

looking sideways: a wölfflinian adjacency.

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One of art history's most ubiquitous pedagogical techniques was developed using a darkened room and two slide projectors. Its inventor, Heinrich Wölfflin, used the cycling of dual imagery to produce a comparative formal analysis – the famous 'compare and contrast' ubiquitous to this day. This mode of reading the great works of art and architecture was accompanied by a language of absolute binary classifications – 'this versus that', 'multiplicity versus unity', 'tectonic form versus a-tectonic form', and so on.

Much later, and in the field of architecture, Colin Rowe takes this binary move one step further by bringing together a trans-historical 'this' and 'that'. In his essay *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa*, Rowe compares radically dissimilar contextual and historical bedfellows. Through this adjacency he produces a new reading of architecture, one that suggests the potential of an architectural language. Architecture becomes text.

More broadly than the double, it is also worth considering how the modality of reading itself is mobilized across multiple forms and mediums. In the case of architectural drawings, the eye reads between the orthogonal representations of plan, section, and elevation to produce an image that is both the object of the drawings

and yet obviously absent. It is interesting to note that new media artists are now incorporating this ability to read non-linear and multiple 'windows' of information into their artworks-as-experience. Artist Doug Aitken's work creates immersive walk-throughs, with overlapping visual projections and acoustics. This is less an experience of straightforward narrative than an unfolding of meaning through a progression of images resonating with the previous screens.

In a more straightforward example, we see the identical wall-mounted clocks of Felix Gonzales Torres slowly falling out of synch with each other. This demonstrates the inherent difficulty of even the most ambitious attempts at the synchronization of constructed and biological time. The same could be said of thoughts – even if two arguments appear to be the same idea, the subtleties of individual expression will generate disparities. Therefore, to bring two things into adjacency is always a potentially charged action.

Every day, as we flick through the multiple tabs of contemporary media, thumbing through newsprint and scrolling browser windows, we find ourselves saturated by the over-abundance of visual information. In this context, *Fulcrum's* two-author challenge seems like an intriguing format, one that invites antagonism, total complicity, 'compare and contrast' responses, or simply a critical conversation.

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i am not interested in architecture.

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I have a confession to make. I am not interested in architecture. Let me explain.

The state of architecture in the 21st century has been concerned with the unfortunate appropriation of a phenomenological framework with – as embodied in theoretical practice only – a radical neo-Kantian interpretation by Foucault. The resultant condition is one which has emerged out of a consistent effort to free architecture from meanings derived from within and out of Classicism and Modernism. There then arrived the computational turn; the language of code and of endless forms which are removed from signification entirely.

My interest lies within the architectural interlude we have most recently been presented with, finding itself wishing only to clarify the problematic muddled under this resultant indifference. It recognises that, to blatantly rip from *The Dude*, the 'royal we' has become profoundly apathetic towards the origin of meaning in architecture.

My lack of interest in architecture is demanded for by the need to disconnect from a practice of architectural theory less concerned with the intentionality behind the object itself than with the multiplicity of form(s) and variations of meaning. It looks towards an interrogation of the present

lack of application of philosophy in architecture. This is very different than being interested in architecture.

This is also very much the opposite of being interested in architectural theory.

One should hope that these are not construed as the words of a cynic. I am not interested in architecture purely because architecture has become too superficial and regurgitated to be interesting. Architecture – and architects – must, as Kipnis ever so poignantly noted, begin to consider "the later act" in which we can learn "whether Eisenman's choice ends in comedy or tragedy."

If neglected much longer, we might as well learn from the indifferent words of the *Dude* yet again, and say: "F**k it, *Dude*. Let's go bowling."

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