



One is always crossing the horizon, yet it always remains distant. In this line where sky meets earth, objects cease to exist. A horizon is something else other than a horizon, it is closeness in openness, it is an extended region where down is space can be approached, but time is far away. Time is devoid of objects when one displaces all destinations. — Robert Smithson
Cover image / Das Riesengebirge, Caspar David Friedrich, 1835

“Who Cares If You Listen?”
Alejandro Durán / M.Arch. 1, 2019

Igor Stravinsky said slammed backbeats, looking out into the crowd. Behind him, the orchestra was playing. The conductor had packed the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées with a crowd that became one of the most momentous events in the history of music—the premiere of the *Rite of Spring*. As the heavily rhythmic, ritualistic ballet and music lurched forward, chaos broke on the audience as the factional split between detractors and supporters of the performance quickly became evident. Stravinsky could only watch in shock as a full-blown riot consumed the hall. The reviews in the papers were merciless.

Fifty-five years later, in 1958, American composer Milton Babbitt would issue his famous rebuke of classical music’s audiences, potentially titled, “Who Cares if You Listen?” In the article, Babbitt argued that audiences of people were no longer qualified to receive advanced musical works exploring concepts like integral serialism and atonatic composition, just as they weren’t equipped to understand music’s newest form of public life, his words. “It is only for that the university, which significantly has provided so many contemporary composers with their professional training and general education, should provide a home for the ‘complex,’ ‘difficult,’ and ‘problematical’ in music.”

Art music, the kind studied, written, and performed at schools like Juilliard, Berklee College of Music, or the Yale School of Music, strays linked to power and resource-rich institutions. Within both myopic intellectual discourse shares space under the disciplinary umbrella with the canonical, the quotidian, and the vernacular. One might even argue that the disciplines are similar in that both rely on the senses as a starting point for their consumption: in one way or another, work in both disciplines communicates a set of values about *something* to somebody, intentionally or not.

But the disciplines diverge here. Music is keenly aware of who its audiences are, and successful symphony orchestras—while one might call one of the most public practitioners of that discipline—go out of their way to calibrate themselves to and engage with their varied audiences. Times recently called America’s most important Orchestra, stratifies itself as a public good, and as an agent of public good, beyond itself as an conservator of timeless works and as a breath innovator in the world of classical music. It’s both a cloistered entity residing within the walls of Frank Gehry’s Walt Disney Concert-Hall and an activist on the streets and in the public venues of Los Angeles.

But every musician heed not the social sciences, a communicator or even a promoter behind every premiere at the Walt Disney Concert Hall is a composer who, in the spirit of Babbitt’s essay, has spent his or her life studying and learning from the works of other artists. But symphonies like the LA Philharmonic and other performers provide an important connection between this private, intradisciplinary world and that of the public. Music has the advantage of spectacle: it demands a focused audience, be it an audience of one or of one thousand.

Architecture doesn’t share this advantage. As Brennan Buck pointed out in *Paprika!* 3:04, “Everyday, architecture’s audience is messy, accidental,” and the public’s engagement with architecture is usually passive, or in a state of distraction. But unlike its audience, architecture—or design, more broadly—is not a passive discipline. Architecture is polemical. How architecture addresses audiences’ reactions will elect may not be the ones we expect. Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring* was poorly received the night of its premiere, but this calamitous presentation was an important event in the course of music history, contributing to the evolving relationship between audience and polemical works of music.

Oh! Hallelujah and Jeremy! Jacinth’s review of the current Chicago Architecture Biennial (see *Paprika!* 3:05) is the best I’ve read. It’s a great mix of stinging examples of architect’s negligence towards our broader audience. Who is the Biennial’s target audience? A public event displaying work by *academics* and *practitioners* into something knowable and practitioners successfully alienated all three of those constituencies to one degree or another. One might say that the public may have left amused, but unformed, and perhaps unmoved. That the public may have felt it seems a missed opportunity. Architecture, not least architectural needs to be tailored toward public consumption, and if we’re not to be public, it shouldn’t be, but when the opportunities arise to interface with the public, it may be unwise to squander them.

As disciplines engage, we exhibit varying degrees of success toward this even-between projects. Bureau. Spectacular’s proposal for Museum Park, for example, is a great example of an architect who engages both architectural dialogue and the public in a way immediately preferable to both. The project, which proposes a collection of rehabilitated pools scattered on the ground and suspended on a steel grid, takes advantage of a public event to visitate the line between academic investigation and public display. “Visitors do not need to know or care about our love for Gothic Pines, Kenzo Kurokawa, John Hejduk, or the project’s regional and national context. Its accessible and lush, whimsical-enough architectural language would have allowed anyone to immediately engage with its spatial investigations.

Architects seem to never tire of bemoaning our discipline’s fade into irrelevance. But architecture is incapable of being irrelevant. Perhaps we have sleepwalked into impotency by not holding it on who other than traditional beauty and strategy beyond core architectural media. we can make our argument to a wider audience.” I would build

on this and say that we need to be mindful of the language we use, the opportunities we already possess, and the intention behind our received and internalized by others. Perhaps we could even say that it seems like a more interesting approach than the landscape approach. By the way, the landscape approach also implies a horizon, which is your topic. The environment—it’s doubtful that you can include a horizon in that.

Now I’m shifting again, and it’s a logical shift. After three years of studying mining in the arctic and subarctic of Canada, my new topic for technology was already present in my shift from landscape to environment, but now it’s even more present. For the last four years, I’ve been teaching studio and doing research with my students. One of my students now is doing a thesis project around autonomous vehicles. Autonomous vehicles mean mapping. New maps. The autonomous vehicle is creating a bidding war around mapping. This is extremely interesting because these are the things that are interesting to me right now, the horizon is so close. The horizon pertains to pictorial tradition, to perspectival construction, and not to what’s happening right now.

— We halt expected that. For us, the horizon is interesting because it takes part in a process of mapping in that it is a line marking a boundary. Through the horizon we see the territory beyond. The horizon is a line that is a line that is a line and curv is the role of land. How does physical land factor into your thinking about environment and mapping?

Right now, my students are going out to buy drones to use for studio. It’s very interesting what’s happening in landscape architecture. For years everybody was talking about infrastructure and systems. Now they work with drones, and what they see is completely different. It is a closer, oblique view that can see large subjects more closely and in a different way than GIS—again, the horizon is not there. What is not yet theorized and could be another project is the notion of space. [Henri] Lefebvre and the production of space. That is not enough to explain or critique the world that we are mapping today, speaking of not just a banal cartography of streets. It must map events and objects in motion. We depend on this cartography produced by the machine for the machine, but there are also alternative cartographies or counter-cartographies.

In your emails you referred to my essay, “Journey to the North of Quebec,” and I thought that was a great title. I’m glad that you’re talking by Marshall McLuhan. This idea of acoustic space, the space of radio media, comes from multiculture, which doesn’t have a horizon. I think that McLuhan could theorize media only because he was Canadian. Canadians have a huge problem with space. This is not a joke about the geography of Canada. Canada is on the margin, on the periphery. It has always been on the periphery of America, a position that I like very much because you have a great perspective from the margins.

— The drone is a wanderer, which brings up the nomenclature space that Deleuze and Guattari talk about, which you reference in your essay (“Journey to the North of Quebec”), is the drone’s spatial paradigm? Drones depend on satellites to navigate, so there is a tension between the ability to wander and the massive geospatial infrastructure supporting this.

Your cell phone operates off of satellites as well, and I bet that it’s your best friend. It’s mine, too, but I’m also aware that it can send information to anyone who wants it. Have no control over that. Like the iPhone, the drone functions because of satellites, but you still have agency over it. At the same time, it is also confined. You don’t have permission to go too high or fly over certain spaces. Invention and a lot of landscape architects are fast-moving from GIS to drones. It’s producing a different type of landscape architecture. The scale is more intimate with a drone. It is familiar to us. To look out and over the horizon implies domination and appropriation, but these are human concerns and not machine concerns. The horizon is not a meaningful symbol for the drone, in terms of how it informs taste and functions.

— Going off of how it informs taste and functions. This is the great message of Deleuze and Guattari: to think of the territory not just as produced by the drone, but as a territory that is being produced by the drone. This is my seat. That is territorialization. There is a great possibility in thinking that we constantly produce territorialization, especially if it becomes conscious, and not just unconscious territorialization. It can become a response to state territorialization.

I don’t know if the drone creates territory. I haven’t had time to think about it. What I think is that you cannot separate territory from the drone. I think that you cannot separate territory from the drone. I think that you cannot separate territory from the drone. I think that you cannot separate territory from the drone.

A Conversation with Alessandria Ponte

Alessandria Ponte is a professor at the Ecole d’architecture at the Université de Montréal. She has also taught at Princeton University, Cornell University, Pratt Institute, the ETH Zurich, and at the Istituto Universitario d’Architettura di Venezia. She is the author of The House of Light and Emptiness (AA Publications, 2014), a collection of essays on the history of architecture, and On the Architecture of the 20th Century: The Power of the Machine. She is also the author of the book, The following is an edited version of their conversation.

— In your more recent research and writings, you have shifted away from the concept of *landscape* and toward what you’ve called a concept of *environment*. Can you talk about that shift in your thinking?

“Environment” seems more appropriate today to describe things without the burden of European traditions of landscape. The term

landscape comes from an aesthetic tradition, which is a very limited way of perceiving the world. Is it beautiful? Is it sublime? This is why environment is a lot more interesting. Especially the line of thinking I’ve been following from Jakob von Uexküll to Peter Sloterdijk—that each space has its own way of being perceived. It’s not just a matter of how it seems like a more interesting approach than the landscape approach. It’s your topic. The environment—it’s doubtful that you can include a horizon in that.

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— In that line of thought, your critique of the horizon in the Western aesthetic tradition would be that it doesn’t account for the process of territorialization by us and other animal and machine subjects.

Yes. What’s the horizon for a machine? Or, let’s say, for a deer? Even the autonomous vehicle, it doesn’t orient itself to the horizon. Not at all. A drone is not oriented by the horizon. I hope I am being helpful. My point is not to destroy your ideas. Actually, it’s thought provoking for me.

— We’re definitely interested in moments when the horizon is not present, or obscured. The horizon remains for us, stubbornly, because it’s physical. Maybe this is just so rearguard, but how do you talk about architectural form within a project like yours that is investigating space and information? What are the implications for the actual buildings that we might build?

This is still a big question for me. I don’t have an answer. But it is like McLuhan and media—it’s not that one medium disappears. Everybody knows that the book is disappearing. No way. It’s staying. I think the horizon is going to stay, in a way, but there are now more layers.

— Perhaps those layers allow us to think about landscape today without the burden of the Western aesthetic tradition, as you say. You’ve also written about the idea of light and entropy. Do you have any thoughts on that? (The House of Light and Entropy.) Why on the desert landscape?

I would not rewrite anything, but I would add chapters. I’ve had discussions with other people who say that the essay in that book about desert testing and atomic bombs should have said something about the atmosphere. I don’t think you need the atmosphere, frankly? Not just as it’s merely a background, the horizon is essential to our spatial perception as earth-bound beings. All orientation to our environment is made in relation to this horizon, which—in addition to separating ground from sky—fundamentally demarcates that which is “upthere.”

— And that can still be critical.

Yes. The point is to be critical and to be responsible. Just to say the atmosphere is bad doesn’t go anywhere. It’s too abstract. You know, it takes that straight without putting the burden of ethics in the wrong place.

The Horizon is the Limit
Martin Man / M.Arch. 1, 2019

To draw in perspective, one begins with a horizon line. When constructing a view, we are taught that parallels converge at points on the horizon. This is a good way to think about perspective. Just as it is a primary way of seeing, the horizon is essential to our spatial perception as earth-bound beings. All orientation to our environment is made in relation to this horizon, which—in addition to separating ground from sky—fundamentally demarcates that which is “upthere.”

In Old English, the word for horizon was *seggenearc*, or “eye-mark,” meaning the limit of one’s view. Our modern word, however, often ignoring the caplin and erasing any trace of the origin of the word, “to divide, bound, limit, separate,” and from *arc*, “boundary landmark,” in other words, a boundary enforces us, defining the scope of what we are able to see. More importantly, however, that boundary also moves with us. By definition, we will never reach the horizon.

Certainly, it bounds our physical perception. So, too, does the horizon. By defining the horizon, we are defining the scope of our spatial understanding, and by extension our ontological outlook. This story of the individual-as-subject viewing objects on an infinite plane is well-rehearsed. It suffices to allude to the trajectory stretching from the painting *The Ideal City* attributed to Laurenta—one of the earliest paintings to use strictly constructed perspectival projection to depict an architectural environment—to Heidegger’s essay, “The Age of the World Picture,” in which he identifies this logic:commuting the horizon to the horizon, in which he identifies this logic:commuting observers—and beyond.

To appreciate how our spatial understanding is delimited by the type of perception enacted in medieval European images, where the horizon was absent or related altogether. Or perhaps in medieval beginning in the Heideggerian, exhibiting their distinctive type of detached, floating, “axonomic” view. Through these examples, we understand that we cannot physically see beyond the horizon, and that our grasp of the world is necessarily bound by the perceptive structures that frame our relation to it.

But what of recognizing the horizon itself? Not the literal horizon, but the horizon of our perception. The horizon is a line that is a line that is a line and curv is the role of land. How does physical land factor into your thinking about environment and mapping?

On a much larger scale, one which encompasses not only architecture but also the general ability to imagine what has never been further bounded, the horizon is a line that is a line that is a line and curv is the role of land. How does physical land factor into your thinking about environment and mapping?

Exquisite Mission Statement

As a prime institution - in an increasingly complex world - we do not yet have apparent answers

- The intention of the Yale School of Architecture
- is to foster - a broad and informed understanding of architecture and its related disciplines
- We work at the corner of Chapel and York Streets - and speculate - on
- the wills, fantasies, and foibles of a society - largely fueled by private capital
- Rudolph Hall provides an arena for healthy dialogue
- Being critical, it seems - does not impose one single design philosophy
- The architect is more than - what is right and wrong
- Architects can, or should, claim the greatest ownership
- - of - the conditions we construct, and those who architecture has historically failed to adequately serve
- We - focus our lens on - teams of collaborators willing to share and exchange ideas - and
- the students’ future as both practitioners and leaders who can expand architecture beyond: - the highest caliber
- - and - rhetorical appliqué - and - pluralism.

— Sutured together from the student-written YSoA Bulletin statements published in this week’s *Paprika!*

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