

SZONDI-LECTURE 2018

TOM McCARTHY

ADVENTURES OF THE BLACK BOX



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7.13

Talking of visions: as time went on, my mental picture of the Project, my baroque casting, or elaboration, of it, changed. Out went the towers and palaces—or rather, better to say they flattened, their balconies and arches, corbels, cornices and spires and all such wedding-cakery steamrolled down into a uniform consistency. What these second-generation reveries gave me in their place, compressed and smooth, was a black box. It might have still been standing in the desert; or perhaps up on a plateau, a raised plain—above a city maybe, like the Parthenon, or maybe situated (for strategic reasons) far from any settlement, but nonetheless connected to a city, or a set of cities, over which it exerted influence. Then again, sometimes this black box in which the Project had become embodied seemed to be lying on the shelf of some administrative building. More accurate, perhaps, to describe it as resting on a plane, rather than plain: one geometric shape that sat atop another. As to its size: this, too, was far from clear. It was hard, in these visions, to maintain a sense of scale. Sometimes it seemed enormous, like an emperor's mausoleum; at others it appeared no larger than a trunk, or coffin; at others still, the size of a child's toy- or music-box. The only constant or unchanging aspect of it was that it was black: black and inscrutable, opaque.

Satin Island, 2015

Tom McCarthy (geb. 1969), London, Schriftsteller und Künstler.

Romane: Remainder (2006), Men in Space (2007), C (2010), Satin Island (2015).

Essays, Erzählungen, künstlerische Projekte und Installationen

UNTERSTÜTZT DURCH DEN FACHBEREICH PHILOSOPHIE UND GEISTESWISSENSCHAFTEN
DER FREIEN UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN UND DIE ALUMNI-VEREINIGUNG DES PETER SZONDI-INSTITUTS