

Nomadic Theatre

staging
movement and
mobility in
contemporary
performance

Liesbeth
Groot
Nibbelink

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Nomadic Theatre

Staging Movement and Mobility in Contemporary Performance
(with a summary in English)

Nomadisch Theater

De encenering van beweging en mobiliteit in hedendaags theater
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Utrecht op gezag van de
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door

Liesbeth Willemien Groot Nibbelink
geboren op 3 april 1971 te Doetinchem

Promotor: Prof. dr. M.A. Bleeker

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Deterritorialising the stage Introduction 11

1 Encounter 36

2 Displacement 60

3 Cartographies 85

4 Diagrams 111

5 Architextures 136

Distributed performance Epilogue 161

References 179

Previously published 189

Performance documentation section 190

Summary 197

Samenvatting 201

Curriculum vitae 206

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DETERRITORIALISING THE STAGE

Introduction

Primary coordinates

In 2005, the German performers collective Rimini Protokoll presented *Call Cutta*, a mobile phone theatre play.¹ In this ambulatory performance, a single spectator navigates the streets of Berlin's Kreuzberg district, guided by a call-centre employee in Calcutta, India, who provides directions over the phone. The mobile phone connects the two places of performance, and interactively engages a single performer and a single spectator in a conversation about the local particularities at both ends of the line. *Call Cutta* is presented as theatre, it surely can be considered as such – as both the performer and the spectator are joined in a situation that is distinctively staged – yet it radically plays with the conventions of theatre. In *Call Cutta*, spectators have become *mobile*; they have left the traditional seat in the (darkened) auditorium and instead are engaged in an ambulatory performance. Next, individual spectators are mobilised out of the larger audience: they are singled out and start and finish the performance one by one. It is not only the spectators that have become mobile but the theatre space is in motion as well. The theatre space loses the architectural coherence provided by city theatres or black-box venues, and, seen from the perspective of the spectator in Berlin, starts to *move along* with the spectator. With regards to the stage, instead of spectators looking at a stage, one may wonder: where exactly *is* this stage? The stage seems to be smashed to pieces – split up between a 'here', an 'over there', and a "Hertzian space" in between.² In an essay on *Call Cutta*, theatre scholar and director Heiner Goebbels observes that actually one did not

1 Website Rimini Protokoll. See Performance Documentation Section, from here on abbreviated as PDS.

2 The term "Hertzian space" is coined by Matt Adams (Blast Theory), to indicate that locative media and cell phones create spaces where users simultaneously inhabit "nearby and remote locations, physical and digital spaces" (in De Souza e Silva/Sutko 2009, 72).

see this performance: there were no performers on a stage, no protagonists to identify with; actually there was no one to be seen (2007, 118). This is rather remarkable, taking the etymology of the word 'theatre' into account, a place for seeing or viewing (Freshwater 2009, 5). The performer has left the centre, argues Goebbels, in fact the centre of the stage is empty, which makes room for the spectator as a subject of communication. Rimini Protokoll removes the focus on (the presence of) the actor, without occupying the centre with something else, for instance, the Ego of the artist, and redirects the attention to how the spectator is perceptively engaged with this performance (2007, 123-124). An ambulatory performance like *Call Cutta* mobilises the codes, conventions and boundaries of the stage, and therefore *deterritorialises* the stage.

Call Cutta is not the only performance in which this disruption of conventional territories in the theatre can be seen at work. Over the last decade, there seems to be an increase of performances that literally attempt to mobilise the spectator and rethink the conditions of the stage. Spectators are engaged in promenade performances or walking theatre, or they traverse the city by bike; they are driven around in wheelchairs, cars, by motorbikes or in mini-vans, or drift across labyrinthine performance installations. Performers forsake the usual centre-stage position and turn into guides, tour operators, or voices on an audiotape.³ Theatre spaces – the term I will use to designate the space in which theatre takes place – are produced in the appointment of temporary and changing coordinates; contrary to the usual conflation with a theatre building, they emerge in and as the *process* of performance and as temporary *situations*.

This study investigates movement and mobility in contemporary performance, by enquiring into the mobility of spectators, the displacements of performers and the movements of theatre spaces. I explore how ambulatory performances and performative installations stage movement and in turn mobilise the stage, and I locate movement and mobility in particular in the shifting relations and porous zones between performers, spectators and spaces. Movement and mobility in performance on the one hand play with conventions and solidified forms of theatre, and on the other hand self-reflexively point to the very thing theatre is made of, as they continuously reveal the theatre as a live and transitory event. That which initially appears as just physical movement in the theatre, on closer inspection involves theoretical movement as well, as it mobilises thinking about how movement and mobility effect and implicate the theatre, and in addition, invites to investigate why some theatre practitioners prefer these mobile forms of theatre making, how these forms address and position the spectators in performance, how

3 Next to the cases discussed in this study, some examples are *Wijksafari* (TGA/Zina, 2013), *Walking* (Robert Wilson/Theun Mosk/Boukje Schweigman, 2008, 2012), *Hartstocht* (Dries Verhoeven/Roos van Geffen, 2002); works of Blast Theory, Gob Squad, Deborah Warner, Janet Cardiff/Georg Bures Miller, or Wrights & Sites. See also Ferdman (2013), Benford/Giannachi (2011), Whybrow (2010), Oddey (2007).

mobility is staged and effects the stage and, subsequently, how such movements best can be described.

These physical and theoretical movements are examined through a specific and newly invented concept: *nomadic theatre*. From the outset, I emphasise that this concept does not label or categorise a particular set of performances; this would create a form of arrest that would not do justice to either the process character of these events, or to the movements that precisely mobilise thought. Instead, I use this concept to deploy a mode of thinking which attempts to be as mobile and flexible as the phenomena it wishes to describe. By exploring the potential of nomadic theatre, and certain qualities that encounter each other within this concept, I navigate through a field without demarcating that field. I will traverse a field that refuses to become territory, with three flexible coordinates as my guides: performer, spectator and space. I follow the movements and temporary occupations of this threefold constellation, in order to describe mobile ways of practicing and theorising theatre.

The term 'nomadic theatre' is occasionally used to identify travelling theatre troupes or street theatre events, yet as an analytical concept it does not yet exist. Nomadic theatre is a product of invention and creation, through which I stage an encounter between the nomadic, mainly as it has been theorised by Gilles Deleuze, partly in close collaboration with Félix Guattari, and the theatre – a theatre that manifests itself as movement and thinks performance through mobility. This study explores the potential of nomadic theatre, by putting the concept to work in a milieu of various European theatre performances, Deleuze's and Guattari's nomadology, and related insights derived from various disciplines in the humanities: media theory, urban theory, cartography, architecture, and game theory. Following Deleuze's and Guattari's take on philosophical concepts, concepts themselves are creative, in the sense that they produce events. Events cannot be captured; they can only be neared. Similarly, a quasi-philosophical concept like nomadic theatre, which at some points fundamentally differs from a philosophical concept, can only be approached by a process of bordering and encircling. This introduction aims to achieve this: it borders and circles around the concept of nomadic theatre, in relation to its object, and through these approximations both object and concept grow in force and volume.

Theatre, technology, mobility

The performances in this study are part of a larger field of phenomena in which equipment such as mobile phones, mobile audio and video devices, smartphones with GPS applications (Global Positioning Systems) and other locative media fuse with artistic and cultural practice. Mobile audio and video technology not only enter the theatre but are equally put to use in audio tours in cities or museums, pervasive games, environmental storytelling, Layar-based art and heritage walks or networked (music) performances. These practices work with layered or mixed realities, in which the physical environment is augmented by digitally created spaces. They surpass physical distance by web-based

applications; they practice one-to-one or many-to-many communication models; they turn cities into urban game boards, either to educational, touristic or critical ends.⁴ Both contemporary theatre and performance then, as well as these twin practices seem to be invaded by what sociologist John Urry terms a “mobilities paradigm” (2007, 44-47). In *Mobilities* (2007), Urry argues that mobility in the 21st century increasingly supersedes physical or vehicular mobility and equally involves other mobility systems that deal with the transport and distribution of information, services, money, goods, technologies and with virtual and imaginary travels. As these mobility systems are interconnected and omnipresent, daily life is increasingly spent in “movement-space” (45). We may be witness then to a mobile turn (Cresswell/Merriman 2011) or even a navigational turn in society (Verhoeff 2012), where space increasingly is charged with temporality and time gets infused with spatiality, where distance is countered by simultaneity, synchronicity or co-presence, and locations become movement-spaces.

These space-time reconfigurations define the spatiotemporal identity of the 21st century world, but they equally emerge as the distinctive properties of (mobile) theatre performances. Mobility in performance foregrounds the spatiality of performer-spectator relationships: performers and spectators conjoin with scale, gauged between the extremely close, the far distance, and an occasional disappearance. These movements similarly emphasise the temporality of theatre spaces. We can see this at work in *Call Cutta*, but also in Dries Verhoeven’s *No Man’s Land* (2008). This promenade performance distributes the spectators over twenty slightly different trajectories, in which each trajectory exhibits a single spectator following a migrant on a walk through the city. The spectator wears headphones and listens to an audio track that provides a comment to both the walk and the encounter. Both of these performances redefine the conditions of the stage. In *Call Cutta*, the stage is constituted through co-presence, whereas *No Man’s Land* operates through simultaneity: the stage is distributed over the urban environment and resurfaces as a series of synchronous trajectories. *Call Cutta* enquires into what exactly constitutes the shared space that is so characteristic of theatre, by situating the performers and spectators in different ‘rooms’. Both *Call Cutta* and *No Man’s Land* invite a reconceptualisation of (aesthetic) distance, and challenge the idea that a theatre performance always takes place on a distinct and fixed location. Movement and mobility in performance therefore not only pertains to mobile performers, spectators and spaces, but also to a mobilisation of theatre characteristics themselves.

Not all the cases discussed in this study use mobile or digital technology, but even if distinctively analogue, these performances seem equally modelled on or scripted by digital culture. They work for instance through interactivity, connectivity, changeability and co-creation, key terms that also define digital and participatory culture (Bay-Cheng et al. 2010;

4 See for examples Verhoeff (2012), Salter (2010), Van den Boomen et al. (2009), De Souza e Silva/Sutko (2009), Oddey/White (2009).

Van den Boomen et al. 2009; Raessens 2005). This pertains in particular to some of the one-to-one performances I will discuss, performances in which one spectator encounters one performer. Both Ontroerend Goed's *The Smile Off Your Face* and Dries Verhoeven's *Trail Tracking* draw on spectators' personal memories and sensorial perceptions. This focus and control of user-generated content transcodes the strategies of personal customisation, hallmark of the digital (Manovich 2001), onto theatre and performance →2.⁵ One-to-one communication is perhaps hardly noteworthy in relation to city tours or serious games, yet in comparison to the above mentioned twin practices, isolating or singling out the spectator in the theatre is quite a remarkable gesture, as it mobilises the very notion of audience. The audience, or the *public*, throughout theatre history has been regarded as representative of the society at large; the audience embodies a community that mirrors a wider (political, democratic) community (Lehmann 2006; cf. Rancière 2009). So what remains of the public when spectators no longer sit *next* to each other, in a group, but are singled out, and asked to enter or leave the theatre *after* each other? This question of course not only pertains to theatre conventions, but further relates the mobility of the spectator to the much larger and underlying research question of how these theatre performances think relationships between performance and the spectator, and between theatre and society at large.

Mobile and digital technologies deterritorialise the stage, which renders the subject of this study into an intermedial phenomenon. Intermediality points to the explicit interplay between media, which gives rise to both a redefinition of media as well as to new ways of perceptually tuning in into media (Kattenbelt 2008). Giving as much force to the 'inter' as to 'play', intermedial encounters work through collisions and change the intrinsic qualities and conventions of media: they induce a heightened sensitivity for mediatised perceptions and ways in which media tend to materialise (Bay-Cheng et al. 2010; Chapple/Kattenbelt 2006). Although intermediality is not the main frame of reference, this study is intermedial on every page. In this study I focus similarly on shifting conventions and changing qualities of theatre and performance, as a result of the interplay between theatre and mobile, digital culture. I explore how theatre tends to materialise differently as a consequence of that interplay, and at the same time exposes a self-reflexivity that characterises many intermedial and postdramatic performances (cf. Lehmann 2007). I will describe how theatre materialises as process, situation or trajectory, and how these practices install a perceptual awareness, a heightened sensitivity inherent to both postdramatic and intermedial spectatorship.

Theatre, performance, movement

Through their focus on process and situation, the performances in this study expose a particular subset of postdramatic theatre, as described by the German theatre scholar Hans-

5 References to chapters are indicated by arrows and numbers, pointing to ←previous and →next chapters.

Thies Lehmann, namely the “event/situation” (2006, 104-107) →4. In *Postdramatic Theatre* (1999/2006), Lehmann observes a shift from a dramatic towards a postdramatic aesthetic architecture, taking place on the European stage since approximately the 1970s. Dramatic theatre is the storehouse of theatre conventions: it thinks theatre as the staging of plays, deals with mimesis and representation and seeks to create illusionary worlds on the stage; dramatic theatre is based on the primacy of the text and organised through hierarchical principles of *logos* and (goal-centred) *telos*, and hence is grounded in logocentrism. In the postdramatic theatre, the text is deterritorialised and becomes equally autonomous as the other constitutive elements of theatre: space, time, bodies. Postdramatic theatre follows the order of a landscape and uses non-hierarchical composition principles such as simultaneity, montage, juxtaposition, seriality, and polyvocality (Lehmann 1997). Postdramatic theatre increasingly incorporates qualities that in the 1960s-1980s were attributed to performance art; Lehmann remarks that in postdramatic theatre, the focus has shifted from representation to presence, from work to process, from internal to external communication, from staged illusionary worlds towards the performance as a live event, which explicitly addresses the relationship between stage and audience (Lehmann 2006, 85-107; cf. Carlson 2004). On the postdramatic stage, the terms ‘theatre’ and ‘performance’ are not that distinct anymore. Therefore I use these terms together, often as equivalents, as contemporary practice renders the distinction obsolete (cf. Bleeker 2008, 8; Read 2008, 27).

Since its translation into English in 2006 (and subsequent translations in many other languages), Lehmann’s study rapidly grew into one of the most referenced books in the field of theatre and performance studies (Hoogenboom/Karschnia 2007), which gives witness to the wide recognition of his inventory. This study underscores the relevance of Lehmann’s survey and in particular the new research agenda emanating from this, that is, the need for adequate analytical tools and terms with which theatre-as-process can be studied in more detail, and other than through negation.⁶ Some theatre and performance scholars did account for the theatre as a transformational process but their agenda is somewhat different, as they concentrate for instance on the actor (Pavis 2003), on transitions (Fischer-Lichte 2004/2008)⁷ or on technological histories (Salter 2010). I focus instead on the mobile, threefold constellation of performers, spectators *and* spaces, which requires a much more spatially oriented analysis, and a more intense alliance with movement.

To develop a mobile mode of thinking, Deleuze’s nomadology provides a fruitful starting point. Deleuze is no stranger in the field of performance studies; quite a few publications in the field refer to his work. Yet it is remarkable that ‘Deleuze’ and ‘performance’

6 Postdramatic theatre is often characterised by what it is not: non-illusionary, non-representational, related to the absence (or death) of characters, and so forth (cf. Fuchs 1996).

7 Fischer-Lichte’s approach remains somewhat dualistic: in the collaborative event, the spectator transforms *into* an actor, the performer no longer represents but presents, the conventional signifier makes room for the material signified, and so on (2008, 11-17).

scarcely meet each other in a titular format. A similar observation is given in *Deleuze and Performance* (2009), the only title that I am familiar with. In the introduction to this volume, editor Laura Cull remarks that performance (studies) and Deleuze share a profound interest in processes, relations, movement and variation, yet the field has been relatively slow to import Deleuze's thoughts (3-4). Deleuze did not write much on theatre; his essay on the Italian avant-gardist director Carmelo Bene is the most explicit exception (Deleuze 1979/1997).⁸ Regarding *movement* in/and the arts, Deleuze is much more known for relating movement to film.⁹ However, Deleuze occasionally links movement to theatre, when alluding to the perpetual variation inherent in any theatre performance, which in the case of Carmelo Bene becomes a radical staging strategy. For Deleuze, (Bene's) anti-representational theatre equates non-repeatable immediacy – which echoes the 1960s discourse on performance art. In *Difference and Repetition* (1968/2004a), Deleuze qualifies the work of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard as a “*theatre within philosophy*” (my emphasis), as their writings carry out “immediate acts” that produce “within the work a movement capable of affecting the mind outside of all representation; it is a question of making movement itself a work [...]; of inventing vibrations, rotations, whirlings, gravitations, dances or leaps which directly touch the mind” (2004a, 9).

Such vibrations and rotations come close to Deleuze's view on the nomadic. It is tempting to equate nomadism with physical movement and displacement. In *Dramaturgy and Performance* (2008), for instance, Cathy Turner and Synne Behrndt shortly mention the “nomadic dramaturgy” of performances that take the form of journeys (197); in his essay “Audio Theatre” (2006), Christopher Balme relates nomadism to ambulatory performances.¹⁰ However, Deleuze's nomadology offers a slightly different orientation. “It is false to define the nomad by movement,” write Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1980/2004, 420). According to them, it is not movement that distinguishes the nomad, but speed (*ibid.*). In a Deleuzian universe, speed relates to continuous deferral and differentiation, to intensities and lines of flight – which can be understood as the whirlings and leaps of the mind referred to above – and to *deterritorialisation*: the destabilisation or undoing of territories. Deterritorialisation concerns the (temporary) occupation, displacement or disturbance of territories. It engages acts that capture, change or escape the codes or laws of a system and relates to strategies that render territory into a state of continuous variation (Deleuze 1973/2004).

8 See also Garcin-Marrou (2011) for a short overview of Deleuze's and Guattari's writings on theatre, including excerpts of six short plays or ‘chaosmic sketches’ by Guattari.

9 In his *Cinema cahiers*, Deleuze uses the concept of the movement-image to argue that cinema does not represent movement, but instead creates affects of movement: blocks of sensation that produce a direct relation with the real (Ils Huygens in Romein et al. 2009, 314-315).

10 Balme sees walkmans, mobile phones, and credit cards as symptoms of contemporary nomadism; as prosthetic extensions of migrant bodies who navigate through a diffused and decentred world (in Chapple/Kattenbelt 2006, 119).

These processes can also be seen at work in performance, in which the urban environment, for instance, partly occupies the theatre space, and performance in turn nests within and captures the codes of everyday life in the city.

Staging a performance in urban space produces a range of speeds, or deterritorialisations: the city becomes a stage, where performance and the everyday life constitute mutual interpretative frameworks; the public environment interferes with the private encounter, and so on. We may also say then, that both the stage and the urban environment *reterritorialise* each other, as they become functions in each other's system. In their respective essays on these Deleuzian terms, both Ronald Bogue (1997) and Stuart Elden (2006) point out that deterritorialisation cannot be separated from reterritorialisation, as they are always co-existent. Ronald Bogue describes the process of de- and reterritorialisation as respectively "the detachment or unfixing of elements and their reorganization within new assemblages" (1997, 475). Reterritorialisation has nothing to do with a return to a previous situation, a going back to 'the same'. Nor does it involve the establishment of a new territory, although in daily reality, we see only relative forms of de- and reterritorialisation.¹¹ Through deterritorialisation, elements are given greater autonomy; through reterritorialisation, components acquire new functions within newly created fields (*ibid.*). Reterritorialisation is similarly to deterritorialisation involved with acts of (temporary) occupation, but is also related to the distribution or transportation of parts or elements of a system onto another system. In my case studies, similar patterns are active. In *Call Cutta* for instance, the stage is deterritorialised, as it has no centre or fixed location: the stage 'happens' simultaneously in Berlin, Calcutta and in-between. Concurrently, global and digital mobility reterritorialise the theatre: through the mobile phone, the stage is distributed over several locations and resurfaces on three different platforms across the globe.

Reviewer Peter Michalzik remarks that "[t]he theatre of Rimini Protokoll does not set up an opposition between the stage and the audience, but integrates the two spheres in ever changing experimental set-ups".¹² All the practices in this study collapse the distinction between the stage and the auditorium; instead these territories become laboratories, engaged in a process of continuous variation. Although employing entirely different staging strategies, they all remove the actor from the usual position at centre-stage. The performer is no longer the centre of attention, and somehow the spectator occupies the stage as well. I write 'somehow' because the spectator has a complex relation to the stage. A stage, in whatever material condition, comes into being because there is someone who notices what is being presented on stage. When this spectator is present on the stage as

11 Ronald Bogue indicates that absolute deterritorialisation only exists as 'de jure', as opposed to the 'en fait' – terms he derives from Henri Bergson – the latter refers to the way phenomena manifest themselves in reality. Deleuze and Guattari often refer to the nomad as an instance of absolute deterritorialisation (2004, 172-173).

12 Peter Michalzik, "On Rimini Protokoll" (2006), see PDS.

well, this by definition creates an unstable situation, a multiperspectival cubism, in which the spectator is both participant and reflexive observer at the same time. One could, of course, abandon the notion of the stage altogether, but then we would abandon theatre, in my opinion. Instead, I propose that it is more productive to follow the workings of territory within these patterns of deterritorialisation. The spectator on the stage deterritorialises the stage from within, and in turn, the stage reterritorialises on the spectator, as the stage puts the activities of the spectator in the spotlights, and exposes how spectatorship is always being staged. The mobile spectator in my view is a powerful deterritorialising force and consequently the spectator is often the starting point for my enquiries.

A note on participation

As suggested above, the changing qualities and materiality of the stage alter the “modes of spectating” through which spectators engage with performance (Oddey/White 2009). The impact of mobile and digital culture explains the recent upsurge of publications attending to the spectator – this study being one of them.¹³ The works discussed here can be qualified as participatory or interactive performances but these terms are not central to my analysis, however strange this may seem, so a few clarifications are to be made. I agree with some game studies scholars that participation is to be preferred above interactivity. The argument here, to put it (too) boldly, is that interactivity promises a mutual two-way stream of influence, which is hardly ever the case – certainly not in my case studies – and ‘mutated’ forms of interactivity are better be seen as a subset of participation.¹⁴ I regard the relation between performers and spectators as a co-constructive relationship, yet this is fundamentally an asymmetric relationship: performers carry out or represent a partially pre-designed structure, whereas the spectators ‘merely’ participate in the execution of this design. Due to the fact that spectators are performatively engaged in these structures or compositions, they are often referred to as performers, or actors, or spect-actors – a term coined by Augusto Boal – or occasionally as characters. These spectators are adjectively marked as *active* spectators, in order to distinguish this co-creative position from the ‘passive’ onlooker or voyeur in the (darkened) auditorium. I agree with Rancière (2009) that spectators in conventional set-ups are by no means more or less active than the mobile spectators that travel through these pages. However, labeling mobile spectators as participants does not solve the problem of distinguishing active from passive spectators. As soon as one explores such terms more closely, one gets entangled in a feedback-loop, because spectators in whatever theatrical constellation are always participants in the event; they are always actively engaged, by way of observing, meaning-making, memorising, and as

13 See Freshwater (2009) for a concise overview of titles and topics in the Anglo-American context, and Deck/Sieburg (2008) for an impression of the German discourse.

14 See for instance Raessens (2005) and Bogost (2007, 40-44). Verhoeff offers a counter-argument i.e. a performative and relational approach to interactivity (2012, 113).

such, they are always co-producers of performances. My point of departure here is the mobile spectator, who in my account remains a spectator, despite remarkable shifts and movements in spectatorship. In addition, I value the performances discussed here precisely for setting this feedback-loop to work, as they self-referentially emphasise qualities of theatre that are always there but do not always rise to the surface.

Participation is also a buzz-word in the domain of the fine arts, indicative of a social turn in the arts (Bishop 2012; 2006), where it appears alongside conversational art (Kester 2004) and *relational art*, a term with which curator Nicolas Bourriaud describes art projects that create temporary communities and open environments as set-ups for intersubjective relations (Bourriaud 1998/2002). In comparison to Lehmann, who grounds postdramatic theatre in the mediatisation of society, both Bishop and Bourriaud connect these art projects to their imbrication within advanced global capitalism, and to the shift from a goods to a service-based economy. They refer for example to do-it-yourself principles (DIY), both as a token of commodification and as an artistic model (Bishop 2004, 54), which comes quite close to my way of positing personal customisation as a slightly uncomfortable yet also intriguing hybrid of art and contemporary society →2. Interestingly, whereas I regard one-to-one performances as a way to explore spectatorial engagement through the deterritorialisation of the collective audience, relational art counters the traditional one-to-one relationship between the artwork and the viewer in order to establish, according to Bourriaud, a sense of (democratic) community. Rancière would certainly disagree with these communitarian assumptions →4, and likewise does art critic and scholar Claire Bishop, in various essays and in her latest study *Artificial Hells* (2012). Her main point of critique is that Bourriaud sees all relational art as democratic artworks, yet relational works are not democratic by default. Drawing on Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, Bishop grounds democracy in antagonism, and argues that relational artworks should draw on dissensus – definitely a Rancièrian take on the subject – as a way of sincerely investigating the *quality* of relations and the way viewers are addressed by the artwork (2004, 78).¹⁵ Next she argues that social artworks should still be evaluated in terms of art and not (only) valued for their social or ethical accomplishments (2012, 13-26). In line with Bishop, I do not discuss the performances in terms of their social achievements. I am instead interested in how movement and mobility are staged and therefore create new dramaturgical strategies.

Pause

The nomad goes from point to point, observe Deleuze and Guattari. For the nomad, points are relays on a trajectory: temporary places of condensation that are “reached only in order to be left behind” (2004, 419). So, at *this* relay: what have I assembled so far? Movement and mobility in the theatre, within a larger context of a mobile turn

15 Bishop mentions Rirkrit Tiravanija’s kitchens and Liam Gillick’s laboratories as Bourriaud’s examples, and discusses the provocative work of Thomas Hirschhorn and Santiago Sierra as a counter-argument.

in society. More concrete: mobile performers and spectators produce mobile theatre spaces, and deterritorialise the stage. More abstract: these movements relate to Deleuze's nomadic thought and to the concept of nomadic theatre. Moving sideways: movement unfolds in space and time. Zooming in on space: theatre requires space, as it always takes place somewhere. Theatre always takes place. It happens, and it 'takes a place'. Moving sideways again: to take a place involves acts of de- and reterritorialisation. I intend to investigate patterns of de- and reterritorialisation through the concept of nomadic theatre. In order to flesh out that concept, I will look further into Deleuze's and Guattari's nomadology – an encounter that is already on its way.

Deleuze's nomads

Let's start with a spatial nomad, the stereo-typical nomad in fact, the one that is imagined as randomly roaming the desert. It is worth emphasising, though, that one of the first nomads to roam Deleuze's work is a philosopher, and nomadic troupes that rove the steppes, which appear in Deleuze's and Guattari's extensive chapter on nomadology, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, only enter half-way through the chapter. Although the word 'nomad' quite often conjures up associations with a rootless wandering of rambling vagabonds, and is rather easily translated into 'city-nomads' when referring to the urban homeless, the heart of the matter lies elsewhere. When Deleuze and Guattari refer to nomadic tribes, the nomadic points to a particular *attitude* that lies underneath this wandering, a specific mode of relating to the ground on which one moves. For the nomad, the ground is a surface for movement, not a territory as it is for the sedentary (2004, 421; Patton 2006, 39). By opposing nomadism to the sedentary, Deleuze and Guattari draw out two different types of behaviour, two diverging ways of doing and approaching things. To the nomad, ground is not a territory; when conceived of as a surface, ground has no borders. At the most, a nomad temporarily occupies a place, takes a place, yet this is a temporary hold, a staying in order to leave. To the sedentary, ground provides the foundation for building a house; ground is something to settle on (Deleuze/Guattari 2004, 419-422). Along with the sedentary do borders emerge, as well as property, ownership, and in their slipstream so do inclusions and exclusions, inside/outside divisions, in sum: territories.

When observing the world in terms of territory, we cannot but notice that by far the largest portion of the (life)world is organised into territories, whether divided into national borders, territorial waters, parcels and premises, parks, pavements or dog-walking areas. A nomadic relation to ground is the exception rather than the rule. More accurate: the nomadic *is* the exception on the rule, the counter-force to order, regulation, legislation and to that what has grown into conceptions of normality, standardisation or convention, as the result of those rules. The nomadic therefore is deeply political, hence the many references to resistance, disruption, dis-settlement and deregulation, terms by which Deleuze and Guattari position the nomad against the State. The State is the territorial force, and this of course does not only pertain to geographically defined areas but also to economics

and finance, political institutions, science, sexuality, ideologies, education, or any other field in which certain conceptions and ways of doing strongly dominate over others. The nomad destabilises the seemingly self-evident nature of the State, through deterritorialisation. Deterritorialisation is not the nomad's intention, it is an attitude inherent to the nomadic: it is the nomad's relation to territory. The nomad and the State are co-existent and interdependent. The State seeks to expand on territory and to maintain its power, yet there is always a nomadic counter-force, which sooner or later gets incorporated by the State in turn. However, this does not defy the nomad, because the nomad will appear elsewhere. As the nomad and the State incessantly define and redefine each other, their relation is not oppositional but rather constitutes a multiplicity, a continuous becoming, an infinite series of ruptures, breaks and assemblages (ibid., 397-398; Marzec 2001).

To repeat, the nomadic in my view entails a certain mode or attitude, much more than it is a (variation on a) desert-nomad. As mentioned above, one of Deleuze's first essays on nomadism, "Nomadic Thought" (1973/2004), relates to a philosopher, namely Friedrich Nietzsche. For Deleuze, Nietzsche radically thwarts the hierarchical history of philosophy; the energy and force in Nietzsche's work completely steps off the beaten track of rethinking and reevaluating the already existent, and demonstrates that philosophy is creativity of thought. Reading Nietzsche produces affects, according to Deleuze, a sensation, an intensity, a getting aware of something that eludes description, or analysis, or interpretation; something that escapes the code. In this essay the nomad continuously appears as something that comes from the outside, something that is suddenly there, in the midst of things, and disturbs the existing order of things. Nomadism emerges as something that 'gets through' but escapes the code, the code that promises recognition.¹⁶ It is something that flows through and underneath the codes of law, contract, institution, the three main principles that legislate, regulate and politicise society (Deleuze 2004, 253-254).

Such nomadic movements rearrange existing conceptions of what can be known, imagined, thought, or done. Nomadic acts then, have the potential of altering our perception and understanding. Put differently, they are capable of producing a politics of perception, as they cause a rearrangement of what Jacques Rancière names the "distribution of the sensible", in *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2000/2004). Rancière uses the term to indicate that our perception and therefore our conception of the world is first and foremost a product of a certain distribution of what can be seen, sensed or heard and therefore, of what is thought, done and imagined. The survey of the distribution of the sensible investigates what is to be perceived in the world and what is made imperceptible; it seeks the exclusions within the inclusions, and focuses on what previously escaped the light of attention.

Summarising, Deleuze's nomadology does not, or not only, refer to movement and mobility, but instigates a type of movement and mobility that escapes rule, convention,

¹⁶ Deleuze refers as well to Kafka and (elsewhere) to Beckett, writers that 'get something through' by writing in a language foreign to their native language, and constitute a minor literature (cf. Elden 2006, 49).

order – in Deleuze’s terms: law, contract, institution – and posits something else in return: experimentation, creativity, potentiality, related to a politics of perception. Expressed through spatial concepts, such an approach to movement and mobility is, I think, a very inviting and constructive way by which also contemporary theatre and performance can be taken into view.

Nomadic theatre - a concept, a toolbox

This study proposes that a mobile phenomenon – movement and mobility in the theatre – should be investigated by means of a mobile theory, a mobile theory that relies on the flexibility of working with concepts. This stance closely affiliates with Mieke Bal’s standpoint, in *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities* (2002), that interdisciplinarity in the humanities “must seek its heuristic and methodological basis in concepts rather than methods” (5). Bal’s account is recognised as very relevant for theatre and performance studies (Bleeker et al. 2009) and this study, which brings in a variety of disciplines, intends to further that line of investigation.¹⁷ The main concept that will be examined is the concept of nomadic theatre, through which I stage an encounter between the nomadic, as a particular mode and attitude, and the theatre, as it manifests itself as movement and thinks performance through mobility.

In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari argue that concepts are the creative products of philosophy, at least, that is what philosophy in their view ought to do. Philosophy creates concepts, in response to (philosophical) problems, whereas art produces affects, and science works through percepts (1994, 5). My reasoning is that questions arising from the field of theatre and performance may also invite the invention of concepts; they do not create philosophical concepts though, but quasi-philosophical concepts, concepts at a cross-point of philosophy and art. My goal is to arrive at a mobile theory, a ‘problem’ to which I respond by introducing the concept of nomadic theatre. Accepting then in advance, that a quasi-philosophical concept encounters a different milieu than a philosophical concept and therefore operates differently, I combine Deleuze’s and Guattari’s approach to concepts with the use of concepts as a tool for cultural analysis, mainly described and demonstrated by Mieke Bal. So, what is a concept?

For Deleuze and Guattari, concepts are not already-existing ideas, but newly created products of invention, responding to problems. Concepts have a (zigzagging) history though, and a zone of neighbourhood through which they overlap with other concepts. A concept consists of heterogeneous, yet inseparable components; components that

[...] remain distinct, but something passes from one to the other, something that is undecidable between them. There is an area *ab* that belongs to both *a* and *b*, where

¹⁷ See also Groot Nibbelink/Merx on concepts as tools for analysing intermediality in performance (in Bay-Cheng et al. 2010, 218-229).

a and *b* 'become' indiscernible. These zones, thresholds, or becomings, this inseparability, define the internal consistency of the concept. But the concept also has an exoconsistency with other concepts, when their respective creation implies the construction of a bridge on the same plane. Zones and bridges are the joints of the concept. [...] each concept will therefore be considered as a point of coincidence, condensation, or accumulation of its own components [...]. In this sense, each component is an *intensive feature* (1994, 19-20, italics by the authors).

Nomadic theatre is similarly a newly created area *ab*, in which the nomadic fuels concepts and terms used in or relevant to the theatre, and the theatre, as will become clear, intensifies the performative qualities and situatedness of the nomadic.

In *Travelling Concepts*, Mieke Bal explores the potential of already existing concepts, by arranging and studying their travels from one discourse or discipline to another, travels which question the very notion of 'field' (2002, 4). Although Bal's agenda and approach is quite different from Deleuze and Guattari's, they share a similar focus on pragmatics: concepts should be tested and evaluated by their use. They both emphasise the performativity of concepts: concepts are creative and provisional, they produce something new, they are mobile and bring about change. Bal's cultural analysis demonstrates in detail what concepts are, what they do, how they relate to objects and how they impact modes and methods of analysis. Bal observes that concepts appear as words, and "look like words" (24) but in fact they are "miniature theories" (22). The disciplinary, theoretical and historical baggage of concepts, when tested and put to work in a new field, produces new meanings, perspectives and relations. Concepts 'do' things because they create focus: they organise phenomena and define the sphere of questions addressed to an object. Through this, consequently, they do something else as well: they (co)produce their objects. A concept works as a searchlight; it focuses interest and installs a certain, articulated perspective, without denying that a different perspective would produce a different object (31-33). In turn, objects "speak back" (45): they determine the specific set of questions that will be addressed to them, and occasionally, they answer by resisting interpretation. Bal therefore sees objects as *theoretical objects* (cf. Bleeker 2008, 8). This co-constructive relationship implicates the involvement of the critic or observer as well; concepts therefore are intersubjective tools, a tripartite event between concept, object and critic (Bal 2002, 44-45).

In line with Bal, I regard the practices discussed here as theoretical objects, as expressions of thought, because they convey specific ideas about the relationship between theatre, movement and mobility. However, what compromises this project entirely – deterritorialisation in optima forma – is that it is impossible to say what comes first: the practice, or the theory. If a concept inflects the object, and the object in turn co-defines the concept, then what is 'of' the concept, and what is 'of' the object, and how do you prevent these movements from getting into a blurry mess? To make it even worse: if

concepts are hailed as the methodological answer to interdisciplinary phenomena, exactly because they are mobile, what happens when the concept in question – nomadic theatre – precisely seeks to investigate that, as its object: movement and mobility? Bal observes that working with concepts can be a risky affair, but also provides a way out of this dilemma: “It is only through a constant reassessment of the power of a concept to organize phenomena in a new and relevant way that its continued productivity can be evaluated” (32).¹⁸ I will take this remark as my lead. This study therefore is an ongoing investigation of what the concept of nomadic theatre does, and how concept and object relate through propagation and contamination, instead of starting with or arriving at a final definition of what the concept is. Bal states that concepts are to be worked through, tested through the analysis of the object (44). Consequently, I will attempt to articulate what movements I follow and am involved in; an attempt that starts anew with each chapter, each time with another performance as a theoretical object and assist.

Although I will not – and cannot – explain what the concept of nomadic theatre *is*, as I can only demonstrate the potential of the concept through *use*, I will give an inventory of the accumulative components within the concept. The concept of nomadic theatre first of all deals with *territories*, *deterritorialisation* and *reterritorialisation*, and traces counter-movements such as the *inversion of conventions* and the *deregulation of code*. Nomadic theatre adheres to distinct modes of displacement, that of *traversing* fields and *cutting across* territories. The concept passes through *tonalities of sensation*, *affective modulations* and *inside/outside connections*, and affiliates with *experimentation*, *testing* and *play*. Lastly, the concept is grounded in *performativity*, both in terms of creation and production, as well as in relation to staging. Consequently, the concept of nomadic theatre points to a mode or attitude that allies with strategies of de- and reterritorialisation; to particular acts through which conventions are questioned and hence become perceptible; to an attitude that is marked by creativity, and capitalises on playfulness. With the concept-as-searchlight in mind, nomadic theatre foregrounds those moments where this mode or attitude becomes distinctively manifest in performance.

A concept defines the sphere of questions addressed to an object. Nomadic theatre firstly asks what kind of territories are in play, and which patterns of de- and reterritorialisation do emerge. These patterns do not advocate the end of territory. Stuart Elden remarks that in relation to de- and reterritorialisation, territory is “both its condition of possibility and, in some newly configured form, its necessary outcome” (Elden 2006, 50). These movements turn territory into a process of making and remaking, and point to the continuous reconfiguration of *spatial* relations (ibid.). In order to investigate these spatial relations, I rely in particular on spatial theories from various disciplinary backgrounds:

18 Bal draws on Isabelle Stengers’ analysis of “nomadic concepts” here, although Bal prefers the metaphor of travel (2002, 29-34).

urban theory, cartography, geography, scenography, and architecture. A second line of enquiry revolves around the question of how these spatial reconfigurations are staged. I investigate how these processes of de- and reterritorialisation are organised or composed, how they position or address the spectator, and what *emergent dramaturgies* arise from these open-ended processes. The focus on staging creates a tension between nomadic resistance to rule and theatre's imposition of order. Despite theatre's intrinsic nomadism – i.e. the continuous variation of the live event – theatre is always concerned with staging and therefore with organising the relationship between performance and the spectator. By following the argument in its twofold way, I will demonstrate that not only does theatre materialise differently as a consequence of the encounter with the nomadic; the nomadic is also contaminated by the theatre, which manifests itself notably in my emphasis on embodied, situated and local operations.

Bal notes that concepts encounter a variety of (established) methods along the way. The concept of nomadic theatre amongst others cuts across two prevailing methods in the field of theatre studies: semiotics and phenomenology (Pavis 2003; Fortier 2002). Concepts do not belong to a particular field, and therefore the concept of nomadic theatre cannot be placed within semiotics or phenomenology, or entirely outside of them.¹⁹ Nomadic theatre encounters semiotics through (the deregulation of) codes; it traverses phenomenology by looking into lived space and corporeal perception; it delineates both fields when foregrounding performativity and creation.²⁰ The concept escapes both methods when reflecting on relations between artworks and theory. It encounters them again, but differently, as a faint echo when entering fields of geography, cartography, or architecture; and again, but once more differently, when engaging with philosophy.

How to do things with Deleuze?

Although theatre and performance studies employ a range of Deleuzian concepts, the nomadic is but occasionally mentioned and usually figures somewhere on the backstage or as an aside. A possible explanation for this minor staging is that the nomadic can easily be critiqued for being either too romantic, too Euro-centrist and neocolonialist, or too aggressive. I will look into these disqualifications in more detail in chapter 1, but it should indeed be acknowledged that Deleuze and Guattari present the nomad as a war machine.²¹ The nomadic may emerge in art, yet appears as well in real flesh-and-blood guerilla warfare, which is probably as creative as art. When taking the full scope of no-

19 This research then is as well indicative of semiotics' and phenomenology's increasing interconnect- edness, see also the use of both methods in intermediality studies (Bay-Cheng et al. 2010).

20 Theatre semiotics and phenomenology both engage with and are defined by performance, yet these methods are hardly referenced in relation to the performative turn in cartographic or architec- tural theory → 3,5.

21 The full title of the nomadology chapter in *A Thousand Plateaus* is "1227: Treatise on Nomadology – The War Machine". Cf. De Kesel (2006), O'Sullivan (2006).

madism into account the concept gets rather uneasy, with the sole redeeming feature being that at least something forces us to think. My stance in the matter is that the nomadic may manifest itself in various ways, either positively or negatively. Notwithstanding the more alarming types of movement – nomadism appears as well in the ungraspable fiscal and monetary flows advancing the 2008 financial crisis, neither to everyone's satisfaction – this can hardly be a reason for disqualifying the concept itself.

The title of this paragraph alludes to John Austin's *How to do things with words?* (1962), his introduction to speech act theory that has issued an extensive discourse on performativity, concerned with the investigation of those acts and utterances that constitute or produce that what they present or refer to (Kattenbelt 2010, 30; Culler 2000). Deleuze's words are similarly constitutive and performative. His work 'does' things: his style of writing unsettles and disorients the reader; his texts perform philosophy, and above all, his language is highly contagious. Contagion, or contamination, is not necessarily a bad thing: it describes a viral type of movement that changes the environment that it partly occupies and is changed by it as well (Bal 2002, 32-33). Yet one can immediately recognise Deleuzian contagion, for instance by an abundant use of Deleuzian/Guattarian concepts, or by a Deleuzian style, and above all, by the adherence to or insistence on his ontology of events. The latter issue in particular brings forth the question of how to get Deleuze 'right'. The 'Deleuzians' have created brilliant studies that engage far more thoroughly with Deleuzian thought than I do, but in a sense they can also be seen as replications of Deleuze, and repetition-of-sameness is precisely the thing Deleuze rejects (cf. O'Sullivan 2006, 5). So what is 'getting Deleuze right'?

For a response to this question I rely on Brian Massumi's foreword to *A Thousand Plateaus*. He emphasises that Deleuze and Guattari are pragmatists: the book is something to work with, and not intended to fall prey to philology. The book affords to be read randomly and selectively, similarly to choosing your favourite tracks or songs on a record. The same goes for the concepts that buttress the book – they should be evaluated in use: do they work, do they help to solve a problem? In his inspiring introduction, Massumi compares concepts with toolboxes. Concepts should not "add up to a system of belief or an architecture of propositions that you either enter or you don't, but instead pack a potential in the way a crowbar in a willing hand envelops an energy of prying" (2004, xv).

My hand is willing. Doing things with Deleuze here involves the selection of three tools, or songs: performativity; thinking through practices; affirmativity. *Performativity*, firstly, entails a focus on creation and production, as mentioned above, both in relation to theory and practice. The second, related tool is *thinking through practices*. Practices are not mere objects for observation and analysis; they are expressions of thought and, as such, theoretical objects. My encounter with Deleuze is primarily a trajectory of practices, in particular related to play and architecture. Thirdly, I choose an affirmative approach to my research subjects. I am interested in how both concepts and practices generate ideas, install connections, contaminate each other, and how performances evoke a sense

of getting in touch with potentiality. Simon O’Sullivan presents a rather similar approach, in relation to fine art and art criticism, seeing this affirmative approach to both concepts and objects as the creation of new bricolages or assemblages (2005, 6, 26).²² Likewise, rather than offering a tailor-made method for performance analysis, this study creates *affirmative assemblages* which render visible how art criticism interferes with the art work, and how a performance invites, or in fact creates thought. Nomadic theatre fuels this assemblage as it installs connections across disciplinary boundaries, enables the reading of practices through theory and vice versa, as well as creating relationships between a variety of fields.

Everything has been done before, but not by us, and not now

Due to the nomad’s inclination towards insubordination and disruption, one may expect a set of quite radical theatre and performance works, at the cross-point of nomadism and the theatre. One can think of works that challenge, undermine and unsettle the laws, contracts and institutions of theatre, such as the visceral theatre of exhaustion of Carolee Schneemann or Jan Fabre in the 1980s, or more recently, the unbinding contracts in Romeo Castellucci’s staging of babies and animals. Compared to these examples, the performances that roam this study are surprisingly modest in their acts of unsettlement and, for the most part, do not unbind any contract at all. I chose these examples for the very simple reason that they “forced me to think,” a phrase I take from Deleuze.²³ They forced me to think about the impact of movement and mobility in the theatre. The examples mentioned above all seem to find their radicalness in relation to the performer – occasionally by way of absent performers, which is of course also a means of ‘presencing’. In some of my cases the performer is rendered absent as well, but always to re-appear differently, at another proximity or distance than expected. My explorations then lead to another un-settling subset of theatre and performance, one in which the mobility of the spectator leads the attention away from the performer, and towards space.

My case studies can roughly be divided into two types: performance trajectories, which bring the spectator from a point *a* to a point *z*; and performance installations, in which the spectator moves freely within a delineated staged environment. As soon as these performances are described in more detail, the question of whether we have not seen this before arises. Throughout the 20th century, there have been many attempts to mobilise the

22 Next to similarities: O’Sullivan stays much closer to Deleuze, whereas I also rely on Mieke Bal. The concept of affirmativity is discussed by amongst others Dolphijn/Van der Tuin, in connection to a relational, non-dualist approach to science (2012, 126-132); by Bal, in relation to critical intimacy (2002, 289-290); by Brian Massumi, as a productivist method alternative to critical thinking (2002, 12-13). For an extensive discussion and a radical approach to the concept of affirmativity in politics and theory, see Braidotti (2011, 267-298).

23 “Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*” (Deleuze 2004a, 176, italics by the author; cf. O’Sullivan 2006, 1).

spectator, notably by the historical avant-garde movements (Bishop 2012; Kennedy 2009; Fischer-Lichte 1997) and in the 1960s rise of Events, Happenings, environmental theatre and performative installations (Berghaus 2005; Bishop 2005; Carlson 2004). An even wider historical scope shows that the present convention of the separation between stage and darkened auditorium only reached its full form with Wagner in the late 19th century, and was preceded by pageants, street theatre, fairs, and medieval practices in which the performer-audience distinction was not that strict (Vuyk 2005). I do not claim to write about a new phenomenon, yet my discussion is consequently geared towards the present.

The title of this paragraph is the motto of the Belgian company *Ontroerend Goed*, whose *The Smile Off Your Face* will be discussed in chapter 4. The motto is a way to acknowledge a history of predecessors, and at the same time a means to liberate oneself from the burden of history; a performative act that opens up to an unhistorical mindset, and allows doing things with theatre as if for the first time. I borrow this motto in order to acknowledge this history, in a way that is nonetheless a little different to *Ontroerend Goed*. In the chapters to follow I occasionally refer to both horizontal and vertical genealogies: historical predecessors, or the twin practices mentioned above, evoked by the discussion at hand.²⁴ I treat these practices similarly as theoretical objects; I do not attempt to provide a historical overview, and do not strive for completeness. In addition, Hans-Thies Lehmann gives a valuable observation when he remarks that despite similar agendas or aesthetics, artworks should always be studied in relation to the context in which they are created and presented. Referring to Adorno's "Logik ihres Produziertseins" (2006, 104), Lehmann sees artworks as exponents of the time or cultural moment in which they are produced. One component of the current cultural moment seems to be the increased spatiality of cultural practices, in which (global) mobility leads to the reassessment of place and space.

Parallel to Lehmann's *landscape* aesthetics of the postdramatic theatre, many theatre and performance scholars observe a spatial turn in both society and performance. This manifests itself in a renewed interest for place and space, and the complex interactions between spatial, social and political practices, or between place, memory and identity (Fischer-Lichte/Whistutz 2014; Hill/Paris 2006; McAuley 2006). The postdramatic, multi-perspectival logic of simultaneity, plurality and juxtaposition instigates connections with, for instance, Michel Foucault's heterotopias, in his essay "Of Other Spaces" (Aronson 2005, 74-77; Foucault 1986), with Edward Soja's *Thirdspace* (Turner/Behrndt 2008, 195-198) →2, or Henri Lefebvre's spatial analysis (Whybrow 2010, 179-190) →2. In *Land/Scape/Theater* (2002), Elinor Fuchs and Una Chaudhuri suggest an interdisciplinary approach and a "spatialized consciousness" to account for and investigate this new spatial paradigm in performance (4; cf. Read 2000). This study likewise takes space as a primary interpreta-

24 As mentioned above, I do not enquire into genre, although these practices can be seen as belonging to different, partially overlapping families, demonstrative of Wittgenstein's "family resemblances" (Verhoeff 2006, 121).

tive window. This spatial perspective also accounts for the many references to (spatial) theories that date back to the late 1960s and early 1970s. Tom Conley observes a spatial turn in French critical theory in that period, which reveals a strong preference for simultaneity, heterogeneity, dispersion and openness, seen as the distinct qualities of space. Conley discusses Deleuze, Lefebvre, and De Certeau →2 amongst others, and observes that they “all demonstrate in themselves that space is not *out-there* but *in-here*, inhering in what, here and now, we see and hear” (Conley 2003, 201).²⁵ This observation pertains as well to contemporary urban theories, cartographic practices or performative architecture, theoretical climates that encounter each other as the concept of nomadic theatre passes through them. A focus on space not only forces open the dramaturgy of a work, as Turner and Behrndt observe (2008, 197) but also instigates new alliances, and exposes cultural domains, spatial theories and design practices as connected and webbed in many ways.

The architecture of dramaturgy

In anticipation of future webbed alliances, the relation between theatre and architecture deserves some attention here, as this is an interdisciplinary connection that runs through all the chapters. Disciplinary boundaries between theatre and architecture are extremely permeable, as architecture has always facilitated and conditioned the theatre, for instance through theatre buildings and set design, and in turn the stage has been used to explore and conceptualise built structures in terms of movement, dynamics, and kinetics (Salter 2010). It is only in the last decades though that architecture turns to *performance* to push its boundaries (ibid., 83). In turn, this study intends to demonstrate that performative architecture reverberates in many ways with contemporary staging strategies and dramaturgies, and I will use the comparison here to explain my approach to both the terms staging and dramaturgy.

Performative architecture does not so much pertain to the performance of buildings, but rather to the production of space, through performance. In both architectural theory and practice, the term performative architecture is employed to explore how designed space invites movement and action, and in turn is created in accordance with use (Salter 2010, 81-112; Spurr 2007; Kolarevic/Malkawi 2005). This conceptual and procedural approach to design and space comes close to how I use the term *staging*. Staging involves the creation of platforms for performance, which organises performer-spectator relationships and spectatorial address, but also concerns the composition and organisation of the performance as process, which creates the conditions for the event to emerge. In his essay “From Logos to Landscape” (1997), Hans-Thies Lehmann also observes that the compositional strategies of postdramatic theatre often tend towards the architectural. He refers in particular to Jacques Derrida’s view on architecture as an event, developed in accordance

²⁵ This breaking down of boundaries also marks the societal changes and emancipatory movements related to the students’ and workers’ protests in the May 1968 events (Conley 2003; Cull 2009, 12-14).

with the architectural work of Bernard Tschumi and Peter Eisenmann.²⁶ This event-architecture in turn paved the way for the performative turn in architecture (Spurr 2007, 40-58). For Derrida, architecture does not produce a location for events, instead, the “sense of the event is woven into the very structure of the architectural composition” (Lehmann 1997, 57); architecture is “a mode of spacing which makes a place for the event” (Casey 1998, 312). In a closely related study, Bernard Tschumi locates architecture at the intersection of space, movement and events, and primarily sees architecture as a mode of thought. Much more than knowledge of form, it is a form of knowledge in itself (Tschumi 1996). In *Dramaturgy and Performance* (2008), Turner and Behrndt too call upon Tschumi when they remark that both dramaturgy and architecture draw on “a deliberate deployment of structure in order to provoke or enable live events”; events that either organise the “performance of architecture” or relate to dramaturgy’s concern with the “architecture of performance” (5). Since staging also pertains to a deliberate deployment of structure and certainly to the architecture of performance, the question arises of the extent to which staging differs from *dramaturgy*. Turner and Behrndt rightly observe that dramaturgy is a “slippery term”, as it is conceptualised and used in many different ways (17). Relevant for this study is that they relate dramaturgy both to the internal structure, composition or fabric of a work, as well as to how this fabric orchestrates layers of meaning or expression for the audience, also in connection to a performance’s wider societal or political context (3, 18, 35; cf. Van Kerkhoven 1999/2002). What remains somewhat implicit in their remarks but is put forward more directly by Maaïke Bleeker is that spectatorial address, or ways of managing attention, is also a vital component of dramaturgy (Bleeker 2008; 2003). The question remains then of how staging and dramaturgy are to be distinguished. They are not mutually exclusive terms. I refer to staging when I focus on composition and spectatorial address; I use the term dramaturgy to connect both these components to layers of meaning, expression, or contextual matter. Staging can be seen then as the “architecture of dramaturgy”, but primarily these terms are instruments to switch focus, instead of entirely different concepts.

Points are relays on a trajectory - chapter overview

To summarise the aim and approach of this research project, in this study I investigate movement and mobility in theatre and performance through the concept of nomadic theatre. I will examine patterns of de- and reterritorialisation, and inquire into how movement and mobility are staged. These patterns point to a continuous reconfiguration of spatial relations, and my approach to both theories and case studies can best be understood as being informed by a spatial perspective. I conceive of the chapters to follow as relays: temporary points of condensation. Every chapter is a new trajectory, a new

26 Dramatic theatre has an altogether different architecture, which draws on “base and support, hierarchy [...], structure, articulation and coherence in view of reason, purpose and function, order in view of *telos* which allows an architecture to have a unity” (Lehmann 1997, 56).

assessment of the potential of nomadic theatre. These chapters can be read separately and randomly. Yet despite the pleasure that hopefully derives from such an arrangement of the text (Barthes), and in line with my focus on staging and composition, I think it is time to revive the author somewhat (Barthes again²⁷). Not in order to posit the author centre-stage again, but as a way of acknowledging that the author cannot entirely escape the linearity of the page and composes the order of sequences. The next chapters are kaleidoscopically arranged: in each chapter, the performer-spectator-space constellation is 'shuffled' differently, which provides a new angle on the dynamics of this constellation and its myriad configurations. Such an arrangement intends to demonstrate that in each case, elements that are often similar are at work, although they are not always equally highlighted. Every chapter discusses a different territory or spatial register, and another staging strategy, which also activates different components within the concept of nomadic theatre and creates a different milieu of references.

In chapter 1, I team up with Dries Verhoeven's *No Man's Land*, already mentioned above. This chapter focuses on the most characteristic territory within the theatre, which is the *stage*. I explore how Verhoeven uses the *encounter* as a way of staging mobile performers and spectators, and how this encounter deterritorialises the stage. As a consequence, the positions of performers, spectators and spaces reterritorialise on each other, which results in observing performers, staged spectators, and smooth spaces. I also pursue the encounter with the nomadic, including critical inquiries into the concept. Inherent to these inquiries is the question of whether the nomadic is a metaphor, which also puts referentiality and representation on the agenda. Representation is certainly not a main subject in this study, but the topic knocks persistently at the door, and since nomadic theatre has no doors, it is already in.

Chapter 2 explores how the staging strategy of *displacement* is used to distribute the stage across a number of domains: *theatre space*, *urban space*, and the domain of global economy. With Rimini Protokoll's *Call Cutta* paving the way, I describe how nomadism in the theatre surfaces as a series of local operations, which produce the theatre space while one moves through it. I connect these local operations to Henri Lefebvre's notion of *lived space*, a concept which makes room for the manifold rhythms of everyday life and that refers to spaces that (become) matter as they are used, practiced and experienced. Lefebvre's urban theories negotiate between Marxist theory and phenomenology, and describe the production of social space. His concepts are quite relevant for (site-specific and location-based) contemporary performance, also because Lefebvre values lived space for its imaginative and representational potential. Through Lefebvre and related studies, the concept of nomadic theatre takes some distance from Deleuze's anti-representational image of thought, to account for the fact that theatre always deals with representation.

27 I am alluding here to respectively Barthes' *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973/1975) and "The Death of the Author" (in Barthes 1977, 142-148).

In the third chapter, I discuss a second performance by Dries Verhoeven, which is *Trail Tracking*. This ambulatory performance plots a route through an abandoned railway station, and here I focus on the materiality of *navigational space*, addressing spectatorship as both an embodied and embedded practice. I conceive of this performance as organised through a set of cartographic layers, which stages performers and spectators through the performance of *cartography*. The discussion calls attention to the performativity of cartography and focuses on the co-creative relationship between maps and users. *Trail Tracking's* cartographic layers display the interconnectedness of space, place, movement and subjectivity. Through a short discussion of the (feminist) concept of politics of location I argue that the encounter of theatre and nomadism invites an understanding of the nomadic as a situated practice, an ongoing assessment and articulation of one's relationship to place.

The first three chapters all question the theatre as a domain of *opsis* and make room for other modalities of spectatorship, that is, the materiality of embodied, sensory and lived relations. This materiality is explicitly addressed in the fourth chapter. Ontroerend Goed's *The Smile Off Your Face* is the primary theoretical object here, and serves as an example of how the stage materialises through sensorial experience. If *Trail Tracking* was already concerned with close geographies, in this chapter the scale of encounter is even smaller, as it investigates *spaces of proximity*. By highlighting the multiple senses through which spectators engage with performance, *The Smile* deterritorialises the theatre as seeing-place and turns the stage into a sensorium. In this chapter I introduce the *diagram* as a staging strategy that on the one hand invites spectators into a fundamentally open process, while at the same time the composition of this process provides the conditions for spectators' mode of engagement. Such operations also characterise play and games, but here I focus on Deleuze's approach to architectural diagrams, to explore the tonalities of sensation within spectatorship, but also to expose the territorial forces at work in these experimental processes.

Chapter 5 studies processes that deal with building performance and are inspired by play. Whereas the other chapters are "experimentations in contact with the real" – Deleuze's qualification of cartography –, this chapter experiments with fictionality. Signa's *The Ruby Town Oracle* holds a middle-ground between dramatic and postdramatic theatre, as it stages an imaginary world while simultaneously this nine days non-stop event is marked by a poetics of (real-time) exhaustion, which obfuscates clear-cut distinctions between play and reality. The stage here takes the form of a *rhizomatic game board* and encounters are staged through different forms of architecture. In this chapter the performer-spectator-space constellation is traced through what I call *architextures*, an intertwined web of architectures and textures that maps interconnected spaces, spatial perspectives, and affective modulations. The chapter ends by playing at the limits, and explores how both rules and boundaries – characteristic of both play and architecture – as well as the excess of those limits form the backbone of this performance, and of the concept of nomadic theatre.

I conclude with an attempt to translate some in-between resonances in the chapters into a few temporary chords. This certainly does not result in a comprehensive orchestral work – for the nomad, relays are points on a trajectory – yet there is at least one disharmonious tune to be heard. Akin to the Bishop-Bourriaud agenda, and as a follow-up to the nomad’s position as both outside and inside of the State, the epilogue explores the asymmetry of contagious movements, through which theatre nests within and is contaminated by neoliberal capitalism. The last words, however, are for the imagination.

Playgrounding

This introduction closes with an unruly thing – the nomadic comes in handy by way of excuse – which is the throwing up of a partially rhetorical and decidedly unanswerable question. This question is: what are the implications of choosing a spatial perspective and a focus on spatial relations in the second decade of the 21st century? What does it mean to put space into the equation, when taking into account that a spatial turn was already signaled in the 1970s (Conley 2003), and then in the 1990s, in the field of cultural geography (Soja 1996) – and when performance scholars seem to profess a renewed interest for temporality and duration that brings Ed Scheer to declare “the end of spatiality”?²⁸

This is a question which cannot be answered directly but that I put forward nonetheless. I find my preliminary and provisional anchor in the notion of *playgrounding*, mentioned by David Micklem, the artistic director of the BAC, or Battersea Arts Centre in London. He used the term to explain his view of the renovation of the huge, old city hall which is the place of residence of BAC. Playgrounding involves the maintenance and improvement of the building by engaging theatre practitioners and performance projects in the work. It is actually a very specific brand of site-specific performance, one might say, as the building is gradually adjusted, repaired and enriched as part of theatre production processes. Micklem explained his concept of playgrounding to me while we were sitting in the beautifully painted and decorated foyer, for instance, which turned out to be part of the scenery of a former Punchdrunk show.²⁹ Playgrounding is attuned to sustainability and long-term investment: it produces relational spaces, attentive architecture, and charges space with memories.

Already present in this introduction, elaborated in the chapters to follow, is the affinity with play. Play involves mobility, in the sense that it offers a place for movement. Hans-Thies Lehmann remarks that the German word for ‘Spiel’ has actually three meanings. It encompasses both ‘play’ and ‘game’ but also refers to the tiny, unnamed or empty space, the void “that the wheels of any machinery (including social machinery) need in order to function properly” (2007, 53; cf. Raessens 2010, 15). In this study, performers,

28 See Scheer’s introduction to *Performance Research: On Duration* 17.5 (2013).

29 Personal conversation with David Micklem, March 2011. See also <http://playgroundprojects.bac.org.uk>. For a short elaboration on Punchdrunk →5.

spectators and spaces are 'in play': their role and spatial position is not fixed, instead their relationship is negotiated and subjected to experimentation. The emphasis is on the performance as a process, instead of a finished work, a process that each time unfolds in a unique, precise and specific way: instead of the theatre as a social gathering space, it is the enactment of social machinery.

The concept of play, and the notion of 'grounding' will both emerge throughout the chapters to follow. They will play an important role in the attempt to answer a question which may be as large as the question with which this section began, but one that I definitely intend to answer, that is, how are we able to attach ourselves to fluidity? The question is derived from the introduction of *Metaphoricity and the Politics of Mobility* (2006), in which the editors Maria Margaroni and Effie Yiannopoulou argue, following cultural geographer Tim Cresswell, that mobility theories in the 21st century should not celebrate mobility for mobility's sake, but need to "do justice to our diverse, historical and geographically concrete experience of movement" (9). The authors ask how we are able to create affective bonds between everyday experience and the world that is on the move, between global mobility and situated, local histories and practices; how, to put it in other words, we might be able to attach ourselves to fluidity. They call for a mobile theory that preserves the destabilising power of mobility, but also incorporates concrete, lived experience and situated practices, and initiates an ongoing negotiation between material and discursive movements. Such a politics of mobility very well meets my approach to movement and mobility in the theatre. I will argue that nomadic theatre invites a focus on situated practices, on processes of articulating particularity, and on the investigation of embodied relationships with the places and spaces through which we move and that we create through movement. These are precisely the issues that inform the interest for duration, and sustainability. Everything has been done before, indeed. But not now.

1 ENCOUNTER

Of horses and wasps

“It’s impossible to understand how they made it all the way to the capital, which is nonetheless quite far from the frontier. But there they are, and every morning seems to increase their number [...] Impossible to converse with them. They don’t know our language [...] Even their horses are meat-eaters!” (Kafka in Deleuze 2004, 256).

As abruptly as I open this chapter, with very little context, this quote suddenly appears in Deleuze’s “Nomadic Thought” (2004). This quotation style is demonstrative of the disruptive force of the nomadic, which is precisely the content of this short excerpt of a story by Kafka: suddenly they are there, in the middle of a town – nobody knows where they came from, or who ‘they’ are. What deterritorialises the centre even more: even their horses eat meat.³⁰ Encounters in a Deleuzian universe do not follow principles of quiet transformation; encounters evoke change and the creation of new assemblages. Encounters occur when territories are “traversed by a movement that comes from the outside” (ibid., 256); when something incomprehensible slips through and escapes the code of recognition.

In this chapter I investigate the *encounter*, as a staging strategy, in relation to *No Man’s Land* (2008-2014). In this ambulatory performance, created by Dutch director and scenographer Dries Verhoeven, a single spectator follows a migrant on a walk through Lombok,

³⁰ The quote is derived from Kafka’s *The Great Wall of China*, and preceded by a quote from Nietzsche’s *The Genealogy of Morals*, with a similar taste of strangeness, although slightly more disturbing, and (mis)used for various political purposes: “They show up like destiny, without cause or reason, without consideration or pretext, there they are with the speed of lightning, too terrible, too sudden, too conquering, too *other* even to be an object of hatred” (Deleuze 2004, 256, italics by the author; cf. De Kesel 2006).

an urban district in Utrecht.³¹ *No Man's Land* stages encounters between performers and spectators, but also between the stage and everyday life. The performance takes place in the city and traverses the urban environment. Such an encounter, in which performance takes the streets, bears similarities to the Kafka story quoted above. There is something strange to the town, something other, something that adheres to different laws, codes and conventions than those that regulate the urban environment, even when taking into account that urban space itself is unpredictable and polymorphous. Although on a much more modest scale than Kafka's nomads, a performance in the city deterritorialises the urban environment, and forms a *rhizome* with that environment. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe the rhizome as an a-centred, non-hierarchical network, based on principles of connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity and deterritorialisation. A rhizome is always in a state of *becoming*, as it continuously changes and has no fixed points or positions. The rhizome therefore is the opposite of territory; it is always in the middle, it has neither beginning nor an end (2004, 7-10; cf. Colman in Parr 2010, 232-234). Urban environments then are always rhizomatic, as there are many ways of living in or understanding a city. A theatre performance nevertheless manages to bring something other to the urban environment, as will be shown in relation to *No Man's Land*, something which escapes, changes and yet reverberates with the codes of the city.

The theatre deterritorialises the urban environment, but meanwhile the city changes the *stage* as well. While performers and spectators traverse the city, they render the stage into a state of continuous variation, as the urban scenery changes with every step and so the platform for performance unfolds alongside their trajectory. The stage is the primary territory of enquiry in this chapter, a stage which materialises within and emanates from a mobile threefold constellation of performers, spectators and spaces. I will follow the pathways of this constellation, which also catalyses encounters with theatre conventions, nomadic games and science, spectatorship in fine arts and the theatre, and Deleuze's anti-representational image of thought. This trajectory of encounters demonstrates how the concept of nomadic theatre stages connections across a variety of fields.

Encounters may be sudden, seen in Kafka's 'horses' statement above, or they may be smooth, as in Deleuze's and Guattari's often-quoted example of the a-parallel evolution of the orchid and the wasp:

The orchid deterritorializes by forming an image, a tracing of a wasp; but the wasp reterritorializes on that image. The wasp is nevertheless deterritorialized, becoming a piece in the orchid's reproductive apparatus. But it reterritorializes the orchid by transporting its pollen. Wasp and orchid, as heterogeneous elements, form a rhizome (Deleuze/Guattari 2004, 11).

31 Since its premiere in 2008, *No Man's Land* has been restaged in various European cities, each time slightly adapted to the particular political-cultural context. I discuss the 2008 performance in Utrecht.

Deterritorialisation, inseparable from reterritorialisation, is the equivalent of encounter. The wasp and the orchid deterritorialise each other because something passes between two heterogeneous movements – a force, a flow of intensity – and produces a mutual becoming: the becoming-wasp of the orchid and the becoming-orchid of the wasp. Such a becoming does not work through imitation or resemblance but through a capturing of code. Encounters bring about change; however, the orchid and the wasp do not change into one another. They evolve in relation to one another; their encounter is an instance of an “a-parallel evolution” (ibid.). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe a range of such a-parallel evolutions and they qualify those encounters between two heterogeneous elements as a process of *entering into composition* with the other (2004, 289).

No Man's Land brings such Deleuzian encounters into play. The stage captures the codes of the city and in turn, the intensities of the urban environment traverse the stage. Performers, spectators and spaces enter into composition with one another, in the collaborative maintenance of a smooth stage. Performers and spectators are neither orchids nor wasps, but they too are engaged in a heterogeneous, a-parallel evolution: they enter into composition with each other while they explore contrasting ways of living and experiencing a Western city.

The rhythms of a smooth stage

Standing beneath the vast, blue departure board at Utrecht Central Station, I watch the crowd in front of me – a hurrying, eating and strolling crowd – filled with the anticipation of things to come. It is the start of *No Man's Land*. Approximately twenty other spectators are lined up with me, each of us wearing headphones and holding a piece of cardboard with a particular name on it. We are waiting for the migrants who will be our guides in this performance. I am waiting for Abderraghman, apparently. Through the headphones I hear sounds that characterise a station concourse – occasionally drowned by the noise in the actual concourse – spliced with faint music fragments, like a radio tuner searching for a clear channel. Our condition resembles that of performers on a stage: while we are standing in a row, with name cards on our torsos and headphones adorned on our heads, we attract quite a lot of attention. Instead of being seated in a darkened auditorium, we are being gazed at and observed by passengers. Unwillingly we have created a gulf in front of us, a gap of about two meters that is perhaps unconsciously avoided by travellers and other people present in the hall.

Amidst the continuous movements, I suddenly notice that a few people are standing still, their eyes closed. They are on the other side of the gap, as it were, approximately three to five meters away from us. The longer I look, the more people I see, highlighted by this still and silent position, opposite to us, their eyes closed. These ‘still lives’ juxtapose the hasty and fast pace of movement that surrounds them, and creates a fissure that changes my perspective on the incessantly moving crowd: it turns the movements in the hall into a

choreography of conscious and unconsciously passing travellers. Expectations rise: these are most likely the people we are going to meet. The music through the headphones slowly drowns the station concourse sounds and it seems the soundtrack has finally located the right tune. While we listen to a Purcell aria, these people suddenly open their eyes, look straight into ours and begin to sing along with the aria – or so it seems, as we are unable to clarify this because of our headsets.³² Whether it is Purcell's score to this urban choreography, or the apprehension of the encounter about to take place I am not sure, but this is an enthralling moment, which deeply moves me, even in my stationary position. One-by-one, the migrants cross the gap and approach each of the spectators; they nod in a friendly way and with a little wink invite a spectator to follow them. Each migrant-spectator couple disperses through the hall, in varying directions. Abderragman is late; I have time to watch at least twelve couples dissolve into the crowd. I wonder what he will look like. The next moment I am approached by a man with dark friendly eyes, about 40 years old, dark hair, a short beard, dressed in black jeans and a black leather jacket. He nods silently and invites me to follow. We quietly walk towards and across platform number 4 and leave the station. Although I am guided, I feel slightly lost: I am unsure what to expect of this, I have no idea where we are going, and I must put my fate, and faith, in the hands of a stranger.

No Man's Land stages an encounter between migrants and theatre spectators – an encounter that is taken quite literally in the opening scene. The performance takes the spectator out on a walk through Lombok, an Utrecht district with a dense population of immigrants with varied cultural backgrounds. The performer leads the way, through busy and quiet streets, past shops, squares and park benches, as if showing the spectator around his or her habitat. Meanwhile, the spectator hears an audio track through the headphones, which conveys a range of different stories and experiences, providing an impression of what it means to be a migrant in the Netherlands. In this performance the political-ethical subject matter of migration and integration is (en)countered by the mundane rhythms of everyday life, the hybrid of which I regard as exemplary of Henri Lefebvre's understanding of *lived space* →2. In the posthumous published *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life* (2004), Lefebvre proposes to study urban, lived spaces by analysing the rhythms of cities, which may help to understand how contemporary cities arise from and are produced by the polymorphous flows of everyday life. These rhythms, just as in *No Man's Land*, involve both the repetitious movements of daily routine as well as the contrasting or conflicting flows of social space.

Already present in the opening scene, but more distinctively in the trajectories to follow, the stage of *No Man's Land* has no fixed boundaries, and instead becomes a *smooth space*.

32 The aria is Dido's Lament, from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, in which she asks Aeneas to remember her while he leaves her. A strange choice for a start of a performance perhaps, but as *No Man's Land's* dramaturgy is based on patterns of inversion and reversal, the song becomes semiotically active at the end of the performance, where spectators are left behind by the migrant-performers who disappear into town.

Opposed to *striated* or closed space, Deleuze and Guattari qualify smooth space as an open space without divisions or clearly defined borders; it is a directional space rather than a dimensional, metric space. Smooth space is the realm of the nomadic, whereas striated space is the product of the sedentary (2004, 528-529). Similar to the difference between a nomadic and a sedentary attitude, the distinction points to two diverging ways of relating to space. The nomadic mode is that of being “distributed into smooth space”, a type of distribution which does not divide in parts, whereas striated space is based on compartmentalisation, structured and organised by law, and marked by inclusions and exclusions (Patton 2006, 39). Nomadic practices both contaminate and escape sedentarist striation; their pattern of distribution is that of occupying a borderless domain, without possessing it entirely (De Kesel 2006, 2). Like many of the conceptual couples of Deleuze and Guattari, the smooth and the striated are two absolutes. They refer to two different attitudes, yet in reality they cannot be strictly separated (Deleuze/Guattari 2004, 523).³³ *No Man’s Land* distributes the stage over the city; the performance occupies the borderless domain of urban space, without possessing it entirely. The auditorium which usually assembles and seats the public is deterritorialised and, in turn, reterritorialises as twenty synchronous trajectories that run parallel through town, with slightly different rhythms and coordinates.³⁴ On the smooth stage of *No Man’s Land*, at least one pattern of striation known from the conventional theatre has disappeared, or more precisely is being addressed, which is the separation of performers and spectators. This (abandonment of) separation is intrinsically linked to the spectator’s relation to the stage, and as the stage is the primary space of inquiry in this chapter, I suggest to investigate the opening scene more closely.

Mind the gap

In *Visuality in the Theatre: The Locus of Looking* (2008), Maaïke Bleeker uses Roland Barthes’ concept of the (photographic) *punctum* to point to certain details in performance that stand out and draw attention to the relationship between seer and the way the seer is addressed by the stage (16, 93-97). Such sticky details can serve as a portal for analysis. The opening scene of *No Man’s Land*, and in particular the caesura taking place when the performers announce themselves by standing still, is precisely such a *punctum*. Therefore, while the performance proceeds into town, let us linger here, at this semi-spontaneous gap between performers and spectators. In the opening scene, performers and spectators are simultaneously joined, separated and defined by this gap, a relatively

33 In the plateau “1440: The Smooth and the Striated”, Deleuze and Guattari remark that the sea is the smooth space par excellence, as one cannot capture the sea but only occupy it temporarily. Simultaneously, the sea is the space most fundamentally subjected to striation, as it has been counted, named and measured, organised by meridians and parallels, longitudes and latitudes, pruned by radars and submarines, or claimed as territorial water (2004, 529-530).

34 Cf. Van Eikels (2011) who links synchronicity to dispersed collectivity and differentiability, however minute differences may be.

empty yet energetic space, gone unnoticed by the majority of the crowd in the station hall, hardly visible, but definitely felt by those who do pay attention. As this breach is so explicitly addressed by first installing and later on crossing the gap, it exposes how *No Man's Land* becomes active as a theoretical object.

This gap between performers and spectators is a historical and theoretical variable, as it has been the motor for numerous innovations and evolutions in performance. It has been closed by the fourth wall convention, paradoxically to draw the spectators into the world on stage; this gap has been maximised by Wagner, by placing the audience in the dark (Groys 2008). There have been various efforts put in place to crush the distinction of the gap, as in the Futurists' attempts to shift the live event from the stage to the auditorium and onto the streets outside (Fischer-Lichte 1997; Kennedy 2008). It has been politically and dramaturgically addressed by Piscator and Brecht, for instance, asking the spectator for intellectual and critical involvement. We can think of efforts to minimise the gap, as in environmental theatre, or attempts to vaporise the distinction, as in Artaud's theatre of cruelty which sought to unite performers and audience into one energetic, orgasmic body; which in turn brings the work of Living Theatre or La Fura dels Baus to mind, and so on, and so on.

As a counterpart to Peter Handke's *Publikumsbeschimpfung* (Offending the Audience, 1966), in which four actors on stage face and confront the audience, and play with stage conventions and expectations, in *No Man's Land*, the performers cross the gap and warmly invite the spectators to come along. Here, the spectator steps onto the stage. Although the spectator enters an extremely smooth stage – as it is not clear at all where the stage starts and stops – the spectator enters a situation which is obviously staged, and which shields both the performer and the spectator from the daily reality in the station concourse. They both occupy this daily reality, they are part of this everyday-ness, yet simultaneously they are separated from it, by way of an invisible, extremely porous membrane.³⁵ By stepping on the stage, the spectator occupies and becomes physically part of the work, reminiscent of *installation art*. In fact, all the performances discussed here could be called installations, as they position the performer within the artwork, and disrupt the convention of frontality. The spectator is prevented to observe the work from a distance, a position which is often associated with objectivity, rationality, and truthfulness, and with “the possibility of seeing it ‘as it is’” (Bleeker 2008, 5). Instead, the installation offers partial, fragmented perspectives, which foregrounds the relationship between the viewer and artwork and collapses subject-object distinctions (Bouchard in Oddey/White 2009, 168; States 1992, 371). In addition, installations often need spectators to complete the work. Vito Acconci's installations, for example, do not ‘work’ without the visitor-spectator. Acconci designs spaces that invite action and response, and which change in response to

35 The notion of the porous membrane is also addressed in game theory, in order to reconfigure and open up the metaphor of the ‘closed’ magic circle (Copier in Van den Boomen et al. 2009, 165-166).

those actions. His work needs to be performed by the visitor-spectator (Spurr 2007, 120-134) →5. Art always necessitates the presence of spectators but installation art seems to make this explicit. This leads Claire Bishop to remark that installation art should perhaps be defined along the lines of spectatorial address, rather than by the attempt to point out characteristics of the work itself – which is bound to fail, due to installation’s interdisciplinary and varied nature. For Bishop, the various modes in which installations address and understand the relationship between viewing and subjectivity could be a way to envisage the *medium* of installation art (2005, 8-10). This seems certainly relevant for the work of Dries Verhoeven. In his work the performer regularly disappears out of sight, as a means of focusing on the spectator’s mode of engagement. Verhoeven likes to model the theatre spectator on the visitor in a museum or art gallery, as he seeks to provide spectators with time to explore their own (perceptual) response to the work. An overt focus on performers often creates a relationship of awe: spectators tend to admire performers, instead of exploring their own perceptual process. Verhoeven once neatly summarised this preference by commenting that paintings do not need applause.³⁶ Installation art addresses the relationship between artwork and viewer, often by way of a one-to-one relation between viewer and the artwork. In a theatre performance, however, the encounter with the artwork usually involves another living entity: the performer. Along with the performer comes the notion of the *stage*, which brings a set of quite specific conventions into play.

Staging the spectator

What is a stage exactly, and what is staging? These are much used words but they are not often precisely defined. Usually the stage is presented as the opposite and counterpart of the auditorium (McAuley 1999, 25). The stage is where the performers present themselves to the public; the stage is where the spectators are not. The stage is often easy to distinguish, when marked by a proscenium arch, or looked down upon in black-box theatres or arena settings (Balme 2008, 49-50). The stage becomes smoother in environmental theatre or street theatre, but even then, there is still a stage. As soon as a street theatre artist starts doing something which deviates from everyday behaviour, people stop, form a crowd, gathering around, and there it is: the stage. When attending the 2013 edition of *No Man’s Land*, many travellers stopped to watch the line-up of spectators, pointing at us, taking pictures with their smartphones. These simple events reveal that spectators are as much responsible for a stage to come into existence as performers. A stage emerges from the activation of a theatrical frame, a set of conditions which marks or frames the presented things as being staged; they are presented in order to be seen, and to be seen as performance (Carlson 2004, 35-37). As such, the stage can extend towards all kinds of

36 “Voor een schilderij hoeft je niet te applaudisseren”, interview with Verhoeven (2007), see PDS. Verhoeven’s view on spectatorship resembles Rancière’s equation of theatre spectators with viewers in art or cinema, each “plotting their own paths” through the work (2009, 16) →4.

domains in life: to political arenas, to social media, to advertising. I regard the stage as a platform for performance, which can materialise in many different ways; the stage does not always concern an elevated height, but it produces a heightened attention.³⁷

This heightened attention closely relates to what media scholar Chiel Kattenbelt names the “aesthetic orientation” of the spectator (Kattenbelt 2010, 31). Aesthetic orientation refers to the awareness of spectators being witnesses to a staged or framed reality, “instead of actuality itself”, which also invites the spectator to perceptually transcend the constraints of daily life (31). This orientation, precisely through the confrontation with the art object, installs a type of reflexivity which is both oriented towards one’s own experiences and towards the exploration of the imaginative, the possible and the potential. The aesthetic orientation is the precondition for every performance event to come into existence (31-33). This orientation installs the notion of the stage and, simultaneously, a stage invites this aesthetic orientation to become active. This dialectical process implicates the potential smoothness of the stage and may serve to understand the conventional stage-auditorium division as the striated version of both stage and auditorium instead of as their prerequisite of definition.

These reflections bring Peter Brook’s often-quoted opening lines of *The Empty Space* (1968) to mind: “I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged”. From a scenographic perspective, a space is never empty, and this study demonstrates that seeing or watching is not always a precondition for theatre →2,4. More relevant to the present discussion however is the observation that in *No Man’s Land*, the spectator walks Brook’s bare stage as well, a space which now is significantly crowded with traffic, sounds, smells and scents, and with other users of public space. Here we touch upon an interesting paradox. When I conceive of the spectator in *No Man’s Land* as being positioned onstage, the spectator both is on the stage and the ‘other’ of the stage, the ‘other’ who is needed for the stage to come into existence. We can abandon the notion of stage altogether to dispose of the problem but then we would dispose of theatre, in my opinion. I propose to use the paradox instead, to argue that the presence of the spectator onstage brings forth an utter strangeness, reminiscent of the nomads in Kafka’s story with which I started this chapter, who are suddenly perceived to be in the centre of the town. Due to the spectator’s aesthetic orientation, a spectator will always remain a stranger to the stage, even when s/he is *on* the stage. Even when there is hardly any physical distance between performers and spectators, the aesthetic orientation of the spectator still will provide a certain (aesthetic) distance. A spectator on the stage does not automatically transform the spectator into a performer, or a character. The spectator, in my view, remains a spectator; a spectator who somehow is not supposed to be on the stage, yet nevertheless is there.

37 Cf. Umberto Eco’s use of the term ostentation, in connection to the remark by phenomenologist Bert States, that on the stage, objects or living entities are “uplifted to the view” which triggers an other-than-daily perceptual consciousness (in Carlson 2004, 36-37).

This paradox perhaps explains the sense of uncanniness that often occurs at the start of performances like *No Man's Land*. The spectator does not know what to expect or what is expected: What am I to do? Am I doing 'it' right? Am I doing it 'right'? Contrary to (most of) the performers, who tend to arrive well-prepared on the stage – even in improvisational performance – the spectator often wonders what to do, how to behave, what to say, or not to say. Contrary to the performer, the spectator did not rehearse. Staging the spectator produces a strangeness which cannot be captured, precisely because the spectator brings a certain exteriority along: a spectator cannot be placed on the stage like an object, or in a similar way be directed or in control like a performer, nor can the spectator be designed like lightning or sound. The spectator can be guided, and severely manipulated, but always possesses a certain unpredictability. Next to the performer, there is another living presence on the stage, which deterritorialises the stage from within. The spectator destabilises the stage by bringing the auditorium 'along', which turns the stage into a space in which multiple perspectives are active at the same time. As a consequence, spectatorship itself becomes the object of heightened attention.

Walking with Abderragman

Let's follow Abderragman, with me in tow, as we are leaving the station concourse and walk across the platform towards one of the many exits of Utrecht Central Station. Abderragman walks before me, equipped with a small audio set and a tiny earplug, while I wear large white headphones. Again we attract attention, as I follow the footsteps of my guide. We are on our way to Lombok, but I do not know that yet. I feel amused and uncomfortable at the same time, curious about what will happen and uncertain because I do not know what to expect. I wonder whether I even *like* performances such as this one... But why do I want to know what will happen? When attending a conventional theatre performance, I never know what to expect. That type of suspense however is part of a convention. It is institutionalised suspense, a remnant of age-old traditions: the curtains raise, on stage a magical world will unfold, a world that will draw you in. In *No Man's Land* however, the unknown is not framed within a context in which not-knowing has its own, orderly place. A reassuring frame is absent. This is not the time to sit quietly in the dark; the safe plush seating has disappeared and so have my fellow audience members.

Confiding in what you know only (re)affirms the things you know. For Deleuze it is precisely the hesitating gestures that characterise the encounter with the unknown that are of value, because of their ability to create new paradigms for thought and action. Deleuze compares such encounters with the learning process of the *apprentice*, who finds himself confronted with a problem. Because the apprentice is not acquainted with the matter at hand, he is forced to analyse the problem and to experiment towards a solution. These activities invite creativity, and, taken a wider view, embody the potential to controvert established values (Patton 1996, 9). Paralleled to this, the spectators in *No Man's Land* can be considered apprentice-spectators, unacquainted with this new

position. My personal account indicates that apprenticeship is not necessarily a pleasant affair and when people are forced to improvise, they may tend to cling on to the striations of convention.

Halfway down the stairs Abderragman stops and turns around. We look straight into each other's eyes. Through the headphones I hear the following text:

This is me.
 These are my hands.
 These are my legs.
 This is my face.
 This is not a theatre costume.
 This is not a Dutch appearance.
 I am a foreigner – or migrant, that sounds better.
 A refugee.
 Political or economical – you don't know that yet.
 And maybe even a Muslim.

Or I'm just here on holiday, that's also a possibility.
 That is the most cheerful version.

This is not my voice. This is not my language.
 This is the voice of an actor.
 See, I may still look like a stranger,
 Like some kind of character from a comic strip from a distant country, who stands in front of you, a little uncomfortably.

Someone who wouldn't normally speak English this fluently.
 But because of the English voice you will regard me differently, listen differently.

Clearly, I could let you hear my own voice.
 I could talk with a slight accent, Goodevenink.
 How nice that he speaks English.
 That you would be touched when I pronounce the English word 'lemon curd'... without making a mistake.
 You probably wouldn't really listen to the words.³⁸

38 I heard the Dutch version of this text. For the sake of readability I use the English transcription here. See PDS.

The text raises many questions concerning the identity of the man standing in front of me, and the voice through which he is represented – some of which I will address below. In the meantime, the eye contact at close distance settles the atmosphere for things to come; there is sympathy involved in the exchange of looks, the eye contact is actually quite intimate, and pleasant. Next we move on, walking rhythmically on the merry *rai* music now played through the headphones, towards one of the station's exits and onto the street, setting course for Lombok district. During the next half an hour or so, we alternate between walking through Lombok and moments when Abderragham stops, turns around and looks at me, while I hear a voice on tape. The voice tells of 'his' land of origin, of how 'he' has dreamt of living in the West, of tedious asylum procedures, of first experiences in the Netherlands, and of living in the Netherlands for 22 years and still being called a migrant. While I gradually get used to this mobile duo-performance, and Abderragham and I establish a similar pace together, the nature of the story changes. Abderragham this time does not look at me when the voice reports of a gruesome memory of being held by militia while his daughter is raped and burned. Slowly we start walking again, passing through other streets, occasionally observed by residents who seem to vary between curiosity and suspicion. There are cheerful moments as well. At a certain moment Abderragham dances lightly on the beat of the music, when out of the blue two more dancing performers appear around different corners, each of them followed by a slightly dazzled spectator. The sudden duplication of the situation, including my own spectatorship, brings Henri Bergson's essay on laughter to mind, where he observes that any human behavior that resembles the mechanic invites us to laugh.

As the performance's title reminds us, a migrant's life often is a no man's land, a life in-between homes, marked by displacement, lacking one-ness or wholeness. While walking through the streets of Lombok, it appears that the stage as well has transformed into a kind of no man's land. The stage is distributed onto urban space and unfolds as the trajectory progresses. Meanwhile life in the city follows its routes, ruptures and routines. As mentioned above, the theatre space and the urban space are separated by an invisible, yet extremely porous and permeable membrane. A boy loitering on his bike asks me what we are doing. The membrane dissolves. Well, I am in a performance, listening to stories that you may know by heart... This is one of those few, odd potentials of performance in public space, where the rules of play become the object of observation itself. In the second half of the walk, the story's tone changes again and deliberately bypasses cultural-political themes, to make room for the everyday. The voice muses on how we might connect and relate to each other, how we could discuss books or films, or share a meal. If it gets late, I could stay the night, the voice says, and although he has to leave early in the morning, I can take the time and let myself out. He provides me with trust, and the key to his house, with the kind request to put the key through the letterbox when I leave. He promises to serve breakfast to me. Abderragham then places a small orange tangerine on the pavement. I pick it up and return again to the here and now of the walk.

Throughout the trajectory, the stage and the urban space continue to destabilise each other. They merge into urban scenery and unfold and proliferate through their mutual interference. They frame each other, as the urban space becomes the object of aesthetic orientation and the stage reterritorialises on the streets. They unfold again, but differently, when the porous membrane that separates the two domains suddenly dissolves, due to curious inquiries of passers-by, or simply, at a traffic light. These various de- and reterritorialisations continue to render the stage in *No Man's Land* into a smooth space.

In their Nomadology chapter in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari make a comparison between Go and chess, to point at two different logics at work in these games – a comparison which helps to further articulate what a nomadic relation to space entails, and to sustain my preference for understanding the performer-spectator-space triad as a flexible constellation. For Deleuze and Guattari, Go is attuned to the nomadic war machine, as a contrast to the State apparatus of chess, when comparing the functions of the game pieces, the internal relationships between pieces, and their distinct spatial orientation.³⁹ Chess pieces are coded and have pre-established identities and functions, while Go pieces are simple, anonymous units, without intrinsic properties; they have only situational functions. Therefore, the relations between pieces are different. Chess pieces have “bi-univocal relations with one another, and with the adversary’s pieces: their functioning is structural” (2004, 389). Go pieces on the other hand work through the formation of constellations. They derive their function from their position within this constellation; they perform functions such as “insertion, [...] bordering, encircling, shattering” (ibid.). Also their spatial orientation is different: chess defends space and is oriented towards closing the space, whereas Go is concerned with

arraying oneself in an open space, of holding space, of maintaining the possibility of springing up at any point: the movement is not from one point to another, but becomes perpetual, without aim or destination, without departure or arrival. The “smooth” space of Go, as against the “striated” space of Chess. [...] The difference is that chess codes and decodes space, whereas Go proceeds altogether differently, territorializing or deterritorializing it (make the outside a territory in space; consolidate that territory by the construction of a second, adjacent territory; deterritorialize the enemy by shattering his territory from within; deterritorialize oneself by renouncing, by going elsewhere...). Another justice, another movement, another space-time (2004, 389-390).

Go and chess do not differ from each other in terms of the open-endedness of both games, or by the absence of grids and rules. One cannot predict the outcome of a chess

39 Go is a board game in which simple black and white pieces are moved over a grid of vertical and horizontal lines. The pieces are placed on the cross-points of these lines and displaced and arranged in order to encircle or shatter the territory of the adversary.

game and a Go game too has rules and a grid. Rules and grids do not fix positions in space. Instead, they provide the conditions for play. Yet the differences between the games point to two different modes of play. The Go game provides a model for understanding the performer-spectator-space triad as a mobile threefold *constellation* that in each specific performance evolves through particular, changing configurations and situations. I am not implying, however, that I regard performers and spectators as anonymous Go pieces. The Go game points to situational relationships and to a specific spatial orientation, namely one of being distributed into smooth space and of playing with shifting territories, of renouncement and going elsewhere. Analogue to the strategies in Go, a performance like *No Man's Land* places performers and spectators within an open space, and their respective territories – the stage and the auditorium – are active as interfering spheres, subject to deterritorialisation. Although performers and spectators are not the exact equivalents of game pieces, the comparison with the Go game suggests a certain affinity between the stage and the game board, as I will elaborate in relation to Signa's *Ruby Town* →5. This game board occasionally is on the move itself, as is shown in *No Man's Land*. The smooth stage of *No Man's Land* occupies the urban space without possessing it entirely. The stage distributes Abderragman and me onto an open space, and places us into situations that are temporary relays, while maintaining the possibility of going elsewhere.

A problem of referentiality

It seems utterly romantic and quite naïve to speak of Abderragman and me as being distributed into an open, smooth space, in times of involuntary migration, political exile and cultural displacement – topics that are at the heart of *No Man's Land*. Posited against this sociopolitical reality, one can even wonder whether nomadology as a tool for analysis is inappropriate, if not politically incorrect. Robert Marzec introduces this moral dilemma in his essay on Deleuze's nomadology, referring to critical remarks by Caren Kaplan and Gayatri Spivak, amongst others, who criticise Deleuze for being a-historical and nostalgic (Marzec 2001). Although Deleuze and Guattari explicitly distinguish between the nomad and the migrant, this dilemma is tenacious and needs a few words of explication.⁴⁰ Caren Kaplan, for instance, argues that the idea of a perpetual transcending of boundaries actually repeats a Western Enlightenment dream, closely connected to a (European) history of colonial expansion and exploitation (2002, 35). This idea of surpassing limits or borders has also inspired romantic or escapist rhetoric. Rosi Braidotti, for instance, observes how in 1970s cyberpunk discourse, references to nomadism served to celebrate the excess

40 For Deleuze and Guattari, the migrant moves from one point to another, although this second point may be "uncertain, unforeseen or not well localized [...]. The nomad goes from point to point only as a consequence and as a factual necessity; in principle, points for him are relays on a trajectory" (2004, 419).

of societal and physical constraints, and points at the risk of cultural relativism inherent these escapist ideologies (2004, 169-170).⁴¹

Looking into more recent discourse, both Tim Cresswell and Mark De Kesel criticise nomadist vocabulary in relation to postmodern, global citizenship, in which the nomadic is often applied to appreciate ourselves as dynamic globe-trotters. As a counter-argument, De Kesel (2006) points to the aggressive nature of Deleuze's and Guattari's nomadic war machine, which indeed accomplishes that one rather imagines an Al Quaida terrorist than a fashionable cosmopolitan. Cresswell critiques the "nomadist metaphysics" of mobile theories, including those of Deleuze and Guattari, which not only take a world-on-the-move as subject matter, but seek to incorporate mobility in the very structure of thought itself. For Cresswell, those theories tend to celebrate mobility for mobility's sake, while they ignore the fact that access to mobility is unevenly distributed, due to reasons of class, race or gender. Such nomadism tends to flatten out differences and fails to do justice to social inequality, thus ignoring the "racialized root of the metaphor" (2002, 18).

Cresswell sees the nomad as a metaphor, an issue that is addressed by Paul Patton, in "Mobile Concepts, Metaphor, and the Problem of Referentiality in Deleuze and Guattari" (2006). Patton discusses the critique of Caren Kaplan, next to Christopher Miller's, amongst others, who both accuse Deleuze of perpetuating a (neo)colonial tradition based on the myths of expansion and fascination for the primitive Other (cf. Bogue 2004). According to Kaplan, this is a perpetuation of the "rhetorical structures of a modernist European imaginary" (Patton 2006, 40). Patton offers an insightful answer to these and other accusations, by arguing that these problems do not pertain to the nomadic, but concern the problem of referentiality. He argues that the issue is not whether and how Deleuzian concepts refer to certain phenomena in reality, instead one ought to investigate "the relationship of those concepts to their apparently empirical claims" (38). Vital in Patton's argument is the question whether Deleuze and Guattari use the nomad as a metaphor. The answer to that particular question wholly depends on how one conceives a metaphor. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the nomad is *not* a metaphor, but a conceptual persona, related to their attempt to arrive at creative, anti-representational thought (ibid.). For Deleuze, the metaphor belongs to the realm of representation. A metaphor expresses one thing through another one, which not only relies

41 Braidotti does not disapprove of cyberpunk and -fiction itself, as this provides fertile ground for imagining new identities and metamorphoses. She proposes instead a different, neo-materialist reading of Deleuze's nomadology, which informs her concept of (embedded, embodied) nomadic subjectivity (2011; 2004) →3.

on the independent existence of things, but as well divides between an original and its derivative (28-29). Deleuze strongly rejects such a representational image of thought.⁴²

My approach to the matter closely aligns with Patton's remarks. As already indicated by the various examples discussed here, the nomadic in my view manifests itself in many different ways, the one not more true or close to the 'original' than the other. The nomad in science is not closer to the nomad than the nomadic tribes in the desert. Therefore I prefer to speak of the nomadic instead of the nomad, and to understand the nomadic as an attitude, a particular way of doing and thinking that allies with processes of de- and reterritorialisation, which manifests itself in a range of different occasions. Deleuze and Guattari observe that "the nomads do not hold the secret: an 'ideological', scientific, or artistic movement can be a potential war machine, to the precise extent to which it draws [...] a creative line of flight, a smooth space of displacement. It is not the nomad who defines this constellations of characteristics; it is this constellation that defines the nomad" (2004, 466). Nomadism surfaces in war tactics, but also in art and philosophy. Some of these practices raise ethical questions but however contested these practices may be, they do not disqualify the concept of the nomadic itself.

This is not my voice - A problem of referentiality, part 2

Next to this problem of referentiality, *No Man's Land* offers a second problem, which pertains to the obscure relationship between the physically present migrant-performer and the manner with which he is represented by the prerecorded voice of an absent performer. Although I started the performance with a sense of insecurity, not knowing what my role as a spectator would be, the activities required (walking, listening, observing) are, all in all, quite familiar. Instead, the instability of spectatorship surfaces elsewhere, namely in the failing attempts to connect the text provided through the headphones to the performer in front of me. This is not his voice. This is not his story. The story is inconsistent. It is not the tale of one person, but of many. Actually, the story is a collage of all the stories told by the various migrants who participated in the project.⁴³ Each spectator hears the same story. Although I know or suspect all this, a part of me projects the stories onto the man in front of me, trying to bring the various elements together into a coherent whole. But it doesn't work. The two types of address, one by the voice on tape, one

⁴² As my dealing with the *concept* of nomadic theatre is both based on Deleuze and Mieke Bal, it is appropriate to point out that Mieke Bal approaches the metaphor altogether differently. Bal's analysis is grounded in the literal meaning(s) of the word: to move something, to carry across, and to be moved or to be affected. With an eye to Walter Benjamin's analysis of translation processes, she argues that the metaphor always involves transformation; translation in retroaction exposes what is untranslatable within the translated object, for instance. Translation and metaphoring therefore change the original beyond its initial state, and is an infinite process (Bal 2002, 62-67).

⁴³ This text is in each city slightly adapted, in connection to the local context and to the performers participating in the performance. See Van Heuven (2013), PDS.

by the physical presence of Abderragman, stay in conflict. And the conflict multiplies: who is this man that I walk with, who is the 'real' Abderragman? Is he a performer or a migrant, or both? On the one hand I feel disappointed about this 'missed' encounter; on the other hand we *do* still have an encounter. Paradoxically, the audio equipment both separates and unites us. We do not speak to each other; yet we are both silent witnesses, listening to the prerecorded voice on tape.

The text is composed according to the principles of a dialogue, and contains phrases such as "I could have", "you may wonder why", "you probably think that". Personal pronouns such as 'I' and 'you' are deictic markers; they organise social relationships. Precisely because they are empty forms, deictic markers allow the partners involved in the discourse to *appropriate* these terms for themselves (Bleeker 2008, 19). This strategy renders the spectator present within the work, which probably explains my sincere urge to speak, during the performance, or rather, my acute awareness that I am silent. Both the stories and the 'direct' address by the prerecorded voice cause a wish to express my willingness to comprehend 'his' situation, to explain my sense of guilt – for being in a privileged position, for being unharmed. I know that I am manipulated into these feelings, yet this leaves me with an actual sense of incapacity: I will never be able to put myself into Abderragman's place, or to capture this situation entirely; full comprehension is impossible.

The intervention of the mediating voice raises an ethical dilemma. To deprive a person of a voice can hardly be called a suitable means for arranging a successful encounter, especially when thought of in relation to Spivak's well-known essay "Can the subaltern speak?" (1988). It is easy to argue that the prerecorded voice of a (Dutch) actor installs the migrant as Other. In addition, the actor/mediator appears to be an all-knowing figure, as he predicts my response, always one step ahead in articulating possible observations, feelings and thoughts – and even addresses this specific dilemma. Once more the mediator's thoughts are faster than mine, as he also provides an explanation. The voice, by way of the paradoxical utterance "I could have used my own voice", explains how that latter choice probably would invite compliments on how good the migrant/performer has mastered the Dutch language.⁴⁴ Even after living in the Netherlands for over 22 years, he keeps receiving that compliment: "How excellent is your Dutch!" It is difficult to describe the intonation of that comment. It is a combination of the positive appraisal by a native speaker who willfully ignores the stuttering language of the other, and of the tone one uses to compliment a dog or child – but that actually does the trick. It makes me realise that this is what 'we' do – I have to include myself, I'm afraid. The comment is not a neutral one, it is the expression of difference. This interpretation of the scene is strongly affected by the cultural-political climate in the Netherlands at the time of this performance, in 2008. At this time, a growing animosity to foreigners had invaded the Netherlands and Dutch politics, which led to polarised debates about the failure of multiculturalism and

44 I witnessed the Dutch version of this performance.

increasingly rigorous asylum and integration procedures. Within light of those events, the nearly-mastered Dutch language had become a sign for failed integration, and “how excellent is your Dutch” precisely the confirmation of not being ‘Dutch’. Suddenly I wonder whether my participation in this performance is not an equivalent of this sentence, a ‘how good of you to tell your story to me’. It makes me realise that the subject-matter – Dutch native meets migrant – is thoroughly perverted, as there is no best choice when it comes to which voice to use. In either way the migrant is deprived of his voice, whether by the actor-mediator or by an ongoing political debate-as-mediator, a debate that I cannot escape, and which, although I may conceive myself as open-minded, has perverted my way of listening as well. This encounter with Abderragham confirms our distinct positions, as if we are both struck in a perpetual repetition of (social) difference.

No Man’s Land seems to promise an encounter between a migrant and a spectator. The personal tour through the Lombok district suggests that we will get to know each other. But instead of the expected encounter, the performance installs a feedback loop, through which spectators are invited to experience and reflect on their own, often unconscious ways of perceiving and thinking about migrants. As a consequence of the isolation brought about by the headphones, and the commentary voice, the performance manages to bypass the ethical questions raised above and instead redirects the attention to how spectatorship is the product of personal projections and prejudices, and influenced by cultural baggage. There is a second, related strategy which causes this self-reflexivity to emerge. By obscuring the relationship between migrant and performer and by the hybrid of stories, *No Man’s Land* escapes dominant imagery and puts the very idea of ‘the migrant’ itself into a state of continuous variation. Instead of presenting Abderragham as a migrant ‘as it is’, the performance shows that there is no such thing. The problem of referentiality itself then becomes the subject matter of this performance. This strategy is in a way similar to Deleuze’s account of the work of Carmelo Bene.⁴⁵ In “One Less Manifesto,” in which Bene’s work is discussed, Deleuze asks:

Might not continuous variation be just such an amplitude that always overflows, by excess or lack, the representative threshold of majority measure? [...] Might not theater, thus, discover a sufficiently modest, but nevertheless, effective function? This antirepresentational function would be to trace, to construct in some way, a figure of the minority consciousness as each one’s potential (1997, 253-254).

For Deleuze, perpetual variation points to a process of continuous differing or of ongoing differentiation. This is not a repetition-of-sameness or re-presentation, but instead a threshold of potentiality; it points to things in a state of change, to the option of the

⁴⁵ In Bene’s work, the strategy of continuous variation manifests itself amongst others in character representation, as the actors destabilise the characters in *Richard III* by using a variety of acting styles.

always-otherwise. The problem of referentiality in *No Man's Land* similarly creates openings to other horizons and other modes of encounters, as I will elaborate below. Perpetual variation does not imply that we necessarily arrive at a reality which is 'more true', in my view. Instead, spectators are invited to explore the relationship between a conflicting body-without-voice and a voice-without-body, and their own responses to this conflict. Such mode of address is characteristic of postdramatic theatre, which often works through a multiplication of frames or perspectives, compared to the "operation of the single frame" of dramatic theatre (Bleeker 2008, 8). Maaïke Bleeker observes that Lehmann connects this ambiguity to the political potential of (postdramatic) theatre, not so much by what is represented on stage, but because this mode of address "draws attention to the problem of representation itself, to representational forms and how they are perceived, or not" (2008, 8; cf. Lehmann 2007, 53).

Deleuze values (Bene's) theatre for its anti-representational potential. In *Visuality in the Theatre*, Maaïke Bleeker however, points out that theatre always deals with representation. Although there have been many attempts to conceive of a pure, unmediated presence in the theatre, for instance by Antonin Artaud and in 1960s and 1970s performance art, Bleeker argues that presence in the theatre is always framed within principles of representation, because "presence relies on other signifiers and thus remains within the realm of the already constructed. Derrida's 'always already' left deep marks" (2008, 21).⁴⁶ Theatre cannot escape representation. Theatre does not necessarily depend on the 'as if', but always relies on the 'as theatre'. Therefore, different than Deleuze, and other authors in his slipstream, such as Simon O'Sullivan (2006) or Nigel Thrift (2008), I do not think that an emphasis on process, experimentation and differentiation leads us *beyond* representation. This is demonstrated by *No Man's Land*, which, in line with Bleeker's observations, renders representation itself into the subject of investigation.

Fractured reciprocity

Representation in the theatre is closely connected to conventions of spectatorial address. *No Man's Land's* staging of the spectator plays with and thus exposes these conventions. The encounter between performers and spectators is not only frustrated by conflicting stories or the ambiguous body-voice assemblage, but also by the simple fact of the close eye contact between performers and spectators, through which the performer returns the gaze of the spectator. This eye contact is an inversion, and deterritorialisation, of the notion that "someone else watches and that is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged" (Brook). A performer who looks back at the spectator destabilises spectatorship, and renders the contract between performer and spectator visible (Ridout 2006, 80-87; Klaver 1995). This exposure of the contract between beholder and beheld relates

46 Derrida's 'always already' also informs his view on performativity, which according to him always relies on iterability and citationality (Culler 2000, 509).

to Barbara Freedman's use of the term *theatricality*, in her study *Staging the Gaze* (1991), discussed by Maaïke Bleeker, in *Visuality in the Theatre*. For Freedman, the theatre is always marked by and works through the tension between seeing and being seen. For her, theatricality refers to "[t]hat fractured reciprocity whereby beholder and beheld reverse positions in a way that renders a steady position of spectatorship impossible. Theatricality evokes an uncanny sense that the given to be seen has the power to both position and displace us" (in Bleeker 2008, 9). Bleeker elaborates on Freedman's use of the term theatricality, by pointing out that theatricality renders visible how theatre addresses and positions the spectators. Address entails that spectators are invited to adopt a particular point of view from which to look at what is being presented on stage. This does not imply that the spectator always accepts or identifies with the presented perspective. As Freedman points out, such a suggested point of view can also cause a sense of displacement. Next to theatricality, Bleeker posits the term *absorption*, which indicates another, opposite mode of address, namely one in which the spectator is drawn into the world on stage, precisely because the traces of mediation are erased (2008, 21).

Bleeker uses the terms theatricality and absorption to point out how theatre always positions the spectator, in relation to what is being seen, and meticulously explores what is actually involved in 'just looking'. Although Bleeker elaborates her thoughts in relation to performances that work with the conventional stage-auditorium divide, her observations provide further insight into the fractured reciprocity in *No Man's Land* and expose that theatre is always involved with representation, and with a process of staging the spectator. For Bleeker, staging involves the construction of a position for the audience as a *subject of vision*. Paralleled to the function of perspective in painting, this subject of vision entails a specific, suggested point of view, which mediates between the seer as subject and what there is to be seen (80). Seeing, therefore, is always a relational act and actively involves the body of the seer-spectator as the locus of looking. In addition, Bleeker uses the (narratological) concepts of internal and external focalisation to describe how the subject of vision organises the relationship between the seen and the seer. She provides an analysis of William Forsythe's *Artifact*, which starts with one of the performers inviting the audience to "step inside", to demonstrate how various performers function as (conflicting) internal focalisers, and invite the audience to take up their points of view, as if they have stepped onstage (28). Bleeker also mentions explicit examples of external focalisation, such as the moment when suddenly the safety curtain comes down, through which spectators are invited to become aware of their own subjective viewing positions in the auditorium (31). *No Man's Land* too uses various, conflicting internal focalisers, playing the physical present performer against the mediating voice of someone who is absent: one is talking, the other is looking. Through the contrast between a body-without-voice and a voice-without-body, and by returning the gaze, the spectator is placed outside of the presented situation and prevented to absorb into the 'world on stage'. However, despite the many strategies that point to theatricality as the

dominant mode of address, *No Man's Land* also makes use of absorption, as a culturally conditioned mode of viewing.

In order to elaborate on this argument, it is helpful to look a bit further into Bleeker's analysis of perspective. She draws a parallel between perspective painting and the staging strategies of dramatic theatre. Analogue to the strategies of absorption that characterise dramatic theatre, perspective painting draws the viewer into the represented world, precisely by suggesting the beholder to be absent (21). Perspective erases and obscures the framing devices through which the physical presence of the spectator is replaced by an 'ideal' looking position, the subject of vision. That way, perspective suggest direct access to the things being presented, showing the world 'as it is', and obscures the representation *as* representation (48). Although we have come to see perspective as a particular representational technique, Bleeker observes that the promise inherent perspective is quite persistent, namely that there is such thing as "an objective world existing independently of our subjective point of view" (36).

No Man's Land stages a situation in which the spectator, other than in perspective paintings or in Forsythe's *Artifact*, is literally invited to step inside, to share the stage with the performer. Despite the many external focalisers – such as conflicting modes of address or the urban environment – this particular position incites a culturally coded and conditioned response, one in which 'stepping inside' has become associated with direct access, immediacy, truth, and reliability. Bleeker observes how absorption invites the spectator to take up the position of a character or performer, or to empathise with performers presenting 'themselves': "We are invited momentarily, to forget the relationship between ourselves and the other we are seeing. It is as if we experience directly what the other feels, seeing the world through his or her eyes" (33). This may explain why I expected this encounter to be a genuine encounter, in which I would have a direct access to a 'real' migrant, and why I felt such a strong urge to feel empathy. Previously I described how my response to this performance was coloured by a specific political climate and societal debate. The tension between absorption and theatricality exposes again how spectatorship is a culturally conditioned process. *No Man's Land* produces an encounter in which two people are quite close, but ultimately, this creates a fractured reciprocity, where "beholder and beheld reverse positions in a way that renders a steady position of spectatorship impossible" (Freedman), and where the spectator, and his or her response to spectatorial address, becomes the object of observation.

Building performance

At the end of the performance, we arrive at yet another variation of a no man's land. This takes the form of an empty field near Utrecht Central Station, covered with a silver-coloured sand beach, on which twenty beach houses stand. Each migrant-spectator couple enters one of the houses, where the headphones are taken off and the migrant sings to the spectator. Abderragman's voice is raw, low and a bit squeaky. It is strange

but nevertheless comforting to know that this sound is ‘really real’. After having been isolated by the headphones for the preceding three quarters of an hour, the live voice is strikingly intimate. At the end of the song, Abderragman leaves the beach house, only to return in front of the house a few minutes later. Through a small hole in the door the old projection technique of a camera obscura is revived. I see Abderragman projected upside down on the wall in front of me. First I see a blurred image but when it sharpens I notice that he holds a small cardboard, with my name on it: Liesbeth. It is both a literal, visual inversion, as well as an inversion of the performance’s beginning, and indicative of the performance’s self-reflexivity. Seeing my name on the cardboard is somehow a sign of recognition, not in an Aristotelian sense but in the sense of a mutual acknowledgement, indicating that we don’t know each other, that in this encounter we did not get to know each other better, but that we nevertheless have shared time and space together. We have looked into each other’s eyes; perhaps we shared some thoughts and feelings. Together we were involved in quite an intimate situation, despite the mediating technology. In *No Man’s Land*, the headphones intermediate and obstruct the encounter but also invite re-appraisal and awareness of lived and shared time.

Nicolas Bourriaud remarks that relational art produces situations in which “it is no longer possible to regard the contemporary work as a space to be walked through [...]. It is henceforth presented as a period of time to be lived through” (1998, 15). This focus on lived experience pertains to this performance as well. The trajectory leading from the station, to the streets and to the beach house installs a perceptual awareness that in the end surpasses *No Man’s Land* political agenda. More precisely, it could be said, it approaches the topic from a different angle. Instead of installing a critical, distanced reflexivity regarding social and political inequality and other ethical questions, the performances asks what can be shared, despite the obvious differences. This interest for lived experience and for theatre’s potential to install a sense of connectivity, marks much of Dries Verhoeven’s work. The performance achieves this amongst others, by leading the performer-spectator-space constellation through a range of configurations; varying from installing and crossing the performer-spectator division in the station concourse, to the joint walk, to the interiority of the (temporary) house. Throughout these configurations, the performer and spectator together are involved in a process of *building* performance, drawing on lived experience.

In their Nomadology chapter, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe a 12th century practice of building Gothic cathedrals, in which the building process is not based on (the reproduction of) static and pre-designed templates, which are the instruments of the State, but on the embodied knowledge and experience of the craftsmen engaged in the work. They present this practice as an instance of nomad science, grounded in (collaborative) experimentation. Deleuze and Guattari describe how craftsmen create architectural volume and structural coherence through squaring, approximation and qualitative calculation, generated by the material and the work-in-progress: “One does not represent, one engenders and traverses” (2004, 402). The qualified labour

in nomad science works through experience as it has built up in time and is stored as corporeal knowledge. State science instead works through reproduction, regulation and the generalisation of labour, which produces an unequal power relation between those who commission the work and those who execute it (2004, 401-402).

Engendering and traversing the work: this is a remarkably apt description of *No Man's Land's* architecture, and of the performance's emergent dramaturgy. Performers and spectators are not engaged in an act of constructing a building, of course, yet they are mutually involved in a process of building performance. They navigate the streets of Utrecht's Lombok district, meanwhile traversing the paradoxes inherent the dis-settled sedentary life of a migrant in the Netherlands. They engender the work by bringing their corporeal knowledge and sensibilities to the work. *No Man's Land* generated a range of responses, varying from spectators reporting they had a joyous walk, or an alienating experience, or were moved to tears.⁴⁷ Each trajectory joins two particular lives and produces heterogeneous encounters. Building on experience also brings the "Experten des Alltags" to mind, the experts of the daily life, a term coined by Rimini Protokoll →2 but also relevant in relation to *No Man's Land*. Alternative to working with professionally trained actors, Rimini Protokoll often collaborates with non-actors who instead present their particular and/or professional expertise: truck drivers, local politicians, elderly, or factory-workers who lost their job (Dreyse/ Malzacher 2007).⁴⁸ It is a wonderful concept, I think, as of course everybody is the expert of his or her own everyday life. *No Man's Land* likewise presents non-professional actors, is built on the expertise of migrants, and works with the experience of the spectator.

The next moment, Abderragham disappears from view. After a while I leave the beach house, only to find the field empty, with the exception of fellow wandering and wondering spectators; spectators who do not want to leave yet. They seem to be in search of their guides, feeling the need to enter into dialogue with them, the guides who already disappeared into town. All in all, *No Man's Land* is not a politically correct performance in which migrant and native are brought to an increased, mutual understanding. The performance doesn't provide an encounter. At least not in the ways one might have expected. Instead it queries what an encounter is, or might be. How do you get to know a person? What is 'knowing' exactly? Meanwhile, *No Man's Land* experiments with a different kind of encounter, in which two people with quite different backgrounds share a similar rhythm and spend some time together, bringing their own experience to the work. Is this then the 'real' encounter? Well, no. The encounter itself is subject to a dramaturgy of perpetual variation. After my walk with Abderragham, Abderragham will invite some-

47 Based on various reviews (see PDS) and reports from students with whom I visited the Utrecht 2013 performance.

48 Both Rimini Protokoll and Dries Verhoeven also work with professional actors who happen to have a particular expertise, such as being a migrant. Actually, this working method is not entirely new. Michael Kirby mentions the use of 'found actors' in the Happenings in the early 1960s (Kirby 1972, 12).

one else, and then again someone else. This *assemblage* of the one-after-another and the next-to-each-other qualifies *No Man's Land's* emergent dramaturgy.⁴⁹ Deleuze and Guattari regard the assemblage as a continuous increase of connections and observe that “an assemblage, in its multiplicity, necessarily acts on semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously” (2004, 25). A performance that uses the format of a one-to-one encounter extends itself in time, compared to conventional performance. As each spectator will respond differently and each trajectory is a different trajectory, the performance multiplies in number, and changes in nature.

Expanding spectatorship

In this chapter, I investigated various ways in which *No Man's Land* deterritorialises the stage. Evolving from the station hall, to the streets of Lombok, to twenty beach houses on a row, the stage loses the usual structural integrity and reterritorialises as synchronous trajectories. *No Man's Land* puts the stage into a state of continuous variation, by distributing performers and spectators onto the smooth space of the city, while they traverse the rhythms of a migrant's life in the Netherlands. The scale of the encounter swings from horses to wasps and back again, as the performance variedly shifts from large-scale politics of immigration and multiculturalism, towards the tiny details of the everyday, the quality of shared time, and the intimacy of the house. I have characterised this trajectory as a process of building performance, a process of co-creation, in which both performers and spectators traverse and engender the work. Traversing and engendering the work as well characterises my involvement as a researcher. In this chapter, I built an argument through a series of approximations, by activities such as squaring and scaling, partly relying on corporeal and subjective experience, partly relying on how the material generates response.

No Man's Land promises an encounter with a stranger, only to backfire towards the spectators in the end, as they encounter themselves and are invited to self-reflexively explore their response to ambiguous spectatorial address. Staging the spectator in *No Man's Land* produces a situation in which spectatorship itself is brought to the light of attention and renders visible how spectatorship is (always) staged. The encounter of the nomadic and the theatre, in this performance, first brings a destabilisation of spectatorship to the surface, and then evolves towards an expansion of spectatorship. In *No Man's Land*, the relation between performers and spectators is full of inversions and reversions. This fractured reciprocity also involves a sharing and extension of positions: the usual activity of the performer – presenting oneself in front of an audience – and that of the spectator – watching, listening, witnessing – are shared. Abderragman performs but is as well engaged in looking and listening. Similarly, I am observed by Abderragman, by passers-by, and feel an urge to express myself. We do not exchange roles. Abderragman

49 Cf. Pearson/Shanks, who similarly connect the assemblage to (postdramatic) dramaturgy (2001, 24-27).

is still the performer, albeit a confusing one, and I am still the spectator, albeit a confused one. However, we do take over some qualities or characteristics of that other role and integrate this with our existing role.

This mutual encounter resembles Deleuze's and Guattari's account of the relationship between the orchid and the wasp, mentioned above. The orchid-wasp relationship consists of a mutual becoming in the encounter with the other, without losing oneself in the other, nor devouring the other (Stalpaert in Bleeker et al. 2009, 81). In *No Man's Land* this is an encounter in which performers and spectators enter into composition with the other, which produces situated functions: a *becoming-spectator of the performer*, and the *becoming-performer of the spectator*. The spectator does not become a performer, does not transform into a performer, but rather, enters into composition with those aspects and functions that we usually relate to performing in the theatre: to present oneself to another person, to step on a stage in order to do so. The spectator enters a zone of proximity with the performer, by living in symbiosis with these aspects. Likewise, the becoming-spectator of the performer signals a performer who looks and listens and thus cuts across the usual area of expertise of the spectator, on his own terms. The goal is not to arrive at new positions, but this negotiation itself. Both the performer and the spectator are engaged in *becoming-space* as well, as they enter into composition with space by means of way-finding, navigating, and by maintaining the coordinates of the theatre space, a process which will be further investigated in the coming chapters.

Setting up situations that focus on the (apparent) trivial produces a "poetics of encounter," to use a phrase by Nigel Thrift, "which both conveys a sense of life in which meaning shows itself only in the living, and which, belatedly, recognizes that the unsayable has genuine value and can be felt 'on our pulses'" (2008, 147). A last return to *No Man's Land*, place of memory: the station concourse. Recall for a moment the situation in which spectators and performers are waiting, each on either side of the gap. They are looking into each other's eyes, waiting for the encounter that is already taking place. A no man's land is a smooth space. The gap between spectators and performers too is a no man's land: it belongs to nobody in particular. It is a space without borders, open for any traveller in the station. But the gap is not empty, as it is already taken by the people present that pay attention to it. The gap defines performers as performers and spectators as spectators, and as well performers as becoming-spectators and spectators as becoming-performers. These elements together form the image of a gap that is both present and absent, a gap that both divides spectators and performers, and connects them. This is the after-image of *No Man's Land*, that will be active in the following chapters. A gap, on the verge of being traversed and dissolved, embodied and multiplied.

2 DISPLACEMENT

Urban moves

In this chapter I revisit *Call Cutta* (2005), produced by Rimini Protokoll, a German collective of performance artists, consisting of Helgard Haug, Daniel Wetzel and Stefan Kaegi. I will use this performance to trace the whereabouts of the stage in relation to the *theatre space*, *urban space*, and the domain of global economy. As mentioned in the introduction, *Call Cutta* connects a walking spectator in Berlin with a performer aka call-centre employee in Kolkata (Calcutta), India, with the help of a mobile phone. In a short interview, Rimini Protokoll's Daniel Wetzel remarks that "[s]ince we increasingly spend more time on our mobile phones, it is only natural that it becomes a place for theater".⁵⁰ In *Call Cutta*, the mobile phone not only becomes this place for theatre but functions as a primary deterritorialising force, as the phone engages the performer-spectator-space constellation into a dynamic process of ongoing and multifaceted movements. *Call Cutta* employs various modes of *displacement*, as a staging strategy: spectators are involved with physical displacement; performers are displaced from their usual location at centre-stage; the stage itself is subject to displacement: instead of the usual few meters that separates performers and spectators, the gap between them stretches over 6000 kilometers. The performance focuses on call-centre work, both as subject matter and as dramaturgical format, and charges real call-centre employees to carry out the task. *Call Cutta* thus operates through outsourcing labour, another form of displacement, which in this case can also be seen as a form of outsourcing performance.

Although *Call Cutta* deals with globalisation, the performance cuts across the local conditions of both performers and spectators and seeks to render perceptible how places are practiced and lived. Therefore, in this chapter I introduce Henri Lefebvre's notion of

50 Torunn Hansen-Tangen, "Mobile phones take to the stage" (2006), see PDS.

lived space, by which Lefebvre counters prevalent conceptions of space, where space is primarily theorised in terms of the perceived and the conceived. Through its focus on lived and situated practices, *Call Cutta*, as a theoretical object, serves to argue how nomadism in the theatre surfaces as a series of local operations, which produce the theatre space as one moves through it. Deleuze and Guattari affiliate the nomadic with localised actions and spaces, rather than the globalised. They point to the nomad's absolute and "nonlimited locality", adding that for the nomad, "the coupling of the place and the absolute is achieved not in a centered, oriented globalization or universalization, but in an infinite succession of local operations" (2004, 422). Lefebvre's spatial analysis and related theories are very helpful to render visible how these local operations involve processes of articulating particularity, as a countermovement to all too general or dualist conceptions of the global versus the local, or of space versus place.

As mentioned earlier, Lefebvre's work is involved with the study of the polyphonic rhythms of everyday life, in the context of expanding urbanisation, globalisation and commodification, analysing the impact of media and information technology, developments in housing and infrastructures and much more (Lefebvre 2004) ←1. At the basis of his rhythmanalysis, however, is his understanding of social reality as an inherently spatial practice. In *The Production of Space* (1974/1991), Lefebvre counters the abstractness of fast-growing urban, global and capitalist agglomerations by making room for the mundane realities of everyday life. Drawing on both Marx and Heidegger, he employs a triadic spatial analysis of how the perceived, the conceived and the lived are collaboratively involved in a process of production, that is, the production of social space (Elden 2004). *Perceived space* relates to the concrete reality of material and physical space; spaces that can be seen and touched and are mapped and measured. *Conceived space* conveys ways in which we think, imagine and conceptualise space. This abstract and mental space is the instrument of, amongst others, urban planners, designers, social engineers but also the domain of philosophy, law, and politics. *Lived space* points in particular to how spaces are actually used and experienced by different (groups of) people, how they modify over time and are molded by political and social developments, and get infused with symbolic meanings, embodied memories and situated histories. Of vital importance in Lefebvre's work is that these three spatial domains can be distinguished, but never separated; they are always produced through one another, which invites to explore their interrelations and creates trialectic pathways that transcend dualism (Lefebvre 1991; Soja 1996).

Although Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* stems from the 1970s and builds upon earlier work, his spatial analysis is I think quite relevant for contemporary performance.⁵¹ All the practices I discuss rely heavily on this specific understanding of lived space, in which spatial experience is linked to the production of social space. Such a social space

51 See also the references to Lefebvre by Joslin McKinney and Benedict Anderson in a special issue of *Performance Research: On Scenography* 18.3 (June 2013).

is put on the agenda in Rimini Protokoll's *Call Cutta*, which glimpses backstage at call-centre work and counters notions of floating, fluid globalism by firmly locating call-centre employees at the place where they work and live. Lived space surfaces as well in the time spent together in Dries Verhoeven's *No Man's Land* ←1, but also involves the corporeal memories through which we are tied to habitual places of passage, as in for instance Verhoeven's *Trail Tracking* →3. Lived space equally materialises in Deleuze's and Guattari's account of 12th century cathedrals, where collaborative experimentation and embodied knowledge are the backbones of the building process ←1.

A more contemporary urban example is parkour, in which physical displacement is used to counter the affordances of the built environment by personal expression of use. Parkour, also referred to as "l'art du déplacement" or the *art of displacement*, aims to traverse the city in a fluid and continuous manner, as quickly and effective as possible, through improvisation and the creative use of the obstacles and restraints one finds on the way (Kidder 2012; Ortuzar 2009; Fuggle 2008).⁵² John Urry uses the term "affordance" to explain how objects and environments invite, discourage and constrain human behaviour (2007, 50-51).⁵³ Against the perceived and conceived realm of the affordance, the practitioners of parkour, or *traceurs*, are 'jamming' their way through the city through improvisation, by climbing over fences, scaling walls, swinging at railings or walking on roofs. Parkour is an explicit example of how users and inhabitants perform the city. Instead of an abstract or functional space, the city emerges as a lived space, constructed in use. Both parkour and (ambulatory) performance in urban, public space point to the possibility of using spaces otherwise, and reveal the urban environment as always open to a different use than what is intended or programmed by design. "It's about a change in perception," says a *traceur* in a newspaper article, "We move our bodies, and learn to move our minds".⁵⁴ This displacement of perspective, which induces a sense of potentiality, is precisely the basis for Lefebvre's argument that lived space functions as a space of (alternative) representation, as I will elaborate on below. In line with this, this chapter seeks to connect physical displacement to perceptual displacement and provides, next to parkour, a number of *parallax* practices to sustain this argument. Parallax involves "the apparent displacement of an object caused by the actual movement of its observer" (Foster 1996, xii). I will rely in particular on Alan Read's use of the term, who focuses on

52 Parkour is based on the movement theories of Jacques Hébert, emerged in 1990s France as an underground movement, then spread rapidly all over Europe and across the Atlantic, distributed by word of mouth but above all through social media (Kidder 2012, 233; Fuggle 2008).

53 These affordances are the performatives of designed environment, so to say; a path for instance invites walking, a (sunny) beach encourages sunbathing, digital touch screens in museums facilitate haptic interfacing and so on (2007, 50-51).

54 "The art of displacement: Parkour in the physical and the abstract" in *The Daily* (University of Washington), February 21, 2008. <http://dailyuw.com/2008/2/21/art-displacement-parkour-physical-and-abstract/>.

the appearance of the minimal difference within an object of perception, rather than an oppositional point of view, when taking a slightly different perspective (Read 2008, 17).

Similar to my discussion of the installation ←1, the comparison with parkour does not seek to argue that in the theatre, exactly the same processes are at work. Instead, both the installation and parkour are parallax practices, which invite a slightly different perspective on the object of enquiry, in order to point out specific characteristics or qualities. Whereas the installation pivots around the relationship between the viewer and the artwork, in parkour, (single) practitioners explore alternative modes of engagement with urban space. Parkour foregrounds improvisation, whereas *Call Cutta* stages processes of improvisation. Yet they both deal with displacement as a strategy of reimagining the city as a space where qualitative difference is produced and lived, through performance. Performance scholar Jimena Ortuzar critically describes parkour as a “kinetic utopia” which repeats the (modern) myths of free mobility and the transcendence of (physical) restraints but in that quest is also utterly unfree. In order to underline that argument, she points to parkour’s need for continuous movement, movements that seems to express a constant state of emergency – which leads her to inquire what is actually the rush? (2009, 60). Indeed, let us slow down. Let’s walk.

The city as stage

In *Call Cutta*, a single spectator embarks upon a journey by foot through Berlin’s Kreuzberg district, guided by a call-centre employee who is based in Kolkata, India. After purchasing a ticket at the HAU Theatre (Hebbel Am Ufer) in Berlin, the spectator is handed over a mobile phone and instead of invited into the theatre, is asked to wait outside. Within a few moments, the phone rings and after a short mutual introduction, the spectator sets off on a tour that lasts for about one hour. With the aide of the cell phone, the employee navigates the spectator through nearly-abandoned parking lots, shopping malls, play areas and courtyards adjacent to dreary housing blocks. *Call Cutta* had an “off-shoot of afterlives” (Bastajian 2008), a recurring theme in the many reviews and scholarly essays is the ambivalent, but thoroughly intriguing awareness that even though the call-centre employee is situated thousands of kilometers away, simultaneously one expects to see the employee behind the next corner. The dialogue emphasises distance, whereas the intimacy of the voice produces an effect of presence.

Initially, the call-centre employees behave like average call-centre workers, as they introduce themselves by a Western name and in a flawless Western accent. But it doesn’t take long before the employees reveal their true names and start disclosing information about working and weather conditions in India. Through *Call Cutta* Rimini Protokoll investigates the phenomenon of outsourcing. In the global economy that characterises advanced capitalism, tele-services are often transferred to low-wage countries. When calling a helpdesk-service or taking out an insurance policy, one often does not realise that this service may be carried out on another continent. The distance is concealed through the

use of Western names, flawless accents – and telephones of course! Call-centre employees in India, for instance, often work at night, to meet Western timetables.⁵⁵ In an interview, Rimini Protokoll's Daniel Wetzel describes the collective's surprise when discovering the luxury glass buildings of Salt Lake City, the city's business district at the outskirts of Kolkata: "It was a total contrast to everything else in Calcutta [...] It was also surreal. Suddenly the West with its money and capitalism was here and the people sitting in these buildings were pretending to be a part of it – it provided the perfect stage setting".⁵⁶ Something, a force or intensity, that comes from the outside and suddenly is there...

Contrary to the style of reporting in the previous chapter, this time I will use an over-the-shoulder-perspective, to demonstrate that the addressing of the individual spectator does not necessarily require a first-person perspective to reflect on it. I will rely in particular on the essays by Heiner Goebbels (2007) and Susan Leigh Foster (2008), occasionally supplemented by my personal account of the box-version of this performance, attended in Brussels in 2008.⁵⁷ *Call Cutta* is composed as a loosely scripted telephone conversation, which starts off with the revealing of true names. And so it happens that Heiner Goebbels walks with Priyanka, who initially introduced herself as Prudence, and Susan Foster finds herself in the company of Aisha. Goebbels reports of a multifaceted dialogue, that apart from the very precise instructions through which Priyanka maneuvers him through the streets, meanders from political-historical relationships between India and Germany, to an exchange of opinions regarding the interference of the public and the private, to a description of the actual working conditions in the call-centre. When Susan Foster enters a vacant area, Aisha asks her to look for some pictures attached to a tree. These pictures show Aisha's great uncle, so she is told, who came to Berlin during World War II to seek assistance for setting up an Indian liberation army. The history of colonial India's struggle for independence is tagged onto various objects, hidden in dustbins or under park benches. Aisha leads Susan across abandoned train tracks and a loading dock, explaining how these sites were used to transport armaments to the various war fronts, during World War II. The archeological remains, the intimacy of the remote voice and Aisha's "uncanny connection to Hitler" create a "new cybernetic world, one that requires new kinds of skills to navigate" (2008, 171).

The "new cybernetic world" Foster refers to, is the product of various patterns of de- and reterritorialisation, in which a remote-controlled layer is placed over the urban environment and turns the city into a stage. Similar to *No Man's Land*, and parkour, the perfor-

55 This phenomenon is referred to as translocality, by Arjun Appadurai (in Whybrow 2010, 253).

56 Sonia Phalnikar, "Giving globalization a coy voice" (2005), see PDS.

57 After the ambulatory version of 2005, Rimini Protokoll made a box version, with stationary spectators. *Call Cutta in a Box* has been staged in a large number of countries and on international festivals, between 2006-2012. Rimini Protokoll motivates the choice for the box version as a concentration on the performer-spectator interaction (Van Lindt 2008, see PDS), but undoubtedly, and in line with the dramaturgical format, the box version is also an easier export product.

mance appropriates the territory of urban space, without occupying it completely. Urban space too reterritorialises on the theatre as the streets and lots and vacancies define the scenography and the *mise-en-scène*. And yet, the theatre and the urban space are separated by an invisible membrane, that produces a minimal difference between staged and daily reality. Performance scholar Alan Read describes this perceptual displacement caused by the theatrical frame as the “minimal parallax condition”: the process of staging itself installs a “stage rhetoric” which distinguishes the stage from daily life (2008, 16). Read reminds us that this parallax condition “has been the lot of theatrical art since the inception of the relationship between orchestra and horizon, between wagon and street, and between proscenium and auditorium” (*ibid.*). Such rhetoric, however, is also at work in *Call Cutta*. Except, this performance is almost invisible, hardly distinguishable from daily reality. Most of the passers-by probably will not even have noticed that it took place. This situation actually comes even closer to how Read intends to use the term parallax. In *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement*, he refers to the appearance of the *minimal* difference within an object of perception, rather than a diametrically opposed one, when looking at an object from a slightly different point of view (2008, 17). I will return to Read below, I have evoked his observations here to further enquire into this minimal stage rhetoric.

Because mobile phone theatre is primarily noted by the ones engaged in it, such performances can be characterised as a form of “secret theatre” (Balme in Chapple/ Kattenbelt 2006, 118). This notion of a secret theatre helps to expose the slight change of perspective caused by a type of theatre that nests within a city, rendering the urban environment into urban *scenery*. In an essay on audio performances, Christopher Balme uses the term, taken from Shuhei Hosakawa’s essay “The Walkman Effect” (1984). Balme argues that ambulatory spectators who listen to an audio track come quite close to Hosakawa’s walkman users. Mobile audio devices produce a secret theatre, as spectators are shielded from the (urban) environment, traversing the city with an altered perception. The isolated listener is corporally affected by an acoustic, invisible source, which causes (slight) changes in pace and behaviour. The soundscape makes the walk “more poetic and more dramatic” in Hosakawa’s words, and turns all the passers-by into figures on a theatre stage (2006, 119). Goebbels gives a similar account in relation to *Call Cutta*, when he reports of an increased corporeal awareness, induced by the mobile phone and observes how his walking, listening, seeing, occasionally singing body produces an experience of being at the centre of an acoustic envelope (2007, 122).⁵⁸

This secret theatre is a portal to both a vertical and a horizontal genealogy of urban displacement. Ambulatory performances like *Call Cutta* can be regarded as follow-ups of Baudelaire’s *flâneur* and as contemporaries of pervasive games. In *The Arcades Project* (1982/1999), Walter Benjamin describes the *flâneur* as someone who wanders around in the city with no other goal than to observe, without being noticed himself. Drawn by

58 Goebbels draws on Gernot Boehme’s theory of acoustic atmospheres (2007, 122).

the sounds and the scents of 19th century Paris, the department stores in the arcades, attractive women and particular the unknown behind the next corner, the flâneur loses himself in the crowd, while at the same time he observes and thus distances himself from the crowd. The crowd functions as a veil from behind which the city appears; a city that by then sparkles with commercial, technological and artistic innovations which beckons the flâneur to keep dwelling, and which provides the stage upon which he entertains his daydreams (Benjamin 1999, 416-424).⁵⁹ Due to the experience of immersion and intoxication, Baudelaire's flâneur seems to be engrossed into a *phantasmagoria*. The phantasmagoria is often regarded as a pre-cinematic invention, as it suggests an encapsulating environment that offers distraction through optical illusion (Buck-Morss 1992). Benjamin however uses the term for environments that establish a sense of interiority, or an experience of being indoors.⁶⁰ As such, flânerie is as good a forerunner of the invisible, secret theatre that is at work in *Call Cutta*, where passers-by do not know that they figure on a theatre stage. Not only ambulatory performances create secret theatres; I had a similar experience in the box-version, which took place in an abandoned office building. When closing the door of the office after my one-hour talk with Souptick Chakraborty, I realised that nobody would come to know what I had been doing in that particular hour. I found this to be peculiar, because I spend lots of hours working on my laptop, or elsewhere, without someone knowing what I actually did during that time and without me wondering what others think I am doing.

A contemporary example of a parallax condition can be found in pervasive games. Pervasive games, and related forms such as "mixed reality" or "augmented reality" games, place an extra, virtual layer on the urban fabric of a city, often by means of mobile, digital technology, such as smartphones and applications that facilitate navigation, virtual mapping, geotagging and so on (Verhoeff 2012, 157-163; Benford/Giannachi 2011; De Souza e Silva/Sutko 2009). This layer pervades or augments – deterritorialises – daily reality. Game theorist Markus Montola defines a pervasive game as a game that "has one or more salient features that expand the contractual magic circle of play socially, spatially or temporally" (2012, 121). This "contractual magic circle" has many similarities with the (dramatic) stage, further demonstrated in relation to Signa's *The Ruby Town Oracle* →5. Pervasive games, similar to *Call Cutta's* theatre space, often do not have clear physical or geographic boundaries; the gaming area is truly a smooth game board that is on the move. Both pervasive games and ambulatory performances deterritorialise the urban space, as they unfold with-

59 Susan Bennett subtly points out that a history of female flâneuses would reveal an entirely different story, in which prostitutes and women's lack of access to solitary wandering would enter the stage (2008, 79).

60 Flânerie, marveling at technological inventions or luxury goods; daydreaming; looking at nature/landscape paintings in diaramas and panoramas; these were all strategies of shielding oneself from the negative side-effects of industrial innovation: physically dangerous labour and the sense of alienation (Buck-Morss 1992; Benjamin 1935/1968, 82).

in the city, but follow a different set of rules than that which organises regular urban traffic. Both reterritorialise on the urban space, as – keeping the flâneur in mind – life in the city becomes perceptible as (always) staged, and as engaged with the performance of place. All the parallax practices discussed in this chapter deal with the performance of place and therefore with the production of space, an argument I will return to below.

Theatre goes global

Similar to some pervasive games, *Call Cutta* is organised through remote control: spectators are navigated through Berlin by a performer who resides on the other end of the world. In comparison to a performance like *No Man's Land*, the most remarkable difference is, of course, that in *Call Cutta*, the stage and the theatre space have gone global. The stage is shattered to pieces; the theatre space is deterritorialised by means of mobile technology and redistributed over the globe. The stage resurfaces on several joint locations: Berlin, Kolkata, and a Hertzian space in-between, which demonstrates the tight bond between urban and global space that marks contemporary urbanism. *Call Cutta* thus captures the code of the particular time-space reconfigurations that mark a globalised world, where “synchronization substitutes the unity of place, where interconnections supersede the unity of time” (Weber in Van Eikels 2011, 9). Performance scholar Van Eikels argues that these reconfigurations increasingly mark 21st century theatre as well, adding that place and time do not become indeterminate or blurry, instead are determined differently.

This approach seems a response to earlier theories on globalisation, where space and time were seen as liquid or even void categories. Globalisation was perceived as a process in which the world simultaneously seemed to be shrinking and expanding, in increasing degrees over the 20th century, due to the accumulation and intensified use of various mobility systems. Firstly, shrinking, due to new technologies that seemed to bring places closer together and, secondly, expanding, as the area in which one is able to move was rapidly enlarged. This process is often expressed in terms of an increasing space and time compression (Cresswell 2002; Urry 2007).⁶¹ John Urry notes, in *Mobilities*, that contemporary mobility systems do not so much engage with physical or vehicular mobility, or the above mentioned space and time compression, but instead, counter distance or distinct location with tactics of simultaneity, co-presence, or networked connectivity (cf. Verhoeff 2012).

61 This experience of placelessness is exemplified by qualifications such as (in) *Liquid Times*, a rather somber sociological analysis of current state of affairs (Bauman 2007), floating worlds (Gergen 2003), non-places (Augé 1992/1995), and also informs Cresswell's critique on “nomadist metaphysics” (2002 ←1); all in different ways refer to an infinite, indistinct flow of people, goods and information, which produces an alienating abstraction.

Co-presence and connectivity are to a large extent established through omnipresent (wireless and mobile) communication technologies, in particular mobile phones (De Vries 2012).⁶²

Co-presence and connectivity are precisely the registers explored and exploited in *Call Cutta*. One of the defining characteristics of theatre is the notion of the live performance, which is established amongst others through the simultaneous presence of performers and spectators in the same room. *Call Cutta* radically rethinks this convention, or, rather, the performance appropriates the type of networked connectivity and co-presence that marks contemporary globalisation. *Call Cutta* re-articulates the simultaneous co-presence of performers and spectators by applying the logics of wireless connectivity, established by the mobile phone. This pattern of reterritorialisation puts forward the question of what 'the same room' exactly entails, within the context of globalism. Instead of regarding the stage as shattered to pieces, we could also argue that our existence in a globalised world implies that we are always in a shared space – which gives a rather new flavour to Shakespeare's famous dictum that *all the world is a stage*. *Call Cutta* thus seems an emblem of contemporary society, as it incorporates various mobility systems, organises displacement through digital technology and makes the stage go global. Throughout the tour however, the local specificities on both ends of the lines are the engine of the performance. Distance is the omnipresent given and there is an ongoing exchange of the differences between the two locations. Both performers and spectators invest in making them known to the other and they render themselves present through the ongoing negotiation of distance and difference. *Call Cutta's* local perspectives slice through a globalised world and render abstract globalism and related assumptions of universality back to the scale of lived space.

The production of space

Call Cutta counters abstract globalism by exposing the location of call-centre employees' work and private lives, juxtaposing this lived space with that of the spectators. Above I shortly introduced Henri Lefebvre's concept of lived space. I value his concept because Lefebvre not only links lived space to spatial experience but he also connects this experience to the social conditions of a changing lifeworld. In this respect, Lefebvre shares an agenda with *Call Cutta*. In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre weaves together a wide range of observations to show how social space is produced through everyday practice and lived experience, how it is shaped and molded by political processes and global economies, and is socially constructed and transformed by use. Social practice does not only take place within a space, but produces space itself.

62 In *Tantalisingly Close* (2012), De Vries argues that mobile phones are also used, developed and commercially exploited within the *myths* of connectivity, social fluidity and instant access to omnipresent information.

In *Understanding Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible* (2004), Stuart Elden meticulously discusses the influence of both Marx and Heidegger in Lefebvre's work. He points out how Lefebvre uses Marx' analysis of the production of economic forces to enquire into the politics of spatial relations, shifting the attention from the production of things *in* space towards the production *of* (social) space itself. Production does not only refer to the creation or making of things, but as well to the production of society, of knowledge, of institutions, and so forth. Through Heidegger, Lefebvre contends that technological and scientific developments have created a reductive world view in which space is primarily understood in a geometrical, calculated and mathematical sense. Consequently, the world is regarded "as a substance which can be ordered, planned and worked upon - instead of worked with" (Elden 2004, 189). Heidegger uses the concept of *dwelling* to suggest a way of inhabiting the world as a matter of concern, in a lived, experienced manner. Both his terms *dwelling* and *habiter* – approached as verbs, indicating an activity or temporal situation rather than a fixed or permanent state (ibid., 190) – resonate in Lefebvre's approach to lived space, yet Elden suggests that Lefebvre's "pluralist Marxism" much more explicitly addresses the connections between politics and space, in relation to modern capitalism (189).

These influences join forces in Lefebvre's severe critique of abstract space – by which he implies the ultimate dominance of conceived or mental space – which according to Lefebvre is the result of technological acceleration, economic expansion and increasing rationalisation and bureaucracy. Abstract space "transports the body outside of itself in a paradoxical kind of alienation," and instead foregrounds "the primacy of the written word, of 'plans', of the visual realm, [...] analytic intellect [...], 'pure' knowledge; and the discourse of power" (Lefebvre 1991, 308). One of Lefebvre's many concerns is to render perceptible how everyday life is consumed and exhausted by neoliberal capitalism, and lived time has vanished from social space (1991, 95-96). *Call Cutta*, similar to *No Man's Land*, is in my view a performance that renders back this lived time, by providing performers and spectators with an opportunity to explore social space, in this case, through actual conversation. *Call Cutta* turns globalisation into a rather concrete phenomenon, and, taking Goebbels' and Foster's occasional impressions of disorientation into account, provides the opportunity to physically experience the space-time reconfigurations that are brought about by a globalised world.

In *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996), cultural geographer Edward Soja reframes and rephrases Lefebvre's spatial analysis in relation to contemporary human geography, feminist theory and Foucault's heterotopology. He coins the terms Firstspace, Secondspace, and Thirdspace – respectively connoting perceived, conceived, and lived space – to introduce a methodology of spatial thinking, a "critical thirding-as-Othering" (1996, 10). I prefer Lefebvre's terms and rhizomatic approach, however, Soja provides a clear insight into how Lefebvre's triple dialectics, or trialectics, does not divide in parts, but instead transcends dualism by rejecting an "either/or" mode of thinking, in favour of a "both/and also" way of reasoning (7-13; cf.

Elden 2004, 32-33). Lived space both encompasses and also exceeds perceived reality and the mental realm of the conceived; it involves real-and-imagined space and produces a radical openness that disturbs and defies dominant readings of space, and allows for alternative epistemologies (Soja 1996, 81; Elden 2004, 190).⁶³ Such a 'both/and also' logic surfaces for instance in parkour, which does not reject the material or conceptualised urban environment, but surpasses these realms to explore other ways of using a city. A fence is still a fence, *both* a physical object and a token of propriety, but can *also* be used as a jumping board. I call upon parkour to serve as a parallax practice for a second time, now to expose how *Call Cutta* and other ambulatory performances are engaged in the production of theatre space.

Lefebvre was interested in the *production* of space, a production that is grounded in use. Similarly, parkour is based in use and produces (alternative) urban space. Although Lefebvre does not approach production in terms of performance, parkour exposes the connection between the terms, as this practice creates and thus performs the city. Taking a wider view, this approach to production as a creative practice now has become widely accepted, recognisable in the performative turn in many (spatial) disciplines, for instance in architecture. Performative architecture does not only pertain to the performance of buildings, but also to the production of space, through performance. In a Lefebvrian mindset, architect Bernard Tschumi argues that "there is no architecture without everyday life, movement and action" (Tschumi 1996, 23) →5. Parkour's moves precisely touch upon this intersection; they are compositions in and of lived space. Similar to Ian Borden's approach to skateboarding, parkour may be regarded as a form of performative architecture (cf. Kidder 2012, 237; Spurr 2007, 58). Likewise, ambulatory performance produces ephemeral theatre spaces, spaces that are created in and through movement.

Parallax to parkour, and similar to *No Man's Land*, *Call Cutta* challenges the convention that a theatre space has clearly demarcated boundaries and is situated at a fixed spot or location. The theatre space instead follows relays – points that are reached in order to be left behind. This space is produced along the way. The theatre space takes a place, and it takes place: it no longer *is*, but takes place. The theatre space becomes a *navigational space* →3, a succession of local operations. Performer and spectators together maintain the coordinates of this procedural theatre space. When taking the Heiner-Pryanka and Susan-Aisha vortexes into account, two fluid axes which form but a fraction of the multiple grids of *Call Cutta's* theatre space, we can see a continuously morphing movement-space, a performative architecture which is built on the gestures, displacements and changing viewpoints of those who are involved in the act of mainte-

63 Soja includes a very inspiring and highly recommended discussion of the radical openness in the work of black feminist bell hooks, whose politics of location →3 involves the strategy of *choosing marginality* in order to deterritorialise the centre and create "a new location from which to articulate our sense of the world" (Soja 1996, 105).

nance. An assemblage of mobile and talking bodies and navigational spaces, that cuts across commercial contracts, political pathways, Hertzian space, embodied coordinates, and situated histories.

Performing locality

Through its emphasis on distance and local differences, *Call Cutta* ties in with a larger stream of practices and theories that are in favour of “getting back to place” (Cresswell 2002, 18) with the acknowledgement that global space is always active in those local places. The focus on place and location in both practice and theory pays tribute to an increased awareness of the complexity of place – already observed by Lefebvre – and of the interconnectedness of social and political practice, and of memory, history and identity, within a world in motion (Cresswell/Merriman 2011; Hill/Paris 2009; Margaroni/Yianapoulou 2006; McAuley 2006; Massey 2005).⁶⁴ This awareness asks for re-evaluation of, and a non-dualistic approach to place. This is also the central argument in “Theorizing Place” (2002), in which geographer Tim Cresswell traces a history of thought in spatial theory, in which place has been tied to fixity, while space was clothed in fluidity. Place has come to be associated with a specific location, with a distinctive identity and history, whereas space was alternatively celebrated and rejected as unlimited, abstract, and anonymous (cf. Massey 2005; Augé 1995). Such a distinction also informs Michel de Certeau’s approach to place and space, in his often quoted essay “Spatial Stories” in *The Practices of Everyday Life* (1984). In this essay, De Certeau compares places and spaces to the distinction between *langue* and *parole* in linguistics. Space is like the word spoken (*parole*) and involves the actual use of a system (*langue*). Places are defined by and fixed on particular locations; they exist next to each other and cannot overlap. Space on the other hand, as the practice of place, can take infinite forms. Place is location, whereas space is operation (1984, 117).

In line with Cresswell, and with Lefebvre’s lived space in mind, I argue that both place and space are (always) practiced and performed (cf. Cresswell 2002, 23-24). Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai advocates a similar understanding in relation to the concept of location. He uses the term *locality* to counter prevalent (anthropologic) conceptions in the 1990s, where the local was often seen as a simple given and portrayed as an “inert canvas upon which the global and other forces produce changes” (in Whybrow 2010, 249-250). Such a canvas also seems to sustain De Certeau’s approach to place. Instead, locality envisions the local as a product of creation and of the imagination. For Appadurai,

64 Gay McAuley describes this trend as a “placial turn” in performance and critical theory (2006, 16); John Urry locates co-presence at the intersection of both location and relation (2007, 178); Nanna Verhoeff investigates “the paradoxical site-specificity of non-places in non-times” (2012, 102); Eric Gordon describes the “network-locality” of location-based urban games (in De Souza e Silva / Sutko 2009, 23); terms preceded by Paul Virilio’s “glocalism” (Wiens in Bay-Cheng et al. 2010, 98).

locality is not so much a spatial structure but a work of the imagination, a *technology* for the production of a “structure of feeling” through which people are able to relate to the contradictory and circulatory flows that mark our contemporary cities (ibid., 252-253). Imagination is a social practice:

... the imagination [is] something more than a kind of individual faculty, and something other than a mechanism for escaping the real. It’s actually a collective tool for the transformation of the real, for the creation of multiple horizons of possibility.

The production of locality is as much a work of the imagination as a work of material social construction (250).

Much in line with Lefebvre, in my view, Appadurai argues that people need everydayness; they live through attachments, intimacies and daily routines. People “simply cannot work with entirely abstract, or virtual, or mediated [...] communities” (251). People do not necessarily need face-to-face experiences but they need to be able to relate to local and global situations in a “material, embodied, sensory manner”; rather than roots, people need to be able to link with the everyday, which necessitates “some spatialized local” (ibid.).⁶⁵ Parkour is a modest example of Appadurai’s locality-as-technology, where the city never ceases to be a horizon of possibility and gets charged with embodied relations. Appadurai sees the local and global as intertwined, circulatory flows (252-253). This comes close to the “global sense of place” as described by feminist geographer Doreen Massey, who sees place as a meeting ground or a node in a network of social, economic, political and cultural relations (1994; 2005, 192). Place is always much more than what we can directly perceive or conceive. She emphasises that “a larger [pro]portion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself” (1994, 154). Place therefore is not the other, or the outside of global space. Instead place is precisely defined “through the particularity of linkage to that ‘outside’ which is therefore itself part of what constitutes the place” (ibid., 155).

This global sense of place is actively at work in *Call Cutta*. *Call Cutta* brings place to the call-centre employees, in the full awareness of a global sense of place, as Kolkata becomes a force of energy in Berlin, and vice versa. This invites the spectator in Berlin to perceive the city as a network of both Western and non-Western spatial operations – or to give up the notion of ‘the West’ altogether. Both performers and spectators are engaged in a process of performing locality, as they are involved in the creation of “structures of feeling” (Appadurai), which reverberates in the many rhythms of *Call Cutta*. When Heiner Goebels crosses the Möckernstrasse in Berlin, Priyanka imitates the multiple sounds, noises

65 Appadurai here indirectly addresses the darker side of locality as well, that is, increasing nationalism and xenophobia (cf. McAuley 2006, 16-23; Massey 2005) which also forms the backstage of *No Man’s Land* ←1.

and voices she would hear when crossing a street in Kolkata (2007, 122). Goebbels, who is both a scholar and an internationally renowned director of music theatre, discovers that they share knowledge of the same Indian song, a song that he used for one of his operas. Despite the time lapse they sing together, while passers-by in Berlin are puzzled with this man who suddenly starts to sing (119, 129). Goebbels thoroughly enjoys being 'on the road', as he finds his way through unknown parts of the town and becomes aware of a "Lust des Findens" (121).

Susan Foster describes a somewhat different experience. After an hour-long walk, being led through busy streets, across empty parking lots, past unkempt bushes, tattered housing projects, multi-story flats, across a bridge, into a shopping mall and onto the street again, she feels entirely disorientated and displaced. The reassuring presence of another participant whose trajectory more or less matched hers, is also gone. Probably the most uncomfortable moment occurs when Foster enters a grungy courtyard and stumbles upon a picnic of, based on the looks of their dress, Turkish tenements. She feels an intruder who probably will be perceived as privileged and as a voyeur, without her being in control of her actions (2008, 172). Towards the end of the tour, when Goebbels stands in front of a street mirror, Priyanka describes his looks in detail, to his discomfort. Not because the description is not accurate enough but because he doesn't know the location of this viewpoint. The script then proceeds to actual visual encounter. Susan Foster enters a shopping mall and discovers the face of Aisha waving to her, from a screen that is displayed in the window of a multimedia store. She is invited to take a picture of herself, to complete the visual exchange. She is taken back to the theatre by bus, while others report on entering the HAU at the rear end, which is also quite telling, dramaturgically, as *Call Cutta* radically rethinks the conditions of theatre. These reports show how locality each time involves and emerges from a different performance, dependent on the societal and material flows that distinguish this co-creative event from the next encounter, to the next and to the next.

Navigating representation

Performing locality seems close to how Michel de Certeau conceived of spatial practices as a way of writing the city, in which walkers' trajectories become spatial stories, expressive of individual use and singular style, in an unlimited diversity. In his often-quoted essay "Walking in the City," in *The Practices of Everyday Life* (1984), De Certeau pits the infinite trajectories of the walker on the street below against the city as representation, seen from above – in De Certeau's case, the city seen from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center.⁶⁶ For De Certeau, the bird's eye view produces the city as an image or as a map to be read, an omniscient depiction that privileges a single, stable point of view (1984, 92-93). *Call Cutta* nuances and complicates De Certeau's analysis in an interesting way. By replacing the bird's

66 The example does not go without irony of course, after 9-11, and is also indicative of the changeability of place (cf. Cresswell 2002, 24-25).

eye view with a geographically remote and culturally different point of view, Rimini Protokoll produces multiple, fractured and parallax views on the city, exemplified in the experiences of ambiguity and disorientation in both Foster's and Goebbels' accounts. For De Certeau, spatial practice rebels against the regime of the visible, the panoptic, the reproduction and the representational. He argues that the spatial stories of everyday life remain "below the threshold of visibility," adhere to an "opaque and blind mobility" and make use of spaces that cannot be seen or known (1984, 93). I argue, instead, that these spatial practices can be regarded as spatial representations and I revisit Lefebvre to flesh out this argument.

Lefebvre's main project was to investigate, in particular, representation itself, because he acknowledges that representations are internal to lived, social space (Soja 1996, 34). Lefebvre's triad of perceived, conceived and lived space is actually a stepping stone to another, more profound and politically informed triad, concerned with rethinking our understanding of social space, in which he distinguishes between spatial practice, representations of spaces and spaces of representation (Lefebvre 1991, 38-39). *Spatial practice* relates to perceived space and involves material, socially produced space, where space is both a product and a mediator for behaviour. It concerns empirical space as it takes physical form, the spaces that we use and inhabit, providing certain cohesiveness to daily life. *Representations of space* are the products of conceived space, space as it is represented in, for instance, urban design, certain paintings and literature, philosophy, city planning or law. Conceptualised space tends towards the verbal and the intellectual, it is the space of "savoir (knowledge) and logic" (Elden 2004, 187). It has been, and to a large extent still is the dominant space in society (ibid.; Lefebvre 1991, 39). Edward Soja describes these representations of space as "epistemological storehouses," strongly involved with control, regulation, power, ideology and surveillance (1996, 67). *Spaces of representation* encompass both perceived and conceived space but also transcend these spaces by foregrounding lived space.⁶⁷ It is "the space of *connaissance* (less formal or more local forms of knowledge)" (Elden 2004, 187). Lefebvre does not explicitly define this latter realm, apart from and because of the unknowability of its potential. Spaces of representation involve the territories of imagination that disturb or interrupt dominant modes of representation. Lefebvre calls upon the arts, and "certainly theatre" (Soja 1996, 48), in order to restore homogenised space to ambiguity, to make room for diverting corporealities, to render the nonverbal and the rhythms of everyday life a counterforce against the overstimulation of texts, writing, the readable and the visible (Lefebvre 1991, 391).⁶⁸

67 This latter category, *spaces of representation*, has also been translated as *representational space* (Lefebvre 1991, Elden 2004). I follow Soja's translation (1996), as it more explicitly addresses the potentiality of the term in my view, and in order to avoid too close associations with (Lehmann's) dramatic, representational theatre.

68 Despite his non-dualistic approach, Lefebvre tends to connect the theatre to the nonverbal, and the corporeal to the pre-intellectual. Although some of Lefebvre's ideas seem more actual than ever, his view on theatre requires an update, to which this study seeks to contribute.

Soja remarks that these three realms each correspond to a particular type of epistemology. Lingering on Soja's terms for a moment: Firstspace epistemology tends to fixate on the material forms of things in space, often accompanied by claims of objectivity, pretending to describe 'how things are'. This approach has often been criticised as positivist and determinist. Secondspace epistemology on the other hand places the 'true' knowledge of space in the mind, assuming that spatial knowledge is primarily produced through discourse, interpretation, or conceptualisation (Soja 1996, 79). In both these modes of knowledge production, the experience of space is removed and replaced with scientific calculation or abstract thought. Thirdspace epistemology is not based on a set of distinguishable operations. The knowledge inherent to lived space can only be neared, not fully grasped, "through an endless series of theoretical and practical approximations, a critical and inquisitive nomadism" (82), which "builds cumulatively on earlier approximations, producing a certain practical continuity of knowledge production that is an antidote to the hyperrelativism and 'anything goes' philosophy often associated with such radical epistemological openness" (61).

Such approximations describe as well my way of working with the concept of nomadic theatre, and next, bring Deleuze and Guattari's 12th century cathedrals back in mind ←1. Although the radical openness of Lefebvre's lived space to a certain extent ties in with Deleuze's nomadology, their theoretical trajectories show remarkable differences as well. Both Deleuze and Lefebvre approach space in terms of open, rhizomatic networks, and Deleuze's "vibrations, rotations, whirlings, gravitations, dances or leaps" through which he characterises Nietzsche's theatre of philosophy, match well Lefebvre's understanding of rhythms. They both have their roots in the May '68 protests and their work – and that of many theorists referred to in this thesis – is representative of a spatial consciousness in the aftermath of those events (Conley 2003).⁶⁹ Nevertheless, in the books that I consulted, cross-references are sparse.⁷⁰ It could be said, perhaps, that they would not have been the best of friends. Both Deleuze's and Lefebvre's work is grounded in the idea of production, but for Deleuze, this concerns the creation of thought, whereas Lefebvre rejects abstractness and consequently connects production to social practice. The most obvious dissonance lies in their approach to representation. Deleuze's work is thoroughly anti-representational ←1, whereas Lefebvre describes his own work as metaphilosophy, which "differs from philosophy most notably in its acceptance of the world of representations. It analyzes representations as such, as internal to their world, and from this analysis comes the critique of representations" (Lefebvre in Soja 1996, 34). It must

69 Both Lefebvre and Deleuze deploy a de-hierarchised mode of thinking; they approach life and events in its 'totality' and firmly reject strategies of striation or separation (Conley 2003).

70 Next to Deleuze and Lefebvre, I rely in particular on Stuart Elden here, who has studied both Lefebvre as well as (Deleuzian) theories on territories and (de)territorialisation. See Elden (2004; 2006) and his introduction to Lefebvre (2004).

be acknowledged that Lefebvre is not very explicit on how exactly he defines the (lived) space of representation. Through his emphasis on lived space, as *another* category next to the perceived and the conceived, Lefebvre primarily seems to question the conditions of representation itself and investigates what is actually being represented, or can be represented, and what remains unseen. As such, his approach closely ties in with Jacques Rancière's "distribution of the sensible", mentioned in the introduction. Lived space then can be regarded as a space that allows for the appropriation of representation – a strategy that is also at work in *Call Cutta*, as I will elaborate below. Therefore I take some distance from Deleuze's anti-representational image of thought, to account for the fact that theatre always deals with representation (cf. Bleeker 2008) ←1.

To illustrate the representational potential of lived space, I shortly discuss the pervasive game *Rider Spoke* (2007), by the British company Blast Theory.⁷¹ In this game, participants are sent out on the street, alone at night, on a bike with a handheld computer mounted on the handlebars, which is connected to a headset with a microphone. The biker is asked to look for a hiding place, a place where one feels at ease; the computer functions as a positioning system, signaling to the rider any hiding place nearby. Having entered the hiding place, the device's screen delivers a personal question. The participant records an answer onto the device and then the computer tags this data onto that particular location. Now the biker can continue the journey and start looking for geotags that signal the hiding places of other participants. On these specific locations, the recordings and stories of other participants are revealed. The isolation of the biker, separated from the daily routine, induces an increased self-awareness, which gradually expands to the awareness of the presence of other participants, with whom one shares secrets and stories. This produces a sense of connectivity, in spite of not being present in the same room and not sharing the same timeframe. Gradually, the city becomes a depository of voices, an archive of identities coinciding with space. *Rider Spoke* produces an 'other' city, a newly imagined and embodied city, which offers a re-acquaintance with a (usually) well-known environment. *Rider Spoke* thus transforms and performs the city through lived experience, and uses both the realm of the perceived and the conceived to explore alternative forms of representation.

In an interview, Blast Theory's Matt Adams explains how the company seeks to explore the "ethos of social interconnectedness in the face of often quite commercial technologies that have no real interest in the ethos that they create" (in De Souza e Silva / Sutko 2009, 77). *Rider Spoke* thus equally probes the qualities of (Lefebvre's) lived space:

Given the rise of more and more participatory spaces, particularly online [...] some of the questions we've been asking ourselves is, 'who is able to speak in those spaces?' and more importantly, 'what is able to be said in those spaces?' [...] 'what kind of modes of address do they allow?' (ibid., 72).

71 Part of the description is based on Groot Nibbelink/Merx in Bay-Cheng et al. (2010, 218-229).

Such questions point to a Rancièrian mindset, in which the redistribution of the sensible does not only pertain to the game itself, but also to social reality. In *Rider Spoke*, the assemblage of bikers, bikes, technology and spaces creates a hybrid social space, a product of intertwined locations and relations, through which both the game and the city materialise in a process of co-creation and become perceptible as (Appadurai's) work of the imagination: *Rider Spoke* produces "structures of feeling" through which participants can relate to the city in an embodied and sensory manner. Through this discussion, two different but intertwined interpretations of the term representation emerge: that of being represented, and that of envisioning (new) ways to perceive, conceive and experience the world, in order to make sense of it. In the next section, I will discuss how *Call Cutta* uses similar strategies but even more so than in *Rider Spoke*, it employs a both/and also strategy in order to investigate representation itself.

Outsourced performance

Call Cutta is directed from within a call-centre and is performed by call-centre employees. This particular locality is a vital part of this performance, not only as subject matter but also in relation to *Call Cutta's* dramaturgical strategies. The spectators are addressed as clients and the performer-spectator relationship is firmly tied on the grid of capital. Rimini Protokoll investigates the contemporary service industry, and the related practice of outsourcing labour to low-wage countries, by appropriating the system under investigation itself. Rimini Protokoll too offers a service but alternative to a commercial customer service, the service is now a theatre performance. Instead of professionally trained actors, they hired call-centre employees for the project – who are equally professionally trained performers of course. By employing these "Experten des Alltags" ←1, Rimini Protokoll literally outsources performance. The spectators encounter these experts of the daily life in their actual workspace. In the box-version that I attended, my dialogue partner Souptic used a web camera to show me around, pointing to the various clusters of small cubicles, in which teams working for respectively the Australian and American market were executing regular sales work, next to the Rimini Protokoll's call-workers.

Throughout the tour, it is quite obvious that the conversation is scripted, and also the tone of address follows the format of call-centre sales work.⁷² The employees maintain a friendly and cheerful conversation, chatting easily and making flirtatious remarks. It is a playful conversation, which provides a perverse pleasure, as it facilitates awareness of how the spectator is subjected to manipulation. Souptic told me for instance that I have a very pleasant and agreeable voice and suggested that this probably indicated that I was a very friendly person. His remarks made me smile, despite my awareness that he was just playing the game, and it definitely increased my willingness to sing a song, in the middle of an abandoned office building. This feel-good strategy also seems to encourage

72 Wolf-Dieter Ernst (2009) provides a more detailed discussion of this script, see PDS.

participants in the ambulatory version to jump onto a deserted platform in a grey courtyard and shout out loud, or to reveal personal information.⁷³ However, in this respect conversation falls short between Susan and Aisha. When Aisha asks whether she could imagine falling in love with someone over the phone – a scripted question – she learns that Foster is involved in a steady lesbian relationship. Aisha then tries to “switch sexual orientation” and claims a flirtatious interest in Susan herself, which Susan experiences as disingenuous (2008, 172).

These various responses show that *Call Cutta's* mode of spectatorial address is a peculiar version of *personal customisation*, one in which both appropriation and ‘customerisation’ play a piloting role. Personal customisation is a term that is closely connected to digital technology, and demonstrates that *Call Cutta* is not only fastened on the grid of capital, but also scripted by digital culture. New media theorist Lev Manovich uses the term to identify a distinct logic of postindustrial society and digital media: the variability and the modularity of the bits and bytes that distinguish digital or new media from older media allow users to arrange and program media content according to their own preferences – although often limited by formats (2001, 29-37). Manovich observes that the choices one makes are “both free and constrained” which implicates that “customization involves individuals not so much choosing freely but applying standard ready-made suggestions for consumption” (37). Giving witness to a process of cultural transcoding, another of Manovich’s terms, one-to-one performances such as *Call Cutta* are customised on the single spectator, as performances reach their definition in relation to spectator’s choices, responses and behaviour, while at the same time this process is structured by certain formats and procedures. Such performances, in other words, transcode a procedure that originally refers to computer-generated processes, onto a cultural practice. Personal customisation is only partially a neutral term, which is demonstrated in *Call Cutta* as well, as there is a distinct flavour of commodification in the dialogue between performers and spectators.

Heiner Goebbels additionally recognises feelings of uncanniness, in his case caused by the awareness of being led around Berlin by someone on the other side of the globe who has never been to this city. This ‘mis-guide’ calls the Situationists’ *dérives* to mind, urban wanderings based on the counter-strategy of the *détournement*: walking the streets of Paris not with a conventional city map but one that charts desire and affects, for instance.⁷⁴ The *dérives* were part of the Situationists’ attempts to subvert the spectacular and escape the controlling regime of the gaze, and to re-appropriate the urban environment for playful experimentation and everyday life experiences (McDonough 2002, 255-257). I refer to the

73 Anjan Dutt, *Call Cutta*, documentary film (2005), see PDS.

74 An often quoted example of the *dérive* can be found in an account of Debord himself: “A friend recently told me that he had just wandered through the Harz region of Germany while blindly following the directions of a map of London.” Guy Debord, “Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography”. Originally published in *Les Lèvres Nues* 6 (1955), translated by Ken Knabb. See <http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/urbgeog.htm>.

Situationists not only because their urban displacements are part of the family of ‘walkers in the city’ that have been distributed over this chapter but above all to show how *Call Cutta* chooses a distinctively different approach to processes of commodification. The detours of the French neo-avantgarde movement Situationist International (SI) were directed against the late 1960s mass media and consumer society. In *Society of the Spectacle* (1967), SI’s front man Guy Debord describes the human condition as thoroughly perverted by capitalism. Capitalism exchanges the use-value of objects for their exchange-value and severs objects from their material existence: objects become image. The world of commodities thus has become a world of the spectacular: a world in which appearance and simulation prevail above material experience. The spectacle does not refer to reality but solely to itself and its goal is only to establish itself. For Debord, the spectacular not only relates to concrete products of mass consumption; it has become the dominant *model* for the relationship between subjects and world (1967/2005, 8). In order to resist the society of the spectacle, SI envisioned a unitary urbanism in which collaborative projects and playful *détournements* were vital tactics to re-appropriate urban life.⁷⁵ SI sought to counter the capitalist logic of reproduction, through the construction of ephemeral situations, such as the *dérive*, urban wanderings that next to playful maps were based on the principles of psychogeography (Bishop 2012, 85; Wigley 1998, 18-19). Psychogeography involves intuitive displacement, attempts to get lost, or modes of displacement based on urban atmospheres, ambiances and scents (Pinder 1996).⁷⁶ Henri Lefebvre, who was engaged with SI for some time, critiques the radical leftist movements in the aftermath of 1968 for being dualistic; they regard the systems they revolt against as hermetic, static and finished, by which they precisely confirm the oppositions they seek to reject. Instead these systems should be understood as evolving, as changeable from within (Lefebvre 1991, 56).

Whereas SI sought to counter the totalising system of capitalism, Rimini Protokoll appropriates the system – not in order to change it exactly, but to offer a parallax view. Through this, *Call Cutta* makes representation itself part of the process under investigation. The dramaturgical strategies in *Call Cutta* come close to what Claire Bishop calls *delegated performance*, in the context of contemporary arts. Bishop defines delegated performance as “the act of hiring non-professionals or specialists in other fields to undertake the job of being present and performing at a particular time and a particular place on behalf of the artist, and following his/her instructions” (2012, 219). Conversely from hiring actors in a theatre or cinema context, artists “tend to hire people to perform their own socio-economic category, be this on the basis of gender, class, ethnicity, age, disability, or

75 Constant Nieuwenhuys’ *New Babylon* provides perhaps the best and most documented example of SI’s unitary urbanism, much inspired by Huizinga’s *Homo Ludens* and other play theories (Wigley 1998, 26-31, 55-57).

76 This type of wandering paradoxically calls forth the Baudelairian/Benjaminian flâneur, who contrary to the psychogeographer has been regarded as *producer* of the spectacular.

(more rarely) a profession" (219).⁷⁷ Bishop aptly points out that this mode of outsourcing is also an act of outsourcing authenticity, rather different than the rhetoric of direct, unmediated presence that surrounded performance art in the 1960s till 1980s. In these earlier forms, performance artists themselves were present, and presented themselves as true, authentic 'selves', often by applying an aesthetics of risk. In delegated performances, the hirelings 'just' carry out instructions, as 'themselves,' but, at the same time, these activities are authored and directed by the performance artist. Meanwhile, the artist hands over part of the control over the event, as these experts of the daily life are the ones in charge of the actual execution of the process, which also creates a sense of unpredictability. It is precisely through this paradoxical situation, argues Bishop, that authenticity is "invoked, but then questioned and reformulated" (2012, 231).

Call Cutta received some critical evaluations and part of this critique is grounded in the supposed lack of authenticity. Susan Foster, for instance, despite being positively intrigued by the performance, criticises the conversation for being too scripted, adding that perhaps she and Aisha should practice improvisation more together. The performance is not really an equal two-way dialogue or a shared experience due to the fact that Aisha remains hidden behind the "persona of the call worker" (2008, 177). In another review, Tina Bastajian speaks of a flattening of subjectivities, a commodification of personal subjectivity that is placed on top of the profession of the call-centre worker (2008). These responses precisely give witness to the perverse play that is at work here. Bishop uses the (psychoanalytic) term perversion for similar strategies in contemporary art, where unease and discomfort on the side of the viewer give witness to the artists' choice to investigate systems of exploitation precisely by using the rules of this system for organising the art event. Artists use existing formats or systems in order to criticise, discuss, and thematise these formats or systems themselves. They expose the contemporary labour conditions underlying contemporary art, in order "to defy not only agreed ways of thinking about pleasure, labour and ethics, but also the intellectual frameworks we have inherited to understand these ideas today" (Bishop 2012, 239).

In line with Bishop, and as a response to the critical remarks mentioned above, *Call Cutta* in my view focuses not on call-centre employees as individual subjects, but rather on their social-economic position. Although the conversation involves personal stories, and Souptic showed some family pictures, the main focus is not, I would argue, on the personal biographies of the call-centre employees. *Call Cutta* questions the spatial socio-economic conditions of the service industry by offering a theatre service and organising this service on precisely the same grounds. This both/and also strategy uses the lived experience of ambiguity to question and expand existing perceptions and conceptions regarding outsourced labour. Somewhat similar to the staging strategies of *No Man's Land*, the performance questions notions of authenticity and stable identity, and enquires into

77 Bishop shortly refers to Rimini Protokoll's 'Experten des Alltags' (Bishop 2012, 250n8).

the representation of call-centre workers precisely by obscuring the relationship between the 'real' call-worker and his or her professional persona, thus thematising representation itself. In doing so, Rimini Protokoll does not oppose customer service industries but instead provides a parallax view.

Parallax

As mentioned above, Alan Read regards the stage as the minimal parallax condition, which invites us to look at things from a slightly different perspective. *Call Cutta* offers a range of these slightly different perspectives, as this performance de- and reterritorialises not only the stage, but also urban, global, and economic space. Alan Read remarks that, in its simplest form, parallax is "the common experience of an apparent displacement that occurs to an object when we change the position from which we view it" (2008, 16). Parallax is however not restricted to aesthetics or visuality. In *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement* (2008), Read in particular explores parallax relations between performance, ethics, and politics. He then uses the term to avoid all too dialectic or symmetrical relations between performance and politics, in which theatre is thought to have either retreated from politics or still is presented as a society-changing political theatre (2008, 25-27). Parallax strategies provoke an increased sensitivity for qualitative difference, argues Read, a sensitivity that can amplify the relational capacity of human beings and may contribute to social cohesiveness. Parallax practices – both inside and outside the theatre – work with strategies that expose minimal differences, typographically indicated by Read as the difference between this and *this*.⁷⁸ *Call Cutta* similarly maps the differences between this locality and *this* locality, in the trajectories of Heiner Goebbels, Susan Foster and all the other spectators.

Although his strategy and scope is quite different than mine, Read's use of the term parallax, which he in turn derives from Slavoj Žižek, is helpful to point out how parallax strategies open up new spaces of representation, spaces that work through the production of qualitative difference and foreground singularity instead of generalisation. *Call Cutta* provides us as well with a parallax view on representation. This performance on first sight alludes to Deleuze's resistance to representation – regarded as the repetition of sameness – as each encounter between single spectators and performers produce singular, differential spatial practices that never get back to 'the same'. On the other hand, the strategy of personal customisation and outsourcing performance also reveals the grid of capital on which this performance is built, a grid that in turn is deeply embedded with reproduction and repetition, and thus with representation. But thirdly – both/ and also – *Call Cutta* opens up a space of representation in which this situation of 'being

78 Read refers to a performance by Forced Entertainment which investigates silence, not by putting silence against noise but by marking the difference between various types of silence, or, put differently, between this silence and *this* silence (2008, 17).

caught in the system' can be experienced and explored, in a material, embodied and sensory manner, and in addition, demonstrates that such a system can be turned inside out, appropriated and played with. This is the radical openness Edward Soja refers to, connected to lived space, the appearance of a small difference which escapes and extends beyond conceptualised representations of space and points to the potentiality of the always otherwise.

These various perspectives, which are not put against each other but work through one another, present us with a (dynamic) parallax view. Reviewer Peter Michalzik remarks that Rimini Protokoll's experimental set-ups show a profound interest in the "perception and the knowability of the world, in particular the knowability of human beings. The aim is to break open the complex that constitutes our reality, showing it in all its facets as a way of enabling us to interrogate it".⁷⁹ Alan Read too observes that theatre is able to, and perhaps should, function as a human laboratory, by testing the fidelity or faithfulness of representations, while keeping an eye to what is included and excluded in representation (2008, 197). *Call Cutta* may be understood as precisely such a laboratory, where representation is not the exclusive domain of the dramatic theatre. This is illustrated by Rimini Protokoll's view on theatricality:

Theatricality, as we understand it, doesn't have to do with obvious role-playing. This is a widespread misunderstanding. Theatricality is a process between me and the other while I watch him or her or it – in a state of interruption, fascination, openness – I call theatricality the process of an aesthetic experience. It's a process of creative perception. That is why theatre is political.⁸⁰

Wetzel's remarks relate to Bleeker's understanding of theatricality, when she observes that theatricality exposes the conditions of staging itself ←1. The display of these conditions also informs Claire Bishop's analysis of delegated performance. One may wonder whether such strategies, in which artists adopt the system they seek to criticise, bring us back to a postmodern superficiality, in which the world is nothing but an endless repetition of simulacra. In my view, *Call Cutta* takes a slightly different route, and should be regarded as an Appadurain work of the imagination, involved in the creation of structures of feeling through which spectators are able to relate to *Call Cutta's* subject matter and strategies, on the scale of lived space.

Call Cutta emphasises the difference between particular locations; differences that are felt and noticed through embodied displacements. Susan Foster feels that the dif-

79 Peter Michalzik, "On Rimini Protokoll" (2006), see PDS.

80 Barbara van Lindt, "Call it Call Cutta in a Box", interview with Daniel Wetzel (2008), see PDS. Cf. Read's view on politics, which for Read is the term "that best describes that interruption of the sensible" (2008, 177).

ferences were not acknowledged enough because Aisha, for instance, could not foresee that she would stumble upon the picnic with Turkish tenements. In my view, that experience exactly demarcates local differences. Heiner Goebbels' trip turned out to be a joyful one and was concerned with giving trust. Foster's trajectory seemed to be concerned with control and loss of control. These differences are of course relevant with regard to personal experience but in the end the one experience is not more true, or closer to 'the' performance than the other; they are both actualised (parallax) versions of *Call Cutta*, thus exposing the performance's virtuality →3. Read suggests, drawing on Žižek, that parallax is more than just a subjective point of view, as it shows that "subject and object are indubitably tied and mediated. A changing point of view for Žižek will always reflect 'an ontological shift in the object itself'" (2008, 16). This observation comes close to Maaike Bleeker's discussion of the concept of movement vision →3, but also characterises the parallax practices discussed in this chapter.

"There is little point in putting theatre in a wider context when it already shows the complexity of that context within its own acts," remarks Alan Read (2008, 43). This observation is also an apt evaluation of *Call Cutta's* staging strategies, in which theatre space, urban space, global and economic flows continuously displace and redefine each other. In this chapter, the encounter between the nomadic and the theatre proceeded through traversing a range of displacements, leading to a re-evaluation of place, the investigation of practices of appropriation and, ultimately, the production of parallax views. This trajectory provides us as well with a parallax view on both the terms that encounter each other within the concept of nomadic theatre. Nomadic variability exposes the theatre as an open-ended laboratory, in which local attachments, global connectivity and spaces of representation can be explored and experimented with. In turn, the theatre redefines the nomad's nonlimited locality by placing emphasis on lived spaces and situated practices, and through that, draws nomadism into the realm of both Lefebvre's and theatre's "meta-philosophy".

Call Cutta engages performers and spectators into a process of *becoming-space*, as they enter into composition with (globalised) urban environments and appropriate the city through the performance of locality. Spectators enter into composition with space, through embodied displacements and acts of way finding, by navigating and performing space, by establishing a relational space together with the call-centre employees. Simultaneously, the call-centre employees take care of the connection between the locations. They perform their own location by providing site-specific stories, they are tour guides, they create nearness. In *Call Cutta*, becoming-space keeps being tied on the grid of capital but also produces structures of feeling through which spectators and performers may attach themselves to fluidity, in a material, embodied and sensory way. This type of engagement is also explored by (feminist) enquiries on the 'politics of location'. I will discuss this concept in the next chapter but will give one related observation done by Kathleen Kirby here, as it astutely captures the lived spaces addressed in this chapter. Whether we

think of parkour's urban moves, *Call Cutta's* commodity-flavoured theatre space, or the hybrid social space of *Rider Spoke*,

[space] forms a medium for reconnecting us with the material, but it also maintains a certain fluidity, a mobility: if we are speaking of space in the abstract it is susceptible to folding, division, and reshaping. A space persists only as long as the coordinates holding it open are deliberately maintained, and the shapes and boundaries modeling space are, at least ideally, open to continual negotiation (Kirby 1993, 175).

In the next chapter, I will further chart these negotiations in relation to cartography. I will then show that the focus on place, space and local operations implies a specific address to and understanding of the role of the spectator and argue for an embodied, embedded spectatorship. Already shimmering below the surface of this chapter but more explicitly addressed in the next, I will discuss how the performer-spectator-space constellation is drawn and configured through corporeal archives, situated knowledge and the affective tonalities of becoming-space, and how these forces collaborate in maintaining the coordinates of a smooth stage.

3 CARTOGRAPHIES

You are here

A few years ago, I had taped a small flyer onto a window in my house, which displayed the text “You are here”.⁸¹ Passers-by and people about to board buses nearby often stopped walking in order to read the text. They seemed to freeze for a moment, as if they gained sudden awareness of themselves, on that particular spot – of course: I am *here*, and I am here. Learning this seemed to prevent movement. It was my favourite living-room sport to observe that process, in which passers-by almost literally had their feet nailed to the ground. Performing “you are here” is a modest, yet multi-layered event. It implicates a short interruption of an ongoing movement, a temporary pause within everyday routine, in which passers-by are invited to make an active connection between these words and their actual location. “You are here” is a deictic utterance, in which the reader appropriates ‘you’ as ‘I’. The linguistic term *deixis* points to how certain words organise subjective and social relationships in discourse. Personal pronouns such as ‘I’ and ‘you’ are deictic markers: similar to adjectives such as ‘here’ and ‘there’, they articulate a subject’s specific spatial and temporal position. Precisely because they are empty forms, deictic markers allow the participants to appropriate these terms for themselves (Bleeker 2008, 19). Therefore, “you are here” only becomes meaningful in relation to a subject who takes up the position of ‘I’, in connection to a particular time and space (cf. Verhoeff 2012, 55). The flyer-event thus points to the close relationship between place, location, movement and subjectivity.

The text on the flyer was actually written in Dutch, reading “U bevindt zich hier”. The subtle nuance gets lost in the translation. The Dutch verb ‘zich bevinden’ bears associations with finding oneself and with discovery. The text thus can be read as a concise ver-

⁸¹ The flyer announced a local community-dance project. Dries Verhoeven also made a performance with the same title (*U bevindt zich hier*, 2006). This similarity is entirely coincidental.

sion of a phrase like “you are hereby cordially invited to discover yourself on this particular spot”. It raises a temporary awareness of (finding) oneself in relation to a specific location (‘here’) and of the particularity of that location (‘not elsewhere’). The same relationships are investigated, in much more detail, in *Trail Tracking* (2005) by Dries Verhoeven.⁸² Similarly to the flyer-event, the performance aims for awareness of place and plays with various meanings of discovering oneself, while being on the move. In this performance, the spectator walks alone through an empty railway station aka museum, equipped with a mobile phone and a suitcase. Like in *Call Cutta*, the mobile phone is used for navigating the spectators through space. However, whereas *Call Cutta* foregrounded connectivity, co-presence and dialogue, *Trail Tracking* redirects the attention back towards the spectator and as a theoretical object, focuses on situated, embodied spectatorship.

Trail Tracking brings a set of particular territories into play. Whereas the previous chapters dealt with urban space, *Trail Tracking* instead takes place in a former railway station, a highly symbolic place, strongly associated with travel, mobility, and physical and vehicular displacement. Being a museum though, it also brings movement to a standstill. The site-specificity of the place, which links past, present and futurity, fuels the dramaturgy of this performance. Similarly to the previous cases however, this performance deals with a smooth stage and a mobile theatre space, and the staged displacements place an added layer of reality on top of the site of the railway museum. In this chapter I approach the theatre space as a *navigational space*, a space produced through movement, in which the stage emerges as a set of temporary, changing coordinates, maintained by both performers and spectators. In *Mobile Screens: The Visual Regime of Navigation* (2012), media scholar Nanna Verhoeff remarks that mobile navigation devices, such as mobile phones, remarkably conflate navigation and creation: navigating through space at the same time produces these navigated spaces themselves (14). Although her study focuses on (a range of) mobile screens in urban environments and on advanced digital interface technologies, her approach to navigation reverberates in interesting ways with *Trail Tracking*’s navigational and much more analogue moves – in particular due to the fact that she takes a *material* approach to navigation: she favours a relational instead of an object-oriented understanding of mobile screen practices, and focuses on ways in which users are dialectically, creatively, and corporeally engaged with the sites and screens in which they are situated, and that therefore are also produced by them (18). These practices produce “screenspaces” which invite a mode of engagement that “is not visual, fixated and distanced, but haptic, fluid and procedural” (150, 163).⁸³

82 Original title: *Sporenonderzoek*, see PDS.

83 Verhoeff uses the term “screenspace” to point out that both screens and spaces (e)merge as both site and the outcome of navigation – thus proposing a radically alternative view to the more conventional understanding of the screen as display. Screenspace connects both on-screen and off-screen spaces and experiences, in a process of simultaneous construction (2012, 65, 150).

Trail Tracking in turn is involved with the production of a fluid and procedural theatre space, rather similar to Verhoeff's screenspaces, and focuses in particular on the affective tonalities of navigational space. The spectator is the only moving subject in a large industrial space that has 'mobility' as a theme deeply entrenched within it but that now seems to be put on hold, a configuration which solicits sensory and spatial awareness. With the help of the mobile phone, the spectator is guided by a performer who is nowhere to be seen, but suspected to be near. The invisible and un-locatable performer – when stepping into the spectator's footsteps for a moment – plots a trajectory through the actual space of the railway museum. Soon after the start of this performance, however, this trajectory is intersected by another path, namely that of a route the spectator has often travelled in the past and which is now mapped and remembered, and queried by the performer. By way of charting and exchanging locative data, simultaneously oriented towards the past, present and the future, performers and spectators use and produce (site) specific maps, based on the situated knowledge they bring to the map. Due to the various ways in which they are involved with mapping and map-making, I regard *Trail Tracking* as a performance that uses *cartography* as a staging strategy, which concerns the use, design, creation and conceptualisation of maps. *Trail Tracking's* maps are products of co-creation, as they evolve out of the collaboration between user and site, and between performers and spectators. The performer-spectator-space constellation therefore is in particular involved with the performance of cartography, and exposes cartography as performance. As a theoretical object, *Trail Tracking* tunes in with the performative turn in cartographic theory, where maps are studied as (interactive) performances and as products of co-creative relationships between maps and users, an approach which contends the idea of maps as objective representations of the world (Dodge et al. 2009; Crampton 2010; Verhoeff 2012, 137-142). Performative cartography instead sees maps as inherently open to use. Cartography, as a staging strategy, organises time and space by setting up a playing field for the actions of performers and spectators, without predicting the outcome, keeping the field open to the potential inherent in the map.

Cartography: 5th principle of the rhizome

The performative turn in cartographic theory has been highly influenced by Deleuze's and Guattari's view on cartography, and their understanding of maps as assemblages of heterogeneous connections. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, they present cartography as the 5th principle of the rhizome, next to principles of connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity and deterritorialisation. Instead of defining what a map *is*, Deleuze and Guattari characteristically describe the map's potential, by pointing out what a map *does*:

A rhizome is [...] a map and not a tracing. [...] What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely orientated toward an experimentation in contact with the real. [...] It fosters connections between fields. [...] The map is open and connectable

in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. [...] A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back “to the same”. The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged “competence” (2004, 13-14).

In retrospect and prospect, the reader may recognise the various chapters in this study as open-ended maps, as acts of staging connections both inside and outside the chapters, rendering observations and statements open to processes of revision and reshaping. All the performances discussed in this study – and my approach to these performances – can be regarded as “experimentations in contact with the real,” as experimental set-ups for the exploration and production of (Lefebvre’s) lived space ←2. The flyer-event mentioned above helps to demonstrate how cartography (always) involves both experimentation and performance. A singular reader executes “you are here” and situates oneself in that act; each encounter with these words will result in a different map, and involves a singular way of making sense of oneself in relation to one’s situation. The act of locating oneself may have interrupted the return back to one’s house, or delayed a visit to a hospital; it may have evoked a sense of pleasant surprise, or irritation. These potentialities are inherent in and brought forward by the map: they belong to what I will call the *virtuality* of the map, which may or may not be actualised in the encounter.

James Corner, in “The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique and Invention” (1999), equally connects a performative, Deleuzian cartography to lived space. Although Corner uses cartography as a model for urban design and city planning, his observations are quite relevant for the present discussion. Corner argues that (urban) mapping is not an instrument for mirroring reality, but a tool for the construction of lived space; it is a means to engender the process of shaping the worlds in which people live. The underlying argument here is that maps do not represent a field or terrain, implicating the territory to be already existent. Instead, mapping is co-constitutive in producing these territories (225). In a Lefebvrian mode of thought, Corner argues that urban design should not only take the physical attributes of terrain into account; this is just the surface expression of a complex and dynamic set of interrelationships of natural processes, histories, local stories, economic and political forces. Instead of devices for empirical description, urban maps should be regarded as creative practices and conduits of possibilities, “uncovering realities previously unseen or unimagined, even across seemingly exhausted grounds. Thus mapping *unfolds* potential; it re-makes territory over and over again, each time with new and diverse consequences” (213, italics by author). Corner connects this potential to the fact that maps are both analogue as well as abstract. They are analogous to actual environments or events; simultaneously maps are abstract because they are products of scaling and projection, selection and translation. This leads Corner to observe that “[a]s both analogue and abstraction, then, the surface of the map functions like an operating table,

a staging ground or a *theatre of operations* upon which the mapper collects, combines, connects, marks, masks, relates and generally explores” (1999, 215, my emphasis).⁸⁴

Corner’s remarks expose the type of encounter between the nomadic and the theatre, and between performance and cartography, that I will pursue in this chapter. In this encounter, the theatre functions as a staging ground for local operations. In the theatre of operations, the map is not a mirror of reality, but co-constitutive in the production of reality. As a *theatre* of operations, this puts forward the question of what kind of cartographic realities are being staged, and how we are invited to perceive and understand these realities. This encounter then inevitably puts the topic of representation back on the operating table, despite Deleuze’s anti-representational understanding of the map, and in line with theatre’s indubitable connection to representation ←1,2.

Throughout history, maps have been used to chart and depict “the world”; maps however are never neutral representations of the world. Instead they are epistemological tools, strongly involved with the creation of a particular understanding and knowledge of the world that is being mapped (cf. Verhoeff 2012, 141-142). In their introduction to *Rethinking Maps: New Frontiers in Cartographic Theory* (2009), the editors Martin Dodge, Chris Perkins and Rob Kitchin remark that cartography is both “epistemological but also deeply ontological – it is both a way of thinking about the world, offering a framework for knowledge, and a set of assertions about the world itself” (1). This observation indicates again the close connection between theatre and cartography, as theatre can equally be regarded as offering a model for understanding the world and in that act of modelling, produces certain assumptions about that world. Giving consequence to both theatre’s and cartography’s epistemological force, this chapter does not only present cartography as a staging strategy but also utilises cartography as a method for describing and analysing what is actually being staged in the act of mapping. Therefore, before continuing my discussion of *Trail Tracking*, I will first take a closer look into cartography’s worldmaking capacities, by way of a short exploration of the history of cartography, seen from the perspective of theatre.

The theatre of cartography

There is a certain subtlety attached to the observation that the first atlases were called *theatres* (De Certeau 1984, 121). Atlases were a means to show the world in pictures, but implicit in this act of showing is that atlases *stage* a particular view and in doing so *produce* a certain understanding of the world. Maps are intriguing phenomena, because although they are products of manipulation, selection and abstraction, simultaneously they are to a large extent kind of obvious. Maps work incredibly well because they do what they say they are doing. A road map for instance, doesn’t pretend to be something else than a road

84 Cf. De Certeau, who sees the theatre as the setting up of a field for action, an act of making space for operations (1984, 123).

map; it is what it is: a roadmap. The this-is-just-a-roadmap logic tends to obscure what is left out of the picture, and – truly living its paradoxical life to the max – the map could not do otherwise: without selection it cannot function as a map (Crampton 2010, 6). In *The Power of Maps* (1992), Denis Wood convincingly disarms this self-evident nature of maps, by exposing how the apparent view from nowhere presents a particular point of view and interest, while it obscures the fact that maps have authors and are regulated by specific, cultural codes and conventions.⁸⁵ Remarkably similar to Maaïke Bleeker’s analysis of the absorptive strategies of both perspective drawings and the dramatic theatre ←1, maps tend to absorb the user into the map, because they suggest a presentation of an autonomous world that seems to exist entirely independent from either author or user. Analogous to Bleeker’s analysis, maps are equally products of perspective: precisely through the claim of objective representation, maps often remain invisible as a particular way of presenting the world (Wood 1992, 31; Crampton 2010, 12-21).

An often quoted but nevertheless well-serving example of the theatre of cartography is the 16th century Mercator projection. The Mercator map places Europe at its heart and takes the Greenwich meridian as the central point of reference. In the Mercator projection, the meridians that in ‘reality’ converge around the poles – meridians are products of European, Euclidian geometry – are projected as rectangles on a flat surface. This creates enormous distortions of landmasses and as a result the areas occupied by Western civilisations are depicted much larger – read: more important – than non-Western areas (Wood 1992, 57).⁸⁶ Despite being widely regarded as a symbol of Eurocentrism now, the Mercator projection still regularly appears in atlases, classrooms, and significantly, lives on as a digital, easily downloadable image-of-the-world, used in newspapers, prints and on the Internet (Monmonier 1995, 18-23). The Mercator example exposes map-related processes such as geometry, scaling and projection as far from neutral processes. But even when maps are more ‘accurate’, they remain products of perspective. Denis Wood argues that maps are always products of history, culture, and politics, regulated by conventions that are barely questioned: “So surely is this the north toward which cartographers point that they take its presence for granted, as though the neutrality of the general reference map were a fact of nature, a common truth” (1992, 22).

85 Wood argues that maps work like myths, drawing on Roland Barthes: maps look normal or neutral, but actually they communicate values instead of facts. Wood shows for instance how a seemingly natural Transportation Map actually foregrounds transport by car and disfavours systems of public transport, and points to several signs that do not appear on the legend, as if they would speak for themselves – which they don’t (1992, 95-111).

86 The distortion is further enhanced by situating the vertical centre of the map about 50 degrees north of the equator, which increases the Northern hemisphere at the cost of the Southern hemisphere. The distortions lead to a depiction of Greenland as larger than China (Monmonier 1995, 18); Alaska and Brazil have a similar size, although Alaska is five times smaller than Brazil (Wood 1992, 57).

Such claims of self-evident transparency and objectivity date back to the 15th century, an era marked by scientific progress and technological innovations, in which European nations used maps and charts to discover and colonise the globe (De Certeau 1984, 115-130). Both De Certeau and Deleuze and Guattari refer to the 15th century as the point of emergence of not only science but of a scientific worldview, in which rationally produced, centralised knowledge gradually becomes the norm (Deleuze/Guattari 2004, 529). In *Mapping: A Critical Introduction to Cartography and GIS* (2010), Jeremy Crampton observes that this scientific approach dominated geometry and cartography until well into the late 1970s. Crampton portrays a cartographic history in which technological progress, generalisation and standardisation repeatedly were put to use for claims of greater accuracy and hence objectivity (49-61). This emphasis on rationally produced, centralised knowledge and related claims of objectivity, universality and truth reveals a Cartesian, dualistic logic, which suggests the world exists independently and as separate from the observer (Dodge et al. 2009, 5; Verhoeff 2012, 137-140).⁸⁷ Crampton notes that in the 1980s, influenced by the work of Derrida and Foucault, maps were increasingly seen as products of discourse, and as systems of power and ideology. Critical cartography challenged the map as a mirror or transparent window to the world, and instead exposed the ways in which maps represent power relations, act as vehicles of territorialisation, and produce knowledge (Crampton 2010, 44-47, 84-85; cf. Dodge et al. 2009, 1-5). Recent developments in cartographic technology have caused a shift from the focus of maps as representations of power and ideology towards maps as *practices*, which focuses on the actual *use* of maps and the (local) contexts in which they are used. Mapping technologies have become widely available to the masses: open source and collaborative mapping tools are easy to download and use; the collaborative use of geomeia, location-aware mapping technologies, GPS, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) allow amateurs to create, hack, modify, and mash-up maps. Such participatory and digital mapping practices challenge cartography as a specialist, scientific discipline practiced by experts, and produce alternative counter-knowledge (Crampton 2008, 27-40; Verhoeff 2012, 138-139). These practices challenge Cartesian logics and expose how maps conflate production and use. Maps are not autonomously existing objects; instead they are subject to co-creative processes of reshaping, redefinition, mutation and contestation (Dodge et al. 2009, 16-20). As “theatres of operations” (Corner) maps produce the world for us, while at the same time we bring (situated) knowledge to the map. Such a performative understanding of maps question the ontological security of maps. Dodge et al. therefore prefer to speak of the ontogenesis of maps, and of maps as becomings (2009, 20).⁸⁸

87 Verhoeff refers to Jonathan Crary’s observation of a scientific-visual paradigm emerging in the 17th and 18th century, which connects the distant observer to scientific objectivity. Crary’s approach to visibility also informs Bleeker’s critical analysis of perspective $\leftarrow 1, \rightarrow 4$ (Verhoeff 2012, 138; Bleeker 2008).

88 Next to Deleuze and Guattari’s view on maps as performance, the turn towards a performative or “post-representational” cartography has been inspired by amongst others Bruno Latour’s actor-network theory, and Henri Lefebvre’s spatial analysis (Dodge et al. 2009, 10-20).

It is worth observing that within the various understandings of what a map is and does, shifting from objective, transparent window, via maps as representations of power and ideology, to the practice of maps, the theatre of cartography respectively puts the emphasis on perceived, conceived, and lived space.⁸⁹ Although these shifting perspectives may seem to be based on a chronological historical development, it is actually a matter of what Crampton refers to as subjugated knowledge, drawing on Foucault: minor knowledge that was placed backstage during certain moments in history, which does not imply that that this counter-knowledge was not there (2010, 4). Performative cartography for instance sheds a new light on medieval mapping practices, as I will discuss below, through its focus on use and embodied, situated knowledge.

As a function of use, “the map is not fixed at the moment of initial construction, but is in constant modification where each encounter with the map produces new meanings and engagements with the world” (Dodge et al. 2009, 20). This observation is an apt characterisation of the encounters with the maps of *Trail Tracking*, in which both performers and spectators are co-creatively engaged in the use and production of maps, in a process of inscribing themselves onto the performance, as much as the performance inscribes onto them.

Performing cartography

Imagine yourself wandering around a large railway station, full of tracks and train carriages. Now, erase all the people that may have crowded your trains and platforms in this mental picture. Imagine you are completely alone, the sole living creature amidst an environment of machinery, technology, timetables, waiting rooms, train tracks and other traces of travel. It feels like you are moving in a vacuum, as if the world has been placed on pause, save for you. The only connection to another life is provided by a mobile phone. A friendly voice on the other side of the line first suggests that you loudly shout your name in the empty departure hall and then asks you to cross the hall, to go outside, to step across the track, to turn to the right and to walk towards the end of the platform. While you search for your way through this large space, the friendly voice asks you to remember a path you often walked during childhood. It could be a journey that lead from your house to the bakery, or a recollection of the travels across the carpets and halls of your grandmother’s house. You are kindly requested to remember this route in great detail.

Let’s suppose for a moment that you had to cross the street adjacent to your house, on your way to school, and then turn to the left, past the huge chestnut tree, past the houses of your neighbours, and past the ominous, dark bushes in the garden of the stern old Headmaster. After passing, you look towards the house on the opposite side of the street to see if your friend is leaving for school too. Then you continue to walk, past another six

⁸⁹ The observation also recalls Soja’s analysis of Firstspace, Secondspace and Thirdspace epistemology ←2.

houses until you reach the small stone wall that surrounds the schoolyard. You pass the yard with the three grand old chestnut trees, where you use to play marbles in the spring. Then you arrive at the large front doors of the school; on your left is the bicycle shed, on the right is the place where a classmate once kissed you on the cheek because he was in love with you. And inside you go, past the two classrooms for the first four grades and you enter the third room, because you are in the fifth grade. The fifth grade seats are closest to the door, but next year, in the sixth grade, you will fortunately be sitting next to the windows with a view onto the yard. All the while, the stranger on the phone asks you for details on the houses that you passed, the colour of the doorknob on the front door, the smell of the classroom; she seems extremely interested in it all. In the meantime you keep walking through the railway hall: you turn left and right, you type the basic coordinates of the remembered itinerary on a typewriter in an empty phone booth; next you enter an abandoned railway carriage. There you find the drink that you chose some minutes before from four options: tea, hot milk, gin or whiskey – which definitely adds to your impression that this stranger on the other end of the line is actually present in the same hall. Time and time again you are confronted with the actual place of performance, when simultaneously, you are walking in the remembered spaces of childhood.

The imaginary travel described above never actually happened. It is part of what I call the virtual map of *Trail Tracking*. It is the map that could have been performed, had I had the opportunity to 'do' *Trail Tracking* myself. To a certain extent, the account above is also a performance of *Trail Tracking's* map, as the potential inherent in the performance is actualised in my reenactment of this performance. On the basis of interviews with Dries Verhoeven, rehearsal notes, various reviews and a short film registration, I produced another map, which is nevertheless a map: a singular version of *Trail Tracking*, this time based on the encounter between the performance and the critic-observer. This also implies that my account of the performance is not a reconstruction that seeks to depict the performance 'as it was' but instead produces an inventory of its potentiality. Next to the first-person perspective ←1 and the over-the-shoulder-view ←2, the imaginative reconstitution is a third way of describing a one-to-one performance such as *Trail Tracking*.⁹⁰ The emphasis on the virtuality of the map is crucial, not because I did not attend this performance, but because it is inherent in the nature of this work, and other case studies in this study. The map of *Trail Tracking* only comes into being in the encounter between singular performers and spectators, and in my account, between the performance and the observer.

Trail Tracking was presented at the opening of the Railway Museum in Utrecht, in 2005. The museum is a large space, a former railway station. Some of the tracks are still in occasional use. Single spectators, each equipped with a suitcase and a mobile phone, follow a trajectory through the (relative) empty railway station. From time to time, the

90 See Pearson/Shanks for the difference between reconstruction and (re)constitution (2001, 45-49).

spectator catches a glimpse of other travellers in the distance, who also carry suitcases and talk into mobile phones. They are either performers, who are also present in the hall but do not have visual contact with the spectator; either they are other spectators, who started the performance at different intervals and follow a different trajectory. In an interview, director and scenographer Dries Verhoeven explains how his initial encounter with the place inspired his choice for making a performance with one spectator at the time. As the Museum was still preparing for the opening, Verhoeven was the only person present in the enormous railway station, a place that was built to transfer hundreds of people and conjures up associations with travel, transport and mobility, with continuous movement, with being on the road and being somewhere else. The station, as a place of transit, had become a space for dwelling, and each time he stopped walking, it felt like he became part of a world frozen in time.⁹¹ Together with a team of performers, Verhoeven composed a trajectory that could provide the spectators with a similar sensation, a trajectory that created a dynamic interplay between the 'here' and the 'elsewhere', and works with various senses of scale. Whereas the station, the suitcase, the mobile phone and the distant performer all signal 'elsewhere', the spectator's isolation focuses attention on the here and now of the walk, and the material qualities of the location. Throughout the walk, the scale of the railway station is subverted by the entirely different scale of childhood. Place and space become multi-layered modalities of experience, staged through various layers of cartography.

In "The Agency of Mapping," mentioned above, James Corner identifies four mapping practices in relation to contemporary, creative urban design and city planning. In line with his "theatre of operations", Corner approaches these practices as performances. Corner's operations are quite similar to the staging strategies discussed in this study, which allows for staging a few connections. Corner first describes a type of maps that is modeled on the *drift*, inspired by the Situationists' *dérives* and psychogeographic maps ←2 and the work of walking artist Richard Long. These maps reflect "subjective, street-level desires and perceptions rather than a synoptic totality of the city's fabric" (1999, 231). The practices discussed in the previous chapters can be regarded as guided drifts, whereas a more psychogeographic approach will be encountered in Signa's *The Ruby Town Oracle* →5. Second, Corner distinguishes the *game board*, in urban plans that stimulate interaction with the designed environment. These maps orchestrate the conditions for play and function as surfaces for acting out and testing a variety of scenarios (240). Such a game board governed Blast Theory's *Rider Spoke* ←2 and, as a scenario, resurfaces in relation to Ontroerend Goed's *The Smile Off Your Face* →4. Third, the Deleuzian *rhizome* installs connections between various (urban) spheres, in line with Deleuze's and Guattari's approach to maps quoted above, and transmits intensities across heterogeneous fields. I will join the latter operations when discussing the stage in terms of a rhizomatic game board, in

91 "Voor een schilderij hoeft je niet te applaudisseren", interview with Verhoeven (2007). See PDS.

relation to Signa's *Ruby Town* →5. Most relevantly for the present discussion is the fourth operation, described as a practice of *layering*. Corner refers here to the architectural designs of Bernard Tschumi, Rem Koolhaas and Peter Eisenman, pointing out how in these designs several, rather independent layers together produce a "heterogeneous and 'thickened' surface [...] a complex fabric without centre, hierarchy or single organizing principle" (235). Corner compares these architectural designs with the coloured paint delineations on a gymnasium floor, which on the one hand allow for conventional games, based on the internal rule-set or logics of these games, but also offer possibilities for combination, experimentation and montage, creating hybrid games. The four mapping operations show considerable overlap, as they all intend to provide the conditions for open-ended spatio-temporal practices. They invite use, transformation, negotiation; they stage connections and relationships, and seek to accommodate the manifold rhythms of everyday life.

In line with Corner's operation of layering, I distinguish three *cartographic layers* in *Trail Tracking*. These layers have an internal logic i.e. they can be observed separately, but they also interfere with and redefine each other. I will briefly introduce these layers here and use them as piloting devices for the rest of the chapter. The first layer pertains to the *actual-virtual* map of *Trail Tracking*, already briefly mentioned above. The performance provides the conditions for the encounter, through the design of a particular trajectory, which also implies a specific mode of spectatorial address, and a pre-set list of activities, either carried out by the performer or the spectator. I understand this design as a map, a conduit for action and navigation, which is actualised in the encounter between singular performers and spectators. The actual-virtual map points to the performance's potentiality, as each heterogeneous encounter with the map produces a singular version of the performance. The performance in that sense cannot be traced back to an original, but is always part of a process of differentiation, of becoming.⁹² The second layer involves the *navigational practices* of both performers and spectators. The performer navigates the spectator through the railway station, but there is no visual contact. Therefore, they need to practice a non-digital GPS, so to say, a verbal exchange of locative data.⁹³ These spatial operations do not only facilitate orientation but also follow the logic of location-aware technology, so to say: they raise perceptual awareness and address sensory, material modes of spatial engagement; in addition, these operations produce navigational space (cf. Verhoeff 2012). While navigating the railway station, the spectators are asked to remember and describe an often frequented childhood route, as indicated above, as well as to name a place they would like to visit in the future. The performer suggests that

92 Theatre performances are always becomings, due to their transitory nature. Compared to conventional (text-based) performance however, the scale of variation in *Trail Tracking* is much larger; variation is a built-in ingredient of the performance.

93 Cf. Susan Foster's account of *Call Cutta* (2008) ←2. Verhoeven's rehearsal notes too refer to GPS systems. The performers 'practiced GPS' by training to navigate each other correctly from point A to B. See PDS.

the spectator perceives the performance itself as an act of walking between a past and a future. This third layer focuses on *personal geographies*, a term I borrow from Katherine Harmon's *You are Here: Personal Geographies and Other Maps of the Imagination* (2004). Harmon assembled a wide variety of maps, ranging from 16th and 17th century mappings of the mind and the body, to Surrealistic dream maps and fantasy drawings. Contrary to the Cartesian map, these cartographies place the people back onto the map; they reveal the "private meridians" of everyday life, that intersect with the larger social realities in which people live and that articulate what is of value in that world (10). Personal geographies point to how spectators traverse and engender the performance, how corporeal matter becomes something that matters, and how they bring situated knowledge to the map. These private maps create connections between places, memories and sensory impressions, between fantasy and geography. As layered maps, the links between past, present and envisioned futures do not only emerge on the level of personal geographies, but also surface in actual navigation, and in the virtuality of the map.

Charting the virtual

In *Trail Tracking*, both the dialogue over the mobile phone and the found space of the railway station serve as an interface for the exchange of location-based information. Performers and spectators together form the coordinates of the smooth space in which they are operating, and they can be considered as both co-authors and co-creators of the map(s) of *Trail Tracking*. Dries Verhoeven and his team of performers, on the one hand, author this map, as the trajectory and related actions are pre-designed; these provide the conditions for play. On the other hand, spectators bring situated knowledge to the map: they perform the map, they navigate through their sense of place and they add their personal geographies. The map, therefore, is continuously subjected to experimentation, in contact with the real. In their engagement with the map, both the apprentice-performer and the apprentice-spectator do not know beforehand how the encounter exactly will turn out ←1. Therefore, the map of *Trail Tracking* appears in both an actual and a virtual modality. Through the actual encounters with the map, the potential of the map becomes manifest. Potentiality cannot be known before it is actualised, it belongs to the *virtuality* of the map.

To Deleuze, virtuality is the counterpart of actuality – both are part of reality.⁹⁴ In *Architecture from the Outside* (2001), Elisabeth Grosz points out that Deleuze's understanding of the term is based on the work of Henri Bergson, who made a distinction between the possible and the virtual. The possible relates to the preformed, predictable version of the real, whereas the virtual is characterised by the unforeseen, the unthought, and the potential to be something other than the actual (12). Bergson developed the concept in relation to time, and in connection to the simultaneous instead of the successive pres-

94 The virtual here is not the same as the use of the term in 'virtual reality', where the virtual (usually) functions to indicate the not-real as opposed to daily reality. Cf. Grosz (2001, 78-79).

ence of present, past, and futurity. Elisabeth Grosz on the other hand explores the virtual in connection to (architectural) space. The virtual then points to the not-yet actual, to the latent potential inherent any design to become other than what is already actualised, to make unpredicted leaps, to function in excess of design or intention (130):

If virtuality resides in the real [...] this is because the real is always in fact open to the future, open to potentialities other than those now actualized [...] Virtuality is not limited to the arena of technological innovation. Perhaps the most conventional of architectural forms and presumptions best illustrates what I understand as the impact, resonance, and richness that the virtual brings to the real: the wall. The capacity of walls, boxes, windows, and corners to function in more than one way, to serve not only present functions but others as well, is already part of the ingenuity and innovation of the virtual. Makeshift, piecemeal transformations, the usage of spaces outside their conventional functions, the possibility of being otherwise – that is, of becoming – must be as readily accorded to the built environment as it is to all futurity (90).

The practice of parkour ←2 of course excels as an expression of the virtuality of the wall, and similar sensations will be encountered on the layer of personal geographies, further discussed below. Virtuality does not only relate to objects or concrete environments, but above all calls upon (the sensation of) potentiality. Inherent in *Trail Tracking's* design is this latency, the potentiality to become something other than it already has become, a potential that presents itself each time the map is actualised in the encounter of singular performers and spectators. *Trail Tracking's* actual-virtual map materialises in seriality.

Although this actual-virtual map is never finished and never 'one', the map is not entirely fluid, because it facilitates navigation and coordinates the performed actions. The map stages encounters and displacements. The performer plots a route through the railway station and simultaneously his or her actions are plotted by that trajectory. During the phone conversation, the performers carry out a range of actions. Apart from directing the spectator, they query and memorise the spectator's memories, pay a visit to the typewriter in the phone booth, prepare a drink for the spectator, compose a story, sing a song, as well as many more small site-specific tasks. Meanwhile the spectator navigates and performs the actions suggested by the performer and recalls of cartographic memories. As mentioned above, this particular configuration in which both the performer and spectator are differently positioned within the huge space of the railway station, is used to address the spectator in a specific way and invites spatial awareness, next to an increased sensitivity for place and movement.

Despite the collaborative cartographic efforts of performers and spectators, their engagement with the map is not symmetrical. Similarly to the a-parallel evolution of the orchid and the wasp in forming a rhizome ←1, the map of *Trail Tracking* is one that involves a-parallel heterogeneous movements. This asymmetry manifests itself in particular in the

approach to the phone conversation. A mobile phone usually promises dialogue and mutual exchange, as was the case in *Call Cutta*. Verhoeven, however, employed a strategy that prevented the spectator from becoming too interested in the person on the other end of the line. Performers consequently redirected the attention back to the spectator: they used a friendly but rather impersonal tone of voice, providing the spectator with a sense of ease and trust, and the invitation to talk freely. Interestingly, Verhoeven's rehearsal notes refer to this strategy as sales techniques. Different – or similar? – than in *Call Cutta*, the sales technique formula served to prevent the conversation from becoming too private and personal. This strategy enabled the performers to ask personal questions, without getting stranded in casual chitchat, or worse, in a therapeutic dialogue. The performer thus stays at a distance, which allows the spectator to become the “subject of communication”, as Heiner Goebbels put it in response to *Call Cutta* (2007, 123-124). Or rather, the spectator becomes a subject of sensation, as the attention is consequently geared towards embodied relationships to place, and the spectator's engagement in situated, local operations.

Navigational spaces

In *Mobile Screens*, Nanna Verhoeff remarks that “one of the most striking characteristics of screen-based interfaces is the possibility for people in transit to co-create the map of the spatial arrangement in which they are operating. The coincidence of movement and the creation of spatial representations is what I call a performative cartography” (2012, 13). Although her remarks pertain to visual representations on digital mobile screens, rather similar processes are facilitated by the much more analogue and auditory interface of *Trail Tracking*. Whereas the actual-virtual map still is strongly marked by Verhoeven's signature, the real-time navigations in accordance with this map foreground the processes of co-creation Verhoeff refers to. In her study, Verhoeff distinguishes a number of characteristics of (interactive) navigation. Navigation is a procedural, experimental and a creative form of both reading and making space. Navigation is not only directional, pointing the user where to go, but also an act of construction: “the navigator makes the itinerary, and as such constructs the space. Rather than an arrangement to be taken in or to traverse, interactive navigation is a creative act” (138). Although screen-based navigation is different than the act of *staging* navigation, Verhoeff's observations help to point out how in *Trail Tracking* similar processes are at work, while at the same time the performance reterritorialises on the logics of (digital) geomedial.

As mentioned above, Verhoeff focuses on mobile screens and on a variety of screen-based digital applications, and hence explores the relation between maps and (often) single users. In *Trail Tracking* there are two types of map users involved, the performer and the spectator; hence the encounters with the map follow a slightly different logic. Whereas Verhoeff discusses digital interfaces, *Trail Tracking* is distinctively more analogue, and navigation is primarily organised through the practice of a non-digital GPS, as

mentioned above. During the walk, performers and spectators are usually at a distance, but occasionally they are quite close, for instance when the trajectory installs an acoustic proximity. At a certain moment the spectator hears music through the phone, before entering a train carriage. When entering this wagon, the same music can be heard, now on the spectator's actual location. It suggests that the performer just left the space where the spectator now enters. This example draws on the logic of *geotagging*, as it indicates the performer's (previous) location, in this case by way of an acoustic sign. Geotagging emerged as one of the possibilities of digital (GPS) technology, through which locations or objects are charged with digitally stored metadata. This data can be retrieved by activating (visual) location-specific hyperlinks that connect this data to particular geographical coordinates (Verhoeff 2012, 153).⁹⁵ Geotagging facilitates the *plotting* of space, which refers to "marking locations and giving them a layered presence and hence, an added meaning" (ibid.). Performers who navigate spectators too work with marking and layering locations: stairs, tracks, carriages, and objects in space function like beacons that mark the theatre space; they indicate where the spectator should or can go. Next to their use value these tagged objects or places get an added value as temporary coordinates of the stage, and as (symbolic) scenery, used by the performers to plot a route through the station.

Digital, screen-based navigation is able to produce layered and augmented realities; Verhoeff gives a range of examples of LayaR applications on handheld, mobile devices, which place a virtual and visual layer over the urban space.⁹⁶ Similar applications have been used for theatre performances, for instance in the video walks by the Canadian artist Janet Cardiff.⁹⁷ *Trail Tracking* too works with such layered, pervasive realities; it places a porous theatre space over the space of the railway station, and, on top of that, adds a remembered-imagined layer of personal geographies. Layering thus modifies space through the combination of space, interactive technology, and mobility, and produces hybrid spaces. Verhoeff names this the "mash-up logic" of navigated layered realities, which reveals the "mnemonic, temporal and experiential aspects of mobility"; these temporal layers produce forms of "mnemonic spacing" as navigation draws on data stored in the past and activated in the present (162).

Geotags refer to previously stored data but often serve as pointers for future destinations as well. This is why Verhoeff presents geotags as triple indexical markers, who point simultaneously to past, present and future. This triple logic of geomedia "constructs an urban space in which pervasive presence, embedded pasts, and evolving futures inter-

95 Geotagging is often used in pervasive games as well ←2.

96 Examples are the Urban Augmented Reality application by the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAi), which connects actual sites to large on-screen 3D buildings, that have either disappeared, will be built, or were designed but never built at all (Verhoeff 2012, 160); the virtual gallery *ARtotheque* (159), and Julian Oliver's *The Artvertizer* which layers artworks over commercial billboards and screens (107-108).

97 Cardiff often collaborates with George Bures Miller. An example of a Dutch video walk is Judith Hofland's *Met open ogen* (2009).

sect" (152). *Trail Tracking* seems to be governed by a similar (triple) logic in which various temporal layers produce a process of "mnemonic spacing" (Verhoeff). This is not only achieved by the choice of location – a railway museum which is about to become an 'education' center – but above all by *Trail Tracking's* specific mode of spectatorial address, through which the spectator is invited to focus both on the here and now, as well as on the past and the future. By navigating the single spectator through the enormous railway station, the performance focuses on the 'here' and 'now' of navigation, which also involves the places that are left behind and, owing to the fact that the spectator also needs to find out where to go next, installs an orientation towards the future. Next, the isolated spectator lingers in the frozen world of the railway museum, a situation which induces spatial and sensorial awareness in the present, yet the place continuously modulates attention towards the past, while these (stored) trains are also markers of futurity, of future destinations. The triple logic does not only pertain to the 'frozen mobility' of the railway station. While the spectator is involved in real-time navigation, at the same time s/he navigates remembered and imaginary spaces, as if simultaneously traversing the past, the present and a projected future. This assemblage of layered realities allows the spectator to experience the spatiality of time and the temporality of space, to become aware of the simultaneous presence of past and future in the present. *Trail Tracking* not only draws on the (triple) logic of geomeia in order to stage displacement, but also reterritorialises on this logic of location-aware technology: the dramaturgy of this performance is about the intersection of past, present and future and it uses a spectatorial address that induces spatio-temporal awareness.

Navigation not only facilitates displacement but equally involves the *production* of navigational space. In line with Verhoeff's relational understanding of performative cartography, performers and spectators are actively engaged in the production of navigational space: a smooth yet directional theatre space. Verhoeff points to the "immanent spatio-temporality" of navigational spaces; she sees performative cartography as "a 4D operation, a dynamic model of the 3D world set in motion" (145). Similarly, *Trail Tracking's* navigational theatre space is charged with temporality, as it moves along and changes in accordance with the performers' and spectators' evolving itinerary. As performers and spectators are situated on different, changing locations, sometimes distant and sometimes close, and performer-spectator couples start their trajectory at different intervals, the theatre space becomes a strange morphing entity, in which spectators are not presented with overview but are firmly situated within. This also becomes apparent in a second instance of acoustic proximity, where the spectator is suddenly surrounded by sound. Twelve performers begin to sing a song, each on a different spot, as the individual trajectory distributes them over the entire space of the railway station. The station in its totality becomes an acoustic space, which is reminiscent of Heiner Goebbels account of (Boehme's) acoustic envelope $\leftarrow 2$. Verhoeff remarks that navigation produces an experiential, haptic and material engagement to space, which in the case of *Trail Tracking* is

not only brought about by way of isolating the spectator, acoustic navigation, or dwelling in frozen mobility, but above all, by probing personal geographies.

Personal velocity

As mentioned previously, next to navigating the actual space of the railway museum, *Trail Tracking* engages the performer and spectator in querying and recounting an often used path the spectator took during childhood. This usually involves a route that is rather mundane: there is nothing spectacular about the trajectory from school back home or to the swimming pool, for example. Next, this route is traced in great detail, to the extent of seemingly unimportant details such as the colour of a door, the tactile memory of a doorknob, the scent of the hall, or the sounds of the attic. Sometimes the actual space of the railway station serves as an interface for the remembered space, when, for instance, the stairs leading towards a platform invite the description of the stairs in the home. The cartographic layer of personal geographies thus foregrounds the sensory and haptic engagement with places and spaces. The haptic refers to touch, derived from the Greek 'haptein,' meaning 'to touch', but often implicates a broader sensory register that describes experiences of reciprocity, intimacy and proximity, analogous to touch. Both Welton and Fisher argue, in their various contributions to *The Senses in Performance*, that haptics is an umbrella term for various sense perceptions such as proprioception, kinesthetic awareness, or skin tactility. Haptic perceptions provide a sense of immediate connection with the environment (in Banes/Lepecki 2007, 146-155; 166-178). Deleuze and Guattari allude to a similar immediacy when defining nomad art as characterised by a "close vision-haptic space" constellation, referring to the 19th century art historian Alois Riegl, as opposed to the optical space that is produced through long-distance vision. Haptic space does not exclude the eye, but calls upon an understanding of vision and visibility that does not separate the senses, nor distinguishes between object and subject (2004, 543-544).⁹⁸

During rehearsals and try-outs, Verhoeven and his team discovered that the spectator's imagination was stimulated the most when asked for haptic and otherwise material details of the recounted trajectory: colours, smells, tactile information, proportions, next to memories that coincide with names. Through the almost exclusive focus on material qualities, the spectator's attention is drawn towards the memories from the perspective of childhood, which prevents these memories from being tainted too much by the evaluation of them from a present, adult perspective. It is important to note that Verhoeven does not aim for nostalgia i.e. mourning for a childhood that is lost. Instead, he seeks to tap into the intensity of experience that characterises childhood. Children usually know only a limited amount of

98 Both Nanna Verhoeff and Gianna Bouchard mention Riegl's distinction between optical and haptic vision as well. The optic separates the subject from the object that is looked at, whereas haptic vision collapses subject-object distinctions; see Verhoeff (2012, 164) and Bouchard, "Haptic Visuality: The Dissective View in Performance" (in Oddey/White 2009, 163-176).

spaces, in which they spend a lot of time and therefore know these spaces intimately and intensely. This is the kind of intensity that Deleuze and Guattari connect to smooth space: "Smooth space is filled by events [...], far more than by formed and perceived things. It is a space of affects, more than one of properties. It is haptic rather than optical perception, [...] occupied by intensities, wind and noise, and sonorous and tactile qualities" (2004, 528). As soon as the world grows larger, one's engagement with the environment tends to become less intensive. By appealing to the vitality of childhood experience, Verhoeven tries to insert a similar intensity into the spectator's current engagement with place and space.⁹⁹

But still, one cannot escape the irony of discussing a performance entitled *Trail Tracking* through a Deleuzian understanding of maps, which fervently opposes trackings, or tracings. To Deleuze and Guattari, tracings are genetic; they are patterns of reproduction and deep structure. Tracings aim for descriptions of "a de facto state, to maintain balance in intersubjective relations, or to explore an unconscious that is already there from the start, lurking in the dark recesses of memory and language" (2004, 13). In *Trail Tracking*, memory is not explored in order to arrive at 'the same', or to expose an unconscious that is "already there from the start". *Trail Tracking* performs, experiments with and (kindly) mutates memory (further elaborated below) and works with 'minor memories' of seemingly unimportant and overlooked dwelling places. It probes neglected pleasures, habitual attachments to the intimacies of the house or the hut, and maps experiences of being inhabited by space.¹⁰⁰ The performance charts processes of becoming-space, where spectators enter into composition with space; while traversing their personal geographies, they enter a zone of proximity with haptic spaces and spaces of affects. Dries Verhoeven recalls that a lot of spectators greatly enjoyed talking about these memories: "These are things you never tell to others, because they seem to banal to talk about it. Usually you don't describe the scent of the corridor in your grandmother's house, or the fact that you still know you flushed the toilet by means of pulling an oblong object tied to a chain. But you know all these things! And it gives pleasure to talk about that with someone".¹⁰¹ This performance then is perhaps a case of, in Deleuzian vocabulary, putting the tracing back onto the map, of plugging the tracing back into the rhizome (2004, 14-16). These remembered movements install heterogeneous connections to forgotten intensities, to thoughts previously un-thought; they release tracings from forces of striation and reconnect them with smooth space.

Similarly to my discussion of navigational practices above, these personal velocities of becoming-space are equally involved with the production of space. In his writings on the relation between architecture, event and movement, architect Bernard Tschumi neatly

99 "Voor een schilderij...", interview with Verhoeven (2007), see PDS.

100 The performance alludes to the kind of intimate spaces described by Gaston Bachelard, in *The Poetics of Space* (1958/1994).

101 "Voor een schilderij...", interview with Verhoeven (2007), my translation. See PDS.

captures *Trail Tracking's* particular assemblage of personal geographies, navigation, and spaces of affects:

The pervasive smells of rubber, concrete, flesh; the taste of dust; the discomfiting rubbing of an elbow on an abrasive surface; the pleasure of fur-lined walls and the pain of a corner hit upon in the dark; the echo of a hall – space is not simply the three-dimensional projection of a mental representation, but it is something that is heard, and is acted upon. [...] Spaces of movement – corridors, staircases, ramps, passages, thresholds; here begins the articulation between the space of the senses and the space of society, the dances and gestures that combine the representation of space and the space of representation. Bodies not only move in, but generate spaces produced by and through their movements (Tschumi 1996, 111).

Tschumi's words allude to Lefebvre's distinction between representations of space and spaces of representations, and indirectly indicate that *Trail Tracking* experiments with a type of representation that foregrounds movement and embodied relationships to space. This comes close to how Maaike Bleeker uses the term "movement vision," a term coined by Brian Massumi, in her essay "Massumi, Martin and the Matrix" (2008a). Bleeker critiques the Cartesian understanding of a world that is 'there' to be seen, as if existing independently from the viewing subject, who is presumed to look at the world from a more or less stable point of view. In line with Massumi, Bleeker argues that this stable 'positionality' marginalises movement as merely an activity that connects positions or points in time, which fundamentally differs from understanding movement as qualitative transition and variation in itself. A body always feels and moves, and feels itself moving. Even the most literal displacement evokes a qualitative difference, according to Massumi: "When a body is in motion it does not coincide with itself. It coincides with its own transition; its own variation" (Massumi in Bleeker 2008a, 153). This qualitative transformation necessarily informs our way of understanding and looking at the world. Bleeker argues that this connection between movement and feeling is "essential to how we, as bodies, engage with the world we live in, to how our bodies are involved in constituting our awareness of this world, and also to our awareness of ourselves in relation to this world" (Bleeker 2008a, 152). Opposed to "mirror vision", which conceives the world as 'opsis' and separates the world as object from the viewing subject, movement vision on the contrary questions the positionality of a stable viewer and the world as opsis altogether. Movement vision suggests that the world can only be known through the "corporeal investments of the ones participating in it" (162). Vision passes through the body into another (movement) space (163). Movement vision is a very relevant concept in relation to (performative) cartography and in particular draws attention to the corporeal investments in maps and map-making; to ways in which (moving) bodies are intrinsically bound up with theatre's and cartography's epistemological and ontogenetic processes, opening up heterogeneous spaces of representation.

Material maps

Bleeker's concept of movement vision relates to her critique of Michel de Certeau's dualistic view on vision and representation in "Walking in the City" (1984) ←2. Here, he describes the opposition between the representation of the world as if seen from above – in his case seen from the top of the World Trade Center – and the 'invisible' movements of the walkers on the streets down below (Bleeker 2008b). I will use a related observation by De Certeau to similar ends, this time connected to his distinction between the map and the tour. *Trail Tracking* sets the spectator off on a tour, a tour that is organised through map-making processes. In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Michel de Certeau presents the map and the tour as two opposite spatial practices, a distinction that is concisely summarised by Verhoeff: "maps are formalized accounts of spatial relations, whereas tours are spatial movements" (2012, 94). For De Certeau, the map represents the world as if seen from above; it favours a stationary subject and presents geographical knowledge as fixed and static. The map presents places as situated next to each other – the kitchen is next to the hall and left from the bedroom – whereas the tour describes spatiotemporal operations: if you turn left, then you will see the kitchen and if you cross the kitchen you will enter the hall. The map colonises and territorialises space, whereas the spatial operations of the tour subvert the power relations inscribed in the map. Instead of employing a view from above, the tour approaches the subject as positioned within (De Certeau 1984, 120). De Certeau describes how in line with the emergence of a scientific worldview in the 15th century, the map disentangled itself from the itinerary and became the dominant spatial representation at the cost of the tour or of travel logs and diaries. De Certeau's account is helpful in connecting *Trail Tracking* to a wider debate in which a (re)appreciation for situated, embodied knowledge counters the hegemony of optical and distanced representations, yet, similar to my earlier discussion of De Certeau ←2, also invites moving beyond such dualist distinction.

Susan Foster, in her discussion of *Call Cutta*, connects spatial operations such as the tour and the itinerary to both contemporary locative media, as well as to the medieval portolan chart (Foster 2008, 170; cf. De Certeau 1984, 121). Portolan charts date back to the 12th till 15th century; these were collaboratively used and re-used documents, that displayed interconnecting rhumb lines and sixteen equidistant intersection points at the circumference of a hidden circle, with which geographical positions could be calculated (Campbell 1987, 376). They can be compared to the function of today's satellites in relation to locative technologies. These charts enabled sailors to determine their location and trajectory *while* they were at sea – which brings the 12th century cathedrals back to mind, equally a process of measuring and scaling the work-in-progress while traversing and engendering the work ←1. Although portolan charts also play their role in a history of European expansion and draw on Euclidian geometry, they reveal a fundamentally other spatial logic than the static map: "Intended to be rotated, portolan charts have no top or bottom. For most of the early charts [...] there is no way of telling which, if any, of the four main directions they were primarily intended to be viewed from" (Campbell

1987, 378). These charts draw on a fundamentally different logic than the “so sure this is the north they point to” principle that Denis Wood critically ascribed to conventional cartography. As these maps were used and re-used by others, portulan charts document the accumulated experience of travel; they draw on embodied, situated knowledge.

Cartographic theorist Tim Ingold observes how 15th century science obliterated people and their experiences from the map: “Maps as reminders of paths and expressions of experience, as they were conceived in the European Middle Ages, morphed into supposed representations of space through the application of scientific principles” (in Dodge et al. 2009, 20). Both Ingold and De Certeau observe a disconnection between institutional maps and the everyday life in which people are constantly involved in spatial operations and mappings; these paths and experiences however escape the conventional map. *Trail Tracking* can be regarded as part of a family of practices in which maps function as reminders of “paths and expressions of experience” (Ingold), and firmly place people back onto the map. A family that links medieval charts to contemporary geomedias as studied by Verhoeff but also includes the maps made by the Situationist movement ←2. According to David Pinder, the Situationists’ records of their psychogeographic tours – *The Naked City* is probably the best well-known example – were not stationary maps but documents of spatial practices. These maps were made by cutting up and re-assembling parts of existing maps in order to produce a map that accounts for the experience of atmospheres. Pinder asserts that the Situationists did not reject the map – as De Certeau does – but instead rearticulated what a map can do; they appropriated the map in order to “renovate” cartography and to explore alternative ways of engagement with the (urban) environment (Pinder 1996, 414-417). In *Mobile screens*, Verhoeff shows that with the advent of mobile, digital location-aware technology, such a performative and renovative cartography has become common practice, which leads to an even greater “convergence of mapping paradigms” in which the tour and the map do not oppose but co-construct each other, and navigation has become the dominant cultural practice (Verhoeff 2012, 94).¹⁰²

Susan Foster connects the relational cartography inherent to both portulan charts as well as contemporary GPS-based media to a particular view on subjectivity. As mentioned above, Cartesian geometry privileges a stationary subject, separated from the object. By contrast, Foster appreciates the portolan chart as a prototype of a relational understanding of subjectivity: “Rather than offering a bird’s-eye view of the world as projected from a static viewing subject, the Portolan chart documents identity as a fluid collaboration between reader and landscape” (2008, 170). In a rather similar vein, Maaïke Bleeker links movement vision as well to (relational) subjectivity. Instead of a distinctive ‘I’ that looks at the world as if this were an autonomous object, movement vision points to a process of

102 Verhoeff coins the phrase “visual regime of navigation” which characterises contemporary society; regime here does not refer to a system of restriction, but to a paradigm or cultural logic based on mobility as a relational, material practice (2012, 13-16).

co-construction, in which both subject and world emerge, and also disappear (2008a, 163). Contemporary navigation and cartography reveal a spatial and cultural logic that connects situated and corporeal knowledge to a relational understanding of subjectivity, a logic that is also at work in *Trail Tracking*, and closely connected to the concept of politics of location.

Thinking subjectivity through space: politics of location

In *Trail Tracking*, the situated knowledge of the spectator is a vital ingredient of the performance, necessary to perform cartography. Situated knowledge is also key to what the poet Adrienne Rich introduced as *politics of location*. Politics of location is a strategy for articulating the particularity of specific locations and (theoretical) positions, often deployed and discussed in feminist theory, as a critical perspective on dominant, homogeneous representations and as a strategy for accounting for the multiple differences amongst women (Braidotti 2011, 2004; Kirby 1993). It is not my intention to use the concept for a feminist reading of *Trail Tracking*; instead I take some of the baggage of this particular field to demonstrate the close yet dynamic links between location and the subject, and to unpack the concept in relation to *Trail Tracking's* dramaturgy of situatedness. In *Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement* (1996), Caren Kaplan observes that for “many Euro-American feminist theorists, the concept of location offers a solution to the universalizing gestures of masculinist thought, providing a way of rearticulating marginality or particularity” (144). Politics of location also open up the feminist discourse from within, giving voice to black or non-Western feminists to produce counter-knowledge to Western feminism (Braidotti 2004, 59-60).

The work of Adrienne Rich is discussed by Kathleen Kirby, in “Thinking through the Boundary: The Politics of Location, Subjects, and Space” (1993). Kirby describes how Rich approaches location as a web of different, simultaneously active spatial spheres. When she refers for instance to the United States as her country of origin, this implicates a national identity, as well as a nation state, a particular place on the globe, and also works as a frame which inevitably influences the way she observes the world and in turn, the way she is perceived by others. Thus, instead of understanding location as one particular point in space, Rich radically opens up this notion of one-ness and shows how location is a product of many interwoven, interfering spatial layers, a “fabric of continually shifting sites and boundaries” (Kirby 1993, 176; cf. Massey 1994). Rich’s approach is a way of thinking subjectivity through space: a subject is connected to and produced by all these spatial spheres or “territories of meaning,” diverging from micro-political education and schooling to macro-economics and politics (Kirby 1993, 182). As a consequence, subjectivity eludes one-ness too; it has no core or center. Many postmodern theories present subjectivity as a plural collection of subject positions and localities. Kirby finds this approach to the subject somewhat problematic, as it presents subjectivity as only an outer surface on which these positions by coincidence appear, whereas subjectivity also involves a sense of interiority, which provides impulses and records traces of experi-

ence. She points at the corporeal, material connections between subject and location: “The subject and its form, subjects and their natures, are tied into political commitments and ethical positions by nature of being tied into particular material spaces, like bodies or countries, ghettos or suburbs, kitchens or boardrooms” (175). In “Transporting the subject” (2002), Caren Kaplan provides a similar argument, when she critically remarks that many mobility theories tend to produce disembodied mobile subjects, through their focus on technological innovation and progress: “The self is believed to have expanded capacities as soon as it is released from the fixed location of the body, built environment, or nation. But the self is always somewhere, always located in some sense in some place, and cannot be totally unhoused” (2002, 34). Both Kirby and Kaplan do not confine the subject to the house, on the contrary; they attest instead to a fluid, yet situated notion of subjectivity. In line with this, but taking a firm vitalist and affirmative stance in the debate, for feminist theorist Rosi Braidotti the politics of location instills a theory of radical difference, and is at the heart of what she terms the “nomadic subject” (2011).

Drawing on Gilles Deleuze and Luce Irigaray amongst others, Braidotti presents a (neo)material approach to the subject as always involved in a process of multifaceted becomings, as it passes through (socially) embodied and embedded positions, is driven by affects and desire, and emanates from its relations with both human and non-human forces of composition (Braidotti 2011; 2004, 102-120). Nomadic subjectivity suggests a continuous metamorphosis but also draws on “situated cartographies” with which theoretical, historical, and social relations and positions can be mapped, analysed and questioned, or creatively countered (Dolphijn/Van der Tuin 2012, 14). For Braidotti, the nomadic subject is indubitably connected to a radical ethics of transformation, a force of resistance directed against dualist thought, claims of universality, fixed or stable identities; nomadism is not about “fluidity without borders but rather an acute awareness of the nonfixity of boundaries” (2011, 66). Relevant for the present discussion is that her cartographies are immanently spatiotemporal; she makes way for situated histories and also backwards oriented trajectories, for understanding locations as embedded and embodied memories or as reservoirs of counter-knowledge (2011a, 271).¹⁰³

Trail Tracking brings politics of location into practice, on the much more modest scale of the performance’s dramaturgical strategies. The performance reveals location as a densely layered reality, a fabric which weaves together the economic-industrial space of the railway station, the temporary coordinates of the theatre space, the ‘over there’ of the performer, spaces of affects, and places of memory. This morphing ‘here’ is also a way of thinking subjectivity through space, as the maps of *Trail Tracking* draw on the spectator’s situated knowledge, invite spatial and sensory awareness, and induce self-reflexivity. Navigation in this performance entails a traversing of various embodied positions, in

103 See for a slightly extended discussion of the concept in relation to *Trail Tracking*, Groot Nibbelink (2009).

which bodies appear as not only the vehicles for displacement but also as the carriers of memories and the locus of desire, travelling simultaneously in the past, present and future. *Trail Tracking* exposes navigation as an intersubjective process of collaborative exchange, through which spectators make themselves known to the performer and find their bearings. Subjectivity then too is a “fabric of continually shifting sites and boundaries” (Kirby). By installing a situated perspective, spectators are invited to insert the different tracks and traces into the map of their subjectivity; a cartography of plural time-spaces and multiple viewpoints that enables to touch upon a sense of direction while one is on the move. *Trail Tracking* opens up a space for minor, subjugated knowledge and engages the spectators into a process of articulating particularity. Politics of location thus points to and accommodates the heterogeneity of embodied, embedded spectators.

Witnessed presence¹⁰⁴

Trail Tracking's strategies of thinking subjectivity through space lead to a remarkable piece of performative cartography, dealing with drawing and redrawing maps, taking place three quarters of the way through the hour long performance. It is a moment where it is not the spectator – the usual witness – but the performer who gives witness to the presence of the spectator, which makes it a remarkable piece of the becoming-spectator of the performer as well. The spectator is asked to enter a train carriage, put a record on, turn out the lights and take a seat. In the darkened carriage the spectator listens to a story told by the performer over the phone, which is the recounted story of the childhood route the spectator has provided during his maneuvers through the railway station. The performer composes and redraws the map of the spectator's childhood, by using slightly different scale and projection technologies. The story, for instance, is organised by a Google Earth inspired storytelling technique of zooming in – from the city, to the street, to a front-door, to that particular life related to the front-door – or zooming out. Another storytelling mode is that of enlarging sensory details: “it is winter, the streets are white, the car of the neighbours is white, your doorstep is white”.¹⁰⁵ The story is told in the present tense, in order to explicitly address the perspective of childhood.

In one of my interviews with Dries Verhoeven, he informed me that most of the spectators were deeply moved by these recounted mappings. When I asked him why, he was hesitant to provide an explanation, as he did not have any, and preferred to reply by demonstration. He then posed some questions about my childhood home and next improvised a story in which he recounted my answers. Strangely enough, I was emotionally moved as well. When Verhoeven mentioned my parents for instance, it felt like he knew them, while

104 The section's title refers to a research project by Dutch designer and researcher Caroline Nevejan, in which she investigates how digital interfaces can create proximity and reciprocity, even over large geographical distances.

105 Verhoeven, rehearsal notes *Trail Tracking*, my translation. See PDS.

at the same time I knew he did not. Verhoeven: “It just works. To me, the word ‘Wim’ is just a three letter word, but to you it is the name of your father: an entire life is related to that word.”¹⁰⁶ When a performer in *Trail Tracking* recounts that the stairs were grey, or that they were cracked, to the performer these are just the words ‘grey’ or ‘crack’. However, to the spectator they open up a space of intensities: it is a particular grey that evokes a certain feeling, the crack is related to particular moments of disturbed silence, or of sneaking around, or of someone who is not supposed to be there, and so on. A word like ‘grey’ thus achieves the qualities of a deictic marker. As mentioned above, in relation to the “You are here” flyer – which is also the motto of the navigable map of course – deictic utterances are empty words until they are appropriated in a particular time and space. *Trail Tracking’s* deictic markers link space, location and subjectivity, and solicit engagement.

One may perhaps argue that these recounted geographies are again a moment of ‘freezing mobility’ that brings the corporeal archive to rest. Instead I think this is a moment in which relational subjectivity materialises, in which corporeal matter comes to matter and installs a sense of connectivity. It is somehow comforting, when a stranger bears witness to personal experiences, even if they are entirely trivial, or perhaps exactly because they are trivial. It reminds me of the closing lines of *De Avonden* (1947), a classic in Dutch literature, in which Gerard Reve describes a young man who feels existentially estranged from his parents. After ten extremely long days in his parents’ house, in which all the nauseating details of this habitual hell are penned down in a diary, the protagonist concludes his diary with relieve: “It has been noticed. It has not remained unseen,” which also implicates the reader of course.¹⁰⁷ In *Trail Tracking*, an actual living, breathing person sees and notices. At the end of the performance, the spectator is asked to open his suitcase, which appears to contain a pillow. The spectator then is invited to lie on a bed that is mounted on the tracks, to put the phone down and leave it aside, and to rest his head on the pillow. As soon as the spectator lies down, the bed starts moving slowly, as it is drawn over the tracks, out of the railway station. While leaving the station, the spectator sees someone waving on a raised platform and this is the first and only eye contact between the performer and the spectator, after an hour-long conversation. The spectator waves back. A wave: it has been witnessed, it did not remain unseen.

The cartography of theatre

We may think of the maps that are drawn in and through *Trail Tracking* as assemblages: flows of semiotics, histories, memories, intensities, bearings of real-and-imagined spaces, all of which can be understood as ways of thinking subjectivity through space. *Trail Tracking* creates affective and material relationships with one’s own bearings, and provides the spectator with a space for discovering oneself, while on the move. The virtu-

106 “Performing Stories”, interview with Verhoeven (2008), my translation. See PDS.

107 “Het is gezien. Het is niet onopgemerkt gebleven”, my translation.

al map plots a route through the railway station, whereas the actualised maps facilitate a process of articulating particularity. The map thus is negotiated in a process of “constant modification where each encounter with the map produces new meanings and engagements with the world” (Dodge et al 2009, 9).

This chapter investigated performative cartography as a staging strategy. Performative cartography creates stages and theatre spaces on the basis of shifting and collaboratively maintained coordinates; it opens up places and spaces to layered realities; it investigates embodied forms of mobility, addresses the spectator’s situatedness, and defines spectatorship as a process of articulating particularity. The multiplicity of cartography substitutes the linear, logocentric structure of dramatic theatre, and offers a model for describing the compositional strategies that mark the postdramatic landscape: strategies which make room for layered spatial practices and that create dramaturgies of situatedness. I presented theatre as a navigational practice, where navigation proved to be involved with the continuous assessment and negotiation of one’s bearings, and as a creative investigation of one’s relationship to the spaces through which one moves and that are created through movement. As an epistemological tool, cartography exposes the performer-spectator-space constellation as being plugged into an open-ended map, which allows for staging connections between various theoretical concepts and models, ranging from feminist theory to architectural observations, to models for city planning and analysis of urban interfaces.

This chapter also mapped the ongoing encounter between the nomadic and the theatre. Through my discussion of politics of location and the focus on embodied, situated spectatorship, this chapter presents a similar argument as in the previous chapter, although taking another route. *Trail Tracking’s* situated and embodied cartographies sustain my view of the nomadic as not a form of loose, directionless wandering; instead, the encounter with the theatre reveals the nomadic as a series of local operations – operations that can be regarded as an ongoing investigation of the relationship between place, location and subjectivity. These operations are procedural navigations: a creative reading and making of spaces through which one moves and that are created through movement.

Dodge et al. note that performative cartography demonstrates how the world takes shape by how we act upon the world; a map does not simply describe or explain the world, “it describes the world as exposed to our method of questioning” (2009, 12). Performative cartography makes way for understanding how both subjects and worlds are involved in a co-constitutive process in which they simultaneously appear and disappear, and points to a relational understanding of subjectivity. This process is also at work in the next chapter, where I will discuss Ontroerend Goed’s *The Smile Off Your Face*. Although based on a rather different staging strategy, *The Smile* just like *Trail Tracking* deals with worldmaking processes; a world that unfolds through a diffractive reading of scales, from the geographies closest in to wider socio-political spheres, through which both subjects and world emerge in a process of continuously zooming in, and zooming out.

4 DIAGRAMS

A nomad does not necessarily move

In this chapter I explore patterns of de- and reterritorialisation in the closest and most intimate domains of the theatrical encounter, that of sensory perception. I do so by taking *The Smile Off Your Face* by the Flemish company Ontroerend Goed as my theoretical object. Contrary to the other cases in this study, in this performance the mobility of the spectator takes a somewhat different form, as the spectators are seated in a wheelchair, blindfolded, with their hands tied. Equally, it could be argued that in this performance movement and mobility are the defining parameters. Whereas a performance like *Call Cutta* targets the conventions of the theatre space on the level of global economy, *The Smile* upsets the notion of territory on the scale of proximity. Instead of extreme separation, the encounter between the performer and the spectator is one of close physical contact, and literally addresses the boundary between both. This performance experiments with sense perception, intimate experience and imagination, and due to the personal address is quite ‘moving’ in terms of emotional impact. The address to the senses incites, however, even more radical forms of movement, as it mobilises conventions of spectatorship; it deterritorialises the theatre as theatron – a place for looking or watching – and instead reterritorialises the theatre as a sensorium, as the theatre space becomes an environment in which all the senses are addressed simultaneously.

My focus in this chapter does not concern the senses in performance as object of enquiry in itself; I rather look at how this particular address to the senses creates *spaces of proximity* and stages of interiority. My aim is to elucidate how movements in the realm of the small, the close and the private unfold towards the infinitely large of subjectivity itself and towards relationships between self and world. In this chapter I introduce the *diagram*, as a staging strategy that invites spectators into a fundamentally open process, while at the same time the composition of this process provides the conditions for the

spectators' mode of engagement. In "Diagrams as Piloting Devices in the Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze" (2001) Kenneth Knoespel points out that the Greek 'diagramma' refers to the process of marking out something by way of drawing lines, figures, forms, or plans. Remarkably, it also carries a connotation of crossing out, of redrawing or reconfiguration, which indicates the diagram's qualities of transformation, differentiation and potentiality (147). This expectancy of redrawing points to the double nature of the diagram: the diagram is firstly a stabilising force, as it gestures towards definition; and secondly, the diagram is open to change, re-articulation and reviewing (148). The open-ended nature of the diagram may explain its frequent use in performative architecture (Spurr 2007; Vidler 2000). As mentioned earlier, performative architecture does not approach designed space as static, fixed or finished at the moment of construction, but instead is interested in how designed space invites performance and in turn changes in accordance with use →5. On a similar basis, one may think of play, games, laboratories and other experimental set-ups as organised through diagrams. Diagrams provide the conditions for play and give directions, without prescribing or determining the outcome. Diagrams then are piloting devices, to borrow Knoespel's terminology, as they provide a structure, are directional and intimate a "horizon of thought", yet they are open to various use and achieve their form only in actualisation (Knoespel 2001, 148). Diagrams are "central to a theory of emergence," argues Knoespel (159), which also characterises my approach to *The Smile's* diagrammatic design and emergent dramaturgy.

This idea of the diagram as a piloting device is quite relevant, as Deleuze actually employs the diagram to describe the (abstract) forces and power relations at work when material forms or social realities come into existence. Deleuze qualifies the diagram as a cartography which maps the relations between forces, in any social field. These forces or functions only become manifest in the assemblages through which they are actualised (Deleuze 1986/2006, 32). Therefore, the diagram is an *abstract machine*, an engine or force which allows the actual to emerge from the virtual ←3: "The diagrammatic or abstract machine does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs the real that is yet to come" (Deleuze/Guattari 2004, 157). In the essay mentioned above, Knoespel describes how the diagram appears at several moments in Deleuze's work, notably in his studies on Foucault and Leibniz. Deleuze observes, in relation to Foucault's study of Panopticism, how the panoptical prison is not only an optical and spatial arrangement that creates relations of seeing without being seen, but organises behaviour and imposes a particular conduct. As such, the panopticon must be regarded as the materialisation of a certain (societal) function – in this case punishment and control – a function which is distinct, yet inseparable from its concrete manifestation. The panopticon is a diagram in which this specific function becomes apprehensible; the diagram itself is a "functioning", that cannot be separated yet "must be detached from any specific use" (Deleuze 2006, 30).

The attempt to describe how abstract forces achieve a specific articulation also reverberates in the folds of the Baroque house, an allegory with which Deleuze investigates

principles of infinity and seriality in the work of the Franco-German philosopher Leibniz. The fold is a figuration of the infinite itself. It involves a movement pattern in which multiplicities are folded into each other and unfold upon the other – one may think of inflections of body and mind, of exteriority and interiority, of the public and the private, the small and the large, as always mutually connected, through endless variation (Deleuze 1993/2006a; Bal 2002, 87, 102). The folds of the Baroque engage a specific category of relations – also across various historical periods in time: non-centred relations of co-existence and mutual interference. In the introduction to Deleuze’s *The Fold* (1993/2006a), translator and editor Tom Conley suggests that Deleuze’s pleats, furlings and foldings are instances of geophilosophy, as they help to express “our experience of a shrinking globe” where “compressions of time and space” have erased clear-cut distinctions between the inside and the outside, the public and the private, or the global and the local (2006a, xvi).¹⁰⁸ He observes that contemporary artists transform Leibniz’ “*monadology* into *nomadology*” as they fold these territories into each other and deterritorialise them (ibid., italics by the author).¹⁰⁹ Conley’s words capture the subject of this study as well. In this chapter I explore how Deleuzian foldings may help to further articulate such movement patterns in relation to the theatre.

I will elaborate on both these architectural endeavours below and state here that the diagram can be understood as an engine of composition. In *The Smile*, the focus on the spectator’s sensory experience effectuates a thoroughly indeterminate and open situation. Whereas the address to the senses and related spaces of proximity are the pre-given conditions of this performance, the spectator’s response to this address each time newly actualises *The Smile*’s diagram. As such, the performance may be understood as a laboratory, where spectators themselves become a force of composition. I consider the diagram as a useful tool to enquire what is actually subjected to experimentation in this laboratory, and to which particular “horizons of thought” (Knoespel) these experiments point. There are in fact many horizons that emerge in this chapter, as *The Smile* explores the (im)possibility of intimacy and authenticity in the theatre, cuts across debates about participatory performance, plays with theatrical conventions, and experiments with different tonalities of sensation. *The Smile*’s emergent dramaturgy comprises of a twofold movement in which the extremely small is connected to the infinitely large; in which the personal and the intimate reverberate with and within the social and the abstract; in which the scale of proximity unfolds onto the twisting surfaces of advanced capitalism, and vice versa. Deleuze and Guattari remark that a nomad not necessarily moves (2004, 420), and *The Smile* may serve

108 Conley refers here to Deleuze and Guattari’s reflections on the necessity of a geophilosophy in *What is Philosophy?* to account for the conditions of the contemporary lifeworld (2006a, xvi).

109 *Monadology* refers to Leibniz’ use of the term monad. A monad designates an undivided unit, a singularity or ‘oneness’ which is nevertheless a multiplicity because it can be folded in infinite ways (Deleuze 2006a, 25).

to underline this observation.¹¹⁰ Even if the spectator is quite restricted, the perspective of nomadic theatre invites us to understand the constellation of performer, spectator and space as vibrantly mobile.

A wheelchair's thresholds

Have I been kissed by a stranger, just now? Was it real, or did I just imagine it? Until this day, I do not know for certain what actually happened, that particular evening in September 2008 when I visited Ontroerend Goed's performance *The Smile Off Your Face*.¹¹¹ My uncertainty is caused by the particularities of my situation at that time, as I was blindfolded, with hands tied, seated in a wheelchair, and having been wheeled around the performance space for some time until I lost my orientation. With scarcely time to make up my mind on why I had voluntarily exposed myself to this situation, someone gently touches my hands, opens them, leads my hand to feel his face – some beardlike elements afford at least to establish a sense of gender – while he caresses mine. This all happens with much tenderness and it affects me deeply, somehow. But just before it gets too pleasurable, he pulls lightly at my arms, indicating that I am supposed to leave the wheelchair. I will not, I do not want to, my body says, I cannot see anything, I do not know if I will fall. Indeed, when I stand I do fall, or rather, I stumble clumsily out of the wheelchair. It is amazing how this freedom-confining situation in the chair has become my safety zone in such a short time. The alternation of connection and solitude, of ease and discomfort, will prove to be a recurring element throughout the performance and provokes an increased awareness of my presence, as a spectator, in the work.

The ad hoc attachment to the wheelchair perhaps arises from its resemblance to that *other* chair in the theatre: the seat in the auditorium. That seat situates the spectator as a member of the audience: a group of on-lookers, a collective that is often thought to represent the public as part of the social contract of the theatre. To be invited to stand up, to stand out as a single member of the audience and to literally relinquish spectating, can be regarded as a radical inversion of those theatre conventions. The intimacy of this one-to-one encounter produces ambiguous relationships between the private and the public, between looking and other modalities of perception. My passage into the realm of *The Smile* as described above immediately touches upon this ambiguity: instead of a semi-private seat in a darkened auditorium, I stand out and am seen, although this is a

110 Deleuze and Guattari qualify movement in this specific context as extensive, connected to a body going from point to point. Speed on the contrary – not to be confused with fastness – is intensive, which may even involve slowness or immobility. Speed constitutes a body of parts or particles, whose atoms “occupy or fill a smooth space in the manner of a vortex, with the possibility of springing up at any point” (2004, 420-421, italics by the authors).

111 *The Smile Off Your Face* premiered in 2003, achieving its more or less final form after about three years and toured intensively until 2012. See PDS.

private encounter. I am a spectator but I cannot see anything. I am a singular spectator, yet I belong to a group of spectators: I have been waiting together with some of them, in the foyer of a small theatre in The Hague, strikingly called *Paradise*. We have seen each other, slightly nervous or lightheartedly expectant, waiting to enter the theatre, one by one. We have seen people exit the performance space, moved to tears, or confused, or filled with extreme joy. My experience probably could be archived into the Department of Confusion, hovering somewhere between ease and unease, between giving trust and feeling embarrassed. Stepping out of the wheelchair serves as a threshold on which these in-betweens suddenly appear.¹¹² Several other in-betweens show up too, on that threshold, themes that also characterise today's debate on participatory spectatorship and that will emerge throughout this chapter: the (inter)active versus the passive spectator; freedom of experience versus manipulation and confinement; individualism versus community in the theatre.

Because of the personal address to the spectator, it seems apt to take up a first-person perspective again ←1, when describing this performance. I do so in order to establish a sense of interiority, to create an impression of the performance's inside. Yet with the figure of the fold in mind, this way of traversing and engendering spaces of proximity also creates openings towards other spatial and theatrical registers. In *The Fold*, Deleuze observes that the fold is always a movement in two directions, which does not divide in parts but creates mutual inflections. The fold is not a "fold in two – since every fold can only be thus – but a 'fold-of-two', an *entre-deux*, something 'between' in the sense that a difference is being differentiated" (2006a, 11, italics by the author/translator). As the personal impression of *The Smile* indicates, the sensation of the in-between in this case exposes a differential relation with the conventions of theatre, and is in fact opened up by a play with these conventions. Right from the start of the performance these conventions are put to the test, in such a manner that, interestingly, the *inversion* of theatre conventions self-referentially redirects the attention back to the theatrical event itself. The *entre-deux* in this case produces (self)reflexivity, in which particular parameters indicate oppositional directions, yet fold back onto each other in order to arrive at an intensification of traits. Such a twofold movement is, in fact, astutely captured by the object of the wheelchair itself. A chair on wheels, supporting a spectator, carries within itself the idea of mobile spectatorship. The suggested freedom is however compromised by that same situation, as the spectator is prevented from moving independently due to the blindfold and tied hands. The physical confinement

112 The threshold is a figuration of the fold, just as labyrinths, curvilinear forms, reverberations, or temporal modulations (Conley in Deleuze 2006a, ix-xx; Deleuze 2006a, 3). In their introduction to *Deleuze and the Fold: A Critical Reader*, the editors Van Tuinen and McDonell remark that Deleuze approaches the limits of material sensations as "thresholds of consciousness"; the limit is a "threshold of the outside on the inside" (2010, 11-12).

addresses the corporeality of spectatorship, precisely through the partial incapacitation of the body. The spectator is disabled from seeing or applauding, which indicates that the spectator is apparently supposed to engage differently with this performance. Limitation in this case paradoxically points to an expansion of spectatorship, as *The Smile* foregrounds the sensorial, the experimental and the playful. These modalities of perception experiment with the spectator's personal experience. I understand 'experience' here as the conscious perception of both self and world, and of perceiving this relation, which induces an engagement with one's capacity to be affected.¹¹³ Whereas this focus on experience suggests a certain freedom – experiences are usually thought to be personal, non-restricted, 'owned' by the "experiencer" (Nelson in Bay-Cheng et al. 2010, 45), the spectator is also manipulated. This manipulation in turn redirects the attention back to the theatre, because if there is one place in the world where audiences are manipulated, and imagination is being tricked *and* triggered, it would be the theatre. In sum, the wheelchair's thresholds evoke an array of magnifying glasses directed towards the theatre itself.

This self-referentiality is quite characteristic of the work of Ontroerend Goed. The Ghent-based company was founded about fifteen years ago and since then they have provoked their audience with performances that always seek to address the theatre event as a direct encounter between performers and spectators, whether confronting the spectators through chaos, nudity, meta-theatrical dialogue, one-to-one performances or larger scale performances set up as energetic, noisy parties. However varied these forms are, this commitment to the live performance is a primary animating principle in the company's work.¹¹⁴ The direct encounter between performers and spectators in *The Smile* alludes to Hans-Thies Lehmann's "event/situation", although Lehmann does not restrict this particular subset of postdramatic theatre to one-to-one performances (Lehmann 2006, 104-107). In *Postdramatic Theatre*, he argues that the postdramatic event does not represent reality, but foregrounds the real itself. This event involves "the execution of acts that are real in the here and now and find their very fulfilment in the very moment they happen, without necessarily leaving any traces of meaning or a cultural monument" (2006, 104). To a certain extent, the event *does* leave traces, and neither is bereft of meaning, as I hope to demonstrate within the course of this chapter. Coupled with the term 'situation', Lehmann adds a dimension of spatiality and a sense of interiority to the event, by observing that spectators are playfully put into a position from which they are unable to face the perceived but are participating in it – which *The Smile* takes quite literally. Theatre thus is "no longer spectatorial but instead a social situation" which "eludes objective description, because for each individual participant

113 See also the *English Oxford Dictionary* online, Oxford University Press 2013, entry no. 4.

114 "Masseurs van de fantasie", interview with DeVriendt (2009); Bram Smeyers, "Theater uit de Hoge Hoed" (2004), see PDS.

it represents an experience that does not match the experience of others" (106).¹¹⁵ Although I use a first-person perspective as well, the underlying aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that despite the personal address, we may still investigate how these subjective experiences are staged and designed, and move beyond the mere personal description. In relation to *The Smile*, it is worth mentioning that Lehmann also gives testimony to the self-referential qualities of the event/situation. With the focus on the ephemerality of the event itself and the responsibility of the participants in the event/situation, the vulnerability of the process becomes its primary mode of existence. Theatre then "simultaneously takes a step towards the dissolution of theatre *and* to its amplification" (124, italics by the author). A similar dissolution-amplification axis is active in *The Smile*, in the wheelchair's thresholds, where the inversion of theatre conventions redirects the attention back towards the theatre itself.

Pleats of proximity

As indicated above, the wheelchair literally mobilises spectatorship. Pushing the wheelchair onto the stage 'charges' the stage with movement, destabilises spatial conventions, and produces a relation of proximity with the performer, all of which cause the stage to implode. Although the term implosion has strong connotations of destruction and disappearance, I use this word here to indicate that the stage is shattered from within, *in order to appear again differently*. In *The Smile*, akin to the other cases in this study, the spectator is put on stage, but instead of the recurring emphasis on the gap between performers and spectators, in *No Man's Land*, or *Call Cutta's* distribution of stage and auditorium across the globe, *The Smile* merges the auditorium and the stage by bringing performers and spectators extremely close. To complicate things further: the spectator is put on stage, yet the stage is obscured from view. This re-enforces the questions put by this performance: where is the stage exactly, what is the nature of this stage, what are the basic conditions for a stage to appear? The borders and coordinates of the respective territories have become unclear, which does not mean however, that the territories have disappeared. Instead of an erasure of the distinction, the auditorium nests within the stage, and the stage captures the auditorium. As argued earlier, the spectator on the stage distorts the stage *from the inside* ←1. This situation resembles the empty centre Heiner Goebbels referred to, in his discussion of *Call Cutta* (2007, 123), a staged and simultaneously remarkably undefined sphere, and also alludes to the incommensurability of Lehmann's event/situation. Whether performers and spectators share a distance of

¹¹⁵ The term situation also alludes to the construction of situations as advocated by the Situationist movement (Lehmann 2006, 106) ←2. The event in turns has its precedents in 1960s performance art, Events and Happenings (ibid., 104). Allan Kaprow's Happenings in the late 1950s sought "to provide participants with an immediate, sensual experience of reality" (Berghaus 2005, 86). A similar contemporaneity reverberates in the Happenings by Wolf Vostell, organised in Paris and Germany during 1961-1966, as his dé-collages used the one-to-one encounter in order to raise perceptual awareness (ibid., 96-98).

6000 miles or the same square metre, in both cases the performer no longer occupies the centre of the stage. Fundamentally different from Peter Brook's empty space, the performer has left the centre; the stage itself has no centre; the stage deterritorialises by means of an engine that is the spectator. A spectator who is not mobile per se; just as a nomad does not necessarily move.

Alan Read, in *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement*, remarks that contemporary performance often refuses to be discussed in dialectical terms of presence or absence. Instead they seem to be involved in processes of "appearing to appear" (2008, 16). The same might be argued for the stage in *The Smile*: caught up in a process of appearing to appear, the focus lies not on what there is to be seen on a stage, but instead on the conditions of appearance themselves. In *The Smile*, the stage folds back onto itself to explore its own conditions of appearance and folds out towards the infinite space of spectator's subjectivity. Already present in the wheelchair's thresholds, but demonstrated in more detail below, the address to the senses deterritorialises the theatre as a seeing-place, and instead engages the spectator in a process of becoming-space. Before the actual encounter with the first performer, the spectator is immersed in a soundscape of noises, chatter and laughter, and a scenography of indistinctive but pleasant scents. It is agreeably warm as well: space meets body temperature. The theatre space therefore becomes a *sensorium*: the spectator is invited to probe the surrounding environment through all the senses.¹¹⁶ As various authors in *The Senses in Performance* (2007) indicate, tuning in on the tactile, the auditory, and particularly the olfactual produces borderless, formless spaces, in other words: smooth space.¹¹⁷ Compared to *No Man's Land* or *Call Cutta*, which tapped into the smooth space of urban space, *The Smile* constructs a smooth stage by the appeal to the senses and close physical contact with a performer.

Due to this particular address, the performance does not only take place on the (in) visible stage shared by both the performer and the spectator, but enters the private space of the spectator. The stage, as a platform for performance, becomes a *stage of interiority*. A scent does not stay on the outside, but enters the spectator's olfactory system; the sense of being touched is felt in or below the skin. Because the spectator cannot see, the performance highlights another personal space as well, namely that of the imagination. This interior stage folds the outside onto the inside and vice versa: the address to the senses provokes an increased sensitivity for the surrounding environment, yet the spectator's attention is also drawn inwards and installs an orientation towards the spectator's subjectivity, which, as discussed earlier, is a process in which both subject and world

116 In *The Senses in Performance* (Banes/Lepecki 2007), the term *sensorium* alternately is used to indicate a subject's sense perception system ('the senses') and to indicate spaces or environments that purposefully address the senses in perception. I use the latter understanding of the term.

117 See in particular the introduction by the editors Sally Banes and André Lepecki, and the contributions by Fleischer, Welton, and Fisher.

appear and also disappear ←3. The interior stage withdraws from yet also extends the physical stage on which performers and spectators meet. Directed towards interiority, the stage tends to disappear, but only to re-emerge elsewhere, as it reterritorialises on the body and mind of the spectator. Oriented towards disappearance, the infinitely small resonates with the endlessly large of subjectivity.

In *The Smile*, the stage ‘happens’ in the encounter between performer and spectator, nests in the affective spaces evoked by this encounter and by the enveloping environment, folds into interiority, and unfolds towards the spectator’s subjectivity. Under these conditions, the stage no longer has a spatial coherence. Put in other words: the stage has been captured by the *event*. In *The Logic of Sense* (1969/1990), Deleuze turns to the *paradox*, and more specifically to two stories by Lewis Carroll, to characterise the event. He provides a description that reverberates with the inward-outward movements of *The Smile*’s spaces of proximity:

Alice and Through the Looking-Glass involve a category of very special things: events, pure events. When I say “Alice becomes larger,” I mean that she becomes larger than she was. By the same token, however, she becomes smaller than she is now. Certainly, she is not bigger and smaller at the same time. She is larger now; she was smaller before. But it is at the same moment that one becomes larger than one was and smaller than one becomes. This is the simultaneity of a becoming whose characteristic is to elude the present. Insofar as it eludes the present, becoming does not tolerate the separation or the distinction of the before and after, or of past and future. It pertains to the essence of becoming to move and to pull in both directions at once: Alice does not grow without shrinking, and vice versa. Good sense affirms that in all things there is a determinable sense or direction [*sens*]; but paradox is the affirmation of both senses or directions at the same time (in Boudas 1993, 39).

It goes beyond the scope of this study to fully explore Deleuze’s understanding of the event, but I would like to give a few observations on his approach to this philosophical concept, because the event provides the ground on which the diagram operates – and vice versa, the diagram causes the event to emerge. To Deleuze, the event is pure movement; it never arrives at ‘the same’ but is always in a state of becoming. As indicated in the quote above, the event eludes the present. The event resides in virtuality, it belongs to the plane of immanence, to the not-yet-actualised ←3. Yet the event needs to materialise in some way, however abstract or obscure, in order to be known. In *The Fold*, Deleuze remarks that the event needs the intervention of “a sort of screen” which allows the event to move from the virtual realm of “chaotic multiplicity” to the actual, and to emerge as matter (2006a, 86). This “screen” then functions as the abstract machine of the diagram, as it distinguishes the virtual from the actual. Both these modalities of real-

ity are components of the event, as Deleuze and Guattari argue in *What is Philosophy?*, where they describe the event as

the part that eludes its own actualization in everything that happens. The event is not the state of affairs. It is actualized in a state of affairs, in a body, in a lived, but it has a shadowy and secret part that is continually subtracted from or added to its actualization: in contrast with the state of affairs, it neither begins nor ends but has gained or kept the infinite movement to which it gives consistency (1994, 156).

Deleuze's event functions on the level of onto-epistemology, as life, thought, affects, things, and in particular concepts themselves are events, always involved with change and differentiation (Deleuze/Guattari 1994, 158-161). It makes sense then, that Deleuze regularly refers to theatre, which is equally based in perpetual movement. Yet in theatre discourse, the event is often not regarded as eluding the present, but precisely as the vehicle of presence, centred on the here and now of the performance as a live event (cf. Lehmann 2006, 104). The event in performance theory is similar to Deleuze's concept equated with fluidity and potentiality, yet it must also be acknowledged that it has gained a much more solidified form, as the Event itself has become a sort of genre, also implicit in Lehmann's account. These two rather different readings of the event, one philosophical and one theatrical, encounter each other somewhere halfway when further investigating *The Smile*. *The Smile* gives 'ground' to the fluidity of the event, by subjecting the lived experience to a process of (regulated) experimentation.

Into the laboratory

The Smile consists of four encounters with different performers on particular spots in the performance space. With an interval of about ten minutes, spectators enter the room by means of the wheelchair and start their personal trajectory. My first encounter is not over yet: after having left the wheelchair, back on my feet again, I am guided around with care until suddenly I am pushed against a wall, rather violently. Without the guiding hands I feel quite lonely – particularly because I had just begun to surrender myself to the situation; I considered whether to stop wondering what would happen next, and rather 'see' what actually happens instead. Now I have just been left, or so it seems. To make things worse, a photograph is taken of me – or at least, I hear the sound of a camera clicking – which is quite an intrusive act, as it crosses the borders of privacy. Ontroerend Goed member Alexander Devriendt informed me in an interview that this once led a very angry spectator to leave immediately, because this man associated this particular scene with Abu Graib-like acts of imprisonment.¹¹⁸ My concern here is not whether this association was 'just' or not, but on the contrary to understand this reaction as one of many potential

¹¹⁸ "Masseurs van de fantasie" (2009), see PDS.

readings of this scene. In my memory for instance, this moment is primarily archived as an auditory sensation. Amidst the distant chatter of voices and noises, the camera click stands out as a nearby sound, which increases spatial awareness.

In the same interview, Devriendt explains that the company did not allocate any specific ‘content’ or meaning to this scene, which I regard as indicative of *The Smile’s* diagrammatic design. Ontroerend Goed approaches all the relays on this trajectory as acts of providing the conditions for encounters. Devriendt characterises *The Smile’s* design as an open-ended scenario, and literally qualifies the rules in play as rules of play. In the second encounter, the spectator is gently thrown out of the wheelchair to land onto a bed, next to a female performer. She snuggles up close, places her leg on top of yours and starts to inquire about pleasant and secret memories. Devriendt recounts that spectators respond very differently to this situation: they resist or give in; they share their deepest secrets or treat the encounter as a playful and agreeable experiment.¹¹⁹ These and other encounters in *The Smile* render this performance into a laboratory of human behaviour; a laboratory in which experience and experimentation coincide. In fact, the first entries of the *Oxford English Dictionary* define experience precisely in terms of experimentation: the action of putting to the test, to trial in order to make experience of, to fulfil in practice; a tentative procedure, an experiment.¹²⁰ *The Smile* traverses the heterogeneity of spectators: each trajectory is a singular laboratory, a personal yet cooperative investigation of the value of distance and closeness in performer-spectator relationships. This really makes *The Smile* an “essay in intimacy”, as reviewer Joyce McMillan accurately put it.¹²¹ It is a collaborative essay, in fact, with as many authors as there will have been (apprentice) spectators to the performance.

The conjunction of a set of parameters and an inherently open-ended situation is not only a prerequisite for games, essays, or laboratorial experiments; it also characterises *The Smile’s* diagrammatic design. Both Kenneth Knoespel and Sher Doruff characterise the diagram as the becoming-matter of ideas or meaning, for instance as they materialise in sketches, scribbled notes, a preliminary outline of a text, or (re-used) examples or concepts (Knoespel 2001, 146-147; Doruff 2009). Becoming-matter produces an inseparable connection between meaning and form: that what *The Smile* is ‘about’, is actually inseparable from the way the diagram materialises in the lived experience. And yet, the diagram is an abstract machine that in itself has no specific meaning, as Deleuze remarks in *Fou-*

119 When performed in a remote village in Marocco, some people shared never-told secrets, whereas in other geographic areas spectators were inclined to answer in less serious and more playful ways.

120 *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 2013.

121 Joyce MacMillan, “The Smile off Your Face” (2008), see PDS. Intimacy is quite a contested concept, when put in conjunction with theatre, as the personal, private and confidential is often seen as contradictory to the staged, the social and the public ‘nature’ of theatre. In my view, spectators can still experience a performance such as *The Smile* as very intimate, even if they are well aware of this experience being staged. See Groot Nibbelink (2012).

cault: “It is a machine that is almost blind and mute, even though it makes others see and speak” (2006, 30). In the end, the spectators’ personal responses to intimate or intrusive behaviour define the (temporary) content of the scene. Experimentation is the substance of this performance, which in turn is formative for and informed by lived experience.

Thinking through the diagram

As mentioned above, Deleuze and Guattari approach the diagram as an abstract machine, a force that has neither substance nor form, yet plays a “piloting role” (Knoespel) in the process of creation, and “reveals the exercise of a force upon other forces” (Deleuze 2006, 30). A diagram produces directions that are “fractal in nature” which may evolve towards stratification but finds its true potential in qualitative differentiation (Deleuze/Guattari 1994, 40). The highly unstable and fluid nature of the diagram brings Deleuze to observe that this abstract machine is actually closer to theatre than it is to the factory; it fosters connections and constantly evolves, it is always intersocial and likely to bring about change (Deleuze 2006, 30).¹²² In *The Smile*, experimentation is quite restricted on the level of concrete actions; yet the lived experience opens up a non-limited space of change and variation. Spectators actively participate in drawing and redrawing the lines that form the diagram, which occasionally results in literally drawing the line – as did the spectator with the Abu Graib association. This particular response is not only indicative of the diagram’s qualitative differentiability, it also addresses the diagram as a conduit of power and control. Despite their relative muteness, diagrams are not neutral and may serve to enquire how diagrams mediate in the production of meaning and function as relays for the constitution and reconceptualisation of knowledge. Diagrams then are *models to think with* or figures to “think through”: they “reveal matrices through which meaning is negotiated on an individual and social level” (Knoespel 2001, 146, 149). This particular understanding of the diagram leads to exploring how *The Smile* rearticulates what can be considered as knowledge or meaning within the context of theatre.

Kenneth Knoespel discusses the diagram as it appears in various publications by Deleuze, mentioning Deleuze’s enquiry into Foucault’s theorisation of Panopticism as one of the earliest manifestations, and his study on Leibniz, the fold and the Baroque house as one of the latest. Both these architectural structures are valuable thinking models to further investigate *The Smile*’s diagram. In *Foucault*, Deleuze regards the panopticon as a diagram in itself. The panopticon is a particular type of prison, conceived by the 18th century social theorist and philosopher Jeremy Bentham, which situates prisoner’s cells around a central observation tower in such a way that the isolated prisoners perceive themselves as always being observed, without being able to see who observes them. The

122 Deleuze emphasises that the diagram “has nothing to do either with a transcendent idea or with an ideological superstructure, or even with an economic infrastructure, which is already qualified by its substance and defined by its form and use” (2006, 32).

inmates internalise this awareness of being observed, which renders the actual occupation of the observation point in fact redundant. The panopticon is a diagram because it designs behaviour. It involves much more than a prison building itself: it establishes intersocial relationships and functions as a conduit for power, control and discipline; it organises patterns of observation and (feelings of) being observed (Foucault 1975/1995, 195-201; Deleuze 2006, 27-38). Such a relationship is rather literally distinguishable in *The Smile*: most of the time, the spectators are subject to a situation in which they are (or feel) observed by performers without being able to observe themselves – this becoming-spectator of the performer is of course also an inversion of theatre conventions.

On the other end of the spectrum we find the folds of the Baroque house. Although I do not pretend to describe this Leibnizian concept in all its complexity, the Baroque house summons up a relationship between matter and the senses on the one hand, and subjectivity on the other, which in relation to *The Smile* should be addressed, even if only in a limited representation of the concept. The Baroque house is an allegory of the fold, and provides Deleuze with a model to approach the Baroque not in terms of a historical genre, but as a style that exceeds historical periodisation (Conley in Deleuze 2006a, xi). This style articulates a particular relationship between interiority and exteriority, seen as both distinct as well as always enfolded into each other. The Baroque house is a two-story house: the upper floor is a closed space without windows, a place of interiority; the lower floor instead opens up to the world outside and designates exteriority. The upper floor houses the soul, as Leibniz put it, a term equated with the mind (Deleuze 2006a, 97). On the base level there is the raw matter of the body living in the world; this floor has windows, which refer to the senses (5).

The division between an upper and lower floor may easily evoke a Cartesian dualism between mind and body, as well as a hierarchy of a body subordinated to the mind. However, it is precisely through the figure of the fold that such a dichotomy is prevented. As mentioned above, the fold is a figuration of infinity and endlessness. Any single unit or monad, whether a piece of cloth, a paper, a soul or a subject, can be folded in an infinite number of ways, and as such the fold is always a variety, a manifestation of potentiality. In the Baroque house, both floors are connected to each other through an infinite series of folds. Impressions on the lower floor unfold onto the upper floor to find their individuated articulation. In turn, the upper floor projects itself onto matter in order to be substantial and find a form of expression (97-98, 114-116). The sensations and movements on the lower floor resonate in the sounds on the upper floor “as if it were a music salon”, and continuously fill up and ripple the folds the soul is made off (4). A soul on the upper floor can never manifest itself directly: there are no windows on this floor. The walls of the upper room are covered with cloths, indicating that the soul itself consists of infinite folds. This interior room then does not suggest an essence of the subject, residing in the mind, but instead articulates infinity present within subjectivity, and the body or matter as the equally infinite form in which the soul expresses itself.

To summarise, the panopticon serves as a reminder that the diagram may be understood as a conduit for power and control, whereas the folds of the Baroque house relate the diagram to the subtle yet complex patterns by which subjectivity becomes ‘matter’.¹²³ The Baroque house envisages subjects as enfolded within the world and vice versa, with the senses functioning as windows onto the world. Previously, the diagram was introduced as the becoming-matter of ideas or meaning. In what follows, I look closer into this (embodied) matter and explore the laboratory of corporeal spectatorship, first by bringing the panopticon to the front, and placing the Baroque house at the back of the stage, whereas later I will switch this scene of enquiry the other way round.

The grid of capital

The Smile manipulates the spectator, exemplified by simple tokens such as the blindfold and the tied hands, which creates a relationship of dependency with the performer. In order to map the relations between forces though in a panopticon-sensorium, in this section I draw a parallel with another performance, which is *Het Sprookjesbordeel* (The Fairy-Tales Brothel, 2001-2005) by the Flemish Toneelhuis, composed by writer-director Peter Verhelst. This performance equally delves into the corporeality of spectatorship, but negotiates the performer-spectator relationship through the most intensive of affects, that of (unfulfilled) desire.¹²⁴ Intoxicated by the close physical contact with a performer, the carnal language of Verhelst and in particular the haptic sensations of touching another body and being touched, spectators are seduced into giving up control, to living their personal imagination, and to falling in love with a stranger. The performance uses a small cell in obscure parts of conventional theatre buildings, such as a cellar or an elevator shaft, which is transformed into an immersive environment: scents of pleasant aromas and of fresh-cut wood, and agreeable warmth invite the single spectator to probe the space through all the senses, and to perceive the skin as a porous membrane between self and world, between body and environment.

Soon after the start of the performance, the spectator lies down on a vibrating bed, blindfolded, and becoming-space shifts towards becoming-corporeal. Another body joins the spectator on the bed, while a voice touches the ears: “Breath in and out the room, the heartbeat of the bed, the warmth”. Cherry juice is dropped onto the corners of the mouth. The performers – ‘masseurs’ or ‘tongue cats’ in Verhelstian vocabulary – tease the spectator by asking not to believe them, while in the mean time they announce they are going to undress. The spectator’s hands are lead to touch the bare skin of the performer, invited to feel the sentence that is said to be inscribed there: “The definition of a labyrinth: it is not about finding the exit, it is about getting lost”. The spectator is seduced

123 Cf. Bleeker, who draws on Elizabeth Grosz when she states that psychological interiority depends on corporeal exteriority; this exteriority can be understood as the very “stuff of subjectivity” (2008, 6).

124 My description is based on Van Campenhout (2003), Verstraete (2003) and Dragstra (2005). See PDS.

by the synaesthetics of language: words seem to have become edible and tactile, to be tasted and swallowed, they are rubbed into the body's surface and felt just below the skin.¹²⁵ *Het Sprookjesbordeel* conjures up erotic fantasies and mutates consciousness: instead of distant reflexivity and control, the spectator becomes an Artaudian 'body without organs', aroused and ready to give in to desire.¹²⁶

As strongly as the spectators are taken in by this performance, they are repelled from it just as forcefully. After forty minutes the blindfold is lifted, the imagined-beloved performer is gone and instead the spectator faces a second, *other* performer. As if that were not enough to cool off, temperatures fall even lower as the spectator is directed towards a door that opens onto the streets on a remote side of the theatre building – left alone with unfulfilled desire and extremely confused feelings of arousal, shame, desire, or embarrassment. Probably the most unnerving thoughts arrive when everyday consciousness sets in, leading the spectator to wonder how it is possible to feel so intimately connected to a stranger, a stranger who is, above all, a performer. The thrill caused by the uniqueness of this personal experience now suddenly starts to falter, as the spectator comes to the realisation of being just one of many, caught up in a theatrical contract, while the performer-beloved has already moved on to serve a new customer. A customer, indeed: the spectator awkwardly resembles a client visiting a brothel. In a parallel to *Call Cutta*, the spectator has been provided with a (theatrical) service, be it with rather different means, as this time the spectator's personal, sensory experience has been hooked up onto a system of consumption.

This junction of experience and consumption brings the experience economy to mind (Pine/Gilmore 1999, 2011), which treats commercial products and services as memorable experiences or *events* that are (seemingly) adjusted to the personal needs and profiles of consumers. Ironically, whereas 1960s performance art presented the live event and the elusive non-repetitive, one-time action as resistant to the logics of reproduction of consumer culture (Allain/Harvie 2014, 221), the experience economy turns the immateriality of experience into a product of consumption. In his discussion of the event/situation, Lehmann briefly mentions the commercial event, but immediately dismisses it as something altogether different (2006, 104). I prefer to use the connection however, to expose how diagrams draw relations with other diagrams. In *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage* (1999), business theorists Joseph Pine and James Gilmore use the theatre as a model for presenting and staging experiences. Performances like *Call Cutta* or *Het Sprookjesbordeel* work the other way round: they address the spectator as

125 The performance evolved out of various texts and essays by Peter Verhelst, such as *Tongkat* (Tongue Cat, 2007) and *Mondschilderingen* (Mouth Paintings, 2002) and the essay "Minuscule Tongvorige droom over goddelijk theater" (A Minuscule Tongue-like Dream about a Devine Theatre, 1998) in which Verhelst envisions a carnal theatre without performer-spectator divisions.

126 Artaud's 'body without organs' describes a non-representational, non-hierarchical, orgasmic and corporeal approach to life in general and bodies in particular, the organs refer here to major forms of knowledge formation, power and organisation (Deleuze/Guattari 2004, 175-184).

a customer. By installing a service relation between performer and spectator, they model the theatre upon formats of capitalism. Similarly to the panoptical diagram of *The Smile*, in *Het Sprookjesbordeel* an impression of individual observation is created, and following the logics of the experience economy, it is suggested that the spectator is personally attended to. There is a fundamental inequality in this distribution of power relations, in which the spectator surrenders and the performer is fully in control. Instead of vision, desire is the dominant regime here; desire which is not fulfilled and capitalises on lack. The very notion of lack transcodes the spectator's body into a "commodity-body" (Massumi 1992, 129). In other words, in *Het Sprookjesbordeel*, the diagram is (re)written on the grid of capital.

In *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari* (1992) Brian Massumi observes that the "grid of capital is simple. Its categorical distinctions are two in number: worker/capitalist and commodity/consumer. [...] The categories do not have to be perceived by the body they apply to [...] in order to be activated. They are automatically in operation in any state of things touched by capital" (128). Wherever an image of capital appears, such as money, stock, wages or desire, such a commodity relation is likely to be actualised (130, 136). Massumi in fact ascribes a number of diagrammatic principles to capital itself: capital is an abstract machine which operates through (unmediated) desire; it "has images but is imageless as such"; it is capable of transforming bodies or state of things; capital is an *operation* that "can be analyzed as a virtual mode of composition" (131). According to performance scholar Elke van Campenhout, *Het Sprookjesbordeel* perversely de-masques this commodity relation, a relation which usually remains unnoticed as capital's abstract machine tends to obscure consumers' lack of control and the commodification of lack itself (2003). Similar to *Call Cutta*, the service economy is not critiqued from the outside but explored from within, as the spectator is the subject of this (theatrical) service, and challenged to give in to desire.

In another review, Pieter Verstraete remarks that the reiterated use of the words "don't believe me" puts the spectator's sense perception and imagination to the test, to such an extent that it is hardly possible to distinguish between the reality of illusion, and the lie of the truth (2003). This paradox is also active in *The Smile*, where the spectator is aware of being subjected to a staged situation, yet simultaneously, the emotions aroused by this situation are often experienced as 'real'. Here we touch upon an enigmatic relation between authenticity and the stage – which neither escapes the grid of capital. In their book *Authenticity: What Consumers Really Want* (2007), Pine and Gilmore observe that the experience economy produced a world of pretence and hence created a need for authenticity, a sense of realness in which customers are able to interact with or directly relate to the product or service of their choice.¹²⁷ *Authenticity* is equally a retailers'

127 The irony is of course that the authors themselves substantially contributed to the experience economy to come into existence, thus preparing the market and creating a niche for a marketing book on authenticity.

handbook, in which Pine and Gilmore offer ways to *stage* authenticity, with the help of an intriguing matrix of fake and real, fake-real and real-fake categories, stating that as long as you clearly admit that what you do or sell is fake, but either true to the company's ideology or to what you promise to sell, customers will accept the fake as authentic, because these acts rely on being true to oneself or to clients. Not claiming that it is not staged, is thus the most authentic thing to do (2007, 95-114, 220). This plea for an overt theatricality interestingly reverberates within dramaturgical strategies in the theatre, also distinguishable in Signa's *The Ruby Town Oracle* →5, as some contemporary artists do not regard fiction and reality as opposites, but as folds, and opt for re-embracing the age-old suspension of disbelief, in order to investigate shifting layers of reality.¹²⁸

Despite the parallels drawn between economical and theatrical events, there are considerable differences as well: Pine and Gilmore advise trading companies to demonstrate self-reflexive awareness, but this is something other than creating (perceptual) awareness on the side of the customers. This is what ultimately distinguishes retailing from the theatre. Performances like *Het Sprookjesbordeel* and *The Smile* invest in spectators' self-reflexivity, by exposing the grid of capital itself. Massumi attests that a "commodity-body is generalized in a way that not only disregards minor deviations from a norm but is basically disinterested in the body's intrinsic qualities and their similarity-difference to those of other bodies. The commodity-body is reduced to a pure equivalence. It is generalized in the sense that any number of other bodies carry the same numerical value, and could be substituted for it, exchanged in its stead" (1992, 129). *Het Sprookjesbordeel* stages the conditions for this commodity-body to emerge and leaves the spectator-consumer in doubt as to whether the encounter with this particular performer was really unique: 'did it matter that it was me, in this performance?'. The immediate answer to follow is that perhaps it did *not* matter, not to the performer anyway. The spectator treads upon the uneasiness and discomfort of that awareness, and is provided with the "perverse pleasure" that Claire Bishop assigns to delegated performance in the arts (←2), which precisely renders the commodity-relation perceptible.

Distributions of the sensible

The panopticon organises relationships between observation or watching, and being seen or watched, and just like Massumi's commodity-body reduces inmates to numerical value. This abstract machine produces a particular "distribution of the sensible", the term Jacques Rancière uses to describe how the visible or the perceptible obscures the "shadowy and secret parts" (Deleuze) that are subtracted from the sensible, and hence are rendered imperceptible. Rancière applies the term as well to theatre, although the *teatron* also substantially differentiates from the panopticon (cf. Bleeker 2008, 166). In *The Emancipated*

128 Devriendt professes a similar attitude in the interview; this topic will be further addressed in the conclusion.

Spectator (2009), Rancière in fact attributes a certain limitlessness to the act of looking itself, an argument by which he also critiques participatory performance. His study resonates in interesting ways with *The Smile*, while there are strong contradictions as well.

Despite the strategies of confinement, both *Het Sprookjesbordeel* and *The Smile* rely heavily on audience participation. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, participatory performance has led a range of scholars to study these emerging forms of audience engagement, or rather, to discover the spectator again. I am alluding here to the essay “Discovering the Spectator” (1997), in which Erika Fischer-Lichte describes the recurring focus on spectators and audiences as a (20th century) history of attempts to activate and (politically) engage the spectator. In comparison to the historical avant-garde – and one may include the neo avant-garde as well¹²⁹ – she argues that in postmodern theatre, exemplified by the visual theatre of Robert Wilson, spectators are finally given back their true role as spectators again, next to their seat in the auditorium. Postmodernism’s liberated spectators are free to rely on individual association, interpretation and meaning-making, or may refuse to assign meaning at all. As “masters of [...] possible semioses,” they become co-producers of the performance event (1997, 57; cf. Bleeker 2008, 65). In the current debate on participation, however, this stance is often left aside, as participatory spectators are repeatedly described as engaged in much more than “simply watching” (Oddey/White 2009, 8; cf. Lehmann 2006, 106).¹³⁰ One remarkable voice in this debate is Jacques Rancière’s, who in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009) practices a ‘discovery through recovery’ that shares much with Fischer-Lichte. Rancière strongly resists participatory theatre and argues that (conventionally seated) spectators are autonomous, active onlookers, involved in countless heterogeneous performances. Each spectator learns something different from a performance, by means of active interpretation and the translation of this knowledge to others and further fields of knowledge (2009, 11).

Based on this acknowledgment of heterogeneity, the spectators in *The Smile* can equally be considered emancipated spectators. Not because spectators are entirely free to do what they want – the performance is too manipulative to assert that – but because each of them will respond differently to the encounters with performers. It seems rather ironic to speak of tied, blindfolded people as emancipated spectators, yet each encounter in *The Smile*, more than in *Het Sprookjesbordeel* perhaps, offers a space for spectators’ particular ways of perceiving, thinking, and doing; processes influenced by cultural background, social habits and personal histories. However, *The Smile* is a type of performance that is strongly criticised by Rancière, as it requires physical participa-

129 The historical avant-garde refers to Futurism, Dadaism, Surrealism, Russian constructivism, whereas the neo-avantgarde (a term derived from Günther Berghaus) involves the Happenings, Events and Performance art of the late 1950s and 1960s (Berghaus 2005; Carlson 2004).

130 Such phrasing is quite problematic, as there is no such thing as ‘just looking’, as Maaïke Bleeker clearly demonstrates (Bleeker 2008 ←1 and below).

tion and transcends the separation of stage and auditorium. Rancière states that such a redistribution of places at its best leads to an “enrichment of theatrical performance” and “intellectual adventure” but nevertheless confirms a traditional distribution of the sensible, which is the assumption that communality is the true essence of theatre (2009, 15). He takes Brecht and Artaud as examples, stating that they share this communitarian belief, however different their strategies. Both counter the illusion of mimesis with the idea of a living community, in which activity is linked with communality and looking with passivity. This is what Rancière understands as a particular distribution of the sensible, “an a priori distribution of positions and capacities and incapacities attached to these positions” (12). For Rancière, looking is in itself an active process and people assembled in a theatre do not necessarily form a community. In a theatre, just like in a museum or cinema, people are “plotting their own path”; the only thing that is shared is the power of “equality of intelligence” (17). His argument relocates the spectators in the audience, separated from the stage, equipped with the tool of (aesthetic) distance.

Rancière thus critiques performances that remove the distance between performers and spectators and, through this, abolishes the performance as a mediating third party in the event (14-16). Although a certain ‘vanishing act’ takes place in *The Smile*, because the performance – as a mediating third – is actually located in the encounter between performer and spectator, the (aesthetic) distance between performers and spectators in my view does not dissolve, simply because they share the same space. The distance just appears elsewhere, namely in the spectator’s aesthetic orientation $\leftarrow 1$, and in the performance’s diagrammatic design. Contrary to Rancière’s arguments, the spectator on the stage does not produce communality, but differentiability.

Perhaps distributions are inescapable. Rancière’s work is surely an inspiring appeal for acknowledging the heterogeneity and equality of any spectator, but it is meanwhile remarkable that Rancière’s distribution of the *sensible* hardly pays attention to *corporeal* intelligence: knowledge that is present in affects and sensations. By mainly referring to spectatorship in terms of interpretation, storytelling, and cognitive processes of translation, Rancière seems caught up into a distribution of the sensible of his own, which borders on logocentrism.¹³¹ *The Smile* questions this distribution, through the explicit address to the senses. In *Visuality in the Theatre*, Maaïke Bleeker convincingly argues that each performance functions by way of address, whether hardly perceptible or persistently present, and points to the body as the locus of looking. What Rancière seems to neglect, in my view, and what Bleeker purposefully emphasises, is precisely this (corporeal) address. Elsewhere, she observes that “[c]ontemporary theatre evokes intense experiences that often are not easily explained in terms of signs and referents. Often, this theatre addresses the spectator as a sensible body, rather than a decoding mind” (Bleeker 2005, 109).

131 Next to the similarity with Fischer-Lichte’s master of semiosis, Rancière equates the theatre with (reading) a book, and compares spectatorial activity with “the gaze focused on an image” (2009, 22).

As suggested above, the folds of the Baroque house could be a way to account for the spectator as an embodied subject. Arts and performance scholar Sher Doruff advocates reading this diagram as a *biogram* in her analysis of translocal music performances (2009). She derives the term from Brian Massumi, but whereas Massumi primarily relates the concept to synaesthetics (Massumi 2002, 187), Doruff presents the biogram as a type of diagram that is transcoded by lived experience, and geared towards the distributions of affects. The biogram is a conduit that channels and filters embodied sensations, and organises the distribution of “the power to affect and the power to be affected” (Doruff 2009, 124). Similar to one of my previous arguments, she too suggests that lived experience may be understood as expressive content in itself (127). Doruff sees the biogram as an assemblage of compositional forces. Whereas diagrams may pertain to buildings, sketches or abstract models, when transcoded by lived experience these compositional forces materialise in the acts and responses of participants in the event themselves. In a similar vein, I propose to understand both the performers and the spectators in *The Smile* as compositional forces, although their relation remains asymmetrical, as suggested earlier $\leftarrow 1$. The biogram is actualised through affective modulations and tonalities of sensation – patterns of expressive content which may lead spectators to inquire into the (im) possibility of intimacy in the theatre, to reflect on their own responses, or likely, to follow the lived experience folding back onto itself.

A spectator in the dark

About halfway through *The Smile* I arrive at the third encounter. A performer describes her dress – “red, with lace” – and then tells me she is dancing in front of me, and that she loves horses. “Would you like to sit on my lap?” she whispers, while she puts some chocolate and pieces of tangerine in my mouth. I hear the rustling of her dress as she stands very close to me, and when she laughs I know she has moved a few steps away again. The scene borders on the erotic; she teases me by raising curiosity, which invites me to start ‘looking’ for her. This is a rather curious situation: while this performance questions spectatorship in all sorts of ways, I am actually in a position very well known from conventional theatre: in the dark. However, quite consistently with the other dissolution-amplification axes discussed above, the darkness in *The Smile* increases the spectator’s engagement. In *The Smile* the obstruction of vision foregrounds the act of perception itself, and in particular draws attention to the corporeality of spectatorship. *The Smile* addresses the spectator through a variety of senses, as the scene above well indicates. My ears seek to register the location of sounds while I try to establish what I taste; my skin indicates whether the performer is near or far; the proprioceptive memories of stumbling out of the wheelchair inform my wish to remain seated this time; and all the while I try to visualise what I hear. This multiplied address renders the spectator into a sensitive organism or a “web of sensation” as Stephen Di Benedetto puts it, in *The Provocation of the Senses in Contemporary Theatre* (2010), the processing of which induces a “sensuous

thinking” (167-168). This sensuous thinking is a way of paying attention, a staying alert to how senses act as porous membranes between self and world. When thinking through the folds of the Baroque house, the senses draw a relation of exteriority with the body’s environment, but also reverberate with the mind on the (dark) upper floor.

Taking away sight on the one hand makes way for other modalities of sense perception, and on the other hand reveals looking as a dominant mode of engaging with and thinking about theatre. In *Visuality in the Theatre*, Maaïke Bleeker describes the strong conceptual and historical bond between vision, objectivity, rationality and scientific truth, where looking from a distance is connected to the “modern fable of vision as true and objective, of the possibility of seeing it ‘as it is’” (Bleeker 2008, 5). Drawing on Jonathan Crary and Hal Foster, amongst others, Bleeker points out how this “scopic regime of modernity” produces a disembodied notion of vision, which is also at work in the theatre (2008, 2-5; 165-167). Bleeker counters the (Cartesian) disembodied eye/I by exploring how bodies/subjects are always involved in what there is to be seen, and how we are “cultured to see” by existing conceptions of visuality (2008, 7). *The Smile* fits Bleeker’s line of reasoning, albeit with different means. Whereas Bleeker uses the theatre as a “vision machine” to expose the corporeality of spectatorship in conventional set-ups (ibid.), *The Smile* deterritorialises the theatre as teatron and reterritorialises the stage as a sensorium.

The sensorium organises a (re)distribution of the sensible, without rejecting vision though. *The Smile*’s biogram instead advocates the equality of the senses. In his essay “Seeing nothing, now here this ...” Martin Welton describes a play performed in full darkness, and observes that seeing nothing is still a part of seeing, not a lack of seeing (in Banes/Lepecki 2007, 146-155). Although seeing into darkness differs from wearing a blindfold, my urge to look for the performer equally indicates that the visual cortex is still active. When sight is addressed as but one of the senses, within an “altered sense ratio”, as Welton puts it, this “offers an opportunity ‘to make sense’ of vision afresh, to reclaim the visual in the theatre for the realm of the senses” (ibid., 152). Such a ‘visceral visuality’ characterises the proceedings of the third encounter. While teased by the performer, with the taste of sweets still in my mouth, the blindfold is suddenly lifted and with great hilarity I discover a completely different situation in front of me than the one made up in my mind.¹³² It is a clash of the senses. With Bleeker’s analysis of the “scopic regime” in mind, one may think that vision is again linked to objectivity here, portraying the scene ‘as it really is’. Lifting the blindfold however does not follow up on that particular logic. Instead of presenting vision as the agent of true knowledge, the scene invites awareness of how collaborative and disjointed sense mechanisms constitute different kinds of knowledge and modes of engagement with the world. The scene presents the spectator

132 It has to be admitted that reporting on performances that strongly rely on individual experience increases the risk of spoilers, so I won’t spoil this one.

with a Deleuzian Baroque perspective: “For Leibniz [...] perspectivism amounts to a relativism, but not the relativism we take for granted. It is not a variation of truth according to the subject, but the condition in which the truth of a variation appears to the subject” (Deleuze 2006a, 20). The term ‘point of view’ does not satisfy here, instead what counts, quite analogues to Bleeker’s analysis of perspective $\leftarrow 1$, is rather “what remains in point of view, what occupies point of view, and without which point of view would not be. It is necessarily a soul, a subject” (ibid., 24).

Perceiving this clash of the senses might be regarded as an instance of what Brian Massumi names a “thinking-feeling of what happens” (2008). Thinking-feeling is a self-referential process, which involves the “perception of the event of perception *in* the perception [...], in the immediacy of its occurrence, as it is felt” (2008, 6). Thinking-feeling points to the qualitative dimension of perception, and like the Baroque perspective sees perception as never stable, but instead as always relational, vivid and processual (5-7).¹³³ In everyday life, senses tend to function automatically and sensory input therefore, partly as a necessity, is largely ignored. Foregrounding the qualitative dimension of sense perception, however, leads to re-articulating something quite evident yet hardly perceptible in daily life, namely that humans (and animals) are intrinsically connected to the world, through the senses. Sense perception is not (only) a way of gaining knowledge of the world, or of the self; rather we constitute our understanding of both self and world through corporeal perception (cf. Bleeker 2008, 174-177). From the very first entrance into the sensorium, *The Smile*’s biogram addresses the senses as the primary tools through which we probe the world ‘outside’; a world that is constituted by the senses and is enfolded within a relational subjectivity.

Diagramming proximity

The Smile’s politics of perception mobilises what it means ‘to make sense’ of a performance. Baz Kershaw indirectly gives testimony to such a redistribution of the sensible in his description of *The Labyrinth* (1996), directed by Enrique Vargas.¹³⁴ This performance bears similarities with *The Smile*, although it differs significantly in size and scale. Kershaw describes how the absence of sight and the address to the other senses is not only a refusal of a hierarchy of the senses, but also a subversion of the hierarchy of signs (1999, 213).

Kershaw describes how the disruption of perceptual habits, the experience of isolation and the absence of hierarchical order in *The Labyrinth* simultaneously induces a confirmation of the self as well as provokes an increased sense of social and environmental

133 Massumi primary relates thinking-feeling to visuality. When looking at objects or paintings, for instance, we do not only designate meaning or functionality, but “think-feel” an object’s volume, weightiness or depth, due to the body’s capacity to move (around) and to feel movement (2008, 6).

134 Vargas’ *Teatro de los Sentidos* is perhaps the best well known exponent of the theatre of the senses as discussed in this chapter.

connectivity.¹³⁵ That is quite an apt description of my response to *The Smile*'s biogram, as the distribution of affects both raised an increased self-awareness as well as a conscious perception of the world 'outside'. All in all, perhaps nothing spectacular happens in this performance. Visiting *The Smile* may lead instead to a rediscovery of something quite ordinary, yet precious: the experience of one's presence in the work; the awareness of one's senses and how they (dis)function; the perception of proximity of human beings; the impression of slowing-down towards another (Deleuzian) speed of lived space. This biogram maps the force of the imagination as well, as it charts the capacity for other-world making, through which the world will always appear larger than was thought of before – and smaller than it has become.

A slow, modest attentiveness to the ordinary, that which usually remains unnoticed, is also characteristic of Alan Read's *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement*. Although Read does not discuss instances of physical intimacy, and mainly focuses on the lives of those who are usually not included in the theatre, his appreciation for the proximity of relations offers a parallax view on the close encounters in *The Smile*.¹³⁶ For Read, intimacy has the potential of being the equivalent of engagement; theatre and performance are a means to investigate the relational capacity of sentient "human animals" (2008, 8) which in turn may contribute to what he calls an ethics of association and, drawing on Bruno Latour, a reassembly of the social (32, 40-44, 68-70). *The Smile* equally investigates this relational capacity, by employing the folds and furls of the senses, self and world to question our mode of engagement with other beings in that world. This also becomes apparent in the closing scene, where the blindfold is lifted for the second time and I look a performer straight in the eye, seeing a performer who weeps. This scene provokes a dense "web of sensations" (Di Benedetto) and is therefore hard to describe. Despite the knowledge that the situation is staged, the intensity of this encounter is that of two close friends saying farewell. While I feel sad and resistant to let go of the eye contact with the performer, I am slowly driven backwards, which allows me to see all the various scenes at once, with other spectators involved now, next to spectators' photographs displayed on the wall, all in one room. Like in "The Aleph", a story by Jorge Luis Borges, this scene displays the infinitude of a multiplicity.¹³⁷ I am a singular spectator in a multitude of other spectators, who have found or will find their own spaces of proximity. They will have (had) similar

135 Kershaw understands this twofold awareness as the ecology of performance.

136 Parallax refers to a slight change of perspective, instead of a diametrically opposed view ←2.

137 The Aleph is a space that incorporates all thinkable spaces, simultaneously perceived. It is a sphere without a centre, with multiple, contrasting perspectives. As in many of his stories, Borges practices a poetics of exhaustion by following a certain idea to its extreme limits, that is, imperceptibility →5. But as Bachelard shows, in *The Poetics of Space*, using a similar strategy when describing the miniature (1958/1994, 148-182), the passage towards the imperceptible is precisely the threshold of the imagination. In *Thirdspace*, Soja uses Borges' story as an allegory for the radical openness of lived space and its representational potential (1996, 54-56).

sensations to mine, or entirely different ones; I am connected to them as we are all writing our part of this kaleidoscopic essay that marks *The Smile*'s emergent dramaturgy.

Zooming out theoretically, I think it is an interesting paradox that a focus on the single, individual spectator eventually investigates the spectator's relational capacities. In this regard, *The Smile* addresses the spectator again, but with a different attentiveness, as a societal being. This potential of connectivity may be a fruitful alternative to Rancière's 'problem' with theatre's claim to communality. Collectivity then is not a homogeneous community, nor an arbitrary gathering of individuals, but a re-articulation of the social. Instead of communality this performance explores the potential of connectivity, with the acknowledgement of the heterogeneity of any spectator in the theatre.

A theatre of folds

Close friends, saying goodbye – how much can one be tricked? This particular performer and I, we are not friends. It may have been a *semblance* of friendship, the term Massumi uses to indicate how previous experience and knowledge is always enfolded within and reverberate in current experiences and perceptions (2008, 6). My trajectory through *The Smile* produced both an inward and an outward oriented attentiveness, a kind of openness one may associate with friendship. Although I know I am manipulated, at the same time my sense of joy or embarrassment is not fake, and neither is the performer's concentrated attention. Some may argue that *The Smile* comes closer to the panopticon than to the folds of the Baroque house, but I propose instead that these diagrams are drawn *through* one another. *The Smile* produces a texture of affective modulations, as distance intersects with closeness, limitations give rise to infinite vibrations in the soul, interiority unfolds towards connectivity, and exteriority curls up into the imagination.

Thinking through the diagram exposes the performer and the spectator as asymmetrical yet equal compositional forces in an open-ended event. Diagrams help to investigate the (dynamic) form of the event and to articulate horizons of thought without fixating the event entirely. Diagrams are a way to think through the event, but as Knoespel points out, they are also open to revision and redrawing. Following up on that suggestion, *The Smile* allows for the possibility of rethinking the absolute ephemerality of the event in performance. Instead of the ephemeral, *The Smile* invites a particular attentiveness; instead of foregrounding the real, what is real is subjected to experimentation; instead of the use of signs who refuse to function as signs (Lehmann 2006, 104), this performance enquires into what is meaningful or valuable for the singular spectator. The event does leave traces, as the tonalities of sensation become part of the corporeal archive of both spectators and performers. The event materialises in the corporeality of spectatorship, in the procedurality of perception and in the relationality of subjectivity, all of which are ways in which to attach ourselves to fluidity.

In the introduction to *The Fold*, Tom Conley observes that the fold is an intrinsically mobile concept, especially when related to the senses: "Movement of a concept that has

bearing upon a subject's impressions of the physical world does not elevate according to a spiral plan [...] but radiates and ramifies everywhere in the geography of experience" (in Deleuze 2006a, xiv). The fold maps (endless) de- and reterritorialisations, and as such this concept has an exoconsistency with the concept of nomadic theatre, whereas in turn the patterns of de- and reterritorialisation in the theatre coincide with folds. I have foregrounded the ramifications of the fold in order to describe how spaces of proximity deterritorialise the stage, but the folds of theatre radiate within other geographies as well. As a figure of reverberation, the fold may render visible how the theatre itself is subjected to inflection and (self)reflection, or zigzags across mash-ups of fiction and reality. The fold is equally a figure of temporal modulation and may be put to work to investigate the folds of past and present, of scenography and seriality, or of procedural performances. Such radiations dilate the geographies of experience in Signa's *Ruby Town* in the next chapter, where the concept of nomadic theatre once more bends into another direction and encounters another web of architecture, next to the limits of play.

5 ARCHITEXTURES

Drifting / dwelling

Let us recall. Most theatre performances involve spectators sitting in rows, sitting next to and behind each other. As soon as they enter the auditorium, audience members start to find their seats; they know where to go, they know where the theatre space wants them to be. The performance described in this chapter however, entices spectators to wander on and over the stage; they hardly know where to go, they are adrift in space. The governing principle is that of a psychogeography ←2: spectators' navigational moves are led by atmosphere and energy bursts; they follow their curiosity or linger on the spot. The performance in question is *Die Erscheinungen der Martha Rubin – The Ruby Town Oracle* (2007-2008) by the Danish collective Signa. Contrary to the other cases discussed in this study, the spectator is invited to step into a drastically fictional world. Drastically, as the performance lasts for nine days nonstop and the performers stay in character for the total length of the event.¹³⁸ Drastically fictional, as *Ruby Town* concerns everyday life in an entirely invented village. The performance presents an immersive, highly politicised world where the military intervenes in a community of outsiders who worship their common ancestor Martha Rubin.

Ruby Town was situated in a large abandoned industrial hall, in which Signa built a complete settlement with approximately twenty-two houses, caravans, shops, a peepshow and adjoining military quarters. Ruby Town is a poor and shabby village, situated in a Temporary Autonomous Zone, a no man's land in between an anonymous 'North State' and a 'South State', supervised and controlled by North State military personnel. The performers play

¹³⁸ *Ruby Town* premiered in Cologne (2007), where it was performed in three blocks of respectively 36, 60 and 84 hours. During the festival *Theatertreffen* in Berlin (2008) the play time was extended towards a nine days non-stop performance. My discussion relates to the Berlin 2008 event.

the inhabitants of this Zone and they do so by truly inhabiting the place: they live in these dwellings during the entire event. This twofold of playing and doing, of *acting* and acting, is paralleled on the side of the spectators. Visitors to the performance buy a ticket to enter the village – which grants them access for twelve hours – after which they become visitors of Ruby Town; the ‘real’ visitors to the performance take up the role of visitors or tourists who dwell around in this fictional town. In order to enter Ruby Town, every spectator has to pass through a military checkpoint, run by the North State. Upon providing a name and a fingerprint one receives a passport that legitimises the maximum stay of twelve hours. Next, the spectator is led into a room where an instruction video gives off warnings for rude behaviour of the villagers and advice to stay at a distance for reasons of hygiene. When passing the gate to the village however, this distance is immediately trespassed by the villagers, who complement the visitors on their beautiful hair or nice jackets, meanwhile begging for alcohol and cigarettes, in order to surpass the rations set by the military. Trespass and subversion of borders are recurring themes in this performance; this play with and at the limits defines the performance’s emergent dramaturgy. With ‘territory’ and ‘deterritorialisation’ written all over the place, *Ruby Town* is an excellent theoretical object to further explore the concept of nomadic theatre, also because this performance uses the aesthetics of the dramatic theatre – fictionality, characters, role-playing – to fuel up and transgress the processual, participatory ‘real’ event of the postdramatic theatre.

In comparison to the previous chapters, which focused on the single and/or isolated spectator, here the spectator is one amongst many. Similar to the other cases though, this performance accumulatively builds on singular trajectories, as each visit is a variation on *Ruby Town*, and exposes the performance’s virtuality ←3. The set offers ample opportunities to move around, to step in and out the micro-sceneries of separate houses, to straddle sideways, to stumble upon quarrels, fights and flirtations in obscure corners. Spectator-visitors are invited for a talk or a drink at the bar – preferably paid for by the visitor – or they may decide to visit Martha Rubin, an ancestral oracle to whom all the villagers are descendants. Distributed through this labyrinth, the spectators perceive loose yet strangely connected storylines, dispersed as gossip and rumours. They are courted by performers who are obviously playing roles but meanwhile get really drunk, all of which makes it hard if not impossible to capture the event in its entirety. In this chapter I approach this labyrinthine stage as a *rhizomatic game board*, a play area without a centre, where open-ended scenarios and becoming-stories emerge alongside the spectators’ singular yet interconnected trajectories, and instigate a process of continuous variation.

These stories and scenarios are to a large extent embedded in the setting and set design, and emanating spatial relations, which is why this chapter focuses on scenography as a vital force of composition. Whereas in the other cases the spectators were primarily guided by performers to find their bearings, this time the designed environment provides the tags and coordinates for movement. *Ruby Town* is a suitable case to demonstrate that contemporary scenography does much more than providing a background for action,

instead, spatial design is a compositional force which interacts with and orchestrates the embedded movements and events (cf. McKinney/Butterworth 2009, 4). Scenography implicates the writing of space but is also a writing *with* spaces, as I will argue in this chapter (cf. Van Kerkhoven 1992). In an interview with Signa Sørensen and Arthur Köstler, initiators of the Signa collective, Signa remarks that the set actually functioned as a script, as the staged environment limits and therefore defines the actions of the performers.¹³⁹ A script is often conceived as a blueprint for performance and/or serves as a work-document when rehearsing a (pre-existing) play.¹⁴⁰ In *Ruby Town* the ‘play text’ is deterritorialised and no longer serves only the performers. Fuelled and contaminated by lived space, this script is shattered into a multiplicity, gets dispersed throughout the staged environment and unfolds in relation to localised actions: the script reterritorialises on scenography and creates an authoring environment for the spectators as well. Stories presented by performers lose coherence and re-emerge in bits and pieces, and become part of the *texture* of the event. In fact, the script itself becomes a textural, layered phenomenon.

A texture designates a tissue or a woven fabric. In semiotics the term often serves to underline the multiplicity of the (performance) text, as the etymological kinship between text and texture epitomises the text as the interweaving of signs, codes, and actions (Barthes 1977, 155-164; De Marinis 1987/2003, 119). Without entirely neglecting the semiotic or literary text, I propose that a texture is also a weaving together of spaces. In relation to *Ruby Town*, I will describe this texture as an assemblage of navigational, narrative, affective and procedural spaces, sliced by alternating frames and perspectives. In order to highlight the inherent spatiality of the term, I put texture in conjunction with (performative) architecture and name this new aggregate *architexture*.¹⁴¹ An architexture is a particular type of diagram ←4, a fabric of intersecting spaces which invites certain behaviour and reveals the live event as staged through scenography, or, to use the words of Bernard Tschumi, as “organized and strategized through architecture” (in Turner/Behrndt 2008, 5). On the other hand this layered spatiality is open to various use, (re)writing,

139 “Staged intimacy”, interview with Signa (2009). Signa often takes scenography as a starting point for conceptualising their installations/performances (Burckhardt/Behrendt 2008). See PDS.

140 In architectural discourse, a script is often regarded as restrictive (Leatherbarrow in Kolarevic/Malkawi 2005, 5-19). Media historian Norman Klein also foregrounds the function of control in what he terms “scripted space” (in Verhoeff 2012, 33). Verhoeff acknowledges that (spatial) experience can be “tainted by design” yet this experience also exceeds control (ibid., 34). Performance scholar Elin Diamond equally observes that the (theatre) script “assert[s] the possibility of something that exceeds our knowledge, that alters the shape of sites and imagines new unsuspected subject positions” (in Carlson 2001, 2-3). For me, the script is a diagram.

141 Literary theorist Gérard Genette also uses the term ‘architexture’, but in a different sense and context, that of genre theory. For Genette, the architext denotes a network of overarching elements through which a particular work may be allocated to genre(s) (Genette 1979/1992; 1982/1997). The prefix ‘arche’ etymologically refers to ‘first’, ‘over’, ‘above’. In architecture, the architect implicates the ‘first’ builder, alluding to both ‘head technician’ and ‘designer’.

and change. The architextural diagram provides a model for enquiring into how spectators are addressed as co-creators of the event and become part of a process of building performance, a process that in turn has many similarities with play and games. *Ruby Town's* architextures do not only join texture with architectural thought but also fold performative architecture into play theory and vice versa. Subsequently, on *Ruby Town's* rhizomatic game board, the logic and linearity of 'the play' deteriorates and makes room for playfulness as an attitude of engagement.

Borderzones

An architecture is a tissue of interconnected spaces and twisting perspectives, which also characterises my way of describing *Ruby Town*, as I connect third-person and first-person perspectives to viewpoints derived from interviews, essays and reviews. Such a 'tissued' approach seems also appropriate in connection to Signa's rhizomatic game board. In order to dress up this game board, I continue with what looks like a detour but actually is not. As stated above, *Ruby Town* severely compromises the idea of a linear, coherent story. Although there are scraps of stories, the underlying narrative seems that of the lived space itself: the social order in kitchens and bedrooms, pubs, shops and squares; the everyday life of washing, sleeping, cooking, partying and quarrelling. Except, all these activities take place in an extraordinary, artificially shaped environment, in a world that is both distinct from and similar to the 'real' world; a world that is as multilayered and open-ended as everyday life, yet simultaneously it is obviously staged. The blurred distinction between reality and representation is perfectly captured by an essay in *Theater der Zeit*, in which Sebastian Kirsch refers to a cartographic fantasy by Jorge Luis Borges and weighs Signa's uncanny world against the Borgesian map. Borges' one-paragraph story is entitled "On exactitude in science" and is fully quoted here:

... In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no other Relic of the Disciplines of Geography (Borges 1946/1999, 325).

Borges playfully captures the heart of the cartographic imagination here, as he charts the desire to map the world on a scale of 1:1 and follows this utopian idea to its extremity and beyond. Kirsch observes that wandering through *Ruby Town* feels like walking around

in such a map of the world.¹⁴² However, Borges exhausts the very idea of the map, as he traces the map's expansion up to the point that the map can no longer exist. Kirsch's comparison therefore directly touches upon questions of representation: while engaged in this installation, are we part of the real world, or part of a representation of it? As life in this town is *both* actual and a representation of reality, concerned with both acting and *acting*, this lived space seems to be mapped on a scale of 1:1. Borges' story is not coincidentally paradoxical, and serves to indicate how *Ruby Town* folds reality into representation and unfolds fiction upon reality, an issue that will be addressed further below.

Kirsch made a felicitous comparison in my view, as the Temporary Autonomous Zone that houses Ruby Town is indeed a Borgesian Land of Beggars, situated in an abstract place, somewhere on the outskirts of the civilised world. Borges refers to a generalised 'West', and Signa uses a similar geographic poetics, so to say, by situating this town in-between a North State and a South State, without providing further details. This abstraction invites to associate the North State with First World politics, including the military apparatus of control; spectators enter the Autonomous Zone via the North State side. And as the few South State born descendants of Martha Rubin are black and presented as poorer and of lower class than the rest of the villagers, connections with Third World circumstances are easily made. *Ruby Town* is also emblematic of First World immigration politics. The Ruby Towners are forced to stay in their village; the 'inclusion' of stateless immigrants actually implies the appointment of designated areas to those who have no part, in order to prevent further distribution. *Ruby Town* however subtly inverts this distribution of power relations – offering quite a critical perspective on contemporary society and politics – as the apparatus of control obviously fails: members of the military have affairs with villagers; the Captain is a transvestite; there is smuggling and illegal trading going on; villagers have their own rules and systems of punishment. In the above mentioned interview, Signa recounts that in fact, the military are outsiders themselves: being stationed here means in fact degradation or punishment. In turn, the villagers who are consequently presented as wild, uncivilised and unruly are in fact subject to strong social hierarchies. These inversions all subtly refer to the decline of what was once called a First World.

As Sebastian Kirsch points out, navigating through *Ruby Town* feels like walking *within* a map of the world. Although Borges exhausts the map, I follow Kirsch's course for a moment and his suggestion that spectators are positioned on the inside of the map, in fact, they are inside a closed fictional world. The performers for instance consequently negate any inquiries related to life outside the industrial hall; I observed that they seem completely oblivious of buses, timetables or any other link to present-day Berlin. This (relatively) closed fictional world alludes to the logic of play and in fact is not so different from Johan Huizinga's early characterisation of a play world as a marked off and limited area with a disposition of its own. Play produces a temporary world with a distinct order,

142 Sebastian Kirsch, "SIGNA oder Der Sinn für die Unwirklichkeit" (2008), see PDS.

duration and locality, an imaginary world separated from, yet persistent within the ordinary world (Huizinga 1938/1998, 8-11). The Borgesian map too portrays the 'real' and the 'as if' as two distinct yet completely coinciding modes of existence.¹⁴³ This ambiguity is characteristic for (attempts to define) games and play, as the pretense of play precisely constitutes the play itself and partly produces the pleasure of play.¹⁴⁴ Play has fun as an essential characteristic yet is also deeply serious, as it requires a total commitment to the rules of play (ibid.; Salen/Zimmerman 2004). This certainly pertains to Signa's performers who do not step out of their roles for the entire length of the event.

Due to this commitment to play in all its various aspects, *Ruby Town* in many ways resembles a Role Playing Game (RPG) or Live-Action Role Playing (LARP), games that engage multiple players in either digital or mixed reality environments, or in the case of LARPs, in live events (Montola 2012).¹⁴⁵ *Ruby Town*, and other projects by Signa as well, such as *Night at the Hospital* (2007), *Salo* (2010) or *Club Inferno* (2013), equally work with fictional characters in a rather immersive imaginary world. RPGs often make no distinction between performers and spectators; instead all the players are involved in collaborative storytelling (Jenkins 2004, 121). Often there are distinctive roles though, identified by functions or (archetypical) characters – game masters, orchestrators, explorers, chasers, magicians, healers – each provided with certain capabilities and storytelling vocabularies. Signa's artistic directors also function as game masters or orchestrators, as they play influential characters in the village.¹⁴⁶ RPGs may last for several days, or considerably longer periods of time, and next to chasing plots may enable the participants to wander freely around and to enjoy the (narrative) environment (Benford/Giannachi 2011; Copier in Van den Boomen 2009, 159-171; Montola 2007; Montola/Stenros 2004). Particularly in LARPs, players often take huge efforts to dress up as characters and invent extensive role biographies. Juxtaposed to Signa's spectators, LARP players tend to arrive at the game fully prepared, whereas the visitors to *Ruby Town* still are apprentice-spectators ←1 without a character sheet, and due to their double role of spectators/visitors they remain anchored to the layer of reality in which they are spectators to this performance.

143 Borges' story even more alludes to the complete overlap of game and daily realities in pervasive gaming or Augmented Reality Games ←2. In a rather different reading of Borges' borderzone, Guillermo Gomez-Peña is perhaps the most well-known artist who uses the border as an (involuntary) place of habitation, put to work in both playful as well as highly political events and writing (Fortier 2002; Carlson 2004, 200-203).

144 In *The Ambiguity of Play* (1997/2001), play theorist Brian Sutton-Smith places ambiguity at the heart of play, primarily to acknowledge the contested nature of the concept and its wide range of manifestations.

145 Mike Pohjola connects LARPs to Hakim Bey's concept of the Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ) (in Montola/Stenros 2004, 81). For Bey, TAZ is a concept for ontological anarchy, also inspired by Deleuze's and Guattari's nomadology (Bey 1985/1991). *Ruby Town's* TAZ reverberates with this concept as well.

146 Signa Sørensen performs the role of Martha Rubin, Arthur Köstler plays the mayor or Ruby Town, and costume and set designer Thomas Bo Nilsson is the military captain. See also Burckhardt/Behrendt (2008), PDS.

These similarities with play invite to regard the stage of *Ruby Town* as a game board.¹⁴⁷ As mentioned above, the stage is in particular a *rhizomatic* game board. Spectators literally enter and exit the game board at different times and intervals. To most of the visitors, the performance has already started before they arrived and will continue after they leave; they step right into the middle and become part of the event at the very moment of its unfolding. James Corner (1999) uses the game board and the rhizome to conceptualise two types of urban maps ←3. Brought together in this chapter, the rhizomatic game board resides in the tension between the rules of a game, and the open, contingent connections of the rhizome. Corner's game board is not so much a spatial phenomenon but instead a practice of "orchestrating the conditions" through which urban processes may achieve certain (socially motivated) ends (1999, 240). In comparison, Signa's rhizomatic game board is far less goal-oriented and may lack any clear outcome at all. Similar to the Go game ←1, the performers' and spectators' relation to space is that of being distributed into smooth space. They arrange themselves within an open space, a sphere without a centre, where the action turns out to be everywhere.

This smooth stage however is strategised through an architextural diagram. As suggested above, the notion of architexture joins text, texture, scenography, and architecture in a multiplicity of interconnected spaces and, as such, an architexture shows a remarkable resemblance with the digital hypertext in computational and web-based processes. Surfing the Internet by activating hyperlinks has been literally defined as an act of writing space (Bolter 2001; 1991). In an early work on hypertexts, media theorist Jay David Bolter appoints this writing to a reader/user who designates and creates connections, and makes 'sentences' by activating the hyperlinks that connect the disparate digital elements in the network. Writing then implicates a writing *with* places, a (playful) strolling around, in which the reader moves from one element to the other (1991, 25, 57-60). A hypertextual network is an endless, fundamentally unstable and restless network – prototype of the rhizome – in which the same building blocks participate in several paths, and dependent on particular trajectories can achieve specific significance, or become conceptually active as for instance critical, explanatory, or subversive elements (24, 75).¹⁴⁸ Writing with spaces thus exposes a dialogical relationship between design and use. In the following sections I explore a variety of architextures that are equally regarded as returning building blocks in *Ruby Town's* analogue rhizomatic network: *narrative ar-*

147 I use the terms 'play' and 'game' rather indiscriminately, in alignment with game professor Joost Raessens, who sees play as the overarching category, including games and playful behaviour, whereas games are understood as the formalised parts of play (2010, 13; cf. Salen/Zimmerman 2004). This approach loosely alludes to Roger Callilois' distinction between *paideia* or free play, and *ludus* or the more disciplinary or rule-driven modes of play (Raessens 2010, 11-12).

148 Opinions differ on whether a hypertext creates either an increase of coherence or chaos. Lev Manovich, for instance, stresses the contingency of connections, whereas Ian Bogost points to the hypertext's argumentative, correlative potential (Bogost 2007, 26).

chitecture (Jenkins 2004), which looks into environmental storytelling and becoming-stories; *evocative spaces*, where a focus on lived space addresses the affective modulations within intertextuality; and *procedural passageways*, taking game-inspired procedural rhetorics (Bogost 2007) as a specific form of process-based architecture. These textures are separated in description but they intersect in the lived spaces of *Ruby Town*. Each spatial texture offers a shift in perspective, while the emanating interconnections seek to build an increased sense of the over-all architecture of this performance, despite the lack of a centre.

Narrative architecture

Strolling through *Ruby Town* is an encounter with Borges' "Tattered Ruins" in all sorts of ways. Ruby Town is built from scrap, wrecks and garbage. Houses and caravans are primitive; electricity is sparse. The shelves in the shops verge on being empty, the few products on display seem to have since long surpassed their 'best before' date. The same could be said of the interiors, the costumes, the bar or the beauty parlour. In reality circumstances were equally harsh: performers had barely enough to eat, as the rations were set by the military. They had to do all the cooking and washing themselves, without modern equipment to hand. Signa's work often has this aesthetics of bleakness, and enquires into the darker sides of life by subjecting performers to the same conditions as the portrayed characters or situations.¹⁴⁹ *Ruby Town* is not a performance that is fully rehearsed; it is partly the unpredictability of the non-rehearsed that qualifies *Ruby Town* as a postdramatic event. Nevertheless, there was repetition involved, except this concerned the intensive rehearsal of the villagers' histories in *advance* to the event. These invented pasts are extremely complex stories in which individual biographies, including those of the absent, the disappeared and the deceased, create rhizomatic connections. These biographies surface in the set design: in the partition of go and no-go areas, as well as in the material archives to be found in every habitat. In the above mentioned interview, Signa Sørensen recounts:

We wanted to give people the idea, in a subtle way, that there is a lot to find out. Actually you had to be many hours or preferably days in Ruby Town to find out all the stories, because in every drawer you could find letters, and photographs, there were things everywhere. The people from Ruby Town who were smuggling had their routines; the military would do their rounds and confiscate things. If you really took the time to listen you could have heard all sorts of stories that were talked around behind houses. There were secrets all the time, on all kinds of levels.

149 Ilil Land-Boss, personal communication, May 2011. Land-Boss was one of the performers in *Ruby Town* and regularly works with Signa. Cf. Burckhardt/Behrendt (2008), PDS.

Wandering through Ruby Town actually feels like walking in a living archive, where the settlements and military quarters become information spaces or memory palaces.¹⁵⁰ This way of distributing narrative information into the performance environment can be regarded as a form of *environmental storytelling*, a concept introduced by game theorist Henry Jenkins, in “Game Design as Narrative Architecture” (2002/2004). He uses this spatial concept in order to find a middle ground in what is known as the ludologist-narrativist debate in game studies.¹⁵¹ Inspired by Michel de Certeau and Henri Lefebvre, he posits spatial stories next to gameplay and narrativity, and proposes to see game designers less as storytellers but instead as narrative architects. For Jenkins, a game designer is primarily concerned with the creation of narrative universes, level design and (interactive) maps that chart the geographic finesses of these imaginary worlds. Similar to cartographers, game designers are engaged in worldmaking processes ←3, which is why they often find their resources in fantasy and science fiction novels (122). Environmental storytelling involves (fictional) environments in which stories or narrative elements are infused into the physical or digital gamespace. Stories emerge as a result of players’ activities and explorative moves, while the space provides a vocabulary for possible actions and sets the parameters for involvement.¹⁵²

“Spatial stories are not badly constructed stories; rather, they are stories which respond to alternative aesthetic principles,” states Jenkins (124). Environmental storytelling requires a different conception of plot: instead of linearity and causality, the organisation of the plot entails the development of a geography, in which story fragments are episodically structured or emerge as localised incidents (125). Jenkins, in fact, seems to allude to a postdramatic architecture, as his analysis of geography reverberates with Lehmann’s view on the landscape stage (Lehmann 1997). Despite Jenkins’ call on a different aesthetics, his focus leans towards dramatic plot elements such as conflict, battle, betrayal, secrets awaiting discovery, problem-solving – illustrated by his reference to melodrama as a rich potential resource for game design. Although Jenkins also refers to games without (successful) end, the rule-oriented nature of many games adheres to principles of *logos* and *telos*. This dramatic bend also defines the narrative universes of Punchdrunk, a British performance company, that affiliate with Signa’s work. Punchdrunk’s performances however are often based on existing plays and (hence) they place more emphasis on narrative coherence, also illustrated by the fact that the actors repeat storylines by playing on a

150 For a comparison between *Ruby Town* and the memory theatre of Renaissance architect Camillo, see Groot Nibbelink (2012a). Camillo’s memory theatre has also been used as a metaphor for the Internet. See Matussek (2001) and Bleeker/Alsopp (2012).

151 Ludologists see games as distinct from pre-existing (narrative) media; idiosyncratic game mechanics are hostile to any aspirations of storytelling. Narrativists on the other hand approach games as storytelling media and are interested in their transmedial potential (Jenkins 2004, 118-121).

152 Examples are *Majestic*, *Civilization*, *Everquest* and *The Sims*.

loop. Audiences are partly addressed as voyeurs, exemplified by Punchdrunk's hallmark of providing spectators with (neutral) masks.¹⁵³

In comparison to Punchdrunk, *Ruby Town* is not based on repetition; the characters' pasts are fully rehearsed but what happens in the here and now is not. In *Ruby Town*, the stories always evolve, they never return to the same. They are dispersed through space and fractured in time, they are *becoming-stories*. Becoming-stories are marked by their continuous variation which exceeds the repetition-of-sameness. Stories are told, modified, retold by spectators, mutated by gossip, seen from different angles; they blend in with actual occurrences in the village and produce a dense web, or texture, that no one can oversee, not even the artistic directors. In *Ruby Town* there are also battles, betrayals and secrets awaiting discovery, yet there is no final resolution or teleological plot-development.¹⁵⁴ The best illustration of this is perhaps the regular lack of excitement. The simultaneity of action suggests a dynamic, pluralistic whirlwind of things occurring. Instead, often there was very little action. Next to excitement, I also experienced boredom – similar to real life. Some spectators left rather quickly, when finding the majority of performers asleep at the time of entrance, with a cynical comment: "Nothing going on here". Sleeping performers resist the imperative of action known from the dramatic theatre, and interrupt the expectation of progress.¹⁵⁵ Slowness and duration are essential to Signa's eventness, also illustrated by a comment from reviewer Alexander Haas: "Im Modus der Langsamkeit, der diesen Produktion zutiefst eigen ist, erschliesst sich allmählich mehr vom Geschehen".¹⁵⁶ These latter observations implicate that *Ruby Town* is not only concerned with environmental storytelling or narrative architecture, but also draws on the affective modulations of temporality.

Next to Lehmann's landscape aesthetics, Jenkins' account strongly resonates with concepts and practices in the field of performative architecture, a discourse that also exceeds geographic narrativity. Architectural theorist Anthony Vidler for instance remarks that spaces are increasingly seen as being charged with information, activated by bodies, operated through movement, open to various interpretations, unpredictability, cross-cuttings, rhythm and temporality (Vidler 2000). Similar observations can be found in contemporary approaches to scenography (Collins/Nisbet 2010; McKinney/Butterworth 2009). Performative architecture provides a rich discourse that helps to construct *Ruby Town's* archite-

153 Interestingly Punchdrunk uses the mask both to stage the *gaze* of the audience as well as to address them as performers. See for an elaborate discussion Gareth White, "Odd Anonymous Needs: Punchdrunk's Masked Spectators" (in Oddey/White 2009, 219-229).

154 There is a clear and seriously final end to the performance, as *Ruby Town* 2008 closed with a collective suicide, but the event is not structured according to principles of *telos* or *logos*.

155 Dramaturge Stephanie Carp notes, in relation to (Christoph Marthaler's) sleeping characters that "[s]leep refuses to be fixed in time. Sleep relieves the strain of meaning [...] [and] relieves the burden of intentional speaking; it has no goal; it dilates time" (Carp 1997, 72), see PDS.

156 Alexander Haas, "Nibelungenhort und Peepshow" (2007), see PDS.

tures – without wanting to claim that Signa’s installation exactly behaves like the liquid or fluid architecture that has emerged in line with the increasing interest in the performance of buildings.¹⁵⁷ Understood as a particular kind of thought, however, the discourse provides a theoretical climate for a further unpacking of architextural practices. Thinking scenography’s script through performative architecture invites a possibility to make room for the involvement of bodies in the production of space, while simultaneously these spaces function as diagrams, and to investigate how bodies and spaces collaborate in the process of building performance. In order for this climate to function properly, it is well worth zooming in shortly on the performative qualities of architecture. What is the performance of architecture, and how does architecture think performance?

Architectural performances

In “Architecture’s Unscripted Performance”, architecture theorist David Leatherbarrow remarks that we do not so much enter rooms, instead rooms “happen to us” (in Kolarevic/Malkawi 2005, 10). Rooms can depress or delight us; they serve or fail to meet expectations, the exact experience and function each time depends on the particular operations taking place in accordance with that room. Performance then is on the one hand related to the performativity of buildings, as they ‘do’ something to us and are being ‘done to’, and on the other hand is aligned with the variability, unpredictability and non-repeatability that characterises the act and actuality of performance. Leatherbarrow rejects modernist conceptions of space, where space is understood as an encompassing framework or container for events taking place within. To Leatherbarrow, buildings are not fixed or solid objects, but performances, always in a state of becoming. Their latent potential is actualised through particular encounters – encounters of rooms and users, of buildings and weather, of built environments and time (ibid., 16-18).

Leatherbarrow’s account fits a broader pattern in architectural discourse, in which the eventness of architecture precedes and intertwines with the turn towards performative architecture in the last decades of the twentieth century (Salter 2010, 81-112). Influenced by the work of Deleuze and Guattari, and incidentally infused by John Austin’s speech act theory, performative architecture highlights architecture as a process of production and creation (Spurr 2007, 14-15). Represented in the work of for instance Bernhard Tschumi, Peter Eisenman, Rem Koolhaas and more recently Lars Spuybroek/NOX Architecture, performative architecture has been inspired by Situationists’ practices – such as the flexible architecture of Constant Nieuwenhuys’ *New Babylon* – cinema, dance and performance art, urban and critical theory, and in particular developed in exchange with Derrida’s view

157 Examples are *Blur Building* by Diller/Scofidio or the *D-Tower* and the *H2O Pavillon* by Lars Spuybroek / NOX Architecture (Spurr 2007, 250-278). For similar reasons I do not discuss Kim Novak’s “liquid architecture” (in Verhoeff 2012, 110) or the mobile huts, shelters or houses that are often seen as ‘nomadic architecture’.

on architecture as an event (Spurr 2007, 40-58). Event/architecture foregrounds fluidity and action, as a countermovement to stratified architecture. For Derrida, architecture does not produce a location for events. Instead, the event of architecture is its very taking place; architecture is a “writing of space, a mode of spacing which makes a place for the event” (Casey 1998, 312).

In *Performative Architecture: Design Strategies for Living Bodies* (2007), Samantha Spurr subtly critiques event/architecture: despite the many references to bodily movement, this body is often oversimplified and therefore remains a symbolic abstraction (51-53). Although inspired by Tschumi, she observes in his work a tendency to the incidental and the extraordinary, to strategies of sudden cuts and breaks – which reveals Tschumi’s affinity with cinematography and his use of montage as a design strategy (189-192; cf. Nesbitt 1996, 169). As a response, Spurr brings to the fore the lived body in architecture, the mundaneness of everyday life, duration, and related conceptions of temporality that unite past, present, and future (Spurr 2007, 53). Spurr’s approach to performative architecture is most relevant for the present discussion, as she points to the mutual relationship between bodies and spaces, and focuses on spatial events in which bodily movement creatively produces and transforms spaces, while architecture in turn acts upon people.

A key question for Spurr is how performative architecture is able to create inhabitable spaces that allow bodies to interact with the (built) environment. Drawing extensively on architecture, but also on dance and performance art, she consequently foregrounds those practices which reveal a sense of interiority. Constant’s *New Babylon*, for instance, is framed as an early example in which “mobility becomes key to inhabitation”; this flexible architectural structure envisions a playful habitat where form and atmosphere change in reaction to human actions (135-136; Wigley 1998). Similar principles define the interactive installations of performance artist Vito Acconci. Acconci’s performance environments invite and script behaviour as well as respond to the visitors’ movements.¹⁵⁸ Although Spurr significantly downsizes performance to human-centred and corporeal activity, many of her observations seem closely connected to Lefebvre’s spatial analysis. While working on different scales, they both draw on phenomenology and both focus on lived space.¹⁵⁹ Lefebvre as well was very interested in Constant’s *New Babylon*, a project that emerged out of Constant’s affinity with play theory and his short-time engagement with the Situationists’ attempt to create a unitary urbanism, directed against the society of the spectacle (Wigley 1998, 31-39; Elden 2004, 116) ←2.

158 In *Instant House* (1980) for instance, taking place on a swing resurrects the buildings of a house; in *Seedbed* (1972), walking on an erected ramp triggers a voice below to express erotic fantasies, which charges the space with desire (Spurr 2007, 120-135).

159 Spurr primarily draws on Merleau-Ponty (Spurr 2007) whereas Lefebvre’s work is inspired by Heidegger (Elden 2004).

Summarising, performative architecture entails a shift away from understanding space in terms of quantity, geometry, stasis, fixed form, built construction or as a container for action, towards dynamic conceptions of space activated by bodies and produced in movement. In accordance with developments in digital design technologies, this shift explains the increasing use of the diagram in architectural design and discourse. Architectural diagrams resemble choreographic notation systems as they connect spatial relations to (corporeal) movement, and are open to various interpretations and use. As reading or using them activates them, diagrams are *generative* instead of representational devices (Vidler 2000, 3-6; Spurr 2007, 199-201). Spurr studies a range of diagrammatic scripts and in particular her comparison of Tschumi's *The Manhattan Transcripts* with the *Masques* series of architect John Hejduk are striking examples of architextural thought: they are spatial hypertexts that invite to write with spaces. A short description of both projects serves to render these modes of thought productive for a further elaboration of *Ruby Town's* architectures.

Tschumi's *Transcripts* (1976-1981) is a series of books comprising of drawings, pictures, architectural sketches and movement diagrams, which envisions late 20th century urbanism by means of disjunctive and changing spatial perspectives. The chapters with titles such as The Street, The Park, The Fall or The Block each are structured as cinematographic narratives. They contain sequences of urban scraps, seen from different angles. One is taken into the interior of buildings, or posited in-between passengers on the street, or jolted into witnessing space as if falling from great height. These frames and perspectives also operate in the context and contingency of their interrelationships. The books invite to randomly scroll the pages and as such they materialise a spatial hypertext – a trans-script – with erratic structures and singular connections between various viewpoints. The *Transcripts* resist overview or coherent perspective; instead they cut across a multiplicity of uses and registers and invite the readers/viewers to produce their own urban score (Spurr 179-192; Migayrou 2014). Tschumi's *Transcripts* intertwine with Derrida's view of architecture as event. Although his observations are deeply rooted in deconstructionist discourse, it is worth mentioning that Derrida directly links the *Transcripts* to scenography and the hypertext, when he qualifies the project as a "scenography of passage" (in Casey 1998, 313), and elsewhere states that "[w]riting is truly like a labyrinth since it has neither beginning nor end. One is always on the move. [...] One lives in writing. Writing is a way of living" (in Nesbitt 1996, 146).¹⁶⁰

Writing with spaces is also crucial to John Hejduk's *Masques*, a series of (book) projects each with a collection of drawings and texts, and occasionally built structures, successively named after particular European cities. Whereas Tschumi extensively draws on the tools and techniques of the cinematographic, Hejduk's strategies lean much more towards the theatrical. The *Masques* portray free standing, ephemeral structures, ac-

160 Eva Meyer, "Architecture where Desire can Live" [1986], interview with Jacques Derrida (in Nesbitt 1996, 144-149).

accompanied by precise lists of materials, additional tools, and enigmatic descriptions of characters and their moods, memories and actions. “Retired General’s Place”, for instance, part of *The Lancaster/Hanover Masque* (1992) is a wooden tower on wheels, equipped with “navy binoculars, telescope, periscope, opera glasses, earphones, sonar technology, removable ladder, fishing chair, army cot and telephone” and describes a General driving around Berlin in a black Mercedes, dreaming of past achievements while listening to the sound of snow on a winter’s day (in Spurr 2007, 156). Hejduk playfully addresses the text as integral to the design, typical of any architecture drawing, but instead of conflating text and object, he produces surrealist collages which coalesce play, fantasy, intertextuality and the carnivalesque, which self-reflexively explore the limits of architecture (Hays 1996, 7-21).¹⁶¹ Anthony Vidler describes his work as “vagabond architecture” which nests and disturbs the temporary occupied cities, and critiques and disrupts the cities’ commonplace (Vidler 1992, 214) – just like Kafka’s nomads ←1. Spurr states that Hejduk’s drawings are deceptively simple and transparent, but on closer inspection, one is drawn into subsurface level and discovers other worlds hidden below the surface of architecture. The affects generated by such a diagram equal the pleasure generated by the (hyper)text, where additional and associative elements are always ready to subvert the order of ideas on the surface of the text (Bolter 1991, 22; cf. Barthes 1975). With an eye to Tschumi’s *Transcripts*, Spurr characterises the *Masques* as follows:

In the *Transcripts* perspective becomes multiplied and montaged [...]. In Hejduk’s *Masques* perspective is something one travels through. The Masque is read in movement from one event and structure to another. [...] the spaces unfold as one moves through them. There are site plans showing the layout of structures, lists of structures and characters, rough sketches. They are almost incomprehensible when read individually but in accumulation they build up the performance. There is no finished, single performance – and one is forced to give up on the idea of finding it. As one begins to randomly look at different structures or pick out character names, one realizes that the performance is already underway in one’s reading of it. The drawing is not the Masque, it is the script for the Masque (Spurr 2007, 166-167).

These observations aptly characterise *Ruby Town*’s rhizomatic game board as well, which equally provides a script for a performance that is already on its way, resists single perspective, and instead invites to build up a world through the accumulation of spatial stories and experiences. *Ruby Town* is similarly a Masque that constantly hints at other realities and possibilities below the surface of appearance.

161 The architectural structures are presented in series, and occasionally appear in different Masques. They are like actors who travel from city to city, a “troupe of institutions, personalities and urban forms” (Mertins in Hays 1996, 28), and recall 16th and 17th century court masques and processions.

Tschumi's and Hejduk's diagrams conceptualise the spatiality of the hypertext and reveal the necessity of performance: hypertext needs to be 'done' in order to be actualised and the hypertext in turn provides a script for performance. These architectural performances point to ways in which an architecture may be understood as an assemblage of shifting, interlocking frames and perspectives (Tschumi); of perspectives one *moves through* and cause spaces to unfold as one moves through them (Hejduk); of spaces that are constituted in performance, created by the actions of those who look, scroll, stroll, play and imagine.

Evocative spaces

Henry Jenkins distinguishes several modes of environmental storytelling, one of which pertains to the creation of "evocative spaces": intertextual gamespaces that are based on existing stories, films or genres and render the source active within the adaptation (2004, 123-124). I use his term here not strictly in the same sense, as *Ruby Town* does not rely on such pre-existing source materials. In line with Tschumi and Hejduk, I focus on the spatiality of intertextuality itself, as yet another architecture, and additionally on the affective modulations emanating from these spatial relations. As a second entry into Signa's maze, I thus draw on the interconnections of texture, tissue, the plurality of the Text and intertextuality. Although in current architectural practice and discourse the poststructural work-as-text paradigm is hardly in use anymore and has been replaced by the diagrams of performative architecture, I think it is useful to temporarily excavate intertextuality again, as it opens a door to how spaces happen to us (Leatherbarrow), crawl under sub-surface level (Hejduk, Bolter) and in fact point to the lived space of intertextuality. In her introduction to Tschumi's three essays on "Architecture and Limits" (1980-1981), which also rely on intertextual thought, Kate Nesbitt provides a concise description of intertextuality, based on Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes, as "a web or network of relations between the components of a sign, or between an individual work and the works which precede or surround it, on which it relies for meaning" (Nesbitt 1996, 163). Tschumi drew on Roland Barthes, amongst others, and if one looks at Barthes' "From Work to Text", a short essay in which Barthes literally demonstrates what intertextuality is – as if he is 'doing' intertextuality – it occurs to me that Barthes actually practices a kind of psychogeography. He describes a becoming-space of the phenomenological body. To give ground to this observation, I have selected a rather lengthy quote:

The Text is plural. [...] The plural of the Text depends, that is, not on the ambiguity of its contents but on what might be called the *stereographic plurality* of its weave of signifiers (etymologically, the text is a tissue, a woven fabric). The reader of the Text may be compared to someone at a loose end [...]; what he perceives is multiple, irreducible, coming from a disconnected, heterogeneous variety of substances and perspectives: lights, colours, vegetation, heat, air, slender explosions of noises, scant cries of birds, children's voices from over on the other side, passages, gestures, clothes of

inhabitants near or far away. All these *incidents* are half-identifiable: they come from codes which are known but their combination is unique, founds the stroll in a difference repeatable only as difference. So the Text: it can be it only in its difference (which does not mean its individuality) (Barthes 1977, 159, italics by the author).

Barthes' account may as well have been a description of the experience of numerous spectators strolling through Signa's passages. At least, such affective modulations mark my personal experience. While I wander around, my sight lingers on the houses' interiors; laughter and shouting drift out through the windows, standing out against a buzzing choir of close and distant voices, mingling with the scent of the aged wallpapers. I move along past the graphic designs of pre-Fordist products in bathroom cabinets and on store shelves; I smell traces of stress or boredom as the ashtrays spill over in the military quarters. Moving about Ruby Town is a collection and assembly process of these evocative spaces; it is an encounter with a "half-identifiable" world in which somehow recognisable elements are connected in unfamiliar ways.

The Situationist psychogeographic looking-glass also alerts us to the pleasure of (intertextual) strolling. Roland Barthes describes this pleasure as the seam between a conformist and a subversive way of writing or reading, in *The Pleasure of the Text* (1975). Barthes locates this pleasure in-between two *edges* in a text, one that creates order or structure, and one that deviates from or defies the logic of coherence; their collision creates interstices and produces bliss. The Text itself then appears to be a diagram. In both studies, Barthes professes a material approach to the Text and highlights the role of the reader. Paradoxically, in the material domain of the visual arts and scenography, texture also points to the author. Here the term is often used to refer to the surface or 'skin' of objects and materials, which reveal a volume's material and tactile qualities – softness, porosity, temperature, and so on – and the process of manufacture. The texture of a work shows how it is made, implicitly or explicitly: it points to tools that are used and ways of handling these tools. Texture therefore reveals the artist's signature, as it indicates certain styles and preferences in the manufacturing process.¹⁶² Whether choosing a semiotic-linguistic or a scenographic point of view, a texture then is always a fabric of both surface and subsurface levels, a diagram of signatures and personal writings, a layered existence that also marks the architecture of Tschumi and Hejduk.

Tschumi's *Transcripts* and Hejduk's *Masques* require performance in order to be actualised, but their significance originates from the accumulation of visited sites and frames. A texture thus has a temporal dimension as well, as the past is rendered active in the present. Such a spatiotemporal texture is also addressed by performance theorist Marvin Carlson,

162 Ad de Visser sees texture (textuur), manufacture (factuur) and signature (schriftuur) as three inter-related concepts which point to implicit or explicit traces of the hand of the artist in the artwork (1986, 48-49).

in *The Haunted Stage* (2001), who argues that when we perceive spaces in the theatre, we remember other spaces through them. Spaces as well as texts, bodies, objects are always infused by a sense that these are seen before. These (uncanny) impressions haunt or ghost the theatre. More than any other art, theatre is always concerned with repetition and recycling – this pertains in particular to the body of the actor – and returns past perceptions and experiences (1-17). Ghosting surpasses ‘sameness’, as these memories are produced in the present, contingent to new contexts of recollection, adjusted and modified as they “move through” different productions and new “imaginary configurations” (3-4).

Carlson’s study invites to see spaces through other spaces and *Ruby Town* surely offers such sites of remembrance. In *Ruby Town*, recycling manifests itself in quite a remarkable way. Apart from the occasional caravans, through which one may remember fairgrounds, Roma camps, countless sad camping sites, or zones of urban disobedience, the majority of houses in Ruby Town are literally recycled from floors, walls, curtains and interiors of existing houses, taken from an abandoned coal miner’s village – a ghost village – taken apart, and rebuilt again. Ruby Town is also literally ghosted, by way of the figure of Martha Rubin, an Oracle to whom all the villagers are descendent. Ruby Town comes with a myth of origin, which reports of the long and adventurous life of Martha Rubin, who suddenly disappeared after a last sighting in Constanta, Romania, in 1913. She had been stuck in limbo, so the story goes. It is only recently that she has gained living form again, and returned to Ruby Town, in order to foretell the future.¹⁶³ However, she keeps disappearing from time to time; visitors to Martha Rubin’s sanctuary then will find her sound asleep, or run into an empty bed.¹⁶⁴ Martha’s awakenings are often the start of celebrations and festive rituals; coming ‘from the past’, Martha initiates events in the present.

There are additional ways of seeing spaces (moving) through other spaces. The combination of quarters and in-between walking areas, for instance, also recycle the medieval staging practice of *loci* and *platea*. The *loci* were a number of designated areas, elevated platforms or simple mansions that identified allegorical situations or characters, grouped around an open place or *platea*. Essential to the medieval stage, and to Signa’s game board as well, is the simultaneity of play. Medieval *loci* presented juxtaposed allegories such as Heaven and Hell, or houses of saints, heathens, robbers and merchants (Tydeman 1978, 57-61). With a little good-will, *Ruby Town*’s *loci* of the tourist shop, the bar, the beauty parlour or the peepshow might equally be seen as allegories for contemporary consumer and entertainment culture, flavoured by capitalism, cosmetics and pornography, whereas the (border)zone in its totality enacts the society of control.

To imagine the *Masques* is to inhabit them, argues Spurr. With an eye to Gaston Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space*, this imagination deepens when drawings are revisited,

163 See PDS for further details.

164 During these disappearances, Signa Sørensen performed another role – probably that of a gypsy, at the bottom of Ruby Town’s social hierarchy. See “Staged intimacy” (2009), PDS.

when one is enticed to curl up in corners, to follow the secrets of stairways, to enjoy the pleasure of the attic. Architecture thus starts to equate memory, in the sense that both are instances of “layered experience, built up in time” (Spurr 2007, 159).¹⁶⁵ The same can be said of the haunted spaces of *Ruby Town*. The active presence of the past in the present also subtly nuances the ‘here-and-nowness’ of Lehmann’s event/situation ←4. *Ruby Town*, instead, is oriented as much towards the past as it anticipates the future. Like Hejduk’s *Masques*, Signa’s world hugely expands below or behind the surface. One would need days to discover the stories and secrets of this world, to look further through the visible cracks in the mask of friendliness, and discover in fact a “rotten world”, to quote Signa’s Arthur Köstler: discrimination, betrayal, men beating their wives, fierce punishments and more nastiness.¹⁶⁶ Performative architecture proposes that bodies not only move in but also generate spaces. When connected to evocative spaces, the spectators’ differential trajectories may be regarded as processes of collecting and assembling lived spaces. With Derrida in mind, strolling through Ruby Town equals a living in writing. While the spectators build the world of performance through affective modulations, they counter Signa’s signature with their own paths.

Procedural passageways

Signa’s rhizomatic game board raises the question whether visitors to *Ruby Town* are perhaps better conceived of as players, instead of as spectators. Entirely replacing the one term with the other is not entirely satisfying in my view. Instead, I propose that playfulness is a mode of spectating. Next to Jenkins’ account, game studies offers another type of ‘narrative’ architecture, that is closer to the major architectural framework presented in this chapter, which is *procedural rhetoric*. A short inquiry into this concept prepares a third way of cutting across *Ruby Town*’s labyrinth. Videogames critic and designer Ian Bogost coins the term, in *Persuasive Games* (2007), and defines procedural rhetoric as the practice of conveying ideas and arguments through rule-driven and behaviour-organising processes (29). Bogost acknowledges yet counters the negative connotations surrounding both ‘procedures’ and ‘rhetoric’. Procedures are often seen as static, confining, simplistic or as vehicles of bureaucracy or ideology, yet Bogost argues that procedures found the logics that structure all processes, including complex and dialectic ones. Rhetoric sometimes equals pretentious, ‘empty’ rhetoric, or is dismissed as a one-way argument used to compel or influence others. For Bogost, rhetoric is above all expressive, a way of

165 K. Michael Hays uses Bakhtin’s chronotope to qualify this lived temporality in Hejduk’s work, designating the “distinctive temporal and spatial features within a work, the phenomenal ‘feel’ of the world produced by the work”, where (quoting Bakhtin) “time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot, and history” (1996, 10).

166 “Staged intimacy” (2009), see PDS.

meaning-making through processual arguments, and as such he also speaks of procedural representation (3-21).¹⁶⁷

Although Bogost primarily focuses on videogames, procedural rhetoric is not the exclusive domain of computational processes; any medium can express certain ideas via the organisation and inscription of processes (46). Indeed, procedural rhetoric is also discernible in process-driven performances such as *Ruby Town*, and is no stranger to the scripts and scenarios of performative architecture. In fact, Bogost's proceduralism can be seen as performative architecture itself, as the game's structure authors and builds processual, participatory environments. *Ruby Town* or architectural performances are probably less straightforward than the persuasive games mentioned by Bogost, yet his proposition that the organisation and structure of processes are in themselves meaningful and expressive is quite relevant.¹⁶⁸ Procedural rhetoric implies that certain ideas are conveyed by the logics that structure processes, by the rules that delineate behaviour and define the parameters for decision making. Together these elements mount a procedural argument and advance certain claims or propositions. Through testing, trial and error, and manipulation of the procedural environment, the player erects a space of possibilities, based on "the myriad configurations the player might construct to see the ways the processes inscribed in the system work" (42). These processes *generate* representation, in which the player participates, "rather than authoring the representation itself" (5). Procedural representation investigates processes by means of other processes, the enactment or execution of which may either support or challenge the understanding of those processes. Such representations facilitate a "dialectical interrogation of process-based claims about how real-world processes do, could, or should work" (57).¹⁶⁹

When seeing procedural rhetoric as architecture, perhaps one should not do away too easily with the Vitruvian trilogy dismissed by Tschumi (1996, 108). These classic architectural criteria of structural integrity, aesthetics and appropriate accommodation still seem relevant. First, procedural rhetoric depends on structural coherence, in order to be rhetorical. Second, since Bogost partners procedures with rhetoric to argue that procedures themselves are carriers of expression and meaning, this also implies that they might be judged accordingly, in terms of quality of expression, or critical potential. Third, procedural rhetoric is a way of maneuvering players through game worlds, and as such

167 Bogost's rhetoric differs from Sutton-Smith's, the latter refers to broad cultural paradigms and values whereas Bogost focuses on "local arguments" i.e. the claims and propositions represented by the specific rules and logics of particular videogames (2007, 52-54; Sutton-Smith 2001).

168 Among Bogost's many examples are critical games such as *The McDonald's Videogame* (2006) or *Darfur is Dying* (2006), *Tax Invaders* (2004) and educational games such as *Dance, Dance, Revolution* (1998) and *Tenure* (1975).

169 In game studies, the term 'procedural literacy' has gained popularity, in the slipstream of visual, digital literacy, implicating the capacity and knowledge of how to deal and play with formats, procedures, organisational units, and other rules of play (Bogost 2007, 64).

the organisational units do indeed accommodate players. Tschumi prefers another trilogy, that of physical, mental, and social space (111), a trilogy that echoes Lefebvre's perceived, conceived and lived space. Tschumi's preference is also quite relevant, since it leads to inquire into how these procedures, understood as architecture, "combine the representation of space and the space of representation" (Tschumi 1996, 111 ←3), how procedural rhetoric may be thought politically and socially, how micro-cosmoses of play-worlds simultaneously think and act out the macro-cosmoses of the 'outer' world.

Playing at the limits

With Bogost's observations in mind, *Ruby Town* can certainly be understood as a procedural environment; a world driven by rules, limitations and borders. Rules and choice-making processes are the distinctive features of games and play (Salen/Zimmerman 2004; Raessens 2010). As soon as one enters *Ruby Town* one is confronted with procedures, rule-based instructions *and* the subversion of those imposed laws, as both Ruby Towners and military personnel make these rules elastic. Performers are abiding to yet another set of rules, which is the agreement to stay in character for the entire length of the event. As to the spectators, they are in particularly enticed to make choices: they have to decide whether they will trespass borders or enter the peepshow, how they will behave in this world, whether they stay at a distance or get fully engaged. Some spectators felt challenged in becoming completely involved: performance footage shows visitors carrying out a Shiatsu-massage on one of the performers and some spectators decided to stay overnight. Signa Sørensen aptly describes the relation between rules, instructions and decision-making processes, and their rhetoric:

We told the performers: get someone into the fiction but don't cling on too long. If you see this person is fine and you have given some information on where to go now, like "meet my uncle in the restaurant" or "if you need this you should go to Leo," then send them on. This also gives the audience the very important possibility to actually make choices on their own. I really don't like this idea of theatre as a kindergarten where the performer holds your hand all the time and tells you what to do. I think part of the art experience is to show people that the things you experience in life in general are totally dependent on what you decide. You have to decide where you look, where you move, what you say. And what you say is also dependent on what other people say to you. It is very much an artistic goal of ours, to reach some kind of reflection or awareness that everything is a choice within a constructed frame.

The rhizomatic game board of *Ruby Town* is a possibility space. One is not obliged but definitely gets more out of this world when prepared to experiment with the situation at hand. *Ruby Town* addresses playfulness as a mode of spectating, understood here as a willingness to test and explore unexpected situations. This does not necessarily involve

'grand adventures' but may as well pertain to modest experiments, as a personal experience demonstrates. Quite soon after my entrance to Ruby Town, I was invited into the Beauty Parlour where I had my nails done. I left the varnish on for three days after the event. Even though I never wear nail varnish, I did not want to clean it off. For one reason, I liked the idea of carrying a material trace of the performance, as a way of literally staying in touch with this captivating event. Additionally, I suddenly became fond of the idea of being someone who *does* wear nail varnish. To be more precise, the pleasure did not reside in serious contemplations of the pros and cons of nail varnish – nor in the impossible exercise of identifying 'a nail varnish type of person' – but in the freedom to considerate it as one of the things I *could* do. The *playing with the idea* itself. Pleasure here pertains to the option to behave other than one is used to doing; to the awareness of things being potentially different than one thinks they are.¹⁷⁰ This possibility space opens up a line of flight, a field of potentiality. In a very modest and trivial way, this nail varnish event instigates the expansion of limits, a becoming-other: a spectator in touch with the virtual – a becoming-spectator. *Ruby Town* also houses becoming-performers, as this nine-day non-stop event brings performers in a liminal state, and some spectators as well, at the edge of exhaustion and beyond; tiredness causes out of the ordinary behaviour and dilates the surface of everyday life.

Ruby Town is constituted through play, yet is also deeply serious. On a larger scale, rules and choice-making processes disclose harsh social and political circumstances; rules that organise patterns of inclusion and exclusion and exhibit questionable laws and punishments. Throughout, there is a continuous subversion of those rules – which is also characteristic of games and play. Although marked by ample nomadic manoeuvres, the major procedural rhetoric on *Ruby Town's* rhizomatic game board seems to be that of the game of rule-play and decision-making itself. Signa's quote on decision making processes above is already indicative of this emergent dramaturgy. The organisation and structure of the processes in *Ruby Town* express a critical approach to rules and borders. This rhetoric asks how one chooses to deal with rules and restrictions, and explores the limit of limits. The performance thus exposes a particular understanding of play that is very close to the nomadic: Signa offers a space to play *with* the rules, a laboratory where limits are trialed and tested and borderzones are subjected to experimentation, but where the primary test results also indicate that one cannot escape the society of control, as manipulation is deeply embedded in the curls and corners of lived space.

Next to societal rules, *Ruby Town* plays with the rules of theatre: reminiscent of the 'Nothing going on here' of disappointed spectators, this post/dramatic performance challenges horizons of expectation. Signa refuses to adhere to the conventions of dramatic theatre, paradoxically precisely by absorbing (most of) the spectators into the suspension

170 These observations actually closely relate to Chiel Kattenbelt's description of the aesthetic orientation ←1.

of disbelief, a suspension which in turn is driven to the extreme. In Signa's world, the dramatic theatre is a war machine within the postdramatic theatre – or should we see it the other way round – spreading infections and contaminations with every move. In the slipstream of these observations, Tschumi's essays "Architecture and Limits" (1980-1981) come into view. In line with Derrida's deconstruction of architecture, Tschumi argues that deconstruction is not concerned with the destruction of architecture but explores the limits of architecture, in order to investigate what exactly defines or delineates architecture. Limits are architecture's ontological and epistemological base, argues Tschumi: architecture cannot exist without limits, and simultaneously the design projects situated at the limits of architecture – "disturbing, disconcerting elements at the edge of production, hinting at other definitions and interpretations" – provide the ground from which existing conditions can be interrogated (in Nesbitt 1996, 152). *Ruby Town* similarly is situated at the edge of theatre, and hints at other definitions and interpretations. Both the artistic directors of Signa remark that they never conceived of this work as theatre and subtly add that they are not very fond of theatre either. *Ruby Town* may as easily be qualified as either an art installation, or a game, an architecture, a LARP, a memory palace, lived space strategised through scenography, or all of this: an architecture.

The entirety of the map

Ruby Town's play with limits paves the way for a re-entrance of Borges and his intriguing story of a map of the world on a scale 1:1. His paradox triggers the type of questions that can only be answered by negation: how can such a map exist? In what kind of space could this map reside? How would one deal with depicting a world that constantly changes – while at the same time one is *in* that world? Borges' exhaustion of the map is like a Moebius-strip, in which the world as an object to be mapped is both on the inside and on the outside of the world in which the object is being mapped. This figuration of the fold $\leftarrow 4$ also invites to enquire how *Ruby Town* relates to and represents the world 'outside'. After visiting *Ruby Town*, this outside world may strike one as even more unreal or constructed than the life in the village. And when on the inside of this installation, one is to a certain extent still on the outside. It is strange to share a vodka with someone who is totally in character, while you are not; you are still that visitor to *Ruby Town* – and yet, on a scale 1:1, visitor to *Ruby Town*. Signa Sørensen sums it up neatly:

Actually the question of fiction and reality has become irrelevant to me, because in these performances we reach a point where the difference really doesn't exist anymore. If I can speak for myself, there are a lot of moments with the other performers or with members of the audience that are real experiences to me, as well as to the audience and to the other actors. What is going on between us: I cannot say that is not real. The same goes for life itself. The facts of life, the writing of history, the bible, everything is a construction; there is no clear distinction between fiction and reality.

This implosion of the reality/fiction axis is also discernible in other case studies in this study, where lived space is tethered to the deliberate construction of situations. Staging these situations is a means through which these modes – or folds – of reality are displayed and interrogated. Mobius-ising fiction and reality exposes Soja’s both/and also paradigm of real-and-imagined spaces (1996) $\leftarrow 2$, which also marks digital culture (cf. Benford/Giannachi 2011; Lavender in Bay-Cheng et al. 2010). Although thoroughly pre-digital in its surface aesthetics or skin-texture, *Ruby Town* surely tunes in with this digital paradigm.

Both Signa’s *Ruby Town* and Borges’ map raise the question whether a playworld should be conceived of as a *closed* magic circle, an autonomous, free zone whose subversive or fun potential lies exactly in its independence from outer reality, or whether play should be seen as a social and cultural practice, distinct from yet constitutive of or embedded in this culture.¹⁷¹ It is beyond the scope of this study to draw out the finesses of this debate, nor do I intend to choose sides. Instead, raising this question is a means to ask how *Ruby Town* thinks of the play-versus-reality relationship. *Ruby Town* is a distinctively closed off world, yet one cannot ignore seeing how play-world procedures continuously parallel real-world processes. In his essay “Simulacra and Simulations” (1981), Jean Baudrillard takes Borges’ story as an allegory of the simulacrum, or rather as a first stage towards simulation: the phase where the real becomes a rotten carcass, on its way to disappearance. Whereas a representation still is based on the real, as the sign is suggested to be the equivalent of the real, the simulacrum has no relation to any reality whatsoever, as there is no longer a real to refer to. Signs of the real have replaced the real itself; signs become emptied-out objects – surfaces without debts (1981/1998, 166-167). In that sense, Borges’ is a “useless” fable for Baudrillard (166), as it still draws on the (im)possibility of depicting a real world, even at the very edge of exhaustion – without the option of reality this edge cannot exist. In this 1980s essay, Baudrillard names Disneyworld, the Watergate scandal and capitalism as examples of increasingly expansive simulations, not because they are phantasmagoria $\leftarrow 2$, but because they serve to conceal that the world outside is equally infantile, scandalous or amorally monstrous as the staged hyperreality itself (171-174). In *The Return of the Real* (1996), art theorist Hal Foster counters Baudrillard’s analysis by describing how 1990s art and theory brings subjectivity and material bodies to the forefront, next to the social sites where art and society are produced, aptly captured in his observation that “certainly the subjects related to these objects have not disappeared” (144). A similar focus characterises the present study, where lived space, corporeality and situatedness are consequently put into relation with how a spectator as subject is addressed and positioned.

171 Lehmann places Gadamer and Schiller in the first camp, and prefers the second (2008, 54). Many game scholars plea for a non-dualist approach to the magic circle, or seek to move beyond it (Raessens 2010; Copier in Van den Boomen et al. 2009, 164-168). See also Montola for a concise overview of the game studies debate; Montola proposes to replace the circle with the notion of the contract (2012, 48-55).

Play, experimentation and procedural rhetoric are equivalent to the formulation and testing of hypotheses. *Ruby Town* invites a hypothesis as well, as the implosion of the fiction/reality axis seems to open the door for a 'return of the fiction', to go along with Hal Foster's "return of the real". Varying from Baudrillard's world of simulacra, the works considered in this study do not see fictional constructions as replacements of reality, but rather as *also* constitutive of reality, a *lived* reality. Contrary to Baudrillard's examples and analysis, *Ruby Town's* procedural rhetoric continuously points to real-world constructions and simulacra, not to arrive at a 'truth' but to explore the implications of living in such a world. One of those implications is connected to choice making, in the full awareness of acting out these choices within constructed and manipulative frames. However fictional these frames may be, the choices one makes are real and have real effects. Next, the self-referential character of many of the works discussed in this study point to the procedural rhetoric of staging itself, both in and outside the theatre. These works direct our attention to *how* something is staged, to how someone is addressed and responds to this address, to the strategies by which something is made imperceptible or brought to the light. *Ruby Town*, perhaps more than any of the other case studies, places the *imagination* next to staging, by orchestrating a fantasised world. Imagination is of course also at the heart of play. To highlight the value of imagination is perhaps far from astonishing within a context of play and game studies, or the "ludic turn" in society (Raessens 2010, 22-24). However, as I have sought to make the twin concept of play productive for the theatre again, this aspect of play perhaps deserves some closer attention, as it productively shifts the attention from re-presentation to creation, to modes of *inventing* ways in which we might engage with a fluid and contradictory world.

Tissue, traces, tracks

A nomad follows customary paths, observe Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 19), and traces its own tracks (Braidotti 2004, 61). In a similar vein I end with locating some traces in the spatial tissue generated by the concept of architexture. This chapter discussed architextures but the chapter itself achieved some architextural qualities as well, despite the linear disguise of the written page. In fact, to write this chapter felt like building a labyrinth. A restless labyrinth, as connections fought for supremacy and endings could easily be exchanged for beginnings. This spatial hypertext is a weaving together of spaces, stemming from different disciplinary backgrounds. This way, play and game theories come to function as a kind of postdramatic performance theory, which also puts forward a process-based proposition, namely that play theory *is* postdramatic theory – a proposition also done by Lehmann but articulated somewhat differently (2007).¹⁷² Linking both play-concepts and Signa's *Ruby Town* to performative architecture served to show how

172 Lehmann focuses on play elements such as the intrigue, the double-play of the play-within-the-play, the conflict as (competitive) agôn.

ambulant performers and spectators write, produce and appropriate space, while at the same time these spaces are scripted. By way of this “dialectical interrogation” (Bogost), performers and spectators are positioned as both users and producers of space. This pertains not only to Signa’s rhizomatic game board but as well to other playgrounds, installations, ambulatory performances or walking trajectories. As such, the cases in this study all are involved with performing architecture: performers and spectators produce spaces as they move through them. These spaces expose the theatre space as diagrams of layered realities, as assemblages of various meanings and intensities, build up in time, composed in play, embodied and lived, and fuelled by situated knowledge.

Additionally, the concept of architextures sheds a light on my way of dealing with the questions, topics and cases addressed in this study as a whole. Similarly to the architexture’s interplay of connected spaces and shifting perspectives, I approached both practices and theories from different angles and scales: performance descriptions alternated between first-person and third-person perspectives – terms also frequently used in games –; dramaturgical frameworks provided viewpoints for theoretical reflection, and vice versa; theatre and performance theory dialogically encountered concepts derived from philosophy, cartography, or architecture. Lefebvre’s lived space both opened up affective spaces as well as social territories; the scale of proximity proved to be as large as present-day social reality. As an architexture, this study is a writing *with* spaces.

The concept of architexture helps to demonstrate that nomadic theatre does not stick to particular domains; it knows no boundaries, it questions territories by cutting across them – and of course always arrives back at the limits, as there is no deterritorialisation without territory. Architexture points to the limits of the concept of nomadic theatre, limits that, to follow Tschumi, do not destroy but instead point to a concept’s ontological and epistemological base, and are thresholds to the virtual. Concluding, this study in general, and this chapter in particular, has a procedural rhetoric of its own: it demonstrates nomadic theatre, it does nomadology.

DISTRIBUTED PERFORMANCE

Epilogue

If I were a true nomad, I would stop right here.
Right in the middle.

I guess I am not.

Pop-up stores

In the spring of 2007 I nearly stumbled over the legs of a man lying on the street in the centre of Utrecht, his body elegantly draped halfway across the pavement and the road. It appeared that I had unknowingly stepped into a one-minute choreography, called 'Resting', part of the rich assortment of moves that were on the menu at Matsune's and Subal's *Store*.¹⁷³ Passers-by and visitors to this performance shop could purchase a micro-choreography for one or two euros, including 'Half-Resting' for half of the price – which involved leaning gently against a doorpost. Also available were the slightly more expensive 'Copies' – Madonna copy, Buddha copy, and other canonised gestures – and occasionally a customer was presented with a take-away gift. Many of the clients stayed in order to see what their co-customers would achieve, and as such they collaboratively composed the *Store's* choreography. A few years later I learnt about Hannah Hurtzig's *Blackmarket of Useful Knowledge and Non-Knowledge*, which employs the format of the (black) market to put specialists of all thinkable areas – ranging from beekeeping and robotics to palliative care – in contact with a client, each on one side of a table, in order to impart knowledge. The *Blackmarket* is a mobile academy that moves from city to city, draws on local, situated knowledge, and employs experts of all social classes

¹⁷³ *Store* (2005-2012), seen at Springdance festival Utrecht, 2007. See PDS.

along with the attitude of the (Deleuzian) apprentice, to question the boundaries of knowledge.¹⁷⁴

Both these initiatives playfully appropriate an exchange format that is deeply ingrained within capitalism – the store, the market – and put this concept-form to work in another area, that of dance and theatre.¹⁷⁵ They appropriate consumption to use it for *something else*, for *another* purpose. These acts profess a nomadic attitude as they escape the grid of capital and open the door for something that flows through and underneath the codes of consumption. By doing this they of course also expose the limits of capital, because, as Brian Massumi notes, capitalism can displace its own limits but will always be trapped within its own system: “For although capitalism has turned quantum in its mode of operation, it has done so in the service of quantity: consumption and accumulation are, have been, and will always [be] its reason for being” (1992, 138).¹⁷⁶ Both the *Store* and the *Blackmarket* create other spaces of representation; they use choreography to rethink fun-shopping, or twist common notions of expert knowledge. They both reterritorialise the market by using the format for another purpose: these events amount to the consumption of a collective choreography, and to the accumulation of (non)knowledge.

Inherent to the concept of nomadic theatre is the possibility to invert these shells of thought. Instead of reterritorialising the market, it may also be argued that these performances deterritorialise consumption, as they expose the limits of capital and disturb its territory. Both these patterns indicate that performance distributes itself onto the smooth space of capitalism. In the following, I will use these examples alongside the cases and theoretical concepts discussed in this study, to show how the concept of nomadic theatre is thoroughly involved with the distribution of performance towards other realms of practice and expertise, as well as how emanating patterns of de- and reterritorialisation dilate or disturb a number of territories, both inside and outside the theatre.

Trajectories of the stage

As I have argued and demonstrated, the concept of nomadic theatre installs connections between heterogeneous fields, creating relationships between theory and practice, between various spatial disciplines, between theatre and society. The concept allows for

174 *Schwarzmarkt für nützliches Wissen und nicht-Wissen* (2005-present). See PDS.

175 In the short video *From Sketch#5*, Hurtzig describes the Blackmarket as a communicative act of performing knowledge, and as a *theatrical* act which includes text, performers, listeners/spectators, a space or agora, stage directions and a script that provides structure and rhythm. This script replaces the director (similar to the scenographic script ←5) and nomadically captures administration procedures. This script is born out of “*der Geist der Bürokratie*” (the spirit of bureaucracy) (ZIA/ Arte Creative, May 2011). See PDS.

176 In a similar vein, Deleuze speaks of the schizophrenic, a small difference that operates between levels of repetition but beneath consumption (1968/2004a, 365); Guy Debord calls for a “flooding the market” which is in the capacity of everyone but “beyond the capacity of the old social organization” in “Introduction to a critique of urban geography” (1955). See note 74.

the reading of practice through theory, and vice versa. In this study I have employed this concept to investigate how movement and mobility effect and implicate the theatre, how this addresses and positions the spectators in performance, how mobility is staged, and subsequently, how such movements can best be described. In order to do so I followed the whereabouts of the *stage*, and the many ways in which the stage is subjected to acts of de- and reterritorialisation. I focused on the stage because this platform for performance unites performers, spectators and (theatre) spaces, however transparent or imperceptible this stage may appear to be. I showed how contemporary theatre practice distributes the stage into an open, smooth space, as the stage nests within urban space or global space, curls up in the realm of the senses, cuts across the grid of capital, or captures the territory of play. This highly coded theatrical entity is shattered to pieces, displaced, twisted and multiplied. The stage re-emerges as a path, trail or rhizomatic game board, appears in the (dis)guise of a store or brothel, or proliferates as differential-synchronous trajectories and platforms of co-presence.

The stage becomes a smooth space; what remains instead is a flexible threefold constellation of performers, spectators and spaces. The stage then achieves the speed of minute particles or atoms, “with the possibility of springing up at any point” (Deleuze/Guattari 2004, 421), and ascertains the qualities of modularity – the hallmark of the digital (Manovich 2001) – as this constellation can be arranged, combined and configured in an infinite number of ways. The flexibility of the triadic constellation on the one hand exposes the conventional stage-auditorium division as only the striated version of the performer-spectator relationship, self-reflexively reminding us of all other possible configurations within the theatre: it points to the virtuality of the stage. On the other hand, this modularity allows the stage to be distributed throughout every possible realm of society, and as such the smooth stage gives witness to the performative turn in society (Kattenbelt 2010), where staging – the stage turned into a verb, a process, a speech-act – crawls into every corner of socio-economic or political arenas.¹⁷⁷

In *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement*, Alan Read critically remarks that theatre and society should not be seen as one-and-the same, instead he emphasises that these are distinct spheres or modalities of reality.¹⁷⁸ They are two surfaces upon which, however, associative bonds can be perceived. He describes these as “the crossing and re-crossing of intensities across and between these surfaces” (2008, 37). I agree with Read on this, but would like to add that these crossings sometimes follow patterns of de- and reterritorialisation, as theatre and society capture each other’s codes and insert these codes into other domains. The

177 The smoothness of the stage in turn is subjected to patterns of striation, as performance increasingly becomes an imperative, as indicated by Jon McKenzie, in *Perform, or Else* (2001).

178 These remarks are made in relation to Read’s attempt to present theatre as a place for the reassembly of the social, while at the same time he rejects the possibility of a society-changing political theatre ←2.

practices discussed in this study above all capture the codes of contemporary mobility, as they equally use the tools of navigation, way-finding and cartography, of co-presence and locality, of simultaneity and juxtaposition. They are in my view also exponents of a digital, participatory, and neoliberalist culture. To single out the spectator and address the spectators' heterogeneity may be regarded as an appropriation of the participatory politics of neoliberalism, which advocates individualism and supposedly free choice (cf. Bishop 2012, 13-14). The performances do not represent these strategies but use them to organise the performance event. Many of these works operate through individual response, heterogeneity, and user-generated content, but compromise free choice by (exposing the frames of) manipulation and by borrowing the rule-set of a game. Theatre thus captures the codes of digital culture, and is deterritorialised by the participatory and playful components of that culture in turn. Participation nests within the theatre and emerges as one-to-one performance; playfulness provides it with opportunities for experimentation; neoliberalism delivers the grids of capital on which some of these works are based.

In turn, the theatre reterritorialises on participation and playfulness by employing the heterogeneity of audiences and an experimental approach to spectatorship for the investigation of social connectivity – both inside and outside the theatre. Possibly as a response to the excesses of individualism and the elusive abstractness of globalisation, this theatre emerges as a series of local operations which invite a newly articulated attunement into the environment, a sensuous thinking or attentiveness for the interconnectedness of subjects and worlds. As such, the theatre joins forces with the revaluation of place and location that is taken up in many spatial and mobility theories ←2, not to arrive at a new dualism once more, but in order to investigate embodied relationships with the places and spaces through which we move and that we create through movement.

Folds of spectating

As part of the turn from the dramatic to the postdramatic, Lehmann observes a shift from internal to external communication: instead of a focus on an illusionary world on the stage, presented as a closed continuum and established through characters' dialogue, the emphasis shifts towards the exchange between stage and audience, and concentrates on the here and now of the live performance event. Many practices discussed in this study take this external communication to the extreme, to such an extent that it becomes a form of *internal* communication once more, as the one-to-one encounters of performers and spectators often establish the theatre event through dialogue or nonverbal forms of conversation, something which can also be seen at work in Hurtzig's *Blackmarket*. This is why in all the chapters an image of interiority emerged, which placed the spectator at the 'inside' of performance: inside the installation ←1; at the 'indoors' of the phantasmagoria and the secret theatre ←2; enveloped by acoustic and haptic spaces ←2,3,4; connected to interior stages ←4; inside the (Borgesian) map and within the world of play ←5. This interiority is in my view not a strategy of taking the eyes off the world outside, but instead

a means to enquire into the spectator's engagement with that outside world. Hannah Hurtzig connects the *Blackmarket* to a phantasmagoria as well, an arena where the apprentice is intoxicated by knowledge, although always maintaining the doubt. Simultaneously, by radically opening up the notion of the expert – somewhat similar to Rimini Protokoll's experts of the daily life – the *Blackmarket* intervenes in social space and in hierarchies of knowledge. The *Blackmarket* no. 11 in Liverpool 2008, for instance, entitled "On waste. The Disappearance and Come Back of Things and Values", opens up a range of different ways we might consider (and appreciate) waste and invited amongst many other experts a dumpster diver, a vector-biologist, a bin man, and a guerilla gardener.¹⁷⁹

Relations between interiority and exteriority may also materialise in subtler ways. I have mentioned how the installation or haptic spaces collapse the distinction between object and subject, and how map-making or sensory perception exposes subjectivity as always relational and as an act of 'worldmaking'. Subjectivity then is a process in which, to re-quote Bleeker, both "subjects and worlds appear and also disappear". In chapter 4, I discussed the concept of the fold to elucidate this twofold movement. I used the fold to point at the self-reflexivity of *The Smile Off Your Face*, a feedback loop that is actually at work in all the discussed performances. All these works can be pinpointed on the dissolution-amplification axis that Lehmann holds as characteristic of the event/situation ←4. In a similar vein, the focus on interiority amplifies a quality of theatre that does not always rise to the surface, but never ceases to exist, namely that spectators are at all times at the inside of performance; they are always participants in the work. This observation installs another feedback-loop then, as I seem to have arrived back at Jacques Rancière's emancipated spectator ←4. Over the years of doing this research, I have been engaged in countless discussions where my interlocutor in one variety or another repeated Rancière's argument, namely that the conventional seat in the auditorium provides a rich enough experience in itself, or rather delivers even more intellectual adventures than when being asked to participate. They condemned the manipulative nature of these works, or questioned their relative non-repeatability, as the address to personal experience often draws on the parameters of surprise. Although I have come to re-appreciate the conventional set-up as well, I cannot help but think of a reply that is inspired by Stephen Di Benedetto: when was the spectator ever embraced?¹⁸⁰ In line with my discussion of *Het Sprookjesbordeel* ←4, Di Benedetto argues that the "mass proliferation of somatically obsessed images has denigrated the body to a consumer object to be bought and sold, rather than embraced and touched" (in Baner/Lepecki 2007, 128). He quotes Kristine Stiles, who critically remarks that aesthetic distance and autonomy

179 *Blackmarket Encyclopedia* 2005-2012, see PDS. The *Blackmarket*'s assemblies come quite close to Read's ethics of association.

180 British artist Adrian Howells used the embrace as a key concept in his one-to-one performance *The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding* (2011).

are “Enlightenment notions” and even “dangerous fictions” that have “little to do with the actual conditions upon and in which real human beings live and artists produce art” (ibid., 127). The works discussed in this study precisely tune in with these lived spaces. They provoke a redistribution of the sensible by challenging perceptual habits, propose to expand our notion of spectatorship, and expose the entanglement of arts and markets. With her discussion of “delegated performance”, Claire Bishop points as well to contemporary artworld conditions ←2 and we might look at *Store* of Matsune & Subal in a similar vein. Although seemingly extremely light and playful, *Store* simultaneously exposes how artists become their own brand in the art-market and at international festivals (cf. Bishop 2012, 12). *Store* took place in an empty department store in one of the shopping streets of Utrecht. Matsune and Subal use the format of the pop-up store, but simultaneously allude to the necessity of popping-up at international dance and performance festivals. Their work needs to be sold, and the best ways to do that nowadays is to bring the work close to the audience. They follow and invert the marketing myth of adhering to “what consumers really want” (Pine/Gilmore 2007).

Di Benedetto’s remarks indirectly suggest an expansion of our understanding of spectatorship and the concept of nomadic theatre contributes to this. This expansion or distribution draws again on patterns of de- and reterritorialisation, this time described in terms of becoming and composition. I regarded spectators as compositional forces, who enter into composition with performers and space, and approached these processes in terms of the becoming-performer and the becoming-space of the spectator. These processes cumulatively build up towards an expansion of spectatorship, already alluded to in chapter 1 and shortly hinted at in chapter 5, that is, the *becoming-spectator of the spectator*. This becoming-spectator involves a process in which subjects enter into composition with their own spectatorship, and explore the relationship between self and world. Such a process is instigated by the appeal to an embedded, embodied spectator who is confronted with problems of referentiality ←1, offered a parallax view ←2, follows the paths of situated knowledge ←3, is jolted into thinking-feeling (Massumi) ←4, or is taken by play ←5. The becoming-spectator appears at the point where horizons of expectation are challenged, where perceptual systems become laboratories and invite a critical awareness of the process of perception itself, where the spectator encounters the potentiality of the always-otherwise, discovers new limitations, and touches upon the virtual. These compositional elements invite self-reflexivity, and time and again fold and unfold upon the intimate connection between self and world, as intensities that cross each other’s surface, which calls for a relational understanding of subjectivity.

The architextuality of lived space

The spectator is but one part of a threefold constellation. The present discussion equally gives rise to arguments in favour of the becoming-performer of the performer. My approach to this constellation has been a bit off-balance, bending towards spectators

and spaces, as they are the (relatively) new players on the stage. The performer however appears alongside in many new roles and disguises: as tour guide, as voyeur, as an outsourced voice, as a game master or orchestrator; this becoming-performer might be taken up for further research. As mentioned several times, I regard the spectator as a vital deterritorialising force, but the patterns of de- and reterritorialisation often prompted a focus on the (becoming-space of) space. Instigated by the discourse on performative cartography and performative architecture, I discussed how (theatre) space emerges as a product of performance itself. The theatre space materialises in a series of local operations or as a procedural space, emanates from collaboratively maintained coordinates and happens in the encounter of performers and spectators.

The becoming-space of space points to the differential qualities of *lived space* – lived space which in turn is a vital category of *social space*, as spatial experience is always linked to social practice. In chapter 2 I introduced Henri Lefebvre’s approach to these terms, as I find his spatial analysis extremely helpful to get ‘something through’, in the encounter of the nomadic and the theatre. Or rather, Lefebvre’s coupling of lived space, social space, and spaces of representation expose what happens in this encounter, as the theatre always deals with these spaces, while the nomadic puts them into continuous variation and points to their radical openness and – through Lefebvre – to their socio-political attachments. Lefebvre’s account can perhaps be regarded as an instance of “meeting the universe half-way”, a phrase (and book title) of feminist theorist Karen Barad that is connected to her methodology of diffractive reading, the affirmative reading of texts through one another. Such an affirmative approach is also present in this study, be it that both ‘text’ and ‘reading’ are infused by a “spatialized consciousness” (Chaudhuri/Fuchs). In chapter 5, I introduced the concept of architextures, as a diagrammatic texture of interconnected spaces, frames and perspectives. I used the concept to facilitate the writing of and with (lived) spaces, a writing which can be regarded as, following Spurr’s analysis of Hejduk’s *Masques*, perspectives that one moves through. This particular diagram affords the type of diffractive reading as elucidated by Barad and takes her diffractive methodology to the domain of spatial thought and practice. Barad describes her methodology as

a method of diffractively reading insights through one another, building new insights, attentively and carefully reading for differences that matter in their fine details, together with the recognition that there intrinsic to this analysis is an ethics that is not predicated on externality but rather entanglement. Diffractive readings bring inventive provocations; they are good to think with. They are respectful, detailed, ethical engagements (in Dolphijn/Van der Tuin 2012, 50).

Lefebvre’s lived space, now read architextural-diffractively, helps to see how Deleuze and Guattari’s nomadology is an assemblage of local operations and of “situated cartographies” (Braidotti). Being a vital component of social space, lived space encourages

a focus on the social and environmental connectivity that the theatre works discussed here allude to, despite, or rather by way of, singling out the isolated spectator.¹⁸¹

Lived space is definitely something other than a 'myspace' or an 'l-space' and moves beyond individual experience. Such a social space is put on the agenda in Blast Theory's *Rider Spoke*, which explores intimate ways of urban engagement ←2; in Rimini Protokoll's *Call Cutta*, which looks at the backstage of call-centre work; in the trajectories of a migrant's life in Dries Verhoeven's *No Man's Land*; in the many ways the experts and clients in Liverpool's *Blackmarket* might relate to waste, or in the affective modulations within habitual places of passage, as in for instance Verhoeven's *Trail Tracking*, or in Hejduk's *Masques* ←5. According to Lefebvre, social space is a multiplicity, in which vast and smaller movements interfere and penetrate. Social space is produced through encounter, assembly, simultaneity (Lefebvre 1991, 101); it is traversed by (animated) pathways and itineraries, "open on all sides to the strange and the foreign, to the threatening and the propitious, to friend and foe" – a patterned network, a texture rather than a text (ibid., 118). Social space then is intensely rhizomatic.

Lefebvre's analysis of perceived, conceived and lived space not only builds insights in relation to the cases and theories explored in this study, but may also shed light on existing taxonomies of space in performance, in which lived space, parallel to Lefebvre's analysis, is often neglected.¹⁸² When taking the spatial turn in performance into account, lived space proves to be extremely relevant, as contemporary performance often relates to spaces produced through use, that gain significance through corporeal engagement, localised particularities and alternative imaginations. It can be very productive to regard perceived, conceived and lived space as co-existing, overlapping spheres, distinguishable yet never separate. This spatial triad provides a springboard for what Soja terms "spatial thinking", which seeks to transcend dualism and surpasses binary oppositions. Such an approach alludes in particular to the relational, navigational processes as discussed in this study but is not limited to this, as the conventional stage-auditorium is equally a relational affair (cf. Bleeker 2008).

Of particular relevance for the theatre is Lefebvre's coupling of lived space with a space of representation. This junction reverberates in a remark by Bernard Tschumi, mentioned

181 Lefebvre himself shortly considers the use of the term archi-textures, instead of architectures, in order to understand each building as connected to and embedded in "surroundings and context, in the populated area and associated networks in which it is set down, as part of a particular production of space" (1991, 118).

182 Semiotic approaches tend to focus on perceived and conceived spaces, for instance as presentational-fictional space (McAuley); scenic-dramatic space (Ubersfeld); mimetic-diegetic space (Isscharoff), see McAuley (1999, 17-21). Phenomenological studies allude to Lefebvre's lived space but often do not address the critical or representational potential of his concept (Fortier 2002; States 1992) – Stanton Garner's intriguing *Bodied Spaces* (1994) being perhaps the felicitous exception. Fischer-Lichte's distinction between geometric and performative space (2008, 107-108) neither leaves much room for imagined or conceptualised space.

in chapter 3, which has come to be labelled as the ‘fur lines-quote’ in my personal archive. Tschumi describes the affects generated by a fur-lined wall and other sensations of passage. In this quote, he links the spaces of movement to the space of the senses and the space of society, to the “dances and gestures that combine the representation of space and the space of representation” (Tschumi 1996, 111). The ‘fur lines’ are present in every chapter; they surface in the evocative memory palaces in Signa’s world ←5, in *The Smile*’s sensorium ←4, in the personal geographies of *Trail Tracking* ←3, in the uncanny misguides of *Call Cutta* ←2, or in the joint rhythms of *No Man’s Land* ←1. All of these examples generate affective modulations by drawing on spectators’ embodied archives, situated knowledge, and cultural baggage. These spaces of representation allow for the *appropriation* of representation; they provide opportunities for discovering how corporeal and sensory matter comes to matter, in relation to a specific context of articulation.

Nomadic theatre explores and addresses *the conditions of emergence* of such representational spaces. Through a deliberate deployment of structure, the performer-spectator-space constellation each time is configured anew, dependent on the way this structure is actualised in the event and takes place in the encounter between particular performers and spectators. These configurations – potentially infinite in number – may each in themselves be considered architectures, as performers and spectators together maintain the coordinates of temporary theatre spaces, meanwhile traversing and engendering a range of ‘other’ spaces that encompass but also exceed the realm of the perceived and the conceived.

Staging connections

The concept of nomadic theatre functions as a searchlight. This concept exposes the theatre as a space of layered realities, as assemblages of various meanings and intensities, built up in time, composed in play, embodied and lived, and fuelled by situated knowledge. In order for this searchlight to work properly, I made use of a range of spatial disciplines, such as urban theory, geography, cartography, scenography, architecture and geophilosophy. This web of disciplinary climates exposes the working of the concept of nomadic theatre as an act of association, a “provisionary staging of connections” which is equally an act of “keeping things in play”, to borrow the words of Alan Read (2008, 38). These encounters further demonstrated how performance is distributed over these spatial domains, as all these areas profess an understanding of places and spaces as produced and performed, which gives rise to a performative turn in theory, indicated by my discussion of performative cartography ←3 and performative architecture ←5.

This interdisciplinary approach served two purposes. Firstly, it facilitated my attempt to arrive at a mobile theory that tries to preserve the destabilising power of mobility while at the same time seeks to incorporate material, lived experience and situated practices. Secondly, and closely related, I regarded these practices as involved with a continuous “reconfiguration of spatial relations” (Elden), meaning that studying these works

invites a “spatialized consciousness” (Chaudhuri/Fuchs). Interdisciplinarity is intrinsic to a spatial analysis. There is much to be gained by this approach, yet there are also limitations of course. First, it can be argued that each of the previous chapters justifies a full study, to really unpack the potential of the incorporated climate. It is however precisely in the wildness of connections and encounters that the potential of the concept of nomadic can rise to the surface. This wildness is part of the method itself, and alludes to how Deleuze and Guattari equate the nomad with the vague and the vagabond (2004, 405), to how Spurr qualifies Hejduk’s *Masques* as engaged with the visceral “messiness” of architecture (2007, 162), or to the mash-up logic of Hurtzig’s *Blackmarket*. Hurtzig’s *black* market collects all kinds of different knowledge, ranging from academic research to household experience, from embodied knowledge to speculative theory.¹⁸³ This study is equally an amalgam of theories and does not shy from occasional vagueness.

This aggregate, when seen as a parallax practice of the *Blackmarket*, is always a mixture of knowledge and non-knowledge, which leads to a second limitation of interdisciplinary research. This research is interdisciplinary, but this necessarily involves a limited representation of the disciplines involved. I have consulted quite a few books but have undoubtedly missed many more. I may have missed canonical figures or theories, or historical pathways within discourses. As a theatre and performance researcher, I can take up no other position than doing things ‘from the outside’, with an eye to Elisabeth Grosz’s *Architecture from the Outside* (2001). Doing things from the outside implies that I approached these fields from the perspective of theatre and performance. Interdisciplinary research does not automatically produce interdisciplinary scholars, or, to use a parallax view once more, it may also be productive to stay on the outside.¹⁸⁴ Consequently, I maintained the perspective of a performance scholar, and explored how the various concepts, practices and theories encountered in these newly traversed fields can be put to work in the theatre, instead of pretending to give a complete representation of the borrowed field in question. Subsequently, scholars from other disciplines may find some inspiration in this study to do the same. Perhaps a cartographer might discover a ‘minor’ cartography when looking at cartography through the eyes of a performance scholar, just like the urban geographer may encounter some minor city tracks and so on.

Doing things from the outside alludes to the Deleuzian apprentice, who is not acquainted with the matter at hand and needs to experiment with the newly encountered territory, which also opens up the possibility to create new connections and challenge established values ←1. Hurtzig likewise calls upon the amateur, to motivate the use of the term ‘non-

183 Apart from this, the *Blackmarket* is open to bribery. Officially, each client pays one euro for a thirty minute expert-lecture, yet this “lecture” may take any form and can even be taken over by the client. Next, subtly hinted at by Hurtzig in *From Sketch*, the (financial) logistics are equally open to play.

184 bell hook’s “choosing marginality” is at the back of my mind here as well, discussed by Edward Soja as an exquisite example of a (feminist) politics of location (Soja 1996, 96-105).

knowledge' in the *Blackmarket's* full title, who is driven by curiosity and desire, and may become engrossed in learning. As such an amateur, I discovered a rich world of theoretical reflection 'out there' that is extremely helpful to study contemporary performances that cross disciplinary boundaries and territories. My evaluation of Lefebvre's lived space above is already indicative of this. In addition, Lefebvre's spatial analysis, although cryptic at times, suggest that we can look at phenomenology from a more politically inspired view, and his rhythm analysis is surely relevant in relation to the recent upsurge of performance in the city (cf. Whybrow 2010). The Deleuzian fold, with its potential to serve as a geophilosophical concept (Conley in Deleuze 2006a), is a complex yet extremely interesting concept, which in common to nomadic theatre may provide a method for making liaisons between the small and the large, the public and the private, or the past and the present; to investigate the scale of movement in relation to the scale of the senses and the scale of society, to paraphrase Tschumi. As a last example – the list is much longer – I tremendously enjoyed the acquaintance with performative architecture, finding it a discipline rich in concepts that in particular resonate with scenography. Scenography in turn, this expert domain of staging and orchestrating maneuvers, may also leak into city planning or game design.

The concept of nomadic theatre does not only stage connections between disciplines but also allows the reading of theory through practice, and vice versa – with hindsight we might consider this a practice of diffractive reading (Barad). It has been quite challenging to put theory and practice on an equal footing, to think and write them through one another, and add myself as a third party in the game. The intention of this study is to inspire others to take up a concept-based analysis in theatre and performance studies – or in any other area of spatial analysis – but this is not a method of easy reproduction, as each practice instigates a different encounter and each scholar will draw on a different politics of location. In this study I put the concept of nomadic theatre to the test, but I have been tested by it as well. It has been quite a puzzle to structure the work, as theory got entangled with practice, alliances fought for supremacy, and each encounter instigated new ones. I used a number of piloting devices to find a way in this maze. First, a constant reassessment of the questions I address to the works, where I tried to establish whether they emanate from either the concept or the work. Second, in times of chaos it helped tremendously to take up the tool of thinking-through-practices, to go back to the works themselves: what issues do they actually put on the map? Third, I relied on Mieke Bal's notion that words are miniature theories. If I use the word 'encounter' for instance, then what is the nature of this encounter, who encounters what, who instigated this encounter, where do the things encountered stem from, and what is actually created in this encounter? What does the *encounter* between the nomadic and the theatre produce? I have already addressed many aspects of this encounter and I will therefore use the remaining pages to discuss two unexpected encounters. One is linked to the content of form, and the other, closely related, to that stubborn old friend, that is, representation.

Procedural dramaturgies, or: concept-forms

Performances that address the spectator's single experience or trajectory seem to present the observer-critic with a problem. Because how to write about these performances, whether in an academic journal or in a newspaper, without solely relying on personal experience and/or without 'giving it away' to future spectators? How to avoid spoilers? It is peculiar that we never regard a review of a new staging of *Hamlet* or any other repertoire piece as spoilers, yet such issues easily rise to the surface in cases such as those in this study. This particular 'problem' suggests that experience is apparently a private and personal affair, which, in line with Claire Bishop's analysis of participatory art, instigates a focus on emotional achievements or ethical aspects – was it a good experience; is it morally justified to be subjected to this situation? Bishop instead argues that relational or participatory works can and should be evaluated according to artistic or aesthetic criteria.¹⁸⁵ In a similar line of thought I chose to focus on staging principles. These performances are still designed and created by artists, despite the focus on the spectator and spectators' experiences. These compositions can be aesthetically reviewed. Moreover, the dramaturgy of these performances resides precisely in the way a performance is structured. Structure, in other words, becomes the performance's subject matter. The content reterritorialises on the (processual) form.

Bishop's arguments are grounded amongst others in a critical assessment of Nicolas Bourriaud's take on relational art. One of her objections is precisely his equation of structure and subject matter. For Bourriaud, relational art produces relations; relational art is the (social) form, and these social relations are the subject matter. Bishop argues that such a stance separates the work from artistic intentionality, or from its imbrication within a broader context (2004, 62-65). I am inclined to argue however that structure can be the subject matter after all. In chapter 5, I introduced Ian Bogost's procedural rhetoric. Procedures or operations invite to see structures as forms – procedural forms, forms produced in a relational process, somewhat similar to Bourriaud's social forms. As Bogost notes, procedures themselves can be expressive; the procedure is the argument. I noticed that in many cases in this study such a procedural rhetoric is active. The content, or subject-matter, arrives at us through the form. Rimini Protokoll's *Call Cutta* for instance uses the format of call-centre work to assess outsourced performance. In Dries Verhoeven's *Trail Tracking*, the triple logic of geomediality as distinguished by Nanna Verhoeff i.e. the intersection of "pervasive present, embedded pasts, and evolving futures" (2012, 152), both structures the performance and becomes content-matter. In Signa's *Ruby Town*, rule-play and boundary crossings both organise the performance and can be

185 Bishop defines aesthetics along the line of aisthesis, an "autonomous regime of experience that is not reducible to logic, reason or morality" (2012, 18), adding to this a "fidelity to the singularity of each project, paying attention to its symbolic ruptures, and the ideas and affects it generates for the participants" (26).

read as a strong political critique on our dealing with outsiders, on bureaucracy, or on the society of control. These emergent dramaturgies are procedural dramaturgies.

Dramaturgy shares with architecture the deliberate deployment of structure, as argued in the introductory chapter. In recent architectural work, Bernard Tschumi employs the notion of the concept-form, forms that generate a certain concept, instead of being the materialisation of a concept. Such concept-forms are the circle, the dome, the envelope, or linear, concentric and grid cities (Migayrou 2014, 81-83; 192-205). Just like diagrams, they are general forms as they achieve their articulation only in relation to a specific social, cultural and environmental context. However, concept-forms are carriers of ideas, of architectural solutions, in other words, of content. Content and form can never be separated, but I find this a challenging idea, that the (procedural) form *is* the content, that the structure *is* the subject matter – not in order to repeat the modernist adagio of the self-reflexive form, a form without additional content which renders the form equivalent to the content, but to play with the idea of the expressive or rhetoric form. We are acquainted with symbolic forms of course – the phallic statue, the romantic candle, the speedy car – but actually I have Deleuze's and Guattari's conceptual persona in mind here, and wonder whether there could be such a thing as an architectural version of the friend, the idiot, or the gambler.¹⁸⁶ For Tschumi, architecture shares with philosophy its concern for the invention of concepts – and he stays close to Deleuze here – except what distinguishes the architectural concept from the philosophical concept is its implied materiality (in Migayrou 2014, 63). Could the stage be such a conceptual form? Or the arena, the bridge or the border, or the theatre itself? This is unfinished thought, to be honest, but that is why it is housed in an epilogue.

Partly due to this idea of the concept-form – or should I say the conceptual form – the various chapters have been structured according to a certain processual form that expresses my analysis of the examined performance. Put in other words: each chapter has a procedural rhetoric. The first chapter is written as a trajectory, and similar to the introduction builds on relays; the second is organised through the arrangement of parallax practices; chapter 3 is composed as a layering of cartographies, the fourth chapter is a circuit of scales and folds, whereas chapter 5 follows the logics of an architecture, and this epilogue practices dilation. These movement diagrams are intensities that cross each other's surfaces, to re-quote Read, as the trajectory as well draws open-ended rhizomatic maps; cartography too concerns scaling and folding; parallax is a strategy of the architecture, and they all are intersected by the micro-diagrams of ←and →.

186 For Deleuze and Guattari, conceptual personae are figures or "rhythmic characters" (Massumi in Deleuze/Guattari 1994, 2), with a specific historical and/or spiritual baggage, who play a vital part in the creation of concepts, as they carry out thought themselves (Deleuze/Guattari 1994, 63). They constitute a certain point of view and show thought's territories and de-and reterritorialisations (69), hence they provide the "condition for the exercise of thought" (4). Cf. Bleeker (2002, 217-218).

Cartographies of invention

All the practices examined in this study deal with ways in which the real and the represented relate to each other. I refer here to the juxtaposition of lived space and staged authenticity, in *No Man's Land*, *Call Cutta*, *The Smile* and *Het Sprookjesbordeel*; to the grids of capital and the logics of reproduction in some of these works, also distinguishable in *Store* and the *Blackmarket*; to the real and imaginary worldmaking capacities of cartography and games. Perhaps this is in the nature of procedural dramaturgies, as they are the outcome of both staging, which installs the 'as if' of theatre, and the execution of design, which draws on the 'real' here and now of lived space. Contemporary artists demonstrate that the real and the represented have become materials to work and live with. Turner and Behrndt observe that in contemporary dramaturgy, the real and the represented are no longer presented as dualisms, instead "contemporary performance seems interested in exploring the range of ways in which 'reality' can be produced, explored and understood, [...] the ways in which 'make-believe' is made believable [...] in which new stories can be told, and, indeed, we can 'make-believe'" (2008, 188). Artists do not only produce different modes of reality, they are equally shifting the layers of disbelief.¹⁸⁷

Theatre and performance share with Lefebvre's lived space their "acceptance of the world of representations" (Lefebvre). In chapter 2, I suggested that Lefebvre is not very precise in his use of the word 'representation', as it appears to mean many things: symbolic affairs, but also the state of being represented, and, vitally, a space that allows for *other* representations. I value Lefebvre's approach, because this puts representation in close vicinity to the *imagination*. Excavating the imagination has been done before and has already been captured by the market as well. Imagination nowadays is a commodity. And yet, there is always room for *another* imagination, for being otherwise, for thinking differently. The relation between representation and imagination, with the concept-form lurking in the shadow, is for me astutely captured in Michael Hays' analysis of Hejduk's work – Hejduk is on the packing list as well – which is why I will give an insubordinately long quote:

... in Hejduk's chronotope some long-standing conceptual distinctions are dissolved into new matrices of association. Amidst us in the world we too easily take to be 'real' are forces that distort the authentic nature of things, blasting things into false components, holding each separate, not allowing them to touch, obstructing the smooth affiliations they should rightly maintain. The conceptual distinction between formal abstraction and figurations is one result of such distorting forces – the false notion that there can be one set of forms that do not represent anything, that are

187 September 2014, Platform-Scenography and HKU University of the Arts organised a travelling exposium, entitled *Thinking Scenography – Shifting the Layers of Disbelief* to investigate contemporary phantasmagoria.

opaque to any meaning other than self-reflexivity, and another set of forms that represent something outside themselves, that are transparent to a reality, but only insofar as they mimic what already exists. [...] Hejduk twists these “shells of thought” into new shapes in order to liberate his own objects from the strictures of such categorization, in order (this is Bakhtin now), to “permit them to enter into the free unions that are organic to hem, no matter how monstrous these unions might seem from the point of view of ordinary, traditional associations”.

Monstrous. It’s a word frequently heard in discussions of Hejduk’s work. Here it means the refusal of the categorizations, “abstract or figurative”, “opaque or transparent”; it means the reinscription of modernist opacity back into representation itself; it means *the mask that figures a real that did not exist before its representation*. Take for example, the Crossover Bridge of the Berlin Masque series. It is a primary figure, an archetype: a bridge. Every formal decision can be explained in terms of function – a lighted passage to get across the street – or as a constructive elementalism – a geometry of tectonic components, instrumental and unambiguous in its determination. Yet it is so clearly an animal, though not one we have ever seen – green and spikey, so obviously unfettered by instrumental demands as it grazes unawares [sic] at the edges of the Wilhelmstrasse. Old distinctions are of no use here. Hejduk refuses the verticality of thought that separates abstraction and representation, the functional and the fantastic, buildings and animals, into different registers. Hejduk’s chronotope is horizontal and associative. In its ‘abstraction’ (though it is wrong to continue to call it that) has a figurative vocation, and function consorts with dragons (Hays 1996, 10-11, italics by the author).

In his introduction to Hejduk, Hays makes an interesting remark, undoubtedly inspired by Hejduk. He observes that critical (architectural) theory has given up on a direct and formative relation with (architectural) practice: “In its efforts to be critical, it has failed to be propositional” (1996, 8). As mentioned in the introductory chapter, I equally prefer affirmativity above criticality. I favour the attempt to capture the things that constantly escape, above pointing out what someone has missed or has failed to address. I opt for creation and invention instead of loss or lack (cf. Barad in Dolphijn/Van der Tuin 2012, 49-50). I invented a concept, which is nomadic theatre. I put this concept to the test, in the company of various performance practices, and in a range of theoretical milieus. While traversing the various laboratory chapters, the concept generated a series of propositions regarding the use of a concept-based analysis for studying contemporary performance. The concept passed as well through notions of representation, imagination and the procedural concept-form. Above all, this concept aligns with performativity and instigates self-reflexivity: it demonstrates nomadic theatre, and does nomadology.

Thresholds of the imagination

A nomad follows customary paths. Therefore I will end at the beginning, and return to Deleuze's essay "Nomad Thought". I will end with what in another, non-academic universe would have been the beginning of this study. In this essay, Deleuze describes the effects, or rather the affects, of reading Nietzsche. For Deleuze, the energy and force in Nietzsche's work demonstrates that philosophy is creativity of thought. However, how to describe energy, or force? In relation to the *Blackmarket*, Hannah Hurtzig defines non-knowledge in three ways, pertaining to either the things you don't know yet, the things that you have already forgotten, or the things you know but that are *inexpressible* to you.¹⁸⁸ Similarly, reading Nietzsche produces a sensation, according to Deleuze, an intensity, a becoming aware of something that eludes description; something that escapes the code of recognition. Deleuze compares this sensation with looking at a pretty painting:

What is [...] a beautiful painting or a beautiful drawing? There's a frame. [...] But whatever is in the frame, at what point does it become beautiful? At the moment one knows and feels that the movement, that the line which is framed comes from elsewhere, that it does not begin within the limits of the frame. It began above or next to the frame, and the line traverses the frame. As in Godard's film, you paint the painting *with* the wall (Deleuze 2004, 255).

Drawing the painting with the frame perhaps evokes Jacques Derrida's essay "Parergon", in *La vérité en peinture* (1978), yet Deleuze strikes a slightly different chord, in my view. Derrida enquires into the frame itself, the frame that limits i.e. defines and constitutes the painting, and is limitless. Analogue to Tschumi's architectural limits $\leftarrow 5$, the frame is the painting's ontological and epistemological base *and* a threshold to other definitions.¹⁸⁹ Deleuze, on the other hand, relates the outside to the inside and vice versa, not to advocate dualism, as may be clear by now, but in order to "traverse and pass through them" (Dolphijn/Van der Tuin 2012, 127). Second, Deleuze emphasises the *sensation* of movement. He describes the sensation of something that comes from the outside; something that is decidedly present, but does not have words (yet), precisely because it defers from the already-known, the already-existent.

So instead of actually describing Nietzsche's aphorisms, Deleuze seeks to capture their *force*, the force of an event. Events are intensities, they produce affects, and lines of flight. Put in non-Deleuzian words: events materialise in the perception of something that happens and spring up from this encounter; something that forces to think, or feel,

¹⁸⁸ *From Sketch#5*: Hannah Hurtzig, see PDS.

¹⁸⁹ Based on Van den Braembussche (2007, 310-321). Derrida focuses on the frame: there is framing but there is no (fixed) frame (Derrida 1979, 39). See also O'Sullivan on deconstruction vs Deleuzian theory (2006, 12-15).

or both. Events materialise in sensation, and then something else happens: it widens our horizon – horizons of thought, of feeling, of expectation. The widening of the horizon itself is an event, as it produces the sensation of ‘widening’ itself; it is a portal to an infinity of ‘widenings’ and opens up to potentiality. Such events rearrange existing conceptions of what can be known, imagined, thought, or done: they are true redistributions of the sensible (Rancière), no matter how minute.

If we would take such events through a spatialised consciousness, we sooner or later encounter Borges, this master of thinking the outside on the inside ←4,5. Borges always works at the limits; he exhausts his subjects, such as the cartographer’s map. When following Baudrillard’s analysis of this map, we might think of this map, and Borges’s stories in general, as the exhaustion of representation ←5. However, I prefer to see the limits of the imperceptible as thresholds of the imagination. Borges’s stories are like Mobius strips, as they produce sensations that force us to think. Brian Massumi observes how the Mobius strip is one of those two-dimensional figures “whose folding and twisting on themselves create three-dimensional effects. The ‘effects’ are real but not part of the formal definition of the figure. They are in the figure as it is really experienced, adding another quality to it, precisely in the way it stands out from its formal limits” (Massumi 2002, 185).

Nomadic theatre cannot do without limits, as I argued in chapter 5. Limits play a very serious role in many lived spaces. And yet, limits may also serve to maintain that tiny space that any social machinery needs in order to function properly (Lehmann): limits that are thresholds of the imagination, that hint at other definitions and experiences; limits that function as safeguards of qualitative difference. Perhaps we see in Borges the exhaustion of representation. Except, we appear to be no longer in a deconstructivist, poststructural, postmodern universe. We are perhaps in an ecological universe, in which we use embodied, situated and playful connections in order to attach ourselves to fluidity. We attach ourselves through our perception as we move through this fluid world, a world that is created by our movements. While traversing this universe, we slide in and out of imaginary states, not as the equivalent of shopping (Fuchs 1996, 134) but precisely to move beyond a neoliberal capitalist ideology, to search for attentiveness, to train and maintain our capacity to think and feel differently, to embrace the (in)exactitude of difference, to move in all directions, in all sorts of thinkable and unthinkable ways.

I think the surface is ready for movement.

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Previously published

Part of the case studies descriptions and earlier versions of chapter sections have appeared elsewhere:

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Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth, and Sigrid Merx. 2010. "Presence and Perception: Analysing Intermediality in Performance." In *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, edited by Sarah Bay-Cheng, Chiel Kattenbelt, Andy Lavender, and Robin Nelson, 218-229. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010.

Chapter 3

Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth. 2009. "Sporen zoeken. Over de 'politics of location' in Sporenonderzoek van Dries Verhoeven." In *Theater Topics 4: Concepten en objecten*, edited by Maaïke Bleeker, Lucia van Heteren, Chiel Kattenbelt, and Rob van der Zalm, 26-37. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Chapter 4

Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth. 2012. "Radical Intimacy: Ontroerend Goed meets The Emancipated Spectator." *Contemporary Theatre Review* 22 (3): 412-420.

Chapter 5

Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth. 2012a. "The Signa Store: Nomadic Manoeuvres in Ruby Town." *Performance Research* 17 (3): 63-67.

Performance documentation section

1 - Dries Verhoeven / *No Man's Land*

Biography

Title: *Niemandland / No Man's Land*

Premiere: 2008, Utrecht.

Produced by Dries Verhoeven, co-produced by Huis and Festival a/d Werf Utrecht (2008), Theaterformen Hannover (2009), VEO (2010), Call of the Mall (2013).

Concept: Dries Verhoeven

Text: Hannah van Wieringen

Dramaturgy: Judith Blankenberg

Sound design: Arnoud Traa

Original cast: Abderraghman Boukhizzou, Amange Sharif, Ester Ostoja, Etie Negadfardy, Farhad Foroutanian, Irina Grishchenko, Ishan Mohiddin, Kameran Raof, Karim Eharuyen, Khadija Stibchar, Majid Alizadeh, Marianela Paz, Maryam Hazrati, Mo Reda, Mojgan Lalizadeh, Monireh Kalantary, Nasim Miradi, Nasrin Ghasemzadeh, Reyhan Erdogan, Reza Ranjazmay and Stella Ismail.

Voices: Malou Gorter, Bart Klever, and David Eeles

Website

www.driesverhoeven.com

Audiovisual sources

Pictures and short trailers are available through youtube and www.driesverhoeven.com/en/project/no-mans-land

Interview

- › Heuven, Robbert van. 2013. "Vijf jaar dwalen door Niemandland." *TM* 17 (8): 34-36.

Reviews

- › Heuven, Robbert van. 2008. "Zijn naam is Reza." *Trouw*, June 5.
- › Jagt, Marijn van der. 2008. "Ontroerend Intiem." *Vrij Nederland*, June 26.
- › Other reviews are available through www.frascattitheater.nl/sites/default/files/niemandland-berlinerzeitung2.pdf

2 - Rimini Protokoll / *Call Cutta*

Biography

Title: *Call Cutta*

Premiere: 2005, Calcutta/Berlin.

Produced by Rimini Protokoll

Concept: Helgard Haug, Daniel Wetzel and Stefan Kaegi

Website

www.rimini-protokoll.de/website/en/project_143.html

Audiovisual sources

- Dutt, Anjan. 2005. *Call Cutta*, documentary film, DVD. DVD distributed by Rimini Protokoll.
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Interviews

- Boenisch, Peter M. 2008. "Other People Live: Rimini Protokoll and their 'Theatre of Experts'" *Contemporary Theatre Review* 18 (1): 107-113.
- Van Lindt, Barbara. 2008. "Call it Call Cutta in a Box." *Kunstenfestivaldesarts Brussels* www.rimini-protokoll.de/website/en/article_3656.html

Essays

- Bastajian, Tina. 2008. "Some Musings on Iterations and Encounters - Re: CALL CUTTA(s)." *Artnodes* 8. <http://journals.uoc.edu/index.php/artnodes/article/view/772>.
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Reviews

All reviews were retrieved through Rimini Protokoll's website.

- Gupta, Prahim D. 2005. "A trek through two cities, just a call away." *The Telegraph* (Calcutta), February 26.
- Malzacher, Florian. 2005. "Flirting with Service Society." *Frankfurter Rundschau*, April 5. Translated by Sonja Müller.
- Phalnikar, Sonia. 2005. "Giving globalization a coy voice." *Deutsche Welle*, April 4.
- Hansen-Tangen, Torunn. 2006. "Mobile phones take to the stage." *Ericsson website*, October 3.
- Michalzik, Peter. 2006. "On Rimini Protokoll." *Website Goethe Institut*, August 1. Translated by Martin Pearce.

Miscellaneous sources

- › Eva Behrendt, "I have to let it out!" *signandsight.com* 17.12.2007. <http://www.signandsight.com/features/1623.html>
- › Website Blast Theory, *Rider Spoke*: <http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/projects/rider-spoke/>

3 - Dries Verhoeven / *Trail Tracking*

Biography

Title: *Sporenonderzoek / Trail Tracking*

Premiere: 2005, *Spoorwegmuseum Utrecht*.

Produced by Dries Verhoeven/Huis aan de Werf, Utrecht.

Concept: Dries Verhoeven

Original cast: Ronald Armbrust, Marcus Azzini, Jette van den Berg, Femke Bouma, Marije op 't Eijnde, Tâmara Gouw, Nanda Kling, Tim Murck, Salém Riani, Stefan Rokebrand, Anna Schoen, Daniëlle van de Ven and Joeri Vos.

The performance has toured in France, entitled *Mobile/Immobile*, in coproduction with Arto Ramonville, 2007.

Website

www.driesverhoeven.com

Audiovisual sources

- › DVD registration (excerpts), courtesy of Dries Verhoeven
- › Pictures and a short trailer are available at www.driesverhoeven.com/en/project/trail-tracking

Interviews

- › Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth. 2007. "Voor een schilderij hoef je niet te applaudisseren. In gesprek met Dries Verhoeven." *Theaterdramaturgie.Bank*. http://ltd.library.uu.nl/doc/722/MP-LNG-Dries_Verhoeven.pdf
- › Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth. 2008. "Performing stories. Over het maakproces van *Sporenonderzoek*." *Theaterdramaturgie.Bank*. http://ltd.library.uu.nl/doc/734/DOS-LNG-Dries_Verhoeven.doc

Essays

- › Verhoeven, Dries. 2009. *80 cm away from you*. Utrecht: Verhoeven. Includes essays by Wilfred Takken, Marijn van der Jagt, Hannah van Wieringen and Mehdi Idir.

Miscellaneous sources

- › Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth. 2008. "Dossier Sporenonderzoek." *Theaterdramaturgie. Bank* <http://ltd.library.uu.nl/doc/779/dossier%20Sporenonderzoek-cumulatief.pdf>. Includes rehearsal notes and pictures, courtesy of Dries Verhoeven.

4 - Ontroerend Goed / *The Smile Off Your Face***Biography**

Title: *The Smile Off Your Face*

Premiere: 2003

Produced by Ontroerend Goed, in collaboration with Richard Jordan Productions Ltd.

Directors: Sophie De Somere & Joeri Smet

Original cast: Alexander Devriendt, Aurélie Lannoy, Nicolaas Leten, Sophie De Somere, Kristof Coenen

Sound design: Sebastien Omerson

Website

<http://ontroerendgoed.be>

Audiovisual sources

- › Pictures are available at <http://ontroerendgoed.be/projecten/the-smile-off-your-face/>
- › For a video impression, see <http://www.arthappens.be/en-gb/artist/performance/ontroerend-goed/the-smile-off-your-face>

Interviews

- › Smet, Joeri de. 2004. "Tussen afgewerkte act en geïmproviseerd gesprek." *Etcetera* 94: 32-34.
- › Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth. 2009. "Masseurs van de fantasie. Over Ontroerend Goed en het maakproces van *The Smile Off Your Face*." *Theaterdramaturgie.Bank*. http://ltd.library.uu.nl/doc/771/Interview_Ontroerend_Goed.pdf
- › Ontroerend Goed. 2010. "The Smile Off Your Face, Kilkenny Arts Festival." www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxPI34xehg0

Reviews & essays

- › MacMillan, Joyce. 2008. "The Smile off Your Face." *The Scotsman*, August 17.
- › Versteede, Jeroen. 2004. "Intiem theater? The Smile off your Face van Ontroerend Goed." *Etcetera* 94: 30-31.
- › T'Jonck, Pieter. 2005. "Intimiteit, intimidatie." *Etcetera* 98: 51-59.
- › Smeyers, Bram. 2004. "Theater uit de Hoge Hoed. Over Exsimplicity van Ontroerend Goed." *Rekto:Verso* 6: 36-41.

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- › Campenhout, Elke van. 2003. "De intieme ervaring." *Etcetera* 89: 14-15.
- › Dragstra, Andrea. 2005. *Theater op je bloot vel*. MA Thesis, University of Amsterdam.
- › Verhelst, Peter. 1998. "Minuscule tongvormige droom over goddelijk theater." *Theaterschrift* 13: Utopie: Spiritualiteit? 163-169.
- › Verhelst, Peter. 1999. *Tongkat*. Amsterdam: Prometheus.
- › Verhelst, Peter. 2002. *Mondschilderingen*. Amsterdam: Prometheus.
- › Verstraete, Pieter. 2003. "Ontvreemde lichamen." *Urbanmag*, September 18.
www.urbanmag.be/artikel/772/tf-2003---ontvreemde-lichamen

5 - Signa / Die Erscheinungen der Martha Rubin/The Ruby Town Oracle

Biography

Title: *Die Erscheinungen der Martha Rubin/The Ruby Town Oracle*

Premiere: 2007, Cologne

Produced by Signa, coproduced by Schauspiel Köln and Berliner Theatertreffen

Concept: Signa & Arthur Köstler

Direction: Signa Köstler-Sørensen

Set Design and Costumes: Thomas Bo Nilsson

Audiovisual Media and Technical Design: Arthur Köstler

Website

<http://signa.dk/>

Audiovisual sources

- › Pictures are available at <http://signa.dk/media>
- › Video: Reportage Cologne 2007: www.youtube.com/watch?v=LceBsIomUQU
- › Video: Journal Reporter, Theatertreffen 2008:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCRB1i4YXw

Interviews

- › Burckhardt, Barbara, and Eva Behrendt, 2008. "Brave old world." *Theater Heute* (Mai 2008). <http://signa.dk/theater-heute-2008>.
- › Groot Nibbelink, Liesbeth. 2009. "Staged Intimacy: Signa's The Ruby Town Oracle." *Theaterdramaturgie.Bank*. <http://ltd.library.uu.nl/doc/788/MP-LNG-Signa.pdf>

Reviews & essays

- › Haas, Alexander. 2007. "Neue Intendanz am Schauspiel Köln: Nibelungenhort und Peep-show." *taz.de*, October 16. www.taz.de/Neue-Intendanz-am-Schauspiel-Koeln/!6142/

- › Embrechts, Annette. 2008. "Dicht op de huid. De populariteit van ervaringstheater stijgt snel." *De Volkskrant*, September 4.
- › Kirsch, Sebastian. 2008. "SIGNA oder Der Sinn für die Unwirklichkeit. Die unheimlichen Welten von Signa Sørensen und Arthur Köstler." *Theater der Zeit* 5: 8-11.

Miscellaneous sources

- › Carp, Stephanie. 1997. "Slow Life is Long: On the Theatre of Christoph Marthaler." *Theaterschrift* 12: 65-78.
- › Ruby Town's myth of origin, retrieved from a former website of Signa:
In 1880 a girl at around the age of 10 appeared in the German village Schwarza by the temporary camp of the Cirque Rubin. The girl never revealed her past and as no one claimed the child, she was taken into care by the circus and was given the name Martha Rubin. She became a graceful dancer and a remarkable horse rider, but it was her dark gift as an oracle that won her fame as a fairground attraction all over Europe. Martha Rubin gave birth to 17 children out of marriage. 7 of them - including the siamese twins Marthina and Corina, she raised together with the female sword swallower Cora Torrini. In 1913 Martha Rubin disappeared without a trace from the Romanian harbor city Constanta. Throughout the many years after her disappearance Martha Rubin has reappeared on several European locations . A vast amount of footage and audio recordings document these occurrences. In 1933 the relatives of Martha Rubin formed The Martha Rubin Society to collect and to understand the signs and traces of the oracle. In our time most of Martha Rubin's descendants live in Ruby Town, a settlement in the borderland between the North and the South State. For more than 30 years Ruby Town has been of special interest to the North State military, not only because of the illegal trade with the South but also due to an inexplicable radiation. [...] Now Martha Rubin herself has come back to Ruby Town from the limbo in which she was trapped and the descendants gather around to listen to her dark visions.

Epilogue - Store & Blackmarket

Store (2005-2012)

- › Concept: Michikazu Matsune and David Subal
- › Website: www.michikazumatsune.info/projects/store.htm
- › Video footage: <http://vimeo.com/35341201> (Bangor High Street, Wales, May 2010).

The Blackmarket of Useful Knowledge and Non-Knowledge (2005-present)

- › Concept: Hannah Hurtzig
- › Website: www.mobileacademy-berlin.com/index.html
- › Video footage: *From Sketch#5*: Hannah Hurtzig: Der Schwarzmarkt für nützliches Wissen

und Unwissen. Ze ntrale Intelligenz Agentur / Arte Creative, May 2011. [http:// creative.arte.tv/de/magazin/hannah-hurtzig-der-schwarzmarkt-fuer-nuetzliches-wissen-und-unwissen](http://creative.arte.tv/de/magazin/hannah-hurtzig-der-schwarzmarkt-fuer-nuetzliches-wissen-und-unwissen)

- Text and image: Blackmarket Encyclopedia 2005-2012. www.mobileacademy-berlin.com/englisch/schwarz/lexikon2011.pdf
- Text and image: Blackmarket#11 Liverpool, November 2008. www.mobileacademy-berlin.com/englisch/2008/s_liverpool.html
- Image and sound: Blackmarket-Archiv. www.blackmarket-archive.com/
- Essay: Cvejic, Bojana. "Trickstering, Hallucinating and Exhausting Production: The Blackmarket of Useful Knowledge and Non-knowledge." www.mobileacademy-berlin.com/englisch/bm_texte/bonja.html

SUMMARY

Over the last decade, there seems to be an increase of performances that attempt to (physically) mobilise the spectator and rethink the conditions of the stage. Spectators are engaged in promenade performances or walking theatre, or they traverse the city by bike; they are driven around in wheelchairs, cars, by motorbikes or in mini-vans, or drift across labyrinthine performance installations. Alongside the mobility of the spectator, these performances play with the displacements of performers and with mobile theatre spaces. Performers forsake the usual centre-stage position and turn into guides, tour operators, or voices on an audiotape. Theatre spaces are produced in the appointment of temporary and changing coordinates; contrary to the usual conflation with a theatre building, they emerge in and as the *process* of performance, and as temporary *situations*. This study investigates how ambulatory performances and performative installations stage such movements and in turn mobilise the stage. That which initially appears as just physical movement in the theatre, on closer inspection involves theoretical movement as well, as the fluid and flexible relations between performers, spectators and spaces mobilise thinking about how movement and mobility effect and implicate the theatre. This leads to enquiring into why some theatre practitioners prefer these mobile forms of theatre making, how these forms address and position the spectators in performance, how mobility is staged and effects the stage, and subsequently, how such movements best can be described.

These physical and theoretical movements are examined through a specific and newly invented concept: *nomadic theatre*. Nomadic theatre is employed as an analytical and mobile concept, and involves the encounter of the nomadic, mainly as it has been theorised by Gilles Deleuze, partly in close collaboration with Félix Guattari, and the theatre; a theatre that manifests itself as movement and thinks performance through mobility. This study explores the potential of nomadic theatre, by putting the concept to work in a milieu of European theatre performances, Deleuze's and Guattari's nomadology, and related insights derived from various disciplines in the humanities: media theory, urban theory, cartography, architecture, and game theory. Instead of primarily aligning the nomadic with physical movement or the absence of boundaries, the nomadic is understood as a particular mode or attitude that concerns the disturbance or undoing of territories. Deleuze and Guattari describe these disturbances in terms of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. Deterritorialisation concerns the (temporary) occupation, displacement or destabilisation of territories. It engages acts that capture, change or escape the codes and laws of organised systems and render territory into a state of continuous variation. Reterritorialisation denotes the new assemblages and spatial reconfigurations that emanate from these acts – without reaching a (new) state of fixity – and pertains to the distribution or transportation of parts or elements of a system onto other systems.

Drawing both on Deleuze and Guattari's approach to philosophical concepts, as well as on Mieke Bal's use of concepts in cultural analysis (*Travelling Concepts in the Humanities* 2002), this study employs the method of 'thinking through practices' which treats performances as theoretical objects and performance analysis as the creation of *affirmative assemblages*. The concept of nomadic theatre firstly is put to use to investigate what kind of territories are in play, in ambulatory performance and performative installations, and which patterns of de- and reterritorialisation do emerge. Secondly, the concept is employed to describe how these processes are staged, that is, how acts of de- and reterritorialisation are organised or composed, how they position or address the spectator, and what emergent dramaturgies arise from these open-ended processes. Throughout, this study enquires into what the concept of nomadic theatre is able to do, with regard to theorising contemporary performance. This study demonstrates that not only theatre materialises differently as a consequence of the encounter with the nomadic; similarly the nomadic is contaminated by the theatre, which manifests itself notably in the emphasis on embodied, situated and local operations.

In the introduction chapter, a first inventory is provided of the many ways mobile performances deterritorialise the stage and how this might reveal a nomadic attitude. Many of the cases discussed in these study use mobile technology for navigating the spectator through urban spaces, and/or they engage a single performer and a single spectator in a one-to-one encounter. Such strategies disrupt the conventional territories in the theatre and alter the spatiotemporal dimensions of theatre spaces. These changing dynamics in performance are connected to larger societal phenomena such as the increased complexity of mobility systems and the impact of digital and participatory culture, also leading to a re-evaluation of place, situated knowledge and embodied experience. This study connects with the discourse on intermediality in performance and postdramatic theatre, but is in particular positioned within a spatial turn in performance and demonstrates a "spatialized consciousness (Fuchs/Chaudhuri, *Land/Scape/Theater* 2002, 4). This spatial perspective accounts for the many references to French critical theory stemming from the 1970s, which reveals a strong preference for simultaneity, heterogeneity, dispersion, distribution and openness, seen as the distinct qualities of space. These qualities as well characterise contemporary urban theories, cartographic practices or performative architecture, theoretical climates that encounter each other as the concept of nomadic theatre passes through them. The concept of nomadic theatre ultimately instigates new alliances, and exposes cultural domains, spatial theories and design practices as connected and webbed in many ways.

The subsequent chapters are envisioned as laboratories: experimental set-ups for the exploration and the assessment of the potential of nomadic theatre. They are kaleidoscopically arranged: in each chapter, the performer-spectator-space constellation is 'shuffled' differently, which provides a new angle on the dynamics of this constellation and its

myriad configurations. Every chapter discusses a different territory or spatial register, and another staging strategy, which also activates different components within the concept of nomadic theatre, and creates a different milieu of references.

Chapter 1 teams up with Dries Verhoeven's *No Man's Land* (2008-2014), and focuses on the most characteristic territory within the theatre, which is the *stage*. The chapter describes how Dutch director and scenographer Dries Verhoeven uses the *encounter* as a way of staging mobile performers and spectators, how this encounter destabilises spatial conventions and deterritorialises the stage. As a consequence, the positions of performers, spectators and spaces reterritorialise on each other, which results in observing performers, staged spectators, and smooth spaces. These observations provide a stepping stone for a continued encounter with Deleuze's nomadism, including critical inquiries into the concept and his anti-representational thought.

Chapter 2 explores how the staging strategy of *displacement* distributes the stage across a number of domains: *theatre space*, *urban space*, and the domain of global economy. With *Call Cutta* (2005) by the German performance collective Rimini Protokoll paving the way, nomadism in the theatre surfaces as a series of local operations, which produce the theatre space while one moves through it. These local operations are connected to Henri Lefebvre's notion of *lived space*, a concept which makes room for the rhythms of everyday life and that refers to spaces that (become) matter as they are used, practiced and experienced. Through Lefebvre and related studies, the concept of nomadic theatre takes some distance from Deleuze's anti-representational image of thought, to account for the fact that theatre always deals with representation.

In the third chapter, a second performance by Dries Verhoeven is discussed, *Trail Tracking* (2005). This ambulatory performance plots a route through an abandoned railway station, and here the focus is on the materiality of *navigational space*, and on spectatorship as both an embodied and embedded practice. Performers and spectators are engaged in the performance of *cartography*, and the discussion foregrounds the performativity of map-making by focusing on the co-creative relationship between maps and users. *Trail Tracking's* cartographic layers display the interconnectedness of space, place, movement and subjectivity. A short discussion of the (feminist) concept of politics of location is deployed to argue how the encounter of theatre and nomadism invites an understanding of the nomadic as a situated practice, an ongoing assessment and articulation of one's relationship to place.

The first three chapters all question the theatre as a domain of *opsis* and make room for other modalities of spectatorship, that is, the materiality of embodied, sensory and lived relations. This is explicitly addressed in the fourth chapter, where *The Smile Off Your Face* (2003-present) by the Belgian company Ontroerend Goed is the primary theoretical object. The chapter investigates *spaces of proximity*, by foregrounding the multiple senses through which spectators engage with performance. This chapter introduces the *diagram* as a staging strategy that on the one hand invites spectators into a fundamen-

tally open process, while at the same time the composition of this process provides the conditions for spectators' mode of engagement. Deleuze's approach to architectural diagrams – connected to Foucault's Panopticism and the folds of the Baroque House – serves as a piloting device for the chapter, in order to explore the tonalities of sensation within spectatorship, but also to expose the territorial forces at work in these experimental processes.

Chapter 5 studies processes that deal with building performance and are inspired by play. Whereas the other chapters are "experimentations in contact with the real" – Deleuze's qualification of cartography – this chapter experiments with fictionality, in relation to *The Ruby Town Oracle* (2007-2008), produced by the Danish collective Signa. This nine days non-stop event addresses the boundaries between play and reality, and between dramatic and postdramatic theatre. The stage here takes the form of a *rhizomatic game board*, organised through narrative architecture (Jenkins), architectural diagrams (Tschumi, Hejduk) and procedural rhetoric (Bogost). The chapter introduces the concept of *architextures*, understood as an intertwined web of architecture and textures that maps interconnected spaces, spatial perspectives, and affective modulations. The chapter ends by playing at the limits, and explores how both rules and boundaries – characteristic of both play and architecture – as well as the excess of those limits form the backbone of this performance, and of the concept of nomadic theatre.

The epilogue charts some patterns of de- and reterritorialisation that emanate from the resonances between chapters, taking the idea of distributed performance as a lead. Distributed performance firstly is aligned with the asymmetry of contagious movements, through which theatre nests within and is contaminated by neoliberal capitalism, but also escapes the grid of capital. The idea of distribution then is deployed to reflect on interdisciplinary research. Thirdly this epilogue discusses the value of the concept of nomadic theatre for analysing contemporary performance. Nomadic theatre distributes performance over a range of theoretical disciplines, and renders visible how theory itself becomes the subject of performance. As an analytical tool, nomadic theatre exposes contemporary performance practices as deeply engaged with local, situated and embodied operations, and continuously questions our relationship with the places and spaces through which we move and that we create through movement.

SAMENVATTING

In de afgelopen tien à vijftien jaar zijn er opvallend veel theatervoorstellingen te zien geweest waarbij de toeschouwers het rode pluche van de schouwburg vaarwel zeggen of hun vaste stek op de tribune verlaten. De voorstelling heeft bijvoorbeeld het karakter van een wandeltocht, toeschouwers fietsen door de stad of bevinden zich in rolstoelen of auto's; ze zitten achterop een brommer of dwalen door labyrintische installaties. Ook de performers nemen andere dan gebruikelijke posities in, en de ruimte waarin dit soort theater plaatsvindt is in toenemende mate een beweeglijke en vloeibare ruimte. Performers staan niet langer in het centrum van de belangstelling, op een toneel, maar functioneren als gids of reisleader, of ze zijn als stem hoorbaar via mobiele telefoons. De theatteruimte valt niet samen met een gebouw, een loods of een duidelijk afgebakend gebied, maar wordt vastgesteld op basis van tijdelijke en veranderlijke coördinaten. Het is een ruimte die ontstaat in het *proces*, wat maakt dat 'het toneel' haar vaste contouren verliest, en de scène of het speelvlak plaatsmaakt voor de *situatie*.

In dit proefschrift onderzoek ik hoe mobiele voorstellingen en performatieve installaties zijn georganiseerd, hoe beweging en mobiliteit worden geënceneerd, en hoe dit de notie van het toneel of de *stage* in beweging brengt. Ik richt me niet alleen op fysieke, letterlijke bewegingen maar ook op theoretische verplaatsingen. In dit proefschrift stel ik namelijk dat er flexibele relaties tussen performers, toeschouwers en ruimtes ontstaan, en dat dit ook het denken over mobiliteit in het theater in beweging zet. Ik ga na hoe toeschouwers in deze beweeglijke situaties gepositioneerd en geadresseerd worden, hoe mobiliteit wordt geënceneerd en op haar beurt de encenering beïnvloedt, en ik stel de vraag hoe dit soort bewegingen beschreven kunnen worden.

Deze fysieke en theoretische verplaatsingen worden bestudeerd met behulp van een specifiek, nieuw samengesteld concept: *nomadisch theater*. Nomadisch theater beschrijft geen genre, maar wordt ingezet als een analytisch en beweeglijk concept. Met dit concept enceneer ik een ontmoeting tussen (mobiel) theater en de notie van het nomadische, waarbij ik me wat betreft dat laatste voornamelijk richt op het werk van de Franse filosofen Gilles Deleuze en Félix Guattari. In dit proefschrift tast ik de mogelijkheden van dit concept af, door het concept 'aan het werk' te zetten en in verband te brengen met een reeks zeer verschillende domeinen: de Europese theaterpraktijk, de nomadologie van Deleuze en Guattari, en gerelateerde inzichten uit verschillende wetenschapsdisciplines zoals mediatheorie, 'urban theory', cartografie, architectuur- en speltheorie.

Het nomadische verwijst niet zonder meer naar beweging of naar het ontbreken van grenzen, maar wordt steeds nauw in verband gebracht met de notie van territorium, en in het bijzonder met het verstoren van dat territorium. Deleuze en Guattari beschrijven deze verstoring met behulp van de termen deterritorialisatie en reterritorialisatie. Deterritori-

alisatie impliceert de opheffing of de ontbinding van een territorium, bijvoorbeeld door het (tijdelijk) te bezetten, te verplaatsen of anderszins te destabiliseren. Reterritorialisatie beschrijft de nieuwe samenstellingen en (ruimtelijke) configuraties die ontstaan in het proces van deterritorialisatie. Het gaat hier niet om het bereiken van een nieuwe 'staat van zijn', maar om het distribueren of transporteren van systeemelementen naar andere systemen of territoria. Beide processen maken het territorium tot iets dat continu aan verandering onderhevig is. Ik zet deze begrippen in bij de analyse van een aantal voorstellingen. Daarnaast gebruik ik ze om te reflecteren op de relatie tussen theorie en praktijk. Ik beschouw de voorstellingen die ik bespreek als theoretische objecten, die zelf uitspraken doen over de relatie tussen beweging, mobiliteit en het theater. Daarnaast stel ik dat het schrijven over deze praktijken uitnodigt om *affirmatieve assemblages* te maken. Hierbij gaat de schrijver/onderzoeker actief de dialoog aan met het (kunst)werk; in het schrijven over het werk brengt hij/zij verbindingen tussen theorie en praktijk tot stand.

Met betrekking tot die analyse wordt het concept 'nomadisch theater' ten eerste ingezet om de vraag te stellen welke territoria eigenlijk in het geding zijn, in mobiele performances en installaties, en welke patronen van de- en reterritorialisatie we op basis daarvan kunnen onderscheiden. Ten tweede wordt het concept aangewend om enceneringsstrategieën te beschrijven. Ik ga na hoe die processen van de- en reterritorialisatie worden georganiseerd en gecomponeerd, hoe hierin de toeschouwer wordt benaderd en aangesproken, en hoe deze situaties begrepen kunnen worden in termen van een zich in het proces ontvouwende dramaturgie. Daarnaast stel ik de vraag wat je nu met zo'n concept kunt doen, wat betreft theorievorming over theater, en wat er nu eigenlijk ontstaat in die georganiseerde ontmoeting tussen het nomadische en het theater. In dit proefschrift beargumenteer ik dat dit concept de gelegenheid biedt om op een genuanceerde manier aan te tonen dat theater zich op een andere dan gebruikelijke, meer beweeglijke manier manifesteert, en dat anderzijds het nomadische op haar beurt wordt 'besmet' door het theater, wat gestalte krijgt in de aandacht voor belichaamde, gesitueerde en lokale praktijken.

Dit proefschrift is als volgt opgebouwd. In de introductie wordt een eerste inventaris gegeven van de vele manieren waarop mobiele performances de notie van het toneel of de *stage* verstoren, en hoe daarin een nomadische attitude zichtbaar wordt. Voorstellingen maken bijvoorbeeld gebruik van mobiele technologie om een toeschouwer door de stad of andersoortige ruimtes te navigeren, of ze werken met een 1-op-1 format waarbij er één performer en één toeschouwer aanwezig is. Dit soort strategieën verstoren de traditionele territoria in het theater, waarbij performer en publiek doorgaans gescheiden zijn. Ook veranderen ze de temporele en ruimtelijke eigenschappen van de theaterruimte. Deze dynamiek wordt vervolgens in verband gebracht met meer grootschalige maatschappelijke verschijnselen zoals de complexiteit van hedendaagse mobiliteit, de alomtegenwoordigheid van mobiele, digitale technologie en de opkomst van een participatiecultuur. In het debat rond deze verschijnselen valt op dat er in toenemende mate

aandacht is voor de relatie tussen mobiliteit en gesitueerdheid, voor lokale omstandigheden en geleefde ruimte. Dit proefschrift sluit aan bij deze 'placial turn' (McAuley 2006) of 'spatial turn' (Soja 1996; Fuchs/Chaudhuri 2002), wat de focus op ruimte en ruimtelijke kwaliteiten zoals gelijktijdigheid, heterogeniteit, verspreiding en distributie verklaart. Vanuit dit ruimtelijk perspectief doorkruist het concept nomadisch theater verschillende terreinen en gaat het allianties aan met bijvoorbeeld hedendaagse urbane theorieën, cartografische praktijken en performatieve architectuur. Zo wil ik laten zien dat culturele domeinen, ruimtelijke theorie en ontwerppraktijken op veel verschillende manieren met elkaar verweven zijn.

De hoofdstukken daarna zijn opgezet als laboratoria, waarin de mogelijkheden van het concept nomadisch theater worden geëxploreerd en getoetst. Ze zijn op een caleidoscopische manier geordend. In elk hoofdstuk wordt de drievoudige constellatie performer-toeschouwer-ruimte op een andere manier gerangschikt, waardoor er een nieuw perspectief op de dynamiek van deze constellatie ontstaat. Elk hoofdstuk bespreekt een ander territorium of ruimtelijk domein en een specifieke ensceneringsstrategie, waardoor steeds andere componenten van het concept nomadisch theater worden geactiveerd, en een ander theoretisch klimaat ontstaat.

In hoofdstuk 1 vormt de voorstelling *Niemandland* (2008-2014) van Dries Verhoeven het vertrekpunt voor een onderzoek naar wellicht het meest karakteristieke territorium in het theater: het toneel (de *stage*). Ik vat deze voorstelling op als een geënceneerde *ontmoeting* en ik ga na hoe regisseur en scenograaf Verhoeven de ontmoeting inzet als een manier om toeschouwers en performers te mobiliseren. De verstoring van ruimtelijke conventies en traditionele posities leidt tot observerende performers, fluïde ruimtes en geregisseerde toeschouwers die zich plotseling ook 'op het toneel' bevinden. Deze observaties vormen vervolgens een springplank voor een nadere kennismaking met Deleuzes nomadologie, waarbij ik onder meer inga op kritiek op zijn benadering, en op zijn verzet ten aanzien van het begrip 'representatie'.

In hoofdstuk 2 beschrijf ik hoe de strategie van de *verplaatsing* leidt tot een gedistribueerde theaterruimte, die zich verspreidt over verschillende steden en waarbij de voorstelling eigenschappen overneemt van de geglobaliseerde markteconomie. Aan de hand van *Call Cutta* (2005) van het Duitse performerscollectief Rimini Protokoll laat ik daarnaast zien dat (nomadisme in) het theater zich manifesteert als een reeks lokale praktijken, waardoor de theaterruimte wordt geproduceerd in het proces zelf, gelijktijdig met het bewegen door de ruimte. Deze praktijken worden vervolgens in verband gebracht met Henri Lefebvres notie van de geleefde ruimte, een begrip waarmee hij de aandacht vestigt op (de complexiteit van) het dagelijks leven, en op ruimtes die betekenisvol worden doordat ze worden gebruikt en beleefd. Via Lefebvre en anderen beargumenteer ik dat het met betrekking tot (dit) theater wél zinvol is om het begrip 'representatie' te hanteren.

In het derde hoofdstuk bespreek ik opnieuw een voorstelling van Dries Verhoeven, *Sporenonderzoek* (2005). Via een analyse van de voorstelling laat ik zien dat de theater-

ruimte opgevat kan worden als een *navigatieruimte*, en ‘toeschouwen’ een belichaamde en gesitueerde activiteit is. In dit hoofdstuk staat *cartografie* als enceneringsstrategie centraal. Ik stel dat *Sporenonderzoek* is opgebouwd uit een aantal cartografische lagen, waardoor ruimte, plaats, beweging en subjectiviteit onlosmakelijk met elkaar verbonden zijn. Deze verwevenheid tekent ook het begrip ‘politics of location’, een (feministisch) concept dat kort aan de orde komt, om aan te tonen dat de ontmoeting tussen theater en het nomadische uitnodigt om het nomadische als een gesitueerde praktijk te zien, als een onophoudelijk aftasten en vormgeven van de persoonlijke verhouding tot plaats.

De eerste drie hoofdstukken geven elk op eigen wijze aanleiding om te constateren dat het domein van het kijken, historisch gezien zeer dominant in het theater, in belang afneemt. In plaats daarvan wordt de toeschouwer ook via belichaamde en zintuiglijke ervaringen bij een voorstelling betrokken. Dit komt expliciet aan de orde in hoofdstuk 4, waar ik *The Smile Off Your Face* (2003-heden) van het Belgische gezelschap Ontroerend Goed opvoer als theoretisch object. In dit hoofdstuk bespreek ik de theaterruimte in termen van nabijheid en interioriteit. Daarnaast gebruik ik het begrip *diagram* om een enceneringsstrategie te beschrijven waarbij de toeschouwer deelneemt in een open proces dat wél is georganiseerd, maar waarvan de uitkomst geenszins vaststaat. Mijn interpretatie van dit begrip wordt in het bijzonder gekleurd door Deleuzes analyse van architecturale diagrammen, gelieerd aan het ‘panopticisme’ van Michel Foucault en het concept van ‘de vouw’ waarmee Deleuze de barok als mentaliteit bestudeert. Ik gebruik het diagram om verschillende tonaliteiten van zintuiglijkheid te bespreken, als ook om te wijzen op de territoriale krachtvelden in dit soort experimentele processen.

Hoofdstuk 5 staat in het teken van (performatieve) architectuur en spel, in relatie tot *The Ruby Town Oracle* (2007-2008) van het Deense collectief Signa. In dit negen dagen durende ‘event’ wordt de grens tussen spel en realiteit, en tussen dramatisch en post-dramatisch theater, op allerlei manieren bevraagd. Ik vat het speelvlak hier op als een *rhizomatisch spelbord*, en bespreek de organisatie daarvan met behulp van concepten zoals narratieve architectuur (Jenkins), architecturale diagrammen (Tschumi, Hejduk) en ‘procedural rhetoric’ (Bogost). In dit hoofdstuk introduceer ik het concept *architextures*. Deze samenvoeging van architectuur en textuur wordt gebruikt om de verwevenheid van ruimtes, ruimtelijke perspectieven en geleefde ruimte in kaart te brengen. Tenslotte beschrijf ik hoe zowel (spel)regels als grenzen, en het overschrijden daarvan, de ruggengraat vormen van deze voorstelling én van het concept nomadisch theater.

In de epiloog worden tenslotte een aantal vormen van de- en reterritorialisatie in kaart gebracht, die als het ware uit de resonantie tussen de hoofdstukken opstijgen. Hierbij wordt de notie van de zich verspreidende performance als uitgangspunt genomen. Ten eerste wordt dat idee in stelling gebracht om te beschrijven hoe performance zich nestelt in de neoliberale markteconomie, maar ook aan dat allesoverheersende systeem weet te ontsnappen. Vervolgens wordt het idee van distributie ingezet om te reflecteren op de voor- en nadelen van interdisciplinair onderzoek. Ten derde wordt het concept nomadisch

theater als een instrument voor voorstellingsanalyse geëvalueerd. Afsluitend observeer ik dat het concept zichtbaar maakt hoe theorie zélf het object van uitvoering wordt. Als analytisch instrument toont nomadisch theater aan dat hedendaags theater ten diepste verbonden is met lokale, gesitueerde en belichaamde praktijken. Dit geeft aanleiding om voortdurend de vraag te stellen hoe plaats en ruimte betekenis krijgen, en hoe we ons verhouden tot de plaatsen en ruimtes die ontstaan als gevolg van onze bewegingen.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Liesbeth Groot Nibbelink studied Theatre Studies at Utrecht University (1992-1998). Prior to this, she studied Fine Art for two years, at the School of the Arts in Maastricht and Kampen. After completing her studies in 1998 she worked as a freelance dramaturge, director's assistant, lecturer and theatre maker. Since 2005 she is a lecturer in Theatre Studies at the Department of Media and Culture Studies at Utrecht University. In 2009 she started this PhD Research, alongside her teaching job(s).

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