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Performing Metaphors

ANDREAS PHILIPPOPOULOS-MIHALOPOULOS[1]

1. Sliding

In an interview, Donna Haraway says: "I find words and language more closely related to flesh than to ideas…Since I experience language as an intensely physical process, I cannot *not* think through metaphor…I experience myself inside these constantly swerving, intensely physical processes of semiosis."[2] For Haraway, the linguistic body is as physical as any material body. Metaphors, these 'intensely physical processes of semiosis', are constant reminders of the relation between the linguistic and the material. They can make us aware of it and even enable us to become politically involved with what matters.

Placing language and materiality together should be considered a prerequisite for any *matterphorical* attempt. Think of what Gilles Deleuze, quoting the Stoic Chrysippus, writes: "If you say something, it passes through your lips: so, if you say 'chariot', a chariot passes through your lips."[3] This matterphorical passage is the focus of my text here. I employ metaphors as a sliding movement between language and materiality, from lips to chariot and back as it were. The term 'sliding' comes again from Deleuze: "by sliding, one passes to the other side, since the other side is nothing but the opposite direction [*sens* in French]".[4] Both language and materiality produce meaning, sense, direction, although they do it in different, sometimes even opposing but always complementary ways. Let's think of this not as a binary but as a *fold*.[5] And let's imagine metaphors as the sliding movement that passes from one to the other, a sort of gliding that spans the sides of the fold, transferring meaning (in an etymologically faithful understanding of the Greek term μεταφορά, *metaphorà,* meaning "transfer") and in the process constructing new meaning.

Sliding is living inside the fold, swerving one's way through the physical processes of semiosis: "Understanding the world is about living inside stories. There's no place to be in the world outside of stories. And these stories are literalized in these objects. Or better, objects are frozen stories. Our own bodies are a metaphor in the most literal sense. This is the oxymoronic quality of physicality that is the result of the permanent coexistence of stories embedded in physical semiotic fleshy bloody existence. None of this is an abstraction."[6] The context of this sliding is, following Haraway, stories through which my body became a different body. In this text, I share three autoethnographic sketches of my performance practice, part of my recent explorations in material ways of thinking about law, justice, complicity, and responsibility.[7] Karen

Barad's urge towards materiality is something I have always taken to heart: "A performative understanding of discursive practices challenges the representationalist belief in the power of words to represent pre-existing things. Performativity, properly construed, is not an invitation to turn everything (including material bodies) into words; on the contrary, performativity is precisely a contestation of the excessive power granted to language to determine what is real."[8] I am, of course, conscious of the fact that a performance is not necessarily an act of performativity.[9] But I hope it will become obvious that I consistently try to perform language in a material way. So, at some point during all this, I have realised that I am not actually interested in abandoning linguistic practices (even if that were possible), but rather living through their fold with material ones. And metaphors are the perfect instrument with which to do this.

Three performances, three folded theoretical contexts, three slidings, three matterphors. Strictly speaking, I do not offer an interpretation of the performances. My aim is to place them in a theoretical context that facilitates an understanding of matterphors, but also push them into unpredictable directions that I, as both performer and observer, cannot possibly follow - but the reader indeed might. The performance stories carry the greatest weight here, and the theory is just the context. But the whole text is I hope, an exercise in matterphorical thinking and doing. So, I start by thinking of *concepts as objects*, and show how all metaphors operate within a specific metaphorical edifice that constrains meaning. This is illustrated with a performance I gave on ghosts and colonisation at the Copenhagen Royal Cast Collection. In section three, I move deeper in the fold, and think about *objects as concepts*, using paper manifolds at a performance at the Swedish Royal Academy of Music. Finally, in section four, I slide between matter and materiality, their differences and similarities, as a prelude to a performance on death and life, contract and fear, and Venice and water I gave at the Australasian Law, Literature and the Humanities conference in 2019.

My aim is to explore further what I have previously, in the context of law and justice,[10] called *material metaphors* – something that can be fruitfully thought together with the matterphorical.[11] Material metaphors perform a sliding between various, often thought as opposing, folds of the same extensive manifold: between language and materiality; between my body and the bodies of others whether human or nonhuman; and even between such apparently different intellectual activities, such as thinking versus making, or writing versus performing; and disciplines, such as legal versus artistic practices. My ultimate focus here is the profoundly political project behind thinking of metaphors materially: what it is that we try to understand by these metaphors, what we settle in, how we can become aware of this comfort zone and break

free from it, and how to take responsibility for the ways we, as linguistic and physical bodies, actively conceal our complicity with indifference, oppression and injustice.

A few words about how I arrived at these performance practices: initially I wanted to move away from language (how ironic to write this). I have thought that my work was all about texts – writing, giving talks, teaching, and what is more, law, the most textual of authorities, the most linguistic of social abstractions. I soon realised, however, that the texts themselves had a materiality, itself quite apart from the materiality of their author,[12] that needed to be performed: so I started *doing* things while giving talks, sometimes unplanned but with an urgency that was impossible to ignore, and increasingly more and more planned yet left free to unfold in the specific circumstances.[13] Quite separately to all this, I was pursuing an art practice experimenting with various media. But I generally kept the academic and the artistic apart, even hiding my art practice behind a rather romantic sobriquet. Until recently that is, when I realised that the boundaries I had jealously kept between these two were exactly the kind of thing I had been fighting against for all my thinking life: disciplinary divisions, textual and material camps, thinking and making as unrelated practices, humble pedagogy and high art, and so on. I am realising now that, despite my sense of experimentation and even unbelonging, I was still a metaphor for our sclerotic academia, dictated by the degrees one has and the degrees one's students or readers aim to get. So then I started sliding.[14]

I now hope that the metaphor of boundaries that my body was performing, is being replaced by a metaphor of fluidity, contextual pulsating, welcomed happenstance, open vulnerability against the risk of things happening not-quite-as-planned (an anathema for any academic, let alone a legal academic), an embodiment that keeps on becoming other than the body of its emergence, and finally a new academic language, beyond footnotes and conclusive conclusions, yet with the punch that any rigorous academic text packs. In short, I am hoping that the new metaphor I am embodying and trying to express through this text, is a truly fleshy metaphor, indeed a matterphor, one that slides between the linguistic and the material, while nodding to things that can never be fully expressed.

2. The Ghost: Metaphors/Bodies/Spaces

Ever since the influential *Metaphors We Live By* written by linguist George Lakoff and philosopher Mark Johnson, we know that "our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature."[15] This means that metaphors determine, not only how language but importantly how thought is structured and evolving.[16]

But metaphorical thought is not just linguistic.[17] Metaphors employ spatial and corporeal language as standard ways for meaning transfer.[18] Mark Johnson's *image schemas* is relevant here: simply put, in order to make sense of concepts, *we conceive them as physical objects*. Steven Winter calls this "'taking in' of that object."[19] Image schemas "are learned automatically through our bodily interactions with aspects of our environment."[20] This means that through our perceiving bodies, metaphors transfer meaning from concept to object. So, concepts acquire a physicality and themselves become objects through metaphors. This is just the first step of the metaphorical sliding between concepts (let's allow them to remain purely linguistic for now) and objects (which can remain purely physical, again for now). Consider, for example, of the concept of 'control'. Automatically one might think of something constraining, perhaps a constricting handcuff, or a stealthy CCTV, or an oppressive father or even an unpleasant or perhaps pleasant body sensation: each one to one's own image schemas – but the point is that one vests the concept with a physicality in order to perceive it.

It is obvious that metaphors do not only address the conscious level of thought. They penetrate the preconscious level, that is the level where notions are naturalised and accepted unquestioningly. This is particularly true for the so-called 'ruling metaphors', namely established and normalised metaphors that obscure the fact that they are metaphors (i.e. constructions) and not a judgement-free description of reality. Think of the phrase 'to *break* the law' – as if law can be broken if you do something illegal. Or even more chillingly, 'you can't *hide* from the law', the all-seeing, all-controlling almost theological point of view. Ann Cammett has argued that the 'Welfare Queen' metaphor in the North American context has led to the unquestioned acceptance that specific people, namely black women of underprivileged backgrounds, are an unwanted social burden: "Racism plays a central role in Americans' collective historical and cultural heritage. Metaphors in this context also act as 'carriers of cultural elements,' shaping how we make sense of the world and what we value and privilege."[21] Metaphors always have a blind spot: the aspect of the concept that is not fleshed out by them becomes marginalised and forgotten: "in allowing us to focus on one aspect of a concept… a metaphorical concept can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor."[22] From innocuous figures of speech to reality-determining distinctions[23] that illuminate only the politically controllable while obscuring what is troublesome, ruling metaphors are often in the service of what Deleuze's control society.[24]

This preconscious, subcutaneous conditioning of our thought process is facilitated by the fact that metaphors that stick around are already part of a consistent metaphorical system (one is welcome to use any metaphor one wants, but it will only work and catch on if consistent with

the existing metaphorical edifice); they are repeated (once is not enough, since it still hits the conscious level, but when adequately repeated, it becomes part of the norm[25]) and, finally, they trigger an affective response that engages physical, symbolic, and emotional elements.[26]

Still, metaphorical thinking remains creative thinking,[27] and as such has the capacity to evolve and open up to new linguistic and material practices. The first autoethnographic sketch that follows now refers to a performance on ghosts I did in the context (and indeed edifice) of a particular metaphorical system, one of nationalist pride and educational outreach.[28] Within that system, I tried to give rise to a different kind of metaphor, one that, although rooted in the existing system, disrupts it and opens it up from within, like a line of flight pushing from within the accepted metaphorical edifice towards more political and therefore potentially uncomfortable understandings. In the description that follows, I try to show the sliding between the linguistic and the material, how a metaphor can take hold of bodies and spaces, and how it can even corrupt an existing and relatively comfortable system of understanding (in this case that of colonial involvement and responsibility) and bring out affects of discomfort.

TOUCHED BY THE GHOST: This Building is Sliding

> *A breezy early summer afternoon, a long walk across the castle, the palace, the royal gardens, what was it that stopped us, remember? Not a voice or a gesture but a space full of space, a cube spilling to its seams with its own volume, an uncontainable mass, a rapid acceleration, a plenitude, no absence, no void, no emptiness, just fullness vibrating with reverberation.[29]*

A ghost is a sliding. It uses the materiality of objects and that of language[30] to make its immateriality known to us. It is a wound that haunts us. It nests in our bodies. It makes the world around us vibrate. From the edge of our skin to the other side of air, all bodies are spectral nesting grounds.

> *The ghost is a line, as sharp and as cutting as yesterday's papercut on your finger. Can you see it? Can you touch it? It is there, isn't it? Rapid cascade of molecules, a mad concentration of mass, a wall and a gash, a skin and a wound.*
> *The ghost is clear. The ghost is here. You carry the ghost in your body.*

How to engage with spectres respectfully, allowing their palindromic anagram of matter and language to come through? Would the purpose be to flesh out their materiality? To give them space to express themselves? Should I try and connect with the ghosts or acknowledge their

withdrawal?[31] These were some of the questions that guided my performance at the *Royal Danish Cast Collection* in Copenhagen for the launch of *Ephemera*'s issue on ghosts one warm Nordic summer evening in July 2019.[32] The search for answers required first a lateral research: what is the building in which the performance is taking place? What wounds are etched on its walls? And further, where does the city of Copenhagen come into this? In which time and space am I required to dig in order to find the ghost?

The invitation had come from within a very specific image schema: the collection is a vast assemblage of white stucco reproductions of the whole Western sculpture canon, reinterpreted in pristine whitewashed sensuality. It enjoys a special place in the hearts of most Copenhageners as a quirky but beautiful place, full of unconscious nostalgia for an empire where the educational reach of the elites was so strong that could afford maintaining such a collection. The predominant metaphor is one of Hellenic/Christian civilisation and admiration of classical humanist beauty in its pristine, whitewashed layering.

What I discovered during my research, however, and especially through my talks with the collection director, Henrik Holm, was a very different past – or perhaps the standard complementary story of every western empire. The purpose of the performance, therefore, was to begin within the given metaphorical system (of a beautiful, humanist collection) and tease out a different metaphor that would reveal a perhaps more uncomfortable connection to the bodies, the statues, the building and even the city of Copenhagen.

The first part of the performance revolved around a text which I wrote and performed with the help of a sound-altering Korg Caoss pad (so, a mixture of reading out, improvisation, phonetic exaggeration, echo, and bad singing) while concealing my presence. I was hoping that my disembodiment would be felt through the sound of my voice, a sort of ghostly sliding from immaterial (metaphorically expressed through invisibility) and material sound. Sound, therefore, became my metaphorical body of choice for this performance. The text articulated three wounds (or ghosts): the body's, the building's and the city's. Our bodies carry our wounds that were placed on our skins by time and space: gashes of expulsion and rope-marks of belonging haunt our bodies long after their occurrence. Our buildings carry the cracks of their summonses: their foundations are steeped in deaths and births, and their walls are drenched with the smell of humanity. Our cities carry the wounds that our species has ecstatically scattered on squares, roofs and terraces: the planet is creaking right under our feet, but we have insulated ourselves with underfloor heating. We live and die within our spectral wounds, each of us differently, unequally, yet inevitably.

I start with the body because I want to stay, at least for now, within the given system of a successful metaphor: the body as a locus of emotions. In a curt and staccato sound channel, I give instructions to the audience, largely based on the *Body SDS* therapeutic system,[33] a somatic therapy involving touch and other modes of connection, very well known in Denmark but hardly known outside the country. Most of the audience are clearly familiar with it and take to the instructions without hesitation, thereby making themselves comfortable within the metaphorical edifice:

> *Lift your right arm and press the back of your neck.*
> *Remember the memory of belonging – the corner in that room, the home you left behind, the hand that touched you and told you that you are loved, that you will always be loved, no matter what. Remember the memory of you.*

And so on. Little by little, however, the soundscape is changing – it becomes more echoing and distant, more incantation than instruction - and so does the performance: the text moves from the body and its uncomfortable but still-within-comfort-zone emotions, and onto the building.

> *And then the other corner of the building. The North.*
> *Right underneath the top floor. Right above you, golden death.*
> *Place your hand on the wall. And let the pain rain upon you.*

The Royal Cast Collection is housed in a vast multi-storied warehouse-like brick building overlooking the port. It used to be the seat of the Danish slave trade, administered by the Danish East India Company,[34] with windows strategically positioned on the top floor next to the gilded council room: a panopticon overseeing all transactions. The amount of spices, coffee, rum and sugar was checked against the money that was being exchanged.

> *Trails, your bodies moving from south to north, the goods arrive, rum and sugar,*
> *from west to east you trail the sun, but you are forced the opposite way,*
> *you become darkness.*

Very few slaves physically arrived in Denmark, but an estimated 120.000 were transferred from western Africa to the Danish colonies on the Virgin Islands to work at the plantations.[35]

> *But things persist. This is our collective traumascape[36].*
> *We haunt the city of Copenhagen, the royal city built on bones.*

Where are the originals? Not here. Far. But we are not safe.
Statues rotting in Greece and Italy. Bones scattered on Virgin Islands.

The Danish colonial past is neither acknowledged nor seriously talked about in contemporary Danish society. There has never been an official apology on behalf of the Danish government - no doubt for fear of need of reparations.[37]

Lower both your arms to your hips.
Remember your other families. Remember the ones that you have forgotten. The ones you have chosen not to apologise to. The ones you have not dealt with yet. Remember why you have forgotten them. Remember the coloniser you.

The building becomes a slave ship, the audience the cargo, and we the ghostly materialisation of guilt. I come out of my hiding station. The place of my voice is now taken by the soundscape that sound artist Julie Nymann has created for this performance on the basis of the sounds of the actual collection building she recorded over the period of a week.[38] There is wind in that soundscape, openness violently rushing into small enclosures, a raging ocean, creaking floorboards, a solid aural materiality that conjures the ineffable. I walk amongst the orderly cargo just arranged by the evening's assistants: the audience is positioned in rows facing each other, following the well-known maps of slave ships indicating the best way to stack the slaves. We all know this, but not for this place! The audience are all tied up in pairs by their wrists, making sure that they stay put despite the waves, the dead bodies amongst them, the soaking seawater, the rats, the putrefaction. They are waiting, either to die or to reach the plantations and die there. We are deep in the metaphor. An estimated 32% of the slaves die in the three months the journey lasts. Onboard some ships, the percentage is even higher.[39]

Figure 1. Rows of performance participants, still from video by Julius Lyk

The building is sliding, the waves are engulfing us, the floor is tilting, we are diving.
The building is sliding. The ghost is taking over.
On board the ship, Christiansborg, *the ship is sailing!*
Come, all you species, you shall be saved! This is the ark of the coloniser!
Human production will carry on after the deluge. Just stay tight.

The slave trade carries on, if not with the direct blessing of the Danish church, at least with its tolerance. The church is not interested in bodies – these are material irrelevances. It is interested in the real thing: the soul. The slaves are offered the precious opportunity to convert into Christianity.

We are losing money. We are in this together, Christ will save us – convert and your souls will go to heaven. No ghosts. Just pleasure at the end of this journey.

I survey the rows of tied up people. The ghost of the slave ship's captain walks amongst the ones who are alive, and for this always complicit, wrapped in a mist of oblique ignorance. But to him, they are the ghosts of slaves: always present, oozing from the wound of the world's guilt. A tempest is raging. Death is our destination. The captain places a black dot on the forehead of 32% of the audience. About sixty people, mainly white middle-class Copenhageners, are touched by the ghost, random dot of infinitesimal deaths, bodies that never counted except as tools. Something is whispered in their ear, "forgive me" perhaps, or was it "remember me"?, the sound of the crashing waves is too booming, one cannot hear well. I repeat, just I have repeated the various parts of the instructions and the parts of the new metaphor I am trying to establish here.[40] My sound is drowned in the vast matter of early capitalist putrefaction. My utterances are passing from the textuality of language to the object.[41] We are taking the object in, we are touched by the ghost – and with this new metaphor, new at least for the particular context, ghost stands for guilt, complicity, ethical positioning and responsibility. Its materiality touches the withdrawn matter of our nightmares. The rest of the cargo, all 120 or so of them, are fed strawberries out of a shiny white bowl: their skin must look glossy upon arrival, the price goes up if they look good.[42]

West Indies ahead. Virgin Islands ahoy. Have some fruit: your skin, black, shiny, I lick your skin before I work you to death. Your skin, white, pale, brittle, I spit on your skin before I demolish you.

I am already walking amongst the rows of tied up people, embodying the ghost of the slave ship captain, looking around in fear and despair of where this journey is leading us all. I stand before a young black woman, one of the few in the audience. Despite my clouded awareness at that thick mid-performance moment, I notice she is not tied up to her neighbour like everyone else. We look into each other's eyes, my despair to do the right thing, me, a white privileged man facing a woman whose ancestral past is haunting her present.[43] I feel that I need to spare her, to allow her to die now before the worst comes, before she reaches the colonies and put to that death by labour, an act of kindness I thought, but who am I to decide, how can I raise my arm, the black of the paint pouring from the skies of the Royal Cast Collection, all regal and white and collected, perfect gypsum, perfectly unoriginal, who am I, but I raise my arm nevertheless to mark her with the black dot, and she says, no, she shakes her head, no, but she does not go away, she is still there, fierce, looking at me, I am wavering, but I press on, I get closer to her, try to give her the utterance now, please listen, forgive me, forgive him, forgive me, forgive us.

And she says, no. And she motions me with her hand, go away, move to the next one. I am not here to forgive you.

I am not forgiven.

3. Paper: Metaphors/Objects/Metaphors

Let me go deeper into the fold. We have seen that metaphors are produced through the physicality of the human brain and body, and that concepts, in order to be understood, are perceived metaphorically ('taken in') as objects. I would like to build on this and suggest the sliding back movement. Namely, if so far the metaphorical sliding went from concepts to objects, the reverse is also true: that *objects are concepts* too. Haraway again: "these stories are literalized in these objects. Or better, objects are frozen stories."[44] Haraway's material understanding of metaphors takes us directly into the core of sliding: not only concepts are objects, but also objects are concepts.[45] In its sliding between the material and the linguistic and back, a metaphor transfers the meaning of the object (including any body, collectivity and assemblage, human and nonhuman) onto language. This function of the metaphor, namely the transfer of meaning from the object to the concept, goes in the core of what a *matterphor* is for my purposes.

A matterphor originates in the material edge of the fold. In the context of art practice, Clive Cazeaux finds that "to claim that materials have properties of their own and that manipulating them artistically can take their properties somewhere else, is to assert that the action of moving properties from one domain to another, normally attributed to metaphor,

functions here as an *ontological structure*."[46] This means, not only that metaphors are processes that can and do apply to materials and their manipulation, but importantly, that this metaphorical process is ontological. Ontological is of course more than just material. This point is important if one wishes, as I do here, to disengage metaphors from the question of perception (namely concepts are objects because they need to be perceived as such in order to be understood) and enable them to slide on the ontological plane: it means that metaphors slide between the material and the linguistic regardless of perception. To put it simply, matterphors take place independently of the human mind. They are part of the properties of an object/body/etc.

The engagement with the matterphorical function of an object has two important consequences. First, a matterphor allows a variety of meanings of an object to come through and does not rely only on ruling metaphors on what the object and its function is. So, an urban bench is a metaphor for rest, a brief welcome pause in the urban fabric. But on a matterphorical level, namely a level where the transfer of meaning from the object to a concept takes place ontologically, the bench is not just a bench but a way to regulate urban flow. It reveals itself as part of an ontologically conditioned lawscape of control– and if combined with some disciplinary architecture of the bar-across-the-bench that serves both as an armrest and, importantly, as a deterrent for homeless resting, one sees how the ruling metaphor of comfort embodied in the object of a bench actively obscures its politically controlling aspects.[47]

The second consequence is that the linguistic is never left outside. On the contrary, it remains involved in the matterphorical process – just not as the originator, as it is with the usual metaphors. But the matterphor slides back to the linguistic. Cazeaux is clear that there also comes the opportunity (and I would add responsibility, not only in terms of art practices but also in questions of academic making and thinking[48]) to bring about new concepts: "working with materials, with one's hands, allow for the creation of forms and effects that, through description, bring new concepts to bear on the forms, their material and their context."[49] So from concept to object and then back to concept, in a matterphorical sliding palindrome.

How does this perpetual sliding take place? How do matterphors transfer meaning between the material and the linguistic? Spinozan ethics, and particularly his concept of *parallelism*, offer one possible answer.[50] Moira Gatens and Genevieve Lloyd explain: "nothing that happens in the order of thought depends causally on anything that happens in the order of material things, or vice versa. But the 'order of thought' and the 'order of things'… are mapped onto one another in a relation of correspondence."[51] This is Spinoza's parallelism, which cultivates togetherness but also distance. And that crevice, soft and gliding like the inner valley of a fold, is spanned by the sliding of matterphors.

Yet this crevice is still taken as rift and thought to apply in so many parts of our lives. In what follows, I describe how I tried to trace the perceived rift between academic and artistic research by using objects (specifically paper manifolds and keys) as concepts animated by matterphors. The performance is inspired by the need to show the sliding function of objects as metaphors, especially when we are asked to operate in a binary schema of academic *versus* artistic research, thinking *versus* making, and language *versus* materiality. The aim, of course, is to show that there is no dichotomy, just a fold, on which matterphors slide.

TRACING THE STEPS OF ARTISTIC/ACADEMIC RESEARCH WITH BREATHING PAUSES: The Remains of a False Distinction

At a performance lecture at the Swedish Royal Academy of Music as part of a day on music research (itself often between academic and artistic research),[52] I chose – rather oddly, I know – to focus not on sound but on paper. I wanted to use paper as a material metaphor for the manifold that academic and artistic research really is or indeed should be.[53]

At the beginning of the performance lecture, I asked those attending to pick up one of the large (A0) pieces of paper I had in front of me and tear it into two parts. They were then supposed to fold these rough halves – the first as they imagine academic research to be, and the second as they imagine artistic research to be. And then to place them onto two separate piles, one for academic and one for artistic. I indicated the place of these piles to be right on the stage, or rather that space between audience and screen, a stage of sorts anyway, usually empty except for the occasionally adventurous speaker who manages to detach themselves from the podium.

It was fascinating to see how different people dealt with the task. Some tore the paper roughly, without bothering to fold it first. Others opted to kneel on the floor or use whatever available surface to tear it carefully along a folded line. Yet, the neatness of cutting the paper into two halves did not always go with what I imagined to be a neat folding afterwards. Some indeed folded them tidily but in such a way that a deliberate contrast between the two was marked; others folded it haphazardly but spectacularly, creating snow globes of folds and erect edifices of paper-thin facades; others intervened minimally on the paper, perhaps with one little corner fold on the one and a respective little fold on the other piece of paper - but perhaps on what they thought was the opposite side, who knows. The variations were endless. It was rewarding to see how the metaphors we use of academic and artistic research all found material form in these papers. This was not a representation, but an object as concept, animated by the sliding of a matterphor.

The space filled with two piles of white manifolds. The participants respected the imaginary line separating the two piles and placed their artefacts neatly on the designated pile. My performance lecture revolved around the concept of (mani)fold, as introduced by Deleuze and Guattari,[54] and the always necessary co-presence of smooth space (to simplify, a space of freedom and open distribution) and striated space (again to simplify, a space of structure and control). I do not know whether academic research is unproblematically thought of as striated while artistic research as smooth. The whole point of the performance lecture but also of the research that went into the preparation, was all about understanding manifolds as fractal iterations that carry on folding and unfolding ("how to continue the fold, to have it go through the ceiling, how to bring it to infinity"[55]). This process is not in opposition to another process – say, smooth versus striated – but precisely a fold in itself. So, the further one moves into, say, academic research, the more iterative the manifold of the smooth and the striated, even within something that might initially give the impression of one rather than the other.

Figure 2. Pile of manifolds, photo by Krogh Groth

Some, but by no means all participants, fell into the binary trap I set up for them. It is perfectly understandable to think of academic research as more rigid, square, flat, whereas artistic research as more flamboyant, rounded, creative - and so were their paper artefacts. To reinforce this ruling metaphor, in almost straight lecturing mode, I pressed on and gave various arguments for which each one is justly thought to be different to the other. The sliding had not happened yet: we were still in that initial comfort zone where the metaphorical edifice rests comfortably along

our view of the world. But progressively something started to change: while I was talking, I was 'interrupted' by things on the powerpoint, visual, aural and textual ruptures, sounds that just hang there or imagery that was disrupting what I was saying, sallying the neatness of my binarism; even quotes from Rainer Maria Rilke, Ingeborg Bachmann or Chekhov that had seemingly little to do with the reasoned argument I was making – except that they were all about ruptures, cries that go unheard, sounds that remain unexplained, lines that blur the previous lines. Little by little, my body started moving differently, hiding behind the screen or turning its back to the audience, while my words were sliding into palindromes of manifold aurality: "A thesis without direction: my favourite doctoral students are always of this persuasion, where the thesis is known from the start but grows organically, without a horizon yet horizontally", and then, almost on the same breath, "A direction without thesis: my favourite doctoral students are always of this persuasion, where the direction is strong and politically decisive but the thesis is an amoeba that moves independently", and so on.

All along, I was playing with the paper manifolds the participants had made, using them as props or pointing at their shapes and marvelling at their ingenuity. The end of the performance lecture, however, was reserved for a much more explicit sliding. I was showing a short footage of what I considered a good example of the fold between academic and artistic research but also methodology and expression. The video screen was looming large behind the manifolds, and I sat down in front of it, right on the imaginary but clearly demarcated line between the pile of artistic and the pile of academic research. My back was turned to the audience, seemingly watching the footage but actually disrupting their viewing by lifting the papers from one pile, holding them in front of me or looking at them above my head, tearing them or refolding them or just gently maintaining their folding, and then landing them on the other pile. This was a gesture against Aristotelian hylomorphism, namely the submission of matter to the will of the maker: I wanted to disrupt the sculptural intentions of the audience, allowing the agency of the manifold to take centre stage regardless of representational forces.[56] I carried on till the two piles merged into one and I was enveloped in that soft yet angular body of the matterphor.

Although in this performance my metaphorical body of choice was paper, I also used keys in a deliberate way: I asked all participants to take their bunch of keys out, hold them in hand, and jingle them *every time they agreed with something I said* and *every time they disagreed with something I said*. This is exactly what sliding from object to concept means, and then on to multiplicity of meanings, away from ruling metaphors. When after the performance a participant asked me whether my artistic research is a *means* to explain my academic research, thereby taking

me back to the old comfortable binary, I could only remind her of the matterphorical sliding the keys were performing.

4. Water: Matter and Materiality

The final fold. This time, the matterphor will be sliding between matter and materiality. Matterphors allow us to do this: to cluster language and materiality on the side of materiality, and open up the other side of the fold – a withdrawn, harder to reach side, that of matter. As I have argued elsewhere, matter and materiality are connected but distinguishable.[57] The argument is complex but some brief remarks should suffice here. To begin with, materiality is the cluster of abstract ideas and concepts that determine an object/body/assemblage/connection. Materiality is the cultural/political/spatial/physical context in which objects/bodies etc dwell. As a result, materiality is the only aspect of the object/bodies assemblage that is accessible while remaining part of the ontology of the assemblage.[58] It is our only way into ontology, our handle as it were. But, as far as we are concerned, the object is its materiality.

Matter, then, is what would be left if materiality were to be removed. Matter is the object *qua* object, the inaccessible material assemblage that can never become a concept. It, however, is not an a priori. Matter co-emerges with materiality since, in a circular way, materiality enables matter to materialize and matter. Matter does not stand in opposition to form, as the usual philosophical understanding would have it, which encourages an anthropocentric understanding of imposed forms over inert matter.[59] Rather, matter stands 'in opposition' to materiality - but again only as a fold. Matter is not the object without the form, but the object without materiality, namely the object without its political, cultural and spatial context.

Matter and materiality are found in a fold, determining each other in parallelism. They partake in a relation of convergence yet withdrawal from each other. Materiality is what enables objects to acquire identity, to differentiate from other objects, and also to connect with one another. When materiality is ontologically present, matter withdraws. This withdrawal enables materiality to flow into agentic entanglements, systemic assemblages, material considerations. But since matter is co-emergent with materiality, matter dwells in that constant paradoxical penumbra of being both always present (with materiality) and always withdrawn (in order for materiality to emerge).

It bears noting though that the palindrome of connection and withdrawal is not just perceptional but ontological. Several traditions of thought have shown how withdrawal is in the core of the conative function of every object.[60] Likewise with immersion into constant connection.[61] We need to think of these two extremes, immersion and withdrawal, in parallel co-

emergence yet reciprocal obscuring.[62] This paradox is also in the core of performance practice: think of what Peggy Phelan in her by now canonical text on performance writes: "in the plenitude of its apparent visibility and availability, the performer actually disappears."[63] The simultaneous connection and withdrawal is in the core of the fold between matter and materiality (of the performer, of the performance, of the performativity of matter).

In what follows, I tell the story of a performance around water, Venice, and death. Matter and materiality appear in various guises, the main being the distinction between death and life: death in the performance is both planetary and individual; life, on the other hand, is a contract, a future law, an eternity. The two seem different – death withdraws in order for eternal life to emerge, just as matter would do before materiality – but this is only impressionistic, as it becomes obvious in the course of the performance.

AD VITAM AETERNAM: Contract Unto Death

Article 7

Dying is illegal under all circumstances. Death is no longer a lawful state for human beings.

People start coming in the dark auditorium. *Soave sia il vento* full blast. I am walking around wearing the long muzzled mask that doctors in Venice used to wear during the plague.[64] On the one giant screen high up is playing a long video I have prepared with scenes of water, whether a glass of sparkling water or slow canal flow or aggressive flooding of the city of Venice, shadowed by superimposed scenes from air flows I recorded that were produced by various bodies (a hand, a ceiling fan, various body movements, a city seen from above on a night flight, people on the street) and captures of the Venetian church of *Frari*, the place where Titian's last painting *Pietà* was supposed to hang after his death. Once most people are settled, I start running around the hall, maniacally looking for something and repeatedly stuttering 't-t-time', progressively touching parts of my body as if I could finally find what I was looking for perched on my skin, marks and nests of time visible only to me and my obsessively scratching fingers. I then return to the podium on which a large aquarium filled with water is waiting.

My chosen body of metaphor here is water. Water has always been associated with life but also with death.[65] It has a strong symbolic value that complements its material value.[66] It carries a personal significance too, since I spend a lot of time in Venice and have been observing how the element of water on which the city has always relied, is also the one thing that makes the city's existence precarious and often impossible. In many ways, water is matter in hand, both ever-

present through its materiality that often fights against the very city that exalts it, and at the same time withdrawing (how can that green thing be the same as the water in a glass). Venice is not just a beautiful city or even one of the most important artistic and architectural sites of western civilisation. It is a metaphor for earth's environmental degradation, but with a strong political characterisation: small islands on the Pacific going under water do not register with the same power as Venice in the Western, still colonial, way of thinking. Venice and its water are a metaphor, not just for the inundated planet but for the ever-present colonial practices of geographical priorities that take place across the globe in view of Anthropocenic global warming. Mark this sliding: the metaphor of the Venetian water transfers meaning from the precarity of Venice itself to the colonial prioritisations of risk under climate change.

Article 8
Death is punishable by life. Wherever possible, natural resuscitation is to be preferred over other, more forceful, means of resuscitation.

The lecturing part of the performance uses a highly visual powerpoint presentation on metaphors and materiality but printed out on A4 papers, a materiality to play with but also to take more seriously than the digital presentation, which I tear, fold, write on and visually combine on a visualizer that projects what I do on the other giant screen, adjacent to the one where the video is still playing. While showing the powerpoint, I throw water and ink on the papers, trailing it across and smudging the printouts, almost ignoring what I am saying and just getting excited about what the liquidity can do on the paper. I do not refer to the video at all, but my 'lecture' is intercepted by various voices: extracts from a novel I have just completed, where water has a stentorous, rather tetchy voice, irritated by humans; writings about Titian's last painting, *Pietà*; and finally, extracts from a 'future law' I wrote called *Ad Vitam Aeternam* ('to eternal life') where dying is illegal and life's eternity is recognised as the highest protected good.[67]
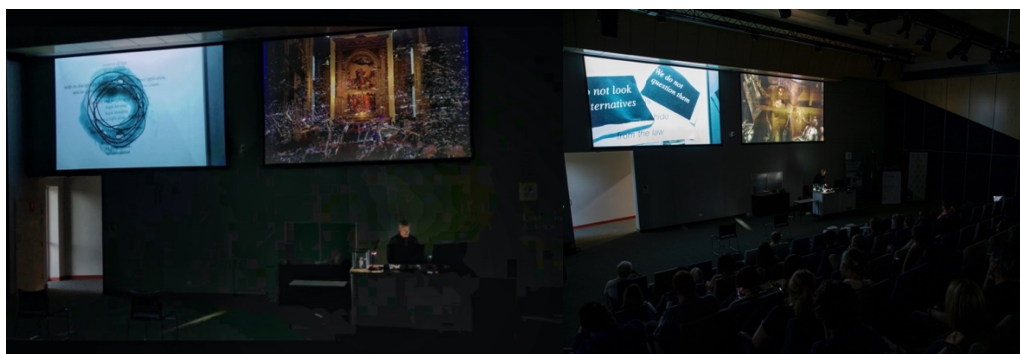
Figures 3 and 4. Dual screens projecting prepared presentation and live feed; (left) still from video by Danish Sheikh, (right) photo by Tim Marsden.

Article 15

All human beings must be facilitated in their effort to achieve the appropriate balance between simultaneous connection and withdrawal.

Article 16

Breathing in all its forms and in particular pulmonic, biotechnological and poral, will be preserved at all times. Breath-sharing will be allowed only if simultaneous chambers of withdrawal are put at the disposal of the breathers.

The crux of the argument is contained in Titian's painting: while he never painted a traditional Pietà of a peaceful Mary holding the dead Christ, but a rather dark, haunting version of his personal agony, he managed to include on the bottom right corner of the painting a small painting-within-the-painting: an *ex voto* depicting a traditional Pietà before which Titian and his son Orazio kneel. This is the matterphor of the contract. No longer with the Church of the Frari where the painting was supposed to hang, but with death itself: a desperate attempt to be spared from the plague.[68] The matterphor slides from the object (the painting-in-the-painting) to the concept (the desire to stay alive), and then carries on to span the materiality of life with the inaccessible matter of death. The votive image is a matterphorical contract with that most withdrawn and inaccessible corner of matter: our very own death.

Just before I present this to the audience though, I distribute a contract for everyone to fill in and sign. The contract asks of the participants to write what they would give up in order to live forever. We then collect the contracts and start reading randomly from them. The ones we do read, we plunge in the aquarium, progressively filling it up with promises of eternal life.

Article 33

Eternal life must never be conflated with death or dying. Such conflation is punished by enforced synchronisation.

Things have already taken a darker turn. The audience is stressed (this was the feedback afterwards) and fearful. The fear around me seems objectless yet very tangible. Little by little things unravel. Titian's contract was not honoured, either in terms of where the painting hang (it never made it to the Church) or in terms of his being spared (he died of the plague). The future law articles become harsher and more sinister, making painfully obvious the fact that life is also withdrawing from any contractual promise. Eternal life is not really life but a means of

biopolitical control aiming at fixing humans and nonhumans in a continuous eternal production process. Death has seemingly withdrawn too, yet what is this non-death, this vita aeterna, this life that so resembles death. Life and death, matter and materiality, both withdrawn yet both seemingly connected to us here, blocking our breathing, making us all wheeze. Whatever sacrifices we might have offered to make, turn out to be in vain. Eternal life is a plague.

Article 35
Eternity is a common good of humanity and will be preserved even at the expense of humanity itself.

Article 38
Eternity itself must never be terminated. In the event of spatial folding, eternity will be reinstated by whatever means available.

5. Keep on sliding

There are some bodies with which we cannot enter into contract. Death is one of them, life another. They are both fully here, fully present yet also withdrawing from us.

Matterphors are just ways of trying to grapple with these impossibilities. Manic transference of meaning between the linguistic and the material in order to *understand* and perhaps even to *own*. Wishful transference between matter and materiality in order to gain an insight into the dark side of the moon, that vastness of time before and after our lives.

Matterphors are faithful friends but can also be lulling in their sliding, ushering us into a deluded belief that we might, after all, be able to settle into some sort of attunement with all these things that can afford to be both fully connected and yet withdrawn.

The matterphorical is a profoundly political project. It is our ethical responsibility to dig out the roots of ruling metaphors and throw them out in the open, challenge them with new metaphors and keep on pushing the preconscious ease with which these comfortable metaphors insinuate themselves to us. The matterphorical is a call to not succumb to easy prioritisations of language over the material, and to keep on trying to discover what happens to the suffering bodies behind triumphalist and vacuous metaphorical concepts. Finally, the matterphorical is an invitation to keep on trying to slide across matter and materiality. And trying we do: in the face of planetary, species and individual death, we keep on employing matterphors, from majestic pyramids to transient paper manifolds and hidden votive images, as brittle tools with which to negotiate the vast inevitability of withdrawal.

1 I am grateful to Daniela Gandorfer and Zulaikha Ayub for their extraordinary perspicacity, and to Jaspar Joseph-Lester, Igor Campos Viana and Miriam Tedeschi for their comments on previous drafts.

2 Donna Haraway, *How Like A Leaf: An Interview with Thyrza Nichols Goodeve* (2000), 85-6, original emphasis.

3 Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans M. Lester (London: Continuum, 2004), 11.

4 Deleuze, 108.

5 Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. T. Conley (London: Continuum, 2006).

6 Haraway, 107.

7 Videos of the performances can be found at picpoet.net. I hope the narcissistic implications of this might be forgiven in view of the fact that this is the kind of sliding that this text advocates. When applied to my own work, sliding became a sort of schizo self-distancing between performer and observer, and academic writer and artist – a destabilizing yet productive process.

8 Karen Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28, no. 3(2003), 802

9 Not altogether different either though. See Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of Performativity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997).

10 Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 'Flesh of the Law: Material Metaphors', *Journal of Law and Society* 43, no. 1 (2016): 45-65.

11 It is important to remember that metaphors have long been considered material. See the examples of thymos and psyche in ancient Greece, in Douglas Cairns, "Ψυχή, Θυμός, and Metaphor in Homer and Plato," *Études Platoniciennes* 11 (2014): 1-42.

12 Almost despite my best intentions, I regularly caught myself defying the norms of traditional legal or even academic writing, and favoring instead a more poetic, namely embodied, spatialised and in general experimental writing. My talks, always illustrated with visuals that underlined what I was saying without however didactically following it, soon started becoming experiments of visual and aural discontinuities, where whatever was being shown behind me would allow contingent combinations of knowledge to emerge.

13 This has been aided by my teaching approach that has always been experimental, using our bodies and the space of the classroom, the building, or even the city in which we were.

14 It would, however, be a lie to say that performance practice emerged as a result of the above-mentioned thinking process. Nor however did it just happen. It took years of gestation, research and even bravado. But perhaps it all starts with an encounter: Patricia Townsend calls this a pre-sense: "the initial sense of something that is of personal interest, that engages the artist's imagination, inviting further exploration and offering the possibility of a new work"; see Patricia Townsend, *Creative Studies of the Mind: Psychoanalysis and the Artist's Process* (London: Routledge, 2019), 7. It is often an oscillation between things I know and things I do not – "the image of a potential new work often seems to be both new and familiar," Townsend, 31. I have always been interested and actively practicing within the "participatory turn" in performance studies; see Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012). Most of the values of my academic legal research (spatial justice, co-presence of bodies, withdrawal as ethical process – or, as Julie-Ann Scott puts it "Because Injustice Hits Me at the Core" in her "Performance Studies: Because I Needed a Way to Better See and Be in this World," (2013) *Text and Performance Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (October 2013), 425; these works have found a second home in my performance practice. In this, I have been inspired by such bridging works as Tami Spry's *Autoethnography and the Other: unsettling power through utopian performatives* (New York, Routledge, 2016).

15 Mark Johnson and George Lakoff, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 3.

16 See also George Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," in *Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 202.

17 See various texts on this, e.g., Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor* (New York:
New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1978); Ian Bogost, *Alien Phenomenology, or What It's Like to Be a Thing* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012); see also Rosi Braidotti's call against metaphors in "Animals, Anomalies, and Inorganic Others," *Theories and Methodologies* 124, no.2 (2009): 526-532.

18 Steven Winter, *A Clearing in The Forest: Law, Life And Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Johnson and Lakoff; and Mark Johnson, "Law Incarnate," *Brooklyn Law Review* 67, no.4 (2002): 949-962.

19 Winter, 53.

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[20] Johnson, "Mind Metaphor Law," *Mercer Law Review* 58, no.3 (2007), 856. See also Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in The Flesh: The Embodied Mind And Its Challenge To Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 3-5.

[21] Ann Cammett, "Deadbeat Dads & Welfare Queens: How Metaphor Shapes Poverty Law," *Boston College Journal of Law & Social Justice* 34, no.2 (2014): 233-265, quoting C. Lawrence, "The Id, the Ego, and Equal Protection: Reckoning with Unconscious Racism," *Stanford Law Review* 39, no.2 (1987), 317 and 322.

[22] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 10. This is also what Susan Sontag in *Illness as Metaphor* calls the metaphor's contradictory application. See also Henri Lefebvre's critique in *The Production of Space (1974)* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991) on how legal metaphors deny the body to which they refer by discursively breaking it down into pieces. In "Flesh of the Law," I used the example of ruling spatial and corporeal legal metaphors as a way in which the law is actively turned *away* from capturing its legal spatial and embodied meaning.

[23] "The textual apparatus is transformed into a libidinal apparatus, a machinery for ideological investment." Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 15.

[24] With metaphors themselves becoming *control signs*: "the control sign functions to make reality and representation indistinguishable. On this basis, it becomes possible for control to not only manipulate reality as if it were a sign (the two obvious examples being marketing and religion), but also to insist upon any regime of signs as an inevitable and inescapable 'reality' or fact (e.g. the 'war on terror')." See Nathan Moore, "Icons of Control: Deleuze, Signs, Law" *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law* 20, no.1 (2007), 52.

[25] Christopher Rideout, "Penumbral Thinking Revisited: Metaphor in Legal Argumentation," *Journal of The Association Of Legal Writing Directors* 7, (2010): 155-191

[26] For a complete list of characteristics of successful metaphors, see Lakoff and Johnson.

[27] "Human thought is irreducibly imaginative" and "Imagination is embodied, interactive, and grounded," in Winter, 5-6.

[28] Karen Fog Olwig, "Narrating deglobalization: Danish perceptions of a lost empire," *Global Networks* 3, no.3 (2003): 207-222.

[29] All extracts in italic from the performance text *Touched by the Ghost* written by the author.

[30] Justine Grønbæk Pors, Lena Olaison and Birke Otto, "Ghostly matters in Organizing," *Ephemera: Theory & Politics in Organization* 19, no.1 (2019): 1-29.

[31] See Emily Brennan-Moran, "Ghosted (I went looking for a haunting)," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 39, no.3 (2019): 268-284 and Matthew Wagner & Chris Danowski, "Hearing Ghosts and Speaking Spaces: A Conversation with Performance," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 25, no.2 (2005): 171-185.

[32] *Touched by the Ghost*, performance by Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos at journal issue launch of *ephemera* 19, no.1 (February 2019), Royal Cast Collection at Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, June 25, 2019.

[33] For more on Body SDS, or Body Self Development, see "About Body SDS," Body S|D|S website, https://body-sds.dk/en/ .

[34] The site subsequently became the Danish Asiatic Company; see Esther Fihl and Caroline Lillelund, "Danish Era (1620-1845)," Nationalmuseet i København website, https://en.natmus.dk/historical-knowledge/historical-knowledge-the-world/asia/india/tranquebar/danish-era-1620-1845/.

[35] See "Danish decision to abolish transatlantic slavetrade," Danish National Archives website, https://www.virgin-islands-history.org/en/timeline/danish-decision-to-abolish-transatlantic-slavetrade/ and N. A. T. Hall, *Slave society in the Danish West Indies* (Mona: The University of the West Indies Press, 1992).

[36] Maria Tumarkin, *Traumascapes: The Power and Fate of Places Transformed by Tragedy* (Carlton Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2005).

[37] "Denmark Nixes Slaver Apology, Reparations," *The St. Thomas Source*, December 11, 2013, https://stthomassource.com/content/2013/12/11/denmark-nixes-slavery-apology-reparations/.

[38] Julie Nymann, *The past here to stay*, 10:00 min loop, single channel, 2019.

[39] S. E. Green-Pedersen and P. C. Willemoes Jørgensen, "Dansk kolonihistorie: det globale perspektiv," in *Dansk kolonihistorie: indføring og* studier, ed. P. H. Jensen, L. Haar, M. Hahn-Pedersen, K. U. Jessen and A. Damsgaard-Madsen (Århus: Forlaget Historia, 1983): 9–15.

[40] It seems to have the required affective response – the audience is enveloped in an atmosphere of questioning – although no one can tell in advance whether the preconscious has been triggered, as hoped for with the body instructions, and whether the affect produced will remain.

[41] An enduring inspiration for this was Viviane Saleh-Hanna's methodological urge towards what she calls Black Feminist Hauntology: "Black Feminist Hauntology is an anti-colonial analysis of time that captures the expanding and repetitive nature of structural violence, a process whereby we begin to locate a language to speak about the actual, not just symbolic or theorized violence that is racial colonialism. The ghosted nature of this work brings forth or calls upon the silent yet visible and enduring realities of colonialism." See Viviane Saleh-Hanna, "Black Feminist Hauntology: Rememory the Ghosts of Abolition?" *Champ Pénal* 12 (2015), para. 20.

[42] See "Slavery," Nationalmuseet i København website, https://en.natmus.dk/historical-knowledge/historical-themes/danish-colonies/the-danish-west-indies/slavery.

[43] An extraordinarily powerful work in this respect is Jenny Sharpe, *Ghosts of Slavery: A Literary Archaeology of Black Women's Lives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), a book I had read leading up to the performance and whose words surged up in me when I was confronted with this woman.

[44] Haraway, 85.

[45] A direct consequence is that concepts have their own physicality, independently of our constructing them as objects. Concepts are generated, evolved, and even abandoned, while steeped in the materiality of bodies and spaces. They are objects in themselves. This is also, however, where objects are no longer 'just' material objects but become enmeshed with the immaterial. They are collective assemblages that include material and immaterial elements and connections. With objects I understand what Deleuze and Guattari, following Spinoza, call a *body*. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 1988).

[46] Clive Cazeaux, *Art, Research, Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 94, added emphasis; see also Clive Cazeaux, *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

[47] See my work on the ontology of the lawscape in Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, *Spatial Justice: Body Lawscape Atmosphere* (London: Routledge, 2014).

[48] See Julie-Ann Scott, *Embodied performance as applied research, art and pedagogy* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018) on the blurring of art and research and the role of ethics and responsibility through hyper-embodiment.

[49] Cazeaux, *Art, Research, Philosophy*, 91

[50] Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics* (1677), trans. and ed. G.H.R. Parkinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), IIIp7s.

[51] Moira Gatens and Genevieve Lloyd, *Collective Imaginings: Spinoza, Past and Present* (London: Routledge, 1999), 3.

[52] This performance was repeated as part of my art residency at the School of Creative Arts and Media, University of Tasmania later on that year. The experience was, however, very different, and the commentary above refer only to the Sweden performance.

[53] Paper emerged as potential material, not only because of its manifold potential but because of what Christopher Collins, following Deleuze and Guattari, calls rhizomatic materiality, namely the almost random search for in-hand materials that can be used horizontally for a performance. See Christopher Collins, "On posthuman materiality: art-making as rhizomatic rehearsal," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 39, no.2 (2019): 153-159.

[54] Deleuze and Guattari.

[55] See Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. T. Conley (London: Continuum, 2006), 39 and 106: "just as developing is not the opposite of enveloping but its continuation, unfolding is not the opposite of folding" "but follows the fold up to the following fold."

[56] See Tim Ingold, "The Textility of Making," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34, no.1, (2010): 91-102 and Ingold, "Toward an Ecology of Materials," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41 (2012): 427-42. See also the use of paper in the performance *Beneath the Forest Floor* as analysed in Joslin McKinney, "Vibrant Materials: The Agency of Things in the Context of Scenography," in *Performance and Phenomenology*, ed. Maaike Bleeker, Jon Foley Sherman and Eirini Nedelkopoulou (London: Routledge, 2018): 121-139.

[57] Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, "Critical Autopoiesis and the Materiality of Law," *International Journal of Semiotics of Law* 27, no.2 (June 2014): 389-418.

58 Hence the difference between this and the classic Kantian position. See my work on this in Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, "The Matter of Atmosphere," in *On Atmospheres and Aesthetics: Phenomenology and the Humanities*, ed. Tonino Griffero (London: Palgrave, 2020): 159-174

59 See Aristotle's *Physics* for the beginning of the concept of hylomorphism and Mary Louise Gill, *Aristotle on Substance: The Paradox of Unity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

60 See, for instance, Niklas Luhmann, "Closure and Structural Coupling," *Cardozo Law Review* 13, no.5 (March 1992): 1419-1442; Levi Bryant, *The Democracy of Objects* (Michigan: Open Humanities Press, 2011); and Graham Harman, *The Quadruple Object* (Winchester: Zero Books, 2011).

61 See Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. C. Porter (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1993); and

Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013).

62 I have attempted this when trying to write about life and agency in Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, "Lively Agency: Life and Law in the Anthropocene," in *Animals, Biopolitics, Law: Lively Legalities*, ed. Irus Braverman (London: Routledge, 2016).

63 Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), 150.

64 Disrupting academic thought and practice from within, I decided to use my keynote at the 2019 Law, Literature and the Humanities Association of Australasia annual conference as a performance lecture slot; see Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, "Ad Vitam Aeternam: Contract unto Death" (keynote lecture, Law, Literature and the Humanities Association of Australasia Annual Conference, New South Wales, December 3, 2019).

65 Instead of extensive references to this, have a look at this most moving water-based graphic short story: Isabel Greenberg, "The River of Lost Souls," *The Guardian*, March 17, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/books/gallery/2013/mar/17/river-lost-souls-isabel-greenberg-graphic-short-story.

66 Astrida Neimanis, *Bodies of Water* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

67 These texts are being read by William McNeil and Olivia Barr, the two valiant assistants for the night, who spring out from the audience and start orating whenever they wish, thus interrupting me without prior notice.

68 See Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, "Flesh of the Law."