INBETWEENNESS: A CONVERSA-TION WITH SHANE REINER-ROTH

Shane Reiner-Roth is the Eurator of the Insiagram account @everyverything, featuring images that express humor and an 'economy of expression'. He is a PhD siudeni ai UCLA and a coniributing writer at The Arthitett's Newspaper and the New York Review of Arthitesture. The -ish editorial team had the pleasure of interviewing Shane over Zoom to discuss his thoughts, processes and intentions behind the images he turates and their relationship with our turreni tuliural momeni.

> -ish Issue Editors (-ish) Since our issue looks into these -ish conditions, we were interested in these weird, accidental or even purposely made moments. Having come across @everyverything before, we thought about your page while working on this issue, and wanted to learn more about how this project started and how if developed.

Shane Reiner-Roth (SRR) I was flattered to be a part of this because @everyverything is the project I've been working on for the longest time, yet I have never had the opportunity to speak about it at length. To begin, I was thinking about this concept of -ish and inbetweenness, which is related to why I started @everyverything in 2013 at the end of my undergraduate program at SCI-Arc. 'Everyverything' was the name of my undergraduate thesis, and while not necessarily tied to the Instagram project, it was also about inbetweenness. At the time, I made a flip machine that animated a house turning into a cat because I was interested in all these things that happen between those two strong forms—the weak forms, the -ish, and the inbetween. This ended up being really important for the Instagram page.

> (-ish) Can you tell us a little more about your process of seletting images and where you find them?

(SRR) For the first couple of years, I was just finding images that made me laugh or exposed this idea I call the 'economy of expression.' To me, this term describes any time designers,

**INTENTIONALLY PAST-ish** Mari Kroin

It is hard not to think of the carefully tailored online ads I get, showing boots on a '90s-ish backdrop that have soft-ish edges and a brown-ish tint, like an old pair I threw out; the eerie sense of an external presence in my subconscious that feeds on nostalgic impulse. Our "-ish[es]" reside in a ghostly region of the mind; they are an instinct, an inclination triggered by familiarity, an inference made to fill the voids of a blurred recollection. As consumer culture encroaches upon intimate territory for monetary gain, I wonder how common my

In the new media age, human sentimentality is rendered down to superficial elements: the baby pink of Glossier packaging reminiscent of my preteen collection of plastic Barbie accessories, online ads promoting the revival of Wonder Woman featuring Gal Gadot bathed in Outrun color palettes, the Sin City-esque typeface on a store bookshelf screaming Yes is More. We buy into these, perhaps because there is comfort in the past; it distracts us from leaning into uncharted futures. The impulse to dive back into familiar water is an intentional manipulation and monetization of our subconscious "-ish[es]". Though not always with ill intent, the repetition and refurbishment of established cultural forms provide media outlets with short-term solutions and quick volitions.

The tendency to, and more recently the tactic of, perpetually reverting to reliable satisfactions lives in Derrida's concept of "hauntology." In Specires of Marx, he refers to elements from the past reappearing in the present as a haunting beyond the grave that manifests in a ghostly form, a sibling of nostalgia. Cultural theorist Mark Fisher elaborates on this idea asserting, "what haunts the digital cul-de-sacs of the twenty-first century is not so much the past as all the lost futures that the twentieth century taught us to anticipate." He notes that our dependency on what is already known dissolves potential futures and inflicts the "deterioration of a whole mode of social imagination: the capacity to conceive of a world radically different from the one in which we currently live." In running back to old comforts we accept a condition in which culture continues without drastically changing and functions under the administration of an established capitalist arrangement. We live in a constant state of retro-futurism where our nostalgic "-ish[es]" are commodified by external entities. Is there an impending condition in which personal sentimental inclinations become unpredictable to others?

In their recent 2021 menswear show "Possible Feelings", Prada describes the theme as a "personal wish for contact [and] our urge to exchange and relate. The foundation of all is the individual: the human body, and its freedom. The need to feel, the pleasure of tactility, results in a panoply of surface, texture and textile." AMO and Rem Koolhaas devised four psychedelic rooms for the backdrop, one of which for context, was hexagonal in plan with pink plaster walls and plush white faux fur carpeting. The installation was digitized for virtual touring, looking almost rendered and video game-ish in pub-

licity stills. Ironically, viewers miss out on the material tactility of these spaces, perhaps that was never actually important. Each room's kit of parts defines a commercial image deeply rooted in past visions of the future, playing into tropes of consumer desire. How could you not want that red coat when it looks so perfect against that '70s-ish green Mies van der Rohe stone floor and lush Prince purple walls? There is a deliberate sense of familiarity framing the product, thus transporting consumers to a false past life in which they owned that red coat.

With the coat and its retro-visions in mind, there is tremendous potential to conceive a world profoundly distinct from outdated yet familiar conjectures of the future. In this time of quarantine, where participation and spectatorship rely heavily on the recalibration of digital interfacing, we might finally be heading towards a new phase of future speculation that leans less upon the comfort of the past, the predictable, and the familiar. If we turn our attention to the unfamiliar we can move on from predictable outcomes, thereby breaking a cycle of buying into haunted aesthetics. For a moment, before (new) nostalgia can be commodified once again, we can restore the innate intimacy of the territory in which our "ish[es]" reside.

- Mark Fisher, "What Is Hauntology?," Film Quarterly 1 September 2012; 66 (1): 16-24, doi: https://doi.org/10.1525/fq.2012.66.1.16, 16.
- https://www.archpaper.com/2021/01/amo-and-rem-koolhaas-design-furryabstract-rooms-for-prada-2021-menswear-show/

A GUIDE TO ARCHITECTS' FILLER WORDS Katie Colford

"Basically": This person does not believe a word she is saying. She thought she did a few months ago—she thought she did when she started this sentence—but no longer. Her last resort is the pause-and-pivot: "...Basically, it's the complete opposite of what I just said."

"So to speak": This person believes every word she is saying, she's just tossing this one out to make herself seem more relatable. She speaks with the grace and poise of Amanda Gorman. Not only that, she "ejects" her USB sticks instead of just ripping them out of the computer. She meal preps on Sundays and maintains an industrial-grade humidifier to support her 52

"Maybe": No one cares about you more than this person. She values your opinion. She genuinely wants to know what you think. She calls herself an artist before an architect and it's not even pretentious.

"Kind of": This indicates nothing but contempt. This person actively wishes that your internet will cut out right before your Zoom crit. She has never post-rationalized because her process is just that successful—she loves to use the word successful. She also never followed you back on Instagram.

"Sort of": Similar to "kind of," but uttered at double the speed with double the aggression.

"-ish": This person selected a bold adjective and promptly lost her nerve. She finds herself falling down a rabbit hole of word vomit where everything has a suffix and words have lost all meaning.

"I suppose": This person knows the difference between type

and typology without telling you she knows the difference. Keep nodding like you didn't notice her hint of a fake British accent on "sup-po-se" or she may start frantically referencing Quatremère de Quincy.

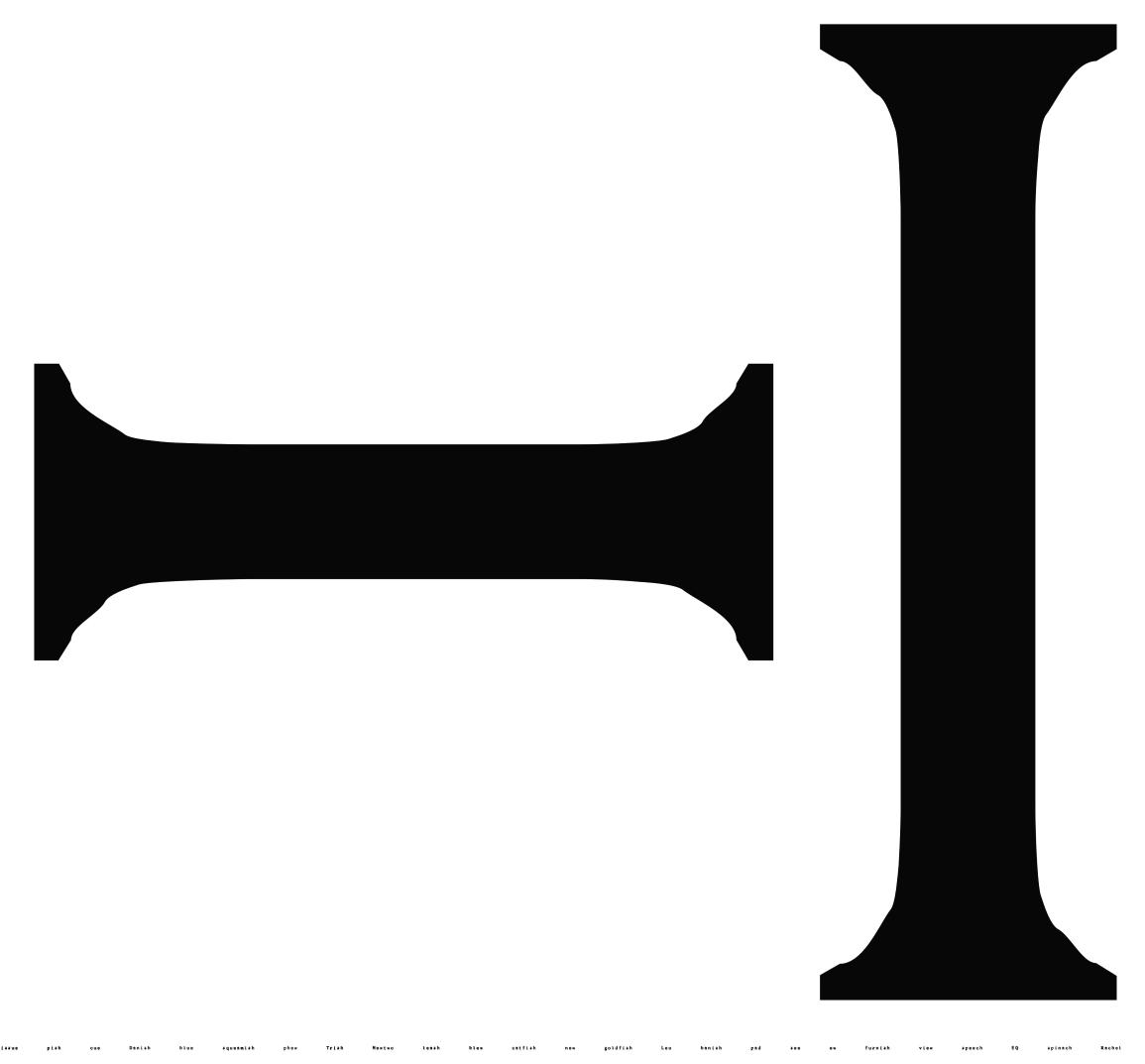
"Quote unquote": Are air quotes an invisibility cloak we can't see jargon through? No, no they are not.

"Actually": Everything this person said up to this point was false.

"Right?": This implies that the speaker has mastered the art of hypnosis and has everyone nodding at every word she says.

"Or something": This person arrived at the end of her intelligent, clear, poetic sentence and then acted upon a sudden flare-up of the

"If that makes sense": It does not.



developers, or others intend to produce something very expressive, grand, or palatial, while at the same time trying to do so very economically. There is often a tension between these motives, and when architects or designers take advantage of that tension, it yields humorous results. Through these ways of 'cheating' with design, architects or designers try to find shortcuts, yet these shortcuts often end up revealing themselves.

I was trying to find photos that were 'worth a thousand words,' allowing me to put as little text as possible underneath them. I don't want to tell the people who follow me whether these designs are good or bad, smart or stupid, because they have the opportunity to be all of those; I just want the image to provoke tension. Initially, I was finding those myself and around four years ago people started sending me images in direct messages. I've never met them and it's real-1y interesting when they try to guess what the next thing I'm trying to express is—a lot of the time they get it right.

To answer how I find the images exactly, I find them either by scrolling through social media or typing in specific things I'm thinking about, like a list of 'construction fails', for instance. These appear when someone in construction misinterprets blueprints and they produce the wrong results. Therefore, sometimes they just appear and sometimes it is a deliberate search.

> (-ish) It's interesting that people who follow your account start to send you images, because that creaies a dialogue. Ii's no longer solely about how you want your followers to reinterpret your images, instead, they also become a part of this process. This brings us to the next question, why did you thoose Instagram as your medium of turation?

(SRR)I wouldn't have thought that Instagram would be my ideal profile because I'm a writer day-to-day. However, Instagram allows me to do something that I don't get to do in my profession, where I get to do image curation freely without needing to explain myself. I try to group things thematically, and even if it doesn't happen that way, they often manage to communicate together anyway. If I had chosen Twitter as a platform, for instance, I would have had to continue explaining myself through text which I already do as a career, so I think of Instagram as a very serious hobby. I try to just post once a day, and sometimes I do it very casually when I'm just waiting to cross the street, and other times I think about it for hours before posting. Yet there's always a sense of freedom in it because it's not my career.

> (-ish) Going back to the aesthetic condition of your images, can you elaborate on where your interest in this tension between expressive and economical modes of design tame from?

(SRR) I started @everyverything at the end of my undergraduate career, when I was supposed to enter the workforce. I was supposed to graduate and become an architect, but at that time, I was getting disiflusioned with the practice as a whole. My thesis was becoming increasingly theoretical and less about a building in the ground—it became my reaction against the field of architecture. Instead of joining it, I wanted to find all of the evidence of its ridiculousness.

My attempt to find a sense of humor in architecture was a reaction against the self-seriousness of the field along with its desire for perfection and detail-orientedness. I couldn't see myself participating in that culture. Instead @everyverything is about highlighting these fucked up details and stupid attempts to save money in design. I am not making fun of them in the posts; rather, I'm admiring them for not participating in this culture of perfection.

I have no interest in insulting the people who produce 'cheap designs' or make mistakes—I think these should be a part of everyday life. We should embrace them rather than thinking of them simply as mistakes. These images reveal how our culture of perfection masks who we really are—like a slip of the tongue.

> (-ish) It's interesting to see how these images become a momentary escape, a collection of these little moments that break the rules, but are still acceptable because they aren't entirely wrong.

(SRR) I like that it's an escape, it's a relief. They kind of break the rules but they work precisely for that reason. When you're going through architecture school (and I'm in my third degree right now) there's this top down assumption that there are certain rules to follow, certain people you have to be interested in, and those who you shouldn't be. I found it very liberating to decide that for myself. For that reason, I noticed that most of the people who follow @everyverything are architecture students.

I'm glad we're talking about it under these terms of escapism, because most of the designs I find are perfectly possible and exist in most cases. It's just a matter of letting go of standards, perfections, and regulations under this bureaucratic culture that we think we have to be a part of. I'm still fighting that myself even as I go through being a writer. I'm still trying to find moments of liberation—of ways to not do things in the 'correct' or 'standard' way. Going back to this idea of -ish, that's the place where you can really see the personality of a creative project; it is in the murky inbetween space that isn't concerned with regulations, pragmatism, etc.

> (-ish) With this curation and celebration of momentary "inbetweenness", that brings us to our next question of what you're trying to achieve from this project. Are you trying to critique, subvert or overcome certain modes of design?

(SRR) With the writing I publish, I have to have a reason for writing it, along with an argument, evidence, and a conclusion. @everyverything is less of a place to prove anything, rather, it's a space for open conversations and interpretations. Where my writing has to be about closing cases, the Instagram page is about opening them up. Do you think this is smart? Do you think this is stupid? Are those useful terms? Do those terms even matter? Therefore, it's a place that deliberately collects images to be openly interpreted rather than to draw conclusions.

Separate from that, I often include the work of artists and photographers I admire like Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Virgil Abloh, and Edward Burtynsky. I try to elevate the work of artists, architects, and

photographers that are knowingly working on the concept of liberation from regulation. While some of the works on my page expose the accidents that reveal our culture, I also included designers who are putting this ironic sense of humor into their work since the beginning. The work of James Wines, from SITE, is a good example of this and I could fill half my Instagram page with just his buildings. He inspired me in a big way and I had the opportunity to talk to him recent 1y. We had a good time talking about the difficult task of injecting humor into design and how that has always been his intention. He told me that in his work, he always wants to get the audience to do a double-take and question how this building got designed, approved by the city, and built. He wants the people walking by his buildings to question what they're looking at-inviting them to interpret them for themselves outside of text.

> (-ish) With your collection including images of purposefully designed works and accidental mistakes or adaptations created from regular use, what do you think these phenomena say about our current culture and buili environment?

(SRR) I think that there's a large part of architecture culture as a profession that tries to imagine or make the built environment as this perfect place. Yet, these perfect buildings are designed for really flawed people. We're all flawed and imperfect, we cut corners and we lie to get out of situations. At best, architecture creates a perfect environment for imperfect people. Therefore, I think that those 'mistakes' revealed in the built environment are an expression of our human imperfections. These ruptures reflect that we are imperfect and we produce imperfect facades and imperfect details. I think this is a much more authentic relationship with the world around us, because who are we kidding, pretending to be perfect for these perfect spaces.

Generally, from the top down, there is this expectation that buildings improve our behavior. Plenty of architects, modern architects in particular, talk about architecture's capacity to improve human nature. Instead, we should embrace the imperfect environment and even the sloppy details. There's a beauty in sloppy details in which we get to see the behind the scenes, where we are invited into the process of its making.

> (-ish) On this note of behind the scenes and a process of making, that brings us back to our own experience in architecture school. A lot of the moments where we find inspiration comes from critics seeing something done unintentionally or misunderstanding original intentions. Those moments make the project stand out differently—there's a level of creativity and ambiguity in our interpretations and misreadings.

(SRR) Exactly—I think there is so much pressure to ignore or to blow past mistakes you make. There's a beauty in not only embracing them, but working through them and turning them into something.

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**EDITOR'S STATEMENT** 

The indeterminant. The unresolved. The ambiguous. -ish is almost something, nearly something, kind of something. -ish cannot be easily classified nor labeled, instead it revels within the off and imprecise, located somewhere vaguely along a fuzzy spectrum. To mimic, to fake, to synthesize, to simulate, to alter, to mutate; they are found in objects, buildings, spaces, images, representations, media, territories, environments and more.

This plethora of ambiguous realities lead us to question: Is it possible for -ish to offer an alternative framework of subversion towards the categorization of life, space and objects? And if so, can we become aware of -ish? Having brought to the surface the fluctuating definitions of what we consider -ish to be, can it be consciously produced? And ultimately, how can it serve as a different mode of knowledge, design, and production?

This issue is a loose collection of articles that reobserve, reexperience, and reevaluate our architectural and cultural landscape through the framework of -ish: from architectural forms, design methodologies, animation, cultural forces, psychic phenomena, language, sound, identity, to inbetweenness.

Only by acknowledging and embracing the -ish can we truly partake in the complexities of the spaces we inhabit. -ish is not an ambition, -ish already exists, -Ish is an intrinsic condition of our contemporary life.

> -ish LIST - SO DIFFERENT FROM A WISH LIST

PH northern lights foghorns

rooster tails on crashing waves the 'whispering gallery' in Grand Central spotlights on clouds

fun house mirrors melted ice cream Elvis Presley hologram

Amazon Prime SB artificial borders

**BOX-ish** Joshua Tan

#### PAPER HOUSE – THE ROOMS OF DÉJÀ VU Carlos Blanco

There are countless scientific theories as to why more than two-thirds of humans experience this déjà vu, and while there is no definitive answer, the effects of this sensation leave the mind unresolved yet intrigued. Déjà vu is French for "seen before" and has become a universal phrase for a puzzling phenomena that inherently is individualized and forces us to introspect into our mind and memories. During these moments of déjà vu, we find ourselves in a state of limbo between two worlds, one detailing a premonition of the event that's unfolding, and the other consciously recognizing the snapshots of the moments as familiar. Inherently, déjà vu places us as the audience in a cerebral theater, in which we observe a puppet on the stage that resembles ourselves acting out the actions, words, and emotions as the story unfolds. Through the eyes of the puppet, within its fabricated theatrical paper house, we witness its encounter with such moments of déjà vu and begin to piece together the reasons for this sensation. Through the progression within the paper house, we ask ourselves, have we experienced that same room or that same feeling before—and perhaps unconsciously, we have.

A Puppet's Encounter with Déjà Vu Moments

ly forgotten, those out of body dreams

experienced through the puppet could be

one reason we encounter those moments

those forgotten dreams. Is the sensation

of déjà vu merely the consciousness' at-

tempt of recognizing a discarded mem-

ory as familiar? If so, then our own

habits, interactions, and thoughts are

manifested through our dreams, influ-

depicted in ink?

per space.

per-Real Fluid Simulation.

the building disregards its pictorial boundaries entire-

ly, and proudly juts out beyond the frame. It is unclear

which edges articulate ground, foliage, or architec-

ture, and which lines are just graphic ornamentations

that frame the view on the page. The print is in fact

proto-digital in how we experience text, image, and

"3-dimensional" space, compressed within multiple

windows on a single "2-dimensional" plane. I do not

sible by ink, but would like to consider how any me-

dia used to depict an object can stretch or augment its

characteristics. For instance, what would be the Bugs

Bunny instruction model sheet equivalent of a frame

The frame must form a continuous edge

distinguish between pictorial space and pa-

When objects pass behind the frame, mask

(as aline or hatch), so that the eye can

them when they reach the other side. Sometimes break the frame line, but only if

you can still register rules 1 and 2.

The realistic-ish frame is familiar to us, yet adopts

novel behaviors within the reality of an image. Con-

sider how this historical drawing might inform a new

reading of contemporary mediums like a Frame Ani-

mation, a Skeuomorphic user interface, or even a Hy-

Ooziness can be achieved with computational proce-

dures intended to simulate the hyper-real movement

of fluids. Not an uninteresting way to generate a 3D

al-world behaviors is not of critical interest here. It's

when ooze behaves in unexpected ways that it invites

Ooze congeals when it's thick and separates

Translucent Ooze is different from glass, it

should have a distorting effect on its context

when looked through, and a slick sheen for

Gridded Ooze' does not need a visible con-

Gridded Ooze has a surface like any other

3D model and can hold a texture map.

When the animation begins, Gridded Ooze appears to

gush against surfaces that aren't there. In fact, the ooze

could be shaping itself to the cropping of the camera

view, a moment where the composition of the image

id dynamics. A perfectly checkered grid paints the liq-

has as much influence over the form as laws of flu-

uid-y surface, which could be believable when you

view a frozen still image. However, once the ooze is

in motion, the checkered grid does not distort and mix

surface, but the technical process of replicating re-

into droplets when thin.

tainer to hold its shape.

added realism

intend to romanticize the illusionary effects made pos-

of déjà vu in our physical world. Perhaps, as one senses this, we are recalling

There is the possibility that as we dream, our animated self-identified puppet wanders and has its own encounter with the universe, entering into parallel realms. As the dreams are quickly forgotten upon awakening in the current physical state, they are simply filed away into the temporal lobe of our brains. Although repressed, hidden, and seeming-

### GRIDDED OOZE Julie Kress

In the iconic episode "The Pink Phink", Pink Panther disagrees with the decorator on what color the house should be. Almost caught sabotaging the decorators' work, Pink Panther leaps into a pink wall and disappears as if he's completely camouflaged. Pink Panther is not rendered with tones of light, shadow, or fur. Such details would have revealed his 3d form contrasted against the slick surface of the freshly painted wall. Instead, between two frames, Pink Panther's form is simply outlined, and then it is not. Our natural desire to register objects allows us to quickly adjust to the impossible transformation of a solid wall into occupiable "pink-space."

Mark Rakatansky celebrates that "animation allows for elastic play when given limits of physical identity already established that is temporarily elongated, extended, in comparison to that limit." He goes on to deconstruct how Bugs Bunny can run and stretch into a dynamic range of poses, but still maintains his Bugs Bunny-ness by sticking to some rules of zoological anatomy and his defining characteristics baked into 2. the original looney tunes model sheet.3

- His arm is the thickest at the wrist. Neck should always be short.
- Ruff on his cheeks should be high.
- Etc.

This brings to mind the skeuomorphic\* icons of our digital interfaces that extend our sense of physical objects within a digital space. It feels perfectly natural to click and drag a pdf into a folder or to jot a note down on a digital Post-It, knowing full well that the interface bears no true likeness to the physical objects they depict. A desktop folder is a

folder, as much as Bugs Bunny is a rabbit, and Pink Panther's wall is solid (sometimes). While our current technology makes realism ever easier to achieve, delving into the territory of realistic-ish invites a reevaluation of how artists have historically dealt with ambiguous objects within imagery.

The 18th-century artist, Johann Nilson, presents us with an even more subtle play of physical identities. At first, a heavily ornamented coffee house sits within a graphically illustrated frame. A second glance and you notice something strange. The pictorial frame bleeds into the scene to form a strange facade for the coffee house. It re-frames windows and doors similarly but not quite like overgrown vines. The flag atop



Coffee House with Bickering Couple, by Johann Nilson

# THE SUBVERSIVE POWER OF QUEER-ish IDENTITY Lee Helms

Late September in East Rock. A friend and I sat in the grass, waiting for our Uber after our descent left us on the opposite side of the park. As I reclined, absorbing the late afternoon sun, my friend looked up from the grass and asked "Can I tell you something?" Naturally, I responded, "Of course, you can tell me anything."

"I think I'm bi" she gently announced. She previously identified as straight and has been in a long-term relationship with a male partner.

Since this proclamation, my friend has maintained her existing relationship while gradually exploring her identity.

Similarly, I have incrementally realized that I do not entirely identify as male, and I often reconcile with my outward presentation; I often present myself to be more masculine than I feel internally. Yet despite my androgynous modulations, I identify largely as a cis-gender, gay male-two discernable identities.

Through my friend's exploration of her sexuality while operating within a heterosexual relationship and my gender variation while predominately identifying in a cis-gender manner, we fall under the category of 'queer-ish.'

In a recent cultural and linguistical turn, 'queer' serves as a grandiose umbrella for anyone who identifies as not-cis and/or not-straight. But, what does it mean for society to be accepting enough of alternative identities where individuals can identify or operate in a way that is queer-ish? Here, I define queer-ish as individuals who can, may, or do operate within the existing cis/heteronormative infrastructure and societal architecture while embracing a loose and transient connection to the queer community or tenets of being queer.

The subversive nature of queer-ish identity renders it a powerful tool to transform our

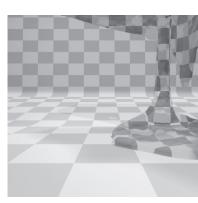
encing the puppet's pseudo-physical interactions within the hallways of such a cerebral paper house. If we make changes to our lives, riddled with unfamiliarity, then the paper house is forced to create new rooms, rearrange the items, and stretch the hallways. Thus, as the puppet wakes up, gets out of bed, and heads to the living room, the habitual routine can be disrupted through triggers deemed foreign. Conveniently enough, a misplaced object, a picture frame tilted upside down, or the television tuned to a channel never tuned to before can become those triggers.

Furthermore, as the puppet wanders from room to room, observing the walls that enclose it, the items it touches, and the light that shines through the windows, it encounters a past life staring right back. The rooms become moving backdrops to the puppet and as it passes through, so do those eerie and familiar thoughts and artifacts. However, as the strings are pulled and directed, new moments appear, creating an array of new memories to recall upon. Thus, although the puppet enters the same room over and over again, the deviations are the crucial aspect of study. If the puppets are manifestations of ourselves in our dreams, then the eerie spaces we venture into are the paper houses, filled with our intrinsic collections of items and memories, only to be replayed in a constant loop. As

ask, "Am I dreaming? Why does all of this feel so familiar?" The journey of the puppet is one of discovery through its interactions within the paper house, and one of self-awareness through its conscious recognition of memories, dreams and autonomy. The puppet questions its reality, debating the difference between destiny and programmation. There must be a reason as to why the puppet continues to encounter déjà vu. Perhaps there is no closure, just as no memory we have is perfect, neither would there be any possible answers.

the puppet wanders through its paper house, it is forced to

We could interpret the sensation of déjà vu within the paper house as the conscious mind making links between rooms, stored memories and individual items we hold in certain discreet places. In the same fashion we hold treasures in boxes under our beds, so could the unconscious mind operate with memories we categorize as familiar and foreign. No memory is too far gone, and déjà vu could represent an instance of replay from past moments or past lives' energy manifested into the present life of the puppet. Could the puppets' conscious mind have lived a million lives in its journey, living simultaneously in each room in the paper house through its embodied memories in homes' walls and items? The familiarity of déjà vu shouldn't feel so distanced and quickly discarded. Embrace the sensation as a close connection to our inhabited spaces and experiences. Piecing together the sensations, one discovers that the only way to describe what déjà vu truly means to us is to experience it, over and over again.









8 Still frames from the Animation, Gridded Ooze, by Julie Kress. See at https://vimeo.com/388572260

into a homogenous brown color as expected, it's fixed in place, like a pixelated glitch on the screen. Similar to Nilson's frame, that is both a graphical ornament and architectural element, the checkered grid is both painted onto the fluid, and a distinct layer (in the Photoshop sense) that does not truly acknowledge the presence of the fluid. Fluid can do almost anything, it does not resist transformation, but for this very reason, it requires

close attention, to make meaningful interventions that negotiate between its physical identity, and its digital reality.

To be nimble in our encounters with digital objects, we do not reject realism, instead, we open up to unexpected hybridities between our physical and digital existence. A preference for realistic-ish means to interrogate objects as they exist relative to digital imagery and to reflect our need to have some sense of physical identity to register differences. It delights in unexpected collisions of possible and impossible through a play of rendered surfaces, colors, and lines. Walls transforming into "pink-space", frames simultaneously being what they frame, and fluids mixed with grids. Each example differs in time, discipline, and medium, but they present alternative frameworks for a more ambiguous, less easily categorized vision of reality.

- Pink Panther, season 1, episode 1, "The Pink Phink", directed by Friz Freleng; Hawley Pratt, aired December 18th, 1964, on NBC, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41aGCrXM20E+feature=emb\_logo+ab\_channel=Official
- Mark Rakatansky, Tectonic Acts of Design and Doubt (London, UK: Architectural Association Publications,
- Bob McKimson, Bugs Bunny Model Sheet. 1943. Warner Bros. Cartoons Inc, Accessed Feb 15, 2021, https://www
- iamag.co/looney-tunes-50-original-model-sheets A skeuomorph is a graphic representation of a physical object, like the recycling bin icon Initially referenced by Harries, "The Broken Frame", 67. Image: Johann Esaias Nilson, 1756.
- Johann Esaias Nilson, Koffiehuis met ruziënd paar (Coffee House with Bickering Couple), between 1731 and 1788, Engraving Print on paper, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Koffiehuis\_met\_ruzi%C3%ABnd\_paar\_ Neues\_Caffehaus\_(titel\_op\_object)\_Sociaal\_vermaak\_(serietitel), \_RP-P-1964-2874.jpg  $\textbf{Kress, Julie. Gridded Ooze. 2019. } \underline{\textbf{https:}//\textbf{vimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze Top View. } \underline{\textbf{https:}//\textbf{vimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze Top View. } \underline{\textbf{https:}//\textbf{vimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View. } \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View. } \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View. } \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View. } \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View. } \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View. } \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{wimeo.com/388572260}} \ \textbf{Also see Gridded Ooze} \ \textbf{Top View.} \ \underline{\textbf{https:}} \underline{\textbf{https:$
- Still frames from the animation, Gridded Ooze

existing architecture, both social and spatial. Similar to José Muñoz's notion of 'disidentification' where queer individuals engage in subversive tactics and transform existing infrastructure and frameworks rather than aligning with or rejecting these exclusionary institutions, queer-ish identity operates under the skin of our existing institutions, yet manifests in a more nuanced expression than disidentification. While disidentification is an explicit, active strategy of survival employed by marginalized and minority individuals, queer-ish identity permeates through its inconspicuous nature, only bubbling when the individual employs it or another individual has the acumen to perceive it. Where the practice of disidentification may work, for example, within the stereotypes of butch-lesbianism to create a flourishing community, queerish identity may emerge as a lesbian woman flirting with a male gender presentation; a trans man choosing to adopt feminine mannerisms; a newly bisexual woman gradually realizing her identity while in a heterosexual relation, with no current intention to act on her bisexuality.

Yet with the subversions of stereotypes, societal infrastructure, and gender/sexual expectations, queer-ish identity may not produce, on the surface, any identifiable alteration of cultural infrastructure. However, through the pervasive proliferation of queerish identity in contemporary culture, slight ripples, slight creases in the social fabric aggregate into an incessant quivering slightly below the framework: like walking into a room you know well, except all of the furniture has been turned 15 degrees clockwise. Over time, the ripples facilitated by queer-ish identity capture a sub-community in itself. What once served as a margin of a marginal community becomes a vital underground network churning just below the surface.

Queer-ish possesses potent subversion, leaving us grappling with how the sedition of our societal architecture transforms our cis/heteronormatively predicated physical spaces. Ultimately, queer-ish will gradually transform our spaces into mimetic arenas of fluidity.

As a whole, cities are queer-ish. The transience, fluidity, rapidity of cities all bubble below the surface, constantly re-inventing, rejecting, obscuring one full identity. But I argue that cities acquired this identity from queer-ish individuals: a city of static, homogenous individuals would contain no nuance, nothing to recreate.

This identity recently permeated into the design of restrooms that have evolved from static, to queer, to queer-ish. Works by queer activists transformed public restrooms into spaces mirroring personal identity, but recent works shattered the rigid reflection of identity and created fluid spaces of expression. Similar to the transience of cities, Stalled! by Joel Sanders, Susan Stryker, and Terry Kogan subverts the private nature of public restrooms and creates an agoric space of varying degrees of privacy.

Where disidentification may create a flourishing community—a mystic locale or a cruising spot-within the existing restroom architecture, queer-ish identity gradually transforms the space into a fluid realm while preserving the infrastructure.

Amalgamating the queer-ish identites of cities with the case-study of Stalled!, we have a telescopic framework for exploring queer-ish. The nuanced manifestations of queer-ish identity-the vari-

## THE VALUE OF INEFFICIENCY Shelby Wright

Efficiency exists as an appearement to systems of capital. If the only goal of living is to make money, then "wasting" money, time and resources is the ultimate sin. The architect situated within capitalism functions to maximize usable square footage while minimizing costs for the owner. This leaves little room for design and ultimately leads to the continuous reproduction of generic space. Not only have we learned to live in generic space, but we have also learned to love its ease of use. We know that our Ikea sofa will fit in our standard-sized living room, that milk is at the back of the supermarket and produce at the front, and if you order the "number one" at McDonald's, you'll get a Big Mac. Somewhere along the way we forgot that humans weren't emotionless machines \*cough\* LeCorbusier \*cough\*. Our modern systems were designed to beat out any wasteful excess. We have been taught to utilize every minute of every day to increase our productivity. We never stopped to ask why this was better. We never stopped to ask if the cult of efficiency was doing more harm than good.

"Inefficiency" is a bad word in our society. It implies there was some degree of failure in the system resulting in the production of something deemed unnecessary. But it is inefficiency which gives us the unique, interesting, and odd. When things don't function exactly the way they should, they take on character, they are no longer inert objects. It's the qualities of imperfection, even awkwardness which draw us to older buildings and buildings not mass produced. You have to jiggle the doorknob a certain way to get the door to open, the light switch is placed at an awkward distance from the entry, and the bedroom is in a distorted shape. Inhabitants of such buildings are forced to react to them, the building is no longer an inert stage set, but rather an entity to be bargained with.

Paradoxically, efficiency is not the means to having less, but rather exists in service to creating more for the sake of more. Why have one expensive car when you can have three cheap ones? Why patch up old clothes when you can just buy new ones? Throw away the outdated iPhone because this one can turn your face into an animal. Things are made cheaper so you can buy more. Isn't the same true of contemporary architecture?

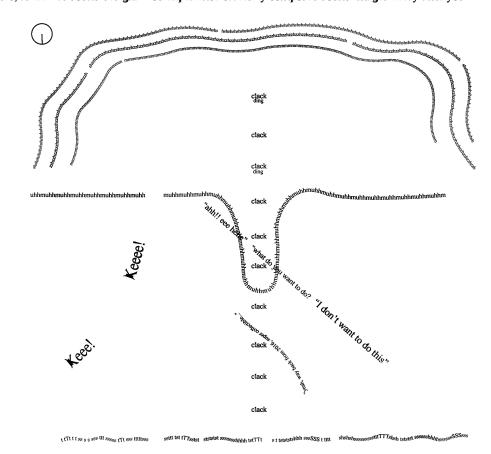
Architecture has aesthetically moved past efficiency, but we are still ensnared in its economics. It has been over fifty years since mainstream architecture began to shun streamlined modernism. It is in the Vanna Venturi House, the pivotal moment into Postmodernism, where we can find an embrace of functional uselessness. Not only did Venturi bring back the idea of decoration on a façade, he also built a stair to nowhere from the second floor to the nonexistent third floor. The stair lies behind an unassuming door as if to hide it, but an internal window is placed directly next to this door. These elements are all playing a game with one another and demonstrate Venturi's notion of contradictory architecture. This stair stakes a claim against pure functionality, it flies in the face of everything Modernism stood for. It suggests that things do not need a purpose, they can simply just exist. Their uselessness makes them strange to us and forces us to develop an emotional response to them that we likely wouldn't for a well-functioning utilitarian object. Useless things, strange spaces, peculiar details all help create a sense of place. They are what distinguish *Here* from *There* and provide some degree of wayfinding in the world. Abnormal features often become landmarks or they demarcate a

specific space rather than a generic one. If the proposition of design is placemaking and not profit, then why are designers more beholden to the latter? I believe it's simply because we have failed to articulate the value of inefficiency.

Inefficiency is not "anti-efficiency." The argument is not that design should be purposefully wasteful of time, money, and resources simply because it can. Instead, inefficiency argues for a reprioritization of ideals where making every last square foot count is less important than creating a stimulating and unique space. We have spent the better part of this past year in our homes, many of which were not designed to hold our interest, but to shield us from the turbulent world outside. Even when we do engage with the world at large, the spaces we inhabit are designed for ease of use and comfort. Bodies seamless-1y move from beige house to car to Starbucks to the third floor of an office park building to car and back to a beige house without the need to be aware of their environment. By instilling just the right amount of indeterminacy and abnormality into the built world, the public would maybe again take notice of it. By cherishing mistakes rather than covering them up, by embracing uselessness and praising abnormality, we could make the valueless invaluable. If the sole aim of a building is no longer efficiency, but place-making through inefficiency, then the built environment can move from an inert backdrop to an active participant in daily life and enrich the lives of those who interact with it.

### A PARKING LOT AT 255 CROWN ST., NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT, FACING SOUTH: 01/30/21 13:00 EST **Brian Orser**

Architects work hard to visualize everything, from ecologies to airflows. We are all aware of the dominance of vision in our globalized culture, which has pushed architecture deeper and deeper into visual space, and, more recently, into the increasingly ambiguous, autonomous space of the image. Yet the image, seen as a confluence of information, representation, and generative computation, offers a surprising alternative to visuality, in the space of sound, or "acoustic space," which is the space constructed in our minds from patterned vibrations in the atmosphere. Sound images have been studied, created and theorized for decades, and are a fundamental idea in music, as well as sound design.2 You experience carefully composed sound images every time you



watch Netflix. Just like the patterned light we capture with our eyes, the patterned air we call sound is encoded with spatial and material information. Enmeshed within visual space there is acoustic space. Sound will not replace vision in architecture. But engaging architecture with multiple senses inevitably brings us closer to an abstract conception of space, untying a pervasive metaphysical identification of what is seen with what is. Sound is not space, but acoustic space is co-extensive with spacetime. This sonic space, like visual space, is space-ish.

Sound is inseparable from our idea and memory of place and urban space. The typographic composition below is a piece of a larger iterative experiment with documenting and representing sound and space. This sound-text-image documents a 30-minute close-listening exercise in a parking lot at the heart of New Haven's commercial district.

BOX-ish Joshua Tan

In Arch2O's "9 Magic Tricks to Transform a Boring Box into an Architectural Masterpiece!," the aspiring or practicing architect is provided with a list of operations with which to spice up their boxy projects:1

This selection of superficial "tricks" to render architecture more interesting is, at first, amusing for its reductivity. Is the addition or extrusion of some boxes really all it takes to produce a masterpiece? But this scenario is only as funny as it is true. How many of us have experimented with some version of these operations, only to receive positive, if not enthusiastic feedback from critics? How many renowned architectural projects can be described in terms of these simple operations? The products of Arch2O's operations seem to define a new type—the Box-ish.

The Box-ish cannot

be understood with-

out first knowing its

two predecessors, the

box and the anti-box.

an enclosure. It pre-

cludes the possibility

of originality with its

own rationality.\* It is

the formal expression

opment driven by the

of neoliberal devel-

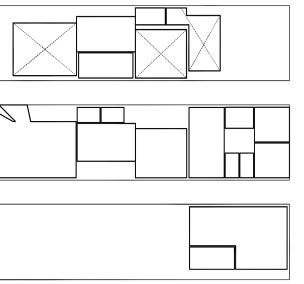
goals of efficiency

and flexibility.3 The

box's organization of

ings. It offers the possibility of creating something completely new with endless developmental potential. So complex is its form that its production has been almost completely outsourced to algorithms and software. This idiosyncrasy turns out to be superficial and vapid. The architect can churn out a hundred and one iterations, geometries, and compositions with just a single click of a button and yet be lost on how to proceed with the design. "Define your parameters!" some might say, and generic terms like "community," "autonomy," and "experience" are instinctively mumbled back. For-

in shape, maximizing usable space. The Box-ish admits context, but only just. The section of the Vault House is specific to the natural site, lifted slightly to avoid flooding in the coastal area. The plan perimeter, however, remains generic and avoids deviating from the rectangular boundary of the cadastral lot. The Box-ish mediates the exuberance of the architect with the reality of building and the demands of the client. Balance is of the utmost importance. It is simultaneously a realistic approach and an aesthetic aspiration. It is perhaps through the Box-ish that architects have final-



space is dictated by the chief concern of rentable area, while the proliferation of construction standards ensures a viable product. The box is everywhere, but always in the background. We see it on streets, in movies and renderings and we imagine it in books and maps. It is almost never in the foreground.

But if the box bores, the anti-box is no more interesting. The anti-box has been heralded as the champion of idiosyncrasy by countless treatises, manifestos, and draw-

mal innovation now resides in the lines of code that exist in our scripts—or, worse, in the scripts that we unconsciously use in modelling softwares as we gradually cede the responsibilities of drawing and visualization to digital tools. Plaster-casting, vacuum-forming, fruit-decaying and the like are the anti-box's last physical residues: an exercise of formal relationships completely divorced from the reality of real estate and building construction.

If the box and the anti-box have failed us, then perhaps architecture's salvation lies in the Box-ish—something like a box, but not totally. The Box-ish is where the idiosyncratic meets efficiency and buildability. It is the compromise with our financial overlords for our claim to creativity. It is at its best when there is utility and consistency—one move that does many things. The Box-ish is preferred because of Venustas per Utilitas.\*

Johnston Marklee's Vault House is a good example of this. The project itself is a box of vaults that changes the experience and formal reading of the building while maintaining the efficiency of the floor plan. The layering of the vaults creates different frames to view the beach depending on one's location within the building. The semi-circular geometry is used for skylights, windows, and foundations, giving the simple box an articulated form. Despite this complex composition, regularity is always maintained on plan. With the exception of the balcony, every room is rectangular

ly one-upped the modernist master, Mies van der Rohe. Simplicity ™ loses to Simple-ish ™.5 Is the Box-ish the last stand of the architect where invention compromises with risk and efficiency? Or is it the holy grail where countless more unique designs can be built? It seems like architects have finally found the way to endlessly invent and build, but perhaps by doing so, they have also created an abyss of perpetual work, overworked for their passion.

- "9 Magic Tricks to Transform a Boring Box into an Architectural Masterpiece!" Arch2o. https://www.arch2o.com/transform-box
- Reinier de Graaf. "The Inevitable Box." Four Walls and a Roof: The Complex Nature of a Simple Profession. (Cambridge; London: Harvard
- University Press, 2017)

ous unsettlings-combined with its scales of implementation render it a disruptive tool in reclaiming and transforming spaces. Whether altering an urbanism, a restroom, or (one day) the cis/heteronormativity of suburbia, the proliferation and subsequent reverberations of queerish identity will subvert our existing perceptions and productions of architecture.

Tilt!

2.

3.

Add & Subtract!

Add Emphasis!

Make Extrusions!

Eat Away from it!

Cluster a Bunch!

Extend the Edges!

Break the Box!

Stack Up!

- Muñoz José Esteban, Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Pr-
- Joel Sanders, Susan Stryker, and Terry Kogan Stalled! Accessed February 9, 2021. https:// www. stalled. online/

University Press, 2017) Manuel Castells. "The Network Enterprise." The rise of the network society. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 154-159. Beauty by means of utility. Reinier de Graaf. "The Inevitable Box." Four Walls and a Roof: The Complex Nature of a Simple Profession. (Cambridge: London: Harvard

> The views expressed in Paprika! do not represent those of the Yale School of Architecture. Please send comments and corrections to paprika.ysoa@gmail.com. To read Paprika! online, please visit our website, www.yalepaprika.com.