Current location technologies have become tools used by contemporary artists, theorists, designers and scientists to reformulate our understanding of social engagement within an enlarged concept of place. These new mobile networks have altered the way people exist in and relate to spaces where the real and virtual world blend, blurring the lines of traditional spatial definitions and frameworks. This special issue provides a variety of perspectives and practices on the meaning and interpretation of today's locative media.
Since the 1980s, the term ‘live art,’ has been used to refer to acts of performance by artists, alone or in groups, as a work of art, in fields as diverse as visual art, experimental theatre and dance. Audience works are an immersive form of theatre where audiences are the co-performers of the work, either as participants engaged directly with actor-performers, or in their own right without such engagement, enabled by a situation or frame created by the artist. Performances framed in this way can take many forms, and utilize a diverse range of settings, props, technologies (increasingly mobile communication and locative tools) and rules for constraining and enabling action akin to games. Non-traditional performance spaces are most often used, from domestic interiors to institutional, commercial and retail spaces to various kinds of public space. The emphasis in audience work is on the agency of the participants and the (inter-)subjective experience gained by being immersed in the performance itself. While this is an expanding field, this form of theatre is still regarded as something of a fringe practice, given its experimental and often hybrid nature. Its essential characteristic is to place the audience within the performance, to experience the risks as actors do, to become the subject of the dramaturgy rather than remaining observers of it beyond the safety of the ‘fourth wall.’ As such, the affective and embodied dimensions of performativity come to the fore within the subjective experience of audience members undergoing the dramatic potentials of the work as enacted by them, rather than being as received and interpreted as representation.

ABSTRACT

This paper looks at active processes of place-making by focusing on the collaborative synergies between live art theatre, the city and the teaching methodology of an architectural design studio. The audience work, en route, uses locative technologies, psycho-geographic techniques and urban choreography to create in participants a heightened awareness of presence and context, the here and now. PastCityFuture, an audience work incorporating an architectural design studio, is focused on overcoming the ‘state of distraction’ in which architecture is experienced to produce in its audience an awareness of temporality, possibility and agency.

As design studio, PastCityFuture mirrors live art by re-thinking the conditions of architectural production and its modes of reception in lived experience, via responsive engagement and site-responsive narratives projected up to 100 years into the future. The designer shifts from creating material space to engendering new kinds of experiential/associative connections with urban places via a state of reflective awareness.

by

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LIVE ART AND AUDIENCE WORKS

Figure 1. Collage of imagery from en route in Edinburgh, Chicago and Melbourne. Source: one step at a time like this. Image authors (from left to right): 1a: Sam Hawkins; 1b: Chuck Osgood; and 1c: Rudie Chapman. Used with permission.

‘EN ROUTE’ AND ‘PASTCITYFUTURE’

Making places, Here and There, Now and When

Figure 2. Collage of photos taken as an audience member of en route in Melbourne. © Ian Woodcock. Used with permission.
RELATIONAL ARCHITECTURE

In a parallel vein, the recent turn in architectural history and theory towards theories of relationality, performativity, embodiment and affect has been accompanied by a shift in focus onto architectural discourses, and the design of spaces, that emphasise both doing things with space and what spaces do. The implications of movement and mobility are not here to be confused with the work of architects whose interest is in ‘animate form,’ ‘folded form’ or buildings that move where architecture is the choreographer and the agency of its occupants is rarely a central pre-occupation, or if present, a minor role in what the architecture affords. Instead, relational architecture is the domain of ‘immaterial architecture’ and ‘spatial agency,’ where the concern is with the consequenc-es of architecture and architectural thinking, rather than with buildings as its object, where architecture becomes many and the role of hermeneutics is foregrounded, and especially where architecture’s dependency on everything around it highlights its essential relationality. In a sense, it is Calvino’s Invisible Cities on the one hand, Benjamin’s Folded Form or De Certeau’s walker on the other. This approach is relational and focused on the experience of users, their interpretive interventions, the making of associations that open up what architecture can be beyond the material, defined, designed object.

Architecture considered relationally gestures toward the range of possibilities for new kinds of imaginative place experience that mobile locative technologies can open up, with reciprocal relations back into (and away from) the material and immaterial at the same time. Key here is the notion of place which is, as always, about the relations between the immaterial and material, rather than an essentialised opposition between them. Both en route and PostCityFuture are understood in this paper to be forms of place-making in the sense that place is a relational construct. Both works are conceived as forms of relational art, which for Bourriaud is “a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space” or for that matter, take as their point of departure a purely material object as the focus for an architectural design. This firmly situates this approach to aesthetics within the new paradigm conceived of by Böhme under the rubric of ‘atmosphere,’ which understands aesthetics as an assemblage in a similar manner. Furthermore, these two works of live art – en route and PostCityFuture – illustrate two approaches to place-making that engender very different temporalities which also bring time into relations of place.

‘EN ROUTE’ AND ‘POSTCITYFUTURE’

En route, conceived and developed by Melbourne-based ensemble ‘one step at a time like this’ and performed to acclaim around Australia and internationally, uses locative technologies, psycho-geographic techniques and urban choreography to create in participants a heightened awareness of presence and context, the here and now. PostCityFuture, under development as a collaboration between the author and members of ‘one step’ is focused on overcoming the ‘state of distraction’ in which architecture is experienced to produce in its audience an awareness of temporality, possibility and agency. PostCityFuture is an audience work that hybridizes live theatre and architectural design teaching, incorporating en route as part of the teaching program. In some ways, the architecture design studio mirrors live art by re-thinking the conditions of architectural production and its modes of reception in lived experience, via responsive engagement and site-responsive narratives projected up to 100 years into the future. The designers involved with PostCityFuture shift focus from the making of material space to making places through engendering new kinds of experiential/associative connections with urban places via a state of reflective awareness.

This paper describes some of the effects of en route as an instance of mobile technologies being used akin to what some have called a ‘sound walk’ or ‘guided tour’ form of live art that focuses primarily on existing context and present time (or on bringing localized experiences from the historical past into the present) via a carefully composed audio track played via an MP3 player along a structured walking route. PostCityFuture is then outlined to illustrate the way that mobile technology is intended to be used to create a future-oriented temporality, as well as the way that en route functions within a design studio as a form of urban research. However, essential to the reflexive understanding of place embodied in the intent of en route and PostCityFuture is the concept of place-identity and its role in place-making, which will be elaborated first.

PLACE-IDENTITY AND PLACE-MAKING

The concept of place-identity is a central concern of this paper because of the links made between place-making and performance in both en route and PostCityFuture. First delineated by Harold Proshansky, place-identity was conceived as a “sensitizing construct, bringing to fruition earlier calls for an ‘ecologi-cal conception of self and personality,’” described as a “pot-pourri of memories, conceptions, interpreta-tions, ideas and related feelings about specific physical settings as well as types of settings.” Place-identity was further theorised by Kalevi Korpela to have come into being reflexively through the early experiences of individuals in familiar environments such as home, school and neighbourhood, via attempts to regulate such environments and sustain a coherent sense of self and reveal that sense of self to others. As such, place-identity has the hallmarks of the enabling constraints of performance as theorised by Erving Goffmann and heavily drawn upon by Richard Schechner in his elaborations of ‘Performance Theory’ to whose insights and practice live art theatre owes a great deal.

While interest in performative architecture arose about the same time as Schechner’s work, John Andrews and Jennifer Taylor introduced the term specifically to refer to architecture as scenography for bodily motion, where buildings are shaped by and for particul-ar users. Branko Kolarevic and Ali Malkawi added two further understandings of performative architecture: the performance of the building as a realized

Figure 3. Collage of PostCityFuture studio work. © Image authors (from left to right): 3a: David Young; 3b: Alia Smith (‘Scavenging Textures’), 2: Andrew Morris; 3c: Clare Miller (‘Peony Garden’); 3d: Chin Siong Ong (‘The Juice Architect’); 3f: Finn Warnock. Used with permission.
design in itself, and the performance of the building in terms of the effect it has on its occupants and more broadly, the culture of which it is a part. The work of Jonathan Hill takes the notion of performance and architecture into different territory, emphasizing the immaterial aspects of spatiality and place experience as a form of agency on the part of users and their interpretations, and the webs of associations that are constructed by them through occupation and inhabitation. Other recent interest in performativity and architecture has developed the work of philosopher Judith Butler to analyze discourse about performativity in architectural criticism and to propose that a synthesis of performance and performativity affords agency in both space and time. In this context this paper seeks to present a view from a place between these takes on architecture, performance and performativity, one that responds in part to the call from the field of geographical studies for new methods in spatial research that attempt to go beyond the traditions of archival, fieldwork, and interview and to rework academic practices themselves as performative. Very much in this vein, mobilities research calls for such performativity, with an emphasis on novel mobile methods, suggesting reconstructions of the relations between observer and observed.

Nonetheless, it is worth taking a step back into an older theoretical context for a moment, and to place the problematic of these particular audience works in the problematic of experience – a sense of aliveness, heightened awareness and presence, and a reflexive sensitivity towards the way their place experience is related to their own agency, as much a product of their own associations as the people they observe and the environments they occupy. This kind of experience of heightened sensitivity accords with those document-ed to have been experienced by participants in sound-walks more generally. Originally conceived and performed in Melbourne, Australia in 2009, en route has since proved to be adaptable and site-responsive, having been performed in various cities in Australia, as well as Edinburgh (Scotland), Chicago (USA), Seoul (South Korea) and in Stratford East (England), as part of the cultural programme of the London 2012 Olympics.

**‘PastCityFuture’**

The question posed by PastCityFuture is: “What if plaques on buildings indicated not what had been there in the past, but what will be there in the future?” PastCityFuture is an audience work currently being developed by the author and ‘one step’ members using a series of small sites in Melbourne’s city centre. It incorporates architectural design proposals by masters students at the University of Melbourne linked to narrative input from communities of interest in the city. Partly conceived as walking tour, sites are

![Figure 5: Collage of photos taken as an audience member of en route in Melbourne. Image © Ian Woodcock. Used with permission.](image-url)

![Figure 6: PastCityFuture on location: left (6a): a site as existing; right (6b): site overlaid with design image for future scenario on hand-held device. Design image in 6b by David Young. Photograph by David Young (left) and Ian Woodcock (right). © David Young.](image-url)
augmented via images and information on a handheld device showing social and physical changes since European settlement and into the future through a series of time-points, responding to specific narratives of projected scenarios developed around peak oil, climate change, demographic shifts, social disintegration and so on.

By assembling relations that loosely mimic development processes and variously inviting participation, the architecture students participate in audience work about place, inhabitants engage as potential clients, politicians and prominent development players engage in future scenarios. Thus, PastCityFuture engenders conversations at every step that work with and articulate agency, relationality and temporality in urban design. Where audience works are immersive theatre operating within an artist-created frame, situation or game, urban design can be conceived of as the shaping of the urban public realm, operating at the intersection between architecture, landscape and planning, constrained and enabled by technology, finance and politics. Both audience works and urban design require frames, both require participation, and PastCityFuture incorporates mobile locative technologies in innovative ways to achieve a hybridisation between them that blurs the boundary between development politics and theatre.

The primary elements of PastCityFuture are: The Scenario, The Stakeholders, Architectural Design Research, The Presentation (the audience work), The Public Forum and The Installation. Participation and public engagement is threaded throughout these elements, as relations between them are variously assembled to bring the work into being. The Scenario is a generalised, but broadly place-based narrative about broader social and environmental changes that could occur over the next 100 years taking into account issues such as climate change, peak oil and their concomitant political, social and demographic ramifications. The Stakeholders are politicians, planners, developers and building proprietors or users who in some way have an interest in an aspect of The Scenario as it is made to play out at a range of scales via the work of architectural students engaged in the development of the project. Master of Architecture students working on PastCityFuture undertake en route to both sensitise themselves to the city and select sites to work with. Once sites are selected, their history since European settlement is researched and documented, with particular note made of changes in use, built form and ownership linked to the historical conditions at the time. The designers engage owners and users of the sites in imagining possible futures for them, while conversations with other stakeholders provide input to frame possible regulatory or development responses to The Scenario. Each site acquires its own specific narrative, a story of its next 100 years told through a series of time-points as a history of the past from the future. The designers then develop architectural designs for their sites to illustrate the narrative, taking into account issues such as resource scarcity, societal re-organisation, the dreams and hopes, failures and nightmares of their owners and occupants, the impacts of legislation and the vicissitudes of development processes. The Presentation is an audience work, a walk that takes participants on a tour of the sites and presents the narratives and their architectural renderings of their future. Associated with The Presentation is The Public Forum, a coming together of participants to discuss the scenarios, the imagery and their experiences with PastCityFuture. As a kind of legacy, each site acquires a plaque that states what will happen there in future: The Installation, which incorporates access to the virtual memory of the site’s future for those possessing the requisite mobile locative technology.

**HERE, THERE, NOW AND WHEN**

Both en route and PastCityFuture are conceived as audience-based live art. They are also place-making projects that utilise mobile locative technologies to engender the assembly of relations of place in terms of both space and time. en route is focused on engendering relations of place in the here and now of ‘presenting’ existing place-identity and for many participants,foregrounding a reflexive self-awareness of personal constructions of place and newly heightened sensitivity to place.

By contrast, PastCityFuture is a place-making project that is structured to engender new kinds of experiential/associative connections with urban places in participants, and to stimulate their imaginations temporarily. PastCityFuture aims to produce a ‘future-designer’ sensibility, encouraging participants to look at places through the lens of change, with a sense of possibility and question: what was this place, what could it be, where is it going, what could happen here in the future? PastCityFuture is designed to produce in its audience an awareness through architecture and imagination of temporality, possibility and agency.

The imaginative engagement of participants may stimulate them to begin to view other (and all) buildings and sites from a similar future-orientated perspective, and to reflect upon their own desires, hopes and disappointments in response to current and future urban climates. Such immersion and reflection has the capacity to empower participants to see themselves and their imaginations as potentially active agents in the conversation regarding urban renewal, design and possible futures.

From the advent of Modernism onwards, architects and theorists have tended to deal with temporality in architecture through the paradigm of architecture as an engine of social change, rather than seeing architecture as embedded in wider assemblages of social, economic and environmental relations; architecture as a force capable of creating utopia rather than the site and expression of possible dystopian futures. PastCityFuture intervenes in these more classical attitudes towards buildings and places as having both a kind of permanence and an agency in social salvation in two main ways. Firstly on a pedagogical level, by teaching students how much or how little buildings may have changed historically, while accommodating a variety of uses that at the time of construction were often totally unimagined. This has the effect of confounding and complicating the still-assumed a priori ideal within architectural education and ideology that form must

**Figure 7.** PastCityFuture studio work for a small warehouse site on a laneway in central Melbourne. Collage of time-point imagery showing change over 100-year future narrative and development of ‘scavengitecture’ tower. © Alix Smith. Used with permission.

**Figure 8.** PastCityFuture studio work for a small shopfront site with frontages on a main street and a laneway in central Melbourne. Collage of time-point imagery showing change over 100-year future narrative. © David Young. Used with permission.
follow function. Secondly, PastCityFuture works with the notion that the fate of architecture is dependent on social, political, cultural, economic and environmental relations, and thus presents design outcomes whose approach assembles architecture in response to such relations rather than inspired designer visions imposed upon a passive population.

This approach to architecture allows students and participants in PastCityFuture to pose the question: what is the relation between building as monument versus evolving urban space as an ever-changing set of relations and processes? Accordingly, PastCityFuture presents the results of an iterative assemblage design process to engage audience participants in narratives that tell the future stories of the sites they visit as the result of a constantly changing intersection of diverse forces, inevitably beyond the control of architectural vision.

In engaging with both the education of architects and the experience of urban audiences, PastCityFuture contributes towards new forms of dwelling in the present by changing perspectives towards the creation of the spaces we occupy, our mode of occupation and the relations that we enter into with them and each other through them. Arguably, en route and PastCityFuture can thus enable more attuned and skilful relations with place. However, the kinds of architecture produced through PastCityFuture do not necessarily lie within the imagery produced within the project so much as the altered relations and imaginaries that result from engagement with it. Unlike most architectural production, PastCityFuture does not attempt to present a utopic panacea or a remedy for social failings, but attempts to illustrate the consequences of possible states of affairs drawn from currently imaginable scenarios. However, in contrast to totalising future scenarios of entire cities and landscapes presented from the air, into which it is hard to place oneself, PastCityFuture occurs on a site by site basis allowing individuals to intimately engage and imagine themselves within each one. The role of architects in this process is thus one of intense engagement with a much wider realm of possibility but on a much more intimate scale, to acknowledge the role they play in creating the space of distraction in which their work is received.

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Figure 9. PastCityFuture studio work illustrating time points for a series of small buildings owned by a single family dynasty on a major city center street intersection. © Finn Warnock. Used with permission.

Figure 10. PastCityFuture studio work image for future scenario showing Melbourne city centre laneway water transport. © Andrew Morris. Used with permission.
REFERENCES AND NOTES

2. See for example: Alexandra and Andreas Papadakis (eds.), Zaha Hadid: Testing the boundaries (Berkshire, England: Papadakis Publisher, 2005).
24. Ibid.
Current location technologies have become tools used by contemporary artists, theorists, designers and scientists to reformulate our understanding of social engagement within an enlarged concept of place. These new mobile networks have altered the way people exist in and relate to spaces where the real and virtual world blend, blurring the lines of traditional spatial definitions and frameworks. This special issue provides a variety of perspectives and practices on the meaning and interpretation of today's locative media.