

The article explores the lesser-known work of Annetta Pedretti's cybernetic-architectural practice, particularly her attempts to work with 'implicit ordering' as a form of resistance against oppression.

Designing in the Context of Time: Why Annetta Pedretti's cybernetic-architectural practice at 25 Princelet Street matters

Dulmini Perera

Annetta Pedretti studied cybernetics and architecture early in the 1970s – beginning at the Architectural Association (AA) in London and later culminating in a PhD in 1981 at Brunel University – and her training continued to influence her lifelong practice just as much as her everyday surroundings. From 1980 to 2018, Pedretti's life and work revolved around one particular site: 25 Princelet Street in Spitalfields, Tower Hamlets. During these years, Spitalfields was grappling with problems related to rising numbers of immigrants and racism, problems that were inextricably linked to the debates around questions of heritage, conservation, and change that were taking place in response to intensifying gentrification. Planners, architects, and designers' decisions about conservation, repair, and transformation are all bound by particular ideas about futures and time. Understandings of time are so fundamental to everyday social and environmental structures that they easily disappear into the background: one hardly notices how established assumptions about time influence the ways that social, environmental, and technological systems are ordered and how these systems, in turn, order the everyday. Pedretti spoke very early on about faulty assumptions about time and the need for 'jerking ourselves out of the habit of taking time as a given' and 'extracting time from the relations, e.g., economics, in which we have allowed it to be seized up and used up'.¹

In this paper, I turn to what Pedretti called her 'intermedia' practice.² More specifically, I will follow the thread in her work – from her experiments in design writing and running a printing press, to flag-making as a form of protest, to the long-spanning project of repairing and remaking the house at Princelet Street – which points towards her interest in reclaiming time as a form of designerly resistance. In so doing, I will explore how these practices come together, exploring the broader challenges of navigating the dialectical complexity related to negotiating between the 'lived time' (experiential) of entities fundamental to their internal processes of

unfolding and 'clock time' (measurable time) that is significant for social negotiations such as design decisions related to conservation or development.

Pedretti's *oeuvre* resonates with contemporary explorations of design's problematic role within neoliberal processes of ordering the world based on concepts of modernity and economic growth, which have wiped out many living systems.³ We are reminded in these discussions that architecture relates to neoliberalisation simultaneously as 'practice, inhabited space, aesthetic discourse, and material culture in ways that are involved, in different registers and scales'.⁴ Design is never neutral within these contexts. Neither is it only representative of a capitalist order of time and relations, which privileges constant development, accelerated real estate transactions, and the permanent production of 'new' solutions, often in the form of technofixes. Instead, design can help transform the relationship between markets, the state, and social values. So framed, design experiments, in working with change in cities, neighbourhoods, and selves, could become ways of reconfiguring these problematic relationships. Current scholarship also reminds us that 'working with the existing – in a literal and figurative sense – does not mean heritage preservation, but responsible care', arguing, as Pedretti did, that the most important aspect of care is recognising the implicit orders of change of material artefacts and their ecological and social contexts.⁵

Living in Princelet Street, with the flurry of nearby Brick Lane, would have undoubtedly prompted Pedretti's concerns about time. Here, the surrounding buildings became sets, layered and textured in ways that speak to a multiplicity of events, concerns, and promises of futures (Edwardian, Georgian, Victorian, Postwar, Thatcherite).⁶ For centuries, the East End of London (and Brick Lane in particular), was a sanctuary for minority communities: Huguenot silk weavers fleeing religious persecution in seventeenth-century France, Ashkenazi Jews escaping antisemitism in Eastern Europe, and

Bangladeshi immigrants who came through the British government's efforts to bring in workers from the commonwealth in the 1970s.⁷ Pedretti's neighbourhood carried traces of all these communities and their stories of change and transformation. These stories were not marked by smoothness but by frictions and competing interests related to different forms of futures. For example, the Bangladeshis who came to Brick Lane for affordable living quarters and work in the textile industry were greeted by discriminatory housing policies and occasional racist violence.⁸ Pedretti chose to become a composer of the story of East London rather than observe it from the outside. She did so by mobilising her practice to counter various forms of oppression.

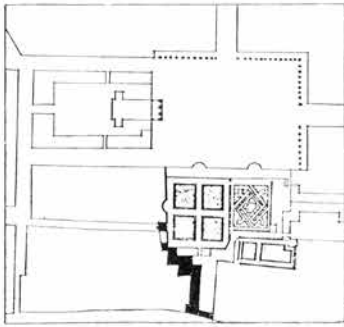
For Pedretti, oppression was a process through which the implicit ordering of living systems, i.e., self-organising systems, are negated or overruled in favour of explicit ordering imposed from the outside.⁹ In other words, oppression destabilises or erases the conditions within a self-organising system – whether it is a human being, a neighbourhood, a city, or an economy – to change the norms from within. Oppression became a word to define the processes she witnessed every day, such as the 'development processes' of corporate companies that gradually erased the cheap workrooms that were the heart of the industrial economy of the East End. The historian and Spitalfields resident Raphael Samuel also observed these processes in the 1970s from his home at 19 Elder Street, nearby Pedretti's Princelet Street house. He writes that it was not only the urban spaces that were erased, but the 'expressive totality' of the character of the area brought forth by multiple forms of life and practices organised around its markets, shops, and houses.¹⁰ In her own way, Pedretti lamented the lack of questioning of the property developers' calculations – 'the assumption that these towers could go up in every city of the world with the same indifference to time and context'.¹¹

Pedretti had started her inquiry in the 1970s, when a growing interest in conservation began to establish itself in Britain as a leading concern in the operational aspects of planning 'new developments', as well as the activist endeavors that defended threatened heritage sites.¹² These movements were a reaction to the perceived 'planning disasters of the 1960s' and were marked by a dissatisfaction towards housing policies and a discontent with modernism.¹³ As Samuel points out, equally questionable was the quick shift towards a conservationist agenda that pivoted on unilateral ideas of culture and English heritage (often promoted by the same local authorities who were to blame for the original planning disasters). The AA, where Pedretti studied in the 1970s, was not an outsider to these debates. The AA hosted architecture workshops led by notable figures such as Bryan Anson, whose active involvement in the conservation struggles of

Covent Garden had already brought the concerns of the streets and the communities into the architecture school.¹⁴ At the same time, along with others at the Architecture Revolutionary Council (ARC) and The New Architecture Movement (NAM), he took architecture to the community, making architecture a resource for those engaged in struggles to defend the autonomy of their ways of life against gentrification.¹⁵

Spitalfields was an important node in the conservation movement of the 1970s.¹⁶ Through her ownership of the house, Pedretti experienced firsthand the paradoxes of the preservation policies of the City Council, which advocated the conservation of the historical houses and allowed the erasure of spaces of hereditary occupations in the Spitalfields Market and the many forms of life they engendered.¹⁷ On the one hand, it became clear to her that the erasure of spaces brought forth by gentrification was also an erasure of time and that the question of what to conserve was far more complex than council policy assumed, involving much more than questions of historical building style. On the other hand, the struggles to address the limitations of space to meet the evolving needs of the multicultural community in Spitalfields were struggles about time, in the sense of not allowing a future for some people. She could see how time, historic time and futurist time, connected in complex ways. She writes: 'to cut the fabric' – by which she means the binding fabric of time – 'is to cut off people existentially (oppression)'.¹⁸ Pedretti's complex definition of oppression enables a better understanding of the systemic embeddedness of oppressive processes that design must not only deal with but which it also partly causes. In other words, her work positions design, whether at the policy or building level, as both problem and solution, pointing towards the urgent need to reframe the very idea of design and its relationship to the multiple crises of the world.

Pedretti questioned the ways in which the redundancies of the quantifiable time of physics, i.e. clock time, influence the economic, social, and political interests that drive design processes. For Pedretti, time is a plurality. Her work is not a negation of the idea of the time of physics but rather exposes the limitations of making this conception of time the ultimate measure of attending to the world. She poses the provocative question: 'what if *time makes the world go round, or the world, rather than the clock, makes time go round?*'¹⁹ Working *within* and *against* oppression is, as Paolo Freire states, 'not to eliminate the risks of temporality by clutching to guaranteed space, that imposes a massive presence to which one can only adapt, but rather it is to treat time as a scope, a domain which takes shape as it is acted upon'.²⁰ For Pedretti, to treat 'time as scope' meant experimenting with ways of bringing attention to the implicit ordering of living systems.²¹ Her work is an invitation to think about a reflexive practice in which claiming time and



m8

MOTIF 8



MOTIF 8: A HOUSE FIT FOR A KING

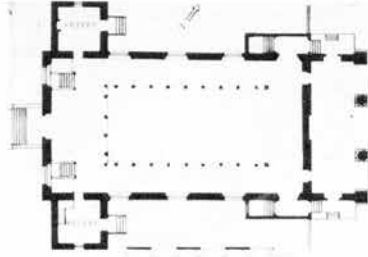
MOTIF 8 was a one-term inter-unit design workshop that exploited individual spatial perceptions and understandings of their execution and representations to generate new design programmes to be resolved and realised. It was supported by an associated lecture course, 'The invention of reality', which discussed the view that reality is how we invent it, and which lead to assorted submissions.



MOTIF 8 – Process description

A. Observations to make a brief

1. Draw, from the image you have that is based on a glimpse, as thorough, complete and detailed a drawing of a space as you can manage. Make a record of how you draw – what you did first, your strategy.
2. Draw, equally thoroughly, completely and with as much detail, the same space, but this time while in the space. Make another record of how you draw.



B. A brief that is a course for action

1. Your two drawings and your two strategies reflect some aspects of how you understand and represent space: this is an exploration. We will design, using this information, a new space. This space is to reflect how you explored the space in your drawings, as shown in your strategies, and is to be based on spatial motifs found in your drawings.
2. Take the strategies and make a brief from them for a space to be explored or that will consciously reveal itself.
3. Isolate spatial motifs by comparing the difference between your two drawings, in order to discover what you invented and what was there.



C. A scenario enacted

1. Think of how this space will be used, of its ceremony. This is its scenario. It is the scenario of a stage-set, of a palace, of a house fit for a king. It is also the scenario of the original building.
2. Design this space. There is no disrespect here, the existing building is a re-construction, a re-design.
3. Present this so that these processes are clear: all processes – the process of your perception, of your exploration, of your brief and scenario and of your space.

MOTIF 8 was attended by

Patrick Beale
Paul Chapin
Julian Cripps
Janet Digby
Charles Dunnett
Christopher Egret
Michael MacNamara
Michael McKnight
Jamileh Manoochehri
Irene Scalbert
Mark Simmonds
Jose Wilmot

with
Annetta Pedretti
Ranulph Gianville



'The invention of reality' course



'The perception of reality', Prof. Richard Gregory, Brain and Perception Laboratory, Bristol University.



'The method of reality', Prof. Brian Gaines, Man-Machine Systems Laboratory, University of Essex.



'Descriptions and realities', Dr. Ruth Kempson, School of Oriental and African Studies, London University.

working *contra* to different forms of oppression becomes about writing, repairing, working with the evolving community, and working on the self. All of these processes are recursively entangled, unfolding, creating feedback and feedforward loops that connect in a myriad of different ways.

Beginnings in architecture and cybernetics: self-organisation, language, everydayness

Pedretti found a vocabulary to explore the complex relationship between transformation, change, implicit ordering, and recursive feedback in living systems through cybernetics. Emerging in the 1940s, cybernetics offered new ways to explore the complex nature of circular causality in feedback processes as systems learn and adapt. The earlier forms of these discussions had focused extensively on order and equilibrium in systems such as thermometers and missiles that could be observed from the outside.²² Nevertheless, by the late 1950s, in what is identified as the second-order cybernetic turn, discussions had shifted to look at how these circular reflexive processes operate in a more complex entangled manner within living systems that were both observers and participants of the same processes. While information and communication aspects of living processes had often been understood through mechanical terms (i.e. life as machines), second-order cybernetic research was instrumental in showing that complex feedback processes involved a whole range of phenomena in the living world, from plants and human bodies to societies and economies. How living systems relate through multiple processes of feedback in time suggested that the boundaries between these systems were much hazier than was supposed by the mechanistic interpretations.²³

Living systems are in continual movement. They oscillate and self-correct. More importantly, natural systems operate in far from equilibrium conditions. When living systems encounter instability, they either break down or break through to a new state of order and organisation. Evolution occurs not only through adaptation to the environment (though this is an integral part of the process) but also through the natural tendency of living systems to reach a new order.²⁴ For Pedretti, the questions of the living world, living societies, living institutional structures, and living buildings were always questions of dealing with the open-systemic nature of their organisation. This was a typical inquiry in the cybernetic-inspired design projects of the 1970s and 1980s, which often looked at the ability of language to frame how open systems respond to differences and questions of participation.²⁵ A well-known example in the British architectural context is the work of Cedric Price and his projects such as the *Fun Palace* or *Potteries Think Belt*.²⁶ For Pedretti, the concept of time was the binding thread connecting these ideas.

As a student at the AA, Pedretti had an early introduction to cybernetic ideas in the context of design and architecture. Discussions by cyberneticians Gordon Pask and Ranulph Glanville moulded her thinking and later influenced her membership in the cybernetic and systems theory community. Others, such as Graham Shane and Leon Van Schaik, experimented with cybernetic and systems ideas to expand ways of framing and engaging the questions of transformation within sites in London.²⁷ Their work informed her view of how cybernetic ideas could be enacted in the context of the broader planning issues that surrounded her work at Princelet Street. Later Pedretti would reminisce fondly about the value of her education at the AA, which was a central political actor in the ongoing debates around conservation and transformation in the 1970s. Here, studio units were taught in ways that framed design in the context of open systems and '(un)prescribability'.²⁸

From 1974 to 1975, Pedretti participated in Studio Unit 9, taught by Van Schaik, James Meller, Peter Jackson, Glanville, and Kate Herron. The students were invited to explore the 'slices of actuality' they compose daily and the actualities they seek to impose through design. The tutors defined *actuality* as 'a reality reached through each individual's experience and not through generalised concepts which lead to the promotion of and acceptance of normative behavior'.²⁹ The studio tutors believed that enabling the students to understand actuality as a product of their actions would free them from the ways architectural and planning professionals tended to take the conditions of the cities as a given. By developing alternative scenarios, the students challenged the normative space produced through measures and estimates made by surveyors in sites ranging from Fleet Street to Cornwall. A brief glimpse of student projects was compiled in the AA Project Review document, where Pedretti adds to a cacophony of voices trying to *actualise* the site in their own ways. Pedretti's drawing is accompanied by a description of the 'city as a treasure chest' for the 'detectors' and 'describers'. There are limitless levels to be detected in the city and an endless number of descriptions. Detecting was creating. Pedretti writes, 'the justification for going around looking finding things [...] was that it would allow that city to be, the description allowed the city to continue being outside the detector'.³⁰ As a student, she had already become interested in the discrepancy between experiencing an ever-growing world and the difficulty in framing such a world, a line of questioning that would carry through into her doctoral research.

In 1979 and 1980 Pedretti and Glanville co-taught a course at the AA punningly titled *Motif x*, in which they tried to create an exhibition space composed of drawings from the designer's perception of the space [1]. They used an exterior

site in Bedford Square as well as an interior site at the St Paul's Church in Covent Garden, joining the political efforts of parts of the AA community in questioning the redevelopment efforts in Covent Garden.³¹ The neglected warehouses and the proposed removal of the market to Battersea made the area a focal point for redevelopment projects.³² After control of the Greater London Council (GLC) was resumed by the Labour Party in 1973, the Secretary of State for the Environment had listed 245 buildings of architectural and historic interest.³³ Due to the scattered nature of these listed items, large-scale redevelopment was made impossible. Nevertheless, the renovation of the market and the proposal of housing schemes from developers had made the area attractive for investors making it a prime site for questions of heritage to play out. Glanville and Pedretti set a framework for the participant students to conduct a series of controlled experiments (which included viewing and drawing) that were, in turn, able to show that the act of students redrawing the space from memory was, in fact, an explication of their own way of seeing the space rather than a passive recording of these ideas. They wanted the students to see that the ways in which worlds are conserved, and how memories are framed and transformed, are more complex than what the normative prescriptive methods imposed by planning and policy regulations would have them believe.

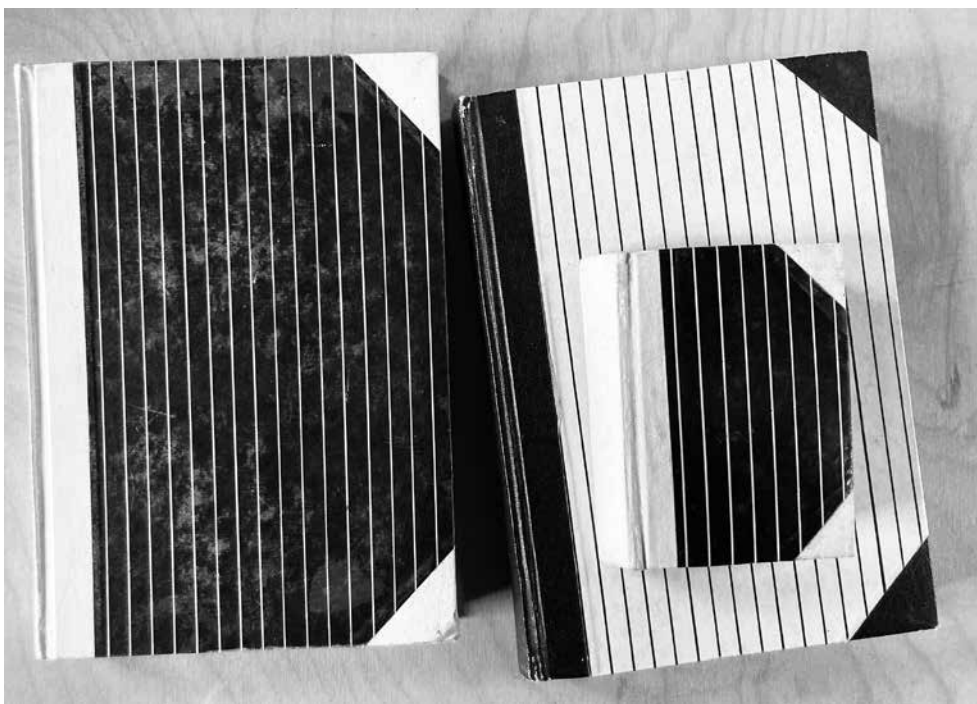
Pedretti became interested in moments where meaningful organisational relationships are formed and negotiated. She framed these moments as 'communicative events' in her doctoral research.³⁴ Events of communication connect the notion of time and recursive feedback to questions of meaning.³⁵ This connection was made through language, or more specifically conversations. Any observer, whether a human or

an artificially intelligent system, requires language to construct worlds, communicate, and argue. Language, in Pedretti's works, takes on multiple connotations, ranging from a broad reference term, to a logic of ordering, to a concept that denotes human natural languages, and in some instances, as a reference to object languages.

In Pedretti's post-PhD practice, the concept of communication events takes on a life of its own. Her work is an invitation to see her house, Spitalfields, and her writing each as an event, both of which transform and change and are at once interrelated and enfolded in messy ways. Where is the boundary? The value of the 'event' as a way of framing human presence in relation to change – whether in the better-known philosophical formulations of Martin Heidegger, Henri Bergson, Paolo Freire, or the less-known work of Pedretti – is that it changes the way one talks about boundaries of various kinds. Boundaries start to blur.³⁶ Pedretti's diary entry reflecting on how she came to work on the lifelong project of restoring her house speaks to this point:

[...] and the project I'd started first to house a conference, then to restore a building became a project to restore a way of making things work, a project to restore a way of (still) being able to see things that was in the process of being wiped out: and then that took away the pressure to 'finish the building' and instead gave one all the time in the world to learn to re-member the time in which we can make things work, things that work, the time in which things could again work – the time in which I work – we work?³⁷

For Pedretti, just like for Mary Catherine Bateson (one of the few known female cybernetic practitioners operating around the same time) questions about cybernetic feedback, change, growth, and transformation were questions



2 Pedretti Notebook sizes, photograph by author, House of Annetta, 2023.

about everyday improvisations, which in turn, contain ‘interlocking commitments, decisions, and possibilities’.³⁸ The work sites of women such as Pedretti’s enable one to see a different ethics and politics of engaging reflexive feedback that is perhaps more helpful for thinking through the challenges of designing within changing societies at present.³⁹

Explorations on implicit ordering: ways of attending to worlds in formation

Does writing while repairing a house help one to attend to the repair process in different ways? Could the repair of a house reveal ways of repairing the city? Can attending to a house and a city through time be a way of exploring oneself as a designing subject and an agent that evolves through time? Can all these activities act against processes of oppression and their politics? Following Pedretti through the small arcs of feedback that connect her projects is one way to explore potential answers to these questions.

Pedretti wrote a lot. The writing that she did in her notebooks and diaries in the 1980s and 1990s were an explicit part of her everyday practice [2]. Her writing experiments range from personal writing on design and academic papers all the way to explorations of alternative forms of publishing. This was exemplified best by her work running the small printing press Princelet Editions. Established in 1981, it operated between the worlds of art and science, and, according to her own words, ‘performed’ publishing interventions.⁴⁰ Yet her writing is not the type of writing that one encounters in academic books or conferences. It is, however, a kind of writing familiar to practitioners and closer to contemporary forms of spatial writing practices (such as Jane Rendell’s ‘site-writing’) that claim writing as a form of critical design practice in its own right. To borrow the words of Jane Rendell, Pedretti might be seen as ‘writing the sites between critic, work and artist, as well as

critic, text and reader.’⁴¹ She did so by prioritising her own emotions and reactions as a subject as they emerged through her encounters with the site during the repair process, in turn prompting questions about the established relationships between theory, practice, and research in architectural and urban methodologies, which are less sensitive to the lived experience of time.⁴² For example, Pedretti explicitly connects the affective realm and realm of action by connecting her diary-writing practice and building practice



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3 Annetta fixing front door scroll, photographer unknown, photo album, House of Annetta, 2023.

4 Vaulted space as summerhouse, photograph by author, House of Annetta, 2023.



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5 Spiral staircase in the garden to access the planted roof of the summerhouse with the outhouse for the toilet on the side, Assemble, date unknown.

7 Attic level of the house with the bed made out of chairs and some of her mixed media projects hanging on the walls, Assemble, 2020.

6 Patterned wooden panels made to replace those that had decayed, photograph by author, House of Annetta, 2023.

8 Basement staircase with drawers, Assemble, 2020.

in ways that make understanding one without the other impossible. In so doing, she foregrounds how mundane daily acts such as drinking a coffee or walking the Tobacconist factor into design responses within the repair process just as much as a budget restriction or a building policy, prompting questions about what counts as the boundaries of design practice in discussions on research and method.

Pedretti's interest in design writing is also linked to the idea of 'the conversational' in the work of her mentor Gordon Pask.⁴³ Pask saw conversations as a significant part of a learning process that engaged living systems in their open systemic complexity. During the years in which Pedretti got to know Pask, he was exploring how conversational models enabled different ways of thinking about the 'information environment', a concept that was gaining traction in the 1970s with the rising interest in computing machines.⁴⁴

Glanville (who was already working with Pask) extended some of these ideas to conceptualise the design process as a conversation that expanded not only outside of the self, but also inwards, as a pivotal aspect of the agency and politics of a designer. According to Glanville, design agency is always multiple (and hence conversational) and enacts itself through the 'internal conversation'.⁴⁵ For Pedretti, writing was a political action, a way of claiming space by externalising ideas as they emerge in time through external and internal conversation. She writes, 'the transitions from writing to building is how I get tuned to what I am doing'.⁴⁶

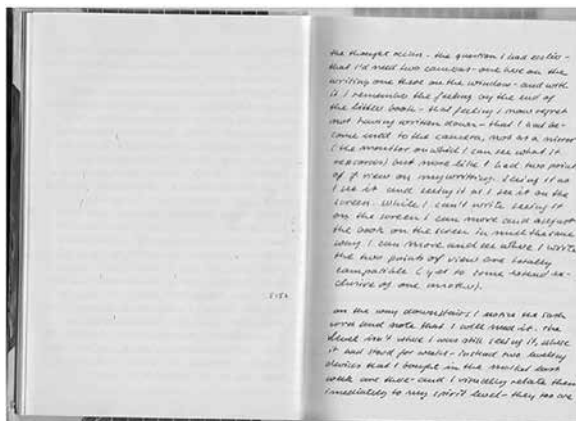
Her diary entries are driven by the remaking and repair process of her Princelet Street house, which she bought in 1980 and would work on till her death in 2018.⁴⁷ All the while the remaking of the house was influenced just as much by her diary writing. She reflects, 'but what did the builders do? They helped me jump from one textbook to the next'.⁴⁸ Her reflexive diaries exemplify what 'attending to' and 'composing difference' could mean in the context of building, or even more broadly what such an approach might mean when working with urban scale processes, futures, and

politics. She comments, 'I was learning to build in time trying to remember again and again how to make sense of things in time and building or rebuilding or restoring an old building would be as good a place to learn as any.'⁴⁹ As the house stands today, one can take inventory of her incomplete acts of repair.⁵⁰ She replaced the roof, the front door, its surround, and the scrolls on the sides of the doors [3]. She built a summer house with a vaulted roof and cast a spiral staircase in the garden to access the roof [4]. A small outbuilding was constructed for a shower and toilet and the rear of the house was excavated to put in basement-level windows [5]. She repainted the back of the building, repainted a portion of the front, and remade some of the lead mullion windows and doors with spiral wrought-iron fixings for the rear ground and first floor. She excavated and poured a concrete slab in the basement to lower the floor level and create more ceiling height, and she started laying slate for a bathroom in the centre of the first floor. She did some work making plain and marquetry wooden panels to replace decayed ones [6]. She designed a bed with old chairs [7].⁵¹ The

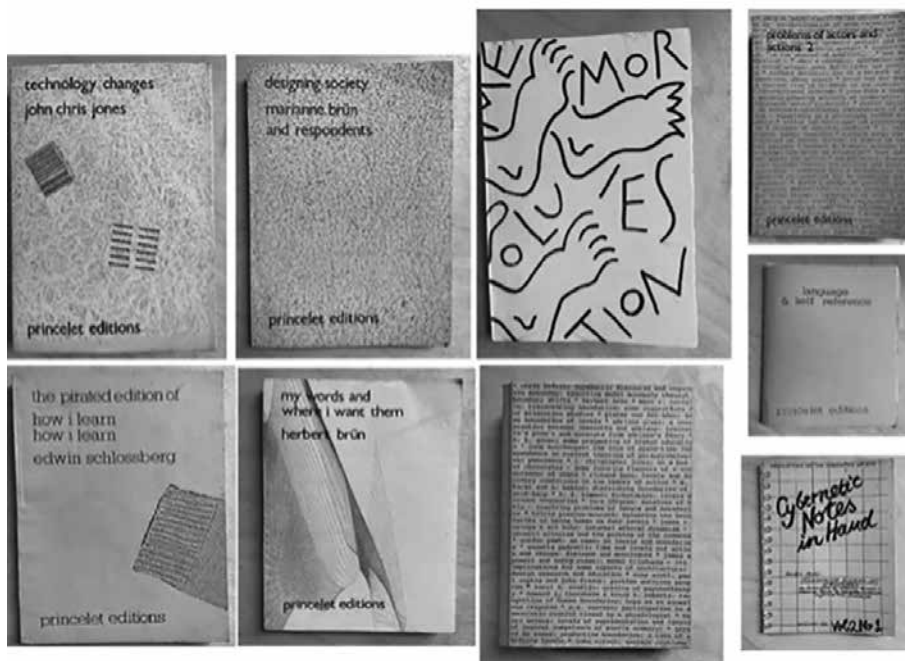
drawers, along with the basement's staircase, are her additions [8]. The window repair work, which took up most of her time, features prominently in her philosophical reflections and will be discussed more within this paper.

Thinking with the traces of Pedretti's objects of repair alongside her diary entries enables one to see how these practices intertwine, or how the building process actually enabled her to move from notebook to notebook. These multiple practices become what Eva von Redecker (2021) calls 'anchor practices' – practices that are rehearsed over time and enable the coming together of structures and systems that collectively support each other.⁵² In the case of Pedretti, these practices aim to develop a sensibility towards implicit patterns and flows that have been destroyed by modern forms of knowing and sensing. For example, reparative uses of material require close attention to the context where the material is located. Responses grow out of a context where both material and technique emerge in response to that context. Pedretti reflects on how this process is radically different from how one is expected to work with modern material, such as her experience of working with 'expanding foam' for repairing the windows.⁵³

The expanding foam came along with what she calls 'an instruction', referring to a kind of overly codified general solution to what are in actuality very specific problems, and that, when imposed, violates the implicit order. She continues to reflect on how working with context also requires a need for a reappreciation of forms of labour and sensibility that have become devalued as a result of the faulty split between the 'mental labour' (the immaterial) of the architect and the 'physical labour' (material) of the builders.⁵⁴ Moving between sites of writing and building within her own practice becomes a way for Pedretti to



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9 Sample page from Annetta's diary writing, Diary 01, photograph by Tristan Bergmoser, House of Annetta, 2021.

10 Books produced by Princeton Editions, photograph by Tristan Bergmoser, House of Annetta, 2021.

remind herself that reparative practices require ways to repair the very split in labour practices. With a slight tone of sarcasm, she comments on how her desire to keep thinking and writing gets interrupted by the actual need to cover the window opening, so that her own survival can be ensured. She writes: 'and the wind tells me that the covers of this large new notebook can pretend what importance they like, that if I don't close off the holes – either temporarily with plastic – or by putting in new windows – I'll catch my death trying to write in the cold.'⁵⁵

Pedretti's diary entries about the repair process at Princelet Street are rich and varied. There is often no page numbering and no clear demarcation of dates (in rare cases, timestamps are scribbled on the opposite page) [9].⁵⁶ The writings range from close reflections on hammering, repairing window lintels, or the city, all the way to themes such as feminism and science. For example, the diary contains an account of the act of hammering, or more specifically, how the sound of a nail changes as it goes into the wood – something one cannot easily measure, quantify, or describe, but which one becomes sensitive to nonetheless. In the next pages she connects this observation to the process of writing.⁵⁷ 'Expository writing'; or setting out to write something and sticking by it is dull because it is all remembered. She compares expository writing to 'forcing in the nail without feeling the hammer'.⁵⁸ Her thoughts on expository writing also become an analogy to what she identifies as one of the powerful ways of observing and ordering the world – the sciences.

*Given that as scientists we are trained to make everything explicit [...] – making an awful lot of noise. [...] An awful lot of noise may sound negative but that is not to say WITHIN science it isn't necessary, inspiring, fascinating and potentially fruitful. [...] But from the point of view of how we make sense of things implicitly – it is an awful lot of noise. It is like trying to hammer a nail in by calculating the weight of the hammer from the specific weight of the iron and a volume calculated from measuring its shape.*⁵⁹

She critiques the way that scientific methods marginalise other ways of observing and ordering the world. The 'time of physics' leads to better measuring, universalising, and controlling by design. The 'time of experience' Pedretti mentions in the context of implicit ordering leads to designerly ways of incorporating difference and resisting oppressive design practices.

Framed in this way, attending to writing could become a way of mediating the frictions between established norms that represented the presence of the past (for example, ideas found in established academic communities) and emergent ideas that represented a future yet to come. Pedretti thought this was only possible by not 'writing about', but rather by 'writing with'. At the invitation to contribute an essay detailing

her experiences with Pask in a commemorative *Festschrift*, she refused to write *about* Pask but rather *with* Pask. Her idea of 'writing with' is a concept that was influenced as much by Paul Feyerabend's *Against Method* and Susan Sontag's *Against Interpretation* as it was by second-order cybernetics.⁶⁰ The essay boldly titled *Against Reference* stresses how academic ideas evolve in certain communities. The more one takes a community as a given 'we', Pedretti argues, the idea systems start to subscribe only to imperatives. This, in turn, leads to too much self-description dictated by proper ways of doing and limits our ways of engaging the world as it is brought forth in process. She also highlights how an individual, through writing, continually creates their own paradigms, which sit in tension with established paradigms.⁶¹ To 'write with' is to create the potential for an idea of an academic community that is continuously changing and redefining itself.

Through the years, Pedretti used her printing press to document many of the systems and cybernetics conferences in ways that were sensitive to emerging collective ideas [10]. These publications often appeared as co-authored in the form of 'Annetta Pedretti and participants'. A good example is her project on the production of the ASC 1984 conference book titled *Autonomy, Intervention and Dependence*. Pedretti argued that a pre-published conference book would restrict the attention which could be given to ideas that emerged in the conference discussion. What she set up was a second-order framework that focused on the 'conferring' rather than the content. Later, she thought that this process could be captured and supported by her printing press as a new form of publication. She named this experimental series aptly as *Living Books*.⁶²

Pedretti's explorations did not only reflect Great Britain's conservation and heritage debates during the 1970s. They also problematised the ways in which narrow notions of heritage and conservation took on an inflated status within these cultural debates. The effects of the dominant ideas about conservation and tradition – such as those surrounding William Morris and the Society for the Protection of Buildings (SPAB) and their efforts to save intrinsically 'English' scenes and buildings – had been contested by critics such as Raphael Samuels, who had argued for more open ideas around heritage, traditions and their transformations.⁶³ The prevailing emphasis on the preservation of period effects, or particular building styles (rather than contested spaces such as markets) was, for Samuels, representative of the reductive framing of heritage not as a question of the living but instead as a 'closed story', that is, 'a fixed narrative which allows for neither subtext or counter readings'.⁶⁴ In fact, what Samuels highlights is how such 'closed system' ideas directly feed into the complex relationship between capitalism and gentrification. As these closed system ideas 'traffic'

in history and ‘commodify’ the past, they have contributed to making heritage and conservation a ‘deeply capitalist’ endeavour in a ‘postmodern’ rather than ‘postindustrial’ vein.⁶⁵ Gentrification processes also bring about a transition from cultural capital to economic capital mobilised by the middle-class valorisation of sites of cultural and aesthetic value. As such, the voices of those who could clearly articulate their identity in simple terms are amplified in comparison to those with contested identities who are unable to do so.⁶⁶ Pedretti’s sentiment echoes Samuels’ critique as she realised that she could only question planning decisions and their relevance to the growing multicultural community, ironically, as a private property owner. She intervened in state processes such as the Crossrail bill hearings where she thought that decisions about the public were being made in a ‘not-so-public’ way.⁶⁷ The conversation between her and the committee members was interesting, with Pedretti trying to explain words like ‘community’. In the Crossrail discussions, by claiming time for herself as a private property owner, she managed to also claim the time for the community she was part of and pose questions about how the communal should be designed. She writes later:

To assert the fabric as one, is to recognise the connectedness in which we are all affected by the way in which we treat time: It is to recognise our treatment of time to be of public concern. It is to put its treatment up for discussion in the public domain. It is to begin to trace oppression as the ‘privatisation of time’. To treat time in the public domain is to assert our right(s) to time and ask how we might deal with time in a more democratic manner.⁶⁸

In Spitalfields, situational identities formed in the various groups took shape as responses to broader forces such as gentrification and nationalism.⁶⁹ Pedretti thought that a lot could be done to create the much-needed sensitivity towards these situational identities by advocating what Mary Catherine Bateson called an ‘adaptive multiculturalism’.⁷⁰ Adaptive multiculturalism was different from politicians and planners’ idea of ‘identity multiculturalism’ that sought to acknowledge difference as emerging diversity in growing cities in nominal ways. Adaptive multiculturalism is multiple for the individual and ‘its greatest importance is in offering multiple ways of looking at the same thing’.⁷¹

In Pedretti’s project for designing a multicultural flag, she set up a framework through which the community came together at Spitalfields Market to work on the continuous reweaving of the flag, thereby engaging in a continuous conversation on the evolving image of community through time [11]. She argued that, as a multicultural society, we define ourselves in terms of histories and exchanges that lead to our present position, and the flags should represent these processes of dividing and rejoining. Pedretti argued that it was important not only to set up this process but to make it explicit, arguing that it was the task of artists, makers, and designers to provide new models to think thorough the emerging complexity.⁷² Pedretti’s approach to time and difference enables a way of thinking through some of the complexities related to



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12

11 Annetta’s Flag project at Spitalfields market, photographer unknown, photo album, House of Annetta.

12 ‘Save Brick Lane’ Campaign at House of Annetta, Assemble, 2020.

autonomy, such as the existence of conditions for changing norms from within, and the complex relationship between the individual and the community. Western liberal notions of autonomy sit comfortably alongside neoliberal ideals, which thrive on a 'nominal notion of pluralism' such as the need for many conversations, many voices, etc. In this model, the community appears as an 'unproblematic fullness', in turn, obscuring the actual second-order issue of 'composing difference' (which is to say, composing community) which becomes a problem to engage rather than the solution.⁷³ Pedretti's work foregrounds these second-order issues.

On reclaiming: times, worlds, futures

In December 2020, two years after Pedretti's death, a 'Save Brick Lane' campaign gained widespread attention, in which the *House of Annetta* was also used as a site in solidarity with the resistance against extreme gentrification occurring at Borough Tower Hamlet and where debates on conservation, repair, gentrification, and evolving multicultural communities continue [12]. Pedretti's home has become a place where the questions of conservation and justice can be negotiated. In her life's work, Pedretti put in place a set of relationships between the house, her concerns, the neighbourhood community, and local authorities that continue to play out to this day. These relationships, which emerged through multiple practices, collectively enable a form of care and resistance, speaking to the ontological idea of design's agency in time and how design designs back.⁷⁴ Her house sets up a framework to resist the imposed futures of single-visioned development processes and provides a space to negotiate alternative futures. It is because of this very fact that an architectural practice such as Assemble could reclaim this site and set up a form of a second-order project such as the *House of Annetta*, speaking to the possibilities engendered by a second-order practice in time.⁷⁵

Pedretti's project is particularly helpful for thinking through the present moment, in which there are many obstacles for thinking in time. Particularly problematic forms of a techno-modern ontology strengthen the runaway feedback loops between practices of making and markets. Pedretti's engagement with time across

the various communicative events of learning, writing, teaching, as well as publishing and repairing a house, are particularly noteworthy in two ways. The first is how she engages the dialectical complexity between the 'real-time' of individuals and the 'clock time' of the social, both in the contexts of academic knowledge and its evolution, as well as the questions of the multicultural politics of heritage and transformation. She engages the tension of both, dealing with time as a common thread, necessary for social organisation, while also maintaining an awareness of how this very organisation threatens to erase the differences between the lived time of individuals and cultural groups. Second, she is sensitive to how clock time oversimplifies the experience of time, and in particular, past-future relations. She alludes to a distinction between 'real time' and 'measurable time'. Real time is only ever lived and perceived in the continuity of being lived. Time becomes measurable when it is divisible. This is what clocks do as they relegate duration to spatial instants. Clocks are at the centre of a 'modern' ontology of the world and are therefore central to any question of making and unmaking the modern world.

For Pedretti, as for Heidegger and Bergson, it is exactly this complex flow between the past and the future, the coming towards itself and the having been, that is lost in the face of the clock that simplifies this relation to quantifiable moments and perceivable directions. Yet it is often the case that clock time is so easily taken as a given, that the thought that alternatives exist does not even occur. The effects of this techno-modern ontology engenders a different sensitivity to the ways in which humans attend to the making (and unmaking) of our worlds in time. Mark Fisher, who alludes to the inability to think in time as a cultural condition, points out how such a condition prohibits any form of thinking beyond capitalism as the only realistic political economic system.⁷⁶ It is a cultural condition where practices become formulated in a form of a business ontology, an ontology that brings about – to borrow Pedretti's terms – oppression through an economisation of time. But Pedretti shows us that an alternative *is* possible and that it begins in our own practices whether in writing, house repair, or community projects.

Notes

1. Annetta Pedretti, 'In the Context of Time', in *Craft and Constraint, Clocks and Conversation: A Larry Richards Reader, 1987–2007* (School for Designing a Society, 2009), p. 98.
2. I found this description in an undated printed note, in which she tries to compile a personal short bio. Under the text is a note stating 'finally – Ranulph – I hope this is ok.'
3. Danowski Déborah and Eduardo Batalha Viveiros de Castro, *The Ends of the World*, trans. by Rodrigo Guimaraes Nunes (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2017), p. 3. Some of the most recent explorations that take up questions of time, modernity, acceleration, and architecture can be seen in the projects and discussion featured in the 10th Architecture Biennale of Rotterdam titled *It's About Time: The Architecture of Change* <<https://www.architecturebiennalerotterdam2022.nl/en/about/theme>>. See also *The Great Repair: Politics for the Repair Society*, ed. by Christian Hiller and others (Berlin: ARCH+ Verlag GmbH, 2023).
4. *Neoliberalism on the Ground: Architecture and Transformation from the 1960s to the Present*, ed. by Kenny Cupers and others (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020),

- p. 5 <<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvzxxb75>>.
5. Great Repair, 'Concept' <<https://archplus.net/en/the-great-repair/#article-41665>>.
 6. For a description of the multiple historical layers and their evolution in time, see: Raphael Samuel, 'The Pathos of Conservation', in Mark Girouard and others, *The Savings of Spitalfields* (London: Spitalfields Historic Buildings Trust, 1989), pp. 135–70. It is also important to note that the House of Annetta sits among a number of other spaces that function as sets for thinking about houses as events in time and time slippage, such as Denis Severs' house in 18 Folgate Street and Rodinsky's room above the synagogue at 19 Princelet Street, and whose disappearance is explored in Rachel Lichtenstein and Iain Sinclair, *Rodinsky's Room* (London: Granta Books, 2000). I am thankful to one of the reviewers for highlighting the possibilities of the comparison with other buildings in the immediate neighbourhood.
 7. Jane M. Jacobs, *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 71.
 8. Naaz Rasheed, *Notes from Brick Lane* (2019), Discover Society <<https://archive.discoverociety.org/2019/04/03/notes-from-brick-lane/>> [accessed 25 May 2022].
 9. Although the question of implicit vs explicit ordering appears across Pedretti's work, a detailed written reflection of the idea can be found here: London, House of Annetta, 'Ideas of Orders – Ways of Seeing: Notes on an Epistemology of Making Things', Personal diary, Diary 2, 1993. Note: Pedretti's archive is yet to be properly assembled and classified. The classification used here is based on my preliminary fieldwork.
I have developed parts of this argument on implicit order and oppression in the following conference papers: Dulmini Perera, 'Designing in the Context of Time: On Annetta Pedretti, Practicing Cybernetics and Futuring', *Proceedings of Relating Systems Thinking and Design Symposium* (Brighton, United Kingdom, 2022) and Dulmini Perera, 'Annetta Pedretti vs. a World Out of Time: Explorations in Cybernetics, Design and Futures', in *ISSS Annual Conference, Advances in Systems Science and Systems Practices* (online, 2022).
 10. Samuel, *The Pathos of Conservation*, p. 169.
 11. Pedretti, Diary 2, p. 187.
 12. Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London: Verso, 2012), pp. 227–38. See also: Elain Harwood and Alan Powers, 'From Downturn to Diversity, Revisiting the 1970s', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, 10 (2012), 16–17.
 13. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, pp. 67–9.
 14. Brian Anson, 'From Radical to Revolutionary', *Architectural Association Quarterly*, 7:4 (1975), 34–7.
 15. Anson's comments on the type of student they wanted to produce through NAM endeavours is particularly telling of how they envisioned change. He states, 'Whenever a student walks through a gentrified area where massive improvement grants have enabled landlords to evict long standing tenants and raise the value of their property a hundredfold, he will vow never to work in firms that indulge in such activities.' Edward Bottoms, 'If Crime Doesn't Pay: The Architects' Revolutionary Council', *AArchitecture*, 5, p. 18 <<https://www.slideshare.net/Nipesh/if-crime-doesnt-pay>>. For the centrality of Architectural Association within the broader debates on conservation and transformation, see: Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, p. 247, and Brian Anson, *I'll Fight You for It! Behind the Struggle for Covent Garden* (London: Cape, 1981).
 16. Mark Girouard and others, *The Savings of Spitalfields* (London: Spitalfields Historic Buildings Trust, 1989).
 17. The Gentle Author, 'A Farewell to Spitalfields', *Spitalfields Life*, 2 December <<https://spitalfieldslife.com/2010/12/02/a-farewell-to-spitalfields/>> [accessed 22 February 2022].
 18. Pedretti, 'In the Context of Time', p. 96.
 19. Ibid., p. 98.
 20. Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (London: Penguin Classics, 2017), p. 65.
 21. Pedretti, 'Ideas of Orders', Diary 2.
 22. For more on first-order cybernetics, see: Reinhold Martin, 'The Organizational Complex: Cybernetics, Space, Discourse', *Assemblage*, 37 (1998), 103–27. See also: Peter Galison, 'The Ontology of the Enemy: Norbert Wiener and the Cybernetic Vision', *Critical Inquiry*, 21 (1994), 228–66.
 23. For more general information about second-order cybernetics, see: Heinz von Foerster, 'Perception of the Future and the Future of Perception', in *Understanding Understanding* (New York, NY: Springer, 2003), pp. 199–210; Andrew Pickering, *The Cybernetic Brain: Sketches of Another Future* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011). For the encounter between second-order cybernetics and design, see also: Dulmini Perera, 'Architectures of Coevolution: Second-Order Cybernetics and Architectural Theories of the Environment, c. 1959–2013' (unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Hong Kong, 2017).
 24. Fritjof Capra, *The Web of Life: A New Scientific Understanding of Living Systems* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, 1997).
 25. Jonathan Hughes and Simon Sadler, *Non-Plan: Essays on Freedom, Participation and Change in Modern Architecture and Urbanism* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2000).
 26. Cedric Price and Samantha Hardingham, *Cedric Price: Opera* (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2003).
 27. Architectural Association, Intermediate School Unit 09 (pamphlet). AA project review 1974/75, Architectural Association Archives, Bedford Square, London, United Kingdom, see also: Architectural Association, First Year Unit 1 (pamphlet). AA project review 1974/75, Architectural Association Archives, Bedford Square, London, United Kingdom.
 28. See the definition of the term 'design' in Annetta Pedretti, 'The Cybernetics of Language' (unpublished PhD thesis, Brunel University, 1981), Appendix 1: Glossary, p. 16.
 29. Architectural Association, Intermediate School Unit 09.
 30. Ibid.
 31. Ranulph Glanville, 'Architecture and Space for Thought' (unpublished PhD thesis, Brunel University, 1988), Appendix J, pp. 482–8.
 32. Anson, *I'll Fight You For It!*, see also: Mark Girouard and Dan Cruickshank, 'Save the Garden', *Architectural Review*, 152 (1972), 16–32.
 33. Harwood and Powers, 'From Downturn to Diversity', p. 17.
 34. Pedretti, 'The Cybernetics of Language', pp. 217–37.
 35. Ibid., pp. 218–20.
 36. David Scott, 'The "Concept of Time" and the "Being of the Clock": Bergson, Einstein, Heidegger, and the Interrogation of the Temporality of Modernism', *Continental Philosophy Review*, 39 (2006), 183–213.
 37. London, House of Annetta, Personal diary, Diary 3 [small hard black cover with white stripes, tape binding], pp. 53–4.

38. Mary Catherine Bateson, *Composing a Life* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 2010), p. 241.
39. Sandra G. Harding, *Sciences from Below: Feminisms, Postcolonialities, and Modernities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).
40. In the undated printed note mentioned in fn. 8, she describes her printing press as 'performing' publishing interventions.
41. Jane Rendell, 'Prologue-Pre-Positions' in *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), p. 40 <<https://site-writing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/5-Rendell-Prologue-Pre-positions-.pdf>>.
42. Jane Rendell, 'The Siting of Writing, and the Writing of Sites', in *Explorations in Urban Design: An Urban Design Research Primer*, ed. by Matthew Carmona (London: Ashgate, 2013), p. 1.
43. Pedretti's reflexive design-writing practice can be traced across the objects in her archives. Unpacking this aspect of her work requires a separate paper. Here, I frame her design writing ideas within the broader trajectory of cybernetic ideas about conversations and the design process. I also mention the size of the notebooks in certain places because the sizes seem to have impacted Pedretti's reflective site-writing process. For example, Diary 3, which is referenced in this paper, is smaller than the other diaries and she makes comments about how the size difference affects her workflow.
44. Gordon Pask, 'The Architectural Relevance of Cybernetics', *Architectural Design*, 5 (1969), 494–6. See also: Usman Haque, 'The Architectural Relevance of Gordon Pask', *Architectural Design*, 77:4 (2007), 54–61.
45. Glanville, 'Architecture and Space for Thought'.
46. London, House of Annetta, Personal diary, Diary 1 [hard black cover with white stripes, tape binding], p. 6.
47. Pedretti was a beneficiary of the conservation programmes managed by the local authorities that employed tactics such as selling and leasing houses with heritage values to individuals who were sympathetic with the cause. These programmes also provided financial support to the owners such as funding for house repair. Pedretti saw this as a condition that enabled her critical practice. In one of her diary entries, Pedretti writes that she feels privileged to write as someone who has been funded over fifteen years to restore a piece of heritage in a period in which one would have had to sell out to earn a living in a highly academic environment. See: London, House of Annetta, Personal diary, Diary 4 [hard black cover with white stripes, tape binding], pp. 4–5. However, it is important not to romanticise Pedretti's economic situation during her time at Princelet Street, as she barely made enough money to survive, let alone bring the repair process to completion.
48. London, House of Annetta, Personal diary, Diary 3 [hard black cover with white stripes, tape binding], p. 2.
49. Ibid., p. 16.
50. This inventory was prepared with Assemble and Fran Edgerly, who had taken stock of what Pedretti had built after the building was handed over to them.
51. Fran Edgerly points out that it's unclear whether she ever slept in the 'bed' upstairs as Pedretti's niece had stated that they would sleep on a mattress placed above the beams supporting the roof.
52. Eva von Redecker, *Praxis and Revolution: A Theory of Social Transformation* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2021).
53. Pedretti, Diary 1, pp. 31–3.
54. Adding to this discussion is her description of the difference of labour between the 'district surveyors' who were using explicit orders and 'working out of time'. She also argues that builders' capabilities of working in an implicit order has been overridden by the extreme economisation and professionalisation of the building process. Reminiscing about how she replaced the window lintels one by one, and rebuilt the brickwork without any passers-by noticing, she argues how acts of care that happen in the context of time happen so subtly that they go unnoticed. See Pedretti, Diary 3, pp. 28–50.
55. Pedretti, Diary 1, p. 4.
56. In the 1980s, Pedretti also started to work with video recording as an alternative method of reflexively engaging her everyday practices. This happened often in parallel to her writing. As such, it could be the case that the time stamps on the left-hand side of her diaries correspond with video recordings that could also be found in her archive. These methods of recording time across multiple practices is a distinct feature of how she attempted to create links across her multiple practices of writing, video recording, building. Since the questions of formatting and organising the archive has opened only very recently, an in-depth exploration of her video material has not been attempted. However in the same handwritten note mentioned in fn. 39, she gives a short inventory of her video productions that are as follows: 'The Wars of the Observer' (20 mins) and time works 'Pointing' (3h), 'Horizon/Horizont'(28h), 'Writing' (40 hrs), 'Object Constancy'(three weeks sampled in to three hours). For Pedretti presenting her video work, see: Jude Lombardi and Annetta Pedretti, Part 1 of 'The I of Language, Turning Objects into Rhythms' (American Society for Cybernetics Online Conference, 2020) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_E_Wx5KXozc>.
57. Pedretti, 'Ideas of Orders', Diary 02, pp. 7–11.
58. Ibid., p. 7.
59. Ibid. pp. 21–2.
60. Annetta Pedretti, 'Against Reference: How I Write the Geometry of Speaking in the Archeology of an It', *Systems Research*, 10:3 (1993), 149–64. In the paper, Pedretti uses a composition of different pieces of writing she made on different days related to the topic and adds the dates next to those particular sections of the text. The corresponding notebook in the archive (in which she wrote these ideas in pencil and paper) also contain additional remarks and thoughts that were edited out of this published version. See: London, House of Annetta, Personal diary, Diary 4 [hard black cover with white stripes, tape binding].
61. Ibid.
62. In her invitation to Marianne Brün who had given a talk about 'designing society' Pedretti speaks of the possibilities of 'living books' where Brün's talk and the discussion surrounding it can be transcribed together 'with responses and response to responses'. See Marianne Brün and respondents, *Designing Society, Living Books Series* (London: Princelet Editions, 1985), inner front page.
63. William Morris, 'The SPAB Manifesto', Spab.org.uk (2018) <<https://www.spab.org.uk/about-us/spab-manifesto>> [accessed 15 December 2022]; Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, p. 227.
64. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, p. 243. See also Samuels's response to developments around the time when the second reading of the Market Bill was in progress through Parliament in 1988 as discussed in 'The Gentle Author, 'A Farewell to Spitalfields', *Spitalfields Life* (2 December 2010) <<https://>

- spitalfieldslife.com/2010/12/02/a-farewell-to-spitalfields/> [accessed 22 February 2022].
65. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, p. 242.
 66. See how the Spitalfields Trust articulated the concept of heritage and directionality in Kate Jordon, 'Bruce Grove Transferred: The Role of Diverse Traditions in Historic Conservation', *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*, 20 (2009), p.67.
 67. Parliament UK, Select Committee on the Crossrail Bill, Minutes of Evidence <<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldselect/ldcross/112/8031715.htm>> [accessed 20 May 2022].
 68. Pedretti, *In the Context of Time* (2009), p. 96.
 69. Jordon, 'Bruce Grove Transferred', p. 64.
 70. Mary Catherine Bateson, *Peripheral Visions: Learning Along the Way* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1994), p. 168.
 71. Ibid.
 72. Dr Larry Richards, one of Pedretti's longtime colleagues, with whom I conducted an in-depth interview on 28 November 2022, recalls Pedretti's stay at his house after a conference in Montreal when she persuaded him to write a letter to the United Nations Headquarters asking about the possibility of hanging the flag there. Although they received a negative answer, the author of the mail commended the endeavour.
 73. Arturo Escobar, *Designs for the Pluriverse: Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), p. 183.
 74. Ibid., pp. 105–34.
 75. For more information about the current state of Pedretti's house, see: <<https://houseofannetta.org/>>.
 76. Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (London: Zero books, 2009).

Illustration credits

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Competing interests

The author declares none.

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