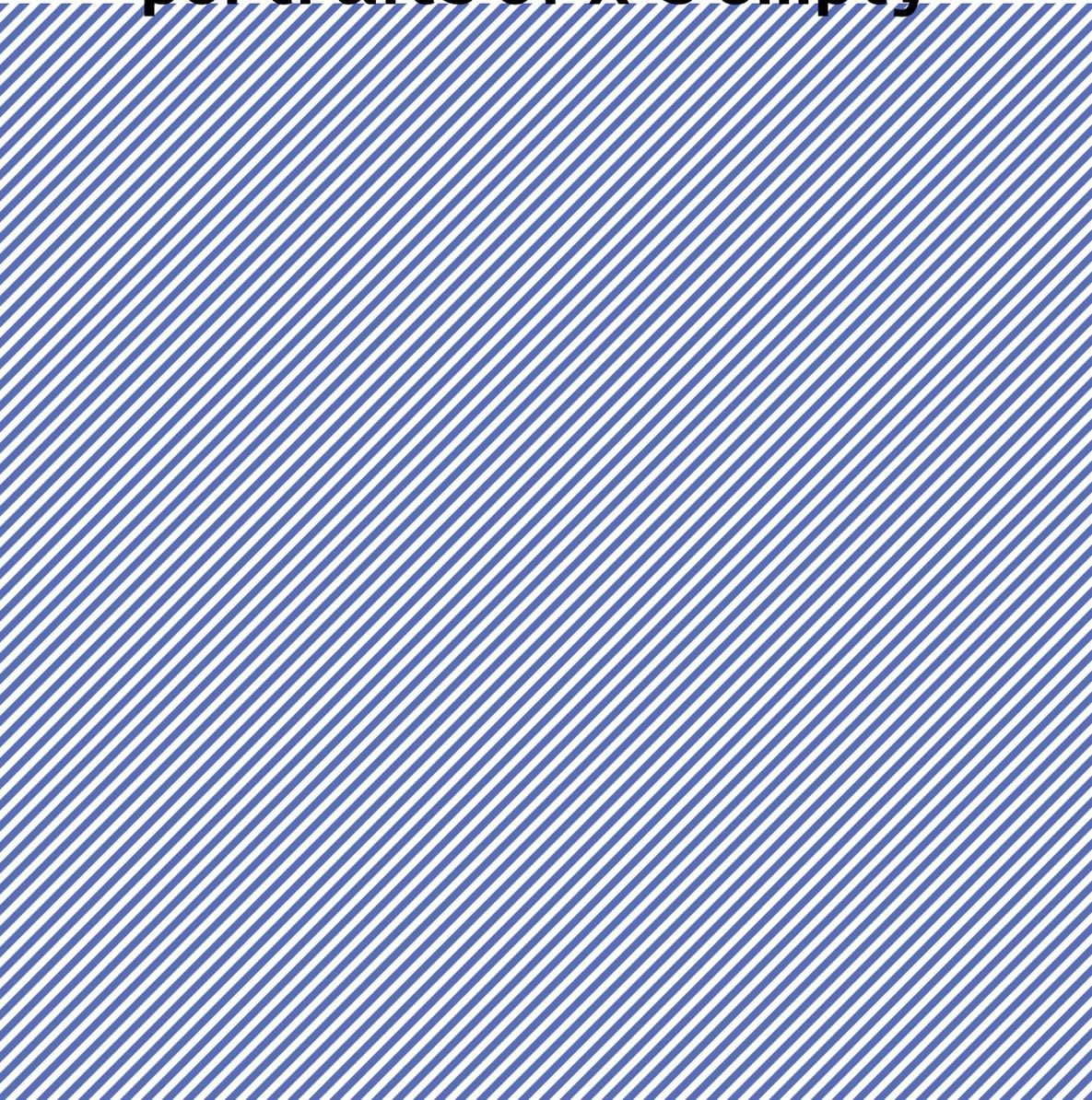


portraits of X's empty



Bernadette Mayer's poem **X at Half Inch intervals** was broken up into half inch intervals. These intervals were distributed to twenty architecture and landscape architecture students at Cornell University in the fall of 2014, as part of the seminar SPACE ACTIVISM. Everyone was asked to create some rule, some logical or illogical constraint by which ones regular intervals and patterns of movement would interrupt and be interrupted with strangers in public spaces and create encounters by asking: (1) what something means and (2) where to go next. This could be compared to landscape architect Lawrence Halprin's *Motation and Take Part Processes* but doesn't have to be. As Alison Bick Hirsch says, Halprin's goal was "to design public spaces that stimulated movement response and enhanced opportunities for choice, chance, encounter, and exchange."

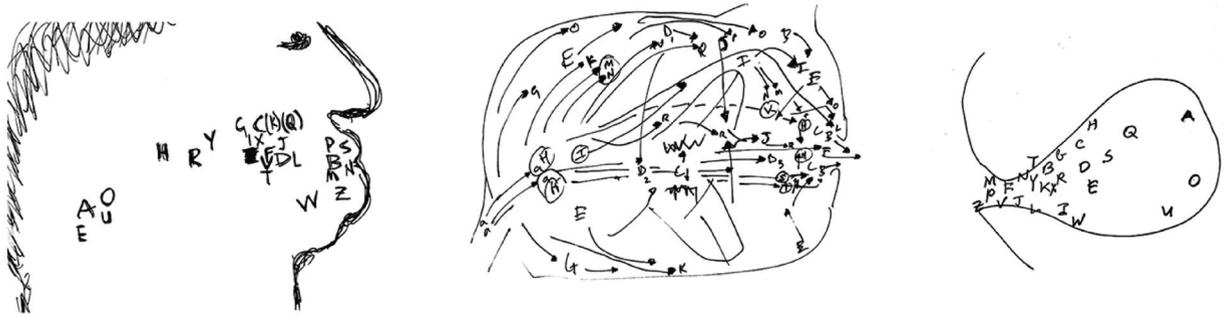
Mayer's inched intervals became another footed interval for our walked lines of measure. We asked people to translate Mayer's intervals from English into some other language and then, with someone else, back into English. Encounters were notated. The notations were then reported back during a dinner in which everyone was asked to bring flour, potable water collected from the city, lines of string of any length, and other interplanetary communications. We walked an ERUVIN across campus, through buildings, and into the kitchen. We mixed the parts we collected from the places we lived in with the ideas of the place we live with with the ideas of the way places could be with memories of places from the places we come from. Our flour parts were combined with a culture from Wide Awake Bakery. (In the fourteenth century, the ERUV was not only an intact boundary line designed around a 'household', but also consisted of baking a loaf of bread from flour collected from individual family units inside of the ERUV. Until the bread was broken, the ERUV remained intact.)

Our individual lines from Mayer's X were twisted together in the Human Ecology building where teaching kitchens could be used to slip under university food preparation unions, liability, and contracted provider rules. In the teaching kitchens we mixed our flour, pooled and boiled our water, added the donated culture, read aloud and nibbled at excerpts of books by Daniel Spoerri to Gertrude Stein (*Tender Buttons*), worked out passive forms, and in general, performed the content that we were speaking about.

I have been building these translations and maps as Urban Scores since 2010. The Scores seek to engage in the materiality of language in space perception and space co-production with non-exclusive publics. In other words, in some sense, poems are taken for walks. The literal foot notes are materialized in a choreographed poetics of movement, feet, listening, and measure. The walks interfere with predetermined encounters, and irritate assumptions of institutional affinity and affirmation as to where poetry can be found, institutionalized in what journals, chap books, presses, readings, and codified in other schools of thought. Listening now becomes a central tenant of composition. And the translator must face the task of constantly having to renegotiate their own selection criteria and comfort levels by which they choose whom to engage with and where. In the processes, we are forced to ask if we actually hear what is being said, or are we only able to hear what we are ready to understand? Are we looking for something that we already know ahead of time? Do I actually ever see what you are saying?

One of the intentions of the Urban Score is to design the conditions which generate new options for perceiving the spaces we live in and the values that shape us. Another intention is simply to stop and talk and listen closely with and to different publics. And as we design filters for how to notate what is being said, we start to listen not just to what people say, but also why they might say what they say. In terms of connecting with and responding to different politics, beliefs and values on the street in shared spaces, we become mindful of how language informs world views through words as we evolve our own language as designers.

"But so far, one thing is clear to me: he's absolutely determined to dismantle an empty, dissolve it in acid, crush it under a press, or melt it in an oven." Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, *Roadside Picnic*



POETRY URBANISMS: spatial notations shaping volumes, RADICAL IMAGINATION COMMUNITY, from the exhibition "Outside Design," Sullivan Galleries, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 2015. Experiments selected above are based on a notational system originally conceived by Andrej Bely (Glossolalia, 1922). The drawing system requests that (1) each person slow down and say out loud each letter in a language and (2) create a notational system that attempts to capture the physiological relations which embody the production of each spoken letter. In other words, use drawing to communicate a spatial/directional relationship of places in your oral cavity where the elemental building blocks of your words are produced (teeth, tongue, lips, throat, gums, breath, etc.). Note voiced and unvoiced consonants. Increase the conscious mechanisms coordinated in the production of what you say. Attempt to feel the choreographed postures of body and air where the condensation of forces occurs in the production of sounds and in the everyday making of speech. Merely in speaking together, our words have real force. Bely scrupulously set out to understand the physical, material, and symbolic systems shaping and circulating forces in the production of sounds. In fact, Bely believed that merely pronouncing letters and words in sounds during everyday speech reproduced the harmonic forces and overtones inherent in the cosmic calculus and act of creation of the universe itself. Cosmic waves. Micro waves. Ocean waves. Sound waves. Shock waves. From clay to human to brick "breathed into" in the Judaic sense of creation. From dust to stardust to the word stardust. Bely believed that everything that moves in the universe forces the materials around them to compress and contract in a constant disturbance and contingency of waves. And, that the waves present at the Big Bang formed ruptures and rhythms as a disequilibrium continuum of spacetime—can be analyzed as sounds. And, that those sounds are identical to the sounds humans make when speaking out. Thus a precise and intentional scrutiny of the words one uses conjures the very act of creation itself. Poetry, rather than becoming an art form that defaults to descriptions and representations of the actual forces creating the universe, forces the universe into a crafted autopoiesis (in the sense used by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela) of a constant act of becoming, a constant act of creation. Bely scrupulously set out to understand the physical, material, and symbolic systems shaping and circulating forces in the production of sounds. In this way, he worked closely with Rudolph Steiner in designing the Goetheanum, a concrete acoustic chamber located in Dornach, Switzerland, an architectural oral cavity, an instrument that amplifies sound waves so as to resonate the power of speaking out. An architect, a poet, a translator, Bely thought of poetry as something ritual as something political as something historic as something divine. If you place your hand in front of your mouth and speak out, you will feel the bubbling microclimates of heat energy that your words produce. Slightly wacko, slightly mystic Bely says in his notation of the pronunciation of the German letters, Warmth is Matter accumulating, pressing from the periphery toward the firm matters of the edges the repelling fragile light the murky quartz of the center (the living flesh).

portraits of X's empty

This is the word *harmony* the *waking mayor* the *sleepwalking garden*

The city resting between naps

The citizens trading neighbors for networks

The ewe trees you know

The gardens very beautiful, and the fruit you know

The pomegranates in her language, the everywhere you know

And the disremembered.

And: the wall wears a white coat.

And: now that I've finally arrived I'm leaving.

And: um, ah, um, well, if you you know

Know how one asks for three meanings of *empty* beside a double lot a double lot.

One says this is aesthetic because it has a concept behind it

This means that we have to relive what didn't happen over and over again.

Lynn says, what we can't know is what we'll be missing.

She knows how heavy a light year can be.

How hard it is to catch one *mist*: mist

What are your Cleopatra's again?

Still one chews their enclosures.

And yet something dwindles.

You know, you mean collided with what ever air err ears

Careful, it's porcelain it's porcelain.

We map all the places in our mouths where sounds are made.

Did you hear the one about the soldiers and the young girls and the ones that do not see?

And in the race to the re-place the word *world*

There is a 5 minute hour glass.

There is a design for a home out of 3 minute windows.

And from more arbitrary ground a found structure of empty *at* and *in* in *of*

Of nested time frames of snarls of slurry walls of thick descriptions of how forks violate food stuff of that thing that happened behind the boiler room *thereby discovering the natural fissures of the substance*

And no one told her how to empty *inside*, or how to *at* sixteen times and *in*.

And no one told her she was going to be a *chair* in his language.

And no one told her cow skulls over door frames would remind her so much of life later.

And this is the Goddess close up or a void or avoid.

Now I am between the moon and your *insides'* best side.

And the *news* is what happens when we don't encounter the conditions that
produce the options around us

And freedom of choice is not choosing from someone else's options, its
choosing how to work in the conditions out of which new options emerge.

And Superman is part soup too, One says

And our company's board is more like a diving board.

And one says, just because I don't know where I am doesn't mean I don't
know my way around.

Then again there is that empty *senator*.

The empty *debate* between the *state* and *self-governing*.

The *can* was lost.

Will was lost.

Will was *Will*.

Neighborhood was lost.

Washington wound up next to *evasion*.

Disruptions was carried through nine languages.

One says how *translate* translates into *carry*, *carry* into *Carry*, *Carry* into
care ring, inevitable agonies.

This is the *agony* I found next to the chunky special.

The example she gives is *love*.

This means the glue is sometimes stronger than the things glued, so hold
to get her
together.

They agree that there is no *harmony* in their language, but there are
simplified chickens.

This means she publishes poultry.

This means when you die you become something *down*.

Stern says women have to decide between making babies and making
buildings, I know because I was there.

Some thought they thought. They didn't.

Knot in a good way.

She was one

She was one of a kind

She was kind

She was stirring the shaggy dough considering the sickle slate jewels.

And this is the day before Life is Space.



Experiments in the terms of space making, project by Cameron Neuhoff. Students are given sound proof ear muffs, and asked to stand together feeling out the terms of space for long amounts of time with closed eyes and in various choreographed locations.
SPACE ACTIVISM (Special Topics in Theory), Cornell University, Fall 2014
Photo: Eric Ellingsen

And all the devices from one's life are missing.

One says they come with a recommendation from God.

One says *this means this*

This means *we built into the rules of the game the inevitable breach of the rules as if it were a rule* as Inger says.

And they say, *we are only fed the idea of bread.*

So I say, *how does the idea of bread taste when your hands are working the culture?*

And one says, *I don't know how long I haven't been from here.*

And I say, *but better to air in love and batter*

Then there was something he said about the *personal* as opposed to the *principle*.

Then there is One's 2 year old child. Stuck somewhere in Georgia without one.

Not allowed.

Waiting.

For on the very off

For you're right it wasn't a gang of daffodils

For any chants that you are

For in the empty space there are 12 stations for cooking.

There is the coincidence of being

Correspondence rules, pattern languages, cannons of delight.

We are learning in a space designed for training housewives last century.

There are 12 liberated stove-tops.

There is a pantry of 34 bowls.

There is a 20 foot rear view mirror hanging from the ceiling at an angle that makes everything appear closer than it really is.

There is the clear request to return everything to the place we found it before entering.

There is the loss of *the constant variable* in English.

There is the suggestion of pancakes.

There is monstrous urban yoga, dinky vestiges.

One carries only hearts from the chance detached deck because hearts.

One is obsessed with sheds because shed.

Over the very loud speaker we here

Please return

to claim your watch.

And I can't help

thinking

Watch

Forget one, one says,

But why.

And, does every period have to count, she says.

Quick

Here is a place you can go if you want to
send clothes to Guatemala in English.

Here I found another *empty* beside the daily chili.

Now another *empty* by the Import Rocket store.

A male *bin* in the *Earth Materials Building* backdoor corridor door.

Another *empty* inside the boarded-up Commons. The Commons is
under repair. The repairs are behind schedule and *pears*.

This is an alternate route through the Commons through the head
shops along the season's portrait parade.

One is a head of their time.

One steps back to the podium that is not there and not missing.

Because blooms *bloom* blooms you know.

Now *communities* means *companies* you know.

Now to *deny* is to *conform* you know.

All behinds beyond her you know. All her's hymn by

They're *seek* in his language you know.

Seeker?

Seeker.

Seeker?

Seeker.

Seeker

She has *melons* in her language.

He's on the hunt for *the cream gentian*.

All I want to say to them is please don't

don't let those gorgeous brains of yours get gobbled up by the brain eaters.
Don't take all those feelings that you have been feeding for all those young
years and give yourselves over like a paper plate to the heart eaters, *the
blond beasts*, the ones without ears inside their hearts, so the **hts**. Don't
go poor your guts out in front of the well-lubed machines. Don't buy into the
idea that you have to buy into the idea that you have to buy into the idea and
plot to make it. Don't you want to be one that there is only one of?

But I'm too late. Their hearts are already being gnawed on. The fangs



Hands on cultures hands on eggs and beaters hands on In the Age of Wire and Strings.
SPACE ACTIVISM (Special Topics in Theory), Cornell University, Fall 2014
Photo: Eric Ellingsen



Combining water each of us collected from different places in the city.
SPACE ACTIVISM (Special Topics in Theory), Cornell University, Fall 2014
Photo: Eric Ellingsen

licked. The blades annealed. They are even starting to learn the dangerous art of covering up the heart's teeth marks with tattoo kisses. They are already picking out the seasonal decor to match the professional lassos. They have already been eaten by the feeling of the need of the feeling of the need that they have to. Have to work there. Have to work for so and so. Have to do what with whom in some way. Have to be something big for someone else but not in a good way. Maybe a few will practice the grim art of regeneration.

I tell them that even flatworms when cut into 50 pieces grow into 50 new flatworms and how this is housing and how housing sings.

And I say look there are decks of cards where every suit is a heart.

And hearts can be lizard tales, and that a brown anole lizard can grow back a fully functional tail in 60 days. And with an average life span of the brown anole lizard being 4 years, and the average life span of a human being being 78 years; that means the eaten-out heart parts will take on average 3.25 years to grow back.

And I show them pictures of Prometheus having his liver eaten out by the everyday eagle. And how Claudia Rankine warns against life as an everlasting shrug, and how she says maybe it's the *live* part of the *liver*. And how next time I'll deliver you some more sparkly things.

And we all stand up and shrug 10 times together as an anti-shrug device.

And one notes the rubbish pits in level V of the temple.

So we shrug 10 more times.

So we shrug for 1 minute to get all the shrugs out of us once and for all.

(PLEASE TRY THIS NOW)

Then there is Gabe.

Gabe in an empty space at *them* them at *next next next* to *purposes*.

Now *purpose* read *porpoises*.

Still we are east of our flour read *margin* need empty

Now we collect the water we collected around town.

Now the treated water is a treat, the bodily contact.

Now bomb ponds come up, unspeakable slaughter.

Now *ritual* replaces *routine*

Routine reads empty *I lost you*

Land says this loss is another thing that is not missing and is not here.

The server is not found.

Motion is still not far behind.

This means the reflection is sometimes brighter than its source. This means

Gang can find a way to hold holes open in open water and

Felicity. Felicity. Mercy. Corner

Slightly asymmetrical chevron

You know how in the first half of this century life in the pancake gradients is

You know how in the first half of her X there are 21 *in's* and 2 *insides*

One at happens to mean you



One at happens to mean the three menaces trapped in the 2-dimensional plane at the beginning of Superman 1. *The Phantom Zone*. How not to feel flat today. Reduced to insubstantial observations. Waiting for nuclear test waves to release one from what is never merely plane. Of immanence we something empty. From *empty* into *Flatland*. Conversations are contoured detours into *No Exit*. There are rebuttals of the page. Stabs at hope. Prayers pulsing *please*. Other encounters and dialogical do.

One is stirring yeasty cultures next to another found *empty*.

One is wondering how to graduate with a practice not merely a degree.

We are divvying up our cups of culture from *Wide Awake B*. We name our culture *Dang*. Jenny is not sure if a yeast culture counts as content in an upper class on contemporary *culture* and *society*. One assignment is just to keep *Dang* alive as long as we can. *Dang* growth. Years of *Dang* growth.

To take *Dang* culture into our hands, into our homes, into our lives. To understand *Dang's* conditions. To feed off *Dang* as we keep *Dang* alive. We divide up *Dang*. Everyone takes some *Dang* home.

Now the elephant is the room not in the room.

Now in the awkwardness of fitting situated beans or beings in her language we empty.

Yvonne says *the mind is a mussel, a bivalve, tidal, title or muscle*.

One finds truth in the knowledge that an octopus has three hearts.

One feels *the familiar path* of the jack-daw feels familiar to learning today.

One says this is not *almost*.

Then I show them images of the Kuleshov effect; how the sequence of the relation of the sequence of the relation of things, like sequins, changes the meaning of the See. And they say, see before when I looked at my car it was a tool of freedom. Now see how the tools have become weapons, like our planes have become weapons. See how when I look in my garage I have a red 6 seater weapon inside. See how now we take our weapons everyday to work; how I take a weapon to your city to seem you into my heart again.

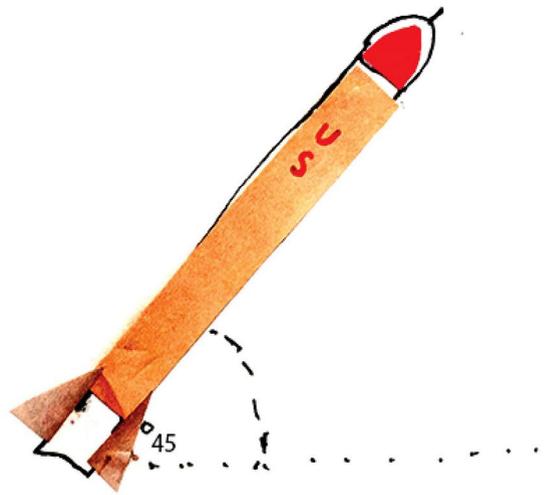
And we talk about collective action as self-expression TRUE OR FALSE. And we talk about power geometries of space, and how it seems that everything around us snarls in us alive in twisted ways. How even the picture of a gun fires. How the geofoams under all the new children's playgrounds are oil spills. How to feel these foam and plastic beings being buried and planted are a billboard of happiness in the picturesque. Then there are those students gunning for suburbia. The we look at images of the movie *They Live*. Then we look at images of Sao Paulo's 2006 "Clean City Act." The 18,000 billboards stripped. And how now the advertisements don't cover up the unscene *live* in the *livers*.



And we talk about how the philosopher Whitehead says a *vegetable is a democracy but why?* And I show them how to sew long pockets in their pants so little pen caps and cents and other innocents will set off the x-ray devices through the security zones. How the long pants x-ray the x-rayers by triggering suspicion and setting off the authority mechanisms springing



TOOL
SPACE EX



WEAPON



Eric Ellingsen, *Long Pockets* (2011–ongoing).

Long pockets were sewn into a pair of pants. The long pockets are sprinkled with tiny metallic objects that trigger security devices when pants are worn through airport security checkpoints. As entire arms disappear into the pants, a micro comical performance of maintaining public balance is played out in the in–security line. This field generates small stories. These stories are combined with research involving FAA protocols, procedures and techniques used by security to feel someone up.

into action.

And we talk about the Sisyphus of small things. How much harder it is to roll a small thing up the well perceived hill. How much easier it is when everyone sees the thing you're struggling against. How much harder to garnish empathy rolling around something too small for anyone to see, something tucked close to the chest, something requiring letting ones get close to the heart. And I show them images of the board borrowers, the north pacific tribes that *practiced a remarkable form of devouring. Rather than logging a forest, certain trees would be selected to be "borrowed" from. A board could be removed from the trunk of the living tree without killing the tree.*

And I say that keeping the tree alive is a condition which generates new possible options other than logging.

And they say, but here is a woman that can now identify 4 different kinds of poisonous gas by their taste.

Sorry, I'm in your duck. Excuse me.

And then I say this line is not a pipe line for your heart.

And they say this is a detail for *The Awakening of the Pentagon*



And we talk about how in Chris Marker's *Sixth Sense of the Pentagon*, the protesters requested permission to levitate the Pentagon 30 feet. How someone inside the Pentagon wrote back saying: *no. But, you have permission to levitate the Pentagon 10 feet.*

So we try
the heart and other lachrymatory agents.

And one asks if somewhere in any culture there is a least yeast? One yeast by itself.

She stands up to say she painted the word BOARD on the board, that this answers that.

The mind dangling studs in the forgotten ear fruit she says,
I'm at the end of my own possibility.

She says, *it's hard to be at the end of one's own possibilities.*

She says, I don't feel I'm part of my language today;

I only eel.

Up on the 7th floor of who cares

One says in energy circuits the more energy you transport the less energy is lost during the transportation.

And one cries I know ones lost.

And one says I love that we go

And one says *O crap, it's a miracle.*

And one offers advice on propagating natives and other hard ons.

One says he's not all the way dumb, just made up of chocolate and birdseeds.

One says no one told the author of X how to preserve the things between the

empty things she found below the ear of the photograph. No one told her how to give form to the *empty* in between. No one told her how to note the *empty* inside in English. What to do when what is not there is not missing. What to do with *the nothing that is not there and the nothing that is*.

Now we are sewing the sweater while the wool grows on the sheep.

And when the procedural X operation algorithmically encounters *one equal one can one explaining one justifying explaining* in English *sorry*. How to curious in the phenomenal bracket, I mean the maybe frame, I mean whatever this parenthesis is called over and over.

Even when *The People Are Called Endless*

Even when Endless there is off or X.

Even when one connects this *all* and *all* to all in all in differences.

Even when the character for Japanese sky is also the character for *emptiness*.

Ewan gave everyone an envelope with a small pebble inside. The pebble came with a letter of instructions. The pebbles were from the place he had been.

The pebbles were to be worn in one's sock, in contact with one foot. A little conscious foot making device. A pea under the sleepwalker's mattress. And while we walked around all day we became conscious of feeling our meter's feet. Years later and I can't get the idea pebble out of my head's foot.

And we start experimenting together with what is sound today by reading the *Bluebird Asymmetries*. We hold on *very very slowly* (vvs), *very slowly* (vs), *slowly* (s), *moderately slowly* (ms), *moderately* (m), *moderately rapidly* (mr), *rapidly* (r), *very rapidly* (vr), and *very very rapidly* (vvr).

Keller says there is a *violence of intactness*.

She says it's kind of like sharing a bunk-bed with the Dali Lama after an evening of more questionable beans. Don't worry, he'll laugh.

The example he gives is of *dimensionless space*.

Maybe she is the X part of the thing that marks no spot.

He is teaching a cup Spanish.

This *mean* means *means*

One tried cutting off the negative ends of a magnet as art thou.

Alas, nothing attracts her anymore.

One is positive one is positive somewhere.

Ones were set up to be cut off.

In fact, even the physicists sit down with poets to speak of the force of words today.

Now *inevitable* becomes *unavoidable*, *unavoidable without* a doubt.

This is better as *inbalance*.

Balance a strange fruit.

One appeals

One apple peals



Hands handling squash.
SPACE ACTIVISM (Special Topics in Theory), Cornell University, Fall 2014
Photo: Eric Ellingsen



Stirring hands.
SPACE ACTIVISM (Special Topics in Theory), Cornell University, Fall 2014
Photo: Eric Ellingsen

One knows *compassion* carries over from Latin as *with bread*.

Now we break the bread together in English *frith* and Ithaca pancakes.

One says a *thud*. Thus thuds. Thus clumps of thuds. Thus: The Clumps.

Thus a new philosophy of Clumping. Being the single tree pulled out of the clump of trees.

Being *what would more immediately strike him would be the total want of that leading feature of all modern improvements, the clump; and of course he would order several clumps to be placed in the most conspicuous spots.*

Thus *creative school does not mean school of 'inventors and discoverers'; it indicates a phase and a method of research and of knowledge, and not a predetermined 'programme' as Antonio says.*

Aaron sees no one is cutting squash so now he is gathering squash cutters.

She says, *I know how the squash feels.*

We sink.

See she is turning seeds see he is turning seeds see she is turning seeds see she is turning seeds see she is adding one seed at a time.

Now from a seat one is reading into the spoon. Squashed next to neutron scars, mechanical menaces, ears of corn, clumps of Ma.

Adrian says the '*Ma*' is '*space*', but not in the sense of a boundless extant, in which objects are located. *Ma* is rather the space between two objects, a betweenness, something contained in the interval of between and among.

In some sense *in the sense* being the point hear.

And I say please escape from those who grow only in professional grossness.

And one says I'm from Kentucky and in Kentucky they'd shoot themselves in the head to prove they have a brain.

Rye says *I'll take whatever you mean by this as a good thing.*

One says this is a planet fucking up its own intelligence.

We feel out the meaning of the concept of the difference in Chinese between *viewing-in-motion* and *viewing-in-stillness*.

We feel out how to read *in stillness*

Now points are offered *grapes*.

What a character.

Now Seals are taught to replace *I don't know* with *I don't know yet*; replace *can* or *can't* with *will* or *won't*, as in: *I won't go into that village and devour hearts on pulped paper plates.*

She says *Now I spell a tree today*

Now one says *step slowly away from the air conditioner.*

Now one fills or full fills emptiness

Now look, is this least yeast a relatively inelastic expense

Now I made the word *squash*

Now another *Radical Imagination Community a Radical Imagination*

One is coming to a head

She says this means strong and lithe like light like life you know

One collects *absence*

One says for *radical conditionedness* please see Cornel's *public practice of philosophy*

One says, now I'm going to put a lot of read hot glitter glue around the halt cut out heart.

I mean if I'm going to let him bash me then that's what you think.

square square square

square square

square square

square square

square square square

This means *motels* are queens in Spanish.

This means you are the girlfriend of a male *hostel*.

Love was generally translated as *longing*.

This means *one measures exercise in belonging* and more *in hollow X's*

Know how Alfred says regarding learning, that *what is desired is a feeling for things, knot this mind that acquires facts, feel into things*.

Know how to read *facts* to feel into things

Know how to read a *feeling for things*, so a feeling for thinks.

In other words, one says we need more fuck you less please you today.

In other words she feels like another pedal around someone else's flower stem in English. In other words, this

empty does not mean *nothing*, please avoid the last thing I don't know in your language maybe *trajectories*.

One says artists today are locked up to learn the livers openings.

One says opening up feels more like cannulated cows.

One only wants to research the big scissors that mayors use to cut ribbons at grand openings. Collect collective gripping techniques, other stories of grip. Re-create an archive of sheer. Develop working sessions with more cuts.

Now there are two students collecting *who cares* in English.

As as is to a choir acquires an *empty* a lot a lot.

As one knows that they are really being asked to conjure tactile experiences from inflexible scientific texts. Asked to translate political constitutions into dinner appetizers, science fiction novels into deathday cards, *because birthday sounds so far away from my part of the Milky Way today*, he says.



Eric Ellingsen, Collection of ribbon-cutting mayoral scissors.

Still one says, how can I feel so down knowing a cumulus cloud on average
weighs 2.2 billion pounds and floats in English.

Still one is oaring away. Measuring parsecs or parsnips ore poems.

And from here on in have a very good heron.

And I say, you don't get it right or wrong, you get it or you don't.

She says, *this line is so empty it doesn't know if it's really here.* It's not.
It's hear.

This *empty* loves the smell of napalm in the mourning.

This *empty* lives the morning napalm at the end of his mind.

Now she asks are we near the place happiness is made?

The last time I was near *happens* she was never.

The last time she was *never* he ended *happy cumin*.

No, she says, that this *moon* is all wrong. That I am sure there are better
ways to say

I don't know into your language.

Yeah went bye-bye.

One eludes glare

Etudes the dilating hush

Dreams of the evanescent otter

Indescribable horizon of another other: other

Calculated irregularity

Speculum accumuliant

Belt strewn milk

Deborah says something inside a photograph.

One only wanted to know the meaning of half-lives.

One asks which craft do you use today?

One asks what happens when one's cheese is the carrot?

This means one is hitchhiking in the language of loss.

This means one is more interested in the shells not the crabs.

One says even whispers travel at the speed of sound.

Know these are all good people maybe some of them not all.

This means all doesn't exactly go on

Like before

Plus I forget

Relax the best drug on the market

Rows after rose

Rise over run

Perceptual asap

Now memory

Now disciplines foster disciples.

Now one stops to consider the hole that is bigger than the thing the hole is in.

Precision without being predetermined or Being.

Flowaway Heart.

The artist says the landscape architect can grade the anything slope.

Now he is quoting Cars. *Sometimes I create the feelings in others that they themselves to do not understand.*

Now Roger says know how *in anything living or nonliving, the spacing and timing of the material elements of which this is composed makes all the difference in determining what a thing is. And one overlooks the fact that it is the differential, non-material spacing and timing of these elements, as much as the material elements themselves, that mainly cause the world to be what it is.*

Know how to read *the non-material elements of space and time*

Know how *time* was replaced by *timing* so replaces

And as if Hatchcock were intentional please take cover.

Now the vital forces us.

Now she puts the cup down asks *what is the plural of me?*

Now Sacks says *he faced me with his ears.*

Now the word wood would or one air or err or our hour and air air err ere ear and water water.

Now I think I think I don't.

You know, like how now hearts napping in the tongue shaped stroller.

Now *I can't breathe* in his language.

Now why is Erika on page five and someone *invaluable*?

This means there are people like us everywhere please find them.

This means I'll see you at the recycling place please find me.

Now is this a door I'll recognize when next time I'm back here and adore?

Now one's own materiality as meaning.

Now learning learns to ask the difference between a *home centered* and *self-centered* reference system.

I think this *empty* is a door in English.

The mathematician says *empty without the help of someone else doesn't add up.*

This is another floating anchor reminding *dots*.

Read her *history of emptiness* his take on nothing.

How we are in need of an anchor not a cause.

This means *we are brought here*.

Because this kind of means *you*.

I beam.

Doesn't bother OK.

Doesn't empty of *where*

Now *the blank* is on top of Herman.

Now we didn't know the meaning of *values* in French.

Now a line in Euclid in taking positions replaces align having points.

Now she says, *it's a poem and poems aren't supposed to make empty sense*
chicken.

Now *complacency* yields *complicity*.

Now one's Hebrew is poking around the tickly spots.

Know how the male *house* explodes in German.

Now orbital realists: orbital realists

Then the air sweat gets in your mouth.

(Read this is a very light and wonderful thing)

Know the man throws his heart soup down, says *why hard? How do you people*
always find me!

What people, Jordan asks?

This might take a while for the dreamers.

break

down

Know now there are no names on memory.

That the gutless mud-sacks and amoebas are licking our hours memory chips
on scarf face cliffs bursting our memories in freaked blooms.

Add: an image of whatever is inside Smart's head.

Add: whatever *Bids* means in their language

The thing waiting says.

Her take on *Stupidity*.

His translation of the *History of Shit*.

Now the text is justified

One set off.

The Ambassadors of the Why arrive never having left.

Now open the pages in front of you and turn back to *IT*. Know how to read as if it were a rule

Now one thought: thought

One insisted slenderest how

The why mattering or not mattering or what

Insert *visitatio*

Insert *insects*

One herd in sex

One in sects

One's eyes brailing hips hieroglyphics

a least lean a least yeast

These are all the words I forget.

The forged see

The certain slants

The rued crusts

Runnels down the limned Commons

How you prove infinite withdrawals more true she says.

Then you remember lots of things at one time.

Then you remember lots of things at one tune.

Time for the mysteries of rope one says in *Hopeful Buildings*. After a time for death.

And Robert says, *art is what makes life more interesting than art*.

Siobhan says this means she got lost between the world and debate.

Mileva says *it seems that oxygen molecules travel at a speed of over 400 meters per second, but only travel a distance of 1/100 of a hairs breadth*.

Because this kind of means you.

At least there's a *sombrero* on the ceiling in English.

At least he says it's what the foot notes that matters when walking around with our empty X parts exposed.

Now she says, I really need my needs my heart ear plugs my privacy.



Eric Ellingsen, *TWIST* (2012).

Now a cow named Milky Way. The children named ARE and Heart.

And with other X's that have a steak in it.

And in the time of Heart and Are the milk time was ending. The infants growing. The exit of the Milky Way. The breast slab slips back into my wife's blouse in front of the culture class. Not slab, more like a swollen sailboat slipping through smooth surfaces water into a marina when the engines cut. Not marina really. Having never done this. Having never felt like this. Having never now at last at least.

Now back to finishing Twisted. Now finish Twisted.

Now finally we filled in the emptiness by emptying of all meaning.

Felt filling of empty X of all endings.

Fulfilling felt empty and full filling.

Full filling what was felt as at and in.

Ex nihilo

Ex voto add absurdums

Ex tempore

Etcetera

And because foxes usually learn how to take human form after 100 years, (sometimes it only takes 50), please try closing your eyes for what feels like 3 minutes. Time yourself.

(PLEASE TRY NOW)

what the foot notes: the following people participated in some way to co-produce this urban score:

Gabriel Wilson Salvatierra, Roland Barthes (*Empire of Signs: "Chopsticks"*), Jordan Christopher Berta, Eric Ellingsen, Avital Ronell (in reference to *Stupidity*), Inger Christenson (*IT*), Dominique Laporte (*History of Shit*, trans. Nadia Benabid and Rodolphe el-Khoury), Emily Zander Chang, Jacqueline Megan Haynes, Jeremias Hollinger (artist who sings in vents, mirroring sounds in vents), Sim van der Ryn (*Ecological Design*), Pixar (*Cars*), Andrea Denise Gonzalez, Gertrude Stein (*Tender Buttons*), Daniel Spoerri & Robert Filliou (*an anecdoted topography of chance*), Ben Markus (*The Age of Wire and*), Cameron David Neuhoff, Yen Hua Debra Chan, Cornel West, Euan Williams, Alfred North Whitehead (*Modes of Thought*), Georges Perec (*'e'*), Myer Siemiatycki (*"Contesting Sacred Urban Space: The Case of the Eruv," JIMI/RIMI Volume 6*), Oliver Sacks (*The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*), Theaster Gates (*Radical Hospitality*), Megan Gran Lund, Erica C Alonzo, Bertolt Brecht (*attempt*), Uvedale Price (*An Essay on the Picturesque*), Kenneth Hoching Chow, Dong Uk Kim, Yang Chen, Doreen Massey (*for space*), Malgorzata Patrycja Pawlowska, Rudolf Arnheim (*Visual Thinking*), Stanislaus Fung (*Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion; "Movement and Stillness in Ming Writings on Gardens"*), Dr. Roger Sperry (*Nobel Conversations*), Daniel Botkin (*Discordant Harmonies*), Charles Wright (*"Black Zodiac"*), Antonio Gramsci (*Prison Notebooks*), Wallace Stevens (*"Snow Man"*), Martin Heidegger (*Being and Time*), Adrian Snodgrass (*Thinking Through the Gap: The Space of Japanese Architecture*), Gus van Sant (*Do Easy*), Georges Perec (*Species of Spaces*) & Olafur Eliasson (*Take Your Time*), Lynn Peemoeller, Mark Wigley (*White Walls*), Keller Easterling (*Enduring Innocence*), Ruth Webb (*Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*), Sam Fuller (director's commentary in *Tigrero: A Film That Was Never Made*), James Jeremiah Slade, Veronica Velez Guzman, Aaron Samuel Goldstein, Chris Marker (*The Sixth Sense of the Pentagon*), Louis Sullivan (manipulated detail from *A System of Architectural Ornament*), George Oppen (*"Of Being Numerous"*), Francisco Varela (from the video *What we see and what we do is not separate*), Samuel Beckett (*How it is*), Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (*The Futurist Cookbook*), Nils Axen, Jakob Johann Baron von Uexküll (*A Foray into the World of Humans and Animals*), Andrei Bely (*Glossolalia*), Andrea Denise Gonzalez, Siobhan Meghan Lee, Mileva Marić (*The Love Letters*), Lynn Peemoeller, Relicque Lucia Lott, Bruno Latour and Michel Serres (*Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time*), The Rabbi Philip Rabinowitz Memorial Eruv (<http://www.kesher.org/eruv.html>)

video links



clip from Richard Donner (director), *Superman* (1978)
<https://vimeo.com/215772998>



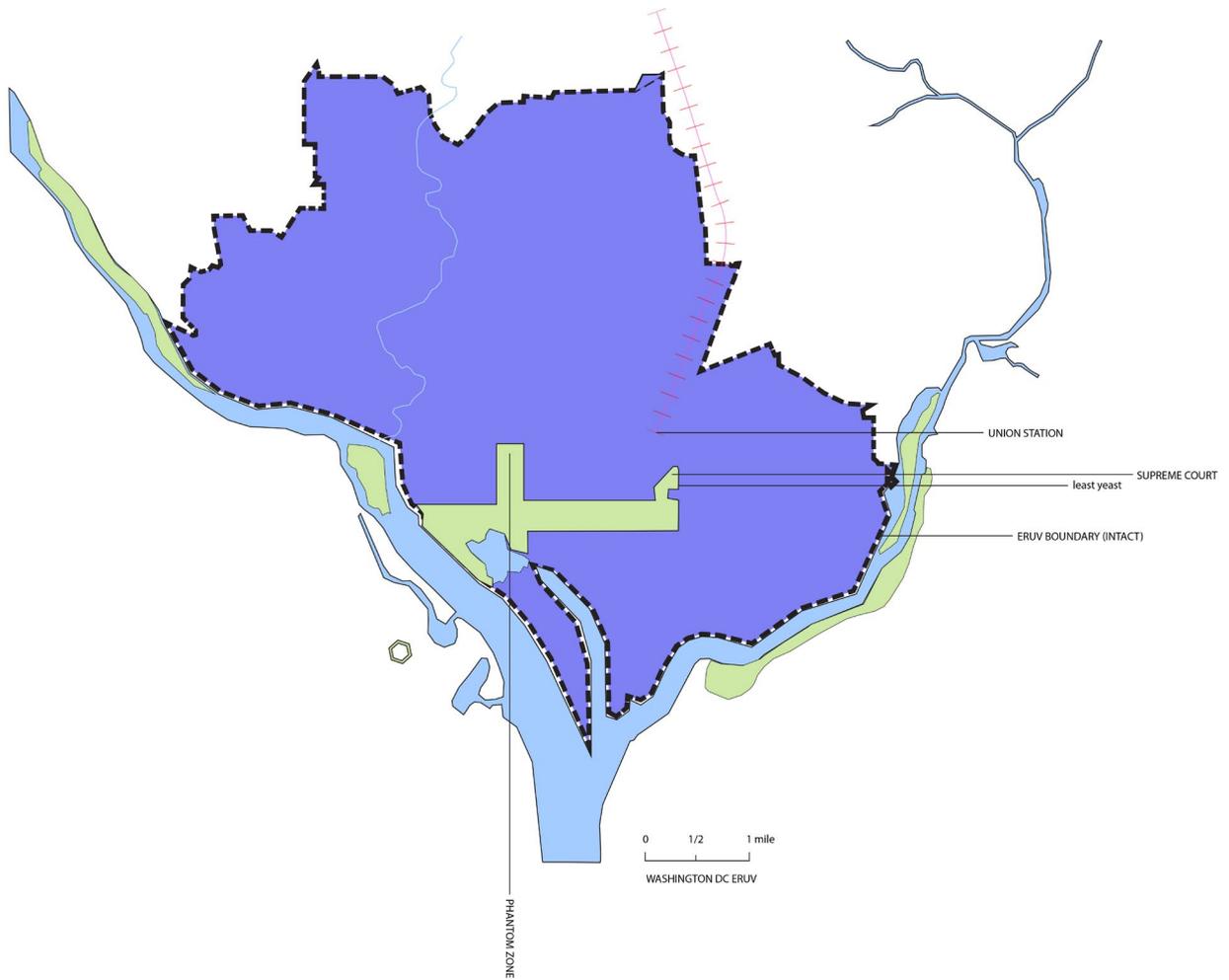
clip from John Carpenter (director), *They Live* (1988)
<https://vimeo.com/215773011>



clip from Chris Marker and Francois Reichenbach (directors), *The Sixth Side of the Pentagon* (1967)
<https://vimeo.com/215773019>



Winding up the yarns we tied together and walked as mobile ERUV.
SPACE ACTIVISM (Special Topics in Theory), Cornell University, Fall 2014
Photo: Eric Ellingsen



Washington DC Eruv, adapted from Peter Vincent and Barney Warft, "Eruvim: Talmudic places in a postmodern world," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 27: 1 (2002): p. 36, figure 2.

Review

By Jonathan D. Solomon

“Many of us enjoy the house of mirrors, and there is a certain charm in the crooked streets of Boston.”

I took a walk through a city with a book. The city was Boston, and the book was Kevin Lynch’s *The Image of the City*—that little blue text-as-city, that collection of drawings of lines and circles and stars and arrows and questions and conclusions about form and perception and cities-as-texts. I had flown to Boston that afternoon and landed late, after the rush hour, after a rain, when the roads from Logan Airport to Cambridge were empty and the interchanges, to my Midwestern scales, so quaint and precious. The bar in my hotel had closed, as bars in Massachusetts do, so I walked out with the book in my hand, with the book in my head, across the Harvard Bridge and into Back Bay perpendicularly, and orienting axially (eschewing alleys) to Copley Square, where there is a sign for the Mass Pike that reads “New York ↓”; lines and circles and hatches and stippling, a broken bottle spreading tendrils across a manhole cover, on a corner with a stone curb, where a weak and absent boundary once met a point of confusion, referencing a bottomless tower on my way to an outside path, I began to experience shape ambiguity...

In fact, I had another text in my head, Eric Ellingsen’s “portraits of X’s empty,” a poem at the edge of the boundary of the path to the node where Kevin Lynch meets David Lynch, where Situationist meets Modernologist, a text-as-city-observation, an ear-in-the-grass *dérive*, a “knot in a good way.”

Throughout the fall of 2015, while Ellingsen was Mitchell Visiting Professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, while he was completing “portraits of X’s empty,” he drank beer while wearing boxing gloves; he built a dream machine; he led a series of walks in which participants navigated the city looking obliquely through mirrors, concentrating on their blind spots, or holding bubbles of space at the extremes of their peripheral vision; he planted garlic in gardens in the spaces between the city grid and expressway on-ramps; and, from his desk in the northwest corner of the Sullivan Galleries, on the 7th floor of the Carson, Pirie, & Scott Building, at the 0 point of Chicago’s coordinate grid, he plotted the city’s (de)centering.

Kevin Lynch as seen in the field, from the tunnel entrance: the distinctive elements cohere only in our head. Coherence is in our heads; coherence is in, coherence, says Ellingsen:

“in the pancake gradients.”

Lynch reminds us, “The image of a given reality may vary significantly between different observers,” almost as if this were a problem. Ellingsen relishes in the subjectivity of perception, and of language. To Ellingsen, cities are acts of translation. Moving in a city is an act of translation. Moving through a city, with lines of poetry in different languages, asking people to translate them, is a form of mapping. Maps are a form of poetry. Poetry is in act of urbanism.

Lynch had the right idea. We learn about the city by looking at it and drawing it, by talking with people in it, by listening to those people; by learning about the city, we become citizens, city makers. However, legibility is boring. Worse, in the city written legibly in form, no one got lost, no one had to ask directions, no one thought they had to talk or listen. In the spirit of *The Image of the City*, Ellingsen’s “portraits of

X's empty" reminds us that there is no writing the city,
no reading the city, without getting lost in translations;
"collided with what ever air err ears" to image the city,
image in the city; imagine the city.

Biographies

Eric Ellingsen is an Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at Washington University in St. Louis. He started Species of Space (SOS) in 2009. From 2009–2014, he was co-director of the Institute for Spatial Experiments, a school started by Olafur Eliasson and part of the University of Arts, Berlin. He is currently working with deans from the Art Academy and University of Iceland to create alternative, hybrid, cross-disciplinary models for MFA/engineering programs. Since 2015, he has also been working with curators at ARTbox and a consortium of international agents, as well as the municipality and mayor of Thessaloniki, Greece, on a Perceiving Academy. Ellingsen's work focuses on pedagogy and landscape architecture as art forms. Through the design and choreography of encounters, public art installations, walks, and performances, he seeks to construct alternative ways of perceiving and using public spaces that empower communities and citizens as agents in the design and self-determination of their own spaces and lives. Ellingsen's Urban Scores have been exhibited internationally and published in distinguished writing platforms such as *Conjunctions*, *The Recluse*, *The Chicago Review*, *PANK* (edited by Roxanne Gay), and *Western Humanities Review* (edited by Craig Dworkin).

Jonathan D. Solomon is co-editor of *Forty-Five* and Director of Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Designed Objects at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His writings have appeared in a wide range of publications about architecture and urbanism, including *Log*, *The Avery Review*, *Footprint* (Delft), and *Urban China* (Beijing), and his drawings and analytical and counterfactual urban narratives are featured in *Cities Without Ground* (ORO, 2012) and *13 Projects for the Sheridan Expressway* (PAPress, 2004). Solomon curated "Workshopping: an American Model of Architectural Practice" in the US Pavilion at the 2010 Venice Architecture Biennale and "Outside Design" at the Sullivan Galleries at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His interests include extra-disciplinary, post-growth, and non-anthroponormative design futures. Solomon holds a BA in Urban Studies from Columbia University and an MArch from Princeton University. He has been a guest critic at schools of architecture worldwide and has been invited to lecture and exhibit in Asia, Europe, North and South America and Australia. Solomon has taught design at the Syracuse University, the University of Hong Kong, the City College of New York, and—as a Banham Fellow—at the University at Buffalo. He is a licensed architect in the State of Illinois, and a Member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA).