

Kids on Buildings: Echos, Mirrors, and Ghosts A Conversation with Jesse Boon

Scapegoat meets Jesse Boon, three and a half years old, outside of OMA's new addition to the Cornell University Architecture School in Ithaca, New York.



Scapegoat Says Jesse, tell me what you think about this building Jesse Boon Those things are really interesting. They are balls. We can sit on them, but I don't know if we can climb way up there. **SS**On that concrete hill? Let's try. JB But it really is steep. You have to try it. **SS**Okay, let's try. JB I know that it's slippery. That sure is slippery! Let's try it. Whoa! We can't. **SS**Let's try. JB Hold my hand. Hey. Sure is steep. Whoa. I don't want to. **SS**Okay let's go back down a little. JB Now that was so fun! **SS** What are these balls good for? JB Sitting! But it's too steep. Let's run around these balls. Let's pretend it's a race. **SS**Okay let's go! JB Boom boom boom zoom zoom! Hey, we can do this with the balls. [Balancing on balls] **SS**That's fantastic! JB Careful! It's a little bit dangerous. It's too dangerous for us. Hey what are these? Balls! **SS**What are these balls? JB I don't know... Hey, I know. They are lights! **SS**I think you're right. JB At night they are lights and at morning they are balls. Whoa, they do make sounds. [Banging on balls] **SS**Maybe we should go inside the building now. [Entering the building across rubber relief letters on the floor indicating directions] JB Um, don't step on the E or the man. That's what it says. **SS**You're stepping on it! [Crossing bridge into cavernous dome presentation space] JB It's good that I have a cape that I can fly with. **SS**Do you think this place is for flying? Where would you fly? JB If I could fly I'd fly up there [pointing to ceiling] but I can't fall down cause I'm a good flyer—whishhh...Uh oh, I stepped on more letters! **SS**Oh you really like these letters so much. [Lying on floor] Let's look through this window [into main lecture hall]. What do people do here? JB Draw. **SS**What makes you think that? JB Cause those pictures are there—on the curtains there are so many pictures. That man's going to go down the stairs. We need to follow him cause he's a super-villain and it's a job for me. Nothing can stop Radioactive Man. [Walking down stairs] **SS**Not even this big staircase? JB Not this. It's really big but nothing can stop me. I can go all the way down. Uh oh, more letters. Watch. I jump over the letters. **SS**Yeah! Do it again! [Climbing on concrete bench under the concrete dome with exposed fluorescent tube lights] JB This is my slide spot. Come on, step on it and it's gonna slide you. Whoa! **SS**That's so cool! Jesse! Uh oh. That's not a good design. You just pulled the florescent tube out. That was a surprise. JB I'm a good puller. **SS**I wonder if they meant for that to happen... JB How can it turn on again? [Fixing the light] **SS**You did it! JB I didn't do it, you did it! There, it's back. I'm gonna pull on a small light, is that okay? **SS**I don't think we should pull them anymore. JB I will. I will pull. **SS**Don't pull it! We don't want to break it. I know it's very tempting.

[Lying down in corner where dome hits floor] JB This is where I sleep. It's time for us to sleep cause it's morning. I sleep in the morning. I'm sleeping here. **SS**This is a good sleeping space. Look at this place here. Wait till you see this. [Looking up at glass reflecting] JB It's a window for us. Oh look, I can see us! Sure is cool. **SS**It is cool. JB Yes it is. It sure is cool. I—hear—my—self [Discovering that we are in crux of dome base and our voices echo; monotone voice] **SS**I—heard—my—sound—too. JB I—heard—my—sound—right—now. **SS**Do you know what that's called? An echo. JB I—do—want—a—treat—right—now. **SS**Did—you—hear—my—sound? JB Sound. JB It's echoes. There's our reflections. [Looking up at wedge of glass above in corner] **SS**That's our reflections. Can—you—hear—my—echo? JB Yeah—I—can. How—can—you—hear—me? **SS**Because—I—have—ears. JB How—can—you—listen—to—me? **SS**With—my—ears. JB How—can—you—talk? **SS**With—my—mouth JB How—can—you—make—that—sound? **SS**It's the building that makes the sound. JB That's—my—echo. **SS**Oh that's your reflection—it's different. There are two things happening right now, echoes and reflections. JB Let's look out of our window. **SS**You really got in there close to that window. JB I see everything. I see snow. You look out too. **SS**I see snow too. JB I—want—to—have—a snack. **SS**Hey Jesse, let's go see this other part of the building, then we can have a snack. [Touching textured concrete with exposed aggregates] **SS**What do you think of this stuff? JB So rocky! **SS**Yeah it is so rocky. Are you lying down because of the rocks or the letters? JB The rocks. They make me feel tired. **SS**Oh, you just touch it and then you fall down. [Falling down to demonstrate effect of rock] JB Be quiet! **SS**Why? JB I'm sleeping. **SS**Something about the rocks and the letters together makes it extra sleepy. JB These rocks are real. **SS**Why did you say that? JB Because they're hard. [Touching felt on wall next to textured concrete] **SS**What about this, is it real? JB Yes, that is real. **SS**What makes it real? JB The rocks. **SS**The rocks make the felt real? JB No, the felt makes the rock real. [Walking on aluminum grate ramp lit from below] **SS**What do you think of this ramp Jesse? Do you like this? JB Yeah. **SS**Why do you like it? JB Cause it sure is shiny. What can we do? **SS**I don't know what can we do. Can we dance here? JB Well, a little. [Dancing and stomping on grating] JB Bang bang, got it! **SS**Okay, how about we run all the way down? JB Ready, set, go—race! [Running down] **SS**Let's go this way. What's this? Let's figure it out. [Looking at backlit Xs and Ys at washroom entrance] JB More letters. **SS**What letters are they? JB X and Y! **SS**That's right. JB Look it's a fountain. I can't drink here. [Struggling to push button and drink] **SS**I have the same problem with this fountain, Jesse. What's in here? JB It's a bathroom. Come on into my rocket! [Entering toilet cubicle] **SS**Is this your rocket? JB Rocket ship. It can blast off. **SS**And that's the button. JB Come in the rocket and blast off! Blast off! [Closing door so we are in curvilinear stainless steel cubicle] JB We're going up to Mars. **SS**How long is it going to take us? JB Six hours. **SS**I know another place in here that's a lot like a rocket ship. JB How can we get in it? **SS**It's down here. Let's run. [Arriving at elevator and pushing call button] JB Here is our rocket! Blast off! The rocket ship is landing. **SS**Now what's going to happen? JB Here's our rocket. Come on into our rocket. [Entering elevator] **SS**Which button are you going to press? JB This one. I pressed number 2. We are going up. [Arriving at second floor] JB It's our stop, but I want to go back down. I don't want to go out. **SS**There's a

snack place here. JB Okay. [Exiting elevator] Is this another rocket of ours? **SS**Yes, this is our rocket stairs. JB Look at this. What's this? I'll show ya...shhh, come on into our rocket. [Entering



curving mirrored storage cupboard] **SS**I don't fit in this rocket. JB You can. We're blasting off. **SS**We can't cause I'm too big. Do you want me to get out? JB Yeah get out. Get into your own rocket. Out of my rocket. [Exiting storage cupboard] JB Where are you? **SS**Out here. Are you having fun? JB I'm going to outer space. Are you having fun? **SS**Yeah, I'm having fun. Are you having fun? Maybe we could have a cookie or something. JB I'll close my rocket then I'll come to your rocket. [Stepping up] **SS**These are our space snacks. [Eating cookies] JB So how was your day? We landed on Marszzz. I pressed Mars so we landed on Mars. **SS**Which planet are we going to now? JB Venus. Is it hot? **SS**I don't think it's that hot. Which place here looks like Venus? JB Bzzzz...let's go. Mission control. **SS**Yes mission control? JB You're landing on Venus. [Walking to



metal mesh curtains at window] **SS**Commander Jesse... JB Are you having fun? **SS**Yeah I'm having fun. Are you? JB Yes, I'm on my rocket. I'm going to that one. Are you having a good time? **SS**Yeah, I'm having a good time. How about you? JB Yeah. Come to my moon. Ride up my rocket. We already arrived at Venus. **SS**I think Venus looks like these curtains here. JB Let's go hide. Come on. You go beside me into this ghost factory. [Going in between full window and white mesh curtain] **SS**I guess these curtains look like ghosts. JB I'm a ghost in my house. Nobody can see us. **SS**Cause we're ghosts in our house. JB Ghosties are here. Nobody can find us. **SS**We're in our ghostie house. JB I'll trap you. I'll trap you, ghost. Gotcha ghost! Caught you! [Wrestling with imaginary ghosts] x

Jesse Boon is a Toronto-based jack-of-all-trades, dabbling in music, letters, painting and dance. He is planning to attend kindergarten in September 2012.