

Heteroglot Environments

The Spatial Essay as a form of Architectural Thinking and Spatial Communication

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ABSTRACT: The dissertation with the working title: *Heteroglot Environments - The Spatial Essay as a form of Architectural Thinking and Spatial Communication* is a design-based research that investigates the potential of the essayistic expression as a driving force for architectural space-making in extended reality (XR) environments. Spatial computing and immersive media have fundamentally changed the way in which architects and designers can conceptualize, constitute, but also distribute space and, above all, communicate through spatial means. The thesis attempts to explore these potentialities of spatial communication in XR environments by looking in depth at the conception of the personal essay, its formal expression, its intellectual and affective modalities, and its transgressive character.

The Installation *Lacuna Space - The Productive Gap* is a XR based spatial essay that explores the meaning of privacy and the intimate domestic space in times of ubiquitous connectivity and pandemic crisis.

Lacuna Space - The Productive Gap is an excerpt of a larger, still ongoing research project entitled: *The Smallest of Worlds - A Social Landscape of Collected Privacy*. It is conceptualized and developed in cooperation with Bettina Katja Lange and Joan Soler-Adillon.

The project began as a participatory, experimental documentary during the period of the world's most extensive lockdowns. Through an open call, we invited people to share short videos and personal statements of their most precious and private spaces that have helped them to cope with the time of self-isolation and confinement. Over the period of one year, we collected a variety of videos of private spaces, intimate domestic moments, and personal memories from over 40 countries, which were later translated into three-dimensional documents using digital photogrammetry. Ultimately, this collection of memories, spatial fragments and spoken testimonies establishes a disorderly archive which forms the basis of the spatial essay.

As an essayistic XR installation, the project explores two key themes of the personal essay and demonstrates how it can be made productive for the space-making process in XR environments.

First, the inscription of subjectivity through the process of intermedial translation of the collected materials from two-dimensional documents into three-dimensional spaces. The installation therefore explores the creative and poetic potential of by-products resulting from the translation process, such as inconsistencies, transitory gaps, fissures or even errors in order to carve out novel margins for the emergence of an authorial voice that is in a perpetual mode of constructing meaning.

Second, the XR installation investigates the extent to which an essayistic space-making methodology in XR environments is capable of constituting an affective spatio-temporal experience that evokes a thinking with and through the body. In this way, the installation attempts to stimulate an embodied rumination that is intellectual and sensual, reflective, and affective at the same time.

Lacuna Space - The Productive Gap is an excerpt of a larger, still ongoing research project entitled: *The Smallest of Worlds - A Social Landscape of collected Privacy*, which has partly been developed at CPH:LAB Copenhagen and is currently supported by the Pixel, Bytes + Film - ORF III Artist in Residence program, funded by the Bundesministerium für Kunst, Kultur, öffentlicher Dienst und Sport.

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