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The Funambulist Pamphlets: Vol. 09_Science Fiction (Volume 9)

Léopold Lambert

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The Funambulist Pamphlets is a series of small books archiving articles published on The Funambulist, collected according to specific themes. These volumes propose a different articulation of texts than the usual chronological one. The twelve first volumes are respectively dedicated to Spinoza, Foucault, Deleuze, Legal Theory, Occupy Wall Street, Palestine, Cruel Designs, Arakawa + Madeline Gins, Science Fiction, Literature, Cinema, and Weaponized Architecture. The Funambulist Pamphlets is published as part of the Documents Initiative imprint of the Center for Transformative Media, Parsons The New School for Design, a transdisciplinary media research initiative bridging design and the social sciences, and dedicated to the exploration of the transformative potential of emerging technologies upon the foundational practices of everyday life across a range of settings. Volume 9 is dedicated to Science Fiction. The texts are not all addressing what should be considered as science fiction per se. Can James Graham Ballard's masterpiece Crash (1973) be called science fiction? Probably not in the sense of Jules Verne, Isaac Asimov and Stanislaw Lem. On the other hand, Ballard questions the way technology affects our bodies and how a creative sexuality can emerge from this relationship seems to me fundamentally a science fiction type of problem. Having James Graham Ballard and Philip K. Dick as the two protagonists of the following texts constitutes an indirect way to reflect on architecture as a technology. Juxtaposing these two authors creates a dialogue that may be as relevant as the most rigorous theoretical work dedicated to these questions. Ballard is fascinated by the beauty and sometimes the eroticism provoked by the failure of technology; Dick is wondering how much human we might remain when our own body is a technological product. Ballard and Dick are not, however, the only 'characters' of these texts in which many more political, philosophical and mythological arguments are being made through the often underrated medium of science fiction. TABLE OF CONTENTS: Introduction: When James Graham Ballard meets Philip K. Dick, What do They Talk About? -- Science Fiction as an Inventor of Dilemmas: From Utopia to Apocalypse by Peter Paik -- 2037 by Raja Shehadeh -- Collision, Sexuality and Resistance -- Ballardian Landscapes: Desacralizing Thaumaturgic Modernity -- The Fouled Beauty of James Graham Ballard -- Letter to James Graham Ballard / April 14th 2009 -- Psychotropic Houses by James Graham Ballard -- The Brutal Art of Enki Bilal -- The Work of Philip K. Dick: Between Paranoia and Schizophrenia -- The Funambulist Papers 03 / Transcendent Delusion or; The Dangerous Free Spaces of Phillip K. Dick (by Martin Byrne) -- Untitled Narrative #002 (Feral Garage) (by Martin Byrne) -- Labyrinths and Other Metaphysical Constructions: Interview with Marc-Antoine Mathieu -- Overpopulated Cities / The Concentration City, Billennium, L'Origine & Soylent Green -- Fahrenheit 451 (excerpts by Ray Bradbury) -- Never Let Me Go by Mark Romanek -- The Declamatory Porcelain Architectures of Serge Brussolo

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