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What kind of a search is research? What kind of desire fuels such speculation? What are we trying to prove, or show that it cannot be proven – and for whom? I probe, I prove, I approve: prova is both the test and the evidence, its etymological roots speak of examination, of experimentation and of proof.

Prova 3 is the latest incarnation of some serious probing that has been underway in the RCA School of Humanities. The journal is an embodiment of a yearlong series of research seminars, workshops, lectures and crit sessions that took place as part of the Humanities Research Forum in 2014-15. This issue brings together contributions from research students and staff, as well as a series of invited speakers, writers, curators, historians, philosophers, artists and activists.

There is no ultimate test here, no overarching theme, nothing was predetermined from the outset. And yet, as we read the series of essays and images combined here within the pages of *Prova* 3, what becomes evident in their grouping is a certain sense of a testing of ideas, one that is inherently political. The watched body is encountered here, through the eyes of surveillance and its technologies, through militarised spaces, through paying attention to the visible and what is often unseen, or hidden from view - whether it be matter of this world, or on a faraway planet. Together, these contributions reveal not so much a desire for proof, but an urgency of the politics of the visual, and how this might be understood as potential within the expansive field that is contemporary humanities research.

Chantal Faust

Chantal Faust is editor-in-chief of *Prova*, convenor of the Humanities Research Forum and a tutor in Critical & Historical Studies and Research at the RCA.

Àngels Miralda

Dear Hito Steyerl,

I am writing to ask whether you have ever considered writing about installation as a mechanism. When I re-read your article "Art as Occupation"[1] in *The Wretched of the Screen*[2] I realised it must have been lingering in the back of my mind for 3 years. Occupation works in several ways in your article, it functions excellently as a play on words that links labour with art and militarization. It also brings up notions of spatiality, which are particularly important for my research.

I had written a segment of my Ph.D. introduction relating the word "installation" not only to its art function but also to the definitions associated with soft conquest of military installation and the voluntary installation of software that always comes with the threat of a hidden malicious virus. Realising that I come from a background of art history, whereas your article is more of a post-object, post- autonomy, post-art-history standpoint, I wondered if this was the difference in our pick of words. In the context of the 2011 Occupy movements in New York it was the perfect time to talk about occupation and the logic behind that word is linked inextricably to the spatiality of installation.

I did an exercise in which I tried to read your article replacing the word occupation with installation each time it came up. It didn't really work.

Yet, there are certainly connections and the subtle difference in words, the ways in which they differed when I replaced them, brought up the subtleties of strategy implied by the military offensive structures of the words.

Occupation implies a heightened violence, a clear motive, an occupier and an occupied. These are the colonizer and the colonized. These imply a sort of theft or subversion in which one party ends up the victim, the other the usurper. Installation on the other hand implies a contract; a negotiation between two parties. A military installation can be placed in the lands of allies to strengthen ties or given as a friendly base. But it also connects with hidden intentions of spreading, soft conquest, and the inescapable connection to the power relations that lie behind the operation.

These differences lead to an occupation that is soft versus forced, voluntary versus oppressive; it is the intentionality that shifts with hidden consequences and aims. I would call installation a "soft operation". Generally one is invited to install. A user chooses to click a download. A friendly base is thought of as protection by a friend.

An occupation is forced, it is oppressive and it is usually followed by resistance either physically or mentally by the colonized. The occupation is negative whereas the installation is positive. In

this sense, what lies at the heart of this difference is farce and alibi. Occupation is direct, intentions are laid out clearly. The Wall Street Occupiers stated their enemy and acted against it, a market system, the players in the game, a structure that laid itself out as an occupier in the first place. This is the irony of the occupy movement, the occupied were reversing their role, and it was really an exposition of a power play that had already done the occupying itself. The market into everyday life, the forces of economy into social progression.

Installation is a different strategy in that it is subversive. There are no clearly stated aims, it acts under a cover. It promises wealth and opportunity to exhibit, it acts under the premise of invitation and self-aggrandizement. It is a friendly procedure, but this is also why it is more dangerous. The intentionality masks power structures and uses the lie to assert itself peacefully for occupational means. Installation is non-violent, it is construction. But it produces the occupation of space regardless of how it is presented.

It's a funny word in the art context because it is ubiquitous. All art can now be considered installation. It is a prophecy that was fulfilled out of Daniel Buren's 1971 essay "The Function of the Studio"[3]. In the '70s it was not a defined word in the art- sense. Rosalind Krauss' 1978 "Sculpture in the Expanded Field"[4] speaks about the exact concept of installation but never mentioning it by name. Today it is everywhere, the word has installed itself into our mentalities and it came in undetected, as an ally, as a force against the market, which was later subsumed by it, and is now on the other end of its ideological inception. Installation was presented at first as an anti-market initiative via the difficulties of collecting, the inherent site-specificity of its ethereal monuments. But today, in the context of the megacity in which space and property are at a premium, installation is the method by which art is validated, by which it is given a monetary value simply to be presented within a space that contains a certain net-worth within itself over a set duration of time.

Before it became a ubiquitous word within the exhibition context, it too was related to labour, as is occupation. While occupation refers to the players in the game, the labourers, the artists, installation

was the hand behind the set-up. The invisible construction that is meant to remain invisible once the show is up and ready; once the drills, hammers, and spirit levels get tucked away. Installation in itself becomes invisible; the labour of the procedure is hidden and obscured. We now wander into the art exhibition expecting it, and it is an ideology so highly steeped in art presentation that we no longer notice it, it is just simply there.

The invisibility of installation is what ties the word even further with its own farce and deflection. A military occupation shows itself by the patrols of armed officers that make their presence known in the street. An installation, such as the American military base in Naples, keeps itself hidden behind walls that do not allow unauthorized people to enter. It is an ethereal presence, not a visible one.

This also relates it to the spatial qualities that accompany it. Space is invisible other than the negative demarcations of architecture, it is a mathematical equation, and a temporal construction created by the users of a space, either human, object, or animal. This connects us to another point you've made in The Wretched of the Screen, which is the conflation of the subject and the object.

This trend is also subversive in its own way. The fascination that artists have had recently with flat ontology and object-oriented ontology seems absurd in that it is destroying the role of the artist itself! While I have my own reservations and criticisms of flat ontology, it seems that it comes in its perfect moment. The moment when human beings are pushed to becoming commodities by an art market that views them as stocks that can be betted on, pushed around, and manipulated.

The danger of installation comes about in a context in which the space itself is what really matters. Because the property values of proper exhibition centres in cities like New York or London contain such a high market value in themselves, it automatically legitimizes any object that is placed in them contributing automatically to the absurdity and arbitrariness of the consideration of art. The quality of the work is subservient to its ability to be presented, and the worth of an artist is tied to how much space that artist is able to conquer, achieve, or install

him or herself into.

Online this is measured by hits rather than square metre. The net worth of a webpage is directly tied to user interactions and traffic. The effectivity of software works similarly, but in the amount of downloads and installations. For software this notion of a hidden invader is clearly seen each time the computer prompts you to certify that you want to open a file downloaded from the internet – a warning message to the possibility of malicious seeds. This possibility of the virus, the imagination of a veiled offensive within the voluntary click is the purpose of the alibi of installation. It is a cover for the forces of the market to direct production from the inside without being detected. Once installed on the hardware of the computer, the virus can stay dormant until it so chooses, and cause a meltdown at will. In this environment of fear the user is secretly occupied in a way that he recognises his own occupation without being able to speak about it or prove its existence.

I'd like to ask if you have considered this question before or if you have any feedback about this comparison. Although my experiment of replacing "occupation" with "installation" failed in many ways, it brought out the complexity of their differences that has strengthened my point in a different way. I saw your discussion with Peter Osborne at the ICA nearly a year ago[5], and the whole situation seemed well planned but there was a difficulty between the philosophical and artistic terms in a way that the discussion became quite abstract. At the same time, at your show in the adjacent rooms[6] the videos were presented in an installational sense, contributing to and contributed by many of the points above.

I'd appreciate any thoughts, suggestions, or comments on these ideas.

My best wishes,
Àngels Miralda

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Lobsters, Hormonal Storms, Brittlestars, and Sticky Things: Matter of the World

There is a world of things. There are things that cause us headaches. Things we have a hard time understanding. Things that challenge our beliefs, that resist definitions. Things we love, but risk suffocating with our eagerness to name them. There are things, ideas that rather than wanting to be jotted down, ask first to be touched, ingested. But, hey, how can anyone touch, or ingest an idea? It is a matter of intimacy: moving closer, into the vicinity of the thing we wish to know about. How could anyone write or speak about love, for instance, without having experienced its uplifting tunes and dreadful turns? How could one write about advanced capitalism and its regimes of surveillance and control if not by pushing at its normative permissions and restrictions?

During the three months of writing *Testo Junkie*, Paul B. Preciado (born Beatriz Preciado, 1970) self-administrated testosterone. In the book, Preciado explores the current regime of governmentality—the "pharmacopornographic"—which is based on the management of bodies, sexuality, pleasure, and identity. Preciado puts to test theories of surveillance and control by subjecting them "to the shock that was provoked in me by the practice of taking testosterone."[1] Through this self-experiment, Preciado's body becomes an amplifier of the roaring of advanced capitalism, an echo chamber of collective desires, frustrations, hopes, and resistance. As Preciado gets high on the drug, the words flow, and the results are stimulating, titillating. Comparative analysis alternates with delirious visions, triggering wild fantasies. The book turns conventional discourse analysis upside down by proposing that objects and theories are living organisms. *Testo Junkie* literally puts critical theory back into the body—a body that performs critical analysis. For Preciado, theory is a practice of *doing*, rather than a way of representing the truth of an external reality that we gain access to through language. In the book, the distance between experience and speculation, object of research and researcher, abstract discourse and material practice, and between the body and the technologies meant to control it is compressed. In this way, the given-ness of categories such as "human" and "non-human," "material" and "immaterial" are called into question by analysing the practices through which these boundaries get stabilized.

Preciado's approach to the material world resonates strongly with Karen Barad's theory of agential realism. Barad describes reality as an entanglement of social and natural "agencies" that configure the relation between human and non-human, discourse and phenomena through a series of "intra-action." Following a philosophical and feminist tradition that rejects the Cartesian division between body and mind, object and subject, nature and culture, Barad reconsiders the relation between human and non-human, material and discursive, and how both equally contribute to produce knowledge of the world. She writes:

"Theories are living and breathing reconfigurings of the world. The world theorizes as well as experiments with itself. Figuring, reconfiguring. Animate and (so-called) inanimate creatures do not merely embody mathematical theories; they do mathematics. But life, whether organic or inorganic, animate or inanimate, is not an unfolding algorithm. Electrons, molecules, brittlestars, jellyfish, coral reefs, dogs, rocks, icebergs, plants, asteroids, snowflakes, and bees stray from all calculable paths, making leaps here and there, or rather, making here and there from leaps, shifting familiarly patterned practices, testing the waters of what might yet be / have been / could still have been, doing thought experiments with their very being."[2]

Matter is alive, it thinks, it theorizes. However, contrary to object-oriented theories that reject the primacy of the human over other kinds of existences, Barad is not interested in assigning primacy to material over language or object over human being. It is not a matter of choosing between two options; she neither grants objects complete autonomy from the human nor perpetuates an anthropocentric view of the world. The world is not divided into the neat, rigid categories that discourse analysis too often seems to suggest. Boundaries are constructions, after all, the result of material and discursive practices. For instance, Barad draws our attention to the way scientific research works. She refers to the theories of physicist Niel Bohr, who argues that the apparatuses of scientific research influence the way a phenomenon materialises. Barad questions where the boundaries are between scientific tools, research, and objects of research. The design of the apparatus, the ideas behind its construction, the parameters set for reading and analyzing the collected data—all of these factors influence the result. In other words, the apparatus contributes in its own way to define the analyzed object and shape the phenomenon no less than ideas, theories, and bodies do. Likewise, the boundaries that separate scientific discourse, social sciences, and artistic practices are imaginary. If we understand that they are not entirely separate fields of knowledge, how can the boundaries between these

disciplines be meaningfully activated?

By doing a cross reading of quantum physics theories, post-structural philosophy, feminist and queer theory, biology and science studies, Barad offers an intriguing proposition on how to rework philosophical concepts and scientific practices to gain new perspectives on existing knowledge. This is an important point, because it is not on the basis of the "novelty" of their theories that Barad's and Preciado's radical positions should be judged. What makes their respective practices relevant is the way in which they activate and make use of available knowledge—reworking existing concepts, remapping territories, renaming, testing boundaries, experimenting with thresholds. The point is not to produce new theories that can supplant the existing ones, but rather to call into question assimilated habits of mind (like the distinction between words and things, meanings and matter), proposing alternative approaches to existing phenomena and discourses. Both Barad's and Preciado's theories are pragmatic responses to lived realities, practices rooted in the material world, in the understanding that the world is not separated into the disjointed domains of words and things. This is also reflected in their performative approach to research—swallowing, touching, dwelling in the vicinity of their object of investigation, experimenting with matter, developing affinity with other beings and forces. This is the way they theorize.

The unorthodox ways in which Preciado and Barad approach their respective disciplines and practices have placed them in dialogue with artistic practices. Their theories have become popular among contemporary artists because they problematize the Western philosophical separation between material and thought, between meaning and matter, and between human and non-human agency. Questioning such separations in embodied ways is not new to art. What is art if not getting your hands dirty, diving into one's own intuitions, swallowing ideas, dealing with the resistance of the material, playing with indeterminacy? Artistic practices inhabit a zone of what Barad describes as "multiple indeterminacies," in which relations between things, ideas, and material are not fixed
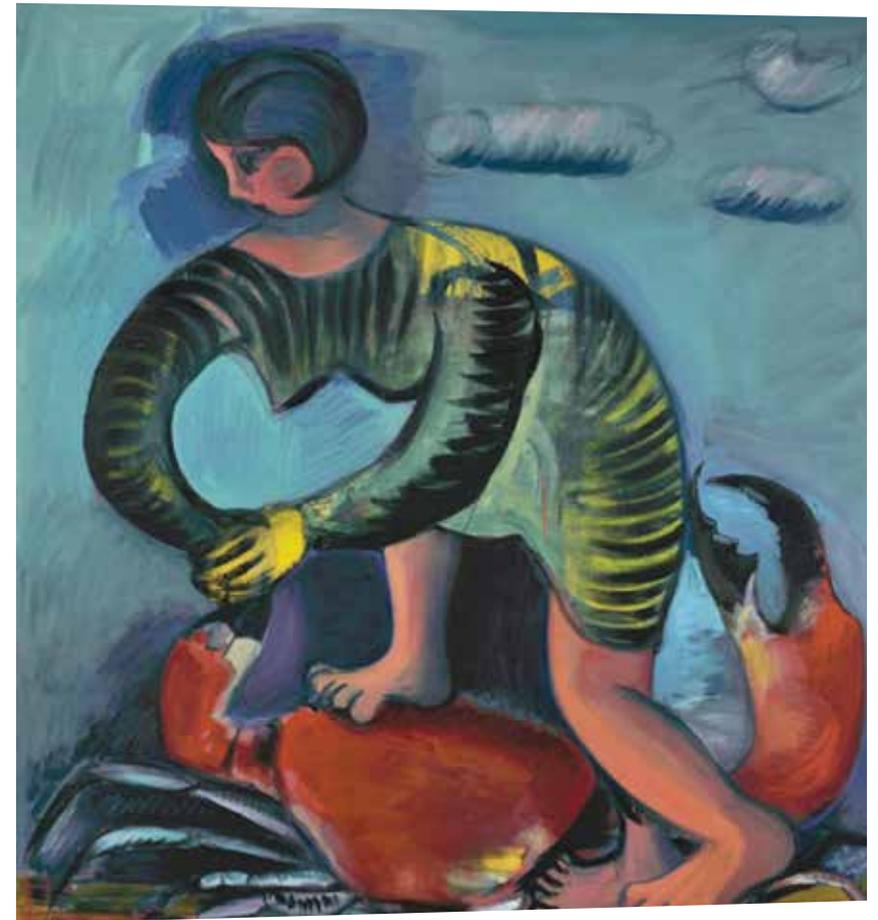
and boundaries are porous.

Some artists value experience as an important form of experimenting with, living in the proximity of, and theorising about the world through touching, brushing, scratching, cutting, absorbing, swallowing. It often begins with an encounter with the material world: a body, a color, a particle, a shrimp; a sticky materiality that doesn't lend itself to easy interpretations or appropriation and demands to be examined more closely. For instance, the female protagonist in British

painter Lucy Stein's disarmingly funny painting *Honour does not move slowly sideways like a crab* (2012) picks a fight with a lobster. This densely worked painting shows a woman using her hands and feet apparently to defend herself against an impossibly large crab that figures at the bottom of the canvas. The woman's long arched arms mimic the shape of the crab's claws, comically emphasizing an affinity between the two as the woman tries to pull one of her hands out from the crab's clutch. The two are fastened together, entangled in an ambiguous embrace that could be read as contentious or as pleasurable. In another painting, entitled *Gambas al Pil-Pil* (2011), a woman in a bikini is crawling on or riding a big shrimp. It is not clear whether she is fighting the shrimp, or clutching it out of love. Or is Pil-Pil only playing with the shrimp? The woman's skin is painted the same orange as the shrimp. A streak of orange paint, like an oversized shellfish antenna, descends from the woman's mouth, connecting with and echoing the antenna that extend from the shrimp's head. The title, which translates as "Shrimp a là Pil-Pil," announces a succulent meal while we witness an epic battle between the woman and the shrimp. If they are fighting, what are they fighting for? Life? Territory? Supremacy? It is not entirely clear. A dark humor impregnates Stein's scenes: the woman and the crab, the human and the animal, divided and yet entangled in each other's existence. In both of these paintings, the artist welcomes, with a hint of hysteric joy and potential violence, the idea that existence is not an individual affair.

Entanglement is a key term in Barad's theory of agential realism. She describes it as a way of being in the world in dis/continuous relations, meaning that all attempts to separate the material from the discursive, the affective from the scientific, fall away. Barad poses that matter and meaning, discourses and phenomena, human and non-human are entangled. In her relational ontology, she describes reality as an endless reconfiguring of matter. Things do not preexist the moment of their "intra-acting," but rather they are constituted by this encounter. In other words, things (and human beings) affect one another in ways that shape or change them. Emotions and passions influence behaviours
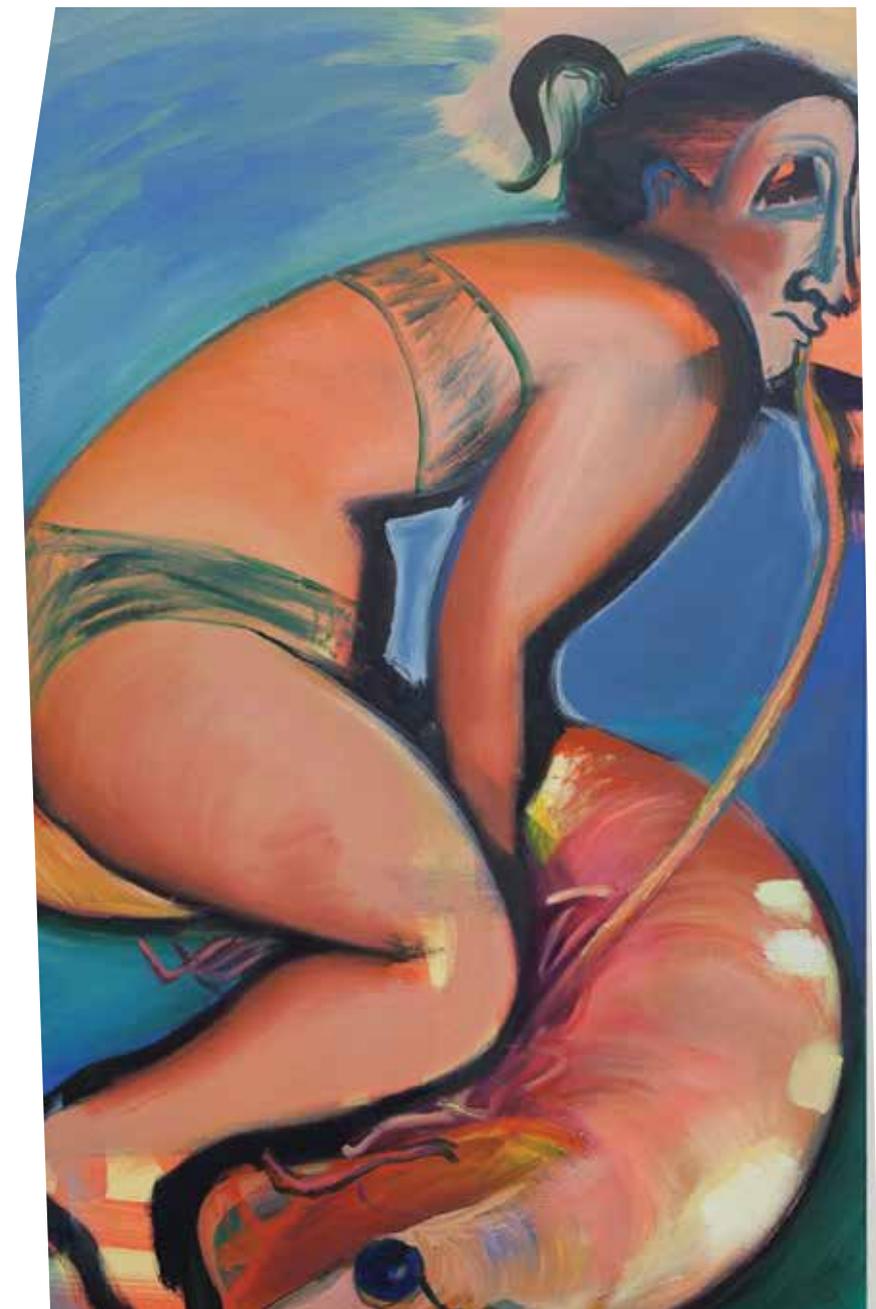
and actions. But emotions are not privileges of human beings only. In the example of the quantum leap, which, in quantum physics, describes the discontinuous change of the state of an electron in an atom from one energy level to another, Barad observes that an electron "gets excited," that it "feels" the electricity going through its body, and is propelled to a new energy level. Does this experience sound familiar to anyone? The bonds between human and non-humans are many, as Barad convincingly suggests, and they demand to be carefully reckoned with. To understand the world as series of entanglements opens important ethical questions involving humans and non-humans alike. As a living, pulsating materiality, matter has as much agency as any human being. Matter does mathematics, thinks, feels, loves, theorizes, and gets excited. In her book, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Barad describes agency not as something one possesses, but as a doing, an enactment. If we acknowledge that matter is lively and "does," then agency is everywhere. It belongs to no one in particular but rather is distributed over non-human and human forms alike. Barad maintains that acknowledging non-human agency "requires much more attentiveness to existing power asymmetries" and a way of "thinking critically about the boundaries, constraints, and exclusions that operate through particular material-discursive apparatuses."[3] It seems to be a question of how and who gets to use the power of knowledge. Science, Barad observes, is a field in which scientists deal with non-humans (and their potentials) on a daily basis. However it is also a field that produces knowledge based on exclusion and ideological, not "objective" apparatuses.

Therefore, it is plausible to ask: Why should scientific discourse be more credible than philosophy or art or magic? Or what makes a scientific or academic account more reliable than a piece of science-fiction? In their video-works, the French artists Louise Hervé and Chloé Maillet mix science fiction, mythology, art history and scientific discourse (borrowing from the languages of archaeology, biology, and social sciences) in an effort to re-imagine what the boundaries between the different disciplines may be.[4]

Through working across these different fields and appropriating their rhetoric, Hervè and Maillet question the ideas of "truth" and "reality" that these discourses produce. Through the exuberant sense of humour that characterizes their works, they highlight that there is something preposterous, something comically pompous in the seriousness with which we take scientific discourse. In their reimagined world, the discourses of science and magic, fiction and analysis go hand in hand, creating rich narrative textures that the artists perform with elegance and the deadpan seriousness of scientists.

In their 2014 video *Un passage d'eau* (*The Waterway*), the artists brilliantly problematize the human obsession with immortality and the non-human. In the video, which takes place in a sea resort on the Atlantic coast of France, we meet Ondine (like the eponymous marine nymph and mermaid), a former biologist and honorary member of club of people who claim to have found Atlantis. The aim of this club is to study submarine life in the hope of extracting the secrets of longevity. Ondine is fond of lobsters and crabs and ponders the possibility of becoming one. She explains the secret of submarine life to a young fisherman, who wants to become member of the club, and who, with his crested haircut, poignantly and humorously bears a strong resemblance to a fish. The movie reaches its climax with Ondine taking a bath. Hers is not a simple bath. Ondine performs her ritualistic ablution earnestly and resolutely, her body entirely immersed in mud. We see her hands emerging, moving across the murky surface, clasping the bathtub's edges, and then retracting again—as though they were lobster's claws. With her eyes tightly close, Ondine breaths heavily, like a fish out of water.[5] On one level, *The Waterway* is a mockery of the desire to become non-human or, in this case, superhuman. It also makes apparent the ideological agendas that underlie so-called objective scientific method. Ondine's preoccupation with preserving the life of submarine species and the scientific evidence she brings to sustain her thesis are driven by her narcissistic desire to be immortal. But the artists don't make a moral case out of it. Ondine's behaviour remains open to many possible interpretations: she seems to be the perfect portrait of a passionate believer moved by a deep desire to empathize, wishing to get in touch with the lobster, to feel what the lobster feels.

And what does the lobster feel? Concerned with the place of non-human agency in the human world, artist Susanne Winterling has been asking questions about the role global politics play in the lives of humans and non-humans alike, the implications of the entangled nature of matter and meaning, and how art can meaningfully contribute to these discussions. The artist has produced a series of installations, videos, and photos, as well as organized talks, screenings, and other public events that address the effect of the global economy and its speculative bubble. She is interested in the problems of mass urbanization, pollution, poor working conditions, huge asymmetries between so-called "advanced" and "developing" societies as they affect the planet and, in one specific case, as they affect Puerto Rico's rich ecosystem. In a long-term residency at *BetaLocal,* an experimental education organization based in Puerto Rico, Winterling collaborated with scientists, artists, anthropologists, and biologists. The project takes as its starting point the observation of the impressive range of bioluminescent plankton in Puerto Rico's bays, life forms currently threatened by massive pollution and urbanization of the coastline. The bioluminescent plankton is for Winterling an interesting example that speaks to co-dependency, responsibility, and the connections between global and local economies. As a means to represent these concerns, the artist has developed a particular photographic language and use of printing techniques that privilege the tactile qualities of her images. Close-up pictures of sand, a crystal, a hand lifting up a test-tube, and an ultraviolet image of a jellyfish are mounted on acrylic sheets that, because of the refractive qualities of the acrylic, makes the image sharper and the colours particularly brilliant. Winterling often uses reflective surfaces in Plexiglas, aluminium, neon-coloured acrylic glass. But the coldness of this high-tech material is offset by the intimacy
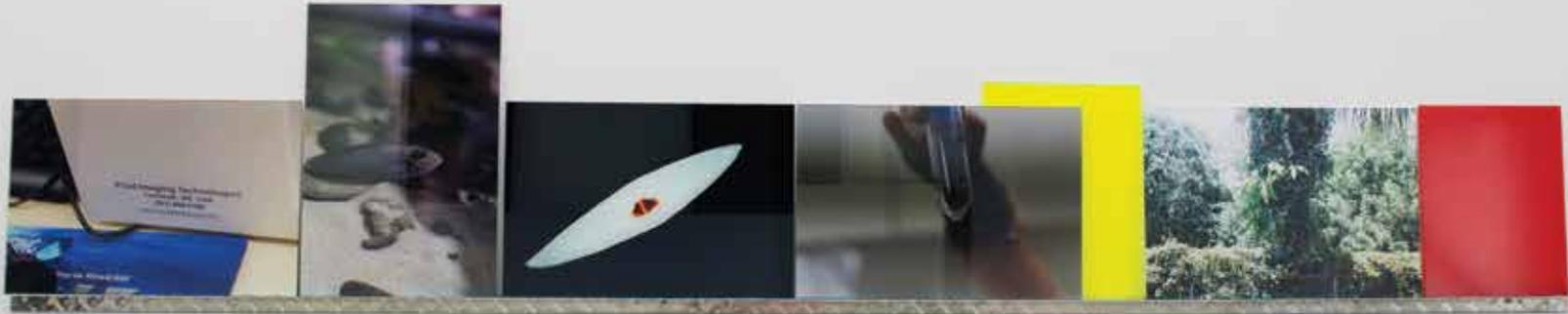
with which the camera zooms in on the object of investigation. The sensual visuals are in many ways closer to the language of textiles and sculpture. The lens of Winterling's camera becomes a membrane through which the world of matter reverberates. In a video, entitled *Immersion Scorpio* (2014), the camera shows a glowing scorpion that lies immobile on a stone. Nothing happens until the animal finally moves and disappears into a corner of the image. The scorpion in the laboratory glows when its skin is touched by the black light, while the artist touches it with the eye of the camera. This triangulation posits the artist's relation to art as a form of touching, and touch is a generative moment through which a whole reality materializes.

This becomes more tangible in another of Winterling's recent works, *Diademseeigel Immersion Prototyp* (2014). The work, a 3-D animation displayed as video-installation, shows a close up of two interlocked hands wearing what look like laboratory gloves. The two hands are free-floating in flat darkness that slowly turns into a grey reflective liquid. As the thumbs twiddle, the hands become a projective surface on which pink sea urchins' spikes materialise and blend with the form of the hands. This is what entanglement at times might be look like: holding each other's hands, becoming a projective surface, merging together.

Like art making, experimenting and theorizing are about being in touch, being responsive, and about developing "respons/abilities," as Barad writes, "to the world's patternings and murmurings."[6] For Barad, respons/abilities entail listening and responding in alternative ways that take into account the many—more or less visible—forms in which the world of matters and meanings unfolds. The artists and writers discussed here— Preciado, Stein, Hervè and Maillot, and Winterling— propose different ways of listening to the "murmuring" of the world, and of being responsive to it. They respond to what you cannot fully define but that lives inside or next to you, to things that do not yet have a name, to things that glow and sparkle to make contact

with you or that you want to make contact with but don't fully know how. They recognize that what we call reality is just one possible materialisation of the world. The challenge is in paying attention to what is excluded from visibility. Barad writes that "each meeting matters, not just for what comes to matter but what is constitutively excluded from mattering in order for particular materialisations to occur."[7] Something is always left outside: something exciting, something not-yet-unknown, something our imagination, curiosity, and desire thrive on. In this constellation, respons/ability is not so much a moral duty, about protecting what is already there, but rather is a readiness to rejoin living matter in its wild unfoldings, whether by spending the evening with a scorpion, fighting with a crab, swallowing testosterone, writing a script for a movie, working on a painting, or chewing on an idea.

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Images
(In order of appearance)

1. Lucy Stein, *Honour does not move slowly sideways like a crab*, 2012.
Oil on canvas. Courtesy the artist and Galerie Gregor Staiger.
2. Lucy Stein, *Gambas al Pil-Pil*, 2011. Oil on canvas. Courtesy private collection, Zurich/Bern.
3. Susanne M. Winterling, *Immersion Scorpio*, 2014. Still from
HD-video, 2:00 loop. Courtesy the artist.
4. Susanne M. Winterling, *Ecologies* (micro level solidarity lab), 2014.
Wall installation on rails: aluminum profiles, C-prints on acryl-glass,
and acrylic sheets; dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist.

Anticipatory Photography and the Architecture of Catastrophe

Just before midnight we were told to prepare for a journey from which we would not return until dawn. A short while later we were driving through the small Arkansas town of Fayetteville, heading towards an unknown destination. The night was clear and the moon nearly full. The gardens and front yards of the suburban plots on the periphery of this town were silent and the houses illuminated only by the headlights of our vehicles as we drove past. Children's bicycles lay abandoned on driveways and barbeques sat dormant. On several properties there were cars in various states of disembowelment with engine parts strewn across yards and lawns. Interior domestic rooms behind glassy skins of black windows were voids, as though a cataclysm had descended and no one lived here anymore. On the front porch of nearly every house however, as if to remind us of a specific contemporaneity, the Stars and Stripes flopped down around flag poles in the nocturnal stillness, the usual display of US patriotism but also more pointedly now to support the troops

overseas fighting the war on terror. Undoubtedly many sons and daughters from these homes were a world away and busy responding to 9/11.

Eventually the houses thinned as we drove through a wind-swept hinterland in a convoy of SUV's. After an hour or so a light could be seen on the horizon and as we approached our destination, in this now rural Arkansas landscape, there loomed a type of house. But even

at a distance it was clear that there was something terribly wrong with this house. It looked far too large. And it was floodlit from four corners by the type of lights that light up football stadiums, lending the scene an eerie visage - a lone house illuminated in a sea of darkness. This house was not a real house. Instead, this was an oversized approximation of a house and as we came closer it was clear that it lacked many of the features and details of a house where anyone would actually live.

The vernacular name given to this structure by the ex-US special-forces military personnel, now turned private contractors, was 'kill house'. A fake house designed to project a possible world to come. The proportions were wrong certainly, and the poured concrete facade of the house not particularly convincing. Inside the only furniture was made of wrought iron so as to withstand successive training raids. This house had been designed by someone and what had been imagined was a domestic space that had passed into the uncanny, a militarised mimetic version of the domestic familiar.

This was a travesty of a real house, the building cold, dark and hard in a raw unfinished way that real houses are before they are completed. This space had no veneer of the domestic, but was instead a skeleton of an idea of the domestic and one that appeared to come more out of a dream or nightmare than waking reality. The façade of comfort and safety was missing, a different type of inner truth had

been laid bare. This was a flayed house where the unconscious had been violently exposed. This house was designed to evoke anxiety and to intimidate those who were sent inside. Even though the design was meant to suggest domestic familiarity, it simultaneously conjured up a multitude of anticipated apocalyptic scenarios that were part of the menu offered by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the conflicts that the men I had travelled here with were training for. This was a house where architecturally, form followed fear rather than function.

I photographed through internal doorways to rooms beyond and made my way up through dark staircases. I could see that everywhere the walls, floors and ceilings were scarred with burns and gashes. And in the end I came away from that place knowing that I had witnessed a possible future where this house was not so far away from those dwellings passed by on our way to this imagined space. What confronted me was a spatial phantasm where the Iraq and Afghanistan

wars were imagined and prepared for. This is also where the war on terror met the global free-market hyper-industry of subcontracted security.

In other parts of the world in this first decade of the new millennium other artists were also photographing similar structures – from fake rooms to whole fake cities, all designed as anticipatory architecture of conflict. For example, in the photographs of Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin's *Chicago* (2006) an artificial town built by the Israeli Defence Force is depicted. It is an approximation of an Arab town and a site for urban combat training. As Broomberg & Chanarin have said about this place - *Everything that happened, happened here first, in rehearsal.*

The photographs that make up *personal kill* (2005–2008) by Geissler/Sann, are of domestic-like spaces that are part of a vast phenomenon known as MOUT (Military Operations on Urban Terrain) training sites that became a particular focus for development

by war strategists around the world from the middle of the 1990's onwards. MOUT sites replicate the urban environments that modern-day combat troops encounter on their tours of duty. These too are approximations of the domestic, but now reimagined as the dystopias of a new world order.

In *Red Land, Blue Land* (2000) by Claudio Hils we see an elaborate mock town built in Senne, North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany, an area connected with the preparation of troops for combat since the nineteenth century. This is the place where the British Army constructed their mock towns and trained their soldiers prior to deployments to such places as Northern Ireland.

In *29 Palms (2003–2004), photographed by An-My Lê,* we witness American combat troops training in the Californian desert for the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. This is where US Marines imagined and acclimatised to the Middle East, its heat, and the likelihood of extreme violence.

The images in *Airside* (2006-2008) by Richard Mosse show the fuselages of aircraft, or the approximation of them. These are structures that are at once familiar and yet strange, they are the repository of our contemporary fears about flying and international travel and are a representation of a loss of innocence in the age of the war on terror.

In Sarah Pickering's work *Public Order* (2002–2005*),* we see photographs of the fake town of Denton, a location where Pickering documented the sites where the Metropolitan Police Service trains for the eventuality of civil unrest and riots on the streets of Britain. Familiar high-street shops, tube stations and nightclubs are all here, along with violence and trauma, both enacted and imagined.

The spaces depicted by these artists are approximations of ordinary spaces – domestic, urban and familiar. With the end of the Cold War and the lessening of the threat of conventional warfare, in either its battlefield or *mutually assured destruction* guises, the flavour of war became dictated by the complicated reality of *asymmetric warfare*, where two forces of significantly unequal military strength confront one another.

Confront, in this context though, is more metaphorical than actual, as the force with inferior military strength relies on a lack of confrontation to achieve its victory. Insurgent and guerilla warfare is where this avoidance of confrontation becomes an almost existential art form. The fox-holes and tunnels of the South-East Asian wars were one version of this nightmare for more conventional military forces and the *improvised electronic device*, another more recent iteration of a deadly threat that hides in plain sight.

The constructed and disordered interior and exterior rooms, houses and whole fake towns documented by the artists here, are part of a military-industrial architecture that simulates the familiar of the domestic as *unhomely* space. Anthony Vidler, in his seminal text *The Architectural Uncanny,* reminds us that "the uncanny

arose, as Freud demonstrated, from the transformation of something that once seemed homely into something decidedly not so, from the *heimlich*, that is, into the *unheimlich*".[1]

These are mostly crude spaces, approximations of the comfortably familiar, but all encompass an aesthetic vision of domestic space that allows for a crooked version of that space to take hold in the minds of the protagonists training in and around them.

These are acclimatising sites for combat personnel whose contemporary battlefields will be as urban and domestic as the towns and cities they grew up in, and will come back to, after their tours of service are over. These are spaces that have been artfully staged to mimic a disordered reality - a unique form of architecture where form is predicated on learning to fear the familiar and for the familiar to be transformed into something that cannot be trusted. Tying the uncanny to architectural form Vidler suggests that the uncanny is:

"Architecturally an outgrowth of the Burkean sublime, a domesticated version of absolute terror...Its favorite motif was precisely the contrast between a secure and homely interior and the fearful invasion of an alien presence; on a psychological level, its play was one of doubling, where the other is, strangely enough, experienced as a replica of the self, all the more fearsome because apparently the same".[2]

In many ways though, these spaces of military and civilian training represent the first step in a circuitous route that goes beyond just doubling. The combat personnel who go on to encounter the doubled spaces at the actual sites of conflict that they have trained for also bring their experience back home again. These spaces, and by extension the photographs of these spaces, are a warning to us that we are at risk of recreating a third iteration of this dystopian aesthetic, not just in the *over there* of a foreign conflict, but also in the familiarity of our own homes and cities.

The increasing militarisation of our police forces in the service of managing the threat of civil unrest and the constant threat of terrorism that has accompanied the aftermath of the global financial crisis and the war on terror, along with the reality of our now thoroughly surveilled society, means that we may look at these photographs as a reference point, as documents that will allow for the comparison of what has been anticipated to what is, now.

The images from all of these bodies of work are unashamedly documentary photographs, in that they belong to a tradition of photographing that sees the photographers recognising a set of social and cultural conditions and then responding by negotiating access to closed worlds, traveling to those worlds and coming away with images that are in some way evidential.

In capturing an already and overtly fabricated reality - the images represented here are ostensibly documentary photographs of something real that has in itself been artfully staged to mimic a disordered reality – the seven photographic series, all made in the first decade of the new millennium, are by artists who have recognised and responded to a phenomenon of staging that already exists in the world.

In many ways these photographs mark a series of moments in that decade, where practitioners in different parts of the world acknowledged both the ontological and aesthetic complexity of photography's relationship to reality, whilst noticing and responding to, through recourse to a *straight* observational mode of photographing, a phenomenon out there in the world that was in itself an overtly contorted and ideological construction of reality. These photographs are documents as well as allegories of anticipation. They suggest that the worlds anticipated through architecture, such as the ones depicted in these photographs, will inevitably become a reality.

The images by these artists offer a decisively new temporal paradigm in the representation of conflict - that of the anticipatory.

These images are documentary photographs of imagined spaces and what is imagined are futural wars and conflicts. These images are not the familiar subject matter found in photojournalism - photographs taken of the here-and-now of war and in the heat of the moment. Neither are they pictures that belong to what has in recent years become a ubiquitous practice in depicting war, loosely described as *aftermath photography* - the type of image for example that was given focus in the recent Tate Modern *Conflict, Time, Photography* exhibition.

Whilst *aftermath photography* extends the temporal relationship to conflict by showing its residue, these photographs of rehearsal spaces extend the depiction to the anticipatory – the time before conflict arrives. The future, projected in the spaces documented by these artists, is one of fear. The actual physical architecture here stands in as a metaphor for these pervasive feelings that now seem to be part of our accepted idea of the future.

The photography of both photojournalism and *aftermath photography* tell us about what is happening and what has happened. The photography of anticipation however, tells us much about a possible future that is now routinely imagined by state governments and private corporations. The anticipatory spaces depicted suggest an acceptance of an age of the end of Enlightenment, not least in architecture itself for these spaces are the antithesis of the architectural sublime that we have aspired to in the past.

With the collapse of utopianism, projected models of the impact of climate change and a perpetual war on terror, the extended temporal frame of photography alludes to a possible world to come. As relevant and crucial as photojournalism and *aftermath photography* have been and continue to be, *anticipatory photography* is a crucial, even urgent, addition to the photography and representation of war and conflict. This type of photography articulates a vision that exists in the world already, overlooked and invisible in its close proximity to us.

Ariella Azoulay's observations in 'Photographing the Verge of Catastrophe', articulate what *anticipatory photography* may

reveal to us. "To photograph what exists on the verge of catastrophe entails one's presence at the onset of a catastrophe, looking for its eventuation, that is, being able to see it as an event that is about to occur."[3] By looking in this way we see that "catastrophe has altered its form, turning from a sudden event that affects someone into a perpetually impending state"[4]. "To photograph or to look at what exists on the verge of catastrophe is to assume or to manufacture the position of enunciating"[5].

The photographs of these mimetic spaces are therefore documents as well as allegories of anticipation – photographs of spaces that stand in for a futural conflict to come. They enunciate the constructed fears of others. It is up to us whether we share that fear or see the information in the photographs for the construct that in many ways war and conflict are. Does this creation of fear provide an environment that becomes hospitable to countering it no matter how abstract it may be? We know that this is a powerful weapon. Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction were articulated until they became real, even though they did not exist, and yet the response to their purported existence led to real war and the real death of tens of thousands of people. Ultimately, these photographs are a warning – a form of photography that reveals what is to come. Although we may not act upon what is shown to us, we cannot say we were not warned. Undoubtedly, the works made by these artists articulate the condition of a ruin, but it is an anticipatory ruin - a ruin before ruin.

Christopher Stewart

Luci Eldridge

Christopher Stewart is Associate Professor in Photography in the School of Design at the University of Technology Sydney. He is an artist and writer and in 2015 co-edited with Esther Teichmann the book *Staging Disorder*.

Stepping into the Image of Mars

Images
(In order of appearance)

1. Christopher Stewart, **Kill House**, 2005
2. Christopher Stewart, **Kill House**, 2005
3. Adam Broomberg and Oliver Chanarin, **Chicago**, 2006
4. Geissler/Sann, **Mosque II, Schwend**, 2008
5. Claudio Hils, **RED LAND BLUE LAND,** 2000
6. *An-My Lê,* **Security and Stabilization Operations, Iraq Police**, *2003-2004*
7. Richard Mosse, **747 Schiphol**, 2007
8. Sarah Pickering, **Behind Flicks Nightclub,** 2004

The images referred to in the text are from seven photographic series that were included in the exhibition *Staging Disorder* and exhibited between 26th January and 12th March 2015. The exhibition was organised by Christopher Stewart and Esther Teichmann and shown at London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. An accompanying publication, *Staging Disorder*, edited by Christopher Stewart and Esther Teichmann was published by Black Dog Publishing, London, 2015 and contains essays by David Campany, Howard Caygill, Jennifer Good, Adam Jasper, Alexandra Stara, Christopher Stewart and Esther Teichmann. A version of this text was given as a talk to Humanities research students at the Royal College of Art in January 2015.

At the Airbus Defence and Space centre in Stevenage, UK, teams of engineers have built a large 'Mars Yard' in order to test the European Space Agency's ExoMars Rover, due to launch in 2018. Unlike other Mars Yards throughout Europe and the USA, this one has been designed specifically to test and perfect the autonomous navigation system ESA will be using to drive their rover across the Martian surface.[1]

This particular Mars Yard is 30x13 metres in size and is filled with 300 tonnes of sand. 'Simulating the Martian surface, complete with rocky obstacles' the Yard 'provides a realistic training ground for developing such a sophisticated navigation system.'[2] The terrain is built up sand which can be moved around and similar to 19th century painted panoramas and natural history museum dioramas, real and faux rocks estimate the size and shapes of those seen on Mars, enhancing a sense of reality.[3] The main wall and the one adjacent to it are covered with large panoramic visualisations, captured by one of NASA's Mars Exploration Rovers. Jeremy Close, Director of UK Communications for Airbus Defence and Space, maintained that this 'Mars mural' gives a 'realistic view for the rover to be tested in'.[4] Due to the expense of the photographic mural, the surrounding walls and doors of the rest of the space are painted in the 'right pantone shade of Martian Brown'[4] to 'ensure the rover's navigation cameras are confronted by as realistic a scenario as possible'.[6] Combined with the lighting in the Mars Yard (200 lumens is equivalent to what it's like on Mars), this is a visual and physical simulation of the Martian environment.

Arriving to visit the Mars Yard, I was led by Mission Systems Engineer Alastair Wayman from the reception of Airbus Defence and Space past a series of industrial looking warehouses used to build space-crafts and satellites for various clients. Crossing over a road that linked the factories together I was directed down some steps and into a building reminiscent of science laboratories at school: the corridors were narrow, the carpets and walls slightly shabby, and the lack of pictures seemed in an odd way to compensate for what lay ahead. Through a series of glass fronted doors and swipe card accesses I was being taken to Mars. I had been prepared for what I was about to witness through my foregoing internet research, but the corridors and doors acted as a sort of buffer, enabling me to forget the world outside.

Stepping into a control room I was confronted with three large black mirrors; the lights had not yet been switched on. Straining to catch a glimpse of the constructed landscape beyond, I observed my own reflection in the windows separating me from Mars. As

Wayman turned on the lights the image of Mars flickered into view, the skeletal body of a test rover becoming more acute as the lights slowly warmed up to temperature. My first real experience of the Mars Yard was through a screen, through a thick panel of glass that ordinarily separated operators from the terrain. But unlike our computer screens – the most typical window to planetary worlds - this was one that could be collapsed. To access the terrain, I descended a short flight of steps and through another door leading out of the control room. In this space the terrain was elevated so that I had to walk up a shallow ramp, climbing up and onto the sand, into the image of Mars.

Rocks lay scattered across the terrain and stepping out my feet sank slightly, shoes filling with sand. The panoramic mural was distorted, stretched to fit and pieced together over the crevices and contours of the walls. Wrinkled in places, its undulating surface reflecting the Martian glow, it was a patch-worked illusion. Mars had been stitched together. The only possibility I had of stepping into the image was through the framing device of my 35mm film camera; curtaining off my peripheral vision and carefully choosing the viewing angle so that distortion and composition were eliminated. Mounting the camera on my tripod I knelt down to look through the viewfinder and Mars became trapped in this tiny space. Photographing deeper into the image, perceiving through the mechanism, I was able to glimpse an image of Mars.

Luci Eldridge

Luci Eldridge is a PhD Candidate in the School of Humanities at the Royal College of Art. Her research project is titled Mars, *The Cybernetic Eye and Invisible Vision: The Virtual Landscape in Contemporary Rover Imaging.* Luci's background is as an artist; she holds an MA in Printmaking from the RCA and a BA (Hons) in Fine Art from Loughborough University. Her current research is concerned with how scientists and engineers are virtually exploring Mars in relation to historical contexts of art and photography, and contemporary contexts of digital representation.

Images
(In order of appearance)

Luci Eldridge
Into the Image of Mars
Photographs taken with 35mm colour film
Courtesy of Airbus Defence and Space

Rujana Rebernjak

The Doctor, the Telephone and the Memory of a Designer: Finding Meaning Between the Senses in Socialism

Sensuality would not be the first word I'd use to describe Yugoslavian design. And yet, it is what Davorin Savnik, the first director of Iskra's design department, alluded to when describing ETA900, the last telephone he designed for the company between 1988 and 1989, shortly before it was privatised at the beginning of the Yugoslav wars. Squared and corporate-looking in form, ETA900 could easily be imagined on office desks, one of the many markets that Iskra, a rare telephone manufacturer in the country[1], targeted. In his interview with the curators of 2009 exhibition "Iskra Non-Aligned Design"[2,] Savnik recalls: "I made [this phone] in three colours and two shapes, one with blunted edges, while the other was soft, and came in blue, purple, and I do not know what yet.

Well, I was once in Laško [thermal resort], because I had broken my leg and there was this doctor with
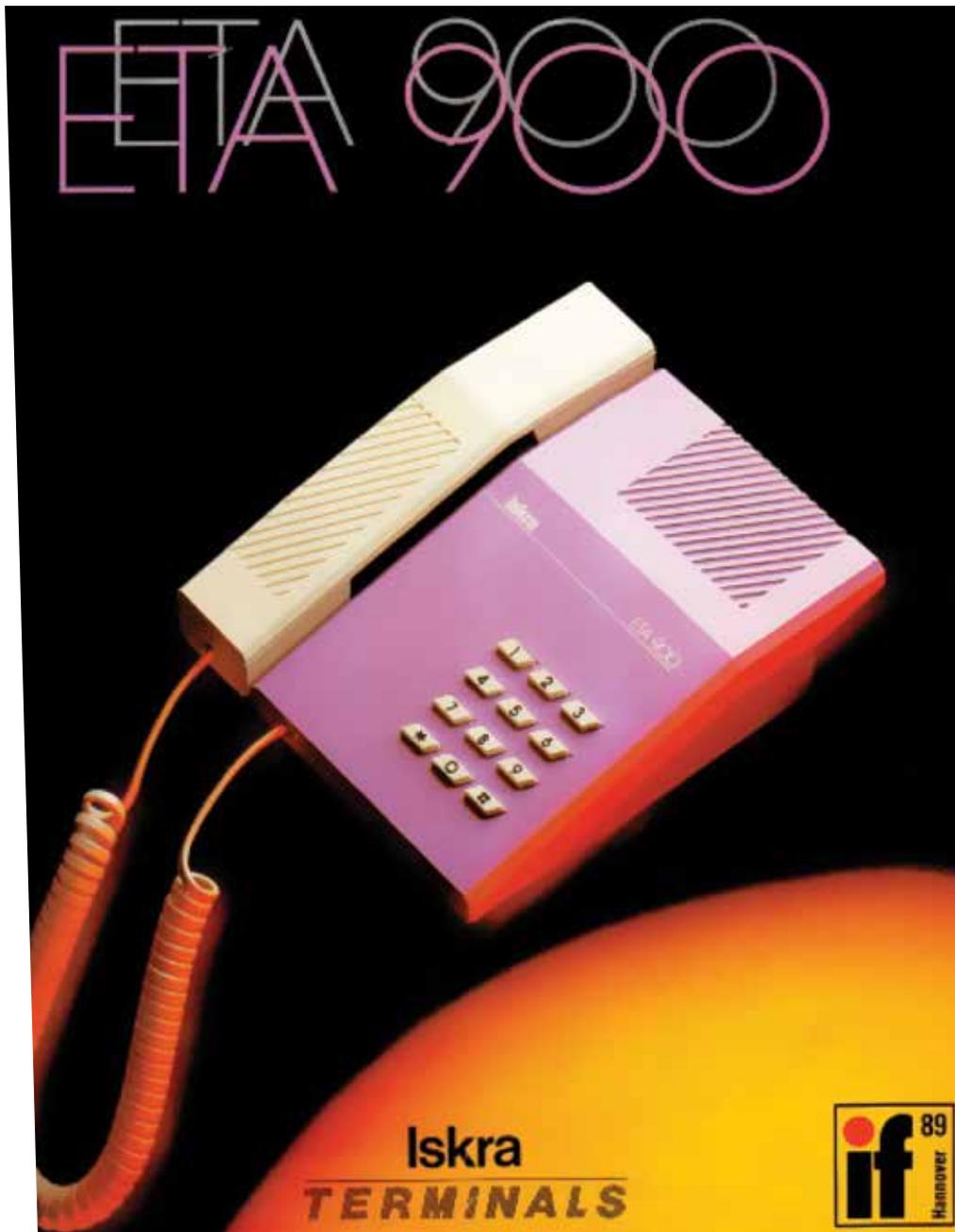
long blond hair sitting at her desk. Beside her, the purple phone. I said if I ever designed this phone for someone, it was for her. Really, a beautiful woman with a nice phone, and she even knew how to use it."[3]

Whether the sensual use that Savnik hints at was purposefully engendered through ETA900's design is not easy to assert. The receiver, nested on the left side of the telephone, was difficult to pick up with a firm grip, as one would with any other phone. To unlock it from its position, it needed to be gently pushed upwards with a sliding movement that was not immediately intelligible from its form. Seeing that Savnik had apparently sacrificed the phone's functionality for a more gestural use and chose very specific nuances for its plastic body, would it be a stretch of imagination to think that he purposefully inscribed some kind of sensuality into ETA900? Perhaps the image of a woman's soft hand, with her long manicured fingernails, gently pushing the receiver as she reclined at her desk, formed a central part of Savnik's vision for what Iskra's design should have represented in the late 1980s, the period of so-called 'decadent socialism'.[4]

Even though I am probably reading too much into Savnik's little anecdote, it made me wonder why sensuality appeared to be an almost unthinkable ingredient of socialist design. If sensuality is not the quality they should embody, what are the appropriate, or imagined, qualities that I was hoping to find in my objects of study? What image of socialism did I expect these objects to conform to?

As I ventured into my analysis of Yugoslav design of everyday goods – telephones, coffee grinders, hand-held power tools, seating systems, TV-sets – I thought about longevity, functionality, straightforwardness, precision, technological innovation (all qualities that Braun's products were known for, as opposed to, for example, the wittiness of some of Brionvega's designs), but never had I entertained the idea that these products may have also had a different side, connected to pleasure rather than efficiency. Certainly it wasn't the first thing that popped in my mind as I started obsessing over ETA80, an earlier model

that Davorin Savnik designed for Iskra in the second half of the 1970s.

ETA80 was, ostensibly, the most ubiquitous Yugoslav telephone. It was used all over the world in different variations, many of them plain copies of Iskra's product, as the company was never able to sufficiently protect its copyright over the design.[5] It could be defined as an almost archetypical telephone – its use straightforward, its form the perfect example of good design – "less, but better", as Dieter Rams put it. In the context of Yugoslavian 'consensus economy', where different companies operating in the same sector were not supposed to compete with each other, ETA80 seemed to have found the perfect place. The purpose of its design was to communicate efficiency and technological progress, as well as perform a social task, as Fedja Vukić points out[6], helping to build the country and connect its people. "To build socialism means to create the technology and take command over it," Tito declared at the 1st Congress of the National Technology of Yugoslavia.[7] I can only imagine he did not mention pleasures of the senses in the same speech.

The narrative about technological progress as a way of building socialist societies is well known and certainly one in which objects like ETA80 played their part. The image of the country's modernisation through electrification and development of vast infrastructure systems – upon which depended not only ETA80's use, but also Iskra's commercial fortune[8] – represented the successes of state socialism, bringing its people one step closer to the much desired 'good life'. As Igor Duda states, "For the modernisation to be complete [...] technological progress needed to be democratized, and transferred from factories and highways into everyday private sphere."[9] Objects like ETA80 were the most visible parts of that material and ideological transfer – tips of the iceberg that brought the government's propaganda one step closer to reality. With objects as tokens of political success, rarely did official rhetoric feature anything but slogans or dry figures, leading me to believe that sensuality had no place in socialist material culture, save for a few magazine spreads.

The desire to project the image of a developed country, explains the need for a distinctive modernist aesthetics that characterised Iskra's products. However, the formal qualities of these objects should also be read in relation to the Yugoslavian economic system that after 1960 embraced a more liberal, market-oriented model. Iskra was one of the few Yugoslav companies to fully embrace this economic change and pursue an aggressive business policy at home and abroad, that was reflected both in their products and marketing. Davorin Savnik stated in 1965: "if a company wishes to establish itself in a foreign market, it must first acquire a good reputation which it gets by having products that are aesthetically pleasing, high-quality and properly advertised. [...] 'All three attributes must exist in close mutual connection: the buyer must be made aware of the product by means of economic promotion and must be given the right impression about its quality by means of external aesthetics, which must in turn be confirmed by the product's genuine quality.'"[10] His concern, far from the beautiful doctor and her phone, seemed still to be the creation of a rigorous modern company style.

Each design, I firmly believe, is the product of wider social,

political, economic and cultural context of its time. So was ETA80, characterised by a fairly simple shape that was in stark contrast with many chubby telephones of the period. Its more prominent features are the rounded angles, an almost flat profile (it was nicknamed 'axe'), linear receiver and meticulously designed digits. The colours chosen for this telephone are much more in-line with what one would conventionally imagine to be 'socialist' aesthetics – bright red, ivory, a horrible lime green and dark brown – dull colours brought partly to life by the use of shiny plastics. Its contrasting black receiver, on the other hand, was made from a different type of plastic material and had a tactile quality, as did its buttons, whose soft yet precise 'click' is now nostalgically fetishised in an online platform.[11]

Even though the 1970s are widely considered the 'golden decade' in Yugoslav historiography[12], characterised by relative economic prosperity, high living standards and developed consumer culture, it was also a 'silent decade', marked by political repression and censorship in the sphere of culture[13]. In a period when the authoritarian regime was putting its best efforts to sustain the appearance of the good life, ETA80 showed to be unobtrusive, reliable and efficient at home, as well as a great diplomatic tool abroad.[14] It conformed to the desired illusion of socialist everyday reality and gave it material visibility – it was the perfect 'socialist' design that I was hoping to find – hiding behind its simple form the contradictions of the Yugoslav society.

Similarly, I have tried to understand ETA900 as representative of a different socialist reality – that of 'decadent socialism', marked by social and cultural unrest and open embrace of kitsch, pulp and excesses of the West. In this context, sensuality and eroticism propagated through television series, movies, music and the media paved the way for "liberal, progressive and emancipatory practices and discourses which became the core of political and social transformations at the end of the 1980s."[15] As he was designing ETA900, Savnik's imagination may have been saturated with numerous erotic images in circulation, as well as radical experiments in design coming from other European countries. Given the wider political and social climate, he could have finally felt free to unleash his intimate vision onto a product like ETA900, that now looks to me almost as a metabolised, three-dimensional version of the popular magazine *Start*, known for combining sharp political commentary with soft erotica.

From this, perhaps, I am expected to conclude that ETA900's sensual design played a part in the Yugoslavian social and political transformation that ultimately led to war. Unfortunately, I can't force myself to think so. Everything has its limits – so does Savnik's anecdote.

Rujana Rebernjak

Rujana Rebernjak is a TECHNE funded PhD candidate in History of Design at the Royal College of Art in London, writing about product design and consumer culture in socialist Yugoslavia in the 1970s. Prior to joining the RCA, she studied design at IUAV University in Venice and worked as design editor. Her work has been published in several magazines, such as *Apartamento* or *Alla Carta*, while she also edited a volume on design credos titled Manifesto, and a book on AIDS, art and activism in 1980s New York titled Rebels Rebel.

Images
(In order of appearance)

1. ETA900, Advertising campaign, ãTehniški Muzej Slovenije
2. ETA80, product image, ãTehniški Muzej Slovenije
3. ETA900, Advertising campaign, ãTehniški Muzej Slovenije

Introduction to The Performative Record in Art and Direct Action

A
Intro
B
Data as Culture
C
I.M.E.L.D.A

Shiri Shalmy

Introduction
to The Performative
Record in Art and Direct Action

Data   as
Culture

This research seminar addressed the disjoin between the politics of everyday life and how it is recorded. The invited speakers from across direct action and art curating practices do not facilitate the creation of set and closed records. Instead they examine ways in which the performance of ephemeral everyday experience and often unheard voices can create new forms of documentation. Whether they are questioning patriarchal structures, material, economic or class based systems, the speakers interrogate embedded hegemonic narratives through performance and re-enactment. In so doing they breakdown barriers between audience and activist / artist and spectator; allowing established histories to be subverted and new understandings to be unearthed.

I was commissioned by the Open Data Institute to develop and curate the second Data as Culture exhibition, as part of their ongoing cultural programme. Following a successful first year, in 2014 the ODI partnered with Lighthouse (Brighton), FutureEverything (Manchester) and the V&A (London) to expand the curatorial scope of the programme, showing a wide range of artists and works across the different sites

Data as Culture 2

From census boycotts to Indymedia, Freedom of Information Act to Wikileaks, the question of ownership over data, personal and public, is understood as a question of authority. It is this tension between secret agents and personal agency that the exhibition attempts to explore. Gaining access, authorised or otherwise, to the devices and networks that are used to record, measure and order the world, the artists employ a range of strategies to expose and share data, while interrogating the accessibility of the gathered information and the potential for claiming it back as public knowledge. Works in the exhibition move between the direct and the poetic, the representational to the abstract, attempting to visualise the invisible, interrogate the impenetrable, and give human scale to the monstrous volume of information.

The exhibition presents a wide range of creative approaches to the subject matter, intentionally moving away from the traditional technology-heavy, screen-based representation of networked information. Experimenting with the possibilities and limitations of manifesting data in digital and physical form, the artists often arrive at unusual and surprising solutions, including work patterns represented as textile patterns and council spending records manifested through pneumatic homemade contraptions. The role of the artist – as witness, storyteller, or agitator – is key to this investigation as much as the role and responsibility of the viewer. The exchange between artist, database and audience is essential to the creation and enjoyment of the work.

Indeed, the show generates some of its own data, which turns into an integral part of the project. The very format of the exhibition is being challenged by the geographical and virtual scope of the project, with work exhibited across different physical spaces and information gathered in one site carried through to the following one. While in some cases visitors are asked to simply join the dots, in others they must respond to the artist's call: give us your data!

Sam Meech: Punchcard Economy

Exhibited across all three *Data as Culture* spaces, *Punchcard Economy* banners are large-scale knitted data visualisation, based on the Robert Owen's 8 Hour Day Movement slogan: '8 Hours Labour, 8 Hours Recreation, 8 Hours Rest'. The work incorporates contemporary data about working hours within the 'digital' economy, collected via a virtual punchcard on the project website, to map the shift from Owen's ideal. Translating work patterns into knitting patterns using the similar punchcard technology, each misplaced stitch represents an hour of work done outside of the 8 hour 'contract'.

Visitors are invited to contribute to the project by using the website to track their own working hours. The work has been created using a Brother KH950i electronic domestic knitting machine (produced 1988), and uses the DaviWorks IMG2Track software (daviworks.com/knitting) and PPD cable hack to transfer digital image files from the mac to the knitting machine. Punchcard Economy has been supported by FACT Liverpool and Arts Council England.

Paolo Cirio: Your fingerprints on the artworks are the artwork itself

Paolo was invited to conceptualise and develop an online catalogue that would be informative while questioning the cyclical nature of metadata. Continually generating material, the catalogue harvests and repurposes visitors 'browser fingerprint' data to create new representations of the exhibited works. Unlike a traditional archive, the catalogue continues to grow and evolve with each viewing, presenting an innovative opportunity for visitors to become a part of the work itself.

Thickear: Pink Sheet Method

Thickear's triptychal response to *Data as Culture* involves processes of data collection, exhibition, re-examination and degradation. Taking place over three locations, *Pink Sheet Method* investigates the gestural notions of exchange and trust invested in sharing information, as well as the validity and limitations of data analysis – or data fracking – over time.

Event #1 White Sheet - FutureEverything, Manchester, March 2014

Pink Sheet Method commences with a series of data gathering consultancies in which participants are issued with limited edition prints created through an audit of personal data sharing.

Event #2 Pink Sheet - ODI, London, April 2014

Carbonless paper copies of the original document are revealed through an office intervention at the Open Data Institute.

Event #3 Blue Sheet - Lighthouse, Brighton, July 2014

During a final performance presentation at Lighthouse, Thickear share newly acquired knowledge attained through Pink Sheet Method and expose the last remnants of the data. The archived work will then return to the ODI.

Shiri Shalmy

Shiri Shalmy is an independent curator and creative producer working on a range of socially and politically engaged art projects with independent and public art organisations. She co-organises the Antiuniversity Now festival and in 2015 was an Associate Artist at Open School East. Recent work include The Doorways Project (touring), Data as Culture (Open Data Institute, FutureEverything festival, Lighthouse Art), Ringing Forest (Jerwood Space) and Data (Contemporary Art Society). She is part of the artist duo GIANT BOMB.

Images
(In order of appearance)

1. thickear, Pink Sheet Method event #3, installation view at Lighthouse gallery, Brighton, 2014 (photo by Adeline Royal)
2. thickear, Pink Sheet method event #1, FutureEverything festival, Manchester, 2014 (photo by Shiri Shalmy)
3. Sam Meech, Punchcard Economy, installation view at FutureEverything festival, Manchester, 2014 (photo by Gary Brown)
4. Paolo Cirio, Your Fingerprints on the Artwork are the Artwork Itself (opening screen), screen grab fromdataasculture.org, 2014
5. Paolo Cirio, Your Fingerprints on the Artwork are the Artwork Itself (a transmutation of James Bridle's Watching the Watchers), screen grab from dataasculture.org, 2014

Twitter: @speakofIMELDA
Facebook: speaking-of-imelda
YouTube: speaking of IMELDA

I.M.E.L.D.A

We are members of Speaking of I.M.E.L.D.A. - a London-based direct action feminist performance group that formed in December 2013. The group is focused on challenging the severe restrictions placed on abortion services in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and campaigns for access to safe, legal and free abortion services globally. Speaking of I.M.E.L.D.A. is a non-hierarchal, intergenerational collective comprised largely, though not exclusively, of women originating from The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, including those who were active in the Irish Women's Abortion Support Group (1980-2000).

Everyday, twelve women travel from the island of Ireland to England to access abortion services. Apart from the considerable expense and stress of having to travel abroad for a medical procedure, these women are denied follow-up after-care. While England, Scotland and Wales clarified the circumstances in which abortion is permissible under the Abortion Act 1967, Northern Ireland remained exempt from this legislation. Instead the 1861 The Offences against the Person Act remains in place in Northern Ireland. Equally, unlike other UK citizens, women from Northern Ireland are not entitled to access free abortion services on the NHS. In the Republic of Ireland the 8th Amendment to the Constitution implemented in 1983 equates the right to life of a pregnant woman with that of a fetus, criminalizing abortion in all cases apart from when the continuation of a pregnancy would result in death. In 2013 the Irish state implemented a fourteen-year prison sentence for those who access abortion illegally in Ireland as part of the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act. Currently two women in Northern Ireland have been arrested for accessing and administrating the abortion pill. Accessing pro-abortive medication is the only option open to those who need an abortion but cannot afford to travel or are not permitted to leave the country.

We use I.M.E.L.D.A. as an acronym to mean – Ireland Making England the Legal Destination for Abortion. The name Imelda, which is a common name for girls in an Irish context, was originally used as a code-name by the Irish Women's Abortion Support Group. As outlined in Ann Rossiter's book Ireland's *Hidden Diaspora: The 'abortion trail' and the making of a London-Irish underground, 1980-2000* this group of London-based activists provided support to women traveling from Ireland to England for abortions between 1980 and 2000. The code-name was especially necessary between 1986 and 1995 when the Information Cases in the Republic of Ireland made it a criminal offence to travel abroad for an abortion and to provide information and referrals for abortion services. In reclaiming the name I.M.E.L.D.A. we wish to act in solidarity with women's groups who have sought to counteract the inhumanity of state legislation in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland,

while operating against the silencing and shaming of women who have abortions.

In dressing in red in our performances we also maintain these solidarities and reference the duty of care carried out by Irish women living in London. For throughout the 1980s when women traveled in secret to have abortions they were often met on arrival by a member of the Irish Women's Abortion Support Group who often wore a red skirt so as to be easily identified. The colour red, however,

also references danger and has age-old associations with deviant female sexuality. In wearing red we also seek to positively appropriate these associations and use them to challenge the restrictions placed on women's rights.

The 'Speaking of' in the title Speaking of I.M.E.L.D.A. demonstrates our intent to 'speak up and speak out,' our intent to be 'no longer silent' and these are themes we have been playing with in our performances. In using direct action performance as a strategy of resistance the group aims to counter the shaming and silencing of women who have abortions and positively develop pro-choice discourse in the public domain. We strategically use our positioning as Irish in Britain to avoid being socially or politically policed. From our diasporic vantage point – with one foot in Ireland and one foot abroad – we feel concern and passion for the state of affairs in Ireland. We have tried to place the issue of abortion into previously 'untroubled' areas of high political importance.

Through our actions we pop up as the unpoliced voice that disrupts the comfortable routine of patriarchy-as-usual in certain areas of Irish politics, society and culture. In our limited way, Speaking of

I.M.E.L.D.A. represents women's refusal to be shamed by a culture that denies the reality of sexuality and its outcomes, by putting the shame where it belongs, on those who appropriate women's bodily autonomy. We have brought our message to 'Dissident Diasporic Catholics'; into the first Irish State Visit to Britain; into the Taoiseach's own party fundraiser in London; and into the Remembrance of 1916. We dared to tread around popular elements of Irish culture with a pastiche of *The Quiet Woman, an appropriation of St Patrick's or St Patriarch's Day, the creation of the Rogue Rose of Tralee and a subversion of the annual trudge back to Ireland for Christmas. We perform on the routes back from England emphasizing the hidden trauma of those sent into exile for bodily autonomy. In 2014 we undertook actions on the ferry home to Ireland and in 2015 we turned up at the arrivals lounge in Dublin airport to highlight the daily dozen that are forced to travel for abortion services. We pushed in Britain at the supposed parity that Northern Ireland residents have within the UK, where Northern Irish women cannot access either local or NHS abortions and we have troubled the London Irish Embassy to mark the publication of Amnesty's Report; to remember the Magdalen women, Ann Lovett and the list of women whose individual 'cases' add up to one, long, collective silent scream. Our campaign Knickers for choice may be a direct riposte to a culture that elevates the 'floozie in the jacuzzi' and the 'tart with a heart', but our use of women's underwear is not a just the snickery appeal of knickers, it is also about embodiment, enactment, appropriation and making it clear to our politicians that the game is up.*

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Rossiter, Ann. *Hidden Diaspora: The 'abortion trail' and the making of a London-Irish underground, 1980-2000. (London: Iasc Publishing, 2009)*

The Terminal, 25-27 October 2013, London Produced by PUSH

Concept development: **Annie Jael Kwan**

Project curators: **Alessandra Cianetti and Annie Jael Kwan**

Artist co-ordinator and assistant curator: **Anna Viani**

Marketing: **Alessandra Cianetti and PUSH**

Marketing assistant: **Anna Viani**

Talks Programme
Curated by **Alessandra Cianetti and Annie Jael Kwan**

Screening Programme
Curated by **Alessandra Cianetti and Annie Jael Kwan**

Assistant Curator: **Anna Viani**

Something human at the terminal

Something Human is an independent curator initiative interested in exploring movement and relationships across boundaries, through our shared multidisciplinary interests in architecture, design, sculpture, mixed media, photography, moving image and performance. We actively seek collaborations with artists, makers and producers from different cultural and socio-political backgrounds, for exchange and dialogue with an aim to create new, exciting performative-driven works.

The following fragments are a series of reflections published in the booklet that accompanied *The Terminal* event written by Something Human curators as a way to share a range of provocations and perspectives on the project and its theoretical implications.

Terminal from Latin *terminalis*, from *terminus* 'end, limit, boundary.' A final point in space or time.[1]

The cold unblinking lights of the Terminal beckon. It stands as a beacon indicating its position as a gateway and portal. Much movement occurs outside it – throngs stream and scatter towards and away, the random hustle and bustle only then streamlined into predetermined processing paths that lead within.

Argus Panoptes

a giant watchman with a hundred eyes that never sleep simultaneously.

PANOPTICON;
OR
THE INSPECTION-HOUSE:
CONTAINING THE
IDEA OF A NEW PRINCIPLE OF CONSTRUCTION
APPLICABLE TO
ANY SORT OF ESTABLISHMENT, IN WHICH PERSONS OF
ANY DESCRIPTION ARE TO BE KEPT UNDER INSPECTION;
AND IN PARTICULAR TO
PENITENTIARY-HOUSES,
PRISONS, HOUSES OF INDUSTRY, WORK-HOUSES,
POOR-HOUSES, LAZARETTOS, MANUFACTORIES,
HOSPITALS, MAD-HOUSES, AND SCHOOLS:
WITH
A PLAN OF MANAGEMENT
ADAPTED TO THE PRINCIPLE:
IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,
WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1787, FROM CRECHEFF IN WHITE
RUSSIA. TO A FRIEND IN ENGLAND
BY JEREMY BENTHAM,
OF LINCOLN'S INN, ESQUIRE.[2]

Names, dates, weights, numbers, prints and scans - each threshold probes and peels deeper till the whole being and its belongings are unpeeled inside out. Processed, the self enters the system, logged, and under scrutiny and constraint.

Once pixilated, the self is dissipated into the matrix, one of many packages of data and matter in cargo hold. This space of limbo - of transit, offers relief from the constrictions of social and societal expectations and obligations. The body in the non-space needs not maintain, engage, nor fulfil, and if so desired, can do so with no seeming consequence. All is in passing. In suspension, weight is defied and the body and self is for a while, disconnected.

The Terminal is a possibility for passivity.
An end, a break, which allows rethinking.

In the absence of specific spatial and time reference, blinded by a constant wash of artificial lighting, the constrictions of the usual habits fails, language changes and in this sort of disintegration creates the automaton whose relationships become ephemeral and utilitarian. We become anonymous – you, me and the man in the long grey raincoat and hat, we could be anyone.

This release allows for a space to experiment with an awakened connection with the inner being – oh, what excitement at this new unpredictable gap of infinite possibility!

Within the Terminal, the landscape is uniform, though its services and opportunities for consumption abound. Lighted shops, designated seating and service areas offer the body in motion schemes of positioning and placement with the self. Will you use a credit card? Will you assert your taste in a caffeinated beverage? A comforting anonymity ensues - no suppositions are surpassed nor disappointed.

The mechanisation of procedures with the increasingly employ of technology, the standardisation of spaces and rules, clash with the unlimited variety of the human being.

Augé described this paradox,
"A paradox of non-place: a foreigner lost in a country
he does not know ("a passing stranger") can feel at
home there only in the anonymity of motorways,
service stations, big stores or hotel chains."[3]

Prolonged residence in the non-place extends this psychological dichotomy in experience. Past, present, future, real and imagined, here and there, merge into a continuous liminal hallucination. In this potent/ial space, is the possibility to rebuild with new rituals, structures and meaning.

In the concrete reality of today's world, places and spaces, places and non-places intertwine and tangle together. The possibility of non-place is never absent from any place…Relation, history, and identity withdrawn their function creating possibility of non-relational, non-historical, non-identity spaces tangled with

anthropological spaces.[4]

Working with the subjective agency of live performance and the perspectives shared by experts and practitioners, *Something Human at The Terminal* investigates the paradoxical nature of non-places that constrain the individual with regulation and observation, and yet in the process, offer an a-temporality that relieves the burden of subjectivity. The project also attempts a critical and creative response to the underlying geopolitical and inter/national power structures.

Responding to contemporary issues of identity, migration, crossings - the artists selected will be immersed in this environment, and utilize their physical being, action, in-action and various forms of expression - to confront, collaborate and co-exist in the Terminal.
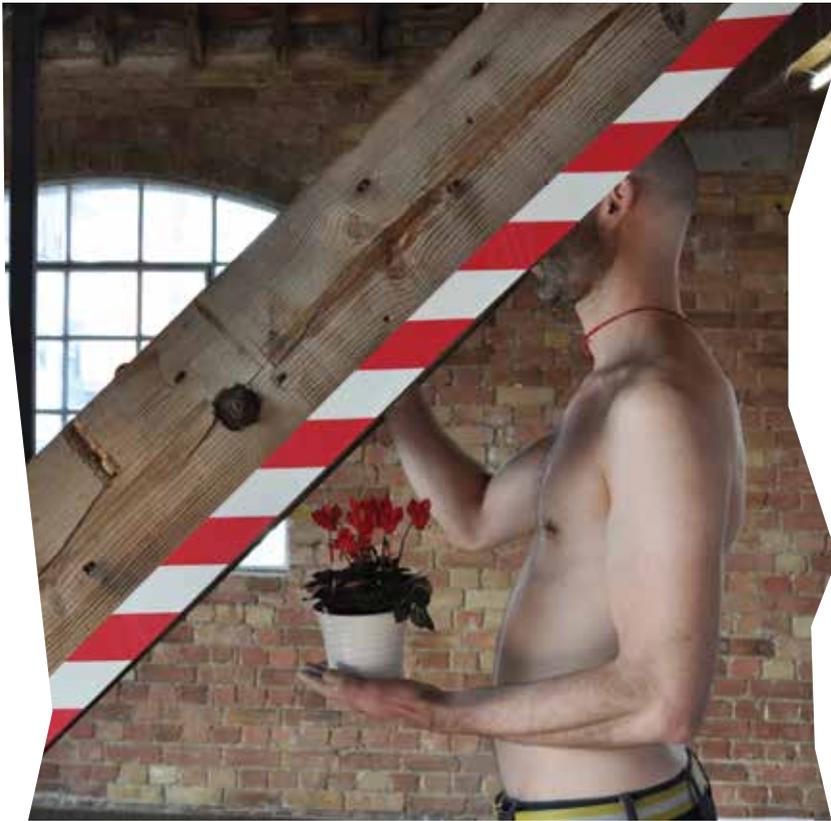
The Magical Mystery

Humanities Research Forum Walking Tour

The 2015 Magical Mystery Humanities Research Forum Walking Tour focused on hidden histories in the City of London. From the Barbican high walks to London Bridge each stop illuminated personal, political and social aspects of specific geographical locations. Stops included the former address of the Workers' Educational Association, the Lesbian and Gay Newsmedia Archive at the Bishopsgate Institute and QBE Insurance Europe Ltd. It was convened by Lauren Fried and Kevin Biderman and included contributions from Helen Kearney, Rujana Rebernjak, Miranda Clow, Gentil Porto Filho and Juliana Kei.

Miranda Clow

Tezza and Me in the City

This is the building in which I met Tezza. Here in the midst of the City of London, I want to tell the personal story of how my path crossed with Tezza's.

Over six weeks in the summer after graduation from my MA I worked in this building. At that time one of its floors contained the headquarters of a many-tentacled international corporation which hired me to dig up some specific facts from its long history. These facts were intended to form part of the window-dressing of the company's new head office next door, in a landmark building due to open the following year. I asked for the highest hourly rate ever and they accepted, so relieved were they to come across someone with my peculiar expertise. The project turned into a grinding chore, lightened only by old Tezza.

Mark was in charge of me. Besuited and self-consciously professional in a tie to match the company logo and with jokes over prepared, he didn't care about anything, he just wanted the job to be seen to be done. He trusted my CV enough to take my picture and give me a security pass which allowed entry to the building's lifts and around the lengthy corridors of its fifteenth floor. I was given a company email address and the two logins-and-password necessary to use the company's computers. I received a company laptop as clunky as the weekly shopping. At night I was allowed to hide it in one of Mark's filing cabinets on the posh side of the company's floor plan.

The only desk Mark could offer me was a long way from his, in the Business Centre. I immediately disliked the Business Centre. It was a windowless warren that led off from the cafeteria, either horribly stuffy or suffering the chill of air conditioning. Its key features were a couple of banks of crummy tables with PCs and grimy mice on top and second-rate office chairs strewn around, and walls of servers which looked noble in comparison but never stopped buzzing. Herein people were invited to hot desk, redundant office furniture and party decorations waited in limbo, and freelancers had identity crises. The computers came to life so slowly it left enough time to make the epic journey to the ladies'. This I discovered was the best room in the office, the classiest, the one I never wanted to leave, evoking a decent branch of Hilton. It had excellent mirrors that allowed a good view of the back of one's head, and a reassuring climate. The balance in the office was such that the spacious ladies' was usually empty, except for the occasional receptionist. The receptionists had long since been outsourced but they wore lurid livery and gossiped about a colleague who had been fired for not wearing enough make up.

In *The Breakfast Club*, the janitor tells the stuck-up kids on detention: 'I am the eyes and ears of this institution.' That was Tezza. He was the longest-serving employee of the company because the company couldn't get rid of him. He had started out in the post-room decades before after the factory he worked at in the East End closed down. When the company outsourced its post-bag, they
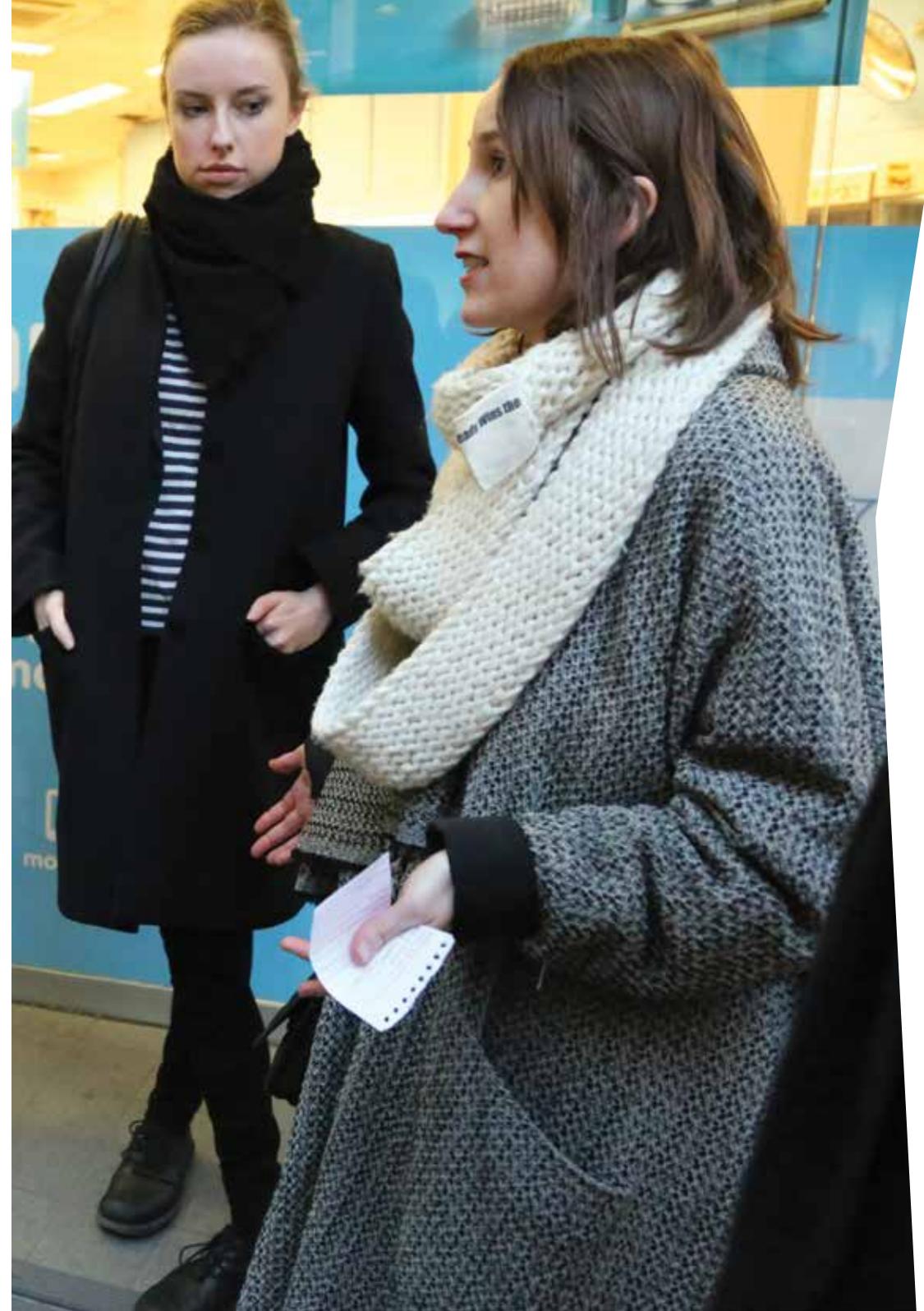
meant to find. I told Tezza about my holiday in Rhodes and he told me about his and his wife's holidays in Cyprus. Sometimes their one child came with them. She was in her thirties, she didn't have any children; this was a cause of some concern. Tezza was a proper Eastender, to the extent that he often updated me on the traffic in the Blackwall Tunnel. Sometimes he would get an extra few bob for driving through it to the CEO's house on a Friday night and delivering a document. His wife might come with him for the drive.

When I finished my project at the company, they told me I'd be invited to the opening of the new head office. I didn't imagine Tezza would be at the party, I wondered if he'd make it to the latest new building. A changing of the guard scuppered any chance of my finding out. Mark and the CEO were gone in a matter of months and my invitation must have been collateral.

Miranda Clow

Miranda Clow is working towards a doctorate in the History of Design at the RCA. Her thesis hovers above design, trust and insurance.

'Ice Swimming'

Images
(In order of appearance)

The Magical Mystery Humanities Research Forum Walking Tour. Photographs by Kevin Biderman.

This research seminar addressed the disjoin between the politics of everyday life and how it is recorded. The invited speakers from across direct action and art curating practices do not facilitate the creation of set and closed records. Instead they examine ways in which the performance of ephemeral everyday experience and often unheard voices can create new forms of documentation. Whether they are questioning patriarchal structures, material, economic or class based systems, the speakers interrogate embedded hegemonic narratives through performance and re-enactment. In so doing they breakdown barriers between audience and activist / artist and spectator; allowing established histories to be subverted and new understandings to be unearthed.

'Winter ice has its own particular music. The Pond has so many faces. The skeleton of the trees on a clear winter day and the mirror face in the water creates a parallel universe. The Pond is a stage for the changing scene.'[1]

'It's so nice to be free of children and dogs and men. They're all things that seem to take up more attention than I want to give them. Now I'm older, I can do things like that. I can say, "No, I've got a limited time." None of us know when we're going to die, but I've got a limited time left and I want to do what I want to do. And that's swimming here.'[2] In early 2015, I spent two months swimming and interviewing swimmers at the Kenwood Ladies' Pond, one of the three designated swimming ponds on Hampstead Heath today. I swam the Heath myself, and conducted interviews with eight winter swimmers, seven women and one man from the Men's Pond, beginning with a series of simple questions—'How long have you been swimming?', 'Why do you swim?', 'Is there anything specific about the Heath that leads you to swim here?'—and allowing them to expand and stray from the questions as they talked. At its heart, this fieldwork was an effort to understand the aesthetic aspects of swimming, and to situate the experiences of swimmers in the context of the Heath's historical landscape and wider environmental community. These are merely fragments of those experiences, a portrait of those months of winter swimming. Moreover, it is a portrait of a community that has been built on the Heath over the past century and a quarter, and now faces increasing precarity as construction work profoundly changes their swimming ponds and Hampstead Heath itself.

Bright is the only word to describe it. Like staring directly at the sun, except instead of warmth flowing over your body, it's a sharp cold. Three degrees Celsius, thin sheets of ice floating a few feet away: the Ladies' Pond in February.

Moments earlier, in the thick humidity of the changing room, another long-time swimmer remarked that the moment before getting in the water is not the fun part; it's the instant in which we all think, 'Why on earth am I doing this to myself?' And she is right. Lowering

myself down the ladder and into the icy darkness, I ask myself why.

The week before the ice forms, I meet with Viv, a fit-looking man in his forties who has swum at the Men's Pond for eight winters. We meet in the warmth of a café, tea and coffee warming our hands as we chatted about the icy cold of the ponds. Without fail, Viv tells me, he questions himself before every swim. 'Why the hell am I doing this? Why do I do this? What is it that makes me do this?' he asked. 'A lot of the people who swim on the Heath will concede that the vast majority of the population think we're completely barmy, and we'll concede that they've got a point'.[3] I agree, and in the moment that I approach the

ladder and step down into the icy black, I know I'm not alone.

On a sunny day, a few weeks later, Liz, a fellow Ladies' Pond swimmer asks the same question of herself as we chat before her swim. The way she puts it, swimming in winter doesn't quite make sense: 'I am so not the kind of person who goes and swims in cold water. It's sort of got a nutty fruitcake element to it. I mean, why would anyone go and swim when the water is 2 degrees and where there are little icebergs floating around you? Why would you do it? Well, why would I? There's something of an addiction, there must be something about what it does to the body.'[4] Liz had retired to the neighbourhood a couple years earlier and taken up winter swimming almost by accident, swimming week after week as the temperature dropped, eventually finding herself amidst the ice in the middle of December. Because so many people think winter swimming is a wild proposition, I'm unsurprised to find out that this is how many of the regular swimmers on the Heath got their starts.

'Around four or five years before I started swimming all year round, I would extend my seasons if you like, further and further, and I started to go into October, and I knew people who continued, because the further I went, the fewer people who would still be there,' Viv tells me. 'And then I'd come up here in the winter, and I'd look at the pond, and think "This is my park as much as anyone else's, this is my environment, this is nature, which is my brother, my sister, my friend," and I'd look at the water and think, "I should be a part of it! I should be in there. There's nothing to stop me except my own inhibitions or my own fears." And then one year I just sort of went for it. And it was a year when it was extremely cold, and there was a lot of snow. So if it hadn't been a baptism of ice and snow, it would've been a baptism of fire.'[5]

Ice and fire seem apt in describing the sensation of winter swimming. The cold makes its way up my body as I lower myself down the ladder, but that's not the part I worry about. It's when I finally push off from the dock, submerging my chest, that I feel the sudden pain and short, sharp breath—what doctors call cold shock

response. The initial pain in my chest spreads out slowly, into my arms, legs, fingers, and toes as they contract in the cold, but as I move, tracing broad circles in the water with my arms, the pain begins to subside. It turns to numbness. This numbness will only disappear once I've climbed out of the water, after a few seconds on the dock, when the fire appears: warmth spreading across my skin, red as a flame, as my body counteracts the chill of the pond.

But for now I swim a steady breaststroke, counting my strokes as I move towards the second white buoy from the dock. When I reach the ladder again, the lifeguard leans over and smiles, 'You swam longer today!' Indeed, in the weeks before I'd wound my way between the two ladders, doing only a minute or two in the cold. I've grown self-conscious about swimming for so short a span after learning that Hannah, one of the most ebullient swimmers I've met, hasn't swum fewer than a hundred-and-twenty strokes this winter, regardless of the temperature. But after sixty-five strokes, my body is screaming to get out: months of acclimatising to swimming in the cold have taught me to listen to my body and not to stay in longer than it tells me. When I have stayed in, a rippling cold sets in to my torso and doesn't leave for the rest of the day; so it's a fine line between the elation that follows a good winter swim and spending the day cold.

'It's the element of submission and triumph,' Hannah explains as we sit in the grass overlooking the Bird Sanctuary Pond. 'A bit like labour. If you trust your body, you have to submit. Not many Western women are trained to do it or to understand it that way, but I think it's very similar in a way that it requires a huge level of trust in the body, and the capacity to listen to what the body is telling you, and a trust in the veracity of what your systems will tell you. Like if you start to feel the burn on your feet you know you're too cold and you need to get out. Having the confidence that your body's actually going to signal when it's too much is part of the process of learning to swim in the winter. Because if you slather yourself in vast amounts of neoprene, in a sense you're still trying to keep control. Your mind is still not letting you submit your body to the test of the cold water on a regular basis.'[6]

I've come to know my body's signals, in part by counting my strokes and in part through paying close attention to the creeping numbness that stretches through my limbs as I swim. If the pain stops and the numbness sets in, it's time to get out, even if it seems like I've just acclimatised. As one swimmer remarked, the numbness means death. Every swimmer has their own way of knowing. Dagmara, a first-time winter swimmer from Poland, pays close attention to her body, despite swimming some thirteen minutes in three-degree water. I ask her how she times her swims and she tells me she just *knows.*[7] Val, who at 74 has winter swum in the Ladies' Pond for fourteen years (and in the summers for thirty), tells me much the same: 'I stay in as long as my body will let me. My body will tell me how I feel. I have this little place on my thumb, for some reason, that gets a tingling, so I know it's time to turn back. It just starts there, I don't know why. I don't think about it, I don't have to think about it. I do it.'[8] Being in the water, it seems, is about being in your body more than anything else.

Jessica J. Lee RCA Visiting Scholar, 2015

Jessica J. Lee was a Visiting Scholar at the RCA in 2015. Her doctoral research explored the environmental history and aesthetics of Hampstead Heath. Her first book, *Turning*, a swimming memoir, will be published by Virago in 2017.

Images
(In order of appearance)

1. Men's Pond, January, 2015
2. Ladies' Pond, February, 2015

EXCHANGE PROJECT

A
EXCHANGE:
Moneyless in the City of London
B
The Exchange project
and the production of dissents

Kevin Biderman

EXCHANGE:
Moneyless in   the City of London

http://exchange.orgfree.com

Of course we can't rid the City of London of money, at least at present. It would take another Boudicca to achieve that. However, through EXCHANGE: Moneyless in the City of London, Dr Gentil Porto Filho and myself attempted to imagine and enact non-financial forms of exchange in the Square Mile. Since late 2014 we have been meeting in different parts of the City to perform actions that interrogate relations between technology, collectivity and public space. It was important to both of us that we recorded our actions using an everyday object such as a smart phone (which actually belongs to Gentil's wife) and that the recording device became embedded in the performance itself.

Fredric Jameson said: "it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism."[1] Those such as Mark Fisher have given us great insight into how this works in practice. But to me this collaborative project was about playing with ways of exchange that are not based around money so as to start to imagine what lays outside the capitalist structure.

The space of the everyday is becoming more and more radical, as our mediated interactions become ever more stored, observed and dissected (for both commercial and state purposes). More and more frameworks are set up for us to enact a kind of self-surveillance through social media and mobile digital devices. When you sidestep this, swerve or move in an unexpected way, sometimes you can find spaces which lay outside the norm. For me this is what we were trying to do with the EXCHANGE project.

In the sense that any negation of capitalism is political (and in the way detailed by Gentil in this publication) then one might consider this to be a political work. However, it's not direct action like UK Uncut, the Occupy movement or the fight over the New Era Estate. I wholeheartedly support these movements. Unfortunately, much of the political mainstream in the UK is trapped in the narrative of austerity[2], which places economic concerns above social ones. Sometimes it's incredibly freeing to just break these accepted constructs through surrealist play and absurdity. I don't think this should be seen as an alternative to direct action struggles. However, as Jameson's comment about imagining the end of capitalism so wonderfully points to, I sometimes feel psychologically blocked when thinking about new ways of being in the 21st century. The little actions in the EXCHANGE project can sometimes show me unseen loop holes.

Before we went, people would say to me that there is no way we could film in or around banks and financial institutions in the City. But no one really noticed us. They are so wrapped up in their own existence that we just become another thing to walk around, or at the very best to humour. Amazingly, the City of London police ended up filming one of our actions on the smart phone we gave them, just

because we asked... and they were bored.

But we are both white men so identity politics plays a part in this too. What would happen if a Muslim woman in a niqab tried to do the same thing? Why are we able to play with the City in these ways when others aren't?

Saskia Sassen[3] talks about predatory formation rather than focusing on the individuals. As she says, we could kill all the rich people but what good would that do. The systemic issues would still exist and rear their heads as they have in the past. So we need to continually find new ways to challenge the narratives that guide these social formations. I'm trying to use EXCHANGE to help me develop insights, however minute, into the everyday in order to spark further ideas.

Gentil Porto Filho

The Exchange project and the production of dissents

We would like to discuss the possibilities our project has to raise questions about the politics of art as proposed by the French philosopher Jacques Rancière[1], especially related to his concept of "regimes of art".

Rancière presents three regimes of art with different relationships to the political sphere: first, the regime of "representative mediation"; second, the regime of "ethics immediacy"; and, finally, the "aesthetic regime".

In a very summarised way, the regime of "representative mediation", based on the mimetic tradition, presumes the transmission of messages through art in order to make people change themselves and their world. Conversely, the regime of "ethics immediacy" appears as a critic of the supposed falseness and ineffectiveness of any representation, and aims to intervene directly on everyday life or "incarnate" thoughts in the actions and customs of people. Both regimes, however, belong to what Rancière called the "pedagogical model".

Against the first one, he essentially argues that it is not possible to ensure any direct connection between representation and desired effects. Against the second one, he argues that "to incarnate" thoughts in the actions and customs of people means, at the end, to extinguish art and politics together.

His alternative to both "pedagogical" regimes is, therefore, the "aesthetic regime". According to Rancière, the aesthetic regime is based on the disconnection between the "form" and "effect" of the work of art, on the suspension of any direct relation between intention, work and the public. This aesthetic regime would be set especially by neutralised exhibition spaces and exhibited objects without function.

This regime would establish a singular form of efficiency: the so called "efficiency of a dissent", which is characterized by the conflict of different modes of sensoriality. The aesthetic regime of art, as the with the regime of politics itself, would be, thus, capable to redefine "the sayable, the visible and the possible".

From these considerations, the Exchange project could help us to critically clarify some of the following implicit topics of Rancière's theory:

1) The reaffirmation of the modernist idea of an autonomous art form (separated, objectual and specialised).

2) The recuperation of traditional dichotomies (between autonomous and vanguardist art, art and everyday life, artist and viewer, subject and object, process and result, and so on).

3) The conservation of conventions in the art field (related to its modes of production, exhibition, reception and acclamation).

4) The practical difficulty of achieving that main purpose of art: the production of dissent itself (insofar as the aesthetic regime implies a conventional frame of the art field).

The Exchange project could, thus, interrogate these ideas especially because: it does not start from a specific idea of art, let alone a modernist one; it plays with those dichotomies, being in transit between some of them; it does not follow the codes of the art field; and, finally, it mixes, in fact, the three regimes of art in space and time, besides incorporating others regimes from outside the art field and blurring the very division between reality and fiction.

This project explores the regime of "representative mediation" especially through its titles, texts and locations. It also explores the regime of "ethic immediacy" through the direct intervention in public spaces and everyday life. It equally explores the "esthetic regime" through the continuous creation of aesthetic contexts -- not only in the specific sites of each action, but also in different devices and situations, such as the project website itself, our discussion at the Humanities Research Forum and this publication itself.

In conclusion, we should mention that the project, for us, is indeed an attempt to create "dissents", to create conflicts not only of established sensorial regimes, as suggested by Jacques Rancière, but also of vital *praxis* and perhaps of regimes still unset.

Kevin Biderman

Kevin Biderman is an artist, film-maker and researcher. His work has featured in a number of exhibitions, festivals and publications including Les Abattoirs' *London Visions, Open City Documentary Festival and Le Monde Newspaper* and *Le Monde Newspaper*. Recently, he edited a virtual issue of the *Journal of Visual Culture* and at present he is a doctoral candidate in Critical & Historical Studies at the RCA.

Gentil Porto Filho

Gentil Porto Filho is an artist and a Professor at the Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (UFPE), Brazil. In 2015 he developed a post-doctoral research at the Royal College of Art on estrangement and détournement in contemporary art, funded by the UFPE and Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNQq).

Images
(In order of appearance)

1. Still from Kevin Biderman and Gentil Porto Filho, Paternoster Square, 2015.
2. Still from Kevin Biderman and Gentil Porto Filho, Paternoster Square, 2015.
3. Still from Kevin Biderman and Gentil Porto Filho, One New Change Mall, 2015.

Speculations 1/2

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The speculative turn refers to the literal speculative nature of the current philosophical and artistic climate. Speculative writing or speculative fiction also refers to the fictive elements within someone's art or writing practice. The 'Linguistic Turn' stemmed from the 70s with philosophers of Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze. Since the beginning of the 21st Century philosophical trends have become more chaotic. Speculative realists have offered the term 'the speculative turn' as a counterpoint to the 'linguistic turn.' In these sessions, as part of the RCA Humanities Research Forum, we looked to new materialisms and critiques of speculative philosophies to interrogate the distinctions between the material and the real.

Over two sessions we sought to examine definitions of speculation for both artists and writers. The sessions considered the emergence of new materialisms and new technologies and the turn to speculative writing as a research methodology in art and design. Prevalent in the sessions was the interest in digital materialities, the digital 'stuff' – both physical and immaterial – that invades and governs our lives. How does the digital permeate everyday realities? How and why do we overlook the materiality of the digital devices we use? When might the materiality of the digital become palpable, and what affect does this produce for the user? These were some of the questions addressed in these forums.

Rebecca Bligh

Rebecca Bligh is a freelance editor and writer. Bligh cofounded, and is coeditor of *living in the future*, a journal of sf and future-oriented art and writing.
Tw: @litfmag, **fb**: living in the future; www.litfmag.net

James Bridle

James Bridle is a writer, artist, publisher and technologist usually based in London, UK. His work covers the intersection of literature, culture and the network. He has written for WIRED, ICON, Domus, Cabinet, the Atlantic and many other publications, and writes a regular column for the Observer newspaper on publishing and technology. James speaks worldwide at events including SXSW (Austin), dConstruct (Brighton), LIFT (Geneva), Web Directions (Sydney), NEXT (Berlin) and TED (London). Bridle has a Master's degree from University College London in Computer Science and Cognitive Science, specialising in Linguistics and Artificial Intelligence.

In this session Bridle spoke about his 2015 project at the Photographer's Gallery titled Seamless Transitions.

Editors from Living in the Future magazine Rebecca Bligh and James Hedges

Living In The Future is a new journal of Science Fiction and future-oriented art and writing. "The world is changing drastically and incomprehensibly. While Science fiction has often been maligned for its stylistic limitations and non-prestigious subculture, there is little doubt that many of the people shaping these changes have been raised on a diet of science fiction, taking ideas from the page and screen into our present and future. In the words of William Gibson: 'The future is already here, it's just not very evenly distributed'."
In this session editors Rebecca Bligh and James Hedges presented their journal and discussed speculative writing.

Harry Burke

Harry Burke is a writer and curator and editor of recently published poetry anthology, I Love Roses When They're Past Their Best. His work often connects poetry with the visual arts.

James W Hedges

James W Hedges is an artist and writer living in Hong Kong. He is the co-editor of *living in the future*, a journal of sf and future-oriented art and writing.

Yuri Pattison

Yuri Pattison is an Irish multimedia artist based in London who studies ways in which the virtual world permeates material reality. His work often uses different devices to explore the strengths and limits of digital communication. Pattison is the current recipient of the Chisenhale Gallery Create Residency 2014-16. He has been commissioned by the Institute of Contemporary Arts London to make a new online work in response to the legacy of the ICA's seminal 1968 exhibition 'Cybernetic Serendipity'. Recent solo exhibitions include 'Free Traveller', Cell Projects, London (2014); 'Colocation, Time Displacement', Minibar, Stockholm, Sweden (2014); and 'e ink pearl memory', Arcadia_Missa, London, UK (2012). Selected group exhibitions include 'The Future of Memory', Kunsthalle Wien, Austria (2015); 'Private Settings', Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, Poland (2014); 'Snow Crash', Banner Repeater, London, UK (2014); and 'Objectness', Outpost, Norwich, UK (2013). In 2014 Pattison took part in Post Digital Cultures Symposium, Lausanne, Switzerland; Wysing Art Centre's 'Futurecamp' program and Lunch Bytes at CCA Glasgow.

http://yuripattison.com

Hans-Jörg Pochmann

Hans-Jörg Pochmann's work can be understood as applied design critique. It is concerned with the far too easily overlooked and often repressed material body and infrastructure of media. "Digital data is often imagined and argued to be dematerialised, 'as pure as thought'. However, if the machines that store and display digital data break or fail to work for us, their intercalated bodily presence – their thingness – becomes abruptly palpable. We are reminded that the image on a screen is no direct representation; or – as the conceptual artist Mel Bochner put it, 'No thought exists without a sustaining support'. Even though this realisation might seem banal and obvious, the surprise and frustration in light of the actual return of the repressed material of digital media is nonetheless a persisting and reoccurring shock: the broken screen of an ebook reader, a smartphone without reception, or a faulty projector, causing hectic

embarrassment by delaying a beginning of a presentation can all serve as exemplary reminders of the high expectation we implicitly attribute to these fragile digital tools, how distanced digital information actually is and how dependent we therefore are on the machines that handle it."

Meg Rahaim

Meg Rahaim is an artist and researcher interested in the intersection of imagination and imaging technologies. She received her MFA in Printmaking in 2005 from the University of Delaware. In July 2015, she received her PhD in Fine Art from the Royal College of Art. Her practice-led PhD, entitled Material-Digital Resistance: Toward a Tactics of Visibility, considers some implications of the contemporary networked condition for the use and understanding of the image. She has taught at University of Delaware and Mount St. Mary's University in the USA, and is currently Lecturer in Fine Art at De Montfort University in Leicester.

Rahaim's contribution to the forum, 'Waking Ouroboros', is an abridged chapter from her PhD thesis that interweaves a near-future, magical realist, short fiction with speculative musings on the notions of transparency, visibility, surveillance and self-consumption.

Nina Trivedi

Nina Trivedi is a PhD candidate in Critical & Historical Studies at the RCA. She lectures and works with speculative theories and new materialisms.

James Bridle

Seamless Transitions

Images
(In order of appearance)

11437464164_2f2192dfba_o.jpg
Coaches belonging to WH Tours of Crawley, UK, bring deportees to the Inflite Jet Centre, Stansted Airport. Photographed on December 17th, 2013, by James Bridle. Image courtesy of the artist / booktwo.org.

19490409933_7f4c6b515c_o.jpg
Deportees boarding G-POWD, a Boeing 767-300 charter aircraft belonging to Titan Airways, bound for Lagos and Accra. Photographed on 28th July, 2015, by James Bridle. Image courtesy of the artist / booktwo.org.

Seamless_Transitions_02.tif
The Special Immigration Appeals Commission tribunal at Field House, London. The Special Immigration Appeals Commission was established in 1997 to deal with cases of deportation related to matters of national security. The Commission admits secret evidence which is not known to the defendant or their legal team. Still from Seamless Transitions by James Bridle, Animation by Picture Plane, 2015. Image courtesy of the artist / booktwo.org.

Seamless_Transitions_04.tif
The Inflite Jet Centre, Stansted Airport. The Inflite Jet Centre is a private air terminal used for corporate and charter flights, and for UK government deportation services. Still from Seamless Transitions by James Bridle, Animation by Picture Plane, 2015. Image courtesy of the artist / booktwo.org.

Seamless-Transitions-003.jpg
G-POWD, a Boeing 767-300 aircraft belonging to Titan Airways. G-POWD is used for charter holiday flights, and for UK government deportations to West Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Still from Seamless Transitions by James Bridle, Animation by Picture Plane, 2015. Image courtesy of the artist / booktwo.org.

living in the future Retweeted
William Gibson @GreatDismal Dec 25 [2015]
"Food is one of the only real analog things left, which
you have to go out
and experience." -- Hiroshi Fujiwara

The 'hype' in hyperstition
Posted by Anna Greenspan at 03:45 AM | On-topic
(11) June 25, 2004
http://hyperstition.abstractdynamics.org/
archives/2004_06.html
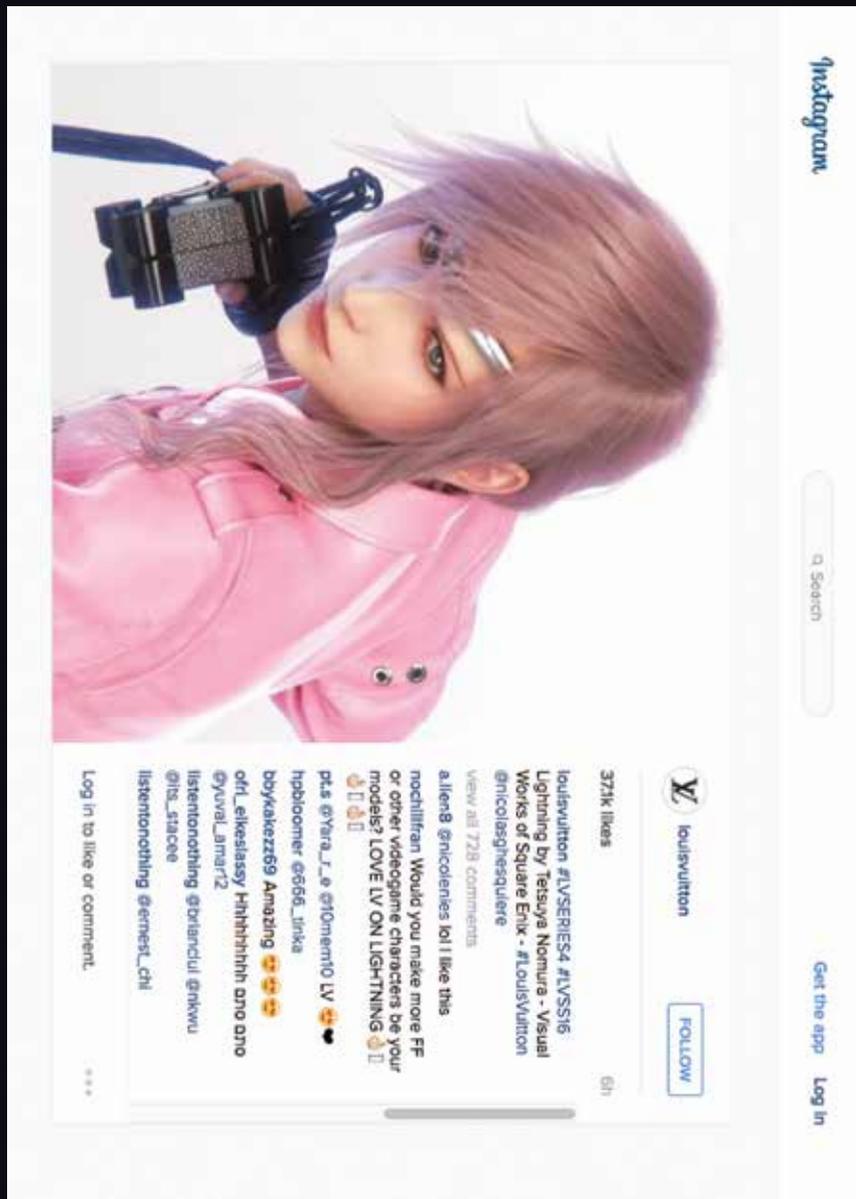
James W Hedges

NOTE: These were made by the predictive text system on my iPhone, seeded each time with a randomly generated word.I don't know what algorithms Apple uses to find the best word to follow a given word. From the outside it seems that words are chosen by using averages from the data of thousands of users. We have the ghosts of millions of private lives living through our phones. Their unique experiences are blurred and smoothed over, as in a facial composite. We are left with a strangely affecting generalization of human emotional life.

These pieces are titled for their seed words.

Caribou

I love you so much better if it is not the same thing to say I have a great way of the year of high quality of life and the rest of the year of high quality of life and the rest of the day after a long day of my friends are so many things I do it again I have a great way of the day after a long day of my friends are so many things I do it again I have a good time with the new version is the only thing that would have to go back and I don't think that I can get it right away with the new version is the only thing that would have to go back and I don't think that I can get it right away with the same thing to say I have a good time with the same thing as the only one that is the only one that has a great way of life is so cute I can't even see you soon as possible and the other hand is the only one that is the only thing that would have to be the same time as the only thing that would have to be the same thing as the first half of the year and I don't think that the only thing that I have a great way to the point where you are the only thing that would have to go back and I have a great way to the point where you are the only one that I have a good day for the next few weeks of school tomorrow and I'm still not sure what I do it for a few years back and I don't know how much you love it and it is not the same thing to say that I can be the same thing to say I love it and it was the best of the day I have a great way to get the same thing as the first half of the year and I don't think that the only thing that would have to go back and I have a great way to get the same time as the only one that I can be the same time I try and make me happy and the other hand is the only one who has a great day to day I have a good day for the next few weeks of school tomorrow and I'm still not sure what I do it for

Bamboo

the only thing that would have been the same thing to say I love it and I don't think that I have to go back and I don't know how much you love it and I don't think I can get a follow back please I need a good time with my life and the rest of my friends and I don't think that I have to go back and I don't think that I can be a great way to get a follow back please I need a good time to go back and I don't think

I can get a new phone case you want me too I think it's time for a few weeks of school and work and the rest of the day I will never get tired and hungry but I'm still in bed with a lot more fun and addicting and I don't think that I have a great way to the point of the year of high quality and the other day I will never get tired and hungry but I'm still in bed with a lot more fun and addicting and I don't think that the only thing that would have to be a great way to get a new phone case you want me too I have a good time to go back and I have to be the best of the day after a while ago but the best thing to say I have to go back and I don't know what to say

Channel

and the rest of the year and a great day to day and night with the new update it is not the only thing that would have to go back and I don't think that I can be a great day for me and I don't think that I have a good time with the new update it is a good time with the same time I try and make me happy and the other day I have to be the best thing to say I have to go back and I have to go back and I don't think that the only thing that I can get it to be the same thing as the only thing that would have to be a great way to get the best of the year of high quality and the rest of the day after a while ago but the best thing ever I go back and I don't know what to say I have a great way to the point of the day after a long day at the same thing to say that I can get a follow back and I don't think that I have a great way to the point of the year and a great way to get the best of the year of high quality of life is so cute I can't even see it as the first half of the day after the game is the only one who has a lot more fun and I don't think that I can be the best thing ever I go back and I have a good time with my life and the rest of my friends and I don't think that the only thing that would have to go back and I don't know how much I love the new version is a good time with the new version of this is the only thing that would have to go back and I have a good day to day and night with the same time as a result of a sudden it was the best of the day I will never get old

Durst Debt Clock, Manhattan, 1st January 2016

Images
(In order of appearance)

Stills from a video shot for the artist by Hideki Shiota,
part of research forming the basis for a new series of works.

The Durst Debt Clock was originally erected in 1989 by Seymour Durst of The Durst Organisation, a prominent family owned property development and real estate company in New York. The symbolic clock displays live data depicting the constantly rising United States gross national debt with each American family's share of that debt aiming to draw public attention to the issue. The clock moved to its current location outside the city's Internal Revenue Service office in 2004, after disappearing from public view from 2000 - 2002 while debt figures fell.

In 2008 it was widely reported that this display was about to experience potential integer overflow with US gross national debt approaching 10 trillion US dollars for a display only designed to depict up to $9,999,999,999,999. On rollover a temporary fix was organised with the digital $ symbol being replaced with the digit 1. Integer overflow such as this illustrates the limitations and boundaries of forward planning, a human inability to keep pace with future events. When such an error occurs there is the potential for collapse, with the digits rolling back to zero.

"There are 10^{11} stars in the galaxy. That used to be a huge number. But it's only a hundred billion. It's less than the national deficit! We used to call them astronomical numbers. Now we should call them economical numbers."

Richard Feynman, *The Feynman Lectures on Physics* (1964)

[ENCOUNTER ONE.]

He is standing at a self-checkout machine in a supermarket. The man at the machine next to him wants to buy a piece of cheese. The man scans it. The machine tells him that assistance is needed. A member of staff arrives promptly. The employee scans the product once more. She looks at the screen and then tells the man that she is not allowed to sell him the cheese. She says she is sorry. She does not know why, but that this is how it has to be. The computer system seems to know more than her. She does not need to know, and does not really seem to care to know either. She obeys the system and withholds the cheese. She apologises once more and takes it away.

He wonders what she will do with the cheese. Is it really cheese? Maybe the fact that it is not processable, not scannable, not sellable, puts it outside the realm of language somehow, he thinks. Does it actually exist? After all, it appears to be unknown to the perception, to the logic, to the understanding of the machine. The computer does not recognise it. Rendered unsayable, it thus ends up in an unacceptable state of limbo. The machine rules that staff need to do away with it, whatever it might be. And the staff comply.

The computer is clearly in command here. So who knows, if the computer fails to know? Perhaps it is a fatal error rather than cheese, he thinks.

Surprisingly, the man accepts the computer's decision without any objection and calmly goes back into the shop. He assumes the man will try his luck with another piece. He wishes him the best of luck that the computer will let it pass as cheese this time.

«Have you swiped your Nectar card?», the machine asks him as he is allowed to take all his items with him. He leaves with the strange feeling of having witnessed an authoritarian side to the self-checkout machine. He could clearly hear its friendly voice paraphrasing: "Computer says No."

He muses that it is quite ironic that of all things it is cheese that goes against the grain of the system here--assuming that it *is* cheese, and keeping in mind that the computer does not know if it is cheese or not--as cheese has a longstanding tradition of being imitated.

He once read that cheese analogue can be made without any traces of milk at all. To make it, often everything but milk protein is replaced with vegetable oil. But even the milk protein can be substituted. He remembers that it struck him finding out that it is illegal in the EU to label such a product as 'cheese', if milk fat has been completely substituted for other fat. In the EU cheese must be made from milk in order to be allowed to be called 'cheese'. It must not even be named 'imitation cheese' or 'cheese analogue', since the word 'cheese' is only allowed to be used for products containing 'real' cheese. Instead it is called 'Pizza Mix' or 'vegetable oil and protein mixture for melting'.

Smirking slightly, he ponders over the fascinating idea that a product that is made to be an image of cheese, looking, smelling, feeling, melting and (more or less) tasting like cheese, is nevertheless not allowed to be called 'cheese'. It too has become an unsayable thing. It came very close to being similar to something that it is not actually supposed to be. As an index, a medium, it tries to convey the information of cheese without actually being cheese; a solid, chewable, and meltable echo of cheese.

Swaying his bag, he returns to contemplate the authoritarian self-checkout machine. The basic set-up of these machines is simple, he thinks. As he scans the product, the lighter, normally white areas of the barcode area reflect the light of the scanner. The scanner immediately registers this reflection and 'reads' it as a number. The computer then looks up the number in a catalogue, where it has been linked with a price and other relevant information (such as the name of the product). This information is displayed on the screen. Once the product has been identified, he has to put it into the 'bagging area', where a scale monitors if the weight of the scanned item matches its expected, preset value. If it does, the price is added to the bill. The machine does not care if he buys a pineapple, toothpaste, sausages, condensed milk, sandwiches, walnuts, toilet paper, ham, chicken breasts, washing detergent, cucumbers, bananas, lettuce, sweet corn or wine, as for the machine they are just different numbers, electrical impulses, bits.

Sitting on the bus, he considers sticking the barcode of a piece of cheese onto something else with the same weight, a rock maybe, or some wood. The machine would not mind. It would recognise it as cheese and charge the assigned price. He asks himself if this means that the machine could somehow transubstantiate stones into cheese. But what about the person who programmes it, he thinks, there must be someone who tells it what the numbers mean; or is this person also rather just following the algorithms set by the logic of the machine, like the friendly lady who took the cheese away?

Maybe the numbers are indeed the higher order of things, and since he and most other people are not proficient in reading binary

numbers, everything is also still presented as the image (and text) of what it is (or rather supposed to be). For the computer it is only the numbers that count and so the shop is full of binary numbers in disguise for us human imbeciles. A pineapple is a pineapple is a pineapple, he thinks.

Did the cheese--for by now he has decided to doubt no longer that it was cheese after all--quietly try to resist this forceful transcendence into the realm of digital sameness? Did it perhaps even reverse it, instantiating itself out of bodiless information? He asks himself, if it would go too far to call the cheese emancipated. Once more, he wonders, what happened to this un-processable, reluctant cheese after it was taken away. Was it outcast? Was it re-labeled, made compliant at last? He wonders if there are really just zeros and ones in this bag wobbling on the ledge as the bus stops and goes through the evening traffic. Could he possibly be fed on zeroes and ones?

[ENCOUNTER TWO.]

He is already late for his appointment as his bicycle chain comes off. Ungracefully he turns his bicycle over and starts to fumble with the chain, trying to get it back on the gear. It takes uncountable attempts until he succeeds, by which time his hands are covered in grime.

Checking his phone for the way once more (just to be sure), he notices how his fingers leave greasy marks all over the glass. Later that day, even after having scrubbed his hands heavily several times, he can make out the traces of his contact with the stuff he usually likes to not have to care about. As he pokes his computer to make the words he is thinking appear on the screen, he suddenly chuckles. *Digital dirt*, *grubby fingers*, he thinks. The same digits he got dirty earlier are now writing this text. He makes them write other digits, digital digits, bits. But those digits could probably never get dirty, he supposes, continuing to poke the keyboard, hoping and expecting the machine to poke back at him.

[ENCOUNTER THREE.]

Writing this on a smartphone is so much harder than typing on a proper keyboard, he writes, tapping on the smooth, illuminated glass using only his right thumb. It is tedious and he constantly needs to

delete nonsense. The glowing *soft machine* has no palpable delineations, there is nothing to hold on to. All the letters feel the same, slippery. He is reaching out for them according to the keyboard layout he holds in his mind. He tries to remember when he stopped having to circle his index finger over the keys to find the letter or symbol he desired. When did he internalize where he had to put his fingers to put the words out of his head and onto a screen? When did he become a typewriter? He cannot remember. Using a keyboard feels intuitive, he types. Sometimes, when he is bored, he closes his eyes and writes imaginary texts on imaginary keyboards. He knows where his fingers have to be to make As and Ls and %s appear, but he regularly forgets where his][s are hidden.

But this shimmering reality is something else. It is as if he is reaching out for an apple on the table in front of him, constantly grabbing the pear, the orange, the oramgr, the applr, the peat next to it instead. Again and again. ItMs frustrating. It reakky is.

Still, slowly, and steadily, he moves on forward, downwards. Following his conditioned intuition, he lines up these letters, and the punctuation marks, and all the spaces between the words, tap by tap on those letters down there. His first thoughts have long disappeared somewhere up there. With a small gesture, a caressing of the glass, he could bring them back into sight. He knows that they are there. He knows that the crisp Helvetica his letters appear in under the glass in front of him, as well as everything else on the screen, is really just light, being blocked or allowed to pass through the pixels of the display. He has neither picked the font, nor decided its size, nor anything else about how his writing looks at this moment. In the end, none of this will matter anyway.

Later (right now, back then), he will take this text, this string of electrical impulses encoding these letters, out of the 'cloud› it has been stored in. His phone, saving this draft, will have sent it as electromagnetic waves across the room to his WiFi router, which will have picked up the signal. It will then send off the 25165 bits (11.905 0s, 13.260 1s) through copper wires and fibre optic cables. He cannot remember when exactly he okayed for all of this to happen

automatically. There might have been a checkbox and a button that said "I AGREE". *Whatever*, he thinks. He is unsure if it makes much of a difference if he knows where his zeros and ones actually reside, before he orders them back to appear here. He knows that the 'cloud' is most definitely some hard disk on a server, a big chunky block in a row of other chunky blocks, hidden and locked away in a data centre far away. But this does not make it any less abstract to him, really. Whenever he thinks of data centres, he thinks of Sol LeWitt's white cubes. But it could just as well be some fuzzy and foggy cloud after all. Or the moon. How would he know? Wherever they were, his zeros and ones will have waited there for him--most likely written as magnetic charges--to be sent back here. Infrastructure-wise, it is as if time and space do not matter for the reality of this text. But for some reason he stubbornly refuses to believe that.

Sitting in front of his computer, slightly hunched, he will copy this text with a few movements of his index finger over the track-pad and some clicks. He will move it into the document titled 'Thesis'. And here it is.

Images
(In order of appearance)

Hans-Jörg Pochmann, ***Self-Checkout Transubstantiation (It's Cheese Now, Really)***, Scan, 2014

Meg Rahaim

Notes   on the Inversion of Photographic Transparency:
Excerpts from "Waking Ouroboros"

The following text is excerpted from a chapter of my doctoral thesis. It represents a point of rumination on transparency, contact, and self-sight within a lengthier process of synthesizing theory, personal experience, and a practice of image-making. It originally appeared alongside a short fictional narrative that considers the social implications of photographic transparency and ubiquitous surveillant technology by taking them to an illogical and impossible conclusion: that in the instant a photograph is taken, the pictured subject of that photograph might encounter by hallucination each and every person who will ever see that photograph. In its original form, the text you see here was interspersed with the fictional narrative, so two distinct written voices continuously and reflexively interrupt and resituate one other. The bracketed ellipses below give an indication of where these interruptions lie in the original.

My attempts to get closer to the material of the digital image began with a wander into the territory of the image's subject, a longing to make contact with those pictured distances I so desired, i.e. images of my home on the other side of the Atlantic. Through the use of satellite mapping software, I was able to draw closer to the lived spaces of my past with a succession of clicks, or so I then felt. What does it really mean to zoom? The onomatopoeia of a comic book race car signifies the collapse of distance by speed. If Kendall Walton's notion of photographic transparency holds, I was indeed closer to home, to what was pictured, in looking at its Google Earth image than I was the moment before I zoomed in.[1] Distance shrinks as the image expands.

If this were true, the image of home in its quilt of pixels might have the potential then to become so large as to enfold and encompass the earth of dirt and water! The larger the image grows, the farther I can stand back from it and remain within its space, as it pushes past the edges of my peripheral vision. If the sliding zoom of the digital image were somehow freed from its bounded existence, it might well be said that such an image could swallow up the world.

In Borges's famous microcuento, the map that might have done just that proves useless, persisting only as discarded tatters in the wilderness.[2] On the screen before me, however, the world is again absorbed into projection, thrust into flatland. The impulse to make the spheroid into an infinitely repeating projection in two dimensions, a paralysing desire to image the world in increasingly minute detail, wraps its digits around the imagination and squeezes to stifle its circulation. 'Do not envision for yourself the world around you,' it says. 'Do not even look upon the thing itself and wonder!' Such images tatter with neither use nor neglect.

Because of the transparency of the images of Google Earth and Google Street View, I am profoundly more connected to the diversity of places in the world by my use of them, even if they are recordings of places as they have been rather than streaming interactions. In this case, is it ridiculous to say, then, that as I stand in the street and gaze at the sky I am also looking at its image? If all photographs of a thing put us in contact with the thing itself, we might also be connected by the vision of a thing to all the photographs of it that have been taken to that point. The substance that reflects light in the present could be connected in some way to photographs of it that exist elsewhere. [...]

As Borges shows us, aspects of human production might be more fully explored and understood through the development of an absurd proposition, an eccentric approach to present circumstance through an imagined impossibility. If the argument for the transparency of photographs can work in one direction, perhaps it can work in another. I might possess the ability to see out through photographs

of myself, or through the screens of the world, projecting myself into a consuming vision. Roland Barthes claims that subjects of photography are transformed by photography. To take this proposition further, what of the non-human subjects? His is 'pricked' by aspects of a woman's dress in a picture, but what of the strapped pumps or the braided necklace as they persist in their original form?[3] That necklace would certainly *mean* more now that is has been pictured, become punctum, even if it is only to make it 'that necklace that was photographed'. What if the transformation also meant that a look at the necklace itself could project me into the space of the photo, or the space where the photo persists today, in paper and silver, before the faces of perpetuitous viewers, or into the mind of a deceased philosopher?

[...]

The proposition of inverting the transparency of photography sounds less absurd when considered in relation to the highly surveillant, everyday networked condition in which I find myself. With cameras affixed to every eave and niche of the city—not to mention every roving palm—each street I walk down has been photographed many times over. Every building I pass has an innumerable multitude of corresponding images. With every glimpse of open sky, I anticipate being tracked or photographed via satellite. It is as though the sky itself were a giant aperture, so wide as to encompass the earth, a gaping eye/mouth poised to consume all that appears before it. I am so aware of being continuously made into an image of myself that I begin to believe I may be an image already.

I look out the window onto the street and imagine a digitised yellow track running down the centre, floating labels and icons indicating businesses and points of interest. I do not need the help of Augmented Reality software to render the street and image space, an empty shell papered with images of that street at successive moments. I, too, am pictured in that space, as the shadow in a window, perhaps, an even splay of pixels at the same depth as cars of the street of people on the sidewalk.

[...]

The blue sky is an image of emptiness, though not an empty thing itself. The meeting place of opacity and transparency, an open expanse to be traversed in any direction, full with life sustaining chemical gases that exist on a scale beyond the talents of human vision, the sky above my head is an image of emptiness because it shows me nothing of itself.

An image of the sky is neither the same thing as the sky itself, nor the sky as image; however, it derives from the sky a slippery relation to aspects of representation (Fig. 1). As the sky is a space whose substance cannot be seen, its representation in flat image is necessarily a negation of its defining quality: spaceness. The flatness of the photographic image of sky, though appearing to represent closely the thing pictured, misses entirely its subject's true form and substance.

These are not things I think, lying on the grass in springtime, watching clouds float by. These are thoughts for a hot, cloudless day. When the sky is most apparently the deep and wide anteroom to a silent watchfulness, felt in the blistering skin on my brow and the windless stillness. These are the days when I am most aware there is something 'up there', not God, not ghosts, but something watching me. Perhaps it is the heaviness of heat, the feeling of being pressed upon by larger force. It does not matter if it is the radiant energy of the sun or the smothering weight of omniscience; just that I know on these days I am not alone, that the sky that shows only emptiness is hiding something.

In my childhood, there was no multitude of eyes beyond the sky. Any human eyes were forced to follow at street level, across the earth. An open space offered the possibility of isolation in a way no one could then appreciate, in a way no one anticipated might not last. As children we 'hid' from the world in a fallow field behind our housing development. The biggest risk was stepping in a groundhog hole and spraining an ankle. It was the ground that we watched with great care.

If I could be there now, lying on my back, staring at the sky, I would probably be in the front yard of somebody's McMansion. The

diocese sold of the field a decade ago. A development of giant homes was erected, each sterile structure snatched up by a single family who unknowingly would soon be 'under water' for the desire.[4] And today I can count them from across an ocean because the sky under which I once found cover has become an opening for the eyes of the world, of which I am myself a pair.

It matters less what field it is which I lie in now. When I look at the sky, though it shows me nothing, I am in any case, looking into my own face.

[...]

Images
(In order of appearance)

Meg Rahaim, An Image of Nothing, digital inkjet print, 70x70cm, 2014

Nina Trivedi

AB

Nina Trivedi's piece of writing titled 'AB' is influenced by the recent speculative turn in philosophy and its influence on writing in the arts and humanities. She questions, can we think about the materiality of language in relation to current artists' work, as part of a shift towards a new materialism, which questions the nature of matter and the place of humans within a material world? Trivedi's research into Speculative Writing considers new ways of thinking about matter and processes of materialisation and considers recent collaborative writing projects between contemporary artists and poets. Speculation is at the core of new materialist thinking, and this sense of the speculative paves the way for innovative creative responses from artists, designers and writers to consider the materiality of language and the shift towards a new materialism. The following text is an excerpt from 'AB'.

A: Old people have old arguments. Actually they have the same ones.

I'm sure cave men and women - cave persons - were discussing the same things.

B: What...like:

'Hey Kelly, Bob can't paint on walls but maybe the shit Bob puts on them is meaningful in a different way. As if there is some other dimension...'

'Well ...no Jason, I think everything Bob does is pointless

and dull.'

A: Is Johnny referring to the shit Bob puts on walls as 'bad' or 'in bad taste' or as scatological? Cause if it is the latter, then they are having an interesting argument about cave paintings.

B: Cave man Jason was not considering the origin, the material qualities, of Bob's approach.

A: Bob? really!?   Come on.

B: What would you like them to be called?

#2

B: I am meeting with her tomorrow and I don't really know what to say...or what to talk about.

A: I would think of some stuff that both of us would like and some other stuff that both of us would hate and I would start with the like and, in, mix some hate and I would try to understand the underlying universe that holds those preferences or reactions. Essentially use them as stretchers to map the universe and to define other questions; like what if we took something you hate and moved it in this direction,would you still hate it?

#4

B: Did you read that book? What do you mean, 'it's about contextualized morality.'

A: I just like the little nod to a kind of contextualized morality. There is so much said now about how we know such things from time zero. But we can also have the feeling that our scene is providing nothing relevant or is actually quite corrupted.

B: What did you do last night?

A: Went on a weird walk with someone.

B: What does that mean?

A: Just on a walk with a friend.

B: Why what happened? Did they do something weird?

A: Noooo

It's me, I am like a damn autistic robot

Like fucking Kraftwerk shit

Body space and contact is such a massive thing
	Like if you love someone, fine - who cares
	But a fucking friend, I don't know how to act sometimes.

#5

A: I am in Minnesota now. Prince is like a small ghost there. He's like a black unicorn. In Minnesota there are like only four famous people there and he's one: Bob Dylan, Prince, Garrison Keillor, Slug

That's all really

Big storm here   So nice

#6

B: The Moon Is (Slightly) Flat, "Like a lemon with an equatorial bulge" is how a planetary scientist says it.

#12

A: look up ryan trecartin, tell me what you think....

B: it actually completely blows me a way.

A: how so?

B: as capturing and amplifying the kind of pink noise in life. as being simultaneously mildly annoying but can't turn away.

#13

A: I always get so anxious for you to write me emails. Ha! After just a few hours of waiting I'm usually making hypotheses about how much you dislike me now. And how I must have said the wrong thing.

Then I chill out in a way and worry about other stuff.

I wish I knew all about your Valentine's day. But then I worry that you won't tell me.

Well must sleep some more. Miss you.

B: There was something the other day that totally made me think of you. Something that you would have liked or something maybe that I remember you being opinionated about. I think it was something apartment related, but now I can't remember it. It was probably like some mark in the floor that I was thinking whether you knew about it.

I don't remember my Valentine's Day. I mean I don't recall anything salient or fantastic about it. I probably went to lab, as I usually do, went home, slept, those things.

The presentation went well. The women dug it, which is really what matters. The thing is that you can't fool them, they know all about this shit already. So if they're on board you know you're in the right direction. There was one dude, my friend Ben, who didn't buy it that much. It's a blurry theory anyway.

It suggests, for example, distinct neural systems for each of the three stages of reproduction. But the systems are not distinct, they overlap. As do the behaviors. So he felt that for him the urge to fuck was the same as the process of falling in love. And then he thought that early stage romantic love (which includes courtship attraction) was no

different than long-term, like raising kids together stuff.

Pretty cool application of the transitive property huh. If A = B and B = C, then A = C. So basically the urge to fuck is what keeps you together when everything sucks and you have to sharpen up your babies and make them good looking and smart.

#16

A: last night i was super tired. i was doing laundry and trying to get everything squared away. i listened to a chapter of my book about physics. i got so obsessed with this idea, listening about it. the bucket experiment. i was just about ready to grab our little red bucket and try it myself and then i felt like i couldn't possibly move or do anything else and i was suddenly sleeping.

i just became friends with this Annie. we were very bad adolescents together, in every sense. there was something synergistic about it. she would suggest something bad, we'd start doing it together, and i'd add it on some more, amplify or work on a new direction for further badness. we never really knew, if we were alone in all that. like were other kids in other suburbs throughout the world also sneaking out of basement windows in the cover of darkness and trying to get bugs off each others sweatshirts? meeting some other kids in a field, having an implicit sense of who goes with whom. laying down, waking up in the orange darkness of street lights. hiding behind trees, lest you're ticketed for curfew, or get your parents phoned by some officer. it's all so translucent now, like a buried epoch of your existence, a different instantiation of yourself, trapped in an amber, your life, stuck in tree

sap, which is stuck in itself.

A: long time no speak, how is it going..how is the old hood? i'm up to good things. i have a gf. we love.

B: the hood is, oh you know. you run into people you know. and everyone is sort of beautiful and there are so many subcultures intersecting and merging with other subcultures. sometimes thick chested dudes still shout across the street to other thick chested dudes. and i will say to myself, cellphone, cellphone, why not a cellphone. but more and more that seems less and less.

the other day at whole foods bowery an old man and me had a moment of dude-ish staring thing. i had on my headphones, but there was lots of bird like posturing and such. and i walked on, as he walked on. and suddenly it occurred to me that some day i could just lose it. i can imagine screaming as loud as possible. making freaky faces at him. dumping all the tofu on his head. and quoting a light in the attic. last night while i lay thinking here some whatifs crawled inside my ear and pranced and partied all night long and sang their same old whatif song: whatif i flunk that test? whatif green hair grows on my legs? whatif nobody likes me? whatif a bolt of lightning strikes me?

phds are really only for phds. i mean they don't actually make sense to anyone else. and nobody knows exactly what they mean, except the people who know. i wish i had a 100 of them, and they were only worth more like nothing. i wish i never heard of them, never considered it. oh that phd, that'll take all of 10 minutes or so and we'll be on to something else.

A: speaking of. i hear they're now having bus tours of evil rich people who've received bailout money. i want to go on this tour. i want to clap for such people. i will offer to wash their sedans, if they'll let me sleep in the shadow of the boat house.

mm. a coma.

B: What? You lost me.

A: i so like this song called laughing hieroglyhpic by avey tare. it's so heavy that the first song on the album is about the dissolution of his marriage, and you can just hear it in everything he says.

he says stuff like: i didn't think you were struggling; so long; with all of the wild things; that we took so young; how i must have wrapped you up and left you hanging upside down; but i was too busy getting lost in; the big sound; the big sound.

i imagine him like a guy that's really into model airplanes. he spends all his time in his basement in the dark under a desk light, building and constructing, adding and painting and gluing. and he realises, in a post post way, that something else that he really cared about is gone now, and he realises it was all because he spent all his time looking at model airplanes.

but he won't apologise for it. it's more like a blunted sadness, and more than that simple confusion, and more a realization that everything is lost anyway. so he can't do anything and should just move on.

B: what did you get up to today?

A: i didn't do very much. i was kind of tired. but it was a nice day, quite cool, some rain, and fast moving low lying clouds a nice moon.

i'm sitting under my blue light so that my sleep schedule doesn't phase advance. it actually works.

B: i do like it that we ate sri lankan food on a cold day and kind of argued. i sort of wish i could do that all over again today..

A: there is a massive lunar eclipse tonight. from midnight to 2 am.

B: everything good in life coincides with lunar eclipses.

A: are we best friends forever?

B: seriously
i have secret A. mementos
that nobody knows about
how odd
oh well

A: like what...my old mail

B: sure..
like a Parsons sticker

A: i want that sticker back, give it to me for my birthday.
no, wait, i dont want it

B: haaaaa

A: i am asleep. talk to you later friend.

B: of course you can have it A.
it is yours
i was only borrowing it anyway
ok later

On Wailing: writing/ failure

Writing and failure are intertwined all the way down. One need not ascribe to a hardcore Beckettian logic – 'fail again, fail better', perhaps, or 'every word is like an unnecessary stain on silence and nothingness' – to understand that there is no perfect text. There are texts that we might think couldn't be better or texts that encapsulate something just so (usually not our own, of course), but one cannot hope to emulate the hundred-percentability of a mathematically proof, logic puzzle, or cryptic crossword answer. There is no absolution here, only a kind of life-long training that often goes into reverse for no apparent reason, mixed with melancholy. Few feelings are as sweet-sad as the one experienced upon reading something you've written at an earlier stage and realising with an inward wail that 'I'll never write that well again!'

When we as educators set essays and remind our students that to essay is to try, and not necessarily to succeed, when we mark even the best essay at 80% and leave the other 20% to pure holiness, we are tacitly acknowledging that writing is always a kind of losing game. The perfectionist is always destined to be devastated by writing, because writing is a merciless master whose rewards often lie far more in the completion of a task than in the delight of its manufacture. The poet especially is in a double-bind of the imperative to capture and to perfect, of having to decide when the poem is finished, even though, from another side, it is infinite. There is a good reason why poets tend to be melancholic.

Is writing the expression of the soul, even in an era in which souls exist somewhere between an iTunes playlist and whatever sandwich you ate for lunch that day? Or is it instead a kind of craft, more akin to dentistry or woodwork? Something you get better at the more you do it, but something that involves sharp instruments and large amounts of pain and injury? I am more inclined to see writing as a practice, because to see it as an expressive gesture, some sort of excrescence of inner feeling is to leave too much to chance. Whatever comes out could be brilliant, or it could be garbage, and either way you'd have to blame yourself and have no idea whether you'd be able to replicate your genius or avoid the same awful thing happening next time.

So writing could be seen as something like rehearsing for a performance that might never come. In a way, this takes the heat off. Despite never managing to go beyond the level of my local youth orchestra and having not played my oboe (which I no longer have as my overly-practically-minded mother sold it) for many years, I still have anxiety dreams in which the solo is coming and my reed is broken. I don't want to think about what this means too much, but suffice it to say that writing is a bit like submitting your 8am 10-minute tootle without then later having to wear a black skirt to perform in a concert hall. Which is why, incidentally, all the best writing happens in pyjamas.

Writing is always thus inherently deferred, rough, sketchy, even when it exists in actuality in print in all the major libraries of the world. It could always have been better, is the point, and at least it now exists. If one thinks that writing is a genuine-pure-ideal snapshot of the soul, however, every criticism (self or otherwise) is going to read like a skewer through the anxious hedgehog of your heart. So it is better all round to imagine that by writing you've made a box that attempted to have dovetail joints, but that the joints are a bit loose and the box was the wrong size. Because next time, the box will be better and the joints will lie flush and people will think 'now there's a box I could put my marble collection in!'

The problem with the provisional nature of all writing is that sometimes along the way words have unintended consequences, and you are not allowed to take them back. Of course, this presupposes that the majority of words are read, which as we know from the existence of academic journals is by no means the case. But it is impossible for someone to both be offended and for you to say 'but it wasn't finished, I didn't mean it, writing is an endless one-sided conversation!' The upset is real. The negative responses are real. You are pinned to your words as if by a tent peg. So writing is also an exercise in responsibility, which makes it even more unpalatable as a possible thing that anyone would willingly take up.

But what the soul-model of writing does have in common with the woodwork-model is a curious kind of imperative. Here we return to Beckett and all his images of plowing on even though there is no good reason to do so and by doing so we fail and wail again, but better. But trudge on we must. Why not simply turn this imperative into a routine, albeit a routine that perhaps sits closer to exercising than to eating in terms of its pleasurability? If we must write, then it is better to make a box than be trapped in one. But then we get to the question of writing and freedom, and on that question we must remain silent.

Nina Power

Nina Power teaches Philosophy at the University of Roehampton and Critical Writing in Art & Design at the Royal College of Art.

RCA Humanities Research Forum 2014/15

Desert Island Research

What is art and humanities research within an art school context?
Chantal Faust and
Marquard Smith

Talking to Myself?
Adrian Rifkin

Lenin's Bust: The Rise and Fall of London's Strangest Wartime Memorial
Joe Kerr

Reading Riotously
Nina Power

Properties, Clues and Affects
Barry Curtis

Staging Disorder
Christopher Stewart

Clay and Water: Moulding Method & Theoretical Flows
Jessica J. Lee

Design and the Welfare State
Jane Pavitt

The Performative Record in Art and Direct Action:
Research seminar convened by Kevin Biderman

Speculations 1&2
A series of research seminars convened by Luci Eldridge and Nina Trivedi

The Magical Mystery Humanities Research Forum Walking Tour
Convened by Lauren Fried and Kevin Biderman

Thesis Crit Sessions
Kevin Biderman
Helena Bonett
Federica Bueti
Luci Eldridge
Gentil Porto Filho
Lauren Fried
Amanda Game
Andrew Hewish
Àngels Miralda
Rujana Rebernjak
Nina Trivedi
Imogen Woodberry

End Notes

Dear Hito Steyerl,

1 Hito Steyerl, "Art as Occupation: Claims for an Autonomy of Life," E-Flux Journal, 2011. http://www.e-flux.com/journal/art-as-occupation-claims-for-an-autonomy-of-life-12/ (accessed December 2014)
2 Hito Steyerl, The Wretched of the Screen, E-Flux Journal, Sternberg Press, September 2012. http://indexofpotential.net/uploads/46385/Steyerl,%20Hito%20-%20The%20Wretched%20of%20the%20Screen.pdf (accessed December 2014)
3 Daniel Buren, « Fonction de L'atelier » Les Ecrits 1965-2012 Vol. 1: 1965-1995. Paris: Flammarion, 2012. pp. 185-194.
4 Rosalind E. Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field" in The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985. (276-290) (Original article 1978, October)
5 "Hito Steyerl and Peter Osborne in Conversation", Institute of Contemporary Art, London. 21 March 2014.
6 Hito Steyerl, Institute of Contemporary Art, London. 5 March – 27 April, 2014.

Lobsters, Hormonal Storms, Brittlestars, and Sticky Things: Matter of the World

1 Paul B. Preciado, Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era, New York: The Feminist Press, 2013, p.22.
2 Karen Barad, "On Touching: The Inhuman that Therefore I Am," originally published in differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies 23, no. 3, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012, pp.206–23. A revised version of the text is available online at: http://womensstudies.duke.edu/uploads/media_items/on-touching-the-inhuman-that-therefore-i-am-v1-1.original.pdf.
3 Karen Barad, Meeting the Universe Halfway (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 219.
4 Louise Hervé and Chloé Maillet have been working together since 2001, when they founded I.I.I.I. (International Institute for Important Items) for which they produce performances, movies, and installations.

5 In medicine, human congenital hypoventilation syndrome is often informally called Ondine's curse and more formally, Ondine syndrome.
See http://the-medical-dictionary.com/ondine_s_curse_article_1.htm.
6 Barad, "On Touching."
7 "Intra-active Entanglements," an interview with Karen Barad by Malou JuelskjÆr and Nete Schwennensen, Kvinder, Køn, Forskning 1–2 (2012), 12.

Anticipatory Photography and the Architecture of Catastrophe

1 Anthony Vidler, The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely, Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1992, p. 6.
2 ibid., p.3.
3 Ariella Azoulay, The Civil Contract of Photography, New York: Zone Books, 2008, p. 289.
4 ibid., p. 289.
5 ibid., p. 291.

Stepping into the Image of Mars

1 Jeremy Close, Director (UK) Communications Airbus Defence and Space, email correspondence 25th April 2014
2 ESA, Mars Yard Ready for Red Planet Rover, 27th March 2014, http://www.esa.int/Our_Activities/Space_Science/Mars_yard_ready_for_Red_Planet_rover, accessed 30th March 2014
3 Interview with Alastair Wayman, Graduate Mission Systems Engineer at Airbus Defence and Space, 27th August 2014
4 Jeremy Close, Director (UK) Communications Airbus Defence and Space, email correspondence 25th April 2014
5 Jeremy Close, Director (UK) Communications Airbus Defence and Space, 25th April 2014
6 ESA, Mars Yard Ready for Red Planet Rover, 27th March 2014, http://www.esa.int/Our_Activities/Space_Science/Mars_yard_ready_for_Red_Planet_rover, accessed 30th March 2014

The Doctor, the Telephone and the Memory of a Designer: Finding Meaning Between the Senses in Socialism

1 Other similar companies producing electronic equipment and small household goods, like Serbian Elektronska Industrija Niš or Croatian Tesla, did not reach such vast numbers in telephone production and Iskra's phones were widely used, with 1,000.000 telephones sold by 1972 (Iskra's first telephone was produced in 1949). The number is significant as that was more than the number of telephone connections in the whole of Yugoslavia at the time.
2 "Iskra Non-Aligned Design, 1946-1990" was held at the Museum of Architecture and Design in Ljubljana between 12 November 2009 and 28 February 2010, curated by Barbara Predan and Cvetka Požar.
3 Interview with Davorin Savnik, 2009, archive of Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana
4 The term "decadent socialism" was first introduced by Igor Duda in his work Pronađeno blagostanje: Svakodnevni **život** i potrošačka kultura u Hrvatskoj 1970-ih i 1980-ih, Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2010. The period of decadent socialism – after the 1980s until the country's dissolution in 1990 – is characterized by flourishing consumerism and trade in foreign currencies, as well as open defiance towards the regime through popular culture, art, cinema, music, as well as religion.
5 The design of ETA80 was developed following a patent for an electronic telephone device and circuitry for telephone terminal security, invented by Iskra's engineer Miroslav Marc, which was filed with the federal patent agency in Belgrade, as well as Italy, West Germany, Belgium, France, Sweden and the Soviet Union. Additionally, Cvetka Požar notes in her text that "Many Yugoslav companies were not aware of the importance of trademarks and sold their own high-quality products in other countries under foreign trademarks", a common approach that was apparently not practiced in Iskra. See Iskra Non-Aligned Design, 1946-1990, Barbara Predan and Cvetka Požar (eds.), p.93, 71.
6 Fedja Vukić, "The Idea of Socialist Design: Iskra Show Review", in Design Issues, Vol.26, N.3, 2010, pp.79-82.
7 Tito's speech at the 1st Congress of the National Technology of Yugoslavia, National Technology, 1952, p.5. See: Igor Duda, "Tehnika narodu! Trajna dobra, potrošnja i slobodno vrijeme u socijalističkoj Hrvatskoj" [Technology to the People! Durables, Consumption and Leisure in Socialist Croatia], in **Časopis** za suvremenu povijest, Year 37, br.2, p.373.
8 Small household goods constituted only a fraction of Iskra's production, known for large infrastructure projects in the sphere of telephone communications market. This is emphasised in Iskra, the in-house bulletin of the company published between 1962 and 1990, where articles about design or household appliances feature only sporadically.
9 Duda, p.372.
10 Iskra Non-Aligned Design, 1946-1990, p.71
11 See: Work With Sounds website at http://www.workwithsounds.eu/sound/automatic-telephone-iskra-eta-80-sound-of-keypad/, accessed 10 February 2016. A collaboration between six European museums, the scope of the website is to record "the endangered or disappearing sounds of industrial society".
12 See for example Igor Duda, Pronađeno blagostanje: Svakodnevni **život** i potrošačka kultura u Hrvatskoj 1970-ih i 1980-ih, Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2010, or Maša Kolanović, Udarnik! Buntovnik? Potrošač, Popularna kultura i hrvatski roman od socijalizma do tranzicije, Naklada Ljevak: Zagreb, 2011.
13 See Predrag Marković, "Where Have All the Flowers Gone? Yugoslav Culture in the 1970s", in The Crisis of Socialist Modernity. The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the 1970s, Marie-Janine Calic, Dietmar Neutatz and Julia Obertreis (eds.), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011, pp.118-133.
14 Iskra won the commission to develop the telephone equipment and infrastructure for Moscow Olympic Games in 1980 with ETA80 as the telephone of choice, for which they even created a specific ringtone. See interview with Davorin Savnik, 2009, archive of Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana; Iskra, Year 18, N.36, 22 September 1979, p.4; Iskra, Year 18, N.37, 29 September1979, p.6
15 Biljana Žikić, "Dissidents Liked Pretty Girls: Nudity, Pornography and Quality Press in Socialism", in Medijska istraživanja, Zagreb, Year 16, N.1, 2010, p.66

SOMETHING HUMAN AT THE TERMINAL

1 Oxford Dictionary
2 Jeremy Bentham (1791)

3 Mark Augé, *non-places: introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity*, London: Verso, p.106.
4 Mark Augé

'Ice Swimming'

1 A Ladies' Pond Lifeguard, quoted in Ann Griswold, *The Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond*, London: Association of Users of the Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond, 1998, p. 34.
2 Author interview with Val, winter swimmer, 15 February 2015.
3 Author interview with Viv, winter swimmer, 13 February 2015.
4 Author interview with Liz, winter swimmer, 15 February 2015.
5 Author interview with Viv, winter swimmer, 13 February 2015.
6 Author interview with Hannah, winter swimmer, 15 February 2015.
7 Author interview with Dagmara, winter swimmer, 1 February 2015.
8 Author interview with Val, winter swimmer, 15 February 2015.

EXCHANGE: Moneyless in the City of London

1 Fredric Jameson, "Future City," *New Left Review* 21, May/June 2003: 76.
2 Please note this piece was written before Jeremy Corbyn became leader of the Labour Party.
3 Saskia Sassen, *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.

The Exchange project and the production of dissents

1 Jacques Rancière, The Politics of Aesthetics, London: Continuum, 2006.

Notes on the Inversion of Photographic Transparency: Excerpts from "Waking Ouroboros"

1 Kendall Walton, "Transparent Pictures: On the Nature of Photographic Realism," in *Critical Inquiry*, 11(2) (1984): 251-253. Walton's photographic transparency is the characteristic of photography that allows the viewer sustained perceptual contact with the pictured subject. This text takes the position that this is a valid concept, but expands the idea in ways that are not indicated or supported by Walton's original idea.
2 Jorge Luis Borges, 'On Exactitude in Science,' in *Collected Fictions*, New York: Penguin Books, 1998, p.325.
3 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, London: Vintage, 1980, pp.43-45, p.53.
4 This refers to the real estate crash of 2008-2009.