

Diagrammatics: Portals of Entry

19 May 2008 v.6

Practice is a set of relays from one theoretical point to another, and theory is a relay from one practice to another. No theory can develop without eventually encountering a wall, and practice is necessary for piercing this wall. (Foucault. Deleuze, 1972)

The diagram [...] is the map of relations between forces, a map of destiny, or intensity, which proceeds by primarily non-localizable relations and at every moment passes through every point, or 'rather in every relation from one point to another'. (Deleuze, 1988, 36)

[...] to write is to struggle and resist; to write is to become; to write is to draw a map: 'I am a cartographer'. (Ibid, 44)

The Research/Creation Diagram

Etymologically, the word diagram – *diagramma* in the original Greek -- refers to the wax tablet philosophers used to compose ideas before committing them to papyrus with a stylus (Knoespel, 2001). The blackboard and chalk of the mathematician, the notebook of the artist, the sketch of the architect, the inked napkin from the brainstorm lunch, all exhibit diagrammatic tendencies, the matter-movement of not-yet-formalized thought and sensation. It is the coexistent registers of relation between diagramming as abstract machine and its pulsing contraction to variable states of presentation (such as those sketches, drawings and doodles reverberating the unthought of thought) that are of interest here. For Foucault, the diagram projects a presentation of power and resistance in relation to the particular features of a social field. Deleuze precisely and artfully extends Foucault's reach by mapping his early, middle and late works, within a knowledge-power-subjectivity continuum. Deleuze further explores the diagram, extrapolating beyond the Foucaultian abstract machine, extrapolating beyond the Foucaultian abstract machine to navigate complementary diagrammatic processes in the work of the painter Francis Bacon (2003), smudging Sahara and rhinoceros skin catastrophes amid the probabilistic givens of a compositional process. How translations relay from content to expression and back, from the visible to the articulable, the receptive to the spontaneous, to arrive at the archive **and** return to the ineffable, virtual, abstract machine to churn again, is the topological terrain mapped by the diagram.

Diagramming the Diagram

The variable, affective, relational tendencies between forces that a Foucaultian/Deleuzian diagram *diagrams*, provides a literally '**re-markable**'¹ concept for mapping intensities that

echo and relay between, beyond and through the 'walls', the skin, of the fissure that separates theory and practice as two irreducible forces, dancing the relation between integration and differentiation. The relational relays that map the dynamic social field of theory and practice, in many ways, map the in-itself of the Diagram in full its range of registers.

The potential for resonance and productive redundancy in diagrammatic interrelations predispose it to both philosophical speculation and a methodological precision.² As a toolbox of applicable concepts and techniques, it affords a tangible approach through the movement of ideas and the emergence of form. A diagrammatic praxis whose particular features concern the dynamic relations between theory and practice in art research, traces the affects of force field upon force field as they contract and expand in one event-dimension, fold and unfold in another. Through multiple, doubling processes of translation and transduction, from articulation to re-articulation, the power relations engendered from the play of these forces in the Diagram produce objects of *partial capture*, differentials of individuating phase-shifts.

It is the topologically processual möbius strip figure that loops the virtual forces of the informal diagram (abstract machine) to actualized thing to abstract machine, an immanent folding from outside to inside to outside, that marks the ontological vector, the directional transductive conversions (Massumi, 2002)³ of the diagram itself. As a map of the encounter between theory and practice in one dimension, between content and expression in another, the diagram makes sense. As a qualified description of artistic research practice, applicable to a specific set of practitioners who doubly articulate their processes, in substance and in text, the seeable and the sayable, the diagrammatic, moving through an embodied biagrammatic, is sensational.

Registers of Diagrammatic Praxis : Overview

Lets begin with a satellite view of the meta-Diagram of Research Creation praxis and the movements of thought and matter it situates.

Diagrammatic praxis problematizes three concerns bracketed by the discourse of theory and practice relations in the arts: How does the language of praxis, the variable, individuating vocabulary of "doing" affect the dynamic between content and expression? How do processes that reverberate between the conceptual and practical emerge, transform, mutate, seduce and transduce? How might parallel encounters between practitioners and publics be facilitated through diverse and problematic transdisciplinary vocabularies of the seeable and the sayable, the discursive and the non-discursive?



Figure 1: *The conjunctive double force fields of theory/practice, content/expression represented as fault-lines and/or phase-shifts.*

The proposition put forth here situates the Diagram, in four (at least) registers, as an infrastructural, if fluidly dynamic, means of exploring these questions. These registers are co-extensive and non-hierarchical, producing a topology of diagrammatic relations through which an ontological vector of the metadiagram passes: A) the *informal* abstract machine; immanent cause; B) the *biogram*; C) the *formal* diagram; D) the *artafect*. That ontological vector produces a directionality that is all oscillation; felt in the movement of the virtual actualizing, the actual realizing and becoming-virtual.

The diagrammatic places the *informal*, abstract machine of power-relations between the force fields of theory and practice as coextensive with the social field of transdisciplinary research. Within this first register (A) of research/creation, the disjunction between realizations of knowledge - the form of content and the form of expression are effectively pulsated by the power-relations that contract the abstract machine, that inflect the *informal* diagram to becoming-*biogram* in the second register (B). In the third instantiation, a transduction between the *biogram* and the '*formal*' diagram appears; a quasi-cause haunting the emerging form, and finally, the occasion of the formal diagram becoming-*artafect*. All four registers of 'doing', are different in kind, enter and re-enter the turbulent, unstable outside, where the forces of the abstract machine play. Through this matter-movement of thought, the diagram redraws itself as a new diagram.

Foucault imagined the diagram as a container of the forces that affect other forces. These relations of power and resistance modulate the diagram, excite the gap, the disjunction that separates forms of realization: distinguishes content and expression, the visible and the articulable, seeing and saying, discursive and non-discursive, light and language. The

diagram maps the variable dynamics of encounter between unformed matter and non-formalized functions; maps the points and features that cut across and through a social field. Deleuze and Guattari reconsidered this unstable, informal diagram as an *abstract machine*: an evolution of forces, the immanent cause to the effects of the encounter between forms of realization. In the argument presented here, the diagram actualizes its virtual potentials on its path through the strata to becoming-archive, passing through the *biogrammatic*, the embodied hinge dimension in which 'practice is perception (Massumi, 2002).⁴

From Abstract Machine to Archive: the ontological overview

In his book on Foucault first published in 1986, Deleuze drew a diagram in the last chapter, *Foldings*, that depicts in overview the Outside as abstract machine, defined by the line of the outside (1), which separates the unformed interplay of forces and resistance from the strategies and strata that filter the affects of power relations to become "the world of knowledge". The central Fold of subjectification, of 'Life' is "hollowed out" and ignored by the forces of the outside as they are realized in the strata fulfilling the obligation of the diagram to "come to fruition in the archive." This is dual process of integration and differentiation. The residual dust of the affective relations produced by force upon force, integrate into the strata even as they differentiate to forms of realization – visible or articulable. The 'empty' fissure/fold attracts and repels these moving curvilinear strategies as they differentiate and "hop over" it. Ostensibly, the Fold of subjectification effectuates change as both continuously topological, and as discontinuously catastrophic (as in leaping over). So, the process of crystallization from informal to formal paradoxically integrates as it differentiates. Deleuze's somewhat paradoxical description follows:

The informal relations between forces *differentiate* from one another by creating heterogeneous curves which pass through the neighborhood of particular features (statements) and that of the scenes which distribute them into figures of light (visibilities). And at the same time *the relations between forces became integrated, precisely in the formal relations between the two, from one side to the other of differentiation*. This is because the relations between forces ignored the fissure within the strata, which begins only below them. They are apt to hollow out the fissure by being actualized in the strata, but also to hop over it in both senses of the term by becoming differentiated even as they become integrated. (1988, 121 ? emphasis added)

So this "pineal gland" figure of the Fold is the "center of the cyclone", where life is lived "*par excellence*" as a "slow Being" (122-123).

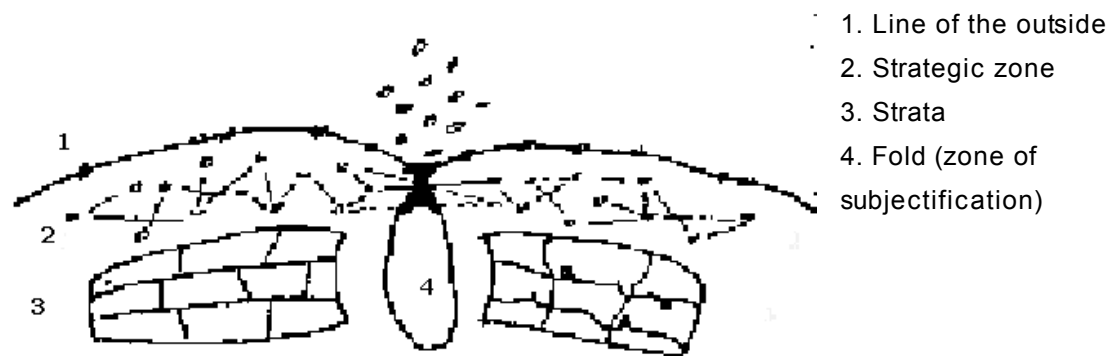


Figure 2: Deleuze's diagram of the diagram (Ibid, 121)

As clarifying as Deleuze's diagram is in summarizing the layered dimensionality of the Foucauldian/Deleuzian hybrid, some modifications will be *drawn off* to alternatively express the realizations of the play of informal forces as this diagram takes on the particular features of a Research Creation praxis. True to the originating wax tablet *diagramma*, the relations are drawn and redrawn, in recognition⁵ of the contemporary social field that situates it. The shifts from the 19C to 20C *disciplinary diagram* of Foucault's focus modulates with the late 20C *society of control diagram* formulated by Deleuze. The shorthand for the force field relevant to the research creation diagram of practice-led arts research today is a *transdisciplinary diagram*, the gamespace of just-in-time⁶ capitalism which necessarily elicits mutations in the Foucault/Deleuze model. Generating the power-resistance relations in this outside qua gamespace are, among others, the revitalized forces of the military-academic-entertainment complex that fuel economic models such as the Creative Industries that pervade the conditions of play in artistic research⁷. The shifts will be discussed in part

Bifurcating portals

Brion Gysin: How do you get in... get into these paintings?

*William Burroughs: Usually I get in by a **port of entry**, as I call it. It is often a face through whose eyes the picture opens into a landscape and I go literally right through that eye into that landscape. Sometimes it is rather like an archway... a number of little details or a special spot of colours makes the **port of entry** and then the entire picture will suddenly become a three-dimensional frieze in plaster or jade or some other precious material. (Wilson, 2001)*

The word fornix means "an archway" or "vault" (in Rome, prostitutes could be solicited there). More directly, fornicatio means "done in the archway"; thus a euphemism for prostitution. (Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fornication>)

Diagrammatic praxis proposes a contractual (push, pull) approach in which the movement

between abstract machine, biogram (embodied, inflected diagram), formal diagram (drawing of, **drawing off**) and *art affect* (realized thing) is topologically immanent. It imagines the practice of writing, of this writing, interleaved with the mapping processes with which it folds and unfolds - forming, deforming and reforming both processes. The relations of non-relations that power the diagram, the thought intensities that resonate between fragments, between content and expression, the seeable and the sayable, the discursive and the non-discursive, mark *entry* points; portals of entry through which all points of the diagram pass – push, pull, fold, unfold - without the designation of arrival and departure, without the input/output connotations of a black boxed confection⁸. Ports, as focal points of passage, attract *lines of resistance* or *lines of flight* through which the diagram may become both an effectuating concrete assemblage (thing) *and* remain outside the stratified zone of the audiovisual. It's as if the port itself is a bifurcating point, a figural inflected archway. The port, as a bifurcation point of resistance (contra black box), modulates and changes the unstable, turbulent interplay between pure Matter and pure Function of the abstract machine. These ports are marked out, localized, situated, by the continuous movement of power-relations:

These power-relations ... simultaneously local, unstable and diffuse, do not emanate from a central point or unique locus of sovereignty, but at each moment move from one point to another in a field of forces, *marking inflections, resistances, twists and turns when one changes direction or retraces one's steps...* (Deleuze, 1988 emphasis added)

An inflection point, marked out by the diagram, is not a symmetrical form but the difference between concavity and convexity, a pure temporality, a “true atom of form, the true object of geography.” (Cache, 1995, 40)

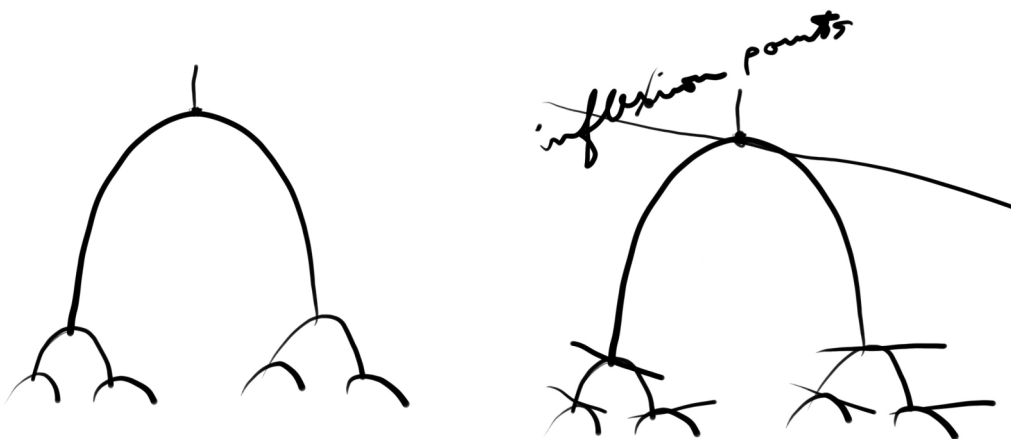


Figure 3: Left: A bifurcating event presented figurally as an archway, a port of entry through order and chaos. Right: Event/entry with inflexion points, points of suspension, of pure temporality, that gives a form “of an absolute exteriority that is not even the exteriority of any given interiority, but which arise from that most interior place that can be perceived or even

conceived [...] that of which the perceiving itself is radically temporal or transitory" (Cache, 1995, 36-37). *The passing through of passage.*

Cache's absolute exteriority is equivalent to Deleuze's description of the Outside "more distant than any exterior [...] 'twisted', folded and doubled by an Inside that is deeper than any interior, and alone creates the possibility of the derived relation between the interior and the exterior" (Deleuze, Foucault, 110). This folded and doubled interior is diagrammed by Deleuze in the folds chapter of *Foucault*.

Thinking does not depend on a beautiful interiority that reunites the visible and articulable elements, but is carried under the intrusion of an outside that eats into the interval and forces or dismembers the internal [...] when there are only environments and whatever lies between them, when words and things are opened up by the environment without ever coinciding, there is a liberation of forces which come from the outside and exist only in a mixed up state of agitation, modification and mutation. In truth they are dice throws, for thinking involves throwing the dice. (117?)

if the outside, farther away than any external world, is also closer than any internal world, is this not a sign that thought affects itself, by revealing the outside to be its own unthought element?

"It cannot discover the **unthought** [...] without immediately bringing the unthought nearer to itself - or even, perhaps, without pushing it farther away, and in any case without causing man's own being to undergo a change by the very fact, since it is deployed in the distance between them" (118?)



Figure 4: Left: a simulation of Deleuze's central marking in his diagram of the Foucaultian diagram. This is the line of the Outside as Fold. Right: To best express the relations of diagrammatic praxis between content and expression (theory and practice) the Fold figure needs to be drawn as a double Fold ("twice twice" as Massumi might say)— a folded Möbius strip. Here the superinflections between inside/outside and content/expression provide transversal vectors

A topology or topological becoming-shapeshift retains its connectivity, its interconnectedness to preserve its autonomy as a singularity. All the points of all its matter reshape as difference

in itself. A topology does not resemble itself. The möbius strip and the infamous torus-to-coffecup are examples of 2d and 3d topologies. technically a topological surface is totalized, it can not comprise fragments cut or glued to produce a whole. Its change is continuous. It is not cut-copy-pasted. But the cut and its interval are requisite to an emergent new. "For Deleuze, the essence of meaning, the essence of essence, is best expressed in two infinitives; 'to cut ' and "to die" [...] Definite tenses keeping company in time. In the slash between their future and their past: "to cut" as always timeless and alone." (Massumi,1992, 20). Add the individuating "to shift" to the infinitives that reside in the timeless zone of indetermination of future-past.

Given the paradigm of the topological-becoming, how might we address writing in the age of copy-paste and hypertext? The seamless and the stitched? As potential is it diagram? A linguistic multiplicity whose virtual immanence is the metalanguage potentiality between the phonemes that gives rise to all language?

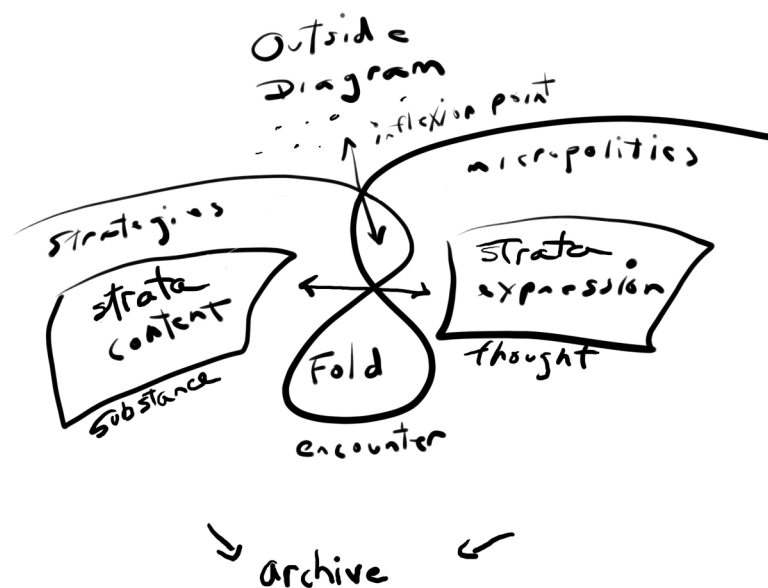


Figure 5: An overview diagram of diagrammatic praxis based on Deleuze's diagram of the Foucaultian model shown below. The main modification is to the representation of the Fold. In the top figure, the Fold or zone of subjectification becomes a double-folded möbius strip.

Four folds of subjectification:

1. **material part of ourselves** which is to be surrounded and folded
2. **the fold of the relation between forces** always according to a particular rule that the relation between forces is bent back in order to become a relation to oneself (rule ; natural, divine, rational, aesthetic, etc)
3. **fold of knowledge** constitutes the relation of truth to our being and our being to truth

which will serve as the formal condition for any kind of knowledge

4. the fold of the outside itself is the ultimate fold: an 'interiority of expectation' from which the subject, in different ways, hopes for immortality, eternity, salvation, freedom or death or detachment. (102)

Register A for Abstract Machine: Informal Diagram

Foucault showed the diagram to be the presentation of power-relations between forces implicit in a social field. In Foucault's most famous example, the prison acts as the confluence of content (prisoners) and expression (law, penal code) (Foucault, xxxx). Informal Diagrams are proliferate. As abstract machines they contain the transversal vectors that cut across a panoply of features (such as institutions, classes, persons, economic formation, etc), mapping from point to relational point, the generalized features of power economies. The disciplinary diagram explored by Foucault, imposes "a particular conduct upon a particular human multiplicity" (Deleuze, 1988,34). The imposition of force upon force affects and effectuates the felt experience of a life, a living. Deleuze has called the abstract machine "pure matter/function" in which relations between forces are nonetheless very real.

[...] the diagram acts as a non-unifying immanent cause that is co-extensive with the whole social field: the abstract machine is like the cause of the concrete assemblages that execute its relations; and these relations between forces take place 'not above' but within the very tissue of the assemblages they produce. (1988, 36)

the processual conjunction of content and expression; the cutting edge of deterritorialization:

The relations of power and resistance between theory and practice resonate - becoming-form; diagrammatics as praxis, integrates and differentiates the immanent cause⁹ and quasi-cause of the actualized occasions of research/creation.

Register B for Biogram: Inflected diagram

Memory is the real name of the relation to oneself, or the affect of self by self [...] Time becomes a subject because it is the folding of the outside...forces every present into forgetting but preserves the whole of the past within memory: forgetting is the impossibility of return and memory is the necessity of renewal. (Deleuze, Foucault, 107-8)

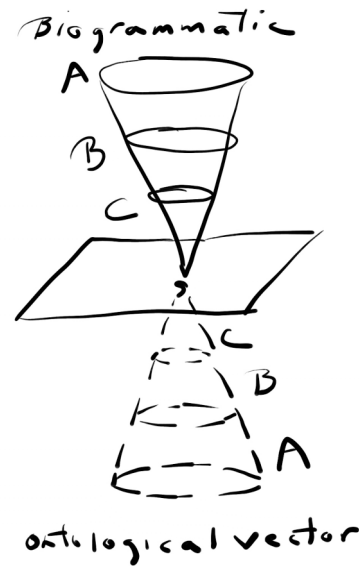
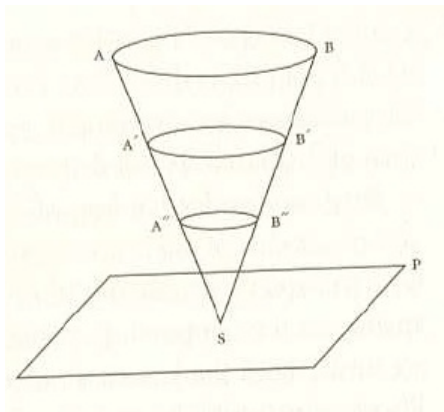


Figure x: The figure on the left is Henri Bergson's diagram of an infinitely contracted past that directly intersects with the body at point S – a mobile, sensorimotor present where memory is closest to action. Plane P represents the actual present; plane of contact with objects. The AB segments represent repetitive compressions of memory. As memory contracts it gets closer to action. In it's more expanded forms it is closer to dreams. The figure on the right extrapolates from Bergson's memory model to describe the Biogrammatic ontological vector of the Diagram as it moves from abstract (informal) machine in the most expanded form "A" through the cone "tissue" to the phase-shifting (formal), arriving at the Strata of the P plane to become artefact. The ontological vector passes through the stratified, through the interval of difference created in the phase shift (the same phase shift that separates and folds content and expression to move vertically, transversally, back through to the abstract diagram.

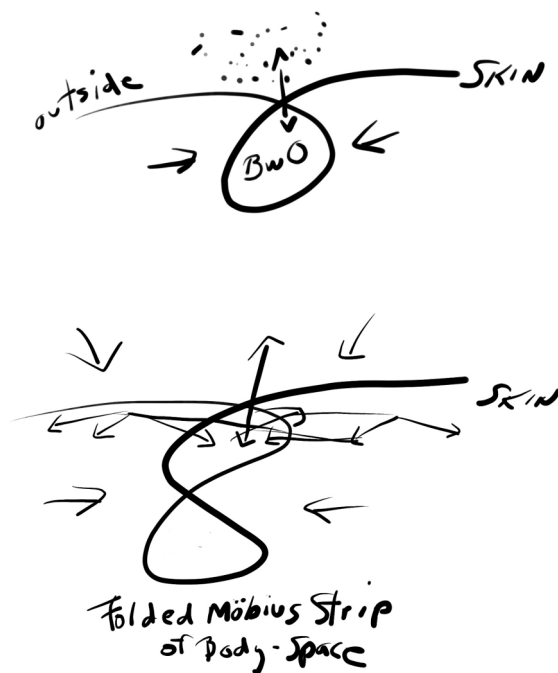
A spatio-temporal-material contracting-expanding of the abstract machine (informal diagram). This is the processual thinking-feeling-articulating of the diagram becoming-cartographic; synaesthetic conceptual mapping. A play of forces, a series of relays, affecting a tendency toward an inflection of the informal diagram becoming-form. The **inflected diagram/biogram** folds and unfolds perception, appearances; rides in the gap of becoming between content and expression; intuitively transduces the actualizing (thinking, drawing, marking, erasing) of matter-movement, of expressivity-movement. *"To follow the flow of matter... is intuition in action."* (ATP p.409). A processual stage that prehends the process of the virtual actualizing;

the creative construction of a new reality (Deleuze and Guattari). The **biagrammatic stage of the diagrammatic** is paradoxically double in that it is both the actualizing of the abstract machine (contraction) and the recursive counter-actualization of the formal diagram (détournement); virtual and actual.

It is the event-dimension of potential - that is the effective dimension of the interrelating of elements, of their belonging to each other. That belonging is a dynamic corporeal "abstraction" - the "drawing off" (transductive conversion) of the corporeal into its dynamism (yielding the event) [...] In direct channeling. That is, in a directional channeling: ontological vector. The transductive conversion is an ontological vector that in-gathers a heterogeneity of substantial elements along with the already-constituted abstractions of language ("meaning") and delivers them together to change. (Massumi, 2002, 85)

Gil:

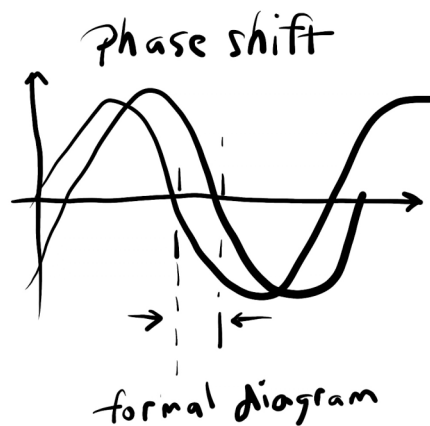
Skin is the space of the body the BwO that is interior and exterior. Interstitial matter of the space of the body.



Register C for Capturing –phase-shifting formal diagram

The material markings and traces of a diagrammatic process, a 'capturing' becoming-form. A diagrammatic capturing involves a transductive process between a biagrammatic form of content and a form of expression. The formal diagram is thus an individuating phase-shift (Simondon), always out-of-phase with itself. A becoming-form that inhabits the gap, the difference, between the wave phase of the biagrammatic that synaesthetically **draws off** the intermix of substance and language in the event-dimension and the **drawing of** wave phase

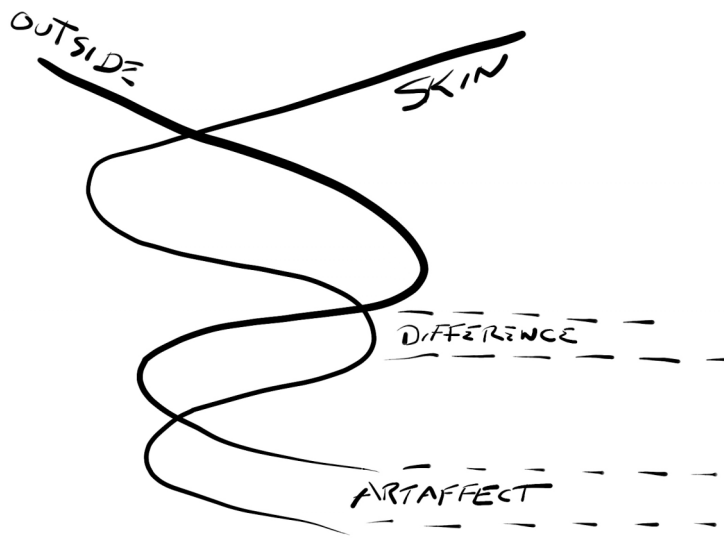
in which *partial capture* is formalized. The phaseshift difference never acquires a vectorial intention. A pre-decisive, pre-emptive *drawing of phase-shifting* with a “*drawing off*” the *biogram*.



If effects realize something this is because the relations between forces or power relations, are merely virtual, potential, unstable vanishing and molecular, and define only possibilities of interaction **so long as they do not enter a macroscopic whole capable of giving form to their fluid manner and diffuse function**. But realization is equally an integration, a collection of progressive integrations that are initially local and then become or tend to become global, aligning, homogenizing and summarizing relations between forces: here law is the integration of illegalisms. (Deleuze, 37)

Register D for Doppler shift – *art affect*

Modulating the wavelengths and frequencies of the phase shifting forms gives another felt effect of a relational shift. The Doppler shift aka effect is one example.



Situating the Social Field of the Informal Diagram

There is a significant element of contentious discourse that permeates theory/practice synergies in arts research. It's necessary to first situate theory/practice relationality in the ethical, political, economic environment that stimulates it. While seemingly tangential, the social field of the research creation includes transdisciplinary tendencies. That debate, currently in high gear as academic terminologies increasingly mutate into artistic vocabularies, is fuelled and funded by a surging dependence on surplus value and the commodification of creative processes. The frictions aroused by invigorated infiltrations of theory in arts practice develops on several strata: fear of the dissolution of standards within the academy; defensiveness, fear of overt intellectualization within the artist community; tendency towards an interdependence that may undermine the autonomy of and distinctions between both sides of the spectrum. These attractions and repulsions are affected by an immanent dynamic, that of the churning economic underbelly of transdisciplinary intersects that keeps the innovation flame burning in an advanced consumer society. While transdisciplinary practice has obvious merit in stimulating discourse, initiating new methods and facilitating interaction between diverse sectors, in this case theory and practice vectors in the arts, the convergence is also tainted by the dubious history of the military-industrial complex¹⁰ and its progeny – the military-academic-entertainment complex. Cross-sector convergence, theory/practice synergies, increasingly situates diverse creative, critical and analytical processes within a

dynamic field of market-driven experimentation. It retains the distinction between disciplinary “forces” or players in what has become a pervasive gamespace. Retaining the distinction emphasises the emerging relations, the interplay itself, between players in an Innovation ecology. A seemingly progressive step, this is a double-sided coin. The virtual “power” of creative processes and their affects, in this scheme, are now invested with a surplus value - branded. Creativity itself becomes a commodity. *Affect Incorporated* - advancing capitalism effortlessly subsuming the ineffable.

Post-Fordist economies are reliant on the virtuostic improvisatory techniques inherent to immaterial labour.

From Knowing to Ethical Know-How

And so, situating the discussion of reciprocal relations between theory and practice in the ecology of contemporary capitalism can benefit from a brief refresh of the Aristotelian designations of the *episteme* (knowledge) and *techne* (art/craft)¹¹.

Productive ‘practice’ itself differentiates into two or more vectors. *Praxis* is ostensibly an activity, an action, a doing in and of itself for itself, without an end product. *Poiesis* garners connotations of a creative activity where the object of the making process figures into the equation. Laid out on a planar spectrum, a phylum of matter-movement, we initially get the conventional dualism between theory and practice:

Theory (episteme/known) ←-----→ **Practice** (techne/praxis/poiesis)

This irreducible separation is viewed by both Foucault and Deleuze as a necessary, dynamic disjunction from which multiplicities of meaning - relays between fragmentary elements of the theoretical and the practical – affect relations and effect the actualized occasions. How these modulatory conjunctions between theory and practice might be described is at issue. Three interfaces will be considered here: techne, praxis and diagrammatic praxis.

Techne Interface

Techne (art/craft) is a skilled *making of*, a convergence of the conceptual and the practical that produces something, an object, artifact. It can be thought of as an affective interface. For Aristotle as for Foucault and Deleuze, the dualist split between theory and practice is a separation-connection. There is a spillage, an echo, of practice in all theory and theory in all practice. This conceit is doubled in the relation between content and expression, a necessary

binary with overtones of the other implicit in each form. The historicity (past) of knowledge behind skill and ...

In many ways this construction epitomizes the rationale for the au courant Creative Industries support of research/creation:

Theory (episteme/knowing) ←----- **Techne (art/craft)** -----→ **Practice** (praxis/poiesis)

Arguably, this formulation elicits a scenario with disciplinary overtones in which skilled, creative labour produces objects through a process affected by and affecting the diagram of the social field in which it is situated. It represents one aspect of the current and proliferate economy of the Creative Industries in which artistic research/creation plays a mediating role in transdisciplinary productivity; where artists work collaboratively with academic and industrial researchers towards the creation of prototypes becoming-commodity.

Praxis Interface

Another point-of-view can be taken which places *praxis*, the immanently political action of action itself, as the modulating interface:

Theory (episteme/knowing) ←----- **Praxis** -----→ **Practice** (techne/poiesis)

This is an altogether different phylum. In this model *praxis is performative*, immaterial in the sense of non-productive – without end-product. Here the modulating middle is the in-itself of know-how. It is as political as it is ethical. Following the work of Hannah Arendt¹² on the political dimensions of performativity, public presence and collective responsibility, Paolo Virno (2007) takes an additional step in describing post-Fordist labour without end-product as *virtuostic*. He generalizes the classical Aristotelian divisions of theory and practice as 'human experience', contextualized in his thinking the power of the multitude:

[„] Labor (or poiesis), political Action (or praxis) and Intellect (or life of the mind). The goal here is still the same: to articulate and to investigate in depth the notion of multitude [...] I would like to maintain that the contemporary multitude has as its background the crisis of the subdivision of human experience into Labor, (political) Action and Intellect. (49) [...] One could say that every political action is virtuostic. Every political action, in fact, shares with virtuosity a sense of contingency, the absence of a "finished product," the immediate and unavoidable presence of others. (53)

So if that modulating middle, disjunction, gap or fissure between theory and practice is of *praxis*, it is as Deleuze describes Foucault's diagram as *abstract machine*, as a cartography

“coextensive with the whole social field” making “no distinction between content and expression, a discursive formation and a non-discursive formation. It is a machine that is almost blind and mute, even though it makes others see and speak.” (2000, 34). It provokes and affects a potential ethical-political action, a performativity that can be best described as diagrammatic praxis, a channeling of the unstable forces and power-relations of the abstract machine of a social field through the strategies of micropolitics to the strata of knowledge formations:

This is a different kind of diagram, a different machine, closer to theater than to the factory; it involves a different relation between forces [...] This is because the diagram is highly unstable or fluid, continually churning up matter and functions in a way likely to create change [...] every diagram is intersocial and constantly evolving. (Ibid, 34-35)

....

In an ethico-aesthetic paradigm proffered by Guattari, artworkers tend to produce *toolkits* comprised of “concepts, percepts and affects” for diverse publics” (Ibid, 129). Artistic production has no monopoly on the creative, but it can and does provoke the unpredictable through processes of creation pushed to mutational extremes. For some, this transversal movement – the affirmation of affective modulations between social, technical and political ecologies is akin to what Varela has called *ethical know-how*, an immanent expertise whose only requirement is “full participation in a community” (1992, 24). By way of example, this commitment is evident in the toolkit approach to creative production that artists working with open source coding have fostered.

Integration in a transductive sense isn’t homogeneous but multiplicitous, differential. If individuating systems with emergent potential are autonomous, how might they belong together, co-operate? Within these networks, the relational glue is ontogenetic and autonomous. Referencing the positive and negative feedback mechanisms that both sustain life and generate change in autopoietic biological systems, one can imagine similar negotiations in human-machine networks; the transductive phase-shifts between homeostatic sustainability and mutational difference. One can comfortably situate within the ethico aesthetic paradigm the implicit understanding that situating itself is not positioning, that it is dynamic and self-varying and assumes no foothold other than a passing through.

....

So diagrammatic praxis maps the thought encounter between matter and function. This relation has many variations that share similar traits:

matter		function
form of content		form of expression
visible		articulable/statement
non-discursive		discursive
seeable		sayable
light-being		language-being
receptivity		spontaneity

it will be argued, potentializes an aesthetic politics in which the change 'felt' through compositional forces is rearticulated in the event or object that carries its affect. That actualized effect may return as a force when in a diagrammatic zone. Outside folding inside unfolding outside.

The informal diagram that powers research/creation (practice-led artistic research) is a transversal vectorial field of relational force fields, matters and functions, lines and traits, in which the economic variables of surplus value infuse the transdisciplinary production of the 21C-style military-academic-entertainment complex. Within this scenario, the encounter between theory and practice acquires momentum even as it enforces resistance.

Interdisciplinary Vocabularies: Terminology as Refrain

As contemporary theorists become increasingly read and referenced by artworkers, the originating vocabularies are recycled in and out-of-context. Both Deleuze and Guattari, for example, sought to ephemerize their language by insisting on the fluidity and necessary mutation of terminologies. Certain precise terms persist, becoming widely recognized, referenced and jargonized in dynamic discourse. Sometimes they recycle to threshold the cliché. How does the continuous creation of singularities as neologisms benefit discourse? Does it keep it fluid and unstable through the force of resistance or, does it impede so as to suffocate, a shared understanding of terms through the rhythm of the refrain? How does the this between of the neologism and refrain function in the statement?

When is a diagram a topology? When is it not?

Elements Becoming-Style

What is pertinent about an event-space is not its boundedness, but what elements it lets pass, according to what criteria, at what rate, and to what effect. These variables define a regime of passage. (85)

Bibliography

- Bell, Jeffrey, "Fear of Politics: Deleuze, Whitehead, and the Truth of Badiou"
- Cache, Bernard, 1995. *Earth Moves: The Furnishing of Territories*, Cambridge, MIT Press
- Deleuze, Gilles, 1991. *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson, Barbara Habberjam, New York, Zone Books. First French edition published in 1966
- Deleuze, Gilles, 1988. *Foucault*, trans. Seán Hand, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press. First French edition published in 1986
- Deleuze, Gilles, 2003. *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press. First French edition published in 1981
- Eisenhower, Dwight D., 1961. "Farewell Address"
- Foucault, Michel, 1972. "Intellectuals and Power: A conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze", first appeared in English: *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: selected essays and interviews by Michel Foucault*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard, Cornell University Press
- Gil, Jose, 2006. "The Paradoxical Body", trans. Andre Lepecki,
- Grosz, Elizabeth, 2004. *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution and the Untimely*, Durham and London, Duke University Press
- Guattari, Felix. 1995. *Chaosmosis: an ethico-aesthetic paradigm*, trans. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis, Bloomington, Indiana University Press
- Knoespel, Kenneth J., 2001. "Diagrams as Piloting Devices in the Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze," In: *Théorie – Littérature – Enseignement: Deleuze-Chantier*, Centre de Recherches sur la Litterature et la Cognition, Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, Automne
- Manning, Erin, 2007, "From Biopolitics to the Biogram, or, How Leni Riefenstahl Moves Through Fascism
- Massumi, Brian, 1992. *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari*, Cambridge, MIT Press
- Massumi, Brian, 2002. *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*, Durham, Duke University Press
- Massumi, Brian, 2008. "The Thinking-Feeling of What Happens: A Semblance of a Conversation" published in *Inflexions* online journal
- Miller, Carolyn R. "What's Practical in Technical Writing"
- Nealon, Jeffrey T., 2008. *Foucault beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications Since 1984*, Stanford University Press
- Wilson, Terry and Brion Gysin, 2001. *Here To Go: Brion Gysin*, Creation Books
- Varela, Francisco, 1992. *Ethical Know-How: Action, Wisdom and Cognition*, Stanford, Stanford University Press
- Virno, Paolo, 2004. *A Grammar of the Multitude*, Semiotext(e)

¹ The word “diagram,” in the original Greek, comes from the root verb “diagramma” which does “not simply mean something that is marked out by lines, a figure, a form or a plan, but also carries a second connotation of marking or crossing out,” suggesting not only ephemerality but also an incompleteness that carries an expectation of potential. From Kenneth Knoespel’s : “Diagrams as Piloting Devices in the Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze” - “ In a sense, diagramma embodies a practice of figuring, defiguring, refiguring, and prefiguring. What is interesting is that the diagram participates in a genealogy of figures that moves from the wax tablet to the computer screen. From a phenomenological vantage point, the Greek setting of diagram suggests that any figure that is drawn is accompanied by an expectancy that it will be redrawn [...] Here a diagram may be thought of as a relay. While a diagram may have been used visually to reinforce an idea one moment, the next it may provide a means of seeing something never seen before.” (2001, 147)

² Reminiscent of Bergson’s *Intuition* which is both a concept and a finely honed methodology. See Deleuze’s *Bergsonism* for more on Intuition.

³ Massumi describes the ontological vector as a transductive conversion: “[...] that in-gathers a heterogeneity of substantial elements along with the already-constituted abstractions of language (“meaning”) and delivers them together to change.” (2002, xx)

⁴ Massumi’s description of the biogram from *Parables for the Virtual*.

⁵ After Bergson’s notion of recognition as the intensive point where memory meets action.

⁶ See Nealon’s capitalism timeline moving from periods of “early” (1848-1890’s), “high” (1890’s-1940’s) and “late” (1950’s-1990’s) to the now of “just-in-time”. (2008, 59)

⁷ McKenzie Wark concludes his book *GAM3R 7HE0RY*, with prescient comments on the black hole quality of a topology of the outside qua contemporary “gamespace” from Deleuze and Guattari (ATP, xxx) and Guy Debord. “Only by going further and further into gamespace might one come out the other side of it, to realize a topology beyond the limiting forms of the game. Deleuze and Guattari: “... one can never go far enough in the direction of [topology]: you haven’t seen anything yet — an irreversible process. And when we consider what there is of a profoundly artificial nature [...] we cry out, ‘More perversion! More artifice!’ — to a point where the earth becomes so artificial that the movement of [topology] creates of necessity and by itself a new earth.” (Wark, 2007)

⁸ Jeffrey Bell discusses Latour’s theory of the ‘factish’ in “Fear of Politics: Deleuze, Whitehead, and the Truth of Badiou”. Latour: “An entity gains in reality if it is associated with many others that are viewed as collaborating with it. It loses in reality if, on the contrary, it has to shed associates or collaborators (humans and nonhumans).” See Bruno Latour’s “On the Partial Existence of Existing and Nonexisting Objects,” in *Biographies of Scientific Objects*, edited by Lorraine Daston (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 257.

⁹ What do we mean by immanent cause? It is a cause which is realized, integrated and distinguished in its effect. Or rather, the immanent cause is realized, integrated and distinguished by its effect. In this way there is a correlation or mutual presupposition between cause and effect, between abstract machine and concrete assemblages (it is for the latter that Foucault most often reserves the term ‘mechanisms’). (Deleuze, 20, 37)

¹⁰ Academic collaboration was of course been present in the earlier model. American President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a Republican ex-general, who advised in a 1961 speech: “Akin to, and largely responsible for the sweeping changes in our industrial-military posture, has been the technological revolution during recent decades. In this revolution, research has become central; it also becomes more formalized, complex, and costly. A steadily increasing share is conducted for, by, or at the direction of, the Federal government. Today, the solitary inventor, tinkering in his shop, has been overshadowed by task forces of scientists in laboratories and testing fields. In the same fashion, the free university, historically the fountainhead of free ideas and scientific discovery, has experienced a revolution in the conduct of research. Partly because of the huge costs involved, a government contract becomes

virtually a substitute for intellectual curiosity. For every old blackboard there are now hundreds of new electronic computers. The prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by Federal employment, project allocations, and the power of money is ever present * and is gravely to be regarded. D.D. Eisenhower, 1961, "Farewell Address" <http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/farewell.htm>

¹¹ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/episteme-techne/>

¹² "The performing arts [...] have indeed a strong affinity with politics. Performing artists-dancers, play-actors, musicians, and the like — need an audience to show their virtuosity, just as acting men need the presence of others before whom they can appear; both need a publicly organized space for their 'work,' and both depend upon others for the performance itself" (Arendt, *Between Past and Future*: 154).