Moving Images - Static Spaces: Architectures, Art, Media, Film, Digital Art and Design

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Moving the immovable: projection-mapping and the changing face of architecture

• Author(s) Name:
Howard Griffin

• University or Company Affiliation:
University of Kent, UK

• Presentation Method. I would like to:
  i. present in person (with/without a written paper)
  ii. present via skype (with/without a written paper)

• Abstract (300 words):
The ‘lumière’ festival has, in recent years, become an established form of public festival, with many cities and heritage sites seizing the opportunity to attract large audiences and increase tourism revenues. Lumière festivals now benefit from the advance in digital technology, which allows light to be mapped to specific surfaces and spaces through projection. This form of light installation, known as projection-mapping, delivers an added sense of spectacle, with onlookers taking the chance to witness momentary changes to the urban canvas, engaging with buildings in new ways.

At night, artificial light shapes the space around us, highlighting routes, exposing features, forming shadows, and provides architecture an altered, arguably dynamic, identity. Whether by candle, fire, gas or electricity, light has the capacity to change the way we
see the space about us. Projection mapping amplifies this, allowing artists to explore notions of altered façade, and changes to character, style and materiality.

The visual sense dominates particularly when judging scale, distance, texture and so on. Experience informs us that most buildings are inanimate; solid objects designed for strength and security. Yet, albeit briefly, our eyes disagree. Projection-mapping can create illusions that change the very nature of architecture, causing the viewer to subconsciously question and review the alterations that seem to occur. Windows can spin. Walls can wobble. Buildings can move. Torre (2015) argues that buildings ‘concretize’ animation, giving depth to two-dimensional image. However, it could be argued that projection-mapping liberates the built environment, animating the inanimate, moving the immovable.

This paper will explore the methods used in projection mapping to deceive and skew perception of architectural form and space, and argues that this form of light show installation not only conjures and deceives, but develops new relationships between people and the cities and buildings around us.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Howard Griffin is a senior lecturer and director of the MA Architectural Visualisation programme at the University of Kent, a course which allows students to focus on the visual communication of architectural form, space and time. This work extends across a number of disciplines, including architecture, film, art, media, urban studies and photography. The course also engages with Digital Heritage, using VR technologies to connect with lost historic buildings and spaces.

Howard has been involved with architecture and animation for 20 years. A graduate of the School of Architecture at London South Bank University, he developed skills in architectural presentation and animation in local authority architectural practice and later in private practice. Following this, he graduated from the Sir John Cass School of Art with a Masters in Digital Moving Image.

Howard is currently reading a PhD looking at the perceptual effects that projection mapping can have on the interpretation of architectural and urban space. Much of this research is expressed through live installation projects, ranging in scale, location and style.