

THE “PROGRAMMATIC EXPERIMENTATION”  
IN THE WORK OF GORDON MATTA-CLARK

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IN THE WORK OF GORDON MATTA-CLARK**

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## ABSTRACT

### THE “PROGRAMMATIC EXPERIMENTATION” IN THE WORK OF GORDON MATTA-CLARK

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This study is a critical inquiry into the changes of the conceptualisations of the term “program” in architectural discourse, particularly after the 1960s and early 1970s. The aim of this thesis is to benefit from the difficulty of defining “program” in architecture as a fruitful, pragmatic and intellectual source. Although several terms, such as “function,” “use,” “occupation,” “activity,” and “event” fulfil some aspects, none of them suggest an exact definition of the term “program” in architecture. Neither does the introduction of the existence of the terms “temporary activities,” “spontaneity,” “coincidence,” “hybridisation,” and “interface spaces,” which consider the emergence of “temporality” as a more considerable variable in contemporary architecture, provides an adequate definition for the term. Therefore, in this research “program” in architecture is problematized as a “weakly” defined phenomenon.

This study introduces the idea of “programmatic experimentation” by exploring and re-reading the work of Gordon Matta-Clark, in which “experimentation” led to the evaluation of “program” as “concept.”

“Program” is re-conceptualised under two theoretical statements defining the general framework of this study: “Concept” and “Experimentation”. “Concept,” as introduced by the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, produces a direction towards thinking to allow a new understanding by constructing multiple situations rather than constricting program’s definition with specific terms. “Experimentation” suggests that the consequences of the experimental attempts of the 1960s and early 1970s are more than just technological possibilities inserted into architecture, revealing a shift in architectural “program.” In the end, the implementation of the constructed togetherness of the two terms is traced through the work of Matta-Clark as a radical criticism of the established conventions of architectural discourse.

**Keywords:** Program, Concept, Experimentation, Temporality, Resemblance

## ÖZ

### GORDON MATTA-CLARK'IN ÇALIŞMALARINDA “PROGRAMATİK DENEYSELLİK”

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Bu tez 1960 sonrası mimarlık tartışmalarında “program” sözcüğünün kullanımındaki değişiklikleri ve bunun deneysel mimarlıkla olan ilişkilerini araştırmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı mimarlıkta “program” terimini tanımlamanın güçlüğünün faydalanılabilecek ve üzerinde tartışılabilir bir kaynak olduğunun vurgulanmasıdır. “İşlev”, “kullanım”, “yerleşim”, “etkinlik”, “olay” gibi betimlemeler program tanımının bazı özelliklerini kapsamakla birlikte hiçbiri tam karşılığı olamamaktadır. Çağdaş mimarlıkta, program konusunda “zamansallık” kavramının dikkate alınması gereken bir etken olmasını açığa çıkaran “geçici etkinlikler”, “kendiliğinden oluşlar”, “rastlantılar”, “melez mekanlar” ve “ara yüzeyler”in varlığı da program teriminin anlaşılmasına yeterli olmamaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada, “program” sözcüğü “zayıf” olarak tanımlanmış bir görüngü olarak sorunsallaştırılmıştır.

Gordon Matta-Clark’ın çalışmaları, önerilen “programatik deneysellik” tanımıyla, “deneyselliğin” “programın” kavramsallaştırılmasına yol açtığı iddiasının kurgulanmasına yönelik şekilde okunacak ve araştırılacaktır.

“Program” bu çalışmanın genel çerçevesini belirleyen iki teorik tanımlamayla yeniden kavramsallaştırılmıştır: “kavram” ve “deneysellik”. “Kavram”, Fransız filozof Gilles Deleuze’ün tanımladığı şekilde, çoğul durumların oluşturulmasına olanak verecek bir anlayışa yönlendirir. Programın tanımı da belirli terimlere indirgenemeyeceğinden, farklı durumların kurgulanmasına olanak verebilen, Deleuze’ün tanımladığı “kavram” terimi ile genişletilerek anlaşılabilir. “Deneysellik”, 1960’ların deneysel çalışmalarının mimarlığa teknolojik olanakların getirdiği bir durumun ötesinde, mimari “program” açısından önemli değişikliklere neden olduğunu önermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Program, Kavram, Deneysellik, Zamansallık, Benzerlik.

To My Parents



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Architecture uses a large spectrum of agents during the process of its interdisciplinary education and production such as culture, history, typology and style. Contemporary discussions of architectural discourse from the 1960s onwards have revealed that it can be misleading to identify these components, which depend on varying informative sources derived either from architecture itself or from outside of it, by precise definitions since that may cause distortions and obstructions in their communication and meaning. Architecture has had a relationship with these agents without the restriction of any historical context. For instance, Michael K. Hays has pointed out the introduction of "architecture culture" in "architecture theory" around 1968. In order to signify the significance of the beginning of contemporary architecture theory as 1968, Hays differentiated one of those tasks – cultural production – after this date as not having "arisen spontaneously," but as "constantly constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed," grounded more on a "self-conscious" process that operated as a "boundary between legitimacy and disestablishment".<sup>1</sup>

A variety of agents have reconstructed the components of architecture either individually or in a unified manner, which have been labelled under the use of different models. For example, the emergence of typology as the realization of the abstract for the establishment of the emerging institutions of modernity in late 18th century France was a particular correspondence for how these agents reconstructed architecture, in this case as a unity, relevant

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<sup>1</sup> Hays, Michael K. *Architecture Theory since 1968*. Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1998, p. 10.

to the historical and social conditions they had encountered. Yet, the meaning and the use of each term have changed according to their cultural, social and historical conditions and limitations. For this reason, the theoretical and productional meaning in the togetherness and separation of these components has always been a matter of discussion, but after the 1960s has been realized as the subject of the task for architectural discourse. Likewise, the prolongation of discussions on typology in architecture have been reconsidered and reformulated in the context of autonomy discussions of the 1970s, and as a postulated source within the complex background of outside information effecting architecture for the articulation of newly emerging dilemmas. Thus, architecture is combined among these various promotions of terms arisen and nurtured from this complex background of agents that informs architecture as outside “forces”.<sup>2</sup> These forces have always existed as complementing and challenging sources, sometimes taken for granted as pragmatic developmental tools, sometimes regarded as limiting boundaries whose limitations give shape and sometimes dangers to threaten the disciplinary boundaries; yet, those agents that inform architecture, inevitably and inescapably leading to the creation of a buffer among interrelating disciplines and architecture, always define a territorial boundary rather than a linear one. For the Modern Movement, these conditions were declared as reaching the unity of canonization of function in order for the optimum conditions of space as a firm response to the complex background with which architecture is faced. However, among these

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<sup>2</sup> Bernard Tschumi uses the term “forces” to define the dynamism of the intensity of flowing information constantly influencing architecture. He states that: “One has of course, talked about this space of place as opposed to the space of flows. In other words, place is static, space is about certainty, while flows are dynamic, and about realities and of course flows of information are absolutely crucial. Today, you cannot simply define the city as a place, a city is very much a network of flows and the notion of flows, and I think it is really important not so much in terms of the fluidity and the continuities that are discussed in Deleuze’s work. But in terms of what I would call forces. In other words, there is much that has been talked about in architecture in terms of forms, today, I would say, instead of talking about forms, we talk about forces. And those forces are really what make the city of today, the architecture of today. And Deleuze is one of the many people, who outside of architecture have brought contributions to our culture and our understanding of those constant movements.” Tschumi, Bernard. Interview with author, 28 July 2005, Appendix B.

abstractions and realizations of architectural space either dominated or weakened by these agents influencing architecture, “program” is the most underestimated and less articulated term, although it has been one of those crucial areas that have been redefined under the employment of the changes by these agents.

“Program” in architecture covers a wide range of issues. For this reason, it is a difficult term that requires redefinition in different conditions. This versatility causes a difficulty of definition as its meaning changes according to situations it encounters. However, in architectural discourse, this entanglement has remained unfolded as a result of the negligence of these changes, with the exception of several academic manifestations. This negligence has also avoided the possible awareness of the subject. This study aims to unveil the difficulty of defining the term “program” in architecture as a potential to dwell on; which would lead to unfold the underestimated issues in architecture about the programmatic approach of the 1960s and early 1970s.

In this study, the nonconformity in the definition of “program” in architecture is enunciated as the potential tool to reveal the criticism during the said period. This can be evaluated both as a disadvantage and a potential since it eliminates any comfort of conventions. Hence, such an inherent difficulty in “program” is conceived as an enriching source by considering the “unconventional” and “plural definition” situations it includes as potentials that would lead to pushing the boundaries of architectural discourse and opening up new horizons.

One of these potentials is suggested as the “unconventional” situation of architectural programming. The investigation of the “unconventional” was introduced by the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) as breaking generalities for alternative conventions. He suggested that

conventions limit “other” ways of thinking and avoid further developments. For this reason, every convention should be transgressed for another one that, in the end, turns into a dynamic process. Here, it is claimed that “program” in architecture already has a dynamic situation and can be assessed in relation to the “unconventional thinking” in the philosophy of Deleuze. This potentiality should be unfolded and employed accordingly rather than being left unconsidered with only constricting terms for architectural programming such as “function”, “use”, “requirement list” and “activity”. Although in contemporary architecture the insertion of terms such as “hybrid spaces”, “temporality”, and “parasitic spaces” –necessitated and urged by the introduction of “blobs”, “mimesis” and “generated spaces” – has contributed to the dynamism of space in order to compensate for the unconventional potential of architectural programming, this study evaluates the emphasis on programming as “weakly defined” among these insertions. For this reason, existing unconventionality in architectural programming is elaborated as a problem to benefit from and to discuss, since it requires redefinition according to different conditions.

Another suggested potential to dwell on here is the “plural definition” of architectural programming, corresponding to the term “function” in Modern Architecture and coinciding with the term “use” in post-WW II architectural discussions, yet both were declared inadequate in their theoretical and ideological implementations. As architectural programming required different definitions in different situations, this study recommends that it can be expanded to the term “concept” that was introduced, again, by Gilles Deleuze. He suggested that philosophy should create or fabricate concepts in order to define problems and situations. Concepts are made up of components that form a wall of uncemented bricks whose boundaries are not well defined. Each component is part of that plane of “concept” while they can also be parts of other concepts as well. Hence, such an overview frees terms from constricted definitions and promises developments. This

dissertation argues that the term “program” in architecture also requires such a translation and should be expanded to a planar situation rather than being considered as confronting several situations of different conditions.

However, in the criticisms of the 1960s and early 1970s, “program” was not understood as a task, although their arguments revolved around the issues concerning the term. Moreover, these criticisms were not sufficient for discussing the programmatic approaches of the period, which is considered here to have developed a criticism on architectural discourse. This criticism is examined by revealing the underestimated programmatic challenges in the architectural discussions and works of the said period.

This criticism is claimed to be understood by examining the programmatic approach through the term “experimentation,” considered to have inherited and revealed a shift in architectural discourse. Thus, this dissertation will examine the tools of “experimentation” in the works of the artist/architect Gordon Matta-Clark (1943-1978).<sup>3</sup> The tools of “experimentation” in his works are claimed to reveal and benefit from the difficulty of defining “program” in architecture, which is put forward as the investigation of the possibility of expanding it to the term “concept.”

As one of the less-mentioned architects of the period, Matta-Clark’s works are introduced here as representing a relation between “experimentation” and “program.” This articulation does not aim to rationalise his works in

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<sup>3</sup> Although the work of Gordon Matta-Clark has mostly been emphasised in terms of the art scene of the 1970s, this study highlights the contribution of his work towards architectural discourse. From the point of view of architects, he was evaluated as an outsider and as an artist who was mostly working on neglected buildings. However, his works couldn’t have been achieved without an architectural sense. In addition, after the so-called “Deconstructionist Architecture” discussions of the 1990s, his work has been cited in architecture only in comparison to this subject, because of the act of demolitions he applied to buildings. However, his literal cuts and demolitions on existing buildings were not actualisations of a deconstructionist approach and they could have been evaluated as an early intuitive discovery but more than that, they were experimental studies sharing parallel aspects to the contemporary architectural scene.



terms of architectural conventions, but, on the contrary, aims to reveal that the works of his contemporaries, were more than just the use of technological developments in architecture. The evaluation of his works and his isolated situation is observed as a potential to criticise the experimentalist approach of the 1960s and early 1970s that was only considered and conventionalised as the mere insertion of technology into architecture in histories and theories of the discipline. In this study, as the works of the artist/architect Gordon Matta-Clark<sup>4</sup> are articulated in relation to his contemporaries, the assessment of “experimentation” in architecture of the said period through the works of Matta-Clark also helps to highlight the underestimated criticism of his contemporaries on the issue of architectural programming.

This thesis argues that the expansion of the term “program” in architecture to a planar situation happened in the 1960s and early 1970s by “experimentation.” Thus, this is considered as a metaphor to develop a criticism through the reconsideration of the term “program.” The distinguished situation of experimental architecture in the same period is suggested to be discussed under the term “experimentation” in order to understand the expansion of the term “program” to a planar situation.

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<sup>4</sup> The archival study of Gordon Matta-Clark for this thesis has been done at the archives of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, in the summer of 2003. At the time of the archival study, the exhibition entitled “Out of the Box: James Stirling, Aldo Rossi, Cedric Price + Gordon Matta-Clark” was organized. The consultant curator of Canadian Centre for Architecture, Gwendolyn Owens and the guest curator of the exhibition Prof. Dr. Philip Ursprung (Department of Architecture, Institute for and Theory of Architecture, Zurich) were also two other contacts for this study. A duplicate of the archive is also held by the Generali Foundation in Vienna, Austria. The films of Matta-Clark are held at the Electronic Arts Intermix, New York. The archive of the British Archigram Group is not yet available to researchers, but is being compiled by the University of Westminster, London. One of the members of the group, Dennis Crompton, was contacted. On Crompton’s direction, Dr. Kester Rattenbury from the University of Westminster was contacted about the Archigram Archives. A few pieces from the archive are held by the Frankfurt Architecture Museum in their Archive, Plan- und Modellsammlung, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The archive of Haus-Rucker-Co is not an organised one either; however, the Frankfurt Architecture Museum holds some of their works.

The use of technology in the architecture of the 1960s should be distinguished from its precedent uses. Reyner Banham (1922-1988) noted the misuse of the term “functionalism” by the later generation of architects in the 1930s in relation to the changing conditions of the 1920s, of which he labelled the “First Machine Age”. Banham used the term “technology” in the conclusion part of his book “Theory and Design in the First Machine Age”, connected with the term “functionalism”. Technology that was related to architecture itself was considered as a tool for these precedent uses: the abstraction of the machine and its adoption to design. The machine was a metaphor for the idealisation of designing the optimum architectural spatial conditions for modern life. However, in the 1960s and early 1970s, technology was what had been included into design itself not in the form of an abstraction but as an existing entity. It was the difference between designing the partition walls inside the space for optimum use, pretending to the parts of the machine and machined aesthetic, which was succeeded by the Modern Movement, and including the light bulb itself as an entity into design, which reflected the consideration of technology in the design process preferred in the 1960s and early 1970s. This was not only because of the difference in the form of technology that was being utilized, but also because of the intellectual paradigm that directed architecture towards that use. The introduction of new media into architecture was the result of interdisciplinarity in the 1960s and early 1970s. For example, space travel required special equipment and architects took active roles in translating such technology into architecture and considered the conditions of how such use(s) could be reformulated. In addition, changes in philosophy and science were also motivating and challenging such considerations. This “de-territorialisation” of architecture, as has been evaluated as the end-product of interdisciplinarity – reaching its extreme point with the slogan “everything is architecture” – in fact, was one of the important reasons for both the emergence and the way of “experimentation” in architecture.

These novelties can be considered as the contribution of inter-disciplinarity, but, this study claims that these contributions were more than just new insertions that developed architecture in a technological sense only and that these experimental studies were more than an enthusiasm in the use of technological developments in architecture. In addition, they influenced the “program” issue in architecture and revealed a shift in architectural “programming”. In the 1960s and early 1970s, there was an awareness of the changes of the definitions of program in architecture. However, this awareness remained unfolded as an architectural discourse that emphasised the popularisation of architecture and the intense use of technology and had been mostly highlighted as the insertion of technological possibilities through the introduction of new mediums into architecture. On the contrary, this dissertation claims that this use of technology was not the eventual goal but the tool for “experimentation” in the architecture of the period, which calls for the emergence of an unavoidable shift for the term “program” in architecture.

For this reason, the experimentalist architecture of the period should be differentiated from the others with the term “experimentation” as introduced by Gilles Deleuze, who demonstrated this by establishing a new relation between thought and experience by stating that “experimentation is a matter of substituting one order of generality for another.” Yet, “experimentation” can be used as a metaphor to criticize “conventions” in architecture. For this reason, the dissertation suggests that “experimentation” of the period is connected to “architectural programming” in the critical sense, and that this connection requires investigation.

Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to contribute to the field of architecture by highlighting the unconsidered togetherness of “program” and “experimentation” issues in architecture, which have been evaluated and conceptualised in different disciplines separately, and to discuss their

“constructed” togetherness during the period of the 1960s and early 1970s, whose specific reflection is considered in this thesis as a potential to profit from and introduced as “programmatically experimentation” in order to understand the criticism on architectural discourse developed on these issues. The tools of this criticism, developed through “experimentation” on the reconsideration and expansion of the term “program” to a planar situation, are detected through the investigation of the unconventional works of Gordon Matta-Clark. Hence, the theoretical framework of this argument is defined by two issues in the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze: “concept” and “experimentation.” In this respect, Deleuze’s “concept” is expanded into “program” in architecture and “experimentation” is differentiated from other experimental attempts and considered as a “shift” in architecture.

In order to generate these arguments, Gordon Matta-Clark is introduced as an outsider artist/architect, whose critical distance is considered as a beneficial source. This critical distance is discussed through the expansion of the vocabulary of architecture in the 1960s and early 1970s in the framework of inter-disciplinarity. Hence, “experimentation” is suggested as both the result and the generating tool for the development of this criticism during the suggested expansion. The tools of this “experimentation” are recommended to dwell on the “unconventional” and “plural definition” situation of architectural programming. Thus, the articulation of these tools of “experimentation” through the works of Matta-Clark aims to develop a criticism by the consideration of architectural programming to be expanded to the term “concept”.

The second chapter introduces Gordon Matta-Clark as an outsider artist/architect whose critical distance is considered as a profitable source, which has been underestimated by architectural discourse. This critical distance is contextualised within the “expansion of vocabulary of architecture” in the 1960s and early 1970s into the framework of inter-

disciplinarity that is highlighted to distinguish the radical contributions that have been overshadowed under the term “ambivalent” to describe the period.

In the third chapter, “experimentation” is suggested as both the result and the generating tool of the development of this criticism during the suggested expansion. The tools of this “experimentation” are recommended to dwell on the “unconventional” and “plural definition” situation of architectural programming. The fourth chapter discusses the difficulty of defining the term “program” in architecture and suggests expanding it to the term “concept” in relation to the term “experimentation.”

In the next chapter, “programmatic experimentation” is introduced to develop a criticism by the consideration of architectural programming to be expanded to the term “concept.” The articulation of the tools of “programmatic experimentation” through the works of Matta-Clark aims to re-read them with the constructed togetherness of the two terms and as a radical criticism of the established conventions in architectural discourse.

## CHAPTER 2

### GORDON MATTA-CLARK

#### 2.1 Gordon Matta-Clark: An Outsider Artist/Architect

Gordon Matta-Clark (1943-1978) studied architecture at Cornell University from 1961 to 1966. His architectural approach, however, was mostly perceived as being within the domain of art rather than architecture. Although he was within a circle of artists and a few architects who shared his critical ideas, Matta-Clark was generally excluded by the architectural establishment because he was not considered an architect but an artist, since his proposed interventions were not suitable for accommodation, temporary, destructive and regarded as artistic actions using buildings as objects. Thus, his works were left obscure behind these artistic aspects.

His separation from the architectural circle is marked in the architectural literature during the happening of his work called “Window Blow-Out” in 1976 at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies for the exhibition to which he was invited: “Idea as Model”. His project was to “display the photographs of buildings in the South Bronx whose windows had been broken out by its residents”<sup>5</sup>; and he completed his installation by blowing out the windows in the exhibition space before the opening, with a BB gun he borrowed from Dennis Oppenheim. Mary Jane Jacob pointed out his act in the catalogue of the exhibition “Gordon Matta-Clark- A Retrospective” as disturbing the elitist attitude of architects who saw the problem of decaying buildings only as structures to be removed for the sake of the renewal

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<sup>5</sup> Jacob, Mary Jane. *Gordon Matta-Clark: A Retrospective*. Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1985, p. 96.

projects by replacing them with constructions. Thus she described Matta-Clark's discomfort about the approach of the Institute to the issue of decaying buildings as such:

Matta-Clark felt that modern architecture was not meeting the needs of people, but rather was creating dehumanized situations; it had become an industry successful only in making money.<sup>6</sup>

The curator of the "Idea as Model" exhibition, Andrew MacNair, also described the reflections of this act on the Institute as follows:

He said that he was going to knock out only those windows that were already cracked; at that point I said okay, only those. But in fact he shot them all out. When the Institute Fellows came in (Peter Eisenman was the director at the time), they were furious. Gordon's piece made a most conceptual and political statement, but no one liked the statement. The glaziers were called in, and within eight hours the piece was eliminated.<sup>7</sup>

The work of Gordon Matta-Clark, one of the less-mentioned architects of the second half of the 20th century, has been included in the major archival collections of the Canadian Centre for Architecture since 2002.<sup>8</sup> Matta-

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<sup>6</sup> Jacob, Mary Jane. *Gordon Matta-Clark: A Retrospective*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1985, p. 96.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>8</sup> Before being donated to the CCA in 2002, the archive was held by Matta-Clark's widow Jane Crawford. This donation occurred just as researchers' interest in Matta-Clark's work increased. Thus, Phillis Lambert, the director of the CCA, decided to make an exhibition entitled "Out of Box" from the latest arrived collections, including Cedric Price, Aldo Rossi, James Stirling and Gordon Matta-Clark. Consequently, it is possible to evaluate this as the institutionalisation or acceptance of the work of Matta-Clark in the discipline of architecture, since the CCA is one of the important architectural archives in the world. "In the 1970s, American artist Gordon Matta-Clark (1943–1978) brought a fresh gaze to bear upon architecture. Trained as an architect, he chose to make buildings and the spaces around them the subject of compelling and often witty investigations into the nature of cities, property, and the social order. His "sculptures," produced by interfering with or cutting into the built environment, were documented in photomontages and films. Blurring the boundaries between artist and architectural theorist, Matta-Clark questioned the very concepts of architecture and space, thus challenging the fundamental assumptions of both disciplines.

The range of Gordon Matta-Clark's activities as artist, photographer, and filmmaker is highlighted in the exhibition through screenings of his films *City Slivers*, *Substrait*, *Paris Underground* and selections of drawings, photographs, and documents for *A W-hole House*, *Conical Intersect*, and *Anarchitecture*. In addition, the visitor will be able to explore the genesis of Matta-Clark's art practice through his original correspondence with his father,

Clark mostly appeared in the 1970s art scene in New York where he was invited to exhibitions at universities and alternative galleries within the circle of artists and architects sharing his approach. Pamela M. Lee has evaluated his inescapable relation with the Surrealists during his childhood in the early 1940s as:

A place (his parent's house) in which Giacometti sculptures function like so much furniture, it was peopled by even more extraordinary personages – Andre Breton, Marcel Duchamp, Katherine Dreier, the surrealist circle recently emigrated to New York.<sup>9</sup>

His father, Roberto Matta (1911-2002), known as a painter, was also trained as an architect, and even worked under Le Corbusier (1887-1965).<sup>10</sup> The letters his father sent from Europe indicate that he encouraged his son to study architecture and advised him to contact his other architect friends such as Friedrich Kiesler, Philip Johnson and Marcel Breuer.<sup>11</sup> At Cornell University<sup>12</sup> (he also studied literature one year abroad at The Sorbonne,

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Roberto Matta-Echaurren (1911–2002), a Surrealist painter who studied architecture with Le Corbusier.

In early Spring 2004, CCA will create a *Garbage Wall* outside the museum building – according to plans drawn by Gordon Matta-Clark – using waste materials left over from the installation of the exhibition. Matta-Clark constructed a similar wall for the first Earth Day in April 1970, using what he found on the streets of New York to demonstrate how “garbage” could be reused as a building material.” (*CCA Exhibition Brief*. Press Release, Montreal, 22 October, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> Lee, Pamela M. *Object to Be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark*. MIT Press, Cambridge, 1999, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Roberto Matta worked in Le Corbusier's Paris studio as a draftsman for two years in 1933/34. It is necessary to mention that Le Corbusier's book “Towards a New Architecture,” one of the most important primary sources for Modern Architecture, was translated to English in 1946.

<sup>11</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:002: Letters 1970-74.

<sup>12</sup> Anthony Vidler, in his article “Splitting the Difference: Anthony Vidler on Gordon Matta-Clark,” has made the following assessment of architectural education at Cornell at the time Matta-Clark studied there: “Of all the American schools, Cornell had emerged as the bastion of a heritage that joined the modernism of Le Corbusier to the abstraction of Albers, and these in a historicist reformulation concocted by painter Robert Slutzky, architect John Hejduk, and British critic Colin Rowe while the three taught together in



Paris), Matta-Clark must have been influenced by his contacts with Colin Rowe (1920-1999) who was teaching there,<sup>13</sup> and also the school's approach, which emphasised architecture not only as a discipline but also as an art. Being one of the period's renowned architectural theorists, Rowe's academic tenure at Cornell, which coincides with Matta-Clark's study there, is remarked as notable with the "development of alternative method of urban design" as a criticism of the Modern Movement. In his book reviews on Matta-Clark, Anthony Vidler has noted two specific points related to this influence of Rowe on Matta-Clark's later works. One is the term "surface formalism," claimed to come from "Rowe's formalist analysis of surface,"<sup>14</sup> as introduced in Pamela Lee's "Object to Be

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Texas in the mid-1950s. Rowe, who had followed John Shaw and others to Cornell in 1963, was the intellectual descendent of German art historian Rudolf Wittkower, with whom he had written his thesis on Inigo Jones, and had applied Wittkower's analysis of Mannerism in architecture to the work of Le Corbusier. Rowe's course on Renaissance architecture, attended by Matta-Clark, combined a formal analysis of facades, layered in space and framed an abyme, with a sense of their active relationship to the complications of contemporary modernism. His studio design courses, on the other hand, emphasized a strict adherence to Corbusian formulas and a reliance on the notion of space as a positive element and force in its own right – space, that is, as a three-dimensional *gestalt* that an abstract architecture shapes and molds like solid clay."

<sup>13</sup> "In the academic year 1963–1964, Colin Rowe returned back to Cornell in Ithaca and there, he created a studio dedicated to the issue of urban design; Peter Eisenman went to Princeton's School of Architecture in New York and instructed second year design students. For Colin Rowe, Cornell provided the proper ground with the existing intellectual debate, which was carried out by the members of Texas University in those years." (With Werner Seligmann and Lee Hirsch's arrivals in 1961, followed by John Hedjuk's arrival in 1962, Cornell became the place of "a celebration of Texas a few years back," with the obvious exception of Bernhard Hoesli. The reassembly of the significant names of the Texas experiment at Cornell years after might be considered as a coincidence. On the contrary, as Rowe expressed, it was through the agency of Werner Seligmann, who was a Cornell graduate of the period of Richard Meier and Peter Eisenman. Called by the students of Cornell as the "Texas Rangers," the eminent figures of the Texas experience proceeded on their way at Cornell.) Tunca Mutlu, Gülru. "A "Historical Project": Doubling of *Italy the New Domestic Landscape*." PhD Diss., Middle East Technical University, 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Gülru Mutlu Tunca has described Rowe's research on the alternative approaches on the re-evaluation of Modern Architecture and his methodology as follows: "The Texas experiment, I believe, was a celebration of a new methodology derived from the concepts of *gestalt* psychology with an objective to redefine Modern architecture. Rowe and Slutzky's pragmatic application of this methodology, especially on the works of Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, was to verify the expressive capability of "form" without any "ideology." Clearly, the emphasis was on the built form's aesthetic relevancy, by the support of other related art movements and related concepts explored in

Destroyed: the Work of Gordon Matta-Clark”); and the other is the attention of “the nine-square gridding of the cuts in the facade of Bingo,” claimed to be influenced by “a grid that was more commonly seen in the 1960s as an invention of Hejduk,” as mentioned in Thomas Crow’s “Gordon Matta-Clark”.<sup>15</sup> As another influence, the assistance that he gave to Post-Minimalist artists such as Robert Smithson and Dennis Oppenheim for the “Earth Art Exhibition” in the last year of his study at Cornell University can be considered to have contributed to his later artistic views, which can be seen in some of his works after his graduation.<sup>16</sup> Although most of his works have been evaluated within art theory and its discourse, they would not have been achieved without architectural consideration; thus, all his works have been conducted with a concept of space.

The literature review on Gordon Matta-Clark reveals that his oeuvre still needs to be discussed in architectural terms. His works were mostly applied to buildings that were about to be demolished, so the main information about them is derived from stories and rumours from the witnesses and his friends. Thus, his archive is comprised of the records of his works such as photographs, drawings, films, and the books in his library, in addition to personal belongings such as letters, notes, and writings that were

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synchronization. Rowe and Slutzky’s pragmatic use of the theory of visual perception in architecture might be regarded as an experimentation among many alternative approaches, and showed the possibility of further articulations that could be transplanted from other alternative fields into architecture.” Tunca Mutlu, Gülru. “A “Historical Project”: Doubling of *Italy the New Domestic Landscape*.” PhD Diss., Middle East Technical University, 2008.

<sup>15</sup> Vidler, Anthony. “Splitting the Difference: Anthony Vidler on Gordon Matta-Clark.” *Artforum*, 2003.

<sup>16</sup> In the CCA exhibition catalogue “*Out of the Box: Aldo Rossi, Cedric Price, James Stirling + Gordon Matta-Clark*,” Matta-Clark’s architectural background is explained as follows: “The school’s approach to architecture promoted the exploration of architecture as an art not simply as a career. Outside the classroom, the active university art scene brought visiting artists to the campus. For Matta-Clark, it was the visit of Robert Smithson and Dennis Oppenheim, who came to participate in the Earth Art Exhibition, that had a decisive influence on his career and his thinking, as both artists became friends and mentors.” (CCA, Montreal, 22 October, 2003).

considered as informative sources on his works. What brought his works today was not their actual entity, but those stories, the articles from that time period's magazines, and exhibition catalogues. It is necessary to emphasise how these sources have conceptualised Matta-Clark. He was mostly discussed within art sources, which can be classified as those that were published when Matta-Clark was still alive and those that were published after his death as a re-invention of the artist after 1990s.

As mentioned above, "Object to be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark", a 1999 book by art historian Pamela M. Lee, contextualises Matta-Clark as an artist whose objects were buildings. As one of the contributors to the edition of the catalogue by the Generali Foundation (an art institution that holds some of the copied pieces from the Matta-Clark archive, "Gordon Matta-Clark" in 1996), Lee published her book as the end product of her PhD Thesis from the Department of Art and Art History at Stanford University. Although it is a worthy evaluation from an artistic point of view – that which once functioned to accommodate living became an artistic object in a rigorous research – in terms of an architectural research, however, limiting the works of Matta-Clark to simply destroying buildings as objects is underestimating their possible contribution to architectural discourse.

"Gordon Matta-Clark," a 2003 book edited by Corinne Diserens and another 2003 book with the same title by art historians Thomas Crow and Christian Kravagna also evaluate Matta-Clark as an artist of 1970s and after biographical introductions, describe his projects from the point of view of art historians. "Gordon Matta-Clark: Valencia IVAM Centre Exhibition Catalogue," written by curator Julio Gonzalez in 1993, also emphasises the artistic aspects of Matta-Clark and again discusses him only within the context of art history. Such catalogues are the hints that art

history considered Matta-Clark as an artist rather than an architect and such an evaluation misleads the architectural contribution of his works as treating them merely as art objects in the form of destroyed buildings under the influence of the spirit and context of the period.

The evaluations of Matta-Clark's works while he was alive and the exhibitions after his death were mostly published in art magazines. One of these is Rosalind Krauss's article in *October Magazine* entitled "Notes on Index: Seventies Art in America," where Krauss evaluates the work of Matta-Clark as one of the contributors to the "pluralism"<sup>17</sup> of 1970s art through his exploitation of "the derelict condition of the building itself."<sup>18</sup> The contradiction of the lack of a "style" and the existence of a unity is evaluated by Krauss as an important point to be highlighted in that period. Hence, the similar dilemma could be detected among the works of the architects of late 1960s and early 1970s, who included the interdisciplinary influences in their works with the lack of a unity that could lead to a style, but within the same planar approaches. In a 1993 "Frieze International Art Magazine," Jeff Rian in an article entitled "Gordon Matta-Clark: Rocking the Foundation", described the generation of Matta-Clark as being the first ones to omit the traditional space/time relations by the introduction of the

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<sup>17</sup> Rosalind Krauss uses the term "pluralism" in order to describe 1970s art in America. She describes the situation of 1970s art as follows: "[A]lmost everyone is agreed about '70s art. It is diversified, split, factionalized. Unlike the art of the several decades, its energy does not seem to flow through a single channel for which a synthetic term, like Abstract-Expressionism, or Minimalism, might be found. In defiance of the notion of collective effort that operates behind the very idea of an artistic 'movement', '70s art is proud of its own dispersal." She also notes that: "[B]oth the critics and practitioners of recent art have closed ranks around this 'pluralism' of the 1970s. But what, really, are we to think of that notion of multiplicity? It is certainly true that the separate members of the list do not look alike. If they have any unity, it is not along the axis of a traditional notion of 'style'. But is the absence of a collective style the token of a real difference? Or is there not something else for which all these terms are possible manifestations? Are not all these separate 'individuals' in fact moving in lockstep, only to a rather different drummer from the one called style? (Krauss, Rosalind. "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America." *October*, 3, Spring 1977, p. 68)

<sup>18</sup> Krauss, Rosalind. "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America, Part 2." *October*, 4, Fall 1977, p. 60.

use of technology and its exploration after making a general account of his works under an artistic point of view:

Looking back, we can see how mechanisation, photography and the newspaper engendered a myriad Cubists that led to Minimalism's endgame; we can see Pop Art's relationship to magazine consumerism; we see how the iconography of Post-Minimalist or non-studio art was influenced by the electronic re-mapping of space. Matta-Clark's generation was the first to awaken to changes brought on by electronic communications. They were also among the last to be educated by unmediated literacy. They tore away at the foundations in which they were rooted if only to keep up with the technologies that were quickly undermining space/time relationships.<sup>19</sup>

An important source in terms of Matta-Clark's own description of his works and ideas, published when he was still alive, was a 1976 interview in "Arts Magazine" with Donald Wall entitled "Gordon Matta-Clark's Building Dissections," along with a comprehensive discussion of his ideas, following the introduction of his works by Wall. The interview discussed the necessity of establishing a relationship between art and architecture that would lead to a new architecture in comparison to that achieved by Le Corbusier in the early 1920s. However, the works of Matta-Clark do not start from the artistic thought that would lead to a relationship with architectural, but already start with an inherited architectural consideration and aimed to make critical points to architecture itself. Thus, he started to describe it as such:

Awry paradox surrounds Gordon Matta-Clark's art: On the one hand, his building removals and dissections represent the further advance yet made in American behavioural architecture. On the other hand, most people, including many accomplished art/architecture critics, are not even aware that a new architecture has been among us for the last decade – an architecture which has just rendered culturally obsolete European-derived Modernist architecture as effectively as did that architecture once render the obsolete the older Beaux-Arts tradition. It's time to catch up; time to begin placing the new architecture into its

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<sup>19</sup> Rian, Jeff. "Gordon Matta-Clark: Rocking the Foundation." *Frieze International Arts Magazine*, Issue 11, Summer 1993, p. 35.

own genealogical framework, much like Corbusier one did with Purism.<sup>20</sup>

There are several publications on Matta-Clark in architectural sources.<sup>21</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark: The Space Between” is a 2003 book written by the art critics James Attlee and Lisa le Feuvre which investigates the architect’s works by grounding them to their contemporary philosophical theories and artistic movements. Anthony Vidler has characterized this book as a more European-based view of the work of Matta-Clark. The book assumes his work to develop a glance against “the discarded and ignored rubbish of modern life, the waste products of the capitalist machine”.<sup>22</sup> The authors evaluated “temporality” and “actually happening” as the main element of his works. His works are discussed around that theme under their relation to “Situationism,” “Language,” “Utopianism” and “Temporality.” However, his one-year stay at Sorbonne and his interest in the Situationists is simply not adequate to discuss his works within this political and theoretical approach:

In his relationship to the city, his fascination with alternative and abandoned spaces, his archaeological interest in urban life, his anti-capitalist critique of modernist architecture and his utopian leanings, he revisited much of the territory mapped out by the Situationists.<sup>23</sup>

The structuralist discourse of the period, which also influenced architecture, is also not sufficient to limit the cuts as “removals and dissections” of Matta-Clark by relating them to language, despite his interest in structuralism. Although his enjoyment with word play – like “an-architecture” – can be evaluated by such an interest, this still cannot be

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<sup>20</sup> Wall, Donald. “Gordon Matta-Clark’s Building Dissections.” *Arts Magazine*, 50, 9, May 1976, p. 74.

<sup>21</sup> The only academic architecture thesis on Gordon Matta-Clark found by the author has been a Masters thesis written by Robert Holloway entitled “Gordon Matta-Clark,” which introduces his works in a bibliographical view submitted for a Diploma in Architecture at Plymouth School of Architecture, United Kingdom, in 1994.

<sup>22</sup> Attlee, James, and Lisa Le Feuvre. *Gordon Matta-Clark: The Space Between*. Nazraeli Press, Paris, 2003, p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

solely sufficient for such a discussion. Temporality is quite a significant aspect of the works of Matta-Clark and the book discusses this with a deep insight to both his architectural and artistic works and events; but, such a discussion leaves the architectural aspects of Matta-Clark in the artistic realm.

Le Feuvre and Attlee's book does highlight that Matta-Clark tried to "re-think the fundamentals of the architectural discipline".<sup>24</sup> The architectural works of Matta-Clark are evaluated within the utopian projects of architectural history, especially by comparing them to the Russian Constructivists:

Russian revolutionary architects were equally fascinated by the prospect of exploiting the empty volume of space above the surface of the city, seeing this as the first step towards mankind's inevitable conquest of space. Their architectural ideas, and particularly their interest in the use of airships and balloons to suspend canopies, were to have an important influence on Matta-Clark half a century later.<sup>25</sup>

One of the architectural sources that specifies Matta-Clark as an artist who contributed to architecture in the process of the 1960s "Post-Modern" interrelation with art is by the architect and curator Babs Shapiro in an article she wrote for the 1980 exhibition "Architectural References: The Consequences of the Post-Modern in Contemporary Art and Architecture" at the Vancouver Art Gallery.<sup>26</sup> She says that both art and architecture benefited from this interrelation. Her evaluation of Matta-Clark is not limited to an artist who used buildings and the urban context as an object to deal with apart from the pure art galleries and used this as a reaction to contemporary Minimalist Art. She claims that architecture benefited from such attempts as being more intertwined with art and influenced the

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>26</sup> Shapiro, Babs. "Architectural References: The Consequences of the Post-Modern in Contemporary Art and Architecture." *Vanguard*, May 1980, p. 6-13.

approaches of “Post-Modern” architects in the projects like “Indeterminate Facade” (1975) by SITE, which became a figure of “Post-Modernist” architecture of the 1970s in most architectural texts.

One of the contemporary architectural evaluations on Matta-Clark has been done by Stephen Walker from Sheffield University’s School of Architecture in his essay “Gordon Matta-Clark’s Building Dissections,” which discussed it through the ideas of Georges Bataille. Walker concludes that the works of Matta-Clark are not architecture themselves, but they can contribute to the re-thinking of the architectural fundamental elements of “commodity, firmness, and delight”:

Although Gordon Matta-Clark’s works were not works of architecture, they can illustrate the possibilities of an architecture operating beyond teleology. Rather than being legible “once and all”, what they actually reveal is the coexistence, the juxtaposition, or superimposition of several (possibly conflicting) readings or uses, partly productive of the vertigo discussed earlier. As artworks, they were conceived perhaps more for their symbolic use than for their real use, but it is the latter that we should explore more energetically when thinking of this notion of architecture and sacrifice. Rather than releasing real expenditure with a shrug, much as Bataille did, Matta-Clark’s work can make us aware that once a figurative or purely formal concept of architecture is abandoned, the notion of function can be spent over and over, in order that the subject of architecture be put to work (rather than laundered of its energies by a weak sacrifice) and thus opened up to a fuller experience.<sup>27</sup>

The most significant research on Matta-Clark according to this author is Peter Fend’s article “New Architecture from Matta-Clark” in the book “Reorganising Structure by Drawing through It”. Peter Fend is an architect and was Matta-Clark’s assistant in one of his important projects, “Balloon Building”. In this article, Fend discusses Matta-Clark’s work in relation to its contribution to architectural discourse, distinguishing Matta-Clark’s position of being an architect pushing the boundaries of architecture:

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<sup>27</sup>Walker, Stephen. “Gordon Matta-Clark’s Building Dissections.” In *Architectures: Modernism and After*, edited by Andrew Ballantyne, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, p. 137.



Because architecture as a profession is so weak, and because change in architecture therefore occurs so slowly, a new body of thought and practice in the field – like that of Gordon Matta-Clark – remains caught in a corner of art history. We do not see cities being built, or neighbourhoods, or even buildings, with procedures from Matta-Clark. The historicists are still in charge. They control the gateways to architectural practice – namely, the schools – and they are more interested in mimicking the forms of previous “great” architecture than in making cities that work.<sup>28</sup>

Fend also describes that architectural circle of Matta-Clark achieving the requirements of architecture and going beyond by physically working in cities as:

By colleagues I mean: Gordon’s classmates in undergraduate architecture school at Cornell, Alan Saret; the artist for whom Matta-Clark worked in the famous “Earth Art” show at Cornell, Dennis Oppenheim; another upstart from architectural training, whom I met through Gordon, Chris Burden; immediate forerunners of Matta-Clark’s crowd, who were seen as competition, like Richard Serra, Sol le Witt and Mel Bochner; others leading the way, with direct influence on Saret and Matta-Clark, such as megastructuralist Soleri, earth-artist Smithson and tent builder Christo.<sup>29</sup>

Another two particular sources where Gordon Matta-Clark’s name can be found in discussions of the so-called “deconstructivist architecture” take place in Mark Wigley’s introduction to his book “Deconstructivist Architecture” and in Robin Evans’ text “The Projective Cast.” While Wigley evaluates Matta-Clark’s interventions literally and put them apart from Deconstruction, Robin Evans includes them in the “Persistent Breakage” chapter of his book within the discussions about fragmentation in architecture.

Mark Wigley claims that:

Deconstruction itself, however, is often misunderstood as the taking apart of constructions. Consequently, any provocative architectural design which appears to take structure apart – whether it be the simple

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<sup>28</sup>Fend, Peter. “New Architecture From Matta-Clark.” In *Reorganising Structure by Drawing Through It*, edited by Sabine Breitwieser, Generali Foundation, Vienna, 1997, p. 46.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. p. 46.

breaking of an object (Best Products Showroom-1977, and Gordon M. Clark-Splitting-1977) or the complex dissimulation of an object into a collage of traces – has been hailed as deconstructive.”<sup>30</sup>

Thus, Wigley evaluates these “works” which have been remembered as the most formidable projects of recent years, but remain simulations of deconstructive work in other disciplines, because they do exploit the unique condition of the architectural object. As indicated before, the aim of this study is neither to re-define Matta-Clark as a “deconstructivist” architect, nor an artist whose objects were buildings, but to point his isolation, and to find evidence that architecture could benefit from his contributions.

“Anarchitecture: Works by Gordon Matta-Clark”, a 1997 book edited by curator Peter Noever, discusses his work under the term “An-architecture,” a phrase often used by Matta-Clark himself. As was mentioned before, Matta-Clark’s play with the words like “an-architecture” or “an-architect” may not necessarily imply a mere political aim, it might also carry the implications of his ideas that emphasise the role of the architect as an experimenter on many issues of architecture to release the order on users:

By removing the wall separating a building’s interior from the exterior, thus making it possible for the viewer to have a glimpse of an unbounded interior space, Matta-Clark establishes a continuum between the world of change (the outside) and the world of order (the domestic or interior). For a building to be true to reality which is time passing, it too must create a continuum between the outside and the inside, between change and stasis. Among other things, Matta-Clark wanted the viewer to reconsider the deeply ingrained mechanisms of a society committed to progress, to question whether society was truly committed to improving the lives of all its citizens. In this sense, although it was his name for a group of artists and friends that included Suzanne Harris, Ree Morton, and Jeffrey Lew, among others, Matta-Clark’s portmanteau word “anarchitecture”, its combination of the words “anarchy” and “architecture”, can be said to sum up the simultaneous desire for disorder and order, as well as to evoke political implications of his art.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Wigley, Mark and Phillip Johnson. *Deconstructivist Architecture*. New York: MOMA, 1988.

<sup>31</sup> Noever, Peter. *Anarchitecture: Works by Gordon Matta-Clark*. MAK Centre, Vienna, 1998, p. 9.

Another evaluation of Matta-Clark's work has been done by James Wines, one of the members of the 1970s SITE group, in his book entitled "De-Architecture". Wines describes this term as:

. . . not so much a theory as it is a frame of reference for questioning the nature and practice of architecture. Subtracting from the institutional definition of architecture in order to redefine it and expand its horizons was the basis for the concept of de-architecture. As Picasso once observed, "Art is a series of destructions." De-architecture involves using inversion for critical effect, providing a context for gaining new perspectives, and disassembling the presumptive, etched-in-granite notions of what constitutes architecture in the interests of discovering more flexible interpretations of this essential public art.<sup>32</sup>

In this respect, Wines evaluates Matta-Clark's work as similar to the themes of de-architecture in the "rejection of functionalist aspects of Machine Age." He supports an art-architecture relation combined under the term "de-architecture" by using the evaluation of Matta-Clark as "while being acted upon by the artist, the buildings gained significance as art, shifting the emphasis from occupancy to cultural merit."<sup>33</sup> Wines also evaluates the works of Matta-Clark as a critique to the "sacred canons of enclosure and privacy in architecture."<sup>34</sup> Although this dissertation also aims to benefit from the critical approach of Matta-Clark to architecture, it discusses it through programmatic aspects of his works rather than the establishment of the critical aspects of his views on the relationship of art and architecture.

It is possible to note that the publications on Matta-Clark concerning 1970s architecture had a more exploratory approach and evaluated his works accordingly, although most of them were published in art magazines. Nevertheless, the contemporary ones have made it more art-oriented and abstract by trying to profit from his work in terms of an outsider for the field

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<sup>32</sup> Wines, James. *De-Architecture*. Rizzoli International Pub., New York, 1987, p. 15.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

of architecture. In a foreword to his 1976 interview of Matta-Clark, Donald Wall, as one of his close friends and colleagues, underlines that:

Matta-Clark's work should not however, be understood as that of an outsider. Similar to others who have begun to redefine our posture toward architecture (Insley and Saret), Matta-Clark received a formal architectural education. Typically, he also abandoned customary architectural notions in favour of the strictly ideational. Therefore, whether referring to his early diggings under 112 Greene Street, or to the compost heaps under stairways, or in his use of dumpster containers as "found" architecture, Matta-Clark's work accepts architecture first as information before all else: to be specific, information that is itself undergoing a feedback process (metamorphic), from other sources, whether ecological (his garbage works), or man made (the removals and dissections). Due to this decidedly process and performance base, Matta-Clark's architecture is absolutely antithetical to the "object"-oriented architecture characteristic of European sources.<sup>35</sup>

Two articles on the architectural aspects of Matta-Clark's work have been published in Casabella Magazine. The first one, "Ready-Made" by Germano Celant in July 1974, aims to cite his work in architecture, and the second, from October 1977, discusses Matta-Clark's "Pier 52." Celant, whose name had been mentioned by Matta-Clark himself in several of his writings, also describes the "Splitting" project in a 1975 issue of Domus. There, Celant underlines how Matta-Clark used the physicality of a building as a "found object" to experiment and open it to discussion. The empirical aspect of Matta-Clark is implied in his following words:

This empirical, elementary and "anatomical" process on architecture can be recorded in the work of Gordon Matta-Clark, whose actions on architectural objects or "bodies" found "ready made" always come "as a surprise".<sup>36</sup>

In his articles, Celant evaluates Matta-Clark as an architect seeing buildings as "found objects," or, in other words, "ready made". His approach highlights the aim of Matta-Clark towards developing an action to imply

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<sup>35</sup> Wall, Donald. "Gordon Matta-Clark's Building Dissections." *Arts Magazine*, 50, 9, May 1976, p. 40-41.

<sup>36</sup> Celant, Germano. "Splitting '74: Gordon Matta-Clark in California." *Domus*, 548, July 1975, p. 48.

criticism more through such radical cuts and interventions on buildings as objects rather than experimenting on architecture. Another publication in architectural sources is the 1979 description of his “Office Baroque” project described by Bernard Marcelis in *Domus*.

After Matta-Clark realized one of his well-known projects – the “Splitting” project – Al Brunelle, painter and critic, describes this work in a 1974 “Art in America” issue under the title “The Great Divide: ‘Anarchitecture’ by Matta-Clark.” He literally describes the work itself from an artistic point of view and evaluates the event as “anarchitecture” without much emphasis on the term itself:

The experience generated by such a transformation is rich and poetic; it is a sculptural experience, but certainly not a conventional one. Scale and component elements are taken directly from the existing structure. Most often, the sites are available for Matta-Clark’s works of this sort have been somewhat inaccessible and almost always impermanent.<sup>37</sup>

In a 1974 *Art Forum* article entitled “Jean Dupuy: I Use Technology Only to Show The Things That Are Invisible,” Alan Moore compares Matta-Clark’s projects with the “Floor Mirror” project of Dupuy, who also uses technology as a tool in his works, which can be underlined about the emphasis of experimenting with technology in different senses.

*Floor Mirror*, as a lateral section, can be related to Gordon Matta-Clark’s *Splitting*, a bisected house in Englewood, New Jersey. Although Dupuy’s mirror setup is tiny compared to Matta-Clark’s grandly scaled act of art, neither piece relates part to part as a means of underscoring the clarity of architectural structure. Rather, like an anomic archaeology, these works reveal raw tectonic mysteries.<sup>38</sup>

The literature that reveals the artistic elaboration of the works of Matta-Clark show that they would be left insufficiently read unless they are

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<sup>37</sup> Brunelle, Al. “The Great Divide: ‘Anarchitecture’ by Matta-Clark.” *Art in America*, 65, 5, Sept. Oct. 1974, p. 92.

<sup>38</sup> Moore, Alan. “Jean Dupuy: I Use Technology Only to Show The Things That Are Invisible.” *Art Forum*, 13, 2, Oct., 1974, p. 73-74.

investigated from an architectural point of view, which in fact forms the basic critical thought behind them. This critical thought takes its essence from the architectural elaborations and investigations of Matta-Clark. Thus, this dissertation aims to benefit from such a critical approach that would contribute to architectural criticism. In order to understand the critical distance of Matta-Clark and the influence of interdisciplinarity in the architecture of the 1960s and early 1970s, this study elaborates the consequences of this interdisciplinarity as the “expansion of vocabulary” in architecture.

## **2.2 “Expansion of Vocabulary of Architecture” in the 1960s and early 1970s:**

We require just a little order to protect us from chaos. Nothing is more distressing than a thought that escapes itself, than ideas that fly off, that disappear hardly formed, already eroded by forgetfulness or precipitated into others that we no longer master.<sup>39</sup>

Gilles Deleuze has described the distressing condition of the chaos of ideas and the necessity to “hang on to fixed opinions” as such. He claims that the protective rules enabling ideas to be put into some order prevent the fantasy of unconsidered possibilities. Here, he criticizes rules as obstructing the development of ideas. But, he also points out the little order in things as the causal of that order in ideas, which is also the reason of empirical imagination. He evaluates the formation of ideas as depending on the protection from chaos, which he calls “an umbrella.” Consequently, he describes a balance between ideas and the universe that depends on a non-static process of empirical interrelation. However, he distinguishes three disciplines in this interrelation – art, philosophy and science – that should

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<sup>39</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 201.

transcend this balance and reach the chaos again in order to bring back the unconsidered possibilities. He has stated that “art, philosophy and science want us to tear open the *firmament* and plunge into the chaos”.<sup>40</sup> He puts these three disciplines in a dynamic position during this process of the production of ideas. As he denotes, once the unconsidered possibilities are suggested against the order of ideas, they also become part of that order; but, by challenging and changing it. This becomes the potentiality of struggle that develop the ways of thinking.

Here, the term “firmament,” borrowed from Gilles Deleuze, can be used to reflect the ground for criticism in the 1960s’ and early 1970s’ architecture as another attempt against the protective fixed rules in architecture. These fixed rules are redefined in each preceding architectural discourse, yet a revolutionary novelty might require transcendence by the succeeding one through the re-incorporation of substantiveness of their vocabulary. For example, the immobility of built space had been a fixed notion in architecture and had not been considered without an alternative. It was even not been a matter of discussion since the evolution of space had been towards the optimisation of settledness “dedicated to permanency.” Therefore, the reciprocal, opposite and vicissitudinous debates in architectural discourse had been wavering between the limits of this notion of immobility of space. Yet, architectural discourse had a conjugative plane of oppositions informed by the conventions in social and economical agents based on the optimisation of this notion of immobility.

For this reason, these fixed rules do not imply the fixation of ideas in architecture, but indicate the indispensable conventions urged by the necessities of being a discipline or institution in an evolutionary process; similar to the approach exemplified by Deleuze as an umbrella of ideas or

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

the requisite closeness of the firmament against chaos. Thus, here, a “firmament” of architecture is considered as the denouement rules, which were put forth by Modern Architecture, that require transcendence in order to develop new ideas. The necessity was to transcend the balance that modernist developments established of what they had replaced as novelties, but which in turn had also created its own conventions. For instance, Modern Architecture liberated the conceptualisation of “program,” which corresponded to “typology” in the preceding Beaux-Arts tradition, from the fixed abstractions of spatial types to more flexible organisation of types of spaces within a building.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, whilst typology as program was a convention in architecture in the Beaux-Arts tradition, Modernism replaced this notion of typology with program as an organisation of spaces released from a given spatial diagrams of types.

Regarding conventions and culture, Stanford Anderson has evaluated the "invention of conventions" as potentials, which can be assessed as the abandonment of a previous convention for the sake of the newly emerging ones. Yet, he illustrated one of Adolf Loos's statements saying "express the three-dimensional character of architecture clearly, in such a way that the inhabitants of a building should be able to live the cultural life of their times successfully," in order to raise the possibility of new conventions as a way of criticism:

Thus the comparison of the fruitfulness of alternative conventions may be still more important than the study of the limits of convention, for a fruitful new convention may revise our understanding of limits.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>This can be regarded as a crucial assessment of the changes in “program” that would (had) centralize architect’s role in design process by Modern Movement. Yet the revolutionary liberation of “program” by the Modern Movement against the typology-based notion of “program” in Beaux-Arts tradition can be regarded as one of the formations of conventions of Modern Architecture in paradoxical relation to preceding Beaux-Arts tradition.

<sup>42</sup> Anderson, Stanford. "Critical Conventionalism in Architecture." *Assemblage*, no.1, Oct. 1986, p. 20.



Anderson implied the necessity of benefiting from the criticism of conventions for the consideration of new ones by promoting conventions as an "advantage of formulating a canon" comprised of a "set of exemplars" rather than a "set of rules". He described such reconciliation as:

A convention is not to be valued primarily for its novelty, beauty, or internal consistency, or for its autonomy, or for the law and order it brings to practice, but rather for its (culturally framed) true or liberating relations to other conventions and to the unconventional, the physical constraints of practice. This mitigation of the autonomy of the convention, this insistence of the convention's quasi-autonomous address to social practice is what protects the convention from the suspicion of being merely made up. It is only this reciprocity of convention and practice that can sustain the convention. But it is also only such a critically sustained convention that can guide practice without the appeal to arbitrary authority.<sup>43</sup>

Although these conventions provided the establishment of the autonomy of the discipline and define its boundaries, it is necessary to consider them as temporary and that can dissolve and be re-defined according to different conditions and situations. The consideration of these "conventions" embedded in architectural discourse as limiting boundaries. And, questioning their legitimacy in relation to informing agents that has caused radical changes effecting architecture as a discipline in the 1960s and early 1970s may clarify the disparity of the criticism of that period.

The break towards chaos in order to liberate the formation of ideas from the denouement rules of architecture directed by a Modernist ethic was necessitated by the need pushed by the outer forces that urged architecture to revise itself. These forces pointed out an inadequacy of terminology to confront the developments in the agents that were informing architecture, such as the outburst of developments in technology and production, and their consequences on people's lives. For instance, in the revolutionary consideration of the liberation of women from the kitchen by designing the

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

1926 “Frankfurter Küche” project of Ernst May, Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky aimed to respond to the demands of novelties in the society of the period. As such, the emerging requirements in the 1960s and early 1970s asked for the space of individuals who were in constant motion against the immobility of space while (in the process of) questioning their social and traditional bonds and boundaries. Yet, the design of the “*Cuishicle*” by Mike Webb in 1967 can be considered as pointing out such a demand, in the way the “Frankfurter Küche” once did. The use of the term “*Cuishicle*” as a dwelling unit reflects the inadequacy of terminology responding to “house” during this period.

The awareness on the inadequacy of these denouements and nature of architecture on meeting the requirements of emerging developments showed itself as the quest of a criticism of Modernist ideas. However, during this process of radical criticism, the works of those architects who were theorised as “utopian” have been overshadowed under a discourse describing the period as “*ambivalent*.” But, the works of such architects included significant challenges against the fixed rules and terminology created by Modern Architecture. For this reason, they should be distinguished from the criticisms that were mostly conducted on a theoretical level and on the revision of modernist ideas without criticizing its conventions.<sup>44</sup> The replacement of the house with a “*Cuishicle*” designed as a portable dwelling unit suggested the complete abandonment of the architectural elements and rules; in comparison with the criticism of functionalism that was directed by highlighting more formal aspects.

Because these attempts were left obscure behind the general glance to the period as decades of the 1960s and 1970s separately, the individual works and their theoretical reflections were squeezed into the term “*ambivalent*”

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<sup>44</sup> For instance, the work of “New York Five” that appeared around the same period with an exhibition in MoMA in 1967, directed a criticism on Modern Architecture without challenging its fixed rules more in a revisionist form.

and “transitionary” in architectural discourse. In this respect, Kenneth Frampton has evaluated the situation of architecture during that period and its break off from the previous decades as being “ambivalent” both in its relation to technology and to art:

No account of recent developments in architecture can fail to mention the ambivalent role that the profession has played since the mid-1960s – ambivalent not only in the sense that while professing to act in the public interest it has sometimes assisted uncritically in furthering the domain of an optimized technology, but also in the sense that many of its more intelligent members have abandoned traditional practice, either to resort to direct social action or to indulge in the projection of architecture as a form of art. As far as this last aspect is concerned, one cannot help regarding it as the return of a repressed creativity, as the implosion of utopia upon itself.<sup>45</sup>

However, the main paradox of the period was more than the dilemma of which the individual works aimed to transcend the goal of a utopia reached by the technology, but there was a debate taking place about the critical issues of “Modern Architecture.” It was more than the problem of the “liberation of architecture” by using the most modern technology to “free building from the use of stone - to make building not a material process but a psychological conditioning”<sup>46</sup> that was pointed out as the solutions for revision or abandonment.

It is possible to say that the emergence of the criticism of Modern Architecture, which accelerated after the 1960s, questioned the fundamental issues in architectural discourse. These criticisms had different approaches, either based on the social aspects of architecture, on the urban scale, on various design strategies or on the legitimisation of the so-called

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<sup>45</sup> Frampton, Kenneth. “Place, Production and Scenography: International Theory and Practice since 1962.” In *A Critical History of Modern Architecture*, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992, p.280.

<sup>46</sup> As Heinrich Klotz described the 1960s in his book *The History of Postmodern Architecture*. See Klotz, Heinrich. *The History of Postmodern Architecture*. MIT Press, Cambridge: Mass., 1988, p. 361.

Postmodernism. One of these criticisms was the assessment of Michael K. Hays towards the Modern Movement on the use of the methods of science in architecture and its re-evaluation in the 1960s that gave direction to new design methodologies:

Modern Architecture's envy of the theories and methods of the "exact sciences" lasted well into the 1960's, in the form of operational research and design methodologies that held that a careful description of any building's program – the physical conditions required for the performance of specific functions – and a systematic adherence to that description in the process of design should result in a direct transposition of functional demands into built form.<sup>47</sup>

On the other hand, Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejean Legault in the "Introduction: Critical Themes of Post-war Modernism" to their book "Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Post-war Architectural Culture" have described the criticism in that period as being between "an expiring modernism and a dawning postmodernism" in a more social level. They emphasised that the "privileged historicism" of the so-called Postmodernism overshadowed the critiques by other movements and practices such as Team X, "the radical visions of the Metabolists," or any of many others, which were "seen only as disparate, fleeting moments of passionate intensity leading to no lasting, significant architectural influence."<sup>48</sup>

It is possible to say that the 1960s was the prompt of a decade with many changes in social and economical life caused by post-war conditions. Goldhagen and Legault have claimed that the struggle of post-war architects was to respond the demands of the changing society and conditions, although they were architecturally "anxious" in many ways. They have described these conditions within a political aspect as being under the

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<sup>47</sup> Hays, Michael K. *Architecture Theory since 1968*. The MIT Press, Mass.: Cambridge, 1998, p. 36.

<sup>48</sup> Legault, Rejean, and Sarah Williams Goldhagen. "Introduction." In *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, CCA, Montreal, 2000, p. 11.

control of the Cold War, the scientific and technological aspect as “transforming the lived experience and the visual landscape” and as an “explosion in consumption among the working and middle classes.”<sup>49</sup>

In this respect, what Goldhagen and Legault have called “the critiques by other movements” that were left obscure behind the “privileged historicism of the so-called postmodernism” is elaborated in this study as a necessity for the explorations of the expansion of the vocabulary of architecture in a critical way.

In order to understand the background of these explorations, it is necessary to unfold the preceding years’ theoretical developments. Reyner Banham (1922-1988) has described this period as “The Second Machine Age” and it can be also included under Mario Gandelsonas’ “Neo-Functionalism” title, while Peter Eisenman used the term “Post-Functionalism.” Alan Colquhoun has remarked that the post-war period architecture led to two succeeding influential theories: “Systems Theory” and “Megastructures.”<sup>50</sup>

“Systems Theory” is defined as being influential on the use of technology on emerging architectural approaches in the sense of seeing the society as an “information system”:

Founding itself on the belief that instrumental technology now replaces all other tendencies, it sees societies as information systems designed to maintain ‘homeostasis’ – decentralised wholes in which no one level is “in control”.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p.12-13.

<sup>50</sup> Colquhoun introduces two conceptual models for urban ideas also being explored by Team X by the end of the 1950s. The first model is based on the concept of “community” and the psychology of perception. The second model is “systems theory” that had been gaining ground in the human sciences since WW.II which he defines as “seeking to apply the common principle of self-regulation to machines, psychology, and society- in fact to all “organised wholes. See Colquhoun, Alan. *Modern Architecture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 220-223.

<sup>51</sup> Colquhoun, Alan. *Modern Architecture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 221.

“Systems Theory” influenced the architectural discourse in the late 1950s as “Swedish and Dutch Structuralism” and the “Megastructure” movement applied it to the complex problems of design in a modern mass society. This may be evaluated as the beginning of the dissolution of the previously defined architectural programs of Modern Architecture and the emergence of the micro-environment and new programmatic explorations. Hence, Colquhoun explained the results of such a quest as such:

Instead of users being presented with predetermined spatial patterns, they were now – at least in theory – offered the means to alter their own micro-environment and decide their own patterns of behaviour.<sup>52</sup>

Another movement influenced by this model, the “Megastructural Movement”- which was contemporaneous with Dutch Structuralism, was not concerned with fixed, recognisable units. It was posited on a built environment without cultural norms and in a continuous state of flux. As for the Metabolist projects, Colquhoun mentioned two countries’ architecture, Japanese architecture of the period and the British Archigram group. He defined the Japanese circle of the movement as those whose “utopian and pragmatic aspects were not clearly differentiated,” while he found the work of the British Archigram group, on the contrary, “unashamedly Utopian and apocalyptic in its imagery,” describing their projects as follows:

The use of ready-made and popular images was a deliberate assault on architecture as a conventionalised, ‘upper-class’ discipline – an invasion of ‘low-art’ into architecture’s hallowed precincts, especially those of the Modern Movement itself.<sup>53</sup>

The British Archigram group was formed by Peter Cook (1936- ), Dennis Crompton (1935- ), Michael Webb (1937- ), Warren Chalk (1927-1988), David Greene (1937- ) and Ron Herron (1930-1995) in the early 1960s in London. The abandonment of the conventional in their works could be

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<sup>52</sup> Colquhoun, Alan. “The Modern Movement in Architecture.” *Essays in Architectural Criticism: Modern Architecture and Historical Change*, Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 1981, p. 21-25.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21-25.

detected by the shift to the use of new media. For example, the list of annual events under the titles: “World, UK, Music, Theatre, Cinema, Fashion, Books”, in the Archigram Magazine described the quest in that period and emphasised the use of unfamiliar terminology to architecture as one of the group’s design strategies. It is possible to say that their influence was both on the architectural and academic milieu. In the projects of Archigram, a new way of life was fictionalised and its reflection was a “non-fixed, temporary architecture.” This temporality meant the dissolution of buildings as functioning machines and the emphasis on their dissolved pieces as individual activities, whose architectural reflection and subject found its essence on the emerging technology, giving the possibility of dwelling in the parts of this machine. Thus, as that emphasis developed, its inevitable reflection on the whole machine concept had changed as a new form of unity. Along with this newly emerging quest, one of the members of the Archigram group, Peter Cook, has described the architecture of the late 1960s by distinguishing it from the movement and style-oriented roles whose ambiguity he evaluated as a potential:

Now the architectural world is confronted with an even more ambiguous set of circumstances and the definitive role of styles or movements of the past is disappearing in a continuous evolution away from architecture.<sup>54</sup>

Consequently, Cook explained, with sarcastic enthusiasm, the emergence of the Archigram group as a result of the changing scene in the early 1960s:

The first Archigram was an outburst against the crap going up in London, against the attitude of a continuing European tradition of well-mannered but gutless architecture that had absorbed the label “Modern”, but had betrayed most of the philosophies of the earliest “Modern”.<sup>55</sup>

The work of the Archigram group has been evaluated as utopian projects

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<sup>54</sup> Cook, Peter. *Experimental Architecture*. Academy Editions, London, 1972, p. 68.

<sup>55</sup> Cook, Peter. In *A Guide to Archigram 1961-64*, edited by Dennis Crompton, Academy Editions, London, 1994, p. 25.

under the influence of technology-oriented views leading to alternative searches for architecture. However, the projects of Archigram developed a critique on the existing architectural discourse beyond conventions. Although Franco Raggi (1945- ) has described the investigations of the group in the context of the use of technology in favour of consummation, underestimating the fact that their point of departure took its essence from – in the words of Peter Cook – to “experiment out of architecture”:

The third issue of the Archigram Magazine was dedicated to the research on the following problems entirely in August 1963: the logic of consummation and the proposals for more developed industrial technology, in the sense of “expendability” aesthetics, was founded to deal with the solutions for the capitalist city in order to reorganise the building productions systems of the production and consummation techniques of industrial neo-capitalism.<sup>56</sup>

In Austria, there were also several architecture groups that shared similar influences. One of them, “Haus-Rucker-Co” was an Austrian architectural partnership formed in Vienna in 1967 by Laurids Ortner (1941- ), Günter Zamp Kelp (1941- ) and Klaus Pinter (1940- ). The group was described by Heinrich Klotz (1935-1999) in “The History of Postmodern Architecture”, as having been active in the propagation of a “provisional” and “disposable” concept of architecture that anticipated changes in the environment.<sup>57</sup> But, unlike the limitation of their work by Klotz, the fiction in the projects of “Haus-Rucker-Co” reveal that they were more than art objects, since they aimed to develop a criticism beyond that:

But this was not the first time that it became clear that the largest and most comprehensive fiction is the belief that one can get along without any fictions- the identification of life with art and vice versa. In the meantime, those of Hollein’s drawings that totally affirm this identity-confident didactic wishes- have come to look like works of art, just as the devices of Haus-Rucker-Co have not remained consciousness-raisers but have turned into fictional works of art that proclaim a message but are not

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<sup>56</sup> Cook, Peter. *Experimental Architecture*. Academy Editions, London, 1972, p. 69.

<sup>57</sup>Klotz, Heinrich. *The History of Postmodern Architecture*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988, p. 362.



themselves the fulfilment of that message.<sup>58</sup>

Gunter Zamp Kelp has described the influence of the architectural education at that period at The Technical School of Vienna as being in exchange and the flow of information nurtured by the outside of the academy. He mentioned the “Club Seminars” on art discussions they attended once a week and the new perspectives brought by excursions to New York, New Haven, Philadelphia, Chicago and Detroit that was introduced by academicians Schwanzer and organized by Feuerstein who taught there in 1964, as revitalising the architectural “woody odour air” that dominated Vienna at that time and provided dialogues with Phillip Johnson, John Johansen and Frederic Kiesler in New York, Louis Kahn in Philadelphia and Paul Rudolph in New Haven.

When Karl Schwanzer gave the green light for “Phantasy” in the Designing programs in 1963, the scene in the department of architecture changed dramatically. Obsessed with ambition, imaginative designing made a great number of students (including also Laurids Ortner and me) to develop projects that never existed before with this form, design and quality at the school.<sup>59</sup>

In this same article, Zamp-Kelp has remarked on two events that shed light on the introduction of their works of architecture to the contemporary architectural scene of the period: the first one was “Urban Fiction,” the closing exhibition of the “Club-Seminars” by Gunter Feuerstein, in which Laurids Ortner participated with the project “47. Stadt” and Zamp-Kelp with the project “Architecture Centrifuge.” The second event was the 1966 international competition “Inter-Design 2000” announced by the Hopzapfel Company, in whose scope was “the development of the future-oriented furniture and living concepts.” The participants of both events included the

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<sup>58</sup> Klotz, Heinrich. *The History of Modern Architecture*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988, p. 361.

<sup>59</sup> Moos, von Stanislaus. “Kunst und Technik: Direktkoppelungen.” *Haus-Rucker-Co. 1967 bis 1983*, Deutsches Architekturmuseum Frankfurt am Main, Friedr. Vieweg & Sohn, Braunschweig, Wiesbaden, 1984, p. 32.

young generation of architects from different countries and backgrounds who were enthusiastic about using the emerging technology and were critical about questioning the conventions of architecture. As one of the emerging terminologies of the recent period, Zamp-Kelp described their acquaintance and fascination with the possibilities brought by the term “pneu” as a new medium as a result of their contact and consequent discussions on this subject with the few architects and artists who dealt with air-transported constructions. For instance, he described the use of this new technology in the project “Mind Expander” with which they participated to the “Inter-Design 2000” competition as such:

When it was close to the end of the works, Klaus Pinter came along from Scharding to set about for the painting of the air-transported balloons for the “Mind Expander”. During the works on these two projects with the help of a friend we found a way to access to a test series, where they tried to produce pontoon from polyester. The method used for applying polyester resin and glass fibre with spray cannon seemed to us less fascinating than the characteristics of the casing on which the plastic is sprayed. The casing, that is to say, built air-transported coverings from the crystal-clear, high-frequency-fused polyvinyl chloride foil, that become a ball-shaped or cylindrical form through compressed air. The skins and their packaging were inexpensive, the treatment in terms of colour, a question of the quickly acquired knowledge. It was obvious that the balloon room over the heads of the users of the “Mind Expander”, was realized in this method, and the “Pneumacosc” was designed as a “Fuller Ball”, and was constructionally shifted also to this technique.<sup>60</sup>

Another Austrian architect, Hans Hollein (1934- ), also produced projects sharing the same attitude of interdisciplinarity with Haus-Rucker-Co, but separated from them in the form of developing such interrelation with other disciplines in a less technology-oriented level. Hollein was also in contact with British Archigram group. In the “Everything is Architecture” issue of “Bau” magazine in 1968, he demonstrated his ideas covering this “everything” as such:

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 35-36.

Limited concepts and the traditional definition of architecture and its means have lost much of their validity. The environment as a whole is the object of our concern and all media which it controls. We care for television and for air conditioning, transportation and clothing, for the telephone and for housing.<sup>61</sup>

Heinrich Klotz has remarked that Hollein's demonstration was a new set of relations established on the detachment from utility oriented purposes for the sake of a more fictional and aesthetic design, rather than a new form of attachment to purpose:

Since 1960 architects had been on their way to developing a realm of meaningful metaphors and narrative representations as a way of overcoming mere subservience to utilitarian purpose, but with Hollein's expansion of the concept of architecture it seemed that the opposite of an architecture founded on fictional and aesthetic design would appear.<sup>62</sup>

Such an ambition for expanding the boundaries of architecture, on the one hand, liberated the fixed concerns of architectural discourse and carried them on a planar level, but on the other hand, it threatened the boundaries of the discipline. However, in both cases, architectural criticism benefited from this inter-disciplinarity that gave rise to such explorations and search for the possibilities of the "expansion of vocabulary" of architecture in order to develop a criticism on the conventions of Modern Architecture and open up the boundaries of architecture.

Although these developments under the influence of such interrelation of fields aimed to criticise the functionalist-oriented aspects of Modern Architecture that claimed a relationship between function and program, they also aimed to suggest and develop more than an open-ended criticism and used technology and new media as tools to broaden its terminology. Hence, these demonstrations suggested the dissolution of the conventional means of

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<sup>61</sup> Klotz, Heinrich. *The History of Postmodern Architecture*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988, p. 361.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 361.

architectural discourse, as the conditions, agents and activities informing architecture that depended on the modernist discourse were being redefined.

The design of the “*Cuishicle*” as an individual living-unit instead of a dwelling, the introduction of the term “*pneu*” and its possible contributions to architectural space, the use of materials such as plastic and resin instead of traditional materials for small-scaled projects, the design of the space “Mind-Expander”<sup>63</sup> which is available only for individual use, were all attempts to develop a new and challenging terminology that would replace the previous ones.

Therefore, the “firmament” of architecture was transcended in the 1960s and early 1970s through the intense use of technology and by spreading out its boundaries through inter-disciplinarity. The consequences of this expansion were more than an enthusiasm and interest in the use of technological developments in architecture. Rather, as Peter Cook points out, they were explorations for the expansion of “vocabulary of architecture.” He explains how they intended to react against the so-called fixed rules of architecture through this expansion with the following words:

I think the labelling is very important. I felt always to set yourself a goal, sometimes by having a label, you make the goal, and you decide what to be your directing thing by making statement of the name. I think that's quite important. And also I think that I was very interested in making things contrast to what was also sort of Modernist ethic. There was sort of social housing and we thought of it as mobilising, the capsule was a kind of anti-house and the Instant City was a kind of anti-city and Walking City was a kind of anti-city, it came from the tradition of the city but in a sense it was challenge, so each thing was found challenging to the original model. I think that was fairly conscious. There were a lot of things involved, there were a lot of sorts of comments on the social situation, and the hierarchy of the cities,

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<sup>63</sup> Moos, von Stanislaus. “Kunst und Technik: Direktkoppelungen.” *Haus-Rucker-Co. 1967 bis 1983*, Deutsches Architekturmuseum Frankfurt am Main, Friedr. Vieweg & Sohn, Braunschweig, Wiesbaden, 1984, p. 32.

hierarchy on the education, and the static quality of things, where the technology really seen as a means to help that not as an end in itself.<sup>64</sup>

Cook described how interdisciplinarity was influential in their reaction by saying that Archigram was very conscious of it and deeply influenced by the technology occurring in graphic design, communications, and art, as there were many cross-links. The discern of those cross-links gave rise to the emergence of works that were pushing the boundaries “radically” by integrating sources out of architecture rather than suggesting that technological tools should renew architectural definitions within the same contexts. Both the need and the consequences of such attempts caused the expansion of the vocabulary of architecture.

As the boundaries of architecture were expanded towards other disciplines, many discussions and debates became influential in architectural thinking. These discussions were directed at different levels, using different methods and with different aims. They were conducted as individual attempts exploring different possibilities. When Franco Raggi made an account of this process in the 1974 book “Radical Architecture,” he pointed out the differentiation among these attempts as follows:

All the projects present a similar image at research level on their use, on the distribution or union of functions because of their different features. And it's an image whose requirements were provided by technological developments. The joining of the rest into Pop Art is pointed out as the attempt of replacing the methodology of development of special parts of architecture other than choosing the official indexes and the results of suggesting structural choices: replacements, the change of order, assemblages, montage, disconnections are the attached methods for the model objects they put themselves as finished popular objects before a possible realisation.<sup>65</sup>

This book by Paolo Navone and Bruno Orlandoni is the evaluation of the works of that time period in relation to the reasons how such a critical approach was developed against the conventions of architecture and how

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<sup>64</sup> Cook, Peter. Interview with the author, 10 April 2006, Appendix A.

<sup>65</sup> Branzi, Andrea. “Introduction.” to “*Radical Architecture*,” edited by Paolo Navone and Bruno Orlandoni Casabella Publications, 1974, p. 7-15.

they complied with the technological developments as tools. The book has been left unfolded in architectural literature, since it was never translated into English and has remained as an edition of the repetition of the period's architectural magazines. However, as an insider among those architects of the Italian context of the period, the author did not only aim to make a Marxist account of these attempts and explorations but also highlighted and documented the projects themselves. But these attempts were overshadowed by the discourse that labelled them as individual utopian explorations of the so-called "ambivalent" period.

What distinguishes these attempts of criticism in the 1960s and early 1970s from the previous ones, and their revisionist contemporaries, is the awareness of the outbreak of the need for the re-evaluation of the existing terminology. Therefore, this dissertation aims to understand how such a need became an outbreak to chaos in order to open the boundaries of architecture to inter-disciplinarity. In this study, Gordon Matta-Clark is considered as a contributor to this "expansion of the vocabulary of architecture," since he challenged the fixed rules of architecture to open up the possibilities of new considerations in architectural thinking. Although Matta-Clark was not in direct relation with his contemporaries who produced similar criticism in this sense, the exploration of his ideas and works and his contemporaries is worth investigating and to consider possible relations among these architects.

These criticisms in the 1960s and early 1970s reveal that there was a difficult debate on the fundamental issues of Modern Architecture and that break-off gave direction to the emerging architectural discourse. These novelties covered a wide range of fields, since the most significant contribution of that period was the introduction of "inter-disciplinarity" to architecture. Or, in other words, the inter-disciplinarity was a borderline forcing architecture to open up itself to development. Reinhold Martin has

suggested that this inter-disciplinarity was a kind of “de-territorialisation” in the 1960s and its confrontation was a “re-territorialisation” in the 1970s through autonomy discussions.

This inter-disciplinarity was one of the catalysts (activators) of the expansion of the vocabulary of architecture, as the introduction of new tools from different media ranging from art to philosophy introduced ways (visions) for architectural discourse. The next chapter will evaluate how this way of “experimenting” in (out of) architecture was different from other periods and why it is discussed in this thesis under the term “experimentation,” which is elaborated as having caused a “shift” in architecture.

## CHAPTER 3

### “EXPERIMENTATION” AS A “SHIFT” IN ARCHITECTURE

#### 3.1. The Framework of “Experimentation”: The Reflections of the Introduction of “Subjectivity” and “Multiplicity”

“Experiment” in architecture covers wide range of issues. However, the term “experiment” is used here to understand the critical position of architects who introduced this term. This critical position is distinguished here as being under the influence of the changing ground in the theory of science from positivist thinking to post-positivist thinking. The fundamental and crucial consequences of this paradigm shift were the emergence of “*subjectivity*” and “*multiplicity*” in the place of “objectivity” and “single truth”. In this thesis, the suggested disparate critical position of the said period is argued within this framework under the term “experimentation”, which is the theoretical shift about how to experiment, and how the existence of “subjectivity” and “multiplicity” caused and changed the conventional thinking that was depending on more objective ideals in architectural discourse. Yet this “multiplicity” was caused by interdisciplinarity and “subjectivity” emerged as the individual attempts regardless of a style within this “multiplicity”.

This “multiplicity” is regarded as reflecting “ambivalency”<sup>66</sup> within the chaos of interdisciplinarity in architectural discourse of the period that needs

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<sup>66</sup> Kenneth Frampton used the term “ambivalent” in order to explain the role of architecture



to be discussed. In architectural discussions, this chaos has been reasoned as the evaluation of the works of architects developed in this interdisciplinarity only as utopian projects squeezed between the functionalist possibilities of the intense use of technology and the difficulties of their adoption to architectural theory, just before the re-territorialisation of architecture by closing itself back to its own domain under the influence of autonomy discussions. For that reason, the consequences of the suggested shift in architectural discourse, which is put forward here as “*experimentation*”, is considered as underestimated behind the influence of the claim that regarded the individual attempts of architects in relation to their resemblance to early period of Modern Architecture about the use of technology.<sup>67</sup> Thus, the period of 1960s and early 1970s was weakly evaluated as the intense use of technology and the revision on the methods of Modern Architecture. However, this revision was more than the repetition of the use of technology, since there was a paradigm shift in the theory of how to “experiment” in science that was also nourishing architecture. Hence, its inescapable influences on architectural discourse require investigation. Initially, to borrow the methods and theories of science for architecture, including the method of “experiment”, can be evaluated as one of the considerable aims of Modern Architecture as Michael K. Hays (b.1952-) pointed out:

Modern architecture’s envy of the theories and methods of the “exact sciences” lasted well into the 1960s, in the form of operational research and design methodologies that held that a careful description of any building’s program – the physical conditions required for the performance of specific functions – and a systematic adherence to that description in the process of design should result in a direct transposition of functional demands into built form. A sufficiently minute description of the requisite functions would allow a design solution of singular correctness, free from mediating conventions and

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in 1960s. See Frampton, Kenneth. “Place, Production and Scenography: International Theory and Practice since 1962.” In *A Critical History of Modern Architecture*, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992, p.280.

<sup>67</sup> As Reyner Banham suggested in his book, See Banham, Reyner. *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 1983.

the arbitrary choice from among alternative formal organizations – a one-to-one matching of function and form in which the problem of representation or translation seems to disappear.<sup>68</sup>

However, it is not possible to mention only the absolute aim of “singular correctness” and freeing from “arbitrary choice” for architecture by getting involved with the methods and theories of science in 1960s and early 1970s. Rather, it can be argued that the emergence of the “*subjectivity*” and “*multiplicity*” as considerable variables in science and philosophy was reflected on the works and the way architects “experiment” that followed the methods of their precedents of Modern Architecture in terms of their relation to science. But not in a repetitive way as suggested by Hays; as these methods have changed, their consequences also caused remarkable changes in their adoption. Thus, the distinguishing factor was the change in the aim towards a utopia, towards the perfectionism of optimum conditions. Rather, the aim of such a utopia put forward by their precedents of Modern Architecture as the discourse of the modernism was radically criticised. This criticism and the abandonment of the aim of reaching a utopia were taking its philosophical and theoretical ground from the paradigm shift that was shaped within these disciplines. Hence, this study develops these influences and the theoretical sources of such criticism based on the term “experiment” that can give rise to the use of the term “experimentation” as the phenomenon of this criticism.

The debates on the evaluation of the term “experiment” started in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century firstly in science, and consequently were followed by philosophy. The emergence of “Modern Experimentation” in the positivist thinking has been pointed out as the result of its dilemma with the developments in science. Thus, the criticism of the methods of empiricism and discussions on its very basic claims caused the emergence of “Modern Experimentation” in the philosophy of science in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a

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<sup>68</sup> Hays, Michael K. *Architecture Theory since 1968*. The MIT Press, Mass.: Cambridge, 1998, p. 36.

result of this criticism, the questions and discussions on the methods of natural sciences led to a shift from the objective, testable science to subjective one.

The criticism of the methods of positivist philosophy was firstly introduced by Karl Popper (1902-1993), whose successors were Jay Hanson, Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996), Imre Lakatos (1922-1974) and Paul Feyerabend (1924-1994). This criticism claimed that the goal of science is “towards an infinite yet attainable aim: that of ever discovering new, deeper and more general problems and of subjecting our ever tentative answers to ever renewed and ever more rigorous tests”.<sup>69</sup> The terms he used such as “explanatory” and “nearer” indicate how the strict aims of positivist thinking about the “absolute truth” were replaced with the possible multiplicity of truth. For instance, Popper introduced “the falsification theory”, which claimed that it is not to prove the theories true but it is possible to eliminate false theories along the process of scientific thinking. For him, the philosophy of science depended on the “theory-ladenness of observation”, in which “...a universal statement that we know its truth from experience usually mean that the truth of this universal statement can somehow be reduced to the truth of singular ones”.<sup>70</sup> Popper suggested “objective knowledge” in “the autonomy of science”, which implied “scientific statement indeed be corroborated, but every corroboration is relative to other statements, which, again are tentative. Only in our subjective experiences of conviction, in our subjective faith, can we be ‘absolutely certain’”.<sup>71</sup> Hence, the consequences of such a claim can be defined as the aim of reaching at more and new truths rather than one truth. The idealisation of utopias as a single truth was also highlighted in early twentieth century architecture. The criticism of this idealism on this theoretical basis of utopian dreams was demonstrated after 1960s. For instance, Bernard Tschumi (b.1944-) discussed such possibility

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<sup>69</sup> Popper, Karl. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. Harper & Row, New York, 1965, p. 281.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 280.

of new and multiple truths by criticising the early utopias of Modern Architecture as such:

None of the early utopian ideals of the twentieth century has materialized; none of its social aims has succeeded. Blurred by reality, the ideals have turned into redevelopment nightmares and the aims into bureaucratic policies. The split between social reality and utopian dream has been total, the gap between economic constraints and the illusion of all-solving technique absolute.<sup>72</sup>

Consequently, he suggested another possible truth against the aim of single utopia of Modern Architecture by stating that:

Unless we search for an escape from architecture into the general organization of building processes, the paradox persists: architecture is made of two terms that are interdependent but mutually exclusive. Indeed, architecture constitutes the reality of experience while this reality gets in the way of the overall vision. Architecture constitutes the abstraction of absolute truth, while this very truth gets in the way of feeling. We cannot both experience and think that we experience. “The concept of dog does not bark”; the concept of space is not in space.<sup>73</sup>

In another point of view about subjectivity, one of Popper’s followers, Hanson argued the “theory-ladenness of observation”, which claimed the perception of the same objects differently. He concluded that all observations are theory-laden. The importance of Hanson’s contribution can be emphasised as follows: “theory-ladenness of observation to some extent develops the claim of the impossibility of theory-neutral observation language that is defended by new philosophers of science, especially by Kuhn and Feyerabend”.<sup>74</sup> For instance, within the multiplicity of discussions about architectural meaning, one of the critical theories grounded its theoretical basis on linguistics by establishing its possible reflections and resemblances with architecture. This theory created its own objective rules and consistent within itself as Mario Gandelsonas put it as being a

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<sup>72</sup> Tschumi, Bernard. “The Architectural Paradox.” In *Architecture Theory since 1968*. edited by. Michael K. Hays, The MIT Press, Mass.: Cambridge, 1998, p. 218.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. p. 226.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 226.

provocative “theoretical production in the field of the so-called social sciences” of which “both its positive aspects and its limitations have been widely discussed.”<sup>75</sup> So far he formulated, this criticism was depending on the claim that architecture has also been affected by linguistics.<sup>76</sup> Thus, the observations of this theory were located among the semantic dimension by stating its translations on architecture. This translation can be evaluated as one of the influences of interdisciplinarity of architecture in 1960s and early 1970s, contributing to the multiplicity of the period and can be regarded within the framework of “theory-ladenness” of observation that defined its own objective rules while being subjective in relation to other theories, sharing a parallel way of thinking to what Hanson suggested.

The emergence of the “subjectivity” can be elaborated through the epistemology about “anti-foundationalism”. In his article “What is Epistemology”, John Greco asked a very basic question to understand “foundationalism” and its reasons: “how must our total system of beliefs be structured in order for any of our beliefs to qualify as knowledge?”<sup>77</sup>; and responded that the reason as knowledge must be grounded in good reasons. Thus, foundationalism, in his words, is explained as an assumption that “all knowledge must have a prior grounding in reasons and of a kind readily available to the knower”.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, he described “foundationalism” as one of the best strategies to avoid scepticism in the “face of the regress problem”<sup>79</sup>. He pointed out that the scepticism challenged the basic acceptations in epistemology.

“Foundationalism” has been conceived as the reasoning of the positivist

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<sup>75</sup> Gandelonas, Mario. “Linguistics in Architecture.” In *Architecture Theory since 1968*. edited by Michael K. Hays, The MIT Press, Mass.: Cambridge, 1998, p. 114.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>77</sup> Westphal, Merold. “Hermeneutics as Epistemology.” In *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*, edited by John Greco and Ernest Sosa, Blackwell Publications: Mass., 1999, p. 8.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

thinking that was considered as the significant paradigm shift from the metaphysical thinking in philosophy to another level of materialist thinking, which rejected the grounding of the knowledge on a priori idealist knowledge leading to a metaphysical ideal and the impossibility of knowing.

However, the emergence of “anti-foundationalism” in philosophy in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which can be considered as the criticism of both metaphysical and positivist thinking, highlighted the importance and existence of “subjectivity” instead of “objectivity”. Yet, “subjectivity” caused the existence of “multiplicity” instead of the “one ideal truth” in positivist thinking. The transition in philosophy from “foundationalism” to “anti-foundationalism” can be regarded as a paradigm shift from the fixed foundations of knowledge to the possibility of more than one fact and one ideal truth. Therefore, the strong concept of theory and foundationalism were challenged by “anti-foundationalism”.

The “anti-foundationalism” made it possible to consider the “subjectivity” and “multiplicity” as important variables. By such a paradigm shift, “anti-foundationalism” criticised both the metaphysical and the positivist philosophy as being “foundationalist” that accumulated knowledge on the foundation of fixed ideal truths of objectivity in order to reach the ideal truth. On the contrary, “anti-foundationalism” suggested the consideration of multiple truths caused by the consideration of the “subjectivity” as an important variable that transforms the previous ones in an interrelational way in order to open up the horizons for the knowledge.

The emergence and development of “anti-foundationalism” progressed both in European and Anglo-Saxon contexts, thus Gilles Deleuze, who was defining himself as an empiricist, has been remarked by John Rajchman as influenced by both contexts, discussing the empiricism of Hume and Whitehead along the same text through his methodology of constructivism.

The anti-foundationalist approach in Deleuze showed itself as the introduction of superior empiricism. It was not only the fabrication of his philosophy in a constructionist approach but also the production of his texts in the same method. Hence, the “principle of difference”, the “externality of all relations”, the “problematic of paratactic serializations” and the “quest for “activated” and mind-transcending subject whose pathways would avoid transcendental turn” were the key points of which Deleuze’s empiricism has been formulated around. The collated togetherness of these concepts has formulated what has been determined as “superior empiricism” of Deleuze that has been based on the consideration of “experimentation” that suggested an “activated” quest among subject and the unformulated surrounding.<sup>80</sup>

As it can be deduced from the above discussions, there was a dilemma in “objectivity”, which has always been accepted as one of the fundamental aspects of science, and it was challenged by the emergence of “subjectivity” as a considerable factor. It is suggested in this study that, the emergence of “subjectivity” in science and philosophy has contributed to “experimentation” in architecture as a distinguishing factor from the previous experimental studies. This distinguishment was fed by the

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<sup>80</sup> “While Deleuze often refers to the central concepts of empiricism as classically formulated by Hume in the *Treatise* (association, habituation, convention), he also develops, throughout his work, a number of other key concepts which should be considered as empiricist. The most prominent of these are “immanence, constructivism, and excess”. The key word throughout Deleuze's writings, as we have seen, to be found in almost all of his main texts without fail, is immanence. This term refers to a philosophy based around the empirical real, the flux of existence which has no transcendental level or inherent separation.” <http://www.iep.utm.edu/d/deleuze.htm>

discussions on “subjectivity” and “objectivity” in philosophy and science.

Since multiple theories can be evaluated within the same critical framework of “experimentation” in 1960s and early 1970s, there were discussions going on during the period. The books, entitled as “Experimental Architecture” by Peter Cook and “Radical Architecture” by Franco Raggi, are the ones that include theories to discuss the period. The authors of these books achieved such attempts to make an account of the period, who are the architects that played active roles as contributors rather than the critics and theorists. Here it is aimed to highlight the importance of these books that were left underestimated within architectural discourse only as self-explaining discussions about the architects’ own works. Their articulation within the critical evaluation of “experimentation” is suggested by referring to the tools of “experimentation” such as “repetition” and “generality” in Gilles Deleuze. In this articulation, the use of the term “repetition” peculiar to Deleuze is discussed in relation to “subjectivity”; and the use of the term “generality” in Deleuze is argued in relation to “multiplicity” again in Modern Experimentation. The reflections of “repetitions” and “generality” on architecture can be discussed in relation to the use of “technology” for “radicality” in late 1960s and early 1970s. Consequently, the books mentioned above entitled as “Experimental Architecture” and “Radical Architecture” will be evaluated within this framework.



## 4.2. The Use of “Technology” for “Radicality” in late 1960s and early 1970s:

### 4.2.1 “Experimental Architecture”

It is possible to claim that architecture was inevitably influenced by these changes in philosophy and science discussed in the previous part. Therefore, it was not a mere coincidence that Peter Cook wrote a book entitled “Experimental Architecture” in 1970. It is the only book that makes an account of experimenting in architecture by carrying the mentioned discussions to academic contexts with the title “experimental”. Actually, it can be said that, the aim of this book was not only to make experimental work distinguishable in architecture, but also to write an alternative elaboration on the current situation. As a consequence, “experimental architecture” is highlighted in order to articulate it as a design tool. Cook made an historical account of “experimenting” in architecture until 1960s and distinguished it from his contemporaries with the emphasis: “to experiment out of architecture” by the following statement:

I suspect that the collection here may prompt a redefinition of experiment in architecture: to *experiment out of architecture*. Whether this is one of the continual cycles of purgative that have to occur in any tradition or a fundamental disintegration cannot be proved. Simply, we are in a paradoxical situation and my examples (all of them drawn from the last few years) frequently display this uncertainty.<sup>81</sup>

In the same way, Peter Cook introduced and questioned a new definition for the experimenting architect who “works methodically, accruing and inventing when necessary, and by almost myopic devotion he frequently arrives at his objectives”.<sup>82</sup> Cook also pointed out a distinction between the

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<sup>81</sup> Cook, Peter. *Experimental Architecture*. Studio Vista Limited, London, 1970, p. 7.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

architects who experiment and the “avant-garde”, by emphasising that they do not necessarily imply the same things as he predicated it in the following:

The experimentalist may come to be some kind of special force in the wake of social change, but not necessarily part of its avant-garde. Once one has assumed the necessity for experimental architecture, its discussion must be based upon the total strategy of a piece of work: its context, objectives, moralities and justifications. But we see the traps of history where talents have been misused because of naïve moral-political associations.<sup>83</sup>

However, Cook did not evaluate the work of his contemporaries as sharing the same aim or opinions, but he defined “six current orthodoxies” that determined the foundations of experimental work as: “the Organic, the Methodic, the Opportunistic, the Scientific, the Utopian, and the Tasteful”.<sup>84</sup> Although this classification may respond to the ambiguities or paradoxes of that situation at that time, it may not be sufficient to explain the emergence of “experimental” attempts in 1960s and early 1970s when a question is raised on that issue again. The reason for this inadequacy might be explained as the evaluation of “experimental” attempts limited by technology rather than an influence of opening architecture to interdisciplinarity, although the statement “to experiment out of architecture” carries the implications of such interplay. For that reason, the term “experimentation” is used in this study to confront the issue of “*experiment out of architecture*”. Three decades after the launch of his book, Cook now highlights the dynamic process of to experiment on the vocabulary of architecture as evaluating it as:

The idea of breaking and opening up the formula, the formula of architecture. Every once in a while it becomes, it responds in same sort of ways, and then you say let's look at it again, let's open up the bag of threads and change the approach to see alternative.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>85</sup> Cook, Peter. Interview with the author, 10 April 2006, Appendix A.

As these works were only evaluated in technological means, an assessment of experimental architecture whose scope is limited by technology led to an inescapable criticism of control, as Felicity Scott puts it:

If, for instance, the work of Team X, Cedric Price, Archigram, Yona Friedman, and the Metabolists emerged through a certain techno-euphoria, and if experimental architects were initially fascinated by the liberatory possibilities offered by new communication and construction technologies, this would soon give way to a more complex, and more dystopian, but never simply techno-phobic, engagement. Although many architects experimented with open-ended, intelligent, and “flexible” structure, they quickly came to understand the other side of this feedback equation: the dispersed forms of control to which their strategies gave rise.<sup>86</sup>

#### 4.2.2. “Radical Architecture”



Fig. 3.1. Mario Merz. “Lo Spazio é Curvo o Diritto?”, 1968-73

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<sup>86</sup> Felicity D. Scott. Architecture or Techno-Utopia, *Grey Room*, 03, Spring 2001, p. 112-126.

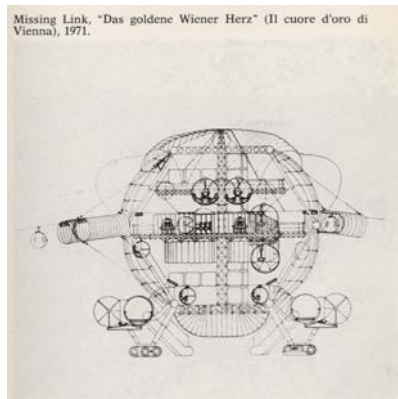


Fig. 3.2. Missing Link. "Das Goldene Wiener Herz", 1971

The emergence of "Radical Architecture" starting from late 1960s should also be mentioned among the discussions on "experimenting out of architecture". The term "radical" was used by Franco Raggi, who theorised the works of his contemporaries as a reaction against the fundamentals of architecture and society with a Marxist evaluation. This architecture emerging from Italian context mostly aimed a social criticism of architecture by using "experiment" as a tool, even though they experimented on different media and technology. For instance, Libidarch, one of these experimenting groups, made a Marxist analysis of structure and superstructure. Whilst this assessment located the architect as being rationally deduced from a capitalistic development plan on the structural level, it recommended that architect's role expanded on the super-structural level. The group described this situation as follows:

Here he is set up as an arbiter of those sequences of aesthetic and functional, methodological and compositional matters which he himself tends to confuse with the true essence of architecture. The use of codified language transmitted by the very social structure of culture and accessible therefore only to those who possess it, celebrates and imposes the ideology of the class-controlling the dominant material relationships.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>87</sup> The assessment of Libidarch continues as follows: "[S]hrewd and one-sided manipulation of the image transforms reality into an object of true contemplation, and the city and architecture into a passively experienced show far from any possible subjective

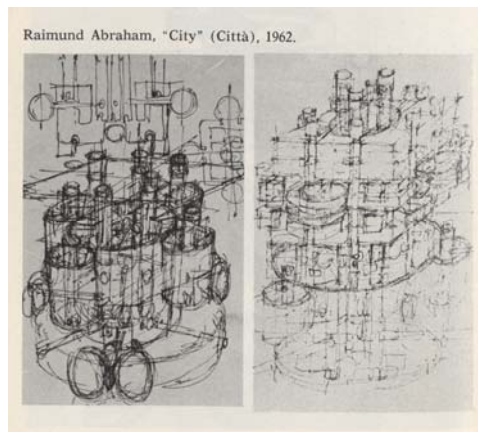


Fig. 3.3. Raimund Abraham. "City", 1962

Italian architect and critic Germano Celant, in his article "The S-Space" described an architectural event including the presentation of projects by Superstudio, Ant Farm, UFO, and 9999. The title of the event was "Life, Death and Miracles of Architecture". These projects represented the introduction and use of different media in architecture in order to develop a criticism. This event can be considered as the manifesto of "Radical Architecture" emerged in Italian context. The projects "Twelve Ideal Cities" and "Interplanetary Architecture" by Superstudio, as Celant referred to, "offered the possibility of a form of "Fiction Architecture" based on premonitions of an architecture that would represent PERFECTION after

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participation. In this situation, which is rather like a blind alley, minimal architecture may be seen as a critical condition in continual expansion. Its main objective is the systematic stripping away of the ideological veils which the system interposes between products and persons. Minimal architecture relates to minimal art not in terms of dependence, but of cultural parallelism and direct contact with instruments. It will be seen not in the production of objects and spatial organisations, but in ideas and actions. Interest shifts from constructed architecture to imagined architecture, from the product to the process, from the object to its use, from things to men, from salesmanship to awareness, from presentation to information and involvement. Taken up as a neutral and readily available element, and seen in the light of the ideological schemes now smuggling in the images and simulacra of contemporary architecture, the commonplace object or scene has the effect of a rejection and destruction of generally accepted technical norms. The relationship between the immediate perception of the commonplace and the thick ideological veil covering accumulated images throws light on the enormity of the dissimulation at the very heart of the dominant ideology". See Libidarch. "Minimal Architecture." *Casabella*, 391, 1974, p. 29.

the next twenty thousand years or so of human blood, sweat and tears.” He further presented the projects as such:

This perfection takes the concrete shall of a conglomeration of brains in a “cube 180 feet wide, long and high, covered with quartz tiles, ten inches square, each of which will bear a nine inch diameter lens, and the whole will be situated in the most burned out, destroyed and igneous part of that grey space that was once New York City, more specifically on the pre-historic site of what was Central Park, more or less at 81<sup>st</sup> Street. The cube is completely filled with cubical containers ten inches on a side, all made of a special transparent polymer of limitless stability. The interior of each cube will consist of a spherical cavity full of a physiological fluid and each cavity will contain a brain. Within the walls of the containers there will be a series of conduits through which the external physiological fluid will be continually renewed. This is what replaces the circulation of the blood. A system of electrodes inserted into various points of the cerebral masses will allow the brains direct and reciprocal communication.<sup>88</sup>



Fig. 3.4. Raimund Abraham. “City”, 1962



Fig. 3.5. Ziggurat. “Environment in Piazza Santa Croce, Firenze”, 1972

Celant indicated the contribution of these projects to that event as “a declaration of the frustrations of architecture and as the last remaining possibility for work in an area free from the rational logic of architecture as a production of goods”. For instance, the project “Street Farmer” by Ant Farm is illustrated by him as having dismantled and abandoned the urban environment of architecture by nomadism that would have replaced the battles that take place in the name of the love of nature. As he noted, their

<sup>88</sup> Celant, Germano. “The S-Space Scene.” *Domus*, November, 1971, p. 9-11.

propositions have formulated themes on pollution, anti-urbanism, the segnaletic catastrophe, the urban ghettos, and architecture as demolition. Also, he pointed out the project “Truckin’ University” by Ant Farm as having suggested as an enormous nomadic truck that would have “served to collect all of the liberatory instruments for action on a new kind of campus – agricultural and not a university, popular rather than bourgeois, poor rather than rich.”

Another contributor of “Radical Architecture”, Lapo Binazzi from UFO, introduced “Non- Design” as being from the object to survival. He suggested that “the purpose of the composition is to show how objects and also ideas, especially good ones, are accessories of capitalism which have wrongly been considered irreplaceable expressions of human activity.” He remarked the sections of this project in a detailed way:

The composition will proceed through a series of sections illustrated by slides which will be gathered together in a stereopticon. The sections are:

1. “The destruction of the object” – atrophy of the objective-hypertrophy of the imaginary-terroristic design.
2. “The recreation of behaviour” – the analogy of sports – the design of dress – animated films.
3. “Utopia of survival” – global tools – individual creative activity – the distortion of services – natural techniques and related behaviour.<sup>89</sup>



Fig. 3.6. Rem Koolhaas, Elia Zenghelis. “Exodus”, 1972

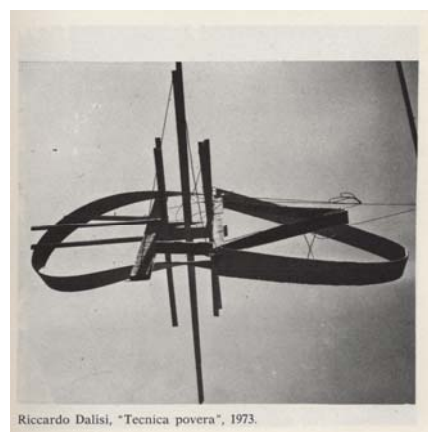


Fig. 3.7. Riccardo Dalisi. “Tecnica Povera”, 1973

<sup>89</sup> Binazzi, Lapo. “Non-Design.” *Casabella*, 386, 1973, p. 16.

It is possible to follow the introduction of these different media into architecture from The AD Magazine from 1970 onwards and their influence on architectural projects when compared to emerging experimentalist thinking. For example, the news titled as “Shelter Suits” was describing a self-contained electrically heated waistcoat-type jacket had been introduced by Parberlee Products Ltd., who was also in the process of developing trousers and gloves based on the same principles. The weight of the nylon quilted jacket was announced as 3-lbs including battery and the embedded sealed elements and was powered by an easily accessible 18 volt re-chargeable Deac nickel cadmium battery. The feature of the jacket was pointed out as incorporating a free-air type thermostatic device to keep the wearer’s body temperature constantly at 34 degrees C for a period of up to eight hours on one charge – depending on the amount of exertion and natural heat generated by user, which would have taken approximately eight minutes to heat up. Yet it was suggested that “the jacket can also be separately used from any available source such as a fork-lift truck, outdoor mobile plant, or vehicle”.<sup>90</sup>



Fig. 3.8. Strum. “Strumenti per l’Informazione Alternativa”, 1971



Fig. 3.9. Studio 65. “Babilonia”, 1972

<sup>90</sup> Cosmorama. “Shelter Suits.” *Architectural Design*, 5, 1970, p. 225.



It can be detected from the articles and discussions in architectural magazines of early 1970s that there was a debate going on how to manipulate that radicality into a criticism of architecture and its role in society after the experimentalist studies of 1960s which were considered as lack of these political aspects. In this respect, Franco Raggi made an assessment of an “opposition architecture” that took its essence from the experimentalist attitude:

Radicalism of manner is a dead end; at the end of it is found the imitation of oneself and negation as a profession. The re-foundation of architecture is a more obscure and banal job, which does not require the demonstration of new existential hypotheses, but constant commitment to the themes which have always demonstrated the cultural and social range of the work of the architect: the home, the city as a structure for use in which various needs are combined. To speak of an opposition architecture then does not mean to recognize an accepted stylistic meaning as branding it, but rather to exhibit a critical attitude, which, through the use of the architecturally specific, that is, of the forms, expresses and reflects the complexity of the context that produces this architecture, demanding, however, a creative area in which poetic invention beyond the paralyzing “functionalistic” considerations can be exercised.<sup>91</sup>



Fig. 3.10. Superstudio. “da Vita Educazione Cerimoni Amore Morte”, 1971-73

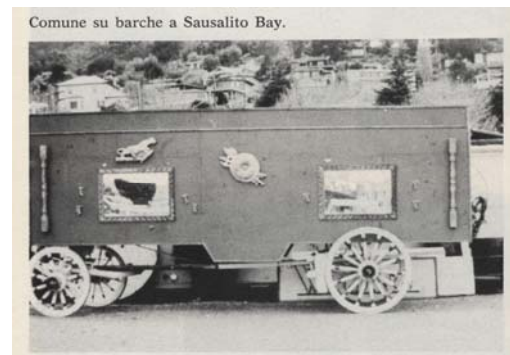


Fig. 3.11. Comune su Barche a Sausalito Bay

He further defined a goal after that assessment, which can be evaluated as

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<sup>91</sup> Raggi, Franco. “Opposition Architecture.” *Casabella*, 386, February 1974, p. 39.

the implication of a certain programme that would emerge from that oppositional approach to architecture as a potential. He urged that the stylistic diversity of the choices that had been seen in the international panorama had been dwelling around the content rather than form in various contexts such as he pointed as (Venturi in America, Gowan in Great Britain, Rossi and others in Italy) that were referring “in design to an apparatus of instruments and culture which reaffirms the continuity of a line of thought”.<sup>92</sup> Yet, he linked that with the continuity of line about seeing architecture as an art “in the front line in an attempt to provide a synthesis as knowledge of the complexity of reality”.<sup>93</sup>



Fig. 3.12. Robert Smithson. “Spiral Jetty”, 1970



Fig. 13. Robert Smithson. “Spiral Jetty”, 1970

The discussions on “Radical Architecture” in 1970s were going parallel to debates on “Experimental Architecture”. Also, in contemporary context, a similar assessment can be made as Bartlett School of Architecture manifested itself as being experimental in education, while the lecturer Iain Borden in this school wrote an article on radical architecture and made a definition of radicality as such:

To be simply new is not to be radical. To be radical means to make a change, to make a difference in terms not only of quantity but also of the

<sup>92</sup> Raggi, Franco. “Opposition Architecture.” *Casabella*, 386, February 1974, p. 39.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

concept, essence, quality of architecture and the city.<sup>94</sup>

The following conclusion by Borden as responding to his question “what is radicality” can be assessed, in a way, as making a synthesis of the experimenting in 1960s and critical approach of 1970s after three decades. He put forward being critical not outside of the social and cultural milieu, but by situating oneself within these conditions. However, he evaluated that aim as utopian and idealistic:

To be radical in architecture is to adopt a critical position within, and not outside of, the social and cultural milieu...To be radical is to seek, perceive and make a difference, of a deliberate kind- an unashamedly utopian position that knowingly considers not only where we are going and where we want to be going (not necessarily the same destination) – but also for what reason and with what procedures? To be radical is then to be emancipatory, idealistic and transformative, as well as ephemeral, provisional, questioning and transgressive.<sup>95</sup>

The “subjectivity” in “radicality” can be traced from the individual attempts described above and the “multiplicity” in “technology” offered the possibility for these individualistic attempts for opening up the “vocabulary of architecture” for further discussions in favour of the criticism on existing “conventions” of architecture in 1960s and early 1970s. Thus, the results of the experimental attempts of that period were more than just technological possibilities inserted into architecture as they are discussed in this study under the term “experimentation”.

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<sup>94</sup> Borden, Iain. “Revolution.” *Blueprint*, July-August 1999, p. 37.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

### **4.3. Suggesting “Experimentation” as Criticism in Architecture in 1960s and Early 1970s**

It is stated in this study that “experimentation” was a tool for the projects and works in architecture of 1960s and early 1970s that achieved the “expansion of the vocabulary of architecture” in the sense of architectural programming, which was left obscure under the approach that considered the period mostly as the intense use of technology and experiment on it. Therefore, as opposed to the inadequate definition of “Experimental Architecture” of 1960s, and “Radical Architecture” of early 1970s, “experimentation” in architecture is put forward in this study as pushing the boundaries “radically” by integrating sources out of architecture rather than suggesting the technological tools revising the architectural definitions within the “same” contexts. These sources are the tools offered by the emerging technology such as the “open-ended”, “intelligent”, and “flexible” structures, the possibility of “special transparent polymer of limitless stability”, “a system of electrodes inserted into various points of the cerebral masses” or the “free-air type thermostatic devices”.

Inevitably, the consideration of the integration of a “free-air type thermostatic devices” within architectural space challenged and changed its programmatic configuration. Since these devices brought the possibility of temporary activities and their motion, rather than fixed activities within a space, along with their actual body, the flexibility of the program was aimed to be achieved with such experiments in emerging technology. This was not only related with the emerging technology but also related with the change in architectural thinking that considered such technology as a tool to change the conventions about Modern Architecture.

For instance, the implication of this criticism in Archigram can be read from the use of two terms that point out the contradiction inherent in programming: “control and choice”. What they suggested for this dilemma was the experimentation of “metamorphosis”, which they explained as “change of mood: change of need: change of personality: change of place”. They described choice as the “freedom; of personality, enclosure, involvement, facility, movement”. Thus, the programmatic situations of the “metamorphosis” can be pointed out as the capsules in motion, attached pylons, independent enclosures, cabins, and information drums.

The term “experimentation” was used in the title of an international forum on “Theory and Experimentation in Architecture”, held at The Royal Academy of Arts in London in 1992, in which the architects whose works were labelled as “experimentalist” were invited. By establishing a relation between theory and architecture under the issue of “experimentation”, this forum differentiated the use of “experiment” from its other uses in architecture by implying a critical position.

The use of the term “experimentation” in this study also aims to highlight a criticism. This criticism was led by the experimental attempts in late 1960s and 1970s that discusses the boundaries of architecture in relation to interdisciplinarity and technology. Thus, such an examination is considered to understand how “experimentation” in architecture is pursued. In order to achieve this aim, it is possible to make a claim that “experimentation” in architecture is a shift to another level of experimenting after the shift entitled as "Post-Positivism" in philosophy and natural sciences discussed in the first part of this chapter, which also influenced architecture, thus it revealed a shift in architectural “program”.

This shift emerges as the significant changes in the consideration of space related to the “experimentation”, such as the shift from the distribution of

spaces in a dwelling unit as living room, kitchen, bathroom, bedroom in the very basic sense; to the sleeping capsules, disposable plug-in eating units, sleeping bags, and balloon units inserted into any existing building in a city. Consequently, not only the distribution of spaces is challenged but also the way of living is questioned and conventional architectural thinking depending on these social conditions was also re-evaluated. Although criticizing the programmatic aspect of the experimentation in 1960s, the following assessment by Peggy Deamer strengthens the suggestion of this experimentation as more than technological insertions by perceiving the architecture of 1960s not only as futuristic urban machines but also as comments and critiques on everyday life programs:

The work of “visionary” architects in Europe during the 1960s – for example, Archigram in England; Hans Hollein, Coop Himmelblau, Raimund Abraham and Friedrich St. Florian in Austria; Superstudio and Archizoom in Italy – is generally known for its futuristic and often monumental urban machines. But in actuality, this work was fundamentally lodged in a utopian image of the body, one animated by visions of the future yet bound by the concerns of the everyday. The particular formulation of this body – as technologically advanced but programmatically primitive – defined a “new man” who was ideologically committed to seeing the self as the safeguard of the values of ordinary life and the defence against the co-opting of the everyday. This formulation suggested that the life of this new man could never be aestheticized nor abstracted and could never be technologically sanitized.<sup>96</sup>

This statement supports that the “experimentation” achieved in the late 1960s and early 1970s were a new approach to “program” issue in architecture because they suggested alternatives to existing everyday life activities which were influential on programming. Thus, the evaluation of the experimental works of 1960s and early 1970s only as the contribution of technological issues and their use in architecture leaves the programmatic shift obscure. For that reason, “experimentation” is suggested to expand the

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<sup>96</sup> Deamer, Peggy. “The Everyday and The Utopian.” In *Architecture of the Everyday*, edited by Steven Harris and Deborah Berke, Princeton Publications, New York, 1997, p. 195.

vocabulary of architecture. Thus, the criticism on the “firmament” of architecture emerged as “experimentation” and its critical aspect aimed to open up the horizons of architectural vocabulary. This expansion also had significant contributions in terms of architectural programming. Here I claim that the “experimentation” in 1960s and early 1970s developed a shift in architectural programming that influenced the later decades.

As it was put forward in the introduction, this thesis describes the “unconventional” and “plural” definition situation of architectural programming as a potential to dwell on. This thesis argues that the suggested criticism of “experimentation” on the conventions of architecture and consideration of space aimed to break the singular truths of these conventions and discuss the possibilities of multiple situations. This was accomplished by the transgression of the consistent relations in conventional thinking in architectural discourse. For instance, when Gordon Matta-Clark made the cut on the floor of the living room through the below bathroom, this created a possible discussion on the programmatic approach of the consistent relations within a house and its program. Thus, such suggestions, for instance, in the case of the “parasitic space” by Matta-Clark within an existing space rather than singular program of a building is evaluated as a fruitful source to discuss how the “experimentation” in 1960s and early 1970s caused a shift in architectural programming. That shift is considered in this study in relation to the difficulty of definition of architectural programming.

In order to understand how this “experimentation” in architecture caused a shift in architecture by integrating sources out of architecture rather than suggesting the technological tools renewing the architectural definitions within the “same” contexts, this study will examine the “experimentation” in the works of Gordon Matta-Clark. This evaluation also aims to contribute to the inadequacies in the definition of “experimental architecture” of that

period. This expansion also had significant contributions in terms of architectural programming. Here I claim that the experimental studies of 1960s and early 1970s developed a shift in architectural programming that influenced the later decades and created a new route among others. Thus, the criticism on the “firmament” of architecture emerged as the “experimentation” and the critical aspect of these works of the said period aimed to open up the horizons of architectural vocabulary. For that reason, the next chapter will discuss architectural programming.



## CHAPTER 4

### “PROGRAM” AS “CONCEPT” IN ARCHITECTURE

#### 4.1. The Difficulty of Defining “Program” In Architecture

This study claims that “program” in architecture is a blurred term and requires investigation. “Program” can be problematized as a “weakly” defined term in architectural discourse.<sup>97</sup> This term may refer to “function”, “use”, and “requirement list” or even to “the zones of a city”, but neither of them is sufficient to make a definition of “program”. In order to understand that intricate situation, it is necessary to explain how these terms are related to or different from “program” as well as how they are interrelated with each other.

The English architectural historian John Summerson (1904-1992) claimed that Modern Movement placed “program” at the centre as “the modern schools holds to the programme as the source of unity”.<sup>98</sup> He pointed out the role of “program” for the Modern Movement as a design tool by saying that “the conception of a building must arise from within the programme; the programme itself must be the architect’s medium, just as much as the materials with which he builds”.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> “Weak Theory of Architecture” by Stanford Anderson. See Anderson, Stanford. “Architectural Design as Research Programs: The Schools at Cranbrook by Eliel Saarinen.” *Places*, 2, 1986, p. 59-69.

<sup>98</sup> Summerson, John. Introduction to *Modern Architecture in Britain*, by Dannatt Trevor, Batsford, London, 1959, p. 11.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

In order to contextualise the limiting approaches to “program”, or the limitations caused by the terms referring to “program”, it is necessary to mention the interconnected and constructed debates on the subject. “Function”, is one of the frequent terms, which is considered as corresponding to “program”, because a building’s function, such as the purpose or the utility, calls for the emergence of required spaces used in the “program” of that building. The Modern Movement arrived at a point that considered the function of a building as a utilitarian tool, whose functionalist treatment was an ideal. The following statement by Le Corbusier: “the house is a machine for living in” reflects this point as he used two different words that were never used together: “house” and “machine”. By such a statement, the “program” of a house was considered as the system of a machine, whose units were fixed and arranged by its technological requirements. Yet, Stanford Anderson (b.1934-) claimed that “within modern architecture, functionalism is a fiction - fiction in the sense of an error” and further suggested that this fiction had a richer notion of storytelling.<sup>100</sup>

For instance, this “fiction of function” was likewise illustrated in the ideological elaborations of the architectural theorist Manfredo Tafuri (b.1935-1994), in his article “Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology” in 1969, through the distinction on the consideration and design of the “unit” between Ernst May and Le Corbusier. After making the following statement that: “Unlike May in his *Frankfurter Küche*, Le Corbusier does not crystallize the minimum production unit in standard functional elements”<sup>101</sup>, Tafuri implied the continuous change in this fiction by saying that the theoretically usable residential cell, should have been responsible to individual needs that were “created by the renovation of the residential

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<sup>100</sup> Anderson, Stanford. “The Fiction of Function.” *Assemblage*, 2, February 1987, p. 20.

<sup>101</sup> Tafuri, Manfredo. “Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology.” In *Architectural Theory Since 1968*, Mass: The MIT Press, 1998, p. 27.

models and standards dictated by production”. Thus, he linked these needs “dictated by an active capitalism in the process of expansion” whose standard production had been considered in relation to function.

Yet, his arguments and evaluations about the consideration of the participation of the users into design process was not only about the pragmatic level of these discussions, but also was raised in the ideological elaborations, which criticised Le Corbusier by saying that:

The subject of the urban reorganization is a public that is called upon and made a critical participant in its own creative role. Through theoretically homogeneous functions, the vanguard of industry, the “authorities”, and the users of the city become involved in the impetuous, “exalting” process of continuous development and transformation. From the reality of production to the image and the use of the image, the whole urban machine pushes the “social” potential of the civilisation machinist to the most extreme of its implicit possibilities.<sup>102</sup>

One of the inadequate correspondences of “program” in architecture is “use”. The term “use” has two aspects in architecture: it is an aim that directs and limits the design process; and it is an actual situation after being available for the occupants. Thus, “program” is affected differently by both aspects which becomes a vicious circle: first, program is a data for the architect in the early stages of design, and generates the design process; second, it changes with occupancy, as the building is available for the users; third, it starts to interact with the environment and is affected by this interaction; and finally it redefines itself as a result of these stages. Moreover “use” may change in different scales ranging from the “program” of a building to the program of a city.

Yet, the discussions and criticisms on the programmatic approach, which had been demonstrated against the “functionalist” ideals of Modern

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<sup>102</sup> Tafuri, Manfredo. “Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology.” *Architectural Theory Since 1968*, edited by K. Michael Hays, Mass: The MIT Press, 1998, p. 27.

Architecture, mostly appeared under the influence of the integration of the post-occupancy considerations and the participation of users into design process. The raising concern in the involvement of the behaviour of users, both in “space” as a unit and as part of an overwhelming system, took priority over the functionalist ideals and autonomous demands of the discipline. What has been mostly criticised was the inadequacy of these ideals in meeting the demands of the users. The architectural theorist Christopher Alexander (b.1936-) published his book “Notes on the Synthesis of Form” in 1964, and his article “A City is not a Tree” in 1965, which has been uttered as one of the fundamental sources on this task. Namely, he criticised the ideals of Modern Architecture in the urban scale by asking:

What is the reason for drawing a line in the city so that everything within the boundary is university and everything outside is non-university? It is conceptually clear. But does it correspond to the realities of university life? Certainly it is not the structure which occurs in non-artificial university cities.<sup>103</sup>

Alexander conceived that problem as the distinction between the natural cities and artificial cities, of which he described by saying that the ones that have been “designed” were lack of overlapping units, which was indeed necessitated by the modern society and its internal relations. Thus, he suggested this problem as a matter of “visualisation of the mental act” and pointed out to benefit from the emerging modern psychology:

It is known today that grouping and categorization are among the most primitive psychological processes. Modern psychology treats thought as a process of fitting new situations into existing slots and pigeonholes in the mind. Just as you cannot put a physical thing into more than one physical pigeonhole at once, so, by analogy, the processes of thought prevent you from putting a mental construct into more than one mental category at once. Study of the origin of these processes suggests that they stem essentially from the organism's need to reduce the complexity of its

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<sup>103</sup> Alexander, Christopher. “A City is not a Tree.” *Architectural Forum*, Vol. 122, No 1, April 1965, p. 58-62.

environment by establishing barriers between the different events that it encounters.<sup>104</sup>

Moreover, Christopher Alexander, in "A Pattern Language", also suggested the implementations of his theory and instructions that were introduced in his first book "The Timeless Way of Building". This second book provided a guide of language patterns that could lead to make buildings and towns by their users. The aim was to liberate the users from the imposition of spaces by giving them the opportunity to select solutions from these patterns that could work both individually and in relation to other patterns in the form of a language. Thus, the variety of patterns were studied and presented that could allow to communicate with each other under different circumstances. The introduction of the book explained its aim to its users as a practical guide very simply as such:

You can use it to work with your neighbours, to improve your town and neighbourhood. You can use it to design a house for yourself, with your family; or to work with other people to design an office or a workshop or a public building like a school. And you can use it to guide you in the actual process of construction.<sup>105</sup>

The logic of patterns aimed to provide a super-structural language that could allow its adoption to more individual problems and an abstract source with variety of solutions that arose from the tentative study of actual problems experienced and observed. Such a suggestion made it possible to involve the users' participation as a remarkable variable in the design process and put the designer and architect to a position of designing, anticipating and programming the foreseen relations and design problems to prompt solutions and leave the users to push its boundaries by themselves. The reason of such a concern was to avoid the consequences of the

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<sup>104</sup> Alexander, Christopher. "A City is not a Tree." *Architectural Forum*, Vol. 122, No 2, May 1965, p. 58-62.

<sup>105</sup> Alexander, Christopher. Introduction To *A Pattern Language*, by Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverston. Oxford University Press, New York, 1977, p. 10.

underestimated issues about human nature in the more concrete thinking of Modern Movement, however the ambitions of this more behaviourist approach of design also had its own handicaps of suggesting an overall set of relations depending on limited observations and encompassment. Thus, that attempt of solution-based arguments was explained in the book as a way of creating a great language system:

In this sense, we have also tried to penetrate, as deep as we are able, into the nature of things in the environment: and hope that a great part of this language, which we print here, will be a core of any sensible human pattern language, which any person constructs for himself, in his own mind. In this sense, at least a part of the language we have presented here, is the archetypal core of all possible pattern languages, which can make people feel alive and human.<sup>106</sup>

Another criticism on this subject in architectural discourse of the period was demonstrated by John Habraken (b.1928-), who was the director of SAR (Foundation for Architects Research) between 1965 and 1975, in his first book “Supports, An Alternative to Mass Housing” in 1962. What he suggested was to participate the users into post-occupancy process by separating the inside spaces and leaving them to the choices of the inhabitants through the construction of the mass-housing depending on the idea of “supports” of the structure. In an interview, Habraken underlined the argument he grounded his criticism as the failure of the architectural determinism that denied the “notion of territory”, by saying that “no architecture can decide territorial structure, but an architecture can enhance it” and he continued as follows:

Separate from the question of inhabitation, the universal mechanism of territory is that visitors (being not inhabitants) have no right to come in, unless allowed, and inhabitants always may step out (assuming no curfew). Here too, criteria of entry may have moral implications depending on the culture prevalent outside the gate in question. And such

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<sup>106</sup> Alexander, Christopher. Introduction To *A Pattern Language*, by Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverston. Oxford University Press, New York, 1977, p.17.

questions are properly debated in that larger realm. Our problem as professionals is that we come from a modernist ideology in which it is assumed that one may go wherever one wants, in spite of all evidence to the contrary.<sup>107</sup>

Another inadequate correspondence of “program” emerges as a “requirement list”, which is a written brief with necessary dimensions that are expected to turn into spaces. This is a common strategy used in architecture ranging from architectural competitions to architectural education. This requirement list, in one aspect, is a conglomeration of functionalist approaches that intersects with use requirements, but not the exact correspondence of “program” solely.

As one of the aims of this study is to explain why “program” is a blurred term in architecture, it is also necessary to describe the challenges against this situation, especially the ones emerged in academic milieu and revealed by terms such as “occupation”, “event” or “activity”. For instance, there is a common strategy of giving out a written program brief before starting the design project in schools of architecture - including the evaluation of projects at the end of semester by comparing them with the pre-given requirements. As a challenge to this, the students are not given any program brief in advance, but they are confronted with questions which might lead them to allow the flexibility both in program and architectural thought.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Andrews J. Clinton. (Associate Professor and Director of the Program in Urban Planning & Policy Development, E.J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers University).”Interview with Habraken.”  
<http://www.patmedia.net/tbookman/techsoc/habraken.html>

<sup>108</sup> Arch. 401-402, METU, Design Studio challenges the role of “program” by starting the design process through a theme. For instance, one of the themes, which was also presented as a book entitled as “Hybrid Spaces” was “HYBRID”. The theme was described as a tool as follows: “The volatile nature of hybrid has become under a critical coercion by a variety of sub-issues, from social territories (such as politics, ideological shifts, capitalist production, consumerism, social fragmentation, and so on) to physical boundaries (such as spatial deformations, programmatic warps, structural distortions, resisting aesthetics, and so on). See Sargin A.Güven. *Hybrid Spaces*. METU, Ankara, 2004, p. 7.

Thus, one of the critics of the studio, Aysen Savas, evaluates the role of program in terms of the hybrid as a theme as follows: “The goal of this assignment, therefore, was not to question the strength of a given architectural program but to test its relevancy with an

Güven A. Sargin, the studio critic of Arch. 401-402, Design Studio at METU, conducts the studio projects with the use of a theme as the generator of a program instead of the pre-given requirement list and urges the reason of such an approach by stating that:

Architectural education, on the other hand, particularly plays a central role in this unceasingly overwhelming endeavour to be able to exercise innovative methods/ models/ paradigms through which it is believed that contemporary needs/ problems/ conditions can only be understood by those alternative processes of architectural education.<sup>109</sup>

Apart from the strategies in schools of architecture, it may be claimed that the main contemporary academic transgression on program was succeeded by Bernard Tschumi under the influence of Post-Structuralist thinking. This break off suggested many constructed ways of experiencing space and “program”. Thus, there couldn’t be one absolute truth for the program of the building as a unity.

Bernard Tschumi challenged the conventional understanding of program by emphasising its deficiency and unpredictability. He suggested that a “program” defined by space and time can confront the weaknesses of architectural space caused by the deficiency and unpredictability of use. Consequently, he put program and function into a dynamic position for the production and interpretation of architectural spaces. The reflections of this claim appeared as the separation of program, form and structure in favour of the “event” issue. Thus, the program emerged in these reflections as a hierarchy distributor among events. The shift in the position of program from “the list of activities” to a hierarchy distributor suggested the “decomposition of program” as a new approach. This kind of an approach to program is followed by multiple definitions of program such as; “program

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over ruling theme- hybrid; and challenge its authority with a total displacement- Albania. The belief is that “program”, a known term for architectural discourse, is de-familiarized in these new locations”. See Savaş Ayşen. “Architectural Program.” *Hybrid Spaces*, METU, Ankara, 2004, p. 17.

<sup>109</sup> Sargin A.Güven. *Hybrid Spaces*. METU, Ankara, 2004, p. 7.



as an innovative strong mechanism”, “program as a generator of design strategies”, “program as a sequence”, “program as meaning”, “program as a strip”, “program definition derived from cinematic terms”, “program in relation to themes to generate events rather than functions”, “program in relation to language”, “program to be permuted”.<sup>110</sup> In addition to the proposed positions mentioned above, Tschumi suggested three alternative definitions of architectural program which encompass them: “Cross-programming”,<sup>111</sup> “Dis-programming”<sup>112</sup>, and “Trans-programming”<sup>113</sup>. Tschumi emphasises the significance of “event” and “activity” in program not only as a generator but also as a dynamic tool for design. The consequences of these challenges against “program” became more “event-oriented” as suggested by Tschumi. “Temporary activities”, “spontaneity”, “coincidence”, “hybridisation”, and “interface spaces”, as some of the emerging concepts in these discussions, contributed to perception of “temporality” as a more considerable variable in contemporary architecture.

Here I claim that the difficulty of defining “program” in architecture should not be evaluated as a problem, but should be considered as a situation that can be benefited from and the reasons that it’s not explicable by definitions may be a source to enlighten the “program” issue in architecture. After the contemporary discussions on “program” and its separation from being only as the correspondent of “function”, “use” or “requirement list”, it is considered as a more dynamic variable in design process. For that reason, it can be stated that the inherent dynamism as a promising design tool in “program” and the necessity to liberate this term from constricting definitions became a challengeable issue to dwell on.

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<sup>110</sup> Tschumi, Bernard. *Event Cities: Praxis*. MIT Press, New York, 1994, p. 327.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 327.

## 4.2. “Program” in Architecture Expanded to “Concept” in Deleuze

As it is not possible to constrict the definition of “program” into specific terms; this study suggests that it is possible to understand the term “program” by expanding it to definition of a “concept” as it is introduced by the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze.

Deleuze enunciated that the constant rules emerged in order to fix ideas into certain realities of the universe; in order to escape from such a chaos and in order to establish a way of communication out of these ideas. As he recommended that “this is all that we ask for in order to make an opinion for ourselves, like a sort of “umbrella”, which protects us from chaos”.<sup>114</sup> Even though every idea started out of these “conventions” and became part of them in the end; he confronted this process by suggesting the idea of “concept” in philosophy. He illustrated the situation of ideas against chaos as such:

We ask only that our ideas are linked together according to a minimum of constant rules. All that the association of ideas has ever meant is providing us with these protective rules – resemblances, contiguity, causality – which enable us to put some order into ideas, preventing our “fantasy” (delirium, madness) from crossing the universe in an instant, producing winged horses and dragons breathing fire.<sup>115</sup>

As Deleuze articulated this intellectual limitation can be overcome by

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<sup>114</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?.* Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 202. Deleuze describes this situation as follows: “But there would not be a little order in ideas if there was not a little order in things or states of affairs, like an objective antichaos; “If cinnabar were sometimes red, sometimes black, sometimes light, sometimes heavy..., my empirical imagination would never find opportunity when representing red colour to bring to mind heavy cinnabar.” And finally, at the meeting point of things and thought, the sensation must recur – that of heaviness whenever we hold cinnabar in our hands, that of red whenever we look at it – as proof or evidence of their agreement with our bodily organs that do not perceive the present without imposing on it a conformity with the past.” Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?.* Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 201-202.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 201-202.

creating new concepts, this study suggests that, as a discipline, architecture also has its own fixed rules in order to avoid chaos within itself and define its autonomy. However, during that autonomy – although it redefines itself and makes self-regeneration to revitalise itself according to different situations along with the process, the paradoxes that do not fit these “conventions” exist inevitably. This thesis defines one of these paradoxes as the difficulty of defining “program” in architecture.

In order to liberate philosophy from the dilemma of its relations with other disciplines and the universe, Deleuze emphasised the term “concept” as a tool to overcome the limitations over philosophical thinking. For Deleuze, philosophy should create “concepts”. Hence, “concepts” are not the definitions attained to things or situations, but they produce a direction towards thinking. As it was stated in second chapter, he defined three disciplines to confront that problem of being impeded by the umbrella of “conventions” or “common sense”: philosophy, science and art by saying that “philosophy, science, and art want us to tear open the firmament and plunge into the chaos”.<sup>116</sup> From this point of view, philosophy should create “concepts” that opened up a sort of window through chaos by penetrating from the umbrella of conventions and creating reconnections out of these concepts of variations that are infinite:

What the philosopher brings back from the chaos are *variations* that are still infinite but that have become inseparable on the absolute surfaces or in the absolute volumes that lay out a secant plane of

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<sup>116</sup> Deleuze explains that these three disciplines overcome this problem as such: “The scientist brings back from the chaos *variables* that have become independent by slowing down, that is to say, by the elimination of whatever other variabilities are liable to interfere, so that the variables that are retained enter into determinable relations in a function: they are no longer links of properties in things, but finite coordinates on a secant plane of reference that go from local probabilities to a global cosmology. The artist brings back from the chaos *varieties* that no longer constitute a reproduction of the sensory in the organ but set up a being of the sensory, a being of sensation, on an anorganic plane of composition that is able to restore the infinite.” Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 202.

immanence: these are not associations of distinct ideas, but reconstructions through a zone of indistinction in a concept.<sup>117</sup>

The idea of “program” fulfils an "external need" attained by “common sense” or “consensus" similar to their elaboration in Deleuze. Therefore, “program” in architecture can also be considered as a “concept” with the potential of temporal conditions changing according to that “external need”. Deleuze claimed that the “common senses” or “generalised” entities in thinking require transgression in order to open new horizons and inquiry for development. This transgression is possible by re-evaluating the existing entities by creating concepts and establishing relations among these concepts in order to accomplish this evaluation. As Deleuze puts it: thinking through “concepts” reveal the differences and enlarging them helps to stand against reductionist and generalised tendencies. Similarly, to evaluate the components of the “concept” of program such as “use”, “function”, “occupation”, “event” or “activity” also as differences can contribute to understand its blurred situation.

Hence, in order to understand the situation of “temporary activities”, “spontaneity”, “coincidence”, “hybridisation”, and “interface spaces” by the emergence of “temporality” as a more considerable variable in contemporary architecture, it is necessary to evaluate their position within “program” in architecture. This text suggests that considering “program” as “concept” makes it possible to understand this term without constricted definitions since it frees it up from limited definitions and widens it to a plane with flexible components.

For Deleuze “concepts” are not “waiting for us ready-made, like heavenly-bodies”; “they must be invented, fabricated, or rather created”.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?.* Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 202.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

“Concepts” are evaluated and recreated in different situations by changing their meaning according to each case. In Deleuze’s descriptions, “concepts” have components and defined by them; and there are relations among these components. Thus, he stated that they are “made of elements that “fit together not like pieces of a puzzle but rather like disparate stones brought together temporally in an as yet uncemented wall”. Concepts are bodiless although they are embodied in objects. They should not be however, confused with the objects they are embodied in. Thus, they are both absolute and relative. They are relative according to their components, the problems they refer, the plane they limit themselves and to other concepts; but they are absolute with the place they occupy on the plane, the density of the problem they refer and the conditions they describe for the problem. As Deleuze explained it, “every concept has an irregular contour defined by the sum of its components, which is why, from Plato to Bergson; we find the idea of the concept being a matter of articulation, of cutting and cross-cutting”.

In order to clarify “concept” in his thinking, Deleuze pointed out its several features. Firstly, Deleuze posed the question of order to define “concept” better in terms of not “*absoluteness*” but being “in relation to another”.<sup>119</sup> As “concept” is fabricated according to conditions it refers to, those conditions or problems already have a context and relations, which may also be different concepts according to other cases themselves.

Secondly, he defined this relation also back to other concepts by suggesting that every “concept” has a *history*. He further claimed that this relation also included the becoming or its present connections as well as that history.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 17.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Thirdly, he explained the term in relation to its components by saying that “what is distinctive about concept is that it renders components inseparable *within itself*”. He furthermore developed his argument on this relation as “point of coincidence, condensation, or accumulation of its components”.<sup>121</sup>

Next, he pointed out that “concept” is “incorporeal, even though it is incarnated or effectuated in bodies”.<sup>122</sup> One of the significant characteristics of concepts introduced by Deleuze is that they are *bodiless* although they are embodied in objects. They should not be however, confused with the objects they are embodied in. For instance, the concept is said to be both absolute and relative: relative to its own components, to other concepts, to the plane on which it is defined, and to problems it is supposed to resolve; but absolute through the site it occupies and the conditions it assigns to the problem, as Deleuze put it: “it is infinite through its survey or its speed but finite through its movement that traces the contour of its components.”<sup>123</sup>

Finally, he suggested that although these relations may suggest a discursive situation, “concept” is not discursive.<sup>124</sup> Thus, he differentiated “concept” and “proposition” at that point by making the following statement:

Finally, the concept is not discursive, and philosophy is not a discursive formation, because it does not link propositions together. Confusing concept and proposition produces a belief in the existence of scientific concepts and a view of the proposition as a genuine “intension”.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>123</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 21.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>125</sup> Consequently, the philosophical concept usually appears only as a proposition deprived of sense. This confusion reigns in logic and explains its infantile idea of philosophy. Concepts are measured against a “philosophical” grammar that replaces them with propositions extracted from the sentences in which they appear. We are constantly trapped between alternative propositions and do not see that the concept has already passed into the excluded middle. The concept is not a proposition at all; it is not propositional, and the proposition is never an intension. Propositions are defined by their reference, which concerns not the Event but rather a relationship with a state of affairs or

As a result, in Deleuze's descriptions, "concepts" have components that create a fragmentary whole and relations among these components are irregular. These components are "made of elements that "fit together not like pieces of a puzzle but rather like disparate stones brought together temporally in an as yet uncemented wall". He denoted that:

Every concept has an irregular contour defined by the sum of its components, which is why, from Plato to Bergson; we find the idea of the concept being a matter of articulation, of cutting and cross-cutting. The concept is a whole because it totalizes its components, but it is a fragmentary whole. Only on this condition can it escape the mental chaos constantly threatening it, stalking it, trying to reabsorb it.<sup>126</sup>

Deleuze made the following definition: "the concept is defined by the inseparability of a finite number of heterogeneous components traversed by a point of absolute survey at infinite speed."<sup>127</sup> Hence, "concepts" are not the definitions attained to things or situations, but they produce a direction towards thinking. Besides, "concepts" are evaluated and recreated in different situations by changing their meanings according to each case as Deleuze suggested: "concepts are only created as a function of problems which are thought to be badly understood or badly posed."<sup>128</sup> These cases and problems shape concepts and Deleuze described this situation as such: "we say that every concept always has a history, even though this history zigzags, though it passes, if need be, through other problems or onto different planes."<sup>129</sup>

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body and with the conditions of this relationship. Far from constituting an intension, these conditions are entirely extensional. They imply operations by which abscissas or successive linearizations are formed that force intensive ordinates into spatiotemporal and energetic coordinates, by which the sets so determined are made to correspond to each other. Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 22.

<sup>126</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 15-16.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

As thinking through concepts open up new horizons to overcome limitations, this process is a dynamic one including relations with other concepts as well as the components within concepts themselves. Deleuze emphasised these relations as such:

A concept also has a becoming that involves its relationship with concepts situated on the same plane. Here, concepts link up with each other, support one another, coordinate their contours, articulate their respective problems, and belong to the same philosophy, even if they have different histories. In fact, having a finite number of components, every concept will branch off toward other concepts that are differently composed but that constitute other regions of the same plane, answer to problems that can be connected to each other, and participate in a co-creation. A concept requires not only a problem through which it recasts or replaces earlier concepts but a junction of problems where it combines with other coexisting concepts.<sup>130</sup>

This study suggests that the architectural discourse of the 1960s and early 1970s' led to a shift in architectural programming, which made further changes more than only technological possibilities inserted into architecture. One of the consequences of this change can be detected from the following assessment from Andrea Branzi's article "Radical Architecture" which made an evaluation of the period's discussions that emphasised "program" as a more considerable variable and which required attention:

If we are to escape from this circuit of producer-householder relationships we must abandon the "spatial" qualities of our architectural surroundings and concentrate on the definition of habitable empty space; the house, in other words, is no longer to be considered a social typology, but a kind of gymnasium available for the continuous experimentation of individual creativity; in other words, the important thing is not its form but its use.<sup>131</sup>

Deleuze suggested the establishment of connections among entities in favour of promising constructions in thinking to open up new horizons. He pointed out the separation of thinking of entities from fixed positions, in

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<sup>130</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 18.

<sup>131</sup> Branzi, Andrea. "Radical Architecture." *Casabella*, 1974, p. 46.



order to be able to evaluate them in other possible situations. Thus, he says that:

The concept is not a proposition at all; it is not propositional, and the proposition is never an intention. Propositions are defined by their reference, which concerns not the Event but rather a relationship with a state of affairs or body and with the conditions of this relationship. Far from constituting an intension, these conditions are entirely extensional. They imply operations by which abscissas or successive linearizations are formed that force intensive ordinates into spatiotemporal and energetic coordinates, by which the sets so determined are made to correspond to each other. These successions and correspondences define discursiveness in extensive systems. The *independence of variables* in propositions is opposed to the *inseparability of variations* in the concept. Concepts, which have only consistency or intensive ordinates outside of any coordinates, freely enter into relationships of non-discursive resonance – either because the components of one become concepts with other heterogeneous components or because there is no difference of scale between them at any level.<sup>132</sup>

This study considers the contextualisation of architectural thinking not as fixed entities and inseparable acceptations. Rather the components of any given contextualisation are considered with a possible relation to reliable and unfolded connections that remained obscure. One of these connections is aimed to be established between the works of the artist/ architect Gordon Matta-Clark and architectural programming by using their own “independent variables” coinciding for possible situations of “program” issue and its problematic situation. Thus, it is suggested that the investigation of such a relation evinces new possibilities of considerations and thinking in the “expansion of vocabulary of architecture” in 1960s and early 1970s, which is both a source to explore “program” as “concept” and also its contribution to this consideration of expansion in terms of “program”.

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<sup>132</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?.* Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 22-23.

## CHAPTER 5

### **“PROGRAMMATIC EXPERIMENTATION” in GORDON MATTA-CLARK**

#### **5.1. The Introduction of “Programmatic Experimentation”**

“Programmatic experimentation,” in this study, is suggested as an alternative critical order (or interpretation) to define or read the architectural explorations in the 1960s and early 1970s, where architectural programming was challenged. This expression is used to criticise the limiting, trajectory “conventions” in program and open up horizons in architectural thinking with the new terminology (they) created for programming. “Program” is proposed to be expanded to the term “concept,” whose determining factors are claimed to have emerged by “experimentation” in the 1960s and early 1970s – described as “programmatic experimentation”. Thus, the methods/tools of “programmatic experimentation” in the work of Gordon Matta-Clark are explored in relation to the terminology determining the components (or conditions) of program as “concept” (borrowed from Deleuze) in the framework of the “resemblances” in experimentation, the “variations” in experimentation of different programmatic situations, the “becoming” in the cut projects that developed programmatic criticism, and the experimentation on “absolute and relative” in the embodiment of his cut works. Yet, these are articulated to describe an alternative order of generality for the concept of “program,” and translated to define that concept.

For this reason, it is suggested here that the “experimentation” in the work of Gordon Matta-Clark explored the changes in “program” (in architecture), which are considered as critical approaches to the “common sense” or “consensus” foundations of architecture. Whilst these works have their individualistic approaches or their “differences” in particular, the resemblances in certain projects worth investigating in order to develop a glance on “experimentation” in architecture – considered, in this dissertation, as a shift. Hence, it is possible to consider “program” as “concept” and re-define its constituting elements in relation to “experimentation” that created “differences” out of “repetition” during the 1960s and early 1970s.

In terms of this thesis aiming to discuss the articulation of the work of Gordon Matta-Clark in terms of “programmatically experimentation,” the critical approaches in his projects contributed to this term without grounding themselves on the “common sense” or “conventions” of architecture. Since the intervened buildings were demolished after his cuts and applications, and they now do not exist, it is not possible to examine the actual work of Matta-Clark, just their representations such as photographs, drawings, writings and films. Therefore, they were experiments on architecture without repetition. Thus, Matta-Clark established a new form of thinking in architectural “experimentation” which was against generality, but aimed to create the possibility of experimenting by turning it into a process in architectural thinking. This generality that was superior to those rules aimed to turn it into a process of change and experiment, which was the significant emphasis on temporality. Thus, “experimentation” on architectural programming in the 1960s and early 1970s aimed to experiment to challenge a fixed point of knowledge, not to reach a fixed one. The works of experimentation during this time period supported the idea that the difficulty of program and its conceptualisation could be benefited by regarding it as a method of experimentation. Hence, the contribution of such elaboration

through “experimentation” made it possible to consider “non-exchangeable” and “non-substitutable” architectural programming as “exchangeable” and “substitutable” in the process of “experimentation”. Consequently, the possibility of considering program as “concept” in architecture turned (or carried) the fixed difficulty in its definition into an ungrounded plane with multiple possibilities open for further development. For instance, Matta-Clark pointed out the possible use of the cut buildings and the inhabiting potentials in them as such:

But I think of it now as still being potentially functional. There’s no reason why one shouldn’t be able to live in that place. In fact, I would be very interested in translating cuts like this into still usable or inhabited places. It would change your perceptions for awhile, and it would certainly modify privacy a great deal. You’d have to live on or as far away from the line as possible. It might be an answer to sharing living space problems. Beyond the gap. Yes – move out!<sup>133</sup>

The articulation and effect of Matta-Clark’s works reveal that these developments can be considered as architectural program as “concept” whose components include the following features: being in relation to another, interconnected; being bodiless although embodied in architectural objects; being relative to its own components, to other concepts, to the plane on which it is defined, and to problems it is supposed to resolve, but being absolute through the site it occupies and the conditions it assigns to the problem; creating a fragmentary whole among irregular components; having the ability to render its components inseparable within itself; not having the definitions attained to things or situations while producing a direction towards thinking; having zigzags and passes through other problems or onto different planes.

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<sup>133</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

## **5.2. The “Programmatic” Articulation of the Works of Gordon Matta-Clark:**

The work of Gordon Matta-Clark included architectural drawings and unapplied projects, interventions with peculiar cut languages on existing buildings that were going to be demolished, and the recordings of these explorations as photographs, films and drawings. The cut buildings were not used after demolition and his projects that were extant as drawings were not applied. The architectural drawings in his archive include examinations on cut languages, the methods on the possible variations of cutting an existing building and predictions of their consequences. His unapplied projects were explorations on the possible insertion of his designs on temporality-based spaces into existing buildings that were intervened by his cuts. For this reason, his drawings and unapplied projects in his archive that have been left obscure beyond the popularity of the reduced literality of his cuts of existing buildings, in fact, reveal that they were all connected to and complemented each other as components of his radical criticism.

In order to understand the reasons for Matta-Clark’s less-mentioned situation in architectural discourse, it is necessary to discuss the role of architecture in terms of being “useful” or “used.” The discipline of architecture urges to have an aim of evolving towards “perfect conditions” in optimum utility, in form and in their interrelation. However, there are examples in architecture that, on the one hand, test the limits of these conventional definitions of spaces and, on the other hand, are contaminated by temporality and inhabit the capacity to manifest variations and multiplicity against these “perfect conditions.” Whilst criticism of the Modern Movement and discussions on this debate especially after the 1960s supported the idea of this multiplicity, the “utility conditions” forced the

discipline architecture to be within the limits of conventional terms. Hence, it is possible to explore the limits of these utility conditions of conventional terms and the emergence of out of limit-spaces in architecture by looking at the in-between, slippery and radical examples of Gordon Matta-Clark.

The emphasis on temporality inherent in his works requires and urges the articulation of how they challenged “programming” in architecture. The multi-facet aspects of the work of Matta-Clark, which covered the questioning of “conventions” in architecture, on “experimentation,” on interventions to existing buildings and on urban investigations, are all considered by this author to be architectural studies exploring alternative programmatic articulations. In this respect, Matta-Clark’s contribution is regarded as developing the reconsideration of the issue of “programming” in architecture.

For instance, the “house” as a conventional dwelling was a compromised unit that established the living conditions of its subjects regarding the emerging social life of individuals. The idea of mass housing of modern life was part of the program for building industrial areas such as factories and their social and physical requirements (in a very basic objective origin). They included optimum conditions for the living unit for individuals – such as living room, bedroom, kitchen, and bathroom. Either as two-storey small houses or as blocks, the program of a house included these conventions based on the same requirement list. Matta-Clark noted that: “[T]he notion of mutable space is especially taboo in one’s own home. People live in their space with a temerity that is frightening.” He linked this anxiety about “mutable space” in a dwelling with the inadequate fixed visual vocabulary of Modern Architecture that was developed as a result of the translation of a machinist functionalism. He believed such a vocabulary was inadequate because the morality to which it responded still required the stability of

space; thus, it mainly replaced the Beaux-Arts aesthetic with a functionalist one. For this reason, Matta-Clark determined a fundamental question on the notion of “mutable space” in a dwelling that necessitated the inquiry about its social bounds. Hence, in terms of the use of “functionalism” in Modern Architecture, he was considering and promoting a “radical re-appraisal” that should have challenged this extensive (aforetime) design methodology as he denoted in his following statement:

The issue for Modern Architecture, the “International Style,” Machine Age; revolutionary architecture, however you want to call it is this: all these various ideologies accept machine functionalism as a kind of visual vocabulary, about which they can moralise in terms of the inevitable needs. The morality that’s rooted in such design mentality is valid. The functional issue was chosen because it seemed the most critical break from a lot of Beaux-Arts, historic garbage. It was valid for its time, but how long has it been, 70 years, since any kind of radical re-appraisal has gone-on? And I think that’s the crux of the issue.<sup>134</sup>

For the Modern Movement, program on the one hand suggested a unity of meaning in a building and on the other hand established this unity with the requirements of the occupancy that lead to different configurations of spaces. Hence, it was a part of the one of the “conventional” understandings of “program,” identified by Matta-Clark as being a “box.” Thus, the investigations of Matta-Clark suggested the reconsideration of these configurations and consequently the program on which they were grounded. One of the several implications about his consideration of such a configuration suggested a continuous change in building programs, as put forward in the following:

The box must be replaced – our needs can be more perfectly flexible if a space doesn’t need to be used it should be stored away, sold or traded for other needs.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, “Interview with Donald Wall.” CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>135</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

Thus, Matta-Clark aimed to develop a certain terminology that would identify his criticism of the conventions of Modern Architecture. The programmatic reflections of this terminology are highlighted here to benefit from and contribute to its expansion on a planar extent. Either in relation to the effects of emerging global situations on urban life where they are located or because of their own inadequacies within themselves, this criticism developed alternative terminology for defining specific architectural spaces such as “limitless” or “mutable” spaces.” These terms were not only used to define a kind of enriching error in urban space in a critical way, but were also used as a kind of design strategy or method to open up new horizons for design and architectural discourse in general. For instance, Matta-Clark used the term “actors” instead of users and described his quest for their generative influence on space as such:

This idea is rich in personal meaning well beyond my ability to expand here, but one of the needs it would fulfil for me is an an-architectural unbuilder in search of actors, it would bring live occupants to the emptiness. “Inflict” and help me shape that space in contrast with another generative fantasy.<sup>136</sup>

This double-sided approach, which is the dilemma of being both an error and a potential method, can actually be the critical thinking itself because it is not only an analysis but also a way of problem solving and a source of method developing. However, it has the danger of being a pragmatic solution that may destroy the potential in the meaning of these words. Hence, a radical approach to such issues came from Gordon Matta-Clark by not turning his interventions into actual “useful architectural spaces” but leaving them as being intervened. Yet, it is possible to highlight three of the phenomena in his terminology linked to his criticism of “program” in architecture: “non-use,” “metamorphosis of use,” and “methods of occupation.”

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.



Matta-Clark defined “non-use” as “a metamorphosis of use [that] automatically generates non-use, logistically it’s unavoidable.” This was a solution to avoid such pragmatism and a manifest about being radical in terms of programmatic suggestions. His interventions were not only destructions to demonstrate a criticism of Modern Architecture or on its architectural discourse that had so far in his opinion reduced the built environment to a “machine city,”<sup>137</sup> but also an architectural analysis of that building before it was intervened. His confrontation with the static understanding of space can be predicated from the following statement:

But, space, to me should be in perpetual metamorphosis by virtue of people continually acting on space that surrounds them. A house, for instance, is definitely a fixed entity in the minds of most people. It needn’t be. So, one of the effects of my work is to dramatize the ways, or stage ways in altering that sense of stasis.<sup>138</sup>

For instance, in the following statement, Matta-Clark pointed out how he was influenced by the potentials of the changes derived from the use of the consideration of temporality, which he labelled as “metamorphosis of use,” and the unexpected possibilities it would generate:

Real spaces especially fascinate me, the kinds of spaces people use all the time. In all probability such spaces are terrifically formalised to use, and this triggers in me ways to set them up without any use. Or setting up the functional level so absurdly so as to ridicule the very idea of function. A metamorphosis of use automatically generates non-use, logistically it’s unavoidable.<sup>139</sup>

In another statement, Matta-Clark equated the “methods of occupation,” in which he defined “occupation” as “a term for transforming space to suit one’s need,” and “by superimposition, by envelopment, by consumption, by digestion.”<sup>140</sup> However, as a result of the fact that these investigations were

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<sup>137</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>140</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON

not applied to buildings in actual use, their consequences on the realisation of such occupations remained unfolded. But, they were considered accordingly since in these interventions the relation between structure and form were considered as separate elements. They were expected to influence each other and these influences were also expected to create an architectural ambiance such as the following program and structure relationship:

As the cutting progressed from the large open office spaces on the lower levels to the smaller interconnecting rooms above, the resultant shapes were transformed from uninterrupted circular slices to smaller curved sections that stopped and started as they met partitions in walls: the boat shape also underwent mutations as it met structural beams and the amount of floor space was altered.<sup>141</sup>

Consequently, Matta-Clark worked on the diagrams of the buildings as he translated the architectural elements into out-of-context situations for testing the ambiguities inherent in these elements in relation to his cuts. He described this tentative approach as follows:

Translating the diagram into its structural context. What's beyond the buildings' surfaces? Rather than using languages using walls. Looking through the thing. The ambiguity what's there or not, as much not as the whole unsharable voids? What happens weights released and working contained energy? The meeting point released: spatial intersection where things are layered or suspended. A cut that took 3 days and 6 inches of rain. Simple gestures spatial complexities and admitting new light.<sup>142</sup>

It can be argued that the criticism of the conventions of Modern Architecture by Gordon Matta Clark, as an artist who benefited from a critical distance of being within the circle of artist/architects of the “An-Architecture” group who criticised the urban and architectural discourse of the time, implied a critical method by making temporary interventions on existing buildings rather than theoretical criticism. Although criticism in

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2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

<sup>141</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Artwork, PH CON  
2002:0016:0086:001-002: Office Baroque.

<sup>142</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Artwork, PH CON  
2002:0016:0086:001-002: Office Baroque.

architecture can be directed by such inter-disciplinary interrelations and these acts were nourished by controversial theoretical criticisms, they were interventions that were achieved through the use of architectural techniques and worth the consideration of being an alternative criticism that contributed to architectural discourse. This criticism in the work of Matta-Clark allowed possible infiltrations into “program” in architecture in relation to the expansion of the term “program” to “concept.”

### **5.2.2. Non-problem” Solving Method: “An-architecture”**

“An-architecture” is a term that was emphasised in the writings of Gordon Matta-Clark. He noted that “I am an-architect”. The term may refer to two different meanings: related either with “anarchy” – implying a political approach – or with “an-architect” (anti-architect) instead of “architect” to distinguish himself within the discipline of architecture as a critic. However, in both senses, Matta-Clark was criticizing architecture by consciously using this term. Also, it should be noted that he was influenced by “structuralism” and frequently used “word plays” in his writings as well.

Matta-Clark’s approach to architecture and his work always highlighted a critical point of view. He also related this criticism with social life and politics, as it can be stated that the programmatic criticism could be developed from that approach:

The dialectics involve my dualistic habit of centring and removal (cutting away at the core of a structure) the clearer becomes another socially relevant aspect of the activity. Here, I’m directing my attention to the central void – to the gap, which among other things, could be between the self and the American Capitalist system.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON

Matta-Clark emphasised several points about his critical approach to architecture, which can be considered as the need for the emergence of the term “an-architecture.” Firstly, he noted that “not as alternatives to architecture – but as a playful metaphoric departure from the rigid structures of that tradition.” Second, he emphasised “architecture as a foreground nature or the city a backdrop.” Thirdly, he said that “a response to cosmetic design completion through removal completion through collapse completion in emptiness.”<sup>144</sup> He also noted that “if the best of architecture is building towards a neutral matrix than the human experience becomes the object.” Next, he said that “traffic traps – a fixed spot surrounded by dangers in motion. Further, he noted that “a primarily architectural failing a systematized consistent approach to a world of total “wonderful” chaos.”<sup>145</sup> He said that “identity papers and keys is an ultimate context in society especially before the law that gives you a constant fixed position.” He noted that “proposing a non science-fiction of housing (problematic).” Finally, he described it as “dealing with the limits of man-made space.”<sup>146</sup>

Matta-Clark urged the necessity of questioning the “conventional” architectural discourse and described it as an on-going process as such:

On the other hand, (behaviourally) much of my life’s energies are about not being denied. There’s so much in our society that purposely intends denial. We would all be living in castles and towers if we hadn’t broken down some of our social and cultural barriers, inhibition or whatever they are.<sup>147</sup>

In this statement, Matta-Clark not only emphasised the architectural consequences of his criticism but also the social and cultural barriers from

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2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>146</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>147</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, “Interview with Donald Wall”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

which they were derived. The emphasis on such a consequence hints the consideration of architectural space not separate from its social and cultural bounds and required a radical criticism covering their inclusion, which implied crucial changes in architectural programming. While making a distinctive description of "An-architecture" through the criticism of Modern Architecture in terms of the problem-solving promises of its architectural discourse, Matta-Clark commented:

If architecture is privileged in needing the past then for modern architecture the greatest of the past qualities order and measure are found in the machine these are admirable qualities law and order - but An-architecture is a search for qualities beyond the rule. A closer awareness of all the senses with little faith in the efficiency army of problem solving - problems solved - non problems.<sup>148</sup>

Yet the problem-solving promises of Modern Architecture were achieved by the definition of architectural programming. So, as a first remark of an-architecture, Matta-Clark's emphasis on "non-problem" solving method of an-architecture can be considered as changing the role of architectural programming in the very basic sense. However, with the use of the term "an-architecture," Matta-Clark was definitely implying an action in architectural space rather than a static object in architecture:

Few individuals think about or bother visualising how to work away from it, to make architecture into something other than a static object into a verb: an action.<sup>149</sup>

Matta-Clark distinguished the term "an-architecture" from the problem-solving concern of architecture by stating that: "An-architecture attempts to solve no problem but to rejoice in an informed well-intended celebration of conditions that best describe and locate a place."<sup>150</sup> What he implied in this definition was the direct relationship of "an-architecture" with existing

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<sup>148</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>149</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

conditions and their use. He also explained it as an on-going process: “An-architecture - working in several dimensions making the discussions the show and the work. Keeping it an on-going open process. Not finishing just keeping going and starting over and over.”<sup>151</sup>

It is possible to establish a resemblance in the similar way of thinking between Matta-Clark’s “an-architecture” and Deleuze’s philosophy of “experimentation,” since the existence of an “on-going open process” were crucial elements of the both. Matta-Clark noted that spaces should be in a constant change and he tried to achieve this aim by his “experimentation” of cuts on existing buildings and his considerations on alternative programs:

We’re on our way out it wasn’t my idea the owners want us out – no the tenant wants to move. It’s either time or too soon as we suspend our thoughts in visions of rooms of sound full of rooms without walls and other states of mind or just this constantly changing state.<sup>152</sup>

As a second remark on an-architecture, Matta-Clark used the phrase: “by un-doing a building”, which implied a reverse approach to existing buildings. He explained his critical approach in his following statement, which can be considered as influenced by the contemporary emerging philosophical discussions and their relation to architecture: “more recently I have enjoyed a term used in reference to Walter Benjamin, Marxist Hermeneutics,” explaining this approach further by saying that:

This phrase helps me think about my activities, which combine the inwardly removed sphere of hermetics and interpretation with the material dialectics of a real environment. The activity takes the form of a theatrical gesture that cleaves structural space.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>152</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

<sup>153</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings. “Interview with Jane Crawford about Office Baroque.” Printed by ICC, 1977.

As a third remark, Matta-Clark noted two points for an-architecture in 1973: “1) Using below, above and between, 2) Anarchitecture can and will begin with adversity.”<sup>154</sup> This statement can be regarded as pointing to alternative spatial situations such as “below, above or between” – the existing spaces to be evaluated as possibilities to conduct his criticism over architecture.

In another explanation of an-architecture, Matta-Clark’s critical approach and his task for possible alternative thinking on the fixed rules of architecture drew his attention to the wasted areas and unconsidered spaces of the city. Thus, he pointed out the potential in these areas in terms of “experimentation” in the following:

I am interested in turning wasted areas such as blocks of rubble, empty lots, dumps into beautiful and useful areas. In regard to the many condemned buildings in the city that are awaiting demolition it seems possible to me to put these buildings to use during this waiting period.<sup>155</sup>

These wasted areas, left-over spaces and unconsidered spaces were considered as potentials for an-architecture. Hence, Matta-Clark’s following evaluation on architecture reveals his critical approach and the left-over spaces in the city:

If the cities use pattern dwindles off to places seemingly forgotten except for each of us man finds it ensuring short escape from total development way push back and insist it be altered to accommodate all the falling of the architectural stage set mentalities is its homogeneous accessibility to all and an oppressive mania for influencing the entire fabric in all its details over all its surfaces nothing’s left alone the professional devotion to case and responsibility leaves no space untreated no surface uncovered whose final effect is a lifeless emptiness completely opposite to the emptiness at the end of the road or at the top of the stairs or at any point of non-use.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>155</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:024: GMCT 1260, Cat #830, 1971.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

Likewise, for the influence of these considerations on architecture, he defined the “city edges the development of outer limits.” His criticism of the discipline of architecture and the emphasis on “an-architecture,” in this respect, can be detected from his following statement:

All views are distorted by a myriad of overlapping views – choose and more “distortion projects” deal with the immediate views specificity. A primary architectural failing a systematized consistent approach to a world of total “wonderful” chaos. If the best of architecture is building towards a neutral matrix than the human experience becomes the object.<sup>157</sup>

His works about an-architecture also included individual investigations on architectural elements. For instance, “wall,” an architectural element, was quite interesting and crucial in his works. Thus, he developed a project called “Garbage Wall.” It was described as a “cyclical work, from garbage to garbage, the performance ended with the dismantling of the piece, which was subsequently dumped into a container” that Matta-Clark had hired for the occasion.<sup>158</sup> He specified the site for this wall as in front of the 10th Street entrance of a church in New York. He described his aim as “experimentation” on the possible layers created by the garbage:

I hope to combine a sculptural process with theatre. The activity will involve building a wall out of urban junk. It will be made by adhering layers of garbage. Once I have built a wall it will provide a setting for some very simple “domestic.” The area around the wall will work, eat and clean maintaining the area activities will be my role in the ongoing performance. The audience, pedestrians and actors are all naturally combined in the character and location of the activity. Although the wall won’t provide the actual shelter it should serve as a stage for eating, washing, work and other homely activities.<sup>159</sup>

The term “de-architecture,” discussed by James Wines and a close term to “an-architecture,” also implies a critical position against architecture. Wines

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<sup>157</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

<sup>158</sup> Gonzalez, Julio. *Gordon Matta-Clark: Exhibition Catalogue*. IVAM Centre, Valencia, 1992, p. 369.

<sup>159</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:002: Letters 1970-74.



points out that although this term "is proposed mainly for critical effect, it does seem appropriate on a number of levels. In terms of its subtractive implications, a reductive approach has obvious appeal in a world where our cities have been obsessively committed to the cause of "over-architecture" in the form of out-scaled congestion."<sup>160</sup> But he also clarifies that "the theory of de-architecture is definitely an attack on smug complacency and resolute preconceptions."<sup>161</sup> In this respect, he reveals that:

De-architecture suggests that massive revolutionary change, sweeping away the past, and rebuilding the city are absurd notions. Certainly, the failure of Modernism lay primarily in its early megalomaniac aspirations to save the world and the dreary compromises that later resulted from the appropriation of its stylistic imagery to satisfy the development industry's demands for cheap and expedient building technology.<sup>162</sup>

On the one hand, Wines evaluates the projects of Matta-Clark under the umbrella of the term "de-architecture" and describes them in this respect in his following statement:

His most famous works included a group of dissected buildings, which at the time seemed to be almost pernicious attacks, a kind of guerrilla warfare against architecture. Structures were cut up, stripped, torn apart, excavated - dematerialized in some way - to achieve a feeling of orchestrated apocalypse. Matta-Clark's art seized upon the paradoxical relationship between the American dream of progress and the wilful destruction that accompanies it.<sup>163</sup>

On the other hand, Wines differentiates Matta-Clark's use of the term "an-architecture" from "de-architecture" in its rejection of what he called "the functionalist aspect of past-due Machine Age moralists."<sup>164</sup> This can be better understood from his following statement:

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<sup>160</sup> Wines, James. *De-Architecture*. New York, NY: Rizzoli, 1987, p. 140.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>162</sup> Wines, James. *De-Architecture*. New York, NY: Rizzoli, 1987, p. 140.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139

One of my favourite definitions of the difference between architecture and sculpture is whether there's plumbing or not. Although it's an incomplete definition, it puts the functionalist aspect of past due Machine Age Moralists where it belongs... down some well-executed drain. That aspect of architecture is a jar for to civilisation.<sup>165</sup>

His works have also been described using the term “deconstruction.” However, Matta-Clark himself seemed not to use this term, although Jacques Derrida was using the term in his writings that were published around the same time Matta-Clark was making his interventions. On the other hand, Mark Wigley claims that the use of “Deconstruction” in architecture does not cover the work of Gordon Matta-Clark because his work lacked a philosophical background and that they were literally deconstructing buildings. However, his works may be evaluated as investigations of experimentation rather than attacking buildings, as stated by Matta-Clark:

The omnipresence of emptiness, of abandoned housing and imminent demolition gave me the freedom to experiment with the multiple alternatives to one's life in a box as well as popular attitudes about need for enclosure.<sup>166</sup>

Likewise, Eugenio Trias has also criticised the evaluation of Matta-Clark's works under the title of “Deconstruction” by distinguishing that term from merely formalist explorations by emphasising its reduction to a lack of content in such cases:

Some critics mistakenly hail as deconstruction what is, rightly and rightfully, an illuminating autopsy of meaning. It would be erroneous and reductive to use these terms of epigonal modernity or nihilistic post-modernism to record the ferocious ransacking of all pseudo-sacredness to which the artist subjects his monumental environment so that, in an air of transparency, a new form may flourish by virtue of which the world will be recreated and restored.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 140.

<sup>166</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>167</sup> Trias, Eugenio. In *Gordon Matta-Clark: Exhibition Catalogue*. edited by Julio Gonzalez, IVAM Centre, Valencia, 1992, p. 371-372.

To sum up, Matta-Clark used the term “an-architecture” to develop a criticism on the conventions of architecture. He described his confrontation in the very basic sense as follows:

Originally I had the notion of a special kind of confrontation in mind but as the differences between the pervasiveness of architecture and the delicate personality of our ideas, I feel more and more like an urban guerilla – only using words instead of bullets – but in amidst these doubts, hold fast to the idea of just how vulnerable the system is.<sup>168</sup>

As Matta-Clark described them above, this study aims to discuss the methods of an-architecture in terms of architectural programming through the experimentation he achieved.

### **5.3. Tools of “Programmatic Experimentation” in the Work of Gordon Matta-Clark:**

Gordon Matta-Clark’s approach to architecture was definitely not only artistic interventions and surface decorations. He intervened into existing buildings beyond the conventional way and beyond the aim of accommodation. His interventions were on buildings that were going to be demolished, except his last intervention project entitled “The Caribbean-Circus Orange,” a renovation project for which he was commissioned by the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art.

His work was against the permanency of buildings and suggested a new temporality. His works not only criticised the existing conditions of the built environment but also started a discussion on the re-consideration of

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<sup>168</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

architectural space and its use in time. If walls, floors, ceilings and facades are some of the elements that create boundaries in architectural space, by cutting them, Matta-Clark speculated their transgression both in space and time. In this respect, Matta-Clark's works can be evaluated as supporting the claim of critical aspect of "experimentation" as predicated in his following words:

The availability of empty and neglected structures was a prime textural reminder of the ongoing fallacy of renewal through modernization.<sup>169</sup>

"Programmatic experimentation" aimed to establish the conceptualisation of "program" with the embodiment of experimentation. This aimed to liberate the term "program" from fixed considerations determined by autonomous situations, and to develop the terms of expedition and debate on the integration of outer forces into this conceptualisation. This integration was suggested to be conducted by experimentation because experimentation provides the possibility of development and search for alternative ways of programming.

The methods of "programmatic experimentation" in the work of Matta-Clark are suggested to be read in layers that lead to evaluate them on multiple planar levels like the use of alternative terminology to discover new possibilities, the experimentation of cutting existing buildings to accommodate the implementation of this new terminology, and the unapplied projects grounded on the ideas of these two previous explorations. All these three situations include individual experimentation methods and inquiries, which can be evaluated as individual planes within themselves. However, they are all compounded on the basis of a quest for a criticism of "program" based on the ideals of Modern Architecture.

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<sup>169</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

The articulation and observation of Matta-Clark's unapplied drawings and projects in his archive, and his interventions on existing buildings, in particular, lead to consider the formation of his critical terminology as complementary components of his criticism and architectural thinking. Therefore, none of them can be evaluated as a single method, but as exploration and testing the multiple situations of this thinking. Thus, in order to emphasise their critical position and detect their interrelation as single complementary pieces weaving the puzzle, the methods and terminology of Matta-Clark are elaborated with the method of experimental processing of factors determining the creation and fabrication of concepts described by Deleuze. This elaboration not only aims to consider both the interventions and unapplied projects together, but also to emphasise the inherent criticism which would lead to understand the "programmatic experimentation" in his works. Therefore, such a reading of the works of Matta-Clark both provides the consideration of methods of "programmatic experimentation" and reveals the inherent existence of programmatic criticism in his works. The tools of this expansion of terminology are explored in this study in relation to the terms that Deleuze specified in order to explain the consideration of "concept" through "variations in different situations," "experimentation" for the embodiment of the "absolute and relative," the "becoming," and the "resemblances" in experimentation."

Firstly, the unfamiliar terminology used by Matta-Clark is seen by this author to be a reaction against the conventional vocabulary of architecture, considered a method of his criticism. This terminology was used by him both to criticise the inadequacy of the existing conventional labelling in architecture, and the physical conditions to which they referred. Therefore, this method of using alternative terminology is defined here by "variations" in different programmatic situations. It refers to the development of various terminologies to identify alternative programs. The uses of multiple situations of unfamiliar terminology are underlined with the more

comprehensive ones leading to the labelling of projects also by Matta-Clark himself. This comprehensive terminology referring to the conceptualisation of both the unapplied drawings and intervention works test the experimentation of “variations” in different programmatic situations, of which he used as tools to conduct this method: “fleabite,” “innerscape,” “displacement,” “solid-void,” and “fold-unfold.”

Matta-Clark’s projects were not only limited to his interventions. Along with his writings, he also produced unapplied architectural projects that substantially reflected his thoughts about architecture, or, in his own words “an-architecture.”<sup>170</sup> This term, which implies a criticism, can be better understood by looking at these unapplied projects. The two most clear definitions of “an-architecture” were made by Matta-Clark as “attempts to solve no problem but to rejoice in an informed well intended celebration of conditions that best describe and locate a place” and as “working in several dimensions making the discussions the show and the work.”<sup>171</sup> He described it as “keeping it an on-going open process” and “not finishing just keeping going and starting over and over.” Thus, he defined himself as “an-architect,” a term derived from “an-architecture.”

Secondly, the embodiment of this terminology was experimented with interventions on existing buildings in his cut projects, which are considered here as testing the “absolute” situation of the terminology with the “relative” situation of cutting existing buildings. Therefore, this method of experimentation provided the exploration of implementing the new

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<sup>170</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002: 0016: 001. Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:003: Letters 1975. Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77. Moreover, “Anarchitecture: Works by Gordon Matta-Clark,” a book edited by Peter Noever in 1997 discusses his work under the term “An-architecture” which was uttered by Matta-Clark himself.

<sup>171</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

terminology that he searched for programming, into the actuality of the existing building. In this quest, the language of his cuts and the methods he developed on cutting the actual buildings in itself required its own experimentation, but the ideological link in all these multiple various situations of cutting directed the research on the implementation of his new critical terminology; the tools of this method can be selected from Matta-Clark's own terminology such as the terms: "completion-removal," "breaking-entering," "building-rebuilding," and "creating spatial complexity reading new openings against old surfaces." For example, he explained the experimentation of cutting existing buildings in order to explore a "metamorphosis" of the space through cutting and voiding as such:

In fact my aim is to evolve away from these restraints as much as possible. While most architects seek to bring a building into existence, I rely upon already existing buildings. I seek to compliment and amplify the meaning of a specific space by "metamorphic" cutting or voiding that space. This puts me and the professional architect at opposite ends of the pole so to speak.<sup>172</sup>

Although the criticism of the Modern Movement and discussions on this debate have supported the idea, especially after the 1960s, of the multiplicity in thinking and de-territorialisation, "utility conditions" force architecture as a profession to push its limits and to question its conventional definitions. Thus, Matta-Clark was asking for such possibilities which took its essence from his "experimentation":

My work directly reflects this in its attempt to open up to get deeper into the concrete unconscious. There's nothing special in this: an attribute of being human is man's desire to probe limits, isn't it? I think, however, that the difference between something scientific and something artistic lies partly in fantasy.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>173</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", "Interview with Donald Wall", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

Thirdly, the testing of the “becoming” in the process of experimentation in the cut works demonstrated the idea of the abandonment of existing programming in favour of this alternative terminology suggested by Matta-Clark. He worked on the contradictions inherent in architecture and chose to develop them further by his “experimentation” on cuts. The radical cuts in his several intervention projects implied the provocative replacement of existing terminology with the use of the tools of: “approaching structural collapse,” “separating the parts at the point of collapse,” and the “abstraction of surfaces.”

As a response to Germano Celant’s article entitled “Ready-Made,” Matta-Clark called his work “Ready-to-be-Unmade.” Likewise, he disputed against the conventions of architectural discourse as such:

I don’t work in architecture in the conventional sense. I work in buildings. Although I talk about spatial complexity and employ terms within the common architecture vocabulary, my concerns are non-utilitarian, non-economic. Nor do I labour under any of the restraints that are inherent in architecture profession.<sup>174</sup>

In Germano Celant’s article, the aim of his “experimentation” with the materiality of building is underlined as his aim was to criticise the “conventions” of architecture:<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, “Interview with Donald Wall”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>175</sup> For instance, the following evaluation by Matta-Clark on his cuts and their relation to existing buildings reveals his way of “experimentation”:

The building is a given complex spaces and parts – punctuating the relations between views and the invisible and doing a limited (cut)not thing whose effects go a limited removals effect on the larger structural context, working beyond inside outside by seeing within. The suspense of cutting the rigid parts free of its whole rearranging how the building must work to hold itself together. Passing through the boundaries passing away with a piece to go choosing and cleaning out a critical point in stress and working between failure and minimalism, reduction and collapse, keeping eyes open for a new hit. The joy of getting away with it a complete devotion to getting away with it. Moving in passing through and getting away with it destructural punctuation with. Rather than finding more ways of using and exploiting what’s left forgotten and remains empty it would be far more useful to allow dead ends their peace and quiet. Rather than finding more ways of using and exploiting what’s left forgotten and remains empty it would be



The spatial order, in which the physical reality of architecture is sublimated, contracts. The system of relations is overturned, the abstracted signs, such as door or wall, ceiling or corner, opening or closing, are transformed into material quantity, no longer geometrically rational. The aristocracy of architecture is thus forced to withdraw by its “vulgarity” and practical elementariness. Without disrupting the ready-made product, Matta-Clark shows us, through his break with tradition, the factuality of space.<sup>176</sup>

Finally, Matta-Clark’s unapplied projects that have remained in his archival documents call for the emergence of the embodiment of the idealisation of the previously described methods. This exploration is defined here with the method of “resemblances” in experimentation. These resemblances in new terminology and their use in the projects and their small-scaled installations and the search for the possibilities for their actualisation are evaluated as the experimentation of the conceptualisation of “program.” For instance, in a letter Matta-Clark wrote to MIT researcher Peter Campus, he mentioned his experiments and projects. It explains his continuous way of “experimentation” with different tools out of architecture. He was thinking about the possibilities of light as a considerable variable for the voids within an existing space, thus he was searching for the possibilities suggested by the emerging technology:

To pass a herd of charging elephants through the eye of a needle, to fill the air with ghosts and to generate a wall of impenetrable light. (The latter I feel is also your domain although you also enlist phantoms to occupy your impenetrable surfaces).<sup>177</sup>

His drawings and calculations indicating possible alternatives for various building cuts reveal that there was an organised and systematic study behind these interventions. Thus, his letter to Melyvn Kauffmann describes his preliminary approach to these projects:

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far more useful to allow dead ends their peace and quiet. Celant, Germano. “Ready-Made.” *Casabella*, 391, 1974, p. 27.

<sup>176</sup>Celant, Germano. “Ready-Made.” *Casabella*, 391, 1974, p. 27.

<sup>177</sup>“Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

My idea is to secure a building awaiting demolition and “restructure” it producing an exciting spatial experience while inducing sculptural sensitivity and refinement to the demolition process. Since you may now have or will have such a building, it might be of interest to you to be involved with an adventurous “un-building” design statement. Since I am an “an-architect” and work with a structural engineer, I could provide complete feasibility studies for such a project.<sup>178</sup>

Sabine Breitweiser has noted this approach of Matta-Clark by explaining how he worked on drawings and models in advance to his applications and interventions by referring to his two projects:

As a trained architect, Matta-Clark planned his large projects on the basis of drawings. Usually he created a number of models before deciding on a particular one. “A simple cut or a series of cuts function as a powerful drawing and redefine spatial situations and structural units,” the artist stated on the occasion of one of his major projects “Office Baroque” in Antwerp. In the year before his early death, the so-called “Sky-Hooks” were created, models for “balloon buildings”. Matta-Clark wanted to create an architecture which would revolve around the human body.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:002: Letters 1970-74.

In another letter to Harold Sten in 1971, that can be an example for his requirements before starting a project, he defined two conditions for his work:

- 1) A ground floor industrial space approximately 2400-3500 (or more) square feet with cold water and the possibility of electrical connections. It needs no heat or windows, something like a warehouse might be ideal.
- 2) A small building, perhaps three or four stories, business or residential, which I plan to use in entirety for a proposed art project which involves principally cleaning it up or thereafter using it as a gallery space for group shows or as community space – i.e. teaching and working with young people. See “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:002: Letters 1970-74.

<sup>179</sup> Breitwieser, Sabine. *Reorganising Structure by Drawing through It: Gordon Matta-Clark*, Generali Foundation, Vienna, 1997, p. 16.

#### 5.4 “Variations” in Different Programmatic Situations:

##### Various Architectural Proposals: "fleabite," "innerscape," "displacement," "solid-void," and "fold-unfold"

Gilles Deleuze has claimed that “conventions” should be transgressed in order to develop new ideas and open up new horizons in thinking. He has suggested that philosophers can achieve this by creating and fabricating “concepts.” However, Deleuze has defined the world of conventions as chaos. It can be evaluated as if a term is detached from its context and used in another one, which allows its considerations out of conventions and is re-contextualised into a new order. Thereby, once a term is de-contextualised and left to chaos, it is infinite and re-contextualised within new relations in the form of “variations”:

What the philosopher brings back from the chaos are *variations* that are still infinite but that have become inseparable on the absolute surfaces or in the absolute volumes that lay out a secant plane of immanence: these are not associations of distinct ideas, but reconnections through a zone of indistinction in a concept.<sup>180</sup>

In this respect, Matta-Clark’s investigations of “program” in architecture by using unrelated situations, unfamiliar terminology to architecture (such as "fleabite," "innerscape," "displacement," "solid-void," and "fold-unfold") shall be evaluated here with the term “variations” borrowed from Deleuze. Since these terms belong to different concepts other than architectural programming, in the case of Matta-Clark, they are used to criticise architectural discourse and to make various architectural (programmatic) proposals. Thus, it can be claimed that the terms became infinite by being detached from conventional meanings, left in chaos and consequently used

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<sup>180</sup> Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?.* Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 202.

as “variations” in “experimentation” of architectural programming by Matta-Clark.

#### **5.4.1. Fleabite:**

The “expansion of the vocabulary” was an objective sequel of the infiltration of architecture into other disciplines in order to reconsider the issues in architectural discourse. One of these fields was biology. Distinctly, the experimentation of the 1960s promoted the “negative” or “weak” sides of biological situations rather than underestimating them to discover the underestimated or excluded one that was left obscure, as an approach to all other fields likewise, which was considered as a way to develop the experimentation on many aspects. Notably, the following statement by Matta-Clark implied such an approach: “it is more interesting to learn from instinctual shelters than from the infinite texture designers.”<sup>181</sup>

Similarly, waste lands and squatter spaces were also considered as potentials to develop ideas and be useful sources. Whilst Modern Architecture and conventional architectural discourse used the “positive,” “profitable,” and “sterile” aspects of physics, biology and other scientific fields, the “experimentation” rather profited from the “underestimated,” “obscure,” and “waste” aspects of other fields. “To experiment out of architecture” was to experiment with “unconsidered” issues. For instance, if Modern Architecture chose to benefit from the “significant forms of nature,” the “experimentation” of the 1960s and early 1970s preferred to observe and investigate the “insignificant, waste” content of nature and also the urbanscape.

Thus, one of the terms suggested by Gordon Matta-Clark, which is

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<sup>181</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

considered in this thesis as a contribution to the evaluation of “program,” and a contribution to combine various programmatic ideas was the term “fleabite.” Matta-Clark borrowed this term in order to describe the situation of a space shared between a host and its parasites. His adoption of the term “fleabite” to architectural space can be considered as a critique of the “idealised” notion of “architectural programming” in Modern Architecture. The reflection of this criticism can be detected from his projects as well as his writings on architecture in his archive. For instance, his cut projects on existing buildings can be conceived as creating the ground of experimentation for predetermining such “fleabite” situations. Matta-Clark described his critical approach to the conventions of architecture by relating them to the existing system as follows:

The dialectics involve my dualistic habit of centring and removal (cutting away at the core of a structure); another socially relevant aspect of the activity then becomes clearer. Here I am directing my attention to the central void, to the gap which, among other things, could be between the self and the American Capitalist system. What I am talking about is a very real, carefully sustained, mass schizophrenia in which our individual perceptions are constantly being subverted by an industrially controlled media, markets, and corporate interests. The average individual is exposed to this barrage of half truths and monstrous untruths which all revolve around “who runs his life” and how it is accomplished. This conspiracy goes on every day, everywhere, while the citizen commutes to and from his shoe-box home with its air of peace and calm, while he is being precisely maintained in a state of mass insanity.<sup>182</sup>

In the conventional sense, architectural programming is considered as the “fixation of the activities on space.” Thus, possible situations are assumed on the basis of expectations of human activities. However, by looking at the “fleabite” situation and appropriating it to architectural thinking, Matta-Clark aimed to consider the togetherness of unexpected activities in a space in an unconventional way, which urged the separation of spaces according to activities. These considerations inevitably required the possibility of

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<sup>182</sup> Wall, Donald. “Gordon Matta-Clark’s Building Dissections.” *Arts Magazine*, 50, 9, May 1976, p. 76.

temporal activities in a space. Hence, he suggested space as being freed (or liberated) from the fixation of object and activity relation in terms of program and suggested the possibility of “moment to moment” space that came along with the consideration of “fleabite” situations, which made the togetherness of unexpected activities possible and changes in spatial configuration accordingly.

The following statement can be regarded as his critique on architectural definitions of “program,” which highlighted “moment to moment space” as the consideration of a continuous change in spaces:

So on the one hand I’m altering the existing units of perception normally employed to discern the wholeness of a thing or the contingent parts of a thing, as an object, as a system.<sup>183</sup>

His contribution to the “expansion of vocabulary of architecture” is also apparent in his suggestion of “wall to live in,” another consequence of the “fleabite” analogy. In architectural vocabulary, a “wall” is a division and a structural element. With a “wall to live in,” Matta-Clark challenged the conventional “wall” description by integrating the surface of a wall and its existence into a three-dimensional spatial consideration by making it possible to live in. The relation between the “fleabite” situation and “the wall to live in” is complementary as they both suggested the use of existing spaces as possible hosts to design on and dwell in. Thus, verticality in the wall surface became a considerable variable in architectural thinking as well as horizontality. The “fleabite” directly included a programmatic consideration as it implied an activity of togetherness and the appropriation of the space according (or related) to this activity. The “wall to live in” can be considered as the architectural reflection of such a programmatic situation.

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<sup>183</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

Matta-Clark also used the term “fleabite” as an analogy to “the space shared between its parasites and host.”<sup>184</sup> Similar issues were also emphasised by artists such as Robert Smithson and other Post-Minimalists in the late 1960s in contact with Matta-Clark. This can be compared to contemporary remarks on parasitic spaces under the influence of discussions on the wasted and left-over spaces of architecture. For instance, Michael Rakowitz developed a project called “Parasite” in 1990 which aims to provide shelter for homeless people. He suggested “the appropriation of the exterior ventilation systems on existing architecture” and described this situation as “parasitism.” This term is, as quoted from the text by Dr. Kazimir Tarmon, of the Osmove Ekologije of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Ljubljana, “is described as a relationship in which a parasite temporarily or permanently exploits the energy of a host.”<sup>185</sup> Rakowitz's description of the project is as follows: “The intake tube of the collapsed structure is then attached to the vent. The warm air leaving the building simultaneously inflates and heats the double membrane structure.”<sup>186</sup> This project, as a provocative contemporary solution for homelessness, can be compared to what Matta-Clark suggested by the term “fleabite.” Similarly, he described that “parasitic” situation as a proposition for neglected spaces:

A highly simplistic view of the edges – again the issue is exploiting undeveloped areas. Therefore, rooftops, waterfronts, empty lots, whatever known usable surfaces that are doing alright on their own are the target for “improvement.”<sup>187</sup>

After such a description, Matta-Clark defined those spaces that are available for “parasitic” situations as “space between the edge of one building ones opposite and to all sides;” “the edges made by functional limits where services break through or re-enter the ground, i.e. plumbing, sewerage;”

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<sup>184</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

<sup>185</sup> Rakowitz, Michael. "Works." In *Surface Tension: Problematics of Site*, edited by Ken Erlich and Brandon Labelle, Los Angeles, 2003, p. 19-53.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19-53.

<sup>187</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

“where the land also raises places where the natural or possible nature of the original land mass break through an excavated paved and superimposed system;” “curb cuts - gutters - road and parking spaces, pigeons, rat city.”<sup>188</sup>  
“Parasites again, the edge, which is clearly denied in the city edges project, is the underground for all its service and life-waste involvement its support of vital energy communication and disposal need is any part of how it functions as a home for our most familiar hosting neighbours - the non paying parasitic tenants and ultra-echo we swale trap poison and gas.”<sup>189</sup>

Matta-Clark urged the potential of “fleabite” situations and defined “metamorphosis” as a source for such dynamism in space. He pointed out this term and made a definition in relation to architectural space:

Metamorphic in the strict dictionary sense of altering the composition of something by the application of external pressure, or more usually by releasing its internal, hidden pressures of transformation. All places have ambiguity. It’s not a clear-cut either-or situation. Space is more than the “aesthetic” manipulation of shapes. It is this ambiguity that needs liberation, clarification, amplification, augmentation, call it what you wish.<sup>190</sup>

He also considered the situation between existing buildings and his new insertions or interventions as “fleabite” and parasitic conditions, by regarding them as initiating the process of metamorphosis through the change in the existing condition in the same way, while challenging the existing conventions of program. He evaluated the “fleabite” as an external pressure to change or release the hidden, internal pressures of existing situations in order to highlight space. In this metamorphosis, he aimed for more than just “aesthetic” manipulation by cutting the boundaries of existing spaces and liberating the activities and by inserting alternative suggestions of use through the consideration of alternative terminology. For instance, Matta-Clark exemplified plumbing systems as parts of buildings,

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<sup>188</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON  
2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.



and the edges that they enter the ground as the controversial situation between the space of nature and the space of the artificial. The intersection point of their togetherness is the space suitable for parasitic activities. Hence, he observed these situations as the end-products (or waste-products) of architecture and suggested re-considering them as having potential benefits.

This challenge against the existing conventions of architectural program in the Modern Movement, which necessitated the functionalised use of space, can be seen in Matta-Clark's following statement in which he highlighted the "non-use" in metamorphosis in favour of "use" in conventional programming. The dynamic change in architectural programming in relation to use was evaluated by Matta-Clark as a considerable variable and he experimented from "the absurd uses of a space" to the "non-use of spaces," which was more than formal cuts or interventions. Consequently, he adapted the same term into the "metamorphosis of use" in the following statement:

Real spaces especially fascinate me, the kinds of spaces people use all the time. In all probability such spaces are terrifically formalised to use, and this triggers in me ways to set them up without any use. Or setting up the functional level so absurdly so as to ridicule the very idea of function. A metamorphosis of use automatically generates non-use, logistically it's unavoidable.<sup>191</sup>

Thus, it can be concluded that Matta-Clark used the term "fleabite" as a contribution to the conceptualisation of program, as he was considering and describing it in relation to "metamorphosis" that implied a continuous change and on-going process in the form of generating non-use rather than expected activities defining the program in conventional sense. It is also necessary to note that, similarly, "metamorphosis" was emphasised by Archigram as a design approach and strategy, as described in their "Open Ends: Metamorphosis, Nomad, Comfort, Hard-Soft, Emancipation,

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<sup>191</sup>"Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001:Matta-Clark Writings.

Exchange and Response, Suitaloon."<sup>192</sup>

#### **5.4.2. Innerscape:**

Gordon Matta-Clark not only borrowed terms from other disciplines but also created new terms for the explanation of his architectural investigations that did not previously exist. “Innerscape” can be related to his statements about using the “below, above and between” with the method of un-doing.

The use of the pre-fix “inner” can be considered as promoting the potentials of the inside of an existing building by detaching it from the floors and walls, leaving it as a void surrounded with the outer walls as the skin. This approach conceives of interior space as a “scape” to intervene that is separated from walls and floors. In some of his proposals, the “innerscape” of the building was emphasised, in which floors are no longer floors but were like separate elements hung on the walls (Fig. 5.1). The project entitled “Free-Standing Column Tower” was a ziggurat-shaped tower inserted into an existing building whose floors became narrower through the roof and were eventually surrounded by a staircase (Fig. 5.2). An opening was cut with the same shape as the freestanding column tower on the wall of the building.

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<sup>192</sup>Crompton, Dennis. *A Guide to Archigram, 1961-74*. Academy Editions: London, 1994, p. 200.

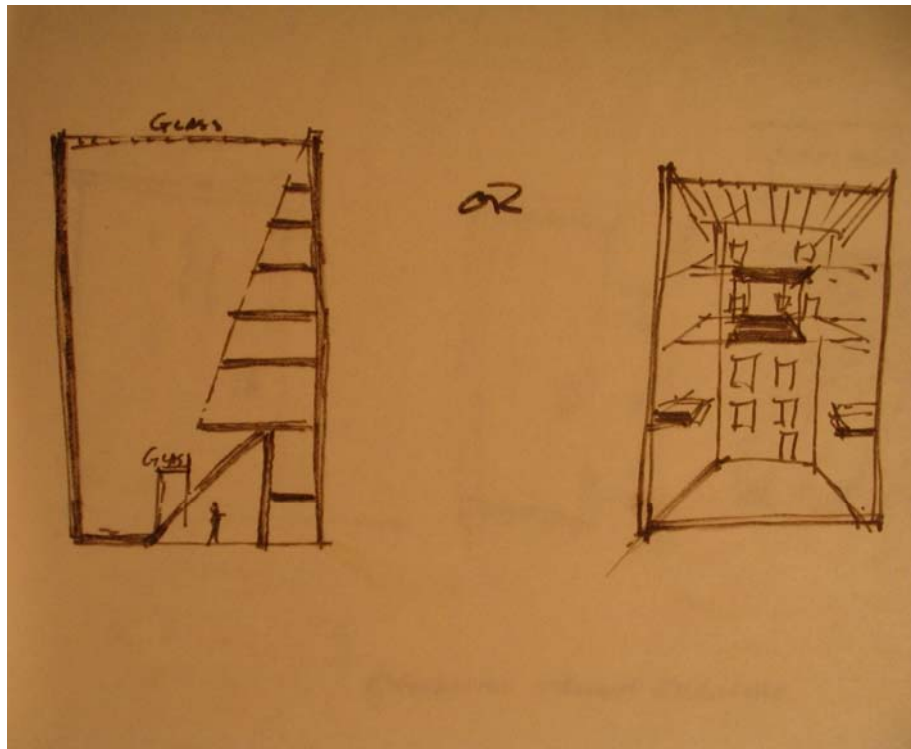


Fig. 5.1 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

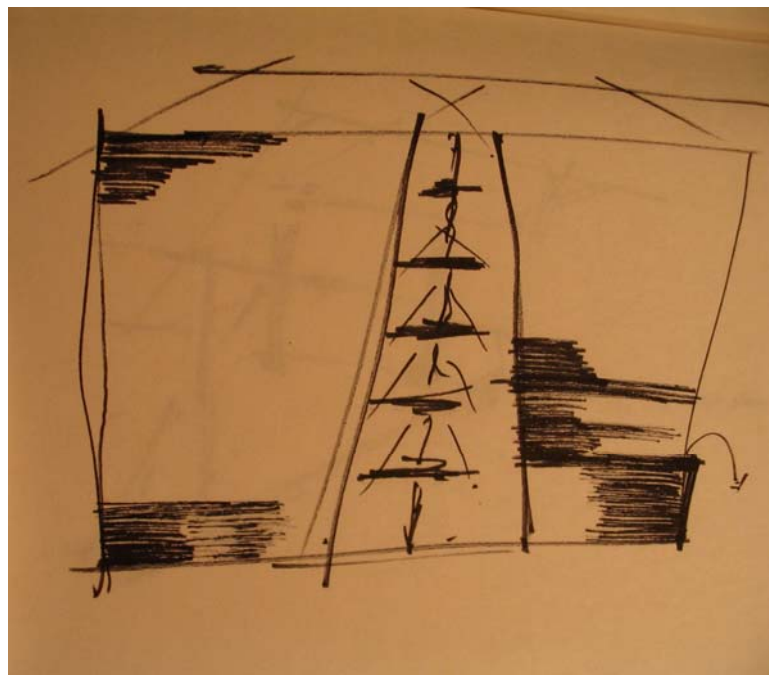


Fig. 5.2 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

His drawings, studied by the author in his archive, reveal that he used a method of inserting various geometrical bodies into existing buildings and their extension through the adjacent buildings as an organism (Fig.5.3). This body ended on the outer wall surface of the existing building and created a cut. However, it is not clear whether this shape continued as a three-dimensional body or just as a cut-out shape on the walls. If it could continue as a three-dimensional body, it would probably inhabit another program and would bring the mutual space into consideration. The same shape was applied to building corners and studied how such a shape can be created (Fig. 5.4).

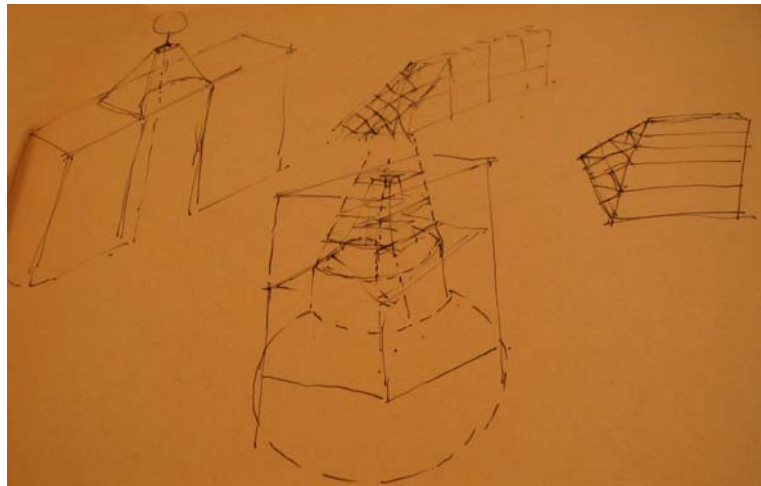


Fig. 5.3 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

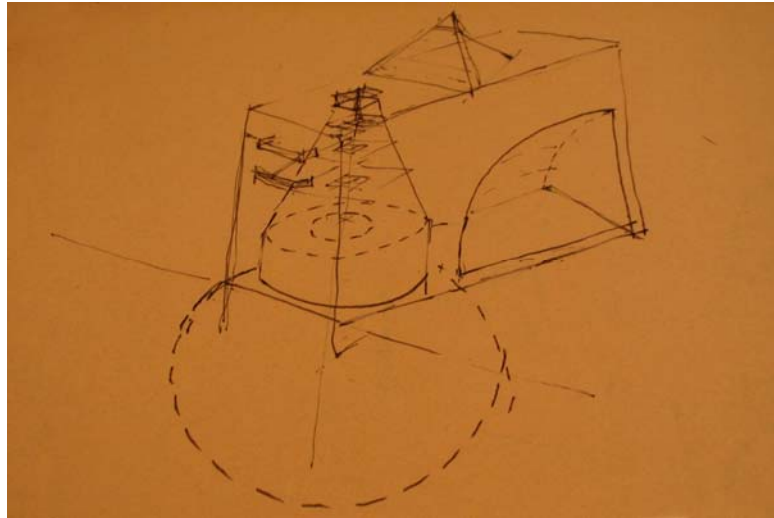


Fig. 5.4 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

Matta-Clark’s architectural proposals concerning “innerscape” also examined the positioning of circles to each other with a V-shape and when rectangles were inserted on them, cuts emerged from the intersections. Rectangular cuts with different sizes were created on two opposite corners of the building (Fig. 5.5). Together, they created a body of cuts continuing within the building and formed a view of a deep window cut from one part to another. This rectangular cut was positioned with an angle within the building, yet the cuts among the floors were not in the same size. The cut on the building was a triangular body from the roof corner to the ground floor; hence, the floors were cut in an angled way. The cut was created on one of the walls of the building that opened an insight through the inner space of the building. (Fig. 5.6)

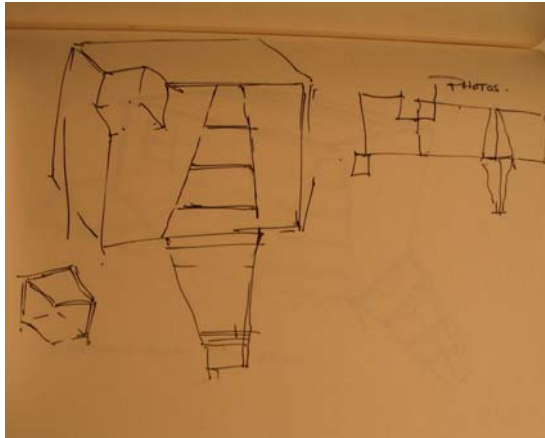


Fig. 5.5 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

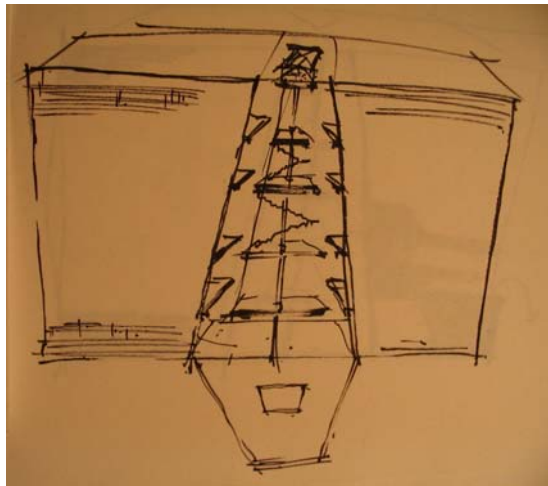


Fig. 5.6 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

In one of Matta-Clark’s proposals, an existing building or an empty lot was sky-lighted from a flat glass-roof (Fig. 5.7). The floors hung on one of the inner walls of the building (or the existing floors are cut in such an angle) were arranged in a triangular shape; thus, they were supported with another triangular structure on the ground floor. In another proposal, the floors were cut and a whole view was created within the building. Hence, the floors were not floors any more but were like separate elements hung on the walls of the “innerscape” of the building. In yet another proposal, a building body was split into two pieces with an angle starting from one corner of the building to the opposite side (Fig. 5.8).

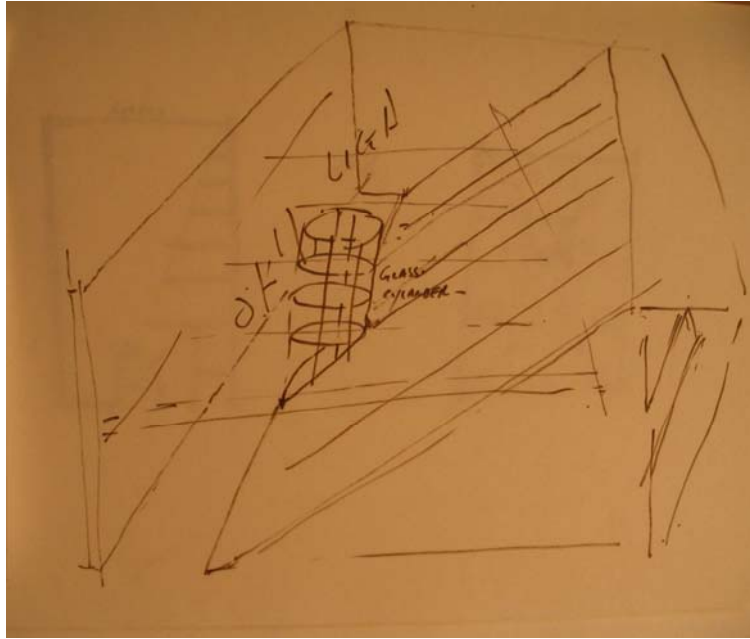


Fig. 5.7 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

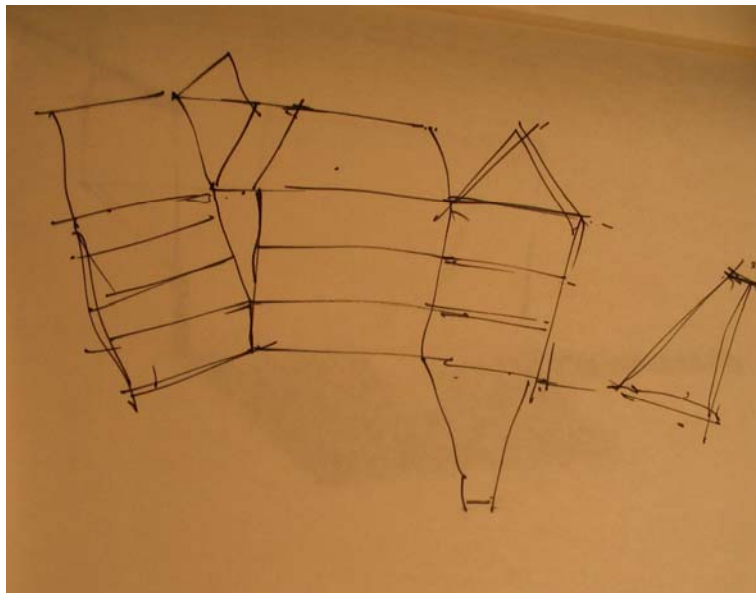


Fig. 5.8 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

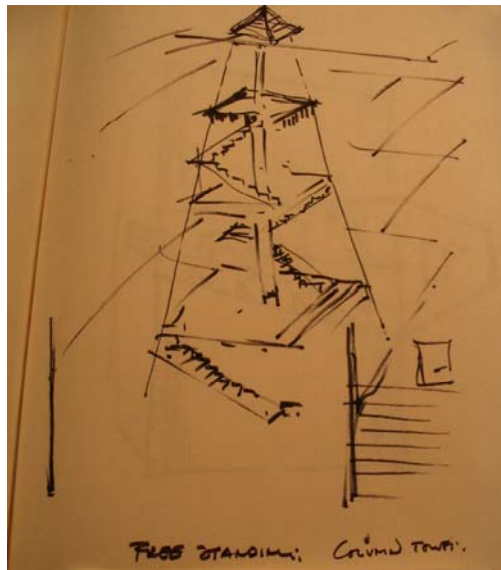


Fig. 5.9. Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

Since "innerscape" was considered as a tool of experimentation, the cut interventions of Matta-Clark can be considered as part of this approach and investigation into the ways of using walls and floors as a "scape" to carry out the experimentation (Fig. 5.1). Thus, in order to achieve the detachment of floors and walls from the outer skin of a building, he detached their content and changed them according to his own use of experimentation as the imposition of another innerscape of void within the existing one (Fig. 5.9). Consequently, it can be considered that the "moment to moment space" previously referred to was not only the togetherness of two existing spaces but also the togetherness of an existing space and the void as a free space that is flexible enough for users to experiment or to use without any architectural reference. The "non-use" Matta-Clark devoted can be conceived as part of such a consideration of the void space separated from the existing space by the implementation of these cuts and their insertion as an un-defined space within the existing one as being open to programmatic interventions.



### 3. Displacement:

“Displacement” was the substantial (or factual) consequence of Matta-Clark’s cutting. It was the displacement of the pieces that were cut within other cuts and developed a language of cut with the execution of such a method. In Matta-Clark’s drawings, he also developed the study of circle and square relations in order to create cuts and accomplish the shape of intersections, mostly on floors. For instance, he worked on the intersection and positioning of simple circles and squares to create deeper cuts, which he called “Simple Circles and Squares, Trench Cuts.” He had drawings that revealed the study of the cuts on different floors and how they would intersect when viewed from above. Hence, the next floor’s cuts on a rectangular shape were placed in an angular position.

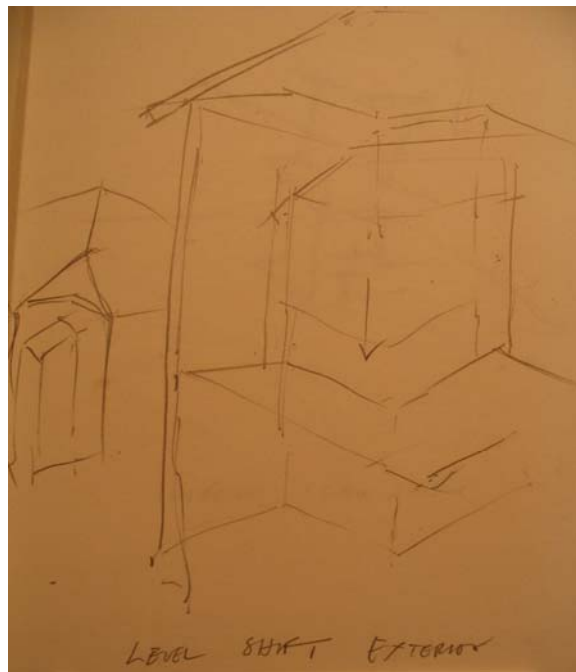


Fig. 5.10. Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

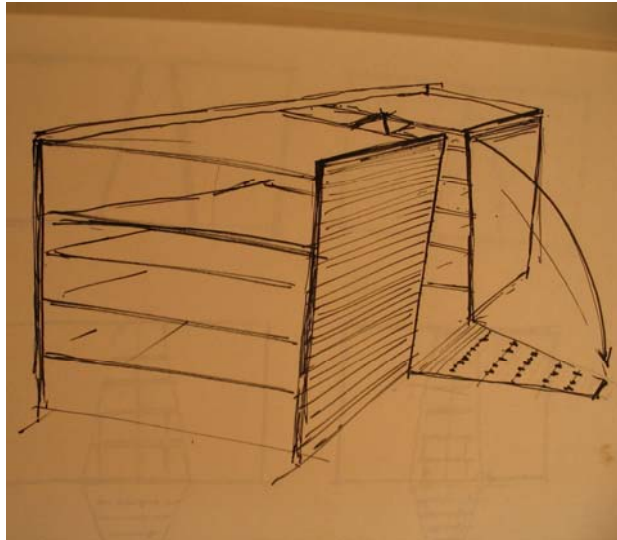


Fig. 5.11 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

There were also several experiments about the interventions themselves, such as the “Level Shift Exterior,” in which a level shift is created among the floors of a building by pushing the cut floor pieces further up. In this project, the building was separated into four pieces, and the cross tracks on the floor surfaces were intersected in one point at the top of the triangle (Fig. 5.10). This method of displacement, as one of the tools of experimentation, made it possible to consider vertical aspects in architectural programming not previously considered. Yet, the consequences of the extraction of the inner walls and floors and their distraction from the innerscape opened up ways for programmatic variations within an existing building (Figs. 5.11-5.12). Hence, Matta-Clark pointed out that as such: “make a building start from both ends and usable from every side.”<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

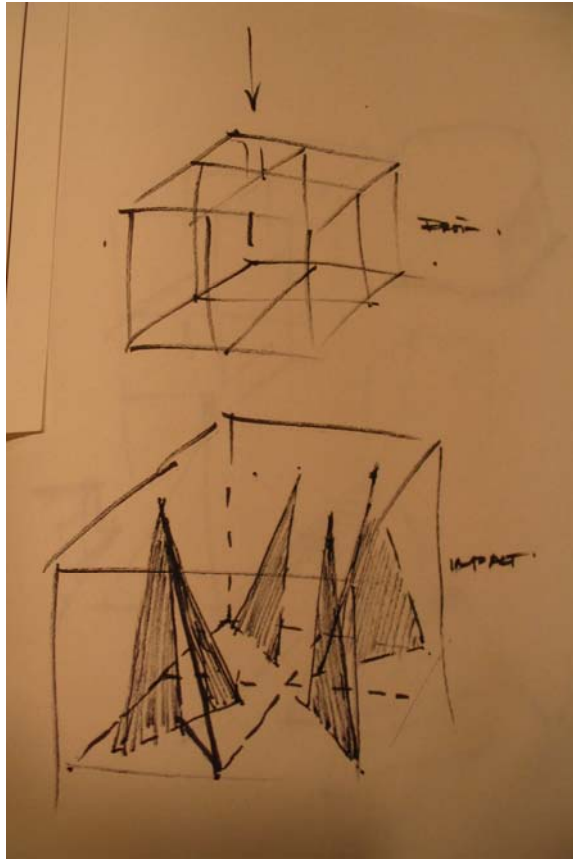


Fig. 5.12 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

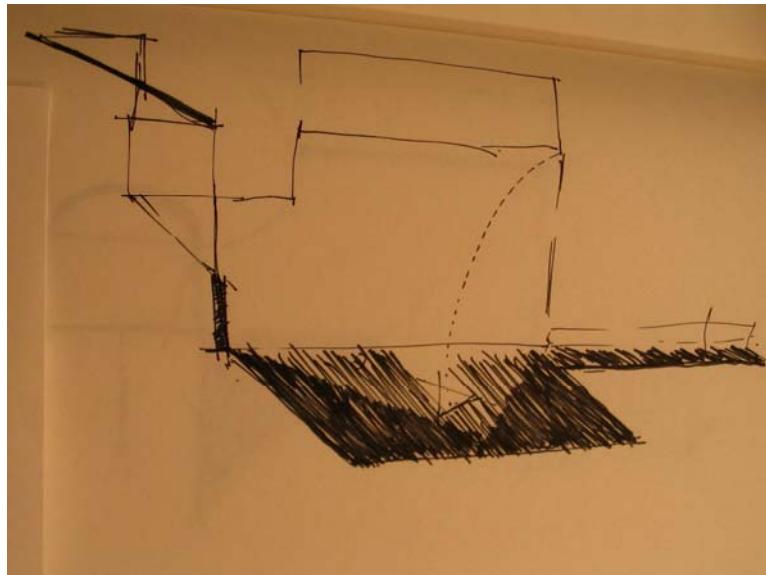


Fig. 5.13 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

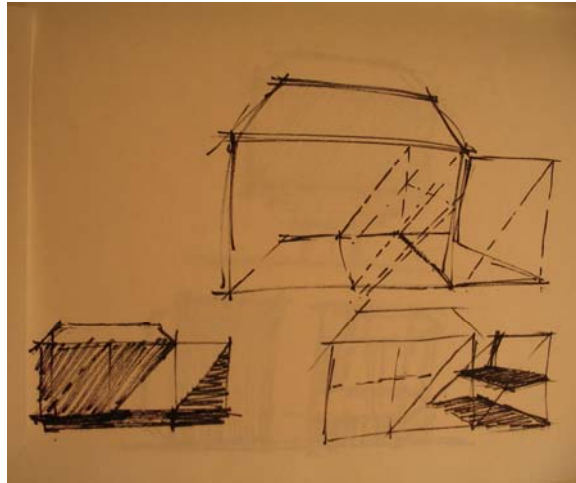


Fig. 5.14 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

As with innerscape, the space was emptied and the level shift was considered as establishing unconsidered relations among spaces, and the programmatic consequences of such “experimentation” were inescapable. The consequences of such considerations were foreseen and supported with such statements by Matta-Clark as: “if needed we work to disprove the common belief that all starts with the plan. There are forms without plans – dynamic orders and disorders.”<sup>194</sup> A cut through the verticality of floors and their separation from the walls established unconsidered variations of program and structure relations (Figs. 5.13-5.14). For instance, the hole created on the floors of the building, all the way from the roof to the ground floor, within the innerscape created by the detachment of floors from the walls, allowed the existence of a void, inserted into the existing building. Matta-Clark emphasised the consideration of the roof as such: “in the history of modern near modern building why should the roof be as delicate as rale when an organic capsule is as thick in the head as in its soles.”<sup>195</sup> Thus, the spaces created through the detachment of floors from walls and the holes made in that innerscape, made it possible to create level shifts as a

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<sup>194</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001:Matta-Clark Writings.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

considerable variable for alternative programmatic variations (Figs. 5.15-5.16).

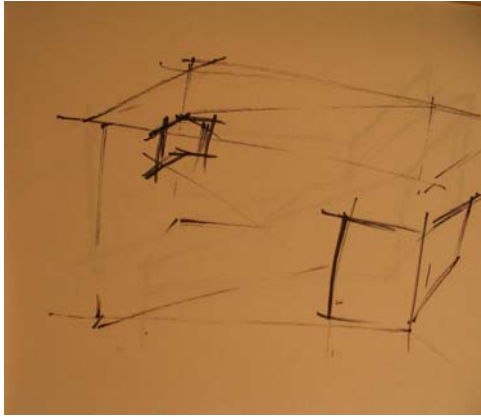


Fig. 5.15 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
“Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

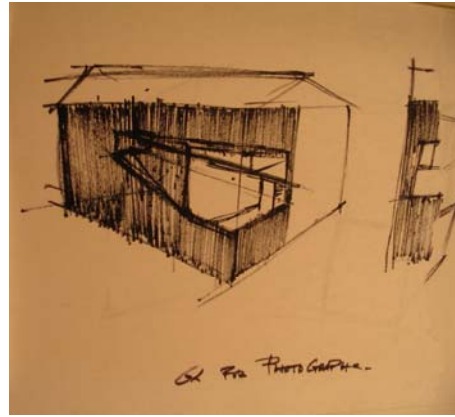


Fig. 5.16 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
“Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75



Fig. 5.17 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

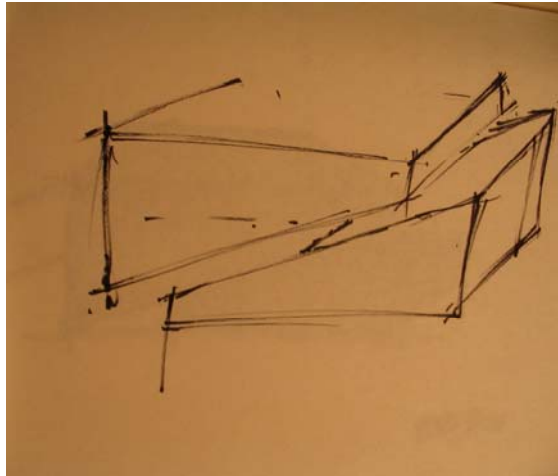


Fig. 5.18 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

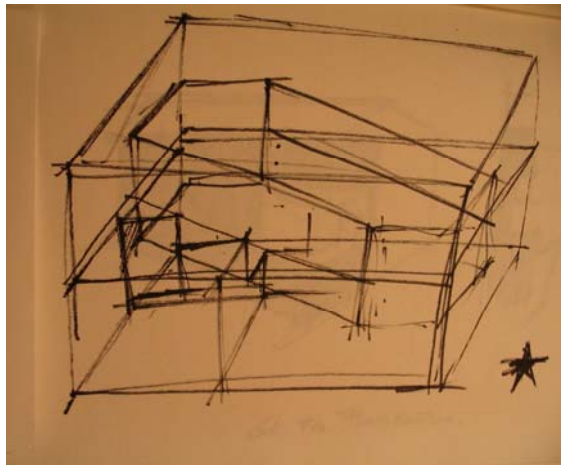


Fig. 5.19 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

Consequently, the sections and the plans of the buildings also passed through each other (Figs. 5.17-5.18-5.19). Yet, the following statement by Matta-Clark is evaluated in this study as a worthy remark on the consideration of such possibilities in terms of programmatic variations:

Social mobility is the one greatest spatial factors how one manoeuvres in the system determines what size and kind of space we work and live in. So, strictly seeking social mobility is a clearly architectural concept, social climbing.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

In this description, the social mobility that Matta-Clark pointed out can be evaluated as the aim and requirement of the mobility to be created within the innerscape of the building that would be allowed by reconsidering the sources and conditions of this social mobility as one of the determining variants for architectural programming.

#### 5.4.4. Solid-Void:

##### Fold-Unfold:

Matta-Clark's "Push over performance" in which "Fold/Unfold, Crush, Cut, Drop" effects were the resulting terminology of this experimentation on "solid-void" and "fold-unfold" (Fig. 5.20). The four walls of a building were put in a sequence next to each other in order to see the effect of the cut pieces. In order to observe the effects of the cut pieces, in another drawing, the four walls of the building are put in a sequence next to each other.

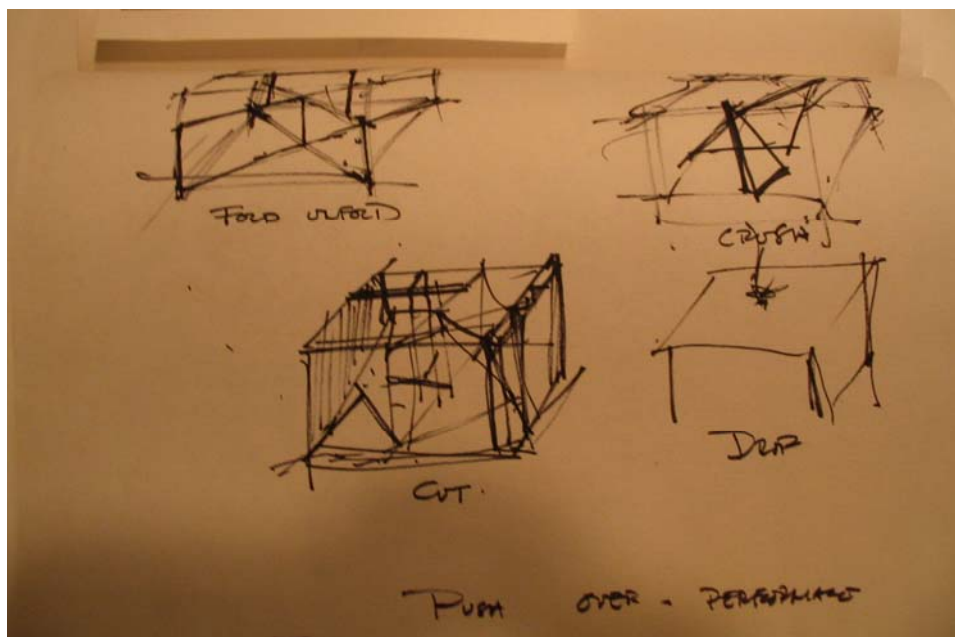


Fig. 5.20 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Various Architectural Proposals", 1974-75

In his “Working away the edges,” the cuts on the edges of the building were studied and the torn down pieces on the walls were highlighted (Fig. 5.21). By cutting the roof and pushing the cut roof towards the inside of the building with an angle create a skylight, a glass cylinder rose from the inside of the building towards the roof by cutting the roof surface as well:

A response to cosmetic design-  
Completion through removal  
Completion through collapse  
Completion through emptiness.<sup>197</sup>

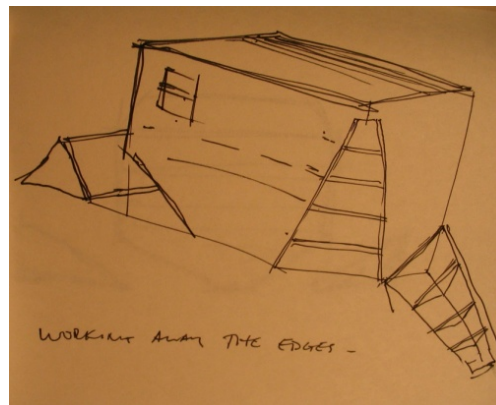


Fig. 5.21 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”

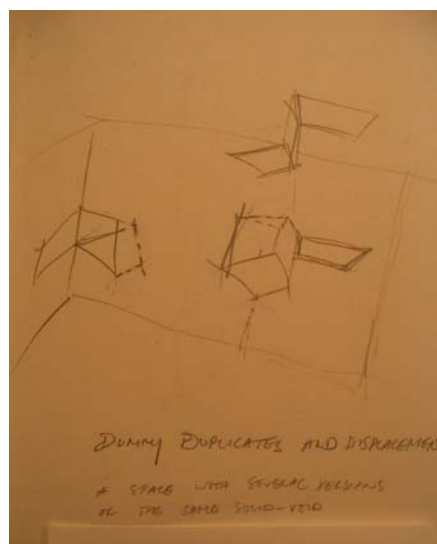


Fig. 5.22 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”

<sup>197</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.



In another project, “Dummy Duplicates and Displacement - A Space with Several Versions or the Same Solid-Void” (Fig. 5.22), the same shape cuts were applied to different places within a building and the resulting cut pieces stuck around on different places (Figs. 5.23-5.24). In terms of cutting, voids, and unfolding, Matta-Clark mentioned the alternative readings and experiences of spaces that were left obscure:

What I didn't realise then, only recently, in the past two years or so, is that while the cutting and voiding opens up new layers of information, institutes slightly shifted insights and establishes unsuspected directions, there's still very much a denial going-on, a greater denial in fact due to the un-folding of additional and alternate readings and experiences...greater enrichment, but denied by the voyeuristic partiality of the situation.<sup>198</sup>

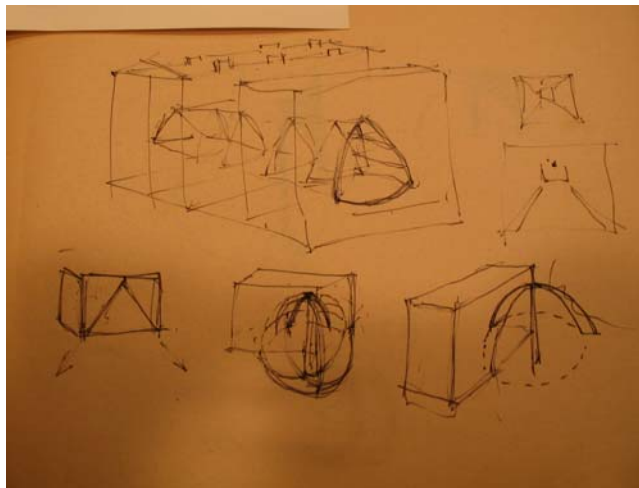


Fig. 5.23 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”, 1974-75

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<sup>198</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

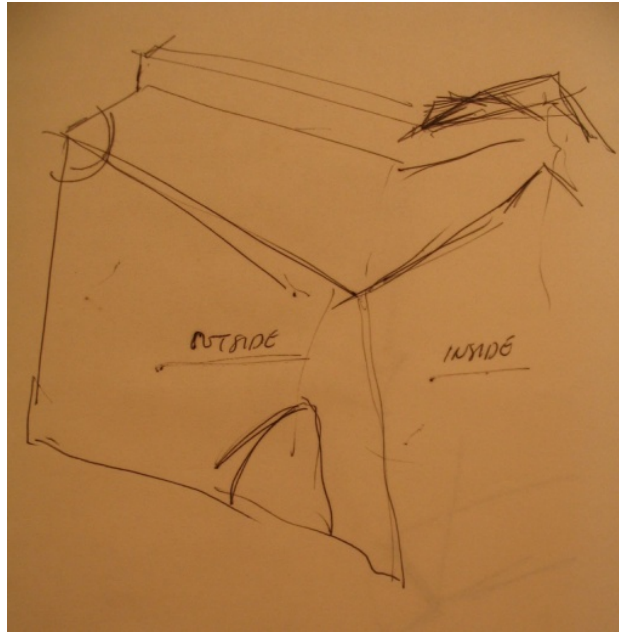


Fig. 5.24 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Various Architectural Proposals”

### 5.5. “Experimentation” on “*Absolute and Relative*” in the Embodiment of Cut Works

Gordon Matta-Clark conducted his “experimentations” on existing buildings that retained their appurtenant “programmatic” situations. Since he detached these buildings from their previous “programmatic” situations by applying his cuts, he ploughed (or turned) them into being “absolute.” Deleuze claimed that concepts are bodiless although they are embodied in objects. Concepts, however, should not be confused with the objects in which they are embodied. Thus, they are both absolute and relative – absolute with the place they occupy on the plane, the density of the problem to which they refer and the conditions they describe for the problem, and relative according to their components, the problems they refer to, and the plane they limit themselves and to other concepts. The urban conditions of the buildings that Matta-Clark cut were specific in respect to other buildings.

But, when Matta-Clark interfered with their program and their existence, they became “relative” in relation to that intervention. They all had specific situations in the urban context. Thus, he described the significance of the existing identity of the intervened buildings as:

I’m interested in taking a situation that’s already charged with its own identity. I’m much more interested in anonymity.<sup>199</sup>

Before applying his cuts, Matta-Clark was working on them as sketches, which can be understood that the absoluteness of his drawings as sketches had a relative position according to their togetherness with the existing buildings that were cut. Thus, he applied these “absolute” cuts on an existing body of building, making it absolute as well. Namely, this was a method of his experimentation by which he contributed to the concept of “program” and made it relative according to that new programmatic situation that he created. This was accomplished through new cuts and transgressed the spaces in new formal relations. The previous programmatic situations, which required defining or asking for a new programmatic relationship, could exist neither by being left-over or empty nor by being demolished with the cuts. Therefore, Matta-Clark described the aim of his experimentation on existing buildings in the following manner:

Work with abandoned structures began with my concern for the life of the city of which a major side effect is the metabolisation of old buildings. Here as in many urban centres the availability of empty and neglected structures was a prime textural reminder of the ongoing fallacy of renewal through modernization. The omnipresence of emptiness, of abandoned housing and imminent demolition gave me the freedom to experiment with the multiple alternatives to one’s life in a box as well as popular attitudes about need for enclosure. It was an exploration of New York’s least remembered parts of the space between the walls of views inside out.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>200</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

In this respect, “programs” can be considered as bodiless, although they are embodied in spaces. Here, the “absolute” refers to the experimentation on “variations” of different programmatic situations. However, they do not necessarily coincide with the objects in which they are embodied. For this reason, they are both relative and absolute. They are relative according to their components such as the specific situation of the space, function, events or the use, and also according to the problems to which they refer such as the architectural task they confront, the plane they limit themselves within the boundaries of those spaces, to other concepts such as the possible activities and to events that make it possible for other programs. They are absolute with the specific place they occupy on the space, the density of the problem to which they refer and the conditions they describe for the problem.

Floors, ceilings, and walls are components of architectural boundaries surrounding architectural spaces. Thus, they embody the absoluteness of architectural programs. They establish “conventions” for the physical reality of architectural space and represent a generality repeated in each building in another form. Matta-Clark’s “Bronx Floors” project was concerned with the “experimentation” of the cuts on floors of neglected buildings in the wastelands of the urban life in New York. As being one of the early works of the architect conducted in The Bronx, Manhattan and Brooklyn in New York during 1972-73, he described these intervened buildings as suffering from heavy arson and the epitome of urban neglect. He defined the interventions as involving and moving into spaces with a handsaw and cutting away rectangular sections of the floors or walls to create a view from one space to another (Figs. 5.25-5.26). Thus, Matta-Clark introduced the following ideas about the transgression of the inaccessibility between spaces through the method of cutting as such:

What also fascinates me is the inaccessible: the space between the walls, the mechanical space, and the space that's your neighbour's space.<sup>201</sup>

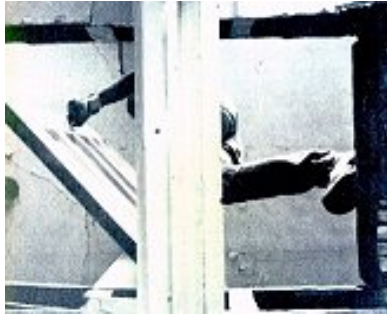


Fig. 5.25 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
"Bronx Floors", 1973



Fig. 5.26 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
"Bronx Floors", 1973

Matta-Clark entitled these Bronx Floors works with separate names: "Threshold," "Double Doors," "Floor Above," "Ceiling Below" and "4-Way Walls." The "Bronx Floors" project was applied in several phases, a series of works. In the Bronx Floor "A" Series of 1973, he noted the following: "Phase A: The suspense of cutting rigid parts free of the whole." In the "B" Series of 1973, entitled "Threshold," he noted the following: "Phase B: Opening of views through the un-visible." In "Phase C: Destructural Punctuation," he described it as "Centring on critical points of streets." Finally, in "Phase D: W-House" in Genoa (rather than New York) of 1973, he described it as "the whole house works to receive its intruder Datum Cut." The work was described in the IVAM Catalogue as being completed with photographs which directly showed the metamorphosis of the interiors or photomontages with alternative views of a single piece.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", "Interview with Donald Wall", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

<sup>202</sup> Gonzalez, Julio. *Gordon Matta-Clark: Exhibition Catalogue*. IVAM Centre, Valencia, 1992, p. 371-372.



Fig. 5.27 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Bronx Floors", 1973



Fig. 5.28 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Bronx Floors", 1973



Fig. 5.29 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Bronx Floors", 1973

In these works, the opening up the floors to each other by cutting them in these neglected buildings criticised the rules about the establishment of boundaries in spaces. The togetherness of the horizontal relationship in architectural programming was thus carried into a possible vertical relationship in programming by these works (Figs. 5.27-5.28-5.29). It can

thus be stated that the particular conditions of this “experimentation” were testing such vertical programmatic conditions by cutting the floors into similar rectangular pieces. By cutting the floors as horizontal elements, Matta-Clark identified a vertical relationship between spaces. Thus, the unconsidered or differently established “conventional” considerations on the vertical relations of architectural programming became ungrounded or challenged by this “experimentation.” His rectangular cuts on the floors did not only contribute to the fixed knowledge about the relation between the floor and architectural program, but also challenged these fixed functions of floors based on this relationship. The “non-exchangeable” on the absoluteness of the floor plane turned into the possibility of the “exchangeable” and “substitutable” cut floors (Fig. 5.30).



Fig. 5.30 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Bronx Floors”, 1973

These buildings had been used as housing before they were evacuated and neglected. So, the “program” can be considered as bodiless and it was not embodied in these spaces with any attained use. The cuts on floors integrated the separated architectural units in a contradictory way of integration through cutting, namely, by two conflicting words (or acts):

integrate and cut (Fig. 5.31). By cutting, separation is achieved rather than integration. However, in this case, by cutting, the integration of spaces was accomplished.



Fig. 5.31 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Bronx Floors", 1973

The components of the "program" in the case of the "Bronx Floors," which made it "relative," were the specific situation of the space as functionless, empty and neglected, its lack of use, its lack of the architectural task they confronted, and the plane they limited themselves to within the boundaries of the housing spaces separated by walls and floors. In addition, these cuts contributed to the "absoluteness" of "program" that occupied these spaces and changed their interrelations by breaking the boundaries among them, by pointing out to the problem of "uselessness" of a building and by benefiting from the emptiness of spaces in order to achieve the "experimentation" to transgress the boundaries of attained activities and the arrangement of spaces consequently.



The location of cuts was where influential and salient places in terms of boundaries, such as the thresholds, and the clear cuts were done exactly between the walls to emphasise the threshold. In order to break the geometrical continuity of the reflection of these cuts, they were applied with certain angles according to the specific situation of the upper floor or the lower one, regarding the place of the windows, doors, all architectural elements and according to the specific extraordinary or self-formed situations of the existing spaces. In this respect, Matta-Clark emphasised those situations about “moment-to-moment” space and made it possible to point out their possible (presumptive) existence as another entity in relation to the “absolute” position of the existing building. He established the “relativity” of his interventions and other possible “programs” within existing buildings through cuts that gave rise to “moment-to-moment” interventions of instant situations.

In order to discuss the “absolute” and “relative” to understand how “program” as “concept” refer to being bodiless although embodied in objects, it is also necessary to discuss them in terms of the plane they limit themselves to and in relation to other concepts. Matta-Clark’s “Office Baroque” project of 1977 reflected the realisation of such an exploration of the limit of coinciding programs between one another within an existing building (Figs. 5.32-5.33). Here, he considered the togetherness of multiple programs coinciding with the function of an office, as he wrote a script dwelling on this issue based on the users.

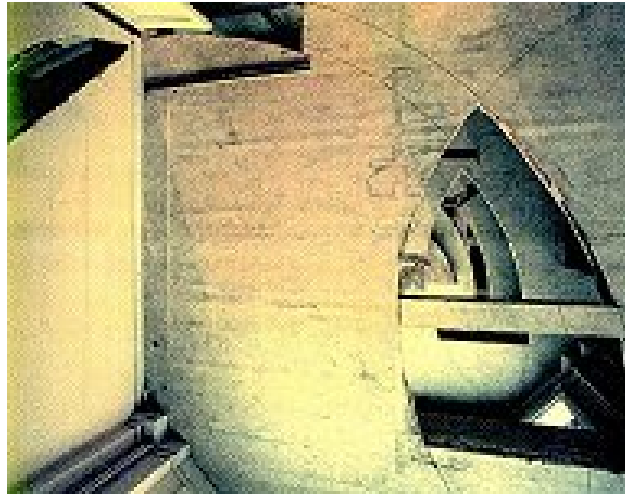


Fig. 5.32 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Office Baroque", 1977



Fig. 5.33 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Office Baroque", 1977

Office Baroque was a five-storey office building belonging to Marcel Peters of the company MP-Omega N.V., in front of the Steen National Maritime Museum, a touristic place in Antwerp, Belgium. A documentary film was produced by Eric Converts and Roger Steylaerts during the time Matta-Clark worked on his cuts and interventions. He firstly aimed to make an

exterior project in which a spherical quadrant nearly the full height of the building was to be cut and removed from the corner. However, this project was not allowed by the city municipality, so he worked inside, out of view. His “final schematic plan consisted of two semi-circular shapes, one slightly larger in diameter than the other, which overlapped, where the semi-circles crossed, a rowboat shape resulted”<sup>203</sup> (Fig. 5.34-5.35).

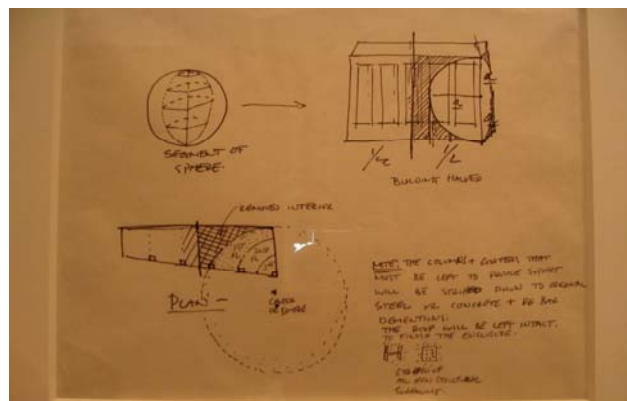


Fig. 5.34 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Office Baroque”, 1977

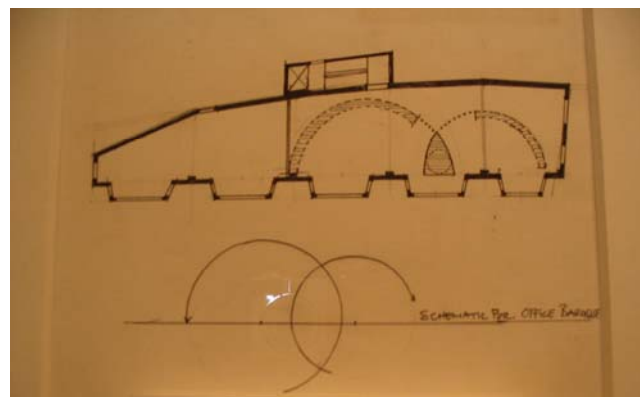


Fig. 5.35 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Office Baroque”, 1977

This project was described in the IVAM Catalogue as being “translated into cut, this became the constant motif on each floor, as [Matta-Clark] used these shapes like fixed set of elements in a musical score that was played

<sup>203</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:033: GMCT 2540, 1973, *Quadrille*, book proposal by GMC.

through the different layers of the building.”<sup>204</sup> Matta-Clark explained this project in the following statement:

Besides the surprise and disorientation this work stimulates, it creates an especially satisfying mental map or model to help the eye remember. Office Baroque is distinct from earlier projects by eluding what I call snapshot interpretation. This is a single characteristic view, which one might find on postcard or art documentation. There is a sad irony in this. Although the project is in prime location with many people hovering just outside the locked doors, the only way to get a comprehensive idea of the work is to wander through from top to bottom inside. I suppose it will be another esoteric hidden work in the history of inaccessible projects.<sup>205</sup>

The documents in his archive revealed that Matta-Clark worked both on drawings and calculations on the cuts before starting the project. The cuts do not show themselves on the exterior of the building. The separate shapes of the cuts have in fact vertical interrelated circular connections. This can be understood from the cut drawings on plans. Also, as part of the project, he changed the entrance to the building by trajecting the cuts on floors onto the flat roof of the building. In this project, the cuts were experimented on floors rather than walls. He used the same shapes on each floor with different scales. Thus, he applied cuts only on the innerscape with the “experimentation” of verticality of these cuts. He also considered the structure of the existing building before the realisation of the cuts, using the term “disposition” to describe their consequences:

In this project, now called Office Baroque, the disposition of spaces (large open offices near the ground, small interconnecting rooms toward the top) determined how the formal elements transformed from uninterrupted circular slices to shrapnel-like bits and pieces of the original form as they “collided” with partitions and walls. Besides the surprise and disorientation this work stimulates, it creates an especially satisfying mental map or model to help the eye remember.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>204</sup>Gonzalez, Julio. *Gordon Matta-Clark: Exhibition Catalogue*. IVAM Centre, Valencia, 1992, p. 387.

<sup>205</sup>“Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>206</sup>“Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

For instance, after proceeding with the “Office Baroque” project, Matta-Clark developed ideas on a scenario taking place in that cut project. He considered taking shots from inside Steen zooming through the cut that he named “window of project.” Then he considered a shot of the street from above or of outside through the windows. He thought of wide-angle pan shots with people in the building, by pointing out that it should be remembered to give it an office-like quality like matching certain shots with shots taken in an office. Thus, he wished to shoot in a circular spinning motion to emphasize the curves and holes, to set up or find vignettes, to take into account the traffic through holes, to make a parallel with computers, the new and old, and to find similar lighting, if possible, with new and old light fixtures. He aimed to relate the project to an office group he called “the gang,” describing them as people who “don’t relate to each other nor to the spaces but are [a] recognisable unit that fills and measure portions of the world.”<sup>207</sup> For his first shot, he wanted to make it just overhead looking down on “the gang,” starting at the top as it disappeared through the holes on the way down into the street, so it would be like an animated zoom out, thus these people then related to the impersonal / personal relationships of an office crew. Matta-Clark’s ideas about how events would fulfil the cut building can be read regarding his ideas about a possible program that would embody his project. Thus, it can be concluded that he left it an open process with less intervention on program just by considering how it would be with two different aspects if they coincided together at some points: “the office crew” and “the gang,” how these coincidences would have directed by the cut project and how they would have been interrelated. These thoughts can be regarded as his considerations on program and event. He left it obscure, and just considered a possible event that would take place as one of the possible problems that program would cover.

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<sup>207</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Art Work, PH CON 2002:0016:075: GMCT-D2464/Cat #720, *Schematic for Office Baroque*, 1977.

As concepts are “relative” according to the problems they refer, each programmatic situation dwells on the specific situation in which they are embodied. Similar to the “Office Baroque” project, another Matta-Clark reflects such an aspect of program as concept, the “Circus-Caribbean Orange” project of 1978, produced following an invitation by the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art. The idea was to renovate three adjacent houses in order to add them to the existing museum buildings. Hence, Matta-Clark proceeded on the project by working with the architects for the renovation, Larry Booth and his assistant. He applied cuts on the facades, walls and floors of the existing building. Only facade drawings exist for the project, but the floor cuts have similarities with the “Office Baroque” project. In terms of these cuts, he considered the circles similar to the layers of an unfolding orange. The circles enlarged on each floor through the lower floors. What he achieved by these circular cuts was the demolition of distinguishing between wall and floor. After these cuts, the separated spaces of the existing building were left without any boundaries. Thus, the vertical and horizontal understanding of the building and the program was transgressed (Fig. 5.36). So, Matta-Clark dealt with the cuts on both floors and walls as an “experimentation” on the three-dimensional complexity of these cuts (Fig. 5.37).

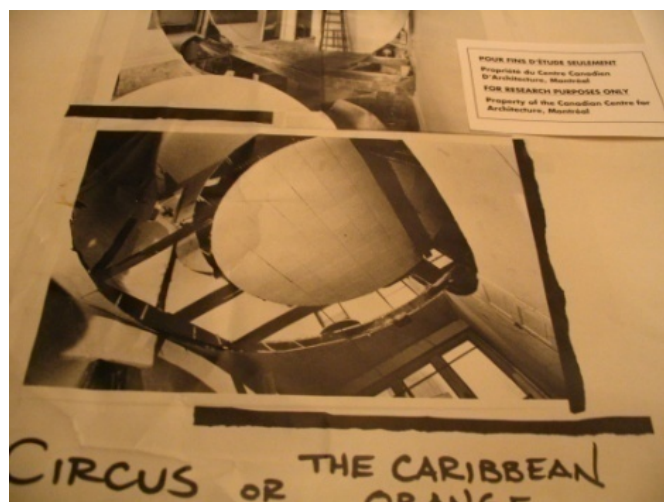


Fig. 5.36. Gordon Matta-Clark. “Circus-Caribbean Orange”, 1978



Fig. 5.37 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Circus-Caribbean Orange”, 1978

This play with the definite location of floors through the circular cuts can be traced in his architectural drawings which aimed to create a level shift among the floors and to develop the possibility of using the existing floors for the insertion of another programmatic situation (Fig. 5.38). In this project, the program of a house was turned into an additional building of a museum. Matta-Clark used this possibility by creating the cuts to transgress the existing spatial configuration of the program of a house (Fig. 5.37). Namely, this became a backward process, as the box-like housing units were integrated into the whole space of the building like the pieces of a puzzle (Figs. 5.39-5.40).

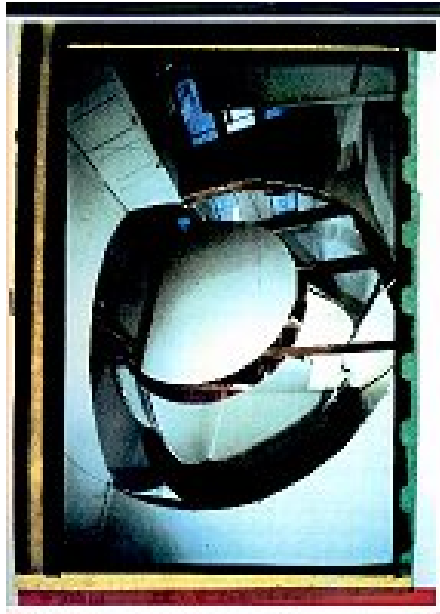


Fig. 5.38 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Circus-Caribbean Orange", 1978

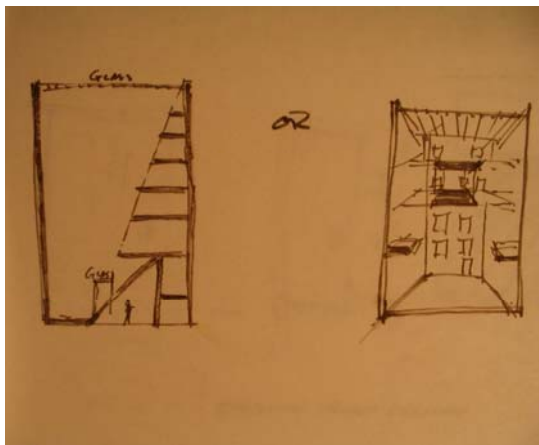


Fig. 5.39 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
"Circus-Caribbean Orange", 1978

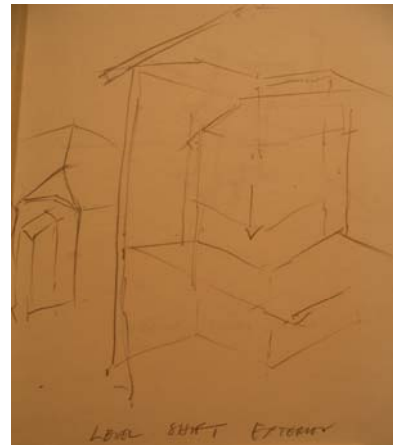


Fig. 5.40 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
"Circus-Caribbean Orange", 1978

The "absoluteness" in the insertion of the newly created programmatic situation for Matta-Clark did not necessarily mean the insertion of an actual body into the existing space. Thus, he intentionally used "void" to be inserted into the cuts he realized, by which he aimed to create the occupation of "omnipresence of emptiness" in the plane that gave "freedom to experiment" the multiple alternative situations in his words. The exploration of such a situation was obvious in his "Conical Intersect"



project produced for the Paris Biennale in September 1975. The building for this project was located next to the Pompidou Centre and the interventions were applied before the demolition of the existing building previously used as a town house. The IVAM catalogue describes the project as follows:

The place was chosen by the artist to develop his project was located in the controversial area of Les Halles, a Paris district where a profound urban transformation was being carried out. His first plan was to make a hole in the new and still unfinished, Centre Georges Pompidou, a building that was then very well-known and the focus of much polemic.<sup>208</sup>

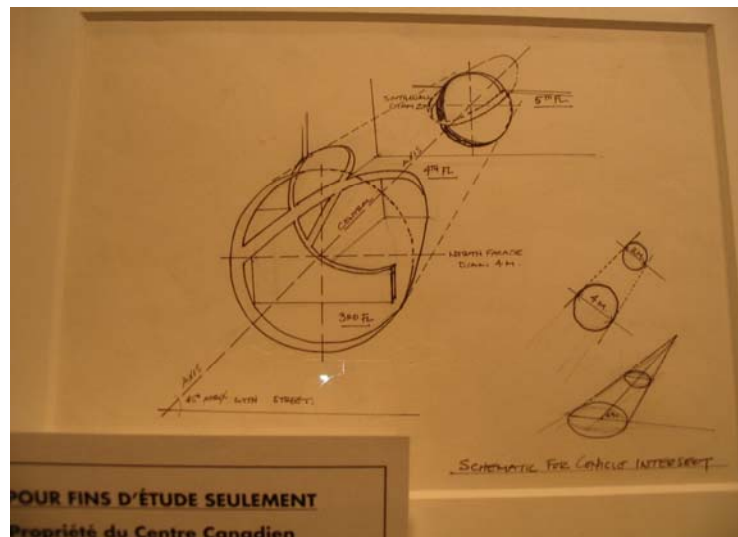


Fig. 5.41 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Conical Intersect”, 1975

<sup>208</sup>Gonzalez, Julio. *Gordon Matta-Clark: Exhibition Catalogue*. IVAM Centre, Valencia, 1992, p. 384.



Fig. 5.42 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Conical Intersect”, 1975

A conically-designed cut was succeeded by 45 angles to the facade. Lisa Le Feuvre has described this intervention as “a negative space – a void through the building”<sup>209</sup> (Fig. 5.41-5.42). With the insertion of a conical shape into the middle of an existing building, both as a three-dimensional body and as two-dimensional traces on floor surfaces, the aim was to intervene on an existing building with another entity. Matta-Clark himself described the process as such:

The Beauborg Project, Conical Intersect, was a wonder of good luck and timing. It was conceived over a year earlier when I had first heard of plans to build the Centre Pompidou as a hub of contemporary culture. The site at 27-29 Rue Beauborg was two modest town houses built in 1699 for Mr. and Mrs. Leiseville as what appeared to be “his and hers” domiciles. These buildings were among the last left standing in the plan of modernizing the Les Halles-Plateau Beauborg district. The work was interesting as a non-umental counterpart to the grandiose bridge-like skeleton of the Centre just behind. For two plaster-dusty weeks people watched us measuring, cutting and removing the debris from the truncated conical void. The base of the cone was a circle of four meters in diameter through the north wall. The central axis made an approximately forty-five degree angle with the street below. As the cone diminished in circumference, it twisted up through walls, floors and out

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<sup>209</sup> La Feuvre, Lisa. “W-Hole.” *Art Monthly*, 4, 2002, p. 255.

the attic roof of the adjoining house. This hollow form became a *Son et Lumiere* for passers-by or an extravagant new standard in sun and air for lodgers.<sup>210</sup>

The interventions on different parts of the existing building were: a conical body inserted on one corner side starting from roof to the ground floor, a triangular cut on the roof and a quarto-circular cut covering the other corner of the building (Figs. 5.43-5.44-5.45). The relationship between them was not clear, thus it could have been a preliminary study for the “Office Baroque” project. The study on corner cut achieved quarto-circle cuts on two adjacent corner walls and their ratio in terms of a circle on floor. Matta-Clark has discussed the “Conical Intersect” project as follows:

All earlier works used buildings neither as objects nor as art material but as uniquely cultural complexes in a given social fabric. These works that consisted of questioning of the internal dependencies of a structural system also harboured the necessity of an urban dialogue. Such a dialogue beginning illegally and in solitude at New York’s Pier 52 on the Hudson became both clearer and more available to the public on Paris streets.<sup>211</sup>



Fig. 5.43 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
“Conical Intersect”, 1975



Fig. 5.44 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
“Conical Intersect”, 1975

<sup>210</sup>Gonzalez, Julio. *Gordon Matta-Clark: Exhibition Catalogue*. IVAM Centre, Valencia, 1992, p. 384.

<sup>211</sup>“Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

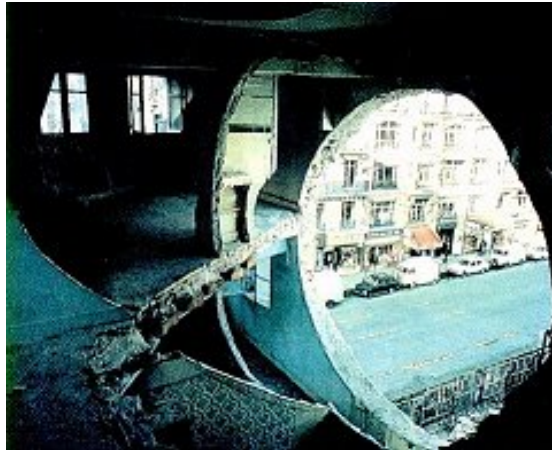


Fig. 5.45 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Conical Intersect", 1975

"Conical Intersect" aimed to insert an imaginary void into a former residential building during the demolitions for the urban renewal around the Pompidou Centre, a building that was pointing out new mechanical considerations of architecture for the neglected spaces of Paris. James Wines evaluated this project as a critical positioning against "Machine Age moralist functionalism," pointing out that:

Matta-Clark's perverse statement was a beautiful contrast to the overzealous technological extravaganza across the street. He burrowed his way through the old building with subversive determination, intent upon creating a confrontation of what he called the "non-umental" that is an expression of the commonplace that might encounter the grandeur and pomp of architectural structures and their self-glorifying clients.<sup>212</sup>

In this project, the drawings of Matta-Clark for the calculations of the conical cuts pointed out that he made a tentative study before their applications. The cut on the facade, as a big hole or cavity through the building made a void or another space within the existing one opening through the newly built Pompidou Centre. The cut established an unconsidered relation between both the inner spaces of the house and the outside. The singular identities of spaces in that house were transcended by

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<sup>212</sup> Wines, James. *De-Architecture*. New York, NY: Rizzoli, 1987, p. 139.

the cuts both on walls, facade and floors. He succeeded in doing this by the possibility of the conical shape which made a void among these spaces. The absoluteness of each space and its differentiation on the existing program was challenged and “relativity” was established by the togetherness of spaces and possible architectural programs. Thus, Matta-Clark experimented on this possibility by creating a conical hole, an imaginary space that was integrated into the existing one.

Here, the possibility of programs being “in relation to another” was tested and the possible connections were articulated. By creating such an imaginary space, Matta-Clark contributed to the idea that “concepts” were “not the definitions attained to things or situations, but they produce a direction towards thinking.”<sup>213</sup> Such consideration of cuts and the integration of spaces by creating an imaginary hole made it possible that the components of the program as “concept” are absolute within themselves, and relative to other components. Thus, program turned into a “concept” “that rendered components inseparable within itself.” As Deleuze has stated, these components create a fragmentary whole and the relations among these components are irregular.<sup>214</sup> This irregularity was also reflected on the cuts done by Matta-Clark in that project and this irregularity of cuts were reflected on the program as “concept” in the same interrelational way. Thus, it can be stated that the cuts contributing to the program as “concept” were also bodiless, although they were embodied in these existing buildings.

In this respect, the newly inserted “program” can be considered as an abstracted conical void which is bodiless, although it is embodied in the solid emptiness of the existing housing space. Here, the conical void coincides with the existing building in which it is embodied. For that reason,

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<sup>213</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. *What is Philosophy?*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, p. 202

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15-16

it is absolute within its own entity, but relative to the situation to which it refers. It is relative according to its own components such as the specific situation of the building being demolished next to Pompidou Centre, which was functioning as a dwelling, also according to the architectural task it confronted such as dealing with a new consideration of functionalism in the form of Pompidou Centre and the plane it limited itself to was the boundary of the contradictory outside conditions within the specific urban context attained by the newly built centre and the district, and its neighbour relation with that building and its own inside condition changed by the newly-inserted conical void as an imaginary space, and to other concepts such as the possible activities and events that make it possible for other programs. But, it is absolute with the specific place it occupied on the space as a singular self-defining geometrical shape as a conical void, to the density of the problem it referred to by its own entity as a critical view on architectural spaces developed by Matta-Clark and to the conditions he defined for this problem and how he dealt with it through “experimentation” on such a cut work.

The choice of an existing building with a huge void and without an existing program is another “absolute” situation that can be traced in the programmatic suggestions of Matta-Clark he explored in his 1975 project entitled “Day’s End” within Pier 52 in New York. In this respect, the cut on the facade allows new situations such as an entrance into the existing building’s non-existing program and created a “fleabite” situation in terms of program (Fig. 5.46).



Fig. 5.46 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Day's End", 1975

Archival study on this project reveals that he made drawings before the realisation of the project (Figs. 5.47-5.48). The notes on the drawings, such as "outside-inside," and calculations about the cut and its relation to the river make it clear that the project is part of his architectural considerations as a whole. Thus, he defines the hints of such ideas as follows:

A sail-shaped opening provides access to the river. A similar shape through the roof directly above this channel allows a patch of light to enter which arches over the floor until it's captured at noon within the watery slot. During the afternoon the sun shines through a cat-eye-like 'rose window' in the west wall. At first a sliver and then a strongly defined shape of light continues to wander into the wharf until the whole pier is fully illuminated at dusk. Below the rear 'wall-whole' is another large quarter-circular cut opening the floor of the southwest corner to a turbulent view of the Hudson water. The water and sun move constantly in the pier throughout the day in what I see as an indoor park, a sun and water temple.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:033: GMCT 2540, 1973, *Quadrille*, book proposal by GMC.

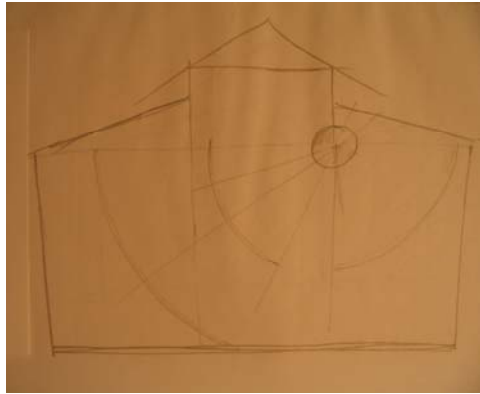


Fig. 5.47 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Day's End", 1975

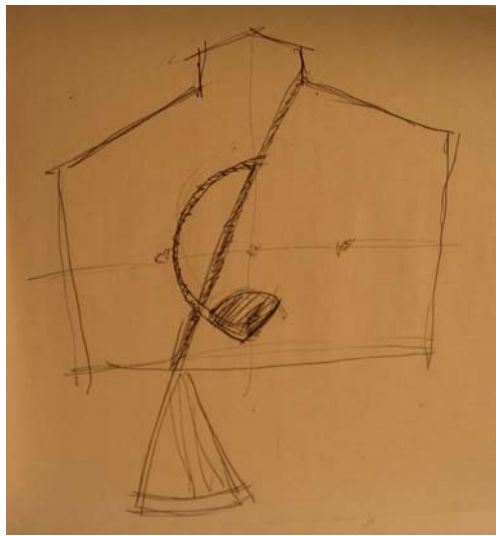


Fig. 5.48 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Day's End", 1975

The existing building was a pier on Hudson River in New York. Although the only impression from outside is a cut on the facade of the pier, this can be considered a realized project of Gordon Matta-Clark. Like his other projects, he again chose a building about to be demolished. However, it is not a coincidence that it is an empty space with huge void; this is part of his experimental studies. Apart from being a mere cut on a facade, or a window for the penetration of light, it can be evaluated as an existing building without a program. Matta-Clark considered light as an abstracted form of a void inserted into space. His aim was to achieve the insertion of light through a giant cut on the facade as the insertion of an imaginary space into the void of the pier. Thus, he noted the two terms: "Measurement and the



Plan” and he explained his emphasis on light as another considerable variable as such: “ratios: have the ability to grow according to harmonic proportions. Light is a new constant measure.”<sup>216</sup> He described what was meant by the term “measure” in the following by linking it to the spatial considerations between the existing and the new interventions:

All measure is an administrative (functional) parts a convenient fraction of whatever constant. Functions measure how far is anything away from home and the kitchen. Measurement will always be a function of some rule and are just not as important as the sense of space. When a measurement doesn’t work a more intimate notion of space beginnings why not deal with efficiency – dealing with the problem in the best possible way is the straightest line to the icebox or going fishing/fission.<sup>217</sup>

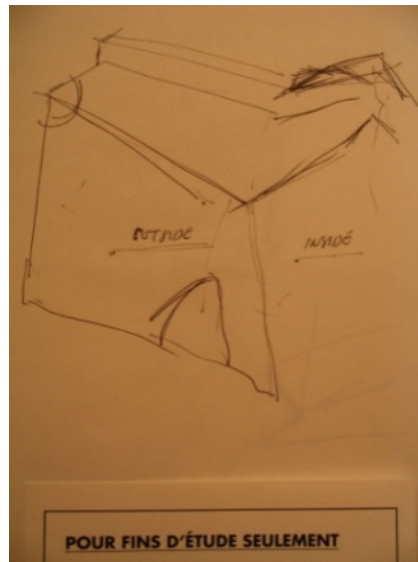


Fig. 5.49 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Day’s End”, 1975

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<sup>216</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

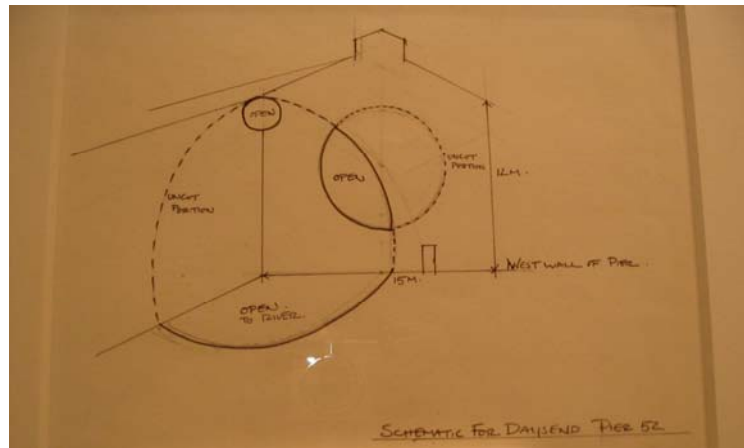


Fig. 5.50 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Day’s End”, 1975

The schematic completed by Matta-Clark reveals that he aimed to form the cut as part of the circle he considered on the corner of the building. He created that cut as the intersection of two circular situations; one on the west facade, the other on the corner of the building. It can be seen on the drawing that he came to that conclusion after several calculations for the location of the cut to be most efficient in terms of light and the entrance for the balloon building (Fig. 5.49). For instance, he placed a circle on the upper corner of the facade and side wall and he used the radiant of that circle on the formation of the main cut (Fig. 5.50), saying that, “below the rear ‘wall-whole’ is another large quarter-circular cut opening the floor of the southwest corner to a turbulent view of the Hudson water.”<sup>218</sup> The arc that passes from the upper corner and the middle of the facade finally completes the form of the cut, which is described by Matta-Clark as “the initial cuts were made through the pier floor across the centre forming a tidal channel nine feet wide by seventy feet long.”<sup>219</sup>

For this reason, the use of a pier building (a building without internal

<sup>218</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:033: GMCT 2540, 1973, *Quadrille*, book proposal by GMC.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

partitions like his other projects) can be regarded as an experiment of another type of spatial condition with a huge void that allows the displacement of other programmatic situations. Thus, the wall that is cut is not a wall anymore, or the cut is not a hole. However, this is not the problem. The disappearance of wall as boundary definer makes it an outside-inside situation in programmatic terms, which says something about the entire spatial condition of the building – appropriately explaining Matta-Clark’s experimental choice for that building (Fig. 5.51).

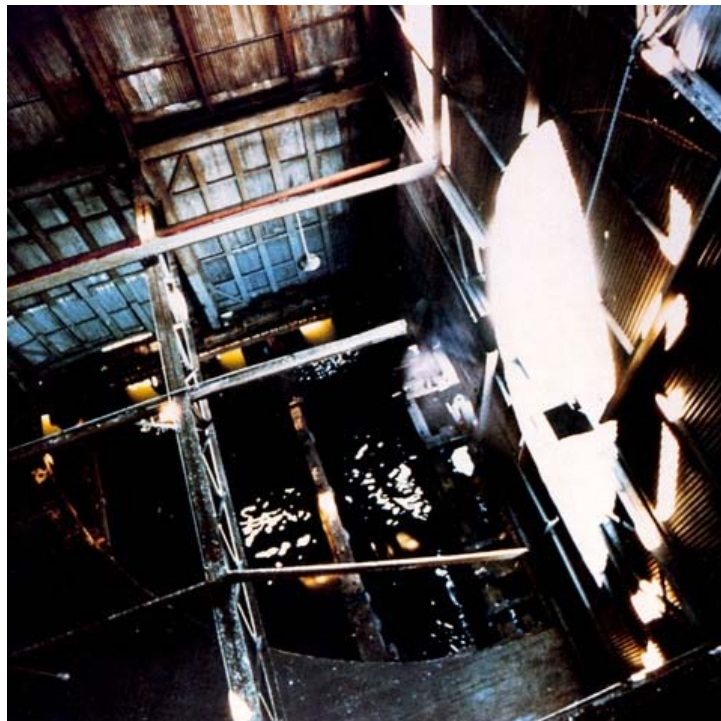


Fig. 5.51 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Day’s End”, 1975

## 5.6. “Experimentation” of the “*Becoming*” in the “Cut” Projects Criticising Architecture as an Institution

One of the distinctiveness of the works of Gordon Matta-Clark was their tangible applications onto existing spatial and urban situations. He actually

cut the surfaces of buildings and unfolded layers. These cuts can be evaluated as a destructive act of a manifest, but more than that they were parts of a critical approach which was actually being applied, in which the urban contexts and spaces were the laboratories. For instance, three of his works can be distinguished from the others in terms of their criticism on “conventional” house in architecture. As “dwelling” is an important figure for architecture, he was not only criticising it as a program but also the system in which it is situated. Thus, these applications on existing buildings turned into actual “events” in the form of “*becoming*” in this context, as he was cut those dwellings; he changed the “concept” of “architectural programming” by unfolding layers and breaking the inseparable into components. This is mostly related to their singular situations. Matta-Clark noted that: “the issue of locating and redefining the centre of a whole structure has carried over into two more recent works: ‘Splitting’ and ‘Bingo.’”<sup>220</sup> He emphasised the two terms related to these works as being influential in his thinking on these projects: “Neglected” and “Abandonment.”

Matta-Clark has said the following about his method of cutting:

Looking through the cut, looking at the edges of the cut, should create a clearly new sense of space. But the cut also must reveal a portion of the existing building system, simply as that which exists.<sup>221</sup>

In the 1974 “Bingo” project in Niagara, he criticized the “typical” house as a dwelling unit. By cutting the facade; he exposed the spatiality of the closeness or privacy to outside or public. The three-dimensionality of the space was reduced to a two-dimensional frontal view. He challenged the architectural limits of spatial configuration of a house. The building,

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<sup>220</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>221</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

demolished after the cuts, was turned into an exposition of spaces and the event in that process thus occurred as “becoming” and changing into something else other than the housing unit. The removal of the facade, an architectural element considered a boundary, challenged the activities of the privacy of a house. Consequently, the division of spaces with the inside walls among the activities and separation of rooms of a house was left indefinable with the removal of the facade. Such a cut of the facade can be considered as the reaction against the Modernist ethic of the house which lists the hierarchy among spatial configurations.



Fig. 5.52 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Bingo”, 1974



Fig. 5.53 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Bingo”, 1974

As described by the IVAM catalogue, “Bingo” was the final title of a work in progress called “Been-Gone Ninth.” The façade of a “typical” American small town home, which was to be demolished for an urban renewal project, was cut into nine equal parts; eight cut pieces were removed while the centre piece was left (Figs. 5.52-5.53). Matta-Clark defined the project as follows: “In earliest cut-outs, I was dealing with a non-acceptance of the space as defined by its given architectural limits.”<sup>222</sup> He also made a statement about using buildings that were about to be demolished:

So for future, one of my goals is to delay the loss of the actual spatial experience and structural alterations by working in buildings where demolition could either be forestalled or be commissioned for occupied space.<sup>223</sup>

Matta-Clark also described the “Bingo” project as follows:

Under the contract with the city, I was to complete my work in ten days, during which time a major part of the exterior was to be sectioned into 9 equal parts, measuring 5' X 9'. Eight of the facade segments were cut free, lowered intact, and crated for transport to Art-park, leaving the centre of the nine-part grid undisturbed. During the allotted working period the pace was a succession of twelve-hour days, non-stop, and at times involving as many as five other workers. The measuring, cutting and removing of the wall sections was continued right up to the hour demolition crew arrived to tear down the house. The project was completed only because the workers called off the demolition until the next morning in order to allow me to safely remove the last pieces.<sup>224</sup>

The second similar project was the 1974 “Splitting” project in New Jersey, in which a suburban house was sliced into two pieces from the middle starting from the foundation up to the roof (Fig. 5.54). In order to keep the building standing after cutting, he supported the foundations before proceeding to the upper floors. In this project, Matta-Clark explored the “issue of locating and redefining the centre,” explaining the process of this

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<sup>222</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:005: Reviews, Announcements, Catalogues 1970-77.

<sup>223</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:001: Matta-Clark Writings.

<sup>224</sup> Gonzalez, Julio. *Gordon Matta-Clark: Exhibition Catalogue*. IVAM Centre, Valencia, 1992, p. 382.

project as:

The work began by cutting a one-inch slice through all the structural surfaces dividing the building in half. The second stage was to bevel down the forty lineal feet of the foundation so that the rear half could be lowered one foot. The central “split” was formed by the five-degree tilt activating the house with a brilliant wedge of sunlight that spilled into every room.<sup>225</sup>



Fig. 5.54 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Splitting”, 1974

Matta-Clark did not aim for any visual consequences of his cutting nor any aesthetic aspects of the object, but he succeeded to unfold the layering of it. In an interview after the “Splitting” project, Matta-Clark said the following about cutting:

A cut is very analytical. It’s the probe! The essential probe. The scaffold of sharp-eyed inspectors. Initially I also wanted to go beyond visual things. Of course, there are visual consequences to cutting, certainly to removal, but it was kind of the thin edge of what was being seen that interested me as much, if not more than, the views that were being created. Well, for example, layering, the strata, the different things that are being severed. Revealing how a uniform surface is established. The simplest way to create complexity was one of the formal concerns here,

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<sup>225</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Notebooks, PH CON 2002:0016:022: GMCT 1069, Cat # 816, 1974, Splitting.

without having to make or building anything.<sup>226</sup>

As a preliminary study before the application of the cuts on the building itself, Matta-Clark used a sketchbook to test his cuts and the depth of cuts. It was a criticism on the dwelling unit and the way of living that is demanded by that architectural space. He not only aimed to question such an architectural space but also the social conditions of the formation of such an architectural typology. For instance, he said that:

I'm dealing with architectural structure as a reality. I mean, there's something about the house which is very substantial, especially in terms of the environment in which it exists. It's like juggling with syntax, or disintegrating some kind of established sequence of parts. In this particular case, the piece is a way of imposing a presence, an idea; it's a way to disorientation by using a clear and given system.<sup>227</sup>



Fig. 5.55 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Splitting", 1974

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<sup>226</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Notebooks, PH CON 2002:0016:022: GMCT 1069, Cat # 816, 1974, Splitting.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.





Fig. 5.56 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Splitting", 1974



Fig. 5.57 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Splitting", 1974

In this project, the vertical cutting of the house and integration of the vertical spaces by removing the boundaries such as walls and ceilings, separates the relations among spaces that are considered together in the functionalist sense (Fig. 5.57). For instance, the cutting of the bedroom and the living room in the same vertical line, and their integration through

cutting suggests the alternative togetherness of both which is not considered as together in the functional sense (Figs. 5.55-5.56). Thus, the conventional thinking in architectural programming depending on a functionalist sense is transcended by such a cut.

The third similar project was “W-Hole” in 1976, the cut of a house in Genoa, Italy. After this work, Matta-Clark himself remarked that:

I seek typical structures which have certain kinds of historical and cultural identities. But the kind of identity for which I am looking has to have a recognizable social form. The determining factor is the degree to which my intervention can transform the structure into an act of communication. The act of cutting through from one space to another produces a certain complexity involving depth perception. Aspects of stratification probably interest me more than the unexpected views which are generated by the removals – not the surface, but the thin edge, the severed surface that reveals the autobiographical process of its making. There is a kind of complexity which comes from taking an otherwise completely normal, conventional, albeit anonymous situation and redefining it, retranslating it into overlapping and multiple readings of conditions past and present.<sup>228</sup>

### **5.7. “Resemblances” in “Experimentation”**

As stated in previous chapters, the integration of technological tools from sources outside of architecture that push architectural boundaries is not adequate to define the “experimental architecture” of the 1960s and early 1970s. Although the integration of these tools contributes to the way that architecture proceeds in terms of the use of methods, they remain within the “same” contexts of architectural definitions. Moreover, they should not necessarily have an influence on architectural thinking.

It is possible to consider their influence as the use of the same methods with

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<sup>228</sup> “Gordon Matta-Clark Archive”, CCA, Montreal, Notebooks, PH CON 2002:0016:022: GMCT 1069, Cat # 816, 1974, Splitting.

different materials. For instance, the use of new technological tools and materials such as steel, glass or concrete contributed to different spatial possibilities in architecture; however, it did not make significant changes in terms of questioning architectural “conventions.” Thus, the “experimentation” of the time period led to a shift also in architectural programming, which made further changes – more than just technological possibilities inserted into architecture. As Deleuze has stated, “experimentation is a matter of substituting one order of generality for another: an order of equality for an order of resemblance.” Therefore, it is possible to consider architectural “experimentation” made up of many layers. Since “experimentation” is a way of breaking one order of generality and starting another, the issue of “resemblance” is a bond that weaves this plane of “experimentation.”

“Resemblances” are unpacked in order to discover an equality that allows the identification of a phenomenon under particular conditions of the experiment. In this respect, experimentation in architecture during the time period in question was a whole project whose layers can be traced in different parts of the world in terms of “resemblances.” From that point of view, the “resemblances” in Matta-Clark’s “Balloon Building Project,” Haus-Rucker-Co’s “Balloon for Two” and “Pneumacosm” projects, and Archigram’s “The Capsule” and “Gasket Homes” projects require exploration in order to shed light on that issue in “experimentation.” In these projects, the way of articulation was different, but the understanding in the use of technology shared the same aim which can be concluded as articulating “architectural programming” by “experimentation.” Thus, all these projects had the aim of radically questioning the “conventions” in architecture. The projects by Haus-Rucker-Co and Archigram have been widely published, so they are familiar within architectural discussions, but Matta-Clark’s “Balloon Building Project” remains relatively unknown despite its “resemblance” to experimentation.

The suggestion of the balloon building projects challenged the consideration of conventions in architectural programming, because it was not only using balloon technology as a new tool to investigate architecture or to enlarge the vocabulary of architecture, but it was integrating a new type of dwelling, changing the idea of modern dwelling type from box to something else, detaching it from both the urban context and any other bonds, mobilising it, and deploying this situation by using technology to achieve that detachment. This mobility would allow permutations of different possibilities of programming, both inside the dwelling and in relation to any context it covers. Furthermore, that “experimentation” was undertaken (or considered) as a process since any section would be an end-product and it would still continue. In order to understand the contribution of the balloon building projects in terms of the ways described above, the terminology of “resemblances” in “experimentation” will be discussed.

The “Balloon Building Project” of 1978 is included in the archive of Gordon Matta-Clark as drawings and writings. This project developed the idea of the insertion of a balloon unit into an existing building, which transgressed all floors starting from the second to the roof (Fig. 5.58). The drawings about this project mostly include sketches on different possibilities of balloon building insertions: the balloon unit clinging on one of the wall surfaces of an existing building, inhabited in a structure that uses the existing building; or the balloon structure was inserted into an existing building as if it was moving within the building: entering from one wall with a circular cut and leaving from the opposite corner pushing the roof further while opening another cut on the corner walls and the roof; or entering through an angular cut on the surface of the wall.

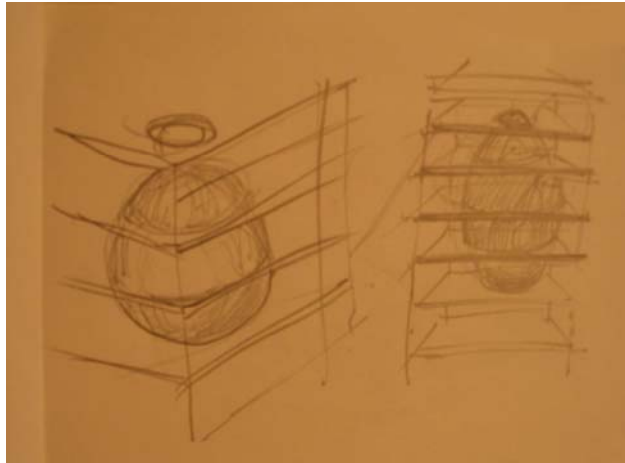


Fig. 5.58 Gordon Matta-Clark. “Balloon Housing Project”, 1978

Although not very clearly described with writings and definitions, Matta-Clark’s drawings on the balloon building studies reveals that his “experimentation” included many different aspects of the study on the balloon unit as a dwelling in relation to an existing building with different possibilities. Hence, the relation between the existing building and the inserted balloon building were not clear in his drawings. The balloon building clinged on one of the wall surfaces of the existing building, in which the structure also was hung on the existing building’s structure (Fig. 5.59). The triangular three-dimensional pieces of different sizes were cut from the existing building body on two corners. These cut pieces also included the floors and consequently, the program was interrupted as well. The balloon structure was located in one corner of the existing building and a necessary circular cut was made on two adjacent walls of the building in order to inhabit the balloon (Fig. 5.60-5.61). The balloon entered the building from one wall with a circular cut, and left the building from the opposite corner by pushing the roof further and opening another cut on the corner walls and the roof. Hence, the circular cut here included one part on the wall and the rest on the roof (Fig. 5.62). The balloon structure entered the building with an angle and consequently, the cut was angular on the

surface of the wall. Also, another balloon with a smaller scale entered the building from one wall and left from the opposite roof, maybe with a faster speed (Fig. 5.63). The balloon structure created cuts on the dome of an existing building, the circular cuts on the roof and the walls were adjacent to each other (Fig. 5.64). When the balloon structure jumped out of the existing building's wall between the floors, half of the circular cut was on one floor and the other was on the next floor (Fig. 5.65). The position of the balloon to the cuts is in different scales, angles and places within the existing building (Fig. 5.66). An inside view as the balloon entered the existing building from one corner and the split in the building as the balloon jumped in and moved.

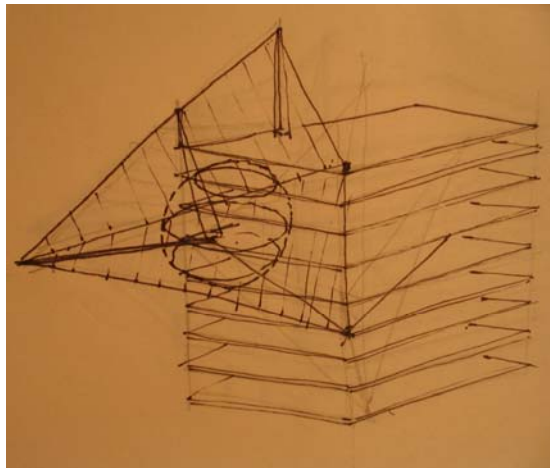


Fig. 5.59 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Balloon Housing Project", 1978

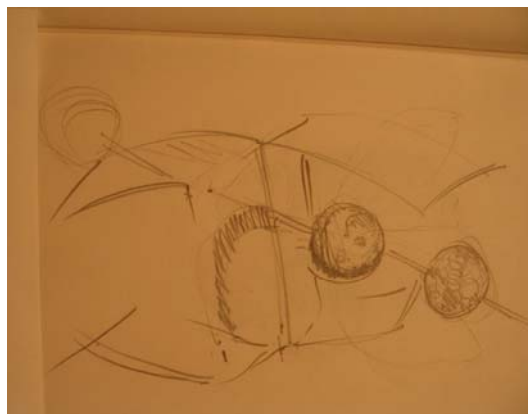


Fig. 5.60 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Balloon Housing Project", 1978

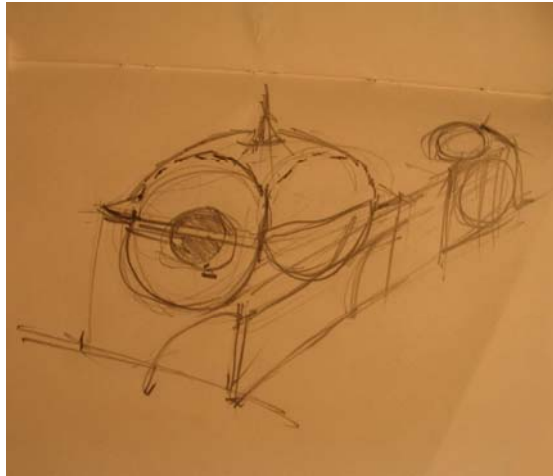


Fig. 5.61 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Balloon Housing Project", 1978



Fig. 5.62 Gordon Matta-Clark. "Balloon Housing Project", 1978

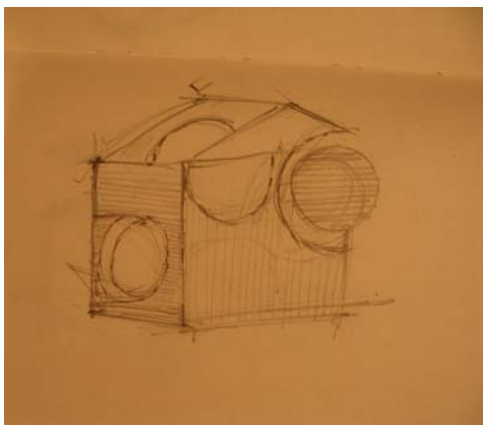


Fig. 5.63 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
"Balloon Housing Project", 1978

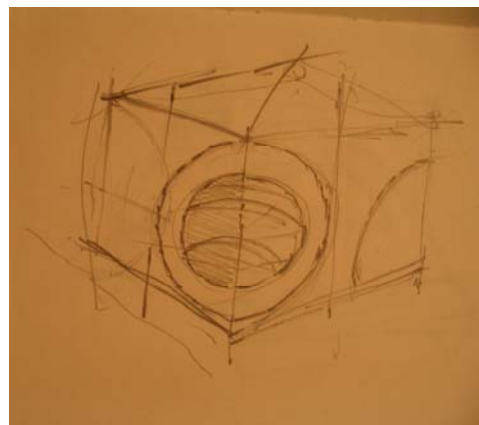


Fig. 5.64 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
"Balloon Housing Project", 1978

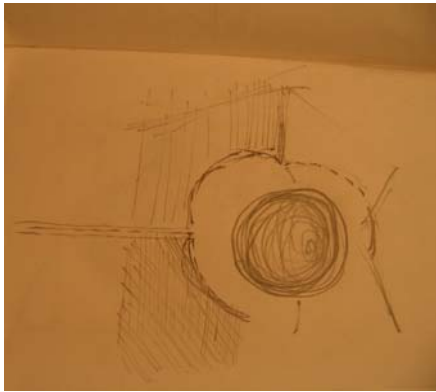


Fig. 5.65 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
“Balloon Housing Project”, 1978

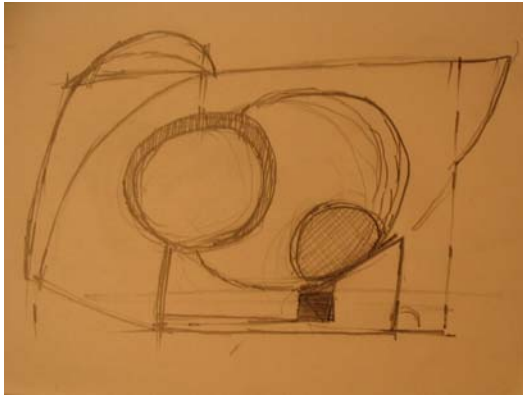


Fig. 5.66 Gordon Matta-Clark.  
“Balloon Housing Project”, 1978

Peter Fend is an architect who assisted Matta-Clark from Spring 1977 to Spring 1978. Fend says that Matta-Clark asked him to make a research about things built "on getting levels, or platforms, to stay suspended or elevated above the ground." He described the task in building that Matta-Clark told him, was to achieve elevation; not to build walls.<sup>229</sup> Fend, as the assistant of the project described his aim as follows:

The original aim was modest: to test indoors, inside a large empty space, like that of the pier where Matta-Clark had made the "Day's End" cut, or even a barn, not much bigger than Gordon's own loft, the suspension with a hot-air balloon- or helium balloon, or both combined - of a mesh rigging, like that on a sailing ship, upon which several people could climb and walk.

He further said that Matta-Clark evaluated the architectural task in that case "would be able to sit on a platform, a calm, clear level, above the ground."<sup>230</sup> The experiment conducted for balloon building included outdoor climate, temperatures, air pressures, winds, skins and coatings, zeppelin firms, tethered balloon systems and lifts. The elements which were emphasised by Fend, as the researcher of this project for Matta-Clark, ended up with the use of different features: "compression elements, tensile fibres,

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<sup>229</sup> Fend, Peter. "New Architecture from Matta-Clark." In *Reorganizing Structure by Drawing Through It*, edited by Sabine Breitwieser, Generali Foundation, Vienna, 1997, p. 47.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.



pneumatic or sail planes, heavy-counterweights, which would be strung together like the elements of a giant sailing ship, always in flux." He has described what Matta-Clark aimed at with the Balloon Project was: "a hot-air balloon, when tethered, [that] can suspend platforms and walkways."<sup>231</sup> It can be understood from the correspondence of Matta-Clark that he contacted several balloon firms about the detailed qualifications of that sort of structure. For instance, in a letter to Piccard Balloons dated 20 November 1977, Matta-Clark described his experimental approach to that project as follows:

I'm researching a project that will attempt to combine 'net-work enclosures' with the structural lift of a series of tethered balloons. At this stage I'm a total novice about balloon technology, but am interested in the possibility of a hot-air stationary balloons, perhaps combined with the use of a solar heat collector to hold pay loads of a ton aloft at low attitudes for as long as economically feasible. Considering that I'm only trying to realize a moderate scale model of a more sculptural than structural character, do you think this is possible venture?<sup>232</sup>

Another letter to Dick Brown also reflects his tentative approach to this project:

I'm experimenting in environmental, experimental design. At present I'm researching a project that will attempt to combine tensile 'networks' structures (enclosures) with a series of low attitude tethered balloons for support. Because of the rapid dissipation of helium, I'm questioning the feasibility a stationary hot air balloon perhaps incorporating a solar heating system for part of the lift.<sup>233</sup>

Peter Fend has suggested that Matta-Clark emphasised the "body" itself as the architectural task and relates his projects according to this task. Thus, Fend defines some "processes" in human body such as "1- gas inflation, 2- liquid filling and inflation, 3- counter-balancing of separately suspended weights, 4- bridging between separate contacts with the ground, 5- elastic

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>232</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:004: Letters 1976-77.

<sup>233</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:004: Letters 1976-77.

stretching and contracting of the skins"<sup>234</sup> and he finds the correspondences of them in Matta-Clark as "1-Light-Gas Suspension (by helium, by hot "air", by sun), 2-Inflation (of an elastic skin), 3-Counterbalanced Weights (in line with Serra and di Suvero), 4-Narrow (Pilotis) Foundation (for straddling, high above), 5-Membranes instead of Walls (a load need not be borne up)." <sup>235</sup> Consequently, Fend makes connections to Matta-Clark's aim in proposing such a project that was put forward in different terms as: "To academics, this is the breaking of walls; to those in the banished camp of artists attacking architectural questions, it's called injecting the self into space." On the other hand, for Fend, Matta-Clark was looking for solutions such as "mediation" between In-Door to Out-Door spaces, a kind of "working space that is shared, and somehow sheltered, by the City."<sup>236</sup> He suggested calling it "Between-Doors" as a kind of space "which are not claimed by anyone but which – being physically "there" – affect everyone."<sup>237</sup> Fend states that Matta-Clark came to a conclusion about the Balloon Building Project as follows: "the lighter-than-air pneumatic tent, or balloon, should become a standard element of the City."<sup>238</sup> By that element, Fend says that Matta-Clark aimed to "set up the game" for the users. For Fend, Matta-Clark, as "an-architect," "plays a model role, and he sets the spirit. But the people must themselves cut out and arrange their own spaces, all within the community shelter created by the "Sky Hook" or with its other name the "Balloon Project."

In this project, Matta-Clark used balloon technology as a tool for the development of an idea of an alternative way of inhabiting, not merely the use of a new kind of material in architecture, but to emphasise a change in

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<sup>234</sup> Fend, Peter. "New Architecture from Matta-Clark." *Reorganizing Structure by Drawing Through It*, edited by Sabine Breitwieser, Generali Foundation, Vienna, 1997, p. 44-55.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46-55.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46-55.

<sup>237</sup> Fend, Peter. "New Architecture from Matta-Clark." *Reorganizing Structure by Drawing Through It*, edited by Sabine Breitwieser, Generali Foundation, Vienna, 1997, p. 47.

<sup>238</sup> Fend, Peter. "New Architecture from Matta-Clark." *Reorganizing Structure by Drawing Through It*, edited by Sabine Breitwieser, Generali Foundation, Vienna, 1997, p. 50.

the conventional use of space in architecture which is influential on the questioning of architectural programming and detaching it from its bonds by experimenting on programming. Thus, in a letter to Karl Stefan dated 14 December 1977, Matta-Clark mentioned how he wanted to benefit from the emerging balloon technology in favour of space creation:

This fascination with economical flexible systems using cables and networks has extended to the possibility of hanging a tent-like tower of a hundred feet in height from a tethered balloon. I'm doing this as an artistic experiment looking to hoist aloft weights, not exceeding 1500 pounds, for short periods in a demonstration model.<sup>239</sup>

The development of his ideas on alternative architectural programs can be detected in the "Balloon Housing Project." Since these experiments were not applied to buildings in use, their consequences on architectural programming remains unfolded. However, architectural programming is not only related to being used and application, it can be studied on unapplied projects, and experimented on through the different use of materials and projects. In the interventions of Matta-Clark, the relation between structure and form are evaluated as separate elements, since they are expected to influence each other, and these influences are also expected to create an architectural ambiance such as the following programme and structure relation:

As the cutting progressed from the large open office spaces on the lower levels to the smaller interconnecting rooms above, the resultant shapes were transformed from uninterrupted circular slices to smaller curved sections that stopped and started as they met partitions in walls: the boat shape also underwent mutations as it met structural beams and the amount of floor space was altered.<sup>240</sup>

As Fend has also described it, Matta-Clark considered the balloon projects

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<sup>239</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Archival Books, PH CON 2002:0016:004: Letters 1976-77.

<sup>240</sup> "Gordon Matta-Clark Archive", CCA, Montreal, Artwork, PH CON 2002:0016:0086:001-002: Office Baroque.

as similar to the cut experiments he conducted in the “Day’s End” project. That project had several layers; he wanted to make a detachment from the existing building as well as he wanted it to be inhabited by that existing building structure. Here, Matta-Clark’s writings about the “flea-host” relationship and its parasitic situation can be evaluated as parallel to this project. The “flea” can be considered as the “balloon building” while the “host” corresponds to the “existing building.” The nature of balloon as a self-controlling system can be considered with the ability of not only moving within the existing structures but also surviving within the city. The skin of the balloon is replaced by the wall. The cut experiments that Matta-Clark used in the “Day’ End” project is considered as the outdoor relation of the balloon building: the balloon structure gets out of the existing structure through that cut.

The original plan of Matta-Clark is described by Fend as such:

To allow for hot-air to suspend canopies or vegetation or platforms accommodating people, or all of these, within unoccupied air spaces of the city, could become practical, even standard part of city engineering. It seemed that cities could be opened up between In-Doors and Out-Doors to allow a vast range of mediation between the two, between Sealed Boxes and Open-Exposed Voids. It seemed, further, that one could take advantage of a prime fact of cities: they release heat, as gas. This heat is emitted from air conditioners, from heaters, from machines and vehicles, from people themselves, and this heat adds up to an enormous source lift. The heat, when emitted from a sealed box, like standard skyscraper today, becomes public property. Why not have this heat, along with incoming solar heat, be put to public use? What opportunism: if it is there, use it.<sup>241</sup>

So, Matta-Clark not only considers the cuts as ornaments or a destructive relation between inside-outside, or the integration of boundaries, but also a possibility of a transition of unrelated programs that can possibly connect under several conditions. The possibilities of this transition from different

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<sup>241</sup> Fend, Peter. “New Architecture from Matta-Clark.” *Reorganizing Structure by Drawing Through It*, edited by Sabine Breitwieser, Generali Foundation, Vienna, 1997, p. 53.

parts of the existing building are also tested in his drawings.

The “common senses” in architecture such as the fixation on the ground, the mobility of the “human body” rather than the architectural product itself, the static program of the building are transcended by the non-fixed ability, the self-mobility, and the possibility of being open to co-existing programs of the “Balloon Building Project.” Here, Matta-Clark rejected the protectiveness and closeness of a program in a building and opened it to possible other programs that could move around and co-exist for specific time within another program. Thus, he tried to break the generality of fixed programs.

This kind of approach makes it possible to think that “program” as “concept,” in the way that the “programs” can be in relation to each other at different times by such a consideration of non-fixed spatial relations. One concept of “program,” the existing one may exist by its own entity, and it may be in relation to another one or not, or the intervening program may be in relation to each other. Matta-Clark’s “Balloon Building” questions such opportunities by opening up the limits on program. It is in fact, not only a suggestion of experimenting with balloon technology, but also establishing a possibility of singular components with irregular entities that can joint to the “concept” of program from multiple situations. Thus, “balloon building” is “relative” to its own components, such as its own program, structure, materiality, and to problems resolves; but it is also “absolute” through the site it occupies such as the co-existence with other programs and the conditions it assigns to the problems of this co-existence. Consequently, the definition of architectural program became ungrounded in this project, and contributed to the possibility of opening it up to “concept.”

What is distinctive is that Matta-Clark did not narrate a story about the non-controllable situations of his “Balloon Building Project’s” program

suggestion, as Archigram or Haus-Rucker-Co did. Rather, he left it obscure. This consideration was his contribution to “program” as “concept,” since he left the programmatic situations of “Balloon Building” open and without control, by just setting up the game. The essence in this set-up was to agitate the rules of social conventions that were crucial in the formation of spatial relations of a building. He experimented with the possibility of what would happen if a house would not be a box and if it is detached from its surrounding and become mobilised. He explored how that detachment would influence spatial relations and how that detachment would be achieved by the emerging technology. He debated on what would happen if the social conventions of a house would be broken down. In his project, he searched on one of the possibilities of how the conventional and unconventional would exist together through balloon building. It is not possible to define program within restricted definitions, the issues raised by Matta-Clark in this project makes it possible to evaluate “program” as “concept,” embodied in different situations. Thus, he left the programmatic configurations to an open-end.

Most of the early projects of Haus-Rucker-Co share “resemblances” with Matta-Clark’s “Balloon Project.” One of them with a similar name, “Balloon for Two” (1967), is a float above the city of Vienna (Figs. 5.67-5.68-5.69). Gunter Zamp Kelp, one of the members of the group, has described this project as follows:

A forerunner (of virtual reality) was the Balloon for Two. It appeared six times between 12.00 am and 6.00 pm through a window of a Viennese façade. Each appearance lasted for about ten minutes, creating the opportunity for a male/female couple to experience the ... urban environment through the tattooed, transparent membrane of the spherical balloon. In Balloon for Two the membrane was situated between the organ of visual perception (the eye) and the environment. This obstruction or hindrance was aimed at the relearning of perception.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Schmiedeknecht, Torsten. “Surface, Metaphor and Virtuality.” *Zamp Kelp: Expanding Space, Architectural Monographs 54*, Wiley-Academy, London, 2000, p. 10.



Fig. 5.67 Haus-Rucker-Co. "Balloon For Two", 1967



Fig. 5.68 Haus-Rucker-Co. "Balloon For Two", 1967



Fig. 5.69 Haus-Rucker-Co. "Balloon For Two", 1967

Another project by Haus-Rucker-Co that contributes to this discussion of "resemblances" is the "Pneumacosm" (1967), which was an expansion plan

for New York using pneumatic cells. It was a plug-in unit in the form of a light-bulb that benefited from the existing buildings to survive as a spatial unit which could be inserted any time into any stationary building (Figs. 5.70-5.71-5.72). This project worked as follows:

A Plug-In cell that came as a unit and was supposed to work like a light bulb: the moment that it was plugged into its station all services like electricity, water and telecommunications would be provided.<sup>243</sup>

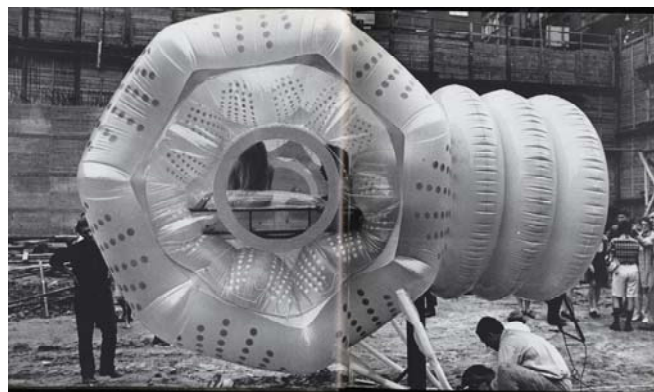


Fig. 5.70 Haus-Rucker-Co. “Pneumacosc”,1967

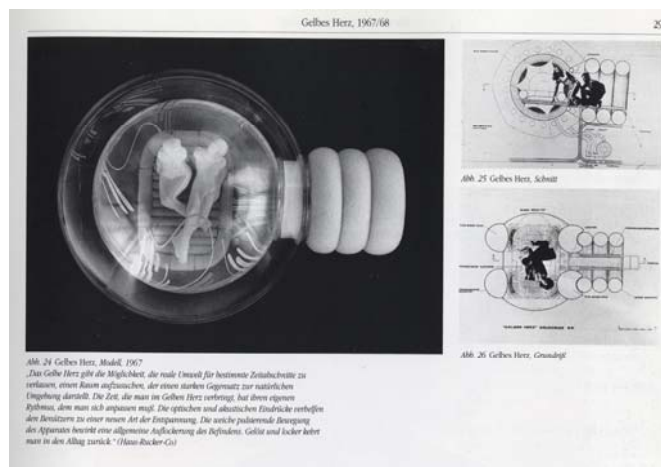


Fig. 5.71 Haus-Rucker-Co. “Pneumacosc”, 1967

<sup>243</sup> Schmiedeknecht, Torsten. “Surface, Metaphor and Virtuality.” *Zamp Kelp: Expanding Space, Architectural Monographs 54*, Wiley-Academy, London, 2000, p. 8.





Fig. 5.72 Haus-Rucker-Co. "Pneumacosc", 1967

More than using the balloon technology in terms of its form, membrane structure and materiality, the transparency and the situation of being aesthetically and perceptually distinguishable, these projects suggest a different inhabiting situation that is detached and radically challenges conventional introversial dwelling units. They provoke and question the basic acceptations of dwelling and way of living, which forms the conventions of architectural programming.

This provocative and radical situation of projects is left obscure by the emphasis and questioning of architects in terms of their disciplinary situation between art and architecture. However, more than their individualistic creative manners, it is more important to understand how all of this research developed and challenged architectural conventions. For instance, Stanislaus von Moos's question on Haus-Rucker-Co evokes a parallel situation with Gordon Matta-Clark in terms of their position to architecture and evaluates them as mere individuals:

It's partly because that the operation field defined by Haus-Rucker doesn't conform with the "normal" architects at all. Is it about an architecture office that also produces art, or a group of artists who were interested in architecture? Are they modern architects or post-modern

or late modern? Or are they in the main not architects, but rather researchers or inventors who have made architecture and the urban environment to the object of aesthetical experiments and manipulations?<sup>244</sup>

"The Capsule" project (1964) by Warren Chalk from the Archigram group can also be considered as a contribution to the "resemblance" issue with Matta-Clark's "Balloon Housing" project in terms of design approaches and "experimentation." The project is explained by the group as follows:

The capsule dwelling was a set of components: whilst snugly and efficiently locked together they were capable of total interchangeability. To use the automobile as an analogy: the Ford floor tray could be traded in for a Chrysler floor tray. There would be a continual exchange taking place, with constantly changing and evolving parts. Perhaps a dream-machine as well as a mere "house"? The whole tower would be organised to allow the larger elements to be replaced by crane and the smaller elements manoeuvred from within: as a result all parts could be capable being opened-out or clipped-in. The main parts were conceived as pressed - metal or GRP though later the possibility of pressed paper started to interest the Group.<sup>245</sup>

Another project from Archigram by Ron Herron and Warren Chalk related to the "resemblance" issue of "experimentation" is "Gasket Homes," described by the group as: "The "Gasket" housing, as its name suggests, used a series of plastic strip profiles of different patterns that can be built up into an almost infinite series of enclosures".<sup>246</sup> As can be seen from these projects, Peter Cook also emphasised the interrelation among other groups by saying that:

Certainly in the 1960's and early 1970s we felt that only in Vienna and Tokyo did they really share our optimism that architecture could and must extend its territory and vocabulary – devouring from other territories if necessary – and thrusting forward (metaphorically,

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<sup>244</sup> Moos, von Stanislaus. "Kunst und Technik: Direktkoppelungen." *Haus-Rucker-Co. 1967 bis 1983*, Deutsches Architekturmuseum Frankfurt am Main, Friedr. Vieweg & Sohn, Braunschweig, Wiesbaden, 1984, p. 31-67.

<sup>245</sup> Crompton, Dennis. *A Guide to Archigram, 1961-74*. Academy Editions: London, 1994, p.44.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46

technologically and literally) into space.<sup>247</sup>

Torsten Schmiedeknecht quoted Hans Hollein that the relation among Archigram and Haus-Rucker-Co “was a medium of communication – and the work of Haus-Rucker-Co is also deeply rooted in this belief – which led it to an approach the activity of architecture from various different viewpoints.”<sup>248</sup>

On the other hand, Schmiedeknecht has also explained the difference between them in terms of their evaluation of experimentation as making the experiments actually or not:

The difference between Archigram and Haus-Rucker-Co, though, is that the latter always regarded the city as a laboratory for its experiments. Putting an idea to the test by physically confronting the public with it was not part of Archigram’s programme. Archigram’s field of experiment was located in the media through which it distributed its ideas. Haus-Rucker-Co’s members, despite their activities as writers, were always concerned with the actual making of the objects they had designed.<sup>249</sup>

It can be concluded from the above descriptions that the “experimentation” conducted by the use of contemporary technology in these projects allowed a way experimenting “out of architecture.” However, they were also making a proposal on “program” within the case of the balloon, the capsule or the pneumatic cells as dwelling alternatives which were inserted into existing structures.

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<sup>247</sup> Cook, Peter. *Experimental Architecture*. Academy Editions, London, 1972, p. 22.

<sup>248</sup> Schmiedeknecht, Torsten. “Surface, Metaphor and Virtuality.” *Zamp Kelp: Expanding Space, Architectural Monographs 54*, Wiley-Academy, London, 2000, p. 12.

<sup>249</sup> Schmiedeknecht, Torsten. “Surface, Metaphor and Virtuality.” *Zamp Kelp: Expanding Space, Architectural Monographs 54*, Wiley-Academy, London, 2000, p. 12.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

This study has discussed the constructed togetherness of the terms architectural “program” and “experimentation” in order to introduce a concept called “programmatically experimental,” considered to be the outcome of the radical architectural explorations of the 1960s and early 1970s. This time period is assumed to have developed a certain, detached, pertaining and radical way of criticism out of “experimentation” nourished by interdisciplinarity.

This interrelation between a variety of disciplines provided the exchange of different architectural media that made it possible to consider these manipulative sources as a possibility to expand the vocabulary of architecture. This expansion was not only a “de-territorialisation” of the discipline eroded by outside forces for about a decade (typically described in architectural discourse as an “ambivalent” period), but it also created fundamental changes in architectural considerations whose theoretical weight is being re-discussed in contemporary discourse under the influence and debates surrounding architectural criticism. For this reason, these changes that were left obscure behind the intense use of technology and ambivalency were in fact investigations beyond the re-vitalisation of Modern Architecture limited by formal criticisms and beyond the employment of post-occupancy considerations. Yet, they were radical criticisms to alter the conventions of Modern Architecture and the social conditions that informed these conventions, therefore suggesting an alternative consideration of “program” in architecture.

Gordon Matta-Clark, whose non-elitist attitude of criticism has been overshadowed behind the artistic aspects of his work, has been evaluated as an outsider artist who was trained as an architect. However, this thesis discusses his works, which could not have been achieved without architectural considerations, as having developed significant contributions in terms of expanding the vocabulary of architecture throughout his explorations that he applied on existing buildings. These contributions to the terminology of “program” in architecture challenged the conventions of Modern Architecture. Matta-Clark not only criticised these fixed rules concerning the labelling of spaces that limited the possible conceptualisation of “program,” and the social agents that directed the design processes and their implementation, but also suggested alternative terminology depending on the criticism of these fixed rules informed by the agents that created these conventions.

The existing art-historical literature on Gordon Matta-Clark has highlighted his work of radical cuts of existing buildings mostly as demolition. Such an understanding has underestimated the theoretical background behind Matta-Clark’s work and the cross-links between his unrealized projects and his cut interventions. However, a rigorous research of his work reveals that the period of his architectural education, his writings, his unrealized projects, his drawings that have emerged after his archive was made accessible to researchers, and his interventions conducted by the method of cutting existing buildings (evaluated in architectural and art sources as individual demolition attempts), were actually all components of Matta-Clark’s radical criticism. Moreover, they comprise the potential of discussing the architectural explorations of the 1960s and early 1970s as causing a shift in architectural programming. Therefore, Matta-Clark’s radical cuts were more than a literal criticism of buildings as architectural objects; they were components of the methods of his “experimentation” comprising cross-links with his underestimated sources of architectural studies that searched for an

alternative terminology to expand the vocabulary of architecture that was limited by Modernist ideals.

As discussed in the third chapter of this thesis, “program” in architecture is a difficult term to accurately define and requires investigation. This study has suggested the expansion of the term “program” to “concept,” which would provide benefit from the versatility inherited in such a term. This expansion promises the consideration of the term “program” on a planar level and provides liberation from the limitations caused by the function-based ideals of Modernist discourse and its program, which depended on the fixation of spaces revolving around a “Modern individual.” The expansion of “program” to “concept” collides with this fixation and suggests the questioning of such a stationary position of program by searching for the flexibility of unconsidered togetherness in spaces revolving around the “various activities.” Such explorations were the subject of debates and research completed in the 1960s and early 1970s in order to replace the fixation with flexibility in “program” and to prepare the intellectual and applied ground for the consideration of promising new developments of “program” and expansion in its terminology.

The method for this search was the “experimentation” that provided the togetherness of unconsidered mediums in architecture with the employment of technology as a tool and a theoretical shift that required the questioning and re-consideration of conventions in modernist discourse and its reflections in architectural production. Thus, the “experimentation” was a vicious circle: it forced the discourse to regenerate itself, and this regeneration became another source pushing to expand the vocabulary of architecture. This way of development and opening up the horizons was what “experimentation” brought into the architectural consideration of 1960s and early 1970s. For example, the use of the term “flea,” borrowed from biology, contributed to the design of “balloon housing” since it was

considered to be hosted within existing buildings. The nature of balloon as a self-controlling system made it possible to not only move within existing structures but also survive throughout the city. The design of a dwelling unit with the model of a balloon searched for its own architectural elements that would liberate the terminology from fixed rules, as the skin of the balloon, inspired by the emerging technology, was replaced by a wall.

“Experimentation” here, as suggested by Deleuze, is distinguished from its other uses in architecture by the theoretical link that it provided amongst the various explorations and the way that they challenged the existing rules of what they aimed to replace. This theoretical link, unlike Modern Architecture, searched for more than singular ideals. Instead, it aimed to question these ideals by employing the existence of many activities in “program” and their possible togetherness or allocations that could be inherited in the conceptualisation of “program” or that may promise more developments after such considerations and its following design methods accordingly.

However, in architectural discourse, these 1960s and 1970s have been elaborated as a widening of boundaries through intense flow of outer information towards architecture including science, technology, philosophy, sociology, anthropology and psychology in the 1960s, and towards autonomy discussions of the 1970s to benefit from the previous decade by being more selectable and sensible about the disciplinary boundaries that were threatened by outside forces. Therefore, the inter-disciplinarity and enthusiasm in the radical changes of the 1960s were elaborated as an indeterminate decade. Consequently, these changes were left obscure behind the utopian and idealistic architectural discourse, determined as an ambivalent period whose ideals could not reach any tangible sources beyond experiments with technology. On the contrary, contemporary discussions and the intense participation of digital media into architecture have called

for the reminiscence of the ideals of that period. The explorations of the 1960s and 1970s have had more substantial consequences that were overshadowed by the discourse of so-called Westernized literature than mere individual utopian attempts. For that reason, the re-discussion of these decades by putting them together as a period reveals that they inherited more worthy discussions and implementations from which contemporary architectural discourse can benefit.

Therefore, the idea of “programmatic experimentation” aims to understand and reveal the inherited implications of criticism on “program” in architecture in the 1960s and early 1970s. By considering these criticisms from such an approach aims to discuss the “program” in architecture on a planar level and liberate it from its limitations and difficulties in definition. This liberation aims to open up new horizons for architectural discourse, which has generally underestimated “program” in architecture. This expansion of “program” achieved in the 1960s and early 1970s made it possible to consider this term to develop the possibilities of architectural space as more flexible towards the changing demands and conditions of the agents that inform architecture. “Experimentation” was both the intellectual and implementation method of this adaptation of flexibility. The methods of this “experimentation” were nourished by the emerging interdisciplinarity and the benefit from these sources as implementations that would shockingly activate the changes in architectural consideration. Consequently, the conceptualisation of “program” was the shift to precede these changes in architectural discourse. The “experimentation” on “program” in architecture of the 1960s and early 1970s suggested expanding the vocabulary of architecture. The methods of this expansion provide the possibility of considering “program” as “concept” in architecture. This consideration of “program” on a planar level is suggested in this study to have caused a shift in architecture in the 1960s and early 1970s. This shift may provide the consideration of “program” in architecture as a more



considerable and challengeable source to dwell on and develop architectural criticism and promise possible developments in this subject.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **INTERVIEW WITH PETER COOK (10.04.06 – 14:30, UCL Union, London)**

I see what you mean: the labelling. I think the labelling is very important. I always felt it like to set yourself a goal, and it's sometimes by having a label, you make the goal, you decide what to be your directing thing by making statement of the name. I think that's quite important. And also I think that I was very interested in making things contrast to what was also sort of Modernist ethic. There was sort of social housing and we thought of it as mobilising, the "capsule" was a kind of anti-house and the "Instant City" was a kind of anti-city and "Walking City" was a kind of anti-city. It came from the tradition of the city but in a sense, it was challenge, so each thing was found challenging to the original model. I think that was fairly conscious. There were a lot of things involved, there were a lot of sorts of comments on the social situation, and the hierarchy of the cities, hierarchy of the education, and the static quality of things, where the technology really were seen as a means to help that, not as an end in itself.

We were quite close to some of the Austrian groups. and not Matta-Clark. But we were mainly very close to the Coop Himmelblau people and also to people like Gunther Domenig who did City's freak, and also to Haus-Rucker-Co and also to Hans Hollein. We were actually friends particularly Hollein and Coop Himmelblau we remained friends. Even we talked together to some of those people in America at UCLA and we made contact with Arato Isozaki, because we talked together with them. So, also we made a link with some of Japanese people. People like Toyo Ito or Itsuko

Hasegawa, actually close personal friends for a long time. There was a sort of link between Vienna, Los Angeles and Tokyo and London particular. And also if you go to France, you will find a lot of archives in FRAC, based on Orleans. They have a big collection.

I didn't know about Matta-Clark until much later. I didn't have any connection with him. I didn't even know, I guess he was doing things around the same time, from the same generation more or less? We didn't know about him till after he died.

We were very conscious of Moholy-Nagy's work and also I think we knew about the work of Constant, of the Situationists. That Mike Webb and I went to hear Constant give a lecture in London at the ICA at the time and also we knew a lot about some of the French groups, the Metabolist people. It was late when we got to meet anyhow. There are certain things that we were aware of. I always say that there are things in the air at the certain generations at the certain moment somehow sort of set of ideas or approaches can be in the air even if we even didn't know the people maybe haven't even corresponded or even met somehow there you are in a contemporary sense reacting against other things, reacting in parallel and then you get to meet some of the people and say my god we're really on the same railway.

Yes, we were very conscious of that. We were very conscious of interdisciplinarity. We were very influenced by things going on in graphic design and technology going on in communications, going on in art, there were a lot of cross-links. Even between Archigram and Pop-Art movement in England. We were very influenced by artists like Blake, Phillips, and Hamilton. We didn't really know them, we got to know them later but we knew them sort from below they were the older generations. Like teachers

and Mike Webb was thought by Stirling, David Greene was thought by Buckminster Fuller.

I think Mike and I were looking more at the materiality of it. I wasn't so interested in the political agenda. Situationists had much more political agenda we were not very very political.

I think there are certain things revolve rather like a cycling. There was a certain period when nobody was interested in Archigram at all. That was probably about ten or fifteen years after it. And then you wait a few more years and it comes back and recycles again. In a different way but there is a re-interest.

I think also was it very much to do with feeling frustration in the vocabulary of architecture that the vocabulary of architecture was too limited. We wanted to open it up, open it out to other vocabularies.

Yes in a gentle sort of way. Not the anarchy of French, I mean sort of gentle, more like anarchy within the discipline, we weren't very political compared with many other people.

Program is a very difficult word in English. It has other overtones. I am not sure whether you use programming how I use programming.

I mean one was also very interested in re-examining the range of potential of elements of re-thinking or adding to the vocabulary; vocabulary of response, to vocabulary of form, vocabulary of parts, vocabulary of approaches, try to widen them in number of sometimes deliberately to shock but usually to loosen its formulae.

And all the time it is the idea of breaking and opening up the formula, the formula of architecture. Every once in a while it becomes, it responds in

same sort of ways, and then you say let's look at it again, let's open up the bag of threads and change the approach to see alternative maybe you come back, now I found out that the curious thing, you were a student here I started building as you know that the blue building in Graz which had some sort of Archigram things and some which couldn't have existed at that time largely because of the computer. Now I'm building in Madrid a housing, which is slightly different but is also using some of the things that we were talking about; scrambling, mixing things up together things together, not just having housing, having other activities into it and liberating the brief in someway. But on the other hand it has to be what paid for and has to be proper social housing and also I am still doing projects for urban design although not have commissioned for, and then just being asked an examination of the sports building for future to look at the new concept of how stadiums or places where people meet, like looking it as the same way trying to open the whole concept and maybe coming up with completely hybridic forms. Because I am interested in the idea of the hybrid. It is quite open the elements and the normal approaches. Probably you have to govern it together again in somewhere. You blow it to happen and open and then certain other elements will rearrange in. Like, I'm going to train now and carrying my office with me, a laptop and couple of wires. Now I'm actually carrying all sorts of gadgets, the underwear is the smallest piece of the operator. Tough I'm not like a robot yet.



## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW WITH BERNARD TSCHUMI (28.07.05 – 18:00, Bernard Tschumi Architects, 227 West 17 Street, New York)**

- There are examples about the relations between philosophers and architects in history such as the Wittgenstein and Loos example. Do you think the interdisciplinary position of architecture after 1960s reached a different position in architecture in terms of design philosophy? Or is it just a break point in academic theoretical discussions? And if it is, what do you think makes this period different?
  
- Is it possible to include the influences of changes in scientific research on the 1960s experimental architecture of Archigram and Haus-Rucker-Co or others as being one of these interdisciplinary relations?
  
- It is difficult to make a definition for experimental architecture that it may cover a wide range of fields. For example, the “experimental programs”. How would you define experimental architecture?
  
- In the 1970s Gordon Matta-Clark experimented on the existing buildings by actual cuts in order to question their temporality. Is it possible to talk about Gordon Matta-Clark’s contribution to architectural criticism?
  
- The issue of “temporality” in architecture, especially in terms of program, has always been in conflict with the issue of control. Since conflicts are useful for going further in reciprocal relations, do you think architectural

programmatic discussions are in such a flow of thinking or were digital architecture a break point?

- Regarding Gilles Deleuze, is it possible to say that his philosophy can open up insights for the architecture responding the demands of the current information-societies, in a way that Modern Architecture was compatible with Industrial Society; or do you think his philosophy can actually correspond to more radical architectural criticism?

- Do you think the developments in cinema such as Deleuze's contribution; can bring the temporality discussions in architectural programs further?

Interdisciplinary position in architecture: maybe one has to start with the opposite, the idea of the autonomy of architecture. In all periods of architecture, not only in 60s or 70s, but I could say at least two or three hundred years there have been constantly polemics and discussions on whether architecture was an autonomous discipline, or whether anything was autonomous; music and its autonomy, literature and its autonomy, cinema and its autonomy, that's one position and there's been others said no, what's really important about these disciplines is the idea of interdisciplinarity, in other words, the idea of the moment when they close over with other fields, with other areas. In other words, the work at the market, the work of the one discipline touches upon another is where really the new discoveries are going to be. So, at various moments in history, the sensitivity either moves towards the autonomy, or towards the interdisciplinarity. I would say that the thoughts that late sixties, early seventies in relationship to movements that were happening in literature and in philosophy that architecture also was quite involved with fields which were close but also outside itself. And as a fundamental question about what architecture is, in other words, trying to define, to give a definition of

architecture and I personally for example, got interested in a dynamic definition of architecture, in other words, in architecture that would involve the movements of bodies in space, the idea of concept and certain areas which came without a doubt in relationship to questions that were being asked by philosophers, by film-makers, and so on. In other words, considering that architecture is not alone in the world, but architecture is part of culture. And I would say that architecture was not any simpler about “knowledge of form”, but architecture was the “form of knowledge” just as mathematics or philosophy or literature, architecture is a way to learn about the world.

Now, another point that you brought was, the notion of experimental meaning and of programs. Now, meaning is a very difficult thing, because architecture has never one single meaning and you should never look at meaning purely in terms of what a building looks like, it also what building does. If I have a large room and I use it as a boxing-ring, in other words, there’s a correlation between what it does, what you are doing actually and what it means and what it looks like. In other words, architecture is just as important but not more important than what happens in it. And when architect started to think about it and I would historically say, in late 70s some of us started to be interested in this notion of writing programs, of asking about the notion of architecture and very quickly also realised that you could have contradictions, in other words, I can have a church and have a night-club in it; in other words, planning on purpose the conflict between a program and an expected form. And these types of contradictions became quite interesting in terms of again, determining what architecture is, in other words, the definition of architecture. And if you talk about what is experimental architecture, quite often, it’s about setting hypothesis, in other words, making assumptions about what would happen if I take the Villa Rotondo of Palladio and I turn it into a night-club or if I turn it into social housing. What are the architectural consequences, cultural and philosophical

consequences of such a hypothesis would be. So, this notion of testing ideas is for me what experimental architecture is. Experimental architecture is not just trying to have crazy shapes, is really a mathematician setting an assumption or a theorem and then you try to prove it with a hypothesis. And you try to do a demonstration, so quite often you can make such a statement and use projects in order to prove the fact.

Now another point that you brought up is what I'm interested in is the issue of say how artists that worked close to architects or aware from architecture or how architects have so looked at what was happening in the art world. I personally was quite interested in at the time that you talked about, again in my case, the very late 60s, mostly the 70s in terms of the work that conceptual artists were doing. But there were also performance artists, in other words, the idea of people using space as the place of their own artistic practice. There were some people, in my own case, I was never really looking so much into Gordon Matta-Clark, but he was quite interesting, because by using his absolutely radical cuts, he was showing, he was making hypothesis in a sense about how you look at architecture and how you question, be careful about using the word "deconstruct", but it has been used, that how you would simply define a critical knife through the established criteria and ideas of architecture. The problem often with architecture is that it is very conventional. It uses all tools in order to repeat the same things over and over again. And it is always useful for someone doing fresh tools and polemical statements in order again to define what architecture is, the notion of definition is crucial in this case, maybe more in architecture than in anything else. Because when we architects, we define spaces with walls, with ceilings, with doors, but to define is also like in a dictionary word, you define like the meaning of the word. So, you define the meaning of architecture. And the meaning of architecture changes all the time.

You talked about, you asked about, Deleuze and the idea of information society. One has of course, talked about this space of place as opposed to the space of flows. In other words, place is static, space is about certainty, while flows are dynamic, and about realities and of course flows of information are absolutely crucial. Today, you can not simply define the city as a place, a city is very much a network of flows and the notion of flows, and I think it is really important not so much in terms of the fluidity and the continuities that are discussed in Deleuze's work. But in terms of what I would call forces. In other words, there is much that has been talked about in architecture in terms of forms, today, I would say, instead of talking about forms, we talk about forces. And those forces are really what make the city of today, the architecture of today. And Deleuze is one of the many people, who outside of architecture have brought contributions to our culture and our understanding of those constant movements. It is interesting to know that Deleuze also wrote a book on film. And he is interested in the movement "image-movement" – movement image, he is very close to one of my own interests of architecture being defined not as something which is static, but something which is constantly in motion. Because after all how you perceive architecture, how you read architecture is through the movement of your own spaces, your body through these spaces. So, a definition of architecture is never simply about the static spaces but also about the dynamic movement of spaces that go through these static spaces. So, it is always about a tension, always about sometimes a conflict between the movement and the static part. That's why, in many ways, architecture is one of the extraordinary fields I know because it's in constant motion, in constant change, and I always feel it's a very young discipline, in other words, even though it has been existing for 3-4-5-6 thousand years, it's still a young discipline, still constantly inventing. And therefore, it's one of the most exciting fields. Thank you.

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW WITH REINHOLD MARTIN

(26.07.2005 – 13:00-14:00, Columbia University, Graduate School of  
Architecture, Avery Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor)

- There are examples about the relations between philosophers and architects in history such as the Wittgenstein and Loos example. Do you think the interdisciplinary position of architecture after 1960s reached a different position in architecture in terms of design philosophy? Or is it just a break point in academic theoretical discussions? And if it is what do you think makes this period different?

No, I do think actually, that's something different, it depends on the context in which you are discussing it, certainly in Europe and in the US, things changed. The architecture as you say has often had interdisciplinary dimensions and philosophy would be one of the disciplines that architecture has historically, a kind of engaged. What happened in Europe in 1960s was the very idea of philosophy was challenged, what became post-structuralism, its sort of metaphysical foundations, a kind of through speaking of philosophy. It was a kind of challenge as being built up, you could say, through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps starting with Nietzsche, even Marx and Heidegger and so on. But it really turned point of view of architecture sort of involvement; but coming to ahead in both French and German contexts after the war. So, in the early number of examples philosophers of getting involved with architects and vice versa coming out of that milieu there's not only the example of Deleuze and Guattari became interested in architecture, and of course the kind of proto-architectural

dimensions in Deleuze's thinking. But there's also Foucault and in a way I think a lot of what you find in Deleuze is traceable to Foucault in space and territory, like; territorialisation de-territorialisation, those kinds of things and they're very different in Foucault who is very involved not so much but he did actually had conversations with contemporary architects in France but those architects were interested in extending the horizon of architecture and probably less because in the direction of philosophy and more towards social theory and Foucault is a kind of social philosopher, he's an obvious candidate. But also because Foucault was involved in prisons and studying the history on prisons and involved even there are more examples, but actually the interdisciplinarity of 60's which has had echoes like till today in architecture has had many other dimensions that a kind of amplified many of the things that had happened in modernism, for example, the relationship with science. So if you think about this in a sort of a non-linear way, then any kind of interdisciplinarity, especially sort of has triangulated rather than a two way relationship, here, so Deleuze, too, like many others, challenging to a kind of positivism, philosophical positivism got involved to some extents with the philosophy of science but not to the degree that it could really be translated but at the same time the architects of the 60s, many of them and from the science-fiction architecture of Archigram a sort of image of science, or technology, techno-science, to some of Christopher Alexander who was doing the scientific standards of computers, to many others who were influenced by the "Systems Theory" which is comparable to biology, so and that was transmitted into architecture through different channels, so you could say that architecture, at least modern architecture, has been always interdisciplinary in a certain way. Architects like Mies, who were interested in philosophy and science, many other things and this is now sort of demonstrated by contemporary scholars. But let's say the stakes of the game changed because rather than all collaborating together in the name of a some sort of a truth putting all the things together for let's say to make a kind of meta-disciplinary in a kind of universal truth, but I think really the

60s mark was a turn towards like a kind of radical question both in the political sense but also interdisciplinarity sense. So, for example, architectural sustention and sort of involvement in this, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s with other disciplines including philosophy has translated into a kind of challenge to this internal assumptions of architecture, to the definition of architecture, like sort of taking other things on architecture has often put itself into crisis and the way that questions about architecture.

- How would you relate the 1960's experimental architecture of Archigram and Haus-Rucker-Co to the network issue in Deleuze's philosophy?

Sure, I mean in the sense that many of these architectures used the theories of networks and some of the most sophisticated theoretically like Archigram also particularly sophisticated theoretically, Haus-Rucker-Co and I don't know, maybe a little bit more, probably the more theoretically formed discourses did actually used network models. For example, the people in Archigram, for example Dennis Crompton did know more about networks, who more did know networks and some of them were sort of aware. So, sure the network model was everywhere, model in 60s and especially in experimental material. Whether or not this is what Deleuze is talking about, I think it's sort of yes or no I'd say, because yes, the rhizome is a kind of non-hierarchical network. But what Deleuze is always capable of warning he says this is not representative of a kind of utopia where network models from 60s till today. I mean this is a 90s of the internet, all that coming euphoria over the internet, have opened the scene as a new way out. As a kind of new kind of space that doesn't have any hierarchy and authority and all that and is more free. Then, in the 60s experimental, probably the most sophisticated of these was Cedric Price, so, what Deleuze and Guattari particularly later on, later in the 80's were trying to demonstrate though the rhizome is a kind of figure of fold, a way of thinking offered certain what they called certain lines of escape, sort of comparable things, complicated, multiplied in our and you could get out of binary oppositions, dualities, you



could temporarily escape from certain forms of authoritarian thinking but it had built into a kind of trap, which they called control society, which is a new model which built Foucault's idea on but actually what they show is that the rhizome could also become an, is automatically, authoritarian. It's just that there was no guarantee, so, I think that problematized a little bit some of the romantic ideas about network people, many architects had in 60s, although it doesn't actually I don't think it de-legitimizes or negates their achievements or the experiments and it cultivates possible to think, a sort of way I think it will be possible to think through somehow that material, rather than in a way use Deleuze as a material and trying to make an equation, thus the network theory of Archigram, in a purpose of the way, it might be interesting to sort of ask what Deleuze does with cinema. You know, Deleuze's theory about architects asks a couple of questions about networks that should be designed in 60s and you see what that means.

- It is difficult to make a definition for experimental architecture that it may cover a wide range of fields. How would you define experimental architecture regarding Deleuze's approach?

You could start with Deleuze's idea of experimentation which is a very regularist one. It's not sort of anything enough faithful. One of the models Deleuze's idea on experimentation is John Cage whose works are notoriously, famously difficult, they are just difficult to perform and difficult to watch, to listen to, I mean they're challenging, so Deleuze's notion of experimentation was, if it was going to be relevant, trying to redefine experimentation would have to be have kind of carry with that, I mean you would have to emphasise this aspect, that should be the challenge that it has opposed to status quo. So, for example, the experiments with pop culture that many architects dealt with it, such as Smithsons to Archigram in England and that would be one example, and of course there would be many. It could be tested against whether or not that agree to which they not

only kind of plays with the iconography of pop-culture and plays with the popular sort of meanings and in a way sort of making fun of high modernism's seriousness, they were sort of making fun of seriousness. But also to the degree that it asks critical questions about popular culture like because to experiment the popular culture in that sense. Andy Warhol is perhaps a better example of that. Well, the point is not sort of, kind of use pop-culture, or celebrate pop-culture in some sort of playful way. But it would ultimately have something to do with experimenting, with the limits of pop-culture or with the internal assumptions of coherences of that thinking of experiment with the tolerance, like the music, how much silence can you listen to when, you put in another way how much noise can you listen to. So that goes like some sort of simple examples, but that sense of experimentation would imply a thing if it were had to have retainless of this critical dimension that Deleuze is sort of emphatic about. Then it would have this sort of pay quite attention to what the stakes are of the experiment. So, what's the stake of an experiment? Is it to kind of take advantage of popular culture to sort of add a new more accesses to dimension of architecture, some of the assumptions of common practices of pop culture in a sort of playful way, or is it just challenge? So, that would be one thing, another example, probably a better example is low technology, like what you do with new technology? So, for example, there's practice in expanding cinema in the 60s which can also be relevant. It's kind of network, the cinema, it's the cinema that's not just in the movie-theatres but everywhere more like television try to take the advantage of technology in media extended into many aspects into a kind of multi media cinema. In another sense, technological media creates a reproduction almost a kind of mirror, of what was actually happening in consumer culture when multimedia were actually going everywhere. So, in a way, cinema was already expanding, in the multimedia, commercially and what seems to be an experimental practice was, it is sometimes difficult to tell whether it's in the head or behind the market. They're simple in a kind of stating the determinisms of

the kind of market touch and not a lot more, they were anticipating because market is going to do that. This is the classic form of Avant-Garde in 60s, post-war period where it can no longer be assumed that the Avant-gardist is in front of anything or somehow like that's the cutting edge like statically and technologically but somehow people do escape the kind of determinations and certain rules of the game of consumer capitalism. So, that task would also be put to any kind of experimental work what is its relationship to consumer society, if you accept the historical model of the Avant-Garde, the older Modernist's model as a kind of model trying to escape from that or trying to provide an alternative, so for example, there's like, you can use other names like instead of experimentalists alternative, but what would be an option is is it really alternative? In one sense, those kinds of questions, similarly you can alternatively use and so is it radical? Well, radical in one sense or a group like Super-Studio if you accept that experimental as a kind of legitimate description of their work as somehow radical architecture. It wouldn't be radical in a sense I think, it might be radical in a sense of a kind of radicalisation of what has already happened, like an extreme version of what was already happening, like a big secret of continuous monument of big giant supermarket, or big giant studio office building. You could say that in those architects, the continuous monument architects Super-Studio, could be seen as a big giant (rigid) studio office building, which of course is what's happening, and Archigram, the Non-Stop City of Archigram could be seen as a big giant city market, and I think they were aware of this, so they were in a way exacerbating or making extreme existing tendencies, they were sort of taking existing public system what they called the establishment. They were taking the system to its logical conclusions, a kind of sort of extreme, so in that sense, it could be considered radical but not necessarily, not certainly, I mean not in often radical alternative. So, the similar question comes up with the suspect of that it's also possible that these Super-Studio particular were overall that too impressed with their own, they took to be radical with their radicality, they

were romantic about their own personal revolt. And so it's when you are in a place to start with could be a kind of taking something that already exists like Peter Cook's book on experimental architecture, and you say "O.K." what did he mean by this and is it really experiment in what sense is it experimental? What is it experimenting with? What is the hypothesis, because any good experiment is hypothesis, and what has it opened up? In Deleuzian question, what has it opened up? Because that would be a sort of illusion question, what possibilities are opened up by this experiment? So, a place to start with is the books like Peter Cook's of "Experimental Architecture" what did he mean by this and in what sense is it experimental? What is it experimenting with? What is the hypothesis, right? What has it opened up? In Deleuzian question, what has it opened up?

## CURRICULUM VITAE

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### **Conference Papers:**

“Transformation of Urban Spaces in London by Turkish Immigrants”,  
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Leicester, September 2003

“Architectural Programming: Experimentation of Temporality”, AHRA 06  
Annual Student Research Symposium, University of Edinburgh, April 2006.

### **Journal Papers:**

“Workshop: Bauhaus Goes Urban – Tool 8.2”, Mimarlık, 325 (Sept.-Oct.  
2005), p. 62–63.

### **Academic Works:**

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“Archilab” Conference, Orleans, France, May 2001.

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