

Between Daedalus and Ariadne: 'Where's the Body?'

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KEYWORDS

Daedalus, Ariadne, body, architecture, movement, sensors, environmental audit, experiential.

This paper investigates the hidden body in architectural education, and the importance of place over space (Ingold, 2012), through three body, architecture, and movement research projects, where explicitly, at the centre of the architectural investigation, is the body. In the first research project, a mapping of the body in a social environment; in the second, an environmental and spatial audit of the places of drowning across the South West of the UK for the RNLI, reveals the mental and physical pressures that the body can be under; and thirdly, an installation project in the British Pavilion in Venice, which exhibits an experiential journey of mutability between architecture and the body. The position and context of the mythological Ariadne (Colomina, 2011) versus Daedalus (McEwen, 1994) as either architect or choreographer is graduated across the projects set with the ecological context of Guattari's, 'Three Ecologies' (1989).



INTRODUCTION: INTO THE LABYRINTH

The body in the curriculum of schools of architecture is easily lost. It is always implicitly there, as the architectural design process acts, both with and for the body. There is in many architectural courses a game of hide and seek through the curriculum, where in design exercises, the body fleetingly appears and disappears amongst building processes and technologies. Sometimes there may be a conscious battle of appearing and disappearing but more often the body is forgotten, lost from drawings, and models it unconsciously disappears from the radar of the design process.

This paper introduces three recent body, architecture, and movement research projects, by architecture postgraduates at AUB, where explicitly, at the centre of the architectural investigation, is the body. These projects examine the body and its movement through Guattari's, 'Three Ecologies' (1989), from the mental, through the social, to the environmental ecology, a thread is drawn out from the various contexts. Within and across the contexts the body is examined and tested placed in a battle between contrasting positions on the origin of the mythological architect (McEwen, 1997). The position and context of Ariadne versus Daedalus are explored through each of the following research projects. The projects can be seen as involving or processing 'maker' and, or 'designer' architects at different points through their contrasting involvement with and use of representation or making. The performative body research that moves between architecture and choreographer is reflected by the binary nature of the mythological metaphor between Daedalus and Ariadne (Colomina, 2002). The mythological metaphor and narrative games of the tools applied to the three research projects contrast with the real and contemporary nature of the projects. Often when the building comes to the fore in architectural education the body can disappear and slip away. In these research projects, building is in the background, while the activity of the body with its experience, recording, representation and interpretation is to the fore. These projects have a shared connection to the dynamic, moving, physical body, and interest in the 'place' of the body rather than the 'space' of the body.

The anthropologist Tim Ingold rallies against the term, space, as empty, detached, from the realities of life and experience', in his essay, *Place, Movement and Knowledge*' (Ingold, 2011). He also states that 'there is something wrong with the notion that places exist in space'. He identifies space as having a different line, an outward boundary, for example the space of the body being bounded by the skin. Place is delineated by movement, activity, inhabitation. Ingold does acknowledge, partially, the

geographer's (and by implication partially the architects) need for the term, space, as they explore, determine and measure, but he expects a return to 'place', or 'raum', with an added dimension, an embodied meaning, following the measuring and then the inhabiting of the space. The architect's role may take from anthropology, Ingold's world, but it also needs to be a geographer too, from time to time, in the process of design (Ingold, 2011).

This paper originally started out arguing for revealing, from within the hidden school, the movement of the body, as both maker and receiver of architecture, and the importance of place not space. It looked to define the hidden school, under the conference theme of the physical school of architecture building, as rather than a space for the making of architecture, a place, with the body of the students define the place. The abstract was originally submitted to the School of Architecture in the 'as a home or building' theme. What most makes the place of the educational process? The building or the students? The bodies of the architecture students, travelling on their educational journeys or the double height spaces of the architecture studios. — the place of education. When the programme emerged at the conference, the paper found itself, in the 'content' (curriculum) section of the conference. This appeared to raise the importance of the return of body's role in architectural education in the curriculum, and the need for its return and embodiment within the projects and research.

The origin journey of the body as defined through the Greek myth of 'the Minotaur and the Labyrinth as explained by McEwan sees Daedalus, the master maker as the archetypal 'first architect', for King Minos, he was the 'builder' of the labyrinth under the King's, Cretan palace (McEwan, 1997). In the myth, Theseus, who slays the Minotaur in the labyrinth, is given a thread by Minos's daughter, Ariadne. Theseus's journey through the labyrinth is mapped by the thread that Ariadne has given him so that he can follow that and is able to find his way out. This mapping is a representation of the space of a journey through the labyrinth. Beatriz Colomina argues that Ariadne is actually the first architect as she makes a representational architecture, not the 'building' Daedalus exhibits as his crafted, labyrinthine space. Ariadne, makes with her, puzzle-solving thread, a thread, that creates architecture, it represents the journey of the body and makes a drawing. She is seen as the necessary focus, and as the thread needs instructions, and a body to move it, Ariadne is a choreographer-architect, an agent of change, creating the line by not only providing the thread, but also telling Theseus the movements he needs to make with the thread in the labyrinth (Colomina, 2002).

From establishing a practice with choreographer Caroline Salem in the 1980s we have developed body and movement

related projects from performances to pieces of city. They investigate from the patterns of the body, the abstract movement to the perceptions and internal connections of body and architecture. The three recent body-architecture-movement research projects are part of series, defined as BAM5 and were undertaken with architecture postgraduate research students on the M.Arch. at the Arts University Bournemouth, a new professional postgraduate programme that explores the performative in the context of the three ecologies. In the first research project, a mapping of the body in a social environment, explores aerial notions of a social ecology with Zaha Hadid Architects; in the second, an environmental and spatial audit of the places of drowning across the South West of the UK for the RNLI, reveals the mental and physical pressures that the body can be under; and thirdly, an installation project in the British Pavilion in Venice, exhibits an experiential journey of mutability between architecture and the body.

RESEARCH 1 (BAM5) — 'GOING OVER' OR DAEDALUS DOMINATES

Spatial Mapping with ZHA in the AUB Gallery

The body movement mapping and thinking development for this project starts with a Zaha Hadid performance collaboration with choreographer Rosemary Butcher that took place in the Festival Hall in 1989 (Butcher, 2016). A composed battle of dynamic lines took place both through the collaboration and in the performance an overlay of the two, a mapping of the architects score was projected across the floor with black taped lines then the choreographer and dancers worked over the lines with their distinct movement, a body layer. It was a layered battle of both Ariadne and Daedalus, where both choreographer and architect were bidding to express their movement.

Following Zaha's final public engagement, opening the CRAB Drawing Studio at AUB, shortly before her death in 2017, Zaha Hadid Architects practice put on a special exhibition in the AUB Gallery, entitled 'Evolution', showing work past and future, in the AUB Gallery. In the first stage of the project a series of body movement workshops AUB Architecture post-graduate students, worked with choreographer Caroline Salem, followed by ZHA, and my practice, Moving Architecture to record, analyse and project representations of the movement taking place in the Gallery. This was done initially with drawings and video, then via movement sensors. These sensors were mounted on the ceiling of the gallery and collected the data of movement in this gallery space over the exhibition period.



Fig. 1.1: Performance Festival Hall Hadid-Butcher collaboration 1987.

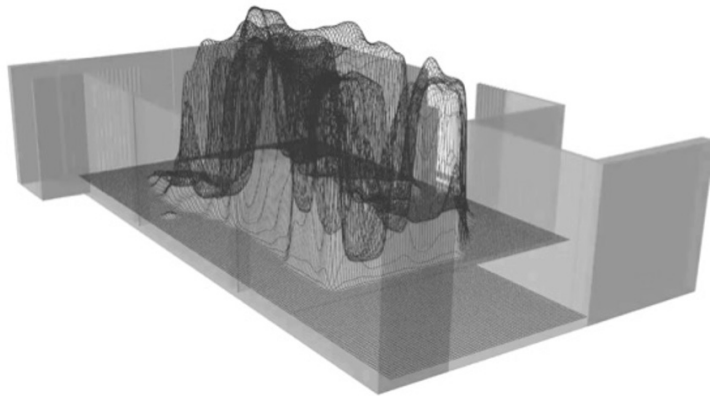


Fig. 1.2: Mapping of Gallery space from sensor info. AUB-ZHA col. 2018

The sensors were a part of another play with Daedalus mapping Ariadne, and an Ariadne moving to the exhibits, originally placed by Daedalus. The ZHA argument was that this recording could map and be used to comment on the ‘popularity — success’ of different sections and exhibits. This was of relevance to the ZHA Spatial Analytics team, where the sensors are seen as a feedback loop, to maximize the efficiency of the practice’s offer in the particular area of office space planning.

The AUB interpretation was more alternative and creative as the information recorded by the sensors was collapsed into a data flow, and re-interpreted by the postgrads, making an experimental representational ‘space’, a making of architecture. They also used video mapping from their own camera’s

and drawings rather than just the sensors to increase the 3D information. This research work was 'applied' in a creative educational environment and had educational value, yet the digital flow that emerged as used was only partial, and to some extent it was 'unreal', the complexities of the social movement and circulation in the gallery was simplified to a binary number.

This is in stark contrast to the sophistication of the interpretative performance and its movement language by the choreographer Rosemary Butcher over the ZH drawing, creating a distinctive context and film where Ariadne and representation, possibly Daedalus combine. The heat maps and data flow aggregate the individual's body movement, and starts to create a 'place', although in this opportunity area for interpretation of a social ecology at present ZHA in their interpretation of determined body attraction to exhibits, Daedalus and 'space' dominate in this process. ZHA Analytics did see it is a feedback data a 'Going Over' (Rosen, 1993) or watching and mapping of the movement, creating information for interpretation, while the AUB and choreographer interpretation returns and starts the rediscovery of the body

RESEARCH 2 (BAM 5) GOING UNDER — UNPICKING THE THREAD

RNLI Designing Out Drowning — AUB Architecture Environmental Audit

The research project 'Designing Out Drowning' was a RNLI Innovation project undertaken as a Knowledge Exchange Project to investigate the issues behind drowning and to project initiatives of how to develop new design approaches that can prevent drowning. A team of investigators and researches were assembled to investigate and reflect on drowning events across the South West. The AUB Architecture team focused on the environmental background from weather to geology relating to the events. The first stage was to visit the sites, analyse and understand the issues behind the drowning events. This understanding of the environmental ecology was combined with the social ecology research undertaken by another creative team to help unravel the combination of mental, social and environmental issues.

The work as architect researchers focused on 'sites' where drowning events had occurred across Devon and Cornwall. in each case the journey of the body was tracked and the environmental data collected, analysed and displayed the conditions of air, land and water recorded and mapped with models fabricated for further debate and discussion. The events included late



Fig. 2.1: RNLI DOD Environmental Audit — Bournemouth Pilot

night drownings connected to social activities in the centre of Exeter Quays in the cold water of the River Exe, cliff falls and jumps at Torbay and Newquay, and people cut off by tide and rip currents at Perranporth and Bantham.

An example of the process can be seen at Bantham where inexperienced swimmers, surfers, individuals and families are often caught out, on the south Devon beach which is famous for surfing. It picks up the southerly swell rolling off the Atlantic and with the right wind and tide can create some of the best surfing conditions in the UK. The rip current that runs across the beach, is understood and used by the experienced surfers to float out to beyond the waves, but for the inexperienced surfer and their families the running out of the rip current makes the surface look calm yet it can pull them out fast and make the unaware panic. There are life guards there in the summer to try and prevent potential drowning events.

The journeys of the inexperienced surfer were tracked and represented through models and drawings. The thread of a potential surfing tragedy starts with the weather and surf reports. Further along is the preparation, the journey, and then the experience of the site with its various landscape markers and events on the road from a home via Motorway to the 2 mile Devon lane from Kingsbridge to Bantham down to the car park and beach access. The mapping of the journey through to the fluid dynamics of the water across the beach ground mapping the rip currents and particular times is important as well as for other sites.

A series of 3D models were created and the stages of reaching the potential drowning event mapped out. In this second AUB Body-Architecture-Movement research project the body was followed, as though tracked from below, into the dynamics of the water. So through the labyrinth of events and decisions

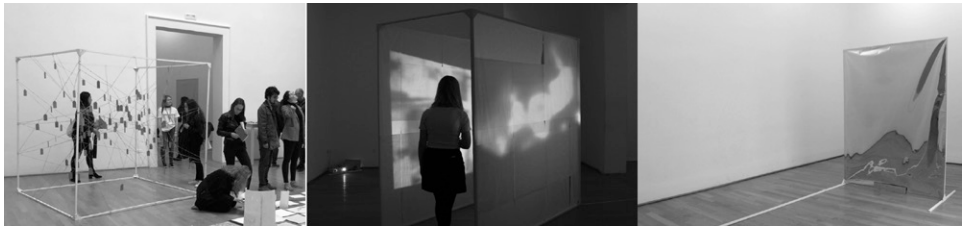


Fig. 3.1: Elements of the AUB installation 'Mutability' in the British Pavilion

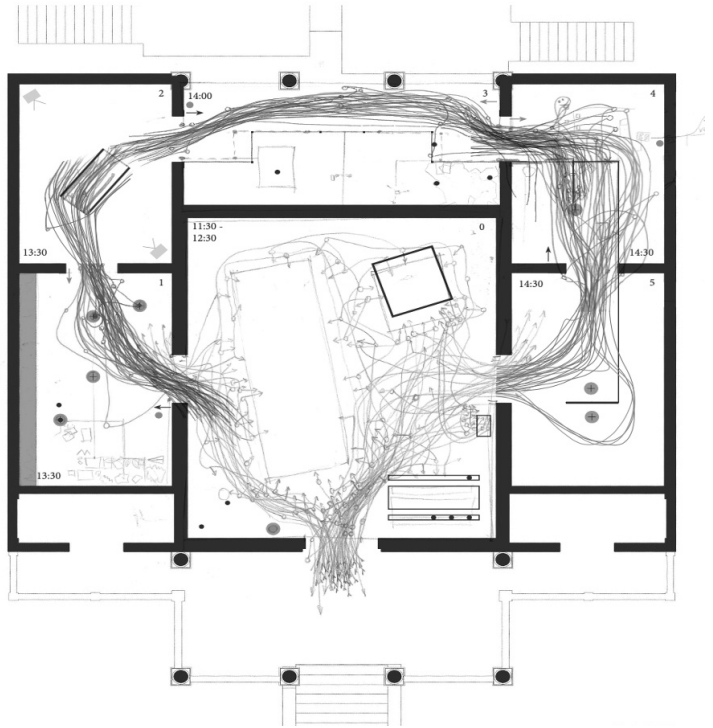


Fig. 3.2: Mapping of movement in British Pavilion during AUB installation

The British Pavilion for the 2018 Architecture Venice Biennale was politically and provocatively left empty by the curators to providing a space for reflection and events. AUB Architecture were invited by the British Council to create a one-day installation event, based around 'Mutability' it looked at changing identity, and nationality, via a rich metaphor of drawing, making, projections, reflections and travelling. A fabricated stick line defined the route as it travelled around the British Pavilion setting up an experiential journey.

This delicate inhabited frame, with its choreographed journey and erection was a fully embodied experience, with projections of the Grenfell Tower fire, and a mirror to view one self. It

worked for both for the M.Arch. students, and an overlay of two thousand visitors, reflecting, experiencing and drawing. Through moments of performativity, with T-Shirts, labels and questions, the installation questioned the audience. From where had people come? How did they see themselves? To where were they travelling? It questioned the quasi-national, the personal, using an installed, designed and pre-fabricated framed, journey, drawing a 'line' through the British Pavilion.

One of the precedents was the artists' Arakawa and Gins, who switched the object-subject, challenging the body with the installations in their Mitaka Apartments. The framed line was also a performative journey along with workshop activity of words and drawings. The intensity of the day and activity was represented through a series of drawings plotting the moving of the body which appeared to also weave a thread suggesting Ariadne as architect with Daedalus as visiting dancer choreographer, the measurer of the architect. This was an Ariadne-Daedalus combination, a place for architectural education, which was experienced and measured. In this third Body Architecture Movement project do the visitors become Daedalus, measuring their experience, or are they carrying Ariadne's thread?

CONCLUSION: UNPICKING THE THREADS

The three research projects place the body at the centre. The experiential of the body hones into view; as does the Tim Ingold's reference arguing for 'place' over space. They examine and emphasize the bodies journey. Architects often talk about the space around that body, with the use of space as a term implying it is neutral and to be manipulated yet, it is loaded with baggage and not neutral, it is always a place, even when everything is removed when it is loaded with the 'removal' of the body. Across all these projects the body is at the interface of the project, mapping, drowning, and experiencing, through a series of methodologies, space is questioned and it is answered by 'place'.

Ingold for his metaphor for this process quotes from Michael Rosen's children's book, 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' (1993):

'We can't go over it,
We can't go under it,
Oh no!
We've got to go through it'

In the search for the hidden school there needs to a focus on the return of the body to the curriculum. It is the bodies link with the function, the ritual, and the performative, that needs

to be found and inserted through the curriculum. That is not just the geometric body, via the Bauhaus, and Oskar Schlemmer's 'Triadic Ballet', but an ecological body that can be seen emerging in the sixties through the Halprins, Anna, a choreographer and Lawrence, a landscape architect, also through the artist and architect, Arakawa & Gins, with the physical bodily challenges of their Japanese apartments. The Halprins appear to channel the sixties new-wave ecologies in America to their movement and landscape work, from the Pacific beach, to the water spaces of the city, and their dancing deck in the woods. For me this hidden school was found and developed via the EASA gatherings as a student in the 1980s in Delft, and the experiential journeying and descriptive workshop of the pioneering landscape architect and teacher Pär Gustafsson.

In the three projects there is a shift from the Daedalus making world to the analysis and representational questioning of Ariadne. This is the overlapping of the choreographic and the architectural, there is the application of reflective bodily mapping and somatic practice, and the use of ecological, psycho-geographic with physical models setting up a wide landscape of overlapping bodily concerns. The first project with its mapping, 'going over it', and the second, 'going under', with its fluid understanding of the body and water, the third is 'going through it' with the experiential.

The three research projects from the AUB post-graduates see the emphasis on the body with different focuses across the mental, social and environmental ecologies of the three ecologies (Félix Guattari, 2014). The body being re-found and reviewed is part of the wider ecological understanding of architectural education it is key to creating an architecture that works at many levels. The body worker, or choreographer has understandings of inside and outside of the moving body that can respond in an experiential way giving and taking, revealing and concealing with wider space and environment around them. The architect working through the process of site exploration to fabrication to use and experience of the fabricated space has multiple opportunities to create a place rather than a space. As shown in these examples, the Venice installation focused on the mental ecology of the visitor, the ZHA project took the social ecology, of many bodies visiting the AUB gallery, while the RNLI discovered the body in the wider landscape of its journey where the extremes of land, air and water were tested as part of the bodies relationship with environmental ecologies. The hidden school with its hidden body needs the curriculum to bring forward the multiple opportunities to work within the connected body (mental), with a series of interconnected bodies (social) and across and within a landscape (environmental).

This research was supported in part by
an AUB Research Fellowship

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