

Author: Yeoryia Manolopoulou with tessera
Research Output 4: *Drawing FIX*

Co-Authors: Anthony Boulanger, Penelope Haralambidou, Eduardo Rosa

Output Type: Design

Design and Production of Artefact for Group Exhibition: *Drawing FIX*

Media: Two combined DVD projections of computer generated animations (duration of loop 4mins, dimensions variable to form a 1:1 scale experience on site) and a single DVD projection (duration of loop 2mins) onto a 1:300 architectural model. The particular installation at the EMST covered an area of approx. 70m²

Dimensions: Variable

Exhibition: *Big Brother: Architecture and Surveillance*

Location: EMST National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens

Curator: Memos Filippidis

Dates of Exhibition: 18 June – 26 August 2002

300 Word Summary

Drawing FIX (with architectural design practice tessera) was a multimedia installation for *Big Brother: Architecture and Surveillance*, international exhibition at EMST National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, 2002, accompanied by a catalogue essay (Greek and English).

Questions/Aims/Objectives

The proposal 'reconstructs' electronically the facades of the half-demolished EMST, a building designed by one of the most significant figures of Greek modernism, architect Takis Zenetos, in order to explore:

- (1) The technological, aesthetic, and social possibilities of surveillance as integrated in a building proposal.
- (2) Alternative forms of public space.
- (3) Ways of 'remembering' places 'lost' to the consciousness of a community.

Context

The project contributes to broader discussions of contemporary architectural restoration, surveillance and time-based technologies, as well as current debates on advancing the role of architectural representation and exhibition.

Methods

Historical research into the work of Zenetos.

Technical research into electronic technology.

Research into time-based media, particularly the combination of animation and three-dimensional models, and their special communicative role.

Dissemination

The exhibition attracted attention from the media and has been discussed in Memos Philippidis, 'Arquitectura (In)Segura y Tácticas de Vigilancia', *Metalocus*, v. 10 (2002), pp. 146–155 (Spanish and English); Panayiotis Tournikiotis, 'Architecture and Surveillance', *Greek Works* (www.greekworks.com, accessed 15/12/2004).

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Esteem

The EMST is the single most important venue for contemporary art and architecture in Greece. Previous exhibitors include Nam June Paik, Bill Viola and Bruce Nauman. The other exhibitors selected included internationally acclaimed individuals such as Andreas Aggelidakis, Diller+Scofidio, Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis, Christos Papoulias, [+RAMTV] and Joel Sanders. The exhibition was installed in the main gallery, together with the 'Blur' building by Diller+Scofidio. The work is now part of the permanent collection of the EMST.

Authorship

Drawing FIX is a design project by tessera, an architectural collaboration of four members, each of which contribute equally: Anthony Boulanger, Penelope Haralambidou, Yeoryia Manolopoulou, Eduardo Rosa.

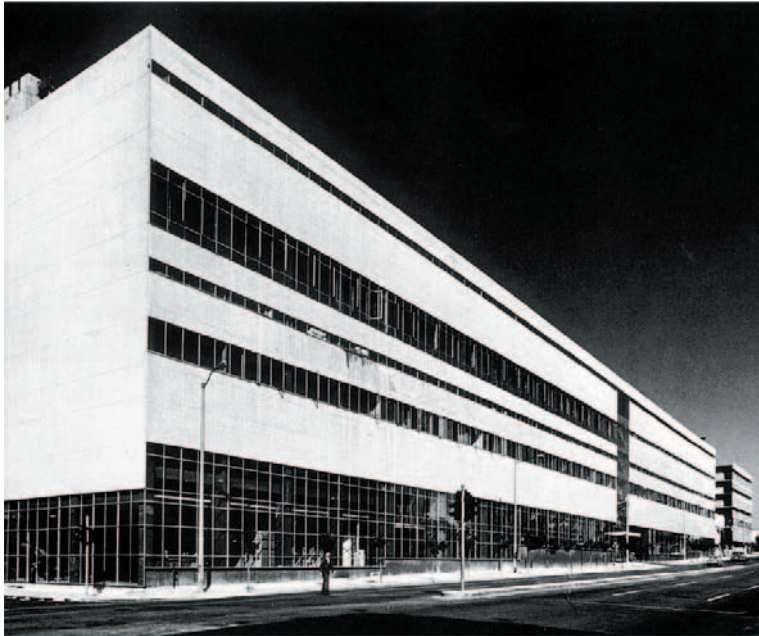


Image 1
The FIX building in its original
form and its current amputated
state.

General Description

Drawing FIX was created in 2002 after the National Museum of Contemporary Art (EMST), Athens, invited tessera (an architectural collaboration of four members: Anthony Boulanger, Penelope Haralambidou, Yeoryia Manolopoulou and Eduardo Rosa) to participate in the international exhibition *Big Brother: Architecture and Surveillance*. Our project addressed the theme of surveillance in a site-specific manner: through an interrogation of the traumatic history of the building that today houses the EMST. The building is the famous former FIX brewery, a significant landmark in the centre of Athens.

The FIX brewery, designed by one of the most distinguished architects of Greek modernism Takis Zenetos, stood as an exceptionally dynamic piece of architecture in Athens for more than three decades. In the 1990s the building was ruthlessly cut in the middle and half of it was totally demolished to facilitate works for the new Metro (image 1). The large void that was created by this demolition has yet to be filled while the edge of the amputated edifice magnifies a feeling of loss for the city.



Image 2
Postcard: an apparition of the
half-demolished FIX building.
©tessera

Drawing FIX is conceived as an urban apparition, a 'ghost image' of the lost building. (image 2) It is a proposal for an ephemeral building that records and relays past events, functioning as a physical repository of the city's memories. Re-tracings of the original two long elevations are merged to create a thin diaphanous structure: a new 'screen-building' that can be used as a public 'vertical square'. (image 3) Like an instrument of optical survey, *Drawing FIX* draws on its entire skin the view that was once occupied by the original building. (image 4) The concrete and glass zones of Zenetos' design are translated into strips of sweeping electronic images. (image 5) The broadcast of the full-scale plan of the empty plot creates an inhabited elevation, where visitors wander in its narrow ramps and decks. (image 6) Tactile explorations become visible when recordings of the 'scanning eye', a camera sliding inside the handrail of the top deck, are interrupted by the coincidental touch of a hand. Whenever the transmission of data is broken, the building fills with 'noise' or disappears in parts. (image 7)

In 2002 *Drawing FIX* was presented as a multi-media installation in the existing part of the FIX building, currently housing the EMST. (images 8, 9 and 10) Since then it belongs in the permanent collection of the museum. A detailed description of the project appears in the catalogue essay (please see attached as part of Appendix 1).

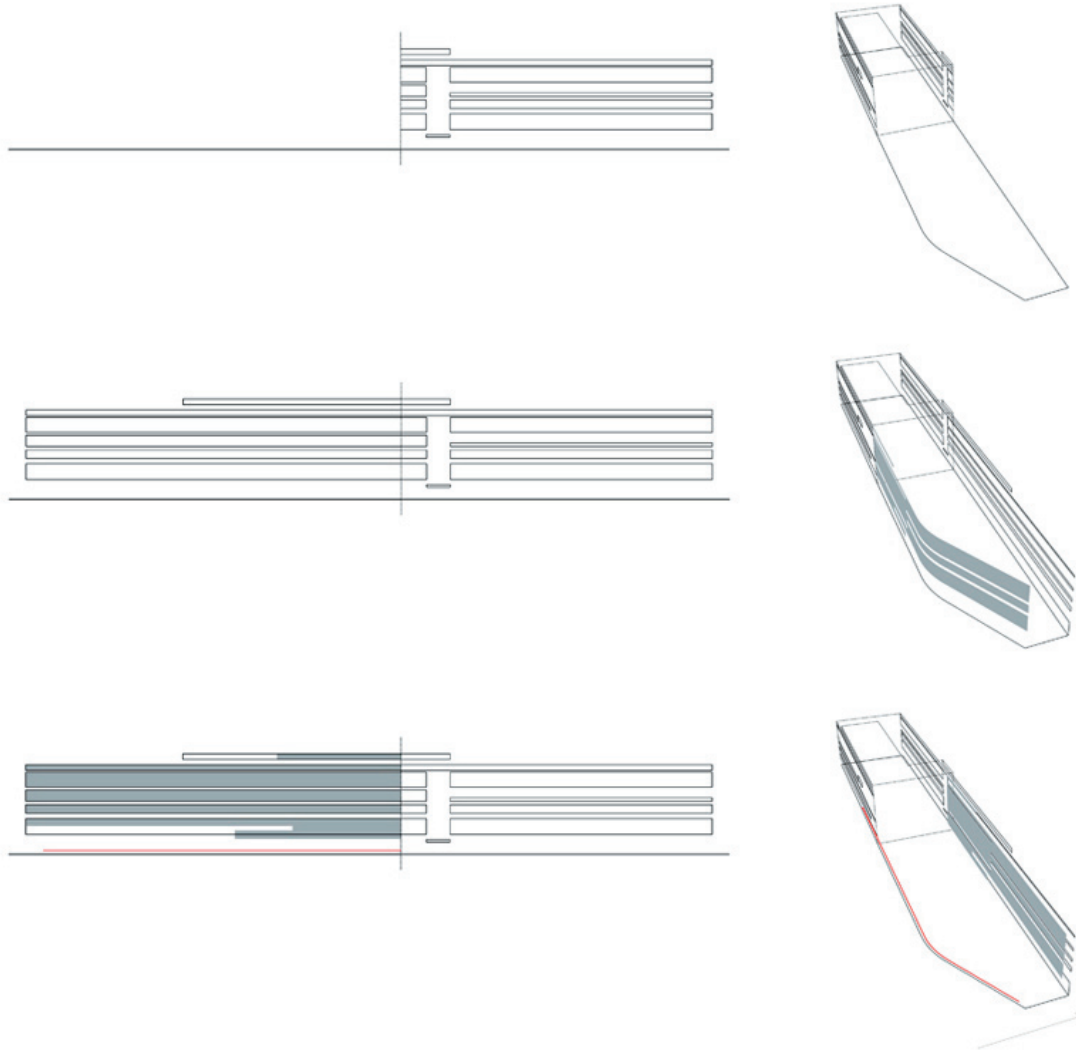


Image 3
Retracing the original elevations
of Zenetos' design. ©tessera

Research Questions

Surveillance within architecture typically implies visual control. *Drawing FIX* explores its 'other' potential: Can surveillance be a positive mechanism that denies an oppressive function? Can surveillance enhance a more fluid dialogue between the present and the past, the visible and the invisible, the material and the immaterial? What would be the consequences for this kind of architecture and the modes of occupation it would suggest? The project dares to take these questions beyond the boundaries of a traditional drawn architectural proposal. It asks these questions through a site-specific installation that directly engages the immediate neighbourhood and the visitors. The installation interrogates the very location of the museum and its problematic history, and questions a number of transient but meaningful relationships set between an architectural exhibition, the building that houses it, the city, and the viewer/visitor's consciousness. It uses the tools of surveillance to enhance desire, less so fear. Memos Philippidis comments on this project in the following way:

An architecture able to trace the movements and desires of the inhabitants would be mobile in itself, with moving panels and partitions programmed to open or close when approached, to disclose or hide a interior landscape. This animated architecture either in the form of a façade crowded with surveillance shots (*Fascimile* by Diller+Scofidio or *Drawing FIX* by tessera) or in the guise of moving parts, seems a potent and optimistic alternative to more pessimistic approaches where surveillance becomes a tyrannical presence. (Memos Philippidis, 'Arquitectura (In)Segura y Tácticas de Vigilancia', *Metacocus* v. 10, 2002, p. 151).

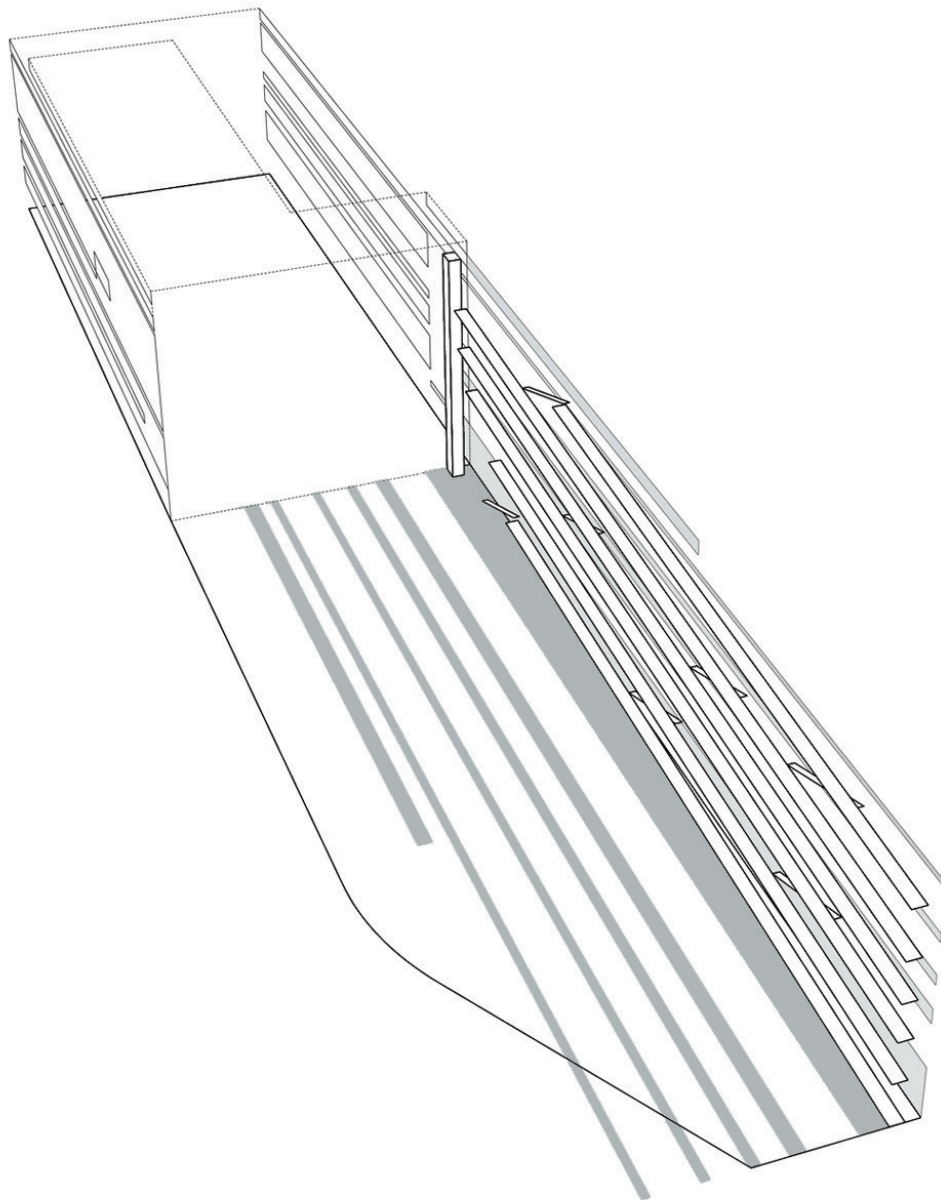


Image 4
The new building 'looking' at the
empty site. ©tessera

Research Aims and Objectives

- (1) To explore surveillance as a positive mechanism that denies an oppressive function.
- (2) To test the spatial, aesthetic and social possibilities of surveillance in a particular (rather than general) setting/location.
- (3) To enquiry into ways of 'remembering' through the use of time-based interactive media.
- (4) To interrogate alternative forms of outdoor public space (this is the first proposal for a vertical square).
- (5) To explore the purpose of an architectural exhibition as both a mechanism of representation and an immediate architectural environment in itself.
- (6) To use the time-based tools of surveillance as design tools, particularly through mixing animation, drawing and model.

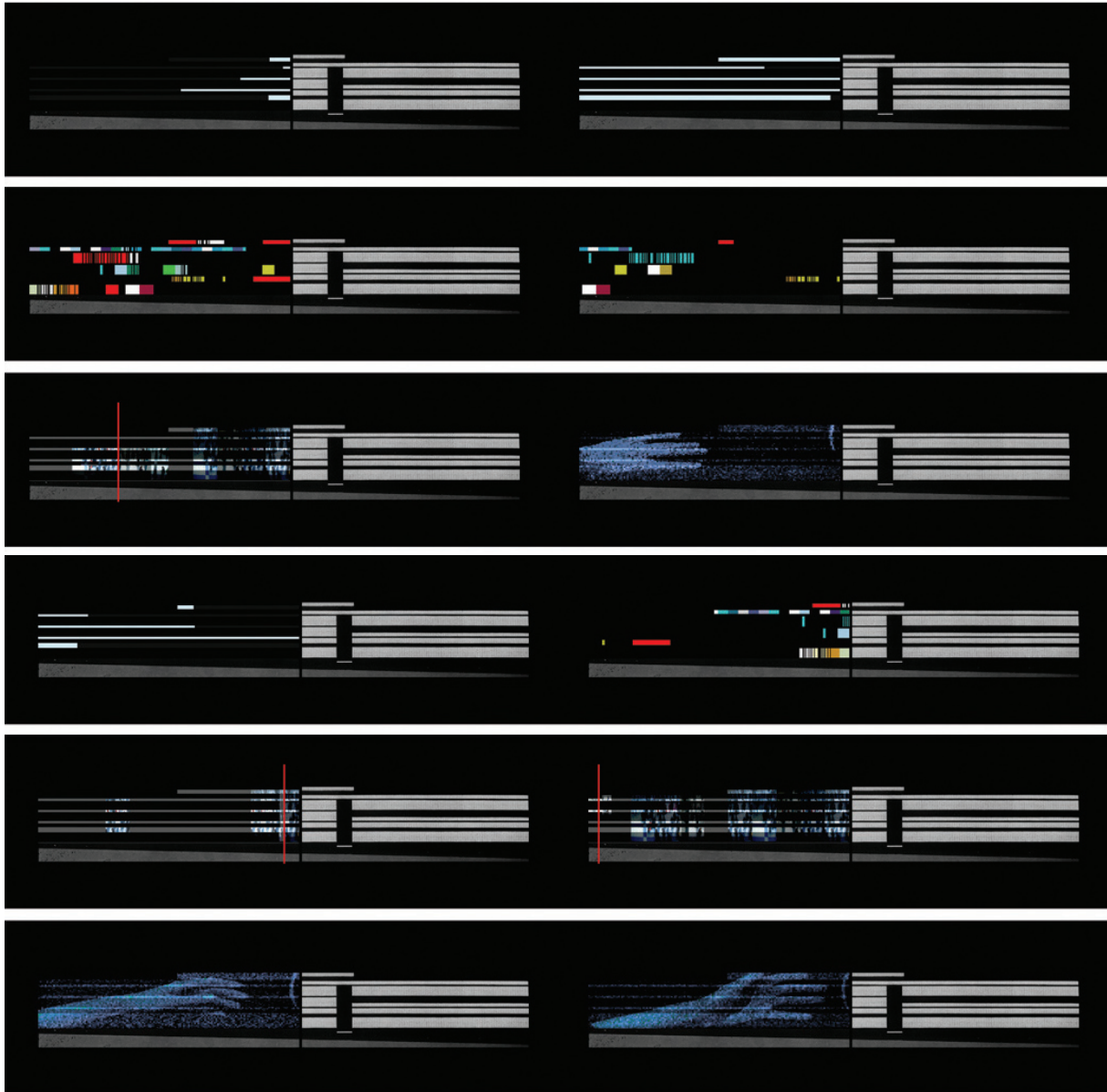


Image 5
The animated façade: sky view/
advertisement flow/tracking
people/hand interruption.
©tessera

Research Context

The main field of research is architectural design. Secondary specialized fields are building restoration and exhibition design. In brief the project is:

(1) Innovative in its understanding of 'building restoration'. It suggests a mixed (material and electronic) kind of 'restoration' with an ephemeral and fragile nature, interrupted by various factors – interaction and chance.

(2) Inventive as an architectural exhibition: in the construction of a mixed system of representation, where animated projections are incorporated in physical models, and in the successful coordination of two simultaneous operations in scales 1:300 and 1:1.

(3) A contribution to an interdisciplinary exploration of how surveillance and contemporary visual technologies can critically relate to architecture and the city. The subject was explored intensively by this exhibition at the EMST and by CTRL [SPACE], another international exhibition curated by Thomas Y. Levin in Germany a few months earlier. For a detailed account of the subject of surveillance and space, refer to Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Frohne, and Peter Weibel (eds), *CTRL[SPACE]: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, ZKM and MIT, 2002. More particularly, *Drawing FIX* relates to the work of Diller+Scofidio (D+S). While D+S use surveillance to play with notions of delay, confusion, camouflage, and superimposition on existing buildings, *Drawing FIX* pushes the use of surveillance further: (3.1) surveillance becomes the building itself, and (3.2) the building incorporates meaningful elements of memory and urban history, not only broadcast footage. The project also relates to works by the artists Krystof Wodiczko, Tony Oursler and, more recently, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer.

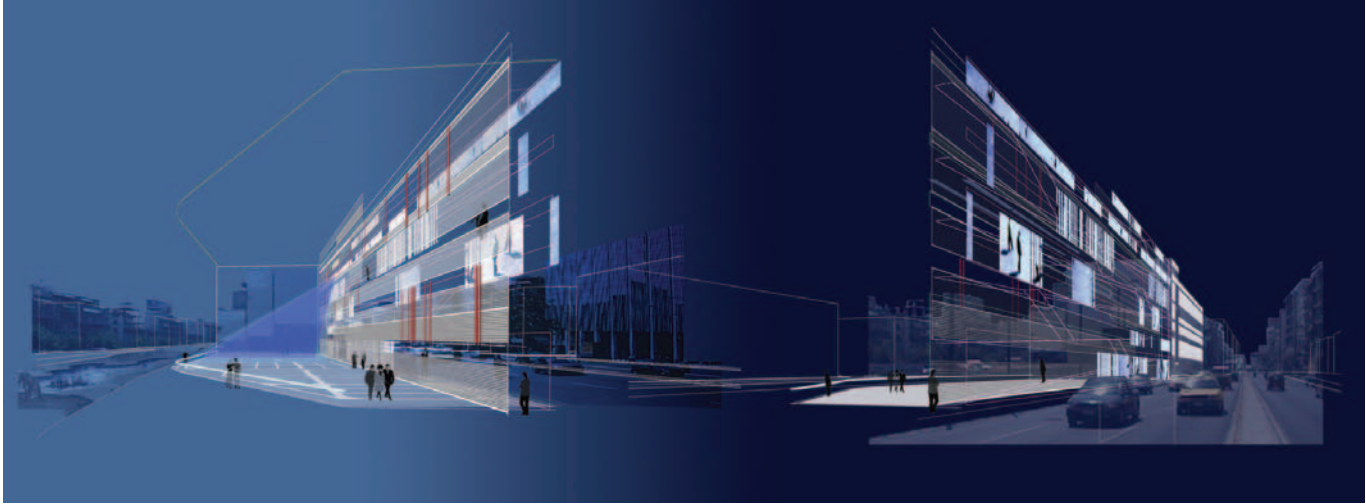


Image 6
Drawing FIX: double perspective
view of the new 'vertical' square.
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Research Methods

The project's questions and objectives, as described above, were formed and explored directly through design. The design process enabled concepts to be built, refined and embodied in the final outcomes, objects and animations. We also conducted:

- (1) Historical research into the specific building and the architect Zenetos.
- (2) Technical research into the technology of surveillance.
- (3) Technical research into the inclusion of interactive technology in the building.
- (4) Research into time-based media, particularly the combination of animations and three-dimensional models.

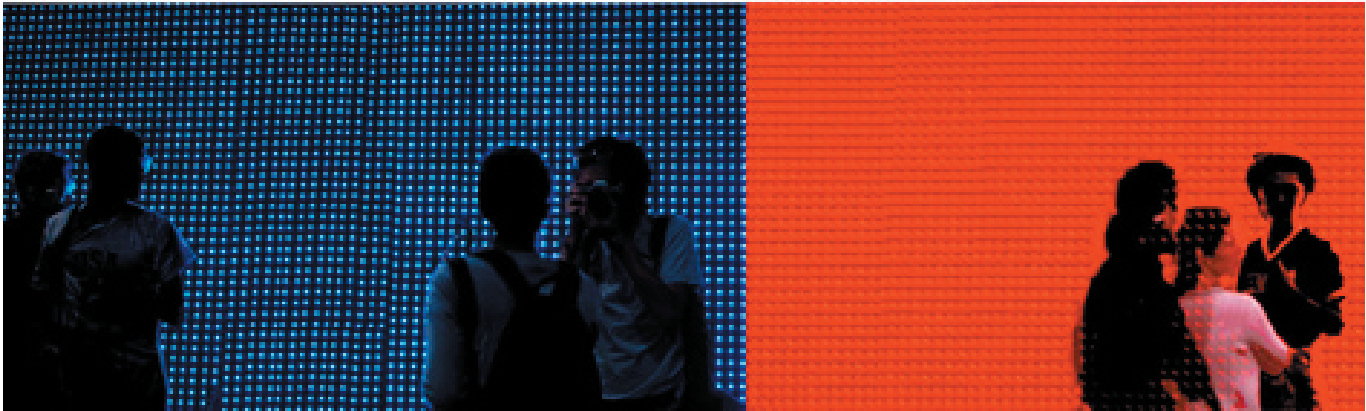
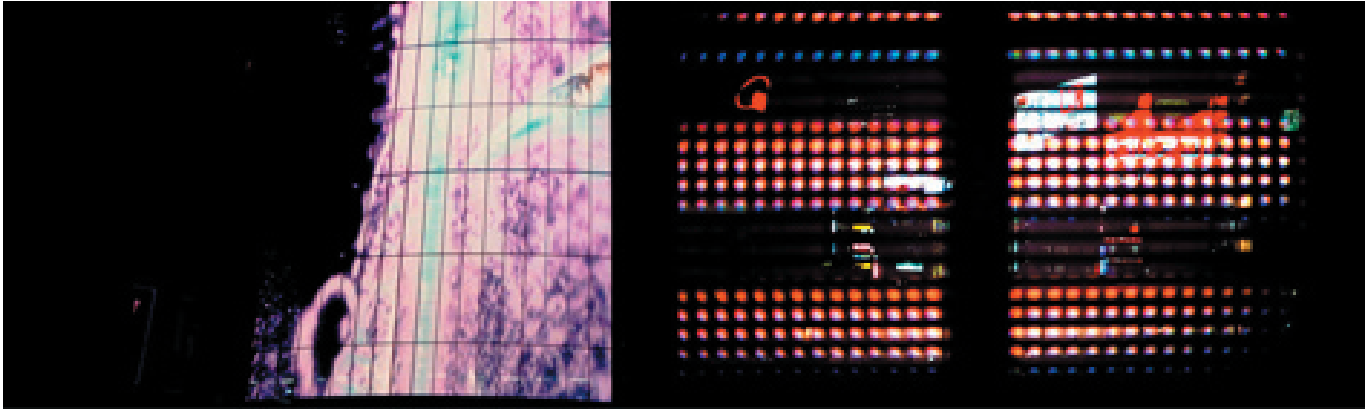


Image 7
Interior views and materiality.
©tessera

Contribution of Author

Drawing FIX was a design project by tessera, an architectural collaboration of four members: Anthony Boulanger, Penelope Haralambidou, Yeoryia Manolopoulou and Eduardo Rosa. All members contributed equally to the intellectual development and material execution of the project.

Sound Editing Assistant: Souli Spiropoulou

Curator: Memos Philippidis

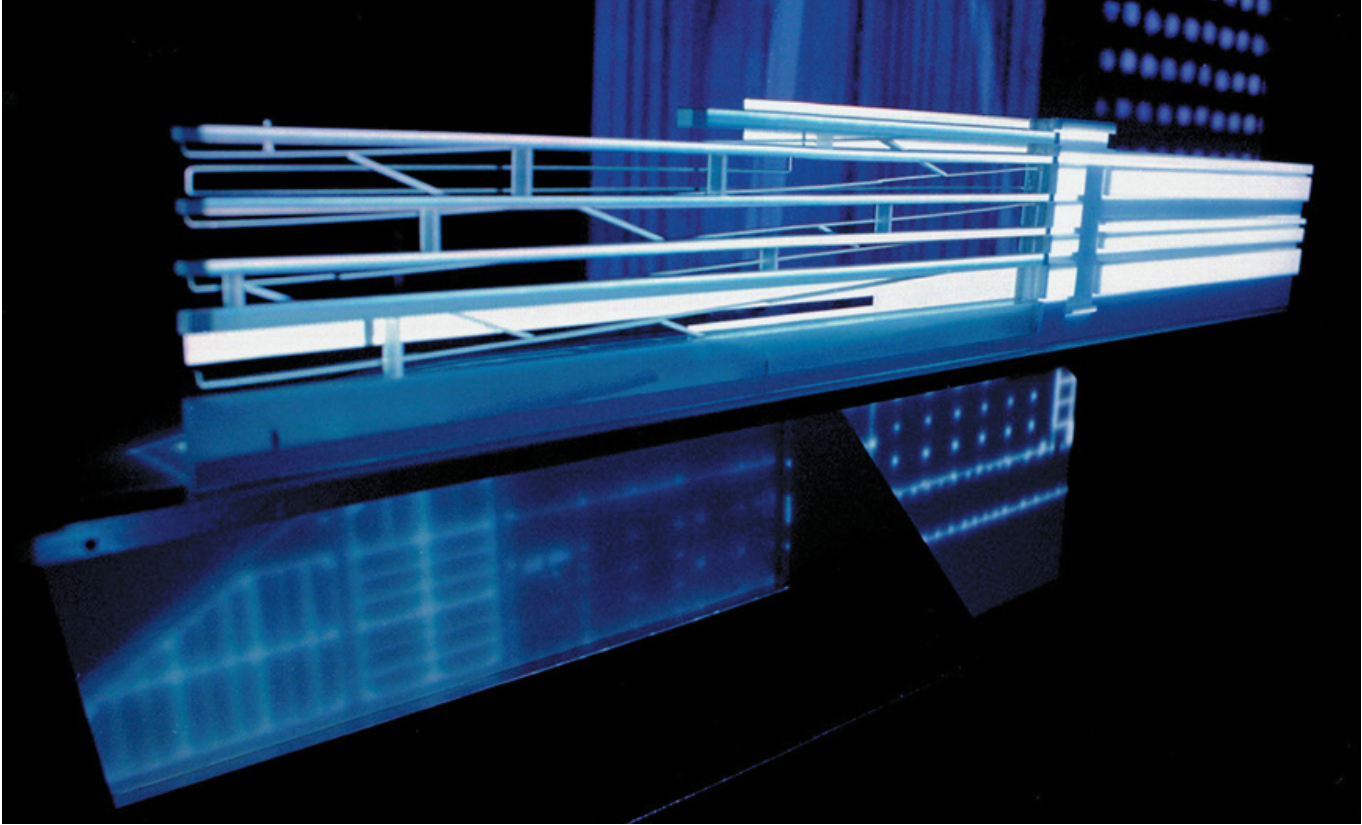


Image 8
View of animated model (DVD
projection, perspex, aluminium
and mirrors, scale of model
1:300). ©tessera

Research Dissemination

The exhibition was very well attended and received. It attracted considerable attention in the Greek media (newspapers, magazine reviews, radio and TV). It was also discussed in:

(1) Memos Philippidis, 'Arquitectura (In)Segura y Tácticas de Vigilancia'. *Metalocus* v. 10, 2002, pp. 146–155.

(2) Panayiotis Tournikiotis, 'Architecture and Surveillance', *Greek Works* (www.greekworks.com, visited 15/12/2004).

(3) Laura Allen, Iain Borden, Peter Cook, Rachel Stevenson (eds), *Bartlett Works: Architecture, Buildings, Projects* (London: August Projects, UCL, 2004), pp. 182–183.

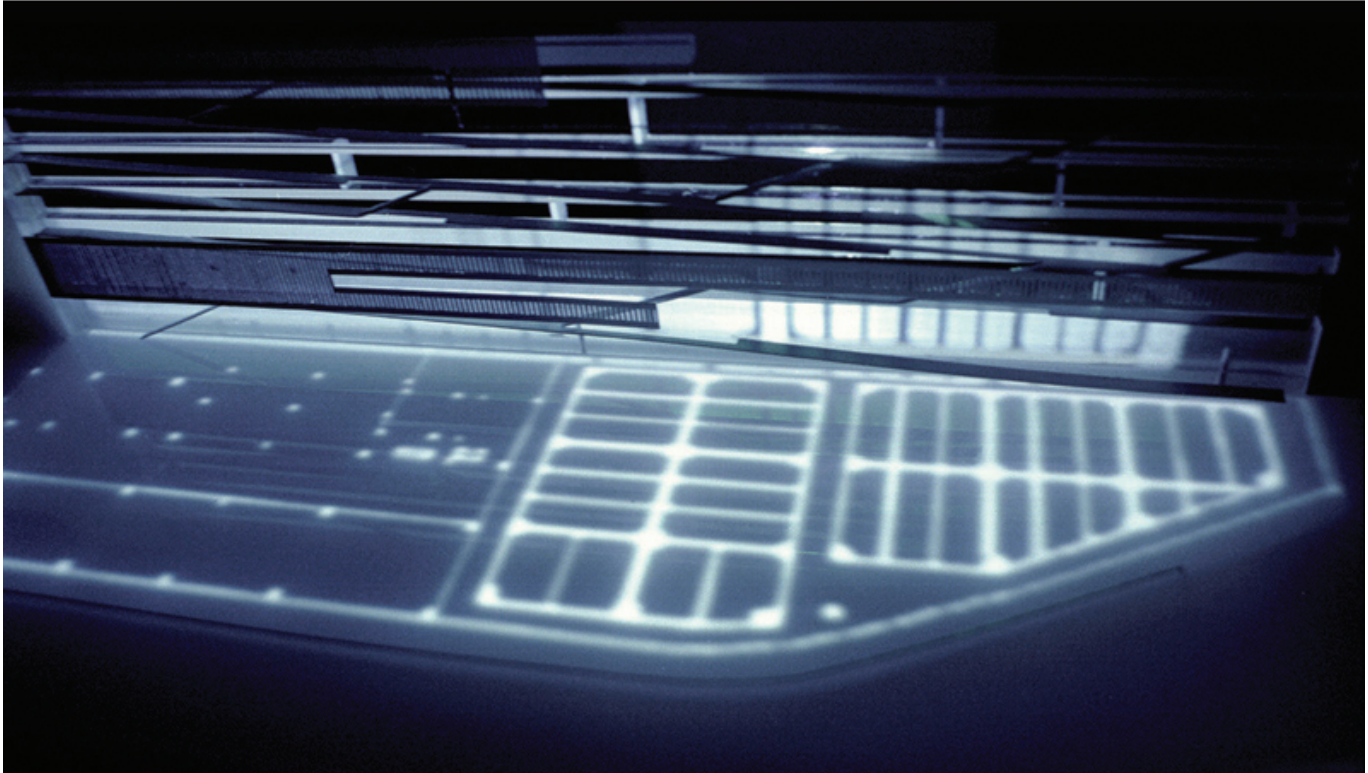


Image 9
View of animated model.
©tessera

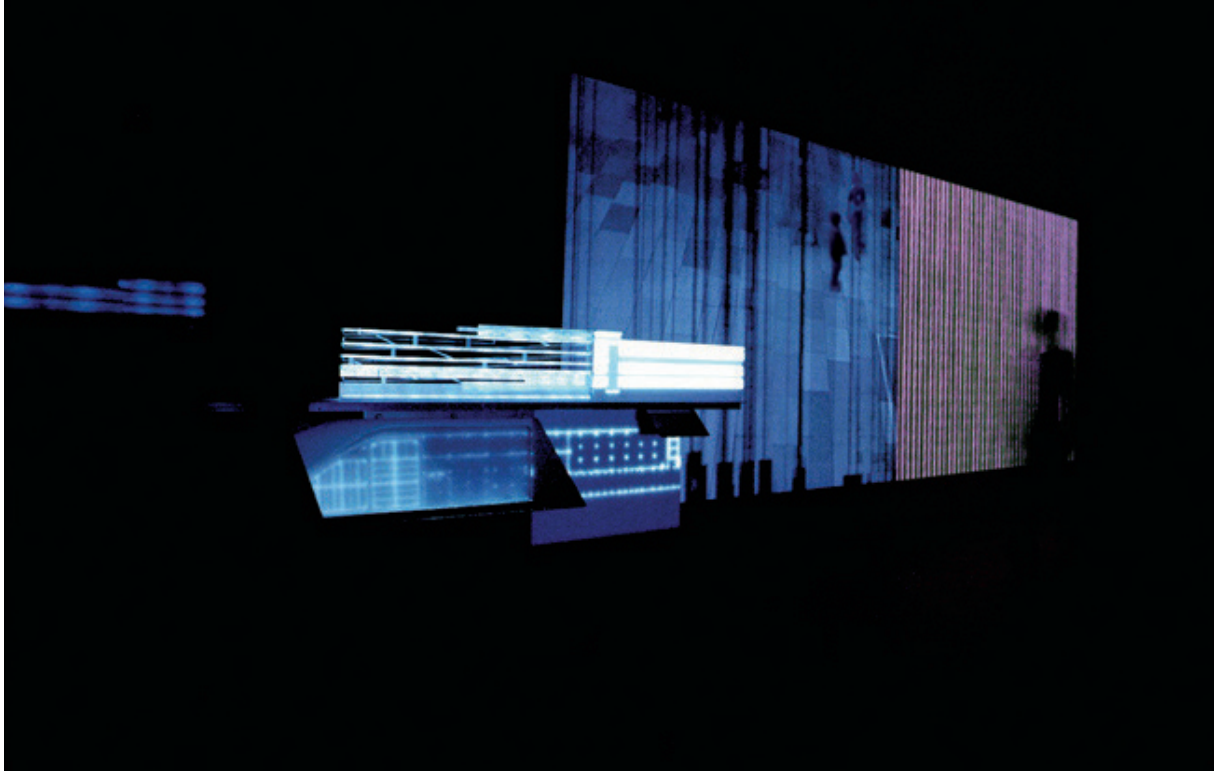
Evidence of Esteem

The EMST is the single most important venue for contemporary art and architecture in Greece. Previous exhibitors include Nam June Paik, Bill Viola and Bruce Nauman (see the museum's website www.emst.gr).

Strict selection of a group of internationally acclaimed individuals: tessera, Andreas Agelidakis, Diller+Scofidio, Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis, Christos Papoulias, [+RAMTV] and Joel Sanders.

Primary location in the exhibition: the only work installed in the main gallery of the museum, sharing that space with Diller+Scofidio's exhibit.

Part of the Permanent Collection of the EMST since 2002.



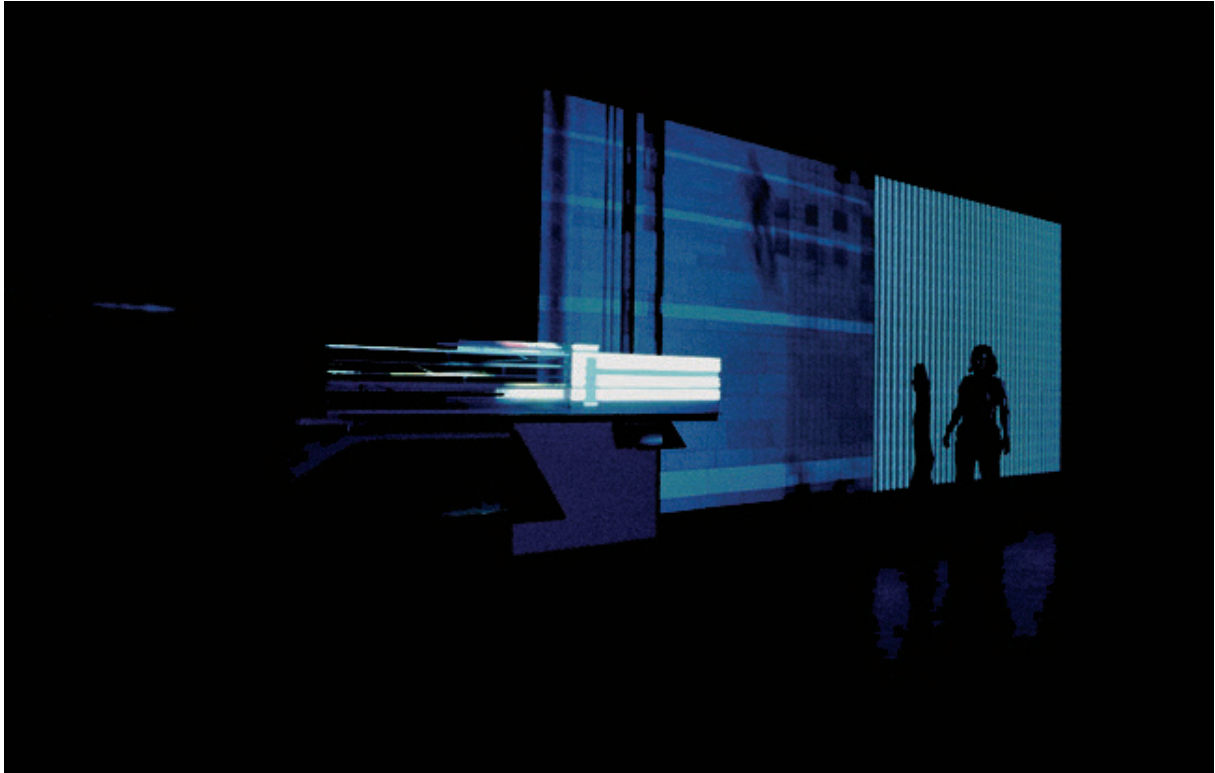


Image 10
Installation view of the model and the two combined DVD projections of computer animations, simulating the two sides of the new square for an imaginary visitor walking along it (scale 1:1). ©tessera

Appendix 1: Related Articles by Yeoryia Manolopoulou

(1.1) tessera, *Drawing FIX*, in Memos Filippidis (ed.), *Big Brother: Architecture and Surveillance* (Athens: National Museum of Contemporary Art, 2002), pp. 86–93. Exhibition catalogue published in Greek and English. [see original enclosed]

(1.2) tessera in Laura Allen, Iain Borden, Peter Cook, Rachel Stevenson (eds), *Bartlett Works: Architecture, Buildings, Projects* (London: August Projects, UCL, 2004), pp. 182–183.

Appendix 2: Critic's Reviews

(2.1) Memos Filippidis, 'Arquitectura (In)Segura y Tácticas de Vigilancia', *Metalocus*, v. 10, (2002) pp. 146–155.

(2.2) Memos Filippidis (ed.), 'Architecture and Surveillance: Elective Affinities', (Athens: Ministry of Culture, National Museum of Contemporary Art, 2002), pp. 11–24.

(2.3) Panayiotis Tournikiotis, 'Architecture and Surveillance', *Greek Works* (www.greekworks.com, visited 15/12/2004).

