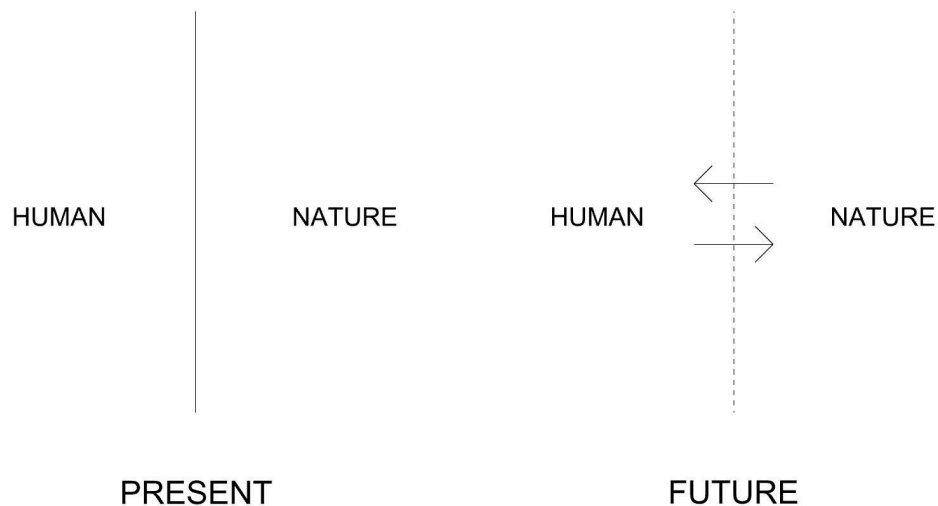


A New Cyborg Manifesto for Designers

Heidi Jagus & Harriet Piirmets

How can architectural theory redefine the built environment not as dead matter, but as an active, living ecosystem and a hybrid extension of our collective multi-species embodiment?



Architecture should not be a separator but an opportunity for exchange.

additional questions

How can architectural design blur the physical boundaries between indoor and outdoor spaces to make humans feel interconnected with their environment?

In what ways do non-human actors (animals, climate elements, living materials) function as co-authors and architects of spatial environments?

thesis

By deconstructing the traditional boxes that separate human culture from the natural world, Donna Haraway's cyborg framework allows us to reframe architecture not as a static barrier, but as a dynamic, multi-species space. Becoming a distributed, living technological system where the boundaries between inside and outside, biological organism, and built environment are fundamentally dissolved.

Rather than treating buildings as inanimate objects to dominate nature, a posthuman architecture must embrace hybridity, non-human agency, and temporal change, acknowledging that humans are not the sole authors of space.

By relinquishing total authorship, design shifts from a finite act of construction to an ongoing, open-ended process across time. Architects must abandon the obsession with permanent, pristine monuments.

quotes

“The machine is not an it to be animated, worshipped, and dominated. The machine is us, our processes, an aspect of our embodiment. We can be responsible for machines; they do not dominate or threaten us. We are responsible for boundaries; we are they.” - Haraway

“Cyborg imagery can suggest a way out of the maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves.” - Haraway

“ Why should our bodies end at the skin, or include at best other beings encapsulated by skin? “ - Haraway

“Nature and culture are reworked; the one can no longer be the resource for appropriation or incorporation by the other. The relationships for forming wholes from parts, including those of polarity and hierarchical domination, are at issue in the cyborg world.” - Haraway

“ language, tool use, social behavior, mental events—nothing really convincingly settles the separation of human and animal.” - Haraway

“What is at the center of my attention are land and water sovereignty struggles, such as those over the Dakota Access pipeline, over coal mining on the Black Mesa plateau, over extractionism everywhere. My attention is centered on the extermination and extinction crises happening at a worldwide level, on human and non-human displacement and homelessness. That’s where my energies are. My feminism is in these other places and corridors.

Now, we are facing a world with all three of those things. We are facing the production of systemic homelessness. The way that flowers aren’t blooming at the right time, and so insects can’t feed their babies and can’t travel because the timing is all screwed up, is a kind of forced homelessness. It’s a kind of forced migration, in time and space.

This is also happening in the human world in spades. In regions like the Middle East and Central America, we are seeing forced displacement, some of which is climate migration. The drought in the Northern Triangle countries of Central America [Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador] is driving people off their land.

So it’s not a humanist question. It’s a multi-kind and multi-species question.” - Haraway

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/20/donna-haraway-interview-cyborg-manifesto-post-truth>

ideas after reading the manifesto

“language, tool use, social behavior, mental events - nothing really convincingly settles the separation of human and animal.” could space perception also be added to that list? Or construction? - is architecture inherently collective, multispecial? New architecture must move towards a common goal with its environment.

architecture beyond static shelter, turning buildings into active participants in the urban ecosystem.

Humans are not the only species to who shape space.

No material is dead, new architecture should consider material as a living thing that changes over time.

Architecture should not be a wall between humans (mind/body) and nature but a tool/bridge between them.

If the machine is an aspect of our embodiment and we are a hybrid of our surroundings , how must the architecture redefine the building so it is no longer viewed as dead matter but an active, living ecosystem?

In the western world nature is a giver/mother who we need to protect and/or use as a resource but Haraway argues that plants (nature) is not passive - they are an active character in the story - nature takes over - we live in a shared reality.

What happens to the world when we feel that we are no longer part of nature?

We are no longer pure creatures - we are hybrid of our surroundings (non human actors)
We are always part of a collective.

There are no mentions that we are inferior to nature - we are nature

Tehnology is no longer dead matter to be used by humans?

Owning land vs being part of the land

“We are the body of this earth and what happens to it is what happens to our own bodies.” - Perdita Finn

“All that you touch You Change. All that you Change Changes you. The only lasting truth is Change.” - Octavia E. Butler

case studies that deal with similar ideas



Hy-fi by The Living

first large-scale structure constructed entirely from 10,000 biodegradable "mushroom bricks" and discarded corn stalks

<https://www.dezeen.com/2014/07/01/tower-of-grown-bio-bricks-by-the-living-opens-at-moma-ps1-gallery/>



Building Biosphere by Bureau Bas Smets with Stefano Mancuso

Building Biospheres envisions a future where buildings evolve into dynamic biospheres.

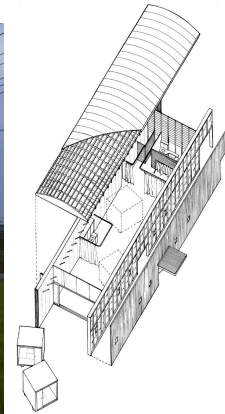
<https://www.belgianpavilion.be/en/projects/belgian-pavilion-2025>



Même - Experimental House by Kengo Kuma & Associates

Blurring lines between outdoor and indoor spaces

<https://www.archdaily.com/322830/meme-experimental-house-kengo-kuma-associates>



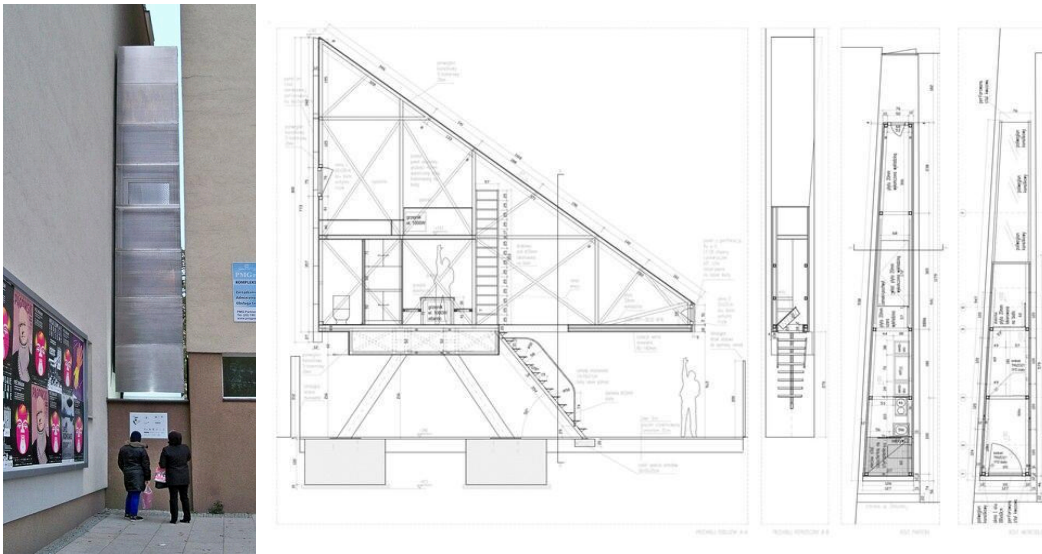
Naked House by Shigeru Ban
Blurring lines between outdoor and indoor spaces
<https://arquitecturaviva.com/works/naked-house-2>



Living bridges by trees and humans
<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20211117-how-indias-living-bridges-could-transform-architecture>



Bioscleave House (Lifespan Extending Villa) by
Arakawa + Gins, Reversible Destiny Foundation
“Architecture’s holding in place occurs within and as part of a prevailing atmospheric condition that others routinely call biosphere, but which we, feeling the need to stress its dynamic nature, have renamed bioscleave.”
<https://www.reversibledestiny.org/bioscleave-house-lifespan-extending-villa/>



Keret House by Jakub Szczęsny

House as a parasite, depending on other buildings.

<https://www.archdaily.com/289630/inside-the-keret-house-the-worlds-skinniest-house-by-jakub-szczesny>

extra reading

Weather Architecture (2012) - Jonathan Hill

Rain is an architect.

<https://www.scribd.com/document/451175002/weather-architecture-2012>

The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment (1969) - Reyner Banham

“There are two basic ways of controlling the environment: by hiding under the tree/tent/roof (in other words, by building a shelter) or by mediating the local environment by a campfire. He points out that “a campfire has many unique qualities which architecture cannot hope to equal, above all, its freedom and variability.” The most recent attitudes to environmental control – where conditions are mediated locally and not globally and in relation to a body and not space – are a testament to this. This is achieved through material that does not need thermal mass but regulates the heat exchange inside a thin zone of a few millimeters (Addington 2008). But a “campfire” as a source of heat and light is localized and specific to its placement within the space. If we think about it beyond its traditional form – and in relation to energy exchange – we can imagine it as a distributed system that can be activated locally and “intelligently,” and only where needed. Viewed in the context of flow and exchange, a “campfire” can become an intelligent surface that can thermally modulate the environment and through that facilitate the circulation and gathering of people.”

https://papers.cumincad.org/data/works/att/lasg_whitepapers_2016_fulltext.pdf