

Disobedience— Dwelling on Standards

I don't know, and don't want to know, where functionality begins or ends. It seems to me, in any case, that in the ideal dividing-up of today's apartments functionality functions in accordance with a procedure that is unequivocal, sequential and nycthemeral. The activities of the day correspond to slices of time, and to each slice of time there corresponds one room of the apartment.

The space of our lives is neither continuous, nor infinite, nor homogeneous or isotropic. But do we know exactly where it breaks off, where it curves, where it disconnects and comes together? We confusedly experience cracks, gaps and points of friction, sometimes vaguely aware that something is stuck, that it breaks loose or collides. Though we seldom seek to learn more about it and more often than not, wander from one spot to another, from one space to another, without measuring, without taking into account or considering the course of space. The issue is not to invent space and certainly not to re-invent it (too many well-intentioned individuals are already there to reflect upon our environment...), the problem is rather to question space, or more exactly, to read space; for what we call the everyday is not the obvious, but opacity.

Denkraum

Making architecture demands a constant and dynamic reading of given contexts under the angle of specific briefs and questions, allowing to unveil explicit and implicit relationships stemming from past actions and present dynamics. We will investigate different ways to read, and from there we will proceed to place findings in a framework, to structure them and create our own hierarchies, to situate ourselves in relationship to it. Within the studio, the multiplicity of individual tracks will be united under the common theme, in a common space of thinking: a Denkraum.

The Denkraum is a space of presence. A place where the work is on constant display and grows organically in time, concentrating questions, tensions and proposed solutions, developing a common design endeavour and discourse, a joined output based on associative thinking and reflection by analogy. A place where reading and writing reality happens all at once. A place to discuss together and with guests coming from different backgrounds, regions and disciplines, guests who will talk to us and think along.

What does it mean, to live in a room? Is to live in a place to take possession of it? What does taking possession of a place mean? As from when does somewhere become truly yours? Is it when you've put your three pairs of socks to soak in a pink plastic bowl? Is it when you've heated up your spaghetti over a camping-gaz? Is it when you've used up all the non-matching hangers in the cupboard? Is it when you've pinned to the wall an old postcard showing Carpaccio's 'Dream of St Ursula'? Is it when you've experienced there the throes of anticipation, or the exaltations of passion, or the torments of a toothache? Is it when you've hung suitable curtains up on the windows, and put up the wallpaper, and sanded the parquet flooring?

It is from these and similar elementary observations by French writer [Georges Perec](#) in his book *Species of Spaces* that we will depart to develop a critical reading and engaging writing of places to dwell. We will approach architectural precedents as a repository to learn from and open up dialogues with. We will reflect on dwelling types, their past and present relevance and their potential meaning to address current needs. We will engage with a number of building sites to explore and project ideas of contemporary dwelling. We will take the time to get up close and personal with both references and proposed sites. We love to walk, over and over again and at different times of the day; to wander around our sites, to work in them, dwell in them, read in them and as such, to not just understand but also feel and experience them through our own bodies and biographies. By walking, building, drawing, reading, smelling, listening, touching and ignoring, we will, together with you, use the semester to dwell on Building Standards.

Excerpts from *Species of Spaces* - Georges Perec (1974)

20 September 2022, 9:30am, ONA 2nd floor at the end of the corridor

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