

Devon Carlson
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Task 9

Media / Architecture / Performance

I find it challenging to define criteria for any given category of art because I'm tempted to question if my definitions of what constitutes proper media projects in a city hold any true bearing of accuracy. These definitions will be nothing more than my own definitions of common themes in city-based media projects that I personally find interesting and thought-provoking.

One feature of this genre of art that I really enjoy is when an art piece reveals aspects of our experience that usually remain unseen. Timo Arnall's 2011 *Immaterial: Light Painting* does this well, as he managed to visualize something as invisible as wifi signals and bring that visual representation into the real world.

Another feature of this type of art that I enjoy is the absurdist nature of some of the work. Yukihiro Taguchi's *Moment – performatives Spazieren* manages to personify pieces of wood, making them move and travel their way throughout a city as they construct and deconstruct themselves into different shapes and forms via stop motion. At one point the wooden planks form a wheel up against a wall, and "roll" alongside the wall to represent the plank's movement from one end of the wall to another. The city's built environment act as the railroad tracks for this moment, and it is quite bizarre to see.

One of the most common themes that I've noticed across these pieces is the way in which they play with space, particularly the way in which they take up more space than the objects of their inspiration traditionally would. Take for example Ana Rewakowicz's 2008 *Conversation Bubble*, in which participants converse with each other with their

upper torsos contained within a very large inflated bubble. Or Anna Maria Cornelia de Gersem's Life Dress, in which a woman's dress is able to comically drastically inflate like boating life vest, forcing unknowing participants to be shoved aside from the wearer as the dress inflates. Personally, I find this work important in its own way even if it was made primarily to be comical. In one scene, the wearer inflates her dress while watching a video on her phone in the subway as a method to force those around her to acknowledge and accept her wish for privacy and space. In this post-coronavirus shaped world, one's personal space has profound new importance that has been long since ignored by society beforehand.

The project Coffee Seeks its Own Level also has an important message, as I find it's message transcends and surpasses the sole message of portraying architectural issues. The principal interaction being that when one participant lifts and drinks from their coffee cup, the other participant's coffees are spilled over and tempered with. The metaphor of one person's actions affecting all others is deeply relevant in a world ruled by capitalism, in which the actions of power overly wealthy individuals cause devastating ripple effects down the economic chain. The actions of investment bankers making decisions and judgment calls in particular periods of time have led to evictions, starvation, and even the triggering actions of global conflicts. While the artist may have intended to showcase the structural clashing of buildings, I see a different message surrounding the actions of the 1% affecting the lives and well-being of the other 99%.