INTERVENTION 3

the next ENTERprise
architects

Biennale Architettura
2016

Austrian Pavilion

Eds. Curators of the Austrian Pavilion
Elke Delugan-Meissl, Sabine Dreher, Christian Muhr

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UN/COMMON SPACE UN/DEFINED LIVING

Text: Elke Krasny

"What can architecture do?" This important question was raised by the architect Marie-Therese Harnoncourt in one of our conversations about the next ENTERprise's work on their Venice Biennale contribution. At their architects' office, which she runs with her partner Ernst J. Fuchs, we sat down together to look at urban mappings, sketches, photographs and floor plans. The urban, architectural, and political complexities of their Biennale work

are profound. Harnoncourt spoke of urban strategies and of undefined sites that enable encounter and interaction. The architect placed much emphasis on the concept of temporary living. The use of existing buildings and infrastructures is as important to their approach as the adding of mobile elements that help to create new un/defined spaces.

As much as the next ENTERprise's architectural oeuvre is well known for its aesthetic and formal distinction and the way it strives to eschew both the normative implications of the modernist 'form follows function' legacy and the normative iconici-

ty of the contemporary signature style, Marie-Therese Harnoncourt and Ernst J. Fuchs are, at the same time, devoted to social concerns and to making architecture politically. Harnoncourt and Fuchs seek to avoid the vicious trap of the widely held, yet false opposition between aesthetic achievements and social, needs-based buildings. The next ENTERprise seeks to steer away from the antagonistic relationship that is conventionally identified between more celebratory formal architectural expression and radical leftist politics. Theirs is neither the principle of the engaged community architecture practitioner nor the self-build approach or any

other variation of a more formalised architectural participation practice arrived at through consultation with future users. Yet, Harnoncourt and Fuchs have a clear ambition to see architecture as relevant to social and political change. And it is in this context that the un/defined space can be understood as a potential space for subjective intimacy and for negotiating fairness in living together with others.

The human need for shelter is lasting.Architecture has never been so.

Walter Benjamin

On the occasion of the 2016 Architecture Biennale, an event we have to understand first and foremost in the terms and logics of the big event, the next ENTERprise was invited to be part of Austria's participation. Almost ten years ago, in the wake of the 2007/2008 financial and economic crisis – and architecture is not only symptomatically indicative of the state of the economy but also conspicuously dependent upon money – exhibitions, and in particular architecture biennales, began to express a pronounced interest in critical and political architectural practice, in bottom-up urbanism, low-cost solutions and informal building. A whole range of biennales as well as international exhibitions and symposia embraced the trend of promoting politically conscious, socially engaged and critically motivated architecture. These exhibitions and their discursive frameworks discovered and celebrated, as I want to suggest here, the figure of the contemporary architect as activist. This architect is not only able to find ways of merely managing in times of crisis but, in the prevailing crisis, is also seeking to counteract and intervene. The 2016 Venice

Biennale is continuing this rather recent legacy of promoting the relevance of architecture under crisis conditions. With regard to the next ENTERprise's Biennale contribution, three things are of interest to us here. First, their work does not easily fall into the category of activist architecture, yet they clearly seek to practice architectural justice in both architectural and political terms. Secondly, their contribution is part of an even more recent trend established by architecture exhibitions of going beyond the exhibitionary imperative to make real architecture instead of exhibitions.[1] Thirdly, the crisis conditions have dramatically changed since the 2007/2008 crisis. Today's crisis is marked most profoundly by austerity and racism. Austerity measures and structural racist violence have taken on dramatic dimensions. As we live through this long moment of crisis, the fundamental human need for places to live remains one of the most pressing concerns. The provision of places for living for low-income populations, refugee populations and immigrant populations is one of the biggest and most

complex challenges. People have come to see each other as a threat. People have come to see each other as competitors. And, in particular, the refugee subject, whose precariousness has been maximised, has been ideologically reconfigured as both a threat and a competitor. According to the report from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organisation for Migration, quoted in a Bloomberg article in January 2016, "about 6.5 million Syrians have been driven from their homes inside their country and another 4 million have sought shelter in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey."[2] This report also stated that "as many as 1 million people from Africa, the Middle East and Asia will seek refuge in Europe this year."[3] Therefore, the question of architecture and the question of the refugee subject have been joined in a complex way.

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[1]   I want to give the following example here: Wohnungsfrage [The Housing Question] curated by Jesko Fezer, Nikolaus Hirsch, Wilfried Kuehn, and Hilo Peleg at Haus der Kulturen der Welt Berlin, October 23rd –December 14th, 2015.

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[2]   Misha Savic, Europe Faces another Million Refugees this Year, UN Report Says, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-01-27/migrant-flow-to-europe-won-t-weaken-in-2016-as-conflicts-persist

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[3]   Misha Savic, Europe Faces another Million Refugees this Year, UN Report Says, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-01-27/migrant-flow-to-europe-won-t-weaken-in-2016-as-conflicts-persist

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Refuge architecture – architecture that offers protection and shelter, both physically and emotionally, has become central (for refugees, but also for many others who are precariously vulnerable and in need of refuge) and should be clearly distinguished from emergency refuge architecture. Architecture is needed that actively resists the ideology of containment and encampment characteristic of much shelter provision. Containment and encampment spatially produce the refugee as a figure to be isolated because the refugee is ideologically constructed as a subject of

"WORK-LIVING" AND OTHER HYBRID MANOEUVRES

Marie-Therese Harnoncourt and Ernst J. Fuchs of the next ENTERprise architects in conversation with Christian Muhr of Liquid Frontiers, Vienna, November 27th 2015

CM: What I have heard so far is that you are addressing the refugee question not in isolation but explicitly as part of a wider context. Am I correct that the city and the urban environment play an important role here?

MTH: That's right, although we see the city in terms of a society which has been developing in a multicultural dimension for quite some time. At the same time we are - unfortunately - currently witnessing both serious attempts to spread fear and the growth of right-wing populism. If we, as architects, are to address this situation, our main focus must be on public space and infrastructure, because both have huge significance for our ability to live together. Furthermore, however, there is the general issue of communication, because integration is ultimately based on comprehension. The dissemination of hate-filled messages naturally has a huge influence upon how public space is used. That is why the subject "Places for People" is not only about place and the urban realm but also about language.

EF: We are particularly interested in the city's 'blank areas' – these open zones which have yet to be defined offer opportunities for new ways of using the city. If we are to speak of a multicultural society then this firstly needs places where this mixing process can occur. In reality, on the other hand, as we see in residential building, the number of rules and regulations is constantly increasing and this, in turn, is leading back towards further separation. The current urgent question about the accommodation of refugees presents an opportunity – which we would like to use – to also address the future of the city.

CM: You posed similar questions some time ago as part of your teaching work at ESA in Paris.

MTH: Yes, there we addressed the notion of "fear of others" and asked how architecture could tackle this. Under the title "Hybrid Lifestyles" we developed a range of "implants" for Goutte d'Or, a hugely heterogeneous and conflict-ridden arrondissement in the north of the city which is home to many Moroccans. These implants are a form of cell which can mutate in line with different

situations and requirements. During these two semesters of work we noticed the importance of the subject of "self-confidence" and the close relationship between this and the question of whether one is able to do something for oneself. The possibility of contributing actively to the life of a district is very important - not only politically but also psychologically. As well as refugees, this question affects many other groups in society whose lives are becoming increasingly precarious. In this situation, new forms of participation develop – such as the notion of bartering which is suddenly on the way back.

CM: Your office is in the Struwerviertel, which is both a piece of nineteenth-century Vienna and a suburb and, at the same time, an area of prostitutes which is right next door to a university campus and, hence, an area of change which offers great possibilities in terms of hybrid use.

MTH: We were the first architects to rent space in an industrial building in the 7th district which is now full of creative professionals. In moving again we wanted to deliberately go somewhere which is still open. The Struwerviertel is a sort of 'island' in the 2nd district with a high proportion of foreigners and an interesting mix.

CM: That means that you discovered vacant space here and decided to move?

MTH: Yes, but it was not a strategic decision. We simply had the feeling that this was an interesting area and wanted to give it a try.

EF: There are, for example, some interesting initiatives in the area which seek to offer an alternative to classic economic functionalism. Private actions which make the district particularly lively. One of our neighbours is a software developer who cooks once a week at cost price, e-mails the invitation and everyone can come and bring someone else if they want to.

MTH: That is both economically sensible and inspiring – also as a way of integrating refugees into a social structure.

CM: So you yourselves already practice this hybrid use of the city. It also plays an important role in your thoughts and interventions as you prepare "Places for People". Are there also other themes which characterise your approach?

MTH: Our other starting points are the notion of the multicultural and the factor of self-organisation which we have also intensely addressed in our residential projects.

CM: In this regard you created the term "Work-Living". How should I understand this?

EF: "Work-Living" is a form of living in which home and work are combined. "Work-Living" can assume very different forms, such as the combination of a home with an office, a workshop or a restaurant. At the same time, it also refers to a principle that affects a building at many levels, combines spaces and, as a result, generates life. We also seek to dissolve traditional functional divisions and classical hierarchies within the building. My opinion, for example, is that the ground floor shouldn't always only be used for shops.

Thanks to technology the location of an office can also be much more flexible today –in the roofspace or in the garage, for example. "Work-Living" is in any case a countermove to segregation and monoculture and a concrete example of the mixing of which we spoke earlier.

CM: The title "Places for People" is also seen as a homage to Bernard Rudofsky. I have the impression that Yona Friedman is perhaps more important for you. Rudofsky also referred to this influential architect and urban planner in "Streets for People".

MTH: It's funny that you ask us that because, out of interest, we visited Yona Friedman many years ago in Paris. He welcomed us to his house and was delighted by our attention. He is very important to us in connection with this current subject because he was in the position to develop utopias and take a forward-looking perspective, particularly on the question of living together in the future. Friedman is particularly inspiring with regards the interdisciplinary way of working that we have chosen for "Places for People". Our opinion is that we should involve lots of creative people. Even if NGOs are able to implement perfect functional solutions with incredible speed, it is vital not to forget the informal aspects which are essential for positive integration. One

basic concern is to signal to people that they are worth something. Just as I want our children to be taught in high-quality spaces, I feel that it is important that people who come to us can also enjoy appropriately aesthetic and atmospheric experiences. This, in turn, also has a lot to do with Rudofsky who didn't restrict his observations about other cultures to functional questions but also strongly addressed aesthetic issues.

EF: I would like to briefly add to that: Rudofsky is fascinating because he used the term "anonymous architecture" and, thereby, succeeded in showing the extent to which buildings also are expressions of a culture. Yona Friedman is, on the other hand, interesting because he was one of the first to address the structures and, especially, the mega-structures, in which humans settle, in the form of, for example, cities. Starting with these structures, his interest moves onto networks, flexibility and mobility and all those terms which are at the heart of today's debate – which, in turn, shows what a visionary he was. At the same time, Friedman and his manifesto "L'architecture mobile" are to be seen in relationship to the Situationists who were, to a certain extent, the pioneers of the hybrid use of cities. They wanted to get rid of stiff relationships and involve everyone in rethinking cities. Such an approach also holds potential for our current task.

CM: A central aspect of your concept is universal applicability. You develop modules, elements, which offer users ways of living and acting and whose hybrid character means that they can also be used in a wide range of spatial situations.

MTH: The requirement to find accommodation for a lot of people as quickly as possible raises the question of "vacant space" because the use of such space is a way of creating relatively economical accommodation not just for refugees but also for a wider spectrum of people who would also be able to live there relatively cheaply. A lot of office buildings are currently being offered for temporary use periods of two to three years. Our objective is to develop prototype elements for this office building typology which, through addition rather than constructional intervention, will create dignified and affordable space appropriate to the concepts of temporary living and working. The starting point for the needs analysis for the development of these elements is the current refuge situation and the possibility of initiating a positive process of integration.

CM: You use the same principle at the urban scale with elements that you call "urban building blocks."

MTH: We think that such a strategy of temporarily "marching in and out" can also be used on the city in general with the same advantage of providing affordable space for new forms of living and producing. These units can be provided for a certain period to people going through a period of change or experimentation. The concept can also be applied to new buildings if, for example, new residential and office buildings also include units for temporary use. Such "free spaces" could appear across the entire city.

EF: In the context of "Places for People" we are initiating an attempt to develop a completely new approach. Initially, we are having to operate within the strict limitations imposed by efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The same was also true of the concrete blocks which had to offer accommodation to as many people as possible in a very short time. The answer was the development of a typology and a process of industrial prefabrication. We have to orient ourselves with this approach but, at the same time, we must also ask if containers really are the only way of meeting these criteria or if the solution is not simply stupid, because no one can live in a container for three months without suffering at least psychological problems.

MTH: Harry Glück spent his life trying to optimise, but he was optimising with the objective of being able to build a swimming pool on the roof because it was clear to him that this certain extra would be a trigger to communication and to the strengthening of the community. Even if he didn't achieve everything one has to admit that Alt Erlaa works unbelievably well as a small city and, thanks to its form and its vertical gardens, also possesses a spatial urban quality. In this context I think of Grafenegg, where we built a concert stage - the Wolkenturm. The stage itself is reserved for large orchestras and visitors with expensive tickets but, at the same time, there are also seats on the grass in the park. This bastion of high culture, which is theoretically reserved for a particular clientele, is actually broken down by this secondary use. My sense is that "Places for People" is also about discovering intelligent manoeuvres which circumvent existing relationships and then enhance these relationships with new ideas about forms of living, producing and communicating.

CM: This objective fits in with our thoughts about first of all latching on to existing projects and then providing these with a new "spin".

threat and competition, a subject that is threatening the existing order and competing for access to resources, infrastructures and institutions that, via a biopolitical matrix of governance, are claimed as being reserved for those who are citizens of a nation state. Therefore, architecture that can serve as housing, shelter, refuge and home is considered central. Yet, we must not forget that architecture also provides public space in which one can move freely and have access to public expression and social encounter, to joy and relaxation. This is important for any kind of futurity for

societies transformed by mass refugee movements.

"Reporting from the Front" is the overarching theme chosen by the curator Alejandro Aravena for the 15th International Architecture Biennale in Venice. One cannot but immediately take note of the strong war metaphor invoking the eyewitness reporting from frontlines, battles, sieges, atrocities, killings, war-torn civilians and refugees. In historical terms there is of course, as many others have noted before me, a most paradoxical relationship between architecture and war. Wars' destructions make possible, both

spatially and economically, architects' works. Yet, this is not the direction this essay will take. Much rather, I will turn to the theme chosen by the curator of the Austrian Pavilion, Elke Delugan-Meissl, as her response to "Reporting from the Front." She decided on "Places for People" in order to specifically address the contribution that architecture can make for refuges, for those who can and, in fact, must report from the front, for those who are displaced, endangered, traumatized and haunted by war. The Austrian Pavilion's theme opens up the urgent question of architecture

and refugees or, put differently, of refuge architecture. Let me add two observations here between which there is a complex link, one about current politics in Austria, EU and the Balkan States and the other - an epistemological observation - about the history of exhibitions. In early 2016 Austrian politicians spoke out for closed borders. A February article on the World Socialist Website reports on the Vienna Conference "Managing Migration Together" in which Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Bulgaria participated alongside Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina,

Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia. Neither Greece nor Germany was invited. Heavily criticising the EU policy of open borders all these countries effectively worked towards permanently shutting down the Balkan route.[4] The idea of officially representing a nation state inherent in the pavilions of the Venice Biennale means that whoever engages with the Austrian Pavilion is implied in its official politics. Yet, this does not mean that one must abstain from taking on this task. Rather, it means that the Biennale contribution can be used to confront the official party politics of a nation state using the symbolic capital of work realised under the umbrella of representing that nation state. Let me move on to my second observation. The works commissioned for the Austrian Pavilion do not take place in Venice. The works commissioned were given the task of anchoring themselves in the realities of refugees locally on the ground in Vienna. Elke Delugan-Meissl's curatorial intent goes beyond the exhibitionary imperative. The term exhibitionary is owed to Tony Bennett's seminal work on the critical genealogy of the museum institution.[5] The museum as a public institution, like the world fair and the biennale, was implicated in the matrix of colonial industrial capitalism and helped shape its violent structural epistemologies of both exclusive and inclusive processes of othering. So, to a certain extent, the Austrian Pavilion in Venice leaves the show behind and its contributions become part of the realities on the ground in Vienna.[6] The exhibitionary imperative is broken precisely at a time when party politics has become the politics of border regimes and migrant management. And architecture leaves behind the exhibitionary imperative to become part of life itself and, in doing so, is even more implied in and entangled with the very hostile political conditions that govern both political realities and national representational logics. With regard to art and art exhibitions, Angela Dimitrakaki has written about the "biopolitical paradigm, where the artistic "act" unfolds within the *social life* (bios, in Greek) proper."[7] Even though her observation was linked to art and its relationship to the art exhibition and not to architecture and its relationship to the architecture exhibition – and I think that there are huge aesthetic, economic, epistemological, and material differences with regard to art and architecture and their responses to the exhibitionary imperative – her argument is still useful in our context. The architectural act, the Venice Biennale contribution, unfolds within the social life of Vienna and its refugee population. Architects were asked to do architecture – and not to exhibit architecture. So, we have an important interruption here. Interestingly enough, the 'show-must-go-on' paradigm is interrupted precisely at a time when national representation has become a highly fraught task for architects adhering to leftist politics. And, even more importantly, architecture is invited to take agency. The funds and the symbolic capital of the Biennale participation are being used to commission new architectural work useful in the current mass migration and refugee crisis.

Let me sum up the specific situatedness from which Marie-Therese Harnoncourt raised the what-can-architecture-do question to which I dedicated this essay. The question comes from an architect who was chosen to become involved in a nation state's representation at a global architecture event. Therefore, whatever work is produced, it has to operate on a level of global visibility and representativity. The work has to be state-of-the-art in appealing to both a globalised mass audience and an international peer group

of architecture experts. At the same time, the work is embedded in and made visible through the nation state's representational logic as I explained earlier. The question was raised by an architect who was commissioned to provide architecture urgently needed in the current refugee crisis. So, we have here the logics of the nation state, of a global mass audience event, of an international expert group and the current catastro-

phic conditions of a mass refugee movement. Therefore, the urgency of the what-can-architecture-do question is very much owed to the specific political, material and economic conditions of the here-and-now in our present historical moment.

The next ENTERprise engages with the crucial 'living on time' issue and with the equally crucial question of how people can relate to the world in which they live. Urgency infringes on time. Urgency makes time precarious. In short, urgency's relationship to time is destructive. We are always ahead too late. We are always falling behind. We have run out of time, or so we are told. Architecture, as we are all fully aware, is a spatial practice. Yet, given that architecture deals with living and, at times, with 'living on time', we have to become more alert to the fact that architecture is also very much a temporal practice. Architecture is implicated in the conditions specific to the time of its production. Architecture is part of the power relationships between governing bodies and things. At the same time, architecture offers protection and refuge, at times architecture even succeeds in sheltering from the very power relationships mentioned before. The crisis conditions necessitate urgent action. Yet, it is also crucial not to be reduced to emergency measures or urgency actions. Today's harsh realities harm people's lives and livelihood. Today's realities displace millions of people. Today's realities are relentlessly brutal and unforgiving when it comes to the shortcomings of our actions, be they architectural or otherwise. This seems to be the real and ideological impasse of our time. Seeing the future as a worrisome place to be, caused by the problems of the past, means that we are somewhat paralysed in the present. Therefore, I fully take up Marie-Therese Harnoncourt's question as both a most timely question under the current crisis conditions and a question that undermines the urgency action imperative since it implies a different timeframe, one that transcends the moment and reaches into a futurity.

The provision of places for living for low-income populations, refugee populations and immigrant populations is one of the biggest and most complex challenges.

Let me pause here to go through Marie-Therese Harnoncourt's question in a slow manner. By so doing, I seek to break the urgent action timeframe, not in order to dispute it, but in order to show that different temporalities are also needed in times of crisis. By capitalising a different word in each repetition of the question a sequence will be created that will allow us to have a better grasp of what is at stake here, politically, socially and philosophically.

WHAT can architecture do?
What CAN architecture do?
What can ARCHITECTURE do?
What can architecture DO?

ture. Yet, this is not enough. Architecture cannot be the only possible object that can be named as an answer. Architecture, as I would like to suggest here, can do more. CAN means to be able to, to be capable, to be possible, or to have the power. Architecture therefore *enables more* than architecture, is *capable of more* than architecture, *makes possible more* than architecture, has the power to do more than architecture. The next word is ARCHITECTURE. The grammatical subject of this question is architecture. Let me switch from grammar to semantics. Architecture occupies the subject position. Architecture is accorded agency. Architecture is understood to have the capacity to act. This only serves to underline what was already stated before. Architecture can produce architecture – and more. DO is the final word in the question. To do is a verb with a palette of very strong and very rich meanings. To do means to perform, to effect, to fulfil, to produce, to work out, to manage, to make good. Therefore, we can rephrase the original question as follows. What can architecture perform? What can architecture effect? What can architecture fulfil? What can architecture produce? What can architecture work out? What can architecture manage? What can architecture make good? In engaging with this question, I would like to suggest that what we are confronting here is in fact the twenty-first century architecture question. What can architecture do? Here and now?

The architectural act, the Venice Biennale contribution, unfolds within the social life of Vienna and its refugee population.

A question presents itself. An answer is expected. In fact, an answer is most urgently needed. Yet, I want to suggest here that the crisis has profoundly interrupted this question-answer relationship. This extends to the architecture-question and the architecture-answer. It is a relationship broken by the crisis condition. There are no available answers. There are no answers to fall back on. There are no answers to rely on. But attempts have to be made to come up with architecture-answers, as well as other answers, despite knowing that the crisis might exceed any of the answers found. Therefore, the what-can-architecture-do question raised by Marie-Therese Harnoncourt is as much a real and pragmatic question to be answered in architectural terms as it is a political and theoretical question. I said earlier that architecture can do *more*. It is my aim here to make a case for understanding architecture's *more* as political rather than economical. Architecture is part of the systems of support that humans depend upon. In a 2012 text titled "Bodies in Alliance and the Politics of the Street" Judith Butler writes that "we must insist on there being material conditions for public assembly and public speech."[8] She goes on to elaborate that: "In the first instance, no one mobilises a claim to move and assemble freely without moving and assembling together with others. In the second instance, the square and the street are not only the material supports for action, but they themselves are part of any account of bodily public action we might propose."[9] And, most importantly for our purpose here, she continues with the following sentence that allows us to understand that what architecture can do is, in fact, political. Architecture is implicated in the politics of support and dependence. Butler writes: "Human action depends upon all sorts of supports – it is always supported action."[10] Let me explain why I think that it is important to extend the politics of the streets to the politics of the corridors, hallways, open-plan offices, small offices, mee-

ting rooms, green spaces and open areas just as much as to tea kitchens, showers and bathrooms. The latter are all spaces that the next ENTERprise engages with in their Biennale work.

The bodies in need of support for their public actions are equally in need of support for all their other actions that sustain and support their lives. On many levels their other actions support their public actions. On many levels these actions run across bodies and spaces, be they public, private, common, or un/

common. The concept of the un/common is owed to a lecture given by Athena Athanasiou in Vienna in December 2015. And I quote her here: "I want to reflect the institution as the condition of possibility for the un/common space of the polis. The purpose of this slash, this inaudible or unheard-of typographic sign that implies the not-in-common at the heart of being-in-common, is, within its very limited capacity, to bring out the exigencies that mark the polis' coming-into-presence as a common space of plural agonism."[11] I would like to connect the un/common space of the polis with the nextENTERprise's un/defined spaces, be they located inside or outside, be they produced by mobile elements moved into existing buildings or be they new architecture altogether. I see a connection to be established here between the un/common space of the polis and the un/defined space of living. I see architecture as a potential link running across the un/common and the un/defined in which both the politics of the polis and the politics of living are enacted. In her lecture, Athanasiou went on to say: "To contest and to go beyond the normative horizon of the centralised territorial polis is to engage with its 'constitutive outside', inhabited by those figured as dispensable, either in the form of the economised precarious human of neoliberal rationality or in the form of the racialised illegal human in transit across the increasingly militarised frozen waters of European necropolitics."[12] Therefore, to go beyond the normative territorial politics of urban planning and architecture as provision for those who are considered ideologically indispensable, for those who have a nation-state right to access to housing, institutions, infrastructures and other services, is to take refuge architecture seriously, yet not to reduce it to refugee architecture.

Architecture supports public assembly. Architecture supports eating and sleeping, conversing and relaxing, in short, living. I do not want to separate one from the other. Architecture supports bodies in corridors or open-plan offices or kitchens. Let me connect Judith Butler's support argument with the next ENTERprise's urban and architectural strategy. Marie-Therese Harnoncourt and Ernst J. Fuchs believe that cities should contain un/defined sites that are not normatively regulated in economic, political, social or cultural terms. As architects they have their eyes trained to make out these sites, in whatever physical form, shape or condition they might be. Theirs is a strategy of mapping the city for such sites of potentiality. Equally, they understand the conceptual and professional tools of architecture to be of the highest relevance to the transformation of such existing sites or even to the design of new such sites. These sites, as I would like to suggest, have the potential to become support structures for the un/common polis and un/defined living. Such sites engender urban agency – and potentially – urban citizenship.

And, even more importantly, architecture is invited to take agency.

Too early to conclude – an architecture of beginning

Following Marie-Therese Harnoncourt's invitation, we spent a night together at their Vienna Biennale project. Located in the former Siemens Headquarters, two floors are transformed into temporary living for both students and unaccompanied minor refugees. Mapping the city of Vienna in search of un/defined spaces, the next ENTERprise singled out office buildings lying fallow. They took up the challenge to turn the office spaces into living spaces. The architectural element they use consists of an inhabitable box fully equipped with a fold-up bed, shelves, a fold-out table and doors that close. With the doors open, you create a topography, you engage with your neighbours. With the doors closed, you create an intimate and sheltered room of your own. Their proposition keeps most of the office structure intact and inhabits it by way of using the boxes as mobile units. These allow for different actions and interactions on the part of the future inhabitants. The space surrounding the boxes is central to their architectural proposition and takes the urban strategy of opening up un/defined spaces to the rooms in an office building. The great advantage of the former office is that there is space, space for social interaction, space for leisure activities, space for sports, space for future collaborations with universities or other interested parties. In contesting the idea of providing architecture destined solely for refugees and, instead, moving towards a strategy of using un/defined spaces opened up to 'living on time' in a very specific and architecturally memorable environment, at once intimately sheltered and part of a social life with others, they make architecture politically. Taken together, the intimately sheltered box and the surrounding space asking for a way of living practiced by sharing space collectively invite hope for the possibility of un/defined living and the un/common polis.

What can Architecture do? Crisis, Precariousness and Hope

Let me go through the words one by one. WHAT refers the object of the question. We could argue that architecture could be the object of a possible answer. Architecture can do architecture. And this is highly important. Architecture can in fact produce architec-

If we imagine the spoken emphasis as corresponding with the visual emphasis I have used here, then we begin to understand what the question asks. Not only do we listen to and look at the question differently but, maybe even more importantly, the question addresses us differently in each of the four repetitions. In shifting the emphasis from the interrogative pronoun to the modal verb to the noun to the verb we begin to get a sense as to how one can make out both a call to architecture and a call to call architecture into question.

4   Martin Kreickenbaum, Westbalkankonferenz schließt Grenzen und spaltet Europa, 02-26-2016, https://www.wsws.org/de/topics/site_areahtemas/

5   See: Tony Bennett, The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics, London: Routledge, 1995.

6   There will still be an exhibition-type presentation of the Austrian pavilion in Venice that shows the projects with the Biennale audience

7   Amelia Jones and Angela Dimitrakaki, "Visible or Merely Possible? A Dialogue on Feminism's Radical Curatorial Project," in: Women's Museum. Curatorial Politics in Feminism, Education, History, and Art, eds. Elke Krasny and Frauenmuseum Meran, Vienna: Löcker, 2013, p. 70.

8   Judith Butler, "Bodies in Alliance and the Politics of the Street," in Sensible Politics. The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Activism, eds. Meg McLagan and Yates McKee (New York: Zone Books, 2012): p.117. Butler's text was written in the wake of the uprisings against regimes in North Africa and the Middle East in 2011. It is in this geopolitical context that Butler draws out the complex relationship between support and dependence.

9   Ibid. p. 118.

10   Ibid. p. 118

11   Athena Athanasiou, "The question of the institution in the biopolitical economy of disposability," lecture held on the occasion of the symposium Counter-Acting. Self-Organized Universities, curated by Lena Rosa Händle, Andrea Hubin, Belinda Kazeem-Kaminski, Elke Krasny, Barbara Mahlknecht, Sunanda Mesquita and Hansel Sato, Vienna, 12-04-2015

12   Ibid.

WHAT can architecture do?
What CAN architecture do?
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