RETHINKING THE CULTURAL CATALYST
An abductive study of the possibilities for urban revitalization with the artistic catalyst in the digital city

Tanya Søndergaard Toft
Copenhagen University
Modern Culture with profile in Urbanity and Aesthetics

September 2011
RETHINKING THE CULTURAL CATALYST
An abductive study of the possibilities for urban revitalization with the artistic catalyst in
the digital city

Master’s thesis

Copenhagen University
Department of Arts and Cultural Studies
Modern Culture with profile in Urbanity and Aesthetics

Author: Tanya Søndergaard Toft
Advisor: Professor Martin Zerlang

September 2011

Characters: 191.680 / ca. 80 normal pages
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td>Thesis statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td>Critical reflection on methodological approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003</td>
<td>Ontology of becoming in duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>004</td>
<td>Abductive knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>005</td>
<td>Eclecticism in the method of intuition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>006</td>
<td>Introduction of theoretical concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>007</td>
<td>Considerations on empirical approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>008</td>
<td>Further delimitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>009</td>
<td>Thesis structure and reading guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>012</td>
<td>Appendix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>014</td>
<td>A (TEMPORARY) PORTRAIT OF NEW YORK CITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>014</td>
<td>City of differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>017</td>
<td>PART 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>017</td>
<td>THE ‘TEMPORARY’ COMPLEX IN THE CULTURAL CATALYST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>019</td>
<td>1.1 The cultural turn and conceptual staging of the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>019</td>
<td>1.2 The difference in the cultural policy of New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>023</td>
<td>1.3 The relationship between the space of place and the spaces of flow in the project society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>026</td>
<td>1.4 The processual nature of the cultural ‘scenes’ in New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029</td>
<td>Summary Part 1: The complex of experience and desire in the cultural catalyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>030</td>
<td>PART 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>030</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>030</td>
<td>2.1 Experiencing in temporary affects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>032</td>
<td>2.2 The four fields of ‘flights’ in the analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>034</td>
<td>PART 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>044</td>
<td>ANALYSIS IN FOUR PERSPECTIVES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>044</td>
<td>3.1 The stage: codes of appropriation in New York City’s public spaces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 The program: détournements in the spatial planning of temporary uses
3.3 The performance: de-territorialized imagination of place in the site-specific art installation
3.4 The audience: the citizen’s positioning in environments organized in ‘electrical currents’

Summary Part 3: Remodeling the principles of the cultural catalyst in the related fields

PART 4

4.1 Bureaucracy /the master plan
4.2 Production /the cultivation
4.3 Sensuality /the program
4.4 Imagination /citizenship

Summary Part 4: Rethinking the cultural catalyst as workshop in the diagram of the ‘city as innovation lab’

CONCLUSION

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS IN A QUESTION MACHINE
Evaluation in a question machine
The contribution of this thesis

NOTES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

DANISH SUMMARY
INTRODUCTION

Thesis statement

The concept of the temporary is a condition for experience in New York City. It is a condition for the rhythm of the city’s continuous re-finding of itself, in which during a single season, coffee shops, restaurants, and clubs open and close; streets morph from the overflow of visitors hunting down its temporary events (like Orchard Street in the Lower East Side with its explosion of new galleries); places previously perceived as being “culturally dead” become hot spots for new exhibitions; and old and new parks become the venues for concerts, movie screenings, and yoga classes.

Since the 1980s, the concept of the temporary has been catalyzed into a multi-complex of strategies of using culture and art as cultural catalysts for revitalizing urban environments in New York City. Nonprofit art organizations use site-specific, temporary art installations to engage New Yorkers in their environments (which was pioneered by the arts organization Creative Time in 1973), and the funding programs of the city’s Department of Cultural Affairs commission temporary art in public spaces (through the “Percent for Art” program, since 1983, and recently through the “Urban Canvas” program, which commissions artwork for temporary protective construction sites in the city). Furthermore, with local and informal cultural organizations arranging temporary art festivals, food festivals, and parades, intended to boost local communities and neighborhoods, New York City seems like a staged spectacle of temporary cultural events.

During the past decade, a new temporary impulse has formed and penetrated the cultural rhythm of the city. The digitalization of the city has brought with it new structures of cultural mobilization in social networks, mobile modes of navigation, and networks among urban dwellers that allow for establishing impulsive cultural events. These conditions are adding a new immaterial dimension to cultural scenes and events in New York City on the material level. Significantly, citizens find themselves in a state of new civic power over urban spaces through new forms of mobilization in social networks and through mobile means of interacting with each other. The cultural catalyst
is adopting the new temporality to some extent: digital outdoor theaters are set up in parks and on rooftops, like the “Syfy Movies With a View” summer series at Brooklyn Bridge Park; and artistic festivals experiment with the aesthetics of new media technologies, like the Bring to Light Nuit Blanche contemporary art festival, which lights up an industrial block in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

A few cultural initiatives of 2011 adopt the new temporary impulse in a collaborative way. The New York Festival of Ideas provides online platforms on which citizens can interact and exchange ideas about the future of the city. These were executed in public events between May 4 and 8, 2011. The mobile BMW Guggenheim Lab invited the public to participate in free programs and digital experiments on issues of contemporary urban life. On a governmental level, Mayor Bloomberg’s proposal, “Road Map for the Digital City: Achieving New York City’s Digital Future” (2011), provides a digital, infrastructural scheme for engaging New Yorkers in urban policy via digital media and social networks.

What I wish to point out—in this adjustment in cultural initiatives to the new temporary impulse of the city—is a cultural planning tendency to meet New Yorkers on different terms instead of just entertaining them as an audience in the urban spectacle. I wonder: How could this tendency translate into the cultural catalyst as a “media art installation” in the digitalized urban environment? How would this reformulate the program of experience in the catalyst, the scope of revitalization, and, not least, the understanding of citizenship? The research question guiding my exploration is:

*What could the cultural catalyst become as an artistic tool of urban revitalization in the digital urban framework of New York City?*

Critical reflections on methodological framework

My methodological approach, which is formulated in response to my thesis statement, is founded on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze.

What is special about Deleuze’s philosophy is his *thinking* of the world in connections and montages across conventions and established patterns of thought. Particularly in the light of my subject of *Modern culture and cultural dissemination* and my academic profiling in *urbanity and aesthetics*, Deleuze’s affirmative and forward-oriented philosophy can be considered a fruitful framework for coming to understand new phenomena in the world, like a rethinking of the cultural catalyst in a digitalized urban framework. Sometimes, as I will argue in this case, the understanding of new phenomena requires a
reconsideration of the optics, from which such phenomena are investigated. As Frederik Langkjær notes in his critical reflection on using Deleuze’s philosophy in the academic field of art history, sometimes it is helpful to “speed up.” With the metaphor of “speed,” Langkjær characterizes Deleuze’s thinking in the rhizome in constant interconnections and de-territorializations (Langkjær 2006, 65).

However, the choice in Deleuze’s argument also makes a problematic premise in terms of making the thesis an academically valid project in the field of the arts. The “problem” begins with Deleuze’s departure from hermeneutics, which is simultaneously a departure from interpretation and critical analysis (Kyndrup 2006, 8). This is why Langkjær advocates for a conscious distinction between philosophical and scientific thinking in the humanities, and for a conscious awareness about when the scientist drives in what mode when he uses Deleuze (Langkjær 2006, 71).

As such, I will use Deleuze in respect to his thinking to mobilize a research design that enables changes in perspective and for this thesis to take up a new position. The “speed” in my mobilization of Deleuze’s thinking is one of identifying lines of coherencies across cultural policies, historic cultural movements, and contemporary cultural trends in an overall discussion of the changing significance of “the cultural concept,” which is at the heart of the cultural catalyst. In addition, while the primary project of this thesis is posed in my thesis statement, the project that echoes in this is one of developing a position in the arts, from which new “aesthetic challenges” can be addressed in the urban field.

**Ontology of becoming in duration**

In my exploration of the cultural catalyst as an artistic tool of urban revitalization in a digitalized urban framework, I am problematizing the dominating regime of practice of using the cultural catalyst in revitalization strategies, of conceptualizing the city as a stage for a spectacle. It is, however, not my intention to test the truth or the falsity of this “condition.” Rather, my objective is to explore the potential becoming of the cultural catalyst, and in that, exploring an alternative conceptualization of the city. This places the thesis in an “ontology of becoming” rather than an “ontology of being.” In researching the becoming, I am researching the cultural catalyst as a processual concept in a sense of duration, rather than as a phenomenon fixed in space, which would be the strategy of a phenomenological approach. The concept of duration is
proposed by Henri Bergson as an ontological understanding of “being in time,” in an ongoing condition of transition, change, and becoming (Bergson 1992, 14, 16). It is in duration that invention takes place, where something becomes because it is in constant development through time (Bergson 1992, 34). This ontological position has a consequence for my research in that I cannot “control” my problem and investigate it in a way that allows for confirmation or rejection of preconceptions of the conditions of the problem, which makes my conclusion less of a solution and more of a prospect, or a scenario. In approaching my problem in an ontology of becoming, I consider it to be influenced by multiple factors and not tied to any generic form or predictable conclusion. My conclusion will be a virtual scenario.

In the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, which is influenced by Bergson, reality consists of a dynamic relationship between the actual and the virtual. The actual refers to the actual experience of the world, the “state of affairs” (Deleuze 1994, 5). The virtual refers to an imagined situation of the future, which Deleuze describes as “a transcendental condition of all experience.” The virtual is found in the actual as a space of possibilities or conditions for what the actual could be like (Deleuze 1994, 157).

My conclusion for what the cultural catalyst could become, as an artistic tool of urban revitalization in a digital urban framework, will be proposed as a virtual condition, which only makes one potential form out of multiple possible scenarios. This is why my cultivation of the problem is essential, more than my final proposal. If the virtual scenario is to be actualized, the conditions in the actual need to be adjusted to affect the sought-after conditions of the virtual. It is with this in mind that I problematize the cultural catalyst in terms of the conditions it is operating under, which is under a regime of practice of a conception of the city as a stage and its citizens as an audience (Deleuze 1994, 211).

Abductive knowledge

The academic validation of my thesis needs to be addressed in a specific abductive perspective. Charles Sanders Peirce proposed abduction as an annexation to the logical categories of induction and deduction, which for Peirce are all necessary parts of the transcendental deduction of semiotic analysis in constructing a logical argument. Abductive knowledge is the “firstness” in a triadic structure in his logic. In this step, logic comes from “putting together what we had never before dreamed of putting together which flashes the new
suggestion before our contemplation” (Peirce 1998, 227). In doing so, we need to approach the hypothesis from different angles in order to lead to new scientific thinking. Abduction mediates between a wonder and its consequences, as the doubt is lifted to stability in the concept formation (Jantzen and Thellefsen 2006, 7). It is in the abductive logic that my exploration is situated. Because of this, my conclusion will be one that can be qualified and imagined, rather than verified and measured.

In an epistemological consideration, abductive knowledge does not come from guessing. As Martin Laursen mentions, the researcher needs to be a traditionalist and innovative at the same time (Laursen 2010, 7). Imagine the jazz musician playing in Washington Square Park outside the Bobst Library in New York City, where this thesis was written. The jazz musician is improvising, but only because he knows his own instrument and its possibilities of combining modes and rhythms can he improvise and try out musical border areas and discover new territories. Similarly, my ability to “improvise” and study new territories requires that I “know” the field that I explore. I have practiced this combination of convergent and divergent thinking through my introductory deductive evaluation of a condition of New York City as organized by the principle of the temporary, and my inductive collection of archival material, case studies, and photography. Both the deductive and the inductive are convergent exercises and have served to establish an understanding of the field for my divergent thinking and abductive exploration. These exercises of coming to know my field are exercises of problematizing how the concept of the temporary challenges and conditions the cultural catalyst.

Eclecticism in the method of intuition

In order to reach new understanding and imaginations, Peirce invites for the composing of eclectic methods for the studying of becoming. In the Ph.D. dissertation “Det Performativt Æstetiske Byrum” (The Performative Aesthetic Urban Space, 2011), Kristine Samson studies the becoming of the performative urban space in an eclectic symposium of methods, by which she approaches her research as a practice of generating knowledge rather than of testing a thesis (Samson 2011, 11). Samson examines the interplay between the aesthetic, architecturally designed urban space and the social actions that play out in it with the goal of investigating what this “performative” urban space could become (Samson 2011, 14). Her method can be characterized as intuitive, which is an abductive approach of giving being to what did not already exist, rather than
uncovering a problem (Deleuze 1988, 15). She studies the problem from the inside, on its conditions of its becoming and by means of the methods necessary to illuminate her subject of study, the performative, in the best way possible. The intuitive method was originally proposed by Henri Bergson as a method of “thinking in duration,” which is to approach a problem from a processual state of mind with the aim of opening it up to a new field of knowledge (Bergson 1992, 30).

My methodology needs to be designed to address multiple factors and therefore needs to be freed from disciplinary rigidity. Inspired by Samson’s eclectic research approach, I am designing my research intuitively by “placing” myself inside my exploration, for which reason eclecticism has been a necessary approach. My thesis unfolds in a theoretical weave in between the arts and between theories of practices of reorganizing the built environment.

Introduction to theoretical concepts

This thesis is based on the conception that the city is a living concept in constant transformation, driven by a continuous formation of flow and interrelatedness in temporary compositions. Deleuze’s (2004b) thinking in the logic of the rhizome spurs the theoretical framework in which I navigate throughout the thesis, and this will be described in more detail in the following chapter, A (temporary) portrait of New York City.

The concept of the temporary is considered a condition for experience in both the city’s material and immaterial levels, which morph into new configurations in urban territories. I am leaning on Manuel Castells’ (2006) perspective on the spatial organization in the information society where the temporary frames my optics on the “spaces of flow,” in my understanding of the challenges of this morphing. The temporary is considered in a double dimension, not only referring to a synchronic and “vertical” conception of a certain amount of time, but also to a diachronic and “horizontal,” ephemeral conception of something in progress. The second notion is a condition of movement in duration, and thus more interesting to my exploration.

The temporary is the condition and contemporary challenge for the cultural catalyst, which I characterize in a dual function in its contemporary shape, of either planning of culture in a universalistic sense or planning with culture in a relativistic sense. This is based on Dorte Skot-Hansen’s (2007) division of approaches of cultural planning. In my reconsideration of the cultural catalyst as an artistic tool of urban revitalization in a digitalized urban
framework, I am rethinking the cultural catalyst into a pragmatic context of planning for culture, with help from Christian Jantzen’s (2005) theory of the cultural concept.

In addition to these main theoretical perspectives, I will include urban theories and position my study in between classical and new viewpoints, such as Henri Lefebvre and Michel DeCerteau’s perspectives on the city and social space; Georg Simmel, Walter Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire and Richard Sennett’s perspectives on the urban subject in the urban, and the relations between subjects; Jean Baudrillard and Scott McQuire’s theories on the “mediation” in urban space; and Ash Amin & Nigel Thrift and Gilles Deleuze’s philosophical conceptions of the city as a “field”.

Considerations on empirical approaches

Following the main principle of the intuitive method, I want to place myself inside of my problem, exploring what the cultural catalyst could become in a rethinking of its regime of practice of the “city as stage” in New York City. This has demanded of my research design to support the different avenues of my problem on their terms. Like Samson, I am framing my argument from different angles with an eclectic composition of different approaches.

• A philosophical analytical approach, as I am treating my empirical material in Part 3 as arts des surfaces, which is Deleuze’s term, meaning “operating in the surface” in between relationships of phenomena rather than conducting a critical analysis and interpretation, as per my scientific positioning in relation to Deleuze’s philosophy (Kyndrup 2006, 8). This is the methodological ground for my organization of empirical material in the Empirical montage, leading up to my analyses in Part 3.

• A concept developing approach, as I am using Deleuze’s philosophy to mobilize the concept of affect, which drives my overall analysis in Part 3.

• A cultural and aesthetic history approach to bring my exploration into perspective with artistic movements; with references to the processual nature of the 1970s East Village art movement in chapter 2.3; the aesthetics of irregularity in the Impressionist art movement in chapter 3.1; the concept of resistance in planning in the 1960s avant-garde movement of the Situationists in chapter 2.3; and my analysis of site-specific art in the
Renaissance frescoes in chapter 3.3.

• **A spatial analysis approach**, to analyze the spatial coding of public places in New York City in chapter 3.1, and to analyze the program in the practice of temporary uses in chapter 3.2.

• **A media archeological approach** in analyzing archival material of *electrical currents* of urban environments mediated by light in chapter 3.4.

• Finally, I have used a *discussion approach* as an important step in my “cultivation” of my problem. During the process of writing the thesis, I presented my thesis research at two international conferences: “The City: Culture, Society, Technology Conference” in Vancouver, which was held April 8 to 9, 2011, and the “EURA Conference: The City Without Limits,” which was held on June 23 to 25, 2011 in Copenhagen. In Vancouver, I presented a paper on using media technologies in the cultural catalyst, and in Copenhagen, I presented a paper on the temporary, ephemeral cultural logics of the digital city. My travel from New York City to these conference destinations became an intellectual travel to the two corners of the dichotomy of my thesis, between pragmatics and poetics. I used the conferences to get feedback on my work in progress and to qualify my concepts along the way.

**Further delimitations**

Although I take a starting point in describing the emergence of the cultural catalyst in an economic framework of the experience economy, and problematize the “city as stage”-regime of practice of the cultural catalyst in this framework, I will not go into details of the fiscal aspect of economy. Rather, my exploration is concerned with a social economy, with the values of citizenship.

Also, although I position my thesis statement in a problematization of the current cultural policy of New York City in Part 1, it is not my goal to propose a new cultural management plan for the Department of Cultural Affairs. I delimit my attention to cultural policy to the discursive framework in which it operates, which directs the program of the cultural catalyst.

With my emphasis on the *affect* of electrical currents, I am treating media in a similar manner as Marshall McLuhan and his proposal in “Understanding Media” (1964) of the significance of media’s affection of
society—not by the content delivered but by its aesthetic characteristics. With the example of the light bulb, McLuhan states that the affects of the light bulb make it a medium in itself, rather than a carrier of a message (McLuhan 1994, 9). McLuhan’s optics is echoed in Ned Rossiter’s idea of the unthought of media aesthetics (Rossiter 2006, 174), e.g., the capturing of the moment of the photographic snapshot that forms a mode of perceiving, of the world in situations, which is picked up in the expression of the temporary moment in Impressionist art, as I explain in part 3.2. The idea of the unthought of media aesthetics also conditions the premise of this thesis. My conception that virtual technologies reorganize and manage our senses and modes of perception, which generates our ways of knowing, apprehending, navigating, and culturally producing the city in new ways, has laid the groundwork for my rethinking of the cultural catalyst.

Thesis structure and reading guide

The concept of the temporary is the thread that holds the thesis together and drives my exploration. In this Introduction, I am positioning my thesis in a scientific framework, which, in its abductive condition with the ontology of becoming in duration, makes the research itself a temporary contribution.

A (temporary) portrait of New York City

I introduce the conceptual basis for this thesis, which is a composition of New York City as a continuously developing, multi-conceptual, media-structured city of differences. The chapter explains my conceptual position in the urban framework, inspired by Gilles Deleuze’s logic of the rhizome.

Part 1: The ‘temporary’ complex in using culture as catalyst for urban revitalization

I problematize the program of the cultural catalyst in the cultural policy of New York City’s Department of Cultural Affairs, in the city’s informal cultural planning and in immaterial organization of the city’s cultural environments in “spaces of flow.” I propose that the catalyst is operating in a planning regime of practice that conceptualizes the city as stage and its citizens and tourists as audience. I point out four problematic views: 1) the staging of the city, 2) the program of entertainment, 3) the performance for desire of experience, and 4) the positioning of citizens as audience.
Part 2: Experiencing temporary aesthetics in ‘affects’
As a prelude to my analyses in part 3, I introduce the concept of affect to explore the aesthetic experience in the temporary environment. I also introduce the four fields in which I will explore the problematic views.

Empirical montage
This part functions as a nomadologic presentation of my empirical material, leading up to my analysis in Part 3. The montage of images is organized by relationships “in the surface” to point at dynamic relationships, beyond historic relatedness or generic traits.

Part 3: Analysis in four perspectives
The analysis is designed to address the four views in my problematization through the analytical lens of the affect. In chapter 3.1, I explore an alternative conception to the public place as a stage from analyzing the spatial coding of New York City’s public places. In chapter 3.2, I explore an alternative conception of the program as entertainment from analyzing the program of temporary uses. In chapter 3.3, I explore an alternative to the performance and the aim of meeting a desire for experience from analyzing the sensual affects in site-specific public art. And in chapter 3.4, I explore an alternative to the positioning of citizens as audience from looking at how “electrical currents” organize civic urban environments in New York City. The four analyses are linked in the aim of cultivating what the cultural catalyst could become in a new formulation.

Part 4: The governmentality of the media-architectural event as cultural catalyst
I discuss the governmentality of the “city as stage”- regime of practice with the findings from my analysis in the four categories of bureaucracy, production, sensuality, and imagination. What I propose from my discussion is a rethought diagram of power of principles of the regime of practice of the cultural catalyst, which I characterize in the alternative conception to the city as stage, of the city as an innovation lab.

Conclusion
I propose a rethinking of the cultural catalyst of conceptualizing the program as a workshop and the stage as an innovation lab. The cultural catalyst is being rethought as a communicative, processual intervention, with the planning ambition to activate cultural innovation and local engagement among asocial relations in the cosmopolitan urban setting, rather than entertainment.
Critical reflections in a question machine

I evaluate my research and consider the contribution of my thesis to the fields of cultural policy planning, the arts, and practitioners of the built environment.
EMPIRICAL MONTAGE FOR PART 3

Chapter 3.1
Fig. 1: Central Park
Fig. 2: Washington Square Park
Fig. 3: Silver Towers courtyard green in University Village
Fig. 4: Bryant Park
Fig. 5: Times Square
Fig. 6: Josie Robertson Plaza, Lincoln Square
Fig. 7: Brooklyn Bridge Park
Fig. 8: *Fifth Avenue Nocturne* (1895) by Childe Hassam

Chapter 3.3
Fig. 9: Beaux Arts fresco in Grand Central Terminal
Fig. 10: *Rainbow Bridge* (1983) by Sal Romano
Fig. 11: *Memories from Swinging on Swing* (1990) by Jim Goldberg
Fig. 12: Beaux-Arts ceiling of the Grand Central Terminal main hall
Fig. 13: *Apocalyptic Optic. The Inferno.* (1985) by Steven Pollack and Wolfgang Staehle
Fig. 14: *Adytum* (1986) by Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel

Chapter 3.4
Fig. 15: *USA. New York. Manhattan. 1994. Aerial shot of the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges at night.* (1994) by Steve McCurry
Fig. 16: *USA. New York. Manhattan. 1994. View on snowy Manhattan from Washington Square Park.* (1986) by Steven McCurry
Fig. 17: *Street scene, Chinatown, Souvenir of Greater New York* (ca. 190-)
Fig. 18: Lower Manhattan Street Scene (1956-1976)
Fig. 19: *New Year’s Eve, NYC (Kiss me, stupid)* (1965) by Joel Meyrowitz
Fig. 20: Bold-Spicy performance “Vice Dolls, what the boys want” (1959-1976)
Fig. 21: *1260 Sixth Avenue - West 50th Street, Radio City Music Hall main entrance* (1934)
Fig. 22: *1260 Sixth Avenue – West 50th Street, Radio City Music Hall night shot* (1934)
Fig. 23: USA. New York City, etc. USA. New York City. Man hailing a taxi. 1976 (1976) by Richard Kalvar
Fig. 24: Man with telescope (1918-1952)
Fig. 25: Consuming Places: Telescope I, II (2002) by Greyworld
Fig. 26: Portrait of the French photographer and founder member of MAGNUM photos Henri Cartier Bresson (1961) by Dennis Stock
Fig. 27: Columbus Circle, Manhattan. (February 10, 1938) Abbott, Berenice
Fig. 28: The new Coney Island, night views of “Dreamland” and “Luna Park” (1904)
Fig. 29: Midtown, Manhattan 1942 (1987) by Andreas Feininger,
Fig. 30: Wet Times Square (1918-1952)
Fig. 31: Times Square at daytime (1950-1955)
Fig. 32: Times Square, 1942. (1987) by Andreas Feininger
Fig. 33: Lit facade of the Radio City Music Hall (1938-1960)
Fig. 34: For The City, Rockefeller Center (2005) by Jen Holzer
Fig. 35: For The City, New York Public Library (2005) by Jen Holzer
Fig. 36: Light Shot of Times Square No. 1 (1938-1960)
Fig. 37: Light Shot of Times Square No. 2 (1938-1960)
Fig. 38: Light Shot of Times Square No. 3 (1938-1960)
Fig. 39: Light Shot of Times Square No. 4 (1938-1960)
Fig. 40: Crowd trapped in the rain under umbrellas on Times Square (1961-1963)
Fig. 41: Lightened newsstand (1961-1963)
Fig. 42: The 59th Minute in Times Square (2006)
Fig. 43: Falling Echoes (2002) by Bill Fontana
Fig. 44: Christmas tree inside the Paramount Theater (1938-1960)
Fig. 45: USA. New York. Lower Manhattan. Shop Window. Postcards. 2007 (1986) by Raymond Depardon
Fig. 46: Statue of Liberty postcard illustration (1960) by H. Finkelstein & Son
Fig. 47: Statue of Liberty in Lower Manhattan
Fig. 48: Tribute in Light Initiative (2002) by multiple artists
I begin this thesis by characterizing the urban framework of my exploration, New York City, in a philosophical manner as a *city of differences*. In this chapter, I mobilize Deleuze’s concept of *difference* into a methodological “style,” a method for cultivating my topic that pushes the exploration beyond analysis and interpretation into a study of becoming.

**City of differences**

As we mark the 200th birthday of New York City’s street grid in 2011, we find the city in a condition in which the order of the grid is being challenged. New York City is in a time of change. The city has always been changing, but the current condition is special for one reason in particular: The new temporality of digital media is affecting the city’s organization and cultural production at every level. This premise stirs the abductive condition of my thesis statement, which begins with how I understand the city, and how, under this conception, it can be investigated.

The concept of change as a condition in the city was the main topic at “The City Without Limits Conference” in Copenhagen, where I presented a paper on my thesis work-in-progress in the conference track, “Conceptualizing Cities.” Presenters were to consider the city as a concept and to formulate this concept, which seeded the conception I am presenting here. My conceptualization of the city of differences is inspired by Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift’s conception in “Cities: Reimagining the Urban”, in which they write:

> “The city has no completeness, no centre, no fixed parts. Instead, it is an amalgam of often disjointed processes and social heterogeneity, a place of near and far connections, a concatenation of rhythms; always edging in new directions” (Amin and Thrift 2002, 8).

This description echoes Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the city as a “rhizome,” a flat-structured plant root network that has multiple entrances, no
beginnings, and no ends, in which everything can be connected to anything other (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b, 7). The academic project in this thesis is based on the understanding of the urban that is inherited in the philosophical concept of the rhizome and the conception of the urban as an interdisciplinary ecology of interrelated flows and impulses. This makes the rhizome city a city of multiple metaphors. As such, as I will address in my thesis, the city of differences holds multiple metaphors: It is a city of the experience economy (Pine and Gilmore 1999), a networked or informational society (Castells 2002), a project society (Fogh Jensen 2010), an Electropolis (McQuire 2008), and a system of coordinates (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b).

The rhizome reflects the fluent and interconnected flows of digital networks. In my conception of the digital city, I am less concerned with particular media technologies and more with the condition of “the city as a medium,” by which Friedrich Kittler applies the concept of media to the field of urban culture (Kittler 1996). The city is a medium because digital technologies are coming to facilitate almost every aspect of the city’s life. I address the media’s role in the city in Scott McQuire’s notion of a media-architectural complex, a complex of architectural structures, urban territories, social practices, and media feedback (McQuire 2008, 57). This is the condition in which differences are found in the urban complexity.

*From differences in the city to difference as methodological style*

Manhattan’s “Cartesian corset” of the street grid contains an imminent difference between rigorousness and creativity. This is found in a city that is monotonously and strictly planned with straight lines, ordered in numbers of streets and avenues, only interrupted by Broadway, which was too trafficked to straighten when the grid was designed; yet simultaneously, the street grid is the geographical frame for a cultural production that is out of control and delirious, one of “perpetual creativity” (Koolhaas 2009, 10) (Currid 2007, 9). In this difference is found the fundamental conceptual basis for the design of this thesis.

Deleuze’s philosophical concept of difference is mobilized in this thesis as a fundamental conception of how things become. In “Difference and Repetition” (2004a), he characterizes a distinction between external difference and internal difference—the former being an abstract effect of a static repetition, the latter concerning the dynamic “acting cause” (Deleuze 2004a, 22f.).

“For in the dynamic order there is no representative concept, nor any figure represented in a pre-existing space. There is an idea, and a pure dynamism which creates a corresponding space” (Deleuze 2004a, 23).
It is the latter conception that Deleuze ascribes to the notion of movement and becoming in the quote, and thus the conception I apply to my exploration and mobilize in my methodology of the intuitive method.

My methodological style of looking for differences in my empirical material is inspired by the architectural theory of Robert Venturi and the methodological application of Venturi’s ideas by the Danish architect Carsten Juel-Christiansen. In “Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture” (2002), Venturi emphasizes the importance of the contradiction found in oppositional experiences in cities and architecture, because “contradictory concepts bring richness and ambiguity to the modern experience” (Venturi 2002, 16). Venturi’s theory is a reflection of Henri Bergson’s work of searching for differences in the object, in the *method of intuition* of “searching into” the material.

The Danish architect Juel-Christiansen adopts Venturi’s method in his analysis of the architecture of the new city in “Monument and Niche” (1985). He looks at aerial photos of the Copenhagen area to identify a “genetic code” by leading out differences, between residues from the “old city” and prospects of “the future city,” to sketch a “thought shape” for understanding the new city. I will be looking for differences in the experience of complexities in the urban and cultural fabric of New York City, both on a macro level, like Juel-Christiansen, of Manhattan as an urban system of cultural production and organization, and at a micro level of the differences in “irregularities.” To be looking for differences is to be examining the city *from within*. It is when looking for these that the intuitive researcher lets her self guide the topic and material of investigation in order to understand its potentials of becoming.
In this chapter, I will problematize the contemporary practice of the cultural catalyst and the regime of practice under which it functions in New York City. I will first look at the emergence of the planning realm of the cultural catalyst and how this concept is organizing experiences in “formal scenes” under the regime of practice of the cultural policy of New York City’s Department of Cultural Affairs. I propose that this official planning is working under a conceptualization of the city as “stage” with citizens and tourists considered as “audience.” I challenge this framing of the cultural catalyst with the processual character of the cultural movement in the East Village in the 1970s. When moving on to the condition of the digital city and its “projectary turn,” the concept of the temporary is reconditioning the challenges and possibilities of the urban framework of New York City.

1.1 The cultural turn and the conceptual staging of the city

The emphasis on “culture” in an urban planning framework followed a “cultural turn” in the developed economies in the mid-1990s as an effect of tendencies of developments of de-industrialization, globalization, individualization, and mass education (Zerlang 2004, 7). With the cultural turn, cultural resources came to be taken seriously as economic imperatives in planning frameworks. The planning initiatives that grew out of these goals originated in a difference in the cultural catalyst, simultaneously culturally sustainable and economically profitable. This formed into a regime of practice under the conceptualization of the city as stage (Skot-Hansen 2008), with metaphorical offsprings such as work as theater (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 109), hotel as plot (Koolhaas 1994, 149) the society as theater (Sennett 1977, 35), and Manhattan as a theater of progress (Koolhaas 1994, 13). How does this condition the cultural catalyst?
The cultural turn and the capitalization of desire for experience

The growing trend of using culture as catalyst for urban revitalization is developing in an economic framework referred to as a symbolic economy (State of the World's Cities 2004, 32) or, more commonly, as the experience economy (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 5) (Skot-Hansen 2007, 13). In this urban framework, cultural resources, amenities, and facilities have come to be seen as strategic urban assets (Mercer 2006, 3). This followed the movement from a scarcity society to an affluent society in developed economies in the 1960s and 1970s, by which cultural values were no longer concerned with life philosophies or social distinction but rather with pleasure and cultural expressions to be determined by a desire for experience (Skot-Hansen 2007, 13).

The use of culture as catalyst for urban revitalization has grown from a capitalization of emotions and experiences. In Richard Florida’s “Cities and the Creative Class” (2005), he describes creative capital as a prerequisite for growth in creative cities, where the social structures of creativity fosters a cultural vibrancy that attracts and stimulates “the creative class.” Florida describes how creativity and desire for experience has become the principal driving force in the growth and development of cities, regions, and nations (Florida 2005, 1). The creative class is a group of people, often of a high level of education or “intellectual property,” who create economic and symbolic value through their creativity (Mercer 2006, 1). However, as I was reminded at the “Cities Without Limits Conference” in Copenhagen, Florida’s logic of growth based on cultivation of a “creative class” seems to forget about the population that is not “creative” in a popular cultural or profitable sense and whose cultural distinctiveness does not so easily adopt to the commercialization of culture and consumption cycle of the capitalist society. In a planning framework designed for short-term economic growth, indigenous cultural diversities are at risk of being overlooked and lost to gentrification and cultural cleansing.

The current challenges of the local neighborhoods of the Brooklyn borough of New York exemplify these issues. Behind the uprising of “cultural scenes” of organic cafés, new concert venues, and galleries, driven by the influx of artists, students, and new families, some local neighborhoods are fighting against oversimplified evaluations as destinations for tourist experiences, real estate interests, or reductions to “products” of symbolic interpretation. The Brooklyn neighborhoods of Williamsburg, Fort Greene, and the once-Polish area of Greenpoint make significant cases. While the new symbolic labels may immediately increase economic growth and make attraction parameters for Florida’s creative class, they also imply the risk of a loss of authentic local distinction to be replaced by one that is simplified and symbolic. Sharon Zukin
describes this problem in “Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places” (2010) as a transition from being a neighborhood of production to becoming a neighborhood of consumption. She criticizes how rent increase and cultural cleansing will force the cultural diversities, which at some point gave the neighborhood its distinctiveness, to move or destroy the conditions for the preservation of local cultures. Left are those who can afford living in a “culturally attractive neighborhood,” while the cultural groups that made it attractive in the first place have been forced to move.

1.2 The program and the ‘city as stage’-regime of practice of the cultural catalyst

As Fredric Jameson proposes in “Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logics of Late Capitalism” (2001), a sense of the “systematic cultural norms,” or cultural logics, is necessary to take into account in order to understand the stage of capitalism in which cultural production is operating.

The architect and urbanist Rem Koolhaas describes in “Delirious New York” how Manhattan in the Machine Age of the 1890s and 1940s—the era of the emergence of Modernism in the Industrial Age is “a laboratory of a mythical island where the invention and testing of metropolitan lifestyle and its attendant architecture could be pursued as a collective experiment in which the entire city became a factory of man-made experience, where the real and the natural ceased to exist” (Koolhaas 1994, 9-10). The delirious metropolitan lifestyle in his observation is what in the experience economy has been translated into a cultural logic of the city as a spectacle of desires for experiences in leisure activities.

The regime of practice, which dominates how the cultural catalyst is programmed in an urban planning framework, operates within the city’s cultural logics. The concept of regime of practice is proposed by Mitchell Dean as a way of thinking an informal institutional practice into an object of knowledge, and into a subject of problematization as a “milieu of thought” (Dean 2010, 31, 32). It is this milieu of thought that makes a condition for how the cultural catalyst is programmed in terms of how it creates a desire for experience, what forms of cultural production it facilitates, and for the role of the citizens in the meeting with the cultural event. The milieu of thought grows from a conception of the city’s cultural logics.

The difference in New York City’s official and unofficial cultural policy
The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs extends support to cultural and artistic initiatives in three major ways: through funding for specific cultural
organizations in exchange of cultural services offered to the citizens of New York City; through direct subsidies to 33 city-owned cultural institutions; and through capital spending for construction and renovation at designated institutions. It is evident from the department’s website that the city’s current cultural policy flourishes in the experience economic logic, which is expressed in Department Commissioner Kate D. Levin’s statement on the importance of supporting art and culture—in particular, the city’s nonprofit cultural community—because this is “an economic engine that transforms our neighborhoods, is the backbone of tourism and a magnet for students, businesses and new residents” (New York City Department of Cultural Affairs). The department funds New York City’s distinguished formal art institutions like the Museum of Modern Art, the New York City Ballet, and Lincoln Center. In the context of the scope of this thesis, it is the department’s attention on culture in the public spaces of New York City that is of particular interest.

The department’s “Percent for Art” program, which was initiated in 1983, commissions New York artists to make fine art accessible and visible throughout the city. The project is intended to demonstrate how the integration of site-specific art in urban space, and specifically on community buildings, enhances “civic architecture” to make the respective environments more attractive.

New York City’s cultural policy is facilitating and evaluating the arts and artistic production in a way by which the cultural catalyst is the cultural resource in itself. This way of using culture in revitalization strategies belongs to a “school” of cultural planning, which Dorte Skot-Hansen characterizes as cultural policy planning, which is sector-based, treasuring art and cultural heritage in a narrow definition of culture, working in a homogeneous perspective of developing art and culture (Skot-Hansen 2008, 74). This is a school of planning of culture. Although the department also funds “cultural organizations”—for example, the “Building Sustainability” program initiated in 2009, in which resources are commissioned to nonprofit organizations with the intention of strengthening the community-based cultural organizations, particularly the city’s low- and moderate-income communities—the cultural catalyst is programmed to plan of culture in an exclusive strategy of cultural distinction. The planning consultant Craig Dreeszden is a theoretical frontman for this approach, which he characterizes as “a structured, community-wide fact-finding and consensus-building process to assess community needs and develop a plan of action that directs arts and cultural resources to address those needs” (Dreeszden 1998, 9).

The alternative school proposed by Skot-Hansen is one of planning
with culture. This is geographically defined with a broad definition of culture as a natural, indigenous, and “practiced” resource (Skot-Hansen 2007, 74). In the cultural map of New York City, this approach appears in locally organized food festivals, parades, block parties, and farmers’ markets. These initiatives are more usually supported by private, commercial sponsorships than with government funding. They bear witness to a way of planning for the lifestyles, textures, daily routines, and quality of life on an everyday level (Mercer 2006, 6). Colin Mercer’s cultural planning approach carries a sensitive and sustainable attitude toward the cultural anthropology of a community and place, which these informal scenes of using culture as catalyst echoes. In Mercer’s consideration of the cultural resource as “what counts as culture for those who participate in it,” he emphasizes a consciousness toward the realities of cultural diversity and cultural heritage (Mercer 2006, 8).

The cultural difference that is accommodated in the department’s commissioning is a difference in fine art, and less in cultural heritage in terms of culture as “a whole way of life,” as proposed by E. B. Tyler, where the cultural resource equals customs, beliefs, and practices of people (Zerlang 2004, 7).

While the cultural catalyst is programmed under the city’s official cultural policy as a tool of planning of culture, I point out a difference in the unofficial programming of the cultural catalyst in a mode of planning with culture. These two ambitions for the cultural catalyst are practiced side by side, under the cultural logic of the experience economy.

The cultural concept between having and being

The differences in these approaches to the cultural catalyst bear witness to two diverging understandings and evaluations of the cultural concept, which Christian Jantzen characterizes as respectively universalistic and relativistic. In “Tertium Datur. Kampen om kulturbegrebet” (Tertium Datur. The fight about the cultural concept, 2005), he proposes these as consequences of two historic epochs. The universalistic cultural concept, which responds to the program of planning of culture, was developed in the late 1700s with the development of educational thought. “Culture” was the potential, civilized refinement of human nature, and became a product of possessing or having. The “products” by which one is educating belong to a region outside of nature’s sphere, such as in the world of fine art (Jantzen 2005, 92).

The relativistic cultural concept, which responds to the program of planning with culture, emerged with the rise of the human sciences of sociology and ethnography and the increased attention toward the conditions for community and coherency in a functionally differentiated society. From having
been related to “nature,” culture was now related to the manmade world. As a relativistic concept, culture is a historically specific and pluralistic indicator of what is specific to humans in relation to nature, as a certain ethnographic account (Jantzen 2005, 92). There is a strong consideration of the community’s history, background, and cultural identity at play in this cultural concept, and culture is “what we are,” the story and preservation of man’s nature in a sense of being.

The policy of the cultural catalyst for establishing “formal cultural scenes” in New York City is significantly dominated by a universalistic evaluation, which is developing in the logic of the experience in Florida’s framework of the experience economy. The informal practice of the cultural catalyst grows from a relativistic evaluation of culture. This latter approach functions to make neighborhoods productive. How can we characterize a problem with this double operation of the cultural catalyst in New York City?

The staging of the city and the problem of representation of space
What characterizes the tension in this difference in the cultural catalyst in New York City is an ontological conception of culture as “out there,” which can be experienced, whether being in its universalistic conception as a distinctive product or in its relativistic conception as a way of life. In both cases, the cultural catalyst generates a “stage” for an audience, in a merging of citizens and tourists, to come and be entertained. The cultural turn’s staging of the city has formed the cultural catalyst into an imperative for a particular kind of urban revitalization through performances. These are establishing cultural scenes in urban space, established in the given economic framework of a rational, cultural logic driven by a desire for cultural experience in the urban spectacle. In this framework, cultural experience has come to mean entertainment. The program of the cultural catalyst in the “city as stage”-regime of practice is a passive one, one by which people are encouraged by their desire to be entertained.

The self-referential dilemma in this emerges as the dominating regime of practice not only operates within the city’s cultural logics but also constitutes them and reproduces them. Henri Lefebvre’s (1991) critical consideration of representation of space describes an imposed form of knowledge of space, an “imitation of natural life,” which is considered to grow in a consumption-based condition of life, cultivated in between need and desire (Lefebvre 1991, 353). This condition, which Lefebvre notes, is typical for a leisure environment like a holiday destination, which New York City has increasingly become, in which the imitation of natural life starts looping in its own discursive condition. The self-referential dilemma is found in the difference in the cultural catalyst, as the planning with culture imitates the performance of entertainment of the planning
of culture, and the planning of culture expands its scope of supporting fine art practices in more diverse cultural communities. It is this form of discursive, consumptive conditioning that I wish to problematize. This regime contributes to the cultural logics of New York City and shapes the cultural aesthetics by which the citizen is surrounded, which is trapped in the “city as stage”-regime of practice. The “city as stage”-regime of practice is operating on the conception behind the experience-driven economy of the spectacular city, which programs how the cultural catalyst operates as an entertainment engine for attracting the creative class.

We can think of the “city as stage”-regime of practice as a discursive “bubble,” which has ruled the cultural production and program of the cultural catalyst since the emergence of the experience economy in the beginning of the 1980s. This bubble seems like a palimpsestic entertainment layer, posed upon urban spaces rather than developing from them. Theoretically, it would be problematic to critically examine the cultural catalyst without changing perspective of optics, to look beyond the past 30 years’ formation of the spectacular city and the formation of the city’s cultural logics in this framework. From a cultural planning perspective, it would be problematic not to question what the program should produce, and how it builds public spaces and public engagement, in the city. In particular, this becomes problematic with the democratized cultural organization in digital networks in mind.

1.3 The relationship between the space of place and the spaces of flow in the project society

I just characterized the cultural scenes planned through the cultural catalyst as scenes of performances, narrated in the discursive bubble of the “city as stage”-regime of practice. In this chapter, I will characterize how the digitalization of the contemporary city brought with it a new form of temporality in digital networks, which reconditions the challenges and possibilities of the cultural catalyst.

The communicational reorganization of society: from disciplinary to projectary

Anders Fogh Jensen describes in his Ph.D. Dissertation “Projektsamfundet” (The Project Society, 2010) this movement as a transition from the disciplinary society to the post-disciplinary society, which he characterizes as “the project society.” With the raising scale of production of the mass market during the industrialization in the late 19th and 20th centuries, new technologies of filing
cabinets, portable typewriters, calculating machines with punch cards, and mainframe computers automated the information processes of the massive production complexes and played a significant role in the unifying movement toward the center, of rationalization and bureaucratization of society (Stadler 2001). Society became, as found in Max Weber’s critique of the Gesellschaft, an “iron cage” (Weber 2004, 71). This industrialist society was hierarchical and inflexible in its organization. The disciplinary structures worked as a program that kept society in order and regulated the relationship between time and space, as a “coordinate system” (Fogh Jensen 2010, 10).

After the Second World War, the center-organization of industrialized society was interrupted by the interconnection in real-time with new media technologies, in the spaces of flow. The spaces of flow is Castells’ term and described as “the material organization of time-sharing social practices that work through flows” as a concept to understand interrelated linkages across an infinite amount of local and global relationships (Castells 2002, 442). In the spaces of flow, society has become networked, and the communicational organization has gone from center-based, vertical, and hierarchical in the industrial organization to peripheral, non-hierarchical, and horizontal. This is the organizational framework of the project society, in which discipline is no longer the general mode of organization. Rather, the project society is organized by projects, which are temporary activities that are not executed based on rules or ambitions of repetition (Fogh Jensen 2010, 406).

Fogh Jensen proposes two metaphors, borrowed from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in “A Thousand Plateaus” (2009), to describe the spatial organization in the disciplinary and the project society. Stratified space is delimited, organized, has rules, and is the space of the disciplinary society. Smooth space, on the other hand, is “flat” and contains no fixed elements and no barriers, and is unprogrammed (Fogh Jensen 2010, 406). While stratified organization of the disciplinary society keeps things in order, the smooth organization of the project society is orderless. The smooth space poses a new challenge to how places function and are experienced.

The ‘crisis’ of place in the ‘grooving’ of the spaces of flow
My focus on this change in the mode of spatial organization from stratified to smooth is on how it affects the formation of place. The transition from the disciplinary society to the project society is as a change in the relationship between form and territory, characterized by a gradual resolution of maintenance and fixity of form.

The form of the built environment increasingly incorporates
electronic communications devices everywhere. The material space of places is transforming into a new urban form in which we constantly interact, deliberately or automatically, with online information systems on an immaterial level (Castells 2006, 86). When Castells analyzes how urban form is transforming spatially in the meeting with the overall processes of cultural and structural change in digital networks (Castells 2006, 85), he points at some key elements of socio-spatial change. I will translate these into depictions of differences in forces and processes in the material and the immaterial urban levels.

There is a difference in the functions of control, of dominant functional processes of institutionalized authority, which operate at a global level, and functions of everyday life, which operate at a local level (Castells 2006, 85). There is a difference in the simultaneous structuring and de-structuring of the urban form of places in the double system of communication, as electronically separate locations are linked up in interactive networks that conflict in the combination of networks and places (Castells 2006, 8). And there is a difference in the opposing constructions of meaning in the simultaneous development of individuation and communalism, which challenges social integration and collectivity in the city (Castells 2006, 85).

These are differences of incongruence in the relationship between form and territory. As forms are smoothened in the project society, the territory is no longer upheld by rules, and this is a challenge to the function and conception of place. These differences are, in different weightings, what have led to a conception and judgment of the decline of public space, an attitude that also penetrates Castells’ article (2006). In the optics I am exploring in this thesis, these are attitudes born out of the logics of the disciplinary society. However, I will argue that this is only a decline in the sense that the systems of function, form, and meaning that were usually programming the place are no longer in control of it. It might be more reasonable to speak about a dispersal of place, which is up to the rethought cultural catalyst in the digital urban framework to change into a connection.

The “groove” of the temporary environment

This characterization of the transition from a disciplinary society to the project society—in which the relationship between form and territory has become more complicated with the immaterial “ruptures” in the functional order, the double communication structures in link-ups of places in networks, and in the meaning of being in society—challenges the “city as stage”-regime of practice even further. It is in these conditions that we need to rethink the ambitions of the cultural catalyst and the meaning of revitalization.
If we regard the meeting between the material and immaterial urban level in Fogh Jensen’s theoretical framework, this meeting can be conceptualized as a *grooved* place. In the project society, the groove is found in between stratified and smooth space; it is an environment “of stripes” that is unprogrammed, a marking in the smooth space that invites for people to stop up and join a projectary activity (Fogh-Jensen 2010, 406). Most importantly, in this context, the groove is a temporary environment. Could we think of the cultural catalyst as a groove, as a program for a projectary space, *in the meeting* between the space of place and the spaces of flow in the contemporary city?

1.4 The processual nature of the cultural ‘scenes’ of New York City

In the project society, I propose that we think more pragmatically about the program of the cultural catalyst as a performative, *processual* impulse. I will now look beyond the “bubble” of the “city as stage”-regime of practice, for a cultural scene for which the processual is a premise for its existence. Such a cultural, creative scene is found in the 1970s artistic cultural movement of Manhattan’s East Village. I will propose this as a different, organic type of cultural scene, a *groove* that is driven by a different form of cultural desire than one for entertainment.

*Urban ‘scenes’ as active situations*

My problematization of the program of performance of the cultural catalyst is pointed toward the passiveness of citizens, who are being addressed as an audience whose desire for experience is satisfied with a scene of cultural entertainment, which, in Zukin’s point, can be considered for a situation of consumption. This critique is also found in Richard Sennett’s critique of Goffman’s sociological study of people’s roles in city scenes, where Sennett criticizes Goffman’s treatment of the city as a composition of passive scenes. Sennett emphasizes how these scenes are actually experienced and active in their composition. What is interesting to Sennett is “how the scene came into being, how those who play roles in it change the scene by their acts, or, indeed, how each scene may appear or disappear” (Sennett 1977, 36). We can use his interest in street scenes as active situations to think of scenes as organic entities, which is where the diachronic essence of the concept of the temporary comes into play.

*The processual nature of informal cultural scenes in the 1970s East Village*

In “The Warhol Economy” (2007), Elizabeth Currid considers the cultural
organization of New York City’s cultural scenes as a driver of the city’s cultural production and economic growth, by looking at these scenes in a *processual* manner as dynamic constitutions. She characterizes a *difference* in the scenes of formal and informal nodes of creative exchange; formally as transfusions of information, informally as places of cultural exchange (Currid 2007, 102). The *formal* scenes are built into the urban form and develop in a fixed location, like the museum institutions in Uptown Manhattan. These formal institutions are, however, only one side of New York City’s cultural history. The *informal* scenes are temporary adaptations to the urban form, developing in urban areas where rents are cheap, spaces are empty, or where other subcultures settle (Currid 2007, 101).

The 1970s cultural uprising of the creative movement in the East Village followed a recession in New York City. Currid proposes three *processual* conditions of the informal cultural scenes that emerged: congestions of people, fluidity across creativity, and interlinkages in social networks (Currid 2007, 9). Artists clustered in the East Village, where crime rates were high, drugs were all around, and rents were cheap due to the economic situation. The creative fields overlapped in rock venues, clubs, galleries, and cafés for exhibitions and performances, used abandoned warehouses for galleries, studios, and nightclubs in coexistence, and fused in the creative nexus of nightlife. This particular space of *fusion* became instrumental to the production and dissemination of creativity (Currid 2007, 28, 31). The nightlife scenes dissolved the borders between art genres, but also between artist and audience, as active compositions of cultural production. As such, what drove the desire for experience in these organic, unprogrammed cultural scenes seems to have been one of collective cultural expression and production of a particular kind of momentum, rather than the expectancy of a performance.

A more institutionalized example of this fusion is found in Andy Warhol’s *Factory*, which was an artistic institution located on 231 East 47th Street in Midtown between 1963 and 1969 and, after 1969, in the loft of the Decker Building on 33 Union Square West, on the borders of Greenwich Village and East Village. Warhol was a familiar face in the informal cultural scenes of the East Village (Currid 2007, 29). In a sense, the Factory was mediating the formal scene of an institution, as a form of society of art production of silkscreens, lithographs, and movie shootings, and the informal scene, as a social hub of anesthetized parties for the artsy people out of which some would become superstars and some would die from an overdose. Warhol’s Factory is interesting in this respect because it is simultaneously a formal institution of transfusion of information and an informal node of cultural exchange. The cultural production
that came out of the Factory—if we are to consider it a form of a cultural catalyst that produces a desire for experience—is as much a *processual*, creative cultural environment as it is the final artworks to be distributed through formal art institutions.

The productive, processual nature of informal, performative scenes

The cultural scene’s processual nature is interlinked with *what drives the desire for experience*. Currid notes how formal scenes are given value by experts, gatekeepers like museum directors, curators, and cultural reviewers, which is to say that a hierarchy of taste is organizing these scenes and thus deciding what should be culturally desirable (Currid 2007, 4f.). This universalistic evaluation system follows the theory of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984) that symbolic power is acquired as *cultural capital* in a hierarchy of taste. Bourdieu’s theory is based on an understanding of a disciplinary organization of society and on hierarchies, which reflect a normative perspective on cultural development as relating to the ideal standards of a centralized organization of society, which is found in the universalistic cultural concept.

The driver of desire found in the informal scenes, on the other hand, I will characterize as performative. Samson’s compilation of the *performative* is a focus on the active action in urban space of “making something happen.” This is about taking something to a possibility in the existing situation, through relationship-building qualities of *performative aesthetics* (Samson 2011, 12, 16). In this respect, we can consider the cultural scenes of the East Village of the 1970s as *performative* rather than as “performances,” which is a movement from a passive to an active conceptualization. The nature of Warhol’s Factory makes it close to a prototype for a performative scene.

With Sennett’s point of urban scenes as active situations in mind, the cultural scenes of the East Village are not temporary cultural environments in a passive sense; they helped to cultivate the East Village into an artistic neighborhood, which the continuous vernissages of new art galleries today have grown out of. We find in the example of the East Village an alternative cultural concept than the universalistic and the relativistic conceptions, one that is different from culture as having or being. Jantzen criticizes the ontological position of both the universalistic, aesthetic cultural concept of culture as *having*, and the relativistic, ethnographic concept of culture as *being* in arguing that culture is not just “out there,” neither in an expressive form nor as “the deep ground” (Jantzen 2005, 96f.). Rather than having or being, culture is *doing*; culture is *cultivation*. The processual conditions, which Currid ascribes to the driving factor of the cultural scenes of the East Village, can be considered for
conditions of doing. They cultivated the neighborhood as a form of informal performativity, and the art genres that grew there, in an organic, uninstructed way, in a response to the broader economic and cultural structures of the city.

The cultural scenes of the artistic cultural movement of the 1970s East Village reveal an alternative cultural logic to the experience economy’s staging of the cultural scene. The kind of organically emerged, cultural dynamics found in this informal cultural scene is driven by a desire found in the performative activity rather than the passive entertainment of performance. It is with this example of an alternative conception of a cultural scene in mind that I wish to explore a reformulation of the cultural catalyst.

Summary Part 1: The complex of experience and desire in the cultural catalyst

With the transition from the disciplinary society to the project society, the urban condition for the constitution of cultural logics and cultural production has been reorganized. The organizational logic of “consistency” that characterized the disciplinary society has changed to an organizational logic of “temporality” in the project society. In this chapter, I have challenged the contemporary regime of practice of the cultural catalyst in New York City with an opening up towards an alternative, processual understanding of the cultural concept, one that has the reorganization of cultural environments in the spaces of flow in mind. I will sketch four problematic views on the cultural catalyst in its current nature, which will organize my analysis in Part 3:

- The staging of the city
- The program of entertainment
- The performance for desire of experience
- The positioning of citizens as audience
This chapter is a prelude to my four-part analysis. I mobilize the concept of affect from Deleuze’s philosophy as an analytical tool that enables me to explore the “space” of the temporary experience. The four parts of my analysis are then introduced in their relation to the four problematic views of my problematization in Part 1 as related fields in which different aspects of the cultural catalyst can be cultivated.

2.1 Experiencing in temporary affects

I characterize affect as a concept for experiencing environments in a space in between the subject and the cultural catalyst, in a process of knowing, in between mind and body.

Affect in the mind-body dualism
In accordance with my methodological takeoff in the method of intuition, and my approach of looking for differences in the material, my use of the concept of affect is a showdown with the epistemology of representation. Representation belongs to the form of knowledge found in our intellect, in “intellectual perception,” which was proposed by René Descartes in the early 1700s as the central feature of thought. This is expressed in his philosophical dicta Cogito ergo sum, “I think, therefore I am” (Hartfield 2002, 258) (Guttenplan 339). Descartes’ dualist thesis, that the intellect of the thinking mind and the body that occupies space are distinct, with the intellect considered as the superior faculty of experience, laid the groundwork for what developed throughout Modernity as the “mind-body problem” (Guttenplan 339).

The mind-body problem is significant to my exploration because my theoretical conception of how knowledge is formed will guide the design of my empirical analyses. The philosopher Immanuel Kant’s7 consideration of the self as an empirical self stirred a shift in the self-understanding of the modern subject
This was a shift from the objective aspect of Man as being an object in Cosmos in the Aristotelian notion to the subjective aspect that Man was the subject of knowledge (Copleston 2003, 78). In a rejection of Aristotle’s notion that experience was grounded in the external world, Kant considered experience as grounded in the human being as a knowing subject (Copleston 2003, 79). However, when mind and body could no longer “meet” in a position in the universe, they were left to “meet” in the experience of the knowing subject, and this left a complex in terms of how knowing was constituted in a position between reason and sense-experience.

In the philosophical heritage from Spinoza, affect is considered a modification of the material experience in between perception of the mind and sensation of the body (Spinoza 2006, 73). From his empiricist stance, Deleuze grounds his concept of affect in Spinoza’s philosophy, in the separation as well as the unity of the material world and the non-material world, in between sensation and reason and converges the mind-body problem into a mind-body dualism. Through the concept of affect, I will design my exploration in this dualism and take an empirical stance in between the bodily experience of place and the sensible experience of matter.

Affect as a function of experience

When Spinoza uses the image metaphor of a baby who laughs or cries, simply because she experiences others laughing or crying, he makes the important remark that we are situated individuals who adjust to the affects of our environment (Spinoza 2006, 73). We adjust to an invisible force that articulates a condition of the environment. This is a way of considering experience as a situation of being-inside-of-something, which Gernot Böhne proposes as a kind of a “mood,” a condition of feeling our own presence in a sense of atmosphere (Böhne 2002, 402). Affect is found in the experience of an atmosphere.

Böhne asks to the function of architecture when he writes: “What does architecture actually shape—matter or should we say space?” (Böhne 2002, 339). In Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of affect, this is likewise a functional concept. Affect comes to imply an exteriority and does not depend on “affection,” whereby it is liberated from the source of the “body” and does not represent it. Body, in Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy, does not necessarily refer to a human body of flesh, but can also be something non-organic. The key is that the object of the body is a living thing with a pragmatic potential (Deleuze 2005, 33): “We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b, 284). The “doing” is an important aspect of the affect, in considering it as “operative” and
active: the affect is a function of experience.

The concept of affect can be used to understand the atmosphere of an abstract space, like the space in Castells’ description of how the spaces of flow are folded into the space of places. The morphing of the immaterial level into the material level of the urban form is affecting the experience of the urban environment. This form of experience cannot be understood as one that is optical, as “seeing” defines a distance rather than a sense of being inside a space. In a functional approach similar to the one of Böhne, Deleuze, and Guattari, I will consider how matter is shaped in affects in an atmospheric space between the citizen and the program of the cultural catalyst. This is, in between mind and body. As a mode of understanding a ‘temporary experience’ in urban space, affect is not isolated as an analytical tool for my analysis. It mediates the cultivation in my analysis and the virtual cultivation of urban space through the cultural catalyst.

2.2 The four fields in the analysis

In the preparation of my thesis, I wanted to let my abductive problem statement be the starting point for my theoretical choices, as well as my choices regarding form and structure. In my cultivation of what the cultural catalyst could become, I will situate myself in four related fields, which take off in my characterization of four problematic aspects of the contemporary practice of the cultural catalyst. This is to cultivate the cultural catalyst, not in terms of “what it is” in today’s framework, but in a reconsideration of what it could become. By looking for differences in these fields, I am working intuitively from the middle of them, and working toward a reconceptualization of the cultural catalyst.

In chapter 3.1, I am following the problematic view on the stage and the spectacularization of the “city as stage.” The stage is where the cultural catalyst operates, in the public spaces of the city. In my design of an analysis to find an alternative understanding of the stage than the spectacular one, I am using an approach of spatial analysis in looking for how the concept of the temporary organizes the dynamics of public parks and places in New York City. This is to cultivate the re-conceptualized premise of the stage from the “spatial code” in these environments.

In chapter 3.2, I am following the problematic view of the program of the cultural catalyst. The program is the objective of the catalyst,
which I characterized in the “city as stage”-regime of practice as one of entertainment. I am using an approach of strategic spatial planning analysis and looking into the practice of temporary uses in New York City, for how the program can be understood in a more pragmatic and planning-oriented sense.

In chapter 3.3, I am following the problematic view of *the performance* of the cultural catalyst, which is tightly related to the program, however is more concerned with what stimulates the desire of subjects. From an approach of cultural and aesthetic history I am looking into the field of site-specific art installations, more specifically the pioneering program of the “Art in the Anchorage” of the Creative Time organization in New York City, for what role imagination of space could play in a pragmatic perspective.

In chapter 3.4, I am following the problematic view of *the audience* and their passive positioning in the staged environment of entertainment. From an approach of urban media archaeology, I am looking into archival material of photographs from the New-York Historical Society, the Creative Time Archive, New York Public Library, and Artstor of how *electrical currents*, i.e., environments that are organized by light in a literal or hybrid sense, have allowed for subjects to position themselves, and their sense of citizenship, in different ways in urban spaces.
The images of archival material and photography presented for my analysis in this thesis are not to be considered as representations of events isolated in time; rather, they are to be considered in terms of the movement between the images (Deleuze 2001, 25). I use Deleuze’s metaphor of the montage to mobilize an organizational method of pointing at new relationships in my empirical material, in a way of looking beyond linear discourses of historicity and generic traits. Deleuze writes:

“What amounts to montage, in itself or in something else is the indirect image of time, of duration. Not a homogeneous time or a spatialized duration (…) but an effective duration and time which flow from the articulation of the movement-images” (Deleuze 2001, 29).

I am using the presentational logic of the montage to express a logic of composition, of regulating an idea of dynamic relationships in my material, which informs the structure of my analysis.

(Most of the appendix is left out due to lack of copy rights)
Fig. 1. Central Park (2011)
Photo: TT
Fig. 2.  Washington Square Park (2011)
Photo: TT
Fig. 3.  *Silver Towers courtyard green in University Village (2011)*  
Photo: TT
Fig. 4.  Bryant Park (2011)
Photo: TT
Fig. 5. Times Square (2011)
Photo: TT
Fig. 7.   Josie Robertson Plaza, Lincoln Square (2011)
Photo: TT
Fig. 8.  *Brooklyn Bridge Park (2011)*
Photo: TT.
Fig. 9. Beaux-Arts fresco in Grand Central Terminal (2011)
Photo: TT.
Fig. 12. Beaux-Arts ceiling of the Grand Central Terminal (2011)
Photo: TT
The exploration of this analysis serves to cultivate my reformulation of the cultural catalyst as an artistic tool for urban revitalization in a digital urban framework. I am switching from a philosophical to a more scientific mode of thinking, however mobilizing it with my Deleuzian concept of the temporary affect. I organize my analyses according to the four problematic views on the cultural catalyst, which I identified in Part 1. I will explore an alternative to the spectacular urban coding of *the stage* by analyzing the affects in the spatial organization of the city’s public places; I will explore an alternative to the program of performance by looking at cases of temporary uses in New York City; I will explore an alternative to the programming of a performance for a desire for entertainment by looking at aesthetic affects in the sensuality of site-specific art installations; and I will explore an alternative to the citizen’s self-understanding as audience by looking at positionings in “electrical currents” of lightened urban environments.

3.1 The stage: codes of appropriation in New York City’s public spaces

In this first part of my analysis, I will explore an alternative to the conception of the urban space as “a stage.” With Henri Lefebvre’s concept, I will analyze public squares, parks, and plazas in New York City for a spatial code, i.e., a form of system of space that comes to guide a means of acting in a space (Lefebvre 1988, 47). I will look for a value of a spatial code that could make an alternative to the “code of performance” of the stage, and characterize this with reference to the late-18th-century Impressionist art movement’s depictions of irregularities and movement in the painting.

*The spatial codes in public parks in Manhattan*

Central Park was built from Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux’s winning design in 1858, inspired by the romanticist movement in English
landscape design characterized by the City Beautiful movement (Wilson 1994, 1). Central Park is located in Uptown Manhattan (Figure 1). There is an ordered grandeur to the sophisticated design of the axial avenues and grand plazas in Central Park, but it also invites for diverse and romantic experiences of walking around the reservoir, picnicking by Belvedere Castle, or rowing in the lake. The subject can follow the broad throughways or get lost in small, twisted paths leading behind rocks, around lakes, or to semi-private tiny lawns inviting for feeding ducks. The experience is a formal escape from the wilderness of sights, sounds, and smells from the city surrounding it, by which the park comes to appear as the antithesis of the city or as an “anodyne for the moral, mental, and nervous afflictions of the city” (Wilson 1994, 18).

Although the romanticist and country-life aesthetics of Central Park inspired the redesign of Washington Square Park by Ignaz Anton Pilat and Montgomery A. Kellogg, who were both involved in designing Central Park, the affects of the experience are quite different (KiesFolpe 2002, 153) (Figure 2). Washington Square Park is currently in its second phase of redesign, which was initiated in 2007 by New York City’s Department of Parks and Recreation, and the new design keeps the main features of the previous one. The park is classically designed around a basin as its gravitational center, which imposes a panoptic center of a pedestrian walkway axis, pointing north and south, east and west. This strict symmetry portrays how the Square, up until 1849, was designed to function as a Parade Ground (KiesFolpe 2002, 152). The Roman triumphal-inspired arch in the north end of the park adds a monumental feel to it. The experience changes when one moves into the outer corner areas of the rectangular park, which are designed almost symmetrically in smooth and wave-like movements, with curving pathways outlined by plantings and interrupted by small, round, and semi-private gathering places.

The later design of the Silver Towers courtyard green between Bleecker Street and West Houston Street in Greenwich Village, only two blocks away from Washington Square Park, is radically different in its style and ambience (Figure 3). The courtyard green appears almost timeless, as an open, clean, and organized public place with a cultivated green, rectangular lawn in the middle, surrounded by the Brutalist Silver Towers. The design from 1966 does not allow for any other “disturbances” in its affects, besides an enlargement of Picasso’s sculpture Bust of Sylvette (1934), created by the Norwegian sculptor Carl Nesjär, situated in the middle of the lawn. The site was originally part of an urban renewal scheme by Robert Moses’ program of urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s (New York City Department of Parks and Recreation), who was also the chairman of the Mayor’s Committee on Slum Clearance in the 1950s (Caro
1975, 20). With the rationalist organization of the urban experience, norms and behaviors have been built into the urban fabric. The affects encourage one to follow the perfect and instructing lines and not step on the grass. This order eliminates pluralism, play, and unpredictability, and there are no traits of the site’s previous historical origin.

More recent urban design initiatives experiment with a loosening up of control of the experience. Bryant Park takes a classical French renaissance garden design, symmetrical and organized (Figure 4). However, following its renovation from 1988 to 1992 from an enclosed, elevated, and retracted zone primarily taken up by illegal activities, Bryant Park was installed with 2,000 standing chairs and 500 tables (A Park Transformed 2008). The affects of this arrangement give people a sense of empowerment of navigating the park freely and organizing themselves as they choose. The pattern of the chairs is never the same as the day before. This spatial organization offers a unique temporary mode of inhabitation. Following the same strategy, Times Square was closed off in 2009 and organized with free-standing chairs and tables for tourists to inhabit, in between Broadway shows and shopping (Lose the Traffic. Keep That Times Square Grit 2009) (Figure 5).

In more recent initiatives of spatial organization of public urban places in New York City, the temporary mode of inhabiting urban places is explored even further in forms of multi-functioning design. The recently renewed Josie Robertson Plaza, which opened in 2007 and takes up Lincoln Center’s central plaza on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, has preserved the modernist spirit of the urban renewal of Lincoln Square (1955-1976), which changed a lower-income tenement district to a zone for Moses’ modernist urban renewal scheme (Chromopoulos 2011, 30) (Figure 6). The affects in the plaza’s design are thus similar to the Silver Towers courtyard green, allowing for a restricted, controlled experience. However, during the summer, the Josie Robertson Plaza is used as an outdoor venue for Lincoln Center’s “Midsummer Night Swing and Out of Doors” presentations. The cultural programming of events and performances adds a different layer to the plaza than does the courtyard green’s cultural programming of the Picasso statue. Within the past decade, this form of temporary planning of installations of art and entertainment has become common for the spatial organization and programming of parks and public places in New York City. The Mad. Sq. Art program in Washington Square Park, the performances of music and theater in Central Park, Bronx Park, and Prospect Park in Brooklyn, such as the acting of Hamlet and varying concerts from the New York Philharmonics to the Black Eyed Peas and movie screenings in Fort Greene Park in Brooklyn all contribute to form a design movement for new
spatial and cultural experiences in the city’s public places.

The recent design of the Brooklyn Bridge Park, which opened to the public in 2008, offers an interesting principle of spatial organization, which combines the controlled minimalism of the modernist design and the openness to discovery of the 19th-century romanticist design (Figure 7). A great lawn in the park is kept open under strict conditions for its use. As explained in “The Brooklyn Paper” by Jeff Sandgrund, the director of operations for the greenspace: “There will be no dogs, no chairs, and no big soccer games on the lawn. … It’s a passive lawn—people can use it with reason” (Campbell 2010). This strict order, however, serves to keep the space clear for the public programming of performances by the Metropolitan Opera as well as for the free outdoor movies in the “Movies With a View” program which runs over the summer.

What I wish to point out with this analysis of the spatial organization of public places in New York City is the way that planning practice affects how people appropriate a place. Recent design initiatives, which are more flexible and customizable in organization, enable people to appropriate public places in new ways, which challenges the control of the original design of these places.

*Interruptions in affects makes up with the control of rationalist and empiricist spatial organization*

The affects of the spatial organization of these examples mediate different levels of hegemony of order and control on the subject. She is imposed to follow the inscribed “routes of experience” in the empiricist design of Central Park and Washington Square Park. In the rationalist design of the Silver Towers courtyard green and the Josie Robertson Plaza, the subject is imposed to a meaning that is built into the urban fabric, which restricts a crossing of aesthetic borders and pre-defined lines. The Modern movement, of which both the empiricist and rationalist design are branches, has impacted the design of New York City’s public places and has restricted the mode of experience by embedding a recipe for experience into the affects of these designs.

The debate between rationalism and empiricism, which Jon Lang notes as the two major streams of thought having influenced urban design in America, and by which I roughly divide my examples, can be personalized in a New York City context in the 1950s and 1960s debate between Robert Moses’ future-oriented, Cartesian ideal of the functionalist city and Jane Jacobs’ Medieval village model (Lang 1994, 2). The debate gained particular attention with Jacobs’ criticism of Moses’ urban renewal visions for the future of Washington Square Park. Moses planned for the Lower Manhattan Expressway, which would cut
through Washington Square Park and erase 10 blocks between the park and Hudson Street to the south, while Jacobs mobilized a grassroots resistance in Greenwich Village’s artistic community to save the original neighborhood. The latter won the battle (Flint 2009, 62).

The opposed positions represent two ways of knowing the city. The rationalism in Robert Moses’ master planning advocates that knowledge derives from reason. Knowing from reason takes a bird’s-eye perspective of looking down at the city from above, seeing the grid of the streets, and the forms, height, and interplay of the buildings, which is the perspective described by De Certeau in his essay “Walking in the City” (1988), when he looks down on Manhattan from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center (De Certeau 1988, 92). He identifies how this is the perspective from which the city is organized, but not the level at which the city is experienced and where this organization comes into effect. Empiricism, on the other hand, advocates that knowledge derives from sense-experience, expressed in Jane Jacobs’ return to the romanticized community of the medieval village. Sense-experience, De Certeau argues, is found in the perspective one has at the street level, where the city’s Wandersmänner are practicing the elementary form of experiencing the city through walking (De Certeau 1988, 93). These are the two perspectives on the city, of two ways of knowing the city, that I see built into the urban design of the city’s public places.

We can mirror the universalistic cultural catalyst in the rationalist perspective on the city, which is one of educating its citizens in a pre-defined system of the value of fine art. We can then mirror the relativistic cultural concept in the empiricist vision for the city, which is more concerned with the sensual experience in authentic cultural environments. However, both evaluations of culture as either having or being have roots in the Enlightenment movement’s control over the modern individual. With the enlightenment, the subject was freed from previous feudal hierarchies but now to be controlled in a sense of “education.” This is designed for a collective affair for creating a homogeneous society, of democracy, human happiness, and welfare (Healey 1992, 145). It is this controlling element of the difference between the rationalist and empiricist design logic, what I wish to point out is being interrupted by more flexible and “mobile” initiatives for spatial design. I wish to characterize this as a sign trend of leaving more control to citizen’s free appropriations of urban spaces.

*Affects of irregularity provide new possibilities for the becoming of urban places*

The opportunity of organizing one’s personal experience in Bryant Park with
movable chairs and tables breaks with the ordered urban design of the park in a “temporary experience.” The organization of “moments” mirrors the photography snapshot-inspired inclusion of the moment in the Impressionist art movement of the late 18th century. Thin brushstrokes, delicate colors, and accurate depiction of light were crucial elements of Impressionism, of expressing human perception and experience (Venturi 1941, 39).

The painting titled *Fifth Avenue Nocturne* (1895) (Figure 8) of the impressionist painter Childe Hassam’s (1859-1935) illustrates this art style. The night view of Fifth Avenue is painted with unfinished, fragmentary perceptions of light, which keeps the painting in a sense of movement. The capturing of movement in the painting illustrates the idea of freeing the vision from a priori intellectual preconceptions (Venturi 1941, 39). For the impressionists, the image was thought of as a transcription of the visual sensations of nature’s appearances rather than an actual depiction or representation of the physical object of the motive (Venturi 1941, 36).

Venturi writes in his essay “The Aesthetic Idea of Impressionism” (1941) about how impressionism was concerned with the less grandiose and rejected the romanticist’s “art for art’s sake” in pictoral perceptions of the far from idyllic everyday lives of the painters themselves. This is a discovery of a “new beauty,” which gave rise to a new class to human consciousness: the working class and the lower bourgeoisie (Venturi 1941, 41). Could the flexible and “palimpsestic” organization of moment-like experiences in Bryant Park likewise be considered a form of “new beauty”? Could this new beauty be a new way of knowing, of giving rise to a new human consciousness of the empowered inhabitant and his or her liberty to appropriate the urban space?

The tendency of physically altering the existing urban form in cultural, temporary “experiences” is reminiscent of the impressionist aim of stirring sensation in the *irregularity* of the style of painting, which the impressionist painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir contended was the chief point in any artistic problem. With reference to Renoir’s theory, Venturi highlights the point: “Beauty of every description finds its charm in variety” (Venturi 1941, 38). It is through the irregularity of variety that sensation is tied to becoming, because this is where new possibilities are revealed of interpretation, and where something is in movement. If we translate the impressionist project into the urban context of New York City, the design that is organized in affects of irregularity, and rejects the set form of representation, reveals new possibilities of what the place could be used for and how it could be appropriated.
Summary, chapter 3.1:
In this chapter, I have discovered how the temporary condition of affects in urban design translates into a loosening of control, which influences how people appropriate an urban environment. When we think of this as an alternative to the “code of performance” of the city as stage, which prescribes a form of appropriation of a place, we could think of a spatial code, which is temporary, flexible, and enabling for irregularities, which would motivate citizens to appropriate spaces in new ways.

3.2 Program: détournements in the spatial planning of temporary uses

In the context of city planning, the irregularity in experience translates into a policy of temporary uses. In this chapter, I explore an alternative to the program of entertainment of the cultural catalyst by looking at the principles of temporary uses in cases from New York City. With reference to the principles of resistance in détournements by the 1960s avant-garde movement, the Situationist International, I am interested in how the program of temporary use can provide a projectary space by planning for irregularities in the urban environment.

The program of temporary uses is to reveal a different appropriation of the city
Temporary uses are adopted into a form of city policy in which the temporary is the conditioning principle for planning with temporary events. In “Temporary Urban Spaces: Concepts for the Use of City Spaces” (2006), the architects Florian Haydn and Robert Temel describe temporary uses planning as a concept for a site-specific, temporary approach to the planning of urban spaces. The temporary use is programmed around the idea of temporality and explores a different appropriation of the city than the one the fixed environment prescribes (Haydn and Temel 2006, 9).

There are multiple approaches to temporary uses, which should not be considered as a singular institutional practice but rather a temporary mode of site-specific planning of initiatives. Samson groups various examples of temporary uses initiatives into three types of temporary spaces:

The social temporary space is a temporary meeting place for social life to meet around social practices (Samson 2011, 121). The weekly Brooklyn Flea is an example of a social temporary space, where temporality becomes a relation-creating factor, as people are attracted and brought together through motives of what they expect to find at the market—some looking for food, others looking for vintage goods.
The juridical temporary space is a transition zone, whose future might already be planned for or remain undecided (Samson 2011, 123). The Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) in the East Village in Lower Manhattan provides an example of a juridical temporary space. The five-lot area has been used as a parking lot since the area’s tenement buildings were demolished in 1965 as a result of great ambitions of commercial and housing developments, but remained unplanned because of economic stagnation, political disagreements, and changes in demographics that caused changes in the planning objectives (Gonzales 2007).

The artistic temporary space is a temporary installation of art, eventually an artistic intervention in the urban environment (Samson 2011, 124). The public art program “No Longer Empty” makes an artistic temporary space in New York City. The initiative fills up vacant storefronts and empty properties temporarily with art installations and plays, including outreach programs to the community of panel discussions, music and performance evenings, children’s workshops, and artist conversations, with the aim of revitalizing these spaces and attracting local businesses. As also noted by Samson, these types of temporary spaces often overlap, and their definitions might even be mutually dependent.

We can thus consider temporary use as a practice of reorganizing urban spaces in initiatives with a program of temporarily filling up an urban territory in a particular way.

The disciplinary divide in temporary uses
The three categorizations of types of temporary uses reflect the general organization of temporary planning in New York City, where strategic reflection on the future of the place is rarely thought into the design of the artistic installations or the social spaces; or where juridical zones either remain unplanned (and often closed off) until the project begins without considering the possibility of using strategies from artistic or social spaces, temporarily; or, like in the “Urban Canvas” program by the city’s Department of Cultural Affairs, where artwork is temporarily prettifying the juridical space on the protective construction sites in the city. Such artistic initiatives in juridical spaces are often accommodating the art rather than the juridical intentions, however. Both Haydn and Temel, and Samson, seem to follow this ontological sense of evaluation according to what the space is in either one of these categories. Alternatively, we could consider a space of temporary use in terms of how it is becoming.

A characteristic of disciplinarity shows in my examples of temporary uses above. The social space of the Brooklyn Flea was started by a community organizer and a former employee at the Brooklyn Borough and was intended to
strengthen the local community; the juridical space of the SPURA parking lot is facilitated by the New York City Economic Development Corp and presents itself as a rational, practical solution designed to prioritize the functionality of the urban ground; and the artistic space of “No Longer Empty” is an art program started by a curator and designed in favor of the arts, using artistic means to redefine public art through a temporary site. The temporary uses initiatives are executed within disciplinary objectives, strategies, tools, and ambitions, which I will characterize as a shortcoming.

I will point at the limitations in these disciplinary categorizations and executions as an effect of a gap between two types of temporary uses, characterized by Haydn and Temel as “interim” and “multiple”. *Multiple* uses refer to temporary uses in consideration of a relationship between the temporary use and the lasting use, by which the temporary use is preparing the location for something other than what has already been planned to come after, and last longer. *Interim* uses, on the other hand, refers to filling out an interim gap in the cycle of utilization with forms of use that deviate from the “dominant” prescribed one. This can be perceived as a more experimental and abstract form of temporary planning (Haydn and Temel 2006, 11, 17). The lack of a future perspective in interim use might result in the planned initiative not relating to the becoming of its location, whereas the lack of deviation in multiple use might limit the effectiveness of the “groove” of the place. It is hard to believe that the affects of a parking lot would make people try to imagine what abstract futures the place could have.

The geographical consideration on the development of the place in a multiple use strategy, and the deviation from the place’s physical logics through more abstract, interim use, needs to be combined in order for the temporary space to point toward new opportunities in the space while staying relevant to its lasting use.

*Temporary uses and the desire of détournements*

Integral to the program of Haydn and Temel’s definition of temporary uses is the exploration of a different appropriation of the city. The resistance element toward the fixed form has roots in the Marxist and avant-garde ideas of resistance toward the homogenizing and disciplining effects of the functional urban planning of the 1950s and 1960s Situationist International movement. They called for the metro stations to be opened at night, for roofs to be available and designed for people to use them, for churches to be used as children’s playgrounds, and for the distribution of artworks in cafés and pubs rather than museums (Haydn and Temel 206, 47). This was to be done within the aesthetic
The notion of *détournement*, which the Situationists Guy Debord and Gil J. Wolman characterize in “Département as Negation and Prelude” as “the re-employment in a new unity of pre-existing artistic elements” (Debord and Wolman 1959/2006, 67). While the aesthetic concept of détournement derives from the negation of artistic expression in painting, the Situationists apply it to a vision of a “unitary urbanism” of social and everyday life, a form of unification of space and architecture with the social and individual body, of resistance toward the organizational form of the built environment (Debord and Wolman 2006, 68) (Sadler 1999, 118).

Détournements happen every day in New York City, when urban subjects experiment with new ways of appropriating the city’s public places. Détournements can be impulsive, when, for example, the summer heat tempts kids and teenagers to cool down in the fountain in Washington Square Park, although this is prohibited; or when snowy winter days paralyze Broadway’s car traffic and people start skiing on the road. But irregularities can also emerge from people’s imagination of what the urban form *could* be used for, which is the case when skaters and skateboarders take over the plane space of Modernist-perfect, continuous lines of stairs and railings outside City Hall, or when the youngsters in Williamsburg illegally use rooftops for parties and barbecues and replace bare walls of old factory space with the Manhattan skyline, framing their party.

Characteristic of all instances of détournements is that they emerge from people’s urges to appropriate and use the city in a *desired* way, which to different extents become expressions of claiming the city’s urban territories. They are projects of unitary urbanism as constructions of situations in life, which is at the core of Situationist cultural activity (McDonough 2004, 164). These acts of claiming and appropriation form the conception of places to become more mobile in their conceptions as urban constructs, because their use changes and so does the system of practice they become a part of, which their future use is eventually thought into.

The Situationists advocated for urban spaces to become mobile in use and perception, so that they could be fitted and refitted in temporary uses to the changing desires of urban inhabitants and thus liberated from the hierarchical, organizational form of the city.

*Départements as projectary ‘grooves’ of becoming*

What is interesting about the détournements when applied to temporary uses as grooves is their potential to apply new goals to a place and thus affect a place’s “becoming.” For the Situationists, the détournements served as “rational *beautifications*” of the city (Jappe 1999, 155). With the political agenda of
the Situationists in mind, I will compare this beautification to the politically underpinned “new beauty” of the much earlier Impressionist project. The form of beauty is to be understood as the establishment of a new form of knowledge, executed in an artistic experience, which gives rise to an empowered human consciousness of a sense of freedom to appropriate the city’s urban spaces in desired ways.

These détournements in temporary uses can be compared to the temporary projects in Anders Fogh-Jensen’s project society. Temporary uses, then, can invite for “projectary” activities of beautification of the city, by means of affects. The temporary spaces become “project territories.” In the light of Situationism, these are projectary activities of resistance toward the organizational form of the built environment. In the light of impressionism, they are reactions to irregularities and tied to a mode of movement and becoming. The understanding of mixing a conception of multiple and interim use that I wish to put forward here involves the program of the becoming of the physical, geographical space, not just filling it up with art and entertainment.

Temporary uses can be designed to constitute “grooves” of irregularities as affects that interrupt the form of appearance and mode of experience of the urban fabric. Such grooves invite for re-appropriation of a place, by opening up the space and inviting for new creations of meaning. This potential in the program of temporary uses, of establishing a projectary space in a détournement, is significant to the rethinking of the program of the cultural catalyst.

Summary, chapter 3.2: Cultivation through irregularity of urban experiences
From this analysis, I propose the program of temporary uses by the détournement, whose qualities of redirecting the use of a place benefit from the merging of social, juridical, and artistic spaces, and from planning in between interim and multiple uses. Temporary uses interrupt the urban system and its organizational hierarchies by interrupting the conception of place as an irregular experience through affects. In this form of interruption in temporary uses, I find an alternative way of thinking of the program of the cultural catalyst in a sense of programming for people’s appropriation of a place.

3.3 The performance: de-territorialized imagination of place in the site-specific art installation
In the previous chapter, 3.2, I identified how the program of the temporary use is
a groove of a détournement in the material urban level, which redirects the use of a place. In this chapter, I explore the *inmaterial groove* of temporary uses, which I characterize by *electrical currents* of mediated irregularities. I will look at Creative Time’s site-specific art installations in the “Art in the Anchorage” program from the 1980s and 1990s. With reference to the heritage of in situ installations in Renaissance frescoes, I will explore how the affects extend the experience of a spatial reality by redirecting the subject’s imagination of place.

*Matter and cultural reflection in site-specific, temporary art in the Anchorage*

Creative Time\(^\text{11}\) was established in 1973 and specializes in commissioning art for unusual city spaces of historical and architectural interest throughout New York City, such as unused landmark buildings, abandoned subway stations, and undeveloped landfill sites (Lipson 1985). Creative Time’s installations live *in* and *by* New York City’s urban landscape. As described by Karen Lipson in the New York Newsday article “It’s Not Just Water Under the Bridge,” from May 24, 1985, the organization “haunts the off-beat sites” for the execution of artistic temporary uses of vacant lots (Lipson 1985).

The artistic installations in situ for public places have roots in the artistic expressions in site-specific Renaissance frescoes and the conception of art as “matter.” Renaissance art was expected to be meaningful, purposeful, *and functional*, not just beautiful (Paoletti and Radke 2005, 12). A work of art during the Renaissance manifested the history of the site into which it was placed, and it accumulated site-specific events in situated artworks (Paoletti and Radke 2005, 13). An example of the depiction of matter and site-related events is found in the ceiling in an archway inside Grand Central Terminal in New York City, which is a Beaux Arts fresco from the American Renaissance period\(^\text{12}\) (Figure 9). The images in the fresco in one of the archways reflect on the scenes from the construction of Grand Central Terminal, depicting workingmen laying new railroad tracks.

Creative Time’s public art program “Art in the Anchorage” is a site-specific artistic series of temporary uses that mirrors the Renaissance emphasis on matter and cultural reflection. The program unfolds under Creative Time’s mission statement of mobilizing the work of artists to “engage in a dynamic conversation between site, audience, and context … pushing culture into fresh new directions.”\(^\text{13}\) It was initiated as a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1983 and formed as a summer art program inside of the Brooklyn Bridge’s stone foundation, which made a 13,000-square-foot exhibition space (Lipson 1985) (Pasternak and Lippard 2008, 24). The artworks in the program of temporary use articulated an awareness of the context of form.
of the anchorage that made a dramatic setting for the installations of significantly lightened artwork. But this was also an awareness of context, as the artists were assigned with the task of “addressing the vivid historical and visual qualities of the anchorage” (Pasternak and Lippard 2008, 24).

Sal Romano’s *Rainbow Bridge*, which was part of the very first exhibition program of “Art in the Anchorage” in 1983 (Figure 10), reflects on the matter of the site: the Brooklyn Bridge. It is an installation built around a large, water-filled box with two black archways, representing the Brooklyn Bridge’s towers. Described by Julie Wosk in “Technology and Culture” (1984), the installation appeared as an “eerie electronique” version of the bridge at night, as it was lit up in the dark with rapid flashes of colored lights illuminating the archways and creating the illusion of moving auto headlights (Wosk 1984). The difference between the weight and fixity of the real-size bridge, and the lightness in the ephemeral affects of the installation’s lighting, establish an illusion of movement as it happens on the actual bridge. The subject is immersed in an illusion of the bridge at night.

Expansion of the matter of space
In Jim Goldberg’s *Memories from Swinging on Swing* from the 1990s program, the affects express differences between a sense of safety and a sense of being lost (Figure 11). From the perspective into the living room of a house from the outside when the viewer enters the veranda, one sees a cozy living room, light from a table lamp, and a running TV, which seems safe and homely. Simultaneously, a video projection outside the living room projects images of runaways for whom, in Nancy Grove’s words, “‘Home was never like that” (Grove 1990). The matter in Memories from Swinging on Swing seems to depend on a social narrative in the installation, as the aesthetic affects enhance a shared sense among the viewers of compassion for the situations of homeless children in the real world, outside of the anchorage. The affects of the spatial treatment invite the viewers to go beyond the space and reflect on points in the “real world.” This is a strategy in Renaissance art as well, which was particular for creating an illusion of space, a space beyond the art space from which the viewer might have observed the paintings in the immersive moment (Crum and Paoletti 2008, 368f.). By the mediation of affects, the emotional space of the installation is expanded to become a space of compassion.

Extending the sense of spatial reality
Renaissance art carried the ambition to extend the sense of a *spatial reality* of the environment. The main ceiling of Grand Central Terminal, which shows a
turquoise blue sky with zodiacs, is described in “The Guide To Nature” (1913) as one sees it from the perspectives from which the view of the ceiling is incomplete—“There is revealed a picture of wondrous beauty and so startlingly natural that one for the moment imagines himself in some old building of Pompeii having no ceiling save the blue sky itself” (The Guide To Nature 1913). Fifty of the stars in Grand Central Terminal’s ceiling are illuminated, and that enhances the immersion in affects, as the artwork comes to “extend, manipulate, and transform the spatial reality of the building” (Crum and Paoletti 2008, 369) (Figure 12). The sense of spatial reality is extended in the sense of transgressing the reality of the room.

A similar scenario, although different in style, is found in Steven Pollack and Wolfgang Staehle’s installation *Apocalyptic Optic* (Figure 13). This is a composition of a destructive painting of the exterior of a cave, lit up by special effects and inserted with TV screens with loops of demonstration tapes for digital video effects. The immersion in affects is brought to a level of artifice and spectacle. The artists express the viewpoint that the effectualness of art is found in its immersive intensities *rather* than its cultural heritage, which I infer from the statement: “One day at Disneyworld is more helpful, in terms of art, than two months in Rome” (Creative Time’s “Art in the Anchorage”).

From détournement to de-territorialization

Affects bring not only the place but also our sense of position in the place into de-territorialization. *De-territorialization* refers to the severance of something from its native place; it is what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as a *line of flight* in “A Thousand Plateaus” (2009), the abstract plane of creativity and movement toward new peripheries in the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari 2009, 60). I propose de-territorialization as a *second dimension* of the situation of the détournement. If the détournement is the physical re-employment of elements of resistance in a physical mode of appropriation, de-territorialization is the reconceptualization in mind about the matter of place, in an individual or a collective sense.

Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel’s installation *Adytum*, from the 1986 program (Figure 14), was a visual extravaganza that included a curtain of falling water, a glowing balloon, a red ladder leading to nowhere, a balance beam, spotlights, and blue firefly lights. Patricia Phillips writes about *Adytum* in Artforum International, about how, “seen from a distance, the installation was a wild, surreal fantasy situated somewhere between the imagination and an interplanetary flight” (Phillips 1986). The metaphor of *the interplanetary*, which illustrates the universe-like composition of the installation, implies a sense of
spatial transgression of the audience’s position in the spatial reality of the light affects; one that is similar to the way the ceiling of Grand Central Terminal invites for a sense of transgression of the position from where one observes the artwork. What is being altered is a simultaneous sense of place and sense of self in the place, in an experience of de-territorialization.

Through de-territorialization, the environment activated by the installation becomes a zone, or, with reference to Alain Badiou, an event site, “where something might happen” (O’Sullivan 2001, 127). O’Sullivan describes this capability of the artwork as if art makes something happen because it operates as a fissure in representation: “[Art] transforms, if only for a moment, our sense of ‘selves’ and our notion of the world” (O’Sullivan 2001, 128). It is in de-territorialization that the pre-established order and control of a territory is replaced with alternative spaces of imagination. Our immersion into an environment that is mediated by aesthetic affects remolds not just our perception of the environment, but also our understanding of being in that environment, or, in a “flight” away to a new dimension of it.

Switching register

So how is this relevant to the rethinking of the cultural catalyst, in regards to cultivating scenes of projectary zones in temporary planning of cultural environments? O’Sullivan brings it all down to earth when he describes the features of art that make “access points” to different experiences of the world: “At stake here, then, are practices and strategies which reveal this ‘other side’ to ourselves; practices which imaginatively and pragmatically switch the register” (O’Sullivan 2001, 128). In a pragmatic sense, affects allow us to switch our spatial register, to switch in our sense of place, and in doing so, to switch in our sense of position in the space. While détournements are found in material grooves, in the pragmatic switch, de-territorialization regards the immaterial level of grooves, and is found in the imaginative switch. It is in a combination of the two that I will propose for the cultural catalyst to be rethought.

Summary, chapter 3.3:

In this chapter, I have explored the immaterial dimension of the temporary use, to find an alternative to the desire of entertainment in performance in the program. I have pointed at how the sensuality in the artistic temporary space can bring the détournement to de-territorialization, which is a “switch” in a level of abstraction of a place, of one’s “spatial register.” This artistic attribute in the mediated space is significant to think into my reformulation of the cultural catalyst, as it carries a potential to remodel not just the physical form, but also
the sensual understanding of the meaning of place.

3.4 The audience: the citizen’s positioning in environments organized in ‘electrical currents’

I will now explore an alternative to the positioning of the citizen as audience. I will look at archival photographs of urban environments in New York City that are mediated by electrical currents, in the meaning of light, in a physical or a hybrid sense. I look at how the affects of the immaterial temporality in these electrical currents mediate the environments in ways that enable subjects to “switch register” and imagine themselves in a new “civic position.” I organize this fourth analysis in the categories of control, narration, and collectivity.

Control:

New York City was the birthplace of incandescent lighting. The article “Electric Lighting in New York City” published in The Electrical World in 1892, describes the progress in electric lighting in the 1880s as a “marvelous swift” with electricity as a “pervading spirit” (The Electrical World 1892, 4). The “swift” is found in the emergence of the night city, which McQuire describes as a potent factor of forces of modernization, as the night city visual correlated to the social processes of capitalist industrialization (McQuire 2008, 114). The description of the “vague sky glow that announces the existence of the metropolis from a dozen miles away” (The Electrical World 1892, 4) can be sensed in Steve McCurry’s photograph of the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges from 1994 (Figure 15), as an indicator of the swift to the era of the Electropolis. The excitement is expressed in the 1892 article’s formulation of one of the first experiences with illumination of public space in the city, of Washington Square Park with Lower Manhattan in the background, with “expressions of wonderment that greeted the erection of the great masts in Madison and Union squares” (The Electrical World 1892, 4). The affects in this scenario are mirrored in the photograph of Washington Square Park at night, taken by Steve McCurry a hundred years later, in 1986 (Figure 16).

**Control of space in electrical currents**

There is a difference in how the electrical current mediates a sense of freedom and control over a place, but also a growing sense of disorientation.

The freedom of the “swift,” or, using O’Sullivan’s term, the “switch,” is found in the comparison of two night scenes. The night scene from Chinatown
on the postcard titled “Souvenir of Greater New York,” which is dated between 1900 and 1910 (Figure 17), captures the experience of an unexposed street. What makes this image distinct from the much later street scene of Figure 18, dated between 1956 and 1976, is how the people on the street in Chinatown are in motion, walking, while the people in Lower Manhattan are standing still and socializing in a street that is illuminated. The aesthetic affects mediated in illumination show a different inhabitation of the street enabled by the outdoor illumination. The new form of inhabitation of the street brings with it a switch in a sense of control of the street. With street lamps, the city’s streets and public spaces became home to a difference in control between routine and rationalization in the day, and pursuits of desire at night.

The sense of control and freedom of expressivity of urban space in electrical current is found in the photograph by Joel Meyrowitz from New Year’s Eve in 1965, which shows a street scene on Broadway in front of a theater presenting Billy Wilder’s *Kiss Me, Stupid*, with a couple in front getting carried away in a kiss (Figure 19). They are standing under the cinema’s awning with a starry sky imitated under the awning in the electrical current. McQuire notes that the electrification of the streets in the 1880s became synonymous with excitement, arousal, and love (McQuire 2008, 116), and this gave way to adult entertainment and aggressively lit—and culturally accepted—messages, like the “strictly adults only” message of the Bold-Spicy performance “Vice Dolls, what the boys want” (Figure 28).

The sense of control over space, gained in electrical currents, enables new forms of leisure positioning in urban space, like we find in the breaking down of control in the night city late 19th hundreds. The “liberation” in spatial environments by virtue of electrical currents became an exploration of new borders of civic ethics and norms—which might lead to a sense of disorientation.

*Control and coherency in electrical currents*

The *order of the grid* also translated into electrical currents, in modes of navigation and functionality, in ways that establish a sense of coherency for the subject in the controlling of the environment.

In the photograph of the corner of 1260 Sixth Avenue and 50th Street of Radio City Music Hall’s main entrance from 1934 in figure 20, which is seen from above in Figure 21, we see how the electrical current of the lights at the entrance compose a spatial bordering of the entrance area to the theater. The affects of the organized lights in front of the building extend the place in a controlled manner that prescribes a set of norms of behavior for navigation in this environment; they invite for subjects to stay briefly to evaluate the evening’s
performance of One Night of Love. The affects frame a space of the environment, which is ordering and organizing the access to the experience of freedom and leisure inside of the theater.

Richard Kalvar’s photograph from 1976 shows a man hailing a taxi in New York City (Figure 23). The affects of the front lights of bus 385 to Riverdale, and the surrounding car lights, bear witness to the functionality of the city and the translation of the order of the grid into the immaterial level of electrical currents. The subject finds himself in a situation between a sense of freedom to inhabit the city at nighttime and a sense of being caught up in a condition of being controlled by the light affects of public order. The dilemma of “freedom” is found in the disorientation that would occur without the functionality, without which the city would not appear as a coherent entity that the subject can navigate and hail his way home. The situation in the photo symbolizes the simultaneous resistance from, yet dependence on, control, or direction, in electrical currents.

The contemporary subject has experienced a newly found sense of control over the new urban spaces provided in electrical currents in hybrid networks, both in cyberspace and when cyberspace morphs into places, in, for example, augmented reality games and with the social media network Foursquare’s feature of “checking in” and identifying “friends” via mobile phones in real space. While these technologies enable the subject to claim the urban space, the “checking in” and the “logging on” simultaneously subordinate the subject to a new dimension of control in cyberspace.

These observations leave a point up for consideration—would the total freedom of functional control create a sense of lack of coherence in the urban setting? This is, in particular, with the smooth space of the digital urban level in mind.

**Being in control in extensions of electric currents in media devices**

The extension of electric lighting that is found in media devices provide a different experience for the subject, of being in control of space and, in wireless mobile media devices of today, also of time.

The telescope provides an example of a media device that has attracted urban dwellers through history for a moment of control of space and distance, experienced in an electrical current, through the magnifying end brightening lens. In the image of Figure 24, documented between 1918 and 1952, a handwritten sign on the telescope writes that “air ships can be seen.” The destination of the experienced journey through the telescope is transgressing the human imagination of proximity and moving into a realm that is adventurous and
imaginary. This mode of optics is reflected in the more contemporary version of a telescope in the Creative Time installation from 2002, by the artist Greyworld (Figure 25). This was installed under the Brooklyn Bridge and connected the city’s historic character with the ephemeral nature of new technologies. The telescope revealed “personal messages” in the skyline of Manhattan while spanning virtual, physical, and social realms.  

The extended electrical current can enable a sense of mastery over the urban environment from mastering one’s perspective. The mobile lens of the camera revolutionized this possibility for controlling one’s sense of positioning by controlling perspective and distance even further, as found in the photograph from 1961 portraying the French photographer Henri Cartier Bresson on the rooftop of the Magnum office penthouse on 57th Street (Figure 26). While Bresson is holding the camera, New York City appears like a blurred landscape in the background, with high- and low-rise buildings fading together, as if a sense of mastery over space through the optics of the lens allows for an experience of mastery over the city. In the electrical current of the taking of the photograph, the photographer is in control of the street that is depicted; the environment can be framed, put in perspective, and the hierarchy between structure and agency can be reversed.

The shift to “multiple perspectives,” enabled by the camera in the hands of the subject, indicates a new condition for visualizing the city and for positioning oneself in it, in a personal experience. If we compare the photo of Berenice Abbott from the series Changing New York, in which she documented the transition of New York City in the 1930s, in a modern vision of the city (Figure 27) with how the city is documented in contemporary forms of photography where cameras have become common properties and incorporated into mobile phones for immediate distribution to social networks online, we find the difference not only in a serious multiplication of perspectives but also in a significant, newly enabled articulation of agency above structure.

Even more than documenting the fabric of urban space, the electrical current of the camera has become a mode of documenting one’s personal narrative in the city and positioning oneself through this, in urban space as well as in social networks, where the perspectives in the urban are brought together. This is simultaneously a positioning, and regained empowerment, of agency.

Narration:

There is a difference in the narration in electrical currents, of feeling a sense of belonging through narrated immersion yet also feeling a sense of alienation and
displacement in the narrative.

The narration of the city in electrical currents is illustrated in the lighting of the theme parks Dreamland and Luna Park in Coney Island, found in the news clip from 1904, which shows the Venetian-style theme parks lightened by 100,000 electric lights (Figure 28). The parks appear like fantasy cities—conceptually not far from the “real” narration of the night city shot of Andreas Feininger of Midtown Manhattan from 1987 (Figure 29). The lights bring the city to life; they witness it being culturally engaged. At the street level, the reflection of electrical currents in the wet asphalt on Times Square illustrates how affects come to narrate a sense of the dissolve of physical solidity of the urban environment (Figure 30). This is also a dissolve of the metaphorical control of the grid, which is replaced with a sense of cultural freedom. What we find in the commercially overstimulating environment of Times Square—which at daytime appears as a composition of billboards, as found in the image of Times Square from 1955 (Figure 31) and in the later, more electrified image from 1987 (Figure 32)—is that the narration of the environment, by the affects of electrical currents, allows for a state of immersion in a new sense of spatial reality of the place.

Immersion in a narrated sense of place
Affects of electrical currents also mediate a strong sense of place in a culturally, sometimes commercialized, narrated environment.

The electrical current, which narrates the façade of Radio City Music Hall in Figure 33, illustrates how lights have intentionally been arranged to decorate the façade in a way of bringing life to the wall. In more contemporary examples, we find how new media technologies allow for new ways of bringing architecture to life and enhancing the sense of place, as in Jenny Holtzer’s installation series *For the City* (2005) with projections of poems and declassified documents on Rockefeller Center and the New York Public Library (Figures 34 and 35).

The example of a narrated environment above them all in New York City, found in Times Square, is documented in the photo series of Figures 36 through 39. These show the texture of Times Square’s signage in a complex of people, light, and traffic. We experience Times Square from a pedestrian’s view in a sense of movement, in a moment of getting lost in a perceptual matrix of aesthetic affects, which parallel the experience of the cinema. The aesthetic affects of advertisements in the reflection of the asphalt in Times Square are mediating an immersive experience of being simultaneously outside and inside “the movie,” in which the spectacle of urban space de-territorializes into a
parallel environment in an extended sense of spatial reality. The situation is reminiscent of Walter Benjamin’s comment in his essay “One Way Street” from 1926: “What, in the end, makes advertisements so superior to criticism? Not what the moving red neon sign says—but the fiery pool reflecting it in the asphalt” (Benjamin 1979, 89f). Like Benjamin’s observation of the significance of the reflection of light more than the light itself, the narration of an environment by affects in electrical currents influence how it is experienced, perhaps even more than the intended message that is put out there. This observation reminds of McLuhan’s argument of the medium as the message, stating that it is what the medium does rather than what it tells, that matters.

A note is worth being made here with the cultivation of the cultural catalyst in mind: In the ambition of creating a sense of place through the affects of the cultural catalyst, the immersion in narration of an urban environment makes a significant support of the experience of the cultural event, which might be just as important as the message of the event.

Collectivity:

There is a difference in how the electrical current unites people in a sense of a collective community and disperses people in a sense of social alienation. When New York City was lightened in the late 1900s, people came together in the city’s streets and public spaces. However, when modern subjects came together, they came to feel and act like strangers among each other in a new form of social scene, in which a public culture of mutual anonymity became a social condition (McQuire 2008, 134). The crowd trapped in the rain under umbrellas on Times Square, photographed between 1961 and 1963 in Figure 40, illustrates how electricity might be a load-builder, because it attracts people in “hours of leisure consumption” of shopping and entertainment. However, the crowd of silhouettes sheltering under umbrellas simultaneously appears as a mass of strangers. As McQuire remarks, public culture privileged “looking over talking, detachment over engagement” as well as voyeurism and passive participation (McQuire 2008, 135). There is a difference between congestion and collectivity, with the electrical current’s mediation of a space of collectivity as a condition for the public space to be an environment of a public culture.

Collectivity between public and private
There is also a between the public subject in public space, and the private subject who is present but not participating in the public discourse. This is a difference in desire to participate in a public environment.
While the newsstand in Figure 41 mediates a collectivity of public knowledge and discussion, the adult theater of the Vice Dolls in Figure 20 is an environment satisfying a collectivity of individual desires. The installation of *The 59th Minute* in Times Square from 2006 presents a movie, repeated during the last minute of every hour in Figure 42. The screen, which was brought from the home to the public space in the 1980s, has a private sense of domesticity attached to it, from its introduction in the 1950s when it isolated people in imaginary communities at home, however simultaneously also cultivates a public sense of collecting people in a sense of proximity of a public culture. This is addressed by Joshua Meyrowitz in “No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behavior” (1986), in which he notes how TV has shaped and influenced social relations in society, by enabling people to “go” where they would not go and be present in distant events, by bringing “information and experience to everyplace from everyplace” (Meyrowitz 1986, 118). The screen presents a sense of collectivity that is forming around an electronic information surface in public space. However, this form of collectivity is building on “private” forms of participation.

This issue is particular to the contemporary condition, as electronic media are considered to make a hinge between public and private life in public spaces. Hybrid mobile media devices compose a new sense of community in public space, as a new form of social architecture, in which public interaction in hybrid space might happen at the cost of isolation in urban space.

*United in electrical currents*

Yet electrical currents are also what unite people in culture in the city. The installation *Falling Echoes* by Bill Fontana from 2002, the open space of the old Tobacco Warehouse at 66 Water Street near the Brooklyn Bridge, encapsulates the urban experience in Figure 43. The electrical current of a soundscape changes the atmosphere of the urban space and lets the subject experience a relationship between the ambient noise of the daily life and the history of the city.19

Inside the Paramount Theater, we see a large Christmas tree in Figure 51 whose affects shape an environment of a culturally collective association of Christmas. Likewise, the lighting stars decorating an empty public square in Lower Manhattan communicate affects of an atmosphere of the cultural history of Christmas in Figure 52. The strongest symbol of local cultural reference for New Yorkers might be the Statue of Liberty. The postcard illustration by H. Finkelstein & Son from 1960 in Figure 54 shows how the statue enlightens the harbor with an electric torch marking the highest beacon in the world. The commercial version of the statue in Figure 55 is likewise designed with
exaggerated light from the torch and affects the environment in a collective American cultural consensus, of which liberty is an integral part. The iconic symbols belong to an abstract system of identification of a cultural collectivity, which the affects mediate in configurations of ambience, of cultural coherencies.

By the powerful aesthetic affects of the lights of the *Tribute in Light Initiative*, which since 2002 has marked the date of the attack on the now-demolished Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, the abstract system of collectivity has the potential of collecting people all over the city in Figure 56. And, when transmitted on national TV, it has the potential of collecting a whole nation and beyond.

**Summary, chapter 3.4:**
From my analysis of these examples of electrical currents in New York City’s urban spaces, I have observed how types of electrical currents affect the way subjects read and appropriate urban spaces and their sense of civic position in them. I have analyzed how affects of electrical currents motivate people’s desire to participate and act in an urban scene in a particular way, and how affects condition the sense of collectivity. When we rethink the cultural catalyst in the digital city as a program of an electrical current, we must take into consideration how the catalyst “remodels” the urban environment, in the sense of remodeling the subject’s civic position in it. This enables a consideration of alternative roles for the subject as citizen, than the one of audience.

**Summary Part 3: Remodeling the principles of the cultural catalyst in the related fields**

Through the four analyses in this chapter, I have explored how aspects of the cultural catalyst can be rethought when learning from four related fields. I found in my analysis of urban design in public squares, parks, and plazas a rethinking of the value in a spatial code that is organized with temporary irregularities, which motivate the citizen to appropriate a space in a different way than what the fixed design prescribes. I found an alternative understanding of the program as détournement, as a way of programming for people to temporarily inhabit a place in a way, which points toward an alternative use in the future. I found an attribute in the immaterial dimension of the program as a potential for enabling for a switch from the level of the physical to a level of abstraction, and enable for a de-territorialization in the imagination of the meaning of a place. And, when I brought this observation to the immaterial spaces of electrical currents in the urban landscape of New York City, I proposed that the mode of immaterially
organizing a space affects how subjects position themselves and understand their level of agency as citizens.
In this chapter, I will return to my problematization of the “city as stage”-regime of practice. In Part 1, I pointed at how this characterizes the dominating planning mode of revitalization of the cultural catalyst in the official and unofficial cultural policy framework of New York City.

I will problematize the governmentality of the “city as stage”-regime of practice in the diagram of power of the panopticon. This makes the optics of governance that is executed in the cultural catalyst. I will discuss this diagram’s inadequacy in the condition of the project society through four dimensions of governmentality proposed by Mitchell Dean (2010): bureaucracy, production, sensuality, and imagination. Finally, I will formulate a diagram of power for my proposal of a virtual condition of the cultural catalyst as an artistic tool of urban revitalization in the digital city.

The panopticon as a diagram of power
Foucault’s disciplinary governmentality operates through the logics—and optics—of the diagram of power of the panopticon. The concept of the panopticon is based on Jeremy Bentham’s architectural figure of a prison in the late 18th century, of a periphery and a center with a tower in the middle. The panopticon controls through the “invisibility” of governance from the tower and divides the convicts into separated individuals rather than a crowd. The architectural apparatus should sustain a power relation independent of the person who exercises it, and the inmates are caught up in a power situation, which they themselves sustain (Foucault 1995, 200f). The panopticon is a type of hierarchical organization of power relations that is invisibly built into the functioning system of the disciplinary society. This is an attention to how we govern and are governed within a regime of practice.
4.1 Bureaucracy: the master plan

The aspect of bureaucracy is necessary to discuss because the bureaucratic impulse is what holds together the social system and stirs its cultural production. In the language of urban planning, bureaucracy is practiced through the master plan, as the overall guiding plan with the aim of creating consistency and predictability in the building process.

The philosophy of the panopticon is penetrating both rationalist and empiricist planning, which, I have proposed, marks a duality of visions in urban design of public places in New York City. Both Jacobs’ village and Moses’ futuristic city can be considered for panoptic institutions, as an invisible form of controlling of the citizens’ collective affairs upheld them both. Both were interested in the construction and distribution of authority over and within the subject, in order to maintain a condition of democracy; Moses in control through design, and Jacobs in control through mutual surveillance in the community. In other words: both planning philosophies are practicing homogeneous effects of power within the principle of the panopticon, of imposing a form of behavior on a multiplicity of individuals (Foucault 1995, 205).

As I proposed from my first analysis, these principles are reflected in the control of a “code of performance” in the cultural catalyst, which is prescribing forms of appropriation of cultural spaces, i.e., an appropriation as passive audience. The stage is a bounded area; its performance is instructed on beforehand; it relies on categorizations of a priori defined categories like genre and type of performer; and it is designed for a homogeneous audience recruited from a system of cultural hierarchies. This formulates into cultural planning initiatives of homogeneous effects of power, executed in a program of entertainment and performances, which is similar to the bureaucracy of the panopticon, an invisible practice of institutional rationality.

A different bureaucratic impulse could be designed for the alternative spatial code of temporary irregularities, following my analysis in chapter 3.1, which would accommodate the human legibility of urban life.

Bureaucracy of tactics
How can we think of bureaucracy as a form of institutional rationality, in escaping the diagram of power of the panopticon of the stage?

The control of experience in this coding of the master plan is what De Certeau criticizes when he states: “To be lifted to the summit of the World Trade Center is to be lifted out of the city’s grasp” (De Certeau 1988, 92). What he pleads is for the dominating forces of rationalist planning to integrate with
empiricist sense-experience, so that the master planning becomes a function of the city’s actual use and desires on the street level and plan for what the Danish architect and urban planner Jan Gehl has pleaded for since the 1970s: cities for people, which are designed in favor of the human legibility of the urban in the life between buildings (Gehl 2010).

The master plan can be described with De Certeau’s concept of “the strategy” that implies a power relationship, a form of “force-relationship,” in which the planner is isolated from the environment and circumscribing it into its intended form (De Certeau 1988, xix). A strategy works from a position of dominance over the urban inhabitants, like the panopticon. The alternative to strategy in De Certeau’s terminology is tactics, which is an approach from the weaker place that is not in a position to dictate conditions to the inhabitants. It aims to make an advantage out of relationships without taking over the environment. Tactics is a temporal intervention; a form of short-term planning principle, like that of temporary uses.

The tactical master plan, as an organizational mode of the planning system, forms in a temporary optics, and is a mode of thinking differently about bureaucracy in the diagram of power, with more control to the citizen. However, with the loosening up of control also comes chaos.

Bureaucracy in chaosmos

There is a difference between planning for order, like Moses and Jacobs did in their own ways, and planning for a heterogeneous audience of multiplicities—in kinds of people, kinds of practices, and kinds of urban formation. This refers back to Sennett’s point that when you deal with the process of urban scenes, you also deal with the disorder in them (Sennett 1977, 36).

Umberto Eco points to an interesting relationship between order and chaos with his idea of Chaosmos. In “The Aesthetic of Chaosmos” (1982), Eco proposes how the development that characterized the beginning of modernity is similar to the development that characterized the beginning of post-modernity, as the movement from “scholastic logic” to early modernity is similar to the movement from structuralist theory to post-structuralism (Farranato 2003, 10). This is similar to the movement Deleuze proposes, from the order of the root-tree to the chaotic logic of the rhizome. However, Eco acknowledges that we do not move from the one condition to the other, but come to live in a tension between the two, which is the Chaosmos (Farranato 2003, 11). In a similar manner, the tactically planned cultural catalyst, based on a spatial code of temporary irregularities, needs some kind of level of controlled, institutional framework.

Chaosmos is found in the “master plan” of Andy Warhol’s Factory. On
one hand, this is an institutional formal scene of art production with relationships to the museums of the formal art world; on the other hand, this is an informal scene that embraces the disorder of informal processes of cultural production of parties and art-making and turns it into a beneficial element for New York’s cultural turnover. The Factory executes a form of bureaucracy, which expects heterogeneity in the process of a Chaosmos and turns these multiplicities into cultural value.

Summary, 4.1: Rethinking the master plan
The form of control in the bureaucracy of the “city as stage”-regime of practice is executing a form of strategic planning for a homogeneous audience. With the pragmatic cultural catalyst, the master plan needs to be thought in a more tactical manner. The tactical master plan of the rethought cultural catalyst needs to welcome heterogeneity and disorder, as part of the planning process.

4.2 Production: the cultivation

It is necessary to consider how the cultural catalyst mobilizes people to produce the city, which depends on the program of the catalyst and how it is programming citizens.

Henri Lefebvre’s account of how urban spaces are produced by the practices of the people who inhabit the space is more significantly an account of considering how such practices are given meaning by a particular paradigm and governed in organization by a particular syntax (Lefebvre 1988, 16). In Lefebvre’s critique of spaces of representation of tourism and leisure destinations, which have become major areas of investment and profitability and which I described as the condition of the experience economy’s structuring of the “city as stage”-regime of practice in Part 1, he describes a dialectical link between need and desire, or between liberation and repression. This link forms around the contradiction of the demand for a “quality of space,” which is Lefebvre’s term for Richard Florida’s logic of the pursuits of the creative class (Lefebvre 1991, 353).

Lefebvre’s critical account of the production of space is important to think into the cultural catalyst, which is co-responsible for a mode of production by governing social practices in space and, through that, by governing conceptual determinations of space.

The subject between flâneur and co-constitutive citizen
As I addressed in chapter 1.1, the becoming of New York City as spectacle is a counter-becoming of the city as a destination of leisure, which is also inherent in Koolhaas’ titling (1994) of the city as delirious. The firmly rooted Marxist initiatives of the Situationists advocate an economy of leisure rather than one of production, with the leisure subject’s détournements as playful acts of resistance toward the city’s rational system of production.

However, we need to be wary of the operative paradigm in which the “drifter” produces the city, which easily translated into an unproductive behavior of the citizen flâneur. Walter Benjamin’s adoption (1999) of Charles Baudelaire’s concept of the flâneur, depicted in the urban shopping arcades of Paris in the 1930s, is a figure of a privileged mode of modern experience, of taking in the impressions of the urban spectacle’s commodity culture. Benjamin describes how the flâneur’s “fantasies were materialized in the department store,” as the “last promenade” of the flâneur (Benjamin 1999, 895). The problem I wish to point out is the lack of engagement in the flâneur, which can be more radically characterized as an adjustment to the routinizing instructions of the order in the panopticon diagram of power. The kind of “soft détournements” of temporary uses—which, for example, characterizes performances, which make people stop up but do not make them think and act—are designed for the flâneur’s passive engagement. What makes a distinction between the Situationists’ playful dérive and the flâneur, however, is that the flâneur “lacks political schooling” on which the Situationist’s project is born (ibid.).

Without arguing that the cultural catalyst needs to possess a “political project,” as such, I will link this aspect to the distinction between the catalyst of entertainment and the catalyst of cultivation. This translates into a rethinking of the diagram of power by not considering citizens as performing roles, like in Goffman’s notion of passive scenes, which in Sennett’s account is to expect that people behave but do not have experience (Sennett 1977, 36). Instead, people should be addressed like empowered subjects of co-constitute citizens of the urban complex.

**The productivity of asocial relationships**

The conceptualization of the “city as stage” contains an assumption of a more or less homogeneous audience, which comes to condition a homogeneous production.

The idea of homogeneity in planning is rooted in the Enlightenment tradition’s central pillars of materialism, modernism, and rationalism, which recognized free individuals who are to combine their collective affairs to build a better world of democracy and progress (Healey 1992, 144, 145). When
planning philosophies rest on the sum of citizen’s affairs, the potential of success is dependent on citizens’ sharing of culture, ideals, and ideologies. Those who become “others” to the community, whether that being the regional community of the futuristic city or the local community of the West Village, disturb the progress toward what is perceived as the common good.

The panopticon constructs a space in which the subject constructs a particular model of space with a particular notion of how people are (and should be) distributed throughout in relation to one another. There is no productive role for the designated stranger in the diagram of power of the panopticon, and that goes for the program of the cultural catalyst in the “city as stage”-regime of practice as well.

What becomes even more problematic: There is no room for “strange” ideas. The “city as stage”-regime of practice treats the stranger like an unwelcomed other. I will propose—in light of my observations of the congestions of strangers in electrical currents in urban spaces in my analysis in chapter 3.4, and with particular regards to the new forms of social architecture emerging with the mobility of personal screens in new media technologies—that we have to acknowledge multiple positionalities on the city, and we have to design our cultural planning initiatives for productivity in asocial relationships. These are what Moses produced but ignored in his rationalist planning, and what Jacobs advocated against in her ideal of the mutually governed community village, which excluded the stranger.

*Accepting differences in urban systems of meaning*

Urban spaces are juxtapositions of activities. The cultural catalyst should construct a sense of mutual understanding without advocating a mutual way of living, which is not natural for how urban spaces work today.

The spirit of the urban is a complexity, which Georg Simmel acknowledges when he speaks of the psychology of metropolitan individuality: “Man is a creature whose existence is dependent on differences” (Simmel 2007, 96). He proposes that it is the differences in the city that causes the mind’s psychological condition (ibid.). From my daily lunch breaks in Washington Square Park, I have witnessed differences between high-value added activities of outdoor jazz concerts; informed activities of distribution of flyers with offers of yoga classes and poems for sale by aspiring poets; the co-presence of different classes with tourists in sneakers with new cameras mingling with Soho’s fashionable inhabitants approaching from the south, bohemians from the 1960s, or punks from the 1970s who still find pleasure in music, drugs, and spiritual pursuits; different social groups of dancers, groups of kids, and hip-
hop communities collecting money promote their music; and the presence of multiple ethnicities and cultures—not to mention the multiple temporalities and spatialities brought into the Square through wireless mobile phones, laptops, and iPads.

Richard Sennett, like Simmel, also recognizes this dependence of a plural nature of urban life. He proposes (1977) that the gathering of strangers has the tendency to produce unexpected conjunctions that are in fact “necessary to human beings to make sense of tentativeness about his own beliefs which every civilized person must have” (Sennett 1977, 196). I will argue along with the sense of cosmopolitanism that Sennett proposes, as the experience of diversity in the city (Sennett 1977, 137). This is to argue against the idea of absolutism as a structural condition for contemporary urban life, by which I characterize what is inclined in Moses and Jacobs’ visions, and which is the condition in the “city as stage”-regime of practice. Without acknowledging cosmopolitanism, the experimental visions and ideas that develop in heterogeneous compositions, which might lead to urban détournements and rupture the routines of society, are less likely.

This is to point out a certain productive form of nihilism, which is different from a condition of anarchy. Anarchy, as New York City experienced at the closest in the 1970s with a recession and high crime rates, is hardly the ideal for any planning regime. However, if we look back at the cultural scene of the East Village in the 1970s, which I described in chapter 1.3, a sense of anarchism is found in the uncontrolled artistic production, the merging of genres in the creative fusions in temporary occupations of venues and lots for impulsive parties, and the intoxicated sharing of ideas. A sense of production flourished in an informal cultural scene detached from the formal cultural institutions of the Uptown museums, until these began to recognize the new genres. More importantly, the desire that drove this cultural production was one of participation rather than cultural consumption.

**Summary, 4.2: Rethinking cultivation**

As such, asocial relationships found in a complex of differences in the urban setting do not necessarily need to undergo a “cultivation of homogenization” to be considered productive, in a cosmopolitan sense. A new planning framework for the cultural catalyst needs to rely on heterogeneous production among asocial relationships in the urban chaosmos and cultivate the differences in the urban space.
4.3 Sensuality: the program

The program is significant to what kinds of desires and experiences that are being planned for and thus choreographing how the city is being produced. In the processual aim, this is in the sense of programming for active participation rather than for passive, cultural consumption.

The program between performance and performativity

The idea of a program, which is a common term in architectural practice to express the aim of the building, meaning that which is being constructed in a physical or cultural sense, is characterized by Mitchell Dean in his acknowledgment of the program in governmentality, as a “deliberate and relatively systematic form of thought that endeavor to transform (social/spatial) practices” (Dean 2010, 32). A program employs forms of knowledge to reform or radically challenge an operation, to reorient toward new goals and objectives, and to act upon the desires, aspirations, needs, and attributes of the agents within them (ibid.). The program is structured to meet the desires of the people inhabiting the space, which leads back to how they experience a place through affects.

The program of the universalistic cultural concept is one of promoting fine art, whereas the program of the relativistic cultural concept is one of supporting the local anthropology and authenticity of a place. Adopted into the program of performance of the “city as stage”-regime of practice, these programs fit into Koolhaas’ simulacra-infused description of the delirious program of Manhattanism, which is “to live inside a fantasy” (Koolhaas 1994, 10). These programs work as entertainment, as “places of escape,” as Amin and Thrift would say (Amin and Thrift 2010, 119). The form of sensuality at play is passive and one of desiring to be entertained.

The “program” of Warhol’s Factory, on the other hand, is significantly different. This encapsulates Currid’s proposal of the processual nature of the 1970s artistic movement in the East Village with the program characteristics of congestions of people; fluidity across creativity; and interlinkages in social networks. In light of my analyses of the program of temporary uses, however, this makes it a program of performativity, which relies on a processual and productive aesthetic framework.

Aesthetics relativism through affects in the sublime

My exploration of experience in a mind-body dualism in affects in this thesis is based on a processual aesthetic framework, which diverges from an
understanding of visual representation.

In Deleuze’s account of the mind-body problem, he reconfigures the aspect of representation in Kant’s aesthetics-theory, which formulates aesthetics as fixed in space and time through an a priori schema. The time-space fixity in Kant’s philosophy does not make the transcendent realizable in experience, which is key to Deleuze’s philosophy of becoming (Deleuze 1994, 46). The problem of the privileging of experience through the eye is a critique of the **ocularcentric** privileging of sight, like the one found in phenomenology, which is grounded in the normalcy of natural perception. This makes movement relative to ‘poses’; and in that prioritizes an ontology of being over one of becoming (Patton 1996, 84). The ocularcentric critique is also addressed in De Certeau’s birds-eye perspective on Manhattan, from his position on top of the high-rise building of the World Trade Center, which he describes as a sight of “a wave of verticals. Its agitation is momentarily arrested by vision. The gigantic mass is immobilized before the eyes” (De Certeau 1999, 127). The scopic perspective from De Certeau’s position of a totalizing gaze from afar is a perspective of reason, of mind, rather than experience, of the body. This ocularcentric perspective is immanent to the panopticon diagram, which controls situations from a position of surveillance.

This problem of representation and critique of ocularcentrism relates to an attitude towards aesthetics and brings along a distance taking to the modernist evaluation of ‘the beautiful’. Martin Jay writes how vision was the master sense of the modern era (Jay 1994, 543). The problem with the idea of the beautiful of the Enlightenment is that it prescribes an absolutist standard for what is beautiful, including a pre-defined aesthetic evaluation system, like the Bourdieudian one of distinction. This is for example found in the aesthetic evaluation of fine art in the universalistic cultural conception, which I problematized in Part 1.1 as the dominant cultural conception in the official planning framework of New York City. The modernist aesthetic of the beautiful is a form of a meta-narrative that controls cultural processes in society, which is the key critique of my problematization of the cultural mechanism of ‘staging’ the cultural catalyst in a program of performance and entertainment.

Aesthetics is important to consider because it mediates the relationship between art and other modes of human activity. We need to understand the cultural catalyst as operating in a scheme of aesthetic evaluation that valuates differences in the city and in the aesthetic experience, because differences cause the ruptures, the grooves, which lead to détournement and de-territorialization. In the postmodern understanding of aesthetics, we find a distance taking to the categorized propriety of the modernist understanding in an epistemological or
ontological independence of artistic discourse (Benford 2008, 5). The challenge that arises when leaving the modernist idea of the beautiful is what the meta-narrative is to be replaced with as an alternative sense of meaning or goal.

We need to consider a form of aesthetic that is productive, versus on that is irrational and, at worst, destructive. As such, we need to avoid the postmodern aesthetics that meet the flâneur’s desire of hyper-real symbols and simulation of society, which is found in Jean Baudrillard’s (2006) idea of the simulacra. This is a form of aesthetics in which human experience is of a simulation of reality, by consuming signs and symbols that simulate “nothing” (Baudrillard 2006, 6). Rather, I will turn to Jean-François Lyotard’s postmodern aesthetics in the sublime. For Lyotard, the sublime is the experience that “alludes to something which can’t be shown or presented” (quote Lyotard in Jay 1994, 582). In the sublime, world is found beyond the compass of human imagination; it penetrates human discourse (Benford 2008, 6, 14). The sublime is an aesthetic of differences. As Benford writes: “To be aware of ‘différance’ is to be confronted with the sublime” (Benford 2008, 15). The sublime contains a quality of a higher importance than beauty, in the challenging of imagination.

As an aesthetics of differences, the sublime breaks with representation and is more akin to a performative sense of production of new categories, and new futures. The aesthetics of affects are found in the sublime.

Summary, chapter 4.3: Rethinking the program
In the ultimate aesthetic aim inclined in the sublime, the program can be considered for a performative, projectary, and processual détournement both in terms of the material re-appropriation of space and in terms of the immaterial de-territorialization of the meaning of a place and matter of the project.

4.4 Imagination: network logic

At the conference in Vancouver, I was asked a question about what civic aspects I could think of in the application of new media technologies to revitalization strategies in urban places. The question made me push my considerations on the goal of the cultural catalyst in the digital city, being not just about revitalizing place but also about “revitalizing citizenship” in a process of building a sense of community in people’s imagination. For this fourth part of my discussion, I will bring my re-conceptualization of the cultural catalyst to a more philosophical level, of how it could cultivate an imagination about the becoming of a sense of citizenship.
Positioning of experience in inter-subjective network logic

With the experience in affects in the space between the citizen and the cultural catalyst unfolding in the aesthetic of the sublime, it is no longer grounded in objective dimensions like Aristotle’s cosmos, or in God, or in subjective dimensions like Modernism’s grounding of experience in the enlightened subject. Leaving the experience at this would be to accept the impossibility for a sense of collectivity in the imagination of citizens.

In Patsy Healey’s re-evaluation of traditional, modernist urban planning, she proposes planning as a democratic form of a communicative enterprise (Healey 1992, 143). This is based on Habermas’ (2002) theory of communicative action. Healey criticizes how our contemporary idea of planning is rooted in Modernity’s idea of the self-conscious autonomous subject and how the subject is being controlled by a form power of “systemic reason” pursued through state bureaucracies (Healey 1992, 145). This critique is similar to the critique I put forward in this discussion, of the panopticon diagram’s controlling of citizens as a passive audience in the “city as stage”-regime of practice. Rather, Healey argues, reason should be derived by an inter-subjective effort at mutual understanding—in Habermas’ words, “…through this communicative practice, [communicatively acting subjects] assure themselves at the same time of their common life-relations, of an intersubjectively shared lifeworld” (Habermas 2002, 13). The members of a community actively constitute knowledge for action, principles of action, and ways of acting in inter-subjective reasoning (Healey 1992, 151). Inter-subjectivity is found in communicative relations between citizens’ perspectives and contributions in a process of making sense together, while living differently (Healey 1992, 147). In this respect, planning becomes a way of acting, which we can choose after debate. It is in this understanding of inter-subjective reasoning that I wish to position the experience in affects and connect asocial relationships in the urban space.

If we return to the perspectivism of the Renaissance frescoes, these contain a particular spatial treatment of creating multiple “scenes” of visual information that would suggest multiple points of view in going over the paintings (Crum and Paoletti 2008, 368). The Renaissance artists provided several clues for determining the various positions for viewing their works and for a sense-making process of multiple interpretations of the fresco, depending on one’s order of perspectives. In rejecting the dominant perspective of a “God’s eye,” Nietzsche argues in his radical notion of perspectivism that knowing comes from the subject’s perspectives of seeing, in which seeing is an active force: “The more affects we allow to speak about a matter, the more eyes, different eyes, we
know to bring to bear on one and the same matter, that more complete will our ‘concept’ of this matter, our ‘objectivity’ be” (Nietzsche 1998, 85). Nietzsche acknowledges how matter is *benefitting* from multiple perspectives.

With inter-subjective reasoning, matter is rooted in “interiorization” of experience in between multiple, diverse perspectives of a community of asocial relationships. Experience is grounded, valuated, and imagined in this interiorization in the community, rather than in the individual or in an external metaphysical source. This way of reasoning is an empowerment of the collective agency and an evasion of the invisible governance of the panopticon diagram. In this way, the reasoning employed can escape from the confines of systems of culturally specific traditions of expressive aesthetic experience, like that promoted in the universalistic aesthetic conception. If we refer this logic of inter-subjective reasoning to the program of the cultural catalyst, this would mean that citizens are not expected to react according to a predefined behavior, but may negotiate and re-evaluate the topic of the catalyst in a public forum.

A problem emerges with the *harmonizing* aspect of Healey’s Habermasian inter-subjective reasoning. Habermas’ theory is consensus seeking, unlike what I have emphasized in this discussion in the qualities of differences in the urban: of multiplicities in practices and asocial relationships, in the sense of cosmopolitanism. As Lyotard reminds us, Habermas’ aesthetics is that of the *beautiful* (Lyotard 1984, 79). We need therefore to critically consider the aesthetic premise of the community; if it needs to be one of aesthetic consensus, or rather, if this can be one of a quality of differences in the lifeworld.

**Inter-subjective reasoning through new media technologies**

The inter-subjective, perspectival aspect of Healey’s planning theory is interesting to my reconsideration of what the cultural catalyst could become in a digitalized urban framework because of the network logic she assigns to reasoning, although her essay was published in 1992, before we were actually interconnected. Today, inter-subjective reasoning has found a new channel: new media technologies.

McQuire proposes a form of “network logic,” which follows the logic of interconnection in the rhizome in which every point of connection is connected to innumerable numbers (McQuire 2008, 23). With the term *relational space*, he describes how social experience in the media city happens in a nexus between technology, economic production, and social relations (McQuire 20). Relational space is what connects people in social media networks and in “linked-up” urban spaces, in which we can actively construct social relationships to others across heterogeneous spatio-temporal regimes. With support of
McQuire’s more contemporary, rhizome-driven network logic in relational space, we can think of inter-subjective reasoning among diverse discourse communities in digital networks. A tactical planning of the cultural catalyst through digital media networks is furthermore a response to De Certeau’s remark that “because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time—it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized ‘on the wing’” (De Certeau 1988, xix). I wish to point out a processual potential in these media networks, whereby revitalization can undergo a rethinking from a tool of pre-planned goals to something that is cultivating “on the wing.”

Of course there are multiple issues to consider in terms of the democracy of connecting asocial relationships through media technologies. In terms of access, those will be excluded who do not possess the technologies that give access to digital forums. It seems fair, however, to consider that a great majority of citizens carry a mobile phone. Also, New York City’s recent collaboration with Facebook, Foursquare, Tumblr, and Twitter in the digitization strategy of public policy proposed in the “Roadmap to the Digital City” (2011) bear witness to the spread of personal wireless media devices and the foreseeing of their near-future importance. In response to this concern, the cultural catalyst needs to be planned with multiple access points, for as many people as possible to be able to participate within their means.

Summary, chapter 4.4:
With the planning objective of “making sense together while living differently” in inter-subjective reasoning, facilitated in a sublime aesthetic ideal in which differences are considered a productive force, the imagination of citizenship is grounded in a collective sense of agency. This allows for citizenship to also be negotiable among agents. In this respect, the diagram of power of the cultural catalyst is maintained among citizens rather than a superior force and based on a desire of innovation rather than control.

Summary Part 4: Rethinking the cultural catalyst as workshop in the diagram of the city as innovation lab
This final part of my discussion is a sum-up of how we can think about what the cultural catalyst could become in a digital urban framework of New York City, in conceptualizing its virtual diagram of power, program, audience, and performativity. This is not as a closed concept of a particular form of the catalyst or technology, but more as a composition of processual principles.
Diagram of power of the innovation lab

In this discussion, I have characterized the diagram of power of the “city as stage”-regime of practice by the panopticon as a homogeneous and restrictive form, which is inadequate for the project society organized in differences. This is because the representational coding of the stage, the program of performance, and the passive desire by the audience for consuming entertainment are stuck in pre-defined systems. In Deleuze’s translation of Foucault’s diagram, he models the diagram to involve a different relation between forces than the one of the disciplinary society, one that is less controlled in a panopticon and more through impulses in the rhizome’s coordinates (Deleuze 1988, 35). This is upheld by the relationships in the rhizome, including relationships between people.

Deleuze’s diagram “controls” a different conception of the metaphor of the theater for society. Deleuze criticizes the theater for its representational mode, which makes it “empty.” The theater should rather be one of repetition (Deleuze 2004a, 12). He writes how “theater is real movement, and it extracts real movement from all the arts it employs” (Deleuze 2004a, 11). This critique of the stagnation of the theater of representation is echoed in Lyotard’s critique of the theater in his essay “The Tooth, the Palm” for its alienation through semiotics and duplication of performances (Lyotard 1976, 110). Like Deleuze, Lyotard rethinks the theater in a more processual manner, as an energetic theater, which “would produce events that are effectively discontinuous” (Lyotard 1976, 109).

From my discussion of the theatrical metaphors of the “city as stage”-regime of practice, I will re-conceptualize the theater of the city in line with the proposals of these philosophers, in a virtual shape similar to the metaphor of the innovation lab. This is an institutional frame in which the scene is a project territory. A stage is a transfusion of information. A lab is a place of exchange, of inter-subjective reasoning in productive programs.

Program as workshop

So how can we then think of the program of the cultural catalyst as a productive tool in the conception of the city as “innovation lab” rather than a staging of a performance?

In the consideration of the program as a détournement of programming for people’s appropriation of place, we approach the composition of the workshop. In the workshop, multiple ideas are brought together in a Chaosmos, clustered and catalyzed into guidelines for further action. The essence of the workshop is process, and it is performative in the sense that it brings a multiplicity of ideas to a point of possibility. In a more abstract sense, we can
think of the workshop as *narrated*, in a sense of narrated through a purpose. A workshop is not a transmission of a message. Rather, it is a narration of a problem that frames a process in a desire for experience of participation. If we consider the program of the cultural catalyst as *workshop*, we are mediating Haydn and Temel’s conceptual division of interim and multiple uses. While the workshop is a situation of abstraction and imagination, it is simultaneously a *cultivating practice* to find out where places could go, rather than a bridge toward a predefined purpose. As Healey notes: “It is where planning effort is deliberately focused on *changing* situations that we can speak of a planning with transformative intent” (Healey 1992, 156). The workshop contains a creative thinking about “acting in the world” in a sense of *doing* by *creating a territory*.

The concept of the *innovation lab* is an institutional frame in which the scene is a project territory of social exchange. The program of the cultural catalyst in the diagram of power of the innovation lab embraces asocial relationships and heterogeneity among *citizens* and in their aesthetic *lifeworlds*. The cultural catalyst as workshop collect multiple, diverging viewpoint into processes of inter-subjective reasoning in the network logic. This is to acknowledge that knowledge is not pre-formulated but created anew in the processual project zone of the workshop, between citizens who *produce* the city. In this respect, the conceptualization of the cultural catalyst as workshop is an approach to planning *for* culture.
In its virtuality, the cultural catalyst as an artistic tool of urban revitalization in the digitalized urban framework of New York City is a communicative, processual intervention, in which the future environment is shaped between asocial relations in the complex, cosmopolitan urban field, with the planning ambition to activate cultural innovation and local engagement, rather than entertainment.

My path to reaching this conclusion took off in the question of what the cultural catalyst could become as an artistic tool for urban revitalization in an urban framework, which is digital and interconnected and structured by the concept of the temporary. I began my exploration by characterizing New York City as a city of differences. This observation was grounded in a characterization of the digital, rhizomatic condition of the city and then translated into a metaphorical style of progressing throughout the thesis.

From my problematization of the current practice of the cultural catalyst in New York City, I pointed at a dominating regime of practice of conceptualizing the city as a stage of cultural interventions as performances of entertainment for a passive audience, in the logic of the experience economy. I pointed at a difference between a formal, universalistic approach to planning of culture in the cultural policy programs by New York City’s Department of Cultural Affairs and an informal, unofficial relativistic approach to planning with culture in the festivals, parades, and block parties in the city. With the current condition of temporality, however, by which the city is organized in spaces of flow, I characterized the metaphors of stage, performance, entertainment, and audience as four problematic conditions of the cultural catalyst, which I wanted to cultivate in my analysis.

I used the concept of affect in my analysis to explore aspects of becoming of the cultural catalyst in four related fields. This concept was mobilized with Deleuze’s philosophy and used as an analytical optics for avoiding the analysis of representation in analyzing the space between the subject and the catalyst. I found, by looking at the design of public parks and places in New York City, an alternative to the “spectacular spatial code” of performance, in a condition of temporary irregularities, which motivates citizens to appropriate places in new ways. I found, by looking at the planning practice
of temporary uses an alternative conception to the program of entertainment, in a sense of programming for détournements of resistance toward the fixed form. I found, by looking at the site-specific temporary art program *Art in the Anchorage*, an alternative to the goal of the performance as a desire for experience, in redirecting the subject’s imagination of place in immaterial affects. And, I found, by looking at urban environments organized by *electrical currents*, how the spatial organization in these affect make subjects “switch register” and re-imagine their civic position of agency in a place.

When I brought these observations into discussion with the panopticon *diagram of power*, which controls the current practice of the cultural catalyst, I was able to argue, in the aspect of bureaucracy, that the idea of master planning of the cultural catalyst needs to be considered in a tactical manner of planning for heterogeneity and “disorder” in the cosmopolitan urban setting. I discussed the aspect of production in the program of the catalyst and proposed a program of cultivation of asocial relationships and differences in urban space. I further discussed the sensuality of the program of performance and proposed a sense of “programming” for a desire of active participation in an aesthetic of differences in the sublime. I finally discussed the aspect of citizens as audience, and proposed that the experience in affects should be grounded in a form of negotiation in inter-subjective reasoning among citizens.

From this discussion, I proposed a virtual, possible becoming of a regime of practice in which the city is conceptualized as an *innovation lab*, with the program of the cultural catalyst in the concept of the *workshop*. The cultural catalyst is reformulated with the temporary as an organizing principle, as a scene for asocial networking and collaboration, as a processual practice of working out the goal for a place in the course of the cultivation.

The meaning of *revitalization* in this particular optics is grounded in a consideration of the urban place as a processual, projectary territory of a spatial complexity of differences and multiplicities, whose future can be *cultivated* by citizens’ active participation, in a projectary activity of cultural innovation.
5.1 Evaluation in a question machine

Deleuze and Guattari’s consideration of Foucault’s diagram includes a dimension of the diagram as a question machine (Deleuze and Guattari 2004b, 258). I will use the question machine of the diagram to critically evaluate my exploration and conclusions. As Deleuze notes, the forces and principles of the diagram produces a new kind of reality or a new model of truth, which is found in the virtual (Deleuze 1986, 35).

How is this cultivation a concept of democracy?
Although I criticized Florida for the exclusivity in the creative class, one can point at a form of exclusivity in my proposal as well. In regards to my point that asocial relationships could be connected in new media technologies, those will be excluded who do not possess the technologies that give access to digital forums. It seems fair, however, to consider that a great majority of citizens carry a mobile phone. Also, New York City’s recent collaboration with social media platforms in the digitization strategy of public policy proposed in the “Roadmap to the Digital City” (2011) bear witness to the spread of personal wireless media devices and the foreseeing of their near-future importance. In response to this concern, the cultural catalyst needs to be planned with multiple access points, digital and non-digital, for as many people as possible to be able to participate within their means. Also, democracy is found in the transparency of the processual design.

What component in the catalytic agents would motivate them to “revitalize”? My answer to this in cultural innovation as the goal for urban revitalization in the cultural catalyst is proposed as a discursive scope, rather than a guideline, and thus it avoids dealing with the practical aspects of the conditions for cultural innovation. A question remains unanswered, which is how the communicative nature of social reproduction functions to condition the processual nature of cultural reproduction in the city of differences? A further pursuit of this aspect could take a series of studies on a moral-practical component found in the micro-
processes of the project society, perhaps in a similar detailed manner as Fogh- 
Jensen presents in his dissertation, however with a focus on the communicative 
conditions for projectary activity.

*Is the ontology of becoming adequate for an exploration of the City?*
In my initial conceptualization of the city concept, I have leaned on a conception 
of the city proposed at the EURA conference in Copenhagen of the city as a 
“settlement structure”, which mirrors Amin and Thrift’s suggestion of cities as 
“stopping places for an over-expanding mobile population” (Amin and Thrift, 
153). It is in this understanding of the urban as a structure in movement and 
becoming that I have based my thesis in an ontology of “becoming in duration”. 
However, one can ask, to what extent does my analysis subtly depend upon the 
essential stability of the city-concept, which is impossible in my ontological 
framework of becoming in duration? It might prove an impossible project to 
live up to this ontology when studying the city. I have had to tame and frame 
New York City in pointing out its differences, and by that I have come to “lock 
it” into a horizontality and spatio-temporal boundedness, by which I have in a 
sense transgressed my philosophical premise. Also, with the concept of affect, 
I have accepted some necessary structures of “presence” for the experience to 
take place, which is an aspect of being, and which is inherent in the ideas of 
“city” and “citizen”. While my mobilization of Deleuzian concepts has pushed 
the theoretical “speed” of my exploration and opened up for the study of 
something in its potentiality, the ontological consequences might be that I am 
underestimating being as a fundamental premise of studying the city.

5.2 The contribution of this thesis

On this final note, I will consider the contribution of my project to my field(s). 
In terms of my contribution to cultural planning and policy, it has not been 
within my scope to propose a new best practice of cultural policy in New York 
City. With this exploration I have laid the ground however for a new mode of 
thinking about the scope and possibilities for a way of planning for culture in 
terms of considering “culture” as a planning imperative in urban space, which 
could be pursued further in more specific attention to policy, and which is a first 
step for creating awareness about cultural planning as a discursive practice.

In terms of my contribution to the academic field of the arts, I have 
wanted with my methodological design inspired by the philosophy of Deleuze, 
to explore how new aesthetic challenges in the urban can be academically
addressed in my field of Modern Culture. By marking a territory of my topic’s related fields, I have intended to push the academic project beyond a dialectic of “interpretation” and “critique”, and to open it up to a new horizon of understandings. While it has not been my main focus to qualify a new research method in the arts, my contribution might rather be found in the re-positioning of my “object of study” of the cultural catalyst as a relational concept, which makes an alternative to a study of the cultural catalyst as a phenomenological “text” ready for analysis and interpretation.

Also, it is worth to consider how my interdisciplinary rethinking of the cultural catalyst with my communicative approach to urban revitalization makes a contribution in the professional world among urban practitioners of architects and urban planners. At the EURA conference in Copenhagen, I had the opportunity to present my ideas to professionals and theorists in the “building disciplines”. My presentation was met with a note-worthy discussion of interest and consensus about the importance of considering the challenges of the new digital structures of the city in urban development frameworks. My thoughts were met with acknowledgement and a slight degree of excitement, which I optimistically noted down, being the only representative from the humanities in this forum of an interdisciplinary conference about the future of the city.


3. Max Weber’s metaphor of “the iron cage” is a critique of the rationalization of the modern project, of the relationship between state and civil society with the former dominating the latter (Scaff 1989, 180).

4. Flows, in Castells’ definition, are “…purposeful, repetitive, programmable sequences of exchange and interaction between physically disjointed positions held by social actors in the economic, political and symbolic structures of society”

5. Castell’s emphasis is primarily on the opposition between the local and the global, however in my use of his concept of the space of flow I will relate it to the local environment and dynamic flows in a scale of local practices in flows rather than global exchanges in flows (McQuire 2008, 132).

6. Bourdieu is not limiting culture to hierarchies of taste however, as he considers culture by the concept of capital, as a form of cognitive structures, as everything which is intuitively understood, as learned and which has become a part of one’s habitus, but which can also be objectified (Lizardo 2010, 2). Bourdieu’s understanding of culture includes an anthropological aspect. He is balancing a universalistic and relativistic cultural conception, whereas Currid’s conception is more universalistic.

7. The conception of culture as cultivation comes close to the original meaning that the cultural concept carried up until the mid-end of the 17th hundred, in referring to the process of agricultural cultivation (Jantzen 2005, 92).

8. Immanuel Kant proposed a distinction between transcendental aesthetics, relating to sensation, and transcendental logic, relating to reason. The aesthetic divide between the two is described in two forms of knowledge, one that is sensible and one that is logical and relates to a distinction between the ‘matter’ and ‘form’ of appearances (Kant 2007, xxxiv). Kant advocates the contribution of sensation to cognition in the sense that we perceive, think and know in reason has been filtered through our senses and experience.

9. Deleuze’s empiricist stance is revealed in “What is Philosophy” that the artwork is “…a being of sensation and nothing else”, and in “Difference and Repetition” when he argues “It is true that on the path which leads to that which is to be thought, all begins with sensibility” (Deleuze 1994, 164) (Deleuze 2004, 182). Deleuze is not to be considered for a pure empiricist however, which is expressed in the recognition that “it is difficult in fact to say where the material ends and the sensation begins” (Deleuze 1994, 166).
10. The City Beautiful Movement developed in the United States in the late 18th Century, inspired by baroque planning and the Municipal Arts movement and the Beaux Arts movement (Lang 1994, 44).

11. As De Certeau argued in his essay Walking in the City, the city is ‘a palimpsest’ (De Certeau 1988, 109). In the palimpsest it is possible to reveal, decode, and decipher a system covered up by an order that is super-imposed on it but of the same type (De Certeau 1988, 155).

12. Creative Time’s program reflects the Situationist showdown with the institutionalization of art and the aim of integrating art into the unofficial urban public space. This attitude is expressed in an interview with Cee Brown, the executive director at Creative Time in Downtown from 1986: “I don’t think to have an art experience, one has to make an appointment, get into a form of transportation, go to an institution to pay an entrance fee (…) I’m very interested in getting art to where the people are. Public art is a very important form of communication.” (Hoffman 1990).

13. The American Renaissance period from about 1890 to 1920, also referred to as the Beaux Arts movement, encompasses the aesthetics of French and Italian and Renaissance (http://www.buffaloh.com/a/DCTNRY/b/beaux.html)


Chromopoulos, Themis (2011) Spatial Regularion in New York City, From Urban


Eco, Umberto (1982) The aesthetic of Chaosophos: The Middle Ages of James Joyce,
Issue 18 of Monograph series, University of Tulsa.

Farranato, Christina (2003) Eco’s Chaomos: From the Middle Ages to Postmodernity, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.


Jay, Martin (1994) Downcast Eyes: The denigration of vision in twentieth-century


Socio-Criticism, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 105-110.


OTHER SOURCES


INTERNET ARTICLES


http://manovich.net/articles/


http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_history/historic_tour/history_robert_moses_modern.html

http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_your_park/washington_sq_park/reconstruction.php

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/26/arts/design/26clos.html


WEBSITES

BMW Guggenheim Lab:
http://bmwguggenheimlab.org/

Brooklyn Flea:
www.brooklynflea.com/about/

Building Sustainability Program, Department of Cultural Affairs
Creative Time
www.creativetime.org

Madison Square Park:
www.madisonsquarepark.org/art

No Longer Empty
www.nolongerempty.org

New York City Department of Cultural Affairs:

New York City Festival of Ideas
http://www.festivalofideasnyc.com/

Percent for Art Program, Department of Cultural Affairs

Seward Park Urban Renewal Area:
www.nycedc.com/ProjectsOpportunities/CurrentProjects/Manhattan/SewardPark/
Pages/SewardPark.aspx

SyFy Movies With a View
http://www.brooklynbridgepark.org/go/programs/-/events/syfy-movies-with-a-view

BLOGS

http://www.brooklynbridgeaworldwonder.com/an-interview-the-bridge-today.html

PHOTOGRAPHY
All photography by Tanya Søndergaard Toft (TT)

Brooklyn Bridge Park. August 5th (2011)
Bryant Park. August 5th (2011)
Ceiling of the Grand Central Terminal, Main Hall Ceiling. August 5th (2011)
Ceiling of the Grand Central Terminal, Beaux-Arts Fresco. August 5th (2011)
Central Park. August 5th (2011)
Josie Robertson Plaza. August 5th (2011)
Silver Towers Courtyard Green. August 5th (2011)
ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

Archival press material:

Creative Time’s Art in the Anchorage, A visual and performing arts program celebrating the Centennial of the Brooklyn Bridge (1983) The Creative Time Archive, Series 1: Exhibitions and Projects, Box 2 – Folder 58, May 19th – October 10th.


Archival image material:

Fig. 8: Fifth Avenue Nocturne. (ca. 1895) by Childe Hassam (1859-1935), Artstor Collection, The Cleleveland Museum of Art, ©Childe Hassam.

Fig. 10: Rainbow Bridge (1983) by Sal Romano, The Creative Time Archive, Art in
the Anchorage, Series III, Box F.

Fig. 11: Memories from Swinging on Swing (1990) by Jim Goldberg, The Creative Time Archive, Series I: Exhibitions and projects, Box 18 – Folder 151, Prints – Art in the Anchorage.

Fig. 13: Apocalyptic Optic. The Inferno. (1985) Steven Pollack and Wolfgang Staehle, The Creative Time Archive, Art in the Anchorage, Series I: Exhibitions and projects, Box 2 – Folder 59.

Fig. 14: Adytum (1986) by Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel, The Creative Time Archives, Art in the Anchorage, Series III: Slides, Box L.


Fig. 16: USA. New York. Manhattan. 1994. View on snowy Manhattan from Washington Square Park. (1986) Steven McCurry, ©Steve McCurry/Magnum Photos and Eva McCurry. USA, Artstor Collection.

Fig. 17: Street scene, Chinatown, Souvenir of Greater New York (ca. 190-), New York Public Library, Mid-Manhattan Library / Picture Collection, 1 photomechanical print: b&w with color cut-outs.

Fig. 18: Lower Manhattan Street Scene (1956-1976) The New-York Historical Society, Frederick Kelly Photograph Collection, PR-246, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.

Fig. 19: New Year’s Eve, NYC (Kiss me, stupid) (1965) by Joel Meyrowitz, Artstor Collection, in the portfolio “Joel Meyrowitz, Photographs: The Early Works.” ©City College of New York.

Fig. 20: Bold-Spicy performance “Vice Dolls, what the boys want” (1959-1976) The New-York Historical Society, Frederick Kelly Photograph Collection, PR-246, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.

Fig. 21: 1260 Sixth Avenue - West 50th Street, Radio City Music Hall main entrance (1934) Wurts Brothers, photographer, New York Public Library, Collection of photographs of New York City / Manhattan, ©The Museum of the City of New York.

Fig. 22: 1260 Sixth Avenue – West 50th Street, Radio City Music Hall night shot

Fig. 23: USA. New York City, etc. USA. New York City. Man hailing a taxi. 1976 (1976) by Richard Kalvar, Artstor Collection, ©Richard Kalvar / Magnum Photos.

Fig. 24: Man with telescope (1918-1952) The New-York Historical Society, Browning Photograph Collection, PR-009, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.


Fig. 26: USA. Henri CARTIER BRESSON. Portrait of the French photographer and founder member of MAGNUM photos Henri Cartier Bresson, on the roof of the Magnum office penthouse of Magnum Photos in Manhattan on West 57th Street. 1961. (1961) by Dennis Stock, Artstor Collection, ©Dennis Stock / Magnum Photos.

Fig. 27: Columbus Circle, Manhattan. (February 10, 1938) Abbott, Berenice (1898-1991), Changing New York / Berenice Abbott, Federal Art Project (New York, N.Y.), New York Public Library.

Fig. 28: The new Coney Island, night views of “Dreamland” and “Luna Park” (1904) from Harper’s weekly: a journal of civilization (New York: Harper’s Weekly Co., 1857-1916), New York Public Library, Mid-Manhattan Picture Collection / New York City – Coney Island.


Fig. 30: Wet Times Square (1918-1952) The New-York Historical Society, Browning Photograph Collection, PR-009, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.

Fig. 31: Times Square at daytime (1950-1955) The New-York Historical Society, Arthur W. Grumbine Photograph Collection, PR-097, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.


Fig. 34: For the City (2005), by Jenny Holtzer, location: Rockefeller Center, Sep. 29-Oct. 2, The Creative Time Archive, Box VV, Series III: Slides, sleeve WW20.

Fig. 35: For the City (2005), by Jenny Holtzer, location: New York Public Library, Sep. 29-Oct. 2, The Creative Time Archive, Box VV, Series III: Slides, sleeve WW20.

Fig. 36: Light Shot of Times Square No. 1 (1938-1960) The New-York Historical Society, Arthur W. Grumbine Photograph Collection, PR-097, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.

Fig. 37: Light Shot of Times Square No. 2 (1938-1960) The New-York Historical Society, Arthur W. Grumbine Photograph Collection, PR-097, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.

Fig. 38: Light Shot of Times Square No. 3 (1938-1960) The New-York Historical Society, Arthur W. Grumbine Photograph Collection, PR-097, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.

Fig. 39: Light Shot of Times Square No. 4 (1938-1960) The New-York Historical Society, Arthur W. Grumbine Photograph Collection, PR-097, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.

Fig. 40: Crowd trapped in the rain under umbrellas on Times Square (1961-1963) The New-York Historical Society, Frederick Kelly Photograph Collection, PR-246, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections, 1959-1976.


Fig. 42: The 59th Minute: Fast Forward (2002) by Jim Campbell, location: Times Square, The Creative Time Archive, Box VV, Series III: Slides, sleeve VV3.

Fig. 43: Consuming Places: Falling Echoes (2002) by Bill Fontana, location: 66 Water Street, Brooklyn, The Creative Time Archive, Box VV, Series III: Slides, sleeve VV5-VV6.

Fig. 44: Christmas tree inside the Paramount Theater (1938-1960) The New-York Historical Society, Arthur W. Grumbine Photograph Collection, PR-097, Dept. of Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections.
AT NYTÆNKE KULTURKATALYSTEN
Et abduktivt studie af mulighederne for urban revitalisering med den kunstneriske katalyst i den digitale by

Specialet omhandler, med New York City som sit empiriske felt, en nytænkning af praksissen omkring at bruge kulturen som katalyst til revitalisering af byens rum, i lyset af den samtidige bys strukturer i digitalisering og sociale netværk.


Metodisk er specialet undersøgende og vidensudviklende. Den metodiiske tilgang tilsigter et projekt, som udformer sig mellem kulturvidenskaben, medieviden skaben og planlægningspraksisser, og følger en abduktiv logik om at søge mod vidensmål, der ikke på forhånd kan forestilles; ved at undersøge problemstillingen fra forskellige vinkler, i forskellige videnskontekster. Den bergsonianske “intuitive metode” mobiliserer jeg som en måde at gå til mit materiale, ved at søge efter “forskelle” i materialet indefra. Det foregår under en ontologi om “tilblivelse i varighed”, det vil sige i en forståelse af tingenes kontinuerlige tilblivelse.

Det metodiske analysedesign er udformet efter disse præmisser og tager afsæt i den indledende problematisering af den herskende planlægningsdiskurs, hvori byen betragtes som en scene, kulturkatalyzen som en form for optræden, dennes program som underholdning, og borgere som publikum.
Min analyse mobiliseres metodisk i Deleuze’s filosofiske begreb om *affekt*, som jeg indtænker i et analysebegreb, der orienterer undersøgelsen mod den midlertidige oplevelse. Min analyses fire perspektiver undersøges som relaterede felter til kulturkatalyten. I den “rumlige kode” i designet af New Yorks offentlige parker og pladser gentænker jeg præmissen for “scenen”. I planlægningstilgangen *midlertidig anvendelse*, gentænker jeg “programmet” som et oprørsk indgreb i det materielle. I den stedspezifikke kunstinstitution, gentænker jeg programmets immaterielle kvaliteter. Og, i New Yorks byrums organisering ved medieringen af lys, gentænker jeg borgerens positionering i det konkrete byrum, og i forestillingen om at være en del af et kollektivt samfund.

I diskussionen mellem den oplevelses-okonomisk baserede kulturkatalyst of de *kultiverede* aspekter foreslår jeg en nytenkning af kulturkatalyten, ved programmet konceptualiseret som en *workshop* og byrummet konceptualiseret som et *innovationsværksted*. Denne tænkte form i kulturkatalyten svarer på det samtidige byrums udfordringer i “kulturdøjlen” ved materialisering af byrummet og tabet af lokalitetsfornemmelse ved orienteringen i nye mobile medier, i en nytenkning af kulturkatalyten som en kommunikativ, processuel instans. Heri formes det fremtidige byrum imellem “asociale relationer” i det komplekse, kosmopolitanske miljø, med planlægningssigtet at aktivere kulturel innovation of lokalt engagement, fremfor at underholde. Netværkslogikken - og muligheden - i digitale medieteknologier, udgør den nye forudsætning for at planlægge processuelt, i en æstetik som formes mellem borgere.

Specialets underliggende tese er at, at kulturkatalyten *kunne* blive et midlertidigt, æstetisk kommunikativt og demokratisk redskab til kollektivt at rette fokus mod byrummets potentielle tilblivelse.