

# Liquid Dancing in the Space of Flows.

## 1. square dancing to economics

In a youtube video [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uSWfQzjahY>] [fig 1.] a young man dressed in a track jacket and oversized jeans 'liquid dances' late one night in the late-eighties, he goes by the name "Liquid Eric" and is the founder of "the Liquid Pop Collective," a group dedicated to the development and dissemination of the form. As Techno booms in time with his movements, he describes convoluted spaces with his hands; his legs lift and fall, seeming to propel him inexplicably sideways, as if he were on a conveyor belt. "Liquid" is a dance form that emerged within the North-East American rave scene particularly New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in the late Eighties and early Nineties. It derives its basic gestures from "funk styles," popping, locking and electric boogaloo of the Seventies as well as break dancing, the successor to these styles which emerged in conjunction with Electro music in the Eighties. Where liquid differs from these previous forms is its emphasis on illusion. One element of the illusion is that the body has become fluid or at least completely plastic, and is flowing in space seemingly moving against some unseen current. The other is that, like break dancing, in Liquid the body has become completely brittle, mechanical, completely bounded. Liquid dancing plays these two opposite illusions together to form one master illusion of glide and break, flow and limit, a sort of squaring the circle.

Laurie Anderson, in her performance *Home of the Brave* borrows a line that has been attributed to everyone from Frank Zappa to Thelonius Monk<sup>1</sup>: "writing about music is like dancing to architecture." Elvis Costello once followed the line in an interview with a music journalist with "it's a really stupid thing to want to do." Instead, Anderson quips in reply, "what about square dancing?" Not only will I attempt to write about music, and in doing so attempt to prove that Liquid Eric is dancing about architecture, but also to prove that he is dancing about money as well. Emile Zola has said "Its very difficult to write a novel about money, it's cold, glacial, devoid of interest." [quoted in Harvey 1985:2] And while John Lee Hooker, Barret Strong and the Beatles have all made lots of money singing about it, short of

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1. for an exhaustive list see <http://www.pacifier.com/~ascott/they/tamildaa.htm>

winning the lottery, I think the same things Zola has said in regards to writing about money could be said in regards to dancing about it. Eric is no doubt performing a difficult dance, but one would be forgiven for believing that fusing finance capital, a field of complete abstraction with the most corporeal of art forms is impossible—as impossible as squaring a circle—and yet I believe I've seen it done.

Among the seemingly impossible things *this paper* will attempt to do are to write about music, about dancing to architecture and dancing to economics without being glacial or cold, and least of all devoid of interest. By doing this, I will attempt to reveal the means by which the body comes into contact with the political space of the city, and through this urban space with the information space of global capital. The goal then is to bring all three spaces into one frame— body-space, urban space, and the abstract poly-dimensional space of globalization, what Manuel Castells has called "the space of flows." [Castells:406] As such this work is an extension and implementation of Fredric Jameson's theory of "an aesthetics of cognitive mapping" developed through the Eighties, including the essay "Cognitive Mapping," "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," and the books *Signatures of the Visible* and *The Geopolitical Aesthetic*. [Jameson, 1983, 1984, 1988a, 1991, 1992] This paper then is both a critique of earlier attempts to reconcile these spaces<sup>2</sup> and an attempt to realize the goals of these previous projects. Implicit in the goals of this project is that at some point one must identify a strategic means for the body to act on its space. Certainly this is a bi-directional system, but it is one that today is completely asymmetrical; all lines along which agency might return to the subject are systematically blocked.

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2. Particularly Althusser's theory of interpellation, the critique, deriving from his reliance on a Saussurian construction of semiotics which places semiotics as a sub-discipline of linguistics which he has inherited via his reliance on Lacan. This project is premised on, and argues for, the recognition of the function of music, art and architecture, as well as monetary systems, mathematical systems, technological systems (computer programs), and systems of production (the Fordist factory, for instance) as fully symbolic systems of the same order as the verbal, which is to say not dependent on the verbal for final determination of their meaning. Without this fundamental shift in the construction of the semiotic one, I believe is not able to properly place the verbal as a particular form of production, to construct an adequate theory of politically engaged art, nor to develop a functional relation of theory to practice.

My effort here is to follow on from my previous work which has argued that Detroit Techno, in representing the situation from which it emerged, the city of Detroit undergoing the process of globalization, could become a means to map the process of globalization as a totality. I have until now only gestured at the means by which this process might be possible, but it is worth revisiting my analysis of House and Techno music, their means of representing urban space and architecture before we consider how the dance form that arose in partnership with Techno physicalizes, corporealizes, and actualizes the acoustic map of transnational capital which I argue Detroit Techno has produced.

## **2. music as liquid architecture**

"Detroit Techno has its immediate roots in Chicago House. From House it borrows its basic grammar, a grammar of spacial relations, of inside and outside, of body space and urban space. This grammar is articulated through two technologies utilized to transform music from the coordination of melody and harmony to the production of shared imaginary space. The first technology is spatial signal processing which allows musicians to make sounds appear to inhabit synthetic virtual spaces. The second technology is the bass bin, an amplified speaker developed to produce sub-acoustic vibrations.

It was only with the emergence of House Music, in the early Eighties, that these technologies became fully incorporated into the form of the music itself. House stripped away other elements of the music to focus on the relationship between the acoustic and the sub-acoustic and the experience of space made possible through their manipulation. Vibration below about 30hz is essentially non-directional and at sufficient pressure (what would be volume in the acoustic range) is experienced as emerging not from the speaker but from within the auditioners own body. With an emphasis on rhythmic bass penetrating the body, one might say, as Benjamin says of film "perception in the form of shocks was established as a formal principle. That which determines the rhythm of production on a conveyor belt is the basis of the rhythm of reception..." [Benjamin 1976:132] But House went a step further, by coordinating the spatialized sound (high frequencies processed with spacial effects). As a result the somatic infrasound there developed a wholly new musical aesthetic strategy, the

coordination of inside and outside. The effect is less like music as it might previously have been conceived—the organization of harmony, melody and rhythm—and more like those art forms which shape space: sculpture and architecture, or even, if the body can be thought of as a containing and defining space— dance.

### 3. the invisible city and the invisible man

This account of bass and space calls to mind the introduction of Ralph Ellison's 1952 novel, *The Invisible Man*. Almost prophetically shot through with Benjamin's messianic themes, it seems somehow unsurprising that Ellison would have also presaged modern 'beatmatched' Djing (the art of aligning the rhythm of two records via the pitch-control in order to play them simultaneously as one additive piece of music), a practice which would only come into being a quarter of a century later. Ellison's narrator speaks of playing the same record, Louis Armstrong's "What did I do to be so Black and Blue" simultaneously on five phonographs so that he is able to feel the music, "when I have music I want to feel its vibration, not only with my ear, but with my whole body." [8] He goes on to narrate the experience which generated this desire,

"Once when I asked for a cigarette, some jokers gave me a reefer, which I lighted when I got home and sat listening to my phonograph. It was a strange evening. Invisibility, let me explain, gives one a slightly different sense of time, you're never quite on the beat. Sometimes you're ahead and sometimes behind. Instead of the swift and imperceptible flowing of time, you are aware of its nodes, those points where time stands still or from which it leaps ahead. And you slip into the breaks and look around." [8]

Ellison seems to have independently discovered Benjamin's messianic breaks in time, developed in his "On the Philosophy of History" [Benjamin 1940] and, as Benjamin had under similar influences in Marseilles, the porosity of urban space, [Benjamin 1932] (Ellison shortly later describes how this new time sense allows him to hear around corners). Ellison goes on,

"So under the spell of reefer I discovered a new analytic way of listening to music. [...] That night I found myself hearing not only time, but space as well. I not only entered the music but descended into its depths." [8-9]

More than just theory, this new analytic sense becomes a strategic weapon. Ellison allegorizes the use of this weapon in a boxing match between a weakling and an overpowering technically superior brute, and in this allegory the development of a new space-time

sense becomes a strategy for asymmetrical warfare. Ellison describes how the underdog "stepped inside of his opponent's sense of time" and "the smart money hit the canvas." [8]

Ellison's invisible man himself has created a room in the forgotten basement of a high-rise in which he siphons off electrical power. The *Invisible Man* is then the one capable of operating in what Lewis Mumford has called the 'invisible city.' As Varnelis describes it:

"The visible city as a prime determinant of the urban is an artifact of the past. Instead, it is what Lewis Mumford called the "invisible city," the world of cables, wires, connections, codes, agreements, and capital that increasingly dominates our networked society. We stand at the dawn of the regime of the invisible, its role in determining urban structure vast. The visible becomes an irruption of other forces, a graphic user interface for a more powerful command line below." [Varnelis]

If we can divide the wires from the signals they carry, Mumford's 'invisible city' is not exactly congruent with the 'city of bits' [Mitchell] which resides in the 'space of flows,' the dematerialized polydimensional realm of networked capital. However, without the hidden city, that which Mumford calls 'invisible,' this new post-modern global network space would be impossible. This city perhaps has even less to do with the visible city, the city of post-modern and international style architecture, but the city of bits does represent itself, materially, through the metaphor of glass and steel high-rises. It has created an aesthetic metaphor for the dematerialization of capital itself, but one which returns, as capital does, and must, to its limits in the actuality of its signifiers.

## 4. architecture as liquid capital

"You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18)

The dematerialization of capital is best represented in its aspiration to displace, not aesthetics, but religion with economics as the master discourse of global culture, and this movement can be read through its architectural transformations. In narrativizing this transition we might begin with the Woolworth Building, [fig 2] if only because it has been called 'the Cathedral of Commerce.' This name was given with surprisingly little irony, in the christening of the building by the divine Dr. S. Parkes Cadman:

"When seen at nightfall bathed in electric light or in the lucid air of a summer morning piecing space like a battlement of the paradise of God, which St. John beheld, it inspires feeling even for tears. The writer looked upon it and cried out 'the Cathedral of Commerce' — the chosen habitation of that spirit in man which through means of barter, binds alien people into unity and peace." [Leeuwen:60]

The World Trade Center would be the obvious choice as the terminal point for this story, both for its tragic end, but also its date of construction, 1973, the year after of the dissolution of the Bretton-Woods accords, the monetary agreement that held global markets in step since the end of World War II. One also thinks of those scenes from chapter seven of DeCerteau's *Philosophy of Everyday Life* in which looking down from the World Trade Center the eye achieves a certain detachment, the feeling that one is experiencing the city as a totality [DeCerteau:71]. Citicorp Center however, (now Citigroup Center) [fig. 5] designed by architect Hugh Stubbins and completed in 1977, is for me the better symbol of the termination, or final realization of this logic. Often considered the first postmodern skyscraper in Manhattan, unlike the World Trade Center with its practical flat tops (one a helipad, the other a transmission tower), Citicorp's spire seems pure symbolism, directly equivalent to the spires of Cathedrals, always the highest building in cities, of the previous era. Sitting on four piers at the center of each of its four sides, it floats detached from the materiality of the city below as if enacting the detachment of Capital from its earthly moorings, a construction of pure light and spirit. Finally, Citicorp Center sits atop a church, realizing the reversal of the relation between economics and religion. In order to build CitiCorp, negotiations were made to relocate the church, St. Peter's Lutheran (also known as "Jazz Church," having hosted the memorial service for Louis Armstrong) that once occupied the site to one corner of the block. The church now sits below on one corner and the tower levitates twenty-five meters above. The material moorings of capital are now the church itself which once claimed the role of transcendent immateriality, and in this I see the final domination of the new religion, Capitalism, over the old.

If we have located the two end-points of this trajectory, we might now seek its middle, the moment of transition. Here I would present the tiny gap between the last great gothic skyscraper and the first built in the international style: the Empire State (1931) and the PSFS (1932) in Philadelphia. [fig 6] Of the Empire State, nothing more needs to be said, but it might be hard to find the seeds of such a great sea change in the modest building of 32 floors by Swiss-American architect William Lescaze and his partner George Howe. In retro-

spect however, we can see the old "gothic" skyscraper dropping the costume of the past in which it has been draping itself. It no longer is responding to a transitional crisis, no longer ceased by anxiety in its role, as Marx says,

"...just when they seem to be engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, and borrow from them names, battle cries, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honored disguise and borrowed language." [Marx 1958:247]

In contrast, the international style here represents a capital as "value big with value, a live monster that is fruitful and multiplies." [Marx 1967:195] No longer in need of disguises, Capital shows itself as it imagines itself, a world of transparency, linearity, of undisguised structure. In the movement of the structure to the interior, these buildings further realize the movement of architecture toward becoming like the body. Architecture becomes *chordate*. Where the old cathedrals and gothic skyscrapers had an exoskeleton like an insect, or crustacean, a member of the phylum anthropoda, the function of skin and skeleton are divided into the glass curtain wall and the structural core-like animals of the phylum chordata.

Like the evolution of biological chordates before, with the glass curtain wall came the opportunity to wrap the body in a skin of nervous material, to effect a level of sensory engagement with the world, a permeability between inside and outside unavailable to the older forms. Victor Burgin in his essay, "The City in Pieces" illustrates this with Richard Sennett's description of Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's "administrative office" for the Werkbund exhibit Cologne 1914:

"in this building you are simultaneously inside and outside [...] You can see through walls, your eyes move inside to outside, outside to inside [...] the confines of the interior have lost their meaning [...] inner and outer become apparent at once, like the front side of a cubist portrait. [Richard Sennett quoted in Burgin: 37]

It seems these developments are, also like the emergence of chordates, a response to a more complex nervous system now in need of centralization and protection. It is in the spine of the visible city that the invisible city arises. Hidden within the transparent structures lies the steel structural core which holds the nervous system of the building: one finds the bundles of wires and optical cables which connect it to the global network. Capitalist ar-

chitecture, it seems, is repeating the stages of human evolution, becoming more like the human body, first standing upright then acquiring language.

We might remember that it was in considering the construction of temples, religious architecture, that Vitruvius related the temple to the human body in the terms of the circle within the square,

"The navel is naturally placed in the centre of the human body, and, if in a man lying with his face upward, and his hands and feet extended, from his navel as the centre, a circle be described, it will touch his fingers and toes. It is not alone by a circle, that the human body is thus circumscribed, as may be seen by placing it within a square. For measuring from the feet to the crown of the head, and then across the arms fully extended, we find the latter measure equal to the former; so that lines at right angles to each other, enclosing the figure, will form a square. [Vitruvius' *De architectura* 3.1.3]

It was this passage which Leonardo da Vinci translated into his famous illustration "Vitruvian Man." [fig. 7] While it shares something in its idealization, its circle within the square, in its transparency the International and Post-modern glass and steel structures may be more like da Vinci's dissections than the whole and opaque body of the "Vitruvian Man." [fig. 8] The international style building is a glass body, and the use of transparency is particularly important in thinking through its symbolic meaning. It seem clear as well, that what is being represented in this new form of transparency is Capital's aspiration towards dematerialization, the system's desire to transform itself from a system of production to a system of disembodied circulation. It does, however, want to do this as a sort of force-field, producing invisible, but impermeable limits, to define space and time without existing in space and time itself. In "The City in Pieces" Victor Burgin has analyzed the Capitalist appropriation of the socialist-utopian glass and steel construction of the International style skyscraper as a metaphor for the aspirations and operations of Capital. "The transparent wall, used by such socialist modernists as Gropius to unite interior with exterior," he writes, "was destined to become the very index of capitalist corporate exclusivity." [Burgin: 37]

## 5. minimalism and perspective

With regards to its spatial logic, this effect of glass and steel architecture seems parallel to the construction of house and techno music, as I have previously written,

"...the psychosexual position of house music is the fantasy of being both inside and outside, container and contained at the same time. Techno producers took this non-

Euclidean representation of space and used it to describe the nature of their position as Blacks in the White suburbs, both not-inside and not-outside.' [Malone 33]

It is for this reason, recalling Sennett's description of Gropius and Meyer's "administrative office," that I can justify my claim, "The primary metaphor of Techno music is architecture." I go on to make a distinction between sonic and material architecture,

"It is however an architecture which flows and changes over time. The spacial effects allow shifts, expansions and contractions against the steady grid of the beat. One is reminded of a quote by Goethe, "architecture is frozen music." Techno realizes its inverse, music as liquid architecture. The mediating force is the product of Detroit itself, the automobile. The automobile has transformed, liquified, urban space, both historically (in suburbanization, freeways and the globalization of production) and aesthetically (it is now seen at ever increasing speed with greater and greater detachment). Where the spacial flows of house tend to be the cyclical throb, thrust and clench of intercourse, Techno is dominated by the breaks, slams, and glides of urban space experienced from the freeway, clover-leaves and overpasses. Where house was psycho-tropic and psycho-sexual, Techno is psycho-geographic and psycho-political. The minimal structure of the music that would seem otherwise boring, primitive, inscrutable here allows the listener to apprehend the change in the space that would be obscured by emphasis on melodic development." [Malone 34]

My theory is based on a system of relation between architecture and the body, a system articulated in two directions: from Capital to the body and from the body to Capital. In each case a particular aesthetic practice facilitates the translation. In the case of the dominant relation from the side of Capital, the facilitating practice is architecture, in the secondary, resistive moment that practice is music. What breaks up the architectural space of Capital and makes it permeable to music, what becomes the theme of the music, is travel in the automobile. Almost twenty years after he co-architected the PFSF building, George Howe, would write of the reconstruction of the city by the car in an essay entitled "Flowing Architecture", and presage even its relation to finance capital,

"Penetrated from every side by the radioactivity of our own space-time thought, our physical surroundings are disintigrating before our eyes. Flattened by the bulldozer of inexorable logic in action, our cities seem to be on the way to becoming desert parking spaces. They must sooner or later be rebuilt to correspond to the image of the universe we have created. For this purpose, we must someday have kinetic money, but that is another question." [Howe 167-168]

Architectural theorist Sigfried Giedion has written, "The space-time feeling of our period can seldom be felt so keenly as when driving." [Gideon 729-30] Detroit Techno has continuously thematized driving, made the reproduction and modulation of this 'space-time feeling' the center of its project, particularly the experience of driving the freeway at night. As if to prove the point, the second release on Metroplex, the first techno label, was Juan

Atkin's "Night Drive (thru Babylon)" with a b-side, a reworking of the same track, entitled "Time-Space-Transmat." What driving provides is a new relation to perspective, and as Burgin says, "perspective provided quite literally the 'common ground' on which the identification of architectural space with corporeal space could 'take place'." [Burgin 35]

While Techno has been compared to, or seen as deriving from, the minimalist and ambient sound movement of the 1970s and 80s [Sherburne], it would seem, given my analysis of it as a spatial form, that it might have more in common with minimal sculpture than minimal music. While the aesthetics of driving run throughout Techno, and stories of driving the trench freeways of Detroit while listening to unreleased tracks, fresh from the studio, abound in articles, it is less commonly known that sculptural minimalism has its origins in a similar experience. Consider this quote by sculptor Tony Smith:

"It was a dark night and there were no lights or shoulder markers, lines, railings or anything at all except the dark pavement moving through the landscape of flats, rimmed by hills in the distance, but punctuated by stacks, towers, fumes, and colored lights. This drive was a revealing experience. The road and much of the landscape was artificial, and yet it couldn't be called a work of art. On the other hand, it did something for me that art had never done. At first I didn't know what it was, but its effect was to liberate me from many of the views I had had about art. It seemed that there had been a reality there that had not had any expression in art." [Smith quoted in Fried:131]

This experience at the heart of sculptural minimalism reveals the primary aesthetic function of minimal techno as well:

"What replaces the object— what does the same job of distancing or isolating the beholder, of making him a subject... is above all the endlessness, or objectlessness, of the approach or onrush or perspective. It is the explicitness, that is to say, the sheer persistence with which the experience presents itself as directed at him from outside (on the turnpike from outside the car) that simultaneously makes him a subject— makes him a subject—and establishes the experience itself as something like that of an object, or rather, of objecthood." [ibid.]

By vacating all interior formal properties of music or sculpture and focusing on repetitions, what comes to the fore, what is left as the sole element for contemplation, is the relation of the perceptual subject to place: the object of perception becomes the experience of perception itself. But this is not, either for minimal sculpture of the Sixties and Seventies or minimal Techno of the Eighties and Nineties (and to speak of minimalism proper, in techno we are speaking of the work of Robert Hood and Jeff Mills on the label Underground Resistance from about 1992 and those who have followed), the space of contemplation is not a

neutral, ahistorical site. It can be seen as the concrete counter-move to Capital's dematerialization, and as such a concrete example of Jameson's aesthetics of cognitive mapping. In both practices, the body is placed against the rationalized space of reception in order to reveal the ideological function of abstraction. In the case of minimalist sculpture, this context is the "clean white space" of the art institution, the gallery or museum; in the case of Techno, the ideologically saturated cube is the urban space constructed in glass and steel. In the case of Detroit Techno, this site is Detroit itself, the landscape most profoundly shaped by the process of globalization in the first world, in this process Detroit has been emptied out, leaving it something like the New Jersey turnpike Smith drove in its state of semi-completion. It is a site under-process, and as such one in which the process itself is laid bare.

Despite their cubic appearance, the minimalist work always takes the body for its point of reference. Minimalism realized that figure-sculpture took the viewer out of his/her own body space and into the representational body space of the sculpture itself. Acting as something like a three-dimensional extrusion of Da Vinci's 'Vitruvian Man,' or at least the square and circle behind him, the minimalist cube becomes the ground, the grounding element, to place the viewers body against. Where previous modes of sculpture had lifted the viewer out of his/her body, out of his/her site, out of his/her political context, the sole aim of minimalism was to return the viewer to themselves. This is, moreover, not to return them to some authentic pre-ideological body, but rather to render the ideology transparent as a means of production, the means by which the spectator's body sense has been produced. Rather than then effecting an alienated sense of body, of body subject to its space, an embodied subject subject-to its space, the hope is anyway that it will return agency to the body and the subject by enhancing their analytic sense of their relation to our subjectivities own ideological construction; that in rendering the means of production visible they might be grasped and turned to serve the interest of the audience.

This is the same disjunction that Jameson has placed at the center of his project of an aesthetics of cognitive mapping, but here the corporeal disjunction only stands in for the more difficult-to-conceptualize relation of subject to Capitalist totality

"It may now be suggested that this alarming disjunction point between the body and its built environment—which is to the initial bewilderment of the older modernism as the velocities of spacecraft to those of the automobile—can itself stand as the symbol and analogon of that even sharper dilemma which is the incapacity of our minds, at least at present, to map the great global multinational and decentered communicational network in which we find ourselves caught as individual subjects." [Jameson 1991:44]

In its transposition of the automobile and the starship (the move from the "night drive" to "space-time transmat,") It is as if the producers of Detroit Techno are already predicting Jameson's words, and as if in reply, have produced the reverse effect. By providing the auditioner with the experience of travel in deep space (and I regret I have not the time or space here to address the formal methods by which minimal Techno effects the experience of acceleration, indeed a sort of sonic time-warp), they teach them analytic listening and train them to respond, through dance, to not simply locate but move their bodies in relation to this new space, the space of flows.

## **6. dancing with the limits of capital**

Liquid dancing owes something, as does Techno, to the funk culture of the Seventies. In Liquid Eric's footwork I see traces of 'Sir Nose D'void of Funk' the Parliament Funkadelic character too cool to dance, but who, when he "gave up the funk" would engage in an otherworldly hustle. But liquid dancing also has its roots in pantomime, a form which sometimes takes as its project the physicalization of imaginary objects. So I would argue these invisible fields that Liquid Eric is describing with his arms, this invisible partner with whom he is dancing, is none other than the totality of global capital itself, translated from music to body, from architecture to music, from economics to architecture. What he is literally describing is the space of the city, the limits of glass architecture, which are themselves invisible, but are the hard limits which describe the spaces of corporate capital in the post-modern city. But those boundaries are in turn Capital's own representation to itself of its rational flows, its abstraction and imaginary limits, hard limits which reflect and represent the invisible hand which creates boundaries that are all too often materialized with force, and come to stand between life and death.

I do not believe that Eric could have found his dance without the music, but the dance is I believe necessarily a full partner with the music. Techno does not have any real existence in headphones or even in the studio—there it is a dead trace, a memory. Maybe we can even say a memory of the future—but it is not alive. But performed on a sound system capable of shaking a body to its core—the body of a dancer—it comes alive, becomes an event that produces both subject and object. What both the music and the dance are doing in this moment of production is, like Ellison's boxer, stepping inside the time of their opponent.

In transforming our time sense, in allowing us to embody it so that we can step inside the time of this opponent, the opponent of all life, of all livable human futures, I believe that Detroit Techno and liquid dance are realizing not only the goal of Jameson's aesthetic, which as he has put it,

"will hold to the truth of postmodernism, that is to say, to its fundamental object—the world space of multi-national capitalism—at the same time at which it achieves a breakthrough to some as yet unimaginable new mode or representing this last, in which we may again begin to grasp our positioning as individual and collective subjects and regain a capacity to act and struggle which is at present neutralized by our spatial as well as social confusion." [Jameson 1991: 54]

But it also realizes Walter Benjamin's dream of transforming technological art into a revolutionary practice,

"the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation, alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation." [Benjamin 2003 IV:268]

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## 8. images



fig 1 Liquid Eric, Mar. 13 1999. Liquid Pop Collective



fig 2. Woolworth Building, 1913, Cass Gilbert Architect 233 Broadway, New York



fig 2a. Woolworth Building interior (photo: Robert Polidori)

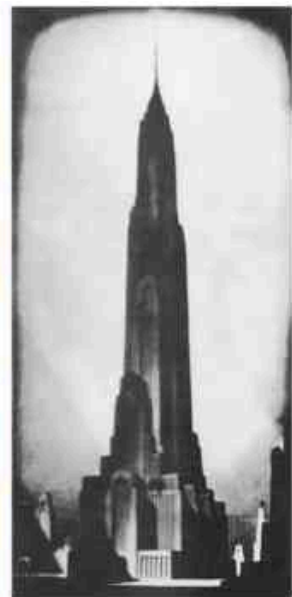


fig 3. Hugh Ferriss, "Religion" 1929



fig 4. Athanasius Kircher "urbs turrata" (note tower to right with angled crest)



fig 5a Citigroup Center (St. Peter's to left) details see 5b.



fig 5b. Citigroup Center, completed 1977  
 architect Hugh Stubbins Jr.  
 153 E. 53rd St., New York



fig 5c. Citigroup Center, St. Peter's in the foreground



fig 6a, 6b PSFS Building (Philadelphia Saving Fund Society) 1932  
 Howe and Lescaze Architects  
 1200 Market St, Philadelphia





fig 7. Vitruvian Man, Leonardo Da Vinci



fig 8a Leonardo Da Vinci, dissection of a neck 1480's



fig. 8b Foetus in the womb



fig 9 'Night Driver' Atari, 1976



fig 10. M-10 Freeway in Detroit on a winter night



fig 9. Tony Smith 'Die' 1968 MoMA



fig 10. Donald Judd Installation of mill aluminum works, 1980-84 The Chinati Foundation, Marfa, TX