

"Buildings are appropriated in a twofold manner: by use and by perceptions – or rather by touch and sight. Such appropriation cannot be understood in terms of the attentive concentration of a tourist before a famous building. On the tactile side there is no counterpart to contemplation on the optical side. Tactile appropriation is accomplished not so much by attention as by habit. As regards architecture, habit determines to a large extent even optical reception."

Walter Benjamin 1936



"To be lifted to the summit of the World Trade Center is to be lifted out of the city's grasp. One's body is no longer clasped by the streets... When one goes up there, he leaves behind the mass... An Icarus flying above these waters ... his elevation transforms him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world ... into a text that lies before one's eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god."

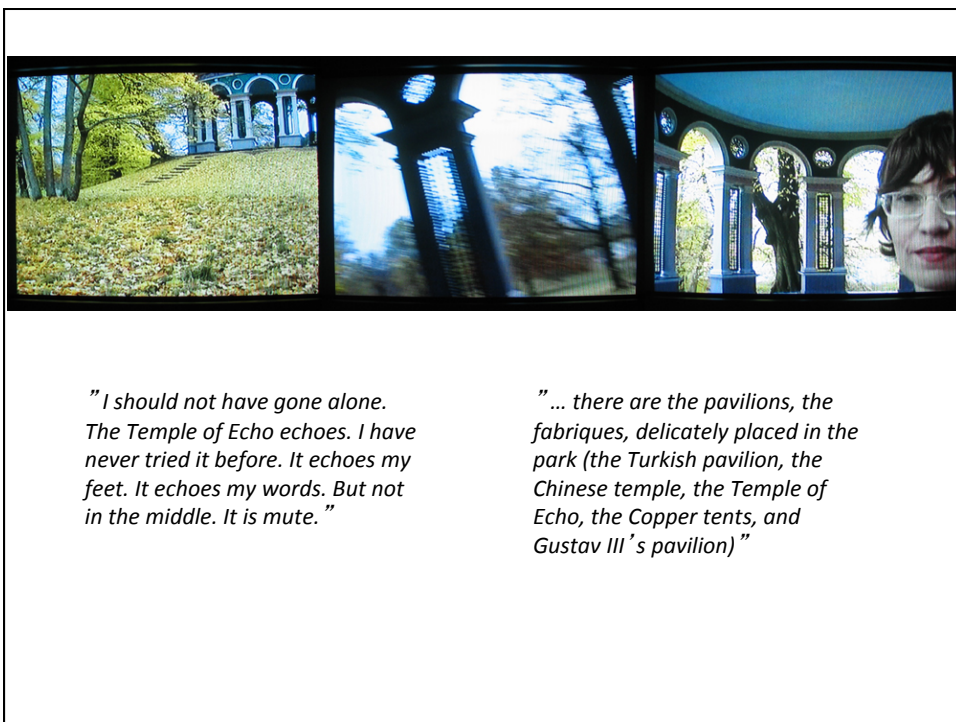
Michel de Certeau - The practice of everyday life - 1984

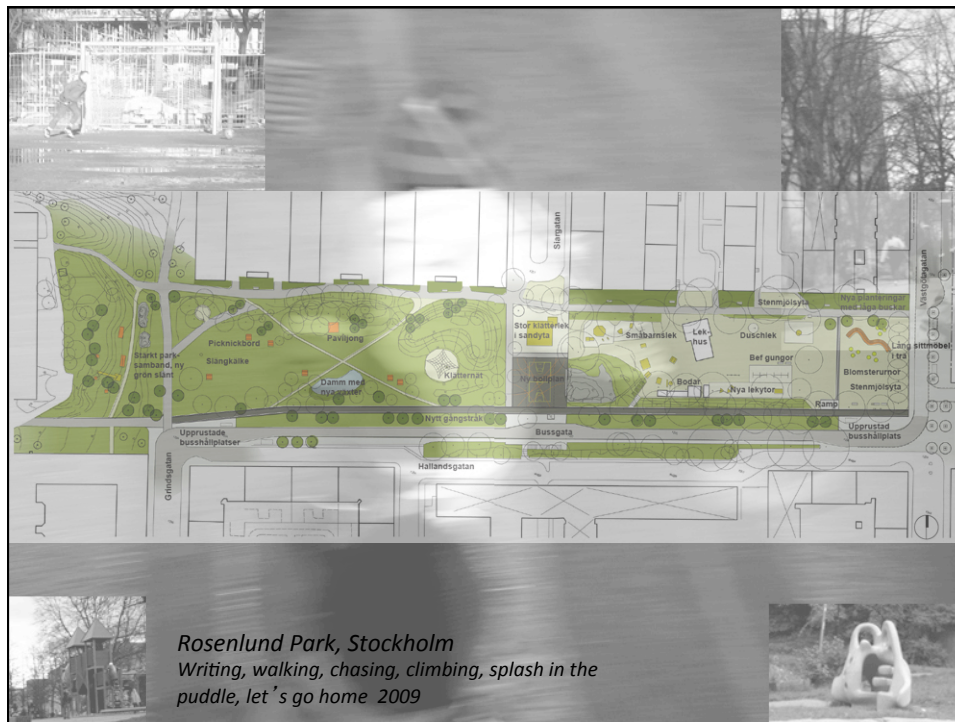
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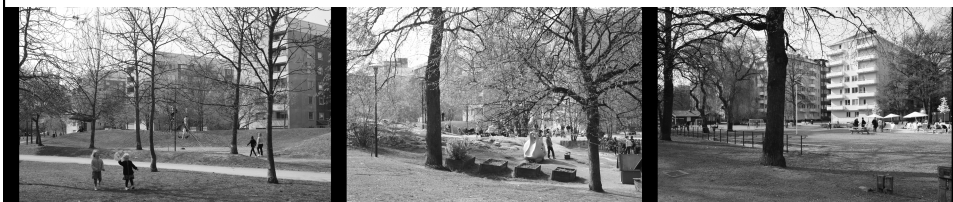
"The ordinary practitioners of the city live down below – they walk – they are Wandersmänner, whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text' – they write without being able to read it... they make use of spaces that cannot be seen – their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers in each others arms."







A performative mode of writing place



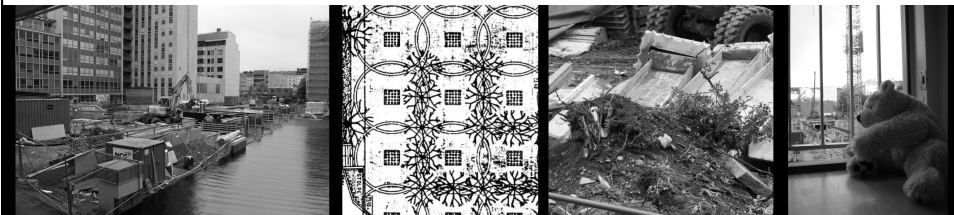
This essay suggests a performative mode of writing that engages in and activates specific spaces, here a particular park, through different forms of self-reflexive engagement. The critical tools we have for representing /.../ physical realities in /.../relation to use and experience /.../ are very limited. As soon as one stops to focus in, or climbs up to get an overview, one has stepped outside of practice or use.

At the lowest point in the park

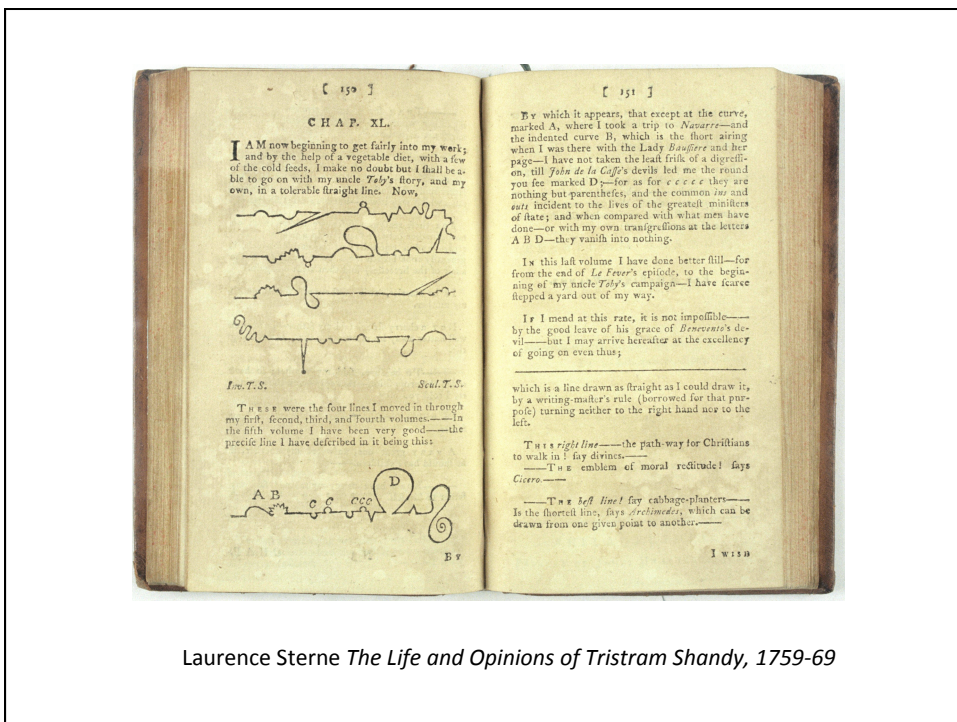
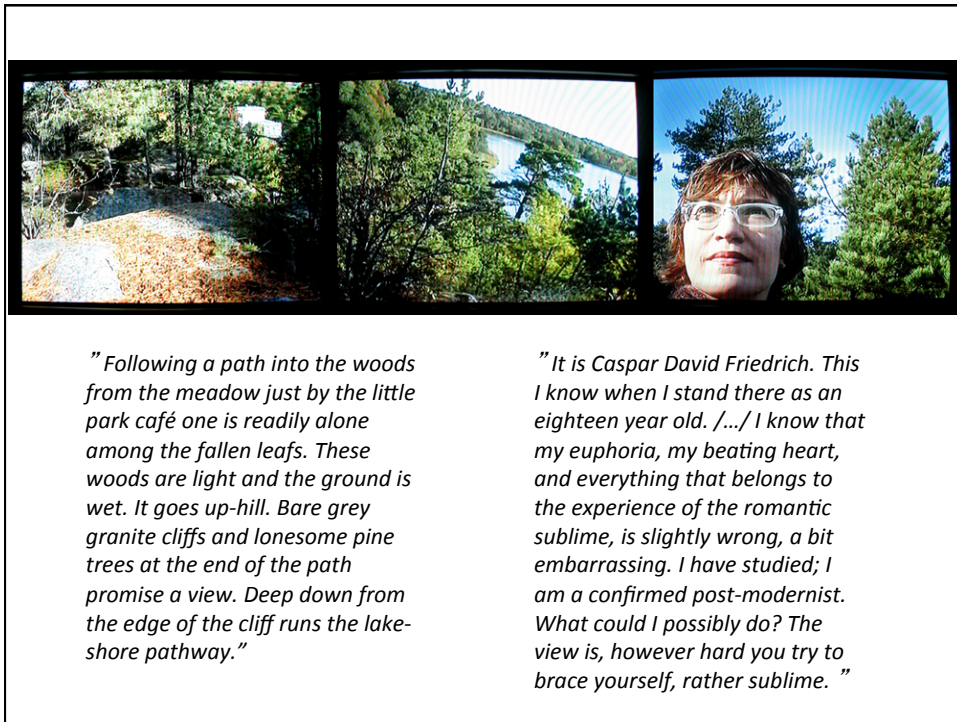


... it is time to leave to pick up my son from day-care, a yellow building at the lowest point in the park. Up on the hill behind, a giant housing block towers. On the other side, a muddy playground, and far in the background graffiti-covered concrete walls /.../ Walking and stopping, running through the park, splashing in the puddle, we get home.

The moment of inevitable destruction



As a particular place changes, expands or shrinks, along with our own actions and relations within and toward it, its conditions /.../ can be the objective of radical change. /.../ When we moved in, Åsötorget was already gone, a hole in the ground being filled in as an underground garage. What remained of the plaza was a fragmentary circular paving pattern on patches of ground, a displaced park bench, and a bush of red red roses.”

Laurence Sterne *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, 1759-69

Writing place (present - represent)

- **Spatiality**
- **Materiality**
- **Location**
- **Structure (relation text/space)**
- **Practice (embodiment, relations)**
- **Voice**
- **Address**
- **Genre**

Genre/form

- **Letter**
- **Dialogue/Conversation**
- **Prose-poem**
- **Promotional text**
- **New-report**
- **Interview**
- **Theatrical play**
- **Essay**
- **Novel**
- ...

Positions/Perpectives/Agents

- **Human / Non-human**
- **Organic / Non-organic**
- **Material object**
- **1st person narrative**
- **3rd person narrative**
- **The 'we'**
- ...

Address

- **Matter of fact**
- **Personal**
- **Intimate**
- **Authoritarian**
- **Passive**
- **Objective**
- **Seductive**
- ...

Writing Places at Söder Pops Island

Workshop assignment: A particular place

13.00-14.45 – Individual work – text production

**15.00-17.00 – Guild discussion (at your selected
guild work-place)**

**Instructions for individual work
(13.00-14.45)**

1.

Select a place from your past two days of fieldwork at Söder Pops Island.

It should be a place that made some particular impression on you.

It could be that it stirred some particular memories in you, that something particular happened to you or others in that place, or that it simply struck your imagination.

Write a title, or heading. And state the geographical location

2.

Select a principal position/perspective (or position-s/perspective-s) from which this place can be experienced / seen / produced.

Reflect on positions/perspectives pertaining in particular to your guild and to your own aesthetic persona.

Name the position(s)/perspective(s)

3.

Select a genre, a form in which you will write your account. Chose between the following:

Letter (who is the writer of this letter to whom is it being sent?)

Dialogue/conversation (how can a conversation be telling of a place?)

Prose-poem (a condensed narrative fiction)

Real-estate locational promotion (can this genre be challenged by bending or twisting the selling points?)

News-report

Interview (as genre)

Note the selected genre.

Your individual assignment is to compose a text which brings the place you selected forward to yourself and the reader (that *produces* place).

Consider the way you set up a relation between the structure of the text and the structure of the place and the experience of place.

Consider also the relations established between people, animals, or objects (acting positions/ perspectives) in the text and particular locations on site.

The piece should be around 2-400 words and submitted at 14.45 to the course-wiki for your guild at KTH social (ask your guild manager if you have trouble identifying the correct link)

<https://www.kth.se/social/course/A42O2A/>

**Guild discussion
(15.00-17.00)**

1. Set a time frame for discussions of individual texts and concluding reflections. Leave at least 30 minutes for concluding reflections and group submission of summary of these reflections on the guild course wiki.

2. Aim to spend at least 10 minutes per individual text, longer if you are fewer participants in the group.

Process for discussions of individual texts

Exchange responsibility for texts in the group so that everyone reads/presents a work by another person. Read swiftly through to prepare for reading it aloud

Read the text to the group (other members of the group close their eyes during the reading)

Discuss your experiences (of reading/listening):

Share your impressions of the written place in one sentence each. How did it feel, smell, look like? Did someone recognise the place as somewhere he/she might have been (even if it is another place somewhere else)?

Share your reflections on the composition of the text. Point to particular sentences or moments that works to trigger the imagination.

Collective reflections

When you have read / presented all works spend the remaining time to sum-up your collective reflections on the places you just visited, and the texts you have experienced.

Submit a summary of your group reflection as the last comment to your guild course-wiki

Tutorial assistance

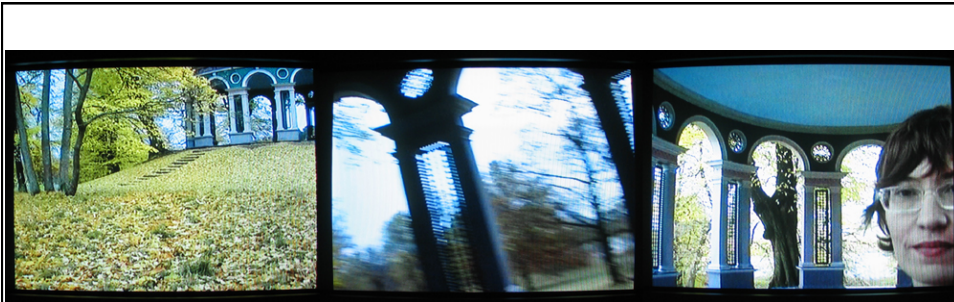
From 13.00-14.45

- Available for brief individual conversations in the red tent.
- Pose questions to us in the 'news feed' of the course web at KTH Social and we can respond there

In the group discussions we will circulate and at least one of us will visit your guild during the discussions.

Katja Grillner and Bettina Schwalm, 20150123





"I should not have gone alone. The Temple of Echo echoes. I have never tried it before. It echoes my feet. It echoes my words. But not in the middle. It is mute."

"... there are the pavilions, the fabriques, delicately placed in the park (the Turkish pavilion, the Chinese temple, the Temple of Echo, the Copper tents, and Gustav III's pavilion)"



"I don't walk down. There is a path running north. Recently planted shrubs turn into a consistent pine forest. Dry grass and tiny aspen brushwood. The air is as dry as the ground. Roaring cars below. The pine forest ends abruptly. A perfectly straight line divides the forest. Small withering oak trees, birches and other mixed species of

deciduous trees. It is here I encounter the hut, Eeyore's house (Winnie the Pooh). There are no signs of anyone living here now. Neither is there any official information about a possible 'hut-project'. It is surrounded by sticks covering the ground. The still green surface of the Pelouse glimpses through the trees..."



"It is a cloudy day, 1980 (perhaps). The ruin is located in the woods beside the Pelouse. We run around the roofless rooms. I do not remember what it is we are playing. Hide and seek? It is difficult to hide. Several occasions blend into one. At one point I know that I imagine the Middle Ages; wonder what it was like..."

"The height of the walls strikes me. Inside it is almost five metres down to the ground (the floor of the roofless rooms). This is not the way it was. When I ran around these rooms I did not (as I remember) give a thought to the height. In 1980 I was 152 centimetres tall. I do not climb down today. There is only one way out. I am alone."



Haga Park 1780-90-today

Gustav III and Fredrik Magnus Piper

