

# THE ARCHITECTURAL PERFORMATIVE AND THE UNCANNY<sup>1</sup>

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"Today if I were to talk about architecture, I would say that it is a ritual rather than a creative process. I say this fully understanding the bitterness and the comfort of ritual."

—Aldo Rossi, *A Scientific Autobiography*, p. 37.

Any inquiry into the role of the performative in architecture should ask this question: Is not architecture *fundamentally* performative?<sup>2</sup> Don't the origins of architecture, viewed as a historical emergence of the human psychic investment in the built environment as well as the "originative" foundational actions taken to initiate buildings, monuments, and cities, suggest that "the performative" as such constitutes the dividing line between architecture and everything else? This issue can easily be confused with the evolution of specific elements dedicated to performance, such as the theater; or with appropriations of architecture by specific performing arts. This question has to do with *the performative as an element contained, as a potentiality, within all architecture*. For example, urban spaces have always combined the support of commerce with the protections of ritual. Domestic houses are the setting for many conscious and subtle "dramatizations." Architecture at all scales can be transformed by events, celebrations, and ritual observances. Even the most primitive architectural "atom," the grave, is almost purely performative.<sup>3</sup> The performative is, in this sense, something inherent, native, and elemental.

This "essentialist argument" applies even to cases where some other art has intentionally appropriated architecture as a stage or support. The Arena Chapel in Padova, to pick just one example from an extensive number of similar cases, goes beyond simply offering stucco surfaces for Giotto's portrayal of the dramatic cycle of the Bible. Its ceiling, walls, and portals are inducted into a new, informative, spiritualized order. But, just as the chapel is re-conceived through the Bible, the Bible, in exchange, *is redefined by* the idea of the "house of God." The epic of cosmic birth, human fall, redemption, and final judgment are given the orientation of the cardinal directions, a zenith and nadir, a horizon and levels, also called "stories."<sup>4</sup> Likewise, the inventors of Renaissance "theaters of memory" found, in the theater form itself, not just a convenient support of independent materials but also the structure of an ideal, universal memory.<sup>5</sup> When performance appropriates architecture in this way, both are transformed into a more universal idea of a "primary" Architecture-large-'A' — beyond the planned or accidental complicity between container and contained.

Any atlas of architecture and performance should begin with a map of "Gaia," a primitive continent not yet differentiated, where the performative and the architectural had not yet begun to drift apart enough to allow for consciously planned reunions. How would this map be drawn? There might be several different approaches, but the one I recommend would begin with architecture's primitive pre-conditions: (1) the distinction of the human subject as, thanks to language, unique in nature, (2) the relations of the visible to the invisible, including the creation of "virtual space" through architecture's

manipulations of displacement, identity, and scale, and (3) the relations of the living to the dead.<sup>6</sup> Architecture is not only unthinkable without the practices related to these pre-conditions; its distinctiveness continues to be obliged to the evolving relations that link these three in terms of the network of *symbolic* relations, the deployment of the visible and invisible presences of the *imaginary* through the literal work, and the *Real* confrontations of experience that are the essential material basis of the performative.<sup>7</sup> It is possible to hear echoes of these primary components in the Vitruvian triad, where cultural deployments, instructions to builders, and the immediate experience of beauty form radically disparate parts of a performative whole.

These three components (symbolic subjectivity within language, the imaginary constructs of subjects, and the Real of mortality) call for an “economical” way to explain the performative, and this essay argues that the name for this economy is “the uncanny.” Anthony Vidler’s classic study of the architectural uncanny favors the idea that the uncanny was predominantly a function of the Enlightenment suppression of the religio-fantastic, where the previous practices of the imagination and ritual customs “had to go underground” to escape the blinding light of Reason. In contrast, the Slovenian cultural theorist Mladen Dolar has noted that the uncanny, even before the French Revolution and Cartesian subjectivity, was just as uncanny — in other words, that the uncanny as such did not need the historical contrast with Reason to serve its cultural functions.<sup>8</sup> The uncanny is “permanently uncanny” within the psyche. Its practices, formalized within religion, custom, folklore, magic, etc. follow a universal blueprint. Architecture has borrowed from this blueprint when it has obliged builders to observe certain precautions. And, from the private scale of the home to the public civic domain, architecture has been supported by the uncanny at the level of ritual. Instead of saying that architecture and performance have “combined” to create uncanny effects, it would be more accurate to say that the “architectural performative” itself has been realized within the universal structures of the uncanny. My main thesis, that the architecture and the performative are inextricably intertwined, moves to a second thesis: that this intertwining takes place within the domain of the uncanny.

**The Dead.** In his study of the origins of urbanism, the geographer-historian Paul Wheatley noted that, in all seven of the primary centers of ancient urban development, the city of the living evolved from a city of the dead. The necropolis was fixed, strategic, and permanent. Its undertakers developed a complex, literate bureaucracy, which attained genuine hegemony over the disparate groups they served. Mortuary beliefs and procedures gave rise to secular overlays. Trade, systems of currency, management of surplus, social institutions, and the use of writing can be traced back to the need to spatialize the earthly component of the soul’s journey in the underworld, an interval where the soul *has not yet realized its death*.

At the level of the home, religion was an idiosyncratic, family affair. The gods were the ancestors, the *manes*, later differentiated into the Lares and Penates, gods of the household. The point of worship was the household hearth, where the family was obliged to set aside a portion of cooked food to feed the dead. As an extension of these culinary relationships, the dead provided blessings, warnings,

confirmations — in other words, the science of necromancy. All household activities were guided by prescriptions from and consent of the *manes*. These precautions were clearly performative and clearly central to the domestic order of the house. And, just as the fire of the private home was collectivized in the idea of a civic flame (maintained in Rome by specially dedicated Vestal Virgins who were “wedded to the flame”) the order of the house was transferable to the scale of the city. At either scale, the element of performance was clearly inscribed into architecture. But, how is this relationship to be understood through the uncanny?

Modern theoretical interest in the uncanny can be said to have begun with psychoanalysis. Vidler begins with Freud’s classic work but does not give equal attention to the essay that inspired Freud. Ernst Jentsch’s ground-breaking 1906 article specified two poles of the uncanny: the case where something or someone living contains an element of death at their core; and the case where someone who dies either is unaware of being dead or refuses to die fully.<sup>9</sup> The former pole (AD, for “alive with a kernel of death”) is popularized by a character who, fearing death, actually puts into motion the very forces that will lead to his/her death, the “Oedipus syndrome.” In John Huston and W. R. Burnett’s 1941 film *High Sierra*, “Mad Dog” Earle (Humphrey Bogart) is befriended by a dog whose former owner died in a hunting accident. Earle, a gangster “with a heart of gold,” befriends the dog as well as the forlorn girlfriend of a henchman and “builds in” his appointment with death. This endearing soft spot is the very void death occupies. Earle, no less than Oedipus, sets up his own demise in the process of escaping it. Death operates from within life (AD).

The opposite case (DA, death “disallowed” by a kernel that remains alive) is the universal cultural interval between actual death and symbolic death, marked by a period of mourning that was originally intended to coincide with the period of the soul’s wandering in Hades before final judgment and rest. “Between the two deaths” has its own distinctive architectural signature, the labyrinth, the meander the leads the soul through the gallery of past events. The inherent gnosis of such a journey was available only to the dead, and originally the word “hero” meant simply “a dead person,” but as folkloric tales about the deeds of heroes were secularized, the hero became a half-mortal, half-divine; endowed with the power to visit the underworld and return. The desire to speak with the dead springs directly from the dead’s access not just to the contents of Hades (in Greek, literally “the invisible”) but also to the structure and hence logic of this buried Plutonic treasure. The household worship of ancestors, directed by Hestia, goddess of the hearth, and put into practice by the mother and daughters of the household, thus had to be shielded from the view of strangers. Ancient households prohibited view of the hearth from the unprotected exterior or public entry. Whether this was to limit the view of the strangers or the *manes* is uncertain. To allow the marriage of daughters — a defection from the father’s ancestral spirits in favor of the husband’s — the ruse of abduction had to be devised. This ruse is still present in the custom of carrying the bride across the threshold.

Without the DA condition of the uncanny, authority’s relation to the invisible would not have developed. Foundation rites, intended to protect tombs, agricultural fields, buildings, or cities, came to terms with invisibility by sacrifice. It is important to see how, here, performance was not a symbol of

religion but, rather, the direct implementation of a symmetry that activated collective memory and imagination. The results might be compared to a placebo in a drug test. The placebo may have no demonstrable causal relation to the desired effect, but the desired effect may happen nonetheless. The symmetry of foundation rites was directly represented by the tradition of twins, such as Romulus and Remus, Castor and Pollux, Atreus and Thyestes. One twin had to be "sacrificed" for the other to live; often, as in the case of Castor and Pollux, periodic rotation between the realms of the living and the dead were prescribed. The cycle of exchange required periodic renewal rites.

Renewal, in architecture, is celebrated by festooning buildings and cities during public celebrations. This practice has been studied intensively by Werner Oechslin in his book on *Festarchitektur*.<sup>10</sup> Garlands, barges, illuminations, and even fireworks transform architecture into stage sets and sometimes the spectacles themselves. Historical districts of countless cities have been permanently "fêted" into movie-set versions of their past states, making them into commonplaces of performative architecture, consumed by a broad and often too-gullible audience. DA, far from being an obscure category of ancient religions thought, is a standard cliché of contemporary environmental behavior. The question should be asked, should the performative be limited to special cases where dance, theater, etc. have appropriated architectural space? Shouldn't cases as common as *Festarchitektur* count as evidence of an "contemporary uncanny"? And, shouldn't the performative as well as the uncanny be considered central to any architecture pedagogy?

### **From Jentsch to Freud: Transcribing Performance into Architecture**

The uncanny's "Jentschian" structure of AD and DA has a direct historical and logical connection to the Freudian uncanny, which emphasized the theme of optics and the issue of identity. Freud drew from the lore of the "evil eye" and was particularly attracted to the E. T. A. Hoffman story, *Die Sandmann*, which abounded in references to spying, optics, and eyes (a main character was named "Coppola," or "eye-socket"). By "identity," Freud primarily meant misrecognition exemplified by the theme of the double, which we can now recognize as foundational rituals' primary instrument for managing relations between the visible and invisible, living and dead. Freud's approach was less symmetrical than Jentsch's formula of AD and DA, but it reinvested in the etymological peculiarities of the word *Unheimlich*. In German, *Die Unheimlich* proclaims direct relations with the architecture of the home. *Hiemlich* procures security and safety. True to the traditions of the hearth, homeliness is about concealing the contents and residents, living and dead, of the home from the gaze of strangers. With the inverse term, *unheimlich*, what has been concealed is, unadvisedly, "unconcealed." Hiding goes beyond simply removing something from view. A sense of prohibition is added. Something that can't be seen is also something that *should not be seen*. When this hidden content is exposed, the element of prohibition is the active ingredient in the uncanny effect. The uncanny is the release, from safe captivity, of "that which should not be seen or known." This release has made for many a good Stephen King novel. Cemeteries are dug up for the family swimming pool. Dark forests are trespassed at night. Creaky doors are opened. The uncanny conflates what simply lies beyond the bounds of

perception and experience into what *should not be* perceived or experienced — only to go on to perceive and experience it! It is a “positivization” of the negative.

Freud extended Jentsch’s canonical approach to the uncanny into the more contingent conditions of literature, popular culture, and folklore; but here it was evident that the differences between privation and prohibition created a structural gap. In fact, the slight asymmetry between the crisscross exchanges between life and death became the basis for the architectural performative. The DA vampire, who refuses to die, and the compulsive AD, whose anxiety establishes his/her own conditions of death, occupy two different realms whose connecting geography must be traversed. The anxious compulsive is caught in a network of symbolic relationships where he/she does not fit. The vampire, true to Freud’s thematic emphasis on optics, is sensitive to light and offers no reflection to passing mirrors. The Jentschian couplet’s slight asymmetry sets up the Freudian key themes, but we should pay attention to the fact that the anxious compulsive is the inhabitant of an ordinary day-time Symbolic with a special spot — a “Samarra” — which draws its victim.<sup>11</sup> The photo-sensitive vampire is the demon of an inverse, dark domain of the Imaginary. Together, the daytime Samarra and vampire-ridden night constitute the twenty-four hours of subjectivity, the Symbolic (the domain of language) and the Imaginary (specular experience). What about, then, the crepuscular twilight, the boundary between light and dark?

The answer to this question leads us closer to the inner nature of the architectural performative. In the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan’s account of the Real, which is defined as *that which resists symbolic identification and defies the imaginary through its unpredictable appearance/disappearance*, the subject has no alternative except to fantasize. By turning away from the unimaginable and unsymbolizable Real, the subject must compose a two-part invention to play the melody of the Real’s resistance. Here, it is not mastery but defect that plays the key role. Out of anxiety, the subject creates dysfunctional symbolic constructs, representations that misrecognize, multiply, and disguise identities. The dysfunction of the image is played out in the separate darkness where the subject seeks the (unlocatable, “acousmatic”) voice of the dead by visiting Hades (literally, “the invisible”) to acquire wisdom.<sup>12</sup> Here, location is deranged to present a puzzle-like condition requiring the subject to employ triangulation, memory, and interpolation to avoid being trapped within. Inside and outside change places. The compass spins.<sup>13</sup>

Fantasy’s two dysfunction-generating components are not complementary or symmetrical; rather it is their dissonance that allows the subject to complete a “circuit” of the fantasy.<sup>14</sup> This specification may seem arbitrary unless one remembers the elaborate ritual complexes of ancient civilizations, where architecture mimicked the cosmos at the same time it measured it astronomically/astrologically; and where ritual sacrifice, dance, and music turned the complex into an extensive *Festarchitektur* aimed at divining truths out of the ancestral dead. The whole of Mayan, Egyptian, Babylonian, early ancient Chinese, southern Thai, and other ancient cultures attest to the predominance of the necropolis. With or without actual graves, such sites repeated Freud’s formula of the uncanny, combining interests in

identity (the preservation of cultural identity through elaborate geneologies) and optics (the close observation of planetary movements and calculation of eclipses and calendar events).

To go further with this line of thinking, we have to embrace, at least momentarily, a few more basics of Lacanian theory of subjectivity. For Lacan, in his project to reverse the damage done by “ego psychology” (strengthening the ego as the goal of psychoanalysis), the role of the Other was central. From early infancy, the Other in the form of the mother and father mediated the child’s awareness of the world. With the extension of these relationships after encountering an Imaginary transformation at the so-called “mirror stage,” the Other could be any authority. The internal rules of order acquired from parents were externalized, but not fully. The subject was now “interpellated” by an Other of its own imagining, a “Big Other” compelling the subject’s obedient behavior and conforming thought. The Other is invisible. It surveilles the subject *via* the gaze, a blind spot in the visual field, the location of the traditional “evil eye.” It calls out to the subject *via* various “acousmatic” (unlocatable) voices.<sup>15</sup> It creates force fields around objects (Lacan’s famous “small other,” *objets petit a*, object-causes of desire), which promise pleasure but result only in compulsion through a warp of ordinary space-time. The Other is present to us primarily through its command to “Enjoy!” — but we do not know what it wants us to enjoy or how we are to enjoy it. We are also obliged to conceal our enjoyment, keep it secret, and represent it, hysterically, as pain or, the reverse, report our pain as pleasure (Freud’s famous observation about the real fun of sex).

Because the Big Other commands us to Enjoy! without telling us how to do this, we subjects must create fantasies that work around this Real and replace it with narratives, pictures, imagined conversations and other scenarios that keep the Real on the chess-board but move other pieces around as if it weren’t there. Lacan’s formula for fantasy,  $\$ \diamond a$ , puts this succinctly. The subject, interpellated/obliged/barred by the Other, symbolized by  $\$$ , is obliged to Enjoy! ( $a$ ) but not told how. The subject encounters an “impossible-Real object,” or a force-field created by some “partial object.” This encounter must be imagined, “visualized,” framed, staged. Like the word “stage” in the Mirror Stage (Fr. *stade*) this happening involves both a temporal interval and a physical space located behind a real or imagined plane (surface of a mirror, proscenium of a theater, gate of a city, doorway or window of a house, etc.).

Lacan specified clearly how this encounter took place by packing into the mark, the *pointon*,  $\diamond$ , two complementary functions, one to do with identity and authenticity, the other to direct manipulations of space and time ( $\langle \rangle$ , “both greater and lesser than”). The *pointon* essentially specified a circuit with two components, not symmetrical or complementary but “circular” in that one involved and necessitated the other. Both indicated the need to go elsewhere, for the subject to be “displaced” in relation to the constructed field beyond the imagined plane. This displacement had two aspects, which contributed names to the two components of the circuit: alienation and separation. To explain this, it should be realized that, in relation to the Other, the subject after the Mirror Stage has two “options.” The first option is to join the network of symbolic relationships mediated by language and social structures: the family, work, ethnic groups, nationality, etc. The cost the subject pays is “castration,”

but this is not the literal anatomical sacrifice but rather symbolic castration — a “castration *by symbols*.” The king is obliged to wear a crown, which in many senses is more powerful than the king himself. The second option is a response to the Enjoy! component of this membership. “What does the Other want me to enjoy?” becomes the question of “What would the Other do without me?” What if I were dead? The subject *can only imagine* this condition of leaving the Symbolic, and this imagining constitutes a narrative of separation, a “death narrative.”

At this point, it should be clear that the Lacanian formula for fantasy, illustrated by the primal Mirror Stage, constitutes the primary specifications for an “Architectural Performative.” It bonds architecture in its most generic condition with the performative into an atom that later joins the more acculturated molecules of theater, dance, music, etc. For architecture, it is true that “all the world’s a stage,” since architecture owes its birth to the fundamental structure of the *plane* that separates the subject from the Other, as well as from its own imaged self, and requires an imagined journey “through the looking-glass,” mediated by this divided, twilight space.

If we have what we need to establish the importance of the architectural performative, why go further? Among those who buy the argument that the performative defines the essence of architecture, there will be many who reject the vocabulary of the “Freudian-Lacanian field.” The language of the uncanny provides a more neutral, ethnographic way to think back to the origins of architecture. The uncanny, so to speak, “belongs to everyone,” namely to the ontic level of cultures where objects, customs, houses and cities, etc. exist in an experiential, documentable, objective way.

### **Theory to Practice; Practice to Theory**

For some, the terms of psychoanalysis provide theory the Esperanto it has desperately needed. Lacan’s succinct *matheme* for fantasy,  $\$ \diamond a$ , with its relational *poinçon*,  $\diamond / \langle \rangle$ , connects theory evolved from the clinic to the everyday world, if only because it explains how the two components of the uncanny relate. Both the clinic and the uncanny focus on the role of negation. The *poinçon* is most familiar as the shape of the hole punched by the conductor on trains and trams. Like the sign for car-pool lanes in highways around major metropolises in the U. S., it involves permission to occupy a special place set aside by negation in the form of a prohibition. The sign may have evolved from the mark used by silversmiths to guarantee the authenticity of their metal *objets-d’art*. The other aspect of the *poinçon* is  $\langle \rangle$ , meaning “both less than and greater than.” This is the mark of the “extimate” (*extimité*), the inside-out logical, spatial, and temporal relationship so central to the literature of the fantastic (time travel, the double, contamination of reality by the dream, story in a story), where the sequential effects of something move around to the front of the process to act as the cause. The extimate, as Mladen Dolar has argued, is the evidence that the uncanny is central to all of Lacan’s thought, and by extension, to all of Freud’s thought. *Vis à vis* the Mirror Stage, it is the subject’s realization of the inside-outside inversion language-culture requires of us to join its fellowship that not only puts a price on castration but specifies what currency we must use to pay it.

Armed with the idea of the extimate, the translation from fantasy to the full legacy of the uncanny — and along with it the key media-studies topic of the architectural performative — is not just possible but necessary. With translation we see that Jentsch's "symmetrical" relationship of Ad to DA is not so symmetrical. Between the alienation of Ad, where the anxious subject stays in "reality" but is drawn to a tragic end; and the separation the subject imagines, to answer the question of "what the authoritarian Other would do without me?"; there is a small gap, a negation as  $\diamond$ , authenticity that offers a place by punching a hole, a negation of  $\langle \rangle$ , a scale inversion that flips space and time in order to allow the subject to travel into the virtual "stage" of fantasy.

These flips are well known, however, through the "inverse" practice-to-theory critical analyses of literary, film, and other types of the performative that begin with empirical categories and work towards the abstract. The architectural performative is particularly clearly written in mythologies, plays, stories, and visual arts that depict how, to maintain identity in the face of universal change, a departure (mock death) and rebirth is essential. Arnold Van Gennep's and Victor Turner's studies of the "liminal" rituals involving visits to the dead to ask them to speak might easily be turned into studies of counterparts in customs surrounding the hearth, the evolution of domestic space, the foundation rites required for all public buildings and spaces, and the creation of specialized spaces for the enjoyment of literal kinds of performance. In effect, these latter examples are only the specialized minority of the general field of the performative where architecture and performance are synonymous.

The empirical-ethnographic method that moves from practice to theory is not restricted to examples from antiquity or pre-modern cultures. Contemporary media abound in themes of the uncanny, from Stephen King's pop culture scares, the depressing dystopian worlds of *Blade Runner*, or the science fiction speculations of *2001, A Space Odyssey* and *Alien*. Even the mechanical formulæ of thrillers and mysteries are saturated with dysfunctions of symbolic identity ("whodunit") and the imaginary. The themes of the story-within-the-story and contamination of reality by the dream package the uncanny into digestible morsels for popular consumption. From the empirical side of things, the uncanny is all around us, "domesticated" as components of entertainment. By the time we reach the theory that underpins our enjoyment, we may easily conclude that architecture and performance have never been far apart.

## **Conclusion**

In the field of architectural education, theory is most often digested in the form of pedagogy, where, ironically, theory as such can be downplayed or denied. Even in teaching that disavows any formal theory interests, theory is already present in the forms and uses of architecture itself. Architecture cannot disconnect from its theoretical legacy because this legacy is itself an intrinsic component of human subjectivity. With or without building, human space and time are the ground of an implicit architecture, which may be developed with minimal material references. As architecture theory has formalized and detached itself from this phenomenal basis, it has aspired to resemble theory in other fields; it has adopted presuppositions that, in isolation from the legacies of cultural use and form, pose

"anachronistic" puzzles, which forget architecture's primary and originative relations to the human psyche. To correct this problem of anachronism often involves a "short-circuit" to the primary field of origins. Such is the case with the architectural performative. The paths of the short-circuit may vary. In this case, the uncanny is offered to allow a self-regulating economy of ideas, available for corroboration and comparison. Because the performative is, essentially, an *architectural* performative, the uncanny is able to state its case by connecting to the external evidence of the clinic, such as Lacan's "extimate," useful in this case because this evidence comes with its own documented relationships to other ideas about the perception of space and time.

Where theory can re-dedicate itself to the legacy of cultural use and form, it should. The architectural performative and the "master key" of the uncanny allow this opportunity.

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1. Final article length and presentation length will be adjusted to conference requirements. Current document length (4570 words) is designed to address the requirements of the preliminary review process, i.e. to present the argument in full.
  2. This question is not asked in a vacuum, especially in light of recent publications and work dedicated to issues surrounding architecture and performance. Although one might expect everything to have been already said by Volume 61, No. 4 issue of the *Journal of Architectural Education: Performance/Architecture*, what was striking about this collection was that, of all the articles that addressed the topic head on, the article that most falls into line with my approach — that architecture has an *inherently* performative nature, was not actually a part of the theme issue: Tali Hatuka and Rachel Kallus, "The Architecture of Repeated Rituals: Tel Aviv's Rabin Square," *JAE* 61, 4 (May 2008): 85-94. The interview with Bernard Tschumi, known for his notion of architecture as event, showed that the predominant interpretation of performance involves the metaphor of covering a distance *between* architecture and the conventional modes of performance, i.e. dance, theater, film, etc. Once this distance is "overcome," new insights are gained, etc. This is not a fatal approach, as was shown by Simone Brott's close reading of *Through a Glass Darkly*, *Barton Fink* and *Repulsion* in her article, "Close Encounter, Withdrawn Effects," *JAE* 61, 4 (May 2008): 6-16.
  3. A casual hiker, coming to a clearing in the woods, sees an oblong mound and at once recognizes the architecture of human remains. Sometimes an eroded headstone is found, cast off to the side. This minimalist shelter is stripped to the essentials: the result of the event of burial and the building-up of protective earth, the attempt to distinguish these bones from animal remains by their singular attachment to the one thing unique to human culture, the name. The Vitruvian virtues are meaningful only in terms of the ritual that employs them in this "nomination" of a relic. The architecture is not a function of effectiveness but identity: this shape could not be confused with any other.
  4. The origin of the architectural term "story" came from the use of the several levels of the interior church walls to tell the two stories of the Old and New Testament. The collation of the Biblical narrative with architectural element provided opportunities for correspondences, puns, and new meanings.
  5. As some have noted, this merger of ends and means marked the critical difference between the standard "rhetorical" mnemonic method of memory places and the Renaissance realization of the synchronicity of

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theater and memory. See Richard Bernheimer, "Theatrum Mundi," *The Art Bulletin* 38, 4 (December 1956): 225-247.

6. Aldo Rossi famously commented that the first architecture was the human grave, the oblong mound that indicates a structure whose "shelter" function engages issues of location, spiritual protection, observance, and memory. Rossi might have welcomed Lacan's observation, that the grave is established to preserve the *name* of the deceased, and to maintain the network of symbolic relationships that sustain both the living and the dead. Language automatically engages this uncanny connection, where the dead and the living maintain ties that are primarily through the medium of the voice, "acousmatic" because of the suspended issue of location.
7. Reference to the three classical domains of Lacanian thinking (the symbolic, the imaginary, and the Real) is not intended to convert architecture theory to psychoanalysis but to keep open theoretical options that would not be available were the investigation of the performative limit itself to symbolic (interpretive) readings or formal analyses. The Real, in Lacan's thought, resists symbolization and this resistance is the key element that distinguishes the performative from other cultural expressions. The Real is the gap or void that, in both the imaginary and the symbolic, constitute the basis for polysemy and, hence, dynamic revision. Lacanian literature is vast; this is a token: Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits, The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink, Heloïse Fink, and Russell Grigg (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006).
8. Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992); Mladen Dolar, "'I Shall Be with You on Your Wedding Night,' Lacan and the Uncanny," *October*, Vol. 58, *Rendering the Real* (Autumn, 1991): 5-23.
9. Ernst Jentsch, "Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen," *Psychiatrisch-Neurologische Wochenschrift* 8, 22 (25 Aug. 1906): 195-98 and 8, 23 (1 Sept. 1906): 203-05. Freud's essay was published in 1919 and is available in modern reprint, Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*, trans. David McLintock (New York: Penguin Books, 2003).
10. Werner Oeschlin and Anna Buscow, *Festarchitektur: Der Architekt als Inszenierungskünstler* (Stuttgart: Hadje, 1984).
11. In popularizations of this point, as in the case of *High Sierra*, mountains are preferred, possibly because they are visible from most lower locations but actual access is difficult or impossible, and this privation generates a corresponding prohibition and, hence, challenge. See, for example, Ernest Hemmingway's death narrative, "The Snows of Killimanjaro."
12. This is the well-documented universal motif of *katabasis*, or descent, a staple of heroic epics such as Homer's *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*.
13. The Thesean labyrinth was a staple graffiti in the ancient world, where drawing its twists on walls was a game of wit and speed. The design contains three identical components, each nested within the other, so that the single out-in-out turn, repeated twice, created its own out-in-out container. This elemental employment of fractal design is appropriate to the idea of the underworld, which the labyrinth frequently symbolized. Hades was both an "in there" and "out there," a marginal space at the center of the earth and at the periphery of the

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human œcumene. Dante repeated this topological conundrum in his *Comedia Divina* by connecting the center of the Inferno to Mt. Purgatory by a line that was both infinitely long and infinitesimally short.

14. It is this circuit that relates to memory, which is suppressed but recoverable. Hence, the memory theaters of the Renaissance, which claimed that the user could remember more than he/she had forgotten, were anticipating the Freudian logic of the dream, where it is not the actual (traumatic) event that is concealed by the unconscious but a fantasy displacement of that event.
15. The Other as voice creates the Lacanian condition of "the extimate," simultaneously interior (a voice inside the head) and exterior (a voice from an indeterminate location "out there"). This is the *voix acousmatique* of Michel Chion, which in cinema exercises powerful and uncanny effects. See his *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).