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Art & Design Practices
and Daily Research

First-person Science and Practice-led Research

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producing meaning and assigning value

The conditions from which meaning arises
Body Proper + Architectural Surround = ARCHITECTURAL BODY
Madeline Gins 1968-1994
Madeline Gins and Arakawa

1987

POUR NE PAS MOURIR
TO NOT TO DIE

ARCHITECTURAL BODY

MADELINE GINS and ARAKAWA

2002
'Research should no longer be done off to one side, in a school, a library, a laboratory. Where one lives needs to become a laboratory for researching, for mapping directly, the living body itself, oneself as a world-forming inhabitant.' (2002: xxii)

Arakawa’s paintings from his early career

Sculpting (1961)
The Forming of Untitled (1962)
Numbers (1963)
Diagram of Imagination” (1965)
Shape 2 (1969)

If possible, please forget about any place not marked place.
Untitled (1969)

I have decided to leave this canvas completely blank.
Portrait of a Diagram (1969)

The bottom left corner of this diagram is one inch closer and five seconds ahead of the top right corner.
The Forming of Nameless
(1981)
Measuring device for atmospheric resemblances (1982)
Blank Dots (1982)
Arakawa and Gins’ collaboration
THE MECHANISM OF MEANING

1. NEUTRALIZATION OF SUBJECTIVITY
2. LOCALIZATION AND TRANSFERENCE
3. PRESENTATION OF AMBIGUOUS ZONES
4. THE ENERGY OF MEANING (BIOCHEMICAL, PHYSICAL, AND PSYCHOPHYSICAL ASPECTS)
5. DEGREES OF MEANING
6. EXPANSION AND REDUCTION—MEANING OF SCALE
7. SPLITTING OF MEANING
8. REASSEMBLING
9. REVERSIBILITY
10. TEXTURE OF MEANING
11. MAPPING OF MEANING
12. FEELING OF MEANING
13. LOGIC OF MEANING
14. CONSTRUCTION OF THE MEMORY OF MEANING
15. MEANING OF INTELLIGENCE
16. REVIEW AND SELF-CRITICISM

1 NEUTRALIZATION OF SUBJECTIVITY
USE THESE EXERCISES AS A SERIES OF 'FILTERS' THROUGH WHICH TO PASS SUBJECTIVE MODES OF INTERPRETATION AND NEUTRALIZE TO SOME DEGREE:

PLEASE THINK ONLY OF THE DOT NOT OF THE X'S.

PLEASE THINK ONLY OF THE DOT NOT OF THE CIRCLES.

USING THE SAME SYSTEM SEPARATE THE NEXT TWO SHADES
2 LOCALIZATION AND TRANSFERENCE

THE FOLLOWING WORDS AND FIGURES ATTEMPT TO LOCATE THE AREA OF MEANING (PERHAPS TO PINPOINT) AND TO EXPLORE THE MOBILITY OF THE CONFIGURATION WHICH SUGGESTS ITSELF. IN THIS CASE, PLEASE DO NOT THINK OF THE CONTENT ONLY OF THE CONTAINER.

IF POSSIBLE LOOK AT THAT.
IF POSSIBLE LOOK AT THIS.
PUT THIS THAT IN ITS APPROPRIATE PLACE.

10 TEXTURE OF MEANING

PERCEIVED TEXTURE—TEXTURE OF PERCEPTION; TEXTURE OF COGNITION; TEXTURE OF EMOTIONS (DISPOSITION).
ATTEMPTS TO THROW OPEN THE CONCEPT OF MEANING BY PEELING BACK THE LAYERS OF TEXTURE.

USING ONLY THIS BRUSH, DRAW EACH TEXTURE FURTHER OUT.
The Mechanism of Meaning
1963-82
At this moment the whole structure repeats itself (another scale? direction?)

This is an ambiguous X-ray of anything. Is this an ambiguous X-ray of anything?

But something is missing

Logic of meaning

Determining the starting point

What's the point?
PERCEIVE A AS B
IMMEDIATELY UPON RECOGNITION OF THIS PROBLEM, SOLUTION
MAY BE PROVIDED (TRIGGERED BY UNDERLYING SIMILARITIES?)
BY AN INSTANTANEOUS DIVERSION OF A INTO B. IF NOT, THE
FOLLOWING EXERCISES MAY AID SUBSEQUENT TRANSFORMATIONS

PREPARATIONS OR ELEMENTS FOR REASSEMBLY

1 DIFFUSION

CAUSE LIGHT TO BE DIFFUSED AROUND EACH FIGURE ACCORDING TO SHADING?
Gaze Brace on the Bridge of Reversible Destiny, 1973 -
Bridge of Reversible Destiny

Bodily Conjecture at Light
In the Recesses of the Communal Stare
The New Missing Link
Diffuse Receding Gauge
Point Blank Entrance Ways into the (Provisional) dissolution of Space Time

Volume Bypass
Points of Departure Membranes
Epi-phenomenal Pass
The Where of Nowhere
Edges of Apprehension
Inflected Geometry
Accrual Matrix
The Planet's Cry
To Not To Die/ Helen Keller Room
Than Which No Other
Reverse-Symmetry Transverse-Envelope Hall
Gaze Brace
Assembly of Latent Perceivers
Cradle of Reassembly
Forming Inextinguishability
Each set of prints consists of four pages
Discarding now the two equivocal terms, 'gravitation' and 'electricity', let us adopt the more definite expressions, 'Attraction' and 'Repulsion'. The former is the body; the latter the soul: the one is the material; the other the spiritual, principle of the Universe. No other principles exist. All phenomena are referable to one, or to the other, or to both combined. So rigorously is this the case—so thoroughly demonstrable is it that Attraction and Repulsion are the sole properties through which we perceive the Universe—in other words, by which Matter is manifested to Mind—that, for all merely argumentative purposes, we are fully justified in assuming that Matter exists only as Attraction and Repulsion—that Attraction and Repulsion are matter—there being no conceivable case in which we may not employ the term 'Matter' and the terms 'Attraction' and 'Repulsion', taken together, as equivalent, and therefore convertible, expressions in Logic.
Third set of prints

Our fancies thus occupied with the cosmical distances, let us take the opportunity of referring to the difficulty which we have so often experienced, while pursuing the beaten path of astronomical reflection, in accounting for the immeasurable voids alluded to—in comprehending why chasms so totally unoccupied and therefore apparently so needless, have been made to intervene between star and star—between cluster and cluster—in understanding, to be brief, a sufficient reason for the Titanic scale, in respect of mere space, on which the Universe of Stars is seen to be constructed. A rational cause for the phenomenon, I maintain that Astronomy has palpably failed to assign—but the considerations through which, in this Essay, we have proceeded step by step, enable us clearly and immediately to perceive that Space and Duration are one. That the Universe of Stars might endure throughout an era at all commensurate with the grandeur of its component material portions and with the high majesty of its spiritual purposes, it was necessary that the original atomic diffusion be made to so inconceivable an extent as to be only not infinite. It was required, in a word, that the stars should be gathered into visibility from invisible nebulosity—proceed from visibility to consoliation—and grow grey in giving birth and death to unspeakably numerous and complex variations of vitalic developments—it was required that the stars should do all this—should have time thoroughly to accomplish all these Divine purposes—during the period in which all things were effecting their return into Unity with a velocity accumulating in the inverse proportion of the squares of the distances at which lay the inevitable End.
Fourth set of prints
Seventh set of prints

When, on fulfilment of its purposes, then, Matter shall have returned into its original condition of One—a condition which presupposes the expulsion of the separative Ether, whose province and whose capacity are limited to keeping the atoms apart until that great day when, this Ether being no longer needed, the overwhelming pressure of the finally collective Attraction shall at length just sufficiently pre-dominate and expel it:—when, I say, Matter, finally, expelling the Ether, shall have returned into absolute Unity,—it will then (to speak paradoxically for the moment) be Matter without Attraction and without Repulsion—in other words, Matter without Matter—in other words, again, Matter no more.
The other sets

Second set of prints

Fifth set of prints

Sixth set of prints
Last set of prints from *Eureka*

Unbinding geometry towards a renegotiation of gravity.

Last panel of *The Mechanism of Meaning* (1963-73) [62 panels]
Paintings for Closed Eyes (1990)
Paintings for Closed Eyes (1990)
Rubber Labyrinth and Truncated Cone (installations) 1979-91
Arakawa and Gins

Ubiquitous Site, Nagi 1992-94
Thresholds between the space of contemplation of the world and our ability to enter that space
Site of Reversible Destiny, Yoro 1993-95
Thresholds: the house begin outside the house
Threshing of boundary states
The roof begins underfoot ...

The walls flower where a distinction holds ...

The chair settles on a rising sense of belonging ...
Reversible Destiny Office, Yoro
1994-96
Critical Resemblance Houses
Reversible Destiny Houses
Sensorium City, Tokyo, 1993-
Museum of Living Bodies, NY, 2001-
Lower Manhattan site
Museum of Living Bodies

Certainly not content to be retirees, members of this retirement community will be as adept at peripatetic bodily thinking as are birds in the sky and fish in the sea, but even more so. They will develop and test architectural procedures that can help them with their chosen task, which is to stay alive for an indefinitely long period of time thereby infusing a happier fate into the sorry happenstance known as the human condition.

Think Tank Retirement Community
Wisdom Circle of Elders
Function versus procedure

• That which is functional amplifies existing modes of sensing.

• That which may be said to be procedural allows a person to move within and across modes of sensing and scales of action
Using Images of Totality

Arakawa and Gins’ practice produces contexts for which modes of sensing and co-ordininological skills become ‘pre-adaptive’ and/or the

‘adjacent possible’ (Kauffman).
Architecture Against Death

Architecture Contre la Mort

BR1
- plywood (stained/varnished)
- natural colors
- soft wall: futons
- color as exterior side: bleeding through
- rammed earth color A
- cork and green paint
- fake stone panel (sliced rocks)
- rammed earth

BR2
- plywood (stained/varnished)
- natural colors
- fake stone panel (sliced rocks)
- rammed earth
- easy color: tiles 30 x 30
- color as exterior side: bleeding through

Bioscleave House / Gallimann Residence

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS
UNIVERSITÉ PARIS 7 - DENIS-DIDEROT

Revue reconnue par le CNRS
WALL-CONFIGURATIONS (INTERSECTING AND SYMMETRICALLY PAIRED):

- Not simply abutting at their endpoints but intersecting one another at various points along their lengths, wall-configurations have the same separate and distinct character in the built work that they have in plan.

COMPLETE SET OF SHAPE-DEFINING ELEMENTS

BIOSCLEFT HOUSE/GALLMANN RESIDENCE 1999-2003
Architecture Against Death Architecture Contre la Mort
Table, bathroom ceiling, labyrinth
WALL-CONFIGURATIONS (INTERSECTING AND SYMMETRICALLY PAIRED):

 NOT SIMPLY ABUTTING
 AT THEIR ENDPOINTS
 BUT INTERSECTING
 ONE ANOTHER
 AT VARIOUS POINTS ALONG
 THEIR LENGTHS,
 WALL-CONFIGURATIONS
 HAVE THE SAME SEPARATE
 AND DISTINCT CHARACTER
 IN THE BUILT WORK
 THAT THEY HAVE IN PLAN.

COMPLETE SET OF SHAPE-DEFINING ELEMENTS

BIOSCLEASE HOUSE/GALLMANN RESIDENCE 1999-2003
View of central room entering via connecting breezeway from F.L. Wright house
Ames room
Version of Ames room illusion by visual psychologist Richard Gregory
Views from both sides of central room
Arakawa and Gins 1994 studies for landing sites and screen valves studies
As the familiar passes through itself

As the familiar passes through itself
Architectural procedures enable a person to explore the ‘shape of awareness., which is made palpable and perceptible when an ‘organism that persons’ using all modes of processing, passes through all the sites of him/herself.

Procedural knowing becomes transformative as an organism that persons ‘parlays indirectness’ (non-ironic irony) and primes him/herself for encounters with other awareness, encounters from which a communally devised shape of awareness may emerge.

Living diagrams/ diagrammatic living
P Eisenman

• In *Diagram Diaries* (1994) architect Peter Eisenman comments upon the generative nature of the diagram as an approach to form which serves to reduce data while at the same time resisting the separation of form and function and form from mimicry. (1994: 214).

• ... as well as anthropomomorphic references
The reasoning of mathematics will be found to turn chiefly upon the use of likeness, which are the very hinges of the gates of their science. The utility of likeness to mathematicians consist in their suggesting in a very precise way, new aspects of supposed states of things... Many diagrams resemble their objects not at all in looks; it is only in respect to the relation of their parts that their likeness consists. (Buchler, 1955: 107)
The ‘being of sensation’ that one extracts from common perceptions and personalised affects, or from the space of representation and the re-identifications of objects, leads not to an inter-subjective orientation in the world, but rather to a mad zone of indetermination and experimentation from which new connections may emerge. In Deleuze’s logic, a kind of uncoded ‘diagram’ replaces the ‘schematism’ that tries to unite sensation and cognition; and through it, one attains a plan ‘not in the sense of mental design, a project, a program,’ but rather ‘ in the geometric sense; a section, and intersection, a diagram.

Arakawa and Gins

- As to whether landing sites have cognitive capacity, all we can say is the following. Not only do members of our set of working terms – organism that persons, bioscleave, landing sites, architectural body – function diagrammatically and descriptively, they also manage to supply what we have come to speak of as instant referent delivery. We might note in passing that a decision has to be made to take the world diagrammatically by means of these terms and that decision has to be heeded or remembered ....
A/G continued

- Used diagrammatically, a term intermixes now lightly, now abundantly with its referent, which, occurring on demand, suffuses the would-be diagram with itself — the resulting-producing demand need consist of nothing more that the term’s being voiced or its making an appearance in some form. Each of these terms serves up in addition to a handily immediate instant referent, a cognitive enough bruiting about of: “Let this happen as it does.” … we invented landing sites as a means to look into what goes on as cognitive capacity. (Gins and Arakawa 2006: 112)
Mitaka- Reversible Destiny Lofts
completed 2006
LANDING SITES
Initiating action / perception as action

Initiating change across scales of actions at the level of the forming of forms.
Mitaka modules
non-standardised threshold across iterations - the tactic of critical resemblances
Thresholds ... of scale
... of the measure of relation
...The threshold between the info obtained via proprioceptive and kinaesthetic sensing and...
... and the visual orientation of the 'organism that persons'
An atmospheric intricateness arises, from the interplay of sensing densities
LIVING ROOM

The bottom left corner of this diagram is one inch closer and five seconds ahead of the top right corner.