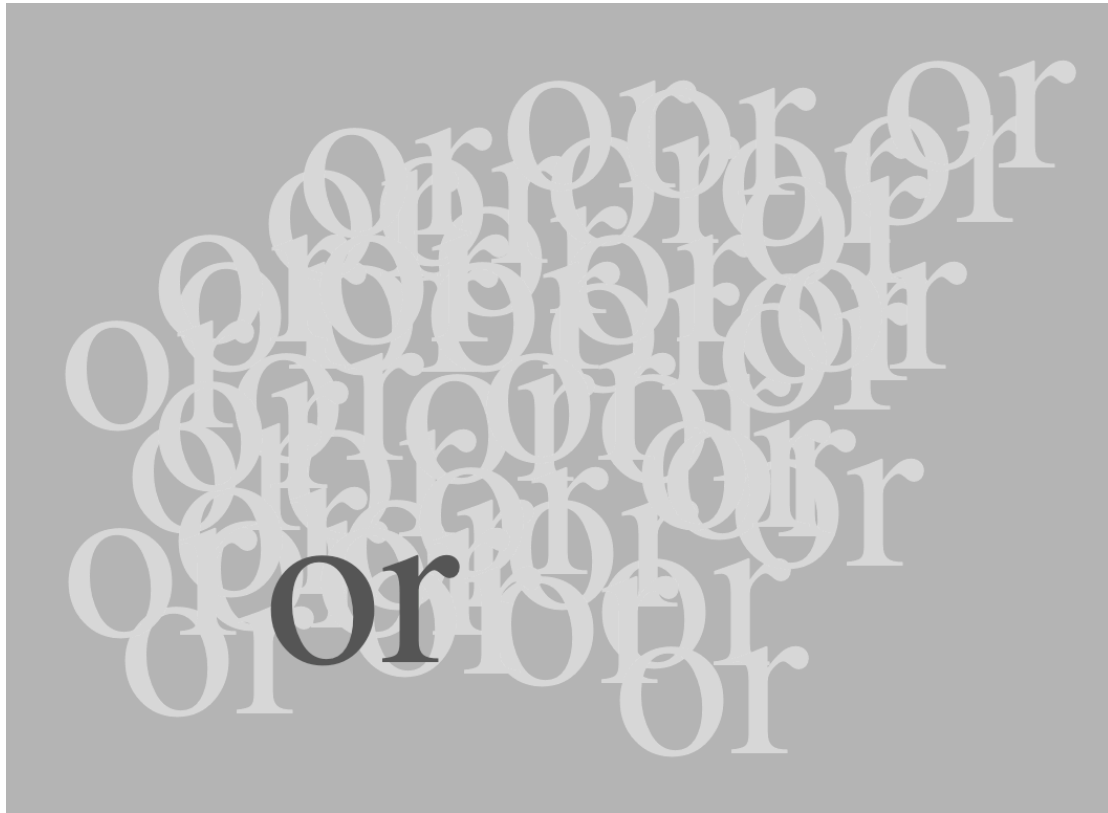


What now, what next – *kairotic* imagination and the unfolding future seized



First then, to set the scene [...]

There is a room, stripped back, bare. Maybe the lights are dimmed. Illumination comes from a chain of naked light bulbs — of different colours perhaps — strung up somewhat haphazardly ... and from the gleam of a spotlight, which picks out two figures from the surrounding dark. Two figures — let's say a man and a woman. They pause ... then begin to speak. It would be improper to steal the thunder of their very first line, so ... imagine an ellipsis ... the dot-dot-dot of passing time ... Two figures exchanging visions of the future, swapping narratives of optimism and despair, utopian and dystopian imaginings. A man and a woman, illuminated, mid-flow in the to-and-fro of exchange: "... in the future, everyone will have brown eyes ... or, in the future there'll be no word for weekend ... or, in the future small will be beautiful; or, in the future no-one will care about algebra or trigonometry or sequence patterns or anything mathematical because computers will do it all, no problem; or, people will grow an extra thumb for quicker texting; or, people will learn to walk on water; or, everyone will speak all the languages of the world, or, no-one will remember the seventies ... or buses ... or takeaways or... dirty weekends".¹ The two continue to imagine what the future might be like through an unfolding litany of prediction, projection, prospection and prophecy: "in the future; *or* ... in the future; *or* ... in the future ... *or* ... *or* ... *or*" and so on.

What strikes me about Forced Entertainment's performance, *Tomorrow's Parties*, is the sense of two distinct modes of future-oriented imagination operating therein — not so much the tension between the utopian and dystopian, nor between the possible and impossible, nor even between the prosaic and fantastical visions of the future that are conjured up by the two performers, but rather that within this work, the future is imagined from two quite different temporal perspectives. Firstly, the performance speaks of the future as 'foreseen' (the future as 'not yet' but still imaginable, 'projectable' *there* in the distance regarded from the perspective of 'here and now'); whilst, secondly, its 'live-ness' attests to an ever-emergent future that is endlessly seized and inhabited through the improvisatory *act* of imagining, the 'near' and *living* instant of the future (conceived as 'what now, what next'). The work thus proposes one mode of future-oriented imagining within the *content* of the words that are spoken ("in the future ..."), whilst another is enacted at a methodological level in relation to *how* (through improvisation) that content *was/is* arrived at, even *arrives*. To distinguish between the two modes then: through acts of imaginative projection a 'future-possible' world is seemingly given shape (even scripted) *in advance* of its occurrence; whilst arguably, within the act of improvisation the shape of an unfolding future emerges *simultaneously* to its imagining.²

Whilst the phrase "... in the future" within *Tomorrow's Parties* signals towards the activity of looking *forward* to the future (*as if* it could be imagined to already exist), my assertion is that the punctuating interruption of the word 'or' (as in "or ... in the future") creates the conditions for a very different quality of imaginative futurity. Here, 'or' serves as both a rupturing and affirmative force simultaneously breaking one flow of imagining whilst initiating the possibility of another. *Or* — the imperative to stop, begin again. Contraction of the word 'other', the interjection 'or' does not simply present an alternative to the terms of the existing situation (according to the binary logic of either/*or*, this *or* that) but instead might be considered as a site of repeated and continual intervention and invention (*or ... or ... or*). Turning attention away from the *product* (what is imagined) towards the *process* of imagining, my intent is to explore how the creative production of the future (as different or otherwise) is not only one of planning or proposing future-possible worlds, but rather emerges through a restless capacity to interrupt 'what already exists' with an interventionist, insurgent 'or'. Taking *Tomorrow's Parties* as a point of departure then, I propose to explore how the imagination might be conceived as a *kairoitic* capability, an improvisatory tendency located at a threshold (the gap or 'creative interval') between the 'as is' of the present and the 'not yet' of the future, the live point of 'seizure' or decision-making wherein the direction of future events might be steered differently, else remain unchanged.³

These two modes of future-oriented imagination (the imagining of a future through 'visions' and projections, and the future imaginatively 'seized' within improvisation) might be elaborated further through reflection on different conceptualizations of futurity. In *On Futurity: Malbou, Nancy and Derrida*, Jean-Paul Martinon reflects that the future is often conceived from the perspective of *here and now* as that period 'ahead of us', a space into which one might attempt to peep, peer or gaze, 'proceed carefully' or even (for the more adventurous) 'throw oneself'.⁴ Turning to the French language he identifies two different words for the future: *le futur* and *l'avenir*. The first — *le futur* — he states, "refers to something distant or remote, possible, or probable ... *Le futur* supposes in fact the possibility of projection, predictions, and prophecies. As such, *le futur* is essentially hypothetical, wishful, or delusory ... often referred to in sentences

such as ‘one day, the world will be a better place’”.⁵ “Or ... in the future everyone will live in a kind of idyllic garden or ... things will be so good in the future Or ... things will be so very bad in the future”.⁶ Whilst *le futur* is concerned with “what will or might be”, *l’avenir*, as Martinon notes, “is usually translated as ... what is ‘yet-to-come’” and is “easily captured with expressions such as ‘I’m dreading it’ or ‘I’m looking forward to it’, therefore to situations of hope or despair”.⁷ Martinon differentiates the two modes of futurity thus: “one focuses on what the future does or what we do with the future [*l’avenir*] and the other concentrates on what the future *is* or *holds* [*le futur*]”.⁸ Though different, both models seemingly intimate towards the future as a linear continuation of time where as Martinon notes, time is “always one-dimensional and unidirectional; it goes towards the future”.⁹ Against this logic, he attempts to reinvent the term futurity “as signifying something that no futurologist, clairvoyant, or gambler could possibly forecast”, by drawing on the radical potential of a third term: *à-venir* (the expression of the ‘to-come’).¹⁰

For Martinon, *à-venir* ‘represents’ an “unhinging”, a “spacing (and) temporizing” which “interrupts the present” “breaking up ... the measurable linearity of space and time”.¹¹ Moreover, he asserts, “*à-venir* does not stem from the future, but *from itself*, from a ‘self’ that ‘lies’ between radical impossibility (‘what has not yet streamed’) and a future historically determined in advance”.¹² According to Martinon, “*à-venir* surges between the foreseeable, ‘projectable’, ‘plannable’, and programmable *future present* and the radical future, that is ... that which exceeds or is more than this future possibility”.¹³ Perhaps then, *à-venir* corresponds to the gap or ‘creative interval’ between the ‘as is’ of the present and the ‘not yet’ of the future; not the ‘not yet’ of the future conceived as a *continuation* of the present, but instead that of a radical ‘unhinging’ or discontinuity. Philosopher Antonio Negri conceptualizes the ‘to-come’ as the eventual ‘time for revolution’, as *kairòs*: for Negri, *kairòs* describes “being’s act of leaning out over the void of time *to-come*, i.e. the adventure beyond the edge of time”.¹⁴ He argues that “*Kairòs* is the modality of time through which being opens itself, attracted by the void at the limit of time, and it thus decides to fill that void”.¹⁵ Negri conceives the limit experience of *kairòs* as one of “‘being on the brink’, as ‘being on a razor’s edge’”, a point of rupture and of necessary decision.¹⁶ In this sense, *kairòs* involves the art of brinkmanship, a capacity for tolerating the vertiginous experience of the limit’s edge. It is a mode of immanent (and imminent) invention taking place at the limit or brink of being, at the restless edge of an unfolding eternal.¹⁷ Rather than imagining the future as already existing (somehow scripted and simply waiting to be inhabited, or like an empty diary or calendar, expectant, waiting to be filled), conceptualizations such as *à-venir* and *kairòs* seem to propose the possibility of a radical future, borne of rupture, discontinuity and of necessary invention. Indeed, for Eric Charles White, *kairòs* describes a ‘will-to-invent’, a form of improvisation based on “adaption to an always mutating situation”, which “establishes the living present as point of departure and inspiration for a purely circumstantial activity of invention”.¹⁸ White argues that “instead of viewing the present occasion as continuous with a causally related sequence of events, *kairòs* regards the present as unprecedented, as a moment of decision, a moment of crisis”, where “the flow of time is understood as a succession of discontinuous occasions rather than as duration or historical continuity”.¹⁹ In this sense the future *happens* — meaning both it comes to pass, and that it unfolds not through planning or prediction but rather by *hap* (by accident or chance).

Kairos is in fact an Ancient Greek term that has, as White notes, its origins in two different sources: archery, where it describes “an opening ... through which the archer’s arrow has to pass”, and weaving where there is “a ‘critical time’ when the weaver must draw the yarn through a gap that momentarily opens in the warp of the cloth being woven”.²⁰ *Kairos* thus refers to an opportune or fleeting moment whose potential must be grasped before it passes. It describes a qualitatively different mode of time to that of linear or chronological time (*chronos*). *Kairos* is not an abstract measure of time passing but of time ready to be seized, an expression of timeliness, a critical juncture or ‘right time’ where something *could* happen. My proposal then is that whilst one mode of future-oriented imagination (projection, prediction, prophecy) conceptualizes the future in terms of a chronological continuity, as a linear progression of time extending (often inevitably) forward from *here and now*, the imaginative futurity within improvisation is closer to *kairos*, a will-to-invent capable of leaning into and inhabiting the *void* that opens once that (illusory) continuity is ruptured. Here, then, not only does the interruptive force of ‘or’ rupture or disturb the continuity of an unfolding narrative, but it also produces an ‘edge’ or moment of crisis, into which new invention is *called*.

The interruptive ‘or’ creates discontinuity within the chain of events by endlessly stopping one flow of narrative whilst simultaneously inviting another. In *Tomorrow’s Parties*, ‘or’ creates the conditions of interval between one conceptualization of the future and another, wherein the performer has to decide whether to *continue* with an already existing narrative, or whether to step off into unknown territory, inventing new lines of flight. Sarat Maharaj differentiates between innovation (conceived as the “improvement and incremental adding to what is already there”) and a species of creativity that is “about discontinuity, about rupture, about production and emergence, and the spasmodic appearance of something entirely unexpected and new”.²¹ Indeed, as Simon O’Sullivan states, “the rupturing encounter ... contains ... the affirmation of a new world, in fact a way of seeing and thinking this world differently”.²² The bond between rupture *and* affirmation (that I am asserting is present within the interruptive ‘or’) is thus crucial for imagining the future as otherwise, contrasting the logic of the ‘negative imagination’, that capacity for imagining only a “future without alternative”, or in Franco Berardi’s terms, an imagination only capable of mapping the “cartography of the coming dystopia”.²³

It could be argued that the attempt to ‘see into’ or ‘vision’ the future is an attempt to gain some sort of control over that which is unknown or uncertain, trying to ‘foresee’ that which has not yet happened, anticipate that which has still ‘to-come’. Indeed, the imagining of the future might be a strategy for coping with the overwhelming reality of existence conceived as an infinitely extending series of ‘discontinuous occasions’, of life lived at the ‘brink’ as ‘now’ opens onto infinity itself. The term *apeirophobia* — originating from the Greek word *apeiro* (boundless, infinite) — refers to an abnormal fear of infinity, the fear of time going on forever, of things that never end; and is remedied by making life as predictable or ‘planned’ as possible.²⁴ In some senses, Western culture seems affected by this affliction — the imagined landscapes of the future are often already mapped out and territorialized. Holidays might get booked a year in advance; diaries determine life’s itinerary according to regular twelve-month cycles; life itself becomes spatialized as a path or route whose course has already been furrowed. However, rather than the capacity to ‘see’ into (and plan) the future from the perspective of here and now, the dissident force of a future-oriented imagination (the capacity to imagine things as otherwise) requires that the illusory continuity between past>present>future is broken, its chain of causality — *all is, as was, as will be* — disrupted, exposed as fallacy.

Indeed, before the term ‘clairvoyant’ referred to the capacity for seeing into the future (foresight), it referred to a quality of insight, keen perception or clear-sightedness (*clair* [clear] + *voyant* [present participle of *voir*, to see], an intuitive ability to see or see-k out things as they really are.²⁵

Or, alternatively, the flight of the future-oriented imagination might be conceived not in relation to sightedness (insight, foresight, even hindsight) but rather might proceed as a form of *benightedness*, a term which Maharaj uses to describe the creative “journey into the unforeseeable”.²⁶ The word ‘benighted’ might refer to the absence of intellectual enlightenment, a state of ignorance perhaps, or else in archaic terms the condition of being taken over by darkness, by the night. Whilst the practice of imagining the future is often described in relation to metaphors of sight (visions, ‘second sight’, seeing the future, even ‘looking forward’), to imagine the world differently (to journey into the unforeseeable) requires a degree of blindness. The imaginative faculties are in fact cultivated in darkness — ‘close your eyes and imagine’.²⁷ Indeed, to truly imagine a different future, the faculties of perception by which we come to understand the world (*as it is*) might need to be restricted, limited or otherwise impaired. There are forms of seeing which do not belong to the ocular realm. Hélène Cixous reflects on the ‘benightedness’ of ‘writing blind’, stating, “Whenever I go off (writing is first of all a departure, an embarkation, an expedition) I slip away from the diurnal world and diurnal society, with a simple magic trick: I close my eyes ... At that instant I am no longer of this political world ... Behind my eyelids I am Elsewhere. Elsewhere there reigns the other light. I write by the other light ... Night becomes a verb. I night.”²⁸ For Cixous, the diurnal is a realm of too bright an intensity, solar daylight “keeps us from seeing what is germinating”.²⁹ So, in order to imagine (to see the *not-yet-visible*), Cixous argues for a form of seeing encountered by closing the eyes, withdrawing from the visible world.

Imagination might be conceived then as the withdrawal from one world that initiates the emergence of another, or as Joyce Carol Oates states, “the act of withdrawing from the world in order to create a counter world”.³⁰ Indeed, the imagination not only creates ‘counter worlds’ but perhaps also *is* itself a counter-world, itself utopian. For where do you ‘go’ when you are thinking, imagining? Elsewhere. Nowhere. Here, utopia is a not a ‘better place’ imagined to exist beyond the conditions of now, “in the future ...”, but rather *is* a condition *of* the near and now, that ‘no place/no time’ realm *behind* the eyes, accessible *via* the imagination. Utopia is thus no *place*, rather a quality of mind, interiority. As Cixous reflects: “Let us close our eyes. The night takes me. Where do we go? Into the other world ... The other side. An eyelid, a membrane, separates two kingdoms”.³¹ An eyelid, the interval or break between ‘what is’ and ‘what might be’, an eyelid – like the interruptive ‘or’ — closing on one world, opening onto another. Yet, the retreat from reality — towards the reflexive dark light of the interior – is not to be confused with escapism or a retreat into the imaginary (that fantasy realm that *only* exists within the imagination), nor is it to be understood as a permanent removal of oneself from the world and from others. Rather, the *temporary* act of ‘stepping off’, withdrawal from or renunciation of the world (as it is) is a precondition for certain forms of critical thinking.³² For Jean-Paul Sartre, “For consciousness to be able to imagine, it must be able to escape the world by its very nature, it must be able to stand back from the world by its own efforts”.³³ Or, to borrow from *Art Sheffield: Zero Hours* — “sometimes, to see your own situation clearly, you have to go elsewhere”.³⁴ Imagination — the event of absencing oneself from the world and its realities, going *elsewhere* momentarily, in order

to then *return*, able to conceive things as otherwise. Or else, a practice of *estrangement*, meaning to ‘turn away’, to ‘keep at a distance’ or perhaps even ‘make strange(r)’ by ‘unhinging’ accustomed or familiar associations so as to ‘see the world anew.

“Suddenly time falters. First, the head spins, overcome with a slight vertigo ... the earth gives way and disappears, one sinks back, goes away ... (but) *where* does one go?”³⁵ Beginning with this image of the fainting subject, in *Syncope: The Philosophy of Rapture* Catherine Clément asserts a critical value for syncopation, described as “an eclipse, interval, absence, followed by a new departure”.³⁶ She conceives of syncope as a *momentary* disappearance or ‘cerebral eclipse’, a brief leaving behind of the world and its realities to access another, perhaps more enchanted or luminescent, realm. The figure of the *renonçant* (the ‘renouncing’ subject who leaves the village to go to the forest) is a key motif within Clément’s philosophy of syncopation. Drawing on the work of Henri Bergson she argued that whilst the ‘village’ constitutes a “static and inalterable ... society”, the ‘forest’ is “open ... distracted by newness ... On one side, time; on the other rupture”.³⁷ However, as Clément asserts, “the journey ... from the ‘village’ to the ‘forest’ is not made with any continuity. Quite the opposite: it is made by ‘sudden jumps’, as if human history were capable of dreaming only if broken by brutal syncopes and unexpected jolts”.³⁸ Syncope [(*sun* (with) and *kopto* (cut))] is borne of discontinuity; a missing beat or break in rhythm, the fall experienced by ‘stepping off’ from that which came before. For Clément, “syncopation constitutes a political gesture ... that is less turned to the past than oriented towards openings and the future”.³⁹ The interruptive ‘or’ creates syncopation, a break in the narrative, an interval where “suddenly time falters”. Like the *renonçant*, a future-oriented imagination proceeds in leaps and jolts. So close your eyes, never look before you leap, for the future that is ‘not yet’ cannot yet be seen. The imaginative renunciation of ‘what is’ involves — like faith — a leap into the dark, the momentary loss of ground, the letting go of what is certain or stable. But it a mode of impotency (*impuissance*) entered electively, in order to conjure a new dissonant rhythm already immanent, already ascending to fill the void. Whilst the imagination is often conceived through metaphors of lightness and aeriality (blue sky thinking, flights of fancy, head in the clouds), fledging thought — the poetical thought of the imagination — must first learn to *fall* before it can learn to fly.⁴⁰

Yet how might one cultivate this capacity for leaning into the void, prepare oneself for a fall? Reflecting on the Ancient ‘practices of the self’, Michel Foucault notes how the Ancient Greeks developed a complex system of preparatory training and reflexive exercises (*askēsis*), for testing mind and body through both *meletē* (meditations or mental exercises) and *gymnazein* or *exercitatio* (the training of oneself in actual situations). For Foucault, the *meletē* involved the “preparation of thought on thought, of thought by thought — which prepares the individual to ... improvise”.⁴¹ Based on the principle ‘to get prepared’, the *meletē* were ‘imagined situations’ or ‘exercises in thought’ aimed at training the citizen to act appropriately in even the most unexpected situation. As Foucault states, “You had to anticipate the real situation through dialogue in your thoughts. One judges the reasoning one should use in an imaginary exercise (‘Let us suppose...’) in order to test an action or event (for example, ‘How would I react?’)”. Or ... *if, in the future ... then*. The most famous exercise of meditation, as Foucault notes, is the *praemeditatio malorum*, the “premeditation of misfortunes and evils” or “a test of the worst”.⁴² So ... *if, “in the future, the Earth will get hit, by meteor showers. Just little ones, at first, but then, big ones” ... then [...]*.⁴³ According to Foucault, the *praemeditatio malorum* involved “thinking about the future” as a “exhaustive review of

evils ... not only assum(ing) that the worst evils will occur, but that they will happen in any event and are not just possibilities with a certain margin of uncertainty".⁴⁴ He states that for the Stoics, "a man who is suddenly surprised by an event is really at risk of finding himself in a weak position if he is not prepared for it ... When misfortune arrives, we should never be able to say, 'I didn't expect it'. Precisely: 'you should have expected it', then, you would not have been taken unaware".⁴⁵ For Foucault, the *praemeditatio malorum* is thus not so much an exercise in imagining the future, as one of "sealing off" or "nullifying the specific dimensions of the future" by "making everything possible present".⁴⁶ Within this pre-emptive model of future-imagining, he asserts, "what is at stake is not a future with its different open possibilities. All possibilities are given, or the worst at any rate ... it does not involve a future with the unfolding of time and its uncertainties."⁴⁷ Herein, lies the precautionary logic of the future-oriented imagination intent on conceiving of things *before* they happen, the futurity of prediction, perhaps even of 'risk assessment', risk management, or ... "In the future, the world will just be run by insurance companies ... you know, because something might happen to you".⁴⁸

To prepare oneself for the unknown future can be conceived then as a preventative measure, an attempt to anticipate the unforeseen so to limit its damage, planning a course of action for every eventuality so as not to get caught out.⁴⁹ Yet, unknown situations demand a speculative approach for you can never be wholly sure what to expect. So prepare yourself well but be prepared for that which resists or exceeds all preparation. Indeed, there are practices whose anticipation of the unknown future is hopeful rather than delimiting. For the artist, to prepare for the unexpected has a dual function. It is the gesture of developing readiness (for anything), a state of being at the cusp of action, mind and body poised. Yet, it is also an act of scarifying the ground, an attempt to create the germinal conditions within which something unanticipated might *arise*. Improvisation involves the cultivation of a contingent form of future-oriented imagination intent on *courting* rather than *thwarting* the unexpected. It involves trusting that the right decision will be made when required, confidence that a response will be performed intuitively at the propitious time. Yet, true improvisation is not based on knowing how to deal with a situation in advance (where the future is predicted and prepared for), nor even is it truly a tacit knowledge, for this describes an already embodied *know-how*. To conceive of the future differently requires a capacity for 'stepping off' or away from what is known or certain (unhinging oneself from the 'as is' or even perhaps leaning into the void 'to come'), at the same time as suspending the desire to fix or firm up the 'what now, what next' too hastily, based on the experience of what one *already* knows. It requires a form of imaginative improvisation that is activated or emerges *simultaneously* to the unfolding situation within which it finds itself, a *kairotic* imagination. For White, "*kairos* stands for a radical principle of occasionality", an improvisational capacity that is 'contemporary with itself, alert and able to adapt to the present occasion' where the 'subject must always be in the act of creating itself anew'.⁵⁰ *Kairos* thus describes a moment of opportunity and the capacity for seizing that opportunity through inventive means, the improvisation of new lines of flight.

A future-oriented imagination is often articulated in a subjunctive mood which for Victor Turner expresses wishing, desiring, hypothesis or possibility: he states that the subjunctive "is a world of 'as if' ... It is 'if it *were* so', not 'it *is* so'".⁵¹ Whilst imagining the future can be undertaken as a way of planning how one might respond to the

unexpected — performing ‘as if’ in order to conceive of the ‘if, then’ — within *Tomorrow’s Parties* this causal logic seems suspended, kept at bay. Each ‘in the future ...’ narrative lasts only as long as the thread remains dynamic, *aleatory*. The work unfolds as a meditation or exercise akin to the Ancient *meletē*, ‘Let us suppose ...’, whilst refusing to further elaborate the narrative with ‘How would *I* react?’. Each developing proposition is duly cut short by the interruptive ‘or’ — stop, begin again. Rejecting the *teleology* of narrative (the pressure of destination or end-point), the continual imagining and re-imagining of the future is performed as rehearsal, the flagging of possibilities, or else as an exercise through which to practice and respond to the interruptive force of ‘or’. More than a term for simply holding a string of alternatives together, ‘or’ becomes the site at which a sense of the devising process — the process of improvisation — is perhaps most articulated. The ability to imagine the interruptive ‘or’ is a precondition for the act of imagining things otherwise. ‘Or’ breaks the illusory continuity of the future conceived as an extension of the present — *all is, as was, as will be* — by creating an opening, an interval, the opportunity for new lines of flight.

There is new political imperative to the act of imagining. In contemporary times, the imaginative capacity to conceive of the interruptive ‘or’ becomes increasingly critical, for the rhetoric of neoliberalism is one of *inevitability*, of a ‘future without alternative’ or according to Paulo Friere neoliberalism operates a form of “cynical fatalism and (an) inflexible negation of the right to dream differently, to dream of utopia”.⁵² The neoliberal future is presented ‘*as is*’ the present, unchanging and unchangeable. Or, “in the future ... things will be pretty much the same as they are now. There’ll still be a huge imbalance between rich countries and poor countries. There’ll still be people with lots of opportunities and people with none. People who’ll starve and people who’ll get by”.⁵³ To imagine the interruptive ‘or’ is thus a form of resistance to neoliberalism’s logic of ‘no alternative’, an ethical practice that refuses to simply accept things as they are, a practice grounded in the *hope* that things *can* be different. The critical faculty of the imagination is thus key in order to conceive of the future as otherwise, imagining alternative narratives in a world where we are conditioned to imagine that there are none. Moreover, the dissident potential of the imagination is not so much in *what* is imagined (“...in the future”), but rather by fact that it persists in doing so (*or...or...or*), continuing restlessly against the odds.

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¹ Extracts from Forced Entertainment’s *Tomorrow’s Parties*.

² The idea of a form of improvisatory performance emerging simultaneously to the situation in which it unfolds is also explored in Emma Cocker, *Live Notation: Reflections on a Kairotic Practice*, *Performance Research Journal*, issue Vol 18, No.5. ‘On Writing and Digital Media’ (eds.) Ric Allsopp and Jerome Fletcher.

³ The notion of *kairos* has become an important conceptual touch-stone for me within a number of recent writing projects including Emma Cocker, ‘The Restless Line, Drawing’, in *Hyperdrawing: Beyond the Lines of Contemporary Art*, eds. Russell Marshall and Phil Sawdon, I.B.Tauris, (2012) and ‘Looking for Loopholes: Cartographies of Escape’ in *Cartographies of Exile*, ed. Karen Bishop, Routledge, 2014. My current research develops the idea of

'helmsman's knowledge' as a manifestation of the Ancient Greek art of *technē*, a 'productive' or 'tactical' knowledge based on the key principles of *mētis* (cunning intelligence) and *kairos* (opportune timing).

⁴ Jean-Paul Martinon, *On Futurity: Malbou, Nancy and Derrida*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p.xi.

⁵ Martinon, 2007, p.1.

⁶ Extracts from Forced Entertainment's *Tomorrow's Parties*.

⁷ Martinon, 2007, p.1.

⁸ Martinon, 2007, p.1

⁹ Martinon, 2007, p.15.

¹⁰ Martinon, 2007, p.xi.

¹¹ Martinon, 2007, pp.4 — 5.

¹² Martinon, 2007, 2007, p.7.

¹³ Martinon, 2007, 2007, p.7.

¹⁴ Negri, *Time for Revolution*, (New York and London, Continuum, 2003, p.152.

¹⁵ Negri, 2003, p.152.

¹⁶ Negri, 2003, p.152.

¹⁷ For Negri "Kairós rests then in the eternal. Better still: kairós is the eternal that creates." Negri, 2003, p.167.

¹⁸ Eric Charles White, *Kaironomia: On the Will to Invent*, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1987), p.13

¹⁹ White, 1987, p.

²⁰ White 1987, p.13.

²¹ Sarat Maharaj, *Six impulses on art research, key note presentation* at SARN Conference "We, the public", 26th-27th of April 2012. Available at <https://vimeo.com/60841270>, accessed 4 October 2013.

²² Simon O'Sullivan, *Art Encounters: Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond Representation*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, pp.1 — 2

²³ Franco Berardi, 'Economic Dogmatism and Poetical Thought in the Coming European Insurrection' in *Art as a Thinking Process Visual Forms of Knowledge Production*, (eds.) Mara Ambrožič, Angela Vettese, Sternberg Press, 2013, p.57.

²⁴ *Apeirophobia* is the title of series of works and exhibition by Reuben Henry and Karin Kihlberg with whom I have worked, producing a text in response to their practice in *Beginnings*, Vivid, 2012.

²⁵ Interestingly perhaps, Martinon also refers to the term "Voir venir" (to see-to-come) to 'represent' the "relationship between subjectivity and the un/foreseen as an instance that can only be momentarily determined in its immediacy", that "takes place when a subjectivity (necessarily involved in a teleological process) attempts to see what is coming and finds him or herself therefore open to what is radically unknown, what is contingent", Martinon, 2007, p.41

²⁶ Sarat Maharaj, *Six impulses on art research, key note presentation* at SARN Conference "We, the public", 26th-27th of April 2012. Available at <https://vimeo.com/60841270>, accessed 4 October 2013.

²⁷ Jean-Luc Godard Godard considers the difference between the act of seeing and that of imagining: "Try to see something. Try to imagine something. In the first case, you can say: look at that. In the second you say: close your eyes." Jean-Luc Godard, *Notre Musique*, cited in <http://thinkingthroughimages.wordpress.com/2013/03/15/try-to-see-something-try-to-imagine-something/>

²⁸ Hélène Cixous, 'Writing Blind — conversation with a donkey', in *Stigmata: Escaping Texts*, Routledge, 1998, p.139.

²⁹ Cixous, 'Without End, no, state of drawingness, no, rather: The Executioner's taking off', p.21. See also Emma Cocker, 'Seeing Shadows requires a certain Blindness to the Light' in a forthcoming publication based on a collaborative project (Seers-in-residence) with Traci Kelly.

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- 30 Joyce Carol Oates, *The Faith of a Writer: Life, Craft, Art*, Ecco; Reprint edition, 2003. xi
- 31 Cixous, *Writing Blind*, 1998, p.140.
- 32 Hannah Arendt differentiates between two modes of thinking, between *Verstand* (intellect) and *Vernunft* (reason). In her introduction to *See it Again, Say it Again: The Artist as Researcher* Janneke Wesseling notes how for Arendt, *Verstand* (intellect) “wants to understand perceptible reality” by applying the criteria of “certainty and proof”, *Vernunft* (reason) “has its origins in our need to ponder questions to which we know that there is no answer and for which no verifiable knowledge is possible”. Moreover, the thinking associated with *Vernunft* requires periodic withdrawal from the world, since as Wesseling notes “sensory experience distracts us when we try to concentrate and think, which is why we say that someone who is thinking concentratedly is ‘absent’.” Wesseling, *See it Again, Say it Again: The Artist as Researcher*, Valiz/Antennae Series, 2011, p.10.
- 33 Jean Paul Sartre, *The Imaginary*, pp.183 — 4.
- 34 <http://www.artsheffield.org/>
- 35 Catherine Clément, *Syncope: The Philosophy of Rapture*, University of Minnesota Press, 1994, p.1.
- 36 Vernea Andermatt Conley, Foreword — East Meets West – in Clément, *Syncope: The Philosophy of Rapture*, 1994, p.ix.
- 37 Clément cited in Conley, Foreword, 1994, p.xiv
- 38 Clément, 1994, p.174.
- 39 Conley, 1994, p.x.
- 40 Notions of falling are explored as part of my collaboration *Tacturiency* with Clare Thornton, specifically as part of our work *The Italic I*. We are currently working on a publication exploring the different states of potential made possible through voluntarily surrendering to the event of a repeated fall.
- 41 Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject, Lectures at the College de France 1981 — 1982*, (Picador, New York, 2001), p.454.
- 42 Foucault, 2001, p.46
- 43 Extracts from Forced Entertainment’s *Tomorrow’s Parties*.
- 44 Foucault, 2001, p.470
- 45 Foucault, 2001, p.471.
- 46 Foucault, 2001, p.471
- 47 471.
- 48 Extracts from Forced Entertainment’s *Tomorrow’s Parties*.
- 49 These ideas are also elaborated in Emma Cocker, ‘Tactics for Not Knowing: Preparing for the Unexpected’, in *On Not Knowing — How Artists Think*, (eds.) Rebecca Fortnum and Elizabeth Fisher, Black Dog Publishing, 2013.
- 50 White, 1987, pp.54 — 55).
- 51 Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre, The Human Seriousness of Play*, (New York, PAJ Publications, 1982, pp.82 — 83.
- 52 Paulo Friere, *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*, 1998, p.22.
- 53 Extracts from Forced Entertainment’s *Tomorrow’s Parties*.