# 7
# A New Dynamism in Architecture

The monospace is a type of building, which due to its structural openness suggests a high level of flexibility and adaptability in use and thus emphasises the processual nature of architecture. Without a traditional separation of specific functions into separated rooms, the monospace questions 'a strictly constructive idea of architecture' (Fontenas 1998, 9). I therefore chose the monospace as a particularly interesting starting point in order to challenge the predominant static and passive understanding of buildings (Chapter 1). I argued that an absolutist-substantivalist understanding of space particularly with this type of building obstructs the ability to grasp the complex and processual reality of architecture. Turning to spacing and following the shared agency of humans and nonhumans in courses of action with the help of ANT, promised to trace the monospace in its multiple dimensions and in its mutual entanglements (Chapter 2). This study, thus, approached the question of temporality in architecture on two levels: On the one hand through the focus on a monospace building and on the other hand through the chosen methodology of ANT.

Concerned with the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, this work then first explored this building in terms of its architectural plans and the existing literature (Chapter 3). Describing the Sainsbury Centre as a building *in* space, it is located at a singular spot at the very end of the campus of UEA in Norwich. Describing it *in* time, it has a chronological biography, which has been told by Witold Rybczynski (2011). The building reproduced through iconic images and dominant narratives in books and magazines has been frozen in its representation countless times and tied to linear spatial and temporal trajectories.

Turning to the building in practice, we then left a space as place and turned to a space that cannot be separated from time. Consequently, we also left the idea of centrality and singularity and encountered the building as a field of possibilities. We learned how the building is a fully blown actor in working-with, in processes of re-thinking and re-designing material settings and thus in shaping and changing ingredients for spacing (Chapter 4). Furthermore, we witnessed how it participates, enhances and changes courses of action and movements in

spacing. We traced how the building is entangled with humans in daily practices and how multiple experiences can co-exist with the building (Chapter 5). We lost sight of the old or new building, the inner and outer, and discovered the numerous material and immaterial devices that contribute to spacing when following light (Chapter 6).

However, in the course of the empirical study a particular ambiguity in relation to temporality became apparent. The idea of flexibility and adaptability also adhere to the Sainsbury Centre (Chapter 3). Since its opening in 1978, however, the Sainsbury Centre has stayed more or less the same and the Living Area is considered a 'historic display' today.[1] Smaller changes of caterers in the restaurant and café, university political restructuring of the teaching programme and administration, the growth of the research facility and the move out of the building of the senior commons club, aside, the forms of use of the building have remained more or less constant ever since. There have been changes, the trees in the entrance area have disappeared, the shop expanded and changed sites, temporary exhibitions moved in and out, office boxes have been set up on the first mezzanine and a lecture room was installed etc., but on the whole, there is a great degree of continuity for a building that would *potentially* make change easy. Yet, potentials are part of a determinist architectural thinking. 'Potentiality is the realisation 'in time' of what was already there *in potentia*. Time unfolds determinations, but nothing really happens [...].' (Latour 1997, 185; original emphasis) Potentialities are planned by architects and are inscribed into buildings, but whether they are fulfilled by the objects, and whether people treat objects accordingly or if new and other ways to relate emerge is a whole different story (on inscription and de-scription see Chapter 4). This study as it is concerned with a realist account into architectural space, set out to explore these other stories. Tracing how people and building relate, it was not about linear developments but the mundane practices and entanglements of people and building in reality witnessing how spacing takes place.

Surprisingly the architect himself amongst others contradicts the idea of change for this building. Developing a façade that is modular, and can be exchanged easily, creating a vast interior that could be a playground for experiments, we learn today nothing can be changed in terms of material setting if it is to be permanent, and especially not the Living Area (Chapter 4). 'The single space—the integrity of that is very important',[2] the director emphasises. Buildings have specific trajectories that emerge in negotiations. And while we face a 40-year-old building which still 'looks the same, apart from the different cladding, and those two overhangs',[3] nevertheless this building is always on the move,

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1     Croose Myhill, in-depth interview.

2     Greenhalgh, in-depth interview.

3     Evans, in-depth interview.

always changing, never static, never the same. To be able to witness this vivid life of the building, however, we had to move inside and leave the regime of potentiality behind. With ANT we understood that flexibility is not a property of a building but of an association of humans and nonhumans, as much as stability is. A monospace *is* not flexible as such, but it requires work to make space flexible,—work that is always hybrid, human-nonhuman.

Turning to the process with the building, we encountered the many 'other entities' that are necessary to produce space (Latour 1997, 186). This is a space of possibilities; this is why spacing gives us a very different insight into the Sainsbury Centre. I want to highlight the difference between potentialities as inscribed and possibilities as emerging since it provides for a significantly distinctive understanding when turning to architecture.[4] Following the latter, we encountered a contingent world of entanglements, of negotiations and contradictions and learned the differences both humans and nonhumans can make. Here, we left a clear and well-structured world in terms of space and time behind and confronted the many times and spaces that the building weaves together.

In the following, we re-collect and put together what we have been able to witness at the Sainsbury Centre over the past three chapters; firstly the specific insights we gained regarding spacing and subsequently regarding the roles of people and building. With spacing some existing predominant ideas in the field of architecture are called into question. What allows us to witness and acknowledge thus far overlooked or unheard actors, simultaneously questions the dominant role played by previous well-established ones. Hereafter, I will make some concluding considerations regarding the methodological approach before opening up perspectives for further research.

## 7.1
## Spacing the Monospace

We embarked on this study with a paradox. In examining space in the field of architecture, this book combined two distinct concepts: The first had roots in a traditional architectural understanding of space and feeds the self-understanding and field of obligation of the discipline of architecture (Chapter 1). The typology of monospace relies on this concept and represents its archetype. Here, space can be singular, controlled by a designer's hand, shaped by walls and completed once construction has ended. The second builds on a relational and processual understanding of space and

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4    Latour (1997) opposes *potentiality* with *virtuality* following the definition of Gilles Deleuze and Isabelle Stengers. Since the philosophical discourse about the difference between virtuality and possibility is of less interest here I use the more common term of possibility.

takes a nondeterministic stance. Spacing gives preference neither to a subjective nor an objective space but follows the processes in which both humans and nonhumans entangle (Latour 1997).

Following spacing allows us to analyse the monospace, not as a static container space, and as such *not* as a space *in* which many things and activities happen, but as a space in its specific capacity to connect and organise and in this way in the process of opening and closing possibilities. Entering the world of spacing at the Sainsbury Centre we become aware that spacing is work—work that is done by humans and work that is done by nonhumans (ibid.). This work does not stop once the building is erected, but forms a dense network of action that has no end. We can distinguish two different types of work when facing architecture: Firstly, the work that is concerned with ingredients for spacing. This work is traditionally done by architects, planners, and engineers and in our case also by curators, conservators and technicians together with many nonhumans. Secondly, the work that takes place in the act of spacing itself. Here many different actors, human and nonhuman, come together to produce, shape and shift a specific course of action.

Re-thinking and re-arranging the material setting or courses of action and movements is a work that is concerned with the elements that make up spacing. We touched in all three empirical chapters on this kind of work. The networks which are concerned with getting people through the doors (Chapter 5.2) or the networks of light (Chapter 6) that show us how multiple actors of different qualities come together and work towards a smooth and stable and thus constant or repeatable course of action. When gaps, problems or new demands occur, a destabilisation takes place. New actors are added or an experimentation as in the case of light starts that tries aligning mediators towards stability. Walking with the Head of Collections and Senior Curator throughout the building and listening to his colleagues we became particularly aware of work that is concerned with ingredients for spacing (Chapter 4). What at first glance looks like a human-centred field of activity turned out to be a closely connected process with the building, in which we cannot necessarily figure out who caused who to do what in how far. It is a working-with that becomes visible; previously explored by studies into the making of buildings (Loukissas 2012; Houdart and Minato 2009; Yaneva, 2009a, 2009b). Decisions here are not linear and not developed under full control of humans. Instead we witness how the building as an actor itself and all the materials and objects are present when it comes to making decisions about changing courses of action and thus modifications of networks for spacing as with the installation of the underground Exhibition Suite for example (Chapter 4).

The second type of work happens to take place in the act of spacing. Here different actors come together and create space. This space is neither objective nor subjective, but emerges out of entanglements in interaction. By tracing specific experiences and events, by following humans and nonhumans and their joint practices, we were able to enter spacing without asking who or what acts upon who or what. This

allowed tracing the work that nonhumans do and understanding how monospace connects differently.

These two types of work are analytically separable; however, they are intertwined. On the one hand, working-with ingredients for spacing is a course of action and we can approach it as spacing itself. On the other, the ingredients fold courses of action to become then actors in new spacings. This makes the situation sometimes confusing and requires clarification as to which aspect should be considered. Following these two types of work we gained a detailed understanding of the process of spacing in the field of architecture, which extends the moment of spatial creation beyond the completion of building. In the following I would like to summarise six distinct characteristics of spacing that stand out in dialogue between the empirical observations and the existing ANT-literature as explored in the previous chapters. However, these characteristics should not be misunderstood as a rigid system but rather as a fluid field, which will change with each new account of spacing.

*Firstly, spacing is about connectivity.* Spacing happens in the interaction of different humans and nonhumans. It emerges out of connectivity in courses of action, in negotiation, in controversies, in experiences. We tend to take all the work that nonhumans do for granted, yet, particularly when problems occur or things break down we become aware of the work of (thus far invisible) actors (Latour 2005). While connectivity with regard to built space is traditionally understood as of a linear relationship (Chapter 1), in spacing it is mutual entanglements we encounter. Thus, approaching the monospace through spacing, we do not understand how it acts upon people or how it determines certain courses of action but we gain a detailed view into the different ways a building can share agency and how we can follow the doing in common. We learned that the monospace makes it easy to guide groups of people around or difficult to project the voice to larger groups (Chapter 4.4), we witnessed how it contributes to the event of specific encounters with pieces of art (Chapter 6.3) or how it allows light to be 'generous' (Chapter 6.2). Yet, in all these events it is only sometimes the building as a whole, as a singular object, but more often specific ingredients, elements, materials, objects, rhythms—thus spacing devices—that become visible.

*Secondly, spacing is about decentralisation.* Asking who is doing the work of spacing we face countless actors, both actors who are present and actors who have left the site or only show up every now and then. While in traditional architectural space that is shaped and enclosed by the presence of walls, in spacing we confront the presence of many actors *in absentia*.[5] If we understand actions as a knot of

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5    See Latour where he remarks that interactions are not *isotopic*, *synchronic* and *synoptic* (Latour 2005, 200f.).

agencies which makes a difference, which re-directs or opens up new possibilities (Chapter 2.3), then turning to spacing we confront many actors who contribute to spacing while not being present. The Sainsbury Centre was put in place 40 years ago. Ambling in its field of art today, chatting in the cafe or reading a book in the school area is possible because countless silent mediations allow for it, because the building holds them together. Turning to the experiences in spacing we witness the work that the nonhumans do when facing daily practices. We can follow how the circular shop works as an anchor giving orientation, how the spiral staircase allows for an overview of the interior from its pinnacle and for a safe descent, and how the setting of the Living Area mobilises, speeds people up, slows them down, and guides them around corners to let them explore the art (Chapter 5). Unravelling the knots of these daily courses of action leads in countless directions. Engaging with a painting by Francis Bacon in the Sainsbury Centre is, thus, not an inter-action *in* space and *in* time but an event of connecting with different actors, times and spaces (Chapter 5.4; Latour 1997). The concepts of inscription and delegation are key to understand that spacing does not only happen in the local presence of these objects and thus does not only depend on the materiality put in place (Chapter 4.4). The humans, the architects, the planners, the craftsmen, the patrons, who put them in place, who placed them with the help of countless diligent helpers, still make a difference and as such they are part of the agency. They re-direct and open up new possibilities; they contribute. Following the connections of any spacing thus leads not only along the networks to many different devices in the building but also to many other places and times.

*Thirdly, spacing is about negotiation.* Approaching spacing we do not only face stability and continuity, which are traditionally attributed to materiality in architecture but we always face negotiations about the courses of action that are possible with it. While the setting of the Living Area carries a script of being 'anti-museum', and while many humans and nonhumans work towards keeping this setting stable and thus to make certain courses of action the same and durable throughout time, spacing allows witnessing adjustments (Chapter 4.4). Enacting scripts in practices today, they are not simply extracted but negotiated (Akrich 1992; Murdoch 1998). We saw that practices of communicating art change and thus that difference occurs in how people and works of art interact. Hence, new spaces emerge while the material setting stays the same. But this also suggests that buildings must not be understood as technical objects in the sense of a clearly defined interface for use; they are manifold in their possibilities for action (Chapter 5.5; Guggenheim 2009). Particularly, monospace buildings seem to offer due to their structural indeterminacy a high level of openness for negotiation. This openness, however, also seems to create a particularly high degree of complexity in negotiation, because when activities touch e.g. on aspects like light, acoustics or climate this affects easily the whole monospace building, its elements and activities. We

saw this high complexity through connectivity in the case of the decision to set up an exhibition suite in the underground instead of in the monospace (Chapter 4.2), or in the long-term study on the change of the lighting situation (Chapter 6). In these decision-making processes, the monospace, the different materials, but also the individual works of art, the insurances schemes, the lenders and the funders, etc. are present. The building connects these multiple actors in negotiations, in controversies and spacing allows us to unravel them. And since negotiation is thus a specific form of connectivity, as explored earlier, this collection of characteristics overlaps and is fluid.

*Fourthly, spacing is about intensities.* Spacing is not homogenous but develops with different intensities and speeds (Latour 1997). Spacing is dynamic. Time joins space. Following a visitor in the act of moving with a piece of art we witnessed how different actors, the artist, the building's spatial layout, the white paint and the colours and different lights work together towards the event of encountering the art (Chapter 6.3). Events carry speeds and intensities like negotiations do. We traced how the controversy of light gained new pace with the blackout blinds breaking down and with the conservator changing lighting policies (Chapter 6). All the objects have their own timings and ways of existence, which develop not in linear time and space but with intensities.

*Fifthly, spacing is about multiplicity.* The connectivity in spacing, since it brings actors of different material qualities together, which all have their own timings and ways of existence, is not only connecting actors but is opening new possibilities in these connections. Thus, actors arrange each other; they exist in relation to each other (Chapter 2.3). We witnessed how the monospace opens and closes possibilities for each of them. Spacing is a relational process in which each actor can be many since actors gain their capacity to act in networks. We saw how the glass, the louvre system and the different materials allow the light to bounce and jump and move horizontally and vertically throughout the building and thus to be a 'generous' actor (Chapter 6.2). Furthermore, we understood that an object, like the display case in the East End Gallery, depending on practice could promote and enhance courses of action and hinder others at the same time (Chapter 4.3). Thus, depending on practice the case forces us to face a different reality of the case (Mol 2002). Objects like people exist in multiple realities. Spacing brings together actors of all types, material qualities, from different times and places, humans and nonhumans. Opening the black box of the building, moving inside and following spacing we witnessed how they all coexist. A building in experience, in perception, in practice is always changing and thus never stable and singular. Turning to the building in practice we entered by following spacing the multiple dimensions of the Sainsbury Centre, yet we will never fully grasp them. A realist account on space faces multiplicity.

*Sixthly, spacing is about uncertainty.* Entering the concerns with specific spacing devices, we witnessed what it costs to control space, to make courses of action predictable, repeatable and thus stable. Yet, turning to reality and following the working-with or specific experiences we became likewise aware of the uncertainties. Both people and objects can act in unpredictable ways. Both built up surprising connections that lead to unique, unrepeatable events and new courses of action and thus new spacings. Following people in their trajectories we saw that their journeys with the material world are not linear, but that gaps occur leading to hesitation when mediations fail, when adequate knowledge or other stabilising actors are missing (Chapter 5.2). We saw that technical objects break down, like the blackout blind and lead to 'darkness' in the Living Area (Chapter 6), furthermore we saw that objects build up surprising connections in which they can gain their own independence and resist. The connection of the heavy case and goods lift is such a situation in which movements of people and objects are re-directed throughout the building as long as the lift is out of service so long as the case is on top of it and as long as adequate tools (and thus actors) are missing to move the (depending on practice) unstable box (Chapter 4.3). Actors gain their capacity to act in relation to other actors and since not one single actor is in control the process of spacing carries uncertainty.

Following spacing as it happens in experience, in practices and events, there can be no such thing as a singular space, a monospace. Thus, studying a monospace building with spacing creates a specific tension between the singular and the multiple. That said, it turns out that the seemingly abstract and formal definition of monospace can exist alongside the multiple spatial courses of action. Spacing incorporates the agency of the building; its (formal) properties are not abstract, not outside but part of its doing. Monospace connects differently and thus it is one dimension of the multiple dimensions of the building. We can understand this when focusing on the far-reaching consequences changes tend to have. For example, changes such as the network of light, climate and acoustics that spread through the whole building without being stopped or separated by walls into smaller groups. The monospace due to its high level of connectivity in this sense tends to make it difficult to change the doing of a network and tricky to control in change, as we saw with the issue of light (Chapter 6). Here there is the orientation of the building towards the sun, the openings and the layers of the light filters to consider, which are just as present in the negotiations as specific materials of works of art, day-, lighting- and art-rotation-cycles or the conservator. The monospace gives them all presence and connects them in specific way. The monospace is present when it comes to rethinking possibilities and it suggests certain solutions and hinders or impedes others. In paying close attention to the multiverse that emerges out of spacing, we can understand the building from inside out,

from within its networks. This provides a different and nuanced understanding of architecture's relationships. Not a static container space but its earthly way of allowing, hindering, and fostering certain events through which its specific dependencies and possibilities occur. Thus, approaching the typology of monospace through spacing we witnessed the 'thingly' nature of a specific monospace in use and its constant mode of becoming.

Before moving on to how spacing helps re-thinking architecture's relations, I would like to touch on the use of the term space in relation to spacing. Space as this study claimed can never be singular. Yet, I would like to suggest that it is sometimes a useful way of black-boxing the complex and processual reality that every space is made of. After unravelling and accounting for the work in the process of spacing in a specific network, as for example in the Living Area, this box can be closed again by speaking of the space of the Living Area. Now that there is a clear understanding that this is not a space that is contained in the Living Area but a space of connectivity and negotiation, that is multiple and complex, and only after a huge amount of work can be brought under control, this seems useful. That said, such use must be taken with caution, since it can easily seduce one into rendering static what is a reality in motion.

## 7.2
## The Building as an Actor

While buildings are traditionally understood to be stable enclosures that contain space, with the help of spacing, we gained a different understanding. Space here is nothing contained, but something that emerges in relations, in networks. If the shell no longer contains space in the sense of an absolutist-substantivalist spatial understanding then it is primarily no longer a separating one but one that connects (Yaneva 2010), mediating between inside and outside. It no longer cuts off and encapsulates the one space from an absolute space in a box instead the shell becomes porous, a filter that is actively 'enabling, impeding and even changing the speed of the free-floating actors, data and resources, links and opinions, which are all in orbit, in a network, and never *within* static enclosures […].' (Latour and Yaneva 2008, 87; original emphasis) With spacing we gain a different understanding for what a building is by what it does and in this it differs from other practice oriented spatial ideas (e.g. Löw 2001).

Encountering the building we do not move *in* time and *in* space but rather with a multiplicity of actors that have their own timings, spacings, goals and ways of being, however, they are connected in a specific way by the building (Yaneva 2010). The building is weaving them all together. As such we can understand it as a specific place. Not as a specific place *in* space (which again would presume a

pre-existing space that is a kind of neutral condition in which the object is situated), however, in its activity of *placemaking*. It is the act of connecting interactions of different times and spaces that is creating the notion of place here (Latour 1997). The building is thus weaving together its very own entanglement of 'space-time-actants' (ibid. 181).

When the curator Winner notes 'We are trying to make the building do things that it doesn't want to do' this particularly renders the building as actor visible.[6] With Winner, we traced the specific doing of the building in terms of housing art. Art objects do not collect in an empty space but are situated in the specific network of the building. This network as it concerns the upper part, the monospace, for example does not allow for stable climate as required by some insurance schemes today and thus impedes the prospects of major art loans to the Sainsbury Centre (Chapter 4). This inquiry shows that exhibiting art, and especially in the rapid cycles of changing exhibitions, is an intense working *with* the building that renders visible the building as a whole as well as, in the next moment, the many actors that it necessarily assembles. Here it is not helpful to distinguish between building and interior design, between lighting and furnishing since it becomes apparent that particularly in a museum setting everything works together to produce a specific condition for spacings (particularly Chapter 6). Spacing dissolves the line between inside and outside. Furthermore, it dissolves traditional distinctions as existing in planning. The building's shell, the automatic doors and air curtain, the covers over the artworks, in some cases silica gel, work together to maintain a constant temperature and humidity for fragile pieces of art (Chapter 4). Approaching the climate, the whole world of the monospace is present. Architecture here concerns the modulation of flows, which do not end once passed the building's shell. The building shares agency in spacing with humans, objects, materials, rules, climate, etc. It shares agency in the daily movements of people and objects; it shares agency in practices and it shares agency in the grand projects when material transformations take place as with the underground Exhibition Suite (Chapter 4). With this inquiry then we witnessed that ANT is particularly helpful in unravelling this kind of material rich world in flux as it is inherent in museum practice and thus provides for a unique understanding of the latter. Moving into the building and following spacing we witnessed complex realities out of which the museum space emerges.

Spacing thus offers a different view on architecture. The look from inside out leaves the birds eye view behind and explores the building little by little. Here we lost sight of abstract concepts, of stylistic or historic attributions as collected in Chapter 3, and faced multiple practices, events and experiences. Turning away from space as contained in buildings, buildings do not exist outside daily life, but

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6    Winner, walking interview.

become part of social practice. Social life thus does not happen *in* buildings but *with* buildings (Yaneva 2009c, 2017). The building is part of the flux and it is never finished. As Stewart Brand noted 'A building is something you start.' (Brand 1994, 188) Understanding buildings as unfinished projects acknowledges the building in its entire lifespan. They have biographies and in the course of their life they participate in a sheer endless variety of spacings. This long lifespan is not to be overlooked for architects and as such spacing challenges the idea of the architectural object, which is shaped by designer-architects and completed with the end of construction.

## 7.3
## The Disappearance of the User

Spacing not only draws our attention toward the many neglected nonhumans, it also gives voice to often-overlooked people in the field of architecture. This may be a surprising aspect. Spacing enhances the 'user' in architecture, however it also renders the understanding of a homogeneous 'public' in the museum setting more diverse. Turning to experiences we leave an abstract and predictable user behind and acknowledge the multiplicity of the experience of humans and their engagement with the world of the building. The people working, visiting and dwelling with buildings are to a certain extent disregarded within architectural discourse and production (Hill 2003). Furthermore the museum visitors are also, notwithstanding a shift, 'a relatively homogeneous and rather passive mass' (Macdonald 2006, 8). Turning to spacing we see manifold things, a world rich in materials and objects, however, we also see manifold people, creative, unpredictable and sometimes fragile human beings. Thus, neither nonhumans nor humans are predictable in spacing. Turning to spacing provides detailed insights and contributes 'to see[ing] how living with the world is always to engage in the practice of drawing things together differently' (Jacobs and Merriman 2011, 216). As such spacing allows us to show people beyond the categories of use and function.

We saw that the 'user' can become an expert when working with the building, which emancipates them for example to take on the role of the client in negotiation with funders and architects (Chapter 4.2), or how they circumnavigate rigid spatial settings and introduce new practices that open up new spaces in case of the Living Area (Chapter 4.4). Thus, we face creative and nuanced human beings, in their experiences with the building, particularly with the museum setting. We witness human beings who attune to the setting differently. Those who are receptive to exploring the Living Area, to walking with the objects, and others who feel compelled by the very setting to look at things that they do not want to see (Chapter 5). We learn about things that happen to people with the building

like getting lost and walking to the wrong door, but also about being physically well connected to the staircases and flowing fluidly past the art display, as well as both the joy and frustration that can emerge out of these connections. We met people who have favourite places and rituals that they practice with the building (Chapter 5.4), and people who become immersed into the event of viewing a piece of art (Chapter 6.3). We followed people and learned about their ways of working with the building (Chapter 4). Thus, we faced many different experiences, which co-exist. There is not one way of experiencing the building and not one way of en-countering the art. And while changing material settings and practices can enrich perception and foster new encounters, the stability of the Living Area, we learned, allows people to return and to explore its dynamics in stability (Chapter 6.3). As such stability can likewise open heterogeneity, since heterogeneity here emerges out of the relation of object and human (Hetherington 1999).

All these people are individual and gain a voice: in observations, in inter-views, in sketching, in courses of action. Approaching architecture through spacing the non-architects become experts themselves. Here we did not witness an overwriting of the original plan of the architect as other authors observed (Guggenheim 2010; Brand 1994; Gieryn 2002) since in this specific case the archi-tect never left the building. In that sense Foster's never gave up authority over the permanent spatial arrangement (which is of course again a shared authority with many other actors in the making). Nevertheless, they do not have sovereignty over space. Thus, we can understand with the Sainsbury Centre even better spacing as a constant re-designing of space that pushes the boundaries of the traditional fo-cus of architecture. It pays attention to small details, the changing of the lighting situation, the introduction of new courses of practice, the work of holding things together. Here we witness the heterogeneity of space—spacing is never the same; it is an ongoing work that creates complex authorships.

## 7.4
## Architects Amongst Many Experts

The Sainsbury Centre became listed amongst other things for its 'in-built flexibility' (Historic England 2017). Yet, reality shows, that what a building is and what it does, if it allows for great flexibility or not is a result of the work of many (Chapter 4). Flexible space (like stable space) develops out of the complex entanglements of humans and nonhumans. Spacing challenges the idea of an autonomous architectural design.

Previous ethnographic studies have shown that buildings emerge out of col-lective actions during the design process and that the idea of an autonomous ar-chitect must be considered a myth (Cuff 1991; Yaneva 2009ca, 2009b; Houdart and Minato 2009). Spacing contributes to a further dispersion of authorship *in* space.

Neither can architects determine the behaviour of future people entangling with a building nor can they fully control the doing of the ingredients of spacing they put in place. Spacing does not follow linear trajectories. This gives some actors like the architect a less prominent or powerful position, while other previously overlooked or little noticed actors gain in visibility.

For architecture as a space designing discipline with a focus on the architectural object (Awan, Schneider, and Till 2011; Chapter 1), spacing thus has far-reaching consequences. When buildings have so far been characterised by solid and stable shells and have erected boundaries, thereby separating an interior from an exterior, this has been accompanied by clear distinctions. With spacing these material borders no longer seem stable but act as mediators between inside and outside, as actors in negotiation, in experience, in perception and processes. The shell no longer creates a closed object but is itself of many individual parts, a group of actors in networks. Here the clear and singular affiliations of the abstract object dissolve and its multiplicity comes to the fore. Whether the shell is a wall that cannot be penetrated, as it happens to visitors prior to the opening of the building (see Chapter 5) or whether it presents itself in elements in working-with with gaps under its doors allowing vermin to circulate (see Chapter 4) is not due to different perspectives but to different practices. Turning to practice we approached the multiplicity of the building in practice and faced a world that is not defined by 'either/or' but by 'both/and'—by coexistence. This leads to greater complexity and decentralisation, but also allows a more focused view on details, layers and elements, which make up a building. The shell is no longer a monolithic, but decentralised and fragmentary. In these elements the possibility of comparison becomes higher and can be validated according to appropriateness and characteristics. This is common in the design of buildings, where all elements are assessed in their effects and selected accordingly, but central to spacing is to incorporate the social dimension of the doing of these elements. Materials, objects, buildings do not have an effect *on* people but *with* people. Architecture's agency is thus limited since countless actors participate in the making of its reality and this shifts the agency from the object to the network.

Architects do not control spacing. Yet, the loss of authority must not be considered 'a threat to professional credibility, but as an inevitable condition' as Awan, Schneider and Till point out and note that architects plan into uncertain futures (2011, 28). Approaching architecture with spacing and understanding a building as a field of possibilities, takes away its objectivity and its hard facts, and introduces a need for openness which might enable architecture to connect to a global and dynamic reality that shapes our daily lives, as Hilger demands (Hilger 2011). Holding on to the static object and ignoring architecture's 'dependencies' as Till puts it dismisses 'the potential for a reformulation of architectural practice that would resist its present marginalization' (2013, 2).

**7.5**
# Tracing an Architectural World in Flux: Some Methodological Reflections

Tracing how heterogeneous actors come together in the course of spacing, I followed the route of ethnographic research into the realm of architectural practice (Chapter 2.5). ANT provides tools to approach space, as we can follow the enactment of networks (Law 2002), and it furthermore allows acknowledging the different ways humans and nonhumans share agency (Yaneva 2009c). Thus, ANT proved to be of great help when entering and unravelling the complex and reciprocal relationships between building, practices, objects, materials and human bodies, which are necessary to grasp in the reality of monospace buildings, as I argued.

Buildings-in-use are large and complex objects, which weave together multiple times, spaces and actors. Moving into this world and following practices leads in all directions. Starting an empirical research into this messy reality of a building seems at first to be a hopeless undertaking. Observation often seemed to be plagued by bad timing or to simply be lacking in time. For example, I arrived just after the fire alarm went off, or when the yellow stele in the Rana Begum exhibition had been touched and moved by a visitor (Chapter 6.4). At the same time, the high visibility of the monospace greatly facilitated the investigation and made tracing in many situations possible. However, we can grasp reality only in fragments and this holds particularly true for buildings, as in all these connections, entanglements and mediations we are never able to fully unravel who else is acting.

I took different routes into this reality. Next to strategic in-depth interviews I engaged in observation and produced written accounts of events, which show the rich world out of which actors emerge. This is known terrain and ethnographies into the field of architectural practice and built environment have shown previously how we can trace the entanglement of humans and nonhumans (Houdart and Minato 2009; Yaneva 2009a, 2009b). The literature on empirically based studies into architectural space is scarce and so a first objective was to validate studying through experiencing buildings and space. Turning to specific experiences I followed with ANT a pragmatist tradition, which allows circumventing the dichotomy of subjective and objective space. ANT has not only proven helpful in understanding the building from 'within' and opening the complex relationships between humans and nonhumans in spacing, it allowed doing so without losing direct contact to the material world of the building—which I consider important for architectural research. With ANT we followed practices and witnessed the difference objects make in courses of action. Tracing objects in their doing and opening black boxes, decomposing them in smaller details and ingredients we traced the work that is necessary to produce space. Here, ANT allows acknowledging the

work that absent actors do, which again seems particularly important for the concerns of architecture.

Adding specific interview forms, the walking interview and the sketching interview, to the methodological repertoire of ANT, however, I departed from traditional approaches. Validating how spacing can be made visible and traced when approaching a building in practice both walking and sketching interviews have proven to be fruitful for studying buildings with ANT. While the first is known in the field of ethnographic research and valued for the rich data it produces (J. Evans and Jones 2011), the latter, known as the mental map interview (Gould and White 1974), is traditionally used in the field of geography and psychology to access mental spatial representations and knowledge. While both methods allow us to research spatial orientation, I used them in different terms.

The walking interview as introduced in Chapter 2.5 and explored with Chapter 4 is a particularly active mode of interview. Walking throughout the building during the course of the interview allowed the building itself to actively participate, to guide and redirect the trajectory of the interview. The building, specific objects and materials brought to attention, slowed the walk down or stopped it, reminding the person observing to mention them. The content of the interview never drifted at any point into a large narrative overview, but remained connected to the earthly reality of the building and the specific pragmatic knowledge of it. Many ingredients for spacing became visible, however not in a detached manner but in their daily setting. Winner for example touched and pushed the glass case to demonstrate problems with it in use (Chapter 4.3). At other moments we met people in the building—and Winner included them for a brief moment in the interview—providing new contact for me. What was an asset in my case can create problems when it comes to aspects of confidentiality or when people prefer to stay anonymous. Furthermore, only during the walking interview was I able to enter certain parts of the building that were otherwise locked. Of course, this form of interview is more time consuming than others and not suitable for every target group. That said, it is particularly helpful to approach a complex object such as a building.

I conducted two walking interviews with two recognised experts in working with the building. I think it would have been useful to have more walking interviews in addition to those done and to repeat them with the same people after a certain time had elapsed. I think this would have allowed tracing small changes in the building even better.

The sketching interview as also introduced in Chapter 2.5 and explored with Chapter 5 was especially aimed at the target group, at people I had to approach directly and with whom I could not pre-arrange an appointment for interview. These were thus short interviews ranging from 10 to 20 minutes, sketching while speaking about their experiences with the building had the enhancing effect that

these interviews also were embedded in the material world. Less autobiographical aspects then the doing with the building stayed in focus during the interview. The paper reminded interviewees to fill it, to think about the material world they engaged with. What could be taken to be a mental experiment was in the case of this study a tool to trace the engagements with the material world of the building. Specific events, experiences and practicalities came to the fore.

The sketching interview can pose challenges for the person interviewed who does not always feel comfortable with sketching. It proved useful to take notes about the drawing order to connect it with the transcript later. While a first question as warm-up seemed helpful, I had two questions which were rather descriptive before reaching my point of interest: 'Think about the different ways you move around here. Where did you go? And what did you do there?' However, sketching movements proved to be particularly difficult and here interviewees often rather explained than drew. Nevertheless, the things they engaged with on the path often became visible. While in classical mental map interviews care is taken that these do not take place in the area it is about, in my case I considered this to be irrelevant, because I did not want to test whether the objects could be drawn from the mind or placed correctly. Thus, it was not a cognitive test but an enhancing tool complementing the oral interview that allowed replacing to some extent a walking interview or shadowing.

## 7.6
## When Space Is Never 'Completed'

In examining the potential of an ANT-account into space in the field of architecture, I positioned this research at the intersection of architectural theory and mundane practice by directing attention to the typology of monospace. I argued that to understand a monospace building we need to turn to its lived reality and witness how space is not contained *in* a building but how it is a complex process that emerges *with* a building (Chapter 1). The book started with the discussion of how we can leave a traditional spatial understanding that still dominates the world of architecture behind (Chapter 2). A relational and processual understanding of space as we can find it currently within the social sciences and the humanities is still largely separated from the architects' spaces; the latter, a singular, inanimate and static form condemned to passivity, the former, active and vibrant, always in flux. This division is far-reaching, since it degrades architecture in its relation to the social to passive materiality, either as a tool or a mirror of social contexts embedded in causal relations (Yaneva 2012). While various scientists are making efforts to overcome this dichotomy, to push the boundaries, and blur the preoccupation with subjective and objective space, empirical studies into archi-

tectural space are generally scarce and tend to favour a human-centred approach. This book, then, provides from an ANT perspective a realist account into the space of a building in practice. Taking up the concept of spacing by Latour (1997) this study approached the topic of space from an empirical point of view with an extensive field research at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich, UK. In studying spacing empirically, it provides a processual, rich, and complex understanding of space and building and both its mutual entanglements with the human world. This approach contributes to the field of architectural theory and the current scholarship on the relationship of architecture to social life, while opening a scarcely explored area in the field of ANT-inspired anthropological works on architecture. Here, the study furthermore explored the methodological contributions that walking and sketching interviews can make particularly in the context of ANT-inspired research.

My account into the world of the Sainsbury Centre was not a critical one. I did not judge at any moment if something is good or bad, if something works well or does not and I did not put my descriptions into the discussion and comparison with, for example, other built references. In the same manner I do not provide suggestions on how to change this world, how to make it a 'better' actor in spacing. Descriptions are not innocent, however (Geertz 1973). Following the spacings with the building we looked at architecture in a different way and it may open new possibilities for architectural activity.

This book indeed shakes some traditional beliefs in the field of architecture. Not to point the finger at those who are 'stuck in the past'—looking into sociology tells us that even for those who are not concerned with shaping buildings along three-dimensional coordinates every day have difficulties in actually leaving a container thinking behind (Schroer 2006)—but to indicate the chances rather that come along when turning to architectural space as process. Spacing acknowledges the consequences of architecture and renders visible the biography of a building entangled with the human world. For architects this can contribute further awareness to the complexity of buildings (not only during the making, which they are perfectly aware of) but also after their completion. Buildings considered from the perspective of spacing are never completed. If we understand buildings as in process, and space as a hybrid human-non-human relation, then this results in a different understanding of what architecture is and does and shifts the field of obligation for architects. It is not the shaping of objects, neither its aesthetics nor style, but its relations with people in the course of life of a building that is central. And here the architect has social and political responsibility (amongst many others). Thus, it is not about thinking architecture as a tool to change people's lives but to think architecture as an open setting. Open for negotiations, open for change and processes. These thoughts are not fundamentally new, concepts such as flexibility and openness especially as they are linked to open plan and monospace

buildings reflect a (certain) wish to keep a building open for the future, open to the 'creative user' (Hill 2003). As I see it, the opportunity that spacing offers is to re-think existing architectural concepts and strategies and through this possibly contribute to developing other ways of doing and thinking architecture. Understanding stability and flexibility not as properties of buildings but as emergent in spacing shifts the focus to the 'architectural' (Yaneva 2010) and acknowledges architecture's dependencies (Till 2013).

ANT as a method makes it possible to debate the relationships of buildings and humans in more complex terms and thus to leave the idea of linear interactions and trajectories behind. The implications ANT has for space in the field of architecture are numerous. Entering the world of spacing we entered a world in flux. While museum spaces in particular produce highly stabilised environments, yet changing the spatial arrangements in terms of exhibition design over and over again, this poses an interesting field of research that needs to further investigate the tension between fluidity and stability. In this tension of stability and fluidity in connection to space an important interface seems to exist in which architecture can learn from ANT but also vice versa, ANT from architecture. An interface that should not only be fruitful for these two, but in general for the further debate on the relationship between architecture and the social in general.