



Becoming – by Wayne McGregor, Image from Marc Downie and Nick Rothwell using Choreographic Language Agent an artificially intelligent "eleventh dancer"

ACTIONS, AGENTS & BUILDINGS

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The FIAT Lingotto car factory, built in 1926 in Turin, was the first Futurist building in Italy. Raw materials arrived at the base and processed through assembly lines on each floor. Newly completed cars would race on the banked 1km test track on its roof. The choreographed movement of raw materials and parts flowed through three-dimensional space with precise efficiency and timing.

It was "to be a concrete dress around a productive process, and this has to conceal as little as possible of the flow of the materials"

Maurizio Torchio, Fiat Archive

Lingotto went beyond the simple diagram of factory efficiency copied from Ford, offering a celebration of movement with flair and panache. Millions of Southern Italian immigrants arrived to work, transforming Turin from Italy's first Baroque capital into an industrial 'company town'. It became the centre of manufacturing in Italy, twinned with Detroit.

Whilst its focus on speed, movement and the importance of industry made the factory a success, it is rare example of a futurist building as the movement faded due to it's extreme manifesto and uncomfortable political associations.

Now Post-industrial Turin is reinventing itself again as the gastronomic and creative capital of Italy. From producing the finest chocolate and coffee, and the foundation of the Slow Food movement, the new mayor wants to create a weekly meat-free day for the city.

The first project will involve identifying a series of adverbs or actions to study. Through physical or digital data you can then create your own choreographic agent, a three-dimensional drawing or model that serves to translate a vocabulary of intangible qualities into space. This could be related to the ideas of the Futurists such as speed and movement, environmental qualities of slowness, flavour, smell, or dynamic behaviour from the socio-political context of the city itself.

The Unit will then travel to Turin. We will visit the work of Mollino, stay in the Lingotto factory, explore the city to find a site for your building, and eat well. Following the plain of the Po River, we will travel onto Milan and Modena to explore this hugely productive region of industrial and agricultural Europe. This is where the precision engineering of high end car manufacturers is found alongside the production of finest aged Parmesan, vinegar and ham. Here with the right recipe and a precise choreography, a vocabulary of actions can translate into industries of unexpected creativity.

After the field trip, we will immediately ask you to begin the development of a large scale architectural proposition which will emerge as your final project. This is a long term iterative process and will draw the ideas of choreographic agency from the first project as well as your experience of the city and site, the logic of the programme and the political and social context of the city within which it sits.

You will develop digital tactics and conceptual tools that define a framework and rule system to determine new ways of making a contemporary digital and physical space.

We are interested in an architecture of events, actions and time based systems. Buildings should react and respond and you will be expected to reject the tradition of inert and benign architecture that only implies a dynamic through frozen formalism.

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