

# Space Alive

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## Abstract

This paper looks at earthly architectural applications of scientific research on space orientation in reduced gravity conditions. It asks how unprecedented forms of perception experienced in reduced gravity conditions give rise to unconventional modes of living. Looking at different technical lineages for achieving weightlessness: on the one hand, outer space exploration and its habitats, and on the other, technologies of suspension associated with experimental architecture, it questions the pragmatics of exchangeability between art and science. Instead of insisting on systems of valuation, that is, instead of opposing the functionality of outer space habitats with the aesthetic of experimental architecture, both practices will be approached in their own terms and on their terrain, that is, in the pragmatics of their effectiveness.

## 1. Introduction

In an era in which bodies and goods are ever more constantly in global circulation, what would an experience of weightlessness do for us?

In the contemporary juncture in which experimental architecture is turning to a variety of techniques associated with outer space science and technology, I question how the training for life in weightlessness and its accompanying design strategies can find unconventional earthly applications.

### 1.1 Outer Space Exploration and its Habitats and Suspension in Experimental Architecture

I will orchestrate a dialogue between neuroscience projects that investigate the contribution of gravity to space orientation and architectural extrapolation of outer space activities (Claude Parent's *Oblique Function* [1], Tomas Saraceno's *In Orbit* and Greg Lynn's *RV Prototype* [2]) to question how the integration of gravitational changes into architectural structures can trigger the emergence of

unconventional modes of living. I will focus the discussion on the impact of architecture on our sense of wellbeing by considering the aesthetics of inhabitation beyond vision and movement, looking at proprioceptive experiences that are at once between vision and movement and yet neither, especially our sense of weightedness and weightlessness.

### 1.2. Pragmatics of Exchangeability

In this section I will suggest that when taken up in its effectiveness, architectural exploration of outer space activities create the possibility for thinking the pragmatics of the encounter between artistic and scientific practices beyond a critique of instrumentality.

## 2. Summary and Conclusions

This paper argues that the possibility of thinking of the fields of exchangeability between scientific experimentation on the contribution of gravity to sensori-motor functions, and architectural extrapolation of outer space activities, is based on a pragmatic contrast between the distinct fields of problems constructed by artistic and scientific experimentation with gravity. The paper will conclude that pragmatically, science does not coincide with art but acts as a preceding genetic relation.

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## References

- [1] C. Parent, *Vivre à l'oblique*. Paris: Place Jean-Michel, 2005.
- [2] G. Lynn, *Future Primitives*. in *Project Room* by Greg Lynn. Exhibition Catalogue: Biennale Intérieure. Kortrijk, Belgium, 2012.