

They Returned Every Day At The Same Time To The Same Place - Spring 2021

Anything Goes (12)

If dance can be anything, how come so many try so hard to make dance that is as little dance as possible? Why devote yourself to dance at the same time as avoiding any and all of it? If dance, or as long as dance had issues and were surrounded by barriers - I get it - it was important to jump, cross, and knock them over, but in 2020? What is it that choreographers and dance makers need to prove?

One would think that if all doors are open why insist on running into walls, or if anything goes it's no longer a matter of if or not, but how? If difference always is relative (post-modernism) the meaning of "breaking out" kind of loses its appeal. The moment everything is possible it is perhaps time to listen to another mantra than the litany of the avant-garde, and instead of "ground-breaking" - which by default leaves a trail of wasted opportunities - engage in different forms of artistic ecologies. Ones that are not based on the same formula as extractivist capitalism.

What about if the avant-garde was nothing more than a smokescreen covering up the real reasons for thinking outside the box? Thrashing borders and threading the uncharted after all resonate far more with extractive and ruthless capitalism than with compassionate and gentle sharing of resources, renewable energy, or cultivating surroundings. Isn't what art and dance history has baptized avant-garde moments, equally possible to identify as instances when markets, territories, or discourses reach saturation, burst, and pave the way for new grounds over which to claim ownership.

When conventional markets invite to compete - may the best product succeed - art markets for obvious reasons don't. The artistic avant-garde has more to do with claiming territory, a kind of colonial behaviour, where "I was here first" is a way of dismissing any and every form of exchange and shared advancement. The artist, whatever expression or genre, is creating monopolies and what he or she sells are shares of the precious monopoly. In fact, it's monopoly, singular, because since there are no agencies to safeguard monopolies in art most of the artist's time is spent surveilling his, her, or their creation. The artists as a kind of Gollum.

It is however questionable what position the artist has in this game of dominance. Might it be that artist in corporate business is equal to R&D or innovation, and doesn't that make curators, programmers and the likes comparable with stockbrokers, investment bankers or businesses that channel money into start-ups?

It is curious that the agreed-upon narration that proposes the end of art's relation to the avant-garde more or less coincide with the birth of neoliberal capitalism. Say 17 December 1971, the release date of David Bowie's album "Hunky Dory" which neither sold very well in the beginning.

The problem though is that even if the avant-garde attitude was violent, male, white, colonial, and capitalist, at least it - which certainly is no excuse - was a project, a drive or a concern about and around a certain medium, expression, quality or approach. It was a matter of being passionate vis à vis, obsessed with or driven halfway to insanity by something external to the self. It was the medium that was to be broken, form that should dissipate, norms that had to be shattered no matter what. The price might be high and

however romantic there was a code: to not aim at breaking ground was to betray oneself, the artist community, even art itself.

The avant-garde was ideological. Obviously not in a political sense (which it probably also was most of the time), no I mean ideological in respect of art. It was carried by commitment, by cause, of unconditionality. Moreover, ideology is not the same as politics on the contrary when politics is all a matter of negotiation, ideology stands tall and would rather die. Hence ideology in practice is always political whereas politics can do without ideology or at least pretend as if. Indeed, neoliberal economy and governance are generating endless deviations in order for the common person to live the illusion that underlying structures are ethically tip top and decent. For politics anything can be everything at any moment and all doors are open. But wait a second, does that not mean that political affiliation is groundless and based only on subjectivity, because if anything goes and everything is everything I can as well base my political alignments on somebody's dress code or choice of eau de cologne? If ideology's business is matter and actuality, politics is all about appearance, and it goes without saying that ideology parties with geopolitics and forms of existence, when in truth politics share bathroom with biopolitics and have swapped existence for performativity.

The dominant western aesthetic canon proposes that art brings something into the world. Something that exists but can't be pinpointed. There is no app to capture it and yet it is there, actual yet not reproducible. Throughout history this something has had many names: poiesis, originality, autonomy, genius, the oblique or unknown you name it, and has been discussed until many ears fell off a second time. It's been the headache of philosophy since 1735 or at least for a really long time, and it still is. How can we talk about or define aesthetic appreciation, without either undoing the very notion of art or elevating it into "touched by God", transcendence or eternal beauty?

A less pronounced question is where this something is located, where ingenuity rests? Is it in the artwork or is it in the artist?

I believe one of art's big problems today concerns how to deal with - what in the early 70's was seen as a blessing – the personal is political - but soon became a curse - namely a gradual shift away from the artwork in favour of the artist. Sure, it cannot be somebody else than the artist and her, his or their processes that generate or bring this something to life, but it is a magnificent difference whether the gesture is pointing towards the artwork and further to somebody having an encounter with the work. Or if it functions more like a boomerang returning to the artist, elevating the artist to be a chosen one carried by some mysterious force. It's up to you and me to make our minds up with respect to where we want to situate the something. Do we believe in art as in artwork or art as in artist?

If art and art-worlds correlate with the rest of the world's developments or conditions - which it does - it is evident that today the something is in the artist and someone's artwork is secondary to the person's subjectivity. This is also why the contemporary artist must articulate a form of politics, but obviously a politics void of ideology and formulated only around appearance.

Before we reach a conclusion just a reminder that this shift is nothing unusual. On the contrary in art as in any other economic landscape what once was identified as commodity – painting, sculpture etc. – now encompasses everything not stopping with installation or performance but including also the artist's subject. As a matter of fact, that is the real deal,

subjectivity is the product par excellence, especially and in particular as long politics rules and ideology is generally cursed.

So why insist on making dance that is as little dance as possible. Well, what else can you do, if the dance starts to smell of anything “conventional”, articulated, advanced or complex the artist runs the risk that the work is stronger than his, her or their subjectivity and at that moment the something in art slides away from the subject and into the artwork. This is obviously also one reason why today the choreographer almost always is on stage, and identifiable as the choreographer or creator. And why a dance maker cannot not have a solo presenting his, her or their practice. A practice that is “in” the maker and not a work separated or external to the subject. Or why costume in today’s dance tends to be more or less identical to how the solo dancer/choreographer looks when dressing up. Even the costume has to confirm the subject. Not to mention why every second visual artist has to make performances, obviously.

If anything goes the real challenge is not to evacuate or to abandon, but on the contrary to remain in the middle as if for the first time, changing speed. To insist and stay put, cultivate the here and now, and engage in changing the conditions, the ecologies of the environments we have been given, that we are devoted to and cannot stop obsessing about.

Balance (1)

Balance is often mistaken for being something. Something you can determine, track down, capture and harness. But of course not, the second balance is turned into a thing, the moment it can be measured and become concrete, it’s not balance anymore. Initially because balance always withdraws, is constantly in movement and depends on instability. However more importantly due to that anything concrete or stable already is out of balance, or perhaps better ignore and run balance over. Balance is a practice, a practice without conclusion that requires diligent attention in order not to coagulate and become either style or regulation. Balance, being a practice, can have no grounding, no founding moment from which all balance and unbalance stems from. That implies that balance necessarily is performative but it also means that what governs it is convention and power. What we think about as balance or being in balance is never in balance except from that perspective of conventions, and conventions as we know are generated by power and finally be those that possess power. For balance there is only balance, whatever else is static, stable or immobile. For balance out of balance is not more or less balance it’s just differently balance regardless of how much out of balance convention considers it to be. Balance is inclusive and affirmative. Perhaps even more inclusive than inclusivity, it is open and contemplates everything with equal interest. For balance everything is equally and at the same time different. Balance cares for oddballs, asymmetries, minorities and differences and it affirms change no matter what.

To dance is to spend time with balance, not master or tame it as so many techniques propose, but instead to contest the conventions and powers that try to shackle it. To dance is to pay tribute to balance in the sense of giving it agency to keep playing games with us, tricking us, obliging us to stay alert and ultimately continue to dance.

Choreography (6)

Choreography and dance is often proposed as causally related. Choreography is the means and dance the end, or as the American choreographer Doris Humphrey suggested, choreography is *the art of making dances*, and the other way around, dance is made of, or the result of choreography. Dance and choreography confirm each other, without need of external input. Perhaps what dance and choreography needs most of all is not a house but a divorce. Rethinking the causality between dance and choreography, if for no other reason would open the door to external influence, and a cluster of established forms of value in respect of skill, composition, relations, dramaturgy, activism, form, embodiment, race, gender, physicality, ecology and so on.

Choreography has at times been outlined as a toolbox. A tool, however, is always directional, and confirms certain or given forms of outcome. Choreography as a toolbox therefore determines the result, in this case a dance. An alternative suggests that the tools are generic and hence can be applied, more or less successfully, to anything, both in respect of analyses and production.

This implies a departure from determination in relation to expression, and the choreographer can, so to say, choreograph anything. This is crucial in order to understand choreography as expanded practice. Choreography is not a means to make dance but to generate something, in respect of a certain perspective, which one possibly could call *the choreographic*. Practically it means that a choreographer is not bound to dance, but choreography becomes a mode of production that can be applied to anything, also outside the aesthetic domain.

A tool has a function that determines a result. Similarly, a technique operates as a mediator and stipulates outcome. Technology instead of having a function, or providing a trajectory, similar to a generic set of tools, enables without determining a result. Technology is to technique, what competence is to expertise. Where expertise excludes in favour of specificity or perfection, competence includes in regard to sharing and precision. Expertise is closed and knows about it. Competence is open and open ended. Expertise consolidates knowledge known, whereas competence carries the possibility for production of knowledge.

Instead of defining choreography as a set of generic tools, that although generic has strong telos, can choreography be considered a technology, a set of opportunities that are interrelated but non-directional. Choreography can then be understood as an approach, an approach to dance as much as to writing, city planning or life. If technique is to be understood as the way to fulfil something, technology can be equated with a knowledge, which is not a matter of fulfilment but instead of the opportunity to question, develop, rearrange, transform, engage and change.

If we consider choreography a knowledge, a choreographer is not, any longer, solely somebody who makes dances, nor a person who puts together a book or makes a film, nor a competence approaching certain expressions into the world, but the opportunity to enable forms of navigation in the world. If choreography can be understood as knowledge it becomes a way of approaching and conducting life.

Finally, if choreography is considered a dynamic of knowledge, entangled in other forms of knowledge yet labouring for its own autonomy, it doesn't just make it possible for choreography to expand its reach, but also in reverse, it opens for the possibility of an

inquiry into choreography itself, detached from expression. The study of choreography in itself; its epistemology – the understanding of itself as knowledge -, its politics and ethics.

Dance (22)

Dance is not a film, a series of positions pasted together into movement. It is exactly its non-divisibility that is key to dance. In fact, dance withdraws from being framed as image, and in this respect renders possible a critique of documentation and archive. If dance was a succession of images the archive could easily box it up and put it on a shelf, but how do one store a dance if not through embodied memory or forms of passing on?

A gesture, a human physical gesture, such as thumbs up is a movement. To a gesture the meaning has been attached, obviously thumbs up doesn't mean "great" or whatever in itself. The attached meaning gives a gesture teleology – purpose or direction. Plato and later Aristotle, proposed with emphasise that all human activity has teleology or telos, purpose or aim. We cannot do something void of purpose or direction. Everything we do must have a cause and cannot not have some effect. It might be vague and layered but everything has purpose or cause and there always some or other effect.

Philosophy has certainly questioned how causality operates and dance can perhaps contribute to the research, even though it more than often remains within the theory outlined by Aristotle. Indeed, conventional forms of causality is so embedded in our ways of operating that we cannot think or act outside its realm. Stuff that trick or circumvent causality therefore is relegated or degraded to phenomena such as magic, witchcraft, the dark web, sorcery or in philosophy to concepts such as the uncanny, event, metaphysic, the unknown or darkness.

But let's return to gesture. What happens if a gesture loses its attached meaning, or something is identified as a gesture although there is no – at least no direct – meaning attached? If there is a signifier but nothing is signified, if the signifier is empty? Indeed, one approach to dance is precisely to regard it as gestures detached from meaning, which consequently renders the, or series of gestures void of teleology, a physical movement that have no, zero, purpose, reason or causality.

Of course, we can argue that we dance in order to stay in shape or to spend together with other people. Certainly, but that is something else then the dance, dance here is transformed from an object of contemplation to a function, dancing.

For example, the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, proposes that dance understood as a gesture without meaning implies that dance, in fact, does not communicate anything, except communication itself. Dance communicates empty communication, or as Agamben says, pure communicability. The possibility for something to be communicated, or one could say dance expresses the promise of communication. Dance thus become the expression, or exhibiting of mediality: it is the process of making a means visible as such. Means detached from any cause or end, detached from direction, aim or purpose, which is equal to that dance expresses agency in itself. Not agency to act upon something, this or that, but agency itself, in other words potentiality.

The consequence, is that dance - gesture without purpose or attached meaning – furthermore must be understood as void of teleology. Dance has no direction, no reason, no purpose. Dance is useless and it becomes, at least on an abstract level impossible to have a

reason for dancing or for that matter, reason to contemplate or see dance. You cannot see dance because this or that reason, but, instead dance is experienced because because. Dance expresses expression, not like theatre, film or literature that always end up expressing something, which implies rather than communicating something, dance expresses possibility of expression, a space or dynamic it offers to the one who dances, and the one who sees to inhabit, share and love.

Ecology (15)

Art is not culture nor is culture art. Art is not synonymous with culture but is always taking place against a cultural background. Culture however is not art. A culture equals its circulation of value, whereas to art circulated value is supplementary. A certain culture's value can be determined by forms of engineering, its revenue can be projected and calculated through the means of conventional signs. The value of art, next to its simple commodity value, must not be possible to calculate or project, as that first of all, implies a shift from aesthetic to ethical judgement, or value, which would mean that art be measured due to its effectivity.

Culture is the condition necessary for art. Any culture, no culture is more or less suitable for art, but different cultures provoke different forms or expressions of art. Every culture generates the art it deserves, and over time means to incorporate art and aesthetic appreciation into culture.

Art carries with it, that it potentially produces, differentiates, ruptures or heal culture. In order for this production not to coincide with production in respect of culture, it cannot not in the last instance be contingent. Production in respect of culture is always probabilistic and reactive to its environment. Aesthetic production, in respect of experience, rests and rely on indetermination and bring the promise of an active mode of production.

Culture is through and through inscribed forms of measure and divisibility. Art on the other hand always withdraws from divisibility, if on no other level in respect of supplementary value. The value of art must be supplementary in order to maintain itself as art.

Culture implies the formation and production of identity and community. Culture is caring, controlling, conditional and fundamentally territorial. Art, on the other hand, in respect of aesthetic experience implies, concentric yet not directional withdrawal from, or undermining of, identity and community. Art in respect of aesthetic experience therefore is deterritorializing, it dissolves community in favour of gathering, which is the first condition for the possibility of emancipation.

Culture by necessity implies a coagulation of perspective. Art on the contrary is an indication of a fluidization into horizon.

Culture implies forms of governance, which initiating moment always is totalitarian. Every form of governance begins with a decree to which there is no exception. Art is always universal, in so much that it is the very absence of governance. Culture therefore is through and through correlated to politics, whereas art, in respect of aesthetic experience, collapses politics into doctrine, however a doctrine that refers only to itself as itself.

Culture is negotiated whereas art is one.

Every culture implies an ecology, prescribed by among other endless other things, its conception of space, time, subjectivity, commodity, privacy, governance etc. Art, in respect of its singularity of experience, does not carry or imply any form of ecology or mentality, which is why art in times of ecological crises can function as an exceptional laboratory for

the possibility of the emergence of form of ecologies that is not derivative of what is already established and agreed upon. This, however, require that we, although it might seem arrogant and irresponsible, insist on the separation between culture and art.

A terrifying ecology has over the last decades been on the uprising, whose sole purpose is to incorporate art into culture. This is worse than alarming not only because it implies the end of disinterested appreciation, but even more importantly because it equals the annihilation of a free autonomous voice, of parrhesia, simply the promise of truth.

Form (4)

Form follows function. But what if that's only so true? Is it perhaps an evasive manoeuvre obscuring a fascination for form, something that requires a disclaimer whenever mentioned. Or reversed, is superimposing function onto form, a method that eliminates the intensity possessed by form? Or, is form void of function, something to fear because it communicates nothing more than itself, which means it's indifferent to power.

Form has often been associated with homogenisation and totalitarianism. Form is cold, lacks empathy and is inhumane. A deficiency that routinely has been substituted by function, or content, that instead is appreciated as relational, performative and social. The assumption being that, form with function is positive, whereas form without, is negative or even dangerous.

Now ponder the possibility of the exact opposite, that it's when form and function is additively conjoined, confirming each other, that things get nasty? The result being a self-confirming loop, where form and function, in other words matter and meaning, support each other *ad infinitum*. A sealed dialectics, that encompasses everything and therefore cannot be challenged.

With its emphasis on language, post-structural philosophy argued that representation is the single capacity through which objects, time, space and reality can be encountered. The ramifications being that meaning, or semiotics, became omnipresent, and that everything else transformed into meaning, as representation had become ubiquitous. Which consequently implied that form in itself lost all relevance, and instead only could be interpreted and reactivated as political.

Function, or content, is invariably a matter of dominance and power. It thrives on power because function flourish only as long as it is active, whereas form is indifferent and exists no matter what. Being was exorcised out of form, and made it homeless in the powerhouse of performativity.

The difficulty is not to fill form with function, but rather how to engage with form avoiding to fall for the temptations of meaning.

Form withdraws from function at the same time as function labours for its assimilation. Form that coagulates transforms into norm, and empty norm, or call it formalism, is also known as sadism or abuse of power.

On the other hand, form without function, detach from power, the will to assimilation and the opponent, spectator or recipient, instead of being guided or told what to do (function), is given a tacit permission to venture freely in a landscape without footpaths, and generate his, her or their own agency.

Dance does not need function. Function suppresses dance and transforms it into meaning, pre-packaged and ready to digest. Dance that cares for form, is not formalist, on the contrary, dance that cares for form, offers the recipient to experience the dance as a prerequisite to experience him, her or themselves as unconditioned agency.

Gathering (9)

When I imagine a community a lot of pictures flicker by. Workers leaving the factory, suffragettes marching for the right to vote, football hooligans shouting and beer, alcoholics in the park, day workers somewhere in Brussels, men in an English 19th century club, Harry Potter fans queuing to get a ticket to the premiere, maybe cows chewing about in the sunshine, or communists storming the winter palace. The images are crisp and I sense that I can zoom in and out, focus on a detail or detect patterns.

On the other hand, if I envision a gathering there are no images or they are blurred and nauseating. It's hard to even name a gathering, what is it even? Gatherings have no names, generate no images. There is no in- or outside, just some vague outlines and possibly faces, but they never stay but withdraw again.

It is common to consider two kinds of communities, voluntary and involuntary, which are those that one cannot choose but are born into or otherwise end up in. Nationality, class, depending on what discourse used race, sex and gender, but also the community of people with diabetes or simply being human. Voluntary are the other ones, the chosen ones, like car owners, republicans, parents, museum visitors or the community of dancers. There are perhaps also a third kind of community. Communities that for some are involuntary but for others come across as a choice. Those are complicated because representatives from the two sides tend not to be able to agree or even understand. Identity is one of those issues that can both be understood as chosen and given, which indeed produce very different views on rights, law and existence.

Communities are great but can, or in fact cannot not, also be extremely violent. Nothing is as good at blackmailing and peer pressure as communities. Communities secure identity but once you belong to a community you are also obliged to be loyal. A community secures identity for the individual but the price to pay is that the individual loses his, her or their autonomous voice.

Communities are always governed; an institution needs to control, guide and punish when necessary. Communities are hierarchical no matter what, and they tend to reproduce rather primitive forms of distribution of power. Every community practice communality and is willing to sacrifice a participant or member for the greater good, for the survival of the community. Community is the origin of ethics, but also corruption.

Gatherings on the contrary lack any form of governance, communality or central axis around which it is formed. In fact, gatherings cannot secure form but are constantly in formation. Therefore, gatherings cannot produce any pressure, or accumulate power, nor does gatherings secure anything, doesn't protect, but at the same time no one is excluded, indeed because to gatherings, boundaries or borders are unknown. Gatherings are not void of power, but power is local and has no sustainability. A gathering evidently has no home base, no basement to smoke cigarettes in and certainly no stadium. Community offers security

because it is structured, gatherings are hyper dynamic because it lacks structure and is purely strategic.

A community secures its individual's freedom, in other words constitutional freedom, or a participant has personal liberty and this liberty is protected like any other commodity. Communities are all about equality, but once again it is an instituted equality and one can always wonder who's in charge, who authorises the conditions for equality and surveils it? Gathering on the other hand practices unconditioned freedom, but secures nothing at all and invites to an equal extent any individual to a freedom without organisation. It is an altogether different form of freedom, freedom without conditions, rendering its participants free individuals. A gathering knows nothing about equality but is equal to everything.

A community has citizens, whereas gatherings render every individual powerless in respect of a moment of sovereignty, which of course also means that gathering is lawless.

Another difference, or a consequence, is that a community always represents itself as community, and in addition the identity of the particular community. Like theatre, it always represents itself as theatre and in addition some story, conflict or cognitive asymmetry. Gathering on the other hand only represents itself as itself – it is obviously already in representation – but there is no additional identity that is represented or proposed. Community is like theatre and gathering reminds us of dance.

Perhaps a little diagram can be proposed. Community equals theatre, is always hierarchical and practice equality. And the opposite: gathering equals dance, is unfamiliar with hierarchy and insists on that everything is equally.

Community associates with choreography, it is organisation, centrality and distributes permission. Dance on the contrary is not in association with anything and withdraws from structures. Similarly, theatre secures the private sphere whereas dance is a *modus operandi* for the possibility of different kinds of life, and the starting point is a departure from the private towards the public domain. Theatre in this sense is the representation of a private intelligence – it is proprietary – whereas dance implies the practice of general intellect.

In order for new kinds of communities to form, new in the sense of their ecology (mental, social and environmental), we need to insist on the importance of gathering, comings together through urgency not communality, for enjoyment not satisfaction. Gathering is the landscape where communities are made, gatherings are terrains and communities are settlements.

Community art is certainly great but the encounter with art, in order to be an encounter with art and not with forms of information or power, it must swear allegiance to gathering.

Human (18)

“My Mama always said that a problem is just a solution that hasn't been found, jet.”

“Your Mama was an idiot then because if the solution hasn't been found jet, it's a fucking problem, isn't it?”

“That's the point, there is no problem, there's just a solution that hasn't been found, jet.”

“Which is a problem. In fact, it's the exact fucking definition of a problem.”

“We just gonna have to agree to disagree then, aren't we?”

But, hello, what exactly is it that they will have to agree to disagree to? As long as we agree no need for either problems or solutions. Jackpot! Then again isn't the very notion of agreeing homogenizing and repressive. Who can't afford to or don't have the agency to not agree? Behind an agreement there's always a financial settlement whereas understanding seems to be built on ongoing exchange.

In any case isn't it terrible with people that puncture discussions with that kind of rhetoric. That's people that deserve to be called a dick or asshole. Goddamned passive aggressive. Is it only me that experiences those few words in respect of a low form of ownership. Like two American men standing on each side of a fence barking at each other over something nobody really remembers what it was. See what I mean?

It is more exciting to contemplate the boundaries of imagination. If imagination is situated in language doesn't that mean that we can only imagine what language allows us to imagine? Imagination thus remains within the boundaries of representation, of what we already are able to perceive. That, I think, unfortunately makes imagination trivial and sad. One can only imagine what language agrees to, and the most radical end product appears to be an unresolved, agree to disagree. Disaster.

On the other hand, if imagination doesn't have any form of boundary and is really wild, totally out of control, it becomes difficult to find it, define it or even talk about it. Another thing American's are great at, to insist on and set up boundaries. Practical maybe, but making things trivial, simplified, and one more time stinking of a sense of property. If there is a boundary there is also ownership and authorship.

One can wonder if imagination is a problem or a solution that hasn't been found yet. If imagination has boundaries and is language based it simply isn't imagination and yet if imagination is not bound it couldn't be differentiated from the rest of life, the world, universe or Gaia.

It feels good to say things like: we need to think outside the box, even though one knows that it's impossible to produce a moment when imagination exceeds its limits. Never mind what is outside the box, if not something unthinkable - because it is still thinkable, the outside is just the inside of another box.

A different set related questions are whether imagination is something – being - or if it is a form of practice – relations. The trouble however is that a practice needs to be located in respect of something and something needs to be practiced in order to gain representation in the world.

Imagination is a slippery slope, but what we can know is that if imagination is language based it cannot exceed what is already possible to consider or think. This means that imagination always at least indirectly supports or consolidates the way we humans are humans. Hence, we cannot use imagination to change the world or the ways life is conducted, exactly because however much we imagine it is still imagination based on or derived from this world and this (the current) way of conducting life. Thus, only by considering that imagination is not attached to language is it possible to utilise imagination

in order to conceive rigorously different ways of life, lives that do not confirm the human as the human. The only problem, which might just be a big problem, is that – as long as we remain human we can't imagine what that something is. It is impossible to imagine what we can't imagine and still this is what we have to imagine imagining. Shit!

Now, what is art's opportunities and responsibilities in this mayonnaise? If art's job was to "use" imagination in respect of what language agrees to, art making becomes strategic, calculated and in worst cases simply smart ass. If this is the case, art making, or art in any instance, cannot bypass ethical implications. In light of this art becomes through and through relational and has no value in itself. On the other hand, if art connects to some or other form of unbound or wild imagination it must carefully avoid mysticism, spirituality, vitalism and universalism. As long as imagination is language related art has no problem with truth, language is after all performative. The moment imagination moves "beyond" it is pretty complicated to not end up in essence, truth and white male straight modernism.

Post-humanism has nothing to do with the post-human. And neither has anything to do with after humanism or after human, and certainly not with something or somebody being humane. Being humane basically just means being compassionate and nice. Although that's not exactly simple as it always implied ethical considerations. Does my compassion to the left undo my compassion to the right etc? Am I nice to this person because it's nice to that person or because it makes me feel humane? Being humane is not always that generous but equally often simply calculated and economical, symbolic or actual.

Post- in the sense of for example post-human rather than referring to after, as it might do with post world war II or PTSD, implies some or other form of self-reflexivity, or the moment when for example humanism, modernism or the internet developed the ability to observe or inspect its own conditions, being in the world, engagements, ethical and relational complexities. Perhaps a stupid example. Post- is when something has gone through a serious amount of hours with the psychoanalyst. You know, not at all liberating itself from traumas but understanding them, being able to reflect their impact and consider them as resources.

Post-humanism is not not-humanist or anti-humanist, it signifies the moment when humanism develops the ability to reflect itself, and obviously humanism or post-humanism has absolutely nothing to do with being or not humane. Generally speaking humanism must be considered one of the more inhumane worldviews ever invented, vouching without a blink of an eye for colonialism, slavery, extractivism, a human and western centric world, patriarchy and so much more darkness. OMG capitalism.

Post-humanism is a humanism that at least figured out it might not be the best, smoothest and generous approach to the universe. Congrats. Nevertheless, also post-humanism is a system of thought anchored in human capacity, human in the way we are human.

Post-human is an altogether different story and much more difficult because, for one, here post- starts to point in all kinds of directions. The initial point nevertheless is that post-human has nothing or at least very little to do with robots or monsters (most of them definitely, ghosts for example). One point of view proposes that post-human designates the moment when humans or humanity became able to reflect its own position vis à vis itself, its relations and its environments. For example, when humanity became able to comprehend

that this way of being human is only one of endless contingent possible ones. That there is no foundation to this way of being human but that it's just the result of contingent outcomes to which there is no destiny, no path, no reason etc. The post-human condition is the state when humans develop the ability to reflect their own being and doings in the world.

Another perspective onto the post-human seems to consider that everything that is not flesh and blood but appears like it is, is post-human. Terminator, as in the films, thus would be post-human but is he, it or they really, because in the end isn't the creature's way of showing conscience and compassion exactly when he becomes human and cute. The Terminator, Arnold, is exactly made to be human, to practice being human like "we" do. This is also why, on a first level, the robot-being poses a threat. When the artificial being becomes too similar to "us", our way of being human loses bearing as unique, special or whatever and that is threatening.

You or whoever doesn't become post-human because you have "Artificial" tattooed on your biceps, nor because you obsess about techno music created only using processors, not even if your dress code is strictly polymer based or you shave some or other part of your head. It might feel great and can be valuable practices but at the end of the day the question is if they don't in fact end up confirming even consolidating being human in the way we are? Not so different from tribal tattoos in the 90s that functioned as evidence for being real. "When I look at my tribal tattoo I know I exist, it's permanent. When I recall the sensation of the pain it caused I can feel a heightened sense of presence. It makes me feel alive."

If anything, these kinds of practices – by all means continue – at best experiments with boundaries - produces tension and awareness about conventions – but the onset is always binary - not not similar to a protest. It is enabled exactly because there is something to "revolt" against, to resist.

Post-human is far more complicated because it means to practice being human detached – completely – from being human in the ways we are. As long as the practice is a result of what we know, based on forms of imagination that remain in language it can strictly speaking not be considered post-human. As long as a practice or form of being is generated in relation or in tension with known practices they can equally not be understood as post-human.

Post-human is not a matter of stopping to be human, to be non-human is another story and maybe easier. Post-human means to be human contingently different from practices that can be identified with respect to how we are human, both being and human part.

Post-human therefore is neither part of a problem or a solution that hasn't yet been discovered. There is nothing to agree to disagree about the post-human and however every form of post-human being is encompassed by boundaries it is boundaries contingent to boundaries we are able to formulate as relations or into a grid. In this respect we have to conclude that any post-human capacity, any rigorous post-human practice, is void of ethics and moreover politics. A post-human condition can in fact not coincide with the human condition as we know it, because the emergence of a post-human condition, in order to be properly post-human, eradicates what being human "once" implied.

Yet, is not what art is all about exactly that: to even if it is hopelessly impossible, generate the possibility for post-human conditions to emerge. Art's responsibility is not to make this world a better place, neither to question or critique it, it is making it come to an end. The world as we know it.

Improvisation (17)

At some point, in the 60's or so, people started to improvise. It happened all over the place, not just in dance, obviously. Dance was a little bit late, but very supportive of the need to free artistic or even human expression from rigid structures, disciplinary society, binary opposition, strict hierarchies etc. The dancer and his, her or their creativity needed to be liberated from the repressive regime of choreography, and the person needed to be freed, through dance, from homogenising forms of identity, beauty and body ideals, hyper gendered life and, the list is long, very long.

Central to improvisation, independent of the art form, was in any case to liberate the individual, dancer, musician, poet, painter from constraining forms of organisation – composition, figuration, harmonic structures, cemented skill-set such as ballet technique etc.

To improvise in dance, as well as in other artistic expressions, was further not just a means to free oneself but implicitly also to liberate humanity. To improvise was urgent, so urgent it didn't matter how it looked, that it bypassed aesthetic judgement. Dance and dancers were on a mission to rediscover human nature, true human nature.

Perhaps, people dancing also just enjoyed jumping around, especially in company with some, at the time, popular stimulants. Who knows, it is of course possible that improvisation just had to with rainbows and fluffy clouds.

So many years later, dancers still improvise, but what happened with the mission statement? Isn't it so that the factory job following strict disciplines have transformed into work situations where improvisation is key in order to juggle all opportunities around, and that that's true more or less for the entire workforce? Isn't it also so that the hegemonies of post-world war II western societies to a large extent have been flip sided, and that we today find ourselves completely schizophrenic and unable to choose? And is it at all urgent to, on stage or even in the studio, express processes of self-liberation, creativity or even individuality? Aren't we today all hyper individualised improvisers that can slip into any context, at any moment, and still maintain ourselves as special.

There are uncountable issues that our societies need to work on but individual freedom or to demand the right to creativity, seem to me somewhat misdirected.

So why, why, should we in today's societies of control, hyper mobility, improvisation based 24/7 work life, still do it? Improvise, for what reasons, because it seems to me that improvisation, the good old version, totally has lost its political momentum?

We can of course still do it because of rainbows and more fluffy clouds. A kind of nostalgia, dancing the illusion that we are free because they were in New York 1971.

But what if instead, with the knowledge we have of the world around us, consider that there might be a political, or at least, critical perspective onto improvisation? Perhaps, the ecology

of “using” dance to free us, the dancer, we could reverse it and consider forms of moving that free dance from us. Instead of using dance for our purposes, thus to learn something about ourselves, can we consider, not exactly the reverse, but practices through which dance teaches us something about ourselves. Which might seem futile, but think about it. A dance that teaches us something about ourselves, is radically different from your shrink telling you why you suffer from agoraphobia or your partner teaching you something about responsibility. It’s learning from dance, in other words from a different, incompatible, form of knowledge. Or, it is being left with a foreign, an alien something that there is no room, or location for, thus having to invent that space or location.

To learn from another human being, or through human forms of knowledge, equals expanding, or at times diminishing, your abilities to act upon the world. To learn from dance, something that doesn’t share human mind sets, carries the potentiality to bypass way of acting and instead change what the world is. Said differently, the former implies a probabilistic, determinable, change whereas the latter presupposed contingent, or indeterminate change. It also means giving dance agency rather than using dance to gain personal agency. Perhaps it is necessary to consider how we have danced, for too long, as an extractivist relation to dance, and that it is now time for a kind of reparation, give dance agency and let it dance us. If for no other reason, that learning about ourselves evidently hasn’t exactly created a sustainable form of life, maybe learning from dance is a path towards spending time with the world, the earth and the planet in ways nourishing and caring.

Join (22)

Join, but what club? Dance or dancing?

It’s worth saying again. Art is not culture, nor is culture art. Art, even performing arts, is something that one contemplates, takes in, arrange oneself in relation to etc. It is not an activity or function. Culture, or a culture, on the other hand, is a cluster of activities or a bundle of functions. It’s less a matter of contemplation than navigating the functions in order to optimise one’s participation.

At one point in history, not so long ago, it was important to question the dynamics of art and insist on alternative forms of participation, reconsidering the exhibition space’ obsession with objects and instead exhibit work, activity or functions. Not so long ago, however, in regard to changes in society and life, is really long ago, and today it rather seems that every museum, dance space or festival, anything art that receives subsidy, is obliged to activate its audience etc. which we all know plays perfectly into neoliberal policy.

First of all, we must be wary not to mix up the museum with the art, the festival with the art presented, may that be dance, theatre, performance, music, poetry you name it. Festivals and museum are exactly bundles of functions that each of us navigate and cruise best we can, from the exhibitions spaces to the bathrooms, from the performance on Saturday afternoon to the menu in the theatre bar, or the museum shop, the promotion t-shirts worn by the volunteers (how utterly ugly) and the opening hours. Art is different, kind of take it or leave it and a dance piece is not better or worse because the que to the toilet was longer than you had expected.

Even more importantly though, is it to not to give art functions. The moment art becomes a tool it is no longer art but culture, and it starts to be delicate to keep apart aesthetic and ethical evaluation.

If somebody asks you why your work, your art, is important, watch out not to attach functions to what you do. Because, the next question will be concerned with efficiency. A function can be measured, so do you offer value for money, or even worse if the someone starts to make comparison, in regard to cost and importance, to elder care, cancer treatments or something else that has to do with possible human, i.e. individual human, suffering. "If you can't even tell me why your art is important, how do you defend that you and your art receive state support when people die because there's not enough funding for hospitals?" It is imperative to not take the bait of ending up on the ballfield of culture. At that moment art becomes a service and has lost any aspiration to an autonomous voice. And remember just because your art is not a poster and a slogan it doesn't mean it's not activating and generating political consciousness.

When notions of performativity were established this transformed life more than we might think. It was not just human identity that transformed but everything transformed from being regarded as something to the sum of its relations, its functions. The best example being the dollar, which in 1971 turned from being regulated by actual gold in Fort Knox to being regulated only in respect of its relation to other currencies and value. This is the moment when the dollar becomes performative, and nothing else. Which means that dollar is nothing in itself, but instead only its functions.

The rise of performativity is the rise of relations, doing and function, on behalf of being, actuality and things. It is a world that rid itself of nouns in favour of verbs, and when it comes to art, this was not just a matter of favouring art that was performative but rather of degrading art, all art, from what it is – something one contemplate – to what is doing in or to the world, in other words it's function.

In respect of the prominence of performativity it is not surprising how frequent it has become to swap dance with dancing. Dance connotes the past, a time when relations weren't everything and most of all when it didn't matter who executed the dance. Dancing, instead, is regarded as positive, relational and personal, somehow more democratic and concerned with an individual's agency.

But there is a price to pay. Dance through dancing becomes personal and consequently dance becomes privatised and concerned with identity and who has the right to what kind of dance, rather than dance carrying the possibility of a form of anonymity through which both the subject dancing and the viewer could experience an intimacy with being a free individual. Moreover, an experience that was supported by dance as a form of expression that withdrew from forms of privatisation in favour of a movement towards becoming public.

From dance to dancing, is synonymous to from object to function, which equals to dismiss dance as a gesture without meaning and instead insist on that dance always express something, and that that is determinable, if not even prescribed.

Dancing, a verb and a verb is a function, is more or less active in relation to something, or a cluster of things. A function is either active or inactive, but even when inactive it is inactive in relation to something. A function can perform a position of neutrality, but neutrality is passive and withdraws from responsibilities.

Dance, a thing to which function can be given but is not inscribed, is indifferent and has no responsibilities (it is equally indifferent to everything). An important difference is that

indifference is not passive but instead available to whatever and everything. Indifference is actively available without value.

Dancing is passive and because it is surrounded by function it is also reactive. It reacts on the world and can at best generate a more or less favourable solution. It consolidates knowledge and inscribes itself in causality. Dance, instead, is indifferent and doesn't answer to anything, and can therefore be active. It doesn't react but undermines causality, it carries pure mediality and the potentiality of world making.

Knowledge (5)

Knowledge is power. The more one knows the more one will be able to control events. If knowledge is power it goes without saying, that knowledge is homogenising, and as much as it expands your horizons, it also controls you in a restraining fashion. The more you know, the more you have to lose?

A different version could be that knowledge allows you to navigate more eloquently through whatever milieu or situation you're in. Knowledge is a benevolent tour guide and the more knowledge possessed the more complex the terrain's opportunities. Knowledge is in the detail.

The problem is that knowledge can only guide, it can never let go, hope for the best, go wild or get lost. Knowledge, however rich, is domestic, tame, and, moreover, it domesticates and tames its user. Knowledge as much as it opens our eyes, is also the primeval panopticon, a self-regulatory disciplinary organisation.

Knowledge has no origin and its performative disposition inevitably makes it an apparatus of power, authorisation and accountability, where benevolence, enlightenment, abuse, fear, dispossession and prohibition always are entangled. The performativity of knowledge further means that it is its power, institutions and ultimately capital, that authorise what kinds or modalities of knowledge that is supported, banned or must remain unmentioned. Because of the character of the forces that has had the power to govern, approve and forbid knowledge, knowledge cannot not be identified as colonial, sexist, gendered, anthropocentric, racist, Eurocentric and so on, criminalising forms of knowledge that doesn't conform to certain, often inconsistent standards or rule. In particular the supremacy of reason and rationalism, and the merciless degradation of nature in favour of culture. Mind you, if knowledge is identified as performative, it can only approach nature as part of culture, not least because knowledge is unable to comprehend something outside itself.

Popularly, nature is things like the body, forests, whatever is growing in the compost, dinosaurs, microscopic stuff that lives in your mattress, lions, teenage acne, gravity and such stuff. Which might just be true, but only and as long as whatever it is generates no forms of relation, causality or outcome. For something to be classified as nature is not a matter of criteria, but instead behaviour or modalities of autonomy. The moment something develops relations, any kind of relation, it is also assimilated into culture. Consequently, nature is void of knowledge, and everything we know about nature, is culture.

Knowledge takes an interest in democracy, but it's always a democracy issued through the form of knowledge in power. Similarly, equality, hence obviously freedom, is always constituted by the dominant mode of knowledge. Nature on the other hand is not

concerned with equality, the governance of every individual's equal opportunities to make the most of their lives, instead in respect of nature everything is equally, if for no other reason, because there can be no governing capacity.

From the perspective of post-structuralism and consequently general theories of performativity, art cannot otherwise than be a matter of knowledge, which we can exchange with language or representation. If art is not inscribed in knowledge, if art is not generating meaning (knowledge) it poses a philosophical problem, because what is it then, and what does that do to the theories. At the same time, if art is assimilated into knowledge it cannot not be aware of, or know what it communicates, what it does. Art becomes a matter of power, an experience that conditions, domesticates or subjugates the spectator or viewer.

It is however crucial to recall that not knowledge is not identical to against knowledge, but instead a refusal to submit every thing, and experience to knowledge and power, to forms of homogenisation and control.

If one considers art's responsibility to make the world a better place, inform and enlighten viewers and spectators about injustices, suffering and atrocities, art must insist on being assimilated into knowledge, to be a matter of disseminating information, even if it does it through the hegemonies of forms of knowledge that often were the very reason for the suffering to occur. But is it still art, or just posing as it?

Art must not be about knowledge. Art is exactly an expression into the world that does not concern itself with what it communicates, that refuses to know and be known, because this is the only path towards an unbound, speculative and wild experience. An experience that does not give permission or pass on agency, but instead, with the risk that it all goes sideways, trusts the spectator or viewer to make his, her or their own mind up. To use the void of power as a trampoline for the production of emancipation.

Liberal Art (10)

There is something inherent in art confirming itself as art. But might there be different strategies or interests? For Marx the loan shark was a difficult and hated character. Initially because it wasn't a category easy to include in Marx theories about production and wage labour, but more important in respect of how abstract value perpetuates abstract value. Or rather, loan and rent are technologies where the one that holds capital always caters for his, her or their position, so to say, on the backs of others. It's after all the entity with resources that set the interest rates.

Rent or debt based economies, evidently are through and through performative. If there, at all is, a product involved it only operates as a token. What is important is to control debt not products or stuff.

Liberalism's relations to change can be summarised as benevolent as long as tradition or existing canons are not undermined or attacked. Liberalism announces a grand yes to anything new but only as long as there's no collateral damage, or don't touch our history. Liberal perspectives welcome variations on the established, in particular if variation enables

new niches, in other words new markets, but anything that challenges established hegemonies is always met with scepticism, dismissal or scorn. The absolute favourite artist is the one that, so to say, shakes the tree to make sure it's properly rooted, or a proposal whose challenge implies added value to the existing canon.

Liberal art is art that confirms itself on the backs of the others. It's art that works like a boomerang. Great device, but the point is to pass value back to the creator, or even to collect value through an elliptic utterance. Liberal art is an art that confirms canons but more important it is an art that sets the stakes where the viewer, spectator or even reader cannot not confirm the work or proposal no matter what perspective, or possibly being ridiculed as being stupid, or having some sort of retarded idea of art as commodity and circulation of human resources.

Liberal art is not at all heroic, hyper male or anything self-referential modernism, on the contrary liberal art is gently cognitive, tidy without being minimal or ascetic. It's well-done-art that never pride itself for technical execution or anal choices of material, it's eloquent but never admirable in the sense overwhelming, like "oh wow". Liberal art is also modest especially in respect of technical needs, format and it's never voluptuous, over the top, loud or in any respect recalcitrant, rowdy or, god forbid, no body-fluids, ever.

Liberal art positions risk in a very precise way. It's always a calculated risk, analysed with an attitude resembling real estate investment or, indeed banking. It's risk only in respect of how much more, never possible loss. Perhaps one could say that liberal art is art to which risk and insurance is synonymous.

Another take is that liberal art always is more about the artist than the art. Not that the artist is extravagant, but in the sense that the value accumulated is accumulated in the artist to a larger degree than the artwork. The artwork has become a token for the artist's subject, not persona but the modest and beautiful self of the artist.

It is important to make a difference between being in awe and aesthetic experience. Liberal art in many ways cancels out the possibility for any experience that is not prescribed or domesticated, and consider it barbaric to celebrate any form of unbound, wild or open-ended experience.

For the aesthetic experience to be anything specific, and not simply the same as riding the subway in New York or for that matter looking at a webpage showing some of the master pieces in the Uffizi, it must carry the possibility to generate value that is supplementary to the object on display, a value that is contingent to the artwork and ruptures any causality between artwork and value.

Minimally interesting (7)

I am for an art that is minimally interesting. Not minimalism - art that withdraws any surplus of meaning. Or miniart – really tiny art, like miniskirts (remember Claus Oldenburg and Sol Lewitt).

Hollywood cinema is really good at it. Computer games, amazing. Contemporary economy circulates to a large degree around attention. Attention has transformed into a commodity and industry invests copious amounts of money on optimising, subdividing and speeding up attention. Attention is today something that is consumed, and especially online platforms superimpose layers of attention. For one single reason, that we should consume more, spend more money and increase traffic on web pages that live on advertisements.

We live in societies where the speed of decision making has increased multiple times, for the same reason that we should consume more. Of course, I don't mean, just buy more but consume more images, information, advertisement, even ourselves.

We are furthermore led to believe that it is we that make the decisions. We who make our mind up. Obviously, an illusion, there is no other choice than the ones provided by marketing strategists, management tricksters and other similar "pillars of our communities".

Sushi or sashimi, is my choice but whatever choice I make I will end up paying for it.

It is very different to choose one of two options, or even multiple options, it is still taking a prescribed decision, and to generate a decision. To now choose from a menu of solutions but instead produce a position. Perhaps not a solution, but a way of turning the tides, changing the circumstances.

It is alarming to what extent art, theatre, dance, music, even poetry (Amanda Gorman) are busy with the same strategies. Perhaps not first of all the artist, but more so theatre,

museums, dance festivals and other institutions that experience a need to optimise the user experience, that live with the pressure of audience numbers and that argue that audience attention is key.

I love museums that don't feature a café and bookshop. That doesn't provide an audio tour or a dance performance in the central atrium on Saturday afternoons.

Minimally interesting art is not boring or slow, reduced or long. It's an art that linger on the threshold of exciting and forgetting, that engage just enough to hold a viewer but never interfere, to guide his, her or their thoughts, associations, sensations or decision making.

Dance that rather than being surprising and exciting, playing on the audience desire for action, lay low in favour of forms of experience that are overwhelming, letting the audience zone out, close their eyes, mind their own business and letting go of a desire to offer the audience something.

Why should art, even as a critique, replicate forms of attention that other's master, through media that are endlessly more docile and manipulative? Why should art provide solutions, even in the shape of questions and heightened awareness, attention and decision making?

Dance needs to look in other directions, for its specificities and disconnection from that flows of information we are surrounded by.

Perhaps it could be understood as provocative to argue for an art and dance that doesn't seize the moment and to up tempo beat doesn't convince the spectator of some or other importance. But really, what I need is to liberate myself from decision making processes that are forced on me and instead, through rigor and care, give myself the opportunity to spend time with myself, life and the world, unfiltered without time optimisation, but just there on the border of minimally interesting.

Somebody, or really many, have proposed that to experience dance first of all is not a matter of looking but instead of listening. about if it is not you and me, the spectators that should listen to the dance, but instead the dance that needs to and are listening to us.

Many will leave or at least some, minimally interesting art, but you know it's their problem not yours or the artwork's, but for those that remain, minimally interesting art is a way of listening to the audience without listening for something, but just be attentive to whatever it is that emerge, without judgement.

Nicolas (20)

In an interview with Nicholas Serota from 2006, the German painter Gerhard Richter is asked how it at a certain moment happened that he started to create out-of-focus paintings. The interview is from a documentary and in this particular section Richter is sitting in an oversized way too fancy sofa. One can sense from the tone of Serota's voice that he is looking forward to a juicy response that will touch upon art historical mysteries or secret conflicts nobody knew about circulating in the Cologne scene of the late 60s. Richter, dressed more like a Chinese worker than a stinking rich superstar touches his nose and changes position, says after a slightly too long pause.

- Well you know, at that time it was... possible, adding a half generous, somewhat innocent smile. I can't recall what happened afterwards but it doesn't matter, the answer is intriguing enough on its own.

What first comes to mind is that Gerhard Richter is just another asshole that obviously and under no circumstances would reveal anything especially nothing that in any way could smudge his genius. Gerhard Richter doesn't get inspiration; he *is* inspiration in it's much pure form. If one Mr Richter ever gets inspired from somewhere else than himself it is from God and God only, but that is probably only when he has a headache or is haunted by a vague hangover after yesterday's opening party. Well, it was just some retrospective who cares where, really. Conclusion Gerhard Richter is a shit.

But what about a different interpretation. Perhaps Richter said something more than about focused or out of paintings but instead touched upon something central to aesthetic production in general.

It was possible. Doesn't that mean that there were no reasons, or no no reasons. It was just possible and I, i.e. Richter did it, out of focus. Of course, after the fact art historians or critics can make up a thousand feasible narratives. Do their detective work and track it all down to some childhood trauma, a revenge plot, technological development, a Marxist unpacking of a historical moment or why not just blame capitalism – neoliberalism was invented at the time so capitalism will have to do.

But what if there were no reasons or no no reasons for real. It was possible, proposes that contrary to other kinds of decisions or unfoldings aesthetic judgment or decisions doesn't necessarily have anything to do with causality. Aesthetic judgement, what green colour to choose, is not a matter of probability, at least not in its entirety. You ask a painter or whatever artist why that one there and most probably the answer will be come across as a rather silly if not stupid. – Cuz, you know... yeah, or something about emotions, feeling, energy or inner necessity. – It could be no other way, and there was no negotiation or probability.

What Richter, the old modernist or not says, is that aesthetic judgement is beyond reason or rational. It can be analysed but some part of it moves beyond probability and measure. One could also say that aesthetic judgement is self-referential because it refers only to itself as itself and that the experience of taking such a decision, whether that is in the studio in front of the easel or in the exhibition space or museum, is not the experience of taking a decision but to make or generate a decision where there previously was not available to make. Since the aesthetic experience is self-referential the outcome of this production is contingent and thus is the experience not of making a decision but of making a Decision. Which since this experience by necessity is empty means to experience oneself as potentiality. Perhaps that is that underlying, that determination that all aesthetic production comes down to, that feeling of generating a decision for no particular reason and to be touched however gently by potentiality.

With a different set of words perhaps what Richter said is that in aesthetic production, just because it is formulated around contingent decisions, hope resides.

Overall (14)

There is a delicate difference between what an image is, and what is in an image. Similarly, of course, what an artwork, a dance, is, and what, so to say, is in the artwork or dance. The French philosopher Roland Barthes was very good at looking at images, and invented what he called punctum - something in an image that gives it momentum, that opens it or perhaps gives it urgency. It's beautiful but it somehow forgets what an image is in favour of an endless regress on what is in it.

Barthes had some problem with being and couldn't hold back giving everything meaning, which of course is a recurring problem for thinkers that identify with postmodernism etc. If everything is text and consequently performative the consequence is that being at least to a larger extent has to be abolished. Being, not in the sense of day to day life, but instead being in itself, is not a text and is not performative. This is crucial, being is not performative. Which at the end of the day means one cannot both have identity (as in identity politics) and being, essence or, a true self. One can think so, or want it really badly, but no, it doesn't fly.

I guess Roland Barthes was a great observer, un grand observateur. He could find connections, associations, allusions you name it everywhere. There was simply no end to it, but to observe is not the same as contemplate, or listen. Barthes was so busy finding out what was in the image that he missed out on listening or contemplating what the image was. But then again, even though Roland Barthes was the most gentle, sensitive and listening thinker, he also proposed apropos love: you fall in love, you fall out of love, you recover from love, and fall in love again.

What a horrible understanding of love. But is it perhaps so that the thinker again forgets the bigger picture and can't help himself but focusing on what is in love, not what love is. Of course, one doesn't fall in love again. Every love is singular and there cannot be an again. By the way, who wants to recover from love? Doesn't that degrade love to something similar to cleaning up in the garage. I will never use this one again, off you go. Love changes and sometimes it hurts real bad, but it doesn't move out just like that. Perhaps, one recovers from the person, or the object of love, but let's hope one never recovers from the love. Why would thousands of poets through thousands of years devote so much time to love if it was nothing more special than recovering from a severe hangover, spending the weekend with your in-laws or forgetting a jacket on a train.

Observers detect or find anomalies, contemplating implies taking in, including disparities, and letting them be. The observer curates his observations, classifies them, locates their trajectories and demands access to a narrative. Contemplating is difficult because it demands the courage and rigour of letting things be, avoiding giving things identity without for that matter letting anything go unseen. Observing gives things and people identity, whereas contemplating offers phenomena to gain form, crystallise from incompatible bits and pieces into something that can be named, which although is not identical to being recognised.

Observers zoom in, focus on detail whilst forgetting the whole. Contemplation integrates detail in the bigger picture and listens to resonances between micro- and macro.

Observation grounds itself through perspective, whereas contemplation maintains a sense of mobility by holding on to horizon, which comes down to that observation is coupled to interpretation and contemplation, although less convincing, associate with production, in the sense that the individual viewer or spectator generates a story, understanding or solution, or a reawakening of a memory, a loss or form of intimacy.

The legendary art critic Clement Greenberg proposed, in respect of Jackson Pollock's paintings, the notion of all-over, which refers to a non-differentiated treatment of a surface, but could also be applied to movement and time. All-over is not similar to uniform, has nothing to do with equalisation, smooth relations or gradient qualities. Instead it withdraws from methods of dramatization, it undoes conflict or contrast, overlooks tension and couldn't care less for conventional forms of dramaturgy, which here can be abbreviated to deliberate manipulation of attention.

From the horizon of all-over, everywhere and every when is of equal importance and never interchangeable. And simultaneously, everywhere and every when is the whole and that whole is always at the same time One and different.

It simply makes no sense to observe an artwork that is all-over but instead it invites to a moment of contemplation. To a time when you are not obliged to make anything out of anything, but can zone out and care for the experience without giving it conditions. Perhaps that's difficult when it comes to Pollock paintings and modernist art, but maybe all-over today is not directly linked to heroic painters and male bonding, but instead can function as an invitation toward a different ecology of attention.

There are, as far as I know, no anecdotes about Roland Barthes being blown away by a Pollock, nor did he reflect on those paintings. Perhaps this is exactly the point, those are not artworks that you first of all reflect. Indeed, reflect implies to take distance, to make oneself an observer is to make oneself unreachable by the intensity of the artwork.

All-over opens for modes of attention that don't estimate form of exchange or confirmation but instead, circumvent performativity, and consider an artwork in respect of its being. What the artwork is rather than what is in the artwork, and propose a modality of experiencing art that refuses to apply one or other perspective but maintains the openness of horizon, and that generates forms of intimacy with the artwork, and the act of experiencing through empathy.

Performance (11)

Performance is not dance. And this is crucial.

Nor is dance the same as theatre. Under no circumstances is it the same. Yet, how many times haven't we heard theatre people blurt out something like, yeah but there's often dance in theatre. Sure, but just because stuff can coexist doesn't mean they become the same or even compatible. Inclusivity neither means putting everything in one pot, making things the same, on the contrary, nor does insisting on forms of autonomy automatically suppose being against inclusivity, on the contrary. Too many seem to equal inclusivity with crossing out integrity. At the same time, we have to be cautious not ending up in some or other form of essentialism, or the other end of the spectrum, cherry picking.

Dance is not a form of theatre. It can certainly be translated into theatre but then obviously it also dissolves as dance. Two reasons, theatre cannot represent itself as itself, but

invariably includes a second layer of representation – character, narrative, subtext, dramaturgy, conflict, in short drama. Dance doesn't need a second layer but can practice forms of autonomy. When I dance I dance and there's nothing more to it, as Merce Cunningham said.

Theatre cannot not propose or even confirm justification; social moral, ethical, political. Theatre is a guide. Dance on the other hand doesn't look for justification. Even though it demands a huge amount of rigour, dance can function as an open image or experience, that doesn't presuppose anything social, ethical, political etc. Theatre is always epistemological or knowledge based, dance on the contrary can just be a dance. Dance swapped story in favour of being.

Theatre and dance further proposes opposite movements. Theatre brings people together in order to privatise the experience and for the engaged to be confirmed. Dance on the other hand brings people together in order to practice becoming public, forgetting to acknowledge or protect the private sphere, as well as the subject viewing or even participating.

Performance is not dance. Performance is a subject performing subjectivity, whereas dance is a subject performing form. This is crucial. Naturally, at least initially is both dance and performance, performative, but performative and performance is not one and the same. Performance is a performative performance. Dance, that allows itself to not cuddle up with theatre, is a performance but is it not performative.

Performance always returns the utterance to the subject performing. It confirms the subject who, although sometimes in disguise, always performs its narrative, situation and position. Performance tells the story of the subject performing, which is why performance negates general or any form of skill. Nothing must cover or stand in the way for the subject expressing itself. Performance is always proposing a gesture that is private. A private gesture that should be allowed to occupy space, and that assumes itself as being important for others. Performance demands attention.

Dance on the other hand offers a different relation, and breaks with the causality, signifier and signified, which frames experience and attaches justification (social, moral, ethical, political). Instead it introduces an interval or distance between the means (subject) and meaning (form), particularly interesting since subject and form hold or carry meaning in significantly different ways. A subject collects meaning in order to gain consistency, prominence and accountability, whereas form have prominence, and need to resist filling up with supplementary meaning. A subject is empty and generates prominence through being saturated with meaning. Form is full, although only with its own emptiness, and must resist meaning or signification, which renders it inconsistent as form. A subject wants to become more subject, form withdraws in order to remain form.

Performance, a subject performing subjectivity, distinguishes itself through being special. Being out-standing authorised by - perhaps vague - but still pronounced general. Dance, a subject performing form, on its term is specific, embedded in an evenness that is generic. This means performance, highlights identity defined by a general conception of what identity is and does. It practises a closed loop where performance confirms the viewer and vice versa, where special and general perform what reminds us of forms of governmentality. Dance emphasises form, suggests that the subject is subordinate to dance, and that the form

generated cannot be anything else than generic, if the interest is to remain form, otherwise form becomes metaphor and dance turns into performance.

The somewhat paradoxical twist, is that dance being indifferent to the subject engaged - it's just a dancer - simultaneously suggests that although it could be any dancer, right now at this very moment it is exactly this dancer, just a person with all that that person is and practice, in respect of a generic that has no interest in framing the person due known social etc. norms. The person dancing is any individual dancing but this time it is exactly this person, framed by nothing else than form, not obliged to communicate anything but responsible not to want something from form, and hence nothing from the audience, spectators, curators etc. Because of this indifference the dancer is passing over from the domain of the possible to the domain of potentiality, both for the dancer but also for the viewer and most importantly for dance. Performance confirms determination through probability, and dance open, contingently, towards the not yet determined.

Fifteen or so years ago Jacques Rancière introduced the notion of an emancipated spectator, including museum visitors or maybe even readers. The starting point for Rancière was that theatre as we know it always is justified. Rancière proposes that theatre is stultifying, and that that in the end cross out any opportunity towards emancipation. The problem is that too many have mixed up emancipated with politically engaged, provocative or loud, and therefore insist on different forms of political art. For Rancière emancipated, however, has nothing to do with either political engagement or independence. Emancipation instead equals to generate a voice, not just to clear your throat, but a voice that cannot be assimilated by existing voices of the people, power or governance. The emancipated spectator is an individual that, in this case through an encounter with art, has generated a voice different in kind to every other voice. Now, for this to possibly take place, it can under no circumstances emerge vis à vis an art that is justified as that voice enacted always must be reactive, thus confirming life and being human as we know it. Emancipation can only occur vis à vis something that aspires to be just an image or art, as, just in this context doesn't offer anything to react too, to confirm or not, it's just art. Emancipation, the production of a different in kind voice, can only be set in motion in front of an art that aspires to be just art, whatever art, an art quelconque.

Quelconque (24)

It is of importance to identify the difference between making political art and making art political. Political art "use" art, in its most efficient way in order to convey a social or political position, a message, a particular identity. Making art political instead implies, either to consider the politics of how art is made, in respect of working hours, authorship, with who, distribution, profession and skill, business model, reproduction, copyright and a million other parameters active when making and presenting art. Or making art political, can also embrace the politics of how artworks are designed and structured, in regard of form, format, editing, attention, narrative, dramaturgical outline, duration, but also the very understanding of what an artwork is and how it generates, what kind of experience.

Whether an artist, actively or not at all is occupied with the politics of his, her or their art, an artwork always formulates a politics. An attempt towards neutrality is of course not an

exception, and as long as an artwork is not actively formulating a politics, either in content, expression or otherwise, it submits to the dominant political situation in which it is made and participates, in other words neoliberal capitalism.

Artworks that inform its audience about forms of injustice, suffering, climate issues, opioid production, damage done to the oceans or any other asymmetry is not by default politically radical, good or on the left of the political spectrum. On the contrary information based art often use information as a smokescreen for actual political engagement, which obviously is one, and a central, reason to why it is so successful. For art institutions, museums, theatre etc. it is imperative not to upset anybody, especially not somebody or council that contributes financially, which is why the looks of political responsibility is perfect as long as it supports the arena on which contributors and beneficiaries operate.

It is important to identify the difference between a justified image or artwork, and an artwork that aspires to be just an image, just an artwork. A justified image is a recognisable image, and hence it is recognisable it also communicates an ethical or moral relation or positioning. Therefore, it is also an image with which an audience member, viewer or reader can identify, and orientate his, her and their position, affirmative or not. A justified image is an image that confirms established forms of life, relations, knowledge etc. It might propose a critique but it is never the less an utterance grounded on established knowledge, which never the less all critique does.

Justified in respect of art, including performing arts, is not only relating to content but also form, format, procedure, dramaturgy, editing, modes of attention, duration, proximity, skill, conditions for representation and so on. Although somewhat abstract categories they also function as guides and confirm the audience in regard to identity, class, race, gender etc. To generate an image or produce an artwork that in some or other way avoid, circumvent, cross out or otherwise avert or deflect justification, that doesn't communicate an ethical, political or economic relationality or position, is difficult, if not impossible. Just an image, just an artwork, is whatever image, an image or artwork *quelconque*, which means that it at the same time need to generate recognition to the extent that it is comprehended an image or artwork, and at the same time not enough to produce forms of identity, perspective or feedback.

But why is this interesting or crucial? The encounter with whatever image, just an image or just an artwork, instead of confirming the viewer, spectator or reader, and their identity, it leaves the implicated two opportunities. Either to simply ignore the situation, pretend it's raining or simply look away. Or, for the one that insist, the necessity to generate or create an identity, a position, or extension to the image or artwork. Just an image, because the image lacks identity invites the spectator, viewer or reader to manifest or ground the image, and hence give it an ethical, political and economic anchoring. This production, instead of homogenising each individual into the anonymity of the audience (which is equally the case with museum visitors etc.), is individual and forces each spectator or viewer to generate his, her or their own ethical, political and economic identity for the image or artwork. But since the production is not created in response to, but rather because there is none, it is not a reactive production, but an active process of creation, a instance of poesis. Which is to say, it is the production of life or worlds, contingent to modes of life and world that we are familiar with. This does mean that what is created is new, all together different. It means it is prominently independent, contingent.

A justified image is formulated in respect of force, it is directional, it has and accumulates power, and makes possible. Just an image or artwork, is instead formulated in respect of intensity, it is powerful but void of accumulated power, and carries potentiality.

Political art for obvious reasons coincides with an art that is justified, it is through and through ethical, moral and clearly designating a political and economic position. An artwork with aspirations towards being just an artwork must refrain from being political and instead take on the more complex task of making art political, exactly by speculative approaches to form, format, procedure, dramaturgy, editing, modes of attention, duration, proximity, skill, conditions for representation and so on.

It is no coincidence that art that confirms the spectators has gained traction over the last few years, it is after all forms of art that confirm identity politics, which as an approach to life, relations and the world is incapable of confirming anything that operates outside established formations of representation.

From the perspective of identity politics, the only identities possible are justified identities, and the other way around they are identities that must be justified. Queer or otherwise perhaps but none the less justified and conventional.

Representation (2)

Everything in the world is given identity because of its relations. Internal, external, intimate or distant, complex webs of relations generate more or less stable identities. Everything that is entangled in relations can also be understood as an object, even though a highly volatile object, such as a memory, some smoke, a dance performance, knowledge or a small cylinder. An empty glass contains nothing, but that nothing is different than the nothing that fills the suitcase stored under my bed. It's empty and at the same time filled with nothing. Nothing is also something, an object, and entangled.

The world is the sum of all relations. Actual ones, like your feet to the floor. Assumed or imaginary ones, like meeting someone's gaze, or saying "I feel you" over the phone, or being touched by an artwork. Possible ones, like having a drink with Serge Gainsbourg, but also impossible ones, whatever they might be. We have a word to bundle all those simple and highly complex relations together: representation.

One thing needs to be cleared, once and for all. Nothing in the world can bypass or evade representation. Nothing cannot have relations, as the very possibility for someone to think it implies a relation. Something that has no relations does not exist in the world, and is thus kicked out of representation. Never mind the world is of course also a representation.

Now, what exists beyond representation, cannot be known, not even unknown. In fact, it is so unknown it cannot even be unknown, or it's unknown to the degree that we cannot even imagine imagining it. It's what's left when we pour nothing out of the glass. Nothing's nothing. Moreover, it has no consistency whatsoever: absolutely no continuity, no extension in time.

If representation equals the world, it means we are never in touch with the actual thing, body, ourselves, a stone, heaven, love. Sorry. But on second thought that's probably really beneficial, because it means things can change, transformation happens, you are different

and so am I, life goes on and every day is a new day. Identity is not something we *have* but is the sum of our relations, good and bad, accidental and deeply meaningful representation makes no difference. Good news, because it means however bad or superficial things seem, relations are dynamic and together we can change them. On the other hand, if the world consists of relations, and relations are dynamic, it also means that different kinds of power - small and big, fast and very slow – control relations, all of them, more or less deliberately.

It is crucial to make a difference between a critique of representation, and the philosophy of representation. Philosophy concerned with representation, which in ways all philosophy has to be, is asking questions about how representation operates, how it's structured, about its ontology, and what consequences this have in respect of knowledge, time, truth, freedom and being.

A critique, any critique of representation, have, in respect of some or other position, submitted to that omnipresence of representation, and are concerned with how it distributes and consolidate relations, visibility, identity, equality, justice, power, borders, value, property etc.

One could say that philosophy is the structure upon which critique forms strategies. Tactics is how to live, resist and change those strategies, and through living challenge the stability of structures.

An artist, a dancer – a scientist or thinker - can never overcome or escape representation, mind you neglect certainly offers no exit, but it might be urgent to figure out, with who you side. Because critique carries the power of argument, but has given up any claim on universality. Because critique knows what it wants, but has given up on freedom.

Space (13)

Something weird is happening with public space, something new and different. Over the last few months movement and presence in public space have taken on new dimensions not least due to state-sanctioned regulations. Directives that will have long-lasting and indeterminate effects on the understanding of what public space is, and what it means in respect of democratic and political life.

Public space has been a hot topic for quite some time. In particular in respect of a tension between re-animating forgotten, derelict or unsafe parts of our cities and gentrification and a general tendency towards privatisation on the other. Art and artists have been “used” to discover grey areas but have often ended up being the beginning of corporate gentrification projects.

A central argument in favour of public space, and a good one, is its necessity for a prolific political life, the opportunity to engage in forms of political manifestations as well as spreading political information. It is further of absolute necessity to protect public space as it ensures access to all people, individuals and groups. This is of course not true as we all know, but without public space there is not even a space in respect of which this can be claimed.

Moreover, public space today is never public enough. It's always governed, sometimes through obvious powers but equally often by sneaky protocols that nobody seems to be able to explain. At some point in history there possibly were actual public spaces, spaces subject to no law or norm. In more contemporary societies those spaces are still around but

manifest in different and more shattered ways. Individuals without papers or permanent addresses, large populations of refugees and immigrants for example are forced to conduct lives which the law cannot protect. Public space is a complex affair as it, on the one hand is a space where different voices can gain listeners but equally a space potential of extreme forms of violence. Paradoxically it is precisely this complexity that needs to be protected. Certainly not as a defense of violence but of spaces that are not reachable for surveillance or other technologies of control.

A less actual and yet acute reason to insist on the necessity of public space concerns the importance of spaces where alternative forms of fiction can proliferate. These are actual spaces that need to be defended. I'm here referring to theatres, libraries, museums as well as public squares, sidewalks, parks and other forms of commons. It seems pretty obvious to me that we today live in political realities where those spaces regularly are sanctioned, censored, pressured by politicians as well as by a general public not least through social media. Libraries are being given policy documents providing clear indication of what literature to purchase. Theatres are equally threatened often by populist media when presenting politically complex work or perhaps even worse when offering resources to experimental art that might only reach a small audience.

Libraries, theatres, universities, museums – perhaps not always understood as properly public space but yet – are of utmost importance not only because of their programs, books or exhibitions but because of what they promise. They carry the promise of autonomous thought, of alternative narratives, histories of the repressed, fictions that never will be successful but nevertheless contribute, of sounds and images that demand unusual forms of attention and that tell stories that make the worlds grow.

All too often have we taken those spaces for granted but we should remember that once they are gone, the moment they perish or die it will take a lot of effort to get them back. We should remember that those spaces exist because individuals, groups and peoples have fought for them and not seldom lost their lives in the process. What makes those engagements even more difficult is that they are not struggles for this or that liberty or freedom, but for the possibility of freedom, any freedom. Forms of freedom that we might not even be able to recognise or consider, that we might find silly or unthinkable. It is exactly those freedoms we need to protect, and protect without asking questions. Especially not, why?

What defines public space, actual or metaphorical, is that they cannot be owned. The park that I spend time in, the bench that I read on, pavement that I discuss local political issues with my neighbour on, is owned by the city and in the end the state takes responsibility for keeping it clean and making sure it's more or less safe. But we should recall that the state, at least formally, is the people. The republic is us and the park is ours together - all of us.

Public space is ours but cannot be divided into small parts and we each take one home. Public space withdraws from ownership and it's in and through that gesture that it provides something extraordinary. Because what is generated, thought, sensed, experienced is also public and cannot be taken home, cannot be made private, at least not without transforming into something entirely different. This process of privatisation is not negative. On the contrary, it implies processes in which knowledge is challenged and transformed. Because

what public space generates is exactly forms of knowledge that are public, that cannot be owned which means that the process of privatisation, of making them yours, to an equal extent transforms the knowledge as it transforms you.

An intricate side effect of public space is that, precisely because it is none of ours and the knowledge or experience it can generate cannot be owned, those spaces, in order to maintain their capacity as public, can also not be measured in respect of efficiency or economical revenue. Any form of measuring technology provides protocols for the inevitability of privatisation or ownership. Parks, the beach, a meadow can certainly be useful but they cannot be “designed” in order to optimise a use or value. Public space is fundamentally useless, but as much as they are useless they can also host whatever, there are no limits to what can happen in a park. Since public space cannot be given direction, cannot be useful, it also means they carry the potentiality of making completely new thoughts or things happen. Privatised space is always carried by forms of probability in respect of for example activity whereas public space supports contingency, in other words anything including some thing that is completely foreign.

Perhaps there is something that connects public space with art, although it seems that art in public space often cannot help itself from privatising those spaces by creating strong frames or replicating protocols or contracts that we know from institutions such as theatres, museums, concert halls or for that matter shopping malls. Yet, is not art precisely of importance in respect of the spaces, actual and symbolic, it can create and the fictions and histories it can generate? And is not our time a time when those spaces need specific attention, both for what they can do but also because they are under serious pressure? It is time that we make a difference between art in public space and art that is or generates public space.

Trees (3)

I like to think about watching dance, like watching a tree. The tree is indifferent to whether I watch it or not. It doesn't ask for confirmation, nor does it confirm me, doesn't tell me who I am or how I shall watch. Still the indifference that the tree possesses is not the same as it doesn't care. In fact, or what do I know, but nevertheless, in fact its indifference is such that it appreciates any relation generated, or the absence thereof equally, and at the same time always of importance. To appreciate something equally, don't imply to equalise, or formulate an ethic that encompasses every possible relation. On the contrary, it means to give every opportunity or situation identical circumstances and yet insist on establishing a unique relation to every single relation.

Trees, certainly, tell us stories, most of the time rather vague and badly edited about origin, seasons, time, space and relations. Oftentimes however the trees don't really bother to tell their stories, but agree to just stand around, letting things go on without much judgement at all.

For hours, I can sit or stand in front of or next to a tree, just looking at it. Allowing for its indifference, and the endless shifts of colour, tune, sensation, light and movement that tree possess and practice, kept more or less busy by other forces of nature. Perhaps this is emphasised by the fact that trees somehow suggest very little direction, and yet they move, and move and move. I can watch leaves forever.

Contrary to theatre, dance doesn't need to tell a story. Of course, dance has stories but doesn't need to tell them. Dance is enough, more than enough, without accentuating narratives. Theatre however isn't much at all without the story. Without that dramaturgical arch, with tension, climax and release, never mind characters and setting. Dance doesn't need any of it, not even a little bit, but just like a tree can be watched without aspirations, judgement, any excitement or dramatic twists. Dance can be enjoyed just like a tree, with a kind of disinterested interest, a sense of indifference that appreciates every movement, big or small, fast or slow, just for what they are, equally. And just think about how delightful it is to a group of dances.

Perhaps dance needs to find other places in order not to end up under the authority of theatre, that tend to force itself on everything? Need to sneak out of the theatre to rid itself of interpretation, which is another word for homogenisation and corroboration of history? Dance doesn't need drama, which inevitably arrives with some or other solution.

Most things watched, proposes a preferred form of attention and homogenise ways of looking. Dance is, can at least be, one of these things, like trees, that doesn't prescribe modes of looking, forms or qualities of attention.

Theatre is so terribly human, confirming being human just like we are, and always were. Dance on the other hand, although often practiced by humans, doesn't care about being human. Dance doesn't care much at all. Perhaps this is why it at the same time is so difficult and wonderful to watch.

Up (16)

Dance has a problem with up. Ever since ballet, as a kind of revenge, up has been abandoned. Forbidden, treason. Already lifting the heel is a betrayal of contemporary notions of dance. Never mind actual lifts, but most of all it's a matter of momentum or energy.

Energy goes down, momentum is towards the ground no matter what. It's imperative that the dancer is grounded, and grounded is always a matter of down. Always down. But is it really that simple that grounding, finding one's balance, connecting with one's foundation without exception is an arrow pointing straight to the nucleus of the planet?

Down furthermore seems to be the only direction through which authenticity can be experienced. When it comes to movement practices that in any respect report to authenticity, deeper self-awareness, presence or truth, up or elevation is total pariah, and weight is the only way to self-realisation. Elevation is doomed artificial, vain and show off, by definition, but why?

If the body in some or other way is networked with authenticity it is not determined by direction, down or up, elevated or not, but to a specific form of cosmology. A cosmology that humans cannot access, or if we do the price to pay is an absolute cut with the cosmology we currently practice.

One can certainly engage in practices that depart from dance as expression, towards dance as self-awareness. Self-awareness, however, has nothing to do with authenticity or truth, but all to do with the image of authenticity, and that is not an image circulated by authenticity but sold to us in order to generate revenue.

In order for a dance to be natural it further is required to be complacent with gravity. Good dance use gravity to produce a natural and healthy dance and relations to the body. But

then again, there is obviously nothing more or less natural with dancing, than any other human activity, although it might feel like it.

Perhaps, a celestial dance that favours the heavenly and universe can offer a different kind of relation to ourselves, others and the world. A dance that listens to the air, lightness, vibes and overtones, and instead of focusing opens up towards forms of availability. There is something hard and passive aggressive about self-awareness, whereas availability comes across as opening up, making room for and being with.

Is it perhaps so that the ways contemporary dance elaborates around authenticity and etc. correlates to a Western, American, understanding of what it means to be human, to be assigned a body, to live with oneself, that in its turn reflect capitalist conceptions of property, privacy, equality, human rights and so on.

This is a perspective onto the world and being that suggests that authenticity is something that can be obtained, captured or owned. That essence is more or less similar to gold or any other fundamental chemical element, it can be dug up or stolen. Instead of getting rid of authenticity altogether, which would be the postmodern strategy, an option is to consider authenticity, essence or truth as something that indeed does exist but that remains unobtainable. That withdraws and yet art, and perhaps dance in particular, can generate temporary cohabitations with essence and its equivalents.

What about a dance that celebrates the energies of the earth, not as a means to state oneself, but instead as a departure point for an ongoing search and sensitivity for moments of intimacy with authenticity. Not only for the dancer but also for the ones that experience it. A dance that instead of pleasuring itself through the density of grounding, instead allows itself a certain amount of light headedness, letting go of self-awareness and privacy in favour of becoming public and available.

Violence (21)

It is common knowledge that architects fear mess. That's why they compartmentalise space and build buildings. Just so they know where things are. Now, one can wonder what choreographers fear, they too after all organise and compose? The answer is quite obvious, movement!

Choreography like architecture is a form of structuring, organising and creating regulations. They are closely related but not identical. Architecture could be described as the organisation of space over time, and choreography the organisation of time over space. Architecture addresses spaces, and their stability, in respect of change, dynamics or movement. Choreography flips the relation into addressing movements, dynamics and change in respect of the relative stability of forms of space.

Choreography is an organising capacity, it structures and structures have sustainability, which enables stability, recognition, repetition, discourse etc. Structures are stable and open, but as much as they allow for different modes of participation they are still regulating as much as offering possibilities. Any structure can be considered a kind of semiotics, which subsequently allows us to recognise choreography as a form of language.

Structures however vague and benevolent, including language – or in particular language – although enabling and make possible communication, memory, exchange and so on, they are also regulating, or simply violent. Extremely violent in fact, language so to say being the primordial violence, if for no other reasons that language implies the possibility of suffering, guilt, time, power, grief or simply the binary, life and death.

Choreography is simultaneously and at the same time violent and a system of knowledge, both the opportunity to communicate and exchange with the world, but as any language capacity it is also establishing boundaries to what communication can be considered. A structure can only express what the structure allows, and is thus always diminishing something's expression whether that is a subject, context, landscape or imagination. Structures are never innocent but coagulations of power both on micro and macro levels, that coalesce with general structures of societies. Western modern structures for choreography like no other culture favours the individual in front of the group. No other structure concerning organisation of dance is concerned with repetition and homogenisation like structures taken for granted in 20th century Western dance. Thus, correlating to how modernity has developed the understanding of e.g. subjectivity, work and production.

Structures are fundamentally abstract, they are bundles of principles that although sustainable need an expression into the world. In the case of choreography that is often dance but doesn't need to be, but can be any expression, may that include bodies, images, text, numbers, gesture, memory or forms of projection. Choreography is definitely dependent on bodies, objects or representations thereof, but those bodies does not have to be human or something that can move by itself.

In order for dance and choreography not to coincide or collapse into one, dance needs to be defined through a tension, distance or juxtaposition to choreography, and cannot initially be a structuring capacity. Dance in its most primary emergence, in the first instance, is and cannot be otherwise than, expression without organisation. Depending on discourse it's even possible, although somewhat unorthodox, to approach dance as matter, as something that exists independently, in itself and is not through and through performative. But as much as choreography – structure – needs an expression into the world. Dance – expression without structure – needs some form of structure to gain sustainability, to exist in the world, which in the case of dance doesn't have to be choreography but often is. Dance without attachment to some form of structure, exists but cannot be accessed by humans or culture as it operates outside, or independently of representation, hence also outside time.

Dance is wild and completely void of organisation. Choreography is one of the means to tame or domesticate dance, but as much as that is "necessary", choreography is also a monument of forms of violence, forms of repressive power, powers that perpetuate violence and power also outside dance, executed on people, communities and the earth.

Watching (8)

Some say one has to learn to listen to dance. They are probably right, listening is after all not that easy. Do you manage to listen to dance, you're probably a good listener in general? Yvonne Rainer, the American choreographer, proposed that it is difficult to see dance. She probably meant that it can be tempting to watch dance as if it was theatre, sports, admirable, sexy, touching and so on. Seeing dance is complex because it means using a vague, weak, vulnerable and somewhat indifferent attitude, which is disempowering rather than confirming desire, spectacle or information. All those other things are a matter of taking measure, understanding, being carried away and guided, whereas seeing dance initially is somewhat flat. Theatre wants to be watched, dance prefer not to.

Watching theatre is all about extracting meaning, whereas seeing dance requires the courage not to fall for the seductive nature of signification, story, tension, imagination, conflict or solution. Theatre presupposes a contract for watching, a framing, which is comforting and general. Dance unfolds differently, without contractual framing, without a set of boundaries that direct the experience, but instead operating like a landscape to which there are numerous entry points and endless ways of navigation, passed on to the individual spectator.

Maybe, Rainer had in mind that see and watch are two different things. Watching is active, takes measure and pins down, when seeing is, not exactly passive, but passing. To watch is to define and hold on, to see is passing, it is open and one doesn't need to say so much. Watching seems to come together with questions starting with *what*. And what something is, is always essential, a destination that is determined or, perhaps one could say, justified. And at that moment we are done, and can go home.

Seeing on the other hand is not a matter of questions at all. The obvious would be a move from *what* to *how*, or from essence to drama, but also drama asks for attention, confirms development, conflict, tension, release, outcome and so much more. Seeing initiates a trajectory towards indetermination, without destination and justification – just seeing. Seeing, and especially seeing dance, is difficult because it asks the viewer to actively engage without pinning down dance or seeing, to any of those forms of determining strategies. Seeing is making oneself available, to actively make oneself available, insisting on not wanting something in return. Seeing hence is a matter of staying away from interpretation, which is a colonial strategy that homogenises, genders, frames and confirms identity, hierarchy and power. Instead seeing, because of its indifference, reactivates the possibility of poiesis, the act of bringing or allowing something into the world.

To dance is easy, but easy requires rigour, because to dance is to become available for the availability of seeing, to a mutuality that stays open and always of interest.

Y (25)

But why?

It is today more important than ever to dance. We just have to be careful with why? Please stop dancing as a means to something, especially in political manifestations. Or, just go on doing it but don't think about it as dance but as a tool, whatever tool.

Somebody has said that our problem today is that the enemy and the sponsor of the uprising is one and the same. Meaning that capitalism is at both ends, and enjoying it. Somebody else has said that our problem, the same problem, is that since capitalism has co-opted language there's no option to discuss our way out of it. It will just be a more or less nice version. Another somebody else, has proposed that capitalism furthermore has conquered imagination, and that imagination today is through and through capitalist. Even your weirdest fantasies are soaked in capitalism. Your wildest dreams, even the ones shamefully hippie, utopian or global communism are fundamentally capitalist. Thinking, reflecting, chilling, zoning out, daydreaming, observing, and so on are all capitalist practices. In short, every reality is a capitalist reality.

But, what if we can't discuss our way out of capitalism, if we can't think of another reality, if we can't imagine a different in kind world? What can we do when we live in what Franco Berardi has named semiocapitalism?

We have to turn away forms of practices that are held together by systems of cognition, reason, consistency or probability.

One option is to devote attention to forms of accident, slippage, in-between spaces, lag, interference, or as Legacy Russel recently proposed to, especially in digital environments value the glitch. Exactly, any kind of stutter, bug, sneeze or hiccups showing up on the internet. Or, perhaps like the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, give attention to what he called junkspace, spaces that's been left for useless, between branded, defined or valued spaces.

A point can be made that space, as well as mapping, always is normative or at least defined by normative forces in society, which proposes that also alternative spaces or spaces inhabited by minorities, women, htbq+ individuals and communities, always are authorised, or given permission to exist and flourish, by dominant discourses in society. Hence both glitch and junkspace opens for different possibilities of conditioning life, as they are spaces that to dominant discourses are worthless, hyper-temporary or crystallised in ways that withdraw from semiotic consistencies compatible with capitalist forms of value. Those spaces that obviously can be digital, emotional, empathic or affective as well as physical, can however not be produced, or established through determination. They cannot be rational, or community based, they can further, not carry a voice or resistance to dominant power structures, because at any such moment they form dependencies on norm, dominant discourses and fully recognisable semiotic systems. These are spaces that have no power, that cannot accumulate power, and it is precisely in and through their lack of accumulated power, that they carry the potentiality of being contingently powerful.

Let's not forget the important difference between powerful and having power. They are not opposites but to be powerful does not equal the desire for the accumulation of power, which always means to carry weight. On the contrary, powerful can often propose a willingness to take or engage in risk, to be willing to sacrifice accumulated power in favour of action or change.

Spaces of this kind open for an interesting relation to autonomy; which conventionally is conceptualised as a discreet or self-determined body or space, although always distinct in respect of something, an entity, territory or power. Autonomy in this sense is closing out, bordering off or simply rejecting, and hence become reactive and homogenising. Fencing off and "demanding" autonomy is then created in respect of the understanding of being connected, in competition, or said otherwise, this kind of autonomy is generated through a capitalist notion of property, and consequently autonomy is formulated in regard to privacy. Glitch, junkspace and similar spaces reverberate of a different kind of autonomy, which are forms that don't define themselves through taking distance or closing out, which is practices that become operational only through accumulation of energy and power. Instead, because those spaces are useless, without value, they can generate autonomy without barriers, without forms of prohibition but on the contrary, it is forms of autonomy that are unconditionally open, that knows no boundaries and therefore poses no regulations or homogenising efforts on to its inhabitants. Its momentum is active, poietic, and is not public in a binary relation to privacy, but is public in themselves, index or public in the sense of sovereign.

Dance can but is not given to be organised into forms resembling semiotics, but carries the possibility towards affective modes of transfer. Which is forms of exchange that are not knowledge based and yet takes place. We are not here speaking about emotion or feelings, which also are knowledge based, but transfer that is yet to be named, that emerge through physical proximity, intimacy, energetic engagement, voice, somatics, breathing, bowel movements, meditation, trans practices, glossolalia, uncontrollable movement and so on. Embodies terrains that are neither semiotic nor cognitive, neither communication nor concerned with imagination, but corporeal engagements, that slip out of the deadlock of capitalism, in favour of contingent other kinds of existence, being and imagining. This is why we need to dance.

Zeit (19)

Time is not human.

It's easy to imagine how a rabbit comprehends time, or other stuff like an umbrella, an arrow or water. The problem is of course that, how we, human beings, imagine a rabbit's, umbrella's or arrow's being in the world, its comprehension of anything at all, is exactly human. Science can measure and figure out but there is always a moment when some sort of information is made tangible, anthropomorphised.

In the Greek epoch of philosophy, a widespread theory proposed that matter knows what it wants or can become. The brick was already embedded in the clay, similar to how the butterfly is already implicit in the larvae. One wonders if time also was built in? Did the clay already know how to experience time before becoming a brick in a family house that would survive generations and a small earthquake?

Human time is nothing natural or organic, but something that certain cultures have used to dominate others, small and big. Time is violent and colonial and has wiped out so many ways of considering *chronos*. In the 21st century time has become fully centralised and we all live under the clock. The capitalism that reigns the western world has attacked time from countless fronts in order to figure out how time in itself can be turned into a commodity or a goods that can generate value.

Time is not the same as duration. Something takes time whereas other things are carried by time and has duration. Something's time can be divided into segments that can be compared, reshuffled and possess exchange value. It's forms of time that can be optimised, diminished or extended without changing the outcome or experience.

One could say that it is discrete time, in the sense that each unit can be separated and examined. The parts are discreet to each other. Duration on the other hand is continuous time. An alternation to any part will change, or collapse the whole into a different experience. It is a time that cannot be subdivided or measured, that has at least vague if at all direction. Most of all it's forms of time that is governed by time not action. It's a time that starts in the middle and expands instead of generating a trajectory from the beginning until reaching its destination.

Duration poses a problem to ecologies and economies based on reproduction, and duration is in delicate ways undermining the prominence of identity and individuality in

contemporary Western culture. The attention economy that dominates our lives, needless to say, is constantly attacking duration. Just think about the increased presence of audio guides in museums, or recent blockbuster exhibitions to which one bought a timed ticket. From the perspective of ecology, the omnipresence of measurable or action time correlates with perspectives on natural resources and earth itself that are harmful, extractivist and mono-culturing. Our relation to time is certainly also political if not ideological.

Art, perhaps in particular dance, dance that emphasise form rather than action, movement rather than narration, the voice of dance rather than that of politics or activation, carries the puissance to undo time, both concerning divisibility and centralisation. Dance is not dependent on narration, action, trajectory, dramaturgical tension, storyline, a – z, solution, but can equally be organised in relation to folded time, landscape, un-time or substance. Unfortunately, dance has consistently been under pressure to adapt to conventional time and choreographers and dance makers have all too often succumbed to strategies that mute dance. Strategies known from theatre and film, adding libretto or storyline, pressing dance into action or causality based forms of presentation, cabaret dramaturgy and so on. Dance doesn't need to reproduce modes of attention favoured by contemporary attention economies, doesn't need to subdivide time in order to optimise consumption and certainly not satisfy spectators from whose vocabulary patience has been excluded. Like philosophy, dance starts from the middle and meanders in all directions, outwards as well as inwards, it must be wary not to get rooted, simultaneously not scramble like chess pieces in a box.

Psychoanalysis initially thought memory arrived from the past and caught up with us. Later, especially in relation to children, it was considered that memory actually arrived from the future, before language oriented modern psychoanalysis concluded that memories emerge from or through the present. Memories are here and now as they are always constructed and remembered from the reality the individual is in. Yet, it is still notions of time that are linear, centralised and divisible.

Dance approaches time somewhat differently, both in respect of its being, dancing and seeing dance. It renders time a burst – *temps éclaté* -, a non-centralised multiplicity where bundles of different forms of time coexists, overlap, intersect and entangle, through or with various, yet distinct, modes of speed, stability and relationality.

Being faithful to dance implies to insist on duration and undo established forms of attention, as well as allowing time to be many and complex. It is first then that dance in its fullest form can emerge and be seen. Moreover, it's to practice different, caring ecologies with ourselves, our relations and environments. It's not a matter of imagining the time of dance it is to practice together not yet knowing.