**Pedestrianism as Floating Life**

* How moving by foot in the city may become important again

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**Abstract proposal** for the session ‘Floating Life’ organize by Libby Straughan, University of Melbourne, David Bissell, University of Melbourne and Andrew Gorman-Murray, Western Sydney University

By Ole B. Jensen, Michael Martin & Markus Löchtefeld, Department of Architecture, Design and Media Technology, Aalborg University, Denmark

Walking with its average speed of 5 km/h was for a very long period of time the primary mode of moving and engaging with the immediate material environment. However, over the past half-century, the socio-technical systems of automobility as well as other forms of non-human powered mobility have changed the ways in which cities are experienced. Most recently, however, the pedestrian mode has been reprioritised resulting in a shift of emphasis, particularly in European cities, toward recognising the destructive forces of automobility. This shift has been accompanied by a variety of reprioritisation strategies including car confinement in cities as well as restricted vehicular access to particular inner city zones at prescribed times. The challenge for many cities is how to legitimately change mind-sets, from automobility to walking. This paper explores pedestrianism not as ‘infrastructure’ or an ‘intervention’ but as transitory, ‘floating life’ across space and time. We conceptualise walking as a multi-sensorial mobile engagement with the material environment. In doing so, we ask how the ‘floating life’ of pedestrianism may be reflected upon as part of the so-called ‘mobilities turn’ and in particular how theories of materiality, embodiment, design and experience interlink with walking. In conceptualising pedestrianism as ‘floating life’ the paper will reflect on initial empirics from a mixed-methods study conducted in Denmark. Here, a variety of tactics and technologies were used, including thermal camera tracking and eye-tracking, ethnographic field studies, interviews, mapping as well as design interventions to explore the spatial-temporal multidimensionality of pedestrianism.