

3rd Stage

Reece Terris

September 9 - 11, 2016



Reece Terris: 3rd Stage

Benjamin Prus

Such is the temporal paradox, the inverted temporality that designates the event as such. Usually we conceive of an ascendant line which goes from the impossible to the possible, then to the real. What designates the true event is precisely that the real and the possible happen simultaneously and that the possibility of imagining it is immediate.

—Jean Baudrillard, “Event and Non-Event” (2007)¹

For philosopher and social critic Jean Baudrillard, a true event is a rupture in history, something that reshapes the world as it simultaneously reshapes our understandings of what is possible in the world. Contrarily, the non-event is the manufactured continual change that characterizes our contemporary life in “real time.” The perpetual stream of information that produces news broadcasts provides us with our daily dose of “events,” while subsequently maintaining the status quo by making our world and our struggles appear banal, unchanging, and inevitable. A life without the interruption of true events is a life lived without the possibility for substantive social change.

Through calling to mind Baudrillard’s concept of the non-event, Reece Terris’ installation at Hamilton Artists Inc. for Supercrawl 2016, *3rd Stage*, gives us a more nuanced assessment of contemporary spectacle. While on the one hand host to the distractions of capitalist spectacle, event infrastructures like the stage also bring us together, out of our ensconced bubbles, into an intercourse rife with productive possibility. By generating this coming together instead of representing it, Terris offers us an a/effective response to capitalism’s attempts at colonizing the experiences of our everyday lives. In Terris’ work, we remain pivotal agents capable of approaching and reimagining the scaffolding of our public existence.

¹ Baudrillard, Jean. 2007. “Event and Non-Event.” In *The Shadow of the Silent Majorities, Or, The End of the Social*. London: Semiotext(e).



Reece Terris, *Bridge - (Wooden Arch)*, 2006. Backyard installation view.

That is to say, Terris' artworks bring people together. An installation by Terris relies on the importance of proximal bodies, drawing an affinity with theatre. His structurally fantastic *Bridge* (2006) brought people together in a residential neighborhood. This functional arching bridge rose and fell four stories while connecting two suburban properties. In traversing the connection one was able to see into the private spaces of fenced off property. The soaring structure transgressed the building codes of the mundane, and made strange the everydayness of backyards and boulevards. In 2009, Terris molded six decades' worth of interior design into a six story apartment structure that grew within the atrium of the Vancouver Art Gallery. *Ought Apartment* (2009) arched the changing faces of our homes from the post-war period of the 1950s to today. Made possible by the recent real estate boom and concomitant residential renovations, this work reflects upon the disposability



inherent in the intimate spaces of our lives. Like the stage in Terris' latest work, this series of apartments was composed of architectural forms that served as settings for the performances of our lives. Archived and preserved by Terris, these architectural forms speak to the changing face of sociability through Canada's recent past. Terris has us reflect on the ways our actions are shaped by capital, how the drive for ever-new production and consumption continually renovates the infrastructure of our everyday lives, and, by so doing, how architecture reshapes our own experiences of our surroundings and each other.

Here in the courtyard of Hamilton Artists Inc., the stage-without-show suggests a spectacle while providing us none—it subverts our expectations of large-scale events like Supercrawl. But, more so, it reveals the stage as a structural relic from a bygone system of publicness. These days, the “show” is whatever happens to be on the business end of our insta-gaze. Our stage is, proverbially, the world, and we build it by pointing our magical stage-makers we keep in our pockets—these five-inch platforms from which sprout the “event.” Or, rather, by which our world, banality and all, is transmuted from “real” to “event.” The stage is at once an old technology generating nostalgia for the spectacular twentieth century, and a clunky material remnant of our transition into a new Panopticism. The stage calls to mind a concert or other theatrical show: hoards of mobile devices held high to capture the event. Except, in this work, Terris gives us the event infrastructure without accompanying performance. The performance is our own, not only as spectators but as producers of what we define as an event today. Reece Terris' work foregrounds the ways in which architecture reflects and shapes our social values and gives form to the experiential qualities of our everyday lives.



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Reece Terris is a Vancouver based artist whose work alters the expected experiential qualities of a place or object through an amplification or shift in the primary function of an original design. Past projects include a six-storey apartment building temporarily installed in the rotunda of the Vancouver Art Gallery, a pedestrian wooden bridge connecting two residential homes, and an architectural false front added to the existing false front of an artist-run centre. His practice is manifest through a variety of media, including sculpture, performance, installation, and photography. Quite often through their hybrid execution, he complicates the traditional definitions of each of these.

Benjamin Prus is a research artist, writer and teacher with degrees in Criticism & Curatorial Practice and Art History. Currently a sessional faculty member and PhD candidate in the Department of English & Cultural Studies at McMaster University, Canada, his research focuses on the effects of lying in aesthetic experience, especially contemporary artworks structured by fictions, lies and hoaxes that foreground the political importance of the aesthetic framing of realness. Visit benjaminprus.com.

Cover: Reece Terris, *3rd Stage (installation rendering)*, 2016.

pg 3: Reece Terris, *Ought Apartment - 1960s South view*, 2009. Installation view.

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