

# 2

## DOMESTICITY AND THE ARCHITECTURE FILM

### Caring-With Architecture

*Lilian Chee, with a photo essay by Ian Mun*

In her book *Who Cares?*, Joan Tronto urges a model of freedom in which an ethics of care replaces the neoliberalist “market-foremost democracy.”<sup>1</sup> Building on the four-phased schema of care (caring about, caring for, caregiving, and care-receiving) formulated by herself and Berenice Fisher,<sup>2</sup> Tronto advocates a fifth phase—caring-with—which democratizes the question of care, distributing this responsibility across all scales and agencies. Care is systemic and relational. For it to work, it needs to happen everywhere, at every level, involving everyone and everything. Caring-with is messy. It interweaves between polarized groups; it is materially and socially grounded, and we need to accept that caring-with means we are implicated: we enter into the pact literally “in the middle of things.”<sup>3</sup> Being implicated, being in the middle of things, is key to caring-with. Tronto urges that caring-with influences how we think, what we know, why we act, and how we become.

Transposing the schema of caring-with into architecture, I propose that “care” be treated as an analytic—an ethico-conceptual category that provokes ontological questions about the reach and limits of architecture as a conduit for care. If care now is frequently objectified as disembodied lists of spatial and programmatic provisions resolved through the act of building, can architecture reconceptualize how else it could care? Indeed, where should architectural thinking with care begin, and what modes of action might be possible?

Care is complex. It encompasses labor, affective engagement, and ethico-political involvement.<sup>4</sup> STS theorist Maria Puig de la Bellacasa argues that the power of care is activated when these three dimensions are read against each other: “To care joins together an affective state, a material vital doing, and an ethico-political obligation.”<sup>5</sup> Through this dynamic, questions of care destabilize the status quo. We may not have the means to deal with all three aspects,

but recognizing our own disciplinary stakes in relation to this triadic complex is a first critical step toward “how to care” meaningfully. Cautioning against its commodification and “normative moralization,” Puig de la Bellacasa advocates caring as a “critically disruptive doing” that can reconfigure “troubled presents” in transformative ways.<sup>6</sup> She urges a recognition of divergent modes of valuing care, emphasizing that these modes may be displaced (or repressed) by power relations. As a disruptive analytic, questions of care (who, what, how, why) might scaffold future political and ethical imaginations that could inch closer to addressing those difficult but persistent questions.

Thinking through care in architecture inevitably unsettles disciplinary focus. As care brings together seemingly disparate categories of things and people, thinking through care requires a willingness to suspend disciplinary obsessions with architecture’s autonomy. Caring-with means being attentive to non-architectural others, taking account of the unwieldy and often overlooked subjects, objects, processes, or actions, and doing so without second-guessing their utility to the discipline, without biases of their lineage, without pretensions to fulfilling preordained architectural agendas. These diversions create disciplinary dissent; they stir up perennial assertions of what makes something architecture or not.

Where should architectural thinking with care begin? I situate the opportunity of caring-with within the realm of architectural representation, specifically through an affective filmic media. The discipline’s internally codified drawing-model-animation triad is effective for communicating design intentions. By extension, film places architecture in the “middle ground,” especially after architecture is occupied, thus allowing an audience to see and, sometimes, lose focus of architecture as an isolated objet d’art. In such instances, film advances an understanding of architecture’s complex relationships to people and things.<sup>7</sup> It offers a response to the issue of care, a problematic that has limited traction and remains largely speculative in the design stage.

This filmic modality creates a dialogical situation: it renegotiates architectural intentions by examining other-than-design encounters and holds such encounters in tension with an established architectural legacy and ideology. Addressing what becomes of architecture and its occupants, this approach offers a conduit of care, or, at the very least, it starts a conversation for *how to regard architecture*, still presented in a visual format. However, it makes its appearance through interwoven modes of use, experience, and maintenance, as well as considering occupant histories and their relationally inscribed temporalities linked to raced, classed, and gendered bodies.

This filmic modality is necessarily complicated by its closeness to architecture as art and capital,<sup>8</sup> while attending to what is kept separate from architectural accounts. In this sense, such films appropriate architecture’s fame and familiarity as touch points to highlight its reciprocal responsibilities. The films

defamiliarize architecture's aesthetic language by considering how these spaces react to occupancy, use, and maintenance. Indeed, it is actual everyday care for architecture that presents critical modalities for thinking architecture through approaches of care.

If a commitment to thinking through care uncovers subjects and stories not necessarily aligned with the shape of architecture's design agenda, then following what Puig de la Bellacasa argues, architectural representation driven by an ethics of care necessarily moves toward the speculative. By "speculative," I mean that architectural discourse shifts from discussing a building as the immovable and definitive outcome of design lineage, capital, and patronage toward a more tentative and entangled language, speaking to architectural production as collaborative and spontaneous. This discursive mode considers how architecture is made and remade by occupation and care while still being deeply invested in issues of design and capital. In other words, the architectural critique of care cannot be effective unless it embraces its own complicit nature in disciplinary autonomy, with the critic essentially "dissenting-within," recognizing her "insiderness" and "acknowledge(ing) implication" in the field.<sup>9</sup>

The following three sections elucidate methods configured around dimensionalities of ethics-labor-affect. The first section explores the expanded role of documentary film in architecture, laying out the former's capacity to engage issues of subjectivity and historiography. Film is a creative medium for communicating design, while video documentation is used in ethnographic work as research record.<sup>10</sup> The second section examines filmmakers—artist Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine's acclaimed *Koolhaas Houselife* (2008) and *Moriyama-San* (2017)—two examples of genre-breaking architectural documentary that bridge into artistic work, thus resonating with the two iconic pieces of architecture these films take as their foci. Creative *and* ethnographic in their constitution, the films describe how architectural representation can fold in care by closely attending to modes of occupancy, being alive to occupant habits and practices, and paying attention to non-disciplinary modalities of spatial production, including housekeeping, cleaning, and maintenance work. The third and final section discusses the critical role of vulnerability and how it might renovate the relationship between architecture and occupancy. The chapter closes with a photo essay introducing my own research film *Objects for Thriving* (2022), which revolves around questions of aging, independent living, and public housing.

### The Architecture Documentary: Configuring Conversations of Care

Film is a medium favored by architects. It is visual and affective: it captures and develops an idea, archives the ephemeral, and makes an argument of something too vast, too minute, or too complex to contemplate in their static

representation. Significant architecture films include Charles and Ray Eames's *Powers of Ten* (1977), which explored the relative effect of scale and our relationship to things seen and unseen in our universe, and *House: After Five Years of Living* (1955), also by the Eameses, which archived the couple's house in the Los Angeles neighborhood of the Pacific Palisades.<sup>11</sup> *House* was developed from a series of stills taken by Charles Eames. The stills featured details including architectural components, keepsake souvenirs, household furnishings, and the changing season's effects on light and foliage, which in turn influence the dwelling's interiors and external facades. Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown's field trip to Las Vegas was also turned into a student film assignment, titled *Las Vegas Deadpan* (1960s).<sup>12</sup> The assignment challenged its makers to rethink the depiction of Las Vegas's dynamic main strip, a landscape animated not just by its outlandish buildings but also by their landmark neon signs. Reyner Banham's *Reyner Banham Loves Los Angeles* (1972) was a travelogue of LA's vernacular architecture and landscape.<sup>13</sup> It was shot from behind the windscreen of a car driven by Banham himself, who had only learned to drive when he moved to LA. The film was aired on BBC One and was a companion piece to Banham's seminal book *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*.<sup>14</sup> There is also Rem Koolhaas and filmmaker Bregtje van der Haak's *Lagos* (2004), based on the architect's 2001 visit to the Nigerian city.<sup>15</sup> Viewers can switch between two videos and three audio channels in real time, thus mixing the city's multiple perspectives. *Lagos* features the personal perspectives of bus driver Olawole Busayo with regard to Lagos, seen and heard in parallel with Koolhaas's comments.

In these instances, the documentary mode is a voyeuristic eye to survey the new, to capture the still unfathomable, and, sometimes, to hint at the radical. The architects' use of film is primarily for making a statement—staking a claim, presenting evidence, declaring, “I saw the world in this way.” In these films, no matter how distracting the frame of the image, the architect's “I” and “eye” dominate. They affirm the architect as auteur. Like the fetishized architecture model, the architecture documentary exists as a cultural technique that records the architect's signature.

However, the use of film ultimately challenges disciplinary preference to position architecture on its own pedestal. Through film, “architecture” is almost always encountered in the midst of things, most of these lying outside the discipline's focus and significance. Recording how architecture is negotiated, inhabited, and co-produced by agents who operate outside the architect's control, the architecture film often reiterates the discipline's implicit but underplayed relationality. The architecture documentary genre is informed by diverse subjects and shaped by the subjects' inherent structures—the connectedness of things big and small in a universe, the unseen edges of an iconic but

lived-in house, a cacophonous city of unremarked vernacular buildings, architecture subsumed by highways and glitzy advertisements. Here, the voice of the user/occupant intersects the filmmaker/architect's vision. This intersection is where relational architectural knowledge arises.<sup>16</sup> It is also a site where an awareness of architecture's duty of care emerges.

The experimental and changing structure of documentary is consistent with what film theorist and curator Patricia Zimmermann calls the "ecology of new documentary."<sup>17</sup> "The ecology of new documentary" describes small-scale, place-based, collaborative, and modestly resourced documentaries in which there is increasing use of the platform for witnessing and activism, sometimes conveying "what postcolonial historiographers call crooked stories, an incomplete, fragmented process."<sup>18</sup> In art, the turn of participatory relational aesthetics means that intransigent issues such as housing and the environment not only inform the subject of the artwork but also configure its methodologies and influence its aesthetics.<sup>19</sup> Zimmermann compares this transformation to new documentary experiments, which are not only dialogical in their story arcs, but also aesthetically relational toward their subject-based encounters. Thus, while, previously, the documentary remade its subject, now, the subject reconfigures the documentary genre. The influence cuts both ways.

It is at the nexus of the subject-based encounter that I see filmmakers—artists Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine's work most firmly situated. Unlike the architecture film examples above, Bêka and Lemoine subvert the expected shape of the architecture documentary in favor of occupant-driven productions of space, creating an architectural version of "crooked stories" that speak to the architectural accounts of these houses. What comes to the fore is how domestic spaces and routines intersect with sometimes-contradictory architectural ideology. In their award-winning *Koolhaas Houselife* (2008) and *Moriyama-San* (2017), domesticity drives the spectator's entry and temporary inhabitation of two iconic houses—the Bordeaux house by Rem Koolhaas and the Moriyama house by Ryue Nishizawa.<sup>20</sup> The eye/"I" in these two films are neither the filmmakers' nor the architects'. This autonomy is given over to those who dwell or work within these houses. As Lemoine points out, the films meander through details instead of giving an overall picture, because the purpose is to "lead you to observe the infraordinary aspects of it—this is not just a technical aspect or constraint, it's about how we get to tell the space, how you will perceive it as a viewer."<sup>21</sup>

Author Georges Perec coined the term "infra-ordinary" to refer to a systematic, even obsessive, anthropological methodology that critiques the social sciences' habitual elevation of problems, catastrophes, and disasters into a flattened form of knowledge. Perec warns that this tendency of dismissing

quotidian minutiae in favor of issues of significance results in innate blindness and disembodied forms of knowledge. “What we need to question,” Perec attests:

is bricks, concrete, glass, our table manners, our utensils, our tools, the way we spend our time, our rhythms.... It matters a lot to me that they should seem trivial and futile: that’s exactly what makes them just as essential, if not more so, as all the other questions by which we’ve tried in vain to lay hold on our truth.<sup>22</sup>

The infra-ordinary inventory relates things big and small, important and unimportant, seen and overlooked, into a single space-time. It is not just noticing but making these fragments relate to each other, asking how they might matter and what happens when something unremarked changes or goes missing. It squares with Lemoine’s description that their films “make a psychoanalysis of the space[;] all our films are voyages through the conscious and unconscious rules and behaviours that inhabit us and the space.”<sup>23</sup> These affective and intuitive structures of knowing alter the way we see things and how we accord them importance. The films raise the importance of ephemeral infra-ordinary knowledge to understanding how both houses enable life within: accommodating what is anticipated but also sustaining relationships and routines that might exceed the architects’ vision.

### ***Moriyama-san and Houselife: Architecture through Occupancy***

In the two films, architecture unfolds in starts and stops, peripherally framed by and emerging through the actions of their occupants. Housekeeper Guadalupe Acedo’s cleaning routine of the Bordeaux house and homeowner Moriyama-san’s gentle but eccentric pastime of reading in unusual pockets and postures while also appreciating the ephemeral occurrences around him become the infra-ordinary conduits into these houses. The two characters share equal billing with the star-architecture that in contrast, makes their appearance through maintenance or use—being dusted, mopped, polished, vacuumed, ascended, peered into, leaned against, sat or slept on, rearranged. The houses are depicted taking place in the midst of life, as infrastructure which exists for, and because of, domesticity. The filmmakers spent between one and two weeks shadowing Ms. Acedo and Moriyama-san around each house, learning how the houses accommodate or resist habits from the inside out. In an interview with the magazine *Archdaily*, Bêka describes how *Houselife* was made in twenty-five chapters so as to “catch the building in little fragments.”<sup>24</sup> Architecture is reassembled as a kind of occupant-made exquisite corpse, understood through its lived consequences rather than its designed intentions.

These films have a Baroque sensation in how domestic details accumulate to become as significant as the architecture monolith.

*Moriyama-san* takes after titular owner Yasuo Moriyama, who lives alone in one of nine units inside his compound, five of which are self-contained flats rented out to younger tenants. While there is stillness in the white-washed geometry of Moriyama's own "village," his world and his house are filled with sounds. We become attuned to the infra-ordinary sounds of household objects, the sounds of a waking suburb: the sounds of Moriyama's younger tenants/neighbors, the whistling of wind, birdsong, the splash of a goldfish swishing in its bowl, and the rustling of leaves in the surrounding gardens. These soundscapes fill the physical gaps between the nine separate units, and allow the viewer to comprehend how domestic life is essentially lived and produced "in between" the completed built form.<sup>25</sup>

In *Moriyama-san*, the architectural complexity of the house unfolds through the gentle repartee between the homeowner, his tenants, his pet goldfish, his recently deceased dog, the new house guest Bêka, and the inner Tokyo neighborhood where the house is located. The pristine white forms and geometric spaces between the different blocks of Nishizawa's design are occupied in ways that perhaps even the architect might not have anticipated. In the laneways between the blocks and on the rooftops, nature enters the house. The impossible act of watching time pass is momentarily contemplated here. Ironically, things contained are, at the same time, liberated. The basement holds Moriyama-san's extensive catalog of sound music; this is where he disappears to become free. Just outside the main living block where Moriyama-san has set up a temporary altar for his beloved dog, there is a blue-and-white lotus pot on a metal table by the laneway. The lotus offers up its fragile leaves to the sky, catching the soft breeze. The temporary altar is placed beside a mature Ficus tree growing in a pot, and, beside that tree, a tender Ficus cutting thrives in another glass container filled with blue gel. The small table with the lotus pot mediates between the living block and the washroom block. It accommodates that transition, encouraging pauses between. By a low tree next to this table, *Moriyama-san* sets up a basin for shaving and washing his face. Under that same tree, he subsequently buries the ashes of his dog.

The narrow laneways between the blocks are planted with grasses, shrubs, and small trees, and host makeshift coverings for the tenants' vehicles as well as shared water butts. Unlike the built architecture, these additions are not pristine, though they are meaningfully made or planted, fully lived with, and well cared for. The architecture of the Moriyama house, as the film gestures, is the sum of all these parts and their various affects. An empathetic understanding of the house emerges as the audience gets to know the owner's habits, passions, and biographical details. In the end, we are left wondering if Moriyama-san's domestic habits might have been liberated by Nishizawa's design or vice versa.



Underlying the smaller details, there is a poignant materiality of aging, death, and grief that complicates the sophistication of the architecture and the simplicity of the homeowner's routines. Walking around the neighborhood, Bêka chances upon a mother and her kids in a pocket park trying to catch a bug. The mother explains that the bug they caught has a limited lifespan of only several days, counting down from the moment the insect departs from its nest. The theme of impermanence courses through the film. Certainly, this tenderness changes how the house is gradually viewed; the separate blocks become more permeable, looser in their sense of separation. Similarly, the laneways between the blocks encourage kinship. The fragility of being alive and being together is repeated in scenes of the house's immediate neighborhood and ends with a visit to the Moriyama family graves, where there is quiet communion between the living descendant and his ancestors.

A similar ephemerality, tenderness, loss, and vulnerability permeate *House-life*. Unlike the noise music of Otomo Yoshihide, the vivacity of Richard Strauss's Viennese waltzes animates Ms. Acedo's movement through the house as she gathers and moves voluminous curtains, swings a porthole open, and is lifted upwards by the imposing moving floor slab that both separates and connects all the levels of the bold concrete behemoth. Designed by Rem Koolhaas of OMA for the publisher Jean-François Lemoine, whose life was permanently transformed by a car accident, the house was listed as a *Monument Historique* almost immediately after it was completed in 1998. The publisher and his family had, contrary to the norm, commissioned Koolhaas to design a "complex" house that would respond to the challenges borne from the subsequent disability Lemoine had to live with. The heart of the house is a large moving platform (3 meters  $\times$  3.5 meters) once holding the late publisher's desk. It allowed him to freely traverse the three big "rooms" stacked over each other—the cavernous first level, overlooking a private garden dug into a hill; the public-facing second level, with its fully glazed façade opening toward spectacular views of the Bordeaux countryside and the Garonne River beyond; and the solid uppermost level, holding private bedrooms with portholes as windows.

The film follows how living in an architectural masterpiece designed to give a new lease of life to a disabled occupant also poses its own challenges of care. Ms. Acedo recognizes how the house was instrumental for bringing back vitality to the family but is honest about what it takes to keep the house in running order, considering the effects of inclement weather and everyday wear and tear. Describing how the housekeeper cuts through the myth of living tranquilly in a piece of art, architectural critic Louise Ada Huxtable reiterates the importance of intelligent and adaptive reproductive labor—creative house cleaning and persistent maintenance—in ensuring habitable spaces for routines:



Here is Ms. Acedo fashioning a spout out of a plastic cup with its bottom knocked out, placing it in a hole to direct one of the leaks into in her bucket, and here she is demonstrating the “joystick,” the illuminated pole that opens the house (there are no keys) when pulled back and forth the right way, sending frustrated users to the service entrance. She rubs soap on a floor track to get a balky glass panel started after the settling of the house has jammed it.<sup>26</sup>

At the start of the film, an architectural heritage group onboard a bus are briefed about the lauded late twentieth-century monument. The group are asked to leave their shoes at the entrance. From here on, the house gains a vulnerability often absent in contemporary architectural imagery. If riding in an automobile was Le Corbusier’s triumphant conception of how his Villa Savoye would welcome its visitor,<sup>27</sup> in *Houselife*, visitors walk down a dusty gravel path, duck between trees, and emerge into a neat private forecourt before entering the house with muddy shoes. These unkempt shoes are strewn messily at the glass door facing the partially submerged private garden. It is the first inkling of this lived domestic monument’s fragility. In a separate interview with Koolhaas, who initially pits his “platonic idea of architecture” against Ms. Acedo’s “platonic conception of cleaning,” the architect relents that by showing the house and occupants co-adjusted to a way of existing together, the film offers a corrective and stabilizing vision of architecture. The imperfections endear the house to us, not as a pristine machine for living in, but as an organic environment that weathers and ages together with its surrounding countryside. Like its occupants, the house, which had just passed its first decade and was no longer insured for defects at the time the film was made, also needs care. Ms. Acedo’s creative solutions for anticipating leaks or dealing with malfunctioning moving parts constitute her duty of care for the house and its occupants. The largely analog methods of maintaining (or caring) for a house—one notably designed with advanced engineering input to perform in ways that are complex, unconventional, or surprising—ultimately prolongs the house’s lifespan for active use, and thus allows a “platonic idea of architecture” to endure.

The camera watches as Ms. Acedo, who, after explaining she cannot take the spiral stairs, proceeds to ascend and descend one carrying a vacuum cleaner on her shoulder and an assortment of cleaning equipment in both hands, with the vacuum wand serving as her walking stick.<sup>28</sup> Ms. Acedo’s unfussed physical precarity unravels in some parts of the house, enlivening the unremarked contract of care between the occupant’s body (e.g. Ms. Acedo and the late Mr. Lemoine) and the house. Care, as the film shows, will only work if it is reciprocal. The house was designed to care for its disabled occupant. In turn, care must be extended to the house, which, in the film, does not just stand as a *Monument Historique* but manifests as a living memorial to its visionary

owner. The film's recognition of Ms. Acedo's ingenuity in making do with household objects for ad hoc house repairs reiterates why the "platonic idea of architecture" relies on disregarded reproductive labor to remain pure.

Architectural theorist and critic Catharina Gabrielsson argues that "hard and dirty" housework" of the sort that Ms. Acedo performs is central to architecture's longevity.<sup>29</sup> Housework also unravels architecture's complicity in commodification and how reproductive labor in the forms of cleaning, repair, and maintenance is frequently rendered invisible. Drawing on the work of Nancy Fraser who cautions that any society that "systematically undermines" reproductive and affective labor is at risk of extinction,<sup>30</sup> Gabrielsson points out that architecture too must acknowledge such reproductive labor as key to its continued existence:

Maintenance and cleaning as care-taking practices engage with buildings as dynamic matter, shifting and transformed through occupancy and decay.... [These practices] call on a wider assemblage of relations, activities, spaces and temporalities that, although hidden and ignored in architecture, constitute its background conditions of possibility.<sup>31</sup>

Both films show how the houses continue to be habitable and relevant through the occupants' care and lived routines. Distinct in their attempts to grasp information lodged in domesticity's infra-ordinary structures, the films reside at the edges of documentary and video art.<sup>32</sup> They speak through inhabitation and domestic routines without necessarily pressing an aesthetic milieu that dismisses its outside. Instead, the films examine novel ways for getting under architecture's skin, not so much demystifying the design of each house as laying bare how these houses support life, how they behave as domestic interiors, and how they assume that amorphous physical and psychical space we call "home."

Literary and film theorist Catherine Witt argues that film can be participatory and fulfill an affective conduit of care by conveying to its audience what is normally overlooked in conventional speech-acts and language.<sup>33</sup> *Houselife* and *Moriyama-San* switch the audience's attention to the figure of the occupant, casting this figure as the active producer of architecture's lived spaces, a situation likely to last decades after it is handed over from the architect. Described through occupation, the culturally conditioned architectural language, which focuses on formal geometry, breaks down. The jargon of lines, planes, volumes, shadow, light, shade, and material is mediated by how these might be maintained, how they obstruct routines or enable them, how they might be misused, how they weather and eventually fall apart. Concrete and wood, plaster and fabric are recognized for how forgiving they are to dust, stains, and stress, as well as how spontaneously and robustly they accommodate unexpected usage and situations.

The physical frame that holds everything together—the house—slips in and out of focus. This slippage is key. Film theorist Laura Rascaroli points out that such films overlay a critical filmic narrative frame onto architecture's inherent conceptual framing of the house.<sup>34</sup> In these cases, the filmic frame bears witness to the triadic ethics-labor-affect configuration in domestic spaces, thus putting together unrecorded, unseen, and unremarked behind-the-scenes care work side by side with award-winning architecture. A physical domain (the house, the neighborhood) and an ideological entity (undergirded by family, nation, iconic architectural commodity) are captured in a creative-critical ontological structure (the architecture documentary) that produces its own contingent and situated ways of reconsidering architecture, home, intimacy, and labor.

Ultimately, paying attention to occupancy is an act of caring-with. Bêka and Lemoine's films take up the task of caring for architectural legacies as much as they care about the people who live and work in these houses. The films situate domestic architecture and the occupants' care as mutually configuring components. They afford new modalities of architectural meaning and significance that mediate architectural intention with occupant life.

### ***Objects for Thriving: Vulnerability, Infrastructure, Domesticity***

Rather than a polemically opposing them, caring-with places architecture and occupancy in a relational continuum framed by a shared vulnerability that architecture and occupancy both embed. Judith Butler argues that vulnerability is not antithetical to agency.<sup>35</sup> To be vulnerable is not necessarily to be powerless. For Butler, agency without vulnerability is a "masculinist ideal."<sup>36</sup> Thus, they advocate recognizing vulnerability as a constructive means to affectively engage and relate to who has agency to act and who is acted upon. Situating this relationship of vulnerability between the human body and infrastructure as codependent, Butler reconceptualizes a relational continuum between the human body and their surroundings, with the human body having:

a certain kind of dependency on infrastructure, understood complexly as environment, social relations, and networks of support and sustenance by which the human itself proves not to be divided from the animal or the technical world, we foreground the ways in which we are vulnerable to decimated or disappearing infrastructures, economic supports, and predictable and well-compensated labor.<sup>37</sup>

Butler's "infrastructure" constitutes an environment articulated by animate and inanimate things, and whose knowledge is shaped by negotiating these complex interwoven relationships. "Infrastructure" is measured through

shared processes of living together that are likely challenging, even abrasive, and possibly hostile. Ultimately, “we cannot understand bodily vulnerability outside this conception of social and material relations.”<sup>38</sup> Conceptualized as a reciprocal material-social configuration in which the human body is understood neither as an independent nor discrete agent who can act alone or be acted upon without consequence, Butler’s notion of infrastructure is groundbreaking because it explicitly draws together hidden (infra) and reciprocal connections between our ways of living with the environments and things that support and/or obstruct us.

Domesticity provides an analytical category to think through housing or home following Butler’s material-social conception of infrastructure. It delineates interior household space, processes, agents, and politics, including the distribution of power and resources. Yet, domesticity has also been sidelined. Implicit in the anatomy of reproductive labor, domesticity is teleologically opposed to modernity, progressive thinking, productivity, and the dynamism of the public realm.<sup>39</sup> Associated with care work and affective labor, domesticity is an area hard fought by feminists and activists.<sup>40</sup> In architecture, domesticity, while a common aspect in housing, houses, and homes, remains a minor and largely unrecognized subcategory of interdisciplinary knowledge.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, domesticity is key when engaging housing or homes because it defines an affective micropolitics<sup>42</sup> marked by gendered and classed bodies of domestic helpers, tenants, homeowners, and occupants, both abled and disabled. Domesticity is inevitably polemical when such micropolitics—what philosopher Brian Massumi defines as the reservoir of real and unexpressed political potential for action<sup>43</sup>—intersect with ideological norms pervasive in established systems of knowledge and power, including those of architecture, labor, and kinship structures.<sup>44</sup>

The subject of the concluding photo essay, *Objects for Thriving* (2022), an observational documentary co-directed by emerging architectural filmmaker Ian Mun and myself, revisits domesticity’s affective politics.<sup>45</sup> While not unrelated to the ephemerality and loss portrayed in *Houselife* and *Moriyama-san*, it is specifically the issue of reciprocal vulnerability between the occupant and their home environment (in this case, the infrastructure of public housing) that the film attempts to address. At its core, *Objects for Thriving* also confronts one of the discipline’s weakest points: how to engage questions of aging occupancy without resorting to commodification and condescension. Can architecture’s responses to aging move beyond health-and-safety checklists and toward opportunities for rethinking self-autonomy, independence, and purpose? In Singapore, 25 percent of the population are expected to reach the age of sixty-five years by 2030. As a sizeable 80 percent of the island state’s population reside in public housing flats, *Objects for Thriving*’s focus on

occupants within the aging estate of Whampoa not only offers insights into a typical able-bodied aging population but also attempts to understand how domestic life might offer a purpose, a project even, to navigate the physiological and psychological changes in an occupant's later years. Filming took place in the thick of the pandemic in 2021. Mun acted as cinematographer-director in the field, while, as an asthmatic shielding from the pandemic, I took the role of researcher-director-at-a-distance, appraising and editing Mun's footage through a gendered spatial politics.<sup>46</sup>

The occupants were asked to share an object they cherished and that allowed them to thrive. We encountered these elders, their pasts, and present environments through a worn and well-used granite pestle and mortar, a Butterfly-brand sewing machine, and household talismans.<sup>47</sup> These objects enmesh social protocols, technologies of survival, belief systems, and personal ideologies. They are analog and anachronistic, and they embed their aging owners' expressions of independent selfhood at a life stage during which vulnerability overdetermines identity. The objects unintentionally challenge the public housing flat's neutrality. Contrasting the smooth surfaces of the mechanized high-rise kitchen, the weight and abrasive texture of the granite pestle and mortar is a displaced ancient technology. When used, its "pok pok" sound reverberates unapologetically through the floor slab into the unit below. This weightiness is also seen in the sewing machine, once integral to the traditional Chinese wedding trousseau. The sewing machine asserts an extravagant presence in a small flat. In the last household, the presence of talismans and altars enables its occupants to reconfigure their flat in alignment with syncretic belief systems. The talismans are totemic; they promise the unobstructed flow of *Qi*, or life force, through these high-rise interiors. The placing of household talismans overlays an intangible cultural ideology over the flat to produce a metaphysical space from within the physical one.

While the "objects" in this film refer to three domestic objects that speak of their owners' pasts, "objects" also gesture implicitly to the public housing flats as the armature that enables the space for these artifacts to be kept and their associated routines to continue. The infrastructure for these thriving aging bodies are such environments that permit freedom, safety, and nourishment of past pursuits and future endeavors. The public housing flat *is* an object for thriving. The outcome of a national scheme created to support nuclear living and to encourage the proliferation of young productive families, in *Objects for Thriving*, these flats offer a secure site for aging-in-place; they allow occupants to safeguard routines, or, in other words, to continue doing what makes them thrive. Film was a means to engage the micropolitics of aging bodies and their domestic situations. It gave occasion to tease out the occupants' unexpressed

political potential with regard to societal norms of aging, independence, and legacy. Mun and Thomas Kong, the project lead, worked hard to establish trust with the occupants before filming could begin.<sup>48</sup> Talking about their experiences of procuring and using their objects as well as demonstrating how these objects work in their current flats afforded opportunities for the elderly occupants to enact memories or situations in which their sense of agency became more pronounced.<sup>49</sup> It reaffirmed the possibility that, despite physical and financial vulnerabilities, their current situations are outcomes of their agency to remain active, connected, and purposeful. It is inconceivable that the understanding of an environment for aging would be possible without engaging such affective micropolitics in the domestic realm.

The film draws out the tensions of Mun's and my own architectural training, specifically how our modes of presenting public housing are complicated by the bodily and subjective difference of the elderly subjects we studied. For me, the challenges were how to speak about/to the occupants' independent living beyond abstract empathy. The film avoids categorizing these living arrangements through familiar headlines such as "heritage" or "memory-making." It also avoids conflating the occupants' quests for independence with active resistance. At the same time, even if care featured strongly in our relationship with and regard for the occupants, care as an epistemological category for reconsidering public housing living was never openly articulated. The absence, or more accurately abstinence, of taking "care" as a critical term speaks of the problematics of "care" as a working concept in academic research. I worried about perceptions of sentimentality and moral high-ground, or, worse, that we would end up over-patronizing our elderly subjects. This photo essay is a first attempt to couch the documentary within the lens of care.

To rethink architecture through the perspective of care means that the "architecture" we conventionally understand needs to take on a more expansive role. It may approximate Butler's definition of "infrastructure," which is to say, using care as an epistemological lens necessitates understanding architecture as a contiguous system of spaces (both of the house or the flat and around these buildings) and their social and material relationships with subjects, both animate and inanimate. This expanded configuration reveals why effecting care in architecture—through making spaces, through visual and textual representations of space, through the construction of architectural knowledge—is an effort that requires capacious imagination and collaborative labor. It brings us back to Tronto's reminder that care in architecture does not necessarily reside in the object of the building alone but is accommodated in the enduring networks and relationships that enable, maintain, and preserve life in those buildings across time (Figures 2.1 to 2.12).<sup>50</sup>

## Objects for Thriving

Ian Mun and Lilian Chee

### Dowry Cabinet [橱柜]



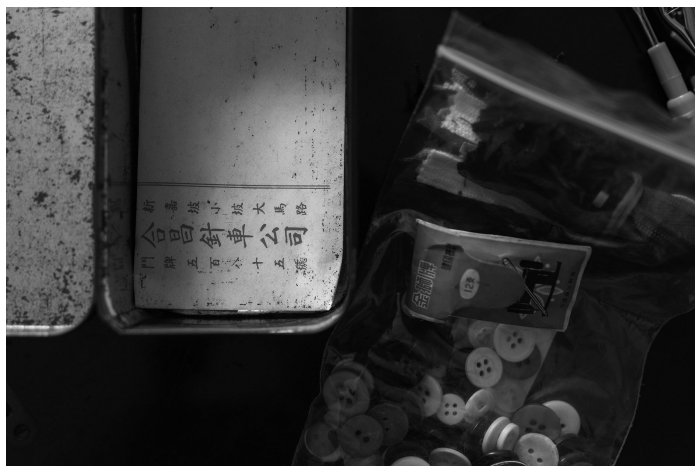
**FIGURE 2.1** It has been a long time since she opened these drawers. She does not remember when the stickers started to appear on the cabinet. She bought these years ago for her son who is now a grown man. The drawers contain old photographs, her jewelry, and make-up. What is there to doll up for now? She wonders aloud. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)



**FIGURE 2.2** As she flips through the old photo album, she recollects the good memories. Although she rarely looks at these albums, she is glad they are still with her. Was she pretty back then? She muses, looking closely at a photo taken during her son's wedding. This was her own dowry cabinet, given to her when she got married. The cabinet is old. Its drawers are hard to open, the joints are so stiff—much like her, she thinks. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)



## Sewing Machine [缝车]



**FIGURE 2.3** The sewing machine has been hers for close to fifty years now. It is a faithful companion. When she first bought the machine, she used it to mend her school-going children's uniforms; today, she mends her adult children's working clothes and sews garments for her grandchildren. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)



**FIGURE 2.4** Old is gold! Her daughter had once suggested replacing the sewing machine with a new model. She refused, likening her relationship with the machine to that of a mother and a child. Having cared for it for so many years, she is confident the machine will not give up on her. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)

## Pestle and Mortar [钵杵]



**FIGURE 2.5** The pestle and mortar are family heirlooms inherited from her mother-in-law. She was gifted these when she married into the family. It is so heavy, she says. It must be used on the floor, but she now struggles to lift it up to the sink for washing. The electric blender is a compromise on flavor, but she has little choice. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)



**FIGURE 2.6** He does not interfere with cooking or cleaning. His wife runs most of the chores out of her kitchen. He is careful not to get into her way. He remembers his mother passing the pestle and mortar to them. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)

Relations [关系]



**FIGURE 2.7** She was educated in a Chinese school, he in an English one. He remarks that she does not understand too much English, so, at home, he tries to speak a little Mandarin to communicate with her. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)



**FIGURE 2.8** They have different hobbies and rarely watch the same TV programs. He uses his iPad and computer in his study; she listens to Chinese sermons and watches Mandarin dramas on the TV in the living room. Sometimes he turns his iPad loud enough for her to hear what he is watching. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)

## Mirrored Flats [孿生居所]



**FIGURE 2.9** She has little knowledge of *feng shui*. That talisman was hung on the exposed ceiling beam by her late husband. There is a specific way of hanging it, she points out. The talisman is believed to repel negative energy and harmonize *qi* (life force) in their flat, a condition worsened by the exposed beam. They could not control the flat they were given. So, they needed to fix these anomalies using their own means. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)



**FIGURE 2.10** When they were looking for a home, her husband was afraid property prices might become too high for their own children to afford. So, they bought two units and removed the wall separating the two flats to make a bigger living space. Today, she lives with her daughter-in-law and her son under one roof. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)

Belief [信徒]



FIGURE 2.11 This room houses her son's belongings. The room was added to her existing flat by the government. The extra space is helpful, because the family members have different religious beliefs. Her son practices Buddhism and *feng shui* in this room; she practices Soka Buddhism and frequently chants in another room. The flat holds three prayer altars. The third altar, in the living room, is a shared ancestral altar. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)



FIGURE 2.12 She feels secure that the protective talismans are hung above the entrance to her flat. She also keeps the festive couplets on the wall beyond the celebration period. She believes they attract good vibes to her environment and her family. She personally replaces the couplets every Lunar New Year. (Still from *Objects for Thriving*, directed by Ian Mun and Lilian Chee, 2022.)



*The author is grateful to Ian Mun, Rachel Sim, and Thomas Kong for their contribution and friendship. Objects for Thriving (IRB No.: LS-20-114) was made with the assistance of a National Heritage Board Grant.*

## Notes

- 1 Joan C. Tronto, *Who Cares? How to Reshape a Democratic Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Selects, 2015).
- 2 Joan C. Tronto and Berenice Fisher, "Toward a Feminist Theory of Caring," in *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives*, ed. E. Abel and M. Nelson (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), 35–62.
- 3 Tronto, *Who Cares?* 4.
- 4 María Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 6.
- 5 Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care*, 42.
- 6 Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care*, 12.
- 7 For a discourse on approaching architecture beyond the object, see Hélène Frichot, *Creative Ecologies: Theorizing the Practice of Architecture* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018), 7–14. For a discourse on architecture's relationality in the middle of things, see Lilian Chee, *Architecture and Affect: Precarious Spaces* (Oxon: Routledge, 2023), 11–16.
- 8 Peggy Deamer, ed., *Architecture and Capitalism: 1845 to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2013).
- 9 Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care*, 80.
- 10 Lilian Chee, "Chasing Inuka: Rambling around Singapore through Tan Pin Pin's Films," in *Asian Cinema and the Use of Space: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Lilian Chee and Edna Lim (New York: Routledge, 2015), 59–76; Igea Troiani and Alison Kahn, "Film as Architectural Theory," *Architecture and Culture* 4, no. 3 (September 2016): 485–498.
- 11 Charles Eames and Ray Eames, *Powers of Ten and the Relative Size of Things in the Universe* (California: Eames Office, 1977), <https://www.eamesoffice.com/the-work/powers-of-ten>; Charles Eames and Ray Eames, *House: After Five Years of Living* (California: Eames Office, 1955), <https://www.eamesoffice.com/the-work/house-after-five-years-of-living>.
- 12 Venturi Robert and Denise Scott Brown, *Las Vegas Deadpan* (1968). For more information on the filmic output from the *Learning from Las Vegas* project, see Martino Stierli, "In Sequence: Cinematic Perception in Learning from Las Vegas," *Hunch*, no. 12 (2009): 76–85.
- 13 Julian Cooper, *Reyner Banham Loves Los Angeles* (London: BBC, 1972), <https://www.viennale.at/en/films/reyner-banham-loves-los-angeles>.
- 14 Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).
- 15 Bregtje van der Haak, *Lagos/Koolhaas* (Amsterdam: Submarine Channel, 2004), <http://lagos.submarinechannel.com>.
- 16 Igea Troiani and Hugh Campbell, "Architectural Filmmaking: Framing the Discourse and Conditions of Production in Architectural Practice and Education," in *Architecture Filmmaking*, ed. Igea Troiani and Hugh Campbell (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2020), 1–20.
- 17 Patricia Rodden Zimmermann, *Documentary across Platforms: Reverse Engineering Media, Place, and Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), 232.
- 18 Zimmermann, *Documentary across Platforms*, 232.
- 19 Zimmermann, *Documentary across Platforms*, 233.

- 20 Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine, *Koolhaas Houselife* (Paris: Bêka & Partners, 2008), [http://www.bekalemoine.com/Koolhaas\\_houselife.php](http://www.bekalemoine.com/Koolhaas_houselife.php); Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine, *Moriyama-San* (Paris: Bêka & Partners, 2017), <http://www.bekalemoine.com/moriyama.php>.
- 21 Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine, "Psychoanalyzing the Space: Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine Discuss the Ordinary Aspects of Urban Life," interview by Romullo Baratto, May 14, 2021, <https://www.archdaily.com/961269/we-make-a-psychoanalysis-of-the-space-an-interview-with-ila-beka-and-louise-lemoine>.
- 22 Georges Perec, "Approaches to What?" in *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, trans. John Sturrock (London: Penguin, 1997), 209–211.
- 23 Bêka and Lemoine, "Psychoanalyzing the Space."
- 24 Dima Stouhi, "How Ila Bêka Puts People's Emotional Responses to Space on Film," *ArchDaily*, June 2, 2018, <https://www.archdaily.com/895582/how-ila-beka-puts-peoples-emotional-responses-to-space-on-film>; Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine, *The Emotion of the Space* (Humblebæk: Louisiana Museum of Modern Art 2018), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVmk5D61\\_3k&t=2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVmk5D61_3k&t=2s). Ila Bêka was interviewed by Karsten Ifversen, camera by Rasmus Quistgaard, edited by Rasmus Quistgaard, produced by Christian Lund, for the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 2018, supported by Dreyers Fond.
- 25 See also Evangelos Kotsioris, "The Life in Between: Ryue Nishizawa's Moriyama House, Tokyo, 2002–2005," *Post: Notes on Art in a Global Context*, December 30, 2019, <https://post.moma.org/the-life-in-between-ryue-nishizawas-moriyama-house-tokyo-2002-2005/>.
- 26 Ada Louise Huxtable, "Ingenious and Demanding," *Wall Street Journal*, September 30, 2009.
- 27 In his interview with Bêka and Lemoine, Koolhaas evokes Le Corbusier's house as an exemplar which aimed towards architectural perfection and substance.
- 28 Huxtable, "Ingenious and Demanding."
- 29 Catharina Gabrielsson, "The Critical Potential of Housework," in *Architecture and Feminisms: Ecologies, Technologies, Economies*, ed. Hélène Frichot, Helen Runting, and Catharina Gabrielsson (London: Routledge, 2017), 246–255.
- 30 Nancy Fraser, "Contradictions of Capital and Care," *New Left Review* 10 (August 2016), <https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii100/articles/nancy-fraser-contradictions-of-capital-and-care>.
- 31 Gabrielsson, "The Critical Potential of Housework," 252.
- 32 "Spotlight on Bêka & Lemoine," Venice Architecture Film Festival, archived at <https://web.archive.org/web/20230329153935/>; <https://venicearchitecturefilm-festival.com/past-editions/2020/beka-lemoine>.
- 33 Catherine Witt, "The Space of Care: Fernand Deligny, Renaud Victor and the Making of *Ce Gamin, Là* (1975)," *French Screen Studies* 22, no. 1 (January 2022): 23–43.
- 34 Laura Rascaroli, "No | Home | Movie: Essay Film, Architecture as Framing and the Non-House," in *Film and Domestic Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 154–170.
- 35 Judith Butler, "Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance," in *Vulnerability in Resistance*, ed. Judith Butler, Zeynep Gambetti, and Leticia Sabsay (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 12–27.
- 36 Butler, "Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance," 24.
- 37 Butler, "Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance," 21.
- 38 Butler, "Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance," 16.
- 39 Hilde Heynen, "Modernity and Domesticity: Tensions and Contradictions," in *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*, ed. Hilde Heynen and Gülsüm Baydar (London: Routledge, 2005), 1–29. See



- also Lilian Chee, "Domesticity, Gender, and Architecture: Locating an Expanded Field," in *The Routledge Companion to Contemporary Architectural History*, ed. Duanfang Lu (New York: Routledge, 2023), 185–201.
- 40 Silvia Federici, *Wages against Housework*, 1st ed. (Bristol: Falling Wall Press; Bristol: Power of Women Collective, 1975); Helen Molesworth, "House Work and Art Work," *October* 92 (2000): 71–97.
  - 41 For a discussion around the knowledge politics of housing against the minutiae of everyday living, see Jane M. Jacobs, "A Geography of Big Things," *Cultural Geographies* 13, no. 1 (2006): 1–27. For discussions on domesticity, see Lilian Chee, "Reimagining Domesticity in 03-FLATS: Single Women and Singapore Public Housing," in *Architecture Filmmaking*, ed. Igea Troiani and Hugh Campbell (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2020), 117–138; Lilian Chee, "Keeping Cats, Hoarding Things: Domestic Situations in the Public Spaces of the Singaporean Housing Block," *Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 6 (August 2017): 1041–1065; Lilian Chee and Eunice Seng, "Dwelling in Asia: Translations between Dwelling, Housing and Domesticity," *Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 6 (August 2017): 993–1000.
  - 42 Brian Massumi and Joel McKim, "Of Micropereception and Micropolitics: Exploring Ethico-Aesthetics," *Inflexions: A Journal for Research-Creation*, no. 3 (October 2009): 1–20. Massumi defines "micropolitics" as the yet-to-be-realized political and creative potentials derived from a significant past event or situation: "Micropolitically, critique has to come from within, in the thick of things, and that means getting your hands dirty. There is no situation of being outside a situation. And no situation is subject to mastery. It is only by recognizing the bonds of complicity and the limitations that come with the situation that you can succeed in modulating those constraints at the constitutive level" (14).
  - 43 Massumi and McKim, "Of Micropereception and Micropolitics," 6–7.
  - 44 Gülsüm Baydar, "Spectral Returns of Domesticity," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21, no. 1 (2003): 27–45; Gülsüm Baydar, "Sexualised Productions of Space," *Gender, Place & Culture* 19, no. 6 (December 2012): 699–706.
  - 45 Lilian Chee and Ian Mun, *Objects for Thriving* (Singapore: Roving Studio; Singapore: National University of Singapore, 2022), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYtBmE4\\_Qrk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYtBmE4_Qrk). *Objects for Thriving* was part of a research project titled *Social Curating and Archiving: From Personal Possessions to Public Legacy in Whampoa* (IRB No.: LS-20-114). The project examined social archiving and public curation of older occupants' memories in Whampoa, an inner city suburb in Singapore. Funded by a National Heritage Board Research Grant, the project was led by Thomas Kong, an educator based in the Department of Architecture, National University of Singapore. See <https://www.whampoaarchives.com/videos> (Accessed May 16, 2023). Chee was a co-investigator in the project.
  - 46 As an asthmatic, I avoided going into the field during this time. My research collaboration with Mun was also structured around collegial care.
  - 47 Only three households were comfortable being filmed. Later, when the film was screened at the local community center, a large elderly community came to support the screening and the three homeowners who were featured.
  - 48 When one of the occupants developed Covid during the filming phase, concern for her health was shared by the research team.
  - 49 For the politics and transformative potentials of domestic enactments for video, see Sarah Pink and Kerstin Leder Mackley, "Saturated and Situated: Expanding the Meaning of Media in the Routines of Everyday Life," *Media, Culture & Society* 35, no. 6 (2013): 677–691.
  - 50 Joan C. Tronto, "Caring Architecture," in *Critical Care: Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019), 26–32.

## References

- Venturi Robert and Denise Scott Brown, Las Vegas Studio, *Las Vegas Deadpan*, 1968.
- Banham, Reyner. *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.
- Baydar, Gülsüm. "Sexualised Productions of Space," *Gender, Place & Culture* 19, no. 6 (December 1, 2012): 699–706. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2012.675472>.
- Baydar, Gülsüm. "Spectral Returns of Domesticity: Environment and Planning D," *Society and Space* 21, no. 1 (2003): 27–45.
- Bêka, Ila, and Louise Lemoine. *Koolhaas Houselife*. Bêka & Partners, 2008. [http://www.bekalemoine.com/Koolhaas\\_houselife.php](http://www.bekalemoine.com/Koolhaas_houselife.php)
- Bêka, Ila, and Louise Lemoine. *Moriyama-San*. Bêka & Partners, 2017. <http://www.bekalemoine.com/moriyama.php>.
- Bêka, Ila, and Louise Lemoine, "Psychoanalyzing the Space: Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine Discuss the Ordinary Aspects of Urban Life." *ArchDaily*, accessed November 9, 2022. [https://www.archdaily.com/961269/we-make-a-psychoanalysis-of-the-space-an-interview-with-ila-beka-and-louise-lemoine?ad\\_medium=gallery](https://www.archdaily.com/961269/we-make-a-psychoanalysis-of-the-space-an-interview-with-ila-beka-and-louise-lemoine?ad_medium=gallery).
- Bêka, Ila, and Louise Lemoine, *The Emotion of the Space*. Humlebæk: Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 2018, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVmk5D61\\_3k&t=2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVmk5D61_3k&t=2s).
- Butler, Judith. "Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance." In *Vulnerability in Resistance*, edited by Judith Butler, Zeynep Gambetti, and Leticia Sabsay, 12–27. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016.
- Chee, Lilian. *Architecture and Affect: Precarious Spaces*. Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2023.
- Chee, Lilian. "Chasing Inuka: Rambling around Singapore through Tan Pin Pin's Films." In *Asian Cinema and the Use of Space: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Lilian Chee and Edna Lim, 59–76. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Chee, Lilian. "Domesticity, Gender, and Architecture: Locating an Expanded Field." In *The Routledge Companion to Contemporary Architectural History*, edited by Duanfang Lu, 185–201. New York: Routledge, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315674469>.
- Chee, Lilian. "Keeping Cats, Hoarding Things: Domestic Situations in the Public Spaces of the Singaporean Housing Block." *The Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 6 (August 18, 2017): 1041–1065. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2017.1362024>.
- Chee, Lilian. "Reimagining Domesticity in 03-FLATS: Single Women and Singapore Public Housing." In *Architecture Filmmaking*, edited by Igea Troiani and Hugh Campbell, 117–138. Bristol: Intellect Books Ltd., 2020.
- Chee, Lilian, and Eunice Seng. "Dwelling in Asia: Translations between Dwelling, Housing and Domesticity." *The Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 6 (August 18, 2017): 993–1000. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2017.1362145>.
- Chee, Lilian, and Ian Mun. *Objects for Thriving*. Singapore: Roving Studio and National University of Singapore, 2022. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYtBmE4\\_Qrk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYtBmE4_Qrk).
- Cooper, Julian. *Reyner Banham Loves Los Angeles*. London: BBC, 1972. <https://www.viennale.at/en/films/reyner-banham-loves-los-angeles>.
- de la Bellacasa, María Puig. *Matters of Care*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017. <https://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/matters-of-care>.
- Deamer, Peggy, ed., *Architecture and Capitalism: 1845 to the Present*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

- Eames, Charles, and Ray Eames, *House: After Five Years of Living*. California: Eames Office, 1955. <https://www.eamesoffice.com/the-work/house-after-five-years-of-living/>.
- Eames, Charles, and Ray Eames. *Powers of Ten and the Relative Size of Things in the Universe*. California: Eames Office, 1977. <https://www.eamesoffice.com/the-work/powers-of-ten/>
- Federici, Silvia. *Wages against Housework*. Bristol: Falling Wall Press and the Power of Women Collective, 1975.
- Fraser, Nancy. "Contradictions of Capital and Care." *New Left Review* 10 (August 2016). <https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii100/articles/nancy-fraser-contradictions-of-capital-and-care>.
- Frichot, Hélène. *Creative Ecologies: Theorizing the Practice of Architecture*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.
- Gabrielsson, Catharina, "The Critical Potential of Housework." In *Architecture and Feminisms: Ecologies, Technologies, Economies*, edited by Frichot, Hélène, Helen Runting, and Catharina Gabrielsson (London: Routledge, 2017), 246–255.
- Heynen, Hilde. "Modernity and Domesticity: Tensions and Contradictions." In *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*, edited by Hilde Heynen and Gülsüm Baydar, 1–29. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Huxtable, Ada Louise, "Ingenious and Demanding." *Wall Street Journal*, September 30, 2009.
- Jacobs, Jane M. "A Geography of Big Things." *Cultural Geographies* 13, no. 1 (2006): 1–27.
- Kotsioris, Evangelos. "The Life in Between: Ryue Nishizawa's Moriヤマ House, Tokyo, 2002–2005," post, December 30, 2019. <https://post.moma.org/the-life-in-between-ryue-nishizawas-moriyama-house-tokyo-2002-2005/>.
- Massumi, Brian, and Joel McKim, "Of Microperception and Micropolitics: Exploring Ethico-Aesthetics," *Inflexions: A Journal for Research-Creation*, no. 3 (October 2009): 1–20.
- Molesworth, Helen. "House Work and Art Work," *October* 92 (2000): 71–97. <https://doi.org/10.2307/779234>.
- Perec, Georges. "Approaches to What?," In *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, translated by John Sturrock, 209–211. London: Penguin Books, 1997.
- Pink, Sarah, and Kerstin Leder Mackley. "Saturated and Situated: Expanding the Meaning of Media in the Routines of Everyday Life." *Media, Culture & Society* 35, no. 6 (2013): 677–691. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443713491298>.
- Rascaroli, Laura. "No | Home | Movie: Essay Film, Architecture as Framing and the Non-House." In *Film and Domestic Space*, 154–170. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- Stouhi, Dima. "How Ila Bêka Puts People's Emotional Responses to Space on Film." *ArchDaily*, June 2, 2018. <https://www.archdaily.com/895582/how-ila-beka-puts-peoples-emotional-responses-to-space-on-film>.
- Troiani, Igea, and Alison Kahn, "Film as Architectural Theory," *Architecture and Culture* 4, no. 3 (September 2016): 485–498. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20507828.2016.1239965>.
- Troiani, Igea, and Hugh Campbell, "Architectural Filmmaking: Framing the Discourse and Conditions of Production in Architectural Practice and Education." In *Architecture Filmmaking*, edited by Igea Troiani and Hugh Campbell, 1–20. Bristol: Intellect Books Ltd., 2020.

- Tronto, Joan C. "Caring Architecture", in *Critical Care: Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019), 26–32.
- Tronto, Joan C. *Who Cares? How to Reshape a Democratic Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Selects, an imprint of Cornell University Press, 2015.
- Tronto, Joan C., and Berenice Fisher. "Toward a Feminist Theory of Caring." In *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives*, edited by E. Abel and M. Nelson, 35–62. Albany: SUNY Press, 1990.
- van der Haak, Bregtje, *Lagos/Koolhaas* (Submarine Channel, 2004), <http://lagos.submarinechannel.com/>.
- "Venice Architecture Film Festival." accessed November 9, 2022. <https://venicearchitecturefilmfestival.com/past-editions/2020/beka-lemoine>.
- Stierli, Martino. "In Sequence: Cinematic Perception in Learning from Las Vegas." *Hunch*, no. 12 (2009): 76–85.
- Witt, Catherine. "The Space of Care: Fernand Deligny, Renaud Victor and the Making of Ce Gamin, Là (1975)," *French Screen Studies* 22, no. 1 (January 2, 2022): 23–43, <https://doi.org/10.1080/26438941.2021.2003562>.
- Zimmermann, Patricia Rodden. *Documentary across Platforms: Reverse Engineering Media, Place, and Politics*, 232. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019.