

## Slought Foundation

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### READING ROOM

Jondi Keane, Alan Prohm, Shaun Gallagher, Theo Lotz



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Friday, April 04, 2008  
Slought Foundation

Slought Foundation, Philadelphia is pleased to announce **READING ROOM**, a special performance practice accompanying *Reversible Destiny - Declaration of the Right Not to Die*, the Second International Arakawa + Gins: Architecture + Philosophy Conference/Congress, to be held at Slought Foundation and the University of Pennsylvania from April 4 - 6, 2008 ([here for more information](#)).

To celebrate the work of Arakawa and Madeline Gins, the **READING ROOM** will do more than put their books on display for the public. It will offer specially designed pointers on how to read them as what the authors call an architectural body. A series of posture- and movement-specific reading situations will be staged to help visitors sense for themselves how their activity as bodies and persons reading relates to the enigmatic action of understanding the texts. The space of the text and of thinking, so often dissociated from the space of the person doing these things, gets produced through bodily interaction with environment. By highlighting certain readerly/perceptual phenomena that make this point, the **READING ROOM** aims to present the texts of Arakawa and Gins in the same spirit of body-wide exploration to which the entirety of their project testifies.

Not an Arakawa & Gins information center for third-person observers, the **READING ROOM** will instead set up certain experiments in which the reader will simultaneously be both subject of the study and beneficiary of the findings. These situations will be on view throughout the conference, and at a special event (date and time TBA) the collaborators will be on hand to enact the featured reading experiences, walking people through them and discussing the approach used in this project, and its implications. Above all the **READING ROOM** provides an impetus and pretext for fruitful interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration on questions raised by the works and writings of Arakawa and Gins. The team of collaborators working together to create the **READING ROOM** (Jondi Keane, initiator and organizer, has invited Alan Prohm, a theorist and practitioner of experimental poetics, and Professor Shaun Gallagher, a prominent philosopher of cognitive science, to form the core collaborative team, as well as Theo Lotz), each from different fields of study, is in no way trying to duplicate the procedural architecture of Arakawa and Gins. Rather, by focusing on the texts and exploring the communal nature of devising, the aim is to build tools for embodied reading, in which landing sites and landing site configuration, key processes of body-wide attention in Arakawa and Gins' work, become self-evident and immediately fruitful as ways of registering the bodily spatial activity involved in reading.



"It is in the nature of the thinking field to move and instigate behaviour using points of position and of supposition. Here is a world of complete tentativity" (Gins 1994: 12).

"Might there be an underlying basis for seeing, and, if so, would this be detachable from the actual seeing of things? What I understand (and work with) as the basis of seeing consists of mind/body in its apportioning of itself and the rest of the world out into a thoroughly proprioceptive-kinaesthetic (and tactile) graphicality." (Gins 1994: 12)

**Jondi Keane**, PhD, is an arts practitioner, critical thinker and Senior Lecturer at Griffith University in Australia. For over 25 he has presented work in the USA, UK, Europe and Australia. In 1992, he was a founding member of the interdisciplinary collaborative performance group Co M-S-K. His doctoral thesis, "Arakawa and Gins: The Practice of Embodied Cognition" has led to other writings on embodiment, practice-led research and the contribution of the arts to the study of perception and action.

**Alan Prohm**, PhD is a poetics research artist currently living in Helsinki. His writing, teaching and performance share the central interest of understanding the embodiment of mind first hand. He teaches architectural poetics and critical urbanist art at the University of Art and Design Helsinki, and experimental poetics at the University of Helsinki.

**Shaun Gallagher** is Professor of Philosophy and Cognitive Science at the University of Central Florida, and Research Professor of Philosophy and Cognitive Science at the University of Hertfordshire. His most recent project include *How the Body Shapes the Mind* (Oxford University Press, 2005) and, with Dan Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind* (Routledge, 2007).

Organized by Aaron Levy, Jean-Michel Rabaté

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