



## ***A Space within a Space for the film Pavilion***

Gabu Heindl

The *Space within a Space* installation for Dorit Margreiter's film *Pavilion* – shown in the Austrian pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2009 – brings up the question of how the exhibition architecture is to be interpreted and perceived: as background or as sculpture? Or perhaps as the non-differentiation of these two attributions? In the following text, two issues will be addressed: the necessity to redesign the pavilion's existing White Cube architecture to make it suitable for showing films, as well as a kind of mediality of the physical space itself, which sets up a relationship to film as medium, as well as to the Austrian pavilion, in other words, the architecture within which the film *Pavilion* is shown.

Film is a medium that requires a space within a space. A 35 mm film projection produces light occupying a conical space that normally goes unseen and is articulated as void. The installation's space-layering walls, which filter out the sunlight, while at the same time allow visitors to enter, closely circumscribe this immaterial cone of light emanating from the projector: all of the interventions "revolve" around the projected cone. The space is no longer a generic envelope for potential projections, but a sculpture precisely attuned to this film installation, this site, and this 35 mm projector. The projector box itself could be considered an abstract sculpture. Not until entering the garden can one see its glass window. The projector can only be seen through this window from one precise standpoint; the way in which the opening is positioned behind a column makes it appear to be merely a maintenance panel. With such interventions we sought to set up a built fictionalization of the pavilion, which also served as the site of fictitious exhibitions in the film *Pavilion*, or, in other words, to jar the visitors' usual perception of the pavilion. In the process, the installation enters into a game of spatial recollection with the Biennale visitors: it partly gives the impression that this space has always been as it is now.

The new interventions are set in a manner that inverts the temporality of “existing” and “new”: though the asymmetrical positioning of the projector box in the passage to the garden breaks with the pavilion’s clear symmetry, it brings a new symmetrical balance to the visual axis running through the entire pavilion by optically centering the tree in the background.

In order to make the *Space within a Space* accessible to all, the entire floor is raised; a suspended ceiling blocks out the existing skylights and changes the proportions of the space. The walls toward the interior are just as white, abstract and empty as the pavilion in its original state. Grey dominates the inside of the *Space within a Space*: grey carpet, grey walls, grey ceiling; the film projector is the only source of light. The intention – admittedly schizophrenic to a certain degree – was to embed the installation in the pavilion in such a manner that it appears to always have been there, and at the same time, is discernible as intervention.

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Recent projects: *Der Bau (The Building) – Deconstruction of a Building*, with Hito Steyerl, intervention in a Nazi bridgehead building, Cultural Capital of Europe – Linz09; Pre-school in Rohrendorf/Krems; Mock-Ups in Close-Up, Architectural Models in Cinema, with Drehli Robnik (video, A 2009); Redesign & Remodelling of the entrance, foyer, and bar at the Austrian Film Museum in the Albertina in Vienna.

Author of several publications in architectural journals (JAE, Umbau, GAM, *dérive* a.o.) and editor of *Arbeit Zeit Raum* (turia+kant, 2008) as well as *position alltag – architecture in the context of everyday life* (HDA Verlag, 2009).

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