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A space for falling in love Martyna Marciniak

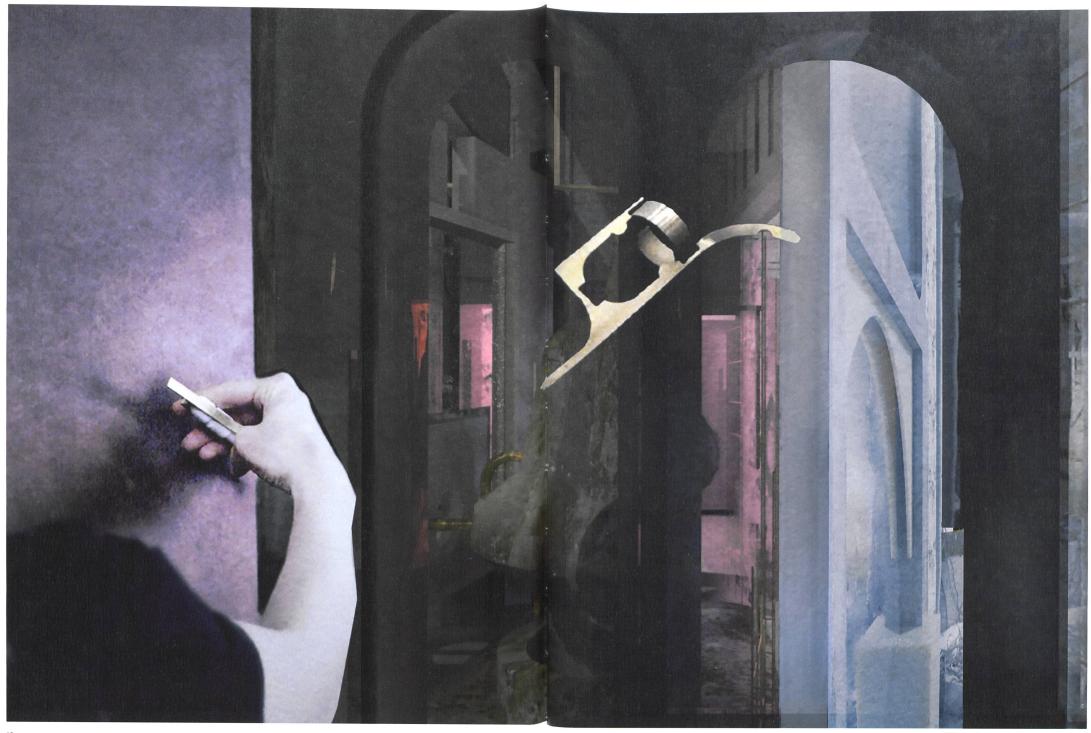
Paul E. Phylo's Palace was meant to be a space that makes love possible, a building that used love as a design methodology, which would in turn hopefully be reflected and apparent in the architecture itself as a quality inspiring the visitor to fall in love.

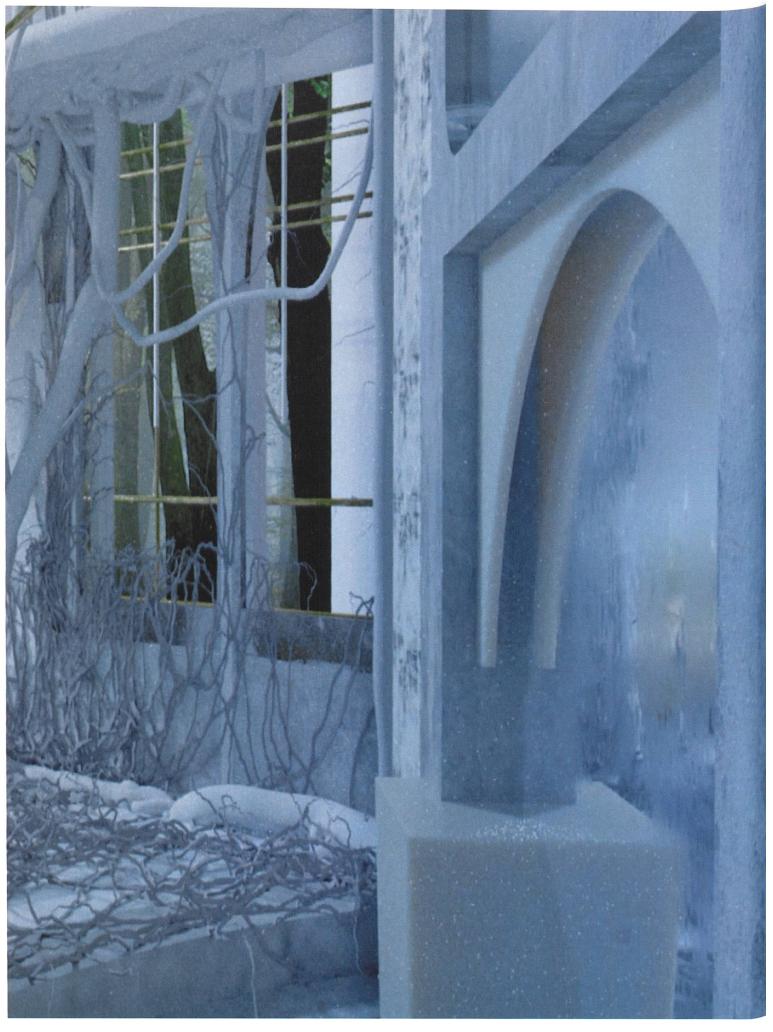
Prologue

the story unfolds differently.

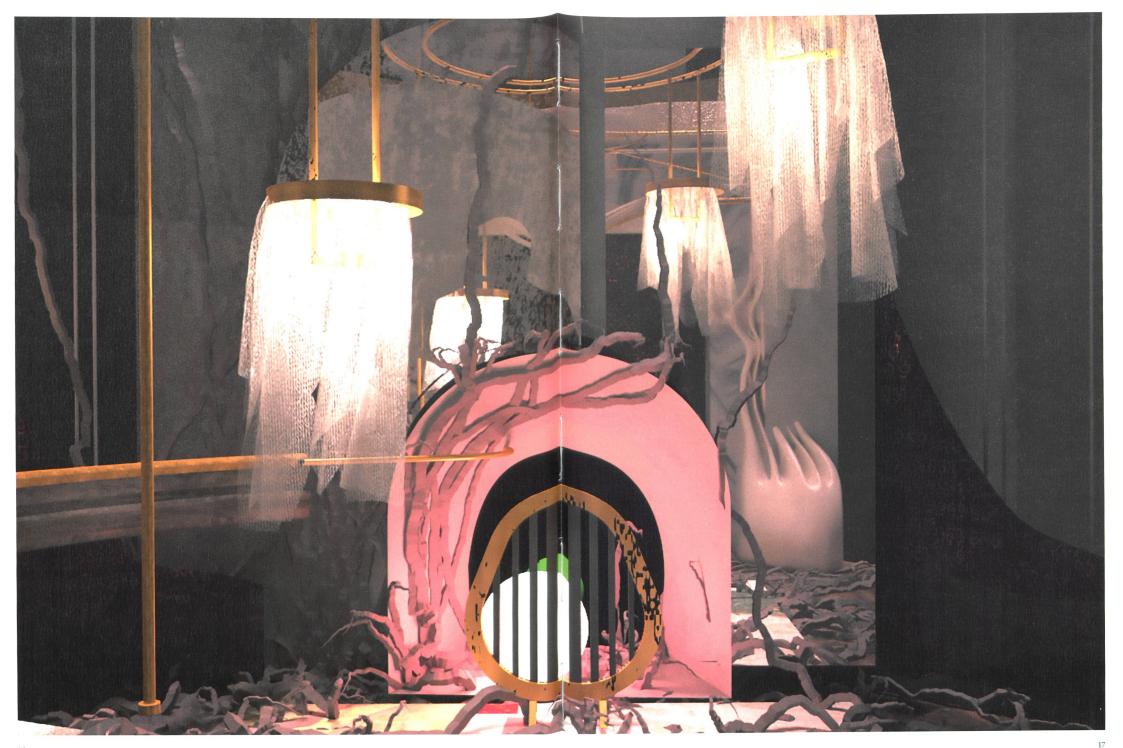
and the life-less, cold, still (Hall of Indifference) to the other. The Palace doesn't want you to go there. If you choose to do so, the love story will end. Or perhaps, even worse, it would progress in an unbearably mundane manner. What the Palace wants you to do is to succumb to its courtship dance. It is almost impossible not to fall into the building's orchestrated (trap)—no matter which route you choose, you will ultimately end up right where the Palace wanted you. In order to do that, it will manipulate you with light and heat... The heat in the Palace spreads from the main fireplace nested in the walls of The Boudoir of Ultimate Excitement all the way out to its extremities. It travels through a network

of veins of the radiators and connecting handrails. Once you arrive at the Dining Room of Awakening, Paul E. Phylo's Palace is unfinished. Its walls are there will be a softly burning fireplace at the end of the punctured by holes, permeated by moss and ivy that room, a set of bizarre glass chandeliers, oval revolving crawls in from the marshy landscape outside. There are mirrors and sugar sculptures hanging from the ceiling. fragments of disconnected handrails, staircases, frames The jewellery-keys would slot into a series of mechaand oxidised mirrors that retain the memory of nisms in the soft, heated walls. The palace would shadows from the past (the very short period when the respond to your touch with igniting the fireplace even building was actually inhabited). Some fixtures and more and illuminating the room with a strong red-hued finishes are haphazardly put together, their form glow. The heat would spread to every corner of the completed with cheap wood (mdf, bits of plywood room, the sugar sculptures would melt, the handrails and sometimes even cardboard). Other fragments are would burn up almost unbearably. The heat would almost too rich and opulent. Their disjointed make you dizzy... almost delirious. For a split second acontextual presence reads somewhat kitsch. The palace you might feel physically completed and connected to likes to be touched, and when it's touched in the right the palatial body. Then, just when you are about to manner, it lets you in to the next chamber allowing to enter (The Boudoir of Ultimate Excitement), offering explore the next chapter of the love story. A you the promise of resolution to this love affair.... just reconfigurable group of cryptically-inscribed jewellery when you will be ready to fall into its red-hot velvety pieces allows this interior world to connect directly womb.... and just when you'll be connecting the final with the touch of the visitor. These fragments are piece of jewellery to the Boudoir's lock, the room will slotted into mechanisms along the palatial journey, start falling apart; the wallpaper will slowly bellow out triggering wall-embedded apparatus to open doors, and curl up, the mirrors will become misty... they might pour out liquid or ignite fireplaces. Depending on even crack and shatter...From beneath the wallpaper, a the sequence of spaces that one choses to enter, network of meticulous veins of radiators will reveal themselves. Finally after all the rocking, and swelling, Once in the Palace, you will find yourself and burning... the fire will die out... the lights will shut immersed in the dark, gloomy threshold connected to down. The Palace will turn quiet, still... The cold light of the slow and dusty (Lounge of Anticipation) to one side day will step in and with it the fantasy of love will evap-(almost frozen) orate. That's where the love will end.









Architectural allegories of love

initially drawn me to it).

of architectural allegories, describes the main protago- therefore necessary for propelling this story forward. nist's (Poliphylo) longing for the loved one (Polia), and his exhausting and elaborate journey to be reunited Marienbad building, it becomes apparent that it is a with her. Poliphylo follows a series of peculiar purely mental, cinematic space—one that often closes courtyards, gardens and rooms that are meant to be in on itself, bends irrationally and thus endlessly leading to her chamber.

his anticipation is constantly being built up and spatio temporal drawings of Last Year in Marienbad. subsequently subverted it seems that he starts falling in love with the buildings themselves. The rooms and Palace revealing its labyrynthine quality. Inspired by objects begin to reflect and reinforce his desires. The the potential of constructing an architectural language fragmented romantic ruins in particular represent the where love is the main goal and objective, I decided to falling in love. This particular language of qualities, original—(Hypnerotomachia's Poliphylo)). materials and architectural elements builds a typology of desire and falling in love.

story actually took place in Poliphylo's dream. It was to me to highlight that what differentiates a spatial him who was the architect of these peculiar forms and allegory from metaphor is the employment of spaces! This realisation is key. It means that Poliphylo referential qualities rather than literal forms or orchestrated this mental image, this landscape of love, figures. My project is therefore employing these as a way to further his fantasy, to explore and nurture proto-cinematic and cinematic constructs to define his desire and love for Polia.

of architecture as a means of confronting oneself with would become a tool of its own in defining the the fantasy of Love, a vision of a space intended just for architectural details, features of desire and materiality. falling in love developed in my mind. I continued formalising it during my subsequent (visits) to the libertine interior of Francois Bastide's (Little House) and especially during the multiple viewings of Resnais' Falling in love is a process. That is why architecturally and Grillet' Marienbad Palace.

«Hypnerotomachia Poliphyli», suggests a taxonomy of and thresholds that suggest an emotional sequence— X and A.

Marienbad gardens and courtyards seem to be revealing the truth about the carnal passions of the characters The story of Paul E. Phylo and his Palace began while the boudoirs represent innocence and intimacy. about two years ago, when I first took the journey Therefore, when the ornaments of the bedroom seem through the allegorical and eclectic landscape of the to progressively intensify and (grow) into a kind of wild 15th century book by Francesco Colonna entitled ivy during subsequent scenes, so is the desire of X Hypnerotomachia Poliphyli (the tongue twisting title towards A. By fabricating these particular architectural was quite honestly one of the key features that had features, Resnais created his own language and architecture of Love. The story of (Last Year in Marien-The book, considered one of the first examples bad would not exist without the Palace. Architecture is

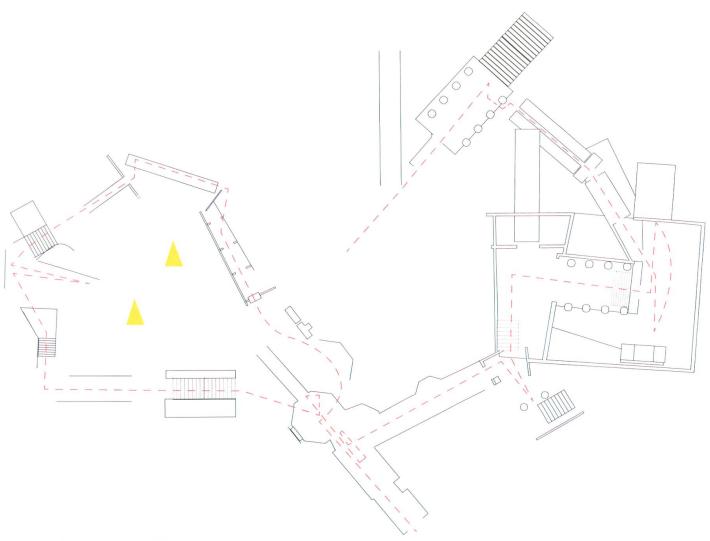
When one tries to grasp the complexity of the o her chamber. confuses its protagonists and the viewer. This During the excruciating journey, in which relationship becomes apparent in one of my

The Spatio-Temporal Analysis of The Filmic (incomplete) sense of falling in love and longing. The explore the idea of a space for falling in love through allegorical corridors and multiple doors he needs to my own architectural allegory—a story of the main choose literally turn into parallel images of his character, the architect and builder of the Palace Paul confusion and anxiety that accompany the state of E. Phylo (named as a tongue in-cheek homage to the

In my project I explored and assumed that particular spatial allegories and taxonomies do stem The final revelation of the book is that the from the modern cinematic vernacular. It is important the programmatic spaces and features. In addition, the Inspired by this discovery and by the potential highly detailed background to the formative love story

Architectural syntax—spatial storytelling

Paul E. Phylo's Palace is on the large scale a journey, a (Last Year in Marienbad), similarily to collonade—a spatial progression through chambers interiors and architectural forms that help tell a story either expressed explicitly through the very names of of love and desire between the main protagonists— the chambers or though their atmospheric qualities and physical transformations. The visitor is encouraged The filmic Palace itself is a construct created to take various routes through the building. However, as an assemblage of particular features of three palaces the route offering the most gradual escalation of desire (Schloss Nymphenburg, Amalienburg and Schloss would lead from the cold, empty Lounge of Schleissheim). The seemingly never-ending corridors Anticipation bathing in the indifferent light of a rainy and halls build up anticipation. While linearly growing day, past the frozen, lifeless and uninviting (Hall of in opulence they assist in facilitating and feeding the Indifference, to the Dining Room of Awakening that feeling of desire of the main protagonists. The staircases warms up and lights up softly. Finally the visitor would on the other hand, while eroticising the figures and the enter the overtly warm Boudoir of Ultimate gaze of the onlookers are also a physical demarcation Excitement that has the capacity to heat up beyond of an important step in the progress of the relationship control—to melt, swell up and finally—disintegrate. between A and X (it is there that they have one of their There is, however, no one right way to travel through longer private conversations). Furthermore, the the building. Love is not, after all, a recipe, nor is it a



The Spatio-Temporal Analysis of The Filmic Palace revealing its labyrynthine quality, «Last Year in Marienbad», Alain Resnais, 1961

spaces are therefore secretly interconnected with a a physicalised augmentation, the recording and series of hidden passages and their walls are perforated reflection of a body falling in love. with alcoves.

The method of projecting and assigning stages of falling in love and courtship onto space and relationship or even consider and devise the various love for Polia, of their history. «strategies» for courtship.

moreover enabling the space to tell a story.

the physical journey can be likened to an emotional

calculated prescribed process. The allegorically named the visitor's interaction with the Palace) becomes

Palace—body

landscape is most notably manifested in the 18th Even though I rarely explain it explicitly, the design century matrimonial maps. These elaborate and beau- method for the Palace was an experiment in letting the tifully crafted illustrations were using fictionalised architecture reflect a fictional yet deeply personal landscapes to represent various stages of falling in love, background story—it included a series of fictional courting and developing a relationship. By taking diaries written by the main protagonist, in which he fictional journeys through these maps one could archives, dates, specifies and explains how various fantasize about falling in love, reflect upon their own pieces of the Palace represent different stages of his

After Paul's love was rejected (in case of most One could start analysing the correlation notable examples of love stories in architecture and art, between particular qualities and stages of love with the loss and unhappiness always yields most productheir spatial counterparts. To me these links are less tive results) he continued working on it as a way of interesting and valid than the sole rigour of translation immortalising his feeling towards Polia. He intended which is establishing its own spatial syntax and to communicate his affection through the architecture, partially to reflect upon his love and partially in order Similarly, in the case of Paul E. Phylo's Palace, to make the visitors experience what he himself felt.

The moment of rejection, the distance one. The spatial progression through various chambers between complete unity of lovers and the \halved> of the building, paired with the immediate experience – state of unrequited love is physically manifested the intensification of light and heat (partially caused by in the Palace through unfinished symmetry and

fragmentation. There are ruins of mirrored partners to The space does not become doving, without the subsequent chambers. It becomes even more apparent presence of the visitor. Without them participating in through drawings that the spaces are incomplete and the architectural courtship dance and falling in love have been adapted to allow this new circumstantial, with the Palace, the building remains cold, damp and «single», incomplete design.

of longing, the feeling of one body missing the other, dampened by rain and water. but it also allows the visitor to imagine, project and complete the forms and in a way construct their personal image or narrative of falling in love. Paul E. Phylo's Palace itself is a character (partially a reflection The Palace is a space for falling in love—that in itself is elaborate beauty. Over time one can observe that the rupted just as he is about to embrace Polia. Final scenes manner in which the hotel is 'dressed' bears a striking resemblance to A's dresses. This feature establishes the hotel as a fetishised object that relates to A's beauty. Towards the end of the film A's gown and the furnishing of her bedroom are so similar, they seem to blend into each other.

The aspect of fetishisation of architecture is also present in my project. The building is constructed with a loved one in mind. The Palace is filled with qualities reflective of the feminine beauty of Poliaparticularly evident in the forms of furniture and cutlery in the dining room, the shape of the handrail and in the design of the features controlling release of light and heat, intended solely to seduce and entice the visitor.

These carefully designed pieces of jewellery in particular quite literally connect the body of the visitor with the palatial body and encourage particular gestures in a way engaging the visitor in a very peculiar «courtship dance».

Just like Poliphylo in (Hypnerotomachia) touching the pieces of the buildings and pressing himself against fragments of moldings on his journey, all the while thinking of his loved one, these pieces become fetishised and eroticised. They are reinforcing the loving connection between the user and the Palace.

One of the ring combinations opens up a secret passage, the other one lights up the space of the Dining Room and when rotated fully, switches on the fireplace that in turn spreads the heat to the rest of the building through a series of pipes embedded in the walls. The walls (made out of encapsulated wax-based phase change material) get warmer, soften up and relax their otherwise orthogonal form. A ring consisting of three parts (to be found and assembled subsequently along the journey through Paul E. Phylo's Palace) is slotted in various configurations into a series of locks and openings of the Palace.

disintegrates under the stress of the outside agents. In This architectural fragmentation is expressive its love-less state it gets overgrown with mold, ivy and

Ending a love story

of the character of Paul, and partially the fantastic its main function. The final space along the journey reflection of his fantasy of the loved one-Polia). As a (The Boudoir of Ultimate Excitement), the last character and a body it reacts to the presence of the episode of falling in love is expected to reveal some visitor, it seduces him and invites him further and truth and resolution. This is the moment when one is further in. This strategy was borrowed from the meant to be confronted with the fantasy, learn about Marienbad Hotel where the building is gradually more what love really means, see its true face. Most novels illuminated as the story progresses and X's and A's and films have traditionally resorted to the celebrated desire towards each other escalates. The light also and silently accepted ultimate shappily ever seemingly seduces X and draws him in deeper into the aftery-scenario. Architectural love allegories however palatial maze. In addition to using light, the building seem to have taken a slightly different approach: seems to be enticing the character of X with its Poliphylo's love journey in a dream is abruptly interHouse signify entrapment, violence and despair.

There is no fortuitous resolution to the longing, no release of the unmanageable growing desire. Therefore in the case of Paul E. Phylo's Palace the final chamber-The Boudoir of Ultimate Excitements overheats, disintegrates and fades away.

The Space for Falling in Loves is characterised by the feeling of incompleteness, paired with longing and physical desire. It is a space for waiting and a space that needs and encourages physical touch. It uses multiple architectural thresholds, graduation of opulence and increasing physical levels of intimacy to control the users' desires. The Space for Falling in Love reveals it as a gradual process that is different for everyone. It exposes it as anticipation marked with alternating moments of despair and wonder.

This evasive, somewhat disappointing ending reveals a kind of truth about love. Love is something that is first built up in the mind as a fantasy. The fantasy of love is often impossible to be handled and sustained by brittle reality.

and spaces of (Last Year in Marienbad) and the (Little 1 Bastide Jean-François, The Little House: An Architectural Seduction), preface by Anthony Vidler/translation and introduction by Rodolphe el-Khoury, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1879.

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