

TITLE

**HOME: THINGS AND BODIES.**

NAME

**Marta Fernández Guardado**

AFFILIATION

Department of Architecture at ETH Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich.

EMAIL ADDRESS

[fernandez@arch.ethz.ch](mailto:fernandez@arch.ethz.ch)

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ABSTRACT

*“Habitualisation devours work, clothes, furniture, one’s wife and the fear of war”.*  
*Art as a device, Viktor Shklovsky, 1917.*

Home is the site of our intimate lives (1). To inhabit a house is to inscribe it in our habits, and while we habituate to it, the domestic falls into the automatic perception of habitual use (2). The house becomes ours while we get used to the house, and it slowly starts to disappear in the background. As often said, “home is where the heart is”, but if we don’t feel it beating, we may be homeless.

The big and small architectural conventions that shape our quotidian lives can be observed and questioned (3). By questioning them, we somehow question ourselves and we open a possibility for engagement and change (4). Modifying the implicit characteristics and relations of the objects that take part on our daily rituals can destabilise their meaning, and can bring the estranged objects back to the foreground of our perception (2). Once they are here, we see them flowing free and open to new interpretations, creating a tension between the real and the possible, transforming the context and giving us the opportunity to imagine new ways of inhabiting.

The project proposes the use of alternative medial practices –collected and classified in a catalogue of references– to document and narrate specific domestic scenarios. The catalogue will be applied in 5 different case studies in order to train and sharpen perception, and produce specific critical observations about every day rituals. These observations will be translated into different estrangement techniques of objectual specific qualities –categorised in relation to the catalogue of medial practices– that will introduce difficulties on the (re)design of household objects and their relations within the limits of the real, and will intensify their presence avoiding the absurd. The goal is to trigger reactions on the user and produce self-awareness about living practices hitherto hindered.

As the result of the study, the outcome of the catalogue –composed by the categories of medial practices and the related terms of defamiliarization– will be evaluated through the user’s experience. This may prove that there is a layer of meaningful information about real specific inhabitation needs that can be extracted from the documentation of the relationships between space, objects and inhabitants. Findings may indicate specific qualities of familiar objects and specific defamiliarization techniques with which to experiment in the field of design in order to inform the context, open reality to creative speculation and drive conscious social transformations.

*(1) Poetics of Space, Gaston Bachelard, 1957: regarding the identification between the house and the memories, and therefore between one’s house and oneself.*

*(2) Art as a device, Viktor Shklovsky, 1917: regarding the economy of perceptive effort and the use of art techniques to recover the sensation of life.*

*(3) Apparatus/dispositif, Michael Foucault, 1977: regarding the system of relations between various elements that organises society, and as Jaques Rancière suggests, the system of forms determining the sense experience.*

*(4) Einfühlung, Verstehen, Verfremdung, Mimesis and related concepts, since the 18th Century: regarding the critical potential of empathy in order to actively reformulate reality and create a change.*