

Architecture 5590:
Graduate Architectural Theory Seminar
Autumn 2014 RM 269

The Ohio State University
Knowlton School of Architecture
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274 Knowlton Hall, Office Hours: Tues 9:30-11:30

The Appearance of Performance Furnishing, Arraying and Decking It Out

Course Description:

"Faces: The Appearance of Performance" will investigate the changing nature of the idea of performance in the architectural discipline over the course of the last quarter century and relate these concepts to notions of character and figure emerging out of 19th Century theories of type and evolutionary speciation. The relationship between the contemporary use of the term performance and the word's historical connection to the concept of "furnishing" will be elaborated through presentations, readings and an in-depth installation project. Two parallel ideas connected to long standing disciplinary questions concerning ornament, façade and interior space will be explored: the concept of "arraying," the preparation for environmental exposure, and the notion of "decking out," the process of surface modification to produce perceptual effects whether in the form of camouflage, plumage display or other forms of intra and inter species signaling. Finally the return of an interest in the ways that material phenomena produce "affective" qualities will be investigated relative to postmodern notions of subjectivity, affectation in personality, contemporary media and the post-humanist body. The seminar will be structured in part as a research and discussion group and in part as a design workshop in which students produce a group fabrication project (commonly known as the "Faces" installation) that explores these issues.

The seminar will offer less a coherent theory about the performative and its appearance (this is after all just a pun meaning both its historical arrival – its temporality, as well as what it looks like i.e., its appearance) than a partial survey of historical and contemporary elements in and about the topic. The class will be an exercise in direct historical and theoretical fabrication – That is, we will speculate on the idea that the performative has something to do with the construction and framing of architectural meaning in the most direct sense. The seminar will thus be an exploratory workshop that connects the theoretical to direct manifestations in material production. In a sense the class will operate through what might be termed "paratactical" processes; sets of ideas, images and precedents that will be aligned through analogy and aesthetic affinities rather than through direct claims to historical causality. Thus we will produce a kind of "make believe" meaning of the performative in contemporary architectural thought. Indeed this concept is rooted in our object of study, as the word face is from the Latin root *facere* to make or manufacture which appears as the root of a closely related semantic field including such examples as facetious and façade which suggest what is hidden, masked or disguised.

The Performative

Performance: From the Latin *perfunire* to furnish or deliver in full (OED) Middle English *performen*, from Anglo-Norman *performer*, from Old French *parfornir* : *par-*, intensive pref. (from Latin *per-*, *per-*) + *fornir*, to furnish. (American Heritage Dictionary: 2000)

In its shift to an interest in the projective, Architecture has developed an obsession with the actual, the active, the procedural, and the performative aspects of producing effects and moods, altered perceptions and atmospheres within "affective fields." The issue of performance, with its parallel set of narrational, procedural, event based and phenomenal concerns has become an important focus within architectural practice and has renewed architects interest in the research of the possibilities and limitations of material systems. Performance has a range of meanings as it is currently used within architecture; spanning a more scientific notion of material limit behaviors and efficiencies of systems to the transformation of unfolding atmospheres or perceptual

conditions and effects in “real-time.” The focus of architect’s attention over this time has moved to an interest in actualization and physical and material processes of creation, the differential of incremental variation and the blurring of categories of programmatic distinction.

The research portion of this seminar will, after revisiting historical antecedents to the problem of the ornamental in architecture, investigate the period of transformation in the architectural discipline from the dominance of collage and linguistic models to the rise of biological and informational models relative to the problem of the body. Performance and by extension the question of the ornamental be explored as the central trope of this shift in disciplinary thought.

A dictionary of associations will be used as the springboard for this discussion.

Dictionary of Associations:

Array:

VERB:1. To set out for display or use; place in an orderly arrangement. 2. To dress in finery; adorn.

NOUN:1. An orderly, often imposing arrangement. 2. An impressively large number, as of persons or objects: *an array of heavily armed troops; an array of spare parts*. See synonyms at **display**. 3. Splendid attire; finery. 4. *Mathematics*
a. A rectangular arrangement of quantities in rows and columns, as in a matrix.
b. Numerical data linearly ordered by magnitude. 5. *Computer Science* An arrangement of memory elements in one or more planes.

Bedeck:

TRANSITIVE VERB:Inflected forms: **be-decked, be-deck-ing, be-decks**
To adorn or ornament in a showy fashion.

Deck:

NOUN:1. A platform extending horizontally from one side of a ship to the other.
2a. A platform or surface likened to a ship’s deck. **b.** A roofless, floored structure, typically with a railing, that adjoins a house. **c.** The roadway of a bridge or an elevated freeway. **3a.** A pack of playing cards. **b.** A group of data processing cards. **4.** A tape deck. **5. Slang** A packet of narcotics.

TRANSITIVE VERB:Inflected forms: **decked, deck-ing, decks**

1. To furnish with or as if with a deck. **2. Slang** To knock down: *He decked his sparring partner.*

IDIOMS:**clear the deck** *Informal* To prepare for action. **hit the deck** *Slang* **1.** To get out of bed. **2.** To fall or drop to a prone position. **3.** To prepare for action. **on deck** **1.** On hand; present. **2. Sports** Waiting to take one’s turn, especially as a batter in baseball.

TRANSITIVE VERB:Inflected forms: **decked, deck-ing, decks**

1. To clothe with finery; adorn. Often used with *out*: *We were all decked out for the party.* **2.** To decorate: *decked the halls for the holidays.*

Furnish:

TRANSITIVE VERB:Inflected forms: fur-nished, fur-nish-ing, fur-nish-es

1. To equip with what is needed, especially to provide furniture for. **2.** To supply; give.

ETYMOLOGY:Middle English *furnisshen*, from Old French *fournir, fourniss-*, of Germanic origin. See [per](#)¹ in Appendix I.OTHER FORMS:furnish-er —NOUN

Ornament:

NOUN:1. Something that decorates or adorns; an embellishment. **2.** A person considered as a source of pride, honor, or credit: *a singer who is an ornament to the world of opera.* **3. Music** A note or group of notes that embellishes a melody.

TRANSITIVE VERB:Inflected forms: **or-na-ment-ed, or-na-ment-ing, or-na-ments**

(-m^ẽnt)**1.** To furnish with ornaments: *ornamented the windows with hanging plants.* **2.** To be an ornament to: “*The babies ornament her ankles, dangle from her pant legs*” (Carolyn Chute). ETYMOLOGY:Middle English *ournement*, from Old French *ornement*, from Latin *ornamentum*, from *ornare*, to adorn. See [ar-](#) in Appendix I.

Perform:

VERB:Inflected forms: **per-formed, per-form-ing, per-forms**

TRANSITIVE VERB:**1.** To begin and carry through to completion; do: *The surgeon performed the operation.* **2.** To take action in accordance with the requirements of; fulfill: *perform one’s contractual obligations.* **3a.** To enact (a feat or role) before an audience. **b.** To give a public presentation of; present: *My theater group performed a three-act play.*

INTRANSITIVE VERB:**1.** To carry on; function: *a car that performs well on curves.* **2.** To fulfill an obligation or requirement; accomplish something as promised or expected. **3.** To portray a role or demonstrate a skill before an audience: *The juggler performed atop a unicycle.* **4.** To present a dramatic or musical work or other entertainment before an audience.

ETYMOLOGY:Middle English *performen*, from Anglo-Norman *performer*, from Old French *parfornir*: *par-*, intensive pref. (from Latin *per-*, *per-*) + *fournir*, to furnish; see [furnish](#).

The second portion of the class will focus first on the development of a series of individual proposals for a “performance” based installation responding to issues articulated during the research portion of the class. This will consist in the production of an array of “furnishing” elements which are interactive and transformative. From these proposals the class will decide to build one full scale realizations for the third and final portion of the class. Students will be expected to produce a scheme, research material methods and processes, prototypes and finally contribute to the production of the finished ensemble which explores their ideas about these topics.

Completion Requirements:

The research portion of the class will involve written responses delivered as verbal presentations to assigned readings and the presentations by the instructor (20%). Students will then produce individual proposals for design installations (30%). From these proposals which will take the form of printed design boards, computer models, physical models and fabrication proto-types, one or two will be selected for group production. The remainder of the class will involve the production of a performative installation (50%)

Research Reading List:

(Contemp) Allen, Stan. “Introduction: practice vs. project,” Practice: architecture, technique and representation (Amsterdam:The Gordon and Breach Publishing Group: 2000) XIII-XXV

(Contemp) Allen, Stan. “From Object to Field” AD Architectural Design: Architecture After Geometry (New York: John Wiley & Son Inc., 1997)

(Contemp) Allen, Stan. “mapping the unmappable: on notation,” Practice: architecture, technique and representation (Amsterdam:The Gordon and Breach Publishing Group: 2000) 31-45

(Contemp) Branzi, Andrea. No-Stop City: Archizoom Associati (Orleans: HYX, 2006)

*(19th) Canales, Jimena and Herscher, Andrew. *Criminal Skins: Tattoos and Modern Architecture in the Work of Adolf Loos, Architectural History*. Vol. 48, (2005), pp. 235-256.

- (19th) Darwin, Charles, The expression of the emotions in man and animals: New York, D. Appleton 1896.
- (Enlight) De Quincy, Quatremere, The Historical Dictionary of Architecture, Selections Trans. By Samir Younes, London: Papadakis Publisher, 1999.
- (Enlight) Descartes, René The Passions of the Soul, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1989.
- (Enlight) Grose, Francis, Rules for drawing caricaturas: with an essay on comic painting. London: Printed for S. Hooper, 1791.
- (Contemp) Hejduk, John: Mask of Medusa 1947-1983 (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1985)
- *(Classical) Hersey, George L The lost meaning of classical architecture : speculations on ornament from Vitruvius to Venturi, Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, 1988
- (Enlight) Hogarth, William, The analysis of beauty : written with a view of fixing the fluctuating ideas of taste: London : Printed by J. Reeves for the author and sold by him at his house in Leicester-Fields, 1753.
- (Contemp) Kipnis, Jeffrey. "The Cunning of Cosmetics." *Herzog & de Meuron: El Croquis* 84, Madrid, Spain, 1997
- (Contemp) Kipnis, Jeffrey. "Performance Anxiety?," 2G: Foreign Office Architects [Number 16] (2001): 5-9.
- (Contemp) Kwinter, Sanford. "La Citta Nuova: Modernity and Continuity" Zone 1-2 (New York: Urzone, 1986)
- (Contemp) Kwinter, Sanford. "Landscapes of Change: Boccioni's "Stati d'animo" as a General Theory of Models"
- *(Contemp) Lavin, Sylvia. "Kissing Architecture: Super Disciplinarity and Confounding Mediums." *Log* 17 (2009).
- *(Enlight) Le Brun, Charles, Conérence sur l'expression générale et particulière
- (Contemp) Lynn, Greg. Animate Form (NewYork: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)
- (Contemp) Lynn, Greg. Folds, "Multiplicitous and Inorganic Bodies" Bodies & Blobs: Collected Essays (Brussels: La Lettre Volée, 1998)
- *(19th) Loos, Adolf. "Ornament and Crime" in Ornament and Crime: Selected Essays, translated by Michael Mitchell (Ariadne Press, 1997)
- *(Classical) Marconi, Clemente. "Kosmos: The Imagery of the Archaic Greek Temple" *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 45 Spring, 2004. pp. 211-224.
- *(Enlight) Montagu, Jennifer, The Expression of the Passions, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994.
- (Contemp) Moussavi and Kubo, Eds. The Function of Ornament, (Barcelona: Actar, 2006).

(Modern) Scarpa, Carlo. "Furnishings," In Carlo Scarpa: Complete Works ed. Dal Co and Marzzariol (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1985)

*(Modern-Contemp) Somol, R.E.. "One or Several Masters," Hejduk's Chronotope, ed. K. Michael Hays (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996)

(Contemp) Somol, Robert and Sarah Whiting. "Notes around the Doppler Effect and other Moods of Modernism," *Perspecta* 33 (2002): 72-77

(Contemp) Tschumi, Bernard. Architecture and Disjunction (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996)

(*** Extra-disciplinary)Turner, Victor, The Anthropology of Performance, New York: PAJ Publications, 1987.

*(Enlight) Vidler, Anthony, *The Writing on the Walls*, Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1987.

Additional Notes and Extended List of Associations:

Kosmos - ornament order world – OED Greek *κόσμος* order, ornament, world or universe (so called by Pythagoras or his disciples 'from its perfect order and arrangement')

Arche is the original stuff of Chaos – kosmeo is the process of worldmaking that orders, arrays and makes harmonious. Adrian Stokes the midcentury British architectural thinker in his book *Greek Culture and the Ego* makes the point that Kosmos originally meant the marshaling of an army (and is thus close to the original meaning of Legion – to muster). Later it meant the ordering of the state and then through the influence of Pythagoras the regularity of things. (Stokes 1958, p. 85).

Kosmeo= meant worldmaking

Cosmetics – related has its roots in kosmos

Connection between Façade and Face on one hand and Kosmos and Cosmetics on the other.

Cosmetics is Make up - Face - root = fac to make - Make a face...

A Façade is the face that architecture makes – In book III chapter I the first example that Vitruvius discusses with regard to symmetry and the human body is the face.

Ornament = adornment

Priestess of Athena had two attendants. Kosmos (adornor) and trapezo (trapezophoros= tablebearer)

Adorn – originally for the Greeks the ordering and arraying for battle - to prepare to make up -

Face – façade - fact (a thing done or performed-Latin *fact-um* thing done, neuter past participle of *facere* to do. OED) To make believe – face- late 13c., from O.Fr. face, from V.L. **facia*, from L. *facies* "appearance, form, figure," and secondarily "visage, countenance;" probably related to *facere* "to make" (see *factitious*). Replaced O.E. *andwlita*. To face (v.) "confront" is first recorded mid-15c. Related: Faced.

Raiment - clothing from French agreement from steer arrayer- to array

Firmament- vault of the sky- from latin support - firm firmare but also like a cloth veil adornment – vitruvius Book II Chapter I: ...and so, as they kept coming together in greater numbers into one place, finding themselves naturally gifted beyond the other animals in not being obliged to walk with faces to the ground, but upright and gazing upon the splendor of the starry firmament, and also in being able to

do with ease whatever they chose with their hands and fingers, they began in that first assembly to construct shelters,"

Pediment- foot-mind – that which is bounded by the action of the foot (Choral Dance perimeter?)

Tympanum – drum [skin]

-ment as a suffix means action or process, result of an action or means, instrument or agent of a process. -ment is from the Latin stem mens= mind through the intermediary -mentum meaning instrument or medium

Persona –mask that is “sounded” through (per –sona – of the sounding?) - A **persona**, in the word's everyday usage, is a social role or a character played by an actor. The word is derived from Latin, where it originally referred to a theatrical mask. The Latin word probably derived from the Etruscan word "phersu", with the same meaning, and that from the Greek πρόσωπον (*prosōpon*). Its meaning in the latter Roman period changed to indicate a "character" of a theatrical performance. (from Wikipedia)

prosopon, n. Greek πρόσωπον face, countenance, mask, in Hellenistic Greek also dramatic part, character, person, person of the Trinity, outward form, appearance < πρός to (see [prosody n.](#)) + ὤψ-, stem of ὤψ face, eye (see [-ops comb. form](#)) (from OED) ... word originally rendered post-classical Latin *personam* of the Vulgate (which however has in some places *faciem*), the corresponding Greek being πρόσωπον face, countenance, person, often in the compound προσωπολήπτειν to accept the face of, rendering Hebrew *nāśā' pānīm* to lift up the face (towards someone), to show favour (originally referring to God's countenance being raised towards a person upon whom he bestows favour; compare Exodus 6:26, Deuteronomy 10:17).(OED)

Decorum – decorate - Latin decorāt-us adorned, beautiful, past participle of decorāre

Ornament – 1 †a. An accessory or adjunct, primarily functional, but often also fancy or decorative; (in pl.) equipment, trappings, furniture, attire –(the earliest meaning attested from 1230). Obs. b. In pl. The accessories or furnishings of a church or temple; the sacred vessels, vestments, etc., employed in religious worship, esp. in the celebration of the Eucharist. 2. a. Something used to adorn, beautify, or embellish, or that naturally does this; a decoration, embellishment. b. fig. A quality, characteristic, or circumstance conferring beauty, grace, honour, etc. c. A person who enhances or adds distinction to his or her sphere, time, etc. 3. a. The action of adorning or fact of being adorned; adornment, embellishment, decoration (lit. and fig.). (From OED)

Figure/Figuration

Adorn/Ornament

Face/ Façade

Kosmeo/Cosmetics and Kosmos

Habitation/ Habit

Deck/ Decorate

Our discussion will more than likely unfold around a large set of contemporary and historical figures including but not limited to:

Architectural Figures:

Vitruvius

Alberti: (De Re Aedificatoria)

Schinkel

Semper

Alois Riegl (Problems of Style: foundations for a history of Ornaments)

Loos (Ornament and Crime)
Mies
Johnson
[Archigram – Archizoom]
Carlo Scarpa (Furnishing)
Ventur: (Learning From Las Vegas)
Hejduk
Koolhaas
Herzog
Wigley (White Walls, Designer Dresses)
Somol (Green Dots and One or Several Masters)
Kipnis (The Cunning of Cosmetics)
Neutlings
FAT
Floencia Pita
Jason Payne
Farshid Moussavi (The Function of Ornament)

Historical Figures:

Ernst Haeckel –Ecology and Evolution
Francis Dalton

Contemporary Art Figures:

Vanessa Beecroft

Additional Historical Readings:

Charles Waldstein, Τραπεζώ and Κοσμώ in the Frieze of the Parthenon, *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 11 (1890), pp. 143-145

Joseph Rykwert Adolf Loos: the new vision, *Studio International*, Volume 186, Number 957, 1973

“[Loos’] little magazine (of which only two numbers appeared) *Das Andere* (The Other) had as its subtitle ‘a paper for the introduction of Western culture to Austria’. This Western culture had a curious physiognomy. Its structure could not be described; it was made up of surface details, which together gave the outline of a fabled and highly desirable state of affairs. Look at the matters with which *Das Andere* dealt: clothes, manners, table manners in particular; begging; sexual mores among the very young; the overdecoration of Wagner’s *Tristan* in the Vienna Opera; the ill manners of the very great (the Emperor Wilhelm II is named); street decorations for state visits and so on.”

Rykwert: “*Horror vacui* is the origin of all figuration.” Ibid.

horror vacui : In visual art, horror vacui (English pronunciation: /'hɔrər 'vɑ:kju:əɪ/; from Latin "fear of empty space", which might be represented by white spots; also cenophobia, pronounced /sɛnə'foʊbiə/, from Greek "fear of the empty"[1]) is the filling of the entire surface of an artwork with detail.

The term is associated with the Italian critic and scholar Mario Praz, who used it to describe the suffocating atmosphere and clutter of interior design in the Victorian age. Older, and more artistically successful examples can be seen on Migration period art objects like the carpet pages of Insular illuminated manuscripts such as the Book of Kells. Moving east, this feeling of meticulously filling empty spaces permeates Arabesque Islamic art from ancient times to the present. Another example comes from ancient Greece during the Geometric Age (1100 - 900 BCE), when horror vacui was considered a stylistic element of all art. The mature work of the French Renaissance engraver Jean Duvet consistently exhibits horror vacui.

