

TRANSGRESSION MUST BE TELEVISED

EXTINCTION REBELLION AND THE ALTERNATIVE CITY

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Theme: Theory

Within the contemporary vocabulary, 'ritual' and 'habit' have become interchangeable terms. The latter has gradually acquired the more negative connotation as an addictive and mechanical behaviour while the former retains its collective meaning as something capable of bringing society together, yet they are, for the most part, used synonymously. Indeed, they are both behaviours that belong to all living creatures, whose bodies are present and visible, and interact with the environment. In particular, for human beings, the two words are rooted in the ethos of a society: they respond to rules and produce codes of behaviour that are repeatable both collectively and individually, generating social constructs and cultural life as a result.

This blurring of definitions has inevitable consequences for architecture: the repetition of behaviours can produce predictive and standardised forms, yet a latent margin between ritual and habitual exists. The proposed paper will investigate this margin through the means of transgression: the one and only character of the ritual that the habit does not itself possess. Transgression in this instance is intended as a temporary and unpredictable action, instigated by what Hannah Arendt defined as courage and freedom. It produces a break in the loop of the ritual and habitual cycle, explores alternative social meanings and questions the indisputable standards that architecture obstinately and recursively puts into form.

The highest form of transgressive action that can still visibly be observed in the contemporary city is the act of protest: a ritual action that transgresses the status quo in a given environment and interrupts the daily life of its streets and inhabitants. As a case study, this paper will focus on Extinction Rebellion, a decentralised network of protest that, through its performative acts, strategically uses pieces of urban fabric in order to allow a new possible city to emerge. Extinction Rebellion will be read as a potential tool of anthropological observation, capable of challenging the current production of architecture as an imposing, paradigmatic form of life.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Francesca Romana Dell'Aglio is an architect, writer and educator based in London. She currently teaches at the Architectural Association and the Royal College of Art, where she is concluding her PhD on the dispute between ritual and habitual actions and their physical effects on the collective spaces of London.

EDUCATION:

2007-2014 Venice: Bachelor and Master - Università IUAV di Venezia
2015-2016 London : Master in History and Critical Thinking - Architectural Association
2018-on going London: PhD - Royal College of Art

TEACHING:

2011-2012 Venice : Iuav (Teaching Assistant);
2016-2017 Oxford: Oxford Brookes (Visiting Lecturer)
2016-2020 London: Central Saint Martins (Visiting Lecturer)
2016-on going London: Architectural Association (Teaching Assistant)
2018-on going London: Royal College of Art (Visiting Lecturer)

EDITORIAL:

2011-on going: Editor of the Venice-based academic journal "Engramma"
2020: Editorial Assistant AAFILES 77

EXHIBITION ASSISTANT:

2012
Venice: "Ricostruire Wittgenstein" (IUAV)
Venice: "Porous City" - MVRDV and European Forum for Architectural Policies - EFAP (13th Venice Architecture Biennale - Common Ground 2012)

2016
Venice: "Home Economics" - British Pavilion (15th Venice Architecture Biennale - "Reporting from the front")

2017
Orléans: "Black Block" Black Square (Biennial Architecture Orléans, France)

CURATORIAL

2014
Venice: "Archizines Itinerant Pavilion" (Iuav)
Venice: "Ground Floor Crisis" (14th Venice Architecture Biennale - "Fundamentals")

2019
Seoul: "Collective Rituals" (Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism)

TALKS AND CONFERENCES:

2014

Venice: “Dimenticare Venezia” - Venice Programme of the School of Architecture in collaboration with the University of Virginia

2018

London: “On Balance” Symposium at Royal College of Art (London)

Sheffield: “From Ritual to Habit. A reading of London Forma Urbis” - RIBA Research Matters Conference

Berlin: “Ritualization in the design process” - Think, Design, Built. Type, Typology and Typogenesis in Architecture Doctoral Colloquium

Rennes: “St, Paul Cathedral the Rise and Fall of collective spaces in London” - Leaving Traces. Living Politics in the City Conference

2019

Seoul: Global Studios Conference (moderator)

2020

The Architecture of Loss: RCA MRes x Architecture Foundation

PUBLICATIONS:

2015

“Architetti in uniforme” – Exhibition review of “Architecture in uniform. Designing and bulding for the Second World War (Rome, Maxxi 19 December 2014 - 3 May 2015) curated by Jean Louis Cohen in Engramma 123. “Architetture per la memoria”

“The Dignity of Gestures” in LOBBY n. 3

2016

The Ship, “All the world’s stage, and all the men and women merely players” in “Fundamental Acts” edited by Matteo Ghidoni

2018

“What’s Wrong with Standardization?” in STUDIO Magazine n.14

2020

“Back Off Biennale” in AAFILES 77

“Corrispondenze di Linee. Il tratto nelle lettere di Gio Ponti” in Engramma n. 175.
“Gio Ponti. Espressioni”

2021

“Immunity and the politics of education” - DEschooling.org