

BEDFORD SQUARE

PORTO

## the interval.

**g.baldwin**

In an institutional environment, how does one reconcile wanting to advance an idea with a critic or tutor telling you not to proceed? How does an Idea evolve extrinsically to a determinate framework?

We are rushed to produce work and present our thoughts as inevitabilities. But is the representation of our work a necessary truth, or a counterproductive process? Is the obligation to precipitate our thoughts impeding our ability to fulfill our capacity?

There is a certain frustration that stems from the incompatibility of wanting to develop an Idea, but being required to produce its incomplete form – a frustration that terminates in a liminal attitude, where neither process achieves its potential, nor are they represented accurately.

Before the dissolution of thinking, it is necessary to step back to the production of thought and the significance of the interval – looking firstly at the construction of an Idea.

The Idea is in itself indeterminate, and thus neutral as an entity of conjugation. It retains the optimism of proposition, yet more often invokes the possibility of problems.

This interval is not revealed or better understood through drawing on uncertainties, speculating validities, and responding to propositions, but on measuring thought with production; a ratio better understood by impression.

Beyond Idea is impression, (the countenance of encounter); a means of advancement based on empirical under-

standings. The Idea can only prove sufficient when paired with evidence; a repetition of signs, representation; a translation of projection, or more precisely 'difference'.

"Difference becomes an object of representation always in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy, an imagined opposition or a perceived similitude." (Deleuze) 'Difference' also promotes the possibility of error, not strictly a negative, but a falsity neutralizing the linearity of the process or a re-straightening in the line of thought.

Looking beyond 'difference' as a mere contradiction, we see that it plays more a role of the in-between. It is not subjectively applied to signs or objectively tied to representation, but sits somewhere in the middle; it bridges opposition, and reintroduces the notion of 'interval'.

I stress this notion of 'interval', as thought is not productive and production not thoughtful without it. It is not possible to move along a path sustained primarily by repetition of difference without facing discordant interrogations. Yet it is also not possible to subvert pure thought into representation without a difference of repetition.

Therefore, the 'interval' must mediate its polarities by retaining equilibrium. As true equilibrium lends an unperceivable task in the reality of production, opposition is balanced in the distance between subject and object. A distance between impression and expression; where the 'interval' defines the essence.

*Graham S. I. Baldwin is an editor of Fulcrum.*

## the interlude.

**e.de sousa**

The what it was to be Aristotelian construct of essence-as-attribute, or set of attributes, defines an object or substance fundamentally as what it is, what it has by necessity, and what without it loses its identity. This forms the nucleus of the individual thing per se. Nonetheless, self, identity and personality are neither things nor objects, and surely not rigid.

According to Portuguese neuroscientist António Damásio, self, identity and personality are biological processes constructed within the brain's numerous interactive components and regions – ongoing processes – thus subject to variation.

The 'building blocks of this construction' are brain maps – the basis for mental images – and images which can then produce actions, namely images that arise from one's body. Generated within the brainstem in regions almost unified with the body, these are not only cognitive images, separated from its object, but images connected to its object – the body. Thus, "felt images", result from a map of sentiment, and are what distinguish a "felt conscience" from an automated conscience.

From the proto-self (id) and core-self (ego) – both of which are shared with non-human species – to the autobiographical-self (super-ego) – which is extensively developed in humans – the human self is constructed. The proto-self gathers information on the body's state, generating feelings that signify our existence as the overall self-necessary

foundation. The core-self requires interaction of organism with object, producing a sense of 'here and now' – conscious of 'the moment' – but devoid of historical perspective. Finally, the autobiographical self creates a relatively coherent landscape of one's history, a narrative with a lived past and anticipated future – an identity – amassed from past interpretations and re-appropriations of real and imaginary events. Thus, the autobiographical self is, by necessity, not just one individual. It is also everyone the self has ever interacted with, incorporating the culture in which the interactions occurred – a multitude of other people, times, and places.

With conscience oscillating between core-self and autobiographical-self, the brain, drawing on interactions between the cerebral cortex and the brainstem, manages to summon massive composites of images that denounce ultimately a risk of inconsistency during the assemblage process, occasionally resulting in temporary slippage into another 'self'. Stable, consistent and predictable self-machineries in some people are open to unexpected turns and twists in others, whose flexibility becomes critical in creativity areas that focus on human actions. A type of interlude, in-between-play movements or play-within-a-play iterative variations, that biological scrutiny renders as an architecture of maps and images becoming actions.

*Emanuel de Sousa is an architect, HTS tutor & AA PhD candidate, supported by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, Portugal.*

## A FUN DEBATE

If I understood correctly the events of last Friday, Parametricism is either a movement so broad it encompasses all forms of computational design, or so specific it only includes Patrik Schumacher.

His argument for “the architectural style of the C21st” revolves around ‘autopoeisis’, or a self-producing architecture, and stems from a global theory of social totality. This finds its form through the panoply of computational tools at the disposal of the contemporary architect.

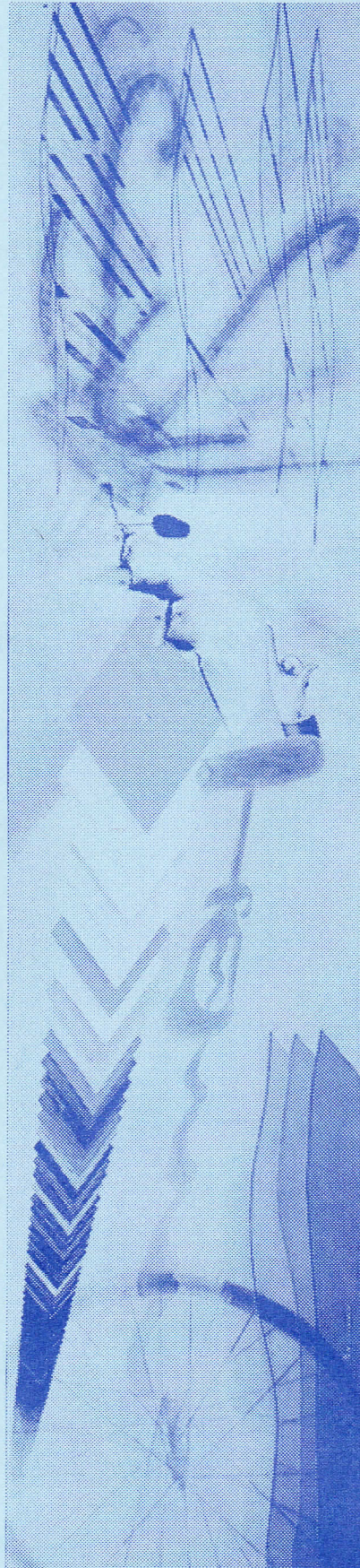
Architecture, Schumacher argued, presents itself to the public through the cadre of ‘styles’. Their ability to understand architecture relies on being able to slot works into a fictional chart of established orders. Until contemporary architecture can present the public with a coherent ‘style’ it will continue to be a profession in decline.

I disagree, and I found Schumacher’s dismissal of pluralism alarming – I do not believe the West will ever again experience a single ‘movement’ of anything (architecture or not).

As Zaera-Polo (FOA) pointed out, one can no longer ask ‘do you like jazz?’ to categorise someone’s music tastes. You can only ask ‘what have you got on your ipod?’ and draw a conclusion from the spectrum of influences and tastes you find there.

When Kipnis asked Zaha “are you a Parametricist?”, she flatly said no – although her attitude towards Schumacher seems ingrained in their unusual relationship. While Ms. Hadid clearly values Schumacher, this does not prevent her from denigrating him in front of a public audience.

In general, there was a great deal of scepticism about the term. Schumacher nobly defended his position, a lone ranger of the ‘avant garde’: “You’re all Parametricists, you just don’t know it yet”, he concluded. *J.Self*



Tu M' Marcel Duchamp

## JAPAN APPEAL

The shockwaves of the earthquake that struck Japan last week lasted five minutes (by contrast, Haiti lasted 28 seconds), and the aftershocks continue to prevent anyone from getting any sleep.

Entire villages were destroyed by the tsunami; a large section of coast remains inaccessible for emergency workers, & it is not yet possible to fully evaluate the situation.

A large part of my family live in southern Japan, but certain of my friends live in the north. They remain uncontactable, and I begin to fear the worst for them.

The rest of Japan carries itself with a strange calm, certain people are even trying to show a smile and a level of optimism in the face of the disaster. I ask all of you to help the people, and to show support for my country.

All the best,

*Emi Hirasawa,  
Paris.*

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

## I HEARD AT THE SYMPOSIUM...

“Hey kid, you wanna be a radical architect? Do this, do this, do this! Walk down the hall on your hands, because everyone before walked on their feet – therefore you’re novel.”

*E.O. Moss*

“The avant garde is precisely that which escapes definition. There seems an inherent contradiction by defining the avant garde as a group - parametricism.”

*C. Jencks.*

“I prefer to draw by hand, because you can’t get it wrong with a digital drawing – you can never see the impact of the hand on the piece.”

*Z. Hadid*