

A thought of performance

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Abstract

My aim is to articulate both theoretical and practical move from schizoanalysis towards a proposition of a heretical practice, following a non-standard thought as being presented by François Laruelle. Thought and performance have a problematic relationship, especially when the presumed conjunction is a philosophical one. My proposition departs from the discussion of the nonhuman or non-standard philosophy. It aims to present an application of thought in performance art practice and artistic research and speculate on the inconsistent relationships between matter as bodies or objects and meaning created through performance. Here, practice does not represent the real but produces an 'advent', or a function of as-if-real. The particular nature of the 'advent', or practice as an advent, has only a unilateral relation with the real: it is speculative practice. These premises will open up a complex set of questions, into which my proposition does not pretend to provide a conclusive answer, but rather an elaboration of the problematics of performance-as-research in correlation with the nonhuman thought and non-standard philosophy. Inasmuch the non-standard philosophy has jarred and contested the post-continental philosophy, alongside the new materialist and post-human thought so that it will contest the concept of body and representation in performance practice, also. Do we regard performance-as-research as 'philosophizing' saturated with 'decisional' forms of thought, is a question, which will implicate a whole range of speculations on body, relationality, matter and duration? My proposal aims to ponder on these questions on speculative means and presenting them in regards to my performance art practice.

Schizoanalysis in artistic research: a production of performance

A production has a significant place in schizoanalysis, for production is perceived as a collective articulation. In the assemblage of late capitalism, the management of collaboration and processuality have a major function for these articulations. The assemblage of late capitalism is the world produced as 'immanent capitalism', or in other words, a fiction of the real¹.

In the practice and theoretical investigations of Félix Guattari and Jean Oury at the psychiatric institution of La Borde in the 1960s, the schizoanalysis was developed as a tool for performative analysis of mental, social, political and environmental factors of a lived territory. The determining factor was, how the real is being constituted as a lived territory through machinic modulations of fluxes and in conjunction with the universal references?

In regards of schizoanalysis, these concatenations constitute an ever-expanding complexity, which is experienced by subjects and groups determined by 'the world'. Therefore, schizoanalysis is a performative analysis of the production of the world. It is philosophising, where philosophy "believes itself to be sufficient unto itself to know and change whatever it comes into contact with," Anthony Paul Smith writes on the philosophical thought².

The world is an assemblage, which schizoanalysis aims to record, consume, and to which it may produce new territories, as well. In these terms a schizoanalysis is a philosophical positioning, bound with the economy *a priori*, in other words, the economy is the determination-in-the-last-instance³ of schizoanalysis.

Economy constitutes *a priori* the knowledge and the economy functions as a milieu for the knowledge to emerge.

From the vantage point of schizoanalysis, the production of knowledge in the field of artistic research is a theoretical, performative, and practical inquiry on the economy and production. The production of knowledge *decides* and *cuts off* the collective enunciations, functions and operations in the world. I have termed this as a *schizoproduction* of art, which is a machinic construct working in conjunction with other social and political arrangements of the world⁴. The artworks contained in my doctoral research on the conjunctions and disjunctions between artistic practice and schizoanalysis aimed to articulate the transformations from modernist industrialism to the post-industrial capitalism.

This project was an analysis of the affective, collaborative, and processual functions in late capitalism, and in this research, the central element was a body in conjunction with the arrangements and functions of immanent capitalism. The late capitalism produces *the world* as a unified synthesis, founded on sufficient thought and dyads such as beings–being or subject-the other. The decisional functions of capitalism are 1) positions or contest (*agon*) and 2) transcending of the foreclosed, radical immanence into the World. The capital form of thought — the philosophy of capitalism — has economic, sufficient and

1 Nauha 2016, 269-277.

2 Smith, 2016, 30.

3 Althusser 2005, 112-13.

4 Nauha 2016

productive functions, which produce the world.

From the schizoanalytic apparatus to the non-standard artistic research.

The world is produced through cuts on the flux of matter. The reason cuts and dissects, 'in a process of a scalpel', and the decision, *decaedere*, is the way to cut off from the real⁵. Through reason and reflection, we create a distance and positions, which are the primary functions of philosophical thought, argues François Laruelle⁶. The aesthetics wield a knife on the matter and the real, and artistic practice gains a position in the world⁷.

We may regard a thought as a *refraction* of reality, and not a reflection from a position. So, in the apparatus of contemporary art practice and theory, the focus is on the refractions. The world is a process of production, where the refractive thought governs the bodies, objects, animals, things, and their relations.

A line of flight is a part of the apparatus, which is a line of flight from one position to another. The performance art concentrates on the refractions of bodies. A body is conditioned through the decisional operations of refraction, analysis and representation. A decision is a scalpel, where a body is differentiated and defined by this thought.

A thought defines, analyses, explains and differentiates a stroke of paint from a face. A thought produces the Nature, the World, the Victim, the Unconscious and the Other. A thought of a body is bound with the unilateral duality determined in the last instance of the economy⁸. A body has only a unilateral relation with the thought, which undercuts the philosophical claim to dominate, that is to say, a thought is an effect of the Real, which in turn does not unilaterally affect the real. There is a unilateral separation between the Real and the world. The world has relative effects on subjects in producing them, where philosophy or aesthetics affect the beings (human and non-human), by determining them, but only in a relative sense (only in this world).

In a performance practice of mine, the interest is to regard a body as in radical immanence and indifferent to the world. It is a practice, where my aim is to focus on the decisional, but relative operations of the sufficient thought as the world. Like nature, a body does not exist, but a body is first and foremost matter. Following the non-standard thought of Laruelle, Katerina Kolozova writes, how the radical immanence in its indifference is void of content, whereas the world is the discursivity itself⁹.

A body and the Real is indifferent to philosophy, economy and the representations of art. Philosophy, economy and political philosophy produce the world; they are the conditions of the world. The world is politics! The world is philosophy!

According to Laruelle, philosophy has the privilege to talk about life, the world, art and politics, where the events of the world do not speak for themselves, but

5 Ó Maoilearca 2015, 22.

6 Laruelle 2012a, 20-21.

7 Ó Maoilearca 2015, 26.

8 Smith 2016, 46.

9 Kolozova 2014, 29.

require a kind of philosophical representative to speak for them¹⁰. A body needs a representative in the world. A representative will express and decides for it, where Ray Brassier argues how the “immanence is posited as immanent in a gesture of thought¹¹”.

However, my inquiry on the non-standard artistic research is to generate a thought, where a body is regarded alongside the thought, but indifferent to these representative positions of truth events or the production of arrangements. In my interest in the possibility of a non-standard thought for artistic research, the failure of the event leads to propose for ‘an advent of art.’

Non-standard thought

In a project, *A Thought of Chair*, which was presented at the Paimio Sanatorium, Finland in an exhibition organised by the Titanik gallery in July 2016, my interest was to converse with the architecture and the hospital furniture, designed by Alvar Aalto. My attempt was to research a performance as an advent, as an experiment on a matter and the limits of thought.

The advent has a form of a speculative performance, where our positionality in the world is being manifested, and not only represented. The world is a ‘fiction’ and a produced event. In these terms, the radical immanence of the real is seen specifically *with* a body. A body is foreclosed matter and paradoxically aligned with the ‘world-without-us’. The body is an advent of the void. A body is not open and not turned away from the thought, but in the parlance of Laruelle it is “deaf and blind, we can only love it and assist it.”¹² My inquiry for a forthcoming research is an investigation of an artistic practice, and what could this ‘assistance’ mean.

A body is not the object of thought or a ‘black box’ of non-standard philosophy, but equally foreclosed from all thought and at the same time, it is the material base for thought. The non-standard thought of artistic research regards the practice as equally foreclosed and equally material thought. Art is matter, and a thought of art is matter; a thought of a body is matter as much as the body is matter in itself. There are no exclusive interpretations or reflections of reality. Artistic practice thinks in its own right, without the philosophical representatives.

My proposition is to regard the practice as *Advent*, in contrast to the apparatus of an event, where “in the state of the event of performance, where a performing subjectivity experiences the situation so differently from the everyday, there is a sense of dislocation, intensity and lack of significant direction¹³.”

A body is not viewed as potentiality, but as a radical immanence, which does not perform *liveness* of an event, but we may only think according to the ‘lived-ness’ of a body. The postulation for non-standard performance is an inquiry into the possibility of practice, which regards bodies and objects in a paraconsistent logic, as unthinkable matter, which is not limited to the apparatus of the economy. It is an experimental practice, which begins as a continuation of

10 Smith 2016, 74.

11 Brassier 2001, 73.

12 Laruelle 1991, 2-4.

13 Nauha 2016, 48.

schizoanalysis, but emerges as an experiment of a performative research on the limits of thought, bound with the economy and performance as an advent. The non-standard performance is a proposition for an advent alongside the foreclosed real.

In the philosophical apparatus, life or art are occupied within a system of sufficient thought, and herewith the positions produced by a thought. John Ó Maoilearca writes how a philosopher provides his or her own 'black box', where all the possible worlds are captured, such as 'black box of multiplicity', which 'molecularizes' the real according to a gesture of his thought¹⁴. In philosophy, the real is the product of the possible, whereas the non-standard thought of Laruelle or Ó Maoilearca regards that the radical immanence has only a unilateral relation with the thought or life¹⁵. The 'becoming' of an artwork, is a where the philosophical black box captures and mutates the artwork, sufficient for the thought of a philosopher, and the artwork has become philosophizable.

The proposition for the non-standard artistic research or performance-as-research, would not aim to exhaust the real through positions or decisional operations, but it would need to consider the black box of itself, also. It is not practice, which seeks to direct a thought towards the foreclosure of the real or the being, since the real and the body have a unilateral relation with the thought. The advent of performance is peculiar in that it is 'impossible object'¹⁶, where it is radically foreclosed and at the same time a transcending site for reflection, commentary, critique and innovation. Then, non-standard performance thinks in a subtractive logic, that is to say, it does not augment the philosophical thought to tell us more about the real. A body is foreclosed from us, but it thinks in performance. The thought of performance is not *about* the body, but from the real, like any other thought.

Performance art does not think like philosophy, but it is 'thought as an advent'¹⁷. The performance does not think about performance, but it is thought 'in-performance' — and 'in-real'. Ó Maoilearca writes how the cutting or editing of a film is unique to the speed of thought in film, that the "speed of thought becomes the speed of cutting, but not as an input for human inferences, but as its nonhuman form of thought."¹⁸ The combination philosophy+performance will not produce more knowledge about the real, nor does practice think in the same ways as philosophy does¹⁹.

Art, like science, is not a translation of the Real. Art does not tell us how to live, even if we request it to do so, which in other words is an application to have a function determined by the last instance of the economy.

Art as Philosophy may converse about anything. Artistic practice may be viewed as a translation of the meaningless into meaningful in the economy of the world. Only in the context of late capitalism does artistic practice alongside the science become a translation of the meaningless into a new knowledge — morality, truth or how to live a life in the world. Nevertheless, science and art are deaf and blind

14 Ó Maoilearca 2015, 73.

15 Ó Maoilearca 2015, 92.

16 Priest 2007, 116-133.

17 Ó Maoilearca 2015, 107.

18 Ó Maoilearca 2015, 116.

19 Ó Maoilearca 2015, 244.

to the truth.

Laruelle distinguishes the real object and the object of knowledge that the real object is to what science relates its forms of knowledge²⁰. It is “non-thetic Identity effectively grounded upon a quadruple *a priori*, postulation of reality, exteriority, stability and unity ... the real object is what constitutes the *a priori* condition for the object of knowledge²¹”. The autonomy of the real object is crucial for the object of knowledge, in distinction from the identity of philosophy. Laruelle continues that “Science changes the order of its thought without claiming thereby also to change the order of the real: it is even a representation, but one that is also non-thetic (of the) Real,²²” or that “the knowledge may be subject to change, but the real object and the Real that it is unilaterally related to are not²³.”

In the context of late capitalism, science, thought and art are overdetermined by the economy, meaning, utility and positions. There is a drive to actualize knowledge into truths and common language, and to universalize it. The process of translation is an essential function of the late capitalism, or in terms of Guattari, for the processual Assemblage²⁴ However, artistic practice does not represent the unrealized world of the political positions, divisions or truth-values.

In the present proposition, the object is the end of the world, or the object of the non-human, in that it is only human, who will produce the world, and it is only particular humans that fit into the form of what it is to be human. Art is not an ‘illustration’ of thought, but it is a form of thought itself, ‘in-real’.

It is the philosopher or the philosopher-artist, who produces a position for an event. The aim to regard an advent, instead, is to regard performance, which do not philosophize the art or augment practice with theory, but as practice it has an indifferent position with philosophy. Non-standard artistic research performs what it thinks and think what it performs.

20 Smith 2016, 89.

21 Laruelle 1992, 92.

22 Laruelle 1992, 96.

23 Laruelle 1992, 96.

24 Guattari 1995, 105.

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