



A NEW MONUMENT FOR DERRY-LONDONDERRY



This document is a proposal for a motor racing circuit through the streets of the City of Derry. It is a proposal that maps a route in, through and upon the existing urban fabric of the city. This document is a means to access the route, a path which has the potentiality to become a new monument for the City of Derry.

START / FINISH



Through workshops and discussions, the existing road and streets of the cityscape have been studied and scrutinised by a cross disciplinary team of artists, architects, urban planners, engineers, motor racing experts, motor racing game experts, motor racing enthusiasts and members of the public. It was not simply the physical environment which was the subject of study, but the cultural and historical environment of the City of Derry. Not only have the lumps and bumps, the straights and the curves, the ups and the downs been considered and pondered, but also the unseen and invisible, the stories and myths, have been excavated too. The visible and invisible, material and immaterial have been considered as foundations on which a suitable course can be composed.

The outcome of the evaluation is a path, as defined within this document, which takes the streetscape and demarcates upon it a route to be taken. It is path with a start and a finish, a determined length and a series of corners and turns to be taken. These locations have been named, christened and numbered, a series of markers with which to etch the path into the landscape. Definitely, this prescribed course is presented as a track for an event, for the racing of motor cars.

TURN 01. OAK CHICANE

This document does not only present a potential path but presents an event to the City of Derry. The event of motor racing is one of speed, noise and spectacle. This proposal gives to the city an event of excitement and achievement to be performed through the streets, an event to draw spectators and participants from far and wide, to watch and take part in feats of skill and boldness. The document unfolds the potential for such an accomplishment to be brought to the City of Derry.

This document is a proposal for a (certain type of) monument. It first appropriates a type of monumentality that approaches notions of scale and space. The path outlined is long; it can be measured in miles. It traces great distances through the space of the city, traversing hills and rivers. It weaves its way between buildings, across steel bridges and through great stone walls. Long, wide expanses of concrete and asphalt are acquired, immense surfaces to be occupied. The cartography captures great swathes of space, territorialising it in order to assign it a (new) function.



TURN 02. CORDENER

(Exiting on to Craigavon Lower)



There is not only monumentality of space but of event. The functionary role to which the space has been assigned transforms it into arena, a place in which the spectacle can be witnessed. Any racing event is defined by speed, by the determination of who can be the fastest. To observe such dynamic displays is to join with the thrill of the race, to attempt to grasp and embrace the experience of exhilarating speeds.

The energetic spectacle becomes an epic organism. It draws together spectators and competitors as a pulsating multitude, swarming around and upon the path that has been traced through the city. A quasi-biological apparatus, the immense circuit pulls about itself the paraphernalia and resources to form the organs and appendages which it needs to respire. It pumps and propels people to it and through it; a monumental micro-society gravitating and vibrating around the physical manifestation of the race course.

TURN 03. LANYON





But this is a proposal which is already beyond a proposal. It is always-already complete, finished. The spaces which the proposal speaks of and territorialises are actual and already existing physical spaces. They are public streets and roads, plazas, bridges and gateways. They are normal everyday spaces through which anyone may traverse. The path as prescribed through the city is one that anyone may take. It is a route that may have been travelled or encountered before. As a series of directions to take, its space has always been there. Both space and path exist and co-exist, each waiting to be uncovered through the act of designation which is carried by this proposal. This proposal does not call the concrete physicality of space into being but the path through it. The space of the path exists without the proposal; or more accurately, it is a space which pre-exists the proposal.

It is this proposal which then conjures forth the path as an ephemeral thing. This document allows the path to be unfolded, enabling a voice and vocality to be empowered which spouts forth a territorialising potency to summon the path into being. Equally, this document, as a piece of printed matter, has an ephemerality all of its own. The transitory summons the transitory: the first summons the second which in turn is the reason the first exists. The fleeting becomes a closed loop folding back upon itself, evaporating over itself. But nevertheless, a path is mobilised in real space and demands to be located. What supplies the path with being? How is it traced? What describes or makes it markers?



TURN 04. U BOAT



Any document or map can be only a representation of a territory or path; "the map is not the territory". The map cannot be entered; it is not a normative physical environment into which one can be inserted. A map with its lines, symbols, colours and key refers, or rather defers, to something else. Conversely, the map does not simply defer to that which it represents, it is not a complete and total depiction of that place, nor can it ever hope to totally be. Rather, it depends on an intermediary process, object or mechanism to become that representation. From simple terms of some type of measuring device or scale to more complexly an interpretive symbol or series of analytics. Likewise, such deferral does not cease there, for the scale or symbol defers to another unit (eg. a measuring system or a key), which it turn defers to something else. The map is a representation of representations, a deferral of deferrals, ad infinitum. But rather than the territory being postponed, it is suspended; a suspension within the relations of deferral which the map invokes. Returning to the path and its solicitation in space, it is the proposal which stimulates the unfolding of the territory. Correspondingly, this unfolding does not actually unfold the territory like the unfolding of said map, but rather it must unfold the relations with which it is deferred.

TURN 05. PREHENS APPROACH

(Exiting on to Craigavon Upper)



Equally and reciprocally, the path or territory must support such an enfolding upon the map or proposal. As stated earlier, this proposal document was developed via an initial phase of study and investigation into the spatial characteristics and context on which the circuit was to be established. And as detailed, this inquiry was sensitive to not just the visible and physical features, but also those which are hidden and invisible. These manifold attributes are that with which such enfolding can take place.

TURN 06. TILLIES



Firstly, the physicality of space must be discussed with consideration of deferral. As suggested earlier, the means by which space is both located and represented is in persistent deferment to something else, to a thing which it is not. Any given location is always held in a relation to other locations. To say something is somewhere is also to say where it is not. What can be supplied in order to prescribe a route or territory is an interrelation of nominated values whose fixedness only exists relative to one another. In terms of the race track route which this proposal sets out, simplistically speaking it is a series of turns or curves, in degrees of right or left, separated by straights sections of various lengths. As such it is relationally complete and self-contained. But in order to be accessed and entered, it must refer to something outside itself. So as to be located in the vicinity of the City of Derry, the representation of the race course must be relationally fastened to tangible anchors in the real environment. Particularly, these markers or anchors are points of communion, between proposed route (map) and physical space (territory), and between path and user. These points of reference allocate to specific features such devices as place names and physical structures which can be located in both map and territory. Through this locutionary act the document or map is transformed from an abstract arrangement into a representation proper. This in turn manifests a trajectory for the document, relationally locating the prescribed route in physical space and allowing entry to it.

TURN 07. FERRY QUAY









This point then arrives at the second deliberation, the deferral of the hidden, as it is precisely in these acts of naming where the invisible resides. The concealed and intangible explored during the initial phase of discussions and workshops included place names, histories and myths; the social. Although some of these issues concern real physical spaces, they are inherently social in capacity, whether through their narrative, historical or functional role. Naming things or giving things a function, relating facts from the past and telling stories are all social activities. Indeed, linking the map itself to physical space and so transforming that space into a territory is essentially social. Nonetheless, in assenting to correlate the path of the circuit to physical space through the anchoring acts as outlined above, in actuality the locations are instead being linked to other (social) events. Although physical space is tangibly present, it is the navigation and plotting of that space which is a socially deferential condition. The performative locutionary act of the proposal manifests not simply a relational framework which is abstractly physical in realisation, but rather a socially sited structure of relations of deferral. The path of the race track which is summoned by the performance of the proposal participates, re-creates and defers to a socio-historical paradigm of events. Whereby the territory of the path is suspended in relations of deferral, it is in terms of time rather than space.



TURN 08. THE DIAMOND

(Rear view from Bishops Gate)



TURN 09. FOUNTAIN

(Rear view exiting)

Finally, the trajectory of this proposal shifts from the physical through the social to enter the temporal. Through the task of unfolding this proposal upon a spatial territory, a space-time of the socio-historical is revealed which was folded into it. The proposed physical realisation of the race course in space activates a paradigm in which the socio-historical can be accessed. By laying out the course upon the environment of the City of Derry, specific historical events, as represented through the naming of particular locations on the track, can be accessed. As such, the manifestation of the track defers to these temporal events in order to be made real. By entering the performative paradigm which this proposal enacts, the temporal past can be retrieved.

The performance of the proposal through the social manifests the relations through which the past is accessed. The social becomes the relation through which the past is given voice; the task of accessing the past is placed upon the social relations which the proposal sets in motion. As that which is distributed through the social, this proposal manifests the path of the circuit which supports the structure of deferment. The access to the past relies on the proposal to be distributed, for the path to achieve a contemporary mythical or invisible status and whereby becoming relationally social, in order for temporal activation to occur. The distribution of the document is the means by which the temporal mechanism is stimulated.



TURN IO. LONG TOWER CURVE

(Rear view exiting)



The temporal paradigm which is activated enables a vocalicity of the past to be unfolded; a space-time is presented via the past in which any participant who inhabits the path of the race track stimulates. This space-time vocalicity can provide the conditions for another type of monumentality in excess of scale, space and event as discussed earlier. This approaches a monument typology in which there exists a normative arrangement of the presentation of an historical past. The interchangeability of the terms 'memorial' and 'monument' is redolent of such a function with the past. Monuments seek to connect the past to a future, a future which is their own; the erection of a monument seeks to create a portal through which that past can speak to a future yet to come. They seek to conserve a particular past and re-present that past within the present, remembering that past and re-telling that past the present. The physicality of a monument carries the weight of this burden, an encumbrance which perpetually anchors that monument within an unchangeable past.

TURN II. AGGRO

(Rear view exiting)





But the paradigm of monument which is submitted in this proposal of a route for a race track counters these normative conditions; it is a counter monument. The act of remembering presented here is not a remembering of the past, but a remembering of the present, of the potential present-ness of the path. It is a remembering of something which is yet to come, the memory of a possible future. The space-time which is activated is a potentiality rather than an actuality. The paradigm of the counter monument is for the task of remembering to be taken out of the past, dislocated from the anchor of the past, and to be carried by those in the present.

This proposal is a counter monument which is socially sited and ephemeral in nature; it relies on a distribution to occur within the social which the reality of the (counter) monument is deferred to. The relational space-time which is accessed through the path of the race track is supported by the territorialisation of social relations incurred from this document. The proposal document is a vessel through which the space-time of the counter monument is activated and accessed. Through its distribution and participation, it simultaneously gives access to and bring into being the counter monument in the urban environment of the City of Derry.



TURN 12. COWARDS COMPLEX

(Transect)



TURN 13. GUILDHALL

What is essential is that the space-time activated by this proposal can only be brought about in the relational paradigm between proposal and physical possibility. It is a temporal praxis which is sustained through potentiality rather than actuality. While the always-already condition of the actually existing space maintains an essential capacity in the relational paradigm, to bring about the race track as entirely actually existing would collapse any such relations.



To conclude, the counter monument which is embedded in this proposal is one of relational potentiality. It enables a new monument to be territorialised upon the City of Derry, an always-already monument which can be accessed by anyone who walks or drives the streets of the city, entering the path of the race track. This is not a monument to support what is already there, but rather a social sculpture and counter monument which is a means to access a space-time which is separate but hidden.

TURN 14. PEACE

Disclaimer:

The artist in no way assumes responsibility for any personal injury or death resulting from the participation in this art work. Illegally racing cars, driving a motor car on the pavement, ignoring traffic and walking down the middle of the road all present their own risks and are actively discouraged by the artist. Participants should be aware of the risks and be responsible for their own actions.

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Stroke City Racing

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