



STREAM

## S3. Affective Built World: Body-Space Politics Beyond Utility

STREAM ORGANIZER(S)

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DESCRIPTION

How might affect help us rethink the built world beyond utility, function, and other tangible measures of value? What becomes visible when space is approached not only as form, program, evidence, or infrastructure, but as something sensed, inhabited, remembered, and negotiated through bodies? And how might attention to body-space interaction open new conversations across geography, philosophy, psychology, sociology, media studies, anthropology, architecture, and other fields concerned with space, subjectivity, and lived experience?

This stream begins from a concern with a recurring tendency in the social-scientific and humanistic study of architecture: a pull toward the measurable, the instrumental, and the materially demonstrable. Questions of performance, use, evidence, policy, and representation often dominate how architecture is analyzed and justified. Yet built environments are never only functional or visible arrangements. They are also lived through atmospheres, intensities, attachments, estrangements, sensory pressures, memories, anticipations, and pre-cognitive orientations that shape how bodies enter, endure, avoid, or become with space.

Affect offers a way to engage these intangible but consequential dimensions of architecture without reducing them to either personal feeling or decorative atmosphere. In a Spinozist sense, bodies are defined by their capacities to affect and be affected, while Deleuzian readings of affect emphasize the relational and processual character of such encounters (Spinoza 1677; Deleuze 1988). Affect thus allows us to ask what space does: how it presses on bodies, modulates attention, organizes nearness and distance, enables or restricts relation, and participates in the making of subjectivity, collectivity, and power. Following Massumi, affect may be understood as registering bodily intensity prior to its full capture in qualified emotion or representation (Massumi 2002). In this sense, affect is not simply another theme to be added to architectural discourse, but a possible method for rethinking architectural knowledge itself.

While architecture remains one important point of departure, this stream is intended as a broader invitation to scholars and practitioners working on affect and the built world in multiple registers. We

welcome contributions that engage embodied perception, spatial politics, environmental psychology, non-representational theory, phenomenology, media environments, memory studies, urban atmospheres, and virtual or hybrid spaces. The stream is especially interested in how body-space interaction can be examined across built, social, psychic, philosophical, and geographic registers, and in how affect may connect these different ways of thinking space.

Papers in this stream may explore, but are not limited to:

- Affect as method in architectural research
- Body-space interaction and pre-cognitive encounter
- Architecture beyond utility, function, and evidence
- Atmosphere, mood, sensation, and orientation
- Spatial politics and the affective life of power
- Memory, attachment, estrangement, and architectural experience
- Embodied phenomenology and affect theory
- Architecture in dialogue with geography, philosophy, and psychology
- Non-representational and more-than-representational approaches to space
- Virtual, mediated, and hybrid spatial environments
- Adaptive reuse, obsolescence, and affective transformation
- Methods for studying intangible dimensions of built environments