

But Villette Work? or Garden's Joyce

...the Parc de la Villette project had a specific aim: to prove that it was possible to construct a complex architectural organization without resorting to traditional rules of composition, hierarchy and order.

...The superimposition of three coherent structures can never result in a supercoherent megastucture, but in something undecidable, something that is the opposite of a totality.

-Bernard Tschumi

In consideration of these two statements, the following suggests a superposition of a different sort--three sections corresponding to points, lines and surfaces--which sounds out the Parc de la Villette in Joycean overtones.

, not familiar, Foley said. The running tracking run running track sound track passes through the piano bar. Will you hum a few bars? A sound idea. Blind piano tuner: point point point point with his stick. In the piano bar, inside the tropical greenhouse. Planted there, the piano. Frozen, music. Frozen music. Muse. mm? The blind man approached Foley. Can you please point point point point point point point point me in the right direction? Where? To mark, to trace, to folie I am Foley. I am here. Where? Here. An anchor. Near the canals, Ourcq and St. Denis. What is this a-boat? About? A point point point point point point point point grid me there. To the Paris metro gates, to Penelope, to neutral space. New-tral. New trail. tra-la-la-la Who's afraid of the big bad. Cartoon strip. Cinema. Zorro! point point point point point point point of the sword. Touché! In armour, the warriors, gladiators, mediators between two mutually exclusive systems--words and stones... people who live in glass. Greenhouse. piano bar. point point point point point point point your toe. Quarterback tangoes on the skating rink. Where? Manhattan. Battalion skates on the tightrope. Don't see the point point point point, not familiar, Foley said, sure I wouldn't be knowing at all: I'm not from these parts myself. But you've had quite a journey, haven't you. In a

journée! Traveling through time. But where? -Here. -Here? -Yes, with battalions. Lambs to the slaughter. Made mincemeat of. Right between the eyes. Women sought out and collected blood for sausages: I guess you could say they cased the joint. -That's offal! But now where? -Here. -Let me see. Map, grid. Park, anti-nature. Function, antifunctional. Context, anticon-textual. Boundary, infinite. Indeterminate, determinate. Precedents, no origin. See? -I see, said the blind man, though he couldn't see at all. Me either, said Foley. -Architecture as pure trace or play of language, said the banner dragged by the helicopter which droned overhead. What does this mean? O, nothing.

Foley looked into the lined face.

-Paces. How many paces?

-To where?

-Cité de la musique to the zenith, the blind man replied.

(The quality goes in before the name goes on).

-Go straight until you reach the canal, turn right, then straight again. Can't miss it.

-How many

God. How many paces in seven hundred meters minus

-Wait. I'll walk with you. Going there myself

I can't go no satisfaction. Shortest distance between two points!

His walking stick straight before him in his right hand, the blind man crooked his elbow, and Foley folded his ling fingers around the blind man's arm. The two walked in silence for a long time. Foley mused. No longer any relationship possible between architecture and program, architecture and meaning. Ineluctable modality of the...

No identification between architecture and program. A

bank must not look like a bank. What dopes a bank look

-I'm sorry, said Foley. Did you say something?

-Is anything wrong with the telephone line, mumbled the blind man. I'm simply asking where we are.

His Adam's apple stuck out in a strange angular way. A patient silhouette waited, listening.

-In the Great Hall.

by Rhona Richman Kenneally

The Fifth Column magazine

-Yes.
 -I see, said the blind man, though he didn't see at all. So the Great Hall looks like a skating rink.
 -No, if anything, it looks like a shed.
 -So what's so great about it?
 -I don't know.
 -And you don't skate in the Park, but in the Hall.
 -Yes in the Park, in the Hall.
 -But not in the Park.
 -Yes in the Hall, in the Park.
 -But not in the Park outside the Hall. Not, for example, on the frozen canal.
 -Yes, in the Park, yes, in the Hall, no, not on the canal, and yes, at another place in the Park, Foley explained patiently.
 -In one of the gardens, then?
 -No.
 -So where?
 -On top of the Museum's theatre.
 -Oh. I see.
 The blind man's chin resumed its traditional perpendicular relationship with his shoulder.
 -And there's probably a library in the swimming pool, he said sarcastically.
 Did Foley participate in the dejection?
 -And swimming in the greenhouse, continued Foley. And not only that: the restaurant itself becomes a gardening centre which becomes an arts workshop. See? You're finally on the right track.
 Was this affirmation apprehended by the blind man? Not verbally. Substantially.

One very bright, in fact, brilliant summer's day at approximately eleven minutes past the hour of nine o'clock in the morning, or it may actually have been closer to nine minutes past the hour of eleven A.M., nothing blatantly unusual happened, and yet it seemed a momentous occasion. For during that imprecisely precise moment one Mister James Augusta Joyce (disons M. Joyeux) of Dublin, Ireland, Paris, France, and Trieste, Italy, his one good eye squinting against the glare of that remarkable overhead sun, adjusted the eyepatch over his other eye (which had shifted out of position when he squinted) as he exited from the Porte de Pantin metro station. His be-ringed hand with its elegant slender fingers tightened over the head of his walking-stick as he made his way north. Then he hesitated for a moment and cast a glance over his shoulder, grunting as he caught

sight of two forms moving in his direction. For Mister Joyce was not unaccompanied on his journey--oh no!--but rather, had amused himself by requesting the honour of the presence of two quite companionable fellows.

One of these exhibited a look of great satiation as he ran his tongue along the teeth of his lower right jaw without breaking the rhythm of his stride: breakfast had been simply grand. Did not Mister Leopold Bloom habitually eat with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls? The grilled mutton kidneys which had comprised his meal (which he had finished consuming, it seemed, only moments before) had given to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine. Unfortunately, a sliver of the kidney, stiffened as a result of burning, had lodged between two teeth. Nevertheless, he was determined not to allow this mishap to diminish his satisfaction, and proceeded at a jaunty gait in the direction of Mister Joyce. The other gentleman appeared to be considerably more ill-at-ease. By comparison with the sprightly Mister Bloom, he was unkempt, not to say lacklustre. Greatly preoccupied, he seemed almost to be ignorant of Mister Bloom's presence, not surprising since he was, during his ambulatory progression, simultaneously gazing intently at a xerox of a text whose author's name was barely visible--Jacques Derrida.

Suddenly, Stephen (for Stephen Dedalus) was the appellation of this second gentleman tripped on a stone which had loosened itself from the otherwise compacted earth and gravel on which he walked, and as he extended his arms to avoid an intense interaction between his face and said compacted surface, the article which he was perusing disengaged itself from his clutch and was sent on a trajectory of its own, so that the title was plainly visible: "Pointe de folie-Maintenant l'architecture." Stretching to recover a now even more tattered collection of pages--the staple had not held and some of the sheets were torn, dirty, and upside-down--Stephen retrieved the first page of the article (not bothering for the moment to reinstate the sequence of the rest) and returned to his reading:

the imminence of what happens to us *maintenant* announces not only an architectural event but, more particularly, a writing of space, a mode of spacing which makes a place for the event.

"Here comes everybody," cried Mister Joyce as Stephen and Mister Bloom were mere moments away from reenacting the complete and exactg journey so recently taken by their mentor. Whereupon they raised their eyes past the parking lot for the cité de la musique, toward Place de la Fontaine aux lions, and concurrently became aware of the roar of a vehicular beast emanating from that direction. At last the golfcart ceased its ferocious aural articulation and came to rest in front of our heroes, alias Balthazar, Melchior and Caspar.

Smoothing his leather aviator's helmet over his head and once more adjusting his eyepatch, Mister Joyce, his walking stick horizontal over his lap, clutched the steering wheel smartly and, with a jolt and a puff of smoke, led his two colleagues to parts, known and unknown. A map had been deemed, prior to departure, to be highly unnecessary, since not one, not two, but three independent means of locating and maintaining one's bearing had been thoughtfully and deliberately installed in the terrain. "How generous, how considerate," muttered Mister Joyce within moments of the departure, and even those who knew him best found it difficult to discern whether he was serious of mind and heart or merely jesting.

Straightening his spectacles, Mister Joyce narrowly missed making contact with that corner of the cité de la musique which marks the path between itself and the theatre present, leading to the service road. As he glanced upward in silent gratitude to the Immortal One he caught the eye of none other than the famous John McCormack, who was leaning out of the window of his rehearsal room in an attempt to cool off: it was, as has been noted, an emphatically warm day. Mister McCormack, the chain denoting his papal knighthood swaying pendulously on his chest, rested o'er his wandering long enough to catch his breath, salute, and call out "nice try, Mister Joyce!" Almost losing control of the golf cart in response, Mister Joyce then turned right sharply in front of the public equipment lot and manoeuvred through a planting of trees. He then found himself--not to mention the cart--on some grass near some highly extraordinary gardens. Jumping out to pick the first rose of summer for his boutonnière (and not finding one--what kind of garden was this?) Mister Bloom nearly dropped his own petals when he spied a fair maiden in the distance. "Could that be Gerty?", he was heard to enquire, but just as he was called upon to resubmit his interrogation the threesome happened on Folie J7 where Ulysses managed to wiggle two fingers in greeting as he stood tied to the screen of the structure. In fact he had almost missed the travellers because he could not hear due to the wax in his ears, so placed the better to resist the temptation of the Sirens, who were appearing to be just too neighbourly. Feeling sensitive to

Ulysses's predicament, Stephen shouted up a warning about the dangers of wax melting in the sun.

Detouring around a large, shed-like structure ("this looks like the place from whence we sprang!"), they next approached Folie N7. Here, stately plump Buck Mulligan and Messieurs Dixon, Lynch and Maddon, A.M.D. (almost medical doctors) turned on the water wheel to drown out the screams of poor Missus Purefoy who was in labour and having a bad time of it. Standing outside to sharpen their scalpels against the metal structure, they noticed now Sir Leopold that had of his body no manchild for an heir looked upon him his friend's son and was shut up in sorrow for his forepassed happiness and as sad as he was that him failed a son of such gentle courage. Suddenly demoralized, and by now totally confused--being, it seemed, no closer to their destination than when their journey commenced--they were suddenly attracted by the sound of tinkling gurgling dancing sparkling water. "Have we found it?", they wondered. Revitalized, they repositioned themselves in the golf cart and navigated toward the sound, a difficult task as it required the crossing of a perilously dense line of trees. "More folly," cried Stephen as Folie P6 came into view. And Anna Livia Plurabelle cascaded down the spiral, looking for Here Comes Everybody but Can't hear with the waters of. The chittering waters of Telmetale of stem or stone. Beside the rivering waters of, hitherandthithering waters of. Night!

And as night approached, the three journeymen accustomed themselves to the notion that their task had overcome them. Unable physically to retrace their steps, they suddenly realized that the most direct path to their goal had been within their reach several times during their explorations. Closest distance between two

and they climbed aboard the promenade. Clap. sound. smile. "Ha!". step. "This". raise arm. "must". lips move. "be". jump up. "it!".

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