

**Jan Smitheram**

*Architecture of Mobility: A Question of Subjectivity*

Abstract

Mobility is a powerful metaphor in our contemporary poetic imagination mobility guides how we think, perceive and relate to our everyday lives right down to the mundane details. In this paper it is suggested that the metaphor of mobility functions not only to govern current thinking but is indeed a primary structuring metaphor in the desire to reconfigure space and in particular the space of architecture. Both from within and from outside the discipline of architecture, architects, artists and philosophers engaged in discussions and practices of reconfiguring architectural space have increasingly incorporated mobility into their work through textual practices and through the actual manipulation of spatial elements. Moreover, and what is of interest in this paper is how this rhetoric of mobility and its translation into architectural elements is primarily tied to a questioning of subjectivity. The vehicle for discussion in this paper is a comparison of two installation projects Arakawa and Madeline Gins Site of Reversible Destiny and an invitational installation project initiated and facilitated by the architects grundeikanindi.teckert. Both of these architectural installation projects are situated as three dimensional ways to question historical notions of subjectivity and both promise that architectural elements, and through the mobility of these elements, hold the power to shift the process through which we become subjects. Through these examples this paper considers how the metaphor of mobility and its translation into architecture liberates as much as it possibly clouds ways to rethink subjectivity and from this how does this ‘mobility-subjectivity’ couplet offer a more nuanced understanding of how subjects do identity in relation to various discursive processes and spatial practices?

Jan Smitheram is PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne department of Architecture Building and Planning. Currently she is on parental leave, bringing up her son Reuben. Although on leave, she still continues to write and has also currently exhibited her paintings at 52Gallery in Wellington New Zealand.