ELEMENTS

A VIDEO INSTALLATION
BY DAVIDE RAPP

PRESENTED BY
DAVIDE RAPP & MARTÍN GARBER
In cinema it is the camera that reveals architectural space. This space can act as a backdrop for the action, or it can become its protagonist, as it assumes scenicographic or symbolic values, depending on the scene. The complexity of space, of both studio sets and real locations, reassembles in the mind of the spectator through the juxtaposition of multiple points of view, coherently with the action and the position of objects and actors.

ELEMENTS is a movie montage of short architecture-related clips selected among more than 200 movies, from the last 100 years of the rich and glorious history of Cinema. The combination of the clips aims to show—through the eyes of several directors and cinematographers—the fifteen elements of architecture identified by Rem Koolhaas and OMA/AMO for La Biennale di Venezia 2014 “Fundamentals” : balcony, ceiling, corridor, door, elevator, escalator, façade, floor, fireplace, ramp, roof, stair, toilet, wall and window.

ELEMENTS is a motion picture about space, a film as a set of objects and actors. A movie montage is an editing technique in which shots are juxtaposed in a fast-paced fashion that compresses time and conveys a lot of information in a relatively short period. The simple act of juxtaposing separate shots of corridors, stairs or façades evokes connections that cannot be found in a single shot. The spaces of fiction coexist simultaneously in countless imaginary architectures, generated by possible new montages to be experimented with.

ELEMENTS is a film without any plot, story or characters. Architecture in movies appears frequently as a background of the action and it can be represented in many ways: top views, one-point perspectives, frontal planes, long takes and close-ups. The framing highlights the proportions and the geometries of the elements, while the presence—or the absence—of sounds, noises and scores unveils their prerogatives and materialities.

ELEMENTS asks the viewer to focus on the fifteen elements through the fast transitions between the clips, revealing contrasts and affinities, lines and shapes, recurring patterns and motives, movements and rhythms. In this framework each scene, cut out from the original movies, gets a new meaning and unveils the close and ambivalent connections between Cinema and Architecture.

ELEMENTS is an artwork for documentary and cultural purposes that embodies almost 500 short clips from 200 different movies: it does not constitute any exploitation of the films from which the sequence are taken.

ELEMENTS has been shown in many institutions, museums and galleries: XV Bienal Internacional de Arquitectura de Buenos Aires, Argentina (September 2015), DogA. Norsk design- og arkitektursenter, Oslo, Norway (September 2015), The Harley Gallery, Nottinghamshire, United Kingdom (July-September 2015), Doors Open Denver, Denver, USA (April 2015), M1/ARCH, Milano, Italy (January 2015), Beijing Design Week, Beijing, China (September, 2014), Elements of Architecture, Venice Biennale, Italy (June-November, 2014).

Davide Rapp, Verbania, Italy, 1980. Architect, Illustrator, Videomaker and Video Artist. He obtained his Master Degree in Architecture (2005) and his Ph.D in Interior Design (2015) at Politecnico di Milano. He participated in the 14th International Architecture Exhibition - Fundamentals (Biennale Venezia, 2014) with ‘Elements’, a movie montage of short architecture-related clips, conceived specifically for the introduction room of the exhibition ‘Elements of Architecture’, curated by Rem Koolhaas, the Office for Metropolitan Architecture and the Harvard Graduate School of Design. He has been published in Italian and international architecture magazines such as Abitare, Domus, Icon Design, San Rocco and Architectural Review. He has lectured in several Universities in Italy (Politecnico di Milano, Domus Academy - Milano, NABA - Milano, Università degli Studi di Genova, IED - Cagliari), Germany (Burg Giebichenstein Kunstschulech -Halle) and United Kingdom (Mansfield College-Oxford).

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