

## Schizophrenic Walks

You are in front of the screen and surrounded by speakers which fill your aural field. As you move, you are aurally oriented around the space, not according to any recognisable cue or feature that emits sound, but sound set in motion through the slow inarticulate movements around the space. First, a continual drone that vibrates and shifts in pitch and volume. Then, the sound of a measured and deliberate Irish male voice that appears on the aural surface and recedes as though passing through light and shade. They recite monologues, descriptions and narratives that express a feeling of anxiety and unease. These are disjointed, partial and interrupted by breaks so that they appear like aphasic stories, memories and descriptions collected by the spectator in a sort of schizo-narrative encounter. Both the narrator and the reader being in a state of mental indeterminacy. We are co-opted into a position of first-person spectator in which we internalise the encompassing sound and character's in-body point of view (here the "camera" might act as the double of a character) so that it is no longer clear if the voice is an internal voice or an external one. Percussive snaps, cracks that are syncopated and unattached to each other puncture the other sounds and their echo describes and exaggerates the emptiness and solitude of the place. The sounds are related to our movement but it is not clear how.

The work has always already begun when you encounter it. There is no beginning, break or end, just continual progression through a voided human terrain and we are never closer or further away from a centre or resolution. Space is central and it is space that *acts on* the spectator, as a kind of literary machine where the movement generates thoughts, perceptions and narrative. But it is also a non-space that is conspicuously a virtual representation. This allows it to both disappear but also still organise the material and all possible formulations of the work. As a virtual space, it is already understood to be a non-space or non-place and so frees us to consider its structure and relation to the sound and other elements at play rather than focusing on a given meaning or treatment of a 'real' physical situation. As if we are looking *through* space rather than *at* it; so it is the subject and organisational structure behind the work, but also invisible.

The landscape behaves as an interstitial space, like an airport, thoroughfare or terminal zone designed as fluid passageway, or what Deleuze defines as an "any-space-whatever":

Any-space-whatever is not an abstract universal, in all times, in all places. It is a perfectly singular space, which has merely lost its homogeneity, that is, the principle of its metric relations or the connection of its own parts, so that the linkages can be made in an infinite number of ways. It is a space of virtual conjunction, grasped as pure locus of the possible

Deleuze describes three ways the any-space-whatever is constructed: the use of shadow (as in German Expressionism), lyrical abstraction ("the state of things itself and the possibility, the virtuality which goes beyond it") and lastly the dissolution of the subject - "to reach the non-

figurative through an adventure whose end is the eclipse of the face, the obliteration of characters". *And then...* responds to all of these conditions while extending them with virtual representation and continuous play.

For Deleuze, modern art expresses the "veritable theatre of metamorphoses and permutations" most clearly. The work of art is a "labyrinth without a thread" where "nothing is fixed", replacing representation with experience: "transcendental empiricism or science of the sensible". Deleuze cites Beckett as the example par excellence in fulfilling this expression. In the essay "The Exhausted" he analyzes Beckett's use of any-space-whatever through what he calls the 'combinatorial' - the art or science of exhausting the possible. Deleuze states, "the combinatorial exhausts its object, but only because its subject is itself exhausted" pointing to Beckett's writing and television productions being "perfectly clear" with their intention of "exhausting space". He describes exhaustion as "the indefinite exchange of mathematical formulations" and the following of formless or unformulated productions. Both of these are necessary "in order to abolish the real". He cites the mathematically determined formulations of four figures moving through space in *Quad* and *Molloy's* distribution of sucking stones between the pockets of his greatcoat as examples of exhausting combinatorial positions. *And then...* stages a system of formulations infinitely more complex than the combinatorial approaches laid out by Beckett. It inserts a conflation of actor and character that can never tire and perform infinite permutations and recombinations. Its re-purposed A.I has a freedom of movement according to certain directives and priorities that will trigger different sound components in sequences which can never be scripted or calculated in advance. The combinatorial positions of sound, movement and narrative assemblages from this programming are endless. It is the world where "nothing is fixed, a labyrinth without a thread" is made manifest and as a production of an infinite schizo literary machine, it is a work of art that answers to Deleuze and Guattari's statement that: "a schizophrenic out for a walk is a better model than a neurotic lying on the analyst's couch". Exhausted but infinitely productive.

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