

Architecture is Always in the Middle...

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Bread-and-butter architecture starts from the middle. It starts from where we already are, from the machinery within which we are already embedded; or rather (since that is always the case anyhow) it sees this 'starting in the middle' as a positive possibility, *the* positive possibility of architecture. Unlike a tree, it does not grow from a single seed into a hierarchical structure, but instead operates like a little piece of couch grass root, left stranded between the paving stones, happy to carry on growing between them, and however much the trees or hierarchical thought try to stamp it out, annoyingly, *it keeps on coming back* like Le Corbusier's grass between the paving slabs. It starts from the middle and it ends in the middle – it does not come to a conclusion, it does not come to a climax but remains on a plateau; that is, its resources lie not in those of a composition that is completed, as in the strategy of Aristotle's poetics or Alberti's definition of the perfect work of architecture, which requires that nothing be added and nothing be removed in order to avoid spoiling it. But things are always spoilt, buildings above all (dust, rain, dirt, stuff, mess, people, life...). Bread-and-butter work is always already engaged in a provisional, local, practical, legal, contractual, personal, social and political situation or machine – or rather, series of multiple machines operating on different registers. For bread-and-butter architecture there is no autonomy and no autopoiesis. There is no autonomy because (contra Luhmann and his followers) the machines, the interplay of activity, never go so far as to

separate themselves into autonomous realms, even provisionally.¹ In that respect, bread-and-butter architecture is profoundly anti-Cartesian. Descartes was wrong: we should not split the ontology of the world into two sections, two distinct realms. Not only for the reason that once this is done it is impossible to suture them together again, nor for the reason that once this is done all sorts of conceptual idiocies follow, but also because this habit of mind, this stubborn image of thought, is hard to shake off in all sorts of other areas of thinking and theory. The supposed autonomy of the mind from the physical realm authorises – no, demands – all sorts of additional fantasies of autonomy and separation. These fantasies then become real, and then the separations actually exist because they are accepted and acted upon. Cartesianism is made concrete.

Instead of Descartes, let us try Spinoza. It is not just the famous question of what a body can do, especially if 'a body' is thought of materially or physically.² (Is there not such a thing as a body of thought? And how is that less of a body than a so-called 'physical' body?)³ As Whitehead says, the idea of the physical is just another habit of thought, another secondary phenomenon, which, in our culture, is subject to an almost constant error of categorisation that gives it a false primacy.⁴ Spinoza is interested in what a body can do because he wants to remove the illusion that what the body does is somehow determined by the mind – the mind as a free agent, distinct from the extended realm of objects and

the senses. The extraordinary moment in Spinoza is where he proclaims the *sameness* of mind and body, both being made from the same *substance*, the same nature – and again, substance here should not be thought of as a material substrate, but more abstractly – a substance that encompasses within its nature both body and mind. What distinguishes the mind and the body is not that they are of a different nature, but that they are two modes or manners of the same thing: ‘Body and mind are one and the same thing, conceived now under the attribute of Thought, now under the attribute of Extension.’⁵ We could say that what this then generates is a profound connection between mind and body, were it not for the fact that a ‘connection’ is unnecessary since it implies a prior separation, which for Spinoza (in contrast to Descartes) does not exist. The mind is nothing other than the idea of the body, no more and no less. It makes no sense, in this un-split world of Spinoza, to claim that the mind controls the body, because how can something be in control of the same thing – the very thing it is itself? ‘Control’ already implies a split between two things, one controlled (body) and one doing the controlling (mind). This is the Cartesian approach: to maintain the split and give control of extended things to spirit or mind. Cartesianism is thus a split ontology, an ontology of two realms, whereas what Spinoza gives us is a flat or immanent ontology, an ontology where there is no transcendence of one realm over another, no evaluation of a higher realm (mind) over a lower realm (body).

More generally, there is a persistent ‘habit of the split’ or ‘habit of the cut’ in architectural theory. Architectural theorists made a fateful decision to take Aristotle too seriously – in particular at the beginning of *Physics* where he states that in order to understand something we must analyse it; that is, we must cut things up into their parts.⁶ John Onians has shown how Francesco di Giorgio’s architecture treatises of the late fifteenth century were particularly indebted to the method described in *Physics*,

in contrast to the more literary structures used by Alberti and Vitruvius.⁷ However, the latter two theorists also *analyse* architecture; that is, they divide it into constituent parts. What Spinoza challenges us to try to undertake is a method of understanding that does not begin with the split – that does not begin with a dualistic or hierarchical ontology, or with the division of the discipline into parts.

It is this persistent split image of thought that operates as the key presumption behind Summerson’s article on the bread and butter of architecture.⁸ Summerson is generous towards the everyday work of architects in their public and private offices, and therein lies the interest of his essay. But the underlying prejudice (and we are made up of prejudices, there is no escaping them, it is just a question of acknowledging and working *with* them) is the prejudice of the split, of the separation of the high and the low, of the difference between two realms, one of which is elevated above the other or transcendent in relation to the other. Is there not a condescending tone in Summerson’s piece? Despite its generosity, does it not remain *de haut en bas*? In his essay we are clearly dealing with the same structure of thought that makes Lincoln Cathedral *architecture* and the bicycle shed mere *building*, as Pevsner famously noted.⁹ At the same time, Summerson sets a challenge:

It is competence and quality we need most at the moment, not the vanity of trying to fly level with the poet-innovator Le Corbusier, or the stupidity (as it seems to me) of being more interested in getting a few exciting, immaculate, individual results than in getting the roots of architecture untangled and properly planted in the soil where they belong.¹⁰

What I wish to explore here is the question of whether we can escape Summerson’s sense of condescension towards the bread and butter; and, if so, what possibilities are opened up by fleeing from this way of thinking about things. Is bread-and-butter

architecture necessarily consigned to 'competence and quality', important though these are? Is it mere vanity to try to fly with the poetry of Le Corbusier? How would the competent architect do that? And, as has already been hinted, perhaps this is to do with the type of roots one wishes to put down, or the type of machine that architecture might be. Summerson's roots are clearly those of the traditional hierarchy of architecture, not the messy and tangled ones that were mentioned above. My claim here is that one task of architectural theory is surely to survey the existing symptomatology of the discipline and propose a new table of disorders, a new casting of phenomena and thought in order to open up new possibilities for architecture, and in this case a new possibility that undercuts this conceptual difference between the competent and the poetic. It would not just be a questioning of existing circumstances but the proposing of new ones. As Deleuze puts it:

There is always a great deal of art involved in the grouping of symptoms, in the organisation of a table where a particular symptom is dissociated from another [...] and forms the new figure of a disorder or illness. Clinicians who [...] renew a symptomatological table produce a work of art; conversely, artists are clinicians [...] of civilisation. It seems, moreover, that an evaluation of symptoms might only be achieved through a novel.¹¹

What this implies is that theory indeed will become something other than analysis in the attempt to propose something new, because the thought that does this will not be content with splitting architecture into parts but must necessarily be integrative – in other words must have more the nature of a novel or a work of art than the tone of a treatise.

I said at the outset that bread-and-butter architecture starts from the middle, in the sense that it is embedded in a series of machines which are always already at work. The term 'machine' should be understood as a positive term, referring both to Le

Corbusier's use and to that of Deleuze. A machine is not a mechanical device where the movement of certain parts is determined by other parts; it is more like an ecology, a series of interplaying elements or particles. As Deleuze and Parnet explain in *Dialogues II*:

Machine, machinism, "machinic": this does not mean either mechanical or organic. Mechanics is a system of closer and closer connections between dependent terms. The machine by contrast is a "proximity" grouping between independent and heterogeneous terms.¹²

A machine is an assemblage of things, a more or less open set of things that interrelate. One of Deleuze's favourite examples concerns tools and technology; he and Guattari often mention the assemblage of the stirrup, the horse and the knight:

The tetravalence of the assemblage. Taking the feudal assemblage as an example, we would have to consider the interminglings of bodies defining feudalism: the body of the earth and the social body; the body of the overlord, vassal, and serf; the body of the knight and the horse and their new relation to the stirrup; the weapons and tools assuring a symbiosis of bodies – a whole machinic assemblage.¹³

We are always already involved in such assemblages or machines, assemblages that operate by means of a symbiosis. (We see here how Deleuze is constantly proposing an understanding of things based on showing the connections between them. In its opposition to the cut, to analysis, Deleuze's thinking stays true to Spinoza's flat and immanent ontology, and particularly to the oneness of thought and thing.) Although technology and tools are a part of this sort of assemblage, they are never primary or determinative because the assemblages with which we are involved are intrinsically social from the outset: for Deleuze, 'every assemblage is collective'.¹⁴

There are other types of assemblage – for instance, geological assemblages or weather systems – that do not involve human or animal agency and therefore do not have a social component. But here we are concerned with what Deleuze and Guattari call the *alloplastic* stratum; that is, the part of reality which relates to us. One noticeable aspect of many architectural interpretations of Deleuze's thought is that they avoid reference to the *alloplastic*, which from the beginning to end of Deleuze's thought is the stratum that interests him most. The result is an overly physicalist, materialist and formal use of this philosophy of architectural theory and practice, a bias which it seems necessary to begin to correct.

Tools and technology only develop as part of an assemblage that is already underway, and which can become more or less transformed by the sudden reinterpretation or invention of a piece of technology or a tool. But the 'particles' or 'bodies' from which an assemblage is formed are hugely varied in type and include the list of matters I mentioned earlier that form the bread and butter of architecture: provisional and inherently local and practical matters such as legal and contractual systems, personal hopes and interests, and social and political situations. At a high level of abstraction, we can extend this list to include the intellectual and philosophical milieu within which the assemblage operates, which is more or less acknowledged but all the more powerful if not acknowledged.

What would we ask of an ontology of everyday architecture? Precisely that it acknowledges these multiple machines, this whole ecology which makes up the bread and butter of existence in any architecture office. Here, acknowledgment means not simply acceptance or resignation, but rather seeing this complex ecology as the positive possibility of architecture, and this is the reason for citing Deleuze's philosophy in this context: it is one of the very few which 'begins in the middle' and does not

depreciate the common or garden variety of existence that has a place for the ordinary woman or man, for the journeyman or the artisan. Contrast this with the usual definition of architecture: we still have not done for architecture what Heidegger demands at the beginning of *Being and Time* - we have not clarified what its manner of being is, we have not laid out a clear ontology of architecture, and this leaves it conceptually and ontologically confused. And this confusion maintains within it, not coincidentally, a nihilistic contrast between the 'low' and the 'high', between the bike shed and the cathedral.¹⁵

Architecture is still almost invariably regarded as building, but with something 'added', some *supplement*, which makes it approach the poetic or the work of art. We are within what Deleuze will call, following his interpretation of Nietzsche, a *nihilistic* way of thinking which, contrary to the vulgar use of the term, defines nihilism as the *depreciation of our current existence*, our middle-of-the-way life, our intramundane, bread-and-butter daily occurrences. Nihilism deprecates our life in the name of a beyond, in the name of a transcendent or ideal realm; and it is the nasty, priestly task of nihilism to make us ashamed of who we are by comparison with that ideal realm (and for Deleuze there are plenty of secular priests too – psychoanalysis, for example, or some of the priests of architectural theory).¹⁶ An ontology of everyday architecture would be anti-nihilistic in that it takes as its positive possibility the machines of the everyday, the machines within which we constantly operate. Such an ontology of architecture would act to destroy the desire for architecture and architectural theory to *even pose the question* about the difference between bread-and-butter architecture and high architecture.

A reader of Nietzsche, Le Corbusier was anti-nihilistic in this way.¹⁷ This is why there is a profound connection between his most misquoted and mistranslated aphorism and the way in which

Deleuze takes up the notion of the machine. 'Une maison est une machine-à-habiter' is persistently and wilfully misunderstood as a reference to the machine aesthetic and a sour pragmatics of housing, whereas the context within *Vers une architecture* makes it clear that this is a poetic question *at the same time* as a pragmatic one.¹⁸ But then, unless one accepts a flat ontology, unless one *begins with the prejudice* that we will *not* split the world into high / low, poetry / pragmatics, matter / spirit, it is impossible to do anything other than misinterpret the phrase. In turn, the phrase is often mistranslated as 'a house is a machine for living *in*', which destroys Le Corbusier's intended meaning that the house is a machine for *living*. It is not a question of inserting life into the house, conceived as a machine or otherwise. The house *is* architecture. The house *is* architecture as *machine*. It is a machine in exactly the manner that Deleuze later explicates; and this is not by coincidence, because in using the term 'machine' he is making reference to its history, to its hinterland of use in Le Corbusier's famous phrase. At the end of Deleuze's final book, *What is Philosophy?*, the remarks about the foundational status of architecture for all art, and how it derives from the machinic / ecological practices of the animal, are further indications of this.¹⁹

Why, or in what way, is the house, *as house*, architecture? A clue comes from another of Le Corbusier's aphorisms in *Vers une architecture* when he says that 'architecture only exists where there is a poetic emotion'.²⁰ How should we read this, which again, like the sentence about the machinic house, seems oddly phrased? Let us first try to read it via a Cartesian mode of thought. Within that prejudice, one takes as a conceptual given that the mind is distinct and separate from the material body it inhabits. Within this conceptual schema or 'image of thought' (as Deleuze sometimes names it), architecture is within the realm of the physical; it is a building with a physical presence.²¹ Poetry, on the other hand, is of the free realm of the mind or

spirit. Strictly speaking, therefore, within this schema Le Corbusier's sentence makes no sense, because it is saying that within, or with regard to a physical object (architecture) there exists a spiritual quality of poetry. The way we would traditionally get around this is to say that what Le Corbusier really means is that when we (the human subject) approach the work of architecture, we will have a poetic emotion or feeling, and that he is writing 'poetically' in putting it in this more obscure way.

Let us try, instead, to read it through Spinoza, through a non-Cartesian mode of thought. For Spinoza, as we have seen, body and mind are essentially the same thing; there is no separation between the two. Architecture, therefore, within this schema of thought, can be both body and mind. What I do not wish to posit here is any mystical vibrancy of matter, any vitalism.²² So how can architecture be both body and mind? What ontology of architecture would permit that? Simply, an ontology that posits architecture as a machine assemblage of the type that Deleuze presents us with, a machinic assemblage that, I submit, takes one of its hints *already* from Le Corbusier's house-as-machine. What are the particles that make up this machinic assemblage? What things are in interplay within this mobile ecology, this symbiosis? Again, the answer is straightforward: architecture consists of the machinic interplay of people and place; that is, it is a subtle mixture of what Cartesianism would separate into body and mind. And it *is* this subtle, interwoven and mobile mixture without any hint of mysticism, because we can clearly and distinctly outline what the set of particles are (people, society, the physical building...) that make up this thing called architecture.

When Le Corbusier says that the house is a machine for living, what he is positing is a new ontology of architecture whereby the house is not the physical building, but rather the interplay between the building and those who come to inhabit

it. And when he states that architecture *is* a poetic emotion, we should take this quite literally, because we can see clearly that within this individual thing 'architecture', which is made up of what we usually like to keep separate (us, buildings...), there *can* occur and *should* occur a poetry, a poetry that would be an integral part of that assemblage, that individual.

Deleuze, following Spinoza, goes so far as to say that we must rethink the 'individual'. We can recast the table of symptoms; if we wish, we can jettison the common or garden, bread-and-butter manner of defining the individual and say that the individual is not the object (or subject), but rather an assemblage made up of what we so often (in our unconscious Cartesianism) wish to keep separate. Architecture is an individual, but an individual that consists of place-people-event all at once, thought all at once. The connecting hyphen, the drawing-together-under-one that it marks, as with the *machine-à-habiter*, is an implementation of this anti-Cartesianism. Deleuze and Guattari use it often: for instance, the 'draft horse-omnibus-street',²³ and 'WASP-TO ENCOUNTER-ORCHID'²⁴ are two of their favourite examples. It is not a question of considering the horse standing in the street, or the omnibus to which the horse is attached, but the whole assemblage of the horse acting together with the bus which it pulls along the street, and the street where it is pulled – an assemblage which depends on the fine tuning of each of the parts to the others in order to function. It is not a question of considering either the wasp in its evolution or the orchid alone, but rather their a-parallel evolution, their symbiosis, the event of their interplay.

Deleuze gives these sorts of assemblages a particular name: 'haecceities'. The term comes from the Scholastic philosopher John Duns Scotus, and refers to the 'thisness' of a thing, its particularity. In literature, the term is well known for having been used by the early twentieth-century poet Gerard

Manley Hopkins. We can gain a sense of what Deleuze means by a machinic assemblage with respect to something like architecture by quoting Hopkins' poem 'Duns Scotus' Oxford':

Towery city and branchy between towers;
Cuckoo-echoing, bell-swarmèd, lark-charmèd, rook-racked, river-rounded;
The dapple-eared lily below thee; that country and town did
Once encounter in, here coped and poised powers;

Thou hast a base and brickish skirt there, sours
That neighbour-nature thy grey beauty is grounded
Best in; graceless growth, thou hast confounded
Rural, rural keeping – folk, flocks, and flowers.

Yet ah! this air I gather and I release
He lived on; these weeds and waters, these walls are what
He haunted who of all men most sways my spirits to peace;

Of realty the rarest-veinèd unraveller; a not
Rivalled insight, be rival Italy or Greece;
Who fired France for Mary without spot.

Hopkins attempts to overcome the sequential nature of spoken language and to speak all at once of an Oxford 'cuckoo-echoing, bell-swarmèd [...] here coped and poised powers.' This is Oxford as a machinic assemblage, as haecceities. A haecceity is not 'a décor or backdrop that situates subjects', but 'it is the entire assemblage in its individuated aggregate'.²⁵ The horse-in-the-street-at-noon (read together almost as one word) is such a haecceity, such an affective assemblage according to Deleuze, as is the towery-cuckoo-echoing-city-of-Oxford.

Deleuze and Guattari say:

We must avoid an oversimplified conciliation, as though there were on the one hand formed subjects

of the thing or person type [i.e., us], and on the other hand spatiotemporal coordinates of the haecceity type [i.e., architecture]. For you will yield nothing to haecceities unless you realise that that is what you are, that you are nothing but that.²⁶

We are the haecceity that occurs, the affect that occurs within the architectural machinic assemblages of which we are a part. And since we are nothing but the haecceity of architecture, it becomes clear why architecture, for Le Corbusier, *is* a poetic emotion: it is because within this haecceity of architecture there is from the outset, and always already included, an 'us', a people, a 'particle' of this haecceity which can experience the poetic.

We have gone from a consideration of bread-and-butter architecture to the poetry of architecture, but the issue is that within this flat ontology there is no necessary distinction between the two; there is no supplement that needs to be added to the bread and butter of architecture to give us its poetry. Both operate within the haecceity of architecture: architecture as assemblage. But this does not mean to say that bread-and-butter architecture is necessarily poetic – or even benign. On the contrary, the most evil architecture is that architecture which understands only too well how to operate the machinic assemblage that includes its inhabitants. We might think of the concentration camp, for instance. In his book on Foucault, Deleuze cites the latter's interest in Bentham's Panopticon; it is the example of the prison that leads Foucault to his own interpretation of the assemblage or *dispositif* (device, apparatus, system), an interpretation to which Deleuze acknowledges his debt.²⁷ The idea of the assemblage, as well as having roots in Le Corbusier, makes explicit reference to Foucault's work on the prison and the military camp: on buildings that become architecture in order to *discipline*, in order to *control*. This notion of the assemblage, therefore, comes both from architecture and also from a place where architecture can be evil, or at least can represent and

implement social repression. For Foucault, architecture enacts discipline, it enacts power (*pouvoir*), and it must be resisted. Although we have posited a non-Cartesian ontology of architecture, this is not to argue – quite the contrary – that all must necessarily be well within such a space.

What Deleuze and Guattari do in *A Thousand Plateaus*, however, is to make Foucault's assemblages into something positive. They remove the negative aspect of the *dispositif* in Foucault. As they state in a long footnote:

Our only points of disagreement with Foucault are the following: (1) to us the assemblages seem fundamentally to be assemblages not of power but of desire (desire is always assembled), and power seems to be a stratified dimension of the assemblage; (2) the diagram and abstract machine have lines of flight that are primary, which are not phenomena of resistance or counterattack in an assemblage, but cutting edges of creation and deterritorialization.²⁸

What does this mean? Firstly, the transformation from *power* to *desire* is a transformation from the necessarily repressive nature of power in Foucault to the positive movement of desire in *A Thousand Plateaus*. For Deleuze and Guattari, desire is essentially positive; in contrast to psychoanalysis, desire, for them, has nothing to do with lack. Secondly, the assemblages allow for 'lines of flight', and these 'lines of flight' are primary. Lines of flight, or lines of fleeing, are possibilities for creativity, for escape from a prevailing system of organisation, and these possibilities of and for creativity are not a side-effect, they are not a supplement or an addition to the ontology, but rather form the very basis or element of that ontology.

Deleuze and Guattari often express this by means of the term 'plane of consistency'. The plane of consistency is like an underlying primary field or element within which things are cast, onto

which things 'take' and organise themselves. This plane of consistency is a field made up of multiple differences, movements, flows; it is out of these differences that individualities are formed, and these individualities are both things within the world, and our common or garden ways of thinking about things. (In Deleuze and Guattari there is a peculiar rocking backwards and forwards between the two, a strange movement or ambiguity that derives from the moment in Spinoza where the unity of thought and thing – mentioned above – is asserted.) A distinction is drawn by Deleuze between this *Plane of Consistence* and a *Plane of Organisation*:

We should distinguish between two planes, two types of planes. On the one hand, a plane that could be called one of organization. It concerns both the development of forms and the formation of subjects. It is therefore, as much as one wishes, structural and genetic. In any case, it possesses a supplementary dimension, one dimension more, a hidden dimension, since it is not given for itself, but must always be concluded, inferred, induced on the basis of what it organizes [...]. And then there is a completely different plane which does not deal with these things: the plane of Consistence. This other plane knows only relations of movement and rest, of speed and slowness, between unformed, or relatively unformed, elements, molecules or particles borne away by fluxes. It knows nothing of subjects, but rather what are called "haecceities". In fact no individuation takes place in the manner of a subject or even of a thing. An hour, a day, a season, a climate, one or several years – a degree of heat, an intensity, very different intensities which combine – have a perfect individuality which should not be confused with that of a thing or of a formed subject.²⁹

We see clearly here the differences that have been the topic of this essay: the plane of organisation deals with things in the manner of a Cartesian split ontology; it deals with *forms* (the extended realm of objects) and *subjects* (the realm of thought). It

always has a supplementary dimension, a transcendence that controls what it organises. The plane of consistency, on the other hand, has nothing to do with subjects or objects, nor with forms; it works with haecceities, not things regarded as separate items, and it deals with intensities.

The key thing is that the plane of organisation is derived from – is an affect-effect of – the plane of consistency. This is what Deleuze and Guattari mean when they say that the plane of consistency is primary, or that lines of fleeing/flight are primary. To follow a line of fleeing means to escape the plane of organisation and to return to the plane of consistency, which always remains in place as a possibility.

To return to the bread and butter of architecture: architecture is always subject to a plane of organisation, a work space which must be controlled, more or less, by the pragmatics of economics, construction, function, longevity, law... This is a part of the discipline of architecture well portrayed by Summerson in his essay. And when he calls for competence and quality in architecture, it is, in Deleuze's terms, the plane of organisation to which he is referring. For Deleuze, the plane of organisation is *not* a negative thing. Although it is 'opposed' to the plane of consistency, this opposition is not to do with an evaluation. Organisation is necessary, inevitable, and neither good nor bad in itself. The opposition Deleuze points to is a non-evaluated difference between the two planes. What should be understood within the situation of the bread-and-butter architecture office is that the multiple organisations within which opposition happens, occur only on the basis of a plane of consistency that always provides the chance for a line of fleeing, for moments of creativity. It is always possible to return to the plane of consistency, to set aside the pre-established forms of the organisation within which one operates and propose a difference, something new; it is possible to make an opening.

In a beautiful passage, Deleuze and Parnet illustrate this with reference to Schumann:

Guattari speaks of a Schumann-assemblage. What is a musical assemblage like this, designated by a proper name? What are the dimensions of such an assemblage? There is the relationship with Clara, woman-child-virtuoso, the Clara line. There is the little manual machine that Schumann puts together to hold the middle finger tight and secure the independence of the fourth finger. There is the *ritornello*, the little *ritornellos* which haunt Schumann and run through all his work like so many childhood blocs, a whole concerted enterprise of involution, restraint and exhaustion of the theme and form. And there is also the use of the piano, this movement of deterritorialization which carries away the *ritornello* ('wings have sprouted on the child') on a melodic line, in an original polyphonic assemblage capable of producing dynamic and affective relations of speed or slowness, of delay or anticipation which are very complex, on the basis of an intrinsically simple or simplified form. There is the intermezzo, or rather there is nothing but intermezzi in Schumann, making the music pass to the middle preventing the sound plane from toppling under a law of organization or development. All of this is articulated in the constitutive assemblage of desire. It is desire itself which passes and moves. There is no need to be Schumann. Listen to Schumann.³⁰

The assemblage of Schumann – the composing machine – is comprised of a miscellaneous, messy set of 'particles' of hugely varying types: his love of Clara Schumann; the way he holds his middle finger as he plays; the structure of 'little phrases' (*ritornellos*) which make up his compositions; the way he is always working from the middle, in intermezzi, so that above all he avoids being tied to a plane of musical organisation. Not that organisation is lacking, it is just that *it does not become primary* – there is always a return to the plane of consistency, to a plateau maintained in the middle.

Architecture, likewise, is an assemblage made up of such heterogeneous particles. As a discipline it has a messy set of dimensions that seem to relate to organisation, among them law, function, contracts, buildability, budget and so forth. But consistent with these, on the same plane, intermingled, can be other particles such as the memory of a place, the fixation with a certain form (the hand, for instance), the repetition of elements (the repeated brick, the repeated window), autobiographical moments, translations from literature, poetic emotion... There is an assemblage occurring here which involves the interplay of all these elements under the auspices of the architect, the one who has the chance to leave the plane of organisation and engage on the level of the plane of consistency. But since the plane of organisation occurs only on the plane of consistency, and since, as Deleuze states, the plane of consistency does not exist prior to the plane of organisation, but rather each is immanent in the other, this does not require any magic; all that is needed is that the law of organisation or development is not allowed to overturn the consistency of these interplaying elements.

At the end of this passage on Schumann, Deleuze and Parnet speak about us. What is *our* relation to this Schumann-assemblage? This assemblage is clearly one of composition, of the moment when a work is put together. How do we relate to this moment of composition? In the simplest manner possible: we just need to listen. The moment of listening is the moment when we become a part of this compositional assemblage. The haecceity is Clara-middle finger-*ritornello*-intermezzi-listener, all interplaying. Schumann has put together a block of stuff (Clara-finger-*ritornello*-intermezzi) into which the particle of the listener is inserted to make another individual (the whole assemblage/haecceity), which is then the haecceity of music. Music includes the listener; the ontology of music is neither its composition nor its playing, but its *interplaying*. What Deleuze proposes here is

an ontology that links the moment of composition with the moment of reception. No longer do these consist of separate realms: in this flat ontology these moments and movements develop from the same resources, move in the same manner. No less for architecture is it a question of either composition or construction, but of its continued interplay. This is why I said that architecture is always in the middle. The bread-and-butter architect is always in the middle of something – there is no *tabula rasa*, no starting from first principles, they are always caught up in the assemblages of the office, of the discipline; but this movement of always being in the middle comprises the reality of architecture, because architecture does not reach its climax with a final composition, a completed form, but rather in a continuation of the same movement and the same assemblage, projected into an open future of a people to come – those who will listen to it.

Notes:

1. See principally Patrik Schumacher, *The Autopoiesis of Architecture: A New Framework for Architecture*, vol. 1 (London: Wiley, 2011) and vol. 2 (London: Wiley, 2012), which is indebted to the sociology of Niklas Luhmann.
2. Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, II, Proposition 2, Scholium.
3. Regarding this lack of metaphor, see Jacques Derrida, 'Qual Quelle', in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982), 273–305.
4. Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: New American Library, 1948), 57.
5. Spinoza, *Ethics*, III, Proposition 2, Scholium. Spinoza was criticised by Leibniz for having made the mind and body the same thing: 'Mind and body are no more the same thing than are the principle of action and the principle of passion.' Quoted from 'Comments on Spinoza's Philosophy' in G.W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, trans. Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1989), 275.
6. 'Thus we must advance from generalities to particulars' Quoted from 'Physics' in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library: 2001), 218.
7. John Onians, *Bearers of Meaning: The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 172.
8. John Summerson, 'Bread & Butter and Architecture', *Horizon* 6, (October 1942): 233–43.
9. Nikolaus Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957), 23.
10. Summerson, 'Bread & Butter and Architecture', 242.
11. Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), section 33.
12. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Continuum, 2006), 77.
13. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, vol. 2, trans. Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 2004), 98; (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 1987), 89.
14. Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 71.
15. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), 2.
16. Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (London: The Athlone Press, 1983), 33, 34, 96.
17. See amongst others Paul Venable Turner, *The Education of Le Corbusier: A Study of the Development of Le Corbusier's Thought, 1900-1920*, (PhD diss., University of Harvard, 1971).
18. Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, trans. Frederick Etchells (New York: Dover Publications, 1986), 4, 107.
19. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Graham Burchill and Hugh Tomlinson (London: Verso, 1994), 186. Although this book is credited to both Deleuze and Guattari, their biographer claims that in fact it was written by Deleuze alone: '*What Is Philosophy?* was manifestly written by Deleuze alone, but he agreed to a co-author credit with Guattari, as

- a tribute to their exceptionally intense friendship.’
 François Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: Intersecting Lives*, trans. Deborah Glassman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 456.
20. Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, 215.
 21. See Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (London: Athlone Press, 1994), chap. 3.
 22. For this tendency, see primarily Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).
 23. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 284.
 24. Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 48. Deleuze takes this example from the scene in Proust’s *Sodom and Gomorrah* where M. de Charlus seduces Jupien in the courtyard.
 25. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 289.
 26. Ibid.
 27. Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Seán Hand (London: The Athlone Press, 1988), 24.
 28. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 585.
 29. Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 68.
 30. Ibid., 73.

Biography

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