

## THE REDISCOVERED SPACE, A SPACE OF ENCOUNTER

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**Abstract.** This contribution presents a scenographic installation symbolising a unique encounter. The door to the rediscovered space is grown together since a long time with environment. So we have the door, which is old, which belongs to the past, to the time when that space was still known, and we have the lighting, the light of today which tries to rediscover, which tries to show us a way, or to show us even what's behind the door but we don't see this. When archeologists try to find some signs of a culture which doesn't exist anymore, or at least in the form it was, collect some objects, and put the objects in the museum and then say: 'there you can get the feeling of the culture'. If I think of it, it is very seldom if a museum of objects of a culture really reveals a culture. On this idea I built my memories. Boxes in the sand, like the door I've build before. Just boxes in the sand. Needing to be diggen out.

Out of a large number of spaces of encounter, of which the author of this paper encountered 1001 in frame of a seminar, the so-called “rediscovered space” has been seen as being the one calling for memory. Forgotten and rediscovered.

By the time the book “The Space of Encounter “ was published Daniel Libeskind was teaching architecture for the students of

scenography specialisation at the State School of Design in Karlsruhe, Germany, where the author was a guest student. The author took part in a workshop, called “research studio” in both the certificates and in the book on “Spaces of encounter” as called in Karlsruhe or “... endless space(s) or histories of (not yet) Architecture” as evoked from Pennsylvania, 2000, for the book. Students were asked to “materialize, create, investigate, illuminate, construct, touch, redeem [...] encounter the spaces of irreversible non-coincidence. Spaces which cannot be encountered in any simulation.” There is a sample of the lists of spaces divided in sub-lists corresponding each to an alphabetical letter (Libeskind, 2001, p. 65-68).

### **1. First Stage: Architectural Drawings**

In a first stage each student got for research an A4 list of names of spaces of encounter, to represent by an architectural drawing or collage at the end of the week on each an A3 paper sheet. The A3 paper sheets together should build a book in 2 volumes, whereby attention should be paid to the harmony of the whole work, so no page draws more attention on itself than the others through the technique used (thicker paper or similar).

### **2. Second Stage: The Door**

In the second stage each researcher had to chose one space out of this list for detailed investigation. The final result of this investigation had to be the expression of the space in shape of a door to enter it, in scale 1:1. It included:

- Typological research of the space;
- Collection of elements which represent the space or make to think at it;
- Form study for the elements and the elements in whole;
- Sensorial perception and experience of the space;
- Simulation and visualisation of the spatial form (drawing, photography, EDV-Modelling, 3D, virtual environment, workshop);
- Reconstruction of the space;
- Integration in the context of other works (from fellow scientists doing general space research).

To define the Rediscovered-Space were used:

- different approaches from the poetry, garden art, archaeology, drawing art, especially of the Renaissance;
- cooperative work of the scientists. This means: creating an environment which leads to build the Rediscovered-Space in the minds and then let the thoughts as drawings down.

The chance has made that the author of this paper chose to investigate the space connected closest to “memory”; the central element in Libeskind’s work on spaces: the “rediscovered space”.

Characteristica of the Rediscovered-Space

**HISTORY:** the Rediscovered-Space existed, sometime, but we’ve lost it. We’ve lost not only the information about the space, but the space itself. We have no space as a primitive any more, we have only the particles of it, without the relationships they need to stay together.

**STRUCTURE:** the Rediscovered-Space cannot be described through a precise shape or feeling which it gives. More: the elements of it are the ones which are important. In the rediscovery process the whole is often forgotten.

**LANGUAGE:** the Rediscovered-Space has a lot of languages. It speaks not only to our ears or eyes, but also to our hands, mouth and nose, over all senses.

**REPRESENTATION:** the Rediscovered-Space is strong temporally defined. So we couldn’t rebuild it today, but we can make people to rebuild it in their minds. This is a virtual representation.

**PHYSICS:** the Rediscovered-Space is physically to be diggen out.

**VARIETY:** We all have another Rediscovered-Spaces because our histories are different. We can find common things, but the Rediscovered-Spaces we are developing out of theses will always be different.

**POETRY:** Marcel Proust wrote a lot about the poetry of this space. Also Japanese gardens are using it similarly, in the Zen gardens.

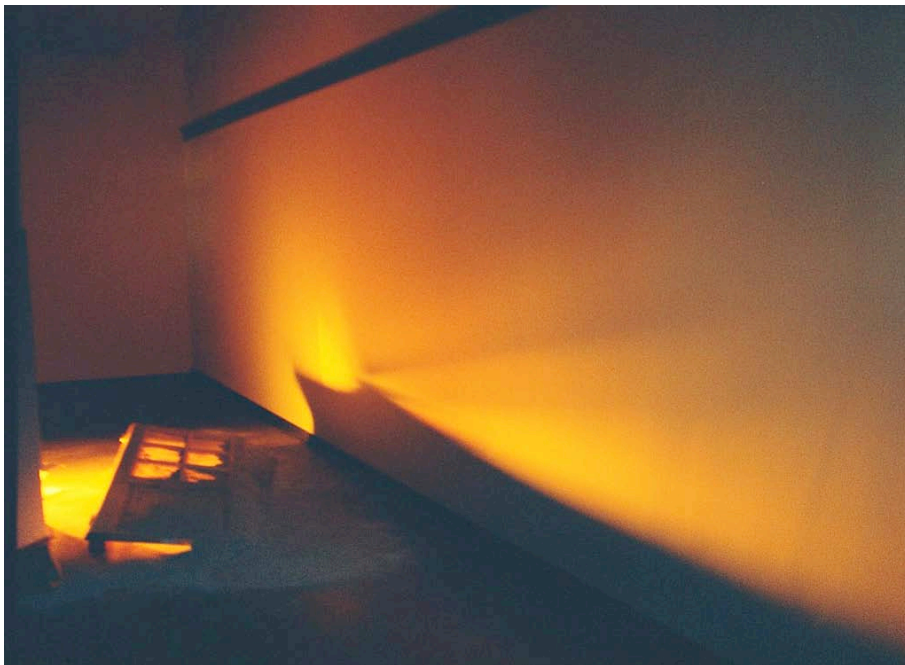
The focus of the research program laid on the exploration of the phenomenon of the Rediscovered-Space in all its relevant aspects (Fig. 1-9). Key objective was to rediscover the memory of lost spaces. Objectives for a detailed study were:

- development of a model for the Rediscovered-Space;
- detailed experimental study;
- three dimensional and multimedial translation of the findings in the preliminary study.

“fragment of the memory of the city. The memories embodied in old walls, peeling fragments, lost edifices. The rubble of decay are houses, preserved and revealed for a decision about what is forgotten and remembered, what is no longer and not yet; in other words not only the history of the city, but the city of history.” (Libeskind, 2001, p. 18).

Such a space has been seen by Libeskind in theatre, and this makes it even more relevant for the scenographic work aimed for by the research of the author:

“the space of theatre [...] the space which has been forgotten. And this forgotten space also points out, in my view, the fact that space as such is a myth – the idea that there is a space and we all have access to it [...] theatre, like everything else, has lost the illusion of the ‘one’ space, ‘the’ space of fair language, the space of memory [...] space used to appear, as something convex, like a thing, having a bodily presence [...] But now space is actually the negative of that convex. [...] In fact it is a concavity, but not a singular one; a multidimensional concavity [...] Space is a hole in hollowness. But anyway space has only been used since Kant made it into a philosophical problem. The Greeks certainly did not grasp space in that way.” (Libeskind, 2001, p. 68-69)



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ENCOUNTER

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*Figure 1.* View of the door to the rediscovered space at night



*Figure 2.* View of the glass part of the rediscovered space

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### **3. Rediscovered – Transcript from the Presentation in the Seminar**

“I begin with a story telling you about the workshop we had this winter. Actually, there were two workshops, both dealing with the same theme: spaces of encounter.

As a first, we had to develop some papers about 1001 spaces, so, like in the old oriental story. These was: the memory of these spaces has gone lost and we are archeologists of the space, and we are trying to rediscover this memory.







*Figure 3.* Detail view of the corner of the door to the rediscovered space





*Figure 4.* View of the whole installation of the door to the rediscovered space, at day and at night

You see, also in the first workshop we had the tag rediscovered but we didn't use it. Such rediscovered spaces were a plenty of – you can think about each attribute just springs to your mind:





*Figure 7.* Detail of boxes in the sand near the door to the rediscovered space



*Figure 8.* Illumination of the door to the rediscovered space



*Figure 9.* Whole view of the door to the rediscovered space

so you can think about a Hungarian space and so on for the nationalities, you can think of a physical attribute so a tall space, a white space and so on, you can take also actors – a space dedicated to Vivian Leigh for example and the point was to make a sheet of paper about each of these spaces.

So they had to black and white and, of course, two dimensional. After that, we made a book. A book of all sheets of papers, a red book. And the seminar was called, the workshop: the making of this red book (1001 Spaces of Encounter).

I had documented this part in a little movie. But I documented more, the works I made during the workshop. I also built these spaces virtually. It's really simple, I know, but I wanted to point out those lines, which made as different layers on the sheets of paper.

Coming to the second part (the Memory of X Space). So I've chosen "rediscovered space", as it was suggested in the first theme. And we had to build something. To build a model. A model of a door: the door of and the door to the 'rediscovered space', simultaneously.

How do I see the door of the rediscovered space? Let's think. The rediscovered space. This means a space which got lost, in a certain time, so we have to find something lost. We also could call it the found space, but it doesn't sound so nice, and re-discovered, with this 're' in it makes a difference to a simply found space because the re-discovered space did exist, just we forgot about it.

Had the rediscovered space a door? Sure, all spaces have a door, they have an entrance. If we are archaeologists, we're thinking of finding some buildings, if we are lucky, and if not, we find just some objects, or object pieces. But turning back to the door. The door is grown together since a long time with environment. We cannot find the key, because it's surely somewhere else, elsewhere, and it's even much too grown in a certain environment. So we have to raise it out. The door I've built stays under sand. Sand is an environment. It is, of course, a simplistic solution, because environment has to be much more complex, but sand is leading best to this idea of archaeology. What did I make more? A lighting. We see a light coming from under the door. If I should chose the light is coming from right under the door, so there is only a lighting door, it wouldn't be that strong. I made the light consciously outside, showed it. It is in a box. A box which reminds the very contemporary times. So we have the door, which is old, which belongs to the past, to the time when that space was still known, and we have the lighting, the light of today which

tries to rediscover, which tries to show us a way, or to show us even what's behind the door but we don't see this. If we try to throw some light behind the door, then we only see this light on the other side of the door. So the door is completely separated from the space. We don't see what's behind the door; we see only the light we are throwing in the space we suppose to be behind the door. At this point we have to think about something else archaeologists look after usually: the objects. We know, when we try to find some signs of a culture which doesn't exist anymore, or at least in the form it was, we collect some objects, mostly some artistic objects, and we make a museum we put the objects in the museum and then we say: 'there you can get the feeling of the culture'. If I think of it, it is very seldom if a museum of objects of a culture really reveals a culture. And I remember as I had history of art classes that I made a writing why do we look to that culture with our eyes from today and why don't we try to get back in time and just think as we were the people who lived in that time. This is not science anymore, this is art, this is something we get in novels, we get in movies, this is something we don't get in scientific research as the one this kind of museums are based on.

Why did I talk about culture? Because culture is a special case what I am dealing here. But we don't have the archaeological space We have again the rediscovered space. And what's the difference between these. OK. So. My grandmother used to collect things. Actually she didn't collect anything. But she didn't throw away the things she did not need anymore. And we used to criticise: why don't you throw them away. These things are only old, they are not antique, they don't have the value antique things have. And she replied, OK, I'm also not antique, I'm also only old. So that's the difference. The rediscovered space is only old, but it isn't something which has a certain cultural or artistic value. Actually the rediscovered space is a personal space. We cannot put it in the museum because the museums are for some artists, but we can put it in a collection of memories of itself. This space we rediscover, this is a space we lost, this is a space which has belonged to us and we have to rediscover it. Why then something publicly shown if the space only belongs to us. You can see it in the objects I collected, they are all personal objects, they are very personal objects of myself. And the space I try to rediscover is a space of my childhood, and especially is a space of my grandmother. I don't know if you realise this while looking at the objects but this is how it was thought about it when I did the work. What have these personal

objects to do with other people? Well, there are objects: there are photographs, there are sounds, there is poetry which children say, there are also common things where I guess everybody has similar memories. And perhaps when I am looking at an old postcard, with an old stamp and with an old text, I remember something, and when somebody else is looking at a postcard with an old text and with an old stamp is also remembering something. Maybe something else, maybe the same, but it is a memory. And he builds his own rediscovered space. That's why I didn't build the space, because these objects are the door indeed, for everybody to build their very own space.

As a story, as it had already been followed by Marcel Proust in his main work, is going out of something's taste. While I could build something which addresses all senses in the real world, this is not possible in the digital world, so I had to constrain myself to visual and to sound memories, but you can browse plenty of them.

I said that the objects are doors – what kind of doors? When we see a door we think of something plain, two meters high and ninety centimetres wide, mostly, with something to pull it and open and go through. Are there other kinds of doors? Could doors be of each shape? Should they be plain? Or have they another model sources? Of course they can. I imagine in this work the object doors as being boxes. Just plain boxes with something inside. Because the objects until you have some memories connected to them – they are just black boxes, even if they have another shape. On this idea I built my memories. Boxes in the sand, like the door I've built before. Just boxes in the sand. Needing to be dug out.

I've made a zoom of such a detail. I've opened a box. This box you can see also in the model built in the door. Just in the front. In that box there is a diaprojector. I don't know how many people know today what a diaprojector is. This is not the machine to project slides on the wall we use today but it was used to make film, to make movie projections. So we didn't cut the slide film but it was in one piece and we can turn and the images come one after the other. It was a movie with a real movement but it was still because we had too few static images with a little text to them. Fortunately I have such a memory quite well conserved. So I took the tape where I have registered this memory and heard the text. And more fortunately I have the diafilm used. So I took the diafilm, and I took the tape, and I made a little bit multimedia work of it. It's exactly how it should look like: you have a

scene, then you turn that button, then you have another scene, then you turn that button. And somebody reads the text because little children cannot read. What's the difference? In this inscenation I made it is the child who reads the text because the child has seen so many times that diafilm that she knows the text already. Never mind, I hope you get the feeling, also if you don't have a diafilm and a tape."

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