Sponging the Chair

Diagramming Affect through Architecture and Performance

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Bachelor of Fine Arts, Master of Arts, Doctor of Philosophy

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Architecture and Design
RMIT University
June 2012
Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Michael Hornblow

June 17, 2012
Acknowledgments

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Abstract

This doctoral research, conducted through both practice-based and theoretical inquiry, is located within the field of psychophysical performance practice, informed by and intersected with philosophical and architectural approaches to diagramming. The aim of the research is to develop ways of approaching and understanding how affectivity emerges and transforms in a particularly diagrammatic manner within a performative event. In particular, this is considered through the experience of an individual person, between people as intersubjective and collective bodies, and within the built environments they occupy. The research begins with the problem of attaining a condition of ‘openness’: a condition whereby performer(s) produce an affective, collectively held state of embodied presence. Affective openness may be recognized as moments in which we feel ‘moved’ by a performance - or when an inexplicable sense of potential seems to emerge that transforms our habitual perceptions of time, space and subjectivity. This opening to affectivity is a double-edged sword. It radically de-centers the subject, but in doing so allows a sense of shared constraint to act like an intangible glue, connecting individuals and even nonhuman or inanimate elements within the environment.

This approach is very different to other performance practices such as Ballet or Contemporary Dance, especially in the way specific methods deal with sensation and movement, form and intention, memory and the image. A performer may enact a sense of openness between selves and/or things when the boundary conditions by which these qualities are habitually expressed become tentative or indeterminate. Because of the importance of objects, artifacts, and built environments as 'intermediaries' within these performances, a comparison with theories of architectural diagramming and situated cognition provides a broader context for the research practice. In particular, I draw on a Deleuzian notion of ‘the diagram’ - not in the conventional sense of a design document but rather as an abstract device for generating processes of transformation. In working through the experience of developing my own performance practice, alongside theories of diagramming and affect, I develop specific principles and procedures for generating openness. I draw on my training in Butoh dance and Grotowski physical theatre method to consider how bodies and selves are affected by the way they situate themselves within a given site. Objects, artifacts, and built environments are seen to stand in as intermediaries for holding open a tentative disposition and through which collective shifts in affectivity may occur.
Using the conceptual figure of a ‘sponge-body’ I explore how this moves through many different openings in thinking, feeling and doing. In the project work, the constructed nature of this holding open becomes more overt by using chairs as physical performance apparatus. This culminates in the final project with the appearance of a gargoyle - as a character who comes to stand in as an architectural figure for locating what may be at stake for resituating the role of the body within the built environment. The gargoyle presents a grotesque figure sitting on the very cusp of normal social interaction. However in doing so, it reveals how the collective nature of affective openness - across diverse levels of experience, may have far-ranging implications for the future becoming of bodies and buildings, selves and environment.
Introduction

...ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'bring (a person) into a place or group');
from Latin introducere, from intro- 'to the inside' + ducere 'to lead.'

It is something that seems so simple on the face of it, but is often so very hard to do in performing for an audience - to find a quality of openness that may affect them, while at the same time following a particular aim or structure for guiding the collective flow of experience. These two aspects are difficult enough in themselves, but they also get caught up with each other - often trading places, requiring each other in fact. As an initial lead 'to the inside' of this research by practice, I will begin my Introduction with an attempt to describe what a thinking and feeling of openness may be - its limits or problems - and how it becomes a question of defining the nature of affect.

To do this, I should first establish the frame or lens through which this Doctoral research opens. As indicated in my thesis abstract, this research practice is located primarily in the area of psychophysical performance. More specifically, this has involved training over the years with various choreographers in Japanese Butoh dance (Min Tanaka, Yoshito and Kazuo Ohno, Ko Murobushi, Yumi Umiumare, and others). Most importantly for this thesis, I have benefited from an ongoing mentorship and collaboration with Tony Yap - a Malaysian choreographer based in Melbourne, through whom my research has found a broader influence in the physical theatre method of Jerzy Gratowski, and the cross-cultural context of shamanic trance mediumship in Malaysia and Indonesia. These training regimes and cultural influences have inflected my own practice in performance art and video installation. In terms of the former, I've always been fascinated by the feeling of abandoned spaces, urban psycho-geography, and embodied relations with furniture and other objects. My performance practice has focussed on site-specific and/or object-specific actions, to explore how affect, memory and perception extend within and beyond the psychophysical contours of the body. In terms of the latter, I also have a practice in film and video making, which has offered me several additional platforms for performance and other forms of expression; through documentary, music video, short film, video installation, video promotion and live multimedia events.

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1 'MAC OSX 10.7.2 Dictionary, version 2.2.1, Apple Inc’ (2005-2011). I have chosen to use the dictionary available on the same interface through which I write, not just for ease of access, but because I have found its hypertextual immediacy has become important to the experience of writing, as well as the ability to access synonyms and etymological links / sources. All dictionary references in the thesis are by default, as above (Apple Inc, 2005-2011).

2 Tony and I have collaborated on a number of performance projects in Malaysia and Indonesia between 2008 and 2010. In Indonesia this has also involved close collaboration with Javanese dancer / choreographer Agung Gunawan. See also CHAIR 2 Section B, and my Conclusion; or for further information see: www.michaelhornblow.com
These two trajectories - body and image - find mutual implication through a research practice that has over many years drawn on philosophical approaches to aesthetics, affect, relation, political thought (to name a few), particularly through the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. In my Masters thesis (UTS), this focussed primarily on Deleuze’s cinephilosophy (Deleuze; 1986, 1989), as a way of understanding the influence of Antonin Artaud on the butoh of Tatsumi Hijikata (see Hornblow; 2004, and 2006). For my Doctoral research, located in the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory (SIAL), this foray into and through philosophy offers new openings, via affective and diagrammatic approaches, for framing the performative body more specifically in terms of the built environment. These openings start to acquire more clarity, but at the same time multiply in complexity - for both theory and practice. This dilemma and its many opportunities comes to characterize my understanding of affect and the diagram. Firstly, in terms of my own difficulties in finding what it is to be ‘open’ as a performer; as well as the transdisciplinary nature of research-by-practice, in the way it opens within and across many different modes of thinking, feeling, and doing. This then is the problem to be addressed in my thesis - one that is doubly problematic: both the apparent simplicity of an intangible quality, and the many modes and means embedded within it, or by which it may be attained.

Towards openness...

Being ‘open’ might seem like some pure unmediated relation - an unspoken or embodied sense of receptivity and spontaneity. However its very easy for this quality to be disrupted by an intention that ‘I should be open’ - as if this idea appears out of the background of my overall aim, and gets caught up in a mental thought process in terms of identifying my own position in relation to who, what, and how I’m coming across. There’s a shift in the moment - a gap opens in which I become self-conscious. In a simple conversation this might be when the other person suspects an ulterior motive in my appearing open, or instead feels empathy for my struggle to convey what I’m trying to say. Or when a memory is suddenly evoked in me through my attempt to connect - a brief moment of reverie while I collect my thoughts and through which the other person might evoke their own memory (not the same, but opening through a shared hiatus).

What ‘opens’ here is a sense that what is actually happening in any given situation doesn’t just appear to us as this ‘now’ moment, nor is it simply an ‘open communication’ between two people - as a direct to-and-fro of information at a purely mental level of interpretation. There are many indirect modes of attention shifting within my own thinking-feeling - and that of the other person - passing into memory, and across various ideas; where the ‘now’ is already inflected by the past, and at the same time forever on the verge of anticipating how things might turn out. These shifts in duration are also connected to a whole gamut of bodily sensations and imperceptible tendencies working below the level of awareness - the subtle potential of things not yet apparent but nonetheless bearing influence on the situation. Being open is then just as much about being open within myself as it is towards the other person - an opening to ‘the gaps’ between my thinking and feeling, within ideas and sensations.
A word or a thought is carried by a particular quality of breath or muscular tension, so that its meaning or intention is also given in the form of this carrying - ‘held open’ by a specific tension within the body.

We are not just working directly between persons, but also indirectly and simultaneously within ourselves. To add to this clamor of gaps and proliferating relations, we are also working through objects and spaces - which carry their own histories as cultural artifacts and atmospheres, and that come to mediate our gestures and attitudes. The other person is reading my body language as much as listening to my words, while I’m also composing my body in such a way as to convey my feeling (as much as my thinking), with the aid of objects and gestures already laden with traces. I’m also reading their body language in terms of how my composure and my words are received - continually adjusting not just to their receptivity, but also my own - together modulating a dynamic space of reception in which the two of us negotiate a shared openness. Thinking and feeling emerge together, both mine and theirs, and it is this intensive space within and between us - with all its gaps of indirect relation - that allows us to remain open, in response to a situation that is forever changing.

The complexity of this openness - internal and external, thinking and feeling, pastness and futurity, language and sensation, object and artifact - indicates several important leads to the inside of the problem. First, that we are not just affecting the other but also affecting ourselves - and that this dynamic opens as a reciprocal capacity to affect and be affected. This capacity is spread simultaneously across many modes of thinking-feeling - different frames of reference that are always tentative and forever shifting: from the depths of our tendencies to the width of our surroundings. The reciprocal and distributed nature of these indirect relations indicates that we are always and already being affected. The very texture of our experience is ‘held in place’ by the way we are situated across various modes of cognition that are automatically cross-referencing one another.

**Holding open affectivity**

Most importantly, this implies that it is not our subjective intention that actually produces affects (except as the direct result or effect of an action), but rather that affectivity constitutes the very flow of our experience at an unconscious or pre-subjective level. The many forces within this flow are all held in place by one another - ‘in-tension’ as it were, so that our conscious intentions then relate to a particular shift in the flow of self-affecting-self, when forces and modes align in a specific configuration. Our capacity to affect and be affected may then be seen as a power to ‘hold open’ the gaps within this flow - across these different modes of attention that effectively hold us in place. By situating our attention - being ‘at-tension’, we may then be more aware of the emerging force relations underlying our intentions, and hence more attuned to the potential of our pastness in the now moment, as well as to the way things might work out. The latitude of the event may then be more open to transformations of affect, to new possibilities for thinking and feeling that are already multiple and always collective in nature.
This understanding of affect is quite different to the way it is normally defined within psychology, where it is usually limited to specific emotional forms of expression at the intentional or behavioral level of subjective experience. As I explore throughout this thesis, my understanding of affect is drawn instead from certain relational and experiential approaches within philosophy, and also to recent studies in cognitive science at the neurophysiological level. For example with the latter, this is where a sense of being always-already affected - or ‘auto-affection’ as Francisco Varela puts it - lends a particular ‘dispositional tendency’ (Varela, 2000: 26) to our experience of relating. This has a certain gradation or ‘tonality’ in the way it is spread across micro-perceptions of immediate pastness and futurity within the brain, which undergo specific shifts in timing (or phase) when we feel an emotion. That is, while auto-affection operates at a pre-subjective level concerned with the continuity of experience - which already lends itself to a relational openness, emotion tends to foreclose the forces at play within the identity of an ego-subject, delimited to some extent as a personal form of intention or power of expression (of love, hate, admiration, jealousy etc). Even so, these forms and powers are implicated with the forces they comprise. They still have capacity for openness more directly, but the question becomes how and to what extent they are also carried by intensities at the pre-personal level. How do they shift affectivity towards further collective openness rather than close it off or shut it down?

This notion of affective openness, and the problems around its expression, is the specific territory I explore in this thesis. It is by nature tentative, but all the more dynamic for considering how certain performance practices may open and transform relations within and across bodies, objects, sites and selves. The performance context is quite different to the example of conversation given above, offering a range of further insights. The psychophysical practices I discuss focus quite specifically on how affective intensities may be located within the body at the pre-personal level of the autonomic functions. That is, where embodied attention may be sited in the proprioception of breath, musculature, sensation, and so on, as well as kinesthetic spatial awareness. This allows the performer to modulate and transform the emergence of affect at the material level of small physical actions, restituting how signified content and emotional expression may appear at the subjective level of intention. By attending to deeper and wider frames of reference, the performer may tap into the configurations of force they comprise, holding open content and expression so that continuous shifts and new potentials for affectivity may occur at a collective level.

This configuration of forces recalls in a new way the original Latin etymology of Affect - affectus or ‘disposition’, but now where the meaning of ‘disposition’ may also be given here as an ‘arrangement, placement, configuration or distribution’. In terms of Varela’s ‘dispositional tendency’, we might find the sense of an ‘inclination, tendency or propensity’ (synonymous with ‘disposition’), indicating the tonality of always-already being affected. And so then if we speak of disposition as ‘a person’s inherent qualities of mind or character’, this might now become an inherent auto-affection within the very grain of embodied cognition; for which ‘character’ becomes our capacity to modulate the tonal shifts that
occur within a configuration of forces - our flexibility to hold open as much as the strength to hold it all in place or keep it together. In a second definition of Affect - *afficere*, ‘to influence’, this is no longer simply an intention to determine the agency or feeling of another person, but in the manner that influence means to ‘in-flow’\(^3\) - in which we are always already modulating our disposition within a reciprocal flow of experience, as this flow shifts through turbulent eddies and plunges on.

Another distinction for the performance context is the way a performer undergoes a certain abstraction of identity in characterizing a role, or by acquiring a sense of ‘presence’. As we will see, this involves a specifically performative disposition in the way they affect themselves as much as the other. Unlike the conversation example above, the performer is not necessarily playing or presenting themselves, nor even only performing for one person. Although, as I will discuss through practices such as Butoh dance, Gratowski physical theatre, and my own performance art, it is not the number of people or variable verity to character or personal self that is at issue. One of the key insights performance has to offer concerns the way purely material and functional qualities may serve to abstract forms of content and expression, in their configurations of force or intensity, across diverse modes of attention. This is where a quality of ‘lived abstraction’ may be found to comprise the very construction of self, its intentions and sense of agency in the world. To reframe my initial point, it is now no longer simply a question of finding a pure unmediated openness, as if it were some original ‘nature’ within the body. Rather, it is a matter of taking up a tentative disposition in which thinking and feeling are forever contingent upon one another, where memories and physical tendencies co-mingle, and where bodies and selves are already bound up with objects, artifacts and built surroundings. This performative construction is not an act of inauthentic artifice - the guise of a mere ‘character’. Rather, it is locate the particular *characteristics* or qualities that constitute the very tentativeness that we are, and of moving through the gaps within a multiplicity of relations.

As in its etymology, to ‘perform’ is to ‘furnish or provide... through to completion’. But it is not the same as simply arriving at a completed form. To ‘per-form’ is perhaps to provide what might allow this formation to occur, an event that is always collective and forever emergent. It is firstly a *collection* or tentative arrangement of characteristics - in the sense that these configurations are distributed deeply and widely, so it is only ever ‘complete’ in its *potential* to furnish a dynamic continuity that remains forever open. Its ‘completion’ is in this openness, through a reciprocal capacity to affect and be affected - to be taken up within a collective field and in which we may feel ‘moved’ by a tentative ‘influence’ that passes across the inside and outside of ourselves.

\(^3\) ‘Influence’ originally had the general sense ‘an influx, flowing matter,’ also specifically (in astrology) ‘the flowing in of ethereal fluid (affecting human destiny).’ The sense of ‘imperceptible or indirect action exerted to cause changes’ was established in Scholastic Latin by the 13th century (but not recorded in English until the late 16th century).
Finding a tentative disposition in the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory

This tentative disposition has characterized my research-by-practice from the outset, even if its potential wasn’t fully realized until later. My doctoral candidature is located in the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory at RMIT, a post-graduate department known for its cutting-edge architectural research in parametric modeling and 3D printing, under the directorship of Professor Mark Burry. As a non-architect with a background in film / video, dance and performance art, there was always some uncertainty around how I was to place my research vis-à-vis the discipline of Architecture. The question has teetered back and forth, between making an explicit critical stance that attempts to resituate the place of the body within architectural discourse, and a more modest focus on the potential for productive contrasts, speaking from within the specificity of my own practice (and related discourses). This Introduction to the thesis is then a kind of ‘lead to the inside’ of this particular problem, a question of how to ‘bring (a person) into a place or group’, in the way I’m trying to move between disciplines, but in the process also feeling ‘moved’ by this to-and-fro, across the discursive insides and outsides of how certain practices may be defined.4

What makes SIAL such an innovative environment is that it is also open to practitioners from other disciplines - photography, holography, fashion, dance etc. - very broadly placed within an expanded field of spatial practice. Candidates examining the flexibility of parametric algorithms sit alongside those concerned with moving bodies, prosthetic modifications, and aberrant perceptions - finding a common sensibility in pushing the boundaries. My lead into SIAL was via introduction to the writing of my doctoral supervisor Pia Ednie Brown, opening into a common interest around how affectivity may be situated and diagrammed within art and design practice. Her notion of adopting an ‘affective stance’ (Ednie-Brown, 2007) is one concerned with an attitude or posture in approaching creative work - how we move in speaking and relating to it, how we feel the thinking about it - and how this stance is inseparable from its emergence, its potential for ongoing transformation. My own affective stance has seen the emergence of a tentative disposition in which the goal posts have been constantly shifting - opening and closing via the disparate pressures of scope and focus, spread across diverse discourses and practices. If it can be called an affective stance it is one that has emerged on the tentative edge of taking a more deliberate critical stance, but as if this intention around a particular position was already too much to hold in place, too ready to arrive at the form of an argument.

4 While SIAL has provided a first home for this research by practice, I’ve also been fortunate to find an extended community through Sense Lab - an international network of artists, academics, dancers, and writers; founded by Erin Manning and Brian Massumi, based in Montreal Canada through Concordia University. This has involved participating in a series of international events exploring creative practice and transdisciplinary research: Housing the Body, Dressing the Environment (2007), Society of Molecules (2009), and Generating the Impossible (2011). (I missed the first event in the series, Dancing the Virtual in 2005, coming the year before my candidature commenced). I make reference to some of these events throughout the thesis. For more information, see: http://senselab.ca/
Several conference papers have been written and some chapters completed but abandoned on the subject of architecture-meets-performance - as a resituating of the body within the built environment. I will return to these points shortly, but what's more interesting for me now is how stepping away from seeking to maintain this position has allowed its affect to be felt, to become part of this tentative disposition, indeed opening space and time for this affective disposition to become my critical position. Curiously, it finally returns in the end as a perspective that actually emerges from within the project work, where this tentativeness becomes a modus operandi through quite specific principles and procedures.

This may be tracked in several ways. Firstly, the candidature has teetered to-and-fro around the question of defining what ‘research-by-practice’ means for my own purposes. In practical terms this appeared initially as an issue for University regulations - whether it is submitted in Project-mode or Thesis-mode. The nature of research-by-practice may be explored in either, and certainly Thesis-mode doesn’t limit the investigation of specific projects; only that there is perhaps more emphasis on theoretical as much as descriptive exposition. A practical limitation is Word-count, and while in my case this proved a key indicator for switching from Project to Thesis, it also came to reflect the shift in emphasis that was already occurring. As the number of projects was reduced - from a total of seventeen produced during the candidature, to only two described in any depth - the theoretical implications multiplied in complexity. In the process, the notion of a tentative disposition (as affective stance) started to play out in the particular to-and-fro of theory and practice.

My approach to research-by-practice has evolved in a way that seeks to integrate theory and practice through this tentative disposition. In a similar manner to the way thinking-feeling become indeterminate, I try to see how theory and practice may be ‘held open’ by problematizing the way they are situated, so their potential for affecting one another may undergo unexpected transformations. As I see it, the problem inherent within many approaches to practice-based research (that are informed by theory), is how one aspect will often predominate over the other. Either theory becomes a matter of explaining practice without generating new ways of feeling – new sensations; and/or the practice becomes a matter of demonstrating or illustrating theory without generating new ways of thinking – new concepts. Both tendencies turn on two sides of the same limit, and in a worst-case scenario only reinforce a double separation - falling short of realizing the potential of their mutual engagement as a relational dynamic. A pragmatic constraint arises when we do something, then reflect on the doing, then write about it, return to doing once again, and so on. This dynamic of differentiation and integration is crucial and requires adequate spacing, but it is often haunted by a lack of implication that defaults to conventional a priori and empirical modes of enquiry.
An alternative approach may be to explore what might be called a ‘radical empirical’ mode of research-by-practice, informed by the way Brian Massumi develops the concept of radical empiricism from the work of William James. As I discuss, this would be one where thinking and feeling are found in both theory and practice, and where we might problematize these relations as a quality of mutual constraint, through an affective stance or tentative disposition. As a guiding principle, this stance may be situated through whichever mode we seem to be working within at any given moment - writing, reading, making, doing - but as if we were also working in the mode of the other at the same time, where the presentness of one acquires ‘presence’ by being held open, so it may be inflected by the absence of the other, and by which it may be taken up. Reading and writing are also a doing and making, both carried by the tentative continuity of thinking-feeling.

Transdisciplinarity:

How may this be implemented in actual fact? For the project-work, this tentative disposition becomes a generative principle for opening the boundaries between architecture and performance to a broader transdisciplinary sensibility, rather than a purely interdisciplinary one. The distinction I draw here is perhaps just as much an ‘intra-disciplinary’ approach - by which I mean; a process of going more deeply into the particular dynamics and singular qualities that constitute a given practice. Then there is the potential not only for comparing and contrasting two disciplinary practices at the discursive level - in terms of the way they are formalized and identify themselves, but also how underlying dynamics operate at an affective level and hence may be seen to work transversally within and across multiple disciplines (albeit via their specific operations). So for example, qualities of sensation, movement, intention, perception, and the image, are common elements found within a transdisciplinary field. By exploring what is singular across different perspectives, in terms of these qualities, insights emerge that may then fold back on disciplinary critiques through more a fine-grained set of discursive practices.5

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5 Foucault used the term ‘discursive practices’ to indicate how disciplinary boundaries may be destabilised and where new forms of knowledge may emerge through the inter-relationships between fields:

"It is usually the case that a discursive practice assembles a number of diverse disciplines or sciences or that it crosses a certain number among them and regroups many of their individual characteristics into a new and occasionally unexpected unity.”

“‘The transformation of a discursive practice is linked to a whole range of usually complex modifications that can occur outside its domain (in the forms of production, in social relationships, in political institutions), inside it (in its techniques for determining its objects, in the adjustment and refinement of its concepts, in its accumulation of facts), or to the side of it (in other discursive practices)” Foucault, 1977: 199-200.
Affective shifts via experiential qualities

This fold-back occurs firstly at an experiential level, where these qualities relate to one another in the way they are located across various psychophysical frames of reference - a perception of sensation, an intention to move, and so on. These are qualities of thinking-feeling situated deeply and broadly inside and outside ourselves. My primary focus is on how insights drawn from psychophysical performance may serve to hold open these experiential qualities to transformations of affect. This involves not only locating them across simultaneous frames of reference (external kinesthetic awareness, internal proprioception, as well as signifying and autonomic or pre-signifying intensities), but also dislocating or short-circuiting their normative or habitual relations. This dislocation is where untimely shifts open up within and across different qualities, revealing the multifaceted and distributed nature of our experience in the now moment (as discussed before with reference to Varela). These shifts are where specific turning points or hinge points may be modulated through a tentative disposition - for instance in the way a perception of sensation or intention to move affects the performer. At the same time, this generates an untimely shift with the audience - in their own perceptions, sensations and intentions for feeling moved. A modulated dislocation opens for sitting tentatively on the cusp of thinking-feeling - across individual, pre-individual and collective modes of becoming.

Affective shifts via transdisciplinary dislocations

Opening these affective shifts is also a matter of moving tentatively within and across different methods and processes. Various techniques offer a preliminary toolkit for generating these shifts, as a dislocation of experiential qualities, but they also arise within specific disciplines and hence reach a certain limit in their translation within a transdisciplinary context. This requires a dislocation, modulation or shift in process and/or method, just as much as the qualities they may serve to dislocate or short-circuit. The thesis chapters follow a trajectory marked by several key turning points in this regard, following a series of internal disciplinary shifts within my own performance practice. This runs through specific methods and processes - dance, performance art, object, installation, video - where tools and techniques drawn from a particular context enable affective openness but also reveal inherent problems that call for still further approaches.
Thesis structure

The thesis is structured in two parts - Part 1: SPONGE, and Part 2: CHAIR - so-called for the key images, objects and strategies that assist me in exploring the experiential nature of affectivity in performance; and how the built environment has a crucial bearing on the opening of affect within an event. Each chapter has a different project focus which responds to the implications of the last, while setting up further problems and potentials for the next.

Pre-amble:
I preface part 1 with an experience I had of walking through an abandoned warehouse while using an exercise from my dance training - called Sponge body - to explore how body and building affect one another. This ‘sponging process’ is when a person may imaginatively ‘absorb’ all the sensate qualities of the environment to get a sense of being densely ‘saturated’ with intensity.

SPONGE:
In the two chapters of part 1 that follow, the Sponge body provides an experiential basis for developing an understanding of affective openness. This is primarily concerned with finding a loci of indeterminacy between motor intention and movement expression in the body, to problematize notions of causality and agency within the self. This ‘pre-amble’ is one that generates purely intensive, indirect, and internal movements that come before actual movement expression in external space. Delaying motor intention in this way creates a certain tentativeness through which bodies, selves and surroundings may become open to one another.

The warehouse experience also helps me to understand how ‘site-specificity’ may be seen as a situated co-extension of self and site. At the same time, its limitations stem from a perilous uncertainty around what I might actually find in the building, thereby reducing the physical action to a simple walk. I revisit the warehouse experience once again in Chapter 2 to analyze qualities of sensation, perception, intention and emotional expression in more depth, while situating it more broadly within the specific dance training contexts and histories that inform it (Butoh dance and Grotowski Physical Theatre Method). This allows me to consider a wider span of physical movement and collaboration, to see how the distributed nature of the warehouse experience was already ‘collective’, even though my walk was a solitary one. Despite this expanded field, a limitation appears in the sense that these dance exercises are often primarily concerned with the agency of the body, and are not specifically situated in co-extension with the built surround. They lose something of the very tentative becoming that occurs between body and building in the abandoned warehouse. This provocation leads me into the project work proper.
CHAIR:
While part 1 SPONGE focusses on an experiential case study and the training regime that informs it, part 2 CHAIR takes these insights through several internal disciplinary shifts - from dance to performance art, to video performance installation. In a series of performance works - the Chair series - I use chairs as a physical performance apparatus to explore how objects, artifacts and sites may be seen to ‘stand in’ as intermediaries for ‘holding open’ a tentative disposition, and through which collective shifts in affectivity may occur. Part 1 SPONGE reveals how embodied experience is spread across different psychophysical frames of reference, and where affective openness may be modulated via qualitative shifts in sensation, perception, intention, and movement. Part 2 CHAIR approaches the task of modulating shifts within and across these frames as a more overt process of construction, as a matter of holding open particular configurations of body-object-site-self.

Mapping the territory

As these performative experiences become more constructed, they allow me to consider how the built environment is not only an architectural entity but also constitutes a broader field comprising its own internal shifts at the level of object relations and cultural artifacts. In this way the thesis becomes a kind of ‘mapping’ across both theory and practice, where discursive and experiential modes become intertwined. I think of this mapping as a provisional survey of established fields, or rhetorical territories - architecture, performance, art, cognitive science, philosophy - where singular qualities of experience (sensation, intention, and so on) may be seen from multiple perspectives. Once again, a tentative disposition is adopted for holding open a rhetorical space in which they share certain correspondences, but through which they may affect one another in new ways. Issues of ontology, process and operation are not just internal to each discipline, but become shared constraints in the way they situate themselves as collective forms of life within the world at large. This approach reflects the very content of their shared focus - affective openness - offering the chance to dislocate their territories, allowing them to shift through particular configurations comprising specific qualities and procedures.

The diagram

A critical juncture across these multiple perspectives, and running closely alongside the exploration of affect, is the notion of diagramming. This ‘diagram’ is not simply that of a conventional graphical schema (although several of these help along the way), but in the way that Gilles Deleuze (and others) frame it - as an abstract field of forces operating within the very fabric of the event, the very texture of lived experience.
For my tentative disposition this ‘diagram’ may be understood firstly as comprising particular configurations of qualities and procedures, as a field of forces that passes within and across the mapping of territories. This diagramming serves to dislocate or abstract these mappings from their original context - as formalized contents and expressions - so that their interpolation through shared constraints may enter abstract relations via qualities and procedures, or what Deleuze and Guattari might call pure matters and functions (2005: 142).

Secondly then, this diagram is not just a configuration of forces, as actual points or things, but concerns the character of the relations that exist within a diagrammatic configuration. They are not just of one point upon another, but of multiple points held in tension and holding one another open in a dynamic manner. Each point or thing has a capacity to affect and be affected by another as a function or matter of force, but these also sit within a collective field, so that each is not only modulated locally or directly with others, but also globally, indirectly or transversally by the entire configuration. The configuration is held in place by this internal tension, which is also forever changing in response to what is outside it, its external environment. This boundary condition isn't always clearly defined, because the very nature of this responsive modulation is founded upon the very fact that forces are always in relation to other forces. They share an irreducible relation that is ‘outside' the forms of things but at the same time delimits their ‘inside':

“There is therefore an emergence of forces which remains distinct from the history of forms, since it operates in a different dimension. It is an outside which is farther away than any external world and even any form of exteriority, which henceforth becomes infinitely closer.”

Deleuze, 2006: 86

It is then not particular things that define points of configuration - affecting and being affected - but where this affectivity is an inseparably reciprocal relation. Following Foucault, this is what Deleuze calls the ‘absolute outside' found at the very heart of interiority. That is, just as a configuration of forces delineates an interior, the very fact of force operates both at the global level of modulation and at the reciprocity of all relations. This rupture of scale at the local / global (or rather transverse / translocal) describes a dynamic state of resistance and a capacity for transformation, where points of relation are always flickering across the boundary condition, dropping in and out of different configurations, endlessly redefining them.

*Diagramming affect*

Throughout the thesis, this becomes an important way for me to understand the potential for a ‘diagramming of affect', where the inexplicable nature of affectivity arises from these abstract configurations. Ultimately however, it is the capacity to affect and be affected that becomes critical.
Whereas the diagram may be seen as a configuration of forces, affect is the change in the way these diagrammatic forces are modulated. That is, affect registers a shift in the emergence and transformation of these forces. This is where affect works firstly at the pre-individual level of pure relations and secondly through specific powers or forms of identity - the former as a transverse power to affect and be affected, the latter as a formalised diagram of power in the way Foucault conceives it. For my own performance practice, this diagrammatic perspective helps me to spatialize how affective shifts in thinking-feeling may be seen to oscillate across the boundary conditions of individual and collective configurations.

This is especially useful in delineating the subtle albeit radical and potentially catastrophic shifts that often occur through emotional expression; where it has the capacity to transform a collective field, but also collapse affective openness when it becomes formalized at the personal level. With reference to the nonlinear dynamical modeling of experience within cognitive science, I draw especially on Varela's notion of 'affective tonality' to track how these shifts develop through the performance projects (Varela, 2000). I draw parallels with similar ways of looking at the problem through Deleuze and others, in particular Massumi's notion of the 'biogram' as a fold in experience; the autonomy of affect; and the diagram as a technique of existence (Massumi, 2002; 2011). This offers fruitful parallels for understanding other projects like these from different perspectives, as well as how these concepts they may be understood in relation to one another.

Architectural diagramming

A long and complex history of diagramming exists within architectural theory and practice. There isn't the scope within this research-by-practice to explore the critical debates or technical operations in depth. However, as I've said my focus here is on the experiential nature of affectivity, in the way the built environment, via object relations and cultural artifacts, may serve to stand in and hold open affective shifts between individual and collective fields. Having said that, there are several key areas within architectural diagramming that are especially relevant. Firstly, Peter Eisenman is a seminal figure in shifting the discourse around architectural form, away from its modernist basis in functionalism, towards an operational set of dynamic transformations (see Somol, in Eisenman, 1999). I've explored in previous drafts the potential for drawing parallels here with the indirect emergence of form within psychophysical performance. However, these contrasts have been largely relegated to footnotes in the final version (due to limitations of scope, focus, length). Of more use for the project work from an experiential point of view is where Eisenman describes how architecture acquires metaphysical presence via a dislocation in historical typologies. He posits this with reference to ‘shifts in phase’ - in the way it is understood in nonlinear dynamics, which helps me to locate Varela’s affective tonality vis-à-vis presence in performance; as a set of untimely relations that are co-extensive with the built environment.
A tentative footing between footnotes and text body

Eisenman and several other architects return again and again throughout the footnotes, like the co-emergence of a secondary argument not yet fully formed, or the deeper substrate of an affective stance for locating my research within SIAL. This performs its own dislocation as a tentative disposition across the actual formatting of the thesis, as if architecture were to lend me a provisional ‘footing’ for which to site the ‘body’ of the text. These leads offer future research trajectories for resituating this body upon new foundations. This ‘Introduction’ is then not just a ‘lead to the inside... bringing [my] person into a place or group’, as a situating of myself in a field to which I may never really ‘belong’ (as a non-architect). Rather, it is an inside that leads through an absolute outside of potential, where this diagramming across the mapping of territories is only the ‘place’ of being situated or held open in a distributed manner; within a ‘group’ that is a collection of things as much as a social domain readily identified as such. As I discuss with reference to Massumi, there is a ‘double openness’ to these affects. ‘Belonging together’ as a diverse collective stems from being differentiated as forms, doubly open to one another via qualities of shared constraint, rather than arriving at a formal identity when we might say ‘those people who do that.’

Chaise traceur

Architectural diagramming explicitly comes to the fore in the project work through an in-depth analysis of two major works in the Chair series: Chaise traceur in CHAIR 1, and Gargoyle in CHAIR 2. In both cases, theoretical frameworks are drawn from architectural theorists or writers who are also practitioners, while working across broader contexts in a transdisciplinary manner. For Chaise traceur I use the work of Bernard Cache, who develops a diagrammatic understanding drawn from Deleuze, applied to architecture very broadly through the mathematical notion of ‘inflection’ (Cache, 1995). In a similar way to Eisenman’s use of nonlinear dynamics, inflection concerns singular points or shifts where things hinge upon one another. Cache’s inflection is very useful for mapping emergent dynamics across disciplines, methods and processes, in the way he posits a ‘proto-geometric’ approach to diagramming. Inflection is where states of transformation may be expressed at the point where an abstract line changes curvature.

This offers a way of imagining how the absolute outside ‘turns’ the inside of things - through relations that are both between concrete things but also ones that pass through all objects as an abstract rupture of scale. Inflections shift through geography, architecture, furniture, and the body, via diverse forces and identity formations. This theoretical framework directly inspires the performance action with the chair, while allowing me to analyze where and how specific shifts in affective openness occur.
Garg(oy)le

Picking up on the insights of part 1 SPONGE, there is a delicate moment at the end of the performance where my emotional expression becomes self-conscious and collapses this openness, but then is situated again more collectively by reconnecting with objects and audience. The implications of Chaise traceur are resolved in Garg(oy)le in a number of ways. Firstly, there are two further disciplinary and processual shifts - sculpture and video installation - which serve to integrate all the objects and methods from previous works in the series into one assemblage, within a more compressed spatiotemporal action. The theoretical framework is drawn from the work of Arakawa and Gins, a pair of artist-architect-poets who, like Cache, are both writers and practitioners operating within a broader transdisciplinary field. The benefit of their work is in the way they specifically address the situated agency of the body within the built environment, and how they are also informed by theories of situated cognition and nonlinear dynamics. Like Chaise traceur vis-à-vis Cache, the Garg(oy)le project was initiated and developed explicitly as an engagement with Arakawa and Gins through two stages of practice - performance and video post-production - running in parallel with periods of intensive writing.  

Stanzas and principles of a critical disposition

With the Garg(oy)le project, the tentative disposition that has emerged in so many different ways throughout my research passes through a final transformation. As I said at the beginning of this Introduction, my stance steps back from taking a critical position at first, but in its tentative emergence may now offer a critical disposition in both processual and affective terms. This stance passes through various modes - or stanzas if you will, like recurring lines in a poem: the oscillation of theory and practice within the projects; the mapping of transdisciplinary fields; their dislocation as discursive territories through experiential qualities of sensation, perception, intention, movement; and finally the internal shifts that occur in my performance practice via dance, performance art, sculpture and video installation. Through Arakawa and Gins I identify how these stanzas become integrated through the figure of the gargoyle as a particular kind of diagramming.

The project reveals how the tentative disposition that has emerged turns upon several key ‘organising principles’ or abstract operations. The first of these is a principle of inversion, whereby habitual or normative relations are turned around and through one another, hinging upon mutual constraints in a reciprocal manner. Dialectical oppositions may then stand in for one another, as a holding open of thinking and feeling, theory and practice, discourse and operation, qualities and procedures. The

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6 The first stage was produced for the 3rd Arakawa and Gins Conference (AG3, 2010); the second during the final PhD write-up stage (2011-2012).
second, closely tied to the first, is a principle of recursion, whereby these pairings are dislocated across just as much as within themselves, through a process of endless implication and cross-reference. This is revealed most clearly in the Gargoyle project, when the compression of qualities within the action transforms at a critical moment, and when I realise the extent to which the work has emerged as a collective field - in ways that are simultaneously social, material and processual.

The gargoyle as an architectural figure

Through an analysis of the emotional expression that unfolds in this critical moment, I'm able to see how the character of the gargoyle may stand in as an architectural figure for resituating the role of the body within the built environment; a siting that is inextricably affective and collective in nature. The principles of inversion and recursion emerge from the outset, through equally sensate and abstract 'sponging' operations. They now find a singular transformation in the gargoyle through a notion of negentropy, in which sponging takes on a particular character within and between people. This final principle of negentropic sponging refers to 'the capacity of an organism to trade its own entropy with its environment', which for the gargoyle becomes a mutual constraint of affecting and being affected, towards openness.

This allows me to make some critical comments on the trajectory of contemporary architecture from the perspective of psychophysical performance, through the gargoyle, and as future directions for further research. It is also where the gargoyle offers insights into the value of diagramming as a research practice - via a negentropic relation of holding open and being taken up by the other.

Interstices in the text body

As a final lead to the inside (of the outside), there are a several interstitial sections within the structure of the thesis where I try to clarify how implications emerge and gather themselves. Between parts 1 and 2 there is a brief Threshold section, and later a short Segue between the chapters on Chaise traceur and Gargoyle. These serve as hinge points or sponge holes for gathering inversions and recursions across the thesis.
These principles are very much something that I feel in my thinking, and feel about my thinking, and so they are something I hope may be felt in the experience of reading as much as writing. This leading inside and out, or turning inside out and back and forth, begins with an invitation to walk with me through the warehouse. This ‘Pre-amble’ is the first interstice within the text, not just between this Introduction and the Chapters, but also between my body and yours. Or for the sake of this experience - ours - one for retracing steps across the reading and writing of a text body: “...like ushering or drawing others into the absolute outside, into a sharing of the shared... its perhaps an invitation to co-generate” (Ednie-Brown).7

7 Personal email, feedback comments on the thesis - in response to my proposing the term ‘affective openness’, rather than the more problematic notion of ‘affective transmission’.
Before embarking on this journey into affect I’d like to describe an experience I had towards the beginning of the candidature, which I hope may convey an understanding and a feeling for the states of embodiment I explore in this research – and in particular the diagrammatic sense in which they emerge through a mutual engagement of architecture and the body.

Imagine an old warehouse the size of a city block, stripped of its internal functions and context within the wider urban fabric – boarded up and defaced, abject and uncanny with its broken windows and crumbling façade. Utterly closed, and yet this seemingly absolute exterior promises a kind of pure interiority, an empty limitless space without people, without décor, machinery or program requirements testifying to the occupation of users and owners. Inside, the huge old workshop spaces extend as vast desiccated voids, the raw play of light and shadow plunging into a darkness of pure potential, like a timeless desert hiding in the middle of suburbia. There’s a sense of being far away from the world and then so very close to something utterly inexplicable. The space is full of ghosts – in its emptiness and abjection it feels thoroughly populated, for as the building decays it reveals deep layers of user history. Equally grotesque and alluring, its textures and colors fall into some kind of autopoietic archaeology of a strange duration. Like a process of deconstruction self-organizing its own disappearance if only to become vivid and eternal.

The building is never really closed as such. The fact that it’s unoccupied invites all sorts of unsavory elements – squatters, gleaners, graffers, junkies, day-trippers. You never know what you’re going to find in there and it can be quite terrifying, as much for ‘the ghosts’ as for anything living, especially after dark without a torch. Moving through the building becomes a process of becoming imperceptible – as a matter of survival it’s always better to sense the other person coming first, or at least for the ghosts to meet them on their own terms.

Out of necessity I found myself adopting a strategy I’d learnt from Butoh dance training, an exercise I call Sponge body. This is a twofold process of reciprocal enfolding and unfolding. First, imagine the entire body is a sponge, my body or yours – or shall we say for the purposes of transmission, ‘ours’. A porous body made entirely of soft fibers, we are hollow in the manner that an aquatic invertebrate sponge draws in water to extract nutrients and oxygen, but also hollow in the way our sense perception extends into space as an attuning with the environment. From a stationary position, lets use all the sense modalities we have available to take our attention throughout the building, to the very edge of what can be noted near and far – sight lines and peripheral vision (the latter as important for sponging spatial volumes as the former), sounds near and far (here and beyond), olfactory atmospheres passing into materials, the pressure of our clothes and airflow on our skin.
And there will also be the tentative anticipation towards these surroundings that we may absorb, the prickling of skin and the quiver of muscles in readiness. This includes any memories of the building or mood impressions, but where these imaginings are now no longer prior or merely speculative but register a feeling for the existence of other entities, other rooms.

For our sponge body all of these human sense perceptions are rendered as concrete abstractions of thinking-feeling, like synesthetic textures of sight, sound and so on that are no longer even species-specific. There is a reciprocal process of double capture that happens, where the sponge body absorbs all these impressions to become heavy and sodden with them. Our attention expands but only insofar as this imagination is situated in the contraction of feeling a mutual absorption. Finally when we reach the scale of sensing the whole building we arrive at an absolute density of being located. At this point we can feel the ‘slowness’ of the building itself as an autonomous entity, as a sense of duration that saturates the event, but also subsumes it within some larger totality. Now we can feel a slight tug pulling us forward, as if ‘feeling moved’ by something inexplicable out there. We are moved by the slowness of a shared weight, for just as we become heavy with the building, there is a strange intensity flickering between us, as if the building has also absorbed the agency of our delayed motor intention. Now when we step off from stationary position we are in effect only moving into ourselves, for we have already become the building and the building has become us (at the dynamic level of reciprocal expansion and contraction, across different sense modalities).

Handy for knowing if someone is around. And even the ghosts, or the skittish pigeons, strange creaks and things rattling in the wind, are no longer as frightening because our boundary condition is so porous as to allow these things to be what they are, and also part of us, just like all those unfathomable things in the body. The sponge body is not just a porous space but also a porous time, for we have already moved forward in so many ways with our attention. We are now simply following a shadow of ourselves that has gone before, and leaving the shadow of what we once were, drawn through absorption into a new viscous state, already sticking to things. Each step passes more seamlessly into a gradual flow carried by the weight of the sponge, its density forever approaching an absolute limit: the slowness of the building itself – felt as a spatio-temporal volume duration full of different speeds, sense modalities and materials.

So this is how we become imperceptible... stealing our footsteps as Tatsumi Hijikata might say, emfolding and unfolding in waves, overflowing body and surround. Sometimes I imagine what these spaces would be like if I wasn’t there. How do they exist outside my experience of them, and what sense of abandonment is this? How do I exist outside my own experience of this surround in which I situate the occupation of my body? And so I try to move in a way of not being there, but with total attention, approaching this quality of abandonment, of space becoming itself in the fullness of emptying.

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8 Hijikata talks about how the Japanese ‘walk as if stealing their own footprints’ (Hijikata, 2000: 73).
By the time I’ve traced a roundabout route through three floors to the final room in the top far corner (the only lockable ‘safe zone’), I feel like I know the building and the building knows me, full and complete. This exchange between self and surround deepens in potential with the next visit, and the next and the next, accompanied by the ghosts more closely each time as though their disappearing act of autopoietic archeology attends the stealing of my steps.

The building is gradually opened to other bodies through a series of gift exchanges – inviting friends to experience it for themselves, exploring it further through dance. Eventually, a small audience follows 5 of us through 16 spaces over the course of an hour, ending at dusk on the top floor. This is when the ghosts really come out of the walls, the audience standing in for them and by which they appear like spontaneous specters arising from the dancing bodies. If as Hijikata says, “The body is a wall made of different materials”, then what are these ghosts that come out to hover between us, and what are they made of?

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SPONGE 1

The Sponge body as diagramming of affectivity

This experience of the sponge body walking through the abandoned warehouse offers a pathway for exploring the central questions and problems addressed in this research. Firstly, how are states of affectivity generated within the psychophysical body? How then do these states circulate between bodies and selves as a reciprocal dynamic of affecting and being affected? Secondly, what role does the built environment play, as a shared domain in this circulation of affectivity? And thirdly, what kinds of shifts or transformations occur when we identify what affects us, as something personal, and when this then becomes an emotional expression? How does this open and/or close a wider circulation of pre-personal affects, between bodies and selves, and the sites they share?

I approach these integrated scales of action, modes of attention and shifts in perception as an abstract ‘diagram’ of affective relations - within and across bodies, selves and sites. The process of absorption in sponging the building serves to demonstrate what I will describe as a diagramming of affect - an approach that draws on specific techniques within certain performance practices, to generate transformations of affectivity through dynamic relations within and across our embodied selves and the surrounding environment.

In this first SPONGE, I retrace our steps through the warehouse to find the points where this diagramming of affect opens us up on both sides - to the full width of the surround and to the depth of ourselves, across multiple sites of attention, scales of action and sensory modes, material signs and meaning. In treading this affective terrain I distinguish the nature of diagramming in dynamic, abstract and affective terms; so then in SPONGE 2, I can then resituate this approach in the context of specific dance techniques within psychophysical performance. This allows me to identify a set of premises around the constructed nature of subjectivity in affective terms - primarily, that our experience is distributed across many frames of reference that are always / already open to, and opened by ‘the outside’. Taking this understanding into the ‘premise(s)’ of the warehouse, the walk becomes a ‘pre-amble’ that sets off from a pre-expressive basis for affective movement. The experiential texture of our sponge body finds a porous and tentative quality, a premise(s) we must occupy as an event rather than dwell within as a pre-given space or innate state of being.
Retracing my steps in more detail, with reference to theories of cognition and affect, I break the pre-amble down into 3 overlapping stages: absorption, density, and 'the tug'. Looking for the gaps between steps I explore how the sponge-body experience may serve to open intervals of indeterminacy in space and time as a short-circuiting of movement, sensation, memory, and perception. It is in these intercalary spaces between different aspects of experience where we may locate the nature of affective transmission - how it circulates across frames of reference between body, self, and surround, and where it may be taken up by others. At the conclusion of our perambulation we arrive at a place where the problem of emotional expression remains to be clarified as a critical hurdle for the social dimension of affective transmission, and in what sense the constructed environment plays a role in this relationship.

A. Into the diagram

*The limits of intention and the appearance of the inexplicable*

Starting with our aim of walking through the warehouse, we are immediately confronted with the limits of our intention. If it was an already inhabited building we might just walk from A to B without much attention to our surroundings. But because we don’t really know what’s out there we stop for a few moments to sponge our attention into the building, considering its totality. Before forming an intention to move, we first feel the immensity of the warehouse upon which our diagram may be inscribed. Once we get over the fear of ghosts and possible humans it becomes more abstract, slipping into a seemingly endless darkness of infinite potential far beyond our attention (let alone intention). It is is not just something outside us in the actual here and now, but where the implication of other rooms as existent entities suggests an endless series of inexplicable relations unfolding beyond us. At first, we feel the ‘inexplicable’ quite simply as ‘that which cannot be unfolded’, opaque and unyielding.

10 I borrow this title from a workshop / event I participated in - held at Artspace Sydney (13-16 December, 2011) - organised by Anna Munster and Andrew Murphie, with public lectures by Brian Massumi and Erin Manning. ‘Into the Diagram’ was pivotal for my understanding of the diagram in the later stages of the PhD writing process.

11 The inexplicable - ‘unable to be explained or accounted for’ - often invokes a sense of something mysterious, but in a contemporary idiom may be approached perhaps as a level of embedded complexity that is closer to its etymology: ‘that which cannot be unfolded’. In the chapters that follow, I refer to two authors in particular, Brian Massumi and Bernard Cache, who in their own way develop a theorization of ‘the fold’ following on from the work of Gilles Deleuze (who in turn draws on the philosophy of Liebnitz). For my own purposes, that which ‘cannot’ be unfolded may instead be seen as a ‘fold in experience’ (Massumi: 2002), where many different modes of bodily attention become enfolded into one sense of feeling or thought. Or as I discuss in part 2, these modes of attention are distributed simultaneously across multiple scales of action, becoming singular events in the way Cache describes points of inflection (see CHAIR 1).
To actually feel what lies beyond our immediate surroundings gets too abstract, its just too far away and indistinct. But then this limit of our attention opens onto a sense of the building’s weight and volume, its presence as an autonomous entity, inexplicable perhaps, but no less real.

*The autonomic systems, into our own inexplicable limits*

This can be felt by considering our own weight and volume, feeling grounded in relation to the building. At the limit of the warehouse as an inexplicable totality, we come to consider our own totality at the same time, of being present in every aspect, even as this opens to our own inexplicability. As we absorb the exterior within ourselves through different sense domains, we find aspects that we don’t usually pay much attention to. Just as we come to sense the autonomy of the building’s inexplicable existence, by reciprocal measure of absorption we also find this within our sponge bodies - breathing it in, contracted in our musculature, upon our skin, feeling it very widely passing into ourselves very deeply. As we come to sense the building’s autonomy, not as one unfathomable thing but as an unfolding of inexplicable entities, then perhaps we should also question our own autonomy as some ‘single thing’? If we are also comprised of multiple entities, how are these enfolded together, while also unfolding into that which we sense?

The autonomic systems of the body, such as the breath, musculature, skin sensitivity, sense of balance, weight and pressure etc, are normally integrated in optimising internal movements all the way down to the molecular level. During the course of a life these become automatic habitual activities tending towards maximum results for minimum effort, each system configured in relation to the others according to whatever action is required of it. Take the walk for instance. Getting from A to B doesn’t give much space for attending to these internal relations. But now that we stop to think about it, feel and sponge our way into it, we find a kind of ‘outside’ within ourselves. Not the ‘outside’ of an actual exterior, nor the transcendent ideal of a pure interior, but one that seems to turn ‘inside out’ through a series of abstract operations.

*A self-producing membrane of semi-autonomous relations*

Each sub-system has a loci of autonomy independent of our conscious intention or scope of attention, enabling a responsive capacity to automatically affect and be affected by other sub-systems, lending the whole system a dynamic adaptability. As Evan Thompson puts, an autonomous system may be seen to comprise a ‘self-producing’ metabolic network that produces its own membrane (see Thompson, 2007: 44); one enacted by what passes across it with relation to its environment, sustained by way of this reciprocal relation.
This autonomy is produced in relation to the others it affects and is affected by: a semi-autonomous loci that is not pre-given but exists within the relation. Our autonomy is already generated by an abstract ‘outside’ within us, contingent on the fact that every given entity is constituted by relations with both small and larger entities whose ‘couplings’ generate semi-autonomous boundary conditions in correlation with their neighbors. When entities co-function across sense dimensions, their ‘neighbors’ are often situated across multiple scales of action in space and time. In other words, embodied cognition works as an open system of simultaneous part-whole relationships involving nonlinear and trans-local processes that are nothing if not topological.

The way in which we ‘hold it together’ comprises open subsets of thinking-feeling-doing that occupy a purely abstract space defined in terms of threshold transformations and intensive co-emergence rather than the size or shape of figures within Cartesian coordinates. (The latter are part and parcel of how we situate ourselves in the World, but these are secondary in terms of what is happening at the abstract level of embodied cognition). Each physiological sub-system has its own particular speeds and rhythms - blood circulation, breath inhalation / exhalation, muscle contraction, nervous activity - which work together as co-emerging fields of agency.

The biogram as fold in experience

In diagrammatic terms, Brian Massumi’s concept of the ‘biogram’ helps to give us a picture for how this self-producing membrane may be seen to comprise many layers, or frames of reference, giving the impression of an integrated experience albeit through a distributed series of co-emergent transformations (Massumi, 2002). Massumi describes the experience of being lost in a building as an example of a shift or dislocation that occurs when different systems of embodied perception lose their hold or fall out of phase with one another (ibid: 178). In this case, our internal sense of proprioception is normally aligned with our external kinesthetic awareness, but we can suddenly become disorientated when a conflict of registration occurs between our external orientation to objects and landmarks, and our internal sense of balance, muscle position and coordination.

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12 See Massumi, in ‘The Autonomy of Affect’ (Massumi, 1995), where he describes how affect works, “...not through closure but through a singular openness” (ibid: 105). “Its autonomy is its openness. Affect is autonomous to the degree to which it escapes confinement in the particular body whose vitality, or potential for interaction, it is” (ibid: 96). I discuss further the autonomous nature of affect later in this chapter.

13 Thompson also describes these relational or ‘enactive’ aspects to autonomy in terms of ‘structural couplings’ between autopoietic entities within an environment (Thompson, 2007: 51).

14 Topology may be defined here as relating to dynamic processes situated primarily in terms of their transformations rather than their local/linear spatio-temporal coordinates. See Massumi for a definition and discussion of the topological nature of embodied experience in relation to the built environment, through the biogram (Massumi, 2002b).
The biogram is then the diagramming of a topological ‘hinge dimension’ or ‘fold in experience’ (ibid: 183-184), where these aspects merge to become more-or-less sensible within the experiential domain of thinking and feeling.

For the sponge body, it is not so much that we get lost in the building. Rather, we seek to produce a state of intensity (our absolute density of absorption), where we may create an opening into an abstract vectorial space of distributed orientation - a biogram. There is a quality of indeterminacy or tentative oscillation here, in the way this enfolds different sense domains and/or modes of attention. The biogram helps us to ‘keep it together’ as it were; but if we are also able to loosen its tentativeness, opening the fold a little, we may find a deeper potential for feeling the inexplicable complexity of things. In sponging the warehouse, we really want to ‘lose our way’, have it stolen from us or even commit the theft ourselves. Then we may ‘steal our steps’ through the warehouse as if we were parting the fold, each step like treading imperceptibly through so many layers of experience or frames of reference.

*Parting the fold as an edging into existence*

Parting the fold in experience becomes a matter of first finding the edge where different frames of reference or modes of attention come together as an integration of various physiological dynamics. In doing so, these frames or modes of experience enact but a fraction of the total capacity they refer to, beyond which there is always a deeper potential that does not appear. For example, the full potential of the breath cannot be given, but it is still there in the background as an infinite set of possibilities, an inexplicable capacity that inheres in whatever rhythm of inhalation or exhalation that actually emerges. Nor then is any actual appearance of the breath pre-given, for it always arises as a process of contingency and mutual constraint with other sub-systems, and as the delimitation of a larger totality. This means that every event is always open to modulation. Just as this potential can never be exhausted or used up by an actual event, gesture or action, because it sustains this openness to modulation as the movement of a continuous futurity.

It is in this sense that Massumi describes the diagram as a ‘technique of existence’ (Massumi, 2011), an edge condition where even a simple white line on a blackboard may be seen less as a figure and more as the proto-figural ‘flickering’ of something constantly ‘edging into existence’; against the virtual background or full spectrum of all other possible lines lurking in the blankness of the blackboard. The line is both less and more than itself as an actual figure – forever oscillating at the generative limit of an enactive contrast between the actuality of its appearance and the virtual ‘ground’ of its infinite
potential. We might ask, if a single line can do all that, then what can a body or a building do, let alone the two of them together?

The act of walking is a dynamic confluence of multiple relations that are altogether quite abstract, emerging from micro-perceptual relations both within and across other relations, forever emerging from an inexplicable depth of pure potential. Just as each sub-system is never pre-given but enacts a relational potential, the entire body enacts the continuous event of these multiple relations as a self-producing membrane. Each action isn’t the expression of a whole - neither pre-given nor completed, but where its total existence is always and already latent, an excess simultaneously passing into the depths of ourselves while remaining somehow outside the event of our immediate actions. For the sponge body, the act of absorption is a process of opening ourselves to this broader spectrum, through a tentative indeterminacy where frames of reference start to flicker in ways that don’t simply direct themselves towards an actual exterior, but are constrained and reabsorbed by a more abstract ‘outside’ that passes within the intercalary layers of our self-producing membrane.

*The ‘absolute outside’ - inside the diagram*

From the conceptual perspective of ‘the diagram’, Deleuze makes the distinction between forms of exteriority and this immanent realm of an ‘absolute outside’, whereby affect is closely allied with relations of force. Following Foucault, he defines the diagram as a ‘set of relations between forces’ (1988: 89), where the reciprocity of the relation opens to a “distribution of the power to affect and power to be affected” (ibid, 73). This distribution stems from an absolute outside predicated on the pure possibility of force, anterior to the appearance of actual things or differentiated forms.

“But the outside concerns force: if force is always in relation with other forces, forces necessarily refer to an irreducible outside which no longer even has any form and is made up of distances that cannot be broken down through which one force acts upon another or is acted upon by another... It is an outside which is further away than any external world and even any form of exteriority, which henceforth becomes infinitely closer.”

Deleuze, 1988: 86

In the warehouse, if we could remove all the actual things of the exterior, and of ourselves, but still retain all the force relations, we could imagine the absolute outside moving through and linking them all up, as if leaking through the porous membrane of our sponge body. Of course, to remove actual things would seem to leave us with nothing. But if we think in other than Cartesian terms we might

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15 Massumi develops a distinction here between the actual and the virtual, drawn from the work of Gilles Deleuze. The virtual may be seen as a domain of potentiality which is then reduced or delimited by the actual, but in a way that is also ‘fulfilled’ by what actually appears or emerges, in which it inheres. The virtual is immaterial and ideal, but no less real. See also Deleuze, in ‘The Actual and the Virtual’ (2002).
consider this as the removal of a sovereign self, “and where things are distinct but not separable from everything that has come to constitute them, including their relations emerging in a given moment”.\textsuperscript{16} It is an opening onto the absolute outside, through the imperceptible fold between the virtual and the actual that sits within a field of forces. Here also, we may make the distinction between diagram and affect in relation to force, where the diagram describes a set of relations or configuration of forces, whereas affect may be seen as the change or transformation that occurs within or through this configuration.\textsuperscript{17}

\textit{Direct, indirect and absolute relations}

From ‘the diagram’ as a concept - a fold in experience, a flickering edge, an absolute outside - we may now find a way of giving it a graphical form. A simple diagram of the warehouse experience might comprise the arrangement of rooms, elements within it, sites of attention, the route taken, and so on. But this doesn’t tell us very much about the affective experience of body and building coming together. Nor is this an easy thing to get down on paper, for this comprises complex experiential dynamics that become quite abstract and are not at all clear-cut.

For the sake of summary we can break it down to several stages (see Figure 1.1). Firstly there is a direct relation as the simple connection between body and building, with a sense of separateness and relative autonomy (a/b). Then the spongy feeling emerges that each is not a fixed boundary condition but a threshold emerging from indirect relations and virtual configurations: the various psychophysical systems of the body on one side (a'); and the inexplicable extension of the warehouse on the other (b'). From here on things get more abstract. The actual or direct relation (a/b) starts to become more porous as the continuous cross-referencing of multi-sensory lines of attention pass back and forth across the boundary: between the abstract bundling of our autonomic systems and psychophysical dynamics, and the abstract bundling of objects, artifacts and atmospheres in the building.

\textsuperscript{16} Ednie-Brown, personal email feedback to thesis draft (2012).

\textsuperscript{17} Ednie-Brown (ibid). This is where a diagram of forces may also articulate a power dynamic; where affect becomes ‘a power’ or generative capacity to affect and be affected, but where this may also be configured in political terms as a strategic aim. Here Deleuze is indebted to Foucault, for instance where he talks about the diagram in relation to affect as the possibility of ‘resistance’ (see Deleuze, 1988: 89). Another way of differentiating diagram and affect would be where the diagram of power that Deleuze reads in Foucault is one that operates primarily at the molar level, whereas affect is firstly articulated in terms of molecular diagrammatics. Despite the fact that the molecular level is constantly being restratified by molar forces, the possibility of resistance may be situated here not simply in opposition to these territorialisations. Rather, there is an internal resistance at the molecular level, a state of intensity governed by a capacity for transformation. In particular, this is where the nature of affect works transversally - as ‘a power’ to affect and be affected (rather than a formalised diagram ‘of’ power as such). So then, just as molar forces restratify molecular ones, the latter simultaneously destratify the former, like the Sponge Body example of being induced into a more distributed sense of agency.
1.1: Experiential abstraction of the Sponge body

These lines trace still smaller boundary conditions, across internal and external entities, lines that are not fixed borders as such but thresholds defining provisional loci of semi-autonomy, which in turn curl further into depth while simultaneously flying back out and across into the wider frames of what they absorb. As this process acquires intensive density, the direct boundary between body and building (a/b) becomes more porous as it gives way to a tentative oscillation between open subsets on both sides. All these direct and indirect relations are now subtended by the appearance of an absolute outside. This emerges as a specter in the background, the full spectrum of the event or absolute outside (c) as a state of potential for the becoming of body and building. But it is also a line that plunges in and out of every relation at whatever depth and width, a pure trace diagramming their intercalary thresholds.

*Singularity sit astride the gap as ‘particles-signs’*

Within the actualization of the overlaps we find not fixed coordinates but points of singularity; that is, topological points of pure intensity situated along an abstract line of transformations. In the diagram above, this is where we see a flickering of points between body and building (around a/b), but also at the points of inflection where lines pass transversally across the boundaries of internal and external loci. These flickering points suggest further lines on the edge of coming into being, infinite specters of the outside sitting within the gap of every relation. These singular points are where the edges start to cut across boundary conditions, moving transversally to link up with one another in ways that are nonlinear and trans-local.
We don't lose the actual thing to some transcendent dimension. Singularities are abstract, but nonetheless concrete in a different manner: points of confluence and particularity that are definitively local and situated, but only insofar as they describe the critical points where threshold phenomena come together as variable intensities.

It's difficult to 'pinpoint' an example of a singularity, because they are not exactly single points in linear time and proximal space, but a series of transformations along a continuum.\(^{18}\) They actualize perhaps, in those 'special moments' when time seems to have dilated or rarefied, as if crisscrossed with the traces of events long past and/or yet to come. Or when space takes on a certain atmosphere of things being not quite what they seem. When something singularizes a shift occurs, as if things seemed to somehow collude according to a different set of relations. Like a simultaneous contraction of diverse but absent milieu in one moment (when their virtual traces actualize), and of rarefaction or expansion into those milieu, as a sense of potential that floats like the specter of a biogram - abstracted, pulled in both directions.

A singular encounter, on the other side of the safe room

An example: I awake suddenly at 2am - in the safe room at the top of the warehouse, with a drowsy sense of having heard a graffiti artist's paint can in the street outside. Was that a hollow clatter echoing in the thin night air? Feeling like it could have been a dream, or 5 minutes ago, or yesterday... but thinking to check anyway if I'd locked the big sliding door into the room. I always lock the door. All sorts of undesirables know how to enter the building. This is not simply a rational act, for having sealed the room the building is no longer porous and spongy, except as a large volume full of ghosts, felt like a dark, brooding pressure. I check the door, and its unlocked! And then as if by some sudden contraction there are voices on the other side. I lock it, fumbling quietly, silent terror escalating as if in a nightmare. They try the door. They don't seem to have heard me, but I imagine them scaling the facade around to my window and having to fight them off. Eventually they leave and I fall asleep wondering if it had happened - all too real to be real.

More uncanny: a few days later I run into them out in the building. Its late afternoon and the sun is streaming in, softening the space. But there are no pre-given rules of conduct in here. Usually with such encounters there's a mutual assurance between parties. But my fears were well founded - one of these guys is a psychopath, a specter. His words teeter on the edge of politeness and playful taunts, bragging about scaling the facade to tag the exterior, confirming my irrational fear from the other night. He asks what's in my bag (a camera, a laptop)... 'Are you a cop?'... 'Are you carrying a weapon?' As I

\(^{18}\) See also my later discussion in CHAIR 1, where Bernard Cache describes singularity in terms of inflection, as a series of points along a curve, giving it a quality of indeterminacy. See also Deleuze, where he talks about a 'general line of force', in terms of points along a curve in relation to the outside (1988: 78-79).
try to steer us down through the building the space between us starts to float slowly in abstract
directions - critically tentative, on the cusp of fight or flight. Time dilates across these past few days, a
bodily pressure shifting between us like that spectral volume on the other side of the door. His eyes
and his words flicker with a lock fumbling, a hollow clatter on the street. Finally we drift apart and I’m
out on the street, alone, looking up the tagged facade as if I’m about to wake up in the room again.

Singularityies remove us from the given form of ‘actual things’, to enter a topological domain of pure
intensities that no longer signify forms of content or expression at the level of interpretation. Or they
appear so saturated with signs they resist interpretation, and take us into some abstract feeling or
transcendental notion, a sense of something unbearable or beyond our comprehension.\textsuperscript{19} But these
are only those that actualize within our scope of attention, for there are singular transformations going
on all the time, from the micro to the macro scale. In fact, this is perhaps how we may know a moment
of singularity, where we catch it appearing on the cusp of our awareness against the background of a
far larger chaos, when it comes up close to shift the here and now.\textsuperscript{20}

\textit{A cutting upon the edge of chaos}

For Deleuze and Guattari, this cusp is where the diagram is always on the edge of chaos, the absolute
outside as pure immanence. But its also where this ‘cutting edge’ extracts from already stratified forms
of meaning (content and expression) particular ‘traits’ of pure unformed matters and non-formalised
functions.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{19} For Deleuze, the notion of the ‘unbearable’ appears in Cinema 2: The Time Image (Deleuze, 1989), as an
image of time in which the World appears as something too large or too cruel to comprehend. With reference to
Artaud and Foucault, this constitutes a shift in modern thought. This unfathomable outside is not just out there in
the World, but present within all relations becomes a limit within thought itself - an unthought. For Artaud this is
an ‘impossibility to think’ that he finds in the moving image, when it ‘stands in’ for his thought (see Deleuze,
ibid). With Foucault this reveals the automaticity of a final limit in understanding the enfolded nature of force
relations as a critique of power. Later in the Thesis, I draw parallels here with notions of auto-affection (Varela,
2000); and negentropy as a power of entropic exchange with the surrounding environment: see CHAIR 2.

\textsuperscript{20} For the difference between what we might call implicit and explicit singularities, or what Cache would call
intrinsic and extrinsic, see my discussion in CHAIR 1. This also relates to the kinds of shifts that occur between
implicit affective individuations and explicit emotional expressions, such as the example of the graffiti artists in
the warehouse. See also my discussion of affective shifts in terms of Varela.

\textsuperscript{21} To clarify further:

“A diagram has neither substance nor form, neither content nor expression. Substance is a formed
matter, and matter is a substance that is unformed either physically or semiotically. Whereas
expression and content have distinct forms, are really distinct from each other, function has only
"traits," of content and of expression, between which it establishes a connection... A matter-content
having only degrees of intensity, resistance, conductivity, heating, stretching, speed, or tardiness; and
a function-expression having only "tensors," as in a system of mathematical, or musical, writing”
Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 141.
These traits constitute intensive features that become pure particles and signs: a lock fumbling, a hollow clatter on the street, plunged through some abstract volume afloat with eyes and words. Like intensive singularities, they display a degree of abstraction that still touch upon concrete elements but only insofar as they deterritorialize or produce a cutting edge with stratified forms, an edge that takes them in and out of the absolute outside.

“The diagram knows only traits and cutting edges that are still elements of content insofar as they are material and of expression insofar as they are functional, but which draw one another along, form relays, and meld in a shared deterritorialization: particles-signs.”

Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 142

Drawn from actual situations but simultaneously located across divergent transformations, particles-signs introduce an indeterminacy between contents / expressions and their virtual counterparts, so that “it is no longer even possible to tell whether it is a particle or a sign” (ibid: 141). At the limit of the actual and the virtual, these elements of pure matter and function oscillate and become indiscernible as they are drawn through a continuous relay of transformations; intensive traits flickering along an ‘abstract line’ that is concrete but only just, and only insofar as its tentative edges express a transverse movement across singular threshold phenomena.22

**External cognition and the implicit form of tendencies**

A little less abstractly, lets look at how singularities, as particles-signs, might introduce a tentative indeterminacy in a more tangible sense, where they may be seen to flicker between intensive features of external cognition in the built environment *vis-à-vis* the habitual tendencies we establish through the course of a life. There is an implicit automatism that arises here that is simultaneously inside us and already out there in the building in the form of potential object relations and cultural artefacts based on prior knowledge.23 From the perspective of studies in external cognition, thinking doesn’t stop at the ‘skull-skin’ boundary (Clark and Chalmers, 2000: 59). Objects and artefacts serve as environmental

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22 A line may be used to represent topological dynamics, particularly as a gradient curve for the approximation of variable intensities and threshold phenomena. For Deleuze, it is ‘the line of the outside’ that folds in and out of the strata; or elsewhere, the curve as a ‘general line of force’. For Bernard Cache, it is an ‘abstract line’ approximating multiple lines of curvature and points of inflection, a bit like Massumi’s ‘flickering’; or where we may speak of a quality of ‘superlinearity’ (Massumi, 1995: 87). I discuss Cache’s theory of inflection in detail in CHAIR 1. Of relevance here for the topological line, is the way singularities are distributed along a line of transformations, conferring indeterminacy to the curve (see Cache, 1995).

23 From the perspective of ‘radical empiricism’ - as an attempt to consider the ‘agency’ of non-human entities in a non-transcendental manner, see also William James when he talks about how two things might ‘know’ one another, as a notion of adding to each others’ existence through an event ecology of relations (James, 1912).
supports for making our way in the world, performing a kind of experiential shorthand by helping to fill in the gaps with a background cache of learnt behaviors, enacted in co-extension with the environment. “The human organism is linked with an external entity in a two-way interaction, creating a coupled system that can be seen as a cognitive system in its own right” (ibid: 62).

At first glance this indicates a level of automaticity through coordinated clusters of relation according to pre-formed patterns of behaviour. For instance, in the building certain features of the surround, or even vague outlines, might elicit a shortening of breath, prickling of skin and flicker of musculature in anticipation of a potential threat or affection ‘out there’. Affects are pure traces retained in the form of tendencies, but in doing so they become abstracted from their original context, becoming like ‘implicit forms... a bundling of potential functions’ (ibid, 34). The mediation of tendencies is not entirely our projection of a pre-given stimulus - it is a coupling, enacted to some extent in relation to material signs in the immediate exterior, however inexplicable. Tendencies still require a new context to be actualized in the event, but because they are already abstractions of pastness the new situation never literally corresponds in either content or expression.

There is a tentativeness or indeterminacy between the internal tendency and whatever might trigger or tug at it from the new context. The new expression of the tendency is reduced to a modicum of its potential in being actualized, as is the context also, both selecting and being selected by aspects of the other with which they resonate. Within this differential limit each thing is not only open to the other in a direct and reductive manner, for in the slippage of their tentative relation there is still the flickering of their deeper potentials. The abstract qualities of their implicit forms leak through the actual event of our sponging, saturating the direct relation with indirect relations on both sides of body and building, carrying the murmur of other contexts running in virtual parallel with the here and now.

24 A historical precedent for this embodied relation to the building may be found in Heinrich Wölflin’s 1886 doctoral dissertation for the University of Munich, “Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture” (Wölflin, 1886); in which he posits a close relationship between architectural dynamics of matter and form, weight and force, with those of our own experience:

“We have carried heavy loads and have known pressure and counterpressure. We have collapsed on the ground when we no longer had the energy to oppose the downward pull of our own body’s weight. That is why we are able to appreciate the proud happiness of a column and to understand the tendency of all matter to spread shapelessly on the ground... Powerful columns produce energetic innervations in us, and the wideness or narrowness of spatial proportions controls respiration. We innervate our muscles as though we were these load-bearing columns, and we breathe as deeply and fully as though our chest had the width of those halls” Wölflin, in Arnheim, 1977: 212.
The warehouse as Sponge body

In the abandoned warehouse, the emergence of an abstract line or cutting edge of transformation first appears to us when we reach a point of absolute density in the process of absorbing the building. A glimpse of the absolute outside opens as a sense of shared weight and volume, of an inexplicable unfolding within every relation, passing simultaneously into the obscure depths of our sponge body and the unfathomable width of the warehouse.

There is a process of becoming between body and building that destratifies forms of content and expression: the building passing into us as sites of attention that un hinge our immediate intention to walk; and as this plays out over a longer timeframe we find a certain ‘gravity of the situation’, of the building as an autonomous entity, a pure event in itself. Within this event, the specific features we absorb - textures, colors and shadows, objects, artifacts and atmospheres - are already abstracted as pure traits of absorption, particles and signs that accumulate and find a density of relations within us.

At the same time, these features give a sense of the building passing beyond us, not just in spatial extension but also temporally, into a far longer historical timeframe for which the length of our absorption can only generate a limit (or a cutting that might approximate its duration as a matter of density; that is, intensity). These features speak of specific historical strata inhering as mere residue: of absent users, lost functions and forgotten programs. Layered on top of one another, their combined textures display a tension of moving simultaneously backwards and forwards in time. Its contents have been removed but the interior surfaces of the building remain as a time capsule of the day work stopped. Meanwhile, a decade of abandonment softens their contours and strips them back to reveal previous ages of occupancy. The process is accelerated by acts of vandalism, gleaning and graffiti, each with their own logic of both removing and adding to the built environment, as if it were forever opening and contracting - like a sponge building of pure particles and signs, impinging and multiplying in endless becoming.

Stripped of its functions, fittings, amenities and users (at least, pre-given ones), the warehouse becomes a timeless desert full of historical traces that have become unmoored from representation, inexplicable and yet palpably real. Abject and abandoned, it becomes a vast outside on the inside of suburbia, as much a sponge body as we could ever be. For just as their traces become pure traits of an ‘autopoietic archaeology’, of particles and signs in abstract permutation, the lost programs that were once stratifications now find a tension or resistance to the stratified outside of suburbia that surrounds it. They become pure tensors that hold the space open to a potential that is both pastness and futurity, diagramming a kind of resistance to the present, seemingly outside of time, or at least untimely.

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25 For a notion of ‘resistance to the present’ as a diagrammatic condition with relation to time, see Barber (2005: 68). See also my discussion on resistance in terms of suspension and auto-affection (to follow).
And so then for us, what was an unknown exterior is now an interior that becomes absolute, which is too say seemingly infinite in continuity but only by reciprocal relation of finding a zero condition in ourselves. By its absorption, it becomes an interior that ‘re-moves’ or finds a break in our intention to move, thereby ‘adding’ a more abstract potential to our own interiority.

B. Interlude: from the diagram to affect

*Affect as asignifying impingement*

To summarize and segue at this point, what stands out for the intersection of affectivity and the diagram in terms of understanding the sponge body experience? First and foremost, there is a sense that affect operates at a level of autonomy independent of our intentions, before we assign meaning to things. In this sense, affect constitutes an asignifying intensity (Massumi, 1995: 88) operating at the pre-conscious level of an ‘unformed and unstructured potential’ (Shouse, 2005: 1). In this guise it moves like a ghost through time and space and across scales of action. But then, how do we account for its effect on us?

Firstly, affective intensity constitutes what Massumi calls an ‘impingement’ or ‘contraction’ (1995: 92) - in our case, through a process of absorption. This dynamic is not simply a one-way stimulus, but a reciprocity of reception and anticipation. As Massumi puts it: “The body doesn’t just absorb pulses or stimulations, it infolds contexts; it infolds volitions and cognitions that are nothing if not situated” (ibid: 90). Secondly, the reciprocity of affecting and being affected - as a set of force relations haunted by an absolute outside, not only calls into question the direct agency of our intentions but the very nature of linear cause and effect. When we tap into the realm of virtual configurations, we find a state of potential that has both a pastness in tendency but also an unlimited multiplicity of possible permutations that hovers in the actual event as a state of futurity, and that ushers it along at the purely abstract level of singularities. This level of abstraction remains somehow both outside the event but nonetheless within the intensive space of every relation.

*Resistance, suspension and auto-affection*

Several conclusions may be drawn from this. Firstly, that affective potential has a certain ‘incipience’ in terms of the emergence it enacts; that things are always beginning to happen or develop, even during or after the actual fact. Secondly, that this incipient potential constitutes a quality of suspension, or in the way Massumi (following Spinoza) describes affect as a state of ‘passional suspension’ (ibid: 92).
Here, activity and passivity are no longer conditions of subjective intention, but where the pre-individual nature of affect opens us into or through a tentative indeterminacy of multiple reference points that not clearly delineated in linear time or spatial extension. This inherent suspension has important implications for the nature of affect and its opening. Firstly, its causality is indeterminate partly for the fact that its autonomous and autonomic potential assumes a level of automaticity, not just at the level of specific tendencies but as a futurity that is always in a state of anticipation. We don’t need to ‘cause’ affect as such, because at a pre-individual level it is always and already happening within the psychophysical body: our very capacity to affect and be affected turns upon the fact that we are always and already being affected in the first place. “Affect is there before being there for me in full consciousness: I am affected before knowing that I am affected. It is in that sense that affect can be said to be primordial” (Depraz, in Varela, 2000: 290). Francesco Varela calls this auto-affection (ibid), a ‘genetic’ automaticity or predisposition comprising the very texture of cognition, in the way it allows the flow of experience to have a sense of responsive continuity, between anticipation and receptivity.

Affective transmission doesn’t send a self

If we need to rethink causal agency through the temporal inherence of auto-affection, we must also reconsider the implications this has for affective openness within and between bodies and selves. This becomes an issue of terminology, especially when affect is often given as a matter of ‘transmission’. Affect is not exactly ‘transmitted’ in the etymological sense ‘to send across’. An objection to the notion of transmission is that it infers a process of psychological transference, of mental intentionality that ignores the embodied and pre-individual basis of affect. Rather, transmission may be seen to occur as a shift in the normal flow of experience, as an element of indeterminacy within auto-affection through a disruption or modulation in the way different frames of reference or modes of attention are usually integrated. This introduces a mode of resistance or complication between biological and social factors, or what I explore in this thesis (through performance practice) as a psychophysical relation.

Affective ‘transmission’ is rather a dislocation or disjunction in the way these socio-biological factors are usually configured. As with the diagram, this sees a change within a set of force relations - of affecting and being affected. These modes of resistance are then not simply a feeling of resisting something out there in the exterior per se, but when our anticipation towards it produces a shift in the rhythm of self-affecting-self - an internal resistance like the action of an electric current going through a filament.26

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26 This metaphor comes from my dance training with Tony Yap, where he demonstrates the notion of a ‘human filament’ as a physical state of intensity. The dancer imagines themselves to be generating their own light from within, as intensive energy passing through a state of material resistance. In other words, the light is ‘transmitted’ not by intention but by sensation, with an openness both to the interior and to the exterior (see SPONGE 2).
This may amount to the same end result, of something being transmitted between bodies and selves, but the distinction to be made here is how this occurs as an indeterminacy within and across pre-individual processes and subjective intention; an intensive space that is always and already in a state of tension.\textsuperscript{27} Even though its inferred intention is problematic, ‘transmission’ does give a sense of some energetic transformation or transposition, but it is one that occurs in a translocal and transverse manner. For this reason I have opted instead to use the term ‘affective openness’ throughout this thesis. This indicates the quality of a general aim that is not merely that of an intention, even if specific modes of opening within and across embodied selves remain problematic and require further unpacking.

We should perhaps always err on the side of the body, particularly in terms of performance. As Teresa Brennan puts it, even through a ‘genetic’ approach to language such as Richard Dawkins ‘meme’, affects are not inherited via a generational line (or not exclusively), so much as a horizontal line of the heart. Even abstract signs flow within and between persons at the level of olfaction and the circulation of the blood (Brennan, 2004: 74-75).\textsuperscript{28}

C. Intensive timeframes: the untimely temporality of affect

So from asignifying impingement, to states of potential and resistance, to affective transmission as a disruption in the flow of self-affecting-self. Now we can be more specific about how this disruption occurs, within the specifically temporal nature of affect where frames of reference operate according to different speeds and durations, coming into phase and/or becoming untimely. I will call these ‘intensive timeframes’ - not conventional timeframes as a set period of linear chronological time, but where various psychophysical frames of reference have their own qualities of intensive variation, together

\textsuperscript{27} This recalls my earlier discussion of resistance as an affective state of intensity operating at a molecular level - a power to affect and be affected rather than simply a diagram of power articulated at the molar level. These dimensions offer a way of moving beyond conventional distinctions between the social and the biological, towards a more dynamic interrelation of transverse strata. In another sense, a fluctuating indeterminacy of socio-biological factors recalls the unformed matters and pure functions of particles and signs. Or in a different way as I will discuss through Cache, an oscillation of gravitational vectors and abstract signifiers (see CHAIR 2).

\textsuperscript{28} As Brennan describes affective transmission:

“What is at stake with the notion of the transmission of affect is precisely the opposite of the sociobiological claim that the biological determines the social. What is at stake is rather the means by which social interaction shapes biology. My affect, if it comes to you, alters your anatomical makeup for good or ill” Brennan, 2004: 74.
generating a heterogeneous realm of becoming - the fold in experience as a purely topological field of forces bound by the singular traits of transformation that pass across them.29

Absolute duration, between external cognition and the fold in experience

As discussed, we find an absolute outside within us that connects to that of the unfathomable exterior, when we sense the interstitial dynamics between force relations. But now, there is also this durational aspect that appears absolute, both beyond and so intimately part of us. This is our first intensive timeframe, which opens its indeterminacy in two almost contradictory ways. Firstly, there is the realm of extended cognition as a coupling of body and world, opening onto an endless series of external supports beyond skin and skull (Clarke and Chalmers, 2000).

This may be seen to constitute a very long timeframe that seems to always come before us, precluding the event just as the building is always there before we arrive and after we leave. Secondly, there is the fold in experience as an implicit mode of continuous existence, even though its embedded multiplicity seems to preclude our awareness in a way that also seems beyond us, yet constitutes our very becoming. The two appear contradictory when they appear to fall out of phase with one another, as in those moments of reverie or delirium when we find an uncanny sense of ourselves within an environment. Like in the warehouse when we reach a point of absolute density and we feel the fabric of our perception stretched across so many things, as if seeing them for the first time and feeling somewhat removed.

29 As indicated in my Introduction and elsewhere in the thesis, ‘frames of reference’ may be defined as different levels or modes of attention, passing into more autonomic realms of cognition and operating across psychophysical subsystems (proprioception, kinesthetic awareness, sensory faculties and signifying regimes). In a similar manner to the way Massumi describes the biogram as a fold in experience, they may be seen as thresholds that, in their dynamic relations, delimit spatio-temporal prehensions of the World. Frames of reference then also concern the habituation of these prehensions - a persistence of folds as enframings of World. These may then be re-affected in order to hold open up the possibility for transformations of affective intensity (for example, in the way Varela describes phase-shifts in tonality and tendency). Care should be taken in noting the distinction, but also interrelations, in moving between ‘frames of reference’ as modes of attention at various levels of cognition and awareness, to habitual framings of action, and then to framing devices such as features of the built environment. As in the case of extended cognition and apperception, framing devices are critical to the way in which we situate ourselves, according to own psychophysical frames of reference, and where habituations occur in their cross-referencing. As I go on to note in CHAIR 1, with Cache’s notion of ‘frame’, the slippage in terms may best be seen as a dynamic framing and deframing of habituation and dislocation in prehensions of the World. (This is also akin to the destratifying and restratifying reciprocity of molecular and molar forces - a power to affect and be affected in concert with diagrams of power).
Yet in doing so we gain a certain gravity of presence that comes from seeing ourselves as a pure event fold distributed across multiple reference frames.30 There is no contradiction as such between the apparent automaticity of extended cognition and the production of intentional agency within the self; for as we have seen, cause and effect are recursively distributed or suspended across the many layers of a ‘self-producing membrane’. There is a sense of automaticity, but it is still one to be enacted. And so it is here that the automaton has on the flip-side an autonomy: a zero degree of self-producing potential which gives it an infinite value of possible relations, a potential that means it is always already caught up in so many things, while still retaining its potential in the event of every relation. Our moment of reverie generates a shift in phase where the two aspects of absolute duration are held open just long enough for the indeterminacy of their recursive hinging to reveal itself. This is where extended cognition becomes a site for singular traits to appear, and for the gap that opens in the folds of a reverie to become a locus of resistance; a potential for modulation through difference and divergence, for something new to be created.

It is through this zone of indeterminacy that we find the ‘slowness’ of the building; not as one of actual stasis or monumentality, but rather a state of delay or suspension that seems to resist the present.31 It appears to us when we find this resistance within ourselves, stopping to sponge our way through things, when we feel its abstract potential as a common limit of saturation, when sites of attention

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30 I discuss the quality of ‘presence’ further in SPONGE 2, as it may be understood within psychophysical performance practice. In terms of how the built environment may play an active role in generating presence, I find Peter Eisenman’s approach of particular relevance here. Eisenman argues that producing a sense of presence, or ‘presentness’, in architecture becomes a matter of ‘dislocating’ the monumentality of historical typologies (see Speaks, 1998); He also describes this in terms of singularity: “presentness” relies on a condition of timelessness... involved with the state of “singularity” - i.e., a specific moment in a phase transition where diverse forces acting on matter induce the emergence of unforeseeable traits” (see Somol: 2007: 174-175). Eisenman sees the displacement of literal presence in dynamic terms, requiring a sense of ‘absence’, for example where a column is no longer load-bearing but becomes merely a sign of structure which acts as the trace of a lost index. Despite Eisenman’s earlier leaning towards a linguistic rather than materialist semiology, it is worth also contrasting this structural sign with Wöfflin’s comments about the energetic innervations of a column in relation to our muscles.

As I argue in SPONGE 2, an approach to presence via singularity informs my understanding of psychophysical performance, for instance where Tony Yap’s notion of ‘presence through absence’ may be considered in terms of intensive features passing across different embodied frames of references. And then where the situated specificity of a site comes to ‘stand in’ or ‘hold open’ distributed modes of attention. In a diagrammatic sense, this ‘absence’ may be seen as an opening to the potential of the absolute outside that flows within and between force relations. My own thinking around the parallel with Eisenman (informed by Somol’s comments, above) is that the ‘the trace’ may also be seen as an abstract inscription where forces contract upon one another (affecting and being affected as a state of change within a set of relations), carried across milieux as the pure traits of particles and signs.

31 Its virtual transformations are of infinite speed, but the intensive space through which they flow is ‘slow’ because it is a state of potential that is always turning on a limit point of zero, as a generative resistance to actual things and events. See also my later discussion of infinity / zero in terms of the Menger sponge and the ‘hollow body’ in butoh (SPONGE 2).
become so swollen with virtual inter-relations that space feels both full of potential and empty of form. In this porous space of mutual absorption we find the building in our sponge body and our sponge body in the building: the body as a distributed process of construction, and the building as an abstract body of relations. This then, is the premise(s) of our preamble. Firstly, the premise of a propositional statement, albeit a tentative one couched in the indeterminacy of things being enacted;\textsuperscript{32} and secondly, the premises of an occupied territory, albeit one that is not pre-given. Neither the territory of a programmed space nor a sovereign subject, or of either one upon the other. The sponge body doesn’t take the warehouse as a given (to do otherwise is potentially dangerous), just as the warehouse demands of the body that it cannot dwell as a pre-given user. The sponge body must occupy itself as a tentative locus of indeterminacy through intensive relations in co-extension with the warehouse.

\textit{Readiness response: the tug into slowness through a half second gap}

The first opening to indeterminacy occurs when our sponge body reaches this point of absolute density when we find the slowness of the building - a sense of the warehouse as an absolute duration or heterogeneous state of suspended potential that is already past and always yet to come. This slowness produces a state of resistance in commencing the walk, but its potential also becomes the site of specific tendencies that start to appear in the flickering of singular traits. Now we can feel ‘the tug’ of vague impulses seeking to elicit something more concrete from the abstract potential of the building. Our habitual assumptions oscillate alongside a sense of what these material signs and vague outlines actually are in the here-and-now of the building, or possibly could be. But in the flickering of tendencies, traits and tensors these possibilities are no longer ghosts nor even anything human, only pure particles and signs that become indiscernible amidst the accelerating delirium of our warehouse-becoming.

The tug isn’t one that pulls us from an actual point out there in the warehouse, nor even from a specific tendency - except as something that might tip the balance. It comes when we feel a mutual absorption between body and building approach a limit of saturation, a slowness. The tug is like a vague assemblage point oscillating between all the virtual relations within us and those that pass into the inexplicable existence of the building. Having sent our attention out in so many ways to take the building inside our sponging, we can now feel the warehouse take us up in turn and pull us out; a critical overlapping in which the tug comes as an overflow, a bifurcation that aggregates points of singularity and tips them over the line, into transformation. The sponge body has been waiting for the virtual weight of the building to ‘arrive’, to give the tug, or rather when this tug comes as a break in its own intention to move.

\textsuperscript{32} For Deleuze, the statement has a diagrammatic sense in the way it has a link to something outside it: “The statement is not at all defined by what it designates or signifies... a statement is the curve joining individual points: that is, the thing that brings about or actualizes relations between forces” (Deleuze, 1988: 79).
If an absolute duration may be seen as a first opening to indeterminacy, or rather its appearance as potential, the tug of tendencies introduces a more discrete timeframe where it takes up a certain resistance. The untimely and distributed nature of causality now finds a more specific interval of indeterminacy, with a measurable half-second or so lapse between the initiation of a movement within the autonomic organism, and the time it takes for the movement to be registered in conscious thought. This is not just a case of being a little slow off the mark, but where a readiness-response is always/already primed within the organism, both as a functional stimulus potential and where psychophysical tendencies find a diagrammatic trace across autonomic systems, where the action is virtually prefigured with incipient forms. And then on the other side of mind, there is the lag between a conscious intention to move, or its modulation, and the movement itself. The former is to some extent in anticipation of the latter, such that causality becomes both recursive and suspended as potential, where singular transformations arise.

**Affective tonality and the 1/10 lapse***

With these shifts across absolute duration and the half-second gap, we find the specifically temporal nature of affect, where embodied frames of reference operate according to different speeds and durations, but which come into phase through their overlapping intensities. The emergent complexity of their multi-sensory relations is such that they are collectively and retroactively updated to give us a sense of being in ‘the now’.  

There is still another micro-interval, even smaller than a half second, through which absolute duration and readiness response are taken up at the conscious level of intentions and actions. As Varela explains, ‘the specious present’ of any current moment is not a clear and distinct instant at all, but more a blur of impressions within an almost imperceptible intensive timeframe: 1/10th of a second. This gap performs an experiential approximation of always tending towards an anticipated future – protention, and being tended upon by the just past – retention.

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33 Massumi gives this half-second lapse as an example of the biogram, as an over-coding of intensity that ‘smudges’ and ‘swarms’ different micro-impressions into one cohesive experience (Massumi, 1995: 197). See also his discussion of Libet and the half-second lapse in terms of affect, cognition, and volition (Massumi, 2002: 90).
1.2: The specious present, the flow of protention / retention; diagrams from Francisco Varela (2000: 12, 29)

Protention is an immediate sense of the event unfolding into the future. For example, in reading this sentence you have a general feel for how it might work out, as an iterative process of skimming and filling in the gaps as you go along. Retention is not yet the memory of recollection, but the ‘just past’ potential of the event, as for example the beginning of this sentence being still held and by which you carry a sense of working it out. This recursive referencing is essential for the continuous flow of conscious thought – each aspect simultaneously folding back and forth, drawn through an intentional centre and bounded by a redoubled ‘fringe horizon’ on either side (the just past and the near future). These micro-second gaps - at the 1/10 scale of the specious present, and the half-second lapse of readiness response - open with and through one another, and together affect and are affected by a wider openness of extended cognition within the surrounding environment.

D. The problem of emotional expression

*Emotion as phase shift in affective tonality*

These infinitesimal intervals may seem too discrete and imperceptible to grasp as an influence on this wider openness. But in terms of activating intention their shifting nature becomes apparent in the sense that extensive movements are inextricably liked with internal expressions of self. For Varela, this fringe horizon gives us a sense of continuous experience, but it is also one that fluctuates and has

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34 These figures have influenced my own diagramming for the ‘Experiential abstraction of the Sponge body’ (see diagram 1.1), and ‘Tracking the tug: the walk through the warehouse’ (diagram 1.3).

35 For further research, its worth noting potential parallels here between Massumi’s biogram as a ‘strange horizon’ (Massumi, 1995), and Varela’s ‘fringe horizon’ (Varela, 2000: 267); and how these may be seen to become an ‘edging into existence’ across the virtual and the actual (Massumi, 2011: 89).
a variable ‘texture’ that waxes and wanes in its breadth. He gives the term ‘affective tonality’ to describe the extent to which our continuous action-behaviors appear more or less ‘transparent’ or unconscious to us. The flow of fully ‘open’ transparency unfolds through our relations with the world as a sense of co-extension with people and things (including our own bodies). As Gallagher says:

“Moreover in regards to movement, since this experience [auto-affection] is always the experience of a sensory-motor body, it includes aspects of the sense of ownership (that this experience or movement is happening to me) and sense of agency for intentional action (the sense that I am the author of this action).”

Gallagher, 2005: 3

Transparency is modulated then by a number of factors to do with movement, extended cognition, and identity formation, and it is here where we can now tackle the issue of emotional expression as a problem for affective openness. When affect takes the form of a specific emotion it becomes more firmly associated with a dynamic of identity and ownership. Varela describes how the appearance of emotions is accompanied by a ‘phase shift’ in affective tonality, when a break occurs in the continuous flow of self-affecting-self (auto-affection), with a resulting displacement or loss of transparency. A loss of transparency comes as a collapse in protention: ‘I couldn’t think straight’, or ‘I didn’t see it coming’; and for retention: ‘I couldn’t make sense of what just happened’. (Or in the case of a more positive over-identification that reduces context to a particular frame or focus).

As Massumi puts it:

“Emotion is qualified intensity, the conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning. It is intensity owned and recognized.”

Massumi, 2002: 28

Which is why emotion becomes very problematic for affective openness, because the asignifying intensities that constitute affect get caught up within the territory of the intentional subject, inhibiting the transverse movement of singular transformations that pass more fluidly between subjects at the pre-individual level. Here we have occasions of psychological transference, which operate more at the

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36 As Varela says:

“The loss of transparency is never distant from a dispositional affective tone... But we can now see that different degrees of breakdown in transparency and the multiple manners in which it happens opens a panoply of affective tonalities: fear, jealousy, anger, anxiety, self-assurance, and so on. Accordingly, the word “emotion” is used here in its specific sense: the tonality of the affect that accompanies a shift in transparency. Affect, on the other hand, is a broader dispositional orientation which will precondition the emotional tone that may appear” (Varela, 2000: 26).
level of identities and interpretation. With emotional expression the dynamics of affecting and being affected take on a more polarised personal-political form, boundaries become defined around pre-given conditions, where we feel the need for things to work out in a particular way. Of course, affectivity is still going on, but now it has taken on a specific tonality. And we should distinguish a few gradations, for instance when tendencies become like the implicit form of proto-emotions, as feelings or sentiments that emerge as personal and biographical effects: “A feeling is a sensation that has been checked against previous experience and labeled” (Shouse, 2005: 1). Emotion is close to feeling, but it is more the form in which a feeling is identified and communicated in and by the self; or as one that is ‘displayed’ in a social setting (Shouse, 2005).

Transduce, induce, to be moved from the outside

As we have seen, the sponge body absorbs formalized contents and expressions as pure traits and tensors such that they flicker as singular particles and signs, in an intensive space of indeterminacy across frames of reference. Now we can be more specific about the nature of contents / expressions in terms of emotion, in the way they are transformed through resistance such that affectivity may be induced within and between bodies. The absorption process is already a kind of break or shift in transparency, in the sense that the usual flow of action (the walk) is withheld to such a critical extent that it generates a readiness potential. This finds a tentative mixing with specific contents in the warehouse - objects, artifacts and atmospheres that invoke specific tonalities (fear, anticipation, curiosity), to induce a flickering of readiness response inflected with uncertain tendencies. And so then at the 1/10 timeframe, our protention has already being sent out as a series of virtual tugs, but then retained and reabsorbed.

The crux of the exercise is find the impetus to move from the outside, as if tricking our own motor intention. So this is what finally pulls us into the walk. All it needs is for one critical point to arrive too quickly or too late, one that might be slightly out-of-step with the others, or on top of another, to tip the balance and actualise the tug. The out-of-step is what makes the step, opening an untimely shift in which our intention to walk reaches such a critical state of delay and suspension that the warehouse seems to suddenly get the jump on us. We are already in-tension with it, so all we need now is for a moment of in-attention to call us forth, to steal our first step from us and lead us into stealing our way through the absolute outside. There can be only one actual step, but when we are induced to move forward it still carries the absolute density of a virtual intensity in which each step is saturated by the absorbed potential.

This then is the ‘sending across’ of affective transmission as a trans-local abstraction of intensity, not simply of sending an action into space but of finding its impetus from the other side - transducing frames of reference so we may be induced to move. This dynamic has a particular kind of openness,
at a redoubled limit where linkages become more indirect and multifaceted, such that transformations acquire singularity. To transduce in order to be induced is a strategy that becomes important for psychophysical performance practice, as we shall see in the following chapter. In brief, this is where being induced to move may in turn induce other people to feel ‘moved’. When the transduction of indirect intensive movements avoids the direct transference of intentional movements, this opens a trans-local zone of indeterminacy that may be taken up by others at the pre-individual level.\(^{37}\)

The absorption process becomes one of building up a resistance or readiness potential in order to complicate and induce a readiness response. It is like a contraction of absolute duration to a half second gap, where singularities flicker more densely on the edge of actualizing, and where particles and signs cut into us as tendencies while remaining tentative as incipient potentials. ‘Transmission’ begins then as a sending across within an interval of purely intensive movement; not actually sent as such, but more like an interruption and overflowing of action-reaction circuits. The resulting indeterminacy finds a limit with the tug, where a shift in phase occurs within the usual flow of auto-affection. That is, when the intensive resistance reaches such a tentative saturation that the initiation of movement loses its central point of agency, but is now more distributed through the untimely becoming of body and building.

\(^{37}\) An important aside: transverse relations of movement and affect are also found in the case of mirror neuron phenomena at the motor nerve level of the organism. With mirror neurons a stimulus response may produce a physiological effect when a person forms an intention to move, as if they had performed the action, even when they withhold or do not produce the movement (see Thompson and Varela, 2001: 418).

A second point about mirror neuron phenomena also concerns relations of movement, agency and emotion. Just as our intention to move produces a physiological response as if the action had been performed, even if withheld, the same goes for when we observe another person ‘display’ a state of affectivity even at a subtle level. The movement or gesture transmits a sign at the neurophysiological level through a subset of mirror neurons that enable us to accurately ‘recognize’ the affect in our own bodies. This autonomic recognition occurs as if we were initiating the affect within ourselves as a physiological response. That is, we feel the affect that has been displayed as if it were our own, perceived as a sign arising from the physical action of the other person. We are indeed ‘moved’ by the other in an empathic sense, aside from the emotional value we give to the actual movement through interpretation.

These findings notwithstanding (ibid: 418), it is worth noting that the existence of mirror neurons remains contested within neuroscience - sometimes considered in terms of distributed neural activity rather than single neurons as such. Murphie argues that the mirror neuron is not a thing in and of itself but a singular synthesis of dynamic interrelations (Murphie, 2010). The use of neuroscientific references within cultural theory is problematic. However, the relational distribution put forward here by Murphie indicates how mirror neuron activity may offer a way of situating how affective intensities seem to abstract the boundary conditions of agency and causation within and across collective bodies and selves.
Walking through the otherness of the relation

In the warehouse there are no actual others, or at least not yet (in any case, to assume otherwise would be potentially dangerous). But as we walk through the building all sorts of feelings around possible encounters may arise, invoking specific tonalities (fear, suspicion, curiosity etc). There is an openness to the possibility of an encounter, even as these possibilities are drawn back into the resistant potential of maintaining speed with the slowness of the building. Possible encounters are then no longer ghosts, or even the chance of other humans. And nor does a sense of the warehouse as an autonomous entity mean that we ascribe some kind of subjectivity to it. The ghosts are not a perceived sentience within the building as such, but rather an aspect of our own extended cognition. In losing our intention, while abstracting its intensity, we find it again as a specter on the other side. Our capacity to push beyond the immediate exterior reaches a limit of the unknown, of something inexplicable and/or unbearable: the total spectrum of the event. Here at the limit it assumes a form, however vague - a ghost, a human - as if recoiling from the absolute outside, from holding ourselves open.

The process of ‘stealing our steps’ may now be understood in new ways. In one sense it is simply moving slowly and imperceptibly so as not to be discovered by a possible other. But in our absorption of the building we have already sent the step that goes before us many times over, and into which we move, or are moved, generating the conditions that allow it to be taken from us, and the possibility that

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38 In terms of mirror neurons, it’s worth reconsidering the perceived sentience of the building more closely. Revisiting my earlier footnotes: the parallel drawn between Eisenman and Wölfflin in terms of the column - as ‘structural sign’ (presence / absence) and ‘energetic innervation’, may also be read alongside William James’ notion of the animate / inanimate as ‘adding to’ one another’s existence. Rather than a direct relation that might founder on fantasies of ‘inanimate sentience’ (whatever its merits or pitfalls), we might approach the question instead in terms of how a site contracts mnemonic assemblages of signs (as object relations and cultural artifacts) and how these then operate indirectly as intermediaries within and between bodies and selves (individual and collective) at the level of extended cognition.

Just as mirror neurons operate as signs (both within and between bodies), it raises the question: to what degree does extended cognition play an intermediary and/or auxiliary role in mirror neuron affects? As I go on argue, the site may be seen to hold open an intensive space for affective circulation. And just as mirror neurons work not simply as visual signs but as material innervations throughout the psychophysical body, nor should we foreclose on how these traces might circulate across different modes of sentience / non-sentience, through the animate / inanimate. Thresholds are not so clear cut between particles and signs, especially when we consider how entities operate within a collective field of agency. In this respect, my research on psychophysical performance explores these concerns at the level of singularity, where the ‘genius loci’ or ‘spirit of the place’ becomes a distributed ecology of relations (see CHAIR 1 and CHAIR 2).

39 To add to my earlier footnote on the ‘unbearable’ through Deleuze, I also see potential correlations here in terms of Varela’s affective tonality in the way it fluctuates as an ‘immediate coping’ (Varela, 2000: 291), within the distributed nature of being an embodied self in the world.
this tentativeness may be taken up by others. ‘The other’ is no longer a definitive possibility nor a
given form, but now a nascent suspension; and just as we find an otherness in ourselves, of being
moved, the boundary of self / other becomes quite simply the openness of relation as autonomous
potential. Even alone in the warehouse we are saturated in this otherness of relation, in the virtual
density of self-affecting-self and becoming-building. Stealing our steps now becomes an act of
disappearance, of holding open a gap between frames of reference and intensive timeframes.

This ‘holding open’ is one of taking our openness to redoubled limit of transparency, through which we
steal our way. The first limit is of following the forward edge of the step coming into existence, but
where its definitive form always seems to fall away, never only into just one step as an immediate
protention, but into a whole horde of steps that have come before us. As if each actual step were
accompanied by so many ghosts of itself, falling away into a seemingly infinite fringe horizon, into that
which induces us to move, and through which we find a very strange transparency - as if we were
utterly transparent and ghostly ourselves. Without form, as if we weren’t even here; or rather in fact
because we are now so intensely present in space and time on many levels, we now glimpse the
absolute outside of things. Sensing the autonomy of the building as though without us in it, at least as
pre-given users. The second limit holds the first one open by drawing out an opposing tension, of
always falling back through a state of retention. But this is also not just of one step, rather a virtual
density of multiple steps sent over and over, in which we are always stepping off from a state of
intensive resistance through the absorbed potential. The ‘weight’ of our slowness is always pulling
every actual step back into potential, like a zero point that allows the other limit to go to infinity. Even
during the process of making a step, each one seems to have never been made, so saturated in
virtuality that it disappears as soon as it is carried forward.

From the ‘safe room’ to zones of indeterminacy

Our initial aim was to reach the safe room in the far top corner of the building. To achieve this we could
have walked there as directly as possible, every step measured as a distance moving ever closer to
that outcome. But then everything in-between becomes secondary, and the total measure of passage
becomes a regressive limit that conditions every step with a certain affective tonality, an ‘ontological
readiness’ towards just getting there.40

40 As Varela says:

“Transparency, then, is a readiness or dispositional tendency for action in a larger field of specific
ontological readiness, that is, an expectation about the way things in general will turn out” (Varela,
2000: 292).”

“...emotions are an integral part of an ontological readiness. However, this should not obscure the
fact that such an ontological constitution has roots in basic emotional dispositions inseparable from
our history as living beings and from minute events in brain physiology” Varela, 2000: 293.
Along the way we are always half expecting something to stop us dead in our tracks, our fringe horizon so narrow as to invite any possibility. But now that we know how to steal our steps this narrow threshold is flung far and wide, and held tentatively open between the two limits. Now we are in a very different safe zone, not one out there we must get to or arrive at, but an architecture of indeterminacy - of tentative becoming.

To summarize in relation to our earlier discussion, we may now imagine some kind of topological ‘shape’ for our sponge body; where these two limits hold the abstract boundary conditions of the zone open, within or across which there is a continual edging into existence through the fold in experience. This ‘shape’ doesn’t relate to the shape and size of figures within Cartesian coordinates, except indirectly. It is more of a vague modulation between the overall state of the system and its phase conditions; that is, the shifts or transformations that occur between the full spectrum of the event and the edging of things coming into existence. Referring back to my first diagram (Figure 1.1), the key transformation occurs when the flickering of singularities establish their own open subsets, whose intensive relations now operate more transversely, nonlinerally and trans-locally, destabilizing the actual boundary. These subsets generate zones of indeterminacy, oscillating between external cognition, tendencies and impulses, until at the tentative limit of absolute density the tug comes as a critical bifurcation, pulling us forward into the walk.

By way of conclusion, we may also diagram the process in a way that retains its abstract dynamics, but now draws them out within a more recognizable frame of Cartesian coordinates (see diagram, 1.3). Here we see situated lines (a) and sites of attention (c) within the exterior, passing through reciprocal loci of absorption to gather density within us (b). There are also those aspects of the building beyond the limits of awareness (d), but these are signs nonetheless that gradually form more tangible relations (across a-c). Zones of indeterminacy start to ‘fill up’ the space with intensity (across a-d), emerging in certain areas (b/c) and particularly through our apprehension of the walk (e). A sense of shared weight and volume appears as direct boundaries give way to indirect relations passing back and forth.

1.3: Tracking the tug: the walk through the warehouse
The transverse and trans-local nature of this passage creates a rewiring or short-circuiting of boundary conditions until we finally reach a critical bifurcation point. The multiplication of singularities flicker between zones, on the cusp of an absolute outside. This removes us from the space of fixed coordinates and into an abstract space of intensive resistance. We enter an architecture of indeterminacy, through a state of suspended potential that is no-less situated - perhaps even more-so for it is saturated in tentativeness, oscillating between zones, through which we are induced to move.

**Falling away, falling back, falling out with ourselves**

If we were to zoom in on the walk, we might see the untimely flickering of singular traits and tensors accompany each tentative step, carrying the saturated multiplicity of a protracted fringe horizon that is simultaneously falling away and falling back, falling in and out of phase, suspended between zero and infinity. Our becoming imperceptible is not that we have disappeared as such, but that we are now moving through an abstract space as much as a ‘real one’ (or where the real is felt more dynamically as an inexplicable unfolding of virtuality and actuality). For all its tentativeness, our walk with the absolute outside is not so much safer, as more responsive. If we do happen to come across something or someone along the way, even just as a sign, we are less likely to stop dead, lose the flow of transparency, let affect escape, or be captured within the self-referential plenitude of identity.

We have already absorbed anything that might come our way, ahead of time (and behind it, and so on). In terms of tonality, the absolute density that we carry along with us is already at the critical limit of situated saturation, inducing a readiness potential as if from the outside. In a sense, this dynamic ‘feigns’ the break in tonality that we experience when we display emotion. As in the manner of mirror neuron phenomenon at the physical level of contracted intensity, any tendencies that appear are abstracted as pure traits and tensors, wherein we find the tug that moves us.41

41 See my previous footnote on the physical and emotional basis of mirror-neurons.
There is a critical difference here between two types of break or shift in phase: direct and indirect. For emotional expression there is a break in transparency resulting from a shift in tonality, such as when a tendency appears that delivers a direct expression of the self as an action displayed. For the sponge body it is instead a break with direct action itself, finding those indirect movements that underlie the expression of tendencies and tonalities. In terms of a topological shape, emotional expression collapses transparency as a shift towards plenitude.

If we imagine the warehouse as part of ourselves (not as a phenomenological ‘world-as-subject’, but through extended or situated cognition), the safe room at the top provides an apt metaphor for the way a wider spectrum of experience gets reduced in scope and focus. It acquires fullness in closing itself off, but loses a semi-autonomous relation with the exterior, via the absolute outside. However, in becoming with the building rather than just reaching the room, we occupy the indeterminate zone of a purely relational field.

Because we have an absolute density of potential to fall back into, any sign is more readily absorbed (through a zero point), and falls away as it is carried into all the steps that already come before us (towards infinity). In taking it up and carrying it on, our tonality doesn’t collapse by giving form to a sign. In our untimely otherness we are already in a sense ‘falling out with ourselves’, in the feints of tendentious tugs produced within density (which already gives us a certain ‘tone’ in the sense of quality or modulation). We seem to be without affect as an outward display but full of its intensity, because we are now inside a more expanded body, rather than always folding relations back into the body we might call ‘yours’ or ‘mine’. 42

**Final fallout... towards the collective**

Because we have already been induced to move through our own transverse transduction, ‘falling out’ with ourselves may then produce a wider ‘fallout’ - where singular particles-signs have the possibility to induce others at the subtiestest level (as in the case of mirror neurons). Stealing our steps is

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42 As I demonstrate in SPONGE 2, there are many techniques within psychophysical performance practice which induce affectivity by generating physical intensity internally while constraining its outward appearance; in order to transduce the boundary of self-affecting-self-affecting-other. The Sponge body is specifically located here in Butoh dance (see SPONGE 2). A precedent within this cultural context may also be found in traditional Japanese Noh theatre in which the performer uses the internal ‘somatic image’ of walking through 5000 years while taking an hour or more to cross the stage (so slowly they appear not to move). The somatic image gives the performer a sense of this expanded body (in imagination, narrative and aim in terms of crossing the stage). The suspension of motor expression is held open by the image and the material intensity of finding this temporal contraction (of 5000 years) within the body. To move continuously at such an infinitesimal speed requires great concentration and skill, inducing affectivity in the performer, to then transduce this in the viewer. The expanded body of the image and the intensive body of the autonomic systems enfold one another, appearing then to infold quite abstract milieu, and to unfold as something utterly inexplicable - time and space in absolute suspension.
like an inverse abstraction of affective tonality as a collapse in transparency, where each step is taken to a redoubled limit - its form seeming to collapse in on itself via an intensive resistance, as if it had never been made; while the transparency that carries it forward is not even that of a self as active agent but its disappearance through infinite induction.

This inverse abstraction of collapsing transparency may produce a very different phase-shift, *between* as well as within bodies, where stealing our steps may be taken up by others, when singularities may be seen to jump across the breaks to trace the boundaries of a people rather than collapse into the form of an individual.

Now that we better understand the nature of affective openness, the task of the next chapter is to find how this fall out works more ‘collectively’. Not only in terms of a people but where the ‘collective’ becomes a broader assemblage, pre-individual and even nonhuman. And also where the sponge body may be understood as part of a tradition, situated within a collection of psychophysical performance strategies that may offer an even deeper exploration of our becoming-imperceptible.
Putting aside its specificity in the warehouse for a moment, I’d like to reconsider the Sponge body exercise itself, in the way it demonstrates how certain approaches to ‘psychophysical’ performance practice are concerned primarily with producing states of affectivity and how these may be understood in a diagrammatic manner. Using the exercise as a stepping off point, I will discuss several other dance ‘scores’ to help us explore some of the finer details of affectivity in a performance context. Along the way, this allows us to re-enter the warehouse in order to road-test our added capacity, particularly in terms of the social dimension, and where affective transmission may unfold collectively in relation to body and building.

The dance-training regime underpinning this research stems from a diverse integration of methods. The selected dance scores I discuss are drawn primarily from Jerzy Grotowski’s physical theatre method and Japanese butoh dance, as practiced through workshops I have participated in, facilitated by several dancer-choreographers or groups: Tony Yap (Australia / Malaysia), Min Tanaka, Gekidan Kaitaisha, and Ko Murobushi (Japan). 43

2.1: Tony Yap, in Rasa Sayang, at 45 Downstairs (2010)

43 Of these approaches, the work with Tony Yap is most important – a collaboration spanning many years (2003 to the present), with a broad depth of engagement through training, live performance, festival development, and friendship. Tony’s workshops are a synthesis of Grotowski training with a butoh sensibility, further informed by traditions in shamanic trance mediumship from Asia. There isn’t the scope here to cover the training regime in detail, although I do describe relevant exercises and cultural contexts where relevant in the coming chapters.
There isn’t the scope or necessity to go into detail here around the broader historical contexts and cultural movements associated with these practices, except where relevant. My aim in this chapter is to focus on their affective basis in practice, and to develop a wider understanding by drawing parallels with the theories of diagramming, affect and cognition discussed in SPONGE 1.

A. Virtuosity, presence, openness

*Affective virtuosity: psychophysical performance and pre-expressive techniques*

The term ‘psychophysical’ may be understood in a broad sense as being concerned with the dynamic relations of physical stimuli and mental phenomenon. In this manner, the aim of psychophysical performance is not simply to entertain through virtuosic physical expression, but to affect the audience by seeking to attain a condition of openness in which they may feel ‘moved’, in ways that have the potential to transform habitual perceptions of space, time and subjectivity. This approach is often very different in aim, emphasis and/or method to other performance practices such as ballet or contemporary dance, and in two main respects. Firstly, just as the Sponge body is not concerned with simply getting from A to B, psychophysical movement is not always a direct relation of arriving at a clearly articulated physical form. Many dance regimes often take it for granted that the performer optimize and align motor intentions with the autonomic body in order to deliver purely kinetic acts of physical virtuosity, occupying space as a measure of distances covered, often according to a pre-set and relatively linear choreography.

By contrast, many psychophysical approaches don’t assume that movement equates to physical extension, that it refers to something outside itself, but that kinetic motion is just one aspect of movement. In the manner of the absolute outside, movement is a pure modulation of matter, an intercalary intensity of force relations, for which external kinetic motion is always in a sense only an edge phenomena. As butoh dancer / choreographer, Min Tanaka says: “The body does not need to move, it is already movement”. Which is not to say that we must be immobile, but that movement in and of itself and at whatever scale of action is a modulation or variation of intensities. Here we find the multiplicity of the autonomic systems, each with their own particular movements of modulation and intensive variation; and also those of psychophysical tendencies with their implicit forms and incipient potentials. Which of course also implicates movements of thought, already contracted within pre-conscious traces before emerging on the cusp of attention; or already eliciting our intentions via the shorthand of extended cognitions (object relations and cultural artifacts).

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44 For an overview of Butoh, and further references see my paper “Bursting Bodies of Thought: Artaud and Hijikata” (Hornblow, 2006). For an overview of Grotowski training and principles (albeit within a specific historical period) see Richards (1995).

45 Bodyweather Summer School, Hakushu Japan, August 2002.
In the workshop practice with Tony Yap, the Grotowski influence is part of what he calls a ‘pre-expressive’ approach to psychophysical training. The pre-expressive training comprises a range of structured exercises designed to open the circulation of physical and mental relations within the body. These techniques are pre-expressive because they work at the level of small physical actions, at a level of autonomic emergence and psychophysical transformation anterior to the appearance of formalized content and expression. Or like the specters in the warehouse, where this anterior dimension is one of incipient traces that are not just a ‘beforehand’ but ones that accompany actualization as a process of repotentialising it.46

As Tanaka says, in one sense the body is always slower than our awareness (Tanaka, ibid); while in another it is already ahead of us in its readiness potential, even as this anterior dimension is already an impingement of past contexts. It is then not a matter of making the body ‘think’ at the speed of the brain, but of opening heterogeneous speeds and transverse tentative correlations within and across them: ‘The speed of thought, of nerves, of blood circulation, of muscular tissues, of the spirit; the chaotic coexistence of various speeds’ (Tanaka, 1986: 154). Nor then, must we move slowly. Certainly for the sponge exercise, the immobility of the absorption stage and the slowness of carrying this density into the walk serves to with-hold direct intention and extensive movement, while potentiating more explicitly all the internal intensities that would usually rally together so seamlessly in supporting a direct course of action. There’s nothing essential about one speed over another for transmitting states of affectivity. It is more a matter of revealing this coexistence of speeds at whatever differential limit, by introducing a tentative indeterminacy in the movement such that singular traits of pure matter and function might appear within the overlapping fold of their cutting edges. This may then be transmitted when it finds some untimely coexistence within another person, where a singular point of inexplicability might move transversely through a tentative overlapping shared by both bodies; a limit fold which the collusion of direct intention and extensive movement too readily covers over.

46 Deleuze describes the to-and-fro of the virtual and the actual with reference to performance:

“...be the mime of what effectively occurs, to double the actualisation with a counter-actualisation, the identification with a distance, like the true actor or dancer, is to give to the truth of the event the only chance of not being confused with its inevitable actualisation” Deleuze, 1990: 161.

See my discussion of this passage (Hornblow, 2006: 38), in contrast with Antonin Artaud’s seminal critique of modern theatre via the figure of the double: “The plastic and never completed specter, whose forms the true actor apes, on which he imposes the forms and image of his own sensibility” (Artaud, 1958: 134). Artaud had a great influence on butoh through Hijikata, and there are many cross-references here through my own performance work, especially in the Gargoyl(e) project (see CHAIR 2).
2.2: Min Tanaka: Photos by Masato Okada 1975-2005

*The singularity of Presence*

In performance terms, the untimely dimensions of affect offer a way of thinking about what it means for a performer to produce a state of ‘presence’. If cognition is a diagrammatic construct situated across multiple frames of reference, a fold or gap in experience, then the larger than life quality that characterizes presence is not so much a monumental resolve of holding a fixed identity in place, but quite the opposite. As discussed in SPONGE 1, presence is more a process of ‘with-holding’ potential, of holding open different frames of reference, so that one may become more widely distributed within and across them; from the external cognition of things to their absorption and multiplying density within the autonomic systems, and the flicker of our intention through it all. This widening is by nature tentative, but what gives it the apparent stability of presence is the way the performer may spread themselves out across them. Or rather, because these are only tentatively ‘actual things’, themselves redoubled and intermixed in their coexistence across multiple references points, it is more a matter of always being in-between frames; in the topological non-place of the diagram, an intensive spatum of continual becomings forever open to the absolute outside within and between relations.

Presence becomes a state of passional suspension, holding open the potential for things to emerge as a kind of resistance to the present. Not an active resistance to things *per se*, but the virtual opposite: one that resists the action-reaction circuits of cause and effect that normally characterize the linear course of events; dipping instead into a deeper incipience within and between things, unhinging the very manner in which forms emerge and events unfold. What emerges is the implicit formation of intensive singularities, where presence appears as something tangible but at the same time utterly

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47 This wider / tentative stability relates also to several terms drawn from Arakawa and Gins: ‘a tentative construction towards a holding in place’; and to become ‘body-wide’ across distributed modes of attention (see CHAIR 2).

48 This relates also to my previous discussion in SPONGE 1, regarding resistance as potential in terms of the diagram and auto-affection.
Inexplicable. In the overlapping of frames we may glimpse the fold or gap through which we constitute ourselves, but only at the flickering edges of infolding contexts and unfolding tendencies, a presence not just wide in space but also time, of presentness and pastness in combined futurity.

**Affective openness on the flip-side**

Most importantly, presence is a relational act of perception taken up by the audience, drawing them into the diagram (as absolute outside), rather than issuing from some innate state within the performer. What Tony Yap describes as ‘presence through absence’ (in weekly workshops, Melbourne 2009), is firstly an openness to the pre-individual asignifying intensities of the body, and secondly a sense that these are for the audience, not the performer. This creates a kind of double openness in the way Massumi describes the proto-figural, of things being open to each other as differentiated forms, but also of belonging together within a purely intensive field, in which they co-emerge.

Presence through absence generates a certain resistance to the present, to the way ‘potential’ is actualized (the absolute outside). For just as presence enacts a reciprocity across frames of reference, this infers a broader coexistence, where holding open a state of passional suspension allows others to take up these singular traits and traces. Affective openness is like the flip-side of presence, where a state of absence allows for the transmission of singularities to pass transversally as pure intensities. The distributed width of presence is then no longer even a ‘larger than life’ sense of the individual performer but more broadly something that takes on a life of its own, where traits circulate in the fold as pure matters and functions. To catch one’s breath, to have a sense of being carried or uplifted, not yet as forms of emotion but firstly as internal shifts in weight and volume that come like a dilation of pressure as if something had changed in the atmosphere.

Affective movements are produced as a modulation of suspension and a feel for untimely states of transition within and across simultaneous frames; not as a matter of slow or fast movements per se, but of too late and too soon, or at the same time too much and too little. For example, when ‘slow’ becomes a protracted delay that breaks with direct continuity but draws our anticipation into a seemingly infinite depth of absolute continuance. Or where ‘fast’ creates a shift of purely differential

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49 Refer also my previous discussion in SPONGE 1, in terms of singularities as a way of understanding presence.

50 As Massumi says:

“The defining limit of the proto-figural is doubly an openness. On the level of actual being, it is the active reciprocity of differentiated forms to each other. Between that level and its be-ability, it is the openness of forms to their belonging-together, infinitely, continuously, indefinitely in potential. The double openness is of relating” Massumi, 2011: 90-91.

51 This relates to my earlier definition of affect in terms of the diagram, where affect is a changing state of transformation occurring within a configuration of forces (see SPONGE 1).
speed between multiple frames rather than just in terms of motion; as if reaching a zero point as a
different passage to infinity, through a sudden hiatus in perception that delivers a ‘shock to thought’ for
the spectator.\textsuperscript{52} Or when slow and fast become almost indiscernible, as with those rare performers of
affective virtuosity who transport the audience to another place, one both expanded and densified, a
non-place of pure singularities where linear time falls into a sense of absolute duration. And from
which we return as if remembering nothing, as if the fold had opened to draw us in and close again
leaving parts of us behind. A feeling that remains with us for days to come, even if we can’t quite
describe what actually happened. (This is a very different but contrasting experience to those acts of
purely physical virtuosity that leave you exhausted, trying to remember this move and that, drawn into
a purely mental realm of temporal sequencing with little or no affective modulation).

B. Butoh and the Sponge body

\textit{A slow walk though abstract space-time in butoh}

The sponge body exercise is just one of many approaches to the ‘slow walk’ within Japanese
performance, a simple everyday movement that has become a classic trope in butoh dance,\textsuperscript{53} but for
which variations may also be found in other performance practices such as Suzuki method. These
20th century incarnations of the ‘slow walk’ derive their influence to a large extent from traditional Noh
theatre, for example when the performer takes an hour or more to cross the stage such that at any
given moment they seem not to move at all, except when measured over a longer duration. In Noh,
movement scores such as these find a broader influence in Zen meditation and philosophy, where the
constraints upon form and expression aim to generate an interrogation of intentional agency for the
self. Principles of equanimity and reciprocity are not just theological or transcendental ideals but an
existential pragmatics, resonant with notions of immanent causality and passional suspension. The
performer seeks to occupy a kind of absolute duration, where ‘outside’ the self or within a state of
‘pure mind’ lies a realm of endless continuance and heterogeneous becoming that is already

\textsuperscript{52} I discuss the singular relationship between zero and infinity through Bernard Cache’s inflection in CHAIR 1,
and with reference to the ‘zero-zero’ of dancer Ko Murobushi, as a disruption of continuity and discontinuity
through movement. ‘A shock to thought’ comes from Artaud, which I discuss in relation to time and cognition
through Deleuze and Varela (see CHAIR 2).

\textsuperscript{53} The Sponge body is my own term, but it draws on several dance workshops from various sources over the
years. The exercise of feeling the room as part of yourself comes from Tokyo-based performance group, \textit{Gekidan
Kaitaisha} (Sydney, Performance Space, 2003); the sense of being induced to move through a withheld intention,
and following oneself in the walk, comes from Suzuki training with Greg Dyson (VUT Solo Artist’s Course,
2006). The walk also relates to ‘sending and following shadows’ (Umiumare, weekly workshop, 2006). Many of
these traits are shared by other dance scores I’ve come across, in the way that bodily influences tend to merge
and migrate.
immanently co-extensive with everything.54 Moving very slowly, but at infinite intensive speed, through a zero point within the self.

More broadly, we find in Japanese aesthetics a pervading relationality that displays a quality of topological abstraction and processual emergence. As for instance the concept of *ma*, or ‘in-between space’, which concerns attending to the reciprocity of affective forces; often as a guiding principle for interpersonal relationships, as the activity of generating a relation (rather than a subject-to-subject duality). Also as a pure abstraction Ma approaches the intercalary outside we find in points of singularity at the level of pure traits (unformed matter and non-formalised function). For example, when Tatsumi Hijikata invents the term *ma gusare*, or ‘rotting space’ - from the experience he has of sitting on a porch in the rain and feeling the cabbages rotting in the garden (see Kurihara, 2000: 14, 76). Or with the Japanese concept of *yami* - ‘shadowy’ or ‘gloom’ - a temporal corollary to the relational intensity of *ma*, suggesting an abstract realm that confounds causality and appearance.55

54 The Zen / Butoh connection is somewhat contestable, in the sense that the latter began as a process of iconoclastic experimentation that derives its influences far and wide (including but not exclusive to Zen). It is a metaphysics of the body rather than adopting any theological doctrine as such. For links between Zen and Butoh see Fraleigh (1999), and Waguri and Kohzensha (1998).

55 In my Masters Thesis I discuss *yami* through the ‘time image’ in Deleuze (1989):

“The premodern Japanese notion of *yami* (the dark, shadowy, or gloom) seems to approximate the topological nonlinearity of the time-image, with a kind of temporal equivalence to the aesthetic of darkness described earlier in Tanazaki’s theory of shadows. David Goodman describes yami as "an endlessly repeating, constantly changing, shapeless form of time. Things are not orderly or predictable but as innumerable and conflicting as thoughts and images” (Goodman, in Klein, 1986: 40)” Hornblow, 2004: 65.

“Theatre critic Kiyokazu Yamamoto defines a "metempychosic" model of time where "there is only process, which is cyclical and endless" (Yamamoto, in Klein, 1986:41); one which Klein describes as “a Premodern, ritualistic model of time and being” (Klein, 1986:41), linking it both to the primordialism of yami and to Hijikata’s method of constant metamorphosis and fragmentation” (ibid: 67).

The temporal dimension of Yami, as a kind of ‘gloom’, may be further situated within what Tanizaki Jun’ichiro proposed as a Japanese ‘aesthetic of darkness’ in his seminal text of 1933, ‘In Praise of Shadows’:

“...the darkness in which Noh is shrouded and the beauty that emerges from it make a distinct world of shadows which today can be seen only on the stage, but in the past it could not have been far removed from daily life... beauty not in the thing itself but in the patterns of shadows, the light and the darkness that one thing against another creates” Tanizaki, in Klein, 1986: 49.

This aesthetic of the shadows had a particular influence on butoh, especially in its formative period as *ankoku butoh*, or ‘the dance of darkness’. Seen through the prism of *ma* and *yami*, it is an aesthetic that resonates with the nonlinear dynamics of emergent potential and passional suspension that we find in the foldings of affect.
In this manner, butoh seeks to articulate a pre-expressive quality underlying stratified forms and processes, always tending towards a limit of continuous potential. As for instance when Hijikata says: “Ah, that thing that is form, becomes vivid in disappearing” (Hijikata, 2000: 76).

Hollow body: where the self becomes a transient membrane

To give us a sense for how the sponge body might be imagined as a pre-expressive unfolding of suspended potential we could do no better than refer to the way Tanigawa Atsushi discusses butoh through the etymological nuances of the body in the Japanese language:

“In butoh, it is not like a body exists as mass and moves in the already existing space. The self is a kind of transient membrane, and the space is perceived by passing through the body... the idea is that emptiness is standing. In other words, it is not mass but a hollow-body. ‘Utsuro (hollow),’ is related to words such as ‘utsurou (shift, transform),’ ‘utsuru (move, shift),’ ‘utsusu (remove, turn),’ and ‘utsushimi (actual body).’

Tanigawa, in Waguri and Kohzensha, 1998

The hollow-body as transient membrane of the self recalls the absorption process of our sponging, in which we move into an Outside that is always and already passing through us. We come to occupy the enactive membrane of a body that is no more pre-given than the surrounding space, for each are constituted within the event of passing through. It is not a self as subject that is created, but its hollowing out as a process of transformation, a deterritorialized body ‘removed’ from itself as an intentional loci of agency in favor of a wider and more tentative continuance.56

A sense of ‘emptiness’ as a state of embodied mind is a familiar trope in psychophysical performance, as a way of generating ‘presence through absence’. But we should be careful not to attribute a state of transcendence or ‘pure being’ here, lest this becomes a pre-given ideal that occupies the hollow with our intention, or predetermines the quality of movement. Nor should we picture the hollow body as a sack with a boundary, for the hollow is neither a hole nor a whole, but an enactive membrane that is not empty per se, so much as a continual hollowing out, a reciprocal opening of suspended potential. To recall our earlier discussions, this opening is redoubled for there are many hollowing out processes going on throughout the body, such that this transient membrane becomes like a fold in experience (Massumi, 2002: 183-184), or a self-producing membrane (Thompson, 2007: 44); comprising so many layers and gaps and by which the self is produced through their distribution. Moreover, our sponging also opens into the transience of the exterior itself, to its own hollowing out, so that what passes through and between these two virtual configurations on either side is neither space nor body but an absolute outside within the relation. The membrane is like a topological sieve, breaking down stratified

56 This mode of operation recalls aspects of the diagram in terms of the absolute outside, as discussed in SPONGE 1.
contents and extracting singularities so that what remains is an abstract space, empty of fixed coordinates but full of flickering traits.

*Edging through zero, to infinity and beyond: the Menger Sponge*

To go from sack to sieve we need to zoom in a little, to form some kind of picture for the ‘texture’ of this abstract membrane we are sponging through. We could do no better here than the Menger Sponge, a mathematical figure in which the centre square of a nine-square arrangement is removed, followed by the scaled centers of the remaining eight; and so on and so on, *ad infinitum*. Robert Somol describes the figure as: “an infinitely porous diagrammatic structure that “produces a solid looking lattice, the surface area of which approaches infinity as its volume approaches zero” (Somol, 1998: 25).57

![The Menger Sponge: Amir R. Baserinia, 2006 (left); David C. Pearson, 2009 (right)](image)

The figure offers a helpful conceptual image for envisioning how we might go from a direct boundary condition, between a given mass and the surrounding space, to gradually opening them through a series of virtual configurations that pass into the depths of the autonomic body and the width of the exterior. Let us imagine the holes as loci of virtual relations within and across multiple frames of reference (each square a frame, albeit in an abstract sense), forever multiplying the in-between as a generative limit to the absolute outside. These frames are like the emptiness of the hollow body, in the sense of removing or turning a stratified boundary condition in on itself, forever tending towards a zero limit, an absence, albeit one that can never be attained except as an infinite value.58 Now we can see the principle of passional suspension as a state of potential - as the structure gets increasingly porous it seems light and buoyant, without having gone anywhere, or needing to, because it is already absorbing and occupying space at the level of intensity.

57 Somol uses the Menger Sponge as a contemporary response to the compositional transformations of the modernist 9-square diagram as described in the architectural works of Peter Eisenman (Somol, 1999).

58 As discussed previously, frames or reference may be considered in three ways: as psychophysical modes of attention or cognition; as the folding of habituated tendencies; and as framing devices in the environment that facilitate this interplay. For the Menger Sponge there is a simultaneous destratification and restratification of itself, in the sense that it abstracts habituated tendencies towards extension by evacuating its interior. It is not an extruded surface as such, but one that goes even further - approaching infinity by finding a zero limit.
The frames perform a double openness of infolding volume and unfolding surface, a ‘discontinuous involution’ lacking in actual extension.\(^5\) So here we have a boundary surface that begins as a skin on things in its direct relation to other things, a fact of relative exteriority. But then by turning inwards, the surface becomes more like an immanent plane as it approaches infinity. The more we hollow out or destratify the self the closer we seem to get to an absolute continuity; even though we can never really reach this as if it were some pure transcendence evenly stretched out, for it is endlessly folding and turning. In any case, the limits of infinite surface and zero volume are not ideal destinations that become henceforth unattainable, but generative limit conditions turning upon one another.

So then it is the edges of the frames where everything happens - where plane and void become indiscernible along a cutting edge of deterritorialisation and delimitation.\(^6\) If we were to see the frames as the inscription and contraction of an affective surface, their corners mark the line of a limit fold.

Seen as a cutting edge (in the diagrammatic sense) this is where we might posit points of singularity along the lines, or in fact where these points do the cutting for they render a tentative indeterminacy - between the concrete plane and its opening to a multiplicity of virtual configurations. The sponge body is drawn along this edge, in a similar way to how dancer / choreographer Yukio Waguri describes butoh as:

“A lump of flesh in a container, pulled out and back in, the body undergoes multiplication and condensation” (Waguri and Kohzensha, 1988).

\(^5\) Greg Lynn talks about how the architectural morphologies of D’Arcy Thompson work as supple geometries which are ‘capable of both bending under external forces and folding these forces internally. These transformations develop through discontinuous involution rather than continuous evolution” (Lynn, 1993: 28). In relation to the Menger Sponge, Lynn contrasts Thompson with Colin Rowe’s seminal use of the 9-square diagram as a reinterpretation of the Palladian Villa. Eisenman’s own manipulations of the 9-square respond to Rowe and Thompson’s approach to the diagram, to which Somol posits the Menger Sponge as his own contemporary response. Lynn’s own development of the diagram through the influence of the Deleuzian fold charts a new course, away from the influence of Derridean Deconstruction under Eisenman (his former mentor and employer).

For a specific parallel here with butoh, there is an interesting contrast between Lynn’s appropriation of ‘the body-without-organs’ as a figure of involution (Lynn, 1998), through Deleuze and Guattari’s rereading of Antonin Artaud. Artaud’s original notion of a ‘body without organs’ is one that turns itself inside out and dances (Artaud, 1994); which Deleuze and Guattari use as a conceptual figure for an asignifying process of desubjectification and experimentation (see Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). For a discussion of the influence of Artaud and the BwO on Hijikata’s butoh, see Hornblow (2006). For a comparative discussion of Lynn’s BwO, in terms of my own project work, and with reference to Artaud and Hijikata, see also Hornblow (2009; 2010).

\(^6\) That is, on one side of the edge the zero limit of the voids deterritorialize its mass as a surface effect, while on the other side the edge simultaneously delimits a passage to the infinite. For further discussion of the Menger Sponge in terms of delimitation see part 2: CHAIR. Deleuze and Guattari describe the diagram in the way it generates a ‘cutting edge of deterritorialization’ in terms of destabilizing subjectivity and signification (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987), qualities clearly evident in the Sponge body experience. For an analysis of butoh through Deleuze and Guattari, see also Hornblow (2004; 2006).
The body walks this tentative line of being pulled out and back in, where boundary conditions and virtual configurations are drawn together and apart through transverse transformations, as a continual edging into existence. If a singularity is ‘a point at which a function takes an infinite value... when matter is infinitely dense’; then the sponge body as Menger sponge appears when we may start to feel tensors flicker nonlinearly and translocally across the multiplication of edges. As we approach an absolute density, this is not of heavy concrete aggregations per se, but of infinitely dense relations within matter, an infinite porosity forever turning on a zero limit. Traits become light and buoyant in a manner that allows them to be transduced from one state of matter to another, and even transmitted from one entity to another; a quality of condensation as much as density, as for instance in the conversion from a vapor or gas to a liquid.

C. Diagramming the image

*Butoh-fu: somatic imagery*

If we were to take this image of the Menger sponge into the warehouse experience, does it help us with our tentative absorption, or is it way too abstract? Certainly by now we can see how both the exercise and the experience are by nature abstract. So perhaps the question becomes how the image might have its own qualities of abstraction that may further enable our own.

In butoh, Hijikata’s choreographic method of working with images, called *butoh-fu* or ‘dance score’, provides a way of approaching the transduction of singular traits at the level of abstract concreteness.

[ COPYRIGHT RESTRICTED MATERIAL ]


Rather than regard an image as the external representation of a thing, butoh-fu explores how the image may pass into the thing itself, or in fact be seen to constitute its material dynamics, as a

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61 As discussed previously, points of singularity have a certain ‘abstract concreteness’ in the way they turn on both sides to the actual and the virtual, as particles and signs that have been extracted from formalized content and expression, to become traits of pure matter and tensors of pure function.
capacity for becoming and transformation. It is a kind of diagramming - one that doesn't refer to an external reality but rather “constructs a real that is yet to come, a new type of reality” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 142). In other words, diagramming delimits the virtual potential of the real while actualizing a dynamic configuration of force relations, but without exhausting this potential in the process. In this manner, butoh-fu is very different to other forms of choreographic dance notation that

2.5 Tatsumi Hijikata notebook: butoh-fu, with paintings by De Kooning and Gustav Klimt (Keio archive)

62 In my MA Thesis (UTS) I discuss butoh-fu through Deleuze’s cinephilosophy and Bergson’s ontology of the image, in terms of its inherent plasticity or material modulation, for instance when Bergson describes the image as ‘a plastic mass’ (see Hornblow, 2004). For this Doctoral thesis there are several references to Bergsonian duration in CHAIR 1, through Bernard Cache’s inflection, which bears influence from Deleuze’s Cinema Books (Deleuze, 1986; 1989). Subsequently, Deleuze references Cache’s inflection in The Fold, which in turn has had a considerable influence on architectural theory, in particular through Greg Lynn (see Lynn, 1993; 1998; 2004). For references to Bergson and Deleuze in relation to cinematic devices in architecture, see also Somol’s discussion of Eisenman and the diagram, in terms of singularity and ‘presentness’, ‘peaks of present’ and ‘sheets of past’ (Somol, 1999: 175).

I also see a fruitful correlation between Deleuze’s approach to the ‘time image’, as peaks of present and sheets of past, and also the ‘affection image’ - in terms of Varela’s dynamical understanding of time consciousness and affective tonality, in particular where phase shifts occur within the ‘specious present’. In previous drafts of this thesis I have written more at length on many of these crossovers, although for issues of scope and focus they have had to be culled in the final document. Some references remain as broader framing devices for the architectural specificity of the built environment in relation to performance, while further areas offer potential for later research and publication.

63 As Daniel Barber says: “This passage on the diagram and its rehearsal in Deleuze's book 'Foucault', have served as the primary source for definitions of the diagram in architecture theory” (Barber, 2005: 72). See also; the articles in ANY 23 'Diagram Work Data Mechanics for a Topological Age' (Berkel and Bos, 1998); also 'Notes around the Doppler Effect and Other Moods of Modernism' - Perspecta 33: Mining Autonomy (Somol and Whiting, 2002); also 'Diagrammania' - Daidalos issue 74 (2000).
might codify a relatively linear sequence of movements using icons or symbols. By contrast, butoh-fu works at the level of ‘somatic imagery’; that is, where the image may find a pre-expressive resistance within the autonomic body through sensation and imagination. This means opening up the image just as much as we have done for the body, differentiating the components of the image-as-thing; and even more so, where these become gradient thresholds that find an overlapping across frames of reference.

For Waguri, this means asking questions like: what is the humidity of the image-thing - its temperature, structural constraints, vectors, speeds or metabolic duration, textures and sensations, and where is the dancer as a subject positioned in relation to it? (Waguri and Khozensha, 1998). Just as the object / thing comprises so many layers there are numerous ways of differentiating somatic images at different levels of composition or duration: in the material depths of a single image; as a dynamical width of relations across multiple images; and then the generative abstractions that result from how these two may be laid out (images both within and arising from other images). The aim in most cases is not necessarily to portray something to the audience as a recognizable re-presentation, but to convey a sense of what animates it as a diagram of force relations, the particular constraints that define its heterogeneous becoming. We will never actually become the object / thing in itself, but we may ‘catch a sense’ of what animates it (Tanaka, 2002), as a tentative indeterminacy where each image meets

64 For example, one of Hijikata’s butoh-fu scores, ‘Diagram of a Cow’ reads like a set of instructions (in Waguri & Kohzensha 1998: unpaginated), but where each image works simultaneously at various levels of abstraction and sensation, so that the danced diagram may find a lived quality that both disorientates subjective intention and situates modes of attention. Waguri compares butoh-fu with Western notation systems such as Labanotation (Rudolf Laban), Choreology (Benesh notation), Merce Cunningham’s Life Forms, and the choreography of William Forsythe. Waguri describes how these stem from a historical pedigree of symbolization and generalization, while traditional Japanese dance was often only handed down from master to student either verbally or as a realistic illustration of physical movement.

Butoh-fu differs from both in its emphasis on poetic abstraction and somatic sensation. “BUTOH-FU uses words to explain matters that cannot easily be symbolized, such as; a way of viewing and carrying an image that a dancer needs to be aware of when he dances. A word is not a tool for recording, but is used as a kind of medium to expand on a physical image with imagination” (ibid). It may be argued, that such dynamical nuances exist within the Western choreographic systems Waguri mentions, which while not operating at the level of sensation in the same way, still display a generative quality of abstraction that goes beyond the linear sequencing of movement phrases. For Laban, see the study of ‘effort’ in terms of dynamics and inner intention (see Newlove, 1993, 2005). For Cunningham, see José Gil: “Dance is not a language, first of all, the non-verbal nature of its movements rendering the idea of a meta-language inconceivable’ (Gil, in Massumi, 2002: 120). For Forsyth, see Erin Manning’s discussion of choreography as a ‘multiplying ecology’, and an ‘incipiency of the in-between’ that exceeds its composition (Manning, 2009).

65 In 2002 I participated in a 4-week summer school with Min Tanaka (a former student of Hijikata), who often asked us to ‘catch the sense’ of something we were trying to embody, as if it were floating in the atmosphere - whether this was an actual thing in the environment, or an abstract somatic image. What Tanaka called ‘image-work’ often directly referenced Hijikata’s butoh-fu, and I recall Min describing the difficulty of juggling so many images (as we too found it difficult), while Hijikata danced beside him seeming to move and transform effortlessly between them all.

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the others at a threshold of continuous modulation, of affecting and being affected. To catch a sense of these dynamics we need to go beneath the shape, form or behavior of the object / thing, to find the singular details of a rhythm, a texture, a contraction, particularities at a pre-expressive level of emergence. And then our own diagramming of autonomic and psychophysical constraints introduces another level of indeterminacy, so that what emerges is a sense of potential not fully given in its actual form, but which appears only as a flickering transmission of pure particles-signs in mutual becoming.

**Particles of the image and the problem of ‛authenticity’**

In his own way Hijikata speaks of ‛particles’ throughout his butoh-fu, where the particles of one thing transform into the particles of another (ibid). Often, these transformations are between such disparate things or processes that they stretch the embodied imagination to a limit of capability, or where their combined immersion and multiplicity presents its own challenges. As much as it characterizes Hijikata’s poetics, this difficulty is also part of a consistent strategy to confound the subject in our intention to ‛get it right’, by maximizing indeterminacy between mind, body, image and thing. In butoh-fu, the image-thing becomes a field of forces, an aggregation of thresholds that finds a cutting edge within the dancer as a state of resistance, suspension, potential. Butoh-fu opens the image to a specifically psychophysical indeterminacy, holding the psychological and the physical open to tendency, to tentativeness. The imagination may explore things that are not in the immediate present but through their absence offer the presence of a broader duration in time and space: “...the ’non-place’, as Foucault puts it, where the informal diagram is swallowed up and becomes embodied” (Deleuze, 1988: 38). The transformations in Hijikata’s ‘particles’ are of singular traits flickering between things, recalling the particles-signs of Deleuze in the manner in which they destratify differentiated forms.

Here also, the somatic imagery of butoh-fu reveals an important insight for psychophysical performance, where this field of practice is often described in terms of ‛authenticity’. Authenticity is a problematic term, in one sense tending towards the ‘truth of the body’ as a kind of a material essence, and/or in another sense seeking the expression of a ‘true self’ in the World. This presents a quandary around the issue of causal agency, where psychophysical tendencies seem to indicate that neither pole is ‘true’ as such, but that some deeper complicity passes between them. In the light of my previous discussion on indirect movement, the two poles do not necessarily present a paradox, so much as a tentative indeterminacy given by the dynamical circulation of semi-autonomous relations being ‘authored’ across diverse systems of reference. ‛Relational autonomy’ is perhaps a better term for reconsidering the quality that ‛authenticity’ seeks: of relation enacted through mutual constraint, an ‛authoring’ that is not that of a sovereign self, but of self-producing and/or transient membranes in the...
manner of Thompson and Tanigawa. The somatic image produces a psychophysical indeterminacy between thought and extension in a way that may evoke so many other diagrams, every singular particle always on the cusp of transducing / inducing further potential. It generates a loci of resistance, between the psychological and the physical, content and expression, matter and force, particle and sign, so that an inexplicable presence might emerge in the absence of either pole becoming stratified.

This is why for Hijikata, many of his butoh-fu scores specifically address the subject position of the dancer, often with the image of something so abstract as to seem almost inexpressible. For example, in his interpretation of Henri Michaux’s ‘Mescaline Drawings’ we are asked to imagine our brain becoming sodden with ink and draining down along the inside of our neck, shoulder, and arm, to the hand (Tanaka, 2002). The image takes us into things but also takes them into us, to reveal a deeper and wider imaging of our own ‘thingness’.

2.6:
Tatsumi Hijikata notebook:

66 A similar quandary is found in the history of philosophy where the two poles of ‘authenticity’ may be found in the authentic self as existential Being (Sartre), or as an attribute of the social in terms of appropriate behavior (Heidegger). For a sense of relational autonomy we might return to Nietzsche’s notion of the ubermeunsch (‘overman’), as both a worldly and bodily soul where authenticity becomes a ‘self-authoring’; although this might also be reframed in terms of pre-individual singularities. For Massumi’s approach to the autonomy of relation in terms of affect, see ‘The Autonomy of Affect’ (Massumi, 2002: 96).

67 I’ve used this score on many occasions for my own teaching, and with many variations: in Dance, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Fashion Design. I often combine this with another exercise learnt on Tanaka’s bodyweather farm (Hakushu 2002), where you clench your fist in order to build up an incipient muscle memory, and then attempt to open the hand 1mm per second. It is an impossible speed for motor intention under the duress of having clenched the hand, so what happens is that the fingers spasm subtly as if opening by themselves. This experience may be combined with a somatic image (Michaux’s ink, or something else) and then transferred to material exploration with a given object (pen and paper for example, as a drawing and/or modeling process).
Even when the dancer gets brain-lock by over-thinking the score and cannot locate the image-thing in either sensation or subject position, this blockage can produce its own kind of incipient resistance, often just one step away from a critical bifurcation. When the dancer no longer thinks about their next move but is moved, when they find the Outside of themselves in a flickering of singular traits, the resistance may flick over into a conjugated flow of spontaneity.

Another strong visual source for Hijikata’s butoh-fu were the paintings of Francis Bacon, having a similarly dynamic materiality that he found in Michaux. This offers another correlation to the diagram of Deleuze, especially where Deleuze discusses the paintings of Francis Bacon, as a generative sensate rupture of scale and representation:

“This is what Bacon calls the Diagram; it is as if, all of a sudden, we introduced a Sahara, a Sahara region in the head; it is as if we stretched over it a rhinoceros skin seen through a microscope; it is as if we tore about two parts of the head by means of an ocean; it is as if we changed the measurement and replaced figurative units with micrometric or even cosmic units. A Sahara, a rhinoceros skin, this is the diagram suddenly stretched out. It is like a catastrophe happening suddenly to the canvas, inside figurative or probabilistic data.”

Deleuze, 2003: 193-194

2.7: Francis Bacon paintings: Painting (1946); Self-Portrait (1971); Head VI (1949)

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68 Waguri uses this butoh-fu score in his workshops, which he calls “Bacon Faces” (see Waguri, 2011); a method derived from the butoh practice of ‘beshimi’, involving grotesque facial grimaces designed to displace the individual in favor of a more collective subjectivity. See also Jortner, McDonald and Wetmore (2007: 105) for specific Bacon paintings used by Hijikata.
Bacon's own words evoke the kind of internal regurgitation we find at play in the somatic imagery of butoh-fu: “Images breed images in me... I’m a grinding machine. I’ve looked at everything and everything I’ve seen has been ground up very fine” (in Peppiatt and Farr, 1999: 32). Returning to the warehouse experience, we may see now how the Menger Sponge might be approached as a somatic image for our sponge body - as a grinding, or a catastrophe. As Pia Ednie-Brown says of Deleuze’s take on Bacon: “... this ‘grinding’ would seem to be a kind of concentrated refinement of affects induced by images into increasingly granular, particular textures of sensation” (Ednie-Brown, 2000: 74).

For the warehouse, we might even use the textural image of a common kitchen sponge to absorb the building, each mode of attention opening holes of pure sensation within the porous surface of our experience. Like Bacon - a grinding of the building; or Michaux - becoming sodden with images, like ink drawn into a sponge, as a writing of affects.

On another level, the cutting edge of the Menger sponge might suggest a more conceptual butoh-fu, oriented around the displacement of subject position. The continuous involution of zero volume and infinite surface might lead us into holding open a loci of tentative indeterminacy - a catastrophe upon the canvas of the self. As I discussed in Sponge1, multiplying our steps to infinity is simultaneously pulled back through the resistance of a zero limit, a topological shape drawn by an abstract contour caught between two limits, where the virtual and the actual find an edging into existence. The Menger sponge offers us an image for this shape and contour, in the reciprocal multiplication of void and surface. To give this butoh-fu a procedure or process of emergence, the first hole in the center 9-square might be when we feel a new sense of the building appear as a shared weight and volume of inexplicable dimensions, when our absorption first breaks the surface tension of the sponge as a pre-given mass, beyond a direct relation between body and building.

The first hole opens as an uncanny sense of the room we’re in, opening an absolute outside within us. When we take our imagination out into the building, the holes multiply, not as rooms per se but a more abstract porous volume that passes through the layers of walls, into an absolute duration. Along the edges between the surface and voids of the sponge, particles-signs flicker between the dense historical strata of the warehouse and our own tendencies, until we feel the tug that induces the walk into actualised becoming. And so then the walk becomes a flickering line across all these edges of a

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69 Ednie-Brown’s essay was a key inspiration in finding a home for this Doctoral Research in the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory at RMIT. She develops an architectural critique of Greg Lynn’s ‘animate form’ through Deleuze and Bacon, and although this passes somewhat outside the scope of my research, I revisit the relevance in CHAIR 2 for its implications in situating the gargoyle figure as an architectural figure of the grotesque.
sponge body-building, so that we are no longer within any given room, but come to occupy an abstract
volume that is dense, diffuse and suspended, as if carrying the building and being carried by it.70

The image becomes a diagrammatic mode of abstraction when we do not represent its contents as an
expression of translation, but rather transpose its traits by transducing its diagram through a state of
indeterminacy: a becoming. To a certain extent it could then be any form of content, even one quite
removed in context to the specific site, all the better to produce a displacement. Its specificity is
precisely a matter of what diagram it generates or potentiates as an opening into tentativeness.

The sponge-body has its own particular kind of ‘rotting space’, along the edge of involution between
zero and infinity. The tension this holds open is similar to the metaphor of the body as a flower (butoh-
kaden) that Hijikata borrows from the Zen poet, Zeami, and to which the slow walk in Noh also finds
inspiration: “The speed of the opening petals is removed by the flower” (Zeami, in Waguri and
Khozensha: 1998).71 Which is to say, the flower / body draws back into duration the expression of the
movement (like the involution of the hollow body).72 So it could be that our sponge even comprises
particles of a becoming flower. In any case, the critical point of interest is where transduction and
transposition might induce an affective dynamic of being moved from the Outside.

70 In the Menger sponge, the saturation proceeds exponentially in relation to the whole volume, rather from one
point to another: first the centre hole of the 9-square, then the remaining 8 as an 1/8th size reflection of the first
hole, then 64 smaller ones around those 8, and so on. In this sense, each ‘step’ in the process multiplies to
infinity in relation to the full spectrum of the figure.

71 In August 2011 I facilitated a session on butoh and image-work at Generating the Impossible, an international
symposium with SenseLab in Mekoos, Canada (near Montreal). One of the scores was a combination of
Michaux’s mescaline drawing and Tanaka’s clenched hand at 1mm per second, but with two additions. Firstly, a
piece of paper and a pen is placed in front of each person, with a discussion about William James’s example of
the pen as an object that adds to one’s existence. The workshop participants then open their hand with the image
of a butoh-kaden - “the speed of opening petals is removed by the flower” as Zeami says. They complete the
exercise by drawing their affects on the paper in front of them.

“To be ‘conscious’ means not simply to be, but to be reported, known, to have awareness of one’s
being added to that being; and this is just what happens when the appropriative experience
supervenes” (James, 1912: 132).

72 There are a number of other walking scores in butoh-fu that may be combined as strategic displacements for
the sponge body, from the conceptual to the material. As an overall image for our slow dissolution of the
building through space, time and matter we might approach it like the flower of butoh-kaden. Or when the Noh
performer walks across the stage as if moving through a passage of 5000 years. Now this passage might become
the 75-or-so years of the building’s history, accompanied by all its ghosts. Or where this ‘autopoeitic
archaeology’ of moving through layers, of body and building as a mutual sponging, might be approached
through Hijikata’s image score: “The body is a wall made of different materials” (Waguri and Khozensha, 1998)
D. Inter-subjective relations

*Clay work: moved by the golem*

An example of transducing this transposition as an induction to the Outside, may be found in an exercise called Clay-work from Min Tanaka’s Bodyweather training. In a sense it is a kind of butoh-fu, but one designed more as a ‘sensitivity training’ in the purely material and relational qualities of the image as a process of modulation; and where its particles not only move into other things, but now also into other people. The exercise is done in pairs: one partner is entirely passive while their partner moulds them into a series of precise positions, as if they were made of clay. The sculptor pauses at certain points to cue their golem partner that they need to fix the position, while the sculptor steps back to observe and then return for the next position.

When the sculptor feels they have finished, their golem returns to neutral stance and then uses the still active sensations in body memory, to reconstitute the positions as a series of intensive movements. A full understanding of the process is quite subtle and complex, but the main point to emerge is how motor intention and sensate reception becomes a prosthetic relation on both sides.

2.8: Society of Molecules: Clay work at Dance House, Melbourne (2009); and Butoh-fu instruction pack for Sydney collaboration.

When the golem is both very passive, but actively receptive in attention, there is often a sense of feeling the motor intention of the sculptor as if it were their own, like a kind of satellite readiness response. In the reconstitution of the sculpting process, the golem may feel as if they were induced to move by the trace of absent hands, where the resistance of their passivity beforehand now serves as an incipient potential.

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73 I’ve taught this exercise in workshops with a number of groups during the research candidature - ‘Housing the Body, Dressing the Environment’ (Sense Lab, 2007); ‘Society of Molecules’, Melbourne Molecule at Dancehouse (Sense Lab, 2009); RMIT Fashion students (2010, 2012); RMIT Architecture students for ‘Arakawa and Gins Online Conference (AG3, Deakin University, 2010); and ‘Generating the Impossible’ (Sense Lab, 2011).
The now passive observation of the sculptor reverses roles, but holds the intensity open between the two bodies by actively attending to each move, and to which the golem may feel this passivity as an opaque surface that serves as a foil for their own movement. For their part, the sculptor may almost feel their hands twitching as they watch the movement, feeling moved by their own incipient traces as if virtually reconstituting the process themselves. Both are induced to move by the other as if connected by nerve threads, through an in-betweenness coming into phase, of flickering particles adding to one another’s existence.

These traces that arise in the clay-work show how the affective openness we have generated within our sponge body, (as an untimely modulation of transparency through intensity and extension, transducing and inducing), now also passes between bodies. And even though the clay-work operates through direct contact, the satellite nature of the relation is translocal, even at the initial sculpting stage. The intervals of movement and intention encompasses two bodies within a field of forces that now has a broader topological shape and even more tentative edge. As each body finds their active passivity as a zero limit, of attending to the intensities in themselves, they are able to extend further into the other body to receive intensities as a passage to infinity; that is, openness. This is where the other is not even of another human self *per se*, but the absolute outside of the relation, the infinite zeroness of always being within and between forces. When it remains tentative and provisional, the exchange of clay particles between two bodies is not exhausted by identification or emotional transference, and may be taken up by other bodies (an audience). Or again by the same two, because in their continual becoming they are always different, always diverging into an otherness of themselves, only ever occupying ‘a body’ by the qualities given in the modulation of ‘clay’.

**Dead body and senile hand, on the other side of the hollow**

This prosthetic otherness in the clay work recalls another important butoh trope: the notion of a dead-body. While the hollow-body has a sense of evacuating the interiority of the self, the dead-body finds an accompanying exteriority on the other side. In some ways the dead body may be seen as a negation of the ‘ego-mind’ (as in Buddhism), but where it differs (or finds differentiation) with its hollow relation is at the critical limit where motor intention meets material becoming. As I write in my paper for SEAM 2009:

“The dead-body operates as a conceptual figure for unhinging the way in which the ego-mind occupies the body as a sovereign territory and governs it as a vehicle extensive to itself by attributing intention through motor expression.”
“Where the hollow-body is an intensive space of perception enabling a broader understanding of the self beyond the confines of the selective subject, the dead-body carries this perception into objects, while allowing this objectivity to hollow it out. The hollow body is not a state of pure emptiness; it allows things to pass. Nor is the dead body some abject nihilism of pure matter; it preserves or inheres a sense of the World.”

Hornblow, 2009

A good example of the dead body may be found Hijikata’s fascination for a senile hand - or ‘te boke’ - when an old man reaches for an object and then forgets what he has reached for. The immobilized gesture that remains is not simply a static figure divorced from continuity. Rather, it is where motor intention finds a collapse in protention, where immediate futurity seems to fall back through the weight of a lifetime. The fold in experience opens, when readiness response passes through a dislocation of memory and perception, as if a biogram had suddenly appeared suspended in space.74

Pair work: taking up with an asignificant other

In the clay-work, the exercise is focused on the tactility of the image - as material becoming and dislocation of intention, rather than any meaningful content as such. Another partner exercise from the Grotowski / Butoh-based training with Tony Yap finds this same singularity between bodies and selves, but more clearly addresses the critical threshold of emotional expression vis-à-vis affective dilation. ‘Pair work’ involves one person performing an improvisation using a combination of one or more physical foci, with a memory or image.

This might involve for instance, dancing inside a small imaginary cube while articulating the quality of something that happened during the day that affected me. Meanwhile my partner stands in close proximity, neutral but nonetheless actively engaged in attending to every movement, so that when I’m dancing my attention is reflected and heightened by that of my partner. We are tentatively held in-tension, my partner following every detailed movement, observing what becomes apparent, looking for signs of what is about to emerge. The level of intimacy that emerges is one usually reserved for significant others, opening minute details of the body for their observation.

74 As I also write in the SEAM paper, the dead-body appears in the sense that:

“...the body may then be regarded as base matter full of potential transformation and intensive becoming. In a Bergsonian sense, the body is that part of ourselves where we apprehend the World, so in objectifying our bodies we may become other things, entering the pure modulation of matter in a manner that is co-extensive rather than merely projective” (Hornblow, 2009).

See also CHAIR 1 and 2 where the dead-body becomes an important trope for my own practice. Here the chair as prosthesis delivers its own kind of dead-body-becoming in Chaise traceur; and then Gargoy[le] takes these implications further as an architectural figure turning upon a principle of negentropy.
But it is not affection, for this would collapse us into a form that inhibits the exchange. We hold each other open in the neutrality of wanting only to see what may continue to emerge, a kind of asignifying otherness found only in the relation. The images that appear are not a representation transferred from dancer to observer, but a collaborative act of perception, of singular traits transmitted as pre-expressive qualities of perception prior to an identifiable form. When the connection is strong and there is a reciprocal openness, I can almost feel as if my partner’s perception is carrying the movement, as if they are already ahead of me in knowing what comes next. All I need to do is follow, in a state of passional suspension. As Erin Manning says of her dancing and teaching in Tango, this intimacy between partners is no longer a clear and distinct loci of agency from one separate body to another, but becomes a matter of ‘moving the relation’ (Manning, 2009b: 16-17). The immediacy of the relation is a shared duration, through the generative incipiency of an intimate encounter, its potential forever unfolding as a ‘dance of the not yet’ (ibid: 13).

Both clay-work and pair-work share this element of being taken to the other side of a becoming. The constraints of physical foci, memory and imagery open a tentative threshold or displacement, an edge condition of being taken up by one another, to the extent that the outer limits of the event seem to plunge through it and turn inside out. (I find my zero point in my partner, taking me towards an infinite potential). In terms of affective tonality, this is where our sense of transparency is bound up in the exchange, where my 1/10 lapse in protention / retention, and 1/2 second readiness response is interwoven through a critical threshold with that of my partner. This weave becomes a singular entity of duration, bound by the diagram of singularities that pass between us. At this level of detail, there is a subtle waxing and waning forever edging back and forth but always verging on the collapse into form. This verge is just as crucial as an edging into existence, for this is where the strata give us something to cut into, to extract singularities from, to transform the forms that become pre-given.

Despite their tactile engagement and/or close proximity, clay-work and pair-work demonstrate how the trans-local and transverse dynamics they generate circulate at an abstract distance beyond simple spatial coordinates. What is most important is to find where the edge condition lies, and how the outer limits may be held open to tentativeness. Here, activity and passivity become a suspended relational

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75 In 2007, I taught the clay-work exercise in a workshop session for ‘Housing the Body’ (SenseLab, 2007), followed by Erin leading the Tango exercise in ‘moving the relation’. Although we didn’t do the pair-work at the time (as I’ve described it from Tony’s class), some adaptation of this might sit quite well between the two - moving the relation as a passional suspension of always ‘not yet’ but ‘as if’ touching.

76 Tentativeness becomes a key concept running through this thesis, and in particular where it is drawn from Arakawa and Gins’ notion of ‘a tentative constructing towards a holding in place’ (see CHAIR 2).
potential through the continuous modulation of intensity, anticipation, movement and focus. In this way, the two exercises are valuable training tools for understanding how affective openness may operate further afield, with an audience. Most importantly, they suggest how broader shifts of intention, movement, and agency, open an untimely quality in which others may feel ‘moved’.

Tony Yap often uses the Indonesian words, *lembut* and *karas* - to describe a differential relation of outer softness and inner feeling or strength. The usual sense one might have of being ‘hard on the outside / soft on the inside’ are turned around as a conversion of energy; the two qualities finding a mutual relation of receptivity and spontaneity that are inherent to holding open. For the purposes of psychophysical performance its worth recalling here the turnings of the hollow body, and how the dislocation of intention finds a differential quality of material becoming in the dead body. The cultural context is different, and we should be wary of attributing dialectical pairs to one another. Yet, there is a common relational aesthetic at play where the habitual givenness of terms turn upon a productive difference. The self is hollow, an intensive space of being transduced, such that the body does not extend but is induced; just as inner feeling has a ‘strength’ that is not of sovereign identity, but singular qualities of receptive spontaneity through a generative resistance with the outside.

*Emotional expression: re-collecting memory through in-tension*

Now we may return to the issue of emotional expression raised towards the end of Sponge 1, to consider how psychophysical performance may help to clarify the delicate gradation or shifting oscillation that occurs within affective openness between bodies and selves. To do this, I would like to draw a contrast between butoh and the work of Jerzy Grotowski, in terms of how the latter - as a

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77 Another exercise drawn from the training with Tony Yap (that is often used alongside the pair-work) is when the performer may shift through different focal distances, as a way of abstracting spatial depth perception and thereby inducing shifts and transitions in affective relations with others. Called A-D focus, this moves through four focal planes, drawing their qualities across one another: a. everyday proximity of inter-subjective relations (looking people in the eyes); b. taking visual perception to the far-off horizon as a trance-like state of reverie; c. drawing this quality back to the surface of the eyes (without going cross-eyed!), and then the whole body as a perceptual surface of sensate receptivity; d. taking these qualities back out to the proximal space of the first focus (a.), but now where there is an abstract openness to other bodies (and if eye contact is made it is more mask-like as a suspension of inter-subjective relations). See also my description of A-D focus, with relation to the biogram, in my paper for SEAM (Hornblow, 2009). I make further reference to the exercise for its influence on the project work, see part 2: CHAIR.
physical theatre method, addresses more specifically the issue of emotional expression in the actor.\textsuperscript{78} Grotowski is concerned with how the actor may actually produce an emotional expression that is in some way 'authentic' for them, and/or by extension for the primary purpose of affecting the audience. So now we are right in the thick of it - that problematic term again, authenticity, and the issue of emotion vis-à-vis affect. To recall SPONGE 1, emotional expression will often close the autonomy of affect within the confines of the self (Massumi, 1995; Shouse, 2005). But now, rather than mitigate the collapse that this form of display might induce, we are faced with the possibility of riding across it somehow, in a way that maintains affective openness and may even even increase its potential. Two main points emerge from Grotowski that resonate with Massumi's notion of a double openness; firstly, precise attention to the autonomous, material emergence of affect through small physical actions; and secondly, a quality of receptive openness where it is not one of extension but a feeling of being taken up by other people through a state of absence or detachment with regards to content.

In his own way, Grotowski invents the same hyphenated term as Massumi does for the opening of affectivity: ‘in-tension’,\textsuperscript{79} when he says that an emotional expression (that is, its ‘authentic’ or genuine display) cannot be generated by the Will alone (that is, conscious intention), but that it must come from precise attention to the small actions of the body. For Grotowski this is often a case of working with emotional memories, in order to induce an affective response. In a similar manner to butoh-fu, a memory is not taken as a pre-given representation; but rather, the performer's task is to enact its emergence through a series of small physical actions, with such precision that the body itself may find the feeling within sensation. Like the clay-work it is a diagrammatic process of reconstitution or re-

\textsuperscript{78} My experience of the Grotowski Physical Theatre Method comes through workshops with Tony Yap, who combines this approach with Japanese butoh dance and principles drawn from South East Asian shamanic trance mediumship, and related practices (primarily from Malaysia and Indonesia). It is worth noting here that Yap’s method differs in many respects from Grotowski, the former adapting this sensibility and procedures specifically within a dance context, the latter being more concerned with actor training. Butoh is in general more concerned with affective intensities expressive of a collective, phenomenological, or pre-individual state, whereas Grotowski articulates these more clearly in terms of emotional content through theatrical characterization, where the inner world of the actor negotiates their own subject position in terms of the physical memories evoked.

\textsuperscript{79} Massumi describes Henri Bergson as an important precursor for an understanding of: “...perception as working to infold extended actions and expressions, and their situatedness, into a dimension of intensity or intension as opposed to extension; on the continual doubling of the actual body by this dimension of intensity, understood as a superlinear, superabstract realm of potential” (Massumi, 1995: 92). For Grotowski, Richards cites how he touched upon the question of intention in his conference at Liege in 1986: “In/tension - intention. There is no intention if there is not a proper muscular mobilization. This is also part of the intention. The intention exists even at a muscular level in the body, and is linked to some objective outside you... Usually when the actor thinks of intentions, he thinks that it means to pump an emotional state. It is not this. Intentions are related to physical memories, to associations, to wishes, to contact with the others, but also to muscular in/tensions” (Grotowski, in Richards, 1995: 96). See also Richards (1995: 102-103).
collection which is not the reflective activity of a subject so much as the objective diagramming of a mnemonic sense datum in all its material components.

Let us consider it in topological terms of shape, edge and image. Firstly, its shape is held open as a zone of indetermination. To recall my earlier discussion on presence, on one side this is where the conscious mind finds the zero limit of a state of absence, as in the ‘dead-hollow’ bodies of butoh; or what Gratowski calls *via negativa* - a process of removing blockages rather than adding effects (see Lavy, 2005). For his part, Tony Yap's notion of 'presence through absence', is one in which the emotional memory or somatic image is understood as being not for the performer but for the audience to feel. And so then the other limit (towards infinity) is an openness to the other, which is really only the other side of this otherness as a state of absence within the self. (The zero limit as opening to the absolute outside, although what distinguishes 'other people' is a certain intensity of circulation and reflection, as in the case of mirror neurons). The two limits turn on the edge condition of the virtual and the actual as it unfolds through attention to the small physical actions themselves. It is here where the cutting edge of the diagram may ‘re-enact’ the material traits of the memory, so its affective potential may be revivified as a process of always cutting into its stratified contents, extracting its singular qualities. As Grotowski says, every repetition of the actions will then often become a new clique, and so it is necessary to go into smaller and smaller actions, forever approaching this intensive edge and its outer limits.

**Primordial affect and non-primordial emotion: autonomy and singularity**

As Thompson and Varela describe it, emotion is ‘non-primordial’, which is to say there is no ‘original scene’ of joy or melancholy to return to, only the reiteration of traces flowing though these mnemonic diagrams of embodied experience. As Deleuze says of Bergson’s duration, memory is not a souvenir but a process of fabulation, of invention. For performance then, there is no original scene to be found in the re-collection of an emotional expression, just as there is no original object to be represented in the somatic images of butoh-fu. This is a common mistake when the performer approaches authenticity like some genuine article that exists in the past, which they must accurately represent as if authenticating an innate truth of existence (their own, in relation to memory). This is to foreclose the event on the terms of a pre-given one, which already leans towards a collapse in transparency by already pre-actualizing the subject. For emotional expression, the pitfalls of authenticity are often closely followed by the notion that something ‘universal’ has been communicated as a special human quality applicable in all cases, somehow occluding the gap between ‘true self’ and ‘world subject’.\(^{80}\) As I have said, authenticity may be reframed in the sense of relational autonomy, in the indeterminacy of a self-producing membrane oscillating across the self and the social, a transduction of autonomy and

\(^{80}\) It is then also a disjunction of personal and impersonal for distinguishing emotion and affect, not as a matter of faithfully communicating a subjective ‘innate being’ from the actor’s personal world or a ‘universal truth’ for the World at large, but what Grotowski calls *conjunctio oppositorum* – a conjunction of opposites (see Lavy, 2005).
automaticity, by which we are ‘moved’, or induced. Perhaps then, ‘singular’ is a better candidate than ‘universal’, in the way I have described the trans-local movement of singularities across these diffuse boundary conditions. What is communicated (or rather, transmitted) is not ‘true’ in all cases of the individual as an aspect of the human collective, but where their particularities operate at a pre-individual level, a collection of pure traits that are pre-expressive and even nonhuman in their materiality.

As Depraz says, it is affect that is ‘primordial’ (Depraz, in Varela, 2000: 290), in the sense of auto-affection, of our being always-already affected. When specific emotional tonalities arise, the phase shifts they create may collapse the two limits: their continuous becoming between zero and infinity being reduced to ‘the one’ - when identity actualizes a subject and loses its tentative edging with the virtual. This is when affect escapes and the performer loses the audience. But as we have seen in the clay-work, there is the possibility of a holding a wider ‘shape’ open between bodies and selves, across which there is neither the transference of one subject to an other, nor a ‘universal oneness’, but a floating point of singularity. As we have seen with butoh-fu, affective openness has such a tentativeness that the image introduces an indeterminacy between psyche and soma, where its internal content may diverge from actual expression, and hence multiply the capacity to be taken up in new ways by the spectator. In a similar manner for Grotowski, working with emotional memory or imagery is not a matter of the expression conforming to the content. In fact, often this disjunction will better serve to produce a tentative intensity.

Even then, there’s no guarantee that an affective state will appear, and for the performer to assume as much would be to make the mistake of ‘pumping the emotion’ with anticipation, which is to have it pre-given, henceforth appearing forced or fabricated. Richards is adamant on this point - even when the emotion doesn’t emerge in the body of the performer, if they are precise in their actions the affective state may still be felt by the spectator. It isn’t necessary for the performer to feel the emotion but to transmit its material signs through a precise series of actions and transitional dynamics based in the autonomic physiology (as in the case of mirror neurons). The process is no less feigned or genuine, but simply recognizes how the singular quality of the image or memory is always already pre-individual and trans-local. For the performer it is more important to be within this broader openness, not to force or fabricate the emotional tone, but to remain within the field of forces as they emerge, to ‘fabricate’ an emergent construction of actions across frames of reference. As forms of display, emotions can be feigned or genuine and are often a bit of both. But it is less a question of their authenticity so much as the autonomy of affective emergence being ‘authored’ across diverse systems of reference - a self-producing transient membrane. (And in fact by diagramming the small actions at this level, feeling will often be generated anyway, or at least held in-tension as a state of potential).

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81 As in the famous case of Grotowski’s protégé, Ryszard Cieslak, who used the memory of his first love for a torture scene in ‘The Constant Prince’ (see Richards, 1995: 15-16).
E. Eventing the built fabric

*Authenticity and the problem of site-specificity*

The opening of affectivity through detailed physical actions, material signs and untimely transitions, reveals further insights into the role of the built environment, especially where modulating tonal gradation (affect / emotion) produces a phase shift between the transduction of relational autonomy (holding open) and the automaticity of being induced (feeling moved).

Let us recall that the building is just as much a sponge-body as we could ever be, but that its perceived ‘sentience’ is an aspect of our own extended cognition and apperception (where we feel it like a timeless desert in the middle of suburbia, as an absolute Outside teetering suspended on the edge of stratification). This is where somatic imagery reveals an important insight for site-specificity. For just as the image produces a psychophysical indeterminacy between thought and extension, to problematize the terms of authenticity in performance, then we must also be careful about attributing any original authenticity to the building, or our experience within it. ‘Authentic performance’ and ‘site-specific performance’ are practices that often coincide, sharing a relation to materiality and presence as ways of occupying the event. But as we have seen, if presence is not fixed but in fact arises from an untimely quality in traversing distributed frames of reference and intensive timeframes, then ‘specificity’ is perhaps not exactly (as its etymology states) ‘clearly defined or of specially determined quality’; except perhaps via the more anexact rigor of topological abstraction.

As for the ‘site’, this is not a pre-given stratified milieu but the non-place of the diagram through which we situate ourselves. What is specific are the singularities that appear in the phase shifts of situating, the specificity of particular relations within the event. As an Architectural aside, this ‘site-specificity’ is much like Eisenman’s approach to architectural presence - a phase shift arrived at through a state of dislocation with one’s historical condition - for the building a dislocation of typology, program and function (see Somol, 1999: 175; and Speaks, 1998: 30). And so then for ourselves this invokes a reciprocal dislocation in auto-affection, where the process of absorption disrupts the circuits of movement, intention, and emotional identification.

There is no original essence to be sought in the warehouse, as if its authenticity were some kind of existential self or phenomenological World-as-subject, nor some attribute of the social. Rather, it is an indeterminate flickering between the two, a reciprocal dynamic of autonomy and automaticity, where body and building add to the existence of each other (in the manner of William James), and where this adding turns on an edge that opens into virtuality on both sides. The body brings out those latent traces of lost programs within the building; and vice versa, the building induces a spectral transduction in the tug of autonomic tendencies. It is a tentative double openness that could easily re-stratify - for instance, if we were to over-identify with the building, where the sense of a lost paradise becomes an affection that folds back into affectation, or in a different manner as an aesthetic of abjection. Its autonomy is not of a self, but a membranic multiplicity that unfolds into becomings-architecture,
becomings-urban, becomings-furniture, becomings of many kinds. These coincide with us but are of a
different nature, in which the warehouse has a sense of beingness purely in terms of contraction and
expansion, of intensity and extensity pervading itself. When it creaks it appears animate, not just
mute matter but of architectural utterances that have loosened their tongues over time to become an
almost organismic field of forces.

The body is a wall made of different materials

Certainly in performance terms we may hold the 'sentience' of the building in our imagination, but this
is an image that is nothing if not tentative. And in fact, when held open this loci of indeterminacy may
reveal the inexplicable manner in which sites, objects and artifacts become 'sentient' aspects of our
own extended cognition. An abstract sentience of ghostly singularities may emerge, with the quivering
vivacity of a ‘feeling in the air’ passing across many things, rather than a ‘capacity for feeling’ to which
specific forms of life are ascribed sentient agency. Whether it is somatic imagery, or just a different
imaging of indirect movements, this opens a displacement within direct relations of subjects and
objects. The warehouse is not first the site of some lost paradise but a pure quality of suspension,
resistance and incipient potential that underlies this feeling before it has a name. It appears sentient
because the metaphysical condition of its typology has fallen out of phase, which in turn reveals the
fold through which our own sentience is in spectral co-extension with the built environment.

This brings me finally to the differences in boundary conditions between affective and emotional
tonalities, as raised at the end of SPONGE 1. Now we can start to see how performance may serve to
hold this gradation open to a wider collective, even as this ‘collective’ becomes more an assemblage
of pre-individual and nonhuman agents. For in becoming dislocated from their pre-given functions,
elements of the constructed environment may not only induce a dislocation for the individual self, but
also for the subject at the individual / social level. As I go on to discuss through two projects in part 2
of the thesis, this is where the performer may open affectivity with an audience by using the built
environment in this manner of dislocation. Elements of the site, as object relations and cultural
artifacts may become a point of folding between people, a shared surface of affective inscription
scored with traces of pre-individual and nonhuman agencies. For the paradox of authenticity, this
performative dislocation is one where the site / object finds its autonomy (when dislocated from pre-

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82 Alongside James’ notion of animate and inanimate entities adding to the experience of one another, Whitehead
also describes six types of occurrence in nature, in which he finds modes of continuity and diverse functioning at
various scales of observation: human, animal, vegetable, single cell, large scale inorganic aggregates, and those
on the infinitesimal scale such as sub-atomic particles (see Whitehead, 1938). There is a recurring relevance here
for such relational approaches to nature, which I follow in different ways throughout the thesis. As Cache says,
geography is a ‘rupture of scale’ passing through all objects, a qualitative relation of forces unfolding and
enfolded by the absolute outside (see CHAIR 2). The important point at this juncture, is the way a sense of
continuous functioning may be observed as a dislocation of both body and building, an affective opening at the
level of pure matter and function, in the singular indeterminacy of particles-signs.
given programs / functions, contents / expressions), and hence may acquire a power of automaticity as a phase shift towards people 'being moved' within an environment.

As I have said, what is particular about psychophysical performance is how it attends to the singularity of pure traits (matters and functions). But what of 'performance' more broadly? In its etymology, the word 'perform' carries a sense of 'providing (or) furnishing through to completion'. To whatever extent, we may say that the built environment is completed by the body, for which it provides, furnishes, or even mimics certain forms.\textsuperscript{83} On the other side of this becoming the body is contained by the building, the boundaries of any given room giving it a sense of completion, and the rooms beyond it a situated continuance. In affective terms there is a basic ontological readiness in which the body enacts its own boundary conditions in relation to any given room and its wider volumes. (Not just in terms of public / private space, but also views, acoustics, atmosphere).

As discussed at the end of SPONGE 1, the safe room in the building provides a built corollary in architectural form for how emotional expression collapses transparency into a form of display (a sense of plenitude); while instead, the sponge walk maintains a zone of indeterminacy in which this readiness is held open. As we will see in the next chapter, performance carries an affective power that may generate a dislocation of site and object, so that these may come to ‘stand-in’ for those spectral aspects of our distributed cognition, to enact a limit point between individual and collective bodies. This is when the ghosts really come out of the walls, or rather out of the sponge-body-as-wall, in the form of affective tonalities that spring from this heightened sense of the built fabric as a porous condition.

\textsuperscript{83} The mimicry of architectural form to that of the body may be traced back to Vitruvius with the image if the ‘well-made man’ in the layout of the temple plan (following the figure of the Crucifixion), and how the classical elevation also follows the proportions of the human body. Lynn traces this historical trajectory further into the modern period, through Le Corbusier’s modular (the golden mean expressed in the figure of a man with his arm raised above his head), and then into the disproportionate bodies of postmodernism (Lynn, 1998). In contemporary architecture, the body becomes a more operational or dynamic abstraction, initially through the likes of Lynn’s animate form, and then where biomimetic morphogenesis responds to topographic terrain features, environmental / climatic factors, and so on. See further discussion: CHAIR 2 and Conclusion. See also my discussion of Lynn’s body-without-organs in my paper for SEAM (Hornblow, 2009).

For an etymological play on ‘performance‘ - as furnishing or providing completion - we may think about how contemporary biomimetic architectures, and what has recently been called ‘performalism’, may provide for the body as a more immersive experiential response for the user. In my final chapter (see CHAIR 2, Section B), I address some of the problems around how this may actually be formalized, and where Arakawa and Gins’ architectural body offers another way of resituating the human body within these contemporary contexts. This ‘furnishing’ is then one that is always a search for architecture’s ‘outside’, where the human body already dislocates the identity of architecture. But also more abstractly, this ‘outside’ is an embodied dynamic moving through all matter at diverse scales. As I explore in the following chapter (CHAIR 1), this ‘furnishing’ relates to the way Cache describes geography as a purely intercalary phenomenon, connected to furniture through the force dynamics of our most intimate encounters with architecture.
As Hijikata says in one of his butoh-fu scores: ‘The body is a wall made of different materials’ (in Waguri & Kohzensha, 1998). We may well transpose this image to the Sponge body, where in absorbing the building we find that we are already made up of it. And now in performance we become a co-extensive threshold comprising so many affective materials, tracing a shared surface of inscription. As in the clay and pair work, we can use the built environment for opening a more collective space, held in ways that don’t collapse into forms of identity (nor even that of ‘a people’), but remain suspended through pre-individual fabrications, nonhuman material traits and untimely transitions. When it becomes a part of our selves the built fabric becomes an event fabric that no longer furnishes completion for the individual, but diagrams a ‘rotting space’ flickering along the contour of the body.
PART 2: CHAIR

Threshold

In this second part of the thesis I focus on my own performance art practice, in which I respond to some of the issues around affective openness that emerged within the dance training in part 1. My practice has drawn on theories of affect, situated cognition and architectural diagramming, during creative development, production, and on further reflection. Now in the process of writing, the project exegesis serves as an opportunity to describe these parallels more deeply, and to explore further implications or frames of reference.

Just as part 1 was prefaced by a Pre-amble, a stepping off point for diagramming affectivity through the Sponge body, I’d like to briefly locate how parts 1 and 2 hinge upon several overlapping processes, which serve to perform a kind of ‘threshold’ for this research-by-practice. This threshold is firstly one of moving between disciplines, from the dance training to projects in performance art and video installation. These shifts occur by finding ways of transposing the principles of psychophysical performance, in particular by using chairs as physical apparatus for generating affective shifts within and between my body, the built environment, and other people. The chair becomes a kind of hinge, an everyday object that enables me to diagram reciprocal relations of affecting and being affected through a given site or milieu. It allows a different kind of sponge body to appear that engages more actively with the built environment. Just as SPONGE saw the stealing of steps through time and space, CHAIR sees the tentative treading of a broader threshold, a holding open between bodies and selves, objects and built environments, disciplines and practices.

Part 2: CHAIR, focuses on two works - Chaise traceur and Gargoyl-e - one for each chapter. These may also be seen as threshold phenomena emerging from a larger series of works, what I have come to call ‘The Chair Series’. It is through this series that the principles of psychophysical performance are transposed from work to work, in the transduction of materials, images and concepts. If the chair enables a different kind of sponge body, the series of transformations it passes through open it to an even larger sponge body, an emerging body of work. Finally, in terms of a hybrid research-by-practice, the conceptual development of the series is always treading tentatively between project and theory modes. While retracing notions of affectivity and diagramming from part 1, I focus now on two approaches that allow me to examine more clearly how the performing body may generate an affective diagramming across frames of reference.

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84 Threshold: “ORIGIN Old English therscold, threscold; related to German dialect Drischaufel; the first element is related to thresh (in a Germanic sense ‘tread’), but the origin of the second element is unknown” (Apple dictionary, 2005-2011). For the purposes of thesis structure, the treading of this threshold steals a few steps between parts 1 and 2, in the sense of holding open or threshing a limit within and across SPONGE and CHAIR.
In CHAIR 1, I use Bernard Cache’s theory of inflection as a way of analyzing *Chaise traceur*; while in CHAIR 2, I explore Arakawa and Gins’ notion of the Architectural Body to examine the ‘biotopological diagramming’ at work in *Garg(oy)le*. These offer different approaches to performing a diagrammatic sponging, towards opening affective relations within and between bodies, objects, sites and selves.

The Chair Series as diagrammatic process


3.1: Drawing the Chairs around a table

The relative importance of different materials varies from work to work - indicated by the size of the circles, with the red circles showing the main foci of discussion in this Thesis.
The Chair series constitutes a diagrammatic process in a number of ways. First of all, the six works follow a trajectory of exploration through an ongoing performance research practice gathered around notions of psychophysical dislocation and affective dilation. The series is ongoing, incomplete and ‘open’ in the sense that several other works bear influence on it - either as predecessors or interstitial works within the series, or other transdisciplinary projects (with or without a performance component). I’ve diagrammed this broader context surrounding the Chair series (see Figure 3.1), to give an overall snapshot indicating the central importance of plastic elements (props, apparatus, site features) and how these are revisited and recombined from work to work. As I go on to discuss in the coming CHAIRS (part 2), each element is used in different ways to disjoin and reform habitual relations between body and site, where this implicates the perceptions and affections of the audience in Chaise traceur, or the video crew in the case of Garg(oy)le.

The plastic elements are central to the performance actions, but also to how the concepts and themes that inform them are explored in practice. Ideas such as dislocation, inflection, and dilation, assume different forms and modes from work to work. In this way the conceptual concerns in the series acquire clarity or materialise at the same time as the material elements start to take on a life of their own. Plastic elements acquire a more abstract plasticity through transformations of object and idea, becoming carriers for the exploration of concepts and themes, recombining as they undergo subsequent iterations, transposing or modulating their qualities in relation to one another.

I see the series functioning like an open emergent system in a way that displays a degree of self organisation through the creative process, when the potentials and generative limitations of the materials themselves (as well as the accidents and chance encounters they allow), have transformative effects which are then ‘reabsorbed’ in subsequent iterations. In this way I see the series operating as a broader sponge body, a body of work incorporating various material bodies, human and non-human, at different scales of action and co-emergence. As indicated by the circles, Chaise traceur and Garg(oy)le are of equal importance in terms of the elements they define. The series is basically framed through these two key works - the former in one way or another deploying all the elements that acquire clarification through subsequent works; the latter drawing all of these towards a state of conclusion, albeit provisional in that it generates more implications (for which prosthesis entails a kind of Coda).

\textit{Plastiques, plasticity and the two disciplinary shifts}

Before giving an experiential account of Chaise traceur (see CHAIR 1, Section A), and as something of a segue from SPONGE 2, I want to outline how the Chair Series first appeared in response to specific difficulties that came up for me in the dance training. As I will go on to describe in the analysis that follows (CHAIR 1, Section B) this became an intersection of two factors - processual and
theoretical - first a disciplinary shift from dance to performance art, and secondly the influence of architectural diagramming - Bernard Cache in particular. Later in CHAIR 2, a similar shift occurs between performance art and video installation, with the influence of Arakawa and Gins. For now, I will outline the first processual aspect, and return to the theoretical framework once the experiential account has been established.

A critical development for the inception of the series was the way the chair became a prosthetic apparatus for exploring an affective plasticity between the body and features of an architectural site. The main departure point for the series involved a disciplinary shift involving an equal focus on plastic-art and action-art elements in performance. This stemmed initially from a feeling I had that many of the pre-expressive dance techniques weren’t enough by themselves for producing an affective state of dilation. Or at least, in myself - for this feeling sat partway between the difficulties I experienced in attaining and maintaining a quality of openness, and the appearance of an idea that more attention could be placed on external elements in the process of constructing such a state. This idea came to the fore most clearly through an exercise in Grotowski training called *plastiques*.

*Plastiques* involves an improvisational process of slowly working through different parts of the body, exploring the endless movement possibilities for each part by spending several minutes on each: shoulders, chest, head, arms and hands etc. On the surface, it is similar to the kind of ‘isolation work’ found in many contemporary choreographic methodologies. However, while the latter is usually focussed on the creation of innovative forms and/or examining details in order to optimize physical virtuosity, *plastiques* is more concerned with the intensive variations within each movement. Attending to small physical actions becomes a matter of opening their potential for multiplicity, through which singular states of affective dilation may emerge. Extensive movements appear from the material modulation of the body, through pre-expressive intensities and transverse variations, rather than being optimized towards a pre-determined form. *Plastiques* is a diagrammatic process of lived abstraction, where it is not the multiple movements themselves that pinpoint the diagram, but of holding open a pre-expressive field of forces where we are always seeking the in-between, attaining a state of suspension that is never complete.

Unlike many of the other pre-expressive exercises, *plastiques* explores the body in all its permutations, generating the kind of porous or pliant surface tension we have seen as characterizing the sponge body. Or in the manner of the Menger sponge - carving out openings within the body where implicit forms may co-emerge alongside vague ideas and spontaneous images that come up through the process. Exploring the contraction and release of movements through my arm and hand for instance, I can feel an increasing capacity for variation through the excitation of blood flow, breath and musculature, and where the release of toxins may invoke certain tendencies. Psychophysical impulses within the organism start to guide ‘me’ rather than the other way around, or where the two of us duet in a flow of receptive spontaneity. Then the different parts start to combine and modulate one
another in a more open manner, for instance where releasing a contraction in one area produces a vector or counterpoint in another part of the body. Thresholds appear as these openings combine and multiply relations, intermixing and accumulating in various ways, sensations dilating one another as somatic images and emotional memories appear in the process of self-affecting-self. A state of ‘dilation’ arrives when the entire process seems to suspend causality, where every movement appears spontaneously from a field of forces. Every movement comes not from a single intention but from the opening of singular transformations arising through a generative multiplicity of being in-tension.

Two problems: dilation and translation

Two interrelated problems come up with plastiques. The first is the difficulty of the process itself in attaining an open state of dilation, while the second concerns the question of how to translate or transpose the principles of the training score into live performance. The first problem involves the tendency to fall back into self-consciously second-guessing the intention to move, creating a crisis of external expression; as opposed to remaining in-tension with the flow of autonomic impulses unfolding through the physical actions of the body. But equally, going too deeply into internal permutations can risk losing a sense of openness with the environment. The specific physicality of plastiques has the related issue of generating habitual movements – of undulating waves, or of the psychophysical momentum generated through the process producing a tendency to ‘pump the emotion’ (Richards, 1995: 96), or getting carried away with its appearance when it arises.

In live performance the problems become especially problematic. The aim of psychophysical training exercises isn’t to use them directly anyway, for they can often look like a technical exercise, but rather to transpose their pre-expressive principles (for instance, as qualities of inner tension and outer softness). Because the process of plastiques unfolds over a particular timeframe, specific to an accumulation of actions, it might seem that dilation can only occur by building up to a heightened level of physicality. But pre-expressive qualities do not require a difference in degree, only a reciprocal relation within and across themselves. It is not the degree to which dilation might be achieved as a possible outcome of finally reaching an open state, but as an immanent process of opening within each moment at whatever speed or duration (and in fact where this opening occurs in-between several at the same time). So in translation, there is not just the danger of falling into habitual undulating movements, or of relying on a process of improvisation alone that might lack the structural, narrative or conceptual dimensions necessary for performance. One approach is to find a choreographic score, concept and/or image schema that might transpose the principles of plasticity in
several ways at once: within the body, with the audience, and through site/context; where this plasticity is both flexible enough for affects to emerge and rigid enough be enacted.\textsuperscript{85}

\textit{For me, a response to this problem became the chair actions, which appeared in the following way:}

\textbf{Dilation:}

In the workshop context there is just ‘me’ and ‘my body’, and when I find myself too ‘in my head’ I often feel a break in the flow of attending to the movement: ‘What just happened?’ or, ‘Is this any good’ or, ‘What comes next?’ I can recall a moment in plastiques where I clearly felt a critical necessity to \textit{send}

\textsuperscript{85} As William James says:

“Plasticity, then, in the wide sense of the word, means the possession of a structure weak enough to yield to an influence, but strong enough not to yield all at once. Each relatively stable phase of equilibrium in such a structure is marked by what we may call a new set of habits. Organic matter, especially nervous tissue, seems endowed with a very extraordinary degree of plasticity of this sort; so that we may without hesitation lay down as our first proposition the following, that the phenomena of habit in living beings are due to the plasticity\textsuperscript{*} of the organic materials of which their bodies are composed” James, 2007: 105.

* "In the sense above explained, which applies to inner structure as well as to outer form” (ibid: footnote no. 2).

James is credited with introducing the term ‘plasticity’ to experimental psychology in 1890 (as above), although it wasn’t until the advent of neuroscience before these insights saw a more applied understanding: "The plastic changes would be related to the formation and multiplication of new synaptic junctions between the axon terminals of one nerve cell and the soma (i.e. the body and the dendrites) of the other” (Konorski, 1948: 89).

For plastiques, the principle of plasticity is an unhinging of habit in order to ‘yield’ to other influences, a power to be affected that is simultaneously internal and external. It is also through this unhinging that habitual tendencies find a new potential to induce the body through spontaneous impulses, where a power to affect may carry the material memory of incipient action, for both self and others. This notion of plasticity may be seen to work in a similar manner to the reciprocal dynamics of \textit{lembut} and \textit{karas}: outer softness and inner tension.

Even pure improvisation shouldn’t be set up in dialectical opposition to choreographic structures of any kind. If we assume that improvisation is founded on a desire for ‘free expression’ or ‘the new’, we will too often find it inflected by the same habits (which structure often serves to break, only to create new ones), or caught up in the same pitfalls of tending towards innovative form. If it is a relational autonomy rather than dialectical opposition we are after here, then it is more an enfolding or a cutting across between structure and the purely intensive space of hollowing out. (To use Bergson via Deleuze - of movement as difference in itself, rather than in degree or kind). This relational autonomy between structure and intensive space would be much like a more pliant contrast between diagrams of power (as structural configuration of forces) and their destratification in the very fact of force, as \textit{a power} to affect and be affected via the absolute outside. (Or again, as a molar / molecular relation).
my attention to and through my hand, and beyond it into the world, because I could feel my default tendency for the motor signal to loop back on itself into self-consciously assessing the movement (collapsing transparency). To pay attention to the body in this way, to attend, is to be AT the point of tension as much as 'in-tension' with it, an internal limit that is also situated externally.

Translation:
And yet at the same time, this break in the psychophysical interval of movement presented an objective sense of my own body as something of a 'necessary obstacle' for affective dilation. Through this opaque reflection I could feel a shift that was not just a crisis of motility / identity, but also the glimpse of a prosthetic relation, a dislocation or unhinging of thought and matter, one that might offer a new way of opening affect in a more explicitly constructed manner.

This realization influenced the basic premise of Chaise traceur - the idea of descending a flight of stairs on an upturned chair. Transposing the principles of plastiques to the plasticity of the object, the chair may become not only a prosthetic apparatus but an affective transducer between body and site. This involves an action that would take me directly into a psychophysical state of dilation by the time I reach the bottom of the stairs, and at the same time indirectly through the accumulated effects of each successive slam down the steps.

Admittedly, this invites the issue of attaining dilation through the physical momentum of an action 'in degree'. However, this issue is also ‘performed’ to some extent as a tentative notion in the sense that the action makes the process of constructing dilation structurally and conceptually explicit. That is, a process of construction which opens the body to the spatial, temporal and material specificity of the site. These aspects also hinge upon a shared object relation with the audience, through the status of the chair as a cultural artifact, and through its inversion opening further implications for the series - practical, conceptual, and theoretical.
CHAIR 1

Chaise traceur: dilated inflections of a furniture-image

3.2: Chaise traceur, Performing Arts Forum, St. Ermes France, July 2007

Section A

An experiential account of the performance

Presented to a small audience at the Performing Arts Forum, an 18th Century convent converted into an Artist Residency in St. Ermes, France, Chaise traceur was the first performance using the chair as an apparatus for generating affective dilation. In the experiential account that follows I make comments along the way reflecting on the various strengths and weaknesses of a given action, in a similar manner to how a theatre director would give ‘notes’ to the actors as feedback on the night’s performance. Except in my case, these reflections are on my own practice, with the aid of video, and theoretical analysis later in the chapter. The experiential description is selective - I only describe areas of interest in detail, merely sketching others, while noting reasons for this along the way.

For video documentation of the performance see the DVD in the bound sleeve of this thesis. Please note that the first section with minimum lighting is much darker on camera than it actually appeared live. The audience could still see the body / action in the half-gloom and as I discuss this was an important compositional strategy for the first section. For a clear well-lit view of the two chair actions that occur in darkness, I refer to two further works form the Chair Series - Uber stuhl (2007), and tablet (2009) - in which these actions also appear (see DVD).

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86 There are two versions here: the full uncut video documentation which I refer to in this chapter, and a shorter edited preview for quick reference.
A thumbnail collage of video screenshots is given for *Chaise traceur* below (diagram 3.3), with timeline counter references for each frame. The collage is arranged to give a sense of the structural rhythm of the performance, shown as five main sections (A-E), with two key points of affective dilation (AB, DE) as a focus for further analysis. There are also clusters of overlapping frames within each section indicating the continuity of individual actions, and separate but nested frames and clusters suggesting contrasting relations or breaks in the flow of the action.

3.3: *Chaise traceur*, video screenshot thumbnail collage

Frame counter no.s:
(1) 00:21; (2) 03:30; (3) 04:15; (4) 04:42; (5) 05:15; (6) 06:11; (7) 07:44; (8) 08:00; (9) 08:21; (10) 08:25; (11) 09:04; (12) 09:07; (13) 09:13; (14) 09:26; (15) 09:35; (16) 09:46; (17) 10:00; (18) 10:01; (19) 10:09; (20) 10:10; (21) 10:14; (22) 10:17; (23) 10:21; (24) 10:30; (25) 10:57; (26) 11:06; (27) 11:18; (28) 11:34; (29) 11:45; (30) 11:47; (31) 11:49; (32) 11:51; (33) 11:54; (34) 11:58; (35) 11:59; (36) 12:05; (37) 12:16; (38) 12:33; (39) 12:40; (40) 12:46; (41) 12:54; (42) 12:58; (43) 13:03; (44) 13:14; (45) 13:40; (46) 13:58; (47) 14:18; (48) 14:29; (49) 14:47; (50) 14:53; (51) 14:57; (52) 15:06; (53) 15:13; (54) 15:15; (55) 15:17; (56) 15:23; (57) 15:26; (58) 15:33; (59) 15:58; (60) 16:07; (61) 16:13
A.: Chair rise, leap to ledge, squeaky step, stair descent

The site for the action is a landing on the third floor of a creaky old stairwell running up through the whole building from the ground level to the attic. As a result the acoustics are so resonant that every sound is like playing the whole building - like a sonic sponge. The audience enters, climbing the stairs all the way from the ground floor, loud and boisterous, their voices filling the entire volume (1). Arriving in the darkened foyer area in front of the stairwell they are ushered into a tight space opening onto the third floor corridors; finally growing quiet when they notice a figure in the dark, halfway up on the landing on the way to the attic.

I am crouching precariously on top of an old chair that has been turned upside down and held very tentatively in place - the top edge of the backrest in contact with the floor, the front legs pressing flat against the wall, my hands clasping the tips of the back legs for stability. The only available light, from a frosted window next to the chair, barely illuminates the contour of my body. As the silence takes over and fills the space I rise up very slowly from crouching. Letting go of the chair tips and floating very shakily, I turn to look for further support, my hand silhouetted against the window (2). At the same time the edge of the backrest starts to slip out from under me with a loud juddering noise. I get one hand onto the ledge of the platform above the window, and at the very last second quickly shift both feet onto the windowsill ledge as the chair crashes out beneath me (3).

A pause... a good length of time to let the effects of the crash linger. Shifting my hands against the upper window frame, I am now completely framed in silhouette against the window. A pause... [too brief, for there is a punctuated moment here had I only felt it fully]... with the framing accentuated by the pressure of feet pressing down and the hands upwards. Then my hand clawing fingernails down the glass pane, the screeching sound echoing and the gesture trailing off as if carrying the remaining silence into space (4). No pause... [I needed to let the gesture and silence linger here]... already shifting around to slowly step off the windowsill and gingerly down onto the landing (5) ... [yes, the right speed here, the moment suspended with an uncertain sense of gravity]... offset by the arms pressing out on the window frame on both sides and the foot extending unseen in the dark, the arm held back in silhouette, lingering.

I find the squeaky point on the top step and start bouncing up and down on it (6), playing it to the audience like a stringed instrument, the sound echoing through the whole building (evoking different things: an insect, a bedspring). [The first bit is best – a short burst followed by silence, then it gets a little bit too urgent, although this is interesting in its own way. But as the speed increases, the sound loses the bass depth that gives it the resonance to cut through the site, becoming more shallow and fragile.]

87 For a well-lit version of this action, from an earlier work, see DVD: tablet.
I reach for the chair behind me and lift it up, holding it in silhouette against the window for a moment (7), before placing it upside down on the steps. The chair sits perfectly flush with the staircase as a meeting of two orthogonal frames - the top of the seat placed face down on one step and the top of the backrest on the next step down (8). I mount the chair, crouching again on the underside of the seat, hands clasping the tips of the chair legs… and leap forward. Using the chair to bunny-hop down the stairs (9), sometimes misjudging and slipping down to the next (10), there are about 7 or 8 resounding slams before I reach the bottom, each accumulating a tenuous momentum of imminent catastrophe.

B.: Fluorescence, chair spin, wall crash

(11) The fluorescent lights flicker on, suddenly bringing into sharp relief the effects of the descent on my body, as if their flickering were to reflect a state of dilation apparent in the flickering musculature and breath (12). This flickering is taken into the gesture of a hand contracting, with the arm rising as if taking up or being carried by these flickering contractions that pass through it (13). [Like the gesture trailing off on the windowpane (4) there is a sense of continuity with the site here, through intensities being gathered in the accumulation of actions. For this reason, I have diagrammed an overlap of

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88 For a well-lit version of this action, see DVD: Uber stuhl. Both Uber stuhl and tablet act as key transitions or intercessors between Chaise traceur and Garg{oy}le: I take note of tablet later on, but it is worth noting here how Uber stuhl performs its own kind of threshold or segue as a hinging between the two CHAIRS. Made shortly after Chaise traceur - Uber stuhl restages the chair descent down a flight of stairs, this time in an abandoned school in East Berlin. I wanted to make the work specifically for video and as more of an architectural art action - with no audience and without any dance or emotional expression. Later on, the work took on a two-frame video installation format (see DVD), and it is here where Uber stuhl acts as a kind of hinge between Chaise traceur and Garg{oy}le. The action is duplicated and split on two sides, with each image chasing the other in an endless loop. The descent has a sense of never completing itself, in the way that each side is taken up by the other. When I reach the landing in the right-hand frame, and turn the chair around the balustrade, the continuity of the action is carried across to the left-hand frame, generating the loop.

This hinging operates both similarly and differently to Chaise traceur. The hinge point simultaneously decouples and recouples the site both spatially and temporally. The two frames approximate a reconstruction of the space in situ – where looking up and down the two flights of steps gives a dislocated bi-focal sense of ‘being there’ (as if through malfunctioning 3D glasses). Across the two frames there is a consistent correspondence (although accidental), in the types of actions that occur - for example, moments of activity and then pause happen to line up on left and right throughout the descent. Like the Sponge body in the abandoned warehouse there is a sending and following of shadows - both directly at the structural level of the loop, and indirectly at the level of action and gesture. There is a similar transduction of untimely shifts - across structure, sequence, action, and gesture - which I posit for Chaise traceur (see CHAIR 1B), but in a more constrained manner. This also anticipates Garg{oy}le in several ways - firstly where this constraint takes the form of a compressed assemblage through sculptural installation. As a further disciplinary shift, the doubling effect in the video of Uber stuhl is also taken to a new level in Garg{oy}le, where the animated multiplicity of the figure is seen to express the collective status of the gargoyle as historical archetype and contemporary antitype (see CHAIR 2).
sections here (AB), indicating the state of dilation that occurs]. Leaning back, I reach without looking for the chair behind me (14). There is an interesting tension here for a moment, with my torso becoming taut in forward anticipation of the room while groping blindly for a chair leg back in the darkness of what had come before. Then finding it, scraping the chair off the stairs and carrying it into the space (15).

This section is now punctuated by a stark contrast between two key actions - spinning the chair around very fast in a circle (16-18) and then crashing it against the wall (19-22). The chair spin is very pronounced both for its kinetic movement and acoustic effect. There is a dynamic tension held in place, between the centrifugal force of the chair providing a counterweight wanting to fly away on me, and the centripetal restraint of my body drawing it into a point of focus. This tension is also expressed through the whistling sound created by air passing through little holes in the metal tubing at the top of the backrest. The sound fills the room acoustically just as the movement does kinetically. And there is a further variable relation between the two, when changing the speed of the spin (and its height or distance to the body) then changes the pitch and quality of the sound. Like the squeaky step, I can now play the chair to the audience, this time like a pipe organ.

The variation in speed, height and distance to the body throws me slightly off my centre, but also gives me an entry point into the next action. The kinetic / acoustic continuity of the spin is abruptly and violently cut short by crashing into the wall, the hurtling momentum of the chair clattering across it (19). But almost immediately the chair then becomes a prop for keeping my balance – maintaining pressure against the wall, transferring tensional force from the spin as if sending the kinetic momentum of the chair into the built fabric. At the same time, the sonic momentum of the spin is broken by the crash and clatter, then a series of screeching noises as I scrape the chair down the wall (20), finally hanging absent in the silent stillness that follows (21). Now the orthogonal angle of the seat and backrest forms a new oblique line on the wall (22), just as it did in a slightly different way with the gradient sweep of the staircase (an angle given by the orthogonal variation of its individual steps).

C. / D.: Intermediary actions

I will skip a large part of these middle sections, mainly because I want to focus my later analysis on the chair coupling, and the affective dilation that occurs towards the end of the performance. There are several interesting things happening here in section C with relation to the wall (some of which I will touch on later in the chapter). But in general, the performance becomes more reliant on prescribed

As I argue later on, this affective state of dilation operates through a simultaneously structural and multi-sensory opening (darkness and light, action and pause, sound and silence), rather than through any explicit emotional expression.
dance techniques here, which don’t add very much by themselves in terms of diagramming broader relations through the site. In section D, the dance elements give way to more direct and pedestrian kinds of movement. First crawling across the floor to stand on an area of rotten floorboards (which I very nearly fall through), retreating as the wood is heard splintering. This presages another structural shift, because it opens a level of uncertainty leading into the next section, through a sequence of quite pedestrian or everyday actions, to the sudden appearance of emotional expression.

Moving to the sink I turn on the tap to pour a glass of water. It trickles slowly and there is a long pause in which I seem to drop into a deeper affective state, through the combination of simply attending to familiar physical tasks, while becoming resigned to a sense of exhaustion from the performance up to that point. I take a single swig from the glass, pour the rest of the water over my face, wash my shoulder, return the glass to the sink with a tinkle, wash my face and head with both hands. Finally, picking up a cake of soap sitting above the basin I turn to walk towards the audience while rubbing the soap on my chest.

E.: Sink and soap, the botch, standstill, final absorption

The fact of being turned away from the audience in attending to the sink and all its details enacts an opening when I turn and walk towards them. I am now in a state of receptivity and reflection more than at any other stage in the performance, absorbed in thought but equally caught up in the transparent flow of simple object-based tasks. This offers a neutral background against which my reverie floats without seeming to fix on any particular idea, or without the affectation that might come from wondering what to do next. All too brief… there is a quality of affection to lathering my chest, as if gathering the somatic memory of everything that had happened until now, distracting me with a feeling for just long enough to let the soap slip from my hands. Its clatter on the floor delivers a little shock to thought, enough to break the flow. Within an instant the affection amplifies into a sudden emotional expression, and just as quickly becomes a cathartic fabrication of gasps and sobs (literally getting it off my chest).

I totally botch the opening of affect. Unlike the first dilation at the bottom of the stairs, which was anticipated through the chair descent and hence constrained in its expression, this time the sudden appearance of an actual emotion has taken me completely by surprise. It wasn’t my intention to get emotional – it just came up out of nowhere. But in identifying the feeling, my first reaction becomes one of gratification – a so-called ‘Aha moment’ of authenticity, a feeling that in referring back to its effects too directly invites affectation. Not sure what to do next, I drop into a circuit of action-reaction. Rather than taking a pause to let this sudden gathering of internal movement flow through me and be taken up by the audience on the other side, I feel the state of potential quickly evaporate, passing instead into a futile pursuit of multiplying possibilities.
Sensing the unraveling catastrophe, there is at first a desperate over-emphasis in lathering my chest (54), then picking up the soap again and looking down the stairwell shaft as if for a way out (55) (finding only a dead end, another place for affect to ‘escape’, suggesting a too literal interpretation such as suicide).

Realizing my error, I start to find the necessary pause (56), and then accidentally drop the soap again – which now has the opposite effect to the first time, acting instead like a prompt to stop me dead in my tracks. I come to a complete standstill, no more than two meters from the audience (57). My arms drop to my sides, with only a flinching hand to express the struggle I feel in becoming no more than a surface in glaring proximity to the audience. There are still a few habitual impulses to express, a brief dalliance with dance against the balustrade that doesn’t really go anywhere (58). But then eventually, walking slowly forward across the debris of broken soap (59), gently rubbing my torso, I pass into the darkness of the audience like a final act of absorption (60, 61).

Section B

An analysis of Chaise traceur through Cache’s inflection

Approaching the two problems via Cache’s inflection

To segue into an analysis of the performance, let us recall the two problems that came up in plastiques, as outlined in the Threshold section. The difficulty I felt in trying to maintain transparency through my body produced a sense of dislocation across frames of reference. But even as this revealed a blockage or phase shift in tonality, it also suggested a way to transpose the principles of affective dilation in a more constructed manner. This became the chair actions, where the principles of plastiques were transposed to the plasticity of the object, as a prosthetic apparatus or ‘affective transducer’ between body and site. This transposition of qualities dis-poses one to the other, giving my tentative disposition a more constructed platform. But this is only half of the story. If the psychophysical training established an underlying feeling of something being unresolved in the process of plastiques, it was Bernard Cache’s theory of inflection (see Cache, 1995) which helped to transform this latent potential through the disciplinary shift from dance to performance art.

Cache’s theory of inflection offers a robust framework for approaching the sponge body as a performative act of diagramming. His conceptual schema allows me to articulate the problems and potentials more clearly for several reasons. Cache’s central innovation lies in how he explores the mathematical concept of inflection to draw out its diagrammatic and architectural potential. In mathematics, inflection denotes a change of curvature from convex to concave at a particular point on a curve. Cache uses this as a primary diagrammatic principle to articulate the abstract dynamics at work across scales of action and frames of reference. Cache is a practitioner as well as a theorist, and just as his own research-by-practice serves to illustrate and actualize his ideas, the mathematical
specificity of inflection offers an image that is so singularly precise in its simplicity that it serves to be simultaneously concrete in expression or application, while remaining absolutely abstract in its potential. It is useful then in both practical and theoretical terms.

3.4: Variations on a change of curvature passing through a point of inflection (Cache, 1995)

Firstly, the theory of inflection has influenced the development of the Chair series, especially *Chaise traceur*, both in its inception and now analysis of the work. The idea of inverting the chair to ride down the stairs came not just from the psychophysical dance training. I was reading *Earth Moves* in the lead up to the performance and this offered a spark for the tinderbox of implications that had emerged through *plastiques*. The spark came when considering Cache's approach to furniture as a kind of hinge between body, object, architecture and geography:

“...there are plenty of examples of architectural objects, of geographized buildings, or of objectal territories. We might think of furniture images as mobile centers that appear at the intersection of these three perspectives.”

Cache, 1995: 30

As I discuss, the chair becomes an architectural object in prosthetic co-extension with site and body; the site becomes the dynamic terrain of a geographized building through body and chair; and the body itself becomes an objectal territory held tentatively open by chair and site. Cache’s inflection gives me a tangible schema for examining these dynamic relationships across scales of action and psychophysical frames of reference in the analysis of *Chaise traceur*. The task here is to discuss how an object such as a chair may be performed as a diagram - how the sets of relations that it enables may serve to hold open a tentative disposition, as an intensive becoming between things. Holding onto the chair for dear life produces a different sense of with-holding relations, as discussed in part 1. The chair affords a series of direct actions through the site, but in ways that un hinge habitual connections between things, opening them to the indeterminacy of indirect relations as a different approach to affective dilation.


**Cache's classification of images**

In theoretical terms, Cache’s inflection has a singular clarity and architectural focus which lends itself to a complex analysis of site-specific psychophysical performance, involving equally abstract and concrete relations. Cache puts forward a classification of images based on a set of three transformations - what he describes as an alphabet of formal elements: vector, frame and inflection.

First of all, when he says ‘image’ he doesn’t mean simply representational images or even just perceptions of external objects. Drawing on a Bergsonian idea of the image and especially that which Deleuze develops in his cinephilosophy, Cache’s approach to the image is not of perception being separate to matter or the world, but where intercalary phenomena or zones of indeterminacy appear within and between things, where there is always room for unpredictable movements and new potentials to emerge.⁹⁰

“The word "image" then places us in a purely optical register where effects are produced without reference to any given object. But these effects are not deceptive illusions, for perception is not an interior image of exterior objects but stands for things themselves. Our brain is not the seat of a neuronal cinema that reproduces the world; rather our perceptions are inscribed on the surface of things, as images amongst images.”

Cache, 1995: 3

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⁹⁰ Cache attended Deleuze’s seminars at the University of Paris for many years, and the categorization of images he develops in Earth Moves bears influence from the ‘cinephilosophy’ Deleuze was developing at that time, towards his then forthcoming books on cinema: The Movement Image (1985), and The Time Image (1989). In turn, Deleuze credits Cache with identifying the critical importance of inflection for a theory of the fold, which Deleuze discusses at length in The Fold (Deleuze, 1993).

As noted in SPONGE 2, in my Master of Arts Thesis (Hornblow, 2004), I examine Antonin Artaud and Hijikata’s butoh through Deleuze’s cinephilosophy. In brief, there is a correlation here between the break in direct movement I discuss in SPONGE 2, and the break in the sensory motor schema which Deleuze characterizes as a critical shift from a scopic regime based on movement, to one based on intensive duration and untimely relations. In affective terms this temporal indeterminacy may be found in Deleuze’s own categorization of images, in particular the Affection Image. For performance, this displays the same kind of nonlinear and translocal untimeliness found in the Japanese spatio-temporal aesthetic of *ma* and *yami* that bears an influence on butoh.

Further research is required for a Cachean reading of Hijikata’s butoh via Artaud and Deleuze; as well as the potential for drawing insights around the uptake of the Deleuzian fold within architectural discourse back into cinephilosophy. This thesis offers some leads in this direction through a Cachean reading of my own practice and its relation to architectural diagramming.
For Cache, inflection is a primary image because it operates at a ‘proto-geometric’ level, in the dynamic sense that a change in curvature may be seen to have a quality of pure modulation and variability, beyond the limitations of Cartesian spatial coordinates. In this way, his theoretical framework is consistent with many of the concepts discussed through Deleuze and Massumi in part 1 with respect to diagramming, via terms such as singularity and indeterminacy. I find these terms may be more clearly articulated in my own research-by-practice through Cache’s diagrammatic principle of inflection. And yet, just as this gives us an image of curvature as a pure quality of variation, Cache describes this not as a diagramming but more in terms of the image. In this chapter then, the idea of the image, as Cache uses it, becomes another way to understand the diagram. The diagram becomes more implicit, although its principles inhere in the way a ‘furniture-image’ is held open to tentativeness, in the indeterminacy of becoming architecture, geography and body. This approach to the image recalls the somatic imagery of butoh-fu in SPONGE 2, especially where the dislocation of subject position we find in some of the more abstract scores may now be informed by Cache’s classification of images. The chair itself becomes an image-thing, more clearly articulated but no less abstract or dynamic an image in the way it is used to transform body and building.

The dilated body as inflection image

The inflection image may be seen at work in plastiques as a way of describing affective dilation. The notion of the ‘pre-expressive’ as a diagramming of pure intensities finds commonality with a ‘proto-geometric’ principle of curvature, as a quality anterior to the appearance of form. As we have seen, the process is not one of getting to a state of openness as an ideal outcome, but of opening within the process through a reciprocal tension between outer softness and inner tension (or lembut and karas; see SPONGE 2). To be dilated is a feeling of being able to do anything at any time. This may be ‘achieved’ by exploring all the possible movements of different parts in the body and recombining them; but even then, every actual movement is always trying to find a quality of pure modulation, the edge of existence where each gesture seems to almost flicker and disappear in the light of somehow carrying or suggesting the presence of so many other possible movements at the same time. And, if the body is already full of potential movement in its tendencies and somatic memory, this quality of modulation is already virtual or pre-expressive (but no less material), and may be found at any and every point, prior to physical extension.

Intrinsic and extrinsic singularities

This relates to how Cache defines the intercalary nature of inflection when he defines it in terms of the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic singularity. An extrinsic singularity refers to ‘extrema’, to maximum or minimum values - the best possible response, the least possible effort etc. Or in
plastiques, what might appear as a virtuosic or authentic gesture with the singularity of effortless physicality or ‘original nature’. Extrinsic singularities can only be specified after a vector has been determined. The second formal element in Cache’s alphabet of transformations, the vector is the realm of the best possible - a gesture, action, or trajectory, selected or invoked as a candidate in the world. However, as we saw in SPONGE 1, the extension of virtuosic or authentic gestures involve complex processes of coordination and emergence across multiple frames of reference, within the autonomic systems as much as the selective subject. The aim is to find a sense of evoking this pre-expressive multiplicity of virtual potential, so that movement is not just the best possible but may seem to flicker on the fragile edge of a fluctuating indeterminacy, as if unable to carry an unbearable lightness in becoming the candidate of an infinite potential. And so as in SPONGE 2, ‘the body does not need to move, it is already movement’ (Tanaka, Bodyweather Summer School, 2002).

“In this way, inflection represents a totality of possibilities, as well as an openness, a receptiveness, or an anticipation.”

“They are the sign that the best possible are not given, and that the possible best are not even called forth. Nothing is lacking in the definition of these points of inflection; they simply signify a suspension of world.”

Cache, 1995: 36

In contrast to extrema, inflections are the domain of intrinsic singularities - ungraspable, precarious and fleeting, while remaining ‘strictly defined’ within a vague terrain of topological parameters constituted by their multiple frames of reference. For Cache, these singularities are situated at the point of inflection where the curve crosses from concavity to convexity. Or convex to concave depending on how you look at it - for in the ‘pure event of the line’ it is both, before the vector of extrema determines an axis or orientation for the curve (Cache, 1995: 17). There is indeterminacy on both sides of the curve and on each side of the point, such that the point of inflection expresses a reciprocal relation of concavity and convexity, interiority and exteriority. We can see this expressed in the double openness that characterizes affective dilation, as a state of suspension between inside and outside. As we saw for the sponge body in the warehouse, there is an outside of the inside, and an inside of the outside - the former as a virtual or topological condition of exteriority that exists in the gaps between multiple frames of reference, and through which the site is ‘absorbed’; the latter as a condition of interiority when the limit of finding ‘critical density’ enacts a sense of immanent co-extension with the environment, and through which affective movement is invoked.
“In the unstable dynamic world in which they figure, images are therefore no longer defined by fixed divisions between inside and outside. Rather this division itself comes to shift or move as outside forces cause internal variations or as internal variations create new connections with the outside.”

Boyman, in Cache, 1995: ix

**The Menger Sponge as inflection image**

To give the point of inflection a kind of image we can do no better than return to the Menger sponge, where inside and outside turn on the mutual involution of a mass approaching zero and a surface approaching infinity. For psychophysical performance we have seen how this turns on the reciprocity of *karas* and *lembut*, with the relative qualities we normally expect of inside and outside becoming inverted. Instead of soft on the inside and hard on the outside, we find the zero limit of an ‘internal tension’ between frames of reference, lending ‘outer softness’ to an abstract surface of infinite continuance. In Sponge 2, this offered a useful parallel through Massumi’s ‘double openness’, as a mutual power of affecting and being affected within a field of forces. Now we can also see how Cache’s inflection provides a diagrammatic image for envisioning how affect operates in this manner. The inflection point may be seen to articulate the kind of topological emergence occurring across the co-extensive and enactive elements I have posited for the process of affective dilation. For Cache, the point of inflection is not an actual locatable point in Cartesian space, but a limit indicating an indeterminate zone or ‘slippage’ across a field of experience (Cache, 1995: 38).

“In mathematics, what is said to be singular is not a given point, but rather a set of points on a given curve. A point is not singular; it becomes singularized on a continuum.”

Cache, 1995: 16

The inflection point is also a ‘fold point’ (Boyman: in Cache, 1995: xvii), where the line then becomes an infinite surface of modulation, in the Deleuzian manner of a plane of immanence. The sponge body

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91 As I footnote later in this chapter, Cache also talks about ‘body and soul’ - or what he clarifies as ‘thought and extension’, in terms of a passage to infinity through zero, for which I draw a parallel with the Menger sponge as an image for psychophysical relations. These absolute relations of zero / infinity offer another way of thinking about frames of reference. As noted earlier these may be deployed in three ways - shifting between psychophysical modes of attention / cognition; their enfolded habituations in prehension of the World; and the way framing devices in the environment facilitate this interplay. This is where the Menger Sponge - as the inflection image of a passage to infinity through zero, may be seen in a more dynamic manner. Cache’s notion of framing and deframing (discussed in forthcoming pages), suggests another way of thinking about frames of reference. A simultaneous destratification / restratification occurs where extension doesn’t actually extrude as such, but approaches a more absolute condition of intensive virtuality.
as Menger sponge demonstrates this well, where the limit points of zero and infinity turn upon one another to carve out a continuous surface through the intensive space within and between things.\textsuperscript{92}

As I discussed in SPONGE 2, the multiplication of frames reaches a limit threshold in which we no longer move from one to the next in a linear way, but where a flickering of points finds a condensation or absolute density, to produce a slippage or untimely smudging across them. Singularities appear along their ‘cutting edges’, or as Cache would have it, where these points are singularized as a series of transformations. In this way the diagram of the inflection image (two curves hinging on a point), could be seen to describe the two aspects of a double openness we find in Massumi. In a direct manner, the two curves may describe differentiated forms meeting at a point of inflection, as an image of in-tension; for example, the chair and the stairs. Or where the point of inflection becomes more abstract and topological, describing not forms themselves but their dynamic differentiation as a flickering or slippage of tensors and traits within and across multiple frames of reference. Here, the inflection point becomes a floating limit, as if we could almost pinpoint the endless in-between of the absolute Outside that sits within force relations. Here the two curves become pure qualities of interiority and exteriority, common to multiple forms in their ‘belonging together’ within a field of experience.\textsuperscript{93}

\textit{Framing and deframing the performance}

In the abandoned warehouse the sponge body was saturated in the environment, but while the constraints of the walk served their purpose this lacked a more developed movement schema that

\textsuperscript{92} The notion of self as a ‘transient membrane’ that we find in the Hollow body is particularly apt here for how the Sponge body relates to the fold. In his Introduction to Earth Moves, Michael Speaks cites Alain Badiou in drawing out the wider context of the fold for Cache, as a paradox of inside and outside:

"Deleuze intends to follow Leibniz in his most paradoxical undertaking: establish the monad as ‘absolute interiority’ and go on to the most rigorous analysis possible of the relation of exteriority (or possession), in particular the relation between mind and body. Treating the outside as an exact reversion, or ‘membrane,’ of the inside, reading the world as a texture of the intimate, thinking the macroscopic (or the molar) as a torsion of the microscopic (or the molecular): these are undoubtedly the operations that constitute the true effectiveness of the concept of Fold." (Speaks, in Cache, 1995: xvi).

\textsuperscript{93} In terms of the transient membrane, these two perspectives on the inflection image as diagram are not opposed but work on different levels. For instance, where Thompson describes semi-autonomous relations across distributed entities comprising a self-producing membrane (see SPONGE 1). Massumi’s fold in experience may also be seen to work alongside Cache’s inflection in the manner of the absolute outside, hinging upon a generative and distributed limit spread across multiple frames of reference.
might generate something new or unexpected. In the dance training it became the opposite problem of lacking an external milieu to situate the pre-expressive intensity. For Chaise traceur, the ‘specificity’ of the site offers a vague structure to work within - rigid enough to generate a state of dilation through a series of actions (which also gave the process a broader context); while flexible enough to allow for divergence and transformation, for new things to appear. Now, the psychophysical frames of reference that may be opened up within the body also have a series of external frames or framing devices – wall, window, stairs, floor and chair, with which to intensify affectivity.

This brings us to the third remaining element in Cache’s alphabet: ‘frame’, and specifically where he describes architecture as the ‘Art of the frame’. True to his dynamical understanding of the image as modulation, and the involuted logic of inside out, his concept of the architectural image as frame isn’t limited to a solid structure. Framing operates in a more diagrammatic or dynamical manner - as a boundary condition, where it not only defines an inside but also as a mode of ‘delimiting’ a larger indeterminacy on the outside, with which it draws a productive relation. As Boyman clarifies, there is a correspondence here with Deleuze’s concept of deframing (decadrage) in his cinephilosophy:

“…where what is internal to the frame discovers a relation to what is external to it in such a way as to open it up to the outside.”

Boyman, in Cache, 1995: xi

In a straightforward ‘join-the-dots’ kind of way the performance was first plotted around the landing, the stairs, the floor and the wall, as the basic framing for a diagram of the chair actions - ascent, descent, spin and crash. But of course, the broader aim was to generate an affective state of dilation, and so it is more important to see how these framings interlock, to delimit or deframe one another in order for this dynamical opening to occur. In the graphical diagram below, I have refocused the initial outline of

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94 There was in fact a performance produced in the warehouse, Here abandon all who enter hope, 2007 (see Threshold, Chair series diagram). Rather than discuss this however, I have chosen to move on to Chaise traceur to develop the implications of the Sponge body experience more explicitly through the chair apparatus. Here abandon all who enter hope was performed for a small audience, involving 5 dancers (Mariela Laratro, Emma Strapps, Leonie Van Eyk, Gretel Taylor, and myself). It moved across 3 levels of the building, through 16 interconnected spaces over the course of an hour, finishing on the top floor at dusk.

95 There is potential for play on several usages of the word ‘involution’ here: not just one of complication, but also in the mathematical understanding of involution, as: ‘a function, transformation, or operator that is equal to its inverse, i.e., which gives the identity when applied to itself’ (Apple 2.2.1 dictionary). For a specifically architectural use of the term, see Greg Lynn’s ‘discontinuous involution’, which concerns the pliancy of architectural form to site context through curvilinearity (Lynn, 1993). See also my conference paper for SEAM (Hornblow, 2009), where I note the parallel between Lynn’s appropriation of the ‘body-without-organs’ (or BwO) from Deleuze and Guattari, as a conceptual figure for this process of involution. In turn, Deleuze and Guattari appropriate the BwO from Artaud, who describes how the body is turned ‘inside out’ as a radical carnivalesque movement. As noted in SPONGE 2, my papers for SEAM and Performance Paradigm (Hornblow, 2006) explore aspects of the BwO through the influence of Artaud on Hijikata’s butoh dance.
the performance on the main sections of analysis (A, B), appropriating Cache’s schema to track where points of inflection may indicate loci of opening and how these operate across different scales and modes of framing, each nestled within the next. (At the end of the chapter I summarise my findings with an additional though brief analysis of sections D and E).

There are three scales, each enfolded within and unfolding from the next. First, Structural inflections - across sections and the sequences within or between them; second, Sequence - clusters of thumbnail image frames indicating a series of actions or transformations; and third, Gesture or Action - a specific movement within each image frame.

3.5 A/B: Structure, Sequence, Gesture, Action

Structure: A/B (sections); a/b (sequences): i-iii
Sequence: i. 2-3, ii. 8-12, iii. 17-22
Gesture: 4, 13, 14
Action: 2, 8, 22

*The chair descent as deframing of body and site*

The only point of dilation I really anticipated in the planning stage was at the bottom of the stairs following the chair descent when the fluorescent lights come on (see 3.5: 11). But as I have said, the specific form of dilation cannot be entirely pre-given or pre-planned. As Cache would have it, life always occurs in the intercalary spaces of matter where the interval between cause and effect always involves a certain amount of indeterminacy otherwise nothing new can occur. This requires constructing what he calls ‘frames of probability’. For Cache, architectural space is never a fundamental given of simultaneity and coexistence but rather the ‘uncertain outcome of separation and partitioning’, so that our compatibility is built upon a mode of discontinuity (see Cache, 1995: 24).
“Architecture would be the art of introducing intervals in a territory in order to construct frames of probability” (ibid, 23).96

As I have said in the case of the Sponge body, this requires a pre-expressive series of actions that disjoin, delimit or deframe habitual relations in order to find a degree of indeterminacy that may generate affective dilation. The chair descent is very expressive in its actions, but it takes the very nature of action to its limit by disrupting the usual way of moving within the body, and the usual way of traversing a given site, to transform perceptions of how these may enframe and deframe one another. The simple pedestrian movement of descending a staircase now becomes an intensification of readiness potential within the body. So then at the bottom the action finds a different limit, a stopping point, where the intensive multiplication of autonomic effects has a chance to gather and condense within a moment of affective dilation. This stopping point marks a point of inflection - although it should not be seen as an actual locatable point in Cartesian space, but rather a transformation of points along a continuum, indicating an indeterminate zone, or what Cache calls or ‘slippage’ across a field of experience (Cache, 1995: 38).97

In the diagram above (3.5), I have borrowed from Cache’s use of figural inflections found in baroque architecture, to indicate how this slippage in the point of inflection may be seen to encompass a series of transformations across a sequence of actions (3.5: i-iii). So for the moment of dilation when the lights come on (3.5: 11), the point of inflection (given as A/B: ii. 8-12) gathers itself through the descent and carries itself well beyond the flickering lights, only slipping away when the gesture of my flickering hand (3.5: 13) passes it into the next action. In terms of affective openness, this slippage is also one that disrupts tonality across intensive timeframes (in the manner discussed in SPONGE 1). Firstly there is the dislocation that occurs at the level of absolute duration (extended cognition), where the chair as object relation and cultural artifact is used in an intensive way that it isn’t designed for.

96 Further to Boyman’s comments about the affinity between Cache and Deleuze, around frame as delimitation and the notion of deframing, a cinephilosophical analysis could be made here. This requires more research, but in brief: the chair performs a break in the sensory-motor schema as an interval of movement at the level of both body and artifact, to generate the untimely affects of what Deleuze might call a ‘time-image’ (Deleuze, 1989). Even though it is a very physical action, it is perhaps not simply an ‘action image’ in the manner of the Deleuzian movement schema, for it also complicates or short-circuits a perception of movement (perception image) from the outset, as a psychophysical relation co-extensive with site in a way that dislocates its typologies (relation image). Above all, it is not just a linear action but an incipient one that operates as an intensive duration. In this manner these other image types serve to generate an ‘affection image’, both through the effects of the descent, and at the bottom of the steps in the dilation of the body.

97 For Cache’s schema this slippage offers a way of envisioning a singular ‘point’ existing outside Cartesian time-space coordinates - where in becoming a virtual line it may be given an abstract duration for sitting within a multiplicity of vectors and interlocking frames of probability. From the discussion in SPONGE, I would also note here a useful parallel to Massumi’s ‘edging into existence’ between virtual and actual; also his ‘biogram’ as a smudge and swarm of micro-events across multiple frames of reference; as well as Varela’s discussion of affective tonality across the ‘fringe horizon’ of a ‘specious present’. These affinities offer potential avenues for further research and/or ways of theorizing practice.
Secondly, at the level of readiness response, when the body is suddenly seen immobile at the bottom of the steps, but with autonomic systems still in full flight, the action carries an intensive incipience with a sense of suspended potential, as if the body could do anything. Thirdly, this generates an automaticity that may be seen in the flickering hand as the arm rises up. This strategy operates in the same manner of stealing our steps in the warehouse, as a kind of mimicry of being induced, where indeterminacy is introduced within the interval of motor intention and external movement, to suggest the collapse or shift in protention we find in emotional expression.98

Purely in terms of transformation, this slippage may be seen to translate an inverse process of delimitation across two modes of discontinuity - the first through the descent, where the constraint of the chair delimits and deframes movement within the body; the second at the bottom when the body stops and this internal movement is seen in the breath and dilated musculature.99

“Simply put, a hollow shape follows a hump; a minimum follows a maximum, which is to say that we find an inflection” (Cache, 1995: 34).

But it is not simply the maximum of the chair descent meeting the minimum of stopping at the bottom (from active to passive), for this would be only an extrinsic singularity at the level of actual extrema. The ‘maxima’ of the descent is also turning inwards through a ‘virtual minima’ - an absolute limit or zero point of impending catastrophe; and this critical possibility makes every slam on the steps a reciprocal threshold of minimizing my effects in order to maximize my awareness of the site - the same principle as ‘stealing my steps’ in the warehouse, but now more like carjacking a shop front. And then at the bottom, the minima of stopping at a standstill is then also turning outwards with a ‘virtual

98 To cross-reference my footnote in SPONGE 2 with relation to the Clay-work and the butoh trope of te-boke (or senile hand), the prosthetic nature of the chair action performs a kind of ‘dead body’ in a more explicit way. Firstly, it generates a state of automaticity in the dilation of the breath and musculature at the bottom of the steps. Secondly, the prosthetic relation between body and chair reflects an internal psychophysical dislocation. Thirdly, this prosthetic dislocation between body and self is also critically co-extensive with the site and the audience - in the same way that the ‘dead body’ posits ‘death’ as a deterritorialization of the subject through material becomings with other things. As I put it in my paper for SEAM:

“This concerns another important aspect of the dead-body, beyond de-framing or unhinging the sovereignty of the selective subject – where the body may then be regarded as base matter full of potential transformation and intensive becoming. In a Bergsonian sense, the body is that part of ourselves where we apprehend the World, so in objectifying our bodies we may become other things, entering the pure modulation of matter in a manner that is co-extensive rather than merely projective” (Hornblow, 2009).

99 To expand on Boyman’s earlier comments about the link between Cache and Deleuze’s cinephilosophy, here we have a deframing within the interval of direct movement, in which a break in the sensory-motor schema acts as a delimitation for the body (see Deleuze, 1989). This produces a multiplicity of effects, of internal indirect movements that are then transduced and translated (when the lights come on) as the inscription of an affective surface on the body. In terms of cinephilosophy, this relates also to the crisis of the action-image and the emergence of the affection image as a space of infinite depth and becoming (an any-space-whatever).
maxima’ of dilation, carrying the totality of the descent through an inflection point into a sense of openness, receptiveness, anticipation:100

“Points of inflection are singularities in and of themselves, while they confer an indeterminacy to the rest of the curve. Preceding the vector, inflection makes of each of the points a possible extremum in relation to its inverse: virtual maxima and minima. In this way, inflection represents a totality of possibilities, as well as an openness, a receptiveness, or an anticipation.”

Cache, 1995: 17

The chair as sponge body

The chair descent performs a different kind of sponge body to the warehouse or the psychophysical exercises. It is more explicit in its architectural relation to site, but it shares the same principle of opening an interval of indirect intensive movement within the body as a process of absorption, which gathers towards a moment of critical density. In the light of the Menger sponge, Cache’s ‘hollow and hump’ is continually inverted around the mutual involution of ‘a mass approaching zero’ and ‘a surface approaching infinity’ - through the zero point of virtual minima in the descent and the infinite surface of potential in opening to the room (even as these reciprocal dynamics should be seen to unfold simultaneously throughout the movement). More concretely, but no less abstract, the chair allows me to literally ‘absorb’ the shocks of each slam while also feeling the energy reverberate out through the stairs and through the site. The reciprocal threshold of ‘stealing my steps’ gives me information as to the critical status of body, chair, steps, staircase, so that we all become one continuum, a becoming. The stairs themselves become spongy - with each reverberation returning to me as an impetus for the next leap.

The building itself becomes an active participant of the sponge body, in terms of how its material properties literally ‘come to the party’ to act at the intersection. The critical threshold of zero / infinity gathers its own internal momentum in co-extension with the site, the chair holding me open and carrying me forward with a critical density of abstract relations across diverse scales of inflection. Thought and extension get turned around and inside out with one another - the inside of me is opened by the exterior, absorbing the site through an internal state of precarious intensity on the cusp of catastrophe, while giving me the tentative trajectory for simultaneously moving forward into the room.

100 At a point of dilation a shift occurs where openness becomes generative. As Tony Yap says in the dance training, it might be felt - “as if you can do anything” - and/or - “as if you can go on forever” (Yap, 2009 workshop, Melbourne). As a reflective note on this moment at the bottom of the step, I probably could have held it longer, to draw out this potential more fully. And certainly, as a general note in hindsight, I am far too ‘intense looking’ in many of these transitional moments, lacking the softness necessary to give the inflection a deeper potential for affective openness.
The two turn on a generative limit, until at the bottom of the steps their dilation may be seen to open through the inscription of an affective surface on the body.101

As I suggested in part 1, there are two kinds of phase shift or break in transparency, the first a break with direct movement and intention, towards indirect movement and pre-expressive emergence; the second, a rupture that occurs when the limit is lost and identity rushes back in to close the gaps (as in the case of emotional expression). But then, through an understanding of working with small actions in GRATOWSKI, we see the potential to flick this around and hold it open to further tentativeness, when a diagramming of somatic imagery and untimely qualities may serve to ‘mimic’ emotional effects but maintain or even intensify affective transmission, without it collapsing. As I also noted in Sponge 2, the site itself may be used in a way that ‘stands-in’ for this mimicry, by modulating the shared dimension of extended cognition, through object relations and cultural artifacts. The chair stands-in as a mimicry firstly in the way the usual transparency we find in tool-use (Gallagher, Varela) is doubly dislocated by using the object / artifact in a very intensive way that it isn’t designed for. I will return to this point about mimicry later in the chapter, but for now I want to note how the chair may serve to with-hold relations between body and site as an opening to other people. Here we find a critical slippage across the

101 In a manner that supports this reading of the chair descent, Cache describes a particular kind of inflection between body and soul that is not a release of substance, but operates as a ‘vibrative’ interface of psyche and soma; one that rotates on itself through “zones of intensity where high elementary energies come together” (Cache, 1995: 129).

“We can now locate points of complication, singularities where substance complicates the body and the soul in the world… [with] the inscription of these two abstract events on a surface that fastens down substance” (ibid: 129-130).

To draw a contrast with the Menger sponge, Cache describes two kinds of baroque inflection - the first where body and soul are part of the world as an inversion of signs, each passing towards infinity as an inertial release of substance; the second (the one described above), where the two signs pass through zero via an inversion of curvature, “through a point of annulment or of self-vertigo” (ibid: 128), without a passage through infinity. The Menger sponge would perhaps indicate a combination of both, of simultaneously passing through zero and infinity as a reciprocal annulment of mass and an immanent surfacing. In a similar manner, Cache describes how “what we take to be our body is in the first place a toric envelope” (ibid: 129).
dislocation of object and artifact, where unhinging their conventional typologies compounds the opening of untimely transformations that occurs across intensive timeframes.\textsuperscript{102}

The body as territory, the chair as geography

As we discovered in the warehouse ‘the body’ is not a given in terms of identity but constitutes a territory to be occupied just as much as the architecture that surrounds it (and indeed the two have a mutual relation). An architectural site is also not a given, and even when it is inscribed with an identity of place this stems from a historical process of repetition based on specific features. And even as these features suggest appropriate functions and produce identities through iteration of use, they remain processes of construction based on singularities with a potential for divergence (see Cache, 1995: 14-15). The body has its own dynamic terrain of potential, and specific constraints - as we have seen in \textit{plastiques} how inflection stands in for a totality of possibilities, which the process of dilation aims to evoke in the flickering of a single gesture; and even where the repetition of habitual tendencies may offer its own mnemonic field from which a singularity may be drawn. The problem then becomes one of framing - or how to deframe and delimit this potential by eliciting a series of transformations through a process of emergence.

If as Cache says, architecture introduces intervals in a territory by constructing frames of probability (ibid: 23), and if as we have seen, the chair opens an interval in the body itself, then how can we account for what starts to look like some very broad circuits plunging inside-out across these different frames of reference: body, chair and site? ‘The body itself’ must be defined more broadly: “by the ensemble of relations which compose it, or, what amounts to exactly the same thing, by its power of being affected” (Deleuze, 1978: 7).

\textsuperscript{102} As a ‘dead body’ becoming, the chair may also be seen within the frame of a wider processual emergence:

“Cache critiques the status of the object through the notion of the objectile, which may be defined as the series of transformations a manufactured object undergoes throughout the design process, from concept stage to eventual use. It places the object within a broader spatiotemporal dimension, an abstract parametric volume not wholly limited to the computational environment, one where the object may be considered beyond purely functional criteria” (Hornblow, 2009: 3).

For the chair action, the objectile as processual becoming might be seen more broadly as an intensive assemblage of perceptions and affections: including my body, the stairs and the room (in the way it dislocates their typology); as well as the perceptions of the audience turning through these relations, and the way the chair as cultural artifact already evokes another people (of users and site histories).
Cache reserves the field of geography as an exemplary domain for abstract vectorial space because it best describes surfaces of variable curvature across diverse scales. This is apparent in the contour lines on orthographic maps (see 3.6), although we should see these only as the description of vectorial approximations within which we may find the potential for unlimited inflection. For then, because inflection exists in an unlocatable intercalary dimension, we can go so far as to speak of a geographic principle that traverses diverse scales, delineating a territorial image as a condition of pure exteriority:

“Geography is not the surroundings of the building, but rather the impossibility of its closure. But it is not a context either, for architectural punctuation is never final. We will therefore not speak of geography as a superior scale to the built frame, but rather as a principle of rupture of scale.”

“And in this way, there will be no object, no matter how small, that does not have its geographical component. Geography is not the field next door, nor even the neighboring district, but a line that passes through our objects, from the city to the teaspoon, along which there exists an absolute outside.”

Cache, 1995: 70

For Cache, the relationship between geography and architecture is one of delimitation (in the manner that Boyman describes earlier). The architectural frame introduces an interval in a territory, first by separation through the condition of the wall - as the production of our coexistence and compatibility based on a mode of discontinuity; and secondly, by selection through the condition of the window – which reestablishes connections with the territory. In this way the frame selects an ‘abstract line' that represents the best possible vector (extrema) as a candidate for all the others (see Cache, 1995: 24-25). At the level of objects, Cache reserves a special place for furniture images as ‘mobile centers’ between architecture, object and geography, not only because they constitute an interior replication of
architecture, but also because they situate ‘our most intimate and abstract encounters, whether in a bed or on a chair’, and are thus ‘our primary territory’: “Architecture, object, geography - furniture is that image where forms are fused together” (ibid: 30).

In *Chaise traceur* the chair quite literally becomes a mobile center. But more abstractly, it introduces an interval of the ‘absolute outside’ between body, object, architecture and geography. This opening to the outside occurs in several ways, which allow us to consider the inflection image of the chair descent more broadly, incorporating other vectors, frames and singularities. As Cache remarks, the occupation of a territory comprises not just gravitational vectors but also more abstract ones at the level of signification (ibid: 12). So for the diagrammatic figure of the chair descent we should not only see the haloes of indeterminacy in terms of the kinetic object and its impact on my own ‘body and soul’ (thought and extension), but also how these complications affect the audience, and where their own perception may be seen to constitute a vector in the territory. This occurs as a complication of two modes: kinetically, optically and viscerally as an object relation, and symbolically as a cultural artifact.

The chair presents itself not only as an interior replication of architecture, a frame within a frame, but also an exterior replication of the body itself in its ergonomic affordance and skeletal resemblance - legs, seat and backrest. There is not only an internal deframing of sensory-motor relations, but also at the level of signification there is an architectural inversion of the body in the sedentary sense afforded by the chair, and the pedestrian sense afforded by the stairs. The chair is both an anthropomorphic icon and a programmatic index for the body-architecture interface. So, when the chair’s ergonomic orientation to the body is inverted to meet the staircase, this infers an abstract deframing of site and program. The chair is no longer a sedentary apparatus for occupying a pre-given space (already determined to be used in a certain manner), just as the body is no longer given as the user of such a space. Similarly, the stairs are no longer simply a form of access between architectural strata in the building; they become a necessary obstacle or gradient threshold for an event.

For the audience, there is the visceral effect and an affective sense of my body at risk - they can feel each slam reverberate through the site and return to me, just as much as I can. But this is complicated even further by the deframing of the chair as a cultural artifact and the programmatic typology it infers. Every chair resembles a body and invites or invokes a body, and so by dislocating its typology I implicate their own psychophysical interval in the process. As an anthropomorphic icon the chair is coupled to them as much as it is to me, or rather to us: ‘the user’. What I do to and/or with the chair, I also do to and/or with the audience; the action both provokes and invokes them.

So now we can include the ‘bodies and souls’ of the audience in the abstract line that weaves through the figure of the chair descent, where their thought also extends into the action to find a point of complication between the inversion of object relations and the alterity this produces for the pre-given status of the artifact. This introduces new points of inflection, not just between abstract and kinetic vectors, but where the intimate abstractness of a furniture-image turns the outside through the insides
of both performer and audience, and further outwards through the chair to change our perceptions as to the status of the site. The site is no longer a given, rather its specific features are given new potential for singularity.

*A series of transformations around lines of orientation*

From the point of view of interlocking frames, the chair passes through a series of transformations in the different ways that the seat, legs, and backrest find orthogonal and oblique orientations with various site features. This in turn allows for lines of curvature and points of inflection to appear within and/or across several key sequences, actions and gestures. This set of transformations provides a loose framework for tracking the affective inflections of object *vis-à-vis* artifact relations between performer, audience, chair and site. It also describes the general trajectory for this first part of the performance, as an abstract line comprising a multiplicity of vectors of diverse orders. In the snapshots 3.7 below, I track four key inflection points (a - d) where the chair moves through different orientations in the hinging of body and site. These perform not only structural transitions but also affective shifts or tentative dispositions.

3.7: Lines of orientation

a. Landing and Wall
b. Staircase steps
c. Room spin
d. Floor and Wall

a. Landing: backrest top edge / Wall: front chair legs, flat side edges / Position: standing on bottom of seat.
b. Staircase steps: backrest top edge / flat top of seat, front edge / Position: leaping on bottom of seat
c. Room spin: sound through holes in backrest top edge tubing / Position: holding chair legs, spinning.
d. Floor: leg tips / Wall: backrest top front edge / Position: leaning against backrest frame

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103 Please note the difference to previous diagrams for *Chaise traceur*. These images relate to the main structural elements of the site, in terms of the structural elements of the chair itself, and only secondly to the structural sequencing of the performance.
a.
On the landing at the start (see 3.3: 2, and 3.7a), there is an orthogonal orientation of outwards pressure, between the chair legs pressing flush against the wall and the top of the backrest down onto the floor. This establishes an oblique tension between these two points, and as I rise up on the chair this becomes a line of curvature as the chair slides out from under me in one direction, and as I lean towards the windowsill in the opposite direction, forming a line of inverse curvature to the slipping chair. There is a tentative hinging held between the darkness of the stairs and the light of the window; a state of potential that is both predisposed to the chair, and to the impending catastrophe of leaping onto the windowsill as the chair slips out from under me.

b.
The chair action down the stairs (see 3.3: 8, and 3.7b) has an orthogonal interlocking of steps to chair, but where their facing is also cut through by an oblique line that supports all the points of inflection, complication and complex lines of curvature constituting the descent. The whole movement of the descent finds a singular expression of curvature in the body when I am reaching back for the chair. The moment is interesting for the fact that my hand grasping thin air was unexpected, a newness. But what makes it singular is that it encapsulates the whole movement in the way it gropes for a pastness - into a concavity of memory amidst the residue of half darkness that remains on the stairs; while at the same time the tautness of the torso expresses a convexity of anticipation towards moving into the room.

c-d.
With the spinning of the chair in the room (3.3: 17-18, and 3.7c-d), the orientation is more a point of tension between the centripetal constraint of the body pulling the chair into a centre vis-à-vis the spinning chair, “[which through] centrifugal energy becomes a transportational vector that is orthogonal to the circular trajectory” (Cache, 1995: 26). And then by varying the line in moving the chair up and down and in and out to adjust the pitch of the whistling sound, this produces aberrations in the spin with a resulting release of centrifugal energy as I slam into the wall. Finally, after scraping the chair down the wall to its final resting point, its orthogonal angle of seat and backrest finds an oblique orientation against the wall, which then allows my body to find a line of curvature as I arch back (2.7d). So again, what makes this gesture singular is how the arch inverts the curvature suggested by the chair - where the oblique line of seat and backrest seems to curve into the wall, like an intimate resolution for the aftermath of sending all its kinetic energy into the wall with a slam. But also for the movement as a whole, this inversion brings to resolution the counterpoint of centripetal and centrifugal forces that were held between body and chair in the spin.
Structural lines and the point fold between sections

Looking back again to diagram 3.5, we can also see how these transformations (as mapped above in 3.7) sit within a broad set of 'structural inflections' (3.5, ab: i.2-3 / ii.8-12 / iii.17-22). This links the three main sequences of action, where points of inflection may be seen to occur as processes of dilation. The central one - the chair descent and its aftermath, is expressed in diagram 3.5 as the 'longest' point of inflection because of its broad slippage across a continuum of transformations (represented by the baroque figure, 3.5: ii, 8-12). On either side there are the other two more minor states of dilation - the chair ascent on the landing through to the scraping fingernails (3.5: i.2/3); and the chair spin through the wall crash and coming to rest on the floor (3.5: iii.17-22); each represented by a baroque figure with less slippage.

In its most rudimentary form the structural elements delineate a basic trajectory or abstract line through four interlocking frames: window, stairs, floor, and wall. Or as three structural inflections - the main hinge point between stairs and floor framed on either side by window and wall. And where two minor hinges fold into and out of the major one - window/landing, anticipating stairs/floor, anticipating floor/wall. For Cache, window and wall are the basic elements of the architectural frame in terms of separating and then selecting reconnections with the geographic territory. But just as the wall delimits the geographical territory as a condition of our compatibility, the window lets the sun shine in and forms a point of view as a principle of coexistence with the territory:

"A contains B, which doesn't prevent B from being able to contain A. The window frames the landscape as much as the landscape encompasses the frame."

Cache, 1995:140

The most important structural delimitation for this first part of Chaise traceur is the stark contrast between virtual darkness in section A, and then when the lights come on at the bottom of the steps for section B. Now it is not so much the window and the wall as actual frames between which everything else happens, but rather their qualities encompassing one another and how this passes through a point of inflection in the middle (AB). Window and wall trade places or invert their purposes. In section A, the window selects a point of view but to such a degree of constraint (virtual darkness) that it also separates a large portion of the site from presenting itself - the dark room evoking the very condition of the wall, even when it is not seen. The light flickers on as if the window had suddenly expanded into the room, revealing the wall as a final destination for my trajectory. And when the spinning chair fills the territory with the force of a whistling sun, the wall is then finally given in all its power of delimitation.

104 “The image of a simple vector is thus never given without the frame image which selects it being constituted at the same time. The wall delimits dark rooms; the window lets the sun shine in; what is still needed is a surface that stretches its screen to the variable play of shadows formed by the light” (ibid: 25). In my case, this surface is the body, alongside the co-extensive surfacing of affect with and through site features.
The crash and clatter comes as a power of being affected, like being thrown through a window, but with the force of the impact then returning to the body as a quality of dilation in coming to rest (3.5: 22).

*When form disappears in the singular specificity of siting*

Let us recall the discussion in Sponge 2 about the pitfalls of authenticity in terms of site-specific performance, where there is no original essence or program to be sought, but rather the specificity of situated relations within the event. Cache also says that its necessary to differentiate the specificity of a site or milieu from its given or assumed identity. He distinguishes two kinds of vector or vector images, concrete gravitational materialities and abstract signifiers, noting how the two become grafted onto one another, for instance where the elevated sense of a religious structure such as a cathedral is reinforced by being placed on the cusp of a rise. But this does not mean that this identity is ‘given’ by the site, only that a singularity has been actualized and then continuously restratified over time.

‘Each abstract vector nails down a multiplicity of concrete, such that the historical succession of vectors appears as a sort of repetition... But beyond repetition, one must learn to read a space of “transistance” that allows us to pass from one vector to another’

Cache, 1995: 14-15

*For Chaise traceur*, reading this ‘space of transistance’ becomes a matter of dislocating the ‘grafts’ or habitual couplings between things, so that this passing between vectors may induce or invoke a multiplicity of abstract signifiers in the audience (equally singular for each, while multiple in affective openness as a circulation of mass-energy). Reading the specificity of ‘site’, as a situated event, becomes a matter of sensing the pre-expressive confluence of intrinsic singularities (as a co-emergence of implicit forms via pure traits, tensors, inflections), **before** the appearance of identities in their extrema. If we recall our discussion of ‘presence’ in terms of singularity in SPONGE 2, this is where an intensive dislocation may now be understood as a process of holding open the repetition of vectors to difference, through a state of absence and/or inversion. This dislocation produces a phase shift that opens an interval of movement to indeterminacy, a space of transistance through which the audience may also pass (just as it passes through them: transient membrane). Signification remains abstract or ‘with-held’, with the possibility of new or purely spectral / monstrous identities forever emerging as the ‘not yet given’. This then is what appears on the other side of presence in performance. If presence turns on a pure virtuality of absence, then the continual becomings that arise as abstract signifiers are like a ‘pure actuality’ that passes through and beyond given forms just as

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105 As I discussed in SPONGE 2, this may be seen as a matter of inducing the ‘diagrammatic tendencies’ of the audience. See also CHAIR 2, where I analyze the *Gargoyle* project through Arakawa and Gins; in the way habitual couplings may be dislocated or ‘cleaved’, and hence where intersecting ‘segments of mass-energy’ may be opened to a broader collective field (or ‘bioscleave’).
quickly as they disappear. As Hijikata says: “Ah, that thing which is form emerges as it disappears; form becomes vivid in disappearing” (Hijikata, in Kurihara, 2000: 76).

This form that is 'with-held' becomes vivid when a certain 'relational sitability' opens at the untimely edges of transistance. In such a manner, Erin Manning describes how the object (in this case quite aptly, a chair) is always edging into experience, through commingling movements of the not-yet and the will-have-been:

“Everything changes in kind. This is the paradox: for there to be a theory of the “object,” the “object” has to be conceived as out of time, relegated beyond experience. For in experience, what we call an object is always, to some degree, not-yet, in process, in movement. We know it not in its fullness, in its ultimate form, but as an edging into experience. What resolves in experience is not, as Alfred North Whitehead would argue, first and foremost a chair, but the activity of sitability. It is only after the fact, after the initial entrainment the chair activates, that the movement into the relational field of “sitability”, that the chair as such is ascertained, felt in all its “object-like” intensity. But even here, Whitehead would argue, what stands out is not its three-dimensional form, but its quality of form-taking. Form is held in abeyance. “Chair” is not an object so much as a feeling.”

Manning, in Zegher and McMaster, 2012

The performer as psychophysical shapeshifter or shamanic medium enters this space of transistance as a relational field of feeling. The performer as ‘go between’ moves within and across bodies and selves, objects and sites, via an abstract vectorial space of transformation and intercession:

As Cache says, the ‘genius loci’ or spirit of a place is not given by any supposedly preexisting identity, for the site is always a process of construction.

As I discuss in my Conclusion, my reference to shamanic mediumship and animist practices is not from an anthropological perspective but as a participant and/or observer of several performance festivals in Malaysia and Indonesia; especially through the influence of collaborators Tony Yap and Agung Gunawan, For the Chair series, this had a particular influence on my performance prosthesis for ‘In Arts Island Festival’ (2010, Indonesia), particularly through a cultural exchange with shamans in Batu, East Java. (See DVD: prosthesis, performed in Yogjakarta just after the Batu performance. See also CHAIR 2 for the way this experience offers a reading of the Gargoyl{oy}le project).

There is a need for further research here, but for the purposes of this thesis - in terms of performance - I’ve noticed how many practices in shamanic mediumship use objects and artifacts as intermediary aids, both for getting into a liminal state of trance and hence for inducing affective shifts in the audience. This occurs in the manner of drawing out untimely object relations and/or investing artifactual significance, often in collaboration with the bodies of other performers. These observations also stem from my years of dance training with Tony Yap, who is especially concerned with exploring states of trance. As in its etymology - ‘trance’ means ‘to go across’ - into what we might describe as an untimely liminal area. Trance may be seen as a lived ‘state of abstraction’ where multiple sites of attention are held open to indirect relations, to the affective emergence of a receptive spontaneity. As a cross-reference to butoh, it may be seen as a matter of holding open the intercalary space-time dimension of ma and yami; or as in Grotowski, the perceptual and intersubjective transitions found for example in the A-D focus exercise (see SPONGE 2).
The architect (or in this case, the performer), may always transform those virtual figures particular to a site, introducing difference within the process of historical repetition:

“...it lies in the capacity of this “genius” to be smart enough to allow for the transformation or transit from one identity to another.”

Cache, 1995: 15

In *Chaise traceur* my approach to transforming the identity of site, or of passing between them, comes with a strategy of dislocation and inversion around a point of inflection, inverting both gravitational and abstract vectors at the level of object relation and cultural artifact. The most obvious dislocation in *Chaise traceur* is of course the chair, where I am effectively turning the gravitational vector on its head, which in turn produces a successive disruption of habitual couplings and abstract signifiers, between object, body and building: ergonomic, sedentary, programatic. Most importantly, this is now a matter of opening the more abstract vectors (at the level of artifact and object relation) to situated material and multi-sensory vectors. This may be also understood in the way I discussed in SPONGE 2, in terms of how somatic imagery and attention to small physical actions may disrupt interpretations of authenticity or identity between body and self. Now we may see how vectors of different orders and sensory modes might allow for transformation or ‘transit’ across vectors and between identities; and where affects emerge in the slippage or phase shifts that occur across points of inflection. Each vectorial image has its own quality, sensory modality, speed and duration, so we are already in an abstract vectorial domain of multiplicity that is on some level ‘out of time’ within itself. Unhinging this untimely dimension offers an opportunity not to resolve the allegorical level of meaning, but to open it up to further complication and inflection within the event. Pure qualities slip through to give a sense of absent and/or imaginary milieus, or just the specter of the absolute outside - through which we are affected and make our own connections for framing and deframing identities.

As we have seen, material vectors range across many different sensory modes - sound and light vectors, kinetic and gravitational, tactile and textural, even oral and olfactory. These operate at diverse scales - between sections, through sequences, and within individual actions and gestures. Each sensory mode has a different material quality and hence a different capacity for affecting the audience. Depending on how these are configured determines how vectors may transit or transform each other, and whether they may come to bear the singularity of inflection, especially in relation to more abstract signifying vectors (at the level of artifact or metaphor).

*Slippages in parallel and breaks in continuity*

The transformation of vectors occurs in two main ways - both of which have the potential for opening to slippage across other vectors and points of inflection, especially abstract signifiers. First, where sensory modes work in parallel to form a stark contrast and create emphasis by hinging or folding on a point of inflection between maxima and minima; and second, where this contrast switches emphasis to pass through an inversion of curvature. So for example, in the first sequence on the landing the bare
minimum of light maximizes the potential effect of silently rising up on the chair in virtual darkness. The contrast of darkness and silence serves to accentuate the sound of the chair juddering out from under me as I reach for the backlit window. Even though the ascent cannot be seen very well, the darkness maximizes the sound effect to such an extent that the juddering intervals can perhaps be imagined more clearly - as an abstract gradient curve gradually accelerating, bottoming out, and ending in the crash.

And so then there is an inversion, the body can now be seen framed within the window, as the silence returns. There is also a new gravitational vector of reciprocal forces moving up and down - from the upward ascent on the chair vis-à-vis its downward trajectory, to now pressing up and down with hands and feet against the top and bottom edge of the window frame. And because the actual point where the juddering chair and the rising body parted ways remained somewhat vague and approximate in the virtual darkness, the slipping chair now transits through a more abstract slippage to find a point of inflection with the body held tentatively within the window. And finally the whole movement finds a singular gesture, where the screeching fingernails come like a delayed echo of the juddering chair - displaying a similar acoustic gradient curve, with the sound trailing off, as the hand seems to carry everything into the remaining silence. And in what remains there may be space for the imagination of the audience to reenter the memory of the gesture with an abstract signifier - perhaps a sense of capture, escape or release. To the extent that these material intensities may find form in the minds of the audience, as ideas or interpretations, requires a delicate balancing act of invocation and provocation; an embodied know-how of when and how to transit the vectors, according to what frames or deframings.

Untimely lines of too soon and too late

For Chaise traceur, creating this space of transistance involves disrupting the perception of unified spatial coordinates by contrasting different sensory modes and holding them open as a suspension of maximum and minimum tension. This involves also disrupting perception of linear time and direct movement, not only through physical effects on the body (such as in the chair descent), but also where object and artifact find points of complication between sensory vectors and abstract signs. These disruptions become a matter of modulating our anticipation through variable moments of suspension and interruption, by making things arrive ‘too late’ or ‘too soon’. Inversely, these movements carry the traces of the ‘not-yet’ and the ‘will-have-been’. It is a temporal dilation as much as a psychophysical one - a bit like inciting a riot in the body and across bodies. Holding moments of suspension through delays in continuity allows time for ideas to form an abstract relation, which then establishes a new anticipation for the next action: ‘what’s going to happen?’ (Such as sitting in the window frame; or slowly stepping off from the sill). Or when a sudden interruption provokes a break or collapse in anticipation, bringing a shock to thought, which allows a brief moment for the next action to emerge through a hiatus in anticipation, while we are still wondering: ‘what just happened?’ (Such as the aftermath of the chair crash against the wall).
Or a variable inversion of both: the chair descent is already untimely within itself in the way it produces a break with direct movement and typology, within and across bodies, object / artifact and site. Each slam down the stairs comes as a shock to thought - 'what just happened?' But the action also carries its own momentum of suspended anticipation - 'what's happening, what's going to happen?' Then when the lights come on, everything switches - cacophony to silence, darkness to light, kinetic movement to stillness. The various continuities and discontinuities of the descent, both inside and outside the body, can be seen for a moment on one surface in the heaving breath and dilated musculature; before a flickering hand carries their effects as an echo of the fluorescent light.107

The second major dilation

The analysis of sections A and B provides a guide for summarizing what goes on in sections D and E (see diagram 3.8). It isn’t necessary to give a full analysis here, but rather to show how the surface affects that marked the first major dilation at the bottom of the stairs return in another way to redefine the work in a new and unexpected manner. The second major dilation following the action at the sink, despite and/or because of its problems, forms an inflection image with relation to the audience more clearly than ever before.

In structural terms we can see how a broad slippage first opens through the shift to more pedestrian actions (3.8: iv. 44-46), with the uncertainty of the rotten floor (3.8: 45) and then moving to everyday

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107 This occurs in a similar manner to the fingernails on the window, carrying the echo of the juddering chair.
tasks at the sink (3.8: 46). This establishes a different rhythm where I drop into a deeper affective state with a sense of exhaustion and resignation, which gives time for things to settle and for all the intensity of earlier actions to find a very broad and subtle inflection. Foreshadowing the major slippage that follows (2.8: v. 52-57), the actions at the sink establish a long suspension, but with a matter-of-fact quality almost without anticipation; until the simple act of turning around to face the audience transforms all that had been gathered while being turned away. The turn acts like a hinge where a minimum suddenly switches to a maximum, in the sense that the emotion that comes up issues from the long suspension.

We may track a space of transistance here in which multiple vectors transform one another via a long slippage that flick-flacks through several inversions on its way to an inflection image. There is a vector of orientation in turning around with receptivity and reflection, and feeling the proximity and attention of the audience in walking towards them. This intersects with several tactile vectors, especially the sensual quality of water (which is already like bringing the inside of the body out into the world). And this passes through several points - filling the glass, drinking, pouring water on my face, to soaping my chest.

Just as the soap maximizes the sensuality of the water, this transits an abstract vector in tending to the somatic memory of all that had happened through the performance. But just as the soap draws all this onto the surface of my body, it also becomes an affection that distracts me from the outside situation so that I suddenly drop the very object that renders the transformation. A gap opens, a shock to thought, and with it another sudden inversion, this time of the suspension that was gathering through somatic memory being just as quickly torn from my grasp, ‘too late’ and ‘too soon’ coming all at once. In the confusion that follows, I desperately attempt to close the gap within an action-reaction circuit of direct movements (vigorous lathering, looking down the stairwell). Am I hoping perhaps for an abstract signifier that might give me a way out? Rather than allow the gap to open with the audience and through the site, to find an inflection that may be borne across these vectors.

Looking for a way out becomes nothing more than a false opening to the outside, a maximum of extension based on the minimum of sensing a lack in thought. But then in realising my error a new inversion opens. Dropping the soap a second time has the opposite effect, finally bringing me to a standstill. Extension subsides, allowing a ‘virtual maxima’ to open as a sense of surface tension between my body and the audience; turning on a ‘virtual minima’ in constraining my impulse to move within the intensive potential for an absolute outside to move through us.

It is an awkward vulnerable moment because it carries the fragility of my error, but at the same time all the inversions that comprise the sequence give this moment a certain slippage, a tentative complication between bodies and selves. The importance of the soap as an object relation approximates a critical slippage through a point of inflection - where the actions of dropping it twice
invert curvature in terms of inside and outside. However, if points of inflection are not actual points but a continuum of transformations, we might do better to see the sequence as a series of ‘point-folds’. These pass through recursive inversions, conferring a mobile loci of indeterminacy to the curve of an event fabric, like the warp and weft of a continuous sponging.

This folding within the event appears most tangibly in the still moment at the end, where the soap is no longer even an object or point of focus but becomes an affective trace conferring an abstract surface relation to my skin. What had appeared more strategically but less effectively in the first dilation at the bottom of the stairs, now finds a powerful resonance with the audience in close proximity.

Towards the Skin of the Earth

As I have suggested, there is a correspondence of sorts in my earlier distinctions between direct or actual movement expressions and indirect or virtual pre-expressive ones, with the way that Cache describes extrinsic and intrinsic singularities. More tangibly, he distinguishes two kinds of image: ‘genuinely primary’ and ‘genuinely secondary’ ones (Cache, 1995: 111). Secondary images relate to extrema, to the stability of the frame where force acquires a determination, ‘neither thrust nor escape, but will and capture’. Primary images arise from secondary ones, after a passage of time has exhausted actions and reactions, giving way to virtualities of variable potential:

‘...the concrete images of primariness can be found in the rounded shape of a pebble, in the whiteness of a bone unearthed, in the polished handle of a tool, or in the incurvation of the worn steps of a staircase... It is like the very smooth quality of someone who’s been around; its what an old person’s smile can be.”

Cache, 1995: 113

In Chaise traceur, the chair descent presents a secondary image of direct action - the dislocated inversion of which then becomes a primary image in the affective dilation of musculature and breath at the bottom of the stairs. Or at the tail end of the second dilation, after the actions and reactions of

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108 A useful comparison may be drawn here between Cache and Varela, where the soap serves as an example of losing transparency via the collapse of an object-relation. That is, as Gallagher puts it, where a sense of agency (ipseity) is given by the action of reaching for an object, and where an emotional tonality may render an aberration or collapse in protention. When I drop the soap a second time, transparency is regained by resituating myself via the object. This may also be seen as an example of a ‘dead-body’ relation in butoh, where te boke (senile hand) articulates this collapse, but then finds a quality of ‘passional suspension’ in the way it delays or short-circuits motor intention (see SPONGE 2).

109 As Deleuze says in his discussion of Cache: “Points of inflection make up a first kind of singularity in space, and constitute envelopes in accord with indivisible relations of distance” (Deleuze, 1993: 20).

110 I might add here that the virtuality of primariness has a pre-expressive quality that also accompanies or even precludes secondary images in the process of their emergence or actualization.
dropping the soap have exhausted themselves, where again we reach an affective surface. But now the proximity of my skin, and the fragility of having botched the dilation, finds a very delicate tentativeness that is held open between audience and performer. The fractured urgency of seeking what to do next finally settles, to become a pure fluctuation between bodies and selves, returning to a primary or pre-expressive quality. In this fluctuation all the vectors that have been traced through ‘the site’ (in whatever sense of situating this topology has now become), may now acquire a new potential, one of transiting or transposing a quality that cuts across or underneath the level of our identities.

In summary, this Cachean analysis has offered me a way of examining Chaise traceur (and potentially, other projects like it), with an equal degree of rigor as that found in works of ‘physical virtuosity’ which use diagrammatic approaches to formal choreographic notation. This analysis offers a different kind of diagramming, looking instead for the emergence of an ‘affective virtuosity’ - one that operates more as an open system of processual constraints (as much as formal ones). This systemic analysis attempts to track the shifts that occur across more diverse parameters and frames of reference. Now I can see how the two problems of affective dilation and disciplinary translation become a matter of transposing qualities in ways that produce spaces of transistance. Firstly, there is the transposition of particular dynamics from dance to performance art - from plastiques to the plasticity of the chair. Then there is the way in which this shift or transposition of qualities is conferred through specific material intensities and abstract signifiers. This operates at several scales at once: at the level of Structure, Sequence, Gesture, and Action - each of which have particular vectors that pass through various framings and deframings.

Seen as an overall system of relations, these vectors and frames operate at different scales and modes, finding singular inflections and affective shifts within themselves and across one another. It is at certain key points (the two major dilations) when a kind of rupture occurs across them all, or when this rupture is when they all catch up with one another, to overflow their influence. Here the system is transformed in its very modus operandi. What has emerged as implicated sets of incipient resistance - between disciplines, within my practice and within myself, across objects, sites and selves - becomes a space of transistance in which they enter a collective dimension. Despite the problem of emotional expression, or perhaps because of it, this process of analysis enables a development for the thesis as much as for the series. To go back into the work - after the fact - is not just a process of reflection, but where the mapping of disciplinary fields becomes a recursive process of inflection, tracking singular shifts across multiple perspectives.

For all its complications, what we have seen unfold through the chair comes to resonate most powerfully with the soap and the emergence of the ‘skin’ at the end. Each object relation, in its own way, acts as an intermediary for the transparency of body and site. Finally, the ‘surface tension’ I have posited for the sponge body brings out the potential for performer and audience to enter a final absorption - when I walk back into the darkness of the building from where the audience had first appeared.
As Cache imagines at the close of *Earth Moves*, perhaps the future of man is to become like an invertebrate sponge, to renounce movement on a bilateral axis (Cache, 1995: 74), and instead spread out like an abstract surface, to become ‘the skin of the earth’ (ibid: 73). In the chapter that follows, the skin returns in the *Garg(oyle)* project as the abstract surface or transient membrane of another sponge body. This emerges, once again, through a critical tension with the social domain in a way that almost escapes my attention - and where diagramming the image takes on a new shift with the move to video installation.
In this final section I focus primarily on the second major project of the Chair Series, a performance art work produced specifically for multiscreen video installation: *Garg{oy}le*.\(^{111}\) This was a solo performance that took place in a small shopfront space in Melbourne on February 3, 2010. There was no ‘audience’ *per se*, only film crew\(^{112}\) and a few random passersby. It involved a performance armature comprising a stack of chairs tethered together with a tensegrity engineering configuration; and a particular ‘costume’ made out of nori seaweed stuck to my body, with a layer of rice resembling a ‘brain’ on top of my head. The videos produced from this performance event can be viewed in the accompanying DVD.\(^{113}\)

The performance explored a contemporary response to the historical figure of the architectural gargoyle. Never one but many in the way it proliferates along a parapet, the gargoyle presents an affective figure of a communal nature, where its multiplicity becomes a collective construction of both human and non-human elements. My aim here is to explore how the gargoyle offers up another kind of sponge body, where previous ways of attaining openness now become more defined in terms of identifying a specific method for psychophysical performance. This becomes more constructed both with relation to the role of the built environment, and the diagrammatic nature of the image, through two further disciplinary shifts within a performance art framework. Firstly architectural installation, in developing the chair as an assemblage; and secondly multi-screen video, in developing a tableau comprising three widescreen projection ‘panels’. (I also distinguish here between the performance event itself and the way this has been reworked through video post-production, as another compositional event opening towards future exhibition in a gallery context).

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111 The spelling - *Garg{oy}le* - refers to the title of the project, while ‘gargoyle’ refers to the figure I develop through the performance, although this too assumes different stances: as physical action, character, and conceptual / architectural figure.

112 The full crew list is as follows: Writer / Director, Production Designer, Performer - Michael Hornblow; Producers - Christie Stott, Michael Hornblow; Director of Photography - Andy Lane; Camera operators - Andy Lane, Sam Hoffmann, Paul Anderson; Costume Designer - Romanie Harper; Gaffer, Chair Wrangler - Robbie Khol; Gaffer, Art Assistant - Ric Richmond; Tensegrity Engineering - Jerome Frumar, Yi Yi Zhou; Video Documentation - Leah Smith; Many Thanks - Andy Miller, Tony Yap. Further post-production: Animation / Compositing - Tim Budgen; Sound Design - Jeffrey Hannam.

113 There are four videos for *Garg{oy}le* on the DVD: a preview edited for the AG3 Online Conference (2010), and three re-animated loop previews for the 3-channel multiscreen video installation, *Garg{oy}le: Parapet*. 
Above all, it is the way all these elements come together that generate a series of affective transformations, marked by several critical points or shifts. This happens in a similar way to *Chaise traceur*, but where issues of site-specificity and emotional expression are now further resolved, to explore new ways of attaining openness. For the Chair Series as a whole, the *Gargoyle* project incorporates many of the features and strategies from previous works, but now within a ‘dense’ or more constrained field of action, by integrating methods and elements from across the series within one assemblage. The chair is multiplied as a 5-chair tier in a way that combines traits of the stairs, wall, and fluorescent light, a contraction that serves to generate an affective state of psychophysical intensity in the performance. This simultaneous multiplication and condensation is also seen in the 3-panel video, where the same action is shown from three perspectives (close-up, mid-shot, wide-shot), while the figure is also multiplied within each panel / tableau through further animation and image compositing.

Like the Threshold between parts 1 and 2 - SPONGE and CHAIR, this ‘Segue’ is then not simply an introduction to *Gargoyle* or even just a transition between works, media, disciplines, and chapters. To segue (in film or music) is to move without interruption from one song or scene to another. In this manner there is a mixology of traits that transit, multiply and condense here, in a way that encapsulates the series as a whole, while allowing it to open further, towards future exhibition of the video (a compositional event in potential and yet to come).  

In these ways, I describe how the project develops two key aspects of the sponge body - the psychophysical dynamics of affectivity as a ‘double openness’ of sensory absorption and critical density; and how the plastic features and pre-expressive strategies involved continually evolve from one work to the next, in different forms or modes. This relationship between the performer as a psychophysical sponge body, and the series itself as a larger processual sponge body (a body of work), is now condensed more explicitly within one project. In turn, these open to further ‘interpersonal spongings’, but now where the collective process of collaboration with my video crew plays an even more crucial role for affective openness than it did with the audience in *Chaise traceur*. This is where the gargoyle appears as a ‘character’, through the emergence of particular characteristics or pre-expressive traits, and how this process moves through several phase shift transformations, in a way that reframes the problem of emotional expression that had come up in *Chaise traceur*.

In terms of theoretical framework, the project is also informed by and critically responds to the ideas of Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, two artist-architect-poets from New York who have over the past four decades developed a range of unique architectural projects and critical-metaphysical manifestos. Up until now Arakawa and Gins have taken a back seat in the thesis, partly because they

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114 As I also note in the Conclusion to this thesis, the exhibition of the multi-screen video installation may also be an opportunity to show it in the context of other works in the Chair Series; and perhaps within a larger body of work - *You treat the furniture like part of me* - which both precedes the series and looks towards its further development.
didn’t influence the project work until later in the candidature; but also for the way their concepts and methods now become more relevant for the current direction of my research. This has become more focussed on the role of the built environment as a collective loci for generating states of affective intensity. Both Cache and Arakawa and Gins clearly work within an architectural context, but their broader philosophical and poetic leanings have impacted on the project work in ways that are no longer couched only in purely architectural terms. As indicated in the Conclusion and in footnotes throughout the thesis, there is potential for this to be taken up and extended for architecture, as I have also indicated in other writing. However I see the research contribution more broadly - through the value of diagramming as a practice; the development of a psychophysical process in the project work; and above all, for understanding the importance of affectivity in considering the place of the body as a collective entity within the built environment.

As discussed in the Introduction, earlier in the candidature there was the question of resituating the body within architectural discourse, from which I stepped back to then see the slow emergence of a tentative disposition. For the project work, the affective transformation of the gargoyle figure - through performance - becomes a tentative disposition which then offers me a ‘critical position’ in architectural terms (as discussed towards the end of CHAIR 2, and in my Conclusion). For the writing process, this also emerges through the footnotes. What I noticed in my Introduction - how the footnotes ‘stand in’ as the emergence of a tentative ‘footing’ for the body of the text, towards further research - now starts to transform in the latter stages of writing. This comes from cross-referencing a diverse contraction of qualities, procedures and materials that become so very dense in the Gargoyle project; and as a way of accounting for the multiplying influences and implications this has for mapping a transdisciplinary field, within which this research offers its contribution.

This means that the footnotes now start to get longer and longer... but rather than take this as a direct problem or external limit for maintaining the form of the academic thesis, I can see here how a certain condition appears to inflect the research, in a more indirect and generative manner. Footnotes are inherently diagrammatic in the way they allow discrete detours to be plotted, even as these seem to fly off into the World beyond the scope of the argument. For the main body of the text they form a tentative boundary condition where quite complex elements may be enfolded as provisional statements without the usual rhetorical and structural coherence required of the main argument. They also offer a boundary condition for marking cross-references, linking strands of the argument from

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115 In a practical sense, the project was produced specifically for AG3: Arakawa and Gins Online Conference, as both a Creative Response and a theoretical paper - ‘Gargoyle: the architectural surround is an overflow, the organism that persons is a wave’ (Hornblow: 2010). The video has been developed further since then (see DVD), while the ideas in the paper have been substantially reworked and taken in new directions.

116 See also my AG3 paper (Hornblow, 2010) for a comparison between the Arakawa and Gins ‘organism that persons’ and Greg Lynn’s ‘architectural body without organs’; and also my paper for SEAM – ‘The Body is a Wall: towards the bio-construction of topological bodies across Architecture and Performance’ (Hornblow, 2009), in which I note parallels between Lynn and Hijikata’s butoh.
previous sections, or flagging the reader’s attention for forthcoming refrains. For my tentative
disposition these two boundaries, within and across the main body, start to open the relationship
between focus and scope / argument and implication to a new kind of tentative inflection.

On several pages this reaches a tipping point when the footnotes - even at smaller font size, take up
more space than the main text body. To re-cognize this juncture I have flipped the two around,
footnotes at the top, main text below. I call this a ‘performatting’ of the thesis. Just as flipping the chair
around in Chaise traceur performs a dislocation of site typology, the ‘premises’ upon which this
document is spatially situated - in scope and focus - now turn upon their boundary conditions as if to
plunge back into the World. Just as the diagrammatic nature of footnotes lends a tentative footing for
stealing ones steps within and across a document, stepping back from taking a critical stance holds
open a space of incipient potential, that now returns in a rush. I can only feel this as a thought in my
writing, but I hope that it is also felt somehow in the reading experience - where this dislocation might
induce a certain tonality. Or at least, where it may indicate how the contribution that follows in my
Conclusion already collapses its fringe horizon in CHAIR 2 - where scope and focus find a mutual
constraint, turned inside out at the edge of particular singularities, across the mapping of fields. Writing
confronts its own outside - when fingers tapping seek to unfold their object relations to the flow of
reading. So then reading also confronts its own outside - when this flow seeks to prise open a
geographic condition - which is not just thinking about what it is I’m trying to convey, but also a feeling
for how this body of text moves as an object relation.

Another sponge body appears - a body of writing - encompassing or accompanying all the others: the
psychophysical body in the warehouse, the Chair Series as body of work, and the various spongings
within each project. Now in performatting this body on a tentative footing, the text reaches a state of
critical absorption, becoming dense with the weight of its in-fluences and im-plications. Perhaps then
in the experience of reading, we might enact a with-holding of potential that may induce a final tug
forward, into the contributions of this research. To ‘segue’ is to move without interruption from one
compositional element to another - but if to move is also to be moved, then perhaps it is also a matter
of opening the interruption to a rupture of reading and writing. Rather than elide the difference that
habitually carries us along, perhaps there is a different kind of ‘segue’ that moves transversally
through the text, a mutual constraint that touches upon the outside of us.
CHAIR 2 Structure:

Like *Chaise traceur* in CHAIR 1, I discuss the *Garg(oy)le* project in two Sections. This is done firstly from an experiential point of view, starting with the preparation, then moving through the different stages of the action. I also account for how elements of the project emerged from earlier works in the chair series, and how this continuity takes up the implications of the gargoyle figure in ongoing iterations of the project - through the video post-production process and towards a proposed multi-screen interactive environment. Section A also includes references to key concepts, methods and themes explored in past works and preceding chapters, in order to situate the project within the research as a whole, and to provide a platform for comparison in Section B.

In Section B, I reassess the project from the perspective of Arakawa and Gins, using their aims and concepts to explore how the gargoyle may be seen to develop a specific process or set of principles and procedures for attaining affective openness. This gives me a way of understanding how the Chair Series, and *Garg(oy)le* in particular, explores and develops a specific kind of diagrammatic condition, as a particular approach to what they call ‘biotopological diagramming’. I suggest this may be a productive way for understanding other projects of this nature. This also allows me to consider what is potentially at stake for the gargoyle, in terms of situating its contribution both as a conceptual and architectural figure, within an expanded field of practice focussed on the built environment as a collective domain of affective relations.

At the end of CHAIR 2 I finish with a short ‘Coda’, to consider some of the wider implications of this analysis, and as a further segue into summarizing the contribution of my research in the Conclusion that follows. The Coda is given as ‘the tail’ of the gargoyle, with brief reference to the last work of the Chair Series - *prosthesis* - performed shortly after the *Garg(oy)le* project (see DVD). This final work helps to draw out many of the broader implications of its predecessor, offering another lens for going back into the project through experiential and theoretical analyses. *prosthesis* also provides a final segue through which the gargoyle offers an architectural figure; and more broadly for diagramming as a transdisciplinary practice, for psychophysical performance, and for embodied relations within the built environment.
Garg{oy}le: overflowing the surrounds of affect

'Hungering for myself, i spawn the meal of me in the pores of my skin, imagineering fertile fields in dreams, taking root through hair follicles, growing the garments of a cannibalist autopoiesis. Caught in the liminal zone between endless striving and a state of exhaustion, we feel the unbearable Outside in the depths of our interior, like the gargoyle teetering tentatively on a threshold…'

AG3 Synopsis: Hornblow, 2010

Section A:

An experiential and processual account of the performance

On the face of it, the action of the gargoyle performance is quite short and relatively simple - rising up from a crouch and arching back to gargle at the ceiling, then returning back down to a crouch again. What makes it difficult is the fact that it is done on a stack of five chairs that have been carefully tethered together into a curved configuration rising up from the floor. Further constraints such as costume, the subtlety of the gargle, and the demands of performance focus, are all designed to impinge on one another in a way that may bring the action to a state of dilation. The action presents a very condensed intensive approach to attaining affective openness - drawing on what I discovered in previous performances, as well as the psychophysical exercises and pre-expressive principles underlying the research practice.
1. PREPARATION

Turning the room around

It’s close to 1:00 am and I’m sitting in the director’s chair staring at a stack of chairs - ‘the prawn’, so-called by the crew for its shape and color. I’m trying to summon the Will to climb it for the third time, to be filmed slowly rising up from a squat, to standing position, then arching back as far as I can to gargle at the ceiling as the whole structure threatens to give way beneath me.

For what seems like a simple action it’s been a long grueling process with countless problems compounding one another. First, a two-hour ‘make-up’ job in which I’m covered in black Nori seaweed paper - a clammy, glutinous skin that contracts on drying and inhibits my movement by pulling into every pore in a fossilized embrace. The final job is to glue my lips back with spirit gum, so thereafter I can’t control saliva retention very well or pronounce my consonants, which makes communication neither easy nor pretty to watch. Now that I’m in the shot there are endless changes and adjustments to costume, lighting and camera so it takes hours before we seem even close to rolling. As director, production designer, camera owner and performer I’m dribbling and slurring instructions, poking camera settings with my seaweed fingers, moving constantly to the dismay of the costume designer who follows around making skin repairs and pleading with me to stop moving.

Then just as we seem ready to roll, I realize I’ve made a critical error - that shooting against the plate glass window of the shop front, designed to get the passing traffic lights on the busy road outside, means that the contour of the black figure will be lost against the dark background. Its already midnight and we haven’t got a shot down yet. I have a sudden fear of people losing faith, of pushing them too far and in the wrong direction. But after discussing the problem and considering a few compromises everyone agrees that the only solution is to turn the whole set around to face the other

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117 The ascent is shown here as the temporal reverse of the descent - as in the time remapping of the Parapet video (see DVD).
way, against the white wall at the back of the shop. The producer gets everyone into high gear and 30 minutes later we’re all amazed at how good it looks, we have our first shots down and all the problems that plagued the shoot early on seem to be resolved.

Becoming the Gargoyle

Chair / body:

So now its take no.3, and after the endless logistical issues all that remains is to find the performance focus with which to carry through the action. The physical risk of rising up on the chairs hadn’t been a real concern until now. But having done it twice I can suddenly feel how much the structure has distorted by being shifted around. So it is just as much an apprehension around being able to maintain that critical threshold of attention on performance focus, while also being aware of any margin of error that might tend towards catastrophe. (Or in fact as we will see, it is a matter of drawing these two into a critical relation, as a generative limit, rather than being opposed or contradictory).

I am physically and mentally exhausted, and the awareness of this psychophysical condition reveals just how much my capacity for achieving the task at hand is now vague and obscure, but at the same time critically relational between the chairs and me. There are some strange couplings going on - a simultaneously personal and collective becoming-chair, focused around the circulation and control of psychophysical energy. As I will go on to describe, this becoming unfolds through the ascent as a tenuous balancing act in relation to the prawn. But already at this point between takes, in my intense scrutiny of the chair I am assessing its structure on the basis of the previous two takes, from the physical memory I feel of it in my body. There is a hint of my sensory-motor function operating as some prosthetic satellite in relation to the prawn, both inside and outside myself, as a dislocation of somatic memory and direct perception.118

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118 This moment marks an important shift that I will return to in the next section because it involves the kind of autopoietic couplings and diagrammatic relations that we find in Arakawa and Gins’ Architectural Body. The sense of co-extension I feel with the chair recalls the principle of the dead-body as a locus of becoming that we found in the Clay exercise, and in the senile hand of te boke (see SPONGE 2), and then the chair-body coupling in Chaise traceur (see CHAIR 1). Gargoyle is a response to the trope of the dead-body as a crisis of motor action, in particular recalling Hijikata’s often quoted line: “Butoh is a corpse standing straight up in a desperate bid for life” (Hijikata, 1993: 58). As discussed in my paper for AG3, I see a further parallel for the dead-body between Arakawa and Gins’ notion of ‘reversible destiny’ (as a rejection of death), and Artaud’s body-without-organs; as developed through Deleuze and Guattari, and in architectural terms via Greg Lynn (see Hornblow, 2010). For a Deleuzian perspective on the influence of Artaud on Hijikata see my essay for Performance Paradigm (Hornblow, 2006).
**Character:**
The hesitation at take no.3 led me to question my preparation. As in the case of *Chaise traceur*, I've always been reluctant to rehearse these actions, except for the logistics of risk assessment - partly because it's exactly this state of crisis where the relations between things open up potential surprises and accidents that enable the work to take on a life of its own. I want to be apprehended by new affects, rather than be in apprehension of them. As a work of performance art I felt that this should come from the material constraints of costume and apparatus, and from conceptual abstraction rather than character and narrative as such. But now, in this moment, I feel that I need something to carry me through… an image, a character, or vehicle, at least a larger reason that might give me the necessary impetus for the action.

‘Camera ready, ready when you are’ says the Director of Photography. Everybody’s waiting… and then I feel a kind of self-conscious but also uncanny third person perception of seeing myself through their eyes - fully intent on the prawn as if sizing up an adversary. I can’t turn around in my Nori skin, much less for my fixed intent, and so I feel everyone’s eyes on me as if the contractive material of the skin itself functions as a surface of translation for their anticipation. The room is turning around again, *through this membrane* - that first spatial turning point of collective crisis drawing in now on a single surface. Suddenly I feel a sense of having become the clique ‘monster director’ - demanding, over-particular and contradictory, something of a gargoyle. But at the same time I know the crew well enough to feel that they want more than anything for me to bring to completion all our efforts. And so this becomes the missing link. Climbing up to crouch on the parapet of the prawn this *becoming-gargoyle* starts to move in two directions at once. As I rise up, the film set and the crew present a landscape of survey for me to summon the grotesque wrath of the gargoyle in all its hybrid animality. The crucial point is not in its literal meaning, but how it circulates and amplifies affectivity - as a feeling of them feeding me with their intent. My wrath is more a kind of ‘radical affection’ around this constraint, one that turns me inside out as a power with which to ascend; a kind of ‘self-imposed cruelty’ as Artaud would put it (Artaud, 1994).

The displacement of my somatic memory and direct perception of the prawn is similar to what happens in the Clay exercise, with the way both activities carry the trace of a previous action back onto the object or subject of attention, as an incipient potential. For the gargoyle, this also opens to the fact that I am sitting (slumped, exhausted) in a chair that is identical to those within the prawn (the only one left after it got too high and too tenuous for further stacking). This in turn opens my attention to a sense of being watched by the crew, with the director’s chair displacing me further, in situating my social role and responsibility. In Cachean terms, this abstract signifier finds a critical or singular point of intersection with more specifically gravitational vectors, circulating within and between bodies (mine

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119 My neologism ‘radical affection’ is a nod towards radical empiricism, whereby ‘affection’ no longer assumes a positive emotion towards the other, but simply denotes a dynamic of relational intensity. In this way it resonates, in an inverse manner, with Artaud’s ‘cruelty’ - which is not explicitly ‘cruel’ in emotional intention, but in its contingency and necessity for producing a lived relation.
and the crew), the chairs, and the prawn. In a similar manner to the critical density of accumulated everyday gestures that we find in the senile hand of *Te boke*, there is the impetus of being *induced to move* as if from the outside; or rather, through the geographical condition of an absolute outside via transverse relations. Recalling the Clay exercise, there is another kind of dead-body / hollow-body dynamic operating simultaneously on the material and social level of body and self. Reaching this singular point lends me the impulsion to rise up from the chair and become the gargoyle.

### 2. ASCENT

**Skin:**

In *Chaise traceur*, the chair carried me just as much as the other way around, while for its abstract signifiers the chair as prosthetic limb was not a somatic image *per se*, so much as a psychophysical imaging process. Now the character of the gargoyle also appears as the abstraction of a material becoming through the very skin that gives it constraint, rather than a literal image of what it might represent. This imaging process carries me up through the ascent as a reciprocal sponging dynamic of being in-tension. On one side, the impingement of my own exhaustion is felt in relation to the prawn, while on the other the impingement of the crew is felt on my seaweed skin. A tentative oscillation occurs, passing back and forth across the transient membrane of a dead-hollow dynamic, where the two sides are transduced as an impetus for rising up. (The ‘two sides’ are not simply that of inside and outside, but those of an object relation or gravitational vector with regards to the prawn and the skin, vis-à-vis an artifact relation or abstract signifier in terms of how these transit between myself and the crew.)

In my essay for AG3 Online (Hornblow, 2010), I explore how the nature of this relation may be seen as a ‘negentropic’ exchange, where negentropy (negative entropy) is understood as the capacity of an organism to exchange their own entropy with the surrounding environment. Even though the AG3 essay was written just prior to the performance (as a provocation for research practice), it was uncanny how this dynamic actually emerged as a mutual constraint through the prawn and the nori.

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120 From the AG3 abstract:

> “In this paper I present and discuss the conceptual basis to an ongoing performance-art project, *Gargoyle* - also submitted to AG3 Online as a Creative Response... The work has been theorized partially on the basis of past iterations... A specific AG3 iteration is planned to go into production during the week of February 15-21, 2010. This places me in the difficult position of discussing a work that hasn’t been fully completed, at least at the time of writing (February 1). It does however create an interesting recursion of iterations within and across practice and theory, a tentative dance between bodies of writing and performing bodies, which is more than apt given my aims for the work and for this paper” (Hornblow, 2010).

It is in this very manner that the to-and-fro of theory and practice also occurs in the final PhD write-up stage alongside further post-production of the *Gargoyle* project.
skin, between myself and the crew as a quality of being induced to move (through incipient action). The skin itself was first intended as a tongue-in-cheek comment on contemporary biomimetic architecture, with its plant-clad facades and permeable envelopes responsive to climatic factors. For the gargoyle figure, this became a way of situating the body in relation to the built environment within a broader context. There isn’t the scope to rehearse this argument in full here; but in brief, I was interested in how the kind of negentropic exchange that characterizes these psychophysical states of affectivity, turns on a folding of personal and impersonal modes of subjective experience.

Negentropy may be seen to work transversally in a psychophysical manner as much as in a purely biological sense. This is where personal and impersonal death passes across the ‘transient’ membrane of the self - simultaneously individual and pre-individual, collective and reciprocal in both cases (social vis-à-vis pure assemblage). Despite the second law of thermodynamics (the irreversibility of time as the reality of entropic heat death), there is still the untimely intensive manner in which forms of life intersect, within and between themselves. As discussed in the case of ‘intensive timeframes’ operating across scales of action, affective shifts in tonality occur when indeterminacies open up through external cognition, objects relations and cultural artifacts. Negentropy happens in the energetic purchase of the ‘too soon’ and the ‘too late’ - a boundary condition for inducing that part of us that is already on the other side of time, of thought, of the body. Deleuze finds a negentropic activity in the ‘impower’ of Artaud, when the latter feels the moving image to stand in for his thought, opening an unthought in thought.

121 The concept of negentropy is complex, contentious, and often misread simply as an opposite sign of entropy. A more nuanced definition would be one of mutual constraint as a reciprocal transfer of negative entropy (see Atamer, 2011). The inherent flux of the external environment induces a degree of internal entropic chaos within the ‘individual’, or subsystem; but it is not merely a direct loss of energy because the subsystem requalifies this transfer within its own complex capacity for self-organisation. Equally, it may ‘purchase’ order from outside, in effect transferring negative entropy flow to the environment (Atamer, 2011: 63). Its not simply that entropy = chaos, and negentropy = order, but that the two pairs purchase energy at a shared limit: the absolute outside. For my purposes, the notion of negentropy is also found in Deleuze, in his critique of negativity and impersonal death via Blanchot, Artaud, and Nietzsche (see Hornblow, 2004, 2006; Atamer, 2011; Deleuze, 1989). This finds a parallel in chaos theory, based on the principle that heat death is not always only approaching absolute homoestasis, but also finds a generative limit in the very fact that its chaotic nature is dependent upon non-equilibrium conditions.
Deleuze relates this to the indirect nature of the ‘time image’ as a collapse of the sensory motor-schema (1989). This also recalls my earlier parallel drawn between Deleuze and Varela (via Gallagher, 2005), about the collapse in protention affecting a sense of intentional agency for the self (ipseity). What we find in Artaud is perhaps a collapse in protention - with the ‘shock to thought’; but where he also identifies an ‘impossibility to think’ that invents a new power. This is an ‘impower’ of being induced, one that transduces the boundary condition, according to the character of its own internal chaos just as much as the orderly form of its identity. It is the same with his body-without-organs - a figure that purchases a capacity to ‘die alive’ in the face of God’s Judgement; to dance this dynamic as a turning ‘inside out’ (Artaud: 1992); a reorganisation of the tonal condition that defines his experience.

The animal-human hybridity of the gargoyle gave me another way of thinking about how the pre-expressive (or impersonal) emergence of affectivity shifts through emotional expression into personal forms of identity, and how this relates to openness. Its not simply that the animal part of ourselves corresponds to our physical organism and the human part to our psychology, but that the two find a tentative intensity that is held open through a quality of mutual constraint within the environment. As we saw in SPONGE 1, this psychophysical constraint is already enacted through object relations and cultural artifacts, but this ‘environment’ is not a pre-given site of meaning. It is neither ‘Nature’ nor ‘Architecture’ as discursive categories separate from our experience, but a situated event that is always collective in some manner. In a tangible sense, the nori skin becomes a kind of affective surface in a similar manner to the way it appeared in Chaise traceur: as a transient membrane or

As Deleuze also says: ‘The time which is empty and out of joint, with its rigorous formal and static order, its crushing totality, and its irreversible series, is precisely the death-instinct’ (Deleuze 1968: 147, 1994: 111). For Artaud, the form of time collapses upon him as a shock, but which at the same time opens a condition of impossibility (of being induced) - to offer him the energetic purchase of an impower. For the Garg{oy}le project, this energetic purchase works transversally via a series of critical shifts, culminating in a state of impossibility prior to take no.3; but then one that offers up the gargoyle as a character of negentropic exchange, through an untimely imaging of radical affection. For the other performance contexts that inform the project, a similar dynamic is at work in Tanizaki’s hollow-body, Hijikata’s dead-body, and Grotowski’s via negativa: drawing upon a reciprocal negentropy of self through the inducement of matter and physical action. For emotional expression, this is where the death instinct tends to collapse the relation - territorializing a more direct entropic boundary of personal identity; although nonetheless, one that is forever delimited by an impersonal death of endless becoming.

For the architectural context, the notion of negentropy has implications for further research; especially where Lynn’s ‘discontinuous involution’ between formal interiority and site context may be seen in the light of negentropic exchange. See also my later discussions of biomimesis. See also Atamer for the concept of ‘dissipative individuation’ (Atamer, 2011). For Architecture this may indicate a way of considering dissipative structures and open systems not only in formal or biomimetic terms, but also in a processual and discursive manner, where the reciprocal agency of architect / tools, may suggest new ontological shifts for situating the role of the user and the place of the body.

See also CHAIR 2, Section B where I discuss ‘The Open’ in terms of human-animal relations.
reciprocal edge condition of affecting and being affected, re-cognizing that a shift has occurred, and then resituating a more open relation. Except now, the character that appears through the gargoyle catches the shift before it finds expression, so that its actual appearance is drawn back and forth through ‘the skin’, allowing the character to transform by intensifying its emergence. The ‘radical affection’ that circulates through this membrane becomes a hollowing out of self through the gargoyle and the crew, drawing on a negentropic relation as a stimulus for movement; of give and take, and taking each other up.

It is not just the nori skin, but also where this affective surface is stretched across multiple sites of being in-tension, in both time (through the preparation), and space, from floor to ceiling (the prawn, the crew, my body). The gargoyle figure becomes like Cache’s ‘skin of the earth’ as a geographic condition of the absolute outside. The human animality of the gargoyle finds a further intersection with Cache here, in terms of the ‘genius loci’ or ‘spirit of the place’ as a transit of vectors underlying the formation of identities. In my AG3 essay I explored the historical role of the gargoyle as a figure sitting astride life and death, both protector and warning, call to sanctuary or harbinger of doom. But going still further back to its animist roots, the gargoyle was seen as an invocation of animal spirits used by the Catholic Church to appropriate pagan symbology (see Pesznecker, 2007).

In my own performance practice, the influence of animist practices has been felt in very different cultural contexts through several performance festivals in Malaysia and Indonesia, where I’ve observed indigenous shamanic performance practices, and participated in cross-cultural collaborations. The main insight I’ve drawn from these experiences relates to my earlier comments in CHAIR 1, about how the ‘genius loci’ (spirit of the place) is a matter of reading the vectorial space of
124 It's important to recognize the issue of cultural specificity and possible misappropriation or misinterpretation of animist practices. However to qualify my approach, my reading of this context is not as an anthropologist but as a performer, in terms of what I can give and take (or take up) through this affective exchange with audiences and collaborators. (This is not to avoid complicity, but perhaps to mobilize the problematic). This is a later development of the dance training with Tony Yap, especially through the benefit of his own research practice on shamanic mediumship. For Tony's work - I see the principles of intercession appearing when he talks about finding a sense of empathy by seeing himself from the perspective of the audience. This is not a form of narcissism, but quite the reverse - or inverse, where intersubjective forms of perception may be dislocated as a purely relational intensity of affecting and being affected. It is in some respects a pure quality related to the transitional states that occur in a more methodical way through the A-D focus exercise (see SPONGE 2).

My discussions with Tony around empathy between audience and performer, and seeing oneself in the eyes of the other, came during a collaboration with Agung Gunawan at the Jogya National Museum - transGROBAK - as part of a residency I received from the Australia Indonesia Institute in 2010. We were both reading about mirror neuron phenomena and 'radical empathy' - a notion found in several shamanic and healing modalities, as a quality of feeling and transforming the other person's pain through one's own (see Koss-Chioino and Hefner, 2006). Radical empathy informs my neologism of radical affection in the gargoyles - especially when feeling the eyes of the crew on my skin, and turning this back through an experiential 'membrane' recalls Tony's notion of seeing oneself through the eyes of the other. These relational dynamics of mutual constraint may be seen as qualities of negentropic exchange, in a similar manner to the way Grotowski talk about via negativa, and Tony of 'presence through absence' (see SPONGE 2).

124 There are several areas of further research to be explored here, and not just for cross-cultural performance. As I discuss / footnote later in the chapter, and again in the thesis Conclusion, shamanic mediumship within animist practices has several potential implications for architecture: mainly, in terms of how 'nature' is framed within biomimetic design, and to what extent 'animate form' engages with the collective domain. See also my discussion at the end of CHAIR 2 (Coda), about a cross-cultural collaboration with Indonesian shamans in Batu, Java; and the influence this had on the last work of the Chair series, prosthesis (2010).

Transistance as one of intercession.124 As I've said, the shamanic medium works as a go-between, always at the level of transverse relations, through the absolute outside. This sits within a broad vitalist principle in which all things in life are always only transitory forms within a continuous process of becoming. All material entities are seen to have a spirit or energetic existence, whether human, animal, or 'inanimate'.125 As I have come to understand, especially through conversation and in collaboration with Tony Yap and Indonesian dancer / choreographer Agung Gunawan, the role of the shaman in these animist practices is to move between worlds, to act as an intermediary or go-between, for both human and nonhuman entities. This includes even 'the dead', for they are felt to be alive within a collective realm of communal memory and as a trace of continuous existence in places and objects of significance. The presence of ancestors, ghosts and other species (animal and
botanical) are afforded a special place, whereby spirits are seen to take different forms through a constant state of transition.\textsuperscript{124}

To ‘translate’ this in theoretical terms is entirely problematic, but in some ways the consideration of cultural specificity comes to reflect (or inflect) the very nature of these phenomena. In a Cachean manner we might see a transduction or transiting of vectors occurring within shamanic mediumship, enacting a continuous co-existence of entities within an ecology. Here, the formation of identities is not pre-given but is always open to intercession, as a relational act of working on behalf of another; not just of another ‘person’, but where there is always \textit{an otherness to the relation}, of moving between ‘dimensions’ and sites of attention, of quite diverse orders. This otherness of the relation becomes a quality of trading one’s own entropy, where this is neither a maxima or a minima of preserving one’s identity within a milieu, nor a specificity that is pre-given (whether of site or culture), but that always turns on the singularity of affective shifts within an event.\textsuperscript{125} For the gargoyle, these broader contexts, whether architectural or cross-cultural, draw us towards the same conclusion. The collective nature of affective states works at a level of pre-expressive singularities, giving us an entry point into

\textsuperscript{124} As discussed in CHAIR 1, the dead body in butoh may be seen to invoke a realm of becoming at the limit of self and matter, and where ‘death’ also opens to a more collective mode of subjectivity. Hijikata was especially concerned with the body in lineage: ‘the self was a graveyard of accumulation of dead bodies’ (Ichikawa Miyabi, in Waguri and Kohzensha, 1988); and of death as a collective ‘continuity of being’ (Hijikata, 2000: 45). He also says:

“I would like to make the dead gestures inside my body die one more time and make the dead themselves dead again. I would like to have a person who has already died die over and over inside my body. I may not know death, but it knows me” (Hijikata, 2000: 77).

“We shake hands with the dead, who send us encouragement from beyond our body; this is the unlimited power of BUTO” (Hijikata, cited in Fraleigh, 2006: 50).

See also Hornblow (2006: 35) for a further discussion on death and the dead body in Hijikata’s butoh. For a discussion of butoh in relation to shamanism see Fraleigh (2010).

\textsuperscript{125} The emergence of these ‘other dimensions’ may perhaps be seen more tangibly as an abstract space of transistance or singularity. Its ‘otherness’ is that of an absolute outside passing between multiple relations of diverse orders, through the singular importance of the collective domain (as both social field and collection of things). In the next section of this chapter, I consider how the transiting of singularities within and across such ‘dimensions’ may be approached through Arakawa and Gins’ notion of ‘dimensionalizing landing sites’, where situating the collective domain may be seen as a matter of ‘cleaving’ habitual perceptions.

Cultural specificity might then be approached in a similar way to my discussion of site-specificity in SPONGE 1 and 2: as a situating of focal transitions within and across frames of reference: cultural, political, personal / impersonal. As I’ve discovered in my own practice, issues of cultural difference are always problematic, and can only be negotiated through collaboration, via a kind of negentropic principle in which we are forever confronted by our own otherness. This is not to subvert cultural specificity or individual accountability, for each has a particular frame, but to open their problematic relations to the outside, through the inherent otherness of the relation.
understanding their specificities, but stopping short of reducing them to pre-given identities: ‘Nature’, ‘Culture’, ‘Architecture’, and so on.

Musculature:
The collective aspect of the dead-body appears more explicitly as a reference to butoh in the action of ascending, when I am perched on top of the prawn. As Hijikata says, “Butoh is a corpse standing straight up in a desperate bid for life” (Hijikata, 1993: 58). The body is taken to a physical limit, an edge condition which then impinges upon the perception of self in relation to the collective, opening a sense of continuous existence that is not a definitive domain of the subject but an indefinite relation with others. For the gargoyle, the effects of the skin are further complicated by the method of sensory-motor disjunction developed in Chaise traceur, where the chair is used to generate indirect movement through incipient action towards a state of affective dilation. In the Garg(oy)le project this method becomes one of taking myself to a limit of duress by moving very slowly through the ascent, so that my leg muscles approach their capacity to lift the weight of my body. As the muscles begin to quiver, a reciprocal threshold opens, a sponging - between the downward tendency to muscle failure and the upwards motor intention to ascend. But rather than mitigate these effects by easing off, the aim is to intensify their limits (fatigue and ascent) so they are forced to situate and coordinate themselves more broadly.126

Muscle fatigue is often felt as a lack of control that gives cues for optimizing motor capacity. But fatigue may acquire its own locus of agency here, because of its tangible feedback. When the direct intentional movement of the ascent is delayed, and the multiplication of effects is constrained, indirect and involuntary movements start to work transversally as a way of easing the pressure. The quivering musculature indicates a state of imminent collapse, but it is also at this critical threshold where spasms start to display signs of self-organisation, forming rhythmic waves that tend to amplify as they

126 At the very start of Chaise traceur, before the staircase descent, there is a slow rising up on the upturned chair, close to how the action works in Garg(oy)le. This action was further developed in tablet (2009), a 50-minute multimedia solo performance where the gargoyle first appeared as a figure. tablet was an important development for the Chair Series, but it became more a sequencing of previous actions and projects ‘stitched together’ (see preview: DVD). Ambitious, but under-resourced in terms of development time and funding, it suffered the problem of becoming more like a series of theatrical vignettes without proper attention being paid to transitions as states of transformation. For these reasons I don’t discuss the project in this thesis. The main value of this work was the collaboration process, especially where members of the same crew also worked on the Garg(oy)le project, in which their participation became pivotal for the dilation of affect.
oscillate between motor capacity and collapse. (The oscillation becomes a locus of indeterminacy between the over-coding of the motor intention to ascend and the over-determination of autonomic responses taken to their limit of capacity). This locus of indeterminacy is another example of the negentropic dynamics characterizing the dead-body, not just as an internal relation of motoricity and fatigue within the musculature at the level of proprioception, but also where it becomes necessary to situate the action kinesiologically across wider sites of attention within the room. As I rise up, the amplifying instability I feel within my body can only be held in place by having a sense of being grounded through the prawn at the same time - feeling the floor somewhere down there, and the proximity of the ceiling above me. The spasm effect is quite subtle in the gargoyle figure, because the danger of the action requires a degree of restraint - becoming absorbed within a wider balancing act, and with the crew as another kind of social ‘support’ in the way we occupy the room together as a coordinated spatial field.

This also opens to, and is opened by the negentropic affects operating at the level of skin and character. For the dilation of affect the quivering serves to both simulate and stimulate a fight-flight response, as if I am being affected by an emotionally charged situation. In the preparation this was certainly true, in terms of my interpersonal relations with the crew, and so this then became affective ‘material’ to work with through the ascent.

**Ceiling:**

The ascent is precarious but on approaching the ceiling there is a new sense of proximity to some other concrete thing. And yet despite this new stability there is also the momentum of converging forces, distributed sites of attention and accumulating shifts in transparency, drawing up through the ascent towards its apex in the gargle. In this final stage, a couple of very short shifts occur, each with their own reciprocal relations that serve to bring everything towards a common limit.

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127 In another work, *you tube my pink batts* (2008, see DVD), this method provokes muscle spasm more clearly, where the musculature is taken to a level of endurance beyond that of other works in the series. As I discuss in my paper for SEAM:

“I approach a fluorescent light covered in fiberglass wool insulation while walking very slowly on tiptoes, sustaining the position into a low crouch, through to picking up the light, lifting it up and rising from the crouch back to standing. With this slow continuous movement, always on tiptoes, the musculature went into a contracted automatism, quivering at the limit point of control. The brain-body interval went through a series of thresholds: of physical exhaustion, muscle failure, pain and the anxiety of sustaining continuous movement beyond the normal functioning of the organism. At each point the physical exertion was constrained to produce an excess of affect, while the emotions that emerged in response to the muscular automatism were also folded back into affect in order to preserve the potential of the continuous deformation. In a sense it was an exploration of a living rigor mortis, a vague rigor of the dead-body taken to the limit of extensity” (Hornblow, 2009).

128 To recall the small physical actions of Grotowski (see SPONGE 2), the ‘simulation’ of material signs is not necessarily ‘inauthentic’, for it may still produce affective dilation at the neurophysiological level of interpersonal stimulus and response (especially in terms of mirror-neuron phenomena).
On the ascent my perception of balance as a feedback loop between body and chairs starts to lose clarity through muscle fatigue, and then a loss of proximity to the prawn as I reach full height. This introduces an entropic element unraveling upwards. What I feared sitting in preparation for take no.3, now comes to pass - the material signs of bodily effects become vague and obscure, only partially recognized without a clear point of reference except in their inexorable acceleration towards catastrophe. But there is also a new state of cohesion, for at the same time this unraveling works across many sites of attention and shifts in transparency. It is this very tentativeness that holds me in place, a dynamic loci of agency that is only ‘stable’ (or metastable) through this unraveling.

There is a negentropic quality in the sense that this ever shifting place is one of ‘holding open’ a continual exchange of entropic relations within and between myself, the crew, and the prawn. It isn’t simply a matter of reducing loss of energy or muscle fatigue, because this intention might serve to shut down the exchange (an intention that also becomes part of a relational system). It’s not a matter of reducing these effects but of transducing them in order to induce a sense of ‘being moved’ by what is ‘outside’. Offsetting the perception of our ‘limits’ in a broader and more generative way allows the exchange to find its own emergent transformations.  

As I try to allow the muscle fatigue its fullest depth, the trajectory of the ascent is marked by involuntary muscle contractions - like tiny ‘spikes’ in a catastrophe curve as I approach the ceiling. The breath is compressed to a shallow rhythm - already constrained by the effort to retain water in my mouth for the gargle (and further limited by the fact that the my lips are glued back making water retention difficult). As I approach standing upright the tension eases off in my legs, but at the same time the constriction of the skin intensifies at the limit of its stretch, introducing a new uncertainty, and a final limit of sorts. I’m also shifting curvature (from forward crouch to backward arch), and visual plane (from floor to ceiling), while at full height and far from the ground. I can feel the stability of a vertical ‘through-line’ as I arch back, even though it is now tenuously ‘narrow’ compared to the bend of the crouch. I briefly lose a wider orientation to floor and ceiling as my head goes back - a very tight curve the precise speed and trajectory of which takes all my focus. But then the fluorescent light appears reassuringly close, and as I sink into the arch in redoubled curvature with the prawn I find the stability to focus on the delicacy of the gargle.

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129 We might think of negentropy here as the threshold of an absolute outside haunting every relation, which when taken to its generative limit finds a pure reciprocity of affecting and being affected. In this sense an ‘open system’ is like Massumi’s double openness, of being open as differentiated forms to one another, and also of belonging together within an ecology of relations.
4.3: The Crest: gargle, gag, and gasp

3. CREST

*Catastrophe:*

All these sites and shifts and the trajectories that shape them come to a critical point of focus when the gargle drops me into the subtlest of surfaces at the back of the gullet. A gargle is a delicate thing - its extensive in the way it pushes water up and out, but it is only really effective when the limit point at the back of the throat maintains a receptive softness. When the gargoyle gargles, the overstrained curve of the body’s backwards arch restricts this capacity for softness, resulting in a gag reflex. This sudden contraction draws all the thresholds of the system to a common limit, resulting in an explosive expression of emotion. The tipping point comes with a shortness of breath, arriving ‘too soon’ and too shallow so that everything else suddenly rises up from the depths to the surface of expression, each shift returning as an echo or a trace to aggregate at a sudden bifurcation of the whole system.

It wasn’t my intention to get emotional. Having learnt my lesson from *Chaise traceur*, and the principles of affective transmission in Grotowski, I wasn’t anticipating an emotional expression, and if it came I was aware of the dangers of letting affect ‘escape’. But the physicality of the gag and gasp had its own unexpected ‘authenticity’ and this intuitively adhered with all the more affective and emotional tonalities that had been building up under the surface - the tension with the crew, the exhaustion, a sense of constriction or contraction across so many unbearable forces.

4. DESCENT

The emotional expression at the crest is where affect takes form and where the flow is momentarily arrested, resulting in a break in transparency. The emotion takes hold of me, filling the frame of my whole being with the totality of a lived present. In the brief aftermath that follows (about 3 seconds or so), I am at a complete loss of what to do next (a collapse in protention), or even having a clear sense of what just happened (retention). As I regain composure I feel an immediate tendency to become self-conscious, affectation filling the void after the loss of extended focus. Emotion is where things get up
close and personal, so my first clear thought was one of reflection - did I reveal too much, become too raw? I can feel the eyes of crew and camera upon me, the ‘fringe horizon’ on my skin no longer circulating through the membrane. But the physiological effects are still coursing through me, and so as I slowly ‘get it together’ through the descent I follow their readiness for movement, reopening a pathway to transparency with the gesture of eating my rice brain.

4.4: The Descent: autopoietic cannibalism

The same method for generating affect in the ascent through attention to physical actions, may now be seen to work in reverse, delimiting the excess of emotion at the Crest as I work my way down through the descent. From disjunction to reconnection, attending to small actions allows a new circularity to emerge, and a new relation to the collective field. The descent goes through several further minor shifts as I draw ‘the eyes’ back into a more intimate space, feeling them now more like specters accompanying me very closely (as much as spectators or the subjects of my wrath). Like the specters in the warehouse, they are also my own reactions unraveling and hovering about me - as the physiological impulses abate and reflective consciousness returns. ‘Characters’ appear here and there, helping me to reabsorb the feelings that arise back into affect - a character of trauma, of fixation, of embarrassment, of amusement, and finally neutrality. Alongside the gestures that carry them these characters serve as objective relations for reorienting my thought (recalling Gallagher’s comments about a sense of self as agency - ipseity - being given by sensory-motor actions). They are like states of reflection, or in fact more like masks for deflecting my own tendency to become self-conscious. Not the clear and distinct characters of fictional identities, but more like a fluctuation or oscillation of virtual figures, ‘characters’ as pure traits or traces of psychophysical impulses, carried back and forth from the brink of reflective consciousness. Although now we have a redoubled fluctuation of these ‘characters’, where the gargoyle action of eating it’s brain also operates as a

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130 These characters are perhaps similar to the way Deleuze talks about the face in close-up as an opaque surface upon which affect is inscribed (see Deleuze, 1989). They turn on a mask-like opacity that calls upon the viewer to take up their own transparent relation towards it, whereby the meaning of the face remains in suspension, in excess of any fixed interpretation or reference to the identity of the performer.
133 From the nori skin to the rice brain, the negentropic principle becomes at once absurd and disturbing. Its as if I’m in a state of reflection on what had just happened, but where this state of reflecting on my thought is carried by the image of feeding on this thought. It is an image of an absurd negentropic circuit, a feeding that is also starving that which constitutes the very capacity to think (my brain). In an Artaudian sense it is a ‘shock to thought’, a shocking image for the viewer perhaps, but also a somatic and conceptual image that ‘feeds’ on this very reference. Artaud comments that the moving image ‘stands in for his thought’ to which Deleuze credits him with finding an inherent impossibility within the very fabric of thought (see Deleuze, 1989); or as he says an ‘unthought in thought’ (in the manner of Foucault: ibid).

As noted in SPONGE 1, a sense of agency or ipseity is given by the intention and delivery of a gesture, to which emotional aberrations and mental illness such as schizophrenia produce a collapse in protention (see Gallagher, 2005). I see this as akin to Artaud’s ‘shock to thought’; and especially where he affirms his own sense of agency at the very limit of demanding that we all ‘die alive’ (see Artaud; in Hornblow, 2006). It is then another example of a dead body relation - where its two aspects - death of self and material becoming - get turned ‘inside out’ (in a sense recalling the way Artaud talks about the body-without-organs). The brain as primary organ of thought becomes a circuit breaker, where an interval between action and reaction jumps more tentatively across perception, affection and ‘conception’. A negentropic relation as ‘autopoeitic cannibalism’ of thought, the apperception of absorbing an idea takes the gargoyle into sponging a very broad body of knowledge.

A further reference would be butoh, in terms of Hijikata’s dead body (as discussed previously). Curiously however, both the nori skin and the rice brain were not intended as tongue-in-cheek references to butoh’s Japanese origin (this might be insensitive in its cultural specificity). These material choices came about purely from logistical constraints, collaboration and audience perception, almost like a wider ‘autopoeitic process’ for the series, taking on a life of its own. (In the case of the nori, this was chosen by the Costume Designer, Romanie Harper, during tablet because my first idea to use rice paper lacked adhesion to the skin. For the brain, the rice came back again in Gargoyle, but only through conversation with friends in the tablet audience, who assumed it was rice when it was in fact cauliflower).

This is perhaps a good example of an inflective practice rather than a reflective one (as discussed in my Conclusion), where recursive modes of theory and practice, and the inversion of typologies that characterize the series, become tightly woven as conceptual layers within the work. (Indeed, to the point of ‘ontological collapse’ in its sheer absurdity - inflecting the collapse of protention which the gesture is seeking to re-situate after the shock of emotional expression).

134 I expand on these architectural implications later in the chapter, then further in CHAIR 2 Section B, and in my Conclusion.

somewhat ‘deformed’ conceptual figure. A bit like ‘biting the hand that feeds’, the gargoyle is seen to be literally ‘savoring’ this state of reflection, as if ‘eating the brain that is fed by itself’.133

What I have called the ‘autopoeitic cannibalism’ of the gargoyle (Hornblow, 2010), is not just an action of ‘getting it together’ after the shock of the gag and gasp. It is another kind of biomimicry (tongue-in-cheek or ‘mind-in-mouth’). Firstly, as an echo of the gargle itself, in its recursive oscillation; and as an ironic or absurdist nod to the folding forms or ‘discontinuous involution’ of architectural envelopes - where internal composition is deformed as a pliant relation to external site context (Lynn, 1993). Or how these become permeable membranes activated through climatic responses, such as light and shadow, natural airflow, ventilation, an openness to the outside.134

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For the gargoyle, eating my rice brain becomes a bizarre involution, the transient membrane of a feedback response circuit, turning around the situated cognition of the collective field. The method of attending to small actions and gestures, as a way of maintaining openness, turns both inwards and outwards through a psycho/physical circuit. The brain becomes the very object of my personal self which I ‘reflect’ upon, drawing it through a recursive circulation of affecting and being affected. So then conceptually, the notion of negentropic exchange reaches another generative limit that is both a shocking image and a ‘shock to thought’, like a grotesque loop inducing some delirious reverie at the very limit of our capacity to think - to think the outside of thought. But its not just my own limits, nor is it simply ‘grotesque’ as an image. It is a collective limit threshold between crew and performer.

The action flickers tentatively between strange object relations and abstract signs, never quite matching up but going round and round; between the familiarity of eating, and the horror of one’s own cannibalism becoming food for thought, hollowing out my own death as a way of staying alive, staying present. The gargoyle is like the grotesquely open body of Mikhail Bakhtin - a figure of disruptive biological and social exchange, turning upon a rupture and renewal of the social domain. The gargoyle as gargling and gobbling grotesque is precisely this simultaneity Bakhtin finds in the satirical celebration of primary needs through the cycle of life and death; both “swallowing the world and being swallowed by the world” (Bakhtin, 1984: 317).

The descent passes through a series of shifts in focal perception, taking me inside through contractions of being affected and back out again through the transformation of characters, then in again, and so on. The overall movement becomes more internal as I settle back into a crouch. But then in the final moments of the descent there is the process of coming out of the performance, a slow liminal passage back to the everyday as if coming out of a trance. Finally returning to the social field of my relation with the crew, I shift back into director-mode, and with the barely audible word - “Cut” - find the trace of rice on my lips. In this final moment of quietude and transition there is a quality of openness that has a certain honesty about it, as if caught unawares between the two worlds of performance and production.

131 Bakhtin sees the grotesque body in folk traditions of the carnivalesque and the grotesque, as a comic affirmation of primary corporeal needs - eating, drinking, defecating, urinating, sex. He saw these expressions as having the potential to renew the social domain from the bottom up. The grotesque body celebrates the cycle of life with the kind of ambivalence my gargoyle expresses in its ‘radical affection’: where birth and renewal are linked to death and decay, positive and negative turning upon a negentropic relation. Bakhtin grotesque body seems most apt for the fact that the architectural gargoyle is also defined as a ‘grotesque’, specifically in cases when it lacks a water spout. The gargoyle fits the profile of Bakhtin’s grotesque body, when it does in fact spew water - a primary expression that is emotive as much as functional in architectural terms: conveying water away from the walls to avoid eroding the mortar between the stone blocks. In its animist roots as a ‘spirit of the place’ we find still other grotesque bodies of a carnivalesque nature. In its hybrid human-animal fusion, it is a figure of ambivalent metamorphosis between good and evil, culture and nature, people and institutional power (none of these pairings necessarily isomorphic with each other).
5. ASSEMBLAGE

Before moving into the next Section on Arakawa and Gins I want to account for how the installation played a key role in the work, and how this draws many of the plastic elements and pre-expressive methods from earlier works in the series into a compressed assemblage and more succinct action, through the gargoyle as a conceptual figure. Different elements start to work as an open system of objects and artifacts, in the way they are reorganised throughout the series. For the Garg(o)yle project this becomes more explicitly a matter of construction, in building the prawn, but also where the performance event becomes more ‘constructed’ or strategic as a method for generating affective openness.

4.5: The Prawn - tensegrity engineering, 5 chair stack

*Tensegrity:*

The opening of affect that develops through the four stages of the process (preparation, ascent, crest, descent) is particular to the construction of the prawn and its effect on the action. Firstly, the tier of 5 chairs is laced together using a *tensegrity engineering* configuration - with an absence of rigid structure supporting the separation of each chair, to give the impression that each one floats on top of the other. A continuous zig-zag of rope threads through the structure to offset the loading. The downward compression force activated by the combined weight of chairs and body brings the rope into tension, with a reciprocal expansion force supporting the weight of each unit. So now the prawn performs its own sponging dynamics in co-extension with those going on in the body itself. This flows on from my apprehension sitting prior to take no.3 - for it is exactly the tentative nature of the construction that compounds the vague and obscure sense I find within the musculature through the ascent (between fatigue and motility). Every infinitesimal movement of ascension needs to reference the ground on which it may rise up from; but my perch is a shaky one, a deferred ground plane that extends down through the tensegrity structure to the floor, and back again.
An increasingly vague signal-response circuit sends long lines and receives a feedback latency period that has cumulative effects on each consecutive movement. At the same time however, the weight of my body gives the prawn metastability through compression force, holding itself together while holding me up with the sponginess of reciprocal expansion. At the macro level, the overall curvature of the 5-chair stack gives it a dynamic structural coherence, along broader lines of concave compression and convex expansion.

Drawing on Cache, the installation assumes the shape of a waveform, enacting a shift in curvature – where the concavity of the prawn allows me to find a convex counter-tension in the backward arch of the gargle. The prawn and I mutually affect and are affected by one another, in concert with the crew, and through which my ascent becomes like the reading of an ‘abstract line’, always flickering with virtual traces, condensing and multiplying, coming together and falling apart. The deferred ground plane of the topmost chair acts like a hinge, or point of inflection, between two co-extensive trajectories, towards floor and ceiling and the crew in the room, to the fullest extent of the surround. Within this larger waveform all the force dynamics of the small actions ‘overflow’ one another across diverse scales and modes - gravitational vectors and abstract signifiers - all held in tension as a holding open to tentativeness.

*Where the Surround becomes an overflow of affect...*

_Surround: Origin late Middle English (in the sense [overflow]): from Old French souronder; from late Latin superundare, from super - ‘over’ + undare ‘to flow’ (from unda ‘a wave’)_

I’ve come to think of this ‘overflow’ as a different way of seeing how I relate to what ‘surrounds’ me, where the inside is co-extensive with the outside, just as this is also a temporal co-extension beyond the bounds of the specious present. As I’ve discussed, affect is a realm where spatial membranes are transient at best (in terms of extended cognition and readiness response), passing also across several ‘intensive timeframes’ running in parallel through the specious present (apperception and protention / retention). Now in the very intensive action of the gargoyle, there is an equally untimely and topological quality to this overflowing. The ‘gradient threshold’ of this waveform is one where the specificity of site not only ‘stands in’ as a collective locus between bodies and selves, but now becomes more deeply infused with them to the point of becoming indiscernible. A multiplicity of forces come together to produce cumulative shifts, the waveform generating waves of affect to culminate in the recursive overflow of the gargle itself.\(^{132}\)

\(^{132}\) This recalls once again Cache’s comment that points of singularity are in fact a series of transformations distributed along a curve (see CHAIR 1).
How this overflow finds in-fluence through the Chair series

For the chair series as sponge body (body of work), the prawn also emerges from a process of ‘self organization’ (albeit within the limits of my own intervention), where I have recombined plastic, multisensory and tactical elements on the basis of accidents, surprises and shifts occurring through previous works, in response to the expressive materiality and/or conceptual capacity of the objects themselves. In other words, the series starts to take on a life of its own, where material constraints and stochastic events not only open my body to other bodies, sites and selves, but where this collective field is always / already a collection of traces carried though a body of work. The work of this body is to hold open the tentative limits of how ‘a body’ is defined, already many bodies at once, seeking a broader capacity. This self organization at the level of the Chair Series works at a longer timeframe but in an very intensive manner, for it in-fluences all the shifts that occur through the preparation and within the action itself.

There are several ways in which the assemblage furthers the development of the series. The prawn gives a more compressed form for generating the untimely shifts and dilations that had appeared in Chaise traceur - counterpoints of ‘too soon’ and ‘too late’ now unfolding through a single action, each opening one to the next. There is a dynamic overflow not just across scales of action but also parallel and recursive timeframes, speeds and slowness. There is an untimely quality to the continuous series of overflowing transformations that is essentially topological - in the sense that we find singular moments that operate as thresholds within which a multiplicity of forces come together to produce accumulative shifts, new realizations and changes in trajectory. The plasticity of the assemblage recalls how the earlier chair actions emerged as a response to plastiques, the explicit engagement with the built environment now more infused as a process of construction. The image of ‘The River’ that we find in Grotowski’s plastiques as a figure of dilation, now becomes an overflow of crisscrossing forces and rippling amplifications, generating waves of affect and culminating in the recursive oscillation of the gargle itself. In Chaise traceur, the gargle at the sink emerged as a key element, and now becomes pivotal for the appearance of the gargoyle as both character and architectural figure. The fluorescent light in the ceiling also returns as an aid to attaining dilation, from the structural transition it provided in Chaise traceur, to a vertical limit that draws everything up towards a state of transistance.

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133 This is a further development for the Chair series, in a similar manner to the way the fluorescent light in You tube my pink batts served as a hefty weight for generating affect. In both instances I reinterpret Tony Yap’s notion of a ‘human filament’ (Yap, dance workshops, 2009): of the body becoming ‘luminous’ when psychophysical energy passes through a state of resistance (towards transistance). This is also found in a different way in Chaise traceur when the lights flicker on at the bottom of the stairs, to punctuate the first major point of dilation.
As a more abstract compression the tiered structure of the prawn references the chair descent down the stairs. Just as the stairs became a ‘gradient threshold’ for generating affectivity in *Chaise traceur*, this is now more actively embodied in the prawn through its tensegrity configuration and overall curvature. There was also a sense of animation in the stairs, with the successive slam down each step giving the site itself a spongy quality. Now this is expressed more explicitly again in the multiplied sweep of the 5 chairs, and their precarious sponginess as a tentative becoming of body and prawn.134

The upturned chairs take up the final position of the single chair from *Chaise traceur*, when it was left propped against the wall to form an oblique angle between seat and backrest. But now this function of the wall is transposed to the floor, where the prawn rises up from an oblique footing: seat and backrest turned face down, legs shooting off on an angle. With the other dynamic of the stairs transposed as its gradient threshold, there is a contraction of two key site elements from *Chaise traceur*: stairs and wall. The earlier orthogonal orientation of the upturned chair - on the landing against the wall, then across two steps of the staircase - now passes through a further transformation: from the rectilinear, through

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134 The transposition of traits from the stairs/chair in *Chaise traceur* to the prawn in *Garg(oy)le* conjures up a further influence that had been lurking in the first work, and now comes more to the fore. The chair descent in *Chaise traceur* always reminded me of Marcel Duchamp, both for his Cubist treatment of live motion study in *Nude Descending a Staircase*, No.2 (1912), and in the way the chair may be seen as a ‘readymade’ that questions the ontological status of the manufactured object-artifact. However, it wasn’t until I participated in a performance research intensive with butoh dancer, Ko Murobushi at CAVE/NYBK in New York (June 2008), before this potential opened up a set of implications for *Garg(oy)le*. Murobushi explored a number of concepts drawn from Deleuze - ‘delirium’ and ‘critical/clinical’ - alongside inframince (or infrathin) from Duchamp. Further research is required to unpack all these terms and their commingling. However in brief, I see firstly how Murobushi’s approach clarified for me the reciprocal relationship between movement and stillness - where continuity and discontinuous breaks work across one another in a similar way to my earlier discussion of direct external kinesis and indirect internal variation.

For Murobushi, there is an infrathin interval between one movement and another, which becomes quite abstract across continuous/discontinuous modes - or what he described as a “zero-zero” - a limit point between movement and stillness. This may be posited as a kind of delirium that approaches a critical limit where the affective nature of action, perception and sensation, are particularly ‘hallucinatory’ in their singular flickering across intensive timeframes. For *Chaise traceur*, this inframince may be found in the inflections that occur through the two major points of dilation. It is also where the chair as readymade attains a delirium of its own, where its tentative status as artifact-object is unfolded through other psychophysical intervals specific to the holding open of bodies, objects, sites and selves. For *Garg(oy)le*, the echo of the chair descending the staircase resounds through the infrathin compression and expansion of the prawn’s tensegrity structure, with its effects on the gargoyle unfolding again through the collective field. The animate/animist quality of the gargoyle, via the animated inframince of the 5-chair stack, enfolds the Cubist motion study of Duchamp in a different way.
the oblique, to the curvilinear waveform of the prawn.  

At a conceptual level, the assemblage overflows again for the gargoyle as an architectural figure. With the internal wall transposed to the floor, the historical gargoyle also abandons the external facade to take up a new ‘parapet’ on top of the prawn. Here, I was thinking about a contemporary response to the gargoyle as ‘grotesque’: no longer functional in terms of taking water away from eroding the mortar between stone blocks, nor symbolic as a moral delineation of good and evil underwritten by the State or Church. The contemporary gargoyle still spews water but it is gargling at a domestic scale, just as the new parapet of the prawn brings in the outside through the intimate relations of body and furniture. The symbolic order no longer calls upon some terrifying unbearable Outside to which the gargoyle is both warning and protection. A sense of the unbearable now becomes a contemporary condition of endless striving and exhaustion, and of a capacity for good and evil that is neither absolute nor pre-given, but a potential in every self that is always situated and specific to the collective.

This integrates the three parts to my critique of authenticity in the SPONGE Chapters: as semi-autonomous relations at the psychophysical level of the body; as specificity of situatedness in the built environment where the site ‘stands in’ between bodies and selves; and as emotional expression emerging from an affective substrate via small actions and abstract signifiers, working transversally within a collective field of action.

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135 This series of transformations may be seen to draw further relevance with architectural diagramming, in the way the diagram operates as a transposition of traits; or where Eisenman talks about the trace as a sign of absence within the presence of form. This series of transformations - rectilinear, oblique, curvilinear - becomes a further transposition from Chaise traceur, in the way the chair moved through several ‘lines of orientation’ (see CHAIR 1).

As I note later in the chapter, and in my Conclusion, there are a number of critical questions that emerge through these transverse reflections / inflections. For example, it calls for a closer examination of Greg Lynn’s ‘animate architecture’. As Michael Speaks suggests, Lynn’s notion of animation seems at times too reliant on inferring actual kinetic movement without taking into account its own fixity as a limit condition (or force of the outside) within a broader movement at the urban scale. Or as Pia Ednie-Brown indicates with reference to Deleuze and Francis Bacon, this animate form isn’t ground up fine enough at the textural scale to give it affective potential. I would suggest that these two scales are inextricably linked.

The ‘stopping problem’ that results from inferred kinetic movement has been posited as the point at which a fluid design process becomes fixed in a built form. However, the question remains to what extent this movement was ever transverse in the first place, as a collective becoming across a collection of many things. From a Cachean perspective this stopping is not a single point, but a series of singular points along a line of transformations (an abstract line that is in itself transversally distributed). For Murobushi, this stopping would perhaps be not a problem of finitude, but a problematic within which we are forever starting over (or as Cache says, where zero and infinity renew one another). For Hijikata, this point would perhaps be where this movement becomes vivid only when its form disappears into potential. For Lynn, the question may become, how is the invention of a people - beyond and before the stopping point - already invoked or induced throughout the design process?
For myself, the pressure of the preparation and the rigor of the action itself was certainly one of striving and exhaustion, like some kind of negentropic loop in perpetual rotation. On a personal level this had emerged over a long period, through the pressures of my practice-based research - too many projects, conferences, festivals, too much travel - and the impact this was having on me personally, and on those around me. Life felt like an inexorable unraveling via so many relentless ascensions towards some hoped-for position of metastability. What sustained me in taking on Garg(oy)le became the close links established with my collaborators over the course of several projects, an experience of shared constraints towards a common aim. It was also an intuitive sense that there was something there in the gargoyle, an emerging figure that required expression in order to resolve the folding of theory and practice. What appeared was precisely this folding through the collective: bodies, sites and selves, human and non-human.

The gargoyle is never one but many. As hybrid chimera it is a fusion, grafting or mutation of different organisms within itself. As built prosthesis, it is already embedded up to its armpits in architecture, and then multiplied along the parapet as a pack. As historical figure, it sits astride the threshold of life and death, good and evil, nature and culture. Its emergent and mutable character isn’t one of dualities, but mutual constraints of energetic exchange. For me, its embedded multiplicity passes from the facade to the closed room. The figure actualizes a character when striving and exhaustion lose their polar oppositions, where in the turning point prior to take no.3 these dynamics find a deeper dilation that marks a change in the collective field. So then my ‘cruelty’ towards the crew is more a sign of ‘good / evil’ / ‘life / death’, one turned through myself as much as it is through them, turning on the mutual constraint of a negentropic limit. The gargoyle is already full of so many bodies, always hollowing itself out with a plethora of mutations; multiple bodies, sites and selves erupting within and across works in the series. This reading of the gargoyle suggests a return to its animist roots, beyond its architectural appropriation along the facade. Here it is not simply a matter of ‘animal spirits’, but a process of animate morphosis we find embodied in shamanic mediumship, where a state of trance becomes a liminal intercession across a collective field. The genius loci or ‘spirit of the place’ is an animate ecology of relations, including human, animal, and inanimate entities, where the forms of things are provisional and emergent, constantly shifting and transforming.

136 Drawing on Leibnitz, in The Fold (1993), Deleuze posits the implication of body and soul via a Baroque sensibility, as the relationship between the facade and the closed room, and/or of the relationship between two adjacent floors. For my contemporary gargoyle, the facade is enfolded through the room, in the sense that the dead body of exteriority is contracted internally as psychophysical tendencies. This dynamic is actualised for the series where the movement of the chair finally smashing against the wall in Chaise traceur then abandons the wall in Garg(oy)le to find its own gradient threshold in the curvature of the prawn. This may also be seen via the preparation, in the abandonment of the shopfront window, with all the affective tendencies this induced at take no.3. The limit between ‘two floors’ then becomes a transverse intensity drawn between floor and ceiling - just as the space between two floors is always already a reciprocal edge condition of floor and ceiling above and below; but now where this reciprocity plunges instead through the room interior in the form of the prawn.
As I go on to discuss in my Conclusion, an ‘animist’ critique of architecture might be one that picks up on the biopolitical dimensions of the diagram via a Deleuzian reading of Foucault. For architectural formalism this becomes a critical question as to what extent the user is already predetermined as a biopolitical entity; as the regulation of a population, or its pre-given potential in design terms. This is as much an issue for architectural formalism as it is for critical architecture. For the former, the question becomes to what extent biomimetic design and responsive environments may sometimes serve only to produce an immersive cinema of sensations without producing a critical dislocation of the subject which might generate a more tentative (deeper and broader) sense of agency. This is where the diagram as a field of forces requires an affective understanding of the change that occurs within power configurations, as a variable series of continuous and discontinuous transformations.

Despite much criticism on the disciplinary autonomy of Eisenman’s early approach to the diagram, I find his later shift towards affect as an important transition for diagrammatic practice. As he says of his later work, there is a shift from “the strategies of reading to the tactics of visceral experience...; the diagram seems to disappear from the built work...; to the possibility of reading affective relationships in the somatic experience itself” (Eisenman, 1999: 208-209). I have experienced this at a personal level through a visit to his Holocaust Memorial in Berlin - a design which is intentionally disorientating for the subject, producing an intensely affective experience, but at the same time dislocating any attempt at identification (see Eisenman, 2012). I’ve written a chapter on this experience - since abandoned for want of thesis scope, and hence doubly affecting.

For critical architecture, the affective force of the diagram underpins formalized configurations of power, but as such may both undermine or be appropriated by them. As Eyal Weizman shows in his analysis of the Israeli Defense Force, even the diagrammatic strategies of Deleuze and Guattari may be co-opted, where nonlinear and nonhierarchical methods of ‘swarming’ and ‘infestation’ may become tools of state power (see Weizman, 2007). The questions become: what kind of ‘people’ are invented, in whose name, and to what purpose? It is an ethical question, where the status of the collective is broadly systemic and may always be seen in the light of a negentropic principle, as a reciprocal dynamic of affecting and being affected. Even within the experimental ‘canon’ of contemporary architecture, the political ‘use’ of theory remains contentious; for example in the knowledge economy of the university vis-à-vis market forces - see Douglas Spencer’s critique of Zaero Polo’s essay, ‘The Politics of the Envelope’ (Spencer, 2011; Polo, 2008). See also Barber, with relation to Eisenman, where he identifies the ‘immanent critique’ of the Deleuzian diagram via Marx, Foucault, and Althusser; as a reciprocal dynamic of overcoding vis-à-vis overdetermination (Barber, 2005).

My contemporary gargoyle is then moving back as much as forward from the historical figure. This opens up further implications for thinking about the architectural context; suggesting perhaps that more emphasis be placed on physical and social bodies as collective agencies that are always and already ‘animate forms’ within a dynamic ecology of relations. I will return to this notion of an ‘architectural grotesque’ later through Arakawa and Gins. For now, I would like to suggest that the gargoyle action demonstrates how any design process should always be one of moving back and forth, as a matter of dislocating fixed identities and typologies, reopening and reanimating processual stages across scales of action. Whether at the level of nonlinear series and methods (preparation, performance, assemblage), or through the deframing of objects, artifacts, figures and archetypes - this opening is one of abstracting concrete relations across a collective field. This realm exists before, during, and after the design process; as Deleuze says of Foucault, the diagram or abstract machine is always ‘social before being technical’ (Deleuze, 1988: 39). The collective should never be an afterthought, for then we become merely the ‘users’ of constructed situations that do not affect us because their configurations of force are already pre-given.141
6. VIDEO INSTALLATION:

_Gargo(y)e ~ Parapet_

This experiential and processual account of the project would be incomplete without considering the post-production stage and compositional elements of the multi-screen video installation. At the time of writing, the exhibition stage is yet to take place, and so my discussion here is intended as an ongoing trajectory for research practice, based on iterations of the project up to this point.\(^{137}\) The issues of moving back and forth through the process and across scales of action now really come to the fore. How may the social space that occurred through the crew and assemblage be arranged in a way that may reopen and reanimate affectivity for an exhibition audience? How may this operate coherently for both the work and the series as a diagrammatic transposition of concrete and abstract elements? Most importantly, how may the gargoyle as an architectural figure of the grotesque support a formal logic or compositional strategy for achieving these aims?

4.6: The Parapet, 3-channel multiscreen video installation - Landscape, Portrait, Figure

*Proposed spatial configuration*

The video composition is designed as a multi-screen environment comprising three long ‘panels’, each one twice the length of a standard widescreen format (16:9 ratio, see 4.6; and screenshots overleaf). Each panel shows the same action using three different cameras, each at a different frame size: Landscape, Figure, and Portrait (wide-shot, mid-shot, close-up). The proposed spatial configuration of the panels is set out with the Portrait panel in the middle and the other two panels joined to either end at perpendicular angles. On a thematic or conceptual level, this arrangement becomes an open and inverted Parapet, like a broken architectural frieze turned inside out.\(^{138}\) Its openness allows the viewer to walk in from one end and become surrounded by the gargoyle on three sides, while its inversion mirrors or mimics the strategy of flipping things around a hinge dynamic or point of inflection. The passage of the gargoyle from the facade to the enclosed room now becomes the movement from a ‘convex’ (albeit rectilinear) exterior envelope, to its inverse ‘concave’ enclosure. In this way the viewer

\(^{137}\) This is an echo of the segue that occurred in writing my paper for AG3, which came between planning and production (Hornblow, 2010), now production and post-production.

\(^{138}\) I am considering a fourth panel: ‘Cosmos’ - but for now it is just three.
performs the shift from the facade to the room, the point of entry invoking the gargoyle’s abandonment of the facade, as both an historical inversion of the archetypal figure, and the processual necessity we found in turning the room around. These sorts of inversions are found throughout the work - in sound and image, time and space, installation and assemblage, concept and process. The absent side through which the viewer enters also evokes the shopfront video location - as if passing from the World of the street through a kind of transparent window into a more internal ‘hallucinatory’ realm.

On entering the Parapet, the viewer may be drawn into a circulation of affective relationships within and between the three panels. On a theoretical level, I see the panels operating at different ‘scales of action’ in the way I’ve described the distributed nature of affectivity. The Landscape panel shows the relationship between body and prawn - in the mode of extended cognition, in terms of object relations and cultural artifacts (at the longer ‘intensive timeframe’ of apperception). The Figure panel zooms in further, to show the effects on the body more clearly, where the method of effectively ‘jamming’ motor intention and fatigue may be seen as a transverse movement of readiness response across the autonomic systems (musculature, breath, nervous system). The Portrait panel zooms in even further, to show more clearly how this affects me at the level of thought - as shifts in affective tonality, in terms of protention / retention (‘getting it together’ through the descent, the transformations of character and self etc). It is the viewers’ perception that may then perform the overflow of these co-functioning relations, premised on the trans-local basis of affect; generating (I hope) an experience of immersive dislocation.

By standing in the middle of the space the viewer performs the ‘ground plane’ of the social field within the overall surround, for which the three panels express a kind of psychophysical circuit or experiential overflow. The centrality of the Portrait panel may be seen to ‘stand in’ for the other two (and vice-versa) in the way it reflects or inflects the three intensive timeframes. That is, the intimate scale of my person is where affective tonality feels the contraction of extended cognition at the level of the built surround (as shown in the Landscape panel), via the readiness response of the autonomic systems (as in the Figure panel). The gargoyle in both the Figure and Landscape panels multiplies in a way that moves directionally into the Portrait panel, for which the Portrait turns in upon itself - its two faces contracting into the image of a dribble in the middle.

139 For the sound design, my collaborator Jeffrey Hannam has reinterpreted a diagrammatic sense of the gargoyle through the granular texture of the gargle, using pitch parameters and time variation as a way of extracting ‘multiple voices’ from the source audio. These are often dislocated from their video reference, to open space for morphing multiple figures in relation to the imagery. This becomes a grotesque quality of choral density in the Portrait panel, a more rarefied atmosphere in the Landscape panel, and a variation of these two in the Figure panel.

140 The distributed nature of experience is perhaps inherently ‘hallucinatory’. See also Massumi on the subject of hallucination (Massumi, 2002: 155).

141 The Landscape panel on the left performs a tracking movement into the Portrait (even as this also gives the appearance that the gargoyle figures are coming out of the latter); while the two figures in the Figure panel on the right face towards the Portrait.
Digital compositing

The contour of the body that we sought in turning the room around (as a contrast against the background), now becomes a kind of edge condition between the three panels. The notion of the gargoyle as a multiplicity - never one but many, an otherness of selves - is given firstly by the spatial arrangement of panels, where the figure comprises different modes of attention. Secondly, it is the reanimation of the video through the digital compositing of multiple layers within each panel, that gives this contour a dynamic edging of untimely relations across scales of action.

Each panel uses a strategy of looping the video image through imperceptible shifts in time remapping: in the crouch at the end of the descent time reverses so the gargoyle moves back through the descent to the gargle; and then at a point just past the gag and gasp, time switches again to flow forwards once more (and so on). This looping strategy is essential so the video installation can maintain a sense of continuous duration as a pictorial tableau. It also works conceptually. Firstly, in the sense that the gargoyle is affected non-linearly across scales of action. Secondly, where this is always a recursive referral to states of affective contraction and incipient action, drawing back into potential, or into states of reflection and self-consciousness. Thirdly, in the way elements of the project cross-reference one another, and in relation to the Chair Series as a whole. Fourthly, how the gargoyle appears as a figure of multiplicity, inversion, and recursion, through the loopings of muscle fatigue / motor intention, the gargle, and the autopoeitic cannibalism of eating its brain.

Landscape:
For the Landscape panel there is already the animated multiplication of the chair within the prawn, a new parapet as some semblance of the gargoyle's proliferation across the facade. But now it also appears as a duplicate series of figures like a rolling frieze animation of never-ending gargles. This produces another waveform through shifts in camera angle - a horizontal wave falling into depth and coming forward again, as a redoubled transposition of the vertical wave that passes up through the body and the prawn. The Landscape panel casts a long wave falling both into depth and out of frame, to suggest an absolute duration of mnemonic apperceptions extending beyond the here and now.

142 The sense of a motion-study animation returns here, as discussed earlier in the becoming of stairs and wall from Chaise traceur. There is also an implicit shift between vertical and horizontal in the transformation from rectilinear to curvilinear through the oblique plane, where the first upturned chair rests on the floor (as an abandonment of the wall from Chaise traceur).
4.7: The Landscape Panel

Figure:
By contrast, the Figure panel multiplies the figure more closely upon itself, as a fragmentation of the same image into a dense sequence of image overlays. Starting with two figures at different stages of the action, one figure splays out as a waveform across the panel to connect with the other as a live-action motion-study. The wave disappears into the second figure as it goes into the gargle, and then later multiplies again as a condensed ‘meatball’ effect. The series then loops as a succession of waveforms and meatballs between the two figures at either end of the panel. Again, as Waguri says: “A lump of flesh in a container, pulled out and back in, the body undergoes multiplication and condensation” (Waguri and Khozensha, 1988).

4.8: The Figure Panel

The Figure panel operates primarily at the level of the organism. The waveform opens like a cross-section, as if revealing a multiplicity of internal entities - semi-autonomous bodies within bodies passing across the autonomic systems. And then the meatball compression implies the affective contraction of psychophysical tendencies, suggesting the grotesque emergence of monstrous gargoyle becomings. Variable multiplications and condensations indicate how different force relations affect one another, the two dynamics conjuring a sense of how readiness response pulls us out and back in, as a kind of intensive extrusion. The splaying and blobbing of the gargoyle maps out an abstract flesh terrain - indicating where points of dilation may occur; the ‘affective contour’ of the body now registered as a painterly overlay of multiple edge conditions. From the ‘discontinuous involutions’
of a meatball biomass, to its rippling outwards over time, the Figure panel both implies and further implicates the waves of affect which overflow the gargoyle.

4.9: The Portrait Panel

Portrait:
The Portrait panel depicts the multiplicity of the gargoyle quite simply as a doubling, with two close-ups facing one another, and a very slim slither of a third image at the border where they meet. The two gargoyles left and right are from the same image but again from different stages of the action, moving back and forth as ascent and descent, switching places as they pass one another. As I have said, the Portrait panel operates at the level of the personal self, where shifts in affective tonality may be seen more clearly in close-up. Those states of reflection that we saw appearing as a tendency towards self-consciousness, but were then abstracted through character, are now given their own double or mirror. The gargoyle as an otherness of selves, finds itself as an/other. Critical fluctuations in retention and protention - ‘what just happened?’ or ‘what happens now?’ - get caught up in an endless loop. Through reversal in time direction each gargoyle is already both before and after the other, forever chasing its tail. Haunted by the in-between, this fluctuation is reduced to a slow endless dribble through the sliver of a third image in the middle. The gargoyle seems to be without stable identity, like the pure chimera of a reflective state in critical oscillation, moving through a recursive fringe horizon populated with various masks and characters.

Live interactivity for the proposed Parapet:
For the future development of the project, we aim to develop a capacity for layers of sound and image to become semi-autonomous interactive entities triggered by the movement, proximity and number of people in the exhibition space. Then a sense of untimely multiplicities may come full circle - affecting the viewer(s) in ways where the work could really take on a life of its own, where gestural elements on both sides of the image generate collective behaviors through live recombination.

The form and format this might take is for now entirely speculative. However, it's worth considering briefly how this interactive environment might operate as a space of transistance; between the spatial configuration of the panels, the image compositing within and across them, and the live triggering that occurs through audience participation.
Or perhaps as a field of ‘translocation’ - in the way that Anna Munster cites William James in her
discussion of distributed networks: “the process of continual change through which things come to
habitually coincide with one another”? (James, in Munster, forthcoming 2013: 43). What she
describes here as a ‘looping topology’ between map and territory - an ‘event of relationality’ - offers
another way of differentiating diagram and affect. As discussed in SPONGE 1, the diagram comprises
a configuration of forces and its inherent potential, for which affect describes the change or untimely
transformations that occur within it. For the gargoyle Parapet, its mapping would comprise the different
modes - spatial configuration, compositied scales of action, interactive interface - within which the
diagram operates as an intensive field.

The ‘territory’ in this case is perhaps not so much the actual premises of the space, for this becomes
totally hallucinatory. Rather, it is the ‘territory’ of the self - as a situated cognition of dislocation,
translocation and transistance - simultaneously constructed and deterritorialised through this mapping
and diagramming: transverse loops within loops caught up in a vast sponging of affect. With reference
to Bateson, Munster clarifies that what gets onto the map (from the territory) are differences -
suggesting that the two are drawn through a kind of ‘force field’ (the diagram): “The point of overlay
between map and territory, then, is a fuzzy set of resonating, subtractive, differentiating resemblance
relations...” (ibid: 43.) of looping overlays with one another (ibid). The affective dimension is perhaps
the changing nature of this looping overlay, its dilation across smaller and larger circuits, where
differences are registered along its ‘edges’.  

In summary, all three panels employ principles of inversion and recursion, multiplicity and singularity,
developing those in the performance but now in ways specific to the image. There is a consistent
redoubling or mirroring of modes that works hand in hand: temporal mirroring back and forth through
time reversal; spatial mirroring through the doubling, flipping, faceting and/or overlay of images across

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143 Munster also talks about William James’ notion of a ‘mosaic’; of pure experience which “concentrates upon
the relations that allow thought to conjunctively expand” (Munster, ibid: 54). This expansion ‘grows by its
edges’ in the manner by which events operate through transitions. This recalls my earlier discussion of ‘edging
into existence’ with Massumi. For Tony Yap, it is the finding of an ‘edge point’ where transitions are states of
transformation as much as sequential interstices.

In her discussion of Natalie Bookchin’s video installation Mass Ornament (2009), Munster describes how
multiple images work as a mosaic, where gestures and movements ‘infect’ their neighbours (ibid: 58). The
repetition creates a sense of automaticity, like in a factory: “...how people lose their individuality in service to
this abstraction” (Bookchin, in Munster, ibid: 56). As Munster suggests with reference to another of Bookchin’s
video works, Laid Off (2009), this kind of constraint upon the self operates nonetheless as a ‘collective
multiplicity’ (ibid: 61). For the gargoyle, the loss of individuality occurs at a negentropic edge within and across
pre-expressive and social domains. (In this manner, see also my discussion of the animist context through the last
work of the Chair series, prosthesis: Coda and Conclusion). For the proposed Parapet, the challenge will be to
see how an ‘infection of gestures’ may occur in a way that induces the viewer, to gather them up in a vast
gargling - a becoming gargoyle.
each tableau; and then the proposed spatial arrangement of panels and interactive responses, in relation to one another and the audience. The panels are both differentiated externally as a spatial configuration, and internally through an aesthetic strategy of fragmentation and repetition - the two dynamics overflowing one another in the sense of ‘belonging together’ (double openness). This overflow within and between the panels constitutes yet another kind of sponging, a process of absorption and density through principles of inversion and recursion. The proposed Parapet is an attempt to generate the ‘diagram’ of an open system, operating across multiple modes and scales of action - a diverse collection of elements that endlessly reworks a collective opening into and beyond itself.

To conclude this account of the Garg(oy)le project, a number of key insights present themselves. Firstly, there is a consistent ‘method’ of abstraction that has emerged; or rather, a set of dynamic principles and procedures that have developed over the course of the research, particularly through the Chair Series. These have involved the dislocation of boundary conditions, signs and functions, beginning in Chaise traceur with the inversion / recursion of object relations and cultural artifacts through the chair. These principles have been used to unhang habitual forms of identity, body and site, in order to find the singular points, untimely shifts or dilations, that pass inexplicably across multiple scales of action and modes of attention. This relationship between multiplicity and singularity is one of opening or unhang the given form, to find an inherent multiplicity within that is already bound up with its surroundings. Here we may locate singular transformations circulating as intensive features within a collective field, opening us to a deeper affective stratum that is always at play within the formation of identities.

Now in the Garg(oy)le project these principles are intensified and complicated still further, taking the series to a new state of potential. Firstly, there is a critical shift from simply object relations, cultural artifacts and abstract signifiers (as in the chair), to where dislocations occur more broadly at the level of historical figures, archetypes or typologies. Procedures involving inversion and recursion work not only at the level of body and site but now also in the recombination of material, spatial, and temporal elements within the work, its preparation, and across the entire series. For the concrete elements, we now have a shift from the dislocation of forms as sites of multiplicity, to their actual recombination as multiples: in the seriality of the prawn construction, and then in video post-production with the spatial configuration and fragmented repetition of the figure. This generates an even more intensive capacity for singular transformations to arise from the unhang of multiplicities, where the series becomes animate as much as animated, functioning as a dynamic open system of concrete abstractions, taking on a life of its own.
For the gargoyle, this shift occurred firstly with the appearance of a character, emerging as a singular transformation: of difficulties in the preparation through the prawn construction and constriction of the skin; my own personal history and interpersonal dynamics with the crew; the pre-expressive methods developed through the chair series (and so on). All these multiplicities singularized around a sense of the gargoyle as a figure of negentropic exchange within a collective field. And then even further, in the descent when the character served to reabsorb the appearance of my own self-consciousness, it became a way of abstracting the formation of identity, by singularizing the particularities of small actions and gestures along a continuum. Negentropy becomes an organizing principle for all the others (dislocation, inversion, recursion), which may be seen to circulate through the Parapet in different ways: the gargoyle exchanging energy with itself (Portrait), within itself (Figure), and across itself (Landscape). The Parapet aims to singularize everything that has come before it at a larger scale and in a more integrated manner. And this is where the gargoyle as a character may also engage with and be informed by broader contexts (animism, architecture). Not just as an historical archetype (or contemporary antitype), but where the gargoyle as an architectural figure of the grotesque has something to say about (or gargle) - what might be at stake for resituating the role of the body within the built environment - just as much as the role of the built environment is important for situating the body in performance.

To help me in locating the contribution of this figure, I will turn now to the world of Arakawa and Gins.
A summary of findings through Arakawa and Gins

Arakawa and Gins are important for the thesis as a whole, in their emphasis on the tactically constructed and situated nature of embodied experience, specifically as an engagement with the ‘architectural surround’ (as they call it). Informed by their own artistic practices in painting and poetry, Arakawa and Gins place the human body square and centre when they call for a procedural architecture that doesn’t just house and shelter the body, but furthers the capacity to sustain life and facilitates the invention of new modes of existence. They reject the habitual acceptance of sedentary habitat based on the view that, if our sense of embodied self is already co-defined by the way it is situated in the environment, then the limits of our surroundings must impinge on the limits of ourselves. By reconfiguring ‘architectural surrounds’ more tactically we may supercede ourselves in unforeseen ways, in terms of our place within a wider communal environment.

Arakawa and Gins’ own diagrammatic approach to situated attention assists me in focusing my ideas around how a site may ‘stand in’ and ‘hold open’ affective relations at a collective level. This allows me to consider three things in terms of what this research contributes. My initial aim is to explore how Arakawa and Gins contribute to understanding the Gargoyle project, within the context of the Chair Series. Further, they offer a pragmatic system of terms and concepts which help me to clarify how site relations may be specified within a particular method of psychophysical performance, one that has emerged through this research by practice and which may be used for understanding and/or developing other projects of this nature. As a secondary aim attending the first, I contribute to the concepts of Arakawa and Gins from the perspective of psychophysical performance practice, where a close attention to the body indicates the importance of collective affectivity in their aim to produce an ‘open system’. Another aspect to this contribution is in drawing out parallels between Arakawa and Gins and other writers discussed in previous chapters, as ways of understanding affective diagramming from different perspectives.

Most importantly, this engagement with Arakawa and Gins (and others) allows me to consider not only the importance of site for performance, but also what might be at stake for resituating the place of the body, as an affective loci for collective agency, within an expanded field of transdisciplinary practice. Their call for an ‘Architectural Body’ involves a circulation of situated attention across scales of action: organism, person, and built surround (Arakawa and Gins, 2002); altogether a wider notion of ‘the body’ incorporating transverse dynamics that are inherently communal in constitution and potential. Drawing on the aims and concepts of Arakawa and Gins for transforming habitual ways of living, the gargoyle - as sponge body - may be seen to operate as a particular kind of Architectural Body.
The gargoyle offers a conceptual figure for enacting the collective construction of the body as an inherently ‘grotesque’ entity, where it might even begin to ‘stand in’ for some kind of ‘architectural animism’ of the grotesque; that is, one that is ‘open’ in ways that are not part of familiar social interaction. Finally, this allows me to reconsider the value of diagramming as a practice, which now becomes a question of how a system of relations or set of forces may be held open as a collective field, to be taken up again and again in new and transformative ways. Not just by others but where our bodies and selves are always already ‘many’, perched on a tentative edge of dilation and dislocation - like a multiplicity of gargoyle becomings, taking on a life of their own.

How bio-topological diagramming may comprise a set of principles and procedures

Defining ‘a method’ sounds dangerously prescriptive - it would be better perhaps to describe it as an open set of principles and procedures that have emerged and continue to evolve alongside one another in response to the situation at hand. I’d like to emphasize the diagrammatic nature of this open set and the way it operates in a topological manner, through states of transformation and singularity. For their part, Arakawa and Gins approach the diagram, or what they call ‘biotopological diagramming’, as a way of tracking the autopoietic interconnectedness between human organism and personal self, and how these domains are also co-extensive with their surroundings:

“These multidimensional interactive diagrams do not stand apart from what they are meant in reduced form to portray. They track what goes on as an organism that persons, not only extending out from and surrounding this their target object, but also passing through it. Layers and layerings from near and far that both eventuate and function as an organism that persons get diagrammed in plain air.”

Arakawa and Gins, 2006: 56

Arakawa and Gins’ ‘organism-that-persons’ is a concept that does not take the body as a given - as a mass bound by the epidermal layer of the skin, nor of the self as an innate subject formed prior to its experience or separate to what it experiences. The organism-that-persons is a reciprocal mode of operation that, ‘…portrays persons as being intermittent and transitory outcomes of coordinated forming” (Arakawa and Gins, 2002: 2); while at the same time the body is seen as “…a complex organism that is always in the process of reading surroundings, [and therefore] needs to be defined together with that within which it moves.” (ibid: xx) They distinguish biotopology from ‘regular topology’ in the sense that topology looks at similarities between boundary conditions, while ‘biotopology does away with the discrete object, and thus with boundary conditions altogether’ (Arakawa and Gins, 2006: 59-60). They recognize that there are crossover zones but in principle they ‘refuse to accept the traditional view that the epidermis constitutes a boundary with the world’ (ibid: 60).
How an organism-that-persons intersects with the world, communal and constructed, may then become another way of considering how psychophysical relations are bound up with a site. For the gargoyle this is where ‘the skin’ comes to act as a boundary condition which abstracts the limits of body / self / world, as a topological condition of mutual constraint through the crew and the prawn. In a similar way to ‘the skin of the earth’ that we found in Cache with Chaise traceur, the gargoyle traces a broader biotopological epidermis, one that becomes an ‘actual skin’ even as it is stretched across much wider singularities: through the process of preparation, intersubjective and object relations, but now also into cultural artifacts and ‘claddings’ informed by animist antitypes and architectural contexts.

**How a set of organising principles may be established**

“Biotopologists want to gain a new and different type of access to organizing principles that sculpt abilities into place. So as to be able to gain familiarity in wholly other and untried ways with organizing principles... biotopologists need to keep groups of scales of action in appropriate relation to one another.”

Arakawa and Gins, 2006: 63

A key feature of biotopology is the identification of key ‘organizing principles’, in order to keep scales of action ‘suitably apart’ from each other, so that an organism that persons may ‘open up an encompassing volume’ for itself (ibid: 64). Sponging, dislocation, dilation, and negentropy may be seen to be the four key organizing principles by which the gargoyle opens itself up as an architectural body. Sponging conveys a quality of receptivity and incipience both internally and externally, as a process of absorption and density in which everything may be seen to ‘lead to and from myself’ as a co-extension of bodies, sites and selves. But just as this moves through and across multiple scales and speeds, it also dislocates the way that scales of action are habitually tethered together, kept separate in order to find a more open state of self-organization. An autopoietic quality - a life of its own that is neither owned nor limited to a single form of life - emerges when these two principles turn upon a third, opening to and being opened by a sense of dilation. This opening turns upon a singularity of presence, marked by absence in the gaps or fold within and between frames of reference. Finally, these qualities of sponging, dislocation and dilation find singularity in a negentropic principle of give and take and being taken up, of transducing and inducing affectivity. Alongside this organizing principle of disjunctive sponging, several other related terms came up along the way, as the limits of this procedure (and consecutive ones) required ongoing development. For plastiques, this basic principle became aimed more clearly around a process of dilation, where the act of walking through a building was no longer sufficient alone as a virtuosic movement in performance terms. And then for the

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144 “In someone’s taking of herself to be an architectural body, at many different speeds of action at once, all and anything that holds sway in her vicinity, at many different speeds of action at once, leads to and from and counts as her” (Arakawa and Gins, 2006: 60).
Chair Series these procedures still remained insufficient because the processual constraints of these exercises stopped short of engaging with the built surround.145

How organizing principles are implemented through architectural procedures of inversion and recursion; how architectural procedures may be named; and how insufficiencies in process become generative elements...

Together these principles generate an untimely overflow across diverse speeds and scales. But they can only emerge and develop through concrete procedures, within which the plastic elements are arranged and sites of attention are distributed. Through the Chair Series these procedures have become increasingly architectural. For Arakawa and Gins, diagrammatic schemas are incorporated within what they call ‘architectural procedures’. As the term suggests, these are procedures that assist a person in constructing an architectural body. First of all, an architectural procedure should have a ‘stellar purpose’ in an area of emphasis that requires change, by assessing what goes on in an organism that persons and discerning what remains insufficient in terms of becoming ‘body-wide’. In the case of the gargoyle, its purpose is to produce a heightened state of affectivity that circulates through a collective biomass via couplings with installation elements in the surround. These procedures that have emerged are characterized by methods of spatial-structural inversion and temporal-processual recursion. We might then speak of a certain ‘dislocation-dilation inversion procedure’, or a ‘negentropic-sponging recursion procedure’, each opening of a particular nuance, involving operations that unhinge habitual relations or tendencies, taking a personing organism to a psychophysical limit.

This research-by-practice has seen a co-evolving set of procedures develop. New principles and procedures have appeared at different scales or modes, through which organizing principles have become more fine-tuned. This process has been based on a perception of what seems to be insufficient in attaining a body-wide dilation. True to the nature of recursive and/or inverse negentropic relations, this is also where insufficient actions in body-widening and/or deepening will often appear on-the-fly, at specific stages in the performance (in the guise of mistakes, chance encounters, and so on). These allow a certain capacity to be affected at the generative limit of a bifurcation in process. The performative work constitutes an aesthetic world unto itself, but in stumbling against elements of

145 We could attribute this variance in a similar way to how Arakawa and Gins posit a ‘terminological junction’, as the need for a twosome or a threesome in the scope of a given term. Further to the term ‘organising principle’ they follow with: “perhaps a bit more spatially or airily, by the term allowing tendency, and the referent that each of these two foregoing terms proffers stretches time spatially out as an axis of possibility” (2006: 65). In my case, the central organizing principle might be one of disjunctive sponging; the allowing tendency, negentropy; and the axis of possibility, dilation (although in a Deleuzian sense this is perhaps more a virtual process of actualization than a ‘possibility’ as such).
‘the World’ in which it is situated, it stumbles upon a continuing capacity to acquire a broader life - one of its own, that is neither owned nor given a single form of life.¹⁴⁶

A point of clarification: these are not ‘architectural procedures’ in quite the same way that Arakawa and Gins would define them.¹⁴⁷ In one sense my ‘procedures’ are identified here after the fact rather than beforehand as a way to proceed. Yet they have also drawn on specific methods and principles from previous works in the series, co-emerging through further shifts in the event with the aim of attaining dilation. Organising principles have been fine-tuned with each iteration, in the arrangement of particular techniques and modulated in response to site and event through a process of trial and error. A sense of procedural knowing has lurked at an intuitive level throughout the series, but only now may a process or method be identified. For Garg(oy)le, this is as follows:

a. The construction of the prawn, as abstract compression of stairs / chair / wall (and fluorescent light above it), from Chaise traceur.
b. The recursion of motor intention and fatigue as a break with direct movement towards transverse or cross-modal relations (developed throughout the Chair series).
c. Skin sensation as the inversion of ‘radical affection’ (turning out as animosity what is taken in as interpersonal apprehension, while turning this critical relation through myself as a collective desire to ascend).
d. The gargle as a physical pathway to emotional expression; bringing all the other procedures to a tentative limit while still maintaining the circulation of affect. And finally, in the wake of all this intensity, a disjunction or break in the tendency towards affectation, through the physical gesture of eating my rice-brain.¹⁴⁸
e. The video recomposition and proposed multiscreen environment as a further trajectory for the series.

¹⁴⁶ This stumbling against and stumbling upon is perhaps another way of thinking about the ‘stealing of steps’ from SPONGE 1, here in a broader processual register.

¹⁴⁷ The gargoyle sits somewhat tentatively between what Arakawa and Gins would call ‘architectural procedures’ (for designing) and ‘directions for use’ (for engaging). This is both the potential and problematic of the performance, to be both designer and user simultaneously. The architectural nature of its procedures is taken up through the evolution of the series, and by which singular features are extracted from site and event, to be ‘reconstructed’ within what might otherwise be a fairly pre-given experience of its ‘specificity’.

For an example of ‘directions for use’ see: "A Crisis Ethicist's Directions for Use (Or How to Be at Home in a Residence-Cum-Laboratory)”. Arakawa and Gins list 21 directions for experiencing their Bioscleave House, for example: “1. Play off of your tactically posed surround like crazy until you have constructed a precise tentativeness for yourself” (Arakawa and Gins, 2002: 97).

¹⁴⁸ This forms a tentative oscillation between my own personal organismic impulses and the use of characterization for maintaining affective circulation with the crew, plastic elements, and sites of attention - thereby constructing an architectural body.
In identifying a procedural knowing at work within these methods and their organising principles, there is the opportunity to consider how more explicit ‘architectural procedures’ might now be developed in the future. A formulation of ‘directions for use’ is somewhat outside the scope of this chapter, and more relevant to the next iteration. In brief, this may be where the live interactive mixology that is proposed for the 3 panel parapet is set up in such a way that the viewer(s) may follow certain directions, to generate particular gargoyle behaviours within and across semi-autonomous layers of sound and image. These directions should not be just a set of instructions separate to the experience, but responsive parameters built into the work, so that the bodies of viewer and gargoyle follow the tentative direction of a mutual becoming.

**How principles and procedures are characterized by ‘tentativeness’ and the way this may be constructed as a ‘holding in place’**

As I have argued throughout the thesis, openings to affectivity hinge upon a quality of tentativeness, where indeterminacy introduces a fluctuation in the way frames of reference are habitually configured, allowing singular transformations to occur collectively. Organizing principles and procedures share this tentative dynamic, especially where they have come to singularize as a particular negentropic relation through the gargoyle. For Arakawa and Gins, organisms that person and their architectural bodies remain by definition tentative and approximate. Of necessity, these involve processes requiring what they call ‘a tentative constructing towards a holding in place’. If cognition is tentatively situated across interlinked entities, then this figuring of ourselves may then allow these linkages to be constructed differently. For the gargoyle, each procedure comprises a series of precise bodily actions and an arrangement of architectural elements devised for attaining the hoped-for outcome - dilation. Where things get somewhat tentative is when some procedures are more or less defined, while others appear ‘on the fly’ in a more tactical manner. Especially when things that seemed defined are not quite

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149 For now I will call them simply ‘procedures’ - as methods guided by principles in a task-based manner, influenced by the emergence of a procedural knowing; which might then anticipate the positing of ‘architectural procedures’ more in the way that Arakawa and Gins define them.

150 I see a resonance here with Varela’s concept of ‘permanent coping that is fundamentally mediated by sensorimotor activities’ (see Varela, 2000: 271). See also Rosenberg where he posits the influence of Maturana and Varela on Arakawa and Gins, drawing a parallel between ‘a tentative constructing towards a holding in place’ (of the latter) with ‘structural coupling’ (of the former):

> “Structural Coupling: Occurs when autopoietic entities become linked together, as with a frog and a fly, or in a more collaborative model, a rhizome or an aggregating slime-mold” (Rosenberg, 2004: 166).
working, for which organizing principles return in new ways to act as prompts for procedural knowing.\footnote{151}

**How this tentativeness is both rigorous and approximate as a process of lived abstraction**

This tentative overflowing circulates within and across works in the series involves two aspects or levels of procedure - where an internal capacity for self-making (autopoiesis) may be taken up externally with other procedures. In many ways it is a matter of ‘setting appropriate levels of abstraction’ (Arakawa and Gins, 2002: 57), ones that are rigorous within a specific action or mode but also tentative and approximate enough to be taken up with others, so that together they may contribute towards the wider trajectory of affective dilation. For Arakawa and Gins, ‘approximative-rigorous abstractions’ are central to the diagrammatic method of biotopology:

> “An approximative-rigorous abstraction holds open and continually keeps posing the question of what is it that in its name has been and is still being abstracted. It is an abstraction that has a reference realm that stays loosely and widely defined even as it is presented in sharp focus.”

Arakawa and Gin, 2002: 57

\footnote{151 For example, the prawn was more or less defined in terms of its hope-for effects on the ascent of the body - as a reciprocal coupling of expansion and contraction forces within and between the tensegrity system and the motoricity / fatigue of the musculature. These procedures had already been defined through previous works in the series. But there was still the task of finding the right position for the prawn so that it might adequately ‘pose the question’ of disjunctive dilation to the body, and in order for that outcome to be properly coordinated within the video (as an issue of the contour between body and background). Turning the room around then produced a later realization of unforeseen tension while sitting in preparation for take 3. But then, this redoubled crisis generated a deeper autopoietic relation, where my muscular fatigue and the structural fatigue of the prawn entered into an uncanny coupling.

This level of abstraction then invited the sensation of eyes on my skin as the sudden appearance of a character to furnish these becomings with the essential performance focus I needed to draw them all into a maximum degree of tentative relation through the ascent. This deeper level of becoming-prawn and becoming-gargoyle was not pre-planned, but nevertheless could only appear on the basis of certain procedures (even though these remained necessarily tentative). And even though their appearance came as a surprise, in hindsight we can see that they also emerged from a deep procedural knowing drawn from the pre-expressive training. The organizing principles of dislocative sponging automatically acted as a prompt for guiding the radical affection of the skin, recalling that very first iteration of the sponge body in the abandoned warehouse.

And so too for the gargle, where I recover from the tipping point of the gag by using it as a physical expression as much as an emotional content, allowing all the tendencies of prior actions to pass through the gasp as an overflow of incipient action. And then through the descent where there is a feedback loop of physical impulses and emotional tonalities, drawn through characterization and gesture. All of these actions benefited from a procedural knowing in the pre-expressive training, and especially having learnt my lesson from the ‘escape of affect’ that happened in *Chaise traceur* (and subsequent analysis in terms of Grotowski’s small physical actions).
For instance, there is a level of abstraction that occurs within the musculature, where the oscillation between motor intention and fatigue develops to an extent where it needs to cross-reference the prawn (and further afield to floor and ceiling). This broader abstraction is loosely defined (between proprioception and kinesthetic awareness) but it serves to ‘hold open’ the internal oscillation (albeit tentatively), thereby allowing it to intensify. There are still further abstractions occurring transversally all at the same time - through the skin, the chairs, and the gargoyle figure itself, both at the level of object relations, cultural artifacts and archetypes. A more complex field of approximation holds a fresh capacity for me to focus the oscillation of the musculature very sharply and yet more tentatively than ever before. Most of all, this wider capacity is made possible because the gargoyle-becoming that has now appeared re-poses the question of attaining affective dilation as a collective activity.

It is a dense quality of ‘lived abstraction’ in a similar manner to William James’ ‘radical empiricism’ - one that is not just of purely material experience, although nonetheless intensely so, but where there are complex knots of lived relation, within and across sensation and signification, and where these become complicated in the psychophysical foldings of organism, person and surround. If Arakawa and Gins offer something particular here, it is perhaps in the relations of rigor and approximation, and how this allows organism and person to oscillate through tentativeness. For example, in the gargoyle there is meaning apparent, albeit implicit, but it is not the a priori knowledge of some idea, rather a very broad incipience that overflows the event with “the felt reality of relation” (Massumi, 2002: 16). The physical and conceptual rigor that goes into constructing the event is one that holds open a space of approximation and transistance. It is less a clear sense of meaning that appears, so much as a procedural knowing that resists belonging to anyone in particular - a productive resistance belonging to everyone in its particularities, emerging through continual abstraction and transforming of its own accord, singular to itself and the multiplicities it invokes.

*How a gargoyle biotopology comprises diagrammatic configurations, as sets of ‘landing sites’*

For all these organizing principles, procedures, and tentative abstractions, are we any clearer on how this gargoyle biotopology might be diagrammatically situated within a site, and how this may help to ‘hold in place’ a ‘holding open’ of affective relations? Arakawa and Gins are especially helpful where they provide a kind of diagrammatic infrastructure for situated attention through their notion of ‘landing

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152 Having posed the initial question (to the body), of how to attain a state of dilation, I reach a limitation because I have been so consumed in the physical process that I almost forget once again the collective dimension of affective openness (as if to repeat the lesson of Chaise traceur). In take no.3 the state of exhaustion prompts me to re-pose the question, to find a new level of abstraction (mutual fatigue) that exchanges this state (negentropy) with other human and non-human agents within the process. The constraint of the skin then introduces a new transverse level of abstraction that is simultaneously tactile, conceptual, and interpersonal.

153 See also Massumi’s understanding of radical empiricism in terms of concrete and virtual relations (Massumi, 2002).
sites’. These operate as ‘neural markers’ (Arakawa and Gins, 2002: 6), by which we land out attention and situate our selves within our surroundings, both near and far, foreground and background, from very large to very small scales of action. This happens via three modes of attention, by which we form a world, tracking and apportioning ways of thinking-feeling our way through it - perceptive, imaging and dimensionalizing landing sites.

Perceptual landing sites are direct prompts issuing from what is immediately in front of us. And yet they are often assigned quite ‘hazily and tentatively’, for they are always occurring in sets, just as there are already sites within sites passing into an imperceptible depth and width on the cusp of our attention. Their ‘singlings-out’ bring the world into existence, registering particular features through a process of repetition (ibid: 11). Imaging landing sites are where we ‘fill in the gaps’ ‘around perceptual landing sites, where a ‘looming non-focussed upon area’ may become generalized or approximated according to our prior knowledge of it (ibid: 12). Dimensionalizing landing sites then work within and between perceptual and imaging landing sites, positioning them in relation to one another.

For the thesis as a whole, I see several useful resonances here with the ideas of Cache, Massumi and Varela, which help to position the gargoyle in terms of how Arakawa and Gins may be used to ascertain what is at stake for this particular architectural body. Such parallels are tentative and I recognize there are poetic and/or theoretical specificities to each approach; but that notwithstanding these parallels may come to ‘stand in’ or ‘hold open’ a broader mapping, where the gargoyle may contribute further understanding to the conceptual and affective nuances within Arakawa and Gins’ open system. For the gargoyle, imaging landing sites are where direct perceptions become more broadly situated, mediated by my apperception of objects and artifacts; for instance, I know what the other side of a chair is without seeing it. They are not just ‘imagings’ of generalized object relations, but where my direct perception of things also open to abstract signifiers, when I situate my tentative ascent according to the incipient emergence of all that has come before - tension with the crew, a sense of exhaustion and the personal tendencies this invokes, and so on.

Imaging landing sites open to the prior knowledge of our apperceptions, but they are no less real than direct perceptions, because they have emerged from them through a process of repetition, just as these repetitions are enacted again as direct perceptions in the readiness responses of our autonomic tendencies, or how external cognition serves to fill in the gaps of our awareness. We may perhaps see the ‘singlings-out’ of perceptual landing sites in terms of nonlinear dynamic systems, or in the sense that Cache describes intrinsic and extrinsic singularities, where a process of situated ‘imaging’ may

154 My direct perception of the topmost chair is not just tentatively held in place as an imaging of its other side, but where this other side is serialized through the prawn, and beyond that in relation to a larger scale of imaging - between the floor and the deferred ground plane of my perch. This is further held in place by a vertical imaging of floor and ceiling, and a horizontal imaging of inside / outside at the surface of the skin.
I see a fruitful avenue for further research here, placing Arakawa and Gins landing site typology - perceptual, imaging, and dimensionalizing - alongside Cache’s vector, frame, inflection. Though not isomorphic or homologous (and their points of difference require further study), we may see how Arakawa and Gins’s approach to an open system bears the influence of nonlinear dynamical systems theory (as Rosenberg points out through the parallels he draws with Maturana and Varela). For a Cachean parallel, the nature of singularity he finds in inflection might be drawn alongside biotopology; in particular where dimensionalizing landing sites seem to perform an abstract hinging within and across imaging and perceptual landing sites. In previous drafts I developed several diagrams which propose specific correspondences between these two regimes. (Still further parallels might be drawn through the Deleuzian / Bergsonian image regimes, as in Deleuze’s cinephilosophy).

While these parallels are interesting, extricating useful differences easily becomes reductive and overly technical from a purely theoretical perspective. From a practice-based point of view it became more useful to see how the different regimes might inform different works in the series, each in their own way. For want of scope, a rigorous comparative analysis would require (for example) a more comprehensive Cachean understanding of the Gargoyles project. Only then would it be possible to draw out potential parallels between Cache and Arakawa and Gins - potentials that might only fully emerge through singular / transverse transformations over time, perhaps requiring another iteration in which these may be tested in a more procedural manner. (This might be another task for the proposed video installation environment).

I see a parallel here with William James and his notion of animate / inanimate things adding to the experience of the other, where landing upon a site is perhaps also a reciprocal relation of being landed upon, simultaneously affecting and being affected. I often find in the terminology of Arakawa and Gins a kind of Catch 22 here - a rigorous pragmatism which critically situates and relocates what is at stake; but sometimes at the risk of ‘extruding’ concepts in a way that tends to their external effects rather than an emergent affective potential. This comes across in the tonality of their writing, which sometimes feels self-indulgent or dismissive, until this too reaches a limit point in my own subject position towards it, when the sheer confrontation of its rhetorical density collapses me, seduces me again, becomes productive once more. It is nonetheless problematic - and partly for this reason my argument attempts to slant the emphasis towards a peopling as much as a personing (even if these are forever interlinked).

provide a broader ‘frame’ for the transittance of vectors and identities. For the gargoyle, the tracking of landing sites becomes not just a matter of landing my attention upon things, but also how singling out a clear perception reveals how things have always already landed upon me, from the inexplicable background of micro-perceptions. Singlings-out include not just those that appear but are always on the edge of other would-be landing sites and quasi-registerings (ibid: 11). Nor are they just landings ‘out there’ but also ones deep inside the body, or where the inside and the outside turn upon an absolute outside, being simultaneously in here and out there, as a power to affect and be affected. This is where dimensionalizing landing sites may be seen to work between imaging and perceptual landing sites in a particular manner.

"Attaching a grappling hook of a perceptual landing site to a vaguely sketched-in rope of an imaging landing site, a dimensionalizing landing site, in landing, hooks onto the environment to gain traction on it."

Arakawa and Gins, 2002: 8
This is precisely what happened in the hiatus just prior to take no.3 - the grappling hook became a whole flock of perceptual landing sites passing between my own exhaustion and the structural fatigue of the prawn. This dimensionalizing landing site tracked its relations way back along a sketched-in rope of numerous imaging landing sites, unfolding through all the difficulties of the process. New perceptual and landing sites were then gathered up - the skin as both material and intersubjective constraint - which then singularized as a new dimensionalizing landing site: the appearance of the gargoyle character itself. This dimensionalizing trajectory gave me the rope and hook with which to gain traction on the task at hand - how to find the impetus to climb the prawn once more, to finally become the gargoyle as an architectural body.

We may think about dimensionalizing landing sites here in three ways. Firstly, as a pure relational quality within a complex set of forces, where these forces also become a mixing of direct and indirect attentions, material particles and abstract signs. For the gargoyle, dimensionalizing landing sites operate in those gaps where operating principles are always at work on the tentative indeterminacy of the relation - through sponging, dislocation, inversion and recursion. Secondly, dimensionalizing landing sites serve to hold open this space of relation, so that a deeper processual knowing may emerge, in which direct perceptions and indirect imagings may singularize along a continuum of transformations. For the gargoyle, this is where the principle of dilation went through a shift in realization, when the means of attaining it became a very particular dynamic of negentropy - a singular relation of give and take and being taken up, transducing and inducing affectivity. Thirdly, sets of force relations and their singular transformations may be seen to take on a particular ‘shape’ here. For Arakawa and Gins, perceptual landing sites land narrowly and tightly upon things while imaging landing sites land more widely and diffusely in their abstract gap filling. For their part, dimensionalizing landing sites do both:

‘Dimensionalizing landing sites land simultaneously narrowly and tightly and widely and diffusely, combining the qualities of a perceptual landing site with those of an imaging one, coupling and coordinating direct responses with indirect ones, the formed with the formless.’

Arakawa and Gins, 2002: 8

This recalls my discussion in SPONGE 2 about the topological shape of holding open two limits, between zero and infinity. For the gargoyle, the ascent becomes a matter of coupling and coordination, held between an external limit of tentatively locating myself between floor and ceiling (both imaging their absent loci and dimensionalizing the relation), and an internal limit of muscle fatigue and motor intention (including direct perception, imaging their recursive waves over time, and dimensionalizing these relations; as well as those coupled with the prawn, floor and ceiling). The skin finds a further landing site configuration of ‘radical affection’ with the crew, which helps to maintain the
This recalls my earlier discussions about ‘authenticity’ via a critique of autonomy, such that automaticity is not just a direct relation of being overdetermined by an external form of power, but more an indirect one of being induced via an auto-affection that is always already co-extensive with the world. ‘Resistance’ may then perhaps becomes a matter of finding a space of transistance - producing an indeterminacy within automaticity that may be taken up through the collective field in a way that doesn’t display just another ‘form’ (of resistance).

A refrain here for my earlier footnotes referencing Wolfflin’s affective embodiment of the column; and the way I cross-referenced this to Eisenman - absence as sign of absence; and James - animate/inanimate adding to one another’s experience (see SPONGE 1). The prawn carries the trace or material sign of the stairs and the wall from the chair actions in Chaise traceur (their ‘lines of orientation’ finding a new abstract line on the curvature of the 5-chair stack); and the gargoyles’ abandonment of the historical facade / shopfront window. The prawn calls to mind Wolfflin’s column in the way its curvature resembles the form of a spine - one that both affects my body directly and indirectly, and is then also given a mirror image when I arch back at the crest. (This redoubling carried still further as a continuous wave along the ‘frieze’ of the Landscape panel, just as these ‘waves’ recur as effects on my organism and person). The ‘column’ as load-bearing structure or merely structural sign, finds a further parallel with my comments about offsetting ‘imaging load’, in the overflow of affect. In a Deleuzian sense, it is perhaps a matter of taking up the ‘unbearable’ as a modern condition (Deleuze, 1989); as with my contemporary gargoyle, an endless striving and state of exhaustion. For Artaud, this becomes the impower of the image as bearer of the unthought (the impossibility to think).

Perhaps then the figure of the column, in terms of what it might ‘bear’ or ‘carry’ as a metaphor takes us to the limit of architecture vis-à-vis ‘the body’. In its biomimetic ‘optimal forms’ does contemporary architecture still bear the trace of a ‘well-made man’ from Vitruvius? Or does it become instead the radical ‘self-making’ of autopoietic semi-autonomous membranes, in the manner of Artuad’s body-without-organs? This broader sense of the unbearable to which the column may be seen to bear a metaphor, would be one that always confronts its own outside. This needs to go further than the animate formalism of Lynn’s architectural body-without-organs; perhaps towards some biopolitical imagining of a ‘vertebral architecture’, delivering shocks to the nervous system in the way that Artaud dislodges the body as a skeleton nailed to the Cross (Artaud, 1994). Or a chair?

musculature as a configuration of ‘necessary cruelty’, which also finds a wider attention to floor and ceiling through the prawn and the fluorescent light in the ceiling. Above all then, it is the gargoyle as character-becoming that gives me a broader dimensionalizing landing site for shaping a trajectory (or abstract line) through all these force relations.

Arakawa and Gins talk about how landing site dispersal may be re-routed in order to surpass the inherent automaticity of an organism-person: “in terms of holding the world in a vise of landing sites that can be relaxed” (2002: 97). They also ask that tactically posed surrounds be devised to ‘lighten your imaging load’; that is, by reducing the number of imaging landing sites (and increasing perceptual landing sites) tentativeness may be augmented in terms of holding the world in place (ibid: 99). The gargoyles invents a very particular kind of landing site dispersal which inverts this dynamic, albeit towards a similar goal. Automaticity is not directly at issue, in fact this is the very means by which the gargoyle becomes tentatively implicated with other human and non-human entities.162 Nor is it simply a matter of reducing imaging landing sites and increasing perceptual ones, but of allowing them to multiply and overflow one another, drawing them through dimensionalizing ones to plunge them into negentropic relations with others.163
The main point of difference is where and how the emphasis is placed in terms of personal and collective domains. Perceptual landing sites are already a direct matter of opening to other differentiated forms, but for the gargoyle this becomes a situation of being simultaneously 'landed upon' (by the prawn, the skin, the crew) in a way that adds to its experience in a radically reciprocal manner. Imaging landing sites then become an opening to its own otherness as much as the other side of things, where the process returns to take on a life of its own through repetition. To recall Massumi's notion of double openness and Cache's vectorial repetition of vectors, we might think of landing sites here as areas where forms are differentiated in co-perception, find repetition through the imaging of apperception, to then acquire this collective life of 'belonging together' through their dimensionalizing relations.

The figure of the gargoyle, as a hybrid multiplicity, means that when my organism 'persons' more definitively in the form of emotional expression, this is already and can only have emerged through a broader 'peopling', one that abstracts the boundary condition between entities as a continuous sponging. An organism persons, a person peoples, a people organisms, and so on - all drawn through the 'environmental communal' (Arakawa and Gins, 2002: 47). So then in the descent, after the crest of the wave transforms this co-emergent overflow, and while the backwash threatens to shut down affective circulation, my person is abstracted again through character, allowing me to 'get it together' while holding this world of the gargoyle tentatively in place. The technique of small physical actions and gestures returns to a narrow focus on direct perceptual landing sites, while knowing that these sites are being taken up as an imaging of camera and crew on the other side. These two aspects are dimensionalized in the to-and-fro of various characters, of particular characteristics waxing and waning until I finally settle into the crouch at the end. Here the 'vise' of landing sites is relaxed at last as I come out of a trance. My imaging load doesn't 'lighten' so much as perhaps dilate subtly into a more even collective field, opening the 'light' of a liminal state that comes from having been so densely packed.

And I would include inanimate objects in this peopling, which is not to give them sentience (as we have seen in SPONGE 1), but in their abstract signs and object relations, as aids to apperception in which we already find ourselves, and which add to our experience just as we do to theirs, at the level of action and invested meaning or material memory.

Again, Tony's 'human-filament' may be seen here as a state or energetic resistance, where incipient action offers up an affective texture, a state of potential inflected by pastness. And yet now, the filament is tightly coiled through both human and non-human resistors, towards a space of transistance. To borrow from Madelaine Gins, it is a 'pause laden reluctance' for allowing:

"...other would-be nascent formations, surely as worthy of emerging as imaging landing sites as any now-or-once-selected massenergy cluster dubbed imaging landing site, entry into the world it (imaging along) constitutes along corporeally" (Gins and Arakawa, 2011: 15).
There is a kind of ‘affective ecology’ at work in the gargoyle, through these collective dynamics of differentiation, repetition, and relation, operating through various ‘collections’ of organizing principles, architectural procedures, and landing site configurations. We may now begin to see what is at stake for the gargoyle - as a matter of opening and maintaining this experiential ecology of life objects, in a way that supercedes our personing organism by repositioning it specifically in terms of the communal environment.

Cleaving and bioscleave

This collective domain brings us back to the construction of architectural bodies as an entity or loci of activities comprising an organism that persons and their co-extension within the architectural surround. Except now we have the central importance of the collective, broadly defined to include human and non-human agents. This domain is essential for any architectural body to be constituted within and comprised of its elements, just as any particular architectural body is only one specific trajectory within this larger field. Arakawa and Gins give this domain the term ‘bioscleave’, which they describe as the ‘atmospheric component’ of the architectural body. They distinguish it from ‘biosphere’, which they see as too pre-given because they want to account for how a person, by constructing an architectural body, may play an active role in changing what might be insufficient. Not just for sustaining life as it is, but for inventing new relations or forms of life, unearthing hidden potentials and superceding habitual patterns in the world. The crucial dynamic that activates this is ‘cleaving’ - which as its etymology indicates has a dual function of severing and forming a new adherence. Cleaving is inextricably linked to bioscleave, in the way it holds open the relative autonomy of any given entity, allowing it to find a semi-autonomous agency beyond its assigned value or set of habitual behaviors within the biosphere.

“… it is the task of those who would produce architectural procedures to augment the bioscleave, the insufficiently procedural bioscleave, and thereby recast it.”

Arakawa and Gins, 2003: 11

“Cleaving and bioscleave, the pair of approximative-rigorous abstractions that underlie all biotopological description, rigorously and approximately hold open places, respectively, for the firm attaching of one segment of massenergy to another along with the equally firm separating of such segments from each other and the biosphere in the dynamic throes of omnipresent cleaving.”

Arakawa and Gins, 2006: 58
For the gargoyle, the nature of cleaving and bioscleave lies at the very heart of its principles, procedures and configurations. The organizing principles of sponging and dislocation share a similar kind of operative abstraction - an absorption of the environment which simultaneously disjoins the way internal and external entities are normally coupled together, thereby recasting it as an affective ecology of reciprocal forces. In its procedures, the gargoyle begins with cleaving habitual relations: for ergonomic object and cultural artifact - the inversion and multiplication of the chair, the instability of the prawn; for the movement of the body in space - the oscillation of motor intention and fatigue; and even where the nature of affection turns on its opposite - animosity as radical affectation. These loci are held open by their own internal capacity for inversion, recursion, and negentropic oscillation, insofar as these openings both invite and are held open by each other. It is a tentative relation of having something to hold onto, while taking this tentative grasp to its limit, so that it may become an area for holding open a wider axis of possibility: affective dilation.

As far back as the warehouse experience, sponging never took the environment as pre-given (biosphere), but sought to generate a reciprocal dynamic of cleaving habitual relations so both body and building may become semi-autonomous entities, recasting a shared domain full of potential (bioscleave). For the psychophysical training, sponging became a quality of dilation - invoking a sense of opening and atmosphere that we find in bioscleave, and generated by very particular cleavings - of intention and attention, thinking and feeling, emotion and affect. Throughout the Chair Series, the task of recasting insufficient bioscleave (towards affective dilation) saw the fine-tuning of procedures through cleavings of dislocation, inversion and recursion. Sponging already had a sense of becoming environment, as an invertebrate skin of the world. Now, through the accumulation of principles and procedures, the reciprocal qualities of absorption and density turned upon themselves so tightly and widely that they finally singularized as a negentropic relation. An exchange occurs between organism and environment, where the very notion of loss that is so tentative to the self (entropy), becomes the energetic currency by which a person may give and take and be taken up within a collective field.

For the gargoyle, the skin performs the cleaving of a boundary condition, not simply one of inward containment and outward projection, nor only of recursive circulation between two segments of mass-energy (my body and the crew). Holding this open allows other cleavings to get caught up and drawn through it, so they may overflow one another. The gargoyle converts this tension, traced through the skin, into a negentropic power for drawing more deeply on its own exhaustion, and for cleaving the musculature by gaining further traction on the oscillation of motor intention and fatigue. At a longer circuit the gargoyle draws on accumulative shifts or cleavings in the process itself - turning the room around and sitting prior to take 3, drawing all through the skin. The skin is a cleft where cleavings cleave one another, attaching but also separating their segments of mass-energy. And in remaining separate, tentative and approximate, this overflow contributes to the augmentation of bioscleave, as an affective ecology.
This overflow finds a new adherence in the gargle, albeit one that comes together so catastrophically that it cleaves the entire movement with a momentary break in continuity. And so then in the descent that follows the effects of overflowing impulses need to be cleaved again and again at the level of small actions (gesture and character), in order to hold them open to affective circulation.

What we might describe as a feeling of *performance focus* and *presence* is perhaps close to this essential pair of abstractions in cleaving and bioscleave – where the sharp focus of cleaving contributes to a wider atmospheric presence we may call bioscleave.\(^{157}\) There are transverse configurations of perceptual and imaging sites throughout, but they only ‘stick together’ when they are cleaved of their subject / object relations and given a new adherence through a reciprocal dimensionalizing that runs through the whole system and maintains its openness. This involves constructing an architectural-body through specific procedures and particular configurations of organism-person-environment. Ones that invite an audience to enter an atmosphere of recasting bioscleave, in a way that allows them to experience their own architectural body.

\(^{157}\) We may be reminded here again, of Grotowski’s *via negativa* or Tony Yap’s ‘presence through absence’, in the sense that generating performance presence requires precise attention to small physical actions as a loci of agency, semi-autonomous with intention. Cleaving may then be seen as both present in the action of the gesture, but where the ‘presence’ it may generate is also inflected as a sign of absence. That is, by the background imaging load of personal and collective histories for which it bears or carries a broader bioscleave.
Coda

In which I summarize, and pose avenues of further research in terms of what the gargoyle may contribute...

To summarize the contribution of the gargoyle to an understanding of performance, through the aims and terminology of Arakawa and Gins, is twofold. There is firstly the process itself, as an open system of principles, procedures and configurations, for ongoing developments in other works or series - a kind ‘how to’ for this sort of project. For a project or series of projects that has multiple ‘agents’ and stages there are two things to keep in mind. Firstly, if we can talk about a ‘sponge body of work’ such as the Chair Series as a very large architectural body (in processual terms), then its atmospheric component (bioscleave) would be one that performs a perpetual cleaving across diverse modes, speeds and scales of action, guided by an affective sense of emergence, where hints and intimations for re-casting itself may appear when the creative process starts to take on a life of its own. When this atmosphere is felt (like when sitting in my chair before take no. 3), this bios may carry its cleavings much further and wider, into the becomings of matter (such as mutual fatigue); gathering long loops and lost parts of ourselves that have remained in the background, but which now become glaringly obvious (such as the apprehension of the crew).

What is at stake for the gargoyle is how the affective emergence of this collective affective domain may be tracked, maintained and transformed. There is a very particular ‘tool-set’ of principles and procedures here which offers several contributions to understanding and reframing the place of the body as a performative agent within a broader mapping of transdisciplinary practices informing this research.

Animist in-fluences

Revisiting my earlier discussions around animism and animal / human hybridity, there are three ways this needs to be delineated: in terms of particular cross-cultural contexts and influences; a reading of underlying dynamics through performance; and how this delineation may offer insights for other practices. These questions require a PhD all unto themselves and are far beyond the scope of this chapter. I bring them up specifically for their relevance in terms of situating affect within a collective domain, and as a point of reflection on the potential contribution of the gargoyle as an architectural figure (as avenues for further research).

There is often much suspicion surrounding vitalism, animism and shamanistic practices, but as I have suggested these kinds of examples and situations have a great deal to offer our understanding of
quite powerful and influential affectivity within collective domains. There is just as much suspicion around the misappropriation or misinterpretation of quite specific cultural frames of reference. As noted in CHAIR 1, my approach here is primarily in performance terms, through participation and collaboration, rather than as an anthropologist. For the purposes of this thesis, we might interpret or translate ‘a spirit’ (of whatever kind) as a topological energetic assemblage - like the specters of the warehouse; where our relation to things (human, animal, inanimate object relations and cultural artifacts) is delimited by our own readiness response, extended apperception, and shifting auto-affection (the three intensive timeframes). We are forever implicated within a collective field, finding our own internal otherness, as each of ‘us’ adds to the experience of an other (double openness). For the performer, this generative otherness becomes a singular relation of presence and absence, interceding not just between forms out there in the environment, but also via a dislocation of their own boundary condition - an overflowing. Shamanic mediums are always drawing on the energy of a collective field, and this relationship with and for a specific community (a village for instance), is more often than not done through other ‘intermediaries’. They may throw themselves against other bodies as a way of inducing a state of trance, or use totemic objects imbued with collective meaning, and which carry their own incipient textures capable of shifting collective perception.158

A key influence for my revisitation of the gargoyle figure from an animist perspective involved a cross-cultural collaboration with Indonesian shamans in Batu, Java, where I performed during the *In the Arts Island Festival* (2010), through the Artistic Direction of Agung Gunawan.159 Coming only a matter of months after the *Garg{oy}le* project, this became the last work of the Chair Series - *prosthesis* (2010, see DVD). Just as the chair offered a prosthetic apparatus for my body throughout the projects, *prosthesis* becomes a kind of Coda in many ways - for the Chair Series as a body of work, and in the way this opens up further implications for future research. As in its etymology,160 this Coda constitutes a kind of ‘tail’ for the gargoyle figure - as a movement towards my Conclusion in considering the

158 These become sites for cleaving or dislocation, drawing energy as a diagramming of the absolute outside - intercession as the hinging of force relations. The art of the medium may be seen as the orchestration of untimely relations and transitions, opening other ‘dimensions’ of duration, where pure traits flicker with singular transformations. It is perhaps not a matter of ‘authentic gestures’ in the way we might attribute these to an individual, but rather the way bodies and objects interact as semi-autonomous agents. There have been situations where I’ve observed what I would think of as contrived relations in performance terms: a shaman throwing themselves against others for instance. But seen as a series of transformations within a collective field and the duration of an event, I’m then confronted by my own expectations, when these artifices become entirely part of the ‘art of making’. (Artifice: origin late Middle English; *ars* ‘art / facere, ‘make’).

159 The festival toured four different places in Indonesia: Bandung, Ubud (Bali), Batu (Malang), and Yogyakarata. Performers included Agung Gunawan, Tony Yap, Yumi Umiumare, Brendan O’Connor, myself and others. For more information, see : [www.theartsislandfestival.com](http://www.theartsislandfestival.com)

160 ORIGIN mid 18th cent.: Italian, from Latin cauda ‘tail.’ In music, the concluding passage of a piece or movement, typically forming an addition to the basic structure; the concluding section of a dance, esp. of a *pas de deux*, or the finale of a ballet in which the dancers parade before the audience; a concluding event, remark, or section, for example in a book.
potential contribution of this transdisciplinary research by practice. If the gargoyle was already embedded up to its armpits in architecture, for which my contemporary antitype chases its tail through the outside to the inside, this Coda entails a final turning point for the emergence of a critical disposition. Now the gargoyle as an architectural figure may draw upon the insights offered by shamanic trance mediumship as another way of seeing how the collective dimension of affect operates within and across body, object, self, and site.

As we saw in CHAIR 1, there was a shift from dance to performance art through *plastiques* to the plasticity of the chair. With *prosthesis* the chair now becomes, in fact - plastic - using the mass-manufactured ‘monobloc’ stackable chair, ubiquitous to patio furniture and public seating areas. My attraction to the monobloc was both for its readymade capacity to be found in situ, and how the iconic singularity of the artifact may induce something in the audience - has anyone ever NOT sat in one? As an object, its plasticity takes on the wear and tear of use so readily - a palimpsest of posterior traces in which we become one multiple. For my choreography, the gaping holes might evoke a face, but also openings for my legs to mount it in ways not possible in previous projects. There was, more often than not, some aspect of affection in selecting the chair - always an old one - important for feeling how each action was drawn through an image of moving with someone personally close to me; just as the chair was already a people of some impersonal kinship. The material plasticity of the chair also allowed a very tentative limit to be reached - bending and bouncing on it, often resulting in its partial destruction; and with it the potential for inducing other psychophysical plasticities of a collective thinking-feeling.

There isn’t the scope, or need, to discuss *prosthesis* in full here, nor am I in a position to describe all that went on in Indonesia, inexplicable as it was. At the least, I can say that the capacity for affective opening operates at a level of plasticity that is simultaneously one of plastic object relations and psychophysical *neuroplasticity* (recalling my earlier comments around empathy and mirror neurons). Whether or not, and how, my performance may have opened anything for the audience in Batu, or Yogjakarta, is already only one aspect of a collective field. Cultural differences aside (if we can ever really do that), the performer merely actualizes or ‘furnishes to completion’ the liminal event of a

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161 The monobloc chair came first from similar constraints in an earlier work for MAPFEST 2009 - *tablet taster* - a development stage for *tablet* (2009). In *Gargoyle*, the orange chairs of the prawn were in their own way a series of multiples, though not stackable. Although the chairs in *prosthesis* weren’t stacked, they found a different multiplicity through the touring schedule and the site-specificity of their discovery or sourcing. Another observation: *prosthesis* finds its own ‘stacking’ of images through the chair, for while still in the realm of performance art, the choreographic sequence serves to situate it alongside the other dance works in the festival program. The event in Batu deserves further mention - approximately 1000 people encircling a small clearing on all sides, flanked by 2 huge trees with spiritual significance for the community, and a tomb at one end containing the grave of the village’s founding ancestor and his wife. The atmosphere was incredible - given by the transverse intensity of spatial proximity, audience numbers, site significance, and cross-cultural contrast.

162 See also my earlier footnotes on radical empathy and shamanic practice in CHAIR 2.
potential that exceeds itself. Without claiming to be one (for this is collectively given and culturally situated), the shamanic medium may be seen to cleave their way through the folds in perception, opening untimely dimensions, dimensionalizing direct perceptions and indirect imagings. Between the absolute duration of objects and the shifting readiness of bodies there is a fine-grained transistance of particles and signs. At the level of bioscleave, the environment is already imbued with a vast passionsal suspension, situated in the fact that a specific population (such as a village) may share a collective belief in the spectral entities of specific abstractions - a tree haunted by a ghost, a shrine carrying the presence of an ancestor.

Even radical empiricism stopped short of supernatural or trans-empirical entities. (William James allows that they may exist but that its not fruitful to talk about them, because he seeks to posit consciousness as an operative activity not a transcendent ego). But if we consider here how the entity IS the relation as a complex assemblage of affects, then it is still working at the level of operation - but now across a very dense collective sponging; one that holds open the space for strange transversals to occur. Inexplicable phenomena are common in these contexts, often appearing as quite tangible signs. If something inexplicable - seemingly supernatural - is considered real by enough people within a particular affective ‘micro-climate’, how and to what extent does this actualize the singular forces at play? This is the affective territory of the shamanic medium, to bring such things into existence, even as they remain signs for ongoing transformations of a virtual kind. As Deleuze says, ‘affect is a complex spiritual entity’ (1986: 111).

Diagramming as an affective practice

What does this contribute to an understanding of diagramming as an affective practice? Firstly, it is to see how techniques of abstraction (in whatever media) carry operative traits that are both material and meaningful, but that these particles and signs are not in themselves the ‘carrying’. Rather, it is where these traits oscillate or become indiscernible as particles / signs, through a particular configuration of relations (diagram of forces); and moreover the lived quality of their changing nature (affective transformations) as it emerges through the process. This compels us - as artists, designers, or any other creative endeavor - to take a particular ‘affective stance’ (Ednie-Brown, 2007) in situating

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163 This is more in line perhaps with Massumi’s approach to radical empiricism, for instance where he talks about the biogram in terms of synesthetic phenomenon, as color and edge condition: “What lies in the darkness at the end of the rainbows? The answer comes without the slightest hesitation: other people’s minds” (Massumi, 2002: 188). Or when he also says in terms of ritual:

“If this is hallucination, it is not “just” a hallucination. It is a collective availing of the creative powers of the false incumbent in all experience. It is less a hallucination in the pejorative sense than an invoked relational reality. That is what ritual does: it invokes into occurring a collectively shared nonsensuous experience of a cosmological kind. This is a speculative dance of the imagination: a cosmolological semblance of truth, abstractly lived, with all due amodal intensity” (Massumi, 2011: 126).
ourselves in relation to our work. One aspect of this is to allow forms to emerge from the material agency of things, so that authorial intention is also a matter of siting our attention in a way that attends to tools, processes and materials, tends to them with the care of eliciting their inherent potentials. This is by now a fairly well established concern, both in architecture, the arts, and other fields, as an aesthetic sensibility and processual understanding of emergence and transformation.

Even further however, the implications and provocations in terms of affect means that emphasis should be placed on the collective nature of this emergence, not simply as an ethical ideal but rather in terms of ‘what works’. If operations are forever distributed and transverse, we are always and already in a collective field. The gargoyle offers a very particular kind of affective stance here - one where a collection of principles and procedures develops its own collective trajectory; one that is also bodily embedded within the collective nature of its tools and materials, sites and collaborative processes. It becomes not just a matter of allowing the agency of these others, but of dislocating one’s own intention in the process, of finding a negentropic principle of mutual constraint to guide the work into taking on a larger life of its own.

What the gargoyle seems to have stumbled upon is how our person is never really just contained in our person. It is forever moving on and beyond itself - often through states of striving and exhaustion, primarily concerned with the efficacy of its actions and intentions. But just as it moves on with the aid of its organism and surroundings (something we take for granted), the gargoyle can only keep so much of itself in mind, in its person that is. It is always leaving traces of itself here and there, in the somatic memory of its organism and the arrangement of its surroundings. When this process starts to take on a life of its own, these traces return as markers and prompts for the collectively constructed nature of its self. Even when they return as things forgotten, perhaps appearing as something other than its self, or as shared traces, this offers the means for the gargoyle to supercede its limited sense of the world, to become an architectural body.

For the future trajectory of the gargoyle, the negentropic principle that becomes central to its dislocations, recursions and inversions, will become critical for how the proposed three panel video installation environment - the Parapet - may carry and revivify the collective aspects which emerged through the series and on the day of shooting. It is hoped that the configuration of panels, in their repetition of the action and dislocation through looping and layering within each composition, may produce a generative tentativeness that holds open a space for affecting a gallery audience. By being differentiated both between AND within the panels I hope to find a third quality within this doubly open dynamic, where their ‘belonging together’ is one that is endlessly cleaved internally and externally, so that the space becomes a collective bioscleave of affects.
Finally, the gargoyle offers further reflection on the broader architectural context that forms a
discursive and institutional ‘backdrop’ for this research by practice. These suggest directions for further
research, but also as embedded potentials informing this thesis throughout, they deserve mention in
terms of how the gargoyle appears as an architectural figure. What began as a tongue-in-cheek
comment on contemporary biomimetic architecture - the skin cladding and rice brain response circuit -
became critical as affective surfaces for the collective transformation of the work (generating intensity
in the ascent and then delimiting it in the descent). The negentropic principle at the heart of this
transformation suggests a number of things for the way a particular affective stance might be adopted
within architecture. Already there are many strategies for engaging the collective dimension in various
scales and modes, and at different stages in the process: community consultation and flexible
program requirements; morphogenetic design processes that mimic site features and/or natural forms;
responsive environments using climatic control sensors, interactive interfaces and ‘smart materials’ (to
name a few).

Despite the emergent and experiential nature that may be implied by these strategies, there is often a
tendency towards optimizing outcomes so that biomimesis becomes another kind of formalism, where
striving to arrive at form exhausts the potential for ongoing co-emergence. The gargoyle’s insights
around negentropic relations begs the question as to what extent the construction of social spaces still
prescribes a pre-given user, or if the very notion of generating agency were itself no longer optimal but
somehow operates as a dislocation of identities, of tentative thresholds enabling collective affects
(both those inside and outside the skull-skin boundary). Or where the very definition of a ‘responsive
environment’ is not simply one saturated with pleasant sensations and quasi-sentient interactive

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164 Helene Frichot identifies in her critique of the Emergence and Design Group - with their biomimetic
‘Morpho-Ecologies’ (ME) approach - that research on chemical reactions across cell membranes has much
potential for seeing how architecture may respond to life criteria (Frichot, 2007: 2). However, as she also says:

“The new biological paradigm offered by the Emergence and Design Technologies might at first seem
to open up a radical new future for the designer, but in fact it is not radical enough when it comes to
framing political and ethical implications and the very ontological transformation of the agents under
consideration” (ibid: 5).

As I have explored through the Chair Series in the figure of various sponge bodies, transient and semi-
autonomous membranes (in the manner of Tanigawa, and Thompson respectively) may be seen to operate as
distributed agencies across multiple scales of action, in both thinking and feeling; simultaneously pre-personal,
individual and collective. If such approaches to biomimetic design seek to develop a ‘performance oriented’
flexibility and responsiveness, the question becomes to what extent this remains only within the autonomous
parview of architectural formalism; or ‘performalism’ as it has also been called (see Grobman and Neuman,
2008; 2011). I suggest that performalist architecture may have much to gain from considering the affective
indeterminacy of recursive inversion that occurs within the kinds of psychophysical performance events I have
explored. Moreover, where biomimetic design looks for the integration of material intelligence and non-standard
fabrication assemblies in-forming the design process, the question becomes to what extent these processual
durations might also take up the life of the social field - simultaneously rather than after the fact of built form -
as a co-emergent series of molecular assemblages in the manner that Deleuze and Guattari envision it.
entities, which in their optimal responsiveness may serve to pacify the user into either immersive somnambulism or hyper-stimulated spectatorship. To be more broadly affective on the level of a collective environment goes beyond these affective extrusions, where external responses are not just to optimize impulses, but to transduce and induce something tentative within the individual. Something ‘grotesque’ (as a lived abstraction) that might then take them out of themselves, through a fold or cleft in their experience, to find a sense of the environment as collectively alive - via the distributed collection of things they comprise in themselves: a sponging.

These abstract operations may perhaps only be approached through the affective stance of a tentative disposition, in which architects (and artists, designers etc) cultivate a particular mode of attention, an attitude or posture in approaching their work - how they move in speaking and relating to it, how they feel the thinking about it. This stance or manner becomes implicated in processes and materials, to guide the work into taking on a life of its own. As Tony Yap said to me once, “Everything is part of the work”. For the gargoyle, this stance becomes a tentative disposition. Through its organizing principles, we might see how an art / design process may become more recursive across stages of the process, forever informing itself as an open system. So then the final outcome might not just be a diagrammatic ‘index of the process’ which stops at the built form, but where different stages return as traces in the way their collectivities and collections hold open this space of in-formation, to affective transformations as much as computational ones.165

The gargoyle stance becomes a series of in-stances, in-formes, in-tensions, for instantiating this communal domain throughout the process. Stages do not simply ‘sign off’ on each other as optimal translations from one to the next, hence remaining somewhat ‘outside’ one another. Rather, they hold each other open, always alongside and within the process, in terms of how they transduce and induce an exchange of ‘creative entropy’, a give and take of taking each other up. ‘Designing the design’ as it is called in ‘processual architecture’ may be when process-as-product becomes a living breathing thing suffused with potential, actualized just far enough as a concrete event but only insofar as its virtualities become all the more intensive as a series of ongoing transformations. As Michael Speaks

165 As I have said of Eisenman’s affective turn, the diagram disappears into the work as an indexical trace. His Holocaust Memorial is an example that serves to carry material traits throughout the design form, from the urban scale to the interior multimedia displays. At the same time it opens these abstractions through an historical narrative (the Holocaust), to turn both formal logic and content-expression through an intolerable limit of thinking and feeling. The tentativeness this produces at the level of individual experience is one that is intensely personal but at the same time dislocates the self in its attempts at historical identification (see Eisenman, 2011).

This offers a more eventful sense of what Hijikata might call ‘continuous existence’ - where death becomes a force of the outside that holds the individual open to itself - in its own otherness; rather than as a pre-given form of memory and presence supposedly inherent to the historical monument. If there is anything implicitly ‘political’ (or biopolitical) in Eisenman and Hijikata, it may be simply that political forms are not pre-given relations of active / passive per se, but already passionate suspensions in which we participate through a collective realm that constitutes the very texture of our experience.
Cache’s notion of the objectile may be reposed here in such a way that the object-artifact takes on a psychophysical hinging between sites and selves, opening and shifting through intensive timeframes, both historical and infinitesimal across the folds in experience. How may architectural foldings enfold us more affectively in a way that gives us the tools for constructing our own architectural bodies? Frichot cites Foucault: “It has not been possible to constitute a science of the living without taking into account, as something essential to its object, the possibility of disease, death, monstrosity, anomaly, and error” (Foucault, in Frichot, 2007: 4). As I have discovered through the Chair Series, it is through errors and anomalies where untimely shifts occur across scales of action and intensive timeframes, opening affect for performer and audience, and allowing the series to take on a life of its own. For the gargoyle, the emergence of monstrosity is where the grotesque refigures death (via butoh and animist contexts), as a collective realm of becoming through the tonalities of matter and dislocations of the subject.

New trajectories in architectural practice offer fresh approaches that could be taken up along these lines. For example, the work of R&Sie(n) explores design research at the neurophysiological level of affect (see Roche, 2012). I see potential here for coupling these sorts of approaches with speculative transdisciplinary practices at the level of cultural narratives, as an urban co-emergence of biological and social life. The integration of material intelligence and fabrication assemblages might then induce a procedural knowing that takes up the kinds of insights Arakawa and Gins bring to the transverse tracking of landing site configurations. (Or as I have indicated in the way Cache’s objectile might be reposed). Then perhaps we may be able to invent new procedures for tracking our own thinking-feeling through vast collective dislocations. As butoh choreographer Akaji Maro says:

“Sometimes I feel I can describe my body without my own body. First of all, you have to kill your body to construct your body as a larger fiction and you can be free at that moment. It happens when you think about this concept that fiction equals a body. It is not only massive but light and transparent. What does this fiction consist of?

This fiction is almost chaos, catching some parts of chaos and creating a total chaos. You can find many different cells in each part of your body. And you can build a bridge between one cell and the other. You don’t have to have the shape of a human being. You can be a whole city. Having a disease sometimes makes a building more attractive” (Maro, in Viala and Masson-Sekine, 1998: 46).

says of Cache’s inflection, the question becomes what is architecture’s ‘outside’, beyond purely operational dynamics of the fold as a reciprocal relation of forces.

“More than this can only be developed when architecture is made to think its outside, to become other, to become new. Only then will it take new forms.”

Speaks, in Cache, 1995: xix

This is where principles of inversion would not only involve the dislocation of architectural typologies (as Eisenman suggests), but now down to the scale of furniture and the body, and into the fine-grain of scaler ruptures within the folds of experience. For Massumi, this is less a matter of: “architecture’s formal disciplinary understanding of itself than with its living through the encounter with its outside”. As he goes on to say:
“There is a particularly important “outside” of architecture that the built environment actually contains: the body. It cannot be forgotten that the living-through of the architectural process is always, and always variably, embodied.”

Massumi, 2008: 25

Coming back to the tentative disposition of the gargoyle, this is where a lived abstraction that is inherently affective, carries the transformation or nature of change within a diagram of forces. If the gargoyle may be considered to be an architectural figure of the grotesque, its contribution may fall within the broader context of a contemporary architectural reinvention of both ‘body’ and ‘nature’. This is not only where architecture is becoming more embodied - through formal morphogenesis, ecological responsiveness, quasi-metabolic systems, and the like - but also where the human body may acquire a reciprocal agency through the kinds of distributed cognition I have described (the three intensive timeframes).

The future of the gargoyle may be one that develops its own embodied ‘architecture of mind’ through augmentations of a post-human cybernetic variety, meeting architecture’s reinvention of ‘body’ on its own terms, within a reciprocal field of forces. And yet, if every diagram is a kind of machine that is already social before it is technical (Foucault, cited in Deleuze, 2006: 39), this augmentation comes with a caution: as much operational as ethical - where the tendency to extrude or optimize any given entity is constrained within a collective becoming (across both external and internal ‘collections’ or sets of configurations). The architectural body of Arakawa and Gins has much to offer here, through their specific focus on the organism-person-environment as an autopoietic system. For the gargoyle, the emphasis should always be placed on the collective dimension at work within and across these generative limits, where a person-peoples and a people-organisms just as much as an organism-persons; or where several persons generate a co-functioning mutual organism as the invention of a people. The problem of tracking so many landing sites at any given time might then stretch the bounds of what we usually consider to be an individual mode of attention (Arakawa and Gins, 2002: 13). As I have suggested, things also land upon us and are already landing within us through incipient actions and their passionate suspensions. We may then be situated even more broadly or ‘body-wide’, within a larger bioscleeve which is always recasting us as much as we are recasting it - the two in continual exchange through a topological principle of negentropic sponging.

Finally, it is the hybrid human animality of the gargoyle that may draw out shared challenges and potentials for further research on the intersections of Arakawa and Gins and biomimetic architecture. As Eric Santner observes (see Santner, 2006), the differences between animal and human ‘nature’ have been posited historically as an issue over which is more ‘open’ than the other: the animal for its unmediated openness towards the natural world (Rainer Maria Rilke), or ‘Man’ for ‘his’ capacity to form a world (Martin Heidegger). Alternatively, we can say that at the level of relational dynamics - of affecting and being affected, the non-human animal and the human-animal share a sense of mutual
constraint in terms of their surroundings (both natural and/or social). Drawing on the literature of Winfried Georg Maximillian Sebald and the political philosophy of Giorgio Agamben, Santner gives this quality the term ‘creaturely life’, to suggest that it is not the difference between human and animal life as such that defines the Open, but the uncanny or creaturely affects we share. For the gargoyle, this creaturely aspect becomes the appearance of the grotesque as a quality of mutual constraint within and between objects, artifacts, bodies and selves; including the trace of those emerging through the Chair Series and in the preparation of the work.

Just as the notion of ‘body’ is being reinvented and resituated through the biological turn within contemporary architecture, so too ‘nature’ is being reframed as a series of dynamic operations upon and within living matter rather than for any species hierarchy or separation in ‘essence’ from the human realm. This is where the very notions of what constitutes Life, sentience, and agency, are being constantly renegotiated, where the ‘human-machine’ interface is also seen more in the cybernetic sense. (Pertaining to dynamic control systems, of whatever kind, that are co-extensive in reach - a sense of the ‘machinic’ in a similar manner to the way Deleuze describes the diagram as an abstract machine). What is at stake for the gargoyle is how these thresholds open or close our affective capacity towards becoming collective, and the new hybrid forms that might issue from this.

As Mark Hansen argues, the organism-that-persons may be located at the nexus of personal and impersonal life, which he qualifies as the co-functioning of human and animal, person and organism: “the impersonal is the organism and personal life only happens when the “organism persons” (Hansen, 2004: 73). I would add that personal and impersonal aspects both turn upon the
As I discuss in my paper for AG3, there is quite a different emphasis in the way Deleuze and Guattari explore the Body-without-Organs (BwO), to how Arakawa and Gins characterize the Organisms that Persons (OtP):

“As Mark Hansen argues, the differences between the BwO and the OtP may be located at the nexus of personal and impersonal life, which he qualifies in terms of the difference between human and animal. Following Spinoza’s monism of substance, for Deleuze life is conceived as fundamentally impersonal and a-human, allowing for molecular becomings across species barriers, contra to the molar coherence of the (human) organism. By contrast, the ‘personing’ organism of Arakawa and Gins is more committed to an understanding of what it is to be human. As Hansen clarifies it, “the impersonal is the organism and personal life only happens when the “organism persons”” (ibid: 73). While Deleuze privileges a deterritorialisation of the subject, favoring the indefinite virtuality of ‘a life’; for Arakawa and Gins there is a recursive co-functioning of personal and impersonal, not of a subject but rather a person that derives its life from the impersonal life of its organism. The recursion is then one where the person also allows the organism to deploy its life, to construct the world by overflowing this relation with the architectural surround” (Hornblow, 2010).

As noted earlier, this is a criticism I have of Arakawa and Gins - or at least where the emphasis on personing (while essential), could be placed more specifically in the realm of peopling (both at the social and organismic level: collective and collection of things). Deleuze and Guattari / Arakawa and Gins are perhaps not opposed as to the status of the im/personal, for the event of inventing a people operates both at a pre-individual / individual level, in which both are collectively enacted. As discussed in my AG3 paper this reading has potential implications for Greg Lynn’s ‘architectural body-without-organs’, as more of a negentropic approach to his notion of discontinuous involution between formal interiority and site context. As indicated in previous footnotes to this chapter, and later in my Conclusion, this where formalism needs to confront its own outside, where the force relations it comprises may open it more emphatically to other ‘forms of life’: the body, the social, the political, and a new criticality where theory and practice turn upon one another.

In the way the ascent operated as the intensive abstraction of a personal affective stance, or tonality (my ‘radical affection’), and then in the descent as a way of abstracting the tendency for emotional expression to close off the confines of identity, by returning to small physical actions and gestures through the abstraction of character.

collective field, at two poles that are inextricably linked. They are not opposed but require one another as mutual constraints - the personal needs all those collections of pre-individual entities boiling away within the organism, just as the organism needs the personal in order to situate these collections within the collective social realm. This reciprocity is most clearly in evidence through the gargoyle in its affective co-emergence with the crew and the resulting emotional expression.

Whether we become implanted with android components and/or augmented with animal capacities by appropriating features from other species, the principle of negentropic sponging offers a way forward for our gargoyle becomings through both natural and built environments (both simultaneously internal and external). Arakawa and Gins desire to recast our relation to what surrounds us is underpinned by a broader agenda to transform and sustain human life beyond its current limits. This is a seemingly inevitable though problematic endeavor in terms of the resources and investment required, with potential impacts on both natural and social environments as far as privilege and exploitation are concerned.
The question of Power has lurked throughout this thesis - first as a power to affect and be affected, and then as a stratified diagram of forces or formalized functions. As we saw with the issue of affective co-emergence and emotional expression in the prawn action, there is a biopolitical dimension to affective circulation in terms of how a given population (the crew) may be regulated in a way that may sustain and/or transform both individual and collective agency. This raises future implications for the gargoyle as an architectural figure, where it may offer a pathway for re-posing this endeavor in a way that is simultaneously ethical and technical in its feasibility - not a method as such, but an affective stance where all our grotesque becomings-animal-machine-architecture might turn upon an exchange of entropy across these overflowing surrounds.\footnote{166 Another important aspect of my AG3 paper, is a discussion of Arakawa and Gins’ claim that architectural bodies and tactically posed surrounds may in the future serve to make the body immortal and conquer death: their ‘Reversible Destiny’ project (see Arakawa and Gins, 2006). In the AG3 paper I locate the differing emphasis of the BwO and the organisms that persons, in terms of personal and impersonal death; especially how the latter is discussed through Deleuze and Guaattari, with corresponding ideas in Bataille, Blanchot, Artaud, and Hijikata. (See also Artaud and Hijikata on death, in Hornblow, 2006). There isn’t the scope to re-hearse or expand upon this argument here, but in short: I propose that a more nuanced approach to Reversible Destiny could be made through the figure of the gargoyle, via a negentropic disposition that sits astride im/personal qualities of life and death.  

This is an area for further research, as much as a future project trajectory for the gargoyle. While I do not address Reversible Destiny directly, the nature of death and the dead body has appeared throughout this thesis, and further avenues are indicated in my Conclusion. One area in particular that is in need of comparative research, is the apparent kinship between Arakawa and Gins’ Reversible Destiny and Raymond Kurzweil’s development of ‘The Singularity’; in which he proposes the means for living forever emerging at a particular historical juncture (see Kurzweil, 1990, 1999, 2005). Kurzweil’s notion of ‘The Singularity’ also invites further attention in terms of the way I have approached singularity via Cache, Eisenman, and others.}
Conclusion

My research-by-practice can be summarised as the tentative emergence of a critical disposition - one that offers an understanding of the way affective openness may operate within a collective field. This has explored how affective shifts occur within and between people and built environments, through different methods of psychophysical performance, aided by philosophical and architectural approaches to diagramming. This has also seen a constant shifting between theory and practice, as the mapping of a transdisciplinary field - and as a diagramming of the way they affect one another through an intertwining of discursive modes and experiential qualities. Dynamic boundary conditions have been seen to operate through principles of inversion and recursion, transforming ways of inducing and transducing a sense of ‘give and take’. Mutual constraints of affecting and being affected become a holding open - taking up and being taken up by the other, through a singular kind of chaos or indeterminacy within oneself that is already on the other side of time, of thought, of the body.

These principles of inversion and recursion emerged tentatively through the development of projects, processes and procedures - from the experience in the warehouse, to an analysis of dance training methodologies, and then finally the Chair Series. In part 1: SPONGE, this began in the warehouse by locating a somatic image - the Sponge body - as a way of exploring how body and building may generate a sense of becoming one another, an ‘adding to’ in their co-existence. A diagrammatic approach through Deleuze, Massumi and Varela, allowed me to identify the presence of an absolute outside, as a generative indeterminacy opening between scales of action and intensive timeframes, across readiness-response and auto-affection. The Sponge body moved through further iterations - firstly the performance contexts that inform this approach: Butoh and Grotowski. Pre-expressive and interpersonal spongings revealed the way affective shifts may occur within and between performers and audiences, especially where close attention to sensation, perception, intention and movement, allow for the tentative negotiation of emotional expression and its ‘authenticity’ as an inherent problem for affective openness.

In part 2: CHAIR, the project work proper began with an internal disciplinary shift, where qualities and principles in the dance training were carried across - as a sponging of intensive traits, into performance art and video installation. The problem of translation between disciplines highlighted how affective openness - or dilation in Grotowski’s terms, may be achieved by situating myself within the built environment via the dislocation of object relations and cultural artifacts. With Chaise traceur, the chair as prosthetic apparatus becomes a way of holding open intensive timeframes to a modulation of ‘too soon / too late’. Cache’s inflection indicated how singular transformations operate transversally across intensive qualities and spatial extension; and in terms of duration, across sections, actions, sequences, and gestures. The notion of ‘site-specificity’ then becomes a situated event that may unhinge the given identity of a site, in a similar way to my critique of authentic emotion. The performance passed a critical point of emotional expression where object relations took me into
intimate proximity with the audience. A ‘geographic condition’ of the absolute outside is traced back through the performance, in the way this moment finds an affective dilation that gathers up all these inflections, in what might be called ‘the skin of the earth’.

A new sponge body - a body of work - gradually emerged through the Chair Series, one that started to take on a life of its own. In the Garg(oy)le project this passed through another critical shift - at take no. 3, when the gathering of emergent transformations resulted in the appearance of the gargoyle as a character of radical affection. Through Arakawa and Gins, I was able to locate how this body of work has emerged through organising principles of inversion and recursion, and where the notion of sponging finally becomes a negentropic condition for situating the gargoyle as an architectural figure. Arakawa and Gins offered a way of defining how the gargoyle generates an open system of landing site configurations, through a tentative construction of both holding open and holding in place. Their biotopological diagramming helped to track how a procedural knowing has emerged that may become a set of architectural procedures in future iterations (the proposed multi-screen ‘Parapet’). Above all, their notion of cleaving and bioscleave allowed me to emphasise how the collective domain was pivotal for the emergence and transformation of affect, across different scales of action and frames of reference: a peopling as much as a personing organism.

The development of these various sponge bodies, within an evolving body-of-work, turns upon the sponging of traits that pass across disciplinary shifts, in the way experiential and material qualities are constantly transposed and reabsorbed. They acquire a singular density in the Garg(oy)le project - not only in terms of the material assemblage and intensity of the action, but also for the way theoretical implications overflow with practice. Performing and making, reading and writing, have weaved with one another throughout the Chair Series; and just as the appearance of the gargoyle as a character revealed a negentropic dynamic at the heart of sponging, this tracking back through a body of work reveals how this architectural figure appears though a body of writing. For the contribution of this research, this indicates what may be at stake for resituating the body within the built environment through the figure of the gargoyle. This then is the final ‘performing’ of a critical disposition - one with a long preparation and even yet still a nascent entity. This began with stepping back from a critical stance at the start, but then co-emerged as a tentative disposition running underneath as an affective substrate. This stepping back and running underneath now becomes a with-holding or holding open that catches up with itself - like a stealing of steps that might now induce something in the transdisciplinary field within which it affects and is affected.

This body-of-writing as Sponge body may be tracked back, not just across SPONGE and CHAIR, but through the overflow of their interstitial hinge-points - Preamble, Threshold, Segue, Coda. These serve to frame the implication of parts 1 and 2, but also especially in Coda for implications passing beyond the scope of the thesis (just as these also find recursive inflections through the writing process). In the same manner, Threshold diagrams a broader practice in the structural shift from SPONGE to CHAIR. Then a more fine-grained ‘performatting’ occurs from Segue onwards, when these overflowing
implications unhinge the tentative footing of footnotes and text body, when a critical disposition finally comes to the surface (in a Bakhtinian sense, like a gargle that swallows the world and is swallowed by the world). With this flipping of the page, like the flipping of the chair in *Chaise traceur*, we return to the tenor of the Preamble - where this body of writing is also an experience of reading. Just as it is ‘our body’ that walks through the warehouse, we now reach a critical shift in absorbing the density of the text.  

This performing of the text is another act of construction, inflecting the Sponge bodies it contains and through which it overflows. If ‘to contribute’ is to be ‘brought together, added’, or to ‘bestow’ - that is ‘to place’; then perhaps the contribution of this research is just as much an understanding of its diagrammatic character. This character is tentatively situated through the inversions and recursions of a Sponge body with holes of many kinds, where reading and writing add to the the existence of one another, inducing a tug back into the World.

**Contributions**

To develop some of the implications and proposed trajectories fleshed out in Coda, I’d like to explore how this research by practice may contribute a critical disposition for locating affect more broadly within the nexus of theory and practice. As I’ve discussed, the ‘body’ and ‘nature’ constitute two ‘outsides’ for architecture that are currently being taken up again through contemporary approaches to biomimetic design. There are still two others whose own outsides overflow the first two, even as they also often remain in exile within the discourse of contemporary architecture: the place of theory within practice, and the question of power in terms of the political. These offer ongoing research trajectories - but also in bearing a critical influence throughout this transdisciplinary research, they become part of what has already become what I will call an ‘inflective practice’.

For the purposes of this Conclusion, these future trajectories indicate that to ‘con / clude’ - con: ‘completely’; and claudia: ‘to shut’ - is never fully a matter of case closed. In this case, it is always evacuated by the very subject upon which it finds closure: the pure exteriority of the absolute outside. Like the etymological wordplay of ‘perform’ in my Introduction, this conclusion may ‘provide, through to completion’, in the sense that it may be completed only in its potential for being taken up again and again.

167 Again, from the Introduction: “...like ushering or drawing others into the absolute outside, into a sharing of the shared... its perhaps an invitation to co-generate” (Ednie-Brown, personal email, 2012).

168 I have adopted the term ‘inflective practice’ from Pia Ednie-Brown’s supervisory feedback as a suggested avenue for future publication.

169 **ORIGIN** Middle English (in the sense ‘convince’): from Latin concludere, from con- ‘completely’ + claudere ‘to shut.’

170 **ORIGIN** Middle English: from Anglo-Norman French parfourmer, alteration (by association with forme ‘form’) of Old French fournir, from par ‘through, to completion’ + fournir ‘furnish, provide.’
Diagramming an affective practice

The first trajectory returns us to the value of diagramming as a practice, as one that is inherently affective and collective, in terms of how theory and practice may generate an oscillation of thinking and feeling. A short history is necessary here in order to posit what my critical-disposition might contribute to this generative tension. The uptake of the diagram within contemporary architecture has gone through several shifts - which reflects how these ‘outsides’ have come to animate its inside\(^{171}\) (context *vis-à-vis* identity), just as these shifts also reveal the outsider status of theory within the discourse. In brief, the post-war period saw the rise of the ‘architect-critics’ through the 1950s-1960s, accompanying the appearance of the diagram as a new discursive and operational tool, particularly through Peter Eisenman (see Somol, 2007: 168). The philosophical influence of Jacques Derrida on Eisenman through the 1970s and 1980s eventually saw the demise of deconstruction as a discursive model, largely because its linguistic basis was seen to lack materiality and social efficacy, with its emphasis on formal contradiction exhausting a broader potential for charting new directions in architecture. This contributed to a large extent towards the ‘post-critical turn’ of the 1990s, in which architectural discourse focussed more on the purely operative nature of diagramming, especially with the development of new computational techniques. A pervading resistance to theory is felt to this day, even within architectural academia. At the same time however, the renewed uptake of the diagram through this post-critical turn hinges upon the influence of Deleuze, particularly with an understanding of ‘folding in architecture’ via Greg Lynn (1993, 1998, 2004).\(^{172}\) Within the resistance to theory there is an outside that informs it, indicating instead the possibility for a productive or generative resistance; one that holds open the very tension that may perhaps produce a ‘sinking-feeling’ - of thinking-feeling that it should be ‘evacuated’ from the discourse.

Through my own tentative disposition, I get the sense that the resistance to theory is often a problem of inadequate framing. As I said in my introduction, the relationship between theory and practice is often done in a reflective mode, where the two maintain a certain distance; for example, where practice demonstrates theory as an optimal outcome, or where theory is used to explain practice (often two sides of the same reciprocal separation). My tentative disposition has passed through the various stanzas of an affective stance: the mapping of transdisciplinary fields as rhetorical territories; the affective diagramming of experiential qualities; and their dislocation from habitual configurations through internal shifts, via different tools and techniques across the projects. The principles of inversion and recursion that now provide me with a critical disposition, may perhaps lead towards what might be called an ‘inflective practice’ rather than a reflective one. To reframe my earlier reference to Cache and Speaks - to look for architecture’s outside here would be one where theory and practice are constantly inflecting, dislocating, turning around points of singularity - standing in, being taken up and holding one another open.

\(^{171}\) As Deleuze says in ‘Foucault’: “The outside is not a fixed limit but a moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and foldings that together make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside of the outside” (Deleuze, 1988: 96-97).

\(^{172}\) See also Sophia Vyzoviti’s ‘Folding Architecture’ (2003).
If we were to see this entire research practice as an open system - in the image of a sponge - it is when all its holes, all the gaps and shifts within and across the dislocation of stanzas, finally overflow. The critical moment where the gargoyle appeared as a character just prior to take no.3, is when this holding open finally returns the outside to us in the form of a concept: the becoming of an architectural figure, standing in for the collective dimension of affect as a matter of multiplicity. Its not just that I am induced, as much as initiate the action, but when the series finally takes on a life of its own. This life is the becoming-gargoyle as a collective enunciation. A singular insight occurs when the problem returns the burden of its incipience - as potential. It is when my thinking coincides with my feeling - my mutual fatigue with the prawn finding a lineage back through the preparation, in shared constraint with the crew. What began as an ‘idea’ inspired by Cache - to flip the chair in *Chaise traceur*, now becomes a ‘concept’: what started with a process of extraction from various fields establishes its own collective abstraction of transverse relations.

What’s your idea? How do you feel? A thinking-feeling through pedagogical practice

This is something that I realized very recently through my teaching of architectural design at RMIT. The role of teaching has been yet another affective substrate underlying the candidature, as well as a future trajectory. Again, it is beyond the scope of this Conclusion, but bears an important influence in the way it bears an *influence* on, or rather ‘with’ others, as a power to affect and be affected. It becomes a tentative disposition of inducing a creative process in students, so it may become generative and semi-autonomous for their own sake. This is often a matter of dislocating the tendency to settle on habitual perceptions and expectations - to always look for the other side of things, endless inversion and recursion, showing how the process itself has more to reveal than the teacher. And then when a student’s work starts to do this, when it takes on a life of its own, the teacher also learns. I had a moment only last week when the status of a concept became clear to me. I saw a common constraint through a student’s design work, with what I experienced in the gargoyle, so that my feedback for them was also a feeding for me.

As artists or designers, we seem forever caught between two states of impossibility. First, that of knowing how material dynamics may be abstracted in order to arrive at a form that articulates something more than itself. Second, that of knowing how this ‘more than itself’ can become social and experiential - in the way that it functions, what it does, how it has something to say. Each of these considerations has a sense of inherent impossibility when sought as ideal outcomes - a being-matter / being-social. These impossibilities may be felt as a certain sinking-feeling of not ever resolving the problem of attaining these optimal worlds. What is this sinkhole if not at a relational affect between where we are now and where we want to get to? It is a sinkhole in which we are already affecting and being affected by something outside the process. And yet, between these two ideal outsiders there’s also an absolute outside felt within the process, a transverse relation of mutual constraint across these two impossibilities. Our sinking-feeling may reveal something in the configuration of our thinking-feeling, appearing like a prompt from the body, and a question posed to it. Stepping back from and/or through the sinkhole, we may see the co-emergence of something coming into being, within and across the material and the social. All we need to do is hold this tension open between their
impossibilities. Then they become more than just two hoped-for possibilities, but start to multiply within a state of potential - through a felt dimension that is already a sensate materiality, and an accumulation of sensations that is already the germ of the social, a collection of multiple relations. The concept that may eventually appear does not resolve the problem, but in fact requires this transverse problematic to co-emerge as an intensive space of potential. The concept appears when the work takes on a life of its own, a singular event that induces us through a tentative outside deep inside the process.

Two basic questions carry us forward: what's your idea?; and, how do you feel? The inherent impossibility of giving either question an adequate answer opens us to the other side of their relations (via the outside). Ideas are mental propositions for a course of action based on information extracted from one or more fields (such as, flipping the chair via Cache). An idea is also felt as much as thought. Its extraction is the contraction of a milieu that has made some impression, alongside an inherently tentative feeling around how it might translate as an outcome. To then ask about this feeling - how do you feel? - is to bring it to the attention of thinking, to tend to it as a thought form, even as it's embodiment sits on or within the outside of thinking. An idea, or a range of ideas, become(s) a concept when it enters the intensive field of its own potential, when it touches upon its own outside as much as those others from which it extracts and through which it in-fluences and overflows. It is a ‘conception’, one that inflects itself through the world, rather than reflects the world as a separate relation.

**The performative force of the concept as a peopling**

As Massumi says, a concept is not readymade but a lived creative force that is inherently constructive (Massumi, 2010: 3). It is judged according to what it does, through the difference it makes, in the way it transforms what it extracts (ibid: 9). It is always in touch with the outside as a movement of becoming together, always in-between thought and the World, such that its flow-on effects ‘overspill’ its semantic meaning with an excess of ‘performative force’ (ibid: 4). It is ‘pragmatically self-referential’ (ibid: 11); hence its conception is already a kind of peopling in potential. Above all, its creative force of doing and becoming with the world always requires a people; indeed, its efficacy is judged by the way it actually invents a people through the lived event. If it may then be named ‘this concept’ in a way that can be repeated, it remains tentative, another difference to be invented. It ‘preserves’ its potential only as an open invitation for ‘a-people-yet-to-come’ (in the Deleuzian sense). The *Garg(oy)le* project was already a ‘peopling’ of collective entities in potential - across the series and the site, as a transverse lineage of objects, bodies and selves. The gargoyle as architectural figure only really became a concept when all these mutual constraints found a singular untimeliness through the invention of a people.

The impossibility of finding what to say to architecture, now becomes a critical disposition, where the inflection of theory and practice finally transform one another through a lived abstraction: my ‘self’ becoming a character of mutual in-fluence with the crew. The task has also been to invent this people as an event of writing and reading, to gather up all the collective affinities embedded within the
performance event and hold them open to further potential. If the performative force of a concept may
emerge through a sinkhole in thinking-feeling, where each may speak in the place of the other, then
written language finds its own ‘ideational materiality’ in ways that help to plunge this sinkhole into
posing questions to the body. This is perhaps why I’m fascinated with etymology and wordplay, as are
many of the writers I draw on. Specific terms have their own incipient lineage, so that words are
always haunted by outside contexts spread across many fields. Within the words themselves I find
both the possibility to qualify them more accurately, as well as the potential to open them to further
invention. Both activities invoke a people. This sinkhole is also for posing questions to a body of work.
As it transduces, induces, and takes on a life, this question becomes again, though more abstractly:
‘how do you feel’? Not just my own feeling, or the crew, but the particular texture of singular
characteristics that emerge across the series and appear through the gargoyle as a conceptual figure
for holding open quite abstract multiplicities.

Affective politics as a holding open, through the sinkhole of thinking-feeling

The negentropic character of these transformations takes us to the inside of a final outside for
architecture: the nature of Power and the question of politics. For Deleuze and Foucault, the notion of
genentropy touches upon the deepest outside of thought - an unthought, where the interiority of
thinking is always in contact with outside forces, just as its multiple and distributed nature sits within an
absolute outside (the immanent reciprocity of relations as a fact of force). As I discussed in CHAIR 1,
forms of identity are forever unstable because the configurations of force they comprise are given by
singularities that are always in a state of flux - forever framing and deframing. Political forms of power
are no longer simply the disciplinary regulation of a population from above, but a nonlinear system of
control thresholds governed by margins of tolerance, distributed across multiple agents and scales of
reference. If we are always already affected, identities at whatever scale exert an in-fluence not only
top-down at the formal level, but also bottom up - where a particular configuration of forces also
operates transversally at the level of the absolute outside, as a power to induce us, seduce us, compel
us etc: biopolitics / anatomopolitics.¹⁷³ The affective power of political Power is a slippery sinkhole. It
affirms the stability of its interior as something to ‘grasp a hold of’, and yet the attraction of such
identities, in the very way we feel affiliation, is always already working through how we ‘hold it
together’, in our tentative ‘holding open’.

The ‘answer’ to the problem of this double bind is again to problematise their co-emergence, to hold
them open to transformation as an endless process of creative invention. For contemporary
architecture, the notion of historical typologies that may be seen to express ideal forms of political
power - the monumental edifice of state power - has been endlessly dislocated, reoccupied, and
reinvented.¹⁷⁴ As I’ve noted with regard to Eisenman, the explicit form of the diagram disappears or
sinks into the affective dimension of the work. The monumental quality of ‘presence’ displayed in the
power-form of the edifice, now becomes instead an untimely series of affective phase shifts within and


¹⁷⁴ See Leach (1999), for an anthology of writing on the subject of ‘Architecture and Revolution’.
across the individual and the social, overflowing one another at the pre-individual level of singularities.\textsuperscript{175} This research by practice has seen a series of singular transformations of presence unfold. In the warehouse it was the appearance of plastic specters flickering like ghosts between body and building; singularising their multiplicities in the encounter with the graffiti artists. In the dance training, it saw the dislocation of the image as a representational device through generative traits of particles and signs - their involution singularised in the image of the Menger sponge. In \textit{Chaise traceur}, it was the shift that occurred when I dropped the soap, and when ‘the skin’ appeared as a singular transformation of all that had come before. In \textit{Gargoyle}, it became a skin that singularised all the forces at play in a more constructed manner, so that what appeared may now be clearly articulated as a negentropic power. In all cases, there is a transverse inducement that turns through the outside of the inside, a pure reciprocity or mutual constraint of power and force, form and affect.

\textit{Forever towards a new critical turn, turning upon a negentropic principle}

An aspect of the post-critical turn in architecture has been a reluctance to engage with the question of political power directly. After all, it’s not architecture’s job to do politics, right? Just as the post-war break saw the need to redefine the disciplinary autonomy of the discourse in purely formalist terms, the post-critical turn saw a shift (both deeper and wider) towards the processual emergence and the operative performance of form.\textsuperscript{176} However, even at the level of process and operation, architecture finds its own political implications: simultaneously and reciprocally, in the constraints of collaboration and partnering, client briefs and site restrictions - as much as their end effects upon the user, the wider urban field, climatic considerations, and so on. Post-critical architecture - if it may be identified in its tendencies and trajectories - may assume a broader position through the reinvention of nature and the body. And yet, too often this becomes a purely formal and/or computational abstraction that fails to become a lived affective dimension.

This is where a critical disposition is ‘absolutely critical’. It would be one that calls for a new critical turn that ‘turns upon’ all these outsides - nature, body, theory, power - to find an absolute condition opening within and across them all. I’m not calling for a new movement, but rather looking for the movement of the new, how it moves us, how it turns inside out through both forms and relations. This is where the concept is critical as a creative force - whether it comes from ‘theory’, ‘philosophy’, ‘practice’, or across them all. The power of the concept is inseparable from its power to affect, for it holds open thinking and feeling in a way that may supercede the individual. It performs an abstraction of identity in the

\textsuperscript{175} As noted earlier, I previously wrote a chapter on the experience of visiting Eisenman’s Holocaust Memorial in Berlin; put aside for want of sufficient scope in the thesis, but which I aim to revisit for future publication potential.

\textsuperscript{176} See Daniel Barber for a critique of Eisenman’s ‘Autonomy project’ from a broader anti-humanist view of the diagram - via Marx, Althusser, Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari (Barber, 2005). See also Hal Foster regarding more recent iterations of the post-critical turn (Foster, 2011; 2012). See also Alejandro Zaera-Polo’s ‘The Politics of the Envelope’, and Douglas Spencer’s critique of this paper (Zaera-Polo, 2008; Spencer, 2011). See also Massumi on Greg Lynn’s ‘animate architecture’, where he proposes socio-political dimensions implicitly at work at the level of process and operation (Massumi, forthcoming, 2012).
same way that the gargoyle became a character of singular characteristics in mutual constraint with prawn and crew.

The concept may perhaps by default be assumed to lie in the realm of thinking, but its emergence as a lived abstraction should be judged in the way it gives affect to thought - provides or furnishes it as a performative force (for our ‘completion’). It is no longer a pre-given form that we find in an idea, but a force of the imagination - a ‘frame of mind’ spread across many things and by which it is transformed. Critical thought is crucial to the concept because it has the capacity to make these leaps across the outside of things - from material intelligence to the invention of a people. Forever tentative and unstable, affect needs the concept to give it a singular impetus within thought, just as much as the concept can only really come into being in the first place as an affective entity. Even philosophy, in identifying the absolute outside that passes across power and force, may be turned to other ends, ‘falling into the hands of the oppressor’. However, the question of ‘what works’ is ethical as much as it is operative. The capacity to transform affective openness, and the way in which a concept may multiply this potential, is judged in the extent to which it creates ‘a life’ that may be taken up by others, and the specific manner in which it induces them to do that. The eternal dilemma of negentropic relations, for theory and practice vis-a-vis politics (praxis), turns upon the question: in whose name am I speaking, and for whom? This becomes a matter of finding in the words of others a capacity for reinvention, through a lived materiality that overflows practice - to produce a concept that invokes a people, so that it may be taken up anew.

The notion that ‘everything is political’ is now perhaps one where the ‘status quo’ exists on the same plane as the immanent tonality of auto-affection. What Foucault calls the ‘singular universality’ of biopower and biopolitics is already given in the fact that we are always overdetermined by tendencies and incipient traces from the outside. The problem of emotional expression that appears in different forms throughout this research is then akin to all our ‘political animals’ that come to populate the social sphere. The performative force of the gargoyle, as an architectural figure, offers a tentative dislocation between form and force, identity and singularity. Political territories - in the way we negotiate them, might then become more productive as a movement through affective openness, via a principle of negentropic sponging - by tapping into our own ‘inner gargoyle’.

The edifice of identity, the monument of memory, the premises of the self - can always be reoccupied and reinvented by a peopling. Forms of power may instead become incipient potentials, because they are already felt in all the bodies and selves to which these structures ‘extrude’ their implicit effects. Like the historical gargoyle straining out from the parapet, we are caught in a liminal zone between a state of power and state of nature (auto-affection), always already exhausted by the excess or

177 See Eyal Weizman’s critique - how the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari are co-opted by the ‘Operational Theory Research Institute’ of the Israeli Defense Force, to theorise the practice of counter-insurgency techniques. A parallel could also be drawn here with or against Polo’s reading of the educational context vis-à-vis market-led forces, as noted in Spencer (see Zaera-Polo, 2008; Spencer, 2011).

178 Foucault deconstructs this notion through an analysis of governmentality, as a ‘singular universality’, in terms of biopolitics and biopower (see Deuber-Mankowsky, 2008).
overflow of this hybridity. Perhaps the future of the gargoyle may be when we tire of maintaining the edifice against the forces of our own nature, and instead unleash them - to fly from the parapet in a grotesque chorus, a gargling cacophony.

The value of this Doctoral Research for future work

For me, the gargoyle has now become a kind of processual prompt for future work, centered around a negentropic principle, both as an implicit sensibility and in some cases as an explicit architectural figure. I’m currently developing a major project, to follow the PhD, which operates more specifically within a cross-cultural context of collaboration and participation, and at a broader urban / architectural scale. This project - grobak Padi - picks up the implications of prosthesis along a new trajectory. As discussed, prosthesis immediately followed the Gargoyle project, and served as a Coda for the Chair Series. Its also where many of the ideas around the genius loci informed these earlier works (albeit retrospectively) through the animist context of performing in Batu.

The choreography in prosthesis moved through a process of internal imagery, like a series of affective atmospheres whereby each gesture or action with the chair was held having different members of my own family in mind. The chair was chosen for its material signs of wear and tear, as a kind of ‘familiar’ - by which I might evoke a people from it, through a prosthetic dislocation similar to Gargoyle and Chaise traceur. My evocation of family then became the sign of a return to my hometown in Christchurch, New Zealand. I spent over a year in Christchurch, initially to focus on the final writing stage of the thesis, and to complete the video post-production on Gargoyle with animator, Tim Budgen. Then a major earthquake hit the city on February 22, 2011: 6.3 on the richter scale, killing 185 people and decimating the city centre. It was here that a deeper sense of prosthetic dislocation attained in a very real way what Cache describes as the ‘skin of the earth’ - as the geographical inflection of a people through the absolute outside.

Home... to the spirit of a place, in its dislocation

The affective shifts that unfolded were profound and pervasive, felt simultaneously at the geological, psychophysical, personal and collective level. The quakes and endless aftershocks produce a tentative dislocation that affect people in different ways, but always within and across shared frames of

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179 grobak Padi is a multimedia performance work for Melbourne Festival 2012, in collaboration with Tony Yap and Agung Gunawan, produced through Multicultural Arts Victoria. The project uses 12 traditional Indonesian food carts (gerobaks) to generate a mobile urban mapping, live-linked between Melbourne and Yogjakarta (Indonesia). The first iteration of this work - transGROBAK (Jogja National Museum, 2010), was produced in Yogjakarta just after prosthesis, through a residency I received from the Australia-Indonesia Institute, and hosted by Performance Klub.

180 Now for grobak Padi, a different sense of object relations and cultural artifacts, as affective intermediaries, is transposed to the food carts, while the relationship to food appears once more but now in an entirely different and quite specific cross-cultural context.
reference. At first there was the collective trauma of the event and its immediate aftermath. Then with the entire CBD closed off - a ‘red zone’ - Christchurch became a city without a centre; as we grieved again as hundreds of iconic heritage buildings were demolished. The lost centre felt frozen in time, like the post-apocalyptic film ‘The Quiet Earth’ (New Zealand, 1985); a place of sadness but also strangely full of potential, waiting for renewal and reinvention. Video and photographic series showed the CBD as a place without people or traffic, where you could hear the birds. Like the warehouse of my Pre-amble, an abstract desert opened in the heart of the city, holding the promise of new urban phenomena heretofore unknown. A vast sponging is at work, in which we find Cache’s singular inflections - ‘from geology to the teaspoon’ - a pure geography of the absolute outside passing through a sinkhole in our thinking-feeling. ‘When a City Falls’ (New Zealand, 2011), we feel it again and again in our gut.

In Christchurch this ‘sinkhole’ has a particular character. Built on swampy ground and underscored by underground streams, the city has been riddled by extensive liquefaction as a result of the quakes (over 400,000 tons of silt pushed up through the earth’s surface). The spirit of this place always had for me a strange mix of positive and negative tonalities, set on a flat plain and urban grid, at times evoking a surface of pure possibility, or instead like being sucked into a swampy malaise without horizon. These qualities held a tentative resistance like the surface and void of the Menger sponge, passing across still other inflections of a ‘genius loci’: the iconic Gothic architecture, sober and conservative, while also light and inventive in its picturesque composition; the cloud formations of the ‘northwest arch’ that cut through the suffocating wind of the day, to bend the very surface of the earth in a sunset gasp of violet blue. Now these abstract lines are unhinged from their historical repetition, to become tentative once more, pure signs and broken particles found flickering across other things. Between the lost city centre and the reverberating aftershocks, to the sight and smell of liquefaction, we feel an absolute outside of abstract relations in the depths of ourselves, a sponging that ‘swamps’ us.

On the positive side, this opens up a tentative disposition that takes us into the earth, through a new sense of ‘place’. With the collapse of infrastructure, lack of space and resources, a DIY attitude has emerged where people are now collaborating, participating and agitating for the new, to an extent never seen before. Our historical tendencies to establish a territory - to hold it together - find a generative limit when we can no longer assume what ‘this place’ is, nor our attempts ‘to hold it in place’ across so many oscillating frames of reference. A space of transistance appears within the sinkhole of resistance, a purely situated place of ‘holding open’ an emergent potential. As identities of place and person pass through so many shifts, a new openness can be felt in the simplest of everyday interactions. We feel it when we meet and recognize that we are ‘from here’: not a pre-given sense of origin so much as a shared contraction of having ‘been around’ through this new sinkhole of thinking-feeling. We invent this place as a people, open to finding out what it could be and what we might become. The lack of a centre has helped to generate a new public sensibility, as the singular presence of an unbearable absence. A bodily sense of mutual constraint hinges upon a shared knowledge, felt as a collective biomass that quite literally moves us.
This experience came to be reflected, or rather inflected in the process of my writing. I was already struggling with the complexity of so many disciplines, theories and practices, and now I felt myself stretched even more tentatively. The intensive space of writing is already a kind of absolute outside, a bounded intimacy of the self which at the same time plunges into and recoils from the world. Now this opened more rawly when every object relation seemed to carry the trace of a shock to thought. When someone bumped my chair my tentative disposition was already predisposed to it - for a split second my readiness response would get the jump on me, anticipating a quake. Or when all these frames of reference overflow and overwhelm me, a collapse in protention occurs (1/10): the word flow falls apart into discrete text objects like a lexical liquefaction, the sentence engulfed by the full spectrum of what might be said. All the while, part of holding it together dwells in this mnemonic proximity to an urban centre - of a place once lived but now gone, while still becoming an incipient potential not yet stratified.

The intensity of this experience offers a final insight for the potential contribution of the gargoyle as an architectural figure. The return home traces a full circle for the Chair Series. My first chair piece - the short film *pneu babel*, was produced in Christchurch in 1999, and there were many years in between before the chair reappeared through more recent iterations, and in a very different context. Now with the *Garg(oy)le* multi-screen video installation, I am looking for opportunities to present the Chair Series (as defined in this candidature) within a still larger body of work.\(^{181}\) This will be a chance to explore some of the implications of the gargoyle figure within what may become a compelling social context for the relationship between the body, architecture, furniture and geography.

The sentiment that - ‘it's not about the buildings but about people’ - appeared soon after the February 2011 quake, as communities came together to help one another, to support those grieving the loss of loved ones, and those who had lost their homes. Over a longer timeframe, as the clearing of the CBD was felt as another wound, I think we realized how much people are a part of buildings too, in the way we build our lives around and within them. Christchurch is currently going through a slow transformation in which many people are actively lobbying for an innovative design-led rebuild which reinvents its iconic ‘Garden-City’ image: through green-construction and sustainable building, urban villages, cycle paths, inner-city parklands, and so on. This leads me to ponder how the *Garg(oy)le* video might be re-sited alongside other projects, in ways that might offer a different perspective to these debates, along the lines of my earlier comments around pedagogical practice, biomimesis, and political action. The form this might take or process it may follow is entirely speculative at this point. It may be a matter of the gargoyle as architectural figure becoming more implicit in responding to the new context. This is where the sponging process may find a deeper and more tentative procedural knowing through the dislocated experience I felt in living and writing through the quake.

\(^{181}\) This larger body of work includes several other prosthetic explorations with bedsprings, fluorescent tubes and other elements drawn from the built environment, but has not up until now been explicitly presented as a series, or clearly formulated as such. The new title for this larger and ongoing series - *You treat the furniture like part of me* - inverts the familiar phrase - ‘you treat me like part of the furniture’ - thereby reversing the emotional tone: from a feeling of being treated like an object, to a sense of being ‘added to’ the immanence of existence by an ‘asignificant other’.
Now in reflecting, or rather inflecting on all these experiential dispositions - as they may be traced all the way back through this thesis to the warehouse - an idea comes to mind for the future of the gargoyle; purely speculative but also a critical proposition. If buildings are becoming more like bodies - broadly defined via biomimesis et al, and embodied selves more constructed through affective prostheses - in co-extension with built environments, at what points do they switch or hinge? Indeed, at these indiscernible points of inflection can we imagine the collective biomass of our embodied selves as a kind of ‘architecture’ at a vastly distributed urban scale? Just as our own psychophysical tonality is already co-extensive with other bodies, objects, sites and selves, can we imagine how this ‘architecture’ might comprise the construction of particular forces, in their lived abstractions? This is already happening to some extent (through the media, the Internet etc), but at what points does it take on a kind of abstract concreteness, when the mutual constraints we share become more formalized yet still remain purely dynamic structures?

These ‘structures’ might feel like those inexplicable supernatural entities we find in animist practices, the genius loci. Or perhaps they are the glimpse of an ‘architectural super-nature’ yet to come, of spectral structures comprising singular inflections that take us into new ‘multipli-cities’. Perched on a parapet, overlooking an unknown landscape, this architectural super-nature would be like an absolute inversion of bodies and buildings, through which the very premise(s) of sites and selves are resituated. In doing so, there lies the potential for a deeper recursion to gather us up through the absolute outside, opening us into a rupture of scale, through the folds of a skin that takes us into a new earth.

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182 I first heard the term ‘super-nature’ used by Peter Eckersell during a QnA session to describe a performance by Tony Yap (Melangkori, North Melbourne Town Hall, 2009; with collaborators Madeleine Flynn, Tim Humphrey, and Naomi Ota). My adoption of the term lies in seeking to develop a further understanding of this idea in a broader context.
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