

The London Consortium
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Place and Spacing

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Aiming to initiate interdisciplinary intellectual debate about paradoxes of contemporary culture, Static presents contributions from an international team of academics, artists and cultural practitioners.

The materials, assembled for each issue around a theme, include analytical essays and articles, interviews, art projects, photographic images, etc. Static will welcome feedback, argument and commentary from scholars, artists, and other readers, and will be regularly updated in order to communicate the most recent and relevant ideas and interpretations on the chosen topic.

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Place while given is never just given. More is in place. More will have always been in place.

Writing about a place - any place - will necessitate that the place be identified, that it be located and thus that it be placed. Each of these moments is an activity; 'identifying', 'placing', 'locating'. As activities, as that which is undertaken, they bring with them the ineliminable mark of mediation. How then is this mediation to be understood? What would be involved in any attempt to position 'locating', 'placing', 'identifying'? The question of positioning as with that of understanding is made more difficult by the fact that the activities are thought either to have been spontaneous or simply to be at work with the given. Mediation is denied by the feint of innocence. Once this position is shown to harbour a complexity that will belie any innocence - rendering that innocence merely putative - how then are these acts to be understood?

If there is change, if moving from one to the other - from innocence to complexity - is not a just a moving forward but a moving back allowing for a possible future what will be the time of this movement? What type of work will have been undertaken?

With the question - and this will be true of questioning as an activity - what is brought to bear upon that activity is the actual process that it seeks to identify. Not the answer but the process or activity itself. What is the place of questioning? What is placed by it?

Even with the question place insists.

Developing place must be specific; sites will always be specific. And yet specificity is not just the evocation of this place, the positing of an already given geography; 'this' place as opposed to 'that' place. Specificity pertains to that which will always have been involved in the thinking of place, of the location of a site. What comes to be given are the predetermined sites of meaning; corner, room, building, street, city, region, nation.

With the given - the predetermined present - there is the necessary and important imposition of relations. Positions captured and held by the play of prepositions; in, by, between, with, etc. Part of that play is an already present implication; one will always be with another.

What is it to question the given? What is the place of such a questioning? Answering hinges on the gift and the work of its inexorable logic. With the gift and its impossible refusal the temporality of tradition - philosophy's thinking of history - is brought into play.

Here, in lieu of place as simple, place will need to taken with its necessary interconnection with space. What is at work with the incorporation of space cannot be accounted for in terms of a simple addition. Space has not to be added on. It is neither emblem nor ornament but brings with it the attempt - albeit a halting initial attempt - to signal the already present work of complexity.

With complexity there will be the inevitability of the question of its own understanding. What will it mean to open up to complexity? What will have been there?

If a question is framed in terms of complexity then the answers that are already given will begin to lose their hold. What had been held in place prior to the opening allowed by the question is the incorporation of complexity into a schema

that locates it in opposition to the simple (the axiom, the particular, etc). Thus placed the specificity of complexity lay in its being an amalgam of simples. Complexity became no more than the consequence of the process of addition. Process here is a simple movement that admits of regress. The supposition is that complexity can be reduced to its founding simples. What had been built is able to be broken down and then rebuilt. At work within this already structured presence is the possibility of a simple beginning. Here simplicity will take on the guise of innocence and, as with innocence, what will have been disguised is the insistent presence of a founding complexity; in other words a setup that is *ab initio* complex.

Complexity will have started to admit of its own founding complexity.

With the admission process and regress, in sum the reciprocal move from the built to the rebuilt will have to be rethought and thus recast. Again there is the presence of a movement in which another set-up must emerge.

The interplay of space and place will have to allow for a complex geography. Once geography has to maintain complexity then the standard place allocated to geometry changes. With it time will have to be reworked. The temporality of progress and regress will no longer pertain as another time holds sway.

With any jumble of possibilities, speed - the nature of speed, the right of speed - must be taken up. Movement from one position to the next; abandoning one understanding to take up another; undoing a specific link to allow for another, all these undertakings - undertakings that bring with them an inevitable necessity, especially in their formulation - cannot just happen. Positioning brings with it an inescapable foundering.

Allowing for speed - the right speed coupled to the actual possibility of movement - returns insistent considerations.

With speed, with the possibility of the orchestration of a movement the inherent complexity – speed's inhering as anoriginally present - emerges.

What is there, will have been there, is the site of an intrusion. The intruder is neither enemy nor friend. Intrusion marks the presence of a primordial relation that will always defy simplicity.

Who intrudes? Whose intruder? What is it to live with intrusion?

Intrusion places the gift. The gift intrudes. Intrusion cannot be refused. With this presence there is more than one. And yet there cannot be just two. At work here is that which exceeds addition.

Intruding by becoming the given creates place. The more than one that was always more than one will come to define the nature of place. Being more, it allows for relation. In allowing it, it spaces.

Spacing becomes the site of the more than one.