OUR FINGERTIPS

TSAN
DU FUN.

I: JENNIFER KO

21 MARCH 2018
AT THE NATIONAL SAWDUST.

Silence phase

Notation drawing National Sawdust
Thomas Tsang
2018
# Content

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Project Details

Author
Thomas Tsang

Title
Unbuilt Drawing

Output
Drawing and Performance

Function
Drawing

Location
Studio Practice

Exhibition Title
Various

Venue
Various

Date of installation
2016-
Performance at the National Sawdust, New York
Violinist: Jennifer Koh
Composer: Du Yun
Projection Drawing: Thomas Tsang
Summary of the Work and its Significance, Originality, and Rigor

The Unbuilt Drawing (2016-) frame the intention of ‘undoing’ in relation to communities of practice and discourse with common approaches and language in architectural drawing. Formations of words with ‘un’ and other similar negative prefixes indicate oppositional, critical and challenging actions. The found commonalities of meaning between the practice and discourse of art and the practice and discourse of architecture, the field of fashion yielded a different set of meanings when this approach was taken in the drawing. By referencing and working with other fields; distinct and potential ways to subvert actions, methods, and modes of fashion practice
can be more acutely revealed. This becomes a fundamental way to critique and reflect on the representation of architectural drawing; through the use of provocative strategies that are practiced within fields such as art.

The act of digitalization: capturing and recording a frame of analog drawing and viewing it on a screen, preserves the quality of the drawing at the moment it was captured. By capturing the series of drawings, allows one to reflect on their drawing process, the transformation of the drawing can be reviewed.

The conception of drawing has been dramatically reconfigured by the arrival of digital media. Drawings are not simply one fixed frame but constantly transforming and unfolding, revealing and inspiring ideas. During the creation of the Unbuilt Drawing, we draw and
think, regularly reviewing what comes before the current drawing, and adjusting what comes after it. Many drawings are suspended from time, unanchored from the particular fixed image, it brings freedom and improvisation, that one which not only holds an important part of the gives the drawing rhythm and tempo, in which provides an additional layer of information of the drawing. Combining with sound, we are able to see the music, or listen to the drawing, in the understanding of drawing and building.
Originality

Digitalization compress drawings, losing some original information. On the other hand, it presents the potential to add information to the drawings, open to think out of the picture frame and transform the medium into new visibility. The drawing uses narrative sequencing for that information, my role is notated drawing in work that otherwise is replaced. In the project working closely in collaboration with composer Du Yun, revisiting unheard voices of Chinese opera and disappearing voice in local dialect unleashing in contemporary Chinese cities; and poet Natalie Diaz, recognized cultural and mythological touchstones that afflict Indigenous Americans in a variety of forms.
The ‘the authorial position of the architect and the permanence of architecture’. Through use and misuse, architecture is undone. Both the method of drawing and the performing the content are relevant to my own use of ‘undo’ in relation to practice. This positions the project within a diverse range of contexts, indicative of literature covered, relevant practices and collaborations.
1  Proposed sound pavilion plan.
2  Collage of structure on the bridge site.
1. San Carlos Church Spiral Stairs Openings, Rome
   Francesco Borromini. 1646
2. Guangxiao Temple, Guangdong
3. Ponte Vecchio (Old Bridge), Florence, Italy
4. Axonometric view of the sounding room, B:inaural

DEHOW PROJECTS. 2016
Research Questions

- Are there aspects of traditional analogue drawing and architectural representation which embed multi-sensorial thinking in architectural design?
- How do representational techniques which combine a staging with a digital projection generate and capture architectural ideas and design?
- What are the spatial considerations of working with composers, sounds, poets, and performative artists narrate through, performing the architectural drawing?
Jenny and I played the first half a little with more intensity, therefore faster. So I had to cut out three slides. About two min

Around 5:24 we cut to 7 something

The big dots that then turning into the line. Which worked beautifully.

There were some architects friends of Jenny's in the audience, we later had drinks after the concert, they esp loved the drawings.

Many people loved how the music - and the performance correlated to the visuals. It gives them a broader and more wicked shift.
Notation for Opera, Shanghai, 2017
Shanghai Project, 2017
Projected Drawing on 40 m x 8 m
Rigor

To rethink drawing collaboratively, if the drawing is an act of production with a set of unified standards, or transforming from one style to another, or tolerate inconsistencies. One discovers something new upon drawing every single frame, and the enduring process is accumulated and compressed into a film. Unbuilt Drawing, as it specifically dramatizes the relationship in still image, sound, and audience receptions; operates radically in thinking about the construction and looking through drawings.

The quality of the physical drawing can be felt intensely in terms of memory, as if all the time and process of the drawing is being compressed in one drawing, in the form of the wrinkles of the paper, erasure
and graphite marks. Through the act of digitalization of the process, we can take a step back, to review the drawing process, what created the one drawing in the end.

Key drawing and collaboration methods included:

- On creative collaborative practice, to argue that the architecture, art, or visual text speak for itself and that the drawing or performance exists precisely

- Because the idea is not easily expressed in words.
Significance

Unbuilt redefines drawing with the element of time and medium. Drawings are not simply one fixed frame but constantly transforming and unfolding, revealing and inspiring ideas.

Many drawings are suspended from time, unanchored from a particular fixed image, it brings improvisation, that one which not only holds an important part of the gives the drawing rhythm and tempo, in which provides an additional layer of information of the drawing. Combining with sound, we are able to see the music, or listen to the drawing, in the making of drawing notation.

The “Unbuilt Drawing” project rethinks collaboration with performance and architecture, my contribution offers a new interdisciplinary outreach and
an expanded practice of creative practitioner, how it reconsiders how collaboration. The main two collaborators for Unbuilt Drawing, are recipient of the 2017 Pulitzer-Prize in Music and 2018 MacArthur Award in Poetry.
Dissemination and Evidence of Peer Review

My drawing was widely disseminated in notable performances and exhibition gallery, and it has significantly contributed to drawing and interdisciplinary collaborative creative practice. The drawing work have been supported by grants and artist residency fellowship in Europe. The research within the discipline of architecture.
Appendix

Performance by the artist collaboration:

TSANG, Thomas and DU, Yun. with Los Angeles Philharmonic “Cinematic Notation #4” (Drawing). TBD (Music)
Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, 2019 (World Premiere)

TSANG, Thomas and DU, Yun. with Jennifer KOH
“Cinematic Notation #3” (Drawing). Give me back your fingerprints (Music)
National Sawdust, New York, 2018 (World Premiere)

TSANG, Thomas and DU, Yun. “Cinematic Notation #2” (Drawing). How are you doing, the past that comes around the corner (Music)
Shanghai Symphony Hall, Shanghai, 2017 (World Premiere)

Co-Artistic Directors: Yongwoo Lee and Hans Ulrich Obrist. - Link

TSANG, Thomas and DU, Yun
“Sounding Architecture”
UABB Bi-City Shenzhen Biennale, Shenzhen, 2018

TSANG, Thomas and DIAZ, Natalie.
“The (In)visible dreams and streams”
Suomenlinna, Gallery Augusta in Helsinki, Finland, 2017.

TSANG, Thomas and DIAZ, Natalie.
“The (In)visible dreams and streams”
TSANG, Thomas and DIAZ, Natalie.
“The (In)visible dreams and streams”

TSANG, Thomas and DIAZ, Natalie.
“The (In)visible dreams and streams”

TSANG, Thomas and DIAZ, Natalie.
‘Built | Unbuilt’ at CAC Reading Room
Bergs Bazaar, Riga, Latvia, 2016
Contemporary Art Centre (CAC), Vilnius, Lithuania, 2016.

TSANG, Thomas
“Lost and Found: Rome in 50 Pieces” (Solo Exhibition)

Books, journals, and references to the project written by others:

Zhang, Kun. Composer Goes beyond her Music, China Daily, 2 Jun 2017
Related grant, fellow and residency:

TSANG, Thomas and Yun, DU. “b:inaural” Design Trust Seed Funding Grant Hong Kong Ambassadors of Design, Hong Kong, 2016.

TSANG, Thomas “Unbuilt” Rupert Artist in Residence Civitella Ranieri Foundation, New York and Umbria, Italy, 2016 Supported by Lithuanian Council for Culture

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To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that we invite Du Yun in collaboration with Thomas Tsang to participate in Phase II of the inaugural edition of the Shanghai Project, which will take place in and around the Shanghai Himalayas Center from April 23 – July 30, 2017, with an opening on Saturday, April 22nd.

The Shanghai Project is an ideas platform that brings together researchers across various disciplines to explore new modalities of research – and public engagement with such research – through cultural production. We are inviting, from China and abroad, artists, filmmakers, performers, musicians, designers, architects, writers, poets, philosophers, historians, scientists, economists, geographers, sociologists, anthropologists, journalists, doctors, lawyers, engineers, hackers, bloggers, activists, and the people of Shanghai as “researchers.” Together, your ideas, methods, and research will form the basis for exhibitions, performances, discursive programming, and publications. By incorporating disciplines, such as the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, alongside more traditionally “cultural” practices, such as visual art, performance, film/video, sound, architecture, and design, the Shanghai Project hopes to address urgent problems, from multiple points of entry, and in manners that can be considered and discussed by people from all walks of life.

The inaugural edition of the Shanghai Project invites researchers to explore the many valences of sustainability into and beyond the 22nd century. Centered in Shanghai, China, a city whose skyline has taken on a futuristic aesthetic of its own, where the term “modern” (moden) was first introduced into the Chinese language, and whose urban transformation is happening at unprecedented rates, the city serves as a perfect backdrop to start contemplating the next one hundred years. More than just a centennial year, “2116” provokes speculation upon the endurance of political, social, economic, cultural, as well as ecological, orders. Moreover, as the year 2110 straddles the continuum of both proximate and distant futures, a most radical question emerges: “sustainability” for whom exactly? With this invitation, we have enclosed further description of the theme for your reference.

We are thrilled to invite Du Yun to participate in the Shanghai Project as a researcher, and to work in collaboration with architect, Thomas Tsang to build the interactive audio-time capsule installation, B:inaural. Furthermore, for the occasion of the opening ceremony, we invite Du Yun to producing a performance in collaboration local opera singers – the performance looks at the evolution of dialectal song in a time of mass urban migration. As a Shanghai native, we are excited to invite Du Yun back home to think about and compose a musical score that reflects the unprecedented transformation her hometown has traversed over the last 25 years, and the unimaginable changes that will come in the next 100 years to come.

We support Du Yun and Thomas Tsang for the receipt of the Design Trust Seed Grant, as we believe both the installation and performance are relevant to migration issues also prevalent in the Greater Pearl River Delta.

Sincerely,

Yongwoo Lee + Hans-Ulrich Obrist
Shanghai Project Co-Artistic Directors
Bibliography

The Department of Architecture educates students in an active culture of service, scholarship and invention. Uniquely situated at the crossroads of China and global influence, the Department takes the approach that design is best explored from a sophisticated understanding of both. With a multidisciplinary curriculum emphasizing technology, history and culture, students gain broad knowledge and skills in the management of the environmental, social, and aesthetic challenges of contemporary architectural practice. With opportunities for design workshops, international exchanges, and study travel, graduates of the Department of Architecture are well prepared for contribution to both international and local communities of architects and designers.