

Now and Then #2

Marrakesh – scenography of a city

Situated at the meeting point of the Maghrebi, Mediterranean and European spaces, Morocco is a bridge, a location of extensive exchanges and overlapping cultural, ethnic or religious groups, in turn colonizer and colonized. Layer after layer, a complex ground has been assembled, serving as a base for a country currently contemplating its diverse heritage: the Arab, the Berber, the European within.

Moroccan dancer and choreographer Radouan Mriziga participates to this reflection in his pieces by observing the way the body perceives and interacts with spaces that are always loaded with values lying beyond the contemporary user or beholder, values that can be revealed and challenged in the frame of a creative expression.

Together, we will visit Marrakesh, one of the most prominent imperial Moroccan cities, and a place where the distant and recent history of the country are especially visible. To discern some of the underlying influences that build up the country's ethos and cities, and continuously imprint the experience of it, we will visit some of the buildings that make the image of Marrakesh, and investigate more specifically a selection of two spatial types, one traditional and one foreign: the garden and the theater.

Those visits will feed a reflection carried out during on-site workshops in which the students will reflect on those types, to understand, then concentrate them into scenographic elements questioning the evidence of prevailing spatial perceptions, elements to be built and then tested in the space of the unfinished Marrakesh Royal Theater.

Following the seminar-week, 5 to 10 participants will be offered to further engage and continue the design of those elements, to be used in *O.Kanal*, Radouan Mriziga's next piece, which will consist in the appropriation and transformation of a former industrial space by means of architecture and choreography. It will take place in Brussel's newly opened KANAL – Centre Pompidou, in collaboration with the dance students of The Royal Academy of Antwerp. The participants (who will join in the frame of a Vertiefungsarbeit) will participate to the performances as architects, as engaged bodies crafting the space during the public performances, reflecting, constructing and actively performing the building process of the scenographic elements and what they stand for.

Or how architects can—literally—play a part in a performative reflection embedded in space on the past and present of a country like Morocco.

Now and Then

Architecture is a cultural and contextual phenomenon and as such always influenced by political, economic, social, spiritual forces, as well as by the representational drive and aspirations of those that make it: aspirations for continuity and tradition, or for (r)evolution and change.

Buildings can thus act as masks, allowing to be or become something else at a given moment, interpreting the *now* in the light of the *then* (be it past or future) and to materialize paradigms.

Our *Now and Then* seminar week series will be exploring European and non-European contexts, focusing on some of their moments of self-definition, always caught in a web of near and distant past conditions. To do so, we will seek the help of various guides: thinkers, artists, architects, writers, politicians or playwrights, who will each time help us to understand a place and a time in a deeper way, and to follow some of the paths that led to their specific condition.

Radouan Mriziga

The seminar-week will be held in partnership with Brussels based choreographer Radouan Mriziga.

His ongoing research focuses on the relationship between body and space, dance and architecture. Referring to the Bauhaus as a pedagogical method of sharing practices and combining craft and theory, he installs a contemporary learning practice in which the modelling of space can be re-invented or reformulated according to challenges that society is faced with today.

Building up on his conviction that we can only think and act through a combination of body, mind, and intellect, Radouan Mriziga wishes to work with dance and architecture students to merge the knowledge from these separate fields and to develop new ways to “think and feel” space, combining practice and theory.

21-27 October 2018 - Cost frame D (750CHF to 1000CHF) - min. 10 max. 21 students

With the collaboration of Radouan Mriziga (dancer) and Esther Severy (dramaturge)

Professor An Fonteyne – Assistants Pablo Donet, Thomas Klement, Galaad Van Daele

Vertiefungsarbeit – 1 workshops during winter semester break + participation to performances in Brussels 16-23 March – exact modalities will be presented before departure to Marrakesh

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