







INTIMATE GEOGRAPHIES OF THE ROOM

by

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## abstract

The private room has existed as a place of refuge from the pressures of public life, the burden of domestic work and has been a signifier of privilege within social constructs. With previous notions of privacy challenged today, it is increasingly important to unpack the structures and ideologies of our intimate built environment. Domestic theatrics are fragmented beyond the confines of the nostalgic house, existing in a slippery state between public and private. The home becomes a dynamic assembly of rooms in which we dwell temporally, hosting a variety of occupants, activities, and objects, assembling a state in which methods of subversion serve to liberate from domestic constructs. By deconstructing the elements of a house, the performance of each room and ritual begins to exhibit an uncanny connection to other spaces. This deconstruction can be facilitated using a dollhouse, which allows architectural elements to be released from their structural and thermal duties: here they are objects of performance, devices to interact through, and explore the boundaries of privacy.

"It seems the room has always been there, before us; that as dwellers, then as architects, we have no choice by to live in and design rooms." (Aureli, 4, 2017)

My sister and I had our own rooms across the hall from one another. The rooms were roughly the same in dimension with identical doors and windows. Further down a narrow hallway was our parent's bedroom, which existed as a symbol of mediation and control between us. Each occupant has a role within the house, and those roles are suggested by both the layout and content of the house. The content and the relations of the room in space, the occupant in the room, and the objects within the space differ by subtle nuances that exist on the surface that envelops the occupant. The intimate geographies we form with our bodies hold the traces of our being, and the structures that aim to prescribe the way in which we dwell.

I grew up in a Victory house, built to house returning WWII veterans and working-class single families located in Toronto's Willowdale neighborhood. The Canadian government passed legislation including The Veteran's Land Act, which supported the erection of small subdivisions in every major town, commencing the suburban movement of the 1950s and onward. This typical single-family house typology can be identified in rows of neat boxes, some with varying shingles or siding colours. The image of uniformity here is expressed on the exterior of the home and is in line with the monotony of residential towers. Only so much can be prescribed by walls, the rest is up to the occupant.





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## introduction

Domesticity is becoming increasingly fragmented, overlapping with aspects of contemporary life. The way we construct our gender, our relation to race, sexuality, class, education, consumption, economics, and any facet of our identity is contemplated within the privacy of the home. Architecture is complicit in the regulating and organizing of bodies in space but is also accompanied by shifts in technology and media which reinforce pre-existing social structures. The shift from the one room dwelling to the multiple room dwelling expressed a social need or desire for privacy within houses, but also worked to separate roles and positions within the home (Aureli & Tattara, 2017).

Today work and leisure are performed simultaneously by masking the distinction between productivity and rest, which can be exploitative in nature. Capitalism depends on the exploitation of free labour and is concerned with the business of endless reproduction (Arendt, 1998). The more our labour is masked as leisure, the less it is visible as work.

Historically, the private room has existed as a place of refuge from the pressures of public life and the burden of domestic work. The interior has been understood as a private place, a space for leisure and all things pertaining to personal life, while the exterior is perceived as a place for work and politics.

The concept of the Functional City, as defined by the Athens Charter, dominated much of modernist urban planning, distinctly separating zones for dwelling, work, recreation, and transportation. The home was an oasis far from work but was meant to be easily accessible

by developing transit. Despite this ideal, the home was still a workplace for some. The spaces of women's everyday lives revolved around the management of the house and family unit; these reproductive and mundane routines are delicately intertwined in political and economic forces beyond the home.

Industrialization brought with it the 8-hour shift and the radical separation of home and office (or factory), rest and work, night and day. Post-industrialization collapses work back into the home and tucks itself into the bed. At the end of the workday, we plug our bodies and our phones in to recharge for the next. The recent surge in Capsule rooms and napping stations highlights sleep and rest as an essential component of productive urban life. In 2012, the Wall Street Journal reported that 80 percent of young New York City professionals work from bed regularly. We can imagine that number has inflated since (Colomina, 2014). The notion of a once private boudoir is now thoroughly intertwined with all facets of public life thanks to endless connectivity.

Organizing stuff is a phenomenon in contemporary culture that reflects current anxieties about the excess of objects we possess. The accumulation of domestic goods was once relieved by basements and attics, but with the rise of the suburbs and shrinking urban apartments, self-storage has been a receptacle of domestic surplus. With digital applications that promise to pick up and drop off personal belongings at the tap of a finger, the distributed self—both physical and virtual—is stretched further than ever before, creating a complex, sometimes invisible set of relations.

An investigation of domestic storage (a closet, a nightstand, a shelf, etc.) and its contained objects explores the limits of privacy and intimacy within the home and unveils the evidence of a domesticity. This process involved documenting personal objects, stored or hidden within a container and forming a collection of remnants from a moment. The objects that are displayed or hidden begin to construct a unique narrative about domestic life. This thesis considers the intersection of bodies, objects, and performances that work to create a sense of place. Leaving physical and virtual traces creates a temporal space to perform, and ultimately shapes the way in which we inhabit space.





occupying the home  
perceived domesticity  
universal man and the rest  
modernising the individual

## perceived domesticity

7

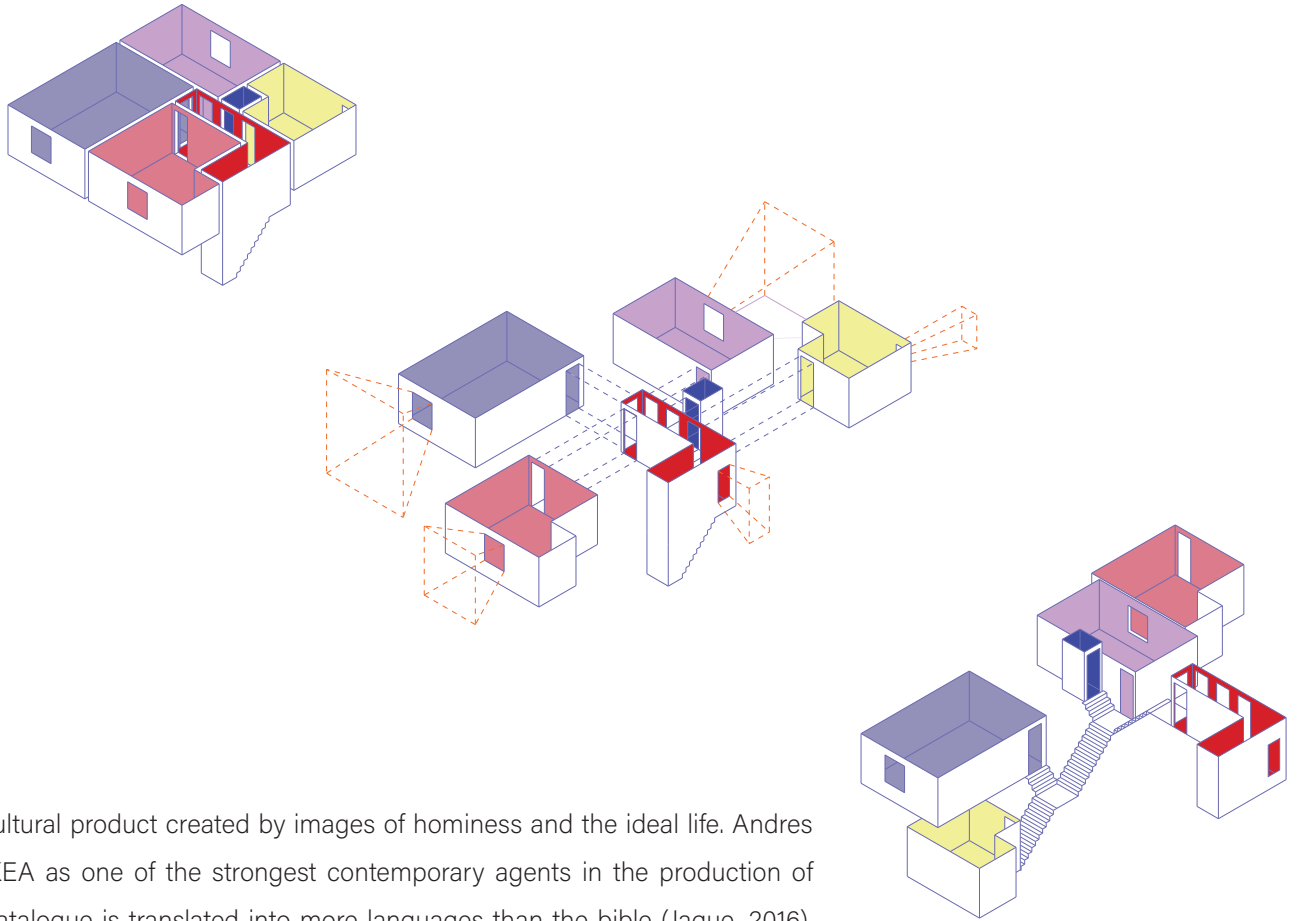
Domesticating things takes space. For example, looking at survival and living on a longer-term basis, farming communities had to accumulate and store resources and organise for production and consumption. In this time, the house becomes a space for both activities, and multiple others with the rise of settled communities. The room, housed within the house, is an internal subdivision to prevent interferences between activities and their associated materials. The rectangular form of housing eases the process of subdivision, allowing for the addition of new space and creating opportunities for adaptability (Aureli & Tattara, 2017).

Growing up, Saturday morning breakfast may have appeared like this generic scene, but always turned into a round table debate, where politics, social justice, music, art, school, and aspects of our lives were passed back and forth. About five cups of tea later, exhausted from banter, each family member would pick up their plate, put a few items back in the fridge and return to their respective space. Us kids always ended up in our bedrooms or the basement, away from “adult” space.

Familiarity is what domesticity looks like to IKEA, among many others. Yet, many people live with uncertainty and strangers. Today, I can hear as my four-year-old neighbor cries because they did not want to go to school and I can smell the aroma of garlic and butter as I walk down a clinically bare corridor to my unit. I hear celebrations, arguments, feel vibrations from a cardio exercise or send echoes from my high heels through the concrete slab separating units of dwelling. This architecture thesis explores the possibility of highlighting these special instances and overcoming the generic, through both the design of spaces and objects, as well as the presentation of these ideas in media.







Domesticity is a cultural product created by images of hominess and the ideal life. Andres Jaque identified IKEA as one of the strongest contemporary agents in the production of domesticity. The catalogue is translated into more languages than the bible (Jaque, 2016). Domesticity is produced in places beyond those that appear family oriented. It is more than the laid-back Saturday morning breakfasts where mom is flipping pancakes, dad is pouring orange juice, and the kids are setting the table.

It is the modern home that exhibits a stripped away presence with the removal of nostalgia from of the Victorian house. Anthony Vidler describes the Uncanny as a strange bond between the homely and the unhomely (Vidler, 1987). Dismissing images of nostalgia in the house dispersed the baggage into the cellar and attic, making it want to be concealed elsewhere in the house. The homely implies a sentiment of security and comfort from fear, concealment from the eyes of strangers, and a place for where secrets can breed freely. The house provides a central point of departure for uncanny disturbances: the assumed domesticity, the residue of family history, and its role as the most intimate shelter of private comfort, enhanced by terror of invasion from outside or spirits from within.

fig 1.2 Deconstructed house

The house as a multi-room complex encompasses a variety of spaces ranging in degrees of public and private, defining community and social organization.

"IKEA delivers societies.

IKEA is a purveyor of social structuration.

98% of the people depicted in the IKEA  
catalogue are young.

92% of them are blond.

They all have some sort of family life.

They are either children, or busy having  
children.

Everything IKEA manufactures is aimed  
at turning the sphere of domesticity into a  
sunny, happy, apolitical space inhabited by  
contented, healthy, young people.

The sense of a home or a household's life,  
however, may also be constructed from  
day to day in quite different fashions.

Not all of us are healthy.

Not all of us are young.

Not all of us are into having children."

Andre Jaque  
IKEA dis-obedients, 2016

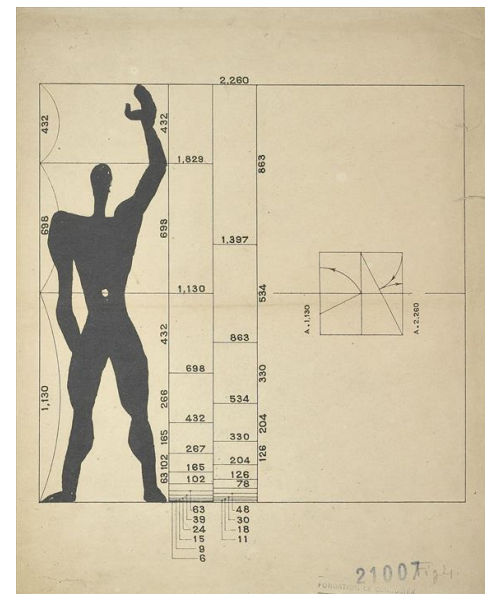
fig. 1.3: Le Modulor, Le Corbusier, 1945

## universal man and the rest

Although the Modern Movement was born in a period of great intellectual expansion, it was also a period of great simplification of interpretations of social behaviour (De Carlo, 1972). The way we construct our gender, our connection to race, relation to sexuality, class, education, consumption, economics, and any facet of our identity is shaped within the privacy of domestic interiors. Every mundane decision within the home has greater implications for society. In this regard, the home is not a refuge from the mess of society and politics that exist in the public realm, but rather the home encapsulates concerns at a domestic scale, enmeshed in the ordinary object, material, and space relations of the interior.

The home is culturally constructed, the house is constructed physically. The separation of spheres is a conceptual mechanism of the public. Problems arise when things are designed for a "generic" person, because "generic" usually refers to a tall white European man. It is the "other" who is restricted in how they dress, where they go, and how they move, in order to abide by the conditions of society as it exists. The other in this case refers to those who exist in the "other" social location, because of their place or position in history and society. Architects still fail to recognize bodies and people that deviate from white male-centric standards.

As an alternative to the isolated family dwelling, collective housing models began to emerge in the 19th century, incorporating built-in furniture and little to no cooking facilities as seen in dormitories, boarding houses, or hotels. Today's micro-apartments echo the condensed nineteenth century boarding houses which were abundant in cities across North America, supporting young individuals migrating for work.



intimate geographies of the room

Hannes Meyer, the second dean of the Bauhaus, was also known for his sympathy toward Marxist ideology. He aimed to liberate the working class from capitalism through co-operation against middle-class individualism (Aureli & Tattara, 2017). He viewed the modern world as a state of "incessant technological development, intensity of social relations, and increasing uniformity of human habits" (Aureli & Tattara, 2018). Meyer's text, "Co-op Interieur" can be understood as a critique of domestic space. Rather than addressing his belief in co-operation through the scale of the city, Meyer addressed the most intimate and common space of the modern metropolis: the private room. The proposal was not for a house but a single generic cell that belonged to everyone. It was implied by the name that beyond the cell, all domestic tasks would be taken care of through waged labour, removing the burden from the individual. The individualising of the modern subject (male, female, child, parent, and sibling) is no longer possible within the coop-interieur as everyone would have a place of solitude and territorializing is eliminated.

The sparsely furnished space was devoid of objects, stripping any identity that the architecture or inhabitant could reveal (fig 1.4). This implies an architecture of use rather than of property, freed from reminders of the inflicted system of private property beyond the room and subverting the notion of privacy by eliminating the concept of private property.



fig. 1.4: Die Wohnung  
(the apartment),  
Hannes Meyer, 1926,

fig 1.5: A Room  
for a Man, Franco  
Albini, 1936



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## modernising the individual

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The Modern Movement promoted a healthy way of living, with the intention of erasing the squalor and filth of the nineteenth century. Industry and habitation would be zoned separately, and consequently organized working and living as two distinct social spheres. Concerns about health and hygiene also transcended into the home, with architects bringing a focus to exercise, sunlight, airflow, and toilets, all designed to shape and showcase the body as smooth, fit, and able-bodied. Modern architecture expelled the thought of physical and social disease from society, eradicating attics, cellars, and the clutter of interiors which was considered a hinderance to progressing toward a modern life.

Advances in science and the desire to liberate society from past conventions painted a picture of how the future would and should be. Modern architecture was an instrument of objectification, modernising its inhabitants who would be liberated by their new environment (Miller, 2010). People are either filed away into tall towers or pushed away into the suburbs. As a result, many places in the world look the same, from the late Pruitt-Igoe apartment complex, to the abundance of Ontario's postwar tower stock. There is a fetishization in these facades. A curiosity that breeds not from the monotonous facades, but the half-visible objects that curb the uniformity and point at a hidden narrative. These are expressions of political ideologies and any form of nonconformity is masked within the interior. Public housing tower blocks connote violence, crime, etc. but they were built as a perfect balance of privacy, independence and community. Often, these towers bulldozed over low rise housing that was deemed unsafe, unworthy and slum-like. The same broken promise of Modernism as seen in towers could be observed in the Mid-Century suburban cul-de-sac (fig 1.6 & 1.7).



The concept of the Functional City, as defined by the Athens Charter, dominated much of modernist urban planning, distinctly separating zones for dwelling, work, recreation, and transportation (fig 1.7). The home was an oasis far from work, yet it existed as the site of labour for some. The spaces of women's everyday lives revolved around the home, family, and leisure, which impacts the world beyond the walls of the house, as even mundane daily tasks and routines within are tied to political and economic forces. The functions of the city (dwelling, work, and recreation) now exist within the domestic interior. We dwell in our car, on our commute to work etc. The Athens Charter envisioned a division of the city by functions, splitting living areas from leisure and production, however, it is evident that in 21st century North America, in both in urban and domestic spheres, the functions of the city are blurring.

"The house has become part of a wider system, a system that has transformed the domestic into a generic, diffuse and continuously expanding ground" (Puigianer, 1, 2016). Today, micro dwellings are being used as solutions for housing crises affecting large cities. By stacking, repeating, mirroring, and compressing, the units aggregate but remain disconnected and inaccessible. These minimum dwellings are distilling the familiarity of traditional apartments with traditional finishes and layouts. Cozy, cute, little bourgeois apartments exist on a micro-scale and can only be identified from the interior.

fig. 1.6: The Levittown suburb establishing a model for homogeneity, built between 1946 and 1953

fig. 1.7: Plan Voisin, Le Corbusier, 1925



CIAM promoted reducing the size of dwellings by shrinking the footprint of the family house to a minimum. The house as a multi-room complex encompasses a variety of spaces ranging in degrees of privacy, implying the dominant position of the homeowner. Rooms have never been autonomous spaces, rather they are the result of subdivisions within the house.

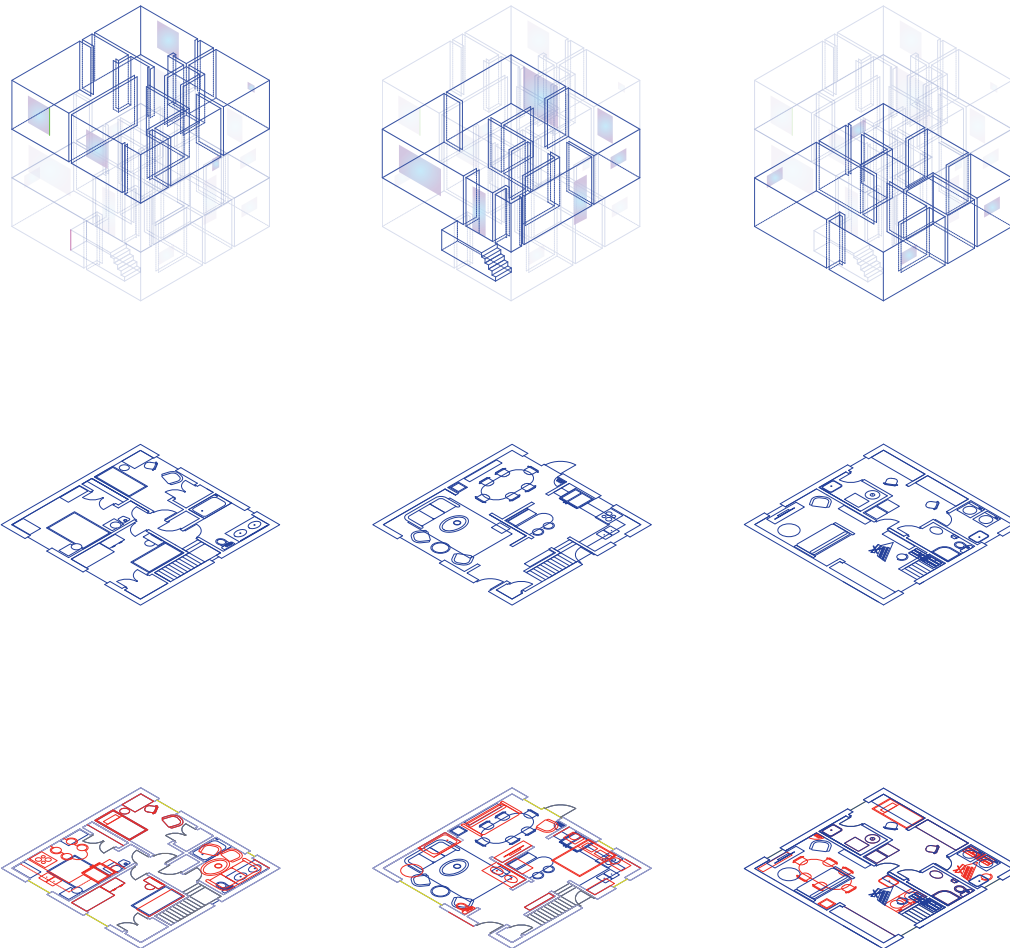
Historically, the private room has existed as a place of refuge from the pressures of public life and the burden of domestic work. The interior has been understood as a private place, a space for leisure and things pertaining to personal life, while the exterior, is a place for work and politics.

The characteristics of Modern architecture hide the power of the arrangement of domestic space on our lives. House planning is crucial in understanding how ordinary people situate themselves in relation to one another. The 20th Century architecture did not so much abandon the domestic environment but sought to rehabilitate it. Feminism had an interest in repositioning the domestic, in order to reclaim its suppressed histories and challenge its agency as an enforced setting of gender roles and social hierarchy.

Spaces such as the "bedroom," the "bathroom," the "the living room" and the "kitchen" are still used to make the house a space of efficiency and productivity, where each subject can be clearly individuated. Each room of the house is linked to a specific function and corresponds to a family member with the corridor as a mechanism connecting the rooms as one organism, uniting and separating spaces (Evans, 1978). Possessing a private space is a negotiation of



fig. 1.8: Atypical  
occupation of  
rooms in a house



- 3 "bedrooms"
- 6 "closets"
- 2 "bathrooms"
- 1 "kitchen"
- 1 "living room"
- 1 "family room"
- 1 "laundry room"
- 1 "mechanical room"

boundaries within the house. Possession can refer to an actual or a constructed relationship to an object, where the former refers to a person's direct and physical control of an object, and the latter describes a condition where an individual has control over an object despite a physical disconnect. A house falls under the latter, where you are often living in room owned by a landlord. In this way, a room of one's own is not literal, but refers to a condition in relation to the organisation of the household.



privacy

surveillance

room of one's own

the gaze

the voyeur



Privacy connotes a sense of comfort, safety, and refuge from the public eye, yet this need is not met for many. It is directly linked to property ownership, capital, and privilege. The idea of public bathrooms comes to mind. Bathrooms in general are a place where one is usually in a vulnerable position.

While privacy is intercepted by forces other than the physical boundaries, privacy cannot be physically enforced. Privacy relates to the physical and virtual objects and information that pertain to a person. From having a space to be alone with one's thoughts, or a secret space to keep personal artifacts, privacy is something that is necessary to balance the social self. Living collectively is only possible if everyone has a right to privacy. The physical boundaries that provide privacy are challenged by mobile technologies, reconfiguring our lives with the shift in demarcation. Political boundaries are no longer implemented through spatial and geographic rules: body, home, cities, suburbs, and countryside can all be viewed through the same lens.

The house has been a space of subjection due to the surveillance produced by its physical nature. However, with the proliferation of the smart home, invisible technologies are fading into the background of daily routines. This blurs the boundaries between attachment and detachment from a device, on and off, work and non-work. The device which perform a task and in return collects trends and data generated by its user, becomes ubiquitous in all facets of life. Living amongst technologies that are designed to blend seamlessly into domestic routines allows productive feedback to be generated endlessly for corporations to use for profit and growth.

fig 2.1:  
"Twindow"modern  
window  
advertisement, 1958

fig 2.2: No  
trespassing.

## surveillance

Capitalism is rooted in the exploitation of free labour, which is made strategically invisible since much of it is performed in the private sphere. The era of Modernism gave great power to the field of architecture as if it was a tool for social organization which would outline the guidelines for living life, modernising oneself, and making “progress”. This utopic vision for society and over-involvement in social order is invasive, restrictive, and oppressive.

Surveys from occupants in low-income and middle-class housing projects in the United States showed that the two main issues impeding tenants’ satisfaction were both understood as one: the issue of privacy (Burr, 1993). Primarily in relation to the exterior, insulating and soundproofing between units was used to address the concern of hearing others and being heard. In relation to the interior, a need for more storage emerged as occupants were concerned with privacy within the units. Storing objects allowed people to keep their possessions out of view from other occupants (Burr, 1993), (see fig 2.3).

The domestic is closely linked to the discovery of privacy and the desire or need to fulfill one’s inner life. The rise of literacy and the popularity of silent reading and the novel were supported by creating an introspective retreat central to the bourgeois home. The ability to detach and immerse oneself in a virtually disconnected space has since accelerated with increasing numbers of personal devices, applications, and outlets (Geddes, 2005). The magnitude of data that a person generates is increasing in every facet of private life through the use of wearable technology such as, Amazon’s Alexa, Google Home, smart home appliances, and the Wi-Fi that connects devices and bodies in space.

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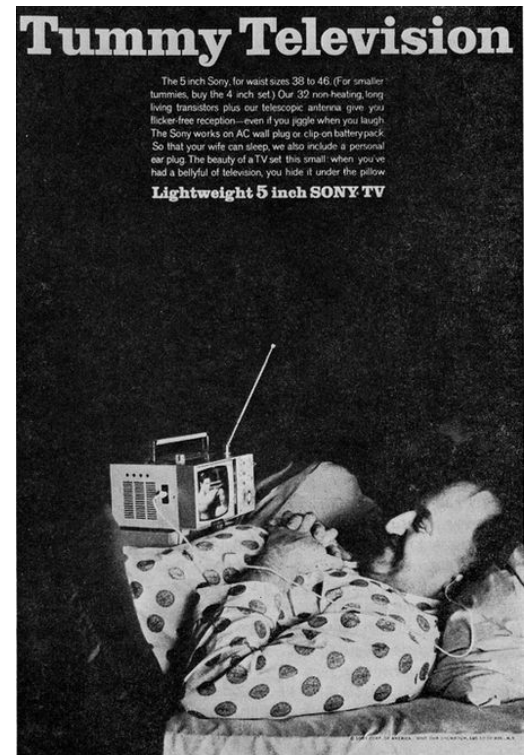


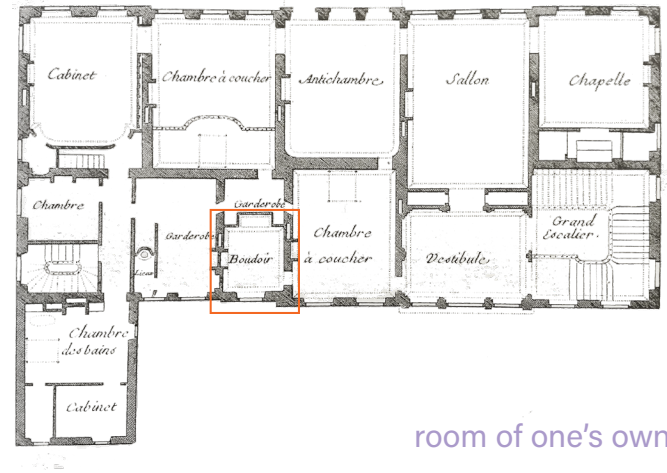
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fig 2.4 : John Lennon and Yoko Ono Bed-in at the Hilton Hotel in Amsterdam, 1969, Getty Images.

Bringing the media reporters in to the bed, making the bed work as a stage for a public performance.

fig 2.5 : Tummy Television, Sony, 1964. Bringing the window in to the public into the privacy and comfort of the bed.





room of one's own

Privacy began as a condition to be celebrated, where the private room (the closet, boudoir, bachelor chamber, and the single worker's bedroom) was first an essential domestic condition of wealthy homes and then seeped into the middle and working-class. The design and decoration of the boudoir highlights the negotiation of female power both in the realm of the home and in public life. Early on, the boudoir was not yet defined as a room, rather a transitional space such as a corner, nook, or a connective space between two rooms. It had no specific designation or program but accommodated a variety of activities. If a man gave a woman a room of her own, that signaled to her that she could govern space but only the small allotted room. That is her domain—the boudoir.

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The neoclassical French hotel of the 18th century featured a boudoir tucked alongside an enfilade of rooms (fig 2.6). It was located between a sleeping chamber and wardrobe or cabinet, near the end of a labyrinth of preceding spaces, and furnished by a chaise longue and a small table. The walls would be decadent in ornaments, mirrors, paintings of mythological and natural scenes on carved panels with plaster reinforcing an ambiguous state of imagination and reality. It contrasted the dematerialised and rational language of its neoclassical architectural container. It was the private retreat for reading, resting, daydreaming, and romance. It was designed to excite the senses and mask the feeling of boundaries and place. The boudoir became literal and psychological space for fantasy and play, a sexualised space for projected desire and secrets which enforced male desire and female desirability (fig 2.7). Images usually depicted the room as either empty of occupants or with a solitary female figure reading, embroidering, or gazing out of a window (Bonnevier, 2005).

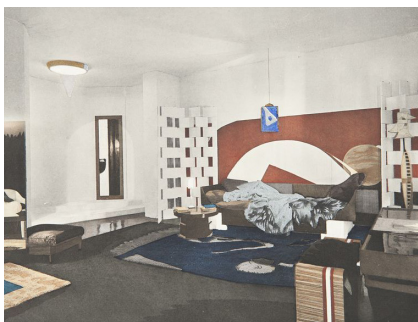
fig 2.6: Plan of the first floor of the hotel of Humières, Jacques-François Blondel, 1752-1756





23 fig 2.7: Le Boudoir,  
Pierre Malouvre, 1774

fig 2.8: Monte Carlo  
Boudoir for the  
Salon des Artistes  
Decorateurs, Eileen  
Gray, Paris, 1923

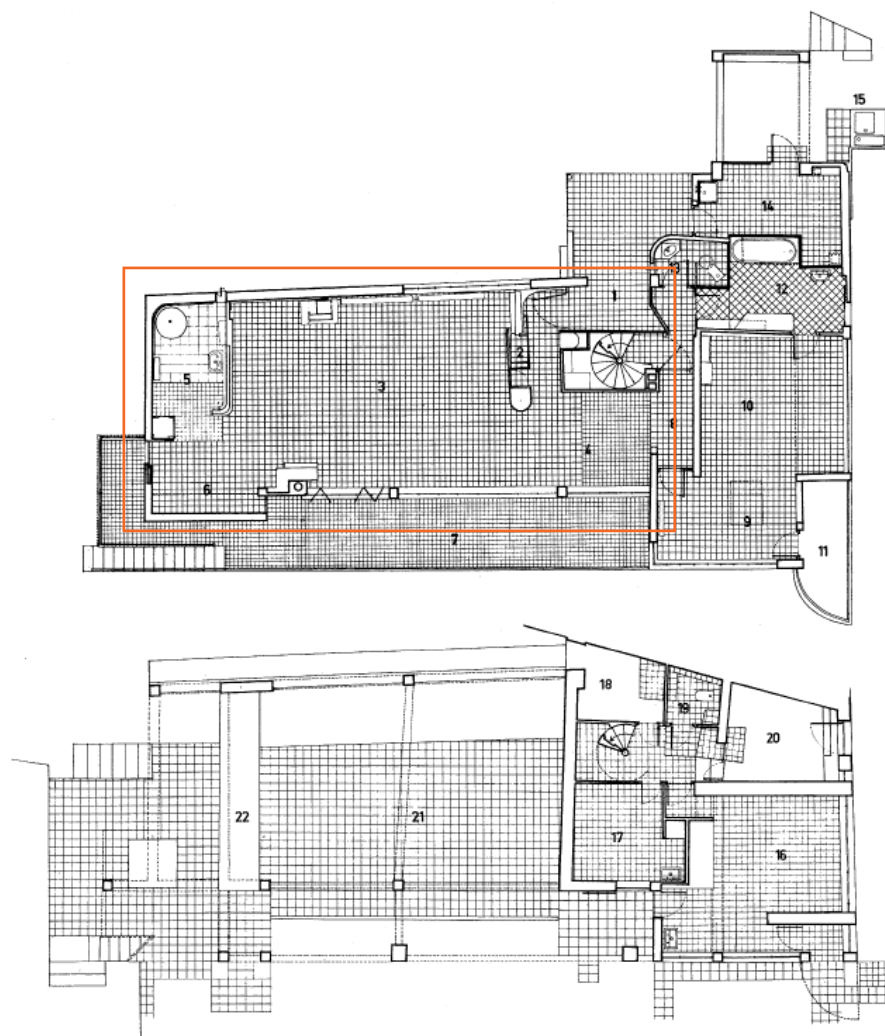


Living room—and boudoir Monte Carlo by Eileen Gray was proposed as a multi-functional space for all aspects of life (pleasure, rest, studies, business meetings, and parties) with the large central day bed at the heart of the room, a multifunctional private space which invited aspects of public life (fig 2.8). There is no privacy dedicated to the bed, instead it is framed as a void and symbol for activities outside of a visitor's presence. The boudoir was the first domestic space devoted to female use, a counterpart to the male study or cabinet. Katarina Bonnevier discusses the issue that the boudoir raises. While men were associated with the mind and rationality, women were perceived as connected with the body and sensuality. By making the boudoir the most public, yet intimate part of the building, these gendered notions of space were subverted and rendered ambiguous. Her work is a feminist critique of the culture and architecture and mainstream masculine taste.

Performativity is a central term in queer theory “that we become in and through the act” explain how meaning is created in the process of making. Gender is not a precondition, men and women are not automatic categories, but rather conditions that are inscribed upon us (Bonnevier, 2005). Gender is constructed and therefore heterosexuality cannot be assumed as the natural, the neutral, or normal. Queer theory aims to restructure the heterosexual matrix, a standard that defines everyone and everything as heterosexual unless proven otherwise and exists as a precondition for how the built environment is understood.



fig 2.9: E-1027  
Floorplans, Eileen  
Gray, 1926





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Through repetition, a condition is assumed a norm and assigned truth. Breaking such norms, Eileen Gray's architecture is performative, taking place within a set environment but managing to foster a new and subversive sociality. The body is engaged in the elements of the building, objects are in motion, sliding, pivoting, flipping, and disappearing, but the body is also in motion.

The shower in the room is hidden behind a pale-yellow screen that does not reach the ceiling and is further camouflaged by the light wall behind it. The sound of water pours through the room while maintaining visual privacy for the shower (fig 2.11).

In E-1027, the first space you enter as a guest is both visible from interior and exterior. The spiral staircase that bisects the house is only visible from the outside where it reaches the roof terrace. The staircase is masked by a corner, screened behind a wall and a secret door (fig 2.10). Within the staircase are cavities in the walls that offer spaces for secrets. "Storage space houses things that threaten to soil the room" (Bonnevier, 172, 2005).

fig 2.10: closet within  
closeted staircase in  
E-1027, Eileen Gray,  
1926

fig 2.11: E-1027 Living  
Room, Eileen Gray,  
1926



## the gaze

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Beatriz Colomina discusses how the development of the x-ray and the modern house coincide. "Just as the x-ray exposes the inside of the body to the public eye, the modern house exposes its interior (Colomina, 146, 2007). Glass played a crucial role in creating a visual blur between spheres, but rather than connecting the two, it framed a gaze, a gaze into the interior. By the mid-century, glass houses had become a phenomenon. From Pyrex cookware to windows in ovens, x-rays are not only used to see inside the body for medical reasons, everything is subject to x-rays. Even if a house is too big to be x-rayed, it was imagined through advertisements and film. Colomina makes the analogy of the skin and bones of the house as being like an x-ray. "Glass walls are like instruments of control, from the outside, the glass exposes the house to the public, as if guaranteeing conformity to the community" (Colomina, 153, 2007).

Built for Dr. Edith Farnsworth, an unmarried middle-aged woman, the Farnsworth house by Mies Van der Rohe was to serve as a country retreat from the city in Plano, Illinois. Perched in the middle of a grassy meadow along the Fox river, the transparent glass box is supported by a floor and roof, represented by two bands of crisp white steel, creating an elevated platform (fig 2.12). The house is sealed off from surrounding nature and wrapped by a thin and seemingly impermeable membrane of glass, forming the boundary between inside and out. The objects and landscapes beyond the house are framed as abstracted and distant images viewing the wall as a picture plane. The image and experience of insularity is reinforced by the sealed glass, within the interior, sights and sounds are magnified, people and objects are more intimate as their tangibility and tactility are enhanced. The house



"Do I feel implacable calm?...The truth is that in this house with its four walls of glass I feel like a prowling animal, always on the alert. I am always restless. Even in the evening. I feel like a sentinel on guard day and night. I can rarely stretch out and relax...

What else? I don't keep a garbage can under my sink. Do you know why? Because you can see the whole 'kitchen' from the road on the way in here and the can would spoil the appearance of the whole house. So I hide it in the closet farther down from the sink. Mies talks about his 'free space': but his space is very fixed. I can't even put a clothes hanger in my house without considering how it affects everything from the outside. Any arrangement of furniture becomes a major problem, because the house is transparent, like an X-ray"

- Dr. Edith Farnsworth

worked to frame Farnsworth and her sexuality as an object of curiosity. At night, the outdoors would disappear in contrast to the glowing house—everything was put on display.

The house has two bathrooms at opposite ends but no private bedroom, which meant that guests were expected to sleep on the sofa or mattress while Edith would be in the sleeping space. The doubling of the bathrooms suggests a need for modesty to hide the female body and its functions, to keep visitors from seeing the nightgown hung on the back of the bathroom door. This article of women's clothing stood as an emblem of femaleness and sexuality and had to be hidden away (Friedman, 1998).

fig 2.12: Farnsworth House, Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe, 1947

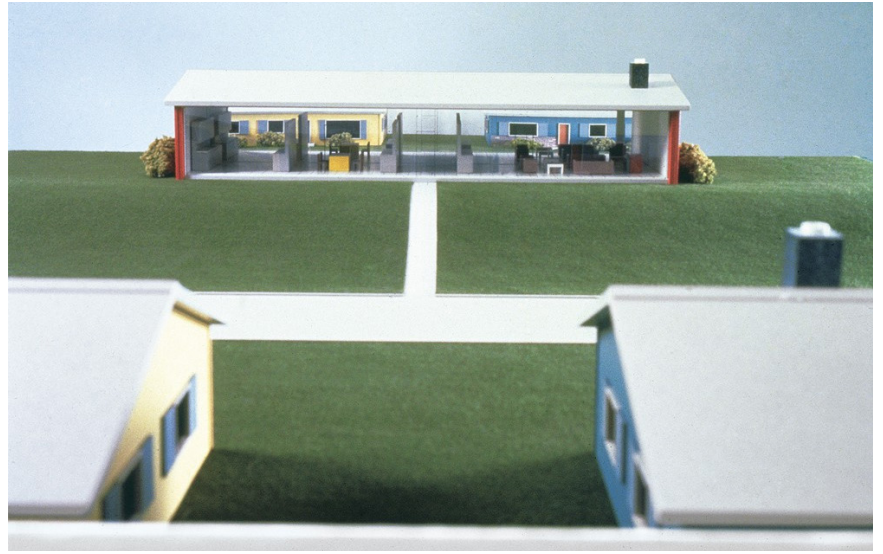




29

fig 2.13: balcony  
objects, for seating  
or storage, Nahal  
Rahnamaei, 2019

Today, glass towers which dominate cities allow a glimpse into residential units, but often this is obstructed by the outer layer of the tower, a series of balconies with glass guards which support the spillage of domestic excess, out of sight from the interior of the unit. As the objects within the home are stored within plain view of the neighboring buildings, anyone who looks out the window is instantly taken aback by the voyeuristic sensation that traps them (fig 2.13).



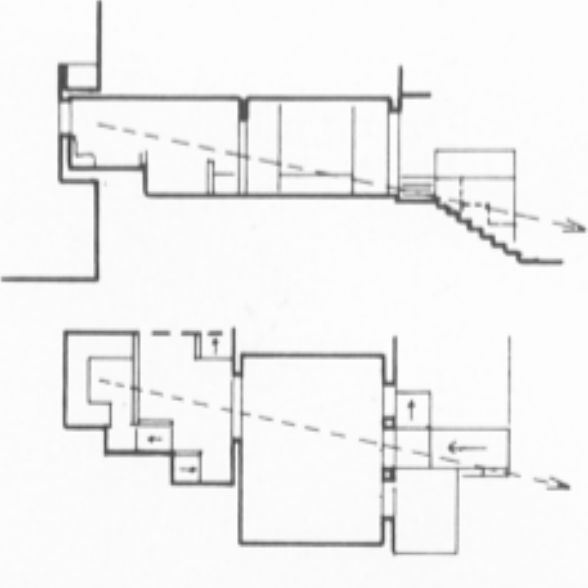
## the voyeur

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The popularity of television in the United States in the 1950s was influenced in part by people's preoccupation with privacy consumerism and family life (Friedman, 1998). Television allowed for a close look at other people's lives and homes, allowing people to peer into the depths of family, gender and the control of the domestic environment. Like the picture window, television blurred the distinction between public and private realms and brought to light the voyeuristic nature of the house.

Dan Graham's *Alteration of a Suburban House* (1978) underlines how assumed ideas of privacy are not quite as they appear by questioning who is looking and who is being looked at in the suburbs (fig 2.14). A model of a bungalow has its front façade removed and replaced by a glass wall and the interior divisions cut in half by a seamless mirror to reflect the pedestrians walking outside the house. The public domain is reflected inside the house, entering the private domestic space while also providing a view of the inhabitants. The space behind the mirror is hidden, suggesting that behind domestic uniformity, different lifestyles are being masked (Vallerand, 2013). This raises a question about viewing, observing, and therefor about controlling the occupant of the interior.

fig 2.14: *Alteration to a Suburban House*, Dan Graham, 1978



Adolf Loos' concept of the Raumplan (fig 2.15) was developed as an emphasis on the separation of rooms with unique functions, contrasting with Le Corbusier's plan libre. Each room was cloaked in a series of materials and textures that would enhance their distinction from one another. There is a confused sense of visual or physical connectivity to rooms, which are framed by generous openings or doors that create a frame for the following space. Steps and various ceiling heights are used to frame views and create suspense and pause between the sequence of spaces, which also enhances the theatricality and spectatorship within the house. The interiors are inward looking spaces, detached from outside, and strongly articulated in its starkly blank façade. Windows are draped with curtains, mirrors are strategically placed in alcoves to fragment and extend the spaces, undermining the sense of boundaries, and returning the gaze back to the interior.

Control within the house was presented as a female role and existed under patriarchal structures. Loos's architecture created intimate interiors reflecting masculine and feminine gender norms. The space marked as female creates the experience of women's vulnerability where her initial feeling of control in the house eventually reveals itself to be another space in which she is surveilled. The space that we understand women as having control over becomes a kind of prison because of the presence of a masculine voyeur. Although the woman in the raised living room in villa Moller has a seemingly privileged view through the house, her behaviour is ultimately shaped by an awareness that she is being watched.

fig 2.15: Moller house, section and plan tracing the path of the gaze through the house, terminating at the raised sitting area, Adolf Loos, 1928



fig 2.16: Moller house,  
raised sitting area  
off living room is  
backlit by the draped  
window, Adolf Loos,  
1928

fig 2.17: Moller house,  
view from the street,  
Lady's Room is  
sticking out of the  
façade, Adolf Loos,  
1928

The Moller house contains a raised sitting area off the living room that protrudes the façade of the building, overlooking the entrance—still a part of the house but actively disconnected (fig 2.16 & 2.17). Here, the couch provides a sense of security, and the backlighting of the window behind creates a sense of anonymity. She is tempted to look out, as it surveys the front of the house, but once her back is turned on the interior her sense of control fades. Once a visitor's gaze meets the occupant of the theatre box, or rather her silhouette against the light of the window behind, she is caught in the act of seeing and becomes the object of another's gaze, entrapped in the moment of control (Colomina, 1999).

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In the Müller house, the Zimmer der Dame (lady's room) is a raised sitting area which is suspended over the social spaces of the house, assuming a position as the "heart of the house" and a point of control (fig 2.18). By creating a theatre box within the house, Loos created an inner sense of privacy, rendering the rest of the interior as public, the men's domain. Conventional ideas of private and public, inside and outside, object and subject become intricately folded into each other.

Loos designed a house for Josephine Baker, wrapped in a black and white banded façade, branded and tattooed the skin of the house, exoticizing the black female dancer (fig 2.20). The heart of the home, the theatre box, the female enclosure, was the double height pool with small windows on the first floor that would invite a voyeuristic glimpse from below of Baker swimming (fig 2.21). The reflection of the glass concealed peering eyes behind the windows, creating a spectacle out of the swimmer.

Invisible, dynamic, and free of fixed structure or definition, eroticism within architecture is based on an instinctual understanding of form and space. It is masked and encoded, characterised by "excess, elaboration, irony, and humour" (Troutman, 2005). Eroticism exists in a state of tension, between a state of maximum desire and feeding off the forbidden.

fig 2.18: Müller house,  
raised sitting area in  
the Zimmer der Dame  
(Lady's Room), Adolf  
Loos, 1930

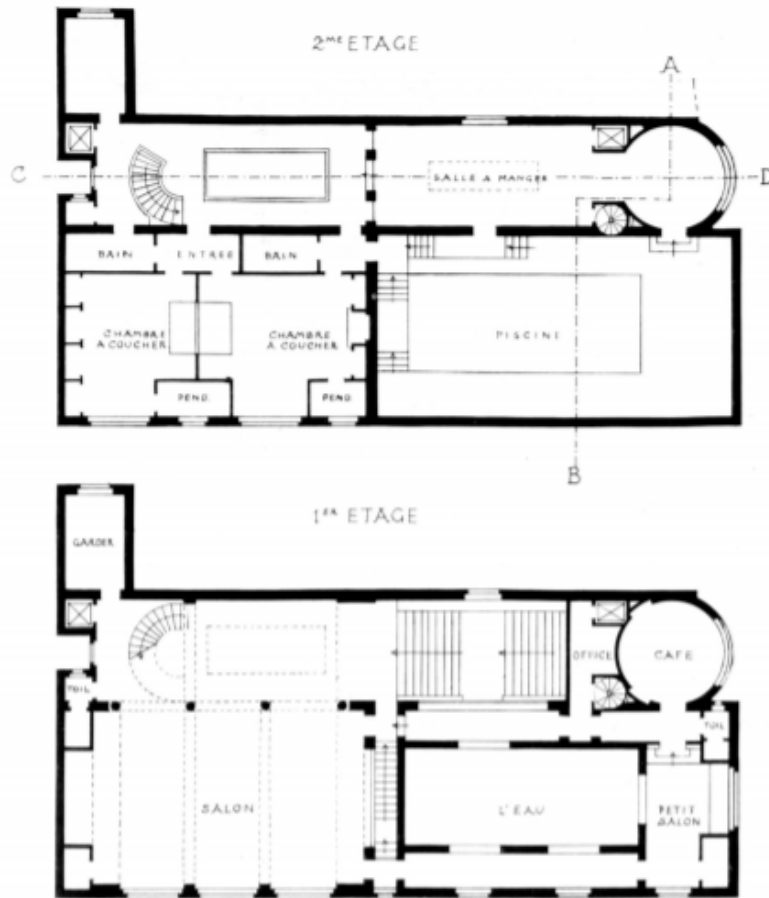
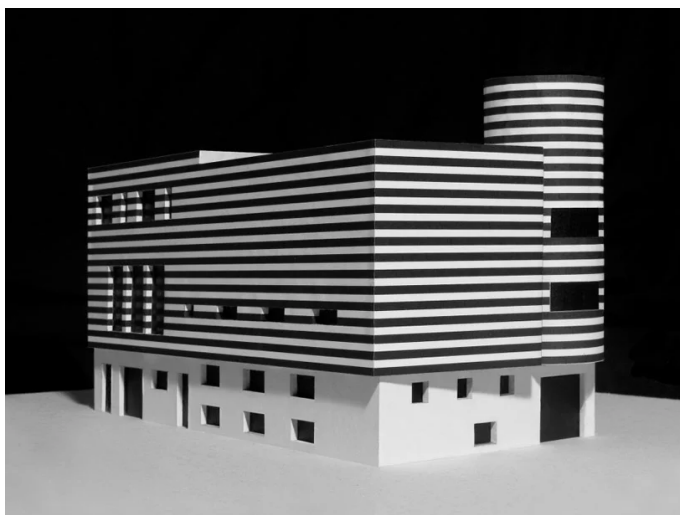


fig 2.19: The Josephine Baker House, Paris, by Adolf Loos, 1928. Plans and sections.

fig 2.20: Model of striped facade of house for Josephine Baker, Adolf Loos, 1927

fig 2.21: Swimming pool for Josephine Baker with glass windows for a voyeuristic view, 1927, Stephen Atkinson

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intimate geographies of the room



designation of space

binaries

women's work

blurring spheres

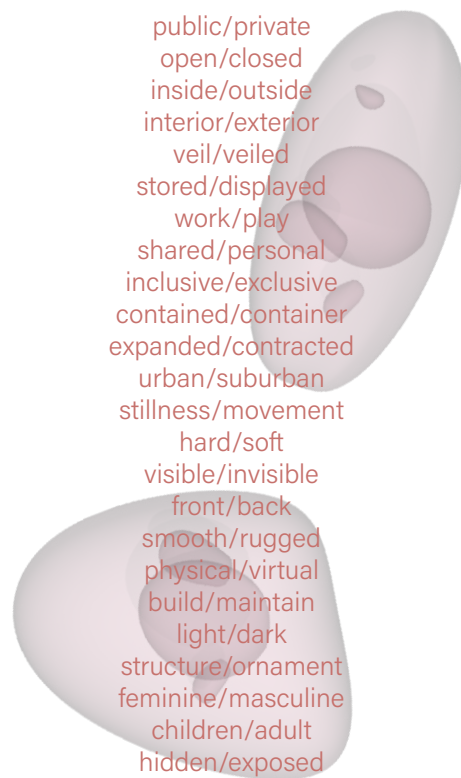
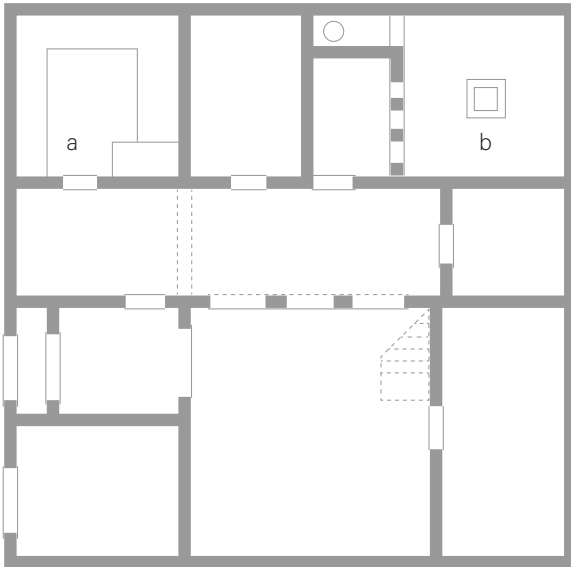


fig 3.1: overlapping  
spheres diagram, 2018

By separating spheres, we create the "other".

The division of space creates experiences of both exclusion and privacy violation for people based on their race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. Queer and feminist critiques argue that binary oppositions are not as relevant to everyone as mainstream spatial discourses have projected, and that a much more fluid and complex understanding of space is essential to ensure everyone's wellbeing (Vallerand, 2018). Opposing spheres present a hierarchical system consisting of the dominant male public realm of production, and the subordinate female realm on reproduction. Reversing the binary terms deconstructs the power dynamics implied through spatial agency. Because of the assumed privacy of domestic spaces, the interior is more representative of the occupant's identification. The house becomes a space that can be deeply concerned with identity and must therefore be constructed beyond binary understandings of space.

Both Romans and Greeks arranged the spaces within the house based on the opposition of work and leisure. The ancient Greeks considered work to be a condition of everyday life, survival, production, and routine. Work would be interrupted by ritual moments of non-work, such as feasts, festivals, sacrifices, and political meetings. Ritual existed as a temporal construct within ancient Greek settlement and extends to prescribe a spatial condition. The formal arrangement of rooms within a house in ancient Greece varied from one settlement to the next, but mainly comprised of a courtyard, two complimentary rooms (the Oikos, the Andron - see fig 3.2) and a series of smaller undefined rooms surrounding the courtyard. These spaces begin to construct a gendered domesticity, where the Oikos, equipped with a chimney and well, facilitated the handling of fire and water (like the contemporary



kitchen and bathroom). This rendered it a service space for women along with the Andron, a reserved space for ceremony and administrative power which translates to “place for or of men”. Like all other rooms in the house, the Andron was used by all genders and age groups, but on special nights it was transformed to a domain for men. The Andron existed in a temporal sense, as it transformed into an exclusive room for events or rituals. It can be considered neither public nor private, as the intimate setting it provided for an exclusive group would have greater implications beyond the room. The events within this space were rigid exceptions to their flexible pattern of life. (Aureli & Giudici, 2018). The distinction between work and leisure in ancient Greece was a construct manifested in time, rather than an actual script of physical space. Devoted to Otium and the display of wealth and power, the ancient Greeks considered the house to be clearly separated from the public, whereas ancient Romans considered extending the house to guests, friends, allies, and strangers.

fig 3.2: Andron (a) and Oikos (b) in the Greek Domus, Diagram redrawn from DOGMA the room of one's own, 2017



According to Hanna Arendt, the division of public/private indicates that there are things that need to be hidden and others that need to be displayed publicly, if they are to exist at all (Arendt, 1998).

## women's work

During the 19th century in Britain, working-class women spent their days in workshops or slums, whereas middle upper-middle-class women suffered enforced leisure. Evangelism influenced the ideology of gender difference in the 19th century, with a focus on morality, much like puritanism, which had previously been religious tradition in Britain. Men were perceived as worldly and active, women as mild and gentle. This view framed them as complimentary binaries, each doing their part: men conducting their work in public, and women in private (Roberts, 1991). While the working-class women had to work outside the home, it was desirable for women to be home. As businesses grew, the men would leave the house for work in the city, while the women and children spent the day refining craft as leisure. Needlework, embroidery, tapestry, and painting were considered leisure since they were deemed activities that did not contribute to the public realm. This understanding of home as a place separate from employment devalues the unpaid work which is done within it and influences our notions of housework today.

Modernity promoted scientific rationalism which permeated previous notions of domesticity, previously centered on love, family, and privacy, and replaced with ideas concerning efficiency, control, and exposing the interior to administrators, health workers and domestic experts. The role of women in the home was no longer narrow and constricted to serving her family, but provided a sense of citizenship in the project of modern social existence (Heynen, 2005).

A rise of feminism questioned the prescriptions of domestic life and imagined new arrangements that would allow women to participate in public life. The realm of architecture

was also as discretely divisive. According to its official policy, the Bauhaus welcomed women on the same basis as men, while subjecting women to painting and sculpture, away from the core architecture class.

Many proposals were concerned with collective domestic services, communal kitchens, laundry, and childcare, which would free women from their duties to their family (Hayden, 1981). The plan for integral coop (fig 3.4) shows 12 row houses with shared dining, kitchen, and laundry facilities, while the Frankfurt kitchen (fig 3.3) shows an incredibly detailed and efficient workstation, both designed by women. We have since moved away from these strict spatial boundaries that define the function of a space.

The normative structure of domesticity has been the single-family household governed by heterosexual relationships with men as the head of the household and women as the caretakers. The woman's duty is to guard the house, but only according to the law that precedes both her and the house. This relationship is far more complex than male/female, exterior/interior, public/private. At the intersection of age, ability, and race, the agency of the subject regarding domesticity is a complex web that challenges the binary understanding of power structures in the home.

fig 3.4: Plan for  
'integral co-operation'  
12 row houses with  
shared Dining ,  
kitchen, laundry,  
parlor, and library,  
Marie Howland, 1885



## blurring spheres

The living room has historically been a room that supports and incorporates several functions. During the nineteenth century, the parlour was a room that was designated for entertaining guests in the homes of the middle-class. However, with an increasing blur between private and public lives, the living room as a multi-functional space emerged alongside the parlour, making a distinction between formal entertaining and the room used for household work and leisure. Eventually, the living room entirely replaced the parlour (Rechavi, 2009).

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There is an alarming blur between work and play today. Offices are cloaked with pops of colour and break-out spaces, cocktail hours, and gamification of office tasks, pseudo-living rooms (fig 3.6), anything emulates any fun, creativity, and passion, and that steers away from the mundane and sterile aesthetic of corporate life (fig 3.5). There is a softness that is hiding the structures at play here. Within the plushy comfort of the bed enters the cold plastics, metals, and papers of work.

"Mature capitalism has taught us to love work as we would leisure, and to invest in leisure the energy and planning that we would devote to work. Both our vocabulary and our spaces have registered this shift" (Aureli & Giudici, 2018). Industrialization brought with it the 8-hour shift and the radical separation of home and office (or factory), rest and work, night and day. Post-industrialization collapses work back into the home; folding work in to the home and tucking itself into the bed. Hugh Hefner, who actually led his business from his hybrid bed/office, describes all the tech gear in his bed. This gear allowed him to conduct interviews, make phone calls, and do whatever else pertained to his empire (Colomina, 2014).



fig 3.5: Jacques Tati's  
Playtime, Specta  
Films, 1967



fig 3.6: Lounge in  
CANOPY co-working  
space in San  
Francisco, Canopy,  
2019

fig 3.7: A Sleeping  
Pod, Getty Images,  
2016

fig 3.8: Hong Kong  
capsule rooms, 2012







fig 3.9: stacking beds,  
top detail

fig 3.10: stacking beds







domestic storage and labour

labour  
concealing work  
domestic overload  
clean your room!  
collection  
stuff

## labour

In "The Grand Domestic Revolution", Dolores Hayden discusses how the socialization of domestic work by the "material feminists" of the turn of the 20th century appropriated physical spaces in the house to create more empowering women's spaces (Hayden, 1981).

Hannah Arendt identifies work as the "the production of lasting objects (a table, a chair, but also a poem or a painting)," whereas labour is the concerned with the business of endless reproduction (eating, sleeping, preparing meals, giving birth, raising kids, cleaning etc.) Work leaves behind objects that last, labour vanishes in order to reproduce (Arendt, 1998). The place of labour is the house. In the medieval house, domestic space and the workplace were often combined within the same building. Modern housing focused on reproduction, disconnected from the world of production.

"If labor power—that is, a population's potential to produce—was and is the most important form of "production," the most central productive space is the house itself" (Aureli & Tattara, 1, 2015). The downgrading of female labour to unpaid household labour reinforces the reproduction of labour power as the central element of capitalist structures. The house becomes central to reproduction, where labour is essential to reproduction, yet is rendered as non-labour, a labour of love, invisible, or hidden in the private realm.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles' Manifesto calls for a readdressing of the status of maintenance work in private, domestic, and public spaces. She tries to break down the barriers of what is perceived of as "work" and what deems itself as "artwork". Looking at minimum wage maintenance jobs and nonwage housewives. Her art exhibit "CARE", aimed to display all the acts of maintaining everyday things as art (Arnolfini, 2013). She would live in a museum, sweep the floors, dust everything, cook, invite people to eat, and any other menial task that would be performed in a domestic and private setting (fig 4.1). By putting this work on display, Ukeles drew attention to labour that goes unnoticed or remains invisible.

In PHANTOM, Andres Jaque filled the Barcelona pavilion with all its junk from the basement, revealing the traces of its history dating back to its original opening in 1929 (fig 4.2 & 4.3). The basement was created as a hidden storage and maintenance room to facilitate the control and maintenance of its installations. By showing domestic appliances, cleaning supplies, and a stack of used cushions, the project unveils the work that goes in to maintaining the untouched appearance of the pavilion as well as concealing the storage which contains artifacts of the pavilion's history (Frearson, 2013).

The impact of these works reveals the hidden and invisible. While Laderman's performance showcases the domestic work that is subjected to the "woman of the house" and is typically invisible, Jaque uncovers the hidden artifacts of the pavilion to expose facets of its history that were strategically excluded. The enaction of domestic tasks emulates the uncovering of hidden objects, highlighting the difference between work and labour, production and reproduction.



51 "MY WORKING WILL BE THE WORK"

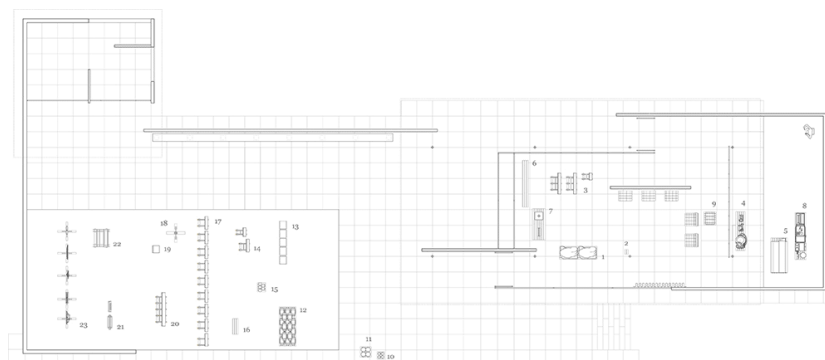


fig 4.1: four actions  
of maintenance art,  
Mierle Laderman  
Ukeles, 1973

fig 4.2: PHANTOM.  
Mies as rendered  
society, exhibition  
plan, Andres Jaque,  
2013

fig 4.3: PHANTOM.  
Mies as rendered  
society, Andres Jaque,  
2013



In 1945, *Tomorrow's House* was published by George Nelson and Henry Wright, a widespread guideline aimed at young middle-class couples looking to own a house. They analysed consumer surveys hoping to identify the housewife's main concerns, which they found to be a shortage in closet space (Spigel, 2001). The Storgewall was proposed as a solution to the clutter of everyday life, intended for the postwar consumer family overcome by the objects they possessed (fig 4.5). The Storgewall served especially as means of hiding and organizing media and machines (from radios to phonographs and TVs), as well as the domestic objects that would be organized by the woman of the house. Nelson initially thought he could solve the housewife's problems by making objects disappear in the airspace between walls, thus developing the Storgewall to keep clutter out of sight.

The publication explored the intimate details of household organization, defining the roles and functions of family members, spaces, and objects. It introduced the family room, the more relaxed and casual version of the living room, advertised as a multi-purpose space to accommodate a variety of activities associated with different gender and generational roles. This included a children's play area, father's study, and mother's sewing nook (Nelson & Wright, 1945). The unity of the family was encouraged through this contradictory notion of division. It also rebranded the kitchen as a workstation, along with other work-related rooms placing women's work at an administrative and secretarial position to manage the house. Storgewall renders the postwar media home as a space of administrative storage rather than a space for family memory. The order and efficiency of the office and factory outside was creeping into the home.



fig 4.5: Cover of *Life* magazine with the Storgewall, January 22, 1945.

fig 4.6: Storage Wall,  
George Nelson, LIFE  
magazine 1945



In relation to women's work within the house, the storage wall optimized the retrieval of household things and served to make her work invisible (Spigel, 2012). In order to relieve the stress of retrieving domestic objects, the housewife would be faced with the decision of where to place each object, negotiating its position within the household and then within the wall (fig 4.6). Given the gradual disappearance of attics and basements in the post-war home, occupants were encouraged to let go of mementos that would be considered clutter. Objects of family memory are subject to the same invisibility as media, but they are never considered "live storage", which consists of items accessed frequently and made easily available (brooms, cups, clothes—domestic objects). If mementos (dead storage) were too special to toss, they could be carefully placed in the display portion of the storage wall, essentially aestheticizing the memories in relation to the high functioning contents of the wall.

Beyond a functional system of family management, the Storagewall acted as a symbol of one's procurements of cultural capital and democratic freedom to choose what to express. Decorative objects were considered to be conversation pieces and expressions of personal taste, which were also vital components of the communication network that the wall produced (Spigel, 2001).

The Storagewall changed our perception of a wall from something that encloses the interior, to a system of organization that gestures to the exterior. Making artifacts invisible has a problematic underside that creates concealed trajectories and hides the entire social and





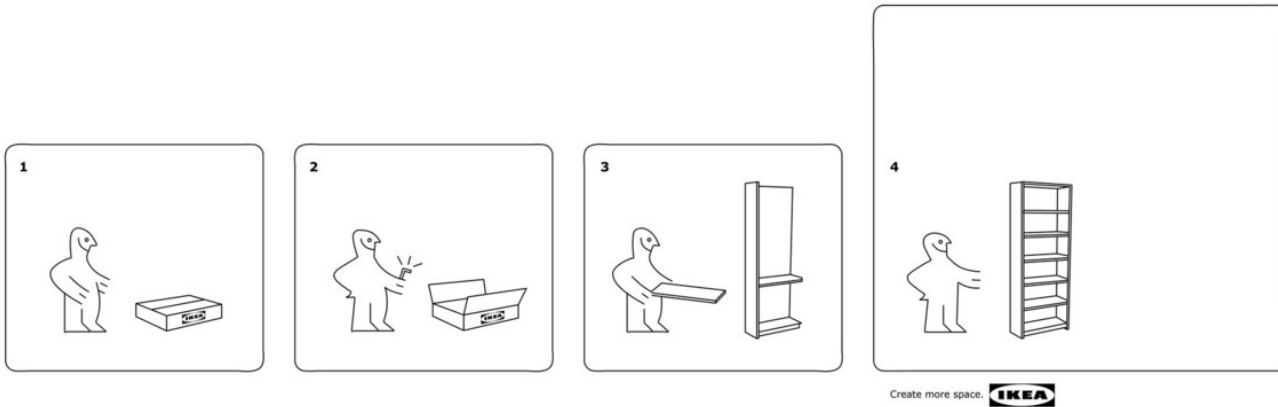


fig 4.8: Billy Bookcase Manual, IKEA

fig 4.9: 606 Universal Shelving System, designed for Vitsoe, 1960

Introduced by IKEA in 1979, the relative affordability and accessibility of the BILLY has allowed people to modify and reconfigure their environments to reflect and accommodate their interests, needs, and personal taste. In 2011, IKEA launched a new 40 cm deep BILLY alongside the original 30 cm, as books were no longer the primary occupant of the shelving system (Mattern, 2016).

Dieter Rams's universal 606 shelving appears to float freely from the wall and off the ground. The illusion of weightlessness comes at a higher price: a single bay costs nearly 12 times the price of a BILLY bookcase (Mattern, 2016). In contrast, the particle board shelves of the BILLY bow deeply and carry the burden of weighted books.





"Cleaning up" was a task mostly performed by the working class, immigrants, and other groups of people who did not typically own houses. With the decline of the servants in the post war era, the work was hidden as a result of the housewife tidying all domestic objects, the artifacts of labour, into a neat storage system. Nelson had imagined his storage wall as a solution to the following interrelated forces at the mid-century:

1. The shrinking size of modern homes, no attics or basements

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Today, the size of homes continues to shrink, and consumption rates remain unprecedented.

2. The decline of servant labour force during the war

The domestic tasks that were once expected to be performed by the housewife are transferred to a product of service. This creates a discrepancy between the classed and raced experiences of those who can afford domestic help, compared with the often-racialized women who are the help.

3. The boom in leisure that would lead to the accumulation of objects

Much of the leisure we indulge in today is no longer associated with a physical location in space, as media that were once stored in homes are now accessible in a seemingly immaterial form.



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Self-storage is dependent on disposable income to be invested in non-essential material accumulation and outsourcing material accumulation. Information is no longer associated with a physical location in space, as media that were once stored in the home (books, photos, etc.) are now accessible in a seemingly immaterial form. The self-storage industry was facilitated by the invention of big box retailers, situated in urban peripheries and long highways. The idea of big box stores was to outsource the efforts of shopping to the consumer, which was facilitated by the surge in car ownership.

The demand for self storage is growing in Canada, with a particularly quick rate of growth in Toronto and Vancouver (Kohler, 2017). New facilities are branded like shiny new sites of commerce, with air conditioning, board rooms, music and Wi-Fi, erasing the unappealing image of self-storage. The storage infrastructure is increasingly centralized and invisible, as the visible portion of the process is reduced to an app.

The stability of a home affects the storage of one's belongings. Migration limits the capacity to collect domestic items over time. Rather than carrying a case of CD's, a music collection can be accessed on demand, provided the presence of a smartphone. We live in a world where we have immediate visual and auditory access to so much information. In addition to access to information, rapid delivery options allow for the same day delivery of items ordered online (provided you sign up for amazon prime). The transience of these objects hides the excess in production, as storage continues to match consumption rates (fig 4.11).

fig 4.10: Second Closet  
Advertisement,  
SecondCloset, 2019

fig 4.11: Amazon  
warehouse,  
Peterborough UK,  
2014



As a response to increasingly mobile lifestyles, IKEA has announced that the company will start renting its furniture as a part of a move towards a circular economy (Samadder, 2019). We are increasingly renting access to everything that we once owned: music, television, art, clothes, etc. The transaction of making one-time purchases has been replaced by ongoing relationships with a company, through subscriptions.

Architecture is often understood as a permanent built form, neglecting the objects that define the inner space of the built environment. A space becomes a bedroom once a bed is placed inside, a kitchen emerges once cooking devices are installed. Architecture exists within a set of spatial relations between the built environment and the movable objects that determine the type of space. The contemporary dwelling is no longer a permanent container for our belongings, but a transient and networked space that can be expanded and contracted according to our needs using apps and similar commodities (Puigianer, 2018). The quality and program of spaces are expressed through the objects they contain. Where the television was once a device that gathered the whole family, as fireplaces did previously, the atomisation of devices modifies the daily habits within the house. Current technologies allow for on-demand spatial adjustments and overlay various uses and occupations.

The downsizing of society as an attempt to restore an outdated model of typical suburban living rather than imagining anything inventive is the premise of the 2017 movie *Downsizing*, in which humans are miniaturized in order to consume smaller resources and thus save the planet (Trees, 2018) (fig 4.12). This echoes the grandeur of the suburban lifestyle

fig 4.12: *Downsizing*,  
Paramount Pictures,  
2018

which urbanites experience alike. The mass consumption of the suburbs was traditionally accommodated through vast amounts of space that allow for redundancy. While the micro apartment of today cannot store all the things that a house with a two-car garage and a basement can offer, it relies on remote access. Subscriptions, sharing facilities, and networks allow for a fluid transaction of things and objects so that the individual does not have the burden of storing items when not in use. When not in use, things feel invisible, the cloud dissolves all labour and burden that is involved in access to a commodity.

Objects extend us as people. They are consciously produced through human labour and produce artifacts. Looking back on these things is like looking at ourselves through a mirror (Miller, 2010). The comparison between clothing and housing are rather simplified, as one has much more autonomy in the way they dress themselves over how they are housed. Clothing comes and goes, is changed and draped on and off the body daily. A house is expensive, huge, and has more permanence. People are constructed by their material world, but they are not the ones responsible for the makeup of the material things they live amongst.

when you tidy up your room, put on dreamy nostalgic music, light some good smells, and thoroughly enjoy the heaven that exists in this intimate, personal space of your own design



clean your room!

On weekends, once the burden of schoolwork was excused, I would be told to clean my room. Rather than seeing this as punishment, I would be relieved to be left alone to recover all the stuff in my room. Like a palimpsest, layers of clutter would be shuffled about to uncover forgotten things. Boxes and bags and containers would all be emptied in an effort to “re-organize” the objects in a new fashion. Tubes of lip-gloss would be arranged neatly along the wall of a cupboard, clothes would hang in a closet following the colours of the rainbow, and stuffed animals would be saved from the suffocating pile of laundry and placed upright again. The process of organizing one’s belongings involves a personal codification of stuff, to determine an appropriate placement for each object.

Suburban anxiety about storage has seeped into the reality of micro-apartment dwellers, but rather than offloading excessive matter in the two-door garage, applications and subscriptions displace ‘stuff’ into a digital interface. Relationships with objects become transient. Beyond physical traces, endless connectivity has allowed for an unprecedented amount of personal data collection. With previous notions of privacy being questioned today, it is increasingly important to decode the invisible meanings in the material world that we occupy. The room is no longer just an unchanging space for our belongings, but a transient and networked place that can be expanded and contracted according to our needs using ephemeral commodities. The attempt to make objects disappear hides the social relations and belief systems embedded in the environment, which produces and organises based on social location.

fig 4.13: instagram  
user:  
@sighswoon, 2019



Marie Kondo's recent popularity reflects current trends that question our relationship to stuff. Her eight-part Netflix series released on January 1st, suggested a universal New Year's resolution, a purging of all things that no longer "spark joy". This effort to tidy up emulates a physical divorce from belongings, but simply relocates unwanted matter out of sight. The KonMari Method instructs people to tidy starting with clothing, books, papers, miscellaneous items, and finally sentimental items (Kondo, 2019). Closet purging has been familiar regiment far before Kondo, probably due to its cyclical nature, induced by the constant accumulation of things that that become overwhelming.

The accumulation of domestic goods was once relieved by basements and attics, but with the rise of the suburbs and shrinking urban apartments, self-storage has become a receptacle of domestic surplus. Before domestic excess gets offloaded to a storage facility, personal objects get stored away in closets, suitcases, cupboards, shoe boxes, and Tupperware—each a room for hiding content.

fig 4.14: Tidying up  
with Marie Kondo,  
Netflix, 2019



fig 4.15: domestic  
storage  
documentation  
request  
Instagram user: @  
nahahahahahal,  
March 8 2019

fig 4.16: immortalized  
stuff  
Instagram user: @  
nahahahahahal,  
March 14, 2019  
collection



As part of my primary research, I documented the contents of my nightstand, wedged between my front door and my bed. I then sent out a request to be invited to explore the depths of personal storage within the private quarters of others. An investigation of domestic storage and its contained objects pushes the limits of privacy and intimacy within the home and unveils how people live.

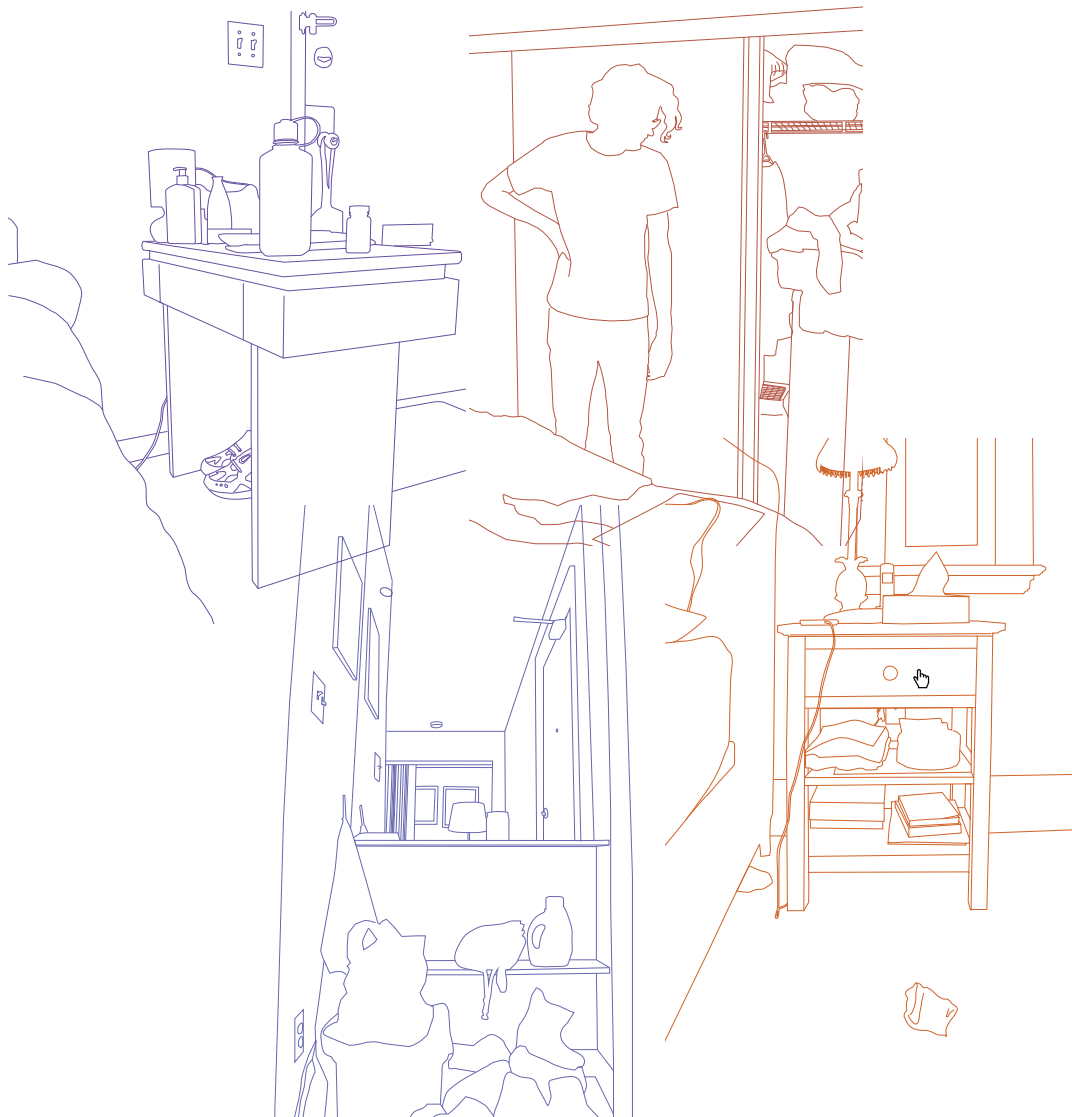
I went through people's objects with them present. The owner of the stuff would tell me how long they have had the object, sometimes only giving a quick description, other times delving into a nostalgic story before moving on to the next object. Objects were respected in their little house, each container requiring a knock before entry.

In several cases I found small amounts of foreign currency from recent trips abroad, and probably not worth the trouble of converting. There are also bags and boxes housed within closets or drawers, but with nothing contained inside them. They are in anticipation of housing smaller objects later. Expired passports are kept, as are old keys to doors that do not exist anymore, electronics that are not quite broken or dysfunctional and which have kept their overall aesthetic quality, and a medley of pills and empty bottles.



fig 4.17 : Room and  
objects traces

fig: 4.18: on following  
spread, Hidden  
objects











traces

veil and veiled

surface

guiding the gaze

extending the body

fig 4.19: Untitled,  
instagram user @  
andrew\_emon, 2019

Highlighting the weight of domestic objects, Toronto photographer Andrew Emond's ongoing project *Interiors* captures the traces of life left in anonymous domestic spaces (Emond, 2019). The objects and imprints in the spaces are the only cues of a previous inhabitation. Recognizable objects become the focus of the images while the architecture recedes into the background, capturing a state between activity and dormancy.

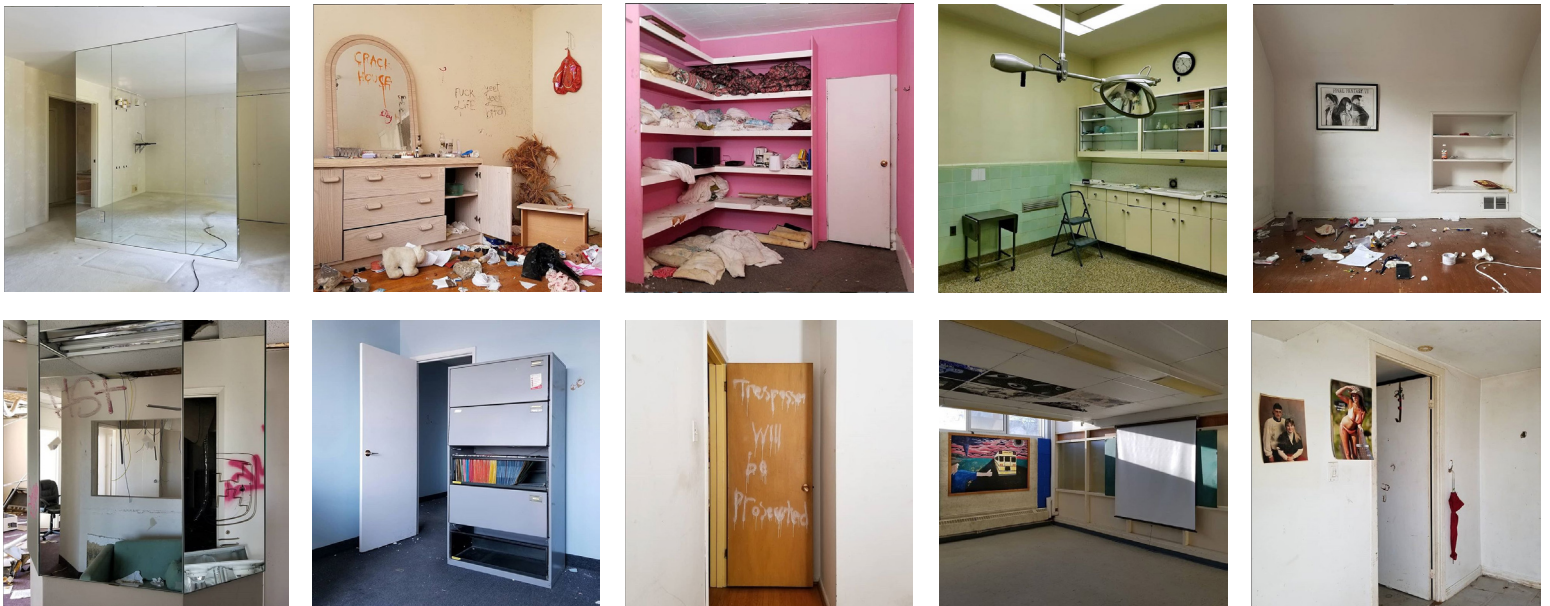


fig 4.20: Closet,  
Rachel Whiteread,  
1988

## veil and veiled

Walter Benjamin recalls his fascination with socks in *Berlin Childhood*, describing a journey into the depths of the wardrobe carving a space among its contents. In the deepest interior of the wardrobe is where he would come upon socks, rolled up and turned inside out. The curiosity that drew his hand into the pocket that the sock produced was satisfied by the discovery of a “little present” rolled up inside. The moment it is pulled out, the pocket disappears, revealing that that the pocket and sock are one. “... form and content, the veil and what is veiled, are the same” (Benjamin, 97, 2006).

Rachel Whiteread's sculptures bring the emptiness of spaces to attention. Using rooms as casts for her sculptures, she represents both the voids and the imprints of life (both interior conditions) on the surface. The plaster allows for a detailed reflection of physical traces and textures to be imprinted on to the surfaces of the cast. Her first cast piece was of a closet, plaster clad in black felt, emulating the blackness of the space inside a wardrobe that “maybe you sat in as a kid” (Artspace, 2018).

Whiteread's sculptures explore Benjamin's fascination with form and content as one by spatializing a condition that was experienced as unravelling socks. Both flip the interior and exterior conditions, bringing tension to the surface by flipping socks inside out as a game, and monumentalizing this shift in the form of sculpture.



intimate geographies of the room



A focus on fun and recreation was heavily embedded in the postwar home, fueled by a rise in consumerism, with leisure and media becoming the focus of everyday life. Made popular in the United States in the 1960s and 70s, shag rugs were widely used in homes to distinguish spaces within open floorplans, to personalize spaces, to and express identity through this highly sensorial material. Shag rugs were often found in family rooms before they migrated to other areas of the home and then rejected altogether. It was a surface for both the nuclear family and liberated sexuality, where children played by day and adults played at night (Randl, 2014). The rugs offered a space for sensual indulgence, as well as excess and fantasy. Contrasting textures of tactile and visual variety offered a highly sensual experience that was eventually considered as excess, leading to the demise of shag.

Before it disappeared into cube vans and dingy basements, shag rugs were loved and taken care of. Cleaning guides would instruct how to groom the long piles of the rug, going over vacuuming and gently raking in order to keep a natural shape. This highly laborious maintenance mimicked the grooming and caring one would imply on the body. Home decorating magazines would also warn against spreading the carpet into workshops or sewing rooms in fear of losing small objects between the waves of piles. This thick coat lining the floors of your home would conceal the traces left behind by any activity in the room. In addition to being a high-maintenance flooring option, shag posed a barrier for some: people in wheelchairs, breathing problems, or anyone who is susceptible to tripping, to name a few. This was a material for the healthy, able-bodied American, who had the love and energy to care for their rug, just like their front lawn.



fig 4.21 : Jayne  
Mansfield's Bathroom  
featured in LIFE  
magazine, 1960

## guiding the gaze

The highly tactile interiors of Hollywood homes, such as the mansion of Jayne Mansfield, offered a plethora of decadent materials. The public eye would experience sexualized celebrities, in soft private interior that greatly juxtaposed their public appearance. It was a deep and intimate glimpse into a highly sensual and private environment, and it enhanced the spectacle to see a public figure in their private space. Limited to print, magazines such as Architectural Digest would allow for a view into the private but highly staged lives of the wealthy.

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"The media are what allows the private to be the site of public memory"  
(Colomina, 336, 1999).

On the reality show MTV Room Raiders, a contestant literally goes through a potential mate's dirty laundry and rummages through their most intimate and interior spaces before meeting them, in order to decipher if they are worthy of a date. Likewise, MTV Cribs sends a film crew to a celebrity house where the owner gives a tour of their (12-bedroom, 8-bathroom, 6-garage door) mansion and gets a chance to show off some of their prized possessions and point to their domestic habits. They even check the interior of the fridge to show the food being consumed. The audience gets a full tour, master-bedroom suite included. Some hosts then claim: "this is where the magic happens".



intimate geographies of the room

fig 4.22: Mirror Selfie  
and interior context,  
2019

Today, smartphones allow for a constant stream of interior images to reach a wider audience. Selfies are a form of digital self-portraiture which allow a controlled sense of publicity and giving the impression of access to private life. Yet these images are filtered, manipulated, and calculated in terms of framing the subject and releasing it on social media platforms.

A common site for the self-portrait exists within the private confines of the bedroom or bathroom, as it takes a certain confidence to be caught capturing a photograph of oneself. To take a selfie can be considered vain and crossing a public social boundary. By entering these spaces Juno Calypso explores the private rituals of a woman consumed by the labouring construct of femininity. Through the role of a fictional single woman, the solitary self-portraits in honeymoon suites express an irony between the indulgence of fantasy and disappointment of solitude (Calypso, 2016). The character plays out the strenuous preparations needed to seduce a lover, thereby critiquing the repressive practices on the female body. Calypso's work shows that there is power in aiming one's camera and guiding the gaze.





fig 4.23: The  
Honeymoon Suite,  
Juno Calypso, 2015

## extending the body

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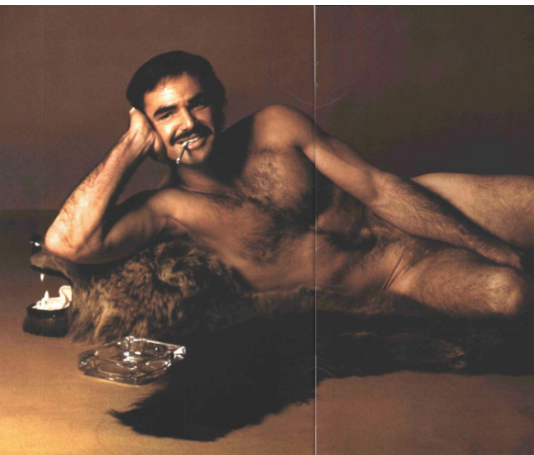


fig 4.24: Burt Reynolds, Cosmopolitan Magazine, 1972

Marshal McLuhan discusses how clothing and housing are used by humans to communicate with their environments in the same way that the body can communicate. Furniture and the objects we connect to within our environments also act as an extension of this. The shag rug was used to communicate, to seduce, and later to repel as an extension of the body (Randl, 2014). Loos' interiors cover the occupant as clothes cover the body, each outfit is for a specific person and occasion (Colomina, 2007). Lina Loos' bedroom was lined with fur and cloth. Loos describes the exterior of a house like a dinner jacket, a male mask, while the Interior is a scene of sexuality and reproduction, things that are divisive topics in the outside world.

In the same way that body hair often marked an acceptance of less restrictive sexual norms, the situating of shag rugs in domestic space suggested physical intimacy. Toward the 1980s, shag fell from the market in favour of short pile evoking economy and efficiency. The hairless body was the new sexy, and the new healthy norm. "The world of kink and fetish is built around ideas of power, control and gender – not that different to our relationships with everyday objects" (Jacobs, 1, 2015).

Objects take on meanings beyond the sum of their material form. From designer to consumer, people are drawn toward sensation. These sensations exist within the surface of objects. Questioning kink stuff, that replicate medieval punishment devices, school uniforms, maids, and nurse outfits. How did these things become conditioned as sexy? Perhaps it is the distance that these images and scenarios have from everyday life that enhances their role in re-imagining.



In the world of roleplay, the objects' symbolic meanings are so exaggerated that they become the space. But outside of this world, in "the real world", objects are taken as natural/normal/neutral. The signs are less visible perhaps, but that does not render them any less powerful, restrictive, or oppressive. It is just dressed down. Kink plays with the signs and symbols of the forces that dominate both public and private lives. It is a platform to experiment and negotiate power. It challenges social norms and exposes them as culture rather than nature. Design beyond the market of kink is driven by the very same impulses and tendencies. Design embodies the fantasies or fictions of our relationship to them. Each design is unique and driven by a multiplicity of attractions. And the fantasies attached to objects are just as conditioned by society and politics.

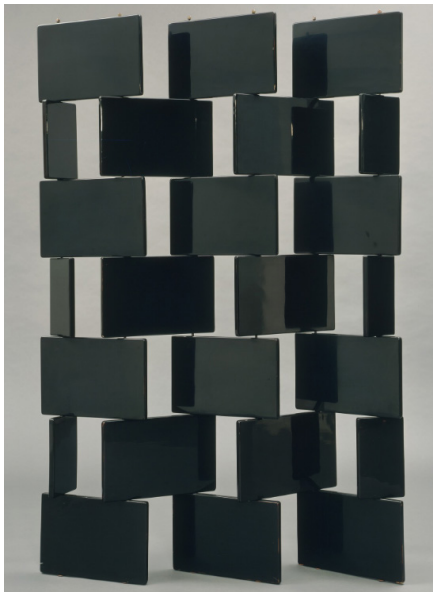
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Gotfried Semper stresses the primary importance of cladding, arguing that structure is within the wall, but our focus is the visible and touchable spatial enclosure. Walls define bodies in the same way that clothes define bodies. Masks operate from the inside and outside. "Material queerness is situated in the surface – that is, in the interrelation between built matter and active subject" (Bonnevier, 2005).

The softness of a cushion is to support how we position ourselves in relation to any hardness. Cushions show signs of use, read as the eversion of emotional states outside the self. Muscles need upholstery to feel well. Cushions are thus a bodily extension through which the body sends signals of well-being to itself (Hemmers, 2018). Textile is a soft backdrop that lets us live our lives in concrete boxes; it leaves impressions as well as receives them. Textile is a

fig 2.25: Bedroom for  
Loos' Wife, Lina, 1903

fig 2.2: Screen, Eileen Gray, 1922



medium of affects, responsive to bodies, changeable, and thus fluid and temporary. The softness of the interior moulds to you, bed, pillows, rugs, clothes, anything soft. An organism that adjusts to the inhabitant as much as the inhabitant adjusts to the room. "In the bed, presumably the softest of all soft furniture, our body rests, loves itself or another. In bed we are alone, suffer, have sex" (Hemmers, 2018).

Aaron Betsky compares texture to class, where the more money you have, the more texture you get. The reverse is true of lighting and sound: the more money you have, the less of both of those you get. Texture is expensive both to build and to maintain. The standardisation of components and the stripping of texture are design decisions that reduce costs in materials, assembly, and cleaning (Betsky, 2019).

Eileen Gray designed walls, floors, furniture, closets, screens, windows, textures, movements and colours into a detailed composition. Screens are enmeshed with walls and rugs with floors. Surfaces are folded into spaces to create interiors which are then assembled as the entirety of E-1027 (Bonnevier, 2005). It is a queer architecture of surfaces in the sense that it subverts notions of interior decoration and merges it with building, which parallels the role of sexuality in her life and work, her sliding sexuality, non-heteronormative lifestyle effecting the order of things. Jennifer Bloomer talks about how structure is masked as masculine, while ornament as feminine. Structure is considered serious and essential, while ornament is extra. Queer theory tries to break down the binary understanding of things beyond the divisive regimes of male/female, homo/hetero, and aims to subvert assumed or instructed hierarchies and boundaries.



fig 4.27: room collage







making a room

furniture

wall

aperture

corridor

A room becomes the imprint of the inhabitant. The softness of the interior is where a person begins to touch space. We lay on furniture, we crouch on the floor, we hide under the bed, and we draw the curtains. A room is where things collect for a period of time (heat, bodies, ideas, objects, air, water, etc): there is a way in and a way out, but the room creates space for a pause in movement. A corridor can become a room once it impedes the flow of things. The space is either physically bottlenecked or through the arranging of materials and objects, the flow of bodies becomes arrested or slowed down.

Objects and furniture can disrupt architecture.

Objects in the living room can be used to regulate the level of desired intimacy between the occupants or between occupant and guests.

Andrea Zittel mixes industrial materials on her comfort units which exist in a state between furniture and building.

Clothing always ends up piled on a chair, personified as a blob-like character that occupies the only seat in the room and looking back at you. To take a seat, the burden is displaced on to the bed, to rest, it migrates back to the chair, carrying the layers of clothing shed from previous days.

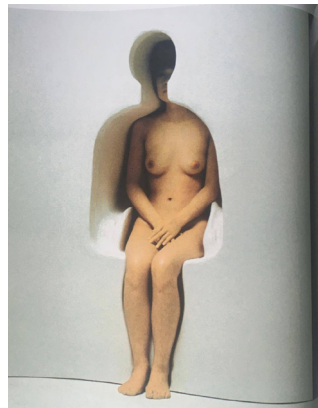


fig 5.1: Emblem, four identical chairs, round table leaf. Marianne Mueller, 2015

fig 5.2: Wall Chair, Shiro Kuramata, 1970

fig 5.3: The chair, Thonet vs Tobias, loved for IKEA, 2018

fig 5.4: Wintergarden  
Bench, Donald Judd,  
1980

fig 5.5: A-Z Comfort  
Unit II, Andrea Zittel,  
1994

fig 5.6: A-Z  
Management &  
Maintenance Unit  
Andrea Zittel, 1992



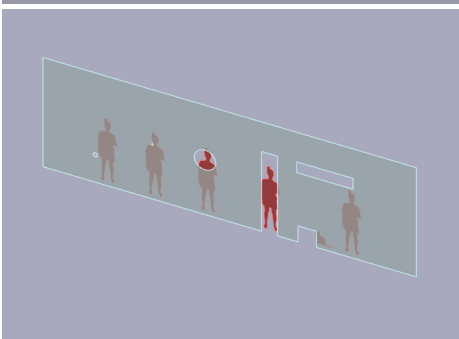
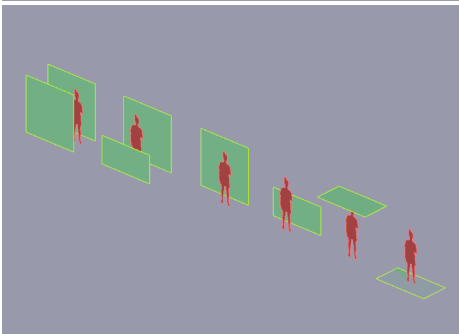
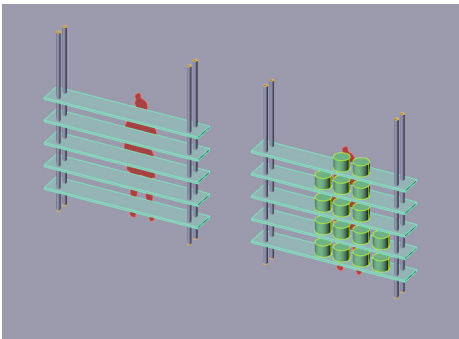


fig 5.7: walls - permeable shelving and objects

fig 5.8: walls as planes

fig 5.9: apertures

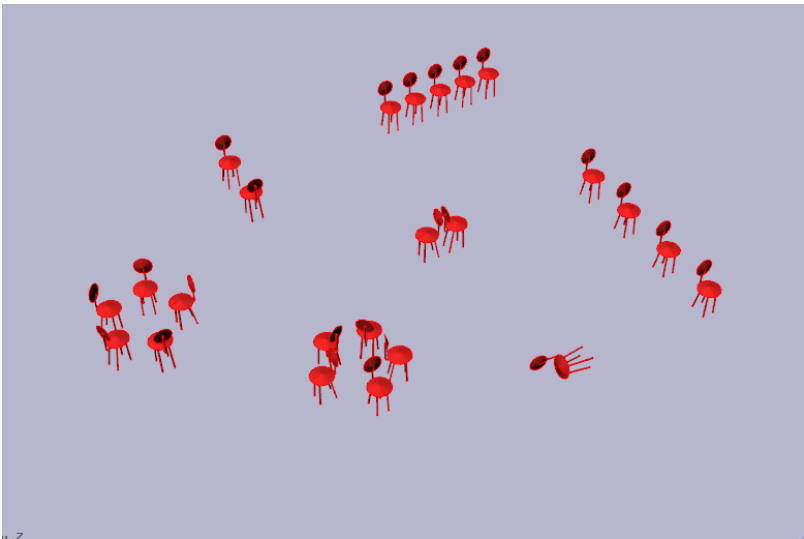


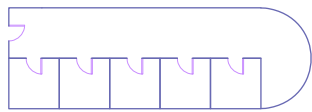
fig 5.10: chairs as rooms

fig 5.11: cloth wall and apertures

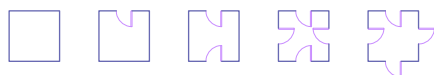
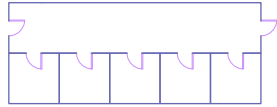


fig 5.12: connecting  
units

## wall



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The history of changing forms of civilization, as new segmentation of spaces is demanded by new forms of society. Increasing standards of modesty and individualism demand new walls. At the same time, scarcity of space and egalitarian perspectives break down walls. Rem Koolhaas states that the wall has at least two essential functions: to provide structure and to divide space. One is necessary, separating roof from ground, and the other is contingent, organizing movement within the container, changeable as per our sociability.

Gottfried Semper explains that the archetype of the wall was first established by hanging fabric on a structure. Solid walls (mud, stone, wood, brick, etc.) came to supplement these temporary barriers. (To make permanent the achievement of the temporary wall, whose purpose was to define community through the symbolic membrane. Social organization was a primary function of a wall. "Hanging loosely, perhaps flapping, the woven screen generates – and crucially symbolizes – the division and organization of the activities within the dwelling. The woven "wall" is an enabler of civilization; the thick structural wall merely a defender of it..." (Koolhaas, 20, 2014)

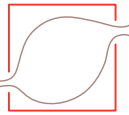
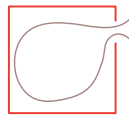
We often do not even experience the wall, we just experience the paint, or the innermost layer. Innermost because it is the closest to your body. If you are outside a brick house, the surface of the brick is the innermost surface, relative to the body. The paint picks up dust, dirt, oil from fingerprints, crayons and glitter, traces from inhabitation. As new tenants move in, everything is coated in white paint, to hide previous inhabitation.

The door signifies the in-between of two spheres. A pause, a hesitation, a change. Sometimes you enter a room looking for something but as you enter, you forget the purpose of your entry. No need for a door, just a "doorway", a bottleneck between two spaces. Tiny corridor. The doorknob is an intimate object—touch is required to make it work—action allows passage. It guards privacy. Enables control over the movement between two spaces. An object of agency and will. Gives access to, and locks away certain spaces.

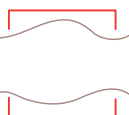
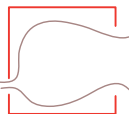
Aperture in the wall hovers between public and private, they determine how space is used. Adolf loos strips the experience of being encapsulated in a room, and forming to it, by positioning furniture off windows, orienting them toward the space one just moved through. This buckles in a typical narrative of entering a room to look on to the next room. In this instant, the observer becomes the observed, and the room becomes a set, and reality a play. (Colomina, 1994)

The corridor, as only a means of moving to another space, becomes wasted space. They are not places, they are vectors, hesitations, zones of passage. Corridors exist between two sites, a portal from room to room. Passage corridor, visual corridor, air corridor, noise corridor, smell corridor etc. (Boom, 2014) . A corridor becomes a room during the moment in which it causes some friction in the movement, or some inefficiency of flow. This can occur through a physical condition drawing one to pause or veer off track, such as in the enfilade which aims to exist as an efficient corridor, while equally providing rooms for pause. A corridor can be expressed as a physical or temporal condition, either facilitating the flow from one room to another or hindering its access.

aperture



corridor







assembly  
model  
dollhouse  
rooms for play  
fragmented domesticity

fig 6.1: Ludwig Mies van der Rohe with a model of crown hall, 1954.

fig 6.2: Le Corbusier with model of Unité d'Habitation, 1940

## model

Architects use scale models to test and communicate their designs to clients and larger audiences. Since modernism, models shifted from being solely a representation of buildings, but also became props for the portrayal of the architect himself (Weiss, Verlan, 2019). The images of a single man in a suit interacting with a miniaturized version of their own design shaped the public perception of the profession and the architect as Creator.

Representational techniques (models, drawings, and photographs) carry gendered connotations, between viewer and viewed, male and female, subject and object. The object and its beholder.

The model is situated next to the architect himself and places him in a seemingly objective standpoint as it enlarges his own figure beyond the sphere of common people, expressing a privileged and controlling position. Le Corbusier would be deeply immersed in his models, posing but ignoring the gaze of the camera. Conversely, Mies van der Rohe boldly faced it, fixing his eyes on the observer and blending into his model.

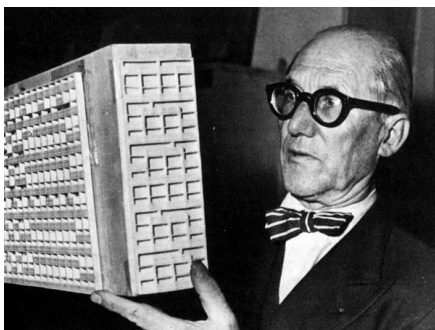


fig 6.3: 1950's  
Dollhouse, Eatons

## dollhouse

The dollhouse also draws attention to notions of public and private space, specifically violation of private space. As a children's toy, it is embedded with prescribed social roles and constructs, especially focused on gender, but intersecting with race, class, and ability. It has been used as a tool to promote family values and train young girls to perform domestic tasks. The distinction between work and play are blurred here, as dolls help introduce girls to labour through play, as they learn to sew and mend the dolls to practice nurturing (Heininger, 1994).

The model creates a virtual reality in which children can act out domestic routines and negotiate social exchanges. This kind of playing expands the usual boundaries by allowing the kid to immerse themselves in a different identity. The dream house, idealised life, and acting out domestic plays helps prepare children for recreating this in the "real world", but the indicators of real world are blurred here (Chen, 2015).

Maintaining a dollhouse, care and upkeep of the toy and accompanying dolls. There is no product or physical outcome of play, but the actions involved put the player to work. Lego or other building blocks have a different narrative, concerned with creating a structure that lasts, at least until it is dissembled for a replay. Children's toys are a tool of gender division and prescription of roles and responsibilities of an ideal grown-up.

The rooms are modelled but space between is not to scale. Rooms are occupied, corridors are traversed. Interruptions in movement result in a room of sorts; to hold bodies, things,



smells, noises. Imagine a house where each room is a movie set, with space for a camera crew and perhaps a studio audience. Moving from room to room does not occur as it does in normal life, or in normal buildings.

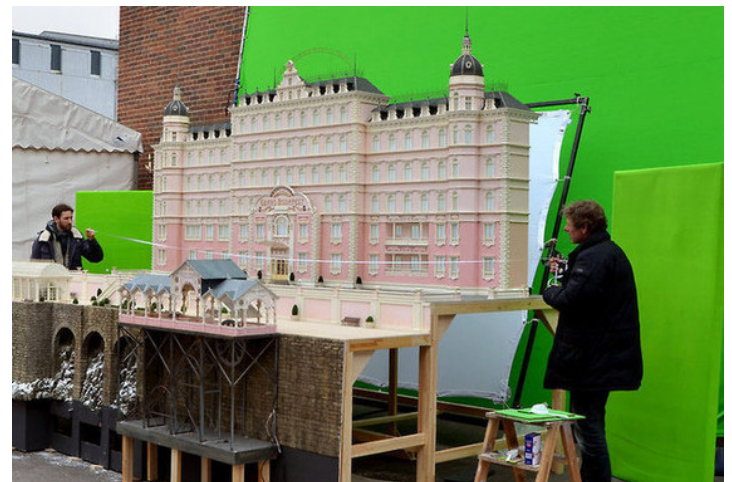
A real house and a dollhouse house—what is the difference? Engagement with the dollhouse requires the house to split open, the spaces are never experienced through apertures such as windows and doors, but rather through a section, displaying a honeycomb of rooms elaborately decorated to mimic a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, etc. As a player moves the doll from one room to the next, skipping any normative means of travel through doors or apertures, the doll exits the house for a moment and gets planted in to the next room, emphasizing the existence of activity and life in rooms, an established setting, confusing time and distance.

Sitcoms are usually shot in front of a live audience with multiple cameras in order to shoot everything at once. Even in an urban setting, the sets end up looking suburban because of the stretched out spaces for the multiple cameras and audience. Sitcoms exist in an interior and a closed loop of people, objects, and spaces. In fact, the entire set is located within the interior of a film studio. It is a continuous interior, one where doors, windows, keys, and phones, are all props. Acting around them, each object can perform without the burden of functionality. The stories revolve around domestic life, marriage, kids, or about work with a common third space like a coffee shop or restaurant.

fig 6.4: Set for Grand  
Budapest Hotel, Wes  
Anderson, 2014

Sitcoms rarely depict any representation of the world beyond the home (Becque, 2018). The shows have a home set, sometimes work, and a third space like Central Perk, in Friends or the restaurant in Seinfeld. The exterior is separate from the interior. The exterior is miniature, then the camera zooms in to an interior space, not through a door or window but a movie transition. Like The Grand Budapest Hotel. The exteriors are “fake” but so is the set. Objects such as doors, keys, and windows grant access. Doors in the sitcoms Seinfeld and Friends represent the liminality of urban life. In sitcoms with suburban settings, family members move through thresholds freely, replicated in urban set sitcoms. Implying a sort of trust and creating a sense of safety, living in space that distrusts or rejects strangers.

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intimate geographies of the room



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fig 6.5: Patrick Bateman's bathroom cabinet, *American Psycho*, 2000

fig 6.6: Villa Savoye Bathroom, Le Corbusier, 1931

fig 6.7: Charlotte Perriand in LC4, Charlotte Perriand and Le Corbusier, 1928

fig 6.8: Renee Pornero & Victoria Sin, "Share the Load", 2005

fig 6.9: untitled, <http://www.editionmonumental.com/>, 2018





fig 6.10: Villa Mueller,  
Men's Study, Adolf  
Loos, 1930

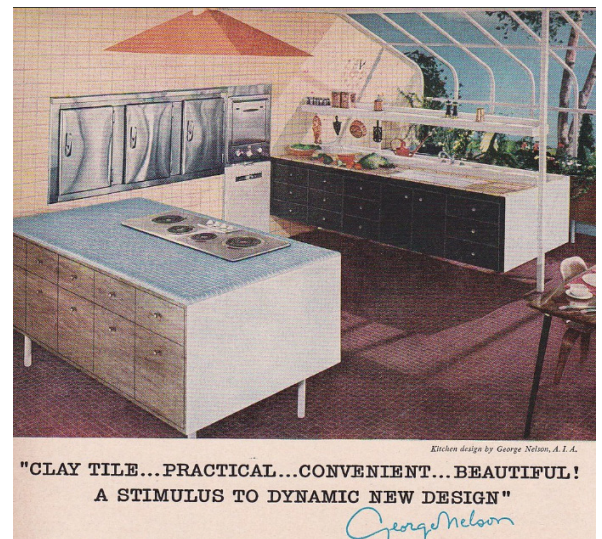
fig 6.11: working on  
thesis, 2019

fig 6.12: Kitchen  
in Paris Studio  
Apartment, Le  
Corbusier, Olivier  
Martin-Gambier &  
Antoine, 1934

fig 6.13: Kitchen,  
George Nelson, 1952



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intimate geographies of the room

fig 6.14: Balcony view  
panorama, 2019

fig 6.15: Villa Le Lac,  
Le Corbusier, 1924

fig 6.16: Outdoor  
dining area, Villa Le  
Lac, Le Corbusier,  
1924

fig 6.17: Bathroom  
and Bedroom Paris  
Studio Apartment,  
Le Corbusier, Olivier  
Martin-Gambier &  
Antoine, 1934



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fig 6.18: untitled  
meme, instagram  
user: @  
dankplantmemes, July  
27 2019

fig 6.19: collection of  
house plants, 2019

fig 6.20: Itabu  
Lavatory, Ichihara-  
City Japan , Sou  
Fujimoto, 2013

## rooms to play

97

The look of control is formed through a window peeled from the wall and into a desk. This mimics the typical window over the sink, where the housewife could simultaneously wash dishes while keeping an eye on the kids. The formality of the desk as workplace restructures her labour of love as serious work. In the 1955 publication *Tomorrow's House*, George Nelson rebranded the kitchen as "work center" (Nelson, 1955), along with other work-related rooms, thereby placing women's work at an administrative and secretarial position to manage the house, giving the perception of control. Yet this was only a tactic for controlling (fig 6.13). On the other side of the wall is a seemingly liberated space for leisure. The shag rug, meant for both the nuclear family and liberated sexuality, where children played by day and adults played at night, they offer a space for sensual indulgence, as well as excess and fantasy.

Workspaces are incredibly mobile, provided that work can be done on a laptop, smartphone, or whatever fits in your bag (6.11). The "third place" is commonly a coffee shop, where individuals gather to maintain focus and productivity, or at least the appearance of. Whether the home lacks the physical space or is not conducive to "serious work", people search for a sense of surveillance to keep them performing. There are clear divisions of roles in the coffee shop, the people who use it for work, for leisure, and the ones working to serve the customers, highlighting the identities of people who are doing visible work, rather than less visible back of house work.

The next model references Eileen Gray's living room in e1027, a multifunctional private space which invited aspects of public life. There is no privacy dedicated to the bed, instead

it is framed as a void and symbol for activities outside of a visitor's presence. Rather than providing the bed with its missing sense of privacy or modesty, it is the backstage that feeds into the lounge chair, a sexualized device that serves the objectification of its occupant.

The LC4 lounge chair designed by Le Corbusier and Charlotte Perriand has been featured in over 800 pornographic films (Drury & Fopp, 2019). A photograph shot by Le Corbusier showing Perriand reclined and facing away from the camera, with her skirt falling from her legs, reveals them as an object of desire (fig 6.6 - 6.9). The pink shag rug reappears here and is a reference to the fur lined bedroom Adolf Loos designed for his young wife, Lina Loos.

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The red wall is a symbolic barrier to give the impression that the person entering is about to violate a space. Upon entry, a rotating shelving unit holds the most intimate yet most essential objects within the room. this draws from the examination of my own storage, where my nightstand holds objects of seemingly opposing nature in one place, for example my wallet and keys sit next to personal toys.

The shower is a passage rather than a container. This emphasizes the act of washing or cleansing as a process to get through to another. The shower knobs are on the exterior of the shower area which involves either another person or the process of preparing and then entering the shower. Two heads are provided around the corner from each other to accommodate at least two people out of sight from one another but allowing them to meet at the corner. This is where a small break in the colliding planes provides a window allowing

a view into and out of the dressing room. Items such as towels, products, or toys, which can be stored within the encasements on the wall, emphasize their presence and offer a window in the current function of the space.

The kitchen explores a division in labor and hidden preparations required to make a meal. This division is accentuated by the separating wall, with a hole punctured to provide a viewport from kitchen to check up on guests and continue to discretely service them (6.12). The aperture is at eye level from the kitchen, but from the perspective of the seated guests the work is out of sight. The shared sink provides an opportunity for both sides to collide and dissolves the false binaries of space.

Movable shelves are placed out of reach to temporarily store and transport food, dishes, and other objects, creating work for the retrieval of things. The curving tables dismantle the hierarchies of a traditional dining table, proposing dynamic occupation.

Hygiene and health are aspects of life which are quite literally the most private to us (fig 6.5). Through documenting domestic storage, I found many containers for daily medications and health remedies that are hidden away. The medicine cabinet is a place of curiosity and intrigue for visitors, so opening up the shelves makes transparent a condition of tension caused by the intruder.

The toilet is nested in an opaque nook, creating a small private environment within a wider transparent threshold, emphasizing its vulnerable position. Sou Fujimoto explores the contradiction of privacy in a public bathroom (6.20). Le Corbusier's studio apartment featured an open bathroom with a bidet located just outside, within the space of the bedroom (6.17). Hidden behind a short yellow wall at the entrance of the bedroom, the user of the bidet is hidden unless standing. The positioning of plumbing fixtures in open spaces within the home can be seen in his other projects, including the sink in Villa Savoye's front entry (1931). This brings the most intimate bodily functions and activities into the most public of spaces.

100

The dressing area presents a passage in which the outer shell of clothing is shed before entering the home. The closet is experienced as a through-space rather than a container hiding its contents. The act of dressing and undressing marks a change of setting, activity, or mood. It is a transformative place which holds all the outfits used to cover the body and express the individual's identity.

The balcony, a condensed outdoor room that hangs from the cell, is private, yet most vulnerable to the public eye, as it constructs the façade of the building (fig 6.14). In trying to improve privacy and heighten the domesticity of our homes, houseplants can offer an opportunity to be nurturing and create a sense of rootedness in one's environment.

fig 6.21: Door to  
boudoir  
fig 6.22: Boudoir, Plan

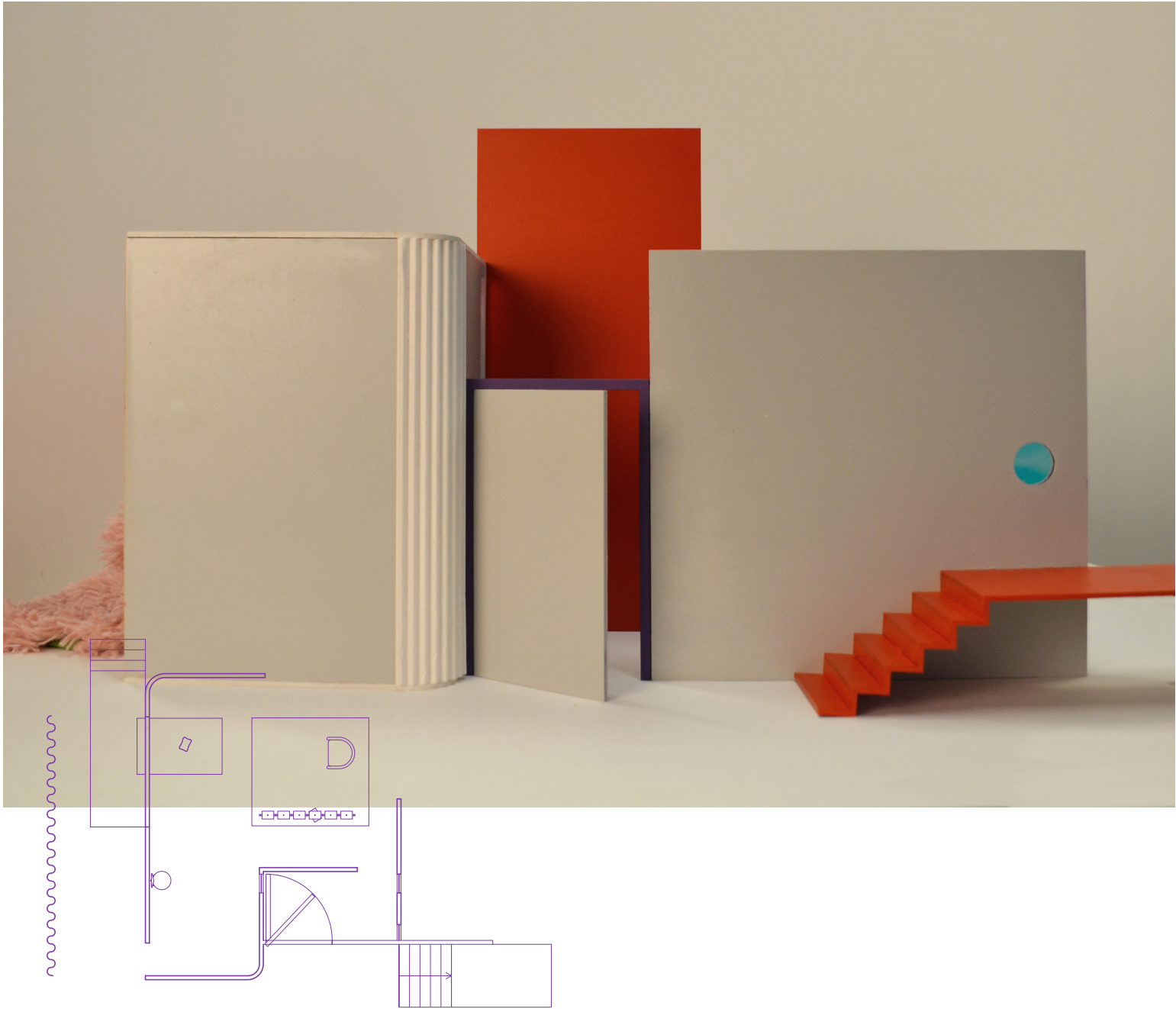




fig 6.22: Boudoir,  
Perspective  
fig 6.23: Boudoir,  
Perspective





fig 6.21: Boudoir,  
viewer/viewed  
fig 6.22: Boudoir,  
viewer/viewed  
fig 6.23: Boudoir  
fig 6.24: Boudoir







fig 6.25:Work/Play  
Station



fig 6.26:Work/Play  
Station plan  
fig 6.27:Work/Play  
Station, Elevation  
fig 6.28:Work/Play  
Station

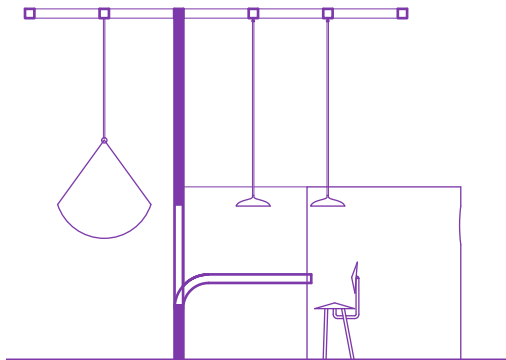
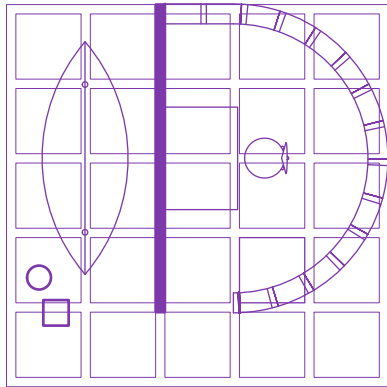


fig 6.29: Work/Play  
Station  
fig 6.30: Work/Play  
Station

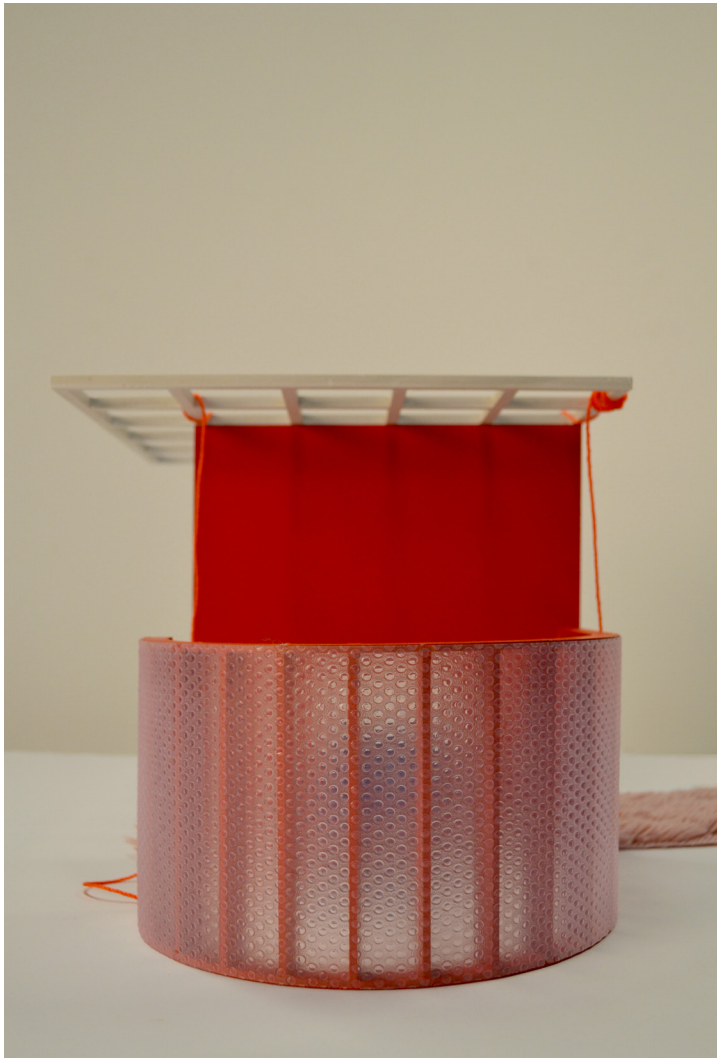


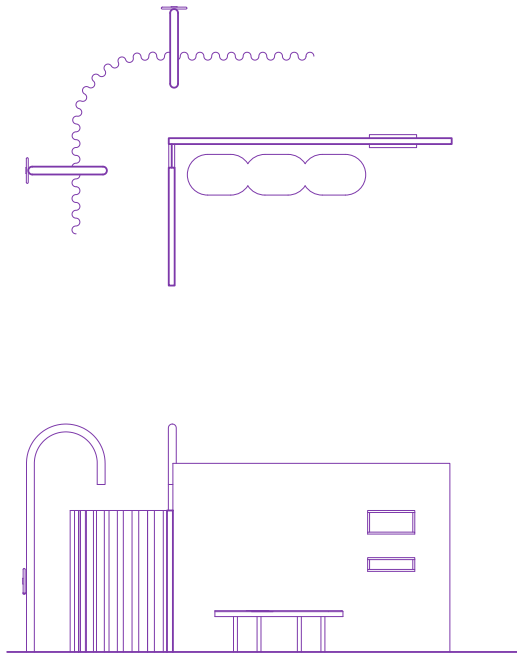


fig 6.31: At Work  
fig 6.32: At Work



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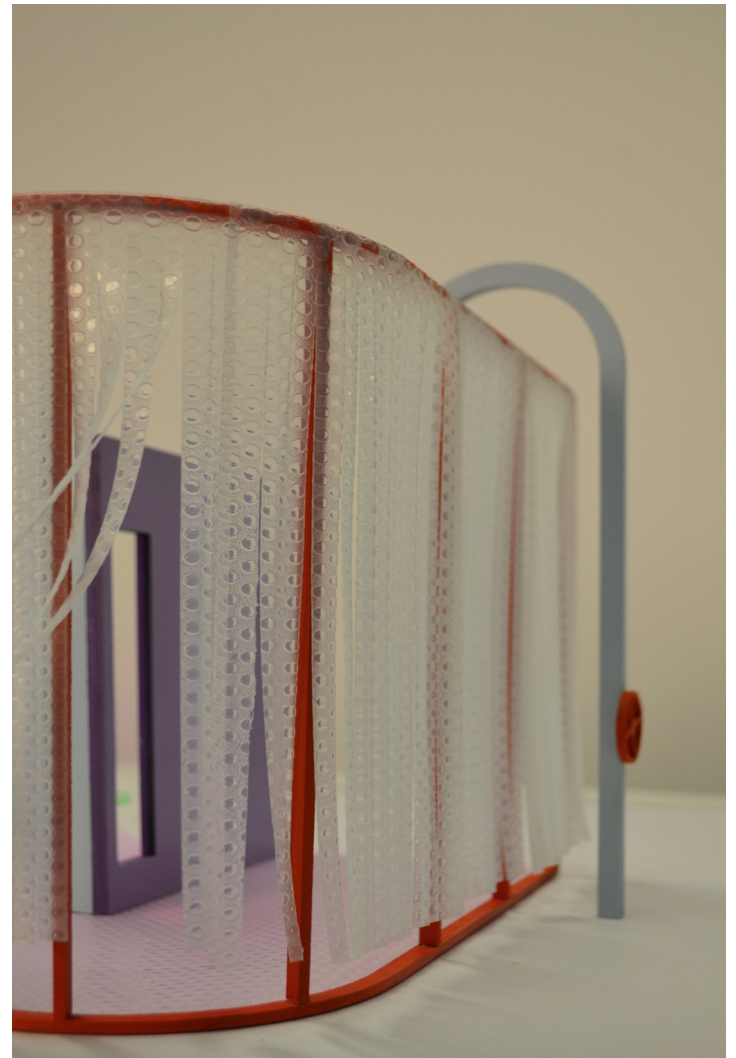
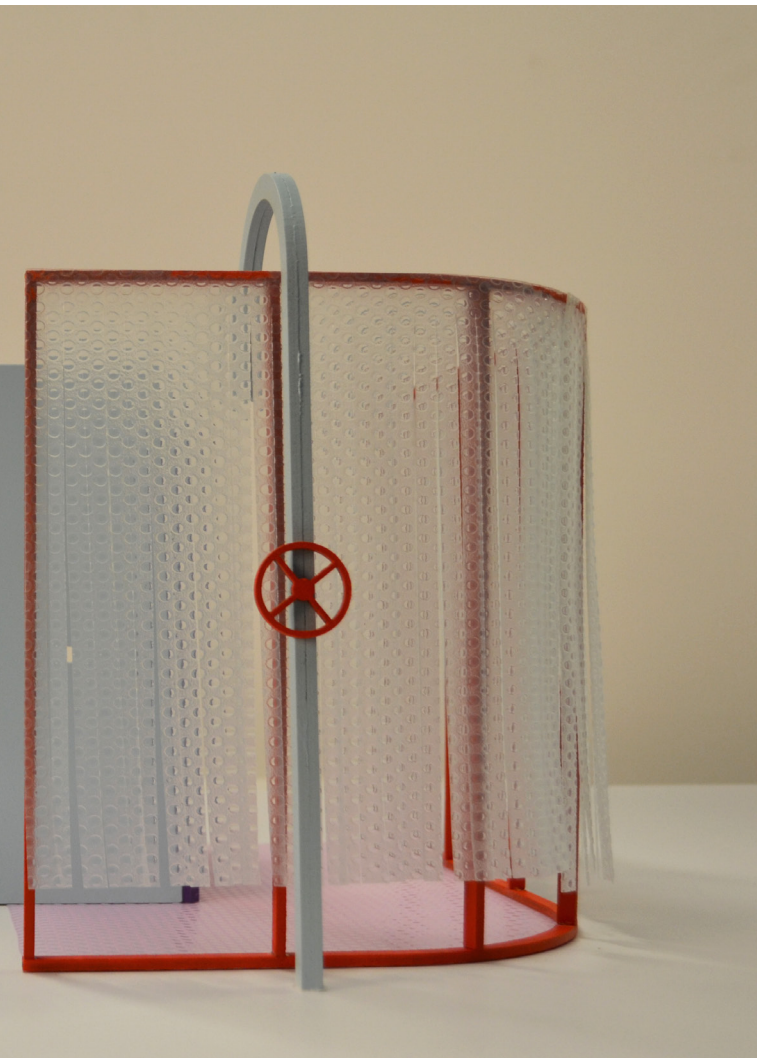
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fig 6.33: Shower, Plan  
fig 6.34: Shower,  
Elevation  
Fig 6.36: Shower



fig 6.37: Shower  
fig 6.38: Shower



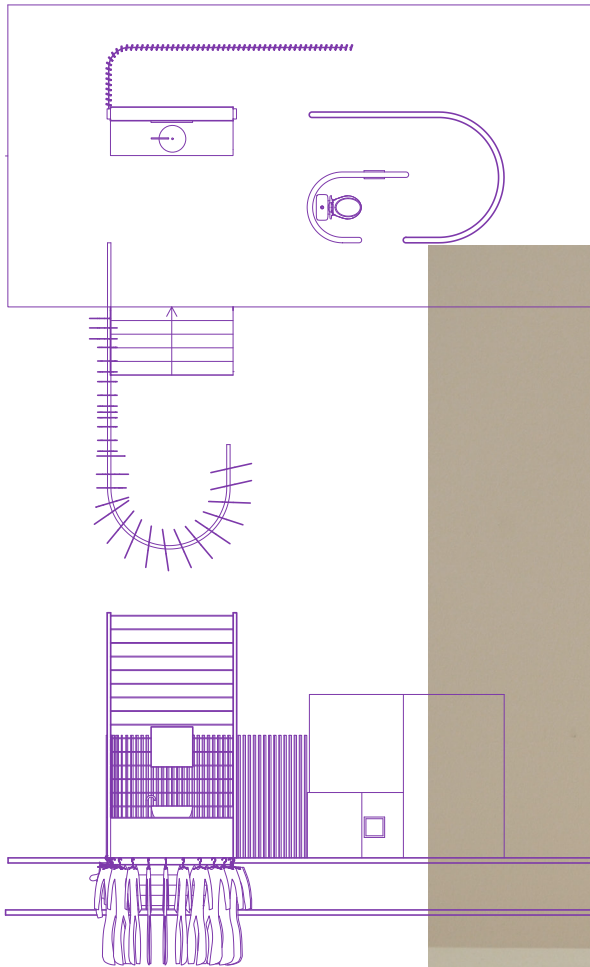


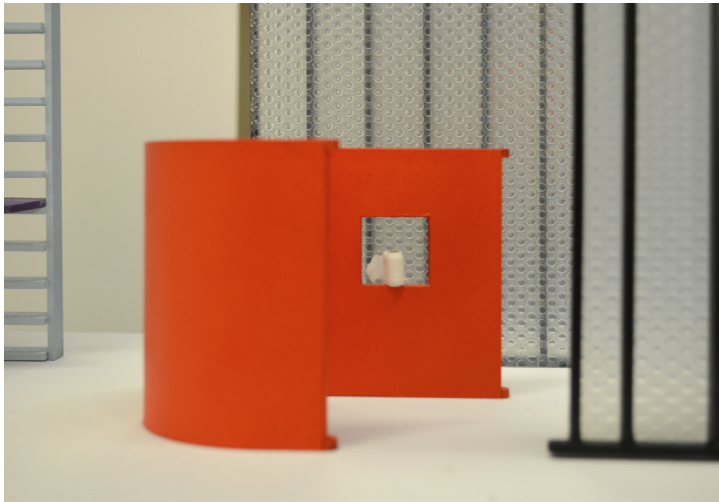
fig 6.39: Toilet and  
Dressing, Plan  
fig 6.40: Toilet and  
Dressing, Elevation  
fig 6.41: Toilet and  
Dressing

fig 6.42: Toilet and  
Dressing  
fig 6.43: Toilet and  
Dressing





fig 6.45: Toilet and  
Dressing, Plan  
fig 6.46: Dressing



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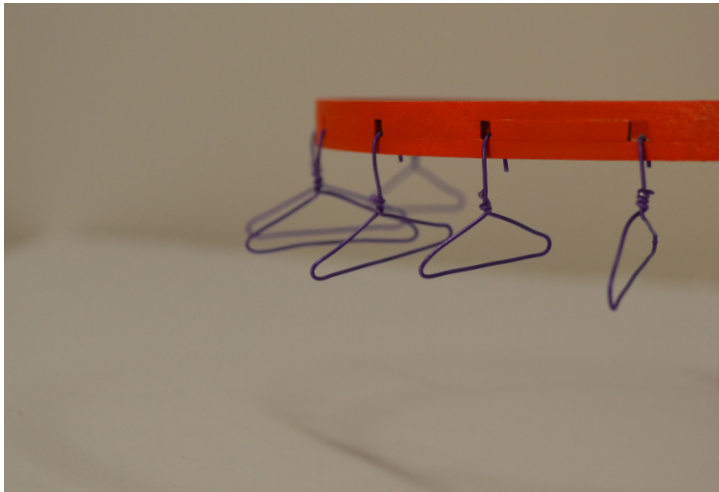


fig 6.47: Kitchen/  
Dining, plan  
fig 6.48: Kitchen/  
Dining



fig 6.49: Kitchen/  
Dining





fig 6.50: Kitchen/  
Dining  
fig 6.51: Kitchen/  
Dining  
fig 6.52: Kitchen/  
Dining





fig 6.53: Kitchen/  
Dining

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fig 6.54: Kitchen/  
Dining

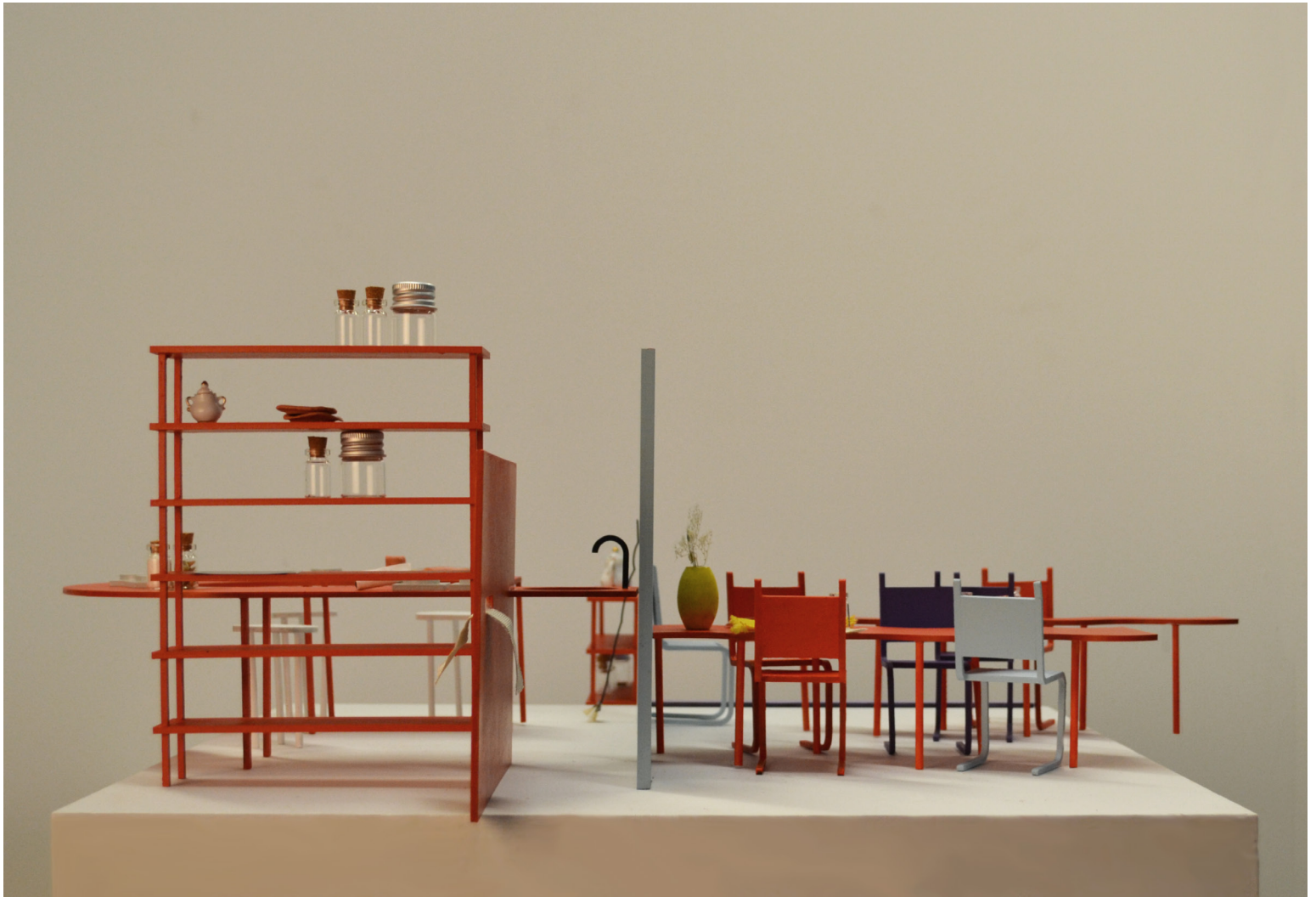




fig 6.55: Balcony



fig 6.56: Balcony  
fig 6.57: Balcony





fig 6.58: Balcony







## fragmented domesticity

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With increasingly complex and intertwined social networks and an abundance of traces, it is becoming harder to separate private life from public life. These entities previously perceived as “two versions of yourself” now exist as one. Social structures are influenced by the immediate spaces we inhabit yet are intertwined with complex virtual social structures. The camera presence of policing is a physical, material and aesthetic manifestation of surveillance. Without these explicit visual signifiers, surveillance exists in implicit ways beyond the scope of architecture. Identifying spatial and material relationships make the implicit explicit, make the invisible visible, and challenge hidden structures that are taken for granted and are becoming more and more embedded in our private lives.

Domesticity is becoming increasingly fragmented, overlapping with varying aspects of contemporary life. The way we construct our gender, our relation to race, sexuality, class, education, consumption, economics, and any facet of our identity is primarily contemplated within the privacy of the home. Architecture is complicit in the regulating and organizing of bodies in space but is also accompanied by shifts in technology and media which reinforce pre-existing social structures.

This thesis considers the physical division of public and private space which creates disproportionate experiences of surveillance and control for people based on their intersectional identities of oppression and privilege.

The primary findings of my design research include:

First, that Spaces are created through the performance of built elements, object traces, and human relations.

There is no generic occupant, and no generic space – meaning that architecture is not neutral

By separating spheres, we create the "other"

If when we are creating a division in space, we are creating experiences of both exclusion and privacy violation for people based on their race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability, the questions that need to be explored in the future are:

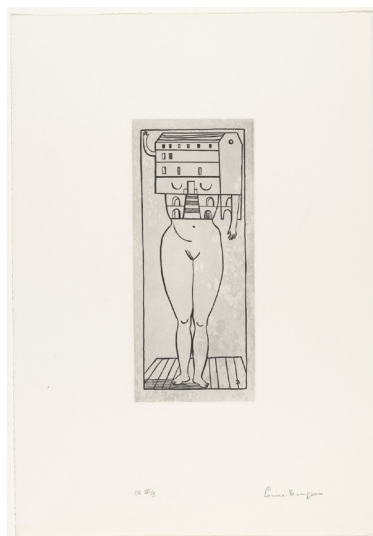
Who in particular is put at risk when we create boundaries?

What capacity do people have to undermine their built environment?

How do we take back privacy?



fig 6.59: Femme Maison, Louise  
Bourgeois, MoMA, 1984



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