

# Doubling Spaces

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English version: Jonathan Morris

The works of Ana Holck duplicate space. This holds for two of the meanings of the verb 'to duplicate'. They introduce more space where there was already space. In this first sense, duplication appears paradoxical. How is it possible to increase the dimensions of a given space? It is not the quantity of space, however, that is amplified in her work, but some of its sensory qualities, some of its aesthetic attributes. In this way, in 2003, to the round room of the Solar Grandjean de Montigny at the Pontifical Catholic University (PUC) of Rio de Janeiro, the artist added a revolving door supported at the centre, which divided the room into three equal parts. In order to move through the circular space of the location, the spectator found him/herself obliged to push the door, tracing out a trajectory that is also circular. To a static circle, the work adds a dynamic circulation. Duplication is thus imitation: a predicate of the work, its circularity, comes to resemble a predicate of a space that already exists, its round aspect.

The mimetic inclination in the works of Ana Holck must nevertheless be examined with care. At the outset, there are already preexisting spaces and things that are independent of the work which carries on a dialogue with them. They are predicates of a concrete space, already configured, that the work mimetizes. This imitation updates it and hence confers a new vigor on what already existed as potential. Without a space that is already given, the work would lose its ties. Thus, in her final graduation work for an architecture degree in 2000, the architectural project for a museum was determined by the initial explosion of a stone. The resulting arrangement of stone fragments appears as a leading thread for the future buildings. One stone resembles another, and according to their future arrangement, their positions also mimetize each other: the high and the low, the

left and the right, the back and the front. To avoid starting from an abstract space, the project first constructs a concrete location. In this way, what is imitated in the works of Ana Holck is never something figured. These are things that exist prior to the work and that shall continue to exist as concrete singularities, as and when the work conjugates with them. Space and things are not replaced by representations, but renewed and enriched by interweavings that had already allowed themselves to be glimpsed as concrete attributes of this space.

Even when she deals with photographs, in *My Mondrian*, of 2001, and *Distância* [Distance], of 2002, imitation in Ana Holck's work is not figuration either. In the work dating from 2001, the projection of light on parts of the human body both accentuates the contours of the bodies or of the projected light and transports the contours into strips of light or shadow that gain autonomy and new contours. Already in the work of 2002, the parts of the human body gained or lost definition, depending on whether one moved towards or away from them. The things in focus or out of it thus imitate distances, as the title of the work indicates. It is in the same line of this peculiar conception of imitation, the duplication by the work of a given predicate of the space in which it is installed, that other works by Ana Holck may be understood. The strips that trace out various parabolas in her work of 2003 at the Centro Cultural São Paulo, reflect the curved spaces of the building's roof. In *Transitante* [Transitant], which also dates from 2003, the space is a common, rectangular room. The strips, laid out in diagonals, run across the walls, the ceiling and the floor. In this case, imitation does not arise from an aspect of the room, but from the transverse path, also composed of diagonals, that is offered to the spectator as a way of entering the work. In this way, it is the floor plan and the elevation that resemble each other.

The use of strips in most of Ana Holck's work is intended to meet a need imposed by the play between the work and the attribute of the space that it mimetizes. The line is an element that is too fine to lead the work through the depth of space. A plane area is evidently something that is too broad to crystallize the veins of a place. If, on the one hand, the work with lines executed in the *Parque Lage* in 2002

mimetized the contours of the wooden stumps scattered across the floor and over the walls, on the other it bore little relationship to the space of the room itself. Already in *Empena Cega* [Windowless Gable] of 2001, however, the strips began both to increase the density of the space, and to mimitize it. Between the two gables that flanked a staircase, strips were placed in accordance with a drawing that also configured a stepped structure.

As in so many other histories, there is a history of the strip in modern art that reaches a high point in Mondrian, in whose works the strip also occupies an intermediate position between the line and the area. Thicker than the lines, they not only divide but also structure the space. Narrower than the areas, they are not the whole of space, but above all, its directions and rhythms. Carry these directional and pulsating stripes outside the canvas into concrete spaces. Make them adhere to places in such a way that they seem simple things within this space, in the same manner, for example, as the large iron plates of Richard Serra. The results of this mixture, which is almost a deduction, are Ana Holck's works with strips. It is not by chance that her master's dissertation dwelt on the work of these two artists, also attempting to examine the relations in their work with the city, music and dance. Do these relations also exist in the works of Ana Holck?

*Estais* [You Are], if I am not mistaken, since I am merely writing before the fine images of her model, is perhaps the most successful and clearest of her works. The concrete space that precedes the work is formed by four walls and two different groups with three pillars each. It is an interior space, but could also be an interval of urban space. The strips detach themselves from one of the larger walls of the rectangular plan and advance at different points towards the pillars that they surround. There is no fixed rule for these advances, but a search for an arrangement of rhythms and directions that animate and update the latent potentials of a place that would otherwise pass unnoticed. In the same way that most of the elements which sustain and divide urban equipment and spaces pass unnoticed. In the same way that the words of our language would remain mute were it not for the rhythms and intonations that are so close to everyday speech (I

owe this idea to Hélio Ziskind), and through which our best songs receive their words and make them meaningful again: pillar, ceiling, wall, may you be, you are, come, go, run, stop. In Estais there is indeed a song with these and other words, but it is more suitable, and it is quite sufficient merely to observe the beautiful dance of the coming and going of its strips.