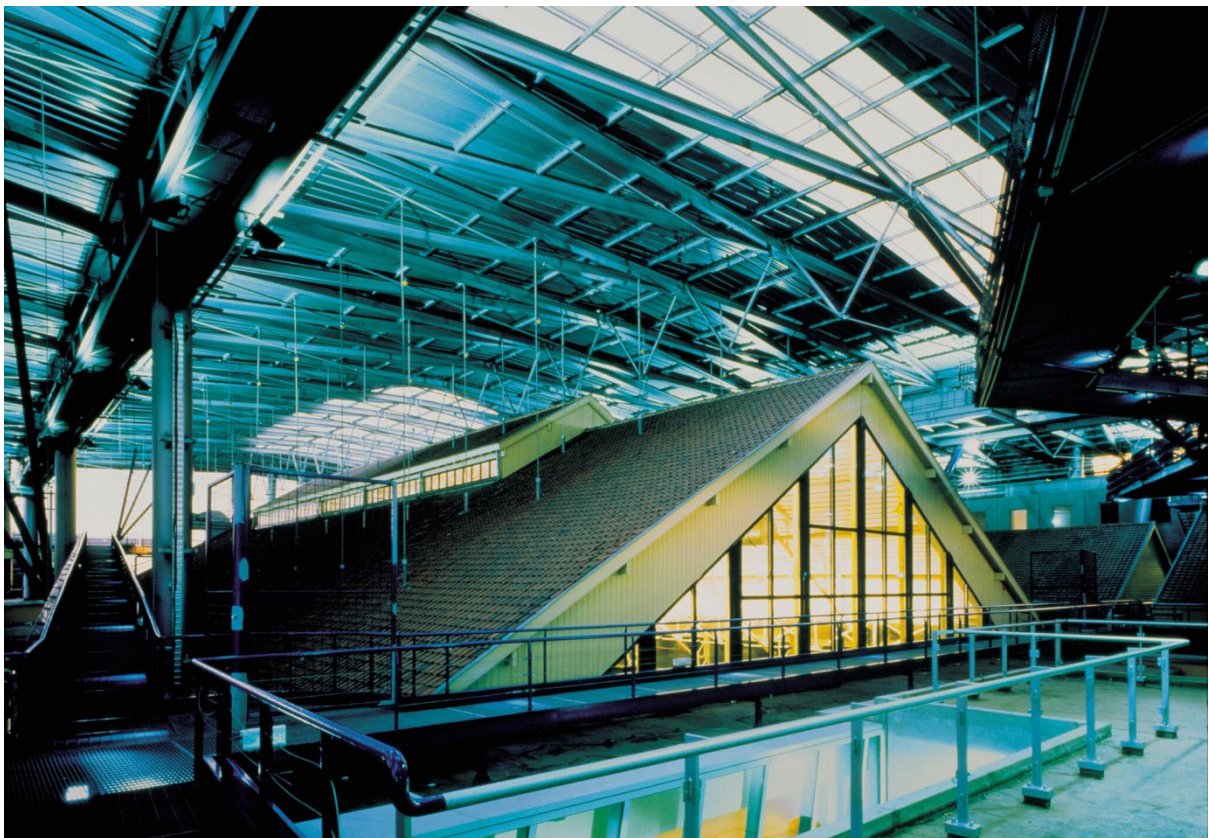


LIVE project in collaboration with Le Fresnoy - Studio national des arts contemporains, a building by Bernard Tschumi.

The event as spatial encounter.

Assemblea presentation — images



Project Context

Studio Drawing Architecture invites students to develop architectural proposals for a live project commissioned by Le Fresnoy – Studio national des arts contemporains in Tourcoing, France.

Le Fresnoy occupies the site of a former popular entertainment complex where Bernard Tschumi designed an important piece of architecture in the nineties, tying the built relics of a socio-cultural entertainment program into an acclaimed centre for artistic education. Tschumi's intervention preserved fragments of the existing building

structures beneath a vast new roof, producing an architecture suspended between past and future, city and institution, everyday life and artistic experimentation.

Tschumi's architecture holds different spatial, temporal and programmatic conditions in tension generating a reciprocal relationship between city and institution, between collective memory and artistic experimentation.

[Le Fresnoy](#) is an institution for training, production and distribution in the audiovisual and digital arts. Its aim is to enable young artists from all over the world to create works using professional technical resources in a decompartmentalised environment open to all forms of expression. Its field of work, both theoretical and practical, covers all audiovisual languages, from traditional (photography, film and video) to digital creation.

Today, Le Fresnoy wishes to reconsider the square situated at the entrance of the building. More than a forecourt, this space forms a **threshold between the city and the institution**, materialising a strong boundary between public life and artistic production, between the ground plane of Tourcoing and the elevated landscape of Tschumi's roof.

GOOGLE MAPS GROUNDPLAN

Drawing Architecture Studio takes this threshold as a site through which the relationship between institution and city can be explored, intensified and reconfigured. The square is a physical site and subject of the project. The student projects will explore the capacity of architectural design to reimagine the forecourt of this building as a durational site: an event space through which the intense artistic production contained within Le Fresnoy extends into the communal fabric of the city. While, in turn, the contingencies, routines and subversive potential of ordinary suburban life will infiltrate the institution.

Through mapping exercises, students will draw out particular characteristics of both Le Fresnoy and its surrounding urban fabric, bringing these into **speculative collision through drawing, on the square**. The project asks what spatial possibilities might emerge from these constructed encounters, and how architecture might intensify them: drawing out new relations between artistic ambition and collective experience, between institution and city, between event and everyday life.

Project Brief

The studio asks a broader architectural question, ***how can the encounter between artistic imagination and the everyday life of the city be activated and intensified through architecture?***

Section as investigative device

Each project will begin by constructing an **urban section** that traverses the observed conditions of both Le Fresnoy and the city. More than a representation of the existing site, the section will operate as an investigative device: a means of drawing into relation

spaces, activities, infrastructures, movements, people and events that may otherwise appear disconnected. Through this section, each group will establish a particular lens through which to investigate the reciprocal relationship between institution and city.

Students will work in groups of two, forming small architectural practices operating within the framework of a live commission. Students may propose their own group formations. Each practice will develop its own position, supported throughout the semester by a series of consultants and informants.

Through observation, interviews, drawing, model-making, film, photography and collage, each group will construct a **situated portrait of the site**. Rather than seeking a comprehensive or neutral reading, this process asks students to select, frame and intensify particular conditions encountered across Le Fresnoy and its urban surroundings. These observations will progressively establish the position from which the architectural project emerges.

Artist as informant

Central to the project is a direct engagement with Le Fresnoy and its occupiers. We will visit Bernard Tschumi's building, its exhibition spaces, production facilities and technical environments, alongside the surrounding urban fabric, on **Tuesday 22 September 2026**.

Each group will be paired with an artist currently studying at Le Fresnoy. Through conversation, interviews and engagement with their work, the artist's ambitions, preoccupations and speculative propositions will become source material for architectural inquiry. We will approach the artists as an **informant**: an active occupant of the site whose practicing principles and ambitions will become part of the methodical construct of the project that will shape, deviate and refine the architectural position.

The artist's work and/or ideas will be drawn outward towards the city, while observations of everyday urban life will be drawn back towards the institution. The resulting architectural proposals will aim to construct new spatial, social and cultural relationships between artistic production and public life.

Studio Drawing Architecture: The Event

Studio Drawing Architecture understands architecture not as a static object but as a **relational field in continuous formation, emerging through encounters between people and places, between ideas and material conditions, between movement and space**.

Following Bernard Tschumi's proposition that there is no architecture without event, the studio will investigate architecture as a relational and time-based practice, one that

emerges through encounters between space and action, artistic intention and everyday occupation. **Rather than resolving these differences, the project will seek architectural possibilities within their collisions, frictions and unexpected affinities.**

Tschumi writes: ‘*The event is the figurative origin of architecture itself, through which an architecture of difference and opposition can be proposed rather than synthesis and totality*’. Narrative techniques—be they pictorial or cinematic—evoke the ability of fiction to operate as an alternative form of critique (Tschumi, 1994). When stating *There is no architecture without event, nor without violence*, Tschumi refers to violence not as physical brutality but to the inevitable disruption and transformation that occurs when human action intervenes in space. Architecture, in this sense, is never static or neutral: the very activities it hosts introduce tensions, collisions, and reconfigurations that alter its spatial and social order.

Leaning on Tschumi’s *Manhattan Transcripts*, we will observe and activate a city into drawings that render the event as a time-based inhabitant of the urban fabric, and subsequently invite the event to intersect with and calibrate the urban fabric into speculative proposals.

We will design architecture as an occurrence in a relational field between space, movement, and event, rather than as an isolated and static object. Moving beyond the classical imperative of representation, students will develop spatial propositions emerging from encounters between infrastructure and program, between space and occupant, and between objects and the events they stage.

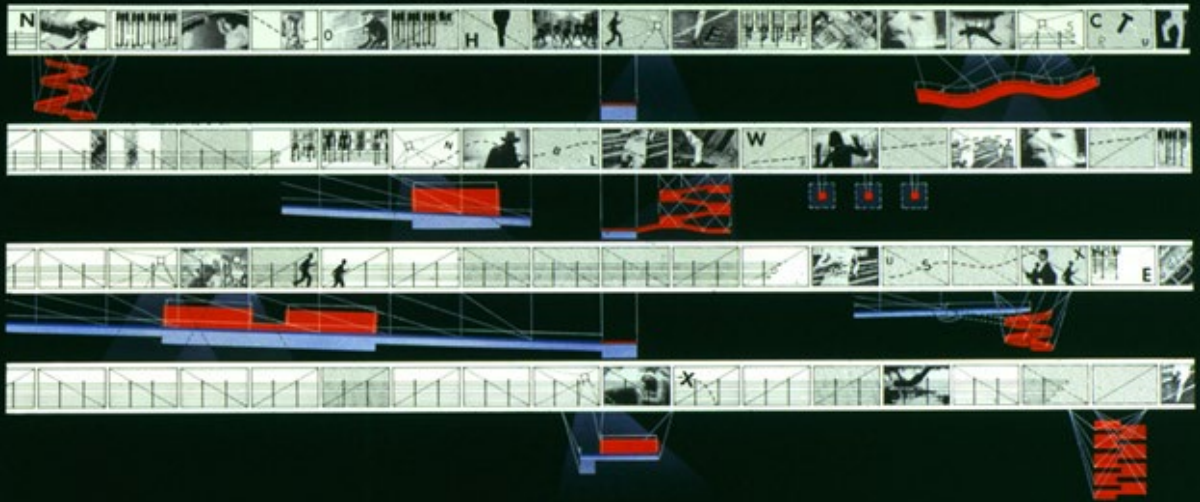
Promiscuous Collisions

When staging and recording a physical site as an experience, we explore and activate qualities and latent opportunities of the urban environment that would otherwise remain concealed.

The Accident is inseparable from its velocity of unexpected emergence (Virilio 2003)

In *Unknown Quantity*, Paul Virilio considers accelerated temporality as one in which the unfolding of events is inseparable from, and indeed constituted through, the accidents and opportunities it brings about. Invention, he suggests, is a way of grasping accidents as signs, as opportunities. It is high time to open up to the impromptu, to that indirect production of science that is the disaster, the catastrophe. If according to Aristotle, “the accident reveals the substance, “the invention of the substance is also the invention of the “accident”. (Virilio 2003)

In that manner, the shipwreck is indeed the ‘futuristic’ invention of the ship, the air crash the invention of the supersonic plane, and the Chernobyl meltdown, the invention of the nuclear power station.



To really appreciate architecture, you may even need to commit a murder.



1

I. DEFINITION

I. Limit

By arguing that there is no architecture without event, without program, without violence, the Transcripts attempt to bring architecture to its limits, as they insert particular programmatic and formal concerns within both the architectural discourse and its representation.

limit: a boundary. (architecture: a form of knowledge whose limits are constantly questioned.)

Productions at the limit of literature, at the limit of music, at the limit of any discipline, often inform us about the state of that discipline, its paradoxes and its contradictions. Questioning limits is a means of determining the nature of discipline.

Today's limits of architecture: 1) things pertaining to the relationship between spaces and their use, between 'type' and 'program'; between objects and events; 2) things pertaining to the notation of architecture. (However precise and generative plans, sections, and axonometrics may be, each implies a logical reduction of architectural thought in what can be shown, to the exclusion of other concerns. They are caught in a sort of prison-house of architectural language, where 'the limits of my language are the limits of my world'. Any attempt to go beyond such limits, to offer another reading of architecture, demands the questioning of these conventions.)

The Transcripts take as their starting point today's inevitable disjunction between use, form and social values. They argue that when this condition becomes an architectural confrontation, a new relation of pleasure and violence inevitably occurs.

II. CONDITION

I. Disjunction



2

disjunction: the act of disjoining or condition of being disjoined; separation, disunion. The relation of the terms of a disjunctive proposition.

M. Foucault, noting the emergence of a new field: 'how to specify the different concepts that enable us to conceive of the discontinuity or the threshold, between nature and culture, the irreducibility one to another of the balances or solutions found by each society or each individual, the absence of intermediary terms, the non-existence of a continuum existing in space or time.' (in *Order of Things*)

The often bemoaned disjunction in the 20th century between man and object, object and events, events and spaces, or being and meaning confirms a lost unity against which there is no recourse. Such a disjunction ultimately implies a dynamic conception posed against a static definition of architecture, an excessive moment that brings architecture to its limits.



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III. CLASSIFICATION

1. Event



4

The Transcripts offer a different reading of architecture in which space, movement and events are ultimately independent, yet stand in a new relation to one another, so that the conventional components of architecture are broken down and rebuilt along different axes.

event: an incident, an occurrence; a particular item in a program. Events can encompass particular uses, singular functions or isolated activities. They include moments of passion, acts of love and the instant of death.

Events have an independent existence of their own. Rarely are they purely the consequence of their surroundings. Events have their own logic, their own momentum. In literature, they belong to the category of the narrative (as opposed to the descriptive).

space: a *cave mentale*? Kant's a-priori category of consciousness? a pure form? or, rather, a social product, the projection on the ground of a socio-political structure?

The age of modernity: architectural spaces can have an autonomy and a logic of their own. Distortions, ruptures, compressions, fragmentations and juxtapositions are inherent in the manipulation of form, from Piranesi to Schwitters, from Dr Caligari to Rietveld.

2. Space



5

3. Movement



6

movement: the action or process of moving. Also a particular act or manner of moving. (In a poem or narrative: progress or incidents, development of a plot, the quality of having plenty of incident.)

Also: the inevitable intrusion of bodies into the controlled order of architecture. Entering a building: an act that violates the balance of a precisely ordered geometry (do architectural photographs ever include runners, fighters, lovers?), bodies that carve unexpected spaces through their fluid or erratic motions. Architecture, then, is only an organism passively engaged in constant intercourse with users, whose bodies rush against the carefully established rules of architectural thought.

IV. RELATION

1. Indifference



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It is the Transcripts' contention that only the striking relationship between the three levels of event, space and movement makes for the architectural experience. Yet they never attempt to transcend the contradictions between object, man, and event in order to bring them to a new synthesis: on the contrary, they aim to maintain these contradictions in a dynamic manner, in a new relation of indifference, reciprocity or conflict.

indifference: the fact of making no difference. (magnetism: the middle zone of a magnet where the attractive powers of two ends neutralize each other.)

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Image credit: Tschumi, B. 1995. *Manhattan Transcripts*. ppXXI
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