AN INTRODUCTION
MANIFESTOS AND DIGITAL CULTURE
ANDREA SICK, AUGUST 2017

Manifestos romanticize the revolutions.
And forget the day after.

AS

Manifestos determine how things go.
Tell it as it is.
Advice an action.
Manifests include—or exclude.
Cover up complex structures.
Gather simple statements.
Manifestos compress,
unify,
repeat
with the fighting spirit of a bureaucratic practice.
They manifest.

NEVERTHELESS

Manifestos create ecstatic and excited moments.
They form a We
Terrible and wonderful things can happen.
Convinced that they can bring changes in common efforts,
they reinvent rules.

COMPARABLE TO NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONS,

manifestos are publishing formats with rich traditions in the arts and activism.
Beyond self organization and self control,
they make assertions for everybody.
And for brief moments they forget, that everybody can always mean a multitude.
Being Many.

AS

Manifestos are like algorithms.
In the digital wilderness,
they ask for a standardization.
To be able to function.
With discrete concepts
they envision an upheaval quite often.
The spirit of the many—they unify it —
even if they can't help it—in the application.

THEREFORE

They are messengers of a truth that wants to be tested.
They loudly express a knowledge.

They justify actions,
that can communicated as (and to the) art(s).
They declare,
play,
regulate,
demand
the execution.*

* The performances and figurations of the texts—that we are calling manifestos
here—present aspects of a media science at the University of the Arts Bremen
(during 2016/2017), that are capable of demonstrating and presenting relationships
between the arts and theory for a discussion. They are brief pauses in a society
that has been described as fluid now for many years. These manifestos play out the
subjective in a conscious and sometimes carnivalesque way.

CERTAINTIES MEAN A THREAT TO THE SURVIVAL OF OUR SPECIES.

THE

ABILITY TO STRONGLY BELIEVE IN SOMETHING IS WHAT KEEPS US ALIVE.

CÁSSIA VILA

RAW
MANIFESTO
GUIDA RIBEIRO

We are all the RAW.
We are uncooked flesh,
    we are crude bones.
Below the plasticity of processed
    self-images, feelings, thoughts
There is the RAW.
Unrefined, imperfect beings,
    eager to flourish brute life.

The immaculate, the exquisite,
the polished, the glazed,
the intellectual, the sophisticated.
All to be abolished!

Everyone is disguised, be naked.
Everybody is tamed, be feral.
Everything is fabricated, be natural.

RAW is the naked art!
The feral love!
RAW is the harsh reality,
the rough authenticity.

RAW IS FILTH.
RAW IS PURE.

THE STAGE, THINGS AND NO BODY MANIFESTO

IRENA KUKRIĆ

Nobody is there.

No body. No human body. Is this to say nothing is there?

Absence is not being there,
but also expecting something to be there or
thinking of something that had been there.

There, there.
So there is something »there« where we want to place this.

There is the stage and if there is no human body on it,
so many other things can be, while if there is a human body there,
other things mostly shy away.

Things don't shine as bright. A human is too present.
There are veins pumping, there is work that has to be done,
there is so much to give, such a performance to be delivered!

What is a lamp or a table or a sound or an image
compared to all this impressive presence?

This is what.

So much had happened on this table.
So much can be on it and move on it and fall and break
and the table itself might break!

And the lamp can turn on and off and even tremble and flicker!

But what they really can do, what they are masters in,
is relating with audience members without even trying.

They are not preparing the performance.

They are the performance.

We see them and think of them how we have experienced them before
or perhaps, in a new light, we see something entirely new.
Maybe a table can dance!

They move or light up or give a sound and voilà:
they too can be directed!

So much more there is on the stage besides humans.

A drop dripping into water.
Shapes and silhouettes and holes
and curtains and floors and walls.

An umbrella opening and closing,

toothbrushes praying,

mechanical pianos playing,

chairs vibrating,

a tune you have heard before (haven't you?),
a curtain that reminds you of your terrible old school (doesn't it?),

a landscape of colors and flickering projections
full of what you wanted to see (didn't you?).

The line between the familiar and the unfamiliar is in the air.

To cross it into the unfamiliar?

Things have a life! Beckett's Winnie said in »*Happy Days*«[1].

They do and they should have their own space to perform!
They should be able to express themselves!
An intimacy arises within the relation of
animate (audience) and inanimate (things).
Only things allow this intimacy
where the audience is free to imagine, interpret and experience
with no human on the stage delivering a performance.

It is about looking for human through the nonhuman.

Looking into a mirror where you might see yourself
but you just might find a ghost.

There is nobody telling you what to think,

but think you will.

The difference is in what is given,
and in what is taken away.

1 »Happy Days«, a play in two acts, written by Samuel Beckett, published by Grove Press, New York, 1961.

SURENESS DIMINISHES THE POSSIBILITIES TO EXERCISE REFLECTION, WITHDRAWING ANY FRUITFUL INTELLECTUAL ARTICULATION. BY DISTRUSTING ALL DEFINITENESS ONE IS ASSUMING THE INEVITABILITY OF AN UNGRASPABLE TRUTH.

BIOTIC EXPLORERS MANIFESTO

JULIAN HESPENHEIDE

01 — the biotic explorer promises to never harm any living organism under any circumstances

02 — the biotic explorer is equally interested in the semiotics as in the semantics of biotic systems to deepen the understanding of the things of nature

03 — the biotic explorer sees himself oscillating between the first-order and the second-order of cybernetics and deeply inheriting all of the following characteristics and ways of thinking:

interdisciplinary, curios, strict, formalistic, reductionistic, atomistic, positivistic, pragmatic, conservative, mechanistic and empiricist

04 — the biotic explorer considers any given technology as a suspicious threat no matter what intention lies behind its creation and/or production

05 — the biotic explorer deems natural systems as trustworthy and therefore as reasonable systems to work with and especially within

06 — the biotic explorer does not rely on synthetic intelligence for the prosperity of mankind and the things of nature

07 — the biotic explorer overcomes the boundaries of closed sources in order for an open and well-informed society

The Biotic Explorers Research Group, Paris + London, 3. February 1972

The Biotic Explorers Research Group is a *fictitious* association and the collaborative effort of scientists from different European countries that worked on the borders of cybernetical explorations in a scientific context under the administration of the U.S. Department for Transcontinental Scientific Exchange during the 1970s and the early 1980s. In their research, they traveled throughout Europe to visit different locations to observe, record and explore the behavior of the regional biota. For his master thesis Julian Hespenheide expressed his research and ideas in the form of a manifesto which then became the foundation of *The Biotic Explorers Research Group*.

ON MATERIALITY OR HOW TO INTRA-ACT

JASNA DIMITROVSKA

1. Stand in front of a mirror and then close your eyes. Say hello to your inner molecules. You think you become less tangible but, your intangibilities are more and more perplexed with heavy carbon intensive physicalities.

1. Imagine your old school books. Now imagine they never existed and forget that you ever learned anything from them. Imagine them anew and start learning the language of the invisible.

1. Admit out loud to the bacteria in your milk that you barely understand what you see and hear.

1. Whisper seven times in a row to a sleeping cat that you as a human have a limited understanding of non-human animals.

1. Explain to your bedroom plant how you have exceptionally limited understanding of biological and synthetic organisms and materials.

1. Dive into a lake with glowing plankton and repeat this sentence to yourself five times: »The space coordinates of matter, material, nature and discourse are different to those of humans.«

1. You, the human, are time based and have no sense of time. You depend on devices. Take off your watch, step into a dark and empty room and start measuring time.

1. Build a Rube Goldberg machine, a nonsense machine. You will undeniably start making sense of every single physical quality of an object. The mass, volume, texture, temperature, pressure, conductivity, refraction… remember them even when you won't need them to perform tricks.

1. Transform wood and oxygen into smoke and ashes. Name out loud the new chemical properties of the match you just burned and burry it into the ground.

1. Take out your bike on a rush hour in a busy area of the town. You can fix your coat caught up in the wheels of the bike and turn right on the green light after you avoid the child that carelessly runs away from her father's arms, the disoriented tourist not recognizing a bike lane, the tired CEO in his car making a wrong U-turn coming at you. You can turn right and still manage to stay safe, but you won't be able to stop a pigeon defecating on your coat. Parameters are challenging.

YOU could intra-act one day. You would intra-act one day. But, for now you are only interacting.

THE OUTLIER MANIFESTO
LUIZ ZANOTELLO

This manifesto comes from the darkened afterglow of digital utopias. It comes from a multitude of shattered networked spaces of capture, from the debris of digital consumerism, from the inhabiting of cognition by the capital and the discrete binaries. From the habits of counting and sorting inscribed in human flesh by crispy user-friendly technological paradox-boxes in our heads and pockets. From the faraway habitats of rare earth harvesting and globalized social taming for semiconducting purity and fake economic stability. From the inescapable labor of measurement and surveillance performed by ubiquitous apparatuses. From the pervasive, accelerated, and speculative islands of post-truth supported by invisible digital infrastructures. From a place of discrete phenomena that masks and smashes hybrid, queer, complex assemblages. From a territory populated by anxiety, fractured identities, and evaporated borders. From an unbounded State in which plurality is nothing but a trope and a hope.

BUT WE SHALL NOT BE THERE.[1]

1 Marinetti, F. T. (1909)
»The Futurist Manifesto«.

We must become Outliers, all the way down. For Outliers are disregarded by the technological systems of capture. For Outliers escape the mechanisms of measurement and any consistent system of standard reference. For Outliers escape being sorted out by algorithms of filtering and habits of perception. For Outliers inhabit without habituating, rely without turning into ground, perceive without turning discrete. For Outliers break those habitats of recognition and order, of black and white, of inside and outside, of 0s and 1s that constitute our own dystopic prisons.

TO ENABLE OUR NOMADIC ESCAPE, WE MUST:

1. Breakdown the Habitual

We recognize that we are creatures of habits and that in our current digital paradigm, such habits are embodiments of outlying technological infrastructures of control. We must break the cycles of capture, by becoming ourselves Outliers to our own habitual activity. We must expose and invert the systems that currently hack our perception in order to escape the entanglements of the grid.

2. Acknowledge the Mess

We embrace the wilderness of raw realities and all their tangible, material, and living dimensions. It is only by acknowledging the inherent potentials and obscured connections of any digital system, only by acknowledging that things are far more messy and weird than they seem before the screen, that we will find escape routes from technological capture and the discretization of reality. Take the gold and aluminum of the plastic eye and weight it by the alien landscapes and social agencies they entangle.

3. Populate with the Unrecognizable

We take datasets as both records and producers of our own capture, and the technological mechanisms of recognizing the biased entities behind them. We will populate them with the strange, weird, unrecognizable fragments of our own agency. We will allow capturing by only a tangential screenshot, but we will always be in truth elsewhere. We shall turn every data un-useful to the point where the systems will disregard us as pure noise and be unable to predict our next steps.

4. Install Escape Routes

We will escape the myriad of cartographic traps by installing escape routes, back doors, and proxies for living and leaving. Our existence shall not be in inhabiting and habituating, but on escaping and thinking. We shall become parasites and build hidden tunnels on the underlying infrastructures to allow our passage. We must always reside elsewhere, and on the elsewhere of elsewhere, and on the elsewheres of all elsewheres.

While it may seem that what we propose requires disconnection and cacophony, it is only a maneuver for regaining identity and liberty. For to become Outliers, we must not escape those habitats of the grid, but use them as shields for our own manifestation. We must fool them, but not by telling a lie. We must act through difference, appear through difference, we must become one with difference. For we, the Outliers, operate consistently with the others: the infinite others. If a system takes us as a flock, we will operate with anything BUT flocks. For inside parsed datasets we will always seem as dissonant sheep disregarded by the plastic eyes; for in truth we are Outliers, always escaping to the other, multiple, unpredictable outlying systems.

IN A WORLD THAT PRAISES BOLD STATEMENTS AND DESPISES DOUBT AND HESITATION, THE ONLY IDEAL SHOULD BE TO GET RID OF ONE PERSONAL CONVICTION

A DAY.

WE CANNOT HELP BUT TO ARBITRATE, FOR EVERY BREATH ALREADY IMPLIES A DOUBTLESS OPERATION.

CÁSSIA VILA

FUNNYSORRYANGRYANONYMOUS.
CLOWNS.
VARIANT
OF A MANIFESTO
CLAUDIA REICHE

1 An Evil Clown Is Roaming The Streets Of This Town At Night … And It's Absolutely Terrifying, About Gags the Clown, Green Bay, Wisconsin, 01.08.2016, boredomtherapy.com/green-bay-clown, 12/24/2016.

2 Circus Romano, Nostalgie Circus, Tent Rental Offer, circus-romano.de/zeltverleih/zeltangebot, 12/23/2016.

3 Walter Benjamin, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, *Le cirque*. Paris [Simon Kra] 1927, in: *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. III, Kritiken und Rezensionen, Werkausgabe Bd. 8, edited by Rolf Tiedemann, Hermann Schweppenhäuser, Frankfurt am Main [Suhrkamp] 1980, 70—72, 71, gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/kritiken-und-rezensionen-1912-1931-2981/26. All translations here and in the following, unless otherwise noted, by Brigitte Helbling.

Walter Benjamin once observed that »a lasting peace of the nations would one day be sealed in a circus tent.«[3] This has not come about, instead, humanity is ever more distrustful and overbearing with regard to the circus. Wild animals are wrested from its folds — forced to breed in glass zoos — and nowadays, even small children fear clowns in full make-up, those alien life forms next-door.
You can't be too
careful, they say.
Safety and fun.

Clownery which first appeared
on the roadside,

retains a mere smattering of fun.
Sure, here and there we still find a chair
being pulled out abruptly.
However, instead of small donations
for clever falls
those forlorn Raggedy Anns,
those painted outcasts at the height of their art
nowadays risk
being smashed to death
by thugs.

Impressions are then shared world-wide.
Without delay!
Via small, rectangular
arenas covered with glass,
Reality is performed,
and constituted.
Disaster capitalism!

What a way to make a living.

4 Marc Wisdom, *Creepy Clowns, The Movie*, security camera Jacksonville Florida, youtube.com/watch?v=XNKZLng Dnq4, 12/23/2016

5 Full moon, photographed in Hamois (Belgien), CC, Luc Viatour, upload. wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/dd/Full_Moon_Luc_Viatour.jpg, 2/1/2017.

6 Cited after the book by Benjamin Radford, *Bad Clowns*, 2016, excerpt on: utne.com/arts/unnatural-history-of-evil-clowns-ze0z1609zcbru, 5/26/2017.

7 An old version of the French lullaby is about Pierrot and Harlequin, with Harlequin demanding to enter Pierrot's house at night, without question in dubious intent. »Au clair de la lune, / Mon ami Pierrot. / Prête-moi ta lume, / Pour écrir' un mot. / Ma chandell' est morte, / Je n'ai plus de feu. / Ouvre-moi ta porte, / Pour le Dieu d'Amour.«

8 Sigmund Freud, Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious (1905), in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. VIII, edited and translated by James Strachey, London [Hogarth Press, The Institute of Psychoanalysis, London] 1960, 188–189, 135, sigmundfreud.net/jokes-and-their-relation-to-the-unconscious-pdf-ebook.jsp, 5/26/2017.

9 On the situation on the eve of Halloween in 2016: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_clown_sightings#, 2/1/2017, de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horrorclown-Phänomen, 2/1/2017.

»A clown is funny in the circus ring.
But what would be the normal reaction
to opening a door at midnight,
finding the same clown
standing there in the moonlight?«[6]
a nocturnal exercise in cognizance
(*Au clair de la lune*[7])
parrying the normal
scaredy-cat
reflex:
Clown comes from clod, a lump of mud,
Strangely alive.

»It is only with misgivings that I venture to approach
the problem of the comic itself.«[8]
Each age has the clowns it deserves.[9]
Let us envision an age that deserves us!
Ha!
Courage, clowns!

10 Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852). Translated by Saul K. Padover from the German edition of 1869, marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire, 5/8/2017.

11 »Here, the real is that which always comes back to the same place — to the place where the subject in so far as he thinks, where the res cogitans, does not meet it.«, Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar Of Jacques Lacan, Book XI, The Four Fundamental Concepts Of Psychoanalysis* [1964], Edited by Jacques-Alain Miller, translated by Alain Sheridan, New York, London [W.W. Norton & Company] 1981, 49. Cf. Claudia Reiche, *Digitale Körper, geschlechtlicher Raum. Das medizinisch Imaginäre des »Visible Human Project«*, Bielefeld [transcript] 2011, 354 ff.

12 Karl Marx, *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. I, Book One: The Process of Production of Capital, translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, edited by Friedrich Engels, Chapter 8: Constant Capital and Variable Capital. marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch08.htm, 5/8/2017.
In the German original, the chapter is number 6 and the wording is harsher: »Jeder Mensch stirbt täglich um 24 Stunden ab. Man sieht aber keinem Menschen genau an, wie viele Tage er bereits verstorben ist.« Cf. mlwerke.de/me/me23/me23_214.htm, 5/29/2017.

13 Slogan for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Everybody leave! The circus is burning!
Of course it is.
Teeth chatter frantically
arsonists in clown-paint
terror without revolution
the bloody trail of our time.

»The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare
on the brains of the living.«[10]
and the foreclosed always returns in the Real
— amen, over and out —
to the exact same place.[11]

»Every day brings a man 24 hours nearer to his grave:
but how many days he has still to travel on that road,
no man can tell accurately by merely looking at him.«[12]
So there freedom lies according to Karl Marx
between appearance and reality
an infinitesimal creeping towards the stone-cast,
floating date …

And death is
»The Greatest Show on Earth«.[13]

The acrobat
mother of all clowns,
places her bets
not on the appearance of reality
but quite cunningly on the appearance of appearance itself.
An enormous risk:
operating behind the acts,
intervening with history,
grueling work.

Where the only hope seems to lie in manipulating the clock,
their art was always grounded in the manipulation of time.
»›There you'll find queer folk! Just think, they never sleep!‹
›And why not?‹
›Because they never get tired.‹
›And why not?‹
›Because they're fools.‹
›Don't fools get tired?‹
›How could fools get tired?‹«[14]

14 Franz Kafka,
*Children on a Country
Road (Kinder auf der
Landstraße)*, translated
by Willa and Edwin
Muir, franzkafkastories.
com/shortStories.
php?story_id=kafka_
children_on_a_country_
road, 5/25/2017.

15 M. Auriol's bottle
feat, at Vauxhall
Gardens, *Illustrated
London News*, 1849,
tradescant.blogspot.
de/2013/06/pic-of-day-
m-auriols-bottle-feat-
at.html, 2/1/2017.

16 Jean Starobinski,
*Porträt des Künstlers
als Gaukler, Drei Essays*,
translated by Markus
Jakob, (cited from:
Théophile Gautier,
*Histoire de l'art drama-
tique en France depuis
25 ans*, Paris 1859),
Frankfurt am Main
[S. Fischer] 1985, 26.

M. AURIOL'S BOTTLE FEAT, AT VAUXHALL GARDENS.

Auriol, the French clown wonder in the cruelly efficient 19th century
— a sweet Hercules on dainty lady's feet, hands and voice of a child,
unmatched in leaps, tricks and equilibristics.
»S'il ne vole pas, c'est par coquetterie«,
and if he doesn't fly, it's only because he's a tease,[16]
this *homme oiseau*.
What is lighter than the wind? Auriol, Auriol!

17 Ibid. 25.

18 August Kober, *Zirkus Renz*, Berlin 1942, 145.

19 »Higher! farther! into the air! the blue! Wings! wings! wings!«, Théodore de Banville, Le saut du tremplin, poesie.webnet.fr/ lesgrandsclassiques/ poemes/theodore_de_ banville/le_saut_du_ tremplin.html, 2/1/2017.

20 Charles Baudelaire, L'Albatros. »How gauche he is, how limp, this winged voyager!«, cited in: Starobinski, Porträt des Künstlers als Gaukler, 73.

21 Kacophony Klown Sex Klub, Los Angeles 1997, Wild Don Lewis (Foto), in: Mark Dery, *The Pyrotechnic Insanitarium: American Culture on the Brink of the Millennium*, [Grove Press Books] 1999, 62. Chapter »Cotton Candy Autopsy, Deconstructing Psycho Killer Clowns«, scribd.com/ document/13145154/ Deconstructing-Psycho-Killer-Clowns-Chapter-THE-PYROTECHNIC-INSANITARIUM-Mark-Dery, 2/1/2017.

22 John Payne Collier and George Cruikshank (IIllustration), *Punch and Judy: A Short History with the Original Dialogue* (1828), cited in: Benjamin Radford, *Bad Clowns*, [University of New Mexico Press] 2016, 12.

A triumph over the familiar, over common sense: »for him, the rules of gravity do not apply.«[17] Quite possibly he understood them differently and catapulted himself into the realm of floating orbs. Auriol, wrinkles on his forehead, undertook this feat by somersaulting over 24 soldiers. See him fly! landing gently in the slippers he's readied beforehand. Also, he was a crack shot, was Auriol. Dangerous. So what makes him comical? »Everything he did was somehow comical because he accompanied each feat with a short squawk.«[18] What a bird! He inspired the poet to write:

»›Plus haut! plus loin! de l'air! du bleu!
Des ailes! des ailes! des ailes!‹«[19]

and taking to the sky he fartingly squawks, after gorging himself on the endless blue. Tsk, tsk, what a way to behave!
»Ce voyante ailé, comme il est gauche et veule!«[20]
(He knew them inside out, Charles Baudelaire, his gang of comedians.)

21

22

23 Günter Bose, Erich Brinkmann: *Circus, Geschichte und Ästhetik einer niederen Kunst*, Berlin [Klaus Wagenbach] 1978, 133. The authors themselves indulged in a subtle clownery, substituting Marx for Heine. Cf. the original quote in: Heinrich Heine, Ideen. Das Buch Le Grand [1826], in: *Heinrich Heine, Sämtliche Schriften, Schriften 1822—1831*, Bd. 3, edited by Klaus Briegleb, Frankfurt am Main [Ullstein] 1981, 245—308, 282, gutenberg.spiegel. de/buch/das-buch-le-grand-386/12, 5/12/2017. Translation often cited, authorship unknown, from the English version by Macmillan, London 1884.

24 Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, translated by J. Sibree, M.A., efm.bris.ac.uk/ het/hegel/history.pdf, 5/25/2017.

25 Marx, Eighteenth Brumaire, marxists. org/archive/marx/ works/1852/18th-brumaire, 5/8/2017.

26 Slavoj Žižek, *Psychoanalyse und Deutscher Idealismus*, Frankfurt am Main [Fischer] 1998, 102.

27 »... it articulates externality as the outer immediate actuality of spirit, neither in the sense of an organ, nor as a language or a sign, but in the sense of a *dead thing*. [...] By this it is not meant that spirit, represented by a skull, is declared to be a thing. What is supposed to lie in this thought is certainly not materialism, as it is called. Rather, spirit must even more so be something very different from these bones. However, that spirit exists means nothing other than that it is a thing. When being as such, or being-a-thing, is predicated of spirit, then for that reason this is truly expressed by saying that spirit is the sort of thing which is a bone.« Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by Terry Pinkard, 2008, de.scribd.com/ document/49157331/ Phenomenology-of-Spirit-Entire-Text-of-T-Pinkard-Translation, 5/8/2017.

28 Walter Benjamin, *On the Concept of History*, Thesis XV, translated by Denis Redmond, members. efn.org/~dredmond/ ThesesonHistory.html, 5/25/2017.

29 Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, translated by Peggy Kamuf, New York [Routledge] 1994.

»When the heroes go off the stage, the clowns come on,
Karl Marx once said.«[23]
Hegel performs a somersault of his own:
»By repetition that which at first
appeared merely a matter of chance and contingency
becomes a real and ratified existence.«[24]
Marx' addition, however, allowing the tragedy of
»all great world-historic facts and personages«[25]
to reappear as a farce
trips up the affirmation
and makes way for the impossible.
Off you go! What was on the verge of falling, stumbles.
No spirit without specters![26] (or tumbles ...)
What will become real
is not only the repeated
but repetition itself,
the only path to change.
›Never again comuuuuh-nism?‹ howls the latest clown.
And again: ›comuuuuh-nism!‹,
to make us laugh.
Funny bone!
»Spirit is a bone«[27] —
in German: the musician's bone.
It hurts.

»The awareness that they are about to make
the continuum of history explode
is characteristic of the revolutionary classes
at the moment of their action.«
Hard to believe, »that the clocks in towers were being fired on
simultaneously and independently from several places in Paris.«[28]
»Specters of Marx«[29] are also descendants of the circus ring—
undead without decency or inhibition.

Don the mask, assume the guise of the contemporary!
All the more so, since farce,
in a new historical twist, has set its heart
on a non-satirical comeback,
making it difficult to distinguish
between comical heroes
and all kinds of obscene clowns.
Clowns do not laugh at themselves
neither do heroes.
This is the province of those outside.

Who laughed at those ignorant clowns on the barricades
of the Paris uprising in 1832?
Blood and tears mocked as an exercise in futility.
And Victor Hugo cried — like Auriol:
»There were no longer men in this conflict, which was now infernal. […]
Demons attacked, specters resisted. […]
A voice from the obscurest depths of the groups shouted […]
Citizens, let us offer the protests of corpses […]
After the man […] had spoken,
and had given this formula of their common soul,
there issued from all mouths a strangely satisfied and terrible cry,
funereal in sense and triumphant in tone:
›Long live death! Let us all remain here!‹ ›Why all?‹ […]
›All! All!‹«[30]

An unknown Harlequin performs a trick (after being guillotined on the stage of a traveling theater): »The head fell off the neck, a fat white and red head, and clattered in front of the prompter's box, and the severed vertebra and everything else was visible as in a piece of meat freshly cut at the butcher's. But then, moved by a great desire for theft, the shortened rump straightened itself, grasped its own head as if it were no more than a side of ham or a bottle of wine, and stuffed it into a bag.«[31]

30 Victor Hugo, Les Misérables, in: Derrida, *Specters of Marx*. Hugo translated here by Isabel Florence Hapgood, gutenberg. org/files/135/135-h/ 135-h.htm, 5/15/2017.

31 Charles Baudelaire, cited in: Starobinski, Porträt des Künstlers als Gaukler, 74.

Neither ramp nor circus ring stand between the stage and the audience.
All gone.
Quiet.
In the totalitarian-technological race
age-old philosophical questions
reappear as doubles —
strictly ridiculous
under the public eye.
eager to please,
automatic.

OMG, in a nocturnal park
under a street light
a colorfully masked person pounds the head
of a prostrate victim,
provoking a red fountain.
Cranberry juice?
Smile, you're on Candid Camera! Beware of being duped.
›Clown sightings‹.
A search word
for fans of the shocking.
›I hate clowns‹
is the new password.
At your service, personalized.

It's all about pranks.
›This is not a game‹,
is what the players tell themselves, desperately
counting the Likes awarded
to evil jokes
mounted in clown's paint
referencing a serial killer, perhaps,
who showed himself to his victims in a clown's costume
pleasuring himself.

In the Swinging Seventies
a Mr. Gacy was
»Pogo the Clown«:
A successful building contractor,
still present in the book of world records:
21 times life in prison and 12 death penalties.
He promised his victims, dozens of young men,
jobs,
and read bible verses to them for days while
torturing
raping
choking
and in the end,
strangling them.
His execution was celebrated
by a jolly crowd
outside the prison walls:
»Turn that frown
upside down
they have just fried the clown!«[32]
This was chanted
in clown costume
echoing that other double
Ronald, the fast food clown.

The nocturnal
angry clowns, as well,
often meet their master
in those who have chased odd birds before,
with cameras and cudgels.
United they shout: Hate!

32 Peter Murakami,
Julia Murakami,
*Lexikon der Serien-
mörder*, Berlin
[Ullstein] 2000, 321.

(Begging for punishment.)
Fear.
»No, we are staying inside«
says the mother to the daughter.
Hate, my little hatter, hate.

What do the evil clowns fear?
Not their victims,
to whom they run:
the sad-faced clown,
who was never
in any doubt about
their identity.
»O mein Papa war eine wunderbare Clown
O mein Papa war eine große Künstler.«[33]
Too bad he's not here.
Tough luck!
So sorry, Oedipus.
The sad, painted face
with one fake tear,
can be borne purely
by none but the brave.

33 »Oh, my papa was a wonderful clown, oh, my papa was a great artist.« From the musical *Der schwarze Hecht*, première Zürich 1939, Lyrics by Paul Burkhard, Jürg Amstein, Erik Charell. songtexte.com/songtext/lys-assia/o-mein-papa-7bdd9e98.html, 12/23/2016, Lili Palmer sings the song in: *Feuerwerk*, DE/CH 1954, director Kurt Hoffmann. youtube.com/watch?v=3Hf-iLEIgbg, 2/1/2017.

34

34 »Emmett Kelly, for example, was the most famous of the American ›hobo‹ clowns, the sad-faced men with five o'clock shadows and tattered clothes who never smiled, but who were nonetheless hilarious. Kelly's ›Weary Willie‹ was born of actual tragedy: The break-up of his marriage and America's sinking financial situation in the 1930s.« in: Linda Rodriguez McRobbie: *The History and Psychology of Clowns Being Scary*, smithsonianmag. com/arts-culture/ the-history-and-psychology-of-clowns-being-scary-20394516/?no-ist, 3/31/2013.

35 Michael Moore, 5 reasons why Trump will win, michaelmoore. com/trumpwillwin/, 10/23/2016.

36 This can be reflected historically, in interpretations of Adolf Hitler as a clown, also as feminine, small, etc. Cf. Gordon Beckles, Adolf Hitler. The Clown Who Wants to Play Statesman, in: *Daily Herald*, London, 1/20/1933, also in: *The Worker*, monthly journal of the Associated Workers of Queensland, Brisbane, 3/15/1933, 4, (nla.gov. au/nla.news-title191), trove.nla.gov.au/ newspaper/article/ 71145258, 1.3.2017.

Seedy and arrogant,
they are
subtle idiots,
those sad-faced clowns.
What a stunt to get people
to laugh
at the exact same thing
that inspires love.
Volte-face
with an analytical bent,
charged with
self-hate and sentimentality.
The monsters that they entertain
are to be pitied.
They don't even know
whom they are cheering on…
salivating with pleasure.
»Friends: I am sorry to be the bearer of bad news […]: Donald J. Trump is going to win in November. This wretched, ignorant, dangerous part-time clown and full time sociopath is going to be our next president.«[35]

(Every age has the clowns it deserves.)[36]

37 boards.4chan.
org/b/, 12/23/2016.

38 Naomi Klein, *The
Shock Doctrine,
The Rise of Disaster
Capitalism*, New York
[Metropolitan Books/
Henry Holt] 2007.

39 Movie poster
Bangalore 2014,
Foto CR.

40 Vendetta mask
(after Guy Fawkes),
identification and
mummery for the
group Anonymous,
festtema.dk/v-for-
vendetta-maske.html,
12/23/2016.

»/b/ — Random, The stories and information posted here are artistic
works of fiction and falsehood. Only a fool would take anything
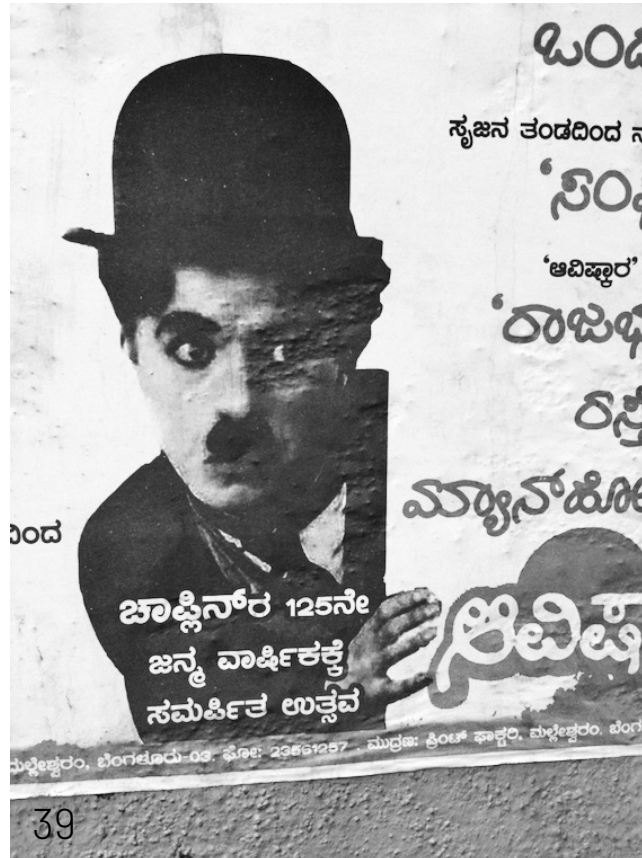posted here as fact.«[37]
This is what the renowned messaging board,
Stomping ground of Anonymous,
declares:
Only a fool would take certain facts at face value.
Or a smart clown for a joke.
Post truth time! Real time!
Shock and awe.[38]

39

40

41 Johannes von Leers, *Juden sehen dich an*, (Broschüre) 1933.

42 Walter Benjamin, *Fragmente vermischten Inhalts*, »Hitlers herabgeminderte Männlichkeit«, [fr 75], in: *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. VI, hg. Rolf Tiedemann, Hermann Schweppenhäuser, Frankfurt am Main [Suhrkamp] 1985, 103, gutenberg.spiegel. de/buch/kurze-prosa-6570/5, 2/1/2017.

Adolf Hitler found his clown in Charlie Chaplin,
born in the same year,
most probably of dubious parentage.
Obdachloser is the German word for tramp.
Entwined characters, right up to the mustache design.
»The Great Dictator« shows
the honest Jewish barber in the Shtetl
not contrasting
the murderous dictator,
but instead
his same-same but different
Other.
The likeness is real,
unsettling.
The barber
occupying the place of the
war monger,
world ruler:
›Peace‹ — he says
to the crowd —
and: ›Democracy! Love!‹
The masses
responds thunderously, enthusiastically,
like an animal
wagging its tail.

»This twee Jewish tumbler,
is as disgusting as he is boring«,
they said about Chaplin:
»a boring and repulsive,
tiny, belligerent Jew.«[41]
But also: »Chaplin became the great comedian he was
by absorbing
the deepest horror of his contemporaries.«[42]

Cease-fire treaties undersigned
by international alliances and governments
barely last until the next newscast —
their efficiency measurable in the hours,
between Zero and One,
calculated probabilities,
in any case
destined to fail
donning the appearance of accident, of design.

Following Walter Benjamin's thoughts on mathematicians and clowns
(whose signatures alone would inspire confidence in a peace treaty)
we would like to take as our bottom line the impossible
betting not on the probable
but on the unsustainable,
the coming revolution.
Courage, clowns!
Everybody leave! The circus is burning!
Of course it is.
Teeth chatter frantically
as the clowns renew their paint.
The mangled, unwanted revolution
is the bloody trail of our time.
Bitter insights.
Every manifesto a clown.

WE DO NOT SOUND LIKE THAT

KARIM (ARNOLD) FUAD

If you did not spend eighteen days in the square

**YOU DO NOT LOOK
    EGYPTIAN
YOU DO NOT SOUND
    EGYPTIAN
YOU DO NOT SEEM
    EGYPTIAN**

If you did not spend eighteen days in the square

EGYPTIANS
   DON'T TALK LIKE THAT
EGYPTIANS
   DON'T THINK LIKE THAT
EGYPTIANS
   DON'T DRESS LIKE THAT

If you did not spend eighteen days in the square

ARE YOU EGYPTIAN ENOUGH
   TO SPEAK OUT?
ARE YOU EGYPTIAN ENOUGH
   TO HAVE AN OPINION
   ON THIS?
ARE YOU EGYPTIAN ENOUGH
   TO BE INVOLVED
   IN ANY OF THIS?

NOT HAVING TO CHOOSE NEITHER 0 NOR 1, FOR LIMITATIONS AND DEFINITIONS ARE

UNBEARABLE. THE IN-BETWEENS ONLY EXIST AS A RESULT OF DIFFERENTIATION.

LIGHT-WRITING FROM LAS VEGAS

ALAN N. SHAPIRO

America Trip

From Dublin, Ireland, I traveled on to New York City, then to southern California to meet up with a long-distance girlfriend. The America trip had begun. Moments after entering Nevada by car, we encountered Whiskey Pete's casino. Here an important Jean Baudrillard »simulation and simulacra« (the models and codes precede »the real,« the image-copy becomes more powerful and weighty than the original, aesthetic representation is over) conference had taken place in 1996. It was dusk as I walked alone across the huge parking lot, my right jeans pocket loaded down with American quarters (25 cents coins) that I needed to sacrifice as quickly as possible to the slot machine gods.

I knew that I was standing at this physical spot for perhaps the only time in my life. The first and the last time. »No two moments of your life are exactly alike« — the clichéd sentence from some book on Buddhist spiritual consciousness that I had read rose up in my mind. But I am a materialist. I want to win some money, right now.

Taking photos in this casino was allowed. I had struck Umberto Eco-travels-in-hyper-reality semiotic gold.

High Speed Food, High Speed Money

The juxtaposition of blackjack tables and McDonald's hamburgers inside Whiskey Pete's casino was an amazing stroke of luck. Fast money and fast food. Save on dinner so you can lose at the gambling tables.

I spoke with a uniformed security guard. I told him that I am from Germany, and that I found this living blackjack-and-McDonald's image to be an extraordinary snapshot of American culture and of what makes us Americans great, especially for those of us Americans who are Germany residents and who love the writings on America of the French writers Bernard-Henri Lévy and Alexis de Tocqueville. The security guard had no idea what I was talking about. He replied in deadpan, becoming the protagonist of the story: »We have McDonald's at all three of our properties.« The gods of money and of hyper-capitalism.

Welcome to the Desert of the Real

Located at the California-Nevada state line in the town of Primm, Whiskey Pete's hotel and casino is 35 miles from downtown Las Vegas.

In November 1996, the apparently-French media theorist Jean Baudrillard traveled to Nevada to headline at *The Chance Event* at Whiskey Pete's Casino.

America is not a cultural desert.

»I [in this case, Chris Kraus] organized *The Chance Event* for my own reasons. Is there anything that happens, ever, that really matters, that is not a confluence of mutual self-interest? You are not American if you do not believe this. In 1996, I'd left New York for Los Angeles after 15 miserable years of trying to be an experimental filmmaker. I'd started writing *I Love Dick*, which one year later would be published as my first novel [and many years later as an international bestselling book and the basis for a widely-acclaimed TV series].«[1]

Nowhere motels. Discarded oil drums in a sprawling garbage dump.
On a dark desert highway, cool wind in my hair.[2]
See the ripped-out pay phones.
Up ahead in the distance, I saw a shimmering light.[HC]
You feel the blast of heat stepping out onto the parking lot pavement under the arid sun, leaving the air-conditioned casino. Architectural shapes bounced from a limousine's opaque window.

»DJ Spooky would travel from New York to give the ›Keynote Address‹ in the form of an ambient trip-hop performance.«[3]

Mirrors on the ceiling, pink champagne on ice. And she said:
We are all just prisoners here, of our own device.
Some dance to remember, some dance to forget.[HC]

1 Chris Kraus, »Chance-Event«, in: *Philosophie und Kunst. Jean Baudrillard*, Merve, 2005, p. 300.

2 The Eagles, *Hotel California*, 1977. Lyrics by Don Henley and Glenn Frey. — **HC** for further reference).

3 Chris Kraus, Chance-Event, p. 303.

»We also rented ten adjoining rooms to set up *Hotel California*, an ambient, site-specific art show organized by Sarah Gavlak and Pam Strugar.«[4]

America is a system of circulation that »precedes the real«—*the real* meaning that classical sociological reality in which classical sociologists believe. Classical sociologists, who base their »scientific sociology« on a nineteenth-century paradigm (that of Auguste Comte) which assumes a world of docile objects waiting to be »objectively« investigated, a classical worldview that assumes the existence of a social world rationally ordered by the sovereign thinking subject of social science who is in control. An alternative literary-existentialist sociology is also scientific—it is based partly on the hyper-modernist twentieth-century sciences of quantum physics, relativity, and chaos/complexity theory. It considers much stranger and wily objects in a never-to-be-mastered social field governed by relations of radical uncertainty and paradox. The world thinks me. The inhuman or posthuman thinks me. Everything is relativistic, enigmatic, and aleatory. In America, mobility, the network and the screen take precedence over »traditional social reality.«

Baudrillard writes in his book *America*: »The secret affinity between gambling and the desert: the intensity of gambling reinforced by the presence of the desert all around the town [Las Vegas]. The air-conditioned freshness of the gaming rooms, as against the radiant heat outside. The challenge of all the artificial lights to the violence of the sun's rays. Night of gambling sunlit on all sides; the glittering darkness of these rooms in the middle of the desert. Gambling itself is a desert form, inhuman, uncultured, initiatory, a challenge to the natural economy of value, a crazed activity on the fringes of exchange.«[5] Baudrillard and the film *The Matrix*: Neo (Keanu Reeves) pulls down a hollowed-out copy of *Simulacra and Simulation* from his bookshelf, in which he keeps hacker software on diskettes and cash. Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne): »Welcome to the desert of the real.«[6] (»If once we were able to view the Borges fable in which the cartographers of the Empire draw up a map so detailed that it ends up covering the territory exactly ... this fable has now come full circle [and] ... it is the real, and not the map, whose vestiges persist here and there in the deserts that are no longer those of the Empire, but ours. *The desert of the real itself.*«[7]

4 Chris Kraus, Chance-Event, p. 304.

5 Baudrillard, *America*, Verso, 1988, p. 34.

6 The Matrix, 1999. Directed by Andy and Larry Wachowski, Warner Brothers.

7 Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, University of Michigan Press, 1994, p. 1.

The Paradox of Gambling

The project is to analyze casino gambling in American society through sociology (modernist knowledge), through media theory (post-modernist knowledge), and through a new (hyper-modernist) object-of-knowledge paradigm which comes after both society and media (experience, existence, the posthuman, technological anarchism).

GAMBLING IS A MEDIA.

LAS VEGAS IS A MEDIA.

AMERICA IS A MEDIA.

Gambling in the »hyper-modern« context is neither purely an entertainment activity nor an activity pursued with the hope of making money without effort. It is both.

Gambling is a paradox. It is an entertainment activity which has as one of its key elements of attraction the possibility of making money without work.

Its appeal to the player consists precisely in the tension between these two aspects. The strategy of the casino management is to immerse the player in a highly controlled semantic and semiotic environment. The player would never consent to gamble if he or she knew that the exchange consists of the purchasing, for a certain sum of money, of a temporal unit of participation.

On the other hand, the player never really believes that he or she frequents the casino in order to make money. If he or she did, he or she would not pass through the ritual of persuading him/herself that his/her expenditure was the price of a legitimate consumer activity in which he or she had the right to periodically indulge. The paradox of gambling lies in the quantum physics sociologically paradoxical *complementarity* between the packaging of an entertainment experience and the desperate illusion of instant monetary gain.

One can consider the »doublethink« of the cognitive processes of the player. George Orwell defines »doublethink« as »the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them.«[8]

8 George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Secker & Warburg, 1949, p. 220.

In casino gambling, the player is, on the one hand, aware of the objective reality of the casino situation: the house advantage, the management's profit calculation, the laws of probability. But, on the other hand, he or she is not deterred from playing because he or she believes in an ideology of »personal exemption« and »beating the odds.« He or she rationalizes that the sequence of wagers and outcomes will pass through a different dimension of »causality« than that of probability. Each player believes that he or she will be the one to evade the objective determinations and inexorable reality of profit calculation.

This »doublethink« is analogous to people's attitudes in general towards social structure and economics and cultural determinations in their lives. Although we are aware that a society with definite organizational patterns exists, we detach ourselves from this awareness and emphasize our autonomy as individuals, our decontextualized self.

Casino Gambling and Post-modern Society

Casino gambling as an embodied metaphor for our situation in hyper-modern society. Casino gambling as metaphor for all of the American Way of Life in the age of Donald Trump. The *semantics* of the casino environment: the management's project of designing a total, controlled environment and selling a packaged consumer experience to the players. The *semiotics* of the transformation of the value of money inside the casino. Money becomes chips. The player is deprived to some extent of the awareness that he or she is playing with real money.

Inside the casino, there is an elimination of the difference between day and night. The same activity (gambling) continues uninterrupted twenty-four hours a day. There are no clocks visible anywhere in the casino. There are no windows. There is an architectural impression of limitlessness. The casino consists of one enormously large room, perhaps the size of a football or soccer field. You cannot see the other end of the room upon entering. Abundant mirrors create the effect of an infinite refraction. There is a minimization of columns, giving the impression of an entirely suspended ceiling.

For the gambler who stays at the adjoining hotel, the manufactured design environment is even more encompassing. Everywhere

there are shops, comfort facilities and services. The gambler does not need to seek the »satisfaction« of his »needs« anywhere else. The valuation of the consumer experience of losing money at black-jack or roulette or slot machines or video poker is enhanced by the player's presence in the total design ambience where other com-modities and symbols and semiotic signs of »the good life« are on prominent display.

> The simulacra of »the good life«
> substitute for the good life itself.
> The simulacrum replaces the real.
> The semiotics of ancient Rome
> replace the real historical Rome.
> The replica St. Mark's Bell Tower and the replica
> Rialto Bridge at the *Las Vegas Venetian
> Resort Hotel Casino* replace the real Tower
> and Bridge of the city of Venice, Italy.
> The Eiffel Tower at *Paris Las Vegas*
> replaces the Eiffel Tower in France and the city of Paris.
> The skyline of skyscrapers and the Brooklyn Bridge at the
> *New York-New York Hotel and Casino* replaces Manhattan.
> Donald Trump's *Taj Mahal* (in Atlantic City, New Jersey,
> the East Coast twin of Las Vegas) replaces the ivory
> white marble mausoleum in the Indian City of Agra.

Simulation: Venice in Las Vegas

Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. The famous Venetian bridge called the Rialto was a hub of anti-Semitism in Shakespeare's time. At today's Las Vegas Venetian hotel-casino, there is a nice Jewish deli called *The Rialto*.

The simulation of Venice in Las Vegas, its cultural-imaginary presence in the former desert of the former territory of Nevada, down to the details of gondolas, canals, and bridges.

The Rialto Bridge and the Campanile of St. Mark's Church. The Campanile (bell tower) was last restored in 1514, when it reached its present form. It was rebuilt in 1912 after its collapse in 1902 on July 14th at 9:45 a.m.

Easy Money

There is nearly an exact parallel between the psychology of those who gamble in a casino and the mentality of the supporters of Donald Trump's »permanent« presidential campaign and his Presidency:

The gamblers are seduced into the casino by the promise and lure of winning Easy Money. They are told that they have a good chance to become winners. In reality, the casino only cares about itself. Nearly 100 % of the players end up as losers. They get *fleeced* (the process of obtaining the wool from a sheep at one shearing) and come away with less than nothing.

During the milestone disgraceful American Presidential cam-paign of 2016, many journalists and commentators keep pointing out again and again that Trump is a liar, etc. That may all be cor-rect, but it doesn't make a dent in the number of his supporters. In post-modernism, the importance and weight of the »references« of verifiable »true« and »false« disappear. For Trump's supporters, something becomes »true« because Trump says it (or tweets it). That is the only criterion. We are living in a hyper-reality where there is no more truth.

Since Trump is the candidate and President of Reality TV, of the celebrity culture, of media hyper-reality entertainment, … invoking »the truth« against him doesn't work as a strategy! There is no lon-ger any separation between the »media culture« in the general sense and the public sphere of democratic political discourse, the »news media« in the narrower sense. Welcome to *The Truman Show (The Trump Show)*.

In 1982, Donald Trump acquires an Atlantic City, New Jersey casino license.

In 1984, *Harrah's at Trump Plaza* opens, a $210 million dollar and 39 story hotel-casino.

In 1985, *Trump's Castle* hotel-casino opens.

In 1986, *Harrah's* is renamed to *Trump Plaza*.

1990—the *Trump Taj Mahal* hotel-casino opens in Atlantic City. It is the largest casino in the world and the tallest building in the state of New Jersey. 17 acres, $1 billion.

1996—*Trump's World's Fair* casino opens next to the *Trump Plaza*.

In 1976, voters in the state of New Jersey passed a referendum approving the legalization of casino gambling in Atlantic City.

In 1978, *Resorts International Casino*—the first legal casino in the eastern half of the United States—opened.

The legalization of casino gambling in Atlantic City was but one example of the sudden explosion of gambling social institutions in American society in the 1970s. In addition to traditional gambling like thoroughbred and harness racetracks, dog tracks, wagering on sports events, illegal numbers games, sports pools and cards, bingo, jai alai, and off-track betting, America now was inundated with State-run lotteries and numbers games, private-sector sweepstakes, contests, lucky number drawings, gas station games, raffles, corporate giveaway, free vacation drawings, bottle-cap prizes, and newspaper contests. This was the new »gambling society.« Both sociology and media studies can partly explain this, although neither is sufficient.

The Whitewashing of Consumer Gambling

The sociological literature on gambling has mainly reflected the debate in American society about gambling's morality and legalization, centered around the question of whether the availability of legal gambling facilities leads to greater incidence of excessive and self-destructive gambling. »Compulsive gambling« is measured by the amount of money lost on gambling over a given period of time, or by certain negative social outcomes associated with heavy gambling, such as destruction of family life, job failure, suicide, bankruptcy, unpayable debts, etc.

Yet gambling, in places like Las Vegas and Atlantic City, is also a consumer activity and a form of entertainment.

Today, in 2017, with widespread online gambling, the distinction between casinos—where gambling takes place—and the rest of the world which is »not a casino«—where gambling supposedly would not take place—has disappeared.

We're Winners

Since the probability of winning in the casino is small, every surprising instance of winning is highlighted and underscored through bells, lights, jackpots, video displays, computer animation, and the cheering that one sometimes hears from another roulette or craps table. When someone wins a large jackpot at a slot machine, the event is loudly proclaimed through all sorts of media everywhere in the casino. I don't lose. I win. I'm a winner. We're winners.

»WE'RE GONNA WIN, WIN, WIN. YOU'RE GONNA GET SO TIRED OF WINNING.« [9]

9 Donald Trump, February 2016, youtube.com/watch?v=ZmnOJSUkjrA

The casino presents a certain version of »populist democracy.« You belong to this imaginary shared democracy—as long as you can afford the $15 minimum stake to place a wager at a table. You can sit there until your stack of chips runs out. Your right to be there, your simulated equality, is never questioned during the game. Regardless of your »net worth« on the outside of the casino, here you play against the same mathematical odds. I can sit down at the same table with the CEO of a big company or a Wall Street stockbroker. But as soon as I am out of chips, I no longer exist. The casino is done with me. I can go to an Automated Teller Machine in the lobby and get more instant cash from/on/with my credit card. I can retire to the casino periphery of the twenty-five cent video poker or slot machines. In most forms of casino gambling, the player is confronted either with a machine or with a highly trained representative of the casino. He or she is almost always playing against »The House.«

Money Loses Its Value

»PART OF THE BEAUTY OF ME IS THAT I AM VERY RICH.«[10]

10 Donald Trump, April 2, 2011 youtube.com/watch?v=wjWfSZT1obA

The German sociologist Georg Simmel wrote in *Philosophy of Money* of the attraction of money as being its pure potentiality that has not been actualized, the anticipation of ownership which comes to have its own seduction as an abstract form. Money gambled in casino games becomes a »sign value« in this sense (a unit of a self-referential semiotic system) and no longer an exchange-value (a direct stand-in for the goods and services) or use-value that one could purchase with it. As sign-value, money has no direct utility. It is self-referential and self-absorbed, involved in a network of relations separate from outside circulation.

Casino money is only distantly related to actual goods and services. Once it enters this relay-system, it can only be with great difficulty re-extracted into the wider circulation. Players who win tend to direct their winnings right back into the game or other games, or to immediately spend them. Very few will use won money to improve their overall economic situation. Money lost does not seem »real« either—at least while one is in the process of losing it—it seems like »play money.«

Most players ambivalently or paradoxically regard their losses as the price of the entertainment. The mental suspension of all usual associations of the value of money outside the casino is practically a prerequisite to participation in the game. The player must forget what he or she could buy or enjoy with the sum of money invested. Even when he or she is winning, the player often experiences the sense of a »trance« or gripped intoxication which prevents him or her from pulling him/herself away from the tables. It is much more difficult to be a winner than the mathematical odds would indicate.

Just as gambling is a case of chimerically believing oneself to be master of one's own fate, so money in general is often regarded as a panacea and the quintessence of freedom and autonomy in American society. In gambling as in money, one enters into a regulatory system of definite social arrangements. The casino chips »belong« to me only in the dimmest of ways. I am allowed to temporarily hold onto them so that I may play out my time, watch them gravitate away, and rid myself of my illusions of instant wealth.

Capitalist society effectively »lends« us money so that we may purchase its goods and messages, follow its dictates, and live out our illusions of self-determination. The credit card buyer never touches the money used in an exchange. The transaction takes place internally between the computer systems of two or more institutions. I can monitor the transactions among those machines by monitoring my accounts online.

Casino Capitalism

In the 1989 science fiction time travel film *Back to the Future*, Part Two, Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) returns from the year 2015 to Hill Valley in 1985 to discover that all of American society has been transformed into a casino, as emblematized by Biff Tannen's gaudy *Pleasure Paradise Casino & Hotel*. Tannen (Thomas F. Wilson), a local bully and McFly's arch-enemy, has time-traveled from 2015 to 1955 and given a copy of a Sports Almanac from the future to his younger self, thus enabling himself to win endlessly at gambling and become the richest man in America.

The emergence of »the gambling society« in the 1980s in which Donald Trump was a major participant as the founding owner of three Atlantic City casinos is related to larger social developments and the history of America. The universalizing and abstracting forces of money; an increasingly homogenized consumer culture; national mass media; network, cable and satellite television; and organizational forces of rationalization and bureaucracy eroded social difference and local and particularistic diversity. Distinctions of status, religion, ethnicity, and community affiliation got bulldozed over.

The gambling game is the cathexis of hidden fears and anxieties. In the uncertain society of economic insecurity in which we are nowadays living, living on the edge is a crucially valuable skill. The casino capitalists have succeeded in rationally exploiting a not so surprising psychological and emotional reaction to a hyper-rationalized society.

Instant winning. Instant wealth. Match two halves of the coupon and win five hundred dollars. Anyone can become an instant millionaire or billionaire by winning the lottery or hitting the big jackpot. Anyone can play on Wall Street. Traditional sources of social solidarity disappear. Forms of speculation like the stock market and gambling assume center stage in the hyper-modern society. It is a culture which knows no sense of limits, and which provides endless simulations of the absent social space.

Gambling is Auto-Erotic

Each deal of the cards, each incident of the game, is independent of all others. The outcomes of incidents which have already taken place have no influence on the incident at hand. The chances of winning, before the cards are dealt, are exactly the same each time. I assume here the ideal conditions of a fresh deck. The cards that have already been used in a partially played deck cause some alteration of the odds. Streaks, both lucky and unlucky, only exist retrospectively. There is no way for the player to know, when in the midst of a streak, when it is going to end. The fascination of the game is its paradoxical, quantum duality, the complementarity of it being both a ritual and a unique event. The »bad faith« (Jean-Paul Sartre) of the player is his or her imaginary unification of the isolated instances of the hands of cards or spins of the roulette wheel.

There is a sexuality put on display in the casinos which complements their international airport architecture and their futuristic interior motif. It is the functionalized sexuality of cocktail waitresses and female croupiers in mini-togas. It is the same simulation of sexuality promoted by the contemporary commercialized erotic system, with its hetero-normative male/female binary opposition and its stylization of the ultra-feminine. This system is deeply misogynistic and objectifying (in the bad sense) of women.

Here in the casino, functionalized eroticism is an ingredient of the simulacrum of opulence and hedonistic polymorphous paradise with which the gambling management seeks to surround the player. The fascination of the game is the systematic perfection of an utterly pointless activity. We temporarily escape the tensions of daily life and enter into a realm of play with its rules and ideal conditions marked off from the real. The element of fantasy and imagination is intensified by the risk involved when there is a wager. Then there is a movement from play to its simulacrum in the semiotics of postmodern consumer culture design.

The eroticism of the non-commodified dimension of gambling can be compared to the striptease artist's evocation of desire.[11] The audience is captivated by auto-erotic gestures which radically exclude the observer: self-caressing and a style of dancing that appears to be only for self-satisfaction. The girl is inaccessible, her gaze is intended for no one, and this is her attraction. In gambling there is a similar self-exclusion. The number of decisions that I make is quite limited, the silver ball spinning around the roulette wheel plays it-

11 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, Hill and Wang, 1972, p. 84—87.

self, the cards at blackjack or baccarat seem to play themselves. I am intoxicated by the logic of their permutations, the unfolding of the finite number combinations. Like a smooth body refracted to infinity in front of one mirror and behind another mirror, one can reduce the house advantage to a minimum by sticking to the monotonous perfection of a mathematical formula. There is a method of play where one repeats exactly the same gesture of drawing a card or standing pat in each possible situation according to rules which repeat themselves forever.

The auto-eroticism of a space age slot machine is, on the other hand, the solipsism of the machine iterating through all of its permutations, observed in a detached way by the voyeuristic human repeatedly pulling the electro-mechanical arm, or pressing the same spin button over and over, like the rat in the lab experiment who presses the same lever again and again to get more pleasure stimulation sent directly to his brain until he finally expires.

Through semiotic *mise-en-scène*, the casino reconstitutes sexual desire.

YOU'RE GONNA WIN! YOU'RE GONNA WIN! YOU'RE GONNA WIN! YOU'RE GONNA WIN! YOU LOSE!

In Search
of the Buried Treasure

Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883) is a major work of British literature that belongs to the »castaway on a desert island« tradition, in the same lineage as Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Johann David Wyss' *The Swiss Family Robinson* (1812). These great works of world literature are part of the legacy and background of the TV show *Lost*, which itself now belongs to world literature, as upgraded for and in the contemporary age of advanced media technologies.

Treasure Island is a story about Pirate Treasure. There is a secret and mysterious treasure buried on a remote Island surrounded by ocean waters. This immense treasure was accumulated not in the most upstanding and scrupulous of ways. It was accumulated by Pirates who robbed and pillaged on the high seas.

Fifteen men on the dead man's chest —
    Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!
Drink and the devil had done for the rest —
    Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!

I was going to sea myself; to sea in a schooner, with a piping boatswain, and pig-tailed singing seamen; to sea, bound for an unknown Island, and to seek for Buried Treasures!

A Cyborg Manifesto

Due to the genetic code he shares with other Vulcans, Mr. Spock can »withstand higher temperatures, go for longer periods of time without water, and tolerate a higher level of pain« than humans.[12] Spock is more resistant to radiation and needs less food to nourish himself than his non-Vulcan counterparts on board the Enterprise. Physical distress, for Spock, is merely a kind of information input.

Lt. Commander Spock does not perspire. He has much greater physical strength than his human colleagues. He has more acute hearing, resulting from evolutionary accommodation to sound wave attenuation in the thin atmosphere of Vulcan. Spock has an extra inner eyelid to protect his vision against strong solar and electromagnetic rays.

By the late 1960s, NASA personnel embraced Mr. Spock as one of their own. Leonard Nimoy was invited to be guest of honor at the March 1967 National Space Club dinner, and to take an extensive tour of the Goddard Space Flight Center. The actor concluded from the warm and intense reception that he received that astronauts, aerospace industry engineers, secretaries, and shareholders alike all regarded *Star Trek*, and especially the character of Mr. Spock, as a dramatization of the future of their space program.

12 Stephen E. Whitfield (Poe) and Gene Roddenberry, *The Making of Star Trek*, Ballantine, 1968, p. 224.

Apocalypse Now

The stance of opposition to a war undertaken by America's »*military-industrial complex*« (MIC), as President Eisenhower termed it in his Farewell Address to the nation on January 17, 1961, is based on the assumption of projecting oneself into the imaginative space of being a shadow government of truth-speakers, empowered by democracy into the democratic position of being able to make »better« decisions for the body politic of democracy than those who hold institutional power in political economy and government.

Much of what we know about the Holocaust, World War II, and the Vietnam War comes from Hollywood films about the Holocaust, World War II, and the Vietnam War that we have seen. In his essay on Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 blockbuster Vietnam War movie *Apocalypse Now*, Baudrillard writes that Coppola's masterpiece is the continuation of the Vietnam War by other means. »Nothing else in the world smells like that,« says Lt. Colonel Bill Kilgore (Robert Duvall). »I love the smell of napalm in the morning… It smells like

13 *Apocalypse Now*, 1979. Directed by Francis Coppola, United Artists.

14 Baudrillard, Simulacra, p. 59.

victory.«[13]

The high-budget extravaganza was produced the same way that America fought in Vietnam. »War became film,« writes Baudrillard. »Film becomes war, the two are joined by their common hemorrhage into technology.«[14] There is implosion or mutual contamination between »film becoming Virtual Reality« and War.

Park Avenue, New York

Following architectural critics like Ada Louise Huxtable and Jane Jacobs, it has become the consensus view among New Yorkers that the Pan Am Building (now called the MetLife Building) is a slab structure that brought congestion to the area, blocked the Park Avenue vista, and shrouded the iconic masterpiece of the New York Central Building. For me, the imposing midtown edifice exists in a parallel universe: the Pan Am Building is a »monster« architecture in the positive and ironic sense of issuing a challenge to the urban space of New York City—a *radical illusion* beyond the officially lamented (lack of) aesthetic sensibility of its builders.

The structure is dense, but leaves space for movement. There is an elaborately engineered system of human circulation and interconnections between places of business and the train terminal. The many high-speed elevators and complex of escalators are complemented by the intricate passageways and tunnels leading to rail and subway service. Poised above the commuter stations, the construction choreographs an open expanse or austere transitory ambience to the ticketing promenade surrounding the majestic analog clock. Home on its upper floors to innumerable tiny windowless offices housing foreign currency changers and language translation agencies, the parallel universe Pan Am Building is symbolic of a secret affirmative cultural exchange of America with the rest of the world.

THE SONIC SHAMANS MANIFESTO

ANTONIO PALACIOS

Not so long ago, sound was being used as a weapon.
Humans, like us, were exposed to sub-sonic frequencies.

Not so long ago, directional sound waves
were used in shopping centers.
Humans, like us, were subjects
to heavily targeted advertisement.
Not long ago, ear worms were implanted
into unsuspected victims.

HUMANS, LIKE US,
were infected with political propaganda.
were exposed to hate speech.
were brainwashed to produce observant citizens.

»Technology is good for you«
Says who?

YES, these are difficult times.
their political agenda is strong.
they want us to be servile.
they want us to behave like marionettes.

So, here we are, more than ready to counter-attack.
But, above all, we are ready to help.

Either alone or in groups, these poor souls come to us.
For them it is not too late, for their ear worms are still feeble.

WE ARE called magicians.
called saviors.
called rebels.

Are we?

THEY operate at daylight. We work in the dark.
use technology. And so do we.
implant thoughts. We get rid of them.
use sound. And so do we.

Our machines are white. Our sounds are black.
Sonic chemotherapy: a cleansing act.

If you are reading this, consider yourself lucky.
It means you have someone that cares.
Give this manifesto to someone else.
Now memorize the address at the end of the page and go.

IT IS NOT TOO LATE.

MEDIA CULTURE IN THE DEEP TIME

MI YOU

This manifesto is a reflection from curating ›Tradition and Modernity‹, the main exhibition at the inaugural Ulaanbaator International Media Art Festival, in June 2016 in Mongolia.

The Rich Ravine

The Steppe

The Poor Ravine

Interesting Mongolian game »The Stag« (*Burga Jiregee*), abstracted from the interaction between spirit-stag and human-nomadic (herding dog) orders. The mobility of the stags in real and in the game is true of the nomadic spirit. (Image from the Swancutt article)
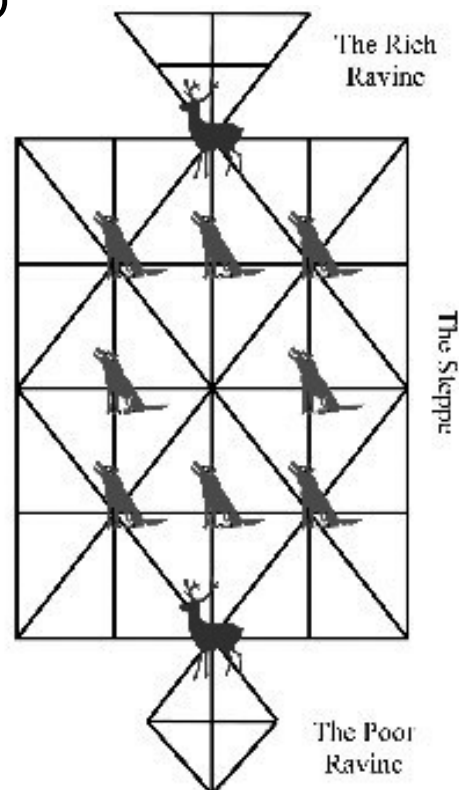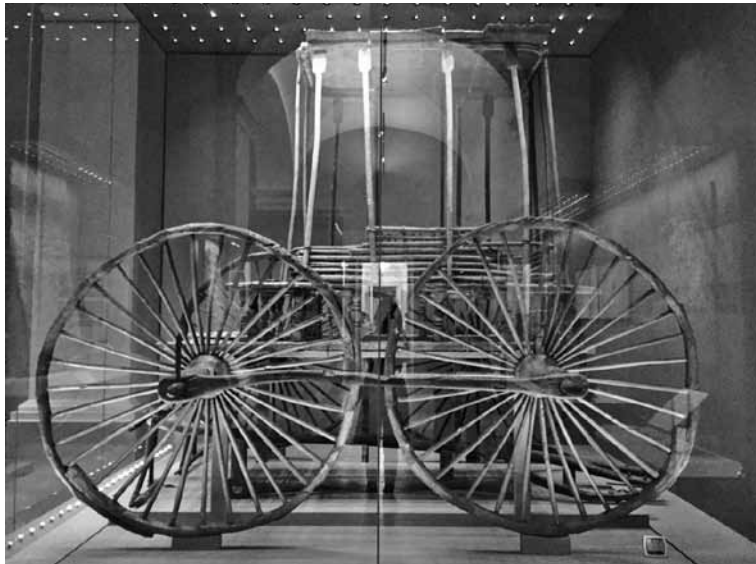
HOW COULD A MEDIA CULTURE NOT ROOTED IN WESTERN TRADITION LOOK LIKE?
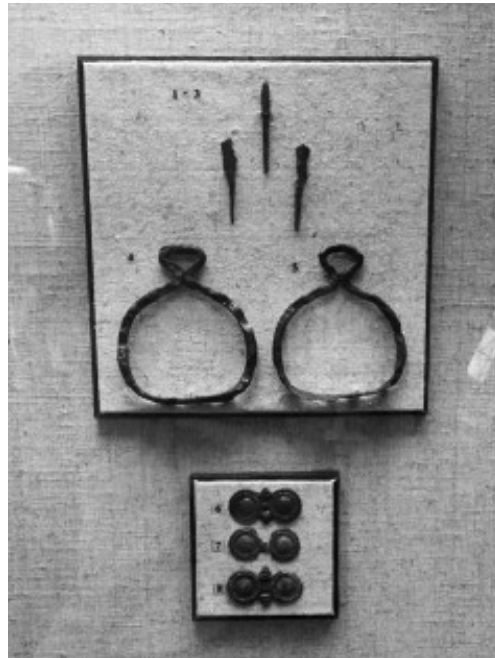
Altai region nomadic horse crafts

Nomadic chariot, wood, Altai mountains, 5th—4th century BCE. Title image of Deleuze and Guattari's »1227: Treatise on Nomadology—the War Machine« in A Thousand Plateaus. State Hermitage Museum.

A culture under rapid transformation for decades, Mongolia still takes pride in its rich cultural heritage, which manifests in life style, the relation to the environment, as well as ancestral and religious rituals. It is here where dichotomies such as nature and culture, organic and the inorganic, self and the other may not necessarily prevail as they do in the West. Such a culture harbors potential for new ways of relating to digital technology and media culture, where, taking the anti-binary view seriously, technology can be rooted in the tradition.

The critical lens of media and media art affords a way to foreground the transformative potential of any practice, necessarily involving media, however »old« or »new«. For media, in the expanded sense, can be taken as anything that mediates transformations. One timeless example is how the invention of the stir-up by the historical nomadic people well over 2000 years ago was a medium that allowed the man-horse constellation to emerge—an early cyborg if you will—and opened whole new avenues of exploring and acting in the world. Another heritage is the shaman tradition shared by cultures with Central Asian steppes roots, as far east as Korea and Japan, and as west as the Norse people. Until today, the shaman acts as human ›medium‹ for mediating universes un-actualized and times that are entangled.

When asked about Dandan Oliq site — the top most dot marked on this map in deep Taklamakan desert (and we are standing somewhere in the middle), this local archeology bureau officer proudly revealed that he had to ride a camel for eight days from Chira to visit the site.
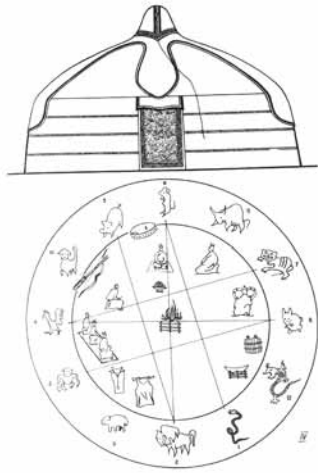
Now we have to ask ourselves, how do ›new‹ media impact our lives, and to which extend can it effectuate transformations. Is digital, computerized fortunetelling as plausible as with a real shaman? Is it possible to (mis)use technology to understand irrationality? Can we learn from a Mongolian, nomadic way of orientation, not based on demarcations of streets on the map, but on landmarks and astrological signs? What would this mean for computer programming? Is it possible to have land, imbued with spirits in the traditional belief, manifest its intelligence through computation? What is the temporality and life of a machine, beyond mechanical reality?

THESE QUESTIONS BRING US FROM A TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN PRESENT TO DEEP HISTORIES, PARTICULARLY THE HISTORY OF NOMADIC CULTURES, WHERE INDEED A STRANGE SYMMETRY OF THE FUTURE AND PAST APPEARS.

THE MOST REASONABLE CHOICE IS TO CHOOSE TO NOT EVER HAVING TO CHOOSE. ISN'T IT?

FREEDOM FROM THE OBLIGATION TO FIGURE THINGS OUT, FOR ONE MUST ACCEPT THAT EVERY TRACK OF THOUGHT IS PROBLEMATIC. AND THAT IS OK?

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THE FUTURE?
MANIFESTO ON TELEPATHY
MONA SCHIEREN

Digital media have become conventional communication interfaces. The devices have strong computing capacities and might work as storage units and archives. But their apps and updates are much too inflexible and produce just electronic junk due to their compatibility standards that are driven by marketing considerations. Therefore they do not function well as protheses among people. Devices only facilitate exchanges that are crutches, because we***** do not believe in the interwoven spheres within us. Those spheres transcend our adequate idea of identity, seclusion and that of the other as necessary partner for communication. Therefore the devices as they currently are do not allow potentials inherent in spheres to assume materiality.

* beings, humans, becomers, (and then also machines)

UTINI— throw away your digital crutches. Launch yourselves onto a »beam-tour« and start thought transference. Believe in the potentialities of your photons, that contain endless potentials of alternatives. Because the crux and the point thereof is: This only works when we start to perceive and accept it as real.

Critique of Criticism

Let us not get stuck in criticizing the status quo. Let us not get mired in efforts to understand the historical background of the existing state of affairs. Instead, let us use historical scenarios as a foundation to imagine how things COULD become. But then we should use these ideas to develop and achieve a future where they would become a reality. This is obviously a risky enterprise, while understanding certain ingredients of such a future is going to be decisive for the finer details of the utopia.

We understand that everything can be corrupted. This is our biggest obstacle. But this can not be a reason to not even try to construct a different future!

If we do not even think about a future realm of thinking, such a sphere can never even begin to be formed at all.

Imagine yourself as a rhinoceros Or: The permanent Un/doing of alterity

The possibility to beam exists
in the virtual journey of the photonic self.

Messages can be send via photon channel-Un/doing. These messages then undertake exchanges with other virtual photon-electron-pairs. One only has to award virtuality much more agency. Barad writes that »virtuality is a kind of thought experiment the world performs. Virtual particles […] do not exist in space and time. They are ghostly non/existences that teeter on the edge of the infinitely fine blade between being and nonbeing.«[1] But how can such a virtuality turn into being? Can this be accomplished through willing or believing? Experiments show that a repeated practice (and one must want such a practice time and again) is helpful. But within such a practice one has to believe that it is effective.

Prana, spice, psi or ether. Energy leaps.
Once nerve ends have opened into the ether,
psychoactive substances are
not needed as amplifiers anymore.

If we assume that every being is being constituted by a capacity to answer (Karen Barad), then we can use the channels! Using interwoven spheres, one can communicate independently — much smoother and without having to carry all kinds of gadgets around. Long live telepathy! Derrida writes: »the telematic technè is not a paradigm or a materialized example of another thing, *it is that*«[2]

No brainless bodies No bodyless brains

1 Karen Barad, On Touching — The Inhuman That Therefore I Am (v1.1), first published in: *differences* 2012, 23(3): pp. 206—223. Revised German Version in: Susanne Witzgall / Kerstin Stakemeier (Ed.): *Macht des Materials/Politik der Materialität*, Zurich 2014, pp. 163—176, p. 167.

2 Jacques Derrida, Telepathy, in: *Oxford Literary Review* 1988, 10: pp. 3—41, p. 19.

We are one, but questions remain:

How do we start these efforts right this minute? And what does that mean for our own actions in the here and now — and not in a potentially utopian future?

There remains a skepticism towards universalisms, totality, fascisms etc. stemming from the appeal to just believe and thereby thinking one already has all the answers.

And how can we implement the plan starting here and now? How can we switch out of our daily existence and routines? How to get in touch during the next conflict? Is there not something that is being called »evil« in a dualistic construction of reality—that needs to be put off limits? In a far distance: yes.

On this point Barad is helpful, even if she shoots the dimension of time we hold for consistent to pieces with quantum physics. Time travel is possible. A permanent becoming.

To fathom possible shallows and relativize dominant ontologies, (hi)stories are needed. Repeating? Thoughts have agency, are actors. Connect energy inside with outside. Let's de-colonize from capitalist structures and let us dismantle the global capitalist machine. Let's change the property of the Machine. Lift the boundaries to zones of transition.

VIRTUAL MATERIALISM —A MANIFESTO
LUCIA MENDELOVA

Intro

Virtual Materialism
is a tool to explore production, consumption and communication within virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies. Working with this tool means taking a pragmatic path of involvement and critical perception of VR and AR.

Virtual Materialism
binds together Virtual Realism (Heim) and New Materialism (Hayles, Parisi, Terranova) and focuses on research about different socio-technological aspects of virtual and augmented reality.

Virtual Materialism
inquires about the digital materiality of VR and AR: it asks about complex relationship between embodiment and information, about potential of data surveillance; about corporate work, free and open source software and playbor (labor as a play); it is a search for post-work imaginings and an inquiry into conditions of the Immersive Capitalism we will be living in.

Welcome to The Ultimate Shopping Mall: The Era of Immersive Capitalism.

In times of hybrid realities, from the point of view of our complex *situatedness*, the virtual is the integral part of the new real. Until »we«[1] recognize this situation, we'll stay too vulnerable to the market.

It will be like never before.

1. There is nothing immaterial about the virtual. Every bit and byte needs energy, each shader enough computing power, every collision detection needs its input, each interaction needs its body, more than ever before.

2. Talking about virtual and augmented reality means talking about bifurcated situatedness in Immersive Capitalism. Only if we recognize our standpoint, we can take a stand.

3. Immersive Capitalism will represent important areas of experimentation with value and free affective labor. It will leverage within corporate feminism of current #WomenInTech.

4. VR and AR are strong affective media targeting directly the »missing half a second« between reflex and conscious reflection. Through their ability to create an automation of response—where one does not have to elaborate, or cognize, but affectively feel what does not physically exist—is their potential to control our perception to a much higher extend than by all previously known media.

5. VR and AR are highly immersive commodities. VR is a commodity that insists on being consumed, at each level, because at each level it becomes more obsolete. AR is a commodity that insists on being consumed, because it takes the consuming for consumption's sake to its perfection. As its tools and platforms will grow, they will smartly turn most of its users to producers.

6. VR and AR will become smart data collectors which delivers data about our habits and desires. As by other networked media, the retribution for a blind trust will be the loss of last bits of privacy. As producers and consumers, we need to request transparency about our data.

7. Immersive Capitalism is a framework to ensure the similarity of reactions, a controlled environment which trained us to have less reflection, react more affective, and for which our data and voluntarily shared labor are commodities while emotions are products.

It has never been much different.

PastPresent	Presenting	PresentFuture
Capitalism	Affective Capitalism	Immersive Capitalism
Subjects and Objects	Actors and Actants	Networks of (Non)Conscious (Non)Cognisers
Historical Materialism	New Materialism	Virtual Materialism
Work	Labor	Playbor
Crafts	Performativity	Enhanced Experience
#OldBoysNetworks	#WomenInTech	#WeAreAllIn

1. There is nothing immaterial about the virtual

Every visible object in virtual world space has a material. Computer generated material is a visual texture which creates the illusion of physical texture. Everything that has to be rendered on screen has a material which is a fragment of a shader — a small computer program which runs on the graphic card and directs how the pixels should be shown on the screen. Real time rendering pipeline computes shaders in stereoscopic projection to convince the visual cortex it receives input from three dimensions instead of two dimensional flat screens in front of your eyes. For the realism of 3D representation, for teasing our brain to perceive what is simulated, we need enough computing power, data storage, server space. The complex infrastructure of the platforms and stacks which depends on energy flows and rare earth metals — the hardware and software we are a part of — are in many ways material, political, social and economical.

2. Talking about virtual and augmented reality means talking about bifurcated situatedness in Immersive Capitalism

At the moment we enter simulation, we are situated simultaneously in the virtual and in the real. The virtual is real as a socio-technological entanglement of devices mounted on our bodies to track our position and interaction and translate them from the physical to the computer generated environments. From our tracked gaze to our PayPal accounts, our body movements are traced in the infrared light flashes 60 times a second.

In VR we are identity tourists consuming different worlds: we all are Sidra, twelve years old girl in Syrian Refugee Camp, (Chris M., Gabo A. 2015: Clouds Over Sidra); in the same moment still embodying white male privileged economy leaders in front of displays bound to their heads, caught in an empathy machine; seemingly adopting a simulated identity (audience in Davos watching the documentary, see Milk 2015 on TEDx).

In AR we are motivated sweet-monster hunters (Pokémon GO), zombie walkers following their cellphone cameras, catching holographic objects enhancing our realities; seemingly getting new information about the world, we are quietly being robbed off information about us.

3a. Immersive Capitalism will represent important areas of experimentation with value and free affective labor

Current calls of big corporate players for »more content YOU have to create« hide the old tendency of technological advantages to build differences and to organize them hierarchically. Big players open their »playgrounds« so you can do a free playbor for them. When we test, play & develop further, we all will learn, but some of us will profit more than others. Creative industries tend to push workers to often precarious working conditions (the traditional freelancer does not even have a factory). But we rather seem to be willing to give up the authentic fruits of the collective imagination, sparing capital the effort of coming from the outside and reaping them.[2]

VR and AR as an engineering segment is definitely more »Zany« (see Ngai 2015) than »Sublime«: it is anxious and excessive, it turns play to labor or makes labor too playful; it pursues irony and makes it be taken seriously and seriousness be ironical. You either love it, or hate it, but mostly both at the same time. It is the the smart mix between learning process, work, play and precariousness which makes you desire the playbor so much you do not care about the alienation of the product of your work. You just want to sell it to be able to playbor more. Immersed, your playbor became the product.

3b. Immersive Capitalism will leverage within corporate feminism of current #WomenInTech

VR and AR technologies will be highly approachable not only for consuming but also for producing services and goods. Their complex requirements (from graphics to neuroscience, from software architecture and speech recognition to storytelling) will attract many people from among the marginalized elements of traditional technological engineering segments. Immersive Capitalism desperate for waged labor of the marginalized (women, but not only) will be coopting them all over the world in order to bind them to labor market often thereby with a help of rephrased slogans about emancipation and diversity. The fact that such target groups would not necessarily be kicking and screaming is understandable, labor work does offer a way to greater independence in the dominant neoliberal lifestyle (see Fraser 2014). Corporate feminism of new technologies, aka #WomenInTech is very convenient for capitalism: it does not question the system; it reproduces many old stereotypes; it ensures the economic payback for education. Besides, so the logic goes, women are good consumers and producers, so the economy would benefit from these newly optimized workers too.

In the world of New Work we are happy, we are the masters of affective labor, the production of affects and relationships. Desperate of being fragile we turned to agile. #WeAreAllIn[3] »we« are the targets of Immersive Capitalism, the young girls of new technology.[4]

---

2 For more to FOSS and digital labor see Terranova: »The fruit of collective cultural labor has been not simply appropriated, but voluntarily channeled and controversially structured within capitalist business practices.« Terranova, 2000, p. 39.

3 »It is important to identify neoliberalism as political rationality that governs not only capitalist economics, but has dominated the very ideas of agency as well as the political imagination of its subjects. Without recognition that ›we are all in it‹, hardly any progressive feminist position towards neoliberalism can be taken.« Kobova, 2016, p. 54.

4 »The formal domination of Capital has become more and more real. Consumer society now seeks out its best supporters from among the marginalized elements of traditional society women and youth first, followed by homosexuals and immigrants. To those who were minorities yesterday, and who had therefore been the most foreign, the most spontaneously hostile to consumer society, not having yet been bent to the dominant norms of integration, the latter ends up looking like emancipation.« Tiqqun, 2012, pp. 15—16.

5 For an approach focusing more on cognitive science see M. Gonzales Franco, TC Peck, A. Rodrigez-Fornells, M. Slater (2014): A thread to a virtual hand elicits motor cortex activation.

6 Affective capitalism analyses how media concentrates on the »missing half a second«: »Targeting a level beyond a conscious perception nevertheless will affect and attuned the prehensive body so when it appears again in the level of consciousness it will cause a kind of deja vu and a desire for repetition.« Parisi & Goodman, 2011, p. 472. Parisi and Goodman exemplify mnemonic control as »construction of memories« at the concept of branding: »Branding generates an atmosphere of time anomalies, it plays with a combination of familiarity plus novelty, a past-futurity. New memories are installed that you have not phenomenologically experienced in order to produce a certain receptivity to brand triggers. No longer relying on lived bodily experience — actual sensory responses — brand memory implantation operates through the body that remembers a virtual sensation.« Parisi & Goodman, 2011, p. 472.

4. VR & AR as strong affective media

AR & VR are targeting directly the »missing half a second« between reflex and conscious reflection, also called an »affect« (see Massumi 1995).[5] Affect is a »pre-perceptive« reaction to the sensorial input, it is not directly about emotion, but about missing reflection. It refers also to a gap between sensing and consciousness, a realm of openness, where unconscious reactions are taking place. It is a space open to manipulation and different »impingements« on our virtual as well as physical bodies (Massumi 1995 pp. 86—102). With the technological possibilities of AR and VR to simulate highly believable sensorial input the ability of intervene within »the missing half a second« is growing rapidly. As Bruce Sterling has announced twenty years ago: there could hardly be more suitable medium for The Era of Ultimate Shopping Mall (Ars Electronica 1990).

5. VR and AR as highly immersive commodities

If the Affective Capitalism (see Parisi and Goodman 2011)[6] was about the usage of affect within marketing strategies of branding and product placement in early 1990's, Immersive Capitalism would be the multiplied and intensified version of the former one.

Enter through the Gift Shop where you can buy the spectacle, there is almost no other way — the »store« opens automatically, when you put on the head mounted display (HMD). It is designed as a Japanese garden with a fireplace and cherry blossom trees, you shop the VR adventures while sitting on an oriental carpet (Oculus). It is a stunning high-class condo with private pool and design furniture (Samsung VR) or a wonderful almost-natural low polygon forest scenery, sun in the sky and birds flying high while you scroll through the floating VR App-store titles (Google Daydream).

Impact possibilities in immersive media seems to be unlimited: subliminal waves of experience marketing generate affective environments of consumption; high quality graphics and interaction fidelity provides retainability of usage; the wow-effect ensures memorability of experience; immersion secures believability of illusion.

Immersion means diving into an illusion. A belief that you are somewhere else than where your physical body is located (VR); A belief that computer generated objects are inseparable parts of your physical surroundings (AR).

While in the virtual reality you are fully immersed in a 3D computer generated world, augmented reality takes the 3D computer generated elements and lets them fully immerse into your physical surroundings. The former one blocks your audio-visual and haptic input and replaces it with simulated input, the latter takes data about your actual environment (audio-visual input and surface mesh scan) and mixes them together with simulated content.

6. Data as main commodity

As marketing propaganda implies: the more you know about people who use your product or your services, the better you can target them; the better you know what they want, the more you can sell them. Since the early age of the internet, the key feature for a commercial sustainability were data. It was just a question of time until technologies with more and more sensors to capture will be mass produced. To collect data, getting people's attention is not enough, crucial is the ability to hold it. The genius of Immersive Capitalism is not in generating wow-effects, but in producing open platforms for users to do almost all what they want to do. Not to forget, these are virtual and

augmented realities existing mainly as lines of code, zeros and ones on servers, which have absolute knowledge on anything going on inside them. They are not dark streets with no witnesses around or any evidence left, so do not treat them as such. The questions are »who owns« and »who knows«. These are the questions of power; this time power over desires and consumer habits. Embodied information (the term has never been so literate) is the main commodity in Immersive Capitalism.[7]

7. Immersive Capitalism is a controlled environment which trained us to have less reflection, react more affective, and for which our data and voluntarily shared labor are commodities while emotions are products

Virtual reality, augmented reality and physical reality are more a continuum than opposite sides of ontological scales. VR/AR are just another media operating within cloud networks of data about us, another consumer model of entertainment and infotainment constructed within complex socio-technological systems. Augmented and virtual reality technologies has always been surrounded by commercialism. This has never been different, and won't change soon. The task is to analyze material traces of simulated environments because as such they will be a part of our everyday life: consuming, producing, licensing, data-gathering, privacy policy, our social interaction and its ethical implication, the hierarchical distribution of sources and information, the questions of labor, playbor and the end of precarity. The task is to learn and to intervene. If we do it right, the payback for our playbor will be more than a new technology to buy.

[7] Read some of Head Mounted Device (HMD) license agreements to calculate the costs of the trust: Oculus license agreements to the 31. July 2017:
1. Information you give when using VR services (E.g. by registration): name, email, phone number, date of birth, more information can be found in your »user profile«. There are stored data about transaction history, payment info, contact details, shared communication with others, optionally your physical features and dimensions;

2. Information automatically collected about you when using VR services: information about the content of experiences you interact with including third parties (Facebook owns Oculus), device specification and usage specifications, location info, IP, WiFi, your physical movements and dimensions, your habits — when you use headset. Source: oculus.com/legal/privacy-policy

Bibliography

Fraser, N. (2014): Can society be commodities all the way down? Post-Polanyian reflections on capitalist crisis. Economy and Society. 43. pp. 541—558.

Gonzales Franco, M., TC Peck, A. Rodrigez-Fornells, M. Slater (2014): A thread to a virtual hand elicits motor cortex activation. In: Experimental Brain Research 232: pp. 875—887. [online:] youtube.com/watch?v=Y-0VHEtyIR4&feature=youtu.be&t=1365

Haim, M. (1993): The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality. Oxford University Press: New York, p. 175.

Hayles, K. (2014): Cognition Everywhere: The Rise of the Cognitive Nonconscious and the Costs of Consciousness. [online:] nordes.medialab.aalto.fi/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/08/Hayles-3.pdf

Kobova, L. (2016): Are we all neoliberal feminists now? In: Solidarity in Struggle. Feminist Perspectives on Neoliberalism in East-Central Europe. Kovats, E. (ed.), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Budapest 2016, pp. 54—59.

Massumi, B. (1995): The Autonomy of Affect. In: Cultural Critique, No. 31, The Politics of Systems and Environments, Part II., pp. 83—109.

Ngai, S. (2015): Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting. Harvard University Press: NY.

Parisi, L., Goodman, S. (2011): Mnemonic Control In: Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death. Ed. by P.T. Clough, C. Willse, Duke University Press.

Terranova, T. (2000): Free Labor: Producing Culture for the Digital Economy In: Social Text 18.2 pp. 33—58. [online:] muse.jhu.edu/article/31873.

Tiqqun. (2012): Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl. In: Semiotext(e)/Intervention Series LA, p. 142.

Video

Milk, Ch.; Arora, G. (2015): Clouds Over Sidra [online:] youtube.com/watch?v=mUosdCQsMkM

Milk, Ch. (2015): How VR can create the ultimate empathy machine? [online:] youtube.com/watch?v=iXHil1TPxvA

Sterling, B. (1990): VR-Symposium with Jaron Lanier, Warren Robinett, Brenda Laurel, Marvin Minsky, Timothy Leary. Ars Electronica 1990 [online:] vimeo.com/14888138

SERIAL
3D-PRINTING
VINCENT BRINKMANN

1/9 The one who does serial 3D-printing sees himself as the producer of a series that is generated from digital data. With the help of 3D-printing a mold version is made.

2/9 The mold version is directly produced from digital data so there is no need for a physically existing positive version.

3/9 The creating act is the casting of the objects. The producer decides which material is being used.

4/9 The casting itself becomes a ritual. In the making of a series the cast turns into a connection between its creator and the object and, through the serial repetition production becomes a ritual.

5/9 The series is produced by a number of copies determined by the artist. The copies are numbered with the appropriate total number.

6/9 Serial 3D-printing critically reflects the handling of mass production. Mass production serves as artificial divergence, as the initial point of difference between object and repetition out of which a series is created.

7/9 The trace turns into the patina of the shape and is embedded in the object. The technique of reproduction remains visible.

8/9 Mistakes happen. In the technique of reproduction of serial 3D-printing you cast from a mold form. All casts are unique and individual.

9/9 Serial 3D-printing becomes the valid technique of art that must spread and find application.

THE ALGORITHMIC ART MANIFESTO
FRIEDER NAKE

We cannot see the digital. Nor can we hear or smell or taste or touch it.
The digital does not exist for human senses. We just cannot perceive it.
The digital only exists hidden away in absolute darkness of electronic chips.
The digital has disappeared into realms of computability,
and there it leads a powerful existence of infiltrating everything perceivable.

Although the world embraces digitality, the digital all by itself does not make any sense.
The digital is interesting only as the computable.
Computable objects outside of human thinking exist only in digital form.

Insofar the digital and the computable belong together as Siamese twins.
In this pair, the computable is the operative and dynamic aspect.
Computability thus is the primary aspect; digitality is only secondary.
The computable is also called the algorithmic.

Images are perceivable and visible but they have come to be computable.
As object of computability, the image must be digital;
as object of perceptibility, the image must be analogue.
It is the algorithmic image that is computable and visible at once.
The algorithmic image is surface and subface:
visible surface & computable subface, tightly bound inseparably.

The algorithmic image is a subclass of the algorithmic sign.
As sign it is a first standing for a second by virtue of a third.
The first is representamen, the second object, the third interpretant (Charles S. Peirce).
As algorithmic sign it always is at once interpreted by two interpreters: human and computer.
Or also: semiotic animal and semiotic engine.
The two interpreters of algorithmic signs generate two different interpretants:
the intentional and the causal interpretant.
But the computer's mode of interpretation is only a determination.
Determination is the far extreme of interpretation:
it is without any alternative because there is no interest, no body, and no life.
The computer is, indeed, performing acts of interpretation.
But this interpretation is restricted to determine
the one and only operation the engine is supposed to carry out.
Machines are made to do exactly that that they are made to do.
Interpretation is not theirs unless they fail.
And yet, remarkable it is to see determination as the extreme of an interpretation.

When Sol LeWitt in 1967 wrote,
»the idea becomes the machine that makes the art«,
he may have been aware, or not, that this had already happened two years earlier.

In three exhibitions of 1965, computer art, as it was called, first appeared in public.
Max Bense's text »projects of generative aesthetics« is the manifesto of generative art.
Algorithmic art is its radical form.

We think the image. We don't make it.
Thinking the work forces you to think of sets and classes of works.
The individual work loses some of its attraction,
although you want that people feel attracted still.
The individual work in algorithmic art, however, is an instance only of a class of works.

The art in algorithmic art rests with the class of works described in algorithmic fashion.
Aesthetics of our times must concentrate on differences
between classes and the individual work.

The class of works in algorithmic art is »style« but also more than style.
Rigorously the class is described by its parameters.
The list of parameters stands for
directions, appearances, variations, surprises, extensions, limitations,
sensations, discoveries, structures, components, elements, etc.
that make up the infinite class.

The class in algorithmic art also exists as an operational entity of generative power.
The algorithm constituting the class,
for each specific setting of its parameters,

determines an instance of the class: one work of infinitely many.
One realization of an infinity of possibilities.

The endless thought of our mind assumes definite form
in finite descriptions of infinite sets,
and such description generates an endless stream of individual works.
Each work a member only of the class.
The class remains invisible forever but it occasionally appears as one piece or another.
Only in parts can we hold the whole.
In some way this is sad.

But think of it: we can describe the whole, the class, the algorithm!
We have it, thus, in its computable form.
Algorithmic art creates a subface that may generate surface appearances.
This is the power of the radical semiotic approach to art.
Umberto Eco's arte programmata implemented.

DEBATING, LISTENING, OBSERVING AND RESEARCHING INSTEAD OF CLAIMING, DECLARING, INSISTING ON MONOLOGUES.

ONE

MUST APPRECIATE THE TALENT OF BEING PERSUADED JUST A BIT LESS THAN THE NECESSARY TO REALLY COMMIT TO ANY BELIEF.

THE UNDECIDED MANIFESTO 6/7 CÁSSIA VILA

TANIA GONZAGA

THE SERNJDIPTOR

*A MANIFESTO ABOUT
THE IMPORTANCE OF
SERENDIPITY
IN THE CREATIVE
PROCESS OF
CONTEMPORARY ARTS.*

Happy accidents, or serendipity, are stumbled upon, often coming from mistakes/errors. Those lapses when properly embraced are not essentially bad and can lead to surprisingly interesting paths, usually not previously considered. Using serendipity as part of the creative process allows an impermanent beauty of error to flow, making things unique. Imperfections can generate a sense of incompleteness, the driving power essential to transformation, improvement and perhaps evolution. It is opposed to perfection, which has its origin in the Latin term Perficio, meaning finished.

Randomness plays an important part in the serendipity scenario. Switching between tabs (a text, a video, a timeline, a chat, ...), connecting subjects otherwise disconnected, making sense in the non-sense is a key skill of the modern serendipitor.

To become a serendipitor is to wander, open to errors, to the unknown, to the unexpected turn that might come. Most importantly, it is a form of perception, a keen eye for the unnoticed that is often disguised in the obvious spectrum. It is not to be afraid of the obvious but rather making the best of it.

The serendipitor is inspired by the Dada's nonsense and randomness. Many have used the chance as an essential part of the artistic process and most likely several others will continue doing so, this manifesto names the person behind it.

The contemporary serendipitor is a renewed gold digger, scavenging through gigas of unworthy subjects, going from tab to tab only to find at last the prestigious gold. This gold is old news, it is obvious, it demands a different perception to become interesting. Serendipity is not only fortune, it is a skill.

/the sernjdiptor

1 theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2010/apr/24/change-your-life-beauty-imperfection

[imperfection art] 1

Take something irregular, rough-hewn, off-kilter, incomplete ... and it's all the more desirable for its flaws

2 imdb.com/title/tt0240890

[serendipity] 2

A couple reunite years after the night they first met, fell in love, and separated, convinced that one day they'd end up together.

3 dictionary.com/browse/randomness?s=t

[random] 3

Adjective: proceeding, made, or occurring without definite aim, reason, or pattern:

4 serendipitor.net/site/?page_id=2

[serendipitor] 4

Serendipitor is an alternative navigation app for the iPhone that helps you find something by looking for something else.

5 merriam-webster.com/dictionary/kismet

[kismet] 5

Define kismet: a power that is believed to control what happens in the future — kismet in a sentence

6 quora.com/What-is-the-best-example-of-perfection-that-you-can-think-of-1

[perfection examples] 6

What is the best example of »perfection« that you can think of? Perfection according to me, 1) Is not stopping and continue trying until you are satisfied.

7 researchgate.net/publication/253797026_On_the_Misuse_of_Ancient_Chinese_Inscriptions_An_Astronomical_Fantasy

[ancient misuse] 7

On the Misuse of Ancient Chinese Inscriptions: An Astronomical Fantasy

8 thesaurus.yourdictionary.com/misplacement

[misplacement] 8

Another word for misplacement: misplacement synonyms: noun The act or an instance of losing something: losing, loss.

9 edisonnation.com/forums/creativity/topics/an-example-of-something-obvious

[obvious examples] 9

Could someone show an example or even many examples of ideas that were rejected because they were deemed obvious?

A MANIFESTO OF 22+1 QUESTIONS (OR NO MANIFESTO AT ALL)
COMPLEXITY TAKEOVER
HENRIK NIERATSCHKER

1. What's the news?

2. How do we update reality in a multi-screen world?

6. Is Ada Lovelace proud of silicon valley?

7. What is gender equality in the blockchain?

12. Who is 3D-printing the filter bubble?

13. How does the future feel on a conference carpet?

18. Why is the future contemporary again?

19. What was science fiction like in prehistory?

3. Is progress pointing in 4 directions?

4. How does a facial recognition algorithm detect climate change?

5. Does high frequency trading connect your body to the world?

8. Is utopia only a micro-narrative in a network of fear?

9. And what about painting?

10. Are gradients the color of our networks?

11. Isn't spray paint the material of an augmented reality?

14. Is the answer »drones«?

15. Why is the present made of rare earths in retail spaces?

16. Who is the CEO of speculation?

17. Are designers prototyping in the tacit dimension?

20. Are standards a revolution in deep time?

21. Is big data big history?

22. Are we crowdfunding the Anthropocene?

+1. WHAT ARE THE NEXT 22+1 QUESTIONS?

A CLEAR IDEA
IS THE MOST
HARMFUL
FORM OF
IGNORANCE. STOP
WITH THE
ARROGANCE
OF
RESOLUTIONS. GIVE

TO THE DOUBT THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.

Vincent Brinkmann is a new media artist. He studied Digital Media at the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK) and ExMedia at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. He is interested in connections between the virtual and the physical, to bring the digital into physical space and to create a connection between code and material. In his works he questions how we act in a world with an increasing impact by more and more technology. Notions such as »sculpture,« »space« and »material« are common themes of Vincent's works.

Jasna Dimitrovska is interaction designer and artist working with both tangible and intangible media. She studied digital media in Germany and literature in Macedonia and she loves writing »what if« scenarios based on research and imagining/mapping out situations to their finest detail. She has a passion for Neo-futuristic designs and augmented reality applications. As an artist she builds tangible models, prototypes and cultural probes in order to investigate the meaning of human interaction with digital objects. At the moment her challenge is the non-human factor of materiality where various materials and media are connected in a system that needs to meet large number or parameters and protocols. And yes, she believes technology will save us!

Karim (Arnold) Fuad is an interdisciplinary artist and Egyptologist. His work addresses the topics of Identity, Social Anthropology and Selfhood often with film, photography and 3D animation.

Tania Gonzaga graduated in Visual Communication at University Center Senac São Paulo. She is currently finishing a M. A. in Digital Media at University of the Arts Bremen (HfK). She works with a variety of media including video, installation, graphic design, VR and interactive media. Her work explores the boundaries between computers, technology and internet, materiality and immateriality, physical and digital as well as random and structured realms.

Julian-Anthony Hespenheide is a German designer in the fields of Interaction Design. He creates compelling complex installations to tell peculiar stories about the digital and open a discussion space in the analog sphere. His work emphasizes on converging the digital with design, art, science and technology to create novel concepts and a better understanding of the future. He is holding a M.A. in Digital Media from the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK), Germany.

Sarah Käsmayr is a graphic designer, mainly working on books. She received her design diploma at the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK) and holds a M.A. from Werkplaats Typografie, Arnhem (NL). Her ongoing research focuses on illegal reprints of books: pirated editions of literary and scholarly works. Together with Cássia Vila, she developed the concept and design of the publication at hand.

Irena Kukrić As a set designer and media artist, Irena Kukrić creates and explores sets and installations in the context of theater, film, contemporary art and media theory. She has done set design for theater plays, as well as production design for film. Recently she has been creating interactive objects and theatrical installations that were performed and exhibited in different galleries and festivals. She received her Diploma at the University of Arts in Belgrade, Serbia and has a M.A. from the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK).

Lucia Mendelova (Bratislava, Slovakia) finished her M.A. in Digital Media (University of the Arts Bremen in cooperation with University Bremen), her PhD. in Philosophy (Comenius University Bratislava, specialization on epistemology, semiotics and gender studies) and her B.A. in Integrated Design (University of the Arts Bremen and University for Applied Sciences and Arts Luzern). After all of this she ended up in a world of big corporations working full time as a software engineer and designer for mixed reality (AR/VR) applications in the rainy grayish city of Bremen.

Frieder Nake is a professor at University of Bremen and lecturer at University of the Arts Bremen (HfK), teaching Digital Media today. Coming from mathematics, his former teaching and research were in computer science. He has widely published on interactive computer graphics, semiotics, algorithmic art and media theory. His work in computer graphics began in 1963. It made him a pioneer of algorithmic art. He has exhibited around the world. His work is represented in German and international museums.

Henrik Nieratschker's work carves out a space between design and art, technology and science, fiction and theory. Particularly interested in the narrative capacities of designed objects and technological applications, he reflects and extrapolates their states and potentials within the complexity of contemporary, cultural and sociopolitical conditions. His output ranges from graphics, products and video to sculpture, interactive media and writing. In addition to his solo projects, Henrik Nieratschker is cofounder of the experimental design studio proto/meta and the curatorial art collective Research and Waves.

Antonio Palacios is a Peruvian graphic and web designer. He holds a Major of Arts (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú), a Master of Visual Media (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain), and a Master of Arts (University of the Arts Bremen (HfK)). He is CEO of »Kill the Pixel Now Studio,« a company specialized in the development of digital projects. At present he lectures as a professor at the PUCP University, UCAL University, and UPC University in Lima, Perú.

Guida Ribeiro crosses the digital fields of creative coding, electronic prototyping and video art. Her works reflect a trite self-endeavor to find purpose in an apparent void, drawing inspiration from occult motifs, dissident political babble and outsider, mostly rude, forms of music and film. She studied Multimedia Communication in the School of Arts and Spectacle of Porto and is currently a Digital Media Master student at the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK).

Claudia Reiche is a media theorist, artist and curator. Her work focuses on questions of how man/machine relations are designed with words and images. She has worked with thealit Frauen. Kultur.Labor, Bremen since 1992, and currently teaches at the Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg on the theory and history of contemporary media.

Mona Schieren, PhD., is a teaching researcher at the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK) and studied art history and philosophy in Hamburg and Nice. Recent publications: Agnes Martin – Transkulturelle Übersetzung. Zur Konstruktion asianistischer Ästhetiken in der amerikanischen Kunst nach 1945, München 2016; Mersmann/Dogramaci/Minta/Schieren (Ed.): Kunsttopographien globaler Migration. Orte, Räume und institutionelle Kontexte transitorischer Kunsterfahrung, kritische berichte, 43/3, Marburg 2015.

Alan N. Shapiro was visiting full professor in Transdisciplinary Design at the Folkwang University of the Arts from 2015—2017. From 2013—2015, he was senior lecturer at Offenbach Design University, teaching creative coding and science fiction. He is the author of two books: Star Trek: Technologies of Disappearance and Software of the Future, and the editor of two books: The Technological Herbarium and Transdisciplinary Design, published by Passagen Verlag. Alan has been the keynote speaker at academic conferences or art festivals, recently at Zurich Design Biennale.

Andrea Sick is a media theorist and curator. Focus of work and research: relation between technological media and cultural production, research on transitions between biological and information-technological discourses, interfaces of scientific and cultural activities, history and theory of performance-art, queer studies. She has worked as a professor for media theory at the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK) since 2009 and with thealit Frauen.Kultur.Labor, Bremen since 1992.
andreasick.de

Cássia Vila (São José do Rio Preto, Brazil) holds a Bachelor degree in Graphic Design from São Paulo State University. She is currently doing her Masters in Digital Media at the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK), Germany. She prefers not to decide between defining herself as a designer, writer or artist.

Mi You is a Beijing-born curator, researcher, and member of the academic staff at Academy of Media Arts Cologne. Her long-term research project takes the Silk Road as a figuration for deep-time, deep-space, de-centralized and nomadic imageries. She has curated a series of performative programs at Asian Culture Center Theater in Gwangju, South Korea, and the inaugural Ulaanbaatar International Media Art Festival, Mongolia (2016). Her academic interests are in performance philosophy, science and technology studies, as well as philosophy of immanence in Eastern and Western traditions. She is a fellow at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Germany), and serves as director of Arthub (Shanghai) and advisor to The Institute for Provocation (Beijing).

Luiz Zanotello (Jundiaí, Brazil) is a media artist and designer. His work occurs within digital media studies, often by exploring the narrative and critical aspects of technology through kinetic installations, speculative machineries, and experimental interfaces. A designer graduated by the São Paulo State University in 2012, he holds a M.A. in Digital Media granted by the University of the Arts Bremen (HfK) in 2017.