
Andrés Jaque: The Body is the Future of Architecture. An Interview with Andrés Jaque

KEYWORDS *Counter-typology* | *Conventions* | *Cosmopolitics* | *Posthumanism* | *Sociotechnical networks*

Andrés Jaque: The Body is the Future of Architecture. An Interview with Andrés Jaque

Interview by Gonzalo Carrasco Purull

over Skype (August 31ST, 2019).

Andrés Jaque is Director of the Advanced Architectural Design Program at Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. Architect, curator and author, he has been visiting professor at Princeton University and The Cooper Union. In 2003 he founded the Office for Political Innovation. He was appointed curator of the 13th Shanghai Biennial (2020). His work, characterized by an intense relation between research and practice, constantly questions the conventions in architecture, as well as its resources and criteria, establishing multiple relations, agencies and transferences from the architecture field towards vast areas of knowledge, technology and social practices. His most recent books are *Transmaterial Politics* (2017), *Mies y la gata Niebla: ensayos sobre arquitectura y cosmopolítica* (Mies and the Cat Niebla: Essays on Cosmopolitical Architecture, 2019), and *Superpowers of Scale* (in press).

Belén Salvatierra, artist and architecture student, participated in this interview and provided technical support for it.

In your Project Phantom. Mies as Rendered Society you address how Niebla the cat is transformed by the pavilion, in a strong relation between the categories of human and non-human. Here we have a very strong connection with the ideas of Bruno Latour. Could you elaborate further on this relation?

Bruno Latour is a figure that has had a vast influence in contemporary thought. And not only him, but all the scholarship on STS. And in general terms, for me it has been truly important for two reasons. First because of the Actor-Network Theory and the notion that reality is not constructed by subjects that occupy a space, but is the construction of the alliances between very heterogeneous agents. This has changed our understanding of architecture.

For a long time, architecture has seen itself as a practice that supplied spaces to be subsequently occupied by society. But we must make a great distinction here, which in my work has been very important: architecture *is* society itself. That is, there isn't a possibility of society that isn't constructed through the mediations or the material and performative constitutions that architectural technologies provide. As it is also not possible to think about an architecture prior to the construction of a fabric of techno-social alliances. This is the real basis of the work *Phantom: Mies As Rendered Society*. And the cat Niebla explains in a very clear way this reflectivity between the subject and the network to which it belongs. Because, on the one side, the cat is a fundamental actor in the design of the pavilion. Because the pavilion is an ecosystemic design, it is not a container. It's the design of a *milieu*, of a medium of relations. And the role the cat plays in eliminating the rodents in the pavilion is to determine which agents form part of this fabric and which ones are excluded.

But, at the same time, the cat is transformed by this process. That is the second reason why Latour has been so relevant. This reflectivity renders obsolete much of the ideas in which diverse notions of architecture are based. Certainly, all those in which architecture is seen as the provision of a container. Also, those in which architecture is seen as something alien to the social. But also those ideas of a contextual architecture, an idea that reflects the context. For instance, the whole notion of **regional contextualism**, that was so important in the 80s and 90s. Because in reality, it's not possible to reflect a context. The context is transformed the moment new agents appear. And at the same time, those agents become something that is transformed by the changing relation they establish, by the continuous reinvention of those who participate in this context.

And this in the cat is most evident. Because Niebla is eliminating the rodents in the pavilion, and therefore, she is participating in the **cosmopolitical design** of the pavilion. But, at the same time, she is transformed. Because

★

"Phantom. Mies as Rendered Society" (Barcelona, 2012-2013) was an intervention by Andrés Jaque in the Barcelona Pavilion that has made visible elements that the foundation keeps in the basement of the building, where "one can find all those material witnesses that reflect the social fabric affected by a common project." Source: miesbcn.com

★

Intellectual affinities present in Andrés Jaque's collaboration for *Reset Modernity!*, book edited by Bruno Latour and Christophe Leclercq (Karklsruhe: ZKM, 2016). (Interviewer's note).

★

Bruno Latour (Beaune, France, 1947). Is a philosopher, sociologist and science anthropologist, renowned as one of the most outstanding figures in the Studies on Science and Technology (STS) and as one of the main developers of the Actor-Network Theory. Among his main works are *We Have Never been Modern* (Harvard University Press, 1993), *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-network-theory* (Oxford University Press, 2007) and *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns* (Harvard University Press, 2013). (Interviewer's note).

★

STS is the acronym for Studies on Science Technology and Society. Also known as Science and Technology Studies (STS), this field inquires into the relations between scientific knowledge, technological systems and society. Source: sts.hks.harvard.edu

★

"Regional contextualism" refers to a part of architectural production in fashion in the 80s and 90s, with a particular sensitivity towards the contextual conditions, derived in part from the resistance to the effects of globalization and the characteristics of advanced capitalism formulated by Kenneth Frampton through the category of 'Critical regionalism'. See: V. Canizaro, 2007. *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition* (Princeton Architectural Press). (Interviewer's note).

★

"The common denominator for the posthuman condition is an assumption about the vital, self-organizing, and yet non-naturalistic structure of living matter itself. This nature-culture continuum is the shared starting point for my take on posthuman theory". Source: R. Braidotti, *The Posthuman*.



Rosi Braidotti (Latisana, Italy, 1954). Is an Italian-Australian philosopher and theoretician. Among her most noted works are *The Posthuman* (Wiley, 2013), *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (Wiley, 2013) and *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (Columbia University Press, 1994). (Interviewer's note).



Ikea Disobedients is an installation by Andrés Jaque. Originally set up in La Tabacalera in Madrid (2011) and later at MoMA PS1 (2012), the piece offers "an overview of individuals and groups who have organized their domesticities not as depoliticized and disconnected environments, but as the very center of their vinculation to the collective and to the conflicts that are part of it. Home for them is the architectural and associative device to engage in the construction and discussion of the commons." Source: A. Jaque and Ana Peñalba, *International Journal of Interior Architecture + Spacial Design*.

by inscribing herself in the basement of the pavilion and its darkness, by working hunting mice in the upper part only by night, she develops this macular degeneration that results in the end in her being transformed by the pavilion.

This game of relations, that certainly is part of the STS context, but also of the posthuman theories by Rosi Braidotti and certainly all this Deleuzian context, is a very concrete European thought from the second half of the 20th Century. It is still now developing and transforming the way we conceive architecture.

In Ikea Disobedients (Madrid, 2011; New York, 2011-2012), this idea that you just mentioned about socio-technological networks is expressed very strongly. What is the reach of working based on the survey of socio-technological networks to rewrite and reprogram domestic convention in political terms?

What's interesting is to see where political action becomes embodied. It is in very complex networks, where the bodies collaborate with architectural artifacts. With furniture, publicity, etc. With, let's say, many technologies quite different from each other. This has been something that corporations like Ikea have understood quite well, they have managed to associate their productive systems to the domestic environments, with the mediation of the bodies, with logistics systems.

This poses a challenge for Architectural practices: how to transcend this professional division of scales in which territorial design corresponds to planners, the urban scale to urban planners, etc. This represents a great limitation: it does not allow the development of trans-scalar projects, unlike what is happening in other areas of social action. And architecture must find ways of being able to operate in trans-scalar projects. And also, ways to be able to find strategies that enable it to operate in different material modes, in different times, in different natures. This is very complex because of the timings, for instance of the environment or the geology, which are extraordinarily slow. But we cannot elude operating, for instance, in the territory of fossil resources. Or in the timings of the atmosphere, which can also be very slow, or at least in decades. But we find ourselves in the need to respond to the challenges that are emerging simultaneously in these times, of these natures and in these scales. And the only way of operating in them is to be able to articulate, through projects of reinvention or rearticulation, these different scales, these different natures and these different times. Such is the challenge of climate change. Or the challenge of inequality. Or the fall in biodiversity in the world. And all of them are very difficult to tackle from the perspective of architecture, with the practices we have inherited from the 90s and the 80s.

But the concepts of social form and counter-typology bring about a question: how can we operate in a society that has displaced the notion of the common for a strong individualism, where the very notion of society is debilitated?

One of the main challenges we face at this moment is the simplification of our own narratives. Actually, there is an insistence that individuality has increased. But individuality is a fantasy. There is no individuality. There isn't a possibility of individuality. We ourselves are constituted by ecosystems composed of many different living beings and inorganic matter. A very small part of our body carries our DNA. We are large ecosystems composed of bacteria, of vegetables. Even today the very notion of individual is impossible to defend. In fact, we expand through the communication infrastructures we use. Our personality is highly diluted in our mobile phone. Our memory is distributed through a large assembly of technological platforms. Our existence depends on a large territorial mobilization. And the limits between some individuals and others are very difficult to establish.

However, the dynamics of advanced capitalism insist that we are different, that we are individuals, that we are unique. Of course they insist. In the same way they emphasize that our big problem is the financial crisis. I think it is very important to consider that, in these times, architects can only be intellectuals and operate with relevance if they dedicate a large portion of their work to investigate, to reflect, to take a stand. To prepare the working field to be able to operate in it.

This is fundamental because we are not operating in a *tabula rasa*. We operate in a world that is constructed with narratives that are set to simplify our capacity for action. We are all conscious that a part of being a citizen consists of conquering a certain capacity for emancipation from the dynamics and narratives of advanced capitalism. And that we do by deciding what degree of connection we want to have with particular technologies. Deciding also how we become dissident from the dynamics of overconsumption. Or how we become dissident from the definitions of our own role as superior human beings in respect to non-humans. Or being dissident from the finalisms of gender. That is, being dissidents from many notions of adscription to the fantasy of advanced capitalism. Without being dissident, it is practically impossible to achieve civic relevance.

The Reggio School Project was born from a collaborative project with the community. You define the design as "a complex ecosystem that avoids homogenization and unified standards." We studied in schools that were disciplinary places. Places that homogenized, normalized. So, the question is inevitable: how to avoid indulging in an architectural artifact that, from its design, is so charged with a disciplinary condition?

"For a long time, architecture has seen itself as a practice that supplied spaces to be subsequently occupied by society. But (...) architecture is society itself. That is, there isn't a possibility of society that isn't constructed through the mediations or the material and performative constitutions that architectural technologies provide. As it is also not possible to think about an architecture prior to the construction of a fabric of techno-social alliances"

★
The Reggio Explora School (El Encinar de los Reyes, Madrid, 2019) puts into practice the Reggio Emilia schools' pedagogy of amazement. "The design is based on the idea that architectural environments can prompt in children a desire for exploration and inquiry." Source: reggio.es; officeforpoliticalinnovation.com

★ John Dewey (1859-1952) was an American pedagogue, psychologist and philosopher that belonged to the philosophical theory known as pragmatism. His pedagogical system was strongly based on action and experimentation. For Dewey, the teacher must, above all, create situations prone to experimentation on the part of the student. (Interviewer's note).

"It is there, in those expanded, multiple, transmaterial bodies, where at this time all the great political issues are discussed, where the debates of the polis are embodied. And this is why I believe that we are going to live, or we are already living, in an era where architecture will start and end its discussions mainly in the bodies rather than in the city. For me, the city has even lost its existence. I don't believe that cities exist anymore"

★ Grindr is an application for homosexual, bi, trans and queer men. Source: grindr.com.

Usually the architecture of schools comes from the control and normalization tradition of the 19th Century institutions. For us, the texts by John Dewey have been very important, for they allow us to understand the pedagogic processes as processes of collective curiosity, inquiry and scrutiny of everyday life. In other words, in place of conceiving knowledge as something prior to direct experience, we think that in the direct experience and in the difficulties that emerge in understanding reality and navigating through it is where the opportunities emerge for all to awaken to curiosity and the collective discussions about how the world that surround us actually is.

Architecture is a very important actor in this change. Contrary to the notion that there exists a knowledge that is already prepared before being transmitted, this other notion poses that experience is precisely the place where the questions emerge. Following those questions that emerge through curiosity and the pooling of knowledge and previous experiences, a sort of intensification in the ability for perception and experimentation is constructed. Here, in this transition, is where architecture has a key role.

In more concrete terms, this comes down to the project being thought of as an architecture that doesn't have to work as a universe, but as a sort of 'multiverse' in which we accumulate different spatial situations, different relations with the environmental, different landscapes. It is a project that struggles against optimization and against efficiency. And which promotes a sort of ecosystem of redundancies, in which the same things can be done every day in a different way.

The building itself is a permanent transition between highly protected spaces, where younger children, 5-year-old, can orient and feel safe. But these spaces are connected with others that recreate much more complex civic scenarios, where it is necessary to make decisions, where it is possible that persons that are close to being adults can develop their own voice. This possibility of accumulating all the situations in a single shape was fundamental for us. Because we believe in the coming together of people of different ages, at very different vital moments, with different perception tools. Also, with very different relations with their relatives, with very diverse degrees of autonomy. These encounters are really the type of everyday conflict that awakens this curiosity and this experience of collective learning that is so valuable in pedagogy and that the pedagogists with which we work have. And this is why we like having a type of collective work like you mentioned: holding meetings, experiments, have the children make models. Integrating all these ideas, which are not ours, but that emerged out of all this conversation.

Following up on this idea of normalized bodies, in one of your essays about Grindr there is an interesting passage. You say that the "urbanisms

of gayness, in the past, sanctuaries of queer and alternative to the heteronormative and patriarchal reductionism, are being reconstructed and merchandized as financial assets, and are redesigned to retain value, align with market logics and become themselves the markets.” What is generally seen as a place of dissidence, of alterity, is modified by the big corporations, who see it as a platform for profit. How does this pose a risk for dissidences or the possibilities of thinking, from within alterity, a counter-hegemonical architecture or city?

Grindr is clearly an architecture, an archiurbanism that is inserted into this dynamic of trans-scalarity that I was commenting on earlier. I think we should invent new words, because in reality, there is no distinction between the practice of urbanism and architecture when you talk about Grindr. You are regulating things that are happening in a scale of more immediate proximity, even regulating things as the use of retrovirals – of PrEP, for instance, which is one of the characteristics that nowadays is frequently included in the Grindr profiles: on-PrEP, or 'undetectable' –, articulating almost the microbiological scale, but at the same time organizing a large territorial construction that is mobilizing servers or publicity campaigns at global scales. Then, sure, we need new words to understand these spatial, relational, performative, material practices, which at the same time are working in different media and scales. This is to talk about what is an archiurbanism. And we need these words, even though they may sound weird, because otherwise we cannot operate in these other spaces or context for interaction.

At many times, architecture, and certainly LGTBQ architecture, has provided spaces for emancipation, spaces for dissidence, for alterity, as you said. Many things responded to hegemonical patriarchies, but at the same time added new layers to the space we shared. And those spaces for dissidence had their own regulations. They were more transversal. In many cases they allowed to articulate different forms of bodies, numerous economies that posed numerous different types of association that not necessarily had to be that of the stable couple. That is, they were a space that absorbed and sheltered, with its limits of course, but they were a space for *queerness*.

Grindr's trajectory was very concrete and explains very well what is happening in other spheres of architecture. At a certain time, Grindr had millions of users worldwide, many more than Uber had. But had less value than Uber, which had less users and was less used. Grindr users – at least in the data we had – used it for an average of ninety minutes per day. You can imagine the importance it had at that time for their users. However, the value in the market of Grindr as corporation was less of one twentieth of that of Uber. This came from it not being useful as a commercial platform. Why? Because it was *queer*. Precisely because it was a space for dissidence from the logics



Acronym for 'Pre-exposure prophylaxis'. It is a drug currently used to prevent AIDS. (Interviewer's note).



See: A. Jaque (2017). Grindr Archiurbanism. *Log* (41), pp. 75-84. (Interviewer's note).

of capitalism. And this made the company unable to sell shares or attract investors. So, they hired Landis Smithers, the *marketing* director for Playboy that had eliminated nudity in the magazine to attract 'family-oriented' advertisers in the United States. So, what he did, his great strategy, was to transform Grindr so that it stopped being a *queer* space, one of dissidence, and became a platform for *lifestyles*.

This is the way in which a radical form of the collective space for interaction, from the microbiological to the trans-territorial, has been reconstructed to become monetizable. This strategy allowed unifying it around certain dynamics where optimization and circulation of actors dominate as resources of a marketing process, as part of advanced capitalism.

The interesting thing is that, historically, architecture has had the task of favoring the spaces of the *polis*. To make possible the encounter of the diverse, the political action, transparency, and the scrutiny over collective action and inclusivity. This has been, to some extent, our disciplinary responsibility. But it is also true that in recent years architecture has been shifting bit by bit until it has become part of this enormous context of *lifestyle*, a phenomenon visible in the way that architecture and vacation houses circulate on Instagram.

★

Jacolby Satterwhite (Columbia, South Carolina, 1986) is an artist working on digital video, performances, virtual sculptures, 3D animation and drawing. He explores his own body and *queerness* and his mother's schizophrenia. Sources: i-d.vice.com; art21.org

★

Is This Tomorrow? (Whitechapel Gallery, London, 2019) is an exhibition featuring experimental propositions from architects and artists responding to issues of the 21st Century, from natural resources and migration to technology and spirituality. The show takes as its model the exhibition *This Is Tomorrow* (Whitechapel Gallery, 1956), which featured architects such as Richard Hamilton and Alison and Peter Smithson. Source: whitechapelgallery.org

★

Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) was a Jewish-German philosopher. He was a member of the Frankfurt School, a group of researchers that applied Marxism to a radical interdisciplinary theory. Today he is considered the most relevant German literary critic in the first half of the 20th Century. He wrote mainly about aesthetics, literature and photography. He is author of *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936), among other titles. Source: britannica.com

Concerning your collaboration with artist Jacolby Satterwhite in the exhibition Is this Tomorrow? You were asked if the future would be then trans or won't be at all. And you answered the following: "In the 21st Century the important thing won't be the cities, but the bodies. The body is the future of architecture." And there you connected with an idea that isn't obvious: future, architecture and body must be together. In this sense, which would be the bodies for the architecture of the future? And what would be the conventions that these bodies will knock down?

This revision came from having become aware that cities do not longer exist. Actually, the way in which Walter Benjamin narrated Paris would be impossible today. This is a realization to which we have also arrived at in our office through ethnography. For instance, for a long time we have studied the fertility clinics in New York, which are spaces that largely escape the interest of architects. But, in reality, they lay behind a large portion of the economic activity of the architecture of places like Columbus Circle.

New Hope Fertility Center is one of the most important fertility clinics in the world. In it, advances have been made that have allowed great control over the composition of embryos, predicting what the genetic manifestation will be over time. So as to enable to, on the one hand, modify the capacity of the embryo to develop from very young eggs.

But also, to incorporate fragments of DNA from different donors and recombine the DNA of the embryos, eliminating diseases. They also introduce fragments of DNA from different parents, so that male couples can mix their genes. In other words, a whole series of genetic recompositions that respond to many models of association, decisions and inequalities. Fertility clinics like New Hope may eliminate the risk of diseases or anticipate the physical design of a person. This will generate many forms of inequality, forms yet unknown. But not only that. All this requires logistics, residences, hotels buildings. And all this has to happen in conditions of elitism that must be associated with performative societies, with air quality, with many things that entail very diverse design operations. And only if all of them can be assembled together, this new form of inequality of life can be generated. This is what is being constructed through the elite fertility clinics.

It is the equivalent, for instance, at the birth of syndicalism, to the discussion of the working-class neighborhoods in Wales or the discussion about air quality. They have the same components. But the difference is that, if the stage of all this was the city itself, in this case it expands to networks where there are animal farms or mares from which hormones are extracted. There are people who work in subrogation services distributed in jurisdictions where this is possible. Such is the case with many Chinese couples that require this surrogate gestation and assisted fertility services as a strategy to have children that may have simultaneously Chinese and American passports, so they can operate within the American market and in the great Chinese factory.

In other words, we'll see that the spatialization of all this is not continuous, but rather comprises networks with discontinuous nodes. And if we try to settle where all this is enacted more intensely, we probably will conclude that it's in the bodies. It is there, in those expanded, multiple, transmaterial bodies, where at this time all the great political issues are discussed, where the debates of the *polis* are embodied. And this is why I believe that we are going to live, or we are already living, in an era where architecture will start and end its discussions mainly in the bodies rather than in the city. For me, the city has even lost its existence. I don't believe that cities exist anymore.

You are one of the few architects that talk about happiness. And you name it from the House in Never Never Land, which you describe as "a mediation between the hedonist situations of extreme happiness." You also talk about happiness in your work about Ikea, when you say that "everything Ikea makes seeks to transform the sphere of domesticity into a sunny, happy and apolitical space, inhabited by content and healthy youngsters." Happiness has always been a very important topic in the production of Office for Political Innovation. What is the role of architecture in the quest

"Architecture has a lot more to do with administering the difference, the conflict. And that is, partly, its political capacity. The capacity to provide a constitution, to generate a different type of consensus in which the dispute remains open"

★
House in Never Never Land (Cala Vadella, Ibiza, 2007-2009) is a house designed by Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation for a hedonist family. "The design of the house is driven by a cosmopolitical ambition of interspecies mediation, as much as by the will to facilitate the building's long-term feasibility." Source: officeforpoliticalinnovation.com

★

Pretty Woman (1990) is a romantic comedy directed by Garry Marshal and starring Julia Roberts and Richard Gere. Source: imdb.com

★

Ernesto Laclau (1935-2014) was a political philosopher born in Argentina. He is renowned internationally as one of the main theoreticians of Postmarxism. His main works are *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (1978) and *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985, cowritten with Chantal Mouffe). Source: sigloxieditores.com

★

Agonism is a current in political philosophy that offers an alternative to the search for consensus in contemporary democracies. Agonism aims to create spaces that can develop the potentially positive aspects of a conflict. Among its main exponents are Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau. (Interviewer's note).

★

Welfare State is a concept of government in which the state has social institutions that protect the economic and social wellbeing of its citizens. "It is based on the principles of equitable distribution of richness and public responsibility." Source: britannica.com.

for happiness, precisely in a society where happiness has become rather a convention of the market?

The discussion about happiness has been fundamental. On the one hand, as you rightly say, it comes from two directions. The first one is to discuss the notion of 'happy ending'. It's a bit like the plot in *Pretty Woman*, that is, that at the end a sexual worker can get along fine with a businessman and everything can be solved, everybody is happy. But in reality, architecture has a lot more to do with administering the difference, the conflict. And that is, partly, its political capacity. The capacity to provide a constitution, to generate a different type of consensus in which the dispute remains open. About this, of course there is a lot of discussion, especially about the work of Ernesto Laclau and Agonism. Somehow, this approach comes into collision with this need of architecture to establish commercial discourses to win contests, to please clients. This architecture that promises that all the problems will go away and that everything will work just fine. And that everybody will be very happy.

But at the same time, while we make this criticism and work for these agonisms, architecture favors some specific forms of politics that have to do with the possibility of celebrating this dissidence. It is true that dissidence and the encounter with the difference produce a certain delight, and even that a conflict produces some type of delight. And it is also evident that the most conflictive, most disputed ecosystems, those where there are more long-lasting everyday conflicts, are also the most resilient ones, the more enduring ones, the ones that have the greatest ability for adaptation. It is there where, in some way or another, the great catastrophes can be avoided. This we see, for instance, in the tradition of *welfare* in Europe at the end of the 50s and 60s, where, in reality, societies were very conflictive, but at the same time there was a certain stage where these differences were celebrated. And this is an ability that architecture also possesses.

And there is a second aspect, which is that the very intensification in the capacities of feeling or perceiving, produces by itself a certain enjoyment, a feeling of being where things are happening. And this, for example, has been very important for us in many projects. To think how architecture can cause an expansion in the perception of the bodies, increase its intensity, generate the ability to perceive what by other means wouldn't be perceived. This also produces a certain political sense of happiness, very different from the 'happy ending'. A sense that is more related to inclusivity and to criticability, where criticability produces a form of pleasure.

When we read a text that clarifies things, that allows us to perceive other things, judge, have an opinion or detect what we weren't able to detect before, we also experience a sort of delight. Or when we see, in a process

of public dispute, that new voices are incorporated. That is the form of happiness that doesn't have to do with the ending, rather with the transition, with the act of transitioning and incrementing the political charge and the representation charge, the charge related to the presence of difference. All this delivers a certain degree of enjoyment, even physical. It's a physical situation of the senses and the intelligence.

And architecture can provide that. It can contribute, in environments grown complex, problematic or disputed, intensifying the capacity for cohabitation, for coexistence with the different. It has even the potential to have an impact in the capacity for critical participation, in frameworks in which the violent conflict can be prevented.

In reality, this vision is no different from Carl Schmitt's classical definition of politics. This sort of possibility of administering the difference and preventing the outcome of the violent conflict, avoiding it. Through these strategies, or these compromises, architecture has the ability to generate beauty, enjoyment, and a different notion of happiness that is not that of the 'happy ending'. 



Carl Schmitt (1888-1985) was a German philosopher of law. Critical of Communism and liberalism, he openly supported the Nazis. In one of his works, *Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (1923) he portrayed the liberal parliamentary government as a farse and pointed out that, pretending the protection of the common good, the political parties seek their own particular agendas. In *The Concept of the Political* (1927-1932), Schmitt "defined 'the political' as the eternal propensity of human collectivities to identify each other as 'enemies' – that is, as concrete embodiments of 'different and alien' ways of life, with whom mortal combat is a constant possibility and frequent reality." Source: [britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com)