GINS: And yet . . . to the extent that breathing is sufficient to change landing site configuration . . . As abstractions that act as conduits for apportioning out, landing sites . . . Or landing sites may be abstractions, but they are ones designed to let that which gets apportioned out, that which is prior to abstracting, flow through with the minimal amount of interference. What, I should ask you, is landing for you now?

ANGELA: The entire house is landing on me . . . on us. There are so many landings I hardly know where to begin.

ROBERT: When I breathe in there are a lot of landings as a result of that . . . I am feeling my breathing more than I ever have before. What I breathe in lands in the lungs . . . but I can't exactly track it to there, although in a way I can. But my attending to all this breathing . . . my solicitousness to my own breathing, would you characterize all that taken together as landing?

ARAKAWA: Yes, I think so. I am thrilled that you came up with that. Linking breathing and landing . . . we hadn't quite gotten to that yet.

ANGELA: What a cozy spot. If you don't mind, I think I will curl up right here and take a nap.

4
Architectural Surround

Let our species cease being stunned into silence and passivity, into defeatism, by a formal architecture that seems so accomplished but that leads nowhere. Members of our species have been stunned into passivity by what should be their greatest ally. To counter the deer-in-the-headlights effect, we have turned from speaking of architecture, vast architecture, to speaking of what of vast architecture a person can encompass in any given moment, naming this the architectural surround. This is architecture at the ready, at everyone's disposal. It is not monumentality but an approachable workaday architecture our species is in need of.

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An architectural surround's features: its boundaries and all objects and persons within it. Each circumjacency has a characteristic set of features. Here are some architectural surrounds and their characteristic sets of features. In the case of an architectural surround that is nothing more than a small enclosure in a wheat field formed by many stalks having been trampled upon, the set includes a floor of trampled-upon wheat stalks, walls consisting of wheat stalks, bent stragglers mixed in with intact ones, and sky for a ceiling. The set of features for a kitchen will be all that makes it a kitchen, including the woman putting a roast in the oven. The set of characteristic features for an immensely large architectural surround such as a city will be everything that makes it a city, including all those bustling or ambling through it.

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Similarly to how she flexes her muscles, a person flexes her surroundings—both are with her and of her always. Landing-site dispersal and a flexing of the circumambient determine and describe the world that lies within one's ambit of the moment. A person who is noting what is around her is dispersing landing sites; as body-wide landing-site dispersal registers the body's immersion within a volume held in place by certain demarcations, recording particulars about boundaries, a person will feel herself surrounded first according to one description of the world, then another. Moving within an architectural surround, a person fashions an evolving matrix, an architectural surround not entirely of her own making. Repeatedly, incessantly, a person surrounds herself by conforming in a particular set of ways to what surrounds her. Constrained by her environment, she proceeds to piece together an architectural surround that maps onto the one within which she finds herself. In a glance, she takes in a tree, a lake, or a wall. Glancing in that direction again, but this time having lifted, for example, her right leg to start walking toward X, she . . .

∞

Questions that query the degree to which persons are surroundings-bound need to be posed by actually erecting measuring frames around them. If persons can never be extricated from surroundings, then what must be looked at is the extent to which they are bound to and influenced by them. In what respects and how variegatedly do physical surroundings invite bodily action? How far out into the environment does an organism that persons extend? To what extent do surroundings influence thoughts and actions?

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A rounding of multiple foci into a supposed whole occurs again and again, continually. One such surrounding of oneself follows upon the last, and there comes to be a layering of surroundings, a summing up of surroundings, into the singular plural of "the surroundings." So much happens all at once, and *surrounding* and *to be surrounded* are spatiotemporally multilayered, this plural oneness ("the surroundings") lets you know. The words *confines* and *bounds* deliver the same message of a multiplicity of events, the active everything through which one moves—from a supposedly single viewpoint. These terms are conveniently all-inclusive; the word *surroundings* in one of its uses designates the people in one's vicinity or members of an entourage.

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Preexisting those who enter them, architectural surrounds stand as elaborately structured pretexts for action. Ready and waiting to be entered, even when in disarray, they are always-encountered and often-noticed but little-understood atmospheric conditioners. Someone might make a convincing case for doubting that she exists or that isolated objects do, but it would be preposterous for her to try to use doubt to wipe away features and elements of an entire architectural surround. It would be unusual and unlikely for someone holding a glass beneath an open faucet and filling it with water to doubt the existence of either any part of this situation or of the situation as a whole. The question "Is this real or an illusion?" would seem not to be an option at such a moment. This whole situation—the sink, faucet, running stream of water, glass, hand, kitchen floor, wall-tiles, and windows, for a start—is of her

sensorium within which she pours all liquids and drinks them up, but it is also constructed in place and is as such a place she can enter and with which she can link up in all manner of ways. All organisms-persons work hard, but none could work that hard, that is, no one could pull off the creation of an entire kitchen with water-producing faucet without prods, prompts, and props—that is, without the help of that set of features characteristic of this appliance-filled architectural surround. It would also be ridiculous for someone using a flashlight to find the path out of a labyrinthine cave and bumping up against uneven walls and low overhangs or tripping upon rocks and stalagmites and then sliding into and splashing through shallow puddles to wonder if indeed this might be a hollowed-out figment of her imagination.

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One's living room is and isn't one's own sensorium. All that is tentative is in the realm of sensoria; all that appears to be definite has been physically constructed.

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The living room one enters maps directly onto one's tentativeness as to what it might turn out to be, that is, onto one's budding suppositions as to what might be holding in place as this the living room. One's sporadic linkings with features of an architectural surround thread a defined enterable, hollowed-out volume throughout and into the midst of the pulsed arraying of possibilities to be pursued. Because any landing upon something, any type of contact, will, by turning a hesitant placing into something more definite, reduce tentativeness or

put it on hold, it is a fairly easy matter to design an architectural surround that will direct and channel tentativeness.

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An ordinary room: a classic example of an architectural surround. Architectural surrounds exist only in relation to those moving within them. Consider a living room in relation to those using it. Recognizable as the type of room it is, but never read the same way twice, a standard living room exists as an enclosing framework, each set of walls, and each wall individually, and surely the floor, too, a backdrop that can frame action. Although for a person on the move, room size and shape will fluctuate greatly, they will not appear to. Each person knows without doubt the size of her own living room. Within this opened up and insisted upon hollowed-out volume that she calls "my living room," a person initiates tentatives, composes actions, shifting her bodily frame accordingly, taking the room with her, that is, taking it up differently depending on how she winds up being positioned. Standard rooms evoke a relatively predictable set of actions. In the good fit of a familiar room, one feels as if the tentativeness underlying actions has been molded. Even someone moving through an apartment with a plan of it in hand does not, because she selects her surroundings and assembles them as she goes, succeed in capturing the whole of it. Architectural surrounds stand as shaping molds for the *What happens next?* of life.

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Putting only a single artifact into an environment will—if someone is around to happen onto the scene—turn it into an architectural surround.

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Having once begun to architect their surroundings, human beings never stop. A person turns a desert or a forest into an architectural surround by how she moves through it. Advancing and cutting paths, fending for herself and defending herself, she uses her limbs to erect enclosures or break them. That which has been architected blocks, guides, facilitates, comforts, contains, or suggests containing.

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An architecturally imbued person will architect every manner of surroundings. An architecturally imbued person will architect every manner of surroundings, even a vast open plain. Any architectural surround she once experienced can become a four-dimensional point of reference for a person standing on an open plain.

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Organisms that person need to *construct* their hypotheses and enter them, surrounding themselves with ordered presentations of their suppositions. Our claim: architecture can help a person figure herself out.

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Environment-organism-person is all that is the case. Isolating persons from their architectural surrounds leads to a dualism no less pernicious than that of mind and body.

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Architectural surrounds that are not specifically set up to be procedural hardly address tentativeness at all. Until now, prior to the existence of a truly procedural architecture, the atmospheric conditioning that architectural surrounds have performed on sensoria has been relatively routine, addressed to and revolving around basic bodily needs. But even the most surefooted, self-confident person brings hesitancy in abundance to her relationship with an architectural surround, for part of being a person is to feel uncertain in regard to and tentative about what comes next. Tentativeness, which produces out of its own generative chaos the possibility of a firm or definite sense of things, needs to receive directions.

∞

Contribute your room, your architectural surround of the moment, to this text. For your room to be of use in what follows, it needs to be transformed into a work of procedural architecture. Note where in the room you are and the direction in which you are facing. To have this room—the room in which you happen to be reading this—stand out distinctly as the room it is, select and keep vivid a representative group of its features. Now take the room and give its floor a ten-degree tilt along its longest length (if the room is square, either side is fine). Make a double of your room thus tilted and place it next to the original. Seesaw the floor of the double so that it ends up tilting in the opposite direction.

ARCHITECT: We have now been in both rooms. It is apparent that the two together frame the impact on us of an architectural surround, that is, of the room in which you are reading this text.
READER: I lean differently into the situation of exactly this room within each of its exemplars.

ARCHITECT: Perfect.

READER: The characteristic features completely match of course from one room to the other—except, that is, for how they land in me.

ARCHITECT: Kinesthetically, these twins, as we heed the slants, present themselves as complementary opposites.

READER: Why the tilt?

ARCHITECT: To catch an architectural surround. To catch the catching (fielding) of an architectural surround. All of it all at once. To know one's room like the back of one's hand: to register one's landing-site dispersal in its entirety.

READER: And without the two opposing tilts?

ARCHITECT: That doubling also would work to bring the architectural surround of the moment sharply into focus. But we would no longer be able to observe and study exactly what— were all else equal, all other landing sites being equal—the effect would be on thought and behavior of two oppositely dispersed (tilted) sequencings of kinesthetic-landing-site configurations.

READER: Yes, and our organism-given tentativeness. It would be snapped up into definiteness, I guess, by the room we know so definitively. A much too hasty resolving of the indeterminate into the "known."

ARCHITECT: To slow down the automatic dispersal. To enter the dispersing itself?

READER: A hesitancy permeates the world in its abundance.

ARCHITECT: Not to get too completely absorbed or sucked up into the process of landing upon . . .

∞

Against the environment of the new territory that is her extended I, a person throws tentatives that land as functions and schemata, most of which join up with her, becoming of her by

reprogramming her. Although the organism-person has the potential to become a person, it does not necessarily become one, or remain one. Everything begins for these organisms with *a tentative constructing toward a holding in place*. The environmental communal, which has everything to do with how an organism persons, can, when reworked in a concerted manner, lead to persons being able to supersede themselves.