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Letter from the Editors
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Masks seem to carry a sinister connotation. Indelibly attached to the mythic, the criminal, the anonymous, and unsettlingly detached from reality, masks are the fictive figures and the activating forms of our increasingly opaque environment.

But can this opacity disassociate architecture from serving power structures, and in turn, empower the public? (Eisenman) Might the mask be a tool for enabling the architect-as-actor to infiltrate existing networks of power? (Easterling) Should we embrace the mask as an authentic expression in-and-of itself? (Rubin)

For this edition of Paprika, we are interested in the myriad relationships between masked and unmasked, truth and the lie, form and simulacrum, obfuscated identity and uncanny double, and their consequences within the discourse of architecture.

MASK(S)I(N)G
Gregory Cartelli, MED '17

Here I could formalize the concept of the mask, as a mask is static (but it feels like it shouldn't be). I could make it *work* for me, as the mask can be a tool; but as soon as it labors, masking, it becomes another thing entirely—divorced from its root. The mask plays with signification, thus the mask should refuse to be easily signified or clearly denoted. What are our masks made of? Clay, wood, plastic, leather, elastic...? No, I mean, what are our masks made of? Culture, society, pathologies, fantasies, imagination...? No, further, what are our masks made of? White, black, blue, colors, dyes, negation, censorship, effacement...

Masking an object obscures its appearance or its purpose. It hides both the beautiful and the abject without discrimination, allowing for actions to play out under cover (camouflage). It can make an object stand out or instead tuck in (pickpocketing). We can wear masks as such and we can take off the masks of others (discovery) to find a "truth," or maybe just another lie. To mask an image is to select only certain parts of it: a mask is a filter, but one that only supplants its underlying actuality. To mask is to alter without changing, to refract without reflecting (as a reflection always transforms). Masking is, as Baudrillard would put it, a manipulation of appearances without the undermining of a foundation, without altering or even *engaging* being or truth in the process. Masking is the play of pure affect, attacking only the sensibilities of the other, but it is a feint; the blow lands, but it never *connects*.

The mask as an object functions as above in the application of its attributes. Masking as an action functions more obliquely—the mask seduces, it "leads astray;" intentionally misdirects. Seduction is, in a way, simulation. You appear to me as I would want you to, to the person I imagine myself as being. I can seduce myself by masking you with one of my own makings. I simulate your image to reconcile your divergent character with my better image of it.

The mask is virtual, or maybe not; it is *real* after all, isn't it? Perhaps that comes to mind just so I can quote Michael Heim that the virtual is "not actually but *just as if*." But that better image is who we are, what we do, *only if* we wear masks. Here the mask is our better self, just as we imagine it to be, only we are, unfortunately, *not* it. Or is it our worse self? Or even our true self? Can the body itself be a mask, a second mask returning us to who we are? We can remove the mask, to look out and say "this is who I am," and then we put it back on to say "this is who I *am*" again. But we see throughout, through the mask, from behind it, with our *own* eyes. And our *real* eyes are seen by others, but somehow they will never recognize us. "She has her father's eyes:" Then is the child a mask of the father? Logically not, but perhaps...maybe. Still we ask, *what* are you dressing as, *what* are you supposed to be, never, rarely, *who* (that would be impersonation, we are concerned here with costume).

Our masks are others, always: never persons, always characters. The Colombian, the Venetian carnival mask which covers only the eyes and the cheeks, is so named for the actress who wanted her beauty to show through, who did not want to cover her face. The recognition of beauty and personality through a disguise is a sign of true love, though the mask is also used to determine the fidelity of another—without the other noticing. The mask allows for surveillance, seeing through, while able to be *seen through*. After filming the music video for "Eyes Without a Face" in 1984, Billy Idol discovered that his contact lenses had fused to his corneas after being exposed to three days of fog machines, lighting, and fire sources. In 1960, *Eyes Without a Face*, directed by Georges Franju, a doctor steals the faces of other women to attempt to restore his daughter's (previously disfigured). Both denounce the potential of humanity simply in eyes alone. We need the whole face to be ourselves again. Or do we just think so?

The Duchenne smile is regarded by physiologists and psychologists to be the genuine expression of true enjoyment as it utilizes the involuntary muscles of the orbiculares oculi (raising the cheeks and involving the eye). Maybe Colombia had other reasons why to cover those parts of her face... beauty being just a happy excuse. However its namesake, Guillaume Duchenne, was rumored to have experimented on the decapitated heads of prisoners as the electro-stimulus was too painful for living subjects. Why do masks so often lead us down this path? Near the fall of the Venetian Republic, the wearing of masks in daily life was restricted to a period of three months beginning on the 26th of December. Why? Because masks are dangerous. They remove responsibility. "Oh, that wasn't me," "I wasn't myself." Then who was it? "You're not yourself tonight." Then who was it? "Somebody else?" Not likely... that seems like a play. There is always the attempt to look under the mask to verify identity. Is this a mistake?

Orpheus, by looking, loses Eurydice: Ovid says he was "too eager," but I would say he was too distrustful of what might be. He thinks it is a mask following him, a shade, therefore a lie. Around this time it was presumed that simply the sight of Medusa would turn man to stone. Medusa, whose mask is so kinetic it turns all others static, is defeated by a mirror. It wasn't her gaze, but her appearance that had this affect. To be affected, you had to gaze, but to affect you only have to project.

Interview: Peter Eisenman 2016.10.13
<i>The editors of Paprika: Masks sat down with Peter Eisenman, Architect, Theorist, and Charles Gwathmey Professor in Practice at Yale University School of Architecture.</i>

Paprika: Where did the idea of deep reading in your work originate?

Peter Eisenman: When I came back to the United States in 1963 and was at Princeton, there was a series of little blue books published by a Dutch publisher on philosophy and linguistics. One of the books was called *Syntactic Structures* by a Noam Chomsky. I began to calibrate my theoretical work differently from how I had originally conceived it. The basic idea was, how does one produce an architecture outside of oneself? Controlled by oneself but outside oneself. How does one produce a grammar, a syntax? What we are doing in the studio today is working, in a sense, on a grammar that denies the iconic, the symbolic, the semantic and the phonological and says, on the socio-political side, the problem with architecture is that it always serves power. It serves power by communicating images, messages, at centers, from the first churches when they were inscribing the scripture on the walls because people couldn't read Latin, to Fascism in Italy, to Nazism in Germany, to Communism in Russia. All of these regimes used architecture as a way of sedating the masses. The more easily accessible the message, the more subservient the people. This can be called a form of activism. In other words you can have the activism of social thinkers, such as [Alejandro] Aravena at the Biennale this year, or there is another form of activism which counters the underlying power of architecture to have a submissiveness. Since your generation is against authority

and power, I would have thought it would be an interesting idea to think about how architecture in fact can be dammed up, that is, stopped from delivering these messages. In 1964 I hadn't connected it to activism or to power. I just knew there was some way I wanted to make it more difficult, in other words, the easier the communication, the more subservient the people. The more difficult the communication, the more problematic for the people. I wanted an architecture that could not be easily absorbed. Jeff Kipnis in a recent essay summed up this activism as "by other means."

Call it a deep structure, call it the need for close reading, there are any number of paths that I've taken through the thirty or forty years, but I became disappointed in the too easy analogy of deep structure and began reading people like Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and others in the mid-sixties. Derrida says that there is no one-to-one relationship between a sign (that is, an architectural sign) and a meaning—that there are free floating signifiers. The whole idea was to problematize the relationship between the subject and the object, that is, to make it a less powerful connection. The work that I've been doing: teaching, building, writing, has always in some way involved this kind of idea. I believe all of us are taught to make powerful architecture. That is what one could say results from a bourgeois mentality. I suffer from that, in that, I want my architecture to be beautiful, but I'm fighting against this impulse that stems from my education. So Peter Eisenman and his students fight against their own natural instincts to try and produce an architecture against power.

P: Do you get the sense that when people come to you with a project, they have an understanding of that problematization?
PE: [laughing] That's why they come. I think that people can tell the difference between Peter Eisenman and Frank Gehry. He has many clients, I have few clients, because I am an outlier. I don't necessarily broadcast this as my work, but clients feel it. We are not into making subservient clients. We want them to aspire to understand even though they may not have the tools to do that. That's what I would like to think that I teach here, that is, for students to aspire to reach the possibility of their potential excellence. What that means to every individual is something different.

P: So many of your projects are situated in incredibly charged political territories, or they have a significant architectural past. This is a far cry from your early houses, which were meant to be site-less. What brought about that evolution?

PE: Site-less meant they were not concerned with the ground as datum, that is, it was they were trying to deny what is the normal condition of any building and any human building where there is a datum between the building and the individual existing on the ground, whether it's a plinth, whether it's a hole, whether it's its stairs, there is a ground relationship. The houses were an attempt to erode that grounded architecture. It got to a point where in *House X*, I became too much in the head and the client, who had dug a hole for a foundation said, "You are not interested in filling this hole, you are just interested in filling up holes. I'm firing you." So I lost *House X*. That was a big blow.

P: Was the client correct about that?

PE: I went to psychoanalysis for twenty years. In psychoanalysis I learned that I was a head person. I had dreams about looking into the sun like Daedalus and Icarus. Manfredo Tafuri wrote an article called "The Meditations of Icarus," which said that my wings burned because I flew too close to the sun. My analyst said you need to be related to the ground, and that's when I started to do ground projects. Canargio, which was the first urban project I did, are holes in the ground. Berlin—in the ground. The Holocaust Memorial—in the ground. I became more interested in the ground as a datum, as an idea to overcome my natural psychological tendencies to be ungrounded. I have tried to do that in teaching. So, through a process of analysis, I was able to come to terms with some of these psychological problems that I had and became much more able to deal with reality. I used to live in a fantasy world of ideas. Now, having a family, having children, having grandchildren, I live in a more real world.

P: You've said how your work is a sort of damming up of its connection to reality and an attempt to make that connection problematic. I wonder then, to the person you would speak to in the bar—when they come across a project that is intentionally problematic...

PE: No, they wouldn't know.

P: Is it possible that they would be more desensitized to architecture because of it's being problematic?

PE: Let me put it this way. I'm reading *Ulysses*. Can I understand *Ulysses*? No. [laughter] Have you ever read *Ulysses*? Try it. Do you think Joyce gave a damn whether I could understand what he was writing about? No. Joyce didn't give a damn who read or understood what. He did his writing. A surgeon doesn't give a damn if you understand what he's doing or whether or not you trust him. I go to the opera and I think, "What the hell is going on?" Should they play down to me? No! They should play up! It's the same with architecture. We cannot dumb-down the world. The world is a difficult world and we will always be in a situation of difficulty. What we don't want to do is desensitize people by dumbing them down because architecture overpowers them. I don't think intellectual things overpower people in the same way that aesthetic things do. I believe aesthetics is one of the most powerful, drug inducing conditions that there can be. I think aesthetics is a narcotic. That's why I don't teach aesthetics. I teach the expression of ideas. I have to answer you by saying there are two ways to look at how distanced people become. As long as they're being overcome by aesthetics, they're not going to like what I'm doing anyway. That's the danger in the politics of today in this country, it's the danger that the people are being overcome by easy ideas. I think architects, writers, poets, everybody has to try to overcome the desensitizing condition of the aesthetic.

P: Interestingly, this is very much how Keller [Easterling] describes the way architects need to operate in the world. The typical operation is in subservience to the aesthetic, where we become tools of power or aesthetics. That's what we're taught. You both propose something different. First, to get in the door—which is something that is very difficult—and once you're there, to work against power. The architect must masquerade.

PE: Look, you cannot tell a client, "Well I'm not interested in your message." But you can say, "I am going to do your moral best to serve you." When I believe in my position as a teacher, a human being, a father, and a husband. It's a moral position. That's the way I live my life. So, whether I'm telling a white lie, I believe it's in the overall sense of the morality of what I believe.

P: I would like to discuss the Berlin project. You pushed to keep information away from the public while they were experiencing it.

PE: That was a bit of a mistake. They did put an information center underneath. They wanted a big information center on the ground and I didn't want it. The whole idea was no inscriptions, no markings... you can interpret it how you want.

P: Is that because it just denies reading through lack of information, as opposed to complicating it or damming it up?

PE: Well it certainly denies more than complicates. It's one of the ways I work. What you see is not what it is. Walking in it is not going to help you understand what it is. What it is is two topological surfaces that don't intersect and don't have any relationship to one another. They're just arbitrary surfaces, one on the ground, one ten meters in the air. The pillars connect the points from one surface to the next. People can say whatever they want, but it has nothing to do with what they think. This young rabbi came up to me on the day of the opening, and said, "Mr. Eisenman, what is the magic in the number of the stones." I said, "There's no magic in the number of stones." He said, "How many stones are there?" I said, "There are 271.1 pages?" So, it happens.

P: You talked a little bit about how architecture today is ruled by the aesthetic. Is the role of the architect, or at least the outgoing architect, to dam up the aesthetic?

PE: I think you do that that if it's not meaningful and not symbolic, and then it's empty. So damming up meaning, symbolism, iconography, makes the aesthetic empty. We're trying to denature power, we're trying to take the alcohol out of the liquid. We're trying to make architecture not a powerful tool of centralized governments or institutions. Whether it's Yale, corporations, the President of the United States, or Mussolini, I'm trying to remove the possibility of architecture as an opiate to the people.

P: What do you make of the fact that your career is bouncing from institution of power to institution of power?

PE: [laughter] Look, we have to struggle against those things in order to produce something beyond that, because that instinct for power is not what produces great architecture, or great poetry. It's

the denial of that force, that energy, that allows us to go beyond that. That's what I try to teach.

Anonymity
Julie Turgeon, M.Arch '18

It's 4:45pm. I'm sitting at my grandparents' kitchen table in rural (and I mean *rural*—this house didn't have a *telephone* until the late 70s) Belgium, rocking a small porcelain coffee cup back and forth across a vinyl tablecloth, letting my mind weave in and out of a conversation I've ascertained for the third time already by now.

The questions are banal enough, rehearsed mostly around work and school. But I'm growing increasingly frustrated by my inability to share my excitement and engagement with things that are most salient in my life. When I worked in the art world, these were things like the Julie Mehretu exhibition that went off without a hitch, penning a particularly eloquent press release, or the time a 93-year-old Wayne Thiebaud (Wayne Thiebaud?) got trapped in our freight elevator. Today, it's the little victories like resolving a plan, dissecting the intricacies of a theory reading, or the thrill of stumbling across the Penthouse left unlocked. Under the polite niceties and platitudes exchanged across the kitchen table, however, there exists a vast disconnect in values, priorities, mindsets, and ways of living that result in a feeling of detachment and isolation. It is a feeling of utter anonymity.

I don't mean anonymity in its traditional sense as a condition of namelessness. On the contrary, everyone in this small Belgian town—down to the local butcher—knows my name and my place in the local family tree (which is especially impressive considering I don't eat meat).

Anonymity comes in many flavors. It is achieved through a variety of means, voluntarily or involuntarily. Anonymity is mobilized in pursuance of honest expression, to subvert dominant power structures, to dodge repercussion, and to move through spaces unencumbered by the obligations of identity. Authors adopt pseudonyms to publish under. Internet trolls untraceably peruse the bowels of the deep web.

I would like to elaborate on the nature of that distinct type of anonymity born of disconnect and detachment, one that draws on sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theories of non-economic forms of capital. For Bourdieu, capital is that which is valued in the setting you are positioned in. His theories frame an idea of capital as embodied in knowledge, skills, and relationships, looking beyond and monetary value and proprietary wealth. These are forms of *currency* we learn to manipulate and utilize to negotiate and stake our place in society.

In the context of an architectural education, capital may take the form of fluency in precedents, proper lineweights, modeling software, or just having that magic touch with the finicky Mimaki cutter. I propose that anonymity arises from not being able to put these accrued non-economic forms of capital into play in a given situation. Anonymity results when the system you've placed yourself into is pulled out from under your feet.

Yes, anonymity can be a deeply frustrating, unsettling, and jarring condition. But, it can also be reframed as a powerful tool, a technique to utilize advantageously. The history of art is rife with examples of artists who have sought anonymity to further their work and advance their ideas. Most known of these is perhaps Donald Judd in his move to Marfa to escape from the New York City art scene he found increasingly stifling. Moving to the small Texas town where very few knew of Judd gave the artist the creative freedom (in addition to ample space) to pursue his goals without the pressures of professional and social obligations of NYC. Remaining relatively unknown in the context of small-town Texas (at least initially) afforded Judd different opportunities and possibilities than available to him as a big artist in the big city. His move fits into a broader desire pervasive in Minimalism for the artist to erase his or her presence from the work produced.

Yet if Judd (and other Minimalists of the 60s) sought to minimize the presence of the hand of the artist in the work of art, how does the opposite of this approach manifest itself? If anonymity suppresses identity, what happens when identity is made hypervisible? If Donald Judd and his Minimalist contemporaries populate the left end of this spectrum, we can compare him with someone who has attempted to broach its right end: Maya Lin.

← anonymity - identity - brand →

Maya Lin is undeniably minimalist in aesthetic, but decidedly *not* in terms of her negotiation of her identity as an artist. Maya Lin the individual became "Maya Lin, the Artist" very early on in her career. She has used the fame generated through her winning proposal for the Vietnam Veterans War Memorial to launch her careers) as artist, architect, and—most recently—activist. She capitalizes on one role to gain leverage and amass credibility as another. Disappointingly, however, she seems unable to successfully synthesize these disparate versions of "Maya Lin" into one. Perhaps precisely as a result of her brandhood, she has fettered herself in place, making it difficult for her to reconcile the varied interests and pursuits she embarks on today.

Either end of the spectrum proposed above spanning anonymity and brandhood enables distinct possibilities, each with its own associated set of advantages and disadvantages. As architecture students priming ourselves to become creative professionals after graduation, I wonder what we stand to gain by positioning ourselves along this continuum at any given time. What lessons can we glean from a condition of anonymity in this environment within which we constantly, declaratorily, and often dramatically define ourselves, our interests, and our stances on a seemingly infinite spread of issues? Is there a benefit or freedom to creating anonymously, unbounden to a particular style or approach we've consciously or unconsciously become "known" for? Does anonymity breed experimentation, or create a "safe(r)" space for risk-taking, trials, and failure?

How do we transition between the insular world within Rudolph and the thousands of eyes a mile away? Isn't there a chance that comparatively little understanding of the nature of our work. Even the term "architect" itself carries different meaning and weight in the space within versus beyond the oftentimes opaque boundaries of the discipline. There is tremendous potential and a source of power to be found in operating between these two spheres only we can better learn to navigate these spaces.

Meanwhile, I lose myself in sips of silky coffee sitting at my grandparents' kitchen table. For this, at least, is a moment we share in simple, splendid, equal delight.

Interview: Keller Easterling 2016.10.12
<i>The editors of Paprika: Masks sat down with Keller Easterling, Architect, Theorist, and Professor at Yale University School of Architecture.</i>

Keller Easterling: When I first started looking at what I call spatial products, I thought I was looking at optimized, functional expressions for maximizing the bottom line—apollitical things like repeatable suburbs, resorts, office parks etc. Maybe I shouldn't have been surprised, but I was surprised to discover the ways that they were derivened in fiction and masquerade. That's the title of the book—*Enduring Innocence: Political Architecture...or...uh*

Paprika: *Global Architecture and Its Political Masquerades*

KE: Yes. [laughter] It seemed that the more rationalized these formulas or recipes were, the better vehicles they were for all kinds of irrational fairy tales. An awareness of that means that one is no longer looking for cast-iron economic logics, or rationality, or game theory, or algorithms, but looking instead for discrepancies and discrepant characters and organizations that are saying something different from what they're doing.

P: Do you find that difficult to see, or do these organizations, in a sense, wear that on their sleeve?

KE: The intoxicating incantations of these scripts, costumes and distractions and lies refresh the market and make it more resilient. The more lies, the better. I keep arguing that architects who are good at reading organization can see the difference between what's being said and the way an organization is actually operating. Like a canine mind that hears words, but understands them in relation to disposition. They hear 'good girl, good dog,' but they're looking at

where you are or if you are next to the door. So they can't understand those words unless they're perceiving a whole bunch of other positions and potentials in organization. As our best architects have a good canine mind, I'm arguing we can see when organizations are closed loops. For example, we look at a repetitive suburb and we see an assembly line, an almost agricultural set of sequences. And we can separate that from the accompanying stories that are about patriotism, homeownership, and family values. Can we read disposition not just in buildings and suburbs, but in entire cities and regions shaped around repeatable recipes?

P: Do you think there is something to the idea that the public can see through this but they choose to participate?

KE: Maybe we are just really under-rehearsed in tinkering with that level of activity and organization. We're really good at pointing to things and calling names, but we're not that good at getting under the hood of organization and tinkering with the activity that is discrepant from the label.

P: What is the implication of unveiling these organizations? Is there something you might anticipate out of that recognition?

KE: It is important to expose it, but it is also important to change the wiring. So there's the unveiling, and that is valuable, but then it's like learning how to play both sides of the split screen. Maybe it also involves learning to outwit some of the powers that be. In the kinds of spaces I look at, there are grisly power politics and power that is very hard to unseat—power that is bulletproof. So how do you manipulate the organization in a way that's undeclared or under the radar?

P: Do you think that that manipulation is the role of the architect?

KE: It could be. How do you manipulate without telegraphing your strategy—without giving it a name? Is there something about being able to manipulate an undeclared thing, which is in fact really powerful?

P: How do you imagine the architect might go about facilitating this manipulation? Ultimately once you get to the building, it seems like you're almost at the end of the line of those systems, the service role.

KE: In that repetitive suburban landscape for instance, if you weren't trying to design a house, could you design a multiplier that was like a gem that reconditioned part of that landscape? You change something about garages, vehicles, front yards, or something else, and that becomes a contagious idea. It's not something you can control. It's something that you set loose.

P: And then it gets absorbed by the production system that exists?

KE: It takes advantage of the fact that this matrix space is already filled with multipliers.

P: This all sounds a bit maniacal...

KE: Well, maybe you're creating another masquerade. You're not really controlling anything, you're seeing if you can get someone else to take it up, to bite on the hook. I would say you can't hope to infiltrate any of those organizations unless you are controlling both the change to the organization and some fiction floating on top of it. You're making the shiny thing that someone's going to pick up, but it's got to have the shine. It's got to have the story. There is no hope of changing these big organizations without being confidence men in that way—hustlers. You have to be good at manipulating cultural fictions.

P: Do you think it's true that no matter what mechanism you come up with, there's always, inevitably, a counter?

KE: Yeah, and we're not used to that. I think we'd be more comfortable if we could be eternally right. And we still think that the master plan that we have in the drawer was the right idea if only everyone was pure enough or smart enough to get it. And so we can continue to congratulate ourselves that we did it, it just wasn't ever executed. More interesting is a different habit of mind about move and counter-move, about a kind of agility, about staying in the game, and about different kinds of organs of design which allow you to shape time-related forms. Does that sort of form allow you to be agile enough to respond to the move when you're out maneuvered?

P: Are there any examples of someone who has successfully done this? Or some institution or some idea that has been a counter-ogist? Or is this something that you're hoping might come out of these unveilings but hasn't yet taken place?

KE: There is not a robust track record or list of precedents. This is an approach that suggests some different kinds of practice.

P: What do you think of architectural education, then, if this is the possibility that you imagine for architects?

KE: You can work on a political imagination while you're going to school that might lead to alternative practices. I'm always amazed when I teach this course called *Launch*. The architecture students have incredible ideas, but they are sometimes not sure how to pursue them. And it must have something to do with our disciplinary hierarchies that cultivate obedience and low expectations.

P: As students, we are conditioned to view ourselves as subject to whatever brief is given to us—we can innovate or iterate on top of that brief, but we're rarely given the opportunity to propose. So I wonder, is that an area of the architecture education that you feel is lacking? That in three years of school we're told that we're not in the room when it's decided what will go somewhere—we're the person that comes into the room after the discussion is over?

KE: Yeah, I always say this, but for advanced studios—well even core studios—you can set up a structure where the work is rehearsing our reactivity to a changing set of conditions—the architectural equivalent of an improvisation class in drama school. So I've done studios where everything changes at certain points and you have to start again, where different circumstances are thrown at you. And in the *Launch* class it's more that the architect is an inventor, or space is the medium of invention—space is elevated to the primary medium of invention.

P: But then, in a real-world context, when would we ever find ourselves in a position where we're empowered to use space in that way?

KE: It might be difficult, but it's just too obvious that so many huge consequential changes in the world are *spatial*. We may not have our hands on them, yet, but they are *spatial*. The world is changing by the thousands of acres a minute. Isn't there a chance that those of us trained to make space might know something about it?

Amon

"They think I'm too tough for a gift so soft"... that's what your mother told me. "Men are scared to give me flowers" she said, "as if a woman who fights and kicks has no use for a thing that blooms and wilts"... Amon E-Hashem was an Afghan father of two—He ran a rental car business in Washington Heights and died in 2010. In 2013 I bought his social security number when my B-1 visa expired and that summer it was so hot that old men began to die in the parks. I remember thinking that that was the rage of Amon E-Hashem, punishing me for stealing his name. I came to this country four years ago when my wife and daughter were taken from me. I buried them in earth that tasted of rust and prayed for death to beckon sleep. My name is Khalid al-Hazmi. But I tucked that name between my daughter's cheek and her mother's hand because without them, I had no use for it. In my dreams they died in each other's arms like the men and women of Pompeii, immortalized in ash with their hands in prayer...I am a surgeon...in Egypt. I was head of my class at Alexandria and I saved lives—but when I got to this country—Lenox Hill wanted me to answer phones. And perhaps pride is for tyrants and fools but I could not do that. So I did other things. I have been a nanny. A janitor. Busboy. Maid. And this past year... I have been holding a sign. In Times Square. But I kept my blue suit and white coat starched—I took them to the cleaners when I did not have money to put food in my stomach. I walked the streets hungry, but clean...

human. The night I met your mother I was wearing them. I did not mean to lie. Not to anyone but myself. The night I met your mother I was planning to throw myself in front of a train... But when my eyes met hers—I had never wanted to live so badly. And as we watched the sun rise over the island, she began to speak of flowers, as I took her hand in mine. And suddenly—there was no floor to speak of, beneath us only sky and our bodies had no weight. We were held aloft by the whispers of hope and the unseen breath of clouds... as we floated I dreamed of a home. I dreamed of both of you without ever having met you—I dreamed that one day, we would sit across a table, your mother's hand in mine and I would look into your eyes and ask you every question—drinking every answer like a dying gasp for air—until your stories, truth, and life, turned themselves into my heart and mind and I could sit at your table as if I had been there all along. Now we can pick up these pieces together or we can do it apart. It is up to you. If you want me to leave I will leave. If you want me to stay, I will stay.

An impenetrable silence descends as the girls and the man who lie stre into each other's eyes. Searching for truth. Unable to find. End of play.

Wear the Wig—Amnesty for the Fault of Icarus
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Part 1

In his seminal text '*The Practice of Everyday Life*,' Michel de Certeau references a peculiar French saying, "le porteur la perruque," which translates as "to wear the wig." "La Perruque" is an example of de Certeau's "tactics," describing methods of acting through relational thinking. In the case of the Wig, the actor looks like they're doing one thing while actually doing something completely different. This "may be as simple a matter as a secretary writing a love letter on *company time*." Action here is proposed as a subversion of disciplinary powers environmentally pervading society to ever increasing extents.' The Wig infiltrates institutional formations, claiming territory through sequences of events played out over time through space.

The Wig is tactical and very risky, as opposed to strategic and stable—a distinction drawn in the General Introduction between the operational modes of the weak versus the powerful. Within theatres of urban drama, entrenched power is strategic—relying on place—while the weak are tactical—relying on time.' The Wig does not seek to withdraw, but rather to seize opportunities from within the cracks and spaces of institutional form. Finally, The Wig discards the spoli, as it has not pilfered material wealth, but rather space and time itself. Curious, the relationship between Wigs and Architecture.

You're in an elevator ascending to the 163rd floor, and the person next to you asks: what is architecture? One might say: form, structure, spatial organization and forces, materials, systems, aesthetics... Perhaps one could add: fleeting temporalities, exceptions within the rules of institutional formation, and persistence in a network-like of routines operating in the slack spaces of human rights. We could also add that the architect is at the same time grounded and the big risk taker, avoiding the blade while keeping her head on the chopping block.

Today, we face multiple crises of basic human rights: destruction by natural disasters and war; rapidly increasing social and economic inequity in urban contexts; mass surveillance of democratic societies; and the dissolution of democracy by, as theorist Elaine Scarry evokes, the emergence of 'thermonuclear monarchy.' Architects will play active roles in unmaking these architectures of violence and in expanding the articles of basic human rights—specifically, the right to practice difference. To do this we will need to adapt to the speeds and mobility of ideologies while expanding and sharpening the cultural resonances of our discipline.

Part 2

At the 163 floor, I would tell the story of the first architect, which goes something like this:

Daedalus was the first architect. He was commissioned by Pasiphae, the wife of King Minos, to build a hollow wooden cow beautiful enough to seduce the Cretan Bull (with whom she had become enamored, due to a curse on her by Poseidon), inside the space of the artifice. Pasiphae mated with the bull, and became pregnant with the Minotaur. When it was born, Minos commissioned Daedalus to build a labyrinth to hold the Minotaur. In this act, the architect evolved from the agent of desire into the agent of logic and reason.

Minos later imprisoned Daedalus and his son, Icarus, inside the labyrinth as punishment for a betrayal. In his moment, the architect (and father figure) became trapped within his own masterpiece.

To escape, Daedalus fashioned wings of feathers and wax so that he and Icarus might fly to freedom. He cautioned Icarus to follow him and not stray from the path. Icarus, a lively youth, thrilled by the act of flight, disregarded his father's words and flew higher and higher until the heat of the sun destroyed his wings, sending him crashing to death in the Aegean Sea.

Today, new information has come to light: that Icarus did not fly too close to the sun, but was shot down with an AGM-114 Hellfire missile launched by an MQ-9 Reaper Drone. I propose that in light of this new information, we grant Amnesty for the Fault of Icarus.

¹De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984. 26.