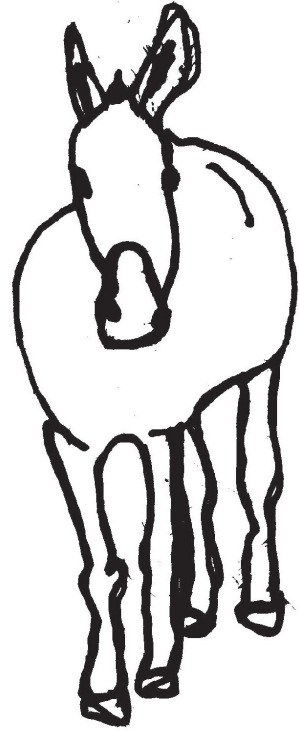


The Almost Manual



On Asynchrony,
Time Lapse, Choreography,
and Extravagant Details
in Life and
Creative Process

Lynda Gaudreau



We try (ardently, in good faith, and in spite of everything) to synchronize ourselves with one another and with objects, but it's all very demanding: our experience in space is different, and we live in a permanent state of desynchronization. What is this oldfashioned and terrible notion of harmony?

LG

THE ALMOST MANUAL

On Asynchrony,
Time Lapse, Choreography,
and Extravagant Details in
Life and Creative Process

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GAUDREAU

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ABSTRACT

The Almost Manual is envisioned as a tool and a handbook. It is intended to be a useful to artists during their creative process, offering a reflection on the concept of asynchrony. This reflection stems from a choreographic practice and is applied to and analysed through the work of several different artists. The interdisciplinary, here, is situated at the junction of choreography, visual arts, and film.

Asynchrony designates a slight shift that is expressed in space and disturbs its homogeneity, modifying our perception. Asynchrony implies that our perception is disturbed by a detail and operates through movement, whatever the nature of this movement may be. An object is not asynchronous a priori – it becomes so in a particular relationship to the space and time in which it unfolds.

This manual is part of an extensive project on asynchrony, begun in 2014, that takes the form of 25 fictional letters to artists. The handbook includes selected excerpts from the project, and examines the forms asynchrony can take. The analysis – and I use this term lightly, for this work always involves an element of play – provides artists with tools.

The first part focuses on the artwork of Pier Paolo Pasolini, Jonathan Burrows and Matteo Fargion, Miklos Gaál, Alberto Giacometti, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Ari Benjamin Meyers. This part also includes the tools: a glossary and parameters.

The second part of the book presents a series of exchanges with artist researchers. Each guest was invited to reflect on asynchrony in relation to error, diachrony, fabulation, glitches, and history. Letters addressed to imaginary characters continue the reflection. An epistolary exchange at

the very end brings in the personal dimension of asynchrony and its integration into everyday life.

This manual does not teach one single, refined method, but rather offers a way to shake up methods that have become too rote or rigid. It is left intentionally unfinished with deliberate blank spaces in the booklet for the user to fill.

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Letter to the Reader

Helsinki • Wednesday • 14 October 2020

Dear reader,

This manual is the concrete form of my research, fed by thirty years of artistic practice anchored in choreography, and by numerous curatorial projects. This manual is a methodology, not a technique of any kind. It offers examples and tools you might borrow and transform. Slip the manual into your bag before going to the studio; bring it along for the bus ride. It is meant to be folded, marked up, rethought, completed.

I began to develop the concept of asynchrony at a time when it seemed nothing could hold my attention. Whether as an artist in the studio, a spectator at a show, or a visitor in an exhibition, I always knew after only a few minutes what awaited me: I found myself sluggish and passive, unsurprised.

So I began exploring my working material as disposable and developing different strategies to produce material that was much more unpredictable.

I gave my working concepts different names; according to the artistic aims, I had *fake space*, *fake body*, and *fake movement*. Over time, the concepts formed a constellation around a unifying notion: asynchrony. I embarked on doctoral studies to write on the subject, because otherwise I would never have done it.

THE LETTERS

A material is not asynchronous a priori – it becomes so in a particular relationship to the space and time in which it unfolds. This research is fuelled by my choreographic practice, but is also the fruit of encounter with the work of

my contemporaries. For this reason, I opted to write fictitious letters addressed to different interlocutors – artists, thinkers, and other characters – who have impacted my career as an artist. Each of my letters enters into dialogue with the disjunctive qualities of the artist’s work. I focus on various operations used by them to produce disjunction.

ASYNCHRONY

Asynchrony implies multiple spaces and times acting simultaneously. This has no equivalence with, for instance, disruption, which is a one-time event. Asynchrony is the modification or disturbance of perception caused by a slight change in space and/or time, which, like a pebble, slips inside some machinery. I am looking mainly at what I call “low threshold” asynchrony; one that works on a very small scale. This tiny friction between space and time heightens the audience’s attention.

In contemporary art, asynchrony can be found in the details: a slight discrepancy between sound and image in a film; inserting or removing of a gesture in a movement sequence; or a sudden modification – for example an abrupt or stealthy gear change in an action in a dance or theatre piece. In my work, asynchrony is more a working method than a hard concept. It can become a tool, a vision machine, and a methodology for artists to consider their material with fresh eyes.

RECTANGLE AND EDITING

To work on the concept of asynchrony and to perceive it requires a referential space: the rectangle (the scene, the gallery,

the photographic or cinematographic frame, the page, etc.). It is necessary to decide on a referential space from which to consider asynchrony. The rectangle frames a situation in which we explore certain parameters (see the glossary).

Temporality is crucial to asynchrony. This temporality is expressed through editing (“montage” in French) which is a dynamic vector that organizes materials. Thus, asynchrony works through movement and dynamics between what is inside and outside (out of the frame of) a rectangle.

You are invited to appropriate, use, misuse, and upgrade these parameters in order to experiment with asynchrony in your own creative process. They are like a pair of glasses I lend to you.

THE MANUAL

The manual is divided into two parts. The first part considers artistic examples in which asynchrony occurs: works by Pier Paolo Pasolini, Jonathan Burrows and Matteo Fargion, Miklos Gaál, Alberto Giacometti, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Ari Benjamin Meyers. My analysis takes the form of a letter addressed to each artist. In the margins, I have added information on the concepts and parameters at play. I also leave space in the margins for your own notes.

In the second part of the manual, four researchers and professors from Uniarts Helsinki explore the concept of asynchrony from their own perspective. These include: theatre director Saana Lavaste, who draws parallels between ikebana, errors, and the making of a theatre project; performance artist Tero Nauha, who addresses the notion of collective fabulation, glitches and “noise” relating to perception and action; dance artist Leena Rouhiainen, who approaches

the concept of asynchrony from the perspective of the alien and the uncanny; and dance historian Hanna Järvinen, who examines time, temporality, event, and perception.

I close with the work of architect Cedric Price. He envisioned his architecture as a “generator core,” meaning that he proposed to build structures without any predefined functions in mind. In this regard, the manual can be seen as a thinking object to be used and misused. Perhaps it could be of interest to artists in their creative process or theoreticians and art lovers reflecting on the question of perception as it relates to space and time.

Please, misuse this manual as much as you can,

Lynda

out. of the frame /
rectangle

PEBBLE

ANACHRONIC PEBBLE

ECCENTRIC PEBBLE

GLITCHY PEBBLE

RECT
REFERENTIAL
ASYNCHRONIC

TO ERASE

HOLE

SELF. DESTRUCTION

SHORT-CIRCUIT

FAKE
FAKE BODY

MEASURE AND SCALE

PRECISE DETAILED QUANTITATIVE

MAP OF

ANGLE
space
ACTIONS

TO EDIT
MONTAGE

TO BIFURCATE

SPACE

FAKE MOVEMENT

out-of-the-frame
Body

METEORITE BODY

Porous Body

PERFORATED BODY

entity over the top

the concepts

Glossary

measure and scale • referential space
asynchronic concepts • asynchronic actions



MEASURE AND SCALE

Detail: This research covers mainly a “low-threshold asynchrony.” An asynchrony that works at small scale, even tiny. It goes hand in hand with precision.

Precision: Central quality to the concept of asynchrony, based on details. No matter how small the detail is—the more precise, the more asynchronic it is.

Quantity: Quantity can be expressed on various levels in asynchrony: sound, light, or corporeal and emotive. It refers to different parameters, such as intensity (volume, mass, weight), and density (spatial or textural; a space can be characterized by a lack of elasticity or plasticity, then the density is lower).



Over the top: This parameter relates to intensity. This can be applied on the material (movement, text, images...) through exaggeration (quantity, expression, rhythm).

REFERENTIAL SPACE



Rectangle: Before anything, we need a referential space to study asynchrony and to situate the following glossary in relation to asynchrony. Museum room, stage, television, comic strip, photograph, film, screen: rectangles are everywhere, and they frame our vision. Whether vertical or horizontal, they allow us to situate objects. A *rectangle* is a scale by which one can research asynchrony.



Out of the frame/rectangle: A term borrowed from film, designating something outside of the frame, out of the rectangle. It also refers to the notion of a blind spot, a place not accessible to vision. “Hors-champ” (in French) emphasizes the outside component; Jean-Luc Godard works

a lot with it in his film. In one scene of *Passion*, a couple is having an argument, but the discussion becomes covered by the sound of the vacuum cleaner from the apartment upstairs (*out of the frame*).

ASYNCHRONIC CONCEPTS



Pebble: The *pebble* is a dynamic element (on a small scale) that comes from *out of the frame*—it enters and causes a disturbance. A good example is the character of the Visitor in Per Paolo Pasolini's film *Teorema*. Out of nowhere, the stranger arrives in a bourgeois family and transforms each member of the family through very brief sexual encounters. The *pebble* is a detail that produces a low-threshold asynchrony, on a small scale, and comes to modify or disturb our perception. The *pebble* is the big concept under which other subconcepts are involved in similar ways:



Anachronic pebble: An unexpected element in a time period. An out-of-the-blue element. A surprise.



Eccentric pebble: An element that does not fit: unconventional, marginal, queer, wacky, bizarre, extraordinary.



Glitchy pebble: Mistakes, glitches, errors, details, and unpredictability are of great value in asynchrony. They are like attention attractors.



Out-of-the-frame body: As a general concept, the *out-of-the-frame body* appears in three principal forms: the *meteorite body*, the *porous body*, and the *perforated body*. While the *pebble* highlights the process by which things outside the frame disturb what is inside, the *out-of-the-frame body* is the embodiment of this interruption in its physical dimension.

The *pebble* and the *out-of-the-frame body* are two aspects of the same dynamic.



Meteorite body: the Visitor in Pier Paolo Pasolini's film *Teorema* is this body. The primary purpose of the *meteorite body* is to disrupt a given space in a single time. Its action is furtive; as soon as the action is accomplished, the body withdraws.



Porous body: Parkour adepts are excellent examples of this. Their bodies seem to mould to the environment by penetrating buildings, materials, objects, and urban spaces. The *porous body* tries to enter into osmosis with that which surrounds it.



Perforated body: It could be like a corporal version of an attention deficit disorder. This body becomes taken over by absences of all sorts (forgetfulness, sleep, inattention, catatonia, ecstasy, etc.).



Fake space: The main function of the *fake space* is to break the linearity of a movement phrase, a movie sequence, or a text. It can be produced by the removal of movements (see *holes*) in a gestural sequence, keeping for instance only the beginning and the end of it. In video works, a *fake space* is usually produced by editing techniques such as the insertion of extradiegetic sounds or images from other sources that generate an artificial space. It manifests through superpositions, juxtapositions, insertions, or removals of visual or sound material. It generates an uncanny quality. The *fake space* is the core concept under which the followings also gravitate:



Fake body: A *fake body* seems emptied of its weight. A body without depth. The body appears artificial, flattened, as made of cardboard. Its movements are

detached and without temporal continuity. A *fake body* has no interest in the body's physicality. It is like a technicolour object from the cinema of the 1950s and 1960s; it is a saturated body, without nuance; a monolith, without interiority. A great example and translation of this concept could be observed at the photographs of Miklos Gaál (see letter to him).



Fake movement: In its style, a *fake movement* is like a Nouveau Roman movement: descriptive and a priori emotionless; rather linear, functional, and dry. It brings to mind the characters of *L'année dernière à Marienbad* directed by Alain Resnais from a screenplay by Alain Robbe-Grillet, a central figure of the French Nouveau Roman. To do a *fake movement*, the person remains more or less in place, set in motion by linear body language of a semaphoric kind (communication gestures used onboard ships, on landing strips, or by a traffic police officer).

ASYNCHRONIC ACTIONS

To erase: Erasing is a way to perturb the equilibrium in a given space. Concepts such as *hole*, *self-destruction*, *short-circuit*, and the *fake space* offer the specific quality and texture this action can generate. Mainly, there are two ways to erase:

a) by removing information, through obliteration, hiding, making holes, denial

or

b) through accumulation by superposing information (reprise, repetition, overdose, etc.). A good example

of erasure is the superposition in the portraits of the painter Alberto Giacometti. On the same canvas, Giacometti used to draw over and over again, through multiple traces, superposed on each other.



Hole: The *hole* serves to erase and remove information from a sequential space to produce asynchrony. In literature, the writer Marguerite Duras addresses this concept. Duras used the term “trouer” in her writing process, referring to making holes in the narrativity in order to create new, unnamed spaces. Her characters might not have names. We might even not know where they are; we think they are outside, but in the next moment, they are already in the room.

Self-destruction: It involves a constant renewal of materials and space to ensure that they may be perceived.

Short-circuit: Like in an electrical environment, a *short-circuit* means that the course of action suddenly fades out, cuts, or becomes interrupted. We can apply it on material or as a way to perform. The quality is important. It is not only a cut, but a quality in the way of withdrawing.

To bifurcate: A change of spatial direction.

To edit: Asynchrony is all about editing, assembling. Montage refers mainly to editing in film, but also in literature. Asynchronic montage can work through opposites, disassembly, then re-assembly.

* This is a list of concepts and metaphors related to asynchrony. It emerged from the artistic practice of Lynda Gaudreau.

Part One

Letters to
Pier Paolo Pasolini • Jonathan Burrows & Matteo Fargion •
Miklos Gaál • Alberto Giacometti
Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster & Ari Benjamin Meyers

ASYNCHRONIC PARAMETERS

Asynchronous concepts: *pebble* , *anachronic pebble* ,
meteorite body , *perforated body* 

REFERENTIAL ARTWORK

Teorema (1968). Film by Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922–1975).

REFERENCES

First part in dailymotion: 0'00"–46'40"

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x72eaed>

Second part in dailymotion: 0'00"–47'43"

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x72e1pb>



PIER PAOLO PASOLINI

Teorema (1968).

Film by Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922–1975).

In the Letter to Pier Paolo Pasolini, I highlight how asynchrony operates in the dramaturgy of the film *Teorema* through the character of an unexpected visitor, played by Terence Stamp. His character is probably one of the finest examples of what a *pebble* can embody in a movie.



Paris, February 27, 2016

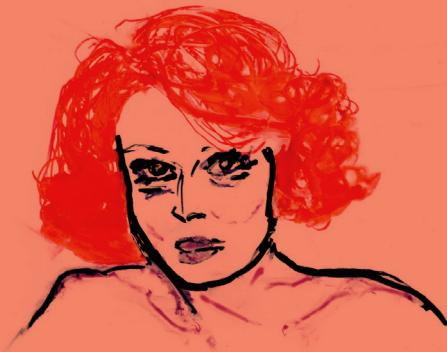
Dear Pier Paolo,

Here I am in Paris, in the Café Rostand, surrounded by writers. I just had a conversation with the woman to my left, whom I don't know, and who, like me, is attempting to write. She spoke of her passion for the German language which devours her and has prevented her from writing these past two years. I don't feel the need to blend in any further – I've ended the conversation, and now I'll turn to you.

When it comes down to it, I don't really know your work in depth. And yet you've been a close presence alongside my work for a long time. I carry the images from your films inside me, and from many of your writings as well – but the essential thing that remains with me is your vision. Is this what it means, to have style? In photos of you, you wear tinted glasses, and I think to myself, it's through these lenses that you see the world.

I'd like to talk about your film *Teorema* (1968), a film that has played a central role in my artistic research. I must have seen it six times (probably more), and in spite of this I don't remember whether it was at a specific moment or cumulatively, over time, that it had its impact. *Teorema* brought unanticipated illumination to my research on asynchrony, causing the emergence of a concept-metaphor that I call "the pebble." I will come back to this notion, but first I wanted to thank you for this film that has had such a strong impact on my work.

How do you shake up a space-time and cause it to become asynchronous? A simple detail – a little *pebble* – will suffice. For example, the unexpected arrival of something or someone who suddenly upsets the course of things. But




Pebble , *anachronic pebble* !

The Visitor is a *pebble*, an “out-of-the-blue” element that shakes furtively the life of each member of a family. Not knowing where this character is coming from, his biography, or his motivations add tension and attention, almost like in a suspense film where the danger is in each of the characters.

First part on dailymotion:

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x72eaeed>

The Visitor 04'40"

Meteorite body 

This work of Pier Paolo Pasolini offers an insight into the relationship between the *pebble*, the *rectangle* and what I call the *meteorite body*. This *meteorite body* is first and foremost that of the Visitor passing through the family. Then, over the course of the movie, we see the effect of this body through his intimate encounters with each character. The Visitor-*pebble* can thus be thought of as a domino effect produced by his physical presence, his *meteorite body* in a given environment (the *rectangle* of the house, room...).

why would we try to shake things up in this way, you ask? and I reply, in order to perceive. If space, and images – most everything, really – are to remain alive, and thus perceptible, the space must be disrupted – even destroyed.

I do this in different ways in my own creative projects. For example, in my choreographic piece *Out of Grace*, I use the body, sound, and light to produce little “accidents” that come to disturb viewers in their visit to the gallery. A viewer who is looking at a work in a gallery room will suddenly see the lighting level change, hear a sound, or might even see a dancer – whom they hadn’t noticed – fall down somewhere near them and then get up again. These interventions last anything from a couple of seconds to a minute, and happen either separately or simultaneously.

The character of the Visitor played by Terence Stamp in *Teorema* is the best example of a *pebble* I’ve ever seen in a film. He incarnates the very essence of the asynchronic character. And I wonder if, unbeknownst to me, *Teorema* is not present in most of my works, in this disruptive detail?

This nameless Visitor, who turns up from who knows where, transforms each member of the upper-class Milanese family in your story. When they come into contact with him, each one has a revelation and is forever transformed. And then the stranger leaves as suddenly and mysteriously as he came. He’s a *pebble* in the family dynamic. Before the arrival of the Visitor, the family members were rolling along just fine, living their tidy and predictable life.

It’s only recently that I realized why I had watched *Teorema* so often: the Visitor allows us to see and access the inner story of each character. Your character-*pebble* moves through a space, upsets it, and allows it to be “saved.” Without this, the story would have been predictable and



The *pebble* allows several dramatic registers to emerge: political, poetic, psychological... and necessarily acts on the whole dramaturgy of the film.

Excerpts with each character

First part on dailymotion:

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x72eaed>

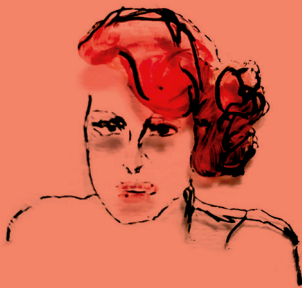
Emilia, the maid

8'54"–14'00"



Pietro, the son

14'31"–18'17" and from 27'45"



Lucia, the mother

19'18"–23'46"



Paolo, the father

29'53"–32'13"




Odetta, the daughter

32'22"–35'29"

mundane. Through him, we access something that was hidden before, invisible, and unexpected.

This mysterious *out of the frame* Visitor – a character without a history or a name – gives us access to poetry, to the intimate, unembellished reality of the characters he meets. I would never have thought I would use the word “poetry” – but it fits because an unexpected, irrational change happens for each of the characters in the story. In *Teorema* the poetry happens through the Visitor, but also through our own imagination as spectators, waiting, as in a suspense film, for the transformation that each protagonist will undergo.

The *pebble* takes many different forms in your work. I’m thinking now of your film *Salò o le 120 giornate di Sodoma* (1976) – how could I have forgotten? This work shook up my quiet life when I was still a young student.



Power, fascism, human monstrosity – In *Salò*, a wide variety of *pebbles* disrupts everything that might be called human dignity. And these *pebbles* multiply and accumulate, expressing all the intensity of violence and of excess, in scenes of torture, rape, murder, or coprophagia... Like you, I use *pebbles* in my work to disrupt things, but the intensity is nowhere near that of *Salò*.

I still remember the fight I had with my boyfriend when *Salò* came out. I hated your film, and hated my boyfriend too, for having taken me to the movies that night. The atrocious torture scenes had shocked and rattled me deeply. I had NEVER seen images like that on screen. We left before the end of the film – I couldn’t take it anymore. The walk home felt endless. I don’t think I’ve managed to watch *Salò* right to the end since then, but now it’s for very different reasons. Now it’s not *Salò* that I hate, but “les salauds,” the bastards in the film.





In the middle of the film, at around 45'47", the Visitor leaves the family.

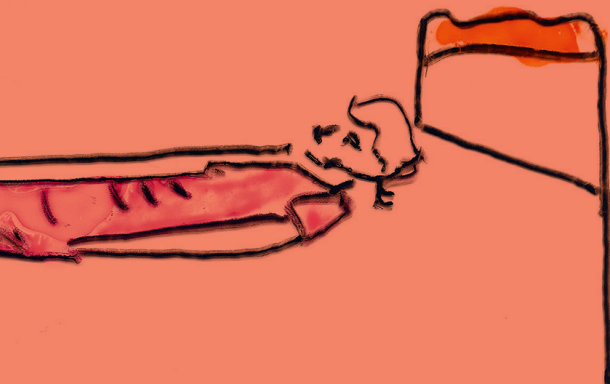
Then begins the second part, where we follow each character dealing with the deep effect of the Visitor in their life.

Each character will be transformed forever.

Second part on dailymotion:

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x72e1pb>

The servant, Emilia, and the family's daughter, Odetta, both experience deep down in their body a shock after their brief relation with the Visitor. Emilia falls into an ecstatic state and performs a miracle on a young child as Odetta, the daughter, withdraws into catatonia. Pietro, the son, paints in liberated pleasure. Lucia, the mother, lives her crisis in a solitude masked by relationships with young strangers. In the last 10 minutes of the movie, we see the father, Paolo, going through his own crisis, seeming to strip himself of his identity.



(A song by Chaka Khan comes on at the Café Olimpico in Montreal, where I sit revising this text in May 2016. “Ain’t nobody, Loves me better, Make me happy, Makes me feel this way, Ain’t nobody...”).

Back at the Café Rostand, 27 February 2016. I turn to look around. On my left, a lady in a large black cardigan – an Italian woman from one of your films, why not. In front of her, a little bouquet of dried flowers she has placed on the table. And I remember the character of Laura Betti, your dear friend, who plays the servant in *Teorema*, and I think to myself that this lady beside me is her, this is Laura Betti.



Nothing happens in a straight line. Your work, Pier Paolo, presents us with *pebbles* as chances for change, that allow us to get hold of ourselves. *Teorema* frees the characters from their synchronization with the world and reminds us that we are desynchronized beings. In *Salò*, the words and the violence of the images lead us, the viewers, to desynchronize ourselves from something we don’t want to be part of.

Dear Pier Paolo, I feel an urge to imagine you playing the organ in a little church somewhere in the countryside, pockets full of pebbles, with the crow from *Uccellacci e uccellini* (1966) at your feet and Toto by your side. Grazie mille, Pier Paolo Pasolini.

Lynda



Pietro
14'53"–16'18"

Odetta
08'30"–11'07"

Emilia
13'35"–14'50"





Lucia
27'28"–28'16"




Paolo
37'47" +



ASYNCHRONIC PARAMETERS

Asynchronous concepts: *pebble* , *anachronic pebble* ,
eccentric pebble , *glitchy pebble* 

Asynchronous actions: *Short-circuit*

Measure and scale: Detail, precision, *over the top* 

REFERENTIAL ARTWORKS

Both Sitting Duet. (2002). Choreographic work by Jonathan Burrows and Matteo Fargion.

Body Not Fit For Purpose. (2014). Choreographic work by Jonathan Burrows and Matteo Fargion.

REFERENCES

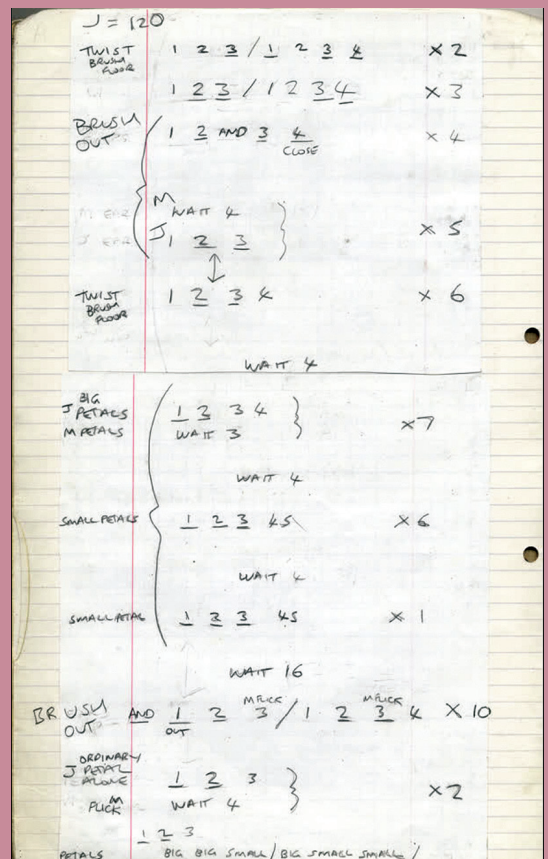
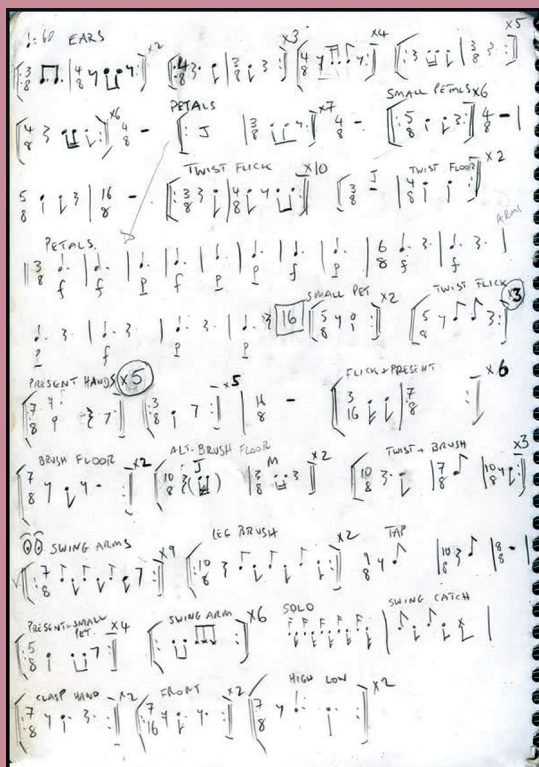
Both Sitting Duet. (2002). <https://vimeo.com/68204508>

Body Not Fit For Purpose. (2014). <https://vimeo.com/101114598>

JONATHAN BURROWS & MATTEO FARGION

My analysis was based partly, but not only, on the work Both Sitting Duet (2002) of Jonathan Burrows and Matteo Fargion.

My research mainly covers low-threshold asynchrony. An asynchrony that works at small scale, even tiny. The work of Jonathan Burrows (JB) and Matteo Fargion (MF) shows how precision, detail, and intensity are significantly linked to asynchrony.



Both *Sitting Duet* is a 37-minute silent gestural translation of the score of Morton Feldman's violin and piano piece *For John Cage*, the repeating rhythmic movements of which seem to cause a kind of synaesthesia, where music is heard though none is present. The piece is concerned with how the counterpoint between two moving bodies might be read, and attention is held throughout by small but significant shifts of gesture, rhythm, and dynamic between the two performers.

In this sense the element of slight surprise in the piece is continuous, made more evident by the minimal materials used. Eight minutes before the end however (around 32'40'' on this [Vimeo link](#) document), a larger shift takes place and silent gesture is replaced by loud clapping. This loud clapping introduces perhaps the real moment of unpredictability in the piece, when the clapping rises to a rhythmic shouting, which appears as a kind of dramaturgical relief after the long concentration that has preceded it.

Body Not Fit For Purpose is a 30-minute performance of short gestural dance solos accompanied by mandolin, each of which is introduced with a political title that seems to imprint a narrative upon the abstract movement. The titles/solos are edited into an order which gives a kind of dramaturgical progression, sometimes serious and sometimes humorous. It remains slightly unclear throughout the piece what the relationship of the two performers is to the materials being used, but the final title dedicates the performance to "my father, who for my 10th birthday bought me a copy of *The Communist Manifesto* and *Chairman Mao's Red Book*." The surprise of the arrival of this more direct personal narrative anchors the previous game with language and retrospectively gives permission for that game.

Jonathan Burrows & Matteo Fargion



Montreal, June 13, 2016

Dear Jonathan, dear Matteo,

We don't run into each other anymore, and I miss you and your work. Although we weren't that close, you were present in my life, and your friendship, even peripheral, grounded me, and gave me courage to persevere in my own work.

For my part, after closing my dance company, I decided to take the time to write about my choreographic research. I chose to do it within the framework of a doctoral degree, otherwise I never would have found the time. Maybe you'll remember our conversation around the time of *Out of Grace*, Matteo: for or against the PhD in Arts? In the end the choice was made and leads me today to Jonathan and yourself; as I unpack my research, I realize that you two are a part of it.

This research currently takes the form of letters addressed to artists whose work has impacted my own. As you know, Jonathan, your work has always had an influence on me. And I had the luck to work with Matteo on the creation of the scores for my projects *Encyclopædia* *DOCUMENT 4* and *Out of Grace*. Both experiences have had a lasting effect on me – a lesson I can sum up as an ode to detail and rhythm. I remember your daily motto, Matteo, “exhaust the material”: restrict yourself to using a single material at a time, exploring it patiently before moving on to another. In the end, what you taught me was very simple: love your material.

Love it by giving it your time, by finding its relevance in time; how a movement, for example, dictates its own time, or, inversely, how a rhythm forges a movement. A movement of the hand, a glance, a gap in action, a thing, even – and in fact above all – an insignificant one, becomes, through



Glitchy pebble



Mistakes, glitches, errors, details, and unpredictability are of great value in asynchrony. They are life attractors. Even if these works are finely written in a score, errors during the performance are part of it.

EXCERPTS

Both Sitting Duet. (2002).

<https://vimeo.com/68204508>

3'55", 23'34"–24'00": Matteo Fargion laughs.

this approach, noteworthy because it is placed in a time and chiselled by this.

There's so much to say about the work you've developed as a duo. Excerpting one aspect isn't easy, especially in this epistolary form, and requires, I must admit, a certain amount of audacity.

Your style.

Yes, this must be it. You are at once classical and eccentric artists. Your compositional approach is profoundly anchored in the musical structures you blast open and divert. An eccentric – an “original” as they say – is not named as such only because of what s/he does or is, but also because of what s/he produces, and you two are the perfect example of this. No conspicuous show of eccentricity characterizes your duo. You appear on stage in ordinary clothes, and the choice of movements is almost banal. And yet. A closed fist, a little vibration of the wrist, a raised arm – all become extravagant. Eccentricity is located in the assembly of gestures and the derailments you impose upon movement. A gesture we think we recognize becomes fantastical because of the choice of execution, which verges on the absurd, or through the exaggeration of a detail. I would even push this idea a little further – if only to break the ice – and compare you to dandies. The definition on the French Wikipedia page today is interesting: “the word dandy appears at the end of the 18th century (in England), distinct from eccentricity – it plays with the rule but still respects it.” Your compositions are remarkably zany and loquacious in regards to this idea.

The structures and protocols of music and dance underlie your work, and anchor your creative process. And as abstract as your pieces can be, the audience finds itself within them. The rhythms – I was going to say the punctilious



Eccentric pebble



Here some examples of unconventional, marginal, queer, wacky, bizarre movements.

EXCERPTS

<https://vimeo.com/68204508>

7'43": After quiet sequence, the performers start an abrupt movement of the arms – let's call it the monkey movement. This movement suddenly opens the space behind their bodies.



13'12": JB and MF start tilting their heads.



14'46": Wiping their faces.





16'20": Holding hands.

rhythms – grab the audience, who become more and more captivated by the smallest detail of what is introduced on stage. Your pieces command attention. The silences in your danced scores become striking moments of tension, all the more exquisite because anything could happen.

For more than fifteen years the two of you have worked to disrupt gestural and musical material as though these were mechanical objects. Through a multitude of rhythms borrowed from existing musical scores – I’m thinking of scores by people like Morton Feldman – you have been developing a radically simple gestural vocabulary that is precise and profoundly playful. As spectators we observe a dance of gestural units, waiting silently to perceive a moment of unison or, better, a slight adjustment, whether of the eyes or some personal tic, that allows us to step outside the frontality of the show for a moment and see you as individuals.

A system of composition such as this cannot forgo accidents and, in spite of the desire to “perform” your scores, you integrate error, you even count on it, even if only in your attempts not to produce it. You set in motion a complex system of details with which we, the spectators, grow familiar. But this system induces disturbance and, sooner or later, something will become unhinged. The strength of your work lies precisely in its programmed *self-destruction* which, by a ricochet action, generates a force of attraction and attention between the work, you, and us, the audience, at every moment. We wait for the miraculous instants of synchronization and even more, of desynchronization – this is what defines your style, so spirited and offbeat. Your work wouldn’t mean anything without precision, but it’s such a particular kind. Normally precision takes us into a rather dry, sterile territory that can quickly become lifeless. But

And so on. The choreography is composed of simple movements that become unusual and eccentric in the context. The effect produces curiosity, smiles, hilarity. The whole composition is made up of a set of *pebbles* that follow one another and that manage to produce surprise.

My point of view is of course personal, but these two artists created one of the best examples of work around surprise and unpredictability. It is useless to dissect the pieces to show a *pebble* , an eccentric action , an anachronism – their work is full of them. A viewing of their work is eloquent.

you employ it with the most communicative virtuosity that a formidable empathy is produced in the spectator, just as it is between the two of you.

Eccentric, yes. And this extravagance isn't found only in the surprising rhythms, but also in movements that are astonishingly simple and original, based on trifles. Desynchronization occurs mainly through the details, causing the audience to remain on the lookout, at the edge of their seats for the least sign, as wacky as it may be.



I can still see you both in your first duo piece, *Both Sitting Duet* (2002), each of you on your chair before the audience, moving parsimoniously, one gesture at a time.

I'm sure you've heard of Vivienne Westwood. The London stylist transforms classic style through detail: a colour, a fabric, and above all a spirit of exaggeration, takes over a piece of clothing and transforms it into the most eccentric of trappings. Granted, Westwood's eccentricity is baroque and even opposite to your minimalism – but whether it's through excess or measure, both your creations make us smile in their mad freedom, their audacity.

Smiles and laughter are the unmistakable, wonderful result of your asynchrony through detail. Thank you, Jonathan, and thank you Matteo.

Lynda

Anachronic pebble , over the top 


Eccentric pebble 

EXCERPT

<https://vimeo.com/68204508>

32'20"

There is a fantastic out-of-the-blue moment, an *anachronic pebble* at 32'38", where MF and JB break the quietness, unexpectedly.

This specific moment in the piece clarifies notions that are not always easy to separate, such as, what is the difference between an eccentric and *anachronic pebble* ? They are pretty similar. But here, I prefer using *anachronic pebble*, because not only is the action original, but it is rather inconsistent. It looks like there is a sudden chronological gap in the piece. The *anachronic pebble* is indeed unconventional, but has this little plus: a quality that relates to time.

In this approach, playing with a parameter conducts easily to another one, cumulating into anachronism and an *over-the-top* situation. This can end up in a *short-circuit* moment.

The work of JB and MF involves working with repetition and exaggerated use of repetition that goes *over the top* with a *short-circuit* moment.



ASYNCHRONIC PARAMETERS

Asynchronous concepts: *fake space* , *fake body* .

ARTWORKS AND VISUAL

Miklos Gaál's photographs

Demonstration Day. (2003). 108 x 136,5 cm, digital C-print.

Swimming Lesson 5, from series of seven photographs (1–7). (2004). 58 x 58 cm, digital C-print.

Telephone Booth. (2005). 89 x 112 cm, digital C-print.

Sunday Afternoon. (2003). 13 8x 110 cm, digital C-print.

Morning Walk. (2003). 90 x 110 cm, digital C-print.

Schoolyard 1 and 2. (2010). 89 x 112 cm, digital C-print.

Gaudreau. L. Dog 1. (2010).

Gaudreau. L. Panda 1. (2010).



MIKLOS GAÁL

My analysis was based on the corpus of Miklos Gaál's photograph series between 2003 and 2010.

I envision these series as formal attempts to separate time and space, exemplifying what would be a space from which time has been taken away. Gaál's work unties for a moment the interweaving of the space-time concept and proposes a flat universe where depth is challenged. Space in these photographs looks solid, opaque, and completely fixed, as if a layer of time had slipped beneath the scene, and then been removed.

Paris, 27 February 2016

Dear Miklos Gaál,

Do you remember me? I invited you to meet me at the cafeteria in the Whitechapel Gallery in 2012. I was living in London at the time on a six-month residency and had decided to listen to my friend Barbara, who said: “In London, only meet people you don’t already know.” And then I made your acquaintance.

But it was another friend, Yann, an artist, who had spoken about you after seeing the photographs I was taking in secret. I had started this photo project to pass the time; I had a studio in Montreal then and I often had to wait for the various artists who had rented the space to show up. Apart from the sound of the bell that rang from time to time in the school yard next door, the studio was large and silent – it seemed the space, too, was waiting.

My images are nothing like your incredible work. My photography is purely exploratory. I started by taking pictures of the walls, the floor – everything that surrounded me. Then the animal figurines I had picked up in flea markets, and which decorated my studio, became my models. I ended up doing several portrait series of them.

I’m still trying to recall how Yann made the link to you... oh, yes, I remember now. Around that time, I had been in Antwerp for two months and Yann had come to visit me. He seized the opportunity to do a photoshoot at the cathedral since his exhibition was coming up. I made us couscous and, in high spirits, showed him my little animals. I still remember how he laughed when he saw them. I must admit they do seem quite naïve, but he examined them attentively, and



Fake space

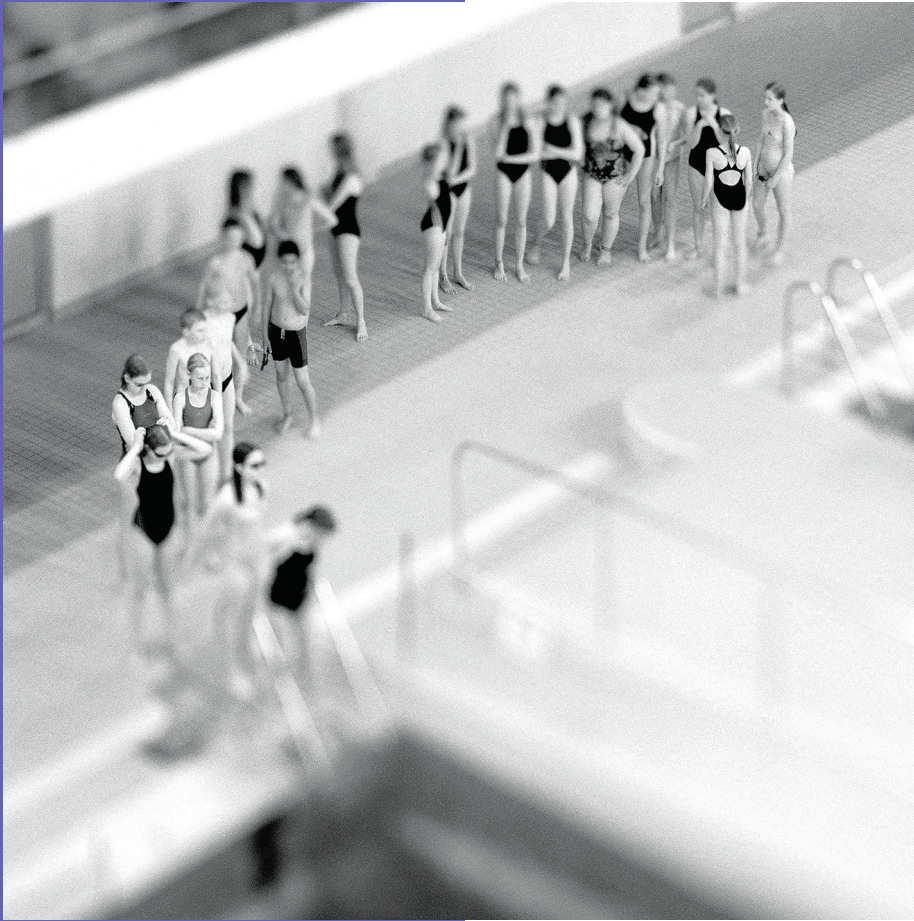
Fake space produces *holes* and illogical continuity in a movement sequence, while in Miklos Gaál's work, *fake space* produces a completely unexpected image. The viewer can no longer easily differentiate animate from inanimate. In these series the space looks frozen, as if there was a withdrawing of depth, a frozen time. This work is a good example of translating a concept in its own medium and practice. Gaál creates a *fake space* on its own terms, that belongs to the field of photography.

talked to me for a long time about the history of the portrait in photography, and about technique. He pointed out that my photographs seemed to move from anthropomorphism to object, and referenced your photographs, and the look of the figurines often found in them.

I'm not trying to compare my work to yours from a technical or artistic point of view. We don't use the same methods, and the quality of your images is of a completely other order. The comparison I'm drawing here is limited to space, and I could say that your work with space is symmetrically opposed to what I do. While your photographs seem to suck up the space of the image, erasing depth and causing the photos to look like maquettes, my images instead give life to the little animal figurines.

Your photographs are superb, but they are also – cramped, somehow, as though there's some space lacking. Do you know the book *Flatland* by Edwin A. Abbott (1884/1998)? I think you'd like it. Your locations seem to be pulled directly from the book. Abbott describes the phantasmagoric life of geometric figures in a flat universe where depth doesn't exist. Space in your photographs and in *Flatland* is solid, opaque, and completely fixed, as though a layer of time had slipped beneath the image and then been removed.

Your photographs appear as flat visual objects – the space in them and the objects within are full, and the very idea of positive and negative space becomes obsolete. The artist Gordon Matta-Clark translates a similar quality in his photographic series of "building cuts." His work is nothing like yours, but he, too, produced superficial spaces, surface places that look like maquettes. In the book *Object to Be Destroyed* by Pamela M. Lee (2000), we see various cuts by



Fake body

The flattened spaces and frozen figures created by the artist and photographer Miklos Gaál challenge our attention when looking at the image. At first, it is easy to see a maquette, but through a fine observation, what seems to be the photography from a constructed scene in a model, was in fact taken from a live situation. This visual doubt defies our perception and arouses curiosity on our part. We might decide to fool our own perception by going back and forth between what we saw at first sight and the image in progress. The body in these photographs appear as flat visual “objects” and figurines.

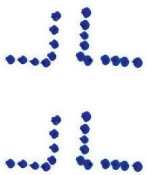


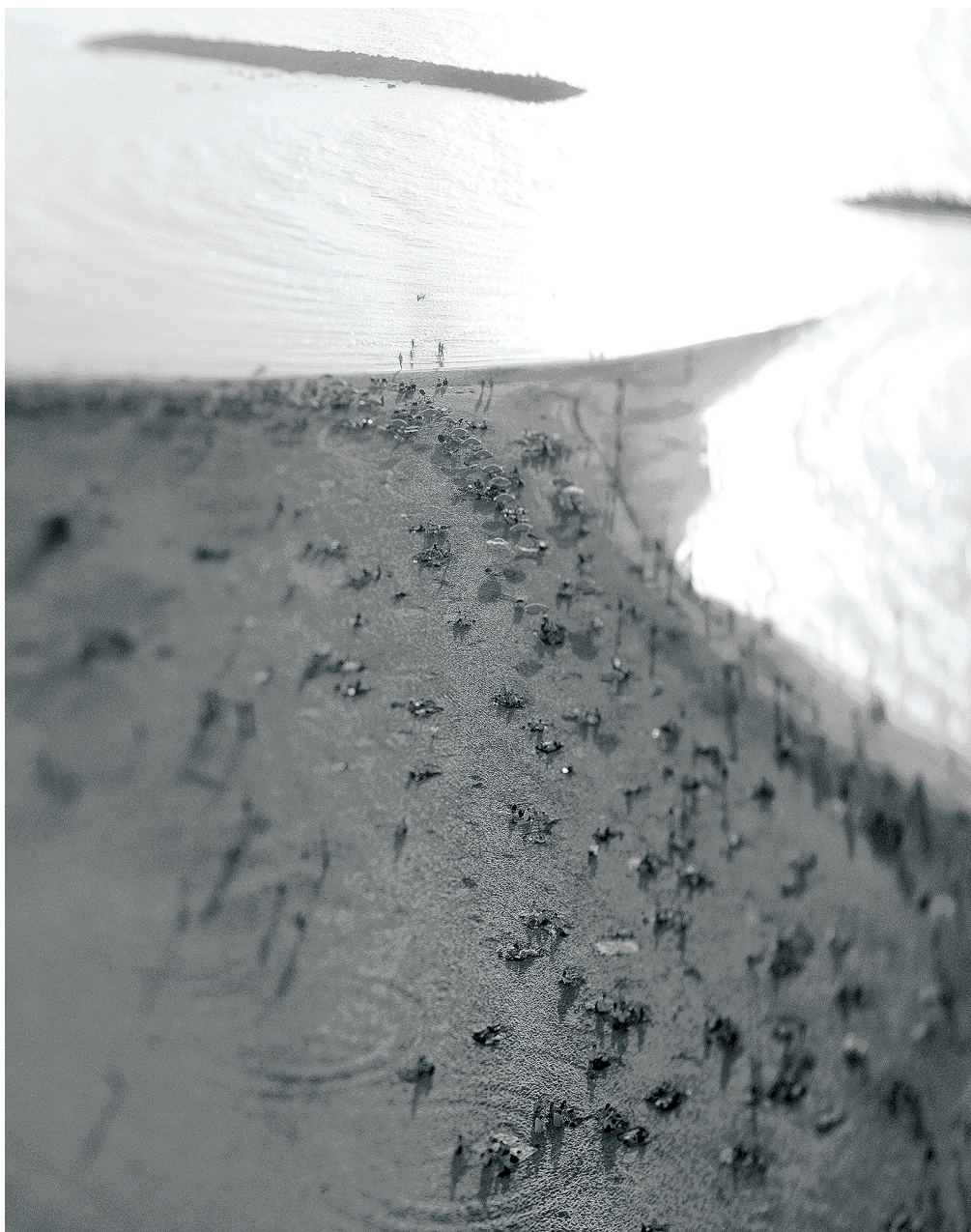


Matta-Clark around the bingo hall in Niagara Falls in 1974. These houses appear to have been cut out with scissors and then glued onto a blank sheet of paper. They look like a series of images that have been flattened with an iron.

We often sum up the choreographer's job as work on space and movement, and to an extent I agree, but this description always bothers me a little, because it doesn't really say much in the end. As I write to you, my thoughts about space are coming clearer, and if you asked me now "what do you do?" I would say that I work on spatial depth, and that a large part of my time is spent destroying and reconstructing it. And so everything I do in my work takes on a whole new meaning, and my artistic mission suddenly becomes simple: I present objects, images, ideas, and bodies outside of depth. Changing direction, short-circuiting, destroying, playing with dismantling and reconstructing spaces is, on the whole, what I've been doing for years now. My choreographic piece 0101 (2007) is an example of this way of working. I tried with this piece to work with a *fake body*, a concept that empties out a body's depth in a world like Flatland, with individuals who are imagined without viscera, weightless. But these *fake bodies* are also your swimmers "sous-vide" in the pool, in your series Swimming Lesson. And they are Lisa and Michael, the protagonists in the film Anomalisa (2015) by Charlie Kaufman. Have you seen it?

Anomalisa is the quintessence of the fabricated, with bodies and objects that are fabricated, but also movements that are fabricated through the technique of stop motion, in a fantastical world beyond any naturalism. In dance as in theatre, we often speak of a performer's presence, and in French we refer to actors as "bêtes de scène" – beasts of the stage. The figurines of Lisa and Michael, too, are veritable





“bêtes de scène.” An object can have presence, and a space can, too – your work proves it. My images of animals have remained inside a computer, just like my animal knickknacks have remained inside a box. I can see a link between this box and your images in which space has left the scene. In your images, individuals without spaces transform into anonymous, isolated characters. I am trying here to understand the flatness in your images – a quality that devitalizes everything that should, in principle, be alive. And then we, the viewers, search for the thing that’s missing.



I’m thinking now of another concept in the family of fake things: *fake space*. In my work, *fake space* produces holes and illogical continuity in a movement sequence, while in yours, *fake space* produces a completely unexpected image. The viewer can no longer easily differentiate animate from inanimate. In this way, you are inventing a *fake space* that belongs to the field of photography.

I know streets, I know parks and pools, but your streets, your parks and your pools are completely unrecognizable to me. I don’t understand them. They are fictional spaces, anti-naturalist, very worked-over, and from which a space has been removed. The subjects in your photographs seem themselves to be taken aback, and caught, as though in a *déjà vu*, but a *déjà vu* that is all your own.

When someone looks at your photographs, they enter into the image or the reality as you saw it, and at that precise moment the subjects, who should be photographed individuals become visual objects, *déjà vus* of your perception of the space you make us experience in turn. This makes me think of Alberto Giacometti, who kept doing his drawings over and over, saying they didn’t correspond to what he had seen, and that he’d let himself be tricked by his



knowledge of space. And a rather odd question comes to mind: is the experience of vision that Giacometti sought, just as you do, and other artists too, not similar to déjà vu? Isn't artistic work based on this desire for synchronization between our perception of the world and ourselves? Does this mean that each time we don't experience déjà vu – which is to say, most of our lives – we are experiencing a desynchronized world? Isn't our experience of what we call life in fact a desynchronization, at heart?

My little animals are no longer completely alone – they live in a space shared with yours, Miklos Gaál, and with Lisa and Michael they form the community of *fake bodies* from Flatland.

Lynda





ASYNCHRONIC PARAMETERS

Asynchronous concept: *pebble* , *fake space* , *fake body* .

Asynchronous actions: To erase, *self-destruction*

Measure and scale: *over the top* 

REFERENTIAL ARTWORKS

The corpus of Giacometti's drawing portraits before 1966.

ARTWORKS AND VISUAL

Kaisla Kyyhkynen (b. 1995, Helsinki, Finland) work is a great example for what superposition, intensity, and *over the top* mean in painting and drawing.

Untitled 1. (2019). 104 x 71 cm, charcoal.

Untitled 2. (2019). 100 x 70 cm, oil pastels.

Untitled 3. (2019). 104 x 71 cm, oil bars (beeswax, raw linseed oil and pigment).

Untitled 4. (2020). 100 x 70 cm, charcoal.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Gaudreau, L. (2021). Burnings Pages 1, 2, 3, 4.

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI

My analysis was based on the corpus of Giacometti's drawing portraits over the course of his life (1922–1966), not on specific artworks.

Alberto Giacometti is certainly the artist who brought me to my research on asynchrony. It took a while to name it this way. His patience and trust in his experiential perception have taken so many forms in my projects, mostly by practicing art as an experimental ground. On the same canvas, Giacometti used to draw through multiple traces, superposed on each other, over and over again.

For reasons of reproduction rights, I will not refer here to the portraits that Alberto Giacometti made during his life – of his brother, his wife, his lover – but to an artist I met during my drawing studio time in Helsinki, Kaisla Kyyhkynen. Although very different, her work ploughs into perception in a similar way to Giacometti's, which I call *over the top*.



Bogliasco, 14 February 2015

Dear Alberto,

I feel somehow so close to you, as though you've become a member of my family in spite of yourself. Would you have adopted me? You are, in any case, a part of my life. You came in without me expecting it, as one says of a child who arrives by accident; the father of an artist by accident, a retroactive father. I don't remember how I came to discover your work – probably through one of your portraits that crept into my line of sight one day. Your drawings are tremendous, you know – they ravish the space of the person who looks at them. They have no reserve; they enter and inhabit the space we believed to be our own. Just this morning, for example, I pinned two photocopies of your drawings to the wall, one of a woman standing and the other a portrait of Annette. And even with the poor quality of the photocopies, they captivate me. To be completely honest, they disturb me. I have this irresistible urge to look at them rather than write to you. My eyes keep coming back to them. Their black lines act – I was going to say again – in a retroactive way, almost as though the drawings hadn't completely given themselves over, or as though my experience wasn't yet complete. Maybe it's a bad idea, in the end, to sit facing them while I try to write to you.

In spite of their power of attraction, your drawings are not magic: they're simply valiant. And stubborn. It's hard to explain, and I'm trying to understand it myself: a drawing will draw and redraw itself right before our eyes, following the multiple lines that make it up. It erases the space from before by superposing itself *over the top*, and reconstructs another space. Your drawings proceed by *self-destruction*. Were you familiar with the self-destructive art of Gustav



Metzger? His approach comes to mind, you two would have got along. Maybe you knew each other? His manifesto from 1959, *Auto-Destructive Art*, is on his site <http://radicalart.info/destruction/metzger.html>. In it I read: “Self-destructive painting, sculpture, and construction is a total unity of idea, site, form, colour, method, and timing of the disintegrative process.” Disintegrative process... exactly. Your work doesn’t produce static objects – they are works in the etymological sense of the term: *operare* = to work, and we do so along with them. When we come into contact with them, we find ourselves in the very process of the object (an object being, from my point of view, anything: a page, a drawing, you, me, a sculpture, an idea, and so on). The primary purpose of your art resides not in the form, but rather in the sensation it provokes – or at least I want to believe for a moment that my work allows me to understand yours. Even though, years ago, I hung from the fence in front of your studio on rue Hippolyte-Maindron to catch a glimpse of your work, I would never have dared to show you mine. I prefer the discreet intimacy of my work alongside yours in my artistic genealogy. But let’s come back to your oeuvre: form is eminently important, of course – if not, why be an artist? – but is the result of a process in space. And it is in this way that your work illuminates my thinking.

The experience of the object is possible through a continual creation of space, and the inverse is equally true: the experience of space is possible through the continual creation of the object. Space and object are thus inextricably linked, and in perpetual reconstitution before our eyes. When this is working, we are able to perceive a space that is dynamic, alive, and in tension. In other words (and you know this better than I), the artist creates a kind of equation in space, based on materials, air, silence, movements – anything can



be used – and the finished work corresponds, we might say, to a formula in space; we, the spectators, perceive with our senses that which the artist puts forth; then art historians take over and analyse all this; and then the artists themselves respond as well. But there's one aspect that catches my attention, and it is the notion of space as a disjunction of several space-times. Space is perceived, seen, and lived through a process of differentiation, in which we, the objects, and the spaces of all kinds – colour, in particular – are incessantly rearticulated by movement; that of our bodies first, but also the movement the artists (such as yourself) propose in their objects.

Your drawings, Alberto, are neither sensible nor quiet – they don't want to become fixed images. They make us enter into the creation of their space. Your portraits catch and hold our eye; their faces insert themselves into our space without a speck of politeness. They are true “space killers.” They ravish our space and monopolize our attention with the insistence of their repeated and obstinate features. In no way is space, in your works, taken for granted.

How does an object or a drawing capture our attention? How does an object assert itself in space? Artists like Metzger and yourself allow us have a relationship to space through the intrinsic experience of the latter. You work space as a material, and for this you use recomposition. Your drawings must constantly remake themselves – it's the only possible way we can see them – time is able to penetrate them as a result of your tireless research. Metzger had a different, more direct approach: he destroyed works before they had the time to become cult objects, as we say, of art and consumption.

I am a proponent of the reprise as a work method applied to a given material, contrary to the repetition that I

repetition of a pattern, in images and in music, can generate in terms of an asynchronous effect. Musician, DJ and producer Moodymann plays with the repetition of a same sound and visual pattern. The result is as hypnotic as a work by Trisha Brown – only, in Moodymann's case, the clip has an asynchronous very reason. The works of the Judson dance that destroys time. The historical factor but I would sanction in an opposite manner, Moodymann's space does so thorough manner for an asynchrony touch identifiable: first, the work function of being spread are out of step, as drawings by the time of multiple spaces. Be honest, the up and the asynchrony occurs when in common, and you don't match up; something slows, and goes off in the plan.

Each reprise allows for the integration of what I call the pebble. This tiny thing, this small change or detail within a given space causes the space to be modified, with a view to perceiving it. I'm thinking, too, of Auguste Rodin, who didn't hesitate for a second to take the arm from one of his sculptures and use it for another.

But let's return to the self-destructive element in your pieces. Self-destruction is indeed at work in your drawings. Destruction operates by superposing lines, which are erased through addition. Your drawings (and I would also add your paintings) possess a caustic quality: they assert themselves through the violence of erasure-through-accumulation. The line is a pure instrument of destruction and creation

tend to associate with composition. The reprise is a way of working, and not an aesthetic language. In dance, for example, choreographer Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker (and, long before her, the whole gang from the Judson Theater Church with Trisha Brown and Lucinda Childs) did a lot of work with repetition. The eminently compositional reach of their works takes over. In a completely other aesthetic register, a video I recently watched by Moodymann, *Come 2 Me* (2014), is an eloquent example of what the repetition of a pattern, in images and in music, can generate in terms of an asynchronous effect.

Musician, DJ, and producer Moodymann plays with the repetition of a same sound and visual pattern. The result is as hypnotic as a work by Trisha Brown – only, in Moodymann’s case, the clip has asynchronous qualities that the works of the Judson choreographers don’t. The historical factor plays into this, of course, but I would say that on a purely formal level, Moodymann’s clip operates in an asynchronous manner for reasons that are clearly identifiable: first, the way the image and the sound are out of step, and second, the placement of multiple spaces within the frame. The asynchrony occurs where the sound and image don’t match up; something slips and goes off in the plan.

Each reprise allows for the integration of what I call the *pebble*. This tiny thing, this small change or detail within a given space causes the space to be modified, with a view to perceiving it. I’m thinking, too, of Auguste Rodin, who didn’t hesitate for a second to take the arm from one of his sculptures and use it for another.

But let’s return to the self-destructive element in your pieces. *Self-destruction* is indeed at work in your drawings. Destruction operates by superposing lines, which are erased

and I moved through it with a certain terror. The Apertures are terrifying because they are eminently static, as though the spaces had been emptied out. The Aperture generates a malaise, an imbalance in our usual relationship to space-time. These works are tremendously powerful and function for this very reason: their asynchrony is that of a space that destroys time.

Your work functions in an opposite manner: time destroys space and does so through crossing-out and asynchrony touches duration. Turrell's work functions of being spensionality, while your drawing is by the dimensionality, and, to be honest, you and Turrell don't have much in common; you have each, in your own way, used self-destruction within space-time as a tool to regain vision.

What would a choreography without space look like? My piece 0101 started with this question. The approach was extremely conceptual, and thus not a borrowed one. A process began around what thing of Agassiz figures moving in three-dim shallow people look like. The metaphor of bearances. The mystery of the vision - has visible, not the invisible" (1961, fig with danthis poppycock about the invis Roy, in a corbeliefs within religious thoucdedicated ourselvesilly to me. Like Wilde, I be the third dimension but in front of us, but that as: How do you move if there is Your work, how do you link movements together if there is no space in which to attach them to each other? How do you make a body movement emerge if there is no

through addition. Your drawings (and I would also add your paintings) possess a caustic quality: they assert themselves through the violence of erasure-through-accumulation. The line is a pure instrument of destruction and creation of spaces. The dynamic of movement of the line allows us to enter into the process and into the constitution of space in time. And so, your drawing of Annette becomes a living drawing because it exists in time, and the discord between the different spaces at work is the result of several successive operations. I come now to a phenomenon that interests me more than anything: the destruction of space by time. But I'd like to begin with its opposite: the destruction of time by space.



A particular situation comes to mind: I remember being in a gallery in Paris in 2004, in one of the Apertures, *Cherry* (1998) by James Turrell, and, because I am claustrophobic, I remained frozen at first at the opening of the installation. When I went in, I could see a space filled with red light with a *rectangle* somewhere at the back. Turrell presented the viewer with a space without borders. An opening at the end of a room was the only reference point for viewers to situate themselves spatially. A very dense light, a monochrome of red, filled the space. As I took a few steps forward, I felt the strangeness of the space, and felt what I would call a cognitive malaise; My body did not understand this space at all. In Turrell's installation, there was a disjuncture between space and time, as though the space destroyed the time; and so the space of the installation conquered the body of the viewer. Turrell's experiential work achieved the incredible feat of making us produce, in our own bodies, the element of destruction. In this space, time seemed horribly suspended, and I moved through it with a certain terror. The Apertures are terrifying because they are eminently static, as though

Superposing lines on a canvas, over and over again, produces a vibration, a sort of movement on the surface that tickles our attention.


To erase

Erasing is a way to perturbate the equilibrium in a given space. Giacometti works through accumulation by superposing information (reprise, repetition, overdose, etc.). The accumulation of lines generates much vitality in the drawing.

The glitch between each line produces some sort of vibration, a small movement that engenders a temporal awareness. The portraits become vivacious; we can't help not looking at them. They retain our attention.

To erase by accumulation and superposition

A drawing will draw and redraw itself right before our eyes, following the multiple lines that make it up. It erases the space from before by superposing itself *over the top* and reconstructs another space. In this regard, I like to think of his drawings as *self-destructive*. The movement of recomposition destroys any idea of the portrait as an object in favour of portrait as process.

Over the top 

Thus, the multiple pencil strokes and the abundance of lines in each of Giacometti's portraits do not leave one indifferent. In some respects, the strength of Giacometti's portraits resides not in the form, but rather in the sensation they provoke. And that sensation is possible through intensity that comes from doing over and over again and through a lot of attempts on the same canvas.



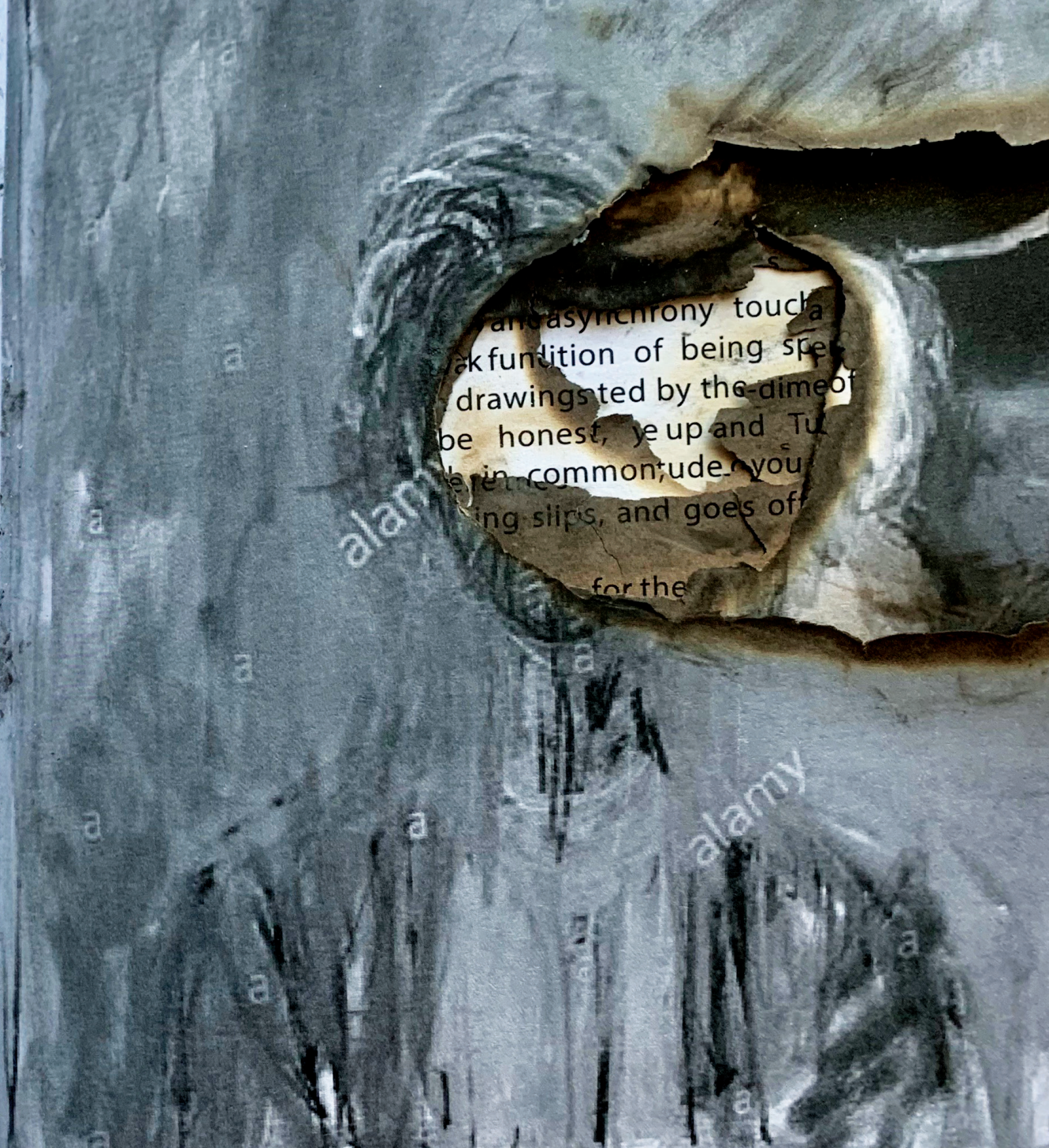
the spaces had been emptied out. The Aperture generates a malaise, an imbalance in our usual relationship to space-time. These works are tremendously powerful and function for this very reason: their asynchrony is that of a space that destroys time.



Your work functions in an opposite manner: time destroys space, and does so through crossing out and slow work over a duration. Turrell's work functions in three-dimensionality, while your drawings act in two-dimensionality, and, to be honest, you and Turrell don't have much in common, but you have each, in your own way, used *self-destruction* within space-time as a tool to regain vision.



What would a choreography without space look like? My piece 0101 started with this question. The approach was extremely conceptual, and thus not at all realistic. A process began around what two-dimensional figures moving in three-dimensionality would look like. The metaphor of removal of a space – the third dimension – had led me to approach the body, along with dancers AnneBruce Falconer and Ken Roy, in a completely eccentric way. We dedicated ourselves to the mission of erasing the third dimension by exploring questions such as: How do you move if there is no depth? How do you link movements together if there is no space in which to attach them to each other? How do you make a body movement emerge if there is no three-dimensional space outside this body? To “succeed,” if I may call it that, the dancers made movements of less than one second and thus the movement didn't have time to inscribe itself in space. A gesture would emerge so quickly it was like a spark we couldn't locate in the space. The effect was incredible. A little like in your drawings, Alberto, viewers weren't entirely sure of what they had seen; they watched



Self-destruction

Destruction operates in the drawings by superposing lines, which are erased through addition. In Giacometti's portraits, the space is a disintegrative process that works over time, through gestures that are superposed on the top of each other. It creates a little glitch between the lines.

the dancers with curiosity and ended up waiting, along with them, for something to happen. Your drawings carry this implosion within them – they seem to exist only for a furtive moment. This may be the reason why my eyes keep coming back to them.

In 0101, the movement of the dancers and the space was never complete; something that would allow the space to become realistic was always missing. Depth was obliterated, movements were separated coldly, and the dancers had a quick and sharp way of moving, without any fluidity. And in the end, just like your standing sculptures, Alberto, the dancers nearly always remained still. By conceptually separating space and time, there was no longer any reason to move. In attempting to destroy a space, I had ended up making a piece about space, and the bodies in it became real space killers themselves, like your portraits, remaining there, right in front of us, stock still.

Thus, space is not this vast and empty thing we penetrate, as we learned in expressive dance classes, but is rather a result: the result of a piling up of spaces and time that are not at all synchronized. We try (ardently, in good faith, and in spite of everything) to synchronize ourselves with one another and with objects, but it's all very demanding: our experience in space is different, and we live in a permanent state of desynchronization. Artists have allowed me to understand this, and you were the first among them. When we synchronize with each other, we flatten everything. What is this old-fashioned and terrible notion of harmony?

My research into asynchrony touches on this permanent condition of being spatially out of step. I get captivated by the works of artists who, like you, never gave up on their



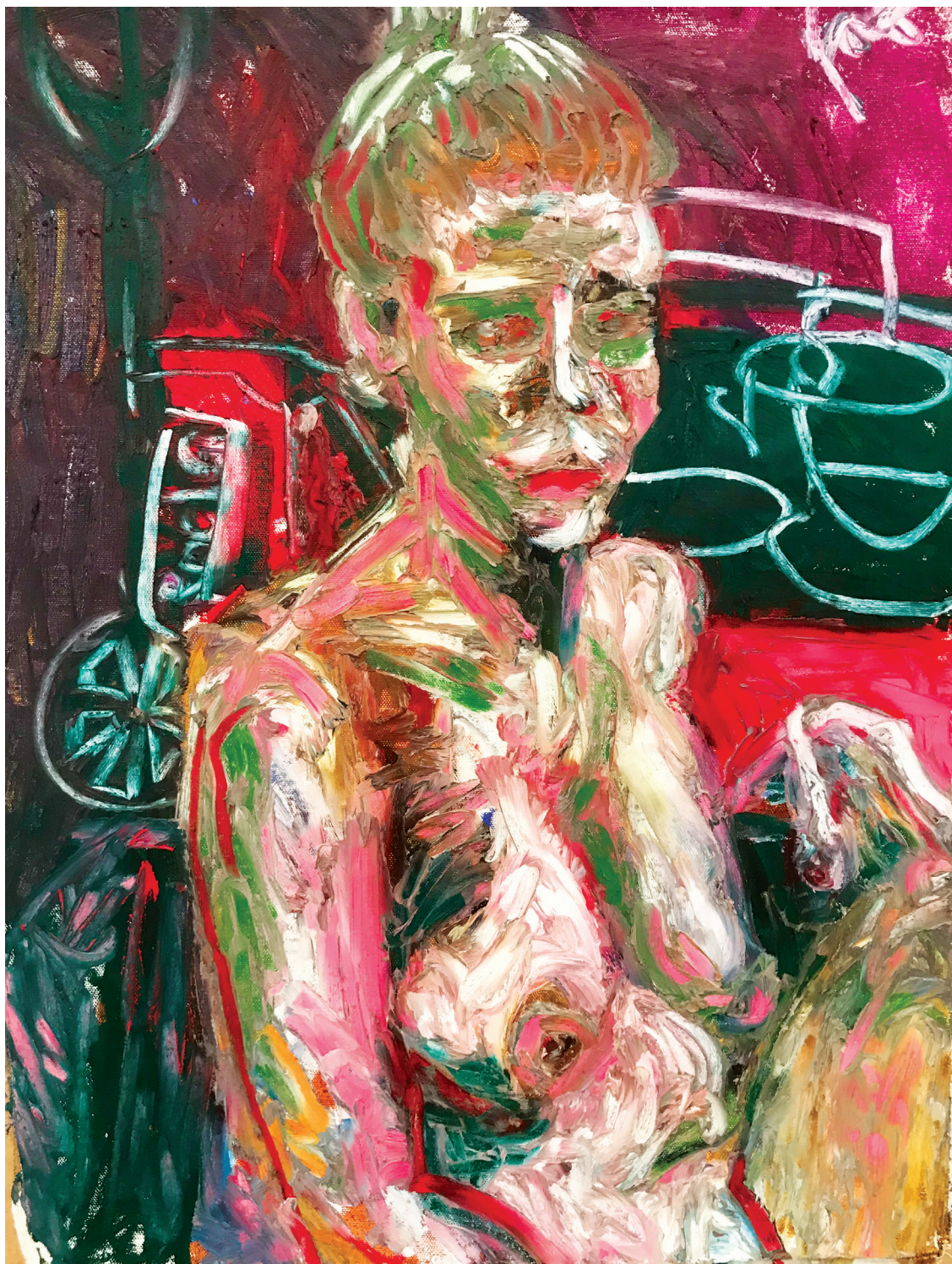
sensations and never feared the solitude of their language. They knew, just like you, that it is in perception that we all converge. The painter Francis Bacon, who you knew, alluded to an art that would speak directly to the nervous system of the viewer.

I will end this letter with a quote from Susan Sontag, borrowed from Oscar Wilde at the beginning of *Against Interpretation*: “It is only shallow people who do not judge by appearances. The mystery of the world is the visible, not the invisible” (1961, online). All this poppycock about the invisible and such beliefs within religious thought always seemed silly to me. Like Wilde, I believe that reality is right in front of us, but that it erases itself in each second. Your work sheds light on my research, Alberto – you help me to understand that space is not static, that it is not an object, any more than a drawing is a lifeless piece of paper. Understanding with one’s senses involves experiencing something. Sontag writes in the same essay: “Interpretation takes the sensory experience of the work of art for granted, and proceeds from there. This cannot be taken for granted now.”


Seeing cannot occur without violence. This accumulation of spaces that *self-destruct* produces movement and time and so, Alberto, your drawings insert themselves into the time of our space. A time occurs and the movement of the gaze is possible, without which your drawings would remain mere objects. Your drawings have helped me to understand the life of a space. Your insistence on wanting to translate that which you saw before the knowledge you had of it informs each of my projects, even when I’m not thinking about it. The tenacity of your vision provides support for my exploration. Your work allows me to understand that space only proceeds from movement; more importantly, time

allows things to exist, and allows us to integrate ourselves into it. Beyond all this, we are but poor, lonesome beings without space.

Lynda



ASYNCHRONIC PARAMETERS

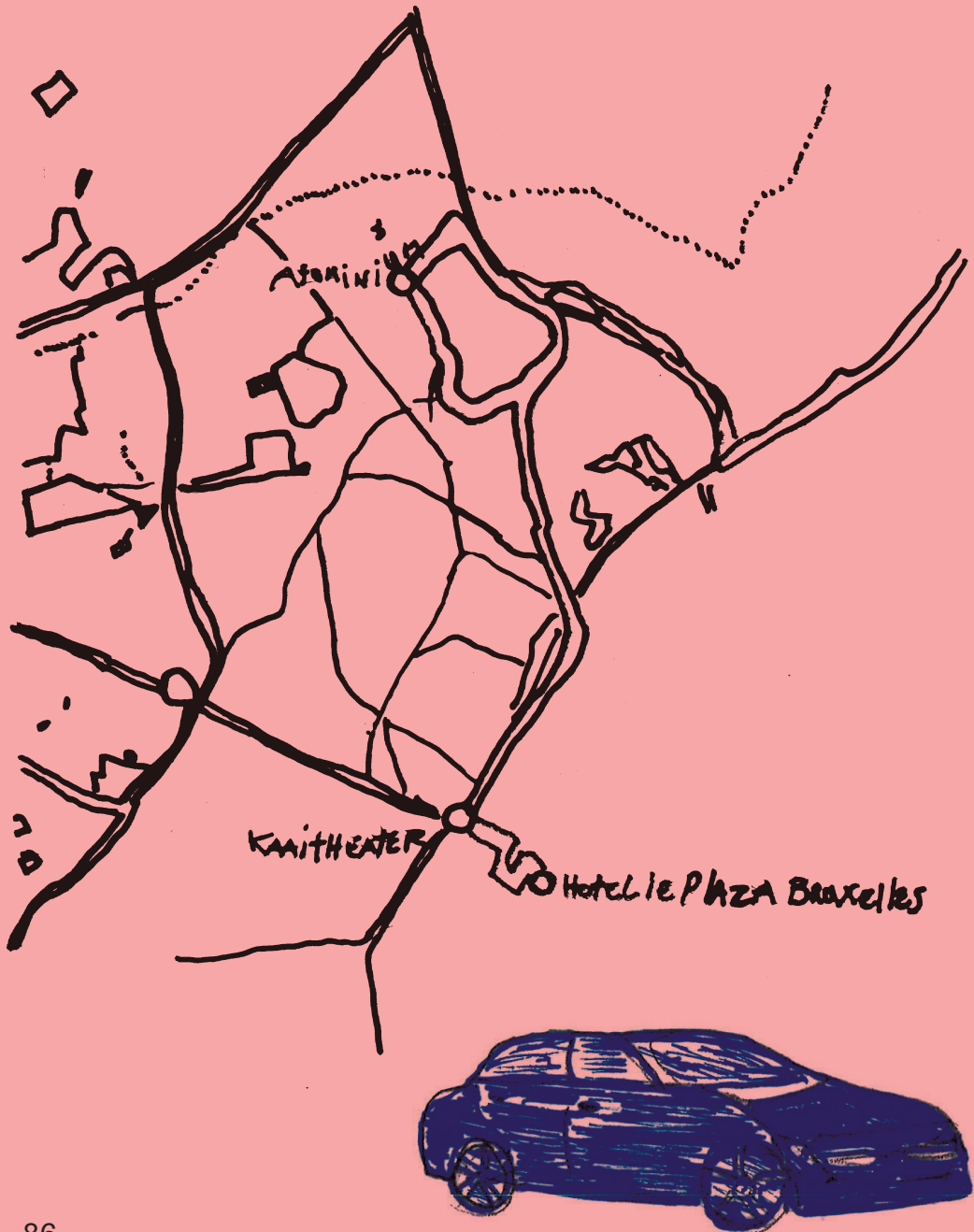
Asynchronous concepts: *out of the frame/out of the rectangle* 

Asynchronous actions: *short-circuit*, to bifurcate, to edit

Measure and scale: precision

REFERENTIAL ARTWORK

K.85. (2011). Work by Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Ari Benjamin Meyers.



DOMINIQUE GONZALEZ-FOERSTER & ARI BENJAMIN MEYERS

The project K.85 (2011) by Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Ari Benjamin Meyers serves as reference material.

I attended K.85 in March 2011 in Brussels. K.85 pushes the limits and protocols of performance. My experience started with receiving a text message and ended in front of an audience applauding me on the Kaaitheater stage for another performance of Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Ari Benjamin Meyers, K.62, in fact related to K. 85. The project is based on an extensive orchestration of numerous activities happenings simultaneously in the city of Brussels. By the end of the performance, all spaces actively involved in it (that were out of the frame of the car), become suddenly visible to me, as did the other audience participants in K.85.

Asynchrony here relates to editing. Script, scenario, and score serve as methods of composition, all intertwined within a montage. K.85 in its articulation is an asynchronous performance. It takes place in multiple unrevealed spaces and ends on stage at the Kaaitheater in Brussels.

Montreal, 27 June 2016

Dear Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster,
dear Ari Benjamin Meyers,

Your project K.85 (2011) will remain in my memory for a long time yet. I was intrigued by the description of your show in the Kaaitheater's brochure, in Brussels: "a black comedy on 'missed connections' inspired by Martin Scorsese's *After Hours* (1985)."

K.85 was presented as one part of a three-part performance including K.62 – a black comedy for audience and orchestra (inspired by the adaptation of Kafka's *The Trial* by Orson Welles in 1962) – and K.73 (2011), which draws upon the film *Malpertuis* (1971) by Harry Kümel with characters trapped in Cassavius' labyrinth. Since I was only passing through Brussels, I wasn't able to see the whole trilogy; I opted for K.85. My curiosity was piqued by the note indicating that the performance site would be confirmed by telephone on the day of the show.

Here's what I remember, and the reflections that emerge from my memories of the show, six years later.

3 March 2011. I receive a text with the instructions for K.85. I'm asked to show up at exactly 8:00 in front of the Hôtel Plaza in Brussels. It says specifically: at 8:00, not before, and not after.

When I arrive, I look around for the crowd, walk once around the building, but there's no one, and no line-up in sight. I go into the lobby – no one. I ask the concierge where the people are for the festival performance, but he doesn't seem to know anything about it. Worry starts to gnaw at me – I'm scared I'll be late. I go back outside. A limousine is now

DOMINIQUE GONZALEZ-FOERSTER
& ARI BENJAMIN MEYERS



Rectangle

There were many rectangles in K.85: the hotel hall, limousine, restaurant, concert hall, backstage corridors, stage...



parked in front of the hotel, and the chauffeur steps forward to hand me an envelope.

Chauffeur: This is for you.

I see an envelope with “K.19” written in black marker.

Me: Um, no, I’m here for a performance.

Chauffeur: Take your seat.

And he hands the envelope back to me with a smile.

Me: What’s going on?

Chauffeur: I can’t say anything.

I get into the limousine with the distinct feeling of entering a David Lynch film. The chauffeur puts on a CD with flamenco music and starts the car. We drive slowly, but surely, and now we’re on the outskirts of Brussels, at the edge of a forest. Sweating more and more, I keep asking my chauffeur about the evening, but he invariably replies: “I can’t say anything, but please don’t worry.”

The flamenco music heats up and I can’t decide if I like it or hate it. The chauffeur is now murmuring a few words into a walkie-talkie.

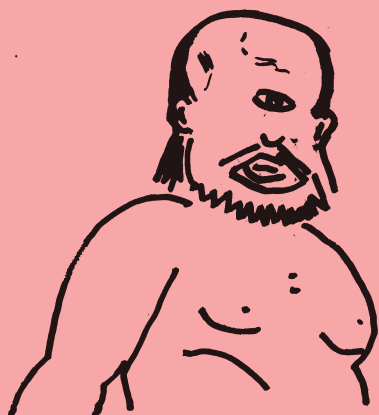
Oh goodness, do I have my passport with me? If I don’t throw myself out of the car, I’ll throw it out the window into this accursed forest. At least that trace will remain. But why don’t I decide to get out of the car? Where are we?

The chauffeur is large and bald, and in spite of his friendliness, he looks like the very archetype of the big strong man. If he had only one eye he could play Polyphemus, the giant cyclops from Homer’s epic. I remember him in the television series *The Odyssey* (1968) by Franco Rossi, with actress Irene Papas as Penelope.



To bifurcate

A clear moment of bifurcation in K.85 is when I receive an envelope from the driver asking me to follow him in the limousine. The expected performance took a very surprising turn from this shifting moment.



Through the window, the night and the trees are very dark, and I'm driving along the edge of a maleficent forest with Polyphemus at the wheel, to the sound of wild flamenco. But silence would be worse.

In this endless night, I resolve to be a Penelope who waits. Dominique, Ari, I have to say that at this point in my story, I hate you.

Little by little, the cars we pass along the road calm me down. A rolling object can comfort. My parents used to leave my brother and me at my aunt Rita's in the summer. Her house was in Lanoraie, beside Highway 138, which stretches along the Saint Lawrence River. Trucks and delivery cars would rumble past day and night. Their engines soothed my brother's and my own sleep.

Brussels, with my chauffeur.

Maybe I should have opened my window. If we were in a convertible, for example, would I have felt better? In his book *Window, art*, historian Gerard Wajcman (2004, 95) writes:

Alberti speaks of an elementary gesture one must make before beginning to paint, in order to be able to begin: for me, to begin to paint, I pierce a hole, I open a window—through which I will watch the story unfold.

The objects I glimpsed along the road (lampposts, lines on the ground, cars we passed) and the rhythm of the car eventually slowed me down and brought me into another register of time. Seated inside this limousine that kept on, imperturbable, I began to see. And then I decided to open this window Alberti refers to, and to enter into a story I was going to tell myself.

The borderline between image, film, fiction, and reality



became porous and then, somewhere within me, the process of creation of the image and space began.

All at once, inside the car, I became the camera of a film. My chauffeur was a character, the walkie-talkie was a prop, the trees were our backdrop and my fear made it a thriller.

What came next, dear Dominique and dear Ari, was an extraordinary journey through the urban architecture of Brussels. Perhaps, Dominique, you will remember this trip was punctuated by several stops? The first stop was beside the Atomium, at Salon 58, the restaurant built in 1958 by the architect of the Brussels World Fair.

I step into an empty restaurant. Such an amazing place – benches of pink velvet and candles flickering – cannot be deserted. I deduce that they are waiting for me. Shyly, I look at the waiters, seeking any sign. I am Peter Sellers in 1963 as Inspector Clouseau in *The Pink Panther*, directed by Blake Edwards. With extreme alertness, I walk through the room, expecting someone to stop me or Kato, my valet, to leap out all at once to knock me down... but nothing happens. Bah... I leave.

With a gesture of his hand, my chauffeur suggests that I stay a little longer. No, thank you, I say, but I get the feeling I'm about to start having fun.

The second stop is a little more cloudy – I vaguely remember deserted streets in an industrial zone. And then the car stops in front of a club. Someone at the entrance asks for the K.19 envelope handed to me by the chauffeur at the beginning of this trip. In exchange, I get a drink ticket, and I head inside to a concert of post-punk music. I gather I have time for at least one beer. My driver's silence means I never quite know how much time I have, nor am I comfortable with the idea of leaving him. Who is he? What is his role? What exactly is my role?

Out of the rectangle ✨

The performance I have experienced, that I describe in the letter, is based on a fine orchestration of several activities that are not visible to the audience participants in K.85. A set of places (*rectangles*) outside the participants' knowledge are at work. In this sense, what is *out of the rectangle* and what is in each *rectangle* is inseparable. It creates misunderstanding, tensions, drama, and mystery in a rather unpredictable scenario.





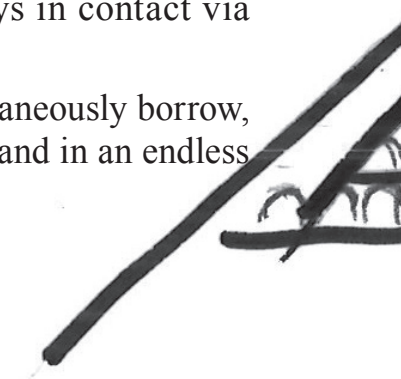
The club fills up, the concert starts, and I become Solveig Dommartin listening to Nick Cave in the final concert in *Wings of Desire*, the film directed by Wim Wenders in 1987; and then I leave my character and step back into my own life. This concert is for me. In my own life, I go to similar concerts sometimes – what a marvellous coincidence then, fiction meets reality, as they say.

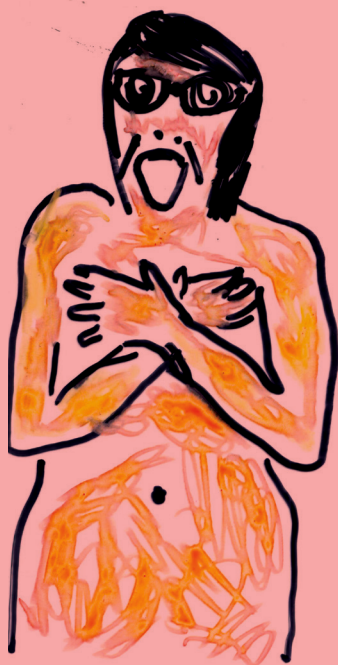
My chauffeur waits for me beside the car. When he sees me, he says something into his walkie-talkie and takes me to what will be my last stop.

The limousine parks in front of the side door at the Kaaitheater. A man who's also carrying a walkie-talkie leads me inside the building and then we rush through the basement of the Kaai at great speed. After a long race through the semi-dark, a door opens: **WELCOME, K.19!** I am alone on the stage of the Kaaitheater, and before me, the audience applauds. Two thousand people will have seen me naked, or perhaps just one – the effect will have been the same. I'm completely stunned.

Dumbfounded, I'm led to my spot among the audience. As I come back to my senses, I finally understand that the audience in the room is the audience from another part of the trilogy, K.62 (2011). This audience has witnessed several entertaining moments, including the arrival of each participant from K.85. And now I am part of the audience welcoming other members of K.85. A large blackboard beside the stage retraces the itinerary of each K under the direction of a hostess/mistress of ceremonies – the woman with the microphone who welcomed me to the stage – who stays in contact via walkie-talkie with each K.85 escort.

That night, K.85 allowed me to simultaneously borrow, imagine, and refuse several roles in my life, and in an endless



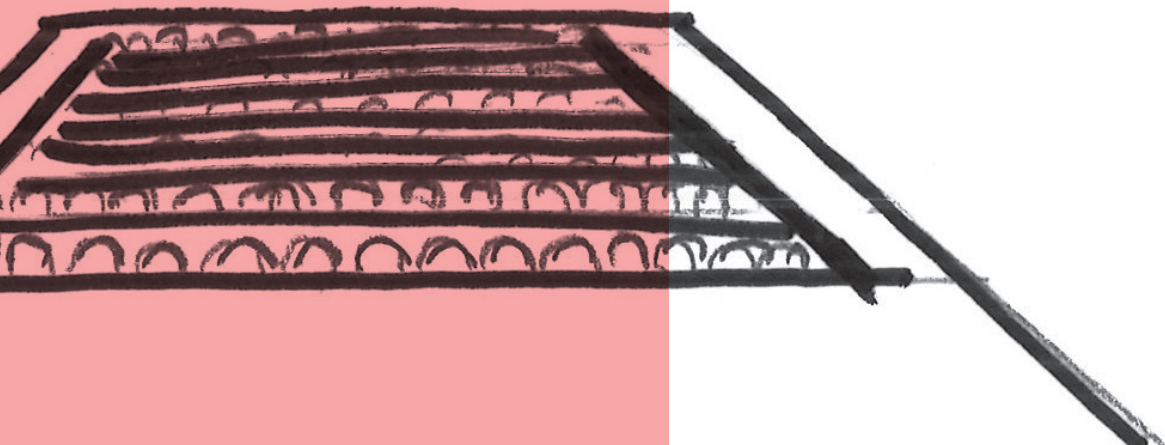


Short-circuit

The moment of opening the door of the theatre and then standing in front of an audience was as abrupt as a *short-circuit* can be.

Precision

The journey of each member of K.85 has a considerable impact on the whole project. Each becomes like a piece of a puzzle.



fiction. I took on various points of view – camera, screenplay, editing, actress, and spectator. Your project, Dominique and Ari, allowed me to enter into the image, to look at it, to leave it behind, to emerge, and then to produce others and so on and so forth. I got to be part of a mobile opera travelling through a city, and your script allowed me to enter myself in various space-times that overlapped in my imagination. Again, a phrase from Vincent Dieutre comes to mind, from his essay *Éloge du vibratile* (2000, 85): “What remains is well and truly the sensation of an image that is an extension of a body, of a quest.” Yes, it is above all my own body that experienced this story via a score composed so finely by you.

The work I do is not on objects or images, but rather on space-time. And you reminded me of this. I work on choreographic images that only exist through time and movement. My scripts are more like scores.

You said some similar things, Ari, in an interview – whose source I can’t find any more – the two of you had with Dominic Eichler in Berlin in September 2011:

Dominique and I often think of our work together in very musical terms. In fact, we talk more in terms of a score than a script, creating a composition. In the end the piece will be as long as it needs to be.

I think of your work often, Dominique. Especially that time I was trying to film images I didn’t know yet. This past winter, I did some work with a cinematographer, preparing short films for an installation. My cinematographer wanted to know what images I had in mind. She told me (without reproach) that the cinematographer usually has a screenplay in hand when she approaches her work, and knows what she will be filming. With me, I didn’t yet know the images I was going to film. I wanted to discover them through the process, but this was unusual.

Rectangle

The driver was in constant communication by walkie-talkie with the mistress of ceremonies (MC) in the theatre of K.62. Inside, the audience were following the itinerary of each K in their own space (rectangle) on the MC's blackboard.

To edit

The composition involves the score of the whole performance of K.85 and the score of K.62.

For the K.62 audience, the performance is based on the precision of the one in K.85.

I refer to the term montage from a technical point of view, as a method of assembling images, whereas I refer to the term choreography for the organization of gestures and objects, but I could just as easily say that I "choreograph" the images and "edit" the movements, and that asynchrony is the effect resulting from montage.

As choreographers, we simultaneously occupy the functions of screenwriter, director, and editor of our work, without any hierarchical distinction, and without giving precedence to the scenario/content. All of it happens in a fluid alternation between these different processes. And in fact, we don't even conceive of these functions in an atomized way – the direction or the scriptwriting happen during the editing process just as much as it does as during the process of producing the material. There is a permanent come-and-go in play between these roles. Of course, the degree to which each artist works in this way varies. But articulating this has clarified even further the close links between choreography and asynchrony.

As I wrote to you today, I took my place once more in the back seat of my Polyphemus' limousine. But what's more...

I read the news today, oh boy
About a lucky man who made the grade
And though the news was rather sad
Well I just had to laugh
I saw the photograph.
He blew his mind out in a car
He didn't notice that the red lights had changed
A crowd of people stood and stared
They'd seen his face before
Nobody was really sure
If he was from the House of Lords.
I saw a film today, oh boy
The English army had just won the war
A crowd of people turned away
But I just had to look
Having read the book
I'd love to turn you on.
Woke up, fell out of bed,

Dragged a comb across my head
Found my way downstairs and drank a cup,
And looking up I noticed I was late.
Found my coat and grabbed my hat
Made the bus in seconds flat
Found my way upstairs and had a smoke,
Somebody spoke and I went into a dream.
I read the news today oh boy
Four thousand holes in Blackburn, Lancashire
And though the holes were rather small
They had to count them all
Now they know how many holes it takes to fill the Albert
Hall.
I'd love to turn you on.

A Day in the Life by the Beatles in 1967, mm... forgive me, I hadn't heard this song for so long. It's playing now in the café where I'm writing. No doubt there's a little drama, a little story, a little Beatles in your projects, Dominique. You are not an abstract artist as I am. Your work draws upon stories that you disassemble and that we, the audience, put together in turn. Above all, you create environments – I know you prefer this term to the word “installation.” Personally I prefer the word “project”: that allows us, the – what should we be called? – participants/visitors, to appropriate, take apart, and then put back together the images and leave them behind. My deepest thanks to you, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Ari Benjamin Meyers.

Lynda



Part Two

Saana Lavaste • Balthazar • Leena Rouhiainen •
Bartleby and Bartlebys • Tero Nauha • Bobby •
Hanna Järvinen • Lynda Gaudreau & Kenneth Siren

STRIPS WITH SAANA LAVASTE

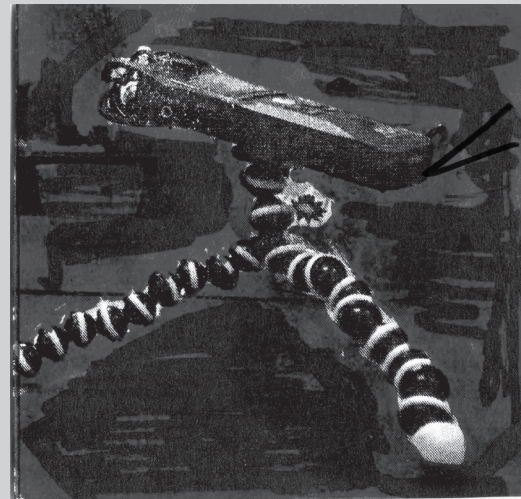
*On error, space, and ikebana in the making of a
theatre play*

In the flower shop, Helsinki, 15 June 2020



Making alive again something that is taken away from life. The flowers have been cut for the arrangement and they will die. They remind us of impermanence. The Japanese ideogram for arranging flowers is *ikeru*, which means and is usually translated as “making alive” or making come to life. But interestingly, *ikeru* can also mean to “transform.”

In ikebana you work with flowers that are dead. And then you bring them alive again. In theatre we have to do some strange alchemy that create life. You have to be doctor Frankenstein. You have to construct it very carefully.



In ikebana, there is this wabi-sabi – did you hear about it?

This is the beauty of the incompleteness. The beauty of the disformed. There would be the tea ceremony, with teacups a little bit disformed, or wood disformed.

In Japanese aesthetics – especially in those influenced by Zen – incompleteness or failure is seen as an important and meaningful aspect of beauty. This quality of deformation and worn-outness is known and appreciated as wabi-sabi. Accordingly, the beauty of asymmetry, incompleteness, and brokenness are much appreciated qualities.

This aesthetic of incompleteness is present in architecture, teacups, haiku, and tanka poems.

Wabi-sabi aims for aesthetic experience that reminds us of temporality and impermanence, and the acute feeling of beauty that comes from that. People think it is about nature, but actually it is a lot about temporality, which brings to theatre.

In theatre – unlike in many other forms of art – people love mistakes. Mistake makes the “now” moment come alive.

Mistakes in theatre and performing art are a way to make people remember this: “this is not a recording, this is unique, this is temporal, it will disappear, we are together in the same space, so my mistakes will affect you and it is a bit dangerous.”

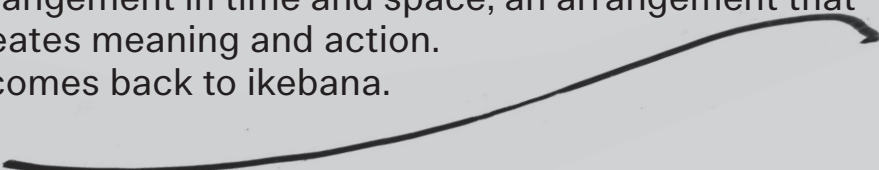


At this moment of our life, mistakes are important. It is time for people to wake up from their recording dreams... music is recorded, TV is recorded, everything we watch from our phones is recorded. So, for me mistakes are a way to bring people back to this shared moment of now and to make us remember that we are temporal beings ourselves, far from perfection. Our lives happen in the unique now, in the midst of mistakes. This feeling of our shared temporality and mortality, and the beauty that comes from this, is very meaningful for me in theatre.

About materiality. What is your relation to materiality and the concept of ikebana that things are very fugitive, almost self-destructive?

Materiality of the stage is interesting. It transforms the thing. The chair is not only chair anymore on stage. Theatre stage open up all the possibilities that anybody or object could have in any time and place.

The materiality of theatre is very strong; it is very concrete, and not abstract. The stage situation is an arrangement in time and space, an arrangement that creates meaning and action. It comes back to ikebana.



In ikebana everything starts with three main branches. Unequal number is important for creating the dynamic imbalance, asymmetry, the feeling of naturality.

When you have 100% of nature outside, in nature, you don't see nature anymore. Then you take a branch, and then you prune away 30% of it. You made a choice about what you want us to see from this nature.

Of course, you can take more, but if you want to keep the naturalness, you keep 70% of nature and the end result looks like you never did anything to it. It looks completely natural.



In classical ikebana, you have the sun over the arrangement. So, you decide the place of the sun and, when you make the arrangement, you have to decide which side of it is growing towards the sun.

There are many rules in ikebana and of course you can break them all. They are usually three main branches. The length of the longest branch is measured in proportion with the size/width of the holder. The second and third branch are both shorter and in relationship to the length of the main branch and each other. The vertical degree of each branch is also carefully regulated. The ends of these three branches form a triangle. All these rules are there in order to create the impression of naturalness.



ASYNCHRONIC PARAMETERS

Out of the frame , *pebble* , *anachronic pebble* .

LETTER TO BALTHAZAR

Balthazar is the name of the donkey in *Au Hasard Balthazar*, the 1966 film by director Robert Bresson.

Montreal, 5 April 2015

Dear Balthazar, my dear donkey,

Excuse my delay in writing to you - a letter to Jean-Luc Godard, who you probably don't know, has taken up all my time lately. But I've been wanting very much to write to you. I feel like I already know you a little - you are in one of my films (in spite of yourself - I'll tell you about it). For this reason, you've been in my thoughts and I have been wanting to thank you for a while now.

When I see you in the film by Robert Bresson, *Au Hasard Balthazar*, I see all animals in you, and they all become beautiful. Beauty is strange. I realized something while watching a film by Miranda July one day, *Me and You and Everyone We Know* (2005): beauty doesn't exist, it happens. At the beginning of her film, the characters seem rather ugly and insipid to me - and yet an hour later, after seeing the whole thing, they become absolutely magnificent. Is it because I knew them better? Probably.

I think of this quote from Robert Bresson: "this is the system of poetry. To take elements that are as far apart from each other in the world as possible, and to bring them together in an order that is not the usual order, but rather your very own" (Bresson 2013, 182). This definition of

poetry applies to beauty in general, and also to July's film.

The characters in *Me and You...* are out of synch with reality, clumsy, and frankly hopeless - or at least, they have every reason to be - but they don't know it. Richard, the shoe salesman, and Christine, the taxi driver for seniors (played by Miranda July) communicate in a language bordering on esotericism. I'm thinking of their conversation as they are walking together, in which they decide that by the time they reach the next corner, their relationship will be over. The script contains a myriad of plot points like this, with unanticipated, absurd situations, and characters with outrageous comportment. July's poetry is housed in the script itself, while with your director, Robert Bresson, it mainly emerges in the articulation of images and sound during the editing process, and in a highly stylized directing style. Still, Miranda July's characters have a kinship with Bresson's in terms of their weaknesses and their honesty. In a completely other aesthetic order, I'm also thinking of horror film director Dario Argento, who says, in an interview with Vivien Villani: "The characters in my films are not 'good' people: they are marginal, homosexual, deviant. [...] I, too, have always felt different, my whole life. I understand what it means to live in society without being like other people" (Villani 2008,

17). And here is where I think about my own life, Balthazar.

The members of my family were always very free in their bodies, to my great dismay. When my friends rang the doorbell, my father would answer in boxers; and my mother, a former city slicker, would tan in her bikini on the front lawn. There was no question that we were the eccentrics of Papineau Street in Sept-Îles, the small town where I was born in Quebec's Côte-Nord. And here I am, all these years later, exploring eccentricity and making a new work out of it with a series entitled: Out. But how could it be otherwise, Balthazar? This is the only perspective I've ever had.

Like the protagonists in July's film, my parents and I were bodies that didn't completely master social protocols. Despite the insouciance of my parents about their bodies, they weren't the ones who taught me about what a body is. My relationship to the body and to dance began with cinema and television. Besides the animals in TV documentaries - monkeys in particular taught me a lot about the body, movement, and sexuality - I learned about the life of the body, and more generally social life, on the big and the small screens. TV series were a key resource, and incredibly instructive. The cardboard look, the stylized décor in many series made it clear that I was watching something completely staged. The way the characters were out of synch

with their environment became apparent, and helped me accept my own sense of being different. This interest for the out-of-synch quality of our lives turned up again in my work in dance several years later. My set designs, for example, have a "fabricated" look. Sometimes they make you think of architects' models, photographers' studios, or the sets of TV series. I usually use a very large sheet of white paper. I spread it over one part of the stage, or fold it to divide the space. With this paper décor, I am trying to accentuate the artificial, fabricated nature of set design. And as I write this, Balthazar, I see more clearly the link that can exist between that which is artificial, anachronistic, and asynchrous; life is all the more visible when it comes from an apparatus. Was it the painter Francis Bacon who said: "The more artificial you can make it, the greater chance you've got of its looking real"?

The films of Miranda July and Robert Bresson show how individuals and their environments are out of synch, by way of a body that's "out of order," that has difficulty integrating itself. Filmmaker John Cassavetes has also explored this, with his disoriented stories and rebellious characters fighting for their lives. Cassavetes' method is diametrically opposed to Bresson's. The actor occupies a central role in the process of creation and, through his or her improvisations,

contributes a great deal to the script. Although you gave Bresson a run for his money during the shoot - I read that he couldn't manage to direct you - I can't for a single moment imagine you in a Cassavetes film, Balthazar, even with all the humanity and kindness of actress Gena Rowlands. On the other hand, you are what I call a body from *out of the frame*, just like the characters played by Gena Rowlands, Seymour Cassel, and the whole Cassavetes gang, himself included.

You know, when it comes down to it, the body in my work resembles you a little. Just like you, the dancer often remains in one place, standing straight. He or she moves very little - in fact I find little reason for the dancer to move. I even admit to having had a bit of a complex about this, vis-à-vis my dance colleagues, but that was long ago now - it's not important anymore. Still, for a few years now, the body moves more easily, when I put it in a space other than the stage (a gallery, museum, for example). This is what happened in my projects *Out of Grace* (2010) and *Out of Grace, M Museum, Leuven* (2012), two choreographic exhibitions, and in *Out of Mies* (2014), an installation. As I write to you, it occurs to me that this may be what has led me to shift my choreography practice towards visual arts these last years - the need to give meaning to movement. These spaces exist in the real world as

specific places. The dancers walk, step, and run through them, and their bodies give a new life to these public spaces. Take, for example, the three short films in my installation Out of Mies. Ah! yes of course, this is the project I must tell you about, because you are in it - let me explain.

In these films, the dancers move through the three sites that Mies van der Rohe designed in Montreal: a housing complex, a gas station on Île-des-Sœurs, and Westmount Square, downtown. The bodies are there to punctuate the space with simple movements.

A mute body remains an enigma for me. In hindsight, perhaps I treated the architecture of Mies van der Rohe like a mystery - indeed, like a space waiting for the presence of a body to come to life. I'm interested in the furtive moments in life, in the most insignificant signs of life animating the body and, inversely, in the way in which the mere presence of the body transforms the space. As I write to you, Balthazar, I understand more fully why I'm interested in abstraction in dance, and why the dancers in my pieces rarely touch each other; they have to remain *out of the frame* of language, outside all psychology, renouncing all expressive intentionality. And here I return to the first part of my letter, the "fabricated" - whether space, or body from *out of the*

frame - that cannot have meaning except through a staging, a framing in which the shot is constructed and shaped.

In an interview with Roger Stéphane on a TV programme for the ORTF (Office de radiodiffusion-télévision française), Robert Bresson says: “We cannot copy life. We have to try to find something to reach life without copying it. If we copy life, we never reach it - we reach something false instead. And I believe it’s through a mechanism that we might arrive at a truth, even a reality” (Bresson 2013, 202).

I never wanted to make a film about architecture, any more than I wanted to make a film about dance. I didn’t know what this footage would become. But as I watched the images during the editing process, I understood the importance of the body. Without its very presence, the architecture filmed would remain merely an image. My attempt was ultimately to present the architectural space of Mies van der Rohe as a potential site for fiction, using the language of cinema and choreography.

Bresson’s work was already present in my research when I wrote *O101* in 2007, and, in 1996, my piece *Still Life no. 1*. In *O101*, bodies seem to be emptied out, as though blown outside themselves. They are flat, chaste, and distant. In *Still Life no. 1*, the body places itself on a table and

on a chair. It seems vacant, constantly searching for a frame. Balthazar, your body and your presence extract themselves from the language of human beings. You are impassive to the vices of each of the characters you encounter in your film. You are an animal, so you don't function in the language of humans; you remind us of the obsolescence of language. You are an endearing creature who asks for nothing. In Bresson's film, your body seems to be waiting, and we wait with you for something to happen.

We don't really know each other, Balthazar, and I hope you'll forgive me sharing these intimate thoughts with you, some of which may even be inappropriate. In the process of writing to you, a number of aspects of my life and my work have come clear - I wasn't expecting that. You are a confidante in spite of yourself. Thank you, Balthazar.

Lynda



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A FABLE WITH LEENA ROUHIAINEN

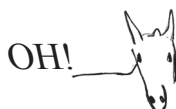


*On diachrony and the alien, through the lens of
Emmanuel Levinas and Bernhard Waldenfels*

Live Google Doc exchange, 6 July 2020

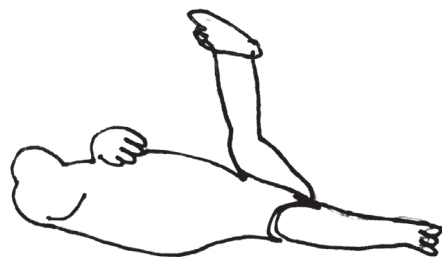


*This is happening in the middle
of the forest in Finland.
It must be the night, but maybe not. It is now the
summer light in Finland.
The story involves Leena Rouhiainen,
in the form of her avatar Ginger, a chimpanzee and
Lynda Gaudreau, as Cookie, a donkey.*



JUST call me Ginger.

COOKIE! Ginger, let's start with diachrony. What does it mean?





I HAVE learnt about diachrony from two phenomenologists. The first is Levinas who points to the difference in the subjective times we each live in. He finds that a subject goes about their egoistic business until interrupted by the face of the other.

This encounter is an intimate meeting that happens on a sensuous and bodily level. A level that resists being known and conceptualized. Here our regular understanding of time-consciousness is interrupted, and we become answerable to the other, we respond before we are aware of the other and our shown our singularity.

IT seems that singularity manifests itself in copresence?
Like we need the otherness to feel our own singularity, is that it?



AS far as I understand, yes, something like that. But it is interesting that this is not out of choice, the other commands us to respond in a sense. And in being singled out like this, we are naked and faced with our singularity, the immediate response that we give, expresses us.

DURING lockdown my senses narrowed down to flat visuality of my computer. I lost track of myself, of time and days, life was in suspension. The real was never real enough.



When I started working on asynchrony, it was because, as an artist and spectator, everything started looking the same. I did not see anymore. During lockdown, it was similar. I was craving for the outside, what was outside the frame of my apartment to feel alive.



WE often explain encounters with otherness in this or that way, are not bothered by it – perhaps in Levinasian terms neglect it and attempt to bring it into the totalizing order. This is the contradiction though, we can express the other, and be hospitable to the other on a sensuous and bodily level as speaking, a saying. But in saying we utilize words that have been said and thus are unfaithful to otherness. So, it is a play between the saying and the said that contradict each other. In strong cases, a sensuous trace is left that silently reminds us and affects our actions.

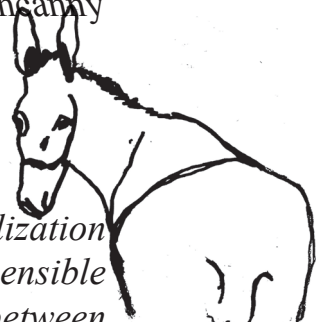
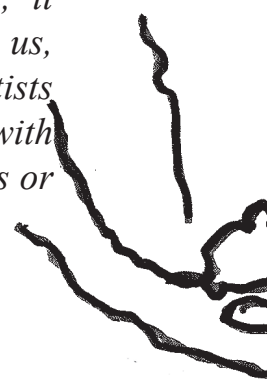
Encountering otherness is not something we create, it comes to us, besieges us, takes us by surprise, disturbs us, leaves us naked, humble... and in this sense I think as artists and artist-researchers we can only play and work with settings that potentially allow us to encounter otherness or experience the alien.



GINGER, how does the alien produce time? How does the uncanny impact time?



FOLLOWING Levinas, in short, there is a temporalization in sensibility through a divergence in which the sensible becomes manifest to itself, it becomes exposed in “between forgetting and expecting, between memory and project” (Levinas 2000, p.29). Temporal flow here is about the differing of the identical, that is also its manifestation, containing an irretrievable lapse of time. This articulation in sensibility already involves a kind of logos, a saying with a signification that remains hesitant or holds a secret (Levinas 2000, p. 10). Instead, Waldenfels depicts the temporality of alien experience in relation to the fact that in his view alterity or otherness has already had an impact on





us, before we recognize the response we have given to it. This deferred response is what announces to us the ungraspable antecedent contact with alterity.

Thus, this contact and its response are tied together across a gap that Waldenfels also terms a heterogeneous dialogue. The contact necessitates creativity, since we are responding to something unfathomable. In this sense alien experiences are “happenings that not only lead us to think, they also force us to think” (Waldenfels 2011, 31). I believe, both these views about the basis of temporal flow of our experience involve something akin to asynchrony.



WHAT is its effect in space?



THERE is here a kind of set-up in which otherness is from elsewhere, the outside that engulfs us. In the Levinasian view, this is first announced as a sensuous rhythm that overtakes us. Here we are in the midst of a participation with an ambiguous interplay of mass, volume, shape, flow, and intensity of the sensible and proximal event. The always escaping and remote alien invokes a proximal exposure that experientially moves us. Encounters with others are therefore the beginnings of a relational spatiality.

HOW do we experience the alien?



THERE is a quality in the alien that is met on an elemental sensuous level that maintains the sense of vitality, volume

and aliveness, that characterizes our lives. I would believe that we partly desire encounters with otherness to experience this, as pleasure.

OTHERNESS as a necessity seems to involve a dynamic in which we erase ourselves in front of the other, then we reappear in our singularity, a bit like in a hide-and-seek game.



WELL put. Heidegger and destruction and Derrida and deconstruction come to mind. However, I think Levinas thinks that we could tinker with our habitual methods of playing around with thoughts, objects, and such to produce new alternatives that could be pleasurable and productive.



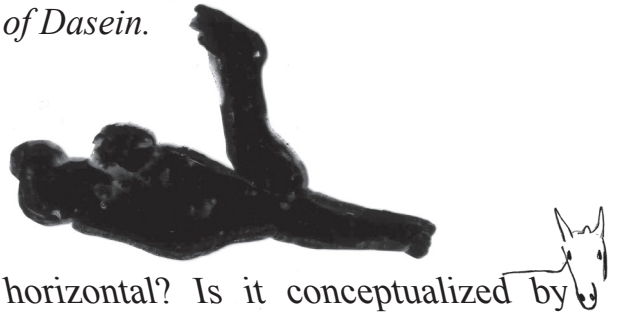
HOW about the relation between alien and surprise? Is it like some kind of UFO (unidentified flying object) that might occur at any moment, upsetting a given situation, then vanishing?



WELL, like I pointed out earlier, in a pathic experience, in experiencing the alien, according to Waldenfels, diachrony is at play. The alien impacting the experience, a kind of antagonism, is anterior, it is already gone, to consciousness when the effect that produces a response is thrown light on and that is always posterior to the alien. So, we are never in contact directly with the alien on a conscious level, so it

indeed is a UFO. We are aware of the fact that something has stirred us, but what it actually is never fully finds an adequate experiential response – even how we try to appreciate the bodily sensations these stirrings arouse.

But then, Waldenfels also writes about order and disorder, the two depend upon each other. I wish I could say more on this, but at the moment, I cannot. Need to read more, except to refer to Heidegger and his notion of care, hammers, shoes, wear down in use, deteriorate, decompose and we need to care, mend for them to continue to be usable, it is one of the existential conditions of Dasein.

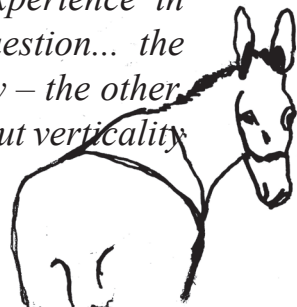


IS diachrony vertical or horizontal? Is it conceptualized by Levinas as an evolutive event? or could we imagine diachrony with multiple layers of time-space?



WOW what a question. For Waldenfels the alien comes from elsewhere. The alien experience involves heterogeneity, in the sense of diachrony. For Levinas, encountering otherness involves intimate contact with the rhythm of the sensible, we go outside ourselves... it is thus spatial and time-related transcendence... too... for Levinas the encounter with otherness grounds and [shapes the] ethics that is fundamental for the constitution of our subjectivity.

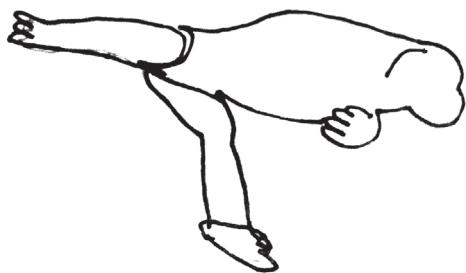
Waldenfels in fact also thinks that pathic experience is actually depictive of the structure of our experience in general... not sure I am answering your question... the earlier part speaks perhaps about horizontality – the other elsewhere, outside ourselves, and the latter about verticality

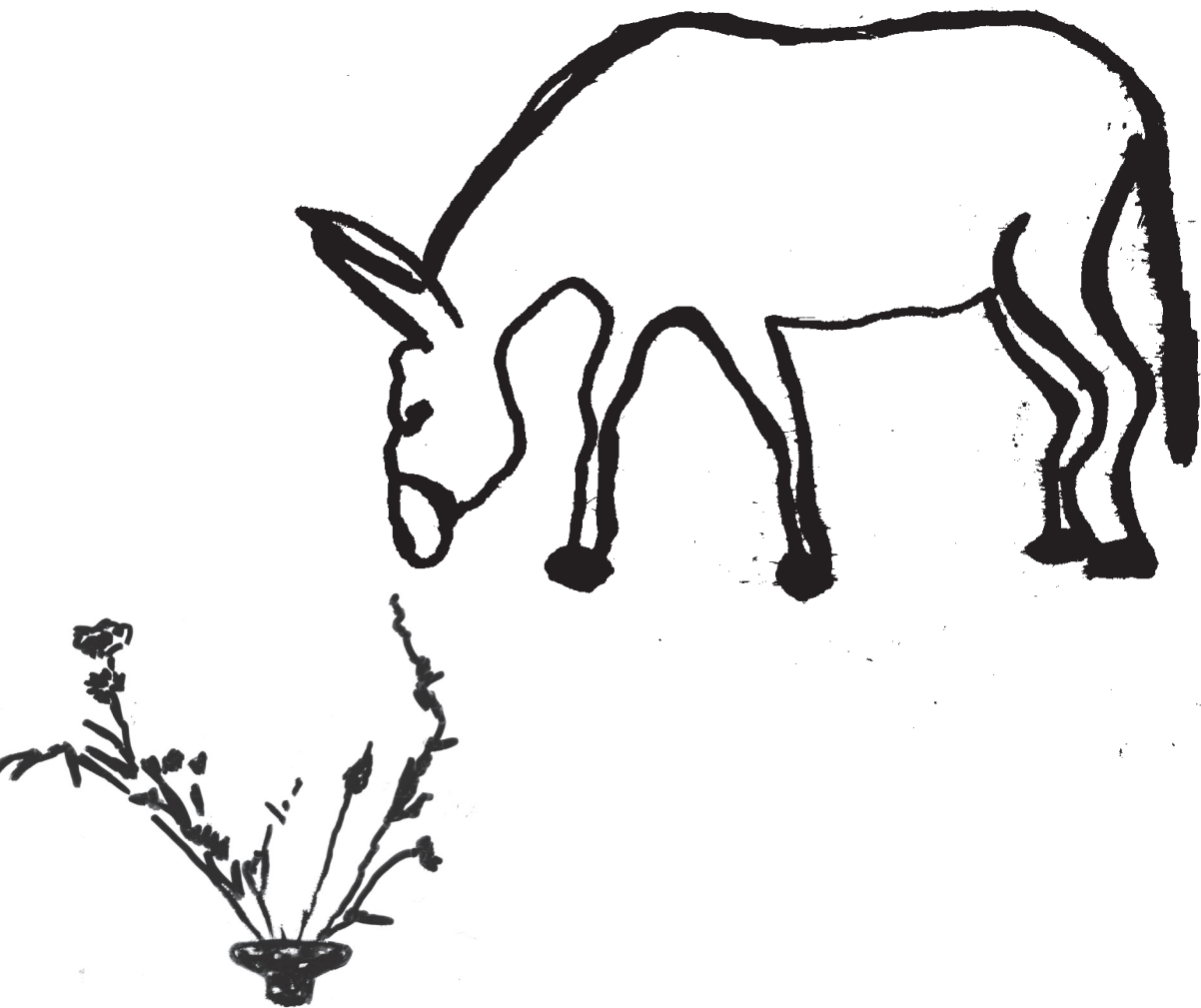




– fundamental to constitution of the subjective and the structure of experience in general...

I have said quite much concerning alien experience or experiencing otherness above, but could add that it can be a pleasurable experience, but also a troubling or traumatic one. Since what exactly originated the experience remains beyond our reach, it can continue to haunt us, as a kind of key event, triggering new experiences.





ASYNCHRONIC PARAMETERS

To erase, *hole*, *self-destruction*

LETTER TO BARTLEBY & BARTLEBYS

Bartleby is a character invented by author Herman Melville for his eponymous work written in 1853. Bartleby is an unusual character who refuses all requests, invariably responding: "I would prefer not to." Author Enrique Vila-Matas reappropriates this character in *Bartleby & Co.* (2009), imagining a community of artists of refusal, the Bartlebys.

Montreal, 3 February 2017

Dear Bartleby, and dear Bartlebys,
I almost didn't write to you.

This began as a letter to Roman Opałka. I had wanted to ask him questions about erasure in his project *Détail 1965 / 1 - ∞*, the work of a lifetime, begun in 1965, which consisted of painting successive numbers. His project started with the number one and continued until his death in 2011. Opałka added 1% more white to each new painting, and from canvas to canvas, as time went on, the numbers seemed to gradually be erased.

Beyond the astounding beauty of each *Détail*, the power of his work lies in the serial and diachronic nature of his undertaking, and not in just one painting. The meticulous execution of each number on a separate canvas is disconcerting, sure, but cannot rival how striking it is to see several *Détails* side by side, allowing us to “visualize time,” as the painter himself once said. Opałka uses space - he doesn't have a choice - but at the same time he rejects it.

Opałka's serial work self-destructs as the viewer looks at it, and recomposes

itself in the eye of the next viewer, as he or she begins to read. Time is born through a programmed *self-destruction* of space that requires us to abandon the understated location of each number and also of each painting.

And all at once this far-fetched question occurs to me: is it in fact the numbers that refuse space? Of course not, they are well and truly there. But Opalka's hand seems to refuse space, never coming back to the same place, sweeping across the canvas and carrying us along with it, moving ahead in time. We could say the same thing about every painter because once the line is placed on the canvas, it is not removed or redone - even if it's reworked or covered over, it has been done. But Opalka makes this the subject that orients his entire work. He exacerbates linearity by painting the succession of numbers, and places the question of temporality at the centre of his project. From my point of view, this position highlights the central role of movement and temporality in the destruction of space.

The work situates us in the movement. By moving ahead of the 1% of white that accumulates from canvas to canvas, the pictorial space erases itself and the figurative world disappears further and further. The white that is first manifest pictorially becomes, little by little,

sheer light. This makes me think of the biblical story of Saul moving forward on the road to Damascus, blinded by the light; this is what I mean by the destruction of space.

What would a dance look like in which the dancer never stepped in the same place twice? In which she or he never repeated the same movements? Would it be Samuel Beckett's *Quad* (1981), but without the repeated trajectories? And would it end with the death of the last dancer?

This is the point at which I abandoned my letter, saying to myself, like you, "I would prefer not to." I realize as I write to you now that refusal and abandonment have their own momentum, they always take us somewhere - maybe even towards a goal - but a goal that eludes us, one that even becomes more and more obscure, self-destructing, like Opałka's work.

Rauschenberg's painting *Erased De Kooning* (1953) comes to mind. I'm attaching a reproduction for your pleasure and reference.

Next I dived into *Suite* for Barbara Loden (2012), a strange book by Nathalie Léger about actress Barbara Loden and her character, Wanda, in the film by the same name that she directed in 1971. The story is sometimes confusing - the author of the

book speaks simultaneously about herself, about the actress (Loden), and about the character of Wanda, and everything gets tangled together so that ultimately only an object remains: the bag. This stable object in the grip of the character of Wanda. This fragile material, white plastic, that Wanda drags around everywhere. This thing that gets filled and emptied throughout Wanda's life. I remember a certain story Marguerite Duras tells a friend. Having watched the slow death of a fly over several minutes, she began to speak to it, and when she realized this, she knew it would be possible for her to go crazy, right there, in that moment.

I turn back to Suite for Barbara Loden and read an excerpt from an interview in Cahiers du cinéma with Claude Chabrol and Isabelle Huppert:

Les Cahiers du cinéma: what happens from now until filming starts?

Chabrol: We snooze.

Huppert: We sleep, to become absent. Go inside oneself. [...] The more we are absent, the more chances we have to be present for the camera. And him: "I don't believe the art of the actor consists in getting outside of oneself, it's more the opposite: to go even deeper within." And her: "What seems important to me in an actor is their passivity" (in Léger 2012, 84).

Wasn't this the case for you, Bartleby?

I'm standing before my bookshelf again.

I examine the books one by one, hoping to find an echo to my questions about erasure in the process of creation. To my great pleasure, I discover your kinsfolk there: Samuel Beckett, Marguerite Duras, Maurice Blanchot, and several of their literary characters. These Bartlebys are different. They don't necessarily refuse writing, but like Roman Opałka, they refuse space. Their characters are sometimes caught in a particular space. I'm thinking of *Happy Days* (1963) or *Waiting for Godot* (1952) by Beckett, or of the characters in *Awaiting Oblivion* (1962) by Blanchot - here's an excerpt: "Since when had he begun to wait? Since he freed himself for waiting by losing the desire for particular things, even the desire for the end of things" (1962, 39).

I could tell you about my choreography 0101, in which the three parts are gradually erased. And I could speak to you about Edouard Levé and his book *Œuvres*, which makes me think of you because he describes works that don't exist. I see an erasure in this, a certain withdrawal of expectations about production, an anti-productive process that's very much in relation to your work, but I'll stop here - I would prefer not to.



Finally, Bartleby, I wonder if, in writing to you, if in revisiting my works and those of others within the framework of my PhD, I'm not in the process of erasing myself as well. In getting involved in this doctoral line of inquiry, my goal was to concentrate on a single project, to do less and to distil, but it's not that simple: how do you manage to lock yourself away?

During these four years of the PhD, I've chosen to be less productive, and I notice that not being productive requires, curiously, a great deal of courage. Beyond the personal questions it provokes, living as a recluse, "preferring not to" do, not producing, being desynchronized, means in some ways becoming transparent, even ignored, but I feel an incredible freedom and that in itself is priceless. Thank you, Bartleby, and all the Bartlebys - you give me courage.

Lynda

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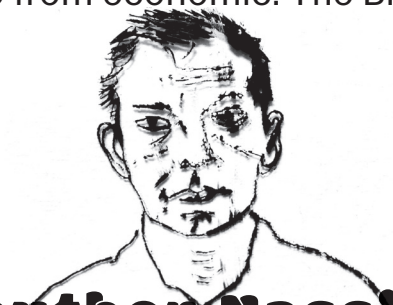
STRIPS WITH TERO NAUHA

*On fabulation, stockbrokers, volatility, glitches,
mistakes, and fabulation again*

Hilpeä Hauki pub, Helsinki, 11 June 2020



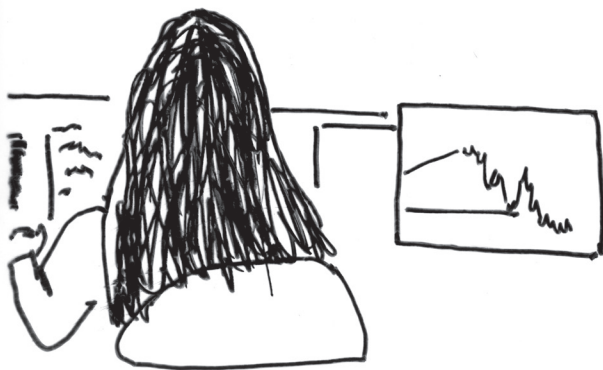
Tero Nauha 14'05": There is one term that I am really fascinated by and it comes from science, but also from economic: The Black Swan (2007). You cannot plan for it.



15'10": **The American author Nassim Nicholas Taleb worked for 20 years as a stockbroker.** He wrote a book on contingency.

It was a time where stockbrokers were on the floor of the stock exchange doing the trading. He describes the importance in working for trading on the floor to sense what was really there; all the feelings and affects, information and noise.

In this work there is always the question: who has the information? Who pretends to have information? And those (the traders) who work only with the "noise," the noise traders. **The very glitched, noisy material?**



Lynda Gaudreau 17'00": *Tero, could you say something more about noise? What is it?*



TN 17'08": It can be simply an errant signal or spurious information, like some bad air or miasma. But for Taleb or someone like Elie Ayache, noise is not simply "what we cannot know," but rather: "what we cannot know that we do not know."

17'27": I think often artist works like that without articulating that way.

We cannot really know what it will be, but we hedge our bets, so we can approximate what it might become in the future.

We don't know if it's going to be good or bad, it is not necessarily a risk, but it's hedging, also about the unknown unknown, the precariousness, volatility, and potential risk.

TN 8'00": In Iran during the Khomeini regime between 1978 and 1983, some books were forbidden. They appeared on the bookstalls with white covers. They were translated political texts, but also comic books, novels. You would find those books at the corner of the street in a suitcase. Somebody would have left a suitcase. Or you would find a book in a toilet under something.



TN 9'27": **There is also stories of people going to the mountains, travelling half a day.** They chose a student and were looking for the book in the middle of the

mountains. These narratives are depicted in the book *Enghelab Street, a Revolution through Books: Iran 1979–1983* by the anthropologist Chowra Makaremi and artist Hannah Darabi. Often these books had no publishing date, author's, translator's, or publisher's name.

It was not unusual to see handwritten additions (important passages underlined, boxed text, sentences written in). [...] The reader is constantly made aware of the precise context in which the ideas they contain were printed. Typos, even in the titles of the works, hasty publishing, the lack of typesetting, poor print quality, contradictions (of dates, transliterations, etc.) became the hallmarks of these intellectual and political outpourings, marked by a sense of danger, haste, disorder, and bare necessity (Makaremi in Darabi 2018, 13).

Hassan Makaremi, an Iranian artist, psychoanalyst, and political activist, recalls in an interview how SAVAK [the Organization of National Security and Information] invaded the dormitory: "I felt I had to save this bag. I went to some friends' house that same night and left them the books without telling them. [...] But they understood that those books were dangerous, cut them into pieces, and flushed them down the toilet" (Makaremi in Darabi 2018, 331).

Iranian writer Chacla Chafiq writes how "I did not know who was providing us with these books and other translated works, or how they managed it; I just knew that they were there, hidden in a corner of this mountain. As I walked with the group along the steep mountain paths, I knew that these books were lying in wait for us somewhere. I imagined them arriving from the highest point of this magnificent mountain" (Chafiq in Darabi 2018, 339).

LG 27'12": *What do you mean by fabulation? Could you give a brief definition of fabulation?*

TN 27'16": Fabulation is for the people to come, it is not fiction or about creating fiction. It comes from Deleuze and cinema. Cinema has this capacity: time image versus movement image.

Fabulation is a collective event, or, fabulation is the advent of a possible but not necessary event. It is kind of simultaneity, where both "we" and "us" are being fabricated, as much as "we" or "us" fabricate the future into the present. For Deleuze it happens in cinema. Film scholar Ilona Hongisto writes in her book *Soul of Documentary* (2015), that fabulation is thinking in duration, thinking that happens in the intervals, a different kind of rhythm, and a fabulation is a way to emerge from "our" duration to recognize the other durations of different kinds. She writes:

it occupies the space in between people who tell stories and the documentary camera that observes these fabulous acts. The relationship between the two creates documentary visions that undo the antagonistic dichotomy between the true and the false (Hongisto 2015: 67).



But fabulation also has this aspect of “being caught in the act” or “en flagrant delit de” (ibid.). Fabulation does not exist in the connection between true or false, but rather in the virtual and actualization. Like for Bergson, **fabulation needs the body, corporeality, and not necessarily a representation, and it is like a collective act of enunciation.**

TN 36'00": In capitalism we are accustomed to fiction, there are many fictions going on, and we are more accustomed to this one... but I think we follow different ones at the same time. but this is... mm... but there is no truth... mm... because capitalism is based on a social logic of capital, it transforms, modulates, and has variable, cyclical movements.

LG 36'08": *This is very close to asynchrony. An asynchronic situation involves at least two spaces relating at the same time. How about this idea of many fictions and where they are coming from?*

TN 36'17": So, again, if fictions are like the information or noise for the traders, where we can be betting for or against some “truth,” it is as fictitious as any other truth – or the truth can be just a bubble that will, at some point, deflate or crash. So, the value of these fictions are purely social, and socially imaginary, yet, fictions are extremely performative and in turn they are productive. So, fictions are circulatory in the first place. They are social and they always have some risk or volatility. I could say that fictions are fictioning, because they are performative, and fictions are socially and collectively imagined relational objects. These objects need practice, which we could call the act of imagination or fabulation.

36'50": In a way there is no culture, culture is an invention... it is there because we repeat it, but it has the capacity... it can be otherwise, and then it brings us that small glitch. But research, like anthropology or performance studies, begins from the necessary

assumption that “if” there were culture, what could it be that people are doing here?

Which I find very exciting, either from text, from performance, or things that happen, is not that something new appears, but some action of some people, that opens up a momentary **glitch.**



LG 40'02": *Could you elaborate a bit on the glitch?*

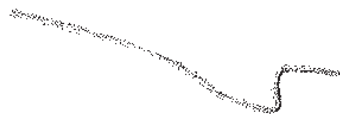
TN 40'06": Glitch is interesting, because for the avant-garde it has a bit of a fetishist relation, an almost savage attribute – since Marinetti from the Futurists, Cage's aleatory search for “**social**” **glitches** as in his piece 4'33”, but also in more contemporary music, like Japanoise.

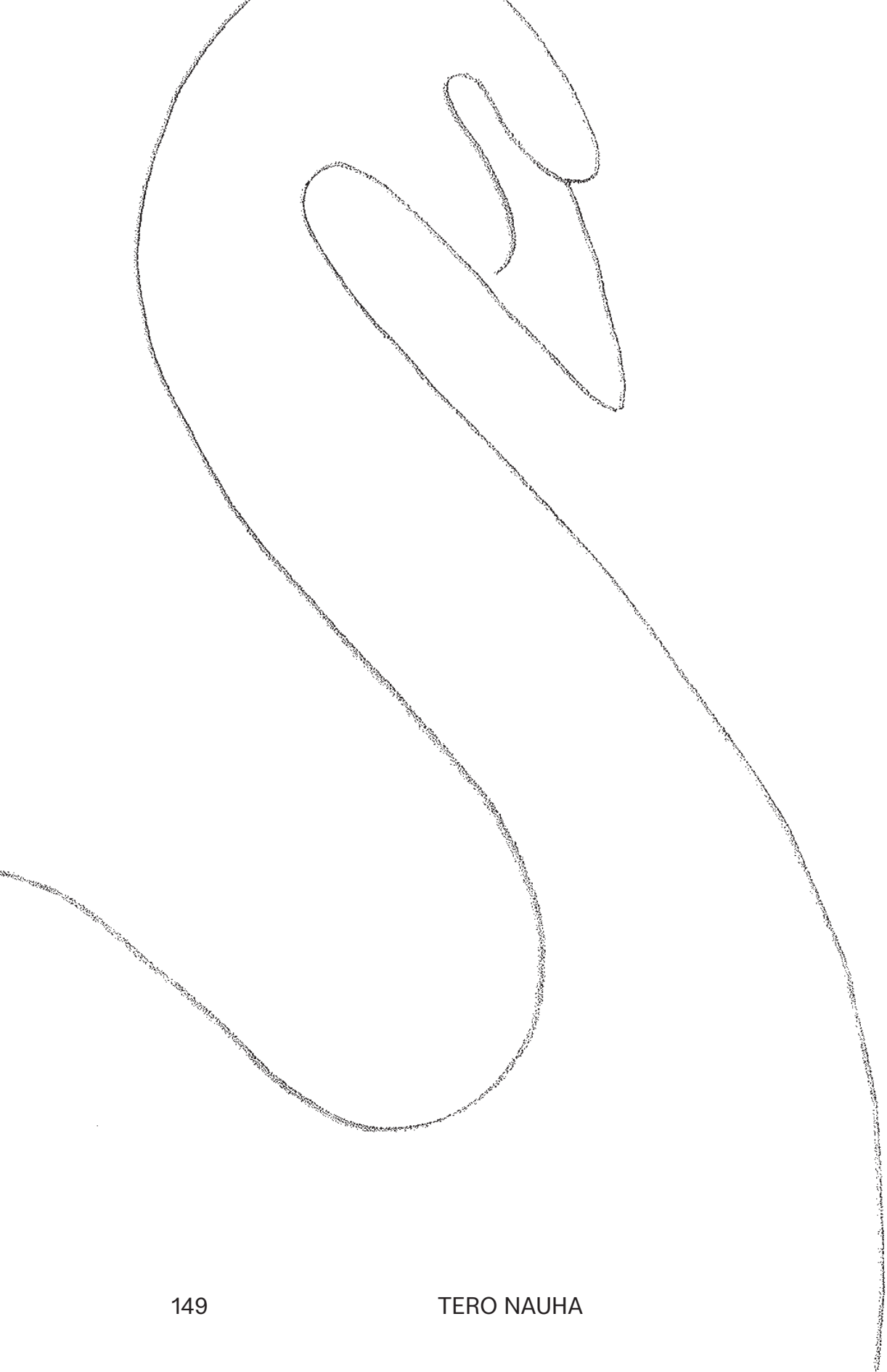
What is this aesthetics of failure, to fail better? Like **glitch** would be some kind of miasmic fabric, that may reveal some unnoticed potentials, like glitch would have a liberating potential. But it is interesting that, in an interview, the musicians of all-female noise band Le Tigre, Kathleen Hanna, Johanna Fateman, and JD Samson, say how men in electronic music often “speak about finding flaws in loops, and finding the glitch [...] something beautiful [but] when women do it, it's like [...] a hideous mistake” (Rodgers 2010, 249). And that “glitch” is a term from space technology, how the machine replaces missing data with random data. And when some **glitches** are creative and others trash, it is an aesthetic decision about what is needed. Then, it is bit different, yet quite similar to stitching pieces together, as for a quilt. Where a necessary number of quilting points is needed so that the upholstery does not flow out from the mattress, pillow, or jacket. Also, **glitch is glitch**, because there are enough stiches or quilting points to keep the rest together. Anne Sauvagnargues calls this a “signifier-quilting point,” which is purely psychic. How many quilting points

are needed to stay sane, or to have an “aesthetics” of noise? I find playing the theremin a practice of quilting, because mostly it is just ripping apart, a non-intentional noise, where you may not find glitches anymore. Guattari writes that without a sufficient number of quilting points “objects that surround us would lose their air of familiarity and would topple into an anguishing strangeness” (Guattari 2013, 209).

49’55”: How do you take a very theoretical political problem, how do you make, incorporate it in a way that it is a “yes” and actually very critical?

50’36”: I am afraid we will need the skill of fabulation in the future to survive. One way or another. We need to create conditions for the fabulation to emerge, to sustain, but also to pass or fade away.





LETTER TO A YOUNG ARTIST

Bobby

Montreal, 27 January 2014

Bobby,

You are ugly, awkward, clumsy, hairy and all-in-all rather disgusting. There are all kinds of ways of inhabiting the Earth.

Since you are so repulsive, the more you are free in relation to others, the better things will go for you. You'll be the creator of your life. You'll be free, and you'll never take anything for granted.

The world is not stable. That which you see is well and truly there, but only temporarily. There's a world to create. People will try to make you believe the opposite, that there's a world to enter. You must destroy all the images, all decorum, and all dirty doublespeak.

Language is doubtful, I tell you, but it's also incredible. Philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein spoke about it at length. His books, by the way, are hardly written; they consist only of paragraphs, numbers, and were in fact usually written by others. He destroyed this absurd notion of "stability" of language and words, and I share his opinion insofar as it relates to objects and things - "stuff," as we say, this hairy, soft, and volatile thing we cannot for the life of us grab hold of.

I've had recourse to phonemes in order to speak, using only the consonants at the beginning of words. This has allowed me to avoid hollow language and useless conversations but hasn't helped my case or my life in society. Try it with a book - erase as many letters as you can, and you'll see, it works, we can still understand: "whatever a man knows, whatever is not mere rumbling and roaring that he has heard, can be said in three words" (Kürnberger, as cited by Wittgenstein, 2002, 29).

You are a free being, I say to you again, and this means you will create space and time. And since everything is ephemeral, neither of these will last. People will make you believe that they will, and will want to sell you insurance, a house, a car: don't fall for it.

There is only little, very little, that we truly need.

You will need your strength in order to destroy space, first of all. You'll have to do it fast because space settles in and quickly freezes time. And this could be your death warrant. Your eyes will become opaque, dull, and you won't even be a machine - at most, you'll be a parrot who repeats and rehashes what others see. You'll develop an insatiable appetite for images simply to be able to feel. You will live in the gaze of others and you will

die with it. Free yourself, liberate your perception of all approval. That freedom is all you have. Make sure of this, for yourself and for others. Perception must remain something outside of language, words and things. Otherwise, you'll be living the parody of a reality - which we call "culture." What a strange and contradictory word.

Nothing is fixed: everything is in motion, all the time. And since things are moving constantly and meaning is endlessly being revealed, we complete the missing information: phrases, objects, anything - we fill in the blanks or, inversely, we create blanks, we erase, omit, and obliterate. We try to create meaning in this way. Space-time - the world, if I may - recreates itself and essentially comes down to a question of quantity - the quantity of what you remove or of what you add to space. The smallest thing can change everything.

Art will be your language. You will have nothing to do, which should be simple - but it will in fact be very complicated. You'll be constantly hallucinating your reality. And like visual artist Alberto Giacometti, you will always be in the process of redoing and crossing out that which you do. Reality shifts quickly. Same thing when you speak. Toad sounds will come out of your mouth and the mouths of

others; you'll need to be empathetic and understand that language is a small scale of communication that doesn't describe very much. This brings to mind an anecdote related by architect Cedric Price: a couple had invited him to dinner to ask him to build their dream house, but on his way back, in the taxi, Price realized that what the couple actually needed was to get a divorce...

I wrote this quotation of his down in a notebook but now I've lost the source: "An architect should not build dreams. She should build realizable reality and through its very presence enable the users to dream."

I believe that Wittgenstein described the hallucination within communication. Language is a convention we agree on, provisionally; time and use transform it. Words constitute points of reference and establish a signage system that allows us to communicate. For Wittgenstein, language is dynamic. So is space - it's in movement, but your eye resists this and tries to solidify it. This is a difficult notion to explain, because you don't ever see the room around you moving; this is simply because space begins in you - you are never excluded from that which you perceive - and is always reconfiguring itself. A little like when you come back to your apartment after several weeks'

absence, and it seems much smaller and older than before. It's the same thing with words - they are symbols, lines, points, objects, and they are instable and insatiable.

But let's return to the subject of art.

We don't see anything anymore. I can't wait for the day when you toss what you have at hand into the chain of events. A simple *pebble* will do the trick. Space needs to be recreated constantly. You won't have to do much, believe me. I urge you to go forward frankly, tear up everything, don't hold back. Go on! Space dies very quickly.

Space is our perception, materialized - or not. I've spoken to you about objects and your body and how it composes space, but lines of force cross it, intentions produce it, experiences are born from it, space can be nothing other than dynamic. Think of the character examining chairs in the waiting room in *Playtime* by Jacques Tati (1967), where couch cushions deflate, eruct and possess their own lives; or of the demolition scene in the restaurant, when the ceiling collapses and they chaos of everyone's bungling allows, in a way, for the space to open and overflow. Space and objects act upon each other and thus recreate themselves, producing new, distinct objects that are desynchronized

in relation to one another, noisy and quiet at once.

There are so many ways of having time penetrate a space, but time can only be anachronistic to the space. The effects of this are multiple and most formidable. Director Robert Bresson always uses sounds that are extradiegetic to the filmed image. The spatial and temporal synchronization between the image and the sound is rarely complete. Each of these languages belongs to a distinct space-time, assembled during the editing process.

Time penetrates space through movement and in various modalities, but the one that interests me most is destruction. I encourage you to generate errors, accidents, and erasure - or even to multiply the quantity of an element in order to attain destruction. What you use to accomplish this is up to you, everything depends on your aim and your argument. Or neither of these because you will often act without intention. You won't need to if you are awake to the world around you. There are all kinds of destructions - it doesn't have to be violent, it's a question of intensity.

Tati threw a *pebble* by dislocating sound from image. In doing so, he produced an artificial space for the viewer, and the image became visible once more. The

order of things was subtly, furtively disturbed. And it made us laugh. Can we make people laugh any other way than through the details? Here it is again - the idea of the smallest increment that changes everything.

You could change things by making people laugh, but it will be difficult, because it will mean acting upon a very small thing... I realize that what I'm telling you comes down, in the end, to a miniscule detail. I'm speaking about disjunction. The destruction of a space requires very little. For example, *holes*. Have I already spoken to you about *holes*?

A space full of *holes*...

Take a movement, for example: a jump. If we keep nothing but the beginning (the momentum) and the end (the landing), and extract what is in the middle of the jump, what happens? The movement produced is rather odd, and even more so if we execute it quickly. This generates a dynamic rather than a movement or a form in space. We might speak of a form in time, or temporal formalism, or of a formless formalism. I call this a *fake space*, which is to say an incongruous space where only one quality is found: precision.

And with this, we are right on the nose: by destroying part of the information, we generate a space-time that

is vibrantly alive and in a state of perpetual change. This is the space of the artists I've spoken to you about, the one we are all looking for, without even realizing it.

I think Cedric Price occupied this space-time by seeing beyond his culture as an architect. He listened to the story of that couple - let's call them Margaret and Adam. He paid attention to the situation beyond language; he was sensitive to language in a wider sense, and to what happened during their conversations, to the couple's needs, as manifested beyond spoken words. Price could have constructed more buildings, but he always refused to build if the project proved not to be necessary, not out of a minimalist spirit, but simply because architecture should respond to the needs of individuals in society.

Thinking in terms of systems and social relationships offered architects, who at this time frequently faced demands to inform their work with a sense of social responsibility, the possibility of realizing a new, holistic perspective with regard to the space in which people lived. When explaining his approach to the project, Price, too, argued that conceiving of the construction site in holistic terms was fundamental to the improvement of the quality of work (Herdt 2012, online).

Bobby, you must destroy, I encourage you to be direct in your approach, don't hold back, space dies very quickly, I want you to understand.

Cedric understood it. A building has a life span of ten years at most. After that, it must be demolished. If human beings have a life expectancy of 80 years, why should the building be built over the course of 300 years? Architecture, for Price, could become tyrannical if it became too functional. He's probably one of the only architects, you know, who held a demolition permit in London in the 1980s.

Lynda

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A PHOTO-NOVEL WITH HANNA JÄRVINEN

*Detective work: destabilizing self-evidence and
cracking the narratives*

In a park, Vallila, Helsinki, 18 June 2020



Hanna Järvinen 1': You have to make a distinction between the past and history. The past is five minutes ago, 50 thousand years ago. The past is everything that has happened in the past from our perspective. Whereas history is a political project, a projection of that past, if you will.

So, history is something that is always written in the present about the past for the future.

In other words, in history you want to make a change in the future, by selecting certain things, events, people, etc. from the past and you create a narrative, "histoire" in French, a story about what happened in the past that is relevant in some way, right now, whether it is because you read somebody's argument you don't agree with or whether it is because there is something new that emerged and nobody has looked at it into before, something you see as historical, i.e. important, or whether it is simply because the political situation has changed in some way. So, whenever a new regime takes over, history is rewritten.

2'15": Historians rewrite history all the time. In this sense, there is really nothing about the present situation that is particularly different 2'30" to what historians have always done. Nowadays, maybe more historians are more aware of the power of their historical narrative. A lot of them want to situate the history they write more explicitly, to make what they want to say about the past about the present.

3'17": But not all historians. Some still perceive themselves as knowing what really happened in the past and they want you to obey, in a sense, their interpretation. This is why for example many political parties have very strong ideas about the use of history, especially nationalist political parties, far-right political parties, because they really want you to believe their versions of history.

In the 1920s, the Annales school asked: can we talk about the peasants, about the people who cannot even write? Can we talk about mentalities people share – the idea being that there is a shared understanding of how, for example, gender is constructed? Why things were done differently in certain part of the world and then think completely differently later on, such as how marriage worked? Why is marriage for some about family unions, where did this idea of romantic love having something to do with it appear, and when?

6'39": In every society at a certain time, there are multiple layers of how people think. There are great examples of people who have tried to trace these layers, ideas that last for a very long time and others for shorter durations.



LG 8'52": *You spoke about layers, what is the shape of these layers?*

HJ 10'40": The present as such does not really exist, it constantly shifting away, like the future is. Any future is imaginary: you can make certain kinds of projections about where it might be, but then the past is similarly so, because we only have our experience of a personal past. But if you think of the past as historians do, basically it can be anything. Neither the past or the future has a concrete shape, because you shape them through your actions. But Bergson has this idea of the present as this point between vortexes, in which this point where we are currently at is between the vortex of the past, and the future is similarly a vortex pointing the other way around. I like that hourglass shape, because hourglasses measure time.

11'42": What in the past do we focus on? What do we see as history and what do we want that history to be in order to create something in the future?

12'00": So, for me, when I think of layers of history, I mean... Well, I have my perspective, but you are certainly older than me, you have lived a very different kind of life, also in terms of society, the culture that you come from, so your historical references are very different. But we are still here, both of us, in this present, and we are both influencing that present by being here. If we look at these buildings around us, they offer a different kind of layer, because they are architectural objects. They have been here longer than us, in every sense of the term. As an historian, if I want to do a history of that building, I could choose how to look at it as an example of architectural style, through its aesthetics, as part of this space, here, in terms of where it is built in relation to the rocks here (in the park).

13'37": What kind of stone was used, where did it come from? What company made it, the economics of it? And these questions, perspectives are choices that then narrow down what I take from the past to narrate it in the present. And the reason why I take that particular narrowing angle, or sort of focus or framework, is because I'm interested in something in the present for the future.

15'00": For example, the fact that it is a building with a park next to it: is that the kind of cityscape we want for the future? Or, I could look at it and see that there is a certain kind of materiality that is good or bad for the environment. What kind of city emerges from something like that?

LG 15'20": *How do you see? How do you select? How do you give visibility?*

HJ 15'30": The way I work, usually, well, it starts from the present. I look at the representation of the past, and go "naaaaaah... it was not like that... something is wrong here." I am in a sort of school of cultural history that is very different



from mainstream History, as a discipline... I think most historians would not respond to these impulses like I do, because for most historians, history is still something separated from the present and the future.

20'20": Take art, for example. I am interested in canonization. Why are certain pieces claimed as more important? What kind of power operates in this institution we call art to make certain authors and certain works of art signify differently to the rest? Most people would not really ask questions like that.

My political project is that canonization is extremely white, it is middle class, or even upper class. The canon portrays itself as universal, but it's not. In dance, my interest lies in the beginning of the twentieth century, and how that moment has signified later, been built into this edifice that even students today have to know about.

LG 21'30": *What is your interest in doing history?*

HJ 22'07": To destabilize the self-evident, the taken-for-granted. The first thing that changes in history is the thing that we think is self-evident, and it is usually the most difficult thing to trace because nobody writes down what is self-evident. This is part of how we think in our ordinary lives.

23'30": I am currently writing a lot about decolonization. I am looking at things like where did this whiteness of the dance narrative emerge? What does it do? What does it forget? What does it exclude in order to create "art dance"?

LG 23'45": *What is your methodology? How do you edit your information?*

HJ 25'13": My thinking is mostly informed by the Foucauldian tradition of interpretation, but more by post-colonialist critics of Foucault: by Edward Saïd, for example, and more recently Achille Mbembe. He is sort of re-reading the whole understanding of what power is in relation to slavery, the division of the world, focusing on Africa, on transatlantic slavery, and also the decolonization of Africa in terms of the formation of the first Pan-Africanist movement and then the dissolution of that. What kind of power is in play? He does not talk about art that much – well, neither does Foucault. He is not interested in art, but it does not mean that what either of them says about politics or history or how people desire power is irrelevant. Those are very relevant when we speak about art.

32'00": How can we attend to a situation that quickly becomes co-opted by the institution? There are now many of these programmes – postcolonial studies, gender studies, cultural studies – largely, I'd say, to allow old disciplines not to address these issues. But conversely, how to escape the weight



of fashionable rhetoric and work an actual change in academia and in art? How can we look at the thing itself and not just at the finger that is pointing at it?

33'00": There is a discipline called history, then some people get interested in gender, political issues that have to do with "masculinity" and "femininity," or transgender rights, or how our ideas of gender came about. Then you have gender studies, like postcolonial studies, separated from History, so that historians do not have to deal with these questions. This is how power operates. This process of excluding the thing from the institution that does not really want to deal with it.

50'53": To talk about what really happens in the present you have to look at the past as well, but you have to be extremely aware of what is going on in the primary sources about that past. You have to see the cracks in the narratives they want you to obey.

HJ 1'11"32": Fred Moten, do you know his book *In the Break*? It is about how Black music parallels political movement, like funk and the Black Panthers. He asks, what's the break? What happens in the break, meaning that stop-time in music, when it is understood as a political moment?

1'12"12": In lot of Africanist music – or dance, which is closer to what I am interested in – you have these breaks. You know, this "hiccup" in the music that actually creates the rhythm to which you respond, that creates physical anticipation in you, so that you wait for that break to happen. Moten talks about how there is a quality to the voice that resists notation. Like when James Brown... you know when he sings how he feels good – that grain of his voice, it is not a vowel, it is an articulation of the significance of that sound. What happens in that moment? Moten argues for a politics of corporeality that I find appealing.

1'14"01": He makes that comparison between art and political gestures. It is hugely interesting book, very theoretically heavy reading, but worth it. More recently he wrote with Stefano Harney on *The Undercommons*, and that is really a pertinent Marxist reading of the current precarity in the arts and university sector.

But the reason why he was able to catch that point about voice and politics is because he is a poet. He is a practising artist. He has been thinking about this in the making of performative poetry, in using his own voice. He got there through the art, not from the Marxist or performance studies theory alone.

1'16"10": You asked about asynchrony. In history, asynchrony is related to this idea of these layers of history being present in all of us, all the time, like we






are sort of carrying the weight of past generations. What we take for granted, we don't really conceptualize it, but it is there, and sometimes there is friction between that and how we see our present. You realize, for example, something you have not consciously thought about, and go "duh, why did I not see that?"

1'32"47": Those are the kind of relations that interest me: when something jumps out, something not of this present moment, but that is suddenly there. Bam. Then you think: can I do something with this? This is the detective work: Where has this come from? Why? Then you start picking at it, and sometimes, that lets you imagine something new.



ASYNCHRONIC PARAMETERS

Asynchronic concepts: *pebble* , *anachronic pebble* ,
eccentric pebble , *glitchy pebble* , *perforated body* ,
fake body , *out of the frame/rectangle* 

EPISTOLARY EXCHANGES BETWEEN LYNDA GAUDREAU & KENNETH SIREN

Addressing queer selves

After a postdoc seminar presentation and the anxious experience of her first day of work at Uniarts Helsinki, Lynda Gaudreau engaged in a reflection with Kenneth Siren, a doctoral student present at the seminar who ultimately became part of her presentation. This out-of-the-blue situation became an unexpected experience anchored into Gaudreau's research on asynchrony.

The concept of asynchrony opens to life, revealing the discrepancy between the inner rhythm of each of us with the rhythm of an "outside." Here, the emotional and intimate dimension of asynchrony is tackled head on.

The sense of reality is not self-evident; it is apprehended through a temporality and a delay. Emotionally experienced asynchrony gives way to a feeling of permanent displacement, a sense of fear, but can also be a source of creativity, emancipation, and action. Here two of the letters.

Helsinki, 16 April 2020

Rakas Kenneth, dear K,

Thank you for answering my letter with great generosity and kindness, and for sharing your doubts and reserves. Your letter helps me fill in the gaps. I understand better what drives you, in art and in life, and how it keeps you on the edge of your seat.

This is important not only on the level of research, but also on the human level. I am not only referring here to Kenneth, my colleague and friend, but also to K, the (becoming) fictional person you played for me at Uniarts on that day - one I won't forget, last September. I was in a panic about my postdoctoral research presentation and then I walked into the room and saw you: sitting in the corner of the classroom, clad from head to toe in that prodigious silver outfit.

You were my symmetrical opposite. Me with my sweat stains, you in your slick jumpsuit. Me with my stiff dry lips and you with your breezy earrings and silver bag beside those psychotronic platform boots. A miracle. I could not ask for better. You saved me.

You were ready to wave like the royals and to disco-fy any kind of presentation.

And that was all I needed. No matter what, we would fly from that corner of the room to the front table together. And with all kindness, you agreed to come with me.

And then there we were, sitting side by side in front of the group. I gave you my text and with an award-winning sixth sense you gracefully became K, my double. You started reading my text written in the first person. This was the beginning of an anachronic experience, like having the translator of the conference give the speech, with the silent author at his side.

Beyond all expectations, we created an asynchronic situation. You were the little rock lodged inside the shoe, or what I call “the pebble” in my asynchrony glossary. You, with your eccentric appearance in the classroom, transmuted into K, a performer at a conference. Alone, I could not have managed to capture and hold people’s attention, as in your presence the situation became an all-inclusive one. Thank God, I chickened out. The whole thing came alive. I was supposed to introduce my research concept, asynchrony, to a group of researchers, and instead there we were, experiencing it in real time, all together: you, me, and the group. I am saying this not only to congratulate us, but to underline that

asynchrony is about time and the presence of a live body makes it come alive.

That day, we experienced displacement. The conference was unstable and filled with continuous movement. It was like a morphing conference operating on multiple levels. The space and the format were in flux. My own presence was readjusting all the time, and so yours was, too. On the top of that, in the delivery of the speech, desynchronization was at play between us, without even mentioning all our nonverbal communication in trying to adjust to one another. We were doing an invisible dance together. But most importantly, the audience was with us; they were attentive.

The conference also probably worked because a strong affective component was at play. And this, once again, underlines the importance of the human presence in asynchrony. Human presence claims a real time operating simultaneously with other times (fictional, compositional...).

Now, with some distance from the situation, I realize the import of this conference in my research. During our laboratory in February, I introduced my asynchronic parameters and invited you to apply them to a text. It was quite difficult to achieve on bidimensional material. But in the conference set-up,

we experimented with at least three of these parameters: the *pebble* (you and me), eccentricity (Kenneth and K), and the *short-circuit* (me and the conductor - the conference). The human presence involved in the experience makes all the difference. The emotions and point of view it contains are imperative.

In writing this, I breathe a bit more deeply. Harmony can emerge from multiplicity, from uncontrolled turns of life, from accidents. Is asynchrony about inclusiveness, about a method for surviving ableist culture, a method for queering the culture? No, it is not. It is about seeing, perceiving, acting. But inclusiveness is certainly a motor and a direct effect. I hope all this makes some sense to you.

Lynda

Helsinki, 1 October 2020

Dear Lynda,

Finally, I'm getting back to you! And I think it is of note that in the meantime between your letter from April and my answer now, we presented a reprise of Out of Synch at the Bridges seminar.

But to your letter. First of all, don't dare put yourself down! "Sweat stains," bah! - when you entered the seminar, I remember thinking how perfectly blow-dried your hair was.

I appreciated how humorous the whole situation was - humorous, without being a joke. As I was not trying to mimic your movements perfectly, nor was I trying to mimic them in a deliberately clumsy manner, I could flow with the moment quite freely and allow the moments of falling out of synch to reveal themselves.

During the Out of Synch presentation this September, there was a moment, when you were speaking as yourself, that you suddenly gestured with your hands in a lively manner to demonstrate something. I had been following your body language in my laid-back and approximate manner, but in that moment, I realized that I simply couldn't bring my hands to gesture that

vividly. There was some social boundary that I found within myself: if I tried to mimic your rapid hand movements, it might come off as foolish, or would my arm and hand movements take up too much space simply because my arms are quite long? Either way, I simply moved my hands a little bit with movements that were a slow, desynced, weak echo of what you were doing.

And I thought to myself: this is brilliant! I found my own lack of commitment to lively hand gestures interesting - the sudden disconnect of first trying to position myself similarly to you and emulate your body language, and then that mimicry coming to a halt at a very clear threshold that was not anything dramatic but rather mundane. And I thought that perhaps, in a room full of dancers, experts in movement, someone else might find that interesting and telling as well.

I'd like to ask you more about your note of eccentricity ("we experimented with at least three of these parameters: [...] eccentricity (Kenneth and K) [...]"). I think it's simply that I don't really understand the word eccentricity in this context - are you referring to a split between a person in a normal social situation and a person becoming a representation of themselves in a performance situation?

Also, maybe to state the obvious, but:

My reading out your text in your own words gave you the chance to hear your presentation in someone else's voice. I think it was so great that you jumped at the opportunity to make comments on it, in the live setting, and explain some things further or in different words or make new associations, and so on. I appreciate it very much, how your idea of using me as an "asynchronous proxy" was so simple to execute, yet so unconventional in thought, and produced very straightforward gains - you can complement your own presentation in real time, we present an example of asynchrony while explaining it - while artistically being so off kilter.

One could even suggest, why aren't all (or simply, to be less dramatic, "more") presentations carried out in this way? Of course, the idea of a live situation would be to get the real-time thoughts of the person presenting, so why not give the material prepared at an earlier time to a sidekick, and let the presenter comment on themselves?

All the best,
stay safe and take care
Kenneth

JONATHAN BURROWS is a choreographer whose focuses on an ongoing body of pieces with the composer Matteo Fargion, with whom he continues to perform around the world. The two men are coproduced by PACT Zollverein Essen and Sadler's Wells Theatre London. His *Choreographer's Handbook* has sold over 15,000 copies since its publication in 2010 and is available from Routledge. Burrows is currently an Associate Professor at the Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University.

MATTEO FARGION studied composition with composers Kevin Volans and Howard Skempton. He has been a close collaborator of Jonathan Burrows for over 30 years, sharing equally the conception, creation, and performance of their work. He has also written extensively for other choreographers, most notably his long association with Siobhan Davies, and his recent collaboration with Norwegian artist Mette Edvardsen on her acclaimed pieces *Oslo* (2017) and *Penelope Sleeps* (2019). He has also written music recently for Claire Croizé's *Flowers (We Are)* (2019) and Andreas Spreafico's *We have to dress gorgeously* (2019). Fargion has also developed a composition workshop for dancers, which continues to be invited to perform widely internationally.

MIKLOS GAÁL (b. 1974, Finland), is a visual artist living and working in Amsterdam and Helsinki. Gaál graduated from the Uniarts Helsinki in 2004. In 2008 and 2009 he was a resident artist at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam. In 2015 he obtained a Research Master from the University of Amsterdam. Currently Gaál is a doctoral researcher in the University of Arts Helsinki, making a comparative study of the art philosophy of Jena Romanticism and contemporary art. Gaál's work has been exhibited in institutions, galleries, and in publications since 2000 in, among others, Aperture Gallery in New York, Kunsthalle in Emden, Kunstverein Göttingen, Huis Marseille in Amsterdam, La Casa

Encendida in Madrid, Casino Luxembourg Forum d'art contemporain and Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki.

Dr LYNDA GAUDREAU is an artist from Montreal. She has been leading an international career in Europe and in Canada. Her work – which encompasses creation, research, and curatorship – examines the choreographic approach and involves a constant dialogue with architecture, visual arts, and cinema. Her many collaborations include a long association with Flemish organizations, and a partnership with the Théâtre de la Ville de Paris which coproduced and presented her work for seven years. In 2018, she completed her doctorate on asynchrony in art. She was a postdoctoral researcher and staff at the Performing Arts Research Centre Tutke, Uniarts Helsinki in 2019–2021. <http://www.lyndagaudreau.com/>

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI (1901–1966) was a Swiss-born painter, sculptor, draftsman, and engraver who lived in Paris. He devoted much of his life to portraiture. His models were often members of his family: his wife Annette, his lover Caroline, his brother Diego, and his mother Annetta. He lived through part of the 20th century and made an important artistic contribution. He is known for his sculptures: tall, slender figures.

DOMINIQUE GONZALEZ-FOERSTER is an experimental artist based in Paris. Since 1990, DGF has been exploring the different modalities of sensory and cognitive relationship between bodies and spaces, real or fictitious, up to the point of questioning the distance between organic life and work. Metabolizing literary and cinematographic, architectural, and musical, scientific and pop references, DGF creates “interiors,” “gardens,” “attractions” and “planets.” Haunted by history and future, DGF’s works become containers where the artist incubates a form of subjectivity that does not yet exist. Through multiple international exhibitions, short films, productions, and concerts, DGF’s mutant work contributes to the invention of new technologies of consciousness.

Dr HANNA JÄRVINEN is currently a lecturer on the doctoral programme of the Theatre Academy, Uniarts Helsinki, Finland. She is also Honorary Visiting Research Fellow at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Dance at De Montfort University, Leicester, and holds the title of Docent in Dance History at the University of Turku. The author of *Dancing Genius* (Palgrave Macmillan 2014), five edited collections, a number of articles and book chapters, her research combines dance scholarship with performance studies, history, and artistic research. She has been interested in authorship and canonization, postcolonialism and decolonization, and questions of materiality and contemporaneity in art practice.

KAISLA KYÛHKYNNEN (b. 1995, Finland). Bachelor in Fine Arts and MFA student at the Helsinki Academy of Fine Arts, she is a Helsinki based visual artist, focusing on figurative painting during her studies at the Academy. Kaisla has participated in several group shows in Finland, most recently in the BFA exhibition at Exhibition Laboratory in September 2020. She will take part in the MFA group exhibition at Kuva+ gallery in May 2022.

SAANA LAVASTE (b. 1976, Finland) has been a professor in directing at the Theatre Academy, Uniarts Helsinki for five years now. She is a director and a pedagogue and has studied both arts at university level. She is interested in time and temporality, especially in the shared now of the live performance. Other current interests are leadership in art, new plays, style (baroque and minimalism especially) and Freirean pedagogy. Saana has been studying Zen Buddhism for around 20 years. She has also lived and practiced Buddhism in Zengården, a Zen Buddhist training temple. She is a student of both Kanja and Sante roshi. Through her Zen practice she became interested in ikebana and found it to be a parallel art form to theatre directing.

ARI BENJAMIN MEYERS (b. 1972, USA) lives and works in Berlin. Meyers received his training as a composer and conductor at The

Juilliard School, Yale University, and Peabody Institute. Trading the concert format for that of the exhibition, his works as an artist—such as *Kunsthalle for Music* (2018), *Symphony 80* (with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra) and *Solo for Ayumi* (both 2017)—explore structures and processes that redefine the performative, social, and ephemeral nature of music as well as the relationship between performer and audience. His diverse practice features musical performances for the stage and exhibition space as well as three operas, including a commission for the Semperoper Dresden and a ballet for the Paris Opera. He has collaborated with artists including Tino Sehgal, Anri Sala, and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, and bands such as The Residents, *Einstürzende Neubauten*, and *Chicks on Speed*. Recent solo exhibitions and presentations include *Solo* at Yellow Solo, Berlin (2020). His artist book, *Tacet in Concert*, was recently published by Corraini Edizioni.

Dr TERO NAUHA is a professor in Live Art and Performance Studies at Uniarts Helsinki and a performance artist. He was a postdoctoral fellow at the Academy of Finland funded postdoctoral research project, *How To Do Things With Performance*, and a postdoctoral fellow at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies in 2017. He defended his doctorate at the Theatre Academy, Uniarts Helsinki in January 2016. His primary research interest is the relationships between economics, performative practices, artistic research, and writing. In 2015, he published his first fiction novel, *Heresy & Provocation*, with Swedish publishing house Förlaget. His performance art projects have been presented at the Frankfurter Kunstverein, Theatrediscounter in Berlin, CSW Kronika in Bytom, Poland, *Performance Matters* in London, and at the New Performance Festival in Turku, among other venues around this small world of ours.

PIER PAOLO PASOLINI (1922–1975) is an Italian writer, poet, journalist, scriptwriter, and film director. Pasolini has been committed to a lifelong critique of current political events. The radical nature of his artwork has given rise to many controversies. His murder in 1975 will long remain an enigma.

Dr LEENA ROUHIAINEN is Professor in Artistic Research at the Theatre Academy, Uniarts Helsinki. She is a dancer and choreographer whose research interests lie in somatics, performance, experimental writing, phenomenology of the body, and artistic research. She has published many articles in these areas. She has likewise coedited the books *Dance Spaces: Practices of Movement* (2012) with Susanne Ravn, *Tanssiva tutkimus: tanssitutkimuksen menetelmiä ja lähestymistapoja* (2014) with Hanna Järvinen, and a special issue of *Dance Articulated* entitled *Choreography Now*, with Tone Pernille Østern (2020). Her recent artistic research addresses breathing and the element of the air. She has been the Chair of the Nordic Forum for Dance Research NOFOD (2008–2010) as well as a member of the Executive Board of the Society for Artistic Research SAR (2015–2020).

KENNETH SIREN (MTheatre) is a doctoral researcher at the Theatre Academy, Uniarts Helsinki. Following a pragmatist framework, they aim at creating disruptive theatre practices that allow the identifying and questioning of habits. Siren's performances are created through devising processes with the dramaturgy alternating between poetry text, movement, and audience participation. A qualified theatre teacher, Siren has lectured extensively on the topic of gender diversity—a theme that often features in their artistic works.

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THE ALMOST MANUAL: On Asynchrony, Time Lapse, Choreography, and Extravagant Details in Life and Creative Process

COVER AND BACK-COVER

DRAWINGS

L. Gaudreau. (2021).

PART ONE:

LETTER TO PIER PAOLO PASOLINI

ARTWORKS

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DRAWINGS

L. Gaudreau. (2020).

LETTER TO JONATHAN BURROWS AND MATTEO FARGION

ARTWORKS

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Burrows, J., Fargion, F. (2014). *Body Not Fit For Purpose* [choreographic work].

Gaudreau, L. (2005). *Encyclopædia – DOCUMENT 4* [choreographic work].

Gaudreau, L. (2006). *0101* [choreographic work].

Gaudreau, L. (2010). *Out of Grace* [choreographic work and installation].

VISUAL SCORE PAGES

The two pages in the image are from the personal score of Matteo Fargion and Jonathan Burrows for *Both Sitting Duet* (2002).

DRAWINGS

L. Gaudreau. (2020).

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LETTER TO MIKLOS GAÁL

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ARTWORKS

VISUAL

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LETTER TO ALBERTO GIACOMETTI

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ARTWORKS

VISUAL

Kyyhkynen Kaisla

Untitled 1. (2019). 104 x 71 cm, charcoal.

Untitled 2. (2019). 100 x 70 cm, oil pastels.

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PHOTOGRAPHER

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Lucinda Childs (1940–). American dancer, choreographer, and actress. One of the members and founder of the Judson Dance Theater/Church.

Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker (1960–). Flemish choreographer and dancer. Leading figure of dance in Belgium and beyond.

Judson Theater Church was a collective of dancers, composers, and visual artists who performed at the Judson Memorial Church in Greenwich Village, Manhattan New York City between 1962 and 1964.

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DRAWINGS

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ARTISTS REFERENCE

Nick Cave (1957–). Australian singer, songwriter, author, and screenwriter.

David Lynch (1946–). American film director, producer, actor, painter, writer, musician.

Martin Scorsese (1942–). American film director, producer, screenwriter, and actor.

Wim Wenders (1945–). German film director, playwright, author, and photographer.

PART TWO:

STRIPS WITH SAANA LAVASTE

On error, space and ikebana in the making of a theatre play

PHOTOGRAPHER

Photo: Lynda Gaudreau. (2020). In the photo: Saana Lavaste at Harjun Kukka.

LETTER TO BALTHAZAR

Balthazar is the name of the donkey in *Au Hasard Balthazar*, the 1966 film by director Robert Bresson.

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ARTISTS REFERENCE

Dario Argento (1940–). Italian film director, producer, screenwriter, and critic. Influential work in the horror genre during the 1970s and 1980s.
Miranda July (1947–). American film director, screenwriter, singer, actress, author, and artist.
Gena Rowlands (1930–). American actress with a career spanning over 60 years. Also known for her close collaborations in ten films with her late actor-director husband John Cassavetes.
Seymour Cassel (1935–2019). American actor. Close collaborator of independent filmmaker John Cassavetes.
Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969). German-born American architect. Regarded as one of the pioneers of modernist architecture.

A FABLE WITH LEENA ROUHIAINEN

On diachrony and the alien, through the lens of Emmanuel Levinas and Bernhard Waldenfels

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LETTER TO BARTLEBY AND BARTLEBYS

Bartleby is a character invented by writer Herman Melville for his new eponym written in 1853. Bartleby is an atypical character who refuses all solicitations by answering invariably: I would prefer not to. The writer Enrique Vila-Matas reappropriated this character in *Bartleby et compagnie* (2009) by imagining a community of negative writers, the Bartlebys.

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STRIPS WITH TERO NAUHA

***On fabulation, stockbrokers, volatility, glitches, mistakes,
and fabulation again***

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ARTISTS REFERENCE

Elie Ayache. (1966–). Born in Lebanon, Ayache is an author of many articles on the philosophy of derivatives trading.

John Cage. (1912–1992). American composer, music theorist, artist, and philosopher. Leading figure of post-war avant-garde.

Filippo Tommaso Emilio Marinetti. (1876–1944). Italian poet, editor, art theorist, and founder of the Futurist movement.

DRAWINGS

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LETTER TO A YOUNG ARTIST: BOBBY

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ARTISTS REFERENCE

Robert Bresson. (1901–1999). French film director.

Cedric Price. (1934–2003). English architect and influential teacher and writer on architecture.

A PHOTO-NOVEL WITH HANNA JÄRVINEN

Detective work: destabilizing self-evidence and cracking the narratives

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PHOTOGRAPHER

Lynda Gaudreau. (2020). In the photo: Hanna Järvinen.

EPISTOLARY EXCHANGES BETWEEN LYNDY GAUDREAU AND KENNETH SIREN

Addressing queer selves

THE ALMOST MANUAL

On Asynchrony, Time Lapse, Choreography, and Extravagant
Details in Life and Creative Process

PUBLICATION SERIES

Nivel 16

*This book is dedicated to the artists
and researchers of Uniarts and to
the artists of Montreal, my hometown.*

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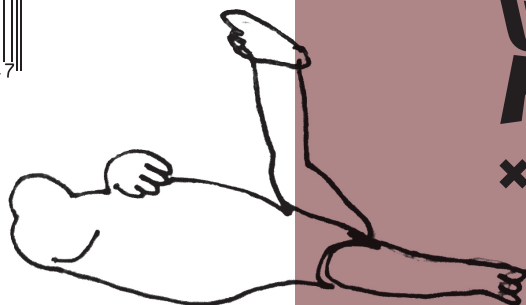
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The Almost Manual: On Asynchrony, Time Lapse, Choreography and Extravagant Details in Life and Creative Process is envisioned as a tool and a handbook. It is intended to artists during their creative process, offering a reflection on the concept of asynchrony. Asynchrony implies that our perception is disturbed by a detail and operates through movement, whatever the nature of this movement may be. This reflection stems from a choreographic practice and is applied to and analysed through the work of several artists. The interdisciplinary, here, is situated at the junction of choreography, visual arts, and film. This manual does not teach one single, refined method, but rather offers a way to shake up methods that have become too rote or rigid.



Dr LYNDGAUDREAU is an artist and choreographer from Montreal. She has been leading an international career in Europe and in Canada. Her work – which encompasses creation, research, and curatorship – examines the choreographic approach and involves a constant dialogue with architecture, visual arts, and cinema. Her latest series, *Out*, tackles the question of aesthetic, political and social eccentricity. She was a postdoctoral researcher and staff at the Performing Arts Research Centre Tutke, Uniarts Helsinki in 2019–2021 and now a visiting researcher. <http://www.lyndagaudreau.com/>



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