

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

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THROUGH THE BODY: CORPOREALITY AND CONSCIOUSNESS AT THE PERFORMANCE SITE

Introduction : Of fissures, structures and instrumentalities

It is the original *ecstasy* that opens for man the space of his world, and only by staring from it can he experience freedom and alienation, historical consciousness and loss in time, truth and error. (Agamben 1999, 100)

This paper approaches the performance site in terms of the experiential instrumentality¹ of space. It attempts to render paths to consciousness that are fleeting - but a(e)ffective, immediate - yet undervalued, corporeal - yet unrecognised. These are relatively unexplored in both architectural and theatrical studies due to a threefold confluence, where the 'work' comes to stand for performance (as the object), monopolise experience (as the vehicle) and dissipate space (as the index). To avoid such confluence this study proposes an analysis of the site in its own right and with respect to all participants involved. The argument is based on the premises that:

- performance, aside of presenting an art-work, is also a live engagement of agents in specific acts, and, hence requires and depends on a site, and
- experiential dimensions which derive from space, though perhaps ephemeral, are legitimate in their own right, and, moreover, integral to the overall experience.

Hence the operation of the site is accessed through an oblique incision that facilitates inquiry into how physical circumstances and relations intrinsic to the event/site solidify in distinct experiential ingredients, affect dispositions and trigger awareness. This allows conceiving and asserting the site as a spatial construct – artefact – that materialises supreme economy and craft in that it simultaneously:

- a) devises a systematic fit of components, that not only organises the presentation and perception of the art work, but also assists the unfolding of a multi-layered performance event²; and

- b) as articulated space commences a corporeal structure that forms experiential ingredients, and, while supporting the encounter with the 'work', also instigates registers of consciousness unique to the performance site/event.

Such resonances help construe a structure of experience at performance in terms of emerging states and affects, that on a broader platform appear to concur with those of experience of art as well as, following Gadamer³, experience in general.

Art

Art, Agamben (1999) asserts, reveals its proper mode of presence through the undercurrent interruptive capacity of rhythm, and in terms of its structure, before which man is arrested – *ekstasis* – as a falling out of measurable time. Hence the ultimate gift of art is embedded in a dimension, where man - through his encounter with the work - attains his original status. Here the work embodies a vital potential – a fissure through which man slips into some more essential dimension of existence to reclaim his capacities and appropriate the work, whereby the primal structure of the work evolves. Conceived thus, the structure of the work of art is situated decisively out of conventional aesthetic discussion (where both structural and stylistic analyses, by focusing on content and form, remain confined within the aesthetic conception of the work), and within experience itself.

Experience

Experience, though lacking univocal definition, and subject to different articulations in diverse frameworks (cycle/Gestalt, negation/Gadamer, flow/Csikszentmihalyi, emergence/Deleuze, etc.), revolves around the generation of change as acquisition⁴. Thus the logic of experience reproduces a structure in terms of instances/conditions (stabilisation, de-stabilisation and re-stabilisation), that entail capacities for engagement in terms of concentration and attention, expansion/fusion, as well as more conscious registration and assimilation of that which is grasped. Nevertheless, emergence is grounded within an encounter with something new, which is initially unmediated, spontaneous, and pre-intellectual. Hence experience germinates through the 'lived body' as the holistic site, where subjective (undergoing, possessing, constructing) and objective (instigating, inviting, stimulating) moments amalgamate. It is, thus, thoroughly embedded in space.

Space

Space is yet another controversial concept, which, although integral to all human existence/experience, evades a monolithic definition. Establishing space at performance as a relatively independent category is especially complicated, as 'theatre' and 'architecture' actually lack univocal relations. Considered in physical terms - performance (the event of presenting an artwork) instates its own temporary space, while architecture constructs permanent settings. This controversy is furthered by the fact that the presentation of the work is necessarily embedded in a social event, generating still another set of relations and effects.

Hence space is (conveniently) construed as a neutral medium. In theatrical studies this takes form of confining inquiry of experience to the effects of the stage, set (as object) within a largely inert and unattended site (medium). Space takes up the role of mediator also in the sense that it enables the construction of meanings, where relations between 'real' and 'fictional space' generate complex taxonomies of spatial functions. Experience, then, is suggested in terms of the theatrical⁵ and bound to the 'work'.

Conversely in the field of architecture the building (for the performing arts) is conceived as an artefact in that it manifests a social institution, and is studied as a medium conveying cultural values and meanings⁶. On the other hand, theatre is studied as a building type⁷, connoting a particular spatial organisation and configuration, which houses diverse functions involved in the production and presentation of performances. In this framework architectural space, though acquiring overall ambience, acts as backdrop for a variety of theatrical expressions. Studies concerned more explicitly with the authenticity of the theatrical experience, establish principal properties⁸, and specify character and sense of place⁹ as the spatial means by which that experience is supported in the context of historical models. Evidently both of these fields lack an account of the (intricate) conditions of 'bodies in space' as legitimate sources of experience at site.

Agamben's insights on the structure of the work of art actually address the work of man as an existential appropriation, instated by the fissures (ek-stasis) that the work opens up. A homologous state appears to arise in the context of 'performance', which both as 'theatrical work' and as distinct place interrupts the flow of life. Furthermore, within, productive functions like 'catharsis', too, are resolutely rooted in a de-stabilising moment – the discovery of the unexpected (Aristotle 1985). Yet these are not entirely elucidated through the art-piece (plot, character, thought, diction, etc.) as the customised cathartic instruments. As the present study takes it, the fact that catharsis is also firmly situated within the shared space of the theatre is far from accidental, and hence catharsis can be conceived as

brought about, as much, by affects of space and in terms of relations between bodies. So are other states perhaps as profound.

By focusing on the corporeality of space – as the immediate circumstance of experience, and of the body – as the sensory locus of consciousness¹⁰, the site is established in terms of effects/affects, conditions/states. This is attempted through collective containment, isolation, and exposure, which, as central assets of the site, disclose its fundamental functions (to organise, protect, and present a work) in their dependence on specified effects (disciplining, centring, relating). Furthermore as analytical tools employed to the minute situations of agents, they help perceive how physical circumstances stage and frame diverse experiential forms. The structure of experience at performance then issues in terms of states (suspense, activation, absorption/concentration) and instances (stabilisation, de-stabilisation), that derive from, and articulate, the inherent controversies of the site, as much as they conjoin with various frameworks centralising on experience in general. The spatial construct, then, mapped in terms of topographies and bodies, emerges as a compound (together with its fissures) from within which the atrophy of our affective capacities (Benjamin 1999) might be resisted.

Of circumstances, states, and instances

The site as a spatial construct

Theatre receives acknowledgment as a complex spatial formation in various terms. Conceived as a ‘social instrument’ (Breton 1989, 4), it is depicted as a forum for collective questioning and explored in terms of types set within societal contexts. As an ‘apparatus’ (McAuley 1999, 245) it enables the basic mechanisms of the ‘look’ to produce theatrical, as well as social meanings.

The present study deviates in that it asserts the site as a spatial construct that is explored in terms of its experiential instrumentality. By employing collective containment, isolation and exposure as analytical tools, its corporeal structure is articulated in topological terms. This helps disentangle diverse physical circumstances in terms of specified effects that (as spatial terms) are integral to the actualisation of the fundamental functions of the site, as well as (in the function of modes of being) generate experientially consequential conditions. Hence the possibility arises to conceptualise the operation of the spatial construct in terms of instances and states – ie in terms of the capacities of space to elicit experiential content.

Collective containment, isolation and exposure are established and operate simultaneously. In the composition of the site they come forth as requisite conditions. Hence collective containment is meant to conjure and take into account two complementing and mutually enhancing conditions, that address the definition

of the performance site as a shared space. It connotes the capacity of the site to house larger groups of people, as well as to facilitate, and even propose their involvement in a common occasion. It enables the definition and protection of the event by actualising isolation (of the event from other occurrences) and the encounter with the work – through exposure (the presenting and perception of an act). In this respect these three conditions in correlation and with respect to their principal function apparently cohere and corroborate.

Yet further inquiry reveals that each has its specific constitution and affects the minute situations of participants in diverse and profound ways – ie through their subtle operations they commence controversies both in correlation and as separate conditions. Their role as analytical tools lies within their capacity to render the site in terms of the distinct forms of experience and encounters it instates, whereby articulating its inherently controversial nature. The structure of experience, then, can be grasped in the reverberations between corporeal circumstances and forms of experience, and understood in terms of their complex amalgamation. Moreover, this structure appears to elicit a crucial residue – the unsettling condition of suspense, together with the activation and absorption it brings about. Hence within the confines of the present study, it is ultimately such a state that would be accessed and explicated in terms of the capacities of the site as a spatial construct.

The controversies of the concepts

Collective containment as a term denotes a whole, which nevertheless is composite, enforced and acquired gradually. Its internal discord issues both within 'collective', which connotes a uniting and joining, but is to be construed in terms of reception and assembly of diverse agents and/or components, and within 'containment', which denotes accommodation, but also restraint within fixed limits. The implications of isolation, too, are not entirely univocal. It describes the condition of being distinct, apart and alone, yet set within a different medium. Hence it indicates the necessity of confines that surround and centre, but also detach – hold short of relation. In contrast exposure effaces all limits. It denotes the situation of being displayed – unprotected and accessible to influence or action. Its inherent controversy lies within a presenting – as putting forth – that is actually mutual. Hence it alludes to a reversible stature – the collapse of observer and observed, and pertains to both a placement (being kept, held, at rest – arrested) and displacement (forceful alteration of a former accustomed circumstance), which altogether generate its disquieting, unsettling effects.

The controversies of the site

Collective containment and isolation are instantly actualised by the threshold that surrounds performance to define, distinguish and detach it from the general flow of life¹¹. In elaborate cases (buildings for the performing arts) this threshold is comprised by various functional components (utility spaces, rehearsals, lobbies, etc.) that aside of facilitating the apt operation of the site, in effect verify the approach to a different realm, whereby the process of disconnection acquires a ritualistic quality. In other cases (playhouse type) such disconnection is resolved by an enclosure articulated as a strict confine that decisively severs and encapsulates. At less elaborate sites it is achieved by the tight alignment of collective bodies averting from an outside. Nevertheless, such definition also institutes the inside, which by virtue of being contained, and isolated, actualises a centre within – the actual performance site (stage-auditorium).

At site the function of collective containment is to assert it a whole, yet as this whole is constituted by diverse spatial components. Hence collective containment receives, assembles and joins - unites, but preserves distinctions, thus in effect maintains controversial aptitudes and forces. Stage and auditorium are articulated as distinct locations that are also destinations for the respective agents, and characterised by special arrangements. Such articulations manifest the workings of both isolation and exposure, which in turn construct the major tension at site – while isolation detaches and grounds within, exposure procures relations and animates.

Isolation is instituted by the distance in-between stage and auditorium, but is refined through the proscenium arc, the curtain, the apron, or the orchestra pit. It enhances the stability of the stage as a centre, and the sedimentary trait of the auditorium. In contrast exposure launches the stage as a dynamic pole, that focuses, but at the same time is put forth towards the auditorium. Its paradigmatic actualisation is the full thrust stage set within the playhouse type, while other means of emphasis involve elevating the stage (impressing the action in space), sinking it (submitting a plan-like observation), or framing it (coaching attention). In turn the auditorium is presented in its fan-like spread around, enhanced by sectional treatments (inclination, balconies, etc.) that reduce effects of distance.

If in spite of such profound distinctions the site emerges as a larger entity, this is due to the other major capacity of collective containment – discipline, whereby it exerts hold over components as well as curbs conflicting forces of isolation and exposure in balance. Stage and auditorium are set in tight interdependence, which is formalised in terms of adjacency and attachment (box stage), interlocking and/or total inclusion (arena, apron and/or thrust stage), while their respective visual fields coalesce (face to face orientation). This interdependence is formatted axially into a strict and legible relation, positing the stage-focus as the principal centre, yet

granting pronounced spatial precedence to the auditorium. Aside from proportional dominance and consistent arrangement and articulation throughout, this latter feature derives from the single sweep of the enclosure and the primary geometric form it frequently assumes. Hence the dynamics of the site generates through the stage that – as an animate focus – emits/attracts, while enclosure as a taut confinement presses in.

Less formal sites, too, depend on and realise these three conditions in correlation. Hence agents assume positions around an invested void to comprise enclosure as their common achievement. As this enclosure ‘breaths’ – fluctuates under the influence of conflicting forces – it virtually expresses the dynamics of the site.

Yet the site engenders also ‘minor’ tensions, controversies characterising the minute situations of the agents. It is through inquiry at this level that collective containment, isolation and exposure come forth in their most prolific aspects – as conditions deeply entrenched in space and yielding subtle but consequential experiential content. With respect to the agents, collective containment accentuates admission, accommodation and inclusiveness – features that homogenise, but also discipline. Thus, rendered specifically for each performance, the stage contains within a common field, delimited within a void. In turn the auditorium assigns places that equalise, but also distribute. Its rows of benches and/or chairs down to their leans - safely embed, but also confine. It sustains a side by side alignment, while orientation towards an external point of attention reduces effects of proximity. Through this fixed organisation collective containment virtually actualises isolation – it disperses agents as solitary centres. Yet at the same time collective containment augments the condition of exposure in that it confronts, thus mutually presents, which becomes apparent especially when the inserted stage renders each agent equally prone to observation (horseshoe, arena). Conventionally attributed to the actor/act, exposure proves to be reciprocal and equally intrinsic to all participants involved. Under its influence the in-between is charged and qualified, in effect contracting space and intensifying perception of others. Hence it diversifies centring by adding an uprooting momentum, and counteracts detachment by instituting relations.

All of these minute circumstances and effects converge, and moreover interact with the impetus of the site – to apply to agents that are firmly situated. The resultant corporeal circumstance then is the condition of being virtually suspended – arrested as well as immersed – in midst of subtle but turbulent influences.

The controversies of experiential forms

Isolation enhances the primary condition of the site in the form of suspense. The experience of isolation derives from the sense of boundedness and dispersal that invoke awareness over being held (fixed in space) but also over being centered, hence self-contained. It activates, and sets in motion two interrelated affective ingredients - an acute discernment of one's situation, bearing the possibility of arriving at a consciousness of the self, and concentration¹² in the form of focused attention, entailing absorption in the immediate instant. Its experiential consequence then is to enforce a rupture in the habitual¹³ and trigger acquisition - as cultivation of the capacity to access more intense states of being.

Exposure in turn invigorates suspense producing the sense of arrest. As a form of experience, the condition of exposure incites affective states that are unsettling, but also challenging and utterly productive. Similar to isolation, it magnifies centring yet triggers awareness of an animated and de-stabilised self, compelled to assume an active status and engage. It builds up through the sense of being thrust forth, dislodged, that also obliges to intensified perception of others. Yet simultaneously, exposure evokes the bodily sense of being an object of intense attention, coupled with the perception of being arrested in this condition throughout the whole performance. These institute an ambiguous polarisation within, and trigger affective states that are de-stabilising - in the sense of becoming vulnerable - and disquieting - to the point of containing elements of fear. By way of inciting encounter with the other, as much as with oneself, exposure vitalises an acute awareness of one's own state of being, but also the realisation that everyone else is captured in the same vulnerable state. Evidently exposure at the site of performance allows one to conceive and accept a liability to reciprocal reversal of these controversial poles - active-passive, subverted-intervening. Thus exposure summons latent abilities and eases the ways of compassion and empathy, leading to a different understanding of power - that of vulnerability as *potentia*. Hence it institutes the capacity to expand and acknowledge the other, asserting involvement and participation as a responsibility¹⁴.

Collective containment articulates still other dimensions of the general state - as it enhances perception of a whole and awareness of diversity and sharing - it holds to immerse. It receives isolation and exposure as experientially productive ingredients and appropriates their energies into a confluent field¹⁵. Yet it permeates the solitary centres procured by isolation (as dispersal) and still upheld by exposure (as their viable co-relation), only as much as to suspend their self-centring effects and slacken confines. Hence this experiential condition involves a two-fold awareness - that of being distinct (individuality) and that of being part of something more profound. Pertaining to social conduct, formal and even ceremonial motifs are acted out, which reaffirm social conventions and contracts,

coupled with a venture, hint at the site as epitome of the public¹⁶ and facilitate consensus¹⁷. Nevertheless, most consequential to immediate experience are elements of ritual and rite that are rendered legible. Ritual imbues gestures and states with power, confirming the exceptional character of the site and eliciting attentiveness and participation. Furthermore, it is under the workings of rite¹⁸ that involvement is brought to the point of fusion with something larger than the self, a condition that is paradigmatically enacted by the chorus in Greek theatre as fusion of actorship and spectatorship. Under the influence of collective containment, the involvement in the immediate instant triggered by isolation, grows into an impulse to let go (as an ultimate de-stabilisation of the self), to enable a different mode of participation, whereby agents associate with others to the point of immersing.

In turn recuperation, the instance of stabilisation, is ensured through witnessing¹⁹, a dimension intrinsic to collective containment, for all the states that agents undergo during the performance event actually occur under observation. Witnessing registers that which evolves by rendering it valid, legible and mnemonic. Here, the function of the collective extends to a testimony – which acclaims and invests that which has been experienced by way of committing it to consciousness and thus allowing a safe reconstruction.

Concluding remarks: of craft and economy

Resonances

This work from the outset has been about rendering space at performance as a legitimate artefact – a source of experience in its own right. Collective containment, isolation and exposure were employed in the status of physical terms – to access spatial effects and in the status of conditions – to attend forms of experience. Thus, via analysis of the site, a structure of experience was elicited that resonates with the corporeality of the spatial construct. In that immediate circumstances were actually charged as possibilities of affective response. This charge becomes more tenable by mapping out body, considering the nature of spatial effects and their sensory counterparts as trajectories to consciousness.

Corporeal space situates by allowing, or forbidding, the body to find its points of contact. It stages relations and hence possibilities for affect and action. It envelops, thus entails sensory engagement. Yet its complex and evocative effects are not always traceable to substance, though set in motion through it. They involve also ingredients of different nature – energy flows, compressed forces, that trigger sensation as state of survey without distance, from within²⁰. They mobilise a kind emphatic involvement through the body as the zone of contact²¹, which registers and acknowledges, employing a rather full sensory apparatus – visual, but also tactile and kinetic. The tactile feels its way around to trace physical presences.

The kinetic registers forces as alterations on gravitation and reverberates deep inside. Thus space is intelligibly felt, while excitation (the contact phenomena) – the visceral, intuitive, emotional, instinctive effect of sensation – is as much a potential of response to sensibles, as it is a pathway to awareness²². In turn the body, through its sensorium and practical knowledge²³, as much as through its relations and performances²⁴ - explores and reverberates²⁵, constructs and appropriates. These two corporeal ingredients, then, not only coalesce to establish a compound, but also intensify and correspond²⁶, perhaps to the extent of being mutually revealing.

At site, these latent capacities of space turn into a power over emotions and states, which issues from the decisive, formalised circumstances, and reverberate in the dynamics of the situated body – as dramatised controversies of motion and rest, embedding and dislodging, distinction and assimilation. These evidence the craft and economy of the artefact in its capacity to render space explicit just enough, so as to engender the sensate dimensions of experience and induce, without overwhelming or determining, dispositions, a think-feel state of mind. Experience can thus remain focused on itself.

Suspense

The craft and economy of the construct, then, resides in its aptitude to contrive the primary and ultimate state – suspense – that emerges through diverse dimensions and contains distinct affective ingredients. Within that state encounters take shape in terms of special registers of consciousness:

- encounter with the self in terms of an awareness (of oneself as a separate entity, of one's capacity to access other states of being);
- encounter with the other in terms of an engagement (with one's capacity to expand and become the other as well, of one's capacity to incorporate controversial states as enabling attitudes);
- encounter with a collectivity in terms of an acknowledgment (of one's capacity to participate, even immerse in a common endeavour; as well as one's capacity to assimilate change).

It furthermore insinuates emotive components such as compassion, pity, fear, pleasure, that are also conducive to the encounter with the theatrical work. Hence reception is rendered distinct from other (meditative and/or individual) contacts with a work (cinema²⁷, TV, text), and within an intricate state of consciousness unique to the site.

Resistances

Finally, the site can be conceived as one, corporeal albeit rudimentary, manifestation of the logic of aesthetic experience²⁸ both in terms of contriving analogous structuring instances, and in terms of content – generating pleasure of involvement and growth, affective absorption in the immediate, as well as conscious incorporation of change. Thus the artefact solidifies the most productive capacities of the site – it commences as well as recuperates departure from passive states (entertainment, distraction, or re-cognition) so as to attain the active and intense states of becoming²⁹ that ultimately enable acquisition.

The agent as subject, in turn, is a voluntary participator – self-intentionally choosing his actualisations. Yet this is also a choice among reverberations engendered by immediate circumstances, and hence expresses coherent appropriation of an outside. At the performance site – which stages and frames the event of the ‘slippage’ – casual appropriation can grow into a more properly reflexive relation to the self – fully experienced³⁰. It might be here, within the fissures of arrested time, and the registers of some more emancipated consciousness, that nodes of the power to be affected could be beheld.

Notes

- 1 ‘Experiential instrumentality’ is meant to connote capacities of space that bear possibilities for affect. While ‘experiential’ comes close to the notion of ‘performative’ (connoting the condition of being non-textual, irretrievable, contingent, indeterminate, spontaneous, immediate, excessive, and affective) (Dewsbury, 2000), ‘experiential instrumentality’ associates ‘performative’ with a recognition of productive aspects of space. Unlike ‘instrumental’ that assigns a causal status to space, the notion of ‘instrumentality’ centres on the properties, circumstances and mechanisms through which space comes to perform – influence, and is, in turn, articulated by way of dispositions and states.
- 2 Sauter (2000, 11) asserts a conception of the ‘theatrical event’ that is centered on the artwork and constituted by actions and reactions of participants. The argument of this study instead extends the notion of ‘performance event’ to temporarily suspend the priority of performance over the larger context (social event) in which it is embedded, so as to receive other renditions as well (such as occurrences deriving from the conditions of the site).
- 3 Gadamer (1995, 70) asserts that aesthetic experience represents the essence of experience per se.
- 4 This brief account of experience is partially based on the profound overview of diverse currents within the discourse on experience drawn by Jay (2005),

especially regarding the potential for development within experience, which, aside of intention (interiority), also depends on the stimulus of a challenge encountered 'outside'.

- 5 For an extensive discussion of this category refer to McAuley (1999).
- 6 See for instance Carlson (1989), who takes it that the primary function of space is to convey cultural meanings by way of an architectural vocabulary, which he deciphers through the arrangement and articulation of relations between spatial elements, physical appearances, structural and decorative elements, location and volumetric composition.
- 7 Appleton (1996) develops and exemplifies a classification of buildings for the performing arts in terms of modes of spatial configuration, from where design guidelines are derived. These follow tightly from functional and technical requirements, defined according to kinds of performance (dance, drama, concert, etc.) and the scale of the enterprise (regional, local, institutional, private, etc).
- 8 Breton (1989), aside of her profound depiction of the principal properties of theatre types through history, studies contemporary realisations in terms of the particular experiential effects generated by their respectively different design principles. This study, in contrast, employs 'central assets' and 'experiential effects' in a rather different status – as recurring and generic conditions, which disclose the operation of the performance site.
- 9 Mackintosh (1993) extensively analyses a wide selection of theatrical spaces to establish 'family characteristics' such as density (of human presence) and intensity (of relations among participants), levels of contact, response, mutual influence, all of which formulate the authentic character of theatre spaces.
- 10 See Harvey (1998) for a discussion of the body in a socio-political context, where it (the body) assumes a comprehensive function regarding consciousness – as measure of both the materialised and the social world. Within the confines of the present study, focus is rather on certain aspects of consciousness that generate within more immediate experience.
- 11 The importance of such distinction is especially recognised with respect to the proper consummation of the performance act. Thus, referring to Goffmann, McAuley (1999, 39) puts forward the function of the theatre building to mark the separation of the theatrical from the everyday, by "framing" the activity in specific ways, transforming actions from "unmarked" to "marked," and hence eliciting certain behaviors from people.
- 12 For 'concentration' as the central asset of aesthetic experience, refer to Leath (1996).
- 13 For an analysis of mechanisms that disrupt and re-configure the habitual, see Harrison (2000).

- 14 At this point I concur with Fiona Jenkins' (2002) concise discussion of vulnerability in the context of the performative. Vulnerability, in contrast to tolerance, is rather conceived in terms of receptivity, permeability, and generosity connoting the openness of identity to transformation
- 15 'Intangibles' operating at the site of performance come forth as valid speculative findings in the work of Mackintosh (1993) in terms of energy flows between actor and audience as well as among the audience. This notion is furthermore acknowledged in terms of effects over space – the stage as 'energised space' (McAuley 1999). The present account extends 'intangibles' to relate certain effects of space that are rather sensed (kinetic, tactile) as forces and/or energies.
- 16 Collective containment allows accessing the performance site also as a field that accommodates notions of the 'public'. See for instance Weintraub (1997) on the public as 'collective discussion, deliberation and action by which solidarity is reiterated'; Joung (1995) on 'acknowledging diversity'; and Certeau (1984) on 'individual modes of reappropriation' of that which is shared.
- 17 For a comprehensive discussion of consensus see Habermas (1990).
- 18 See Nietzsche (1968) on the immersion of the self(ego) into that which exceeds man; Agamben (1999) on ritual as interruption of profane time; Mauss (2002) the nature of collective states and generation of collective forces in the context of rite as social practice.
- 19 This stabilising function of witnessing appears to be analogous to the role of the 'master' in esoteric practices, or the 'analyst' in psychoanalysis. It hence can be understood as a mechanism – guiding the process of departure from conventional states and aiding re-construction – that is enabled at the site of performance by way of designated collective presence.
- 20 See Deleuze (1994) on a conception of the body based on 'sensory becoming' as an active state within experience.
- 21 For a discussion of sensibility in terms of 'zone of contact' and 'contact phenomena' see Dewsbury (2000).
- 22 Burge (1997) discusses 'phenomenal consciousness' (fundamental to typing phenomenal mental states and events) in relation to 'rational access consciousness' (linked to central executive powers), thereby accessing certain distinctions between phenomenal and intentional aspects of experience.
- 23 For a theorisation of primary (sensorimotor) experience as an 'embodied' learning mechanism integral to the cognitive unconscious see Lakoff (1999).
- 24 Gregson (2000) asserts that performances are not just situated in space, but also articulate their own spatialities. The present account relies on this assertion not only regarding the operation of informal sites, but employs it more profoundly in assigning an active role of agents in the constitution of the effects at site.

- Such understanding actually helps avoid deterministic, as well as purely phenomenological terms that implicate space as primal cause.
- 25 Reverberation is a notion through which Deleuze (1994) approaches the concept of 'becoming' – as a dynamic, creative and intrinsic constituting of life. Furthermore reverberation (as relation) exceeds imitation, identification, resemblance or sympathy, to denote an exchange, a passing from one to the other, in the course of encounter, between two equal entities.
 - 26 For a theorisation space-body correspondences, based on the intrinsic need to relate to environs harmonically see Dewsbury (2000).
 - 27 Silverman (1996) discusses such reception though the medium of film, where it is conducted by the mechanisms of desire and identification, and in terms of a displacement of the self and of what is given-to-be-seen by the 'productive look'.
 - 28 See Shusterman (1999) on a genealogical sketch of the aesthetic experience in terms of 'evaluative', 'phenomenological', 'semantic' and 'definitional' dimensions. Also refer to Csikszentmihalyi (1990) on a concise analysis of the aesthetic experience as a flow.
 - 29 On the philosophy of 'becoming' refer to the work of Bergson (1944).
 - 30 For a particularisation of the distinctions between experience as 'Erlebnis' and 'Erfahrung' and their function in the re-configuration of the habitual see Latham (1999). Furthermore, disclosing the operation of experience in more general terms, Gadamer (1996) establishes a conception that encompasses change and its conscious incorporation through negation of previous experience. In this interpretation, the condition of 'being experienced' connotes an utterly liberated state, for it entails emancipation from the dogma of once-and-for-all knowing and openness to ever-new experiences.

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