SUMMARY OF DAY ONE – SARA DIAMOND

Sara: As I said yesterday, my role at 9:00 o'clock in the morning is to attempt to summarize the brilliance that was presented the day before and having created this absolutely arduous schedule for all of you, which you helped me create, by the way, because you all did want to be in dialogue with each other. I'm going to attempt to do this to some extent. So, here we go. For the archives, for the radio out there and Radio 90 and the Banff Media Institute Radioland, these are some of the ideas from yesterday.

I really want to thank Linda Wallace and Sandy Stone because they did this amazing bookend act, which I really didn't expect or orchestrate, but it kind of does make sense in some ways. The day kind of began and ended with the subject of relationships and space and Sandy told this incredible story about Capernia who was a preoperative transsexual who's heterosexual army lover was murdered because of his relationship with Capernia. But the story is nonetheless Capernia's and her decision to kind of take up a range of subject's positions within different kinds of spaces; those are the kinds of social accommodation as a point of resistance, and a kind of meeting of her own identity. And what for me was incredible, was the sort of notion that Sandy talked about the kind of recalibration of Capernia within a kind of space of performance that would be both within his invented space at the ACT Lab but also that could travel as nomadic entities.

There is a sort of a plan to re-enact these identifies in this space that Sandy, who is a postoperative transsexual, was constructing within an academic environment as a seditious performance but in one where Sandy is, in fact, enacted as a point of power and has authority within that space and a kind of set of controls and could design the performance and the space. Within these architectures of inclusion and exclusion, as a real life Diegesus, that is a sort of an enacting a space and narrative, which we're going to explore tonight. I thought that this phenomenal book-end to Linda as kind of a book-end of lines of flight and the notions of the subject's engagement within a space that is both either engaged or indifferent or a space of resistance and both Linda and Sandy spoke eloquently to the problem of nomadism, of the kind of movement of the subject through physical spaces, the constant movement which is not just the kind of position of the artists, but many people I know who work within the kind of industry of new media in fact are phenomenally nomadic right now and need to engage with a set of tools and spaces and that kind of

enactment of movement, often through choice, but not always so, to rule their working lives.

So both of them kind of refer to this notion of the line of flight, the need for a kind of pod or space, the physicality of resistance within architected spaces and this kind of return to reconstructing a kind of subject position which was almost certainly spoke within Katherine's and Jean-Claude's discussions in the morning, which I hope I get to. But the notion of touch also, which Sandy spoke about, on a ...., the kind of erotic touch, the need to reconstitute the subject of erotics of actuality and physicality and the need for presence or the desire for presence. And I think we have to kind of talk about the difference between desire and need within some of these dialogues. This was also sort of picked up by Richard Povall, interestingly by Marcos Novak. It was his discussion of twelve dimensions but ultimately his decision to make physical work which was a kind of extrusion or physical tactile representation of these sort of dimensionalities and the kind of again erotics of surfaces that could be touched as well as seen and moved through.

So this discussion of absence at present as a kind of framing metaphor; while it has a long history and Katherine, it was fantastic that you are with us, because you have written a lot about this. I'm hoping that within the kind of debates and discussions today about data and the kind of associative repetitive ideas about data, or notions of data. Jean-Claude also did talk about archival consciousness and the role of archiving history and navigation. He left today; and he's really engaged within this sort of construction of libraries and archives and theorization and digital space. And then Doug Macleod's fantastic ironic stand-up of the Canadian session with lines of the library and the archive as a kind of metaphor for a rather difficult identity. In any case, there are some positions we need to engage with a lot more about the kinds of aesthetics of absence and presence and the aesthetics of association and data and its navigation and its non-narrativity. Anyhow, we sort of did get into that.

We also spoke a lot about movement as a kind of guiding principle within physical and virtual spaces and where the kind of context of design. I have this image, which we sort of didn't get involved with, but Joy Mountford's incredible presentation about Christian ....'s work and some of these ideas about how you work with buildings and the sort of image of people. Because people did talk about alien invasion as a metaphor and that kept coming up. And this idea of people looking at Christian's buildings from the plaza, looking up and looking at this phenomenon of projection but waiting for the aliens to land, in a sense. That kind of metaphor, the alien and the other, did sort of keep moving itself through our dialogue. And of course, Doug did a fantastic theatrical piece about architecture becoming a kind of alien practice. And I want to return a little bit to some of what he talked about and also what Cameron talked about, if I get there.

But in any case, we talked about movement as both meaningful and functional, as a kind of metaphor. We talked a lot yesterday and last night about choreography and the ideas about the embodiment of movement through the dancer, the choreographer and the designer. We talked about the problem of socially engineering movement and how social engineering was always meaningful and needed to be understood self-consciously. We talked about a kind of associative movement through spaces. Kristine Woolsey's work with a key-frame which I thought was a really important debate about what is the key-frame, is it simply something where you happen to take a snapshot that's incidental or is it, in fact, full of meaning, a kind of pivotal point of transformation and again, kind of referring that problem back to issues of narrative of spaces that have a kind of function and history, the home, the workspace and so on – how we design those and how we in fact shift key-frames or movements and create junctures or shifts within those spaces. And seeing Kristine's buildings and how she kind of actually used interactive media to design and move people through those spaces.

Paul Kaiser also spoke a lot about movement and his decision to actually move from highly architected choreographies by the master and mistress dancers or choreographers, it's a kind of every-day movement and the more incidental and kind of enhanced perception from the limits of movement, I thought, was quite interesting and his decision to do that returns us, in a sense, to another dialogue which is to look at movement and behaviour as emergent. And both his work and Richard Povall's, in a sense, working with the idea of emergent behaviours which I think also refers us back to this debate of kind of absence presence versus emergence, which I think again, we have to get into. The ideas of emergent behaviour are actually quite critical within this discussion and they relate again to some of what we're going to hear today about the design of navigation, strategies within data; but the ideas about emergent behaviours also have a history and take us back in some ways to thinking about Minister Fuller's notions of evolutionary spaces and tools which Richard Loveless so eloquently sort of took us through last night, and those also then take us to the more paranoid sensibility that we, I think, began to kind of play with, which is so much part of the gaming industry and the gaming toy industry where subjects are produced by the ways that toys and games are designed. They do play with us. There is some concern about, "Oh my goodness, aren't these toys going to play with us? They're designed to play with us." And how active is that play and how ubiquitous should that play be, and what happens in a world. Again, Joy Mountford gave us some very humorous but poignant narratives about this. What happens when the toys know us and what happens when the toys are stupid, and what happens when the buildings are smart but when the smartness is not a smartness that we want to have designed into them? What happens when Microsoft designs the smartness? It's not just a question of "Are they smart or are they stupid?" It's also, "Who designs intelligence into these environments?", not to be anti-Microsoft; it's to say, how do you deal with the ideas of intelligence. I think Mark Green was great yesterday in reminding us consistently about the limits

of technology. Well, we're going to talk about intelligence today a fair amount and what it means and how you compute it, and I'll just set a little reminder there, that intelligence in terms of tools, is very limited and it's best when its distributed and it has very limited functionalities although we have this great sort of science fiction Doichuk kind of send-off yesterday from Katherine, which was great, about the limitless nature of computing and turning ideas about that.

Nonetheless, at this point in time, there are real limits to iutelligence. So how do you sort of deal with that kind of focus metaphor and then, what happens when buildings and toys play with us? And what kinds of subjectivities are produced by the condition, sort of not knowing whether something is intelligent or not, and what its intelligence is. So how does our subjectivity get produced within that?

Doug Macleod, I totally appreciated the play and it was a great moment to go to dinner, to give some of us a bit of indigestion who work in Alberta and at the Banff Centre. But the play of architecture and architecture as a practice versus engineering and some of his argument to take the vision of the emergent and our knowledge of three-dimensional designs, and the power of media and look at that as to how we grow architecture as a practice, how we grow architecture in vitro, which I thought was a beautiful metaphor. If you look at some of what Doug was speaking about, and the need for a kind of visionary architecture, one that is ecological and understands both the ideas of the virtual and also the very physical world that we live in, which is also a biological world, and then look at some of Cameron's ideas. It was great that he used all these metaphors from the pre-computing world or the pre-digital world and then it was so amazing how "Get Smart" and, in fact, how a lot of people are imagining virtual spaces in buildings. So these are kind of limits to how far the imaginary has gone and I think Cameron was pushing us to also very much think about the physicality of design in our bodies within physical buildings. And I think there is a warning there, and also in Doug's discussion, about surveillance, which we haven't talked about, and we probably need to. One of the key elements, the kind of pen-optagon of design in both virtual spaces and in buildings.

When we actually began to talk more concretely about tools and design, I thought there were some really exciting ideas that came up in the last session and the session before that. The idea of scalability; the idea of working small and presenting big or at whatever scale we want to, both in physical spaces and in wired spaces and on a network which Rob from Fakespace spoke about. Linda's principles of integrating depth and gaining perspective in emerging environments. And then the whole discussion about standards, which we will pick up through today and tomorrow, is a very critical discussion. What are the gains and losses of imposing standards within the process of designing software? What happens when you create languages that control; because Midi also created severe limits. I mean, less on issues of authorship because I

think those are bypassed, but also in the framing of how music was made for awhile, but the questions of, it also opened and released musical practice than imposing to whole new groups of people as Linda so eloquently pointed out. What do you gain and what do you lose, and how does that kind of fit with the sort of Freeware Shareware models that we were speaking about at the beginning of the day with Jean-Claude instead of at the end of the day in terms of artistic practice.

So the question of standards, languages that control and release, the idea of WIMP which is bringing in Windows, etc., etc. into virtual spaces and how that also will contain some of the ways that other sorts of exploration. It's happening within immersed environments. That we need to kind of really need to engage with, and I think some of the work that we're going to see today is going to help us to get there.

The idea of input and output devices, which markets know that, and a number of others spoke about, but the idea of input and output devices that match or parallel, is a really, really important idea. So the idea that you can have an input device, with the body, through the body, through various kinds of interfaces that we design, that also has parallel kinds of outputs. We need to come back to that.

In this framework, I want to note that the debate around Denis' presentation, which has to do with the role of history; a thread that ran all the way through our discussions, which is to say, "How much does the kind of representation of something?" and somebody called for the death of representation, by the way, in our discussion; we'll come to death later. But the kind of role of history and the process of designing products and objects and interfaces and where the point of breakage comes from. I think within that discussion, both Denis and an interesting lean of Char's, Denis argued from the point of realism and Char from the point of abstraction, both said the most interesting things are when mistakes happen. And what you learn from that process of mistakes and again sort of ruptures. So we'll come back to that.

If I don't refer to you, it's not that your ideas aren't somehow embedded in this; it's just that somehow I didn't say your name. So please forgive me. Everyone unfortunately is inferred within this dynatron. So Scott gave us this world where people are playing ....sets and the way that sets work are that they are interdependent and relate to proximity and I thought what his work was so interesting about, in terms of looking at the problem of metaphor and interaction, is that they're patterning from nature into the social and then from the social back into kind of nature. And that notion of proxemics, which he spoke about, which is the application of looking at how people kind of play in terms of their closeness to each other, which is applied specifically to cultural difference, was very apt in also talking about the ways that we look at the very noise set in proximity. So using the right metaphor when you're working with a biological issue, I mean the living architecture into the kind of

digital and into the social is really critical, and I wanted to underline that, as well as the incredible ....and sort of acknowledge the generation of his work. In that discussion came the idea from Katherine of the skew-mark and the sort of coagulation of the historical point of transition and change where kind of ideas begin to position around certain kinds of moment or Diegesus and then there's a point of shift or change, which is interesting, because that brings us back to the key-frame. So we're definitely looking at these sort of moments of transition or transformation.

We had this huge fight about dimensions and I thought that was so exciting. Obviously, I got over-excited and didn't contain it, and I apologize, but the debate about "What is dimensionality? What is a subatomic set?" The debate about dimensions in space versus dimensions in time, the ways that we kind of looked at dimension as being something that reproduces itself but also doesn't; how do you represent something that makes a conceptual leap? I think that's the territory of architecture that we're playing with for sure.

I really appreciate all of you who leapt up and tried to take us through the dimension of learning, what is the twelfth dimension in ten minutes, and how do you represent this, and a fantastic moment of actual multiponentiality. But this problem of limits being human and physicality, as well as social limits, which Gordon kept underwriting, is something we really have to keep remembering in some of this discourse. And then this point also that what is perhaps most interesting at this moment of research right now, is how we create collaborative environments and how we work and play together. And that relates back to the very early morning points; ideas about authorship and identity, which I'll come to eventually, but this stream of the shifting nature of authorship and identity ran through the entire day, and it's directly related to how we design both physical and virtual spaces and how we understand them as subjects with an identity.

And then we also talked about the appropriate use of medium and that came up very much within the discussion of the, should string quartets be distributed over networks versus situations in context which Marcos and other people kept underwriting, cannot be represented using existing media. How do you make that leapage of representing new forms of practice? And I think Gordon is here, in part, because he's saying, "Come on, you guys; work with those of us designing these systems to actually push the ways that content and human interaction take place within them."

We talked about realism and new forms of graphics. We talked about the death of the polygon, that was definitely a death that did happen, and I'll end with a little diagram from Brian, because there's something that happened that I thought was so fantastic which was; as he was talking about this problem of modelling and the kind of attempt to move a huge kind of dinosauric; at this point in time you kind of see in a computer animation industry, from polygons to this quite revolutionary efficient way of working with implicit surfaces,

which requires imagination and kind of mathematical imagination. I thought it was so interesting that I have to draw the diagram now. And Brian's world, which is this really revolutionary world of graphics practice, was on the periphery. So for me, it was really interesting that in that orbiting universe of computer practice, there's also this kind of tension which many of us as designers and artists, experience of how you use practices that really make a lot of sense in terms of shifting dialogue and discourse from the periphery going to the centre, and what happens when you do that.

Which brings me back to Linda's discussion about, what happens when the kind of very creative, very specifically designed software environment of immersion that had been made by researchers and artists, begin to actually become standardized. I know we're going to talk a lot more on the Computer Science side today, and don't be scared those of you who don't work in that field. I think the people presenting will make it available and those of us who have been in the art discussion and subjectivity very much yesterday, will be able to ask them questions. But that I thought was very interesting is how we kind of look at where peripheries collaborate, which again gets us back to the coin of flight I suppose. Then some of the discussions around interface or environments and what they should be, and Joy reminded us and I think a number of other people who would pick this up, that interfaces need to be haptic, that is touch-based; sonic, that is surrounded with sound in a kind of richness of audio, body-based in all kinds of ways, and to not privilege the visual, and that's really critical as we think about architecture and architectural practices.

Coming back to the discussion of the author, there was an ongoing challenge of what does the architect do, the question that Kristine asked, "When the architect becomes, in a much more democratic dialogue with the client, and discloses information that allows a kind of authorship on the part of the client, and when the architect also builds." And then Jean-Claude's question of, "What is the role of the artist within this shifting framework of authorship?" So kind of collapse of function that opens up new forms of function, and then both Marcos and Katherine Hayles, from some quite different perspectives, gave some very interesting sorts of answers to those questions. Marcos gave us the assignment of opening the sensorium, of our tiny scale of perception, to using virtual tools and architecture to allow imaginary beyond our capabilities, and he saw the role of architecture as being able to, or attempting to articulate a cosmology and provide us with allegory, which is quite different from metaphor. Because there are leading literature critics here, I am going to let them help us to understand the differences between allegory and metaphor. I once got into so much trouble at one of these summaries where I tried to define menonem versus metaphor, and I'll never do that kind of thing again. It hurt so bad, I was almost crying. And then we had this huge fight about menonem which was really sad.

The role of architecture to kind of apply the territory about the allegorical, which is certainly a post-modern project, for those of us who like Paul Kaiser who hates post-modernism. Then Katherine Hayles talking about the fact that we need to struggle with this problem, which Doichuk set up, and she is using a kind of theoretical charge to ....question, but the problem of being enframed with the machine and the problem of simulation of senses, the cunning in a sense or sensory apparatus. Both of them were approaching that problem of a sensorium from quite different perspectives.

Again, coming back to the question of, "What is the value of design and intelligence?" The question about the quality of interaction, what does the interactor do, what does the interactive media do with the building? What do we do back? Who explicit or implicit should that be? The question of the interface and what are its metaphors. So Jakub's discussion, and his eloquent work with the hand and gestural language systems that can cross cultures and allow people to speak to each other or can be culturally specific, and they allow collaboration and self-awareness. And so I thought the match between some of Jakub's discussion and his work and Scott's story as a child, his first subjectivity being the kind of realization of his hand, of being both of his body and outside his body, controlled by his muscles but also having a will of its own, which is of course, has awoken erotic sensibility to it which, I think this is important to underline because we were talking a lot about that last night in Sandy's discussion of the kind of goal of the physicality of the erotic. The idea of realizing that it was instrumental nonetheless. And then Char's discussion, which I think is very important, about how the hand is about instrumentality. And if we want to form ways of navigating interfaces that don't assume that notion of authorship and designing instrumentality, then there's times when the hand is not the appropriate interface nor the visual; you really need to think about that. And the role of extraction and passivity, as well as activity, within interaction and within architecture, with Char's work and John's work with Char, certainly reminded us.

So that brings us to the subject, which is where I'm going to end, having worked backwards. Some of the ideas that came up; again the notion of living architectural media space; in other words that media space is constantly authored, often not by ourselves but outside us. And then the role of our own operating or pathways within that, which Linda Wallace and Doug Macleod brought up; where Doug spoke about media as architecture in the current era, and used a lot of metaphors from media to discuss the problems or issues of architecture. Katherine's discussions of simulation as self and the kind of infinite power of computation and subjectivity within that. And that resolution is no longer a question, so where does the subject get constructed within that? I'm hoping she picks up her ideas about the subjective data today and I'm sure she will. Jean-Claude's subject; the notion of I give, I do not possess; it sort of shifts from ownership to the capacity to give but which also assumes a kind of possession and now perhaps as a collective possession, where the subject constantly repositions and redefines itself within that which I think both Jean-

Claude and Katherine and Linda were speaking to. And again, the discussion of Shareware or resource movement within that and the kind of phenomic atomic subjectivity, the role of physicality within that so again, we could have come down to the analogue as a way of fixing the subject, even if it's for a moment. And then given that interesting call, again call for the death of representation which echoed through the room.

So that's where we went yesterday, to some extent. I think it was a pretty amazing day in looking back and again, we left with a fantastic model of the emerging environment of the universe in a sense and where do certain forms of authorship sit within the universes that we inhabit, which are our architecture. So thanks, all of you, you did an incredible job bringing us through a territory. I know I omitted a lot because that always happens. But if there's any points that you want to make and sort of pick up or chastise me around, this would be a moment to do that and then we'll start the session because we're almost on time.

Put your hands up, please, if there are things that you want to add or critique within that.

:   You were perfect.