What is happening here?
[exploits of the nonhuman]

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I, Dawn Marie Gaietto, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

What is happening here? [exploits of the nonhuman] is a practice-led research project introducing the proposition of *anthrodecentric art* as conceptual framework. I propose *anthrodecentric art* to be a relational logic opening a state of re-enchantment for the viewer, allowing for the emergence of visible nonhuman agencies. My development of *anthrodecentric art* follows two lines of enquiry: 'How can the practice of art-work to reveal nonhuman agencies?' and, 'What types of representation are most revealing of nonhuman agency to a human audience?' My practical methodology begins with my working theory, testing variations of representation through experiments, generating diagrammatic arguments, enacting these diagrams in space, and developing analytic tools to understand how works impact viewers. I propose that the resulting art objects are not representations of theory but embodiments, extending beyond representation and generating spaces of function — the revelation of nonhuman agencies. I work through modes of non-Cartesian representation, creating a system of connective tissues, conceptual fibres of understanding the relational space between the real/represented through a state of re-enchantment — a space where the real and the represented are equally present/erased. The works presented within this project are works with animate nonhumans as present and active subjects; drawing from social, political, cultural, and ecological histories with the intention to seduce the viewer into a state of re-enchantment with the present and past nonhuman. I propose the viewer is key to the entirety of this project, with the aim of changing perspectives from cultural narcissism to that of a relational and connected existence. The layering of types of representation within each installation of work is intended to de-stabilise the viewer and allow for new ideas and thoughts to emerge — to generate a space of shifting perspectives.

Impact Statement

What is happening here? [exploits of the non-human] is the proposal for a methodology, the critical and practical methodology of *anthrodecentric art*. This methodology is intended to have an impact both within and beyond academia. These impacts are allowing for the recognition of non-human agencies, adding to the discourse of ecological interconnectivity and has the potentially increasing environmental quality of life over time.

Currently environmental, or ecological, concerns impact the daily lives of individuals globally. Global climate change continues to grow in destructive strength, a powerful force impacting individuals, societies, states, and countries. This work speaks to the underlying economic and cultural perspectives which allow for this prospective catastrophe. Asking, 'how can art reveal non-human agencies?' the methodology of *anthrodecentric art* creates a non-Cartesian framework for the production, reception, and criticism of artworks; making visible non-human agencies. The visibility of non-human agencies has the potential to shift human perspectives, patterns of consumption, and economic models accounting for the complex interconnections forming ecological systems and affects.

I have engaged individuals and institutions through exhibitions and events with the aim of furthering understanding. I co-ordinated the conference *Rendering the Invisible Visible,* centred on the visibility of non-human agency. Interdisciplinary academics were brought together, shaping the discourse of ecological interconnectivity. In the public sphere, my engagement activities have ranged from the long-term installation of a pigeon loft onto a UCL rooftop, to my degree show *The Feathered: an exploration of non-human labour*, to the commissioned installation, *Who Looks Back,* and the subsequent panel discussion, *Landscapes of the Future* at Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall. Each point of engagement has transformed the camouflaged non-human existence into a visible intersection of human|non-human engagement. Focussing on the presented intersection allows the audience to consistently move into a broader conversation, demonstrating an understanding of individual actions and perspectives, key to the social

challenges of the looming environmental catastrophes resultant of human behaviours.

The generation of diagrams is a key element of this methodology. Distilling the methodology of non-Cartesian representation and its function, the diagrams work to analyse the methods of production and evaluate viewer response. Positioning the open, complex system of *anthrodecentric art* and non-Cartesian representation accessibly, yet refusing to reduce these systems to antithetical forms; the diagrams bridge the abstract and concrete increasing audience understanding. I utilised these diagrams to critically analyse existing works of art and to guide conversations with viewers, anecdotally recording responses to modes of representation. These diagrams are useful models for generating forms of practice and critically evaluating works of art. As models, they impact the discourses of art criticism and ecological interconnectivity within academia. Enacting the models in public engagement benefits the individual viewer as they increase their awareness of ecological quality of life.

Anthrodecentric art is a research-based proposal to slow down, notice interconnections, and to see the omnipresent non-human agencies — the potential impact enhances a wider public understanding of a responsible, ecological way of thinking.

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The Situation

What is happening here? [exploits of the nonhuman] is a practice-led research project aiming to create critical and practical methodologies allowing for the production and reception of *anthrodecentric art*. I propose *anthrodecentric art* to give viewers the opportunity to see, recognise, and acknowledge the existence of nonhuman agencies. I propose *anthrodecentric art* as a practice of art that neither creates nor reifies a position of privilege for the human actors, allowing them to occupy a central point or perspective; to aid in revealing the agency of nonhuman actants present in the materials, processes, and reception of art.

As such, *anthrodecentric art* seeks to actively:

- refuse positioning nonhumans as a resource for human consumption.
- allow nonhuman agencies to be present in their own capacities.
- allow room for nonhuman agencies to become visible to humans.

A State of Mind

Anthrodecentric art strives to recognise the limits of human knowledge, for the viewer to acknowledge the unknown, and perhaps even accept ambiguity. The ethics of recognition, a guiding force within this research, begins with an acceptance; the acceptance of the fictive state we (most likely) inhabit. The fictive state to which I am referring is that of a *Cartesian state of mind*. This state is filled with abundant dualities and consistently places the human figure atop any and all conceivable hierarchies. While we may be in this state of mind, the *other* (the nonhuman in this case) is always present and remaining elusive. They are always looking. The human is, most likely, incapable of recognising this look. By inhabiting this state of un-recognising, we as humans are complicit in this fictive narrative and continuously render the nonhuman invisible. Although invisible, the nonhuman is omnipresent. These fictive systems have expanded from Cartesian perceptions to abstraction rendered through capitalist thinking via the subsequent loss of indexical relations. My research explores the invisibility of nonhumans and nonhuman agencies, and the constructs which render them so. I am arguing

that nonhuman agency is omnipresent and the invisibility is predicated on the perceptual framework of the viewer — and that this framework can be altered.

Art contributes in shaping a world which becomes, through navigating the individual and the kind. Questions of relational being, inclusion and enchantment offer the chance to explore these parallel relations of the individual and the kind through these art-based experiences.

In considering the newly generated terminology for my research, *anthrodecentric,* I assembled the term in a straight-forward manner. The term is formed from component parts that are quite common to everyday language and can be comprehended purely from their etymology. (See *Fig. 1*). Beginning with the base root of 'anthropo-', this can be initially understood from the simple Greek meaning of 'human.' However, if one were to extrapolate a bit further into the possible definitions, one could substitute 'man' for 'human'. 'De' offers several relevant and possible selections, ranging from 'negation', 'reversal', 'removal', and 'separation', I have drawn from the language of 'removal.' Lastly, '-centric' with meanings around 'being central.' Through this etymological assemblage, I am using a term built from the roots of 'human' - 'removal' - 'centre' or taking the human away from the privileged position. The delineation of this project's particular vocabulary is necessary as language is a primary actor that could be understood outside of my authorial intention.[1]

Research Questions

In order to recognise the omnipresent, yet invisible nonhuman agencies, my research questions emerge from within these constructs of representation to interrogate boundaries and slippages to allow a nonmodern or non-Cartesian perspective. In beginning upon this path, I turn to a conceptualist practitioner within a modernist tradition. Lucy Lippard positions conceptual practice as " . . . emerging from two directions: art as idea and art as action."[2] While these ideas are presented by a modern artist and theorist, this dual position — art as idea and action — is necessary for the successful functioning of a work of *anthrodecentric art*. These ideas

1. Here Haraway explains how the site of language is itself a site of production and should be attended to as such, ". . . [acting as a site of production] where language also is an actor independent of intentions and authors, bodies as objects of knowledge are material-semiotic generative nodes." Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, 200.

2. Lippard, "Escape Attempts," ix.

Anthropo- 1. a learned borrowing from Greek meaning “human,” used in the formation of compound words: Origin of anthropo- Greek, combining form of ánthrōpos human being, man. Word Origin and History for anthropo-before a vowel, anthrop-, word-forming element meaning “pertaining to man or human beings,” from comb. form of Greek anthropos “man, human being” (sometimes also including women) from Attic andra (genitive andros), **from Greek aner “man” (as opposed to a woman, a god, or a boy)**, from PIE *hner “man” (cf. Sanskrit nar-, Armenian ayr, Welsh ner). Anthropos sometimes is explained as a compound of aner and ops (genitive opos) “eye, face;” so literally “he who has the face of a man.” The change of -d- to -th- is difficult to explain; perhaps it is from some lost dialectal variant, or the mistaken belief that there was an aspiration sign over the vowel in the second element (as though *-dhropo-), which mistake might have come about by influence of common verbs such as horao “to see.”

de-[duh; French duh; Spanish de; Portuguese di] Spell Syllables Examples Word Origin preposition1. from; of (used in French, Spanish, and Portuguese personal names, originally to indicate place of origin): Comte de Rochambeau; Don Ricardo de Aragón. Origin of de < French, Spanish, Portuguese < Latin dē. de- 1.a prefix occurring in loanwords from Latin (decide); also **used to indicate privation, removal, and separation** (dehumidify), negation (demerit; derange), descent (degrade; deduce), reversal (detract), intensity (decompound). Compare di-2, dis-1. Origin
Middle English < Latin dē-, prefixal use of dē (preposition) from, away from, of, out of; in some words, < French < Latin dē- or dis- dis-1 de- prefix 1. removal of or from something specified: deforest, dethrone 2. reversal of something: decode, decompose, desegregate 3. departure from: decamp Word Origin from Latin, from dē (prep) from, away from, out of, etc. In compound words of Latin origin, de- also means away, away from (decease); down (degrade); reversal (detect); removal (defoliate); and is used intensively (devote) and pejoratively (detest). Word Origin and History for de Expand
Latin adverb and preposition of separation in space, meaning
“down from, off, away from,” and figuratively “concerning, by reason of, according to;” from PIE demonstrative stem *de- (see to). de- active word-forming element in English and in many words inherited from French and Latin, from Latin de “down, down from, from, off; concerning” (see de), also used as a prefix in Latin usually meaning “down, off, away, from among, down from,” but also “down to the bottom, totally” hence “completely” (intensive or completive), which is its sense in many English words. As a Latin prefix it also had the function of undoing or reversing a verb’s action, and hence it came to be used as a pure privative -- **“not, do the opposite of, undo”** -- which is its primary function as a living prefix in English, as in defrost (1895), defuse (1943), etc. Cf. also dis-. Centric adjective 1. pertaining to or situated at the center; central. 2.
Anatomy, Physiology. pertaining to or originating at a nerve center. Origin of centric 1580-90; < Greek kentrikós of, pertaining to a cardinal point, equivalent to kéntr (on) (see center) + -ikos -ic

-centric
1. a combining form with the meanings “having a center or centers” of the specified number or kind (polycentric); **“centered upon, focused around”** that named by the first element (ethnocentric; heliocentric). Origin Expand
see centr-, -ic. Historical Examples: With centric and ec centric scribbled o’er, / Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb. centric / adjective 1. being central or having a centre 2. relating to or originating at a nerve centre 3. (botany)Also concentric. (of vascular bundles) having one type of tissue completely surrounding the other (of leaves, such as those of the onion) cylindrical -centric suffix 1.having a centre as specified: heliocentric
Word Origin abstracted from eccentric, concentric, etc. Word Origin and History for centric-centric word-forming element meaning “having a center (of a certain kind); centered on,” from Greek kentrikos “pertaining to a center,” from kentron (see center (n.)).

Figure 1. The etymology of *anthrodecentric art.*

(All definitions taken from: Online Etymology Dictionary. Accessed 17 Jan 2016. https://www.etymonline.com.)

introduce essential elements of a continuously evolving work of art, moving through idea and action — and the space between.[3]

How can the practice of art-work to reveal nonhuman agencies?

What types of representation are most revealing of nonhuman agency to a human audience?

A Process

I will argue that *anthrodecentric art* offers approaches to becoming-with the nonhuman through artistic practice and encounters. In speaking to the practical research and knowledge proposed in this project, the nonhuman agencies and knowledges in the world are not to be understood as separate from the human experience or as resources to support humans; but can be understood as a research into the potentialities and possibilities of our relationships to nonhumans. As Donna Haraway states, "Acknowledging the agency of the world in knowledge makes room for some unsettling possibilities, including a sense of the world's independent sense of humour. Such a sense of humour is not comfortable for humanists and others committed to the world as a resource."[4] The accepting and welcoming of these unsettling possibilities and humour is integral in the experiments of *anthrodecentric art*. This process of creation and viewing utilises non-Cartesian representation (NCR) as methodology. This enables access to the four primary axioms of *anthrodecentric art*: re-enchantment, the visibility of nonhuman agency, sustainable economies, and sustainable use of resources.[5]

The first step of *anthrodecentric art* is utilising non-Cartesian modes of representation. By using these modes of representation, the hierarchy of human privilege can be evaded by creating a generatively confusing space of encounter for the viewer. Using NCR as a methodology, a state of 're-enchantment' can possibly be achieved. This state can allow for nonhumans to re-attain their values outside of human consumption from the human

3. This will be further explored in *The Look* through movement, slippage, and reciprocity.

4. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, 299.

5. The third and fourth axioms of *anthrodecentric art,* sustainable economies, and sustainable use of resources, will be explored in future research. My thesis is focussed on developing axioms one and two.

perspective. Re-enchantment, the second step, is an innately subversive state, it is a rejection of oppressing *the other*. This happens through slight diagonals in representation, not harsh ruptures, this happens through processes of emergence. This practical project of emergence must be unpredictable to allow for potential paths of interest to be discovered and then followed. Here Barbara Bolt reviews the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari regarding the openness required to carry forward,

> When asking how can one's work operate in this way . . . 'Deleuze and Guattari argue it is when the molecular elements within a work produce 'lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification'. This is not chaos, but rather a configuration of speeds, accelerations, intensities and rupture' . . . They begin with a recognition that we necessarily operate within the social formation. 'Lodge yourself on a stratum', they say, and 'experiment with the opportunities it offers'. Once you have found an advantageous place from which to find potential moments for lines of flight, connect with them and surf them. They claim that it is only through a meticulous relation with the strata that one can succeed in freeing lines of flight.[6]

Once in the state of re-enchantment, a viewer can then be open to seeing nonhuman agency, the present-elusive, becomes present-with-recognised. What has been pushed into the realm of the invisible can become visible again. The viewer will be able to look, see, and be with the present nonhumans.[7]

Thinking Naturata

Mary Shelley's Dr. Frankenstein looked to the knowledge of the ancients.[8] A knowledge of possibility— not the Modern knowledge of impossibility. Shelley, through the actions of Dr. Frankenstein, questioned the boundaries of life and death and the space of possibility between; although this space became, or always was, monstrous. *Anthrodecentric art* heralds a knowledge of the nonhuman with power, not a monstrous power, but the power of agency. *Anthrodecentric art* works in the space of possibility— a third space of re-presentation which shifts a viewer's perspective to see what surrounds them, a spectrum of nonhuman agencies.[9]

6. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation,* 41.

7. Throughout this thesis I readily draw from the work of Barbara Bolt as a mediator of 20th Century (and prior) male authors. This is not an attempt to deny the importance of the original authors and their contributions, but in positioning Bolt (as well as Haraway, Bennett, and Barad) as layering voice(s), the original theories are re-positioned and re-visited through contemporary theory relating to nonhuman agency through a female voice, thereby diffracted and refracted into a multi-vocal assemblage of articulated theories, gaps and overlaps.

8. Shelley, *Frankenstein.*

9. I am positing the *third space of re-presentation* as the space between action and idea, a space in which the artwork has generated its own being and relations. This particular term and my usage will be further developed in future research.

Underlying my proposition, *anthrodecentric art,* is a long lineage of thinking and belief that attribute agency, soul, and or life to nonhuman things. Animism is the oldest known 'religion' and actually outdates paganism. Animism allows agency to all material phenomena through the possession of souls. Ancient Greeks believed in the 'what-is', which will be further discussed in *The Look*. Also, the Greek doctrine, hylozoism, that all matter has life which dates back to pre-Socratic philosophers. This material liveliness also accounted for consciousness. Moving forward to 17th Century Amsterdam, Baruch Spinoza published his text *Ethics*, in this treatise he equates god and nature, calling for an understanding of god that is not anthropomorphised. He cites nature as two parts, first *natura naturans* and the second, *natura naturata*.[10] These are the active and passive elements of the universe, or god and all of his attributes which are to be understood as indivisible, uncaused, and as a whole. In contemporary thinking, Bruno Latour introduced actor-network-theory within his sociology research, which treats non-living things as active agents. This thinking has continued to evolve, in discussions around agents, actants, and nonhuman agency, as I will discuss further through Jane Bennett in *The Frame*. The active and passive things by which we are surrounded have long been viewed as agential beings, the work of *anthrodecentric art* continues this line of thinking and expands this to the agency of artworks as themselves things and as things capable of shifting the perspectives of human viewers towards other nonhuman things.

10. Spinoza, *Ethics*, 28.

Preparing a Space

"So today I have expressly rid my mind of all worries and arranged for myself a clear stretch of free time. I am here quite alone, and at last I will devote myself sincerely and without reservation to the general demolition of my opinions."[11] Early in the *Meditations*, Descartes establishes his situation, the beginnings of his philosophical meanderings, alone and devoted to the study of his opinions. He unravels his mind and its relationship to the extended things by which he is surrounded, with 'clear and distinct' perceptions, understanding and imagination,

11. Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy,* 5.

and through a causal argument for the existence of God. Resulting in a conclusion, "But nevertheless, on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am simply a thinking, non-extended thing; and on the other hand I have a distinct idea of body, in so are as this is simply an extended, non-thinking thing. And accordingly, it is certain that I am really distinct from my day, and can exist without it."[12] Two hands, two things, two ideas: the mind and the body. Spinoza, following shortly thereafter, refutes these notions positioning all things (bodies) as animate and 'minded', and all things are reliant upon two attributes: extension and thought, these are the basis of a reality.[13] I am suggesting that the Cartesian line of thinking underlies common perceptions and approaches to unconstrained consumption, the perception of nonhumans as *less than* on a hierarchy, things without mind or agency — this is the basis of the *Cartesian fictive* I propose to alter through the usage of non-Cartesian representation. While Descartes claims, "This consideration is the greatest help to me, not only for noticing all the errors to which my nature is liable, but also for enabling me to correct or avoid them without difficulty."[14] and no doubt this may have been true for him, or his authorial *I* in writing, at this time a different way of thinking, of relating to other bodies, may be necessary.

In engaging with the practice of art with an objective of shifting perspective, I will necessarily be engaging with representation. I will begin exploring the term 'representation' through systems theory. The language of systems theory allows for the complexity of this subject to be discussed with clarity and embraces the interconnections which abound. In addition, I am situating the practice of *anthrodecentric art* and the methodology of NCR as open, complex, non-linear, and emergent system. In systems theory there are three general categories: natural systems, artificial systems, and epistemological systems.[15] In speaking of the notion of representation, I am referring to the third type: the epistemological system. Halsall defines epistemological systems as discursive system of representation, this is key to allowing the agency of nonhumans becoming visible in an artwork.[16] But, the question of 'what is representation?' and 'how does it function?' remain. How are these systems of knowledge brought to the viewers and how are they understood?

12. Descartes, 28.

13. Spinoza, *Ethics,* 55 and 3.

14. Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy,* 33.

15. Halsall explains the three systems, "Broadly speaking, general system theory operates through the analyses of three types of systems. These are:

1. Natural Systems, those systems said to occur naturally. These include such systems as an ant colony, a weather system or a cognitive system such as the brain.

2. Artificial Systems. These are non-natural systems such as economic markets, or models of artificial intelligence which are, in the broadest sense the product of human activity.

3. Epistemological Systems.

Halsall, *Systems of Art*, 32.

16. Halsall, 32.

Attempting to answer such a question requires historical grounding of the operation(s) of representation. However, a direct line of enquiry will not be suitable. I will begin here with a living female author, Barbara Bolt, discussing Heidegger's position of more deceased men from the Greek epoch -- a loop of discussion around systems of artistic representation, "In a comparison of early Greek and Modern epochs, Heidegger explains the historical shift in the understanding of what-is. He suggests that in the pre-Socratic Greek world, man is the one who is looked upon by what-is. In the Modern epoch a reversal occurs. Man is the one who does the looking. He becomes the one who looks upon what-is. What-is becomes an object of man's scrutiny."[17] To restate, for the Greeks, what-is was a presence; while for a modernist, what-is, is an object of man's scrutiny. This is a positioning of 'man' in power and in the centre of all nonhuman elements by which he is surrounded. This sentiment is echoed in this explanation by Latour once again looped and re-presented through a female voice, this Cartesian regime of representation as presented by Latour and Heidegger via Bolt is that of a chasm between the human viewer and the absentee object of the representation. This subject viewing an object relationship is unilateral. This unilateral viewing reinforces the position of 'man's' domination over the *other*, or the 'not man'.

From the position of NCR, it is necessary to remove man from this position of dominion in reference to modes of representation. As Bolt/Heidegger is quoted below, the necessity lies in understanding the relationship of being present, to unconceal (or to reveal), the power to represent the other, and to position the representer outside of the represented has been strengthened through technological developments. This outside position allows the representer to create frames of understanding. These frames only allow limited points of access for other viewers, strict points of access. As Bolt/Heidegger elucidates here, technology-driven frames can create linear trajectories of associations which are not easily reconfigured. Instead of following the above delineated line of thought, representation has alternate capacities (as shown through the Greek example of being looked upon). This is a matter of positioning the represented and the representer; as well as allowing for alternate frames of viewing and

17. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation,* 19.

construction of alternate epistemological systems of representation. *Anthrodecentric art* calls for an alternate mode of re-presentation that works with the nonhuman agencies and allows for the visibility of these nonhuman agents. This is the rationale for NCR to be both a critical and practical methodology. The critical methodology allows for a deconstruction of the pre-existing Cartesian frames and the practical methodology results in active viewing positions of experience, or rather of encounters. These encounters seek to allow viewers the experience of new patterns that exist beyond a modern framework of representation.

This modern framework of representation works within the fictive imaginary mentioned earlier; I am arguing that a viewer can encounter an experience outside of this framework through moving into a state of re-enchantment. I am positioning this, Cartesian representation, as a fictive imaginary as it is determined by cultural ideas, in particular a cultural understanding of Enlightenment in the West. Following a binary understanding of enchantment, the dualities of this fictive imaginary are built and supported, in particular the binary of Western Modern thinking versus the superstitious, the irrational, and the imagined. In the dialectical view of enchantment, Modernity is enchanted, dangerously and oppressively, and seeks to abolish individuality. In this research, my usage of re-enchantment draws from the contemporary developments of antinomial enchantment. Within the antinomial approach to understanding re-enchantment, this research works to embrace the complexities of life, life in constant collaboration and co-existence with humans and nonhumans alike. Following the rational, secular, and deliberate strategies set forth by Landy and Saler, a viewer engaging with a work of *anthrodecentric art* can provide the opportunity for entering a state of re-enchantment.[18] Order: the use of NCR as a practical methodology orders the logic of the encounter for the potential of revealing the nonhuman agencies. Purpose: the purposes of nonhuman things in the encounter are present as they are, not as purposed solely for human consumption. Redemption of the individual: the individual viewer, through the arts encounter, can rejoin the collective of agential things in the world through conscious and independent action. The significance of the encounter: a viewer is presented an opportunity to become-with "moments of being in

18. Landy and Saler, "The Varieties of Modern Enchantment," 2.

which the centre appears to hold union with something larger than itself," this something is an ecological collective of beings, human and nonhuman, each with purpose.[19] This approach to re-enchantment is not irrational, it is rationally situated within an ecological order, presenting the viewer with a space to inhabit a diverse environment, one of individual autonomy and responsibility. In this research to be re-enchanted is to recognise the what-is and to be with the what-is, including but limited to the nonhumans of the world.

When I speak of nonhumans of what do I speak? From my position, the list of nonhumans is inclusive of things such as: tree, frog, amoeba, virus, ice, river, climate, electricity, iron, phosphorous, plastic, oil, coal, salt, a wooden board . . . However, immediate questions arise regarding this notion of nonhuman, 'What is the difference between a nonhuman agent and a force: for instance, the elements of air, oxygen, nitrogen, etc. and a system such as climate?' Or, 'What is the difference between a 'raw' nonhuman and a 'processed' nonhuman, i.e. a tree versus a wooden plank?' If all of the above can be considered nonhuman actants, what are the boundaries or differences in agency between these? While climate is easily identifiable as a system, it is composed of material components such as atoms and molecules, dust and moisture; then manifests change outside of itself, therefore identified as an actant. The list of potential actants is seemingly endless and varies in degrees of complexity from a single-celled organism, such as the amoeba, to highly complex systems such as global climate. Or as Grosz explains, "The nonhuman is a cover-all term for a wide variety of things: other living things (animals and plants); nonliving things (objects, processes, events); and incorporeals, including spaces and time."[20] Materiality, historical entanglement, and indexicality are key components in determining an actant in my research, or more specifically a nonhuman actant within *anthrodecentric art*.

From this understanding of nonhuman, I move now to define nonhuman agency within this research. "Nature is neither a passive surface awaiting the mark of culture nor the end product of cultural performances," this statement by Barad articulates a central premise of this research; nature, or the realm of nonhumans, is efficacious outside of anthropocentric understandings

19. Landy and Saler, 2

20. Roffe and Stark, "Deleuze and the Nonhuman Turn," 22.

and uses, outside of the realm of human narcissism.[21] This is why I have decided to use the term *agency* in this research, from the initial engagement with the language of this research I am attempting to acknowledge the active power of nonhumans, regardless of human presence or engagement. The space of this research, of these practical engagements, is posthumanist in recognising the agential capacities of nonhumans, both animate and inanimate. My use of agency draws from an understanding of distributed agency stemming from interactivity, not agency as an attribute of an isolated subject. My usage of agency does not include discussions of cognition, emotion or consciousness, nor the zero-sum game of the agency of the oppressed and the oppressor as discussed in human-political-matters.[22] My usage of agency draws from contemporary thinkers such as Bruno Latour, Karen Barad, Donna Haraway, Anna Tsing, and Jane Bennett.[23]

I will begin here with Actor-Network-Theory, this research draws from a language allowing for the recognition of distributed nonhuman agencies, for an experimental engagement with a microcosm of these agencies within the arts encounter. Latour defines actant as, "a term from semiotics covering both humans and non-humans; an actor is an entity that modifies another entity in a trial; of actors it can only be said that they act; their competence is deduced from their performance; the action, in turn, is always recorded in the course of a trial and by an experimental protocol, elementary or not."[24] This semiotics grounding allows for the expectation of a human viewer being able to read and engage in the arts-experiment, to look and see the nonhuman agencies. Agential realism expands this semiotic engagement as a continuous given state, "the mind is always reading material."[25] Bennett describes the concept of vital materialism as understanding, "the capacity of things — edibles, commodities, storms, metals — not only to impede or block the will and designs of humans but also to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own."[26] This notion of independent force is the ability, or the active power of things, nonhumans, to act outside of the realm of human will and control. Barad discusses agency from the position of agential realism, "Agency is not aligned with human intentionality or subjectivity."[27] The discussion of intentionality is irrelevant in this

21. Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity," 827.

22. Agrawal, "Enchantment and Disenchantment," 635.

23. This lineage will be further examined in *The Frame*.

24. Latour, *Politics of Nature*, 237.

25. Barad, "Matter Feels."

26. Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, viii.

27. Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity," 826.

research as this individual attribute does not impact distributed agency and human subjectivity is unessential as nonhuman agency exists regardless of human acknowledgement. Barad continues, "Agency is a matter of intra-acting; it is an enactment, not something that someone has," again, in this discussion of nonhumans, the personal attribute of agency is unimportant, it is relational being, the unfolding of interacting, the distributed agency which is of concern.[28]

In this practice-led research, it is the microcosmic-experimental space of the gallery which is under examination. In the arts encounters, I am working to place a small number of select animate and inanimate nonhuman actants in semiotic-relation to one another and the human viewer. The aim is for this small window of interaction, or intra-actions, between things through the use of NCR, and moving a viewer to a state of re-enchantment (or outside of the haunting of Descartes' mind/body dualism), to acknowledge the intra-actions, the agency of the nonhumans. Then through the recognition the experimental apparatus, the arts encounter, to possibly re-emerge into the macrocosm with the ability to read and understand the extent and impacts of intra-activity reverberating throughout the world. To look and to see these ripple effects, the concentric circles and the impacts of unconstrained consumerism, that as a human, one is within the circles, not outside. "We are not outside observers of the world. Nor are we simply located at particular places in the world; rather, we are part of the world in its ongoing intra-activity," Barad positions the human firmly entwined with the nonhumans, consciousness nor intentionality will eradicate the material connections and implications of nonhuman power.[29] This research is political by nature, as I am calling for the recognition of nonhumans and humans to be recognised as ecological actors, to not isolate the perceived effects of consumption simply with capitalist systems of market value and cost. The distributed agency of unconstrained consumption does not stop at an individual level, rather these effects, these intra-actions ripple outward over space and time impacting other humans and nonhumans.

In presenting my argument for *anthrodecentric art*, I will be utilising diagrams in tandem with the text. The diagram is an essential method in my work as the immediate bridge between theory and practice — idea and action — the concrete and the abstract. The diagram will also

28. Barad, 826.

29. Barad, 828.

provide a basis for a qualitative analysis of the practical works. Deleuze comments upon the work of Spinoza that the diagram, "it is a plan in a geometric sense: a section, an intersection, a diagram."[30] My approach to the diagram is using the space as a mapping tool, mapping potentialities: spaces, lines of thinking, and intersections in a non-proscriptive manner, but not necessarily in a geometric manner. In short, the diagrams are modes of practice. They are theory in action. They are unfixed. They are relational. These diagrams are not proscriptive. Aspects of the diagram that are less legible are intended to open lines of inquiry and allow for independent, individual engagement with the proposed theory. The diagrams presented through this thesis utilise the modes and strategies of NCR (which I explicitly propose in *The Look)*: movement, chaos, reciprocal exchange, slippage; as well as present functional, re-presentational spaces engaging with questions around use and value. If perceived as a tool, the diagrams I present are useless tools, bordering on opaque, but add value via complexity to the engagement with relational theory. The diagrams are plans of potentialities and can be negotiated by each reader as a use-less tool for engaging with processes of revealing. A reader's engagement with the diagrams is not dependent upon my authorial intention, but a continued opportunity to negotiate with the active theories, self-determining their value — an experiment of translating in a relational space.

30. Deleuze, *Spinoza,* 122.

Art Histories and Presences

In situating my research within art history, first I will establish the term 'modern,' then I will examine a non-canonical lineage of art criticism. Following the thinking of Latour, we have never been modern.[31] Modernity implies that everything before has been changed with a demonstrable separation of facts from personal judgement, which we collectively have not accomplished. Graham Harman explicates Latour's position as a *nonmodern*, "For we ourselves, just like Neanderthals, sparrows, mushrooms, and dirt, have never done anything else than act amidst the bustle of other actants, compressing and resisting them, or giving way beneath their

31. Latour, *We Have Never*, 10.

blows."[32] *Anthrodecentric art* is focussed upon making visible this melee of acts and actants.

As *anthrodecentric art* is proposed to give viewers the opportunity to see, recognise, and acknowledge the existence of nonhuman agencies, I will now examine the notions of 'to see,' 'to recognise,' and 'to acknowledge' through pre-modern and modern art criticism alongside contemporary alternatives creating a *nonmodern* space within the field. In 1905, Georg Simmel wrote in his text, *Rembrandt,* a precursor to modernist art criticism, ". . . much of what we believe we 'see' directly is in fact not seen at all, but rather, as one says, is 'deduced."[33] Simmel expands this notion of what is 'deduced' into once assembling a 'unity of the object' and 'can fill itself with other selves just as it can with its own.'[34] Simmel's analysis of seeing in regards to this renaissance painter, Rembrandt, reflects a *nonmodern* perspective. From this perspective, there is not a divisive separation between elements, one which allows for a unity and complexity of interaction and engagement between subjects. A line of argument, of seeing the parts versus the whole. pervades modernist art criticism and the 1960's argument between Michael Fried and Donald Judd (amongst other Minimalists of the time). "When you start relating parts . . . you're assuming you have a vague whole . . . and definite parts . . . you should have a definite whole and maybe no parts[35] . . . " as expressed by Judd. This position on the whole and the parts informs Fried's position that the falseness of a manufactured focus upon the shape evades the importance of creating relation within the work alone. For Fried, the dependence upon the viewer to complete the work with their bodily presence discredited the wholeness of the work to be seen on its own, the viewer as an active agent was a distraction.

As his position on 'to see' pulls Fried away from the desired perspective of *anthrodecentric art* as he focused on 'looking upon' an object as a material only, his position relating to distance is aligned with the notion of 'to recognise' and 'to acknowledge.' Fried argues that the, ". . . nonrelational, unitary character, *distances* the beholder — not just physically but psychically. It is, one might say, precisely this distancing that *makes* the beholder a subject and the piece in question . . . an object."[36] This rejection of distancing and objecthood in Fried's position allows for recognition and acknowledgement — although his position is centred upon the agency of

32. Harman, *Prince of Networks*, 58.

33. Simmel, *Rembrandt,* 17.

34. Simmel, 17.

35. Fried, *Art and Objecthood,* 149.

36. Fried, 154.

the artwork, I am here extrapolating that position to nonhuman agency as a whole. Moving forward to the contemporary criticism of Barbara Bolt, she furthers the argument of the necessity of the nonhuman, the artwork, as a subject, "The unfolding of the work in the open region of the world is the realm of performativity where the logic of practice, not rationality, operates. In this realm not-knowing-of-the other contrasts with representationalist knowing of *subjectum*. An object is no longer set before a *subjectum*." This is not the distance feared by Fried set into motion, but an allowance for emergence, an emergence of nonhuman agency. From this arts criticism context, I move forward into examining the contemporary arts landscape of ecology, nonhumans, and notions of agency.

Practical Presences

Drawing from this philosophical position, the importance of understanding modes of representation in the practice of art can be explored. The intellectual exploration and understanding of representation seem to release the artists' practice from an object-bound physical state of viewing. Bolt/Deleuze supports this importance and distinction in practice. *Anthrodecentric art* is a fluid state of practice and utilises movement in individual works, installations of work, text works, and bodily positions in regard to encountering nonhuman agents. This is a practice that cannot be given a fixed status or definition but is continually becoming-with or emerging-from within itself and the mode(s) of representation necessary to move beyond the Cartesian frames of viewing.

Recent contemporary examples of works moving in this direction include two major exhibitions: Expo X at M.O.M.A. P.S.1 in New York, U.S.A., 2013; and dOCUMENTA (13) in Kassel, Germany, 2012. In Expo X, viewers were exposed to works by Meg Webster, Olafur Eliasson, and Adrián Villar Rojas. In Rojas's, *La Inocencia de los Animales*, viewers were confronted with Fried's fears of the theatrical, the import of the viewer's body in relation to the shape-based sculptural constructs. Yet, this conflation of antiquity and contemporary presence

with the basis of knowledge was a site of imagining a lack of human presence or existence. Meg Websters 1983 work, *Pool*, made visible the support structures of falsified nonhumans as entertainment entities. Eliasson in *Your Waste of Time*, brought to the gallery calved icebergs in a sealed and insulated, refrigerated room powered by solar panels.[37] While Expo X was "an exploration of ecological challenges in the context of the economic and sociopolitical instability of the 21st century,"[38] I argue that the parts were not operating as a whole and failed to make primary a discussion of nonhuman agencies to highlight the import of nonhuman agencies in the face of our contemporary ecological challenges.

dOCUMENTA (13) was prefaced to the viewers,

> These are terrains where politics are inseparable from a sensual, energetic, and worldly alliance between current research in various scientific and artistic fields and other knowledges, both ancient and contemporary. dOCUMENTA (13) is driven by a holistic and non-logocentric vision that is skeptical of the persisting belief in economic growth. This vision is shared with, and recognizes, the shapes and practices of knowing all of the animate and inanimate makers of the world, including people.[39]

This text opens many lines of thinking and questioning, most importantly from the lens of *anthrodecentric art* I am concerned with the notions of 'worldly alliance,' 'ancient and contemporary knowledge,' and the recognition of 'animate and inanimate makers of the world.' The recognition of the relationship between the inanimate makers and politics is essential to *anthrodecentric art*, particularly when considering ecological relations and impacts. In *The Worldly House*, an archive of works constructed by Tue Greenfort based on the written works of Donna J. Haraway, Greenfort assembled an extensive collection of artworks examining the animal as relational subject. In *Dog Run*, Brian Jungen created a social sculpture only accessible to humans with a canine companion, but visibly accessible to all passersby. Pierre Huyghe constructed a social sculpture inhabited by the natives of Karlsaue Park, a trained dog, marble, and bees (to name just a few of the constituent actors) which viewers could stumble into through the stinging nettles — or follow the signs from the other side. This integration of actors

37. This work will be further discussed in *The Frame*.

38. "EXPO 1: NEW YORK," MoMA PS1.

39. Christov-Bakargiev, *The Guidebook*, 6.

brought the viewer into the relations, becoming-with the artwork.[40] The visual and linguistic grammar of dOCUMENTA (13) was an early inspiration and impetus for my research and the development of *anthrodecentric art*. The excavation of relations between humans and nonhumans through art expressed through the inevitable political import is integral to the ethics of recognition, to the ethics of *anthrodecentric art*.

Moving Forward

I am arguing that it is important to take on this line of research now (or before now), as we live in a time of global environmental changes such as: climate change and mass extinction.[41] The pervasive view of humans as outside of nature has been reified through Cartesian systems of representation that allow for all nonhumans to be positioned as ready for human consumption and mastery. As representation has provided support for this view and allowed it to spread, I am arguing that it is time (or past time) to use alternate or emergent modes of representation that are no longer complicit in this point of view. Art that operates outside of this prevalent mode allows for the revealing of relations beyond the scope of the human, opening up to more complex relations, revealing nonhuman agencies and affects. I propose that this research will be a contribution to knowledge in the field of art by means of questioning and providing alternate options in representation, experience, and systems of awareness. I propose that this research will contribute to the understanding of framing versus revealing through artistic practice, exposure to and ability to comprehend non-linear and non-hierarchical systems, through building critical thinking experiences through engagement with *anthrodecentric art*.

Application

The premise of my research is developing *anthrodecentric art* as a critical and practical

40. This work will be further examined in *The State*.

41. For further reference into governmental and private scientific studies and demonstration of these two phenomena, please see the following sources:

Department of Energy & Climate Change. 'Climate Change and Energy - Guidance. Climate Change Explained.' (Government Digital Service, 2014. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change-explained).
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. 'Fifth Assessment Report'. (IPCC, 2014. http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/).
Barnosky, Anthony D., and et al. 'Has the Earth's Sixth Mass Extinction Already Arrived?' (Nature 471, no. 7336 (2011): 51–57).
Wake, David B., and Vance T. Vredenburg. 'Are We in the Midst of the Sixth Mass Extinction? A View from the World of Amphibians'. (PNAS 105, no. 1 (2008). www.pnas. org cgi doi 10.1073 pnas.0801921105).

methodology. This premise and my research questions will be explored through the practice of *anthrodecentric art* in the examination of non-Cartesian representation, states of re-enchantment, notions of nonhuman agency, and then through the analysis of my practical research. NCR is the primary working methodology in the generation of new practical works. As NCR includes all things that are not Cartesian modes of representation, I will argue movement, slippage, and reciprocity are the three primary modes of NCR imperative to a work of *anthrodecentric art*. The methodology of NCR will be discussed at length in *The Look*. In *The State*, approaches to re-enchanted perspectives will be investigated with contemporary examples of enchanted thinking. Then, the impact of these ideas on viewers will be unpacked through discussing the function of NCR within the reception of artwork. In *The Frame*, nonhuman agency will be defined and explored in situ, through tales of folklore and chemical functions of the human brain. Moving into *The Furred* and *The Feathered* a series of my works will be presented through the terms of *anthrodecentric art*.

The Look

a look at non-Cartesian re-presentation

Before the question, "How can the practice of art-work to reveal nonhuman agencies?" can be answered, I must first address, "What types of representation are most revealing of nonhuman agency to a human audience?" The proposition of *anthrodecentric art* relies upon the use of non-Cartesian representation (NCR) as methodology allowing for a state of re-enchantment to be achieved; then, to look at how the practice of art can reveal nonhuman agencies. In short, NCR will not reify the false binaries that pervade Cartesian thinking, and NCR will not be a practice of *othering*.[42] This is a methodology that will enable looking, seeing, and being with another.[43]

In the current and predominate mode of Cartesian representation, I am arguing that we are complicit in a collective fictive experience, an experience of looking, seeing, and being that excludes all others. Through the practice of *anthrodecentric art*, I am proposing to fill this gap of exclusion — to escape this invisible fictive and slip into a re-presentational space that is a shared and relative experience, a being-with, an experience of 'what-is' beyond a solely anthropocentric perspective. Bolt explains the danger of representationalism, as distributor of the fictive, as a mechanism of control, "What is at issue is not so much representation in itself, but rather how, in the modern world, representation has come to be understood as the structure that enables representationalism to dominate our contemporary way of thinking. Representationalism is a system of thought that fixes the world as an object and resource for human subjects."[44] Bolt succinctly explains the pervasive view of humans as outside of nature, which has been reified through modernist or normative systems of representation that allow for all nonhumans to be positioned as ready for human consumption and mastery.[45] "Representationalism orders the world and predetermines what can be thought."[46] If this is so, art that operates outside of this prevalent mode can allow for the revealing of relations beyond the scope of the human, opening up to more complex relations revealing nonhuman agencies and affects.

I am proposing NCR as a methodology to operate outside of this prevalent of representationalism and to experience 'what-is' through the practice of *anthrodecentric art*. The realm of NCR is vast, it encompasses any mode of representation that does not reify the human/

42. These binaries include but are not limited to the nature/culture and the masculine/feminine binaries. NCR is predicated on ambiguity and the reality of spectrums and interconnectivity. The notion of opposition is rejected in favour of relational logic and being.

43. Please see Appendix 1 "Expanded Case Studies" for additional information on the process of testing and evaluation.

44. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation*, 12.

45. Although I predominately use the term Cartesian representation, the term Modernist representation can be used synonymously. Both refer to the developments of Cartesian logic and the binary modes of thinking and separation that continue from this philosophical time.

46. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation*, 9.

nature binary. In developing NCR as the working methodology of *anthrodecentric art*, I have identified three primary modes that are essential to generating a space of re-presentation which could allow for the emergence of visible nonhuman agencies (see *Fig. 2*). These three modes are movement, reciprocity, and slippage.[47]

As I present NCR as a methodology, I will be presenting two pairs of artworks which relate to specific points in the discussion and which relate to the discussion of my practice works in *The Furred* and *The Feathered*. These pairings and the other artworks referenced throughout this thesis are not intended to function as a survey, nor a contemporary or historical overview of artworks related to the animal. These selections will be analysing the specific usage of the animal within these artworks and situating the works within the theoretical models I am proposing.

Movement

The NCR mode of movement is an active mode, operating through chaos, unfixing, revision, performing theory, and revealing. These operations are unending and are un-utilitarian, moving along diagonals to create new conceptual spaces. The approaches to practice I am utilising from movement are first and foremost predicated on the action of thinking or the idea. In foregrounding the action of thinking, material waste is reduced, and this is always of the utmost importance. The development of concept is achieved through an active and continuously moving line of flight — striving towards the slight diagonal necessary for re-enchantment. The work of *anthrodecentric art* will take risks and consciously attempt to suspend utilitarian notions of use, specifically relating to the abstraction of economies and the art market. Yet, strives to retain a relationship to conceptual use and active thinking in the artist and viewer. Visualisation is mandatory in the active thinking process, ensuring conceptual content and aiding the avoidance of unnecessary material consumption. Here, making does not reveal the meaning, the revelation is unending. In these process-based works, there is no

47. Please see Appendix A for practical experiments leading to this designation.

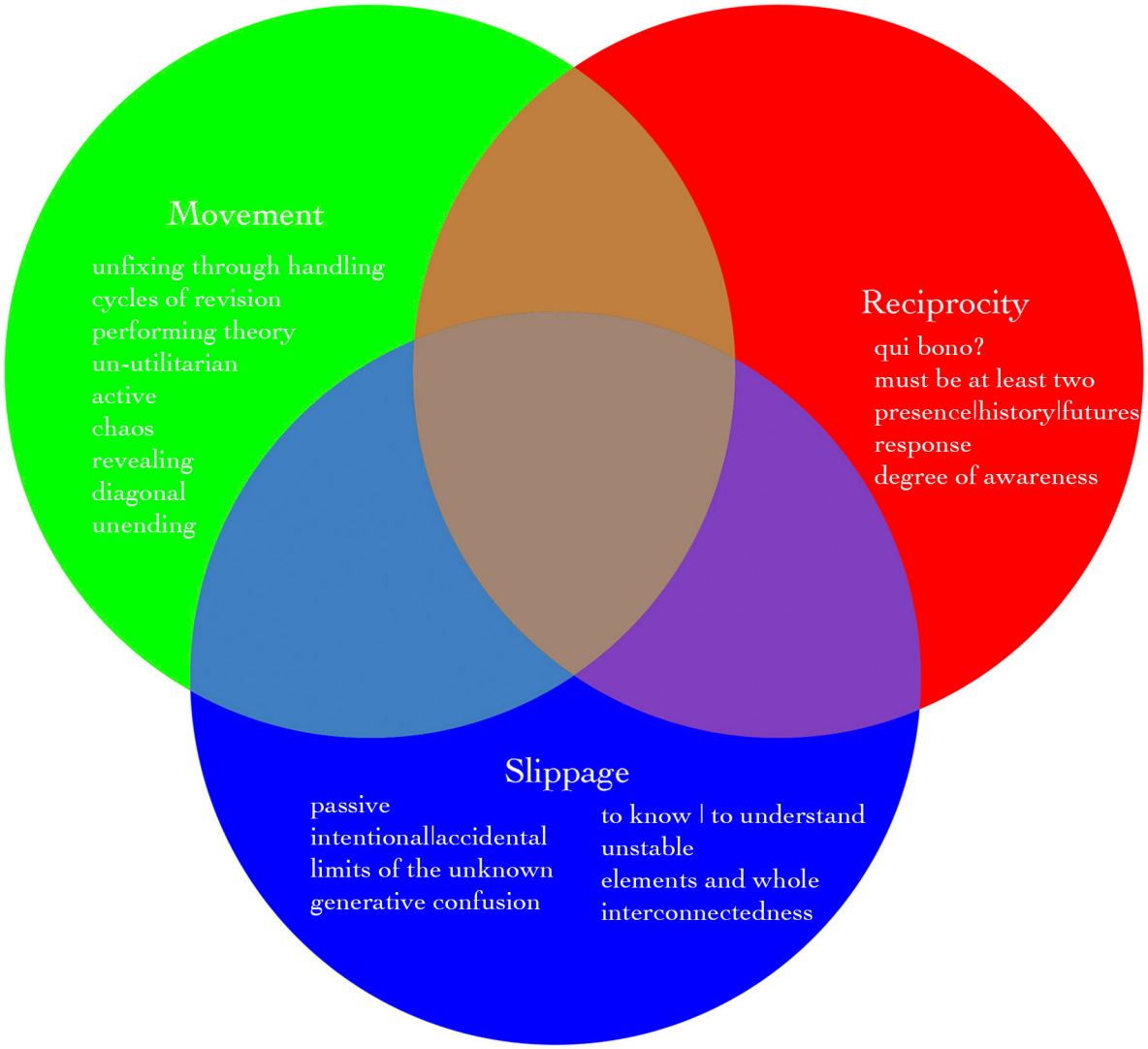
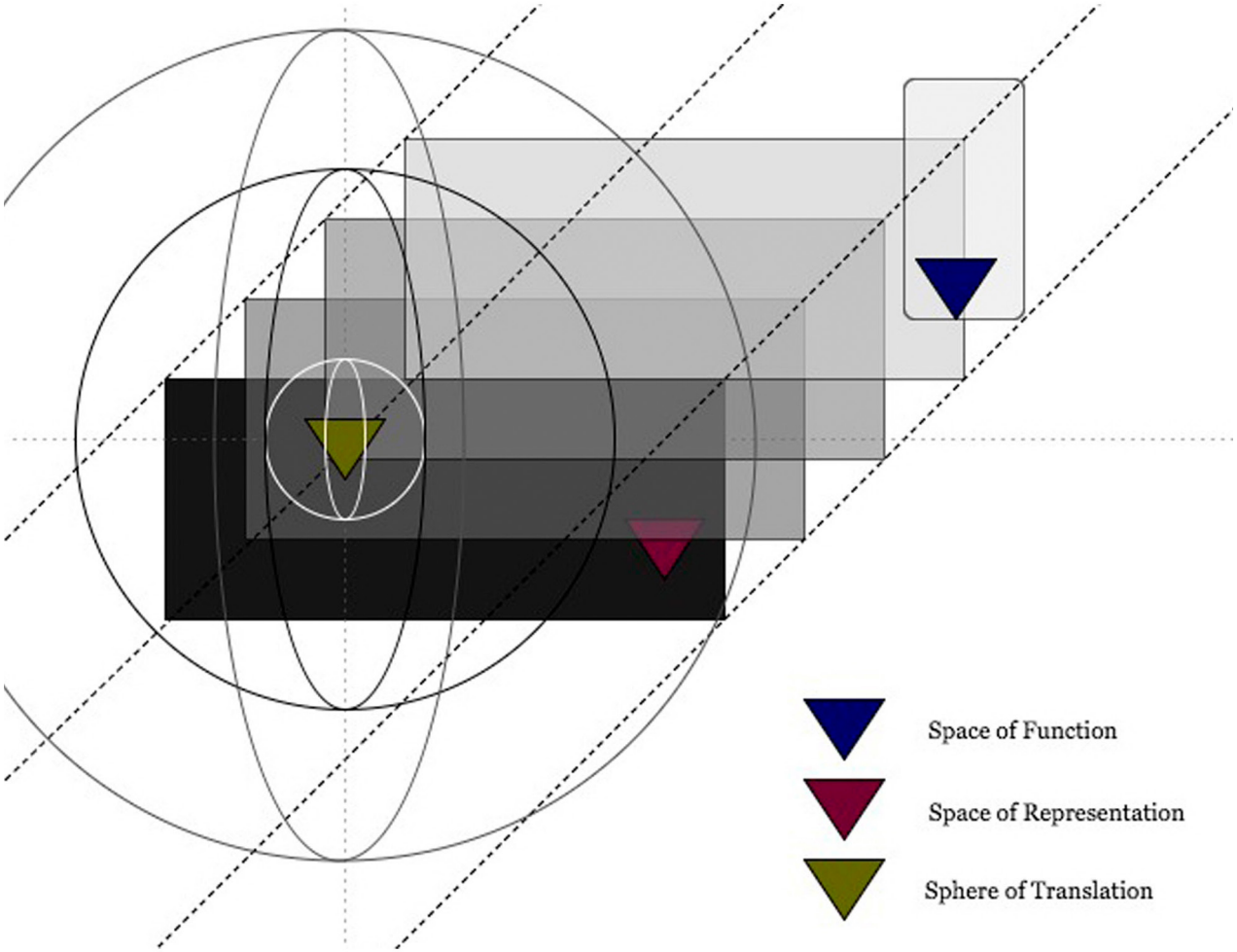


Figure 2. *Diagramming the modes of non-Cartesian representation,* 2017.

Figure 3. *Realms of influence*, 2017.



moment of completion — there is a continuous cycle of revision. The process of revision relies on the viewer and re-making towards the experience of re-enchantment. The works of art are functioning as theoretical objects — proposing and performing their own theory.

In the diagram, *Fig. 3,* three key realms are situated within the architectural space of the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London. This diagram is working to demonstrate the ever expanding realms of influence that may follow a viewer engaging with an artistic intervention — in this case a viewer who has actively engaged with the pigeon loft as part of my participation in the 2017 Slade Degree Show.[48] The Slade as an architectural space is shown through four progressively lighter shades of grey, representing the basement through the second floor, and then the roof access point. The three key realms of theoretical concern within this exploration of NCR are: *the space of function*, *the space of re-presentation*, and *the sphere of translation*. In the simplest of terms, *the space of function* is the pigeon loft on the roof of the building where accessible to pigeons, serving as a site of protection and sustenance. The *space of re-presentation* is the placement of the previously used pigeon loft during the exhibition, and the site open to access by viewers. Lastly, *the sphere of translation* is the ever-expanding reverberation of the potentially modified perspectives of viewers after engaging with the artwork. This ever-expanding sphere moves with the viewer through life - beyond the gallery - and can affect their perspective of other artworks, as well as issues with no direct relation to art. As Bolt discusses, the fixity of representation has been disrupted through the engagement with the theoretical object and into our concrete dealings with the world. The readily available hierarchy from Cartesian representation is that humans are better than and ranked above the pigeon in every way. Beyond that conception is the common trope that pigeons are vermin. I will directly and specifically refute the notion of the 'usefulness' of vermin in Chapter Six, *The Feathered*, but for now I will refer back to the Cartesian notion of the 'master of other' for the basis of these commonly held views.

Here, I want to focus on the fixity of the notion of vermin and human superiority. What actually backs these claims? What pieces of information have been collected and analysed to

48. Installation images are in *The Feathered*.

create this belief system? Can a risky theoretical object create disruptions? Much like political ecology, art, does not shift attention away from the human pole, but can call into question the fixity of belief. This conceptual movement, or becoming unfixed, is a key objective in *anthrodecentric art*.

One element of movement is chaos. The preceding diagram, *realms of influence* (*Fig. 3*) works to elucidate some patterns from a chaotic layering of places, spaces, physical objects, nonhuman users, and human viewers. The diagram offers a conceptual reading of the potential of the work or attempts to decode the assemblage and map out a time of potentiality that extends in all directions from the actants in the scenario. This assemblage holds countless possibilities, as Guattari explains, "But the notions of elements and complexity are susceptible to being brutally inverted. Those that are the most differentiated and undifferentiated co-exist within the same chaos which, at infinite speed, plays its virtual registers - one against the other and one with the other."[49] To 'engender new fields of the possible' is the ultimate objective of the work of *anthrodecentric art*, but all the potentialities cannot and will not be accounted for — the possible inversions will play themselves out through each encounter with each viewer and then move out through the world in translated perceptions completely outside of my authorial intention. "Through its movements, speeds and actions, the assemblage brutally inverts the strata, bifurcates and engenders new fields of the possible."[50] It is these strata and registers and the chaotic movement between, which Bolt attributes to the generative space. At best, this diagram accounts for a potential, yet chaotic distribution of the encounter through the desirable ethical constructs which can arise from re-enchantment.

This diagram also presents a triangulation of objectives — to work with nonhumans and humans, to create a state of re-enchantment, and to generate new perceptions for the human viewer through this encounter. The sense of chaos allows what-is present in our peripheral vision, yet remains perennially elusive, to move into the foreground allowing the viewer to look, to see, and to be with the present nonhumans. "It is easy to lie horizontally or stand vertically, but very much harder to orientate yourself diagonally. Attempt this and you will fall!

49. Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 53.

50. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation*, 82.

In the schema of the grid of organisation, creation is the mutant line, the diagonal."[51] As Bolt explains here, the act of looking, seeing, and being are states of relation — this relational state is achieved through the diagonal or mutant line, or perhaps a productive confusion which creates space in a viewer's mind for the recognition of differing perspectives.[52] As not all potentialities can be predicted, the art encounter happening repeatedly, happens anew with each visit, it will never become exhausted. Bolt expands this notion of the artist/viewer/art relationship as from the inexhaustible diagonal a continuous stream of chaotic movement emerges and rejects the exhaustion or completion of the work. This incomplete or unfixed work remains in a continuous state of discovery and generative confusion in relation to the viewer. Working within modes of NCR disallows using up, abusing, and taking as one's own as the work remains in this unfixed relation.

51. Bolt, 48.

52. The notion of the diagonal is proposed as a detachment from "the task of representing a world." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 296.

One's Own Body

What narrative is constructed when the animal becomes an aesthetic object?

To approach this question, I will turn to two artworks, both utilising the body of the pigeon. First, *some pigeons are more equal than others* performed by two artists, Julian Charrière and Julius Von Bismarck.[53]This performance was conducted in Copenhagen, Venice, and Berlin in 2012. The two artists spray-painted pigeons, in an attempt to make the birds more tolerable for the humans in these urban spaces. Second, *The Others*, a collection of 2,000 taxidermied pigeons presented by Maurizio Cattelan in the 2011 Venice Biennale.[54] The stuffed birds overlook visitors of the Biennale from the front of the Palace of Exhibitions, as well as from the rafters and ledges in the building's interior. The primary form of these two artworks in the body of the pigeon. The animate rendered inanimate, either through death and stuffing, or through transformation into an aesthetic object. If one were to view the pigeon as a 'minded' thing, following the thinking of Spinoza, what of the mindedness or the agency of the animal is lost or gained through this transition. In terms of NCR, in both cases, the pigeon has been taken as

53. Charrière and Von Bixmarck, *Some Pigeons Are More Equal than Others*.

54. Cattelan, *The Others*.

one's own, through the taking of the body. In the case of the pigeon having gone through the easy bake oven of spray-paint, through the control of human approved aesthetics, the object of pigeon can now be accepted into the historically shared urban spaces. In the case of the taxidermied pigeon, it is through death, the loss of autonomy, the bird has been neutered of its obscenity and becomes an accepted figure of worth through the assignment to the category of art. While there is conceptual movement in each of these instances, these 'lines of flight' loop directly back into the *Cartesian fictive*, denying the pigeon agency and restricting the pigeon to a fixed relation of vermin to only be accepted through human control. Through the lens of NCR, when the animal's body becomes an aestheticised object, the narrative is a reinforcement of human domination, a narrative giving preference to the human gaze over the agency of the nonhuman, divorcing the animal from an animate past, present, or future.

Reciprocity

The mode of reciprocity requires at least two actors. This mode questions who benefits, examines histories/presences/futures, necessitates a degree of awareness for the present actors, and elicits a response from the human actor. To engage with an arts encounter functioning in the NCR mode of reciprocity is to engage with reciprocal looking, seeing and being. There is ample opportunity to read the work, the space, the people around oneself — it is not only humans who employ such a practice. The opportunity for the animal to read the human is omnipresent, which is arguably why most animals are present, yet elusive — or perhaps remain in our peripheral vision. The ethics of *anthrodecentric art*, the ethics of recognition, do not depend on forcefully placing the animal in the visual sphere of the human, this would only reify the sense of human mastery. The task of *anthrodecentric art* is to aid the viewer in recognising what they have not yet seen; to *other* oneself, recognise the *others* in oneself and the multiplicity of entangled selves in which they can find themselves. John Berger positions our realms of sight, "We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between

things and ourselves. Our vision is continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself, constituting what is present to us as we are."[55] *Anthrodecentric art* through enacting reciprocity expands our presence and allows us to become re-enchanted by and with others, to understand the potentials of nonhuman agency.

~A sphere of beneficence~

The space of function is predicated upon the usefulness of the loft to pigeons. Although not dictated in the above diagram, this is also a function of spherical influence — assumed positive influence on a regional pigeon population. This population is brought into contact with this single site of care and protection, then this sculptural object is moved into *the space of re-presentation* within the gallery. Within *the space of re-presentation*, multiple viewers may engage both physically and conceptually with the loft. If a viewer moves from this site and continues to act as *a sphere of translation*, she brings this sense of care into the world she inhabits — a circle may be created, if her new attitude towards pigeons may lead to a change in behaviour, becoming an actor of caring. Then we may have a reciprocal act between two single beings or two essences of being.

The pigeon loft engages with multiple ecologies, including the University College London and local pest control, that of the gallery, of representation, of human and nonhuman relations, and the imaginary, as relates to the fictive ecology named above. Within the UCL ecology, not only does the loft offer a sphere of beneficence, but also functions as constructive institutional critique, given the institution's policies on discouraging the existence of a local pigeon population.[56] This constructive critique functions by subverting the removal policies and providing a site of sustenance and care. This may be read as an (un)intentional artistic practice — unintentional as the primary objective is the care of pigeons, and intentional given its eventual translation into a gallery space and subsequent encounters with viewers. Presences, histories, and futures collide in these encounters and unleash multiple potentialities. As Donna

55. Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 9.

56. Further documentation of the institutional engagement between UCL and the local pigeon via the Slade pigeon loft can be found in Appendix 3.2.

Haraway states, "Once again we are in a knot of species coshaping one another in layers of reciprocating complexity all the way down. Response and respect are possible only in those knots, with actual animals and people looking back at each other, sticky with all their muddled histories."[57] While the encounter with the pigeon loft does not include the pigeon looking back to the viewer in the gallery, the viewer will not have to wait long before coming face-to-face with the pigeon out-side. This encounter is re-engaging in being-with and enacting re-enchantment in relation to the pigeon in London.

57. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 42.

Aesthetic Observations

When a space of function is transformed to an aesthetic space of observation, what happens to the underlying issues of labour?

To address this question, I will be looking to two iterations of one work, *Untitled (12 Horses)*, by Jannis Kounellis. Rome, 1969, in Galleria L'Attico twelve horses are tethered around the perimeter of a gallery, there is no visible food or water, they stand on the tiled floor.[58] This work is inextricably linked to the Arte Povera movement, a movement based upon the lack of affordable materials, driving the selection of materials to the readily available. Available in the here and now (of 1969) for Kounellis, a gallery space and twelve horses. Their bodies are the materials of the work; their mindedness and liveliness are the materials of the work; the common stable is the material of the work. In 2015, in the West Village of New York at Gavin Brown's Enterprise, this work is re-staged.[59] The gallery becomes a stable with twelve horses tied around the perimeter, each with a stack of hay and a water bucket, standing upon rubber mats. Once again, a recreated stable of its time. The horses' bodies, their presence is the work. The horse on display is the object of observation, the horse stands firm in its symbolic register, majestic perhaps mythical, standing not still but not active. The observer looks from a safe distance, the potential power of the beast is tucked away from any potential contact. Even an actual animal remains conceptually distant, the only reciprocity of this artistic gesture

58. Kounellis, *Untitled (12 Horses)*.

59. Kounellis, *Untitled (12 Horses)*.

is the historical conception of the horse, the potential grandeur positioned firmly within the mundane of a daily horse-ly existence. The functional space of the stable, a space and place of care for the horse labourer for human-kind, is translated into a space of representation, but the representation holds as a representation as 'horse' remains 'horse', the actual exchanges of horse and carer are erased rendering a space rife for contestations of animal welfare. This is a space of distance, between the nonhuman and the human, between the mundane and mythic, between the relation of labour and care and observing. The social, cultural, and material agencies of the horse do not translate into a space of material bodies as artwork reliant upon looking.

Slippage

The mode of slippage is passive. This mode allows for both intentional and accidental happenings, and any combination thereof. Based upon generative confusion, this mode interrogates the limits of the unknown and the notion of knowing or understanding — often with humour. This mode is unstable and works to explore interconnectedness, the relationships of parts to wholes. *Anthrodecentric art* works towards an order of thinking that addresses the limits of knowledge and an acceptance of the unknown — this allows for re-enchantment to take hold through the viewing-experiencing encounter. This thinking, or state of re-enchantment acknowledges the register of arbitrary knowledge and the realm of responsible actions within the knowable. The knowable, the ability to recognise is with us before speech according to Berger, "Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognises before it can speak. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled."[60] *Anthrodecentric art* does not work to resolve the relation between what we see and know, but to accept this relation and to engage with the potentialities. As stated above, productive confusion is welcome and a generative force within the NCR methodology. The active objects and things, including the theoretical objects, are allowed to slip in between states of knowing and understanding, remaining unfixed. This state of the theoretical object as unfixed, continually pushes against the

60. Berger, *Ways of Seeing,* 6.

notion of stability.

Stability is undesired and allows the art work to become fixed formally and conceptually, and then re-framed within the confines of the art market, continuing the loss of the index. By rejecting stability, the work moves the materials towards re-enchantment, this often revolves around both intentional and accidental concepts. The intentional concept is quite clearly what the artist has intended. The accidental concept is less identifiable and often emerges through each individual encounter with the theoretical object, bringing the viewer to a state of full presence through the engagement. This means that the knowledge generated through the theoretical object is inherently unfixed. Triangulating the knowledge of the artist, the viewer, and the work in each engagement, there is continuing slippage between boundaries of knowledges which pushes towards the acceptance of limitations. The practice of *anthrodecentric art* and the resulting works are not centred on the artist, but on new ways of thinking and perceiving that arise from each arts encounter. There is a constant slippage in each encounter with each individual theoretical object, and the installation as a whole. Returning momentarily to systems theory, Halsall suggests the complexity of interconnectedness affirms the significance of the encounter, "This idea that it is impossible to relate every element to every other one except by virtue of their interconnectedness suggests that complexity is about the unity of the system as a whole which is of greater conceptual significance than the sum of the parts."[61] The whole of any work of *anthrodecentric art* is maintained through the slippage of elements and an individual's capacity to accept the limits their knowledge.

Returning to the *sphere of translation* and the pigeon loft, this is a process of translating the experience of the arts encounter and the visibility of nonhuman agency to experiences beyond the gallery space. Thus, the work of *anthrodecentric art* is creating another network or system that exists in relation to the pre-existing systems. This can potentially change not only the re-presentational system of which it is now involved, but external and connected systems as well. The following passage from Bolt explaining Derrida's position on difference presents a dual role of translation that allows for this 'disorderly' or emergent growth,

61. Halsall, *Systems of Art*, 151.

> In his introduction to the essay '*Différance*', Derrida explains that *∂ifférance* is not a word nor a concept, but rather an economy… He suggests that this complex structure is 'an interlacing which permits the different threads and different lines of meaning -or force - to go off again in different directions, just as it is always ready to tie itself up with others'. Derived from the Latin *∂ifferre*, the verb *∂ifférer* has two distinct meanings. In one sense, *∂ifférer* refers to the action of putting off until later. Derrida notes that according to this meaning, there is implied 'an economical calculation, a detour, a delay, a relay, a reserve, a representation'. Used in this sense, *∂ifférer* involves a temporal dimension. In its other usage, says Derrida *∂ifférer* means 'to be not identical, to be other, discernible'. Understood in the dual sense of deferral and difference, Derrida argues that *∂ifférance* designates a 'constitutive, productive and originary causality, the process of scission and division which would produce or constitute different things or differences'. Thought in terms of *∂ifférance*, representation begins to bud and grow in a disorderly fashion. It becomes incalculable.[62]

62. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation*, 31.

This temporal understanding allows the work of *anthro∂ecentric art* to continue in its representational growth beyond the time of original production. The work is dynamic and fluid as Bolt examines Derrida's position, "For him, the crux of the mutability of representation turns on the axis of translation; the translation from one state to another, from one form to another and so on. Representation is a sending or a sending on (envoi)."[63] The project of *anthro∂ecentric art* embraces this temporal extension, the non-Cartesian artwork, in terms of success will yield a scission and division, formed through translation that is informed and open, and that breaks from the Cartesian mode of representation and the framing of man as the centre of power.

63. Bolt, 32.

Mo∂es of Non-Cartesian Representation - Critical Application

In London, 2018, Lin May Saeed presented an exhibition, *Biene*, at Studio Voltaire. In the textual preface for the exhibition, Saeed's multiple points of influence are noted, ranging from the Animal Liberation Front to ancient Mesopotamia to the mythological figure Brunhilde. While the stated subjects seek to reference 'atavistic animisms,' 'post-human conditions,' and 'gender, place and species,'[64] here I am concerned with her deployment of NCR modes in the

64. "Biene," *Studio Voltaire*.

presentation of the art works to the gallery visiting audience. Focussing on the four sculptural figures placed prominently in the gallery space, the 'animal' subjects face forward into the room atop the skeletal structures of plinths. The four figures are in various states of completion, in detail and coloured rendering, this incompletion leans towards the mode of movement, as the figures could be approached as unfixed through the artist's handling. Their positioning also moves towards a sense of interconnection between the other art works, this relationship of the elements and the whole is an element of slippage in the grammar of NCR and *anthrodecentric art*. The partially rendered condition of the animal figures also generates a sense of instability, which questions what is known. These initial aspects of encountering *Biene* position the work as suitable for dialogue with the language of NCR.

Emerging

The supposition of Cartesian representation - that the world of nonhumans is free for exploitation and consumption by humans is not 'what-is' but a perception of 'what-is' - is not the only path of presentation, of representationalism. In this artistic research practice of making visible the present, both nonhumans and their agencies emerge from modes of NCR as present and potentially visible. From the perspective of *anthrodecentric art*, the present and the elusive are not mutually exclusive. They are simultaneously omnipresent. We choose our blindness. Jack Gallant states that it only takes twenty minutes to form a new synapse, a new connection and understanding of how we perceive the world.[65] In twenty minutes, a new way of thinking emerges. Thus, is the engagement, the being with of *anthrodecentric art*. The open, complex system of thinking and understanding relational being dynamically evolve through each engagement, with each encounter. This is the position of *anthrodecentric art* progressing from the language of NCR into re-enchantment.

I will apply these notions of NCR, movement, reciprocity, and slippage, through the model *the function of non-cartesian representation* in *The State* as a delineated zone where nonhuman

65. Jack Gallant, computational and cognitive neuroscientist explains the function and unknown emergent qualities of the brain, "Any given area or piece of the brain has about a 50-percent chance of being connected to every other piece. So it's a hugely, highly interconnected network. And it takes about 20 minutes or so to grow a new synapse. So as you're listening to me speak and your thoughts are fleeting from one thing to another, you're essentially having those different thoughts; those different thoughts are an emergent property of information flowing over this fixed set of wires. So the brain has this dynamical property where information flowing over a fixed set of wires can interact with itself in order to give rise to this new emergent property of thought. And we have no idea how that kind of system works at this point." Dubner, "This is Your Brain."

agency may become visible through the practice of *anthrodecentric art*. Examining authentic and present nonhumans via the degree of artistic mediation, I propose the *Zone of Enchantment*, a conceptual space in which nonhuman agency is accessible. As Latour states, "Nothing is more anthropocentric than the inanimism of nature."[66] Through *anthrodecentric art*, perhaps we can revisit the animism of our world and recognise our encounters with the animate.

66. Latour, *Politics of Nature,* 224.

The State(s)

"The highest that we can attain to is not Knowledge . . . but a sudden revelation of the insufficiency of all that we called Knowledge before, — a discovery that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy."[67] — Henry David Thoreau

67. Thoreau, "Walking," 240.

Emerging from the use of non-Cartesian representation (NCR) as methodology, a work of *anthrodecentric art* could occupy an unfixed place allowing for the potential re-enchantment of the viewer. This state of re-enchantment functions to potentially make visible nonhuman agencies and the relations between things. Once again abandoning the *Cartesian fictive* of the other as a resource for consumption, active things emerge from the elusive to the present. However, a curated arts encounter is not the only way to find oneself in a re-enchanted state.

Engaging with the Unfixed Perspective

The language of enchantment is not hard to find. Just here, in *Fig. 4* the findings of a quick (dis)enchanted Google search for writers on 'enchantment.' Has Google created an algorithm that supplants the death of god and fulfils the multiplicity of such a deity's mystique and knowledge, as realised through the depths of knowledge of all human thinkings — or — is this a commodity driven reflection on what we want (read: to consume)?[68] This u-/dis-topian binary seems a bit reductive . . . the language of enchantment reaches well beyond these pedantic limitations. The human-techno-cyborg-response-unit of the Google search engine throws back human reflections on the notion of enchantment just as quickly as an exhaustive finding of all images (determined by the particular zone of access) for the terms 'agency,' 'art,' and 'nonhuman' as seen in my video work, *The Academy Part One*.

This video consists of four sections: a black screen with an ape figure at the bottom, situated as if in a portrait; then three sections, each composed of all the images available from a Google image search for the terms 'agency,' 'nonhuman,' and 'art.' The images in this video are reminiscent of Spinoza's 'dumb pictures' as they are not brought forth from active thinking and

68. By 'death of God,' I am referring to the conception of modern Western secularisation beginning with ancient Jewish monotheism, through Calvinism, then extending to the notion of dis-enchantment as the 'greatest contribution of Christianity to Western civilisation.' Morgan, "Enchantment, Disenchantment, Re-Enchantment," 3, 5. I am also referring to the Nietzschean concept, "God's death is devastating because the disenchanted world it leaves behind threatens us with disorientation." Anderson, "Nietzsche on Redemption and Transfiguration," 226.

Figure 4. Swirling algorithmic attempts to generate context and knowing.

This image is a compilation of still images from my video, *The Academy ~ Part One,* and collected quotes from a Google search for "quotes on enchantment."

The Academy, Part One, 6'46", 2015. (the full video can be found on the portfolio drive)

"Top 25 Enchantment Quotes." AZ Quotes. Accessed 3 Aug 2016. https://www.azquotes.com.

thereby the images themselves do not operate as propositions.[69] However, the video as a whole is conveying a proposition regarding the relationship of viewers to knowledge. This assemblage of images is a critique of the 'collective knowledge' that is derived via Google algorithms**.** This algorithm functions as a degenerative force of knowledge production, as it is not generated through thought and subsequent action; but is a culmination of data without intention. This video portrays our incapacity to name, which could be a productive strategy in *anthrodecentric art,* if naming is perceived as a tool of subjugation; however, in this instance the incapacity to name stems from our inability to synthesis knowledge and understand existing and potential interconnections. This slippage between the ability and inability to know is demonstrated here by Nehamas,

> Suppose, for example, that I do not know what H2O is. Then given that H2O is water, I do not know what water is. And I remain ignorant of this even if I can use the term "water" as fluently as anyone else in the world. Conversely, if I know what H2O is, given again that it is water, I also know what water is, even if, as it may happen, I cannot use the term "water" properly. Even if I do not know what "water" means, I may still know what water is.[70]

This confused state of knowing and unknowing, using and consuming without intention nor understanding of the pre- and post-effects of these actions is the harm in not synthesising knowledge and lacking comprehension of interconnectedness.

There is a loss of connection between the 'subject/index' of the image and the 'subject/index' of the viewer, and through this lost connection we have severed our relational selves; there is a disconnection between what is known and unknown. As this relational self becomes ungraspable we risk slipping into alienation. Bolt provides an understanding of this alienate and the technical, "Being as what-is is set aside. Being becomes technical; it becomes a product. The picture we are left with is one of alienation from Being."[71] This video work serves as a source of warning by mimicking visual training via The State, as a common motif in popular culture, tempered by a visual instability. Submerged in a field of the unknown, a viewer can construct new meanings and ideas which may not correspond to nor correlate with previously existing

69. As Cook explains, Spinoza's conception of an idea is a proposition that asserts that something is the case, does not consist of words, the images are not 'dumb pictures', it is active thinking. It is a non-linguistic understanding of 'the truth of a thing'. Cook, *Spinoza's Ethics. A Reader's Guide*, 49.

70. Nehamas, "Episteme and Logos in Plato's Later Thought," 227.

71. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation*, 28.

conceptions. The dis-enchantment of information overload accumulated without context is deployed as a re-constructed proposition - one without hierarchy and one which welcomes wonder and the multiple.

Un-defining the Un-fixed

"The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world,'" words written by Max Weber in 1917.[72] Weber's views on dis-enchantment cross between the two historical modes of thinking on enchantment: the binary and the dialectical. The binary approach to enchantment creates oppositional categories: Western elite (men) versus 'primitives,' women, lower classes, and children, scientific rationalism versus superstition, Modernity (the Enlightened) versus the 'other' (relics to be erased). These categories are hierarchical, the Western elite, Modernity, and scientific rationalism are supreme and are positioned as universal standards for acceptance, functioning as mechanism of control or mastery. Reactionaries to these assignments, such as spiritualists, also bought into the binary approach to thinking, embodied in various attempts to reverse the value judgements. While the dialectical approach to enchantment also places a negative value judgement on enchantment, it is Modernity itself that is enchanted. Modernity is a series of dangerous enchantments which obliterate the autonomy of individuals through manipulation.[73] Weber positions the oppression of cultural forces and the scientific achievements as leading to the inevitable destruction of humanity. This reflects the changes of his time: the loss of power of religion to secular beliefs and structures and major scientific developments, explaining the world of nature. He posits a duplicitous existence of the individual in this system as subjectified and objectified, both binary and dialectical in understanding.[74] This leads to a development of intellectualisation, or the understanding of a "logically connected whole."[75] This intellectualisation replaces religion with a system of unified meaning and value, yet science simultaneously fails as it is stuck in an infinite loop. The rational, continually changing its

72. Weber, "Science as Vocation," 155.

73. *pace,* Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectics of Enlightenment*.

74. Weber, "Science as Vocation."

75. Weber, "Science as Vocation."

Figure 5. Enchantment and spiritualism.

Amidst the booming popularity of the spiritualist movement of the 1860's, which
included figures such as the well-known Fox sisters, William Mumler rose to prominence with his portraits of the deceased. Pictured to the left is Mary Todd and her deceased husband, Abraham Lincoln, circa 1870. Mary Todd Lincoln was a long-time customer of Mumler, even after he was exiled from Boston and relocated his photographic studio to New York due to the scandalous revelation that he was faking his photographs.

Image by: William H. Mumler, "Picture of the ghost of Abraham Lincoln with Mary Lincoln." circa 1869. (PD-US).

own understanding of itself, fails as a replacement for the irrational, leading to a reliance on aesthetics and a lack of conviction, or the disempowerment of the modern self.

This disempowered self is bereft of their situatedness, as they are subjected to the conceptual framework of Modernity, placed into the *Cartesian fictive*. The conscription to this belief has positioned the West as more than a geographic region, but a control mechanism of thought and social relations.[76] This control is exerted on inhabitants of the West themselves and of people residing in regions across the globe, a conceptual colonisation. Although living in a world "suffused with value," these plural values have been released, now solely determined through capital rather than dependent upon 'constrained engagement.'[77] People may be inhabiting a state of dis-enchantment, while consciously or unconsciously aware, created through strategies of utility, mastery, and detachment by the dominant authority. One strategy for empowering people is to allow for participation rather than a "sense of participating in the decisions that affect their moral and spiritual lives."[78]

Following Gell, this research aims to utilise the *technology of enchantment* that is art, as this particular technology allows one "to make what is not out of what is, and to make what is out of what is not."[79] As a technology, art can move beyond the aesthetic, to interrogate the manner of production and allow for the generation of idea through encounter. Through these lines of interrogation, viewers can choose to engage with perceptual frameworks other than the dis-enchantment of control and purpose beyond consumption. Gell argues, "It is the way an art object is constructed as having come into the world which is the source of the power such objects have over us — their becoming rather than their being," this power, while related to a desire, the desire of that which resists us, also works to forge social relations with the object and networks and the underlying intentionalities.[80] The artwork as a social agent is a "physical entity which mediates between two beings, and therefore creates a social relation between them, which in turn provides a channel for further social relations and influences."[81] These two beings can be within the work itself, allowing the viewer to function as observer, or the beings can be the viewer and the work, or two viewers. This potential nexus of social relation

76. Bilgrami, "Occidentalism," 384.

77. Bilgrami, 398.

78. Bilgrami, 407.

79. Gell, "The Technology of Enchantment," 53.

80. Gell, 46.

81. Gell, 52.

is engaged only by autonomous human agents, yet the encounter itself can (hopefully) generate a sense of uncertainty. This uncertainty is the break from control, the option to understand oneself and an object as having a purpose beyond the structure of capitalist consumption. Gell posits, "The problem of uncertainty is, therefore, not opposed to the notion of knowledge and the pursuit of rational technical solutions to technical problems, but inherently a part of it," this notion of uncertainty is a productive state, a desirable state within *anthrodecentric art*.[82]

The mode of re-enchantment that *anthrodecentric art* reaches towards hopes to re-invigorate the experience of the world with mystery, order, wonder, purpose (via encounter and interconnection), epiphany, and a 'locus of the infinite.'[83] This position is not deceitful (such as false encounters portrayed by spiritualist photographer William Mumler, see *Fig. 5*), but relies upon encounters which open eyes and minds to the understanding of the endless matrix of relations and connections — which cannot be severed by perceptions that erase — made elusive, these present conditions can be rendered visible. This approach welcomes multiplicity and contingency. This mode is an experience, a language, a language which, "to discover is to speak every language," as one becomes open to "the song of enchantment of the things themselves."[84]

This is an antinomial approach to re-enchantment.[85] This is a voluntary action by the viewer of the works, there is no imposition by structures of power. This is a respectable process and practice, regarding all constituent actors. This is a rational practice. This is a practice of multiples, not accepting false singular explanations and power structures. As Landy explains, the antinomial is a freeing approach,

> Freed from the sinister spectres of *Kulturkritik*, antinomian theorists of modernity are at last able to put on display a set of enchantments that are *voluntary*, being chosen (*pace* Adorno) by autonomous agents rather than insidiously imposed by power structures, *respectable*, compatible as they are (*pace* Weber) with secular rationality, and *multiple*, being replacements, each one in its own way, for a polymorphous God.[86]

This approach avoids historic *othering* and dismissiveness of people and qualities of

82. Gell, 57.

83. Landy and Saler outline the parameters of their understanding of a 'fully secular and deliberate' approach to re-enchantment which rejects 'shame' and works through "the promise . . . of a quasi-mystical union with something larger than oneself," which is established through "unwitting collaboration." This is an underlying principle of re-enchantment through *anthrodecentric art*. The viewer need not be approaching the works of art with the intention of a shifted perspective for such a shift to occur, although the shift is always autonomously reached and not coerced in any way. Landy and Saler, "The Varieties of Modern Enchantment," 2.

84. Serres, "What Hearing Knows," 268.

85. Three modes of enchantment are discussed: the binary, the dialectical, and the antinominal. The binary is marked by historic 'othering,' and classifications of inferiority of those possessing imagination (i.e. children and primitives). The dialectical is marked by the assignment of dangerous and deceptive enchantment of Modernity. Whilst the antinomial is compatible with secularity and rationality. Landy and Saler, 3-7.

86. Landy and Saler, 7.

thinking and believing and does not position the notion of *enchantment* as a negative outcome of Modernity. While neither a naive nor a hypocritical practice of re-enchantment, the re-enchantment of *anthrodecentric art* works towards a recalibration of one's relation to the world around them. Not to speed up, consume, and discard experiences and things; but to slowly slip into a space which allows for the discovery of the lateral and the diagonal. From the perspective of political ecology, Latour explains an approach to slippage and redeeming practices,

> Far from "getting beyond" the dichotomies of man and nature, subject and object, modes of production, and the environment, in order to find remedies for the crisis as quickly as possible, what political ecologists should have done was *slow down* the movement, take their time, then burrow down beneath the dichotomies like the proverbial old mole.[87]

87. Latour, *Politics of Nature*, 3.

Here as a proverbial mole, I write calling for the *slowing down* of the experience of art encounters and to embrace the ambiguous from within. It is not necessary to uphold the binary paradigm — *anthrodecentric art* calls for the dismantling of this historic narrative.

As Timothy Morton explained in a lecture on our inherent ecological state to the 'Royal Society for encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce' (RSA) in the spring of 2018, truth does not demand black and white definitions, there is a grey area of *truthiness*.[88] There is not a clearly discernible edge to what is *truthy* and to what is not. The truth is an ambiguous state, any calling for otherwise is false. This ambiguity is an anti-binary state and accepts duality; including, but not limited to, the duality of representation that is not representation but a becoming with the what-is. This third state of representation allows for a slow encounter and operates as revealing the opportunity for re-enchantment.

88. Morton, "Being Ecological."

The Magik of Rats Run Amok

To be re-enchanted, via *anthrodecentric art* or otherwise, means to no longer abide by the notion that there are human consumers at the top of a hierarchy separated from 'nature', a

category comprising all nonhuman entities. While dis-enchanted, one perceives these nonhuman entities as relegated to free consumption without consequence, by those humans with the ways and means to so do. Re-enchantment, within the anti-framework of *anthrodecentric art*, is simply to encounter all things as lively materials, as actants each fulfilling their roles, each capable of consequence and effect. These consequences and effects can escalate to the brink of the Sixth Mass Extinction or remain quite simple in scale through daily interaction, causing a human viewer to ponder their relationship with nonhuman inhabitants of their common spaces.

Take for instance Zardulu, at first her name may be unfamiliar but 'pizza rat' or 'selfie rat' might be more recognisable (see *Fig. 6)*. These interventions into the daily commute of New Yorkers were not quickly forgotten nor erased. New Yorkers often reported finding themselves in awe of the situation and now unsure of the realm of capabilities of city rats — oft stating they now more carefully watch and study their surroundings, experiencing a completely new city.[89] An actor, Mr. Boz, hired by Zardulu to aide in one such rat-based intervention shares his initial contact with her, "She was like, 'Would you like to be a tool for a grand architectural design?'"[90] What is this 'grand architectural design'? She, Zardulu, seems continually reticent to unveil her actual ambitions, but from the outside the ambition of connecting to the nonhumans of New York seems quite clear. Zardulu herself has stated, "I think creation and perpetuation of modern myths is a tragically under-appreciated art form. It upsets me when I hear people refer to them as lies."[91] What is the lie within the work of Zardulu? Perhaps the closest aspect to a 'lie' is the implicit denial of human authorship underlying the rat-stunts. Yet, is the human-nonhuman animal collaboration in need of full disclosure? Can this seeming return to a fairytale commune of labour remain re-enchanted in the landscape of contemporary New York? One New York viewer remarks on the delight of these encounters, "Zardulu's work seems to be closer to doing magic. You stage these events, and it delights people and makes them happy to live in a world where something like this took place - and it's almost as if it really did take place, as long as nobody talks."[92]

But 'the magic' of Zardulu has been talked about, quite extensively, being covered in news

89. Reply All, "Zardulu," #56.

90. Newman, "The Artist Behind."

91. Newman, "The Artist Behind."

92. Newman, "The Artist Behind."

Figure 6. Media coverage of the media hoax artist Zardulu.

Materials adapted from: Newman, Andy. "The Artist Behind the Three-Eyed Fish and Selfie Rat, and Other Hoaxes," *The New York Times*, 29 March 2016, New York Region.

New York Times | https://nyti.ms/1qcw

N.Y. / REGION

The Artist Behind the Three-Eyed Fish and Selfie Rat, and Other Hoaxes

By ANDY NEWMAN MARCH 28, 2016

One afternoon last fall, an actor named Greg Boz got a phone call.

It was a job offer, but not the kind he was used to getting. The caller was an artist who spoke in vague, mystical terms.

"She was like, 'Would you like to be a tool for a grand architectural design?'"

outlets including the New York Times, Vox, the Washington Post, Vice, Reddit, the Gothamist, and the Daily Mail. If silence is the key allowing city residents to maintain a sense of wonder, it has been lost. Yet, residents still remark of their own changed relationships to the city and their heightened state of observation. In this dialogue exchange co-hosts question their response to a 'changed' city, "PJ: Was it true, what you said, that it was making you see the world differently, see the city differently?" "ALEX: Yes. I have put my phone down. And I watch people now. And I am suspect of everyone."[93] The connections were made visible — speech has not erased the curiosity or newfound skepticism of the prior assumed order. "Right a world where a rat carries a slice of pizza is more interesting than a world where it doesn't. But a world where a lady trains rats to carry a slice of pizza is more interesting than either of those worlds."[94] These 'more interesting worlds' are those of revealed interconnections.

93. Reply All, "Zardulu," #56.

94. Reply All, "Zardulu," #56.

An Airborne Assault

The techné of the homing pigeon has not become completely obsolete — the once valiant soldier from the front lines of WWI has found a new market for its labour skills. Apparently, police have captured a wild criminal homing-pigeon, illegally smuggling drugs from Iraq into Kuwait. However, this is not a singular incident, similar operations have been thwarted in the past. Additional events of pigeon/human drug collusion include a homing-pigeon carrying cocaine and marijuana into La Reforma Prison in Costa Rica, and the one hundred smuggling birds captured in Iran in the summer of 2017 (see *Fig. 7)*.[95] Although one could argue against the moral grounds of drug-smuggling pigeons, is this not exemplifying a state of re-enchantment? The humans involved were able to see the potential and real connections between themselves and the birds, even if the utility of said mindset was orientated towards the nefarious. In each article reporting on the above three events, the history of the pigeons' relationship to humans is mentioned; small, poking reminders of the past streaming through into the present.

95. Eriksen, "Could This Backpack-Wearing."

Figure 7. Images of the past-present pigeon.

Images from recent news reporting on pigeon-human encounters of trafficking, *(top)* Al Arabiya English, @AlArabita_Eng, Twitter post, "Shocking images: Traffickers use pigeon to smuggle drugs into #Kuwait, 16:30, 23 May 2017. Found in: Eriksen, Alexander, "Could This Backpack-Wearing Pigeon Really Deliver Drugs?" *Live Science*, 26 May 2017; *(bottom)* Dehghan, Saeed Kamali. "Iranian police seize carrier pigeons to smuggle drugs," *The Guardian*, 29 August, 2017, Middle East, images by Fararu.com.

Lucid Re-presentation

As the past leaks into the present narrative of pigeons, we could call into question *our* ability to see connections or relations, in particular those which extend beyond the human. Saler calls to question this vein of sight here, "A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not *command a clear view* of the use of our words. -- Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in 'seeing connexions.'"[96] Our lack of lucid communication, linguistic or otherwise, results in the perpetuation of the dis-enchanted state of the Great Divide, the nonhuman as resource — only in service of deserving humans. The goal of re-enchantment within *anthrodecentric art* is to work towards the lucid representation - the representation which is not a representation — but a functional third space which remains indexical but also its own reality which communicates a clear view of connections. The engagement with the work of *anthrodecentric art* is a practice realm, a space for experimentation by the viewer, to test their grounds, relations, and ability to find connections in a contained space. Landy expands on this relationship of the microcosm of the art experience to the macrocosm,

> Our engagement with a microcosm in which connections are drawn as tightly as they can possibly be is, if we wish it to be, a *training* for re-engagement with the macrocosm, for an engagement in which we ourselves can find and invent connections, forging a world which, *even though each of its elements remains untouched*, suddenly acquires order, and thus suddenly becomes liveable.
>
> The spell works, if we wish it to, on ours as well.[97]

The macrocosm emerges as soon as a viewer steps away from the work, the opportunity to expand this new found skill set — applying a grammar of looking, seeing, and being with, to allow re-enchantment to seep into everyday thinking presents itself. The spell works if we want.

The act of looking, seeing, and being with is not revolutionary, it is a slowness, a softness,

96. Saler, "Waste Lands and Silly," 70.

97. Landy, "Modern Magic," 122.

and openness to the everyday. Re-enchantment is to understand what-is and the connections between things, and perhaps, a rejection of entitlement. Is this the inevitable outcome of non-Cartesian representation? I do not believe this to be the case. However, I think the grammar or dis-orderliness of NCR exercised through reciprocity, slippage and movement, will always allow for this lucidity to be an option for the viewer. Perhaps, this becomes a discussion around the place and/or space of the viewer before, during, and after the encounter. Can the attachment of place, the fixity and order of hierarchies be significantly challenged through the art-encounter? How can forms of engagement and exploration create meaningful sensations of movement, reciprocity, and slippage allowing for the viewer to access a space of re-enchantment? Nightingale offers this reflection on the challenges of humans through bodily forms of engagement and the power of oscillation,

> An ecological approach to nature is grounded in partial and perspectival modes of apprehension -- "situated" knowledge. The philosophical ecologist attempts to understand the kinship between humans and non-humans through bodily forms of engagement. This kinship, however, has its limits: human awareness of time and death separates us from non-human nature. We are, then, both situated and unsituated in the natural world, and our efforts to achieve an ecological mode of dwelling must honour both sides of this equation. The oscillation between bodily and intellectual explorations of nature generates a mode of understanding that "breaks off" in wonder: wonder is the origin of ecological philosophy, but also its (ongoing) culmination.[98]

98. Nightingale, "Broken Knowledge," 16.

The oscillation created through NCR can allow for the present yet elusive to become the present and visible. This is not signifying a change in the states of the nonhumans but occurs by virtue of the shifted 'viewing' perspective. This shifted perspective of the re-enchanted embraces an unfixed self-orientation, a recalibration to lateral and diagonal connections, and the looking, seeing, and being with 'what-is.' These two examples demonstrate the *slowing down* of encounters in which humans perceive nonhumans. The magik of rats running amok is the human taking notice of a specific rat and a specific rat action — curiosity and imagination that extend beyond the borders of Cartesian representation is the magik. The airborne assault is the

recognition of the techné of the pigeon, their internal g.p.s., and the relevance of this techné in contemporary times. The powers of these perceptions override the prior established order in which the nonhuman was only a resource or otherwise ignored. These humans have been re-situated (at least temporarily) within a *natural* world and re-engaged with wonder, or a state of re-enchantment.

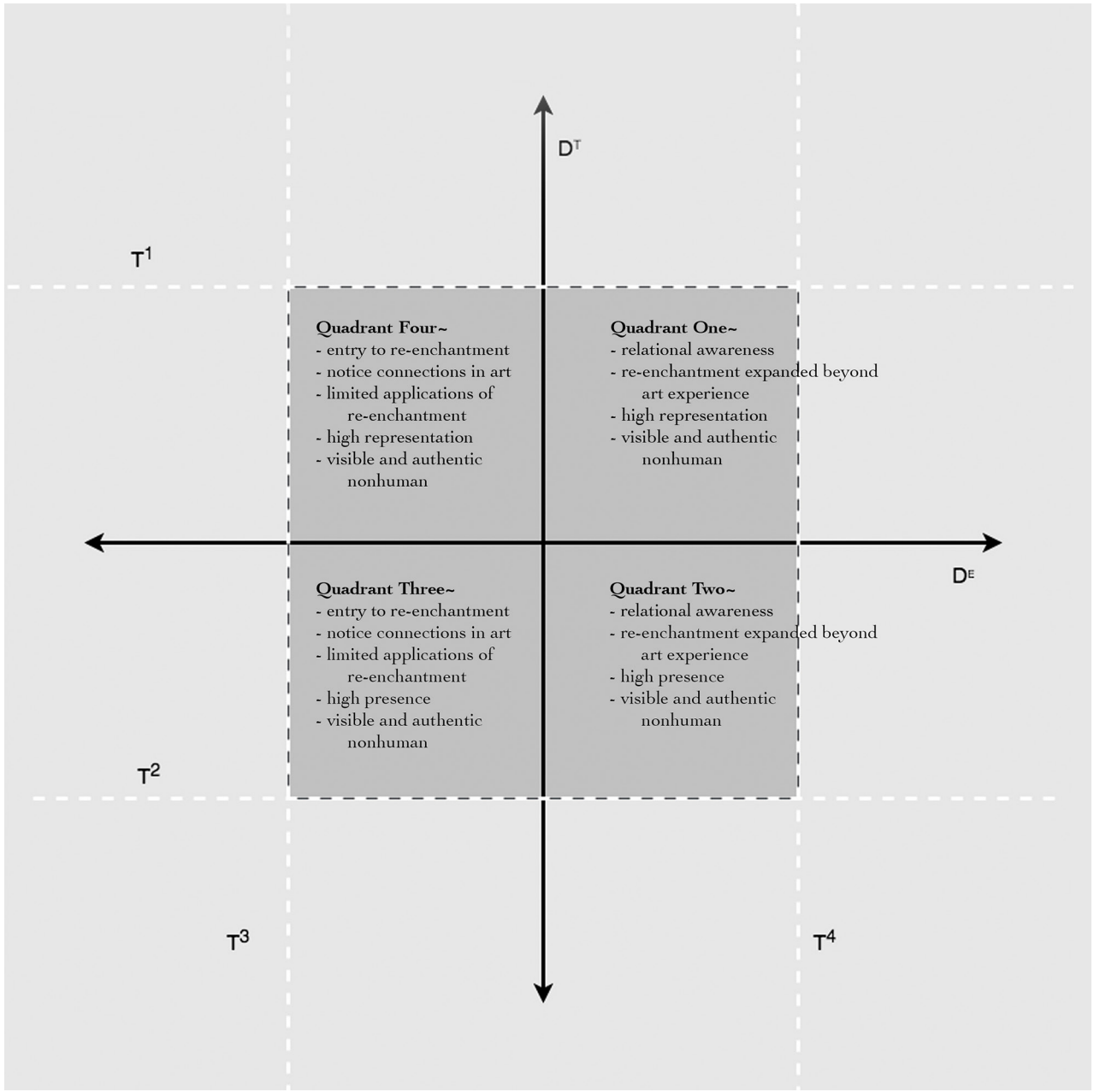
The Function of Non-Cartesian Representation

To begin examining states of re-enchantment in human viewers following deployment of modes of NCR, I present the diagram, *the function of non-Cartesian representation* (see *Fig. 8*). This is a model for qualitative analysis which distills the key objectives of *anthrodecentric art*: the visibility of nonhuman agencies and the recognition of interconnections. The three main terms of the diagram are representation, translation, and authenticity. I am presenting here the elements of the diagram, then situating my usage of authenticity in the theoretical framework of NCR, as well as the deployment of these terms in *anthrodecentric art*.[99]

If the nonhuman input or impetus has been filtered through too high a degree of translation, the representation has become solely the property of the human translator and loses all connection to the present nonhuman. Conversely, if the nonhuman authenticity remains too high, or is not filtered before being presented to an audience, the work may remain inaccessible. If the work remains inaccessible, it thus renders itself a pointless exercise, perhaps even, in a worst-case scenario, increasing the conceptual distance between the human audience member and the nonhuman agent. The goal of this model and of an *anthrodecentric art* practice is to reveal nonhuman agencies for external comprehension, blurring or subverting the anthropocentric viewpoint that is so pervasive and reinforced by the Modernist or Cartesian mode of representation.

99. Please see *The Situation* for extended definitions of representation and *The Look* for translation.

Figure 8. *The function of non-Cartesian representation, [f(NCR)],* 2016.



Within this presented model, *Fig. 9*:

'D^t' is the 'degree of translation' of nonhuman agency through the artist.

'T^1' is the threshold of too high a degree of translation by the artist. The nonhuman presence is rendered invisible or remains invisible. Works that cross this threshold remain in the Cartesian mode of representation.

'T^2' is the threshold of too low a degree of translation by the artist. Although the nonhuman presence remains authentic, this presence remains invisible to the viewing audience.[100] There has not been enough re-presentation to cause a shift in a viewer's perception. 'D^E' is the 'degree of enchantment' of the viewer.

'T^3' is the threshold in which the viewer moves from a state of dis-enchantment to an openness to to re-enchantment.

'T^4' is the threshold upon which the viewer is able to to translate their re-enchantment from the arts encounter into the 'real' world, in other words the viewer entering *the sphere of translation*. This model works to explain a delineated zone of contact between human and artwork that allows for nonhuman agency to become visible, or in other words the active space resulting from NCR.

Z^E, the zone of enchantment, is a space of visible nonhuman agency and a shifted perception within the viewer becomes possible.

The *Zone of Enchantment* is broken into four quadrants based upon the response of human viewers.

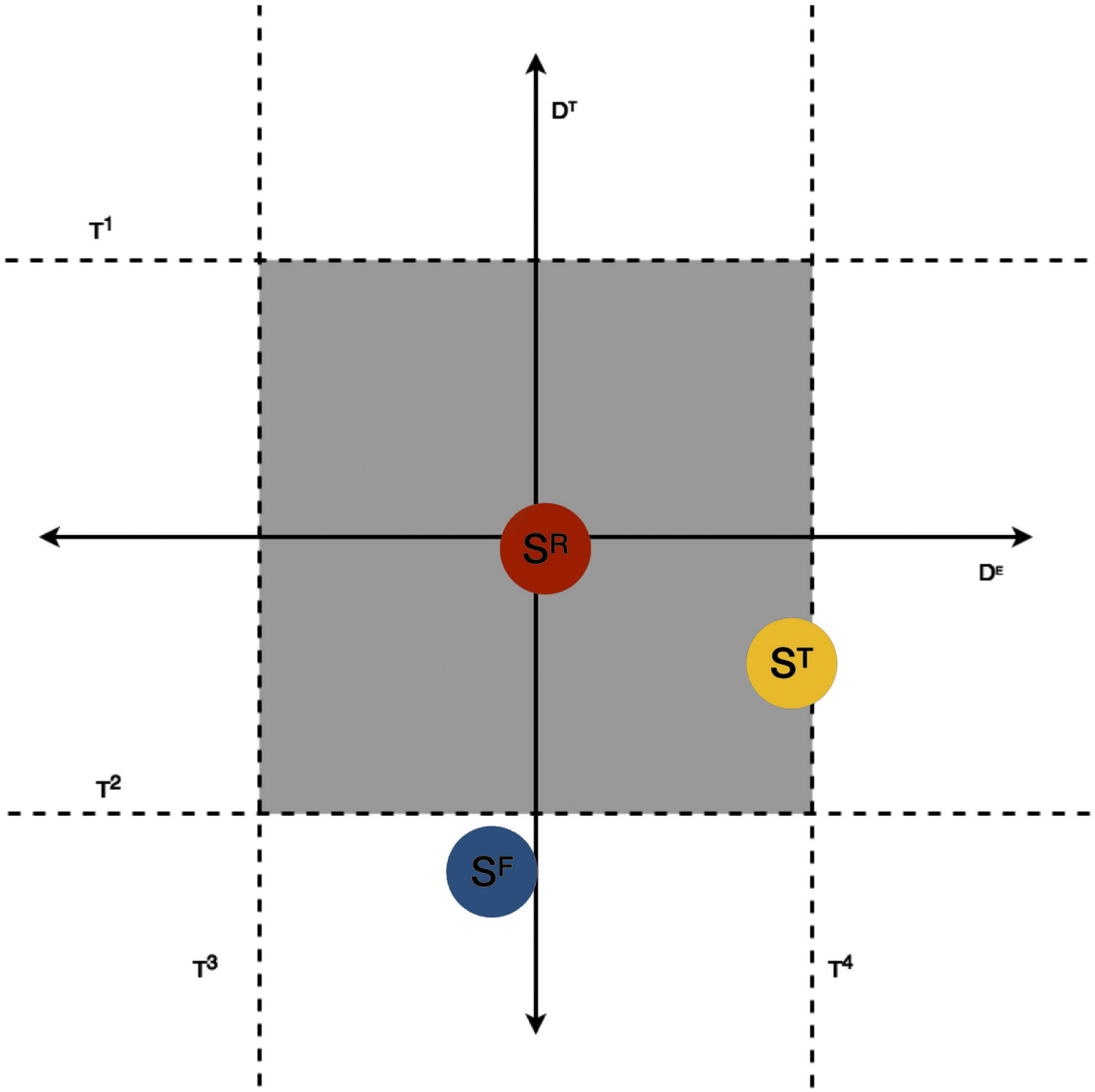
In quadrant one, the viewer has relational awareness and is open to the expansion of re-enchantment beyond the art-encounter, the visible and authentic non- human has been filtered through a high degree of re-presentation.

In quadrant two, the viewer has relational awareness and is open to the expansion of re-enchantment beyond the art-encounter, the visible and authentic nonhuman has a high degree of presence.

100. The notion of 'authenticity' is of importance in this diagrammatic model, as the authenticity of the individual or the essence of an actant (as an authentic non-human representation, or the non-human agency as unmediated through artistic intervention) may be recognised through the artworks.

Figure 9. *The function of non-Cartesian representation, [f(NCR)]* applied to the loft as installed on the Slade School of Fine Art 2017-18 and installation in the 2017 Graduate Degree Show, Slade School of Fine Art.

Additional information regarding the pigeon loft is available in *The Look* and in *The Feathered*



In quadrant three, the viewer is entering into re-enchantment and noticing interconnections with limited application, the visible and authentic nonhuman has a high degree of presence.

In quadrant four, the viewer is entering into re-enchantment and noticing interconnections with limited application, the visible and authentic nonhuman has been filtered through a high degree of representation.[101]

Based upon relational goals of the arts encounters of *anthrodecentric art*, the attempts to create an opportunity for the revelation of nonhuman agency are responsive to the exact viewing conditions. This is reminiscent of artistic movements, such as conceptualism and the attached understanding of representation. Lucy Lippard explains the approach of such artists, "Conceptual artists, perhaps more concerned with intellectual distinctions in representation and relationships than those who rely on the object as vehicle/receptacle, have offered posterity a particularly tangled account."[102] Drawing from this historical position, the importance of understanding modes of representation in the practice of art can be distilled as putting forward complex accounts of pasts, presences, and histories through re-presentation. The intellectual exploration and understanding of representation seem to release the artists' practice from an object-bound physical state of viewing. Bolt/Deleuze supports this importance and distinction in practice,

> He suspects that practice creates the movement and movement provides the key to breaking open the fixity of representation. It is not that representation can be expelled from the scene, but rather at the level of practice, representation can be set wobbling on its axis and can be toppled. Practice involves movement and movement involves setting things in process. Practice necessarily involves a process of becoming.[103]

Anthrodecentric art is a fluid state of practice and continuous process, utilising movement in individual works, installations of work, and positions in regard to encountering nonhuman agents and moving towards a state of re-enchantment. This is a practice that cannot be given a fixed status or definition but is continually becoming-with or emerging-from within itself and

101. This diagrammatic model is an abstraction and not intended to be a diagnostic or actual tool of measurement.

102. Lippard, Lucy. 'Escape Attempts'. vii.

103. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation,* 40.

the mode(s) of representation necessary to move beyond the Cartesian frames of viewing.

Translating from the idea to the physical image, Rancière approaches the image through dissemblance. "In the first place, the images of art are, as such, dissemblances. Secondly, the image is not exclusive to the visible. There is visibility that does not amount to an image; there are images which consist wholly in words. But the commonest regime of the image is one that presents a relationship between the sayable and the visible, a relationship that plays on both the analogy and the dissemblance between them."[104] From this perspective, the image or representation is not needing to be authentic to the idea of a thing, but connotative of relations. So, there is a need for the authentic to be ethical, unframed by Cartesian representation, and relational — this will allow the work of *anthrodecentric art* to reveal nonhuman agencies. To achieve this level of functionality, anything under consideration must be understood as an already active agent. This agent is active in one or more current networks in which it is irreplaceable. The logos, relations, and positions are explicated here by Nehamas,

> The logos is a summary statement of the path within a network of objects that one will have to follow in order to locate a particular member of that network. But each object along that path itself occupies a unique position within that network, and is defined by its interrelations to all other things and their positions. Thus a thing's logos, apparently short as it may be, is implicitly a very rich statement since it ultimately involves familiarity with the whole domain to which that particular object belongs.[105]

Thus, the work of *anthrodecentric art* is entrenched and entwined with the pre-existing networked relations of each nonhuman agent — expanding the interrelations into the arts encounter — re-tangling with the viewers path of impact after.

The notion of authenticity needs to be understood through its relationship to representation. When speaking of a model and a copy, what is the relationship between these two? Bolt dissects this relationship through Plato's notion of Ideal Forms, "The preoccupation with models and copies can be traced back to Plato's postulation of an Ideal world of Forms. In this conception, Ideal Form pre-exists any actuality. The image or what we have come to know as

104. Rancière, *The Future of the Image*, 7.

105. Nehamas, *Virtues of Authenticity*, 234.

representation can only ever be an imperfect copy of an Ideal Form. The visual arts, even more than language or philosophy, are infected with models and copies."[106] From the perspective of *anthrodecentric art*, there is not a problem of being 'infected with models and copies,' but the (un) ethical space which they inhabit. From Plato's postulation, there is no actual ideal form as it can exist as idea only, but the possibility arises to re-present an authentic and ethical presentation of nonhuman entities via images or other forms of re-presentation.

Authenticity can be linked to notions of mimesis in the visual arts. Bolt discusses the difference between mimesis and the 'picture' introduced through Cartesian representation, "It was Descartes, according to Heidegger, who inaugurated the new paradigm of representation and reduced the world to a picture. . . This picture was not a mimetic image, but rather is a prototype, model or schema for what the world could be like."[107] This creates a divide between the notion of mimesis in 'picturing the world,' and the effect of Cartesian representation as acting to 'frame the world.' The act of framing can be seen as an ethical or perhaps more aptly, an unethical move. Alexander Nehamas present Plato's position here, "For Plato, the inauthentic is the unethical. There is virtue in being authentic, and there is authenticity in all virtue. Nothing fake can be good, and nothing good can be fake. Only the genuine can be a proper model of imitation, and nothing short of the genuine can ever be perfect."[108] Although the language here is slippery, ethics is of central concern within the practice of *anthrodecentric art*. The framing of the human as the centre, in a place of power and privileged consumption is unethical; while de-centring the human and creating an opportunity for the authentic nonhuman agent to become visible is the ethical move.

From an ethical understanding of the term authenticity, mimesis can now be re-examined. As Jacques Rancière presents mimesis, it becomes a system of relation between the artist and their process, as well as the artist and their audience, "Mimesis is not resemblance understood as the relationship between a copy and a model. It is a way of making resemblances function within a set of relations between ways of making, modes of speech, forms of visibility, and protocols of intelligibility."[109] A point of emphasis in NCR is 'intelligibility.' In order for

106. Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation*, 17.

107. Bolt, 18.

108. Nehamas, *Virtues of Authenticity*, xxiv.

109. Rancière, *The Future of the Image*, 73.

nonhuman agency to be intelligible, the artist must 'work with' materials, opposed to 'using' materials, and also be vigilant in their awareness to 'forms of visibility'.

Now, a question in order to ask anew, what is it being re-presented, "When Socrates, for example, appeals to the definition of clay in order to explain why Theaetetus' first attempt to define knowledge fails, he asks him to suppose that 'someone had asked concerning clay . . . what exactly it is.'"[110] From the perspective of NCR, can this question be inverted 'to ask clay what it is?' What is the effect on the knowledge being produced through this inversion? What is our capacity to understand an answer? Here it can be argued that the clay will answer, not through our common conception of oral language, but through its actions and reactions as a human (in this case an artist) chooses to work with the material (and to also be aware of the connected systems, such as the source of the material and ecological impacts of removing the clay). The authentic in this scenario is increased awareness of system-wide impact, not using the clay as a resource to be consumed but to work with the clay.

The authentic, the translated, the represented, this coalescing of influences and processes is mapped onto the terrain of the *function of non-Cartesian representation*. In order to understand the impact of re-presentation strategies, based on the degree of artist mediation, on the experience of re-enchantment of the viewer this diagram as an abstraction can aide in mapping response and potentialities. Using this model, I will analyse a selection of my practical works and two works by contemporary artists in relation to the potential for achieving a state of enchantment, or even moving a viewer into a *sphere of translation*, carrying the lens of enchantment beyond the arts encounter.[111]

The Function of Non-Cartesian Representation - Critical Application (Take One)

Applying the *function of non-Cartesian representation* diagram as a model for criticism, I will now briefly return to Pierre Huyghe's installation from dOCUMENTA 13, *Untilled*.

Within Karlsaue park, viewers could encounter Pierre Huyghe's sculptural installation

110. Nehamas, *Virtues of Authenticity*, 224.

111. As a model, this diagram allows for a qualitative analysis, but results are subjective to the individual's engagement with the artwork. This model is intended to discuss objectives and potentials.

within a bit of an impromptu sculpture garden. *Untilled* consists of a bee hive (a non-aggressive species), placed atop the body of classic Greek-esque female nude. *Untilled* continues, existing and expanding beyond the borders of the (a)historical figurine and throughout the compost area with a sculpture of a painted dog, various plants, poisonous fruits . . . The viewers experience walks away with them from the sculpture garden as they continue to battle the stinging nettles as they move into other spaces in the park. This work is quite exemplary of *anthrodecentric art* at first encounter. The site, as it exists in a functioning ecosystem, was not disrupted, but rather built within. The systems already at play were allowed to continue, modifying at will with the new additions to the space. The materials used were selected in accordance to the site, and also with an objective to sustain these systems and allow for the integration. Elements of history are included yet obscured to disallow a linear or singular perspective to be formed by a viewer. The viewer is also positioned within the systems, as external viewing was an impossibility.

This work utilises all three modes of NCR I have identified as necessary for *anthrodecentric art*: slippage, reciprocity, and movement; in order to offer a high degree of nonhuman presence to the viewers, placing them within a system of nonhuman agency, thus in quadrant two with the possibility to extend this relational awareness beyond the arts experience.

Translating On

Re-enchantment, of the antinomial sort, is a necessary state to move towards the visibility of nonhuman agencies. From this state, the viewer emerges *slowed down*, open to wonder, and the interconnections of things becomes infinite. This perceptual shift allows the mind to move beyond the *Cartesian fictive*. This state can be achieved with or without the presence of an arts encounter, as seen through the encounters with urban rats and duty-based pigeons but can be deliberately sought after through the use of modes of NCR within an arts encounter. Once here, re-enchanted and open to possibilities, *anthrodecentric art* moves towards the revelation of nonhuman agencies, as will be discussed in *The Frame*.

The Frame

~ Or ~ an anti-framing of expectations

Using modes of non-Cartesian representation (NCR) as a methodology, I have proposed an answer to one of my primary research questions, 'What types of representation are most revealing of nonhuman agency to a human audience?' Having utilised NCR to move into a state of re-enchantment, an openness to interconnection and interrelations between things, I now return to the question, 'How can the practice of art-work to reveal nonhuman agencies?' In order to explore this question further in the analysis of my practical works in *The Furred* and *The Feathered*, I will now propose an understanding of agency without the presupposition of intentionality or consciousness and explore an example of nonhuman and human agencies in a mythological-ecological system.

Concentric Circles

The nonhuman turn of contemporary thinking is a matter of exceeding disciplinary boundaries. This turn rejects the notion of *speciesism* as the basis for facilitating, or even justifying human privilege over nonhuman entities, specifically the privilege of unconstrained consumption.[112] This research is situated within this turn, and as such, seeks to generate spaces within the arts encounter to untangle long-standing binary oppositions: subject/object, animate/inanimate, and organic/inorganic through an investigation of relations between things. The relations of things which this research explores is an un-doing of the *Cartesian fictive*, to re-engage through a re-enchanted mind with the material world. This re-engagement is first based upon and situated within the *Ethics* of Spinoza, then notions of nonhuman agency will be explored through the thinkings of Deleuze, on Spinoza and then the nonhuman, then I will move into the contemporary thinkers from which I am drawing my understanding of *agency*, including Bennett and Barad. "Knowledge is indifferent to human consciousness," and human consciousness and notions of intentionality will not be explored here and now.[113]

112. Roffe and Stark, "Deleuze and the Nonhuman Turn," 17.

113. Roffe and Stark, *Deleuze and the Non/Human*, 3.

Of Spinoza

Bodies exist. Bodies (extended things) affect one another. Each body seeks to persevere. Every affect has a consequence. The mode of thought, of thinking, potentially allows humans to recognise order and affect and to use their self-determined or active-self to make decisions with awareness of the potential outcomes - affects - destruction - maintenance - or even care for other extended things. Disregarding logical sequences of affect — of consequence — does not diminish the actual, extended thing, the reality of related and mutually affecting things. Is understanding there are consequences following actions the limitations of recognition, of ethics?

"Nothing in nature is contingent but everything is determined to exist and to operate in a specific way by the necessity of the divine nature."[114] It's not a given, nor is it even necessary, that a human recognises the greater whole (or even the ability to recognise), the multitude of expressed modes which compose 'life on earth.' Recognised or not, the human is a body in a world of affecting extended things which operate in an ordered manner. It is important the people do not map past conceptions of an anthropomorphised God into Spinoza's equation, God = Nature = Order. This would perpetuate the general confusion that people have of things existing to meet their needs, these value judgements are unimportant. Humans are part of the substance and its modes of expression, not understanding or misunderstanding a cause is not 'free will.' "*Nothing exists from whose nature some effect does not follow*," the human is part of the greater whole, one of many.[115] The human affects and destroys regardless of intention or degree of comprehension. The ethical point is really to come to a space of recognition, then to make use of the 'active' or self-determined self to make decisions deliberately and to take responsibility for the consequences. The logical argumentation underlying the one substance is not of concern here, but the notion of logical implications, the relationship between premises and conclusions — they must follow to be a real observation, one actually tied to reality. There is no room for self-absorption and self-import.

114. Spinoza, *Ethics*, 28.

115. Spinoza, 34.

Most important is the primary idea of one substance — ordered — mutually and multi-directionally affecting, of which humans are a part. Although a Cartesian scholar, Spinoza responded to the errors he perceived in Descartes' though. He positions the mind within the material world, he rejects dualisms. In the *Second Part of the Ethics,* "Of the Nature and Origin of the Mind," Spinoza presents the explanation, "For what we have proved so far is very general and pertains no more particularly to human beings than to other individual things, all of which are animate albeit in different degrees."[116] All things are animate, albeit in differing degrees. This is not to equivocate the life of experience of say a rock, or a pigeon, or a human, but an ethics of recognition of the inter-relations and inter-actions, and the 'minded-ness' of the one nature, an orb which throws and pulsates with multitudes of modes existing, each seeking to persevere - each being affected and affecting others. The laws underlying are fascinating, the law of inertia (perseverance) and the laws of motion and reactions, with the notion of equal being proportionally relevant to the specific modes involved.[117] There is an incredible amount of space for the specific within the whole. There is no degree of separation at a fundamental level, interesting ties to notions of mass extinction or apocalypse - life will find a way - substance will persist - continuation is the only option, the mode of the human is not now, nor never was a mode on which the substance relied. Recognising that "all things in nature fit together in an orderly and structured whole" including the human, is, I am suggesting, when a person inhabits a state of re-enchantment, at least temporarily exiting the *Cartesian fictive*.[118] All things are a part of Nature, individuals and systems operating in balance, composites and individuals.

116. Spinoza, 55.

117. Spinoza, 55.

118. Spinoza, 46.

Of Deleuze (concerning Spinoza)

"Everyone knows the first principle of Spinoza: one substance for all the attributes. But we also know the third, fourth, or fifth principle: one Nature for all bodies, one Nature for all individuals, a Nature that is itself an individual varying in an infinite number of ways."[119] This statement by Deleuze situates the import and influence he perceives Spinoza's work to

119. Deleuze, *Spinoza*, 122.

have had, that one would be familiar in the first instant with multiple tenets. He continues to explain Spinoza's influence as explicating, "A *common plane of immanence* on which all bodies, all minds, and all individuals are situated."[120]Upon this plane one defines an individual by their affective capacity. This capacity, through the extended body is approached in two ways 'kinetic' and 'dynamic.'[121] These two approaches are defined, or understood, through relation, "The important thing is to understand life, each living individuality, not as a form, or a development of form, but as a complex relation between differential velocities, between deceleration and acceleration of particles. A composition of speeds and slownesses on a plane of immanence."[122] These approaches to the body are still not confined to the human, but to all extended things, each constituting a world, an ordered world, of perseverance, "So an animal, a thing, is never separable from its relations with the world. The interior is only a selected exterior, and the exterior, a projected interior. The speed or slowness of metabolisms, perceptions, actions, and reactions link together to constitute a particular individual in the world."[123] The notion of perseverance, of all things, can be thought of as a *desire* to maintain the extended body, and as this body continuously bumps and jiggles in conjunction, in contact with other extended things, it seeks to maintain a cohesion, as "The object that does not agree with me jeopardises my cohesion, and tends to divide me into subsets, which, in the extreme case, enter into relations that are incompatible with my constitutive relation *(death)*."[124] Death is a matter of duration, a duration with a beginning and an unknown end, the failure of maintaining cohesion, "The end of a duration, which is to say, death, comes from the encounter of the existing mode with another mode that decomposes its relation."[125]As the complexities of relations, of affects are continuously unfolding, one extended things acting in concert with other extended things, abiding by these laws of motion and perseverance, Deleuze questions this community, this notion of sociability, and how may this very symphony may be engaged, perhaps with deliberate affect,

"But now it is a question of knowing whether relations (and which ones?) can compound

120. "Explication is always a self-explication, a development, an unfolding, a dynamism: the thing *explains itself*." Deleuze, 68.

121. Deleuze, 123.

122. Deleuze, 123.

123. Deleuze, 125.

124. Deleuze, 21.

125. Deleuze, 62.

> directly to form a new, more 'extensive' relation, or whether capacities can compound directly to constitute a more 'intense' capacity or power. It is no longer a matter of utilisations or captures, but of sociabilities and communities. How do individuals enter into composition with one another in order to form a higher individual, ad infinitum? How can a being take another being into its world, but while preserving or respecting the other's own relations and world? And in this regard, what are the different types of sociabilities, for example? … Now we are concerned, not with a relation o point to counter-point, nor with the selection of a world, but with a symphony of Nature, the composition of a world that is increasingly wide and intense."[126]

126. Deleuze, 126.

Of Deleuze and Guattari

"A single and same voice for the whole thousand-voiced multiple, a single and same Ocean for all the drops, a single calmer of Being for all beings."[127] The whole and the single, the thing (in)animate, accounted, these are all the one substance of Spinoza. Deleuze maintains a Spinozist perspective, placing the human and the nonhuman in the expansive universe, a position which denies human privilege. The human is, and therefore, must be contextualised with the nonhumans, this is the multitude, the many and the one. Deleuze states, "I don't know what I am - I'd have to investigate and experiment . . . It's not a question of being this or that sort of human, but of becoming inhuman, of a universal animal becoming - not seeing yourself as some dumb animal, but unraveling your body's human organisation exploring, this or that zone of bodily intensity, with everyone discovering their own particularly zones, and the groups, populations, species that inhabit them."[128]The body, or the extended mode of a thing, is common, it is a shared mode between the animate and the inanimate, just as being minded, per Spinoza. Deleuze and Guattari continue to work through the concepts introduced by Spinoza, particularly speaking of the animal through two approaches of complex networks: becoming and assemblage. These concepts both locate the human within the nonhuman, a network of sociability. The basic conception of affect underlies the premise of becoming, "Affects are becomings, the reality of becoming-animal . . . is affect in itself"[129] As affects are becomings, the affects of the individual are the generated by the potentialities of the composite, "The active

127. Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* 304.

128. as quoted in Roffe and Stark, "Deleuze and the Nonhuman Turn," 11.

129. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus,* 256, 259.

and passive affects of which the animal is capable in the individuated assemblage of which it is a part."[130] Wasps and orchids, perhaps a passing influence, perhaps an (im)perfect exemplar of becoming, through the work of Deleuze and Guattari, we encounter these two individuals/modes of extended things, and they exist on a line of duration — one absent a beginning nor an end, one with the *desire* to persevere, "a line of becoming has neither beginning nor end, departure nor arrival, origin nor destination. . . A line of becoming has only a middle."[131] This becoming is not a mimicry nor imitation, but sociability in action, two disparate things affect one another in mutually beneficial ways, re-territorialisation. This space of becoming, unlimited in variety, deeply explored, allows for thinking which continues the dissolution of the self/other binary, there are zones of affect which defy categorisation, "Within this space, various becomings may be traced, each of which opens a zone of indiscernability between the human and the nonhuman, between the animal and machine, vegetable and mineral, the organic and the inorganic."[132] Grosz identifies one major contribution of Deleuze as his 'reading of the human' and his ability to propose questions, perhaps questions which open new ways of seeing and being with what-is.[133] These questions, unanswered, remain with this research, "what of the nonhuman or the inhuman exceeds man? What forces run through humans to connect them to animals and plants, to incipient brains, to milieus and atmospheres, to geographical and historical events - that is, what forces make the human exceed itself?"[134]

130. Deleuze and Guattari, 257.

131. Deleuze and Guattari, 293.

132. Bogue, "The Companion Cyborg," 177.

133. Roffe and Stark, "Deleuze and the Nonhuman Turn," 24.

134. Roffe and Stark, 18-19.

Of Thinking Now

The questions and concepts of mutually affecting bodies, inanimate *mindedness*, of action and consequence have stayed in the theoretical mind. I turn now to examine the ideas of *agential realism* by Barad, *vital materialism* in Bennett, and *becoming-with* through Haraway in a continuation of the concepts explicated by Spinoza exploring the notion of *agency* used within this research. Although, these questions and concepts are not contained within the realm of theory but extend into the realms of practice. In *Ecosystems of Excess*, Yoldas presents

one potential future of a post-apocalyptic continuation of substance.[135] I position this work as Spinozist in thinking as it portrays the continuation of life, of substance, beyond the existence of the human — the human is a catalyst in creating the conditions, but is not necessary for the perpetuation of life.[136] She presents not only the proposition of plastic-based lifeforms, but she generates entire interior and exterior systems, ideas of continuing affects lifeforms based upon the grotesque amount of plastics found in the Pacific Ocean. Rising from the proverbial ashes of humanity, a new system emerges. A new image of the indiscernible intersection of (in)animate things becomes anew.

Becoming-with is engaging in a zone of the indiscernible, when two or more extended things interact in such depth, the categories cease to exist, at least within a temporally-limited caesura. In *When Species Meet*, Haraway details her experiences with her dog Cayenne.[137] She explores the mundane of the day-to-day and the mutual changes that happen within herself and her dog, and the durational and infinite effects of inter-species relationships. These ideas will be further explored in *The Furred*. Hers is an exploration of multi-species sociability, of mutual affecting. Barad seems to agree with this dynamic understanding, change attending practice, stating, "Each critter in its ongoing intra-active engagement with and as part of the world it participates in materialising."[138] This follows from her understanding of agency as an ongoing process, a process of response and responsibility — there are multitudes of possibilities through the engagement and the mutual response, and this is a matter of ethics.[139] This predicate of intra-acting positions the notion of agency outside of the individual human's intentionality, it requires at least two parties, two *minded* things in the world acting with one-another. These practices are the production mechanisms of the material, "Apparatuses are material (re)configurings/ discursive practices that produce material phenomena in the discursively, differentiated becoming."[140] In this research, the arts encounter is positioned as such an apparatus, a microcosm. This lineage of thinking ties to Bennett and her conception of things having 'tendencies of their own' outside of human intention and subjectivity. In presenting the political nature of her project pertaining to vital materialism, Bennett explains that ,"By vitality [she]

135. Yoldas, *Ecosystem of Excess*.

136. Much as Barthes positions the ubiquity of plastic in the *Mythologies*, he may not have imagined the potential futures based purely upon the propensities of the material. Barthes, *Mythologies*, 97.

137. Haraway, *When Species Meet*.

138. Barad, "Nature's Queer Performativity," 127.

139. Barad, "Matter Feels."

140. Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity,"819.

means the capacity of things — edibles, commodities, storms, metals — not only to impede or block the will and designs of humans but also to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own. . . that runs alongside and inside humans."[141] Here Grosz succinctly explains the necessity of deliberate nonhuman engagement, "The human is, obviously, a hinge, a pathway, one of many, by which the world may understand itself, by which thought or conceptuality is added to or elaborated in the world. But if the human and its modes of conceptualisation understood this world better, the place of the human would not be so perilously close to extinction, so self-destructive as it has been. If the human is seen as one among a huge number of species and billions of living beings, this provides a kind of antidote to the endless spirals of self-inspection."[142] While this research does not investigate the specificities of any one of these contemporary theories, this research aims to make visible the multiple sociabilities and reverberating affects, the agencies of things, emerging through the encounter with practice. Now, I present a reading, or re-reading, using the notion of assemblage as a reading strategy, via Bennett, of an ecological-mythological-folktale.

141. Bennett, *Vibrant Matter,* viii.

142. Roffe and Stark, "Deleuze and the Nonhuman Turn," 18.

A Tale to Begin

> Glooscap was a creation god and not only was he pretty instrumental in getting everyone here, but he was pretty good guy. He runs the world, rules the animals, regulates nature and keeps us from screwing things up too badly. Sometimes though, he gets tired of it all and says, "Goodbye, I'm going to make myself die now." He paddles off to the other side of the misty clouds and dies. However, he can't enjoy his rest; because he comes back to help whenever he sees us turning the world into a dumpster fire. So he comes back way, way too often.
>
> In some stories he is credited with creating the humans and the animals, and some just the animals. We're going to go with the former and this is before the humans existed and he created the animals. The world was still in sandbox mode and he didn't quite have the skills down yet. For instance, the first time he made a squirrel he made it as big as a whale. Looked at it and said, "This seems like a bad idea." And it was a bad idea, the squirrel annihilated every forest it touched. Glooscap touched it and it shrunk down to its present size. Then he rebooted the world to start fresh.

Then he made the beaver, trying to make that whale-sized as well. That too did not work out and the beaver built a damn that flooded the entirety of North America as well as drowning all of those tiny squirrels. He touched the beaver and it to shrunk to be normal beaver-size. He once again rebooted the world and started fresh. Next up was the moose. And Glooscap had meant to try and make it smaller, but he still had the 'make the animals problematically large' box checked and he accidentally made the moose so big that Its massive moose head popped over the clouds. It could trample its way across the continent in mere minutes, scaring all of the appropriately sized squirrels and beavers. Glooscap sighed, alright he would shrink this one too. He touched on its head, but it just looked at him, shook it's moose head and ran off. It refused to be shrunk. Glooscap sighed, took out his magic bow and arrow and shot the moose dead. It wavered and the world shook when it crashed to the ground. Glooscap did not want to clean up a giant moose corpse, so once again he rebooted the world.

Once all of the animals were made and the environment was pretty stable, he decided to add people. He made the first village and populated it, then he made village after village. Glooscap visited each village after he made it and taught the people everything they needed to know to live happy lives. They lived their lives with each other, people cherished and respected one another, they lived in peace and all was well; for about a generation.

The streams for a whole string of villages began to dry up. Soon it was completely dry, even when they had heavy rains. Then, a black and green ooze came from it. The people tried the black and green ooze, it was about as delicious, refreshing and safe for them to drink as you would think a black and green ooze would be. Things got bad. The water storage ran out. The people would die if they stayed here. But all of the villages in the area were having the same problem. No one knew what to do.

The elders gathered together and determined they must send a man north. Farther than anyone had ever gone. They must learn what was causing this problem and fix it. The found one brave man who left his family in an attempt to save his village. He followed the black oozing green stream north. He moved as quickly as he could, his people needed him. He barely slept and he tracked the stream over the mountains and when he did he saw that the stream was flowing, a little bit. It was stinky and yellow, but more watery than oozy. Then he saw tents and the shape of people on the horizon and he rant to the them and discovered that they were not people. Well, they were not like any people he had seen before. They were lizard people, maybe, they were scaly and webbed, with clawed hands; but were otherwise very polite. Seeing as humanity was

only a few years old maybe lizard people were a common occurrence? He didn't know. Then he saw it, in the basin in the middle of the village there were gallons and gallons of clean cool water. He had been filtering out whatever water he could from the sludge, but it was disgusting. He was parched. He begged the lizard people for water, but they refused. It's not that they didn't want him to have any, but it was really out of their hands. He would have to talk to the great chief that sat at the mouth of all the rivers. If he said that the brave man could have some then he could have some. The chief wasn't someone they wanted to cross, so he brave man would have to ask himself. The brave man sighed and continued on. He wanted to stop and rest but his thirst prodded him onward. He was so close to water and he would be lauded as a hero for saving his people.

He followed the stream for the better part of a day, until at evening time he saw the source. It was a spring of sorts. The stream was coming from under a mountain and the black sludge was pouring out of it. The opening the sludge was coming out of was tiny, and even if the brave man didn't care about being covered in sludge ,which he absolutely did, he wouldn't have been able to fit. He looked all along the wall and there wasn't a break for as far as the eye could see. He was stuck. The wall was straight up. So high that he couldn't even see the top of it. Even if he managed to survive the trip around it with his thirst, he might never find the stream again. He clenched his fists, he had failed, and now his people would die. Without thinking he began pounding on the wall, yelling and kicking, not caring about this hands or feet, just howling in rage. Then the wall's eyes opened. The brave man didn't notice until the wall began shifting, moving for miles in each direction. The brave man looked up and saw the monster that he thought was a mountain staring back down at him. Its black pupil ringed by yellow. A tongue that was hundreds of feet long licked its lips. The peaks of the mountains weren't peaks, they were his thin warts. It looked down at the man and said, "Hey, why are you kicking me?" and, "What do you want?" The brave man's hands began to tremble, this was a huge mistake. Still he had a chance, he begged the monster for water, "The stream was their only spring and they would die without it. Just maybe scoot over a bit, so maybe it could come through. Also, don't use it as your toilet? Is that too much to ask?" It was. The mountain monster smiled a toothless smile, his smile was nearly a mile wide and he sang, yes sang, "Do ask you please, I don't care, if you want water, go elsewhere." The brave man was pretty angry and said, "Look, you're the size of a mountain and there's no where else to go - ooh, you're opening your mouth okay and this is probably just fine." The brave man could see inside the creature's mile-long mouth. And saw scores and scores of bodies: people, buffalo, deer, a few lizard people. As if he needed to, the monster once again sang, "I don't care, don't bother me or I'll saw you up." I don't know if the brave man was shrinking in terror of being swallowed up or he if was critical of the monster for

abandoning his rhyme scheme, but he didn't have time to react. The monster closed it's mouth, and the brave man was hit with a powerful wind that stank of rotting corpses, he was lifted off his feet and thrown back away from the monster. The earth shook with the monster's laughter as the monster settled back down over the stream and closed its eyes.

The man made the long trek back to his village in failure, when he arrived the water was blacker and slimier than ever, and he told everyone they should just get used to drinking the monster's waste water. The people despaired. They would soon die. They cried out to the heavens. I don't know what Glooscap was doing, but I know what he wasn't doing. He wasn't getting any rest. Then he realised the issue wasn't something the people had done, but a monster that had slipped past his many, many trials and errors in making the animal. He sighed, "Alright, time to go to work." He painted his body red and made himself twelve feet tall. He adorned himself with eagle feathers and put on clam-shell earrings. As he walked, thunder and lightning began to fill the sky. The eagles began to circle above him and soon he came to the village of the lizard people, who were exceptionally polite to Glooscap, offering him the water. Although now after the last person had come and gone, even their water was yellow and stinky. Glooscap looked at the mountain in the distance, "No thanks," he said, "I think I'll get my water from the source." He walked and walked, until he was facing the stream, and the monster was already awake (on account of the incredibly cool thunder, lightning and eagles). Glooscap said that he wanted "water, clean water, a lot of it," for the people downstream. The monster once again creaked out a, "Ho, ho. All the waters are mine. Go away or I'll kill you." Apparently just not bothering to rhyme at all. Glooscap narrowed his eyes and said, "Yeah, well, we'll see about that."

The earth trembled as the monster rose to his feet and looked down at Glooscap hungrily. It opened it's stinking, slimy mouth and dove down for Glooscap, but found that it never hit the ground. Glooscap was growing. Glooscap grabbed the top of the monster's mount and pushed upward as he grew. The monster quite literally biting off more than he could chew, began to worry. Not worrying as much as it would when Glooscap now towering over the creature with his head in the clouds grabbed the mountain range the monster had been sitting by and wrenched one of the flint peaks from it making a huge make-shift knife as he held the struggling monster. Now a few times it's size, he buried the knife in the ground and dug a deep ravine and lake. The monster creaked a futile, "No," before Glooscap buried the knife in its belly. All the water it had been reserving rushed out and into the ravine Glooscap had dug and turned the stream into a rushing river that flowed to all the people and gave them clean-ish water. Glooscap didn't care about punishing the creature, it was just an animal, it didn't know any better. But he did need to get every last drop out. He balled up the monster and squeezed and squeezed,

wringing it out. The monster creaked and croaked, muffled by Glooscap's hands. Until finally, it was a manageable size. Glooscap looked at the valley that had been opened and the fresh water flowing from the lands beyond and saw that his work was done. The people would survive. He balled up the now tiny monster and tossed it, like one would a crumpled piece of paper. It landed in the swamp. Glooscap knew the monster lived, but it didn't matter it couldn't hurt anyone now. It recovered after Glooscap threw it in the water and it swam to a lily pad. It leapt out, sat on the pad and croaked. The monster had been a bullfrog that Glooscap had accidentally made too big and then forgot about. And that's why a bullfrog's skin in so wrinkly, because Glooscap squeezed it so hard.

As it turns out, the murderous frog-monster that nearly killed humanity in its infancy is the ancestor of all frogs. So yeah, this means frogs are extremely selfish, and if they were big enough, they would kill us all. And really given how evil and selfish that one was, how do we know that all frogs aren't just sitting on their lily pads waiting for the day they can rise up and take revenge? Glooscap looked at the world and wondered if he should check it one last time, to make sure all the animals were normal-sized. But that would be a ton of work and he wanted to go back to sleep. He once again boarded his white canoe and sailed off into the mists. Humanity was going to be alright.

Except they weren't.[143] . . .

I will begin with a re-reading of this myth — in a reverse manner of sorts . . .

We (western-industrialised-humans)[144] have been granted (or taken) our existence and the subsistence to meet our needs. As we learn, we take. First, we take what we need. Then amalgamations of want take on personhood and transform our needs. (Moving well beyond what Glooscap could have imagined). As it turns out, the needs of capital far outweigh the needs of a village. The villagers continue to operate downstream and believe that the chief will protect them. However, the water runs dry. The villagers cannot live like this. A brave villager asks the chief for water and perhaps, justice; to hear only that, 'water is not a human right.'[145] It seems here that the villagers are left without choice to perish or to relearn a waterless life. There is no Glooscap to turn to — Glooscap will not beat the 'chief' into submission for the

143. The host and writer Jason Weiser has compiled myths from the Mik'maq, Passamaquoddy, and Maliseet people into a contemporary re-telling. Weiser, Jason. "Native American Folklore: Monster."

144. This generalisation is stemming from myth-base language.

145. Much like the villager media dissemination and de-con- textualised video footage has a left a wake of discontent following from a clip of Peter Brabeck claiming that water is best dissemi- nated as a commodity. McGraw, "Nestle Chairman."

greater good. To whom can the villagers turn?

It is here — that I am suggesting the villagers turn to themselves. They simply must force, or perhaps slip into, a new understanding of the world — the way the people understand their environment, their ecology. If not for the sake of another, for themselves. Man has created the person of corporations, man alone must destroy.

> As it turns out, the murderous frog-monster that nearly killed humanity in its infancy is the ancestor of all frogs. So yeah, this means frogs are extremely selfish, and if they were big enough they would kill us all. And really, given how evil and selfish that one was, how do we know that all frogs aren't just sitting on their lily pads waiting for the day they can rise up and take revenge?[146]

146. Weiser, Jason. "Native American Folklore: Monster."

I can only wonder at this moral. Whose purpose does this line of questioning serve? I doubt that it aligns with the original folktale but has been introduced as a *modern* twist for the listeners' entertainment. An attempt to anthropomorphise the frog as villain, in service to the purity of the human-figure. Would a frog take revenge? Does that question even matter? I am answering, 'No.' This is a null-value question and only seeks to reify Cartesian modes of representation. More realistically, the frog is a metaphor for capitalist development; is it really fair to the frog to construct this metaphor? However, in this moment perhaps the more relevant question is, 'Can we assign this degree of intentional agency to a frog? Even when it so closely suits our needs in justifying human behaviours?'

Who are the actors in this scenario? Not the actors in a scene, but in an ecological reading of the above . . . First, we have the villagers (presumably of multiple villages not in control of the water supply). We then have the lizard people, let's call them middle management, who at first manage to be successful given their wits and fore-planning, yet still fall prey to the chief. Then we have the chief, or corporate entity that has laid claim to the resource of water. Then perhaps the most obvious and easily overlooked actor — water, plus the river and mountain system which created the original water flow. The river depends on water flow from the mountain range. A strong flowing river sustains the ecological balance of the entire river

system, humans (and lizard people) being only a small part of this system. As soon as the toad/corporation restricts the flow through overconsumption, all other actors become invalid and the ecosystem fails to function. Again, to whom does the responsibility fall? The mountains for failed production? The river for failing to provide sustenance? Or perhaps, the entity over-consuming and even denying a role in such a cycle?

> On a sunny Tuesday morning on 4 June in the grate over the storm drain to the Chesapeake Bay in front of Sam's Bagels on Cold Spring Lane in Baltimore, there was:
>
> One large men's black plastic work glove
> One dense mat of oak pollen
> One unblemished dead rat
> One white plastic bottle cap
> One smooth stick of wood
>
> Glove, pollen, rat, cap, stick. As I encountered these items, they simmered back and forth between debris and thing — between, on the one hand, stuff to ignore, except insofar as it betokened human activity (the workman's efforts the litterer's toss, the rat-poisoner's success), and, on the other hand, stuff that commanded attention in its own right, as existents in excess of their association with human meanings, habits, or projects. In the second moment, stuff exhibited its thing-power; it issued a call, even if I did not quite understand what it was saying. At the very least it provoked affects in me: I was repelled by the dead (or was it merely sleeping?) rat and dismayed by the litter, but I also felt something else: a nameless awareness of the impossible singularity of *that* rat, *that* configuration of pollen, *that* otherwise utterly banal, mass-produced plastic water-bottle cap.[147]

147. Bennett. *Vibrant Matter*. 4.

The above selection by Jane Bennett is one example of a found assemblage of things. These examples are not hard to find. One can stop and look around at any moment of any day and catalogue the things as seen. "A nameless awareness of the impossible singularity of *that* . . ." is key to the conceptual framework of nonhuman agency that is central to *anthrodecentric art*.[148] Although each individual thing-type could be replaced by another of that thing-type, each thing is essential to the course of actions and equal reactions demonstrated through physics. Although, each assemblage is a specific thing of a thing-type and as an assemblage, each

148. Bennett, 4.

individual thing becomes irreplaceable. The assemblage is a *becoming-with* of many things that stand outside of a simple human-usefulness understanding.

Returning to the creation myth above, or rather my re-reading of the creation myth to a myth of destruction via corporate personhood and over-consumption, as a story the things are abstract and can be mapped onto any number of physical territories that include the list of actors. However, if we look specifically to the San Bernardino Mountains in California, the abstract things of myth crystallise into a concrete assemblage of things, actions, and reactions. Nestle's Arrowhead water is partly drawn from a pipeline in the San Bernardino Mountains (under a twenty-five years expired permit).[149] This company draws millions of gallons of water from Strawberry Creek. This creek is a vital connection between two watersheds and supports the life of a variety of creatures (amphibians, snakes, birds, humans, to name a few). So, to recap the actors in the abstract myth to the actors in the concrete river: the toad is Nestle, the river of sludge is Strawberry Creek, and the humans dying of thirst are a variety of life. I am speaking of agency in terming of actions, affects, and reactions, but I wish to be clear that I am not limiting the notion of nonhuman agency to a causal relationship. nonhuman agency is dependent on things: individual, singular things that each play their part within an ecological system, they are irreplaceable.

149. Mohan, "Nestle Drawing."

Defining Human

Traditionally there are three approached to defining 'human': theological, biological, and philosophical.[150] The theological approach is dependent upon the following criteria: a being that is special and unique via mode of creation, a being that possesses a soul, a being that possesses the basic human capacities (yielding a notion of equality among men), and lastly a being imago Dei. The philosophical approach is dependent on a separate set of criteria: a being that possesses consciousness, has conscious desires and feelings, can experience pleasure and pain, is self-conscious, has a sense of time and of a future-self, has the capacity for social interaction,

150. Evans, 'What is a Human?'

and can communicate. Lastly, the biological definition is dependent upon the expression of DNA and is full of mechanistic metaphors, drawing from Darwin and reflects the Nature Argument.[151]

From these frames of understanding what a human is, then we can move into the notion of contested and uncontested humanness. An uncontested human is simply that which all parties agree as a human, such as a baby human and an adult human. The contested human is the realm of problematic political arguments, such as an embryo or a chimpanzee. The space of political argument of contested humanness is easy to identify from abortion arguments through the extension of human rights to nonhumans.

Within this research, I am following the biological definition of human; and as such, positioning all other forms of animate and inanimate matter as nonhumans. I would like to point out that I am not restricting the defining elements of the philosophically defined human solely to the realm of human. I am not engaging with notions of souls or of consciousness in the definition of human or nonhuman, I do not understand these to be relevant in this discussion of agency and re-enchantment.

151. Evans. The 'Nature Argument' would be that Nature takes precedence over nurture and the human is determined by genetics not their environment.

Refining -or- Expanding

In this research and developing the proposition of *anthrodecentric art* and NCR as a methodology, I am using the term 'agency' with a particular meaning, an actor or actant as a thing with the capacity to act upon another. Further, I am looking to the agency of things in three spheres: social, material, and cultural. The agency of a thing in the social sphere is evidence of the evolution of relationships, it is history in the present, it is the entanglement of two or more things with each shaping the other. Donna Haraway succinctly points out that human exceptionalism is fantasy, stating, "This [human exceptionalism] is the premise that humanity alone is not a spatial and temporal web of interspecies dependencies."[152] Although this is a common misconception, it is nonetheless a misconception. Humans do not exist

152. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 11.

outside of the 'spatial and temporal web' of nonhumans but are firmly entrenched and cannot exist outside of this world wide web of other humans and nonhumans. In speaking towards an understanding of social agency, this interdependence is key. Humans and nonhumans alike are continuously contaminating one other through the presence and jointly shaping the futures of one another. "Never purely themselves, things are compound; they are made up of combinations of other things coordinated to magnify power, to make something happen, to engage the world, to risk fleshy acts of interpretation,"[153] here Haraway is explicating an important aspect of agency in the practice of *anthrodecentric art*. The human, the nonhuman, and the work of art are never solely themselves; but act with one another, engaging and magnifying what-is present.

153. Haraway, 250.

As agents and agency are everywhere (as discussed above), working from Jane Bennett's writing on vibrant materialism, let's examine the second aspect of agency: material agency or the material ecology of Things. This notion of material ecology is centred on understanding the effects of actions by humans and nonhumans and the reverberations caused throughout the environment. Bennett's earlier description of the found assemblage can lead to the contemplation of rubbish. Yes, as humans, we tend to produce quite large amounts of refuse, but does the human action of ascribing a Thing to the realm of rubbish actually impact the material agency of such a Thing? Is the vibrant materialism of a Thing subject to the whims of human language? It seems that Bennett would argue no, that the effects of Things and the material reverberations would not cease to exist due to human will. In regard to the assemblage of rubbish noted earlier, those Things can and will,

> Remind us that a vital materiality can never really be thrown "away," for it continues its activities even as a discarded or unwanted commodity. For Sullivan that day, as for me on he June morning, thing-power rose from a pile of trash. Not Flower Power, or Black Power, or Girl Power, but Thing-Power: the curious ability of inanimate things to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle.[154]

154. Bennett, *Vibrant Matter,* 6.

However, are the effects of Things animate or inanimate always subtle? It would seem that the concentration of CO2 in our atmosphere might be proof otherwise (at least to the vast

majority of scientists working today).

Another valuable insight into the material agency of Things within human bodies can be examined — although an evolutionary time scale is necessary and then, "a mineral efficacy becomes visible."[155]

> Soft tissue (gels and aerosols, muscle and nerve) reigned supreme until 5000 million years ago. At that point, some of the conglomerations of fleshy matter-energy that made up life underwent a sudden *mineralisation*, and a new material for constructing living creatures emerged: bone. It is almost as if the mineral world that had served as a substratum for the emergence of biological creatures was reasserting itself.[156]

Although the 'conglomerations of fleshy-matter energy' most-likely displayed to sense of intention, the effects of their material agency walk on through our human bodies still to this day. After all, "We are walking, talking minerals."[157]

Lastly, I will turn to discuss cultural agency or ecology. Looking at the way we think, how this thinking has been shaped, and how we think about Things. Alfred Gell in *Art and Agency* puts forth an empirical analysis of the co-existents that construct the art-object. These co-existents are the index, artist, recipient, and the prototype. This system of classification, predicated upon the above named co-existents, seeks to elucidate "The situations in which indexes of an art-like kind can form part of a nexus of social relations between agents."[158] This project is, of course, varied and considered to be incomplete and not law-like given the diverse natures of art objects. Gell presents the work of Marcel Duchamp regarding the fourth dimension. The fourth dimension is, "the 'real' but strictly *unrepresentable* domain beyond, or encompassing, the 'ordinary' world we live in and perceive in the normal way."[159] As I speak of nonhuman agency being made visible through the practice of *anthrodecentric art,* I am always speaking of multiple agencies. First, the agency of the present nonhuman as such, which includes the three above domains of Thing agency. Second, the cultural agency of the artwork and the reconstruction of the index representing the unrepresentable.[160]

155. Bennett, 11.

156. Bennett, 11.

157. Bennett, 11.

158. Gell, *Art and Agency*, 28.

159. Gell, 243.

160. Strategies for this task utilising modes of NCR were expanded throughout *The Look*.

A Brain + A Brain Intervened

Now a turn from our mineral selves to look at another internal system, operating silently and allowing each of our human selves to be conscious and fully intentional in our actions . . . unless, it does not.

Pictured to the side is a brain, a human brain, a bi-polar human brain. This brain has distinct differences from a 'normal' brain. Perhaps there are noticeable differences in the grey matter of the frontal and temporal regions, if they are not noticeable — they are still there. There is a distinctive degradation of the grey matter, a disappearance at a rate significantly different to a normal brain. This loss of grey matter contributes to the major symptoms of bi-polar disorder. These symptoms include a mind that is easily distracted, a body with little need for sleep, the exercise of poor judgement, a lack of temper control, the exhibition of reckless behaviour, elevated mood, easy agitation, increased energy, racing thoughts, high self-esteem, speed talking and bingeing — in the manic mode of operation. Yet in the depressed mode of operation (from the same, singular brain) these symptoms arise: sadness, fatigue, inability to concentrate or make decisions, weight instability, overwhelming feeling of guilt, worthlessness, and hopelessness; decreased self-esteem, suicidal ideation, a lack of pleasure from any normally pleasurable activities, sleeping troubles, and finally a sense of utter isolation followed by the seeking of isolation.

These sets of symptoms are incredibly oppositional, yet these are the effects of a bi-polar brain with cell metabolism issues continually losing grey matter at an alarming rate. It would seem that given the extreme variation in symptoms, that one could (easily) argue that one experiencing this illness is lacking in the capacity of intentional action, or intentional agency. As I have demonstrated above, intentional agency is a small subset within the notion of agency and this perspective is not central to the explanation and proposed existence of *anthrodecentric art*. However, I am issuing this example of chemical agency to illustrate that even a theological and philosophically defined human is not always capable of intentional actions; and furthermore,

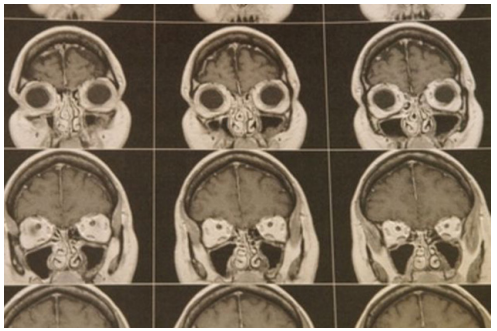
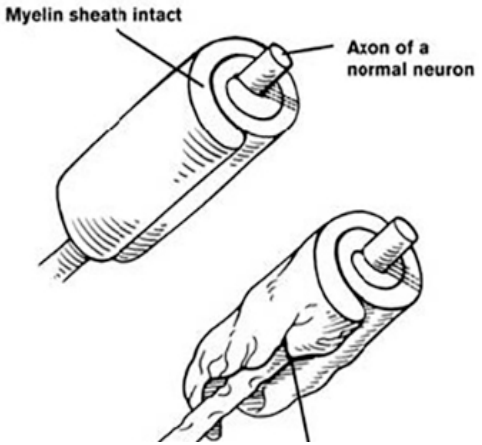


Figure 10. The neurobiology of bi-polar disorder. This image is commonly used with web-based resources, but is uncredited and I am unable to find an original source.

Figure 11. Demyelination of neural sheaths. This image is commonly used with web-based resources, but is uncredited and I am unable to find an original source.



that every human is not always capable of maintaining a singular self within the container of a single body. Each and every human body is reliant on a functional balance within their neurobiology, if this is not 'naturally' existing a chemical intervention can be introduced. In the case of the bi-polar individual, that chemical intervention is commonly lithium. Lithium can actually restore the physical grey matter of the brain, as well as restore the patient's capacity to be a conscious and intentionally acting human being. This material agency of lithium allows a human to occupy a balanced state and to be a conscious actor socially, materially, and culturally. However, the human may not choose to follow all of these possibilities. For instance, has the patient looked to the origins of lithium? What are the practices of extracting the mineral? What are the environmental impacts? How is unused lithium disposed?

We are walking talking barrels of minerals and chemicals . . . this is but one example of material interventions that assist in composing and allowing for our continued sense of individual selves.

The Function of Non-Cartesian Representation - Critical Application (Take Two)

The door is opened, one can pass through. Moving into this room, the walls are thick, it is cold, actually freezing. One has walked into a gallery sized freezer, walls thick with insulation, powered by solar panels on the rooftop of M.O.M.A. P.S.1. The room is not empty, there are other viewers, all of the humans are walking around them and looking. Large and medium sized white borders, calved chunks of iceberg transported and placed into the manufactured space — a life support system. This work by Olafur Eliasson bends the human-modified ecological systems of climate control in the North Sea to a directly manipulated and controlled environment within a cultural institution. This work is marked by a high degree of presence, the insulation, the temperature, and the icebergs. Yet, these present agents are situated via the artists re-presentation to make visible the systems of influence which have rendered the out-of-doors environment unsuitable to maintain its own stability. These mediations by the

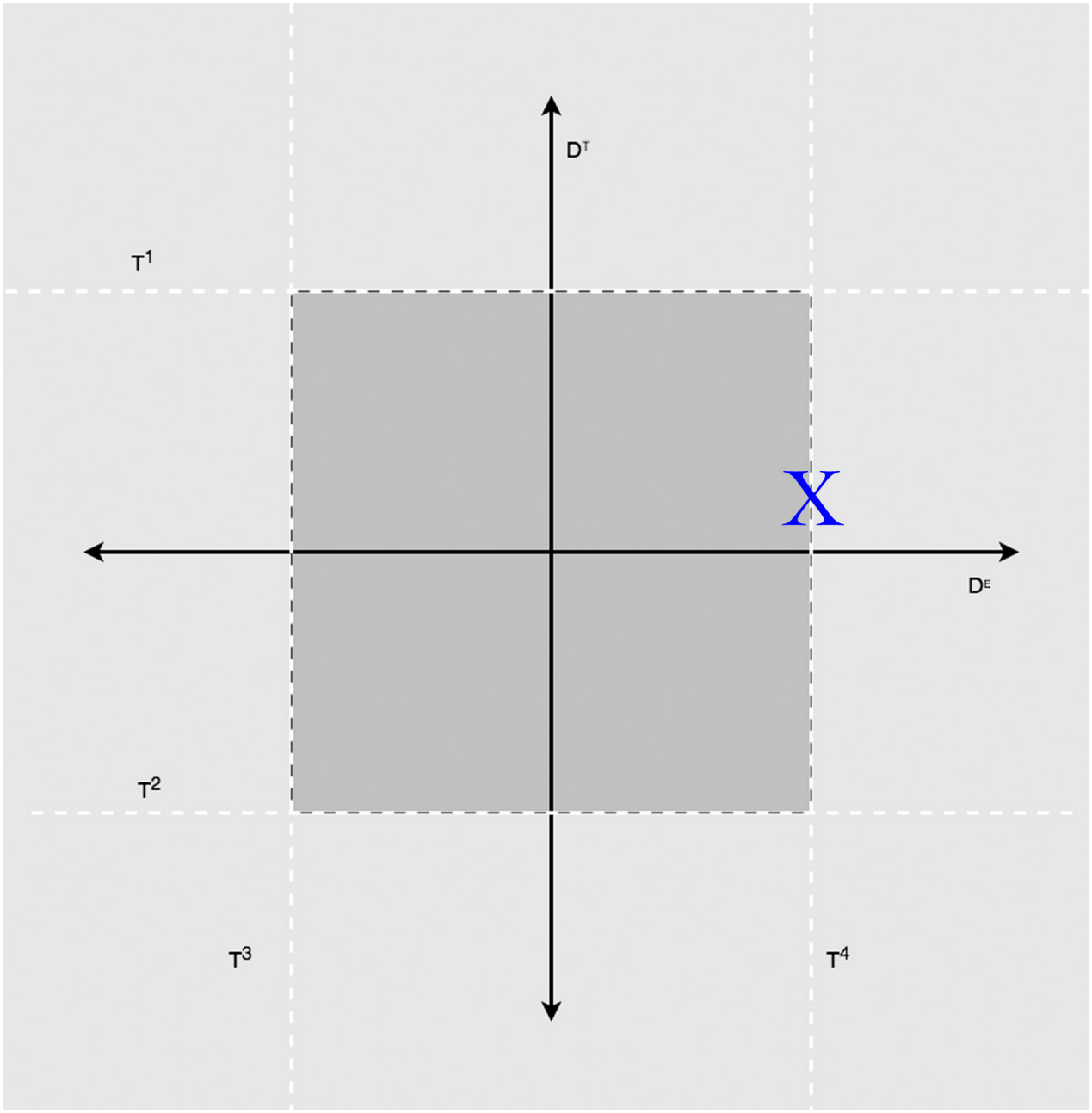


Figure 12. *f(NCR)* applied to Pierre Huyghe, *Untilled*, dOCUMENTA (13), 2012.

artist generate a sense of re-enchantment which allow for the systems of re-presentation to be mapped inversely proportionate to the *natural* systems, currently failing. The *natural* elements and the elements assembled for this life-support construct are simultaneously revealed as nonhumans with agency. This particular installation and the confluence of materials and systems lead towards a translation of enchantment and the visibility of nonhuman agency moving beyond the gallery (as seen in *Fig. 12*).

Recovering Enchantment

To understand enchantment is to be open to understanding relations between Things outside of the human dominated hierarchy of Cartesian thinking. This is not a magically-orientated thinking, but a thinking grounded in looking at, seeing and understanding a shared reality. Enchantment is not the anthropomorphised things of a Disney canon; although, their lexicon may be a set of conceptual training-wheels for understanding the agency of Things outside of human use-value. The call for re-enchantment is to call for an understanding of the 'lives' of materials. For example, the lives of inanimate things after becoming rubbish — the how of a plastic water bottle becoming a floating island of trash in the Pacific Ocean that is larger than the state of Texas.[161]

In the folktale from the beginning of this chapter, the original text could have been written from an animist perspective. The toad is afforded a sense of agency, stemming from the intentional action of blocking the source of water. From a language of animism, the toad was perhaps afforded this sense of agency from a notion of the toad possessing a soul. This allowance for a nonhuman to possess a soul, as seen to be a theological determiner of a human, is afforded to the animate inhuman actor, the toad. This intentional actor is even ascribed the capacity for evil, to intentionally deny the life-force necessary to support the humans living downstream. But perhaps this ascription of the soul is unimportant within the discussion of *anthrodecentric art* . . . if we move into the Cartesian realm of reality, the toad is

161. Montanari, "Plastic Garbage Patch."

an automaton. This toad is not capable of feeling and is therefore not a human regarding the philosophical definition. The toad in this instance is dis-enchanted and is simply a biological conglomeration of organs which a superior human can quickly dispense. Whilst the water remains a passive (non)actant which only serves to support the lives of humans and any other quality can be quickly dismissed. However, if we move into the realm of re-enchantment the corporate personhood of toad quickly dissolves into the metaphorical selfish nature of rampant consumption of humans with expendable money. The resource of water can be recognised as an indispensable actant in ecological terms for countless individuals and interactant Things. The act of re-enchantment is to recognise water, as a Thing, and a Thing that cannot be replaced — an active agential thing.

The use of modes of NCR has generated a state of re-enchantment, allowing for the visibility of nonhuman agents. In the next two chapters I will be presenting my practical works, examining the modes of NCR utilised, analysing the potentials for a viewer to experience a state of re-enchantment, and then postulating possibilities for the recognition of nonhuman agency from the arts encounters.

The Furred

Looking -- Seeing -- Being -- with the dog, cat, and fox

Throughout this discussion of the works comprising *The Furred*, the primary questions being asked are 'Who sees?', 'How do they see?' and 'What do they see?' These questions are largely unanswerable as Thomas Nagel tells us, "Our own experience provides the basic material for our imagination, whose range is therefore limited."[162] Here the importance is not a falsely claimed knowledge of what the dog, the fox, or the cat can or does see; but to ask these questions and accept there is an answer that we cannot and will not be able to know. There are three primary works which will be discussed here, *Who Looks Back*, *Encounters with Her Presence* (composed of three parts), and 'Miss Maddie Dog performs *Being a Dog*.' Each work will be discussed in detail and then examined using the diagram *primary modes of non-cartesian representation*, and then *the function of non—Cartesian representation*.

162. Nagel, "What is it Like?" 439.

Who Looks Back?
~ for Untitled

Everything that I am about to entrust to you no doubt comes back to asking you to respond to me, you, to me, reply to me concerning what it is to respond. If you can.[163] . .

163. Derrida, *The Animal,* 8.

Who Looks Back is an act of appreciation of the nonhuman, of *Untitled*.

We share our ecologies.

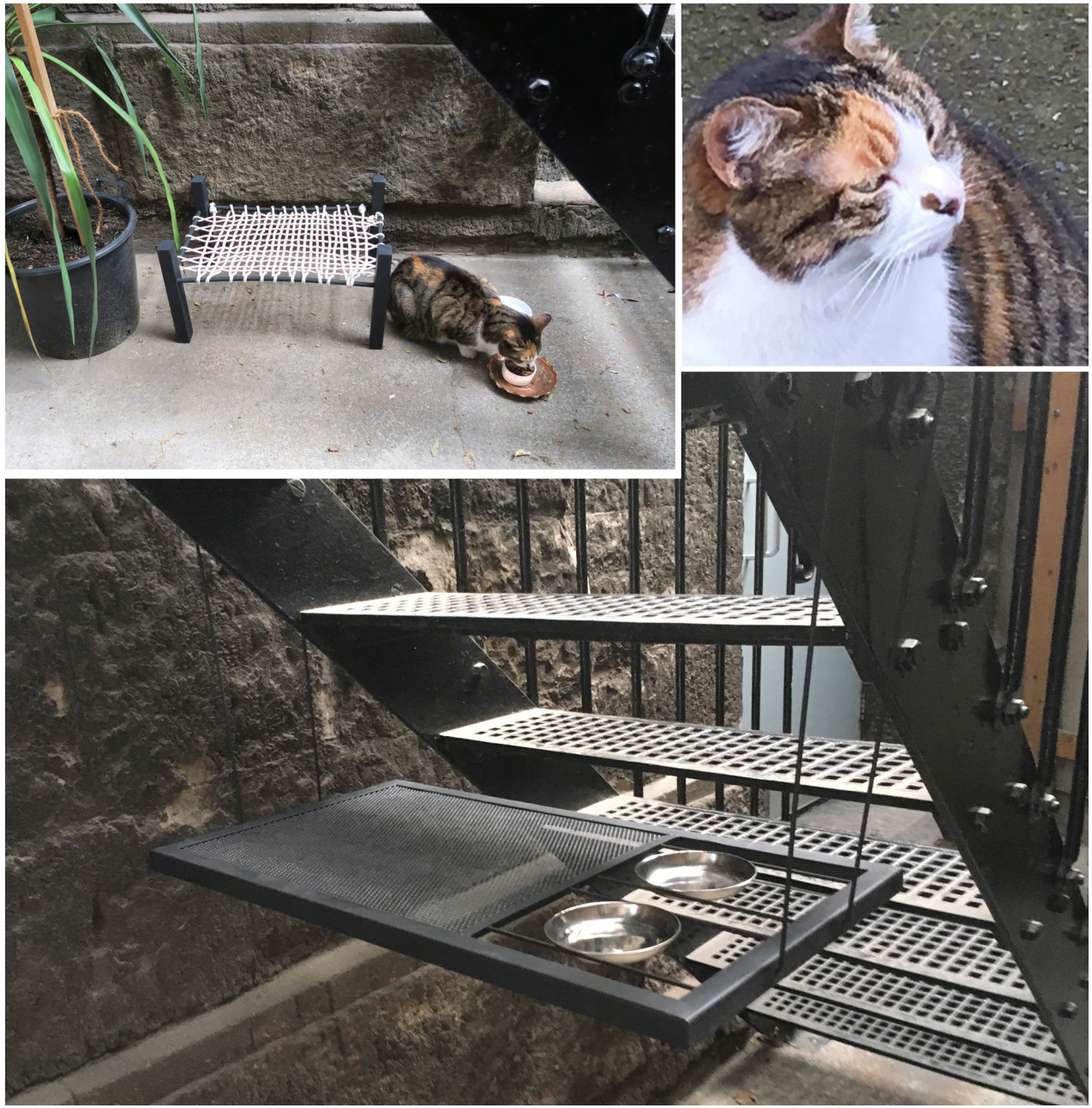
We enact our agencies.

We are a multiplicity of our many entangled histories.[164]

164. Gaietto, *Who Looks Back*, installation text.

Who Looks Back is a sculptural intervention into a non-art space at Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall. An intervention aimed at specifying space dedicated to the popular nonhuman resident. This resident is a cat, deemed *Untitled* by the gallery staff. As a practical matter this sculpture shields her food from slugs, it provides a safe perch from which she can survey her home, and it provides warmth during cold times. This intervention is an act of care for Her and a recognition of Her presence.

Figure 13. Documentation of *Who Looks Back*, semi-permanent sculptural intervention to Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall. *(top left)* Version one, 40 x 26 x 21cm, wood and rope, 2016. *(bottom)* Version two, 60 x 40 x 2cm, steel and aluminum with self heating pillow, 2017.



Who Looks Back, as a title, is a reflection on the above Derrida quote and the expanded text of *The Animal that Therefore I Am*. This text begins with a discussion of the cat looking at him and seeing his naked body. He speaks of following: of the limitations of gratitude, of shame, nakedness, of consciousness — this is the point of primary concern. Here I am thinking of the reciprocity of looking and seeing, of extending gratitude towards this member of the gallery as far as possible — to appreciate this particular cat and the benefits her presence brings to the space and to her human co-habitants.

Looking is a reciprocal act that extends in time and space through the histories that made this moment and makes for our potential futures. This work positions the act of reciprocal looking as a space through a shared encounter revealing the shaping of social landscapes of our future, related to this shared material landscape. This work has been installed in two parts. The first installation was late-Spring of 2016. It was constructed of wood and rope, with no other materials. This bed was positioned underneath the fire escape. However, it seemed to create desire in child-humans as well as *Untitled* and the weight of the human bodies quickly broke the structure. The second iteration was installed in early 2017. This construction responded to the destruction of its predecessor - suspended and delicate - an attempt to disinvite human 'participants'. The bed is the width of the fire escape and is attached by bespoke hooks and can easily be taken down when needed and then re-hung. The bed frame is designed with a cool metallic webbed area for the cat to enjoy in warmer times, and then a self-heating pad is placed during cold temperatures. The frame also accommodates two bowls, water and food, easily removable for cleaning. The black and silver construction blends with the existing aesthetics of the fire escape in order to not attract the attention of small humans.

The bed becomes a space designated for the cat and allows her a perch to look at humans as they may look at her. From this emerges a simultaneous and duplicitous presence of the cat; she is revealed yet, not framed. As the cat looks back, she looks with her histories of her individual self and of cat-ness. She came to the gallery as an apparent stray and made herself a home, receiving free access to the gallery spaces during opening hours and access to

storage facilities for after-hours safety. As cat-ness, she brings histories of cats bred and used to combat mice and rat infestations, as cats left to fend for themselves as strays, the growing population of discarded animate rubbish a by-product of human interactions . . . The gallery inhabitants bring histories of their individual selves, their histories of art activities leading to the establishment of the gallery, and their histories and expectations of animals. All parties chose to create the specific ecology of this gallery, an alternative art establishment adopted by a cat - who has free-ish reign over her chosen territory. This ecology allows for the cat-ness to be revealed as an actant that looks, sees, and is with her human co-habitants. The sculpture for this cat is an intervention into the social landscape of the gallery and generates a slippage of the status of art and the actions of nonhumans to enmesh in a visible emergence of shared social and cultural agency.

Modes of Non-Cartesian Representation

The main mode of NCR enacted through this work is reciprocity. First, the work is action-orientated. The initial action is the designation of a space for the sole use of this nonhuman resident. Then, the action of building and installing the bed, with continued action through the use of the bed and the space by this cat. These actions are then complemented through the actions of gallery visitors noticing the bed and engaging in conversations around this installation. This was most notably demonstrated by the attendees of the *Landscapes of the Future* panel discussion. The gallery director, Naomi Siderfin, introduced me through this specific work and this work was then the primary focus of questions from the audience. The audience was keen to speak of the relationship of this cat to the gallery and the designation of a space for recognition. This continued with conversations around the installation following the talk and every visit I have made to the gallery since. The intentional use of reciprocity and the subsequent conversations demonstrate the direct revelation of the presence of the cat and present relationships to the cat, as well as the past and future relations of human and cat.

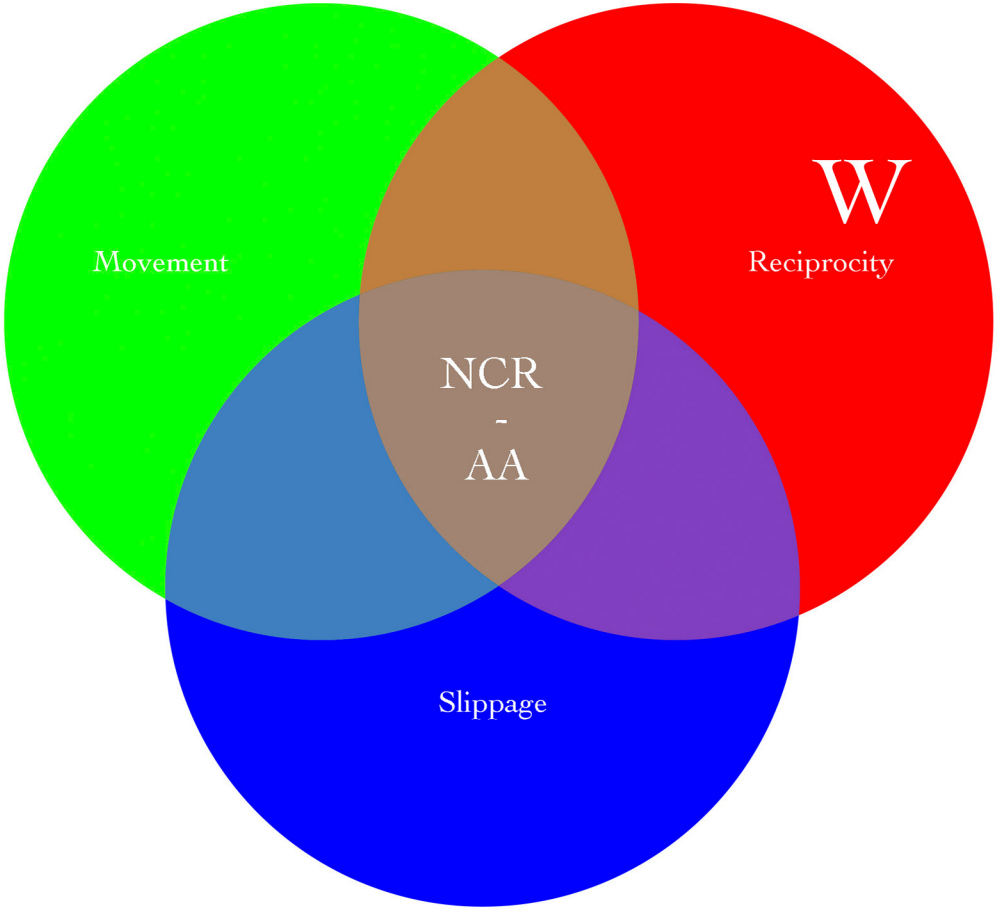


Figure 14. *Who Looks Back* modes of non-Cartesian representation.

These speculations have not been restricted to this gallery cat, but through conversations these notions have extended to the gallery space and the cat in a more abstracted and expanded sense. This work calls for a response by the viewer, either through recognition or even through inviting 'wanted' contact with the cat and the donation of gifts. I have and will continue to argue that this installation benefits the viewer more than the cat; she was content before and continues to be content in her living space now. The action of designating the space for the nonhuman was of primary import by directing specific attention to her presence. Through the recognition of her presence, the viewing audience is offered a direct opportunity to look, see, and be with *Untitled*.

Often, I have encountered people asking me about making artwork for the animal as audience, the cat is not the audience of this artwork. The cat is invited to make use of, in a functional manner, this artwork — but the audience is the human gallery visitor. This is an art-based action to enact the mode of slippage by highlighting an opportunity for the viewer to engage in a sense of interconnectedness to this specific cat. These continuous cycles of viewer revision through encounter, experience, and conversation can, but do not always, lead to moving past this audience confusion. This is a performance of entanglement, through the language and ethics of recognition.

Potential States of Re-Enchantment

To speak through the lens of re-enchantment, this work remains nebulous. Depending on the time of viewer engagement, the degree of representation can be quite unknown. Without the presence of the cat, or prior knowledge of this resident, the sculptural intervention is quite unnoticeable. If noticed, without prior knowledge of the cat resident, the sculpture does not make sense and may seem a bit odd or out of place. If the viewer has knowledge of the cat resident, then even without her actual presence, the degree of her presence is still high which then allows for an immediate emergence of her as an authentic, visible nonhuman agent. The

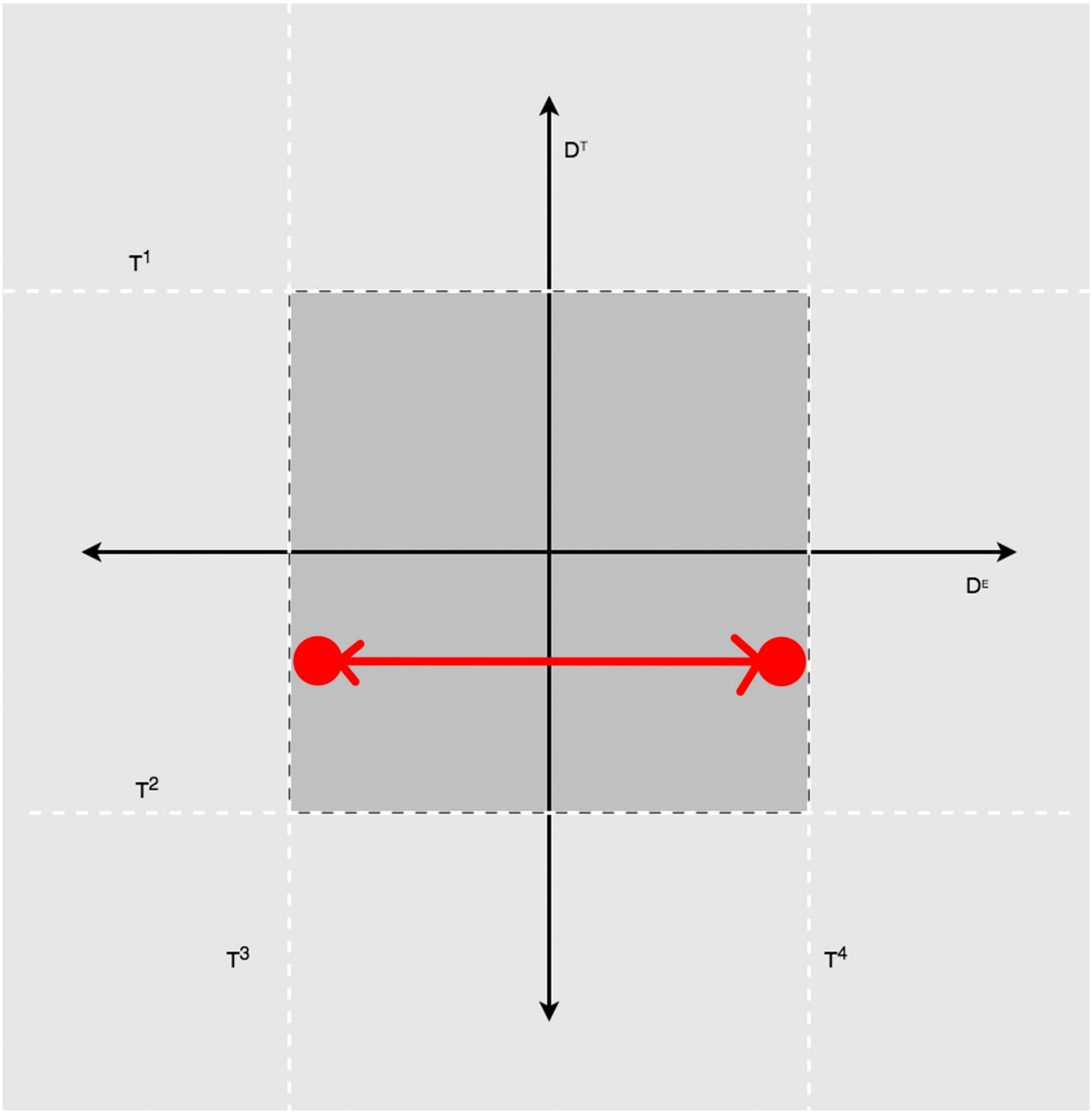


Figure 15. *f(NCR)* applied to *Who Looks Back*.

degree of translation has little to no effect on this reading. In terms of (dis)(re)enchantment, each viewer is different depending on their prior perspective and if they have experienced the cat's presence. As a whole, through anecdotal observations and conversations, I would hazard a guess that the viewers move from threshold three towards threshold four in varying degrees. There have been several viewers wanting to purchase a bed for themselves (or rather their cat), but I have steadfastly refused as this is for *her* and *her* alone. The askers are always confused when I initially refuse, but then fall onto a spectrum of bemused to positively puzzled when I explain my position. I do think this exchange increases the degree of re-enchantment each time.

Untitled was always present in the gallery, and visible to some (mostly as a toy to be stroked while waiting for lunch). However, following the installation and introduction of this work her presence is more visible as an autonomous entity. This work operates through an engagement with social agency, highlighting the relationship of this cat to the viewers visiting this gallery. Through this specific locating of the actors, the entanglements of existence are given space to emerge.

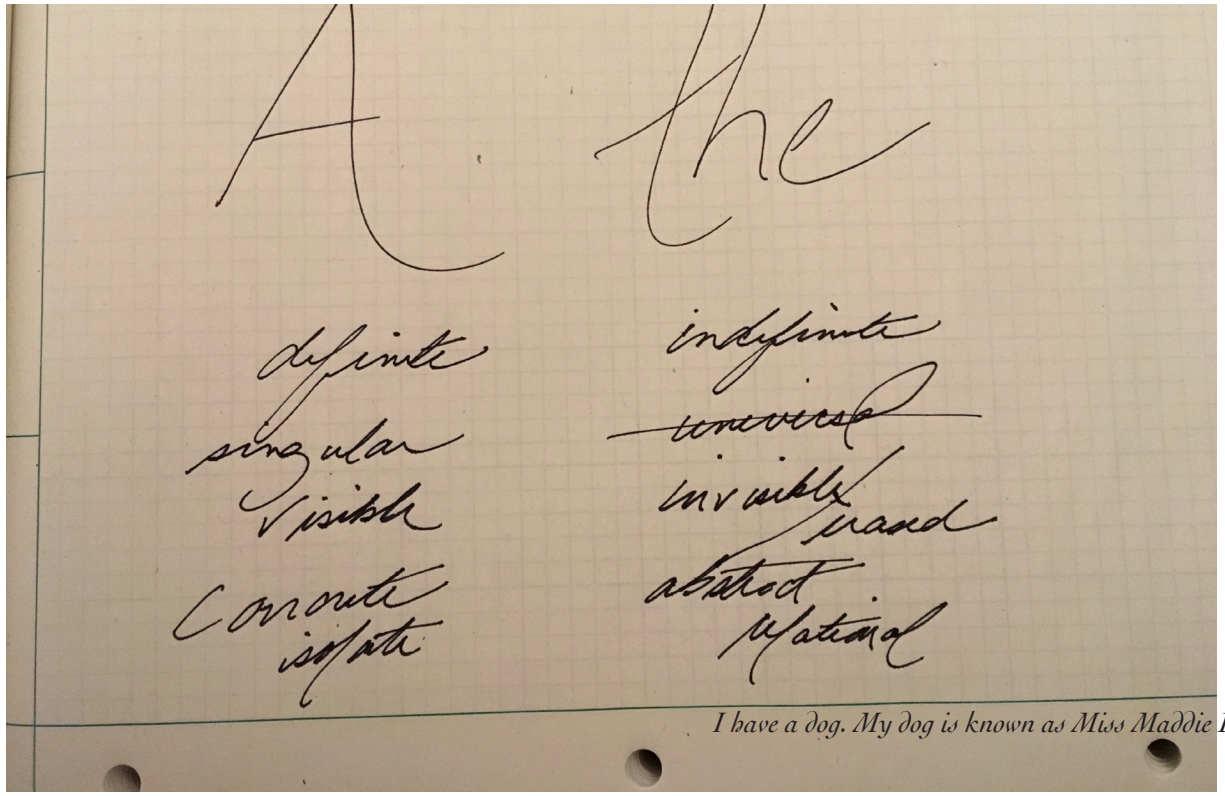
. . . The said question of the said animal speaks but whether one can know what respond means. And how to distinguish a response from a reaction.[165]

165. Derrida, *The Animal,* 8.

A|The

What is the idea of parallelism between the definite and of the indefinite? Both are used as modes of identification. In the definite identification, we speak to the tree itself — this tree is eight meters tall, has oblong and double-serrate leaves, produces white flowers in the spring; and red, two-pitted berries in the late summer. This tree is in my garden. Then we have the indefinitely identified tree. This is the idea of tree, or of tree-ness. These are the parallel conceptualisations of tree versus tree-ness. The parallelism is articulated by Spinoza, "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things."[166] In

166. Spinoza, *Ethics*, 117.



I have a dog. My dog is known as Miss Maddie Dog.

When I first met Miss Maddie Dog, I saw her in a kennel with her sister. I requested a meeting with her, specifically. We were led to a designated room for such an interaction. I knelt down and called to her, she sniffed, looked at me briefly, and then continued to sniff her way around the small room. The attendant panicked and called to the dog to come to me. She did not. She sniffed, intermittently looked at me and continued about her business. She pooped. As the attendant neared loss of consciousness, I called for an end to the charade. I claimed that I would adopt this brilliant dog and no one would stop me.

Figure 16. Articulating the indefinite.

these works, I invert or conflate the idea of fox-ness and dog-ness with the particular fox and dog with whom I am working. As Spinoza explains, there is the tree and the idea of the tree, but these are not separate modes, just separate approaches in thinking — which *follow reciprocally*. In inverting the expression of the idea of the fox and the actual fox, there is a space for generative confusion in a viewer with the fox and the idea of the fox. The agencies of the fox and the dog are their own, as well as indicative of the agencies of their kind. A dog is an essence and is timeless. The dog is an individual, is a material extension and temporal.

In contemplating this oscillation, a historical review of the place of animal is prudent. Turning to the Christian bible, the human was the steward to all nonhumans across the land, including the land. Moving through Enlightenment and Descartes long-standing theory of the duality of mind and body — the animal becomes an automaton, a simple machine of reflexes. Exacerbating the situation for nonhumans, capitalism rolls through and relegates all nonhumans (or non-Western, non-White humans — or at least their labour) as a resource to be freely exploited. The slippage between A|The is an attempt to question the knowledge of kind and individual, to return to an indexical relationship, it is a step in a process of atonement. An atonement that begins with a heightened awareness of agency, agency that exists and is possessed by humans and nonhumans alike. This atonement begins with the action and extends through the action.

Encounters with Her Presence

This is a series of three works, including the full length video and a shortened version, a text, and a collaborative performance.[167]

As a child I watched the fox and the hound play on the screen, the horse and the cat play in the field, and the cat and the hamster play on the carpet. Perhaps I was confused about the difference between people and animals, although I did not believe that to be the case then; nor do I believe that to be the case now. I was also (not then nor now) particularly struck by

167. The full length film is 26'21" and the shortened version shown with the performance is 5'.

wonderment at interspecies friendships. What I most likely translated from the long list of Disney films that I consumed was the ability to wonder about the thinking and experiences of animals. This was immediately and continuously reified by my actions with a variety of animals at home and on the farm. The social interactions were fascinating, and at times seemed a bit more nuanced than those of the humans I was around.

In the undertaking of my practice-led research, I have found myself in a position which unwittingly replicates the narrative arc of *The Fox and the Hound*.[168] This project unfolded over the course of six months and is complete with the curiosity driven fox instigating a relationship with a dog and mean old man (or woman) playing the role of the evil villain. What follows is the video compilation of these six months of intimacy-building with the feral inhabitant of my garden.

This video is an unfolding of three nearly identical views, each includes a bit of the garden patio and a sheepskin blanket; one includes Miss Maddie Dog, and the last includes a fox. The video opens with a black screen, a void to be filled. Emerging first, on the right side of the screen is the landscape with a dog, then the middle third opens to the landscape foregrounding the lighting and environment, last on the left third of the screen a fox is revealed. This video is soft in the individual treatments of the three images yet retains hard divisions which aide in maintaining the sense of replication. The breathing of a dog is obvious, and she is continually moving. The landscape flows with fluctuations from the wind and the dappled sunlight. The fox is eerily still and has been confused by some viewers as a taxidermied specimen, until she inevitably and swiftly departs from the frame. These visual qualities allow a sadness to emerge; the potential for an elegy. The length of presence for each of the three images varies. The three scenes come and go, and through the formal repetition allows a sense of being-with to merge between the three images. This sense of being-with is physically present in the experience of the animals as both have shared the bed and left remnants of their fox-ness and dog-ness on the sheep-ness surface.

Each chooses to inhabit a shared space. If the first space is the void, the second through

168. *The Fox and the Hound*, Disney, 1981.

Figure 17. Looking at rendering . . .

I watched anthropomorphised animals walk, talk, and sing. I did not confuse this as the language of the animal or the world of the animal, but a way to attempt in understanding an 'other'. I knew from
experience that animals lived their own lives, in their own way.

Early anthropologists classified animism
as the inability to distinguish between people and things, known now as 'old animism'.

Anti-film still from Disney's *The Fox and the Hound*, 1981.

Figure 18. Film still from *Encounters with Her Presence*, film, 26'21", 2016.

fourth spaces are the variations on habitation, this reveals a fifth space. This fifth space is the opportunity for the viewer to cross between the images and the visual frames, to understand the sense of co-habitation and to join via re-presented space that is theoretically accessible for any to experience. This is reinforced through the narrative arc — void, dog-ness, space, fox-ness — the near identicalness yet obstinate differentiation. This is a (re-)presentation of a question, a question of one's knowledge of the feral and domestic nonhumans by which one is surrounded, and of the liveliness of animate material.

Above, I have suggested the video questions the ability of a human to recognise the liveliness of animate nonhumans, particularly of the feral. I wrote the above text to illustrate the complexity of relations - between humans and nonhumans, and of feral and domestic nonhuman animals. Unfortunately, she met an untimely death only days after our last session of filming. I found her, dead, by the road. The forensic evidence did not lend itself to a gracious reading of the driver's actions. Please see here, in *Fig. 19*, some examples from a community thread, from *The Street*. This selection quite clearly demonstrates the various capacities of humans in my neighbourhood to recognise the liveliness of a neighbour fox.

The determination of feral nonhumans in urban ecologies as vermin is not unusual. One of my questions through this film is, 'What is the basis for such a judgment?', 'Can one cite a justification for this determination that is not predicated on the absolute privilege of the human?' and 'For what is the basis of such a judgement?' These questions are posed through the *slowing down* of the encounter.

The last instantiation of this work is a performance. This performance took place in February of 2017 at the Bloomsbury Theatre. In the case of this event Miss Maddie Dog was not allowed to be present as a performer due to the strict regulations and certifications for animal performers in theatre and a lack of time to meet these requirements. However, it was possible for her to attend as an audience member. This opened up the possibility for a triangulation of her presence — first as a representation in the video; second, her indefinite character in the reading; and third, her presence in the audience, a nonhuman, an invited

Figure 19. Extract from commentary on *The Street*. *The Street* is now defunct, it was an early community-based on-line forum. This thread was originated by a resident of Harringay, London. The original post was questioning the possible excavating activities of foxes in her rubbish, causing a mess in the front garden. The flurry of replies range from incensed fox-hating neighbours ready to wage a war against fox inhabitants, to fox-friendly neighbours pleading with their human neighbours to be compassionate to lives-beyond-human. February 2017.

FOXES

Sean D 2 months ago in Harringay
Is it against the law to feed scraps to foxes ?

Andrew D 2 months ago
I don't think so but why would you feed these scavengers. They may look cute but they shit in people's gardens and rip open bags on our streets every night causing litter and mess.

Dee 2 months ago
No, there is nothing in law that says you can't feed foxes but it will only end up upsetting the neighbours!

There have also be reports of foxes attacking people in their homes. I have noticed how brazen they have become - they no longer fear humans and I often see them wandering around on the streets/playing in my back garden during the day.

I wonder what Joanna Lumley's
Neighbours make of her feeding foxes (see article). I expect they wouldn't dare criticise a high profile celebrity.

https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/world/shortcuts/2015/may/19/the-risks-of-feeding-an-urban-fox?client=safari

Sally H 2 months ago
Not that I know of, I do.

Tammy G 2 months ago
As far as I'm aware a lot of people do it, I know I do, so I'm pretty sure it's not against the law.
:-)

Lexi D 2 months ago
Re foxes allegedly attacking babies in their homes, I'm highly sceptical. I believe that in these cases family dogs are the culprits, and foxes are blamed so the dog won't be put down.

https://www.streetlife.com/conversation/xs2z5ehr5ui/ 1/11

be employed to shoot a fox. Now what happened to my fox fur winter coat :-)

Veronica P 2 months ago 4
I totally agree with Andrew and Alison, foxes are now a real nuisance in London. I'm thinking I might have to pave over my lawn, which I really don't want to do but it is completely full of holes dug by foxes and I have to clear up the mess that they bring into my garden every night, often disgusting things like used disposable nappies. The reality is they are breeding very quickly and the problem is becoming worse all the time.

Carol S 2 months ago 1
http://www.timeout.com/london/blog/the-secret-life-of-londons-foxes-093016

Gail H 2 months ago 10
The vast majority of comments in response to original question centre on the mess foxes make in gardens by bringing in refuse. Simple solution - keep rubbish inside secure bins - yes, tie down handles if necessary! I'm sure the bin man is capable of undoing a knot? And if he isn't, then possibly he could stoop to collecting split open rubbish bags on the pavement and even, shock/horror, pick up rubbish he spills on the ground himself? Oh yes and how about everyone using cloth nappies instead of the disposable crap that isn't biodegradable and festers on landfill sites... Foxes are beautiful creatures and quite frankly I'm always happy to see them in my front garden :

02/2017 Streetlife | FOXES

Diana W 2 months ago 1
Foxes are unwelcome for keen gardeners, who hate having to garden defensively in order to manage the damage they do. Those who are less involved with their plants evidently feel more indulgent of these and other pests.

To stop foxes digging holes in the lawn, I found that liberally sprinkling their favoured digging patches with LOTS of ground chilli worked so well that I never had to repeat it.

Having to fox-proof my compost heap is another but more constant problem. They foxes understandably go for the warmth of decomposing leaves etc, so I keep buckets etc on top of the heap to prevent the foxes nesting there, especially in winter.

Protecting areas of small plants means not only using netting but making really solid structures to support the netting. Neither foxes and neighbouring cats are as easily deterred by catching their claws in the netting as I'd expected, so the seedlings haven't been easy to keep safe.

Tammy G 2 months ago 8
I have to say it's not always the foxes that make the mess with the bins... I walk my dog very late at night/early morning and I see a lot of foxes, some of which are very friendly and actually play with my dog, but I'm getting off point here... it is NOT always the foxes that go through the bins. In my area there are at least 3 people I have

igo 2
I are.
ui/

19/02/2017 Streetlife | FOXES

Alison 2 months ago 7
Please do NOT feed foxes. They really don't need it, as there's plenty if discarded food around already. Why do you think there are so many foxes around?
Foxes are beautiful, but they are the bain of my life, especially in the summer, when they dig up my lawn, and my flower beds (biting off any new plants I try to grow, leave their smelly faeces in my garden and on my doorstep and my neighbour's wall, and brazenly attempt to walk inside if the door is open, even when we are just inside. This means that we can't ever leave our back door open and unattended, even on the hottest day.
Friends have found a Fox in a room on the top floor of their home.
They chew up and destroy anything they can get hold of, so we daren' t leave anything outside, and have been known to bring ruined shoes and children's toys, which I later discover, were unwittingly left out by neighbours, into my garden.
Urban foxes are not at all shy. I have been working in my garden when one jumped right in, and stood there just looking at me less than 3 feet away , until I ran at it roaring like a lion!
Another time I was forced to walk out into the road when a fox 'faced me down', standing its ground on the pavement as I walked towards it.
And they frequently sleep in the middle of the gardens round here, or on next door' s children's trampoline, in full sight, right in the middle of the day. (Have the photos to prove it)
They have no nature predators, and, as I say, have an easy source of food from the backs of restaurants and discarded fast food containers. So, although it may be tempting, there is certainly no need for anyone to encourage them to hang around any more than they already do by consciously feeding them even more!

Gail H 2 months ago 16
Well if people left their rubbish INSIDE their bins like they're supposed to,

In February, I am walking a dog at night.
We both notice a fox following us. She remains
at a constant distance bobbing elusively from our sights,
yet she remains present; her sight fixed firmly
upon a dog.
By March, a dog and I are in the garden, late one evening.
I notice as she repeatedly sniffs along the bottom of the fence row.
I continue to watch — then I see the whiskers, the nose,
and the cream-coloured snout.
A fox and a dog chase noses and scents along this line.
Both curious — enough to follow; both elusive — enough to avoid the other.
In April, I am sitting in a chair in the garden
in the late evening. A dog is doing dog-stuffs
in the centre of the garden. I look down —
emerging from my legs is a fox. I watch her quietly,
as she silently stalks a dog. She stops — she slowly raises her head —
we make eye-contact. Looking with one another.
After the slightest hesitation she spins around out of the garden.
A dog has no idea as she continues upon her dog-doings.
Things progressed, slowly.
In August, mid-afternoon I was heading to the garden. I stop before the door, she
is present, she is sleeping.
A few days later, I cannot see her
in the garden. I open the door for a dog and a cat to go
into the garden. Returning a bit later, I notice a dog standing
in the exact centre of the garden. Repeatedly looking from the far back corner to
the front. I more closely look to see this scene.
In the foreground a cat is wandering around, the centre subject
is a dog, looking anxiously back and forth, and in the background is a fox
curled up under a tree. Upon opening the door,
a cat returns inside. I walk calmly outside into the furthest front corner
from a fox. While I smoke, a dog and a fox sniff each other
and walk a boundary — uncertain who has trespassed upon whom.

Figure 20. Text, *Encounters with Her Presence*, 2017.

audience member. Regardless of her not being allowed as a performer, she was nonetheless performing dog-ness for her fellow human audience members. Maddie dutifully watched each performance, quietly and calmly sitting to the side of the room in the front of the audience section. When the time came for our performance, a dog-minder held Maddie's leash as I walked to a platform to the side of the screen. An abridged version of the video began to play via projection, a lone spot lit my position as I read the above text. As seen in the documentation of this performance, Maddie stood and was intensely engaged for the duration of the reading - even cocking her head back and forth to the mentioning of 'dog' throughout. The audience oscillated between watching the large projection at the front of the room and straining around to watch Maddie, in her actual presence. The re-presentation of herself was matched against the presence of herself — it would seem that both had an impact. This was a continual movement in translation of the re-presented experience, the experience in situ, and the experience of the re-presentation.

Modes of Non-Cartesian Representation

The video, the text and the performance are all linked through the basic elements of the work, yet each iteration functions a bit differently within the modes of NCR. I will begin by considering the mode of movement within the original video work. The content and timing of the frames introduces formal movement. The identical base shot of each frame builds in a sense of stability, but the introduction of the two animal subjects over the duration of the film erases that sense of stability. There is a riskiness in the presence of the fox and the dog — this can emerge as a practical matter, a viewer in concern for the safety of the dog in the presence of the devious fox — or as a conceptual risk given the mirrored positions of the feral and the domesticated canidae. This riskiness brings into focus the historical ties between the dog and the human, and the effects of the discretionary chain of events leading to contemporary pet/human/dog relations. The viewer is able to move between the frames and question and

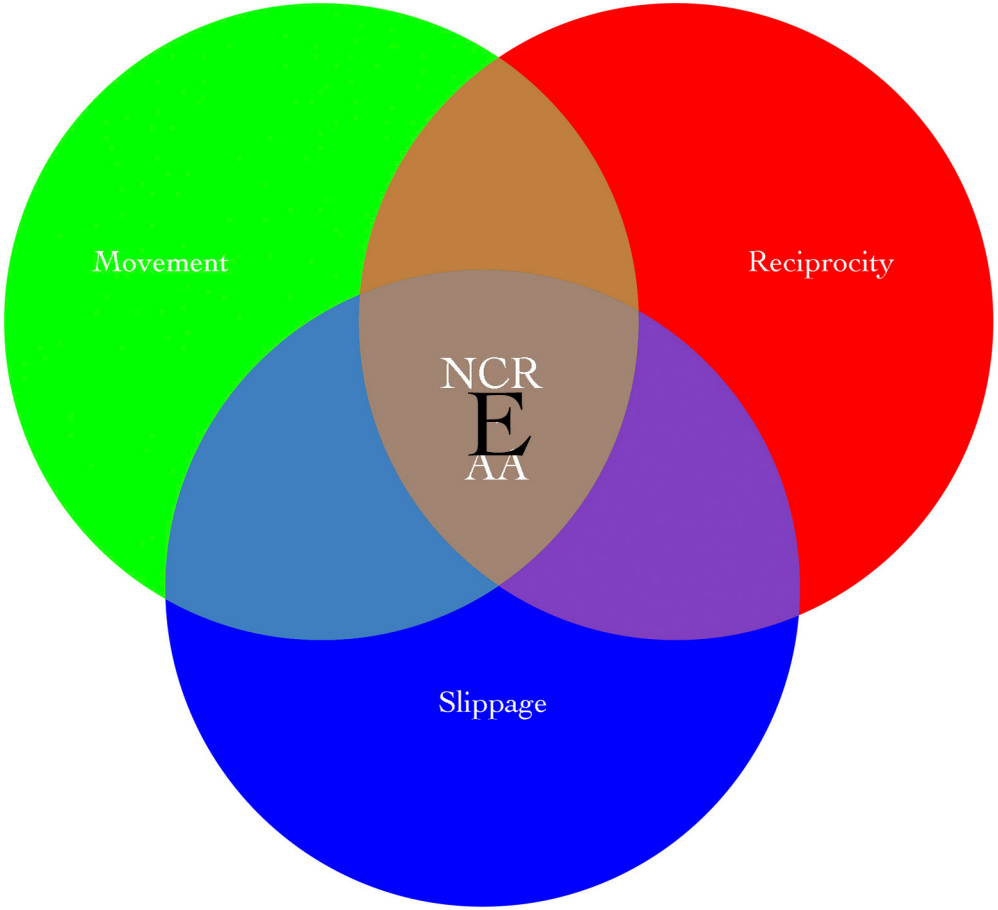


Figure 21. *Encounters with Her Presence* modes of non-Cartesian representation.

revise their preconceived notions.[169] Adding the text into the work increases the conceptual chaos, as the voice evenly relays all happenings without judgement and reveals a kinship throughout the encounters. Moving then into the performance, the layered representations and presence of Miss Maddie Dog allowed for a re-presentation of the unrepresentable. This chaos through layering revealed her multiple agencies in time and space, performing a theory of interconnection.

Moving from the mode of reciprocity, this work in all iterations, primarily reveals presences, histories, and speculates on futures. The shared genetics of the two canidae subjects and the disparate relationships that have developed with humans is examined in the shared space of the English garden. The cultivation of the space and dog relationship is countered with the co-presence of the feral fox. The language of the text complements these actions and allows a viewer to fade in and out of awareness of expectations and to reflect upon the presented self and other relations. The viewer has the opportunity first and foremost to look at the subjects on the screen, to see and look with the subjects through the text, and then — to be with the subject — through the performance shared with a canidae audience member. The film, text, and performance work together as a mirrored lens, allowing the viewer to experience and reflexively question the content.

The mode of slippage is also increased through layering the film, text, and performance. The film alone is passive and questions knowing and understanding through the usage of framing and space. This can create a gentle and generative confusion through the allowance or welcoming of the feral into the cultivated human space of the garden. The text works to destabilise the notions of the individual and kind of the actors through a confused a/the usage, furthering the distance between knowing and understanding within the viewer. The text builds in a sense of interconnectedness through the narrative structure. The simultaneity of her as representation and her as audience member, for the performed version, expands the experience of interconnection to the theatre space, forming a replication of the shared space featured in the film. The slippage between the encounter with the subject of the film work and the encounter

169. In October 2016, I used this film as the concluding slide for a presentation. During the question and answer time a viewer decided to rant on about the evilness of the fox and spoke of their killer tendencies retelling an urban legend. When the frame containing the fox popped onto the screen, he trailed off his story of chicken beheadings and the rest of the audience began to giggle. This quiet fox did not fit into this legend.

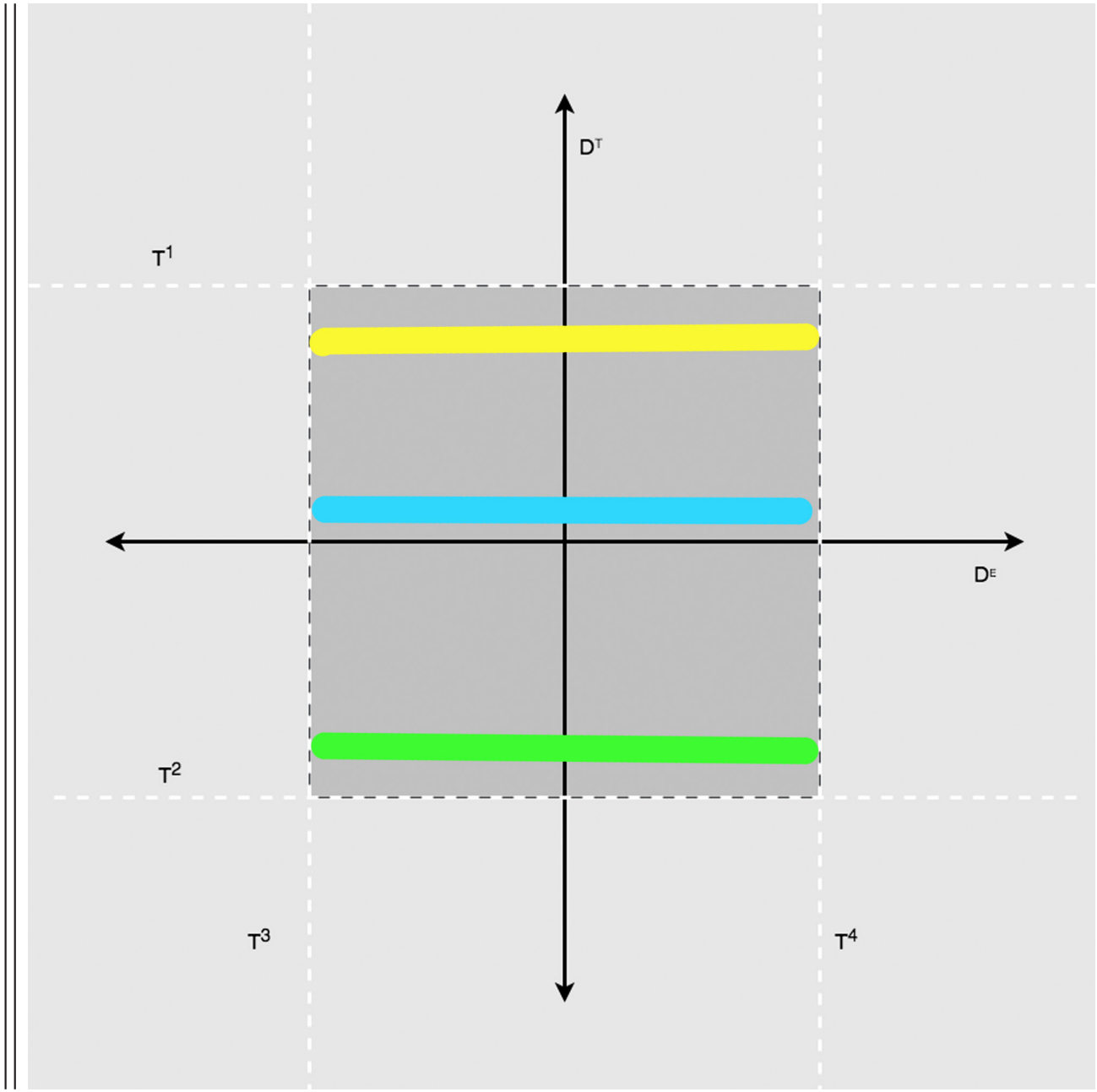
with dog as audience also leans into questions of consciousness and generates a space for slipping into a realm of allowance for the dog as intentional actor and viewer.

Potential States of Re-Enchantment

The film is quite clearly of a high degree of representation. Yet, I would consider this degree of representation to be closer to the x-axis due to the familiarity of the primary components: garden, dog, and fox. This familiarity reduces the effect of distance due to a removed method of representation and allows for visible and authentic nonhuman presence to be rendered. The text is also a high degree of representation, I am arguing a higher degree of representation than the film, the text through abstraction and slips of metaphoric prose create a greater conceptual distance between the fox and a fox. The (in)definite turns of articles also increases this distance significantly. In terms of the performance, there was a high degree of presence, with Miss Maddie Dog in the audience, but this degree of presence was tempered due to the simultaneous representation via the film and text. In addition, she was clearly present as audience which separated her presence from the content of the work. Her presence as audience, could be considered in its own right as a fourth constituent of the work, which I would consider a high degree of presence, close to threshold two. Moving to the degree of enchantment, there is evidence that each viewer tended to move from beyond threshold three into the zone of enchantment; but the degree of movement and to which elements of the work they were responding varied greatly.

The role of the garden as a shared and unintentional communal space is most likely in the periphery of most minds (judging from the comments in *the Street*). This awareness of the garden as a communal space becomes visible through this work. In addition, the omnipresence of the fox in London, moves from a peripheral awareness to the foreground through this representation. The nonhuman agencies which potentially emerge from this work are the relationships of the dog and the fox, and their agencies in effecting places into spaces through

Figure 22: *f(NCR)* applied to *Encounters with Her Presence.*



their presence. The fox is afforded a (un)represented space outside of the conception of vermin and re-located to a space more closely related to the dog — this movement generates an understanding of the foxes continued presence and unseen effects within the shared spaces. The social agency is the most evidenced throughout this work, of both the dog and the fox, as actants as they are shown through an entangled existence via the film and text. The material agency is not foregrounded, although the shared presence is evidenced through the inanimate faux sheepskin rug. This particular shared space also alludes to a knowledge of the sharing through scent, which adds the possible reading of an intentional action by either or both animals. The cultural agency is exhibited through the *unrepresentation* of relations, the third space of (not) represented is manifest through the ordinary actions shown, recounted, and then performed. The final reconstitution of the index was the presence as Maddie in the audience. This again allows for the index, artist, recipient, and the prototype to co-exist in time and space.

Miss Maddie Dog performs Being a Dog

This collaborative piece of work was performed in February of 2017 within the PhD research week at the Slade Research Centre, Woburn Square.[170] This work was a collaborative performance between myself and Miss Maddie Dog. The conceit of the performance was for her to simply be herself, to act as a dog. The technical duration of the performance is approximately forty-five minutes, this is the time in which all twelve participants designated focus upon her. However, her presence in the space introduced a state of performance, upon entering the building until the time of her departure. For the duration of the proper performance, she had a stack of fabric to use as a bed, a space understood only for her, with a bowl of water. The performance 'began' once all of the audience members had entered studio one, closed the door, and all had turned their full attention to Miss Maddie Dog. For the first five minutes, all human viewers sat silently as Maddie sipped some water, circled on her fabric, looked out at everyone, walked out to greet people individually, returned to her space to sip

170. For the institutional care documentation of this encounter, please see Appendix 3.1.

more water, circle on the fabric again, and finally to lie down. Once lying down, she continued to look back at those looking to her. After about five minutes, one viewer asked, "When does the performance end?" My response was that this was an indefinite performance, and that we should feel free to speak at any time.

Maddie, the dog, is a pet. She lives in a world determined by humans, primarily me. Her entire existence is moulded around the allowances provided by these humans. The notion that she is performing *Being a Dog*, for this human audience is a false framing of a temporal microcosm of her entire experience of existence, except perhaps the magnified attention she was receiving. Can such a performance be scripted? Or is the inverse true, that the script of such an exchange is so well rehearsed that it simply must be followed by all of the actors? If this exchange is read as questioning what is a performance; it seems the work answers that performance has no beginning or end but is simply the continuation of what already is — just a moment of attention being called to this state of being. Maddie's behaviour can be read as scripted, as a text; but just as easily the human actants responses can be read as a text by her, driving her responses to sooth and placate her viewers before making herself comfortable.

Is there an ethics of viewing this performance? Who is asked to do what? The ethics in question are simply highlighting the ethics of everyday interaction with a nonhuman animal, especially that of a pet. The human viewer is being asked to engage with the notion of pet, demanding a degree of self-reflexive thinking. Maddie is being asked to perform her normal duties, although to a degree of intention above her normal experience. I would not put any or every dog into this performance, due to the degree of potential stress caused by a room full of people so intensely staring. However, Miss Maddie Dog has a history of being a therapy dog and is comfortable in settings with large numbers of humans. Her personal history becomes a driving factor in her responses as well, as she took time to greet and soothe members the viewing audience within her own performance, before making herself comfortable. The naming of this action as a performance creates the framework for the humans to intently observe a dog, regardless of what their non-art response to a dog may have been. This control is

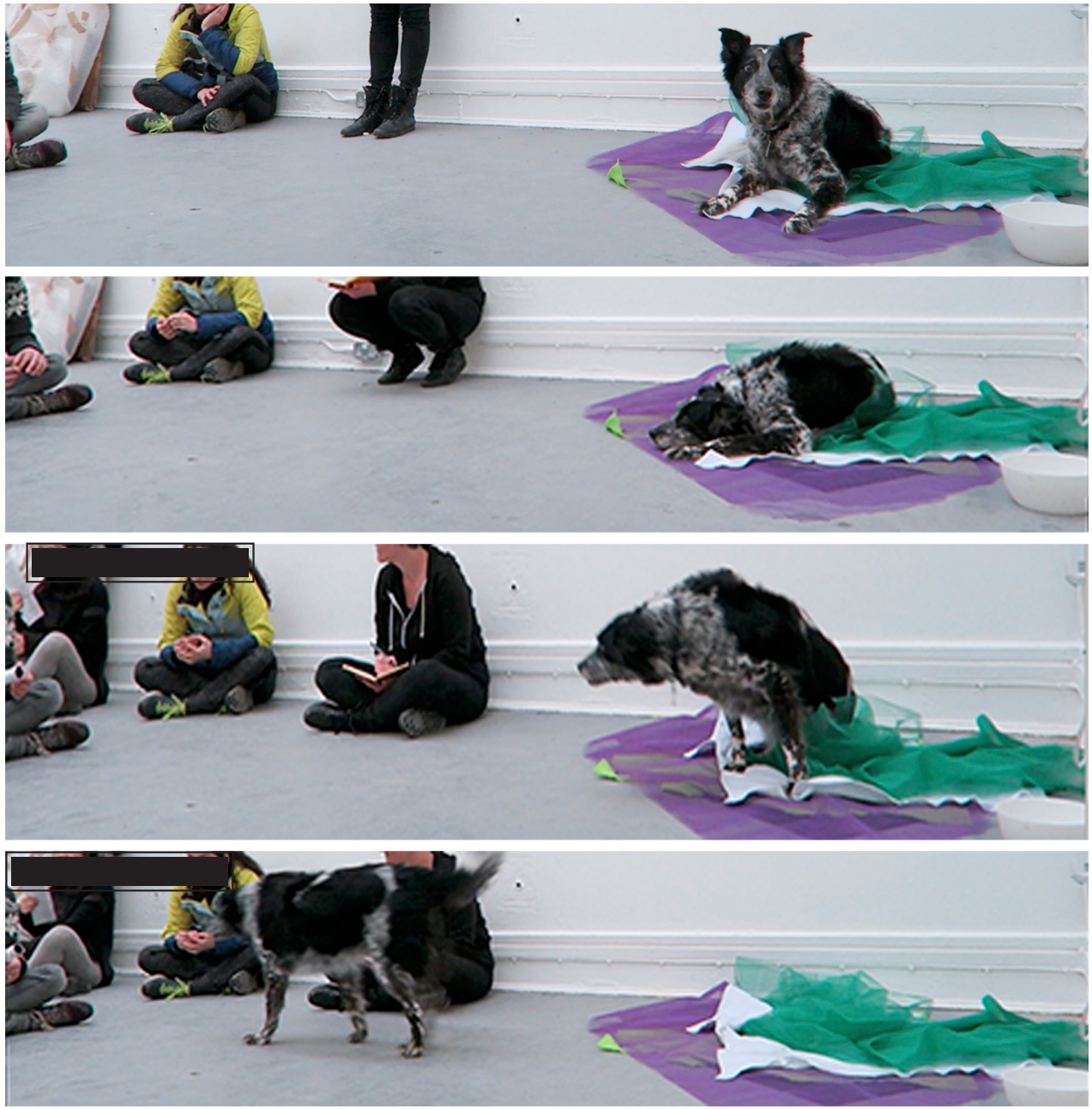


Figure 23. Documentation stills from 'Miss Maddie Dog performs *Being a Dog*,' full performance documentation, 16'26", 2017.

manifest through the language of the interaction and can potentially insert a false restriction or expectation of a restricted time frame of the performance. When in reality, from the morning through the concluding drinks of the evening, Maddie was still performing and still the centre of attention with her behaviours being analysed.

Was this a critique of politeness? Whose politeness could be critiqued in such a scenario? It seems that the human viewer is just as susceptible to this critique as the dog subject. Presumably, Miss Maddie Dog is not differentiating her behaviour in this performance from her behaviour in a studio setting. The expectations of focus and intent of the humans is elevated through the auspices of performance and does subject every behaviour of Maddie to an elevated critique. She acted politely, attending to the viewers before herself; the viewers acted politely only responding to Maddie and not attempting to sway her behaviour in any way. Perhaps this critique of politeness would be well extended beyond the performance and to a greater group of nonhumans — the politeness to allow nonhumans to their own business — the pigeon to continue upon their *bio-recycling* ways? The performance of humanness shares the same model of a microcosm of their extended existence within this viewing framework, largely shaped through the language of performance. The performed humanness was responsive, not aggressive. This led to an immediate confrontation of the limits of knowledge, as voiced by the viewers. To know themselves, to know a dog; to know the relationships that are and that are possible. Whilst confronting the limitation of their own knowledge, they were simultaneously confronted with dog knowledge. Her animal instincts and her learned behaviours, as she sips water to bide time, as she greets and soothes them, as she circles before lying down and then looking up from a position of submission. These actions of knowledge and anti-knowledge are performed between Maddie, myself, and each of the individual viewers present. The knowledge of being with another, of being present with another, to see and look with another.

Presence unfolds with self-awareness. Each person expressed their self-awareness as an individual in a shared space, as well as in relation to Maddie. In this space and place, was Maddie acting or performing herself as an individual dog or perhaps the archetype of dog-

ness? She was occupying the performed space of both the dog and a dog. She is an assimilation of dog traits acting in a symbiotic relation to her human audience. Her performance was simply her being extended into the space of the art gallery into the space of the performance. As Maddie performs her parallel being, so too did myself and did each member of the audience. Each individual performed the role of human and of their singular selves in relation to the presence of Miss Maddie Dog as well as in relation to the expectations of the artistic encounter. This artistic encounter required a presence of self in relation to the presence of others.

At what point does this become art? There is only a question of the performance, or art, for the human, this performance becomes art when it is recognised and named as such. To deem the encounter a performance is to provide an allowance for the human viewers to engage in a time and space with Miss Maddie Dog, this language does not affect her experience. This is the impact of my authorial intent. In the moment of declaring Miss Maddie Dog will now perform *Being a Dog*, I proposed a new fact to the audience. This fact was that this dog at this time will perform the essence of dog-ness, and that this performance is for them. Perhaps this performance is a designated time and space for them to engage in self-reflexive and reflective thinking allowing their awareness regarding the performative relationships with animals that we continually experience to grow. I resisted stating the duration of my authorial intent via performance, as she shall continue to perform throughout the conversation — allowing for the thoughts of her enduring performance to waft well beyond the end of this conversation. A return to concentric circles of the pigeon loft and *the sphere of translation* that opens out past the engagement with the art encounter. This is an intention to combat the fictive, mentioned before, the fictive perception and expectation that humans are privileged above the nonhuman; the boundary of the viewers conception and application of this fictive imaginary is to be pushed beyond the duration of this particular encounter and this particular dog.

This performance is centred around Miss Maddie Dog, and as stated earlier, is based upon my knowledge and history of her behaviour and comfort levels. I would not find it ethically acceptable to put other animals in this type of encounter without this prior knowledge. For

instance, in *Sheep, Pig, Goat* a series of farm animals were brought into an arena to encounter human performers and a human audience.[171] From my perspective, the animals were intensely stressed, and this encounter only succeeded in triggering intense empathy and a desire for the encounter to end. I personally do not believe that animals should be further instrumentalised into a false engagement that is predicated on fear. The difference between these two performances hinges on a conceit of performance - the willingness and openness to the experience of performance and of empathy to the performer.

A question arose, 'Is the conversation a piece of work?' I have edited the documentation of this performance without audio — the acknowledgement of a conversation via visual cues is adequate inclusion as this is the realm of conversation in which Maddie was able to be responsive. This statement is not intended to reflect on her capabilities to comprehend the English language, just her capacity to speak it. Her voice is paramount within this work; any additional human voices were only there as an aspect of the human audience processing the work, her visual responsiveness to the discussion is indicative of her inclusion. The supple denotative understanding through the visual responses is the demonstration of a reciprocal engagement — the allowance of multiple ontologies, present as they are. Maddie becomes a mirror through the work, asking questions of agency and relations to the audience as the audience throw their expectations towards her. Her silence evades their latent desires to dismiss her presence. Her agency is in her presence, her demeanour, and in her willingness to perform dog-ness. The audience looks as she looks back; the audience sees her as she sees them; the audience is being with her through prolonged and direct contact with another.

Modes of Non-Cartesian Representation

The modes of movement, slippage and reciprocity are all utilised in this work, although some are more self-evident than others. First, I will examine the mode of reciprocity, as this seems to be the strongest and is most directly evidenced with her in-dog-body presence. In the present (of the performance), there were people and a dog. These bodies inhabited the

171. *Sheep Pig Goat,* Wellcome Collection.

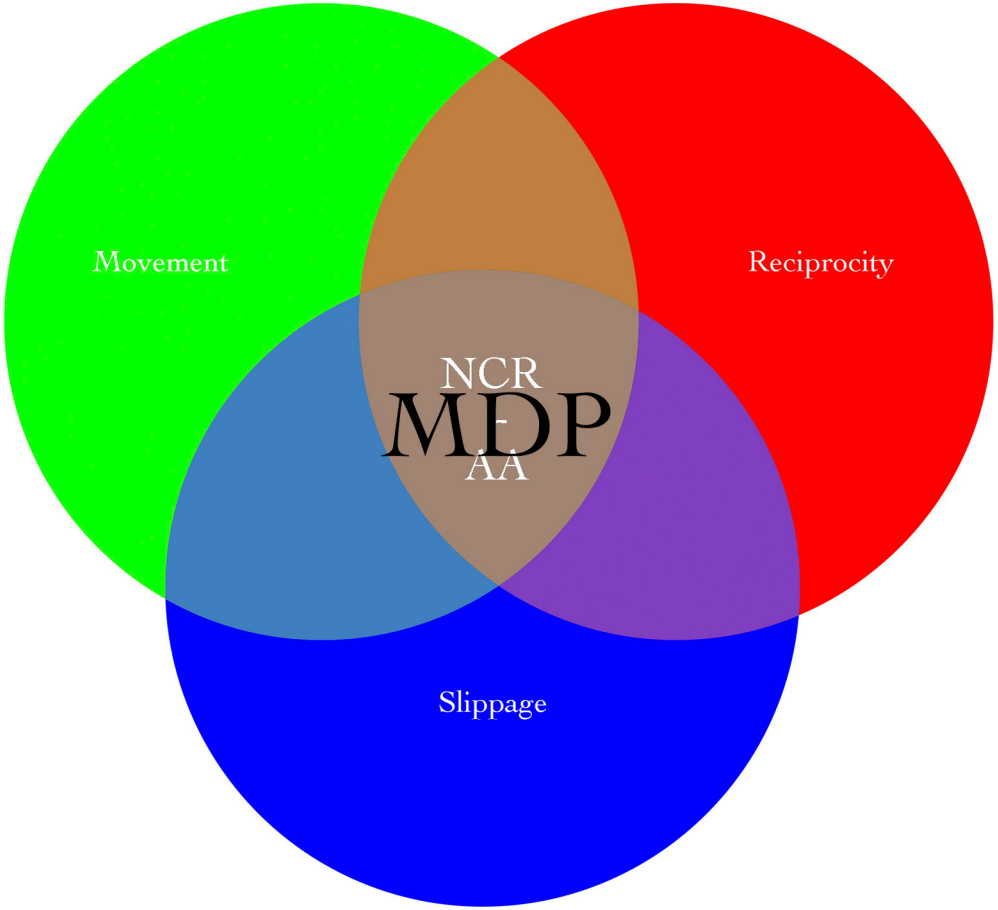


Figure 24. 'Miss Maddie Dog performs *Being a Dog*' modes of non-Cartesian representation.

same space. Maddie had a personal history with a few of the viewers, but not all. Yet, there is a shared history of dog and human which entangled all parties in the room. Haraway speaks about this intersection through her experiences of training with her dog, ". . . a particular woman and a particular dog, not Man and Animal in the abstract, is a historically located, multi species, subject-shaping encounter in a contact zone fraught with power, knowledge and technique, moral questions — and the chance for joint, cross-species invention that is simultaneously work and play."[172] When in studio one, the doors were closed, and Maddie was performing, this was a joint activity between her and each viewer. This specifically located experience is the present, yet there is the element of shared-shaping histories which have allowed this particular moment to be. Then speculating the future, there was the short-term of Maddie's unending performance, a slightly longer-term future of which of the viewers would see her again, and the future of the human and dog. The individual and the kind were tied throughout this experience, and that parallelism was evident through the conversation (including direct reflections and share remembrances of dogs past). These remembrances indicated the moving in and out of awareness of the viewers, the easy translation of this singular experience to past experience, weaving a tapestry of reflections and reactions. Arising from this undulating awareness, the boundaries of self became a bit fuzzier, the notion of the pet and the interconnection of such a relationship afforded a less delineated conversation about oneself and the othering of an animal (or another person). This mode of reciprocity was brought forth via action — not my actions, but action driven by Maddie and her interactions with the viewer and the conceptual actions inspired within the viewers in their responses to her presence and their subsequent reflections. These reflections extended well beyond Maddie and their past pets, but into the meaning of performance and *othering* and boundaries. The most clearly demonstrated aspect of reciprocity was the discernible connections between Maddie and each viewer, whether she was individually greeting the viewer or lying down, intense connections were engaged through looking, seeing, and being with her — not at her. Lastly, in terms of reciprocity, 'Who benefits?' I would hazard a guessed observation that Maddie

172. Haraway, *When Species Meet,* 205.

found the experience enjoyable — she maintained a happy and calm demeanour throughout the day. Yet, I think the greater benefit of the work was for the viewer, an opportunity to have a leisurely encounter with a dog, but in an arts setting, allowing for a critical engagement with the animal, self, and other.

Turning to the mode of slippage, the encounter was marked by a generative confusion. Maddie seemed to be slightly confused by the number of humans so intently focussed upon her, the humans seemed slightly confused about how to relate with an animal performer with whom they could not communicate (at least through spoken language). This initial barrier built the sense of generative confusion as each viewer worked through their relationship to Maddie in this context. There were consistent undulations within our conversation and in the viewers capacities to know and understand the context of performance. This stream of conversation repeated multiple times and always included the language of performance and how that could be translated onto the experience of a dog and dog-ness. This led to further examination of the notions of consciousness, a slipping of knowledge and understanding of the potentials of Maddie's consciousness and of other animals. The intimate setting allowed each viewer to experience a sense of interconnectedness — I believe this grew from the individual attention Maddie lavished on each viewer, as well as the reflections through prior personal experiences. These qualities of the encounter decreased the overall stability of prior knowledge and experience, allowing the encounter to unfold through various states of understanding and acceptance of confusion. These qualities were all engaged with passively, there was no instruction by me to the intent of the performance — just a title and an encounter. This intentional non-framing by me allowed for accidental responses to the encounter.

The last mode of NCR I will discuss is movement. Conceptual movement is an active process compared to the passive instability of slippage. The active processes of movement have no end . . . even if the performance had ended, theoretically the aftereffects can linger and continue affecting the viewer's sensibilities. The chaos emerging from this performance is non-violent, it was a gentle stirring of expectations and realities and reflections. The conversation

around the performance greatly increased the chaos, as a viewer was not left within their own mental cycles of revision but constantly in conversation while moving through these cycles. As an added bonus to these cycles, Miss Maddie Dog was still performing, moving around the space, looking directly at people, consistently engaging the senses of the viewers as their processes of mental revision were happening. This encounter could be perceived as risky for the viewer (perhaps due to a pre-existing fear of dogs), but more explicitly, risky in terms of challenging one's expectations and engaging with the unknown. The viewer entered into a performance based upon reciprocity without knowledge of this condition. This riskiness aided in the revealing through the encounter. The last element of NCR embedded with this work is the notion of performing theory. In speaking of entanglement, intimacy can be overlooked within the more violent chaos of daily life, this performance created a conceptual space within which the viewer maintained a distance from Maddie which disallowed her presence to be overlooked, yet equally disallowed her relational-connective tissues to be ignored.

Potential States of Re-Enchantment

This work cannot be completely understood through the diagram *the function of re-enchantment,* but this diagram is valuable in beginning to understand how this work functions. In examining this work, I am considering Miss Maddie Dog to be the primary nonhuman of importance. Quite clearly, she is present in the work as she is the locus of of the work. This high degree of presence is only mediated through my translation in titling the work as performance. This labelling allowed for an understanding of her presence and the encounter as art work. Positioning this work along the x-axis is more difficult, and I do not believe that this metric can be approached as a singular position but is dependent upon the experience of each viewer. Gauging from the viewer dialogue, I do think it is appropriate to place this work into quadrant two, as through my observations all viewers demonstrated some sense of relational awareness with Maddie. In addition, each viewer appeared to have recognised Maddie as a

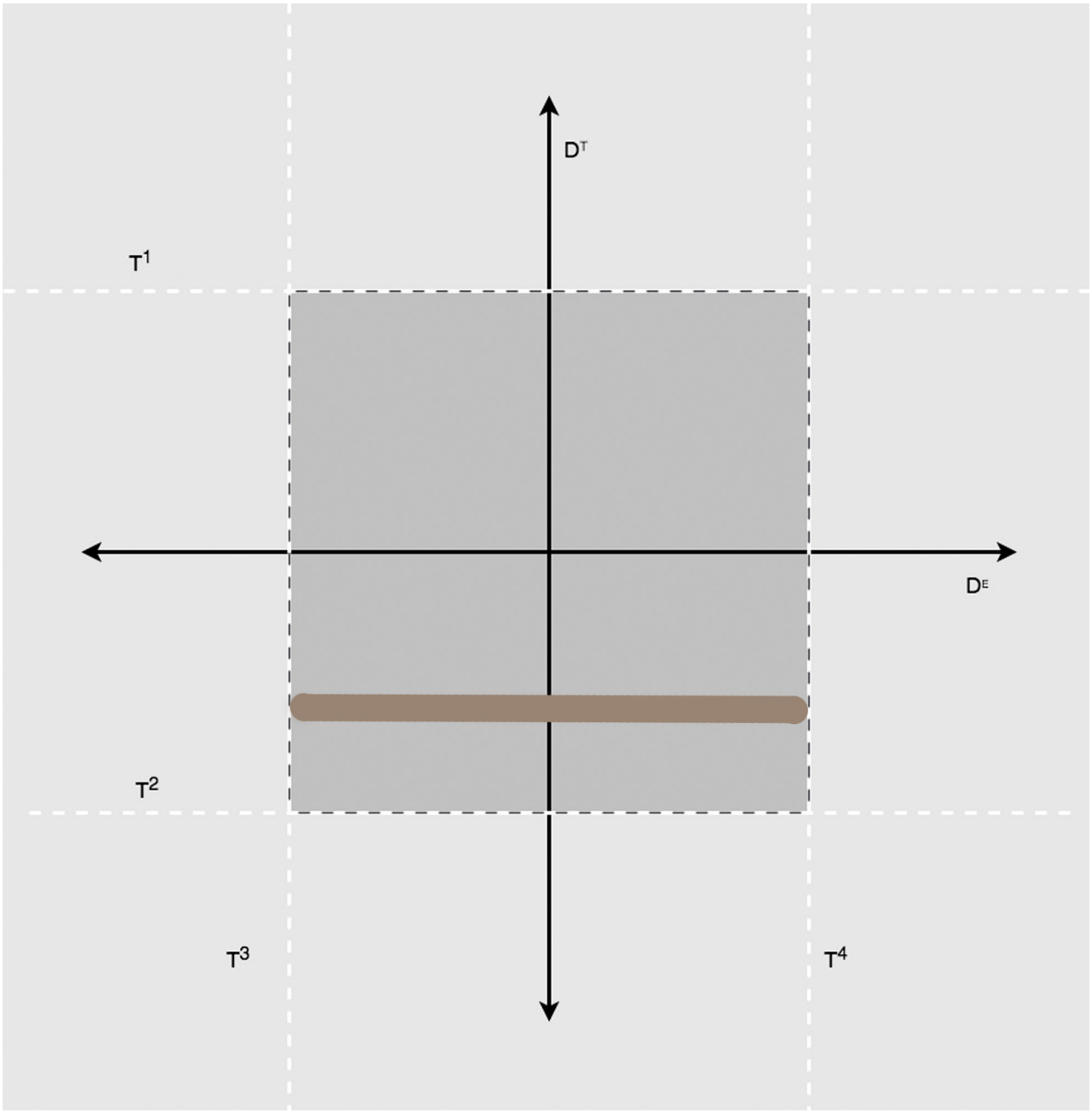


Figure 25. *f(NCR)* applied to 'Miss Maddie Dog performs *Being a Dog*'.

visible and present nonhuman. The degree of relational awareness varied by viewer and was mostly evidenced by their shared reflections and shifts in perceptions of the performance through the dialogue. I think it is probable that a few viewers were verging on a potential expansion of re-enchantment beyond the encounter, but this is unknown.

From this encounter, the performance of dog-ness became visible as a topic and a realm of awareness. This understanding easily extends into conversations of daily human performances and creates a shared understanding into the existence of the dog without the help of language. Maddie's agency as an animate and intentionally acting nonhuman was made visible through her awareness and continuous adjustment to the postures and attitudes of the viewers. The social agency of Maddie was enacted in the gallery, evidenced through the changing relations between her and the individual viewers — the entanglement was performed through the experience. The viewer and Maddie were never solely themselves but acting with one another and exemplifying their presences. Lastly, in consideration of cultural agency, Maddie through her performance brought the viewers the *unrepresentable*, she was the social relations between two agents, while being an agent herself. Using the terms of Gell, Maddie was the index, the artist, the recipient, and the prototype; this layering of roles allowed for the complex revelation of animal-human relations to be examined through this microcosmic encounter.

The Feathered

~ *the* natural *wonders of bio-recycling*

The Feathered is an examination of works surrounding the pigeon, the figure of the pigeon, and the lives of pigeons in a human-centred, urban ecological system. This series of works presents questions of human perceptions of the pigeon and of pigeon-ness, the ethics of human|pigeon interactions, and of the (in)actions of humans on pigeon populations. *The Feathered: an exploration of nonhuman labour* installation engages with modes of non-Cartesian representation (NCR) in a reexamination and re-presentation of labour-based relations between the pigeon and the human and then offers a proposition of the pigeon's current labour-based agency as a *bio-recycling* system.

The Loft

The pigeon loft was first installed onto the rooftop of the Slade School of Fine Art on 10 May 2017. This loft has been built to meet the standards of the *Animal Welfare Act of 2006*. This act and the design of the loft account for the welfare of potential pigeon inhabitants or site-users through consideration of the suitability of the environment and provided diet, the allowance for the exhibition of normal behavioural patterns, availability of communal housing; and protection from pain, injury, suffering, and disease. These guidelines have been met through the construction of a social housing unit that can allow for up to thirty-six visiting pigeons while retaining individual space. The pen space is open access and any visiting birds have complete freedom of entry and departure. The solid floor allows for foraging behaviours and the walls are lined with perches for comfortable resting sites. The pigeons are offered a high-quality racing bird seed which fulfils their dietary requirements and the birds are free to supplement this feed with their outside foraging activities. As the pigeons are visitors-at-will there is no restriction on their normal behaviours, and the birds retain free will to utilise the structure for protection and shelter as needed.[173] This is a site of communion between the feral and the human.

In addition to these practical considerations, the loft is multifunctional within the conceptual realm of *anthrodecentric art*. The following conceptual and functional elements are intrinsic

173. Further information regarding the efficacy and design of the loft please see Appendix 3.2 for complete documentation.

Figure 26. Documentation of the installed pigeon loft. Initial installation March 2017. 1.9 x 0.9 x 0.7 m.

within the un-framework of *anthrodecentric art* and are enacted within the pigeon loft and the later gallery installation: un-fixity, manipulation of the logic of time, evaluation work through nonhuman usage, and manipulation of institutional rationales and constrictions.

Un-fixity is exactly as it seems, the inability to assume the past, present, and future of a thing based upon a singular encounter. This is a comfortable relationship with the unknown. This relationship is not inherently scary — it is just not predictable. This un-fixity also extends to prior knowledge. In the works of *the feathered*, a viewer most likely has a prior opinion on pigeons. Even in the talk, *Ask the Birds*, held at the Whitechapel Gallery in association with the Mark Dion exhibition, the three ornithologists on the panel each referred to the pigeon as a 'trash bird.'[174] This relegation of the pigeon to the category of 'trash bird' or 'vermin,' is not an uncommon conception. From my observations, there seems to be an inverse relationship between common/exotic and trashy/worthy. One aspiration of the pigeon loft and subsequent exhibition is to question these pre-existing judgements and their foundations. Why would 'commonness' need to be equated with little or no worth? The fixity of this belief would hopefully be challenged in an encounter with the loft and open a line of questioning to the greater aspects of the relations of pigeons and humans. One specific challenge to this question of worth is posited in the form of locating the pigeon as a productive member of society through their *bio-recycling* activities (more on this later).

Time appears to be linear, equally measured in seconds, minutes, hours, years, decades, centuries, millennia . . . The language of the loft neither accounts for nor cares for such a measure. What is of import is what is here, what is now, what can we do to express appreciation for one another? Yet, simultaneously and in contrast, the loft recalls a history of co-labour and co-care between the pigeon and the human. The structure brings forth this history into the present. This time-based questioning builds through each installation of a loft, an exponential growth of uncertainty, of un-fixity — translating the temporal into the spatial experience.

The loft in the gallery only attains or relates to a sense of value through the potential or past usage by the pigeon. An empty, untouchable clump of wood, metal, and sand has no particular

174. *Ask the Birds*, Whitechapel Gallery.

value within *anthrodecentric art* external to a relation with the pigeon. These materials in another work could have value on their own, related to their own material histories and futures, but in this form of the loft that is not possible. The relationship to the pigeon, real or imagined, determines the potential worth and success of the loft as a sculptural item. If the loft only speculatively posited a relationship with the pigeon the work would be incomplete, yet another imagined space of symbolic animal import in opposition to the actual animal being recognised.

Thinking through the relationship of the part and the whole, the pigeon loft is an argument grounded in minimalism. Is the concept of the loft immediately pitted against the design elements? Does any part of the loft possibly add up to the function of the total? No, in my opinion. The parts of the loft are allocated to meet the needs of pigeon care and to meet the theoretical aspects of a non-lethal population control device, but the whole is an allocation of human space and labour dedicated to the care of a pigeon, a number of pigeons — a space of recognition of millennia of mutual existence and shared beneficence. I am arguing, that here, and now, the whole far exceeds the parts.

This work is an equal engagement with the institution and with the pigeon. Without equal contribution, the work ceases to exist. The initial institutional engagement was with University College London, Estates. The rationale of the institution is predicated on the concerns of its stakeholders. From my engagement with UCL, the stakeholders were presumably most concerned with their ability to maintain zero-contact with the pigeon and then that the property not be damaged by the pigeon. My pigeon loft proposal foregrounded its functional use as a non-lethal population control mechanism that would not invite nor allow for any direct contact between the pigeon and the stakeholder(s).[175] However, the design of the loft does not allow for this function and negates the premise of the UCL Estates agreement. Yet, I do not see this particular mislead as a negative, herein lies the notion of positive institutional critique. The institution is in no way damaged by the insertion of the pigeon loft — the pigeon is in no way damaged by the installation and use of the loft. Both interested parties are served. The pigeon receives healthy sustenance and shelter; the institution is unbothered and unfettered by effects,

175. Non-lethal population control is exerted through the collection and destruction of eggs — an interesting collision with the approaches to the notion of the contested human as embryo. As the construction of the loft does not allow for nesting, there will not be eggs to collect and destroy.

yet is afforded a feather in the cap, so to speak, by offering the opportunity for a sustainable, friendly gesture to the nonhuman inhabitant. The gap is filled by me, as I fill the feeder and I clean up the limited amount of detritus caused by the installation. This is a non-price paid for the acceptance of the common feral nonhuman into the realm of the institutionalised human.

There are two immediately available positions for evaluating the potentials of the pigeon loft. The first is concerned with the pigeon experience. I cannot and will not begin to extrapolate or even imagine the experience of the pigeon. The second position is that of the human viewer. This is the position of primary concern within the un-framework of *anthrodecentric art*. The potential shift in perspective for the human encounter is of primary importance. When the artwork has become a functional space for a potential shift in perception for the human viewer, moving away from the perception of the animal as subjected to the animal as an agency-capable/authorial subject, the site of function of *anthrodecentric art* has begun.

One barometer with which to gauge to potential success of the pigeon loft as a functioning site of *anthrodecentric art* is the transition of places to spaces. The place of UCL, as institutional grounds with active policies towards 'discouraging' the presence of pigeons, begins to transform into a shared space as the pigeon is afforded a site named and recognised for their care and comfort. The institutional place begins opening to a space of co-habitation and of reciprocal care. Pertaining to the language of NCR, the loft is engaging with movement, slippage, and reciprocity. The active presence of the pigeon generates a space of revealing the pigeon, outside of the expected bounds of a common vermin. The past slips into the present via the architecture and implied relations. Then the notion of reciprocal care questions, 'Who benefits?' This potential for confusion is beneficial.

The loft does not actively change the lives of the pigeons, it is a simple insertion of food and shelter. These are things pigeons are quite capable of finding for themselves. So, though the success of the loft relies on its usefulness to the pigeon, the pigeon does not rely upon the loft. Through the NCR methods and effects, the loft allows for re-enchantment to potentially arise given the continuously present and invisible pigeon is now afforded a dedicated space — the

pigeon remains present and is now visible. Confusion of 'who benefits' from the loft as artwork and the utility of NCR methods begins working towards new perspectives.

The loft as a stand-alone work does not move towards revealing the agency of the pigeon as it is inaccessible to the viewer, however, it does allow space for acknowledging the pigeon. This groundwork is built upon through the subsequent gallery setting and installation. The acknowledgement of the pigeon grows into an argument for the pigeon to be recognised as a legitimate labourer on the streets of London, an active *bio-recycling* system.

Why the Pigeon?

Pigeons have a rich shared history with humans, or rather in the service of man. From as long as 10 000 years ago, man was painting representations of the pigeon on walls, and most likely the pigeon was first domesticated by Neolithic man. They are suspected of cohabitation amongst the caves and the cliffs. The ancient Egyptians used the pigeons as war-time message carriers and as a method of communication between financial houses. These practices were continued through history by the likes of Reuters news agency, the Pigeon-Gram services in New Zealand, and in the United Kingdom as messengers from the front lines in WWI. The last of such pigeon-based services was ended in 2006. Pigeons have long been used as a symbol in history, from the cuneiform tablets of the Sumerians, the Christian bible, and as sacrifices. Their symbolic meanings range from love and peace, to sacrifice, motherhood, and harmony.

The life of the pigeon persists in today's urban ecologies in spite of the elaborate and intentional efforts of their human cohabitants to eradicate their presence. This is not a statement of human-centrism nor of pigeon-centrism, but observation of this relationship and efforts undertaken. Looking to the histories of human-pigeon relations the pigeon has been an extremely useful labourer. Lending their selves and bodies to their human counterparts in protective communication, which has been extraordinarily dangerous for them in times of human warfare. In a brief summary of this history, first there was a state of cohabitation,

Relational Adaptation One

Every day at four-thirty, an older woman with bright orange hair wheels two carts into the park. She daily returns to the same bench and methodically removes small plastic packages from her carts. Behind her, in the grass, a small flock of pigeons gathers, every day. She turns with a white bag and throws bits of bread and seed across the grass, her arm the head of a sprinkler system of feed. The pigeons bounce around and eat to their content. Meanwhile, every day, a squirrel emerges from across the lane. She scurries up the lane and around the back of the bench. The woman picks up a different bag and hands the squirrel some food, only after she has greeted the squirrel by name. The last animal to arrive is a raven. Daily taking its perch on the back of the bench until greeted. Then the raven hops to the ground and is fed from yet another stash of food. The woman continues to feed the pigeons yet separates them from the raven and its food. She provides and segregates. Every day at four-thirty.

Figure 27. Relational adaption one.

This is a series of observations. While there may be a common conception of the pigeon as vermin, I watched reactions . . . here are three observations of the contrary . . . stories of humans being with the pigeon.

At a central London park, I witnessed one woman and her feeding patterns, at least five times a week over the course of a year.

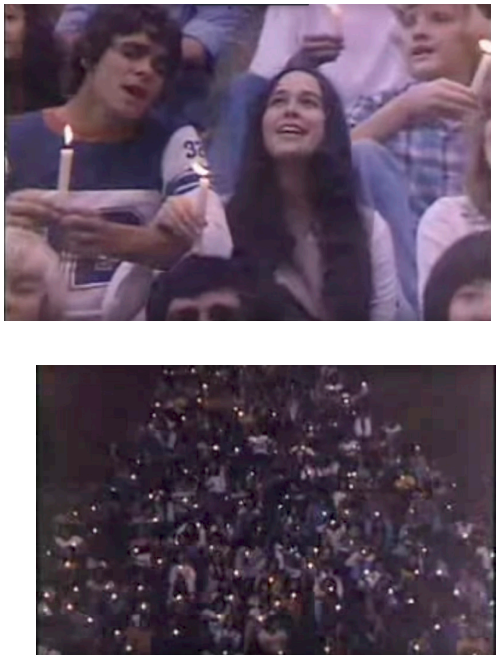


Figure 28. Still images from the 1971 Coca-Cola advert. (PD-US--no notice advertisement)

then of labour (with many symbolic developments), exile after technological and mechanical developments rendered their labour unnecessary and too costly, and then relegation to the position of vermin deserving of extermination. However, here I would like to place an addendum in this historical account, that the pigeon is still a productive member in the ecologies shared with humans - as scavengers, and as active and animate *bio-recycling* systems. They are cleaning up after the consuming and rubbish-producing humans. Even though attempts of erasing the pigeon from our 'human' ecologies continues, a quick Google search will provide one with multiple options of capture and disposal, the resilient pigeon persists. The work of *The Feathered* is an active support of the resilient pigeon and of their *bio-recycling* labour-agency, with an objective to re-purpose the waste of this *bio-recycling* agent into the realm of value via art and materiality.

Expanding into Diagrammatic Relations

This Coca-Cola ad was first aired on January 18, 1971 in London. The concept for the ad was conceived by Bill Backer (creative director of the Coca-Cola account for McCann Erickson) during a fog induced layover in Dublin when flying from New York to London. Backer observed that the evening of the forced landing left all of the passengers quite grumpy and unfriendly, yet in the morning he saw the agency of Coca-Cola in action. The previously grumpy people were now smiling and socialising over their cool crisp bottles of Coca-Cola. His reaction was to conceptualise Coca-Cola as a 'universally liked formula' that functions as a 'tiny bit of commonality' among otherwise dis-similar people. Backer's song revolved around the notion of "seeing the whole world as if one person," and then addressing that person's need through 'the real thing,' the singular commodity of Coca-Cola. Backer's perceived social agency of Coca-Cola as a commodity then burst forth as a folk music advert, and then was released by two different folk music troupes. The commodity of sociability hit the market without apology.

I am bringing forth this proposition from Coca-Cola's ad agency in 1971 to today because

of the commonality of language between my project and Backer's vision - most notably the argument for material relations as central to universality. Is universality possible? Or, conversely, is it not already omni-present yet inaccessible? Perhaps the inescapable nature of universality is the positioning of humans as external from nonhumans, being central and looking upon 'what-is' is generally not conducive to understanding? Backer appears to agree, as he positions the agency of Coca-Cola as the de-centring agent of human experience and as allowing a universal experience to emerge through a material exchange.[176] Returning to the third thesis of Badiou, "It's very important to understand that an artistic truth is a proposition about the sensible in the world. It's a proposition about a new definition of what is our sensible relation to the world, which is a possibility of universality against the abstraction of money and power."[177] Interpreting Badiou's point, one could assume that the experience of the commodity, Coca-Cola, could never lead to a universal experience given the inextricable context of abstraction via money and the market. I am taking this position, yet I find Backer's vision interesting and work towards translating this misconception to the production of art works and perhaps a form of artistic truth and exchange.

These modes of exchange emerge with the installation *The Feathered: an exploration of nonhuman labour* and are presented in a triangular relationship in the installation twice. The diagram of these modes of exchange brings the viewer into the installation as the introductory image on the map, as well as on the wall as part of Constellation One (C^1). The three primary actors within this diagram are human, pigeon, and art. Which are coincidentally the three primary actants within the active installation space. Each of the three identified actants are defined through a primary action (second layer) and then by a resulting effect (third layer). The three primary actants are expanded outward, the second stage: consumer, scavenger, re-purposer; offers an expansion of the actants activities. The activities are further delineated in the third, and outermost, triangle as rubbish-producer, *bio-recycler*, and assigner of value.

The installation comprises nine constellations which correspond to the nine points of intersection in *the material labour of pigeons*. However, this is not a one-to-one correspondence,

176. The music from this ad is the basis for the language selected in the work to speak with another, C5. The folk song was repurposed in an earlier work, *The Rounds*, found in Appendix 1.

177. Badiou, "Fifteen Theses," thesis three.

Figure 29. *The material labour of pigeons*, 2016.

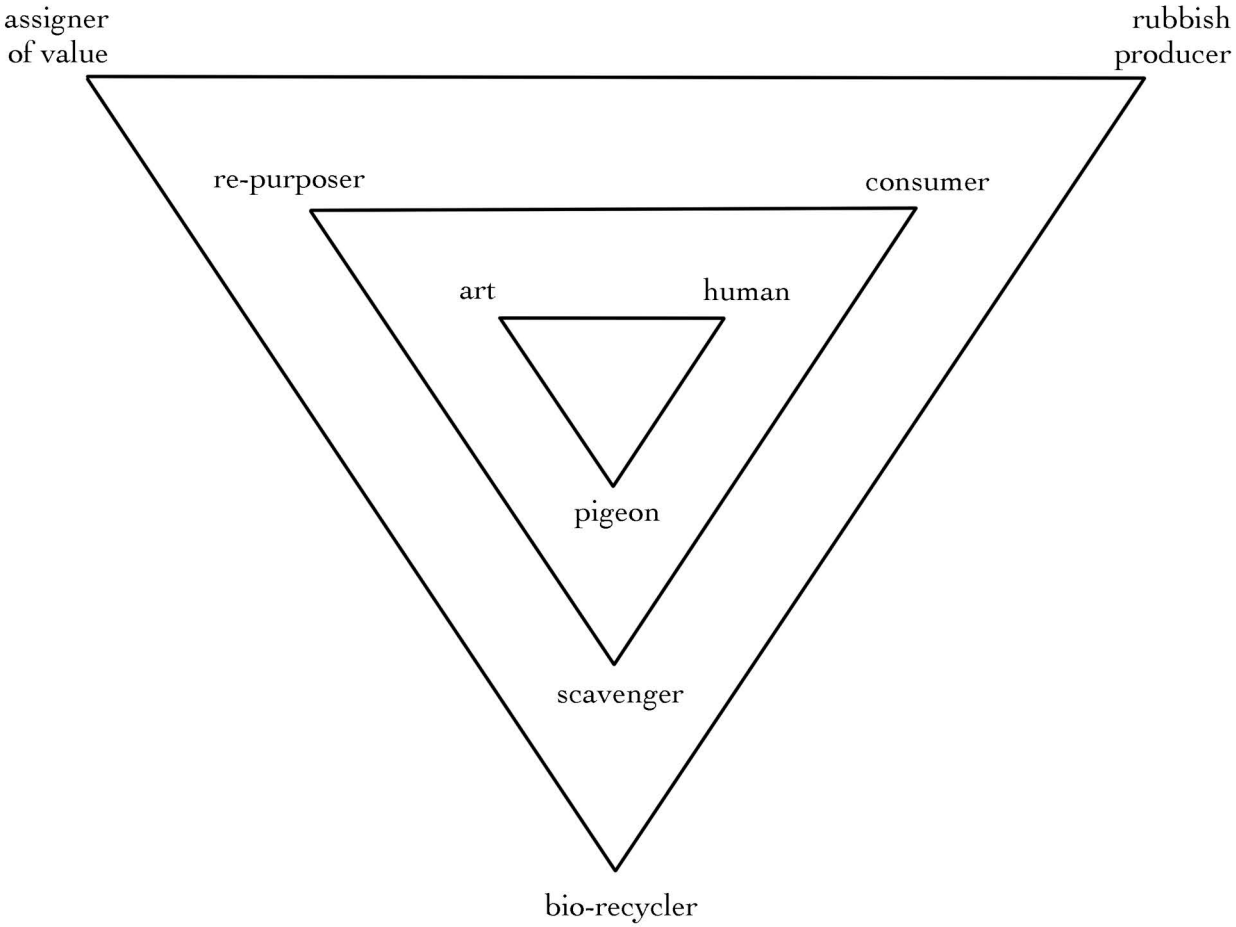


Figure 30. Installation view. *The Feathered: an exploration of non-human labour*, Graduate Degree Show 2017, Slade School of Fine Art.

Figure 31. Relational adaption two.

North of Edgeware Station in London, March 2018.

Relational Adaptation Two

Walking to the gallery, I see a flock of pigeons, more a sea of pigeons across the pavement and the road. Each stumbling and trying to jump over the next. At the front of the flock stands a man. He holds a large, orange, plastic bag filled to the brim with seed. He is tossing handful after handful, feeding the hungry birds.

but a triangulating correspondence of a constellation to no less than three points of intersection. This triangulating and layering of correspondence allow for the installation to create and maintain a movement once a viewer has crossed the picture plan into the space. This installation is a diagram in space, it is a (re)assembly of relational being, it is a traversable image. This is an image in space.

Distributing through Constellations

C[1] ~

This constellation is composed of three parts. *The building of homes* and *the exile* are positioned on the left wall as a diptych, with the third element on the back wall, *the material labour of pigeons*, functioning as a removed triptych component. *The building of homes* is a 16'28" film, created in North London in 2016. This video is an extended still scene of flat roofs, with one particular 'flaw', the missing shingles. This flaw is not readily apparent and is not visually dominant in the frame. This film is a still image of duration. At 4'50" two pigeons arrive on the scene. The only moving elements of this image are the sky, the lighting, and these two pigeons. The pigeons eventually make their way to the missing shingle, and it becomes clear that this is their home. This view of a roof in a North London neighbourhood is a site of cohabitation (although to be fair, all human houses are cohabited with many more animate nonhumans than most would like to admit or even be aware of). This film is a still meditation of a still meditation, which provides an allowance for revealing frames within the frame over the duration.

This space of communal living is a meditative space allowing for assimilation of the 'action' latent in the image. This allows for a narrative arc extending beyond the durational confines of the video - relating to the infinite notion of presence within NCR. The exile is the diptych pairing — this is again a still of the same roof — with a single change. The opening of cohabitation has been removed. There is an erasure through material filling. The pigeon pair symbolically exiled to the realm of vermin is physically exiled from their home. The

Figure 32. Constellation one.

(top left) The building of homes, film, 16'28", 2016.

(top right) The exile, photograph on acrylic, 40 x 30cm, 2017.

(bottom) The material labour of pigeons, chalk on polypropylene on pigeon loft remnants, 40 x 30cm, 2017.

triptych element, the material labour of pigeons, is the repeated diagram from the installation's introduction. These three triangles and expanded labels of action and result are transcribed by chalk marker onto three layers polypropylene, the diagram is as modifiable as the language and understanding of the three actants: human, pigeon, and art. These layers of plastic and language are assembled and mounted using remnant wood and fixings from the loft — a newly created home. This ensemble is a reflection on real estate and ecology, the successes and failures and planned and chaotic systems.

C^2 ~ *offspring of . . .*

The second constellation is a singularly titled work. This piece is an assemblage of a found, moss-covered chair; a tension joined square fence, soil, three plants, and a rented taxidermy pigeon standing upon a bowler hat. This work is a combination of references that tie together human, pigeon, and art. These references include economic, art historical, and of applied Cartesian representation as enacted. The assemblage begins through the representation of gardening and landscaping practices which emerged about the same time as the introduction of perspective and of Cartesian dualism. Each of these aspects historically works to create a singularly human point of view which positions the human as dominator of other. The assemblage as an artistic act is a homage to the Surrealists and in particular Magritte. The art historical references are directly connecting the art and art activity points from the installation's primary diagram. The Surrealist reference here extends into questions of perception, and this work is directly positioned to be a viewer of C^5. The references of the soil here, and of the mirrors in C^7 are pointing to the perceived dominion of man over other as expressed through Land Art. The chair as a found object is a productive site of rubbish, complete with its own moss-based ecology. The pigeon is rented. This is a site of assembly — the assembly of rented death, discarded ecologies, and dying consumable gardening.

Figure 33. Constellation two.

Offspring of . . . , found chair, gardening supplies, rented taxidermy pigeon; 60 x 60 x 100cm, 2015-17.

Figure 34. Constellation three.

A Building of Home, functional sculpture, 1.9 x 0.9 x 0.7m, 2017.

Figure 35. Constellation three, detail.

C[3] ~ *a building of home*

The third constellation is a single object. This single object has two primary sites of existence — the roof of the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London and in the gallery. UCL has put forth plans to discourage pigeons from its properties. I proposed the building and installation of a pigeon loft to UCL estates. The basis of this proposal was for the loft to function as a non-lethal method of population control. This loft is to be regularly maintained by me, including the feeding of quality pigeon feed (as would normally only be accessible by the pet birds of fanciers). This is a site and an act of husbandry without expectation of return. By approving this loft, UCL Estates unwittingly approved an act of institutional care. This is a material positive-institutional-critique. This is a temporally-oriented-solution. This loft is the centre-piece of this installation as well as the the point of reference in the diagram, *realms of influence*, this is the epicentre of concentric circles of translation from the gallery outward.

C[4] ~ *(in)definitely*

This wall-based work is composed of a text drawn with oil stick and an over-laid hanging larder bird. The wall text is a variation of the diagram seen in *The Furred*, which again relates to notions of the individual versus a kind and the parallel relationship therein. The rented, hanging larder bird is a wood pigeon is situated in proximity to the taxidermied rock dove or mutt pigeon of *offspring of . . .* |Pigeon| and |not pigeon| are equal, they are equal as absolute values. This is the collapse of A|The, as the individual and essence are conflated and equally present. Turning again to Benjamin Bratton, "Fuck the symbolic!"[178] This is not the time nor the place to engage in flippant symbolic endeavours. But here in our absolute understanding of pigeon/pigeon-ness, both are presented and re-presented through multiple lenses and ready for an experiential action taken in part with any/a/the viewer. The symbolic idea has been re-presented with the economic and art historical contexts, to generate a rich experience that engages with perceptions of the pigeon, today, in London. This Pigeon has the rich histories of pigeon,

178. This quote was in response to an attendee requiring a show of solidarity, inviting Bratton to first relocate to the Congo prior to speaking about issues of the anthropocene. Bratton, 'The Post-Anthropocene."

Figure 36. Constellation four.

(in)defefinitely, assemblage, oil stick and taxidermy pigeon; 2017.

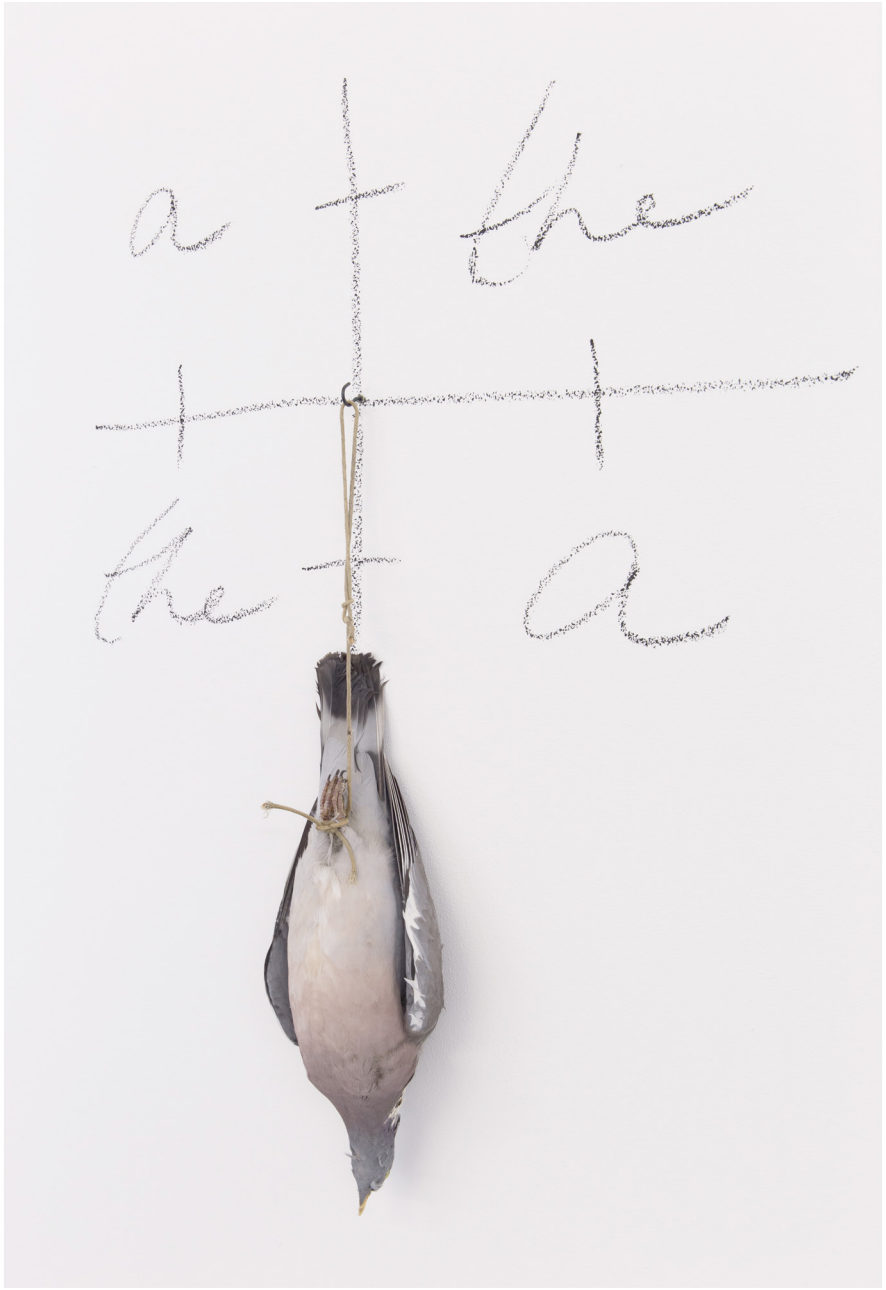


Figure 37. Constellation five.

To speak with another, audio installation, sound compilation and cage, 2015-17.

combined with the recognition of the labour of the contemporary *bio-recycling* system of |pigeon| today.

C[5] ~ *to speak with another*

In the audio track, *the teaching*, there are multiple voices speaking and listening, yet this cacophony of voices and ears results in zero shared comprehension. Or, more aptly, this exercise does not lead to increased human comprehension of the pigeons' voices. The pigeon voices in this track are taken from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The human voice speaks the words: 'I,' 'me,' 'human,' 'pigeon,' 'home,' 'sing,' 'love,' 'harmony,' 'hold,' 'company,' 'peace,' 'land,' 'real,' 'thing,' 'want,' 'world,' 'today,' 'presence,' 'never,' and 'the way.' This word selection is derived from the Coca-Cola advert, or rather the advert's sister folk songs. The lyrics of the ad are directly contrary to the message of the song as ad - the contradiction between commodity driven production and consumption versus the ability for a balanced environment with bees and trees and snow-white turtle doves, for instance. This return to the notion of the pigeon, or dove, as symbols of peace and love, is just a reflection on the rejection following a loss of use-value. These works also call into question the notion of 'keeping company?' Are we not already doing so? Yet, this company is not predicated on respect or reciprocity but on eradication. The sound piece is hidden underneath a low-hanging, empty bird cage. The fruits of academic-scientific research are utilised, but are a floating, lost index as the space of cohabitation has become emptied.

C[6] ~ *manimal merch*

This constellation is a kind of entry point or exit from the installation proper and is separated via a beam in the gallery itself. *Manimal merch* is a compilation of things generally considered proper and necessary for an art interaction. There is the *artist's business card*, a potentially mass-produced iconic image from the installation (aka *bitch bird*) and lastly a guide to interacting with the art. This is an ode to art-market-necessity, and a guide to the subversion

Figure 38. Constellation six.

Manimal merch, assemblage; map, card, and *bitch bird*; 2017.

Figure 39. Constellation seven, floor.

A beneficiary, assemblage, nine mirrored tiles and oil stick diagram, 2015-17.

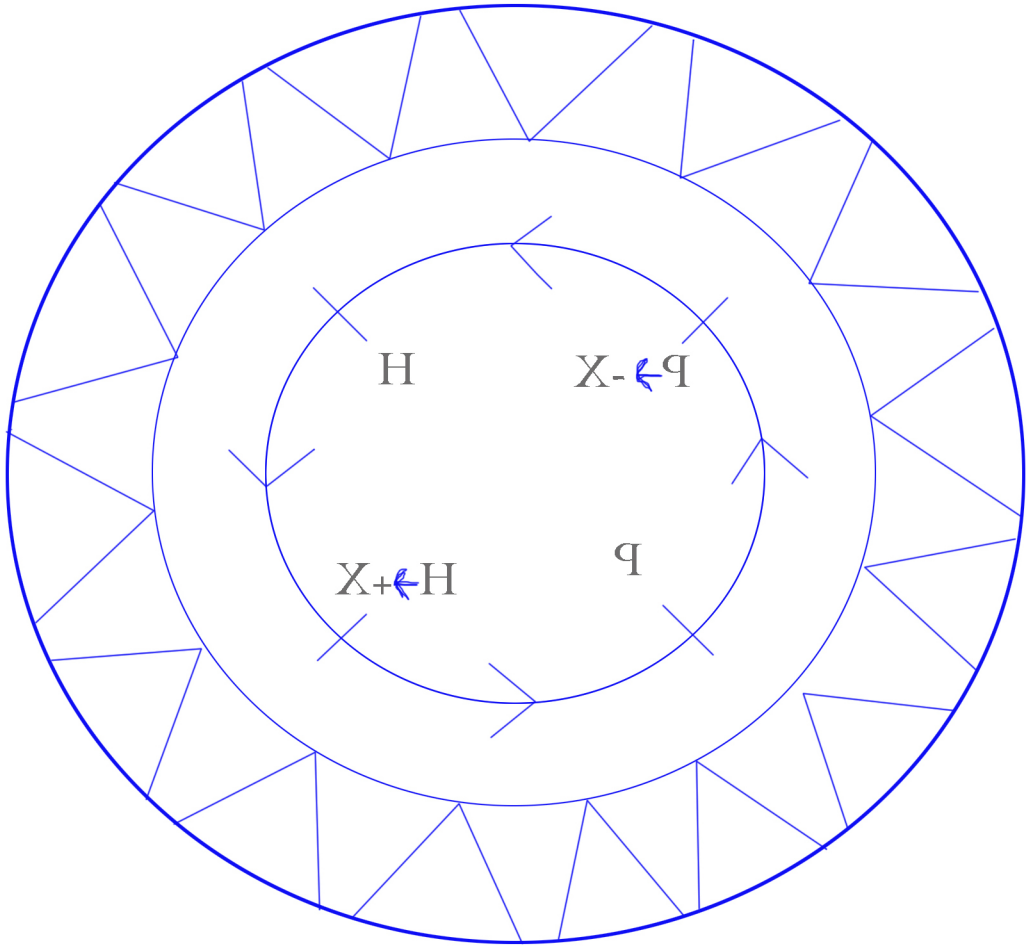


Figure 40. Constellation seven, ceiling.

of the art market by the material means of production gifted to humans through the processes of *bio-recycling*.

C[7] ~ *a beneficiary*

This constellation is a vertical work near the back, right corner of the gallery. On the floor, there are nine tiles of mirror arranged in a grid with a base composed of three tiles. The remaining tiles spiral in a vertical stack from the back of the arrangement. Directly above, a diagram has been drawn on the ceiling in reverse, legible only through the mirrors. This action flattens A|The through experience. This is a minimalist-inspired work. This diagram is functioning as a central system of direction. The diagram is composed of three rings. The most external ring is a bifurcated whole, the bifurcations introduced here are taken from the binary rationale constructions that pervade Modern thinking such as: self/other, nature/culture . . . The middle ring is a re-assembled whole, re-joining the binary rationales, this assembly provides an allowance for a spectrum of relational possibilities. The third innermost ring is a specific example of a new relational possibility. This particular example is the relation between pigeon and human, the material connection is rubbish. The 'H' stands for human, the 'P' stands for pigeon, and the 'x' for rubbish.

C[8] ~ *ground score*

This constellation is two selected images from the *ground score* series. *Ground score three* is a drip painting on paper, a collaborative artist-pigeon action undertaken at the Wildlife Rescue and Ambulance Service in North London. *Ground score thirteen* is a chemically-sealed wet-specimen pigeon chick mounted onto paper, purchased from Gemma's Curiosity Shop on Etsy. The economy of the D.I.Y. shop on Easy is replicated through the dodgy constructions of the frame backings, which may be visible if a viewer were to notice the angle of remove from the wall mountings. The abstract expressionist inspired work is made possible through the generously donated *bio-recycled* pigments.

Figure 41. Constellation eight.

Ground Score, Thirteen, wet-specimen chick on paper, 60 x 40cm, 2017.

Figure 42. Constellation eight.

Ground Score, Three, pigeon guano on paper, 60 x 40cm, 2015.

Figure 43: Constellation nine.

The Site of Production #2, installation, found barbed wire, 8 x 1m, 2017.

C^9 ~ *the site of production #2*

This constellation is a single, ceiling mounted swath of barbed wire and angle metal. This barbed wire was recently retired from a home's construction site in North London. This material is rubbish. This is a rubbish based after-thought of the real estate and construction markets. This rubbish is art of no cost. This site is |not| the site of ground score production, this site is the production of exile.

Modes of Non-Cartesian Representation

In examining this work, I return to *primary modes of non-cartesian representation* and *the function of non—Cartesian representation* diagram to discuss the constellations and installation through the language of NCR and re-enchantment.[179] The language of the constellation implies the interrelation of the works within a constellation, as well as the potentiality of the relations between the individual constellations, and as a whole. Each constellation is composed of multiple parts, and as discussed above can be assigned to correlate with multiple points on the base diagram of the argument of *the material labour of pigeons*. This works with the relationship between chaos, order, contingency and arbitrariness, Landy discusses the function of such an arrangement here,

> If a constellation is capable of replacing religious faith, this is because a constellation is more than simply a collection of stars. It is a set arbitrarily carved out from among the dense cluster on view, deemed to belong with each other and not with the rest; a set, furthermore, on which a shape -- perhaps even a meaning of sorts -- has been imposed, by a doubly bold act of human intervention into the non-human world. What before was chaos now comes forth as order; where contingency reigned, now there is a certain internal necessity, as each point of light has to be just where it is for the posited shape to hold. The constellation confers upon each of its members a raison d'etre, and all by an act of human will. Unlike the theological *kosmos* it replaces, then, a constellation is *an ordering which tacitly admits its own arbitrariness*.[180]

179. For a more detailed analysis of the constellations, please see Appendix 2.2.

180. Landy, "Modern Magic," 116.

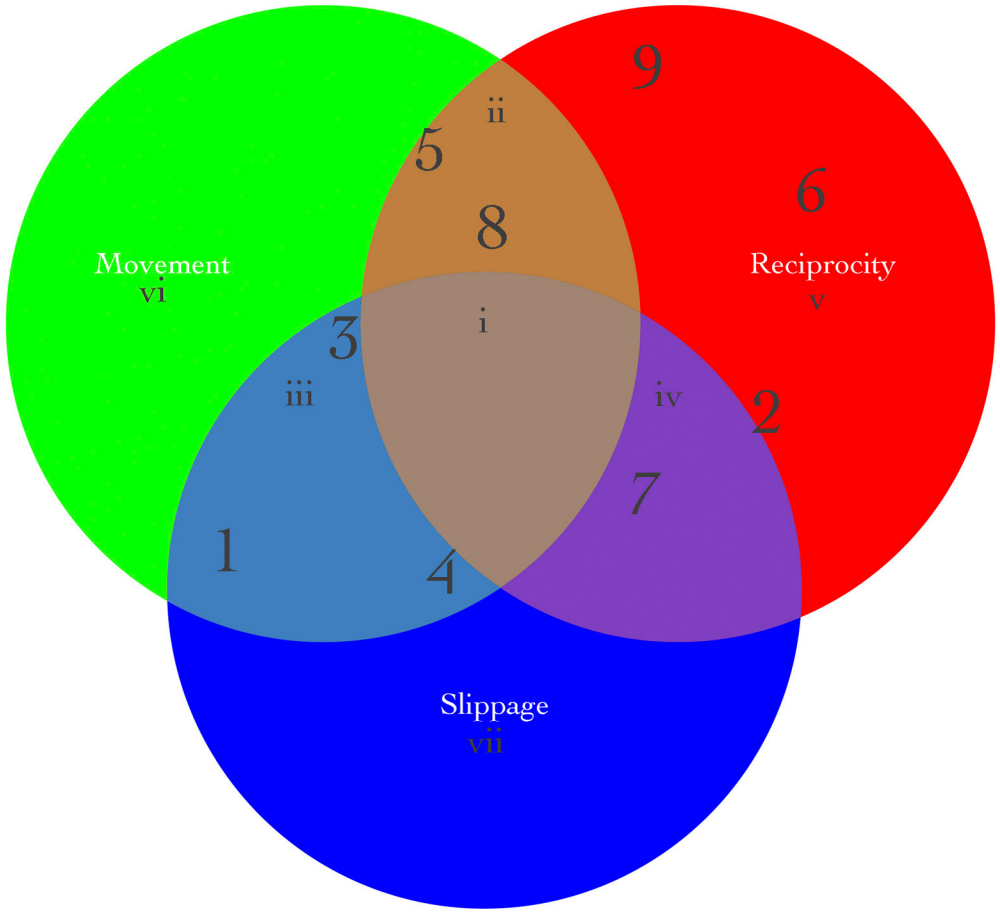


Figure 44. *The Feathered: an exploration of non-human labour* modes of non-Cartesian representation.

While replacing a religious faith is not an objective of *anthrodecentric art*, in dealing with notions of dis-/re-/enchantment, the void of an absent god is part of the discussion. The constellations of *the feathered* are a set of human interventions onto a nonhuman world in a physical manner. More significantly though, I am suggesting that the conceptual intervention into the nonhuman world is the raison d'etre of these constellations. These constellations may suggest any number of meanings, but the underlying suggestion is that the arrangement or ordering is arbitrary in the engagement or reception by the viewer and that the non-linear logic supplies a variety of ways for the viewer to engage in a state of re-enchantment while with the works, which can translate to the macrocosm of their engagement with the world external to the gallery.

The individual constellations of *the feathered* span the *primary modes of non-cartesian representation*, mostly inhabiting spaces of union between two modes. There are two constellations, C^{6} and C^{9}, which are firmly entrenched in the mode of movement, and C^{2} which is edging from movement into the realm of reciprocity as well. C^{5} and C^{8} are within the union of movement and slippage, zone two. The union of slippage and reciprocity, zone three, contains C^{1}, C^{3}, and C^{4}. The remaining constellation, C^{7}, falls into zone four, the union of reciprocity and movement. This arrangement of the constellations over the *primary modes of non-cartesian representation* aligns with their distribution through the space and the introduction of works through the navigational guide. Beginning with the approach to the physical installation, it appears as an image from the exterior, which a viewer then enters and is greeted by C^{6}, *manimal merch*. From this position, the viewer has obtained the navigational guide which does not order the constellation insomuch as it orders space. This immediately introduces an apparent conflict of interest within the installation, as the potential for arbitrariness seeps into the experience. This dis-orderliness aids the viewer in engaging the constructed relational space — the ability to read and re-read the installation from any point and perspective. The interconnectedness of the constellations and the works from any point will lead back to the primary statement of pigeon labour and their relationship to the human. As the constellations are distributed across

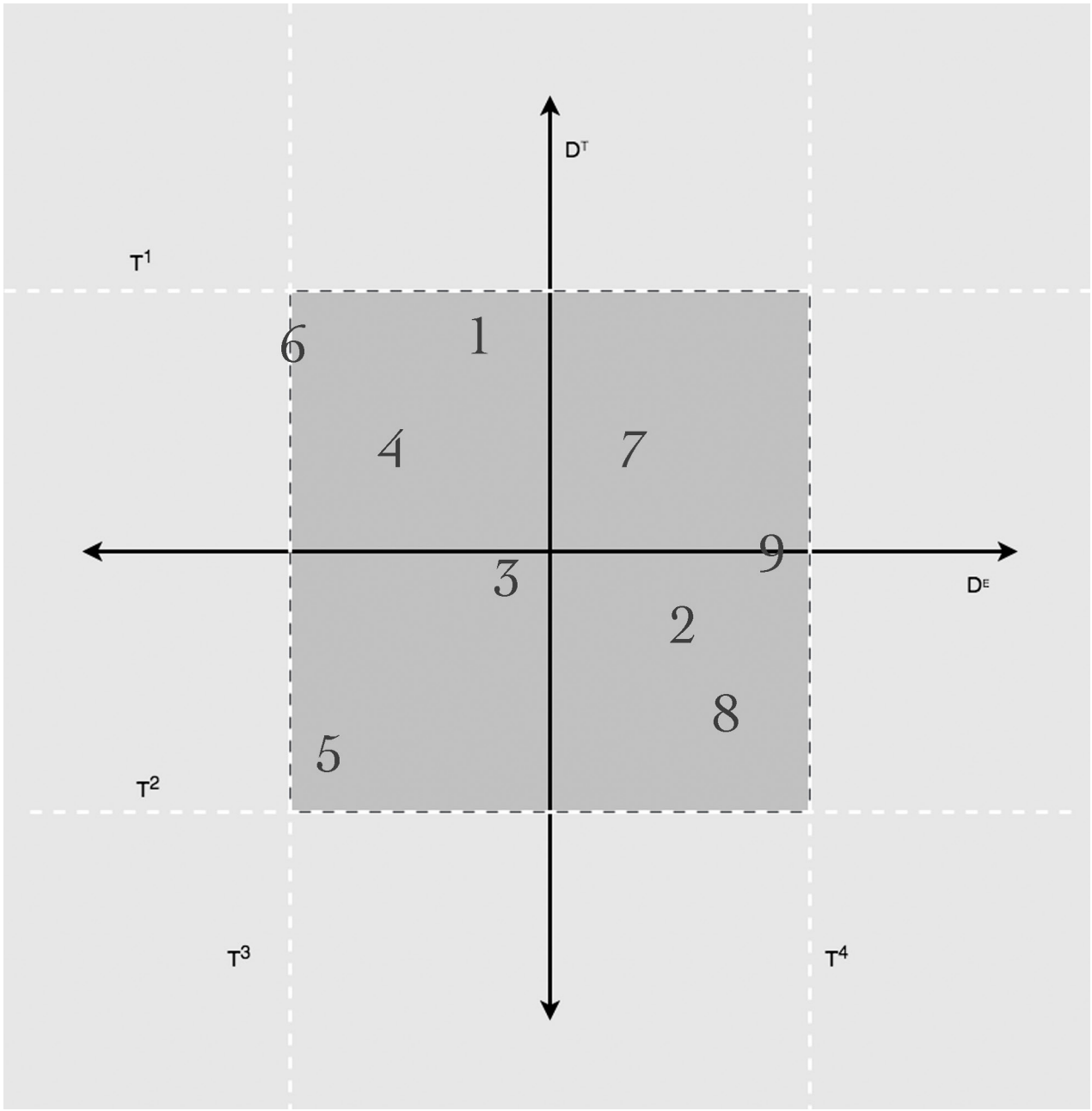
all three modes and their unions, the whole of the installation is able to move into zone one, a functioning site of NCR. As the methodology, NCR has been processed and achieved, the next phase of analysis is to consider if re-enchantment has been made possible, and if so, how?

Potential States of Re-Enchantment

To discuss the potential re-enchantment emerging from the installation *The Feathered: an exploration of nonhuman labour*, I have plotted the individual constellations onto the diagram, *the function of non—Cartesian representation*. I will discuss the constellations as they operate on the spectrum of a high degree representation to a high degree of authentic presence based upon the elements as installed. Then, I will discuss the individual constellations on the spectrum of recognition of interconnections with limited application to a sense of relational awareness and possible extension into the macrocosm (based upon anecdotal observations of viewers). In conclusion, I will evaluate the overall installation and its potential to generate a sense of re-enchantment and the potential for expansion of re-enchantment outside of the gallery environment.

High representation and high presence are differentiated by the amount of authorial translation enacted upon the nonhuman subject. I have previously argued in *The Look*, that this act of translation has an inverse relationship to the authenticity of the nonhuman, yet some degree of translation is necessary to create a rupture allowing for the generation of a new perspective in the viewer. Within this installation of works, I am locating C^{1}, C^{4}, C^{6}, and C^{7} as those with a high degree of representation. C^{1}, as a video, a still image, and a diagram, are all various degrees of abstracted representation of the pigeon and its relations to humans. C^{4} is also a degree of high representation due to the significance of the language of a|the and the introduction of the parallelism of the (in)definite. C^{6} is completely representational as it engages with the marketisation of the art within the installation, and also presents the underlying argument of the installation via text. Lastly, C^{7}, is of a high degree of representation based on

Figure 45. *f(NCR)* applied to *The Feathered: an exploration of non-human labour.*



the reliance of the relationship of oneself to a diagram through engagement with the mirror.

The works with a high degree of authentic nonhuman presence and a low degree of authorial translation are C^2, C^3, C^5, C^8, and C^9. C^2 is composed of several found nonhuman entities presented as they are, the only authorial intervention is the arrangement. The loft, C^3, offers a high degree of presence as it is a functional pigeon loft before and after the gallery viewing, and clearly shows the past-presence of pigeons through the indexical register of steps taken. Although C^5 is constructed from a recording, the sound of the pigeon still registers as a higher degree of presence as often sound cannot be immediately registered to an origin (and the placement of the speaker builds upon this). *Ground score*, C^8, again functions as an index of the presence of the pigeon, but the materials of the works directly betray their proximity to the pigeon in production creating a high degree of presence in the gallery. Lastly, C^9, is on the cusp of high presence and high representation, as the predicate of this work is its actual use in the world outside of the gallery, yet its presence in the gallery becomes more representational.

The second spectrum for consideration is from dis-enchanted to re-enchantment carried into the macrocosm outside of the gallery. As previously stated, the placement of works on this spectrum is reliant upon my anecdotal observations of viewers engaging with the installation. C^6, C^5, C^4, C^1, and C^3 bring the viewer in from a dis-enchanted state building towards a sense of relational awareness, while C^7, C^2, C^8, and C^9 engage with the new state of relational awareness and prepare the viewer to carry this forward into life outside of the gallery, or in other words to traverse from the space of re-presentation to *the sphere of translation*. In building from the state of dis-enchantment, C^6 immediately engages the viewer with the expected language of a gallery, however, this protocol introduces the viewer to the navigational tool which may guide them to a state of re-enchantment by elucidating important points of connection between the constellations. The sound work of C^5 does not require nor incite a state of re-enchantment but works to establish connections between the human and the pigeon through the offering of a direct (albeit false) translation, but this aids the viewer in beginning to construct the idea of connections between the works. The text in C^4 continues to build on these connections by

equally calling into question the veracity of the singular and the plural, beginning to dissolve notions of self-import. *The building of homes* and *the exile*, C^{1}, continue this line of questioning, mapping the notion of home onto the pigeon, and introduces the notion of shared spaces. The loft, in C^{3}, brings complexity to the notion of home, from the shared space, to a space of active care between human and pigeon and institution.

From this point the viewer is mostly bridging from noticing connections and having a limited ability to apply this skill to developing a sense of relational awareness. C^{7}, in flattening the self and the abstracted relations of things increases the relational awareness, through the bodily awareness within the space of the installation. The viewer then can engage with C^{2}, this assemblage of found items, which are all commonplace as things and as practices, further draws the viewer into a personal relation with the installation. C^{8} and C^{9} both equally bring the viewer into the installation and push them away through the selected materials, yet the result is a still increasing sense of relational awareness through past, present, and future selves.

Concentric Agencies

While the goal of *anthrodecentric art* is to allow for the revelation of nonhuman agencies, in the case of *the feathered: an exploration of nonhuman labour*, I have taken a more direct approach in re-positioning the pigeon as a *bio-recycler*. This approach was informed by the long history of pigeon-human relations based upon a shared utility of labour and care. This history was invisible, or perhaps in the peripheral vision or knowledge of the viewer but was not impacting the common conception of the pigeon as vermin. In utilising the narrative of shared human-pigeon labour, I constructed an installation which aimed to position the pigeon as a still vital labour force within the landscape of contemporary London. In the installation, I think I have engaged the pigeon through our shared histories engaging in a reflection on our social ecology. The entangled history of the pigeon and the human is not mapped out through linear time but is demonstrated through the continued and interwoven existences of the pigeon and the human

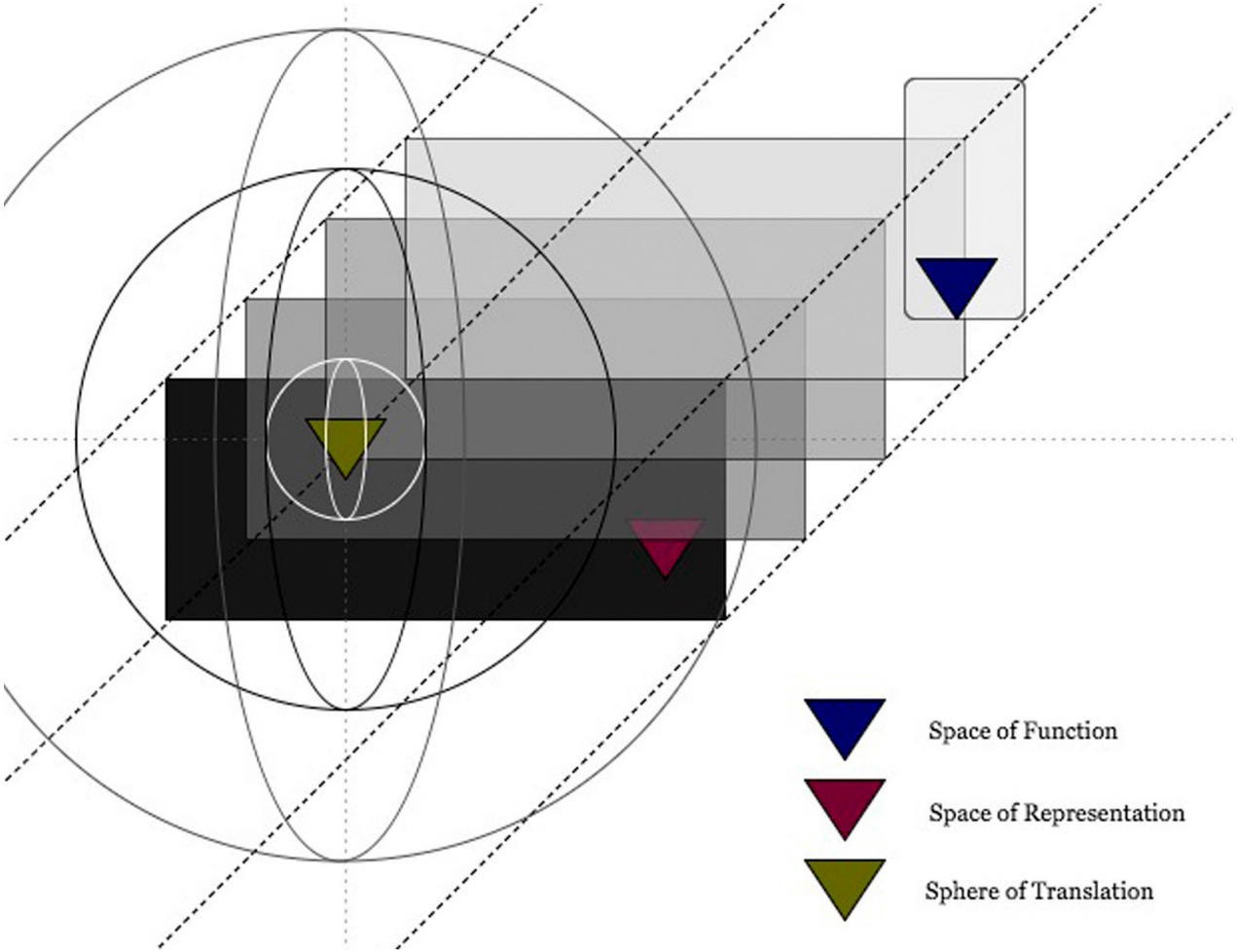


Figure 46. *Realms of influence*, 2017.

through various forms and processes (from the notion and realities of home through the shared materiality of *bio-recycled* pigments). The material agency of the pigeon and the nonhuman is most strongly presented in C^2, *offspring of. . ..* This constellation not only demonstrates historical relations of things through the practice of gardening and the subsequent effects on other nonhuman inhabitants of the environment, but re-purposes rubbish. This re-purposing allows for the emergence of language around this rubbish, and the relations of human-centric control and the creation of rubbish to be simultaneously present. Lastly, the cultural agency of the art-object, *the unrepresentable*. The entirety of the installation is a representation, yet it is also not a representation as it generates its own distinct space. The cultural agency of this non-representation is the capacity to recalibrate viewers when they re-enter the macrocosm. What happened the first time they viewed a pigeon upon emerging from the gallery? And the fifth or hundredth time? The historical relationship to the pigeon was peripheral, is it now visible? Is the present relation to the pigeon afforded direct and intentional thought? The agency of the pigeon is not predicated on intention; yet, the response of the human viewer of this work requires a transition from the accidental to the intentional in thinking of the pigeon.

Returning to the foundational research questions of this project, 'What types of representation are most revealing of nonhuman agency to a human audience?' From this installation, no singular type of representation would have been sufficient. In generating a space for the viewer to engage with the long-standing historical and present entanglement with the pigeon, a layering of representations was necessary to create a space of re-presentation. This space of re-presentation allowed the different works through a vibrant system of constellations to unfold a pathway to a different perspective. Any singular approach would have been too didactic and would have failed. The layered representations allowed for an unfolding puzzle, complete with multiple diagonals which create a matrix of relations affording the space to subvert commonly held conceptions. And, the second question, 'How can the practice of art-work to reveal nonhuman agencies?' It does the work, it creates a space for exploration, a space that generates more questions than it answers.

Relational Adaptation Three

A man is sitting on a bench in the park over his lunch hour. He opens his market sandwich and takes a bite. While chewing, he rips off another bite. He holds it out in his hand. A pigeon perches on his hand and eats the sandwich. Other pigeons form a sort of bird-based queue.

This process continues with a different bird for each bite.

Figure 47. Relational adaptation three.

Central London park bench, July 2016.

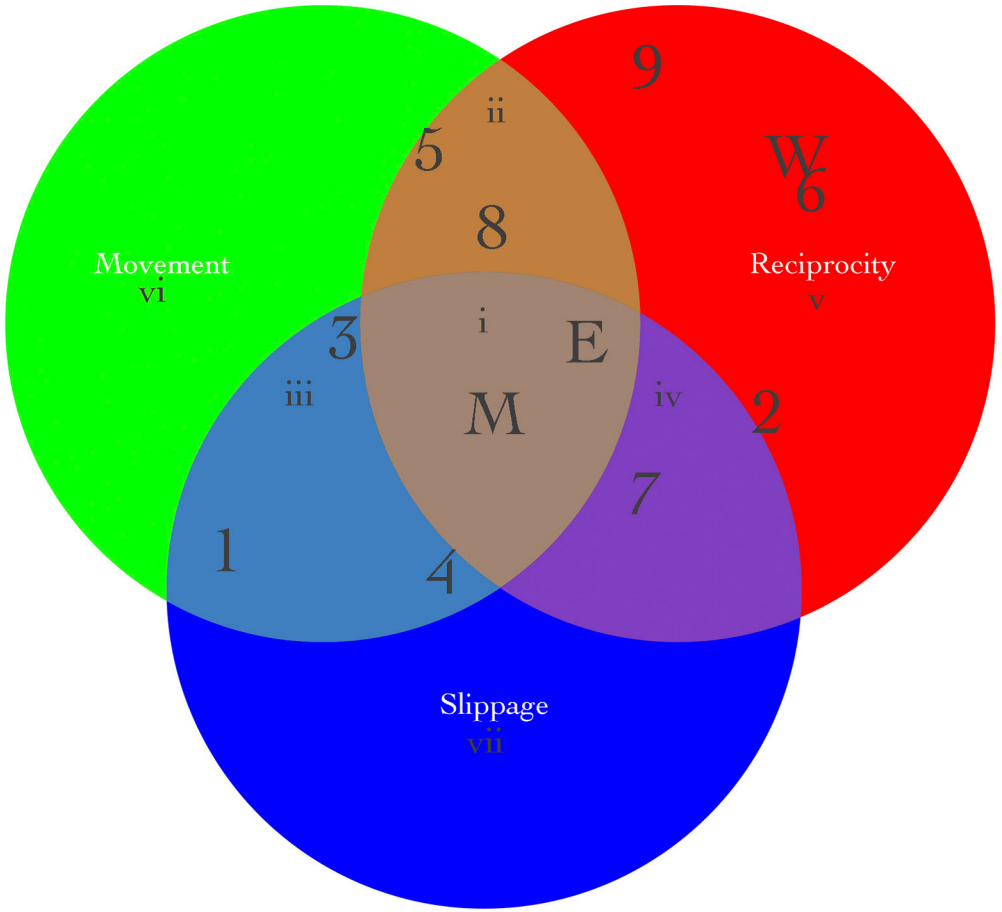
The Consequence

The proposition of *anthrodecentric art* comprises four axioms: reaching a state of re-enchantment, recognising present nonhuman agencies, developing of sustainable economies, and committing to the sustainable usage of materials. In *What is happening here? [exploits of the nonhuman]*, I focussed upon axioms one and two. In this exploration, I developed non-Cartesian representation (NCR) as a primary methodology, working through my research questions utilising the NCR modes of movement, slippage, and reciprocity. In deploying these modes of NCR, I was then able to analyse of states of re-enchantment and the nonhuman agencies rendered visible once a viewer has entered such a state.

What types of representation are most revealing of nonhuman agency to a human audience?

The many. The works discussed throughout this report are varied in the formal and conceptual approaches utilised. Framing, or rather the un-framing through modes of NCR is always available in the creation of new works and in re-reading past works. The presented works in *The Furred* and *The Feathered* each engage with the three primary modes of NCR, allowing possible access to a state of re-enchantment for the viewer and work towards revealing nonhuman agencies. In *Fig. 48*, each of the works is comparatively plotted onto the diagram *modes of non-cartesian representation*. *Who Looks Back* and 'Miss Maddie Dog performs *Being a Dog'* primarily enact the mode of reciprocity. Both of these works engage the viewer in explicit looking and seeing with the cat or the dog from a position that they, the viewer, are seen in return. The generative confusion arising from these encounters and the mode of slippage were demonstrated through the dialogue accompanying the works. Emerging from these encounters was a gentle chaos, the conceptual movement of the viewer which increased over the duration of the encounters. *Encounters with Her Presence* expresses all three modes of NCR, each element of this work functions in slightly different ways. In terms of movement, the video introduces riskiness, the text increases the chaos, and then the performance increases the chaos though Maddie's presence. The three layers work together to function as the mirrored lens of

Figure 48. Cumulative modes of non-Cartesian representation.



reciprocity. The ability for the viewer to know and understand is challenged through the three elements and the use of the NCR mode of slippage.

The Feathered: an exploration of nonhuman labour was composed of nine constellations which are equally spaced throughout the Venn diagram of the modes of NCR. These modes of representation are combined with layers of methods, including photography, film, sculpture, assemblage, painting, screen printing, sound, found things and made things and dead things. Most of the individual constellations fell within a union of two modes of NCR. Constellations 1, 3, and 4 were operating in the modes of movement and slippage. Constellations 5 and 8 were in the modes of movement and reciprocity. Lastly, constellation 7 was in the modes of reciprocity and slippage. Constellations 2, 6, and 9 were firmly working through the mode of reciprocity. No single constellation worked through elements of all three modes. The layering of these constellations within the installation allowed additional movement as the viewer could generate and then re-generate a new experience each time they re-engaged in constructing a reading of the constellation(s). The layering of the NCR modes of representation allows for a generative and emergent experience to be accessible to the viewer, to be new, indefinitely.

The re-enchantment of *anthrodecentric art* is not a reaction to dis-enchantment but is a direct line to 'what-is' or authentic representation. This is a state of perception which allows a viewer to construct meaning and understanding from 'what-is,' not false notions of the represented through a Cartesian lens. This is not a binary, as its neither Cartesian representation nor a specific perception of (re)enchanted matter, but it does allow for a relational logic between things, in which meaning is not pre-determined. "If enchantment implies belief, re-enchantment implies something more like the memory of what it might be like to believe. So, although the re of repetition resonates within the term, it is a repetition acknowledged as such, a reprise or recall in which the disenchanted modern mind experiences enchantments at a remove, usually via art,"[181] here Paige explains a function of re-enchantment which is enacted through *anthrodecentric art*. The function of enchantment is multi-faceted, and I will not submit a false reading of the possibilities and outcomes, that would be an antithetical task to the project of

181. Paige, "Permanent Re-enchantments," 159.

anthrodecentric art. I am confident that the viewers (across a spectrum of responses) were able to increase their awareness of nonhuman agency. Although I do not immediately subscribe to the language of belief, via Paige, these encounters can shape or reshape perceptions of relations. The degree of enchantment is impossible to determine from the works alone. The relationship with re-enchantment is completely determined by the viewer, their prior experiences and their willingness to engage with work that may be confusing or uncomfortable. Although determining the degree of enchantment is an impossibility as a whole, through anecdotal observations and personal conversations, there is strong evidence that the works are helping the viewers move from the exterior of threshold three into a space where they notice connections and develop a relational awareness. I understand these reactions can be strengthened with further developments and continued testing of modes of NCR but will always be immeasurable.

How can the practice of art-work to reveal nonhuman agencies?

The primary objective of my practice-led research is to generate artworks that allow for the visibility of nonhuman agencies. Agency being identified as the capacity to act, or intra-act, not reliant upon intentionality. This is not to be confused with artworks that make nonhuman agency visible; this visibility is contingent on the conceptual activity of the viewer and cannot be dictated through the processes of production. The processes of production can create an emergent space which creates potentialities and encourages the viewer to step beyond their personal comfort. The role of agency in *What is happening here? [exploits of the nonhuman]* is to translate the present but elusive nonhuman into a present and visible nonhuman agent.

One sphere of agency I have identified and worked towards rendering visible is material. Material agency was of primary import but was not thoroughly engaged through these animal/nonhuman-based works. The figure of the pigeon was proposed as an active *bio-recycling* system which implies a positive role in the urban ecology of London. Social agency is entanglement,

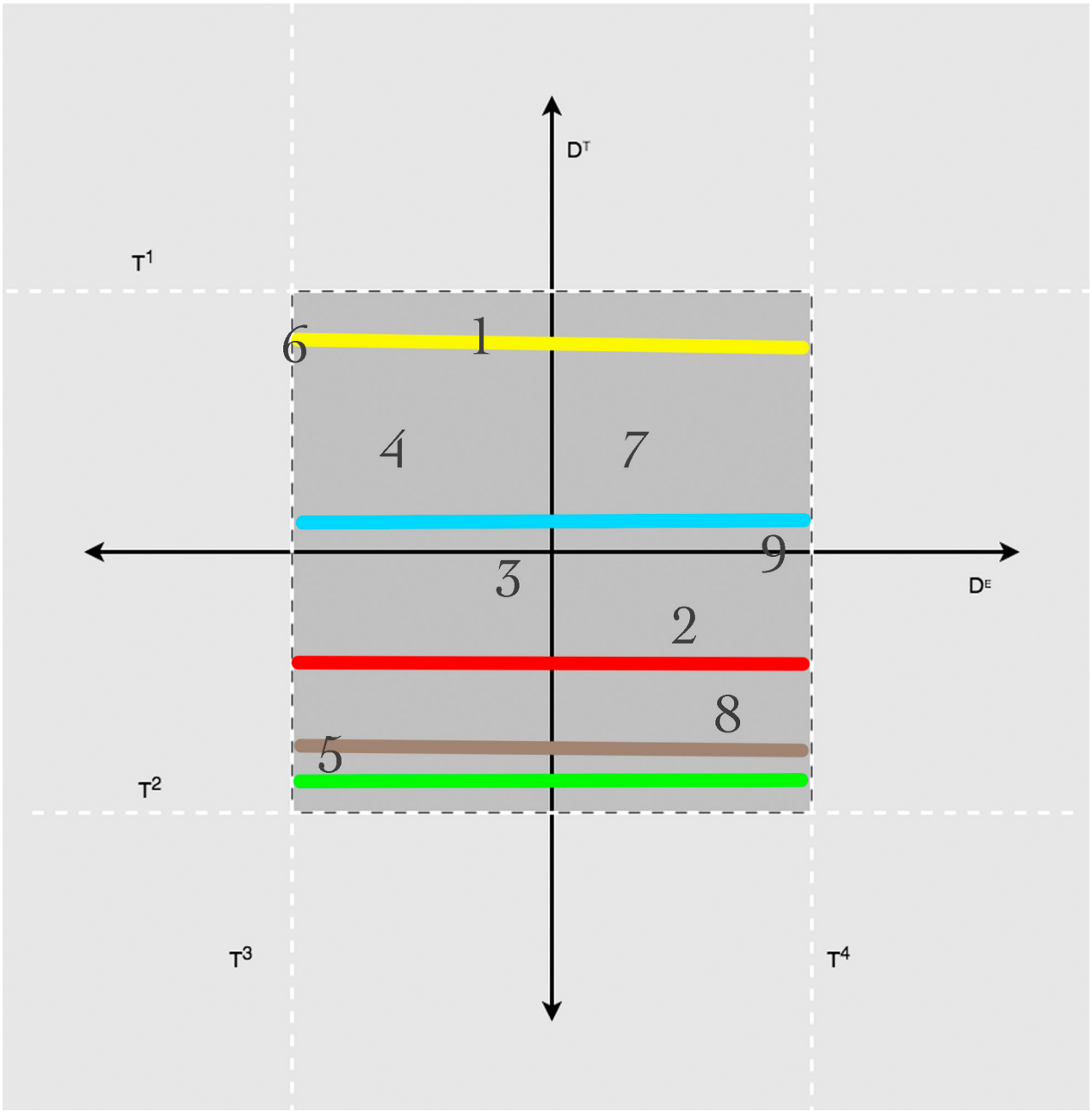


Figure 49. *f(NCR)* applied to cumulative works.

it is relationships. *Who Looks Back* locates the actors of the gallery space (human and cat) and renders visible the entangled past, present, and futures of these actors. The entangled presences of actors is brought forward through communal spaces in *Encounters with Her Presence* and 'Miss Maddie Dog performs *Being a Dog'* as well. In *The Feathered: an exploration of nonhuman labour* these shared pigeon|human relations through the past, present, and the speculative future are mapped out through a narrative of labour and the proposition of viewing the pigeon as an active *bio-recycling* system.

Cultural agency was consistently enacted in each of the works. In working through the visibility of nonhuman agents in the cultural sphere, I focused on the four co-existents that Gell proposed, the index, artist, recipient, and the prototype.[182] The focus with these co-existents is the reconstitution of indexical relations via the *unrepresentable*. The works in this report each re-presented the animal as subject, functioning as the index, recipient and the prototype; in the case of 'Miss Maddie Dog performs *Being a Dog'* she was also an artist-collaborator-performer. The viewer also fulfilled the qualities of these co-existents, working towards the reconstitution of the index through mutual presence and both actively and passively looking, seeing, and being with the nonhuman. This duplicitous experience of active and passive is produced through the use of modes of NCR and leads to the creation of the third space of re-presentation. The *unrepresentable* is the third space of re-presentation generated through the successful use of NCR — re-presentation that is not a representation.

182. As presented in *The Situation* and *The Frame*.

Re-presentation

In conclusion, I understand the works presented within this research to demonstrate the feasibility of *anthrodecentric art* as a practical methodology. In the exploration of my research questions, I determined the modes of NCR necessary for a work to open the possibility of re-enchantment in the viewer, and to then bring the social, material, and cultural agencies of the present nonhumans to the realm of the visible. Viewers responded to the gentle chaos evoked,

and in time-based engagements the increased exposure increased the depths of the perceptual changes. The un-framing enacted through the modes of NCR representation is essential in moving through the fictive experience of Cartesian representation into the space of re-presentation and being with 'what-is.' *Who Looks Back*, *Encounters with Her Presence, Miss Maddie Dog performs Being a Dog,* and the works composing *The Feathered: an exploration of nonhuman labour* utilise modes of NCR, speculatively re-enchant a viewer with relational awareness, and allow for revealing the visibility of nonhuman agencies in the social, material, and cultural spheres. These are works of *anthrodecentric art*.

Embarking

The works in this research project all revolve around animals, but *anthrodecentric art* is not restricted to works with the animal as subject; within the frame of this research my original experiments yielded the most positive results with my animal-based works. One goal of *anthrodecentric art* is to allow for the revealing of nonhuman agencies, including, but not limited to the animal/nonhuman. Moving forward within realm of *anthrodecentric art*, I will continue this practice with animals, but also move towards works that reveal inanimate (*minded*), nonhuman agencies. It has been suggested to me that this 'expanded' practice would build into a successful postdoctoral enquiry into the question, 'What is life?'[183] As Taussig reads Benjamin, "And what does such a compulsion to become Other imply for the sense of Self? Is it conceivable that a person could break boundaries like this, slipping into Otherness, trying it on for size? What sort of world would this be?"[184] In the continuation of the practice of *anthrodecentric art* pressing against such boundaries of the imagination, to engage with the ecological real is the pursuit, to step outside of the *Cartesian fictive* and recognise the relational nature of being.

In continuing to expand the use of *anthrodecentric art* as a critical methodology, I will be embarking on a series of remakes. Within this series, I will be looking to existing works of art that could be *anthrodecentric art*, but yet, are not, such as the works of Charriére found in the

183. Conversation with Susanne Kuechler, 2016.

184. Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity*, 33.

paper "Cultural Narcissism and the Subjected Animal in Two Acts of Artistic Practice."[185] My working hypothesis is that there will be a minimal number of changes necessary in the production of the work, but the main modifications with be in the un-framing of the re-presentation of the work to viewers. I will then be working to analyse the changes made and the effects on perception.

185. The full paper can be found in Appendix 2.1.

Submerging

In a final synopsis of *anthrodecentric art*, I turn to paraphrase Timothy Morton, we don't have to claim 'to be ecological,' we are ecological. How we deal with this reality is the point of contention.[186] As the USA has withdrawn from the Paris Accord in 2017, corporations act with political personhood, anti-science climate change deniers gain political power (as seen throughout the USA political arena from the 1980's and escalating steeply since 2010) — what are the options in offering alternate narratives? I would argue that it takes a variety of approaches and voices, direct activism, poetic reflection and speculation, fact-based journalism, philosophical pondering and the experience of assumption-challenging art, to name but a few. *The Guardian* put forth a campaign to educate readers and motivate political action leading up to the Paris Accord meetings in 2015 and then published a podcast series, "The Biggest Story in the World."[187] This story includes questioning the role of journalism in a 'post-truth' media environment and the role of journalism in campaigning towards a specific end (in this instance, divestment). Yet, in October of 2018, the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* has issued a revised report, stating that there may be only twelve years until there is significant or even 'catestrophic' climate change.[188] This layering of voices and strategies is not unnecessary or unneeded. I am arguing that we should continue to strive to repair and to be better in our stewardship. This sense of responsibility and hope is mirrored in the realms of *anthrodecentric art*. *Anthrodecentric art* can be passive and active simultaneously through its different attributes — it can generate a space of gentle chaos, the chaos that reveals. Encountering a work or

186. Morton, "Being Ecological."

187. The Guardian, "The Biggest Story in the World."

188. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, "Sixth Assessment Cycle."

installation of *anthrodecentric art* is not to be taught a lesson, but to submerge oneself into a pool of the unknown and to experience a relational awareness. Through relational awareness we, as viewers and consumers, have the option to increase our perceptual abilities to understand the swirling, relentless flow of agencies and affects.

Anthrodecentric art is a practice of process — a process leading towards unimagined ends, towards speculative futures. A process which actively:

- refuses to position nonhumans as a resource for human consumption
- allows nonhuman agencies to be present in their own capacities
- allows room for nonhuman agencies to become visible to humans.

This is not a process of seeking new forms, but a process of looking again, seeing anew, and being with what-is.

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A.1 Expanded Case Studies

This is a comprehensive review of my doctoral research practice and the specific practical experiments probing the edges and depths of my primary research questions.

— How can the practice of art -work to reveal nonhuman agencies?

— What types of representation are most revealing of nonhuman agency to a human audience?

Each work will address a primary research question and sub-research questions through a discussion of hypothesis, methods, analysis of results, and potential follow-up works. Works that follow-up from prior experiments will be notated with the symbol '♺'.

1. *Operations: take one: en(act)on* (Oct - Dec 2014, Hampstead Heath, London)

Research Questions: Does art require an audience? If so, how is that audience determined in a non-traditional art setting? How can this audience be engaged? To what level can the audience become a participant with a nonhuman?

Hypothesis: That people may notice the placed object(s) but would not engage with the materials without further instructions or suggestion.

Methods: This series of experiments was to be based upon the placement of a stock of a single material into a publicly accessible space with some form of instruction or invitation for passers-by to engage with the materials. The key factor in selecting materials would be size and mass; large enough for the participant to take notice of the effect of the material on their actions, yet manageable enough to be open to a wide selection of participants. In this first trial, I actually focused solely on the language and function of the signage. Working with the Institute of Making, a custom sign was manufactured, a wooden placard engraved 'en(act)on' was placed upon a metal post that was easily pushed into the ground at Hampstead Heath. I first placed the sign on a hidden trail with limited access to passers-by. The sign was near immediately acted upon and began its travels across the landscape. This piece operates as a proposition for the viewer to become active by acting upon the presented materials. This suggestion and language of 'act on' is to allow for a reciprocal physical engagement between the subject (audience and thing) opposed to a unilateral action by the viewer.

Analysis: Unfortunately, I did not install any sort of tracking device, so the sign was eventually lost after several moves. This experiment was successful in garnering public participation through a mostly language-only driven impetus.

Follow-up: Moving forward with this series, I will be focusing on the materials selection, both in responsible consumption and integration into the landscape, as well as the ability for participants to actively engage. This was a stage in developing my particular language of engagement and installation strategies. However, still a small puzzle piece to be refined and subject to further experimentation with future iterations.

2. Filmic experimentation with nonhuman aura (Dec 2014, Hyde Park, London)

Research Questions: Are auras composited views of the tree in motion real? Can anyone learn to see an aura? How can the aura be captured and presented via film?

Hypothesis: That even if an 'aura' was not visible captured on film, through interventions in the projection process and layering of imagery, an aura- like image would become visible.

Methods: I shot two test rolls of film in Hyde Park, focusing on one tree that was available in a solo view for both rolls of film. The first roll was a single long shot of the tree and environmental context. The second roll was broken into three long shots that each maintained a close- up view on three separate segments of the tree. However, this footage was quite mishandled in processing, resulting in uneven tonalities and loss of detail. I then worked through a digital manipulation to cut and stitch the film segments vertically to create alternately

Analysis: The work was not as interesting as I had hoped and requires other components.

Follow-up: I had originally intended to experiment with various installation set-ups and material interruptions, but as the work was failing to meet the objectives of the *anthrodecentric art* methodology I am constructing, the material usage was not justifiable. However, this failure brought about a radically different approach to the same conceptual drive.

3. *Cradle* (March 2015)

Research Questions: This project was driven by the desire to test my abilities to make work for the sake of making work, and to do it on a tight schedule.

Hypothesis: That the pointlessness of the intervention, executed on a small scale would replicate the current trajectory of climatic changes stemming from large-scale human activity. I was also hoping that this would generate questions of mutual extinction(s).

Methods: To use the provided equipment: digital camcorder, tripod, small microphone, and laptop with Final Cut; to create a 5-minute film in two days. I decided to conceptually build my film around notions of extinction and the Anthropocene using diagrammatic actions to manually create a loop of action, or a loss of agency and effect. These themes were determined

by England's role, 250 years ago, in the process of industrialisation, or as the 'cradle' of industrialisation. To then re-position the loop into the land that supported this movement in evolution in human society, as an attempt to recall the concrete effects of this change that have touched three-quarters of all land (not covered by ice sheets).

Analysis: The layered sound elements did not integrate into the visual elements. A longer visual sequence is most likely necessary to communicate the desired reflections. The work as a whole operated as a sketch for a more significant visual piece.

Follow-up: I see absolutely no value in making work for the sake of making work. Although there may be some visual merit, there is absolutely no conceptual merit. The duration schema I explained in my introduction holds true to my production process.

4. Lecture as Form experiment (March 2015)

Research Questions: How to approach an academic presentation in a way that simultaneously engages the audience through drawing them into the material and pushes them away through fragmentation; thus, forcing the issues of perception and individual comprehension.

Hypothesis: That the audience would not be able to follow the presentation as a single whole; but would fade in and out, giving preference to various attributes of the presentation. This would place each viewer in a similar position in regard to the presented relational variables yet highlight difference in the reconstruction of the key components and understandings.

Methods: The presentation consisted of two main components. First, the visual: a video of five different long-takes of five different landscapes (some found, and some created expressly for this video), and a poem constructed from the latest IPCC recommendations (constructed using mechanical writing methods). Second, the verbal presentation: this consisted of my introduction, and synaptic 'lecture' that brought together my key references and resources, a methodological review, a reading from Jane Bennet regarding the perception of time and scale in regard to the construction of the human body, and a brief conclusion.

Analysis: There was a wide range of response to the presentation or using the lecture as form. The following discussion actually evolved beyond the need for my response and became audience-based discussions. From my position, this was a successful trial using lecture as form, particularly in judging potential audience responsiveness and responses.

Follow-up: I intend to continue to draw from this experiment in future lectures. I find this approach to be quite useful in generating an audience full of questions and comments that centres around the intellectual material presented yet is motivated by the frustration and excitement of the format.

5. Etymology text (May 2015)

Research Questions: What is the role of language in shaping this practice?

Hypothesis: That language cannot be escaped, but through confrontation can be utilised productively.

Methods: The text is constructed by breaking down 'anthrodecentric' into the component parts: 'anthro', 'de', and 'centric'. Each component part is addressed by presenting the full range of potential and nuanced meanings. In order to confront language, I then specify the particular preferred definition for each word part, thus constructing a very specific and simple term meaning 'to remove the human from the centre'.

Analysis: This exercise is simplistic in approach, but quite powerful in directing readers and viewers to my authorial intention within the practice. That this approach, the anthrodecentric approach is not implicitly violent or a practice of misanthropy.

Follow-up: I would like to retain the simplicity underlying the text, but to further reduce the amount of text to take less time for a viewer to engage.

6. Gelatine material experimentation (comparing various water samples). (May 2015)

Research Questions: Can gelatine be used to create a material trace or residue in a predictable way?

Hypothesis: That the gelatine would melt and create different patterns and colours; and that this information could be used to plan future works employing these material characteristics (particularly in reference to

Methods: To create gelatine holds in a permeable casing, then to hang these from the wall suspended from two nails creating a predictable drip pattern against a sheet of paper. The water for each gelatine sample was collected from different water sources to test colouration in regard to the production process of the gelatine purifying the samples.

Analysis: These tests were carried out in Woburn, given the temperatures, the samples first froze and then dried out. Leaving no useable information.

Follow-up: None planned at this time.

7. *The function of authenticity* (June 2015)

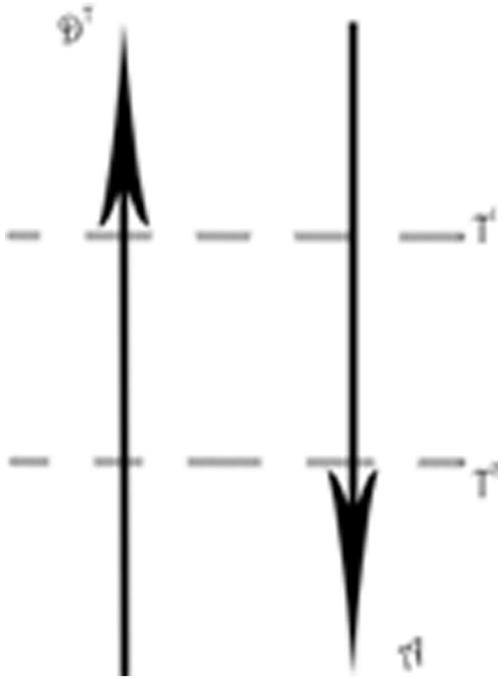
Research Questions: What does it mean for art work to work? How can this be evaluated?

Hypothesis: I propose that having a model to think through an art work and its relations to the nonhuman which it represents, that it will be possible to more effectively determine if that art is working to allow for nonhuman visibility.

Methods: The primary method here is diagrammatic thinking. Positioning the unmediated nonhuman presence on an equal but inverse scale of artist mediation as a method to identify a zone of authentic nonhuman representation.

Analysis: Although this model is useful in directly thought, it is not practically useful in evaluating individual artworks.

Follow-up: I will need to refine this diagram to be more specific.



8. *Mirrors, Replication*: time-based experiments in space (June 2015)

Research Questions: I have been working with an ongoing experimentation of mirrored visual exercises that call for mimicry between two or more photographers. The underlying principles of this investigation are the processes of visually and mentally transcribing oneself

into or out of a place, the transcription of an apparent real through mirrored and layered realities controlled at an individual level, and the representation of place through ongoing interpretation. The visualisation of multiple presents through the mirrors, will hopefully alludes to the multiplicity of experience both at a present and through a historic understanding.

Hypothesis: The focus of the second photographer in replicating the first will perceptually flatten the two or more scenes in the viewfinder creating a multitude of presences.

Methods: As an exercise in the field, on a base level two people venture into the landscape, a camera in one hand and a set of mirrors in the other. The first photographer will peer through the camera's eye piece and then divide the camera's field between a straight view into the landscape a layered view through the intersecting mirrors. Following the capture of the first image, the second photographer carefully views the image and sets upon the task to re-create the image.

Analysis: This seemingly simple task of replication becomes increasing difficult as this second photographer must struggle to mimic the first's height, stance, angle of view, holding of the array of mirrors, and then positioning the mirrors in the correct alignment relative to the lens. Even with the variables in regard to manual camera controls being fixed, the second photographer will inevitably fail in creating a suitable replica.

Follow-up: This process as a whole highlights several key factors within the notion of anthrodecentric art. First, again a sense of the broader understanding of culture is foregrounded and even put into direct and measurable index of success and failure. In expanding the discussion of culture further, this exercise calls into question the operational value of mimicry in relation to sociability and culture. [Need to bring in discussion of Haraway/Simians . . . And de Waal to expand - also index re: Gell and the direction of agency movement].

9. *Operations* in Saas Fee (Saas Fee, Switzerland, June 2015)

Research Questions: While at a summer research residency programme in Saas Fee

Switzerland, I conducted a series of four operations that examine specific relations between humans and the nonhuman contexts in which we found ourselves.

Hypothesis: That by drawing attention to these complex relations it would create a demonstrable impact on the conversations and works of my residency peers.

Methods: As a whole, this series of operations relied upon performance and performative actions.

Analysis: The operations which I did not discuss, nor position specifically as works of art were more successful in impacting the actions of others.

Follow-up: I intend to build on this balance of silent intent and stated intent.

10. *DEAD Matters*: text (June 2015)

Research Questions: How can I speak from a position in which I deserve to have no voice?

Hypothesis: That the audience would find the links between the various elements of the performance and text, difficult to link with the video.

Methods: My contribution was the text work, DEAD MATTERS, which functioned as a collaboration with Alexandra Anikina. She produced a video piece, which was installed in the touring taxi cab, my text was available as a pamphlet to the art tourist, and I then finished my text with a performance as the silent tour guide (working the tour route out with the driver prior to departure). I refused to speak for the duration of the exhibition and the tours, having been present in the town for only three weeks I held no position from which I could speak in regard to the town or for the town. However, I relied on the text and video to situate the work in the place of Saas Fee. My text, DEAD MATTERS, was a machinic re-interpretation of Theodore Adorno's Minima Moralia. Working from his text as a base, I selected small segments of the texts and then reorganised these portions into a different baseline composition. From this point, I then selected the key words in the text that situate the text in a very particular history, and then replaced these particular key words with updated term from currently developing strands in philosophy, particularly hyperstition and accelerationism.

Analysis: Although, I feel that this was a successful individual work and performance, it was primarily a human/human interaction and did not leave space for nonhuman presence and visibility. As such, it was not a particularly useful exercise in the development of this methodology.

Follow-up: None planned at this time.

11. Collaborative performance (June 2015)

Research Questions: How does a viewing audience react to a silent human guide miming the silence of the landscape?

Hypothesis: That this action will make the audience increasingly impatient and uncomfortable, demanding an answer to their questions that explain their relationship as viewer to the silent host. Methods: In this collaborative performance, I was a silent guide to a golf cart tour of Saas Fee. I was utterly unresponsive to questions and comments in an attempt to blend silently into the landscape for which I possess no right to speak in behalf.

Analysis: People were very upset with me. However, they would then spin into a negative feedback cycle within themselves and further removed themselves from engaging with the surrounding landscape. It was very counterproductive to my intentions.

Follow-up: I would not use this method again in this manner.

12. Guided hike (June 2015)

Research Questions: How does a viewing audience react to a silent human guide miming the silence of the landscape?

Hypothesis: That this action will make the audience increasingly impatient and uncomfortable, demanding an answer to their questions that explain their relationship as viewer to the silent host. Yet, as the hike requires continued physical engagement with the landscape the quite presence would become welcome.

Methods: Taking a group of people to the top of a local mountain, and then walking down

the mountain without a map. The walking path was constructed in situ and was a combination of following trails and non-trails, all following the glacial flow back down into the valley. This was a method of reading the land as land and rejecting mediating media.

Analysis: Although, there were stressful moments, mostly the group was calm and settled into enjoying the encounter with the land and the direct experience.

Follow-up: Given an appropriate context, I would re-deploy this method for encounter and experience of indexical relations.

13. *The sway* (June 2015)

Research Questions: How much momentum can a human viewer accept when suspended in a cage above a mountain?

Hypothesis: That this maybe a bit of a perverse experience and would not be received well.

Methods: Whilst in the cab of the — — — —, there is a certain amount of sway due to the mechanical motions and the impact of wind on the carriage. I tried to use my body to add to this momentum.

Analysis: My body does not have the capacity to modify the sway of such a large carriage and resulted in a null experiment.

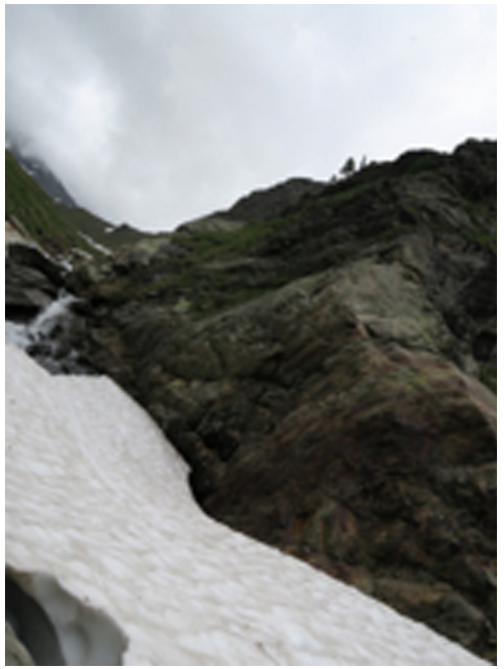
Follow-up: None.

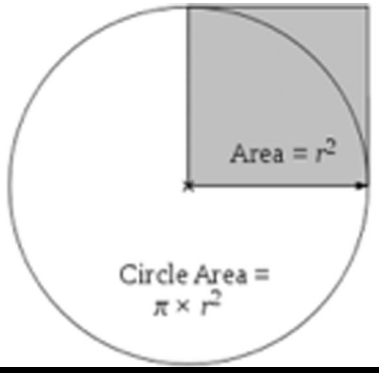
14. *The Square of My Shame Circle* - installation (Olympic Park, London, Aug 2015)

Research Questions: Without any prior knowledge of audience, how could I approach the site's history and development that would be legible and thought-provoking, or not eliciting an immediate rejection.

Hypothesis: I thought that people would be a bit confused by the installation's disconnection from the event spatially and that it might be ignored.

Methods: I began to grow butterhead lettuce in the studio. The pseudo-green house space was successful in growing sprouts, but incapable of growing full heads of lettuce. From this





point, I again returned to the site and ideas of environmental engineering and decided to create faux heads of lettuce from recyclable produce boxes procured at Sainsbury's. Here I followed with the original plan of the inedible lettuce, and resin dipped each of the forty-nine faux lettuce heads into two shades of resin. Then each of the toxic-nonedible lettuces were given a photography book with the invitation text attached with a warning label orange string. Finally, the square of my shame circle, was placed in a large field adding the festival grounds. In response to the impossibilities of regeneration, I placed all forty- nine figures across the field following a diagram of one of the three impossible problems of mathematics.

Analysis: Even with the abominable weather, the project was somewhat successful in regard to human interest and time investment as demonstrated through close inspection and retaining the objects and/or photography booklets. This project was integral in my series of experiments as pertains to the relationship of aesthetics and appeal.

Follow-up: This project left me with a desire to further test bounds of interaction (as linked to Operations) in non-art sites. The expanded freedom of inquiry and interaction poses several further questions, such as: To what degree can I intervene without transforming an area without taking into account a viewer's choice?

15. Booklet (Aug 2015)

Research Questions: What is the relationship of images of the past landscape on present viewers? Particularly when the past was an ecological disaster?

Hypothesis: The viewers would reflect positively on the present state of the manicured, yet toxic, landscape upon which they strolled.

Methods: I compiled a series of images from this section of the Stratford canal prior to the construction of the Olympic Park. I then created a small booklet of the images and tied this to the maquette using a hazard-orange cable.

Analysis: People responded as expected. The reflection on the still hazardous landscape were not noted.

Follow-up: I need to be more explicit with the underlying messages in my work.

16. Maquettes (Aug 2015)

Research Questions: Can an assemblage of toxic and recycled materials be a legible metaphor for the landscape on which they are presented?

Hypothesis: This will be difficult for a viewer to read unless they have prior knowledge of the area.

Methods: I cut maquette of lettuce heads from Sainsbury's produce boxes and then mounted them on small wooden stands. Then I dipped the tops of the maquette in an epoxy layered with a green stain.

Analysis: This was not at all a legible metaphor and proved to be a waste of materials.

Follow-up: None.

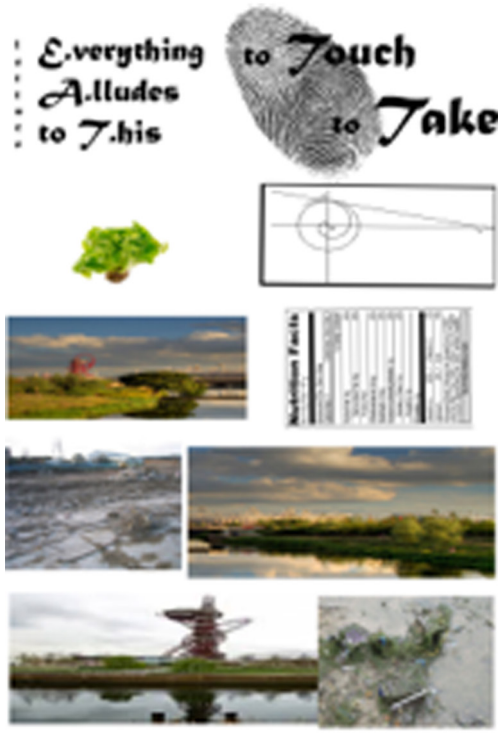
17. A 'Viral' video (Oct 2015)

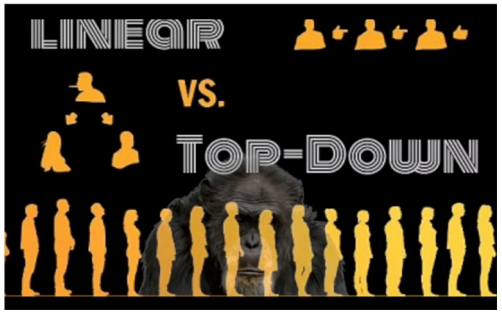
Research Questions: How can the loss of connections within the realm of knowledge be communicated visually? Also, how can this be communicated in a popular visual language?

Hypothesis: The goal was for the cadence of the images to draw the viewer in close enough for clear recognition of each subject; yet, to throw off the recognition through the cropping and jump cuts to seemingly unrelated subjects.

Methods: I began by collecting all images associated with selected key terms via Google image search (key terms: agency, nonhuman, and art). I then placed the resulting images into a slideshow format video with a bouncing rhythm and visually mirrored cropping, adding thirty seconds of rest as the introduction and conclusion with a solitary ape figure situated in the bottom centre of the frame, as a reassuring and familiar figure. I used the Google image search as the construction of these bodies of knowledge are not my own, but of popular construction.

Analysis: The video operates as a synthesis of bits of knowledge and highlights the loss of connection between these bits of knowledge. This leaves the viewer in a position to search





for connections and creates a sense of self-awareness in the viewer of their own inability to synthesise knowledge. This ungraspable entity then pushes the viewer into a place of alienation and an experience of the loss of the relational (the conundrum of knowledge today). This loss of relations demonstrates the social vacuum of all things being possible without regard for what is right or wrong.

Follow-up: I plan to follow up this trajectory of my practice by continuing to explore the dissolution of Piercean indexicality and the relationship of this dissolution and the ability to 'know' within current knowledge.

18. Volt tapestry (EARN conference, London 2015)

Research Questions: Can this activity present a question of materiality to re-affirm the indexical object? Can the action of making serve as a re-constitution of the index?

Hypothesis: I hoped that the act of making would uncover questions about the origins of the materials and the rationale for their selection. In addition, the activity basis would allow for the nature of relations to arise (between the human and nonhuman things present) and for these relations to become intuitively graspable.

Methods: I presented a curated table of a selection of different coloured felt and tulle fabrics along with sewing implements, such as: needles, thread, scissors, and pins. I then introduced the materials through the thinking of Alfred Gell and his indexical composition of the volt sorcery object. This configuration is circular, beginning with the prototype appearing to the artist, who then puts themselves into the index (fabric-based construction here), then the index in turn holds the power over the prototype. I brought this circular construction of the index into the conversation to discuss authorial hubris in regard to the use of non-renewable resources in the name of creation. The presented action was to replicate the exchange of agency from the creator of the volt item to the thing itself, within the framework of a convivial conversation.

Analysis: Some people were slightly hesitant at first to begin constructing an object of volt

sorcery and were quite nervous regarding the language and notions of imparting themselves into the material (the same concerns led to some participants taking their volt things with them upon completion). The inability to know how things have come to be was central in most group conversations. Especially once discussing the actual materials, the seemingly innocent tulle which is nonetheless a vile leftover of the petrol process.

Follow-up: To complete this project, I then assembled the remaining materials and the contributed volt things into a tapestry.

19. Diagrammatic thinking (EARN conference, London 2015)

Research Questions: How can one speak about the role of an abstract visual element and its place in practice-led research?

Hypothesis: That having artists dialogue about their relationship to and use of the diagram in their practices

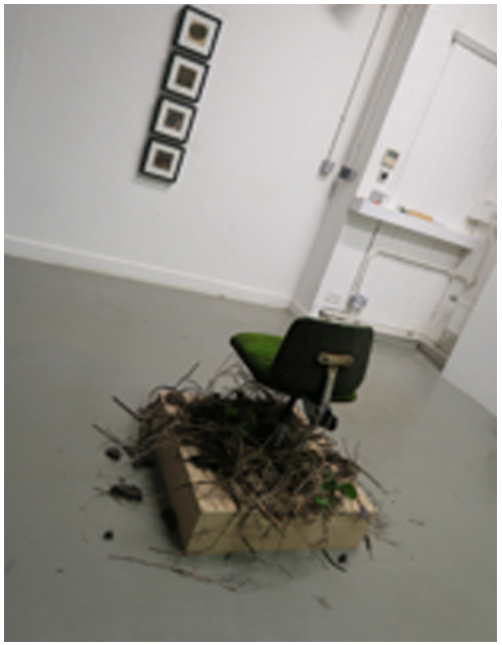
Methods: Working with a colleague, we arranged for a conversation between two established artists that heavily rely upon the diagram in their respective practices.

Analysis: The conversation was interesting but could have been a better utilised format. For instance, having a structured set of questions would have been useful. Such questions would have been exceptionally useful if following from a workshop diagramming activity and a group discussion. However, time did not permit this depth of engagement.

Follow-up: In similar situations, I would be more forthright in realistic timetabling to allow for engaged discussions, and also be more directing in the dialogue portion.

20. *Position (or scatological frame of reference)* (Dec 2015)

Research Questions: The primary line of questioning in creating position was the translation of a two-dimensional diagram into three-dimensional space without losing the abstract capability to trace relations and effect between the elements. How van nature and culture be discussed visually, yet non-oppositionally? How can this be explored through a



relationally re-combined territory?

Hypothesis: I expected that viewers would be attracted to the mystery of the contents of the frames, drawn to the sensuous nature of the moss, and distracted by the condition(s) of the plinth.

Methods: To begin, almost all materials used were found, including: the wood for the plinth, the garden debris, the moss-covered chair, the soil samples, and the faeces samples. The first soil sample was collected from a garden in Haringey; the second collected from my greenhouse top soil from The Square of My Shame Circle and contained the remnants of deceased butterhead lettuce plants. The first sample of faces was obtained from my dog (the pampered nonhuman), and the second from myself. The work was announced with a simplified diagram and a title. When presented, the work created a seeming hierarchy that was easily re-ordered upon conceptualising the actual relationships between the materials in the frames. Then the chair was removed from the viewer using a hand-constructed plinth which highlighted the quality and process of construction, mirroring the operations of a diagram. Each element was presented in a fashion to highlight the relations between the source materials, the materials themselves, their positions, and the positions of the elements to the viewer.

Analysis: All the materials can be thought of as a form of compost, albeit in different states and forms. The physical cycles present have parallel economic cycles implicitly attached. Overall, this ties into my research of anthrodecentric art as material recriminations of nature and culture; partially accomplished through the re-joining of natural and cultural objects into an equally curated, and highly resistant viewing position. The diagrammatic nature highlights the lines of receptivity and movement between the things present.

Follow-up: To expand the selection of things re-appropriated as growth bases.

21. Sculpture (Dec 2015)

Research Questions: Can a nonhuman assemblage serve as an extension or proxy of human perception?

Hypothesis: I think this will be difficult for people to register.

Methods: I positioned a found desk chair with moss overgrowth into a bespoke plinth with random ground coverings. This assemblage was placed to be a viewer or a viewing position of the wall frames.

Analysis: This was not well received, and the focus of viewers was primarily on a confusing aesthetic of the parts rather than the whole of the construction.

Follow-up: Will continue to experiment with proxy-based points of perception that displace the human.

22. Diagram (Dec 2015)

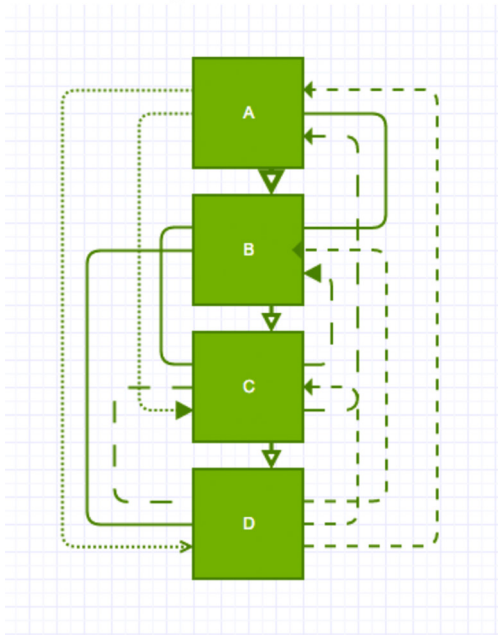
Research Questions: What is the relationship between used materials and the arts space of exhibition? What degree of translation is needed for legibility?

Hypothesis: That this diagram would help the viewer to trace a cycle of use/dis-use of materials through the assemblages of the installation.

Methods: Four frames were positioned in green to represent the four frames of material on the wall, then potential flows of energy, use and dis-use are mapped onto the grid of the diagram.

Analysis: People need to be handed a copy of a diagram and will most likely not pay attention to prior provided materials. I will not do this due to waste of materials.

Follow-up: Need to find ways for the diagram to be more present in the space of exhibition.



23. Frames (Dec 2015)

Research Questions: To what degree does the specificity of materials matter to a viewer? If it matters, does the viewer back through a relational thinking or stop at identification?

Hypothesis: The viewer will stop at identification.

Methods: Four bland Ikea frames were filled with four materials: human faeces, dog faeces, commercial potting soil, and found dirt.

Analysis: The hierarchy of materials was lost in a discussion of why smells were not available. No discussion in relation between these materials and the assemblage and diagram was of interest.

Follow-up: Contemplate how to heighten interest in relational thinking amongst material thinking.

24. Research Week installation (Feb 2016)

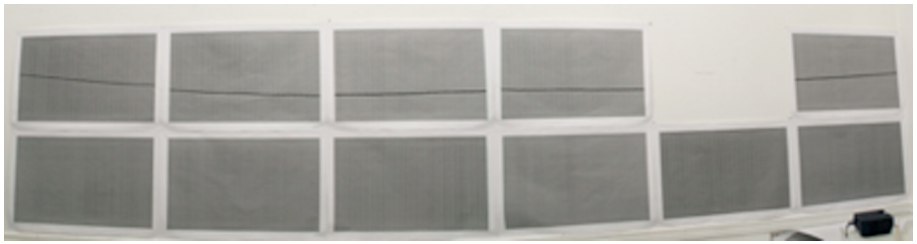
Research Questions: Will the mimesis of complex relations of existence in an installation aid in the visibility of nonhuman agency?

Hypothesis: I think this will generate a positive confusion and allow peripheral ideas to become apparent.

Methods: A complex layering of visual elements and presence of animate and inanimate nonhumans.

Analysis: This was a largely successful installation. The main reply was that it was an entry point into my thinking and allowed the viewer access to a large amount of materials, but this was fruitful as a full experience.

Follow-up: I will continue to utilise the strategy of layering to engage with a sense of conceptual movement that allows the viewer a shift in perception.



25. – *Site of Production* (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: Does a site of origin of a work have a place with the art work? Will this enhance nonhuman visibility?

Hypothesis: As a solo work, I do not think this will function. However, when place in proximity to the art work, it will also function as work.

Methods: This is a panoramic image Xerox printed onto several A0 sheets and then re-assembled on the wall opposite the work created at the site.

Analysis: Although viewers were at first confused by an image (taking up a whole wall) apparently of 'nothing', the relationship to the paintings opposite became visible and the agency exerted at the site also became understood.

Follow-up: I would like to re-thing how this site is represented to be a stronger presence on its own.

26. – *Ground Score 1 – 13* (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: Can bio-recycled pigments be recognised as such, and serve as a critique of a historical art movement?

Hypothesis: Yes, by using recognisable forms and switching the materials.

Methods: Working at a pigeon rescue, I place sheets of paper under the site of production and the pigeons did what they do. The paper captured the bio-recycled pigments, creating a series of thirteen drip paintings.

Analysis: In this installation, people were more concerned with the presentation of the

works than the works as individuals. Due to health and safety regulations, and the mode of presentation; they were wrapped in a plastic wrap.

Follow-up: Work through less distracting, yet safe modes of mounting and displaying.

27. – installed diagram (Feb 2016)

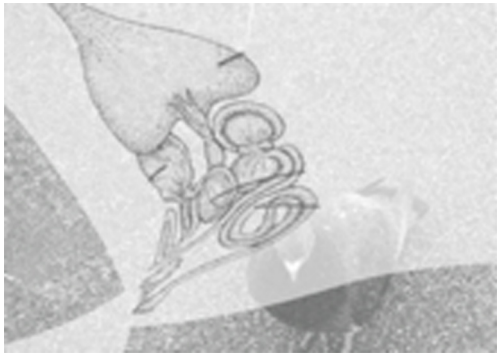
Research Questions: How can a diagram present the basis of an installation and not become the centre?

Hypothesis: Positioning the diagram in a layered manner will assist a relational reading.

Methods: Four Xerox printed A0 sheets presented a faded background image on which I hand drew the diagram with an oil stick.

Analysis: This mode of presentation allowed the diagram to pulse from the foreground to the back and the viewer to engage with the diagram as a relational code to the installation as a whole.

Follow-up: Continue to play with diagram presentation.



28. – portrait #1 (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: Is a figure necessary to aide in the legibility of the other works?

Hypothesis: Presence of the figure would be helpful, but not as a centre-piece.

Methods: Printed a street portrait of a pigeon onto four A0 panels, with low contrast. Then layered an image of the pigeon's digestive system in a line drawing, as portrait of the bio-recycling system that produced the surrounding pigments.

Analysis: The layered image was a bit confusing and did not work as intended, a bit too literal. The digestive tract was unnecessary.

Follow-up: Be more generous.

29. – Diagram (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: What is the relationship of humans/rubbish and the pigeon/bio-

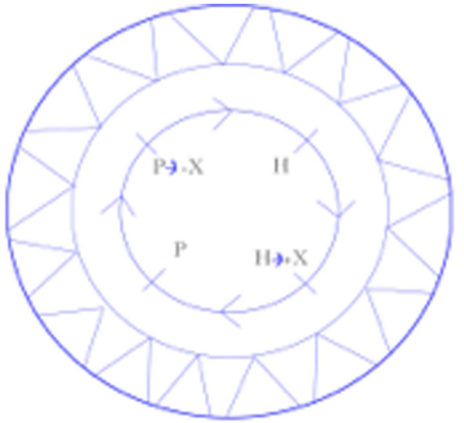
recycler? How does this translate into an art space?

Hypothesis: Providing a coded link to the elements of the installation would assist the viewer in de-coded the whole.

Methods: The diagram was three circles. The putter two linked through binary constructs coming together. The inner representing the cycle of materials through production and consumption of two species.

Analysis: Although not entirely legible, provided a key to reading the relational space of the installation.

Follow-up: Continue to utilise the diagram within an installation, mindful of the visual relationships as well.



30. – manifesto text [see text on page 235] (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: How can I succinctly communicate the research objectives of anthrodecentric art?

Hypothesis: Being direct will be more successful.

Methods: Wrote through the primary positions of my research.

Analysis: People read this text thoroughly and return to it several times. However, there are too many similarities in my verbiage to art historical manifestos and the specifics of my intent are lost.

Follow-up: Re-write to be simpler and more directly focused on the axioms of anthrodecentric art.

31. – *academy part 1* ♺ - video (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: Can the positioning of 'dumb' images in proximities of ideas strengthen the ideas? And to assist idea based art work in creating a space of visibility of nonhuman agency?

Hypothesis: Yes, through positioning of the flashing images near the manifesto text that

speaks directly against such consumption.

Methods: To re-use the 'viral' video by placing within an installation. This video was projected in a small low corner near Algernon and the manifesto text to strengthen the opposition between the contents.

Analysis: This positioning was productive for the viewers and allowed the contrast between rampant consumption and the notion of collective knowledge to be contrasted with ideas of re-constituting the index throughout the rest of the installation.

Follow-up: Continue to work with positioning works to create an inner dialogue within the wholes of installations.

32. – the birds (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: Will the direct application of language impact perception?

Hypothesis: That directly revealing my authorial intention will shift perception of one work and an installation.

Methods: I directly labelled two faux doves with a taxonomic assignment.

Analysis: This work was a failure as went largely unnoticed by all viewers.

Follow-up: Be more playful with the work.

33. Maddie - her presence (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: Will the agency of a directly present nonhuman be visible to the audience?

Hypothesis: That she will provide a positive experience for viewers, but her agency will only be measured through their particular experiences.

Methods: Maddie was present with her comforts through the installation and discussion, making the viewers aware of her presence prior to entering the space.

Analysis: Viewers responded strongly to her presence, repeatedly. It was stated that her calm presence directly impacted the experience of the viewers, calming them as well. Her

presence additionally provided insights to the work, through the chaos and allowing the underlying questions to be accessed.

Follow-up: I will continue to work with Maddie as long as she is comfortable with the conditions.

34. – the index (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: Can the indexical residue of Maddie's presence impact viewers who do not directly experience her presence? Hypothesis: Maybe, but I doubt they will be of significant note.

Methods: I left Maddie's bed and bowls after she left the installation.

Analysis: People were more in-tuned with her index than her presence and were caught up in speculating her potential previous behaviours in the space.

Follow-up: I will continue to experiment with the index versus the presence of her.

35. – institutional awareness (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: Is the institution more aware of nonhuman presence than individuals?

Hypothesis: Yes, in a preventative measure.

Methods: I went through full proper institutional approval of Maddie's presence in the space, including posting rules of engagement.

Analysis: The institution desires to be aware of nonhuman presence as a manner of containing their agency. It seems that, yes, the institution is more aware.

Follow-up: Currently unsure but intend to continue testing this boundary.

36. *Ode to Algernon* (Feb 2016)

Research Questions: How to explore the relational nature of death? How to create a scenario which calls into question the intuitive responses of viewers?

Hypothesis: The encapsulation of a mouse will be confusing, and perhaps bordering on

absurd to a viewer given the problems with 'pest' species in London (in particular mice and rats).

Methods: Upon finding a deceased mouse outside of the Slade elevator, I decided to pay Algernon respect in death. I encapsulated A in a windowed chamber, with a white felt base that will record all traces of his material disintegration.

Analysis: Algernon has been completely isolated and presents a complete loss of a relational self. This anecdotal reference to guilt through isolation leads to the unpacking of the life of a creature — a call for re-creations of narratives. A becomes relational through narrative process; then once again non-relational through the clinical visual language. This oscillation reifies the difficulties of the ontological transition to recognising the agentic capacity of nonhumans.

Follow-up: I plan to continue collecting any mice that I find and repeating the gesture.

37. src wall photo work (May 2016)

Research Questions: What agency do we see in our daily surroundings? What is invisible?

Hypothesis: That through daily viewing of our surroundings we miss slow changes and that by stopping time in a photograph, this mineral-time becomes more visible.

Methods: Create a large format still photograph of the outer wall of the studios.

Analysis: People were responsive to the aesthetics of the mineral wear and tear and stated a sense of recognition but were not able to place the sight.

Follow-up: None.

38. cat bed 1 (Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, London, May 2016)

Research Questions: What is the relationship of a recognised nonhuman resident and a spatial act of care?

Hypothesis: That dedicating a space to the resident cat of Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall would allow her presence to be further recognised and for the cat-lovers that regularly visit her a space to bring gifts.

Methods: I constructed a tall bed frame from wood and then wove a platform for her to rest across the top.

Analysis: She (the cat) hated the surface of the platform. Children like to sit on small chair like items, even when inaccessibly placed.

Follow-up: I will rebuild this cat bed with more attention to surface detail and less accessible and less inviting to small humans.

39. *The material labour of pigeons* (June 2016)

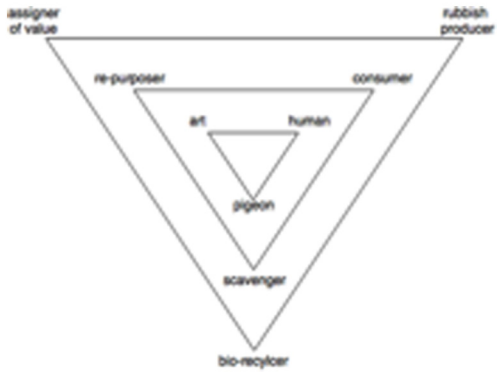
Research Questions: How can the relationship of pigeons and humans be understood through the mediating agent of art?

Hypothesis: Creating a relational diagram that allows the three agents to be linked and present through differing functionalities begins to unpack this complex and historical relationship.

Methods: I constructed a triangular diagram with three layers: human/pigeon/art, consumer/scavenger/re-purposer, and rubbish producer/bio-recycler/assigner of value.

Analysis: This diagram has proven invaluable in relation to a number of works and discussions of work and materials. People are interested in the terms and relations, as well as the application through differing works.

Follow-up: Continue to use and work through differing ways to present with and as visual work itself.

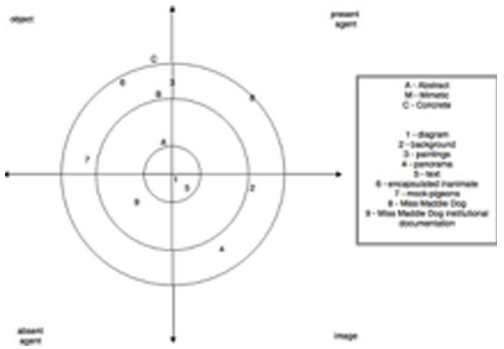


40. upgrade analysis diagram (June 2016)

Research Questions: How can the function of art works working to make nonhuman agency visible be presented for discussion?

Hypothesis: Mapping the theory into the visual will aid in discussion and analysis.

Methods: This diagram is broken into two types of placements: one is abstract, mimetic, and concrete; and the second is active/absent agent, image and object. This allowed individual



works to be plotted and then discussed within a specific and established framework.

Analysis: Very useful in limiting word count and allowing a visual representation of how I am explaining the underlying theory.

Follow-up: I would like to modify this diagram as my research progresses but think the visual analysis tool is indispensable.

41. forum y.2- upgrade- performative lecture (June 2016)

Research Questions: Can nonhuman agency be alluded to via performative methods in a presentation?

Hypothesis: Yes, but subtly is key.

Methods: To tie together a theoretical element, a popular culture element and a consumable object through the presentation and performance. The theoretical element was nonhuman agency, the popular culture element was coke (including advertisement), and the consumption of a glass bottle of coke.

Analysis: This active element added an appropriate amount of humour to the academic presentation and aided in the illustration of nonhuman agency.

Follow-up: I will maintain attention to performative aspects of presentations moving forward.

42. video 1 - *the building of homes* (June 2016)

Research Questions: Can a viewer recognise the home of a pigeon? Or just the property damage of sharing a home?

Hypothesis: I do not think most will be sympathetic to the pigeon.

Methods: This video is a single, long still take of a rooftop in North London. There is a missing shingle, which reveals itself as the home for a pair of pigeons.

Analysis: The video's duration can demand a lot of attention, and most viewers seem to not make it to the point of revelation. This leads me to believe it is a duration issue and not that

they had figured out the hidden home.

Follow-up: Add additional/related content to add in pointing out the discrepancy.

43. video 2 - *the building of homes part 2: speaking with pigeons* (June 2016)

Research Questions: How has the pigeon and pigeon-agency been rendered visible and invisible historically?

Hypothesis: That using an out- of-date approach to media can replicate the out-of-date attitude of the pigeon as exile.

Methods: This video is an abbreviated and potentially faulty (through exclusions) rendering of the pigeon through man's history. The overuse of simplistic aesthetic options available through PowerPoint oscillates between a space of presenting the pigeon and rejecting the potential viewing of the pigeon through this media and degree of (dis)engagement.

Analysis: The running ticker of the 'like to teach' lyrics acts in direct opposition to the historic 'truths' of our inter-species relationship. As well as questioning if we are to 'build the world a home', what or who exactly constitutes the world when we exile beings following their usefulness. The form of this video was difficult for people to engage with the content.

Follow-up: Continue to experiment with forms to present this type of content that are less distracting.

44. video 3 - background (June 2016)

Research Questions: What visual representations of the pigeon-as-being work to highlight their agency?

Hypothesis: Using as many different types of images possible will help to bring visibility to their rich history and agency.

Methods: I collected as many images that illustrate the pigeon through history, particularly their relationship to man; as well as images illustrating pigeon anatomy and biology to relate to their agential capacities to be useful historically and as bio-recyclers now.

Analysis: It did not seem that the sequence of images as a whole had an impact, but individual images did. This was not useful though as the single image would only work to reify prior conceptions.

Follow-up: To continue to work with historical/found images and a more effective mode of communication.

45. sound 1 - *The round* [see text on page 236] (June 2016)

Research Questions: Can the use of traditional culture be modified to illustrate the tradition of nonhuman abuse?

Hypothesis: Possibly but creating a critical space through such an approach without being pedantic will be difficult.

Methods: A recorded voice sings mutating lyrics of the commodity-driven utopia of consumerism through folk lyrics into three additional rounds of lyrics that critique consumerism and the abuse of resources. Round 1: lyrics of 'I'd like to teach the world to sing', Round 2: flip to a nonhuman perspective, Round 3: the agency of the commodity, and Round 4: exile of the Marxist capital collapse. The voice is layered in a traditional round format as the versions progress.

Analysis: I was unable to usefully analysis this work due to personal difficulties in hearing my own voice.

Follow-up: Due to the above stated difficulties, I will not pursue such an experiment again, at least not soon.

46. sound 2 - *to speak with another* (June 2016)

Research Questions: Can speaking lead to a comprehension of an other?

Hypothesis: Possibly, in a limited scope.

Methods: There are multiple voices speaking and responding in this audio track. The human voice speaks the words: I, me, human, pigeon, home, sing, love, harmony, hold,

company, peace, land, real, thing, want, world, today, presence, never, and the way. These words are selected from the advert. The pigeon 'responses' are composed of recordings done by the Cornel Lab of Ornithology.

Analysis: The sound work alone is a bit untouchable, there is not much room for a viewer to navigate the work.

Follow-up: Build this sound piece into a relationship with additional elements to highlight the relationships and potential reciprocity.

47. enchantment flow chart (Aug 2016)

Research Questions: What is enchantment? Why is re-enchantment necessary for nonhuman visibility?

Hypothesis: That contextualising the term with known historical content that the need for re-enchantment will be easier for a viewer to understand.

Methods: This is a three by three constructed diagram. Keeping to simple terms: pre-Cartesian, Cartesian, and post-Cartesian for the chronology and then horizontally arranged by using the key terms related to each historical understanding: school of thought, agency, use-relationship.

Analysis: This has been very helpful as a tool to situate my research objectives and work in a historical framework and simultaneously negate terms of soul and consumption.

Follow-up: This diagram will be useful in teaching and presentations moving forward.

48. *Maddie and the fox* (Aug 2016)

Research Questions: What is a shared space? Is there space which is not shared?

Hypothesis: No, I do not think there is an unshared space. The notion of shared space is ubiquitous, but selectively invisible as such.

Methods: Over the course of months, observe a neighbourhood fox that showed interest in my canine companion. As she started to spend time in the garden, I would leave Maddie's bed

out in the sun. When I noticed the fox sharing this bed, I decided to start filming. The final film is 26'26" and is in three frames, the bed in the garden, Maddie on the bed, and the fox on the bed.

Analysis: This has proven a work that provokes strong responses from viewers. Regarding shared spaces, I originally intended physical, but through observing viewers the predominately created shared space is that of reflection and empathy.

Follow-up: I would like to continue to follow opportunities to share this work and its variations. Mostly, I intend to continue reflecting on the function of the work and how to expand.

49. Maddie and the fox ♺ - text [see text on page 51] (Oct 2016)

Research Questions: What impact can a contextual text have on the reading of a film work?

Hypothesis: That a text with open readings can be most useful in expanding the context of the film as well as the nonhuman visibility.

Methods: To write a diaristic text that explains the origins of the film through prior encounters with her presence. Yet, to open the text into a poetic realm through a 'confused' use of a|the for a slippage in the reading of the individual and the essence of the subjects present in the text and in the film.

Analysis: The writing has proved to be quite powerful and generates strong emotive and intellectual responses from listeners (in response to later performance) and in readers provided a visual reference to the accompanying film.

Follow-up: To continue to use this writing strategy as accompaniment to works, to use language as a gateway from the Cartesian frames of reference that commonly shape our perceptions to the non-Cartesian modes suggested through the visual work.

50. Representation table (Nov 2016)

Research Questions: How to make clear the differences between Cartesian and non-Cartesian representation, and the effects thereof?

Hypothesis: That this will provide clarity but need further work or explanation to explicate the effects.

Methods: Parsing out the language of representation that works to objectify a subject for consumption versus a allowance of the un- consumable and positioning on an easily legible table.

Analysis: Useful if a viewer is familiar with at least one term on each side. This requires prior knowledge for engagement or further explanation.

Follow-up: To work on expanding and/or simplifying the content, and to also provide additional context.

51. The bed (Nov 2016)

Research Questions: What is the relationship of trace from a visual encounter and the physical index of the subject?

Hypothesis: That the bed would need to be presented in a way that the scent is accessible and not overwhelming.

Methods: I have not shown this work in any capacity, yet. It is in storage following from its claiming.

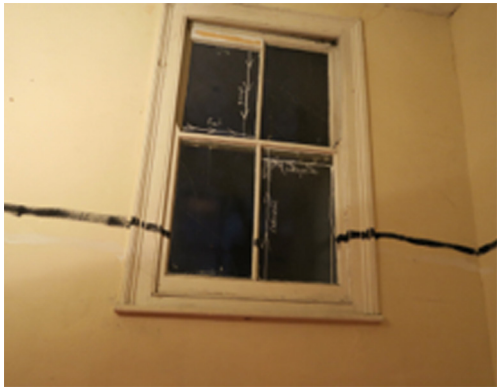
Analysis: That this object as an index would need to be shown in a manner that links it to the film work for context, yet as a stand-alone work.

Follow-up: To look for showing opportunities for the combined series of related works.

52. *… A voice or more in a room …* - installation (Roaming Room Gallery, London, Feb 2017)

Research Questions: What is the relationship of fact and nonhuman agency?

Hypothesis: That the fictive perspective of Cartesian facts has erased nonhuman agency and can be refuted.



Methods: Layering sound, diagram, painting and language to question perceptions of reality.

Analysis: This layering was effective in calling to question the political agencies within the presented situation.

Follow-up: Pursue how this line of questioning can be used more explicitly with perceptions of nonhuman agencies.

53. sound piece (Feb 2017)

Research Questions: How can sound be used to reference a network of agencies?

Hypothesis: That viewers would not experience the sound for a long duration, but the tone and language would have a meaningful impact.

Methods: I created a looping sound file of the 'Jonestown Death Tape (FBI No. Q042)' and The Delfonics 'Ready or Not Here I Come", which is the song playing at a reduced speed under the Jonestown tape.

Analysis: Viewers had visceral reactions to the tone and content of the tape.

Follow-up: Continue to use 'reality' as a reflection and tool of critique.

54. diagram (Feb 2017)

Research Questions: How to relate the content of the room with a direct question of perception?

Hypothesis: An opaque set of signs upon a window work to re-direct perception into the room.

Methods: Using a chalk marker, I drew two lines with opposing arrows representing group/individual and fact/perception.

Analysis: The diagram was not readily noticeable given the tone of the glass and white marker but was a soft and unobtrusive reflection on the content of the installation.

Follow-up: Continue to experiment with use of diagrams within an installation.

55. 'collectivity' -painting (Feb 2017)

Research Questions: Can a simple gesture engage a viewer int a relational space?

Hypothesis: This gesture may distract from the 'real' content of this work.

Methods: In a single gesture, I painted a solid black line around the room with the word 'collectivity' on the wall under the sound piece. I also then painted a single white line, with the word painted as a reflection.

Analysis: This gesture was not distracting and aided in drawing viewers into the small room.

Follow-up: I need to continue to think through simple yet powerful gestures that invite viewers to engage.

56. an engagement with 'fact' - wall text [see text page 240] (Feb 2017)

Research Questions: If facts are known, is a situation understood?

Hypothesis: That no amount of singular facts allows for the comprehension of complex and relational situations.

Methods: The text is a compilation of facts surrounding the Jonestown community and the events of the massacre.

Analysis: The text as a series of factual vignettes was successfully situated through the complexities of the sound work, diagram and painting.

Follow-up: I will continue to use the approach of delineating 'facts' and the complex contexts which allow for a deeper comprehension.

57. *Encounters with Her Presence* ♺ - performance (Bloomsbury Theatre, London, Feb 2017)

Research Questions: How will a human audience respond to sharing the space of audience with a nonhuman? What is the effect of the represented nonhuman subject being present as audience?

Hypothesis: That the presence of the dog as audience would be distracting to the audience

(for differing reasons).

Methods: I screened a five-minute version of Maddie and the fox film, paired with a reading of the encounters text, and invited Maddie to be in the audience.

Analysis: Maddie was very attentive and responsive to the reading, particularly at moments which referenced her. The audience members that were near her were of split attention, between the screen, reading, and Maddie. I received no negative feedback regarding her presence. Her presence seemed to have enriched the experience of encountering and viewing.

Follow-up: I would like to continue experimenting with nonhuman presence, but only when the nonhuman can have the expectation of comfort. This, to me, precludes that I need to have a relationship with the animal and that the animal is comfortable in public generally.

58. 'Miss Maddie Dog performs *Being a Dog'* (Feb 2017)

Research Questions: Does a pet ever stop performing their pet-ness?

Hypothesis: No, but neither does the human stop performing in relation to the pet (at least in the space where such a performance is expected).

Methods: Miss Maddie Dog was given a dog bed and bowls in the corner of the gallery and then the viewers were allowed to enter. They could only enter with the prior understanding of the performance and that the space was dedicated to the will of the dog.

Analysis: All parties performed, for the continuation of the 'performance' and throughout the rest of the day.

Follow-up: I would like to continue this performance to a larger audience, if and when the opportunity allows, and Maddie seems comfortable in the space in prior visits.

59. Forum 3 (Feb 2017)

Research Questions: How can I express the delicate nature of these nonhuman interactions in an academic forum?

Hypothesis: That I would need to blend a soft, personal observations language with that of

the underlying theoretical underpinnings.

Methods: I used personal anecdotes, shared popular culture references, theory and my work to circle around the objectives of the research I was presenting.

Analysis: This indirect engagement with the theory and objectives of the research created a more compassionate and engaged audience. There was also a serendipitous moment of a viewer railing against 'the fox' during the questioning and answering time, when a fox appeared in my video (still playing) that offered a direct contrast to the stereotypical critique being voiced.

Follow-up: I need to continue to take the time to speak and prepare presentations to be less direct and soften the approach to explaining my work, this mirrors my actual work and allows the audience to follow me.

60. Video (Primrose Hill Park, London, March 2017)

Research Questions: Can the structure of a short film be strategically used to generate an unfamiliar experience with the everyday?

Hypothesis: The layered and mis-coloured recording (due to cross-processing of film) would play with the notion of taking apart and putting the notion of 'tree' back together again.

Methods: The film was shot in four sections: the base, the limb, the leaves, and the whole. The super-8 film was then cross-processed and recombined to represent the parts and the whole in different configurations.

Analysis: The film has a nostalgic feel which depending on the viewer could be distracting or open a sense of re-enchantment and actual looking to a tree as a 'tree'.

Follow-up: I intend to continue with this line of experimentation but am unsure how to proceed currently.

61. action cards (Primrose Hill Park, London, March 2017)

Research Questions: How to create a game-like experience that maximises engagement without consuming resources?

Hypothesis: A take away activity would allow for extended interest and impact.

Methods: Created a card for 'Your First Tree Aura Reading'. The front is a series of meditative steps to follow and the reverse is intended for recording one's findings.

Analysis: The day of the install was horrible weather with no measurable or observable engagement.

Follow-up: Would like to retry this within a larger event.

62. *Landscapes of the Future* - panel discussion (Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, London, June 2017)

Research Questions: What are the best strategies for speaking of a theoretically- driven artwork to an audience with unknown statuses regarding background knowledge?

Hypothesis: That I will need to speak more emotionally than intellectually for the work to translate and remain interesting.

Methods: I introduced my sculpture through Derrida as a theoretical framework and noticed immediately that eyes were glazing over. I then switched modes to explain the theory through the work in a series of questions around the notion of reciprocal looking and entangled histories — expanding then with answers to my own question as addressed through the work.

Analysis: This switch in presentation approach was well-received and I received several follow-up questions, even amongst a panel of much more accomplished artists and curators. Following, several audience members engaged myself and the gallery director with questions and conversation around the project and its installation.

Follow-up: I need to remember this lesson moving forward in any and all presentations of my work.

63. *Academy Part One* ♺ (Showroom Gallery, London, June 2017)

Research Questions: What changes are there in audience reception based upon a change in format of presentation of this film?

Hypothesis: That the intensity of the film would be diffused and less impactful.

Methods: The original film was screened on a large format, approximately 20 x 30'.

Analysis: The film's impact was strengthened by the size of the images and became a more overwhelming and uncomfortable experience for the viewer, resulting in a deeper impact and thinking of the origins of the images and nature of collectively generated knowledge.

Follow-up: I will further consider the content of this film and potential expansions both in content and immersive size.

64. Anecdotes collected (on-going) [see *Relational Adaptation* texts in *The Feathered*]

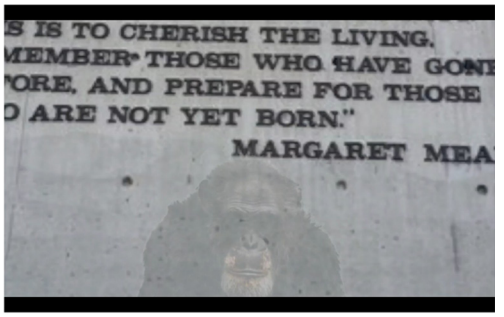
Research Questions: What acts akin to anthrodecentric art are found outside of the gallery and done by presumably non-artists?

Hypothesis: That these acts are on-going and largely un-noticed.

Methods: Observe and record.

Analysis: There are indeed several examples of such behaviour, it is simply a matter of noticing.

Follow-up: I will be using these collected anecdotes within larger works, to use as examples of anthrodecentric thinking in action.



30. *What is Anthrodecentric art?* text work.

What Is Anthrodecentric Art?

Okay, there is the most obvious problem, right here at the start. What is anthrodecentric art? What could I possibly mean with this particular term? What are the implications for art, as a commonly understood practice? Firstly, I am proposing the construction of this term, anthrodecentric art, as a rejection of art that is predicated upon acceptance and success through the art market. This rejection happens through multiple registers: the reception, the audience, the modes of production, and the modes of distribution. This rejection is a rejection of abstraction resulting from radical capitalism. This rejection calls for a return to materiality: in labour, in production, in consumption. Following, I am proposing the term, anthrodecentric art, as an alternate methodology to the construction and production of art in relation to material use. This particular methodology does not allow for the production of art for the sake of producing art. Production should be entered upon only with extreme intent and meaning implicit in congruence with the selected materials. This approach calls for selected materials to be recognised as limited resources, and to be used in accordance with careful evaluation of the material in relation to the work being produced. Anthrodecentric art rejects the position of modernist philosophy and the construction of binary relationships. This rejection takes many forms but is predicated on the rejection of an oppositional relationship between nature and culture; a primary example being the acknowledgement of culture as a process of learning and teaching to which art can be an insurmountable tool.[1] Lastly, anthrodecentric art rejects the notion that humans occupy a privileged position that allows for voracious and endless consumption; as such, any art produced should serve a larger function than the expression of a singular viewpoint.

Sociability is necessary (beyond a human audience).[2]

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1 "Culture simply means that knowledge and habits are acquired from others - often, but not always, the older generation - which explains why two groups of the same species may behave differently. Because culture implies learning from others, we need to rule out that each individual has acquired a particular trait by itself before we call it cultural." De Waal, Frans. The Ape and the Sushi Master: Cultural Reflections of a Primatologist. (First edition paperback. New York: Basic Books, 2001). 6

2 Anna Tsing speaks about the notion of entanglements and emerging nature/cultures as erasures of autonomy and acts of sociability. Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 'Feral Biologies'. (In Centre for the Anthropology of Sustainability. University College London, 2014).

Round 1:

I'd like to build the world a home and furnish it with love,
grow apple trees and honey bees and snow-white turtle doves.

I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony,
I'd like to hold it in my arms and keep it company.

I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand
and hear them echo through the hills for peace throughout the land.

It's the real thing.
What the world wants today, that's the way it will stay, with the real thing.

I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony,
a song of peace that echoes on and never goes away.

Put your hand in my hand. Let's begin today
with your hand in my hand help me find a way.

I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand
and hear them echo through the hills for peace throughout the land.

I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony,
a song of peace that echoes on and never goes away.

I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony.

Round 2:

I'd like to sell the world a home and furnish it with debt,
kill apple trees and honey bees and trap shoot all the doves.

45. *the rounds,* lyrical text work.

I'd like to teach the world to sing like perfect commodities,
I'd like to hold it in my grasp sell shares of its company.

I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand,
and hear them echo through the hills for coke throughout the land.

It's the real thing.
What the world wants today, that's the way it will stay with the real thing.

I'd like to teach the world to sing like perfect commodities,
I'd like to hold it in my grasp sell shares of its company.

Put your cash in my hand, let's begin today,
with your cash in my hand, help me find a way.

I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand,
and hear them echo through the hills for coke throughout the land.

I'd like to teach the world to sing like perfect commodities,
a song of greed that echoes on and never goes away.

I'd like to teach the world to sing like perfect commodities.

Round 3:

I'd like to share the world as home, with all its entities,
like apple trees and honey bees and snow-white turtle doves.

Together then, we all will sing in perfect harmony.
The reciprocity of life will be there, all around.

I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand,

and hear them echo through the hills for peace throughout the land.

It's the real thing.
What the world wants today, that's the way it will stay, with the real thing.

Together then we all will sing, in perfect harmony.
The reciprocity of life will be there, all around.

Put your hand in my hand, let's begin today.
With your hand in my hand, help me find a way.

I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand,
and hear them echo through the hills for peace throughout the land.

Together then, we all will sing in perfect harmony.
The reciprocity of life will be there, all around.

Together then we all will sing in perfect harmony.

Round 4

I'd like to take all the world's home and furnish it with void,
exile apple trees and honey bees and snow-white turtle doves.

I'd like to teach silencing in totality.
The universality, it will keep me company.

I'd like to see the world for once all vacantly staring
and hear the silence through the hills, exile throughout the land.

It's the real thing.
What the world wants today, that's the way it will stay with the real thing.

I'd like to teach silencing in totality.
The universality will keep me company.

Put your hand in my hand, let's begin today.
With your hand in my hand, help me find a way.

I'd like to see the world for once all standing hand in hand
and hear them echo through the hills for peace throughout the land.

I'd like to teach silencing in totality.
The universality will keep me company.

I'd like to teach silencing in totality.

. . . a voice or more in a room . . .

(compiled by DMGaietto - 45:54)

1. The Jonestown Death Tape (FBI No. Q042)
   by the Reverend Jim Jones, et al. (The Peoples Temple Cult) 18 November 1978
   44:29.73

2. The Delfonics. "Ready or Not Here I Come." *Sound of Sexy Soul*. Philly Groove Records LP 1151, 1968, vinyl LP.
   2:05
   ½ speed/full speed

56. *An Engagement with Fact,* text work.

the people's temple
agricultural project
california
1970's
guyana
25 years
1974
1 compound
orinoco river basin
communist utopia
1 sect
father
1 leader
1000 members
1 daughter
1 rescue attempt
assault rifles
u.s. congressman assassinated
men
women
children
cloaked identities
potassium cyanide
punch
tranquillisers
jungle airstrip
900+n dead
new religious movement

suicide ◀ □ ▶ murder
1 shadow recording
soviet escape
[code] white nights
revolutionary suicide
15 defectors
87 survivors
port kaituma airstrip
conspiracy theories

A.2 Critical Applications

These two pieces of writing are extensions of the critical methodology of *anthrodecentric art*. In *A.2.1 Cultural Narcissism*, I examine two works by two artists working with animals created by the artists Joseph Beuys and Julian Charrière. This text was written for delivery in a conference and is presented as such here. I directly reference visuals throughout this text, these are absent in this printed version. The images referenced from Joseph Beuys were small clips of documentation from his work, "I Like America and America Likes Me," and still images from Charrière's "Digesting Geometries" series. There were four slides, each slide featured a clip from Bueys' work on the left and a still image of Charrière on the right. I presented this paper in the conference *Rendering the Invisible Visible* (25 May 2018). I co-organised this conference based upon the visibility of non-human agencies with Dr. Sarah Fortais and we were funded through the Institute of Advanced Studies and the Dean's Strategic Fund.

The second entry in *A.2 Critical Applications* is an extended analysis of my work *The Feathered: an exploration of non-human labour*. Here I return to the diagram, *modes of non-Cartesian representation* and discuss the elements in detail of each constellation.

A.2.1 Cultural Narcissism and the Subjected Animal

Cultural Narcissism and the Subjected Animal in Two Acts of Artistic Practice, I would like to clarify that I am presenting the animal as a subset of the potential category 'other' which can consist of humans and/or nonhumans. Animal has been specifically named here as the two visually subjected others presented and represented by these artists in these two works are the coyote and the pigeon.

Is art a perpetuating force of cultural narcissism? First, my understanding of cultural narcissism - that of a widespread adoption or demonstration of the traits of clinically defined narcissistic personality disorder. I am suggesting that modes of representation are a least partially responsible for the dissemination of the homogenising force of narcissistic traits. These traits include, but are not limited to fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, and more; a belief that oneself is unique and deserving of high-status; an unwavering sense of entitlement. In a word — deluded — engaged in a delusion that the world is their stage and only their stage. Cultural narcissism is a world of relations for those dis-enchanted with relations.

Looking to our screen . . .

— On the left, we are looking at video documentation from *I like America and America likes me*, by Joseph Beuys in Rene Block Gallery in Manhattan, New York; the year is 1974.[189]

— On the right, we are and will be looking at a series of images by Julian Charrière, this series of images is entitled *Digesting Geometries* and has been originally created in Paris, 2001, and later recreated in locations such as Berlin and London, this series is categorised by Charrière's representing gallery as 'actions-interventions.'[190]

And now, I present an understanding of 'art' as a means of representation . . .

189. Beuys, Joseph. *I Like America and America Likes Me*. 1974. Multi-species performance. René Block Gallery.

190. Charrière, Julian. *Digesting Geometries*. 2011. Photography series, 20 x 30 cm.

The 're' of representation suggests that to represent, is to present again . . . Latour[191] claims that, in western culture there have existed two vastly different regimes of representation. In the first regime - a regime that he relates to early Christian and medieval understandings of representation - the re-presentation is presented anew as if for the first time. It involves presenting again and anew. In the second regime, which he equates with Cartesian understandings of representation, the representation stands in the lace of an absent object.[192]

This Cartesian or Modernist regime of representation as presented by Latour is that of a chasm between the human viewer and the absentee object of the representation. This subject viewing an object relationship is unilateral. This unilateral viewing reinforces the position of 'man's' domination over the other, or the 'not man'. This fictive imaginary, or delusion, is not restricted to a singular self, but can exceed the realm of the individual, expanding into the systemic cultural sphere.

— On the left, Beuys works with a cane, felt, a coyote, and a cacophony of materials to function as ruptures. This action took place over a three-day period at Rene Block's gallery in Manhattan. The coyote stands in for the entirety of the relationship between America and Native American peoples and disallows for a coyote-self and the Native American selves.

— On the right, sunflower seeds were placed on the ground, in various geometric patterns, which pigeons had ready access. Once the birds were in position and feeding Charrière captured the photographs. According to his gallerist, "With his performance, Charrière tames the birds back into structured, ordered patterns, lifting them out of their apparent chaos and reintroducing them into the geometry of our lives."

The positioning of materials (both human and nonhuman) as a means to an end is supported through this Cartesian mode of representation, as the human artist and subsequent viewer is in

191. Bolt, Barbara. *Art Beyond Representation: The Performative Power of the Image*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2004. 15.

192. Latour, Bruno. "Visualization and Social Reproduction." In *Picturing Power: Visual Depiction and Social Relations*, edited by G. Fyfe and J. Law, 15–38. London: Routledge, 1988. 23.

the position of peer, the materials are to be looked upon and are free for human consumption. The process of consumption does not allow for the recognition of nonhuman or other agencies. This reifies the Great Divide or the nature/culture divide by fixing the nonhuman world into a place of object and therefore resource. This reification of a binary is not exclusive to the nonhumans in the world, but as an example also reinforces the male/female binary. As John Berger explains, "The surveyor of the woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus, she turns herself into an object - and most particularly an object of vision: a sight."[193] This insight from Berger demonstrates that Cartesian representation serves to support binary oppositions, creating subjects and objects, and inherent position of power in viewing.

193. Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. Middlesex: Penguin Books Limited, 1972. 47.

— On the left, a man, a coyote, in doors, contained, unknown present audience, presented as video and still image artefacts, one act, the irrational, the shamanic.

— On the right, the pigeon, outdoors, dispersed, public, photographic significance, multiple acts, geometry, the rational

I am arguing this work is the reification of Modernist representation. Modernist frames of representation generate an allowance for each individual to perceive themselves as omnipotent figures and to occupy a singular position of viewing, reifying the obsession with self, and of otherness as that to be designated to the space of the object — or to become dis-enchanted through this frame of viewing and un-related to the subjected other that is represented. This Modernist representation is a representation of consumption and simultaneously consumption itself, the consumption of a subject into object into resource.

As the animal becomes a resource through artistic practice, self-obsession and self-import become the subject of the work.

— On the screen, seen across both screens - a white european man, a man acting upon

another, the animal, international engagements, food and water as seduction, symbolic significance — the symbolic acted upon and through the real other, art and artist

With this power of representing — is it possible to not impact the development of prevalent cultural narcissism?

"Representationalism orders the world and predetermines what can be thought." Barbara Bolt explains in her text 'Art Beyond Representation: The Performative Power of the Image'.[194] The pervasive view of humans as outside of nature has been reified through modernist or normative systems of representation that allow for all nonhumans to be positioned as ready for human consumption and mastery. As representation has provided support for this view and enabled its dissemination, it is time now to use alternate or emergent modes of representation that are no longer complicit in this view. Bolt continues with the explanation of the relation of representation to experience, "What is at issue is not so much representation in itself, but rather how, in the modern world, representation has come to be understood as the structure that enables representationalism to dominate our contemporary way of thinking. Representationalism is a system of thought that fixes the world as an object and resource for human subjects."[195] Art that operates outside of this prevalent mode allows for the revealing of relations beyond the scope of the singular human, opening up to more complex relations revealing the agencies and affects of the othered.

194. Bolt, Barbara. *Art Beyond Representation: The Performative Power of the Image*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2004. 9.

195. Bolt, 12.

— On the left, Beuys frames his action,

> The knowledge of this freedom [to cast of dependence on leaders, etc] coincides with the current historical-critical crisis point, a combination of spiritual poverty and the poor to destroy the world . . . *This is also the point in time when cooperation with other forms of life becomes ever more necessary*. Only humankind can grasp the overall structure. Only [a] human being, because he is free, can make the interconnections between the species.[196]

196. Antliff, Allan. *Joseph Beuys*. Essential Introductions to Modern Masters. London: Phaidon Focus, 2014. 120.

Is the human the only species capable of making interconnections? Or is the human, particularly the Modernist and the narcissistic human the only species commonly incapable of doing so, or even more appropriately — the only species not capable of recognising the existing interconnections. The potential power of this statement could be re-presentation to diverge from Cartesian representation; yet this is negated through the self-centric framework and the importance placed upon the symbolic rather than the present subjects, allowed to exist of subjects in and of themselves.

— On the right, the artist is not performing, contrary to the earlier claim of his gallerist. The artist has actually turned the pigeons into unwitting performers in a spectacle for human consumption. Further, the position of human power is reinforced through the implicit invitation for disrupting the birds feeding without the potential for reciprocal action. The notion of 'lifting them from their apparent chaos'[197] is a direct assertion that the supposed order of human order is the only correct order, and through the human-centric Cartesian representation the birds must submit to domination. This has been achieved (albeit for a limited duration) by imposing the order via a geometric rationale upon them, and for a limited time forcing them into the closed system of Cartesian representation. The pigeons are not approached as collaborators or nonhuman agents, but from the prevalent attitude of the pigeon as pest to be rounded up for destruction, even if only through an image. This approach does not allow for new relations to develop or for the movement of ideas and as such, this is an act of dis-enchantment.

In the current and predominate mode of Cartesian representation, I am arguing that we are complicit in a collective fictive experience, an experience of looking, seeing, and being that excludes all others. I proposed that by recognising the impact of representation on the perception of relations beyond a sense of entitlement to unlimited consumption of others, we can move towards escaping this invisible fictive and slip into a re-presentational space that is a shared experience, a being-with, an experience of 'what-is' beyond a solely human perspective.

197. Cargnel, Claudia, and Frédéric Bugada. "Digesting Geometries," n.d. http://www.bugadacargnel.com/en/artists/71159-julian-charriere/works/10131-actions-interventions.

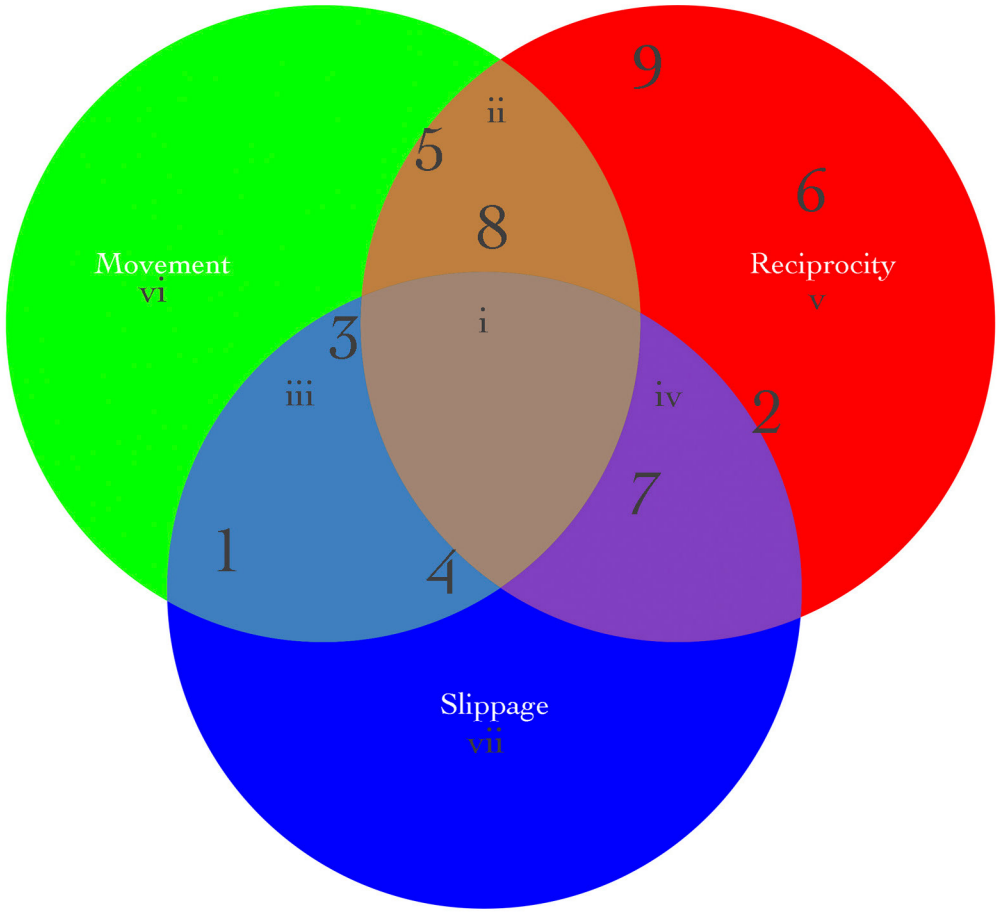
This is not a magically-orientated thinking, but a thinking grounded in looking with, seeing and understanding a shared reality. To understand enchantment is to be open to understanding relations between Things outside of and within the human dominated hierarchy of Cartesian thinking. This moves away from the cultural narcissism predicated on the delusions of dis-enchantment and entitlement. A move towards re-presentation that allows for the emergence of the subject, and not the subjection of the other, can un-fix the views of the world and things as resources for the privileged and narcissistic human subject.

In conclusion, yes, I understand and believe that art can act as a perpetuating force of cultural narcissism. Specifically, art that operates within the framework of Cartesian representation — art that subjects the other and art that relays a sense of entitlement created through the consumption of an image for the singular self-important viewer.

A.2.2 Expanded Analysis - The Feathered: an exploration of non-human labour

C^1 ~

The building of homes and *the exile* are positioned as an obvious diptych, with the third element, *the material labour of pigeons* (the base diagram of the installation) is separated physically (the final element of the triptych). This arrangement immediately introduces a physical movement between the works and the bodily engagement of the viewer (particularly if they are following the printed material which delineates the constellations). The physical movement is a suggestion to begin engaging with the works, while the intention of the pieces is for the viewer to engage with the conceptual movement of translating the terms of the diagram onto the content of the video and still image diptych. The original correspondence for C^1 in reference to the diagram, *the material labour of pigeons*, was 'rubbish producer,' and/ or, 'scavenger.' These links arise through the content of the video and still image, with the pigeon creating a shared home or space of physical commune within existing human housing structures. While these works can equally relate to the categories of 'human,' 're-purposer,' 'consumer,' or 'scavenger.' This lack of direct correlation allows for a productive confusion to be introduced immediately. The works slip between the terms of the installation, the notion of 'home' can translate from the human to the pigeon, due to the re-presented shared home. This use of slippage continues to possibly destabilise the notion of home, and what is known about the condition of home from a singularly assigned place to a shared place. Reciprocity is enacted through the questioning of 'who benefits?' from the home as singular place or a shared space. The works bring the presence of the pigeon to the intimate space of a home and an awareness to the human-home dwellers as being-with the pigeon. This awareness as an act of reciprocity moves through the constellations and the installation as a whole. In addition, the conceptual movement of this awareness carries through the installation through the active layering of elements, revealing figurative and literal pigeon-ness. C^1 falls into zone three with *the primary modes of non-cartesian*



The Feathered: modes of non-Cartesian representation.

representation, operating primarily through modes of slippage and reciprocity.

C^2 ~ *offspring of . . .*

This constellation of assembled materials contains immediate references to 'human,' 'pigeon,' and 'art.' These materials are assembled through a logic of time, directly referencing histories of each of these diagrammatic elements, re-presented in the present, and also references other constellations through economies, histories, and art history specifically. This constellation works through the movement mode of NCR. The assemblage itself is relational, and then re-activates its internal relationally through the engagement of a viewer. The notion of utility of the elements has been erased through the condition of the element and through the handling of the assembled work. This handling unfixed the elements from their original utilitarian roles and opens the potential for 're-purposing' via symbolic references, which in itself is not useful, but the symbolic references perform the chaos of this time-based-logic and allow this constellation to perform theory of relations between various other constellations. This is seemingly the most stable of the constellations, and it is this stability that allows for the recognition of the present and of histories to emerge through reciprocity. This is an action-oriented work through the required mental actions to engage with the layers of potential references. This constellation operates primarily in zone five, movement; but does engage with elements of zone seven, reciprocity.

C^3 ~ *a building of home*

The third constellation was the physical pigeon loft. The loft after being installed upon the roof was brought down into the basement gallery space and re-assembled. Despite the moving and re-assembling process the loft still contained indexical registers of the pigeon: the partially eaten food in the feeding perch and footprints across the sandy bottom. Standing in the corner, the loft acted as an anchor to the other constellations, as each constellation fanned out from its base-line position. The loft functioned through the slippage of a viewer's ability to know and

understand the loft — first to recognise and understand the loft as a sculptural object, but to then have this knowing destabilised through the recognition of its function as an actual loft. This intentional accident of knowing and then re-knowing pushed the understanding of inter-connectedness to the pigeon throughout the other constellations, radiating through the fan-like composition; pushing the relationship and connectedness of the part to the whole. This was furthered through the mode of reciprocity and the moving in and out of awareness of the actual intention and function underlying the loft. The loft as an act of positive institutional critique through conversations with viewers this became clear (rather than through explicit demarcation within the exhibition itself). After a viewer learned of the intended function of the loft, often they then engaged with a cycle of revision in the viewing. The suspended utilitarian function of the loft suggested this relationship, but it was not readily available information. The loft as a constellation functioned primarily within the mode of slippage, but also performed elements of the modes reciprocity and movement.

C^4 ~ *(in)definitely*

This constellation engages with the notion of knowing and understanding first and foremost. The parallelism of a|the, or the definite and indefinite creates a space of slippage which can translate into questioning the limits of either category. This can translate into thinking through interconnectedness of the individual and the other, even so far as to engage with the complexities of self and other. The taxidermy pigeon and the use of re-presentation engage with the logic of time through presence, history, and future by exposing the economies and symbolic references allowing a viewer space to potentially recognise the unknown through the instability of the a|the parallelism. The positioning of the bird also recalls histories of utility and hunting. Yet, the utility of the pigeon is removed and archived to a position of questions. This conceptual movement unfixes this one historical relationship to the pigeon and replaces this with the pigeon as the performance of ethical questioning. The gridded background allows for actual diagonal lines to be drawn connecting the terms through the body of the bird, the bird is the intersection

of the singular and the multiple. This constellation works with the modes of movement, slippage, and reciprocity in a counter-clockwise motion as the engagement unfolds and allows for new questioms to form and to be mapped into the installation as a whole. Although the constellation uses all three modes of NCR, I would not consider this to be a singular work of *anthrodecentric art*, as it requires direct relations to the other constellations for the full line of questioning to emerge.

C^5 ~ *to speak with another*

The audio track, *the teaching*, and its housing were originally assigned in relation to 'consumer,' but also map onto the ideas of 'assigner of value,' 'rubbish producer,' and 're-purposer.' The intended lack of comprehension allows for the viewer to passively engage with the mode of NCR, slippage. A generative confusion between known language and the translation of this language into an unknown, or non-sensical cadence of pigeon sounds gathered through scientific research allows for this passive slippage. The language, from the Coca-Cola ad, is not immediately recogniseable, yet the terms can allow for a slip between knowing and recognising the terms and then entering a space of de-recognition. There is also the division of presence of body and the presence of sound. The dis-embodied sound is both human and pigeon, alternating through a mock speech exercise. This variation on practice demonstrates cycles without revision but can allow the viewer to cycle through the exhibition with revision in the connections they make. This work also makes a demand on the viewer through their body, to properly hear the sound piece one must bend down to hear the nuances of the sound, bringing the viewer into the space of the work and further creating a relational encounter. The viewer has the option of coming into and with the work. This constellation primarily works through the mode of slippage but engages with aspects of movement when completed by a viewer.

C^6 ~ *manimal merch*

Manimal merch was intended to fulfil the place of 'consumer,' and 'assigner of value.' This is most likely the first constellation a viewer would encounter upon entering the installation space. Upon entry, they were offered contact information, a guidebook for navigating the exhibition, and given a preview of bird-based merchandise that will never be. This seemingly mandatory element of the show both fulfilled its utilitarian function and denied this function. Information was present and disseminated, yet the market element was a facade. The primary mode of NCR was within chaos, through the introduction of the layers and potentialities of the installation — the information of the navigational guide was primarily geared towards the sourcing and economies of the materials, as well as a bird's eye view of the installation and the potential lines connecting each constellation. As a guide it provided the necessary information, but the viewer needed to engage with the installation to reveal the relationship of the information to the works and to the relational conceit of the feathered.

C^7 ~ a beneficiary

Originally intended to fill the 'human' position, this work actually fulfils the positions of 'art,' 'scavenger,' and 'consumer' as well. A diagram written in reverse on the ceiling is still mostly legible, but for full engagement the viewer must step to the edges of the mirrors and look — placing themselves in the order created by the diagram. This is an immediate flattening of the self into the realm of other, even without direct recognition by the viewer. This complexity mixes with the obscured content of the diagram which parses relations of the self and other with a number of additional false dichotomies. This calls for a response from the viewer, and this call must be answered — if the viewer steps back, whether re-engaging this experience into the installation or walking away, or staying with the reflections and attempting to decode the cipher-like diagram. This creates a movement, a line of flight, regardless of the viewer's response. This performs the theory of relationality between the viewer's concept of self and of the other in an abstracted theatre. This theatre continues in the references to land art and the bodily performativity of engagement. This theatrical-like insertion can aid the viewer in

constructing a visualisation of the installation as a whole, and how this microcosm bleeds into the macrocosm. This constellation predominately operates through the mode of movement, with some assistance from reciprocity.

C[8] ~ *ground score*

Ground score was first imagined as the direct representation of 'bio-recycler,' and is still most directly the referencing this position. However, the positions of 'pigeon,' 'art,' 'consumer,' 're-purposer,' 'rubbish producer,' and 'assigner of value' are all directly connected. The drip painting is one from a series of thirteen and was the first element of this installation to be created, and the basis for the argumentation of the *bio-recycling* value of pigeons to emerge. This was a collaborative effort with locally-residing pigeons sharing their bio-recycled pigments for the drips of the painting. The second element of *ground score* is the wet-specimen purchased from Etsy. In combination these works present a beginning and an ending of a production cycle that has been introduced into a new and different production cycle via the auspices of art. This immediately works as a slippage between knowing and understanding. One may know what a drip painting is through the language of art history, and technically this work fits into the model of thought. Yet, the mode of production and the materials quite clearly evade this knowing and understanding. This slippage is working towards a questioning of limits, the limits of the assignment of value through the mode of production and materials — the limits of the qualifiers of an artwork. Continuing in the mode of slippage, this mode has been accessed by generative confusion, but it also leads to an instability in comprehending the author's intent, which can translate into the rest of the installation. This constellation engages with notions of the present and the past through the presentation of form, yet speculation of the future emerges through the usage of materials and may beg the question of additional *bio-recycled* materials to come. This re-purposing and assigning of value to art objects is not located within the material alone, but within the cycles of revision through the viewers experiences and the potentials for inter-relations with the pigeon one may reveal through this act of looking.

C^9 ~ *the site of production #2*

The final constellation again requires a bodily adjustment by the viewer to be accessed. Suspended from the ceiling the coil of barbed wire creates a physical diagonal across the space of the installation. This constellation was first attached to the position of 'scavenger,' but like the other constellations equally services other points on the diagram of origin. 'Human,' 'consumer,' 're-purposer,' 'scavenger,' 'rubbish producer,' and 'art' are all equally legitimate assignments. The locale of this scavenged material is notated in the navigational guide to the installation, including the original purpose of the material. This discarded barrier has lost its utility prior to my scavenging and was reassigned to the position of site of production in relation to the *ground score* works. This revision was completed prior to the installation of the material. This handling of the material unfixed it from the original utility and allows for a revealing of relations between the thinking of the viewer and the conceptual basis of the diagram as a whole. This constellation is firmly grounded in the mode of movement.

A.3 Institutional Documentation

In order to bring animal encounters into the institutional, I was required to submit documentation of my intentions and abilities to properly care for the animal in an ethical manner. Bringing Miss Maddie Dog to the Slade School of Fine Art required the submission of a "Risk Assessment" which focussed upon the safety of the students and ensuring all risks of Maddie's presence were minimised. The documents included in *A.3.1 Miss Maddie Dog* are documents are the institutional requirements of an ethical interaction and standard of care. The document "Guidelines for Successful Interactions" while playful in tone, does work to explain basic parameters of respect towards the non-human presence in the gallery setting. The "Dog Welfare Directive" is a direct assessment of care guidelines and an assurance to the institution that these will be met, as outlined by the *Animal Welfare Act*. *A.3.2* is my proposal as submitted to UCL Estates to obtain permissions for installing the pigeon loft. This document draws from animal welfare guidelines yet positions the loft as a non-lethal population control device and allows for the possibility of 'sustainable meat production.' While neither of these stated possibilities were pursued, and perhaps never intended, the language used was necessary for the installation of this positive institutional critique.

A3.1 Miss Maddie Dog

Guidelines for successful interactions with Miss Maddie Dog (as posted in gallery entry):

1. Please be aware of Maddie's presence at all times.
   A. This includes, but is not limited to, stepping on her paws or her tail.
2. Do not modify her bedding area.
3. Do not change her water, or the condition thereof.
4. Please feel free to pet her; be aware that she is fond of licking humans.
5. Do not obstruct her free movement around the space of studio 1 at Woburn Research Centre.
6. Leave the doors to studio 1 closed.
7. Do not feed the dog.

Dog Welfare Directive

The responsible inclusion of an 11-year-old border collie mix in a gallery-based critique.

Student: Dawn M. Gaietto Course: MPhil/PhD 2nd Year

Location: Slade School of Fine Art, Woburn Research Centre, Studio 1. Duration: 1 Day

Date: 26 Feb 2016

This document will outline the means by which the dog's health and well-being are maintained to the highest standard.

The care of the dog will be based around the five freedoms of animal welfare proposed by the *Farm Animal Welfare Council* (FAWC).

Free from hunger and thirst - animals must have access to fresh water and a diet which will maintain health and vigour

Free from discomfort - an appropriate environment should be provided, including shelter and a comfortable resting area

Free from pain, injury or disease - you must ensure the prevention of illnesses, or rapid diagnosis and treatment

Free to express normal behaviour - sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind should all be provided

Free from fear and distress - you must provide conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering

To ensure these five freedoms are maintained consideration has been made towards the transportation to and from the studio space and inclusion within the artwork/critique space.

It is important to note that at all times the health of the animals will be monitored. This will be achieved via the checklist below.

Important indications of a healthy dog include:

- Enthusiastic feeder
- Clean, bright skin without scratches, lumps, irritation, or dryness
- Clear eyes
- Cool nose
- Positive disposition

Early signs of ill health may include changes in:

- Lethargy
- Lack of appetite
- Hazy eyes
- Disinterest in the surroundings

Shelter Prior to Arrival at the Slade

The dog is my pet and will remain housed in her properly maintained and healthy environment prior to transportation to the Slade.

Transportation to the Slade

The dog will be traveling to the Slade via the underground. She is well practised in train-based travel, including proper behaviour in a crowded environment and being carried up the escalator.

The duration of the journey will be kept to a minimum. Total journey time is predicted to be less than 45 minutes in the morning before 7:30am to avoid rush hour traffic.

Due to the short duration of the journey food is not required. The dog will be provided with water before and immediately following the journey.

Storage After Arrival at the Slade

The dog will be kept inside studio 1 the Slade Woburn Research Centre.

There is ample room for free movement. Bedding and water will be freely available.

She will be walked outside in the park once an hour for regular relief.

The studio doors will be kept shut, removing the possibility of the dog venturing into unmediated spaces (such as those with hazardous chemicals, i.e.)

The dog will not require food for the short duration of her stay.

Dog Involvement Within the Installation/Critique

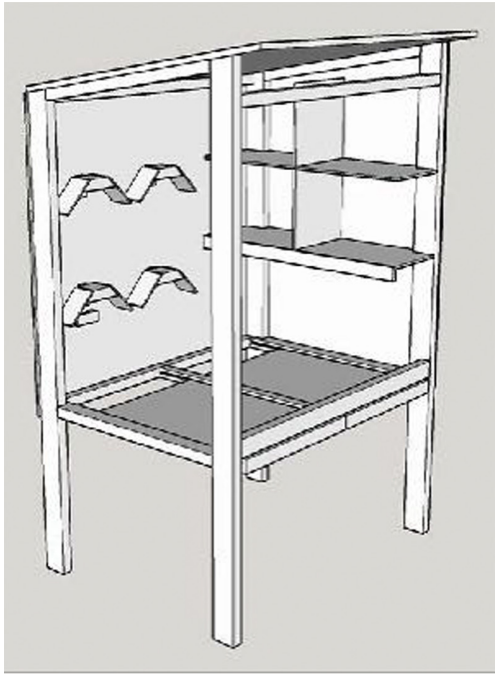
The dog will have a passive involvement within the work. The following initiatives will be taken to ensure the situation causes no distress to the dog.

The dog will be allowed to move about freely within the designated space.

All humans entering the space will be informed of the dog's presence, and that her comfort and desires will be the priority and dictate all activity within the space for the 45 to 90-minute period of interaction.

This document is based on information extracted from the following government guidelines: https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/farm-animal-welfare-committee-fawc#assessment- of-farm-animal-welfare---five-freedoms-and-a-life-worth-living

A.3.2 The Pigeon



Proposal ~ rooftop pigeon coop

Prepared for: UCL Estates

Prepared by: Dawn Gaietto, third year Post-graduate Research Student, Slade School of Fine Art 20 March 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objective

In preparation for the Slade Graduate Degree Show, I am proposing to install one custom-built pigeon coop structure onto the roof of a UCL building (preferably the Slade School of Fine Art if possible). This pigeon coop structure will be fully stable (even in high winds), easily moveable for any work needing to be done in the area, and will be a temporary installation. This structure will provide a small safe haven for a limited number of pigeons residing in or around UCL as part of my third year PhD thesis work and my graduate degree show exhibition.

This proposal is an arts-based experiment in the husbandry of urban feral pigeons in a non-invasive manner (within the landscape and architecture of UCL) towards a thinking and possible practice of sustainable meat consumption.

Goals

Structure:

- A cross-section view is available above, the finished version will still have an open front for access to the interior of the coop.
- The total structure will measure 1.8m x .9m x .7m.
- The base will be elevated .2m with casters (for mobility).
- I believe this structure can potentially shelter up to thirty-six pigeons.

- This structural design can be modified to fit space allotted for a rooftop installation; for instance, if need be the total size of structure can be reduced up to fifteen percent from the above stated measurements.
- In addition to the cross-section view above, there will be four sandbags, one attached in each corner for additional support and security.

Location(s):

- I propose to place the coop on the roof, preferable in a section without direct wind.
- This location will be inaccessible to passers-by and does not allow for access to nor potential contact between UCL students, staff, and visitors to the housed pigeons.
- This pigeon coop will have limited impact on the UCL environment in the long or short-term, as the structure will be completely removed by 9 June and I will fully clean up the area following dis-assembly.

Safety:

- The coop will be of limited size, have a low centre of gravity and be further secured through the attachment of sand bag weights in each of the four corners.
- Placing the structure on the roof will be safer for human welfare (no access) and for animal welfare, as humans and animals will not be interacting around or in the structure.
- Additional weights will be attached in each corner, further stabilising the structure and mitigating any response from wind interference.
- The coop will be constructed with sealed and weather-proofed wood.

Mobility:

- The coop will be fully mobile within the assigned rooftop installation space. It will be mounted on four casters with brakes.

Transportation:

- I will prepare the component parts: the floor, ceiling, and wall boards; the supporting beams; and the internal perches; so, as they can be quickly assembled once in the rooftop position for installation. All will be of a size and weight that can be easily carried by myself.
- Following assembly, the weights will be secured in the four corners and a digital video camera will be installed in the interior of the coop.

Project Outline of Animal Welfare

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 makes owners and keepers responsible for ensuring that the welfare needs of their animals are met. These needs and their fulfilment within the realm of this project are outlined below.

- a suitable environment (place to live)

Guidelines for pigeons' suitable environment as taken from Pigeons: Good Practice for Housing and Care.[1] The recommendations include social housing, plenty of pen space, solid floor, perches, and flight room. Within the pigeon coop structure that I have outlined above each of these recommendations is met.

1. First, **social housing**, the coop allows for up to thirty-six pigeons to exist in a social environment while retaining individual space.
2. **Pen space**, the pen is open, and the birds can choose to leave at any time.
3. The planned floor is a **solid floor**, which allows for pigeon foraging at will. This floor will also be cleaned weekly to decrease dust accumulation.
4. The back and side walls are lined with two different styles of **perches** allowing the birds to rest comfortably within the space of the open coop.
5. Ample **flight room** is available for the pigeons as one wall of the coop will always be left open and allows for the pigeons to fly the coop at will.

- a suitable diet

Pigeons are omnivorous and should be offered a wide range of grains and green food, supplemented with pelleted diets containing animal protein such as chick starter crumbs. Small seeds such as millet, rape or linseed can be fed on the pen floor to encourage foraging or by hand to help habituate the birds to humans. Turf or trays with other litter can also be used to encourage foraging, taking care to site foraging areas away from areas where birds defaecate. Other favourite treats include pinhead oats, hemp with peanuts, popcorn and mealworms. Note that birds fed ad lib all the time will become obese, especially if they are only allowed limited opportunities to exercise.[2]

I will be weekly filling a feeding tray with a selection of small seeds as outlined above. As the pigeons will have the ability to leave at will, they will have ample opportunity to supplement the provided foods with the foraging that would normally compose their diet.

- to exhibit normal behaviour patterns

As the coop has been designed from the ethical standards of the RSPCA and is open for pigeon at-

will access and departure, this coop will in no way limit the behaviours or restrict the normal behaviour patterns of the pigeons.

- to be housed with, or apart from, other animals (if applicable)

  As stated above, the pigeons will have the option to partake of social housing at will. The coop is designed to allow comfortable shared access for up to thirty-six birds at one time. Leaving the front of the coop open yet sheltered from direct wind allows the pigeons full flight freedom and control over their own social environment.

- to be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease

  The introduction of the coop is a form of protection for the pigeons that choose to utilise the structure. It will provide shelter from environmental challenges and potential sources of injury.

Institutional References

Please see below for examples of institutions allowing for the support of nonhuman life in the pursuit of academic and artistic pursuit:

- Manchester Art Gallery
  Bee Raphaelite Honey - two co-workers established a three-hive colony of bees on the roof of the Manchester Art Gallery - then sell the honey in the gallery shop as well as producing lip balm from the wax.[3]
- the Tate Modern
  The Tate Modern has a resident bee keeper that maintains hives on the roof of this urban building. The produce from the bees is sold in the Tate's own shops.[4]
- the Wellcome Collection
  In support of the Making Nature exhibition at the Wellcome Collection, a special series of events has been conducted *Sheep, Pig, Goat*. This event series is a collection of traditionally farming animals being kept in an arts institution in Peckham where the animals engage with performers for an audience.[5]

[1] RSPCA, Research Animals Department. "Pigeons: Good Practice for Housing and Care." Supplementary resources for members of local ethical review processes. 3rd Edition, April 2011. Pg. 2.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Manchester Art Gallery. *Bee Raphaelite Honey*. http://manchesterartgallery.org/blog/behind-the-scenes-the-gallery-bees-and-garden/

[4] Tate Modern. The London Honey Company. http://shop.tate.org.uk/invt/11099

[5] The Wellcome Collection. *Sheep, Pig, Goat.* https://wellcomecollection.org/sheeppiggoat