
Digital-Cultural Ecology and the Medium-Sized City

01-03 April 2016

Abstract Submission Form

1. Paper / Proposal Title: Mise-en-scène and Spatialisations of the Digital: How life in our cities and architectural representation might reframe digital interaction - projects from the miniature to the neighbourhood.

2. Format: Presentation, based on book chapter in *Filming the City*

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5. University or Company Affiliation: Royal College of Art, London

6. Abstract (300 words):

This paper looks towards architectural space, mise-en-scène and mental landscapes in film, to reconsider individual privacy in digital social media. The study of three films that use the film set and the backdrop of the city differently has informed three design research projects. These deploy architectural representation and its method of spatialisation to test how the physical settings we inhabit and know to read intuitively might better frame and contextualise our post-perspectival and post-televisual digital landscapes of interaction.

The process of mise-en-scène informs a range of analog and hybrid digital-physical practice-based design projects on a range of scales, from the miniature, through the room, to the neighbourhood. The model of a dreamscape, an exhibition design, and an audience feedback platform for promenade theatre resituate some of the dynamics observed in online social media, such as the rapidly shifting relationship between actor and audience, through methods of representation, from miniaturisation, to spatialisation and navigation. The spatial situations emerging through a process of reflective practice give rise to a more immediate understanding of relationality; a spatially informed vocabulary of transparency and opacity, overlap, enclosure, peripheral vision and focus helps to consider the encounter of content and digitally

mediated social situations in more nuanced ways than the merely symbolic interpretation of architectural fragments.

The contextualising function of architecture and the urban image explored through the set in film is a starting point for a broader investigation into the role of physical settings, cognitive maps and mental landscapes, and the intuitive relations that might be mediated by architectural space. Instead of a paradigm for interaction considering the city as a device that needs to adapt and absorb ubiquitous computing technology, this paper suggests that readings of the tectonic space of the city could augment the information exchanges in digital communication, and social media in particular. The suggestion is that an architecturally informed communication design might become the virtual equivalent of the film set.

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Benjamin Koslowski is an architectural designer and researcher and is currently a PhD candidate with the AHRC's Creative Exchange Hub at the Royal College of Art in London. His research tests architectural thinking to better understand individual notions of privacy online. Benjamin also teaches in Interiors at Middlesex University.



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