

OFFICE-PARTY

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Within the data-driven delirium of immaterial labor—flows of information, productivity surveillance, and efficiency analytics demanded by corporate interests, managerial consultancies, and office furniture designers—this proposal seeks to co-opt these tactics of digital management to produce an alternative ethos of work. The implications of these techno-disciplinary devices on the bodies and actions of workers are both performative and aesthetic, and as such can be appropriated to re-empower those surveilled and the quantified to produce new spaces—both physical and virtual—of resistance.

Traditionally, office contract furniture is sold as a fixed system with a layout determined by the data-driven protocols of efficiency management. Today, companies like Herman Miller and Knoll are rapidly integrating data-gathering systems and automation protocols into the furniture itself to track worker productivity, anticipate ergonomic desires, and algorithmically predict optimal layouts and postures.

Corporations such as Google and Facebook advertise their offices such that it is impossible to distinguish between leisure and labor, ideologically conflating office hours with after-hours activities. In what ways can these digitally-analyzed and computationally arranged terrains of labor be reframed to deny work, encourage unproductivity and play, and insist upon a new metric of quanta and performance while remaining situated within the contemporary rhetoric of corporate-utopian “playbor” offices. OFFICE-PARTY proposes the design of the office through rogue B(l)M, a condition that exists parallel to the regimes of data-driven productivity and performance paradigms, to enact a more radical Building (mis) Information Modeling platform. This software allows users/workers to alter and undermine these furniture systems to create absurd proliferations, unfamiliar re-arrangements, and inefficient clumpings, choreographies and orchestrations controlled by shadow algorithms and hacked efficiency protocols operated in secret by the same employees charged with their maintenance.

... It's 5:45 and almost everyone has left... The computer screens have flickered into static and the hum of the office has died down... OFFICE-PARTY is not a proposal but a hidden condition, a performance of illicit glances and stolen dances. It's that moment of complete anomic abandon—a condition of lawlessness, disobedience, and disorder. It's a moment in which the rules can be set aside, the desks digitally

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reconfigure themselves, and users can surrender to the the suppressed desire for chaos and motion. Defying the cybernetic flows of efficiency and logistics in the Bürolandschaft office landscape, the workers can remake the frenetic jumble of desks and filing cabinets, creating a clearing instead of a careful row. As the workers gather, at first sheepishly but with increasing eagerness, the fluorescents flick off and the music starts... “A fit of shaking passes over the group” (Dan Graham, *Rock My Religion*). The dance begins. As the demarcation between life and work slips back and forth, the office party is a radical reformatting of the culture of immaterial labor. The day-time spatial obedience to the digital economies of production is the necessary alibi for a night of pleasure. Pushed to the extremes between the managed and the deviant, the OFFICE-PARTY offers a possibility of refusal within the regimes of work.

