

NETWORKS

I am no longer a thing - a noun. I seem to be a verb – an evolutionary process, an integral function of the universe.
(I SEEM TO BE A VERB, BUCKMINSTER FULLER, 2016)

VOLUPTAS

AUGMENT II

The objective of AUGMENT is to explore the infinite complexity of our immediate environment. Together with an artist, we will develop a particular understanding of contemporary life going beyond the merely visual.

Whereas with AUGMENT I we would have used instruments to augment the relationship of cause and effect, AUGMENT II focuses on the invisible glue in between – the networks.

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BUCKMINSTER FULLER, I SEEM TO BE A VERB, 1970

Humankind has organised its surrounding in ever more complex networks. With the advancement of technology, economy and biology, the self and the body is ever more complicit and interwoven within such urban networks. Switzerland, and Zurich in particular, is world-famous for its reliable and seamless networks.

Although mostly invisible – with its architectural manifestations predominantly limited to nodes or edges – these interconnections range from public transports to the sewers and facilitate its citizens with everything from ripe avocados to new business contacts in the Zunfthäuser. Our daily lives are embedded in fragile networks of which we

only become aware of once they glitch.

Train stations, switch houses, man-hole covers, antennas, they are all examples of nodes that at times dominate entire landscapes or are being walked over unnoticed. We quietly subordinated to the constitutions of such networks – input and output – without being fully aware of our actions. Dropping a letter in a mail box sets in motion a complex web of bodies, energies and architectures under which the network is designed to perform efficiently. They are in a state of constant change – dynamic structures that can surge, swell, overflow, empty, switch, sag, signal, fluctuate, transmit, relay, adapt, break, transport, idle.

Cracks leading us despite ourselves, to new social practices which will reveal themselves as less and less separate from each other, and more and more complicity.

FÉLIX GUATTARI, CRACKS IN THE STREET, 1987

What if we act upon its entropic state, its vulnerabilities, its undesigned territories? What if we desaturate traffic signals and people start crossing the street when the lights are on red? Would the movement of cars come to a fullstop? Would the judiciary system collapse under the flood of traffic perpetrators? Which unexpected outcomes

can we provoke if we activate the cracks in a network? Can we imagine unprecedented links between networks and rewire the existing architecture into new feedback structures for the citizens?

We will meet with New York-based artist Sarah Oppenheimer whose work occupies a field between architecture and sculpture. In her kinetic transformation of space, she engages the visitor in a network of hidden mechanics and make him a complicit actor within the spatial experiment. Thus challenging not only the perception of our body in space but at the same time questioning our actions upon the space of others. Using Oppenheimer's work and other precedents of networks as a point of reference, we will investigate and reflect on the invisible links between nodes in our immediate milieu.

During the workshop, students will study the mechanics of existing, highly specific networks of the City of Zurich. After discussing these and locating or inventing cracks, the groups will make proposals on how these can be triggered to act upon the existing network poetically. On a closing event, we will assess the proposals possibility to affect the social everyday life and explore how the new links can lead to a new reading and perception of the city.

DATES
October 19th – 23rd, 2020

LOCATION
Zurich and its vicinity

COST
Category A

INQUIRIES
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CREDIT
David Lynch, Blue Velvet, 1986