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Towards a Deep Ecology of Art, Technology and Being

- an ontological investigation with particular reference to the

rock-cut edifices of Ellora, India, and Tadao Ando's Water Temple

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Thesis Abstract

This practice-based thesis is an interrogation of 'being', one not centred on the human being. It concerns a being that manifests through dynamic inter-relation between human and other entities and phenomena in the universe. It considers several interrelated questions, interrogating notions of 'relational being', 'non-anthropocentric being', 'the being of a space', 'the space of being'. Ultimately, one is considering the implications of relational being for 'deep ecology'.

With regard 'relational being', key inter-related Buddhist ideas drive the thinking and practice: 'relational origination' (*pratityasamutpada*), and 'emptiness' (*shunyata*). Furthermore at the heart of this particular history of technology is a discussion of the significance of zero. The Sanskrit term *shunya,* means both 'zero' and 'empty', and relates to *shunyata*.

There are several principal objectives. Firstly an analysis of perceived relational dynamics in Ellora's rock-cut architecture, technology, and ontology. Secondly, scrutiny of apparent correspondence between Ellora's Edifice Twenty-Nine and a contemporary Tantric shrine: the Water Temple, constructed in 1991. Thirdly, an examination of ideas in contemporary science and technology that engender reconsiderations of notions of 'relational being'.

The primary practical outcomes are two films: *relationship-place naka-ma* and *zero = every day?* Both approach the question through phenomenological process, paralleling Ando's conception of 'architecture' as an integrated and inter-acting entity of built edifice, wider landscape, and the spectatorship of persons who frequent it.

This research engenders 'new knowledge' in terms of: offering pluralistic,

trans-national and trans-disciplinary insight on current thinking relating to art, architecture, technology, spectatorship, and ontological practice; evolving knowledge with regard interactions between body, humanly constructed entities, wider environments/ecologies; engendering new perspectives on considerations of cyberspace, Ellora, Ando, and the Water Temple; contributing to a counter thesis vis-à-vis the colonial project of objectification and ossification of the other.

It is probably quite true, generally, that in the history of human thinking, the most fruitful developments frequently take place at those points where two different lines of thought meet. These lines might have their roots in quite different parts of human culture, in different times, or different cultural environments, or different religious traditions. Hence, if they actually meet, that is, if they are, at least, so much related to each other, that a real interaction can take place, then one may hope that new and interesting developments may follow

- Werner Heisenberg,

(In Capra, 1983, p.9).

In our age, however, we live in a world which man has changed so completely that in every sphere – whether we deal with the tools of daily life, whether we eat food which has been prepared by machines, or whether we travel in a countryside radically changed by man – we are always meeting man-made creations, so that in a sense we meet only ourselves

- Werner Heisenberg,

(Heisenberg, 1970, p.23).

Thus the aim of research is no longer an understanding of atoms and their movements 'in themselves', *i.e.,* independently of the formulation of experimental problems. From the very start we are involved in the argument between nature and man in which science plays only a part, so that the common division of the world into subject and object, inner world and outer world, body and soul, is no longer adequate and leads us into difficulties. Thus even in science *the object of research is no longer nature but man's investigation of nature*

- Werner Heisenberg,

(Heisenberg, 1970, p.24).

Author's Notes

The author's official name is 'Raphael Jay Adjani'. Its shorter form is 'Raphael Adjani'. The author is known also as 'raphael jay adjani' and 'raphael adjani'. Previously the author was known as 'Ajaykumar' or 'ajaykumar'. One of the reasons for the names being written in 'lower case' is to emphasise 'non-anthropocentricity': a theme of this thesis. For consistency here, all names will be written in lower case. Publications/presentations made by by the author when known by the previous name will be written as 'ajaykumar'. Publications/presentations made when known by the current legal name will be written 'raphael jay adjani', or shortened to 'adjani' only. In some academic and artistic situations/presentations, both names have been used. With such cases, to aid fluency for the reader in the particular text passage, either name or the hybrid 'adjani-ajaykumar' could be used.

With regard Ellora, while some scholars call them 'caves', the term used here is 'rock-cut edifices' as this distinguishes more clearly between a cave already in existence and one specifically hewn by human beings.

The terms 'Eastern', 'East', 'West' and 'Western' are not used by the author in a cultural, social and political context as they are thought to be problematic and where possible they are replaced by more specific geographic references. However sometimes the author cites other authors who use these terms and in this case, their manifestation in this thesis is unavoidable.

Given the transdisciplinary nature of this discourse, moving fluidly across subject areas and disciplines, it has been felt useful for the reader to have repetition of certain points at times where it aides ease of readership. At other times references will be given to other parts of the thesis. Furthermore, there is a Glossary (pp. 182-201), for easy reference to Non-English terms as well as certain scientific and other terms.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without considerable support, encouragement and inspiration. I would like to thank all those who made this possible including:

Mayo Yamaguchi, who accompanied me to the Water Temple, acted as a vital intermediary with its Staff; and introduced me to a great master of tea, Mr. Hisashi Yamada.

Mr Hisashi Yamada, formerly Director of the Urasenke Chanoyu Centre of New York, who was a profound personal influence and inspired me to develop 'my way of tea'.

Hanako Miwa, who accompanied me also on another occasion to the Water Temple, and dealt with many of my questions with regard art and culture in Japan.

Mr. Homma, the principal priest at Honpukuji Water Temple, his staff and his family. Mr. Homma made time generously to answer my questions.

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Jem Main, Ania Baas and the Staff at Kube gallery, Poole, UK, who supported the realisation of *way of tea – an art of conviviality*.

Ian Gwilt, Brit Bunkley, as well as the Director and staff of MIC Toi Rerehiko, Auckland, New Zealand), who supported the realisation *zero (hybrid 2).*

Narendra Pachkhede who invited me to create and present the first version of *radio play*, which he curated as part of the 'Transpose' exhibition and symposium.

Deborah Turnbull, Ian Gwilt, Ernest Edmonds, and the staff of the Creativity and Cognition Studios of the University of Technology Sydney, together with curator Matthew Connell and other staff of the Powerhouse Museum who made possible the realisation of the second version of *radio play*.

Daniel Somerville, Takashi Nishida, Akiko Ban, Gareth Jenkinson and Rob Palmer whose creative contribution made possible the realisation of the films *zero = every day?* and *relationship-place naka-ma'.*

Contents

List of Practical Portfolio Items

Note: More Details are in the Research Outlines for each work in the Appendices.

Fig. 1   *relationship-place naka- ma,* **still image 1**

Date   2010

Image by   raphael jay adjani and Daniel Somerville

List of Illustrations

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[1] A *chaitya* is either a Buddhist or Jain shrine that includes a *stupa. Chaitya* can be understood also as an assembly hall or prayer hall.

[2] A s*tupa* is a Sanskrit word signifying a Buddhist monument, a mound of some sort in which are buried relics of the first historical Buddha or subsequent Buddhist sages. *Stupa* in Japanese is termed *sotoba.* These are often places of worship.

Chapter One: Introduction

Section One

How is the question?

This thesis is an interrogation of 'being', one not centred on the human being. It concerns a being that manifests through dynamic inter-relation between human and other entities and phenomena in the universe. It considers several interrelated questions, interrogating notions of 'relational being', 'non-anthropocentric being', 'the being of a space', and 'the space of being'. Ultimately, one is considering the implications of relational being for 'deep ecology'.

With regard 'relational being', key inter-related Buddhist ideas drive the thinking and practice: 'relational origination' (*pratityasamutpada*), and 'emptiness' (*shunyata).* Furthermore at the heart of this particular history of technology is a discussion of the significance of zero. The Sanskrit term *shunya,* means both 'zero' and 'empty', and relates to *shunyata*.

At this point, the author requests that you view the film on DVD 2,

zero = every day?,

placed precisely on the next page, before continuing to read this chapter.

This thesis has twofold aims primarily. Firstly, it is a philosophic speculation on conceptions of 'relational being', and the possibilities of historical, current and future technologies to engender such experiencing. Secondly, it is a discussion of a notion of spectatorship as 'active witnessing' (Gilroy, 1995, p.32), i.e. participatory experiences, within a context of what Zen[3] teacher Daisetz Suzuki describes as 'psychospheres' (Suzuki, 1959, p.295): places of evolving inner awareness. Both aims address the nature and dynamics of interface.

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[3] Brief explanations of Asian and other non-English terms and concepts such as 'Zen' and 'Yoga' used in the thesis are normally explained in the footnotes the first time they occur. At the same time, depending on what is judged best to assist the flow of comprehension for the reader, the meanings may be explained also in the body of the text. The Glossary also provides a quick reference to such terms.

This thesis is an ontological investigation. It is a trans-disciplinary dialogue. It is an examination of 'being' within a particular framework, dynamic, and flow - intellectual, conceptual, artistic - that begins notionally with the original manifestation of what could be described as Tantric[4] 'technological'[5] practice in South Asia: a practice that could be perceived as a synergy of mathematics and other science, art and architecture, as well as philosophy. Furthermore, the thesis interrogates being with regard certain contemporary ideas in science as well as in ecosophy. It examines the question in relation to certain art, aesthetics and ontological perspectives that have emerged in Japan. It culminates in investigating the possibilities of developing such a notion of being through contemporary art practice, particularly in relation to architectural processes, and in relation to what is sometimes called 'digital media' technology.

The thesis has elements that are written and theoretical in a conventional sense; as well as elements that would be understood conventionally as art practice. However an essential purpose is to posit at least the idea and the possibility of transcending such a conventional divide, certainly in parts. Rather than the written component attempting to interpret or 'explain' purely the practical component, the thesis is being produced to enmesh, at times, 'theoretical' and 'practical' both in written text and in art practice. The film *zero = every day?*, ostensibly a practical work, is an example of such enmeshing. The film will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four. It has been placed within the written element, here in Chapter One, deliberately for a number of reasons. One of these is that in so doing the author attempts to facilitate a more symbiotic reading where written and practical are being interrogated and comprehended in relation to each other.

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[4] Tantric and Tantra as the author is using them will be delineated in a number of places including in Chapter One, Section Two, as well as in the Glossary.
[5] 'Technological', 'technological', and 'technological practice', as the author is using them in this thesis will be delineated in a number places including, later in Chapter One and in Chapter 2, Section Six, as well as in the Glossary.

The aspiration with such enmeshing is an interrogation of the notion of 'practice as theory, theory as practice'. The written here is less retrospective and more 'con-temporary', more in the 'now' – closer to the flow of 'eternal present' that is known in Sanskrit as *ekaksana* - highlighting a flow of ideas of which this thesis is perhaps a moment of crystallisation. In this sense form and theme come together and there is an acknowledgement of a notion of art practice not as paradigmatic of thinking but art practice as thinking.

With such writing one moves away from singular voice and 'solid' object and evokes a polyphonic narrative that emphasises a plurality of being. In the context of digital and 'new media' art, 'relational origination'[6] is reconsidered in part through investigation of a notion of a poly-phonic 'i'. The *mono-ha* artist Lee Ufan named some of his material-based works *Relatum*: His aim here was to 'foreground the idea not just of the relation between one thing and another, but also the surrounding space' (Enokura, 2001, p.11).

The primary elements of practical exposition, are a version of the filmic installation: *relationship-place naka-ma* and the above-mentioned film: *zero = every day?* This film is an evolution of an earlier conception, presented in installations in Japan and New Zealand[7]. Other projects discussed and presented in the portfolio are works that constitute the process towards these culminating two works.

relationship-place naka-ma and *zero = every day?* have developed through a symbiotic process. Both these works, in varying formats, have constituted elements

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[6] Relational origination will be delineated fully later in the thesis: Chapter Two, Section Five.
[7] *zero – the aroma of technology, the flavour of art, to savour being*, presented in Tokyo in December 2009, curated by Toshio Shimizu; *zero (hybrid 2)* - in *Hybrids,* MIC Media and Inter-Disciplinary Arts Centre – Auckland, New Zealand, 29 January – 5 March 201Curated by Brit Bunkley and Ian Gwilt, http://mic.org.nz/events/exhibitions/present/hybrids. The length of the *zero = every day?* film in the portfolio is twenty-four minutes. The length of *zero* films in the preceding presentations was sixty-four minutes in Tokyo; and a looped sixty-four minute version in Auckland.

of other works of the author that are inter-active and immersive experiences, such as listed below. These other works, in multifarious ways, are part of the process that engendered *relationship-place naka-ma* as well as *zero = every day?* These include (listed chronologically and also including the above-mentioned works):

- *8 technology.net - web site as ritual art work* www.8technology.net, (adjani, raphael jay, with *8*, 2010-present).
- *zero – the confluence of art and technology* (ajaykumar and Nandi, 2008-present).
- *iPak,* of *M-I I-M* series, (ajaykumar, *et al*. 2008-present).
- *phant_Asia – asylum of desire,* concept, of *M-I I-M* series, (ajaykumar, 2008-present).
- *radio play* (ajaykumar, 2007-present).
- *4D – a tea ceremony*, (adjani-ajaykumar with *8*, 2010).
- *zero (hybrid 2)* (adjani-ajaykumar with *8*, 2010).
- *zero - the aroma of technology, the flavour of art, to savour being* (adjani-ajaykumar with *8,* 2009).
- *pages of madness,* of *M-I I-M* series, (ajaykumar, 2005-2009).
- *a_m_m_s* (*akasha_ma_mu_shunyata*) (ajaykumar and Nandi, 2007-9).

Research outline statements of each of these works can be found in the appendix. Consequently they will be referred to in this chapter only as necessary, contextualising the main works.

<u>The significance of zero</u>

For a considerable period, the author has been reflecting on the notion of zero, the Sanskrit term *shunya*[8]*,* which means both 'zero' and 'empty', and the associated concepts of 'emptiness' (*shunyata*), found in Buddhism. One of the reasons is that a reflection on zero as well as unthinking and rethinking technology may have significance and importance in our contemporary lives. This may be in part because, these days, one tends to use the word 'technology' in a very different way from how it was originally conceived. From numerous discussions with students, colleagues, friends, 'technology' appears to be synonymous largely with computers and products generated by computers. Yet technology's original meaning seems to be forgotten. For the Ancient Greeks, according to the philosopher Martin Heidegger, the word *techne*, which is the root of our current word technology, meant a kind of practice and thinking, that had no distinction between what today we call art, craft, technique, and philosophy. It was all one practice. In fact, the Ancient Greeks had no word, specifically, for 'Art.' The aspiration of this author is to think of technology as not just computers, but the way one uses them and, in a sense, the way we live our contemporary lives in this Digital Age.

Can we use all our contemporary technology in an ecosophic way? Can we live our lives ecosophically? If we did, perhaps we would use mobile phones and computers and other gadgets very differently. This may result in new creative processes impacting deeply on ecology. Can we also think about art practice philosophically? Some people evidently do. For example, Tadao Ando, states that for him making architecture is thinking (Ando, 1995a).

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[8] Sanskrit words such as *shunya, shunyata* and *akasha* which will be used frequently through this discourse. Some writers write them with an 'h' following the 's', and some without such as: *sunya, sunyata* and *akasa*. The author includes the 'h' consistently in his own writing and where other writers referred to choose not to he maintains their original usage in any quotation.

How does zero relate to this? Well, the basis of our contemporary Information Age, is the binary system, which is dependent on the conception of zero. Therefore, our Digital Age, in one sense, begins with the conception of zero. This will be delineated in Chapter Four. For now it should suffice to understand that zero is thought to have been conceived fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago in South Asia in India. As aforementioned, in the ancient South Asian language of Sanskrit, zero is written as *shunya* and *shunya* also means 'empty'. *Shunyata* from *shunya* is a Buddhist concept that signifies 'emptiness'. It can also signify 'void' and 'nothingness'. Such emptiness is thought to have presence. *Shunyata* is also a concept important in the South Asian belief systems that today may be termed Brahmanism.

In South Asian temples such as those at Ellora, which will be discussed in Chapter Three, empty spaces are thought to be specifically designed as art. The void was, in one sense, the sculpture. In South Asia, around fifteen hundred years ago it seems that researchers were integrating mathematical and other scientific ideas with philosophic notions as well as with artistic exploration. For example, it is said that in certain Indian temples you would find at their centre, their inner sanctum, not ornate religious statues or paintings, but an empty space: an empty space containing a book only. This book was not a religious text but a book of mathematics. The mathematical attempt to understand the universe, the philosophic attempt to grasp it, and the artistic conception of it, went hand in hand. So we see here in South Asia, a parallel to the Ancient Greek's approach to technology, to art, and to philosophy.

How do contemporary scientists approach the idea of void? According to physicist Fritjof Capra, the classical mechanistic worldview was based on the notion of solid indestructible particles moving in the void:

> Modern physics has brought about a radical revision of this picture. It has
> led not only to a completely new notion of particles but it has also

transformed the classical concept of the void in a profound way. The transformation took place in the so-called 'Field Theories'. It began with physicist Albert Einstein's idea of associating the gravitational field with the geometry of space, and became even more pronounced when quantum theory and relativity theory were combined to describe the force-fields of sub-atomic particles. In these quantum field theories the distinction between particles and the space surrounding them loses its original sharpness and the void is recognized as a dynamic quantity of paramount importance (Capra, 1983, p.229).

Capra continues:

In these quantum field theories the classical contrast between the solid particles and the space surrounding them is completely overcome. The quantum field is seen as the fundamental physical activity, a continuous medium that is present everywhere in space. Particles are merely local condensations of the field, concentrations of energy that come and go, thereby losing their individual character and dissolving into the underlying field. In the words of Einstein: 'we may therefore regard matter as being constituted by the regions of space in which the field is extremely intense. There is no place in the new kind of physics both for the field and matter, for the field is the only reality' (Capra, 1983, p.233).

To be clear, one is not asserting that ideas from Animism, Brahmanism, Buddhism and Tantra are the same as ideas in modern Physics but that there are parallels offering insight. Here, it is worth recollecting the words of the physicist, Werner Heisenberg, who wrote:

It is probably quite true, generally, that in the history of human thinking, the most fruitful developments frequently take place at those points where

two different lines of thought meet. These lines might have their roots in quite different parts of human culture, in different times, or different cultural environments, or different religious traditions. Hence, if they actually meet, that is, if they are, at least, so much related to each other, that a real interaction can take place, then one may hope that new and interesting developments may follow (In Capra, 1983, p.9).

So, in the case of this thesis one is thinking of what can be learned when several different lines of thought meet – such as the one in ancient South Asia, the one in ancient Greece, contemporary ideas in modern physics, and ideas that exist and have existed in Japan, such as concepts of 'emptiness', void, nothingness and space-time; as well as the way the pioneer of Noh Theatre, Zeami, conceives of the aesthetic and philosophic concept of *yu-gen*[9]*, as understood by art historian Makoto Ueda*; and of the tea ceremony of Japan: known in Japan as *sa-do*, *cha-do* or *cha-no-yu. Sa-do* could be translated as the 'way of tea'[10].

Ultimately, in this thesis one is considering relational being, and its implications for what is called 'deep ecology'. Deep ecology is a term coined by ecologist and philosopher, Arne Naess. It is a recent branch of ecological philosophy, 'ecosophy', that considers human kind as an integral part of its environment where the human

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[9] While it is usual to write Japanese words such as *yu-gen* in English without hyphenation, i.e. *yugen*, for the purposes of this thesis, where it is important to understand the meaning of the individual characters, as well as the relationships between characters, it has been felt useful to write these terms in hyphenated form, i.e. *yu-gen*. The aesthetic concept of *yu-gen* is interpreted in various ways in different art practice throughout the history of art in Japan. Ueda's interpretation of Zeami's *yu-gen* is as follows: 'the beauty of *yugen* when one mournfully observes the immovable fact of life' (Ueda, 1967, p.94). *Yu-gen* is an aesthetic and ontological quality that Noh theatre performers aim to produce. Ueda explains that Chinese character *yu* of *yugen* denotes 'deep, dim, difficult to see'; the character *gen* depicts the 'dark profound, tranquil colour of the universe' (Ueda, 1967, p.60). Ueda explains that this equates with the concept of 'truth' in Taoism. Kunio Komparu, whose family practices Noh and traces its lineage back to Zeami, explains that Noh is known as 'the art of yugen' (Komparu p.12). This y*u-gen* is beyond intellectual perception and is experienced in Noh through spectatorial cultivation.

[10] Henceforth it will be referred to as the 'way of tea' - a better understanding of it conceptually - unless quoting from other authors who term it differently.

being is not the centre of the world but one of its component parts only. Hence we have the notion of non-anthropocentric being and bionomic thinking. The philosophy emphasizes the equal value of human and non-human life, as well as the importance of the ecosystem and natural processes. It could be said to have a resonance with the animist belief system in Japan known as Shinto that seems to posit the sacredness of all phenomena without hierarchy. One is reminded also of the word in Japanese for the human being that means somebody 'in relation' always: *nin-gen*. We exist only in relation. So, the way we approach zero may influence the way we approach being in this Digital Age.

When approaching such concepts such as 'emptiness' it is worth remembering, in terms of literary style, the Buddhist teaching known in English as the *Lotus Sutra* uses often astronomical numbers and measurements of time to convey a sense of timeless time, or to convey the inconceivable. Could it be that in the emptiness one finds the infinite? Such a question in purely religious terms is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, here there is a notion that there is no absolute truth, but only insight that is found in relationships and relational being. We understand this more when we think of quantum physics and the words of John Wheeler, the physicist who conceived black holes:

> There is nothing more important about the quantum principle than this: That it destroys the concept of the world as sitting out there, with the observer safely separated from it by a twenty centimeter slab of plate glass. Even to observe so miniscule an object as an electron he must shatter the glass, he must reach in, he must install his chosen measuring equipment. It is up to him to decide whether he shall measure position or momentum; to install the equipment to measure the one prevents and excludes his installing the equipment to measure the other. Moreover, the measurement changes the state of the electron. The universe will never afterwards be the same. To describe what has happened one has to cross out that old word,

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'observer', and put in its place the new word, 'participator'. In some strange

sense the universe is a participatory universe (Mehra, 1973, p.244, and also

in Capra, 1983, p153).

In the Middle Ages in Japan, known in Japan as the Muromachi Period, it is

understood that people would paint pictures, hang them on their walls, then invite

their friends around who would then proceed to write poetry on the paintings, on

the silk itself, and this poetry became a part of the work. This was a notion that

borrowed from practice and thinking in China, such as the Ma Hsia School of

Painting in the Thirteenth Century C.E.. So in art, as in physics, one moves away

from fixed objects and observers and thinks instead of process, of continuum, of

flow, of relational spectatorship and relational being. Such ideas will be delineated

in future chapters.

As aforementioned, Tadao Ando, whose work will be engaged with in Chapter Three

in particular, believes that for him at least, making architecture is thinking (Ando,

1995a). In this regard, it should be remembered here the significance of imagery

as well as art in general in an oral culture, a culture where most of the society may

not be highly literate. The images at Ellora and Ajanta are important in this context.

The remaining images at Ajanta in particular had this didactic function. In addition

in contemporary terms Ellora, because there is little Tantric literature available to

us from its period of construction, 'remains the most satisfactory "text" about itself'

(Malandra, 1993, p.122). A parallel idea is found in Tibetan Buddhist sand

mandalas[11]. Barry Bryant describes them as 'Visual Scripture' (Bryant, 2003, cover

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[11] *Mandala* has a meaning of 'healing circle' originally. These were four dimensional
spaces of 'therapy', healing of the soul, which could equate with Suzuki's idea of
psychosphere. *Mandala* in Sanskrit can have the meaning 'essence' or 'containing'.
Malandra explains them as a schematic diagram portraying deities in a set order
that 'provides a guide to the organisational scheme of Ellora's Buddhist caves from
earliest to latest' Malandra (1993, p.17). They came to take on two-dimensional
graphic form also, as will be explained later with regard the womb world and
diamond world mandalas of esoteric Buddhism, where they are significant aspects
of Tantric meditation. In Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism, these are created using
coloured sand.

page). So in terms of the history of ideas, these maybe thought to be examples of where the work is considered 'the writing'.

Makoto Ueda comments that the 'way of tea' has to show itself to be different from a conventional tea party (Ueda, 1967, p.87). The deeper purpose is to grasp it in Zen terms, in the sense that Zen is ultimately found not in the temple – a preparatory stage only – but in daily life. Ultimately the 'way of tea' is the 'way of life': daily life itself may become the psychosphere.

Writing in the third person is still always writing in the first. How could it not be otherwise? This reminds one of another absurdity: one where the narrator in the film *Sunless* (Marker, 1982), 'edited' by Chris Marker, describes a letter that a fictitious cameraman has sent her from Africa, commenting on people who look into his camera stating something like: Whoever heard of such a stupid thing as not looking into the camera as they tell you to do in film schools. The filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard has had a seminal influence on film-making. One consequence of making *Breathless* (French: *A Bout de Souffle*: 1955) could be said to be that all cinema became self-conscious and self-referential. This writing is necessarily apperceptive.

The nature of this question and one's approach to it has from the very start been porous. It touches many points and, although initially the author specified in the title that this subject was being explored with reference to Ellora, and Ando's Water Temple – and there will be a case study of each - one could choose to add a number of other ways and subjects to explore it and each would have some pertinence. For example the relevance of some of the practices and the thinking of artists, designers, thinkers, forms, such as (listed alphabetically) Roy Ascott; Matsuo Basho; Erwan and Ronan Bouroullec; Butoh – including the work of Tatsumi

Hijikata[12], Kazuo Ohno, and Sankai Juku; John Cage; Chandralekha; Fluxus; gardens of China, India, Persia and Japan, such as the Zen garden of Ryoan-ji; Wasily Kandinsky; Yves Klein; Akira Kurosawa; Lee Ufan and other *Mono-ha* artists; the Ma Hsia School in China; Chris Marker; Cildo Meireles; Mariko Mori; Isamu Noguchi; Hiroshi Sugimoto, Symbiotica; Andrey Tarkovsky; James Turrell; the 'way of tea'; to mention but a few. It would be beyond the parameters of such a thesis to develop an extensive discussion of all such artists and practices. It would also miss the aims of the thesis. However at certain points the author will make specific reference to them.

At the same time it should be noted that the ontological artistic practice stemming from the 'way of tea' has become an increasingly influential practice and concept that feeds the way of this author. So much so that an installation for the British gallery Kube, in November 2009, had the title *way of tea - an art of conviviality*[13]. In mainly indirect as well as occasionally direct ways the 'way of tea' is reflected on throughout the thesis.

The thesis considers a broader history of technology and 'technological practice'. Here it examines the notion of technological practice as ontological practice. The thesis discusses relationships between ecology, other science, technology, art, architecture, philosophy that were evolved initially through the discourses of Tantra and Buddhism[14]. It considers the possibility of earlier ontological and epistemological activity as paradigms for contemporary and future thinking-practice.

'Technological' practice is being used in a particular and crucial sense here – and throughout the thesis - which refers to what might be thought of as an integrated

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[12] For this thesis Japanese names are written in the European style with the family name second.
[13] See Research Outline for *way of tea – an art of conviviality* in Appendices.
[14] The author is not holding to any one school of Buddhism, but seeking to draw on the canon of knowledge as a whole, where pertinent to the themes.

epistemological process where art, philosophy, craft/technique and science are considered part of an integrated thinking-practice. There are important parallels here with the ideas of philosopher Martin Heidegger through his discussion of *techne/techne* (Heidegger, 1977, pp.3-35). At the same time, this personal enquiry on being has a different focus and other historical and cultural starting points: such as the epistemologies of Tantra, Yoga[15], Buddhism, and certain aspects of animistic practices such as Shinto[16]. Essentially the notion of being in question is not one centred on the human being. Rather it concerns a being that manifests, or comes into being, through a dynamic inter-relation between human and other entities and phenomena in the universe; it is a being that comes into being in an interstitial space between phenomena. Moreover it may involve particular art practices that engender or facilitate such spaces, spaces that Suzuki describes as 'psychospheres': places to explore the psyche. Here, alongside 'relational being', one develops a number of associative notions: 'non-anthropocentric being', 'the being of a space', and 'the space of being'. The psychosphere could be said to be 'a space of being'. To reiterate: essentially this involves a discussion of the nature of the inter-face. These subjects will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

In discussing being this thesis considers several interrelated questions, interrogating these notions of 'relational being', 'non-anthropocentric being', 'the being of a space', 'the space of being'. The primary questions are: -

> How, if at all, does one develop a notion of 'relational being' in
> contemporary society and through a contemporary art practice?

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[15] Yoga as George Feuerstein attests (Feuerstein, 2000, viii), is a rich, complex ontological tradition, with a multitude of schools, and approaches. It is being used here with no single school or approach being emphasised, rather recognising it as a significant ontology.
[16] Shinto is said to be the indigenous belief system of people who live on the islands of what we know today as Japan, existing in some form since one of its prehistoric, periods: *Jomon*. It is an animistic belief system, where inanimate objects such as rocks, as well as trees, humans, other animals are considered equally sacred without hierarchy.

How, if at all, does one develop a notion of 'non-anthropocentric being' in contemporary society and through a contemporary art practice?

Is there such a thing as 'the being of a space'? Can an art practice engender it?

What is the relevance of the Buddhist concept of 'relational origination' - to contemporary technological practice?

What is the nature of spectatorship in such processes?

To what extent can Tantric, Buddhist and Animistic art and philosophic processes offer paradigms for a contemporary technological practice?

To clarify objectives of the thesis, these consist of:

o   Analysis of perceived non-anthropocentric dynamics in Ellora's rock-cut architecture, technology, and ontology (Chapter Three).

o   Investigation of the ontological processes of a contemporary Tantric temple: the Water Temple, designed and constructed by Tadao Ando in 1991, including a perceived correspondence with practice at Ellora (Chapter Three).

o   Reflection on certain ideas in contemporary and historical science pertinent to notions of 'relational being' (throughout the Thesis).

o   Examination of certain ideas in contemporary 'new media' and technology that engender reconsiderations of notions of relational being, non-anthropocentricity, the 'being of a space' and 'the space of being' culminating in the film *relationship-place naka-ma* (Chapter Four) and the film *zero = every day?* (Chapter Four).

- Interrogation of perceived correspondence with historical and cultural-specific events provoking inner fields of consciousness and events conceived of in different cultural, social contemporary spaces, both in physical space and in cyberspace.

- Study of kinaesthetic processes, performativity and architectonics. Here there is some reference to other works of the author, such as *laal shaari*; a work in video, *tate modern* (Chapter Three), *radio play* (Chapter Three)*, a version of the filmic installation *relationship-place naka-ma* (Chapter Four)

and

- Inquiry of theory-practice processes, with particular reference to the film *zero = every day?* (Chapter Four) and with partial reference to other works.

With regard 'relational being', the key ideas that are driving the thinking and practice of this thesis, are the concepts of relational origination (discussed in detail in Chapter Two, Section Five), and the concept, to which it is closely related, of 'emptiness' or *shunyata*. While these ideas could be said to originate in Buddhism, essentially the theme and questions are examined with a pluralistic, trans-national, and inter-disciplinary perspective: ancient architecture, contemporary architecture, body-centred art, garden design, contemporary science, contemporary sculpture and installation, digital art, and philosophical processes. There is no central thinker or dominant idea here. Rather the originality of ideas the engendering of new knowledge, is through the particular 'symbiogenetic' process taking place here (borrowing loosely from Lyn Margulis's conception of symbiogenesis).

Section Two

Brief Historical, Contemporary and Theoretical Context

While Tantra is claimed to Tantra is popularly claimed to date back to the Fourth or Fifth Millennium B.C.E., with possible evidence of it in Harappan Culture there is

not sufficient hard evidence at this time to back such claims. Moreover Tantra has been used in quite diverse ways through history to mean various things for different people. However Tantra does manifest very tangibly as architectural form from the First Millennium B.C.E. in the form of rock cut edifices: at Ajanta, Ellora, and numerous other sites in South Asia. It .proliferated around 400 to 1000 C.E., paralleling Ellora excavation; and conceptually and aesthetically influencing it (Pathy, 1980). With regard Tantra, it is important to recollect that it evades easy definition

Ajit Mookerjee and Madhu Khanna (1977) highlight Tantra's confluence of artistic, philosophic, and scientific practice, through an essentially practical, intuitive, and phenomenological approach. Philip Rawson (1972) emphasises the importance of 'life style' in such synergy. Ellora's realisation may be considered to embody the philosophic outlook of a civilisation that perhaps aspired to a relational entity of:

art_ecology_mathematics_medicine_other-science_philosophy_technology

Art here encompasses architecture. This term is necessarily clumsy perhaps. Yet the contemporary medical scientist Yujiro Ikemi eloquently evolves this notion, encapsulating some of the relational entities under discussion, when he writes of a 'biopsychosocioecological model' (Ikemi, 1996, p.2). Ikemi believes 'the contemporary pathological roots of modern society may rest upon modern man's neglect of the harmony between his natural being and his social being, between living and let-aliveness' (1996, p.2). He terms this condition 'alexicosmia' (1996, p.2). In some sense *iPak* (see appendices) is a work that engages with alexicosmia. Such relational entities and existential constructs will be examined further in future chapters, particularly Chapter Two.

One could conceive Tantra loosely, as an integrated approach of science, technology, philosophy, and art that emerged in South Asia to explore 'being' in all

its dimensions. Tantra was iconoclastic; it was and is transgressive, and it was and is personal. It involved/involves highly individuated personal research projects: a personalised ontological journey. Ultimately rather than define, perhaps one can discuss only one's own approach to a 'way of Tantra'. There is a resonance here with the oft-quoted Duchamp dictum of 'it is art because I say it is', and this will be elaborated on throughout the thesis.

At the time of Ellora construction, Tantra could be considered science and technology at 'the cutting edge' as much as it was 'cutting edge' art and architecture, for as Mookerjee and Khanna explain 'Tantra absorbed and elaborated upon the sum total of traditional scientific knowledge in mathematics, astronomy, iatrochemistry' (Mookerjee and Khanna, 1977, p.18). Ellora edifices are significant feats of engineering. Tantra suggests the sacredness of all phenomena. Tantra influenced philosophic systems that manifested in South Asia and beyond: Hinduism, Jainism, Bon, Islam, and Buddhism, in which exists the principle in certain schools that all phenomena reveal the true entity of life: the ultimate reality. It may be useful here also to refer to the contemporary Tibetan teacher and senior monk Lama Yeshe, who has attempted to clarify Tibetan Tantric Buddhism particularly for European and American readers. In *Introduction to Tantra*, Lama Yeshe comments on the practitioners of Tantra aspiring to 'meditate on the emptiness of self-existence, and penetrate the ultimate nature of reality, thereby freeing themselves of all delusions' (Yeshe, 2001, p.101).

While Tantric Buddhism largely disappeared in India, it took root and is still practiced in Japan, from the Ninth Century C.E.; as well as in Tibet. Ando's Water Temple evolves the tradition of Tantric Buddhist architecture. Perhaps this term could evolve our conception of psychosphere: perhaps one should be discussing 'biopsychosocioecologicalsphere'.

Ando appears to conceive a synthetical architecture: one that comes into being only at the space-time of inter-action and inter-face of human, with built edifice, and with a wider landscape of so-called 'nature', (Dal Co, 1997, p.453). In terms of landscape, Ando writes:

> I believe that architecture belongs not to civilization but to culture. Architecture comes into existence only against a background of history, tradition, climate and other natural factors (Dal Co, 1995, p.450).

This notion will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three. The contemporary theoretical context is most informed by particular scientific research that, as with Ellora, emphasise a visceral 'mind' and non-anthropocentricity. This is to be discussed throughout the thesis. Moreover, in the realm of virtual space research, Michael Heim (2002) finds correspondence with the psychosphere of the tea ceremony and virtual space. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

With regard practice-theory processes, this discussion will develop lines of enquiry ploughed by thinkers-practitioners such as John Cage who composed 'performance-lectures' (Cage, 1973, 1997); and those involved in the generation of what may be termed 'film essays': artists such as Chris Marker (Marker, 1982, *et. al.*[17]). Although Cage wrote theoretically, he is perhaps most recognised as a 'practitioner', as is Marker. There are also transmigrations in the other direction. Significant here is some of the writing of Jacques Derrida such as *Tympan* (Derrida, 1991, pp.146-168.); writing that has been perceived as performance texts as well as 'writing performances' (Derrida, 1998, subtitle and other pages).

Furthermore, the rock-cut edifices of Ellora could be said to embody philosophical thinking. We have here both practice as thinking and thinking as practice. In this thesis one is trying in art to find a personal language and form that synthesises

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[17] See Bibliography for other works of Marker as well as texts discussing his work.

other theory and practice, making and thinking. In a seminar of TrAIN – the research centre of the University of the Arts London in Transnational Art, Identity and Nation – the art historian Deborah Cherry talked about the elusiveness of the art work saying words to the effect of: You can talk everything around the art work but you cannot talk the art work (TrAIN seminar with ceramics curator Louise Cort at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, 15 November, 2005). In terms of art history one would broadly agree. Unless one does 'talk the art work'. This is the intention at points in this thesis. John Cage in discussing this approach to formation of his lectures and articles, writes:

> Many of them have been unusual in form – this is especially true of the lectures – because I have employed in them means of composing analogous to my composing means in the field of Music. My intention has been, often, to say what I had to say in a way that would exemplify it; that would, conceivably, permit the listener to experience what I had to say rather than just hear about it (Cage, 1973, p.ix).

In this thesis, in terms of engendering new knowledge, the nature of the subject matter necessitates some formal experimentation in the writing where form approaches theme and theme approaches form: a 'way of writing'. This is undertaken with the film *zero = every day?* and the *zero* online book: www.zero.fluxtopia.net.

Section Three

Personal Context and Methodology

The epistemology of Tantra, the 'way of Tantra', has been based on rigorous subjective, personal enquiry. Essentially each person finds her or his own way: 'a way of Tantra'. Although the author does not consider himself to be a practitioner

of Tantra (*tantrika*) his art practice, his practical search, and his research, has focused increasingly not on the art object but on the possibilities of the creation of what one may term a 'sublime' world that manifests in an ephemeral space between an art object and a spectator's experiencing of it; where art works come into being through the 'play' of others.

This art is not so much about objects but about how we interact socially, with the world around us. It explores the possibilities of creating little realms - special spaces or places - to contact our playful nature, our imagination, and our feelings about the sacredness of our lives and our relationships. These relationships are as much to do with our relationship with others, as they are with objects, and with ourselves.

Here the work may be considered by some to re-conceive classical Buddhist and Tantric art in contemporary form: eliciting notions of daily life as art. Engaging with the Buddhist concept of 'relational origination' - also known as 'dependent origination'[18] - a notion is being evolved of 'relational being' and the 'being of space', stimulating vital ecological questions concerning the human being in relation to environment.

While it may seem peculiar to discuss ancient monuments such as those of Ellora in the same breadth as new media technology, the practice and thinking that brought these edifices into being, serves as a conceptual, intellectual and historical starting point for this contemporary technological research. The human-made caves at Ellora and Ajanta were art and architecture that related to a wider nature and contained empty spaces that were considered as much part of the sculpture as the carvings on the cave walls. Ando uses natural sunlight to create spectacular cathartic moments at the Water Temple. Zen gardens could be said to come into

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[18] Relational Origination is written in Pali as *paticcasamuppada*; in Sanskrit as *pratityasamutpada;* in Tibetan as: *rten.cing.'brel.bar.'byung.ba;* in Japanese as *engi*.

being through the spectator's viewing of them: creating a kind of 'psychosphere': a space or place that facilitates contact with the imagination, the psyche, the soul: a space and place of 'being'. The question here is not whether new 'technology' can reproduce such psychospheres in novel ways but to what degree can any technology - 'new' or 'old', 'hi tech' or 'lo tech', generate inter-active and immersive processes that facilitate some sense of relational being.

Fig. 2   **An exterior image of some of the monasteries and temples, cut into the rock, at Ellora and the pathway under the waterfall that leads to Edifice Twenty-Nine.**

Date   **2002**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani**

The processes that seem to have engendered Ellora edifices in particular may offer a paradigm for future new media, technological, philosophic practice, a platform for future epistemologies.

Key components of the thinking-practice are inter-disciplinarity and trans-nationalism: it is through such inter-disciplinarity and trans-nationalism that one is engaged with evolving different epistemologies, in relation to art, in relation to digital practice, and in relation to wider intellectual processes. It is in such

trans-national and inter-disciplinary processes that one may find a space: perhaps one that is a kind of 'space of being'; as well as one type of 'being of a space'.

While studies of Tantric art, have tended to centre on their history, the thinking here on Tantra/Tantric art, as well as on Yoga/Yogic art, Buddhism/Buddhist art, Zen/Zen art and Animism/Animist art, perceives them as evolving processes, not locked into an historic and philosophic essentialism, but rather, processes that may be advanced through current thinking from whatever source, unbound by particular iconography. With regard an evolving organic discourse on 'Buddhist art' art historian Eugene Wang writes:

> To frame Buddhist art by way of visual culture is to shift the focus from the isolated objects to unifying subjects as the ultimate end of enquiry. Not that objects are unimportant – they remain the primary source of art-historical scrutiny; but they are to be organised in the perceptual horizon of the subject. They are to be wrested from their conventionally pedigreed art-historical moorings of painting, sculpture and architecture, and integrated into the imaginary topographies that they were originally intended to evoke and create' (Wang in Cherry, 2005, p.17).

In this thesis the intention is not to go 'back' but to go 'beyond'. What is pertinent here about Physics is: 'Among other things, an attempt to harmonize with a much greater entity than ourselves, requiring us to see, formulate and eradicate first one and then another of our most cherished prejudices and oldest habits of thought, in a never ending quest for the unattainable' (Finkelstein, in Zukav, 1979, p.19).

It should be understood there is not a proposition for some general, 'complete' theory to find. To paraphrase crudely recent Atheist Society billboards that quote biologist and ethologist Richard Dawkins: *there is no truth, there is no answer; just get over it and enjoy your lives*. Further extending this one could write: *there is no*

happiness; just get over it and enjoy your lives. Perhaps then one may approach the kind of *yu-gen* elicited by Ueda: *Yu-gen* will be referred to further in later chapters. There is a perceived parallel here with the Zen idea that one must let go even of the desire to attain Buddhahood.

Such a notion is argued by ecologist and activist Joanna Macy, whose thinking and practice have been influenced by Buddhism. The Buddhism that seems to interest her most is similar to that of Zen teacher Thich Nhat Hanh that emphasises process rather than an ultimate truth to be found. This will be discussed in depth later in the thesis. Perhaps when one lets go of the notion of 'solid' and/or ultimate truths, other insights may emerge that may profoundly evolve our notions of art, technology and being. Borrowing from Heisenberg, one is both creating and examining the possibility of a new knowledge being engendered at a transnational intersection of a number of ideas.

Chapter Two: Relational Being

Section One

Introduction

This chapter delineates the notions of 'relational being', 'non-anthropocentric being', 'the being of a space' and 'the space of being' as approached by the author. It discusses the evolution of these ideas in relation to the Buddhist concept of 'relational origination'. The chapter clarifies the particular personal approach to 'Technology' and 'Technological Practice' that in this case, have epistemological source in Buddhism, in Tantra as well as in elements of Animism.

The chapter is divided into the following eight sections: this introduction; secondly the delineation of the crucial nature of the personal ontological enquiry in approaching 'relational being'. Section Three discusses the notion of 'art as yoga' and 'yoga as art'. Section Four discusses notions of being. Section Five discusses relational origination and the Buddhist concept of 'emptiness'[19]. Section Six is a re-consideration of the notions of total art work or *gesamtkunstwerk*. Section Seven discusses the significance of Tantra. The eighth section is the conclusion. Subsequent thesis chapters will discuss further the ideas delineated in Chapter Two in relation to author's practice and the practice of others.

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[19] The Sanskrit word for 'emptiness' is *shunyata*. The Chinese word is: *k'ung*. The Japanese word is: *ku*. *Shunyata* can be expressed also as 'void-ness', 'zero-ness'. For more details See ajaykumar and Nandi, (2008); as well as Berger, (2009).

The word 'emptiness' has a nihilistic connotation according to Sogyal Rinpoche. In a lecture on *shunyata*, in place of emptiness he offers a Tibetan term to grasp better *shunyata*. It is written in English as 'permanent_non-existence_free of that' [*tac_che_le_towa*] (Rinpoche, 2002, from 32mins. 30 secs).

Section Two

The importance of the personal subjective enquiry in approaching relational being

Following Chapter One, this section exposes the importance of the personal subjective enquiry. 'Being' itself is hard to define. In a number of Buddhist texts it is presented as series of negations. In such texts being could be understood as 'entity'. In the Buddhist teaching known in English as *Sutra of Immeasurable Meanings*, a prologue to the *Lotus Sutra* (see Glossary), the entity of the Buddha is described in the first chapter in terms of thirty-four negations:

> neither square nor round,
>
> neither long nor short,
>
> neither appearing nor disappearing,
>
> neither born nor perishing,
>
> neither created nor arisen,
>
> neither made nor formed,
>
> neither sitting nor lying,
>
> neither walking nor standing still,
>
> neither moving nor turning,
>
> neither noisy nor tranquil,
>
> neither advancing nor retreating, neither safe nor perilous,
>
> neither right nor wrong, neither gain nor loss,
>
> neither this nor that, neither coming nor going,
>
> neither blue nor yellow, neither red nor white,
>
> neither scarlet nor purple, nor in a variety of colors.
>
> (http://www.sutrasmantras.info/sutra20.html, 25/01/09).

The description of each negation varies slightly according to the translation. The philosopher Nagarjuna (*circa* 150-250 C.E.), founder of the Madhyamaka school of

Mahayana Buddhism describes in the *Treatise on the Middle Way* (Sanskrit:

Mulamadhyamakakarika) eight kinds of negation:

> Therein, every event is marked by:
>
> non-origination, non-extinction,
>
> non-destruction, non-permanence,
>
> non-identity, non-differentiation,
>
> non-coming (into being), non-going (out of being)
>
> (Nagarjuna, 1970, p.39).

It should be remembered here that these negations too appear slightly differently

in various translations. Crucially, Nagarjuna is explaining that, what may be termed

the 'essential' entity of all phenomena, transcends duality and is non-substantial.

There is a correspondence here with a Buddhist notion of 'emptiness', which

Nagarjuna elucidates as the lack of autonomous existence (Sanskrit: *nihsvabhava*).

While certain Buddhists do search for an ultimate reality, the supposition here is

that if at all there is such a thing as an ultimate reality it is an understanding that

there is no ultimate reality, or that the ultimate reality is understanding that there

is no ultimate reality or absolute truth. With such a dynamic, there is less emphasis

on some kind of ultimate 'arriving' but rather on engagement, on 'becoming' and on

'being'. Here we move away from object and finite goal toward process, 'way' and

'flow'. It is such an art that is of interest. Of course, the aim of this thesis is not a

detailed analysis of Buddhism, Tantra, Yoga, Animism or Zen, but for this thesis to

be an engagement with some kind of 'way of adjani'. The composition of the thesis

in itself is part of this apperceptive way.

In this context for a long time the author used the term 'dependent origination'

most commonly to describe the Sanskrit term *pratityasamputpada*, mainly because

this is how it is translated in a number of texts, including by the Dalai Lama's

translator; and not least because the author had once been asked to write an article on the term, a number of years ago, and the term remained fixed in his thinking. Yet the term of preference used now is increasingly 'relational origination', as it offers a different tone and sensibility to 'dependent'; as well as approaching more closely the core notion of 'relational being' which will be discussed in more detail later. Kenneth Inaba feels similarly (Nagarjuna, 1970, p.17).

While a number of scholars recognise numerous monistic tendencies in Buddhism (See Kenneth Inaba's essay in: Nagarjuna, 1970), not least its worshiping of statues of the Buddha (See discussion of Water Temple in Chapter Three), Nagarjuna's line of thinking seems to stresses the lack of 'absolutism', and a lack of deification of 'the Buddha'. In this ontological context therefore it is preferable to use indefinite articles. For example, rather than 'the Way': 'a way'; and to use lower case e.g. rather than Buddhism: buddhism; rather than Tantra: tantra; rather than Yoga: yoga; rather than Zen: zen. Henceforth the author will use lowercase, unless the context demands uppercase, or those he is quoting are using upper case.

To grasp this concept of 'entity' or 'true entity' in the buddhist texts one needs to grasp in more depth the buddhist concept of 'emptiness', This is a central idea in Tibetan tantric buddhism. In a series of lectures in Nottingham, United Kingdom, 26-28th May, 2008, His Holiness The Dalai Lama, a spiritual leader of tantric buddhism in Tibet, explained the importance of the core buddhist concept of relational origination to arrive at a sensing of *shunyata* (Dalai Lama, 2008b) According to the Dalai Lama, and borrowing from Nagarjuna, the concept of relational origination elucidates the idea that no phenomenon has an intrinsic, 'free' nature but exists only in relation to all other phenomena. It is only when we let go of fixed solid entities, may we grasp *shunyata*.

Nagarjuna states in Verse One of his *Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way*, perhaps better known in its Sanskrit title, *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, that:

> At nowhere and at no time can entities ever exist by originating out of themselves, from others, from both (self-other), or from the lack of causes (Nagarjuna, 1970, p.39).

In his Nottingham lectures, the Dalai Lama stressed the seminal importance of Nagarjuna's contribution to the genealogy of ideas with regard the concept of *shunyata.* Furthermore he provided a conceptual and theoretical framework for the notion of 'relational origination'*.* Nagarjuna is so highly esteemed in Tibetan buddhism, that he is sometimes called the second buddha*.* The Dalai Lama stated that it took him a long time to understand this, but eventually, through profound meditation: 'I came to appreciate Nagarjuna's point that when you understand the true meaning of emptiness then you come to recognise that the notion of intrinsic existence or inherent existence or objective reality cannot be accepted at any level' (Dalai Lama, 2008b, Session 5, 15 minutes and 30 seconds - 16 minutes, 14 seconds approximately).

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The central text of the Dalai Lama's lectures was the six-hundred year old *Praise to the Buddha for His Discourses on Dependent Origination* by Lama Tsongkhapa and its 2007 English translations by Geshe Thupten Jinpa (Dalai Lama, 2008a). Lama Tsongkhapa, addressing Shakyamuni, writes in the first verse:

> He who speaks on the basis of seeing,
> This makes him a knower and teacher unexcelled,
> I bow to you, O Conqueror, you who saw
> Dependent origination and taught it
> (Dalai Lama, 2008a, p.2).

In verse three he writes:

> So how can an intelligent person
>
> Not comprehend that this path
>
> Of dependent origination is
>
> The essential point of your teaching
>
> (Dalai Lama, 2008a, p.2).

As Daisetz Suzuki explains, buddhist concepts – such as emptiness - cannot be grasped by intellectualisation. In this sense, zen is 'un-reason', 'un-philosophy' not grasped through logos:

> for Zen finds an inexpressibly deep thought even in holding up a finger, or in saying a 'good morning' to a friend casually met on the street... in the eye of Zen the most practical is the most abstruse, and vice versa. All the system of discipline adopted by Zen is the outcome of this fundamental experience (Suzuki, Daisetz, 1991, pp.34-35).

However it should be remembered that in the sense that etymologically 'philosophy' means 'a love of wisdom', zen should be considered philosophy, and all buddhist teachers as 'philosophers'.

Zen appears to be grasped when one transcends (but not denies) the rational mind. In this context, certain creative processes in art are pertinent. If, as Suzuki indicates, there is an inherent compromise in writing, in a theoretical thesis how does one write about nothing, about nothingness? This is in part why the first historical Buddha, Shakyamuni[20], discusses the true entity in terms of thirty-four

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[20] Shakyamuni means literally 'Sage of the Shakyas' – the peoples to which he belonged and was said to be a prince of. Shakyamuni is also known in Sanskrit as Siddhartha (first name) Gautama (family name), (Pali: Siddhattha Gotama). Siddhartha means 'one who achieves his purpose'. He is said to be the historical

negatives. One has to let go of one's conceptualising, or rather a certain kind of cerebral conceptualising. One has to 'empty' the mind to enable being. Here the author's view is that a thesis approaching 'being' similarly requires the importance of a particular 'practical' component as much as a 'theoretical' component to enable a full exposition of the subject area: to give full scope to non-logos learning and knowing. Borrowing from Heidegger, for this research topic there is a need to 'dwell' in the philosophy and not simply ask 'what is philosophy?' and remain outside it. While the nature of the so-called theoretical component could also be a kind of poeisis, the context and parameters of this doctoral research do not easily facilitate this.

Delineating the difference in approach to story and narrative between European and Japanese fairy story readings, the psychiatrist Hayao Kawai, explains how European children have been left dissatisfied by the ostensible lack of 'action' in Japanese fairy stories: the complaint that 'nothing' happens (Kawai, 1988, p.13). Kawai explains that a Japanese fairy tale cannot be understood as an object in itself, 'separate from the subjective feelings in the reader's mind': it is not so much that 'nothing' happens but that a 'nothingness has happened' (Kawai, 1988, p.21). Kawai's analysis stresses the importance of analysing art practice in its own philosophical and cultural terms. During a performance-lecture at ISEA, 2008 - an exposition on the notion of zero and concepts of emptiness, void, space, space-time in South Asia and Japan such as *akasha*, *ma*, *mu*, and *shunyata* - ajaykumar and co-researcher/presenter Alok b. Nandi found a clear distinction between the responses of 'Asian' spectators and 'Euro-Americans'. The 'Asians' tended to sense the ideas, while the 'Euro-Americans' tended to be confounded by the exposition (ajaykumar and Nandi, 2008).

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founder of what we know today as buddhism. The date of his birth is not known precisely, with a number of contemporary scholars believing it to be around 400 B.C.E.

At this point the author requests that you view the film on DVD 1,

relationship-place naka-ma,

placed precisely here to be viewed, before going on to read Chapter Two.

Section Three

Art as Yoga – Yoga as Art

In Ancient South Asia, art practice had been considered yoga. Aesthetician Bhatta Nayaka of the Ninth Century C.E. considers, according to the Sanskrit scholar Raniero Gnoli, 'Aesthetic experience, being characterised by disinterested and impersonal pleasure is a modality *sui generis* of the unbounded beatitude that appears to the yogin[21] in his ecstasy' (Gnoli, 1956, pp. XXII_XXIV). Yoga is not understood here, in the European and North American contemporary popular sense of slightly exotic fitness regime: of physical postures (Sanskrit: *asanas*), breathing techniques (Sanskrit: *pranayama*) and meditation (Sanskrit: *dhyana*). What is being considered here, is that on the profound level, all aspects of human engagement, activity and inter-action are potentially yogic practice – depending on the intentions, actions and capabilities of the practitioner.

Yoga has several meanings etymologically. As historian of religions Knut A. Jacobson explains in depth and in detail, the concept of yoga varies according to which school of thought in South Asia is utilising it, and many of these appear as contradictory (Jacobson, 2005, pp.3-27). The purpose of this thesis is not to elucidate an essentialist position on yoga. Rather, it is to examine ideas, from whatever source, discipline, culture and historical period that shed insight on the afore-delineated notions of being, particularly in the context of art practice as ontological practice. One meaning etymologically of yoga is 'means': ultimately any means can be employed toward yogic ontology.

Through art one may approach 'relational being' experientially. The art practice forms then an integral part of this thesis, concerning the personal ontological journey and the possibilities for engendering spaces or, borrowing the language of

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[21] *Yogin* or *Yogi* is practitioner of Yoga/'the way of yoga'.

Heidegger, *lichtungs*[22] for others to manifest and 'enjoy' being. Here there is

evidently a correspondence with Suzuki's 'psychospheres' as places to engage the

psyche, the soul. With regard the tea ceremony, he writes that it is 'the art of

cultivating… psychic atmosphere, or the inner field of consciousness' (Suzuki,

Daisetz, 1959, p.295). There is an emphasis on the creation of particular moods, or

atmospheres as art, rather than realisation of objects. In Sanskrit this is known as

rasa. It will be discussed later with regard South Asian aesthetics and the concept

of 'an art of affect'. While objects are involved in the 'way of tea' – such as the tea

cup - and these have considerable artistic as well as commercial value, at the core

is the generation of a particular ontological state through human inter-action and

conviviality. Suzuki explains the constitution of such 'psychospheres' in terms of the

engendering of *shunyata*:

> the realization of the spirit of poverty, devoid of all forms of dichotomy:
>
> subject and object, good and evil, right and wrong, honour and disgrace,
>
> body and soul, gain and loss... This poverty that permits no room for
>
> anything, even for the point of a needle, is what is known in the philosophy
>
> of *Prajnaparamita*[23] [known in Chinese as *pan-jo* and in Japanese as
>
> *hannya*]… as 'Emptiness', and the tea ceremony is based on it, for *sabi* or
>
> *wabi* is no other than the aesthetic appreciation of absolute poverty (Suzuki,
>
> Daisetz 1959, pp. 295-6).

The art research that is being undertaken here is an ontological research in

essence; an ontology not bound by particular dogma or rhetoric, paralleling the

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[22] In German *lichtung* means a clearing, such as a clearing in the woods. *Lichtung's*
root is the German word for light (*licht*). Heidegger's discusses the necessity of a
lichtung or clearing for being to manifest.
[23] *Prajnaparamita* (Sanskrit, English translation: *Perfection of Wisdom*) Sutras
including *The Heart Sutra* and *The Diamond Sutra*, are important in mahayana
buddhism.

epistemological process of tantra. The significance of tantra in this discussion will be delineated later in Section Six.

Yoga pertained and may pertain to any ontological practice. In Japan the Tendai[24] and Nichiren Schools of buddhism, while epistemologically distinct, have as their root the buddhist text, the *Lotus Sutra*[25], attributed to Shakyamuni. In this teaching there is the belief that all phenomena are sacred. Nichiren - who began life as a Tendai monk - writes, referring in the below passage to the lineage of philosophers and thinking on the *Lotus Sutra* that has preceded him:

> The Great Teacher Miao-lo comments on this as follows: 'The true aspect invariably manifests in all phenomena, and all phenomena invariably manifest in the ten factors. The ten factors invariably manifest in the Ten Worlds, and the Ten Worlds invariably manifest in life and its environment.'

> T'ien-t'ai commented, 'All phenomena consisting of the ten factors, Ten Worlds, and three thousand realms are entities of the Lotus Sutra.'

> The Great Teacher Nan-yueh says, 'Question: What does *Myoho-renge-kyo* represent? Answer: *Myo* indicates that all living beings are *myo*, or mystic. *Ho* indicates that all living beings are *ho*, or the Law.' T'ien-t'ai also says, 'The Law of all living beings is mystic' (Nichiren, 2009, p.417).

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[24] Tendai derives from 'Tient'ai', the name of a mountain in China, where the Chinese philosopher Chi'i was based and who created a systemisation of the buddhist teachings where he ranked the *Lotus Sutra* as the principal teaching of Shakyamuni. Chi'i is also known as T'ien t'ai. The Tendai Sect in Japan was created by Japanese buddhist pioneers who brought the teachings of Chi'i back to Japan.
[25] In Sanskrit *the Lotus Sutra* is known as *Saddharma Pundarika Sutra,* which translates more fully as *the sutra of the lotus of the wonderful law*. In Japanese it is known as *Myo Ho Renge Kyo*, or *Hokke-kyo*.

While the Zen inspired poet Matsuo Basho wrote the most exquisite verse, in haiku form, he also wrote in prose form, that the most profound 'poetry' was found in daily life:

> What is important is to keep our mind high in the world of true understanding, and returning to the world of our daily experience to seek therein the truth of beauty. No matter what we may be doing at a given moment, we must not forget that it has a bearing upon our everlasting self which is poetry (Basho, 1966, p.28).

The 'way of tea' is also a significant factor in this thinking-practice. Here the 'way of tea' - is being considered as a multiple media, multi-sensory installation, 'an inter-active and immersive art experience that comes into being, in an ephemeral moment between people. Zen monk and tea exponent Ryofu Pussel believes that the 'way of tea' is principally a Buddhist path... a medium of religious Buddhist cultivation' (Pussel, 2005, p.11). In this sense the 'way of tea' could be understood as 'art as yoga': art as an ontological cultivation. The personal practice is only relevant with this understanding.

Most importantly and with regard the notions of relational being, non-anthropocentric being, the being of a space and the space of being, that are under discussion, the issue is: in contemporary trans-national societies and 'trans-local' communities (Nandi, 2007) that ostensibly have different relationships to art and ritual, how can one develop ontological experiences that give the possibility of glimpsing such being, with an art practice that is not culturally specific, or tied to specifics of a form that has developed over several hundred years possibly? How does one develop a *zen garden without the 'zen'* (ajaykumar, 2003-8)? A *tea*

ceremony without the 'ceremony'[26] (ajaykumar, 2009)? This will be discussed in more detail later. The answer for the author – in terms of self-experience or 'auto-spectatorship' - is certainly in the affirmative. For other spectators, which is part of the aspiration, one cannot always ascertain, though certain works adjani-ajaykumar has created do have certain feedback mechanisms. Here it may be difficult to setup a market research on the lines of companies like Gallup, that have any tangible relevance. Even if the answer would be in the negative, the personal research continues. As is expressed in *radio play* (ajaykumar, 2007 [6]), artist Man Ray writes of an artist requiring one spectator only for his work to be deemed to be successful.

It is in this respect that in the author's practical research he has been looking at diverse points of spectatorial engagement and spectatorship, outside the traditional gallery and art centre context. Ultimately it is an art of daily life or rather an art in daily life that he is researching: practically, theoretically and practically-theoretically: through processes such as 'concrete essays' (ajaykumar, 2007[1], ajaykumar 2007 [2]); performance-lectures (ajaykumar and Nandi, ISEA, 2008, ajaykumar, BEAP/CADE, 2007[4]); and other interventions (ajaykumar, *radio play*, versions 1 and 2, 2007 [5]). These attempt to interrogate the distinctions of practice and theory; and investigate certain practice-theory confluences and synergies. The fourth chapter on 'new media' technology will undertake such a strategy and approach.

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[26] *tea ceremony without the 'ceremony'* was the initial title for an exhibition by ajaykumar in November 2009, eventually called *way of tea – an art of conviviality.* See Appendices.

Section Four

Notions of Being

<u>Relational Being</u>

The medical researcher Yujiro Ikemi outlines the scientific basis for a psychosomatic approach to health, proposing 'the concept of non-dualism (neither dualistic nor monistic) which recognizes mutual dependence and respects independence' (Ikemi, 1996, p.2). There is a profound distinction in this thesis between the concept of a 'Cartesian' being and relational being. If one follows a buddhist premise of 'relational origination', the separated divided being has no intrinsic individual significance. A buddhist concept drawn from 'relational origination', perceives there to be no permanent self: *anatman*.

Furthermore, as aforementioned, the Japanese had no word for the human being that was separate from nature. There was no dividuum for the individual to be. Günter Nitschke discusses this succinctly (Nitschke, 1993, pp.57-58), explaining that a current word used to mean human being is *nin-gen* – which means literally: 'person-place', or 'person-in-relationship'. The *gen* here has the same character as *ma*. So rather than 'I' one may suggest instead 'i_nature', 'i_space', 'i_space-time'. Further de-emphasising even the 'i', other suggestions could be nature_i, 'space_i', 'space-time_i'. Ultimately it is the space between, the underscore that is of importance: the relational. As Nitschke explains, the word for 'society' and 'world' is *se-ken*. The *ken* here has the same character as *ma*. *Se-ken's* meaning literally is 'world-place' or 'world-in-relationship' (Nitschke, 1993, p.57).

A pertinent parallel is the philosopher and activist Joanna Macy's concept of 'world as lover, world as self' (Macy, 1991, cover page). In her discussion of the buddha mind in contemporary art practice, Jacquelynn Baas discusses a zen concept of the art of being with the world, with a reciprocally enhancing and mutually informative

universe (Baas, 2004, p.21). In the Tendai and Nichiren schools of Japanese buddhism that base their teachings around the primacy of Shakyamuni's teaching of the *Lotus Sutra*, there exists the notion of the non-duality of the human body and the environment.

Such relationality is clarified in the introductory referenced statement of Heisenberg, repeated here:

> Thus the aim of research is no longer an understanding of atoms and their movements 'in themselves', *i.e.,* independently of the formulation of experimental problems. From the very start we are involved in the argument between nature and man in which science plays only a part, so that the common division of the world into subject and object, inner world and outer world, body and soul, is no longer adequate and leads us into difficulties. Thus even in science *the object of research is no longer nature but man's investigation of nature* (1970, p.24).

Pertinently Heisenberg believes also that:

> the great scientific contribution in theoretical physics that has come from Japan since the last war [World War II] may be an indication for a certain relationship between philosophical ideas in the tradition of the Far East and the philosophical substance of quantum theory (Heisenberg, 1970, p.173).

Perhaps one can see here a parallel in terms of the contemporary contribution to Mathematics and Information Technology – particularly software - that has come from South Asia.

The buddhist, teacher, scholar, poet and activist, Thich Nhat Hanh, whose lineage is in the Linji School of dhyana[27] buddhism writes:

> Too many people distinguish between the inner world of our mind and the world outside, but these worlds are not separate. They belong to the same reality. The ideas of inside and outside are helpful in everyday life but they can become an obstacle that prevents us experiencing ultimate reality. If we look deeply into our mind, we see the world deeply at the same time. If we understand the world, we understand our mind. This is called 'the unity of mind and world' (Nhat Hanh, 1998, p.4).

Through this we have the notion of what Nhat Hanh terms 'inter-being'. If one considers the notion of the relationship between body and environment which is described in some buddhist schools as 'neither two but two' and in buddhist schools in Japan as *esho funi*, stemming from the concept of 'relational origination, this elucidates the notion that the 'true self', which some buddhists aspire to attain, exists in an intangible realm between body and environment. Here one could transposes the words 'true self' with relational being.

Even using the word 'between' can be misleading as ultimately such buddhists view the notion of a divide between so called inner and so called outer as an illusion; a necessary construct however sometimes used to explain certain ideas. Perhaps thinking of it as an enmeshment would be useful. Considering the notion in Physics of the field is pertinent here also. In Chapter Four this will be discussed in terms of what both physicist Fritjof Capra and Joanna Macy call 'the web of life' (Capra, 1997, book cover title and theme; Macy, 1991, p.84). Therefore, if one works with this premise of finding a true self in this intangible, perhaps liminal realm, one reinforces the idea of a relational being.

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[27] The Japanese word *zen* derives, via the Chinese word *chan,* from the Sanskrit word *dhyan* or *dhyana* which means 'meditation'.

The Tibetan buddhist master Sogyal Rinpoche discusses the significance of this liminal space and liminal being from a Tibetan tantric buddhist perspective.

> In this wonderful teaching [by 'this' Rinpoche is referring to the totality of the buddhist teachings], we find the whole of life and death presented as series of constantly changing transitional realities known as *bardos*. The word "bardo" is commonly used to denote the intermediate state between death and rebirth, but in reality bardos *are occurring continuously throughout both life and death*, and are junctures when the possibility of liberation, or enlightenment, is heightened (Rinpoche, 2002, p.11).

Here one has again this notion of relational space, and space between. Here it may be as useful to think not just of being but the act of becoming, which has an active and kinaesthetic sense, which will be discussed later also with regard Ellora and the Water Temple. The French phrase for this is pertinent: *se realiser*. A process of self-realisation, self-becoming. Here again one moves away from object from fixed entities and develops a notion of something constantly in movement in action. Here it is valuable to consider Nicholas Bourriaud's thinking that in relational aesthetics 'forms' need to be supplanted by 'formations' (Bourriaud, 2002, p.21). Yet formation still has the notion of solidity. What is being considered here is dynamic flow with temporal ephemeral manifestation – or realisation. Perhaps what may be most appropriate would be the present participle 'forming'. The Sanskrit word *karma* has the sense of action and also of a wheel of movement. *Karma* refers to tendencies in this light. While it is commonly misconceived as referring to fate, it is valuable to think of *karma* in terms of constant movement, of action, of becoming: *se realiser*. In fact as the Pali scholar T.W. Rhys Davids indicates: 'Where others said 'soul', Gautama [the Buddha] said usually 'action'' (Macy, 1991, p.88).[28]

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[28] The various South Asian philosophy/belief systems and their schools, including Buddhism, have particular interpretations of Karma. For a more detailed explanation, see George Feuerstein's *The Shambhala Encyclopedia of Yoga*: pp.149-151.

Given the trans-national context of this discussion, here it is pertinent to note that according to sociologist Paul Gilroy, 'Diaspora accentuates *becoming* rather than *being* and identity conceived diasporically, along these lines resists reification' (Gilroy, 1995, p.24). While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to elaborate further, it should be noted also that from a 'technological' as well as 'gender' perspective the social scientist Donna Haraway's thoughts are pertinent:

> The dichotomies between mind and body, animal and human, organism and machine, public and private, nature and culture, men and women, primitive and civilised are all in question ideologically. The actual situation of women is their integration/exploitation into a world system of production/reproduction and communication, called the informatics of domination (Haraway, 1991, p.163).

In Japanese there is a concept called *ma. Ma* has many senses such as space-time, emptiness, pause, a space between, and interval. It also has hundreds of meanings in compound form*.* In the context of this discussion, 'interval' and 'emptiness' are of particular pertinence.

This notion is comprehended further through reference to an explanation of what meditation is by the Tibetan Buddhist master Jamyang Khyentse in answer to one of his students who asked him to elucidate what meditation is. Jamyang Khyentse asked the student: 'When the past thought has ceased, and the future thought has not yet arisen, isn't there a gap?' The student replied in the affirmative. Jamyang Khyentse then responded: 'Well, prolong it. That is meditation' (Rinpoche, 2002, p.79).

It is this intangible realm that one is working with. It cannot easily be defined further. Ultimately it can be described only in the manner of Shakyamuni's

thirty-four negations. It has to be sensed. This is why the practical research is crucial, as is the way that the so-called theoretical writing is relating to the practical.

One of the central concepts in Noh theatre as expounded by pioneer Zeami, is the engendering of a 'flower' (Japanese: *hana*) in the performance. Essentially this *hana* comes into being in a liminal space between performer and spectator.

Varela describes even the activity of the brain as a relational process: 'the brain is a highly cooperative system: the dense inter-actions among its components are doing...as a result the entire system acquires an internal coherence in intricate patterns, even if we cannot say exactly how this occurs' (Capra, 1997, p.259). Cognition is an active kinaesthetic process. Here again is the importance of the act of becoming – *se realiser*.

The tantric buddhist meditation that Sogyal Rinpoche elucidates – the *Dzogchen* practice - is one that is not about 'cutting oneself off from the world' which is often a popular view of meditation. His meditation process emphasises relationality. In this meditation one's eyes are kept open, gazing into the space before one, and aware of the surrounding environment. Rinpoche writes:

> In the Dzogche*n* teachings it is said that *your meditation and your gaze* should be like the vast expanse of a great ocean: all-pervading, open, and limitless. Just as your View and posture are inseparable, so your meditation inspires your gaze, and they now merge as one… Instead of shutting out life, you remain open and at peace with everything (Rinpoche, 2002, pp.67-68).

Elucidating this idea of 'meditation inseparable from life in general, Rinpoche writes:

> Once an old woman came to Buddha and asked how to meditate. He told her
> to remain aware of every movement of her hands as she drew the water
> from the well, knowing that if she did, she would soon find herself in that
> state of alert and spacious calm that is meditation (2002, p.65).

Rinpoche explains also the importance of not 'doing' but 'being':

> There is a revealing Tibetan saying, *"Gompa ma yin, kompa yin,"* which
> means literally: Meditation is not; getting used to is. It means that
> meditation is nothing other than getting used to the practice of meditation.
> As it is said, "Meditation is not striving but naturally becoming assimilated
> into it." As you continue to practice the method, then meditation slowly
> arises. Meditation is not something that you can "do"; it is something that
> has to happen spontaneously: only when the practice is perfected (2002,
> p.65).

Non-Anthropocentric Being

Non-anthropocentric being could be seen as a particular interpretation of 'relational being'. It refers to a sense of being where human is not central to a worldview but seen as one 'element' only in a universal web, a web that is in dynamic inter-relation. The epistemologies that are under particular discussion – tantra, buddhism and animism – should not be seen as crystallised philosophies, locked in a cultural essentialism. This would serve only to perpetuate the colonial, orientalist project. Rather they should be seen as evolving systems of ideas that develop through inter-action with other ideas from whatever source: an interpretation of 'symbiogenesis'. In this context particular recent ideas in science are pertinent. For example, James Lovelock's Gaia Theory defines a 'being' - Gaia - that is:

a complex entity involving the Earth's biosphere, atmosphere, oceans, and soil; the totality constituting a feedback or cybernetic system which seeks an optimal physical and chemical environment for life on this planet. The maintenance of relatively constant conditions by active control may be conveniently described by the term 'homoeostasis' (Lovelock, 2000, p.10).

Homeostasis is understood as an open or closed system that regulates its internal environment toward the maintenance of a stable, constant condition. Lovelock's Gaia theory emphasises non-anthropocentricity. It should be noted that in certain buddhist systems of thought, while all phenomena are said to contain the 'buddha nature', to be sacred, there is a hierarchy of sacredness in that unlike inanimate objects, plants, other animals, only the human being has the possibility of changing her basic tendencies – her/his *karma* through her/his actions. In contrast to such a hierarchy, in animistic practice such as that of shinto in Japan, there is not hierarchy: animate and inanimate, human, other animal, plant, rock are equally sacred. In this sense such animism emphasises non-anthropocentricity.

There is also a correspondence here with the 'deep ecology' conceived by Arne Naess. Naess developed this line of thinking in contrast to an environmentalism that involved projects purely for human, anthropocentric benefit. Naess clarifies that these are essentially superficial projects, as they are not based on addressing the central issue of altering the human position of conceiving itself in separateness from the world. Outlining deep ecology, Naess writes:

The emergence of ecologists from their former relative obscurity marks a turning point in our scientific communities. But their message is twisted and misused. A shallow, but presently rather powerful, and a deep, but less influential, movement, compete for our attention. I shall make an effort to characterise the two.

1. *The Shallow Ecology movement:*

Fight against pollution and resource depletion. Central Objective: the health
and affluence of people in developed countries...

2. *The Deep Ecology movement:*

a. Rejection of the man-in-environment image in favour of *the relational,
total-field image.* Organisms as knots in the field of intrinsic relations. An
intrinsic relation between two things A and B is such that the relation
belongs to the definitions or basic constitutions of A and B, so that without
the relation, A and B are no longer the same things. The total field model
dissolves not only the man-in-environment concept, every compact thing-in-
milieu concept – except when talking at a superficial or preliminary level of
communication.

b. *Biospherical egalitarianism – in principle*. The 'in principle' clause is
inserted because any realistic praxis necessitates some killing, exploitation
and suppression. The ecological field worker acquires a deep-seated respect,
even veneration, for ways and forms of life. He reaches an understanding,
from within, a kind of understanding that others reserve for fellow men and
for a narrow section of ways and forms of life. To the ecological field work,
the equal right to live and blossom is an intuitively clear and obvious value
axiom. Its restriction to humans is an anthropocentrism with detrimental
effects upon the life quality of humans themselves. This quality depends in
part upon the deep pleasure and satisfaction we receive from close
partnership with other forms of life. The attempt to ignore our dependence
and to establish a master-slave role has contributed to the alienation of man
from himself (Naess, 1989, pp.27-28).

To develop such a perspective Naess argues first of all that the narrow science of
ecology needs to be combined with philosophy to form a new discipline:
'ecophilosophy'. Moreover such ecophilosophy needs to be both holistic and

personal: 'ecosophy'. For Naess there is not one solution or formula; rather there is a need for each individual - as in tantra - to develop her/his own way. Naess entitles his own path as 'ecosophy T'. At the same time one could have any number of variations: 'ecosophy U', 'ecosophy V', 'ecosophy 42', 'ecosophy adjani'. 'ecosophy ajaykumar', 'ecosophy 0' 'ecosophy 8', *etcetera*.

The emphasis on non-anthropocentricity is key to a different world and universal view. One of the legacies of Cartesian thinking is the idea that humans have a particular special level of intelligence and consequently 'mind'. Yet as Maturana and Varela clarify, even certain simple organisms, molecular species, have cognitive capacity and what they call 'autopoiesis', which could be understood as 'self-creation'. Furthermore the ontogenic development of simple cellular organisms is always relational – dependent on the nature of interaction with surrounding entities and phenomena (Maturana and Varela, 1998, pp.75-80).

Joanna Macy stresses the importance of relational origination also through her 'world as lover, world as self' concept'. Here it is pertinent to expound some of the ideas of ecologist and activist John Seed (as Macy does) in his essay *Beyond Anthropocentrism*:

> When humans investigate and see through their layers of anthropocentric self-cherishing, a most profound change in consciousness begins to take place. Alienation subsides. The human is no longer an outsider apart. Your humanness is then recognized as being merely the most recent stage of your existence; as you stop identifying exclusively with this chapter, you start to get in touch with yourself as mammal, as vertebrate, as species only recently emerged from the rainforest. As the fog of amnesia disperses, there is a transformation in your relationship to other species and in your commitment to them.

What is described here should not be seen as merely intellectual. The intellect is one entry point to the process outlined, and the easiest one to communicate. For some people however, this change of perspective follows from actions on behalf of Mother Earth. 'I am protecting the rainforest' develops to I am part of the rain forest protecting myself. I am that part of the rainforest recently emerged into thinking'. What a relief then! The thousands of years of imagined separation are over and we can begin to recall our true nature; that is, the change is a spiritual one – thinking like a mountain, sometimes referred to as 'deep ecology'.

As your memory improves, as the implications if evolution and ecology are internalised and replace outmoded anthropocentric structures in your mind, there is an identification with all life. Then follows the realization that the distinction between 'life' and lifeless' is a human construct. Every atom in this body existed before organic life emerged 4000 million years ago. Remember our childhood as minerals, as lava as rocks? Rocks contain the potentiality to weave themselves into such stuff as this. We are the rocks dancing (Seed, 1988, pp.35-36).

Ironically, perhaps this approach to ecology seems a new twist on economist Adam Smith's notion of 'enlightened self-interest'. Furthermore not only can we said to be 'the rocks dancing', but that the rocks themselves are 'dancing'. A mountain is in a state of constant movement of flow, even though human eyes may not discern this.

The Being of a Space, the Space of Being and Process

Space is being considered as being. This is a notion found in shinto where all phenomena are believed to have a certain kind of 'life'. In addition, as above-mentioned, in certain schools of buddhism there is the notion that all phenomena

reveal the true entity, including inanimate and 'empty'. Consequently, empty space could be considered to have presence. In the rock-cut edifices of Ellora, which is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, the empty spaces are a critical component of the architecture. The empty space is being.

Tadao Ando discusses the significance of the spirit of the space - the *genius loci* - in the creation of architecture. This *genius loci* could be understood as the being of the space also. It appears Ando 'dwells' for a significant time in a space to try to sense this spirit before beginning to develop an idea for the edifice that will be created in that space, in dynamic inter-action with such a sensed spirit. This will be delineated in Chapter Three. Ando's approach echoes that of Frank Lloyd Wright who stated 'it is the nature of any organic building to grow from its site… the ground itself held always as a component part of the building' (in Nute, 2004, p.11). There is a resonance here, as architectural historian Kevin Nute mentions also, with a word for a home in Japan that is *ka-tei*. *Ka* means house and *tei* means garden. With such a word, one has here the existential and ecological sense of a built edifice always engaging with immediate surroundings. As aforementioned, Heidegger discusses the necessity of a *lichtung* or clearing for being to manifest. In this context if one is sensitive to the space in the manner of Ando or Lloyd Wright, the edifice, the building itself, embodies the *lichtung* or the being of the space.

This space is always in flux, never 'solid' but always in a process of becoming through the inter-action of the edifice, the people who frequent it and the wider landscape –as will be discussed in Chapter Three with Ando. Borrowing the zen term 'mindfulness', if one is mindful in such a space, a relational being may be manifested. Ando gives a dynamic aspect to landscape or environment in this architectural process as by the involvement of movement by so-called natural elements such as the Sun. Consequently this takes emphasis away from anthropocentricity and emphasises a particular flux of being or becoming. Such mindfulness also resonates with the iconic statement attributed to Duchamp of: 'it

is art because I say it is'. The quality of spectatorial cultivation is paramount here in art creation or art making.

With regard 'the space of being', in Chapter Four, Suzuki's notion of psychospheres will be discussed in relationship to cyber space and Michael Heim's thinking around the potential application and correspondence of ideas around the tea ceremony to virtual design. Consequently, the engendering of psychospheres is discussed here briefly only with regard specifically to a notion of 'the space of being'. Suzuki conceives the psychosphere as an inner field of consciousness cultivated through the nature of one's engagement in the 'way of tea'. Michael Heim describes psychospheres as psychic frameworks: frameworks where the field of consciousness comes into being only in inter-relationship and interaction with utensils of the 'way of tea'. Again, we have a stress less on personality or on object but on a relational being. Moreover, the coming into being through inter-action and immersion is also in special appointed and 'anointed' space-time: the place or location of the 'way of tea': the space of being.

The art works that the author is endeavouring to realise, have this sense of the art work itself being a space of being; spaces of potential inter-action and/or immersion. These will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent chapters. This notion of empty space has an interesting parallel in China in the Thirteenth Century C.E. with the Ma Hsia School. This too will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters.

There is a relationship with such an idea of space as being and process as both in Physics and in Philosophy we have ideas that concern flux, ever-changing space. Here one should be perhaps talking again about the 'becoming of a space and the space of becoming'.

The Chilean biologists, cyberneticists, and philosophers, Humberto Maturana and Varela's conceived what is called the Santiago Theory of Cognition. This theory, in brief, posits the idea that mind is a process not a thing (Capra, 1997, p.257). Here again there is an emphasis on the process of becoming, *se realiser*. Furthermore, with regard art making there is an implicit emphasis on process and spaces of becoming rather than object. Capra delineates the process of knowing as follows:

> It is cognition, the process of knowing, and it is identified with the process of life itself. The identification of mind, or cognition, with the process of life is a radically new idea in science, but it is also one of the deepest and most archaic intuitions of humanity. In ancient times, the rational human mind was seen as merely one aspect of the immaterial soul or spirit. The basic distinction was not between body and mind, but between body and soul, or body and spirit. While the differentiation between soul and spirit was fluid and fluctuated over time, both originally unified in themselves two concepts – that of the force of life and that of the activity of consciousness (Capra, 1997, p.257).

The ideas that Maturana and Varela explain in *The Tree of Knowledge*, indicate that cognition should be perceived 'not as a representation of the world 'out there,' but rather as an ongoing bringing forth of a world through the process of living itself' (Maturana and Varela, 1998, p.11) [29]. While such a process of knowing here may not seem relevant directly to the notion of a being of a space, it is important to understand that an acknowledgement of the notion of the being of space is in part the understanding that the process of knowing takes place ubiquitously.

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[29] Maturana and Varela's ideas in relationship to the thesis themes will be will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

Section Five

Relational Origination/Dependent Origination

Succinctly, the previously explained idea of relational origination in Buddhism is that all things, all phenomena exist only in relation to all other things. This is an invaluable component in the developing understanding of relational being as well as deep ecology. The contemporary thinker and activist Joanna Macy writes of the significance of 'relational origination', which she conceives as 'dependent co-arising':

> The eight-spoked wheel that graces gateways and temple roofs throughout the Buddhist world symbolizes the teaching of the Buddha. It is called the Wheel of Dharma, the *Dharma Chakra*. It also represents the central doctrine that his teachings convey: the doctrine of *paticca samuppada*[30] or the dependent co-arising of all phenomena...This centrepiece of the Buddha's teachings is not about a level of reality separate from our daily lives or aloof from the phenomenal world of change. It refers not to any absolute being or essence, but to process itself – to the way things work, how events happen and interrelate (Macy, 1991, p.53).

The crucial approach here is that knowing is inter-active; that consciousness co-arises in conjunction with sensory activity. There is no hierarchy of knowledge.

This emphasis on process is significant for the art under discussion. 'Relational origination' may enable some alleviation from status and power: of object; of artist; of keeper of art; of writer of art. While all these may exist in such a process, there is no central focus but only a dynamic process of inter-relation. The knowing or the art (manifestation) comes into being in relation, in the ephemeral space between.

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[30] Macy is using the Pali language for the Sanskrit term *pratityasamutpada*.

With regard a parallel between relational origination and contemporary science, both Capra and Macy discuss the significance of cybernetics and the general systems theory. Macy discusses specifically with regard to buddhism. Capra discusses it within his evolution of the notion of the web of life, incorporating ideas of Lovelock, Margulis, Pert, Maturana and Varela and others. In an earlier writing, *The Tao Of Physics*, Capra looks specifically at parallels between ideas in contemporary physics and those in South and East Asian epistemological systems. Macy describes cognitive activity from the perspective of the general systems theory as a circuit involving so called external world and 'that' which perceives it. Maturana and Varela discuss this circular flow in the context of auto-poeisis, self-creation. Quoting cyberneticist Norbert Wiener, Macy describes human beings as 'but whirlpools in a river of everflowing water. We are not stuff that abides, but patterns that perpetuate themselves' (Macy, 1991, p.22). This corresponds with the idea mentioned earlier of matter being only local condensations of the field. Essentially, we exist in a kinaesthetic process, a dynamic process of movement and change. Even when a human body ceases to live, in the form of a corpse it continues to flow and engage with its environments through its decomposition. Consequently, death should not be equated with stillness, lack of motion.

There are several schools of buddhism and countless approaches and interpretations of buddhist concepts including 'relational origination' and *shunyata*. The intention here is not to argue which is the most pertinent, correct, or truthful: this thesis is not one based in buddhology or dogma. Rather it is an inter-disciplinary discussion that utilises these concepts as starting points towards a particular discussion on being, technology, and technological practice. With regard 'relational origination', Macy's approach is most interesting because she takes a particular view, that Shakyamuni did not define a specific truth or ultimate reality. This again places emphasis on dynamic flow and on-going ephemeral moments of 'se realiser', becoming/being. She quotes from Shakyamuni:

> Whatever is esteemed as truth by other folk amidst those who are

entrenched in their own views ... I hold none as true or false. This barb I beheld well in advance, whereon mankind is hooked, impaled... no such clinging for the Tathagatas[31] (Macy, 1991, p.72; original source not specified).

This quotation appears to be eschewing fixed, definitive, or ultimate truth. While ultimate truth is eschewed the process of knowing, of being is not. The aim here is to clarify that one is not interested in historical, essential truths, but evolving processes of knowing and being, in the context of relational being, drawing on research in any discipline. While this thesis takes place in an art context, it is feasible that it takes place in numerous sites of enquiry.

Returning to the concept in Japan of the space between, *ma*, the interface under discussion is the space of being and the space of being in art in specific terms as well as in a more general sense. It is in this liminal space that relational being emerges. When one takes on board Lovelock's ideas and those of Lynn Margulis, then such a relational being can be conceived as non-anthropocentric being. Here one has a sense of inter-face that is radically different from the way inter-face is commonly employed in information technology and art based on information technology. It is a more active notion. It is here that two, often disparate elements of electronic arts – inter-action and immersion may synthesise.

This is in essence a very particular conception of the human entity in relation to the world and where the 'being' of human may be located. Here the thinking of physicist Werner Heisenberg is pertinent: 'what we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning' (Capra, 1983, p.152).

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[31] Tathagata is another name for an 'enlightened one': a buddha.

Section Six

Total Art Work, Gesamtkunstwerk

In the nineteenth century, Richard Wagner developed the concept of a 'total art work',
a *Gesamtkunstwerk.* Wagner believed 'common' art work to be the apogee of art-
practice:

> Artistic Man can only fully content himself by uniting every branch of Art into
> the *common* Artwork: in every *segregation* of his artistic faculties he is
> *unfree*, not fully that which he has power to be, whereas in the *common*
> Artwork he is *free* and fully that which he has power to be (Wagner, 1895,
> p.183).

Wagner envisioned his operas as such where all elements of stagecraft – design,
lighting, actor-singers and music are synthesised toward a singular artistic vision –
one that in the twentieth century film could be described as the realisation of the
'auteur'. While Wagner created the terminology, in terms of theatre it is Adolphe
Appia arguably who attempted to realise most fully the notion of 'total art work' in
some of his works and collaborations, such as the Hellerau collaboration with Émile
Jaques-Dalcroze.

While Wagner evoked a pre-modernist age in his work, harking back to the Ancient
Greeks for whom art was not a commodity, his work evidently involved technology
available to him in Theatre. Moreover, the notion of a total art work in some ways
is most easily found in works located in the so-called virtual world. According to
Mathew Wilson Smith, such works show that the total art work is still a potent
aesthetic ideal, always inter-twined with technology, continuing to blur distinctions
between high and mass culture art work and commodity spectacle. And yet there is
a profound transformation as well, for what cyberspace offers is a kind of unity that
is not one of Wagnerian synthesis but of networking, a simultaneous and collective

creation that transcends the Kantian opposition between mechanical and organic form (Wilson Smith, 2007, p.6). If we are, as previously stated considering notions of relational being, of polyphony, of a 'nature' that includes both computer and human being, then such ideas become vitally important to a thinking that makes distinction between organic and mechanical form.

In South Asian civilisation, as aforementioned, the artist has been perceived as a *yogi* or *yogin*, and art as a yoga. The legacy of the thinking and practice of what can also be found in a *circa* two thousand year old seminal treatise on art aesthetics, *The Natyasastra* (Bharata, 1996) and commentaries on it, such as those of the Tenth Century C.E. tantric scholar Abhinavagupta (Gnoli, 1956 and Ingalls, 1990). *The Natyasastra*, also written as *The Natya Shastra*, is said to derive from an earlier text, *The Natya Sutra*, which was expounded hundreds of years before, and is perhaps the earliest known discourse on the arts. Before Wagner, *The Natyasastra,* discusssing the realm of performance, could be said to have theorised a systematic practice of a total art work (without using Wagner's terminology)*,* with a detailed hypothesis of art and aesthetics, involving a synergy of text, stagecraft, scenography, stage construction, lighting, colour, make-up, costume, movement, gesture and music. *The Natyasastra* elicited and discussed in detail a synthetical theatrical form combining visual art and aural art, and incorporating sophisticated notions of spectatorship. If it were to be written today, one could envisage that it would also theorise and embrace electronic and multi-sensory possibilities, as well as the concerns of technoetic artists and scholars. By 'technoetic' I mean the ideas of artists and thinkers such as Roy Ascott who writes:

> Beyond the dry world of virtuality and the wet world of biology lies a moist domain, a new interspace of potentiality and promise. I want to suggest that Moistmedia (comprising bits, atoms, neurons and genes) will constitute the substrata of the art of our new century, a transformative art concerned with the construction of a fluid reality. This will mean the spread of intelligence to

every part of the built environment coupled with the intelligence that lies within every part of the living planet. This burgeoning awareness is technoetic: techne and gnosis combined into a new knowledge of the world, a connective mind that is spawning new realities and new definitions of life and human identity (Ascott, 2000, p.2).

Gnoli comments on the sensory and sensuous nature of the art experience as espoused in *The Natyasastra:*

Drama is considered a form of synthesis between visual and aural arts. In it both collaborate at arousing in the spectator, more easily and forcibly than by any other form of art, a state of consciousness *sui generis*, conceived intuitively and concretely as a juice or flavour, called Rasa.

This rasa, when tasted by the spectator, pervades and enchants him. Aesthetic experience is, therefore, the act of tasting this Rasa, of immersing, one self in it, to the exclusion of all else (1958, p.XIX).

There is a resonance here with the tea ceremony, which involves both a literal and ontological 'tasting' and smelling'. This will be expanded on in later chapters. *The Natyasastra* has been considered enthusiastically by some to be a fifth Veda[32]. Moreover, there is a resonance with the architecture making at Edifice Twenty-Nine at Ellora a tantric temple devoted to the God Shiva,[33]. The reason for this is that Abhinavagupta, according to Anupa Pande, believed *The Natyasastra* to have a close correspondence with the primary concepts of Kashmiri *Shaivism*: a type of

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[32] The original four Vedas being regarded as the key texts of ancient Indian belief systems, dating back four and half thousand years, and regarded as divinely revealed, eternal wisdom. V*eda* means knowledge. There are four Vedic theological texts: the *Rig Veda*, *Sama Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and *Atharva Veda*. These are thought to have been composed around 1500 B.C.E. It should be noted that Veda did not refer only to theological knowledge. There are other Vedas in other fields such as medicine and military craft. The word Veda is thought by some to precede the Latin origin as the root of our contemporary word, video: 'I see'.
[33] To be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

Hinduism, imbued by tantra, focusing on the God Shiva, that emerged in Northern South Asia (Pande, 1997, p.17). The inseparable relationship here between artistic practice and a philosophic practice concerning being is confirmed by Bhatta Nayaka who, according to Gnoli, believed that: -

> aesthetic experience, being characterised by the immersion of the subject in the aesthetic object, to the exclusion of all else and therefore by a momentary interruption of his everyday life is akin to the beatitude of ecstasy or the experience of *brahman*[34]. Any form of pleasure is an epiphany of the divine beatitude, which is the very essence of consciousness (Gnoli, 1956, XXIII).

The attempts at technological thinking and practice in this thesis are underpinned by a notion of synergy and 'symbiogenesis' of artistic practice, architectonic practice, philosophical practice, technical, scientific, and ecological practice. Perhaps such technological practice and technoetic practice could be perceived as a revising or reconsideration of the notions of total art work/*gesamtkunstwerk* in the intellectual heritage of *The Natyasastra*, Wagner and Appia. After Wagner, Walter Gropius's vision of the Bauhaus was one where architecture, rather than opera, became the focal point of the total art work. In this context, the architecture of Ellora and the Water Temple, could be said to be works of total art of total 'technology' in the Ancient Greek sense. The way in which these edifices do this will be delineated in the next chapter.

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[34] In Vedic philosophy, *Brahman* means the absolute reality or all-pervasive supreme principle of the universe.

Section Seven

How and Why Tantra

The art historian and tantric scholar Philip Rawson confirms that to give a definition of tantra is not easy. He believes however there is one thread on which all the different approaches to tantra can be tied, which is the idea that tantra is:

> a cult of ecstasy, focused on a vision of cosmic sexuality. Life-styles, ritual, magic, myth, philosophy, and a complex of signs and emotive symbols converge on that vision (Rawson, 1978, p.7).

Kundalini, a Sanskrit term, is understood as a potential force in the human being that followers of tantra strive to manifest. The yogic master Satyananda Saraswati in explaining *kundalini* tantra, writes:

> Kundalini is the creative energy; it is the energy of self-expression. Just as in reproduction a new life is created, in the same way, someone like Einstein uses that same energy in a different, more subtle realm, to create a theory like relativity. It is the same energy that is expressed when someone composes or plays beautiful music. It is the same energy, which is expressed in all parts of life' (Saraswati, 1984, pp.18-19).

As aforementioned in the section on relational being the Japanese buddhist term *esho funi* elucidates an idea of a true self being found only in the inter-relation of body with external space. The meteorologist Edward Lorenz has demonstrated climatic relational origination through his hypothesis of a 'butterfly effect'. Furthermore, if one draws on contemporary neuroscience and other scientific research such as that of biologist Lynn Margulis, one may reconsider notions of 'being', of 'intelligence' and of 'mind'. Margulis states 'Humans are not the centre of life ... humans are not even central to life ... We need to be freed from our

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species-specific arrogance. No evidence exists that we are 'chosen'' (Margulis, 2001, pp.149-150). Moreover, what is interesting is the possibilities of current and future technologies to engender such experiencing through the practice of art, architecture, and design; and of such experiencing to take on board tantric, buddhist and animist notions that consider each and every phenomenon as sacred; and also that some buddhist schools, believe that the true self is found in the mundane world of the every day.

While studies of tantric art, such as that of Rawson, have centred generally on their history, the thinking here on tantra, yoga, animism, buddhism, and zen, perceives them as evolving processes, not locked into an historic and philosophic essentialism, but processes that may be advanced through current thinking from whatever source, unbound by particular iconography.

Section Eight

Conclusion

In this chapter the personal ontological enquiry has been delineated, yet a personal that is in relation to all other phenomena in the universe. In this context relational being has been exposed. It is a relational where the human being is not the centre, but one 'element' in a universal net, mesh and nexus of connection; a space of being and a being of a space. In this context a comprehension of 'relational origination' and *shunyata* is invaluable. Therefore, the personal is not of a conscious ego that can control all phenomena but one that may have some small yet significant influence.

In the earlier section on relational being the Tibetan master Jamyang Khyentse was cited. As aforementioned he asserts the prolongation of the 'gap' between the past

thought completed and the future thought to come as being meditation. Perhaps here there may be an aspiration that such a gap could be expanded so much that ultimately all phenomena could be perceived as 'meditation'. The art making that is being discussed is the 'gap': the interface, the insubstantial space between. Marcel Duchamp stated towards the end of his life: 'My art would be that of living: each second, each breadth is a work which is inscribed nowhere, which is neither visual nor cerebral. It is a sort of constant euphoria' (Cabanne, 1971, p.72). Perhaps this could be said to be the space of being. This is the *techne* or technological practice that is being conceived. As Basho believes: the most profound poetry exists in daily life. What is daily life other than energy – life force.

In this sense, ultimately what is most interesting is the practice of art as a yoga, and writing as yoga. Could this be thought of as *a way of writing?* What is being considered here, is that on the profound level, all aspects of human engagement, activity and inter-action, including art-making, are potentially yogic practice – depending on the intentions, actions and capabilities of the practitioner.

Chapter Three: space-time in relation to the body: with particular reference to rock-cut edifices of Ellora and Tadao Ando's Water Temple

Section One

Introduction

With regard the notions of being that are being discussed, this chapter discusses the critical importance of kinaesthetic processes as well as of the body in relationship to space. Further evolving the discussion from previous chapters, this chapter interrogates bionomic, non-anthropocentric, approaches to art, architecture, and design practice; the manifestation of these disciplines as ontological practice; a perception of architecture existing only in an inter-relation of built edifice, humans who frequent it, and a wider landscape; as well as a de-emphasis on object and greater focus on flow, process, and spectatorship.

Following this introductory section, Section Two focuses discussion on tantric rock-cut edifices at Ellora in South Asia; then engages in a comparative analysis of Ellora sites, primarily Edifice Twenty-Nine, with the Water Temple in Awajishima Japan - a site of a Japanese tantric buddhism: *shingon* (English: 'true word'/'true words'[35]) - designed by Tadao Ando and completed in 1991. The discussion is furthered in Section Three through engagement with the author's works, primarily, as the dance collaboration *Laal Shaari.* In Section Four there is some discussion of other ludic, inter-active processes in works instigated by the author such as *zen gardens without the 'zen'*, the *shapes-design website,* as well as on relational designs of Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec. This is followed by a conclusion.

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[35] *Shingon* derives from the Chinese word *zhen yan*, which means literally 'true words'. *Zhen yan* is a Chinese translation of the Sanskrit word *mantra*. *Mantra* is a sound, evocation, syllable, word, or a group of words that are perceived to have transformative power.

Fig. 3 *cute micro garden*: a *zen garden without the 'zen',* Image 1

Date **2005**

Image by **raphael jay adjani**

Evolving the discussion in Chapter Two, this chapter involves further examination of certain ideas in contemporary science that may correspond to the thinking that engendered some of the sites at Ellora; and the similar thinking and practice in the realm of contemporary design. It should be stated that the correspondence between the Water Temple and Ellora was an original deduction in 2000 by the author, not mentioned in any known material in the English language on Ando or written by Ando, up to 2001. However, the author's deduction was confirmed by the priest responsible for the Water Temple, whom the author met and talked to during a field research trip later in 2000 and to whom the priest showed pictures, 'snapshots' of Ando undertaking research at Ellora. This chapter draws on earlier articles written by the author on the subject of Ellora and the Water Temple (ajaykumar, 2005 [1], 2005[2]).

Essentially the chapter examines possibilities for re-conceiving in current space-time, particular art-architecture-ontology dynamics that arguably reached maturation around fifteen hundred years ago in South Asia with the conception and construction of edifices at Ellora. There is an interest here in the utilisation of

new technologies and materials to further bionomic notions of presencing and being.

In the tantric rock-cut edifices of Ellora one may deduce an aspiration to a synthetical practice of architecture and ontology. What is of concern is a contemporary pertinence and evolution of a hypothesis of being between so called body and so called external space, and its pertinence in the secular realm beyond specific religiosity. In the buddhist teaching, *Perfection of Wisdom in 8000 Lines*[36], expounded at a time of early Ajanta construction and just preceding the period of Ellora construction, there is an emphasis away from making concepts absolute and emphasis toward 'relational being'. The *Perfection of Wisdom in 8000 Lines* 'reveals that all dharmas[37] are void, signless and wishless, not produced, not stopped and non-existent...Perfect Wisdom herself is empty, *sunya*' (Macy, 1991, p.109).

This study begins to investigate how certain ideas in contemporary science parallel and further evolve such conceptions. As outlined in Chapter Two, Lovelock' Gaia theory (Lovelock, 2000); Margulis' evolution of the notion of symbiogenesis (Margulis, 1993); and Maturana and Varela' conception of auto-poeisis (Maturana, and Varela, 1980, 1998); Candace Pert's research on neuropeptides (1999), together with Ikemi's 'biopsychosocioecologicalsphere', to be discussed later in the Chapter, all re-locate the human, the sense of being, and the sense of mind.

In contextualising Ando's work in relation to the secular world it is pertinent to recollect that buddhist and animist notions consider each and every phenomenon as sacred; and that some buddhist schools believe that the 'true self' is found in the mundane world of the every day. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Philip Rawson has described tantra as:

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[36] In Sanskrit, this is written *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra.* It is considered to have been written around 100 B.C.E. It is part of the aforementioned series of early Mahayana teachings, entitled *prajñā pāramitā.*
[37] *Dharma* in buddhism indicates the teachings ascribed to Gautam Siddhartha ('the Buddha'). It has also come to mean the buddhist teachings as a whole.

a cult of ecstasy, focused on a vision of cosmic sexuality. Life-styles, ritual, magic, myth, philosophy, and a complex of signs and emotive symbols converge on that vision' (Rawson, 1978, p.7).

Such vision takes into consideration the elusive notion of a painterly practice, not as paradigmatic of thinking, but rather a painterly practice as thinking. If one expands Ando's notion of equating making architecture with thinking, ultimately, any mundane life activity may serve as a vehicle for the realisation of such a 'thinking', such an 'art' or, borrowing Heidegger's term, such 'a way of thinking' (German: *denkweg*).

What is being considered is the practice of contemporary architecture, art, and design as ontological practice: a thinking about a symbiotic, non-anthropocentric, art, architecture, and design practice. There are four crucial concerns here:

- The significance of the human body and its kinaesthetic physicality in the creation of an artistic event and experience.
- The magnitude of inanimate elements in actively engendering that experience.
- The ability to re-conceive, in contemporary disciplines, using contemporary technologies and materials, ideas that reached a certain maturity in South Asia around fifteen hundred years ago, and moreover to re-conceive them beyond their specific religiosity and culture.
- The conception of an art experience or event outside of galleries and other professional centres of art, which find central focus in an active, apperceptive, spectatorship.

For example, with regard to architecture, let us consider a perception of architecture - that is found in the ideas of Ando - not as built edifice only but of

architecture being perceived as something existing only in an inter-relation of built edifice, humans who frequent it, and a wider landscape. Such a perception can then be expanded to the disciplines of art and design. The pivotal dynamic here concerns spectators and spectatorship. Appia wrote of a living art that was beyond the theatrical art, where the most profound art was not found on the stage but in the forms before it – human spectators. Appia discussed the aspiration of the spectator to live art. Appia writes:

> For a long time we have separated art from our life and our homes, in order to shut it up in museums, concert halls, or theatres. Living art knows not these sad compromises: it lives, we live in it, it lives in us (Appia, 1997, p.130).

For Appia, such a living art evidently destroys the dualism of one person being always a producer and another always a spectator. Such a human body may be both the work of art and the spectator. Historically, such ideas of an art of spectatorship have found profound resonance in art manifesting in South and East Asia.

Section Two

Ellora and the Water Temple: a comparison

<u>Ellora and Ajanta</u>

Temple excavation in South Asia began prior to the site at Ellora, in hundreds of sites spanning what today is thought of as Central and Eastern India. According to archaeologist M.K. Dhavalikar, there are around twelve hundred rock-cut edifices in India (Dhavalikar, 2003, p.1). Of these one thousand are in Western India,

predominantly in the contemporary Indian state of Maharashtra. Three of these sites are in the vicinity of the contemporary city of Aurangabad: the twenty-eight edifices at Ajanta; a smaller site of twelve buddhist edifices just outside Aurangabad (usually termed 'the Aurangabad Caves'); and the thirty-four edifices at Ellora.

Fig. 4   **Map of the area around Aurangabad Maharashtra, delineating the location of Ellora and Ajanta sites of rock-cut edifices**

Date   **2010**

Image by: **Courtesy of the Internet:**

http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://aurangabad. nic.in/images/aurangabad_map.gif&imgrefurl=http://auranga bad.nic.in/htmldocs/maps_abad.htm&h=366&w=400&sz=23& tbnid=ADrxqGMz7AB_oM:&tbnh=113&tbnw=124&prev=/imag es%3Fq%3Daurangabad%2Bmap&zoom=1&usg=__dDqQ4h60 nqrrGTs2VC0F9I59sJk=&sa=X&ei=d3Z6TPhSkIbiBvfOkIgG&ve d=0CDsQ9QEwBA

at 29/8/2010, 16.07

The exact dates of excavation period are disputed. At Ajanta they are thought to date from around second century B.C.E.. Excavation continued here till the fifth century C.E.. Aurangabad edifices date around sixth and seven century C.E.. The Ellora edifices hewn out of the Charanandri Hills, date from around 550 to 950 C.E.. The edifices at Ajanta were entirely buddhist, interwoven with tantric thinking. Originally, for each edifice, almost every wall, floor, and ceiling, was painted with frescos such as that below.

Fig. 5   **Ajanta Edifice One, Fresco Image (shot in very low light conditions without Flash or Tripod that were not allowed at Ajanta)**

Date   **2009**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani**
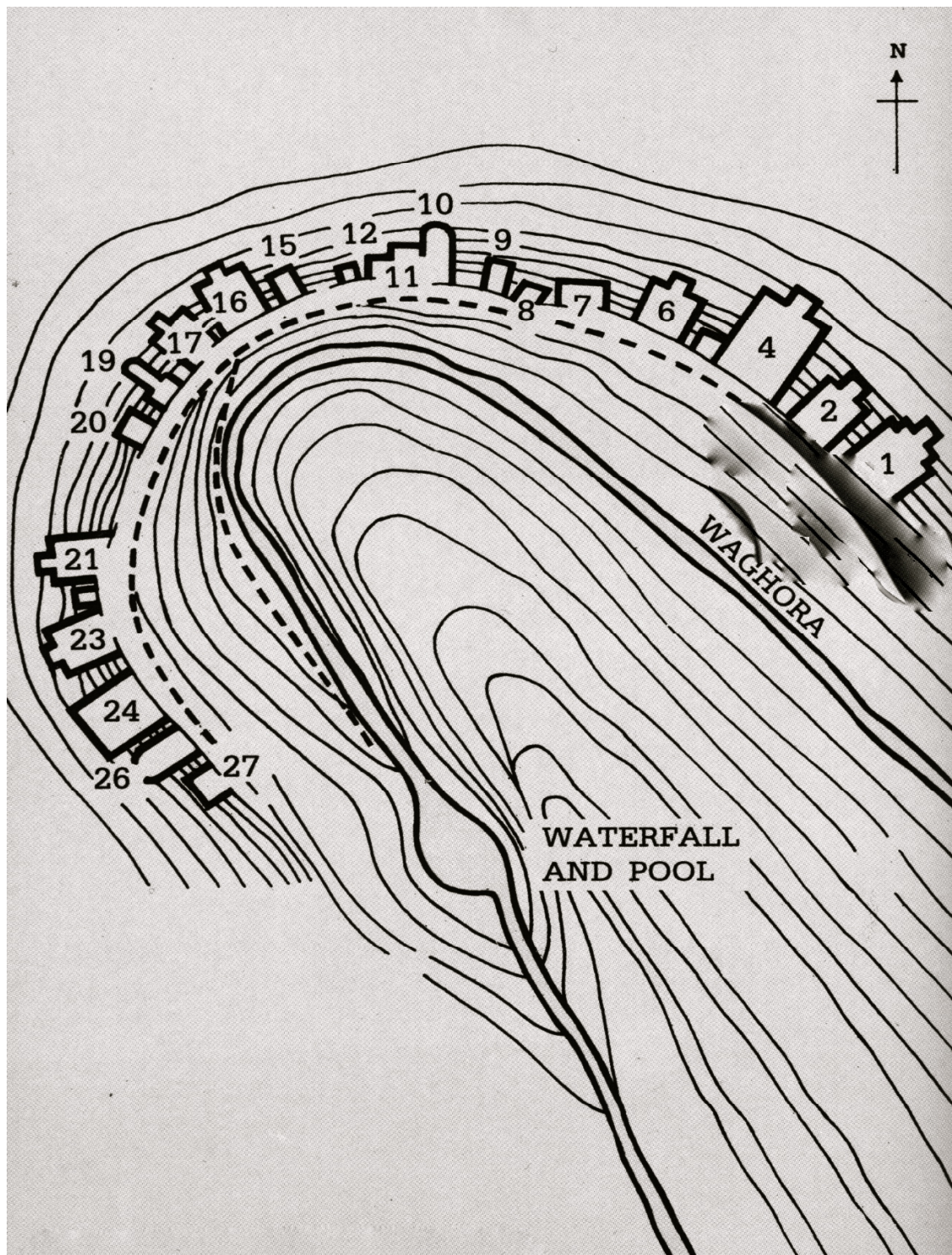
Fig. 6. Diagram of layout of Ajanta site

Courtesy of Poduval (1993, p.24)

The sites at Ellora were buddhist, jain, and brahmanical, also interwoven with tantric

philosophy. Tantra, as a number of scholars such as Feuerstein point out, has

influenced strongly all three of these belief systems. This interweaving of

philosophical and religious ideas is important. One is not here attempting a study that draws on one primary frame of reference but exploring the development of a notion of relational being and investigating possibilities of evolving such conceptions.
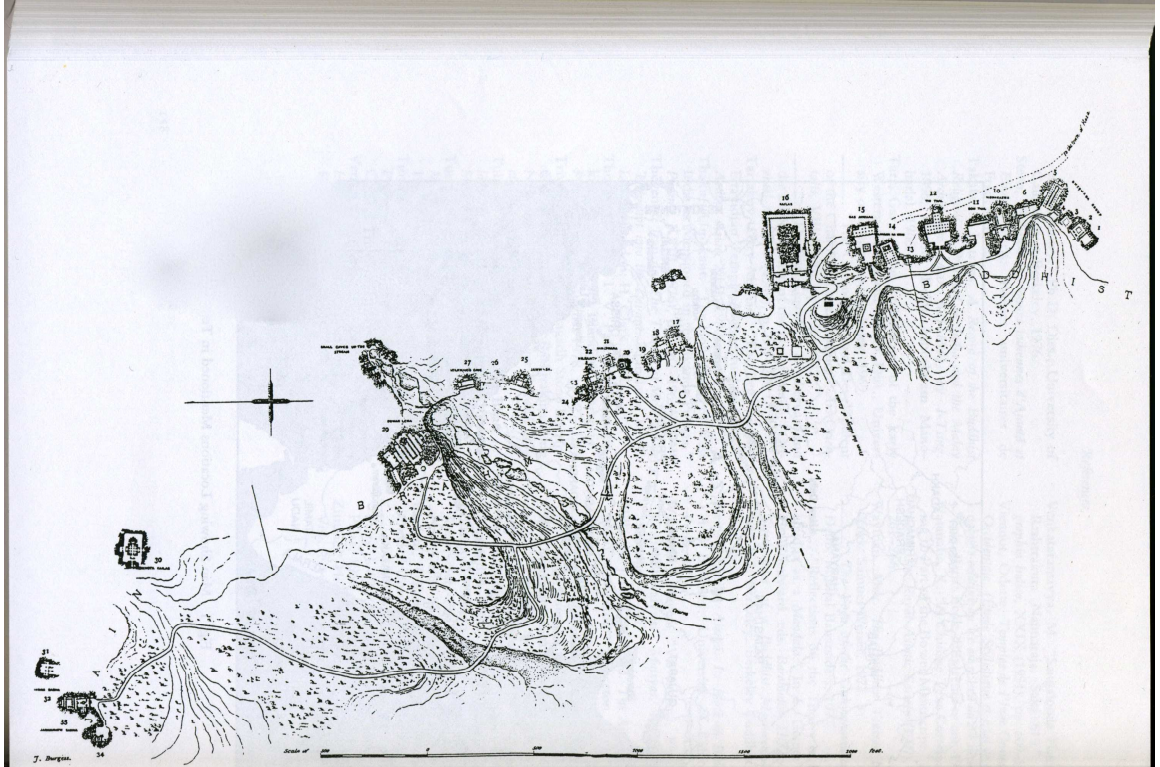
Fig. 7 Diagram of layout of Ellora site

Courtesy of Malandra (1993, p.160): Originally from Burgess, James (1875-76). *Report on the Antiquities in the Bidar and Aurangabad Districts, Archaeological Survey of Western India, Vol. III*, London: William H. Allen & Co. 1878.

According to Ellora researcher Geri Malandra a hindu phase of excavation took place around 550 to 600 C.E.; a buddhist phase around 660 to 730, and a last phase that comprised both hindu and jain temples around 730 to 950. (Malandra, 1993, p.5). Less of the paintings survive at Ellora than Ajanta, but sculptural and architectural aspects remain. All these were carved out of the rock in their entirety, including Edifice Sixteen known as the Kailasa or Kailasanatha Temple, which involved excavation of around two million tonnes of rock. It was originally painted on every surface. The architects of these stupendous works are unknown.

Fig. 8   **Ellora Edifice Ten, interior showing carved**

chaitya hall, stupa and buddha sculpture, in late

afternoon before sun sets in the West illuminating

buddha sculpture.

Date   **2009**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani**

A number of scholars such as Rawson point out that tantra has its origin in the

oldest religious texts in South Asia: pre-Indo-Aryan Vedas[38]. It is beyond the scope

of this thesis to delineate such a notion but the author's research, from a number of

sources and perspectives, is pointing toward an idea of a mid-first millennium tantric

apogee. For example, coinciding with Ellora edifice construction is thought to be the

conception of zero (*shunya*). Discussion engaging with zero takes place in Chapter

Four. Malandra, considers the twelve Buddhist temples at Ellora to be a 'museum

preserving *in situ* a visual record of the early development of Tantric Buddhist art'

(Malandra, 1993, p.XVII). The buddhist edifices according to Pathy, 'represent a

pantheon and mythology of Tantricism' (Pathy, 1980, p.22). These may be

considered to be sophisticated attempts to realise an evolved total art work, like a

gesamtkunstwerk, which is a synthesis of not only art disciplines, but also a

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[38] For further information on the Vedas, see Glossary.

synthesis that integrates science and philosophy. As mentioned in Chapter One: one could describe the practice here as a kind of relational entity a relational thinking of:

art_ecology_mathematics_medicine_other-science_philosophy_technology

Art here encompasses architecture. This relational thinking parallels and resonates with the earlier used term, derived from Ikemi of a: 'biopsychosocioecologicalsphere'. It elucidates the original sense of technology (*tekhnologi*), as the ancient Greeks were thought to understand it.

It is perhaps here useful to delineate further Ikemi's concept. Professor Yujiro Ikemi is a medical scientist and regarded as a pioneer of psychosomatic medicine in Japan. In 1959, following study in the United States at psychosomatic centres such as the Menninger Foundation, he founded the Japanese Society of Psychosomatic Medicine. The Society received formal recognition as a scientific body in 1979, when it was admitted to the Japanese Association of Medical Sciences. Psychosomatic medicine was authorised formally as a clinical field by the Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1996. According to Chiharu Kubo:

> His pioneering research on spontaneous remission in terminal cancer patients demonstrated that a strong faith and belief system was the common thread in the fabric of human life… he had devoted his time and talent toward integrating Oriental somatopsychic and self-regulation methodologies into Western medicine, including Yoga, Qigong, Zen meditation, Japanese dance and acupuncture (Kubo, 2000, p.58).

The biopsychosocioecologicalsphere evolves the concept in psychiatric medicine of the biopsychosocial model developed in the United States by George Engel. Ikemi's research suggests a more complex being – where so-called 'inner' and 'outer' interpenetrate. This becomes pertinent also with regard Suzuki's purely ontological

notion of a psychosphere that may be engendered through participating in a tea ceremony. The tea ceremony is strongly influenced by zen buddhism. Zen is one of the processes that Ikemi has found, may help treat cancer patients.

The philosopher Yasuo Yuasa discusses a particular conception of energy or energy flow in Japan called *ki* [Chinese: *qi*]. With its literal translation as 'air', 'gas' and 'breadth' it corresponds with the Sanskrit yogic *prana,* also meaning breadth as well as vital life force; and the Latin *spiritus,* also meaning breadth. In Japanese schools of Buddhism, self-cultivation (*shugyoho*) takes place through numerous processes of meditation, including 'meditation in action', thereby developing *ki*. Visceral, kinaesthetic processes to evolve *ki* is involved in Buddhist inspired arts practice – Noh, *Waka*, in the martial arts and in *Bushido* – the way of the samurai. Such a practice of the body is to undermine theoretical conceptualising, to realise 'no-mind'. In this sense this self-cultivation can correspond with a 'yoga of art'. According to Yuasa, the body as intermediary brings to together the inner world (spirit) and the outer world (matter) (Yuasa, 1993, p.XX).

While a comprehensive scientific understanding of *ki* is still not yet in existence, Yuasa, referring to some initial research in China, explains that both a scientific and philosophic grasping of *ki* enables an understanding that 'the human being is not a *homo faber*[39], who conquers nature, but is an ecological, receptive being made alive by the invisible power from beyond nature, for the human being is originally a being born out of nature (Yuasa, 1993, p.188). While there may not be a scientific consensus with regard this kind of *Ki* energy, the evolving scientific research of cell biologist James Oschman and others lends credence to the ideas of Yuasa. Oschman's research is validating or indicates that there are 'natural

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[39] *Homo Faber* has several meanings. With its roots in Latin, it could be said to mean man the maker or man the smith, who controls the environment through his tools.

energy forces' in the body and that these can be channelled and evolved by human, not 'superhuman' beings (Oschman, 2000).

Edifice Twenty-Nine at Ellora was constructed, according to Berkson, in the late seventh century or early eight century (Berkson, 1992, p.198). Dhavalikar believes it to be the seventh century (Dhavalikar, 2003, p.84). It has been less written of than other sites because the art and sculpture in other temples are asserted to be of greater artistic merit. It is being discussed in this thesis for particular architectural and architectonic reasons: because of all the temples, it most graphically indicates the physical and metaphysical journey; of the relationship between moving body, so called nature, and the humanly constructed, in relation to ontology. It should be understood that it was a temple within the hindu pantheon: dedicated to the worship of the god Shiva: the Lord of the Cosmic Dance, who symbolises destruction and potential recreation. Consequently there is a Shiva *lingam*[40] situated at the epi-centre of the temple. In addition there are a number sculptures related to Shiva on the temple walls, including one in the East side of Shiva dancing.

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[40] The Shiva *lingam* is a phallic object of devotion and meditation. In certain hindu belief systems, the god Shiva is one of a 'holy trinity' or *trimurti* of major godheads. In such schools of thinking the god Brahma is understood as the Creator; the god Vishnu as the 'sustainer' and Shiva embodies the notion of destruction and transformation: one he achieves and creates through cosmic dance. In this context he is known as 'the Lord of the Dance' – *Nataraja*.

Fig. 9   Edifice Twenty-Nine, image of Shiva Lingam Shrine at centre.

Date   2009

Image by   raphael jay adjani

Fig. 10   Ellora: An exterior image of some of the monasteries and

temples, cut into the rock, and the pathway under the

waterfall that leads to Edifice Twenty-Nine.

Date   2002

Image by   raphael jay adjani

Fig. 11   **Edifice Twenty-Nine, image of interior and side entrance**

Date: **2009**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani**

Historically in South Asian civilisation, as aforementioned, the artist has been perceived as a *yogi*, and art as a yoga. *The Natyasastra*, as aforementioned in Chapter Two, Section Six, emphasised the primary aim of creating an art of affect: a *rasa*, literally meaning taste or flavour, and essentially signifying beauty or aesthetic experience. Abhinavagupta, whose writings have been amongst the most influential on South Asian aesthetic thought, discusses the importance of physically embodied experience in the ontology of art practice. Implicit here is an importance of 'feeling' of visceral intelligence and visceral knowing, of a sensuous and poly-sensory ontology.

When considering somatic intelligence, an embodied mind, the research of neuroscientist Antonio Damasio and others is vital in closely linking sensory perception with cognition and affective processes. Damasio's practical research leads him to conclude that 'emotion is integral to the processes of reasoning and

decision making' (Damasio, 2000, p.41). Furthermore Lakoff and Johnson (1999) draw on empirical evidence in embodied cognitive science as well as in cognitive neuroscience to posit an idea of an embodied mind, which challenges Euro-American philosophical traditions.

The area occupied by Ellora was considered a sacred site in psycho-geographic terms, before cave-excavation took place there. In fact it was such belief that resulted in the edifice construction. The *raison-d'être* of cutting into rock should be understood. It was not because these South Asian peoples were incapable of building above ground as, since the period of the Indus Valley civilisations, two thousand years before the earliest constructions at Ellora, there already existed the capability and capacity to build sophisticated constructions as aboveground temples. Therefore those who constructed the edifices at Ellora had a specific reason for cutting into rock. They envisaged this specific architectural process as precise means to experience void (*shunyata*), or in hindu terms, perhaps *brahman.* Perhaps a more familiar European term, could be used here: it was a means to experience 'the sublime'. The techniques employed involved manipulation of light and sensory faculties. This could not have been achieved by natural caves, in which rituals had taken place since prehistoric times. This was a sophisticated construction of very particular ontological processes that in many ways may have empowered its constructors.

Fig. 12   **Water Temple: Conventional architectural image of**

                 Interior of Subterranean Shrine of the

Date: **2009**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani**
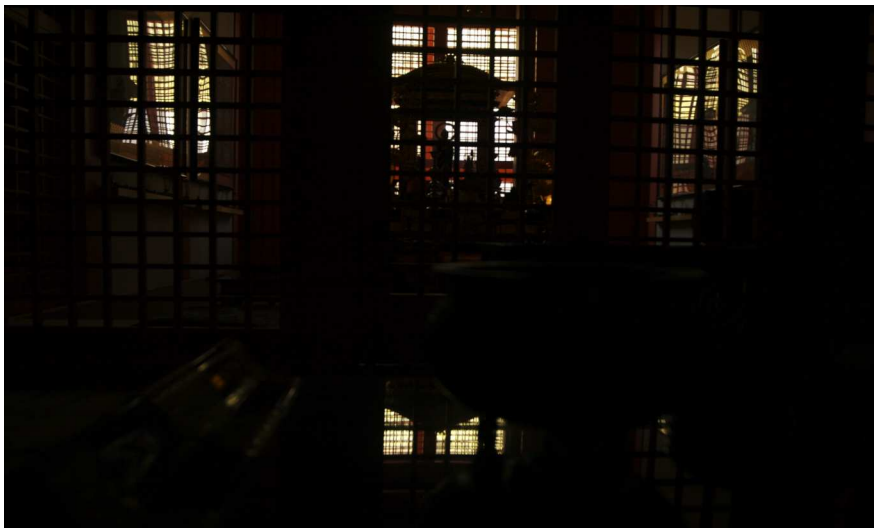
Fig. 13   *darkness and reflection*: **phenomenological view of the**

                 subterranean shrine of the Water Temple

Date   **2009**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani**

The Water Temple – Honpukuji Mizumido - has been built on the island of Awaji, in Japan's Inland Sea (*Seto Naikai*). Construction began in 1989 and was completed in 1991 (although historian of East Asian architecture Günter Nitschke believes it to be 1992). It is situated on a hill located in the North-eastern part of Awaji, in a place called Higashi-ura. The Honpukuji Water Temple is a shingon temple. Shingon is the foremost sect of tantric buddhism in Japan. It was originated by Kukai in the Ninth Century C.E. following his research in China. The basis of shingon training is meditation engaging with two *mandalas*. As art historian Takaaki Sawa explains, these consist of: one representing the world of diamond-like transparent wisdom [*kongo-kai*], and the other the world of womb-like phenomenal experience [*taizo-kai*] (Sawa, 1972, p.14).
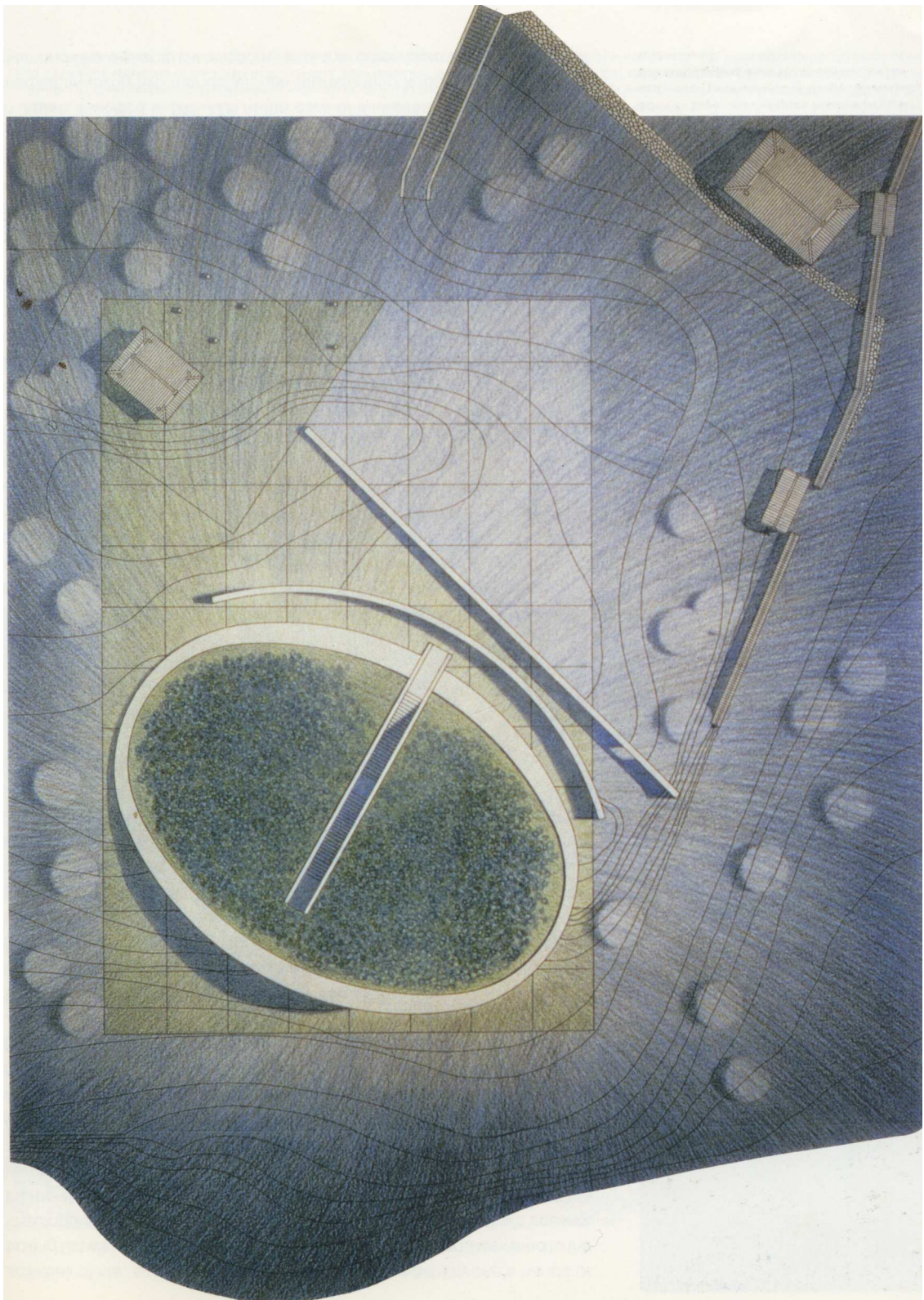
Fig. 14   **Water Temple Drawing from Nitschke (1995, p.78) – courtesy of Tadao Ando**

Ando describes the Water Temple construction and his intention as follows:

> This project is a new main hall, Mizumido, or Water Temple, sited above the
> existing compound on a hill that provides a sweeping view of Osaka Bay.
> Instead of the massive roof symbolic of Buddhist temples, I chose living
> lotus plants as the emblem of the new Water Temple. The entrance to the
> hall parts the surface of an oval pond filled with green lotus plants and
> appears to draw visitors under water. The pond forty meters long and thirty
> meters wide, is placed on a small slope, and the main hall is located beneath
> the pond. The hall consists of a square room within a round room.
> Four-meter-high pillars rise up from the points of intersection of a grid
> spaced at intervals of one *ken*, a traditional Japanese module equivalent to
> 1.8 meters.
>
> The approach to the pond and the hall is a narrow path through a vast
> white-pebble ground that leads away from an infinite expanse of blue sea
> and toward a long, blank wall. It is a path to the sacred – ocean, sky, white
> pebbles hindering wall, oval lotus pond. Within the hall, sun shines in form
> the West suffusing two vermilion walls with a reddish glow. The shadows of
> the pillars slant diagonally across the floor. These contrasts of light and
> shadow suggest a realm that is beyond the every day, urging observers to
> reflect on personal truths (Ando, 2003, p.118).

According to Nitschke, with the Water Temple, 'Tadao Ando freed Buddhist
architecture from some 2000 years of stylistic shackles (assuming that Chinese
palace architecture was more or less fully developed by the Early Han dynasty)'
(Nitschke, 1993, p.77). This appears quite a sweeping statement, and inaccurate if
considering the whole of Asia, particularly as there was great innovation in buddhist
architecture at Ellora, as Malandra attests. If one should assume here that the 2000
years Nitschke mentions refers to the development of buddhist architecture in

China and Japan, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to engage in a lengthy comparative analysis of such an assertion. However, the Water Temple does appear to be, as shall be explained, one of the most original buddhist temples in Japan today.

The formal and thematic innovation in Buddhist architecture achieved by the realisation of this temple cannot be underestimated. The extent of innovation was such that according to Ando researcher Kazukiyo Matsuba - and verified by the author's conversations with the Head Priest of the Water Temple – it was difficult at first for some parish members and priesthood to conceive it as 'Buddhist'. The Head of the Shingon Sect stated that: 'The dignity of a Buddhist Temple is displayed in its roof. We have our doubts about a building that doesn't even *have* a roof' (Matsuba, 1998, p.56). What Ando appears to do is construct a dynamic of this experience through the totality of the architecture. Once again there is a kinaesthetic meditation and a four-dimensional ontology. This will be explained in the next segment that deals with correspondence between Ellora and the Water Temple.

Correspondence between Ellora Edifice Twenty-Nine and the Water Temple

In relation to Ellora and Ando's contemporary buildings such as the Water Temple, there is a hypothesis of elements of so-called 'nature' being active narrative agents. Examining more closely this relationship, Ando writes:

> Architecture is the art of articulating the world through geometry. However the world is not articulated as isotropic, homogeneous spaces (topoi) that are each related to a totality of history, culture, climate, topography and urbanity. A 'place' is not the absolute space of Newtonian physics, that is, a universal space, but a space with meaningful directionality and a

heterogeneous density that is born of a relationship to what I choose to call
shintai. (Shintai is ordinarily translated as 'body', but in my use of the word I
do not intend to make a clear distinction between mind and body); by
shintai I mean a union of spirit and flesh. It acknowledges the world and at
the same time acknowledges the self)…

Man is not a dualistic being in whom spirit and flesh are essentially distinct
but a living, corporeal being active in the world. The 'here and now' in which
this distinct body is placed is the point of departure, and subsequently a
'there' appears. Through a perception of that distance, or rather the living of
that distance, the surrounding space becomes manifest as a thing endowed
with various meanings and values. The world that appears to man's senses
and the state of man's body become in this way interdependent. The world
articulated by the body is a vivid, lived-in space.

The body articulates the world. At the same time, the body is articulated by
the world…

In order to perceive an object in all its diversity, the distance between the
self and the object must be changed in some way. The change is brought
about through the movement of the shintai. Spatiality is the result, not of a
single, absolute direction of vision, but of a multiplicity of directions of vision
from a multiplicity of viewpoints made possible by the movement of the
shintai. Not only the shintai but natural movement such as that of light,
wind, or rain can change the (phenomenal, as opposed to physical) distance
between the self and the object. By introducing nature and human
movement into simple geometrical forms, I have been trying to create
complex spaces (Dal Co, 1995, p.453).

Such a conception is crucial to engage profoundly both with the Water Temple and with edifices at Ellora. Sophisticated geometry is a primary feature of Ellora edifices, serving to develop inter-relationships of various elements. There are a number of correspondences between the Water Temple and Ellora edifices, specifically Edifice Twenty-Nine. These include:

- Sites of tantric practice.
- A preparation stage and process in the architecture.
- Circumambulation.
- Physical journeys that are elliptical.
- Journeys into and under the ground.
- Experiences of emptying and emptiness.
- The side entrances to the temples.
- Corporeal, kinaesthetic meditation.
- Intimacy between and integration of humanly constructed substance and the existing material i.e. the landscape.
- The relationship between solid materials, water, and sky.
- The significance of water and ritual cleansing.
- The relationship between and plays of darkness and light.
- Processes that seem to provoke both de-familiarisation and familiarisation.
- Four-dimensional objects of meditation and devotion - *mandalas*.
- How the notion of space-time, and emptiness-presence, which are elusive, find manifestation in an active engagement between human being, human construction, natural manifestation and human ideas of a single producer-spectator, or ideas of both spectator and instigator - whether artist, philosopher, priest, architect.

Here it is important to discuss the aspect of physical embodiment and the critical kinaesthetic aspect of such ontological process at both Ellora and the Water Temple. *Karma* is usually translated as action. As Macy explains in pre-buddhist

literature this action referred to ritual acts. In buddhist texts it is broadened to include all volitional behaviour – bodily, verbal, and mental. This is what we are' (Macy, 1991, p.87). The Japanese word *shintai* is normally understood today by Japanese as 'body'. Tadao Ando's interpretation of *shintai* is a body that exists in relation to space only (Dal Co, 1997, p.453).

This also resonates with the idea of 'co-arising' of all phenomena that Thich Nhat Hanh terms 'inter-are' (Nhat Hanh, 2002, p.13). Ando's interpretation defines an architecture as that which comes into being only through interaction of human, with built edifice, and with a wider landscape of so called 'nature'. This again emphasises kinaesthetic processes as well as relational dynamics. Such ideas are particularly explored in the author's filmic works such as *tate modern* and *relationship-place naka-ma.* The latter is more fully discussed in Chapter Four. There is a research outline of the former and latter in the appendices. Could one not also look at it conversely, of a body that comes into being only through interaction with built edifice and external space? In this context does the notion of 'architecture' become synonymous with the notion of 'mind'? Carmel Berkson, in her study of Ellora, explains that: 'In ancient India, one did not enter the cave as an isolated individual but each as an integral element in the coordinated reality of the cave' (Berkson, 1992, p.27).

For Ando, as aforementioned, *shintai* acknowledges the world and at same time acknowledges the self: 'Man articulates the world through his body... At the same time, the body is articulated by the world' (Dal Co, 1995, p.453). Consequently does a body only come into 'being' through interaction with external space? In this context, once again does 'architecture' become synonymous with 'mind'? While mind here could be misconstrued to mean that which supposedly inhabits the brain but is not of it as in the Cartesian sense, the mind here that is being considered is an evolution of Candace Pert's notion of 'body-mind' (Pert, 1997, pp.140-149), incorporating

so–called 'external' space to arrive at a notion perhaps of 'body-mind-space', or 'body-mind-space_time'. Ultimately this mind *se realise* in the moment of dynamic interaction: it is the underscore that is crucial. This will be discussed in more detail later.

Berkson writes of the context of Ellora's construction:

> During vast stretches of time in prehistory, in face of external dangers from drought and flood, lightning, illness, and hunger, from man and beast, an increasing awareness of the numinous developed, generated by fear, accompanied by awe, and by that great yawning gap - existential separateness, and isolation. The need for belief in a higher power intensified and deepened. While the surrounding sky is first conceived as the locus for the deity, it is a remote and unreachable deity. Now man began to seek salvation in the mountain, which touched the sky, as the convexities and powerfully swelling contours encouraged expansive feelings. By virtue of its silence and impenetrability, it symbolized the eternal, and was identified with the goddess who evolved in the imagination (p.25).

Evidently this resonates with Lewis Mumford's ideas, concerning the origins of permanent as well as semi-permanent architectural sites not being first dwellings, but places where ceremonies and rituals, pertaining to elemental concerns of life and death, took place: such as in caverns deep below the ground (Mumford, 1991, pp.14-19). For Ando working underground is also vital. A number of his other works - such as the Church/Chapel on the Water in Hokkaido and the Chichu Art Museum in Naoshima – employ also sophisticated processes and passage ways, to take people up to go down and then up again. One sees parallels here not only with Ellora but the architectonics of numerous Japanese gardens.

Resonating with such ideas and Suzuki's notion of psychosphere, Ando says:

I have been trying to achieve a fictionality on the premise of constructing a space that humans actually use. Therefore, when I say fictionality of architecture, it does not mean simply a story or superficial decoration. It means the quality of a spatial experience composed of architectonic elements aimed at aesthetic perfection.

What I have sought to achieve is a spatiality that stimulates the human spirit, awakens the sensitivity and communicates with the deeper soul. In order to construct the fictionality of architecture, one has to mobilize both reason and intuition together, seeking a space that is a new discovery for oneself. This space must contain the notion of time as production of the new epoch, and simultaneously introduce specific regionality, historicity, geography and tradition. It is my pleasure as an architect to continue to think, to build, by engaging my full body to combine fiction and the actual into a space of a higher dimension (Ando, 1995a).

In the context of South Asian speculation on an embodied mind - notions of a body conceived as 'mind', or feasibly 'no-mind', or plausibly neither 'mind' nor 'no-mind' - the research of certain contemporary scientists re-enforce the outcomes of such earlier research. Maturana and Varela's systems theory of autopoiesis postulates that the brain is not necessary for mind to exist. Even simple organisms, without brains are capable of perception and consequently cognition. Furthermore the entire dissipative structure of an organism is involved in the process of cognition.

Pert's research on neuropeptides and their receptors indicates that cognition takes place in formations other than the brain. Neuropeptides and their receptors are the 'biochemicals of emotions', carrying information in a vast network linking the material world of molecules, with the non-material world of the psyche (Pert, 1999). Receptor sites are located throughout the body and form a network of

communication, linking brain, endocrine and immune systems. Pert believes that it is increasingly logical to think of 'a single integrated entity, a body-mind'. Moreover she has found correspondence between the most concentrated areas of enrichment of certain neuropeptides, and the location of perceived yogic *chakras*[41] in the body. Lovelock's Gaia Theory hypothesises that the living matter of the planet functions like a single self-regulating organism. Margulis' ideas will be clarified later.

With regard the brain, the neuroscientist James Austin clarifies zen meditation's inter-relationship with neuroscience: 'the two fields are so intimately interrelated that each illuminates the other ' (Austin, 1999, p.4). Austin's thesis is: 'awakening, enlightenment, occurs only because the human brain undergoes substantial changes. Does prior meditation help the brain to change in this direction?' (Austin, 1999, p.XIX).

Beyond these notions of body centred mind, one furthermore needs to contemplate a mind, a self, an intelligence, which may be conceived as emerging in body-space. Such thinking begins with a perception of a body that is not differentiated from what today is conventionally known as the external space, or environment, or nature: rather a self or an intelligence that is found in an interstitial space. Roy Pea asserts that:

> Anyone who has closely observed the practices of cognition is struck by the fact that the 'mind' rarely works alone. The intelligences revealed through these practices are distributed – across minds, persons, and the symbolic and physical environments, both natural and artificial (Pea, 1993, p.47).

Gregory Bateson asserted that memory is half in the head and half in the world (Bateson, 2000). Architectural and ontological practice manifests at Ellora in an

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[41] The yogic *chakras* or *cakras* have several meanings and, as Feuerstein explains, the pertinent one here 'denotes psychoenergetic vortices forming the major 'organs' of the body composed of life energy [*prana*]' (Feuerstein, 2000, p.68).

intangible realm between disciplines, between minds, between relations of human beings to environments. With regard Edifice Twenty-Nine, the corporeal kinaesthetic meditation, communing with space, provokes a particular intelligence. Indeed, the Sanskrit word for space and ether (a*kasha)*, is perceived as having presence, a kind of 'substance': 'In akasa the infinite expanse of space or ether, the notions of light and void conjoin...like space she ('Perfect Wisdom') is endless...immeasurable, incalculable, and insubstantial' (Macy, 1991, p.110). This awestruck metaphysical speculation finds contemporary validation in other hard science: Lovelock's theory of Gaia - another goddess of the earth – postulates that the self-regulation of the planet involves its entire entity, including air, oceans, and rocks. Some buddhist thinking considers mind and 'true self' to be found not in the body in relation to the space, but in-between, body and space being 'neither two but two', in an interstice of perpetual inter-action. Macy's interpretation of the buddhist teachings or 'Dharma', similar to that of Thich Nhat Hanh, is that the Dharma was expounded not as an objective but rather as a 'way' (Macy, 1991, p.105). The emphasis here again is less on object and objective but on process and inter-activity.

In Japan the word for 'human being' is not distinct from nature. This word, *nin-gen*, as Nitschke explains, means 'person-place' or 'person-in-relationship' (p.57). According to Nitschke, the word for Society and the World is *se-ken,* which means literally 'world-place' or 'world-in-relationship' (p.57). There is a resonance here with the title and themes of Macy's work: *World as Self, World as Lover*.

In Japan space and time appears to have been conceived as one four-dimensional realm, *ma*: space-time. For a deeper understanding of this, the catalogues of the exhibitions curated by architect Arata Isozaki on *ma*, are invaluable (Isozaki, 1979, 2000), as are texts by Günter Nitschke: (Nitschke, 1993, pp.48-61). As well as space-time, *ma* has come to have numerous related meanings such as 'space', 'place' 'interval', 'emptiness-presence', and 'void-affirmation'. There is here a

further correspondence with ancient Japanese civilization, in terms of the belief in the spirits found in rocks, trees, and other entities of conventionally termed 'nature': *kami*. Moreover, in shinto and other animistic belief systems, anthropocentrism is de-emphasised, with the human being not placed at the top of a hierarchy descending with animals, then plants, then insentient objects. Rather it is the case that all phenomena are considered equally sacred. In his study of place, time and being in Japanese architecture, Kevin Nute suggests the original shinto 'tectonic act of enclosure' of trees and rocks as essentially the first Japanese architecture; the first Japanese 'built responses to place' (Nute, 2004, p.12). As our global society increasingly embraces a post-human technology and condition with a concomitant humanist apprehension, the reappraisal of such animist ideas together with those of yoga, tantra and buddhism, may be of individual and collective therapeutic value in dealing with human narcissism and existential crisis; and of contextualising the human situation in a wider cosmological realm.

Architectural historian Kiyoshi Takeyama clarifies the possibilities of engendering *shunyata* - void - in Ando's architecture, seeing also a parallel with 'way of tea' architecture:

> Since it prizes the value of abbreviation, Zen philosophy tends to prefer a perfectly empty space to a space that is perfectly complete. The same preference is to be seen in both tea ceremony architecture and in Ando's work. For example, not only are Ando's courtyard gardens empty, but their walls seem to have been deliberately stripped of expression. He strives to create space by means of invisible, apparently nonexistent things. In brief, his kind of space can be called a void, but, ironically, a void in which all things are inherent. The idea underlying such a space is common to much oriental philosophy (Takeyama, 1983, p.177).

The original journey to arrive at Edifice Twenty-Nine at Ellora involved walking along a thin and occasionally precarious path that had been cut into the almost vertical rock face into which all these temples were hewn[42]. The immensity of the mountain is easily felt, as is its violent power over the individual. It should be noted that congregation at Ellora was most populous during the monsoon season. During the monsoon season, this walk of several hundred metres takes the journeyer underneath a high waterfall, which empties into a small lake. Smaller shrines line this path also. Essentially, it is a progressive transcendental journey, a psychic distancing from the world of daily life to the world of the sublime. Passing under and through the waterfall is a purification process: a symbolic, and sometimes literal, showering.

Through this journey, one enters the temple from, quite unusually, the side. There are a number of sculptures in the temple as well as a vast expanse of emptiness. Emptiness is a constituent of the architecture. The voids in the architectural sites are in direct relation to the voluminousness of the sculpture. As Berkson states, these 'voids are the statue as well' (Berkson, 1992, p.93). We are not discussing the 'empty' purely in terms of the literally empty space in the temple. The void is not 'empty' but may be filled with the feelings and emotions of a spectator. The buddhist *Heart Sutra* (part of the *Prajnaparamita* genre of buddhist teachings), as Sogyal Rinpoche reminds us, states 'Form is emptiness. Emptiness is form' (Rinpoche, 2002, *circa*. 43mins.). The form here is essentially our presencing in the space-time, our being in the 'space'. Significantly Rinpoche thinks better ways to express 'emptiness' are 'openness', 'limitless', 'un-confined' (2002, *circa* 49 mins.).

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[42] In recent years a paved, wide pathway has been built to replace this original path to encourage contemporary visitors to make the journey to this temple. This necessarily facilitates physical access to the temple. In terms of both Heidegger and Heisenberg, it could be argued also that such 'touristification' of the site also reduces access in profound 'technological' terms. While any spectator at Ellora may certainly experience a sense of sacred, one must recognise also that Ellora is essentially no longer a place of devotion but a heritage site, which has a different value, not to be decried.

The journeyer makes a circumambulation around the main shrine consisting, as earlier mentioned, of an object of Hindu religious devotion: a Shiva *lingam*. On one of the walls is sculpted an eight-fold *mandala.* In actuality, as Malandra has noted, edifices at Ellora present 'a rare example of architectural attempts to transform a three tiered *mandala* into a structural form' (Malandra, 1993, p.122). There is a systematic construction of a physical journey through a four dimensional *mandala* of space-time: physical journey is a process of 'emptying' to facilitate another 'presence' to emerge. Ando discusses the significance of the process of approaching architecture: 'I want visitors before they enter the building to reflect on what kind of architecture it is…The way you approach a building is most important in Japan…a place and a time for preparation are also part of architectural space' (Wachmeister, 2003, first fifteen minutes).

Although in a different context, here one is reminded of the unique style of cinematography of Akira Kurosawa. At a time when the dominant approach of film-making was using a single camera, Kurosawa uses a multiple camera set-up. He then shoots scenes in a single take: a scene in *Ran* comes into being at the moment of confluence of action of horse, man and camera, set on an immense landscape where movement is accentuated by shifts in light and cloud (See: Kurosawa, 1985, penultimate scenes and other scenes).

As afore-mentioned Ando 'dwells' a considerable time in a location to allow an architectural concept – which in this sense could be thought of as 'the being of a space' - to germinate:

> that is one that is perceived through the body, the voices of the land, the place, and feels the essential needs for the future object, from the genius loci. These understandings are not being received from logical reasoning, but by feeling (Pham, 1998, p.134).

According to Ando researcher Pham T. Hien, before Ando creates an architectural plan, he:

> tries to concentrate on articulating the surrounding context, and to put his imagination into high tensions, affected by all other orders, except formal order. He waits until the mature moment, waits until the 'concept' gradually develops naturally (1998, p.135).

It is important to understand that Ando's first response to or engagement with the perceived spirit of the place - *genius loci* - is lyrical - he begins by drawing and painting partially in abstraction, rather than construction of precise technical plans[43]. There is again an emphasis on relationship of human with environment, that space is personalised, and never simply 'empty'. If one accepts Nitschke's understanding of *ma* as 'place', and that for him 'place is the product of lived space and lived time, a reflection of our states of mind', then the 'space of being' should be understood as 'place' or 'place of being'.

Ando not only places emphasis on the movement of the *shintai*, but on 'natural' movement such as that of light, rain and wind. Light and darkness play significant roles at all Ellora sanctuaries. Sculptures and murals would be illuminated at different points as the earth circumambulates the sun. The Shiva *lingam* at Edifice Twenty-Nine remains in semi-darkness all day until illuminated momentarily in the evening by the setting sun. Different climatic conditions also play their part to light and darken, instantaneously and momentarily, in varying degrees, aspects of the iconography. New relationships between icons are constantly being engendered. Such infinite possibilities also engender infinite space-times of presencing. The central shrines within each rock-cut edifice primarily face West. Consequently they are most illuminated at sunset. One can envisage the scenarios of an acolyte in

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[43] For example see his drawings in relation to the construction of Benesse House in *Naoshima Contemporary Art Museum*. In this book the first drawing is re-drawn by hand for each copy.

some kind of prayer or meditation in virtual darkness right through the day until a particular moment of literal illumination of an icon possibly being a precipitator for a metaphysical one. Berkson writes of the effect of the light: 'For some moments, Ellora's earth and rock, carved by hand and carved by nature, standing in atmospheric silence, will obliterate the puny self' (Berkson, 1992, p.56). The relationality is emphasised by the construction of artificial caves rather than the use of natural ones. Ellora and Ajanta constructions are a sophisticated constructed relationship between human and landscape.

Ando's Water Temple is significant, not only because it is a site of esoteric, *shingon*, buddhism, but because its architecture appears to integrate form and theme. This is quite unusual in Japanese temple architecture, which historically has been modelled pre-dominantly on Chinese pre-buddhist architecture. Yet it is pertinent that, according to Sawa, the founder of *Shingon*, Kukai, believed 'that color and form were essential to the teaching of the ideals and profound hidden meanings of Buddhism' (Sawa, 1972, p.150). While Sawa exposes how other temples have attempted to embody such ideals, it is arguably Ando, who has achieved this most sublimely.

Kukai's notions are key to a greater understanding of the notion of art making as philosophical practice, art as thinking. Kukai scholar Ron Green explains in his online published article, referencing Kukai scholars such as Ryuichi Abe, Yoshito Hakeda, and Shoko Watanabe:

> As Ryuichi Abé puts it, 'Kūkai did understand writing as a technology; however, it was for him not a tool for statecraft but a sacred technology necessary for creating and maintaining cosmic order' (Abé 1999, p.310). In this statement, Abé gets to the heart of the issue. For Kūkai, poetry and mantra were closely connected.

Literature was more than a hobby for Kūkai then. According to the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra*, ultimate reality is found in all speech and the root of speech is the soul of the universe, which Shingon calls Dharmakāya Mahāvairocana (Watanabe 204). Today this is known as the linguistic philosophy of what Kūkai called Sound, Word and Reality (Watanabe 204). [4] Kūkai writes, 'The Tathāgata reveals his teachings by means of expressive symbols' (Hakeda 1972:234). Accordingly, all literature expresses the universe of the Buddha. Kūkai likely hoped that the development of this idea would provide no less than a Buddhist alternative to the dominant literary theories of Confucianism of his time (Abé 1999:310).

From this perspective, Kūkai's activities in literary competitions and numerous exchanges of poems with individuals are occasions for widely disseminating Buddhist ideas. In this sense, poetry is *upaya* or skill-in-means, the very activity in which all Mahayana Buddhists should be engaged. Not only was he able to do this by including the abstractions of mantra in his verse, but by writing about meditative practice. We see this in his "Poem on Contemplation of Ten Illusions" (*Jūyukan*) and his "Poem on the Contemplation of Nine Appearances' (*Kosōshi*).

For this reason, it would be a mistake to consider Kūkai's exegeses more 'philosophical' than his poems. An analogy could be made to the tendency of scholars to concentrate on the first chapter of the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra*, that dealing with doctrine, as the 'most important' section to the detriment of the bulk of the sutra, which deals with specific practice. In addition to understanding Kūkai's view of the religiosity of activities of poetry, by reading his poems and letters in the *Collection Divining the Spiritual Nature*

of Henjō we can also get a feeling for the depths of Kūkai's personality[44]

(Green, 2009).

At the same time, as Matsuba explains (Matsuba, 1998, p.61), many contemporary re-creations of buddhist temple architecture fail because while they may match the forms they do not capture the quality of space: the being of the space. It is here that Ando is successful in facilitating such a space of being, at least in the phenomenological thinking and process of this humble author.
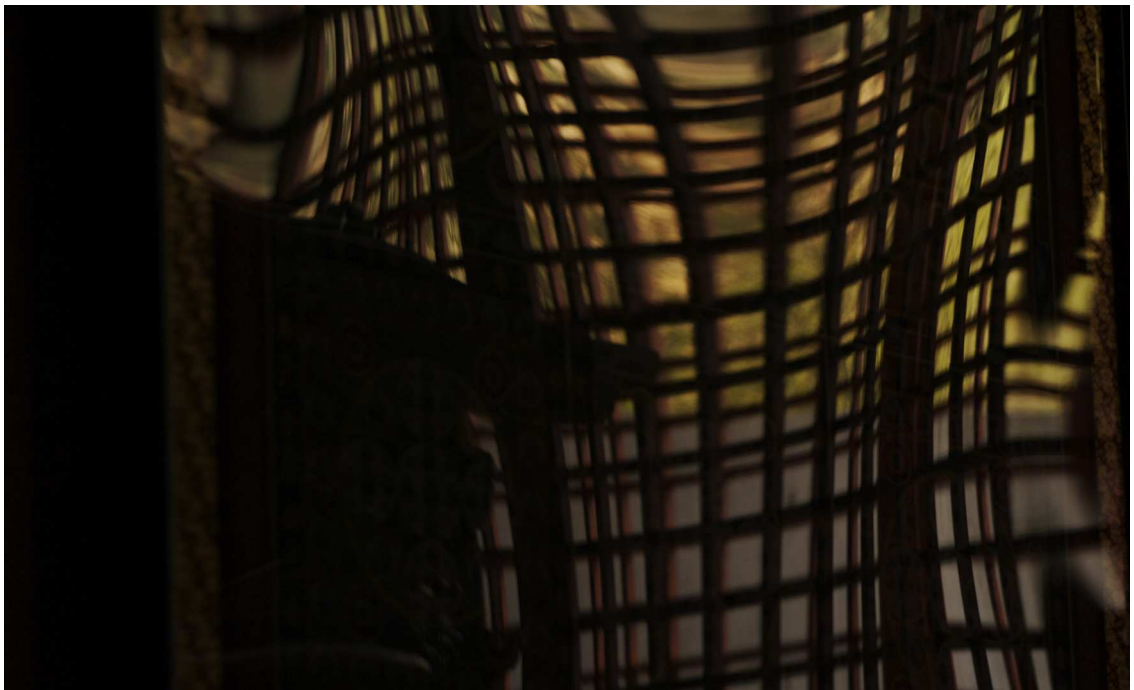
Fig. 15   *flow* – 'phenomenological' image for subterranean shrine at

         the Water Temple

Date   **2009**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani**

The Water Temple has been described by some commentators as the most lyrical of Ando's architecture, although it could be argued that Chichu Art Museum is equally

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[44] Earlier the notion of art as yoga is discussed. Here, at least in the context of Kukai, one may consider the possibility of writing as yoga. Such a nature of writing will be discussed in Chapter Four with regard the *cine roman*, film essay and concrete poetry, as well as the author's works such as *zero = every day?*

poetic in a very different sense for it overtly designates itself as a site where the architecture is the art work[45]. The Water Temple's simultaneous physical and ontological journey involves climbing up a winding hill road, then up a set of stairs, then taking a meandering passage, involving walking around two wall structures, eventually arriving at an oval pond.

Here one has a vista also of Japan's Inland Sea (*Seto Naikai*). This is indicated in the film *relationship-place naka-ma* that is to be discussed in Chapter Four. For the author the Inland Sea is significant influence. For him such a point of view as one reaches the Water Temple construction, is reminiscent of a story of a phenomenological experience of a tea house that Rikyu is said to have constructed towards the end of his life. Nitschke relates the story thus:

> Rikyu built his last tea house somewhere on the mountains overlooking the Inland Sea. When it was completed he invited his most noble friends for a direct taste of his mature design talents. They made the long laborious ascent, passed through a carefully designed garden but were disappointed. The view to the sea was blocked everywhere by the old fool. Before crouching into the tea house they were made to step down and rinse their hands and mouth. Bending down, just at the surface of the water they were treated – through a tiny opening in the hedge – to a full view of the grand scenery of the Inland Sea.

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[45] At the time of writing the author had undertaken field research at Naoshima, on three occasions, studying Benesse House Museum, the Art House Project, as well as Chichu Art Museum: an artist-specific museum with each gallery designed for a specific work of art by either James Turrell, Walter De Maria or Claude Monet. The author is planning on writing a new text on Chichu Art Museum, in 2011.
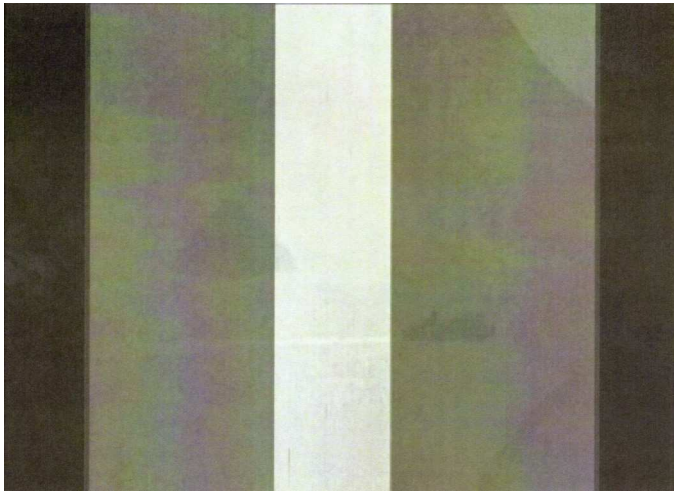
Fig. 16 *relationship-place naka-ma* **film, Still Image 1: 'Inland Sea'**

Date **2009**

Image by **raphael jay adjani and Daniel Somerville**

For Ando, the two walls set a boundary and a fissure with the world of the everyday. He states: 'a single wall severs, interrupts, opposes and violently alters the site on which it is placed' (Dal Co, 1997, p.445). The Water Temple has not one but two such walls: part of the process of entering what Mircea Eliade described as 'sacred space' (Eliade, 1957, Chapter One: 'Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred', pp.20-65). Like the walk through the tea garden to enter the tea house and immerse oneself in its ceremony, the overall journey could be understood as intended as a process of emptying.

Fig. 17   **Image of the two initial walls on the pathway to the main shrine of the Water Temple**

Date   **2009**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani**

As one walks around the second wall and sees the pond, one also sees the hills and sky in the distance. The pond is filled with water lilies, as well as with the reflections of the hills and sky. Circumnavigating it, one descends a set of stairs, which intersects the pond, in order to reach the main shrine, under the ground. The symbolic travelling through and under the water corresponds with the journey under and through the water of the fall at Ellora. At the bottom of the stairs, one enters the temple, once again, from a side. The main buddha shrine is also surrounded by a circumambulatory path and another circular wall made of vermilion wood panels.

The shrine room itself is only lit naturally by a single West-facing window, behind the central buddha statue. On the walls either side of the statue, are the two mandala-images symbolising the world or qualities of wisdom (*kongo-kai*), and the other of compassion (*taizo-kai*) [see Sawa, 1972, p.14]. These *mandalas*

correspond with iconography at Ellora and Ajanta. In this vermillion walled shrine, as at an Ellora cave, one feels immersed in the 'womb'. Here one witnesses again, Malandra's notion of journeying through and witnessing a four dimensional *mandala* of space-time: while it is usual in tantric practice to contemplate the two-dimensional surfaces of the two *mandalas*, in the Water Temple, Ando immerses the visitor into these two worlds three and four-dimensionally, engendering walks through them and being amongst them. Pertinently, the relationship between shingon architecture and Ellora is further developed by Malandra who also makes a parallel between architectural *mandala* creation at Ellora, specifically Edifice Six, and the shingon To-ji Temple in Kyoto, Japan whose construction is based on the ideas of Kukai (Malandra, 1993, p.26). Sawa discusses this temple architecture in detail in *Art of Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*.

The Water Temple may be understood as a theatrical space of seeing: the etymology of theatre, *teatron* in Ancient Greek, means 'a space of seeing' - physiologically and psychologically (in the original sense) - where spectators are also performers. Ando expresses his 'desire to inspire internal vistas within the individual which correspond to spaces the individual harbours within himself' (Dal Co, 1997, p.444). The shrine remains in semi-darkness throughout the day. As at Edifice Twenty-Nine, only at one moment, close to sunset, does literal illumination take place.

This *ma* of interval generates the possibility of a *ma* of sacred space-time. In addition at the Water Temple, and very unusually, what is illuminated is not the buddha statue, but the person who sits before it. Ando seems to be highlighting a buddhist dictum, eroded in influence in part historically through the increasing deification of 'the Buddha' through his iconification, that each person is potentially a buddha, and that one must not worship statues; or treat the buddha as a god, but rather worship ourselves in enlightened form. Ando, who has engendered similar dynamics with other sites such as with the (Christian) Church of the Light, stated:

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The architectural space becomes alive only in correspondence with the human presence that perceives it. In our contemporary culture, where all of us are subjected to intense exterior stimulation, especially by the electronic environment, the role of architecture as a spiritual shelter is crucial. (Dal Co, [ed.], p.453).

Architectural Historian Philip Drew writes that 'light is the special medium which he (Ando) uses to clarify emptiness in his architecture' (Drew, 1996, p.9). As Matsuba confirms, (Matsuba, 1998, p.61) one inspiration for Ando with the Water Temple was the Jodo-ji Temple, in Hyogo, a shingon temple constructed by Chogen in the thirteen century common era. Chogen was also influenced by the pure land schools of buddhism, who worship a buddha called Amida, who resides in the Western part of the Universe. Consequently the light emanating from the West in the evening at Jodo-ji and at the Water Temple has profound significance.

Fig. 18   Image of subterranean shrine of Water Temple

Date   1993

Image by   H. Ueda, courtesy of Günter Nitschke and Academy Editions

However there may be a more crucial understanding to be sought here. There is not only a two-way dynamic between the light of the sun and the human being, but a

three-way one: the statue remains between the two, in a third, interstitial space. It is this third space that reminds us of another buddhist conception that the true self is found in the inter-action between human and external world, between interior and external. The buddha statue may be perceived to embody this realm, physically and metaphysically placed between the two realms of the human body and the celestial one: relational being.

Using light, Ando could be understood to bring nature into the architecture in a way that is both confrontational and, ultimately, generative of harmony. His incorporation of water, light, and sky in his work may act as a critique of abstraction in modern architecture, restoring architecture's bionomic relationship to the earth. Furthermore Ando's architecture here formally corresponds with Kukai's notion that 'nature, art and religion were one' (Hakeda, 1972, p.5).

To use light one must also concern oneself with darkness. The Water Temple Main Hall uses almost no electric light normally, except safety lights in the surrounding corridor in its subterranean shrine. While electric lighting has been fitted in the main hall, it is not generally used in the daytime to emphasise darkness. It seems to be there for functional purposes only such as cleaning and safety reasons. The Head Priest of the Temple confirmed this perspective in oral discussion – that it was an expressed intention of Ando for the main shrine to remain in semi-darkness in the daytime. The Water Temple buddha statue that is in relative silhouette embodies a realm that is dark, difficult to fathom: reminiscent of the particular quality of *yu-gen* mentioned earlier[46].

Drew writes, 'At the intersection of light and silence we become aware of 'nothingness', a void at the heart of things' (1996, p.8). Just as the body is crucial to the being of the architecture, so too is the void. Berkson writes that the void or *shunyata* is as integral to the art and architecture as its mass (Berkson, 1992,

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[46] See Chapter One, Section One.

p.93). In the context of the Water Temple, where the buddha statue is situated directly in between the Diamond World and Womb World Mandalas there is an even greater relational symbolism. Sawa explains that:

> The Lecture Hall of Esoteric Buddhism also departed from the standard plan. Instead of being a place for the reading and hearing of the sutras, it became the scene of the most Esoteric rites. It was divided into inner and outer precincts by means of a lattice, and an image of a Buddha was enshrined in the innermost central part of the inner precinct. On the walls between the columns on either side of the image were the Diamond World and the Womb World Mandalas (1972, p.16).

The Water Temple too contains such lattice, creating such an inner sanctum. While it is not possible normally for visitors to the Temple to enter this space or see the Statue while the lattice doors are open, such as each morning when the temple priest/s conduct prayers and rites there, one should understand the way Ando has constructed the shrine, that there is another, bionomic, ritual being conducted each day as the sun sets. Given that this inner sanctum is considered to be the place of the most essential ritual, the bionomic ritual may engender an even greater sense of relational being.

With regard to the notion of circumambulation, one should not only consider the circumambulation of the human being, but the circumambulation of the earth around the sun, which generates the journeys of light, which in turn precipitate ontological journeys. At the Water Temple it is changing light as the Earth circumambulates the Sun, that creates animation, while the human being remains still before the buddha statue. It is only a corporeal stillness, while internally there is intense activity. One can apply Berkson's thinking on Ellora to the Water Temple when she states, 'the sculptured components there are in effect aggregates which are never independent. The forms are in a continuum of mutual transformation

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existing only in relation to each other' (Berkson, 1992, p.35). Echoing Nagarjuna, Tich Nhat Hanh and the 'web of life' ideas that emerges in contemporary scientific research, Berkson states 'the only thing that is definite at Ellora is that there is nothing definite: there is only an aggregate of various realities; they are together but they are separate at the same time in the same place' (p.92). This 'in-between' space pertains to architecture, aesthetics and culture in a broader and deeper context in Japan. For example, the veranda – *engawa* in Japanese - embodies a coexistence with nature but also an interactive dynamic relationship between the building (including its inhabitants) and the natural world[47].

A conventional geometry of a buddhist *mandala* is a square containing a circle, in which is placed an image of a buddha. At the Water Temple, either side of the main buddha statue, two such *mandalas* hang from the wall. Ando's edifice is iconoclastic in that it inverts the circle-square dynamic: using primarily circular walls with a buddha statue at its epicentre, surrounded by a rectangular wooden lattice. Is this also a process of abstraction, to create a historical and cultural disjuncture, revitalising the dynamic of space-time where the sacred can be experienced once more? The theatre director Tadashi Suzuki writing of Noh states that when a tradition can be successfully broken, the profundities of the art form can be further revealed (Suzuki, Tadashi, 1986, p.72). Such a breaking of tradition is also perceived in terms of the placing of the buddha statue below the lotus pond and the lack of a 'roof', as aforementioned. While this could be perceived as irreverent, philosophically, it may be highly significant. In buddhist teachings there is a particular conception of the relationship between teacher and pupil, master and disciple. In this conception, essentially the teacher should teach all he/she knows to enable the pupil to go beyond the teacher. The Lotus flower here could symbolise the pupil, i.e. any person who engages with the teachings of buddha. This placement by Ando also further undermines deification of buddha.

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[47] For further details on the veranda/*engawa*, see Glossary and Isozaki (1979), Nitschke (1993) and Wachmeister (2003)

Ando has attempted to create such sacred spaces explicitly in all his spaces, irrespective of religiosity, and always (but not exclusively) using concrete. Although, as Frampton expresses, it is sometimes 'hard to imagine anything more materialistic in its constitution than reinforced-concrete wall' (Frampton, 2003, p.6), Ando uses these concrete walls, to generate a fissure in the chaos of daily life, to facilitate the creation of such spiritual centres. Ando uses current technology to generate to develop spiritual foci. He treats concrete as sacred material. This could be related to a buddhist idea of finding the sacred in daily life. What is important here is the approach to the material rather than the material itself. This notion of the every day relates to the approach made by the author with works such as *zero = every day?* This will be delineated in Chapter Four.

Ando's concrete is compositionally unique, using specific techniques (Drew, pp.11-13) so that his walls have a near glass-like smooth surface to express a plurality of light conditions and shadow effects. There is a resonance here with the shadow play of Robert Rauschenberg's 'White Paintings'. The reflective quality, as Drew comments, dematerialises the wall, despite its mass. This provokes particular sensory experiences for those who journey through his spaces. Ando uses contemporary materials such as concrete, together with traditional materials such as pebbles, wood, water, and emptiness, placed in a way that is both familiar and unfamiliar to Japanese.

At the Water Temple, before arriving at the point of stillness before the statue, there has been, as aforementioned, a preparatory physical journey that is meandering and circumambulatory, a transcendental journey scaling the hill to the temple site, climbing the temple steps, following a path through foliage, going around two concrete walls, around and underneath an oval lotus pond, and encircling its principal shrine. The concrete walls do not serve as protective walls or walls of enclosure, for on the South side one could easily bypass the meandering journey that the walls help construct, and reach the lotus pond and subterranean

shrine in a more direct manner. Moreover on the North face of the site there is no wall and one is offered a clear view of the landscape.

Fig.19   The landscape beyond the second wall at the Water Temple

Date   2009

Image   raphael jay adjani

This corresponds to the process of kinaesthetic presencing at both the Water Temple and Ellora where *akasha* (Sanskrit, trans: space) is presencing. *Ma* has significance in this context. Kunio Komparu, whose family has practiced the Noh for several hundred years, regards this ritual theatre as an art of *ma*:

> Noh acting is a matter of doing just enough to create the *ma* that is a blank space-time where nothing is done, and that *ma* is the core of the expression, where the true interest lies (Komparu, 1983, p.73).

Ma, as Komparu explains, is an art of abbreviation that can be engendered through the presence of a single post or a person only.

These correspondences in the two sites - despite or in spite of the fact that they have been constructed by architects with varying aims and approaches, in differing cultures, in historical periods that are radically at variance in a number of ways - particularly in terms of the place of organised religion in society, in terms of mass education, and in terms of wider democratisation - indicate that there may exist, in the words of Nitschke, 'common human denominators below the complexity and

differences of the diverse outward manifestations of built form on our planet throughout history' (Nitschke, 1993, p.7).

Through study *in situ* of a large number of works by Tadao Ando in Japan - Churches, Hotels, Museums, Galleries, Community Spaces, Theatres, Temples - it is evident and should be understood that Ando's ideas relate not only to works created for religious purposes but for the secular world, for all his projects. The ontology of concern here is not buddhist, christian, shinto, tantric or any specific philosophy or belief system. Ando's works, his ideas appear to serve to further an evolving understanding of notions of being: relational being, non-anthropocentric being, the being of space, as well as the space of being.

Section Three

Kinaesthetic Processes/Dance/Movement/Theatre/Design

Art making as Acts of Philosophising – the Personal Journey

In this section works made by the author will be cited that are part of the process. However it is worth remembering that Heidegger writes:

> When we ask, 'What is philosophy?' then we are speaking *about* philosophy. By asking in this way we are obviously taking a stand above and therefore, outside of philosophy. But the aim of our question is to enter *into* philosophy, to tarry in it, to conduct ourselves in its manner, that is, 'to philosophise' (Heidegger, 2003, p.21).

Art-making here is seen as such an entrance *into* and tarrying in philosophy: to make art is to philosophise. The so-called art works or art objects will be engaged with, not explained. Outlines of these works cited can be found in the addendum. The relevance of this text is to further the way through further engagement with ideas. These works are not fixed in stone but temporary glimpses of process of 'way': the way, perhaps, of 'space-time_i'.

There is an inherent compromise in writing about the work, as Daisetz Suzuki acknowledges, with regard zen. Yet this compromise may have some value. At the same time it should be borne in mind always that when we talk about a thing we may lose it: Lao Tzu stated in the *Tao Te Ching*: 'He who knows does not speak; he who speaks does not know' (Translated by Lin Yutang, online at: http://www.terebess.hu/english/tao/yutang.html, 03/09/10, 15.07)). So with such a premise, and that of Socrates - *monon oida, oti ouden gignosko* ('the only thing I know is that I know nothing') - perhaps here the author acknowledges too that he knows nothing or no thing. Is this a pre-requisite to know 'nothing-ness'? In the earlier sections dance, theatre, movement, kinaesthetic processes have been discussed. This section furthers such discussion, incorporating discussion of work made by the author. As these works form part of the process that leads to the culminating two works, they will not be discussed extensively. Moreover, this may be seen as duplication, as research outlines statement are included in the appendices.

Earlier the notion of 'deep ecology' was introduced. The etymology of the word 'ecology' derives from Ancient Greek meaning 'home'. Pertinently, in her book *Wisdom of the Body Moving*, the transpersonal and body psychotherapist Linda Hartley writes: 'This story is about embodiment, the human being at home. Each of us in our own body' (Hartley, 1989, p. XXI). Yet where does one perceive the body beginning and ending? If one considers the notion of *esho funi*, then perhaps this 'home' is not a home in the sense of an isolating individual – 'An Englishman's Home is his Castle' – but one which is relational and borrowing from

Macy, one where 'home may be perceived as world' or once again in the Japanese sense: 'world in relationship': *se-ken*. With respect of Macy's conception of 'world as self, world as lover', Hartley states that the process of what she calls 'body-mind centring' is one where by 'coming into our body we become connected to our greater home, the earth; we become a part of the earth and she a part of us' (Hartley, 1989, p.XXI). This body-landscape relationship is reinforced by the research on dance of Andrea Olsen that stresses a self where body and landscape are inseparable, (Olsen, 2002).

Laal Shaari and Kathak and South Asian Performance Philosophy

This section concerns processes around the author's dance-theatre collaboration with dancer Amina Khayyam: *Laal Shaari (versions one* and *two)*, in 2007. While a research outline statement for this project is in the appendices, some of the research elements will be discussed here.

Although the author has conducted much dance-landscape research, *Laal Shaari* was an external commission that required theatrical presentation. *Laal Shaari*, based on the North Indian dance form of Kathak, a form which Amina Khayyam dances and one in which the author has trained. Kathak is one of the principle classical dance forms in South Asia. The word 'kathak' come from the Sanskrit word *katha*, which means story. Kathak's origins are several hundred years old beginning with storytellers, known as kathaks, of nomadic tribes in Northern India.

These 'stories' are thought to have been performed in temple courtyards as well as village shared spaces. They were thought to have specialised in recounting mythological and moral tales from Hindu epics. The performance involved music, song and stylized gestures. Mughal influences around the Sixteenth Century C.E. on

Kathak performance involved the absorption of elements of dances that originated in Persia.

Fig. 20   **Flyer Image for *Laal Shaari***

Date   **2007**

Image by   **zero culture**

Currently there are three main strands or schools of Kathak. These schools, known as *gharanas*, are named according to the geographical area in which they have evolved: Jaipur, Lucknow, and the Benares (Varanasi). While Kathak has gone through a period where dance more than drama is emphasised, in contemporary terminology Kathak would be best conceived of as dance-theatre.

One of the philosophic contexts for *Laal Shaari* is the *Natyasastra*. In this thesis discussion, one has begun, in an historical sense with Ellora, Ajanta, tantric art, buddhist art, architecture, and philosophy as well as Ancient Greek technology. The practice at a certain point at Ellora could also be termed a total opus, or total art work as previously outlined. In this context another historical and conceptual

starting point for this thesis is the aforementioned *Natyasastra*. The *Natyasastra,* a text espousing a 'total art work' has been perhaps the single most influential text on not just the performing arts but all art and aesthetics in South Asia over the last two thousand years. The *Natyasastra,* like the experience of Ellora, emphasises an active spectatorship.

In thinking of experimentation in South Asian dance the first word that comes to mind is 'Chandralekha', a choreographer who has been seen by a number of critics and dancers as the apotheosis of groundbreaking experimentation. Some of Chandralekha's thinking and ideas with regard to contemporary experimentation in the context of historical tradition are quite pertinent to the author's thinking relating to the themes and approach of this thesis. Chandralekha writes of dance:

In this cosmology, the arts and sciences, too, are interdependent and richly cross-referenced. Dance, music, architecture, sculpture, yoga, medicine, martial arts, linguistics, grammar, are not isolated and mutually exclusive. This is the larger meaning of 'tradition' – to be integral, to be whole (Chandralekha, 2003, p.58).

In some sense this thesis project moves easily back and forth from ancient history to the twenty first century and beyond: going back to go to the future. As for Chandralekha, the issue is not 'tradition' versus 'modernity': they should not be seen as two different things, or at least 'two but two, not two but two' (*esho funi*).

In fact here it is important to recognise, that in part works of art and architecture and forms can be part of a national 'mythmaking', particularly since the rise of nationalism and the birth of a huge number of nation-states in the post-colonial era. Classical South Asian Dance such as Bharata Natyam is certainly part of an attempt to build cultural heritage and legacy, as is the 'sanctification' of sites such as Ryoan-ji in Japan.

Here again it is important to 'de-story', de-construct even, to 're-find' and to 'e-volve'; yet with no fixed point of arrival. As Lao Tzu writes in the *Tao teh Ching*: 'life is continually renewing itself' (Lao Tzu, 1979, p.24). Here it should be remembered also the creative aspect of destruction. As aforementioned destruction and re-creation is symbolised by the god Shiva, which Edifice Twenty-Nine is dedicated to. It is lined with Shiva sculptures as well as having a Shiva lingam at its epicentre. It is through 'cosmic dance' that Shiva destroys the world.

Through such movement, as aforementioned a 'relational space' and a 'being of a space' may be engendered. This space in consideration could be a space of presencing beyond the residue of the art object and the technological *modus operandus*. While these ideas originated in some shape or form in South Asia more than two thousand years ago, they resonate with contemporary ideas such as some of those of Marcel Duchamp who stated in an interview with Pierre Cabanne: 'My art would be that of living: each second, each breadth is a work which is inscribed nowhere, which is neither visual nor cerebral. It is a sort of constant euphoria' (Cabanne, 1971, p.72; also in: Baas and Jacob, 2004, p.21).

In thinking of dance and theatre, what is important here is not to think of a performer on the stage only, but theatre or dance that comes into being in the inter-relating dynamic between performing body, spectator and the space-time of inter-action. The T'ai chi Master Liang says: 'When the mind moves, the mind intent is immediately aroused; when the intent is aroused, the ch'i will immediately follow. So the heart (mind), the intent, and the ch'i are closely connected like a circle' (*In* Hartley, 1994, p.9). There is reminiscence here of the evocation of deep ecologist Seed that we are rocks moving.

Laal Shaari and a personal conception of *Yu-gen*

Ueda explains that Zeami's *yu-gen* must have 'pessimistic implications, for the truth of the universe always points toward the sad destiny of man' (Ueda, 1967, p.61). Yet while there is an element of sad destiny in the *Laal Shaari* story – resonant with *mono no aware*[48] perhaps - and the struggle to transcend sadness', another way to look at such destiny is to accept one's death individually and collectively. Such collective acceptance of death of the human is a step toward non-anthropocentric being as it no longer posits the idea that seems to be dominant in human civilisation so far – that the human is at the centre of things: whether made in God's image, or top of the evolutionary ladder, or the notion that through thought one can know everything. If as Tarkovsky believes the purpose of art is to prepare oneself for death, death itself must first be accepted through the art practice.

Zeami's *yu-gen*, according to Ueda, synthesises an earlier, literary sense of *yu-gen*, of elegant beauty, with the sense of *yu-gen* as a profound mystic truth of the universe. Zeami became increasingly interested in elegant noble characters who then face tragedy, through which a greater inner beauty maybe revealed. As one ages through tragedy one may perceive truth. One of the author's teachers, the theatre pioneer Etienne Decroux, believed studying acting at eighteen was not recommended. He thought the optimum age was around thirty-five when one had accumulated significant adult life experiences to marry profundity and realism to one's acting technique.

There is a resonance with the aforementioned Chinese buddhist Philosopher Chih-i's system of a human being exhibiting three thousand facets in each moment of

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[48] As one is discussing processes in contemporary technology and media, one intentionally takes here the liberty of consulting Wikipedia where *mono no aware* is explained currently: '*Mono no aware*…(lit. 'the pathos of things'), also translated as 'an empathy toward things,' or 'a sensitivity of ephemera,' is a Japanese term used to describe the awareness of *mujo* or the transience of things and a bittersweet sadness at their passing': *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mono_no_aware*, 28/1/2010, 18.45. Kawai, with regard female characters in Japanese fairy tales discusses 'the feeling of 'aware' (softly despairing sorrow), which a Japanese would feel for a female figure who disappears in silence' (Kawai, 1988, p.22). This is highly pertinent to the author's approach to the female character in *Laal Shaari*.

existence. Within this complex idea there is a sub-concept of the 'Ten Worlds'. This idea is that human beings have and manifest at any one time one of ten basic states: hell hunger, animality anger, tranquillity rapture, learning, absorption, compassion, and buddha. Within each of these states are contained all ten. Therefore one can exhibit a state of hell while actually being in the state of buddha. It seems that in tragedy or apparent hell one may exhibit one's true self or 'buddha'.

Yet with regard this thesis and *Laal Shaari* it is primarily the colour of darkness, of blackness, its taste, smell and flavour that is of most interest: the *rasa* of *yu-gen*. Version one took place in almost entire darkness, and the last scene is in total darkness in both versions, where only the ghostly flow of the dancer's movement around the stage may be ascertained.

Such a '*rasa* of *yu-gen*' is explored in *radio play*; as well as in *pages of madness* and *iPak*. These works' research outline statements are contained in the appendices, and will not be discussed in detail here, except to say *radio play* has been presented in 2007 in a theatre in near total darkness. The work begins with a dimly lit near empty stage, which goes to near total darkness just before the narration begins. While the narration had been recorded beforehand and communicated to the audience by the P.A. system, through post-performance discussion, it became clear that a large proportion of the audience believed the narration was being enunciated live, with an actor in the wings.

At the time of writing a notion of further evolving such presence-absence dynamics is being explored. This would involve a wholly live version of *radio play*, where both the audience and performer are enmeshed in darkness and the performer enunciates the narration live on stage without a P.A. system. The audience hears only the voice of the performer. The performer plays with pauses and delivery, according to the mood and energy of 'the space of seeing' that includes its audience though with the possibility of evolving the text. This has been approached in 2009, in a theatre

presentation as part of a conference, where a desk, chair, microphone and stand was set up on the sage. The house lights dimmed to darkness, and then the narration began. In the question and answer session after the presentation, it emerged that many of the audience thought that the author delivered the lines live off stage, when they were in fact recorded and played from a CD. Perhaps this indicates the quality of work by the sound engineer. As the author is dyspraxic and has difficulty remembering lines, this may point to the most practical way of presenting the work live in future being to read it off stage.

In *version two* of *Laal Shaari* at the Royal Opera House, (November 2007), the production ends with an epilogue: white flood lights shone directly at the audience – light so bright that it blinds: playing with a '*yu-gen* of white': with white having a symbolism and a number of significations in both Japan and South Asia that are pertinent. One is minded here of some of the approach to some landscapes by Venezuelan painter Armando Reveron – such as 'White Landscape' (Elderfield, 2007, pp.125-135).

Hijikata's Butoh was known as the dance of utter darkness – *ankoku butoh*. Hijikata's first work was entitled *Forbidden Colours* (Japanese: *Kinjiki*), inspired by Yukio Mishima's work of the same name. Yet for this author and in the contemporary context, black feels the 'forbidden colour'.

While constructed in the tradition of Kathak, there was an attempt in part with *Laal Shaari*, to destroy Kathak to re-find it. Kathak today is envisioned primarily in terms of dance while its dramatic origins, though still in existence are under-emphasised. Yet, as aforementioned, Kathak's origins were in storytelling, the aim here was to create a piece of dance-theatre to tell a story, a very contemporary, and 'real story' that says much about life on earth as life in the celestial realms.

Stillness and Movement

There is an essential dynamic of stillness and action in *Laal Shaari.* Architectural historian K.S. Takeyama explains lucidly such dynamics, architectonics and performativity across a range of art forms, including Ando's architecture where:

> spaces in which light and shade are contrasted in dynamic sequences to inject complexity and depth into fundamentally static plans with highly surprising results.

> In daily life and in many fields of traditional culture-including *ikebana* and the *Noh* drama - the Japanese people are fond of calm, but it must be a calm charged with the tension of dynamic action. Architecture for the tea ceremony is based on an aesthetic of action inherent in the static state; and the architecture of Sen no Rikyû, where static elements are arranged to create active tension, is the ultimate expression of this aesthetic. Transcending the expression of mere action, and subtly revealing the active inherent in the static - a fundamental goal for all Japanese art - are aims shared by Rikyu and Ando.

Inclusion of the World of Nature

Though set in an urban environment, tea ceremony architecture strives for the mood of a mountain retreat. It shuts out the exterior world but introduces nature, in symbolic form. The symbolic representation of nature is a major current in art in Japan, as is readily seen in such outstanding examples as the garden of the temple Ryoan-ji, where stones and white sand are used to depict islands and the sea. Other gardens of this style - called *kare-san-sui* - are found in zen temples in various parts of the nation. Their symbolic effect is heightened by their lack of moisture. In a climate like that of Japan, where humidity is generally high, they might be described

as dryness in wetness.

The same mood of a dry element placed in a generally moist atmosphere pervades the courtyard gardens that are always a part of Ando's residential designs. In them, without directly introducing nature by planting trees, Ando symbolically includes invisible natural elements: light, wind, and sound (Takeyama, 1983, p.174).

While Takeyama's statement may be perceived legitimately as essentialist, what is important here for this discussion is the aforementioned sense of society/world-in-relationship (*se-ken*) that furthers a notion of relational being. It also builds the idea of a parallel and resonance with the tea ceremony. While the tea ceremony is not the centre of this discussion, it has been influential on the author's thinking when making practical works.

While this is generally the case, Ando's subversive and iconoclastic approach – de-familiarisation to cause re-familiarisation is iconically seen in the Yumebutai space on the island of Awaji, with his theatre styled on an Ancient Greek amphitheatre. In numerous Greek amphitheatres, one can perceive landscape in the distance and around the theatre – whether hill, sky, sea, field or forest. Ando brings landscape and 'nature' literally into the architecture He does this by putting an actual tree permanently on the stage, and water inside the theatre. Corresponding still with conventions of Greek architecture, the audience can see nature outside with the Inland Sea (*Seto Naikai)* in the distance beyond the stage. A further complexity takes place as one often witnesses ships, symbols of contemporary technology traversing the waters.

Fig. 21.   The amphitheatre at Yumebutai designed by Tadao Ando

Date   2009

Image by   raphael jay adjani

Another resonance here is with the current Noh Stage, which has the backdrop of a
pine tree, irrespective of the nature and content of the play. A further response
here to be noted is the fact that several hundred years ago, Noh plays were
habitually performed outside, often on dried up riverbeds, lit by changing sunlight.
This kind of theatre again is in dynamic relationship with its surrounding landscape
just as the Greek amphitheatre is. With such theatre architecture the movement of
the earth around the sun, just as in the Water Temple and at Ellora, is an active
agent in the creation of a sacred space of being and sacred being of space.

Laal Shaari, the first version, begins in almost total darkness with only a few tea
lights barely illuminating the stage. A dancer barely seen – more an object pushes
one more tea light on to the stage in a particular choreography, The sound of the
tea light scraping on the floor is heard even at the back of the auditorium.

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Eventually she comes downstage centre and other lights come up, but we are still in a relatively dark space. She stands still, in front of the audience, engaging with them looking at them for maybe two minutes. At the same time, over the two minutes and almost imperceptibly, she starts to move her arms and hands so that she appears to transform into an initial movement of a conventional Kathak dance. The deafening silence is broken by the sound of the shout from the auditorium: a man hurls some invective, abuse at the dance and then he disdainfully leaves. Members of the audience 'jump' up startled. The startled dancer then too begins a more conventional Kathak movement. Almost imperceptibly, she starts to move her arms and hands so that she appear to transform into an initial movement of a conventional Kathak dance. The deafening silence is broken by the sound of the shout from the auditorium, a man hurls some invective, abuse at the dance and then the disdainfully leaves. Members of audience 'jumps' up startled. The startled dancer then too begins a more conventional Kathak movement.

This is written less to explain and describe the *Laal Shaari* 'object' but more to reflect further on the dynamics of stillness and the lucidity of darkness, and audibility of silence. The filmmaker Robert Bresson writes:

> What is for the eye must duplicate what is for the ear… when a sound can replaces an image, cut the image or neutralize it…The ear goes more to the within, the eye toward the outer…The eye solicited alone makes the ear impatient, the ear solicited alone makes the eye impatient. *Use these impatiences*… Against the tactics of speed, of noise, set tactics of slowness, of silence' (*In* Weis and Belton [eds.], 1985, p.149).

For many years the author preferred to use the French term spectator rather than English word 'audience' to describe those present in a cinema or theatre hall witnessing a play or film. For him the sense of seeing in a holistic sense as understood by spectator in French comes closet to the notion of Greek etymology of

theatre, *teatron*, a space of seeing. There is a similar sense with the Japanese word for audience *kan-shu,* where 'kan' means watching rather than listening. Here one recollects again the Sanskrit word *veda* – meaning knowledge, which some believe, beyond Latin, is the root of the English and other European words for seeing and for video.

While this notion is still pertinent it also sits side by side with audience now, because of the importance of sound (including silence) in the process. As Bresson describes, sound goes to the inner ear image to the outer. A horror film would have little horror with image alone. Furthermore, when one thinks of a space of seeing one thinks also of the psychosphere – a space of being.

Section Four

Design, Relational Furniture, Product and Garden Design

Introduction

With regard the body of Ando's work, Pham Thanh Hien explains, 'decorative elements, and colors are intentionally escaped in order to magnify the potentiality of space' (Pham, 1998, p.8). Developing the notion beyond Pham, Drew reminds us that spectatorship is still crucial in this process: believing that Ando eliminates anything extraneous to reveal, to those who may perceive it, the essential quality of the space, which is a presencing emptiness (Drew, 1996, p.9). Emptiness is filled by spectator feeling: internal colours. Yet it should be noted that the Water Temple is an example of Ando using intense colour below the surface, vermillion red, which is symbolic in buddhism, and the effect of creating a 'womb' world in the

subterranean inner shrine: another example of form integrated with theme. Moreover Ando synthesises personal philosophy with tantric buddhist philosophy.

Kunio Komparu - discussing both the tea ceremony and the Noh, as well as intimating life in general - believes that 'elegance is born when the ordinary is abbreviated, concentrated, and reduced to essentials…eventually leading to *ma*' (Komparu, 1983, p.74). While Heim discusses this in terms of the contemporary technology and practice of cyberspace, ultimately, if any mundane activity is perceived to be sacred, such performative rituals may be located in any aspect of daily life, where the human body is simultaneously an apperceptive instigator and spectator.

Interior Design, Garden Design and the Home

In this context, creative design of and for the home and working spaces have significance. While Appia considered man to be 'the measure of all things' (Appia, 1997, pp.123-131), the concern here is to evolve and contextualise such spectatorship, such readership, such experiencing, as relational, non-anthropocentric, symbiotic presencing. It is at the core of the experimentation with furniture and garden design undertaken by 'shapes-design': a collaborative venture taking place primarily in 2005-8, between the author, architect Alessandra Maiolino and industrial designer Simona Maiolino (ajaykumar, Maiolino, Alessandra, Maiolino Simona, www.shapes-design.com 02/02/2009, 15.23).

Briefly stated, the kind of designs 'shapes-design' began to evolve involve generating processes for other people to shape, to play, to sit, to walk through, to muse, to relax, and to enjoy in their homes, offices and in a wider social world. In this sense, some of its furniture, lighting, and gardens, comes into 'being' only

through their engagement with the mood, the space, the imagination and playfulness, of those who acquire and frequent them. An example is the light, *PYT*. It has a sculptural form that can be manipulated in myriad ways to create a personalised new form each day or whenever the mood takes one. As objects these items hold no interest for the author. What he is most interested in is the play, the inter-action with another, out of which emerges an art work, furniture, or a garden. Unlike Appia, he is less concerned with the human body than with the entity that is the space or place of play and presencing, an entity that incorporates the human body, corresponding with Suzuki's notion of psychosphere.

These processes relocate the discourse and the focus, beyond the conventional centres of art – such as galleries and museums – and 'returning to the world of the mundane'. For example, 'shapes-design' conceived *cute micro garden,* as a garden where a person who acquires it, can shape the contours of its landscape, the location of the bonsai tree that stands upon it, and the composition, kinds, and colours of the flower petals that may be placed on the terrain, according to her/his creativity, taste and mood. *cute* is a garden for anybody, particularly for those who have no garden. It is a micro-garden that fits in almost any room in the home, or on an office desk. It requires no water, only care and imagination. One can tend the garden every day, or never, as one wishes. The emphasis here is clearly with the spectator. There is an aspiration to re-conceive particular bionomic processes toward a re-defining of conventional notions of 'nature'.

cute micro garden is part of an ongoing series, *zen gardens without the 'zen'* initiated by ajaykumar, in part under the umbrella of the shapes-design studio collaboration (see: http://www.shapes-design.com). Why and how a *zen* garden without the '*zen'?* There could be several reasons. Zen was an iconoclastic religion, moving away from perceived reliance on liturgy and textual justification, and focusing on direct experience. A famous zen story tells something like: Once upon a

winter, a buddhist acolyte comes across one of his peers burning a statue of the buddha. In horror he asks his colleague why he is burning a statue of the Buddha. The colleague replies matter-of-factly that he is burning wood to keep warm. Yet hundreds of years later zen too may be perceived as being institutionalised. Therefore borrowing from Tadashi Suzuki, perhaps zen can be 'rc-revealed', its profundity elucidated through successful breaking of tradition. This author is not a follower of zen, or other buddhist schools, or of tantra or of yoga, or animism. Moreover the author does not consider himself an artist as it is commonly conceived today. What he is interested in is finding ideas again, evolving them through engagement with other ideas as part of a personal - could it be anything else - way of thinking, way of knowing. Riddles and non-sense – known as *koans* - are an important pedagogic tool of zen masters to facilitate acolytes transcending logos to arrive at a different knowing. However if one employs the approach of Duchamp – 'it is art because I say it is' - the apperceptive mindfulness of such activity would be considered by the author as art.

Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec have designed *Algues* a plant-like module that grows like a climbing plant through the shaping and imagination of those who acquire it. Other works, such as *Twigs*, and *Vases combinatoires*, function similarly. Discussing *Vases*, Erwan Bouroullec states: 'These are vases that we made in nine pieces, and which can be recombined to make other vases in different shapes. What we do is make a few 'tools', and the individual has to decide how to use them in her or his life' (Bouroullec, 2001). *Argues* and *Twigs* borrow from conventionally understood 'nature', using contemporary materials, to engender new organic and relational processes.

Fig. 22   **Combinatory Vases (French: *Vases Combinatoires)***

                by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec

From: **http://www.bouroullec.com, Tuesday, August 31, 2010, 15.48**

Fig. 23   ***Algues* by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, Image 1**

From: **http://www.bouroullec.com, Tuesday, August 31, 2010, 15.46**

Fig. 24 *Algues* **by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, Image 2**

From: **http://www.bouroullec.com, Tuesday, August 31, 2010, 15.45**

Here again 'nature' may be perceived as incorporating plastics, and other contemporary manufactured materials and process. Such design permits certain creative autonomy. It attempts to shift emphasis away from the initial conceiver of the work, the designer, to those who acquire it: spectators, towards an art of spectatorship. Moreover, this 'work' is less a static form than a flow.

The 'shapes-design' site itself is a relational, ludic work, in two principal respects: the use of a mini jukebox, where a user can choose which music to accompany the text and images, and the nature of the play with the image-text console: *www.shapes-design.com*. At the time of its construction, around 2003-4, this kind of inter-active and sound composition was rare in commercial websites of its genre. At the time of writing in 2010, the web landscape has changed considerably. The jukebox for the shapes-design website could be considered a forerunner for the *jukebox* of *iPak*. The author is fond of using such 'retro' forms as jukeboxes to undermine the constant drive to use the latest technology in new media art to the extent that one senses festivals and symposia such as Ars Electronica, Zero One and ISEA become religious festivals and experiences where the godhead is technology: in the conventionally understood sense of the word.

Fig. 25   **iPak Press Image 6**

Date   **2007**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani in collaboration with Andrea Maiolino**
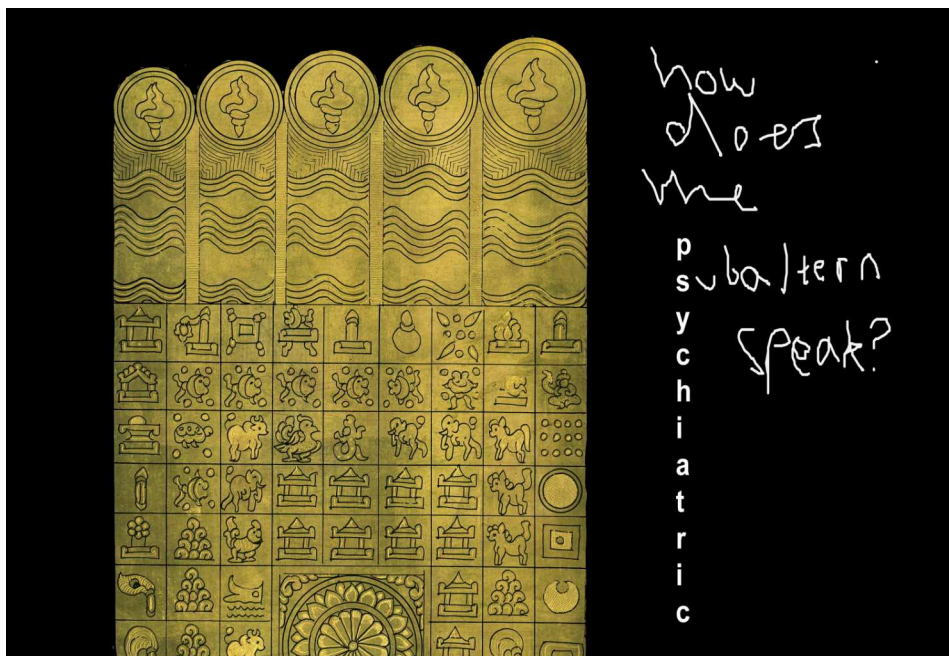
Fig. 26   **iPak Press Image 1**

Date   **2007**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani in collaboration with Andrea Maiolino**

Section Five

Conclusion

As the concept of 'art' is used and interpreted in multifarious ways, varying in different historical periods, cultures and societies, it is perhaps valuable here to reiterate which 'art' is under consideration: here it is art-making as a philosophic practice. Ando, as aforementioned, writes of architecture-making as thinking. The word 'philosophy' derives from the Greek word for wisdom so in this context thinking of art-making as a process of engendering wisdom, of knowledge, or rather art-making as processes of knowing.

An etymological understanding of 'art' is its derivation in Latin – *ars* – meaning to arrange. One may have the sense of assembly here – montage. Maturana and Varela think 'all doing is knowing, and knowing is doing' (Maturana and Varela, 1998, p.26). The sense here is always of action - one meaning of the Sanskrit word *karma* – of kinaesthetic, corporeal, visceral processes.

While Nitschke interrogates whether, there may lie 'common human denominators below the complexity and differences of the diverse outward manifestations' (Nitschke, 1993, p.7), perhaps a critical 'common denominator' could be perceived, as the poet Basho has expressed, as the importance of autonomously and perpetually seeking 'the truth of beauty', (Basho, 1975, p.28) the ultimate poetry, in the world of daily experience: a moment by moment, space by space, finding of a psychosphere. The tea ceremony engenders an opportunity to rethink all daily actions, including drinking tea. In the exhibition catalogue for the Bouroullecs' exhibition *Blossoming Gap*, (*Blossoming Gap* with Andrea Branzi at the Rendel & Spitz Gallery, Cologne, 2003) Andrea Branzi writes, quoting Zygmunt Bauman, of 'a Liquid Modernity that does not possess a form of its own but tends to follow a temporal flow of transformations' (Bouroullec, Ronan and Erwan, 2003, p.197).

Maturana and Varela (Maturana and Varela, 1998, p.11) see cognition as a bringing forth of a world through the process of living itself: a flux of being?

The medical research of Ikemi and others appears to highlight the importance of visceral and kinaesthetic process – of body movement in space-time. Edifice Twenty-Nine, the Water Temple, tea gardens, and Ikemi's research appears to highlight the importance of visceral and kinaesthetic process – of body movement in space-time. This emphasises the ecological relationship of so called inner and so called outer and may further support a notion of relational being.

Ultimately the 'gesamtkunstwerk' that is in question in this thesis is not so much a total art work but an ontological concept that spans a number of disciplines and epistemological processes found in ecology, mathematics, medicine and other science; as well as in art and architecture; in philosophy; and in some of the numerous ways technology is conceptualised in the contemporary world. Here again we move beyond the psychosphere of Suzuki to a more expansive notion. Increasingly one finds correspondence and confluence if not synonymity in these notions and terms: gesamtkunstwerk, symbiogenesis, biopsychosocioecologicalsphere and relational being.

Chapter Four: The conceptualisation of Zero and Relational Origination

Section One

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the conceptualisation of zero. Through such focus there is a further interrogation of the 'space between', the interface, the interval between ostensible art object and spectator. The chapter is discussed in relation to ideas from a number of art practices as well as the author's work in 'new media' technology, specially in relationship to an on ongoing discourse with regard zero.

The primary works of the author under discussion are two filmic works:

relationship-place naka-ma

zero = every day?

These works have developed through a symbiogenetic process. Both these works, in varying formats, have constituted elements of other works of the author that are inter-active and immersive experiences, such as listed below. These other works, in multifarious ways, are part of the process that engendered *relationship-place naka-ma* as well as *zero = every day?* These include (listed chronologically):

- *8 technology.net* - web site as ritual art work: http:// www.8technology.net, (adjani-ajaykumar with *8*, 2010-present).
- *zero – the confluence of art and technology* (ajaykumar and Nandi, 2008-present).
- *iPak,* of *M-I I-M* series, (ajaykumar, *et al*. 2008-present).
- *phant_Asia – asylum of desire,* concept, of *M-I I-M* series, (ajaykumar, 2008-present).

- *radio play* (ajaykumar, 2007-present).

- *4D – a tea ceremony*, (adjani-ajaykumar with *8*, 2010).

- *zero (hybrid 2),* (adjani-ajaykumar, with Somerville and *8*, 2010).

- *zero - the aroma of technology, the flavour of art, to savour being* (adjani-ajaykumar with *8*, 2009).

- *way of tea - an art of conviviality*, (adjani-ajaykumar with *8*, 2009).

- *pages of madness,* of *M-I I-M* series, (ajaykumar, 2005-2009).

- *a_m_m_s* (*akasha_ma_mu_shunyata*), (ajaykumar and Nandi, 2007-9).

Research outline statements of each of these works can be found in the appendix. Consequently they will be referred to in this chapter only as necessary, contextualising the main works.

The two DVDs contained in this thesis are not perceived as 'art' in themselves. While creative processes took place to compose them, they are films not to be 'looked at' but to be 'looked through', beyond, to different kinds of viewing, one of which may be an art that flourishes in the imagination and consciousness of the spectator. Both films are perceived not as definitive entities but as 'films in continuum'. They are ongoing works of process manifesting uniquely and specially for each context of presentation. Sound and image are edited specifically for each situation, as is its overall manner and mode of engagement. In this sense the 'relationship-place' of both films is site, space, time and spectator specific.

There is not one fixed film called *relationship-place naka-ma* or *zero =every day?,* in the same sense that in ideological essence, there is no tea ceremony the same as any other. It is very much about an experience of 'now' of a certain temporary coalescence of factors, that is not the material DVD, but includes the context tin which the DVD is shown, the person or persons who frequent or are imagined to frequent this context, the time of year, the occasion, the mood. In this sense the film is always 'edited' for the occasion – sometimes an editing of videographic

image, some times editing of sound. For example, when *relationship-place naka-ma* was presented in Bangkok in 2010 as part of the installation *atmospheres*, there was a different composer-pianist, Rapeedech v. Kulasubaya, from the one on the DVD submitted with this thesis. Kulasubaya played according to his own mood that evening as he experienced the images unfurl before him on numerous screens – on a concrete floor, on a cinematic projection screen, on computer monitors, on the back of his upright piano and on a garage type door. He played to the mood of the occasion – the 'rasa' generated in part by the personality and mood of the spectators before him. He did not rehearse any part, but spent an intense period in the company of the author, to develop an appropriate level of sensitivity and sensibility for the ontological dynamics and aesthetics of the project. This process is seen as a vital and critical aspect of the composition.

There is a parallel here with the preparation of Noh artists for a theatrical presentation. They do not rehearse much together in the way one conventionally understands a rehearsal process in British theatre; and they have no director. Each performer has studied the play and understands its basic scenario and mise-en-scène. However what is most important is the ability of all the performers to immerse themselves in the situation and listen intensely to each other on stage. What is being discussed here is an ontological preparation. Ultimately what is important for the spectator is what is not said, what is not seen. *relationship place naka-ma* has no words. *zero = every day?* has many at the beginning. However these words, like those in a Noh play, are constructed to facilitate the culminating emptiness of the experience. In fact even the words at the beginning suggest to the spectator to fall asleep if s/he wants to during the screening.

While a suggestion of the author for the viewing the DVDs contained in the thesis could have been that they are played in and viewed not on a computer but in a DVD player connected to a television monitor and with good quality speakers, such a suggestion is seen as too prescriptive. Ultimately the set up is not of great

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importance. What is most important is the preparation of the spectator, corresponding to the way a guest may prepare for a tea ceremony, as well as the way Ando describes a person's preparation for an architectural encounter. It is the view of the author that a psychosphere, as described by Suzuki may be generated in such conditions. As the psychosphere of architecture may be perceived to come into being through the interaction of apperceptive human with built edifice and wider landscape, so too does the psychosphere of *relationship-place naka–ma* and of *zero = every day?* come into being through interaction of apperceptive spectator and all the other constituent elements of the work's presentation. While Suzuki believes that ultimately the host can create a tea ceremony for one – for her/himself only – in this thesis construct, the spectator may decide for herself/himself the manner and context of viewing: a tea ceremony for one, a tea ceremony without host but with only spectator only (unless the spectator decides to view the films with others).

The historical journey of 'zero' parallels the historical and conceptual parameters of this thesis. While there is considerable discussion around the date and place of the conception, a widely-held view is that zero was conceived in South Asia around 600 C.E., paralleling the aforementioned temple excavation and supposed maturation of tantric thinking, including tantric buddhist thinking, in South Asia.

At the same time the conception of zero is crucial for the binary system that is at the core of our Digital Age, the Information Age. Therefore, in some sense the conceptual origin of our contemporary culture begins with the conception of zero in South Asia around fifteen hundred years ago. This will be discussed in more detail in Section Two.

Section Three considers further the work *zero = every day?* as well as some of the processes that culminate in this work. Section Four considers further the work *relationship-place naka-ma*. Section five considers art production as curatorial process

and co-creation. Section Six is a conclusion to this chapter.

In the context of current, past and prospective technological practice, this chapter furthers notions of 'relational being', 'non-anthropocentric being', 'the being of space', and 'the space of being'. While these concepts have been delineated earlier, it should be remembered always that they are complex and none of them can be delineated fully: here there may be some credence in the notion that when one speaks about something one may lose it or change it. However, it is intended that through the accumulative process of this discussion, some further sensing, comprehending of, and reflection on these notions is engendered.

Section Two

The processing of Zero

Zero's History

The opening line of mathematics teacher Robert Kaplan's book *The Nothing that is – a natural history of zero* – is significant: 'If you look at zero you see nothing but look through it and you will see the world' (Kaplan, 2000, p.1). While this statement could be construed by some as somewhat essentialist, it points to the immense and undeniable significance of the conception of zero for human civilization, in particular for our contemporary age. Mathematician T.K. Puttaswamy believes the invention of the decimal system including zero to be 'the most important mathematical contribution of ancient India' (in Selin, 2000, p.409). Zero/*Shunya* and *Shunyata* are at the heart of the discussion around relational being.

The precise origin of zero is controversial with numerous viewpoints. For example, Puttaswamy points to the decimal system being in use in the South Asian civilisations such as Mohenjo Daro and Harappa dating back to 3000 B.C.E. On the other hand, Kaplan believes, that zero is used in some sense by the Sumerians, Babylonians, as well as Ancient Greeks, before it came into being in South Asia in around 600 C.E. Detailed discussion of zero's origins is not within the scope of this thesis, however, nor is it the central concern. What is most pertinent is the understanding of the confluence of mathematics, philosophy, art and architecture that could be said to have taken place in South Asia, around the time of zero's possible conception. On such a premise, one could argue that the philosophical history of our current time, which has been called, commonly and variously, the 'Information Age', the 'Digital Age', the 'Scientific Age', stems from a particular conception in South Asia, around 600 C.E. Here perhaps a more sophisticated terminology is not just to think of this period in South Asia as a confluence of ideas, but, borrowing from Margulis, imagine it as a symbiogenesis of ideas: where there is critical relational dynamic necessary to the conception of ideas across fields of thinking-practice. Furthermore, as previously stated, one is not looking to go back but to go beyond; to evolve insight in the spaces between, the spaces between disciplines, the spaces between cultures. Consequently, there is an elicit premise of a need to evolve such symbiogenesis in our contemporary age.

The process of naming is pertinent here. Kaplan discusses the ideas of astronomers and mathematicians Aryabhata the Elder and Varahamihira living in different parts of South Asia around the sixth century. Aryabhata the Elder used a word for place, *kha,* to describe the idea of zero. Varahamihira used 'words for spaces, like ambara (sky) and akasa (atmosphere) – and sunya, usually translated 'empty' – which soon became zero's commonest names' (p.44).

Such spatial metaphors for zero are significant and it is these that underpinned the titling of a research enquiry developed in collaboration with Alok b. Nandi: *a_m_m_s* (*akasha_ma_mu_shunyata*). This research evolved through discussion between the collaborators with built-in deliberate spatial and temporal distance and intervals. It involved discussion by telepresence significantly. It had a number of outcomes including the afore-mentioned performance-lecture delivered at the 2008 Conference and Festival of the International Society of Electronic Art (ISEA) in Singapore: *a_m_m_s: is zero no.thing?* The research collaboration with Nandi, culminated in the online book publication, *zero – the confluence of art and technology*. Consequently for this author in this thesis, the most important notion is the zero that is *shunya*, or the *shunya* that is zero: zero-shunya.
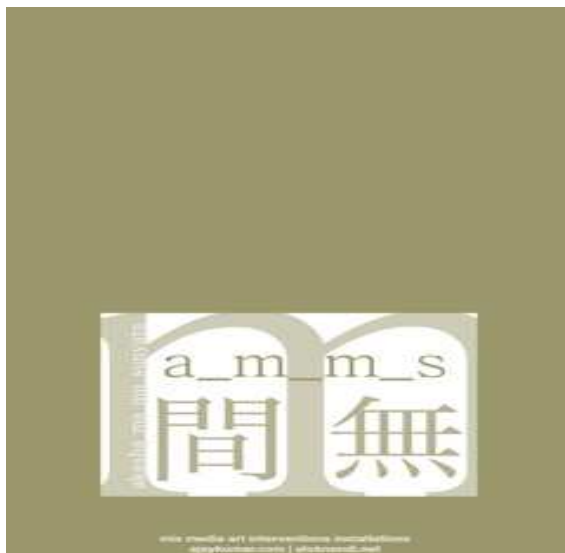
Fig. 27   ***a_m_m_s* image for**
                  zero – the confluence of art and technology
Date   **2008**
Image by   **Alok b. Nandi, through discussion with ajaykumar**

Emptiness-Presence, *shunyata* and the Ma Hsia School

In this thesis reflection, one is concerned with both an architecture and the architectonics of text, image, and sound. The Ma-Hsia school of landscape painting in the Thirteen Century C.E., of the Southern Sung dynasty in China, led by Hsia

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Kuei and Ma Yuan, is renowned for its construction of empty spaces. Ma Yuan's 'one corner' style involved painting one part of the 'canvas' (silk in actuality) composition as a means to give expression to the 'blank' of the canvas. Not only was Ma-Hsia art concerned with relations between tangible and intangible, it engaged with relations between artist and painting, and between artist and spectator.

Both Ma Yuan and Hsia Kuei were court painters and the royal responses in poetry to their paintings were inscribed on the silk itself: becoming a part of the work. In Japan, Five Mountain Zen (*gozan*), which particularly emphasised the involvement of acolytes in worldly affairs, was deeply influenced by this practice. Consequently the *shigajiku* form, which could be translated in English as 'poem-picture-scroll', emerged during the Middle Ages, the Muromachi period (1336-1573):

> In the year 1410 a Zen Buddhist monk from Nanzen-ji [Kyoto]... wrote out a landscape poem and had a painting done of the scene described by the poem. Then following the prevailing custom of his day, he gathered responses to the images by asking prominent fellow monks and government officials to inscribe it also, writing on painting became a part of the painting...Some fifteen individuals responded (Parker, Joseph, 1999, p.1).

One witnesses here an 'art of spectatorship', an 'art of dialogue', an 'art of conviviality'. By 'spectatorship' here one is not thinking of the Society of the Spectacle. This spectatorship - which Alok b. Nandi and ajaykumar coined 'a-spectatorial' through the *a_m_m_s* project - is less about looking at and more about inhabiting: inhabiting or dwelling in a space. This also manifested in other forms and contexts. Some of the *haiku* attributed to Basho, are begun by him, and then, by his invitation, completed by others. Basho is considered a master of the linked verse or collective poem known as *renga*. *Renga* were created in social

situations, such as poetry parties. Here, according to seminal *renga* poet and theorist Nijo Yoshimoto, they were composed primarily 'to delight the people present' (Ueda, 1967, p.38), not for posterity. The 'way of tea'

is an art form that stems from social function. Its art is a space or a place of conviviality. This is an art form of the now, *ekaksana*. In the online book *zero - the confluence of art and technology*, as well as with 'performance essays' in refereed publications (ajaykumar, 2007[a]; ajaykumar, 2007[b]) spaces are left for a reader-spectator to draw, write whatever s/he wants, as s/he reads through. It becomes a part of the thesis, published in our mind. Furthermore there is an invitation in the *zero* book also to scan and send the author a copy, or cut the paper out of the thesis and send the author the 'original': perhaps to be re-published later in some format or simply re-published in his mind.

The absurd and humour, or its attempt, form part of the compositional equation also for *zero = every day?,* as well as other related works. This is in part due to the influence of zen 'art-thinking' that has been replete with humour and 'non-sense'. In part it is also the continuation of one creative line of the author, who when he worked as a professional actor for a number of years was particularly interested in the character of the Fool in Shakespeare's plays; as well as the absurd in the Theatre of the Absurd ('from Vitrac to Beckett'). Consequently, if this thesis ever manifests in some form of book publication it is anticipated that there would be invitation here to write on the book copy and leave it for the next reader. Alternatively, the reader of the book would be invited to use an empty space to that s/he would find below on the book page, to place a cup of tea as s/he takes a break, book-marking the page for ongoing reading at some later stage[49].

The artist Marcel Duchamp discuses the significance of the spectator as co-creator: 'The spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and

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[49] The philosophical importance of the absurd, of irreverence and of humour will be delineated in the next section.

interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his contribution to the creative act' (Duchamp, 1973, p.140). Jacquelynn Baas, borrowing from John Cage, believes that Duchamp:

> changed not only how we experience art, but how we experience life. He helped us see that everything in the world is worthy of our attention, and to understand that this – our attention – is the creative active act (Baas, 2004, p.20).

This is an important insight. At the same time it should be noted that the 'we' and the 'us' here are problematic. If they are used in a global or universal context, Baas's text is flawed given the discourse that has taken place in this essay, with regard a particular history of art, technology and philosophy. If it refers to a North American readership (the text is published in the U.S.A.) or a Euro-American readership, she could be correct in general terms, arguably. However this then may be perceived as giving her text an Orientalist dimension. However in the context of this thesis discourse, the critical importance here is to recognise that Baas's description of the perception of the creative act is not something that emerged with Duchamp, though he certainly has evolved the idea in a particular context, but is core to the history of South and East Asian art and culture.

The development of ideas around *shunyata* in art in India, China, and Japan took place through the influence of buddhism. The Sanskrit term *akasha,* meaning as 'space' and/or 'atmosphere'*,* emerges through physical manipulation. In the monumental rock-cut edifices of Ellora, emptiness is integral and crucial to the architecture and art. Carmel Berkson states 'the space which permeates, pervades, and envelops these solid forms is the ultimate unifier, denoting the fullness of the Absolute' (p.40). The artefact essentially exists only to enable that ontological process.

Section Three

zero = every day?

Fig. 28   *zero = every day?* **Still Image 1**

Date   **2010**

Image by   **raphael jay adjani, Akiko Ban, Daniel Somerville and Takashi**

Nishida

zero = every day? is a film that lasts twenty-four minutes. The length is chosen deliberately as it is a multiple of eight, and increasingly the author's works engage with the number eight as well as the number zero, as is delineated in the film itself. *zero = every day?* is conceived and directed by the author. The author, Akiko Ban, Daniel Somerville and Takashi Nishida created the images and text-images. Sound is composed Joey Draycott and Rob Palmer; as well as by adjani working with sound engineer Gareth Jenkinson. Narration is written and performed by adjani.

zero = every day? evolves *zero keynote* and *zero narration* which were both elements of an installation: *zero: the aroma of technology, flavour of art, to savour being*, presented in Tokyo, at Gakushuin Women's College, 15th December 2009. A

version of *relationship-place naka-ma* was presented in the context of this installation. The performers for the Tokyo installation were the author, Akiko Ban and Takashi Nishida, assisted by students of the Gakushuin Women's College in Tokyo.

zero = every day? engages with the concept of *shunya*-zero and *shunyata* (emptiness) as well as engaging with the technologies of the every day: working with technologies in its current commonplace sense to engage with technology in its ontological sense. Engaging with buddhist, shinto and tantric notions that all phenomena are sacred, the author has been engaged increasingly in developing work through and with technology of the everyday, with consumer applications as well as with some corporate technology and processes. This has involved deliberate working with applications such as PowerPoint, iWeb, Keynote, iMovie; working with 'lo-fi' recorders that exist on camera phones, recording visual images – moving and still – with such phones also. In one sense this could be thought of as situations where 'shallow' technology may reveal 'deep' technology. Another description could be 'towards a "poor" technology'. In part there is a deliberate attempt to engage with a particular kind of *wabi sabi* that certain commentators have attributed to Rikyu's tea ceremony. This is mirrored in other works such as a recent project, *loss 0.5 bangkok*, presented in Bangkok, Thailand in December 2010, where conventional theatre lighting is de-emphasised in favour of 'practicals' such as mobile phone screen lights, cycle lamps and domestic table lamps.

Fig. 29   *loss 0.5 bangkok* **poster image**

Date   **2010**

Image by   Supanit Riansrivilai

For details of this project see: http://www.8technology.net/8/loss_-.html
23/3/11, 03.36.

Scenographically the working process engages with the every day and the premise
of finding the sacred in the every day by using found objects in a number of ways.
One of these is using the technologies and equipments and resources that one finds
immediately before one. Therefore scenographically each location of presentation
will shape the work. Taking on board an ideal of *wabi sabi* and a kind of *technology*
povera, for *zero - the aroma of technology the flavour of art*, *to savour being*,

presented in Tokyo the author deliberately chose to seek (and found) lights in a *100 Yen Shop* (equivalent of a *Pound Shop* in UK) to light the work. Some images for *relationship-place naka-ma* and works in the *zero* series were deliberately shot with a Nokia N95 cameraphone. This is not a refusal to work in 'hi-tech' but a working process where it is not the godhead[50], and where it is part of a wider dimensional ontological art praxis. The question is less what technology one is using - whether it is 'hi-tech' or 'lo-tech' - but how one is using it.

The nature of the composition of *zero = every day?* approaches a form-theme synthesis, formally engaging with some of the concepts discussed. Moreover, here it interrogates the notion of 'practice as theory' and 'theory as practice'. This brings into question the notion of difference and distinction between the two, and the perceived some time privileging of theory over practice in art and humanities research. Moreover this may have resonance with parallel approaches such as, the aforementioned performance-lectures and lecture-texts of John Cage (1973); 'film essays', such as some of those of Chris Marker (1983)[51]; together with some of the textual strategies of Jacques Derrida, in works such as *Tympan*. In addition, it corresponds in part to the online publication *zero – the confluence of art and technology*. It also attempts such a form-theme synthesis. Furthermore, the nature of the composition also serves to engage with conceptions of a polyphonic 'i'.

Moreover with the Keynote software used for making the film, there was a particular dynamic being developed between stillness and movement. One of the aims here is to actually develop a sense of stillness in moving image, as well as

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[50] A sentiment sometimes experienced by the author when participating in electronic art and new media festivals, such as Ars Electronica and Zero One.

[51] It should be noted here that the term 'film essay' was not coined or used by Chris Marker (also known as Chris. Marker), but by critics assessing his work and that of others who they deemed to be following a similar practice.

movement in still image. Here one takes into consideration ideas on photography by Roland Barthes:

> In the Photograph, the event is never transcended for the sake of something else: the Photograph always leads the corpus I need back to the body I see; it is the absolute Particular, the sovereign Contingency, matte and somehow stupid, the *This* (this photograph, and not Photography), in short, what Lacan call the *Tuché,* the Occasion, the Encounter, the real, in its indefatigable expression. In order to designate reality, Buddhism says *sunya,* the void; but better still: *tathata,* as Alan Watts has it, the fact of being this, of being thus, of being so; *tat* means *that* in Sanskrit and suggests the gesture of the child pointing his finger at something and saying: *that, there it is, lo!* But says nothing else; a photograph cannot be transformed (spoken) philosophically, it is wholly ballasted by the contingency of which it is the weightless, transparent envelope (Barthes, 1984, pp.4-5).

Each 'slide' acts as much like a still life tableau distinct but still inter-dependent on all the other slides. With the *zero* installation in Tokyo the time was deliberately stretched in such processes to create a work of sixty-four minutes in duration (multiple of 8 i.e. 8 x 8).

In addition, it corresponds in part to the online publication *zero – the confluence of art and technology*, which also attempts such a form-theme synthesis. Furthermore, the nature of the composition also serves to engage with conceptions of a polyphonic 'i'. *zero = every day?* engages in many ways with the every day and the premise of finding the sacred in the every day by using found objects and technologies: deliberately choosing to use the technologies, processes, equipment and resources that one finds immediately before one.

Zero, concrete poetry, and the ciné roman

The film *zero = every day?,* the book *zero – the confluence and art of technology,* the internet works *iPak* and *pages of madness* consider architecture of text-image-sound, where text is sometimes image, or image is sometimes text. Sometimes it is both as is calligraphy. Moreover such writing may contain philosophic concepts that evade straightforward intellectualisation. The *shigajiku* poem-painting scroll practice mentioned earlier was widely popular in 15th Century Japan. The significance of the relationship between word and image that is being developed through this thesis needs to be with the understanding that in China the word for writing and painting in the past has been synonymous. In Japanese, both these words are pronounced as *kaku* although written with different characters.

Mary Ellen Solt in her study of concrete poetry, acknowledges that the form evades easy definition. However she confirms that the concrete poet is concerned with establishing a new relationship to space (the page or its equivalent) and/or to time (abandoning the old linear measure) (Solt, 1971). For example, it has been calculated that it would take over a hundred million years to experience every single permutation of image with text and sound in *pages of madness,* assuming that human civilisation as it is currently known could survive that far. Digital technology, new desktop publishing possibilities certainly impacts greatly on relationships of space and time for a concrete poet. Ultimately Solt defines a concrete poem as that where form equals theme; and theme equals form. Had the possibility been available to him this author would submit his thesis as a concrete essay only - without practical portfolio – embodying such an approach.

Current digital technology also permits a pertinent conceptual revisiting of the aforementioned *ciné-roman*: the literary film - films to be read as much as viewed - and the book publications that could follow or accompany them. The artists

involved in constructing the *ciné-romans* - Jean Cayroll, Marguerite Duras, Chris Marker, Alain Resnais, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Agnes Varda - each had a particular view of how the *ciné-roman* was defined. For Varda it was the construction of 'a film to read': 'un film à lire' (1965, p.42). Robbe–Grillet placed emphasis on the publication of the literary *ciné-roman* after the film: a book that is especially useful for those who have not seen the film (Van Wert, 1978, p.27). Robbe-Grillet specifies that the literary *ciné-roman* can be read leisurely or studied, whereas a film cannot. It functions also like a libretto for an opera, supplementing the spectator's experience of the film reading with a literal reading.

The works and concepts that the author has instigated such as *zero = every day? pages of madness, chaos, jukebox, phant_Asia – asylum of desire*, *www.8technology.net*, embodies and permits both kinds of reading to take place. One could also say this about films seen on VCR and DVD players, or recorded on Sky satellite boxes. With the web, it is a more complete experience that one could also easily slip in and out of: whether at home, at a café, or at the office. This is enhanced by the ongoing proliferation and ease of access of Mobile Broadband Internet. This is in part due to the different lengths of the work, and work made for different attention spans. More significant are two other factors. The first concerns a reader's ability to sample. At this time, almost anyone can lift pages, text, images etc from other web works and place them in her/his own work or archive it in some way. Secondly, the instigator of the work (sometimes called artist), can much more easily re-create the work through sampling, through re-edits. If the instigator so wishes, and in the author's case this is true, it can be a work that exists both in the moment and in continuum. At the same time one does not discount the possibility of work-in-continuum in the cinema. For example, the works of Wong Kar-wai, such as the loose 'trilogy' of *Days of Being Wild*, *In the Mood for Love* and *2046*, immediately come to mind here: films whose production and presentation span a number of years, exhibiting a sense of a cinema in continuum.

As the Internet access becomes increasingly cheaper and accessible in other ways, works on the web actually can combine aspects of the film and book publication. Devices such as the iPad[52], as well as those that will follow them, will evolve such a process. One could imagine another kind of writing emerging as commonplace in a digital realm, somewhere between the *ciné-romanists* and concrete poetry.

The book publication of *ciné-romans* after the release of the films had a number of purposes. They functioned, as aforementioned, like a libretto for an opera. One could here consider the author's half of the online book publication *zero – the confluence of art and technology* as a kind of libretto for *zero = every day?*. The *ciné-romans* supplemented the spectator's experience of the film reading with a literal reading. They permitted those who had not seen the film to experience something of its ideology. It must be remembered that these films were not highly commercial and did not have long runs, nor were they shown extensively in all theatres around France. The author's 'kiné poèmes' on the web could incorporate all these facets. Assuming one has access to a computer, which most people in the United Kingdom now do, it is a work that can be endlessly reviewed, paused, re-wound, fast forwarded etc. It is a further evolution from the processes of VCRs and DVDs, and of course is analogous to books.

Critics have pointed out that, given the language used in films such as *Hiroshima mon amour* (Resnais, 1959) or *L'annéé dernière à Marienbad* (Resnais, 1961), '*ciné-poème'* would have been a more accurate term than *ciné-roman*. Perhaps the methodology for *phant_Asia – asylum of desire* is one that moves toward a *ciné-poème*. Moreover if one were to incorporate kinaesthetic methodologies perhaps it could be termed a *kiné-poème*.

Given the current mobile technology poems and utterances can be created

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[52] The iPad was released by Apple around the time of writing.

deliberately on the move for others on the move. Current devices such as, Blackberries, iPhones, mobile broadband dongles in combination with current social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Flickr facilitate this. Twitter allows a passage of 140 characters only. Like the suggestive brevity of a haiku, it may be used to evoke a certain idea rather than expose it[53]. Like the haiku's ability to capture swiftly and briefly, a landscape, a mood, a season, one may find a contemporary global equivalent in a tweet or photograph sent while waiting for a bus in rural Maharashtra, sitting in a traffic jam in a taxi in Bangkok, travelling on a plane through the stratosphere, or lolling at a café in Calabria: uniquely sharing a particular atmosphere simultaneously with anyone in the world who wishes to share it[54]. One has in mind here the notion of *rasa* - theorised in the *Natyasastra* - to generate aestheticised moods, flavours, feelings. The processes at play in the aforementioned inter-active poetry also mirrors this 'art of effect'.

The potential of brief 'intervals' (*ma*, once again) of reading 'kiné poèmes' between (or during!) a business meeting are intriguing. The aspect of 'interval' here is poignant. It is accepted that tweeters, and other netizens will only be interested in the site for a few seconds and 'switch channel' unless something engages them very quickly to remain at a particular web page. Furthermore, large texts do not hold browsers' attention. They either move to another page or print the page off. The thinking here is to instigate works that, like advertising, are 'brief encounters', momentary interjections. Of course there are other kinds of *kiné-poemes* like *poems on the underground in* London's underground rail network. The poetic utterance with condensed language and meaning is highly communicative in this context: enabling sophisticated messages to be engendered and communicated in relatively short spaces of time. Here also the *kiné-poèmes* operate a similar dynamic to that between a spectator and painting in a physical gallery: allowing manual and mechanistic inter-activity yet also permitting a spectator to choose her

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[53] For further details see: http://www.twitter.com/8__technology (1/7/2010, 21:04).

[54] This also adds new meaning to the notion of travel writing.

or his temporal level of engagement.

In a period where retention levels appear to get ever shorter, a web page invariably has to be an almost instant hit; otherwise, a reader may stop reading and move to another site or page. The condensed language of poetry allows complicated or sophisticated messages to be engendered and communicated in relatively short spaces of time. Yet unlike the involuntary process of television advertising, or with viewing a film in the cinema, a spectator cannot easily re-view it as often as he/she would like. Here also the *kiné-poèmes* operate a similar dynamic to that between a spectator and painting in a physical gallery: they allow manual and mechanistic inter-activity but it also permits a spectator to choose his temporal level of engagement.

The *www.8technology.net* work is constructed in certain ways to slow down such fast motion, subverting usual structure. Moreover it is developed with deliberate imperfection, and a simplicity of style using a simple programme that can be accessible and usable by almost all who have computer access: iWeb. While many websites are being constantly updated, some by the second, the purpose here is to engage with such a process in a ritualistic manner, as a daily exercise that may resonate with the tending of a dry sand (*kare sansui*) zen garden or a 'daily tea ceremony'.

Chris Marker'*s* CD-ROM *Immemory* (2002) may appear to problematise this notion, through the length of some of its texts. In one section there is a commentary of several pages on the screen. Although the text is intellectually stimulating, it is physiologically tiresome to read, and not easy to download. However, like a Noh theatre experience it may not matter whether one drifts off while reading. One may wake with a memorable line or thought or feeling. A similar methodology is followed with *zero = every day?*.

The nature of the relationship that in *zero = every day?* is being reflected on also concerns an inter-relation of photographic image, typographic image and sound so that there is not an authorial track: where no track - film, sound, or text - is dominant, but exist in inter-relation. In *pages of madness* photographic image is de-emphasised in relation to typographic image: 'un film à lire'.

In comparison to the *ciné-romanists* such as Alain Resnais and Alain Robbe-Grillet, whose work took place in a still relatively commercial film structure, the author's *modus operandus* more closely resembles an *art brut, an art of poverty, a technology of poverty.* Although he may not have access to or choose not to use some of the so called 'high production values', his processes with such works gives him greater prerogative, adaptability, engagement, and accessibility. *zero = every day?,* in principle, points to an ethos, that such technological art can be 'accessed' by all and such processes are accessible to all to create technological art.

Section Four
relationship-place naka-ma

Psychospheres and Cyberspace

relationship-place naka-ma filmic installations engage with the ideas of 'psychosphere' of the tea ceremony as delineated by Suzuki. Such a psychosphere could be described as the space or place of becoming. Reflecting on Suzuki's notion of the psychosphere it is pertinent that architectural historian Kiyoshi Takeyama believes there is a resonance and there are parallels in Ando's residential architecture with the architecture of the tea house in the 'way of tea', as conceived by seminal tea-master Sen no Rikyu four hundred years earlier:

Both are enclosed and concentrated. Both have a deliberately created simple appearance. Both are calm, quiet, and pure. Both are gentle, austere, and clear in mood. Both are dimly lit but have light within their darkness. Both give a feeling of expansiveness in spite of their small size. Though set in cities, both are rural in nature. Though artificial, both are natural. They are neither commonplace nor monumental (Takeyama, 1983, p.166).

While Ando writes of the problematics of our electronic environment, virtual designer and theorist Michael Heim believes the technology and technological practice of cyberspace may ultimately also be a *modus operandus* to engender similar spiritual centres or, borrowing from Suzuki, psychospheres (Heim, 2002, pp.286-291). He correlates four principle qualities of the 'way of tea'*,* with features of cyberspace, suggesting that the dynamics of the ceremony may be a guide for developing a sense of place. The four features are 'harmony' (Japanese: *wa*); 'respect' (Japanese *kei*), 'purity' (Japanese: *sei*) and 'serenity' (Japanese: *jaku*). For Heim, each relates to pertinent virtual design issues that currently need to be addressed.

Wa refers to systematic coherence, currently lacking in the Web. *Kei* refers to respect of materials used and of the presence of other people. For Heim distance is crucial in engendering respect and he believes that the tele-presence of the web in part erodes this respect. *Sei* manifests in the minimalisms of the tea ceremony, corresponding to the emptiness and minimalism of cyberspace. Heim cites another designer, William Bricken, at the University of Washington's Human Interface Technology Laboratory who conceives cyberspace as *shunyata*. Yet Heim also believes that there is a need to address the issue of this emptiness rapidly filling with junk, particularly junk mail: 'we need to reflect the essential loneliness of cyberspace in the electronic environments we create' (Heim, 2002, p.291).

Cyberspace currently does not offer the holistic privacy to enable 'serenity' (*jaku*): 'when we write e-mail, we might as well be shouting our message from the rooftop' *(2002, p291.)*. A number of net artists have explored subjects around this theme. Some have taken a contrary position such as the Italian based media group 0100101110101101.ORG who, with its work *Life_Sharing*, created in 2001, and viewable at: http://www.0100101110101101.org/download/life_sharing.html, (23/02/10, 18.06) see privacy as a redundant notion, preferring to think in relational terms. For now, it is worth noting that Heim, taking Alfred North Whitehead's perception of concrete reality as a dynamic process, believes the idea of world as event-based and occasion-centred is significant for comprehending virtual worlds. It is of course resonant with Ando's aforementioned notion of *shintai*. Heim writes:

> Despite the Western predilection for substances and permanence, the virtual worlds team must accept the passing, changing, flowing nature of actual occasions. By accepting the flow, the virtual worlds team regains the power of actual experiences in a culture that increasingly receives its realities in pre-packaged formulas...

> One of the implications of flow, then, is that the unit of intelligibility and of value shifts. Instead of the sacred book, the event comes to foreground. Instead of information, the event receives priority. We misconstrue the Internet if we think of it as a vast information library or system of information. The Internet is also a test bed of new life forms like avatars. And avatars come to life through interactive events. The event combines literacy and playful sociality in a series of meaning-conferring events that imprint themselves as memories through their visual strength and topical cogency (Heim, 2000).

The current actuality of cyberspace is far from Heim's vision, or that of William Bricken. However, in the context of the omnipresent and almost all-pervasiveness of this electronic world, and in relation to tantric, animist, and buddhist notions of all phenomena being sacred, the practical investigation of cyberspace designers such as Heim will be of ever-increasing importance in generating virtual psychospheres. Ultimately it is less a question of what it is, but how we operate. This is about philosophy and psychology.

relationship-place naka-ma film
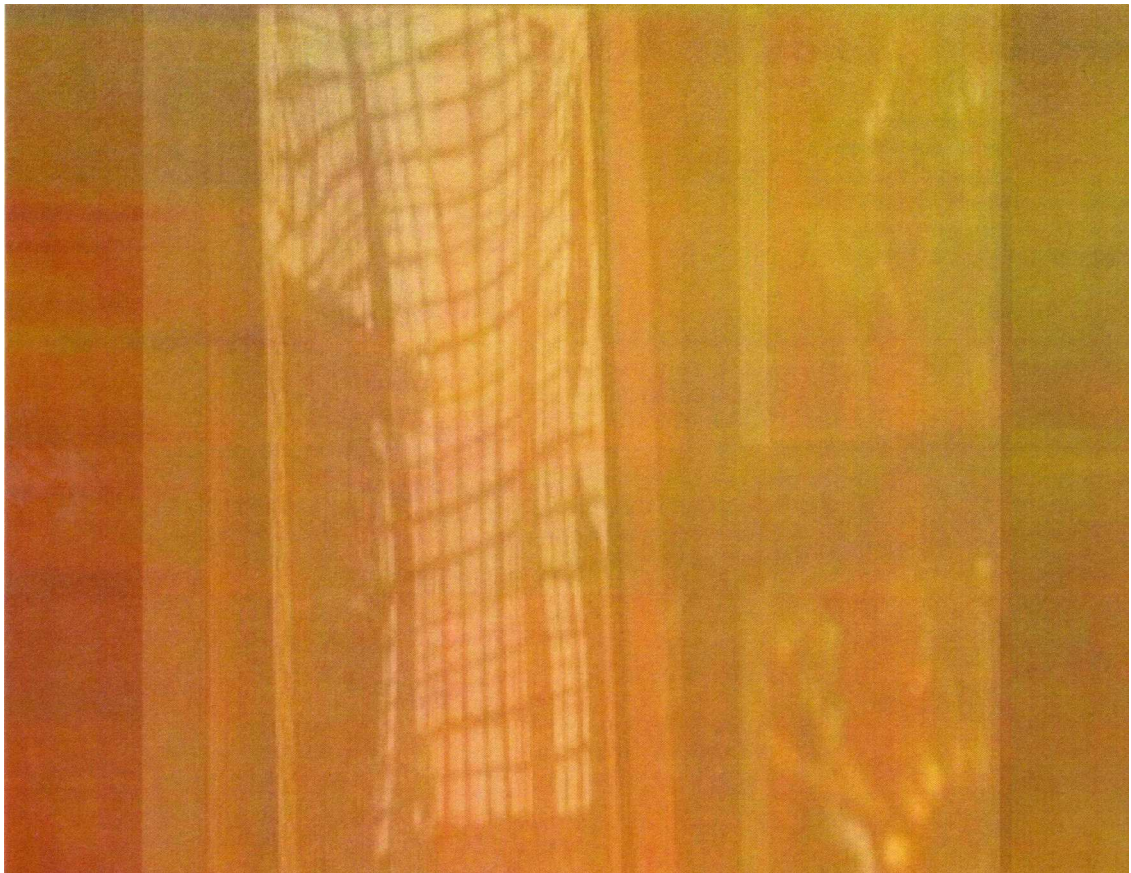
Fig. 30 _relationship-place naka-ma,_ **Still Image 1**

Date **2009**

Image by **raphael jay adjani and Daniel Somerville**

relationship-place naka-ma is conceived and directed by raphael jay adjani. Video and still imagery are by raphael jay adjani. Editing is by Daniel Somerville. Sound-music in this thesis version is by Joey Draycott. It has been presented in varying contexts and as elements within other presentations/works, including:

- Online specifically for www.8technology.net webwork
  http://www.8technology.net/8/film__rp_nm/Entries/2010/9/20_relationship
  -place_naka-ma.html, 5 June 2010 – Present.
- *performance ecology*, public talk as part of workshop, CEM, Lisbon, Portugal, 25 February 2011.
- *performance ecology*, public lecture presentation, for the Research Centre: University of the Algarve, Faro, Portugal, 23 February 2011.
- *atmospheres,* installation, Bangkok Code, King Mongkut University of Technology Thonburi, (K.M.U.T.T.), Bangkok, Thailand, 2 December, 2010.
- *4D – a tea ceremony,* Accidental Festival, BAC, London, U.K. (adjani *et. al.* May 2010).
- *zero (hybrid 2)*, MIC Toi Rerehiko, Auckland, New Zealand January to March 2010.
- *less than formal tea ceremony*, Goldsmiths, University of London, 5 October, 2009
- *way of tea – an art of conviviality*, Kube Gallery, Poole, UK, (ajaykumar, *et al.* 30 October – 26 November, 2009).

As earlier alluded to the interaction, immersion, conviviality and spatio-temporal uniqueness of tea ceremony concepts found in Japan, are crucial to the conceptual process of *relationship-place naka-ma*. Taking from the 'way of tea'
, the film is presented each time with the spirit of a particular one-to-one experience. In Japan there is an expression 'one meeting, one chance'/'one meeting, one opportunity' (*ichi go ichi e)* – which embodies this idea - whether for

individually requested and specifically created one-to-one presentations or for contexts involving groups of people; even for the Internet.

relationship-place naka-ma is a film engaging with a particular notion of architecture not as built edifice only; but a concept of architecture as an ongoing dynamic inter-action of built edifice, the people (spectators) who frequent it and the surrounding landscape – topographic, cultural, social. This idea is discussed earlier with regard Tadao Ando and this version of the film engages in particular with the built edifice known as the Water Temple. Such a phenomenological process in art shifts emphasis away from object and more toward spaces of being and becoming.

As well as the tea ceremony historical, architectural and conceptual starting points include rock cut edifices of Ellora and Ajanta; architecture of Tadao Ando, zen gardens, the Inland Sea (*Seto Naikai*), Isamu Noguchi's gardens and museums. The film could be said to embody the essentially phenomenological interaction of a spectator (the author) with a number of architectural locations and landscapes.

Furthermore there is an additional a-spectatorial process. *relationship-place naka-ma* is a 'film in continuum': it is an ongoing work of process manifesting uniquely and specially for each context of presentation. Sound and image are edited specifically for each situation, as is its overall manner and mode of engagement. In this sense the *relationship-place* is site, space, time and spectator specific: hence its title. Spectators may arrange their own one-time-one-place engagement with the audio-visual imagery, in any location in the world, in any context, with one person or with as many as they wish, by contacting its editor Daniel Somerville. He will then work with the author to create a specific scenography for that manifestation, that experience, taking in to account the feelings, moods, sensibilities and sensitivities of its spectator-guests, as much as they can perceive

and imagine them through their communication. In this sense it may be a *tea ceremony without 'tea'*.

There is a further play on words here. The word *naka-ma* in Japan also denotes various kinds of companionship, coterie, of being 'mates'. This notion emphasises conviviality, which could be said to be at the heart of tea ceremony processes.

Stillness and Motion in *relationship-place naka-ma*

There is a deliberate play with the dynamics of stillness and motion in the film. This is in part an engagement with Barthes' ideas, as mentioned with regard *zero = every day?*. Whereas *zero = every day?* uses the software and context of corporate PowerPoint and Keynote applications to achieve this primarily, *relationship-place naka-ma* works primarily with a compositional strategy that involves a particular combination and synthesis of still images and moving images. Here moving images seem to be still at times, and still images appear to move. For ease of readership and clarity the critical reference is repeated here:

> In the Photograph, the event is never transcended for the sake of something else: the Photograph always leads the corpus I need back to the body I see; it is the absolute Particular, the sovereign Contingency, matte and somehow stupid, the *This* (this photograph, and not Photography), in short, what Lacan call the *Tuché,* the Occasion, the Encounter, the real, in its indefatigable expression. In order to designate reality, Buddhism says *sunya,* the void; but better still: *tathata,* as Alan Watts has it, the fact of being this, of being thus, of being so; *tat* means *that* in Sanskrit and suggests the gesture of the child pointing his finger at something and saying: *that, there it is, lo!* But says nothing else; a photograph cannot be transformed (spoken)

philosophically, it is wholly ballasted by the contingency of which it is the

weightless, transparent envelope (Barthes, 1984, pp.4-5).

While Barthes contends that the photograph rather than the moving image of film

is a space of contemplation, the approach here is to create such a psychosphere

in film.

Sound in *relationship-place naka-ma*

The relationship of sound and image is critical in filmmaking. Popular commercial

film appear to make sound subservient to image. The attempt with *relationship-

place naka-ma* is to develop a more egalitarian approach, with sound and image

entering into a relational discourse. Earlier, (in Chapter Three, Section Three), a

statement on relationship between sound and image by filmmaker Robert Bresson

was cited partially in relating to the approach to the work *Laal Shaari*. As the

philosophy and aesthetic of such ideas are crucial to the process of making

relationship-place naka-ma here his statement is included in full:

To know thoroughly what business that sound (or that image) has there.

□

What is for the eye must not duplicate what is for the ear.

□

If the eye is entirely won, give nothing or almost nothing to the

ear * One cannot be at the same time all eye and all ear.

□

When a sound can replace an image, cut the image or

neutralize it. The ear goes more toward the within, the eye toward the

outer.

□

A sound must never come to the help of an image, nor an image to the help of a sound.

☐

If the sound is the obligatory complement of an image, give preponderance either to the sound or to the image. If equal, they damage or kill each other, as we say of colors.

☐

Image and sound must not support each other, but must work each in turn through *a sort of relay.*

☐

The eye solicited alone makes the ear impatient, the ear solicited alone makes the eye impatient. *Use these impatiences*. Power of the cinematographer who appeals to the two senses *in a governable way*. Against the tactics of speed, of noise, set tactic of slowness, of silence.

(Translated by Jonathan Griffin)

*And vice versa, if the ear is entirely won, give nothing to the eye
(Bresson in Weis and Bolton, 1985, p.149).

Such thinking is pertinent to *zero = every day?* also. There are problematics, highlighted by Cage of what constitutes 'sound' and what constitutes 'silence'. Thinking about the ear being entirely won, one may consider that *radio play* is a film, with the imagery played out in the imagination. These are relative. For example although one knows the world is round, most of the time one tends to operate as if it is flat basically with undulations. When one stands still one is also standing on the planet Earth that is travelling 107,000 kilometres per hour approximately around the Sun. Truth is relative. Engaging with such a paradigm is part of the process of playing with dynamics of 'stillness' and 'motion', 'sound' and 'silence' in numerous works by the author, including *relationship-place naka-ma* and *zero = every day?*.

Section Five

Art Production as Curatorial Process and Co-Creation

Through the potential contribution of potentially innumerable other artists' work to the composition of *chaos*, *jukebox,* and *platform*, the work evades a purely singular artistic view of an historic and ongoing social tragedy. Rather it embraces a pluralistic approach: one that may engender a sense of history's polyphony. *iPak - 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses* in this sense is a collective work - made through the potential inter-action and participation of innumerable artists and spectators who bring the three works fully into 'being': works that both transform second by second, and evolve over a number of years. There are parallel processes in pages of madness and the *phant-Asia* concept. Ultimately, *iPak - 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses* is a project that interrogates not only tragedy but, the notion of art as a healing, regenerative force.

The author sees some of his current intellectual-creative processes more as ones which may combine both pedagogic processes and curatorial processes that engage spectator-artists who maybe anonymous. This is the case with current works such as *iPak*, which come into being through spectator participation – some times literally as 'artists'; with concepts such as *phant-Asia - asylum of desire*. Pedagogical and participative processes in such as *zero (hybrid2)*, *way of tea –an art of conviviality*, *4D - a tea ceremony*, as well as a planned future participatory *8* internet art work*: no.thing*.
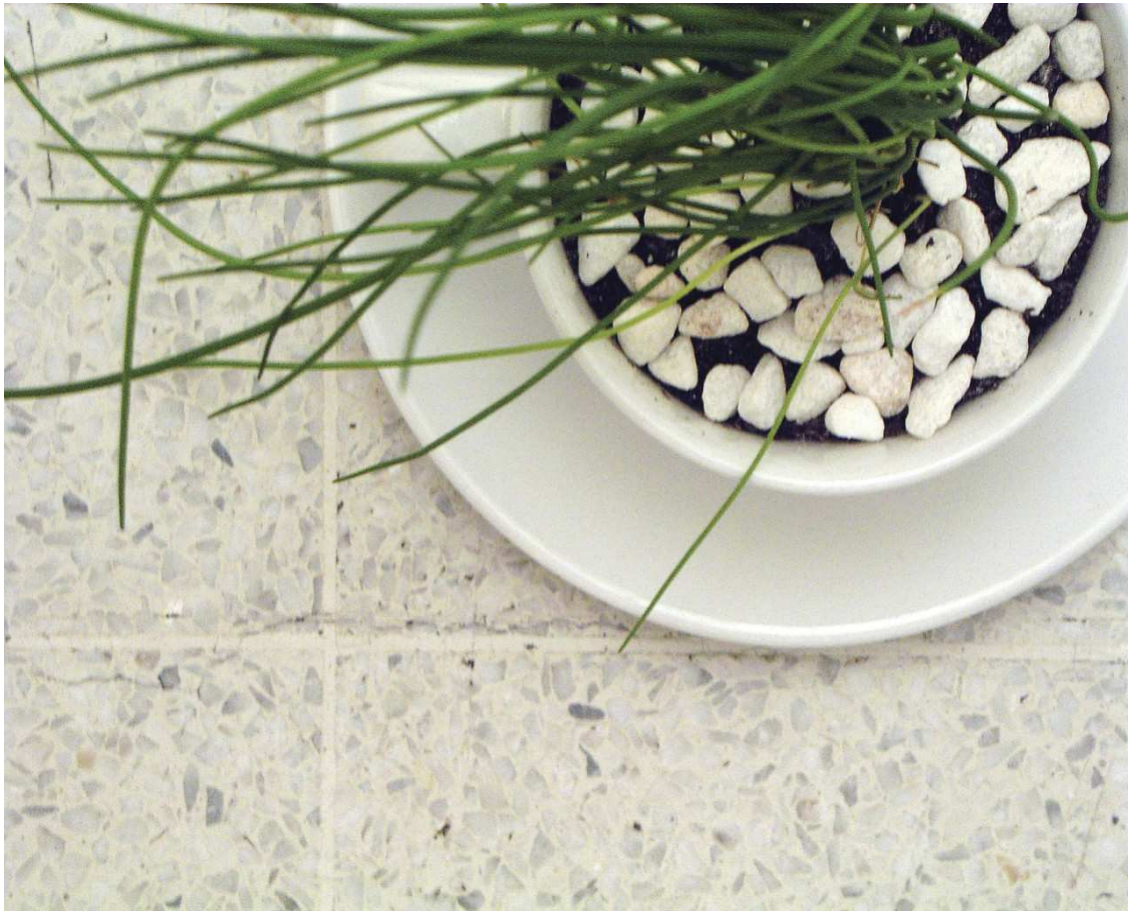
Fig 31   *way of tea* press image 4

Date   2009

Image by   raphael jay adjani and Ravi Juneja

In other works it is less overt but intentional. *zen gardens without the 'zen'* is conceived in this context. Earlier works conceived or co-conceived by adjani-ajaykumar – such as *tabula rasa* (1997), *dogs of desire* (1995), *PanOptiKa* (1998), were collaborative processes with other 'professional' artists and had elements of spectator-artist 'co-creation'. *pages of madness* has a rudimentary format for discourse: a viewer may respond to the manifestation by email with feedback that enables further response and a dialogue to emerge. Dialogue is one of the foundation elements of the *iPak* trilogy (*chaos*, *jukebox* and *platform*), where viewers may upload items in response to mine, which become incorporated into the work. Chris Marker in *Sunless* (1983) supposedly incorporates film footage sent to him by others

into the work, and calls himself the editor of the work, not the director. This author is less concerned with the exposition of an individual thinking than a development of a continuum and a polyphony.

If the structures of artistic and academic dissemination and academic output would easily allow it, this author would choose anonymity. Works of art in a social, public realm interest him more here where one may evade having a signature on a work, elude a plaque, dispense with a catalogue: where artist is medium rather than *auteur*. Despite one not knowing definitively who realised the current form of zen garden of Ryoan-ji, which dates from around the 17th Century C.E. in Japan, it appears to continue to engender an epistemological process. *iPak* is 'engendered' by ajaykumar not 'created' by him, nor 'authored' by him. The author considers separating his legal name from his public/artistic name, his legal gender form his public/artistic gender, his nationality from his public/artistic nationality in the future.

Pertinently when one sits on the temple veranda, from which the Ryoan-ji garden is meant to be viewed, the human eye cannot take it in one vista. Takahiko Iimura and Arata Isozaki's film, *Ma: space/time in the garden of Ryoan-ji*, uses a scenographic strategy of series of tracking shots to emphasise this aspect with regard Ryoan-ji (Iimura and Isozaki, 1991).

Section Six

Conclusion

The approach to the films and the research is necessarily phenomenological. The Water Temple that is presented is not the built edifice only but the people who frequent it (adjani and by extension his collaborators), and a wider landscape. The

film in this sense is emblematic of a work of architecture or perhaps better expressed: architectural process. In this sense it is in sharp contrast with most architectural imagery in architectural publications, where the building is presented mostly without the presence of people, and not essentially in relationship to wider landscape. The wider landscape is not just the literal landscape around the Water Temple, but one that takes into consideration the author's subjective, emotional and aesthetic world. As Heisenberg writes: 'What we observe is not Nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning' (In Capra, 1983, p.152).

Unfortunately, despite Ando's philosophical notions on architecture, most of the imagery in books produced about his work seem to display the built edifice primarily. The built edifice here could be seen as the embodiment of the ego of the artist-architect. This points to an anthropocentric or egocentric view point. The attempt in this thesis in all its components is not to interpret art works and by implication the intention of the author.

The attempt in this thesis is to engage with the philosophical idea first and foremost, not simply the 'bricks and mortar' (or in Ando's case: the concrete). Such a phenomenological process in art shifts emphasis away from object and more toward the potential spaces of being and becoming.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

This is a personal journey. That is one of the first things that need to be understood. Professor Geoffrey Crossick, the Vice–Chancellor of the University of London, as well as former Head of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, and former Warden of Goldsmiths, University of London, where the author lectures currently, had a meeting, as the Warden, with faculty members of his department in 2006. In this meeting he asked those present their views on the problematics of assessing practice as research. The author responded that one of the issues is that the Academy needs to see it in terms of a through line that is the lifetime work of the artist-researcher. He or she is the through line.

One trusts that it is clear that one is not talking literal autobiography. While there is a title, the research, and a theme, its exploration comes only through the evolution of the line of the artist-researcher. In Japan human beings as artists may be reclassified as 'intangible national assets' or 'national treasures'. If one accepts such a premise the research here, the engendering of original contributions to knowledge, is focused on the journey of these human beings. While this may appear to emphasise anthropocentrism, the purpose of citing this notion here is to further evolve the idea of the intangible and the insubstantial in research terms and to problematise the focus in research terms on tangible outcomes.

Marcel Duchamp stated towards the end of his life: 'My art would be that of living: each second, each breadth is a work which is inscribed nowhere, which is neither visual nor cerebral. It is a sort of constant euphoria' (Cabanne, 1971, p.72). Here one moves away from art object and moves toward process. If one accepts such a notion, in this context this thesis research aims to engender 'new knowledge' in terms of:

- o Evolution of knowledge with regard interactions between body, humanly constructed entities, wider environments and ecologies.
- o Trans-cultural, trans-disciplinary insights on current thinking relating to art, architecture, technology, ontological practice and spectatorship.
- o New considerations of perceptions of cyberspace, and technological practice.
- o A contribution to a counter thesis vis-à-vis the colonial project of objectification and ossification of the other.

In this research it is a *sine qua non* that the author utilises his own experiential learning, his own artistic investigation, his own practical research. However the nature of such a first person is in question. It differs from a Cartesian 'I' and the 'I' latterly used by authors such as Luce Irigaray and is more akin to a notion of 'i' in small capitals and one that exists only in relation, not in distinction. The concept in buddhism of a body and external space that are 'two but not two' further elaborates relational origination. It concerns a definition of self that exists in an interstice between what we conventionally think of as our body and the external space. Given that our bodies are porous, at an elementary point of view even, it is not at all clear where and how a body begins and ends, how 'I' begins and ends. If a person breathes in the air around her, it becomes a part of her body. If she breathes it out, and if the second person breathes that air in it becomes a part of his body. Does the first person also become a part of the second person?

In his *Literary and Art Theories in Japan*, Ueda's chapter on Rikyu and the *way of tea*, is entitled 'Life as Art' (Ueda, 1967, pp87-100). If one engages with the zen term 'mindfulness' it is clear the notion here is not that all life is art but that which could be perceived as such is life experienced through apperceptive being. At the beginning of the thesis is a quotation from Werner Heisenberg:

> In our age, however, we live in a world which man has changed so
> completely that in every sphere – whether we deal with the tools of daily

life, whether we eat food which has been prepared by machines, or whether we travel in a countryside radically changed by man – we are always meeting man-made creations, so that in a sense we meet only ourselves (Heisenberg, 1970, p.23).

Even in the remote Amazon Jungle there exist the Internet as well as schools based on satellite education. Tourism is an almost all-pervasive technology. Traditional floating markets are now re-created as 'theme parks' in Thailand. In this sense what and how is the art? Tate Modern and similar corporations may also be considered to be less cathedrals of art and more shopping malls. In this kind of technological world, we may meet only ourselves. Yet if one moves away from the art object, one considers art now to be in this context the relational being: the relational being where one is or is part of the art in question. While Basho wrote that the most exquisite poetry is found in daily life this is not quite the sense of what one is discussing here, but rather, one is considering ephemeral entity that exists nowhere; an entity in which humans may be apperceptively immersed. Earlier the notion was outlined of a practice of art as a yoga, and writing as yoga. What is being considered here is that on the profound level, all aspects of human engagement, activity and inter-action, including art-making, are potentially yogic practice – depending on the intentions, actions and capabilities of the practitioner. So the process of living can be understood to be both art and yoga.

laal shaari, *radio play*, *tate modern*, *zen gardens without the 'zen'*, *zero – the confluence of art and technology*, *relationship–place naka-ma*, *etcetera* are not considered by the author to be art works. At best these 'objects' and 'entities' may be considered to be precursors to and precipitators of a knowing and being. While this process of being can be described as art, it is the ontology of the enquiry that is the central concern.

In this context, as mentioned in Chapter One, the author has called his process 'technological' as well as 'poly-tekhnekal' in that it draws on a number of disciplines and ideas, present and past, ideas that may be transnational, to explore the notion of relational being and becoming. He considers this a kind of 'deep technology' in contradistinction from what he sometimes may term 'shallow technology'. Deep technology here correlates with 'deep ecology'.

In an ecological process where the art of this author may exist nowhere, the author would choose at the end of this life for all his 'artefacts', tangible items leading to an art process, and its unpublished documentation, to be burned (as would be indicated in his will). This correlates with a notion that only through direct experiencing can such a knowing take place. It corresponds to the underlying principle in which Zen Buddhism came into being which was essentially a rejection of the knowledge found in extant Buddhist writings and teachings. It corresponds also to an idea and belief that the author heard in his early life that those who initiated what is commonly understood to be yoga never actually passed it on – or communicated it to others as they believed in each individual directly finding his or her way. If this is the case, it seems such pioneers may not have wished for 'yoga' be systematised, arguably 'fossilised' and eventually commodified. Such an idea also relates to what is believed to be some of the ritual practices of aboriginal peoples in Australia. It is understood that they would create 'landscape art' (without conceiving it as such and before such a notion came into being), which would then be eroded and vanish through organic weathering processes. While the aim of the author in this case may be antithetical to or undermining of the academic processes of the anthropologist and cultural historian, it is a vital part of the 'existing nowhere' and processes of relational being.

With regard notions of 'life as art' Ueda believes such an art is not possible: citing the violent deaths of tea masters Rikyu and Joo. One must remember that in this context the arrival is not the goal of the journey, but that undertaking of journey is

the goal– a journey without end. Here one has a process, a flux. Joanna Macy discusses the importance of each of us developing a world view and a view of our relationship to it - what Germans call *weltbild* (Macy, 1991, p.4). The ideas developed in this thesis are not an attempt to look back, but to utilise significant ideas from what ever discipline or epoch and existing materials to go beyond. At a time of supposed ecological crisis, one needs to fathom not only the danger but seize the opportunity.

As aforementioned certain buddhist schools express the idea that the 'true self' is found in the liminal space between self and environment; a self and environment that are described as 'two but not two'. Perhaps here one should actually be considering a notion of a being of a space-time, or a space-time of being, a space-time of non-being? Capra clarifies that relational origination:

> is also one of the most important revelations of modern physics. It becomes apparent at the atomic level and manifests itself more and more as one penetrates deeper into matter, down into the realm of sub-atomic particles (Capra, 1992, p.134).

As Robert Pepperell asks 'need we rely on academics and scientists to advise on us on the location of consciousness and the relationship between mind, body, and world?' (Pepperell, 2003, p.171). The answer has to be yes in terms of a doctoral thesis written within current parameters and goals. The answer in a wider context as Pepperell also then believes, is not so unequivocal. This emphasises personal and collaborative journeys, phenomenological and democratising processes. While Pepperell terms our current world 'the posthuman condition' – beyond humanism - this author like others finds the use of the prefix 'post' problematic. While Pepperell's ideas are critical and invaluable the term is misleading ultimately. This author would choose to call it 'the relational condition'.

Glossary

The intention in this Glossary is to discuss terms such as *shunyata* in specific relationship to the pertinence of the thesis. The delineations and explanations below are not for the purpose of arguing which is the most correct or truthful definition of the terms. While each may explain the particular conception of a term by a particular thinker/artist, this thesis is not one based on particular dogma. Rather, it is an inter-disciplinary discussion that utilises concepts as starting points towards a particular discussion on being, technology, and deep ecology.

While it is usual to write Japanese words listed below such as *se-ken* in English without hyphenation, i.e. *seken*, for the purposes of this thesis, where it is important to understand the meaning of the individual characters, as well as the relationships between characters, it has been felt useful to write these terms in the Glossary as in the main body of the thesis, in hyphenated form, i.e. *se-ken*.

During the thesis, as has been explained, there was a conceptual imperative to change the capitalisation of items such as Buddhism, Buddhist, Tantra, Zen to lower case i.e. buddhism, buddhist, tantra, zen, unless they located are at the beginning of a sentence or section, which requires capitalisation, or the text is quoting from another source that uses these kinds of words with conventional capitalisation.

Akasha

The Sanskrit word for space, ether and atmosphere, a*kasha, (*also written: *akasa)*, is perceived as having presence, a kind of 'substance': 'In akasa the infinite expanse of space or ether, the notions of light and void conjoin...like space she ('Perfect Wisdom') is endless...immeasurable, incalculable, and insubstantial' (Macy, 1991, p.110).

Alexicosmia

This is a term coined by contemporary medical researcher, Yujiro Ikemi, for a pathological condition. Ikemi believes 'the contemporary pathological roots of modern society may rest upon modern man's neglect of the harmony between his natural being and his social being, between living and let-aliveness' (1996, p.2). See 'Biopsychosocioecological model' below.

Anatman

The buddhist concept of *anatman*, drawn from 'relational origination', perceives there to be no permanent self.

Asana/s

Asana is a Sanskrit term referring to a form, position, exercise, kinaesthetic process found in popular contemporary understandings of 'yoga' - such as 'sun salutation' and 'downward facing dog'. Such a conception of yoga has three elements normally: breathing techniques (Sanskrit: *pranayama*), meditation (Sanskrit: *dhyana*) and *asanas*. See 'Yoga' below.

Auto-Poeisis

Auto-poeisis from Ancient Greek is understood as "self-creation" or "self-making". Biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela generated this concept to explain and define the nature and functioning of living systems. Borrowing from biologist Gail Fleischaker, Fritjof Capra explains that the primary properties of an auto-poetic network are its being 'self bounded, self-generating, and self-perpetuating' (Capra, 1997, p.202). Maturana and Varela think that even at the level of a single biological cell auto-poetic, cognitive process take place.

Bardo

The Tibetan buddhist philosopher Sogyal Rinpoche writes that the whole reality of life and death presented as series of constantly changing transitional realities known as *bardos*: 'The word "bardo" is commonly used to denote the intermediate state between death and rebirth, but in reality bardos *are occurring continuously throughout both life and death*, and are junctures when the possibility of liberation, or enlightenment, is heightened' (Rinpoche, 2002, p.11).

Biopsychosocioecological model

The medical researcher Yujiro Ikemi discusses a 'biopsychosocioecological model' where a human being is considered a dynamic integral relationship between the biological psychological, the social, and the ecological dimensions. See 'Alexicosmia' above.

Brahman

Brahman means the absolute reality or all-pervasive supreme principle of the universe, in the Vedic philosophy that emerged in South Asia around 1500-500 B.C.E. See '*Vedas*' below.

Butoh

A dance and dance-theatre form that merged in Japan in the 1950s. One of its founders, Tatsumi Hijikata, termed it *ankoku butoh*: 'dance of utter darkness'. The author likens this darkness to the darkness of *yu-gen* (see below) – it is a physical, psychological, philosophic colour that he explores.

Chaitya

A *chaitya* is either a buddhist or jain shrine that includes a *stupa* (see below). *Chaitya* can be understood also as an assembly hall or prayer hall.

Chakra

The yogic *chakras* or *cakras* have several meanings and, as Feuerstein explains, the pertinent one here 'denotes psychoenergetic vortices forming the major 'organs' of the body composed of life energy [*prana*]' (Feuerstein, 2000, p.68).

Ciné-Roman

The *ciné-roman* has various interpretations. For filmmaker Agnes Varda it is 'a film to read'. It refers to a particular approach to film-making by artists such as Marguerite Duras, Chris Marker, Alain Resnais, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Agnes Varda, that borrowed techniques form literature and applied them to film. *Ciné-roman* also refers to 'books' or 'photo-novels' that were published alongside or after the distribution of the film. These books existed in their own right artistically and also function to enhance the reading of the film in several ways.

Denkweg

Martin Heidegger's term, which could be translated as 'a way of thinking'.

Dharma

Dharma in buddhism indicates the teachings ascribed to Gautama Siddhartha ('the Buddha'). It has also come to mean the buddhist teachings as a whole.

Dzogchen

The *dzogchen* practice is a tantric buddhist meditation - which contemporary buddhist philosopher Sogyal Rinpoche elucidates – that emphasises relationality. In this meditation one's eyes are kept open, gazing into the space before one, and aware of the surrounding environment. See '*Bardo*' above.

Ecosophy/Deep Ecology

The term is believed to be coined by philosopher and ecologist Arne Naess and it is his interpretation specifically, rather than that of others, including philsopher Félix

Guattari, that is being discussed primarily in this thesis. For Naess it relates to another term that he coined also, deep ecology. It refers to a philosophy of ecology where all things, all beings have inherent value and where human is not perceived as the centre of the world or universe but an integral part of a dynamic total image field.

Engawa

This is the term in Japan for the veranda. This veranda embodies a coexistence with nature an interactive dynamic relationship between the building (including its inhabitants) and the natural world. See 'Ka-tei' below.

Ekaksana

This is a term in Sanskrit that refers to 'an eternal present'.

Esho Funi

In some buddhist schools in Japan, esho funi, is a term that could be said to mean 'neither two but two'. It is a concept that stems from 'relational origination', this elucidates the notion that the 'true self', which some buddhists aspire to attain, exists in an intangible realm between body and environment. Here one could transpose the words 'true self' with 'relational being'.

Gaia Hypothesis

The Gaia Hypothesis developed by chemist James Lovelock in the 1970s, in collaboration with biologist Lynn Margulis, concerns homeostasis. It articulates an idea that all phenomena existing on a host planet – animate and inanimate - have acted and act as a single, self-regulating system: 'a complex entity involving the Earth's biosphere, atmosphere, oceans, and soil; the totality constituting a feedback or cybernetic system which seeks an optimal physical and chemical environment for life on this planet. The maintenance of relatively constant

conditions by active control may be conveniently described by the term 'homoeostasis' (Lovelock, 2000, p.10).

Genius Loci

A Latin term that could be interpreted as the 'spirit of the space'. It could be understood as the 'being of the space' also.

Gesamtkunstwerk

Composer Richard Wagner developed the concept of a 'total art work', a *Gesamtkunstwerk.* It could be called also a 'common' art work. Wagner believed it to be the apogee of art-practice. Wagner envisioned his operas as such where all elements of stagecraft – design, lighting, actor-singers and music are synthesised toward a singular artistic and philosophic vision.

Gharanas

There are three main schools of Kathak dance-theatre, known as *gharanas*. They are named according to the geographical area in which they have evolved: Jaipur, Lucknow, and the Benares (Varanasi). While Kathak has gone through a period where dance more than drama is emphasised, in contemporary terminology Kathak would be best conceived of as dance-theatre.

Gompa ma yin, kompa yin/Meditation

"*Gompa ma yin, kompa yin,*" is a Tibetan buddhist term that means literally: 'Meditation is not; getting used to is' (Rinpoche, 2002, p.65). The sense here is that meditation is nothing other than getting used to the practice of meditation.

Haiku

Haiku is a form of poetry conceived first in Japan. Historically consisting of seventeen syllables/sounds, Haiku could be said to express a unique thought or

feeling in which the external world of 'Nature' is linked to the inner world of 'human being'.

Hana

One of the central concepts in Noh theatre as expounded by pioneer Zeami. It is the engendering of a 'flower', in the performance. Essentially this *hana* comes into being in a liminal space between performer and spectator.

Homo Faber

Homo Faber has several meanings. With its roots in Latin, it could be said to mean 'man the maker' or 'man the smith' who controls the environment through his tools.

Ichi-go Ichi-e

This could be understood as 'one time, one meeting' or 'one meeting one opportunity'. It is a term that is strongly related to zen. It is referred to often by tea master Rikyu.

Ikebana

Ikebana is an art of flower arrangement that originated in Japan. It is also known as *Ka-dō*: the 'way of flowers'.

Jainism

A philosophy/religion originating in South Asia. One of its seminal figures is Mahavir, said to be a contemporary of Shakyamuni Buddha. Jainism was influenced by tantra. Its philosophy-practice emphasizes the necessity of self-cultivation to attain enlightenment.

Jomon

Jomon is one of the prehistoric periods of Japan: approximately 14,000–300 B.C.E.

Kami

Spirits found in rocks, trees, and other entities of conventionally termed 'nature'. *Kami* could be also understood to be God or Gods. Shinto (see below) is known as the *way of kami*.

Kan-shu

The Japanese word for audience is *kan-shu,* where 'kan' means watching rather than listening.

Kare-san-sui

Kare-san-sui are dry landscape rock gardens associated with zen buddhism. Here *kare-san-sui* means literally 'dry-mountain-water'. The sand in these gardens symbolises the Sea or water. The rocks symbolise mountains. The most well-known today is Ryoan-ji in Kyoto, Japan.

Karma

The Sanskrit word *karma* has the sense of action and also of a wheel of movement. *Karma* refers to tendencies in this light. While it is commonly misconceived as referring to fate, it is valuable to think of *karma* in terms of constant movement, of action, of becoming: *se realiser* (see below). In fact as the Pali scholar T.W. Rhys Davids indicates: 'Where others said 'soul', Gautama [the Buddha] said usually 'action'' (Macy, 1991, p.88).

Ka-tei

Ka-tei is a word for a home in Japan. *Ka* means house and *tei* means garden. With such a word, one has here the existential and ecological sense of a built edifice always engaging with immediate surroundings. One has also a resonance with ecology, whose etymology stems from the word in Ancient Greece for 'house' or 'home'. See *'Engawa'* above.

Kathak

Kathak is now one of the principal dance forms in South Asia. The word 'kathak' come from the Sanskrit word *katha*, which means story. Kathak's origins are several hundred years old beginning with storytellers, known as kathaks, of nomadic tribes in Northern India. While Kathak includes both dance and drama, currently the creative exploration focuses less on dramatic and more on dance.

Ki

The philosopher Yasuo Yuasa discusses a particular conception of energy or energy flow in Japan called *ki* [Chinese: *qi*]. With its literal translation as 'air', 'gas' and 'breadth' it corresponds with the Sanskrit yogic term *prana,* meaning breadth as well as vital life force; and the Latin *spiritus,* also meaning breadth. Visceral, kinaesthetic processes to evolve *ki* is involved in Buddhist inspired arts practice – Noh, *Waka* poetry, in the martial arts and in the 'way of the samurai' (*bushi-do*). Such a practice of the body is to undermine theoretical conceptualising, to realise 'no-mind'. In this sense this self-cultivation can correspond with a 'yoga of art'.

Kinjiki

Hijikata's first Butoh work was entitled *Forbidden Colours* (*Kinjiki*), inspired in part by the Yukio Misihima novel of the same name. In the author's creative practice, 'darkness' and 'blackness' are forbidden colours of exploration.

Koan

Koans, riddles, non-sense are an important pedagogic tool of zen masters to facilitate acolytes transcending logos to arrive at a different knowing.

Kundalini

Kundalini is a Sanskrit term, which is a potential force in the human being that followers of tantra strive to manifest in all parts of life.

Lichtung

In German, *lichtung* means a clearing, such as a clearing in the woods. *Lichtung's* root is in the German word for light *(licht).* Heidegger discusses the necessity of a *lichtung or* clearing for being to manifest.

Lotus Sutra

In Sanskrit the buddhist teaching *Lotus Sutra* is known as *Saddharma Pundarika Sutra*. This translates more fully as the sutra of the lotus of the wonderful law. In Japanese it is known as *Myo Ho Renge Kyo*, or *Hokke-kyo*. It is a prominent teaching in Nichiren and Tendai schools of buddhism in Japan. See 'Tendai' below.

Ma

Ma in Japan has several meanings such as: 'space-time', as 'space', 'place' 'interval', 'emptiness-presence', 'time' and 'void-affirmation'. The notion of ma' has been significant historically in art-making in Japan. For example, Kunio Komparu, whose family has practiced the Noh theatre for several hundred years, regards this ritual theatre as an art of *ma*. Architect Arata Izozaki curated the exhibition, *Ma, space-time in Japan*, in Paris, for the Festival D'Automne, in 1977-8; later at other sites including the Copper-Hewitt Design Museum in New York; and finally at the Tokyo National Museum of Fine Arts and Music in 2000.

Ma-Hsia School

The Ma-Hsia School of landscape painting in the thirteen century common era, of the Southern Sung dynasty in China, led by Hsia Kuei and Ma Yuan, is renowned for its construction of empty spaces. Ma Yuan's 'one corner' style involved painting one part of the 'canvas' (silk in actuality) composition as a means to give expression to the 'blank' of the canvas. Not only was Ma-Hsia art concerned with relations between tangible and intangible, it engaged with relations between artist and painting, and between artist and spectator. Both Ma Yuan and Hsia Kuei were court painters and the royal responses in poetry to their paintings were inscribed

on the silk itself: becoming a part of the work. See '*Shigajiku*' below.

Mandala

Mandala has a meaning of 'healing circle' originally. These were four-dimensional spaces of 'therapy', healing of the soul, which could equate with Daisetz Suzuki's idea of psychosphere. *Mandala* in Sanskrit can have the meaning 'essence' or 'containing'. A conventional geometry of a buddhist *mandala* is a square containing a circle, in which is placed an image of a buddha. In tantric buddhist sites of contemplation, such as the Water Temple there are two main *mandalas*: one representing the world of diamond-like transparent wisdom (*kongo-kai*), and the other the world of womb-like phenomenal experience (*taizo-kai*).

Mono No Aware

Mono no aware could be interpreted as 'the pathos of things', 'an empathy toward things,' or 'a sensitivity of ephemera'. The psychiatrist Hayao Kawai, with regard female characters in Japanese fairy tales, discusses 'the feeling of 'aware' (softly despairing sorrow), which a Japanese would feel for a female figure who disappears in silence' (Kawai, 1988, p.22). This is highly pertinent to the author's approach to the female character in *Laal Shaari*. In Japan *mono no aware* is used to describe the awareness of the buddhist concept of *mujo*: the impermanence or the transience of things. See '*Mu'* below.

Mu

Mu is a zen term expressing "emptiness" or "nothingness" or "void". It is a state that zen acolytes aspire to experience.

Muromachi

The Muromachi Period in Japanese history, corresponds to the period 1336 to 1573 C.E.

Nagarjuna

A significant figure in the development of buddhist ideas, (*circa* 150-250 C.E.), with regard in particular to *shunyata*.

Naka-Ma

This Japanese term translates literally as 'relationship-place'. It is used in Japan to mean 'mates', 'companions', and a 'coterie of friends'.

Natyasastra

The *Natyasastra,* discussing the realm of performance, could be said to have theorised a systematic practice of a total art work, discussed in detail a synthetical theatrical form combining visual art and aural art, and incorporating sophisticated notions of spectatorship.

Nihsvabhava

Nagarjuna (see above) elucidates this Sanskrit term as the lack of autonomous existence.

Nin-gen

A current word in Japan used to mean human being is *nin-gen* – which means literally: 'person-place', or 'person-in-relationship'. The *gen* here has the same character as *ma* (see above).

No/Noh

Noh Theatre originated in Japan in the Fourteenth Century C.E. with pioneers Zeami and his father Kan'ami. It could be thought of as a 'total theatre' or 'opera'. Zeami's Noh is influenced by his buddhist practice. Noh is sometimes termed an art of *yu-gen* (see below) and an art of *ma* (see above). See also '*Hana'* above.

Pratityasamutpada

Relational Origination is written in Sanskrit as *pratityasamutpada*; in Pali as *paticcasamuppada*; in Tibetan as: *rten.cing.'brel.bar.'byung.ba*; in Japanese as *engi*. It is also termed often 'dependent origination or relational co-arising. Here there is a parallel with the idea of symbiogenesis. See 'Symbiogenesis' below.

Psychosphere

Zen teacher Daisetz Suzuki, describes the engendering of a 'psychosphere' through the creation of a tea ceremony. It could be understood as a 'place of evolving inner awareness'. It could be said to be 'a space of being'. Suzuki conceives the psychosphere as an inner field of consciousness cultivated through the nature of one's engagement in a tea ceremony.

Rasa

Rasa is a Sanksrit term that can be understood as 'mood', 'flavour', 'juice'. It conceives an art and aesthetics of feeling. This *rasa*, when tasted by the spectator, pervades and enchants him. Aesthetic experience is, therefore, the act of tasting this *rasa*, of immersing, one self in it, to the exclusion of all else.

Se Realiser

This French reflexive verb could be understood to mean a dynamic process of 'self-becoming'.

Renga

Renga is a linked verse or collective poem, originating in Japan. *Renga* were created in social situations, such as poetry parties. The poet Basho is considered a master of *renga*. According to seminal *renga* poet and theorist Nijo Yoshimoto, they were composed primarily 'to delight the people present' (Ueda, 1967, p.38), not for posterity.

Santiago Theory of Cognition

This theory, in brief, posits the idea that mind is a process not a thing. The theory by developed Maturana and Varela, is explained in *The Tree of Knowledge*. It indicates that cognition should be perceived 'not as a representation of the world 'out there,' but rather as an ongoing bringing forth of a world through the process of living itself' (Maturana and Varela, 1998, p.11).

Sa-do

The tea ceremony of Japan is termed *sa-do*: the 'way of tea'. The tea house is called *sukiya* and the tea garden is called *roji*. In the tea house there is typically an alcove (*tokonoma*), where items such as calligraphy, other art, and flowers are placed. These may evoke the season, the mood, the context or some aspect of the personality of guest or host. The calligraphy may relate to a concept in Buddhism.

Se-ken

The word for 'society' and 'world' in Japan is *se-ken*. In Japanese, the *ken* here has the same character as the above-mentioned *ma*. *Se-ken's* meaning literally is 'world-place' or 'world-in-relationship'. A pertinent parallel is the philosopher and activist Joanna Macy's concept of 'world as lover, world as self'.

Seto Naikai

Seto Naikai is Japan's 'Inland Sea' a body of water that separates the three main islands in Japan's archipelago: Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku. Located in the Inland Sea is the island of Awaji (Awajishima) - the location of the Water Temple – and the island of Nao (Naoshima), where there are several works created by Ando.

Shaivism/Shiva/Shiva Lingam

Kashmiri *shaivism*: is a type of hinduism, imbued by tantra, focusing on the god Shiva, that emerged in Northern South Asia. The Shiva *lingam* is a phallic object of devotion and meditation. In certain hindu belief systems, the god Shiva is one of a

'holy trinity' or *trimurti* of major godheads. In such schools of thinking the god Brahma is understood as the Creator; the god Vishnu as the 'sustainer' and Shiva embodies the notion of destruction and transformation: one he achieves and creates through cosmic dance. In this context he is known as 'the Lord of the Dance': *Nataraja*.

Shigajiku

Shigajiku could be translated as 'poem-painting-scroll'. This creative practice was widely popular in Japan in 15th Century C.E. These could be said to be works that are inter-active, immersive, collaborative and relational. In Japan, Five Mountain Zen (*gozan*), which particularly emphasised the involvement of acolytes in worldly affairs, was deeply influenced by s*higajiku*.

Shingon

Shingon is a school of tantric buddhism in Japan. The word *shingon* derives from the Chinese word *zhen yan*, which means literally 'true words'. *Zhen yan* is a Chinese translation of the Sanskrit word *mantra*. *Mantra* is a sound, evocation, syllable, word, or a group of words that are perceived to have transformative power. The basis of *Shingon* training is meditation engaging with two *mandalas*. As art historian Takaaki Sawa explains, these consist of: one representing the world of diamond-like transparent wisdom [*kongo-kai*], and the other the world of womb-like phenomenal experience [*taizo-kai*] (Sawa, 1972, p.14).

Shintai

Shintai is ordinarily translated in Japan as 'body'. For Tadao Ando it means a union of spirit and flesh that both acknowledges the world and acknowledges the self (Dal Co, 1995, p.453).

Shinto

The *shinto* that is being referred to here is the animistic belief system in Japan that conceives egalitarian sacredness in all phenomena, animate and inanimate.

Shugyoho

In Japanese schools of buddhism, self-cultivation (*shugyoho*) takes place through numerous processes of meditation, including 'meditation in action', thereby developing *ki* energy. See '*Ki*' above.

Shunyata/Shunya

Shunya means 'empty' and 'zero' in Sanskrit. *Shunyata* from *shunya* is a buddhist concept that signifies 'emptiness'. It can also signify 'void' and 'nothingness'. Such emptiness is thought to have presence. *Shunyata* is also a concept important in the South Asian belief systems that today may be termed brahmanism. The Chinese word for *shunyata* is *k'ung*. The Japanese word is: *ku*. *Shunyata* can be expressed also as 'void-ness', 'zero-ness'.

The word 'emptiness' has a nihilistic connotation according to Sogyal Rinpoche. In a lecture on *shunyata*, in place of 'emptiness' he offers a Tibetan term to better comprehend *shunyata*: *tac_che_le_towa.* It is written in English as 'permanent_non-existence_free of that'.

Stupa

A *stupa* is a Sanskrit word signifying a buddhist monument a mound of some sort in which are buried relics of the first historical buddha or subsequent buddhist sages. *Stupa* in Japanese is termed *sotoba.* These are often places of worship.

Symbiogenesis

Biologist Lynn Margulis argues that symbiotic relationships between organisms of different kingdoms or phyla are the primary force in evolution. She terms this

process symbiogenesis. Margulis states 'Humans are not the centre of life ... humans are not even central to life ... We need to be freed from our species-specific arrogance. No evidence exists that we are 'chosen'' (Margulis, 2001, pp.149-150).

Tantra

The precise origins of *tantra* are not clear. Some have claimed it to have emerged in South Asia around 5000 B.C.E. It proliferated around 400 to 1000 C.E., paralleling Ellora excavation; and conceptually and aesthetically influencing it (Pathy, 1980).

Tantra could be considered science and technology at 'the cutting edge' as much as it was 'cutting edge' art and architecture, for as Mookerjee and Khanna explain 'Tantra absorbed and elaborated upon the sum total of traditional scientific knowledge in mathematics, astronomy, iatrochemistry' (Mookerjee and Khanna, 1977, p.18). Tibetan teacher and senior monk Lama Yeshe, comments on the practitioners of tantra aspiring to 'meditate on the emptiness of self-existence, and penetrate the ultimate nature of reality, thereby freeing themselves of all delusions' (Yeshe, 2001, p.101). Art Historian Philip Rawson has described *tantra* as: 'a cult of ecstasy, focused on a vision of cosmic sexuality. Life-styles, ritual, magic, myth, philosophy, and a complex of signs and emotive symbols converge on that vision' (Rawson, 1978, p.7).

Techne/Tekhne/Technology

For the Ancient Greeks, according to Heidegger, the word *techne*, which is the root of our current word technology, meant a kind of practice and thinking, that had no distinction between what today we call art, craft, technique, and philosophy. It was one integrated practice.

Tendai

Tendai derives from 'Tient'ai', the name of a mountain in China, where the Chinese philosopher Chi'i was based and who created a systemisation of the buddhist teachings where he ranked the *Lotus Sutra* (see above*)* as the principal teaching of Shakyamuni. Chi'i is also known as T'ien t'ai. The *Tendai* Sect in Japan was created by Japanese buddhist pioneers who brought the teachings of Chi'i back to Japan.

Upaya

Upaya is a Sanskrit term, which could be understood as "skill in means", "expedient means" and as "pedagogy". *Upaya-kaushalya* is a concept which emphasises that practitioners of buddhism may use their own specific methods or techniques to experience more profound realization and notions such as 'emptiness'. The *Shingon* (see above) pioneer Kukai's poetry is in this sense more important than his dogmatic text for the dissemination of his buddhist philosophy. In this sense, poetry is an *upaya*. More profoundly any creative activity could be a means to ontological experience. Once again there is an emphasis on each individual developing her or his own 'way'.

Veda

The original four *Vedas* being regarded as the key texts of ancient Indian belief systems, dating back four and half thousand years, and regarded as divinely revealed, eternal wisdom. *Veda* means knowledge. There are four *vedic* theological texts: the *Rig Veda*, *Sama Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and *Atharva Veda*. These are thought to have been composed around 1500 B.C.E.

It should be noted that *veda* did not refer only to theological knowledge. There are other Vedas in other fields such as medicine and military craft. While the contemporary word video is usually thought to have its etymology in the Latin word, 'videre': to see, and 'video': I see, some believe beyond Latin, that Veda is the root of video.

Wabi Sabi

This term defies precise definition. The understanding that is most relevant here is one that resonates with Daisetz Suzuki's description of *wabi* and *sabi* as 'none other than the aesthetic appreciation of absolute poverty - devoid of all forms of dichotomy: subject and object, good and evil, right and wrong, honour and disgrace, body and soul, gain and loss' (Suzuki, 1959, pp. 295-6).

Wa Kei Sei Jaku

Wa, *kei*, *sei*, and *jaku* are Japanese terms for four principle qualities desired to be engendered through the tea ceremony: 'harmony' (*wa*); 'respect' (*kei*), 'purity' (*sei*) and 'serenity' (*jaku*).

Weltbild

Joanna Macy discusses the importance of each of us developing a world view and a view of our relationship to it - what Germans call *weltbild* (Macy, 1991, p.4).

With regard notions of 'life as art', Ueda believes such an art is not possible: citing the violent deaths of tea masters Rikyu and Joo. One must remember that in this context the arrival is not the goal of the journey, but that undertaking of journey is the goal– a journey without end. Here one has a process, a flux.

Yoga

Yoga as George Feuerstein attests (Feuerstein, 2000, viii) is a rich, complex ontological tradition, with a multitude of schools, and approaches. It is being used here with no single school or approach being emphasised, rather recognising it as a significant ontology. What is being considered here, is that on the profound level, all aspects of human engagement, activity and inter-action are potentially yogic practice – depending on the intentions, actions and capabilities of the practitioner. One meaning etymologically of *yoga* is 'means': ultimately any means can be employed toward *yogic* ontology.

Yu-gen

The aesthetic concept of *yu-gen* is interpreted in various ways in different art practice throughout the history of art in Japan. Ueda's interpretation of Zeami's *yu-gen* is as follows: 'the beauty of *yugen* when one mournfully observes the immovable fact of life' (Ueda, 1967, p.94). *Yu-gen* is an aesthetic and ontological quality that Noh theatre performers aim to produce. Ueda explains that Chinese character *yu* of *yu-gen* denotes 'deep, dim, difficult to see'; the character *gen* depicts the 'dark profound, tranquil colour of the universe' (Ueda, 1967, p.60). Ueda explains that this equates with concept of 'truth' in taoism. Kunio Komparu, whose family practices Noh and traces its lineage back to Zeami, explains that Noh is known as 'the art of yugen' (Komparu p.12). This y*u-gen* is beyond intellectual perception and is experienced in Noh theatre through spectatorial cultivation.

Zen

The Japanese word *zen* derives via the Chinese word *chan* from the Sanskrit word *dhyan* or *dhyana*, which means meditation. *Zen* came into being as an iconoclastic form of buddhism. In *zen* a very personal path to so-called enlightenment has been emphasised. At the same time *zen* teachers such as Thich Nhat Hanh have placed greater emphasis on process, rather than a final arriving at 'enlightenment'. Daisetz Suzuki explains that buddhist concepts – such as emptiness - cannot be grasped by intellectualisation. In this sense, *zen* is 'un-reason', 'un-philosophy' not grasped through logos.

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[55] Architect Arata Izozaki curated the exhibition, *Ma, space-time in Japan*, in Paris, for the Festival D'Automne, in 1977-8; later at other sites including the Copper-Hewitt Design Museum in New York; and finally at the Tokyo National Museum of Fine Arts and Music in 2000.

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Appendices

Primary Projects Research Statements

(listed alphabetically)

1.

relationship-place naka-ma

DVD1, placed Between Chapter One and Chapter Two within Thesis.

2.

zero = every day?

DVD2, placed at the beginning of Chapter One within Thesis.

Research Title/

Title of Work: *relationship-place naka-ma*

Art Maker-Researcher: raphael jay adjani

Technological Format: Filmic Installation

Date of Completion: 2009-present day

Total length of Work: 16 minutes

Conception and Direction: raphael jay adjani

Editor: Daniel Somerville

Photography: raphael jay adjani

Sound: Joey Draycott (for version submitted in Thesis)

Videography: raphael jay adjani

Viewable: DVD1, placed after Chapter One and before Chapter

                          Two within Thesis.

<u>Note</u>:

- o The concept of the work was created by raphael jay adjani and he directed the work throughout, making all ultimate creative decisions.

- o The raw images created – both stills and video - were by raphael jay adjani.

- o Daniel Somerville edited these images under direction from raphael jay adjani, and following an underlying philosophy.

- o The sound composition in the Thesis DVD version attached was created by Joey Draycott, under direction from raphael jay adjani and in consultation with Daniel Somerville.

Research Questions

The nature of filmic and photographic engagement with a particular notion of architecture not as built edifice only; but a concept of architecture as an ongoing dynamic inter-action of built edifice, the people (spectators) who frequent it and the surrounding landscape – topographic, cultural, social.

The possibilities of filmic installations to present a work each time with the spirit of a particular one-to-one experience, drawing on dynamics of the 'way of tea', including the zen expression 'one meeting, one opportunity' - *ichi go ichi e* – which embodies this idea. This could be for individually requested and specifically created one-to-one presentations, for contexts involving groups of people; as well as for imagined audiences, including those on the Internet.

The potential for filmic experience as immersive experiences in the way zen teacher Suzuki describes as 'psychospheres' (Suzuki, 1959): places of evolving inner awareness.

Research Context

This project is an ontological investigation, examining 'being' within a particular framework, dynamic, and flow - intellectual, conceptual, artistic - that notionally begins with the original manifestation of tantric 'technological', ecological practice in South Asia. This technological practice is paralleled by Heidegger's thinking on *techne*. It engages with contemporary ideas of non-anthropocentric being and 'deep ecology' such as those of Bateson, Lovelock, Margulis, Maturana and Varela, Naess and Pert. It culminates in investigating the possibilities of developing such a notion of being in relation to architectural processes and internet technology.

Research Methodology

This project is the culmination of a series of expositions of the theme, which formally and thematically investigate the ideas. It has involved phenomenological immersion in a number of architectural and ontological sites - such as The Water Temple, the edifices at Ellora and Ajanta, zen gardens, the Inland Sea (*Seto Naikai*), Isamu Noguchi's gardens and museums*,* the 'way of tea' - over a period of four years. Methodology includes formal experimentation in virtual interactive and immersive processes.

There is a particular engagement with a number of ideas relating to stillness and movement in the film, which has been discussed in the thesis, through a particular use of still image and video image.

For the essential sound concept, adjani decided on an approach where the music was created live in one take – with prior preparation and sensitisation to the ontological and aesthetic dynamics by the composer. This one take involved a composer responding to the moving image as s/he saw it. There were a number of influences for adjani choosing this approach – including the application of an idea in zen that is known as 'one meeting one opportunity' It also takes on board compositional strategies found in music traditions in South Asia, the influence of piano composition strategies by pianist Keith Jarrett.

relationship-place naka-ma is made as a 'film in continuum': it is an ongoing work of process manifesting uniquely and specially for each context of presentation. Sound and image are edited specifically for each situation, as is its overall manner and mode of engagement. In this sense the 'relationship-place' is site, space, time and spectator specific: hence the film's title.

Research Outcomes

This work, *relationship-place naka-ma,* is/has been presented in the context of other installations and works such as:

1. Online specifically for www.8technology.net webwork
   http://www.8technology.net/8/film__rp_nm/Entries/2010/9/20_relationship
   -place_naka-ma.html
   5 June 2010 – Present.

2. *performance ecology*, public talk as part of workshop, CEM, Lisbon, Portugal, 25 February 2011.

3. *performance ecology*, public lecture presentation, for the Research Centre: University of the Algarve, Faro, Portugal, 23 February 2011.

4. *atmospheres* installation: image screened on multiple screens and surfaces as with live piano composition by Rapeedech v. Kulasubaya, as part of this installation at Bangkok Code, Bangkok, Thailand,
   3 December 2010

5. *zero (hybrid 2)* - in *hybrids,*
   MIC Toi Rerehiko , Auckland New Zealand, 29
   Curated by Brit Bunkley and Ian Gwilt.
   http://mic.org.nz/events/exhibitions/present/hybrids
   January – 5 March, 2010

6. http://www.facebook.com: search group '*8* technology'.
   August 2010 – Present.

7. *zero – the aroma of technology, the flavour of art, to savour being.*

    Gakushuin Women's College, Tokyo, 15 December, 2009.

    Curated by Toshio Shimizu

Other manifestations include:

8. *4D – a tea ceremony*,

    a) Goldsmiths, University of London, 3rd March, 2010.

    b) Accidental Festival, BAC, London UK, 30th May, 2010.

    Each of these presentations had new live compositions by Joey Draycott

9. *way of tea – an art of conviviality*, Kube Gallery, Poole, UK, 30th Oct – 26th Nov, 2009.

10. *less than formal tea ceremony*, Goldsmiths, University of London, 5 October, 2009.

Research Title/

Title of Work: *zero = every day?*

Art Maker-Researcher: raphael jay adjani

Date of Completion:	2010
Format:	video animation
Length:	24 minutes
Conception and Direction:	raphael jay adjani
Visuals:	raphael jay adjani, Akiko Ban, Daniel Somerville, Takashi Nishida
Sound:	raphael jay adjani, Gareth Jenkinson, Rob Palmer
Format:	Animation/Video Developed with Keynote and iMovie
Viewable in:	Portfolio DVD 2

Note:

- The original idea and philosophic approach is by raphael jay adjani, who made all the key and ultimate editorial/directorial decisions about what should be in the film.

- Non-Japanese textual images are by raphael jay adjani. A few were developed from the zero book in collaboration with Kiun Kim.

- Akiko Ban created the initial Japanese calligraphic images.

- Takashi Nishida did a large proportion of initial keyword animation, which was then evolved further by raphael jay adjani.

- The initial photographic and video images were by raphael jay adjani and developed in collaboration with Daniel Somerville.

- The narration was written, performed, and directed by raphael jay adjani.

- Rob Palmer created the Drone.

- Gareth Jenkinson and raphael jay adjani developed the water sounds.

- Gareth Jenkinson recorded narration and was responsible for mixing sound.

Research Questions

The potential application of every day technology used in education and corporate world to manifest as deep technology.

The potential of 'lo-tech' animation to move toward deep technology.

The interrogation of notions of zero-shunya-empty, emptiness, nothingness and void (*shunyata* and/or *mu).*

The potential for re-conceiving notions of *wabi sabi* in contemporary 'new media ' practice.

Development of ideas and methodologies relating to works that could be said to be both art practice and art theory.

Development of ideas and methodologies relating to works of concrete poetry in the context of a new media practice.

Development of ideas and methodologies relating to works of the *cine-roman,* particularly as approached by Chris Marker in the context of a new media practice.

Evolved from *zero - the aroma of technology, the flavour of art, to savour being*, presentation in Tokyo, 15th December, 2009.

Conception and Direction: raphael jay adjani

Visuals: raphael jay adjani, Akiko Ban, Daniel Somerville, Takashi Nishida

Sound: raphael jay adjani, Gareth Jenkinson, Rob Palmer

Research Context

Summarising ideas contained in the body of the thesis: -

The conception of zero-*shunya* is of vital importance for the existence of our current global society. The Information Age, the Digital Age begins essentially at the point of generation of zero, thought to be in ancient South Asia.

In the Ancient South Asian language of Sanskrit zero is written as *shunya*. *Shunya* also means 'emptiness'. *Shunyata* from *shunya* is a Buddhist concept that signifies 'void' or 'nothingness' or 'emptiness': an emptiness that has presence. *Shunya* is important also in the religion of Brahmanism.

In ancient South Asia researchers were through to be integrating mathematical, scientific ideas with philosophic ones and with artistic exploration. For example it is said that in certain Indian temples you would find at their centre, their inner sanctum, not ornatereligious statues or paintings, but an empty space with a book only: and the book was a book of mathematics. The mathematical attempt to understand the universe, the philosophic attempt to grasp it, and the artistic conception of it, went hand in hand.

Research Methodology

Deliberately engaging with lo-fi/lo-tech technology, technology of the everyday, corporate, education and consumer-orientated applications such as Microsoft's PowerPoint and Apple's Keynote, an animation film was created to last twenty-four minutes.

Once the animation process on Keynote was completed and sound mixed, the film was transferred deliberately to video using another technology of the every day,

iMovie: a rendering process that would further fragment the image in a particular way that was desired. This had a particular impact on text, in part de-materialising it. A number of previous 'versions' and lengths were produced before as part of the process to arrive at this final work.' These earlier versions also form elements of other works such as *4D – a tea ceremony*.

Research Outcomes

An animated film in video of twenty-four minutes. The film has been specially made for this thesis and, at the time of thesis submission, it is showing and has been shown in the following contexts:

1. Online via Vimeo and/or 8technology website:

   http://www.8technology.net/8/film_zero_%3D_every_day/film_zero_%3D_every_day.html
   September, 2010 (approx)-Present

2. 'Performance Ecology', public talk as part of workshop, CEM, Lisbon, Portugal, 25 February 2011

3. 'Performance Ecology', public lecture presentation, for the Research Centre: University of the Algarve, Faro, Portugal, 23 February, 2011.

4. *atmospheres* installation: screened as part of this installation at Bangkok Code, Bangkok, Thailand, 3 December, 2010

Secondary Projects Research Statements:

projects that have been part of the research process

(listed alphabetically)

1.

4D – a tea ceremony

installation

2.

Laal Shaari

dance-theatre

No documentation video available at this time. N.B. The work was created in

extreme low light conditions which impeded satisfactory documentation.

3.

M-I I-M series

iPak -10, 000 songs, 10,000 images, 10.000 abuses.

generative art/internet art

4.

M-I I-M series

pages of madness

generative art/internet art

5.

M-I I-M series

phant-Asia – asylum of desire

concept

6.

radio play

installation

versions 1 and 2

7.

shapes-design website: http://www.shapes-design.com

Internet art

8.

tate modern

video-film

9.

way of tea – an art of conviviality

installation

10.

zen gardens without the 'zen', series,

installation/interior design, works from 2005 only

11.

zero – the confluence of art and technology

online art book publication

12.

zero – the aroma of technology, the flavour of art to savour being

installation

13.

zero (hybrid 2)

installation

Research Title/

Title of Work: *4D – a tea ceremony*

Art Maker-Researcher: raphael jay adjani (conception and direction)

with *8*

Date of Completion: 2010

Format: installation

Length: 16 minutes

<u>Note</u>:

- o This project is conceived and directed by raphael jay adjani

- o Assorted Members and associates of the *8* technology group created creative

  content for this project, including performance of 'tea ceremony'.

  <u>For Version 1 at Goldsmiths, London, UK, 2/3/10</u>:

  raphael jay adjani-ajaykumar

  Daniel Somerville

  Joey Draycott

  Nicole Dimitrakopoulou

  Sara Amini

  Satomi Mihira

  Sian Ni Mhuiri

  Wiracha Daochai

  Spectators

  Documentary Photography:

  Jonathan Michael May

For Version 2 at Accidental Festival, London, UK, 30/05/10:

raphael jay adjani-ajaykumar

Daniel Somerville

Gudmunder Ingi Thorvaldsson

Joey Draycott

Matthew Beard

Nicole Dimitrakopoulou

Satomi Mihira

Valeria Tello Giusti

Wiracha Daochai

Spectators

Documentary Photography:

Jemima Yong

Ravi Juneja

Research Questions

The possibilities of creation of inter-active and immersive facilitates beyond cultural specificity to facilitate what zen teacher Daisetz Suzuki calls a 'psychosphere', when referring to the 'way of tea'v(*sa-do*).

Research Context

while elements of the 'way of tea' as it is usually understood are altered, the interactive and immersive essence of it is savoured and cherished in this contemporary conception utilising contemporary technologies. Here raphael jay adjani investigates the significance of certain Asian philosophic, aesthetics and art for a contemporary global ecology.

Research Methodology

A zen saying goes something like: 'If, on the path, you meet the buddha, kill him; if you meet your teacher, kill him; if you meet you parents, kill them'. Just as ultimately one should find one's own 'way of buddha', one must find one's own 'way of tea'. An iconoclastic approach underpinned by this ethos is adopted throughout the process, as can be witnessed in the scenario below.

A new version of *4D – a tea ceremony* is being planned in Tokyo, for April 2012: It will have the specific title: 趣 *omomuki - atmospheres, deep flavours, and tastes of space* and be part of the *red cube series.*

Scenario of one 'way of tea' (envisaged in Tokyo) is as follows:

I   greeting

A guest arrives at the gallery and is greeted by a host.

The guest is offered a seat at the sofa, where the host helps remove the guest's shoes and offers her/him a pair of slippers to wear.

The guest is then guided to the gallery space by the host, viewing, along the way, abstract pictures inspired by Japan's *Seto Naikai* (Inland Sea), *sa-do*, architecture and gardens. The pictures are illuminated by a series of pebble shaped floor lights, evoking a garden path.

II   Ceremony

Inside the gallery space, a second host greets them. The first host leaves the guest with the second host. The guest is offered a seat and a glass of water.

An evocative film begins, inspired by deep-ecological ideas found by the *8* artists' personal exploration of Tadao Ando's architectural conceptions.

While the guest watches the film, the second host washes and massages her/his feet and attends the guest as the film plays.

At the end of the film, the second host excuses himself and leaves the gallery; the guest is momentarily alone in the space.

The first host returns and offers the guest green tea flavoured ice cream to savour and a copy of the exhibition catalogue to view. The host waits at a discrete distance, available to respond to the guest's needs or queries, and at an appropriate time invites the guest to join the artist in the 'meeting room'.

III	Departure

In the 'meeting room', the guest has the opportunity to enjoy a moment of informal conviviality with the artist/hosts. The guest has the opportunity also, should s/he wish, to order pictures or a copy of the film.

The guest has her/his shoes and any other belongings entrusted to the first host, returned, and s/he is bid farewell.

The visual and sensuous aesthetic of such a 'way of tea'

While elements of the tea ceremony as it is usually understood are altered, the essence of *sa-do* is savoured and cherished in this contemporary conception. The journey from entrance to the gallery building to the actual exhibition space function as the 'tea garden' (*roji*), which is a preparation for the guest entering the tea house (*sukiya)* that is the gallery space. The massaging and washing of feet embody a sacred ritual inter-action between host and guest; the washing of feet, in part, echoes the washing of hands before one enters the tea house and begins a tea ceremony. The film and pictures evoke the art and flowers placed in the alcove (*tokonoma*). The relationship between the hosts and guest epitomises the 'art of conviviality' perceived to be at the heart of the tea ceremony. The drinking of tea is subtly suggested through the flavour and aroma of the Ice cream.

The gallery, corridor and meeting room should be clear and uncluttered. Only that furniture which is necessary remains. The gallery space is divided in such a way to create a path, a journey through which the guest is guided to an inner sanctum. In this inners sanctum initially there is only emptiness and darkness, illuminated gently by the pebble light path and film projection. No other lighting is required within the gallery. The corridor and meeting room should be lit in the usual way.

Pictures will hang in positions at the end of the corridors created by the division of the gallery space and the existing architecture of the building.

There will be a total of eight pictures on display, which guests may purchase, although more will be contained in the catalogue. The hosts will wear specially designed costumes for this tea ceremony only, reflecting the relation of the person to the space and the content of the exhibition, embodying an aesthetic of *wabi sabi* (see Glossary).

The tea ceremony here concerns not the art object, or the performance, but investigates the potential for creation of a 'sublime' world that manifests in an ephemeral space between an art object, artist and the spectator. In this sense the nature and quality of human interaction is 'art'.

Research Outcomes

Installation with two versions

Version One,

Presented at Goldsmiths, University of London, New Cross, London, UK. 3 March 2010.

Version Two,

Presented at Accidental Festival, BAC - Battersea Arts Centre, 30 May, 2010, London, UK.

Version Three

Planned for Change the World Gallery, Omotesando, Tokyo, Japan, and other spaces from April 2012.

Research Title/

Title of Work: *Laal Shaari*

Art Maker-Researcher: **ajaykumar (director) and Amina Khayyam**

(dancer)

Date of Completion: 2007

Format: dance-theatre

Length: 35 minutes approximately

The work was a collaboration and the artistic rights are jointly owned. ajaykumar's

input spanned:

- o   Director

- o   Transformation of initial story idea into dance-theatre concept

- o   Choreographer

- o   Scenographer

- o   Performer

Amina Khayyam's input spanned:

- o   Ownership of initial story idea

- o   Principal Performer

- o   Choreography

The Music Direction for the first version was by Faheem Mazar, working in

collaboration with ajaykumar and Amina Khayyam. The second version evolved

these concepts with new composer-musicians.

The project was produced by Zero Culture

Research Questions

An engagement with the Noh pioneer Zeami's concept of *yu-gen* beyond the formal and ritual context of Noh. As Makoto Ueda explains, '*yu* means deep, dim, difficult to see, and that *gen*, originally describing the dark, profound tranquil color of the universe, refers to the Taoist concept of truth' (Ueda, 1967, p.60).

Exploration of a dynamic between stillness and action.

Investigation of contemporary theatricality within the classical South Asian dance form of Kathak, currently not noted for its dramatic qualities, despite its origins in story telling.

Formal exploration of dance-theatre with regard to the South Asian primary aesthetic concept of mood, flavour, taste, known as *rasa*.

Research Context

While *Laal Shaari* is inspired by a real story - a woman denied the most important thing on her wedding day: a red dress (*laal shaari*) - essentially there is no narrative plot but rather a philosophical engagement with conflicts, moods, and leitmotifs - love, loss, sexuality, humiliation, absence, grief, betrayal, and transcendence.

Research Methodology

The methodology includes: -

Improvisational process.

Developing choreography from process of inner emotional movement.

Experimentation with working with candlelights and low lights.

Experimentation with 'blinding light' focused on audience in Version Two.

Contra-tempo work between choreography and musical rhythm – slow when fast;

fast when slow.

Work with relation between darkness and light.

Work with relations between sound and silence.

Spectatorial interactions.

Research Outcomes

Laal Shaari, version one: arts depot, London, March 2007

  MAC, Birmingham, March, 2007.

Laal Shaari, version two: Royal Opera House, London, November 2007.

In addition:

ajaykumar, and Amina Khayyam, (2007). 'Duet for One - Process and Kathak' in

Pulse: *South Asian Dance Magazine,* UK, Mar. 2007, feature article, pp. 11-12.

Research Title/

Title of Work: *iPak* of *M-I I-M* series

Art Maker-Researcher: **ajaykumar**

Date Completed: 2008 (The work is online till the present day)

Format: Internet/Computer Generated art, involving text,

sound, animation, photography drawing, painting, and

video

Length: Infinite

Collaborators: ajaykumar, Turbulence numerous artists and

spectators

Note:

ajaykumar created the initial concept and directed the work.

ajaykumar created initial imagery and text.

Turbulence (Helen Thorington and Joanne Greene) curated and commissioned the

final work.

Numerous artists have added and may continue to add their work – either images,

text and sounds – that became and become a part of the work.

Spectators create their own versions of *chaos* and *jukebox*.

Re-active created the programme and collaborated with ajaykumar on the design.

Research Questions

The specific science-art investigation for *iPak* – was to investigate:

1. The notional of relational being through developments of:
   a) Work that comes into ephemeral being at particular moments that may not be repeated for millions of years.
   b) The random generation of items by a computer programme that may be considered 'non-anthropocentric'.
   c) Potential for creating the correspondence between Asian notions of 'void' and conceptions of 'virtual' space.
2. The ability of generative art to be a re-generative force: 'art as medicine'.
3. Particular Ludic processes.
4. Particular dynamics between inter-action and immersion in technological art.
5. Evolution of ideas around for the construction of 'polyphonic narrative'.

Research Context

Recent scientific studies indicate, British black people are significantly more likely to suffer from mental illness due to social causes. Professor Robin Murray, of The Institute of Psychiatry, believes 'The experience of black people in the U.K. almost drives them mad'.

While the starting point of the research is in the United Kingdom, there are inevitable resonances with many other countries faced with multi-cultural dynamics and migratory forces. For example there has been an influx of immigrants from former colonies in other European countries such as Italy, France and Germany; as well as from Eastern and Southern to Western and Northern Europe.

In the United States, the history of Native Americans, 'people of colour', as well as 'multi-cultural' immigration, has also impacted on racism and consequent engendering of mental illness.

Moreover, in part through globalisation, increasing migration around the world make racism and its engendering of mental illness a significant global phenomenon. Therefore *iPak* is made viewable firstly in English, and then, it is anticipated, in several other languages (funding permitting).

The research context was also the development of a work that further evolves the formal and thematic strategies of the *M-I I-M* series, after *pages of madness*.

M-I I-M is a series of science-art projects - internet art works, installations, conference presentations, lectures, talks and articles - that are responses to recent medical research that suggests racism engenders mental illness.

Moreover *M-I I-M* formally-thematically investigates notions, which have emerged in South and East Asia: such as relational origination (in Sanskrit: *pratityasamutpada*), relational being; non-anthropocentric being; the 'being of space'; 'the space of being'; void; interval; emptiness-presence. It examines them in a contemporary world increasingly filled by virtual space. The series includes *pages of madness*; *concrete essays 1 and 2*: the first published with specific title in *Leonardo, Journal of the International Society of Art, Science and Technology*; and the second published with specific title in the *South African Journal of Art History*. *M-I I-M* also includes the conception of a new composition: *phant_Asia – an asylum of desire.*

M-I I-M is an ongoing project of a particular community and political engagement in relation to digital technology, involving those who appear to inhabit the margins of society including the digital society. The series goes 'beyond madness': considering

art as medicine, a therapeutic re-generative force; that insight may emerge from madness.

M-I I-M is also the title of a presentation made on the theme at *ISEA2006/ZeroOne San José: A Global Festival of Art on the Edge.*

pages of madness considers the visuality of text in a net that up to now has been dominated by text; which re-conceives, in digital media, notions of concrete poetry; as well as the practices of the ciné-roman filmmakers such as Chris Marker, and Marguerite Duras: making 'films to read'.

iPak involves a deliberate use of 'lo-fi' recording equipment, such as camera phones; and playing with some of the machinery, forms, and practices that are defining the current 'now' and 'I': the 3G cell phone, iPod, iPhone, mpeg, jpeg, downloading, texting, 'collaging'. Much of the initial material for this work is created by a camera phone.

The full title of the work - *iPak - 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses -* itself is a play on words: borrowing from portable devices such as Apple's iPod with its capacity to download and play infinite tracks and images as well as its early model which could store up to 10,000 songs or images; and HP's iPAQ pocket PC; playing with 'Paki' a term of racist abuse in the United Kingdom; together with the emphasis on the ubiquitous 'i', evoking our generation that self-obsessively focuses on 'I'.

Research Methodologies

1.   Further scrutiny of medical evidence.

2.   Enquiry into notions of chaos.

3.   Generation of computer programme to develop a particular random generation of art elements , working with web-design enterprise, re-active (Italy).

4.   Creation of an online gallery, where artists and others can display work.

Research Outcomes

An internet artwork, *iPak*, Commissioned and exhibited by the American gallery *Turbulence*, from March 2008 to Present Day: www.turbulence.org.works/ipak; and eventually at: www.ipak.org.uk, to at least March 2020.

iPak is a playful, inter-active, immersive, evolving exhibition, that synthesises spectator creativity, the random generation of works by a computer, and art composed by ajaykumar.

iPak involves three inter-connecting works – *chaos*, *jukebox*, and *platform*.

chaos and *jukebox* involve random generation of images, texts, and sounds, to create an entirely new composition each time a spectator views it. Furthermore *jukebox* allows her/him to select and play with combinations of material: creating her/his own private chaos: unique and different with each play.

platform is an online gallery where you can exhibit your art in response to the themes - upload still images, videos, animation, texts, music, audio, and ideas, as well as your biography. Your art becomes a part of *chaos* and *jukebox*: creating an

organic ever-changing, evolving, relational entity in cyberspace. All this art contributes to a 'polyphonic' narrative: one work that is a synthesis of many tones, colours and 'stories': spectator-participants essentially. *iPak* belongs to nobody ultimately but is a relational work that is a testimony to a tragic global phenomenon and testimony to the power of art.

In addition, a computer programme was created for a distinct section: *forum* as a space and place of communication, exchange, and shared experience. It was created as a forum of discussion around the themes. Blogs could be created, articles on the themes posted, links to other pertinent sites created. However early in the manifestation of the work, *forum*, was hacked into, which affected the whole Turbulence Gallery and a decision was made to remove this section.

iPak is also presented in various research and artistic fora, including:

-   'Art, Technology and Relational Being' in *Buddha Mind - Creative Mind?* Conference, Institute of Oriental Philosophy, UK, 14 June 2010.

-   'Relations and Positions in a Connected World', Goldsmiths Thursday Club, - Public Digital Media Forum of Goldsmiths, University of London, UK, 11, June 2010 with Annie Abrahams and Ruth Catlow.

-   'Internet art as re-generative force: iPak - 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses', a Shape Arts Event: *Online Marketing & Networking* Venue: SPACE STUDIOS, Hackney, London, UK, March 2008

Summary of Project Dates

March 14th, 2008:

Official Global Launch and exclusive presentation of *iPak 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000* abuses by Turbulence Gallery, USA.

March 13th, 2010:

iPak - 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses provisionally completed in terms of exclusive presentation by Turbulence. The work continues to be presented there, beyond the formal agreement.

March 14th, 2010 – March13 th, 2020

iPak - 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses to be able to be presented at or via multiple sites, including at www.ipak.org.uk

Title of Work: ***M-I I-M* series**

pages of madness

Art Maker-Researcher: **ajaykumar**

Date of completion: 2004 (till 2009).

Technical Format: Internet

Length: infinite

<u>Note</u>**:**

- o ajaykumar conceived and directed the work

- o John Phelps was technical director

- o ajaykumar created the sound

- o ajaykumar wrote the text

- o ajaykumar created the photographs and videos

- o Spectators who inter-act with the work create their own specific version

- o Dr. Richard Parkin was a consultant

- o Helen Rowe was a consultant

- o The Peabody Trust Supported the work

Research Questions

ajaykumar's specific science-art investigation for *pages of madness* - in relation to a social theme: racism's engendering of mental illness amongst black people – was to research:

1. Potential for creating the correspondence between Asian notions of 'void' and 'virtual space'.

2. A re-conception of concrete poetry in digital media.

3. Possibilities of digital media to re-conceive the dynamics of the French *ciné roman*: 'films to read'.

4. Potential for creating a work that combines form and theme to investigate the politics of culture in relation to art, cultural plurality and disability.

Research Context

Recent scientific studied indicate, British black people are significantly more likely to suffer from mental illness due to social causes. Professor Robin Murray, of The Institute of Psychiatry, believes 'The experience of black people in the UK almost drives them mad'.

Research Methodologies

Further scrutiny of medical evidence.

Development of a form-theme methodology that:

a)   itself is an enquiry into notions of void.

b)   synergises text with image on virtual page.

This involved construction of a particular montage: a series of 'meanings' coming into 'being' through interplays of text, sound, photographic, and video image, and the spectator herself. Still images are randomly generated in relation to an ordered linearity of text and constancy of sound, with near endless permutation, so that the work can be experienced in a snapshot of fifteen seconds through to over a hundred million years.

Research Outcomes

An internet artwork: presented by the American gallery *Turbulence*, 2004 and other international festivals, and conferences.

- ISEA2006/ Zero One San José: A Global Festival of Art on the Edge, as part of *M-I I-M* presentation, San José, CA, USA, August 2006;

- Carnival of E-Creativity*,* New Delhi, India, January 2006;

- Community TV Channel, UK, Mad for Arts Online Gallery, 2004-06;

- Rampton High Security Hospital, Retford, UK, March 2005;

- Generative Arts Festival, Milan, Italy, December 2004;

- National Film Theatre, London, UK, 6th Disability Film Festival, Dec. 2004.

Title of Work: ***M-I I-M* series**

                       phant_Asia – asylum of desire

Art Maker-Researcher: **ajaykumar**

Date of Completion: 2008

Technical Format: concept

Research Questions

The *phant-Asia – asylum of desire* installation concept aims to further interrogate the notion of an interstitial realm between artist and spectator through the introduction of a bartering process.

Research Context and Methodology

phant_Asia – asylum of desire is a concept developed through research enabled by an Artsadmin Bursary for *iPak - 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses.*

'asylum' is envisaged firstly as an installation for a gallery, and secondly as an Internet art work. The concept for the installation is for it to comprise three image tracks and one sound track. The image tracks would be projected simultaneously, side by side, on to a 'moist medium': a large aquarium with water, tropical fish, rocks, vegetation; while the sound track accompanies them through the P.A.

Each image track would centre on a fantasised life, a life that lives on the margins of general society - a refugee, a philosopher, and a sex worker - decoded through the filter of the emotive and personal life of ajaykumar. A single sound track -

emotive, disturbing, fragmentary, and elliptical - would focus on his long

exploration of his own personal identity and sexuality as a 'black' man, working in

several continents at the same time. The words would be primarily in English; and

would include excerpts of languages of some of the places he has lived and worked.

Although highly personal, the narrative will, like the *ecriture* of Barthes'

autobiography (Barthes, Roland, 1996), defy precise readership.

The inter-action of sound and images provokes a process of endless deconstruction

and reconstruction. Each spectator would be able to choose which image track to

watch, at any one time. The flow of the water and the fish, by accident and by

design, would also shape the quality and nature of the image. Each image track

would have a ten-minute duration and be looped six times without break.

The sound track would be a distinct entity that functions as a 'scape and maybe

listened to, eyes closed, without watching the image tracks. It would last sixty

minutes. The 'stories' would have no dramatic climax and have the feeling of being

an endless muse: the inter-action of sound and images provoking a process of

endless deconstruction and reconstruction. New senses would appear each time,

new connections surface as the three films lap against each other.

asylum would be non-linear: Spectators would be able to begin and stop watching

or listening at any time. Each spectator would not have to pay money to experience

asylum but instead would need to bring a photograph of an image that is highly

personal to her/him, an image representing a time or incident in her/his life that is

deeply memorable. A spectator would give this photograph directly to ajaykumar,

who would receive them personally at the entrance to the installation. When

spectators leave through a different exit, they would find the floor paved with the

photographs they would have given ajaykumar. To leave the site they would have

to walk over these images.

Areas of formal and thematic investigation of the *asylum* project in development correspond to:

- o Particular relationships between art, technology, society, and so-called 'nature';
- o Development of a notion of an interstitial realm between so-called body and so-called nature;
- o Spectatorship and bartering;
- o Rethinking otherness, multi-culturalism, and convergence;
- o Rethinking identity; difference/multiplicity/fragmentation.
- o The further development of ideas and themes explored in *pages of madness* and *iPak - 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses*.

The *asylum* installation concept interrogates further the notion of an interstitial realm between artist and spectator through the introduction of a bartering process. An interstitial realm may be elicited also between so called bodies and so called external space, through input of elements of nature. The non-linear installation would comprise three looped image tracks accompanied by a single sound track.

Subsequent to the installation, an internet art work would be composed utilising, elements of the installation's text, sound, and imagery. This too would involve a bartering process.

Research Title/

Title of Work: *radio play* **– versions 1 and 2**

Art Maker-Researcher: ajaykumar

Date of Completion: 2007.

Technological Format: inter-active sound installation/audio webcast/

                             lecture-performance.

Length: 32min. 53 sec.

<u>Note</u>:

- o   Conception and Direction by ajaykumar.

- o   Curation of work at Powerhouse Museum, Sydney by Deborah Turnbull.

- o   'Curation' of work at Transpose by Narendhra Pachhkede.

- o   'Curation' of work at Fractured Narratives by Robert Gordon and Osita
  Okagbue.

- o   Inter-active elements of work at Powerhouse Museum technically designed
  by Ian Gwilt.

- o   Narration by ajaykumar.

- o   Sound engineering by Gareth Jenkinson.

- o   Text by ajaykumar.

<u>Exhibition Formats</u>:

i)   Darkened Room: fully blacked out; several chairs for spectators; P.A. system,
optional eye masks. To be presented at specific times.

ii) Cubicle with CD player and headphones; eye mask; chair for spectator.

iii) Open gallery space; Table, CD player & headphones; eye mask; chair for
spectator.

iv) Podcast or similar transmission from host gallery's website.

Research Questions

In the context of audio narratives, formally and thematically this project attempts to investigate contemporary trans-cultural possibilities for engaging with the Japanese concept of *ma* - signifying emptiness-presence, interval, pause, rest, a space in-between, in-relation, space-time. The project interrogates the notion of 'relational being' in art practice, where the work is not primarily the art object, but comes into 'being' through an ephemeral inter-action between art object and spectators in relationship to landscape – social, cultural , topographic - in which object and spectator is situated.

radio play questions distinctions made between practice and theory, furthering investigations made through other works such as John Cage's performance lectures, as well as 'film essays'.

The work is a particular experimentation of dynamics between sound and image: investigating the extent to which sound inputs can be visualised.

Research Context

Thematically the work engages with and questions current notions of race, cultural diversity, and 'blackness'.

Research Methodologies

- o Development of discursive sound narrative.
- o Diverse presentation avenues: in place of conventional papers in conferences, as well as being a discursive work that is presented in art galleries.

- o Construction of 'emptiness' in the narrative for an audience to fill with its thoughts and imagination.

- o Constructing digital inter-active elements in Powerhouse Museum presentation.

Research Outcomes

- o *Fractured Narratives: Pinter, Postmodernism and the Postcolonial World -*

- o Symposium, Goldsmiths, University of London, 6th Nov. 2009: version 2.

- o Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, Australia, 5th Sep - 5th Oct. 2007:

- o Gallery and Online Podcast presentations: version 2.

- o *Territories- light, sound & space* group exhibition, Study Gallery of Modern Art, Poole, UK, 27th Jul. - 13th Oct. 2007: version 2.

- o *transpose: shedding the capacity to fit in,* exhibition/symposium, Sakewewak First Nation's Arts Collective, MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Canada, Mar. 2007: version 1.

ajaykumar was also invited to give public lectures on themes relating to *radio play*, to accompany its presentations at the Study Gallery of Modern Art (Oct. 2007) and at the University of Technology, Sydney (Sept. 2007).

Project Description

radio play is in part a play on a radio play, and takes the form of an auto-ethnographic audio presentation, experienced in a darkened space. Blurring distinctions between practice and theory, *radio play* has resonances with performative lectures of John Cage, Derek Jarman's *Blue*, as well as film essays of Chris Marker, who, alongside other *cine-roman* directors, made 'films to read'. Formally and thematically the work engages with the Japanese concept of *ma* - signifying emptiness-presence, interval, pause, rest, a space in-between,

in-relation, and space-time. *radio play* is an immersive work that elicits a particular spectatorship, facilitating possibilities of spectators as co-creators; engaging with a notion of artist as medium rather than auteur. *radio play* calls into question established notions of race and cultural diversity. It could be termed a work of sound art, of live art, and of new writing.

Research Title/

Title of Work: www.shapes-design.com

Art Maker-Researcher: ajaykumar, Alessandra Maiolino, Andrea Maiolino

Date of Completion: 2005

Technological Format: Internet

Length: Infinite

<u>Note</u>:

The playful inter-active elements of the work, were conceived originally by ajaykumar and Alessandra Maiolino and developed in collaboration with web-designer Andrea Maiolino.

Research Questions

The aim for the website was to create a work that formally and thematically was consistent with the philosophy and ideas of the design studio, shapes-design: creating inter-active, ludic, playful furniture, lighting and garden designs.

Research Context

Expressed in Research Questions.

Research Outcomes

An interactive, ludic website at: www.shapes-design.com

Research Title/

Title of Work: *tate modern*

Art Maker-Researcher: **ajaykumar**

Date of Completion: 2006

Technological Format: Video – Available on DVD

                           Online (with iTunes software) at:

                           http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa

                           /viewPodcast?id=119002027&s=143444&i=2151559

Length: 4 mins. approx.

<u>Note</u>:

- o Conception and Direction by ajaykumar.

- o Text written by ajaykumar.

- o Videography by Sara Muzio.

- o Editing by Sara Muzio.

- o Production Assistant: Tod Higginson.

- o Narration by ajaykumar.

- o Consultant: Alessandra Maiolino.

Research Questions

This research – interrogating a range of technological practice: from historical Ellora architecture (India) to contemporary digital art - concerns the nature and dynamics of interface.

tate modern specifically concerns the potential of application of Tantric processes such as that found at Ellora, as well as the intellectual approach of Tadao Ando, to a site of contemporary European architecture.

Research Context

Thematically and formally, the work engages with:
- o   The buddhist notion of relational origination (Sanskrit: *pratityasamutpada*).
- o   The phenomenological kinaesthetic processes involved in defining of architecture and engendering ontological processes at the rock-cut edifices of Ellora, India.
- o   Tadao Ando's defining of architecture as not built edifice only, but as the interrelation of built edifice, the person who frequents it and a wider landscape. This landscape is designed as not topological only but cultural social and philosophical.
- o   Tadao Ando's interpretation of the Japanese term *shintai*, commonly understood as body, as body existing in relation to space.

tate modern specifically concerns the potential of application of Tantric processes such as that found at Ellora, as well as the intellectual approach of Tadao Ando, to a site of contemporary European architecture. Thematically and formally, the work engages with:

the buddhist notion of relational origination (Sanskrit: *pratityasamutpada*); phenomenological kinaesthetic processes involved in defining of architecture; a notion of architecture as defined by Ando as architecture as not built edifice only, but as the interrelation of built edifice, the person who frequents it and a wider landscape; Ando's interpretation of the Japanese term *shintai*, commonly understood as body, as body existing in relation to space.

Research Methodologies

The creation of a work in video that involves:

- Development of a phenomenological kinaesthetic process to the art work, which places my self as both maker and spectator as integral to art work and architecture.
- The inclusion of the personal in the defining of architectural space, and ontological entity.
- A particular conception of emptiness in both architectural and wider cultural terms vis-à-vis the edifice known as Tate Modern.

Research Outcomes

Initially commissioned for Channel Five TV's 'Mad for Art' series, *tate modern* has been presented in various contexts. This includes:

- *Territories – light, sound & space* -group exhibition, Study Gallery of Modern Art, Poole, UK, Jul-Oct. 2007.
- Sky TV/Propeller TV, UK, Broadcast, Sept. and Oct. 2006; Jan. 2007.
- Artist Review Series - Immersivity, Art, Architecture, Sound and Ecology for Live Art Garden Initiative, London, UK, Jan. 2007.

- *biblio*- group exhibition, Triangle Gallery, London, UK, Mar. 2006.

- Carnival of E-Creativity, Festival of Electronic Art, New Delhi, India, Jan. 2006.

- Global Podcast, via iTunes, Mar. '06-present. Viewable with iTunes software at:

  http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=119002027&s=143444&i=2151559

Research Title/

Title of Work: *way of tea - an art of conviviality*

Art Maker-Researcher: adjani-ajaykumar with *8*

Form: Inter-active and Immersive Installation

                             with envisaged Contextual Programme of Art and

                             Culture from Japan and other parts of Asia

Location: Kube Gallery, Poole, UK

Date: 5 - 26 November 2009

<u>**Note**</u>**:**

Conception

and Direction: adjani-ajaykumar

Curation: Jem Main and Ania Bas

Photographic

Documentation: Denis Roberts

Images: adjani-ajaykumar, Daniel Somerville,

Performers/'Hosts': adjani-ajaykumar, Andre Amalio, Daniel Somerville, Gudmundur

                    Ingi Thorvaldsson, Takashi Nishida, Tereza Havlickova

Produced by: *8*

Scenography: adjani**-**ajaykumar with Daniel Somerville

Sound: Rob Palmer, Joey Draycott.

Research Questions and Objectives for this collaborative project between adjani-ajaykumar and Kube

<u>The Idea</u>

The 'way of tea' is a sophisticated interactive and immersive art experience. It is multi-sensory and involving of multiple media. It is what seminal designer Adolphe Appia called a 'living art', based on buddhist philosophy, to develop the sense of the sacred in our daily lives and in life as a whole. The tea garden is integral to the ceremony: the journey through it facilitating the spectators' journey from the world of daily life to the realm of the sacred.

- o Creation of temporary installation: a contemporary tea ceremony and garden that engages with the philosophic concepts, yet is not culture-specific. Here it could be thought of 'trans-national', embodying diverse cultural inputs, drawing on artist ajaykumar's personal research and eclectic influence. This contemporary tea ceremony and garden involves spectator inter-action and immersion: a performative, musical, and architectural experience that engages with the dynamics and stupendous quality of the existing architecture of Kube: both its internal space and external space.

- o Presentation of a rich and varied programme of activity on various community and education levels that would enable access to range of Japanese and Asian art and culture, giving cultural context to the exhibition: for people living and working in Poole and Dorset. A range of programmes that was designed to be informative, entertaining and engaging for audiences that currently may have limited access to such diverse cultural input. The programme was envisaged to include:

    - Film screenings on architecture of Tadao Ando and Ellora.

- Screening of Teshigahara's *Rikyu* – a biopic of the seminal tea master.

- *Anime*: Japanese Animation day.

- *pecha kucha*.

- Aikido workshop-presentation of the martial art - kinaesthetics is an important part of the tea ceremony, and this presentation would help give a better understanding of this in terms of Japanese culture as a whole.

- Traditional tea ceremony demonstration.

- Public Q&A by adjani-ajaykumar and discussion on themes around the work.

<u>Installation Description</u>

In terms of adjani-ajaykumar's installation, the art work here is not an object but the creation of something of a sublime world that exists somewhere between the architecture of the building, the art objects used, artist, and spectator. It is an interactive experience, a contemplative experience, and one of pleasure.

Although the tea ceremony is popularly thought of as involving extreme formalisation, at its heart arguably it involves social-interaction and is ultimately about conviviality.

ajaykumar would like to create a series of performances that are really in essence a number of one-to-one (and one-to-small-group) encounters between herself/other collaborative performers ('hosts') and a spectator, another person, with whom she will share a cup of English tea or Italian coffee, biscuits and engaging conversation. The performances could take place at half hourly intervals through the day.

The 'tea house' in this situation would be the first floor of the gallery. It would be 'set' in a particular way to foster a particular relaxing space, using images, music/sound, comfortable chairs, particular lighting (to include the natural light of

the building), aromas. In this sense, it would be developed as a multi-sensory experience.

It is customary for tea houses to be situated in tea gardens, which function as an integral part of the tea ceremony: in that the journey through the garden acts to help us have a kind of distancing from the world of daily life to the sublime world of the tea ceremony. Spectators enter individually and are welcomed by a 'host', who washes their feet ritually and offers a refreshing glass of water.

The vision for the tea garden would be to have a near empty space in the ground floor gallery and to create a meandering pathway through the space that eventually takes people up the stairs to the tea house.

The pathway is made of circular cappuccino coffee cups: each filled with earth, 'micro' rocks, and grass seeds that shoot, grow, and die during the course of the exhibition. The 'hosts' would clean, water and tend this garden each day of the exhibition.

The pathway would be constructed in ways that take people at certain points to the glass wall of the building and highlighting certain features of the courtyard outside – the pine tree, certain sculptures already there; a possible additional temporary sculpture made specially for the work. As the sun moves across the sky, in and out of clouds, different qualities of light and shadow would also be highlighted and enhance the experience.

The idea of the meandering journey would be to slow down the journey through the space to highlight the space, and make people more aware of the tremendous quality of the architecture, including the relationship it creates between the internal and the external. adjani-ajaykumar would also seek to find a very subtle sound - it

could be a vibration only or specially composed or found music - to be played in the

space to enhance the feeling of the architecture and its wonderful auditory quality.

Research Title/

Title of Work: *zen gardens without the 'zen', * series

Art Maker-Researcher: **ajaykumar**

Form: Installations/Interior Design/Gardens

Dates: Projects here included from 2005-20010 only

Research Questions

This research concerns investigating the notion of a hypothesis of 'non-anthropocentric being' that may emerge in a relational world, between body (spectator/artist), ostensible object, and landscape – topographical, social, and cultural.

This project began with seeking to analyse the contemporary trans-cultural relevance of the Japanese concept of *ma*, denoting space-time, emptiness-presence, and interval; and finding a methodology for re-conceiving it as an 'art experience', where apperceptive spectators are the only 'performers'.

Research Context

Architect Tadao Ando defines an architecture that comes into being only through interaction of human, with built edifice, and with a wider landscape of so called 'nature'. In this case emptiness and void is integral to his architecture, as is performative, kinaesthetic meditation.

Research Methods

1. Field research at the Water Temple in Awajishima designed by Ando and inspired by the Ellora and Ajanta sites in India. This involved phenomenological analysis using myself as a subject together with others frequenting the sites to deduce the dynamic relationship between the humanly created structural patterns of the sites with those of the elements.

2. Construct phenomenological experiences in a number of places including spaces of function.

Research Outcomes

This is an ongoing series. The works that have taken place within the context of the thesis include:

paper garden, installation, 5th in series
- ○ *Territories – Light, Sound & Space,* group exhibition, Study Gallery of Modern Art, Poole, UK, July-October 2007
- ○ *ArtistsExchange*, group exhibition, CAA, Hilton Hotel, New York, USA, February 2007
- ○ *biblio-,* group exhibition, Triangle Gallery, London, UK, March 2006

cute micro garden, installation, 4th in series
- ○ *Imagination, Function, Production,* group exhibition, The Study Gallery of
- ○ Modern Art, Poole, UK, March 2005.
- ○ *The First Modern Art Fair,* - group exhibition, Study Gallery of Modern Art, UK, May-June 2005.

luminescence, concept, 3rd in series

Concept for a garden for the Peabody Trust, London, UK.

- o _Imagination, Function, Production,_ group exhibition, The Study Gallery of Modern Art, Poole, UK, March 2005.

Research Title/

Title of Work: *zero – the confluence of art and technology*

Art Maker-Researcher: **ajaykumar and Alok b. Nandi**

Date of Completion: 2008

Technological Format: Book - infinite edition online version at

www.zero.fluxtopia.net

Total length of Work: 64 pages

<u>Note</u>:

- o Conception and Direction by ajaykumar and Alok b. Nandi
- o Design Collaboration with Kiun Kim

Research Questions and Context

The conception of zero is of vital importance for the existence of our current global society. The Information Age, the Digital Age begins essentially at the point of generation of zero in ancient South Asia. ajaykumar and Alok b. Nandi interrogate zero: from its historical and philosophical origins to it critical importance in our contemporary being.

In the Ancient South Asian language of Sanskrit zero is written as *shunya*. *Shunya* also means 'emptiness'. *Shunyata* from *shunya* is a buddhist concept that signifies 'void' or 'nothingness' or 'emptiness': an emptiness that has presence. *Shunya* is important also in the religion of brahmanism.

In ancient South Asia researchers were integrating mathematical, scientific ideas with philosophic ones and with artistic exploration. For example it is said that in certain Indian temples you would find at their centre, their inner sanctum, not ornate religious statues or paintings, but an empty space with a book only: and the book was a book of mathematics. The mathematical attempt to understand the universe, the philosophic attempt to grasp it, and the artistic conception of it, went hand in hand.

Through various exposition exhibition processes ajaykumar and Alok b. Nandi investigate ways to un-think and re-think technology: re-visiting the way we think about art and technology and 'technological practice' today and in future. 'Technological practice' is approached in a particular sense: referring to an integrated research that embraces art, philosophy, craft/technique, and science, as well as health and ecology in a profound sense. While there are parallels with German philosopher Martin Heidegger's discussion of the way the Ancient Greeks approached *techne* (root of our current term 'technology'), these researchers' enquiry has its roots in buddhism and tantric philosophy, as well as in the re-conceiving of South Asian and Japanese philosophic and aesthetic concepts through trans-national and translocal processes.

In the book project ajaykumar and Nandi explore equally – formally and thematically – the number eight, a perfect number in Physics, and a number that has importance in buddhism.

Research Methodology

The collaboration with between ajaykumar and Alok b. Nandi was formally and thematically to work at a distance, rarely to speak and to converse telematically by email or Skype: discussing the notion of '0', the notion of '8', as well as South Asian and Japanese notions of space, emptiness, void, interval, pause, space-time: *akasha*, *ma*, *mu* and *shunyata*.

In this context, working with the number eight as well as with the number zero, the book construction was decided as being of sixty-four pages, with each writer working with thirty-two pages, form one end of the book, meeting in the middle, with page thirty-two for each, with an empty space. The book could essentially open either way, beginning with Nandi or beginning with ajaykumar.

Research Outcomes

An online book publication: *zero – the confluence of art and technology*
at
http://www.zero.fluxtopia.net (till present)

Title of Work: *zero (hybrid 2)*

Artist-Researcher: **adjani-ajaykumar**

       in collaboration with Daniel Somerville and *8*

Form: Installation

Date: 2010

<u>Note</u>:

- o   Conception and Direction: adjani-ajaykumar

- o   Curation: Brit Bunkley and Ian Gwilt

- o   Produced by *8*

- o   Images by adjani-ajaykumar, Akiko Ban, Daniel Somerville, Takashi Nishida

- o   Sound by: Joey Draycott, Rob Palmer, Takashi Nishida

- o   Sound Engineering: Gareth Jenkinson

Research Questions

This work was created in response to an invitation by curators Brit Bunkley and Ian Gwilt to participate in a group exhibition *Hybrids*, an exhibition engaging with 3D rapid prototyping processes, and other media. Rapid prototyping technology has largely been used by industrial manufacturers and has since been adopted by architects and digital media artists.

Concerns of the exhibition curators include existence and what constitutes the identity of an object, authorship of digitally created work, the fluidity of transformation from data set to three dimensional object, and the relational aspect between prototyping, audiences and real-time. *Hybrids* investigates the ability of

rapid prototyping to blur the interface between manufactured truth and objective reality.

Considered within an art making sphere, the process raises issues over ontology, authenticity, and place amongst others. The works in the exhibition seek to address these while still embracing their own materiality, in model making technology and digital culture. As the title *Hybrids* suggests, the works comprise a combination of these ideas with a range of media including live performance, social and formal sculpture, video installation, and painting.

Hybrids articulates itself as an extension of Kosuth's *One and Three Chairs*, which plays on the ontological properties of an object. His theory on the unification of concept and realisation has been re-interpreted, taking into account the undefined and evolving limitations of rapid prototyping. Kosuth's statement that art is to embody an idea that remains constant despite changes to its elements will be tested within a digital framework.

Research Context

Summarising ideas contained in the body of the thesis: -
The conception of zero-*shunya* is of vital importance for the existence of our current global society. The Information Age, the Digital Age begins essentially at the point of generation of zero, thought to be in ancient South Asia.

In the Ancient South Asian language of Sanskrit zero is written as *shunya*. *Shunya* also means 'emptiness'. *Shunyata* from *shunya* is a buddhist concept that signifies 'void' or 'nothingness' or 'emptiness': an emptiness that has presence. *Shunya* is important also in the religion of brahmanism.

In ancient South Asia researchers were through to be integrating mathematical, scientific ideas with philosophic ones and with artistic exploration. For example it is

said that in certain Indian temples you would find at their centre, their inner sanctum, not ornate religious statues or paintings, but an empty space with a book only: and the book was a book of mathematics. The mathematical attempt to understand the universe, the philosophic attempt to grasp it, and the artistic conception of it, went hand in hand.

Research Methodology

Presentation of an evanescence of bubbles which daily morphs and ultimately reduces a projection screen to nothingness, playfully interrogating possibilities of realising a 3D prototype of 'emptiness', and of 'zero'.

The bubbles, emblematic of zero, emptiness, ephemerality, and relationality, actually cause – through their moisture – the gradual disintegration of the cloth screen over days. The resulting three-dimension objects capture an idea of 'output in 3D', of the concepts of zero explored in the installation. The work confronts the challenges of synthesising art processes and art object and of making a thing of nothing.

The work also exposes the dilemmas and conundra of the artists, dealing with a 4-Dimensional dynamic in 3-Dimensional terms. In Japan there was no word for 3-Dimensional space (height-width-depth) that was separate from time, until exposure to European ideas. So in this context there was always a 4-Dimensional realm in operation: space-time, which they termed *ma*.

Moreover these artists are engaging with a particular notion of architecture as expressed in the accompanying Keynote presentation. This is a conception of architecture that is not static built edifice only, but an architecture that comes into being through dynamic inter-action of built edifice, the person who frequents it and

a wider landscape. Here there is movement not only in the shape of the person but in the elements: the apparent movement of the sun in relation to the earth, flow of water, wind. These become active elements in an ephemeral architecture that comes into being in a particular space-time. This conception is epitomised in the works of contemporary architect Tadao Ando and in the historic rock-cut edifices at Ellora in South Asia. This epitomises an approach to art that emphasises – rather static objects - flow, process as well as both inter-active and immersive spectatorship.

Research Outcomes

zero (hybrid2)

inter-active and immersive installation

MIC Toi Rerehiko, Auckland, New Zealand,

29 January. – 5 March 2010

http://www.mic.org.nz/artists/ajaykumar-8-technology

Research Title/

Title of Work: *zero – the aroma of technology, the flavour of art, to savour being*

Art Maker-Researcher: **adjani-ajaykumar with *8***

Form: Installation

Date: 2009

<u>**Note**</u>**:**

- o Conception and Direction: adjani-ajaykumar

- o Curated by Toshio Shimizu

- o Produced by *8*

- o Images by adjani-ajaykumar, Akiko Ban, Daniel Somerville, Takashi Nishida

- o Scenography by Daniel Somerville

- o Sound by: Joey Draycott, Rob Palmer, Takashi Nishida

- o Sound Engineering: Gareth Jenkinson

- o Performers: adjani-ajaykumar, Akiko Ban, Takashi Nishida

- o Production Support from Students of the Department of Curation, Gakushuin Women's College, Tokyo.

Research Questions

Investigation of the concept of zero-*shunya* through contemporary, inter-active and immersive art processes.

Investigation of tea ceremony realisation in a contemporary context beyond cultural and religious specificity.

Research Context

Summarising ideas contained in the body of the thesis: -

The conception of zero-*shunya* is of vital importance for the existence of our current global society. The Information Age, the Digital Age begins essentially at the point of generation of zero, thought to be in ancient South Asia.

In the Ancient South Asian language of Sanskrit zero is written as *shunya*. *Shunya* also means 'emptiness'. *Shunyata* from *shunya* is a buddhist concept that signifies 'void' or 'nothingness' or 'emptiness': an emptiness that has presence. *Shunya* is important also in the religion of brahmanism.

In ancient South Asia researchers were through to be integrating mathematical, scientific ideas with philosophic ones and with artistic exploration. For example it is said that in certain Indian temples you would find at their centre, their inner sanctum, not ornate religious statues or paintings, but an empty space with a book only: and the book was a book of mathematics. The mathematical attempt to understand the universe, the philosophic attempt to grasp it, and the artistic conception of it, went hand in hand.

Research Methodology

This project is the culmination of a series of expositions of the theme, which formally and thematically investigate the ideas. This series called *8* takes the form of architectonic investigation, performative interrogation that uses the concept of the 'way of tea' as a model of working. The tea ceremony is a multi-sensory and multiple media art form that manifests ultimately not in objects but in an ephemeral evanescent experience: an art of conviviality between host and guest, artist and spectator.

Research Outcomes

zero – the aroma of technology, the flavour of art, to savour being

installation

Gakushuin Women's College, Tokyo, Japan

15 December, 2010.