parc de la villette-bernard tschumi
The body has always played an important role in Tschumi's development of the Parc de la Villette but it has always been important to contemporary architectural theory as whole (Vidler, 1992). The focus of the body in La Villette brings into focus many unique spatial arrangements which create a park experience like no other.

When describing the bodily experience of the Parc de la Villette (or within any other structure) there is a fundamental understanding that an experience is basically the perception of how one's body is interacting with other bodies within the same space. There is also an assumption that there is no link between the perception and the action, and that both are mutually exclusive. Further, models of thought have concluded that consciousness of the body arises through interaction of the world at the same time that consciousness of the world arises through the medium of the body (Merleau Ponty, 1962). In other words, much like the popular catch phrase of television psychologist Dr. Phil, ‘there is no reality, only perception,’ and only by having this awareness, can one fully begin to understand La Villette from an objectionable vantage point of a single frame of reference.
In Anthony Vidler’s analysis of the Parc de la Villette in *The Architectural Uncanny*, Vidler uses the concept of ‘uncanny’ as a metaphor for the interpretation of contemporary models in architecture. According to Vidler, the body analogy has taken three forms within architectural history: (1) the classical (literal) projection, (2) the eighteenth century’s idea of the sublime that objectifies the physical and mental state of the body, (3) the modern idea that the building has bodily characteristics (Vidler, 1992). It is clear that Vidler’s third form is clearly present in Tschumi’s Parc de la Villette. This is due primarily due to the fact that the park’s ‘dismembered’ body is incomplete in its formation and realization. La Villette becomes more of an experiential field that is open to multiple interpretations, dislocations and associations and according to Vidler, is a body in a state of self-acknowledged dispersion (Vidler, 1992).

The Parc de la Villette creates many interesting and profound connections between its form and how a viewer interacts within it. Just like the complexity of the physical structure itself, the perception of the body within the structure can become multi-layered and quite complex as well. For Tschumi, the fragmentation of the body found within La Villette occurs basically within three distinct levels: (1) geometric, in the separation of lines points, and surfaces, (2) programmatic, in the breakdown between the relation of form and function, and (3) semantic, through Saussure’s theory of sign (which explains the collapse of communication between signified and signifier i.e. that the word is no longer linked to the meaning) which is evident in the ‘follies’ that literally mean ‘decorative structure’ and should have no purpose within the design, but instead are integral to the understanding of La Villette’s overall concept (Tschumi, 1987).
The Parc de la Villette creates many interesting and profound connections between its form and how a viewer interacts within it. Just like the complexity of the physical structure itself, the perception of the body within the structure can become multi-layered and quite complex as well. For Tschumi, the fragmentation of the body found within La Villette occurs basically within three distinct levels: (1) geometric, in the separation of lines points, and surfaces, (2) programmatic, in the breakdown between the relation of form and function, and (3) semantic, through Saussure's theory of sign (which explains the collapse of communication between signifier and signified i.e. that the word is no longer linked to the meaning) which is evident in the ‘follies’ that literally mean “decorative structure’ and should have no purpose within the design, but instead are integral to the understanding of La Villette’s overall concept (Tschumi, 1987).

The fragmentation, rearrangement, and superimposition of lines, points and surfaces create a disjunction between the form and the viewer’s experience. By breaking down the structure, Tschumi creates a physical separation between the form and the body of the viewer. In this way, any bodily experience has the tendency to be disjointed and separate since the forms themselves recreate this effect.

In addition to this, Tschumi creates new experiences and allows for new vantage points for a body within the design of the program inside La Villette. By dismembering and reassembling the architectural elements, Tschumi creates an experience similar to that found within the language of film. In La Villette, the follies are reassembled in successive sequences and frames similar to a cinematic promenade (Tschumi, 1987). The idea of the body is therefore established in the park in at least two ways: (1) as a dismembered architectural body, and (2) as the situated body of a cinema spectator (Ribero, 2005). The follies in La Villette act as the cinematic promenade and they create a sequence of controlled visual fields which allude to the notion of a situated viewer or individual body in space much like how a film uses a series of sequential scenes to create its overall effect on a viewer. The viewer can still be set apart from the crowd (and have a unique bodily experience) while still maintaining visual connectivity (and having a global bodily experience at the same time).
Finally, and connected to the cinematic promenade, time also plays an important role in Tschumi's connection to the body and its effect on the viewer. Through time, Tschumi attempts at capturing the temporary and spontaneous nature of "events" which can take place within the park (Tschumi, 1987). In La Villette, bodies in space have the ability to wander from any path and create a unique and un-programmed 'event'. By allowing for this ability to spontaneously create an 'event', La Villette is much like the cinema. Spatially and sequentially, the architectural fragmentation of the structure allow and capture the 'possible' and the 'accidental' within the park and therefore create newfound 'bodies' from which to view Tschumi's 'events' offering new experiences within the park.

Tschumi's underlying ideology is that architecture has political and social effects and that the ideal space of political transgression occurs at the scale of the user, or of the body in space (Ribero, 2005). The un-programmed activities occurring in La Villette can be seen to generate space physically through fragmented space, but are also being generated by space through cinematic events in time in ways that are completely unpredictable. In other words, Tschumi creates a function whereby 'events' can occur even if form and function cease to exist. By creating an architecture of unpredictability and uncertainty Tschumi opens up a field of possibility where bodies can create spaces that can go well beyond architecture.
Ribero, Patricia Seang Hui, Space in Bodies and Bodies in Space, University of London, 2005