



Keynote Speech

HELMUT WEIHSMANN*

Venue: Istanbul Technical University, Faculty of Architecture, Room 127 Taşkışla Istanbul

Date : 7 April 2005

Hour: 10:00

"THE IMAGE OF METROPOLIS - PERCEPTION OF URBAN SPACE IN CINEMA"

Presentation will be dedicated to the perception of urban space in contemporary and experimental cinema and its often abstract, deformed and contradictory images of the metropolis. From the early manifestos and illustrations of early avant-garde movements of the 20th century like Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism and Rationalism (Neue Sachlichkeit) the aim was not to represent a naturalistic view of things, but to thwart the illusion of reality, or to create a "new reality" by means of new visual codes such as the collage and demontage, acknowledging the methods of the so-called "bricoleur".

The concepts of artistic or independent cinema attempt to demolish the traditional form of visual representation, customary ever since the invention of perspective in the Renaissance, in a two-fold manner. First, by means of ironic subversion of the spatial order through abstraction and deconstruction of architectural codes and linguistic patterns of the narrative. secondly by an ideological critique of the status quo. Especially recent film and video works of contemporary artists have shown an interest in intertwining real and virtual environments because they create a more dynamic sense of urban space.

The city is now seen as a fragmented body of disparate parts, which no longer fit together or have a coherent meaning. Thus the image of the city is defined as a dense "bri-collage," comprised of various structures with no links to each other. Lecture will attempt to stress the structural and spatial network of today's visual chaos by use of various film essays and poems.

***Helmut Weihsmann** born 1950 in Vienna, is an international renowned architectural and film historian. He completed his architectural studies in Vienna in 1980 and has lectured widely since 1986 in universities, colloquiums, summer academies and workshops on architecture and film design, including at the Academy of Applied Arts in Vienna, at the School of Architecture/Columbia University (New York City), Getty Center in Santa Monica, Berlin, Cambridge, Copenhagen, Frankfurt and London. Author of several pioneering books and countless articles on the subject, i.e. GEBaute ILLUSIONEN Architektur im Film (Vienna 1988), CINÉTECTURE: Film - Architektur - Moderne (Vienna 1995), etc. Co-founder of the debut Film-Arch-Festival of 1993 in Graz. He has curated special film programs for several German and Austrian architectural associations, museums and organized exhibitions and media presentations on architecture and urbanism, including the Architekturzentrum in Vienna, the Lentos Art Museum in Linz and the newly built mdm/Rupertinum in Salzburg. He is the director of an annual film cycle U&AE (URBANISM AND ARCHITECTURE) and the curator of the mediatheque at the architectural study center AUT/Tyrol in Innsbruck since 2001. -end-