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Nina Bačun is a versatile designer, researcher, and educator who works in the fields of exhibition and set design, conceptual and speculative design, and film art. Her collaborations with the Zagreb-based Oaza* collective demonstrates her holistic and multidisciplinary approach. She is currently investigating the intersection of architecture, design, the built environment, and moving images, at the doctoral program in Architecture and Urban Planning in Zagreb.

* An all-female collective called OAZA has been actively engaged in art and design research initiatives in the autonomous cultural sector since 2013. (www.oazabooks.com, www.o-a-z-a.com)

**Cinematic Space as Architecture of Disposition:
The Architecture of Fragments and Figments**

In contemporary society, Zygmunt Bauman's concept of 'liquid modernity' offers a profound critique of the state of flux that defines modern life. According to Bauman, this 'liquid' phase is not a break from the past, but rather an evolution of early modernity. Unlike the solid structures and ideals that dominated previous epochs, liquid modernity is characterized by fluidity, uncertainty, and continual transformation. Bauman's dichotomy is striking: modernity simultaneously embodies order, prediction, and manageability—the 'idea of a final destination'—while perpetually dismantling established norms and traditions. The distinction between the earlier 'solid' phase and contemporary 'liquid' modernity lies in the nature of change itself. In a world that is constantly shifting, nothing remains fixed, and all forms of permanence are subject to reconfiguration.

This notion of fluidity can be applied directly to the study of architectural space, particularly when viewed through the lens of cinema. Cinematic space, much like Bauman's liquid modernity, is not bound by physical laws or traditional notions of order. Instead, it exists in a state of constant transformation, shaped by narrative, montage, and the viewer's perception. In this regard, the films of Russian Avant-garde directors Dziga Vertov and Sergei Eisenstein serve as early examples of how cinematic space can embody liquid dynamics. Their montage experiments were revolutionary in their ability to fragment time and space, creating new realities from disparate elements. These cinematic techniques laid the foundation for what we can now recognize as 'liquid spaces'—spaces that are mutable, multidirectional, and constantly in flux.

The Ambiguity of Cinematic Space

The relationship between cinema and space is inherently ambiguous. While space is omnipresent in every film, it often remains an unnoticed element unless the viewer's immersion in the plot is disrupted. Unlike traditional architecture, where space is a static, tangible entity, cinematic space is fluid and often invisible. However, this invisibility does not diminish its importance. On the contrary, the way space is used in film can offer significant insights into architectural design, particularly in terms of how spaces are experienced and understood. Cinematic space challenges the rigid boundaries of physical space, offering new perspectives on how ar-

chitecture can be conceptualized and designed.

The aim of this research is to explore the interaction between architecture and film through the medium of cinematic space. By analyzing images extracted from films and experimenting with montage techniques, this study seeks to uncover the ways in which cinematic space can influence architectural thinking. The research is guided by a methodology of relational thinking, which focuses on the relationships between elements within a space, rather than on the space itself. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how space is constructed, experienced, and represented in both cinema and architecture.

Methodology: Relational Thinking and the Agency of Images

The central premise of this research is that cinematic space can be understood from dual perspectives: as both representational and performative. In this sense, cinematic space is not just a backdrop for action, but an active participant in the narrative. Drawing from Javier Fernández Contreras' manifesto on interiors, the study proposes that cinematic space functions as a relational virtual network, comprising landscapes, buildings, objects, and characters. This network is constantly in flux, shaped by the relationships between its elements rather than by any inherent physical properties.

The methodology of this research involves analyzing still and moving images from films, establishing connections between them, and experimenting with their montage. This process is not merely about understanding how images create reality, but also how reality is constructed through images. By examining cinematic space through this lens, the research aims to expand the horizons of architectural theory and design, offering new models for thinking about space. These models are derived from the representations, reinterpretations, and analyses of cinematic spaces within architectural and landscape contexts.

Cinematic Space: An Architecture of Fragments and Figments

Cinematic space, in all its complexity, is defined by its scalelessness and fluidity—key characteristics of contemporaneity. Whether imagined, real, or hybrid, cinematic space exists at the nexus of constructed and lived realities, intertwining elements of the mundane with the extraordinary. It can be understood as an architecture of fragments and figments, where spaces are assembled or constructed through montage techniques. These spaces challenge traditional architectural interpretations, diverging from the static, material understanding of built environments by embracing performativity and relying increasingly on mediated experiences.

In cinema, montage plays a crucial role in shaping space. Through the manipulation of time and space, filmmakers create environments that are not bound by the same constraints as physical architecture. These spaces can be representational, manipulative, or autonomous, depending on how they are constructed and used within the narrative. Montage, therefore, has the potential to enhance or even facilitate the performative aspect of space, particularly in today's context where architecture is increasingly mediated rather than directly experienced.

Diegetic Space: Representational, Manipulative, and Autonomous

André Gardies identifies four key types of cinematic spaces that contribute to the spatial essence of a film: cinematographic space, diegetic space, narrative space, and viewer time. Diegetic space, in particular, is of interest in this study. It refers to the film's reality that exists independently of the story—what Jacques Lévy terms 'anecdotal space.' In many films, diegetic space serves as a backdrop or container for action, lending plausibility to the narrative. However, diegetic space can also be a more active element, shaping the viewer's experience and influencing the narrative itself.

Diegetic space can be representational, mirroring real-world environments, but it can also be manipulative, reshaped through montage to fit the needs of the narrative. In some cases, diegetic space becomes autonomous, existing as a space that is independent of its real-world counterpart. These concepts provide a framework for analyzing how space is constructed, utilized, and interpreted in cinematic storytelling. By blurring the boundaries between representational and performative space, cinematic space challenges traditional notions of architectural design and offers new possibilities for understanding space in a fluid, contemporary context.

Case Study: Alain Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad*

One of the key examples of diegetic space in cinema is Alain Resnais' 1961 film *Last Year at Marienbad*. In this film, diegetic spaces are architecturally incorrect, with multiple real spaces combining to create one cohesive cinematic space. Resnais explores the spatial dynamics between characters and the environments they inhabit, crafting a cinematic topography that mirrors the complexity of relationships between space, time and memory.

In *Last Year at Marienbad*, space takes on an active role, becoming as significant a character as the protagonists. Resnais uses on-location shooting to emphasize the relationship between characters and their sur-

roundings, while montage constructs a cinematic version of the palace that is both familiar and surreal—a collage of different real-world spaces.

The palace in the film functions as an autonomous space, existing independently of its real-world counterpart. It is not merely a backdrop for the narrative but an active participant in the film's exploration of identity, time, and place. Resnais exemplifies the potential of cinematic space to offer new perspectives on how environments are experienced and understood, both in cinema and in real life.

Conclusion: Reinterpreting Cinematic Space

This study of cinematic space as an architecture of disposition—an architecture of fragments and figments—offers new insights into the relationship between cinema, architecture, and space. By examining the representational, manipulative, and autonomous aspects of cinematic space, the research proposes a new framework for understanding how space is constructed, experienced, and interpreted in both film and architecture.

Cinematic space challenges traditional design principles by embracing fluidity, scalelessness, and relational thinking. It offers a model for understanding the complexities of contemporary space, where physical boundaries are increasingly blurred and mediated experiences are becoming the norm. In this sense, cinematic space provides a valuable tool for architects and designers, offering new ways to conceptualize and engage with the spaces we inhabit in a world defined by change and uncertainty.

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Figures:

Figure 1 Graphic representation of André Gardies's four kinds of cinematic spaces expanded upon using Jacques Lévy's concepts of space, with a special focus on diegetic space.

Figure 2 Montage of still images—screenshots from *Last Year at Marienbad*, a 1961 film directed by Alain Resnais.
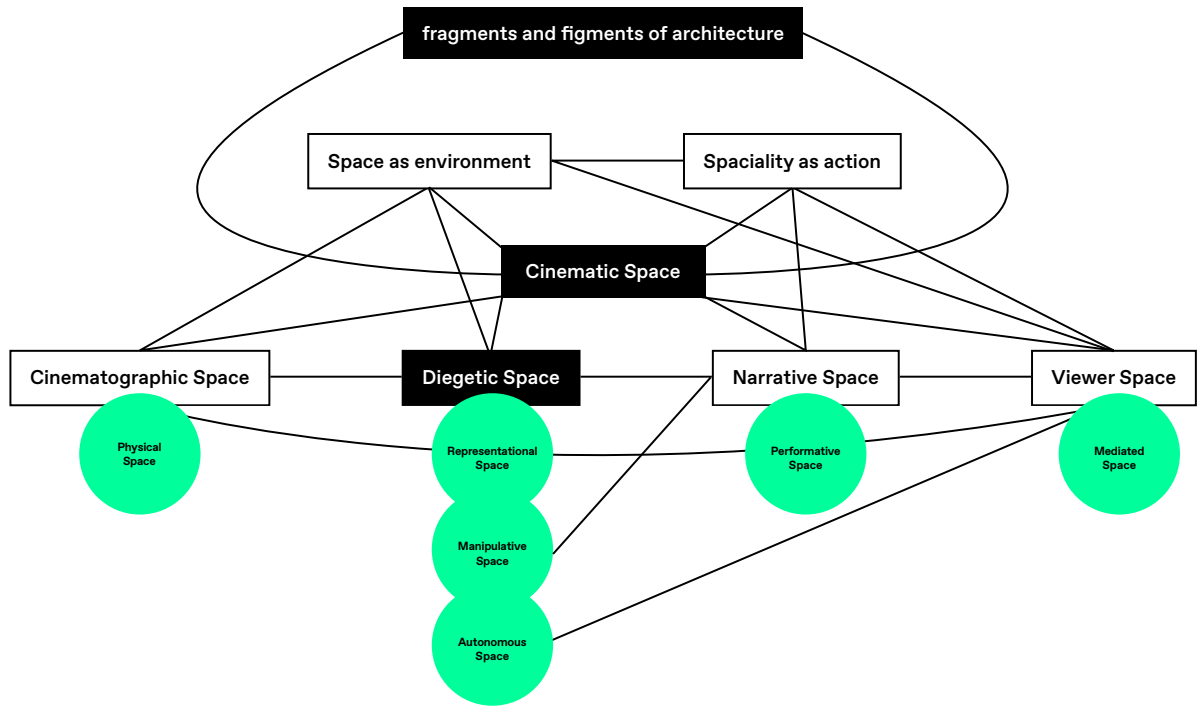
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