interview 27 November 2018)

In describing their desire for a "Fun Palace," Girvan council tapped into a contemporary conjuncture of architectural, technological, and creative experimentation seeking alignment with municipal agendas.⁴ The Fun Palace project, conceived in 1962 by influential British theatre maker Joan Littlewood in collaboration with architect Cedric Price (Holdsworth, 2011; Mathews, 2005, 2006), envisaged temporary, flexible, and interactive structures, installed on derelict urban sites and serving as playful, theatrical spaces within which people could freely participate in innovative technological delights (Dickens, 2019). Albarn had a personal connection to Littlewood via theatrical designer Hazel Albarn, his wife and collaborator (Fraser, 2014). In 1967, Littlewood invited Hazel to re-paint the bar inside the Theatre Royal Stratford in east London using wild colours, and later, to create the psychedelic set for her production of *Mrs Wilson's Diary*. Both Hazel and Keith subsequently became involved in Littlewood's ambitious plans to transform the Theatre Royal into a Fun Palace and radically re-programme its productions around participatory theatre and circus style "happenings." Albarn consequently became acquainted with Price and emerging contemporary talents, including architects Richard Rogers and Archigram's Peter Cook, designer James Dyson, and performance artist Bruce Lacey. Their collaborative ideas eventuated in a ludic theatrical event-space called "Bubble City," which Littlewood curated for the 1968 Festival of London (Bonet Miro, 2016).

However, Littlewood and Price's ambitions to construct Fun Palace megastructures on the deindustrialising docklands of London and similar sites elsewhere struggled to compete against more functional proposals for such land, while Archigram's left-field visions remained largely confined to the pages of magazine editions (Hughes & Sadler, 2000). By contrast, Albarn's work became an especially realised form of these gathering impulses as he focused on designing, building, and testing his experimental projects with public audiences. Indeed, Girvan council were enticed to replicate his 1968 Spectrum installation at Margate's Dreamland amusement park after it was hailed as "the first real fun palace" (Taylor, 1968). Excited journalists reported about the shock of encountering Spectrum, which looked "like a giant caterpillar" (*Vogue*, May 1968) or "pills for a giant hypochondriac" (*Evening News*, 15 April 1968). Encountering Spectrum "slap bang in the centre of the gnomes of Margate, between the pink-painted sphinx and the one wall thick mock-up of the liner Queen Mary," Taylor (1968) concluded that "no borough park in 10 years' time, I believe, can afford to be without one, as a cheap but gorgeous

adventure toy.” A year earlier, Albarn tested a formative version of his modular play structures at the Brighton Festival, installing a 10-foot-high construction of black, yellow, blue, and red fibreglass capsules, designed to be “part-temple, part funfair, part art gallery,” and incorporating “meditative areas, discovering areas, rest and escape areas” (*The Guardian*, 13 April 1967; see Figure 2). He also built a performance space for the psychedelic rock band Soft Machine that year on the Côte d’Azur, southern France, in collaboration with renowned light projectionist Mark Boyle.⁵ Albarn’s experimental projects in Margate, Brighton, and the Côte d’Azur, precursors of the Fifth Dimension, enabled a broad public to experience first-hand the avant-garde propositions of the fun palace, because, as he admitted, “we were the only buggers stupid enough to try and build them” (Interview 18 July 2019).⁶

4 | MODULAR MODERNITIES

Combining the aesthetic influences of 1960s artists and designers, and Hazel’s expertise in theatrical design and educational play, the Albarns, together with “events designer” Ian Knight, established the environmental design practice, Keith Albarn and Partners Ltd (with Keith, Anthony Hutt, and Richard Park the directors) at 26 Kingly Street adjacent to Carnaby Street in London’s Soho in 1964.⁷ Described as a “happenings factory,” the studio was a place where “the heavy aroma of incense hangs everywhere,” the “darkness is broken by vivid beams of coloured light” and “[e]lectronic sounds burr” (Blackburn, 1967). Such descriptions capture a sense of the tumult of experimentation and innovation involving “designers and artists, filmmakers and photographers, kinetic and luminal constructionists – even actors and musicians.”⁸ It had design and construction “units” and light, sound and kinetics ‘departments’” (Oberbeck, 1968b, n.p.). Together, they handled the diverse range of work the studio produced: “environmental control units, therapy units, funfairs, interior design, furniture, toys, exhibition stands, audio-visual aids, graphics etc.”⁹ As American journalist S.K. Oberbeck documented, “Albarn speaks of his associates as an aesthetic family,” where “all [his] activities are directed towards a more fluid relationship between man [sic] and environment, creating an environment more responsive to man’s [sic] actions” (1968b, n.p.) as part of a more open-ended, less deterministic approach to design. Accordingly, Albarn considered himself to be an “environmental artist.”

In this context, the dramatic municipal “modernisation” of urban Britain throughout the 1960s, characterised by mass “slum” clearances of Victorian housing and their replacement with tower blocks, had a formative influence on Albarn’s working practice. While studying art and architecture in the early 1960s, he became increasingly disenchanted with what he regarded as modernist architectural dogma and its negative impact on urban life:

There was a small group of us ... who were getting really bolshy about having a hard sell, as we saw it, for tower block dwellings, and ... you could see that this was destroying community after community after

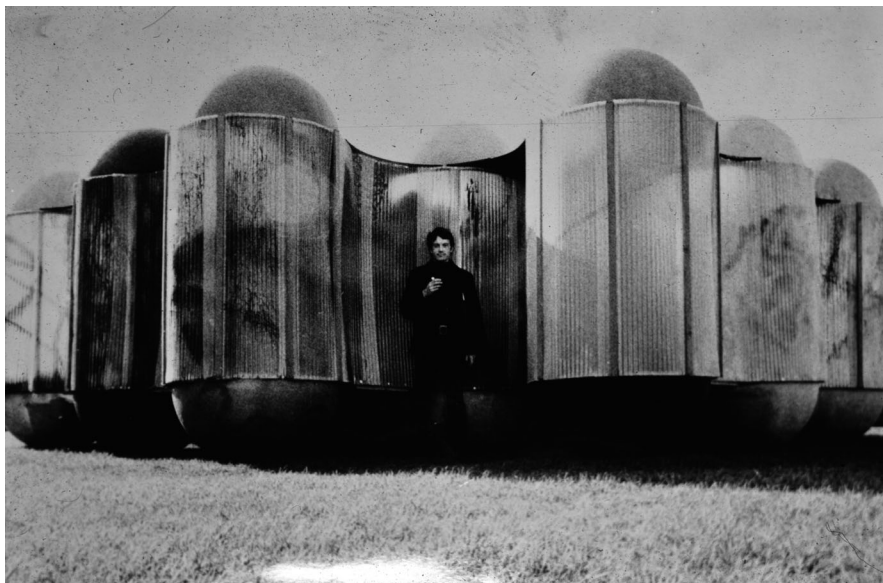


FIGURE 2 Keith Albarn with his experimental fun palace 'Inter-67' at the Brighton Festival, 1967.

Source: Keith and Hazel Albarn, reproduced with permission

community ... So, alarm bells began to ring about the relationship of people with the environment ... [between the] wishes of the people, and the wishes of finance. (Interview 27 November 2018)

His disillusionment was “exacerbated by a series of lectures that ... included the big names from the Coventry rebuild and the South Bank ... [delivered by] heavy-duty guys, all guys” (Interview 27 November 2018), prompting his decision to quit architectural training and study sculpture. Working alongside Hazel at Kingly Street as freelance designers of toys, theatrical sets, and immersive environments at art-scene happenings, Albarn began to work against the functional emphasis of modernist architecture and how he felt it limited the potential of human experience. As he reasoned:

[A]rchitectural design in Britain is just too rational. It’s concerned with making every square inch function. I go in the opposite direction [and] encourage designs which allow and help the expansion of personality ... it is not practical to visualise people living in things that look very much like power stations. (*Sunday Times*, 1967, n.p.)

Albarn’s dissatisfaction with the rigid designs of modern urban dwellings initially led him towards designing interior furnishings that were colourful and “adaptable to your every whim [whereas] now they’re almost impossible to change” (in Blackburn, 1967). His emphasis on the flexible, interactive, and playful potential of everyday urban living environments was informed by sculptural considerations that avoided typically rectilinear modern forms in favour of more sensuous, curvilinear shapes and patterns (Best, 1969):

The point of these structures was that they originated in the curvilinear ... designing systems that were not just Cartesian coordinates, just more boxes, but which allowed people to play with curved space, which I felt at the time might be a thing of the future. You know, Einstein had said ‘play was the best form of research.’ So, it was a DIY idea of adaptability ... because it was very important in the thinking behind all these structures ... the modularity was about playing with the curvilinear, or playing with materials that could curve ... That was something I felt very strongly about ... It’s not just an architectural style thing. It affects the ways we think, the values we attach that arise from our environment. It fosters playful thinking. (Interview 8 July 2020)

Emerging from a period of intense experimentation, Albarn’s solution for devising highly flexible built environments was his modular “Ekistikit” system, which he launched in the form of Spectrum at Dreamland in 1968.¹⁰ The components of Ekistikit were 8 ft and 4 ft diameter spheres and tubes that could be split horizontally or vertically and extended to increase height, width, and length. Each unit was forged from glass fibre and reinforced polyester (known as GRP), a strong, non-conductive, and light material that could be diversely coloured and moulded into complex shapes. Though GPR was subsequently tainted by suspicions about its detrimental effects on health, at the time it was heralded as replete with potential, as Albarn’s strikingly innovative forms demonstrated. Importantly, he was “all for getting the underground over-ground” in recognition that “[f]or our sort of activity to have any effect, it must be to some extent integrated into existing society” (in Oberbeck, 1968b, n.p.). Accordingly, his Ekistikit system developed through crossovers between his spectacular, experimental “sensoriums” and more pragmatic, overtly commercial applications. Thus, with an image of the Fifth Dimension on its front cover (Figure 3), the trades journal *Industrial Building* enthused on the system’s potential, noting that “some of the same components that are used for the exterior shell of a structure may also be used equally as effectively for the interior furniture of the same building” (1969, p. 23). Diverse applications followed, including capsular sofas and oversize chairs, spherical workman’s huts, golf course shelters designed in the form of gigantic golf balls, retail kiosks (notably the information booth on Paddington Station in London), playgrounds for new high-rise developments, experimental housing in Letchworth Garden City, a Victorian mental hospital in Taunton, and an experimental autistic children’s unit for an NHS hospital in St Albans (Albarn, n.d.; London, 1968; Manser, 1970).

The flexibility inherent in the Ekistikit system mirrored vernacular traditions in mobile architecture, from tents, yurts, igloos, tipis, caravans, post-war “prefabs,” and later, ubiquitous “Portakabins” and shipping containers (Kronenburg, 2013). Yet, its emphasis on industrialised building systems, machinic adaptability, and embedded cybernetic technology also allied with contemporary designs, including geodesic domes by Buckminster Fuller and Drop City, Archigram’s “walking cities” and “plug in” megastructures, and the metabolic master-planning of Kenzo Tange. Albarn’s connection to Littlewood and Price’s Fun Palace project was also pertinent. Addressing Littlewood’s brief to create a radically interactive, participatory theatrical space, Price’s unrealised Fun Place was envisaged as a “vast, socially interactive machine, an improvisational

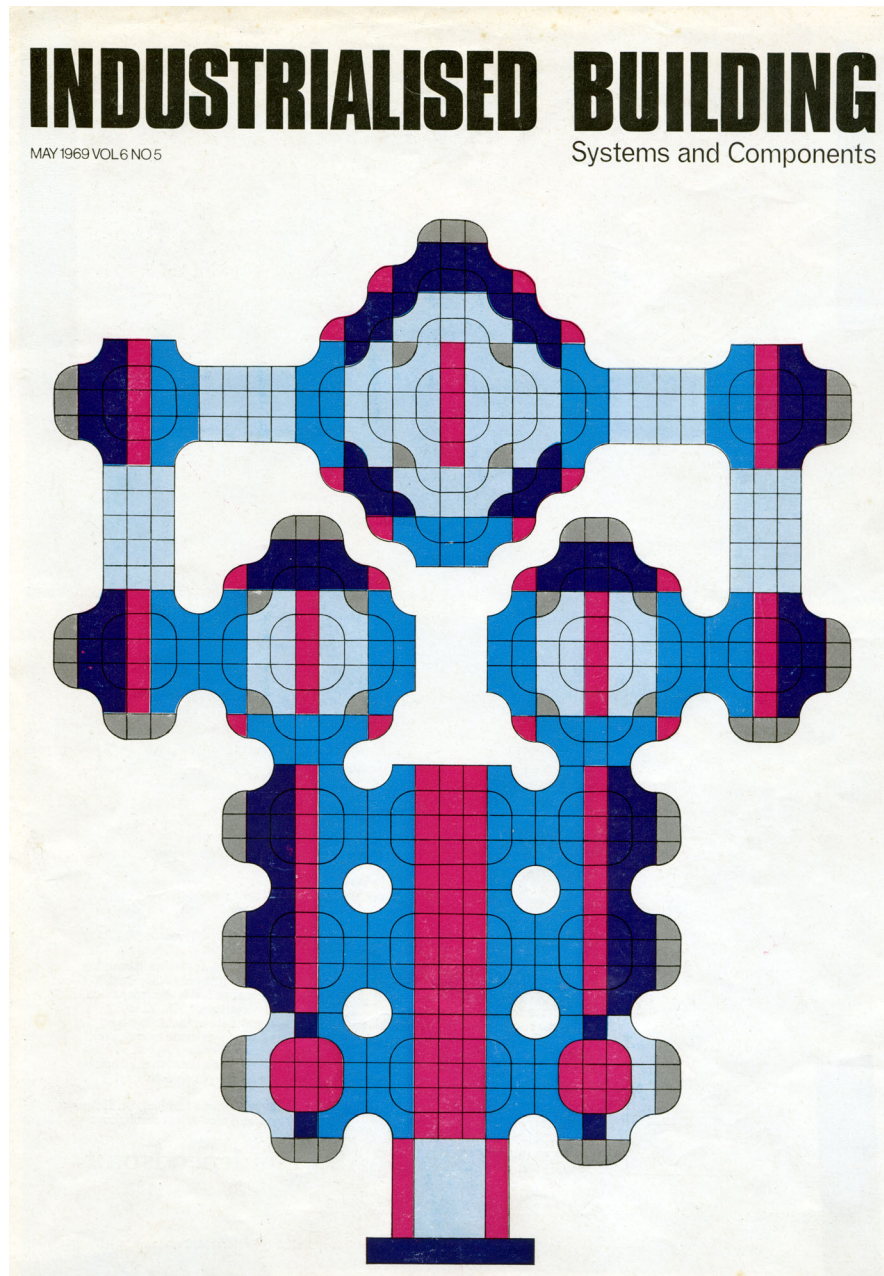


FIGURE 3 Keith Albarn's design for the cover of *Industrialised Building* featuring the Fifth Dimension, 1969.

Source: Keith and Hazel Albarn, reproduced with permission

architecture, constantly changing in a ceaseless cycle of assembly and dismantling" (Mathews, 2006, p. 39). It was, as Mathews notes, to be "a 'kit of parts' rather than a building" (2005, p. 80), that with the aid of embedded cybernetic systems "could reprogram and reconfigure itself to accommodate an endless variety of functions" envisaged by its inhabitants (2005, p. 42). Such speculative propositions captured the era's utopian efforts to playfully re-configure the spatial affordances of built structures, often at the whim of their inhabitants, and re-imagine a more delightful urban future free from the constraints of manual labour and fixed modes of inhabitation (Blauvelt, 2016a; Hughes & Sadler, 2000; Murphy, 2016; Šenk, 2017).

Reflecting these radical impulses towards playful, smart, and sustainable urbanisms, Albarn's Ekistikit sought to resist the creative destruction of architectural modernisation, where "we tear up model A and build model B," and instead "cut out all this waste by making possible to change model A into model B" (Church, 1968, n.p.). As far as its utility for the Fifth Dimension was concerned, Girvan's councillors recognised that "[T]he fun palace units are so versatile that they can be dismantled and put up again in a new shape at little expense. So each year we could have an exciting new effect" (*Carriack Herald*, 13 June 1969c). The Fifth Dimension was indeed subject to an eventful process of re-configuration: through

ongoing repainting, refitting, and re-installing to sustain interest for returning visitors and, significantly, maintaining the structure's vulnerabilities to seaside weather, sand, storms, and salt water (which would ultimately prevail).¹¹ Girvan's councillors invited students from the Glasgow School of Art to refashion parts of the interior and, at the end of the 1969 season, commissioned the multimedia arts company Electroscope to substantially augment the interior with immersive technologies.¹²

Albarn's highly flexible, curvilinear, industrialised building system, with modules that could be easily reassembled to meet diverse and shifting purposes, accorded with the serial reproduction of units integral to modernist architecture. Yet it rebuked the looming modernist towers that symbolically celebrated the status-laden fantasies of elite power through overwhelming scale and limited tactile variety (Kaika, 2011; Rodaway, 2002), as well as the functionality of socialist-inspired standardised prefabricated units deployed in the serial architecture of public housing blocks. Whereas uniform units were usually assembled vertically to produce fixed structures, Ekistikit modules afforded occupants possibilities to co-design their environments and change the uses and aesthetics of various components, allowing infinite assembly and reassembly of structures that were of human scale, intimate, and horizontally arrayed across space.

The Fifth Dimension belonged to the welter of creative experiments that emerged in the late 1960s, where "the most modern artists, with something of the cool come-hither of a psychedelics salesman, are constructing wrap-around experiences and spaces that are strikingly different from our normal environment" (Oberbeck, 1968b, n.p.). Crucially, as Oberbeck (1968a, n.p.) contended, it was the possibilities afforded by new sensory technologies that were central to this artistic flowering; with cybernetics, op-art, new forms of illumination and sonics, robotics, computers, projection, automation, new materials, and holography being variously combined in the production of what the cyberneticist Gordon Pask described as "aesthetically potent" environments (1968, p. 34).¹³

The flexible capsular form of Albarn's Ekistikit system created interactive, immersive environments within which sensory experiences could be enhanced, altered, or manipulated. The small, discrete chambers produced an interior intimacy, while their interconnectedness encouraged exploration throughout the labyrinthine structure. This enclosed design disallowed distanced observation and solicited visitors into absorbing the sensory multiplicities that ranged across the different spaces. The capacity of the modular structure to engender such sensory experiences was integral to Albarn's challenge to top-down modernist architectural rationalities:

We were seeing the importance of the involvement of people in their own environments, and how limited that involvement actually was. So, I wanted to help build things and do things that would alert their sensory system to a point where they felt they should be able to do something with their environment. (Interview 27 November 2018)

In developing such notions, Albarn and his collaborator Jenny Mail Smith later argued that:

Reason used as a tool can help us to build the spatial models we require, but it does not give us access to the further dimensions of thought which sustain our imagination and creativity. We may require other modes, further dimensions, to enter the space built by the use of reason, and it is in these spaces that we develop by cross-references our qualitative judgements, our sense of 'rightness,' our humanity. (1977, p. 11)

In designing the Fifth Dimension, Albarn was explicit that the overriding intention of such sensory excitement was to "reattune perception" (in Bird, n.d.), or in Lefebvre's (1973/2014) terms "reeducate bodies" towards the production of sensory space, and thereby cultivate a more critical disposition towards built environments such that their inhabitants might, for example, hold planners and architects to account. It is to these sensory qualities that we now turn.

5 | PSYCHEDELIC SENSIBILITIES: ENTERING THE FIFTH DIMENSION

With its salmon pink turrets, lower modules rendered in dark blue, light blue, and yellow, and deep red entrance, the vibrantly coloured structure visually dominated the Girvan seafront, immediately luring the gaze of visitors and inhabitants. The diversely scaled, modular fibreglass components of its curvilinear, egg-box design added to its extraordinary appearance. Yet on entry to the structure's low interior, and subsequent movement through its labyrinthine form and divergent chambers, things became more intensely strange, as sights, sounds, and textures combined to generate an ever-changing, multi-sensory experience.

Albarn's intentions were fulfilled as visitors and journalists waxed lyrical about the sensory onslaught they experienced, testifying to their highly engaged interactions with the installations and components inside the Fifth Dimension. Far from passive, those who entered the fun palace affectively engaged with its lively materialities and multisensory qualities, as they excitedly detail. The *Carrick Herald* (30 May 1969a) relayed this array of sensory pleasures:

The fun palace immerses the visitor into a kaleidoscope of colours which vary their pattern and tone as light levels alter. But the surprises are not only for the eye, the ear is simultaneously entertained with the outer space rhythms of electronic music while the hand passes over a full range of smooth and abrasive textures in wood, plastics and metal. Without warning, concrete floors give way to sponge!

Alluding to its fairground influences, the *Design Journal* also detailed the interior chambers:

Strobe lights and hanging objects in the dark, hectic colours in patterns and shapes that fight the form, sudden spatial contrasts, eerie lights and an assortment of noises from murmurings to mind melting screechings are old tricks – but they still work when used with all-round intelligence, as here. The warren of cells and tunnels and sudden loftier chambers presents at least half-a-dozen respectable visual excitements, as, for instance, when the almost subliminal strobe light (black and silver) of one cell slows down and takes on colour in the next ... it is a struggle through a dense forest of heavy hanging objects although further in there is a pitch-black vault with a teetering floor, where the barrel walls, all repetitive domes and angles like a Camargo relief, invite finger exploration for just as long as the ears will stand a hideous electronic crescendo. (1970, pp. 14–15)

The *Carrick Herald* (20 June 1969d) also recorded diverse and often ambivalent affective visitor responses to this sensory array. One young woman reported that she was “a little nervous about what I might encounter in this weird place. I looked up and, to my great amazement, saw what looked to be a dalek ... I continued to walk through these narrow passages which were lit up colourfully and I had a feeling of wonder and fear mingled together ... I didn't really know whether I was glad or not to get out.” Other townsfolk, however, were less moved: “it looks ludicrous. No wonder the older people turn to each other and say, more teenage rubbish.” Yet for many younger visitors the unsettling, Dionysian pleasures of the Fifth Dimension could be lasting and profound, as one respondent recalled:

It looked like something out of Doctor Who or Quatermass, an alien craft which had landed from a parallel universe ... I put off going inside it, mainly because it looked like it would be an overwhelming experience, something that would ‘blow your mind’ ... my [older] brother Alex had been round it by himself and came out crying! ... I finally relented and agreed to go round it accompanied by my dad. I recall various colourful kinetic displays mounted on the walls, with shimmering Moire patterns and liquid wheel projections ... I was mesmerised and also got goose bumps, imagining what lay in wait for me inside ... I definitely remember ... one room which had Perspex columns from floor to roof, and it gave the impression of going back a long way into the darkness ... the cut-outs seemed to freak me out the most ... They suggested weird animal and humanoid forms which were the stuff of unsettling dreams or surrealist paintings. I cannot overstate just how big an impression the Fifth Dimension made on me at the time, and just how huge an influence it has been on the rest of my life. It sounds crazy, but it has left me with a life-long fascination for surrealism, psychedelia, and most importantly with Electronic Music, specifically the 1970s brand known as ‘space music.’ (Grant Middleton, email correspondence, 7 November 2019)

The animated, eloquent responses to these powerful sensory effects thus chimed with Albarn's intentions: to expand sensory experience and induce critical perspectives towards the built environment. Such objectives aligned with other contemporaneous explorations into the emotional, affective, and sensory impact of psychedelic elements, qualities envisaged to be politically and psychologically transformative. However, these mind-expanding qualities remain primarily associated with the effects of psychotropic drugs. According to Chapman (2015), intensified experiences of colour and sound were integral to LSD-inspired psychedelic experience. Among enthusiasts, the drug's revolutionary potential would liberate the individual from habits of thought, as perceptual visions and hallucinations transformed understandings of the world.

Yet, although psychedelia was a central influence on the design of the Fifth Dimension, Albarn had little interest in the psychoactive effects of mind-altering drugs. Indeed, as Oberbeck reports, the key ideas that informed his design approach

emerged “before the strobe-frozen, peacock-colored drug and psychedelic craze hit swinging London, which was just rocking gently then,” before “the joint-rolling, sugar-cube tripsters soon began to flourish” (1968b, n.p.). Albarn confirmed that “psychedelia was important to us in making a bridge for us to the society within which we were operating ... [but there] was an awful lot going on which was called psychedelic which wasn’t actually generated by drugs directly” (Interview 27 November 2018). As he reasoned:

I was trying to do things which in a sense were answering the same desire to be in a state of super consciousness, but I felt that you could do it without bloody weed because my experience of working with people who were high wasn’t actually very profitable. Great company but not much production. (Interview 18 July 2019)

Albarn articulates ideas that resonated with those expressed by the adherents of mind-expanding drugs: “I also was concerned with the spectator who became disoriented from the normal world and found himself [sic] absorbed in a new environment in which his [sic] awareness expanded” (in Whitcomb, 1968, n.p.). Yet his work sought to reorient and expand critical consciousness without the use of psychoactive substances (Pyyry & Aiava, 2020). We therefore insist that it is critically important to reappraise psychedelia as a movement that was influenced but not determined by hallucinogenic substances.

In considering the specific sensory components of Albarn’s sensoriums, of especial importance was light, which emerged as a key element in diverse performative and representational practices in figurative, non-figurative, and abstract art, in the all-encompassing “environments” and countercultural, multi-media lightshows and happenings (Rycroft, 2013). Besides the continuously changing colours of rooms, varying between hot reds and oranges, vibrant yellows and cooler blues and greens, illumination was multiply deployed to generate a host of effects. As at Margate’s Spectrum, Taylor (1968) details a “radiant labyrinth” that included “patterns of coloured light from various combinations of rotating bulbs projected through Perspex screens” while two “fountains spew forth luscious foam from illuminated tubes.” Passages and chambers were illuminated with strobe lighting, projections, reflecting mirrors, and textured surfaces such as moiré to create a riot of kaleidoscopic patterns. Ultraviolet light highlighted rotating sculptures and the clothes of visitors, and a giant illuminated eye pulsed.

Besides light, multiple other visual, olfactory, sonic, or haptic stimulations were deployed within the Fifth Dimension’s interior, altering as bodies manoeuvred “from dream chamber to dream chamber” (*Carrick Herald*, 30 May 1969a). Hazel Albarn recalled how her design for one chamber exemplified this multisensorial approach: “It was lighting. It was shiny surfaces. It was very textural fluffy woollen sort of surfaces and it was like walking through a forest of different sort of textures” (interview 18 July 2019; Figure 4, left). Illuminated, sound-responsive shapes and colours shifted according to rhythms and user interaction, and through corridors and rooms, buzzes, bells, low electric murmurs and oscillating timbres continually altered in intensity and pitch. These were complemented by an array of tactile stimulations. As Best describes, “walls are lined with exotic ‘feelies’ and floors have a habit of changing, suddenly and without warning, from hard concrete to soft sponge” (1969, p. 58). Visitors progressed through a jigsaw forest of plywood cut-outs, soft foam rotating sausage forms along a narrow cylindrical corridor, and revolving plywood slatted walls, provoking different haptic sensations and diverse movements arranged according to scenographically curated sensory zones (Figure 4, right). These interactive, tactile manoeuvres also included “knobs and levers to pull, and pedals to press, that made lights flash, bells ring, startling noises explode, followed by little tinkles” (Whitcomb, 1968, n.p.). As Whitcomb (1968, n.p.) points out, movement through these smooth, squishy, bouncy, vibrant, cool, jagged, noisy, muted, and animated realms seemed likely to generate distinct states of mind and emotion as well as sensory experiences.¹⁴

Albarn’s experimental sensoriums aligned with many contemporaneous radical cultural and political projects. Experimental music, poetry, performance, art and design by avant-garde groups such as Fluxus, and an emphasis on events and happenings epitomised these innovative explorations, along with desires to escape from art markets and commercial scenes (Higgins, 2014). This 1960s ferment embraced a multitude of creative practices, designs, and performances that experimented with various sensory stimuli that might prove psychologically and politically transformative.

Albarn’s approach to presenting multi-sensory experiences without recourse to mind-altering drugs is underscored by Blauvelt’s observation that the “hippie scene ... embraced modernism’s fascination with new media, materials and technologies – taped music, synthesizer sound, feedback and distortion, light effects, slide projectors, portable video cameras, television, plastics, reflective Mylar [polyester film] and computers” (2016a, p. 11). This was supplemented by “a plurality of new forms, hybrid media and interactive experience” and experiments with “the fluid nature of light and sound as well as the interactive qualities of kinetic art” (2016a, p. 11) that used technology that was sensuously and affectively connected



FIGURE 4 [left] Hazel Albarn's set design inside the Fifth Dimension, Girvan, 1969; [right] plan for the interior sensory zones of Spectrum, Dreamland, 1968.

Source: Keith and Hazel Albarn, reproduced with permission

to human bodies, in contradistinction to the alienating effects of machines. Rycroft foregrounds the political importance of these sensorial technological innovations while appositely decentring the associations of drugs with late 1960s creativity, contending that “there is a tendency towards pharmacological determinism. I would argue that other technologies, especially electronic technologies, were equally fundamental to the counterculture ... [in] driving the establishment of new subjectivities” (2013, p. 57).

Thus, Albarn's psychedelic experiments belonged to a broader 1960s movement to recalibrate sensory attention, including rock and avant-garde music concerts and immersive kinetic and light-oriented installations “designed to be consumed in an embodied, encounter-based mode” (Rycroft, 2013, p. 58). Rather than being beheld passively, the sensorial interpretation of such elements occurred “in conjunction with the embodied viewer-participant and were at once a psychic, physical and haptic experience” (Rycroft, 2012, p. 457). Rycroft also elaborates on how these kinetic artists were influenced by “a new cosmology that was characterized by revised notions of matter, energy, space-time and light” (2012, p. 463) which sought to convey a sense of shifting energies and matter in flux, notions redolent with contemporary posthumanist and new materialist thinking. In disavowing anthropocentric geographical thinking that conceives matter as inert (Barad, 2007; Bennett, 2010), these ideas seek to realign human relationships with non-human things in a vital politics, in which everything is always unpredictable and shifting, “turbulent, interrogative and excessive” (Anderson & Wylie, 2009, p. 332). Barad thus argues that new political potentialities emerge by “taking account of the entangled materializations of which we are part, including new configurations, new subjectivities, new possibilities” (2007, p. 69), not least in terms of the sensory charge that such interactions engender. Visitor responses to the proliferating materialities and sensory stimuli, and their embodied actions in lying, pressing, grabbing, charging, jumping, and crouching as they interacted with these elements, also highlight how, as Degen *et al.* insist, people “produce aesthetic relations through specific, everyday practices: touching, looking, photographing, sitting, listening, climbing” (2008, p. 1916). Such practices became the basis for a more theatrical, eventful engagement in the Fifth Dimension whereby, as McKinney observes, “the intersecting intentions of the scenographer and of the participants come into contact with the capacities of the materials themselves” (2015, p. 16).

To emphasise, the psychedelic effects installed in the Fifth Dimension deliberately sought to induce multi-sensory experiences as a foundation for opening-up individuals to critical and reflexive thinking. As Best saw it, the “aim is to create a new dimension in entertainment by bringing all five senses simultaneously into play” (1969, p. 58). Albarn was explicit about such aims: “You’ve got to loosen up all the senses to start the consciousness working” (Blackburn, 1967). More stridently, he claimed, “I am concerned with the expansion of communication. I am trying to link up sight, sound, smell and touch. Join these senses together and you have a force more potent than LSD” (in Clemens, 1968, n.p.). These multi-sensory installations

were devised to undercut conventions of feeling and sensing, producing, according to Albarn, an environment “so unfamiliar that people find emotions they really did not realise they possessed” (in Whitcomb, 1968, n.p.). Accordingly, as with other 1960s creative experiments, “the entwined materialities and sensibilities with which we act and sense” (Wylie, 2005, p. 245) were reconfigured in the Fifth Dimension through the deployment of particularly lively things, textures, and other stimuli. The application of non-figurative, abstract, moving forms of “lumitechnical apparatuses,” illusory optical patterns, mobiles, and mechanical sculptures deployed by artists and installed in the Fifth Dimension sought to induce visitors to reflect on perception and the sensory ordering of the world. These non-human agencies supply “the perceptive body with a set of possible actions or movements to perform” (Kraftl & Adey, 2008, p. 227), but the success of the fun palace relies on visitors to open themselves out to sensation and interaction with the particularly dynamic milieu that it provides.

Albarn considered that the built environments created by purveyors of a dominant modernist functionalism, in accordance with their interests, orthodoxies, technical aptitudes, and aesthetics, demarcate what is seen and unseen, smelled, heard, and touched; they shape the spaces to which we become attuned through everyday habit. Indeed, advancing his critique of the cubic spatiality of modern life, he stresses that:

Not only are our perceptual systems now conditioned by our innate need to register our verticality in relation to the horizontal earth plane, but this conditioning is both unconsciously and consciously reinforced by the architecture of our built environment and our conceptual infrastructure. (Albarn & Miall Smith, 1977, p. 134)

In contrast, psychedelic innovations such as the Fifth Dimension created new sensory objects and modes of sensing at variance to this usual regime of the sensible. In avoiding “a Babel of directions, exhortations, billboards, and electronic showmanship” (in Albarn & Miall Smith, 1977, p. 12), the vigorous forms of sensory stimuli generated by commercial interests, ways of sensing, feeling, and making sense of place could be more thoroughly disrupted. Such kinaesthetic politics thus destabilise the “self-evident facts of perception based on the set of horizons and modalities of what is visible and audible as well as what can be said, thought, made, or done” (Rancière, 2004, p. 85). Albarn’s sensoriums were consummately able to “provoke, intervene, and disrupt the established regime of the sensible” (Berberich et al., 2013, p. 318; Kullman, 2019), defamiliarising the normative experience of space in a pleasurable yet challenging fashion. Their modularity also enhanced possibilities for visitors to reflect on how sensory apprehension and bodily capacities are shaped through the ongoing construction of built environments – provoking speculation on how places might be built otherwise, in more sensually stimulating, participative, and ludic ways (Edensor & Millington, 2018).

As Oberbeck emphasises, prefiguring Bourriard’s discussions of the relational aesthetics of 1990s art, the new environmental arts of the 1960s sought to radically engage the spectator, who “will find his [sic] traditionally passive role as an aloof onlooker roundly challenged by the unsettling assembly of action-oriented art works and artistically seductive machines” (1968a, n.p.). Similarly, Bourriard describes a relational situation in which “heterogeneous entities can meet; it must be unstable, open to exchange and dialogue” (2002, p. 115). The heightened sensory encounter with light, materials, sounds, and smells in the Fifth Dimension solicited such relational challenges. But crucially, as well as encouraging reflection, it also generated an experience of ludic pleasure. Such virtues were summoned up by Albarn. Referring to *Spectrum*, he remarked that “play as a social activity has ritual and pattern, and also the possibility of an open-ended situation, a degree of exploration. Our fun palace at Margate is obviously play-oriented. It’s at a fairground, after all” (Oberbeck, 1968b, n.p.).

6 | CONCLUSIONS

In telling the remarkable story of a psychedelic fun palace installed in the unlikely setting of Girvan in 1969, we have sought to reappraise the potential of psychedelic creativities for considering current geographical notions about sensation, affect, and the built environment, and to recuperate a politics of pleasure and play. To conclude, we outline three key implications of this story for advancing recent critical geographies concerned with the eventful, emotional, and sensory experiences of inhabiting buildings.

First, situating our analysis around a late 1960s fun palace has engaged with the design and experience of modern built forms beyond their familiar inflections. This matters not least because the “big things” at the centre of geographical scholarship concerning architecture and experience have typically centred on residential high-rise and civic buildings, or commercial spaces like airports and shopping malls (Jacobs, 2006; Kraftl & Adey, 2008; Lees, 2001; Lees & Baxter, 2011; Rose et al., 2010). As a counterpoint, our examination of Keith Albarn’s Fifth Dimension highlights a rich yet overlooked historical geography of alternative modern architectural experimentation with play, technology, and the creative arts. As an

excessive space of affects, it offers a strategic context to reflect on how we might design and experience the built environment otherwise. We have focused on an architectural experiment exemplary of psychedelia to reclaim the term from its stereotypical, pharmacological associations, more precisely describing the diverse influences that one environmental artist drew on when ascribing transformative potential to the sensory realms he created. This also reveals, as Hickey suggests, that movements such as psychedelia are both difficult to define and considered outside the mainstream canon because they “prioritise complexity over simplicity, pattern over form, repetition over composition, feminine over masculine, curvilinear over rectilinear, and the fractal, the differential, and the chaotic over Euclidean order” (1997, p. 94).

Second, we discuss how one avenue for producing more flexible, adaptable architectural forms is constituted by the creative development of modularity, as lucidly exemplified by the Fifth Dimension. The installation emerged at a generative intersection between commercial and experimental architecture, and artistic and technological innovation. As Albarn’s pioneering approach to environmental design exemplifies, advances in architectural modularity in the latter half of the 20th century afforded opportunities for architects, owners, and inhabitants of buildings to act as spatial agents (Awan et al., 2011; Lorne, 2017), altering both structural and socio-spatial configurations in accordance with changing desires, aesthetics, and functions. The turn to modular modernities also decentred formal notions of “the building” at the heart of architectural practice. Instead, as with Albarn’s Ekistikit, environmental designers were concerned with developing flexible, adaptable structural systems as suggestive scaffolds that could potentially facilitate new architectures of play. Such urgent avant-garde efforts to democratise architecture actively contested a dominant paternal and colonial programme of modernist functionality, centred on efficiency and predefined use, and in which creative destruction becomes the common response when these criteria are deemed to be no longer met. Importantly, then, emergent forms of late 1960s modular modernity are significant for their critical anticipation of the key tropes of playful, smart, and sustainable urbanisms, while simultaneously drawing on vernacular traditions of temporary architecture. In learning from these modular forms, we can seek to extend the wider potential of mobile architectures (Kronenburg, 2013) by making explicit connections between the envelopment of lived spacetimes – by various shelters, scaffolds, domes, bubbles – and their adaptation to contemporary and future social upheavals and environmental crises, as well as temporary structures of utility and play (Blauvelt, 2016a; Murphy, 2016; Šenk, 2017).

Third, we have especially focused on how Albarn’s fun palaces expanded sensation through a disorientating, ever-changing array of Dionysian enchantments that immersed inhabitants in overwhelming alterity while disconnecting them from normative sensory habits (Pyry & Aiava, 2020). We have explored how inhabiting play structures such as the Fifth Dimension might generate, in Lefebvre’s (1973/2014) terms, the “reeducation” of sensing bodies towards the production of lived space. Indeed, Albarn was explicit that his ultimate goal was to cause visitors to his sensoriums to reflect on the abstraction and alienation of sensory bodies from contemporary architectural design. Thus, as Classen emphasises, the potential for re-enchantment extends beyond immediate sensory impact because “we not only think about our senses, we think through them” (1993, p. 9). In reconfiguring perceptual experience and inducing reflexivity, enchanting encounters with the sensorially unfamiliar can propose new possibilities for feeling and being otherwise in space. Such installations, in deploying diverse, unfamiliar materialities and stimulating technological innovations, offer much potential to engender what Bennett calls “re-enchantment,” heightening the senses so that we “notice new colours, discern details previously ignored, hear extraordinary sounds, as familiar landscapes of sense sharpen and intensify” (2001, p. 5). Crucially, Bennett’s notion of enchantment relies on a distributed conceptualisation of agency, “a confederation of human and nonhuman elements ... distributed across an ontologically heterogeneous field, rather than being a capacity localized in a human body or in a collective produced (only) by human efforts” (2010, pp. 21–23). As we have discussed, these redistributive capacities temporarily transcend Rancière’s (2004) focus on the constraints imposed by the dominant producers of space who design environments in accordance with their sensory predilections and values, and instantiate how we are to sense and feel space in following practical norms. Accordingly, we regard the Fifth Dimension, along with other “new landscapes of encounter and experiment” (Latham & McCormack, 2017, p. 310), as exemplary of a more progressive redistribution of the sensible in ways that foster dissensus and thus liberate architectural spaces from the sensory limits of functional, serial design. In confounding dominant affective and sensory conditions, the structure opened up possibilities for encountering new agencies and associations, for soliciting new modes of attunement to the built environment, revealing pre-existing norms as well as generating possibilities for fun and play. The inclusive invitation to enter its novel architectural form in which new sensory impressions and bodily capacities could be experienced through open-ended exploration agitates for a more equitable material ordering of the world.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Parks Committee of Girvan Town Council minutes (17 March 1969).
- ² The Fifth Dimension also featured in the 1970 *Tomorrow's World* annual.
- ³ *Carrick Gazette and Girvan News* (18 January 1974) reported that part of the Fifth Dimension had been severely damaged by a 'week of gales.'
- ⁴ Parallels here with efforts to embed countercultural art in government agendas by the Artist Placement Group, see: <http://www2.tate.org.uk/artistplacementgroup/default.htm>
- ⁵ Albarn briefly became Soft Machine's manager around this time.
- ⁶ For interior footage of Spectrum, see: 'Fun Palace 1968', *British Pathe*. 3 October 1968 (<https://www.britishpathe.com/video/fun-palace>).
- ⁷ 26 Kingley Street was home to the Artists' Own Gallery where Keith and Hazel curated exhibitions together at this time.
- ⁸ For archival footage, see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIMWTsj0hiA> (04:04-05:19).
- ⁹ Keith Albarn and Partners Ltd (1968) *Environmental design, kinetic lighting, multi-media at 30 Warner Street ECI* [flyer, Keith Albarn personal collection].
- ¹⁰ 'Ekistiks' is a scientific theory of human settlement developed in the 1940s by Greek architect and planner Constantine Doxiadis.
- ¹¹ Ongoing maintenance of the structure and electrical equipment needed to be replaced (Parks Committee minutes, 2 November 1970). High running costs lessened the attraction's economic value but the council agreed to keep it open for the 1972 season, adding limited new elements replaced (Parks Committee minutes, 22 November 1971). A subsequent decision was made to retain the attraction for the 1973 season following repair and maintenance, as it still produced a profit (Meeting of Entertainments and Publicity Committee, 18 December 1972). The same committee reached a similar decision for season 1974 (12 November 1973), but by 4 December 1974 a final decision to dispense with the Fifth Dimension was made.
- ¹² Electroscope was formed by Denis Barns, a painter at Glasgow School of Art, and John Ballantyne, a scientist at Strathclyde University. The re-design of the Fifth Dimension's interior was their first big commission. Council discussions relating to this work were published in the *Carrick Herald*, 10 October and 14 November 1969, and 24 April and 20 November 1970. Following Electroscope's interior makeover, The Fifth Dimension's public re-opening ceremony was reported in the *Ayr Advertiser* (23 April 1970).
- ¹³ Experiments that crystallised in the exhibitions curated by Jasia Reichardt, 'Cybernetic Serendipity' (1968; Keith Albarn was a consultant and contributor) and 'Play Orbit' (1969), held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London.
- ¹⁴ These elements were central to later developments in Albarn's sensoriums, most notably his experimental Autistic Unit for the treatment of autistic children at High Wick Hospital, St Albans. Twelve brightly coloured fibreglass modules created sensory zones allocated for physical exercise alongside quiet, relaxing 'womb like' rooms (Albarn, n.d.). For footage of Keith's prototype play structures and Hazel's Play Learn toys for the St Alban's children's unit, see 'Nursery Furniture 1968', *British Pathe*. 4 July 1968 (<https://www.britishpathe.com/video/london-be-ware-other-colour-pics-share-this-title-1>).

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