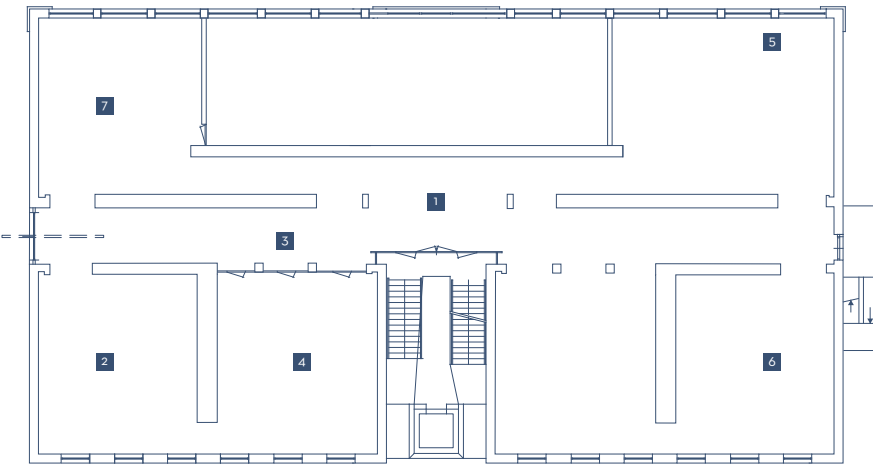


# Exhibition Floor Plan

THIRD FLOOR



- 1 page turning machine and magazine
- 2 the king
- 3 the door
- 4 the thief
- 5 the window
- 6 the stranger
- 7 the camera

## *the king, the door, the thief, the window, the stranger, the camera* Judy Radul

Upon entering the exhibition, you are invited—and at times manipulated—to relate in different ways to the forms and techniques at work in the spaces. As a king, you won't touch or move anything around you: things move on their own, for your pleasure alone. No door remains closed to the sovereign. As a thief, you are an unwelcome guest that raids the rooms, hoping to remain unseen. You snuck in through an open window. Transparency comes at a price. As a stranger, you are caught on camera and made visible, your strangeness on full display for all others to see.

Media technologies such as CCTV, screens and automated motion have become the culturally and politically charged frames and filters by which our sense of reality is built. Judy Radul sets out to explore the poetic and social agency of doors, windows, entrances, and exits by means of her multi-camera, live-feed 'present system'—the backbone of the exhibition. Cameras become agents that steer the visitor's behavior; architecture is performed through multiple points of view. Portals and vistas are brought to the fore as reality-producing media. Radul transforms the exhibition spaces into a dynamic set for live image production.

*In my art work, particularly recent work with moving cameras, I have made use of a lens geometry, which I think of as the architecture of the lens—a space not delineated by walls, but demarcated by the continuous, shifting potential of the lens view. However, unlike a theatrical stage frame machine, animated (pan tilt zoom) lens space is not fixed, but moving and virtual. The space doesn't surround the subject as much as it traverses it.*

—Judy Radul, *Video Chamber*, 2011

In the exhibition spaces, the forces of media technologies are channeled into an experiential assemblage where they both materialize and dematerialize. The foldable connectors and dividers deployed by the artist—book pages, shutters, blinds and screens—exert agency on a social and ideological level: a door, for example, constitutes the reality of inside and outside, of access and exclusion.

### PAGE TURNING MACHINE AND MAGAZINE 1

What if a space could unfold like a book? Imagine an unhinged space, opening up and closing in on itself, revealing and concealing. In this magazine, designed to be looked at by a camera, Radul collates found imagery, photographs made in Rotterdam, and source texts including her own writing. The arrangement of images is such that the causal dynamics between recto-verso and the cinematic shot/counter-shot are brought to the fore. The automated page turner is like a bad actor laboring over a gesture we ourselves could make without giving it any thought. By handing over this gesture to an apparatus, the constituent parts of the movement are broken up. Reading and leafing are denaturalized, mechanized and outsourced.

*The play of recto and verso enabled by objects such as book pages that can be turned creates an ambivalent threshold zone between the imaginary of the image and the real of the reader/observer. The medial conditions for the birth of a hallucination have been met—a hallucination that is at its very core a medial operation.*

—Bernhard Siegert, *Figures of self-reference. A media genealogy of the trompe-l'oeil in seventeenth-century Dutch still life in Cultural Techniques. Grids, Filters, Doors and Other Articulations of the Real*, 2015

## THE KING 2

*Kings don't touch doors.*

*They don't know this happiness: to push, gently or roughly before you one of these great familiar panels, to turn around towards it to put it back in place—to hold a door in your arms. The happiness of seizing one of these tall barriers to a room by the porcelain knob of its belly; this quick hand-to-hand, during which your step slows down for a moment, your eyes open up and your whole body adapts to its new apartment.*

*With a friendly hand he holds on a bit longer, before firmly pushing it back and shuts himself in—agreeably assured by the click of the powerful and well-oiled latch.*

—Francis Ponge, *The Pleasures of the Door*, 1942

His Majesty The King Willem-Alexander Claus George Ferdinand, Prince of Orange-Nassau, ascended the throne of The Netherlands on 30 April 2013.

## THE DOOR 3

*The door represents in a decisive manner how separating and connecting are only two sides of precisely the same act. The human being who first erected a hut revealed the specifically human capacity over against nature, insofar as he or she cut a portion out of the continuity and infinity of space and arranged this into a particular unity in accordance with a single meaning.*

—Georg Simmel, *Bridge and Door*, 1908

*I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

—John 10:9-16, New King James Version

*As the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century embraces the virtues of transparency and flow, the physical reality of the door becomes embarrassing, suspicious, while the original, divisive impetus of the door grows stronger than ever. An awkward compromise emerges in the dematerialized*

*door: no longer a hefty barrier politely opened upon the production of credentials, but a stretched zone of passive aggressive, relentless checking mediated through layers of insidious devices. A proposed “tunnel of technology” could rationalize the obstacle course that is the contemporary airport, which has inherited the old city gate's function of policing passage into and out of the urban center. With its Checkpoint of the Future, the International Air Transport Association proposes to solve the resulting clutter by creating a new global digital infrastructure that identifies safe citizens in advance and allows travelers, using the key of their biometric data, to pass unimpeded through security, as if there were no door at all...*

—Rem Koolhaas, *Elements of Architecture* - 14. International Architecture Exhibition, la Biennale di Venezia, 2014

## THE THIEF 4

*And what happens during a burglary? Having broken the lock, as soon as I push the door it thrusts back within me a heap of darkness, or, to be more exact, a very thick vapor which my body is summoned to enter. I enter. For a half hour I shall be operating, if I am alone, in a world which is the reverse of the customary world.*

—Jean Genet, *The Thief's Journal*, 1949

The elements in this room together evoke a chain of reference, including Jean Genet's *The Thief's Journal*, an account of his life as a thief and social pariah; his short critical essay *What remains of a Rembrandt torn into four equal pieces and flushed down the toilet*; the theft of seven masterpieces from the Kunsthal Rotterdam in 2012—remains of which were later found in the back yard of the mother of one of the thieves who had burnt several paintings in an attempt to protect her son from prosecution—; Derrida's experimental book *Glas* in which the philosopher considers Hegel's metaphysics and Jean Genet's writing, adopting also the latter's double columned structure used in the original *What remains of a Rembrandt*; and Jean Genet in *Tangier* by Mohamed Choukri, a novelist, kindred spirit and friend of Genet's.

Before the invention of the printing press by Gutenberg in 1440, books were created entirely by hand in a time-consuming, laborious process. Books were hence extremely rare and valuable. To prevent them from theft, Medieval libraries often kept their precious volumes chained up, allowing for the books to be consulted only on site. This feature of *stabilitas loci* (alluding to the Benedictine ideal of staying in one location your entire life) turns the chain into a signifier of the locus of knowledge. Contemporary knowledge systems emphasize the maximum dissemination of knowledge, potentially leading to the devaluation of information. With the chained up books, their status as being valuable is heightened while their action radius is severely limited.

## THE WINDOW 5

*The window indicates, first of all, the rather general classification of social reality in a public male-oriented space and a private female-oriented space. The special character of the window as a borderline has not only to do with its fragility in contrast to the solidness of the walls, but also with its relationship to the other opening in the façade: the door. Finally, the most dominant temporal classification of day and night is signaled by an uncovering or a covering of the window.*

*The shunning of the window by upper-class women and the gradual process of restraining maids from cleaning the public side of the window are vital elements in the completion of female domestication. The nineteenth-century reinvention of the exterior shutter blinds or “modern” wooden roller blinds, paralleled by the use of a mass of draperies on the inside, confirmed the solidification of the window as the borderline between private and public space. The solidification seemed to justify the appearance of male window cleaners.*

—Irene Cieraad, *Dutch Windows. Female Virtue and Female Vice*, 2006

*The problem in architecture is first and foremost one of doors and windows. There are three windows. There is the French window (door) which serves to effect an architecture, a place where man lives, be this a city or an apartment. There is the window which renders itself autonomous, the window as a place of light or looking. The third window is the television screen... So when I speak of a window, I mean this third window. I am speaking also of another constructed space, that of telecommunications and the new technologies. Another point concerns cutting out: you only have an image if there is cutting, for nothing is ever seen in its entirety. Everything is always perceived through a frame, and it's certain this frame existed from the moment the first eye opened upon the visible field. This process continued with the framing of paintings, the frame of the photograph, and the frame created by the television camera eye.*

—Paul Virilio, *Speed-Space*, interview with Chris Dercon in *VIRILIO LIVE: Selected Interviews*, 2001

## THE STRANGER 6

*If wandering is the liberation from every given point in space, and thus the conceptional opposite to fixation at such a point, the sociological form of the “stranger” presents the unity, as it were, of these two characteristics. This phenomenon too, however, reveals that spatial relations are only the condition, on the one hand, and the symbol, on the other, of human relations. Elements which increase distance and repel, in the relations of and with the stranger, produce a pattern of coordination and consistent interaction.*

—Georg Simmel, *The Stranger*, 1908

Diergaarde Blijdorp, the Rotterdam zoo, houses a group of zebras native to the savannah of north-east South Africa.

*Strangely, the stranger lives within us: he is the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity founder.*

—Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, 1991

## THE CAMERA 7

The 'present system' is Radul's unique multi-camera system. Responding to the surroundings, she records a choreography of camera motion which determines the live panning, tilting, zooming and tracking motions of the cameras set up throughout the space. While walking through the spaces, you see other visitors (and occasionally yourself) in the montages playing on multiple screens. The 'present system' puts image-pressure on the time and space of the exhibition, and estranges the visitor, creating a short-circuiting of looking-at and being-looked-at, which are the core dynamics of the theatre. As the camera cannot but look at anything placed within its line of sight, what is at stake here is not so much the visual itself, but the perception and recording of the visual as it unfolds on-screen. Through this intricate system, Judy Radul explores the ethics and aesthetics of live camera motion and image feeds, the characteristics of recorded time and action, and the different ways of framing objects and happenings through a lens. In doing so, she allows multiple modes of perception and representation to simultaneously manifest themselves.

*In pondering the superimposition of built space and lens space it may be worth remarking that built space, although it may partition an environment, is fundamentally part of a contiguity, one room leads to the next, the door opens to a street and the street to a field. The lens delimits space in a different way, finding its terminus in the videographic frame which selects from contiguous space and therefore continuously refers to an "out of frame" just beyond the cone of vision of the camera. The desire to be seen by a video camera is a desire to appear at a distance from oneself. Video couples the desire to be seen with the desire to see from the point of view of the camera, in the absence of any "encompassing" space that brings myself and my audience together.*

—Judy Radul, *Video Chamber*, 2011

