Universiteit
Antwerpen

This item is the archived peer-reviewed author-version of:

"Give me some wiggle room" : how to feel at home in the gap between design, building and decay

Reference:
Decroos Bart, Schrijver Lara.- "Give me some w iggle room" : how to feel at home in the gap betw een design, building and decay
Architecture and culture - ISSN 2050-7828 - 7:1(2019), p. 51-68
Full text (Publisher's DOI): https://doi.org/10.1080/20507828.2018.1557836
To cite this reference: https://hdl.handle.net/10067/1605610151162165141

uantwerpen.be
Institutional repository IRUA

Revised Manuscript (Excl Author Information and Showing Changes)

Click here to access/download;Revised Manuscript (Excl Author Information and Showing Changes);TF_A&C_Spaces

‘Give Me Some Wiggle Room’: How to Feel at Home in the Gap Between Design, Building and Decay

abstract

This article takes the Caritas building by De Vylder Vinck Tailleu (2016) as a foil to discuss tolerance from a number of perspectives, demonstrating the productive nature of the very notion of tolerance as a filter to understand a contemporary building with an innovative approach to professional conventions both in psychiatric care and in architecture. The building, a pavilion on the campus of a psychiatric care facility in Belgium, flies in the face of architectural conventions for care facilities, yet provokes a rethinking of contemporary institutional care. Its strategic utilization of the gap between idea and building and of improvisation in the building process provide a striking example of the potential ripple effects from a singular project that provide ‘wiggle room’ in understanding what architecture can do.

Keywords: tolerance, architecture, new materialisms, object-oriented ontology

‘Give Me Some Wiggle Room’: How to Feel at Home in the Gap Between Design, Building and Decay

When you visit the Caritas building, you enter the psychiatric institution through the small parking lot in front of the main building. A paved pathway on the side leads into the open campus with its many different buildings, opening up the view over a large green lawn in front of you. In the middle of the expansive field of grass stands an old, partly demolished and empty building. Its interior spaces can be entered through the various openings in the façade, and once inside, a vertical view unfolds through the various cut-away floors above, all the way up to the open roof structure and blue sky beyond. Bright green beams of steel support the original wooden floors, some of which are nothing more than a primary structure while others have been cut away entirely, the cut-off stumps of the wooden beams still sticking out of the brick walls. Small holes are visible in the remaining floorboards, intended to let the accumulating rainwater flow through the entire construction. In numerous places, the old walls have been repaired with concrete blocks, in seemingly improvised patterns of grey tiles against the dark brown brickwork. In addition, grey smears of concrete are visible where the window sills used to be. They protect the walls from rain and snow seeping in. Trees now grow in what used to be rooms for the treatment of ‘troubled’ women at the beginning of the twentieth century. And whereas the building’s interiors have been cut open toward the public space of the park, seven greenhouses have been placed throughout what remains of the different interior floors of the building, providing shelter from the elements for those who happen to wander into this surreal world.

The Caritas project (2016) is a renovation of a former hospital building by the Ghent-based architecture office De Vylder Vinck Taillieu, in collaboration with the research group BAVO, the staff of the psychiatric institute of the institute KARUS and a number of its patients. The building, as described above, is a *pars pro toto* for a continuous and on-going project to re-think the spatial organisation of the campus, a process moving through time rather than being fixed in place (figure 1). As such, this ‘moving project’ provides a foil to discuss the notion of tolerance from a number of perspectives, showing how the ‘wiggle room’ between the various layers and phases of an architectural project allow for a different conception of what architecture can be and do. As such, we hope to demonstrate the productive nature of the very notion of tolerance as a filter to understand a contemporary

building with an innovative approach to professional conventions both in psychiatric care and in architecture. At the same time, we intend to show that this conceptual filter also gains in discursive depth by taking on a specific case with a rich material reality, that to some extent exceeds the intellectual framework we apply to it.

What kind of tolerance?

The theme 'Spaces of Tolerance' as presented in this issue of *Architecture and Culture* seems to coincide with a wider trend in the humanities, where we have seen the development of what we could broadly group together here as 'materialist ontologies' or 'new materialisms' in recent years.[1] At its core, this development (re)introduces matter and materiality to an intellectually abstract, conceptual discourse. The basic move here is to dismantle the traditional dualism between the supposedly active subject and a supposedly passive object, thereby questioning a discourse based on oppositional dichotomies such as nature vs. culture, human vs. non-human beings, intentional consciousness vs. inert matter. Additionally, this approach expands the notion of agency to include non-human subjects, attributing in varying degrees a sense of agency or autonomy to matter or material entities. This renewed interest in materiality may be traced back to the development of actor-network theory within sociology in the 1980s, but has in recent years spread to myriad other domains resulting in the conviction that material entities play an increasingly central role in our understanding of history and human culture. As Diana Coole and Samantha Frost argue in their overview of the current strands of 'new materialisms': 'foregrounding material factors and reconfiguring our very understanding of matter are prerequisites for any plausible account of coexistence and its conditions in the twenty-first century.'[2] In short, the development of these new materialisms demonstrates a shift away from immaterial things as language, consciousness, subjectivity, agency, mind, soul – which are usually presented as fundamentally different from matter and valorised as superior to the inertia of physical 'stuff'.

These developments are most notably found in ideas such as Bruno Latour's 'actor-network theory'(Law 1986 and Latour 2005), Karen Barad's 'agential realism'(2007), Quentin Meillassoux's 'anti-correlationism'(2008), Jane Bennett's 'vibrant matter'(2010), Lambros Malafouris' 'material engagement theory'(2013), or Graham Harman's 'object-oriented ontology'(2015), among others.[3] Put differently – and in the context of this issue – all of these thinkers seem to argue in favour of what we might call a 'space of tolerance', an in-

between space of coexistence beyond or behind (or under or above) the thin and rigid boundaries separating these fundamental categories. These thinkers show a widespread interest in such in-between spaces, which are often identified as neither subject nor object, neither culture nor nature, neither fully human nor non-human. It may however be more pertinent to the discussion on tolerance to treat this conceptual space as a gap between (sometimes mutually exclusive) definitions, allowing for various potential definitions to be simultaneously present. As such, the call for 'spaces of tolerance' in this approach is closer to what philosopher Timothy Morton identifies as the 'relief of finding wiggle room, and the sense of humour we kindle when we say "wiggle"'.[4]

This paper stands in favour of this 'wiggle room', and of exploring its capacity to provide an open and qualitative perspective on the way in which we categorize and define materiality, experience, and culture. In a rather literal sense, tolerance underpins each architectural project in its 'fit' between the ideas and the materiality of the project. Analogous to how an engineering project makes use of tolerances in how a mechanical component fits into, attaches onto, or moves through another component, the practice of architecture can make use of the gap between the design, planning, drawing and construction of a building, in order to provide a richness to the building throughout its inception, completion and life cycle. In this perspective, the Caritas project provides a series of 'potential definitions' that are crucial to reconfiguring the role of architecture at the KARUS psychiatric centre in Melle, Belgium.

Relationality and Material Agency

Before we get back to that green lawn in front of the Caritas project, we need a short detour through some underlying theoretical positions to outline what is at stake here. Many of the developing positions on materialisms share the basic premises of actor-network theory, which provided a much-needed revision of the heroic twentieth-century understanding of scientific development by bringing both context (networks) and additional contributing agents (actants) into sharper focus.[5] The basic move of attributing 'agency' to matter thus stands as a correction to the notion that humans are the (primary) determining factor in knowledge. In its most extreme form, it follows from what Quentin Meillassoux has termed 'correlationism': the line of thinking in Immanuel Kant that suggests the human mind actively structures reality. As Meillassoux writes: 'By 'correlation' we mean the idea according to which we only ever have access to the correlation between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from the other.'[6] In other words, we can only know the world as it appears

to us. While many 'new materialisms' focus on the relational aspect of understanding, Graham Harman's object-oriented ontology (OOO) seeks to explicitly overcome this correlationism by maintaining an essentialist ontology of the world.[7] Harman proposes that the world is primarily made up of individual entities, which are not fully reducible to their relations with other entities (as in the work of Latour or Whitehead), nor to the parts they are made up of (objects are the fundamental 'stuff' of the cosmos, yet not in the reductionist sense of some 'smallest particle'). By returning to the Kantian thing-in-itself, Harman is able to argue that objects are 'withdrawn' or – as fellow OOO-thinker Timothy Morton puts it – 'open', and therefore never completely exhausted by any human (or non-human) modes of access (such as thinking, measuring, calculating, feeling, licking, or brushing).[8] Departing from Harman's object-oriented ontology, Morton defines this as a 'weird essentialism', as a gap between the 'being' and 'appearance' of things: 'On the view of weird essentialism, things are inconsistent rather than constantly present: to be a thing is to have a gap between what you are and how you appear.'[9] Morton demonstrates this by paraphrasing Kant's discussion of raindrops: 'There are raindrops. You can feel them touching your skin coldly, wet and small. Though these phenomena are not the raindrop, they are inseparable from the raindrop. … Raindrops are raindroppy: their phenomena are measurably so. But I can't access the actual raindrops. Their phenomena are *not raindrops*. There is a fundamental, irreducible gap between the raindrop phenomenon and the raindrop thing. Moreover, I can't locate this haunting gap anywhere in experiential space or even in scientific space.'[10]

In bringing these ideas back to the material realities of architecture and their theoretical implications, two things need to be emphasized here. First, the distinction between appearance and being is not to be understood as a neo-Platonic argument in which the material, experiential world is a false appearance or a mere shadow of an immaterial and eternal realm of constantly present Ideas, but rather that the material world itself is always distinct from how it appears. The thing-in-itself is not an Idea but a thoroughly material thing which can nevertheless be destroyed.[11] This materiality is also central to the revaluation of matter as an independent entity: for example, Jane Bennett's 'vibrant matter' is equally an appeal to treat our environment with the respect and empathy we would typically accord humans.[12] Secondly, the distinction between being and appearance is not a singular, defining gap to be apprehended by the human subject. This contention would return us to an anthropocentric mode of correlationist thinking. Instead, Morton uses it as a conceptual mechanism, suggesting that things have a gap in their ontological structure as such: '…the

human-world gap is not the only one. Everything has a gap like that. Correlationism is not false in itself; it is simply the anthropocentrism…' that reduces things to passive objects.[13] By introducing a difference between a thing and its appearance, Morton is able to find the necessary wiggle room, which does not require for things that 'to exist is to be constantly present.'[14] Morton's loosening of the ontological structure questions the staid timelessness that has typically defined a discourse on architecture as an object – whether it is an icon, an object of use, or an institutional symbol, the architecture is frozen in conception and representation. If we can let go of 'constant presence' as defining existence, and instead turn our attention to the active role of manifesting one's existence, including the unexpected turns in the life-cycle of things (and indeed even their 'mortality'), the architecture discourse stands to gain a broader understanding of buildings as material agents in their own right.

From Static Object to Moving Project

This rather abstract, ontological argument about the structure of objects resonates with recent scholarship within the field of architecture. In the essay 'Give Me A Gun and I Will Make All Buildings Move', Bruno Latour and Albena Yaneva argue for a different conception of the architectural project, not as a constantly present object, but as something that assumes different appearances and shapes over the course of its lifetime. They write: 'The problem with buildings is that they look so desperately static. … Everybody knows – and especially architects, of course – that a building is not a static object but a *moving* project … .'[15] In their argument, they lay out the obvious distinctions between the Euclidian space in which buildings are *drawn* on paper, the environment in which buildings are *built*, and the world in which they are *lived* yet they also note that we always seem to 'fall back on the Euclidian space as the only way to "capture" what a building is – only to complain that too many dimensions are missing'[16]. As such, Latour and Yaneva argue for 'inventing a visual vocabulary that will finally do justice to the "thingly" nature of buildings, by contrast to their tired, old "objective" nature.'[17] This so-called 'thingly' nature is defined as 'a *navigation* through a controversial datascape: as an animated series of projects, successful and failing, as a changing and criss-crossing trajectory of unstable definitions and expertise, of recalcitrant materials and building technologies, of flip-flopping users' concerns and communities' appraisals.'[18] This 'contested territory' that is the building 'cannot be reduced to what is and what it means, as architectural theory has traditionally done.'[19] While the terminology differs somewhat, it seems that what Latour and Yaneva argue for comes quite close to Morton's definition of the ontological structure of an object, not as a static entity that is constantly

present, but with a gap between its being (it is still the same building throughout) and its multiplicity of appearances (the building appears in its many iterations, different design proposals, changing conditions and expectations, its realisation and subsequent aging, restorations, transformations, deterioration and destruction etc.).

In *Buildings Must Die*, Stephen Cairns and Jane M. Jacobs study the inevitable decay, deterioration and destruction of buildings (the 'must' in the title refers to a material reality, rather than an imperative command), tracing architecture's obsession with creation and production of the new. They observe that throughout architectural history buildings have often been seen as 'alive', having 'memory' or 'spirit', and how architects employ organic metaphors in describing buildings, where walls become 'membranes' or 'skins' that may 'breathe', building structures are referred to as 'sinews' or 'bones', and how the movement throughout corridors, staircases and rooms is thought of as 'circulation'.[20] Cairns and Jacobs argue that 'seeing the building as a coherent whole, to be understood as a relatively autonomous and essential thing (an idea held very succinctly in the architectural idea of "the completed building")' puts a particular weight on the static building.[21] As a result, architects become the creators of a life, which is moreover supposed to be everlasting. Moreover, Cairns and Jacobs observe 'an assumption that for architecture to remain beautiful it must not change; buildings must aspire to be durable…'[22] Yet, given a long enough time frame, even the most durable buildings will disappear, which reveals durability (or presence) not as an intrinsic attribute of architecture, but as 'an attribute of how the social world approaches architecture.'[23] Parallel to Morton, Cairns and Jacobs' critique of architecture's natalism might be seen as a call to include the many appearances of an architectural object in our conception of what an architectural project is, including its decay, deterioration and demise.

Similarly, the work of architect and theorist Jill Stoner takes an interest in the decay and deterioration of buildings, as the necessary conditions for what she describes as 'minor architectures', which are '[p]rovoked by desires for resistance, fragmentation, and opposition, [and] may be mobilized *within* buildings that are underutilized or diminished by real or perceived obsolescence.'[24] These minor architectures aim at dismantling rigid dichotomies structuring the field of architecture (and by extension social space, as discussed above): 'Consider two pervasive hard segmentations in architectural discourse: the dichotomous private and public and the even more fundamental binary between nature and culture. Minor architectures can blur these boundaries, turning hard segments soft.'[25] Stoner is concerned

with a politicization of architecture, defining minor architectures as 'opportunistic events in response to latent but powerful desires to undo structures of power; and as such, minor architectures are precisely (if perversely) concerned with the privilege and circumstances of major architecture, the architecture of State and economic authority.'[26] In other words, minor architectures operate by establishing spaces of tolerance, spaces in between the hard segmentations that structure (major) architecture. As such, the notion of 'minor architecture' proposes ways to conceive of the architectural project beyond the natalist fixation on the completed building within regulated frameworks and systems of power, operating in 'that mercurial, indeterminate state that is the passage from striated to smooth, from closed system to open space.'[27]

Now, let's return to the Caritas project, which proves to be a fitting case study to explore these concerns in relation to the practice of architecture. In tracing these conceptual notions through the built reality of this project, we will be able to arrive at a different conception of architecture which allows for the gap between things and words as well as for a relational understanding between people, the built environment and time.

From Major Architecture to Minor Architecture

The Caritas project was realised by architects De Vylder Vinck Taillieu and is the result of an architecture competition organized by the architectural research office BAVO, who was commissioned to do so by the administration of the KARUS psychiatric centre in Melle (BE). The psychiatric centre was originally established as a Christian institution by the Sisters of Mercy and was organised as a large, open and green campus, with a number of separate buildings placed throughout the park, each housing a department dedicated to a different pathology. The complex was originally built around the turn of the century according to the conventional campus model for psychiatric care at the time: a place 'away', to exclude the 'mad' from the social space of the city, under the guise of peace, quiet and fresh air as being beneficial for the sick. During the 1950s and 1960s, then, as a result of changing regulations and standards in psychiatric care, these buildings were steadily demolished and have since been replaced with pseudo-modernist, functional blocks, designed around the number of 'beds' they can house, as to maximize efficiency. These newer buildings were an expression of the prevailing views on psychiatric care at the time, which, during the second half of the twentieth century, were focused on medicated processes aimed at 'solving' psychiatric illnesses. While the perspective on psychiatric care has shifted further towards less

institutionalization, aimed at integration and ambulant care, the demolition campaign of the original buildings continued over the years to make way for more of the typical standardized hospital architecture. In 2016, as part of this ongoing demolition campaign, one of the last remaining original buildings was already partly disassembled (the roof had been removed and the floors had been stripped down to the structure and subfloors), when a new director halted the process. Realizing that the building was being demolished without the need for replacement, but merely because it didn't meet the regulations, he instead launched an architecture competition posing the question of what this building still could mean in the context of contemporary psychiatric care. Out of the three invited offices, the Ghent-based architecture office De Vylder Vinck Taillieu was selected for their proposal to leave the building as is, to facilitate the inevitable process of aging and deterioration by adding structural reinforcements in places where necessary and removing even more parts of the building where desired, and to open up the building for indeterminate uses by adding seven greenhouses as wind- and waterproof shelter.

The architects' decision to leave the building 'as is' as a starting point already shows the Caritas project as a minor architecture. The architects do not propose yet another new architectural programme and form as expression of an underlying, more contemporary psychiatric paradigm. Instead, they propose to accept the building of a previous 'major' architecture, and to open this up, both literally and figuratively. First, literally. In addition to the demolition that had already taken place, the architects opened up the floors further, cutting holes throughout the interiors, while enlarging the window openings in order to make the building permeable both to the weather and to visitors (figure 2). The traces of its previous interiors are clearly visible, while the physical cuttings in the building undermine any sense of a stable interiority. As a consequence – moving to the figurative sense – the building escapes any classifiable category of typology – is it a house, a garden, a square? – and thus any specific fixation in terms of programme or function (figure 3). The addition of the seven empty greenhouses allows for various unforeseen uses while emphasizing the loose functionality of the building as such (figure 4). As several anecdotes in the reports of Gideon Boie (BAVO) confer, it is often not clear to patients and passers-by whether the building is part of the psychiatric campus, if it is intended to be entered and used, and what the use might be.[28] This stands in contrast to what Stoner describes as the entanglement of major architecture with notions of time: 'Political space engages the dimension of time, variously by its categorical divisions or by its liberating flow. … The architecture of the prison, for

example, stratifies the mechanized agenda of incarceration; it operates through religious adherence to temporal laws of segmentation (the daily schedule) and permanence (the incommutable sentence). … The segmentation of time within a politically structured workplace [another example] obliterates the eternal and nonhierarchical relations between people and nature – substituting management of a false, measurable time … for the perceived instability of fluid time.'[29] Instead, the Caritas project operates by dissolving 'the distinguishing membranes which separate inside from out, now from then': it places the spaces of the project outside of institutionalized time, in the sense that the spaces are difficult to incorporate into a preconceived programme or schedule.[30] In contrast to the regulated spaces of other buildings on the campus, the Caritas project opens up a *physical* 'space of tolerance', where other, undefined activities are able to take place. It provides the necessary wiggle room to question what kind of uses, activities or functionalities should and could take place on the campus, both for staff members and patients.

Aside from the building as it appears today, the entire process of the Caritas project shows an explicit resistance toward the architectural object as a static, *present* entity. The involvement of BAVO, who was invited by the new director to think about the future development of the campus, provoked a design process of reflecting on the presence of a few remaining original buildings and what could still be done with them. However, whereas the initial ambition was to develop a new master plan for the site, the process soon diverged from this premise as BAVO set up a participatory process with patients, staff and management. The focus of the participatory process quickly became the presence of this building in a state of ruin, halfway between construction and demolition, which led to the architecture competition. At this point, with the building still in its state of ruin, without any idea of a future use or new construction to come, the architectural project may already be considered *present* on the campus. Out of the three competition entries, the initial proposal by De Vylder Vinck Taillieu was chosen, which was then further discussed in the meetings with all involved parties. These discussions were facilitated by various scale models of the building, which were used to imagine the possibilities an empty building on the campus might provoke. This exploratory process continued in the building itself with the ad-hoc reparations to the brickwork, improvised by the contractors on-site (figure 5). Likewise, the planks of the rotting floors will gradually be replaced one by one, when and where necessary. Instead of being a static project, dictated in a set of drawings, the building itself seems to rather operate as a growing and evolving scale model. The initial ideas and wishes of the parties involved were first projected and

materialized in scale models during the brain storm sessions, and this process continues at full scale in the building itself. For example, the greenhouses are envisioned to be moved out into the field of grass in front of the building to facilitate different uses, expanding the project beyond the physical limits of the original construction. As such, the Caritas project not only opens up a *spatial* tolerance, both material and conceptual, but a *temporal* tolerance as well.

In the regulated context of institutional care, however, it remains difficult to inscribe the building into the conventional frameworks of use, function and meaning, as the history of its many names also demonstrates. The building was originally called 'Saint-Joseph' before the demolition and subsequent participatory process, but as Boie describes in his reports, the building knew many variants and different names throughout the process, especially relating to its typological classification.[31] The building was commonly called 'Joseph' by the patients and staff, but often joined with different nouns as to indicate its presumed typological function, depending on who was talking. As such, it has been called the 'Joseph Square', the 'Joseph House', 'Rooms of Joseph', 'The Porch', 'The Dovecote', or 'Sanctuary', with the board of directors eventually settling for the official name of 'the Canon Peter Joseph Triest Square' as tribute to the founder of the psychiatric centre. In addition, the architects themselves and publications in the architectural press have initially referred to the project as 'Caritas', but at times the name of 'Joseph' and the official name of 'the Canon Peter Joseph Triest Square' pops up here and there. The difficulty of naming the project, the many variants and the multiple usages continuing up to this day indicates the project's resistance to being reduced to a singular object, and rather emphasizes the explicitly 'moving' nature of the project, which keeps on changing to this day.[32]

Expanding the 'Wiggle Room'

As with most buildings, hospital architecture tends to be defined by its programmatic demands, structured according to prevailing paradigms on psychiatric care, the place of the patient and the role of staff, caregivers and management. In contrast, the Caritas project instead is an explicit attempt to loosen up these constraints, and to realize 'spaces of tolerance', where the expectations, demands, regulations and habits lose their ground. As such, the building is not reduced to its being a hospital building, but instead takes on many appearances, both as part of and outside the institutional space. The multiple levels of meaning, history, construction, transformation and even decay are the results of an eminently unconventional design solution within a greater structure of institutionalized care.

Importantly, these spaces of tolerance as described in the text and images – physical and temporal, understood as a 'minor' and 'moving' architecture – take effect both in the discipline of architecture and in the institution of psychiatric care. On the one hand, the Caritas project questions our – architects' – conventions of what a building is, related to functionality, completion and construction. And by doing so, on the other hand, the project questions our – users of an institutional space – conventions of what psychiatric care is, related to the role of the environment in therapy relative to our positions as either patients, staff or management.

The effects of the Caritas project as a design intervention on the rest of the campus are still emerging, mostly to be found in the building process and informal conversations with patients and staff, yet the project already makes it possible to conceive of a different kind of space – as it has already taken form in a neighbouring building. The 'Dageraad' building (meaning 'Dawn', which houses the Department of Psychosis Care), a few hundred meters down the road from the Caritas project, presents us with a first answer to what the effects could be. This building also remained as part of the original campus architecture, and was likewise scheduled for demolition. However, seeing what was possible with these depreciated buildings in the project of Caritas, patients and staff took matters into their own hands and proposed a renovation plan for the building, without the need for an architect. The building was restored in line with their ideas, using more conventional construction practices, but with a sense of openness and freedom not found in the other conventional buildings on campus. The Caritas project remains a unique project on the campus, both in its appearance and its undefined functionality, but the Dageraad building demonstrates a similar underlying 'tolerance' to the use of the campus space, following its example.[33] This too is the result of a 'minor' architecture – to recalibrate habits. The permissiveness projected by the building provides at least an initial view of how a strategic insertion of different tolerances (in the building process, in its appearance, and as well, in its reading) may spread to an overall sense of breathing room, for staff, patients and visitors alike.

With this final thought we can leave the campus of KARUS behind, exiting through the Dageraad building. Its façades have simply been retained, with the insertion of double glazing in compliance with today's building regulations (figure 6). Inside, however, the expectations of the contemporary hospital building are subverted by the shell itself. The typical layout and materialization of standardized hospital rooms set along a corridor at

medical stretcher-width are modified by the existing floor plan of a bygone era. The central volume has been opened up for communal activities by removing the doors between the different rooms, removing the need for a corridor by creating a continuous enfilade through various zones – ping-pong, eating, music (figure 7). Turn-of-the-century architectural elements puncture the clean white spaces: an out-of-use chimney becomes a place to gather around while watching a game of pool; the high, vertical windows, dating from before the invention of the modernist *fenêtres en longueur*, draw in an abundance of light; and the shelving and piano found in the abandoned building again serve their function, contrasting the usual neutrality of hospital furniture (figure 8). Leaving the building through the unguarded front door again, where patients and visitors alike hang around in the courtyard, we glance one last time in the direction of the Caritas project, its naked roof structure visible beyond the trees.

---

[1] For an overview of the developments in new materialisms, see Diana Coole, Samantha Frost (eds.), *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) or Rick Dolphijn, Iris van der Tuin (eds.), *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012). For an overview of the developments in speculative realism, see Levi Bryant, Nick Srnicek, Graham Harman (eds.), *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism* (Melbourne: re.press, 2010) or Graham Harman, *Speculative Realism. An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018).

[2] Diana Coole, Samantha Frost, 'Introducing the New Materialisms', in: Diana Coole, Samantha Frost (eds.), *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) 2.

[3] Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (London: Duke University Press, 2007); Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (New York: Continuum, 2008); Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter : A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Lambros Malafouris, *How Things Shape the Mind: A Theory of Material Engagement* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2013); Graham Harman, *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything* (London: Penguin, 2018).

[4] Timothy Morton, *Humankind. Solidarity with Nonhuman People* (London: Verso Books, 2017) 159.

[5] John Law (ed.) *Power, Action, and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986).

[6] Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (New York: Continuum, 2008) 5.

[7] See 'Chapter 4: Indirect Relations', in: Graham Harman, *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything* (London: Penguin, 2018) 147-194.

[8] Timothy Morton, *Realist Magic: Objects, Ontology, Causality* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2013) 93.

[9] Timothy Morton, *Dark Ecology. For a Logic of Future Coexistence* (New York : Columbia University Press, 2016) 70.

[10] Ibid. 93.

[11] See for example Harman's discussion of the White House in: Graham Harman, *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything* (London: Penguin, 2018) 154-157.

[12] See for example Bennett's discussion of her encounter with trash in: Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter : A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) 4-6.

[13] Timothy Morton, *Dark Ecology. For a Logic of Future Coexistence* (New York : Columbia University Press, 2016) 103. In cognitive science, Alva Noë's work has provided a similar recalibration of how we understand consciousness by focusing on the *combination* of brain and body in *relation* to the world as it shows up for us. Alva Noë, *Out of Our Heads. Why You Are Not Your Brain, and Other Lessons from the Biology of Consciousness*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2009).

[14] Ibid. 48.

[15] Bruno Latour, Albena Yaneva, 'Give Me A Gun and I Will Make All Buildings Move : An ANT's View of Architecture', in: Urs Staub, Reto Geiser, *Explorations in Architecture: Teaching, Design, Research* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2008) 80.

[16] Ibid. 82.

[17] Bruno Latour, Albena Yaneva, 'Give Me A Gun and I Will Make All Buildings Move : An ANT's View of Architecture', in: Urs Staub, Reto Geiser, *Explorations in Architecture: Teaching, Design, Research* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2008) 89.

[18] Ibid. 87.

[19] Ibid. 86.

[20] Stephen Cairns, Jane M. Jacobs, *Buildings Must Die: A Perverse View of Architecture* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2014) 11.

[21] Ibid. 65.

[22] Ibid. 64.

[23] Ibid. 65.

[24] Jill Stoner, *Toward a Minor Architecture* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2012) 17.

[25] Ibid. 10.

[26] Ibid. 7.

[27] Ibid. 7.

[28] For example, Boie relates an anecdote about a woman wandering around night after night through the building, wondering what the function of the building is supposed to be. In: Gideon Boie (ed.), *UNLESS EVER PEOPLE* (Antwerp: Flanders Architecture Institute, 2018): 212.

[29] Jill Stoner, *Toward a Minor Architecture* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2012): 4-5.

[30] Ibid. 22.

[31] Gideon Boie, 'A Note on the Names of the Square', in: Gideon Boie (ed.), *UNLESS EVER PEOPLE* (Antwerp: Flanders Architecture Institute, 2018) 170-172.

[32] Likewise, the question of authorship is complex in the Caritas project. While it is usually attributed to the architects De Vylder Vinck Taillieu, the role of BAVO, the participating patients and staff members, as well as Herman Roose, the current director of the institute, cannot be understated. Different publications demonstrate the difficulty this project raises in the conventional standards of architectural publishing and discourse: design credits are variously attributed, depending on the publication. The *Flanders Architectural Review N° 13* mention BAVO as 'project designer', the KARUS psychiatric centre as 'co-producers', and the staff and patients as 'user-architects'. *UNLESS EVER PEOPLE* mentions no authors on the cover, instead providing on the back a list of all the people who have contributed to the project as well as to the book in alphabetical order, with a total of 24 authors.

[33] As described in: Gideon Boie (ed.), *UNLESS EVER PEOPLE* (Antwerp: Flanders Architecture Institute, 2018) 186-223.

References:

Barad, Karen. 2007. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. London: Duke University Press.

Bennett, Jane. 2009. *Vibrant Matter: A political ecology of things*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Boie, Gideon (ed.). 2018. *UNLESS EVER PEOPLE*. Antwerp: Flanders Architecture Institute.

Bryant, Levi and Nick Srnicek, Graham Harman (eds.). 2010. *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism* Melbourne: re.press.

Cairns, Stephen and Jane M. Jacobs. 2014. *Buildings Must Die: A Perverse View of Architecture*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Coole, Diana and Samantha Frost (eds.). 2010. *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Dolphijn, Rick and Iris van der Tuin (eds.). 2012. *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press.

Harman,Graham. 2018. *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything*. London: Penguin.

Harman, Graham. 2018. *Speculative Realism. An Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Latour, Bruno and Albena Yaneva. 2008. 'Give Me A Gun and I Will Make All Buildings Move : An ANT's View of Architecture', in: Staub, Urs and Reto Geiser. 2008. *Explorations in Architecture: Teaching, Design, Research*. Basel: Birkhäuser. 80-89.

Latour, Bruno. 2005. *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Law, John (ed.). 1986. *Power, Action, and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Malafouris, Lambros. 2013. *How Things Shape the Mind: A Theory of Material Engagement*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Meillassoux, Quentin. 2008. *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*. New York: Continuum.

Morton, Timothy. 2013. *Realist Magic: Objects, Ontology, Causality*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press.

Morton, Timothy. 2016. *Dark Ecology. For a Logic of Future Coexistence*. New York : Columbia University Press.

Morton, Timothy. 2017. *Humankind. Solidarity with Nonhuman People*. London: Verso Books.

Noë, Alva. 2009. *Out of Our Heads. Why You Are Not Your Brain, and Other Lessons from the Biology of Consciousness*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Stoner, Jill. 2012. *Toward a Minor Architecture*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Troiani Igea and Suzanne Ewing. 2017. 'Call for Papers, Architecture and Culture "Spaces of Tolerance"'.

Troiani, Igea and Suzanne Ewing, Diana Periton. 2013. 'Architecture and Culture: Architecture's Disciplinarity', *Architecture and Culture*, 1:1, 6-19.

.

List of figures:

Figure 1. Front façade. Photograph by Filip Dujardin.

Figure 2. Entrance to the building. Photograph by Filip Dujardin.

Figure 3. Central space with theatre. Photograph by Filip Dujardin.

Figure 4. Greenhouses throughout the former interiors. Photograph by Filip Dujardin.

Figure 5. Blockwork reparation to the façade. Photograph by Filip Dujardin.

Figure 6. Front façade of the Dageraad building. Photograph by Filip Dujardin.

Figure 7. Enfilade of rooms in the Dageraad building. Photograph by Filip Dujardin.

Figure 8. Found elements in the Dageraad building. Photograph by Filip Dujardin.

Figure 1

Click here to access/download;Figure;figure 1.jpg

Figure 2

Click here to access/download;Figure;figure 2.jpg

Figure 3

Click here to access/download;Figure;figure 3.jpg

Figure 4

Click here to access/download;Figure;figure 4.jpg

Figure 5

Click here to access/download;Figure;figure 5.jpg

Figure 6

Click here to access/download;Figure;figure 6.jpg

Figure 7

Click here to access/download;Figure;figure 7.jpg

Figure 8

Click here to access/download;Figure;figure 8.jpg