

Reading on Reading: Ecologies of Reading

This exposition shares and reflects on the collaborative artistic research project *Reading on Reading* developed by three artistic researchers – Emma Cocker, Cordula Daus and Lena Séraphin – working together within the frame of the Research Pavilion #3, Venice. Drawing on our different research interests around expanded language-based practices, we – the three of us – developed and tested a series of experimental reading practices at various locations in and around the Research Pavilion in Venice during the Summer 2019, in order to explore what alternative modes of sense-making are produced when reading is undertaken artistically, that is, *as* an aesthetic activity.¹

Whilst the ABOUT section provides a practical account of the background for this research collaboration, and the different PRACTICES² show and share material from the explorations themselves, in this section we elaborate on some of the questions and concerns emerging in-and-through our shared enquiry. However, before doing so, we want acknowledge three significant conditions within which our research collaboration has unfolded.

Firstly, *Reading on Reading* is a specifically time-bound research project that was conceived as way of gathering or bringing together three different research practices within the frame of a shared rubric – *reading on reading*. Its duration mirrors that of the Research Pavilion 2019 – our shared enquiry was tentatively initiated in the preparatory stages of the Pavilion (February 2019), unfolded in Venice (during May and June 2019), and culminated (like the Pavilion itself) within the frame of *InfoLab*, (at Exhibition Laboratory, Helsinki, October 2019). As such, whilst drawing on our own extant research interests, this collaborative enquiry has been undertaken in less than one year. This relatively short timeframe can be conceived in terms of strength or quality rather than limitation. Reflecting on the experience of researching together within the frame of the Pavilion, we ask – What timeframes are needed for collaborative research activity? How does the timeframe influence and shape the nature and texture of collaboration, and the research enquiry operating therein? How does the arc of research unfold and how can we take care of its various stages – of the *pre-*, *during* and *post-*phases within the research process? When does a limited timeframe create an affirmative form of energy, acceleration and intensity, and when does its urgency slip towards unnecessary stress and pressure?

Secondly, the research questions and concerns that we now elaborate were not conceived at the outset, in advance of researching together. We began with an intuition, a hunch, only a sense of the possibilities for mutual enquiry – more than anything, we felt the *desire* to work together. We did not begin to collaborate out of need or necessity, not from a strategic vision based on pooling our respective skills and expertise. Sometimes collaboration – as

well as practice-based research itself — emerges *non-teleologically* without a determined goal or outcome as such, but rather in answer or response to an unspoken pull or call to *work-with*. Here then, how might this approach towards collaboration be conceived in resistant terms, as an alternative to the instrumentalised demands of institutional rhetoric? How does one begin collaboration when the goal or aim has not been determined in advance? To a certain extent, we did not know what form our shared research enquiry would take before doing it; moreover, before doing it in the very live and public context of the Research Pavilion. Our questions [see exposition for a list of questions voiced within our shared conversations during Summer 2019] have emerged and accumulated from ‘being in the midst’, in-and-through the doing, in the practising of the practice, rather than being known and nameable at the start.³ It is only during the research itself and in retrospect — in the development of this exposition — that we have been able to really ‘make-sense’ of the process of ‘sense-making’ that we had together engaged in. As such, it feels more accurate to say that we have *arrived* at our questions in-and-through the *doing* of shared research — through the experiential testing of different practices of reading — and this exposition has provided a space to look back at them, make our questions public, rather than reaching definitive conclusions or ‘answers’.⁴

Thirdly, a significant feature of our collaboration relates to language, where as Michael Schwab states, “Insofar as artistic research takes place within rich fabrics of practice, it is always also embedded in a multiplicity of languages — both verbal and non-verbal ones”.⁵ We three researchers — Cocker, Daus and Séraphin — each have a different first language or ‘mother tongue’ (English, German and Swedish respectively). Within our collaboration there are different degrees of linguistic agility and capability — ranging from the monolingual to multilingual; moreover, where the multilingual encompasses a range from a beginner’s grasp of another language to advanced level fluency. However, English was largely the communicational language of our collaboration: indeed, English was also the communicational language of the Research Pavilion as a whole. We acknowledge that the pragmatic use of one privileged language as the *lingua franca* of artistic research maintains the uneasy imperialism of English within the international artistic research ecology.⁶ However, our own enquiry focused more towards considering how we are each conditioned by language in different ways, and by our cultural backgrounds of using language. Different languages create different habits and patterns within reading, writing and speaking; ranging from how the sense of a sentence is grammatically structured to the way in which the mouth physically grapples with a particular letter or a word. Depending on how one’s mouth has been trained and disciplined through cultural language practices, certain letters can be more or less difficult to pronounce. We observed how the alphabet itself was sounded differently through the vocalisation of our linguistic and pedagogical conditioning, through different phonetic and phonic habits and conventions. Since our collaboration explores reading as an aesthetic practice, this variation within pronunciation and accent was approached as a further material with which to play. Though the

typographical and physical materiality of the text are explored within our individual research practices, for the research collaboration *Reading on Reading* our emphasis was on the materiality of words as they are chewed over in the mouth and mind – on the sonic and phonic aspects of language.⁷

Titling: a two-phase approach

Our title, *Reading on Reading: Ecologies of Reading*, reflects two phases within our shared enquiry. *Reading on Reading* was used as the title for our research together within the actual frame of the Research Pavilion #3. Within this enquiry, reading is approached as a reflexive activity for considering its own *becoming*, where reading is undertaken as a practice for engaging with its own process, with the very act of reading itself. Our practices attend to the performative event of reading – likewise, the texts that we chose to read together refer to the practice of reading themselves.⁸ A central text which both inspired and influenced our enquiry and practice has been Georges Perec's 'Reading: A Socio-Physiological Outline' from *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*. In this text, Perec proposes that, "Reading is an act", stating "I wish to speak of this act and this act alone: of what constitutes it and what surrounds it; not of what is produced (the text, what we read), nor what precedes it (writing and its choices ...) in short, something like an economy of reading seen from an ergological (physiology, muscular effort) and socio-ecological perspective (its spatio-temporal setting)."⁹

Whilst Perec's text is *about* reading, our reading of his text was not undertaken in order to know more *about*, where reading supports the accumulation of information or knowledge gathered or grasped *from* the text. Rather, we conceived the content of the text and our activity as somehow acting in *solidarity*. We selected this text (and others) for their capacity to engage in dialogue with – perhaps even amplify – the endeavour of our experimental practices, texts that affectively spoke to us almost as fellow collaborators within the research process. Here, the text functions as an artistic or aesthetic material to be worked with, as much as a contextual reference from which to theoretically or conceptually draw. More specifically, our own focus 'on reading' is undertaken in-and-through artistic research. We understand reading *as* an aesthetic act and differentiate it from the reading *of* aesthetic texts, and also from theories of *aesthetic response* in relation to reading.¹⁰ How can we approach the doing of reading in aesthetic terms – as a sensitive and sentient act pertaining to sense perception? How do aesthetic forms of reading shape our understanding? How does an aesthetic reading of a text shape our subject-hood in different ways? What happens when we read within the frame of an artistic environment? How can reading be inhabited *as* an artistic research practice, rather than as its theoretical support or for contextual provocation?

The second part of our title, *Ecologies of Reading*, expands our enquiry to consider how the act of reading can be explored as a practice for not only organising the relation of the reader to a text read, but also as a micro-political or *ethico-aesthetic* practice through which to re-consider, even re-organise, the

relations between self and other(s), self and world. We reflect on the etymology of the word *ecology* – drawing from the Greek *oikos* meaning ‘house, dwelling place, habitation’, to refer to the relationship, interaction and interdependence between living organisms and their environments. Whilst respecting the environmental associations that the term ecology has since acquired (its specific relation to environmental destruction and anti-pollution activities emerges in the 1960s), we ask: How can the read text be inhabited as a place of living and for dwelling; reading conceived as a meeting place for shared experience, the basis for ‘common orientation’, for *being-with*?¹¹ Moreover, how can the act of reading – especially undertaken as a social or collective activity of a live sharing of text – be approached as an *ecosophical* practice, embodying and reflecting Félix Guattari’s notion of *ecosophy* (with its three ecological registers of environment [environmental ecology], social relations [social ecology] and human subjectivity [mental ecology]).¹² Lamenting the deterioration of individual and collective modes of human life, of “human relations within the socius”¹³ alongside a crisis in the relationship between “subjectivity and its exteriority – be it social, animal, vegetal or Cosmic”, Guattari calls for the reinvention and “enrichment of modes of life and sensibility”¹⁴ through the forging of “new paradigms that are ... ethico-aesthetic in inspiration”.¹⁵ He argues that, “We need new social and aesthetic practices, new practices of the Self in relation to the other, to the foreign, the strange [...]”¹⁶ We wonder, could the modest practice of reading together contribute to this wider ethico-aesthetic project?

Drawing on this sense of reading’s dual potential as both an *aesthetic* and *ecosophical* practice, *Reading on Reading: Ecologies of Reading* explores three further interrelated foci: We ask: How can aesthetic practices of reading: (I) Shed new light on the phenomenology (or *how-ness*) of reading? (II) Transform the often-solitary activity of reading into a shared or communal act – and explore what modes of sociality, solidarity and emergent ‘we’ open therein? (III) Operate as a disruptive process, unsettling normative conventions of reading through focus on the poetic, affective and material dimensions of readerly experience? This three-fold enquiry has been informed not only by our individual research interests in language-based practices, but also by the wider frame of the Research Pavilion itself, and the research cells within which we were each operating.¹⁷ Our enquiry draws on the ethos and principles of both research cells *Disruptive Processes* and *Through Phenomena Themselves*, in order to explore ‘how is reading?’ in parallel to the question, ‘how else can we read?’

I. Our interest in the phenomenological *how-ness* of reading takes place within a wider frame of cellular activity comprising the research project *Through Phenomena Themselves*.¹⁸ Conceived by Alex Arteaga, this “research cell proposes an inquiry into research practices developed in two fields – artistic research and phenomenology – that operate with and through phenomena as their object of research or as the primary medium of exposure to and/or of their object of research”.¹⁹ As the project outline states, “The main focus of this research cell is to explore new possibilities of mutual enhancement,

refinement and hybridization between specific artistic and phenomenological research practices. Although the research goals might be divergent, both evolving fields of practice share a common base: an interest in the generative nature of our existence, alongside the mobilization of embodied subjectivity in first-person perspective processes of inquiry whose primary objects are emergent, co-constituted, intuitive, evident presences – that is, phenomena”.²⁰

Prior to the Research Pavilion in Venice, Arteaga circulated various phenomenological texts, which cell members collectively explored within the frame of a series of *Reading Circles*. Through this process, we encountered the work of phenomenologist Max van Manen and in particular his reflections on the practice of ‘phenomenological writing’ and the question of “what does it mean to write phenomenologically?”²¹ Van Manen reflects on the phenomenology of writing, asking at what point in the writing process is he – the writer – ‘actually writing’, if there is “an actual moment that he can say ‘Now. Now I am writing’”.²² Van Manen argues that during the process of writing he seems, “to be seeking a certain space. A writerly space” stating that, “In this space I am no longer quite myself”.²³ Whilst he reflects on those physical spaces conducive to writing, he further poses the question, “Where am I then” *during* the process of writing itself. For van Manen, the term *textorium* refers to a “virtual space that the words open up [...] The physical space of reading or writing allows me to pass through it into the world opened up by the words, the space of the text”.²⁴

Struck by his account of the *textorium* and the ‘virtual space’ that opens for the writer-reader, we wondered if our own experimental practices could generate insights into the experiential *textorium* encountered through reading? How is the *textorium* of reading? What would be a phenomenological approach to the practice of reading? [There is a section within this exposition called TEXTORIUM, where we integrate some of our own reflections and material findings into the very fabric of Perec’s text, as a way of further exploring the texture of the *textorium*, the virtual spaces that open up in the text for the writer or the reader.] In parallel, through reflection on Vilém Flusser’s work on ‘gesture’ – and in particular on the ‘gesture of writing’ and the ‘gesture of speaking’ – we wondered what or rather *how* is the ‘gesture of reading’?²⁵ For example: Is page-turning a byproduct of reading or is it part of the gesture of reading? What of posture? We recognised that the practice of reading actually comprises a field of interconnected gestures and activities – we asked: How is reading? *How* is the *how* of reading? When are we *really* reading? What does it really mean to read? What gestures are *part of* reading and which not? What gestures are somehow intrinsic to reading but are *not* reading as such? Furthermore, how does the *manner* in which you read change the sense or understanding of what it is that you are reading? How does the reading of a text allow you to change your understanding of it?

II. Our interest in the *we-ness* of reading is situated between the wider research concerns of *Through Phenomena Themselves* and the cellular activity of

Disruptive Processes, in an attempt to reach beyond an investigation of the *how-ness* of reading, towards the possibilities of 'how else'. Reading is an embodied practice, a bodily practice; its sense-making processes are activated through the limbs and the wider senses as much as through the mind. Research is necessary not always to produce new knowledge, but rather to explore and also *sustain* conditions of engagement, such as the corporeal aspects of reading that engage the body of both the reader and the text, inviting reflection on (in Karen Barad's terms) "how matter comes to matter".²⁶ Reading is also a liminal practice – existing somewhere between the voice of the writer on the page and the inner voice of the reader reading, complicated further once a text is read out loud, implicating other listener-subjectivities in this meshwork of relations. How do we attend to our bodies and those of others as we read, and how might this increased attention open new ways for experiencing a text, our selves, the wider environment of our practices? We are interested in how different relations are organised in and through the practice of reading? How do we bring into relation, how do we *share*? How are the ethics of reading and of *being-with* – how do you prepare for an encounter with the other, including the other of the text? Initiated by Anni Laakso, Minna Heikinaho and Lena Séraphin, the manifesto for the *Disruptive Processes* project states, "We do not separate artistic goals from the lives we are leading. Therefore the borders between intimacy, privacy and collective become active and influential. It is this liminal state that enables a study of alliances and the impact of collaboration [...] Our attitude is to do research in order to form a genuine meeting place that enables sharing. In other words we address collaborative creation of knowledge that can alter and change – be disruptive in the world. We act in favour of emancipatory artistic processes".²⁷

For Perec, "There is something a little surprising about the idea of several people reading the same thing at the same time."²⁸ Whilst reading is often undertaken as a solitary or private activity, we wanted to explore how the practice of reading might foster new forms of sociality, communality and togetherness. Indeed, for Guattari, "Social ecosophy will consist in developing specific practices that will modify and reinvent the way in which we live [...] a question of literally reconstructing the modalities of 'group-being' [*l'être-en-groupe*]"²⁹ How can we shift from the private to the communal, from the individual to the collective – what are the implications of reading together? Reading in proximity to others. Reading *with*. What happens when we start reading collectively, when different voices make up a sonic 'we' – whatever this might be? Co-incidents within reading; co-incidence – from *com* 'with, together' and *incidere* 'to fall upon'. How can the first-person subjective perspective within reading become plural, become inter-subjective, how can reading expand the individual *I* of the reader? Com-read: to read together. Towards com-readership, *common-sensing*. Reading acts as a catalyst for generating spaces of shared reflection within a given social space or situation. Reading as a prism through which to reflect on both the ethics and politics of gathering. What manifestations of temporary community emerge through the act of reading together?³⁰ How are different social assemblages produced in-

and-through the shared experience of a read text? Reading can enable us to explore the wider conditions for 'living together', drawing on Roland Barthes study of *idiorhythmic* life forms, where social connections emerge that are capable of protecting the individual's need for both solitude and solidarity, for being together *and* being apart?³¹

III. Our exploration of the disruptive potential ('how else') of reading is aligned to the wider research imperative of the cell *Disruptive Processes*, though also very present and extant within our own individual research interests. We ask: How *do* you read, or rather what conventions and habits structure our experience of reading and consequently the sense-making and understanding facilitated in-and-through that experience? How might the experience of learning to read shape our wider ways of being in the world? Perec observes that we learn to read by speaking the words out loud but are later taught to unlearn this practice – to relocate the event of reading away from the lips, the mouth, the tongue, to be taken up instead by one's 'inner voice'. How does this shift within the act of reading from the bodily to the cerebral influence and inform our relation to embodied knowledge? Once one has learned to read there seems to be no way back – one cannot look at a letter, at a word anymore, without having that inner voice in one's head. Our own practice has involved a process of willful unlearning. We asked: what happens when we reverse reading's conventions – returning to the act of lettering, of mouthing the single components of a word like a child that is learning to read, as a means of disrupting or unsettling the semantic sense of a word/text.

Could we disturb the privileged meaning of reading (as one of understanding the meaning of something read), drawing on a secondary definition where reading means to utter aloud or render into speech? What emerges when one focuses on the latter definition to the willful detriment of the first? Is it possible to be transformed by reading even if you do not understand its content? What chance poetics erupt as we read wrongly, mis-read or willfully misunderstand? For Guattari, "Ecological praxes ... generally seek something that runs counter to the 'normal' order of things, a counter-repetition, an intensive given which invokes other intensities to form new existential configurations".³² We wondered if we could dissociate reading from understanding, in the sense that one typically reads in order to better understand what one has read. Is reading to do with understanding the words? How can reading produce an "a-signifying rupture" to use Guattari's term, shifting attention towards the material, affective and relational aspects of reading – reading beyond the informational, beyond the assumed rational meaning of the words.

What forms of reading have become normative and unquestioned, especially within the context of academia?³³ What do aesthetic practices of reading 'show up' about our habits and conventions? Indeed, for philosopher Alva Noë, art is a 'strange tool' that can help to reveal the ways in which various everyday practices organise us at the level of living and of embodiment:

practices of organisation such as walking, eating, moving, conversation and perhaps we might add, *reading*. However, he argues that art not only has the capacity to reveal how we are organised but also can be conceived as a means of re-organisation. Here then, how can aesthetic practices of reading not only show how we are ordinarily organised in-and-through the activity of reading, but also how we might re-organise our selves and our relations to the world through reading in other ways.³⁴ As Perec states, “How could we teach our extra-ocular muscles to ‘read differently’?”³⁵ How *can* I read a text? Could reading happen like this or like this or like this? Reading practices are always changing, reflecting wider societal shifts and technological advances. In one sense, our reading practices at the Research Pavilion might appear stubbornly analogue considered against the increasingly digital context of contemporary reading experiences, our use of paper-based ‘photocopies’ somewhat anachronistic given the increasingly dematerialised ways in which text is now often digitally read.³⁶ While the very cultural technique of reading might already include methods, which we would call ‘skimming’, ‘parsing’, or ‘swiping’ today – digital technologies, the Internet and mobile devices have undeniably changed our habits of ‘reading’. However, our investigation focuses on an embodied encounter between the physical body of the reader, the physical space and the physical (as much as virtual) body of the text.³⁷

As previously stated, we did not initiate our collaboration with a clear sense of these three interconnected threads of enquiry, rather they have emerged in-and-through *practice*. Our shared commitment was to practise, to share practices, and that gradually through the process of practising together we might establish the terms of such practices. We focus on the *ing-ing* of research, with an emphasis on the verb rather than the noun, on the *doing* of the doing. We asked: How do we practise reading? What conditions are needed for the practising of this practice? What do we need to do to give us enough structure or a frame to allow things to unfold? We conceive our practices as exercises or even as *askesis* to draw on the monastic context of the Sala del Camino.³⁸ Yet our practices are not conceived as a means for improving our capacity to read. “Practice does not mean rehearsal”, states Jon Kabat-Zinn, “There is not ‘performance’. There is just this moment. We are not trying to improve or to get anywhere else”.³⁹ Likewise we are not rehearsing towards the perfection of a given practice. How can we really attend to the *practice* of reading – beyond the sense of what is being read, beyond ulterior motive, beyond preconceived anticipation of outcomes and insights gained? Indeed, the initial idea of *Disruptive Processes* was to generate art works *in situ* and not to bring in existing works, structuring the contribution to the Pavilion instead through a series of five workshops. In parallel, the core ethos within the logic of *Through Phenomena Themselves* was not to exhibit art works as such but to ‘practise our practice’ in the public context of the Research Pavilion – to research but also to make public the process of researching. This raised the questions: How to *do* artistic research in an exhibition space? Moreover, how does one really *do* and not simply *perform* the doing? How can we just read without our reading being misunderstood as a performance of reading? These questions reverberated at

the micro level/core of our exercises, forcing us to scrutinise the very act of reading itself. Are we gesturing? What does it mean to say I am *really* reading?

Our first phase of practising together took place within the frame of the Research Pavilion in Venice in May 2019. We approached the Pavilion as a process-oriented laboratory for live exploration, inhabiting the inner spaces and courtyard outside as a site for testing our shared practices. During the opening week of the Pavilion (and as part of the opening event itself) we bracketed specific time frames within which we would collectively explore different approaches to 'reading on reading'. Whilst the PRACTICES section provides a more detailed account of each separate practice of reading, here we briefly share a sense of how the research process unfolded. Rather than conceiving a plan in advance, our development of the reading practices emerged spontaneously, intuitively, sequentially, where we were working spatially *in situ* and temporally in the moment. Our process involved: (I) One of us proposing a reading practice (an initial impulse or instruction); (II) An agreed time frame wherein we would actively test that practice; (III) An agreed time frame directly following the practice where we would come together in conversation to reflect and share our experience. Conceived as a linguistic form emerging in close proximity to our practices of reading, conversation is approached as a practice or a research process in its own right.

To con-verse: to turn about together. To listen, to remember, to notice and pay attention when something new comes about, to embrace the attitude and approach of another, to recognise how the other's view interfaces with one's own, fleshes out one's experience beyond the perspective of a single I. Here, the critical reflections emerging through conversation are not considered supplementary to the research process, but part of its very fabric. Our conversations were recorded and later transcribed – the process of transcription itself also happening as a live event (made public and visible) within the context of the Research Pavilion. Using a 'conversation-as-material' approach, these transcripts have subsequently been condensed into textual extracts that operate within this exposition (e.g. as a list of questions generated within our enquiry; as textual reflections on some of the practices) as a means of speaking *from* our shared practice rather than only about it.⁴⁰ Within this exposition the reflections included as part of each practice are predominantly drawn from this conversational transcript: we emphasise the quality of reflection fostered in-and-through the live experience of the research, emerging in close proximity to the doing, emerging through the interplay of our different voices in live exchange.

Each newly evolving practice was proposed in response to the practice that came before, as well as in relation to the wider ecology of activity within the Research Pavilion. For example, initiated during the intensive preparatory activities before the official opening of the Pavilion, it is no accident that our first day of practices addressed the 'poetics of attention' between concentration and distraction within the act of reading (e.g. see *Lapse Louding*,

Walking-Reading). We wanted to explore how reading could operate as a notational system for attending to and marking the contours of attention within the act of reading itself. *Questions: Where are the spaces in the room that felt most conducive to concentration? What is it that enables me to go from a state of lapsed concentration into concentration? What would it be like if I walked when I was concentrated and then stood still and read out loud when I was distracted? Is breathing a way of managing the sentences that we think?* Our second day of shared practice focused on the vocalisation of intonation and affect within the process of reading (e.g. *Re-Sensing, Weightlifting*). *Questions: What would be my tone, my tonal attitude? Do tone and intonation mean the same? What is the difference between emphasis or intonation and force and volume? Is the re-sensing happening in the voicing or the listening? What would it be to put the tonal emphasis on the non-important?* On the third day, our emphasis shifted to address practices for site-specific or site-attentive reading, a practice of *site-reading* within which we considered the relation of reading to both actual external space and the virtual space of the *textorium* opening up to us through the act of reading (e.g. *Space Sounding; Shoaling; Synchronic Looping*). *Questions: Does focusing on spatial thresholds invite a different question? How can I reverberate something in a space and see if it has an effect or not? Did we get to the point of connecting with the space?* Our process of questioning reflects an embodied attitude – the delicate yet tenacious testings of improvisatory enquiry.

In the PRACTICES sections of this exposition we elaborate on the nine reading practices that we tested and developed during this period, where for each practice there is a description or even a kind of ‘score’ – which we hope can be used by others in the future for their own explorations – alongside an archive of material findings and documents from our own investigations. Certainly, the issue of both the document and the archive present interesting questions for the artistic researcher, as well as for the field of artistic research more broadly. Whilst the shareability of one's research is arguably necessary (particularly in the academically-defined arena of research), it is not always clear at the outset of a research process what needs to be recorded, documented or captured and *how*?⁴¹ Whilst the conventional focus within artistic practice might be on the documentation of artworks and their exhibition, within artistic research the activity of documentation might well address the research process as much as its resulting outcomes and artefacts – the tests, trials and failures as much as the points of resolution and success.

For Robin Nelson, “A key challenge ... is dissemination by way of the articulation and evidencing not so much of the practice itself (though the practice is a crucial mode of evidence) but of an overall research enquiry.”⁴² He argues that whilst, “audio-visual evidence of the ephemeral event can never be mistaken for the practice itself ... insights into how it might have been variously experienced as a sequence of moments in time might nevertheless be imaginatively understood.”⁴³ However, Nelson also cites Matthew Reason to acknowledge that, “There can be no concept of documentation without a sense of that which is not (or cannot be) documented”.⁴⁴ Rather than striving to communicate the totality of a research

process through any single means, Nelson advocates a selected, fragmented, disjointed, multi-perspectival and multimodal approach, where “the incompleteness or partiality of any one medium or document can be buttressed by information gathered from another.”⁴⁵

For artistic researchers, the challenge of communicating the research process, findings, discoveries or insights, as well as the creative outcomes of the research can often be one of *showing* as much as *telling*, where non-linguistic (visual, material, audio, performative) as much as linguistic methods will need to be cultivated for exposing / showing / evidencing / recording / holding / noticing / chronicling / reflecting the *doing* of the doing. For Dieter Mersch, “Art portrays, exhibits, presents and performs, but the decisive epistemic modus of these varying practices is always showing. Key to an epistemology of aesthetics is a detailed reconstruction of these varying ways of showing.”⁴⁶ He argues that, “Art does not know because it speaks, instead it makes recognizable by showing”⁴⁷ further elaborating that by “‘showing’ and ‘manifestation’ we do not mean expression, but exhibition and exposition [...] We are dealing with ‘showings’ that in equal measure reveal something and show themselves while in showing, hold themselves back ... their *métier* is not representation, but presence.”⁴⁸ But how might one articulate the process of research through showing rather than just telling? What does one *need* to show – what aspects of the research process are important to communicate to others; which parts of the process itself need to be captured, revealed and shared in order to expose practice as research? What different forms could this showing take?

In parallel, the relationship between the artistic process and its documentation has an extensive history within Conceptual Art, Land Art and Fluxus, where the differentiation between the artwork and its documentation has at times been deliberately blurred or challenged; where the artwork exists only through its documentation, or else where the documentation *is* the artwork.⁴⁹ Within the field of performance and live art, the role of documentation and the document has been highly contested, historically drawing on theorist Peggy Phelan’s oft-cited cautionary against the attempt to capture the experiential, ephemeral nature of performance, where she states, “Performance’s only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance”.⁵⁰ However, more recently, as curator Bridget Crone argues, many contemporary artists are now “interested in articulating a sense of separation . . . between the ‘live’ unfolding performance and the quoted or re-enacted material”⁵¹ and “have already radically disrupted these neat separations between the liveness of the body and the not-live status of the image” where “staging becomes a means for re-thinking and re-configuring the relationship between body and image, between immediate experience and mediated information, between projected image and performed body.”⁵² Additionally, the issue of documentation also resonates with ideas emerging from within non-representational theory such as the writing of Nigel Thrift,

who advocates moving ‘beyond representation’, beyond signs that stand in place of something else.⁵³

Whilst not the explicit focus of our research, these ideas have informed our own approach to documentation and the archive. We do not consider an archive as being a repository – a non-changing record of the past – but rather as a phase in the process of research, active in both the present and future sense. The materials that we have gathered pertaining to our practices are fragmentary and incomplete – an assemblage of parts rather than a coherent whole. In places, the material is documentary – that is, a record of something having happened, the evidencing of an event. In parallel, we have explored the potential of the research ‘document’ rather than just documentation, where the materials are less about re-presenting what ‘has been’ but rather are intended more like scores or propositions for future activation, for new tests and further experimentation by the potential reader.⁵⁴ Here, we conceive the performance document less as an indexical record of ‘being there’ – of what is now ‘past’ – but rather as a malleable material dislocated from its original context and brought into new configurations. We are interested in the interrelationship between showing *and* saying, between the visual *and* the linguistic – our material archive comprises both image and text. Indeed rather than translating the embodied experience of practice into language, the textual fragments themselves attest to the bodily rhythms of *voicing* (since they are extracted from recorded conversation) as well as to the bodily labour of transcription (over 30,000 words transcribed over a number of days).

Sharing Practices

Following the first phase of our collaborative exploration in May, we returned to the Research Pavilion again in June 2019, to further nourish and share our enquiry within a larger community of other language-based artist and practitioners. In parallel to our own *Reading on Reading* investigation, we co-organised and hosted a 3-day research event called *Convocation: On Expanded Language-based Practices* (16–18 June 2019). Forming part of the wider public programme for the Research Pavilion, we conceived *Convocation* as a call to come together, a gathering of expanded language-based practices. Weaving between artistic research and phenomenological approaches, this 3-day event included open workshops, live research, collective writing / reading exercises, and performative lectures, and was conceived as a reciprocal space for creating viable interconnections with a wider international community of artistic researchers (a multitudinal ‘ecology’ of contemporaneous practices) through a material encounter with language experienced in its diversity (See *Convocation*).

Convocation was a way of contextualising our investigation of reading as an aesthetic practice in relation to other artist-researchers working with language in an expanded sense, as well as creating a context for us to test some of our practices with a larger group, for further exploring the emergent *we-ness* generated in-and-through shared acts of reading.⁵⁵ For example, on 16 June

2019 *Convocation* participants were invited to engage in a practice of *Walking-Reading* from the Campo in front of Chiesa di San Gerardo Sagredo in Sacca Fisola, along Calle del Large Lavraneri and Calle Convertite, arriving at Campo San Cosmo, Giudecca, whilst reading Perec's text *Reading: A Socio-Physiological Outline* (See *Walking Reading*). From here, we engaged in a shared practice of *Circuiting* on the steps of the Chiesa dei Santi Cosma e Damiano and in the courtyard of Sala del Camino (See *Circuiting*). Since our initial phase of research activity within the Research Pavilion in Venice we have also shared our *Reading on Reading* practices with other researchers within the frame of InfoLab at Exhibition Laboratory (Helsinki). We invited attendees at the opening event (on 24 October 2019) and research seminar (on 26 October 2019) to engage with us in the practice of *Lapse Louding* (See *Lapse Louding*).⁵⁶

Throughout our three-fold enquiry around the *how-ness, we-ness* and *how-else-ness* of reading, the practice of reading has been folded back on itself as a reflexive gesture for attending to its own ecologies of practice – through the affective poetics of attention and resistance; vocal intensity and intonation; as well as the social-spatial relations between site and subjectivity produced in-and-through reading. Whilst *Reading on Reading* has evolved as a collaborative research enquiry, it nonetheless draws on and expands our own individual research interests around reading. Indeed, the practices of reading that we have tested within the frame of *Reading on Reading* can be located and contextualised through the prism of three thematics that acknowledge the specificity and singularity of each individual researcher's own ongoing enquiry within this collaborative exploration. For example, the reading practices *Walking Reading, Lapse Louding* and *Circuiting* stem from Emma Cocker's research, her interest in the poetic, aesthetic as well as affective aspects of reading. In the section of this exposition entitled *Poetics of Attention*, Cocker brings her previous investigations in-and-through reading into dialogue with Michelle Boulous Walker's, *Slow Philosophy: Reading Against the Institution*, in order to ask: How do we read as artists, as writers, as poets? Against utility, against informational acquisition: what other modes of reading might we cultivate? Reading as resistance; reading as reparation, reading as experimental adventure.⁵⁷ What different kinds of sense-making are generated through different critical-poetic practices of reading? What emerges in the shifts and slippages from one text to another; in the chance encounter between words; in the gaps and intervals; in the breath; in the stumble and the pause?

The practice of *Lettering* bridges between Cocker's interest in the 'poetics of attention' and the chance poetics emerging through different modes of attending (close up, myopically) to language, and Cordula Daus's exploration of the phenomenon of the voice and vocalisation. The reading practices *Re-sensing* and *Weight-lifting* further extend from Daus's own investigations into where and how meaning originates and occurs (literally, where meaning takes place) and how sense-making can be destabilised. Throughout her artist book series *Toponymisches Heft* Daus has developed the notion of 're-sensing' (Entsinnung). "Re-sensing is a psycho-onomastic technique (...) which

enables to recall the origin of a thing and to get rid of its meaning at the same time.”⁵⁸ Applied in the right form and with a little bit of luck, re-sensing can enable “new wordings of the world.”⁵⁹ Tested for the first time on Spanish colonial place names and further deployed by the (fictional) linguist J.C. Duenkel, Daus has recently explored re-sensing of specific word-phenomena through live vocal improvisations. In the section of this exposition entitled *Vocalisation*, Daus gathers a constellation of research fragments from her works in order to ask: How and where does meaning emerge in/through reading? How are we being affected by it? Is there an intensity of meaning? If yes, how can we modulate, dose or abstain from it in-and-through reading?

The three reading practices *Space Sounding*, *Synchronic Looping* and *Shoaling* can be situated in proximity to Lena Séraphin’s ongoing exploration of the capacity of collaborative acts of writing and reading to shape both the experience of public space and the emergent subjectivities therein. In the section of this exposition entitled *Site and Subjectivity*, she brings documents and reflections from her recent research project *RE/WORDING* into dialogue with architectural theorist Jane Rendell’s essay *From Critical Spatial Practice to Site-Writing*. Extending from her experimental writing project *Wording – Collaborative Writing in Public Space* (in which a gathering of 50 writers were asked to ‘word’ – notate, record, observe, attend in words – a specific public space, inspired by Georges Perec and his experimental work *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris*, 1975), *RE/WORDING* involves a process of collaborative reading in order to shape a public space using words, and through the positioning of oneself in shared spaces. What happens through the reinsertion of a text back into the space of its becoming through reading? What happens when that same text is read elsewhere? How does the read text become operational, when it starts to reverberate in space? How can a shared reading practice operate with *infraordinary subversiveness*?⁶⁰

The shared aim of these three different pages within our exposition – *Poetics of Attention*, *Vocalisation*, *Site and Subjectivity* – is to situate specific aspects of our collaboration *Reading on Reading* in relation to the broader lineage of our own individual research practices, therefore the format for these pages varies. By differentiating our shared research enquiry into these named thematics, we acknowledge that whilst our collaboration has enabled the co-production of research emerging between the lines – or in the subtexts – of our different practices, it simultaneously provides a fresh context within which we might reflect back on and nurture our own extant interests. Here, the energies of collective and individual research activity are not mutually exclusive, but rather operate symbiotically. Within this exposition, we aim to exercise a sense of the *idiorrhhythmic* nature of collaborative practices of research (as much as practices of reading): towards an ecology of research and reading predicated on the delicate relation between being-with and being-apart; between engagement and withdrawal; between solidarity and singularity; between the ethics and politics of both gathering (togetherness,

commonality) and dispersal (separation, departure).

Indeed, in considering the fragile ecologies of practice, is there a risk that increased (over-)emphasis on collaboration (especially as it is championed within institutional strategic rhetoric) might come at the expense of, overshadow or eclipse other modes of relationality and *being-with*? Within our own process of shared research (which we call 'collaboration' for want of a better word) we acknowledge the presence of many species of proximity and community, we-ness and near-ness, different manifestations of the prefixes co- (together; joint or jointly; mutual or mutually, in common) and com- (beside, near, by, with): participation; observation; conversation; caring/curation; listening; hosting; guesting; audiencing; supporting; bearing witness; hearing out; feeding back; offering help; spending time; sharing time; sharing resources, world-building.⁶¹ Receptivity. Generosity. Reciprocity. Beyond co-production, we experience co-operation, co-inhabitation, co-existence, even the co-incidences through sharing space and time together (of experiences or occurrences existing at the same time). Does the emphasis on collaboration within academic research rhetoric risk the prioritising of working or labouring together (from the Latin *collaborare* 'work with', from *com* 'with' and *laborare* 'to work'), whilst failing to acknowledge the implications and shared responsibilities of really 'living together'? How can we create ecologies of practice whose concerns extend beyond the imperative of work and production, whose values are more ethico-aesthetic than economic?

In *The Ecologies of Attention*, Yves Citton argues that contemporary neoliberal life is marked by a gross overabundance or excess in terms of production, whilst there is simultaneously a critical deficit in or exhaustion of our collective and individual attention. He traces the emergence of the 'attention economy' within late capitalism, an economy whose "principle scarcity is attention rather than the traditional elements of production".⁶² Citton asks: "What can we do collectively about our individual attention, and how can we contribute individually to a redistribution of our collective attention?"⁶³ One point of focus within his argument addresses the potential of 'joint attention', collective attention and even individuating attention – where "The co-construction of subjectivities and intellectual proficiency requires the co-presence of attentive bodies sharing the same space over the course of infinitesimal but decisive cognitive and emotional harmonizations".⁶⁴ Here, Citton's description of joint or even 'presential co-attention' resonates with the quality of shared attention that we experienced together within our reading practices, where "several people, conscious of the presence of others, interact in real-time depending on their perception of the attention of the other participants".⁶⁵

Citton seeks to reconceptualise the vocabulary through which contemporary attention has been inscribed, moving away from the language of 'attention economy, economics of attention, economy of attention' towards the notion of an ecology or even (drawing on the work of both Norwegian philosopher

Arne Naess and Félix Guattari) an *ecosophy* of attention. Following this line of thought, does the call towards 'ecologies of practice' similarly attempt to wrestle research away from the increasingly economic basis through which it is often institutionally valued (with the emphasis on knowledge production, transfer and exchange)? Beyond the *production* of new knowledge, new insights, new revelations, might not artistic research play a role in the cultivation of reinvigorated forms of attention, of being attentive; the reformulation of a research culture for gently tending and attending to one another's research processes and practices, rather than fixating on the production of more and more knowledge in an already over-saturated 'knowledge economy'? Can we shift the notion of what artistic research *does* away from the preoccupation with knowledge production, to better consider the ecologies of shared practice that researching artistically – researching aesthetically, researching attentively – gives rise to?

Throughout this exposition, we implicitly relate the philosophical questions of ecology to the contemporary realities of artistic research practice, as manifested within our own research project *Reading on Reading*. Drawing on the notion of 'ecosophy' as much as ecology, our own concrete practice has enabled us to reflect on Guattari's three ecological registers of environment [environmental ecology], social relations [social ecology] and human subjectivity [mental ecology]. Rather than being bent on the individual production of knowledge, *Reading on Reading* has involved the ethics and politics of shared research practices. We acknowledge the importance of research environments such as the Research Pavilion for the *cultivating* of artistic research, however, we wish to invoke the etymology of this term to refer to the labour of care; the devotion of special attention or the promotion of mental growth or development, rather than to the practice of tillage, the preparation of a ground for productive yield. Indeed, the term *culture* refers to the tilling of land in anticipation of production, for an increase in the desired outcome or 'crop'. How can we shift the emphasis from the privileging of production towards attention and care; moreover, from the stimulated growth of the neoliberal knowledge economy towards growth conceived as environmental and social transformation, as growth for individuals and communities in ethico-aesthetic terms? For this, we need open research environments that allow time and space, where collaborations can arise through emergent affinities rather than forced opportunities; where the process of research develops serendipitously through a receptive mode of 'finding' as much as through actively searching. As Silvia Henke et al state in the *Manifesto of Artistic Research*, "'Researching' is a form of 'finding'. There is always an element of chance in finding [...] and not the strict, straightforward 'search' (search, research, recherche) by means of a system or models which have been otherwise legitimated".⁶⁶

Rather than entering the Research Pavilion as an existing collaboration with a history of shared practice, we 'found' each other within its frame. We began our collaboration without knowing where it would lead, in the absence of preconceived research questions or methodology. Yet we did not consider

this a deficit or limitation, since the process of negotiating how to collaborate, how to share practice, indeed how to ‘live together’ – in Barthes’ terms – seems to us a central issue for creating generative ‘ecologies of practice’. Whilst we may not have provided answers to the many questions generated in-and-through our shared process of research, we hope that in some modest way *Reading on Reading* contributes to the wider ecology of artistic research through its exploration of reading as an ethico-aesthetic practice for cultivating shared poetics of attention, for the re-sensing of language through embodied vocalisation, for tending to the emergent ‘we’ that reading together affords.

Emma Cocker, Cordula Daus, Lena Séraphin, 2020.

Framing text for the research exposition *Reading on Reading: Ecologies of Reading*.
<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/618624/618625>

¹ The Research Pavilion space was the Sala del Camino which is inside the ex Convento dei SS. Cosma e Damiano in Campo San Cosmo. Our research took place inside the Sala del Camino, as well as the surrounding courtyards, and in various locations on the islands of both Giudecca and Sacca Fisola.

² Our practices are: *Walking Reading, Lapse Louding, Circuiting, Re-sensing, Weight-lifting, Lettering, Space Sounding, Synchronic Looping, Shoaling* (see also menu of practices on the left of the page).

³ ‘Being in the Midst’ is the title of a new collection of writing by Emma Cocker in which she considers the ‘thinking-in-action’ within different artistic practices, through emphasis on an immanent and embodied species of thinking that arises only in-and-through the *doing* of practice.

⁴ Henk Borgdorff argues that, “research (and not only artistic research) often resembles an uncertain quest in which the questions or topics only materialize during the journey, and may often change as well”, ‘The Production of Knowledge in Artistic Research’, in Michael Biggs and Henrik Karlsson (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts*, London: Routledge, 2011, p. 57.

⁵ Michael Schwab, Editorial introduction for JAR (Journal of Artistic Research) Issue 18, <https://www.jar-online.net/issues/18>

⁶ As Schwab states, “it is important to challenge the hierarchies that come with such limitations insofar as they inscribe particular preferences, which often claim universal status as either the only possible or a necessary order of things. When such an order predominates, however, it skews the image of artistic research that emerges, creating many misunderstandings”. Editorial introduction for JAR Issue 18, <https://www.jar-online.net/issues/18> As of Issue 19, JAR is accepting submissions in Spanish, Portuguese and German.

⁷ For example, Cordula Daus explores the sign and ‘its physiognomy’ within her own research practice. In her narrative fiction *Jens*, the use of type, font style and size are used playfully to reflect on the bodily presence of a proper name/person. Her interest in the corporeality of signs is also reflected in the presentation of materials within the practice of ‘re-sensing’ where the type of fonts, kerning, line spacing and size have the capacity to influence the reader’s reading and intonation e.g. G A P.

Cocker focuses on the visual materiality of text within her own research project *Close Reading* (see *Poetics of Attention*).

⁸ Our attending to the 'performative' nature of reading is not to be mistaken with the 'performance' of reading. The term performativity is often conceived through the prism of 'speech act theory', derived originally from J. L. Austin's much-referenced lecture *How to Do things with Words* (1955). In contrast to 'constative language' (descriptive language that can only be verified as true or false), Austin argued that a performative utterance (provided it is uttered in a 'felicitous context') does what it says. In these terms, beyond simply enacting what it says, performative language is understood to actively create: it is 'operative' in the sense that it brings something into existence. It not only makes a statement, but also performs an action. However, the idea of performativity is an expanded – and indeed expanding – concept, where the original Austinian conceptualisation (with its various Anglo-American derivations, extensions and critiques) has been deviated within a performance studies context to refer more broadly to the mattering of a performance's performance. Within a Germanic context, the notion of performativity is untethered from the Austinian emphasis on speech, communication and linguistic sense-making and from the overtly pragmatic – even utilitarian – idea of enunciative execution that seeks to achieve a subject's (pre)intended effect, and is approached instead through ideas of embodiment, event-hood and co-creation. For example, see Erika Fischer-Lichte's chapter 'Explaining Concepts' in *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2008). Alternatively for Karen Barad, "Performativity, properly construed, is not an invitation to turn everything (including material bodies) into words; on the contrary, performativity is precisely a contestation of the excessive power granted to language to determine what is real. Hence, in ironic contrast to the misconception that would equate performativity with a form of linguistic monism that takes language to be the stuff of reality, performativity is actually a contestation of the unexamined habits of mind that grant language and other forms of representation more power in determining our ontologies than they deserve", Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2003, vol. 28, no. 3, p. 802.

⁹ Georges Perec, 'Reading: A Socio-physiological Outline', in *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, (London: Penguin Books, 1974/1997), p. 174.

¹⁰ For example, see Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978), especially Chapter III, 'Phenomenology of Reading: The Processing of the Literary Text', pp. 107 – 163. We specifically draw on the etymology of the adjective aesthetic as derived from the Greek *αισθητικός* (*aisthetikos*), meaning 'esthetic, sensitive, sentient, pertaining to sense perception'. See Harper, Douglas. "aesthetic". Online Etymology Dictionary, <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=aesthetic>, viewed 11.3.2020.

¹¹ Our use of the term *being-with* invokes Jean-Luc Nancy's, *Being Singular Plural*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2000). Luce Irigaray elaborates a model of 'being with the other' where "human becoming is considered as a relation-with: with oneself, with the world, with the other" in *The Way of Love*, (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 87. We also consider Martin Buber's formulation of an *I-Thou* relationship in which the other is not separated by discrete bounds (Cf. *I and Thou*, New York: Scribner, 1958); Erin Manning and Brian Massumi's "withness of worlding" (Cf. *Thought in the Act: Passages in the Ecology of Experience*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), and Jacques Derrida's 'being-with beyond

fraternalism' (Cf. *Politics of Friendship*, London and New York: Verso, [1994] 2005).

¹² Félix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

¹³ Guattari, 2014, p. 27.

¹⁴ Guattari, 2014, p. 18.

¹⁵ Guattari, 2014, p. 24.

¹⁶ Guattari, 2014, p. 46.

¹⁷ Emma Cocker and Cordula Daus were both members of the research cell *Through Phenomena Themselves*, and Lena Séraphin was part of the research cell *Disruptive Processes + AIRA*. See <https://www.researchpavilion.fi/research-cells>.

¹⁸ See <https://www.researchpavilion.fi/through-phenomena-themselves>

¹⁹ See framing statement for the *Through Phenomena Themselves* cell at <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/474888/507478>

²⁰ See <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/474888/507478>

²¹ See Max van Manen, 'Phenomenological writing' in *Phenomenology of Practice: Meaning-Giving Methods in Phenomenological Research and Writing*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), pp.357 – 374. See also Van Manen, 'Writing Phenomenology' in *Writing in the Dark: Phenomenological Studies in Interpretative Inquiry*, (The Althouse Press/University of Western Ontario, 2002), pp. 1 – 8.

²² Van Manen, 2002, p. 1.

²³ Van Manen, 2014, p. 358.

²⁴ Van Manen, 2014, p. 358.

²⁵ See Vilém Flusser, *Gestures*, trans. Nancy Ann Roth (London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), specifically the chapters 'The Gesture of Writing' pp. 19 – 25 and 'The Gesture of Speaking' pp. 26 – 31.

²⁶ Karen Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2003, vol. 28, no. 3. Barad argues for relational co-constitutive "intra-actions" between humans and non-humans, stating that, "On an agential realist account, agency is cut loose from its traditional humanist orbit. Agency is not aligned with human intentionality or subjectivity ... Agency is a matter of intra-acting; it is an enactment, not something that someone or something has. Agency cannot be designated as an attribute of 'subjects' or 'objects' (as they do not preexist as such). Agency is not an attribute whatsoever – it is 'doing' / 'being' in its intra-activity. Agency is the enactment of iterative changes to particular practices through the dynamics of intra-activity", Barad, 2003, pp. 826 – 827. Elsewhere she states, "We don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world", *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 185. In *Vibrant Matter*, Jane Bennett explores the "capacity of things ... not only to impede or block the will and designs of humans but also to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own", *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. (Durham, NC/London: Duke University Press, 2010), p. viii. Referring to our current epoch as the Chthulucene rather than the Anthropocene – an epoch in which the human and non-human are inextricably linked in tentacular practices, Donna J. Haraway argues that what is required is the conceptualisation of *sym-poiesis*, or *making-with*. See *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016. See also Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective', in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

²⁷ From the *Disruptive Processes Manifesto*, 2019. See

<https://www.researchpavilion.fi/research-cells>

²⁸ Perec, 1974/1997, p. 180.

²⁹ Guattari, 2014, p. 22.

³⁰ In *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (2004), Miwon Kwon attempts to articulate a shift from site to community within new genre public art, coining the term 'temporary invented community' to describe those specific social configurations that are "newly constituted and rendered operational through the coordination of the art work itself," Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 2004), p. 126. These temporary communities are formed "around a set of collective activities and/or communal events as defined by the artist" (Kwon, p. 126). Such communities, Kwon asserts, are both projective and provisional, always "performing its own coming together and coming apart as a necessarily incomplete modeling or working-out of a collective social process. Here, a coherent representation of the group's identity is always out of grasp" (p. 154). Theorist Irit Rogoff explores a similar "emergent collectivity" – those "emergent possibilities for the exchange of shared perspectives or insights or subjectivities" – made possible through the encounter within art practice, within her essay, *WE: Collectivities, Mutualities, Participations* (2004) – available at <http://theater.kein.org/node/95>. Rogoff points to how "performative collectivity, one that is produced in the very act of being together in the same space and compelled by similar edicts, might just alert us to a form of mutuality which cannot be recognized in the normative modes of shared beliefs, interests or kinship" (2004, unpaginated). Nina Möntmann's *New Communities* (2009) addresses "the emergence of temporary and experimental new communities in art and society that refuse to function as an easily manipulated mass united by a common identity"; exploring "ideas about how to position yourself as an individual, how to conceive communal spaces and to what extent communities inform the quality of public space". Kwon's term "temporary invented community", Rogoff's "performing collectivities" and even Möntmann's "new communities" might describe the temporary relationships, connections and intensities that bind together diverse individuals within the specific space-time of a participatory aesthetic activity, including reading together.

³¹ See Roland Barthes, *How to Live Together*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013). Barthes use of the term 'idiorrhhythmic' – *idios* (own) and *rhythmos* (rhythm, measure) – draws on several historic monastic communities in which each individual finds its own place. We were often reminded of this idiorrhhythmic coincidence while walking and reading in the courtyard of the Sala del Camino. The Sala del Camino within which the Research Pavilion is located is part of Santi Cosma e Damiano – a Benedictine monastery founded in 1481 by Marina Celsi, one of the most prestigious female monasteries of the city.

³² Guattari, 2014, p. 30.

³³ In one sense, our advocacy of aesthetic, affective, poetic modes of reading could be situated within a wider context of 'postcritique' approaches, which are concerned with discovering new experimental postures and stances of reading, as well as "testing out new possibilities and intellectual alternatives" to the standard operations of critique. See Elizabeth S. Anker and Rita Felski, 'Introduction', *Critique and Postcritique*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). p. 2. See also Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015). Alternatively for Rosi Braidotti, "Texts are not here to be interpreted, but rather to be assimilated,

consummated, used – or not,” in *Metamorphoses: towards a materialist theory of becoming* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2002), p. 96.

³⁴ See Alva Noë, *Strange Tools – Art and Human Nature*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015). The showing of the means through which we are organised and the capacity for reorganisation also resonates with Henk Borgdorff’s argument that artistic research can be conceived according to two different perspectives: “a constructivist and a hermeneutic perspective.” Borgdorff, 2011, p. 61. He argues that, “the hermeneutic perspective assumes that artistic practices and artworks disclose the world to us. The world-revealing power of art lies in its ability to offer us those new vistas, experiences and insights that affect our relationship with the world and with ourselves.” Borgdorff, 2011, p. 61. Alternatively, for Borgdorff, the “constructivist perspective holds that objects and events actually become constituted in and through artworks and artistic actions. Only in and through art do we see what landscapes, soundworlds, histories, emotions, relations, interests and movements really are or could be. Here lies the performative and critical power of art. It does not represent things, it presents them, thereby making the world into what it is or could be.” Borgdorff, 2011, p. 61.

³⁵ Perec, 1974/1997, p. 175.

³⁶ Whilst in Helsinki we met with artist-researcher Simo Kellokumpu to talk about his recent PhD research ‘Choreography as Reading Practice’, *University of the Arts Helsinki* (2019), <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/437088/438771>. In *Uncreative Writing* Kenneth Goldsmith refers to a new type of writer/reader subjectivity, which is produced through the influence of the Internet’s ‘ecosystem’. He compares this new strategy of reading with ‘parsing’ in the sense to dissect, analyse, dismember a collection of sheer endless data, which is not intended to and cannot be read anymore. See *Uncreative Writing, Managing Language in A Digital Age*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

³⁷ Our working materials for our reading practices were predominantly photocopies of the pages of existing books, in order to enable multiple readers to work with a shared text, whilst also enabling the presence of physical gestures such as page-turning. Reading from A4 copies of printed books also has its own sound and creates its own pauses. With additional resources, it would be interesting to explore how a shared practice of reading becomes amplified when a community of readers can be seen as reading from the same book e.g. multiple readers all holding actual physical copies of Perec’s *Species of Spaces*. This visible sense of a shared reading experience (as evidenced through the visibility of the book cover) is less communicable through digital devices, which conceal the content of reading behind the technology.

³⁸ The term *askesis* is used to refer to a training exercise, specifically in the sense that Michel Foucault describes *askesis* as the “training of the self by oneself”, See Foucault, ‘Self Writing’, in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault 1954 – 1984*, Vol. 1 Subjectivity and Truth, (ed.) Paul Rabinow, (The New Press, 1997), p.208. For Foucault, “The aim of the *askesis* was one of perpetual preparation and testing (*l’épreuve*) rather than completion or accomplishment; for Foucault, the *askesis* were conceived as “permanent preparation for a test that lasts as long as life”, Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject, Lectures at the College de France 1981 – 1982*, (Picador, New York, 2001), 2001, p. 454.

³⁹ Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Wherever You Go, There You Are*, (New York: Piatkus, 1994), p. 22.

⁴⁰ *Conversation-as-material* is a research practice developed by Cocker within the frame of several artistic research collaborations including *Re-* (with Rachel Lois Clapham) and *The Italic I* (with Clare Thornton). Within the practice of ‘conversation-

as-material', dialogue is recorded, transcribed and then distilled to reveal an emergent inter-personal textual poetics. Within this dialogic practice, the quest is for a *not-yet-known* vocabulary, where meaning does not exist prior to utterance but rather is co-produced *through* the dialogic process itself, through an inter-subjective and *immanent* mode of sense-making emerging from the enmeshing of different voices engaged in live exchange. See Emma Cocker, 'Conversation-as-Material: Writing without Writing' in *The Creative Critic: Writing as/about Practice*, (eds.) Katja Hilevaara and Emily Orley (eds.), (London: Routledge, 2017).

⁴¹ As Henk Borgdorff states, "The academic requirement that the research process and the research findings be documented and disseminated in appropriate ways raises a number of questions when it comes to artistic research. What does 'appropriate' mean here? What kinds of documentation would do justice to research that is guided by an intuitive creative process and by tacit understandings? What value does a rational reconstruction have if it is far removed from the actual, often erratic course taken by the research? What are the best ways to report non-conceptual artistic findings? And what is the relationship between the artistic and the discursive, between what is presented and displayed and what is described?" , 'The Production of Knowledge in Artistic Research', in *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts*, edited by M. Biggs and H. Karlsson, (London and New York: Routledge), pp. 57 - 58.

⁴² Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.72.

⁴³ Nelson, 2013, p. 86.

⁴⁴ Nelson, 2013, p. 72. He is referring to Matthew Reason, *Documentation, Disappearance and the Representation of Live Performance*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 27.

⁴⁵ Nelson, 2013, p. 84.

⁴⁶ Dieter Mersch, *Epistemologies of Aesthetics*, (Zürich : Diaphanes, Berlin, 2015), p. 14.

⁴⁷ Mersch, 2015, p. 115.

⁴⁸ Mersch, 2015, p. 170.

⁴⁹ See *Visual Resources: an international journal on images and their uses*, 'Documentation as Art Practice in the 1960s', (eds.) Christian Berger & Jessica Santone, Volume 32, Issue 3 – 4 2016.

⁵⁰ Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked – The Politics of Performance*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 146.

⁵¹ Bridget Crone, *The Sensible Stage: Staging and the Moving Image*, (Bristol: Picture This, 2012), p. 6.

⁵² Crone, 2012, p. 6. See also the research project *Performing Documents*, which explores the problems and potential of performance and its documents. *Performing Documents* was funded by the AHRC and hosted by University of Bristol, in partnership with University of Exeter, Arnolfini and In Between Time. See also the research project, *The Alternative Document* (curated by Angela Bartram) and the resulting special issue of *Studies in Theatre and Performance* (Volume 38, 2018 - Issue 3, *The Alternative Document*), including the article, Emma Cocker & Clare Thornton, 'The Italic I – between liveness and the lens', pp. 238 - 250. Fellow researcher in the Research Pavilion, Charlotta Ruth, also addresses these issues in her project, *Living Documents*, stating that, "When working with art in live situations, documentation tends to be the necessary evil where the work is forced to change to something rather static. In *Living Documents* we are embracing this friction by examining documentation formats and approaching work of us and our colleagues with

documentary methods. We are also playing with what ‘ephemeral documentation’ possibly can be” See

<https://charlottaruth.com/stage/living%20documents/index.html>.

⁵³ See Nigel Thrift, *Non-representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect*, (London: Routledge, 2008).

⁵⁴ We have differentiated documentation and documents through a visual approach – documents (images with the capacity to act as a proposition or prompt for future action) are presented in monochromatic blue often with individuals occluded with a red circle (so they are indicative of anonymous participant engagement rather than of a specific individual’s involvement). Alternatively, documentation (evidence of a *specific* event) includes the participant’s names.

⁵⁵ As part of our framing for the *Convocation* event, we spoke about the complex issues of research and its documentation, where participants were informed that different modes of documentation would be taking place over the next three days, and their consent was sought. They were also able to decline being involved in the process of documentation.

⁵⁶ The project *Rewording* was activated in parallel to the *Reading on Reading* practices within the frame of InfoLab as part of both the opening and the seminar. See *Site and Subjectivity*. Researchers involved in the Infolab event were aware that documentation would be taking place, and their consent was sought. They were also able to decline being involved in the process of documentation.

⁵⁷ See Michelle Boulous Walker, *Slow Philosophy: Reading Against the Institution*, (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017).

⁵⁸ Daus, *Toponymisches Heft* (2010) available at <https://toponymy.wordpress.com/method/> (viewed 26.11.2019).

⁵⁹ Inspired by the ‘poetics of excessive specialisation’ as encountered in scientific language and articles, Daus has appropriated the discipline of toponymy to intervene in the histories of knowledge and invent her own form of ‘applied toponymy’. Her notion of *re-sensing* is derived from an *International Handbook of Onomastics* taking up the herein expressed claim for onomastics to become a basic research into the ‘wording of the world’. See Ernst Eichler, Gerold Hilty and Heinrich Löffler (eds.), *Namenforschung. Name Studies. Les Noms propres. Ein Internationales Handbuch zur Onomastik. An International Handbook of Onomastics. Manuel international d’onomastique*, (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), p. 16.

⁶⁰ Perec uses the neologism ‘infra-ordinary’ to refer to an everydayness that requires sustained attention. Sometimes used interchangeably with the term ‘endotic’ it describes a quality of the everyday that is neither ordinary nor extraordinary. In ‘Approaches to What?’ he states, “What’s really going on, what we’re experiencing, the rest, all the rest, where is it? How should we take account of, question, describe what happens every day and recurs every day: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual? [...] To question that which seems to have ceased forever to astonish us. We live, true, we breathe, true; we walk, we open doors, we go down staircases, we sit at a table in order to eat, we lie down on a bed in order to sleep. How? Where? When? Why?”, in Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, translated by John Sturrock, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974/1997), pp. 209 – 2011. First published in *Cause Commune* in February 1973].

⁶¹ The term ‘world-building’ was used by [M] Dudeck during *Convocation* (18 June 2019).

⁶² Yves Citton, *The Ecologies of Attention*, trans. Barnaby Norman, (Cambridge: Polity, 2017), p. 6.

⁶³ Citton, 2017, p. 10.

⁶⁴ Citton, 2017, p. 18.

⁶⁵ Citton, 2017, p. 84.

⁶⁶ Silvia Henke, Dieter Mersch, Thomas Strässle, Nicolaj van der Meulen, Jörg Wiesel, (eds.), *Manifesto of Artistic Research A Defense Against Its Advocates*, (Zurich: Diaphanes, 2020), pp.18–19.