Thesis booklet
Presentation
The boundaries between physical and virtual are dissolving as realities are superimposed, collapsing space. The architectural proposal of a movie theater at S:t Eriksgatan in Stockholm acts as a device for exploring the role of architecture in an unstable reality. By regarding architecture as a medium, a cluster of world manifestations provide new tools of design.
Context

Parallel realities

We live our lives in multiple parallel worlds. Virtual reality (VR) technology (fig. 1) is only the most obvious example of media enabling a rapid and highly immersive experience of alternate realities. The smartphone is less immersive yet highly impactful. Moreover, the city is full of more or less developed worlds appealing to mainly, but not exclusively, our vision. Two by three meter digital video screens transport us to a Greek beach or into outer space. Huge, seemingly autonomous, windowless malls are reached via subway transportation and elevators. Spaces like these, which we might as well have reached through clicking a hyperlink, are in a way placeless.

Heterotopias, the spaces described by Michel Foucault as “...outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality”1, are expanding and increasingly influence our daily lives. Massive multiplayer online games (MMORPGs) like World of Warcraft generate parallel mirror economies where cheap labour is used for farming virtual gold2. The yet to be released open world computer game No Man’s Sky provides a procedurally generated universe enabling players to explore 18 quintillion planets3. 30 years after the publication of William Gibson’s seminal book Neuromancer, where the hacker Case, stuck in the “prison of his own flesh”4a longs for cyberspace, a “consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators” 4b, cyberspace as a dominant, competing reality hardly feels improbable. Meanwhile, interactive light art installations projected on buildings (fig. 2) and wearable technology like Google glasses (fig. 3) share the property of blurring the line between physical and virtual. However, superimpositions of worlds and experience does not necessarily need high technology devices. Live roleplaying games like Deathgame, reinterpreting the city and it’s objects, instead rely on a set of rules and the collectively imagined world of it’s users. Interactive transmedia storytelling pieces such as Endgame: The Calling5 and the more obscure Jejune Institute6 superimposes an imagined reality onto everyday life. As we engage in fictional worlds as well as virtual architectures at a daily basis and at increasing speeds, parallel realities and their inhabitants, us, cannot be ignored. Furthermore, smartphone applications like Periscope let us send and receive a live video stream to and from anywhere in the world, essentially collapsing space. Sharing a live stream of movie star turned performance artist Shia Labouf sitting through a 72 hour marathon of his own movies7 with thousands of unknown people destabilizes the Angelika Film Center in New York as well as my living room.

Dissolving & superimposing

Collapsing space

Heterotopia

1 Johan Ahl Eliasson

2 (fig. 1) Person flying like a bird using Oculus Rift, a VR technology.

3 (fig. 2) Interactive light art installation Your Text Here in Detroit by Marc Zotes, participants were invited to send anonymous messages which were projected onto a building.

4 (fig. 3) Realities superimposed, the view of a Google glass user.

5 (fig. 4) Map of the MMORPG Eve Online star system.
Inevitable fiction  
However, the phenomenon of humans traversing worlds or simultaneously experiencing a number of realities is nothing new. MMORPGs, social networks and VR technologies are simply the latest iterations of conjured worlds going back as far as media, as far as architecture, as far as storytelling. To medieval church-goers, the rich wall paintings formulated a hypermediated space. Reading a book has the power to let us linger in another world, as does listening to a piece of music or contemplating a painting. The audience of a play or a film definitely inhabit the world acted or projected before them. I would argue that architecture, usually seen as being the physical world rather than mediating it, have this same power.

Project as artwork  
Inhabiting or dealing with multiple worlds is inherent to the built as well as the paper project. The inner workings of the architectural project seems to rhyme with the dissolved and superimposed experience of the city. The architect inevitably creates a fictional world in order to communicate their project. This situation is intensified in the academic environment wherein at least one additional layer of fiction, the imagined client, further complicates the cluster of information that is an architectural project. The instability caused in this system by a lack of immovable facts can lead to a creative feedback loop. However, the complexity of operations involved have the power to enrich, as well as weaken, the project as a whole. The idea of regarding the project as an artwork provides an opportunity to work with architecture meta-architecturally.
Thesis

Dissolving boundaries
I have described a world where the boundaries between the physical, virtual and mental are dissolving. The role of architecture in such a world seems unstable. Perhaps the post-post-modern surge of neo-modernist, pragmatic architecture is an attempt to reclaim the physical and the tangible. I believe that an alternative route forward is to acknowledge this rapidly changing world and embrace the instability and the multiplicity of worlds. As the human experience is a superimposition of dimensions, architecture must be created in several worlds simultaneously.

Acknowledging & embracing
The main intellectual act I will perform is leveling the playing field of the arts or media. Film theoretician Ricciotto Canudo proposed in 1911 that cinema was the synthesis of the spatial arts of sculpture, architecture and painting as well as the temporal arts of music and poetry. By reinterpreting Canudos idea, I will regard architecture, not cinema, as the sixth encompassing art. Seen in the company of these other media, the opportunity of regarding architecture as a world-conjuring operation emerges. When the border between physical and virtual collapses, how does one tell the difference between for example a film and a building? Not even function, commonly seen as the realm of architecture, can be the decisive factor when considering for example a digital interface. Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, writers of Remediation: Understanding New Media, writes “Media have the same claim to reality as more tangible cultural artifacts; photographs, films and computer applications are as real as airplanes and buildings”. Remediation, a concept within media studies, describes the way any new media incorporates the traits of already existing ones. Conversely, “(...)older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media”.

Architecture as media
I aim to explore how these ideas can be used to widen the range of tools of architecture. Furthermore, how can the elements of other, perhaps intangible, worlds be incorporated into the architectural project without diminishing its relationship to the tangible and therefore its urgency? Essentially, can architecture be continually relevant in a dissolved world without itself dissolving?

Remediation
Aims
I aim to explore how these ideas can be used to widen the range of tools of architecture. Furthermore, how can the elements of other, perhaps intangible, worlds be incorporated into the architectural project without diminishing its relationship to the tangible and therefore its urgency? Essentially, can architecture be continually relevant in a dissolved world without itself dissolving?

(fig. 1) Andrei Tarkovsky arranging a shot for The Sacrifice.

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Method

Cluster of worlds

I plan to design a proposition for an architectural intervention and simultaneously construct a world or cluster of worlds in dynamic interplay with it. The world cluster acts as architectural subconscious or dream world in relation to the projected physical architectural object. Within this world cinematic techniques such as the jump cut or the reverse tracking shot, literary techniques such as automatic writing or rhyming or a web phenomenon such as the hyperlink are all viable as architectural acts, performed without translation to conventional architectural language. It is a world wherein myth, intuition, history and hearsay are regarded as fact. This world is not constrained to gravity, three-dimensional space or linear time. The current plan (which is subject to change in accordance with the development of the project) is for the cluster to manifest in five media, the fifth being the proposed architectural intervention: (1) text; (2) image; (3) diorama; (4) video; (5) architecture. By exaggerating, partmentalizing and clarifying the process, a simplified and crude remediation is avoided.

Manifestations

(1) Text. The first world will manifest as a stream of text.
(2) Image. The second world will manifest as a two-dimensional surface.
(3) Diorama. The third world will manifest as a three-dimensional object.
(4) Video. The fourth world will manifest as moving images thereby incorporating the fourth dimension, time.
(5) Architecture. The fifth world, manifesting as an architectural intervention incorporates all of the aforementioned dimensions and is able to remediate their traits. In some ways what the project will be about is exploring what the fifth dimension, specifically architectural, is.

Conjurer and manifestation

The projected architectural object is both a conjurer and a manifestation of worlds. I envision it as the neck of a toppled hourglass, connecting the ethereal and corporeal as a Cartesian pineal gland. The aim is for the sand to trickle from bulb to bulb in both directions at once.

Creation of space

Though the manifestations are represented here as a hierarchical list insinuating an evolutionary concept, the point of this method is the opposite. However, the five worlds can be seen as a spectrum of mediation where the creation of space gradually moves from the mind of the spectator to outside it. While reading, the experience of space is to a high degree created in the mind of the reader. As we move through dimensions, the representation heightens in direct physicality and as a result, less of the experience of space is created in the minds of the spectator and instead stated blatantly. My aim is for the worlds along the gradient to retain both properties, toppling the supposed inverse relationship. Some tools at my disposal are illusion, ambiguity, narrative and paradox.

(1) An illustration by comics writer and artist Jean Giraud (Moebius), constantly dealing with journeys through alternate realities.

(2) A periscope-like distorting device used as a world-conjuring machine as part of the project In the Open, conducted during the spring semester of 2015.

(3) A site plan of the fictional world created by the distorting device made as part of the project In the Open, conducted during the spring semester of 2015.

(4) The projection of visual foveal stimuli to the pineal gland (Descartes, 1644).
Program

I will design a movie theater. The program, acting as catalyst and raison d'être, will be able to engulf and be enriched by the cluster while simultaneously feeding intent, focus and substance to the cluster and the thesis as a whole. A movie theater being a device for world-conjuring, can within my project be regarded as an analogue to architecture. Besides this meta-architectural quality, the movie theater as a type have inherent properties harboring both challenges and opportunities. Examples are multi-storey multi-level rooms, no need for windows, complicated logistics and a clear division of served and serving space.

History

The movie theater, as suggested by the name, have similarities with the theater and while today they certainly share elements (stage/screen, audience seating, ticket sales counter, back-stage/projector-room etc) their origins are distinctly different. While theater is classically played outside with the audience watching from a hillside, the origins of cinema are murkier. Film was born out of the soil of phantasmagoria, photography, optical tricks like the zoetrope and thaumatrope. The first movie theaters were not architectural artifacts at all but projectors carried from town to town around the turn of the century, set up in whatever room or tent were available. They had more in common with traveling circuses than with contemporary theaters. The first half of the twentieth century saw the rise and dominance of the local movie theater and a cinema culture where the movie theater, through news reels, became main sources of information. The advent of television forced cinemas and film companies to invest in new, unique experiences. Many small theaters were closed while the larger got wider screens, better sound and colour film. Technical developments like 3D, 70 mm film, stereo sound and later IMAX and surround sound, in a way descendants of cinema’s illusionary origin, are the film industry trying to fight home entertainment. Today, a result of technological developments within film projecting logistics, market pressure-induced efficiency and urban sprawl, new huge cineplexes are built outside of the city rather than within it.
Proposal

The movie theater I propose to design will be smaller than the cineplex mall versions popular today (fewer screens) and will instead of a wide selection of films across multiple screens show fewer simultaneously (perhaps only one) but have a more varied program, including low-budget, art-house and international films. Similar sorts of movie theaters active in Stockholm today are Zita, Rio and Sture. Both as a way to inject some sense of economic viability to the intervention and to provide Kungsholmen with a possible cultural hub I will insert a café and a small shop selling film- and media-related products. This parts the program into two distinct parts of a choreography, the first being anticipation or meeting (café, shop, ticket sales, snack sales), the second being the film experience (the auditorium). Enveloping these parts is the serving space (storage, projector room, staff kitchen, etc).

World vehicle

The essential function of the program is to transport the user to another world. A movie theater is a vehicle for moving between realities. It is however, not only a medium, but a world unto itself.

Movie theater as church

Movie-going is not entirely unlike going to mass in a church. A group of people with somewhat common goals enter a room devoted to another realm entire. Here they as a group yet individually aim to transcend ordinary life and find solace in this experience. This is in a way a poetic paradox, doing something absolutely individual heightened by the company of others. Additionally, as with a church, it is a place with the potential to be a meeting place.

(fig. 1) Skandia by Gunnar Asplund, opened at Drottninggatan 82 in 1923.
(fig. 2) UFA Cinema Center in Dresden by Coop Himmelblau, opened in 1998.
(fig. 3) Galway Picture Palace by DePaor Architects, yet to be opened to the public.
Kungsholmen’s last regular movie theater closed in 1996, rendering a large and well-populated part of Stockholm a cinema wasteland. SF Bio, Sweden’s dominating movie theater company, has expressed a wish to open a movie theater in the area but has so far been unable to find a suitable site. The small urban local cinema, as opposed to the suburban cineplex version, have a long history in Kungsholmen, it was once the most cinema-dense part of Stockholm. Since the 1940s when 18 local movie theaters nestled beside the apartment blocks, cinema has changed from being an everyday thing to being more of an event. Placing a smaller theater in the middle of the city asks the question: Is it possible to maintain a feeling of spectacle and otherworldliness while being smaller, more intimate, and closer to home?

A possibility in regards to site is to embed the cinema totally in the surrounding architecture. Instead of adding onto existing cityscape, burrowing into what is already there. A cinema can do without windows. The program and my proposed method lend themselves to dealing with the movie theater as a cave wherein on one wall parallel worlds are projected.

The stretch of St Eriksgatan just south of the bridge over to Norrmalm was particularly dotted with movie theaters. This was the main street and so movie theaters were able to attract the citizens as they moved in the city. But further than that, the topography of the site seems to enable large windowless rooms. The parallel street Kronobergsgatan lies considerably lower than St Eriksgatan, and further up the hill lies Fridhemsplan. As a result, the buildings on both sides of St Eriksgatan negotiate a drop that in some extreme spots span three stories. As an example, the eastern apartment block Roddaren have housed four different movie theaters, at least one of which’s structure is clearly visible still today. Even after the last movie theaters closed here, murky, phantasmagorical, heterotopic spaces continue to thrive. Cybertown, a multi-storey, indoor, smoke-filled and dark windowless city where laser rifles are fired between lunch and 9 pm lies right next to a three-storey pool hall where you enter the third floor through a short flight of stairs downward. This stretch of St Eriksgatan, already a cluster of worlds in space and time, will be able to feed into the world cluster along with the program.
Schedule

January 19 - February 7  Research program; research references; read literature; produce site model
February 8 - March 5  Develop worlds and movie theater design simultaneously
March 6 - March 7  Collect/preparation presentation material; prepare oral presentation for mid seminar
March 8 - March 9  Mid seminar
March 10 - April 24  Develop worlds and movie theater design simultaneously
April 25 - May 6  Continue work but with a focus on ensuring rhetoric and readability
May 7 - May 8  Prepare presentation material and oral presentation for final seminar
May 9 - May 15  Final seminar
May 16 - May 29  Finishing touches on presentation material
May 30 - June 3  Diploma days

Presentation material

• Abstract/revised thesis booklet
• Process material
• Wooden site model 1:500
• Section model of movie theater design 1:100
• Plan/plans 1:100
• Section 1:100
• Elevation 1:100
• Site plan of Stockholm with historical context (movie theaters then and now)
• World manifestation 1: Text (Thesis/Narrative/Description of design)
• World manifestation 2: Image (Two-dimensional drawing/painting/photo-montage)
• World manifestation 3: Diorama/sculpture (Three-dimensional medium)
• World manifestation 4: Video (4-dimensional medium)

Potential references

Literature

• Sculpting in Time - Andrei Tarkovsky
• The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality - Paul Ricoeur
• Montage and Architecture - Sergei Eisenstein
• Piranesi, or the Fluidity of Forms - Sergei Eisenstein
• Remediation: Understanding New Media - Jay David Bolter & Richard Grusin
• Den ägglösa konsten fikilese: Ett om kinematografen - Ricciotto Canudo
• Stockholms alla biografer - Kurt Berglund
• Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film - Giuliana Bruno
• Invisible Cities - Italo Calvino
• Mr. Palomar - Italo Calvino
• Neuromancer - William Gibson

Film

• The Draughtsman’s Contract - Peter Greenaway
• A Walk Through H - Peter Greenaway
• The Sacrifice - Andrei Tarkovsky
• Solaris - Andrei Tarkovsky
• Stalker - Andrei Tarkovsky
• Blow-up - Michelangelo Antonioni
• Holy Mountain - Alejandro Jodorowsky
• Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring - Kim Ki-duk
• Synecdoche New York - Charlie Kaufman
• Tron - Steven Lisberger
• The Cell - Tarsem Singh

Architecture

• Skandia movie theater - Gunnar Asplund
• Film Guild Cinema - Frederick Kiesler
• Endless Theater - Frederick Kiesler
• Shrine of the Book - Frederick Kiesler
• Universal Theater - Frederick Kiesler
• UFA Cinema Center - Coop Himmelb(l)au
• Busan Cinema Center - Coop Himmelb(l)au
• Cinema Sil Plaz - Capaul & Blumenthal Architects
• Galway Picture Palace - DePaor Architects

External contacts

• David Bowallius, projectionist at Filmstaden Vällingby.
• Martin Lunnegård, former shift supervisor at Filmstaden Scandinavia, Solna.

Johan Ahl Eliasson
End notes


Context


5. HARTLEY-PARKINSON, Richard (2014) “Can you break the $3million codes this author has created in his books?” Metro online news site, October 9 2014, <http://metro.co.uk/2014/10/09/can-you-break-the-3million-codes-this-author-has-created-in-his-books-4898696/> [accessed 07/01/2016]


7. #allmymovies, performance piece by LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner, November 10-12 2015 at Angelika Film Center in New York City

Method


Site

1a. MARTINSSON, Karl (2015, Tuesday November 24) Mitt i Kungsholmen, pp. 4-5.

1b. MARTINSSON, Karl (2015, Tuesday November 24) Mitt i Kungsholmen, pp. 4-5.

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Projecting Realities

Re-mediation in the Realm of Architecture

Thesis project by Johan Ahl Eliasson

Supervised by Elizabeth Hatz and Peter Lynch

We live our lives in multiple parallel worlds. Virtual reality technology is only the most obvious example of recent media enabling a rapid and highly immersive experience of alternate realities. Our experience is full of more or less developed worlds. Moreover, huge, seemingly autonomous, windowless malls are reached via subway transportation and elevators. Spaces like these, which we might as well have reached through clicking a hyperlink, are in a way placeless. Heterotopias, the spaces described by Michel Foucault as "(...)outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality" ¹, are expanding and increasingly influence our daily lives. Furthermore, smartphone applications like Periscope let us send and receive a live video stream to and from anywhere in the world, essentially collapsing daily basis and at increasing speeds, parallel realities and their inhabitants, us, cannot be ignored.

¹. FOUCAULT, Michel (1967) Of Other Spaces

The role of architecture in a world where the boundaries between the physical, virtual and mental are dissolving seems unstable. As the human experience is a superimposition of dimensions, architecture must be created in several worlds simultaneously. Film theoretician Ricciotto Canudo¹ proposed in 1911 that cinema was the synthesis of the spatial arts of sculpture, architecture and painting as well as the temporal arts of music and poetry. By reinterpreting Canudos idea, I will regard architecture, not cinema, as the sixth encompassing art. Seen in the company of these other media, the opportunity of regarding architecture as a world-conjuring operation emerges. When the border between physical and virtual collapses, how does one tell the difference between for example a film and a building? Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, writers of Remediation: Understanding New Media, writes "Media have the same claim to reality as more tangible cultural artifacts; photographs, films and computer applications are as real as airplanes and buildings". Remediation, a concept within media studies, describes the way any new media incorporates the traits of already existing ones. Conversely, "(...)older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media".²

I aim to explore how these ideas can be used to widen the range of tools of architecture. How can the elements of other, perhaps intangible, worlds be incorporated into the architectural project?

¹. CANUDO, Ricciotto (1911) Den sjätte konstens födelse: Essä om kinematografen
Method

I have simultaneously investigated five worlds (media), the fifth being the proposed architectural intervention of a movie theatre.

1. TEXT. The first world will manifest as a stream of text.
2. IMAGE. The second world will manifest as a two-dimensional surface.
3. DIORAMA. The third world will manifest as a 3-dimensional object.
4. VIDEO. The fourth world will manifest as moving images.
5. ARCHITECTURE. The fifth world, manifesting as an architectural intervention incorporates all of the aforementioned dimensions and is able to remediate their traits.

The aim has been for these world manifestations to grow in parallel and in dynamic relation. The cross-contamination ultimately feeds into an answer to the thesis question. The movie theater incorporates tools and moments from the other media.

Text

The world of text has served as a binding myth or narrative, establishing a sequence within the movie theater, a plot if you will. The metaphor as a technique has, somewhat surprisingly, the possibility of being incredibly precise. During the work, the idea of seeing a building typology as a manifestation of a myth or narrative has emerged. The movie theatre, although sharing traits with the church, lacks an equally powerful narrative and choreography.

“You are a conscious traveler of a cityscape, you are the neck-stretched predator of the primordial wastes, you are a dot on a map, a gun flash hovering over an isometric view. You are bid entrance by a familiar sign and leave the city hardcore landscape through a one-way maze and walk straight, swallowed by the deep. A gradual but swiftly turned corner, like a blade silently cutting fabric, reveals and seals you inside. You carry on, and as a tumbling rough shape hitting placid water you find yourself in another world. It is an infinite but contained limbo from which you see the next one. It is much larger than expected. It is a pool you sink into. It is unclear how it is arranged. It is a womb, and like that it is only a preliminary world. Another is beckoning. However, we have time. It is not a room because a room is connected to other rooms. Yet, a beckoning tunnel cavity beyond threatens to spill its contents like a flower collecting rain water. Continuing, you are trapped only to find yourself in an immense space. A cosmos of planet vehicles. You are stretched and loose, ready to travel. You walk in space, among space and find your escape. Once inside you are open to another world and you enter and you linger. The only appearing objects are the seats, suspended on top of each other at a slant. They all face one direction. A very meager light evaporates from the eye of the projectionist’s window at the back. The floor is hollow, as on a boat. We are clearly in a ship suspended in space, in nothing. We have gone from one uncertain world-space into a black void. Eyes now used to the darkness, a dark curtain hangs directly in front of us. A bell calls and the curtains are drawn aside, revealing a dimly lit screen. At the perfect moment, the eye at the back bashes the screen in colour. A world is created. It seems to emerge from behind the screen. It protrudes infinitely into another world. It is like drawing aside the curtains and opening the window of a dark and cluttered bedroom unto a hillside.
Image

The image world is based on an analysis of Giovanni Battista Piranesi Carceri etchings. The prison series exhibit a range of devices such as distortions of scale, repetitions of similar shapes and extreme contrast and shadow to create a feeling of vastness and boundlessness. The main find I have made is that Piranesi in plate V uses a slanted horizon line, to which the image owes its sense of otherness. These and other traits belonging to the world of the image have been used to create somewhat of a piranesian paraphrase, an image corresponding to the cavern of the salons in the movie theatre.

Plate V from Le Carceri d’invenzione by Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1730-1778) turned upside down and cropped.

Manifested metaphors

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Plato V from Le Carceri d'invenzione by Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778)

- Ambiguity of convex versus concave
- Repeating/alternating shapes give extreme sense of depth
- Ambiguous scale of objects
- Fog gives sense of enormous scale and depth
- Shapes lining up awkwardly
- Vanishing point 1
- Plane of large dark structures
- Vanishing point 2
- Slanting horizon line outside of frame
- Multiple points of "escape"
Early sketches

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Diorama

The diorama or mirror box is an attempt to create a boundless but contained world. With the use of vaulted galleries constantly obstructing the views and a distorted hexagon a space is created where the boundaries are unclear. One of the main traits of the diorama is the disconnect between the interior and the exterior, making the interior of the diorama a world. A world does not have an outside. The diorama corresponds to the foyer of the movie theater.

Photo of the back of the diorama piece Elant donnes by Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) in process 1965.

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Diorama - Exterior

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Diorama - Interior

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Diorama - Plan 1:2

Diorama parts

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Visualization of diorama interior

Johan Ahl Eliasson
**Video**

The video world has centered around the use of what is called a reverse zoom effect. It was used by Alfred Hitchcock in Vertigo and has since become a fixture in cinema. By moving the camera inwards while zooming outwards or vice versa, space seems to stretch. Another important reference is Wavelength, an avantgarde film piece by Michael Snow showing a 40 minute long take where a continuous but excruciatingly slow zoom inwards reveals new things about a room. By distorting the shape and placement of a row of pillars in the scenography for the video, a claustrophobic room becomes an open space. The zoom, rather than composition, color or narrative, is a trait belonging to moving images as it incorporates both time and space. The video world corresponds to a moment in the movie theater where the visitor reaches the foyer.

Stills from the film Wavelength (1967) by Michael Snow (1929-).
Reverse tracking shot

Vertigo - Alfred Hitchcock (1958)
Wavelength - Michael Snow (1967)
Jaws - Steven Spielberg (1975)

Reverse tracking shot process

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Scenography for reverse tracking shot plan and section 1:5

Reverse tracking shot setup

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Frame from reverse tracking shot video

Johan Ahl Eliasson
Architecture

S:t Eriksgatan in Stockholm, historically filled with movie theaters, now harbouring none, attracts establishments shunning natural light due to extreme height differences within the block. A movie theater is inserted into an existing apartment building, using the large spans of a former movie theater closed down in the eighties to create a cavernous, piranesian dungeon. The techniques of the media worlds invade the movie theater, aiding the choreography of escapism and immersion into the world of cinema.

A world is that which has no outside. The image, the text, the video and the diorama are worlds in this sense. When it comes to architecture, I have time and time again been struck by how it seems inseparable from the physical world, our world. Instead of dreaming up a utopian project I chose to ground the architectural intervention in reality. That has forced me to negotiate with the fact of architecture that there is always an outside, a concave to the convex. On one level the movie theater is a collection of remediating acts. On another the movie theater attempts to become a medium in itself by disconnecting with the outside of the building and the city.
Stockholm with today’s movie theatres marked. Kungsholmen (dashed) lacks a movie theatre.

SF Bio is currently investigating where to establish a new movie theatre on Kungsholmen. Articles from local newspapers Mitt i Kungsholmen and Vårt Kungsholmen
Kungsholmen with sites of former movie theatres marked. The area around S:t Eriksgatan just south of the bridge (dashed) held particularly many.

Aerial photo of the block Roddaren with the lots of Roddaren 50 and 57 marked.
Roxy, 1935.

Johan Ahl Eliasson