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'silvering (slowly)': augmentation, age, and mattering

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abstract

'Silvering (slowly)' was a group show at St Paul Street Gallery in Auckland, NZ, 9–13 September 2019. It drew together threads from our independent research trajectories as a response to this journal's questions around augmentation and technicity. The exhibition was a material dialogue consisting of installations and drawings, structured dialogues before and during the show, and an epistolary exchange afterwards.

The operative methodology is one of conversation between collaborators that was conceived more generally as an open-ended material practice including nonhuman participants. Without purporting to offer a single consistent position, we problematise the concept of augmentation through our conversation. By means of our rhetorical figures—the moon, mirrors, silvering hair, and silence—we question the time and matter of augmentation, and its sense of forwardness and addition.

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prologue

'Silvering (slowly)' was a group show at St Paul Street Gallery in Auckland, New Zealand, 9 – 13 September 2019. It drew together threads from our independent research trajectories as a response to this journal issue's questions around augmentation and technicity. The exhibition was a material dialogue consisting of installations and drawings, structured dialogues before and during the show, and a subsequent epistolary exchange.

In presenting a curated transcription of our letters to one another, our intention is not to pretend we have a consistent position (regarding methodology, theory, or intention), but to expose the augmented interior's seams through the device of conversation. Conversation is, for us, a way to structure practice that prevents it from lapsing, on the one hand, into a mere sequence of transactions, and on the other hand, 'a blur of generalised "doing."⁰¹ As ethnographer of human-computer interactions, Lucy Suchman, puts it, 'conversation is not so much an alternating series of actions and reactions between individuals as it is a joint action accomplished through the participants' continuous engagement in speaking and listening.'⁰² Rather than setting out with clear ideas of what augmented interiors might be, we have sought to discover something about them through joint action (Figures 01 and 02).

Figure 01 (top):

'Silvering (slowly)'. First room, with *1000-line dwelling* in the foreground. Photo: Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

Figure 02:

The review panel discusses *Elevations (from the ground looking back)*. Photo: Emily O'Hara, 2019.

from c

I'm getting old. Does that matter? I love that question—'does it matter?' It's got the everyday sense—'is it important or relevant?'—but I also hear it referring to matter, substance, stuff. 'Does it matter' might be a way of asking how matter is unfolding, persisting, or doing something in a particular situation. Jane Bennett, writing about the life of metal, hints at this sense of mattering:

Instead of a formative power detachable from matter, artisans (and mechanics, cooks, builders, cleaners, and anyone else intimate with things) encounter a creative materiality with incipient tendencies and propensities, which are variably enacted depending on the other forces, affects, or bodies with which they come into close contact.⁰³

To ask whether something matters—for example, whether this work we're reflecting on together matters—is asking how the tendencies and propensities of creative materiality are being enacted, what form our intimacy with things takes, and what forces, affects, or bodies are participating in this mattering.

So anyway, I'm getting old. I try not to spend too much time in front of the mirror these days. I don't want to be vain. On good days, I think the silver in my hair and beard looks dignified. On bad days, I think I just look tired all the time. Sometimes it strikes me as weird to see myself from the outside. Borges, for a similar reason, found mirrors unsettling:

I see them as infinite, elemental
Executors of an ancient pact
To multiply the world like the act
Of begetting. Sleepless. Bringing doom.
They prolong this hollow, unstable world
In their dizzying spider's-web⁰⁴

Mirrors augment space; they *matter*. It's common knowledge that mirrors can make a space feel bigger. But they don't just add space, they fold it back on itself, prolonging, multiplying, disorienting. This is why I liked thinking about silvering. The thinnest of films of metallic silver makes a pane of glass a mirror, pulling the world into a surface, amplifying and transposing space, and making us visible to ourselves. Perhaps mirrors were the first screens.⁰⁵

In our conversations about augmentation and technology, I came to see that augmentation wasn't simply about a surplus or supplement.⁰⁶ Augmented realities and augmented bodies are easy to understand as the addition of something new: a capability, an innovation, a possibility. But what if augmentation was a matter of attunement, orientation, code-switching, delay, recurrence, rather than addition? Silvered glass is no longer transparent, but instead wears the ageing skin of the world it reflects.

Instrumental and solutionist design ideologies, especially the idea of 'added value,' are endemic to discussions of spatial technology, and I don't feel I have anything to offer to that kind of conversation (do you?).⁰⁷

Instead, as I see it, we pose the always-already augmented-ness of space by the rich and multiple times of mattering.

Anyway, this is why I'm writing: to reflect on how augmentation matters.

from e

Nightstand consisted of a collection of hand-rolled ceramic moons, one for each full moon of 2019. Three glazes were used: white, pink, and metallic silver palladium. The moons yet to come were gathered in a bowl carved into the top of a four-legged poplar stand. Moons passed were deposited in a heap at the foot of a three-metre indigo drape. Entrants into the gallery pass between the bowl and the drape (Figures 03 and 04).

How old is the moon?⁰⁸

How old is a nightstand?⁰⁹

How old am I?¹⁰

I don't think about getting old, or maybe I do. But only through the lens of the other (the moon, a child, an ancestor, a dead parent). In this way my existence, my sense of my own duration (which is marked by births; not just my own, but those of my children, by the rise of each new moon in the sky, and by the deaths of my parents, myself, my husband, our cat, and eventually my children and their children). I see that my entire existence is augmented by spans of life–death duration

What's all this got to do with a nightstand?

Figure 03:

Nightstand with glazed ceramic moons. Photo: Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

Figure 04:

The discarded moons of *Nightstand*. Photo: Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

A nightstand. The small table that holds space beside the bed, collecting the detritus of nights past; tissues, lip balm, baby monitor, a stack of books, a box of tissues, numerous other items concealed in the drawers within; a letter from my mother, a container of crystals, passports, birth certificates, marriage certificates... three or four generations deep. These objects that authorise identity must always be kept at arm's reach in case of a night-time emergency (fire, flood, some other disaster). Alongside these innocuous objects... my nightstand is also a surface activated by light, specifically, moonlight. In the house in which we live, the moon traces a path from the back of the house toward the front over the course of any given night. On a clear and cloudless night, the silver moonlight seeps in through any available gap, striking surfaces, turning them into a silver toned landscape, and jolting me awake.

The moon is at once ordinary, everyday and somehow extraordinary and striking. The same moon rises each night. It is the same moon upon which all of my ancestors have looked, and it will be the same moon that looks down upon those who come after me. This is slow time. This is time *as* augmentation. The scale of moon time stretches everyday existence, making it bigger, larger.

It is upon the nightstand that death gathers.

The moon and its light, new each night washes over my nightstand and death gathers there

I don't think about getting old
But I think about the passing of
each night
and know that it is tracing an
unknown duration.

from n

Figure 05:

The lines of (M+B) @ruff cuts 005
projected onto the wall of the
gallery's second room. Photo:
Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

For *(M+B) @ruff cuts 005*, an audio recording from 1971 of James Baldwin and Margaret Mead discussing race has been digitally translated into a pair of quivering white lines.¹¹ They are projected low on a wall of the second room, unlabelled and with no audio track. The projection equipment sits informally on the floor (Figures 05 and 06).

What matters?—ingesting the first cup of coffee. The act of transgression that severs body matter away from the immersive pool of slumber... the invisible bubble that encircles my head, an activated force field of coercion to clock a 'conservative' line... towards the second cup of coffee that makes this world seem a viable space to dwell in—this is practice.

Ritual—the mattering in code-switching: *(M+B) @ruff cuts 005*, is the augmentation of redaction, exorcised as installation.

/*

In the first instance, a digital audio file is reduced to silent frequency waves, a visual representation of sound, that draws out, transitions, alters, redacts, and hides meaning. Inherent to its matter *(M+B) @ruff cuts 005* comprises several code-switching moments... from vocal chords activated in dialogue to recorded audio matter, from analogue recording to text transcription, from analogue recording to digital data transfer. As digital matter, it is cut, reedited, reassembled through code play as visual sound with audio redaction, then projected as a light medium. These shifting moments comprise

flows of data, from one form of matter to another, a recursive shift from analogue to digital materiality. The lines projected onto a wall in St Paul Street gallery 3 encounter a spectrum of silvering, a process of greying out and whitening that further augments the code-switch and inscription. These moments occur where the gallery faces the clash of atmospheric conditions between the interior and exterior.

Through the indigenous lens of 'genearchaology,' code-switching could be considered (a system of) othering, a paradox where other is considered same and ancestor.¹² Embedded into the material of *(M+B) @ruff cuts 005* (the now) are the remnants of its past, compressing space and time, that make the other present, the same ancestor in multi-dimensional relational realm...

*/

That is to say, augmentation of matter as code-switching is othering, a making where other is same and ancestor... the question I ask myself is, why does this matter...

from c to n

Your phrase 'augmentation of redaction' hits home for me. If augmentation is an addition and redaction is a subtraction, then your phrase is an oxymoron. But I suspect neither of those preconditions are true.

In one sense, the quivering line you projected onto the gallery wall was a reflection, the index of a conversation. The line ripples in

close fidelity to an audio track but strips away all the clues that would allow us to interpret it in the conventional way. I watched some gallery visitors assume the projection was a kind of seismograph and try to make it move by stamping. Your squirming white lines have broken their 'contractual congruity with the referent' in a kind of 'transcoded indexicality.'¹³

The nuances, challenge, harmonies and dissonances of a fraught conversation are pared back. It's particularly odd that there are two lines, reflecting the two participants in the conversation, but that the two lines are exact duplicates (or are they? Sometimes I thought I could discern differences). Difference and dissension dissipate, leaving a perfect duet.

When I draw, I repeat things. Most of my drawing is redrawing. Often this involves omission, learning to leave things out. I like the moment when a drawing becomes diagrammatic. I like the idea that I could give instructions for someone else to redraw it; that I could become redundant and excise myself from the drawing completely, and that consequently the drawing might come to stand alone, apart from me.

Perhaps something can only come to appear as augmentation by suppressing or omitting other things.

from n to e

I can't remember what I wrote, though it was only days ago. I think I am aging. I know I am silvering. I am getting older. In parts only, wiser. Particularly when I compare myself to others or other iterations of myself... some

false sense of wisdom follows—*not the extension of self where other is the same as an ancestor. Somehow that is different.*

Ageing through the lens of the other, a beat is struck. It is *tā (time)*.

This augmentation acts as a marker in a series of markers. And like the nightstand objects and silvering hair, we collect them as they demarcate space and in turn form duration, for, and of, ourselves.

What briefly sits on my nightstand is my morning cup of coffee that enables a transgression away from the immersive pool of slumber. A recursive pattern of behaviour, which, like the circling and cycling of the moon, will transition to something else. However, unlike the moon, the augmentation of its redaction does not beget its return... but for now, I sleep in the knowing that it will serve, in some way, my morning practice.

Augmentation of redaction, to hide meaning, the act of code switching, of material transitions, bares semblance to the circling and cycling of the moon you speak of. However, unlike the moon it does not always offer a return. A return to former states... for instance between Baldwin and Mead—text transcription to analogue recording, an intimate conversation between two people, race before racism, time before imperialism or time before slavery. Holding close to your nightstand—time before births, time before deaths, or time before marriage. Sometimes a shift in materials, shifting matter, ageing, is other, another or a never to return.

How or what, then, does redaction have to offer the moon (or the nightstand)? I have no idea.

Maybe like moonlight, redaction serves to highlight something that maybe absent. Something we are in need of, like the times before. Maybe it serves to remind us of what we have, in order to value it while it is here. Maybe it is to remind us that we are continually circling and cycling in a disruptive continuum from known to unknown, from life to death. Aging has offered depth, but no resolution. It offers a collection of markers that speak to duration but offers no release. Perhaps we are not looking for a release but for a holding, a holding close to.

from s

1000-line dwelling zig-zagged across the first room of the gallery. It comprised tens of metres of the designer's own grey hairs knotted together, from which hung fine silver jewellery chains. The hairlines are almost invisible, so the chains appear to float as vertical lines drawn in space (Figures 06 and 07).

The silvering of hair from the temple to the crown augments my face, slowly rendering me both transparent and metallic. The fall of unpigmented hairs which have littered my clothes and home are resurrected in *1000-line dwelling* as a knotted silver hairline precariously bridging the interval between the hefty walls of St Paul Street gallery. Lengths of luminous silver chain weight and pull the

Figure 06 (left):

The suspended silver chains of *1000-line dwelling*. Photo: Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

Figure 07 (above):

Hairlines suspending the silver chains. Photo: Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

hairline into tense straight lines. The fall of the chain is held back by the minute rise of the knots along the tensile bridging hairline. If one thousand lengths of knotted silver hair-fall can be considered as a scalar line marked in knotted increments, then the measure of each strand is a measure of lived time. The familiar 1:1000 architectural drawing scale in this instance is reconfigured as a quantity of one thousand lines and a spacing out of embodied time.

To augment is to lengthen an interval or musical note. To dwell is to pause and to lengthen a temporal interval of occupying place. Dwelling then is an act of augmentation. To dwell is to draw out. *1000-line dwelling* is a drawing out of a bodily matter within the exhibition site of display as a temporary structure of shimmering lines, active forces, inclined gradients, and vertical drops. The vertical silver chains plumb the depth of dwelling in the gallery. Circling around each line, I became attuned to the drawing, and increasingly aware that the silver lines would appear and disappear as I approached and pivoted through the drawing. At the same time as the lines were stretched and grounded by gravitational forces, the lines were animated by the vibrational qualities of light and air. Light lines formed temporarily as sunlight bounced inside the silver chain links, thickening the line weight through the intensity of the reflected light. The material agency of silver chain and silver hair created a quietly animated and vibrational field. *1000-line dwelling* was drawn and augmented by a silver quickening of matter.

from e to s

You cannot escape
You are deceived
An illusion floats around you
Casting spells, tripping you
Tripping is better perhaps
Than to disappear too early
All dust is the same dust.
Temporarily separated
To go peacefully
And enjoy the eternal nap.¹⁴

When I think about your *1000-line dwelling*, I think about the time and patience required to collect *only* fallen hairs. The willpower to resist the urge to speed up the process by yanking, pulling, brushing or combing. Imagining this process of hair falling transports me into a shared domestic dwelling, a continuous space rich with repeated everyday gestures. Do repeated gestures augment our existence? I see hundreds, thousands, millions of hands reach out to pluck a fallen hair from a shoulder, couch, table, jacket. What if those silvered strands were left where they fall, gathering in corners and under sofas like bodily tumbleweed or dust...?

I cannot help but also read across the appearance and disappearance of the silver chains in the gallery in relation to the appearance and disappearance of women in particular, as our hair loses its pigment. I have heard multiple women describe a feeling of becoming slowly invisible in the world as they age and their hair silvers. Our presence is augmented by our appearance. Sometimes we augment our appearance to remain visible.

But with your work there is a kind of magic at play... what was once invisible, once seen, cannot be *unseen*, and so I am brought into closer proximal relation to the environment that houses the drawing; the walls take on a kind of gentle tension, as I see and understand the delicate stretch of silver hair between two points. The tense relation between the walls, the ceiling, and the ground becomes implicit in holding a space that hovers between—and all the while the drawing exists on a knife-edge between the delicate and the strong, between potential collapse and an unexpected holding on.

from c

Elevations (from the ground, looking back)
faced the gallery entrance, consisting of three

ink drawings on white paper. They make reference to instrumental construction or survey drawings, particularly techniques of hatching.

Elevation drawings lift things up from the ground, twisting them into a vertical plane under an orthographic stare from nowhere. My three elevations, however, don't tend to infinity. They aren't drawings *of* something that's come before them, nor drawings *for* something that will come after them. They're not part of a chain of before and after at all. This doesn't mean I think they're somehow a-temporal, though. On the contrary, I'm interested in how time (especially the times of the ground) rolls on, unfurls, collapses, creases, and mixes, without reference to an ecstatic present.¹⁵

Figure 08 (above):

The three drawings of *Elevations (from the ground looking back)*.
Photo: Carl Douglas, 2019.

Figure 09 (right):

Detail of *Elevations (from the ground looking back)*. Photo:
Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

They have resulted from an ongoing process of redrawing. Their direct progenitors were drawn in Nga Paretaihinu, the *wharekai* of Tukorehe Marae, in Kuku, Horowhenua, Aotearoa, during a *wānanga*, in January 2019.¹⁶ These precursor drawings themselves, however, weren't anything approximating an origin or innovation; they recalled lines that I had drawn many times before. They were collected, filtered, revised, redrawn in half a dozen sketchbooks. The daily practice of drawing has cured me of the expectation of the new, orienting me instead to the evolving, regressing, migrating, in fidelity to the intricacies of a reality never fully understood.

They recall the textures and hatch patterns of geological surveys and archaeological plans, referencing compost, detritus, charcoal, pumice, driftwood, and mud. I am fascinated with the time of accumulation, of sediments that build up and wash away, of the trinkets and ephemera that stockpile in our homes,

of wrinkles and marks of age, of investment, interest, and speculation—things that subtend slow time.

My elevations answer no brief, solve no problem, signify no forward progress. If anything, they are the drawn equivalent of staring sheepishly at the ground.

from r

Heavens and Earths consists of three drawings that deconstruct conventions of architectural graphic language. Drawn in pencil on drafting film, they were installed on three sides of the gallery's second room, connected by a string line acting as a horizon. The first sheet is a cosmogram drawing from Muslim cosmologies; the second a sectional concept for a memorial to the victims of the Christchurch mosque shootings; and the third (pivoted on its corner) a derived axonometric (Figures 10 and 11).

Figure 10:
Heavens and Earths. Angled axonometric of memorial. Photo: Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

Figure 11:
Heavens and Earths. Cosmogram drawing. Photo: Samuel Hartnett, 2019.

I find it difficult to externalise—I want silence, I want to internalise, I want to withdraw.

A rupture has occurred. The invisible has now been made visible. A refractive mirroring of the true ground makes connection through separation. The ground on which I locate myself has been pulled out from under, and I now hover over an invisible plane, disoriented, and have nothing to hold on to. I am ungrounded. In this state of instability, there is a 'return' to a space of memory that questions identity and belonging. Forced to face my inside world with the world outside, I am searching inside a shadow of sorrow. After some clearing, though, I augment myself towards a horizon—I need to stabilise, augment myself. My relation to the world in time and space has changed.

Can I now reconstruct my world through architecture that responds to the rupture? Can I manifest stability? Should I resist gravity? Give weight through an edifice? Can I memorialise, or is this iconoclasm? Does it matter?

Right now, Ibn al-'Arabi's cosmological lens is providing the praxis for how I begin to re-ground myself, literally and allegorically.¹⁷ Using a theory of 'modalities of Being' via the space of dwellings (*manāzils*), I attempt to bring into Being past, present, and future at once. Synthesised to provide a cleared surface for the sublimation of peace, a surface for public prayer is laid out, and an illuminated column (protected by a cube) casts shadows over the ground, for which they fall into voids. The installation of a horizon line passing

through the drawings allows each drawing to refract and fold into each other. The horizon line stretches—it thins out the plane that divides and brings into being remembrance, reflection and matter. My installation is an attempt to suture the wound, but I know it could open up more at any moment.

from s to r

'Silvering (slowly)', brings into relation a collection of five spatial works, distributed along a light-shadow gradient, extending from the northern window into the depths of the gallery. Your drawing series, *Heavens and Earths*, dwells in the shadowy recesses of the gallery. The luminous graphite lines emerge slowly from the darkness, making visible the invisibility of sacred dwellings, and details which offer us glimpses of your imaginary world-making. My drawing, *1000-line dwelling*, positioned by the window, dwells in light. The animated light-lines of silver chain and silver hair appear and disappear as the drawing-dweller moves through suspended construction lines. Sited in lightness and darkness our drawings appear to fluctuate, becoming visible and invisible, producing temporary imaginary dwellings, and at the same time, resisting the exhibition site of display.

Marco Frascari suggests a history of architectural drawing can be traced from the building site to the drawing board.¹⁸ As the architect became increasingly absent from the building site, construction lines drawn directly onto the building site were replicated in miniature on the drawing board. As spatial designers, we learn to inhabit construction

lines of dwellings on paper. We dwell in our drawings as we conjure imaginary worlds formed through outlines, textures, and annotations.

Construction lines connect our dwelling-drawings. My silver hair lines drawn in tension between the walls of the gallery are installed at eye height to create a barely visible structure of resistance and growth. The string line which sets a consistent horizon for your drawing series draws my attention to the interplay of the miniature abstract dwellings within the macro dwelling of the exhibition site. The interplay of worlds within worlds that I can see in your cosmological drawings draw us from our everyday into a sphere of ancient knowledge of gods and love. The miniature worlds of our dwelling-drawings are detailed differently, sited differently. Both dwelling-drawings draw from the same cosmic forces of gravity, growth, movement and resistance.¹⁹

from r to c

Three elevation drawings were developed from proprietary studies that are carefully redefined in more extensive ink illustrations. Prior sketches provide the basis of a plan, but there is no exit strategy. As this architect draws, there is time for change, new thoughts, new forms, and new space. What might appear determinant and ridged is, in fact, fluid. Memory is pushed across the surface (using ink) and absorbed into the paper. There is no signification of intent, nothing fixed or finite, but there is a conviction to the black line, and there is a willingness to open and fill time. The triptych composition floats in both the horizontal plane and vertical plane, on

the page and the wall. Although the drawings are well defined, there is no specific context or inscription provided. Therefore, my broken thoughts must formulate the ground.

Enclosure filled to its capacity
pressure building up
the field is crashing,
the boundary cracking,
containment breaking through,
debris spilling out.
Parts scaling up
compacted layering overflow,
spreading over ground,
for a new earth.

An empty enclosure,
thin but braced,
holding together.
Debris pushing,
against the surface
shards fleeting but contained.
Dots mark new zones
densely packed peripheries,
accumulated but porous.

The lines of the grate are strong,
parts of me fall through,
parts of me hold on,
parts of me drift,
parts of me are excluded,
parts of me are contained,
parts of me fill the void,
parts of me are horizontal,
parts of me are vertical,
Parts of us are overlapped,
parts of us break the line,
parts of us fill the void.

from c**Figure 12:**

The review panel discusses *1000-line dwelling* in the gallery. Photo: Carl Douglas, 2019.

I worry we're coming across a bit sad and inwards (Figure 12), But then, as feminist scholar Sara Ahmed pointed out, happiness can function as a kind of social discipline:

... happiness is not simply used to secure social relations instrumentally

but works as an idea of aspiration within everyday life, shaping the very terms through which individuals share their world with others, creating 'scripts' for how to live well.²⁰

Optimism about progress is one of the most powerful of these normalising scripts: 'Bad feelings are seen as oriented toward the past, as a kind of stubbornness that "stops" the subject from embracing the future. Good feelings are associated with moving up, as creating the very promise of a future.'²¹

To resist eagerly embracing progress, to confess misgivings about our direction, to waver in our optimism, is to risk being seen as a 'troublemaker.'²²

We've been cautious (even contrary) about the idea of the augmented interior, and the logic of augmentation in general. Is there anything left of augmentation if we separate it from the business-world idea of 'added value' and the problematic concept of 'progress'?

Our concerns about the forwardness of augmentation (the sense that to augment is to add something and thus to step forward) are something like the anxieties that attend seeing oneself in a mirror. To reflect, we imagine, is also to be reflected, to be given back to oneself by the surfaces that give us context. Folded back like this, we discover ourselves in relation to a line, perhaps a crease, seam, or thread. Augmentation in our respective works implicates subtraction, suppression, redaction, or omission. But this doesn't commit us to a logic of plus and minus, presence and absence. Instead, augmentation becomes apparent as things are folded out of view or stitched into pockets.

The moon has mythical overtones of both care and the occult, of rhythm and waywardness,

of domesticity and the utterly alien. The flattening effect of moonlight, in which colour drains into silver, transfigures the most intimate and deeply familiar of spaces. To lie in the dark staring at the moon is to correspond with an elemental exteriority. It seems eminently plausible to say that the moon stares through my window at me.

Similarly, to stare into a rupture, a line that crosses our path, interrupts us and catastrophically severs us from the past, is to be rendered suddenly flat. How can we begin to reconfigure ourselves, to find new stability, to disclose ourselves as the centre point of a new horizon? What is it possible to remember when cracks radiate out from the rupture to fissure the past? The rupture leaves in its wake a before and an after. Drawing into such a rupture seems to necessarily involve searching for or constructing new ground.

Not all ruptures are abrupt, though. Some are slow and inexorable, like aging, but nonetheless require us to re-found or re-forge ourselves and our spaces. Rather than building up from the floor, we might stretch our new dwellings across it, like the weighted hairlines of *1000-line dwelling*, or a spider's web. These lines and their delicate balance might prompt us to think of the routines through which we maintain our tenuous hold on ourselves—one cup of coffee after another, drawing after drawing scratched into a sketchbook.

Without lines on which to thread our lives, folds across which we meet ourselves, we might find ourselves beginning to slip away.

Figure 13:

Caravaggio, *Narcissus*, ca. 1597–1599. Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Rome. Accessed May 15, 2020, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Narcissus-Caravaggio_\(1594-96\)_edited.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Narcissus-Caravaggio_(1594-96)_edited.jpg)

We fear becoming invisible with the silver hairs of age, of never finding solid ground again, or of finding we have nothing left to say. The most momentous of conversations might be reduced to a quivering echo, a mute ripple dying away in pool.

Narcissus, that famous paragon of self-absorption, lost and found himself reflected in water. Perhaps he could serve as an emblem

of augmentation. In Caravaggio's image of the scene, there is a partial figure, troubled and mesmerised (Figure 13). His face, shoulders, arms, and one knee catch the light, and are reflected in the water below to form a circle bisected by the line of the water's edge. The silvery sheen of his sleeves is highlighted in the reflection, but the rest of the image recedes into darkness.

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Sue Gallagher is a Senior Lecturer in Spatial Design and Director of MESH Art + Design interdisciplinary practice in AUT University's School of Art & Design. It is her understanding that spaces are not static and fixed creations, but are subtle, transformative, and communicative. Gallagher's spatial design research explores queer material imagination and dwelling through an experimental drawing practice.

Dr Emily O'Hara is a lecturer in Spatial Design at AUT University's School of Art and Design. She has an interdisciplinary practice fluctuating between performance, object, sculpture, photography, and moving image. Her work circulates

around questions of language, silence, and ineffability in relation to mourning, the maternal, otherness, and urban ruins. A keen focus on temporality and extended duration underpins her spatial practice, which weaves between theatre-based scenography, film, furniture, and object making, and performance with installation. www.emilyjaneohara.com.

Rafik Patel is a lecturer in Spatial Design at AUT University's School of Art and Design. His research examines how architecture and public spaces are politically charged. The main focus is on the Muslim diaspora in New Zealand. His creative practice uses drawing as a method to examine Islamic poetry and philosophy.

Dr Nooroa Tapuni is a lecturer in Spatial Design at AUT University's School of Art and Design. An interdisciplinary artist, Nooroa seeks to derive a correlation between seemingly disparate knowledge sets to unfold power relations. Their PhD research posited an indigenous understanding of interconnection as a cybernetic system through interactive digital art practice. It did so as a way to explore the extent that digital material can be the interface for intuitive understanding and indigenous knowledge. The researcher is currently exploring the ambiguity of communication through the process of code-switching.

notes

- 01** Marcus Boon and Gabriel Levine, eds, *Practice, Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary Art* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018), 13.
- 02** Lucy Suchman, *Human-Machine Reconfigurations: Plans and Situated Actions, 2nd Edition*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 87.
- 03** Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter. A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 56.
- 04** Jorge Luis Borges, *Dreamtigers*, trans. Mildred Boyer and Harold Morland, reprint edition (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1985), 60.
- 05** Mirrors and screens mirror and screen one another beautifully in Giuliana Bruno, *Surface. Matters of Aesthetics, Materiality and Media* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2014). Mirrors act somewhere between screen and surveillance camera in John Soane's house-museum, according to Hélène Furján, 'The Specular Spectacle of the House of the Collector,' *Assemblage*, no. 34 (December 1997): 56–91.
- 06** The supplement 'comes against, beside, and in addition to the *ergon*, the work done, the fact, the work, but it does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside. Neither simply outside nor simply inside. Like an accessory that one is obliged to welcome on the border, on board,' Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 55.
- 07** Ethnographer Lily Irani gives a critically illuminating view of the political and ideological freight of added value: 'Those who failed to add value were understood instead as sinks, as mouths to feed, as jobless masses, and as failed potential,' Lily Irani, *Chasing Innovation. Making Entrepreneurial Citizens in Modern India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), 167.
- 08** 4.53 billion years.
- 09** The first recorded use of this term was in 1862 (OED). Almost everyone I know says *bedside table* but I prefer the poetry and double entendre of *nightstand*... that this object stands and catches the night and moonlight while I sleep.
- 10** At this very moment in time, 35 years, 8 months and 19 days.
- 11** Margaret Mead and James Baldwin, *A Rap on Race* (London, UK: M. Joseph, 1971).
- 12** Albert L. Refiti, 'Being-Social,' In *Critiquing Pasifika Education in the University Inaugural Conference*, 1–11, 2007, 1. Genearchaeology is a key concept in Metuanooroa Tapuni, 'ATA: A Practice-Led Artistic Inquiry into the Intersection of Digital and Physical Environments,' PhD dissertation, (Auckland University of Technology, 2016). <https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/handle/10292/10096>.
- 13** Mark Dorrian, 'Transcoded Indexicality,' *Log*, no. 12 (Spring/Summer) (2008): 105–115.
- 14** Dejan Stojanovic, *Circling: 1978-1987* (Beograd, Serbia: New Avenue Books, 2012), 63.
- 15** 'History is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now,' Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (London: Pimlico, 1999), 261. I appreciate Benjamin's rejection of time as a homogenous and empty container for events; but I wonder about the singularity of his 'now.' What if there were a herd of nows ambling about?
- 16** In te reo Māori, a *wānanga* is a gathering to learn or deliberate, and a *marae* is the central gathering place of a Māori tribal group, particularly the open space in front of the *wharenuī* (house of meeting) The *wharenuī* and *wharekai* (dining hall) embody and bear the names of ancestors; 'Kuku Wānanga', last modified 8 Sep 2019, <https://www.drawingopen.com/blog/2019/5/5/drawing-ecologies-at-tukorehe-marae-kuku-horowhenua-11-16-february-2019>.
- 17** William Chittick, "Ibn 'Arabî," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Fall 2020 edition, ed. Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/ibn-arabi/>.
- 18** Marco Frascari and Federica Goffi, *Marco Frascari's Dream House: A Theory of Imagination* (London, UK: Routledge, 2017).
- 19** Spiros Papapetros, 'World Ornament. The Legacy of Gottfried Semper's 1856 Lecture on Adornment,' *RES*, no. 57/58 (2010): 309–329.
- 20** Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 59.
- 21** Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 217. Ethnographer Angela McRobbie writes, 'The cheerful, upbeat, passionate, entrepreneurial person who is constantly vigilant in regard to opportunities for projects or contracts must display a persona that mobilises the need to be at all times one's own press and publicity agent. This accounts for a flattening and homogenization of personhood.' *Be Creative. Making a Living in the New Culture Industries* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2016), 146.
- 22** Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 64. cf. philosopher Donna Haraway's concept of 'staying with the trouble,' *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 3; and design theorist Donald Schön's insistence that designers generate problems as much as they solve them in *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (UK: Abingdon: Routledge, 1994), 40.