

A version of this paper titled "Possibility over Time" was presented at Loughborough University in the English midlands on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009. The two-day conference titled *Interrogations: Creative Interdisciplinarity in Art and Design* offered insights from researchers from across the UK, USA, South Africa with keynote speakers from Cambridge University, Edinburgh University and University of Toronto.

## *Making small talk: the practice of interdisciplinary art research and the "compulsive unlikely"*

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### **abstract**

This paper examines the potentials in interdisciplinary art practice for exploration beyond established paradigms. Philosopher of science, Isabelle Stengers claims that things already impinge across disciplinary boundaries; that an "ecology of practices" is possible in the "event" of interdisciplinary transaction.<sup>1</sup> The investigation accrues insights from one art practice that links to other practices for particular durations. It thereby depends on temporal aggregation and attentive dialogues, enunciating a chain of potentially generative and sustaining production for those involved.

### ***Inter/indisciplinarity***

To begin this exploration of the generative potentials of interdisciplinary art practice, several conceptions of the term interdisciplinarity are useful. I refer to the perspectives of Belgian science philosopher Isabelle Stengers who asserts that association with practitioners in different fields enables sustainable and enlivening, creative possibilities to exceed probable expectations. Her 'ecology of practices' therefore locates possibility or 'events' in the interstices, between disciplinary boundaries or in ways that make those boundaries indeterminate. Events cannot be predicted *a priori* but are encountered through risk and; slowing down to enable thinking with feeling. Through reliable witnessing of the practices of others, transformative and sustaining innovations can thus be engendered.<sup>2</sup>

W J T Mitchell claims a kind of "indisciplinary" 'turbulence or incoherence in the inner and outer boundaries of disciplines. 'Interdisciplinarity' he claims is 'safely institutionalised' although in my experience this is contestable. Nevertheless his emphasis is not on policing knowledge system boundaries.

If a discipline is a way of insuring the continuity of a set of collective practices (technical, social professional)... "indiscipline" is a moment of breakage or rupture when the continuity is broken ... [and] before the routine or ritual is reasserted, [there is] moment of chaos or wonder when a discipline or a way of doing things compulsively performs a revelation of its own inadequacy.<sup>3</sup>

Art practice has qualities that may optimise conditions for innovative process or the in/interdisciplinary rupture above described. In artistic research artists are expected to inculcate academic research paradigms that allow for

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<sup>1</sup> Isabelle Stengers, 'Cosmo-politics: Risk, Hope Change: A Conversation with Isabelle Stengers and Mary Zournazi' in *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*, Ed. Mary Zournazi. (Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press, 2002), 246.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> Ginzburg, Charles et al., 'Inter/disciplinarity' in *The Art Bulletin*. College Art Association 77:4. 541. (Dec 1995), Accessed online 21/05/09 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3046135>

the validation and communication of knowledge claims. This paper posits however, that art's exigencies must also be accommodated such that institutional research paradigms do not foreclose on its unanticipated possibility. It focuses on the possibility of "letting the small talk": the "in" and "inter" discipline ruptures that occur in circumstances that not only *allow* for inventive art's exigencies but also *value the risk and rigour* involved in navigating such a process.

For example some art gestures may be unpredictable in a temporal sense; emerging from slow antecedents such as a serial conversation. Paying attention is fundamental to innovative processes but so is purposeful looking away; diverting thoughts and feelings into the contextual field of the work.

Sarat Maharaj writes that visual art practices do interact with established discursive-academic circuits

.... However this should not lull us into seeing the discursive as the ...prime modality of "thinking through the visual". Alongside runs its "pathic" and "phatic" force, its penumbra of the non-verbal, its somatic scope, its smoky atmospherics, its performative range.<sup>4</sup>

Through writing I continue the making of three clusters of work and in this sense I emphasise duration: the accrual of the work in lived space-time (Bergson). The first is a suite of ephemeral public art works that operated in a changing urban context, the second is a university gallery installation with direct relationship to an academic context and the third is an architectural intervention in an alternative artist-run space situated in a semi-rural recreation park. In writing through these works I aim to bring to more explicit awareness the durational conditions that have enabled processes and transactions to open up to and probe terrain beyond predictable art production. This is not to lay claim to some outstanding originality but rather to openly acknowledge in this work the space of encounter operating through it: listening and intuitively attending to the field of everyday making practices performing around me. Perhaps I also map my own non-linear creative cognition beset with concentration lapses, affectual intensities and intuitive leaps.

Mika Hannula et al recommend critical hermeneutics as the starting point for artistic research involving two stages, listening and constructive critique.<sup>5</sup> With regard to listening, Hannula et al claim that an ethical encounter and relationship begin with:

...the rare ability, wish and need to listen to what is being said. ...it demands...that we give the other party the opportunity to present an argument to reveal what they have to say in their own way and style...grounded in the means of the person who presents the message.<sup>6</sup>

As such it establishes for Hannula et al a 'politics of listening' which has a lot to do with the politics of representation and while an encounter and communication will always fail to be neutral,

...[e]ncountering otherness requires instead a critical gaze and the acquirement of distance from one's own starting points and needs....There must be air-airness.<sup>7</sup>

This artwork and writing are therefore complete in themselves yet they have been produced provisionally: to assume or manoeuvre towards such a durational negotiation.

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<sup>4</sup> Sarat Maharaj 'know-how and No-How: stopgap notes on "method" in visual art as knowledge production' *Art&Research* 2:2 (Spring, 2009), 4 <http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v2n2/maharaj.html> Accessed 4/09/09

<sup>5</sup> Hannula, Mika, Suoranta, Juha and Vaden, Tere. *Artistic Research -theories, methods and practices*. (Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, Finland; University of Gothenburg/Art Monitor, Gothenburg, Sweden), 2005: 62-63.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 63

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

## time beings

*There forever* was an ephemeral public art project undertaken on the cusp of a massive gentrification of the Port River area in Adelaide South Australia in April 2007.<sup>8</sup> Work on *Continuous Wave* began as a response to the inhabitants of particular place. As Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt<sup>9</sup> note social conditions and relations are ultimately “sculpted” by architectural nuance.

The works that emerged there were both performative and material artefacts and corresponded to the architectural transition in process. The sites became locations for dialogue and work titles; *swamp*-the state of the port prior to settlement c1830s, *dock* the site of already razed structures at the time of my intervention, *shack* the old customs booth for incoming goods and *shed* a long-term *domus maximus* of a houseboat and its designer. The latter two buildings are threatened with demolition but until now, remain standing. The shack, dubbed the “radio shack”, is currently being considered for heritage listing and has served as the meeting place and accoutrements storage for of a 25 year-old ham radio club. While convincingly internet-savvy, club members are amateur radio stalwarts, experts in radio electronics, antenna building and other kinds of (anachronistic?) communication systems like Morse code aka “continuous wave”. Radio communication, they informed me, more than internet communication affords acuity of interpersonal awareness; ‘you can always tell a pirate by the sound of his voice’. I attended their Wednesday night meetings over a twelve-week period establishing my interest in them as current Port residents on the cusp of change and signalling that I wanted to develop an art project with them. We talked about radio, the shack, or themselves and often they worked to entice me to love the things that they love; into an understanding of radio electronics and other know-how.

Over time complex social dynamics of any group are revealed, albeit this group opened to a shared artistic identification in the process. Curiosity and interest about what would transpire between respective fields of knowledge and expertise built slowly and incrementally. In subscribing to a different kind of local value and bearing witness to an erstwhile unknown field of electronic knowledge, I opened the work to new individual and group subjectivities. As Jorella Andrews emphasizes;

‘the capacity to take up personalized ways of being in ...[a] complex other(ness)-oriented way is something that must be learned and practiced’<sup>10</sup>

and this has been a process of bringing into conjunction and witnessing different making processes. Irit Rogoff highlights that looking away from the intended focus of cultural production may allow different articulations to emerge:

... the act of looking away from the objects of our supposed study, in the shifting modalities of attention...[has] a potential for a re- articulation of the relations between objects, makers and audience. Can looking away be...an alternative form of taking part in culture...the diverting of attention from that which is meant to compel it, i.e. the actual work on display can at times free up a recognition that other manifestations are taking place...<sup>11</sup>

In this case, looking away occurred as an alternative to the more solitary (myth of) art production and as diversion from individual and group focus on radio. As initiator of the project, looking away for me was an intuitive choice based on the context of architectural and demographic transition and flux.<sup>12</sup> Often relational artwork seems

<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.ensemble.va.com.au/therefore> re project’s curatorial premise.

<sup>9</sup> Antoni Negri and Michael Hardt, *Empire* in Dieter Roelstraete, ‘Poiesis Makes Perfect, Notes on Gesture (Reprise)’ (Conference paper). <http://summit.kein.org/node/191> (Accessed online 22/12/08)

<sup>10</sup> Jorella Andrews. ‘Critical Materialities’. (Conference paper) *Summit: non-aligned initiatives in educational culture*. Berlin. May 24-28, 2007. <http://summit.kein.org/node/191> (Accessed online 22/12/08).

<sup>11</sup> Irit Rogoff, ‘Looking Away-Participations in Visual Culture’ *Conversations on Collaborative Arts Practice*. (Conference paper). <http://www.collabarts.org/?p=6> (Accessed online 19/03/09).

<sup>12</sup> In retrospect, my art practice was functioning through related concerns in the research into spectators, attention, affect and time.

remiss in its potential to (re) exploit vulnerable people in adverse circumstances and in its sensational media-like documents of “real life”. During the collaborations, the quiet potency of this work revealed itself differently. Artefacts circumvented direct identifications such that only video shots of hands or sounds of voices were discernable. Despite my fears to the contrary, sustained interest and attention afforded sufficient understanding for works to be achieved without contrived surrender of expertise and aesthetic competence. Sometimes we just needed to wait for the next move to become evident or material to be sourced or fabricated.

Ultimately, *shack* was opened to the public as a ready-made installation and performance; a site of material knowledge and community accompanied by the recorded sound of our conversations. Although a single-track recording was produced, the multi-layered “talk-all-at-once” type of conversations that mostly prevailed there, gave the impression of more complex sound engineering. To me this aptly reflected the layered and fluid identification of performers /makers and spectators from one to time to another. Significantly, each meeting with the radio club was, in itself, a social and cultural performance; a process most cogently faithful to the concerns of the participants and the project.

Ninety bottles of water in plastic containers were situated inside the shack each with an inscribed date. Since amenities had been disconnected pending demolition, the club treasurer conscientiously carried water each week to ensure that tea and other conveniences were continued. After dark on the final night, in the performance titled *swamp* I carried the bottles of water two by two onto the dock. A local audience watched as the accumulating bottles lit by a generator lantern, gathered resistance in the empty space left by a recently razed boat shed. As I returned back and forth from the shack to the dock, the treasurer unexpectedly began to perform this manoeuvre of his own accord carrying this water again with me. As a gesture of support for the project that we had watched over together, there was an ease to this contribution. Whilst tending sensitively to the alterity that was entailed, the performance emerged from a trust built patiently over time.

### **untimely witness**

Following the events of *Continuous Wave*, I considered how my practice could be innovatively articulated in an art-dedicated context. *Line drawing* (2008) was a project curated for a university gallery and thus directly beholden to art institution processes and time frames. Institutional determinations can mitigate the kind of delays and intuitive responsiveness that brings the work into another realm of edgy and experimental possibility. In considering the role of intuition in the process, I focus on Elizabeth Grosz's references to the ideas of Henri Bergson. Bergson's conceptions of intuition and virtuality suggest that by considering the virtual that only exists in time rather than only the spatially in objects, we might be able to engage in social action differently. 'The virtual is another name for the inherence of the past in the present, for the capacity to become other'.<sup>13</sup> Intuition enables the instinctual connection to the sensory and the spatial, organisational insights of the intellect to come together and become orientated towards an opening up to the world.<sup>14</sup>

... intuition is the close, intimate, internal comprehension of and immersion in the durational qualities of life'.... To think intuitively is to think in duration...<sup>15</sup>

Exploring three dimensional and performative drawing processes, my installation incorporated subverted and diverted second-hand theatre props. The curator secured time for the installation to develop over a protracted period such that elements accrued gradually in the gallery at intervals and areas were activated through editing, and creating patterns of motion and spatial articulation. The choice to work with material already present in the everyday world is often mistaken for mannered incompetence. Instead it is a formally considered and thoughtfully enunciated process that refuses the rearticulation of seamless or refined production values to fit museum or market prescriptions. As such it is an open process that acquires freshness from each new context. Umberto Eco's conception of the "open work" affects a:

...mutability...deployed within the specific limits of a given taste, or of predetermined formal tendencies, and is authorized by the concrete pliability of the material offered for the performer's [interpreter's/spectator's] manipulation<sup>16</sup>

For Yves Lomax the formation of work is open in that it can never actually be contained at any one time and within one locale such as a gallery. Her lines imply "opening" as durational flux:

Think of making the art gallery a most untimely place. Think of making the lines break through and not settling for well established points. Think of all the lines that are involved.... in the formation of a gallery space [that] can never be contained in just one local place.<sup>17</sup>

During installation, I recovered a shattered acoustic guitar from a nearby street. I pondered the determinants of its fate; a dynamic performance that I could only imagine. In combination with another found element from the same area, it became a considered part of my installation.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Elisabeth Grosz, *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution & the Untimely*, (NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2004), 251-252.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 234

<sup>16</sup> Umberto Eco, 'An Open Work' in *Participation: Documents of Contemporary Art*, Ed. Claire Bishop, (Whitechapel London, Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2006), 37.

<sup>17</sup> Yves Lomax, *Writing the Image; An Adventure with Art and Theory*. (New York; London. I. B. Tauris, 2000): cited in Irit Rogoff, 'Looking Away-Participations in Visual Culture' in *Conversations on Collaborative Arts Practice*. (Conference Paper) <http://www.collabarts.org/?p=6> (Accessed online 19/03/09).

<sup>18</sup> The text on the bag reads 'I'm famous online'

As exemplar, the guitar contributed to a further aspect of the work's accretion. Earlier in my research I learnt of an emergent technology that turns sound waves into cold air. Thermo-acoustic refrigeration (TAR) may eventually determine a clean and sustainable way to refrigerate and air-condition all kinds of spaces.<sup>19</sup> Briefly stated, TAR functions through a transfer of excited particles stimulated by (enclosed) highly amplified sound (frequency) waves and passed through a directional filter causing an exchange of hot air for cool. Developed in collaboration with staff from Adelaide University Mechanical Engineering Department, *Air conditioner* (2008) was constructed as working model turned installation component. Prompted by my "untimely witnessing" of the guitar "performance", and with a gallery assistant who is also an accomplished musician, guitar synthesiser-generated sounds were recorded. These samples were then arranged and digitally edited to form an original sound composition. Instead of employing a frequency wave machine, *Air conditioner* cooled to music.<sup>20</sup>

*Line drawing* involved a suite of five related installation components with several "drawn" in the regions between disciplines and relating for particular durations to experts from other fields and/or interested others. Precise knowledge in physics and engineering was brought to bear on *Air conditioner*. It is a testament to and signifier of possibility; to remarkable latent or competencies. Importantly, its materiality is the point of reference for all who experience it.

#### **An aside : making small talk**

Jacques Rancière's inquiry into intellectual emancipation refers to the material artefact as a bridge of communication across which one verifies learning with another person. Rancière examines the propositions of educational philosopher Joseph Jacotot, from post-revolutionary France who contends that much can be learnt through material verification. In this evocation, the primary focus is on an honest accounting and recounting process of the learner or "voyager" before a witness such that there is:

[n]o aggregation: the binding of one mind to another. There is intelligence where each person acts, tells what he [sic] is doing and gives the means of verifying the reality of his action.<sup>21</sup>

While the artefact/book is fore-grounded as the bridge and the passage between two minds, it is also the means through which explication is rejected as harbinger of aggregation and the 'annihilation of one mind by another'.<sup>22</sup> Rancière's exploration has a correlate in relations between artist and spectator where work 'addresses a spectator whose interpretive and emotional capacity is not only acknowledged but called upon'.<sup>23</sup> Art he says is politically and socially emancipating when it renounces its authority and ability to do so. Explorations of individual competence are prioritised such that:

...exceeding the system of represented groups [and] constituted identities ... in accordance with their importance in society ...a rupture ... opens out into the recognition of the competence of anyone...<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.mecheng.adelaide.edu.au>

<sup>20</sup> I have come to music composition as autodidact, motivated by recognition of the potency of auditory sensation in installations.

<sup>21</sup> Jacques Jacotot, *Journal of Intellectual Emancipation*, 1835-6: in Jacques Rancière *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999), 253.

<sup>22</sup> Jacotot, *ibid*

<sup>23</sup> Jacques Rancière, 'Art of The Possible' in *Artforum*, (March 2007): 263.

<sup>24</sup> Rancière, J. 'Jacques Rancière and Interdisciplinarity' (Interview with M. Baronian & M. Rosello) Trans G. Elliot. *Art&Research: A Journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods*. 2:1. (Summer, 2008).

<http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v2n1/jrinterview.html> (Accessed 21/08/09).

Rancière's claims (with ethnographer George E. Marcus and his conceptions of fieldwork in the global world), 'a crucial link between aesthetic experience and political engagement'.<sup>25</sup> '[In] showing a non-hierarchical relationship to knowledge', the processes of making /thinking/sensing becomes 'a mutual process of problem-solving'.<sup>26</sup> When working with others notes writer Nikos Papastergiadis it is not a matter of an artist deferring proprietorial claims to a work of art and then revealing underlying individualistic motivations, instead the collaborative art project succeeds or not on the basis of 'the potential encounters and possible exchange between insider-outsider 'epistemic partners' and the mediation of art on its context and participants.<sup>27</sup>

### scope

*Oxymorons for a better life (scope)* was sited at a recreation park in the Adelaide Hills and installed in a small square 19<sup>th</sup> century sandstone office. In the past the office housed scientific records for an adjacent experimental orchard. After many experiments with toxic pesticides the trees were felled and over time the contested vacancy claimed for public recreation. In consultation with local government the office space has recently been renovated and now functions as an independent art space. As such this place reveals a different kind of functioning economy.

Processes of "make-shift" and "make-do" can offer insights in the varied rhythms and tenacious repetitions of everyday life. Having been part of the area reclaimed by local residents, *Seedling Art Space*<sup>28</sup> offers an alternative: a transgressive opening to another kind of rhythm and thought. The local people determine and activate things; they bring food for the art openings, they amble by and ask about the work; they invest. In this work, an enclosed window-to-window cardboard corridor (*scope*) breaches the office inviting other qualities of seeing and exchange. From the inside it is a significant obstruction, occluding much of the interior and creating a barrier to light and movement. Outside from either window, the enclosure becomes a sealed viewing aperture that surveys the intricacies and bearing of the observer's relationship with light and the surrounding growth and decay. Over time, even brief periods of time, light relations are redrawn articulating some newer ecology.

Along an interior wall, *zest: the development of the heart in man [sic]* entails a shelved display of small clay models. This intervention references Adolf Ziegler's mid nineteenth century wax models of developing embryo hearts that were originally sold in conjunction with A.Ecker's *Atlas Icones physiologicae* (Leipzig 1851-59).<sup>29</sup> The models invite associations. Isolated organs based on profound interiority, each 'part of one body developing inside another' is far removed from its intimate and chronological origins.<sup>30</sup> Every model shaped as advance on a previous developmental stage, chronicles some long ago newborn or unborn loss.

Like the character of history and nature in history, in this work I requisition kinds of substratum. The work attests the historicism of knowledge, representation and science, and in making obscure the conjunction between inside and outside intimates pressing ecological responsibilities; incipencies that demand more complex negotiations of the relations between previously hermetic regimes and epistemologies. Science sociologist, Bruno Latour claims that:

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<sup>25</sup> Nikos Papastergiadis, 'The Global Need for Collaboration: Conversations on collaborative art practices'. 9 *Collaborative Arts>>essays*. Accessed online 12/08/09. <http://www.collabarts.org/?p=201>

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*

<sup>28</sup> See <http://www.seedlingartspace.asn.au>

<sup>29</sup> Three dimensional wax model organs usually accompanied encyclopaedia in Leipzig at this time. Cited in S. Chadarevian and Nick Hopwood, Nick. *Models: the Third Dimension of Science*, (Stanford California, Stanford Uni Press, 20040, 176-177.

<sup>30</sup> Michael Taussig, 'The Sun Gives without Receiving' in *Walter Benjamin's Grave*, Chicago; London, University of Chicago Press, 2006.

[p]hilosophers... have been obsessed for much too long with objects and subjects, and not enough by air conditioning! Envelopes, spheres, skins, ambiances, these are the real conditions of possibility' that [it] has been trying to dig out of hopelessly inaccessible 'infrastructures'.<sup>31</sup>

With regard to objects and subjects, Latour's neologism, "*factish*" is revealing in considering injunctions against interdisciplinarity. Factish reclaims the shared etymological origins of the two terms "fetish" and "fact" in order to reconsider the freedom of passage between the real and the constructed; the conceptions of artefact as fetish onto which beliefs and desires are projected and the "facts" of scientific reality.<sup>32</sup> According to Latour, factish recovers this link through the 'actions of the makers of both', such that "construction" and "autonomous reality" are identified as synonymous.<sup>33</sup> Latour posits that the opposition of the terms epistemology and ontology were formed 'in removing human agency from and attachment to the fabrication of facts *and* of fetishes'<sup>34</sup> In reclaiming this association as 'a practical ontology', Latour suggests ways of uninhibited movement between territories such as science and art.<sup>35</sup>

Isabelle Stenger's extensive writings about the potentials of interdisciplinary relations incorporate the term *cosmopolitics*. Cosmopolitics involves "an ecology of practices" where more permeable boundaries open up the possibility of cultural dialogue.<sup>36</sup> An ecology of practices for Stengers aims to generate hopeful encounters; encounters 'with things or people, or ideas that oblige her to think in new ways rather than ceding to probable limitations.'<sup>37</sup>

...where there is life there are boundaries...practices may change through their relation with other practices, because a boundary is not a barrier, it connects the inside and the outside. If the outside changes so will the inside, but not as a function of the outside, in its own manner. So you cannot interfere within but you can try to produce a difference... [so as]not to judge away as mere opinion what is outside ...[a] boundary.<sup>38</sup>

Practice-led art research I assert, can allow for such movement and possibility informing institutionalised systems of knowledge production and extending the scope of reductionist models of disciplinary indifference and separation, production/ consumption, or active and passive involvement. Certainly research must be discursively rigorous and accessible to others if it is to make a contribution. However art can contribute not by ceding its uncertainties and the unlikely compulsive ruptures that mark it pejoratively as difficult or somehow undisciplined, but through the challenge that these very qualities pose for research methodological tradition. While its 'experimental staging' processes activate constructive doubt, (to borrow from Disch on Latour)<sup>39</sup> art research nevertheless requires the critical encounter with others within the field and in the broader cultural context in order to avoid repetition or solipsistic individualism.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Bruno Latour, 'Atmosphere, atmosphere' 2003, entry for exhibition catalogue for Olafur Eliasson, Oct 2003-Mar 2004, Tate Modern Turbine Hall, Unilever Series, <http://web.fm/twiki-bin/view/Hiaz/AtmosphereAtmosphereFullVersion> Accessed online 22/05/09

<sup>32</sup> Bruno Latour. *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. (Cambridge Massachusetts; London, England: Harvard Uni Press, 1999): 274-5.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*, 284-285.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid*

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*, 287.

<sup>36</sup> Isabelle Stengers, 'Cosmo-politics: Risk, Hope Change: A Conversation with Isabelle Stengers' in *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*, Ed. Mary Zournazi, (Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press, 2002): 257-60.

<sup>37</sup> Stengers, 257.

<sup>38</sup> Stengers, 261-262.

<sup>39</sup> Disch, Lisa. "Representation as 'Spokespersonship': Bruno Latour's Political Theory". *Parallax*, 14:3, 2008. 92 <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713695220> Accessed online 26/05/09

<sup>40</sup> Hannula, et al-45-46.



For Latour political representations happen when the “faithful spokesperson” and the “reliable” fact are co-producing; processes that are transformative: and that confer agency on the represented. <sup>41</sup>

Art research is not alone in its performative uncertainties and methodological disjunctures, but art is *the* practice these ruptures as constitutive of creative process can be openly recognised. (This potential resides in the ‘singularity’ (Deleuzian) rather than the universal references or particularities of an artwork. <sup>42</sup> )

So this work is not and never can be a model of art research practice, as it is beholden to contextual nuances and therefore acquires its unexpected possibilities accordingly. Having identified the mutability and temporal slippage in these interdisciplinary practices, it would be futile to invest in any fixed model of practice.

Rather in order to approach a sense of generative possibility, invoking a “durational climate” seems more apt. Such a climate is conditioned by intentional variation in qualities of attention. At times art researchers or indeed any researchers may give themselves permission to look beyond their own singular research focus to “watch over” more permeable borders and bear witness to other performed and material practices. In this way, they partake in the verification processes of another kind of research from a distance: the perspective of “outside insider”. So we might constitute an “inventive atmosphere” at once inside and outside; an in-between process that is serially unstable and self-defining yet one that allows for the potent possibility in a small talk with anyone.

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<sup>41</sup> Disch, *ibid*

<sup>42</sup> Sarat Maharaj ‘know-how and No-How: stopgap notes on “method” in visual art as knowledge production’ *Art&Research* 2:2 (Spring, 2009), 3 <http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v2n2/maharaj.html> Accessed 4/09/09

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