

of the mezzanine rail in the front left foreground, which establishes the location of the subjective viewer on the same mezzanine. Without that fragment the person or camera lens occupying the station point would appear to float in air. Second, one of the two vanishing points is still within the frame of the image. While not as resolute as the focal points in the later photographs, the window on the stair landing does “anchor” the subject’s view. Third, Le Corbusier’s image contains several possibilities for co-location, places where the viewer can conceive of being. Movement, and thus time, are introduced into a single image. If the subjective viewer is located in the image then so, too, are that viewer’s “motor projects.” Conceiving of movement through the space, for example, the itinerant viewer, on relinquishing the station point, must first negotiate the vertical void by moving out of the image to the left, then return along the mezzanine at left, disappear behind the opposite wall of the gallery and arrive at the projecting balcony at the top of the stairs. The subject interacts with the surrounding architectural object. From the new location, the subject may register as a new focal point the place where he or she has been; the image is reversed. This subject is not a ubiquitous observer but simply one who has assumed a new station point. From the new station point new routes will be detected and embarked on. The subject’s station point, though fixed in the photograph, can be conceptually altered by the subject.

Antonio Martinelli’s provocative photograph of Carlo Scarpa’s Plaster-Cast Gallery in Possagno, near Carrera, imparts mystery to the idea of co-location (Figure 1.20). The photographer locates himself (and his camera) at a station point where he is in “registration” with a series of spaces in enfilade while he is simultaneously able to apperceive another space that denotes an alternative path through an adjacent gallery. The photograph is, in fact, in two-point perspective; it is only the convention of depicting spaces in enfilade in one-point perspective and the strong focal point at the end that could make us assume otherwise. As in Le Corbusier’s representation of the gallery at Maison La Roche-Jeanneret, one of the vanishing points is clearly within the frame of the image, at the approximate end of the enfilade, where a sculpture is the focal point.



Figure 1.20 Carlo Scarpa, The Plaster Cast Gallery, Possagno. Photograph by Antonio Martinelli.

Everything I see is in principle within my reach, at least within reach of my sight, and is marked on the map of the "I can." Each of the two maps is complete. The visible world and the world of my motor projects are each total parts of the same Being. . . .

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind"

But unlike the juxtaposed focal points in Le Corbusier's deep space/shallow space photographs, both of which are in conceptually accessible frontal planes (even if hidden from view), the focal point of the adjacent gallery does not appear to be at the end of a literal visual axis with the viewer, but rather at the end of a visual axis where the viewer *could be*. This mysterious focal point cannot be discerned without the viewer's movement. The viewer may conceive of himself or herself moving to and occupying either location; both are on Merleau-Ponty's map of the "I can." One is clear, the other enigmatic; but both are equally intriguing and equally command the viewer's movement. The irony of this brilliant photograph is that, while there are clearly two focal points for the viewer, one culminating each gallery sequence, the perspectival vanishing point for both is the same.

It is impossible to know whether Scarpa planned the occurrence of this visual event. A surface study of the body of his architectural work affirms that he deliberately employed the spatial enfilade, and the many instances of photographs based on obvious focal points make it difficult to refute that Scarpa consciously and compellingly exploited the straightforward visual effects of traditional architecture. But did he consciously consider the visual effect of this particular spatial juxtaposition? Or is it simply a case of the aleatory – the discovery by the viewer/photographer of something that occurs by chance as a result of other intentions and operations?

The spatial experience of parallax, or perspective warp, while moving through overlapping spaces defined by solids and cavities opens the phenomena of spatial fields. The experience of space from a point of view that is in perspective presents a coupling of the external space of the horizon and the optic point from the body.

Steven Holl, Anchoring

Subjective perception conjoined with subjective movement multiplies the visual effects that are captured, frozen, in the typical representation. Any representations of this experience must include a multitude of views, with a multitude of focal points, each registering with the surroundings in a different way and each disclosing different readings of depth. An objective representation in time would scan the object without registration, without determinant focal points and without any consequential readings of depth. Subjective movement introduces another effect which can only occur in its presence – parallax. Originally a term used in astronomy, the dictionary definition of "parallax" is "the apparent displacement of an observed object due to a change in the position of the observer."¹⁶ An objective representation of parallax is impossible.

More than 30 years after Le Corbusier wrote about the architectural promenade, he designed the Dominican monastery at La Tourette. Colin Rowe's narration about the approach to La Tourette (1961), a fragment of which appears at the beginning of this chapter, is premised on his movement as he approaches the monastery. As he changes his position, focal points displace one another, figure and field fluctuate; his forward movement is first impelled and then repelled. The dominant motif of Rowe's perceptual experience is the