I, LIKE MANY THINGS

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In a world of change we cling to constants that comfort us while catastrophes lure behind cut corners. We compartmentalize and channel our focus into cones of concentration when confronted with choices. Many might decide to do so with intention while others simply try to cope with the complexities. While we are no strangers to change, this current historical conjuncture presents extremities and emergencies that invite conjecture on normalcy and its fragility, challenges to status quos and rapid adaptation to revised realities. As everyday life is turned on its head, the home remains a physical and metaphorical locus of our greatest aspirations and deepest anxieties. A performative and pervasive space where fictions become realities and rearranging furniture and fixtures constitutes political acts with planetary consequences. Today's dense time offers us glimpses of a myriad of hybridized and alternative modes of domesticity that demand our shared attention and careful critical inquiry before they are once again lost to routine.

If architectural practice and discourse is often reserved for the few, how does it become available to the many and what might such a shift afford? This experimental publication situates everyday architectural encounters within narratives of ecological collapse and climate disaster, identity politics, social movements and digital cultures presented as a non-linear story that starts at home. It explores a literary and literal space for many possible subjectivities where languages, knowledges, positions and relations are abundant. *I, Like Many Things* is part of the Home Work Research Project (HMWRK) started at Yale School of Architecture in the spring of 2020.

Across four chapters and three visual catalogues, *I, Like Many Things* presents anecdotal stories, fictions, academic research, poetry, and visual essays. One chapter explores nascent and invasive virtual worlds. Another hones in on ongoing ecological collapse and climate disaster. A third chapter finds ground in social movements and political organizing, while a fourth ponders selfhood, imagination, and the possibilities of "off-time." As timely distractions between chapters, catalogues present past inquiries by us and open call participants.

I, Like Many Things is for those to whom the pandemic was an exercise in spatial design. Those who consider themselves architects or designers and those who do not. Those of us who engage with, push back on, and negotiate the spaces we inhabit, consciously or unaware, expanding our collective field of action. *I, Like Many Things* unfolds the critical interdependencies of all social, political, and environmental struggles, and attempts

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GUSTAV KJÆR VAD NIELSEN explores an activist "open" practice that spans research, curation, spatial design, community organizing and strategic planning with an interest in collective and civic spatial practices. He collaborates on projects with the Master in Architecture Programme at University of Luxembourg, makes critical inquiries on spaces for deliberation as a Fellow at DemocracyNext and is a co-editor of the book *I, Like Many Things*, published in 2023. Gustav holds a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture from Aarhus School of Architecture and a Master of Architecture I degree from Yale School of Architecture and has worked in architecture offices in Denmark, the Netherlands and USA.

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to maneuver ambiguities, complexities, imaginaries, and chaos as stepping stones toward more integrative and sensitive spatial practices. It can be read as an unreliable guide to alternative ways in many directions.

The editors Gustav Kjær Vad Nielsen and Diana Smiljković, and contributors Luísa Sol and Markus Miessen will have a collective reading and discussion of the book and its relationship to the work and aims of Cultures of Assembly. Moderated by César Reyes Nájera.



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