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The Art of Disappearance:

The architecture of the exhibition and the construction of the modern audience

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ABSTRACT

A critical culture requires that the site of appearance, the temporal coincidence of the subject, the object and the site, be acknowledged as a ground for meaning. Through a built investigation and a theoretical address this thesis examines the site of appearance for contemporary creative practice; the extent to which it continues to be defined by and contained within the conceptual frame of the Enlightenment aesthetic as the privileged discourse of the object. In a detailed analysis of the architecture of the exhibition, the 18th century Academy *Salon* and the Parisian bourgeois *hôtel* are juxtaposed with examples from the late 20th century practice of site-specific exhibition. This comparison reveals an essential connection between art and architecture, between architectural form and social representation. An alternative concept of the exhibition as a site of appearance thereby acknowledges individual, temporally specific interpretation as a potential ground for critical discourse within the contemporary art institution.

RESUMÉ

Une culture critique nécessite que le "lieu où l'on se présente", la rencontre simultanée du sujet, de l'objet et du site, soit reconnu comme le point de départ de la raison d'être.

A travers un projet bâti et un exposé théorique, cette thèse examine le "lieu où l'on se présente" dans la pratique créatrice contemporaine, et à quel point ce lieu ne cesse d'être limité et défini par le cadre conceptuel établi par l'esthétique du Siècle des Lumières; à savoir: le discours privilégié de l'objet. Dans une analyse détaillée de l'architecture dédiée à l'exposition, le Salon Académique et l'Hôtel Bourgeois Parisien du XVIIIième siècle sont mis en parallèle avec des exemples de la fin de notre siècle de l'usage d'un site précis lié à l'exposition. Cette comparaison révèle une corrélation essentielle entre l'art et l'architecture, entre la forme architecturale et la représentation sociale. Le concept du "lieu où l'on se présente", comme alternative à l'exposition, accrédite d'emblée l'individualité. L'interprétation, particulière et momentané, devient une base possible de discours critique au sein même de l'institution contemporaine des arts.

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CONTENTS

The Art of Disappearance

As the facility by which art is named in public, the modern art institution can not be denied, it is both the ground upon which one might build and the frame within which one must act. The political culture of the late 20th century, the organisation of society into a system of institutional units: the state, the professions and the family, limits the creative contribution of the individual by prescribing the procedures of interpretation and exchange within a fixed order.[1] At issue for the creative practitioner is the identification of a site for the operation of a critical consciousness within the institution; the recognition of the social nature of existence and the formative contribution of the individual imagination. It is perhaps only in this way that we might acknowledge our status as "historical and social" actors within our own culture rather than merely its offspring.[2]

It is my contention that, notwithstanding two centuries of cultural debate, the contemporary art institution continues to operate within an aesthetic model attributed to the 18th century European Enlightenment. Furthermore, as a consequence of the structural and linguistic limitations of this model, the vital connection between the site, the art object and the subject - the constituent elements of artistic discourse and the means by which the individuai creative contribution to culture might be acknowledged - is restricted in its social and political operations. The interpretation of site is therefore the essential theme of the following discussion. If, as I have suggested, critical practice is confined by the concept of culture as a collection of objects: paintings, sculptures and theatrical performances, housed within a "neutral" architectural container and divorced from the context of production, then a reconsideration of these fundamental elements may introduce an alternative reading.

This thesis operates on the premise that art and architecture exist within a dialectic, a discourse that defines the site of appearance for the visual arts in a

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[1] Kumar, Krishan. "Political culture" *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought* ed. Alan Bullock, Oliver Stallybrass and Stephen Trombley (London: Fontana, 1988) 659.

[2] Said, Edward W. *The World, the Text and the Critic* (London: Vintage, 1991) 15.

given era as a ground for knowledge. "For us appearance - something that is being seen and heard by others as well as by ourselves - constitutes reality."[3] In the act of communication between the maker, the object and the spectator, a meaning is appropriated by the individual subject as an interpretation.[4] The extent of this appropriation in the modern period, the public significance of art and consequently the possibility for a critical culture may therefore be determined by the physical relationships that exist between the site, the object and the spectator as they are defined by the architecture of the exhibition.

In the following text, a critical analysis of the constitution of the viewing subject and the architecture of public appearance in the 18th century will be employed in order to reconsider the late 20th century practice of site-specific exhibition and thereby discern the structural heritage and practical limitations of the privileged Enlightenment model. Identifying the conditions of contemporary practice, it is not my intention to propose the restoration of an earlier model of appearance, replacing the modern art institution, but rather to distinguish alternative practices of creation, presentation and interpretation that operate critically within the institutional frame. Two of my own built works accompany this discussion, acting as a practical correlative to the theoretical discourse; an examination of the implications of site and the responsibility of vision through a process of construction, installation, documentation and narrative commentary.

The modern conception of site traces its heritage to the 18th century Enlightenment as the realisation of empirical thought in the reorientation of the material and intellectual world view away from a belief in the existence of a transcendent order towards the "actual experience" of man.[5] In the discourse of art and architecture this reordering was made manifest in the redeployment of practice and display towards the primacy of the art object as artifact. Activities that had previously existed in an intimate dialogue, producing integrated,

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[3] Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1958) 50. The concept of the site of appearance in this instance derives from the cultural construction of the public, the *polis*, and the private which was identified by Hannah Arendt. In this definition the private realm acted as the ground for necessity and survival, thereby establishing the possibility of freedom in the public realm as the privilege of individual interpretation and expression.

[4] Ricoeur, Paul. "Appropriation" *Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination* ed. Mario J. Valdes (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991) 86-98, 89. I refer here to Ricoeur's definition of appropriation from *aneignen*: "... to make one's own what was initially 'alien'...."

[5] Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage, 1973) 321. In this context the modern era is directly associated with empiricism as the conceptual frame in which knowledge is determined directly in relation to man.

composite works, were redefined. Art and architecture were subsequently categorised as distinct disciplines and attributed with specific values, motivations and objectives. Furthermore, as a correlative to the material restructuring of creative culture into a hierarchical system of objects and activities, a revised intellectual order was put into place. A new philosophy of aesthetics emerged which was directly concerned with the identification, categorisation and control of individual cultural experience.[6]

With the advent of officially sanctioned, permanently sited public exhibitions of visual art in the 18th century, the Enlightenment program identified a new site, the gallery, and a new set of characters in the cultural discourse: the painter, sculptor, architect and author, the viewer, spectator and reader. At issue in the late 20th century is the progress of this conception of the art institution towards its logical conclusion in the totalising museum; the identification and categorisation of any and all artifacts and consequently the removal of the distinction between art and life which is the mainstay of the modern program. The historian and critic O.K. Werckmeister has identified a material and intellectual response to the Enlightenment *impasse* in the decline of criticism and the withdrawal of culture into a citadel as the last stronghold of aestheticisation. The discursive ground of appearance within the institutional frame being relinquished in favour of the preservation and conservation of the privileged discourse of the object.[7] It therefore remains to a critical practice to reconsider the context of public presentation and the limitations of discourse; to distinguish the site of appearance in the late 20th century. What is the structural realisation of an aesthetic ideal that denies the specificity of individual experience, the immediacy of perception and the creative operations of the imagination, and how might one act responsibly within its frame?

Inappropriate Behaviour (1995), the built work which accompanies this text seeks to operate in the ground between the privilege of the subject and the privilege of the object; between the "private" space of the home and the "public" space of the institution.[8] In an address to the concept of the art museum,

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[6] Cassirer, Ernst. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Princeton and New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1951).

[7] Werckmeister, O.K. *Citadel Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

[8] The distinction of public and private in this context is specific to the late 20th century. In subsequent chapters the temporal specificity of the notions of public and private will be reconsidered in relation to the received interpretation of the 18th and 20th century conceptual frame.

Theodor Adorno observed that the art object and the individual imagination of the viewer exist in a vital tension. "The fetishism of the object and the subject's infatuation with itself find their correction in each other. Each position passes over into the other."[9] In a process of evasion the constituent works of *Inappropriate Behaviour*, the *Furniture Taxonomy* (1995) and the *Incredible History of the Rococo Rear View Mirror* (1995), represent an attempt to defy a categorisation of practice that might contain, define or otherwise reduce the work to a single text for a prescribed reader. *Inappropriate Behaviour* therefore operates as a built installation, a photographic collage, a document, a narrative text and a public performance.[10] In a constant reinterpretation of the site, the private home, the public gallery and the city street, the dominant perception of the subject as inhabitant and observer is offered as a ground for debate.

In order to counter the politics of the institution a reconsideration of late 20th century society is required. In the *Practice of Everyday Life* Michel de Certeau identified the neglected history of the subject.[11] In the daily operations of the individual as actions of resistance, the dominant order of culture and society is undermined. De Certeau proposed that day to day activities: "reading, talking, dwelling, cooking," contradict the topographical organisation of social existence, the aspiration of the totalising ideology.[12] This account of the creative, constitutive activity of the subject in relation to the site is a valuable alternative to the limitations defined by the Enlightenment paradigm and therefore it will act as the point of departure for this thesis. In the discourse of the site of the modern city De Certeau identified two "stories" which exist in a continuous process of exchange: the "being there" of the object which defines the *place*, and the "operation" of the cultural subject which defines the *space*.[13] The temporal

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9 Adorno, Theodor. "Valéry Proust Museum" *Prisms* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, 1981) 173-185, 183.

10 The installations of *Inappropriate Behaviour* were presented as part of a lecture entitled *How do I look? Art as accessory: a critical reconsideration of architectural space*, at the *Accessory Architecture Conference* in Auckland New Zealand in July 1995. The critical text was written in collaboration with Joanna Merwood (architect) and accompanied by an artist's statement prepared by Victoria Clare Bernie. The *Furniture Taxonomy* will be installed in *Galerie La Centrale*, Montréal, Québec, Canada in November 1995.

11 Certeau, Michel de. *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1988)

12 Certeau xx.

13 Certeau 117-118.

specificity of meaning and the constant process of individual interpretation and reinterpretation is explicit.

> "On this view, in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is, when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualisation, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts."[14]

[14] Certeau 117.

CHAPTER ONE

The Architecture of Appearance: The *Salon* as event

Introduction

The exhibitions of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, the *Salons*, held in the *Salon Carrée* of the Louvre Palace throughout the 18th century have, until relatively recently, operated as the paradigmatic form of public exhibition in the discourse of art in the modern era.[15] As the representations of Enlightenment aesthetic doctrine in built form, they have become synonymous with the identification of the constituent elements of the modern art institution: the neutral architectural site, the autonomous art object and the passive viewing public. In this construction the *Salon* site is limited to the built structure of the exhibition as it provides shelter to a collection of art objects which are organised according to an ideal classification grounded in an hierarchical system of genre, media and commodity value. The architectural form itself is considered to be without a meaning beyond the utilitarian concerns of organisation and conservation. The autonomous art object, detached from its architectural context, is deemed to provide its own reference through its material form, its stylistic affiliations within the conventions of the art historical discourse and its unique history.[16] The audience for such a presentation is the silent witness to a received wisdom.

This account of the aesthetic discourse in the Enlightenment is essentially historicist in nature, attributing to the public exhibition a single, linear development from the *Salon Carrée* to the late 20th century exhibition and consequently denying the specificity of the 18th century *Salon* and the relevance of a contextual interpretation. The juxtaposition of the 18th century and the late 20th century exhibition in this thesis is therefore undertaken in an attempt to

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[15] Throughout the text, the *Salon* exhibition, which derived its name from its site in the *Salon Carrée*, will also be referred to as the *Salon*. The *hôtel salon* will also be referred to as the *salon*. The modern era in this context refers to the duration of the project of modernity which I will situate between the 18th century and the present day.

[16] Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken, 1968) 217-253. Here I am referring specifically to the "aura" or "unique history" of the art object described by Walter Benjamin.

undermine the agenda of the modern art institution by reinterpreting the practice of exhibition in relation to its immediate context. By replacing the principle of an historical development with a critical address to the demands of contemporary practice the temporal nature of the exhibition as event is made explicit, and the critical implications of the presence of the viewing subject and the art object in the site may be restored to the critical debate. In an analysis of Modernist criticism, the dominant interpretation of the Enlightenment model in the 20th century, Mary Kelly identified a process of contextual interpretation which might acknowledge the exhibition as "discursive practice." In the displacement of the Enlightenment model, the exhibition may be seen to operate as a collection of fragmentary discourses rather than the representation of a privileged aesthetic agenda.[17]

Chapter One will address the constitution of the common ground of aesthetic experience in the public site of the exhibition, the *Salon*, through a reconsideration of the particular nature of the public subject and public space in the 18th century: the spatial arrangements and behavioural forms defined by the large scale entertainment of the *fête* and the theatrical performance. Through an examination of La Font de Saint-Yenne's *Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la Peinture en France* (1747), a critical address to the practice of exhibition and the place of art, the central concerns of the 18th century aesthetic debate will be identified in relation to the essential correlation between the built site and the aesthetic experience of the viewing subject. The particular connection between the *Salon Carrée* and the *hôtel salon* , the primary public site of the nascent bourgeoisie, will be traced throughout this chapter as a precursor to a detailed analysis of *hôtel* architecture in Chapter Two. The *Salon Carrée* as the paradigmatic historical exhibition will be addressed through a structural and linguistic analysis of the evidence of the built site, the Academy catalogue, the *Livret*, and a selection of 18th century guidebooks which refer to the *Salon* in the context of architectural sites and private collections throughout Paris. The early 18th century *Salon* will be distinguished from its later manifestations with a view to identifying the procedures of objectification that marked the way towards the construction of the modern art institution.

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[17] Kelly, Mary. "Reviewing Modernist Criticism" *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation* ed. Brian Wallis (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984) 100-101.

Chapter Two will consider the particular constituency of the bourgeois audience for art, the intimate society of the *salon*, in relation to the distribution of art in the 18th century *hôtel*. The bourgeoisie represented a substantial body of material and intellectual patronage throughout the period, exhibiting a major influence upon artistic and architectural production. In the connection between social representation and architectural form, a parallel will be drawn between the construction of the *hôtel salon* visitor and the *Salon Carrée* audience. The bourgeois visitor will serve to connect the various public spaces of appearance in the 18th century city through his or her viewing operations. In an analysis of the concept of architectural use in the 18th century, as it was represented in the theoretical writing of Jacques-François Blondel in the *Traite de l'Architecture de le Goût Moderne. De la Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance et de la Decoration des Edifices en General* (1737-8) and Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières in *Le Génie de L'Architecture ; ou, l'analogie de cet art avec nos sensations* (1780), the site of art, the relative distribution and identification of paintings and sculptures, will serve to define the changing nature of public space in the *hôtel* and the implications of that change for the *Salon* exhibition. At issue is the extent to which the autonomous art object was distinguished from the architectural site during the 18th century and the consequences which might then be inferred for the practice of public appearance in the modern era.

In Chapter Three, the *Art of Disappearance*, late 20th century exhibition practice will be discussed with regard to the revised interpretation of the historical art institution in Chapters One and Two. In an analysis of the privileged discourse of the object in modernity and the advent of pluralism in creative practice, three recent examples of avant-garde evasion and retreat will be examined in relation to the site of appearance as the occasion for critical debate within the institutional frame.

The site of public appearance in 18th century Paris

"The Parisian is never indifferent to what goes on around him, and the slightest new thing will stay his steps. A man has but to direct his gaze upwards and appear to observe something attentively and

you will see others stop to look also. The crowd gathers and everyone is asking what there is to be seen."[18]

In the *Dictionaire Universel* of 1690, Antoine Furetière defined the public in opposition to the private individual as the *particulier*. He identified a general group of citizens as those who inhabit the city and contribute to the political and cultural discourse of that city and the formation of its moral philosophy.[19] In Furetière's definition the collective body of individuals is identified in terms of the newly formulated urban citizen. The term "public" in its 17th century sense thus lacks the generality which we recognise today. Furetière's public is created in opposition to the private individual but his specific use of the term "citizen" and reference to the *morale*, the moral philosophy which governed both behaviour and social hierarchy, situates the public in a far more particular system of privileges. Richard Sennett has referred to the complexities of social identification during the 18th century. The creation of the bourgeoisie distinguished the urban dweller from the nobility, the gentry or the ecclesiastic as someone possessed of certain privileges not available to the people in general. This distinction served to undermine the existing economic and social hierarchies, resulting in a mass of individuals who could no longer be identified within the established order.[20]

In the construction of the 18th century aesthetic doctrine the concept of a public for art, a new secular, collective body in society capable of forming and voicing a judgment, was associated with the moral function of art as a representation of the preferred social order. The political and social changes taking place in France in the 18th century (the displacement of the nobility and the ascent of the bourgeois within the new bureaucracy) created a challenge to the studied equilibrium of the *ancien régime*. Bourgeois economic power, the possibility of social ascendancy and the attendant growth of literacy, made for a

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[18] Mercier, Louis Sébastien. *The Picture of Paris Before and After the Revolution* tr. Wilfred and Emilie Jackson (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1929) 125.

[19] Furetière, Antoine. *Dictionaire universel, contenant generalement tous les mots François, tant vieux que moderne, & les termes de toutes les sciences et des arts* (La Haye & Rotterdam: Arnout & Reinier Leers, 1690) *Public*, Tome III. Cc3. *«Le general des citoyens, ou des hommes. La Morale ne presche autre chose que l'amour du bien public, la conservation de la chose publique ou republique. On a veu en France la guerre du bien public.»*

[20] Sennett, Richard. *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Vintage, 1977) 49. See also Furetière: *Bourgeoisie*, Tome I.

newly influential and critical audience.[21] As such, the monarch led by his ministers, was obliged to acknowledge a new formulation in society: the crowd. The constitution of the common ground necessary to formulate this new social group demanded the reorganization of existing social codes in a new configuration. The threat inherent in the subversion of the existing order is registered in Furetière's dictionary.

> *«Peuple se dit encore plus particulierement par opposition à ceux qui sont nobles, riches, ou éclairés. Le peuple est peuple par tout, c'est à dire, sot remuant, aimant les nouveautez. Cet homme est gasté de toutes les erreurs & opinions du peuple. Il est de la lie du peuple. Le petit peuple, le menu peuple, le commun du peuple est malin & seditieux.»*[22]

In reply to this new voice a set of principles was required to impose order. It would be wrong to attribute this project solely to the governing authorities, the crown. The situation threatened both the state and the bourgeois individual. The absence of an established social identity allowed for upward mobility in an administration peopled by the middle-ranking *officiers*, but it also introduced an element of insecurity. Unable to associate in a defined social group, the bourgeois citizen was obliged to identify himself through association, to represent himself socially through reference to established formulae of dress and behaviour, specifically that of the nobility whose practical power he had already adopted in the newly organised administrative bureaucracy. Sennett has identified the result as a society of "strangers."[23]

The *Salon*, the officially sanctioned public exhibition, was the paradigmatic act of Royal patronage of the visual arts in the 18th century. As part of the cycle of festival and the larger symbolic system of the dominant order, the *Salon* coincided with the celebration of the Feast of Saint Louis, the King's *fête* or name day, and was therefore associated with both the monarch and the Church. As a separate, secular institution however, it was also part of a permanent installation, the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture. An institution housed in the

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[21] Ariès, Phillipe. "Introduction" *A History of Private Life Volume III: Passions of the Renaissance* ed. Roger Chartier (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1989) 1-11. A discussion of the concept of the reading public and its implications with regard to social order in the 17th and 18th centuries.

[22] Furetière: *Peuple*, Tome III. M.

[23] Sennett 49.

Louvre Palace, a building redolent with symbolic associations with French history, culture and material wealth.

Recent research concerning the *Salon* exhibition has focused on the public nature of the early 18th century exhibition and its basis in the culture of the spectacle and the *fête;* the large scale public presentations that derived from the celebrations of the church festivals.[24] The *fête* provided an opportunity for a participatory experience of the display similar to that of the first public art exhibitions. However, it is important to note that the *Salon* exhibitions were not mediated by centuries of religious ritual and interpretation as the *fêtes* had been. The distinction between religious and secular entertainment was beginning to be recognised in the literature of the time. Furetière refers both to the religious and the profane *fête,* the latter term being used to identify those celebrations accompanying the birth of a King and the various festivals and displays produced for the court at Versailles.[25] However, the distinction was not firmly imposed and the religious implications of Royal Festivals remained in evidence in the material form and the conceptual program of the celebration.

Public exhibitions of painting and sculpture took place prior to the official installation of the *Salon* in the *Salon Carrée* in 1737 and they may serve to illustrate the extent to which the practice of exhibition in the early 18th century operated within the broader cycle of festivities and celebrations.[26] The exhibitions of the Place Dauphine, *L'Exposition de la jeunesse,* were open air displays on the Isle de la Cité.[27] As a physical component of the city and a part of the cycle of celebration and spectacle, these exhibitions occupied the same ground and the same temporal dimension as the city street. The daily life of the city still operated in accordance with the religious calendar and the religious order of the day set down in the canonical hours. The spatial and symbolic references for behaviour in the street were however, qualitatively different to those of the enclosed architectural space of the Palace and here, a crucial distinction can be

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[24] Crow, Thomas. *Painters and Public Life in the Eighteenth Century Paris* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985) 49-78.

[25] Furetière: *Feste,* Tome II. D3. See also Sauval, Henri. *Histoire et recherches des antiquitiés de la ville de Paris* (Paris: Charles Moette et Jaques Chardon, 1724. New York: Gregg International, 1969) vol. 2. 680. Sauval refers to the number and diversity of spectacles in early 18th century Paris.

[26] Janson, H.W. (compiler) *Catalogues of the Paris Salon 1673-1881* (New York: Garland, 1977-78). The date of 1737 for the first *Salon* in the *Salon Carrée* is queried in the Janson text. 1737 was the date of the first extant *Livret* for the *Salon* in the *Carrée.*

[27] Crow 82-88.

made between the exhibitions of the Place Dauphine and the *Salon Carrée*. The *Salon* exhibition, once it was established in the Louvre, required an intentional visit within particular opening hours, to an identified venue which was organised specifically for the purposes of viewing a display of painting, sculpture and engraving. The specificity of the *Salon* site would therefore have served to define the range of reference for an audience attempting to configure an appropriate mode of social representation. The *Salon* marked a new site of appearance for a newly designated public.

In the context of this discussion a valuable comparison may be made with the theatrical venue. The early 18th century theatre represented an alternative model for the viewing public in the form of a built site specifically oriented towards presentation. Theatrical performances were participatory, involving the presentation of an animated dramatic text in a direct confrontation with the audience. The *parterre*, the open arena of the obstreperous scholar and the bourgeois professional, was a site of interpretation and reinterpretation between the viewer and the performance. In *The Fall of Public Man*, Richard Sennett observed an essential connection between the architecture of the theatre and the construction of the subject which might be valuably applied to the identification of the *Salon* audience during the 18th century. Contrasting the space of the participants, the actors and the audience, in the early 18th century theatre with the space of the disconnected spectator in the late 18th century, Sennett observed a process of dislocation between the viewing subject and the immediate site of the performance. In 1781 the *Comédie Francaise* moved to a new venue where the open space of the *parterre* was filled with seats. A theatrical site that had previously been oriented towards the primacy of the individual patron, relegating the mass of the audience to the *parterre*, made provision for the comfort and edification of the crowd as a collection of individual spectators.[28] This acknowledgment of the individual in the architecture of the site created a self-conscious restraint in the theatre. In terms of the public presentation of art, the equivalent procedure might be traced in the identification of the audience for art in the silent halls of the modern museum and the contemporary exhibition.

> "There were no more shouts from the back of the hall, no more people eating food while they stood watching the play. Silence in

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[28] Sennett 74.

the audience seemed to diminish the enjoyment of going to a play. And that reaction is a clue to the sense of audience spontaneity and participation."[29]

Both the *fête* and the theatre serve to qualify the particular nature of public space in the 18th century. However, there is a fundamental distinction to be drawn between the earliest *Salons* and other organised forms of celebration available to the public. The *Salons* lacked any established, traditional meaning or a clear function that could be discerned. What made the *Salon* as an organised form unique, was the absence of any absolute authoritative model. The religious ceremony of the *fête* ultimately rested upon the order of a God created universe administered by a human hierarchy led by the monarch. The participatory theatre rested on a familiarity with the drama and the site. The *Salon* was patronised by the crown and used to exhibit the splendid wealth and cultural magnificence of the head of state. However, the introduction of a mass of individuals into the specific site of the *Salon* was a new combination without a single dominant model for interpretation or behaviour. The first *Salons* represented a range of meanings for a selection of subjects but a single agenda was not established by the site which was, to all intents and purposes, new. The absence of any immediately recognisable structure required the *Salon* visitor to turn to individual reference to define the function of the exhibition and the behaviour appropriate to that function; to construct their own subject position from the available resources: to perform.[30]

La Font de Saint-Yenne and the construction of an aesthetic doctrine

«Un Tableau exposé est un Livre mis au jour de l'impression. C'est une pièce représentée sur le théâtre: chacun a le droit d'en porter son jugement.»[31]

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[29] Sennett 74.

[30] See also Crary, Jonathan. "Spectacle, Attention, Counter-memory" *October* no. 50 (Fall 1989) 97-107.

[31] La Font de Saint-Yenne. *Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France avec un examen des principaux ouvrages exposés au Louvre le mois d'aout* (La Haye, 1747. Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1970) 2-3.

La Font de Saint-Yenne's essay of 1747, *Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France avec un examen des principaux ouvrages exposés au Louvre le mois d'aout 1746* addressed the essential problem of the contemporary cultural debate in the middle of the 18th century. At a time when society was in a process of change and in need of a means by which to identify itself, La Font's essay may be seen as an attempt to construct an aesthetic experience.[32] A set of principles were required with which to control the judgment newly accorded the individual members of the viewing public. The right to judgment had to be controlled and directed if it was to support the cultural and social order, and in doing so, contribute to the restoration of the French nation, the monarch, the state and the public.[33]

The nature of an exhibition site, its function, and the constitution of its audience, was at the forefront of the unofficial and often vociferous critical debate accompanying the *Salon* exhibitions of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture in Paris throughout the 18th century.[34] The text of the *Réflexions*, divided into two parts, addressed the site of the art object in the private *hôtel* and the Academy *Salon* respectively. The first section took the form of an analysis of French painting and the influence upon it of a public "taste" formulated in the decoration of the bourgeois *hôtel*. In the text La Font described the popularity of "illusion" in decoration and the role of the "spectator" as the viewing subject for that decoration. The second part of the essay traced these concerns in the context of the *1746 Salon* exhibition as the assumed material realisation of the impact of popular taste on French painting. For La Font, the exhibition, the public presentation of art, was the ground for the realisation of the aesthetic discourse.

> "Aesthetics has become the mirror in which both artist and spectator find themselves reflected, and in which they are to recognise themselves and their fundamental experiences."[35]

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[32] Cassirer, Ernst. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1951) 13-14/298. Cassirer identified the operation of reason in the 18th century aesthetic discourse as a process of analysis and construction. The rigorous analysis of an experience would result in the identification of component parts from which to construct an ideal experience. The rules which derived from this ideal would be mediated by taste as "an individual sense shared by all."

[33] La Font 12-13.

[34] Crow.

[35] Cassirer 303-304.

In the first part of the *Réflexions* La Font identified the essential problem of the public presentation of art as the need for a distinction between an art object and the built site of its presentation; clarity was to be achieved through a spatial and intellectual distance between the distractions of the Rococo *hôtel*, and the object of aesthetic experience, the painting.[36] Although La Font's address was particularly aimed at the excesses of the newly wealthy bourgeois home, it was a call for harmony, proportion and moderation rather than an advocacy of the austere gallery interior familiar to modern exhibition practice.[37] What he appears to have sought in the construction of a Royal Museum in the Louvre, and what he saw reflected in the intelligent displays of a small group of influential connoisseurs, was an order that might serve to enhance the viewing subject's experience of the painting. A careful selection from a variety of genre displayed in a studied arrangement which was suited to the decorative whole.[38]

> *«Telle seroit la Gallerie roïale que l'on vient de proposer, bâtie exprès dans le Louvre, où toutes ces richesses immenses & ignorées seroient rangées dans un bel ordre, & entretenuës dans le meilleur état par les soins d'un Artiste intelligent.»*[39]

Implicit in La For.t's museum model was the concept of the exhibition as a site that might improve the individual viewer through the presentation of elevating examples. The site advocated by La Font privileged didacticism, displaying the collection in such a way as to achieve the appropriate effect upon the viewer, be he artist, learning his art by example; spectator, seeking aesthetic or moral enlightenment; or foreign visitor, finding in the resources of the collection a reflection of the supremacy of the French cultural heritage. It is notable that La Font accorded the history painting particular priority in his scheme; as the painting of the soul it was the only genre that could convey the heroic acts of

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[36] La Font 16-17.

[37] La Font 12-13. See McClellan, Andrew L. "The Politics and Aesthetics of Display in Paris 1750-1800" *Art History* vol. 7, no. 4 (December 1984) 438-464.

[38] La Font 29-30.

[39] La Font 40.

virtuous men and inspire the most profound impression upon the viewer, all other forms of painting being merely for the eyes.[40]

Attributing the decline of French painting to the dirth of exemplary work in the public domain, La Font commented that, with some notable exceptions, the private collections which were accessible to a bourgeois public, favoured the excess of Rococo decoration over and above any concern for the serious work of genius to be found in the history paintings of the previous generation.[41] It was La Font's contention that the popular taste for superficial novelty, exemplified by these decorative schemes, was responsible for the dissemination of the Rococo as the "national taste" and the ensuing degeneration of French artistic practice as it was represented in the annual *Salon* of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture. The *hôtel salon* was thus deemed to have a detrimental impact on the aesthetic experience of the spectator. In particular, La Font decried the reign of the mirror in the Rococo *hôtel* as an expensive and highly ornate addition to the interior which displaced the history painting in the ornamental priorities of the decorative scheme. The emphasis placed upon illusion in the Rococo interior, which is exemplified by this use of the mirror, distorted both the assumed reality of the built space and the social order. (*fig.* 1.a.b.) La Font drew a direct correlation between the moral decline of the French public and its cultural productions and the degraded status of the painting.[42]

> *«J'avouë que les avantages de ces Glaces qui tiennent de prodige, méritoient, à beaucoup d'égards, la faveur qu'elles ont obtenuë de la mode. Percer les murs pour en aggrandir les appartements, & y en joindre de nouveaux; rendre avec usure les raïons de la lumière qu'elles reçoivent, soit celle du jour, ou celle des flambeaux, comment l'homme ennemi né des ténébres, & de tout ce qui peut en occasion la tristesse, auroit-il pu se défendre d'aimer un embellissement qui l'egaïe en l'éclairant, & qui en trompent ses ïeux, ne le trompe point dans l'agrément réel qu'il recoit? Comment lui préfera-t'il les beautés idéales de la Peinture souvent sombres, dont le plaisir dépend uniquement de l'illusion à laquelle il faut se prêter, & qui n'affecte ni l'homme grossier ni l'ignorant?»*[43]

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[40] La Font 8-9.
[41] La Font 29.
[42] La Font 14-15.
[43] La Font 14-15.

Fig.1.a,b. *Salon ovale de la princesse de Soubise,* Hôtel Soubise, Germain Boffrand, Paris 1785.

The use of such mirrors as indicators of wealth and status and the means by which to construct a social identity, was symptomatic of the early 18th century decorative scheme. The excessive use of mirrors on the part of the bourgeois was noted by a growing body of critics as evidence that the social order was being undermined by the representation of wealth and threatened by the rising power of the new urban individual. The bourgeois patron was able to disguise his illegitimacy through the presentation of affluence as a symbol of power and status. In his guide to Paris, Germain Brice made particular reference to the residence of one Jean Thevin, financier.

> *«En 1704, on y ajoûté une riche galerie, pour laquelle il a fait plus de deux cent mils livres de dépense, décorée de tout ce que l'on a pû imaginer de singulier & de beau, particuliarement de glaces d'une extraordinaire grandeur, qui sont les ornemens favoris des Financiers d'apresent, pour des raisons que l'on ne peut dire icy.»*[44]

La Font applied his concern for superficial illusion and distraction specifically to the *Salon* exhibition of 1746. In a general survey of the exhibition, he drew his argument through the example of two paintings by Boucher, *L'Eloquence* and *L'Astronomie.*[45] La Font argued that whilst they were pleasing to the eye, the paintings, which were destined for the *Cabinet des Médailles à la Bibliothéque du Roi,* lacked character. The personification of *Eloquence* wanted the rigour associated with his nature, whilst the attendant figures required a natural attitude, grace or beauty. *«On lui demanderoit encore un peu de vérité & de naturel dans ses attitudes....»*[46] In La Font's opinion, Boucher's efforts were those of a Rococo illusionist and as such they serviced the demands of the popular audience for fantasy and portraiture. The artist lacked the skill or knowledge to practice the highest form of visual expression, the history painting.

La Font was concerned that the spectator for art in the *hôtel salon,* who was the same spectator who frequented the Academy *Salons*, should experience the

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[44] Brice, Germain. *Description Nouvelle de la Vile (sic) de Paris et recherche des singularitez le plus remarquable qui se trouvent à present dans cette Grande Vile (sic)* (Paris: Nicolas le Gras, 1706) 266-267.

[45] La Font 74-76.

[46] La Font 75-76.

"truth" of the art work and be improved by it. The implication being that the site of the aesthetic experience qualified the form and assumed quality of that experience and, fundamentally, that painting or art could represent the truth, whilst Rococo decoration could not. Just as the art object was beginning to be recognised as a bearer of meaning independent of the architectural site, so decoration as such was seen to lose its place in the architectural order to become an applied signification.

The concerns which occupied La Font - an audience for French art defined within a specific site for the purposes of a prescribed aesthetic experience and the containment and qualification of that aesthetic experience - were specific to the social, economic and cultural changes of the 18th century.

Creating a path:

The *Salon Carrée* and the procedures of containment

Situated in the *Salon Carrée*, a large rectangular room at the junction of the *Galerie d'Apollon* and the *Grand Galerie* on the first floor of the Louvre Palace, the *Salon* exhibition took place on the Feast of Saint Louis in August and remained open to the general public for approximately three weeks. (*fig*. 2.a.b.) Originally intended to be an annual event, the exhibition was held intermittently throughout the 18th century.[47] The *Salon Carrée* site was the venue for the Academy exhibition from 1737 onwards; prior to that, other venues in the Louvre and the *Palais Royal* were made available by the crown. There was no entrance fee to the exhibition and no restriction placed upon the visitor on the basis of social rank or wealth, the only expense being the voluntary purchase of a *Livret* catalogue. During the opening hours access to the Academy offices was restricted by the Swiss guard who administered the exhibition both inside and out, controlling the flow of visitors. Contemporary records point to a large audience for the *Salon* spread across the social range.[48]

Whilst the exhibition was sited specifically in the *Salon Carrée*, the publication of substantial numbers of guidebook texts suggests a popular knowledge of the distribution and decoration of the surrounding Royal

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[47] Janson.

[48] Sandt, Udolpho van de. «Le *Salon* de l'Académie de 1759 à 1781» *Diderot & l'Art de Boucher à David: les Salons, 1759-1781* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1984) 79-95. Sandt, Udolpho van de, «La fréquentation des *salons* sous l'Ancien Régime, la Révolution et l'Empire» *Revue de l'art* no. 73 (1986) 43-48.

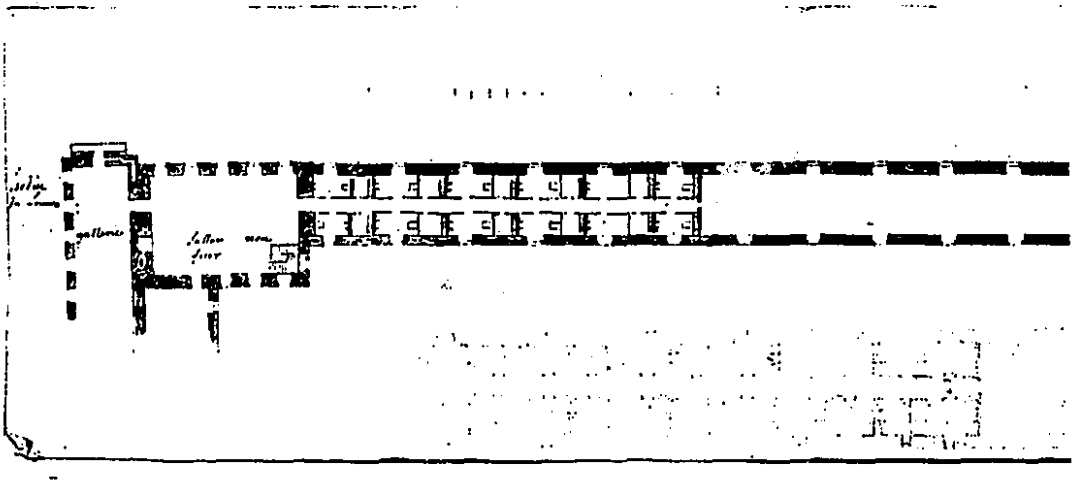

Fig.2.a. *L'Escalier du Salon du Louvre*, Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, 1753.
Collection: Arthur Veil Picart.
b. *Plan of the Galerie d'Apollon, the Salon, and the Grande Gallerie*, Louvre, Paris. Archives Nationales, série O. 1667, pièce 68.

apartments within the bourgeois community. Many visitors to the exhibition would therefore have been familiar with these guides and the collections and venues mentioned in them. Antoine-Nicolas Dézallier D'Argenville's guidebook *Voyage Pittoresque de Paris, ou, indication de tout ce qu'il y a de plus beau dans cette Grande Ville, en Peinture, Sculpture et Architecture* of 1752 provides a description of the Louvre during the Academy occupation, detailing the decorative scheme of the Academy rooms, a collection of rooms flanking the *Salon Carrée*, and the ground floor apartments immediately adjacent to the entrance vestibule used by the visitors to the exhibition.[49]

The Louvre Palace held considerable significance for the Parisian and the foreign visitor alike, as it was deemed to reflect national pride and cultural advancement. The dilapidated condition of the Palace during the monarch's sojourn at Versailles was felt to indicate the general decline of the French nation and culture at the time.[50] During the residency of the Royal family at Versailles, the Louvre was an administrative centre for the government visa office and provided lodgings for favoured servants of the crown, artisans and officers. It operated as a distinct community within the city and was accessible to a wide variety of visitors and occupants.

The particular distribution of the Louvre apartments which were to become the offices of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture merit consideration as they illustrate the nature of the architectural site both as an official Royal residence and, through modifications and additions, a new public venue for presentation and display. In accordance with Louis Le Vau's design for the Louvre of the 1650s and 1660s, the ground floor Royal apartments had been occupied by a suite of rooms designed for the Queen Mother, Anne of Austria, and decorated by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli in a series of paintings on the theme of Roman military history, harvest, the seasons, Apollo and Diana.[51] (*fig.* 3.a.b.) The rooms provided a summer residence for the Queen Mother, and were organised in a succession from the public audience chamber to the private boudoir. Situated perpendicular to the Seine, directly beneath the *Galerie d'Apollon*, movement through the rooms was arranged in a progression from

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[49] Dézallier D'Argenville, Antoine-Nicolas. *Voyage Pittoresque de Paris, ou, indication de tout ce qu'il y a de plus beau dans cete Grande Ville, en Peinture, Sculpture et Architecture* 2e ed. (Paris, 1752).

[50] La Font 32-33.

[51] Hautecoeur, L. *Histoire du Louvre, le Chateau, le Palais, le Musée, des origines à nos jours 1200-1940* (Paris: L'Illustration, 1928; rééd 1940).

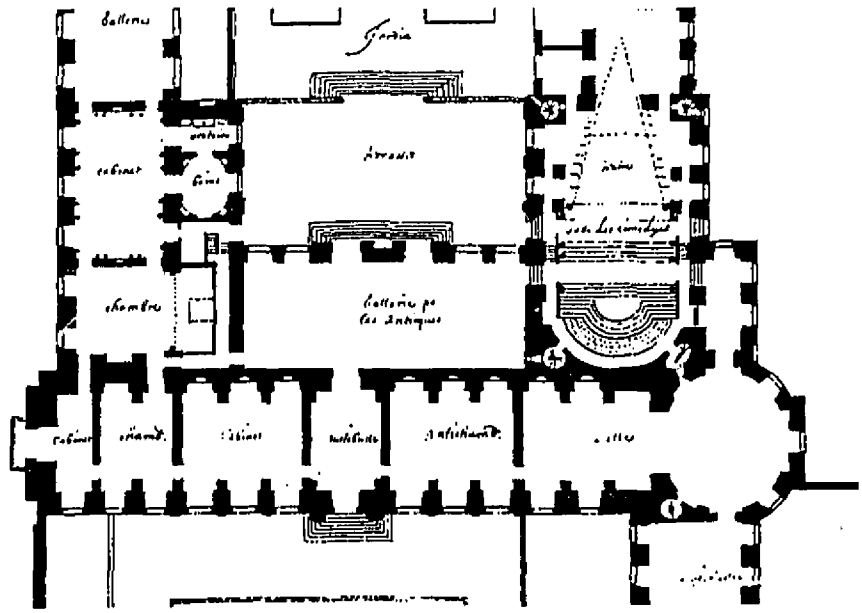

Fig.3.a. *The Queen Mother, Anne of Austria, Summer Apartments* , ground floor, Louvre, Paris. Recueil du Louvre, tome I, fol. 12, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des dessins.

Fig.3.b. *The Queen Mother, Anne of Austria, Summer Apartments* , ground floor *enfilade* view, Louvre, Paris.

south to north, from the private chambers, to the public audience rooms. On the first floor, the King and Queen had connecting apartments. (*fig.* 4.) The Queen's rooms were arranged in a succession along the *Cour Carrée*, towards the west where they connected to the King's apartments. The latter divided into audience chambers to the north and cabinet and gallery to the south. In Le Vau's scheme, the *Salon Carrée* operated within the King's apartments as an antechamber to the *Grand Galerie*; an audience chamber for official visitors and ambassadors who were invited to witness the wealth of the Royal collections. This new design for the *Salon Carrée* enlarged the rectangular plan of the Metezeau's *Salon* allowing for five windows to be installed towards the Seine and three towards the *Cour de la Reine.* A further row of attic level windows was included on either side. To the east the *Salon* connected to the *Galerie d'Apollon* and to the west, the *Grand Galerie.*

Le Vau (1612-1670) had been a student of Mansart and was responsible for a considerable number of private residences before he was commissioned to work on the Louvre and latterly Versailles.[52] In the context of this discussion it is valuable to note the extent to which the Louvre apartment *enfilades* refer to spatial arrangements favoured on a more modest scale in the private *hôtel*. (*fig.* 5.a.b.) A significant connection, illustrating the importance of the apartment form in 18th century architecture, might be drawn between the distribution of the various apartments in the late 17th and early 18th century *hôtel* and the first floor apartments of the Louvre, surrounding the *Salon Carrée.* In a progression from public to private space and in the particular disposition of the gallery and its vestibule or antechamber in the *hôtel*, it is possible to discern a connection with the relationship established between the *Grand Galerie*, the *Salon Carrée* and the *Galerie d'Apollon* and the public audience chambers of the King's apartments. Rooms devoted to collection, the gallery and the cabinet, were distinguished from the flow of the main *enfilade* by an antechamber which announced their particular function and the behaviour required of the visitor.

In the use of the *enfilade*, a hierarchy of spaces, the apartment form was to become an increasingly familiar spatial reference for the bourgeois visitor.

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[52] Tooth, Constance. "The Early Private Houses of Louis le Vau" *The Burlington Magazine* vol. CIX, no. 774 (September 1967) 510-18. Constance Tooth has discussed the extent to which Le Vau's private commissions influenced *hôtel* architecture during the 18th century, particularly in relation to the plan, the disposition of the stair and the dramatic emphasis of the *enfilade* progression in the public apartments.

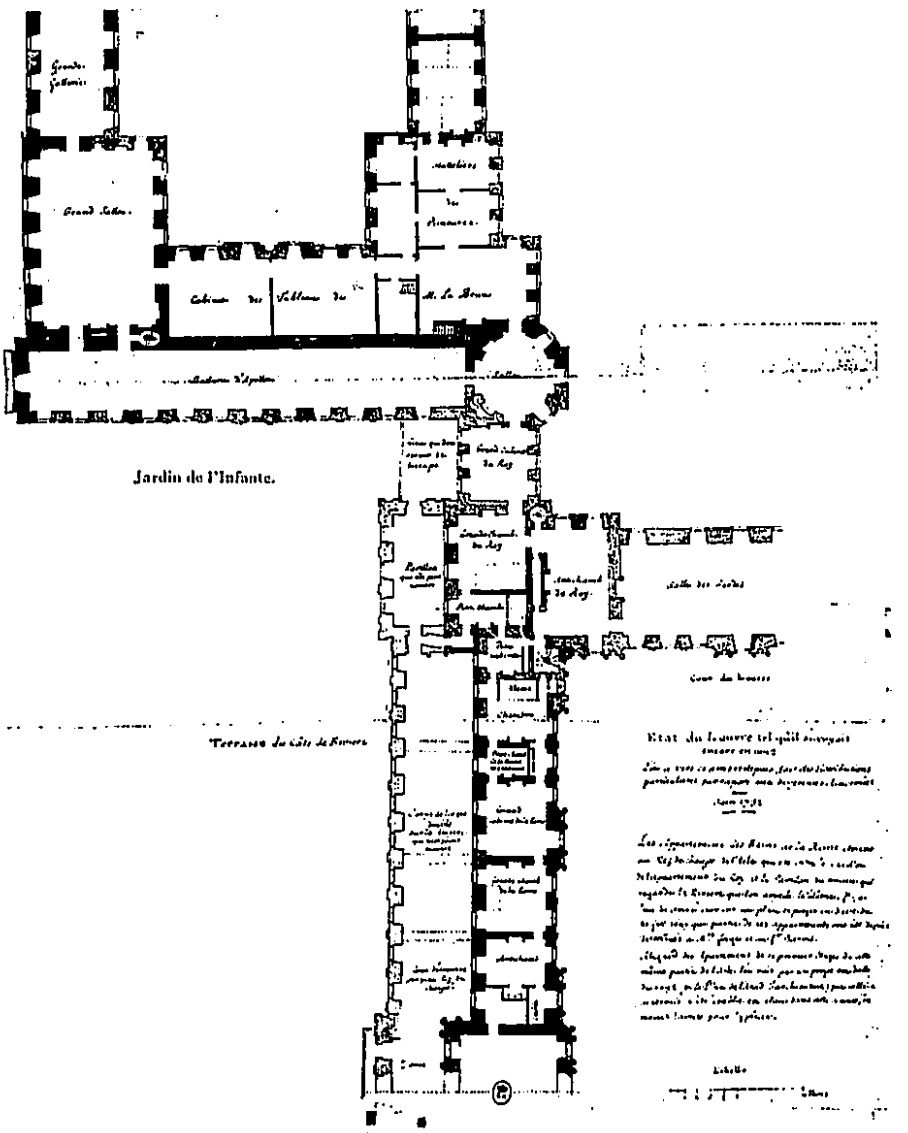
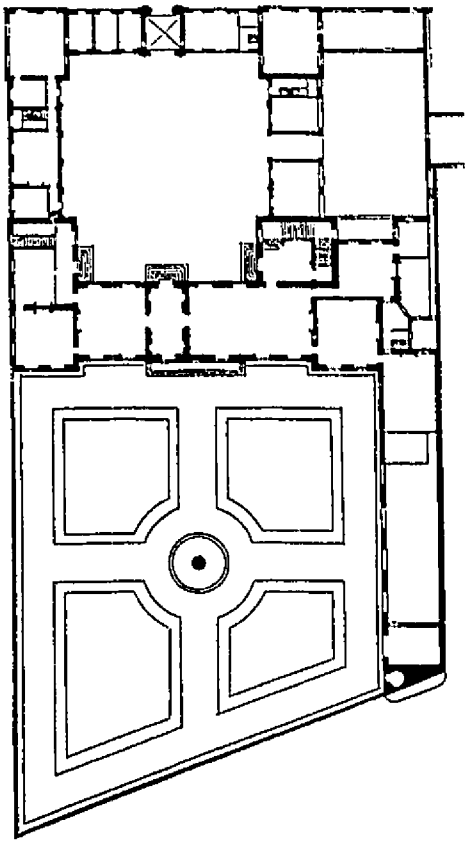


Fig.4. *Louvre Plan 1692, Apartments of the King and Queen*, first floor, Louvre, Paris. Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.



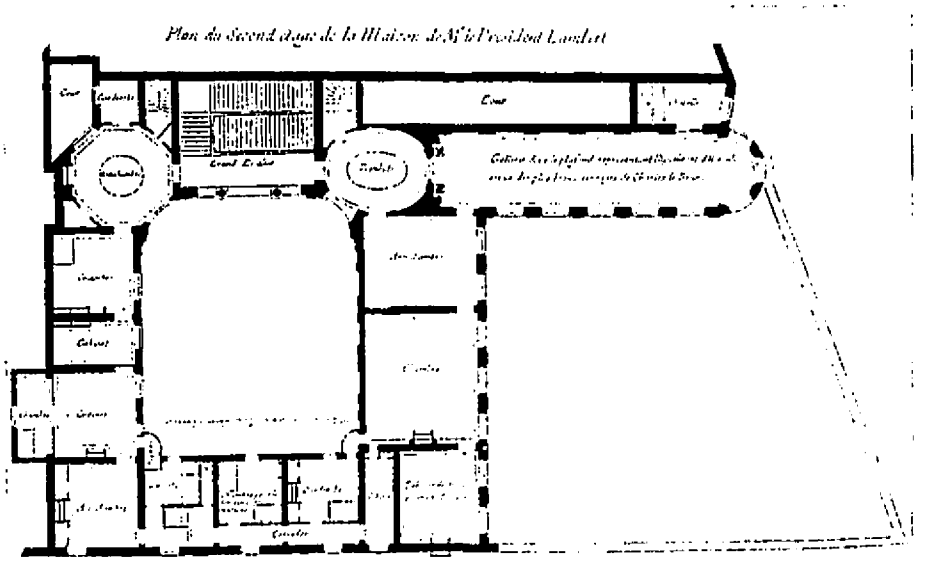


Fig.5.a. *Hôtel de Bretonvilliers*, Paris, Jean du Cerceau, Louis Le Vau, 1635-. *Petit Marot.*
Fig.5.b. *Hôtel Lambert*, Paris, Louis Le Vau, 1640-. J-F Blondel, *Architecture Françoise.*

Although interpretations of the apartment were many and various, a path, a suite of connecting rooms defining an increased intimacy was established, which allowed one to anticipate the order of the rooms and the behaviour appropriate to that order. The decorative scheme of the apartment necessarily lent itself to this agenda. Anthony Blunt has described Le Vau as a *metteur en scenè* particularly with regard to his work in the Hôtel Lambert and the Royal palaces.[53] In creating an apartment, Le Vau was concerned with the theatrical nature of the space, the totality of decoration, distribution and site in relation to the subject as participant and audience. Expectation and anticipation were inherent in this architecture of appearance.

The removal of the court to Versailles in the year 1678 marked the installation of favoured individuals and government officers in the Louvre apartments. It was not until 1722 and the residency of the Spanish Infanta in the first floor apartments surrounding the *Cour de la Reine,* that any structural changes were undertaken in the *Salon* and the surrounding rooms.[54] Introduced to provide a separate entrance to the Infanta's apartments, the *Infanta Stair*, an iron-railed staircase rising from the site of the Queen Mother's oratory on the ground floor, provided public access to the *Salon* exhibition and in doing so, resituated the exhibition in relation to the Palace and the city. In effect, the stair broke through the succession of spaces and thus the particular theatrical performance implied in Le Vau's original plan. It cut a path through the Palace and in doing so it created a new site. The site defined by the path was an isolated space amidst a complex distribution of rooms. The *Infanta Stair* defined a distinct route to the *Salon;* a passage which transgressed the system of *enfilades* that had been integral to the plan of the Royal apartments.

During the course of the exhibition, the walls of the *Salon Carrée* and the stairwell were lined with paintings to the height of the cornice. The windows were closed and the casements hung with paintings; the provision of light was restricted to the attic windows above. Sculptures and busts were arranged in the casements and on the long tables covered with green fabric that stood in the centre of the room, displaying an array of medals, plates, reliefs, models and

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53 Blunt, Anthony. *Art and Architecture in France 1500-1700* (London: Penguin, 1988) 222.

54 Aulanier, Christine. *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre* (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1947-1958) vol. V, 49-52. The alternations made during the Infanta's residency are itemised in Aulanier's text.

engravings.[55] This rearrangement of the *Salon Carrée* during the course of the exhibition confirmed the spatial and temporal specificity of the new site.

As a newly created site the *Salon* introduced the possibility of an alternative perception of space for the visitor to the exhibition. In the potential operations implied by the site, in the movement from tableau to tableau, the splendid displays of ornate decoration and the busy exchange of opinion there were echoes of the public *fête*. Ascending the stair, the visitor followed a spiral route to arrive at the *Salon Carrée*; a closed, dark room, busy with visitors moving along the walls and between the tables. In such circumstances, any opportunity for the close examination of individual works was limited by time, space and arrangement. As a consequence, the visit to the exhibition was defined as a primarily social activity.[56] Furthermore, without the familiar ritual procedures of the spectacle or the spatial subdivision of the theatre, both of which designated relative status, social distinction in the built space of the *Salon* resided in the representation of the individual through his or her behaviour and dress. The space of the *Salon* may therefore be interpreted as a new configuration of public space. Its identity lay in the behaviour of the individual, in the space of participation and in the processes of self-representation. In its theatrical formulation, 18th century etiquette allowed for a degree of interpretation which was to be actively discouraged in the more rigid formulations of the 19th century. However, in time behaviour became more specific, that which had been expedient and pertinent to the time and the site became the norm; the prescribed form of behaviour. As a correlative to this systematisation of social convention the site and the art object also became more specific. The bourgeois example of individual behaviour in public, modified to remove its interpretative element, became the model by which to define aesthetic experience, thereby announcing the advent of the objectified ego of the 19th century observer: the modern art audience.

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[55] Chouillet, Jacques. «Du langue pictural au langage littéraire» *Diderot & l'Art de Boucher à David: les Salons, 1759-1781* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1984) 41-55. See also Dacier, Émile *Gabriel de Saint-Aubin Peintre, Dessinateur et Graveur (1724-1780) II Catalogue Raissoné* (Paris and Brussels: Les Éditions G. Van Oest, 1931).

[56] Sennett 64-66.

The *Livret* as exhibition theory: the documentary history of the object

As the officially sanctioned publication of the Academy the *Livret* served to illustrate the concerns of the monarch with regard to the public exhibition and the progress of the Academy. The *Salon Livrets* produced by the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture were published under the Royal seal. Written by an Academy member, the texts, ranging between thirty and forty pages, listed the work included in each exhibition, the artist and in certain instances the patron, provenance or destination of the work. (*fig.* 6.) As one of the public exercises of the Academy, set down in its *Ordonnance* of 1648, the exhibition situated painting and sculpture in the wider context of the state whilst withholding any direct political link between the two. [57]

The *Livret* of 1737 was the first to accompany the exhibition in the *Salon Carrée* site. In 1737 the *Livret Explication*, a brief statement at the beginning of the pamphlet, indicated that the *Salon* was to serve a dual purpose: to encourage progress in the arts through the emulation of great works and to give pleasure to the public as they bore witness to the cultural supremacy of France. The 1737 *Explication*, essentially a declaration of the function of the *Livret* as an interpretation of the exhibition, situated the *Salon* in the 18th century cycle of entertainment and spectacle.[58] The function of the exhibition was therefore made explicit in these earlier texts. By 1740 however, when the format of the *Livret* started to change, the agenda became implicit, contained within the material body of the text. The *Livret* which was published to accompany the 1767 *Salon* relied upon its structure and contents to convey the program of the exhibition.

Arranged according to the order of the exhibition, starting at the entrance and progressing anti-clockwise around the *Salon*, the 1737 *Livret* operated as a descriptive text, following the distribution of paintings and sculptures throughout the *Salon Carrée*. In theory, using the *Livret*, the visitor would be able to identify the work on display. Descriptions were brief and it was only in specific instances that the work was explained in any length. The explanation was usually limited to an account of scale, figural composition and, where

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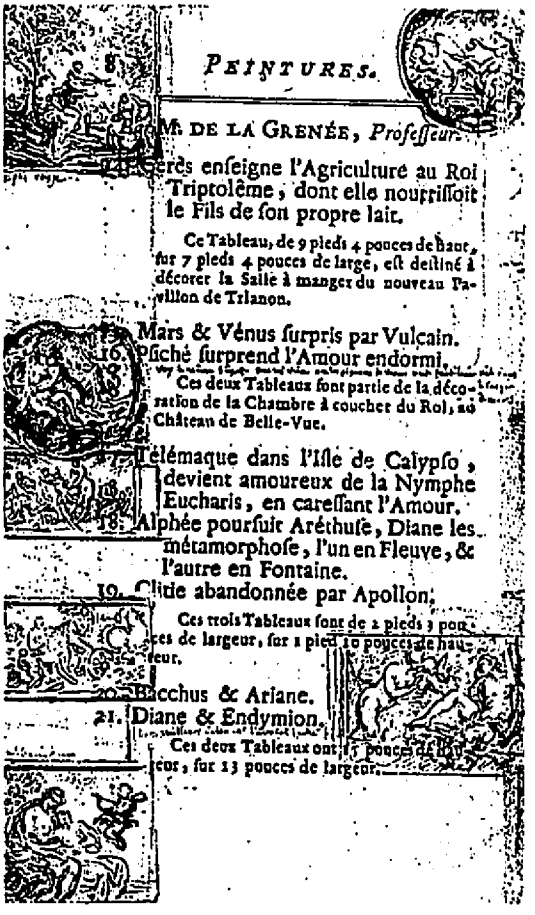
[57] Sauval vol. 2, 500-503. Sauval cites the specifications of the Academy as they were set down in 1663 and thereby illustrates the restrictions that were placed upon the Academy membership with regard to activities that were deemed to be beyond the preserve of the artist. In the organisation of the schools and assemblies, all discussion was to remain within the confines of art as a professional discipline, thereby avoiding the contribution of artistic practice to any wider cultural or political debate.

[58] *Livret* ,1737 5.



PEINTURES.

M. DE LA GRENÉE, *Professeur.*

Cérès enseigne l'Agriculture au Roi Triptolême, dont elle nourrissoit le Fils de son propre lait.

Ce Tableau, de 9 pieds 4 pouces de haut, sur 7 pieds 4 pouces de large, est destiné à décorer la Salle à manger du nouveau Pavillon de Trianon.

15. Mars & Vénus surpris par Vulcain.
16. Psiché surprend l'Amour endormi.

Ces deux Tableaux font partie de la décoration de la Chambre à coucher du Roi, au Château de Belle-Vue.

17. Télémaque dans l'Isle de Calypso, devient amoureux de la Nymphe Eucharis, en caressant l'Amour.
18. Alphée poursuit Aréthuse, Diane les métamorphose, l'un en Fleuve, & l'autre en Fontaine.
19. Clitie abandonnée par Apollon.

Ces trois Tableaux sont de 2 pieds 3 pouces de largeur, sur 1 pied 10 pouces de hauteur.

20. Bacchus & Ariane.
21. Diane & Endymion.

Ces deux Tableaux ont 15 pouces de hauteur, sur 13 pouces de largeur.

Fig.6. *Salon Livret 1769*, illustrated by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin. Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

relevant, historical or symbolic reference. The majority of work in the 1737 *Salon* can be identified by genre: religious, classical and allegorical; the inclusion of contemporary historical reference was limited. Dandre Bardon's painting of 1737 was a notable exception. As an allegorical representation of French supremacy in the glorious reign of Louis XV, the painting was placed toward the end of the main *Livret* text and consequently toward the end of the *Salon* visit. It thereby provided a focus for the exhibition which served to situate it in the wider context of the French state.[59]

The *Salon* of 1737 was a familiar celebration in the context of the spectacular theatrical events of the 18th century. As the material representation of Royal patronage the exhibition performed a didactic role, however, neither the particular constitution of the *Salon* audience nor any specific mode of behaviour was predetermined. The 1737 *Salon* was therefore an event which combined the activities of entertainment and contemplation in a new formulation.

By 1767 the *Livret* format had changed. Organised according to a numerical system, the pamphlet no longer made reference to the built site. Where the earlier texts had been ordered according to the decoration of the *Salon*, the 1767 *Livret* was detached from any correspondence between the particular site of the exhibition and the painting or sculpture on display. In a system of references and descriptions ordered according to the hierarchy of media, (painting over sculpture), and subject (history over genre) the later *Livret* defined the Academy exhibition in a system which referred the chronology of the pamphlet and the exhibition to another order both literally and conceptually.[60]

As the 1767 *Livret* had no *Explication* statement, the agenda was implicit in the lengthy descriptions of the text itself. It was in the *Avertissement*, which guided the reader in the use of the *Livret*, that the essential reconfiguration of the later Salon site was made evident. The reader was invited to find the number on the painting and its correspondent in the text and read the accompanying explanation of the work. The material art work was therefore isolated from its site, from the neighbouring work, the order of the decoration, the *Salon Carrée*

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59 *Livret* ,1737 21-22.

60 *Livret* ,1767 9. The La Gren'e Four Estates was paradigmatic work in terms of the 1767 text. The program of the exhibition is made evident in the content and emphasis of the text. «*Quatre Tableaux de même grandeur, représentant les quatre Etats: 22. Le Clergé, par la Religion & la Vérité. 23. L'Epée, par Bellone, présentant à Mars les rênes de ses Chevaux. 24. La Magistrature, par la Justice, que l'Innocence désarme; la Prudence l'en félicite. 25. Le Tiers-Etat, par l'Agriculture & le Commerce qui amènenet l'abondance.*»

and the palace. The participatory space of the earlier exhibition was gradually removed from the text as the *Livret* changed from a chronological guide to a numbered and ordered explanatory list.

La Font's essay of 1747 attests to the tone of the contemporary criticism produced in response to the absence of a defining order or structure in the earliest *Salons*. Confronted with the newly defined critical opinion of the literate bourgeoisie, the agenda of the exhibition as entertainment was severely undermined. Both the quality of the work and its presentation were criticised in unofficial publications which flourished in the early years of the *Salon*.[61] In a process of objectification which is made evident in the concerns of the *Livret* and the critical writing of the period, painting began to be detached from its site and interpreted for the forms and values it represented in terms of a constructed aesthetic order. The exhibition, which had been a familiar event in the life of the early 18th century city, a predictable set of stories and cast of characters, was gradually given a different role in the wider context of French culture, a role where the physical experience of the site was deemed to be subordinate to the interpretation of the written text.

> "The moment of erotic projection in vision - what St. Augustine had anxiously condemned as 'ocular desire' - was lost as the bodies of the painter and the viewer were forgotten in the name of an allegedly disincarnated absolute eye."[62]

The *Salon* of Saint-Aubin: the practice of exhibition

In the *Vue du Salon de 1767*, a drawing by the Academician Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, an alternative *Salon* site is represented.[63] (*fig.* 7.) In this visual record of Chardin's decoration of the Academy exhibition, small paintings are hung near to the visitor's eye-level with larger paintings above; display tables are positioned for circumnavigation, and large scale history paintings are used to provide axial symmetry on the walls. Within the drawing, the emphasis of the

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[61] Crow.

[62] Jay, Martin. "The Scopic Regimes of Modernity" ed. Hal Foster *Vision and Visuality. Discussions in Contemporary Culture DIA Art Foundation no. 2* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1988) 8.

[63] Dacier, Émile. *Gabriel de Saint-Aubin Peintre, Dessinateur et Graveur (1724-1780) II Catalogue Raissoné* (Paris and Brussels: Les Éditions G Van Oest 1931). Sahut, Marie-Catherine and Volle, Nathalie *Diderot & l'Art de Boucher à David: les Salons, 1759-1781* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1984).

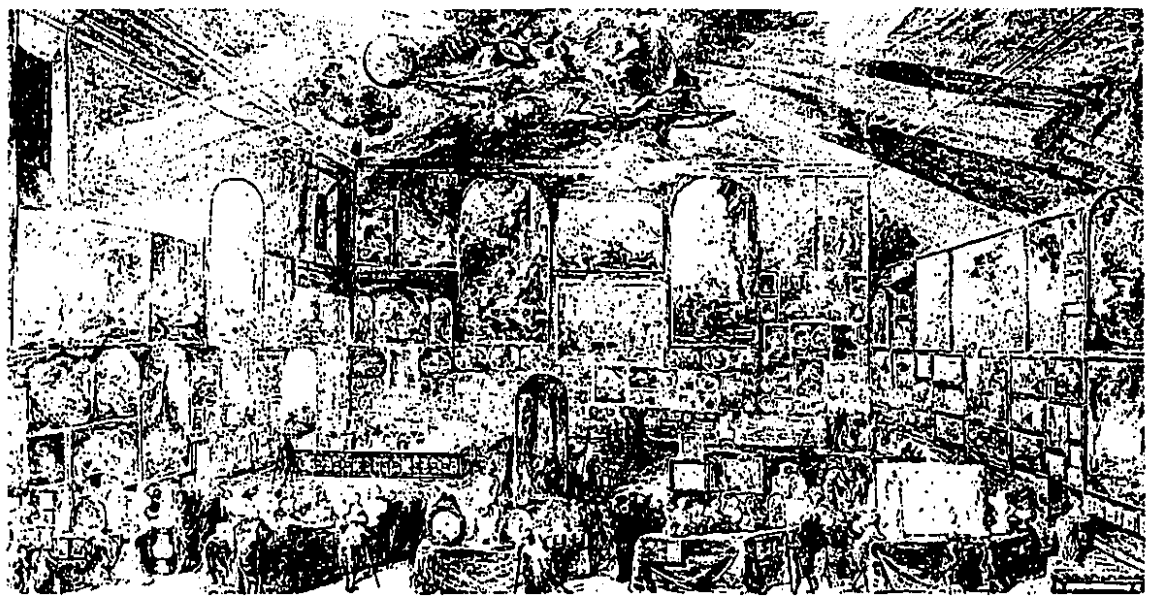

Fig.7. *Vue du Salon de 1767*, Gabriel de Saint-Aubin. Paris, private collection.

1767 hang lies in the iconic images of *Saint Denis Preaching* and the *Miracle of Ardents* as they are installed symmetrically on the wall leading to the *Galerie d'Apollon.* The drawing thus defines an alternative site, one that intimates the fluidity of the space, the movements of the visitors and the extent to which any assessment of 18th century exhibition practice based purely on the text of the *Livret* would prove untenable.

The decoration of the *Salon* of 1767 represented in Saint-Aubin's drawing serves to define the demands of the decoration and distribution of a *Salon* which was required to display a vast array of different genres and scales in a single space. In the main, the art work was not created specifically for the public exhibition site of the *Salon.* Although the promise of public recognition was increasingly important to the contributing artists, most of the work exhibited in the *Salon* was still intended for the *hôtel,* for a particular site, decorative scheme and spatial distribution. In the decoration of the exhibition the individual work, detached from its intended site, was temporarily installed within the *Salon* site as a constituent element in the decorative arrangement of the whole. Saint-Aubin's drawing points to an important distinction which continued to privilege the *Salon* site in exhibition practice as a temporal event: a performance. In the later years of the 18th century the art object was beginning to be identified as such however, the priority remained with the site as a whole; the ground of the exhibition was still interpretative.

It is in this image, in the demands of the temporary composition of the *Salon* exhibition as *mise en scène,* that the nature of the 18th century exhibition is most clearly defined in practice as the material theatrical moment of the *parterre* rather than the legible space of the written text. It was only with the advent of the 19th century art institution that this theatrical analogy began to disappear and was replaced with the specific demands of the written agenda, the *Livret.*

With the construction of the *Soufflot Stair* from the courtyard, *Cour de la Reine,* to the *Salon* and the consequent removal of the *Infanta Stair,* the particular nature of the *Salon* space began to be more clearly defined in relation to the practice of exhibition. Originally intended to accommodate the increasing audience for the *Salon,* the *Soufflot Stair,* built in 1781, served to change the space from the isolated venue of the annual exhibition to the antechamber, both literally and conceptually, of the permanent collection, which was to be installed in the *Grande Galerie.* As the meaning of the *Salon* became more particularly related to the permanent collection of paintings, so it lost the interpretative

associations of the theatrical site to ally with the historical agenda of the museum.

The guidebooks published during the 18th century defined a route for the literate bourgeois subject through the public spaces of the city, dividing Paris into quarters whereby, in the words of Dezallier D'Argenville, one might view the beauties of the French capital with "order and discernment."[64] Seen in the context of the city, the *hôtels*, the palaces and the squares, the *Salon* exhibition occupied the focal point of a network of collections and displays. The primary audience for this particular display was the reading bourgeoisie. D'Argenville's guide of 1756 was amongst a series of privately published catalogues and guidebooks listing collections throughout the city.[65] In as much as the *Livret* formulated an ideal *Salon* and a path through the exhibition for a prescribed audience, so the guidebook marked a passage and a viewing subject for the city. Identifying the public spaces and the works situated there, the guides provided a connection between the private *salon*, the city square and the public exhibition which serves to identify a site and an audience for art beyond the confines of the *Salon Carrée*. (*fig*. 8.)

Drawing together the modes of social representation in operation in the private residence with those of the public domain, the theatre and the spectacle, the earliest form of the *Salon* constituted a site which, I would argue, was essentially interpretative and participatory in nature and therefore public in the 18th century sense of the spectacle and the *parterre*. It was only later, in response to the demands of cultural and social change, made evident in the realisation of the Museum Project, that the site of aesthetic experience adopted a mode of behaviour specific to the experience of art, thereby limiting the position of the viewer, the site and the art work in the fixed formulation of an idealised individual experience.

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[64] Dezallier D'Argenville 6.

[65] Brice, Germain. *Description Nouvelle de la Vile (sic) de Paris et recherche des singularitez le plus remarquable qui se trouvent à present dans cette grande Vile (sic)* (Paris: Nicolas le Gras, 1706). For a discussion of the popularity and availability of these texts see Bonfait, Olivier «Les Collections des Parlementaires Parisiens du XVIIIe siècle» *Revue de l'art* no. 73 (1986) 28-42 and Verlet, P. *The Eighteenth Century in France: Society, Decoration, Furniture* tr. G. Savage (London and Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1967).

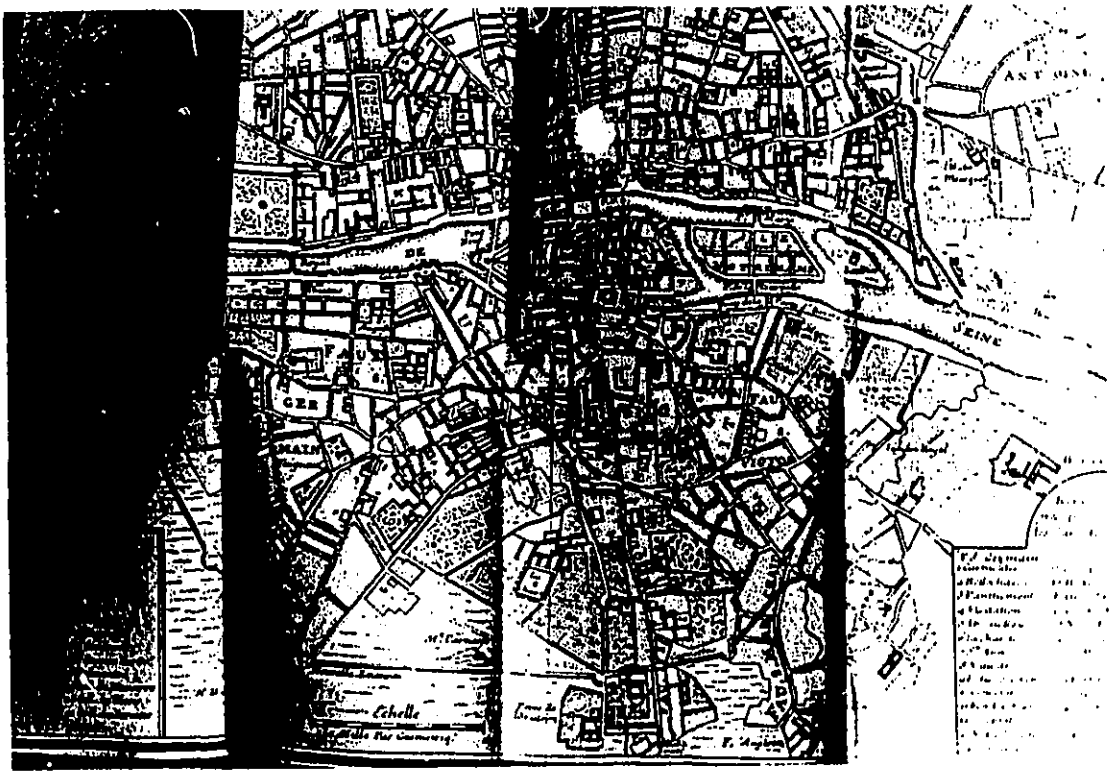

Fig.8. *Paris 1706*, Germain Brice. *Description Nouvelle de la Vile (sic) de Paris: et recherche des singularitez le plus remarquable qui se trouvent à present dans cette grande Vile (sic)* (Paris: Nicolas LeGras, 1706) vol. I. Blackadder-Lauterman Library, McGill University, Montréal.

The constitution of the *hôtel salon* and the construction of the modern audience

The individual in society: the bourgeois *salon* as paradigm

> "Yes, my dear reader, you may well open your eyes and express your astonishment, for we have masters in the art of good manners who help to shape our young men anxious to acquire the art of pleasing.
>
> This art has its own principles and is not to be pursued haphazard, as on the Russian Steppes. Small things are treated as big ones, and serious affairs as trifles."[66]

In the following discussion the practices, motivations and expectations of the bourgeois individual in the public domain will be considered in relation to the *salon* visitor and the *Salon Carrée* audience, thereby providing a reconsideration of the contribution of architectural context to the construction of the modern exhibition model, its object and its subject. The concerns which were addressed by La Font in relation to the construction of an aesthetic experience; the need for a set of socially conditioned principles realised in built form, were integral to the architecture of the public site of the *Salon Carrée* and the *hôtel salon.* In this context, painting and sculpture will be reconsidered in relation to the limited designations of the Enlightenment model of art as either decorative (conceived as integral to the architectural space as a whole) or objectified (presented independently as part of a collection attributed with a particular function independent of the built site). Implicit in this discussion is the thesis that social behaviour and architectural form are allied and that while this connection is not deterministic, individual activity can be manipulated through formal values in the built site.

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66 Mercier, Louis Sébastien. *The Picture of Paris Before and After the Revolution* tr. Wilfred and Emilie Jackson (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1929) 19.

In the context of this discussion, the concept of social representation will refer specifically to the procedure by which a member of the bourgeois class might select from among the formal and behavioural codes of the prevailing order to create a social identity; acting out a role in public as a means by which to convey a particular image of oneself to others.[67]

The social context for the development of private architecture in the 18th century was marked by a new level of intimacy in the life of the city which may be traced in both the Royal court and the individual residence.[68] The late 17th century and the early 18th century announced a smaller scale of society and a refinement of social practices and etiquette to meet the demands of that intimacy.[69] The hierarchical ordering of society and the codes of behaviour by which one might appear true to that order, was identified in the concept of *biensèance*.[70] Ritual patterns of behaviour that had previously represented a transcendent order were gradually formalised into a system of social organisation based on the need to situate the newly designated individual in relation to the existing structures of society.[71]

A centralised bureaucracy and the consequent displacement of the nobility defined the context for the 18th century concept of social representation. In a policy which removed the aristocracy from an active contribution to the state, Louis XIV established an administration centred on the monarch and operated by the bourgeois. This displacement of the nobility by the bourgeois may have neutralised the threat to royal authority represented by the power of the

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67 Eleb-Vidal, Monique, and Debarre-Blanchard, Anne. *Architectures de la vie privée. Maisons et mentalités XVIIe - XIXe siècles* (Bruxelles: Archives d'Architecture Moderne, 1989) 53. Sennett, Richard *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Vintage, 1977) 60. Sennett describes the absence of any clear social structure for the bourgeois of the late 17th and 18th century. Revel, Jacques. "The Uses of Civility" *The History of Private Life Vol. II: Passions of the Renaissance* ed. Roger Chartier (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1989) 196-199. Revel discusses the considerable number and range of etiquette publications written for the aspirant bourgeois during this period.

68 Foisil, Madeleine. "The Literature of Intimacy" *A History of Private Life. Vol. III: Passions of the Renaissance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1989) 327-363. Sennett and Hauser, Arnold. *The Social History of Art Vol. III: Rococo, Classicism, Romanticism.* (New York: Vintage, 1951).

69 Ariès, Phillipe. "Introduction" *A History of Private Life. Vol. III: Passions of the Renaissance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1989) 1-11. Ariès has attributed the resulting new social order to the rise of the literate individual as an economically powerful citizen and the centralisation of the French administration.

70 Furetière *Biensèance,* Tome I. Dd2.

71 Bal, Mieke, and Bryson, Norman. "Semiotics and Art History" *The Art Bulletin* vol. 73. no. 2 (June 1991) 174-208.

aristocracy but it also served to subvert the system by which the monarch held sway; the hierarchy of divine right. Once this system was challenged, the previous social order was liberated and private individuals from the middle ranks of society could aspire to wealth, position and privilege.[72] In 1647, the Paris Parliament rebelled against the monarch in response to economic excesses in foreign policy by refusing to support funds for any further foreign adventures initiated by Mazarin. The ensuing insurrection, the *Fronde*, was indicative of the dissatisfaction of the Parliament, the *officiers* of the bourgeoisie, with the prevailing order, and therefore may be seen to represent the new critical voice of the individual in French society.[73] Further to this political dissension, the challenge to authority of growing literacy served to undermine the society of privilege which had been restricted to the church and the nobility: the first two Estates.[74] Their power, above and beyond divine order, had been maintained by their role as mediator between God, the King and the people.[75] The new constituency of individuals and the power of the written text as a means of critique and control defines the parameters of the present discussion with regard to the site of the *hôtel salon* and the subject of the bourgeois citizen.

The structure of the 18th century *hôtel* may be seen as a response to the change of emphasis in social interaction represented by the rise of the intimate conversation, encouraging an exchange throughout the *chambres de parades* that acknowledged the spatial operations of the individual, the spaces of the court having been focused on the person of the King.[76] During the 18th century, the individual gradually began to be identified as the audience for, and the subject of, appearance.

The residence of the *particulier*, as defined in the *Encyclopédie*, was identified according to the social rank of the patron; however, the bourgeois, aspiring to the condition of the aristocracy, undermined this order.

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[72] Maland, David. *Culture and Society in Seventeenth-Century France* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970).

[73] Hibbert, Christopher. *The French Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1982).

[74] In this instance privilege refers to private, individual law. Hibbert 39-41, Maland 158-160.

[75] Furetière: *Lecteur*, Tome II. Xx3 The role of the reader was defined as privileged interpreter. In the Church, the position of the *Lecteur* carried with it the guardianship of the sacred texts.

[76] Ariès 8-9. Ariès has made reference to the culture of conversation as a spontaneous activity amongst the "middle" ranks of society which eventually became formalised. He has noted the distinction between the public and private activities of the individual: the public being linked to the authority of the state and the private, the *particulier*, being beyond control of the state. In this he is referring to a process of institutionalisation of individual private life.

Paradoxically, whilst the *Encyclopédie* attributed the *hôtel* to the nobility and the *maison* to the bourgeois, during the 18th century a substantial increase in *hôtel* construction was patronised by the ascendant bourgeoisie.[77]

For the bourgeois audience the act of social representation was perfected and orchestrated by the activities and forms of the *hôtel salon* as the primary public room.[78] As part of the *chambres de parades* the *salon* was used for a wide variety of activities, formal gatherings, concerts, balls and ceremonial dinners. Eleb-Vidal and Debarre-Blanchard, in a definition derived from D'Alembert and Diderot's *Encyclopédie* have made reference to the subdivision of the *hôtel* into *parade* rooms for public presentation, *societé* rooms for the "elective society" of the family and *commodité* rooms for the master, the mistress and the domestic servants of the household.[79] In this interpretation the *salon* site was therefore organised not merely according to pragmatic needs but rather in relation to strict social determinations of that which should be visible and public, and that which should be invisible and private.

The particular connection between the practices of intimate society and the altered structures of the built site has been cited in relation to the contribution of Madame Rambouillet (1588-1665), a Parisian hostess.[80] In 1621 modifications to the structure of the Hôtel Rambouillet included the removal of the main stair from the centre to the side of the *hôtel*. The resulting plan provided an entrance to the first floor apartments that announced a suite of adjoining rooms to be crossed and recrossed as small groups of individual guests carried out their conversations throughout the *enfilade*. The subject of this social representation *par excellence* was defined by the concept of the *honnête homme* as the model of "...refined, proper, social behaviour...."[81] An individual subject was not to be identified by his "honest" behaviour as such, but rather, by his behaviour in public in relation to a public order.[82]

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77 D'Alembert, Jean Le Rond, Diderot, Denis, and Mouchon, Pierre. *Encyclopédie, ou, dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une Société de gens de lettres* (Neufchastel: Samuel Faulche & Compagne, 1765) *Hôtel.*

78 Maland 49.

79 Eleb-Vidal and Debarre-Blanchard 53.

80 Eleb-Vidal and Debarre-Blanchard 35-36. Thornton, Peter. *Seventeenth Century Interior Decoration in England, France and Holland* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978) 7-10.

81 Revel 192.

82 Maland 50.

«Ce public dressé à la vie de société donne le ton dans les salons et y représente un certain type humain, dont l'idéal a été conçu et précisé dès le XVIIe siècle. C'est «l'honnête homme» vivant pour le monde et formé par le monde.»[83]

During the course of the 18th century the popularity of the *salon* grew and the forms of behaviour and ritual which were modified for the new scale of intimate society began to exchange spontaneity for a rigorous code which was to define the *salon* subject, his manner and his conversation.[84]

The private collection: the place of art in the intimate society

In an analysis of the place of the art object in the collections of the 18th century Parisian *parlementaires* Olivier Bonfait has commented that, while the site of the individual painting moved throughout the century according to the subject and the medium, the collection remained inextricably linked to the conceptual and symbolic understanding of the building as a whole.[85] In an analysis of the relative distribution of art works Bonfait distinguished the public and private sites of the *hôtel* as feminine and masculine spaces respectively. The vestibule, the staircase and the parade apartments were considered to be public whilst the *antichambre*, office and *petit salon* of the master were semi-public. Private space was preserved in the library, the cabinet and the bedrooms.[86] Landscapes were feminine and public at the beginning of the century; by the end of the century they were evenly distributed between the public and private spaces. At the beginning of the century Royal portraits which indicated Royal patronage for the master of the house were private and usually sited in the master's cabinet or offices; at the end of the century, they were deemed to be public works.[87] As the individual grew in significance, so the distinction between public and private space became increasingly important in the distribution and decoration of the *hôtel*. The emphasis shifted away from public concerns towards the private, and

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[83] Glotz, Marguerite, and Maire, Madeleine. *Salons du XVIII eme siècle* (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Latines, 1949) 18.

[84] Ariès 8.

[85] Bonfait, Olivier. «Les Collections des Parlementaires Parisiens du XVIIIe siècle» *Revue de l'art* no. 73 (1986) 28-42 *Parlementaires* were members of the Parisian parliament which was administered, in the main, by the bourgeois.

[86] Bonfait 30-40.

[87] Bonfait 32.

all displays of wealth and position were consequently isolated in the public apartments where they might prove the most effective.[88] The *salon* thus became the focus of the display of art in the *hôtel*.[89] Bonfait has observed that, in the early years of 18th century, as the purpose of rooms in private houses became more specific the affinity between the genre of image and the function of a room increased. Paintings and sculptures began to occupy different sites and to perform new functions. Concentrated in the public rooms, in the *salon*, the jewels of the collection were gradually distinguished from the decoration as a whole.[90]

As the art object began to be named separately from the architecture of the *hôtel*, so the *salon* began to be recognised as a distinct space, disassociated from the private, intimate spaces of the residence. The *salon* represented the power, position and wealth of the owner before the visitor as a witness. The *Salon Carrée*, reconsidered in the light of this construction, indicates a similar agenda for its patron, the monarch, in the identification and manipulation of an art object and a viewing subject. In the Louvre, the *Salon Carrée* was defined and isolated by the inclusion of the *Soufflot Stair* which converted the *Salon Carrée* into a single, enclosed space. The program attributed to both the *hôtel salon* and the *Salon Carrée* indicated an essential connection between the changing nature of architectural form and the operations of bourgeois social representation.

The architectural treatise: the built site and social representation

Jacques-François Blondel's *Traite de l'Architecture de le Goût Moderne. De la Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance et de la Decoration des Edifices en General* (1737-8)[91] and Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières' *Le Génie de L'Architecture; ou, l'analogie de cet art avec nos sensations* (1780)[92] address the contemporary architectural debate through the example of the private residence, the country house and the *hôtel* respectively. At issue in this discussion is the role of the art object, the painting

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[88] Bonfait 32.

[89] Bonfait 31.

[90] Bürger, Peter. "On the Problem of the Autonomy of Art in Bourgeois Society" *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Manchester and Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) 35-54, 49. This new value was latterly to be associated with autonomy and to carry with it the central debate of modernism. Bürger has defined the progress of the autonomy of art in bourgeois society as, "...the separation of art from the praxis of life..."

[91] Hereafter abbreviated to *Maisons*.

[92] Hereafter abbreviated to *Génie*.

and sculpture, in relation to the *hôtel* site. In this regard, the architectural texts will be examined for their treatment of the essential problem of aesthetics, as the construction of an experience, the creation of a prescribed effect upon the viewer through the manipulation of material form. The analysis of *Maisons* will specifically address the concept of a legible built order of society through the application of an all-encompassing *convenance*. The discussion of the *Génie* will examine the theatrical space of the *salon* through the application of sensationalist theory, where sensation is a direct physical experience of space allied to a particular emotional effect or response. It is my contention that both texts are linked to a contemporary consciousness of an ideal social structure that might be represented in architectural form and that the operation of the subject and the object within that ideal is influenced by that consciousness.

The public site of appearance in the *salon* was defined in two ways; in terms of the position or placement of the site within the building, and in terms of its particular appearance with regard to decorative elements. These two positions may be described as *distribution* and *decoration* and may be seen to define the subject and the object within the presentation. The following analysis will concentrate on the implications of these positions for the constitution of an art object and a viewing subject.

In the 18th century conception of architectural "use" there was no firm distinction between form and function; the specification of utilitarian terms was only realised in its material form in the 19th century.[93] There is evidence however for an increasing concern with the particular function of rooms within an *hôtel*, a concern which remained intimately connected with the designation of specific activities and new social groupings in the bourgeois community. In *L'Art de Batir des Maisons de Campagne où l'on traite de leur distribution, de leur construction, et leur décoration* (1743) Charles Briseux referred to a requirement that the form of a room announce its use.

> *«Les attributs de chaque piéce, en doivent annoncer l'usage; & il faut que ces caractéres particuliers que donne l'ornement, soient répandus avec beacoup de ménagement et de goût...* »[94]

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[93] Chi, Lily. "On the Use of Architecture" paper presented at the 82nd ACSA conference, (Montréal: March 1994).

[94] Briseux, Charles. *L'Art de Batir des Maisons de Campagne où l'on traite de leur distribution, de leur construction, et leur décoration* (Paris: Prault, 1743) 154.

During the 18th century architectural function implied representation; it remained a profoundly social concept, each element in the process being an integral component within a greater whole that answered ultimately to the demands of social and cultural absolutes. In Brisieux' statement however, it is possible to discern a concern with the need to provide a set of principles for appropriate construction and appropriate behaviour. At issue is the changing role of the art object and the viewing subject during a period in the architectural discourse when an alternative concept of use in building, one that went beyond ritual or symbolic concerns towards a supposedly pragmatic interest in accommodation, was in its infancy.

Jacques-François Blondel (1705-1774) was a theoretician, architect and educator. Following the publication of the *Traite de l'Architecture de le Goût Moderne. De la Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance et de la Decoration des Edifices en General* (1737-8) he published the *Architecture François*, (1752-56) which listed outstanding works of architecture in Paris and, *Cours d'Architecture* (1771), a massive, encyclopedic architectural treatise.

The *Maisons* was an address to young architects which was intended to improve practice by providing a set of guiding principles and models derived from antique sources and recent architectural practice. The text was a critique of the excesses of contemporary practice, and an attempt to amend its most profound failings by example. Blondel's aim was to illustrate the extent to which ancient architecture might provide a resource for the architect faced with the caprices of recent years, educating him in the essential elements of the art in order that he might recognise that which was truly beautiful.[95] Blondel's thesis related architectural meaning to the wider cultural context of the French state through reference to antiquity as a model and a legitimation. He attributed the reduced condition of French architecture to the dirth of examples and the absence of architectural practitioners trained to interpret the existing resources. The result was the excess of the Rococo.[96] In describing Blondel's response to the Rococo as a period of architectural experiment, Emil Kauffman identified an essential problem for architectural practice at the beginning of the 18th century in the relationship between "form and purpose." "Should aesthetic principles rule

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[95] Blondel vol. I, xv.

[96] Blondel vol. I, xj.

composition or should practical needs be considered in the first place?"[97] Blondel's thesis represented a sense of historical awareness in the use of the historical reference; a belief in the possibility of advancement for the arts through the study of existing works; a conviction that architecture might aspire to the heights of the "other" sciences.[98] However, the extent to which Blondel might be situated within the purview of the Enlightenment architectural discourse as described by Kauffman should be mediated by an appreciation of his primary concerns as they were made evident in the text of the *Maisons*.

Maisons is a two volume treatise concerning the distribution and decoration of country houses.[99] Volume I includes an introduction to architecture in its classical, historical context, and an analysis of the exterior and interior *distribution* and *decoration* of a selection of models which were devised by Blondel and arranged according to size from a building of fifty *toises* to a building of fifteen *toises*.[100] Each description placed the building in relation to the outbuildings, gardens and the park as a whole. In the *Maisons*, Blondel therefore provided a catalogue of buildings and a statement of principles. Volume II addressed the interior *distribution* and *decoration* of the various buildings under discussion. The conceptual framework of Blondel's thesis was realised in the idea of *convenance*, which Antoine Picon has defined as the means by which each aspect of the architectural endeavour was brought together in a formal harmony reflecting the social status of the individual patron.[101] In the introduction to the *Maisons*, Blondel qualified his use of *convenance*.

> *«C'est cependant cette partie de l'Architecture qui en doit fair l'objet capital; c'est elle qui regle tout le corps de l'Ouvrage, & qui place dans chacune de ses parties tout ce qui doit y être naturellement. L'esprit de convenance enseigne le choix des Emplacemens, la justesse des proportions, & la commodité des arrangemens; il fait faire le discernement des matériaux propres au lieu où l'on bâtit; il guide dans leur assemblage & leur travail; il vous met toujours en vûë le but de votre entreprise: & en*

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97 Kaufmann, Emil. *Architecture in the Age of Reason: Baroque and Post-Baroque in England, Italy, France* (New York: Dover, 1955) 132.

98 Blondel vol. I, xv.

99 Furetière: *Maisons de Plaisance*, Tome II Ggg2.

100 A *toise* is equivalent to six and a half feet in measure.

101 Picon, Antoine. *French Architects and Engineers in the Age of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 85-92. Furetière *Convenance.*, Tome I. Ooo2.

un mot, c'est par la convenance, qu'un Bâtiment peut avoir toute sa perfection & qu'on y trouve une agréable correspondance des Parties avec leur tout.»[102]

In their role as the designators of social rank and behaviour, both *decoration* and *distribution* fall under the purview of *convenance* as the range of principles employed to provide a correlation between the separate concerns of architectural practice. Where *distribution* refers to the spatial arrangement of the plan and elevation, decoration refers to the application of colour, texture, furnishing, the architectural orders, painting and sculpture. Blondel's use of *convenance* represents a concern with an architectural practice that characterised the appropriate order and motivated the subject to behave according to that order.[103]

Blondel described the *salon* in the palace of fifty *toises* as a two storey room, a *Salon à l'Italienne,* situated in the centre of the main body of the building between the *Salle d'Assemblée* and the *Salle à Manger* on the ground floor and the *Antichambre, Premier Antichambre* and and the *Salle d'Assemblée* on the first floor.[104] (*fig*. 9.a.b.) Entering the Palace from the main entrance vestibule, the visitor would proceed through the antechamber to the *Salle d'Assemblée* which would lead him either to the *Chambre de Parade* or directly into the *salon* itself. Alternatively, he might ascend the main stair, situated to the left of the entrance vestibule, and proceed through the various rooms of the first floor apartment to arrive at the iron railing of the balcony overlooking the *salon*. The balcony provided both a viewing platform for the spectator and a site for the orchestra which would accompany the balls and concerts held in the *salon*. In each instance, the movement through the Palace was arranged according to a hierarchical system of access which was specifically related to the social standing of the visitor in relation to the master of the house and, the nature of the visit as a business call or a social engagement. As the focus of a succession of paths which traversed the Palace horizontally and vertically, the *salon* connected the public spaces to the private spaces. In Blondel's example the spatial emphasis remains with the public site. As the public room *par excellence,* the *salon* was the ultimate site of display and representation in the Palace and every view supported this role.

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[102] Blondel vol. I, 3.
[103] Picon 85-92.
[104] Blondel vol. I, 31-32.

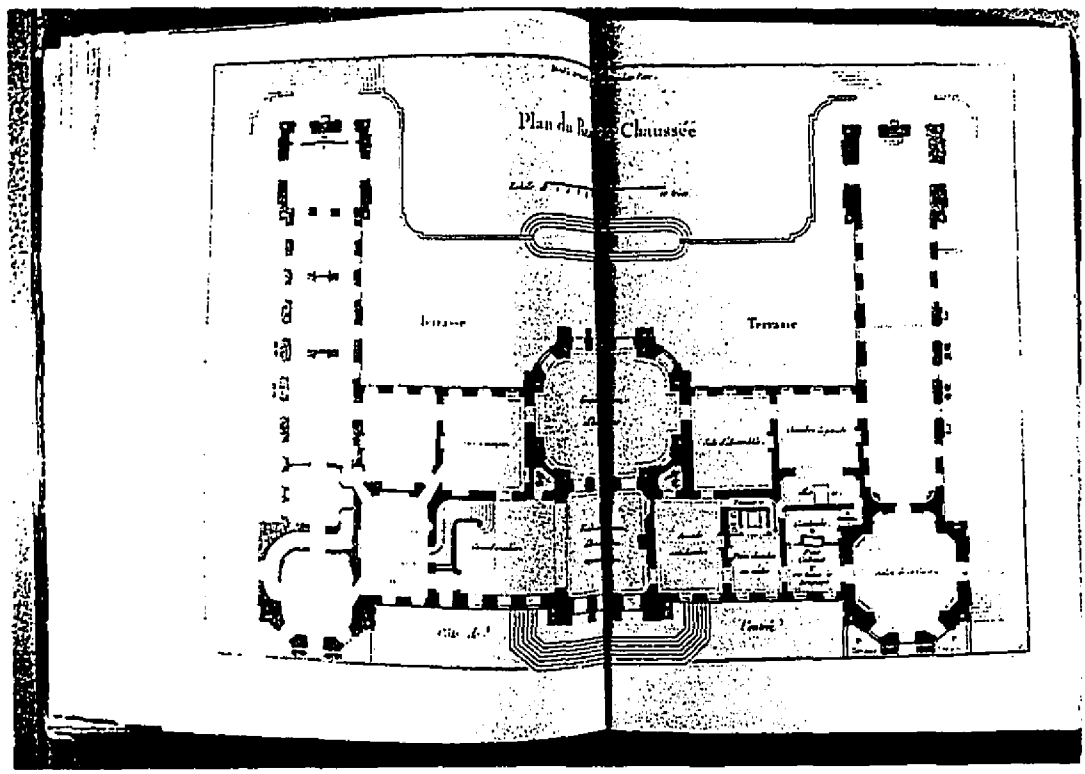

Fig.9.a. *Bâtiment de 50 Toises*, Rez de Chaussée. J-F. Blondel. *Traite d'Architecture dans le Goût Moderne. De la Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance et de la Decoration des Edifices en General* (Paris: Charles-Antoine Jombert, 1737-8) vol. I Plan 2, Page 23. Blackadder-Lauterman Library, McGill University, Montréal.

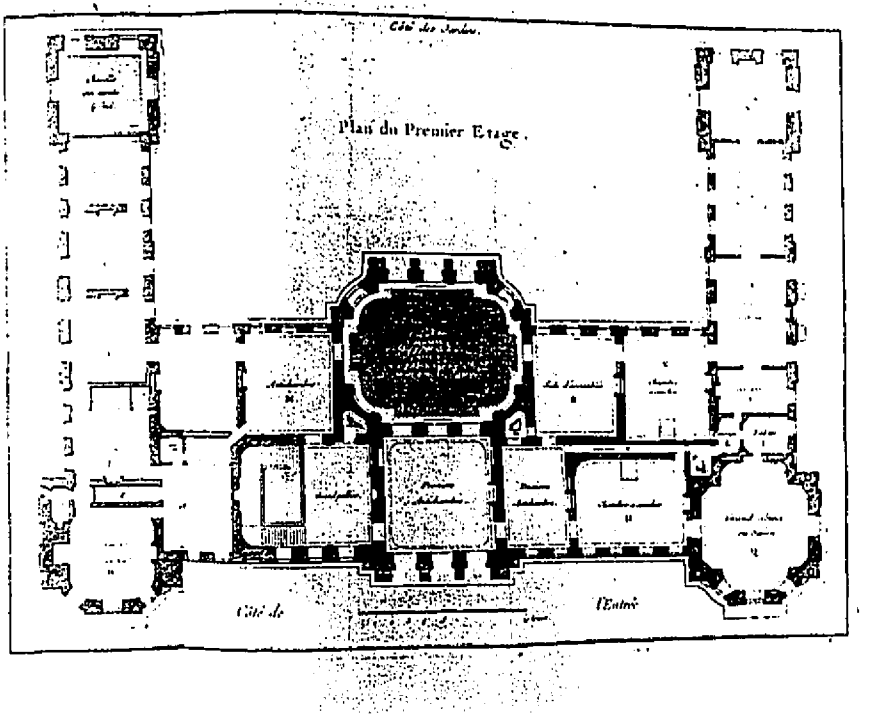

Fig.9.b. *Bâtiment de 50 Toises,* Premier Etage. J-F. Blondel. *Traite d'Architecture dans le Goût Moderne. De la Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance et de la Decoration des Edifices en General* (Paris: Charles-Antoine Jombert, 1737-8) vol. I Plan 3, Page 41. Blackadder-Lauterman Library, McGill University, Montréal.

«Il est distribué de maniere, que de quelque côté qu'on se tourne, étant au milieu de cette Pièce, la vûe reçoit une extrême satisfaction.»[105]

In a discussion regarding the decoration of the *salon*, Blondel made particular reference to the variety of decorative elements employed in order to reflect the many uses of the *salon*. Niches were placed in the angles of the *salon* and reflected in the ornamental mirrors that decorated the chimney. Piers above the doors were decorated with paintings which represented the various loves of Jupiter and a series of landscapes occupied the sites which were too small to accommodate history paintings. The ceiling vault was painted with the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis.[106]

It is in Blondel's analysis of *decoration* that the spatial order of *distribution* is most clearly defined in terms of social ritual. The *enfilade* of rooms in an apartment would denote a path, and that path would be charted in the *decoration* of doors, walls, panels, the position of sculptures, the themes of ceiling paintings and the displacement of fixed and moveable furnishings.[107] For example, on the ground floor of the *Salon à l'Italienne*, the themes of country life which were celebrated in the feasts and balls that were regularly held in the *salon*, were represented in the decorative scheme. The central door to the *salon* on the ground floor opened onto the principal *enfilade*. Above the carved door frame was a painting of a hunt scene, which was repeated as a carved trophy above the door and throughout the ornamentation of the ground floor. A series of maritime ornaments also encircled the ground floor *salon*, focusing on a painting beneath the chimney mirror. On the first floor, the decorative theme reflected the musical function of the *salon* as the venue for balls and concerts. The doors were decorated with a musical theme using painting and carved relief. In effect, the first floor was "consecrated" to the musical arts and the ground floor to the celebration of the hunt.[108] (*fig*. 10.)

Blondel proposed that, in following the path of an *enfilade*, the visitor would anticipate the subsequent rooms through their decorative subject and

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[105] Blondel vol. I, 31.

[106] Blondel vol. I, 31-32.

[107] Verlet, P. *The Eighteenth Century in France: Society, Decoration, Furniture* tr. G. Savage (London and Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1967) and Thornton, Peter *Seventeenth Century Interior Decoration in England, France and Holland* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978).

[108] Blondel vol. I, 32.

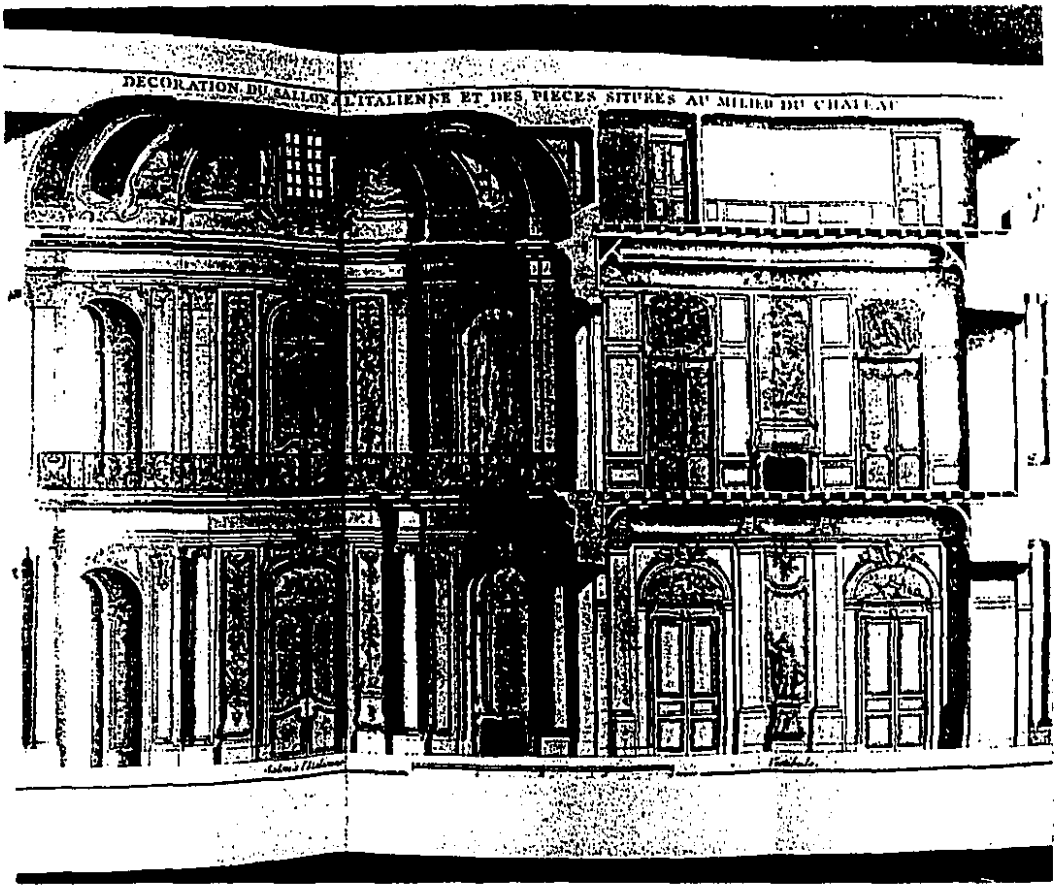

Fig.10. Decoration du Sallon à l'Italienne et des pieces au milieu du Chateau, J-F. Blondel. *Traite d'Architecture dans le Goût Moderne. De la Distribution des Maisons de Plaisance et de la Decoration des Edifices en General* (Paris: Charles-Antoine Jombert, 1737-8) vol. II, Plan 8. Page 64. Blackadder-Lauterman Library, McGill University, Montréal.

prepare to behave appropriately.[109] The doors to the entrance vestibule would, for example, have a Doric simplicity while the doors inside the *Salon à l'Italienne* would employ the decorative panels, discussed above. The theatrical analogy with the *mise en scène* is at work here, preparing the actors and the audience for the next scene in the drama, thereby countering any analysis of Blondel's thesis as a prescriptive guide or a practical address to "form and purpose." In Blondel's decorative scheme, *biensèance* prevailed. *Decoration* must accord with the rank of the owner, the parts should agree with the whole and the interior relate to the exterior, equal importance being given to the *distribution* and the *decoration.*[110] For Blondel, the decorative excess of the Rococo particularly lacked the harmony and proportion of *biensèance* and therefore precluded the communication of an elevating aesthetic experience, providing in its stead, a confusing, distracting *mêlange*.

> *«Combien en voyons-nous que l'esprit de nouveauté à fait tomber dans le défaut de supprimer les lignes droites & dans les plans & dans les élevations, & qui croyant se faire un mérite de leur fécondité, ont fait un mêlange si confus de Sculpture & d'Architecture, que le Spectateur le plus attentif ne peut malgré toutes ses reflexions, garder le souvenir d'aucune des formes qui composent ces décorations, ni deviner le motif qui a porté l'inventeur à décorer de cette façon plûtôt que d'une autre.»*[111]

The implication is that the subject might receive satisfaction, the "appropriate effect," through an experience of the building which would position the individual in relation to the social order through the symbolic order represented by the architecture as a whole. In this way the room both represented and orchestrated the social order in the daily life of the subject. Without such an order in the *decoration* and *distribution* there would be confusion. The Rococo decoration not only created a disturbing visual distortion but also represented, in its patronage by the bourgeois *en masse*, the rapid movement of social change in a society no longer routed in natural birthright but in acquired wealth. This confusion ranged from the visual and the spatial to the moral ordering of society. Blondel required that precautions be taken in order to avoid misrepresentation.

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[109] Blondel vol. II, 77.
[110] Blondel vol. II, 81.
[111] Blondel vol. II, 88-89.

«Sans cette précaution, l'oeil trouvant une même richesse de quelque côté qu'il se tourne & étant également occupé, ne peut rien distinguer qui mérite la préference; ce qui embrasse si bien l'esprit du spectateur, que comme nous l'avons dit, il sort de cette piece sans avoir retenu aucune de ces formes.»[112]

In a discussion of the relative merits of the use of drapes and perspective painting in the *salon*, Blondel preferred the drape. *«...comme le charme des couleurs artificielles ne peut absolument tromper les yeux...j'aimerois mieux me passer de la subtilité de cet art dans une grande piece, où rien ne doit paroître postiche.»*[113] Blondel argued that perspective would be better served in a site where the illusion might be maintained; a smaller room where the spectator's gaze might be directed specifically to the construction of the perspective rather than a *salon* where the subject is encouraged and expected to move through the space. Blondel's demand for coherence, harmony and order might therefore be seen as a reference to a ideal form rather than any conception of "truth to materials." Painting and sculpture were considered relative to the room as a whole and were arranged accordingly

Picon has identified a call for decorative "legibility," in the architectural theory of the late 18th century; a literal, didactic correspondence between architectural form and social rank. "The decoration of a building was meant to express directly its use and the rank of its owner."[114] Blondel's argument reflected a concern for the aesthetics of effect by relating architectural form to the perception of the individual spectator. However, his thesis was not prescriptive; he maintained a creative role for architecture in a theatrical framework that allowed for participation as an interpretive action between the subject and the site. In the *Maisons* the demands of *convenance* dominated.

Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières' (1721-c.1793) treatise, *Le Génie de L'Architecture; ou, l'analogie de cet art avec nos sensations* (1780) was based upon a concept of sensation, which allied particular emotional responses to specific material forms. Couched in the language of 18th century sensationalism the

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112 Blondel vol. II, 102.

113 Blondel vol. II, 64-68.

114 Picon 52.

intention of the *Génie* was to make this association known.[115] In Furetière's definition, *sensibilité* was the faculty by which the individual receives the impression of an object, a faculty which was inherent in the animal kingdom, whilst the *sensible* was the material object which created this impression. Spiritual bodies were neither sensible nor palpable.[116] The association of sense-data (colour, line and scale) with individual perception, was deemed to produce a particular effect. For Le Camus, the essential resource for architectural meaning lay in the building blocks of the *sensible.* Using models of architectural excellence from the past, Le Camus' analysis of cause and effect operated with a view to the identification of a set of principles for application in practice: a system of architectural rules that would order sensations and manipulate the individual towards a particular aesthetic experience.[117] However, in marrying the sensationalist thesis of immediate individual perception with a concept of a transcendent ideal, Le Camus' text falls significantly beyond the empirical, conceptual frame.

> *«C'est d'après des regles fixes & invariables que se forme le goût & que nous faisons mouvoir d'une maniere déterminée & sublime tout à la fois, les différens ressorts pour affecteur agréablement les sens & porter dans l'ame cette émotion déliceuse qui nous ravit, qui nous enchanté.»*[118]

The *Génie* is a single volume work of continuous prose consisting of an introduction, an essay concerning the orders of architecture (placing the French order as the end of a legitimating genealogy) an essay "On the Art of Pleasing in Architecture," a consideration of exterior *decoration*, "On Distribution and Decoration" and a specific analysis of the *hôtel* from the entrance vestibule to the stable yard. In the text the *hôtel* is a model indicative of a concept of architectural type in its infancy, though not yet the rigorous systematisation of 19th century taxonomy. In the *Génie* Le Camus' *hôtel* was offered as the most remarkable example of an architectural form that might be modified and appropriately

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115 Quinton, Anthony. "Sensationalism" Fontana *Dictionary of Modern Thought* ed. Allan Bullock, Oliver Stallybrass and Stephen Trombley (London and Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1988) 769.
116 Furetière: *sensibilité* and *sensible*, Tome III Fff3.
117 Le Camus 14.
118 Le Camus 14

applied elsewhere.[119] The structure of the text follows the *enfilade* in the progress of description and analysis through the house from the public chambers to the service quarters. In each instance the physical structure of the *enfilade* defines its subject as the constituency for an hierarchically arranged series of representations. A progression from simplicity to opulence in the paradigmatic apartment of the mistress of the house. Le Camus did not separate *distribution* and *decoration* in his analysis; rather, after an initial discussion of *distribution* in relation to the association of certain essential forms with specific emotional responses, he applied his thesis directly to the model.

> *«Examinons à présent chacune des pieces dans leur détail, dans leur usage & dans ce qui leur est relatif: ces choses une fois bien entendues, on concevra plus aisément l'harmonie & l'accord qui doit régner entre les parties, & entre chaque partie & le tout.»*[120]

In the progress through the *hôtel*, Le Camus distinguished his concerns in relation to practical function and established social codes as they were made evident in the *decoration* of the room, and the identification of a particular viewer as spectator for each representation. In the procession through the mistress' apartment from antechamber to boudoir, the action moves from the public towards the private domain. The subject as visitor was to proceed from the austerity of the vestibule through a series of three anterooms to arrive at the *salon*. Le Camus advocated a vestibule and three anterooms, for arrival, disrobing and attendance respectively.[121] All the rooms (five was the minimum for an apartment) should communicate in such a manner as to maintain social decorum and practical comfort for the patron and his visitors in accord with the social rank of the subject. The relative *distribution* of the rooms was therefore essential for the creation of the appropriate effect upon the individual visitor.

> *«En attendant contentons-nous d'observer que, malgré ces nombreux & vastes logemens, il y a encore de petits appartemens où on a le soin de faire trouver tout ce que la commodité, l'aisance & le luxe peuvent faire desirer. Aussi ces petits appartemens sont-ils plus fréquentés que les grands; la*

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[119] Le Camus 2-3.
[120] Le Camus 97.
[121] Le Camus 86-87.

nature conduit à cette préférence. Les grands apartemens ne sont, à proprement parler, que de parade, il semble que la géne & la contrainte en soient l'apanage: dans de trop grandes pieces l'homme se trouve disproportionné. Les objets sont trop éloignés de lui, on s'y retranche dans une partie, le reste devient inutile & déplaît.»[122]

In the brief analysis of *distribution* which preceded this description, Le Camus provided a formal vocabulary, associating the square plan with a serious effect and the round with gaiety.[123] *Decoration* and *distribution* were thus married according to the analogy of colour, form, scale and proportion in the creation of an emotional effect upon the viewer. The vestibule, with the stair to the right, led to an anteroom for disrobing, a second anteroom for preparing to be received and a third ante-room as proto-*salon*. The *salon* then led to the mistress' boudoir and private bedroom. The *salon* could therefore adopt any form; however, the chosen form had to be understood to define a particular character for the room.[124] Whether the room was oval, square, one- or two- storey, a *Salon à l'Italienne*, it must attend to proportion in regard to height, breadth and length. Le Camus provided no fixed dimensions or absolute rules; rather, he selected exemplary models that ranged from an ancient structural typology for the *salon* to examples of recent French practice.[125]

Le Camus made specific reference to the role of painting and sculpture in relation to the architect's practice in "On the Art of Pleasing in Architecture"[126] The arrangement of the art work had to be in accord with the effect required of the room as a whole. The individual rooms of an apartment each having their own particular purpose.

«Il en est de même des tableaux, ils ne conviennent pas par-tout: un superbe Michel Ange, un magnifique Raphaël perdroient de leur beauté, s'ils n'étoient placés à propos & à leur jour. Nous dirons plus, la grandeur du tableau, son genre, le sujet même doivent être relatifs à la

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122 Le Camus 89.

123 Le Camus 97.

124 Le Camus 107.

125 It is notable in the context of this discussion that Le Camus placed particular emphasis upon the exemplary work of Louis Le Vau at Vaux de Viscomte and Versailles.

126 Le Camus 46-47.

piece où il se trouve, & il convient enfin qu'on puisse croire qu'il a été fait pour le lieu.

I'l n'en est pas d'un appartement comme d'un cabinet ou d'une galerie de tableaux; chaque endroit comporte son objet; à son aspect on doit juger de son usage; l'expression, l'empreinte du caractere en décide: c'est à la délicatesse à tenir la balance, au goût à peser, & au bon sens à décider.»[127]

In this way, Le Camus identified an essential connection between the effect of the painting and the form of the site, distinguishing between the painting in the collection which serves one function as the object of contemplation, and the painting as part of the total *decoration*, as a constituent element in the representation as a whole.[128] In the analysis of ceiling painting as an integral component in the architectural site, Le Camus situated his concerns within the locus of the architect as *metteur en scène*.

«On peint quelquefois les plafonds. Un beau ciel bien jetté, peu forcé en vapeur, donne beaucoup de grace & de légéreté; la corniche en est plus détachée, & rend alors tout l'effet qu'on peut attendre de l'Architecture. Si l'on veut placer dans les plafonds quelques figures, il faut y employer des sujets allégoriques; c'est là l'instant où l'Artiste doit réveiller son attention; trop de figures, un coloris trop vif & trop brillant détruiroient entiérement l'harmonie de l'Architecture. Aussi la peinture d'un plafond doit-elle avoir toujours un ton aérien, & les objets en paroître éloignés & comme perdus dans l'immensité.»[129]

In advocating the illusory space of the ceiling painting, Le Camus remained consistent with the theatrical analogy that he maintained throughout the *Génie*. In effect, he drew a comparison between the public spaces of the *hôtel* and the structure of the theatre. As the *metteur en scène*, the creator of the stage for his subjects, necessarily actors, Le Camus designated particular subject positions and

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[127] Le Camus 46-47.

[128] Bonfait 34. Bonfait refers to the catalogue texts of individual collections as indications of the contextual nature of the collection designated as part of the decorative schema as a whole or a particular collection of individual works, distinct from the architectural context of the *hôtel*. This designation remained flexible throughout the 18th century.

[129] Le Camus 106-107.

defined a set of essentially participatory and interpretative operations for those subjects within the built space. In an analysis of Le Camus' thesis, Rémy Saisselin has drawn an alternative model of a didactic architecture from the theatrical analogy, a "non-discursive" space.

> "Architecture thus acted like a species of fixed spectacle and just as the stage and its frame and the action on the stage fixed the attention of the spectator, thereby in effect disciplining it, so the proportions and orders of architecture fixed the imagination and it is this which allowed a communication or rapport between edifice and observer, for both were removed from the arbitrariness of pure fantasy and mere chance."[130]

In this respect Saisselin does not appear to acknowledge the specific nature of the epistemological context of the *Génie*. It is my contention that the actor subject of the *Génie* must be placed in the wider context of the interactive theatrical practices of the 18th century in order to appreciate the implications of the analogy undertaken by Le Camus. To assess the extent to which "arbitrariness" and "chance" continued to occupy a place in the architecture of the *hôtel*.[131] The particular analogy drawn by Le Camus can be directly observed in a description of the second anteroom.

> *«Mais encore une fois, c'est dans cette piece qu'on doit commencer à ressentir le genre de sensation qu'on aura à éprouver dans les pieces qui suivent; c'est, pour ainsi dire, une avantscêne à laquelle on ne peut apporter trop de soin par annoncer le caractere des Acteurs.»*[132]

In the anticipation and expectation implicit in this statement there is a reference to a specific subject position. The ante-room is quite literally *before the scene*.[133] However, the scene or stage in this instance is not the fixed, controlled space of Saisselin's analysis, which refers to a modern model of theatrical space; rather,

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130 Saisselin 245.

131 Saisselin 245.

132 Le Camus 101.

133 Collins Concise Dictionary (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1989). Proscenium, from the Greek *proskenion*, before the scene.

the flexible, often rowdy space of the 18th century theatre described by Richard Sennett in *The Fall of Public Man.* Seating on the stage and the constant contribution of the opinionated audience of the *parterre*, who often addressed the actors directly during the performance, actively promoted the element of "chance" and "the arbitrariness of pure fantasy."[134]

Theatrical, participatory space and the art object played an integral role in the ordering of space in the 18th century The art object as such was distinguished as part of the collection of the patron but it remained ultimately subservient to the concept of the site as a whole. In Blondel one might define this site as the transcendent ideal of *convenance;* in Le Camus, the participatory space of the theatre. The art object and the subject distinguished by Blondel and Le Camus could not be fixed in any utilitarian construction, as the form of each text reveals an essential connection to an ideal order. The discourse between art and architecture in the 18th century continued to represent a site that was integrated. The autonomous art object and the modern viewer was to be the construction of the next generation.

The Museum Project: the art institution in Modernity

With the construction of the *Soufflot Stair* in 1781, the *Salon Carrée* was both structurally and conceptually linked to the *Grand Galerie* and the Royal collection as the permanent representation of the cultural supremacy of the French nation. In an analysis of the Museum Project, D'Angiviller's program for the Luxembourg Palace and the Louvre, Andrew McClellan has identified the essential program of the late 18th century museum in relation to contemporary political and aesthetic concerns; discerning a pragmatic function for the art object in "the equation of good government with careful conservation and display of works of art."[135] Referring to D'Angiviller's acquisition of Le Sueur's paintings from the Hôtel Lambert in 1776 for the Royal collection in the Luxembourg Palace, McClellan observed the gradual dominance of the autonomous easel painting over the decorative panel in the late 18th century politics of display. Detached from the architectural site of the *hôtel,* Le Sueur's paintings represent

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134 Saisselin 245.

135 McClellan, Andrew L. "The Politics and Aesthetics of Display in Paris 1750-1800" *Art History* vol. 7, no. 4 (December 1984) 438-464, 459

the literal separation of the art object from the architectural site and consequently serve to define the ground for the modern interpretation of the art institution.[136]

It has been my contention that the objectification process identified as the Enlightenment program was not totalising, and that the accepted understanding of the aesthetic art object, subject and site may be treated critically through an address to spatial and temporal designations. The extent to which contemporary exhibition practice may represent the purpose attributed to modernism, i.e., autonomy from immediate social and historical concerns, can only be assessed through an examination of the site, as the perpetual exchange of space and place. Chapter Three will address the late 20th century practice of site-specific exhibition in an attempt to acknowledge the critical dimension in operation within contemporary creative practice as it continues to be defined within an historical interpretation of the art institution.

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136 McClellan 448. For a description of the Le Sueur cycle in relation to the relative subject position of the viewer see Goldstein, Carl. "Studies in Seventeenth Century French Art Theory and Ceiling Painting" *Art Bulletin* vol. 47 (June 1965) 231-256.

CHAPTER THREE

The Art Of Disappearance

The historical art institution and the exhibition *impasse.*

> "...only exhibition institutions can, at this historical juncture, fully legitimate any art practice."[137]

The late 20th century art institution, the mechanism by which art is named in public, is a construction based upon a retrospective conception of the 18th century cultural debate; an interpretation of the *Salon* exhibition, the Museum and the Academy as the manifestation of new knowledge. In turn this conception is based upon the idea of the "truth" of the ideal aesthetic experience, rather than a socially and culturally specific response to the context of the 18th century.[138] However, although this formula of aesthetic experience as a didactic exchange between an art object and a passive observer persists in late 20th century exhibition practice, the technological, political and economic changes of the intervening centuries have served to undermine the primacy of the object in the theoretical discourse, thereby creating an *impasse* in the Enlightenment project.

The displacement of the art object finds its theoretical ground in Walter Benjamin's essay of 1936 "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."[139] Once the unique history, the aura of the object, was removed with the advent of the reproductive technologies, a renewed concern with individual reception or appropriation of meaning was made possible. The value system of an aesthetic model based upon uniqueness, was undermined and the structures of understanding had to be reviewed in order for the art institution to

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137 Crimp, Douglas. *The Museum's Ruins* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993) 243.

138 Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage, 1973). In this context I am referring to the interpretation of epistemological shift attributed to Foucault. I am suggesting transitional periods of change rather than revolutionary shifts in understanding.

139 Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken, 1968) 217-253, 240-241, and Ricoeur, Paul "Appropriation" *Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination* ed. Mario J. Valdes (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991) 86-99.

continue to exist. Benjamin identified a possible alternative to the aesthetic *impasse* in a reconsideration of the site through a model of architectural appropriation where use and perception, mediated by custom and habit - the temporal dimension - were combined in an interpretative act.

> "For the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation."[140]

The critical artistic debate of the 1960s represents the most recent challenge to the essential elements of aesthetic understanding. The hegemony of the art object, displaced in the hierarchy of the construction of meaning, was replaced with an analysis of the relative status of the artist and the audience, thereby providing the ground for an alternative critical debate.[141] The theoretical "death of the author" which ensued challenged the central position of the "author function" in critique; displacing the author as creative origin and primary resource for meaning, in favour of a concern for the context of cultural production, the economic and social factors governing interpretation and the relevance of the site of reception as the ground for a discursive culture.[142] As Hans Robert Jauss has observed, the primacy of representation and the concern for objective truth in art history, was replaced by a work determined by its effect.[143] The presence of the viewing subject was therefore reintroduced into the discourse as the concept of being before the work; the moment of the subject in the site. "In short, it renewed the question of what aesthetic experience could mean when viewed as a productive, receptive and communicative activity."[144]

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[140] Benjamin 240-241.

[141] Foucault, Michel. "What is an Author?" *Language, counter-memory, practice* ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977) 113-139. Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author" *The Rustle of Language* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1989) 49-56.

[142] Foucault, Michel. "What is an Author?" *Language, counter-memory, practice* ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977) 113 -139. The term "author function" refers to Foucault's model for the traditional role of the author in relation to the construction of meaning in the modern era.

[143] Jauss, Hans Robert. "The Theory of Reception: A Retrospective of its Unrecognised Prehistory" *Literary Theory Today* ed. Peter Collier and Helga Geyer-Ryan (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1990) 53-73.

[144] Jauss 53.

This thesis proposes that, in the light of the contextual reconsideration of the Enlightenment model discussed in Chapters One and Two, the art institution never achieved the asocial, ahistorical position attributed to it in modernist theory but rather, that it retained its position as a part of a site defined both spatio-temporally and socially. As a consequence of this reconsideration, it may be possible to introduce an alternative prognosis for the exhibition through an analysis of recent practices of presentation in the context of a revised understanding of the positions available to the art object, the viewing subject and the site. The critical debate of the 1960s and 1970s, defined by a concern for reception, may be seen to have introduced the possibility of a critical address to the artistic discourse in its social and political context. In the following analysis the questions raised by this critical debate will be applied to three recent examples of exhibition practice.

The contemporary exhibition and the institutional avant-garde

The conceptual art of the late 1960s and 1970s may be seen to have provided an immediate material response to the critical debate inaugurated by Benjamin.[145] Land Art, Installation, Performance, Happening and Pop all served to question the context of exhibition, the implications of a particular interpretation of time, space, authorship, commodity value and professional disciplinary boundaries. Denying the orthodoxy of representation, these practices announced an era of plural art forms and for a brief time, undermined the assumed Enlightenment aesthetic model.[146] However, the critical inquiry was short lived; in order to be named in public and to contribute to the ongoing discourse of art, the institution as a conceptual frame was found to be necessary. Without the discursive ground of institutional language, critical debate was

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[145] The term conceptual art is used, in this instance, to identify a body of work that questioned representation rather than a specific style.

[146] Buchloh, Benjamin H.D. "Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions." *October* no. 55 (Winter 1990) 105-143, 105-107. Buchloh has referred to the elimination of the conventions of representation in conceptual art practice as "...artistic practices that explicitly insisted on being addressed outside of the parametres of the production of formally ordered, perceptual objects, and certainly outside of that of art history and criticism." See also Krauss, Rosalind. "Sculpture in the Expanded Field" *The Anti Aesthetic* ed. Hal Foster (Port Townsend, Washington: Bay Press, 1983) 31-43, Krauss, Rosalind "Notes on the Index Part II 1977" *Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1985) 210-220 and Sayre, Henry. *The Object Of Performance. The American Avant-Garde Since 1970* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982).

impossible hence the *impasse*. Once it had been identified by the late 20th century art institution, the discursive potential of conceptual art was susceptible to its objective qualification. As the primary instrument of the art institution, the exhibition both defined the forum for debate and, by virtue of the dominance of the Enlightenment model which privileged the art object, denied the discursive potential of the site. At issue in contemporary practice is the possibility for a critique operating without the institutional model but within the institutional frame; a critique which constitutes the cultural debate in a self-conscious form, aware of prevailing belief systems, and able to situate itself in a critical relation to them. The work of artists such as Michael Asher, Daniel Buren and Dan Graham operates in response to this debate by making incisions in the formal and conceptual space of political, economic and cultural institutions and thereby perpetuating the agenda defined in the debates of the 1960s and 1970s. Installed in museums, corporate headquarters and private homes, the work undermines the received understanding of aesthetic value and function by playing with the concepts of anticipation and expectation: the elements of surprise and disorientation. These critical practices are by their very nature marginal, and as official recognition increases, so does the risk of absorption into the institutional avant-garde.

The built form of the exhibition institution, the museum and gallery, remains the primary site for the public presentation of art. In the last decade the construction of contemporary art museums and the popularity of large scale festival exhibitions such as *Documenta*, the *Venice Biennale* and the *Münster Sculptur Projekte*, attests to the continued health of the institution and its role as the primary means by which practice is legitimated and art is received.[147] Realising the need to adapt to an audience attuned to new media technologies in the culture of immediacy, the institution has absorbed the alternative rhetoric of the 1960s and 1970s into its physical space and conceptual agenda. The exhibition has, in the last two decades, identified an officially sanctioned alternative to the "white cube," a term used by Brian O'Doherty to refer to the

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[147] Heartney, Eleanor. "Sighted in Münster" *Art in America* USA vol. 75, pt. 9 (September 1987) 140-145/207 and Jacob, Mary Jane. *Places with a Past. New Site Specific Art at Charleston's Spoleto Festival* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991). Jacob's account of the Charleston festival exhibition situates *Places with a Past* in a genealogy of avant-garde exhibition practices including *Münster*, *Venice* and the *Chambres d'amis*, as a means by which to legitimate the "alternative" credentials of the exhibition.

concept of a "neutral" exhibition space, in the form of the institutionally sponsored site-specific exhibition.[148]

In a critique of pluralism in contemporary practice Hal Foster has identified the extent to which the displacement of art from the gallery site, the conventions of discipline and exhibition, has become the standard.[149] Where alternative sites and practices may have operated critically on the margins of an Enlightenment model of experience, their adoption by the institution has had a neutralising effect.

> "We have nearly come to the point where transgression is a given. Site-specific works do not automatically disrupt our notion of context, and alternative spaces seem nearly the norm."[150]

The *Documenta* exhibition of contemporary art held in Kassel, Germany at four year intervals since 1955, serves to illustrate the progress of the institutionalisation of the avant-garde in late modernity. Installed in the *Museum Fridericianium*, the *Orangerie* and the *Karlsaue Park* and, in recent years, in various public sites in the urban centre, the *Documenta* exhibition transforms the town of Kassel by imposing the formal distribution and ritual paths of the modern art institution onto the topography of the post war city.[151] The international art audience, visiting the site in vast numbers, accomplishes this transformation by bringing with it the behavioural codes and conceptual frame of the contemporary art institution, the manners of the "ballroom exhibition."[152]

The scale of the exhibition, its various sites in the designated museums and the city itself, echo a popular concern for the physical and intellectual accessibility of art through a displacement of the boundaries, assumed to be merely physical, between the wider audience and the advanced practices of modern art. The *Fridericianium Museum* is altered to accommodate installation

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148 O'Doherty, Brian. *Inside the White Cube. The Ideology of the Gallery Space*. (San Francisco: Lapis Press, 1986).

149 Pluralism in this context refers to the presence of multiple media and forms of practice and the absence of an ideological framework, political, cultural or ethnic. The absence of any critical apparatus in contemporary practice is implicit in this definition.

150 Foster, Hal. *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (Seattle, Washington: Bay Press, 1993) 25.

151 The gradual advance into the physical space of the city was a marked project of *Documenta 8*.

152 Kuspit, Donald. "Documenta 8: Issues" *C Magazine* no. 14 (June 1987) 26-30, 28.

requirements; urban sites are corralled for the public art discourse, and the parks and gardens of the *Karlsaue* are employed in an allusion to the distant environmental sites of the Land Art movement.[153] In effect *Documenta*, mediated by the rhetoric of the institutional exhibition and its accompanying publications, provides a taxonomy of the avant-garde in any four-year period. In the process, as Nancy Marmer has observed, denying the city of Kassel its particular history as a former World War II arsenal destroyed by Allied bombing and rebuilt as the paradigmatic West German "new town," twenty miles from the border with East Germany.[154]

The catalogues which are published to accompany each *Documenta* exhibition both record the event and define the program. In the context of this analysis the catalogue will operate as the primary text under discussion. As artifacts of the institution these texts have, in recent years, identified the procedures for the institutionalisation of the avant-garde by combining a disparate array of theoretical texts in a process which can only be defined as an attempt to associate the exhibition program with a positive, liberal, pluralism through a superficial denial of the institutional frame within which it is operating. In the two volume catalogue *Documenta 7* (1982), the curator Rudi Fuchs published a range of essays by critics, designers and curators involved in the design, organisation and publication of the exhibition. The written text provides a prologue to the creative history and project description allotted to each of the individual artists represented in the exhibition. Having stated the *Documenta* agenda as a "desire for clear order and quiet atmosphere," Fuchs republished essays by Goethe, T.S. Eliot and Borges to support his concept of the exhibition as a fantastic journey.[155]

> "Once inside the museum a work of art needs to settle down and come at rest like a ship after a voyage. We must then take time and listen to the various accounts of discoveries, to various dreams."[156]

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153 Marmer, Nancy. "Documenta 8: The Social Dimension?" *Art in America* USA vol. 75, pt. 9 (September 1987) 128-139/197/199 and Galloway, David, "Kassel Redux: A History of Documenta" *Art in America* (September 1982) 7/9-10.

154 Marmer.

155 Fuchs, Rudi. "Introduction" *Documenta 7* (Kassel: D+V Paul Dierichs GmbH, 1982) vol. I xv.

156 Fuchs vol. I xv.

Having situated the traditional aesthetic agenda of the exhibition, the compilation of a variety of critical texts proceeded to qualify the *Documemta* program in relation to the contemporary artistic discourse. Germano Celant's essay "A Visual Art Machine: Art Installation And Its Modern Archetypes," in Volume II of *Documenta 7* illustrates the extent to which the alternative critical discourse is acknowledged by the institution as a means by which to legitimate its practice within the assumed liberality of pluralism.

> " The environmental circumstances for exhibiting art today cannot be other than the ideal 'white cube.' This assemblage of naked walls, whose splendour and impact prevail over any body of work, calms all extra-artistic doubts. The 'ideal' gallery creates an aseptic container, full of visual cotton fluff, in which the visitor/collector can perceive art as uncontaminated and virgin material, and disposed therefore, to their own desires."[157]

Celant's analysis of the negative impact of the "white cube" on the processes of reception and interpretation used the established rhetoric of the institutional critique to identify the crisis for a cultural practice whose only *raison d'être* is self perpetuation. In doing so, it provided a direct critique of the *Documenta* agenda as it was defined by Fuch's and built, in the formulaic "white cube," by Walter Nikkels.[158] In a scheme for the *Fridericianium* Nickels devised a series of plain white walls to be installed in the 18th century museum in order to define the space of exhibition and realise in built form Fuch's requirement of a reserved space for the distinct experience of the art work.

As the general timbre of the catalogue advocated the plurality of forms and the supposed absence of any restrictive program, *Documenta 7* may be seen to confirm the pluralist dilemma. Regardless of the individual practices of the artists represented in the exhibition, the agenda of objectification prevailed. Although individual contributors to *Documenta 7* attempted to address the

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157 Celant, Germano. "A Visual Machine: Art Installation and its Modern Archetypes" *Documenta 7* (Kassel: D+V Paul Dierichs GmbH, 1982) vol. 2 xiii-xviii / pxvi. See also Buchloh, Benjamin H.D. "Documenta 7 : A Dictionary of Received Ideas" *October* no. 22 (Fall 1982) 105-126, 112.
158 O'Doherty.

specific qualities of the particular site, the identity of the town as "exhibition site" was privileged over its identity as "Kassel" for the duration of the event.[159]

Pluralism is ill-equipped to confront the persuasive, coherent construction of the modern art institution. Unwilling to acknowledge a place within the dominant ideology, the privilege of the avant-garde, contemporary practitioners, critics and connoisseurs have removed the conceptual framework that might have provided the ground for debate. Without the acknowledgment of an existing doctrine, self-consciousness, the means by which one might acknowledge one's self and one's actions in relation to society, is not possible.[160]

Within the Citadel of Culture: the practices of ambiguity

O.K. Werckmeister has identified the institutional avant-garde as symptomatic of the *Citadel Culture* of the 1980s, placing particular emphasis upon the temporal specificity of this critique in relation to the specific economic, cultural and political context of the mid-1980s. A culture confident of its liberation from any totalising dogma yet unable to act critically to sustain that liberation. The formal variety, range of media and unlimited reference, reduces all practices to the superficial, uniting and containing them within the uncritical citadel of culture. There are no longer any lines or barriers to transgress in a pluralist culture of this nature, no power to shock, no surprise and no contradiction. Werckmeister's *Citadel Culture* is a social and economic concept which illustrates the contemporary interconnectedness of cultural practice, the art market and international economic exchange. During the 1980s contemporary art exchanged hands for vast sums of money. The discrepancy

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159 Werckmeister, O.K. *Citadel Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) 170. In the conclusion to *Citadel Culture*, O.K. Werckmeister provides a critical analysis of *Documenta 8*, an exhibition which was assumed to be the socially conscious response to the conservative program of *Documenta 7*. Citing Robert Morris' *Firestorm* panel painting series, a reinterpretation of iconic photographic images of concentration camp victims, Werckmeister noted the absence of any critical connection, on the part of the West German reviewers, between the historical and geographical context of the exhibition and the subject matter of the paintings . Art criticism remained within the purview of formalism and the constructed history of artistic styles.

160 In this context affiliation to a doctrine is not a reference to party political association but rather, to the recognition of the existing debates, language systems and epistemology, and a willingness to operate within them as a means by which to identify alternative discourses. The reference to Werckmeister was first noted in, Schwarz, Michael "Chambres d'amis or the retreat of art" *Daidalos* no. 36 (June 1990) 22-80.

between labour time and material worth relative to other modes of production perpetuated the art institution as a separate, idealised value system.

> "In the course of the last decade, the license of representation in all media has been achieved as a deceptive image of the democratic right to free opinion. For the first time in the history of public culture, the principle of obscenity has been all but abolished. This verbal and visual emancipation of citadel culture facilitates unbridled representations of sexuality and death. But the more glaringly the psycho-physical appearance of human nature is illuminated, the more obscure the historical actuality of human life remains."[161]

Michael Schwarz has identified this distortion of relative values as an essential factor in the reaction to the *Citadel Culture* on the part of certain creative practitioners and collectors.[162] As the art institution has affirmed the citadel by advancing economically in the marketplace, and physically in the construction of museums and galleries and the installation of sited exhibitions, so the artist and collector have begun to retreat, "into privacy or into remote rooms, which can only be reached by a limited public."[163] Land Art, installation, site-specific projects and the growth of private collections indicate a conscious attempt on the part of certain artists, critics, curators and collectors to mark a deep dissatisfaction with the institution and to evade it; to withdraw from the ultimate objectification of cultural practice as it is exemplified in the symptomatic extremes of exchange value.[164] This method of evasion, this retreat, offers a site that is detached from the temporal and spatial designations of aesthetic experience in the Enlightenment exhibition, thereby recognising another discourse and identifying alternative positions for the viewing subject. However, in enacting the procedures of retreat, the practice of evasion is required to operate in the precarious ground between official recognition and the margins, between appearance and disappearance. Schwarz's argument has therefore placed the emphasis upon a physical, spatial retreat, into the private site, as the

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161 Werckmeister 17-18.

162 Schwarz, Michael. "Chambres d'amis or the retreat of art" *Daidalos* no. 36 (June 1990) 22-80.

163 Schwarz 74.

164 Schwarz.

ground for an existing audience already conditioned by the rituals and codes of the institution.[165] The visitor to an obscure private collection or sited exhibition brings with him or her the agenda of the art viewer. As a counter to the possibilities of this private discourse, I would argue that it is possible to propose a public equivalent. Just as the phenomenon of the private exhibition site in the home marks the potential for a discursive, critical interaction between the work and the visitor, audience or inhabitant, so the public exhibition site, the city street and the storefront may acknowledge the spectator as Benjamin's disinterested observer.

Three recent exhibitions have addressed the retreat from the institution into the city and the private home respectively: the *Storefront for Art and Architecture* temporary facade project in New York in 1993, *Creative Time 42nd Street Art Project* site specific installation in New York 1994 and the *Chambres d'amis* sited exhibition in Gent, Belgium in 1986. At issue in each of these examples is the operation of exhibition on the border of the institutional frame and the immanent possibility of disappearance. The form of each of these exhibitions provided an opportunity for critical action through the displacement of the art object in favour of a concern for the exhibition site: for the context of the presentation, the distribution and decoration of the site, the subject positions available and the place of the exhibition within the institutional discourse as a whole. The program of each exhibition can be traced in its accompanying publication: a pamphlet by *Storefront* and *Creative Time* and a catalogue by the sponsoring museum of the *Chambres d'Amis*, the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst. In the following discussion the catalogue text will be addressed as an artifact, a fragment of the exhibition as a whole, and an officially sanctioned statement of the theoretical progam of the presentation.[166]

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165 Conrads, Ulrich. "In New Chambers" *Daidalos* no. 53 (September 1994) 94-104. In this context the terms public and private refer to the late 20th century model of the open space of the urban public sphere and the closed spaces of the private, individual home; the contemporary distinction is important, relating as it does to the imposition of assumed bourgeois spatial designations that deny the diversity of society and the intermingling of its everyday practices. For further reference see Certeau, Michel de. *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1984) and Negt, Osker. and Kluge, Alexander. "The Public Space and Experience: Selections" *October* no. 46 (Fall 1988) 60-82. Negt and Kluge provide an analysis of the bourgeois public sphere as construction. Duncan, Carol. "The Art Museum as Ritual" *Art Bulletin* vol. LXXVII, no. 1 (March 1995) 10-13.

166 Kelly, Mary. "Reviewing Modernist Criticism" *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation* ed. Brian Wallis (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984) 100-101.

The *Storefront* project by Steven Holl (architect) and Vito Acconci (artist) followed a collaborative program in the design and installation of a facade for the *Storefront for Art and Architecture* gallery on the corner of Kenmare and Cleveland streets in the Soho district of Manhattan. (*fig.* 11.a.) Commissioned by Shirin Neshat and Kyong Park, the facade was devised as an "...experiment in built form,"[167] an attempt to interpret the theoretical concerns of the *Storefont* (an exhibiting organisation devoted to the publication of art and architecture on the margins of the cultural debate) through a critical practice.[168] As stated in the pamphlet, the gallery required a new facade, a public identity on the street, together with access, security and shelter. At issue in the facade program was a continued resistance to the institution and an enhanced public identity without the loss of marginal status and the attendant possibility of absorption into the mainstream gallery community, represented by the nearby private galleries and the recent redeployment of the institution in the form of the *Soho Guggenheim* on Broadway.

The program initiated by *Storefront* was published in a pamphlet which accompanied the project, outlining the concerns of the *Storefront* organisation in terms of a sustained "culture of experiment."[169] The facade was to be collaborative and temporary and was to initiate a series of project facade commissions on the part of *Storefront*. The object was to create a direct confrontation with the traditional architectural and artistic value system of material permanence and individual creativity. The *Storefront* intended to operate critically along the margins of the recognised institution while acknowledging the changes taking place within that institution as it entered into the domain of alternative, marginal discourse.

> "While the dominance of the centres waver, new ideas, individuals and institutions are emerging. Changes are in order and, without centres, the margins lose their value. Then, the confrontation of the

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167 Park, Kyong. *Storefront Art and Architecture. Vito Acconci and Steven Holl: A Collaborative Building Project* (New York: Storefront Art and Architecture, 1993).

168 Woods, Lebbeus. "Storefront for Art and Architecture " *Sites* no. 19 (1987) 49-65 and Woods, Lebbeus "Storefront: Iconoclasm, invention and the ideal" *Architecture and Urbanism*. no. 2 197 (1987) 71-98.

169 Park.

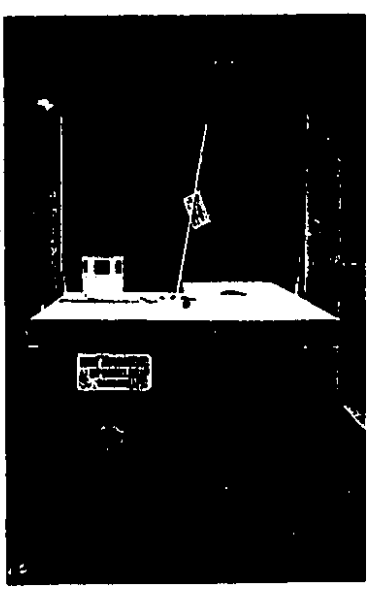

Fig.11.a,b,c. *Storefront for Art and Architecture*, Steven Holl and Vito Acconci, New York, 1994.

main and the alternative becomes void, and the new position of "margin" would be to redefine the centre in order to occupy it."[170]

The curator Kyong Park proposed that the program of the exhibition might recognise the contemporary construction of public and private: the assumed liberty of the public sphere as it had been subverted through surveillance procedures and the violation of the private sphere through the voyeuristic activities of the mass media in the penetration of the individual private home by an invasive televisual agenda. "Spaces, physical and otherwise, are now private and public; simultaneously open and closed at the same time."[171]

A wall follows the side-walk, tracing the curve of Cleveland and Kenmare, linking the *Storefront* to *Eileen's* cheesecake cafe on Cleveland and a row of empty storefronts on Kenmare: a street level facade with private apartments above. The smooth green wall of the gallery creates a visual caesura, a silent break in the rhythm of the street. When closed, the facade, a masonite skin of irregular steel-trimmed panels, echoes the shutters of the surrounding businesses. Open, the panels pivot horizontally and vertically, projecting out into the street and back into the gallery. (*fig.* 11.b.c.) During the course of subsequent exhibitions the panels will operate as display surfaces and contribute to the formulation of individual projects in relation to the *Storefront* agenda, literally offering the work out to the street and enticing the viewer inside. In plan, the gallery, a shallow triangle ninety feet long, reaching its apex at the angle of Kenmare and Cleveland, is cut into smaller units by the vertical panels of the open facade which can be set at varying angles throughout the day. No door is distinguished by the facade, the panels break providing access from several points along the sidewalk. By virtue of the scale and angle of the construction, an otherwise clear space can be reconstructed in a number of permutations to suit the demands of individual exhibitions. The object position, the identification of art or architecture as such is undermined by the spatial distribution and the decorative limitations of the site. The space of the *Storefront* may shift and change; the exhibition will move when the gallery opens and closes; horizontal and vertical surfaces are not assured as they are in the much vaunted permanence of the conventional museum and gallery. According to the demands of the climate, the

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170 Park.
171 Park.

artist and the curator, the gallery will be a closed, artificially illuminated space, accessible through a single break in the facade, or an extension of the street outside.

In the *Storefront* the architecture of the exhibition does not merely serve to accommodate the art work but rather, it plays an active role in the interpretative process. The work on display will be preserved and guarded in accord with the established function of exhibition architecture; however, resting outside on the horizontal shelf of the facade, its material value will be challenged through direct contact with the passer-by. Whilst the space of the exhibition is flexible, the *Storefront* remains an exhibition with fixed opening times, publications, publicity and an established record of presentation. Vito Acconci has voiced the following concerns in relation to the project. "One thing that confuses me about the theory of the project is: who moves these walls anyway? People from the street? Artists/architects having a show? Gallery Directors? We might have set up a structure of instrumentation but whose hands is the instrument in?"[172] The space is interpretative but it is still a gallery, and object value is still ultimately prioritised through conditions of reception dictated by the built site and the administration.

The rhetoric of the *Storefront* initiates a discourse by advancing into the physical space of the city street through its built form, and the conceptual space of the art institution through a written text. Whilst admitting the conceptual ground of late modernity as the reserved art space, the project attempts to displace it. A spectator moving past or entering the *Storefront* is the recipient of a number of exhibitions: the exhibition as catalogue, the exhibition as storehouse and, with the mediation of the pamphlet publication, the exhibition in relation to the social and economic discourse of the art institution and as such, an individual selection and contribution is recognised. The *Storefront* attempts a level of self-awareness, a conscious acknowledgment of the individual as artist, architect, viewer, and citizen by situating the experiment within the wider cultural debate. However, this awareness is limited. In an attempt to avoid specific ideological agendas, the *Storefront* denies any political agenda, laying claim to a "relevant" neutrality.[173] A paradoxical statement which ignores both the indisputable politics of any public presentation and the impossibility of architectural

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[172] Vito Acconci interviewed by Claudia Gould *Storefront Art and Architecture. Vito Acconci and Steven Holl: A Collaborative Building Project* (New York: Storefront Art and Architecture ,1993).
[173] Park.

neutrality. The architectural iconography of the *Storefront* denies the "white cube" in assuming the aesthetic of the storage warehouse redolent of industrial units and factory doors, containment, collection and storage; a commercial reference to a consumer culture that is only superficially at odds with the program of the modern exhibition engenders the distracted passage of the shopper through the contemplative space of the gallery. It is in this ambiguity that one can most clearly discern the threat of disappearance for the critical gallery exhibition as a discursive text; the requirement to traverse the minefield of implications, references and associations in order to avoid the supposed limitations of an ideological label, whilst still acknowledging presence and position.

The *Creative Time* installation takes the advance of art and architecture into the city one step further. Created by a number of artists, architects and designers in cinemas and storefronts on 42nd Street, the exhibition took place in the Summer of 1994. Inscribed on cinema marquees and billboards, installed in foyers and storefronts, the *42nd Street Project* defined the facade of the street as a surface to be, quite literally, read.

The *Creative Time* agenda lay claim to the cultivation and creation of "new publics," situating the art work in the space and the time of the city, through an address to the dual notions of consumption and voyeurism.[174] (*fig*. 12.a.) The twenty five projects arrayed along the edge of 42nd Street operated in full recognition of their site: the relationship to the scale, the space and the dimensions of the commercial thoroughfare. At the level of the pedestrian viewer the projects invaded the space of the side-walk either physically or intellectually, merging with the information signage on billboards and shop fronts, manipulating with the procedures of advertisement and consumption. Playing with the most prosaic expectations of the 42nd Street spectator, Robert Rosenheck's *Love Pictures* offered a free peep show which revealed a series of photographic stills recording the adventures of a "LOVE" sign. (*fig*. 12.b.) Meanwhile, the epigrams displayed on Dee Evett and the Haiku Society of America's *Theatre Marquees*, displaced the anticipated literal information of movie times with observations on the minutiae of individual lives. (*fig*. 13.a.b.c.d.)

"With a flourish the waitress leaves behind rearranged smears."[175]

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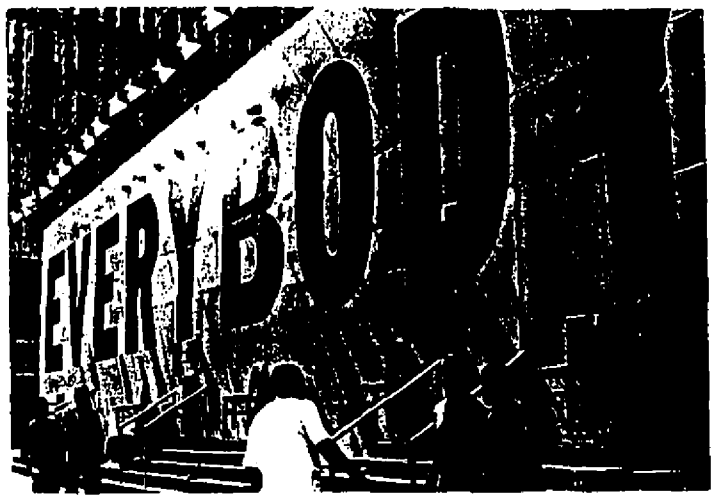
[174] Creative Time. *42nd Street Art Project* (New York: Creative Time, 1994).

[175] Dee Evett and the Haiku Society of America *42nd Street Project*, New York, Summer 1994.



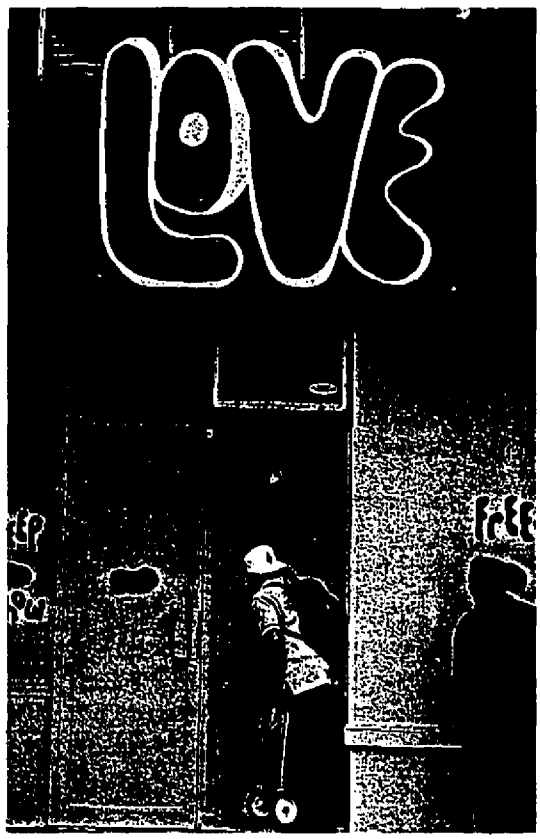
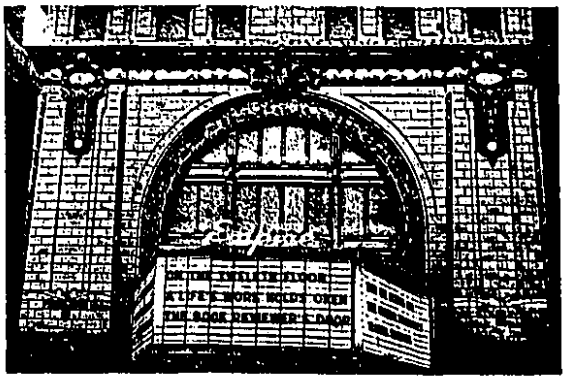
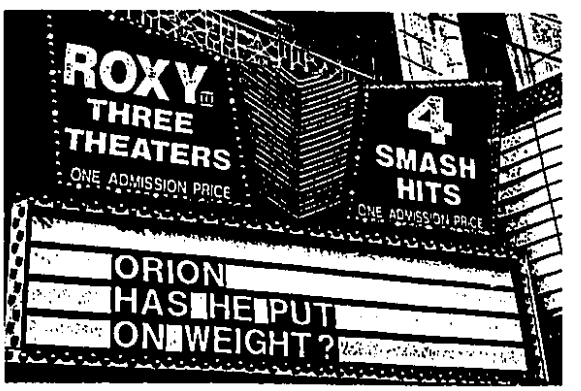
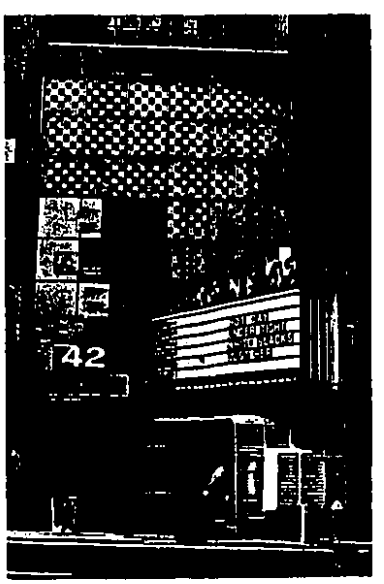


Fig.12.a. *Everybody*, Tibor Kalman and Scott Stowell, 42nd Street, New York, 1994.
Fig.12.b. *Love Pictures*, Pobert Rosenheck, 42nd Street, New York, 1994.







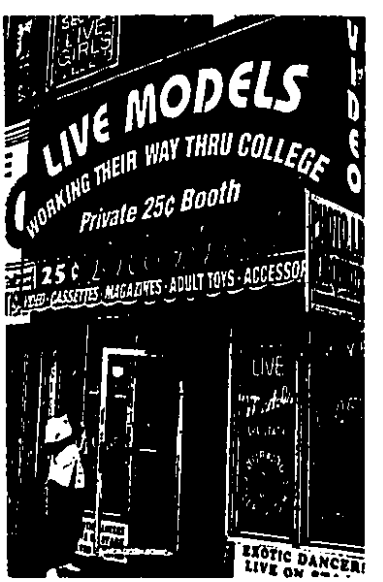


Fig.13.a,b,c. *Theatre Marquees*, Dee Evetts and the Haiku Society of America, 42nd Street, New York, 1994.

Fig. 13. d. 42nd Street, New York, 1994.

Through the arrangement of constructions, statuary and texts in the public zone defined by the commercial building and the sidewalk, the ritual of the exhibition continued to mark a path through the space, its place in the cultural tradition assured. However, as a fragment of the presentation as a whole, the exhibition structure could no longer claim to prescribe the aesthetic experience. The process of surveillance, the control and orchestration of the individual through a procedure of mutual observation which relied upon generally established modes of behaviour, was undermined in the recognition of individually constructed paths. In a critique formulated in the language of the institution, the institution was challenged.

Along the side-walk and the street, the installation identified the passer-by as viewer, the distracted witness of Benjamin's thesis, appropriating the architecture of the exhibition "...noticing the object in incidental fashion."[176] By absorbing the *42nd Street Project* into his or her individual conception of the city, the individual subject could construct another exhibition text, a guide-book topography linking the galleries and shops of the Soho district with the museums and public projects along the broad thoroughfares of Manhattan. In this displacement of the object as such, the spectator is recognised. The site, the architecture, the art, the street, the city and the temporal dimension of the exhibition visit, all serve to recognise the multiplicity of the viewing subject. The spectator is no longer the generic art audience following a prescribed path through the catalogue of aesthetic experiences but rather, an active participant. The apogee of the exhibition, the disembodied space of the *Salon Livret*, becomes a fragment, a contribution to the physical experience of the site but no longer the means by which that experience is realised.

The participation which was inherent in the *Creative Time* agenda evoked a public sphere which did not serve to identify the mass of the population, but rather provided a stage for the individual's performance of his or her life; a ground for the process of social representation which situates the subject in relation to the prevailing social order; an ephemeral space of appearance which, by virtue of its various scales, subjects, objects and sites, does not service the unifying agenda of the public discourse of modernity. However, this late 20th century exhibition carried with it the undeniable knowledge of the art institution as a didactic construction. At issue for a project such as *Creative Time* was the

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176 Benjamin 240-241.

extent to which it might be possible to use the existing site critically without converting it into the institution, to name the practice of exhibition without losing the cultural identity of the site. The paradoxical condition of any form of critical practice that plays with the forms of the established cultural and socio-economic institutions has been identified by Benjamin Buchloh as the potential for absorption.

> "...the critical annihilation of cultural conventions itself immediately acquires the conditions of the spectacle, [that] the insistence on artistic anonymity and the demolition of authorship produces instant brand names and identifiable products, and [that] the campaign to critique conventions of visuality and textual intervention, billboard signs, anonymous handouts, and pamphlets inevitably ends by following the preestablished mechanisms of advertising and marketing campaigns."[177]

Just as the *42nd Street Project* operated on the public margins of the city street, so the *Chambres d'amis* redeployed the institutional debate in the homes of private individuals. For three months in the summer of 1986, artists from Europe and North America installed work in 58 inhabited houses in the Belgian city of Gent. Defined by set visiting hours, a catalogue text and a map situating each installation, the exhibition was described by the curator Jan Hoet as a "cautious, lucid flirt," between the museum and the inhabited spaces of daily life.[178] *Chambres d'amis* involved individual and collaborative projects, sited installations, texts and museum installation. The catalogue, a substantial documentation of individual projects with an accompanying curatorial essay provides both a material resource and a definition of the exhibition program.

The distribution of the work in occupied spaces, in rooms, vestibules and corridors served to undermine the spatial frame of the institution. As the curator Hoet observed in his catalogue essay, the familiar ritual understanding of built public space was undermined. Where a closed door or a corridor in a gallery clearly marks an office or a storeroom, defining the path of the exhibition, in the private home the associations are radically different. A closed door in a private

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[177] Buchloh, Benjamin H.D. "Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions" *October* no. 55 (Winter 1990) 105-143, 140.

[178] Hoet, Jan *Chambres d'amis* (Gent: Austellungskatalog Museum van Hedendaagse ,1986).

residence defines a secret, mysterious place not to be transgressed.[179] In the inhabited rooms, fixed opening hours acquire an alternative reading as the reserved time of the gallery is reinterpreted through the pattern of daily life as it revolves around the preparation of meals. Similarly, the plain wall surfaces and the uninterrupted spaces of the exhibition are lost to individual decorative schemes and the detritus of daily life.

Heike Pallanca's installation *Augen-Blicke - Einladung zum Dinner (Eyes - Views: The Dinner Invitation)*, occupied two rooms on the first and second floor of St. Annaplein 63.[180] (*fig.* 14) On the first floor a darkened room contained a row of five wooden chairs facing an illuminated photograph of an empty room. Above and to either side of the photograph, similarly illuminated pairs of eyes were attached to the wall at the level of the cornice. On the second floor, directly above the installation, the room represented in the photograph lay open to the visitor. Containing a table prepared for supper and four chairs, the room was illuminated by diffused sunlight from a large picture window. Invited to move between the two spaces, the ritual space of the uninhabited institution and the inhabited space of the home, the visitor was encouraged to observe or participate according to the relative position of the furnishings. In the room below, one could observe the photographic representation from a distance, whilst above, one could occupy the space of that representation. In this juxtaposition the spatial distribution, the furniture as functional and symbolic form, served to describe the space.

The house as exhibition site cuts through both the architecture of the exhibition, the coded forms of the "white cube," and the architecture of the home, the ritual paths between kitchen and dining room, bedroom and bathroom. While an unknown visitor is rarely afforded access to the upper floors of the home, the *Dinner Invitation* audience is allowed directly into the guest room. The spectator in the private residence is thereby obliged to acknowledge the implications of looking; to recognise the power and responsibility of the gaze, to realise a level of consciousness which had hitherto been displaced by the model of the detached, prescribed observer. In the home, the element of voyeurism is uppermost, as access to secret places and the implied penetration of private

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179 Hoet 343.

180 Hoet 346/349.

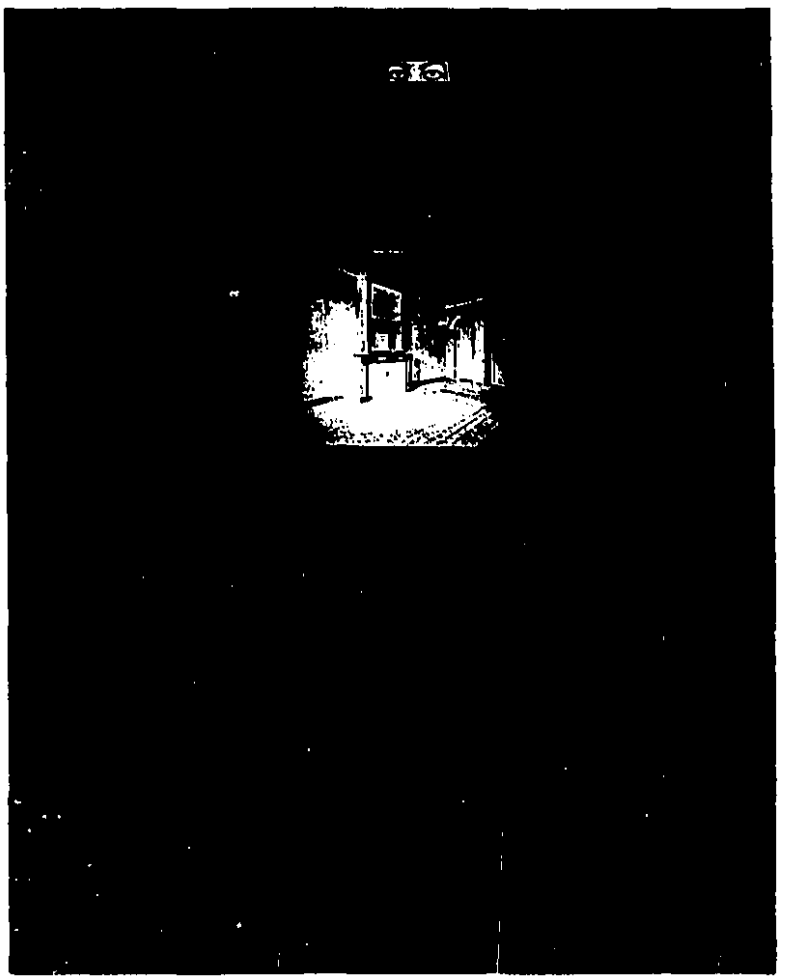

Fig.14. *Augen-Blicke- Einladung zum Dinner*, Heike Pallanca, Walter and Vreele Vander Cruysse - Verhasselt. St. Annaplien 63, Ghent, 1986.

spaces informs the viewer's confrontation with the work and qualifies the resulting interpretation.[181]

In Niele Toroni's intervention at Kortvijksesteenweg 551, a succession of blue brush marks painted on the white wall surface of the guest room at thirty centimetre intervals with a #50 brush require the direct confrontation of the viewer with the inhabitant. (*fig*. 15.) Recorded in the catalogue text, Toroni's definitive project required the proprietor to offer a drink of whisky to the visitor in the painted guest room. The combination of the artist's autographic mark, the brush stroke, with the scale of the prosaic domestic interior and the rituals of polite society, transgressed the essential subject-object distinction defined by the spatial program of the gallery. Behaviour and etiquette were subverted and the fixed procedures of social representation in the private home and the public exhibition were dismantled in an operation which required the individual subject to act with expediency: to perform.

In the catalogue text, Jan Hoet identified the conceptual ground for the experiment of the *Chambres d'amis* as the timeless uninhabited museum and the lived existence of the inhabited home.[182] In this institutional interpretation each site would rely upon the participation of a prescribed subject inhabitant and subject visitor. Addressing the subject position of the visitor in the dual space of the private home and the gallery in the Musée Condé in Chantilly, the critic Louis Marin has identified an alternative critical ground in the discourse between the role of the guest and that of the spectator, a ground which may operate as a counter to Hoet's model. [183]

> "On the one hand, the art work is offered to the disinterested contemplation of the visitor; on the other, the work constitutes a framework of life into which the visitor is invited: on the one hand, distancing from contemplation - the cognitive element; on the other, integration or 'play-acted' participation in a foreign existence - the practical element. On one hand, the rights of the visitor (who

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181 Lamoureux, Johanne. "Chambres d'amis" *Parachute* no. 44 (September-November 1986) 57-60.
182 Hoet 341-342.
183 Marin, Louis. «L'art de exposer... Notes de travail en vue d'un scénario» "The Art of Exhibiting...Notes for a Film" tr. Jeffrey Moore *Parachute* no. 43 (June-August 1986) 16-20 tr. Jeffrey Moore 57-71.

Fig.15. *Untitled*, Niele Toroni, Paul and Hilde Daem, Kortrijksesteenweg 551, Ghent, 1986.

pays to enter); on the other, the obligations of the guest (who must respect the decorum.)"[184]

Marin's analysis recognises the necessary ambiguity of any inhabited site, the creation of meaning in the museum or home relying upon the immediate operations of the individual subject, whereas Hoet's assumption of a "neutrality of vision" situates the exhibition agenda firmly within the purview of the Enlightenment model.[185] Daniel Buren's intervention/installation, *«Le Decor et son double» Pièce en deux actes ou un acte pour deux pièces avec papiers collés blanc et fuchia par D.B.* was a found site in Raas Gaverestraat 106, a published text in the *Chambres d'amis* exhibition catalogue and a construction in the Musée de Gand, which provided a direct, built address to the fallacy of the neutral architecture of the institution cited by Hoet.

In the catalogue text two black and white photographs depict a bedroom and its replica separated by two sheets of tracing paper, each with a fuschia stripe drawn diagonally across the page from right to left and left to right. As the reader turns the pages, the bedroom transforms from the representation of the room in the Musée Gand to the room in the Raas Gaverestraat 106 site. (*fig.* 16.a.b.c.d.) In the catalogue, the equalising view of the monocular camera lens belies any distinction between the inhabited room and the replica; we rely upon the written label to distinguish an assumed reality from its representation. Using the material and intellectual formulae of the art institution, the catalogue as the final document of the temporal exhibition which situates it in the historical continuum of the history of art, Buren introduces the element of doubt. Undermining the certainty, the truth of the photographic image and the written text, he restores meaning to the spectator as reader and links that meaning to the spatio-temporal context of the exhibition.

In Buren's project, the formal authority of the built site, the museum and the home is subverted as the private bedroom of Annick and Anto Herbert, defined by its scale, furnishing and relative position in the distribution of the private house, is duplicated in the museum and the catalogue text. The intimacy of the bedroom is offered to public scrutiny; the voyeurism of the project made explicit. The creation and interpretation of meaning is recognised as the

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[184] Marin 57.

[185] Buchloh 137.

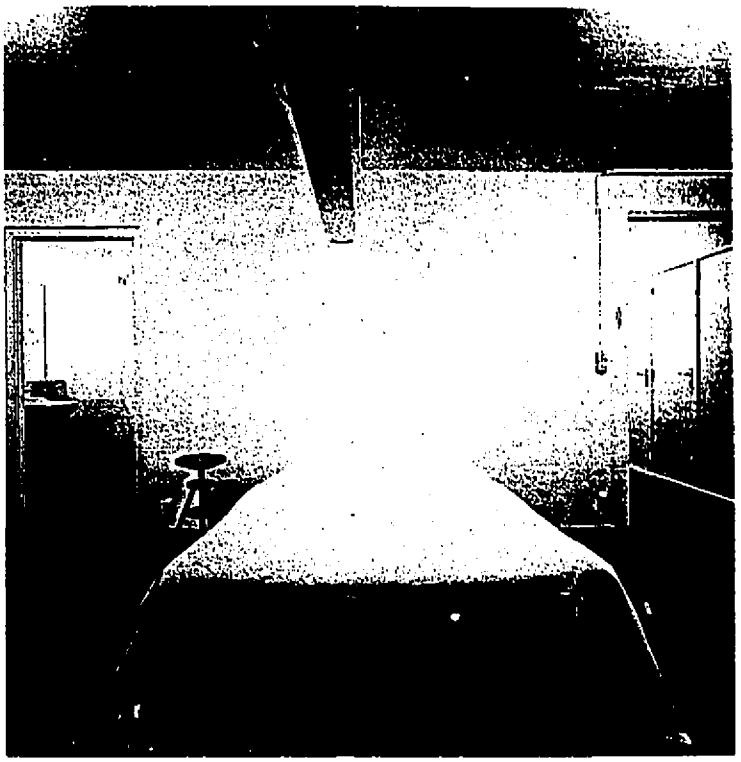

Fig.16. *«Decor et son double» pièce en deux actes ou un acte pour deux pièces avec papiers collés blanc et fuchsia par D.B.*, Daniel Buren, Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Annick and Anton Herbert, Raas van Gaverestraat 106, Ghent, 1986.

Fig.16.a. Musée du Gand.

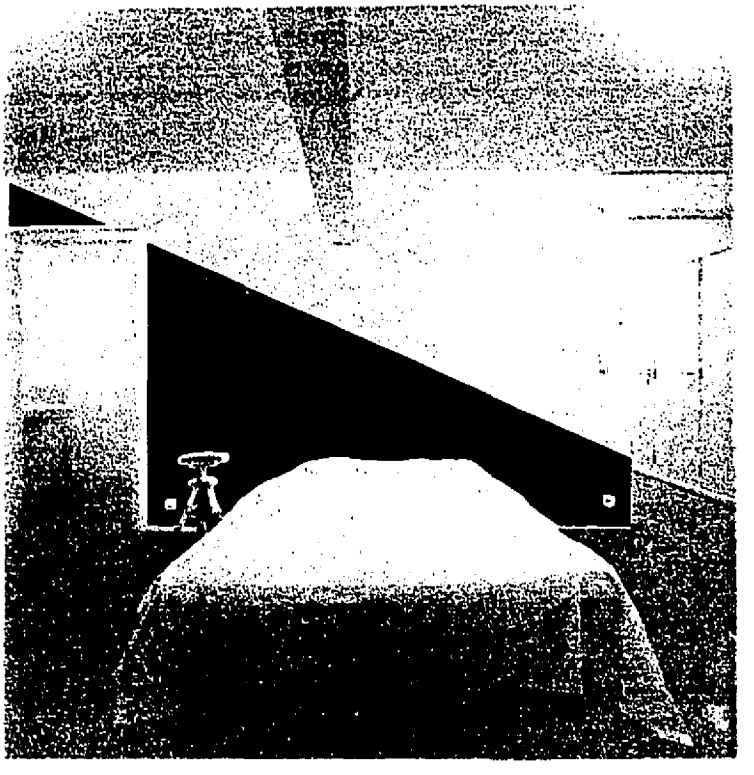

Fig.16.b. Musée du Gand.

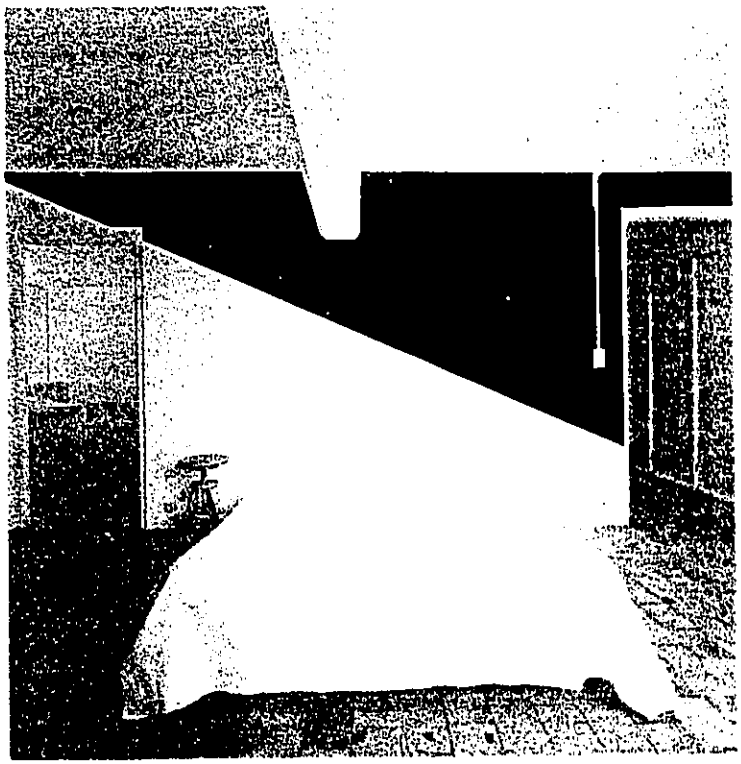

Fig.16.c. Raas van Gaverestraat 106.

Fig.16.d. Raas van Gaverestraat 106.

responsibility of the individual spectator or reader. In effect, *Decor et son double* reproduces the procedures of aesthetic experience, the conceptual frame of the institution.

At issue for the *Chambres d'amis* was the limit of the institution. Just as *Creative Time* displaced the secure ritual of the public institution through the intervention of the city street, so the domestic installations of the *Chambres d'amis* subverted the conventions of privacy. In both exhibitions the temporal site of the presentation may be privileged over the object and the architecture. The *Chambres d'amis* bears witness to the possibility of an alternative space for art, where the performance of the exhibition allows for multiple individual interpretations on the part of the viewer. Moving from house to house, the subject is encouraged to acknowledge the responsibility of vision, the implications of the site: the spatial designations and the temporal specificity of meaning in operation in the city, the museum, and the private home.[186]

Conclusion

In the late 20th century the society of institutions has become synonymous with reality. The intellectual need for principles, for an objective order in society has been made manifest in the modern era in regulated systems of kinship, culture and economics. With the advance of the new technologies however, the privilege of the institution has been put into question and the displacement of an objective value system has created a cultural *impasse* which cannot be denied.

The point of departure for this discussion, the Enlightenment aesthetic project, has been the object of a contextual reinterpretation. It has been shown to be an act of expediency; a series of constructions in direct response to the changing society of 18th century Paris. In the *Salon* exhibition the site was primarily a *mise en scène*, a stage for the performance of a public life rather than a means by which to prescribe the experience of an individual subject. The audience, the public for art, was not the defined constituency of late modernity but rather, a diverse array of people identified according to the privilege and

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186 *Chambres d'Amis* was organised as part of *Initiatiff 86* a festival of exhibitions in Gent, promoting Belgian art and culture. The festival necessarily carried with it a particular agenda, indicated by the inclusion and exclusion of artists and projects. Alternative projects were installed independently by artists challenging the program of the festival, providing a further level of critique. See Bernard, Marcellis. «L'Art dans la ville» *Art Press* no. 106 (September 1986) 30.

position which they actively represented in public. The identification of the art object and the value with which it was attributed was not a reflection of inherent formal values but rather, an essential response to contemporary political, economic and cultural concerns. The historical art institution as such was not an 18th century phenomenon. Towards the end of the century there is evidence of a gradual process of cultural and social systematisation in the application of fixed categories to man and his artifacts however, that discussion demands a separate address to the context of the late 18th and early 19th century. Throughout this analysis it has been my contention that what is at issue is not the identification of an historical moment; the birth of the modern art institution, but rather, the recognition of the temporal and spatial specificity of knowledge; the conditions which create a particular interpretation of the identity and function of art in a given era: the nature of the site.

The juxtaposition of theory and practice in this thesis recognises that the site of appearance exists as the coincidence of the subject, the object and the site in a temporal exchange and, as such, belies the application of a single method. The projects of *Inappropriate Behaviour* attempt to perform an incision in the operation of daily life, subverting the assumed neutrality of the site, an architecture of mere physical accommodation, through the continual displacement of function and scale. In this way it may be possible to distinguish an alternative ground for creative practice in a site defined by its impermanence as a constant to and fro of appearance and disappearance, a delicate balance between invisibility and the institution.

The built investigations of the *Furniture Taxonomy* take the form of a collection of ornaments, iconic furnishings as found objects and built structures, each of which is incised with an alternative reading of a fictional text. A photograph is embedded in the fabric of an ornament or applied to its surface; a compartment is filled with pepper or lavender which permeates the air, ready to spill should a container fall or a cupboard be opened. In an accompanying narrative *LSD and Visual Perception: Alice masters her emotions*[187] a pamphlet recounts the history of an illness; a descent into madness and the progress of a cure. Through a collage of text and image the story juxtaposes the fact and fiction of a young woman's medical record with a selection of banal domestic

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187 Bernie, Victoria Clare. *LSD and Visual perception: Alice masters her emotions* (1994) unpublished pamphlet.

ephemera. The history unfolds within the dramatic frame of a stage direction; in the time it takes for a plate to fall.

The *Furniture Taxonomy* is an interpretation of the house as a theatrical space, a stage with actors, direction, a script and an audience. Operating on the premise that the furniture which decorates the public and private spaces of the built environment represents the social identification and the social aspiration of the individual within the community, the *Furniture Taxonomy* offers a reconsideration of domestic iconography. As the repository of a secret history, each ornament is ascribed a fictional identity as the material evidence of intimacy: promises, deceptions and desires contained within the correspondence, collections and documents of a private life. The furniture and its contents may be touched, opened, rearranged and, where relevant, emptied. In this way the narrative course of the whole and the part may be reorganised according to individual whim and caprice.

In a complementary project, *The Incredible History of the Rococo Rear View Mirror* seeks to operate as an address to the received understanding of the public space of the street. Eight ornate vanity mirrors were transported through the city, attached to an array of vertical and horizontal steel supports. Installed in gardens, attached to buildings, railings and sign posts, they served to represent the immediate realities of the site to the viewer. Removed from the scale of the house and divorced from its intimate choreography, the mirrors momentarily replaced the individual in the city.

In the late 20th century the individual home is systematically proffered as the ultimate manifestation of privacy; the city street is its antithesis. In practice, the distinction is ambiguous. In a society sustained by the new technologies of television, video and satellite transmission, the assumption of constant surveillance is implicit and the private home merely serves to define an alternative public space where action is ordered and defined by a combination of structural conventions and accumulated notions of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. While creative practice and theoretical research continue to conspire in the delusion of the ordered society, in the sanctity of the institution, the ground for a critical culture will be held in check.

"Utz spent hours in the museums of Dresden, scrutinising the ranks of the *Commedia dell' Arte* figures that had come from the royal collections. Locked behind glass, they seemed to beckon him into their secret, Lilliputian world - and also to cry for their release. His second publication was entitled *The Private Collector*:

'An object in a museum case,' he wrote, 'must suffer the de-natured existence of an animal in the zoo. In any museum the object dies - of suffocation and the public gaze - whereas private ownership confers on the owner the right and need to touch. As a young child will reach out to handle the thing it names, so the passionate collector, his eye in harmony with his hand, restores to the object the life giving touch of its maker. The collector's enemy is the museum curator. Ideally, museums should be looted every fifty years, and their collections returned to circulation..."[188]

188 Chatwin, Bruce. *Utz* (London: Penguin, 1988) 19-20.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

A FURNITURE TAXONOMY

&

THE INCREDIBLE HISTORY OF THE ROCOCO REAR VIEW MIRROR

Victoria Clare Bernie

1994-1995

"A pigeon keeps its head imperturbably vertical while its body is moved every which way. Gravity pulls on the fluid in the inner ear of most vertebrates and provides a keen sense of balance for the head. Thus both bird and man can perceive the world with a steady gaze."

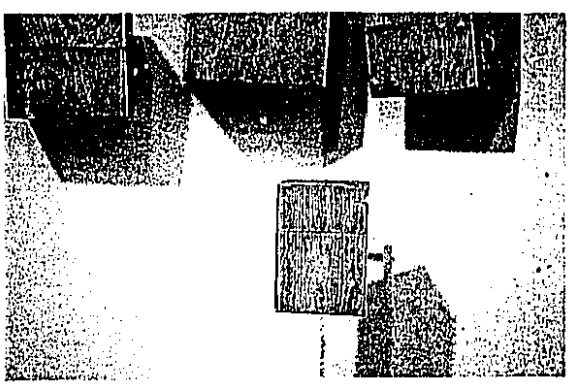
John Rowan Wilson *The Mind* TIME LIFE Science Library 1964 *page 46*

A FURNITURE TAXONOMY

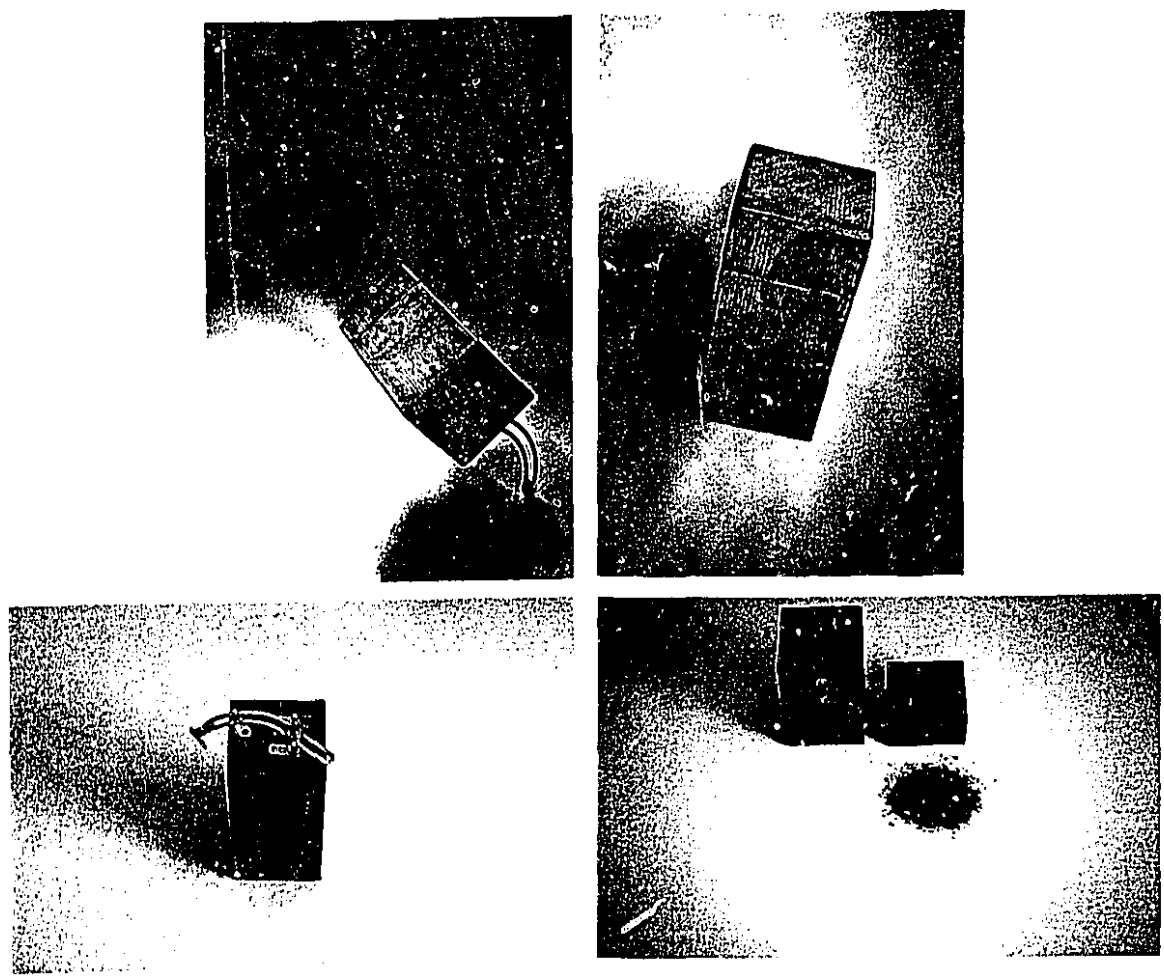
"In any twenty four hour period she will sleep up to sixteen hours. When tested, the subject proved preternaturally disposed to deep sleep. In accordance with current research we can assume that she 'experiences' upwards of one dream every ninety minutes."

Victoria Clare Bernie
LSD and Visual Perception: Alice masters her emotions 1994

PLATE 2



TEA CADDIES



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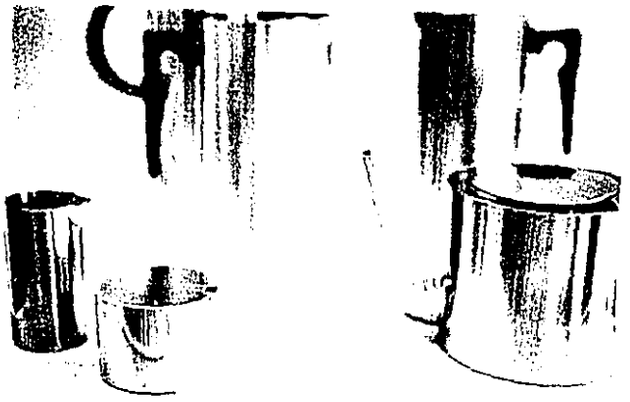


PLATE 5

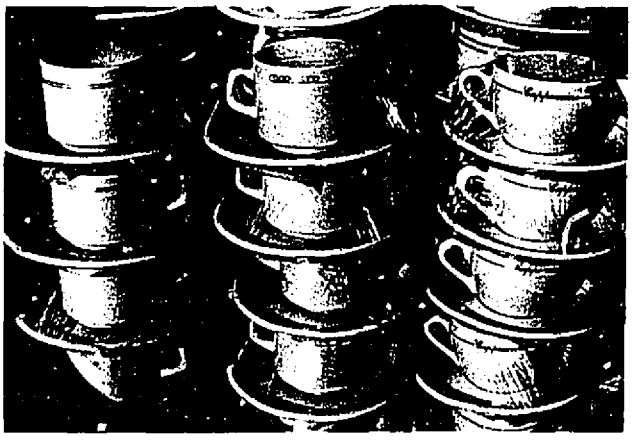
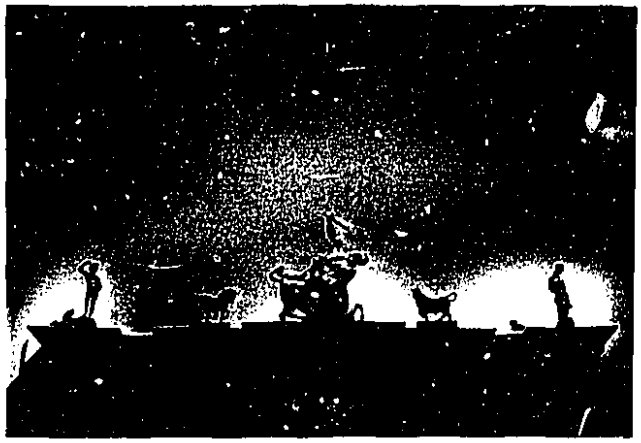
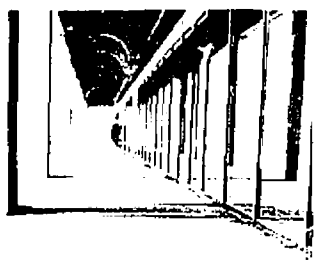
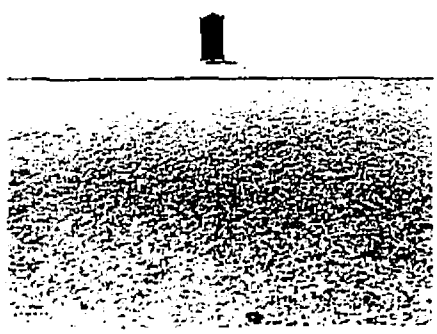


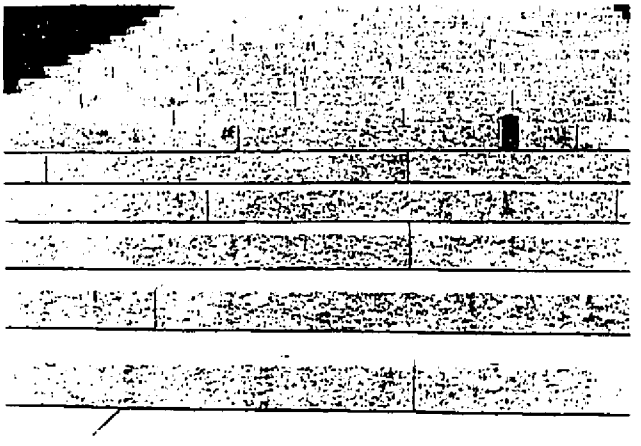
PLATE 6



FANTASY OF A LOST WARDROBE: IN HONOUR OF THE LADY WHO LOST IT







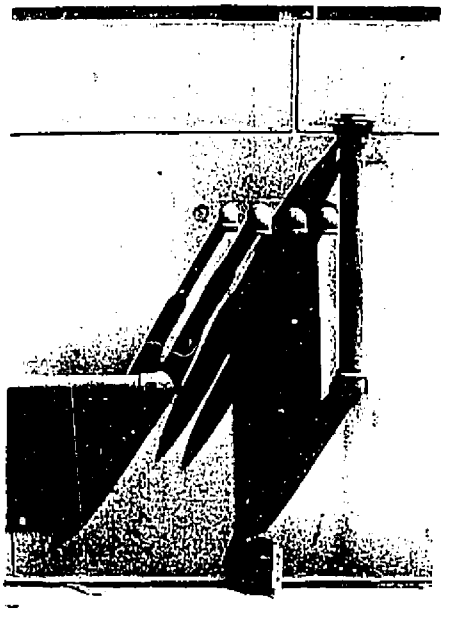
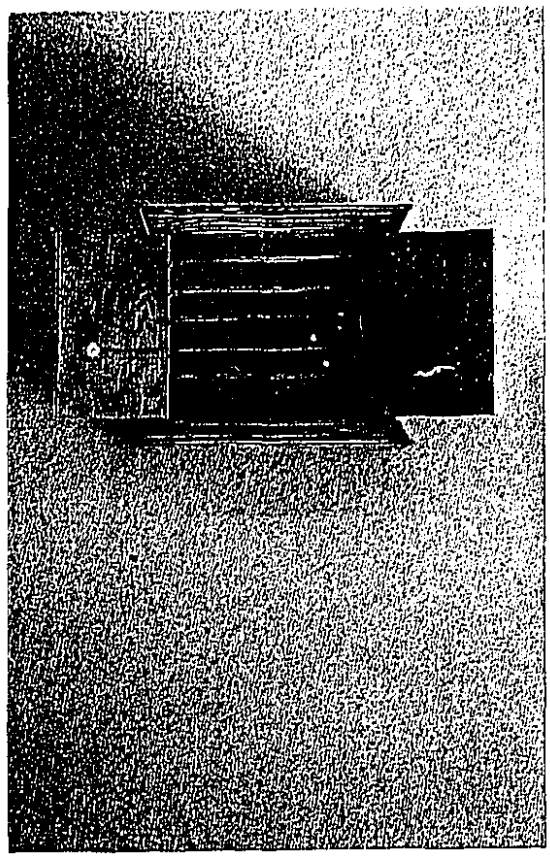


PLATE 10

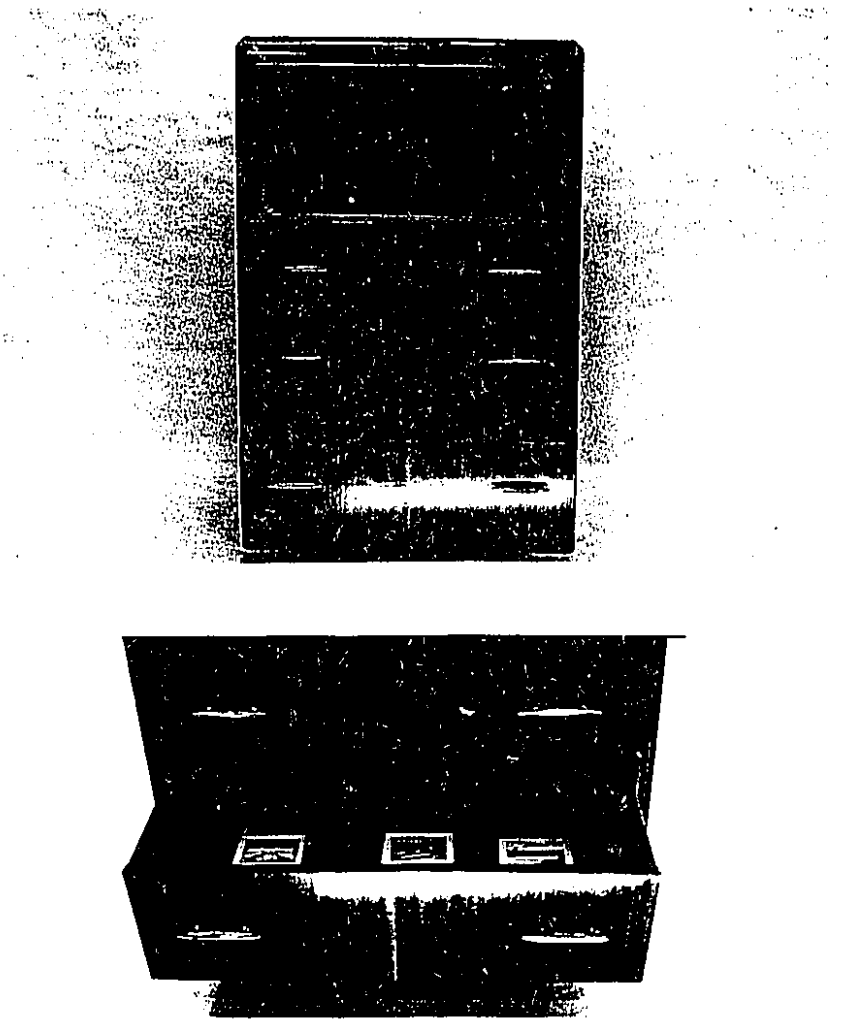
PLATE 11



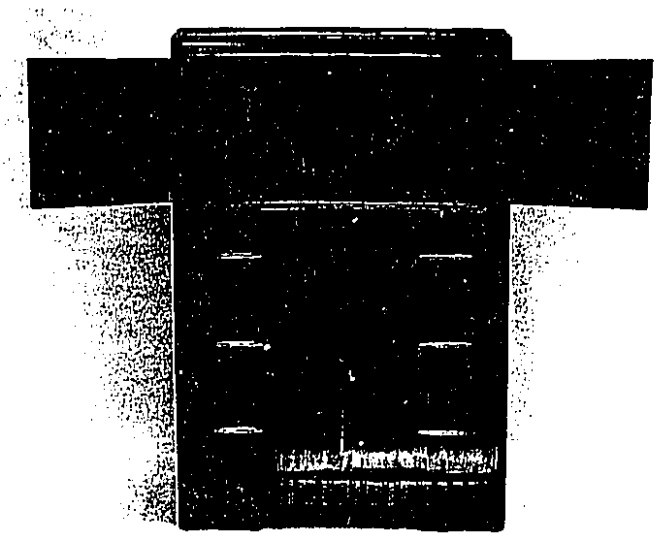
PEPPER BOX

PLATE 13

PLATE 14



CHIFFONIER



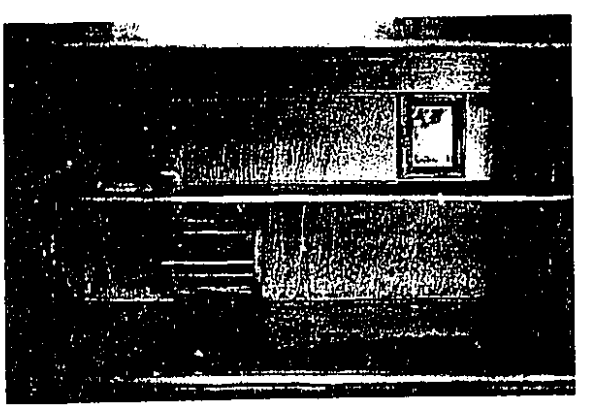


PLATE 16

PLATE 17

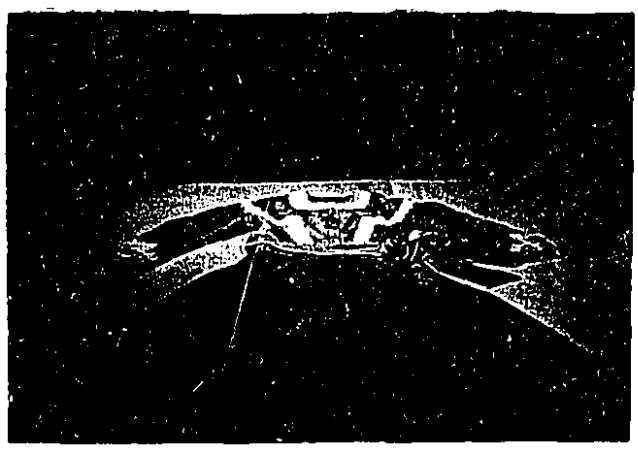
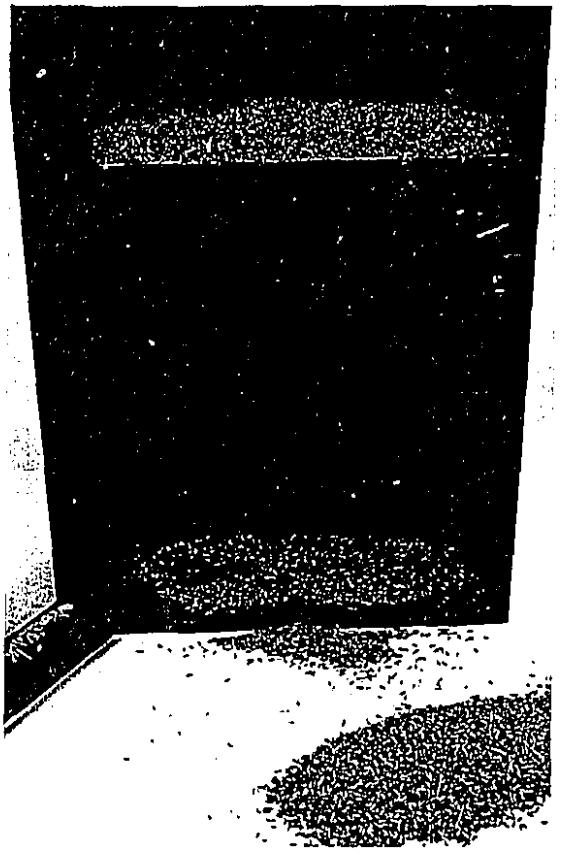


PLATE 18

PLATE 19

PLATE 20

PLATE 21



LAVENDER CABINET

PLATE 23

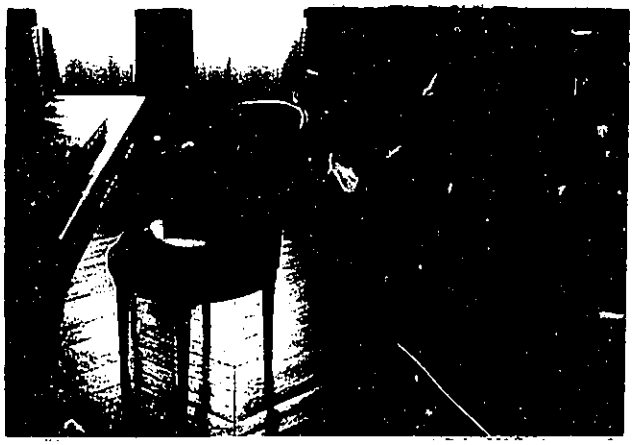
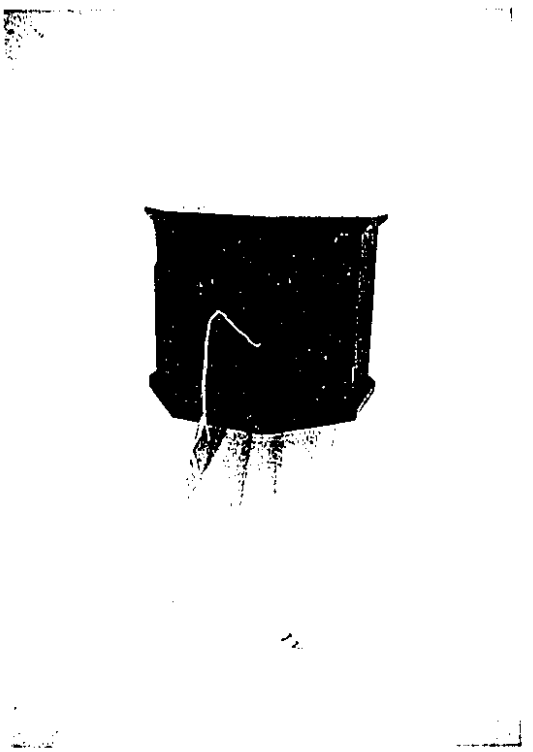


PLATE 24



BAQUET

PLATE 26

PLATE 27

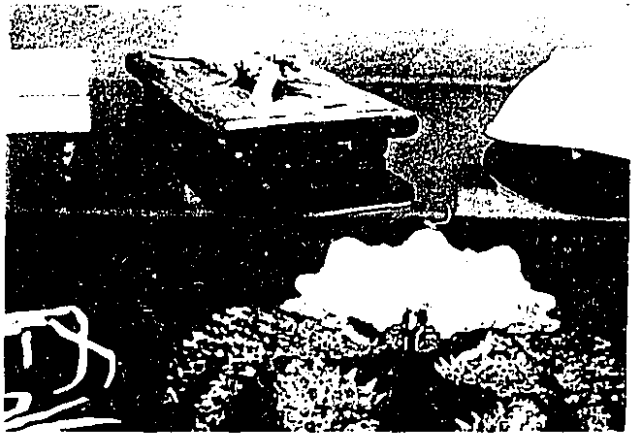


PLATE 28

PLATE 29

PLATE 30

INVENTORY

A SUITE OF 22 PHOTOGRAPHS: A TAXONOMY

&

Tea Caddies

14 wooden tea caddies containing 8 lb. of Orange Pekoe and 1 lb. of Jasmine tea. 12 brass devices, brackets for attaching tea caddies to vertical surfaces. The caddies may be detached, rearranged, emptied. The contents are likely to spill.

Fantasy of a lost wardrobe: in honour of the lady who lost it

5 mahogany-framed photographs: a suite. The documentary history of a miniature wardrobe, measuring 4"x2"x1". The photographs depict a journey from the town to the country.

Pepper Box

A small dark-wood wall cupboard measuring 8"x10"x3" installed above an end table. The cupboard stands 6 feet from the ground. Inside, 5 shallow shelves are liberally sprinkled with pepper. The cupboard doors may be opened.

Chiffonier

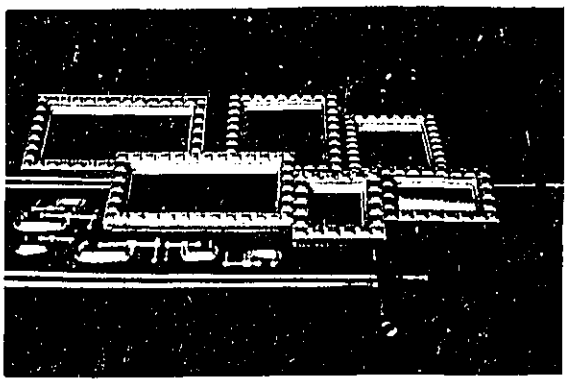
A highly polished fine wood chiffonier. A cupboard with two hanging compartments and a single framed photograph; a mirror against a floral wallpaper. Three drawers containing laundered white linen; between each sheet, a sprinkling of fresh lavender. In the third drawer, imbedded in the bottom, three photographs depicting: a nightgown, a bed and a stone basin with soap and a towel. The linen may be removed or rearranged.

Lavender Cabinet

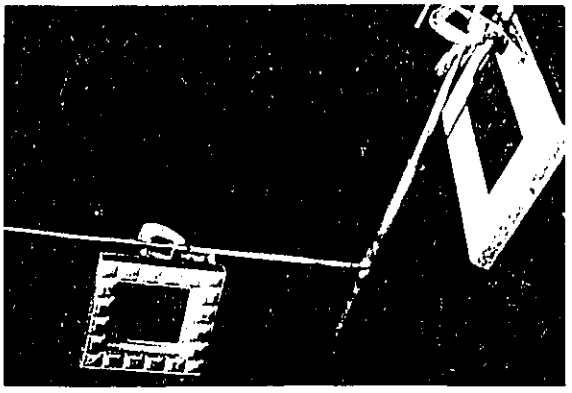
A dark oak cabinet, attached to the wall at eye-level. A plain glass door with brass handle and hinges. The cabinet contains a single shelf and holds 2 lb. of dried lavender. When the door is opened the contents will fall.

Baquet

A low octagonal cabinet in dark oak. Three framed photographs hang from 6 brass hooks: a bird in flight, a monkey and a crab.



THE INCREDIBLE HISTORY OF THE ROCOCO REAR VIEW MIRROR



"What does a mirror do? 'It reflects,' like a human mind; but the ordinary run of mirrors obey a simple and inexorable physical law; they reflect as would a rigid, obsessed mind that claims to gather in itself *the* reality of the world - as though there were only one!"

Primo Levi *The Mirror Maker* 1989 *pages 47-48*

PLATE 33

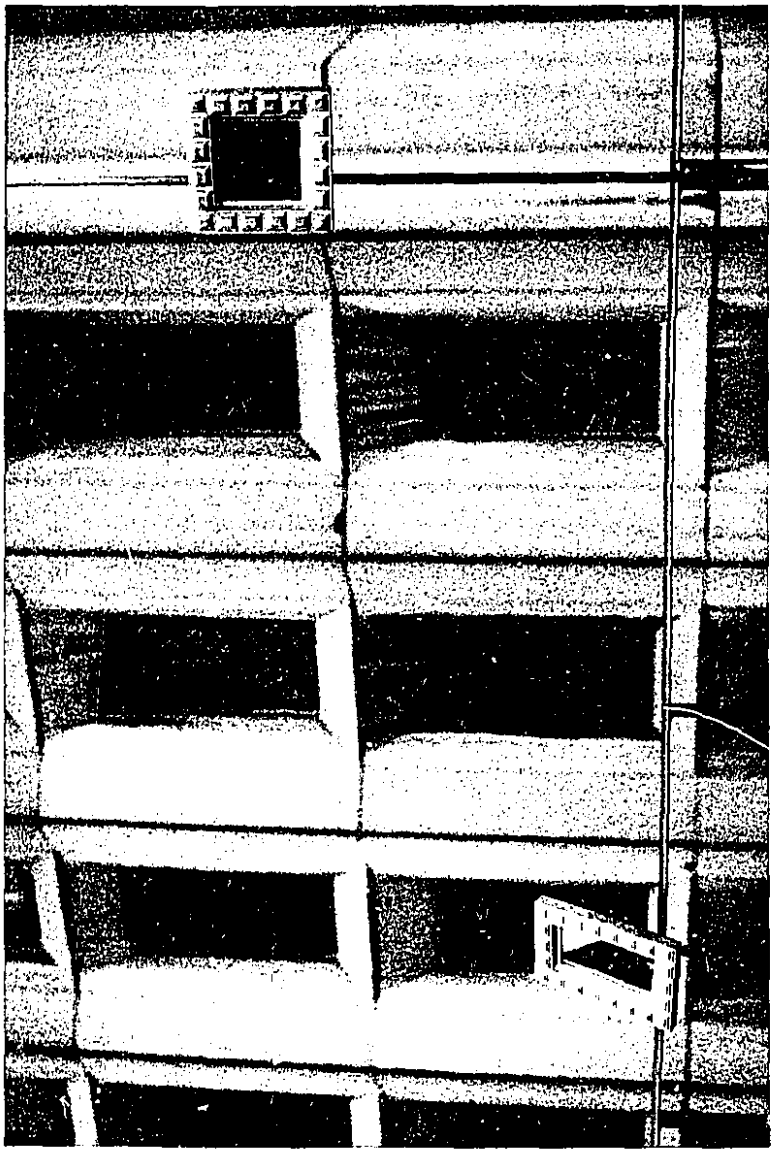


PLATE 34

PLATE 35

PLATE 36

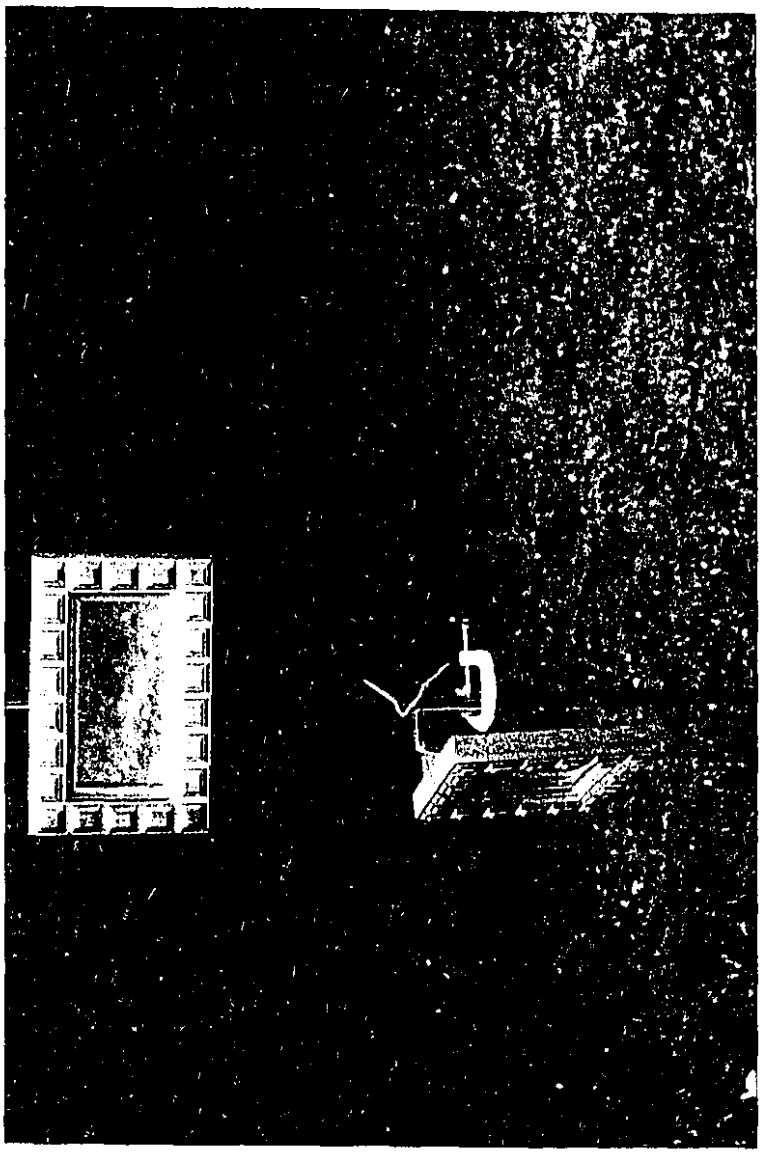


PLATE 37

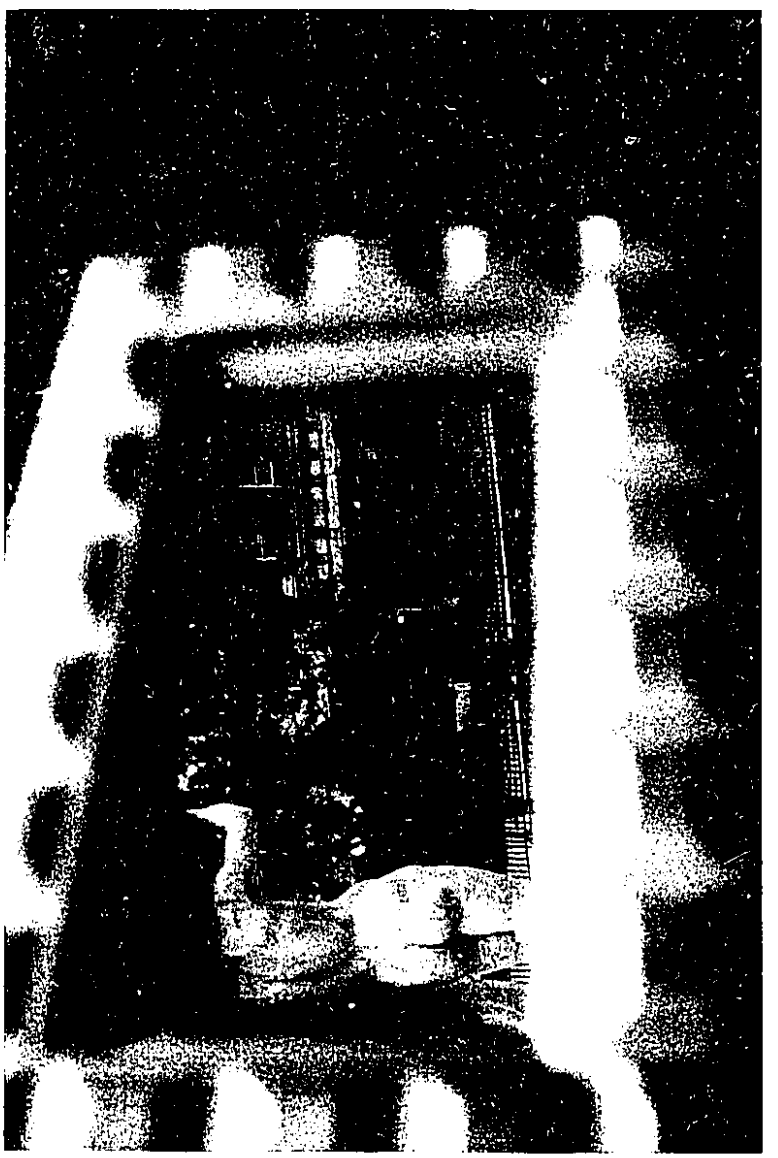


PLATE 38

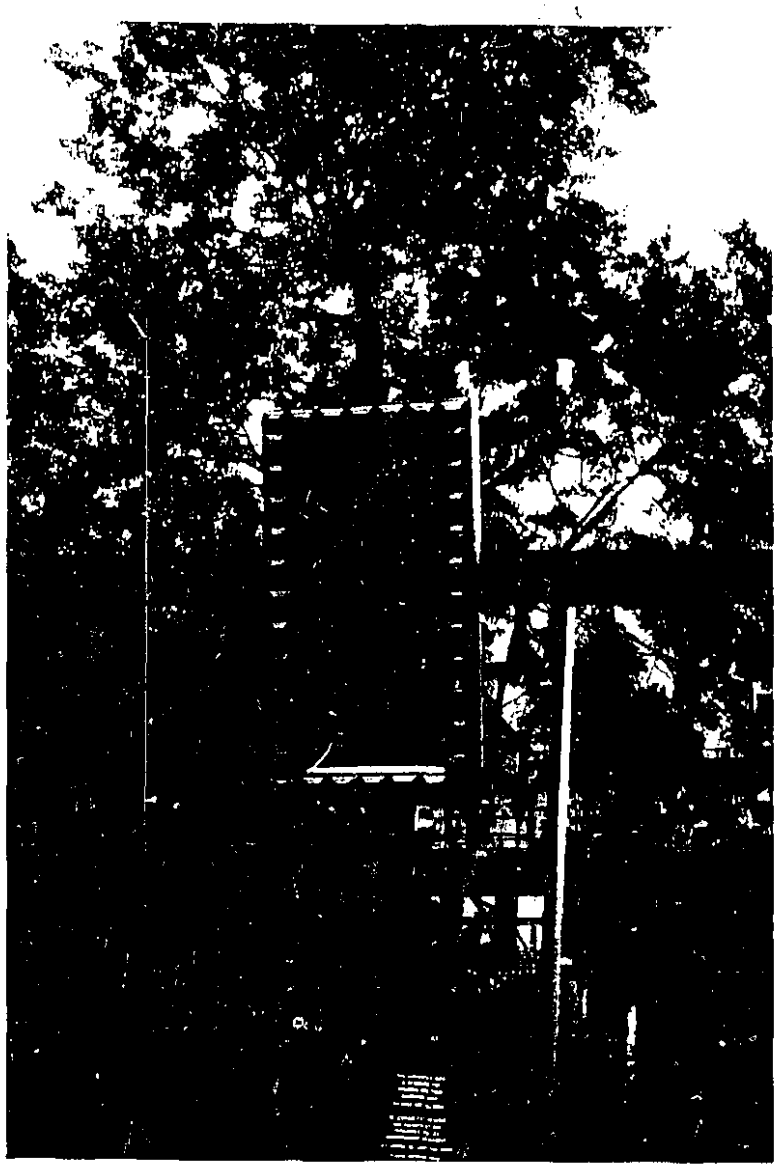


PLATE 39

ILLUSTRATIONS

Title Page — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 1.a,b. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 2.a. — Aulanier, Christiane. *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre* vol. I-VII (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1947-1958) vol. 2, pl. 3.

Fig. 2.b. — Aulanier, Christiane. *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre* vol. I-VII (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1947-1958) vol. 2, pl. 4.

Fig. 3.a. — Aulanier, Christiane. *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre* vol. I-VII (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1947-1958) vol. 5, pl. 2.

Fig. 3.b. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 4. — Aulanier, Christiane. *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre* vol. I-VII (Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1947-1958) vol. 7, pl. 26.

Fig. 5.a,b — Blunt, Anthony. *Art and Architecture in France 1500-1700* (London: Penguin, 1988) fig. 181, 182

Fig. 6. — Sahut, Marie-Catherine, and Volle, Nathalie. *Diderot & l'Art de Boucher à David: les Salons, 1759-1781* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1984) fig. 25.

Fig. 7. — Sahut, Marie-Catherine, and Volle, Nathelie. *Diderot & l'Art de Boucher à David: les Salons, 1759-1781* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1984) fig. 27.

Fig. 8. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 9.a. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 9.b. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 10. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 11.a,b,c. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 12.a. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 12.b. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 13.a,b,c. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 13. d. — Photo. V.C. Bernie.

Fig. 14. — Hoet, Jan. *Chambres d 'amis* (Gent: Austellungskatalog Museum van Hedendaagse, 1986) 176.

Fig. 15. — Hoet, Jan. *Chambres d 'amis* (Gent: Austellungskatalog Museum van Hedendaagse, 1986) 253.

Fig. 16. a,b,c,d. Hoet, Jan. *Chambres d 'amis.* (Gent: Austellungskatalog Museum van Hedendaagse, 1986) 40, 40, 41, 41.

Plates 1-39 — Photo. V.C. Bernie

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