

The Green Flaneur and the Widi'd Street Paul Guzzardo

Paul Guzzardo

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Abstract

Introduction-This excerpt opens "Swimming in a Sea of Death: A Son's Memoir." The author is David Rieff the son of Susan Sontag. "Nothing could have been further from my mind. I thought that I was returning to my home in New York at the end of a long trip abroad. Instead, I was at the beginning of the journey that would end with my mother's death. To be specific, it was the afternoon of March 28, 2004, a Sunday, and I was in Heathrow Airport in London on my way back from the Middle East. ? I began making phone calls -reconnecting with home as has always been my habit once I am through reporting a story. That was when my mother, Susan Sontag, told me that there was a chance that she was ill again. My mother was clearly doing her best to be cheerful. "There may be something wrong," she finally told me after I had gone on at far too great length about what the West Bank had been like. While I had been away, she said, she had gone in for her twice-yearly scans and blood tests -the regular routine that she had been following since her surgery and subsequent chemotherapy for the uterine sarcoma she had been diagnosed with six years earlier. "One of the blood tests they've just run doesn't seem so good," she said, adding that she had already had some further tests done, and asking me if I would come with her the following day to see a specialist who had been recommended to her and who had done some follow-up tests a couple of days earlier. He would have the conclusive results then.

Index terms—

1 Introduction

his excerpt opens "Swimming in a Sea of Death: A Son's Memoir." The author is David Rieff the son of Susan Sontag. "Nothing could have been further from my mind. I thought that I was returning to my home in New York at the end of a long trip abroad. Instead, I was at the beginning of the journey that would end with my mother's death. To be specific, it was the afternoon of March 28, 2004, a Sunday, and I was in Heathrow Airport in London on my way back from the Middle East. ? I began making phone callsreconnecting with home as has always been my habit once I am through reporting a story. That was when my mother, Susan Sontag, told me that there was a chance that she was ill again. My mother was clearly doing her best to be cheerful. "There may be something wrong," she finally told me after I had gone on at far too great length about what the West Bank had been like. While I had been away, she said, she had gone in for her twice-yearly scans and blood tests -the regular routine that she had been following since her surgery and subsequent chemotherapy for the uterine sarcoma she had been diagnosed with six years earlier. "One of the blood tests they've just run doesn't seem so good," she said, adding that she had already had some further tests done, and asking me if I would come with her the following day to see a specialist who had been recommended to her and who had done some follow-up tests a couple of days earlier. He would have the conclusive results then." ?? Four days earlier on March 24, 2004 Susan Sontag was speaking at Graham Chapel at Washington University in St. Louis. Sontag had been invited to the University's Assembly Series to discuss her recent collection of essays, Regarding the Pain of Others 2 William Gass i . The cover page was Francisco de Goya's Tampoco Plate 36 from "The Disasters of War" cycle. The evening before Sontag joined n a "staged" conversation. The Gass -Sontag exchange went from the politics

of G.W. Bush, literary heroes (She was asked if she had met the English poet Gerald Heard, she had.) to the Icelandic singer, song-writer, composer Bjork. Sontag had recently attended a Bjork concert. Though apparent friends for years the difference between the speakers was marked. Gass's precise, almost stuffy air _he bemoaned a viral base popular culture _clashed with a "Sontag Sin Borders".

The next morning in the University Chapel Sontag discussed the long history of the representation of the pain of others. The photographic essayist talked about reading images of atrocities, the erosion of perception and the inured reception. Six years later I'm not sure how much I remember from the morning talk or from reading her collection and the scores of reviews that followed. But something happened I do remember. Somewhere near the end of the talk she paused and said, "I will be remembered for one thing. It will be for extending an essay. The essay was by a German man. His name was Walter Benjamin. And the essay is Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. ?? In the five years since her death there have been countless sum-ups of Sontag's legacy. When asked his mother's great achievement David Rief said, "her 1992 novel *The Volcano Lover* is the best thing she ever did." Benjamin's essay has been grist for a generation of cultural critics and art historians. Most commentary involves image, replication, and aura. But on that day it seemed the essay's epilogue mattered most to Sontag. This is where Benjamin says, "The destructiveness of war furnishes proof that society has not been mature enough to incorporate technology as its organ, that technology has not been sufficiently developed to cope with the elemental forces of society."

2 a) Framed

The Volcano Lover is set in Naples at a time of rupture, shortly after the French revolution. The novel is many things. It is a set piece for a cuckold, in playhouse of atrocity, degradation and humiliation. But it is also a story of a collector, or maybe collectors. One is Lord Hamilton and the other is Jack. Lord Hamilton is an ambassador. He collects Greco-Roman antiquities. Jack is a monkey. He collects nuts.

Walter Benjamin was a mystic. His portfolio was the universe. It was the catwalk for his flaneur. Whether Sontag knew it, she summoned Benjamin at a place where two flaneurs earlier set out. They are Otto and Inga. They are players in a flaneur tale. Their story is set in a blended halfway house. They move through a porous street. Otto and Inga are in this essay because it is nested in a brief to build "on and out" that street. The essay is part of a larger brief for a protocol for a wiki'd street; "a how to build a ramp" for a green flaneur. The street is wiki'd if it's studded with epistemic niches. The flaneur is green if the flaneur can dart from idea space to idea space. But it is hard to make the leap. Obstacles block the way. They empty and corset the street. They are the bugs. They are embedded in the system, the operating street-ware.

The essay is probe. It is a quick one. It probes the link between smart streets and collecting practices. It is also a frame. It's frame to assess collectors and their kind in this liminal arena. And if you want to build this is the place to start.

3 b) Leaked

Otto and Inga are characters in a story by Andy Clark and David Chalmers. Clark and Chalmers wrote it at Washington University St. Louis. The story is in the essay "The Extended Mind". 5 "The Extended Mind" is a seminal work in cognitive science research, on mind and embodiment. Here's where's Otto and Inga come in. It's bound breaking.

Inga hears from a friend that there is an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, and decides to go see it. She thinks for a moment and recalls that the museum is on 53rd Street, so she walks to 53rd Street and goes into the museum. It seems clear that Inga believes that the museum is on 53rd Street, and that she believed this even before she consulted her memory. It was not previously an occurrent belief, but then neither are most of our beliefs. The belief was sitting somewhere in memory, waiting to be accessed. Now consider Otto. Otto suffers from Alzheimer's disease, and like many Alzheimer's patients, he relies on information in the environment to help structure his life. Otto carries a notebook around with him everywhere he goes. When he learns new information, he writes it down. When he needs some old information, he looks it up. For Otto, his notebook plays the role usually played by a biological memory. Today, Otto hears about the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, and decides to go see it. He consults the notebook, which says that the museum is on 53rd Street, so he walks to 53rd Street and goes into the museum.

Clearly, Otto walked to 53rd Street because he wanted to go to the museum and he believed the museum was on 53rd Street. And just as Inga had her belief even before she consulted her memory, it seems reasonable to say that Otto believed the museum was on 53rd Street even before consulting his notebook. For in relevant respects the cases are entirely analogous: the notebook plays for Otto the same role that memory plays for Inga. The information in the notebook functions just like the information constituting an ordinary non-occurrent belief; it just happens that this information lies beyond the skin.

Of course the street lies beyond the skin. Clark and Chalmers were not the first to point it out. Poe did it way back when in "Man of the Crowd". There was Baudelaire, and Benjamin set off fireworks. But what's important about this fable is that the authors begin mapping the cognitive leak. "The Extended Mind" and publications and research that follow introduce liminal minds, liminal places and the solubility of both. It's research struggling with "brain bound versus maybe not so bound". It is how the street functions as a part of the super-sized mind.

While the publications detail the "outed brain" for scholarly cohorts, they are more than that. It is a new flaneur narrative, an update on the trek. It's a storyline about the coupled ones, our relationship with things, and where to build.

4 c) Smeared

Otto's notebook was a CP prop, the cognitive processing sort. Clark and Chambers wrote "The Extended Mind" near my prop. It was Club Cabool. Cabool was a new media nightclub in St. Louis. It was a launch to plod into a soft arcade mash-up, an earlier Internet. The club was an "ur-platform" for mixing and mapping our digital ecology. It was a collection hub, "cull and sort" as ambient remix. Here's a 1997 archived web-take on it.

Club Cabool was a St. Louis new media nightclub. It operated in 1997 and 1998. On top of dealing in alcohol, it was an experiment in emerging digital information networks. The night club had the first DSL line in St. Louis and was one of the first St. Louis public venues to install web cameras. Virtual Jockeys mixed selected web sites with live and prerecorded videos, while simultaneously projecting the mix on screens in Cabool. The jockeys were the authors of the evening's visual amalgam as they blended surveillance and spectacle. A scaffold/kiosk served as a booth/ performance stage for these "Digital City Auteurs".

Cabool was snapped for a photo spread. ?? This club series was much published. Viral multiples offer slick calling cards. One in particular opened access to a collecting image keen, and through them the street. It was The 3rd of May; a remix. Like Tampoco Plate 36, The 3rd of May is part of the Goya savage war cycle, serial scenes of horror, brutality and torture. This Goya was photographed when museum collections were being first digitized and broadband networks assembled. It was grabbed out of a cognitive niche by a "web jockey", and then smeared in the nightclub. It was an early bridge, a virtual outing from the Museo Prado, a Spanish notebook. Smeared Goya was much revered. It was the card to play. It was a voucher offering access to a street and a lens on a bug.

5 d) Shrink-Wrapped

The projects that followed leaked outside the club. They smeared the street as they courted an extended epistemology. They tried to set Goya up with A the flaneur. The praxis is called Recursive Urbanism. It's an eDate. It mixes and matches digital archives with contemporary urban experiences, riffs on the city. It is one more application to make sense of things, a tool to probe the effect of pervasive computing on the design and occupation of public space. It is a map to a smart place, one to make sense of things. The street has been "an application" for sense making since the flaneur drifted into the Greek market. The "app-user" is embedded in a meaning making process. RU as a work in progress generated this brief. It is discussed in earlier publications. ?? This is from Displaced: Llonch & Vidalle Architecture on RU building tools.

Darwin did his passage on a boat. Llonch and Vidalle give us a Beagle update. They propose a new tool to weave a course, a transit tool. They understand that digital appliances boot three-dimensional culture into twodimensional apparel. In the face of an information tsunami they've crafted an appliance to try to map that unfathomable tera, pera byte place, the couture we've dropped into. ?? PG The dilemma in the tera-perabyte world is getting deciphering gear on the street. Without that techne the city is less and less a stage for knowledge creation and synthesis. We need new place making action plans. We need new interfaces on the ground linking the city space and data-landscapes. Place making that takes no heed of the evolving knowledge environment is no longer sustainable. If the end game is a sustainable city, the city has to be a knowledge generator. And without a street/data/scape interface _new crossover nodes _it's neither. Time is short. This brief should have been started twenty years ago. That's when the info-age began slamming us. But it never got written. Now the digital buckshot is coming at hyper-speed. And we've got a gaping hole in the city. We're wedged between a data space and a hard place, and left with a shrink-wrapped something or other.

an agile plastic information tool primed to navigate through a muddled landscape-a prospect to plug into a plugged-inflaneur's hunger for wander and wonder -a venue for a sampling storm -an outpost for literate sentinels at porous borders-new arenas for essayists, poets and artists to engage in agnostic encounters with emerging media worlds. This is out of the "The Cartographer's Dilemma by Guzzardo and Holm. It's in the form of a conversation. 9 7 RU probes the effect of pervasive computing on the design and occupation of public space and how mixing digital archives with contemporary urban experiences -riffs on the city-can re-mythologize a terrain. It's about hard and soft boundaries, digital patinas, blurred data streetscapes _things outside the skin bag. The dilemma is what to do about this shrinkwrapped something? Walter Benjamin's cohort Hannah Arendt spent an intellectual life slicing away at shrink wrapped-places and people. Arendt was a street savvy one. Like Sontag she understood the need to act. Arendt knew the street was ground zero for the archetypical drama. The place to glimpse, peer ahead, and assess what is coming. And it's the place to frame and expose things. It's been the place ever since the kid pointed his finger at the naked in-charge guy.

6 Paul Guzzardo and Lorens Holm

7 e) Up the Canny

2008 "This is our first example of another important characteristic of embodied, embedded cognition, one that may be called the Principle of Ecological Assembly (PEA) According to the PEA, the canny cognizer tend to recruit, on the spot whatever mix if problem -solving resources will yield an acceptable result with a minimum of effort." ??02009 "We have never done this before." "Pavilions like this have not been built in free, open public venues in Chicago and other major American cities. It's all a learning experience. Expert designers were coming up with something that seemed reasonable. There are lots of things I would challenge harder next time. ??1 Star architects two pavilions will summer in park: Seeking to spotlight the 100th anniversary of the document that changed the face of Chicago, celebration organizers brought out the bling Tuesday night and unveiled designs for two temporary pavilions in Millennium Park by internationally renowned architects. The follies were not alone. Adjacent was a kiosk. It flanked the pavilions. It was there for the public "to invent the future". This future was the metropolitan Chicago region. An interactive touch-screen installation allowed visitors to choose from various scenarios currently facing regional planners. The "touch-screen flaneurs" immediately got the upshot on their pick; popup animations. And it was all on a green scale. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) said this would all help shape Chicago's GoTo2040 plan. GoTo2040 was to direct regional development for the next 30 years. ??6 On July 3, adults climbed the scoops and clambered onto the pavilion's flat roof to get a better view of the fireworks. The pavilion had to be shut down lest anybody fall off and crack a skull. Once sleekly sculptural, Van Berkel's design now resembles a beaten-up jungle gym. It will be out of commission for four days, beginning Tuesday. "Why is this a surprise to anybody?" said Harriet F.Senie, an art history professor at City College in New York and the author of several books on public art. "The first thing people do with public art is they climb on it." Meanwhile, the other Burnham pavilion -a pod-like structure by London architect Zaha Hadid that opened Tuesday -is having problems of its own. All too predictably, parkgoers stepped onto its ground-hugging fabric walls, leaving footprint marks. Stanchions were installed to prevent the fabric from being ripped. It's easy to point fingers at Van Berkel and Hadid for creating dazzling pieces of sculpture that failed to On August 9th 2009, five days after a troubled and delayed Hadid pavilion opened, the architectural critic for the Chicago Tribune Blair Kamin wrote "Fragile Art Takes A Hit In An Interactive World". anticipate how people would behave. Yet it is also true that star architects need tough clients to say no, when they come up with designs that are beautiful but impractical. In this case, the client consisted of a committee organizing programs to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Daniel Burham's Plan of Chicago and the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs. The pavilions, which are scheduled to come down Oct. 31, are meant to draw attention to the centennial activities. 17

After the Architects were selected John Bryan, the centennial committee's co-chair and the fundraising whiz for Millennium Park, added that raising more money should not be difficult, given the high caliber of the architects. "It's a sexy enough thing," he said. "If the product's good enough, somebody will sponsor it."

Obviously something that has a shelf life for only a few days makes inventing a future a little dicey. If this sounds churlish, well it is not directed toward Hadid or van Bekel. They did what they were told. The fault is not in our stars.

8 f) Stuck

The question is why "a folly" for the program? How canny was that? And the short answer is: Jack Rules in a brown field of withered auras. But quip aside, more is needed to understand the folly and the sponsor, the prop masters. That more leads across the lawn and to Frank Gehry.

Millennium Park is a crowd still, packed with serial handsome venues. The Frank Gehry Pritzker Concert Pavilion is a front center, and for good reason. Gehry created a new idea place. He connected dots. He exploited a dot -byte technology to design and build. Multiple meaning Gehry knew his wiki. He shuffled the intelligence from one space to another to create a canny space. He grabbed from painters and airline designers. He left a better blend. Gehry is the streets nearest kin, the link to the Homebrew Club; the 70's geekdom rowdies -Jobs, Wozniak, Gates and lesser likes and lights. These guys gave us the personal computer and the idea place we find ourselves. Like them, Gehry the canny cognizer opened up a new idea place and ran with it. As Richard Ogle says, the gear Gehry got on the street was charged with "the surging energy that flows from putting opposed, orthogonal or previously unrelated elements into dynamic interaction with one another" 19 question is why did Gehry's design protocol hit a program wall? And why do his luscious arrays look more and more like shrouds?

An answer is not to be found in fields of architecture and urban design, or at least not yet. Biopsies of shrink-wrapped mounts or lines of attack on shroud-ware haven't made it into their Briefs. But it has made it to the social sciences. That's where answers are lurking. But it's with a new kind of social scientist, of the empirical bent. They're the ones closest to ground zero archetypical drama. They're assembling tools to glimpse, peer ahead, and assess what's coming. And they're working (or maybe stumbling) on gear that might map collecting passions in this porous tableau.

9 g) Bug as Lodestar

"If the highest rate of return in an economy comes from piracy we can expect that the organizations will invest in skills and knowledge that will make them better pirates." 20 Douglass North was the man behind the mast. He was on the look out for pirates. He got a Noble Prize for grabbing a few. His early research was on the pirate payoff structure. It help launched a new discipline. It's called New Institutional Economics. It's about how to slip by folly. Or what to do when you're center stage with a not-so-rational actor; us. North's pirate work was done at Washington University St. Louis, where Otto and Inga set out, and Susan Sontag looked back. New Institutional Economics is part of the new social sciences. It is amended and swayed by cognitive science research. It slices away at choice sets; the role of human thought, emotion and behavior in making decisions. It grapples with flux, the limits of knowledge, and bad maps. It's a brief for a better brief, one to keep violence at bay. By going after bandits Douglass North fixed a laser on the bug in the system, the institutional "shroud-ware". Pirates are not just trolling the seas but are on high ground. And if we want to stay ahead of them _out of bugs way _we need to leap like Walter Benjamin's tiger from idea space to idea space. This Brief is far too brief to discuss the empirical slant of the new social sciences. But here is a perfunctory PowerPointish account. It's a frame for a better behavioral blend; perhaps dare say one for an eplioqued organ.

1. Don't constrain choice sets 2. Allow an understanding of dynamic processes 3. Support incentive structures for creativity North didn't emerge fully formed from the sea foam. He extends Hannah Arendt, and he's a successor to the polymath Patrick Geddes. North refreshed Geddes, like Lewis Mumford before him. North and his kind showed up on a Geddes's non-static stage. These new social scientists _with their cross-fertilized tools for trial and error _have a Geddesian hum. Patrick Geddes is the father of city planning and sociology. As Lorens Holms and I have said Geddes is a message Darwin and Huxley sent into the future North's trek with folly usually plays out on Argentine monetary governance, Russian petroplutocrats, and Kim Jong Il -Robert Mugabe roadscapes. But it shouldn't stall there. It's also a perch to reflect on the role of objects and collectors. He understood flux, the limits of how we know, and why we have to keep mapping. Geddes was the first to slot cognitive science onto street. This author of Cities in Evolution understood the trek as the tool to plumb the mind.

10 h) A Matter of Dimension

In an era of everywhere computation these social scientists offer a notebook to grab on to as the meaning between things and us are rewired. And as of now there's not much else out there. This essay is ongoing work in building idea spaces _polis release 2. It's a pitch for a wiki'd street. But it is tricky pushing an arcade of epistemic niches welcoming a train of augmented flaneurs onto streets pinched by ecological sinkholes and data smog. It is hard to get deciphering gear street site. Difficult to experiment, test, and see how the street functions as a part of the superzised mind. It's hard to connect dots, bytes and things. Oxygen and platforms for this synthesis are short. Things are tight. Too many creative precincts are booked with exquisitely designed storage bins. "Recursive hermeneutical curbside scratch pads" are not on the collectors "to do list" _or at least the ones who control the real estate. Blogs, articles, gallery installations, and even documentary films are cuffed. They're flat. They don't do much with this digitization of everything. In our virtual mechanically reproduced "plenitude/certitude" there is a solipsism to them. And it's late for new recursive storytelling portals into idea spaces, late to find out how we're being changed by the sweep of information technologies, late to assess where collectors fit in. This essay doesn't want to be a scold. But if we want to extend our essays and ourselves a little longer we need a wiki'd street. To get we have to take back the street. It's what Hannah Arendt called "action". And it involves rattling props and prop-masters.

Douglass North has a new book: Violence and Social Order -A Conceptual Frame Work for Interpreting Recorded Human History. The cover is The 3 rd of May.

11 i) Art in the Age of Heap Postscript: May 2010

The heap was in a plaza in Buenos Aires. It was next to the Victorian cemetery Recoleta. The plaza was filled with a maze of dense photo-shopped images, forty-some panels _giganto grafias. Tigers, broken hearts, text fragments, mirrors, Dante Alighieri, images of crossed faces and bugs _a lot of bugs _made the collected pool. All digitally mashed and enhanced by the Argentine photoshop scribbler Rogelio Polesello. The exhibition was a tribute to Jorge Borges and Franz Kafka. It was titled "Unity in Diversity". And the heap was tabbed a labyrinth. The labyrinth was part of a Kafka Borges Biennale 2010 exhibition. The International Foundation Jorge Luis Borges, Franz Kafka Society and Centre of Prague and the Ministry of Culture of the City of Buenos Aires organized the exhibition. It commemorated more than two dead scribes. It was a tribute to a Menu. They

The platforms Harris was talking about were in Chicago's Millennium Park. They were temporary installations. What is called a Folly. The Follies arrived to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Daniel Burham's "Plan of Chicago". The Committee directed by Harris selected Zaha Hadid and Ben van Berkel each to design a Folly. Prior to the formal opening the selection was dully noted everywhere: 12

10 Andy Clark 2008, Supersizing the Mind Oxford University Press, p 13

11 Blair Kamin August 9, 2009 "Fragile art takes a hit in an interactive world", chicagotribune.com, Cityscapes

12 Blair Kamin, TRIBUNE CRITIC The Bean to get new neighbors -Star architects? two pavilions will summer in park Chicago Tribune (IL) - Wednesday, April 8, 2009

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Figure 1:

Figure 2:

271 were all there; gradient map, posterize, pixel aspect ratio, desaturate, crosshatch, sprayed stroke, smudge stick
272 and bug-copy. ??6^{1 2 3 4 5 6 7}

¹David Reiff, *Swimming in a Sea of Death: A Son's Memoir* (Simon & Schuster; December 30, 2008) ²Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 1 edition(February 19, 2002)

²Walter Benjamin, *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (published in 1936, but not translated into English until 1968.) ⁴Susan Sontag's final wish -Salon.com, Feb 13, 2008 http://www.salon.com/books/feature/2008/02/13/david_reiff/

³Andy Clark & David J. Chalmers, *The Extended Mind, Analysis* (1998). 58 (1):7-19.

⁴The article "www.cabool.com" was in *Interior Design Magazine*, the 1997 *Design Yearbook*.

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⁶Blair Kamin "Fragile art takes a hit in an interactive World" *City scapes-chicagotribune.com* August 9, 2009
18 Blair Kamin, *TRIBUNE CRITIC* "2 architects to design Burnham pavilions" *Chicago Tribune (IL)* -Sunday, June 22, 2008. 19 Richard Ogle, *Smart World* Harvard Business School Press; 1 edition (June 5, 2007)

⁷Douglass North's December 9, 1993 Nobel Prize Lecture: *Economic Performance through Time*, offers a synopsis of New Institutional Economics-http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economics/laureates/1993/north-lecture.html 23 Paul Guzzardo and Lorens Holm, *The Cartographer's Dilemma* p12 GCSAAR Transactions on the Built Environment (ISSN 1992-7320)24 Despite the rhetorical gamesmanship this is not a wanton assault on the collectors. This is about vying literacies _a battle of the literacies. Platforms for perpetual mapping represent a new literacy. You need a scaffold to build that literacy. You need a structure to prop things against, to hook things on, modular systems that can move one.

