ATLAS OF EMOTION

Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film

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2 A Geography of the Moving Image

By means of the . . . film . . . it would be possible to infuse certain subjects, such as geography, which is at present wound off organ-like in the forms of dead descriptions, with the pulsating life of a metropolis.

Albert Einstein

The evolution of the architectural screen, fleshed out in the architecture of the movie house itself, has been produced in dialogue with a cultural field that includes the "laboratory" of film theory and criticism. As we address the space of film genealogy and history, our site-seeing tour thus stops off at times to revisit "classical" film theory. A number of proposals from this period will be taken up in the course of fashioning filmic observation as a practice of emotion pictures. I begin by proposing a geographic notion of the haptic, working from an architectural "premise" that will develop later along a geopsychic path. Here, the haptic is advanced in the material realm of architecture, in a continuation of the investigation of the urban pavement traced by Siegfried Kracauer, cut and mapped by Walter Benjamin, and charted by the architectural itineraries of the movie house.

In seeking a theory that explains the practice of traversing space, we might first revisit "Montage and Architecture," an essay written by Sergei Eisenstein in the late 1930s. I take this work as pivotal in an attempt to trace the theoretical interplay of film, architecture, and travel practices, for as we site-see with Eisenstein's essay as our guidebook, taking detours along the way, their haptic maps begin to take shape. In this pioneering meditation on film's architectonics, Eisenstein envisioned a fundamental link between the architectural ensemble and film, and he set out to design a moving spectator for both. His method for accomplishing this was to take the reader, quite literally, for a walk. Built as a path, his essay guides us on an architectural tour. Path, in fact, is the very word Eisenstein uses to open his exploration. Underscored in his text, it becomes almost an indexical mark, a street sign. An arrow points to the itinerary we are to take:

The word path is not used by chance. Nowadays it is the imaginary path followed by the eye and the varying perceptions of an object that depend on how it appears to the eye. Nowadays it may also be the path followed by the mind across a multiplicity of phenomena, far apart in time and space, gathered in a certain sequence into a single meaningful concept; and these diverse impressions pass in front of an immobile spectator.

In the past, however, the opposite was the case: the spectator moved between [a series of] carefully disposed phenomena that he observed sequentially with his visual sense.

Speaking of film's immobile spectator, Eisenstein reveals the perceptual interplay that exists between immobility and mobility. There is a mobile dynamics
The architect Bernard Tschumi's theoretical project *The Manhattan Transcripts* (1981) offers a contemporary example of Eisenstein's way of thinking about motion in architecture. Proposing to outline the movements of the various individuals traversing an architectural set, Tschumi declares that "the effect is not unlike an Eisenstein film script." He suggests that the reading of a dynamic architectural space "does not depend merely on a single frame (such as a facade), but on a succession of frames or spaces," and thus draws explicit analogies with film. Tschumi cites Eisenstein again in his work for the Parc de La Villette (1982–97), where the architectural path he designed was called a "cinematic promenade." Here, the itinerary that links the *folies* of the Parisian park is conceived as a film. The architectural-cinematic juncture is deployed on the grounds of motion along a sinuous route connecting the urban gardens of a metropolitan drifter.

Walking on these grounds and into the cinematic terrain of Tschumi's later architectural projects, such as Le Fresnoy National Studio for the Contemporary Arts (1991–98), one begins to understand the interaction between the two spatial arts, both of which function as dynamic terrains. A dynamic conception of architecture, which overcomes the traditional notion of building as a still, tectonic construct, allows us to think of space as practice. This involves incorporating the inhabitant of the space (or its intruder) into architecture, not simply marking and reproducing but reinventing, as film does, his or her various trajectories through space—that is, charting the narrative these navigations create. Architectural frames, like filmic frames, are transformed by an open relation of movement to events. Rather than being vectors or directional arrows, these movements are mobilized territories, mappings of practiced places. They are, in Michel de Certeau's words, spatial practices—veritable plots. This is how architectural experiences—which involve the dynamics of space, movement, and narrative—relate to and, in fact, embody the effect of the cinema and its promenades.
interacts with architecture’s narrative peripatetics and “streetwalking.” In this way, the route of a modern picturesque is constructed.

Thinking of modern views like the ones Le Corbusier helped to shape in relation to promenades, one travels the contact zone between the architectural ensemble and film—a form of tourism. When an architectural site is scenically assembled and mobilized, as cities often are, the effect of site-seeing is produced. Such traveloguing is also produced by the cinema. Film creates space for viewing, perusing, and wandering about. Acting like a voyager, the itinerant spectator of the architectural-filmic ensemble reads moving views as practices of imaging.

THE ARCHITECTONICS OF SCENIC SPACE

In its capacity to produce views, cinema carries on and further mobilizes the drive of the spatiovisual arts to picture space. Exploring this issue in an essay on Piranesi and the fluidity of forms, Eisenstein returned to the relationship between film and architecture, stating that “at the basis of the composition of an architectural ensemble is the same ‘dance’ which is at the basis of film montage.” This essay begins, poignantly, with another spatial wandering. The author looks out from the windows of his apartment, located near the film studios, and gazes out onto the city of Moscow, surveying its changing metropolitan contours and remarking on the expansion of the city space. He then looks at the walls between the windows inside, where a Piranesi etching hangs, and proceeds to read the architectonics of this image as a predecessor to the “ecstatic” shattering of space to which his own fictional film constructions aspired.

2.3. Windows as frames in Toba Khedoori’s Untitled (Windows), 1994-95. Oil and wax on paper. Detail.
spatiality in which spectacle was displayed through motion by inciting the observer to wander through space. As suggested here by modern re-readings of the picturesque promenade in the "picturesque" architectonics of the Acropolis and Piranesi's views, film reinvented the picturesque practice in modern ways. It did so by permitting the spectatoral body to take unexpected paths of exploration.

CITY VIEWS

Continuing our walk—a trajectory through historical trajectories—to retrace the paths of architectural-fil mic wandering, we return to Eisenstein and recall how he compared vedute to films more than once. He was intrigued, for example, by El Greco's View and Plan of Toledo (c. 1609), with its extraordinary multiple representation of the intersection of view painting and cartography. Here the painter, imaginatively inscribed in the picture, offers a map of the city as a geographic spectacle, opening it against a view of the urban panorama shown in the background and thus enabling the beholder to inhabit a multiplicity of spectatoral positions. Eisenstein noted that, as in a film, in this view we see "a city...not only from various points outside the city, but even from various streets, alleys, and squares!" As travel culture, the urban geography of view painting makes an interesting comparison with the cinematic viewing space. The spatial representation of view painting merged the codes of landscape painting with urban topography. In its various incarnations, it was actively produced by traveling painters and was related to the picturesque voyage. Articulating bird's-eye-view perspectives and the viewpoint of the city walker, it presented a diversity of views, from the panorama to the street-level prospect to the detail of a practiced place. In this way, it offered a city to view by presenting a site for traversal. The language of film has come to embody this practice of viewing sites, even rendering feasible the "impossible" aerial projections and
The type of travel writing and textual tourism found in “Montage and Architecture” is cinematic. Cuts and editing take Eisenstein from place to place. Once in Rome, he proceeds to walk through the interior of Saint Peter’s and, here, the act of touristic montage produces an interesting twist. His move from external to internal architecture is significant, for it parallels the kind of shift from exterior to interior views that is central to the picturesque and instrumental in understanding filmic mobility.

Eisenstein discusses at length the eight coats of arms that adorn Saint Peter’s famous canopy. The art historian Yve-Alain Bois, who has commented on Eisenstein’s specific use of Choisy’s axonometric vision to develop a cinematic peripatetics, remarks that, once inside, “instead of discussing the ‘maternal’ space of baroque architecture, to speak like architectural historian Vincent Scully, [Eisenstein] preferred to turn toward iconography.” Although this may seem disappointing, one might also recognize that the object of Eisenstein’s iconographic reading is, in fact, a maternal space, the subject of an itinerant narrative. Here we have a gendered tale, a spatial rendering of sexuality, that deserves critical attention.

The eight decorations produced by Gian Lorenzo Bernini depict different facial expressions. Their reading is produced by way of walking around the space, where the drama unfolds, quite literally, step by step. Connected by the mobile spectator and associated by way of peripatetics, the apparently unrelated faces produce a story—a woman’s story. The change of facial expressions, once placed in the gendered realm, becomes readable: the decorations depict the contractions and final release of a woman’s face, suggesting the different stages of her labor and delivery. Ultimately, this architectural tour tells the story of the inside of a woman’s body. Walking inside an architectural space, we have actually walked into an “interior.” The sequence of views has unleashed an intimate story. The walk has created a montage of gender viewed.
dwellings always construct a subjectivity. Their subjectivity is the physical self occupying narrativized space, who leaves traces of her history on the wall and on the screen. Crossing between perceived, conceived, and lived space, the spatial arts thus embody the viewer.

Film/body/architecture: a haptic dynamics, a phantasmatic structure of lived space and lived narrative; a narrativized space that is intersubjective, for it is a complex of socio-sexual mobilities. Unraveling a sequence of views, the architectural-filmic ensemble writes concrete maps. The scope of the view—the horizon of site-seeing—is the mapping of tangible sites.

**INHABITATION**

This experiential dimension—a sense of "closeness"—was recognized by Walter Benjamin when he related cinema’s new mode of spectatoriality to the way we respond to buildings. In his view, the spectatorial practice established by architecture is based on collective use and habit: "The distracted mass absorbs the work of art. This is most obvious with regard to buildings. Architecture has always represented the prototype of a work of art the reception of which is consummated." An heir to this practice, film continues the architectural habitus. It makes a custom of constructing sites and building sets of dwelling and motion. It has a habit of consuming space—space that is both used and appropriated. Being at the same time a space of consumption and a consumption of space, it is a user’s space. One lives a film as one lives the space that one inhabits: as an everyday passage, tangibly.
FILMIC MAPS

The erotics unleashed by the architectonics of lived space escalates in the metropolis, a concentrated site of narrative crossings that bears even deeper ties to cinema's own spatial (e)motion. This urban culture—an atlas of the flesh—thrives on the transient space of intersubjectivity. As when one travels with film, in the city one's "being" extends beyond the subject's walls. In 1903, when the cinema was first emerging, Georg Simmel proposed that, due to the "intensification of emotional life" in the metropolis, "a person does not end with limits of his physical body or with the area to which his physical activity is immediately confined but embraces, rather, the totality of meaningful effects which emanate from him temporally and spatially. In the same way the city exists only in the totality of effects which transcend their immediate sphere."

The city is laid out clearly as a social body. Exposed as passage, it would eventually become "the naked city," joining up with cinema again, by way of situationist cartography, in the form of psychogeography—a map of dérive, or "drift." Molded on the model of the Carte de Tendre—that spatial journey of the interior that mapped emotional moments represented as sites onto the topography of the land—situationist cartography was itself a psychogeography. As it graphed the movements of the subject through metropolitan space, one situationist map literally inscribed cinema into its cartographic trajectory through its reference to the American film noir The Naked City (1948), and in this way—that is, by way of the cinema—reproduced the everyday practice of the city's user.

Put forth as a map of potential itineraries and lived trajectories, the metropolis engages its dwellers and temporary inhabitants in geopsychic practices. It is the site of both inhabitation and voyage and a locus of the voyage of inhabitation. As James Clifford explained it in his mapping of "traveling cultures": "the great urban centers could be understood as specific, powerful sites of travelling/dwelling." Conceived as a mobile tactics at the crossroads of film and architecture, the metropolis exists as emotional cartography—a site of "transport."

CINEMATIC ARCHITECTURES

From modernist to situationist space to contemporary spatial discourse, architecture meets film on the grounds of the shifting metropolitan space. As Robert Mallet-Stevens declared in 1925, in a statement not far from Eisenstein's own formulation, "film has a marked influence on modern architecture; on the other hand, modern architecture contributes its artistic share to film... Modern architecture is essentially... wide-open shots, images in movement." Following the encounter of poststructuralism (and especially the philosophy of deconstruction) with architectural practice, in crossovers that have included exchange between the architect Peter Eisenman and philosopher Jacques Derrida, contemporary architectural discourse
The link between film and the architectural enterprise involves a montagist practice in which the realm of motion is never too far from the range of emotion. The two practices share not only a texture but a similar means of fabricating (e)motion, which includes their modes of production. As both art and industry they are practical aesthetics, based on producing and determined by commission. Their making of (e)motional space is a collaborative effort that demands the participation of several individuals working as a team; traverses different languages; and transforms project into product, which is finally used and enjoyed by a large constituency of people that forms a public. Economic factors are not only present but may even rule the passage between the different semiotic registers: from the drafting table to building construction to occupancy, on the one hand; and from script to the set of film production to occupancy of a movie theater on the other.

As the architect Jean Nouvel claims, a knowledge of "transversality and exteriority" links the architect to the filmmaker, who, as producers of visual space, share the desire "to experience a sensation—to be moved—to be conscious and be perverse in traversing the emotion as in analyzing it—recalling it—fabricating a strategy to simulate and amplify it in order to offer it to others and enable them to experience the emotion—for the pleasure of shared pleasures."30 Describing his own architecture in these terms, Nouvel states that "architecture exists, like cinema, in the dimension of time and movement. One conceives and reads a building in terms of sequences. To erect a building is to predict and seek effects of contrasts and linkage through which one passes. . . . In the continuous shot/sequence that a building is, the architect works with cuts and edits, framings and openings . . . screens, planes legible from obligatory points of passage."31 Architecture and film interface, increasingly, on traversals, for as Nouvel puts it, "the notion of the journey is a new way of composing architecture."32

A filmically driven architecture may also work with the flesh as a site of "fashioning" visual space performed in the street scene. In the words of Diana Agrest, one may look at the "street as a scene of scenes," a site where a phenomenon such as "fashion transforms people into objects, linking streets and theater through one aspect of their common ritual nature."33 Incorporating architecture into the practice of the visual and performing arts, Diller + Scofidio's transdisciplinary work, such as Flesh, BAD Press, and Tourisms: suiteCase Studies, brings the fashion of traveling movements to the attention of architecture.34 SuiteCase Studies, for example, a traveling exhibition, provides a meditation on the mobility of architectural fictions, thereby doubling its theme. The installation travels in fifty identical Samsonite suitcases, conceived as "the irreducible, portable unit of the home." Doubling as display cases, they showcase two touristic sites: the battlefield and the bed, "the most private site of the body's inscription onto the domestic field."35 On the map of gender, architectural space here meets the emotional ground of filmic tours.
much to offer to cinema studies. Minimally, as this chapter argues, these can act as a vehicle for the haptic grounding of film and its theorization as (e)motion pictures.

As we shall see, geography plays an important part in fostering this articulation. Mapping is the shared terrain in which the architectural-filmic bond resides—a terrain that can be fleshed out by rethinking practices of cartography for traveling cultures, with an awareness of the inscription of emotion within this motion. Indeed, by way of filmic representation, geography itself is being transformed and (e)mobilized. The dweller-voyager who moves through space drives the architectural itinerary of the city, the activity of travel, and film itself. All three practices involve a form of human motion through culturally conceived space—a form of transito.41 Not necessarily physical motion, transito is circulation that includes passages, traversals, transitions, transitory states, spatial erotics, (e)motion. Adopting this emotional viewpoint for both architecture and film viewing, two seemingly static activities, involves transforming our sense of these art forms. By working to conceive a methodological practice that is “in between,” we aim to corrode the opposition between immobility-mobility, inside-outside, private-public, dwelling-travel, and to unloose the gender boxing and strictures these oppositions entail. Architecture is a map of both dwelling and travel, and so is the cinema. These spaces, which exist between housing and motion, question the very limits of the opposition and force us to rethink cultural expression itself as a site of both travel and dwelling.

The space of cinema “enmoves” such cartographic rewriting. Layers of cultural space, densities of histories, visions of transit are all housed by film’s spatial practice of cognition. As a means of travel-dwelling, cinema designs the (im)mobility of cultural voyages, traversals, and transitions. Its narrativized space offers tracking shots to traveling cultures and vehicles for psychospatial journeys. A frame for cultural mappings, film is modern cartography. It is a mobile map—a map of differences, a production of socio-sexual fragments and cross-cultural travel. Film’s site-seeing—a voyage of identities in transito and a complex tour of identifications—is an actual means of exploration: at once a housing for and a tour of our narrative and our geography.