MALIN PARKEGREN

DIGITAL BORDERLANDS
- towards an architectural practice of remix

MATERIAL TURN

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Considering the ever-current discourse about the digital medium in the architectural field and beyond, there is still an apparent need to orient ourselves in an age of digital technology. How do we relate to the digital condition that remediates our experiences, reframes interactions and looms over us like a conceptual cloud? When digital technology and following culture emerged, it was quickly adopted by both large industries and individuals in their everyday lives. This caused distinctive characteristics and apparent boundaries between what is digital and what is not to fade, as it quickly settled into our own realm. The thesis considers the material foundation and formation of the digital environment in a relatively fundamental manner with the aim to uncover greater insights and suggest ways of approaching an alternative digital practice.

The focus of the thesis lies on algorithm-based software tools. The approach to design investigations and the use of these tools are described as creative misuse. Misuse subverts notions of intentionality built into both code and interface along with raising questions of precision in the execution of said algorithms. The method was developed to engage with digital practices and their emerging expressions while revealing alternative potential in common tools used by many practicing architects. To address and evaluate this method a theoretical foundation was developed and implemented. A design output was then produced to apply the knowledge gained from repeated iterations of the method and subsequent theoretical reflections.

Conclusions reached by the thesis demonstrate that there are many alternative ways of approaching an algorithmic practice. The investigation indicates that agency in human to non-human interactions can be gained by disrupting the perceived relationship between the aforementioned actors. Situating the architectural practice in a digital space connects it to many other cultures and expressions that share the same material conditions and ways of navigating the digital. Native ways of executing actions such as downloading, editing, and copying are shared within a number of disciplines, thus enabling the practice of architecture to connect with a larger digital culture of remix and in turn, expanding the role of the architect in the process.

Keywords : digital, photogrammetry, algorithm, remix, remediation, transcoding