

Levitation

*Suave, mari magno ("How sweet it is when on the open sea...")
Lucretius, De rerum natura*

Levitation is neither turbulent nor laminar.

Turbulence is, what Epicurus and Democritus call the primitive form of the construction of things. Lucretius, in his poem De rerum natura uses "clinamen" to describe the unpredictable swerve of atoms, the smallest imaginable form of turbulence, a differential. In his uncertainty of them, he refers to the atom's inclination. It is as if they were a subject. In the identification of clinamen, Lucretius gives birth to modern physics. Thereafter the mechanics of fluids becomes the preoccupation of physicists and Vitruvius dedicates a book of his treatise on architecture to the flow of water.

But what could be said of a state not at the mercy of a swirling atmosphere, nor is arranged in parallel streamlines, that is to say not turbulent, laminar? Is there something that can regulate the degrees to which it is able to resist being swished around in the boll of turbulence and can avoid being made into a projectile in a laminar stream?

Levitation can contend with turbulence and laminae and yet not be either. And yet it may be a strange amalgam of a turbulent condition, in other words a violent or unsteady one (a fire, political unrest, a rough rock, a milling crowd) and a laminar condition (still, a non-deviating vector, certainty, a domesticated garden, safety glass etc.). This amalgam of violence and stillness will be the subject of the studio.

Through precise guidance and written briefs, the studio will explore what the characteristics of a levitating space is; how foreign phenomenon can co-exist in a project. We will explore the characteristics of selected contemporary conditions pertaining to geometry, material, climate, resolution, scales, colors and weight to produce individual large Canvasses-that-Never-Existed (CTNE) of 5000 x 5000 mm each. This will be our first approximation to what we call a "tropopause" (the plane in between a turbulent and laminar condition). Leon Battista Alberti had a preoccupation with the extreme limits of things, with the concept of the orlo or boundary. He defined a superfice or plane as an external part of a body which is known not by its depth but only by its length and breadth and by its quality." In the "Canvasses", decisions will be made with respect to how much an idea "impregnates" the canvas (ie. its depth, its disappearance, its weight, a notion of stillness etc.) that ultimately will carry volumetric information that becomes an individual's space. The broader project (a building) realised in the studio will be composed through the production of dedicated videos, images, plans, sections and models.

Start of the studio: Friday 12/10/2018, 9:30 am. Regular presentations or "Pin-Ups": Fridays, 9:30-12:00, Workshops: Fridays 13:00. / Guest critics will be invited for mid-term and final reviews.

For more information please enquire with Susanne Stoeller:
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Levitation is a studio run by Dom Gross with Valle Medina and Benjamin Reynolds (Pa.La.C.E, palacepalace.com) and supported by Vera Buehlmann.