

**Michael
Kargl
Performativity
Materiality**

Art and Material

Michael Kargl

If you look up the description of Vincent van Gogh's *Self-Portrait* (1889) you will find that the artistic materials of the painting are oil and canvas.¹ Upon closer examination it becomes obvious that the canvas was mounted onto something. Traditionally, wooden frames were used for this purpose, so we can assume that it was also the case with this painting. As canvases rarely adhere to a frame by themselves, something is needed to fix the canvas in place (nails, staples, etc.) Similarly, the painting then needs to be fixed into a frame. So what actually is the material of the artist? Let's suppose that the frame was only added later, and its shape and color were not part of the concept from the beginning. Then there is still the painting itself, which consists of far more elements than just oil and canvas. In order to prepare oil for artistic applications it has to be mixed with finely ground pigment, perhaps a bit solvent is added to change the viscosity. A preliminary list of the artistic materials would then read as follows: oil, canvas, pigment, solvent, wood, nails.

What seems like bean counting here refers to a fundamental question, which is not only relevant for art historians but also for artists: What are the materials of art? In the example above the materials were named after the fact: oil and canvas (wood, nails, pigment, solvent). With other artworks the list can be quite different: Michelangelo's *Dying Slave* consists of marble; Valie Export's action *Tap and Touch Cinema* consisted of a body, box, curtain, visitors, movement, and so on. If one tried to compile a list of artistic materials, it would likely be an impossible and incredibly boring endeavor.

Asking the artists makes the matter even more complex: The number of materials used in their work process is incomparably higher than the materials in the finished works. Many things are not defined from the outset, there is much experimenting, models and prototypes are crafted, rough sketches drawn, research conducted. All of these involve materials that artists deal with on a daily basis and should, consequently, be integrated into our list above.

The main difference to the aforementioned materials, however, is that they are not defined after the fact, rather they represent a potential for the artists—a potential that refers to a possible future work, materials with which they will make something.

We should not forget that the employed materials also continuously change: Changes in technologies, new processing methods or aesthetic trends always generate new materials while others become obsolete (for example, hardly anyone draws with red chalk anymore).

So which materials are those of the artists? Those that constitute the finished work or those that were used beforehand in the production process and refer to a future work? However we decide, we will not succeed in drawing up a list that clarifies, once and for all, the question of artistic materials. We can only come up with excerpts, describe fragments of a material cosmos.

Material per se

Perhaps we have to find another point of departure. As artistic materials cannot be listed conclusively, we can try to define material as such and then elaborate the special characteristics of artistic material. A widely-cited thinker in this context is Aristotle. Simply put, he breaks things up into matter and form. Following his concept of matter, however, we learn that it is not suitable for our purposes. Namely, his analysis quickly reveals a problem: "Matter can itself be divided into matter and form: for instance, bricks are made of clay, shaped into cuboid blocks. Again, clay has its own matter—mud, say—and so on. Eventually, if one pursues this hierarchy of matter far enough downwards, Aristotle believes that one will reach the four elements, earth, air, fire and water."²

Contemporary thought arrives at similar results. Informed by findings in the natural sciences, the chain does not end at the four elements anymore but at particles and waves charged with energy. Such a concept of material does not help us much either in the context of art—material particles do not differ from each other, regardless whether they are in a spaceship or in Van Gogh's self portrait.

This glossary is composed of entries. Each entry appears not as a definition of performative materiality but as a particular manifestation—a display—and configuration of it.

Animacy and embodiment

Animacy and embodiment pull in opposite directions: where the former is a movement of opening, the latter is bent on closure. For the living, animate beings we are, [...] the term "embodiment" is simply not experientially apposite. We do not [...] experience ourselves and one another as "packaged" but as moving and moved, in ongoing response—that is in *correspondence*—with the things around us.¹

Annwn and Abred

The Circles of Abred emerge from the Circle of Annwn (pronounced *amoon*): a chaotic simmering cauldron containing all potential forms and manifestations. Annwn and Abred are more complex than merely “past” and “present”. They exist simultaneously, and there is a temporal progression within the Circles of Abred as the manifest forms, which have emerged from Annwn, are born, grow, die and are reborn.²

The Making of Things – Proximity

Let us go back to the beginning and ask the initial question again: What is material? Tim Ingold provides a very general and broad understanding: “I mean by materials the stuff that things are made of.”³

So Ingold does not ask *what things consist of*. If we take this approach seriously we have to slightly revise our abovementioned concept of material. The material description of a given artwork then does not suffice with the listing of oil, canvas, pigment, solvent, wood, etc.—also the *making* has to be included. Put concretely, the material I am currently using while I sit and write at my computer now would be next to impossible to grasp: It starts with the computer I am writing on, the heating that gives me warmth in winter and allows me to think and write smoothly, then there are the thoughts that emerge during writing, my social and economic status that enables me to ponder this topic, and surely does not end with the light that helps me to recognize the keyboard. Beyond just this immediate point in time, I must also acknowledge things from the past as material, things without which I could not work on precisely this text and thus are inherently in use: Texts I have read, my biography hitherto, the invention of electricity, the design of the text processing program, and much, much more. All of this is contained as material in the text before you. What is interesting here is that this text would be completely different if the circumstances were not exactly as they are. All of these conditions—hence materials—must find the right constellation (in terms of time, place, intensity, etc.) in order to enable me to write in this moment.⁴ In this light, material not only consists of matter but also of relations, a vast array of connections and relationships, which manifest in one moment only to fall apart again and establish new connections. Material is then something processual that even interacts with us.

Material and Time

Let’s perhaps dwell a bit longer on this temporal process of making with regard to material. In the case of Van Gogh’s self portrait it is a description of materials made *after* the completion of the work. The talks with artists reveal a potential of material, a projection of a work pointing to a possible future. But if we try to extrapolate the material from these descriptions in the present we are confronted with a gap. This seems logical: During the work process the material is used,

but not called as such. This abstract naming can only be done with difficulty and distraction parallel to the actual work with the material.

As a result, this presence of the material is often simply ignored, which the notion of material advocated by art historians also illustrates: Material is that which is intended to be used in an artwork. "In general, material, unlike matter, refers only to natural and artificial substances intended for further treatment."⁵

Put pointedly, this implies that artworks do not evolve in the making rather follow a predefined concept that already stipulates the material. Perhaps this might be the case in the classical art canon, but it certainly no longer applies, latest since the advent of the collage and assemblage in the art world at the beginning of the twentieth century.

So it seems that material never exists in the present. Maybe this has to do with the fact that material as such is simply not perceived in the moment as something independent, something separate from the body working with it.⁶ But precisely this blind spot, this existence of material in a nascent present is central to the becoming of material.⁷

Materializing

Hence, I would propose to *understand material as something that emerges through usage*. Usage is an act that frees the material from its passive existence in human perception, from the mere being-object.

Perhaps I should be more specific at this point: Objects are separate from us. They exist on their own and have, as long as they are perceived as such, no connection with us. They are independent. Things are a different situation. They create connections. When I look at a thing, examine it, put it in a specific place, assign a meaning to it, then a connection emerges between me and the thing, between the thing and a reference system, a place, and so forth. Things are thus knots of relations and relationships—in Germanic it was not for nothing that "thing" was the term for a gathering place: "the thing has the character not of an externally bounded entity, set over and against the observer, but of a knot whose constituent life-lines, far from being contained within it, continually trail beyond, only to mingle with other lines in other knots".⁸

Apparatus

The larger material arrangement enacts a cut that resolves the inherent onto-semantic indeterminacy through which the "subject" and the "object" emerge. Apparatuses are the conditions of possibility for determinate boundaries and properties of objects and meanings of embodied concepts within the phenomenon.³

Attractors and bifurcation

It should come as no surprise, then, that the current penetration of science by historical concerns has been the result of advances in these two disciplines. Ilya Prigogine revolutionized thermodynamics in the 1960s by showing that the classical results were valid only for closed systems, where the overall quantities of energy are always conserved. If one allows an intense flow of energy in and out of a system (that is, if one pushes it *far from equilibrium*), the number and type of possible historical outcomes greatly increases. Instead of a unique and simple form of stability, we now have multiple coexisting forms of varying complexity (static, periodic, and chaotic attractors). Moreover, when a system switches from one stable state to another (at a critical point called a bifurcation), minor fluctuations may play a crucial role in deciding the outcome. Thus, when we study a given physical system, we need to know the specific nature of the fluctuations that have been present at each of its bifurcations; in other words, we need to know its history to understand its current dynamical state. And what is true of physical systems is all the more true of biological ones. Attractors and bifurcations are features of any system in which the dynamics are not only far from equilibrium but also *nonlinear*, that is, in which there are strong mutual interactions (or feedback) between components. Whether the system in question is composed of molecules or of living creatures, it will exhibit endogenously generated stable states, as well as sharp transitions between states, as long as there is feedback and an intense flow of energy coursing through the system.⁵

We see ourselves rather as a unity, a constant being with a certain stability. The continuous change of our world and therewith ourselves is widely ignored through mechanisms of exclusion and biases in perception. We are "here", stable, and (almost) immutable, while everything changes out there. But exactly this ignorance, this demarcation between us and the world enables us to think of something like "material" in the first place. Material emerges in the moment when the "self" conceives itself as something separate, when a break is made and suddenly there is an opposite, an "other". Even when—following the definition of "emergence through usage"—the self is itself also material and thereby cannot be differentiated, the illusion of an outside position is needed, at least for a moment, to make usage and therewith material as such recognizable.¹⁰

Instability

Another consequence of this definition of material is the conclusion that material is always something unstable. It only exists through usage, only in a transformation and exchange between material components, which must always assume a specific relationship with one another. As the earlier description of the creation of this text illustrates, it only takes but one slight variation of a component for the process to arrive at a completely different result. (If my parents had not invested in my education in the past you would not read this text today.) The only stable point when working with material is the becoming-aware of the "self". It serves as a hinge between the states of the fluid being-material and the fixed being-object or being-thing. As a stable threshold, it must be constantly crossed in both directions—the separation of the self and the stream of the subject-less material world—in order to bring the material into being or make it disappear out of sight. Various forms of instability in the process of becoming material then condense into one point, only to move away from each other again in their inherent restlessness. All this is material.

Body

Why should the material world include only *either* things encountered *in situ*, [...], *or* things already transformed by human activity, into artefacts? Why exclude things [...] [that] have been recovered and removed but not otherwise transformed? And where [...] would we place all this diverse forms of animal, plant, fungal and bacterial life? Like artefacts, these things might be attributed formal properties of design, yet they have not been made but have grown. If, moreover, they are part of the material world, then the same must be true to my own body.⁶

Why should our bodies end at the skin, or include at best other beings encapsulated by skin??

- 1 Cf. "Vincent van Gogh, Self-Portrait, 1889," *National Gallery of Art*, <https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.106382.html> (accessed on Oct. 7, 2018).
- 2 Thomas Ainsworth, "Form vs. Matter," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/form-matter/> (accessed on Oct. 7, 2018).
- 3 Tim Ingold, "Materials against materiality," *Archaeological Dialogues* 14, no. 1 (June 2007): 1. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1380203807002127> (accessed on Oct. 7, 2018).
- 4 Karen Barad explores this issue very intensively with her term "intra-activity". Cf. Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2007), 139–40.
- 5 Monika Wagner, "Material," in *Materiality*, ed. Petra Lange-Berndt (London and Cambridge: Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press, 2015), 26.
- 6 Research has shown that tools are perceived as parts of the body when in use. When we hold a hammer firmly in the hand we feel its impact on the nail in all its details. The brain incorporates the hammer into the body. Can it be that the same thing happens with material, in general, not just with the tools? Cf. Karen Sherman, "The Glory Hole," *e-flux journal* 87, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/87/164528/the-glory-hole/> (accessed on Oct. 7, 2018).
- 7 From this perspective, interestingly, the concept of time can be resolved: Naturally, I must first acquire a brush and paint in order to paint something, but in the act of painting this process of acquiring is equally so present—without it I cannot paint. So this acquisition and painting exist parallel and without difference in a nascent present. Thus, material becomes an anchor point to construct time when one looks at certain properties and their changes in the process of becoming. Because all possible states are present in material at all times. Cf. Barad, *Universe*, 180.
- 8 Tim Ingold, "Being alive to a world without objects," in *The Handbook of Contemporary Animism*, ed. Graham Harvey (New York: Routledge, 2014), 216.
- 9 "The self, as subject of intuition, must be opposed to the object thereof, and so distinguished ab initio from the not-self. In this inquiry we clearly have no fixed point, and are revolving endlessly in a circle, unless intuition, in itself and as such, is first stabilized. Only then can we determine how both self and not-self are related to it." Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Science of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 206.
- 10 "Intuition as such is to be stabilized, so that we can conceive it as one and the same. But intuition as such is in no way stable, consisting, rather, in a wavering of the imagination between conflicting directions. That it should be stabilized, is to say that imagination should waver no longer, with the result that intuition would be utterly abolished and destroyed. Yet this must not happen; so that in intuition there must at least remain the product of this state, a trace of the opposed directions, consisting of neither but containing something of both." *Ibid.*, 206–207.

#2016-01 (*nefertiti*)

plastic filament, wooden socle, 60 × 60 × 150 cm (2016)



#2016-06

paper, mattress, rubber band, dimensions unknown (2016)



#2016-07 (*light*)

fluorescent tube, glass, 40 × 85 × 40 cm (2016)



#2016-08 (*bundle*)

mixed media, 200 × 70 × 70 cm (2016)



Boundaries

Boundaries do not sit still.⁸

Change

Causality, the core principle of classical dynamics, suggests that change occurs when one discrete entity (cause) influences another (effect), where both the causative and effective agents pre-exist their relation. However, once we replace causality with performativity as our central dynamic principle, the concept of change changes. Change is no longer a question of what causes what, but of what coexists with what.⁹

#2016-09

blackboard, chalk, glass, metal sawhorses, 115 × 80 × 79 cm (2016)



#2016-10 (corner)

adhesive tape, variable dimensions (2016)



Chora

Kristeva characterizes the semiotic as a suppressed, unconscious language, which she also paraphrases with the term chora. The chora, or Greek *khôra*, is translated as space or womb. In philosophical contexts the chora was first used by Plato for something unnamable, inexperiential, and fluid, which is prior to the One, the Father. Kristeva associates the chora with the human drive and its unconscious articulation, which is thereby assigned to the realm of the semiotic. It is neither a sign nor a position, rather an inherently mobile and extremely provisional articulation.

The chora is the space of meanings that cannot be reduced to a symbolic order, hence it transcends rational subjectivity. Kristeva employs the chora to create the relationship between the semiotic and its subject in process. In contrast to the neutral, rational subject in male dominated language, it is confronted with archaic, instinctive, and maternal aspects in the act of assigning meaning. Kristeva also conceives the chora as a pulsating pressure on or in symbolic language. You can imagine this process like an eruption that thrusts upwards. And an eruption is only possible in one moment, the process of assigning meaning: When the speaking person enters into the symbolic order and its power of definition, but at the same time suppresses the parallel unconscious meanings.

For Kristeva, the chora does not generate a new language, rather it represents the heterogeneous, fragmented dimension of language. In her view, the chora is without unity and identity, yet it is subject to certain rules, which do not originate from the realm of the symbolic.¹⁰

#2016-12

metal sawhorses, steel, 200 × 80 × 300 cm (2016)



#2016-14

mixed media, variable dimensions (2016)



Clouds

To observe the clouds, I would say, is not to perceive objects in the sky but to catch a glimpse of the sky-in-formation, of its *clouding*.¹¹

#2016-15

mixed media, variable dimensions (2016)



#2016-16

mixed media, variable dimensions (2016)



Cultural materials

What matters is not any particular psychological structure (rationality) so much as problem-solving skills, rules of thumb, and routine procedures, that is “cultural materials” that can *accumulate over time*.¹²

#2016-18

wood, paint, fluorescent tube, 180 × 175 cm (2016)



Dérive

One of the basic situationist practices is the *dérive* [literally: “drifting”], a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances. [...] In a *dérive* one or more persons [...] let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there. Chance is a less important factor in this activity than one might think: from a *dérive* point of view cities have psychogeographical contours, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes that strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones.¹³

#2016-19 (sound)

mixed media, variable dimensions (2016)



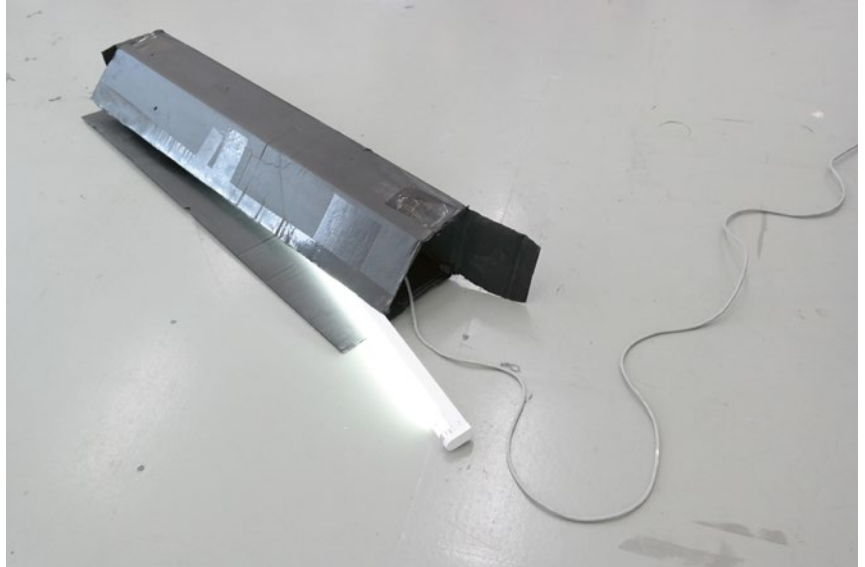
#2016-20

mixed media, variable dimensions (2016)



#2016-21

cardboard, china ink, chalk, fluorescent tube, 120 × 20 × 40 cm
(2016)



Détournement

Short for “détournement of preexisting aesthetic elements”. The integration of present or past artistic productions into a superior construction of a milieu.¹⁴



Doing

“That rock over there is a rock because of doing,” he said. We looked at each other and he smiled. I waited for an explanation, but he remained silent. Finally I had to say that I had not understood what he meant. “That’s doing!” he exclaimed. “Pardon me?” “That’s also doing.” “What are you talking about, don Juan?” “Doing is what makes that rock a rock, and that bush a bush. Doing is what makes you yourself and me myself.” I told him that his explanation did not explain anything. He laughed and scratched his temples. “That’s the problem with talking,” he said. “It always makes one confuse the issues. If one starts talking about doing, one always ends up talking about something else. It is better to just act.”¹⁵

The relationship of the cultural and the natural is a relation of “exteriority within”. This is not a static relationality but a doing—the enactment of boundaries—that always entails constitutive exclusions and therefore requisite questions of accountability.¹⁶

#2016-25

performance, variable dimensions (2016)



#2016-27

mixed media, 115 × 79 cm (2016)

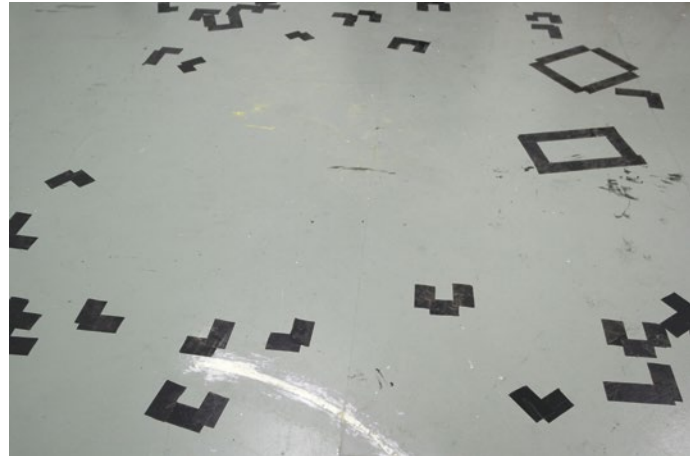
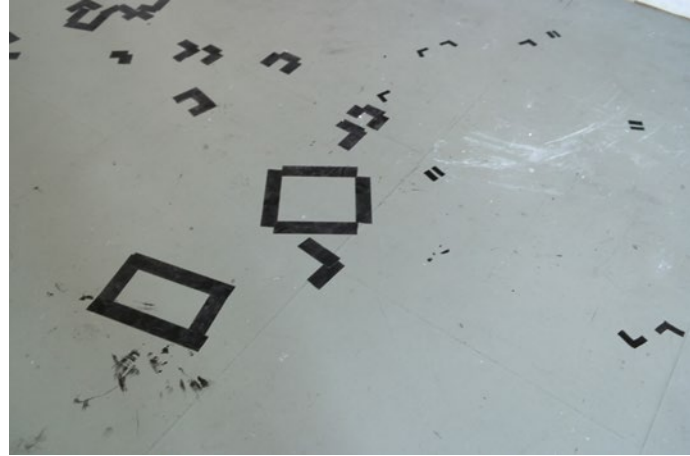


Ethics

Ethics is not simply about responsible actions in relation to human experiences of the world; rather it is a question of material entanglements and how each intra-action matters in the reconfiguring of these entanglements, that is, it is a matter of the ethical call that is embodied in the very worlding of the world.¹⁷

#2017-01

adhesive tape on floor, variable dimensions (2017)



Engagement

Suffice it to say, at this point, that even if the maker has a form in mind, it is not this form that creates the work. It is the engagement with materials.¹⁸



Falling tree

One of the recurring philosophical questions is: "Does a falling tree in the forest make a sound when there is no one to hear?" Which says something about the nature of philosophers, because there is always someone in a forest. It may only be a badger, wondering what that cracking noise was...¹⁹

Fetish

Thus the fetish is an object that, by virtue of its sheer material presence, affects the course of affairs.²⁰

Finality

“Believe me,” don. Juan said to me once, “this sense of finality about the world is a mere illusion. Due to the fact that it is never challenged, it stands as the only possible view. To see energy as it flows in the universe is the tool for challenging it.”²¹



#2017-05

blackboard, chalk, 120 × 200 cm (2017)



#2017-07

cardboard, china ink, chalk, 90 × 120 cm (2017)



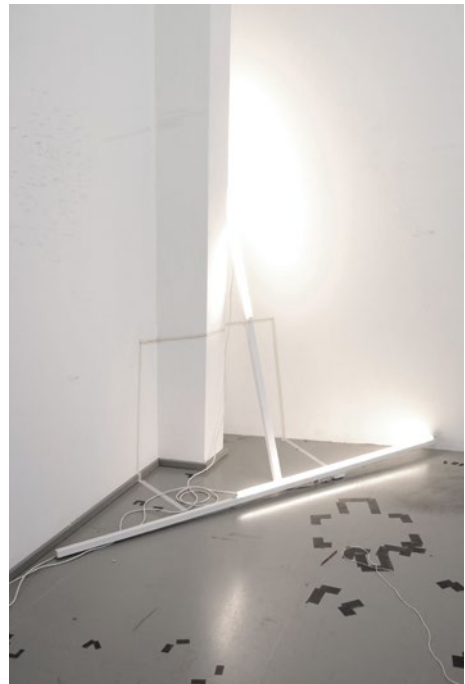
Finitude

Man isn't merely the measure of all things; man's finitude is implicated in the very conditions of possibility of measurability and determinability.²²



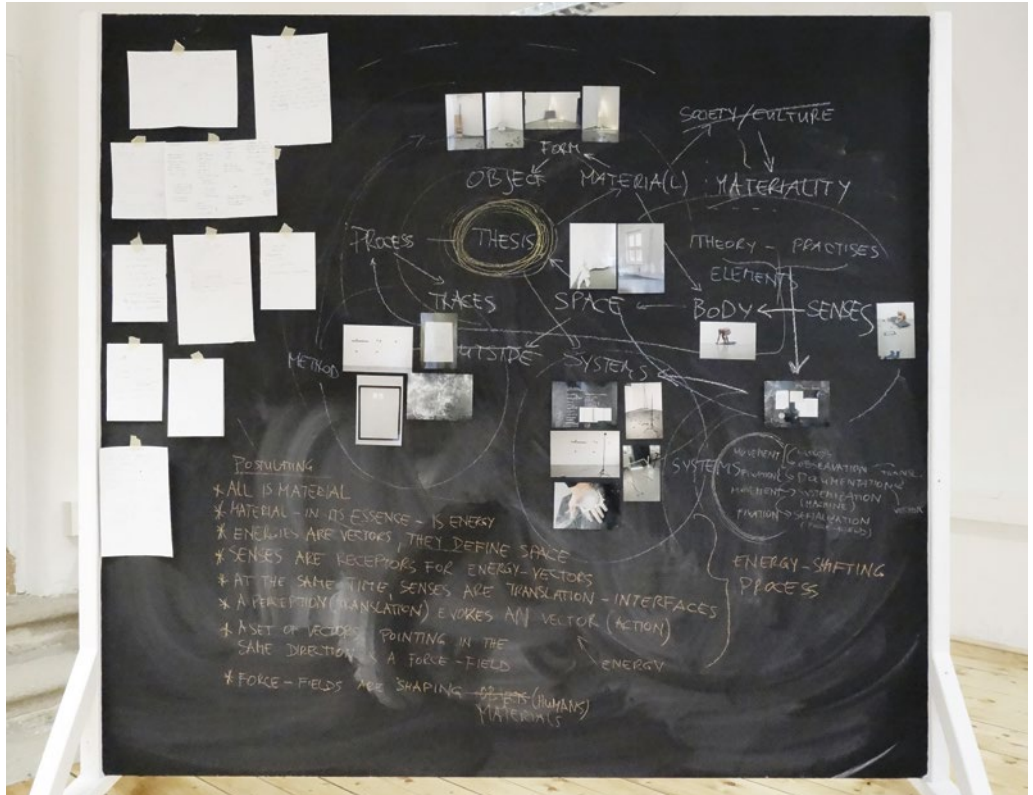
Fitting in

When I walk through a field and my attention is suddenly drawn to a few stones lying next to each other with a small plant growing between them, and I like what I see, what is that liking? Clearly the stones are lying there in a certain correspondence, if not accordance, because the wind and water have moved them, rolled them over the ground and made them find an impression, create a little group, a little nest where a plant could start growing and be protected—but where does my liking fit in? Is it merely in me, subjectively enjoying the sight, or is it something objective, an extended correspondence? I am with the stones and plant immediately, fitting in with them.²³



#2017-13

chalk, photographs, adhesive tape, 226 × 207 cm (2017)



Follow

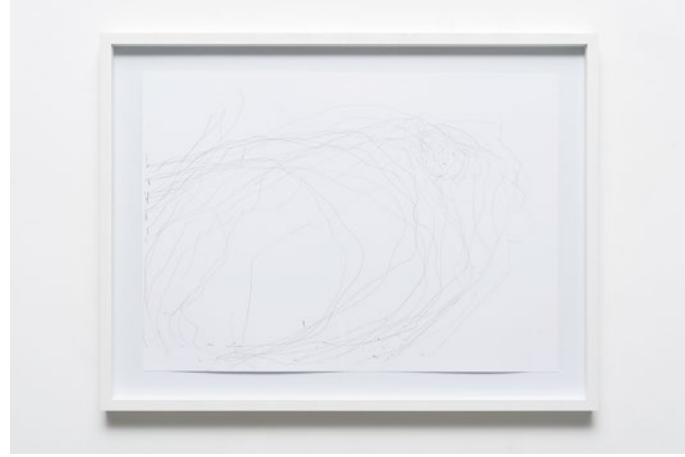
[...] Deleuze and Guattari, who insist that whenever we encounter matter, “it is matter in movement, in flux, in variation”. And the consequence, they go on to assert, is that “this matter-flow can only be *followed*” (Deleuze & Guattari 2004: 451). What Deleuze and Guattari here call a “matter-flow”, I would call a *material*.²⁴

clouds (09-03-2017)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)

clouds (2017_nd-01)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)

clouds (2017_nd-02)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)

clouds (2017_nd-03)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)



Human

Recent estimates suggest that human cells (i.e., somatic and germ) constitute only 43% of all the cells that form a human body [...]. The other 57% of cells are microbial (bacteria, viruses, archaea, microeukaryotes), and therefore, in terms of cell abundance at least, humans are actually more microbial than human. This statement is also true when considering ratios of gene abundance—microbial genes within the human body are thought to outnumber human genes by between 150 and 1000 times [...]. With a moment of reflection, this can lead to a medley of existential questions such as—what does it mean to be human?²⁵

diagram (body)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)

diagram (book)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)

diagram (borders)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)

Hunter

To dream like a hunter is to become the creatures you hunt and to see things in the ways they do. It is to open up to new possibilities of being, not to seek closure.²⁶

“To be a hunter means that one knows a great deal,” he went on. “It means that one can see the world in different ways. In order to be a hunter one must be in perfect balance with everything else, otherwise hunting would become a meaningless chore.”²⁷

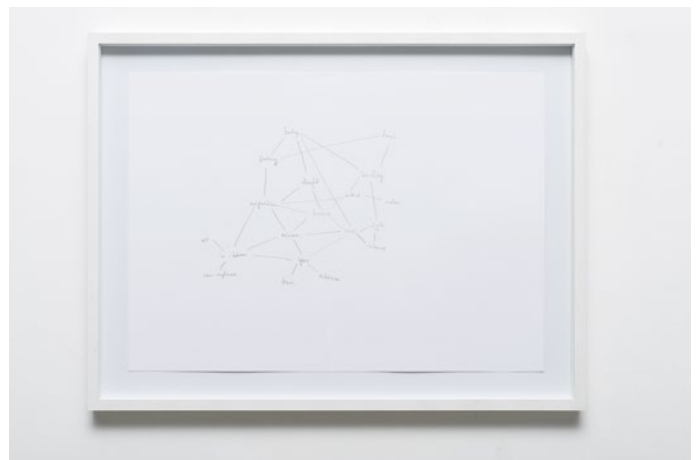
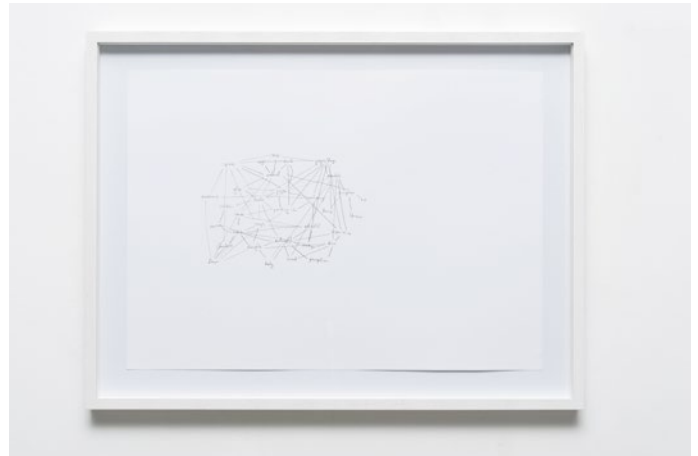
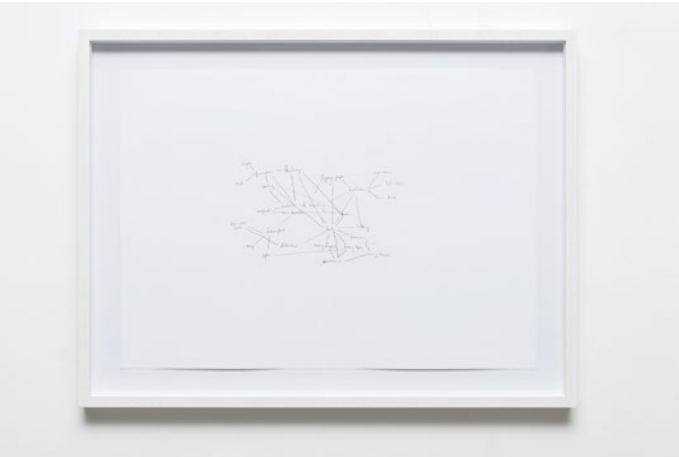
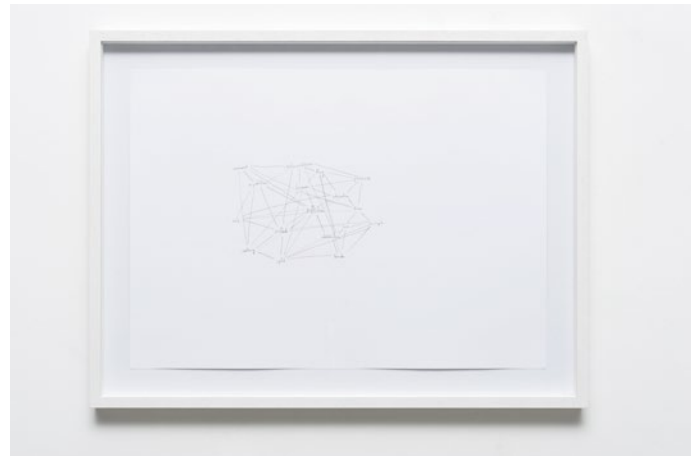
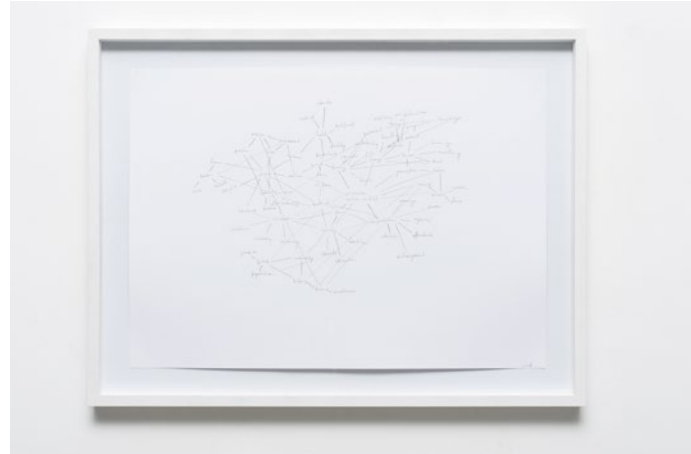
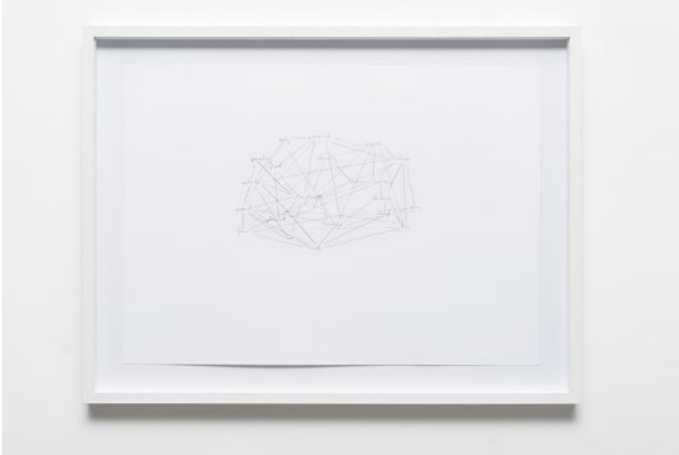


diagram (language)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)

diagram (material)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)

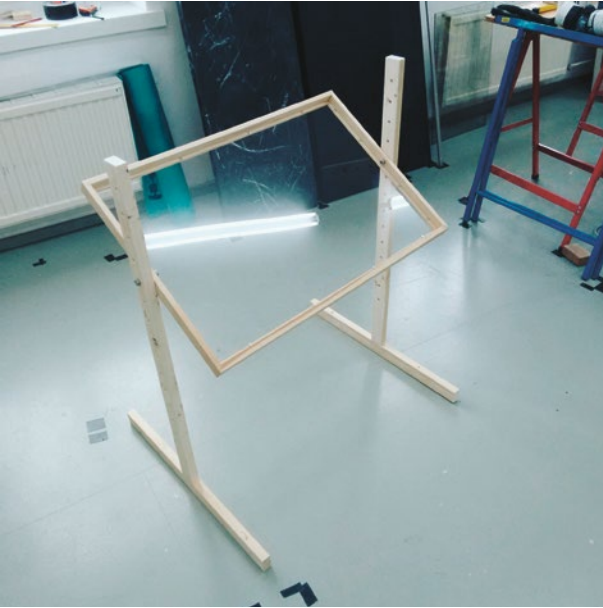
diagram (reflection)
pencil on paper, 60 × 80 cm (2017)



Hylomorphism

To create anything, Aristotle reasoned, you have to bring together form (*morphe*) and matter (*hylē*). In the subsequent history of Western thought, this hylomorphic model of creation became ever more deeply embedded. But it also became increasingly unbalanced. Form came to be seen as imposed, by an agent with a particular end or goal in mind, while matter—thus rendered passive and inert—was that which was imposed upon.²⁸

drawing machine
wood, glass, 80 × 62 × 107 cm (2017)



expect
neon tube, chalk, blackboards, dimensions unknown (2017)



Improvisation

A work of art, I insist, is not an object but a thing, and as Klee argued, the role of the artist is not to reproduce a preconceived idea, novel or not, but to join with and follow the forces and flows of material that bring the form of the work into being. “Following,” as Deleuze and Guattari point out, “is not at all the same thing as reproducing”: whereas reproducing involves a procedure of *iteration*, following involves *itineration* (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 410). The artist—as also the artisan—is an itinerant, whose work is consubstantial with the trajectory of his or her own life. Moreover, the creativity of the work lies in the forward movement that gives rise to things. To read things “forwards” entails a focus not on abduction but on improvisation (Ingold & Hallam 2007: 3). To improvise is to follow the ways of the world, as they unfold, rather than to connect up, in reverse, a series of points already traversed.²⁹

floor

chalk paint, wooden floor, variable dimensions (2017)



Incorporation

Studies have shown that the objects we hold become neurologically incorporated into our perception of the body—especially if we use them as tools that extend our body's capacity.³⁰

The blind man's stick has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight. [...] To get used to a hat, a car or a stick is to be transplanted into them, or conversely, to incorporate them into the bulk of our own body.³¹

color gradient/wall

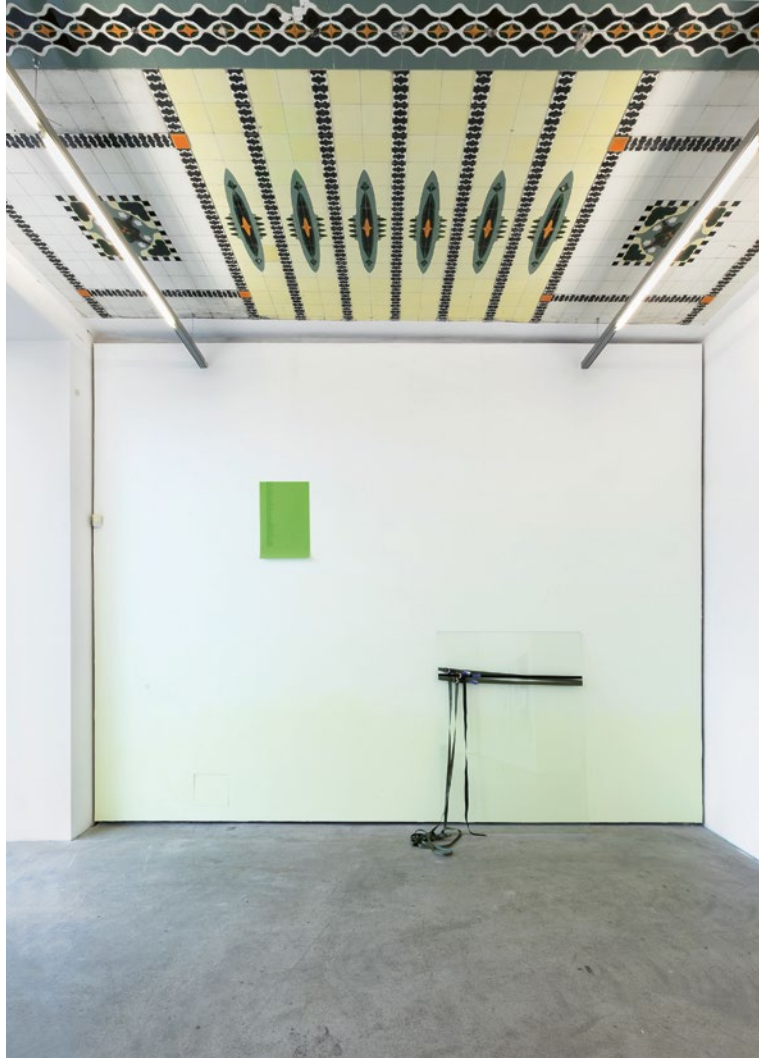
wall, wall paint, dimensions unknown (2017)

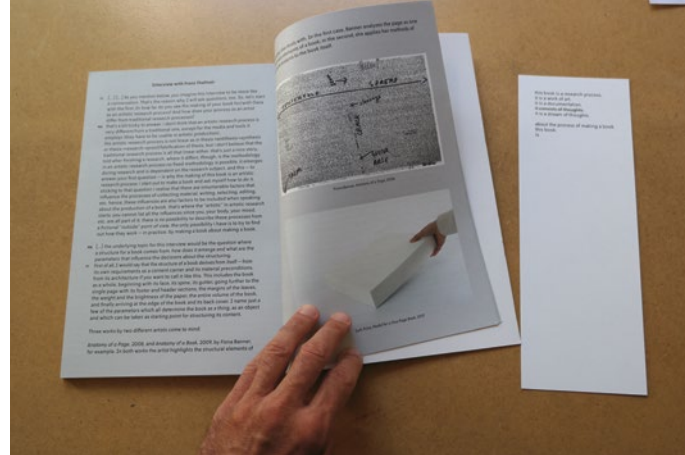
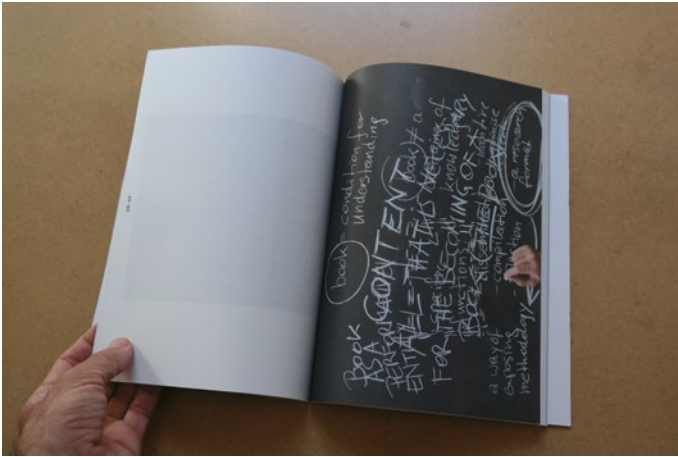
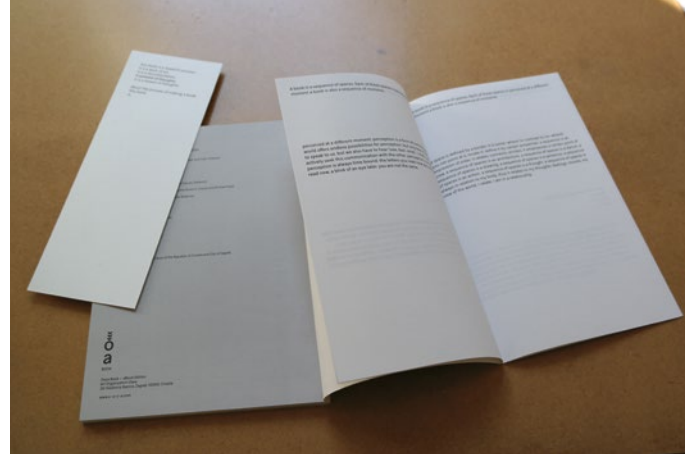
glass/tension belts

glass panel, tension belts, 100 × 200 cm (2017)

Inhabit

[...] *learning to inhabit the world in a better way*, instead of trying to construct it based on a preconceived idea of historical evolution. Otherwise put, the role of artworks is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities, but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real, whatever the scale chosen by the artist.³²



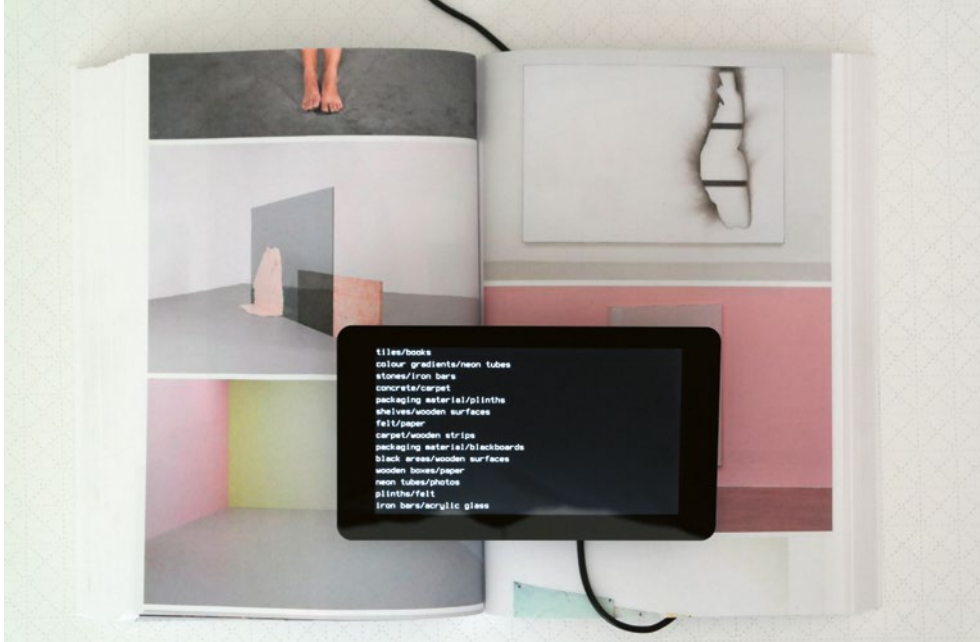


Inquiry

The theorist does his thinking in his head, and only then applies the forms of thought to the substance of the material world. The way of the craftsman, by contrast, is to allow knowledge to grow from the crucible of our practical and observational engagements with the beings and things around us [...]. This is to practice what I would like to call an *art of inquiry*.

In the art of inquiry, the conduct of thought goes along with, and continually answers to, the fluxes and flows of the materials with which we work. These materials think in us, as we think through them.³³

material generator
Raspberry Pi computer, screen, software, 19 × 11 × 5 cm (2017)



Intuition

Intuition as such is to be stabilized, so that we can conceive it as one and the same. But intuition as such is in no way stable, consisting, rather, in a wavering of the imagination between conflicting directions. That it should be stabilized, is to say that imagination should waver no longer, with the result that intuition would be utterly abolished and destroyed. Yet this must not happen; so that in intuition there must at least remain the product of this state, a trace of the opposed directions, consisting of neither but containing something of both.³⁴

pedro's geometry
steel bars, composite panels, variable dimensions (2017)



Knowing

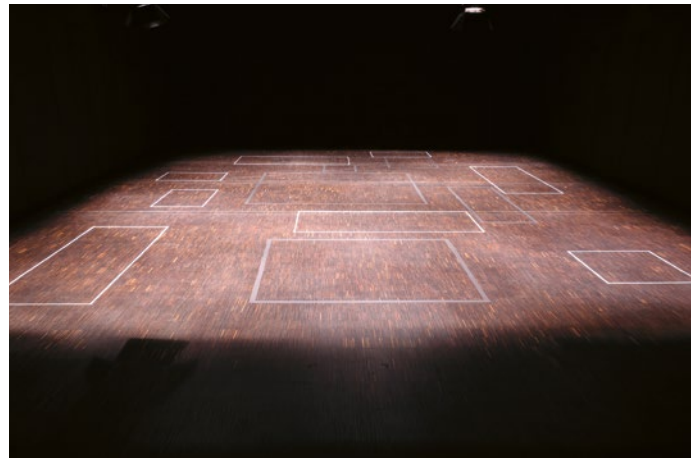
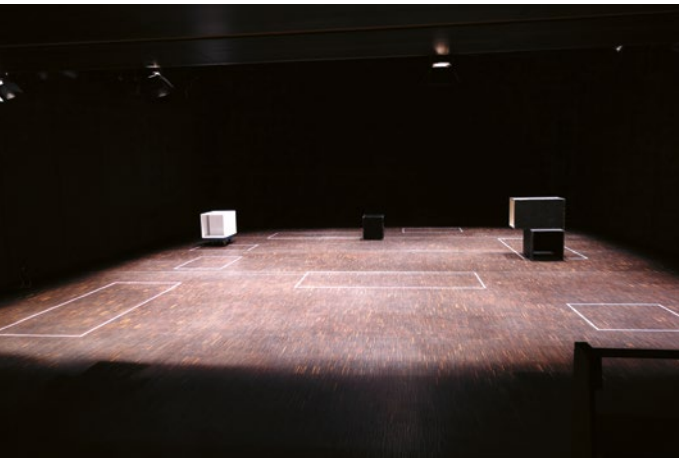
Knowing entails differential responsiveness and accountability as part of a network of performances. Knowing is not a bounded or closed practice but an ongoing performance of the world.³⁵

The only way one can really know things—that is, from the inside of one's being—is through a process of self-discovery. To know things you have to grow into them, and let them grow in you, so that they become a part of who you are. [...] knowing is a process of active following, of *going along*.³⁶

My thesis is that if we start with the supposition that there is only one primal stuff or material in the world, a stuff of which everything is composed, and if we call that stuff “pure experience,” then knowing can easily be explained as a particular sort of relation towards one another into which portions of pure experience may enter.³⁷

positions

tape on floor, found objects, body positions, variable dimensions (2017)



Leak

We may conclude that things can exist and persist only because they *leak*: that is, because of the interchange of materials across the surfaces by which they differentiate themselves from their surrounding medium. The bodies of organisms and other things leak continually, indeed their lives depend on it.³⁸

allyoucansee

Raspberry Pi computer, screen, software, wooden box, 47 × 78 × 45 cm (2018)



Matter

Matter does not refer to a fixed substance; rather, matter is a substance in its intra-active becoming—not a thing but a doing, a congealing of agency. Matter is a stabilizing destabilizing process of iterative intra-activity.³⁹

trolley
steel bars, paint, composite panel, 120 × 140 × 78 cm (2018)



Matter and form

Matter can itself be divided into matter and form: for instance, bricks are made of clay, shaped into cuboid blocks. Again, clay has its own matter—mud, say—and so on. Eventually, if one pursues this hierarchy of matter far enough downwards, Aristotle believes that one will reach the four elements, earth, air, fire and water.⁴⁰

color studies (studio)
acrylic paint on canvas, 90 × 180 cm each (2018)



Matting

Matting is a kind of posthumanist performativity that emphasizes matter's capacity to matter, to achieve significance in its being as doing. Matter here is not ground or essence, but agentive, "produced and productive, generated and generative".⁴¹

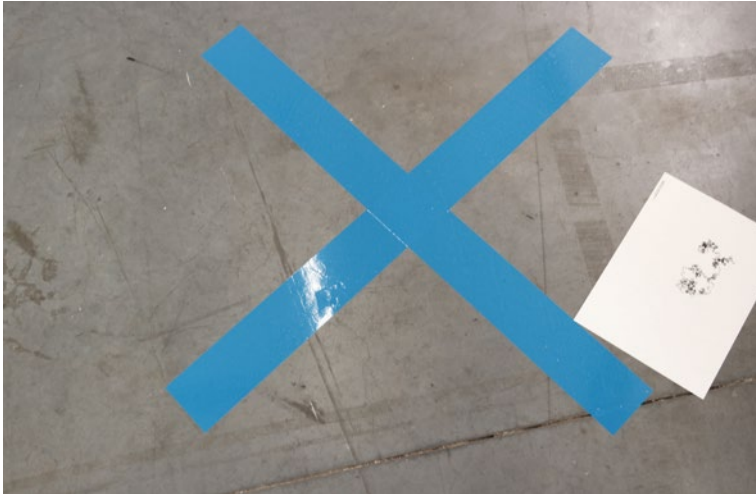
Meaning

Meaning is not a property of individual words or groups of words but an ongoing performance of the world in its differential dance of intelligibility and unintelligibility.⁴²



floor plan

blue foil on floor, variable dimensions (2018)



fridge

plasterboard, wood, acrylic paint, 50 × 55 × 90 cm (2018)



Object and thing

“An object,” writes the philosopher of design Vilém Flusser (1999: 58), “is what gets in the way, a problem thrown in your path like a projectile” (from *Latinum obiectum*, Greek *problema*). Standing before us as a *fait accompli*, it blocks our passage. To continue, we have either to find a way around it, to remove it, or to achieve a breakthrough. The thing, by contrast, draws us in, along the very paths of its formation. It is, if you will, a “going on”—or better, a place where several goings on become entwined. As the philosopher Martin Heidegger put it, albeit rather enigmatically, the thing presents itself “in its thinging from out of the worlding world” (Heidegger 1971: 181). It is a particular gathering or interweaving of the threads of life.⁴³



Ocean of materials

Like all other creatures, human beings do not exist on the “other side” of materiality but swim in an ocean of materials. Once we acknowledge our immersion, what this ocean reveals to us is not the bland homogeneity of different shades of matter but a flux in which materials of the most diverse kinds—through processes of admixture and distillation, of coagulation and dispersal, and of evaporation and precipitation—undergo continual generation and transformation. The forms of things, far from having been imposed from without upon an inert substrate, arise and are borne along—as indeed we are too—within this current of materials. As with the Earth itself, the surface of every solid is but a crust, the more or less ephemeral congregate of a generative movement.⁴⁴

glass/lines (movements)

glass panel, chalk marker, dimensions unknown (2018)



neon tube/wood

neon tube, wire, wooden planks, dimensions unknown (2018)



Performative

A performative account insists on [...] practices of engagement with, and as a part of, the world in which we have our being.⁴⁵

palette 1 and 2
plastic lids, paint, 37 × 45 cm (2018)

Photography

The body which is simultaneously: project/
material/performer of artistic practice finds its
logical support in an image by the photographic
medium. Photography is a “sociological” object
which permits the seizure of reality itself; it can
thus quickly seize the dialectic which renders a
behavior significant, by becoming communicable
to a collective audience.⁴⁶



Practices

As the rings of trees mark the sedimented history of their intra-actions within and as part of the world so matter carries within itself the sedimented historicalities of the practices through which it is produced as part of its ongoing becoming.⁴⁷

Raw materials

Raw Materials + Labour + Machinery = Product + Profit⁴⁸

paper/glass
glass plates, paper, 40 × 60 cm (2018)



performing material research (with alberto franceschini)
performance, variable dimensions (2018)

Semi-Material

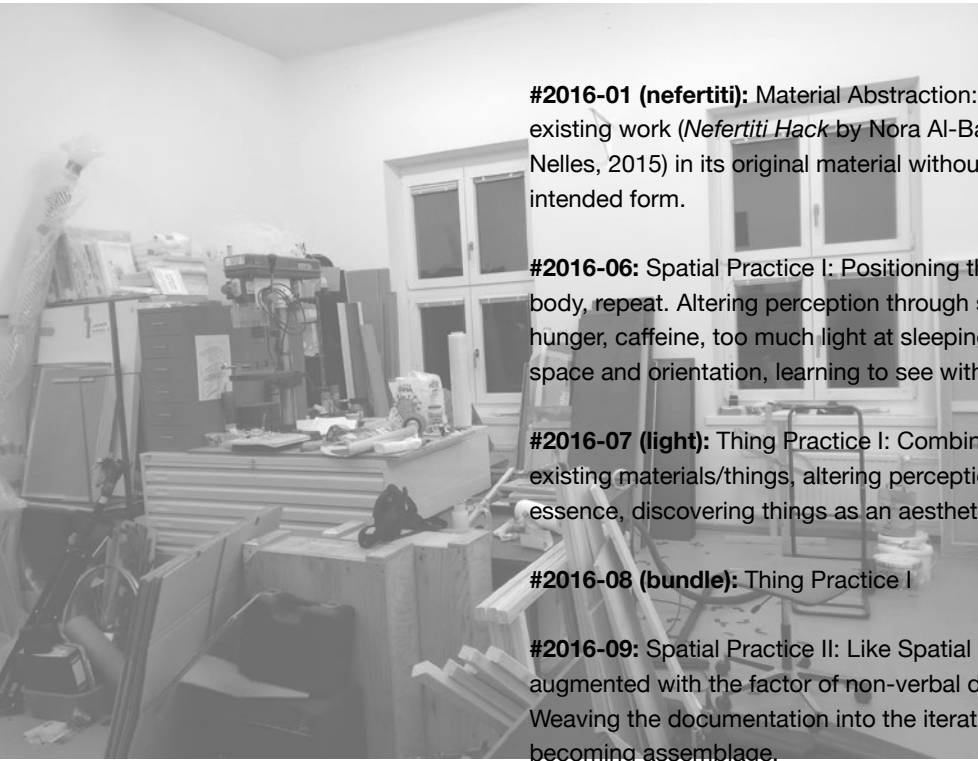
The fact that technologies rapidly become associated with a class of objects that are fundamentally material should not deflect our attention from the semi-material: another class of objects that emanate in our fullest relationship with the world as necessary mnemonics to our affective dimension.⁴⁹



Sex

Sex is a sacrament, and crossing-over into other modes of consciousness. It is the central act of the Great Work of transforming consciousness and, through consciousness, the world.⁵⁰





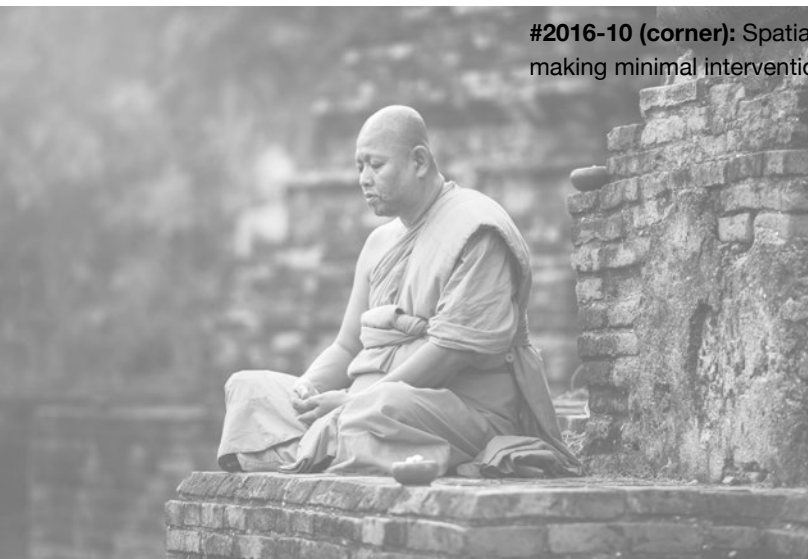
#2016-01 (nefertiti): Material Abstraction: Reproducing an existing work (*Nefertiti Hack* by Nora Al-Badri and Jan Nikolai Nelles, 2015) in its original material without giving it the intended form.

#2016-06: Spatial Practice I: Positioning things, moving the body, repeat. Altering perception through sound, exhaustion, hunger, caffeine, too much light at sleeping time... affecting space and orientation, learning to see with the body.

#2016-07 (light): Thing Practice I: Combining, rearranging existing materials/things, altering perception. Identifying the essence, discovering things as an aesthetic experience.

#2016-08 (bundle): Thing Practice I

#2016-09: Spatial Practice II: Like Spatial Practice I, augmented with the factor of non-verbal documentation. Weaving the documentation into the iteration of the practice, becoming assemblage.



#2016-10 (corner): Spatial Practice III: Perceiving space, making minimal interventions to intensify perception.

Storyed matter

No matter which form it takes, matter yields terrestrial tales of resilience, creativities, uncertainties, evolution and dissolution in non-deterministic ways.⁵¹



#2016-12: Spatial Practice I

#2016-14: Spatial Practice II

#2016-15: Spatial Practice II

#2016-16: Spatial Practice II

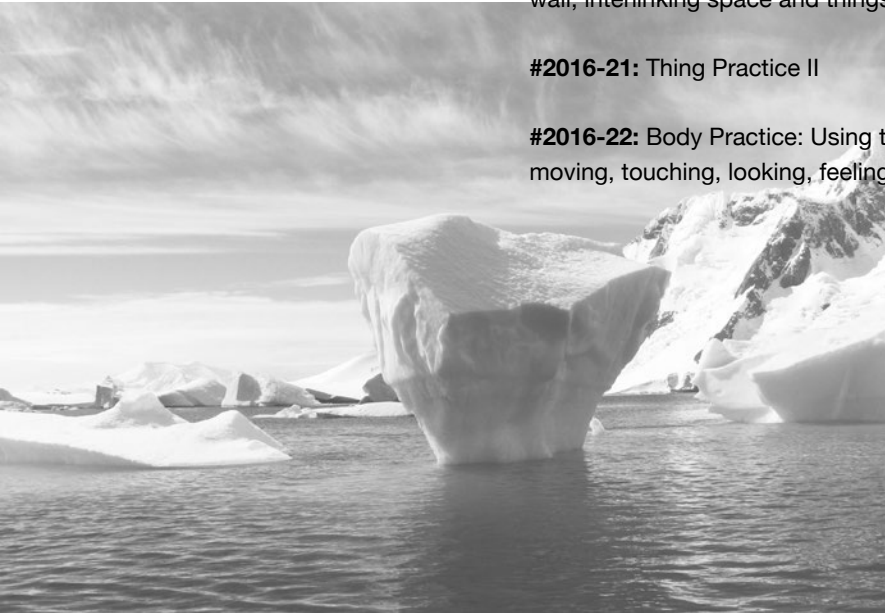
#2016-18: Thing Practice II: Augmenting the combinations with existing artworks, breaking open aesthetic completion.

#2016-19 (sound): Sound Practice: Employing Thing Practice and enhancing it with non-visual layers.

#2016-20: Spatial Practice II+: Marking positions on the floor/wall, interlinking space and things, visualizing stories.

#2016-21: Thing Practice II

#2016-22: Body Practice: Using the body to define things; moving, touching, looking, feeling, smelling, interacting.



The cook, the alchemist and the painter

The cook, the alchemist and the painter are in the business not so much of imposing form on matter as of bringing together diverse materials and combining or redirecting their flow in the anticipation of what might emerge.⁵²

For the alchemist, by contrast, a material is known not by what it is but by what it does, specifically when mixed with other materials, treated in particular ways, or placed in particular situations.⁵³



#2016-25: Body Practice

#2016-27: Layering: Arranging, layering, and connecting things; strata manifest.

#2017-01: Spatial Practice II+

#2017-02: Body Practice

#2017-03: Body Practice

#2017-05: Reflexive Practice I: Written-aesthetic reflection, understanding language as an open carrier of knowledge, which speaks to the form of presentation.

#2017-07: Reflexive Practice II: Showing the traces of past events, employing the form of presentation as knowledge carrier.

#2017-11: Prototyping: Declensions in the material, exploring rules of a language.



#2017-13: Reflexive Practice III: Written-aesthetic reflection, combined with images of past manifestations of material knowledge.

clouds (09-03-2017): Spatial Practice II+: Marking positions on paper through projection, preserving ephemeral states, view the clouds in their clouding.

clouds (2017_nd-01): Spatial Practice II+

clouds (2017_nd-02): Spatial Practice II+

clouds (2017_nd-03): Spatial Practice II+

diagram (body): Reflexive Practice IV: Definition as a spatial constellation in the surface; language resides between the words.

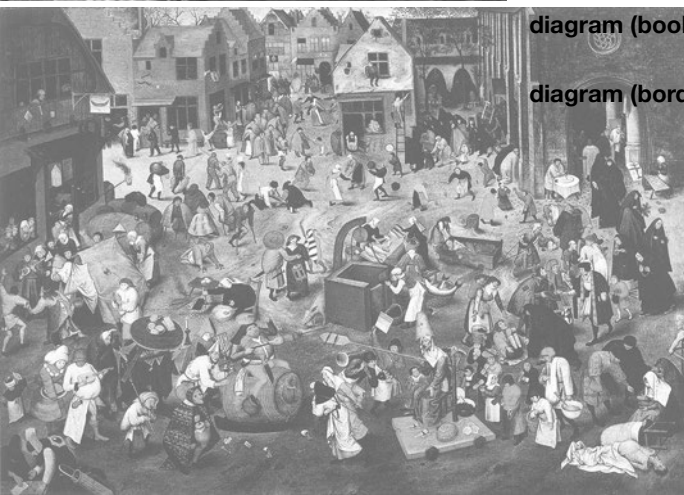


diagram (book): Reflexive Practice IV

diagram (borders): Reflexive Practice IV

Thinking in materiality

In order to follow this fragile lead in almost complete darkness, the unequivocal alternative is to not think about *materiality*, but—tautologically perhaps—*materialize* it, and think *in material*. There can be no discourse on materiality, only discourse in materiality. This choice, taken without reservations, entails a rejection of survey, investigation and analytical study (the study of a subject from a hypothetical outside which positions work on and about its subject but can never speak with it) for the performance of its primary proposition (“I materialize”) and can only talk in action through the voice of material.⁵⁴



diagram (language): Reflexive Practice IV

diagram (material): Reflexive Practice IV

diagram (reflection): Reflexive Practice IV

drawing machine: Tool Practice: Finding aids to generate insights.

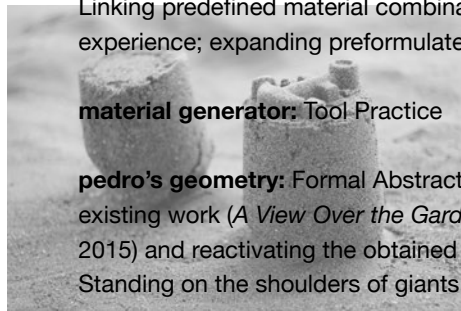
expect: Reflexive Practice III: Reduction in the reflection.

floor: Reflexive Practice II+

color gradient/wall, glass/tension belts: Generative Practice: Linking predefined material combinations with aesthetic experience; expanding preformulated action into improvisation.

material generator: Tool Practice

pedro's geometry: Formal Abstraction: Formally analyzing an existing work (*A View Over the Garden* by Pedro Cabrita Reis, 2015) and reactivating the obtained parameters in new units. Standing on the shoulders of giants.



Touch

We're made up of the same stuff. If I stab you, I must instantly discover what it's like to be stabbed. And vice versa. We know what we do to each other. *When we touch someone, they touch us equally.*⁵⁵

Traces

Traces are a beginning. They indicate. That there is something to be found, but do not reveal what, where, and how. They suggest paths but do not say where they lead. That is why one follows them at first but leaves open whether to pursue to them.⁵⁶

Nefertiti Hack

From today on everybody around the world can access, study, print or create a 3D dataset of Nefertiti's head in high resolution. This data is accessible under a public domain without any charges, this torrent provides you a STL-file (100 MB)

TORRENT DOWNLOAD

alternatively direct download

on web file (400MB)

NEFERTITI_062.ZIP

The Other Nefertiti - Artists release the 3D data of Nefertiti's Head.

Nefertiti is returning to the place where it was found. For the first time since the sculpture was excavated and stolen over 100 years ago, the iconic artefact will be shown in Cairo. "The Other Nefertiti" is an artistic intervention by the two German artists Nora Al-Badri and Jan Nikolai Nelles. Al-Badri and Nelles scanned the head of Nefertiti clandestinely in the Neues Museum Berlin without permission of the Museum and they hereby announce the release of the 3D data of Nefertiti's head under a Creative Commons License. The artists 3D-Print exhibited in Cairo is the most precise scan ever made public of the original head of Nefertiti. With regard to the notion of belonging and possession of objects of other cultures, the artists intention is to make cultural heritage publicly accessible. The Neues Museum in Berlin until today does not allow any access to the head of Nefertiti nor to the data from their scan. "With the data leak as a part of this counter narrative we want to articulate the arbitrary, to inspire a critical re-assessment of today's conditions and to overcome the national notion of possession in Germany" the two artists say.

Artists Homepage

Jan Nikolai Nelles

Nora Al-Badri



positions: Body Practice and Spatial Practice II+

allyoucansee: Tool Practice: Conceiving the work-tool as artwork.

trolley: Formal Abstraction applied to an everyday object (tool trolley)

color studies (studio): Color Abstraction: Like Formal Abstraction, just with color.

different views: Formal Abstraction and Color Abstraction combined with Prototyping. Departure point as in pedro's geometry.

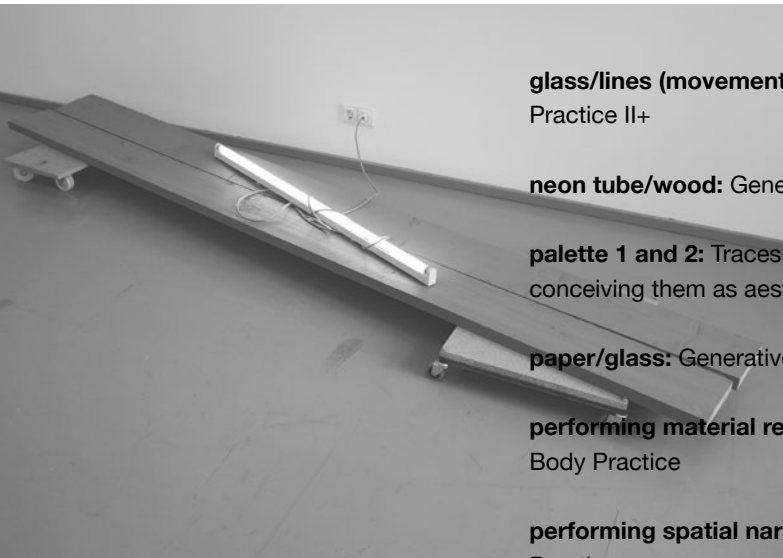
floor plan: Copying Practice: Conceiving copying as material transfer, letting dimensioning come into effect, making thought processes visible.

fridge: Formal Abstraction (studio fridge)

human/box: Generative Practice

Workshop

That was when I grasped it for the first time: the whole workshop was Corodiak. The web of strings was his optic nerve, the tools and vices were extensions of his arms. The plans and sketches were an extension of his brain, the puppets and mechanisms the fulfillment of his dreams and ideas.⁵⁷



glass/lines (movements): Generative Practice and Spatial Practice II+

neon tube/wood: Generative Practice

palette 1 and 2: Traces Practice: Reading existing traces and conceiving them as aesthetic impressions of reality.

paper/glass: Generative Practice

performing material research (with alberto franceschini): Body Practice

performing spatial narratives (@ oaza kolektif zagreb): Body Practice

Der ein Draß sich nach seinem tode
Verfchluckt/ vnd fiber gefressen het/
Dem andern beuz das heupt zum schwanz/
So hastu die rechte kunst gant.



World

Why not use art to look at the world, rather than stare sullenly at the forms it presents?⁵⁸

“The world around us is very mysterious,” he said. “It doesn’t yield its secrets easily.”⁵⁹

The Death of the Climate Activist

Bayo Akomolafe, Ph.D.
The Emergence Network

In the southeastern Brazilian state of Santa Catarina, in a small municipality called Laguna, a curious intra-species alliance has evolved over the years. If you were to pedal to Tesoura, a beach facing the Atlantic, you might find fishermen knee-deep in the water, cast nets in hand, doing nothing. Or so it seems. If you do not grow impatient, you might witness the first shot in what is to become a ping-pong rapid-fire series of trans-corporeal signals and gestures. First, a dorsal fin or two might pierce through the calm surface, invoking a wave of recognition that flutters across the men's lips. The dolphin's name. Another dolphin surfaces, only in part, slapping its tail on the surface. The men closest to this dolphin suddenly become very active. This dolphin heads straight for shore; the men cast their nets. The retrieved nets are never empty of fish; the local mullets called tainha. The men say to anyone who would listen: When the dolphins aren't around, it is not worth fishing.¹

Here's a riddle: Who are the fishermen? The men? The dolphins? Or something that resists convenient and conventional naming?

If the science pans out, then numerous climate change reports suggest we are collectively heading for more difficult, fiery times. In 2018 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report calling for drastic and fundamental transformations in the ways we perform the economy, advising that if significant amelioratory efforts aren't in progress by 2030 to limit warming to (and emissions consistent with) 1.5°C, the runaway effects could mark the beginning of the end of a healthy planet as we know it.

Another report²—authorized by the Australian Senate in 2017—adds petrol to the stinging fumes, shames the curt conservatism of the IPCC model, and predicts that without radical mitigation efforts in the next decade, human civilization could *end* by 2050. Arguing that the IPCC's scenario-building apparatus was too reticent in its appreciation of the sheer complexity of Earth's interconnected geological and political processes, the Australian document unfolds a narrative that reads like the plot of a filmic exploration into the origins of a dystopian, post-apocalyptic “society”.

On the backs of these narratives of catastrophe, climate activists and environmentalists around the world are amplifying their efforts to educate the public, force the hand of the powers that be to shape policies consistent with the science, and organize communities to transform the ways they live. In doing so, these activists have touched the nerve of the status quo, angering repressive governments like the Bolsonaro-led Brazilian state, who believe they have a lot to gain by mining resources and killing communities that protect the integrity of those troubled lands.

The enforced killings, “disappearings”, and silencing of activist voices around the planet is a story worth telling—perhaps with just as much intensity and grief as the previously referenced reports on climate collapse. An account from the international NGO Global Report³ puts

a notably conservative figure to the number of enforced activist deaths and/or disappearances recorded in 2018 in countries like India, the Philippines, Brazil, Columbia, Mexico, and the DRC (among others): 164. *One hundred and sixty-four* lives snuffed out because they challenged large corporations, stood up to government officials, and demanded an end to the mercantilist algorithms of a system committed to protecting its escalating bottom lines.

And yet, in the face of a globalizing population deadened by the fetish of apocalyptic endings and to a consumerism that rewards the cavalier, climate activists push on toward the pinnacle where the courtly suits hobnob with each other in the hallways of power—more than often without success. Wielding the apparent righteousness of their motivations, data management tools, fundraising strategies, social media approaches and communications, and daring events, activists continue to insist on the possibility of a radically different world. Swedish teenage activist Greta Thunberg, who skipped classes at age 15 to hand out flyers chastising the bewildering inaction of adults at the Swedish parliament, will in mid-August 2019 board the *Malizia II*, an open-cockpit racing yacht, to attend a United Nations summit meeting on global warming in New York. The two-week journey across the Atlantic fits in with Greta's avowed rejection of air travel because of its associations with greenhouse emissions.

It is in the context of these electrifying tensions—between the climate justice claims advanced and articulated by practitioners like Greta and the associated resistances mounted by the powerful not only in the so-called Global South but in the United States and in Europe (where artful smears and condescendingly finger-wagging essays crowd dailies to berate the juvenility of these activists)—that another concern emerges. *A third entry*. A traversal streaking through the sky like a comet, tearing up the fabric of the ordinary as it passes. The traces of an unsettling set of questions are faintly discerned: *If we grant that our lives and bodies are materially entangled with the environment, agentially*

inseparable from nonhuman processes, then should we not take into account the ways we ourselves are being acted upon by the materials/tools in and around us? In simpler terms, if the climate activist is “correct” in saying that the world around us is not just a natural resource to be exploited for our whimsical pursuits of growth at all cost, and that the world by implication is alive and active and animated, then what does that do to the “climate activist”? In even simpler terms, if we “humans” are part of the world and not apart from it, then who is the activist? And, more shockingly, where is power?

Every attempt to mark the take-off point for the Anthropocene—the so-called “age of Man” characterized by irreversible effects on the planet due to anthropogenic activity—is strewn with trouble. It would be easy, for instance, to say the Anthropocene began with the advent of industrial societies, with the deployment of the Hiroshima/Nagasaki bombs, or much earlier when human societies began to use tools and language—except that the Anthropocene calls into question (among many other things) our assumptions about the linearity of time. Beginnings and endings are not neat in a world that is entangled and entangling. Origins spill into endings that are initiatory and catastrophic all at once. In a sense beyond the scope of this essay, time becomes material, rhizomatic, performative, participatory, and diffracted—no longer the dependable tour guide that was enlisted to lead us all to a certain future.

In fact, nothing stays the same. The same porosity and corrosiveness infect, and de-exceptionalize, the human figure.

Modernity invested “humans” with a transcendent separability that privileged us above the material world. Fancying ourselves unique and above the realm of messy things, we built concepts that enabled us to colonize others and our environment. Ironically, the Anthropocene has

worked very well as a compelling rallying call to the untoward effects of anthropocentrism. We are learning the hard way that we are not at all central to the world's workings, and that—even more worrying—the properties we imagined we owned are not at all “ours”. We can no longer draw a line to mark where we stop and whence the environment begins, where nature crashes at the doorstep of culture, where our internal and supposedly private subjectivities end, and where the blind deterministic laws of Newton hold sway. *We can no longer say who the fisherman is.*

Holding a cup of warm water (as opposed to cold water) could be the difference between judging a stranger as trustworthy or untrustworthy.⁴ Traumatic memories could be passed across generations due to the activism of gut bacteria.⁵ And phones—those ubiquitous tools of modern addiction—are actively modifying the way we think, express ourselves, know the world, and show up bodily. These are not simple cause-effect relationships but “intra-actions”, so relationally penetrating that the “objects” only emerge as a result of the relationship, and not prior to it.

Together with Bruno Latour, and in a perverse misstating of his aphorism that he would no doubt approve of, let us all announce: We have never really been human. In a surprising twist of plot,⁶ we are neither the heroes nor the only matters of fascination in a pluriverse of the manifold. The tool-wielder has become (or has always been) the wielded. The net caster basks in, and is shaped by, the aquatic expertise of dolphins. The ultimate is now penultimate. From Pollanian apples, in their conspiratorial attempts to use humans to propagate their kind, to Baradian-Bohrian quantum particles doing experiments in the (now saturated) “void”, the world is truly alive and agential—suffused with the “elements” of personhood we gleefully grab for ourselves.

In short, the Anthropocene calls upon a radically new ontology and dismantles the Aristotelian-Cartesian one most modern Western dwellers have long taken as granted. This is the material performativity that notices “molecular” processes (in the Deleuzian

sense), transcorporeal bodies, companion species, queer time, and nonhuman agency. This ecologically vibrant world of emergence desacralizes human activity, placing it within a web of other agential effects streaming from an incalculably perverse and rhizomatic world. A processual world of fluid becomings and performances.

The world that the climate activist hopes to save *kills him*. Dismantles him. Tears him apart. Diffracts him so that what was once quintessential is now spread abroad. *Things fall apart, and the center cannot hold*.

Instead of an independent agent—the vaunted unit of social change whose intentions and motivations and exhaustions are the engine room of world change—surrounded by the paraphernalia of her vocation, we must now turn our attention to the whole *assemblage* and what this organization of bodies is doing. The climate activist is no longer the human separate from the furniture of activism but the “human” and the materials: the computer screens, the concepts, the classifications, the categories of thought, and the city in its subjectivizing effects. As such, the classical self is decentered as the focus of our attention and prayers; social change is not predicated on the unilateral moves of the human self but on assemblages breaking through (deterritorializing and reterritorializing) other assemblages.

Is some kind of *postactivist* inquiry discernible? What might the matter of such investigations raise up? The methodologies of a postactivist engagement are not this essay’s to discuss, but whatever they are, such a vocation holds great promise—especially in a time of despair, when it seems the same veteran approaches to climate activism (or activism in general) are failing to provoke movement.

As a child of the so-called Global South, my people have long been passive recipients of the so-called benevolence of the West. NGOs are as bountiful as thieving churches on every street. People

nickname themselves “activists” in order to locate their mouths squarely beneath the faucet of foreign aid and Euro-American philanthropy. Not much changes, however. Activism often translates into street smarts for fooling yet another virtue-seeking foreigner. To fresh-faced well-intentioned wanna-be activists, the lessons are stark and quickly adopted: It hardly matters what your righteous cause is, or what your intentions are, in order to survive you have to *get with the program*.

What a postactivism might invite us to dwell with are the various furniture elements that comprise the activist assemblage. Instead of focusing squarely on the human, we are being called to notice the apparatus, what it stabilizes, what it *re/produces*, what it excludes from mattering. We might find, for instance—taking seriously this postactivist invitation to deprivilege the human “actor”—that how we see our problems is often a part of the problem: that our solutions, thoughts, contributions, and ideas are secretions of the assemblages we intra-act with. As such—and this is another important postactivist consideration—we will often reinforce the problematic situations we want to escape: Our “solutions” will often turn out to be the crisis doubling down on itself, gaining intelligence, becoming more nuanced.

Most importantly, a postactivist investigation might help us recover a sense of wonder and re-enchantment by pointing to “other places of power”. Perhaps this is its greatest gift: hacking through habitual patterns of perception and engagement to reorient attention to other sites of potentialities bubbling from the chemical landscapes of the Anthropocene.

In the final analysis the climate activist’s greatest sacrifice is her identity, her pristine separability. Her demise scatters her remains abroad, seeding every banal surface with agency and promise. It is there we must go, in the performative distance, where the otherwise swirls.

- 1 Joe Roman, "Fishing With Dolphins," *SLATE*, January 31, 2013, <https://slate.com/technology/2013/01/fishing-with-dolphins-symbiosis-between-humans-and-marine-mammals-to-catch-more-fish.html>.
- 2 David Pratt and Ian Dunlop, *Existential climate-related security risk: A scenario approach*, BT Policy Paper, (Melbourne: Breakthrough – National Centre for Climate Restoration, 2019).
- 3 Amanda Schupak, "Disturbing Report Shows How Many Environmental Activists Are Killed Each Week," *HUFFPOST*, July 29, 2019, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/report-environment-activists-killed_n_5cb5f7dfe4b098b9a2db040f.
- 4 Samuel McNeerney, "A Brief Guide to Embodied Cognition: Why You Are Not Your Brain," *Scientific American*, November 4, 2011, <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/a-brief-guide-to-embodied-cognition-why-you-are-not-your-brain>.
- 5 James Gallagher, "'Memories' pass between generations," *BBC News*, December 1, 2013, <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-25156510>.
- 6 Not too surprising, given that non-Western philosophies have been speaking of this strange entanglement for generations.

Footnotes glossary

- 1 Tim Ingold, *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 94.
- 2 Graham Harvey, *Contemporary Paganism: Listening People, Speaking Earth* (Washington Square, NY: New York University Press, 2000), 28.
- 3 Karen Michelle Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 143.
- 4 Knut Ebeling, "The Art of Searching: On 'Wild Archaeologies' from Kant to Kittler," *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics* 25, no. 51 (January 10, 2017): 7–18, here 14, <https://doi.org/10.7146/nja.v25i51.25152>.
- 5 Manuel De Landa, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 14.
- 6 Tim Ingold, "Materials against Materiality," *Archaeological Dialogues* 14, no. 1 (June 2007): 1–16, here 4, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1380203807002127>.
- 7 Donna Haraway in Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 159.
- 8 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 171.
- 9 Rosi Braidotti and Maria Hlavajova (eds.), *Posthuman Glossary (Theory)* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 245.
- 10 Ursula I. Meyer, *Die andere Philosophiegeschichte*, Philosophinnen 18 (Aachen: Ein-Fach-Verlag, 2007), 307–8. Translated for this publication.
- 11 Tim Ingold, "Being alive to a world without objects," in *The Handbook of Contemporary Animism*, ed. Graham Harvey (Durham, UK: Acumen, 2013), 213–25, here 216.
- 12 De Landa, *A Thousand Years*, 43.
- 13 Guy Debord, "Theory of the Derive," trans. Ken Knabb, *Les Livres Nuxes* 9 (November 1956) <https://www.edde.vt.edu/sitonline/si/theory.html>
- 14 Internationale Situationniste, "Definitions," *Internationale Situationniste* 1 (June 1958): <https://www.edde.vt.edu/sitonline/si/definitions.html>
- 15 Carlos Castaneda, *Journey to Ixtlan* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972), 188.
- 16 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 135.
- 17 Barad, 160.
- 18 Ingold, *Making*, 22.
- 19 Terry Pratchett in Harvey, *Contemporary Paganism*, 122.
- 20 Ingold, "Materials against Materiality," 12.
- 21 Carlos Castaneda, *Magical Passes: The Practical Wisdom of the Shamans of Ancient Mexico*. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), introduction.
- 22 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 143.
- 23 Lars Spuybroek, *The Sympathy of Things: Ruskin and the Ecology of Design*, revised and expanded edition (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 147–48.
- 24 Ingold, "Being alive," 220.
- 25 Jake M. Robinson, Jacob G. Mills, and Martin F. Breed, "Walking Ecosystems in Microbiome-Inspired Personal and Planetary Ecological Perspective on Enhancing Personal and Planetary Health," *Challenges* 9, no. 40 (2018): 1–15, here 3.
- 26 Ingold, *Making*, 11.
- 27 Castaneda, *Journey to Ixtlan*, 53.
- 28 Ingold, "Being alive," 213.
- 29 Ingold, 222.
- 30 Karen Sherman, "The Glory Hole," *e-flux* 87 (December 2017): <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/87/164528/the-glory-hole>.
- 31 Merleau-Ponty in Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 157.
- 32 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics (Documents Sur l'art)*, trans. Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods (Dijon: Presses du réel, 2009), 13.
- 33 Ingold, *Making*, 6.
- 34 Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Science of Knowledge* (published 1749 in German as "Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre"), ed. and trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs, *Texts in German Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 206.
- 35 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 149.
- 36 Ingold, *Making*, 1.
- 37 William James in Spuybroek, *The Sympathy of Things*, 147.
- 38 Ingold, *Making*, 95.
- 39 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 151.
- 40 Thomas Answorth, "Form vs. Matter," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (February 8, 2016): <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/form-matter>.
- 41 Braidotti, *Posthuman Glossary (Theory)*, 245.
- 42 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 149.
- 43 Ingold, "Being alive," 215.
- 44 Ingold, "Materials against Materiality," 7.
- 45 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 133.
- 46 Gina Pane in Jennifer Blessing, "Gina Pane's Witnessess," *On Archives and Archiving* 7, no. 4 (2002): 14–26, here 21.
- 47 Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 180.
- 48 Alain De Botton, *Status Anxiety* (London: Penguin, 2005), 107.
- 49 Michael Punt, "Synchroony and the Semi-Material Object," in *New Realities: Being Synthetic, Consciousness Reframed – The Planetary Collegium's IXth International Research Conference*, eds. Roy Ascott, Gerald Bast, and Wolfgang Fiel (Vienna: SpringerWienNewYork, 2008), 224–227, here 226.
- 50 Peter Redgrove in Harvey, *Contemporary Paganism*, 99.
- 51 Braidotti, *Posthuman Glossary (Theory)*, 412.
- 52 Ingold, "Being alive," 220.
- 53 Ingold, *Making*, 29.
- 54 My rephrasing of Céline Condorelli, *Support Structures*, (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014), 13.
- 55 Sherman, "The Glory Hole."
- 56 Werner Stegmater, "Anhaltspunkte. Spuren zur Orientierung," in *Spur: Spreizlesen als Orientierungstechnik und Wissenskunst*, eds. Sybille Krämer, Werner Kogge, and Gernot Grube, Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft 1830, (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2007) 82–94, here 82. Translated for this publication.
- 57 Walter Moers, *Labyrinth of Dreaming Books: A Novel*, trans. John Brown (New York: Abrams, 2013), e-book.
- 58 Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 54.
- 59 Castaneda, *Journey to Ixtlan*, 22.

Photo credits for artworks

All photos by Michael Kargl unless stated otherwise.
#2017-02 (p. 19), #2017-03 (p. 20); Michaela Tomasselli clouds (09-03-2017) (p. 24), clouds (2017_nd-01) (p. 24), clouds (2017_nd-02) (p. 24), clouds (2017_nd-03) (p. 24), diagram (body) (p. 25), diagram (book) (p. 25), diagram (borders) (p. 25), diagram (language) (p. 26), diagram (material) (p. 26), diagram (reflection) (p. 26), allyoucansee (p. 34), trolley (p. 35), color studies (p. 36), fridge (p. 38), palette 1 and 2 (p. 41); Markus Gradwohl floor (p. 28); Stefan Riebel color gradient/wall and glass/tension belts (p. 29); Lisa Rastl human/box (p. 39); Wouter Huis glass/lines (movements) (p. 40), neon tube/wood (p. 40), paper/glass (p. 42); Gilles Ribero performing spatial narratives (p. 44); Nina Bacun

Photo credits for index of practices

All photos by Michael Kargl unless stated otherwise.
p. 46 (buddhist): Sasin Tipchai/Pixabay
p. 47 (Drombeg stone circle): Ingo Mehling/Wikimedia Commons
p. 47 (ice berg): Robynn/Pixabay
p. 50 (Milky Way): Pexels/Pixabay
p. 50 (sand castle): Okan Caliskan/Pixabay
p. 52 (clouds): Ashish Bogawat/Pixabay

Performative Materiality

Editor: Michael Kargl

Idea, concept, artworks: Michael Kargl

Texts: Bayo Akomolafe, Michael Kargl

Translation and copyedit: Christine Schöffler & Peter Blakeney |
www.whysociety.org

Graphic design: Studio Kehrler | www.studiokehrer.at

Production management: Franz Thalmair

Typefaces: American Typewriter, Archer Pro, Brandon Grotisque,
Brandon Text, Helvetica Neue, TT Hoves, Times New Roman

Paper: 150g Munken Polar Rough, 400g Munken Polar (cover)

Print run: 300

Printing: Medienfabrik Graz GmbH

Printed in the EU

Austrian Science Fund (FWF): AR348-G24

Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0)

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0>

Revolver Publishing

GOLDLAND MEDIA GmbH

Immanuelkirchstr. 12

D-10405 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 47 37 79 52 80

Fax: +49 30 47 37 79 52 99

info@revolver-publishing.com

www.revolver-publishing.com

ISBN 978-3-95763-474-0

Financially supported by

FWF

Der Wissenschaftsfonds.

di:'Angewandte

Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien
University of Applied Arts Vienna

Performative Materiality
Including
The Death of the Climate Activist
By Bayo Akomolafe



9 783957 634740