Looking for a multidisciplinary and performative architectural Sketch

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Sketch is one of the most common ways of creating and transferring thought in architecture. The sketch, which was attributed to a representative role in architecture until the second half of the 20th century, has started to be called a performative act that accompanies the birth of design thinking. This new naming has emerged through the discovery of the cognitive aspect of the sketch process. Thus, future sketch patterns have become one of the current debates in architecture. This study aims to examine the emergence of sketch as a performative act. In doing so, it focuses on expanding the creative field of sketch with multidisciplinary art.

Keywords: performative act, multidisciplinary art, architectural sketching, creativity, design.

As an introduction

> *"I'm not strange, weird, off, nor crazy,*
> *my reality is just different from yours."*
> Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

The sketch, which was first seen in architecture in the days before the production process with the Renaissance, was used as representative until the second half of the 20th century and as a representation of producing solutions. Towards the end of the 20th century, it started to be seen as a performative action that directly influenced the design process.

Recognizing the cognitive role of sketch in the design process, one of the current debates in the history and theory of architecture, is the question of how the future forms of drafting will be. Researches in this area show that the result is neither the computer-aided design, nor the traditional sketch method. Today, researchers discuss multidimensional methods, including hybrid forms of both traditional drawing and computer aided drawing (Pilsitz, 2017). Nowadays, architecture is looking for different methods of expression, including emotional and cultural layers, in order to look more deeply into the concepts of a place or a situation. Beyond its traditional sketch method, architecture has begun to experiment with drafting forms that increase the possibilities of creative thinking.

Philosophy of sketch

Sketch is one of the most basic ways for architects to express their thoughts. The sketches created at the moment represent the traces of the architect's thinking movement. The sketch moves as the thought moves. Therefore, the sketch is not fixed, it becomes instant with thought. Sketch is a field of fluid action that prepares the birth of ideas rather than a method of presentation in architecture. According to Paolo Belardi (2014), the sketch is a dynamic action that can be seen as a performance or a formation that reveals thought.

The basis of the sketch movement is to gather different data together and focus on the relationships between them. According to Suwa and Tversky, the sketching process is a process that reveals unexpected relationships and provides to revise ideas. The designer makes a self-talk during the sketch (Suwa and Tversky, 1997). In doing so, an indeterminate and flexible environment is formed

due to the moment-change character of the sketch. This creates a creative process by increasing the possibilities of research and interpretation of the designer. Goldschmidt (1991), refers to this condition as the ability of "seeing-as" activity.

When creating a draft of the design, it is intertwined with the mental and the graphical notion. In the process of creating sketches, the relationship between the intellectual and the imaginary constitutes the creative process. The process of creation is quite confused and palimpsest process. Smith (1995), mentions that the act of creativity has a fundamentally cognitive structure. Creativity consists of the discovery and production stages within an individual's mental boundaries. At this point, the capacity of the intellectual is uncertain. When the intellectual becomes concretized, the transfer of the intensity of thought to outside (usually on paper for architects) can bring many losses. A strong tangible response of intellectual creative intensity is closely related to what has been transferred to the draft. At this point, the form of drafting becomes vital.

In the traditional drawing method, only the measurable values make the creative nature of the sketch a reductive character. Only an architectural drawing based on measurement is insufficient to explain the dynamics of a place and the concepts of that place. The reason for this is that the definition of space has a complex structure. Bruno Zevi argues that space is not just a hollow, but a reality where life and culture intertwine. According to this understanding that the dynamic structure of the space comes from different layers belonging to the ground, the space is not only a visual object, but a reality (Zevi, 1974). Therefore, the discovery of different layers of a place reveals the concepts related to that place. Since the 1960s, the space has been discussed through new concepts of different layers. For example, *genius loci*, a concept used to indicate the distinctive character of a space, illuminates the understanding of the different dimensions of space beyond the physical and functional dimensions. In this approach, which takes into account all kinds of environmental data, the space emerges with its content (Norberg-Shulz, 1980). Similarly, Lefebvre (1991), in his work called *Production of Space,* argues that space arises from the perceived and directly experienced practical and theoretical flows that make sense of it.

For that reason, in this article, the term "architectural sketch" is a multidisciplinary way of expressing itself into the creative nature of thinking and perception rather than the measurable data drawn on paper. This is the research on the current situation and the concrete reflections on it. In this article, the

sketch, which is used outside the traditional meaning, represents the third and fourth dimension (time dimension), colour, texture and material, and multidimensional forms of expression, including non-architectural disciplines.

Multidisciplinary ways

The focus of this article is on multidimensional methods, as a way of producing space covers with many non-architectural disciplines. The works of Perry Kulper and Bryan Cantley, in particular, have been inspiring to establish the framework for this article. The architect Perry Kulper, who has made important studies on architectural representation, draws the architectural representation among the possibilities of thought by removing the framework from which it is imprisoned within certain rules. Instead of framing the drawing, which is the practice of setting up space, he suggests a relational practice to explore the state of movement (flow, action) when drawing and to intensify thoughts (Kulper, 2013).

"In the play of stability and vulnerability, my work finds relational synthesis. This prepares the ground to broaden the designer's imagination for the scope and perhaps the cultural agency for architecture. Rather than materialising architecture, I produce spatial speculations by constructing various drawings. Doing this through lines and composited layers rather than through the logics of construction allows my work to incorporate both necessary and unexpected cultural and natural considerations." (Kulper, 2013, p.63)

Questioning how architectural representation quickly reduces what is meant, Kulper focuses on how non-metric things are represented. Based on this, he develops complex-looking projects in which different layers of knowledge are put together, which pose the hierarchical representation of space design. Kulper's projects consist of overlapping various layers of information, such as drawings, signs, photographs, traces of the atmosphere, symbols, texts. For example, the *Central California History Museum*, a competition project (Figure 1), is represented by drawings in which different materials such as ink, graffiti, tape, photographs, x-rays, foil, and cut paper come together. In this drawing technique, in which Kulper reflects multiple anti-representation languages, all hierarchical elements of architecture and delimiting elements such as scale are abandoned. Here, angle drawings determine the figurative characteristics or architectural features, regardless of the synthetic resolution of the perspective drawing (Kulper, 2013).
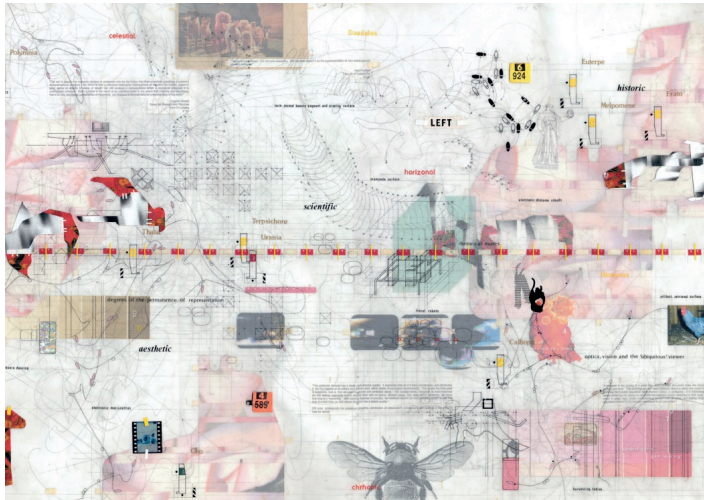
Figure 1. Perry Kulper, *Central California History Museum*,
Thematic drawing technique.

The drawings, consisting of a combination of different layers, each representing thoughts and possibilities, reversed the traditional architectural narrative, creating cavities among the thoughts here. This situation puts the idea of setting up a space with alternative methods of expression in foreign language. Kulper's project, *Bleched Out: De-Commissioning Domesticity* (Figure 2), which is defined as a relational drawing that does not contain direct spatial images, is one of the studies that are foreign to the traditional space representation language (Kulper, 2015). In contrast to the multi-information layer in the *Central California History Museum*, this project focused on a small number of data, emphasizing the basic focus of space. For this purpose, a form of expression where the masses are indicated with color and line is used.
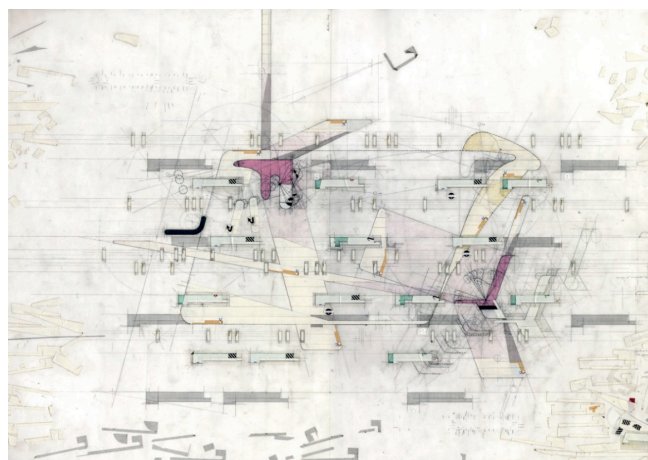

Figure 2. Perry Kulper, Bleched Out: De-Commissioning
Domesticity, Relational drawing technique.

In his urban scale projects named *Strategic Plot, David's Island Competi*tion (Figure 3), and *Alchemic Urbanism, Passport: Documenting Urbanism* (Figure 4), Kulper, who has sought to represent what has not yet been represented in the language so far, attempts to unearth what is left in the architecture under the shade of the major discipline, in this way, and tries to bring light those that are hidden in architecture:

"In the visualisations, I reflect on issues and relationships otherwise held at arm's length. By developing them over time, each negotiates accumulated experiences and new combinations of authorial knowledge and architectural susceptibility. They motivate increased authority and cumulative understanding that reveal new thresholds of ideational, representational and spatial risk. This lineage is evidenced through the tensional play of a drawing's conceptual risk and practised restraint. Ultimately, this play opens new relations of spatial possibility for a designer on the lookout for risky stabilities through the agencies of the architectural drawing." (Kulper, 2013, p.63)

Figure 3. Perry Kulper, *Strategic Plot, David's Island competition*, New Rochelle, New York.

Figure 4. Perry Kulper, Alchemic Urbanism, Passport:
Documenting Urbanism, 2011

Another academician-architect, who is interested in the new spatial possibilities of architectural drawing and teaches design theories is Bryan Cantley. Cantley, who works on the non-representation of the architectural drawings and the reductive effect of drawing, opposes the typical relationship that the drawing establishes with the audience because traditional architectural drawing refers to the reduction of knowledge or the creation of absolute facts (Cantley, 2016). Cantley argues that drawing is something beyond its own, which is a product other than itself, and uses it as a research laboratory, believing *Dasein*'s nature will be there, unlike elsewhere. In his research laboratory, Cantley focuses on the transformation of measurable elements of what Kulper has emphasized. In doing so, he focuses on the relationship between drawing and technology. According to Cantley, technology offers new possibilities for visualizing the conditions of transformation, changing the phases of dispersion and revolution, and drawing. Technology also encourages a rethinking of the phenomenological relationship between the world and architectural drawing (Cantley, 2013). Cantley summarizes this situation as follows:

"Perhaps the biggest impact of technology in my drawing is the ability to render conditions of transformation, phase shifting, entropy and revolution. Somewhere long ago, when Photoshop first introduced Layers as a manipulation tool, I realized that the act of recording could become live and not as dependent on chronology, in the sense that changes and states of event/time/object/interaction could be stated simultaneously – with the ability to view different states of time in

an autonomous, yet geographically similar grafting. The thing changing... into other thing(s)... at the same time. Or not." (Cantley, 2013, p.39)

As in Kulper, Cantley tries to create a new language, his own expression, by alienating the language he knows well. In the works it produces, the drawing is in continuous flow with successive layers (Figure 5 and Figure 6). The content of the drawing develops throughout the drawing period, such as a constantly evolving start. The ideas drawn first try to discover how the relationship between the drawings behaves rather than the pure visual characteristics. It forms a basis for this. In the words of Cantley, "the information from the drawing provides an additional illustration of the current situation." Cantley explains this with the concepts of *Artefact* and *Antifact*. *Artefact* creates a layer that is defined as a hand-made object (drawing, name). *Antifact* creates another layer (drawing, verb), which is defined as the possible document of the object that cannot be represented. In the drawing, an artificial hybrid of these two layers is formed by a conceptual intervention (Cantley, 2016).
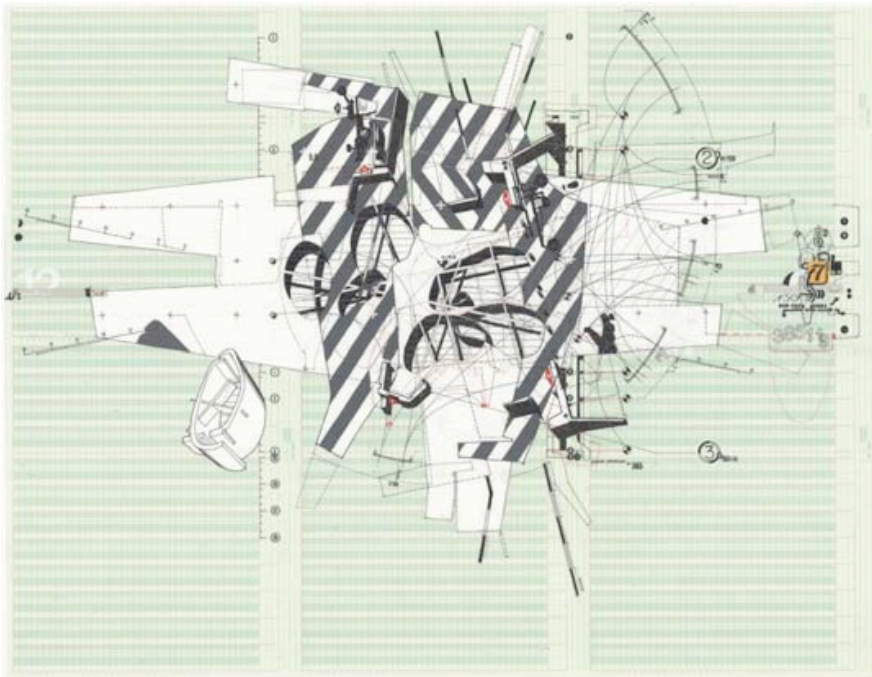

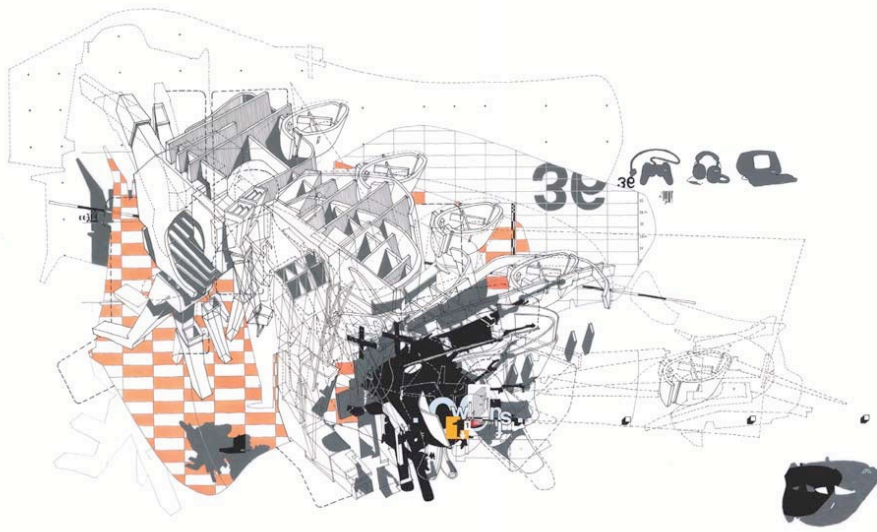**Figure 5.** Bryan Cantley, Form:uLA, Sur-Face Bores, 2012.

Figure 6. Bryan Cantley, Form:uLA, TypoGraph No 2, 2011

As a result

In the works of Kulper and Cantley, drafting creates a process that is shaped by the relational analyses put into the center. The way in which the form of drafting itself becomes a creative action opens the door to diversifying our awareness of the place and experiencing different ways of thinking. These new forms of architectural expression, which enable the understanding of the density of matter by getting rid of the usual rules, birth the chance to have a real experience. This can be defined as exploring an "intense" narrative, which allows the architecture to rediscover itself, material and story through "sketch".

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