

Place

What is space? And what is connectivity and context? For me, space is something in relation to something else. It is a delimitation in something bigger. It is a frame within something greater than itself, a kind of definition of something and of someone for someone else; a model which, depending on context and purpose has different rules, appearances and names.

The place can be huge and abstract, tiny and incredibly specific. It can be anything and anywhere, indoors and outdoors. A neutral place for me can be an awkward place for you. The place is the form. Form is for many artists the reason why and how. Irrespective of whether it is the content which determines form or form determines content, place is nevertheless form and thus very important.

Perhaps it appears muddled, mingling concepts of form and place, but that is what I'm doing. They are so significantly related that if I am to explain the meaning of place, I must also mention form.

Form is that which limits place. It is what constitutes both limitations and interfaces, what separates and connects. It is what makes place what it is and not something else. Each place has its own characteristics and distinguishing features. Whether they are neutral, natural or artificial, there will be something, which is distinctive, which defines. A place without definition is exactly that, a place devoid of definition and that is what allows it to be categorised, as well as the adjoining place and possibly even the person behind the pronouncement.

That which connects, the relationship between place and form and form and place is what is interesting as it in turn speaks of the context, which cannot be left out either. Separating place from form and form from context is of course possible and the result would be:

Place

Form

Context

That is where it ends and I do not believe it is possible to develop it any further; they remain static words. Seeing as they exist, they coexist with the rest of the world and the world is influential. Place, form and context constitute family and belonging in the same way that an older sister without a younger sister cannot possibly be an older sister, neither as an individual nor as a concept.

Visible and invisible constructs influence and inform our perceptions and expectations of a place. The meaning of many places is sufficiently apparent for form and context to be seen. Often, a word is enough to illuminate the whole: a word, which, without further explanation is adequately meaningful to enable us to conjure the greater context. I will mention a few, to elucidate what I mean:

Work place, living place, fire place, parking space, drinking place, birth place, sleeping place, market place, common place, eating place, desk space, gathering place, advertising space, exhibition space, resting place, turning place, beach, aero space, personal space, camp site, cyber space, studio space, head space, loading bay, reserve place, back space and displace.

Words and place mirror our needs at specific times and were created on this basis, pertaining to the ideals of that time. Some belong in another time and another society and have since disappeared

other than as terms describing something which existed in the past, while other places are renewed and recreated perpetually.

In spite of mutual and general similarities, the experience of a work place for one person or a web space for another can differ widely. Yes, not only the experience by the way, but the place, form and context as a whole, could differ totally and yet be called a hospital bed or a web space. Secondary experiences regularly give way to primary reasons and constructs created in order to facilitate and simplify.

When a place is created, definition form and function become linked. Many places are created from scratch, anew, or are transformed from one place into another in a split second, while others, such as parking spaces, are routinely mass-produced. When this happens, combinations of more or less odd elements are created which can, after years of public repetition come to appear completely obvious and natural. Content and place have conjoined, so to speak. The establishment of thought and foundation has occurred, been granted permanence and time.

Understood is that all places with the same name are used in similar ways. Drive at the green light and stop at the red, large white rectangles painted in a row mean one thing while narrow, small ones along the sides mean another; agreements which are as useful as they are givens.

There are however consequences for this kind of linking. Consequences, which can be linked to industry, manufacturing and economy as well as to ideas concerning safety, control and future. There is a risk that we may inadvertently confuse values that do not necessarily have a direct link. For example, most people are in agreement that there is a difference between a permanent solution and one that is merely temporary. But it would be hasty to draw the conclusion that a permanent solution generally is better than a provisional one. Building a permanent staircase to a temporary house might create more anxiety than calm.

One could therefore suggest that that which seems most obvious has the capacity to both open up and clarify as well as impose limitations on the way we live our lives.

Hasty conclusions as to place and the values we attach to place can cause us to develop a false idea of what place really is. Supposing you really can say that it is anything. Yes, it is clearly something now, in the present, when we are interacting with the place. But otherwise it is something which is always changing, from yesterday to today, historically and into an uncertain future. Irrespective of what happened in a place yesterday, one's perception is always informed by yesterday and not today. Today provides a different context to yesterday. Although we tend to speak of yesterday as a time comparatively recent, you cannot get away from the fact that it actually *was* yesterday.

So, referring back to the initial question and principal purpose of this text; why I enjoy working with place, against place, in service of place, with place on location; it's because regardless of what kind of place we are talking about, it my behaviour, my way of seeing, my way of walking, my way of speaking and my way of thinking. The place can be either unfathomable or simple, yet it will reflect our culture and temporary order. We identify with it, define ourselves within it, create it and consume it.

We, who exist are amongst other things one, and also me, the one who is writing in this place to you, in this particular context, in a place which, like all other places, has particular regulations and rules. In this particular construct for instance, a new sentence ought to begin with a capital letter and conclude with a full stop. Otherwise I might expose you to the indefinably eerie, causing you to examine your perceptions of how things should be, allowing seconds, minutes, perhaps days to pass

before you finally come to rest and begin to sort and order; fits, doesn't fit, fits, doesn't fit... with expectation and connectivity. I could also

finish right here.

Just like that.

not to continue. Already, it would be too late; I would have contravened the usual norm, and some of you may already have lost interest, although I was only trying to use place, this particular place, to talk about form, content and context in another way, through a direct, practical theorising, specifically, on location, carrying out a little mini-experiment, still pretty conventionally, on a white background with black lettering.

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