

## **A move into drawing**

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### **Keywords**

architectural drawing, drawing conventions, urban representation, drawing movement, temporality, notation

The presented images are part of the process leading to a large-scale, three-dimensional drawing entitled *Weaving Lines/Looming Narratives*, exhibited in the form of a site-specific installation at Newcastle University (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> The project was an experimental survey of an urban site; it examined how architectural drawing conventions might capture the kinetic aspects of architectural and urban spaces. The making of this expanded drawing, and the way the audience engaged with the drawing, together addressed the question of presence in architectural drawing and, by extension, in architectural thinking and making. Rather than cutting through the site by means of a panoptic vision (which is the primary mode in conventional architectural plans), this survey sought to capture the site's various levels of action. Drawing from an understanding of the city as an ongoing discourse rather than a finite script,<sup>2</sup> the project focused on the kinetic elements of the site, recording the negotiations between the human and non-human actors that inhabited and configured the space. The representation aimed to confer upon six characters, operating across differing scales of time and space, a "visual materiality," a constancy that would make these ephemeral agents of both the visual and the spatial present in the drawing, as they are in the site.<sup>3</sup> One of these characters, the fishmonger, is seen in Figure 2. Traces of habitual, chanceful and involuntary movement were captured through the in-situ "drawing by light" that longexposure photography allows.<sup>4</sup>

Each vertical line in Figure 3 represents a one-second moment of observation. To transcribe the linear light tracings of the photographs, such as those visible in Figure 2, was not a process of translation but a literal ichnography, a direct tracing of forms of the site through the augmented experience afforded by the photographic lens, in one-second intervals of observation. Arranged across a timeline of temporally equidistant tracings these frames accumulate to represent the



Figure 1  
Weaving Lines/Looming Narratives, Installation at Newcastle University, 28 January–2 February 2013.



Figure 2  
Fishmonger Still.

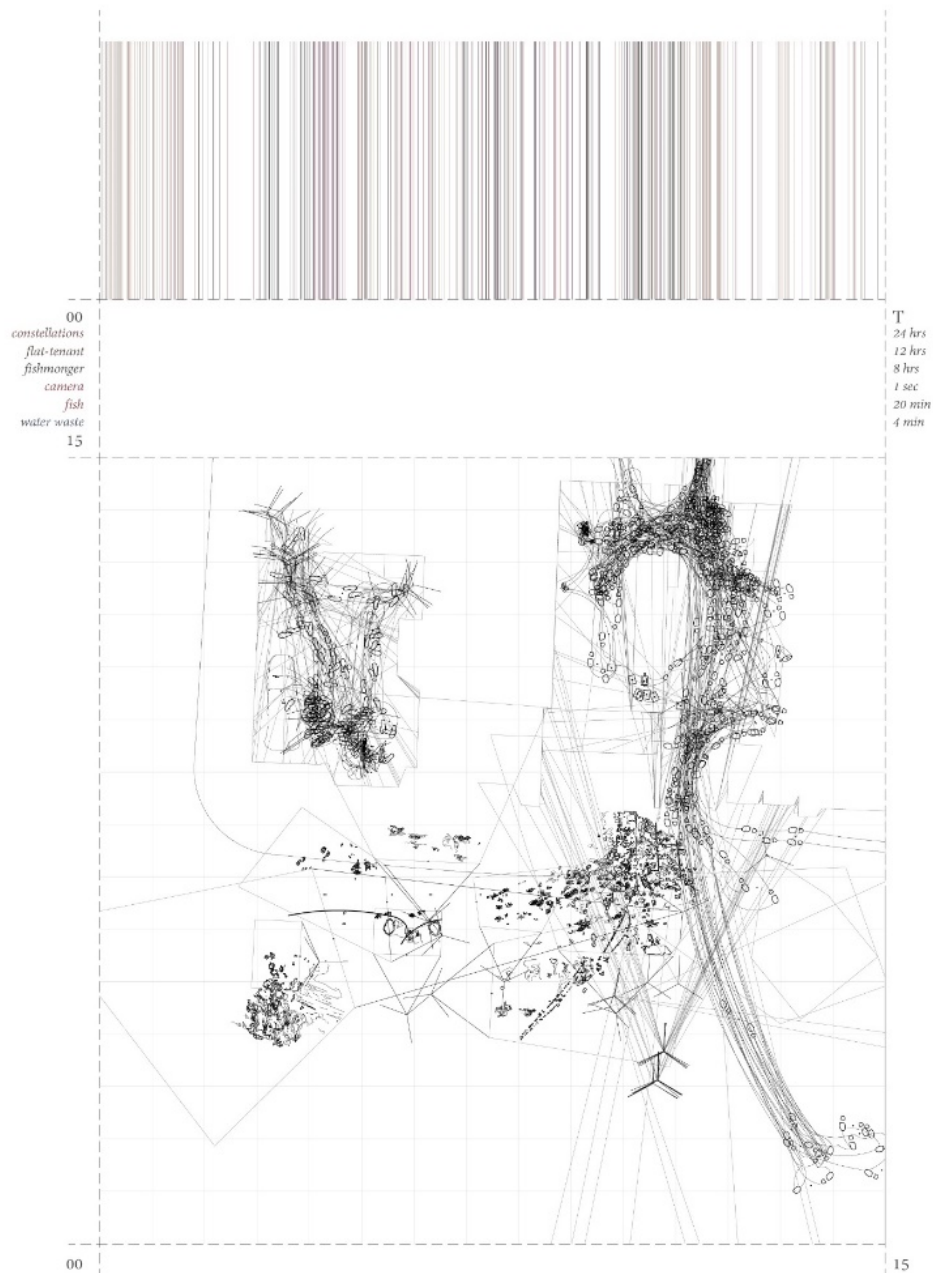


Figure 3  
Weaving Lines/Looming Narratives: Room Key.

movements of the characters through what Gilles Deleuze, after Henri Bergson, calls “privileged instances”:<sup>55</sup> still moments that abstract the continuity of duration, rendering its changing materiality measurable. Although photography maintains a sense of pictorial accuracy through the way it captures what it sees as image, it can only partially capture movement by breaking it up into individual stills. The abstract notational code of architectural plans and elevations used here reintroduces duration into the drawing, collecting the “privileged instances” into a continuous spatial field of representation.

## References

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<sup>1</sup> *Weaving Lines/Looming Narratives* was presented at the Newcastle University School of Arts and Cultures, Newcastle, UK from 28 January to 2 February 2013. Sophia Banou, *Weaving Lines/Looming Narratives* (site-specific installation at Newcastle University, School of Arts and Cultures, 28 January–2 February 2013).

<sup>2</sup> See Sophia Banou, “Textual Cities/Working Drawings: Rereading the Space of Drawing,” in *Writingplace: Investigations in Architecture and Literature*, ed. K. Havik, S. Oliveira, J. Mejia Hernandez, M. Proosten, and M. Schafer (Rotterdam: NAI 010, 2016), 206–15.

<sup>3</sup> These characters, animate and inanimate, were a fishmonger, a fish, the tenant of a flat, waste water across the pavement, the star constellations and my own camera.

<sup>4</sup> The project drew from early experiments in chronophotography. See László Moholy-Nagy, *The New Vision: From Material to Architecture* (New York: Brewer, Warren and Putnam, 1932), 134. László Moholy-Nagy’s long exposures dissociated the plasticity of space from the idea of concrete matter, defining volume equally through the “circumscription of mass” and the visual contour of motion by means of light. Similarly, his photograms suggested a way of not simply drawing with light, but of understanding physical movement as drawing in real space.

<sup>5</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 3–4.