

# **GORMLEY TO GAGA**

## **TRANSFORMATION & REVELATION**

**DESIGN FOR PERFORMANCE**

## 9. POST WORKS

Set designers

*Stage City/Lapped Translated Lines,*

Riverside Studios, London (November 2008)



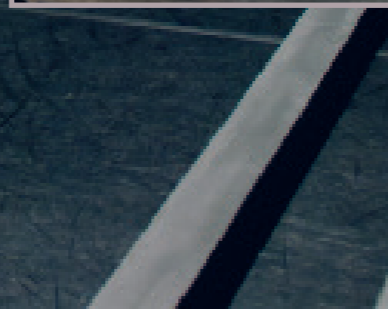
### 1. What influenced this work?

Central to all our work is the idea of the city as a stage set, and how this can change the way we inhabit and think about architecture and the city.

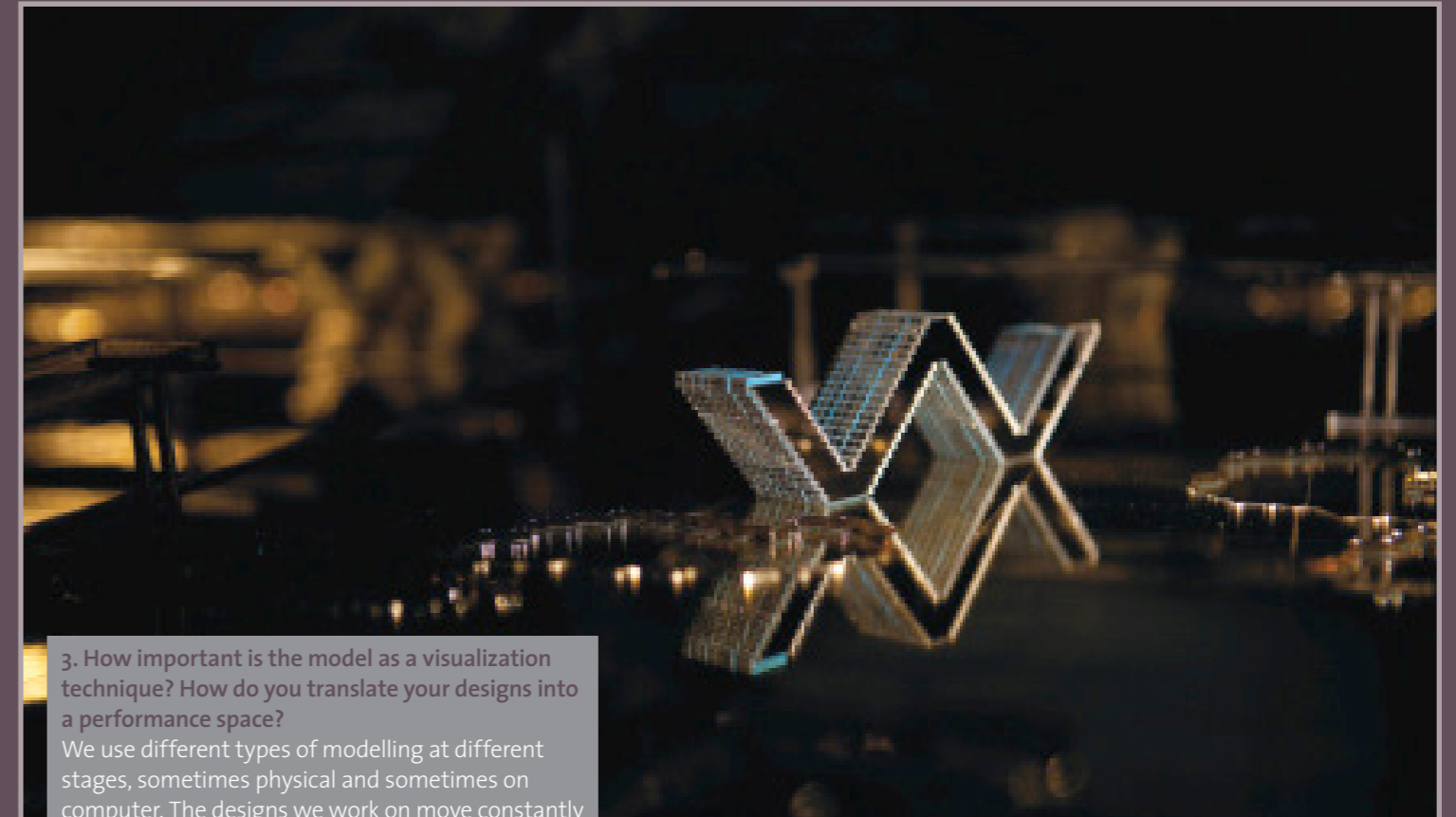
Buildings and urban spaces influence our movement and behaviour in both deliberate and unexpected ways, and once you start to notice how the city really impacts on us, in a cultural and social sense, it can become quite disturbing. This was central to the work *Stage City*, a fictional performance-city machine staged inside a glass vitrine that borrowed familiar elements from London to create an assemblage of characters, props and sets. Steps, ramps and routes – designed and improvised performance spaces – were sampled and edited to create a familiar landscape, but one that was rearranged and re-imagined, appearing as a well-oiled city-machine with a logic different from that which we're used to experiencing.

### 2. Does your creative process begin and end with a performance, or is it a continuous development that transcends projects?

It's a continuous development across projects. Our work and ideas are fuelled by a collaborative process between ourselves and the other artists we work with. It gives energy to all the projects we do. We hand over aspects of projects to other people to develop and then respond to the work produced; that way unexpected things can happen.



THE DOCUMENTATION OF A PERFORMANCE SHOULD ALMOST BE SEEN AS A VERY DIFFERENT PIECE OF WORK



### 3. How important is the model as a visualization technique? How do you translate your designs into a performance space?

We use different types of modelling at different stages, sometimes physical and sometimes on computer. The designs we work on move constantly between these different modes of representation – and we draw. Each stage will change what we are proposing as we incorporate the discrepancies each medium allows. It's important for us to use the gaps and changes of direction that emerge from every iteration of a piece of work.

On several occasions we have moved directly from the 'sketch model' into the final object – the fabricator working directly from our first intuitive act.

### 4. What does performance design mean to you?

Cities are basically places that frame, control or enable events, and performances take place in everyday situations. It's interesting how an act can be recorded into the fabric of a city. Look at the way London changed in the August 2011 riots.

It's about how our actions frame and make the spaces around us. Once you take this premise as a starting point, your view of how we inhabit urban space changes dramatically.

### 5. Is it important to document performance?

The documentation of a performance should almost be seen as a very different piece of work. To try to recreate something that is experienced as an event is futile. We always treat our documentation with both complete respect and – at the same time – total scepticism. For this reason most of our performance stills are taken outside of the actual performances, with photographers, film-makers and editors that have no particular relationship to the theatre, performance or architecture.

