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YES
OF
THE
NO

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TO BUILD
IN SPACES THAT
ARE MORE
SPECULATIVE
YOU HAVE TO BUILD
IN SPACES
THAT ARE MORE
SPECULATIVE

THE YES OF THE NO

No — look up the word in a dictionary and be told of its negative connotations, how it functions as an interjection that refuses, denies or seeks to cancel out. *No* is an utterance that stands in the way of things or that declines to participate. It is a form of obstacle or dampening down like the stubborn voice of the party pooper or killjoy for whom the glass remains half empty, never half full. Or else it expresses nothing but a deficiency or dearth, a lack or absence, the failure of something to materialise. It is the response dreaded by the unrequited lover, the puncture wound by which a proposal gets let down or loses its verve. It is the final call that brings about an end; the cruel cut that nips things in the bud, the blow by which hopes and dreams and fledgling possibilities are dashed and then wither. Functioning as a measurement, it is the marker of that which is nonexistent, missing or simply not allowed. Taken as an instruction or rule, it is the governing voice of restrictive authority that tells us what not to do, which attempts to silence or stop us still in our tracks. Or maybe it is the calling out of the mother whose child's hand draws too close to the fire. How quickly a term can turn. As a protective intervention *no* wishes to keep the other from harm's way, it is an act of care or of responsibility, a pledge, a promise, a commitment made. *No* stops one flow of action allowing another to develop. It is an interruption based on being able to see an imagined future, the consequences of each individual act. Whilst the *yes* of surrender can signal the passive and acquiescent acceptance of the seemingly inevitable, *no* is a defiant gesture of protest that refuses to give up, give in. It is the rally cry of dissent, the declaration that enough is enough, that a line has been crossed. Things have gone too far. The binary logic of opposites collapses in on itself. Here is the *yes of the no*, through which *no* allows, opens up or enables things to move forward, to move on. *No* stalls, taking time (back) to re-think or re-imagine the trajectory of future action. Look up a word in any dictionary but remember that definitions can be irredeemably imprecise, for meaning is rarely still, nor ever wholly certain.

COME ON

Consider next, the word *yes* — think of its affirmative function, how it approves, attests or generally agrees. *Yes* signals an act of recognition, of being able to accept to the existence of something that was previously hidden, previously undeclared. It is the speech act of the witness whose testimony cannot deny what they have seen, that cannot be denied. Or else it can be experienced like the clearing at a film's denouement when things suddenly fall into place; a flash of inspiration or illumination visualised as a light bulb being switched on. Yes! That Eureka moment of discovery or breakthrough, the state of having found *it*, of having attained the *telos* sought. Yet, the meaning of the word *yes* can vary through its intonation or inflection. *Yes* is dependent upon the status or power of the individual that utters it, the context in which it is uttered. *Yes* can be an expression of assent and of consent, of agreement and consensus. Yes, indeed. But could it also not speak of hesitation or curiosity or some trepidation even — *yes?* Here, it might describe a gradual awakening or sensitising towards that which has been ignored or unnoticed or has hitherto remained invisible, a sense of raising awareness or the finding of something that had not been consciously pursued. Another *yes* then, akin to the nascent clarity forming from within the mists of some dissipating fog. A form of affirmation that emerges hesitantly at first, where the declarative stalls to make space for a less than wholly certain *yes*, the slow 'oh, *yes*' whispered by the curious attending as events unfurl or unravel. Or else the term might seek to contradict or work against the order of a previous limitation or constraint, where *yes* is the refusal of an already existing refusal, the refusal *of* refusal itself. This is a form of rebellious or dissident *yes* that is unwilling to be held bound by the negative authorisation of the *no*. Here, perhaps, it is possible to conceive the *no of the yes* — a form of affirming refusal or a species of permission or provocation that advocates the possibility of being or behaving otherwise. A dissident *yes* traps and renders the *no* of the naysayer void. This hopeful *yes* scarifies the ground, creating germinal conditions within which the unexpected might arise. It is a *yes* that wishes for the unexpected, that wishes to be surprised. The *yes* that invites rather than endorses is a call to action — it is an insurgent affirmation. Come on then! What are you waiting for!

STEPS TOWARDS DANCING SOLO

Habitually coupled with the preposition *from*, dissent is often defined by the thing against which it takes a stand or strives to differ. It is brought into existence by the very terms that it wishes to challenge, constituted by the logic of the same system that it simultaneously seeks to dispute or resist. Based on a practice of alterity or of being otherwise, dissent sets itself in wilful opposition to the sentiment or conventions of the majority opinion, the ascendant order. In doing so perhaps, it inherently plays into the sticky trap of binary relations where two partners are coaxed into the hold of a slow-playing conceptual waltz where one term will always lead and the other follow. Each creates the momentum that keeps the other in play, the awkward choreography of an uneasy dance pair forever bound to, yet repelled by one another. Parallel energies pulling in opposite directions create the dynamic of rotation or revolution, the close coupling of two systems transferring force from one to the other and back again. The relationship between dissent and its oppressive antithesis is often symbiotic. Each is propelled by the power of their opponent's resistance or reaction. Every new manoeuvre is conceived in tentative anticipation of the other's next step. In order then, for dissent to truly refuse the terms of the system in which it finds itself ensnared and encoded, it must devise new rules — a new choreography specifically for the purpose of going it alone, for breaking established pattern or protocol, for dancing solo.

BECOMING THE CAUSE

Rather than taking up a specific cause against something else, dissent has the capacity to be constitutive (causal in and of itself), a critical and creative practice undertaken towards the production of new or unexpected ways of being in the world. Here, a shift occurs from being mobilised *by* external forces towards self-mobilisation, towards causing oneself to act. Dissent is a form of protestation against normative or hegemonic ideologies (whatever they might be), the desire to break or escape from the pernicious stranglehold of conformity and expectation. It is the rejection of prescribed and accepted cartographies of subjectivity in favour of a perpetual — daily and life-long — quest for new modes of creative inhabitation not yet fully mapped out or declared known. Dissension necessarily involves some degree of contrariness, founded as it is on the principle of not concurring or agreeing with the authority of dominant modes of naming and knowing. It makes no sense then to try to make sense of a practice hell bent on thwarting the logic of consensus. It would be at odds with the idea of dissent itself to pin down individual moments of rebellion or sedition within a broader genealogy (political, theoretical or otherwise). Dissent resists such familiar strategies of organisation and classification, for it perceives in them a nascent orthodoxy. Looking for other ways to inhabit the system — without being captured or constrained by it — requires that a given language or set of rules are no longer used to hold things in place, but rather become worked until malleable, bent back or folded to reveal other possibilities therein.

IF EVERYTHING HAS BEEN DONE THEN WHAT IS LEFT?

Revolution may never be exhausted but neither does it reach an end, for it is an impossible pursuit like that of the tireless dog chasing its own tail, like Sisyphus with his rock. The downfall of one form of oppression brings another in its wake. One tyranny collapses as another burgeons. Dissenting tactics are swiftly absorbed and redeployed as strategies of control and order; insurgent methods scrutinised and mirrored back, manifold. Progression does not necessarily bring about change, simply new ways of keeping things the same. Or else, the progressive norm might give the *illusion* of moving forward, leaving the old ways behind by declaring them useless or passé. Here then, dissent might refuse to keep pace, turning away towards what is and has been left. This reveals a latent politics, which — by way of opposing the right — harnesses the energy of the left's wrongness, its untimeliness. This is the politics of the wasted and ignored. The overlooked. Obscure. The obsolete. Peripheral. Illicit. All that has been cast aside. The discarded and forgotten. Leftovers. Goods surplus to requirement, deemed unfit for purpose. The fallen foul by the wayside. Abandoned practices. Outmoded technologies. Redundant skills. Here though, the rejected or unwanted is resilient like the wily knotweed or the uninvited admirer who refuses to move on or go away. The left is out of order, out of line, out of sight. It is to be out of time, step or sync with the dominant societal drive onwards, ever upwards. It is to operate anticlockwise. If right is to tighten, then left is to loosen. It is a politics of undoing, of allowing things to unravel. Left is also a lover's language, being closest to the heart.

PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED

Readiness is the state of being at the cusp of action, mind and body poised, awaiting signal. To be prepared is to anticipate the unforeseen future. Unknown situations, however, demand a speculative approach for you can never be wholly sure what to expect, what skills will be required. Yet, certain practices can be rehearsed daily: using your eyes; creating secret signs; receptiveness; reading maps; judging heights and distances; simple doctoring; stalking; learning to hide; plant identification; differentiating provisions from poisons; imagination; free speech; making fire; building bridges; early rising; whistling; wood whittling; weather wisdom, finding the North. Practice does not make perfect, rather a precarious capacity with no goal other than to be continually practised. Repetition of a singular action creates thinking space in which to contemplate strategy. Learning how to aim an arrow straight is to comprehend the vertiginous dynamic of a line of flight, to conceptualise an escape route. To prepare for the unexpected has a dual function: it is the gesture of getting oneself ready (for anything) but also of scarifying the ground, creating germinal conditions in which something unanticipated might arise. Emergency is both a state of crisis and the event of emergence, the brink of the new. Dissent desires to break with or defy expectation by willing into existence the unexpected, something unlike what has come before, the eruption of a form of thinking or being differently.

MAKE DO

The new or different is not something to anticipate passively like next season's shoes. Better it be conjured from the conditions of the present, from what is already here and now. Surrendering to one's circumstances does not mean to give in to the inevitable but rather to yield to the possibilities that each specific situation brings, learning to be resourceful with what is to hand. Reinvention is the practice of breaking down the familiar into a molten state in order to divert its flow, affecting a change in perception. New economies emerge based on alternative principles of asymmetrical exchange: theft and piracy, gift giving and donation, the art of losing one thing and finding something else. Lending should be treated with some caution however, for whilst it suggests generosity it often expects more back in return. To *make do* is not to manage with less nor hope for more, rather a call towards a life of creative action over dutiful consumption — an instruction to begin making and doing.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Limits mark the edges of what is deemed acceptable or permissible, what can be done or seen or said. They differentiate the known from what remains uncharted; distinguish the sanctioned from the improper or taboo. Limits determine capacity, how much something can tolerate before it begins to break; the degree of pressure that it can withstand. The most insidious can be self-imposed or voluntary, those that have been nurtured lovingly in the dark over years. However, limits — whether social or spatial — are rarely staked out with any real clarity. Lines on a map are often invisible at ground level, psychological limits revealed only once they have been breached or pushed too far. To know your limits does not mean to dutifully remain within their bounds but rather — like the poacher or pioneer — to develop the border knowledge that will allow the limit to be negotiated differently or rendered porous, to learn where the boundaries are and be mindful of how to facilitate their crossing.

EMBODY KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is an oppressive tool of power once it is invested in like lumps of gold. Yet ways can be found to avoid its forms from becoming bankable, transferable. Knowledge can be concealed tacitly within the body, smuggled across borders. Having confidence in something is a matter of faith, of trust. Memorisation is the burning of an idea into the head and heart. Expert and amateur are bound by their love, for both obsessively surrender their attention to a single passion. Unlikely dissenters, both resist the liquid terms by which they are increasingly expected to conform. One rejects professionalism, whilst the other is a little too honed and focused, acutely specific. Localised knowledge fails to adapt or modify itself obediently to the societal demand for global forms of generic and malleable (non) skill, rather it strives to retain its awkward specificity, its strange and impenetrable dialect. Ideas become located at the fingertips or along one's taste buds. Flesh refuses to be made dispensable, to give up its secrets easily. Other forms of knowledge are wilfully scattered or dispersed through a community, where various individuals are entrusted as keepers or protectors of a carefully chosen fragment, a single coordinate on a living map. Such strategies refuse to divulge the extent of their knowledge, but rather only ever indicate towards the collective potential.

FALL BENEATH THE RADAR

Pinning your flag to the mast is the surest way of being seen, of announcing your location. Dissent might well be unspectacular then, fail to put on a show. Visible lines of strategy are equally discernible to friend and foe. An insurgent's sources should therefore never be revealed. Failure to provide adequate references or documentation is a way of information — or a person — being taken out of authorised circulation, rendered unverifiable, insubstantial, a touch suspect. Dislocated or liminal states of being offer a sense of both liberation and loss, where nothing can be taken for granted, where everything is up for grabs. Different personae might be adopted as a means of subterfuge or for testing the potential of another's style of life. Borrowing allows for trying something out without ever truly owning it, nor being owned by it. Dissident modes — of being or behaviour — appear insensible or scrambled to dominant channels of communication, which will always operate on a different wavelength. Covert bandwidths — the psychic, the virtual, the nocturnal or subterranean — require a different kind of reception, require tuning to a more nuanced key or timbre. Non-standard or (seemingly) abnormal frequencies — of existence — often fall out of range and cannot be so easily traced. That which is perceived as powerless thus becomes a blind spot — invisible, exempted or ignored. Impotency emerges as a mode of stealth.

AM I BOTHERED?

Dissent derives its etymological origins from the Latin *sentire*: to feel or hear, to experience through the senses. However, it is the negation or reversal of the verb, a state of *not* feeling, of resisting sentiment, of failing to be moved. Yet, to defer reaction can augment one's capacity to truly act, for action wavers at the mercy of the emotions, at sensation's beck and call. Reaction is only ever action in response, more often a force of habit. Lack of responsiveness is not for the apathetic or idle though, for it is far easier to give in to distraction, to lose one's focus and fall back into line. To not care — what others think — thwarts the opinion of the crowd, by demonstrating that you couldn't care less, that you do not give a damn. Practised indifference is as unswerving as an ascetic's abstinence, requiring the meditative withdrawal of one's interest away from worldly pressures and expectations, towards a neutral state. The teenager thus becomes the site of a germinal politics. Their refusal to be bothered is the declaration of an emergent independency, an attempt to separate themselves from their surroundings, to prefer not to be overly troubled or affected by them. Adolescence can appear unmotivated, lacking any real direction or purpose. It has yet to succumb to routine or settle into identifiable rhythms. Here, the body is experienced as an awkward and unpredictable assemblage that jerks and stutters, that is still undecided on which shape it should take. Habits are adopted briefly and loved intensely before they become boring and are abandoned with haste. Affiliations bloom for the duration of a day.

GOING OVERBOARD

To jump ship attests to a loss of faith, to the hopeless recognition that there is nothing else that can be done. Yet, there are other ways of breaking rank by remaining on board. Any uneven distribution of weight or action will inevitably unsettle the equilibrium. The horizontal order (of left and right) can be supplemented by a vertical logic (the principles of more or less, of deficit and excess). Expectation can be disappointed through the practice of inefficiency, of deliberately failing or somehow falling short. It can also be exceeded, surprised. Dissidence adversely plays out under the cover of over-eagerness. Enthusiasm can become too much of a good thing when it is over-excited and a little lawless like the sugar-rush of a hyperactive child.

BEING IN TWO MINDS

Dissident practices can seem difficult to reason (with) for they are prone to switch tack, keeping formless or mercurial. Theirs is a bipolar logic that oscillates between opposing positions to avoid becoming fixed, immobilised. Asceticism is swiftly followed by conviviality; gravitas by levity, insensitivity with care. Willingness exhibits wavering commitment — comes over willy-nilly. Utility is conceived to have no purpose. The act of not taking something seriously is performed with certain sobriety. Critique turns from negation towards affirmation; towards the yes of the no. Inconsistency signals the desire to keep one's options open, a method then for resisting consistency as the desirable paradigm, a tactic for preventing complex human experiences from becoming reduced or simplified to any single or stable position. By simultaneously being *both* and neither, inconsistency reveals the inadequacy or fallacy of existing systems of classification, instead tending towards the still unresolved. It is a restless state frustrated with the existing options, relentlessly searching for other ways of being in the world.

WITHOUT RHYME OR REASON

Utility is the law of use, which measures individual things by their capacity for service or employment, setting their value or worth against how efficiently they get the job done. Here, nothing is without good reason. Everything is where it should be, as you would expect. Ergonomics maximise efficacy through the fit between form and function, between workers and their place of work. Performance is optimised through choice design, greater speeds yielded through a streamlined cut. Whilst utility determines how something *will* be used, lack of specific purpose opens up the possibility of unexpected interactions, polyvalence. Actions can be isolated and absolved of direction; repeated senselessly until meaning is evacuated, made absurd. To lack purpose is to refuse to behave according to dominant teleological or goal-oriented expectations, to remain unmotivated, without clear aim. Purposelessness meanders errantly against the logic of the most direct path, taking further detours rather than cutting corners. Uselessness is activity liberated from its servitude or else the expectant state of promise or potentiality before purpose has been fully declared, before a use or function has been fixed, defined.

BIDE YOUR TIME

(S)he who hesitates is lost according to the logic of swift and definitive action, seemingly unable or unwilling to make a move. However, to dally or dawdle is to take one's time (back). Failure to respond instinctively leaves thinking space for imagining unexpected lines of action, for initiating a new trajectory of events rather than simply reacting to or repeating the old. Hesitation waits for the propitious moment, a reflective interval within which to conceive a less predictable next step. To encourage a delay between stimulus and response disrupts the logic of cause and effect, shifting attention away from the deliberate towards the process of deliberation. Moments of stillness and slowness — of creative non-production or the event of doing nothing — break or rupture the smooth flow of habitual routine, momentarily illuminating openings and fissures within which to imagine things other than what they are.

OPTING IN

Dissent plays games but refuses to play the game; it questions or misuses the logic of the dominant system whilst declining to leave its frame. To play life like a game is to accept its rules for the pleasure of exploiting the loopholes, as points of critical pressure or leverage against which to work. Rather than being surrendered to with passive and acquiescent obedience, the rules of a game should be approached consciously by one's own volition, modified or dismantled once they begin to stifle action or no longer offer provocation. To play life according to a different set of rules involves teaching new recruits the tricks, for all games require their players, new initiates willing to yield to the delight of play's darker arts. Dissent is played out through the force of collective action, thwarting the disempowering and atomising effects of individualisation, the oppressive regime of divide and rule. Group formations align spontaneously into unstructured communities, the logic of shoaling replacing that of the school.

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

Dissent is not so much resistant then as forever hopeful, a prospective practice that is always searching for new ways to rupture the conditions of the present in its commitment to the possibility of something different, alternative futures. Dissent is having belief or faith in the capacity of things to be otherwise. It is a quest of an irresolvable kind however, for every new situation brings with it a new order of normality and convention. As such, dissent remains an ongoing endeavour that requires continual attention and rejuvenation, a critical following from within every new generation who refuse to see the world and their place within it as fixed and determined, as unchanging or unchangeable.

AS IF.
NOT ALL IS,
AS WAS,
AS WILL BE

BETWEEN THE WATER + THE WIND

There are certain things in the world that only really come into being in those moments when they are activated or brought into action by *other* things. A boat is much like any other vessel until it is brought into contact with water, and it is this relationship to the water that in part makes a boat a boat. So too, the specificity or singularity of the boat is furthermore made evident during the act of sailing, for sailing epitomises the mode of being which is a boat. However, the act of sailing is only made possible through the interplay of multiple forces, including but not only including that of the boat itself. Sailing is the interaction of the boat and the skipper and the water and the wind. It is an event that takes place in the moment of these different forces coming together in one place. Remove any one to reveal their inextricable interconnectedness. The negotiation or interrelation between these elements creates the dynamic of movement and in turn it is this movement over water that defines the boat as a boat, gives it its reason for being. The boat's reason for being is thus dependent upon the presence of other forces. Its existence or potential, at least, is always conditional — affected and determined by the existence of other things. Learning to sail involves the negotiation between and with these different elements, it is a process of facilitation or mediation that attempts to make good the turbulence created by the pull of the water and the push of the wind. Sailing then, involves a mode of attendance or attention to these different and often competing forces; moreover, an intuition for knowing when to yield and for recognising when to assert control. Our own experience of being in the world might also be thought of in terms of these interrelations and co-dependencies. Subject formation is a highly contingent process, which takes place somehow between and through the event of affecting and of being affected by other things. It is perhaps no coincidence that the word *subject* also means to be depending or conditional upon somebody or something else, something other.

HELSMAN'S KNOWLEDGE

Movement through any space is shaped as the desires of the individual body meet with the pressures of its surrounds; performed through the negotiation of different forces as the helmsman steers against the pressure of the water and the wind. At times, it seems that we are losing our grasp of helmsman's knowledge, our capacity to harness the momentum of forces that are outside of our control. Sometimes perhaps, we give in too soon, surrendering too quick and easily to the force of the situation in which we find ourselves. Too often, our bodies seem at the mercy of powers that cannot fully be discerned, our movements conform to the call of unspoken laws and a logic that we seem unable to resist. Here, the body is experienced only through the pressures acting upon it, seemingly unable to recognise its own internal force or agency, its capacity to withstand or tolerate as much as yield. Certain spaces push towards specific kinds of performance, direct a body to behave in a fixed or scripted way. The possibilities of what a body *could do* shrink to fit the template of expectation; options narrow to the standards of a pre-set score, where the individual body can express itself only through the slightest embellishment of the norm. Over time, our navigation of a space congeals towards a set pattern of routinised gestures, as day-after-day we dutifully repeat and repeat our chosen groove, rarely missing a beat. Pattern sediments towards protocol, an unspoken rulebook that tacitly moderates the limits of what is allowed. It is tempting to imagine that rules are drawn from elsewhere, laws cooked-up by faceless government hooked on curbing the enthusiasm of our wayward desires. And yet *we* author and enforce the limitations that determine how we live our lives; our complicity and obedience maintains their authority, strengthens their hold. Then, to be more discerning, for any rule is good only as long as it protects and affirms life, failing if it only curtails or constrains.

RECALIBRATION

It is through our bodies that we might differentiate the rule of friend from foe. A body is an instrument capable of attending to and measuring the nature of both its own force, and the affect of other forces. Yet this skill must be practised daily, without which it becomes lost or lapsed. On occasion, individual bodies might need to be re-attuned, else risk forgetting the art of affection. At times, we too readily forfeit or forgo our agency as affective beings, as forces amongst forces. We create rules that diminish our potential for interaction; that keep us atomised and at a distance, removed from those we don't yet know. We fiercely police the boundaries of our own personal space; keep our eyes dutifully diverted lest we catch another's glance, attract their attention. We keep ourselves to ourselves. Mind our own business. Look the other way. We purposefully name the other *stranger*; in turn, we too feel increasingly estranged. Over time our bodies become unreliable; too sensitised to a sense of risk and danger, too dull or numbed to act another way. Over time we might lose the feeling of what a body — our very being — is capable. Diminishing awareness is self-imposed, too readily accepted, for the limits of self and situation are rarely tested. So often, our own capacity remains uncharted; moreover, the limits of what we are capable have become mistaken for what is allowed. The body folds to fit the mold of how it *thinks* it should behave. Limbs forget the fullness of their reach. Skin barely remembers the feel of unsolicited touch. Voice lowers so indiscernible amongst other voices. Movement synchronises to the metronomic regulation of those that were there before us, there before us, there before us. Without practice, a body's capacity to electively act is decreased. Yet, a body can also be re-trained, recalibrated; through exercise it can nurture its own affective force. With practice, a body becomes receptive (and not resistant) to situations that test its limits affirmatively, inoculated against those situations which dampen or diminish its potential or power. Here, to truly care for the self involves challenging its limits — by experimenting along the interstice where *I* encounters the world — not through the withdrawal or retreat safely away from worldly pressures.

LIFE AS GYMNASIUM

The resistance of a body is not performed by trying to escape or refuse the terms of a situation but rather by rehearsing ways for transforming its affects, for performing the situation otherwise. Yet, years of schooling cannot be unlearned overnight. Habits knotted into the sinew of a body take some effort to untie. The teaching of how one should be and behave is worn deeply in the muscle of both flesh and thought. It has been hard work getting the body to conform to the rules within which it is expected to operate. Long hours have been spent impressing upon it the error of its unruly ways. Social scripts pass down through generations. Every era rethinks the lines yet the story stays pretty much the same. Vocabularies alter, the order of the acts remain. The habitual choreographies of daily life are thus not easily rejected or refused, nor will they be undone with force or fury or through revolution alone. Discipline is undisciplined through discipline. Disobedience is a delicately honed skill. True improvisation still needs some rehearsal then, for unattended the body will always fall back quickly into comforting and harmonious rhythm. Conformity is an insidious lesson that creeps upon the body during the night in dream as much as when awake. Dissidence must become practised with the same rigour as conformity then, not just through the brief intensity of protest or revolt but according to daily and continual training. The spectacle of resistance is all too easily reabsorbed; the moves of dissonant bodies underscored with a sound track and sold back as late-night T.V. So practise quietly and lightly, defy by *not* making one's resistance too visible, too assimilable. With practice a body can become pliant, not compliant. Choreograph a small part of every day against the conditions of expectation and convention. Make daily life a gymnasium within which to rehearse and play.

HOW A CITY FEELS

To conceive of a city in choreographic terms is less the imagining of it as a stage upon which to dance, but rather to apprehend it as a field of forces and intensities, *as* choreography. It is a weave or web of flows and rhythms, the live entanglement of relations between bodies and space. Attending to this choreography requires looking beyond what is habitually seen, becoming attuned to the permissions and conditions that determine the very nature of its interactions. Less concerned with the visual spectacle of how the city might appear as a dance of interlocking flows, focus must delve deeper, for invisible forces set the pace and pattern of interrelations within a specific space or site. More than mapping the traces of movements scored — the notation of existing trajectories across and through a given place — the choreography of the city must be registered in another key. Visible rhythms are merely watched from the stands, where what can be witnessed are only the effects of unknown forces, not the forces themselves. To comprehend the true nature of a force requires that it is encountered and not just observed. This enquiry cannot be practised at a distance or through mind alone. Beyond regarding how the rhythm of the city *looks*, the sentient body registers how it feels, by experiencing it close up, in the flesh. A body is a force among other forces, its course determined by its capacity to affect and be affected by other things. Affect is measured through the pulse of a body, according to how it moves and is moved. Choreography attends to these interdependencies, conceptualising the city as the temporal unfolding of fluid and ever-changing relations.

LOOKING FOR LOOPHOLES

Permissions are often inscribed through negative clause, where the body is steered away from certain actions, towards a set menu of increasingly limited choice. Conventions of a space form the idiomatic round hole, the social hoops through which the individual must attempt to jump. Yet, the dimensions of conformity's hoop are rarely consistent. Every situation sets its own parameters, endlessly re-inscribing its perimeter edge. These precarious terms ensure that a body is kept on its toes, since the social standards within which it must perform are re-negotiated by the hour, ever changing. Rather than waiting for the limit or rule to be modified at the whim of some external power, the individual might attempt to intervene in advance. Under pressure, limits can be rendered porous. The line that differentiates one state or space from another can be made to move or give. The division between private and public space becomes blurred through choice actions and interventions. Micro-performances can be staged in the gaps between properties, in the alleyways of possibility between territorialised zones. Boundary walls offer points of pressure against which to vault and somersault, jump and balance. The threshold between here and there can be dwelt in and upon, not just swiftly passaged through. There are intervals of the city where the rules of behaviour have not yet been fully declared, where they still remain in flux. Between the law of one space and another, a moment of lawlessness exists where a body might briefly escape the authority of either side of the line. Act swiftly, for any breach of control is rarely lasting, is far and few between. Unruly spaces are routinely brought back under rule, or else soon governed by the law of a fear that is equally difficult to counter. Act swiftly but with intent, for whilst the opportunist recognises the opening within every situation encountered, with haste and not intention true *kairos* often goes to waste. Begin by acting *against* impulse, for impulse is an illusory sense of liberation, nothing but the involuntary performance of an action or reaction already known, the subconscious repetition of what already is.

NAVIGATING LIMITS

It is habit to lament those limits imposed upon the body, pressed against its will. Yet, self-limitations are often observed more vigilantly than the strictest order. In directing our dissatisfaction towards the rules that we have not made, we can fail to notice the ones that we have ourselves nurtured, those we have accepted as inescapable truths. There are certain limits that a body believes are undeniable fact: the boundary that separates its own interior from the rest of the world, the laws of gravity. Thus, skin is carefully guarded so to keep the self contained, a thing distinct from other things. Weight is often privileged before levity; gravitas given import against that which is considered light. Find ways of challenging the seemingly irrefutable limit, and other man-made rules and restrictions become more possible to resist. In dance a body attempts to escape the earth's magnetic pull, forgetting its fetters in momentary lines of flight, becoming aerial. The space of the body does not end with its own physical limits; skin is less impermeable than it first seems. The secret interiority of self can be pressured gently beyond the skin's limits to occupy other realms; the exteriority of the world can be held in the recesses of a body, hosted within. A body is not a thing bound by its surface edge, but rather a force whose capacity is only comprehended through the intensity of its interactions. To be more capable then, a body must become less concerned with protecting its limits, defining the contours that divide and separate it from everything else. Capacity is not built by closing oneself off, but through receptivity, by becoming more *open*.

FOLD / UNFOLD

Electing towards an open state, the body becomes receptive to the force of other bodies, affected by its own volition rather than against its will. However, the open body is vulnerable to both threat and promise. It will need to cultivate resilience, develop its strength. Open the body gently then, with care. Limbs set in fixed ways will need time to relax, relax. Joints locked in rigid posture must be coaxed to flex. Flesh hung heavy might want persuading of its capacity for feeling, as much as for flight. As a solid entity the body is only too aware of its edges, its physical limitations, its distinctness from other things. Untrained the body is too conscious of its mass, its weight and density. It imagines itself as molded clay, flesh worn down at the hand of gravity and the pressing of time. To shift the body from thing to force requires a little alchemy. A body must be convinced of its power to shape-shift, its capacity for modifying its own condition, changing its very nature. Elemental transformation requires heat and energy. Rising temperature might turn matter into its liquid state, cause liquid to become gaseous, airborne. Warm the body through folding and unfolding, through the rub and touch of skin on skin. Register points of tension and blockage as the body coils become untangled when extended to fullest reach. Let go of tightness of feeling; release the knotting of the hips, the clench of the jaw. Folding means to yield or surrender, it involves learning how to give. Yet this is not a passive act, for to fold the body back upon itself requires some agility, the same for the folding of thinking back onto thought. Breath makes the folding of self and the world palpable. The body holds something of the world's air within its pleats; productive gaps can be nurtured in the creases between thoughts. Once folded, the body is rendered unfamiliar, incomprehensible. Consider a body morphed into unexpected contortions; not the involuntary torque and spasm of the hysteric body bucked against her will, but of a body capable of twisting itself (free) to avoid becoming trapped, immobilised.

CONTIGUITY

Folding the body increases its elasticity, building its capacity to flex under pressure, to take the strain. Rather than an obligatory practice where the body is forced to adapt to ever changing circumstance, the elective flexing of a body is undertaken pleurably, for the sensations generated by moving to and from taut and relaxed. Through folding, a body can reach exalted states; the rapturous bliss of a body prone or prostrate, the ecstasy of a swooning body caught at the moment of faint, of fall. However, attending to the curve and bend of a body can soon fold towards the solitary excitation of self-stimuli, the self-sufficiency of a pleasure or passion gleaned only from oneself. Here, the autoerotic body risks becoming hermetic, its pleasures sealed within an affective feedback loop where it is only sensitive to itself sensing. Cut off from the affects of other forces, the energy of any system soon becomes entropic. In time a closed body loses its capacity to truly feel or act. A body must then practise folding with other bodies. Its matter must be touched by the presence of other matter, its flows and rhythms plaited and interwoven with those that are not its own. It is through the play and pressure of other bodies that the individual can truly conceive of what they are themselves capable. Test the body by bringing it into proximity *with*. Work on becoming close not closed to strangers. Generate warmth to nearby bodies. Practise affection towards people that you don't yet know. Experiment with gradients of intensity, bringing the speeds and slowness of your body to time with others, in time allowing the rhythms to gradually fall back out of sync. The performed actions of an individual can be used to take the behavioural temperature of a chosen space or scene, test its water. Certain speeds and rhythms disappear unseen against the noise of their surroundings, or else appear in sharp relief when the possibilities of a given place are more subdued. With practice a body can measure the intensity of a given moment, comprehend the unseen nature of the rhythms and forces that give it its shape and tenor. Like a thermometer measures warmth and cold, a body can become sensitised to slight changes in the air, shifts in climate. Flesh can gauge the permissions and prohibitions of a situation much swifter than the mind.

GOOD COMPANY

A body's capacity can be bolstered through association, its potential for action amplified through the company that it keeps. Its force or energy can fluctuate and waver, depending upon its surrounds. A body knows when it is in good company, for here it can be as much as it can be. There is some truth to the adage that strength can be found in number, yet there are times when three too soon becomes a crowd. Within the public realm, individuals are often grouped through necessity or habit as much as by desire or design. Waiting flesh gets pressed into ordered lines. Unspeaking assemblages form in squares during the brief reprieve between morning and afternoon. Tired limbs brush and crush during the rush hour, each body compressed to fit the cut of commodified time. Classificatory regimes usher individuals into preformed groupings all too easily. Tick box scales package persons by age and place of origin, by sexual proclivity, colour of skin. Bodies are routinely assembled under the nomination of increasingly complex cultural codes, acronymic coordinates that fix and position an individual within the range of a predetermined grid. Community is the term given to any loose association of bodies connected by location or geography or by some other common bond. Experiment with new ways of becoming collective, multiple. Refuse those orders that keep the body fixed and bounded, that force allegiance against the individual's will. Gathered bodies might behave differently according to how they are named. Possibilities of collective action can be augmented by a momentary change in the used noun. Practise with others the leaderless shimmer of a shoal of fish or flock of birds, a murmuration's flight caught in the light of evening gloom, or the exaltation of larks ascending. Charm like finches — wisp and drift and chatter. Avoid the unkindness of ravens, a lapwing's deceit, the pitying of the turtledove.

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Practice demands concentration and attention, since a body is swift to return to gestures known well, to the ease of default options. Familiar locations can be the hardest to rehearse, for the rhythms of these places have been programmed into the body, are difficult to override. Practise then in places still unfamiliar, with gestures that are not your own. Seek out those districts which desire or necessity would never lead you to explore: the margins of the city's edge-lands; its business parks; empty lots, quiet residential streets never yet called home. On occasion, journey elsewhere to other cities or places whose shape and contour is not yet in memory stored, whose habits require learning still. Treat these as rehearsal spaces for the training body, for testing its receptivity to the push and pull of unexpected forces and pressures. Emptied of the routine that habitually governs its steps through space, a body's movements can become experimental, surprising. Space no longer appears as the ground against which the movements of a body score, for experimental bodies collaborate *with* space on the production of new choreographies. To be truly receptive to the call of space, a body must remain unmotivated in its intentions yet alert enough to respond when the occasion seems right. Old habits must not just be replaced with habits new, the familiar gestures of one place simply swapped for those of another. Before a body adapts to the customs and practices of its new surrounds, there is a brief interval where even minor differences in everyday behaviour can be discerned. Attend to the smallest details of daily life, for it is through the reworking of these that the patterns of habit and convention can be collapsed, reordered. New choreographies emerge in the appropriation of behaviour. Gestures can be gleaned and borrowed; fragments of everyday life isolated from their context, liberated from the laws of cause and effect.

GLIMPSES OF WHAT IF

Minor performances can be scored through the reordering of life's refrains, those barely noticeable melodies of action and inaction that collectively make up the white noise of the everyday. Extracted and condensed, even the most prosaic gesture can become alien, enchanting. Yet, the experimental body is not intent on destroying or disrupting the flows and rhythms that make up daily life. Their experiments with its vocabulary and grammar attempt to augment and modify its experience, devising new melodies within the terms of a given situation such that it might be encountered afresh. The experimental practice of everyday life is not to change its structure or shape in any prescriptive way, but rather tactics through which to transform how it is encountered. Choreographed interventions within and with space are not proposals for a new way of living a life, for they are necessarily time-bound and impermanent. Undertaken as a form of rehearsal or training, they operate in the mode of the subjunctive, the key of *what if*. Rehearsal is a state of suspension, time separated from the enforced productivity and performance of daily life. An experimental body endeavours to suspend the normative logic of a given space or situation, in order to access other frequencies of being and behaviour. This is not the quest for an alternative or counter way of existing to the norm, but an attempt to reveal *other* ways of operating alongside, in parallel. Revelations often occur along the cusp that separates the visible from the unseen, the sayable from the unspoken. To be truly revelatory then a practice must inhabit such thresholds, abandoning the desire for audience or spectators to the hope of something unexpectedly witnessed, momentarily glimpsed.

AS IS
IS NOT
THE SAME
AS
AS IT
HAS
TO BE

WALK

The act of walking across a city is not a neutral gesture, nor is it one that goes unobserved. The pavement traced, the corner cut, the square circled, the line crossed, the wrong turn mis-taken, the blind alley turned a blind eye to, the dead-end dreaded causing quick and uneasy return. It is all too easy to stop attending to the nature of these daily decisions: to choices weighed up, instructions obeyed and strayed from, to routines that somehow build and are played out each day after day after day. Before long our irresponsible steps are taken care of by others. Unseen shepherds herd us sheep-like through the spaces of the city as though we were daydreaming or in partial sleep. We are perhaps too willing to place trust in our uninvited guides, to forfeit our intuition and forget how we ever made our way without their help. Gradually we might abandon our capacity for aimless wandering, lose our individual sense of direction in favour of authorised routes and assisted navigation. We are forgetting to look in lieu of being told. Like good children we stick to the map and follow the arrows. The city is closing its secrets to us. We must now try to remember its spells. 'Open city! Open Sesame!'

STOP

There are hidden rules that determine how to cross the city, coded orders issued on how to behave, move and interact. Dawdle or meander in the busiest thoroughfare to reveal the fierceness of these unspoken bylaws. Fall still as a rock on the riverbed, as the flow of feet stream past in their forever forward surge. Like civic statues the static body acts as silent witness; a mute commemorator, a figure temporally distanced from the hurried and surrounding throng. A stilled crowd is the harbinger of a potential action poised or the lamented residue of some event since past. Experience the anticipatory queue gathering force or those morbid formations curiously congealed around sites of local catastrophe. Here, inaction is a dynamic form of stillness that quivers palpably like the video-screen paused awaiting play; charged like skin waiting to be touched. Conceived as a totality, the city can be imagined as a unit of activity not unlike the body or a machine, its momentum fuelled by the never failing current of individual motion, the perennial rhythm of the everyday. Stasis thus signals a crisis in this system as the cogs lock; the pulse stalls, the motor crashes. Yet such crisis provokes reflection or decision without which a change to habitual routine need not be imagined. Pause is a critical gesture — without stillness, movement forward will inevitably falter.

OBSERVE

Routine is the grey fog glided into as though by pilots hypnotised by the Ganzfeld mirages of its featureless horizons. Sung like a lullaby it beckons the eyes to slowly close upon the world; lulls the fevered imagination towards involuntary and perpetual slumber. Enter cautiously the incessant mist or ceaseless miasma. Pay attention to your daily journeys and their subtlest landmarks, for you can never be certain when you may need to retrace your steps. Reclaim the lost art of observation from the machinic gaze of surveillance technologies, from the panoptic watch of closed circuit TV. Observe your surroundings with microscopic curiosity or the insurgent wonder of a child. Practise with due care though, for the act of scrutiny is a highly nuanced endeavour, performed along a spectrum of encounter spanning from objective distance to the most intimate proximity. Look to others for guidance for there are still those who have not abandoned this disappearing craft. Present in the coquettish obsession of a lover's gaze during games of seduction, it is also the process played out in the most rigorous scientific methodology, in the forensic search for missing clues. Inhabit these different viewing positions and ways of seeing. Now meet a stranger's eye and note how they respond to the precision of your newly practised glance.

FEEL

Now drop below the radar of the visual, beneath the cartographer's contour and the bureaucrat's grid. Down here at ground level the city is encountered through the logic of a different system of narration; its stories voiced in the language of more marginal and experiential translations. Wandering disrupts the dominant optical orientation of mapping — the static, atemporal form of spatiality through which a place is officially described — by drawing attention to the way in which space is always under construction and understood by the range of senses, not only through sight. At close range it is no longer possible to visually experience the city as a map. It must be registered through another sensory order. It must be felt. Close your eyes and allow your feet to read the streets as though they were braille, as though they were a musical score. Pay attention to its orchestral patterns and invisible tempo — to the repeated rhythms and staccato breaks, interludes, capricious ruptures, to the melody of wear played out and manifest in heavy palimpsest and notations along the margins. Construct a way of speaking back, as an echo or vibration drawn and performed through your body. Choreograph your reply as a silent eulogy, to others who have walked along this way.

TRACE

Sense of place occurs at the juncture between space and time. Spatiality can be conceived as a model of mobility and motion, or of transience and transitivity that can be both played out and punctured through. Lived experience is narrated through a language of stratification and depth, imagined as an archaeological structure. Construct of its own occupation, place is a site of séance where all its histories collide. It is the meeting point between past and present, whilst a non-place is the empty void whose history has been bleached out, erased or is still yet to come. Reflect on the journeys that have crisscrossed the site at which you now stand. Tune in to its bandwidth of inhabitation, conjure the ghosts of your coordinates. Wandering is a tactic through which a contingent or relational sense of place can be retrieved and even instigated, where unauthorised versions of reality — emerging at the interstice of memory, anecdote and lived experience — might elude the flat and static visuality of the map. Now visualise the route that your own life has taken. Plot it as an imaginary itinerary or mental map. Carve your history in illogical footsteps across the fabric of the city or as footnotes to its text. Score its surface with the scrawl of your itinerant epitaph. Walk your signature into the places in which you dwell.

STILL

Pause then. Attend to the stillness of the public realm — those clustered groups gathered impassively in lines or squares, lone lovers impatiently anticipating the advent of another, the sorry standstill of sightseers who have lost their way. Stillness is always more than it seems, a habit of camouflage that refuses to give much away. Yet under scrutiny, still waters run deep. Contrast the inaction of the habitually unmoved or (e) motionless with the sudden and unsettling hiatus felt when something stops you dead in your tracks. Standing to attention always drifts towards lethargic distraction or careless daydreaming in time, the much-awaited immobility of pleasurable interlude, a performance willingly suspended. Muscles tensed in inflexible contraction inescapably yield to the demands of gravity, unable to resist exhaustion's tireless pull. Inability to act can signal a form of resignation, the passive and acquiescent acceptance of the seemingly inevitable. Alternatively, failure to move is a defiant gesture of protest or refusal where digging in one's heels is a tactic for persistently remaining (still) against the odds. To be static then means to be inert or incapacitated, yet it also has the potential to conjure from nowhere the force of hidden energies, unexpected powers. (In)still breaks in the liquid rhythm of habitual flows, by affecting the spacing of a missed beat, a temporal opening into which to imagine things other than what they are. Make stillness a foil for infinite and limitless action.

WAIT

Waiting is an episode of time in which the quickening pulse of adrenalin and slow rhythm of boredom struggle to conduct the pace of passing hours. It is the threshold across which the future is conjured; the interminable limbo of all adolescent dreams, a chasm of pleasure and irritation into which the unspoken fantasies of the everyday might fall or take flight. Performed along a spectrum of expectation — from awaiting the familiar or recurring to anticipating the not-yet-known — the duration of waiting will always be too long, yet somehow never enough. Think of those involuntary moments of indecision before the unfulfilled wait is finally abandoned. Or recall the perennial experience of enforced waiting, the resentful limbo produced by another's failure to arrive. However, waiting is also a tactic for deferring endlessly the disappointment of closure or of unwanted resolution. An undefined or indefinite wait — when an end or outcome remains uncertain — creates a temporal vacuum within which future action can still be imagined. Hesitation waits for the propitious moment, a reflective interval within which to conceive things in other ways. Poised forever at a point of anticipation, waiting promises towards as yet undecided possibilities where one's options are kept momentarily open or left trembling in the balance. Wait then. Stall. Bide your time. Practise a delay between stimulus and response; attend to the opportunity of each moment.

BREAK

Charting an escape route from expectation requires slowing down or stalling the rhythm of habitual routines at the same time as building capacity to respond with unexpected speed and intensity when the time is right. The tempo of unthinking repetition is a beguiling love song, a most insidious melody. Listen carefully and you will hear its beat stepped out in collective refrains along sidewalks, or indistinct in murmured drones, the humdrum harmony of multiple voices tethered to the tenor of a single tune. Improvisation is defense against melodious repetition, working across the logic of the recurring chorus, the conscious interruption of predictable flows. To improvise is to conceive a counter rhythm (of being or behaving), by devising ways to resonate discordantly or at a different timbre. Working against the grain demands a degree of attentiveness; identification of alternative frequencies of opportunity already present within every familiar structure, the minding of gaps. Spaces of possibility — yet too often the gaps are filled carelessly or in haste, as incessant chatter surfaces the holes of awkward silence. Or else they stay unnoticed like a dropped stitch. Find ways of extending the spaces of hesitancy between cause and effect, yet act swiftly and with intent for true *kairos* is fleeting and disappears as quickly as it comes.

GROUP

The city is a promiscuous assemblage, a precarious gathering of disparate forces and fragmentary parts. More than a spatial or geographical terrain that can be named and known, every city has a mobile and mercurial architecture. Performed as choreography or an event, it is the unpredictable symphony of divergent rhythms coaxed into tentative co-existence, the promise of infinitely variable refrains. Herein, lies potential for an unfolding orchestration always on the cusp of a change in chord, ever receptive to new direction. Yet, true mobility should be practised lightly, for whilst even the most flexible can seize without due care, agile structures become rigorous if over disciplined. Classification fixes the social city into immutable form, rendering community static and identities unchangeable. Definition is the art of eradicating ambiguity, clarifying blurred edges, the boundaries that separate and divide. Set limits with caution, for like warmed gas the expanding city-space is volatile, knows no bounds. Devise tactics for releasing points of pressure, for loosening the habits of stiffened postures and resistant joints. Exercise a different routine daily; fail to fall into the shape of set ways. Identify common patterns of gathering and dispersal — the flood of rush hour, the insurgency of a swarming crowd — but perform them when least expected. Find others with whom to flock freely, where synchronicities form spontaneously through affinity rather than conformity, each new move determined by the direction of the collective that is its own leader.

SOCIAL ASSEMBLAGE

The meaning of singular words — even of individual *characters* — is determined in relation to the company that they keep, by the way they interact or socialise with others, according to the terms of the situation in which they find themselves assembled. Words and letters are social creatures in this sense, restlessly moving from one textual gathering to another; endlessly gliding in and out of different conversations, forever facilitating the flow of communication before moving swiftly on. Sense emerges through an act of assemblage, through the auspicious collision of disparate words into some sort of provisional order. Explore a word in the dictionary and you encounter a range of *possible* definitions, a sense, even, of how its form and function may have changed or been modified over time. So too, beyond these various authorised and endorsed meanings, pronunciations, etymologies and inflections, there are *other* ways whereby a word is adopted locally by a particular community of users, where it becomes invested with extra or unexpected signification. The meaning of any singular word can therefore never be wholly defined in isolation, for meaning is always context-specific in nature. Similarly perhaps, individual identity can be thought of in such terms, where the way that the human character operates in the world is determined as much by the context in which they find themselves — by their relationship to an environment and to others — as by any intrinsic, definable sense of self. A person might amplify or dampen certain personal qualities or attributes based upon their proximity to others. Individual personality traits can be brought out or toned down, subtly adjusted or adapted for the ease of a smoother social fit, or else rebelliously left unaffected in blunt refusal of being made to conform. Lived experience involves the constant negotiation of expectations, learning to operate according to — by working with, against or else around — the terms of each situation's coded logic, or of finding new ways to breach or break its rules.

SKIRTING THE CENTRE

Considered from the perspective of the centre, the margins describe an outer limit, the end of the line, the back of beyond. Or maybe those places that somehow fail to make the grade, that fall below some tacitly accepted standard. Marginal places are those marked by their distance from the privileged sites of action or official scene, seemingly behind the times or somehow out of sync with metropolitan life, with its fast pace and faster lives and unceasing flows of production. It is easy to conceptualise the margins akin to the extremities of the body, reliant upon a life force pumped out by the beating pressure of (the) capital, the vital heartlands. Against the progressive pro-motion of the city space, marginal places might seem a little static or even backwards, failing to move forward or falling into decline. Places in decline often slope, their fortunes prone to slip and tumble, hit rock bottom, slide. Yet to decline is also an act of refusal, for it expresses a reluctance to accept the proposal offered, a desire to develop things otherwise. So too, might the margins skirt the centre, purposefully keeping it at a distance so as not to be distanced by or within its terms. To *skirt* edges in order to avoid or pass or surreptitiously circle. Margins offer shadowed refuge wherein to eschew the lure and logic of the centre and its centripetal charms, whose pull grooves desire lines as ingrained as the predictable trajectory of the bedazzled moth. The task becomes one of operating centrifugally, which here means a refusal to be moved by the centre. Movement away from — not forced by — is a fugitive act, elective exile. To take flight on one's own terms is to locate oneself wilfully wide of range. However, the centre can no longer be effectively mapped in geographical or spatial terms, for it has become dispersed, ubiquitous, attitudinal. It is not a place from which to come and go, but rather a set of core or normative values that are taught through mantras, repeated often. The middle ground is not escaped easily for it is an imperial force whose laws are pervasive, its master fierce. This centre has no visible boundary; its margins are mercurial. Navigation of margins is uneasy for their shape shifts. To inhabit the margins without being marginalised thus requires a certain skill, the cultivation of tactics, operational *ruse*. Marginal places require marginal practices.

GUIDE AGAINST GUIDES

Marginal places cannot be studied on a map nor navigated with GPS, for their contours are drawn in invisible ink; their margins refuse to be conceived in purely scopic terms. Boundary lines shift with the tide or time of day; certain territories can be crossed only by knowing *when* as well as *how*. Margins are performed according to the terms of a hidden archaeology whose layers unfold deep into and beyond the surface of a place, a palimpsest ghosted by the indecipherable codes of forgotten histories. Yet, marginal places will not be known in advance or by their past alone, but rather they reveal themselves slowly through the process of a live encounter. They exist between times — even outside of time — yet their tense is very present. Such places are experienced along the nape of the neck or in the pit of the stomach or maybe along the tip of the tongue, as one vocabulary falters and another is simultaneously called. For some the margins are to be treated with caution, avoided at all cost. Visit an unfamiliar town or city and before long you will be guided towards its centre. Signposts unequivocally point towards the shops, towards safety in numbers, comforting pedestrian zones. Guidebooks carefully craft routes from one concrete landmark to the next, lest interest falter, itineraries become deviant. It takes some effort to cut against the prevailing wind or current, not to be carried with the direction of the mainstream flow. Guide against guides though, for the authoritative text is always slow to respond to the changing profile of the local terrain. Its *must sees* may have become *long gones* or *no goes*; way-markers change location on the hour, pathways appear and disappear again overnight. Hidden assets come to focus slowly through the prism of a more nuanced attention; you will need to look differently, closer. Better then, to find your own way through, for the route must be determined by the specificity of your own body and of what it is capable. Trust your instincts. Or seek out those with local knowledge, (s)he with whom to explore the limits of both place and of person, where the testing of margins is conceived as synchronous to the conception of other, less acquiescent, ways of living and performing a life. Construct your own guide but remember that it must be modified daily, followed lightly, questioned often.

BEATING THE BOUNDS

A manual for marginal places is not like a map. It makes no sense to try to gauge the shape or outline of such a place by beating its bounds, for its edges are liquid, indiscernible. To beat the bounds is a territorial act, the plotting of limits. Once mapped, the boundary becomes solidified, used to measure or constrain, differentiate or divide. However, margins beat the bounds by refusing to be contained, by remaining boundless. To map the margins is a futile pursuit like that of cutting treacle. No definitive contours can be scored, for the territory is not altogether solid or stable. It wavers, is inconsistent, prone to change its mind. This landscape tilts; it is a diagonal terrain. To inhabit such a space requires a particular inclination or leaning; to live this landscape is to learn by it, to accept to play by its rules. Each step is a test or trial. You have to feel your way. Like the threshold or limen, the margin is a zone of indeterminacy, where binary logic becomes momentarily suspended, rendered null and void. Margins are spaces of contradiction that form in the gap between one state and another; they are caught between this and that or here and there. Or rather they verge on. To *verge* is to inhabit the cusp, forever falling short of definition or declaration or deciding for sure. It is only ever nearly. Not quite. Almost. Unable to be categorised according to the logic of either/or, margins prefer to display the properties of both or many, or else they remain nameless, beyond the limits of definition. Out of bounds. No longer and not yet, margins fall wide or stray of existing modes of classification. They demonstrate a borderline tendency, presenting as somewhat wayward or wild.

AS NEEDS MUSTER

To move away from the centre creates imbalance, disturbs its even keel. Marginal places are thus always a little off-key or out of kilter, a bit askew. Here, ordinary laws no longer fully apply, for capricious forces determine the parameters for living on the edge. Margins are unquestionably testing places to live; their unstable ground can easily create disorientation, a fear of falling or else of getting lost or stuck. Marginal landscapes cannot be traversed carelessly for they are often awkward to negotiate, risky and pitted with obstacles that can easily trip the unwitting traveler, catch them off-guard. Yet, it is impossible to truly prepare for such a place, for these environments change daily and according to the weather. Prepare yourself well but be prepared for that which resists or exceeds all preparation. Inhabiting the margins is akin to putting yourself on the line. It requires a certain instinctual knowledge borne of the moment, a confidence that the right decision will be made when required. New ways of operating are provoked into being through the encounter with a situation unlike what has come before. Marginal places thus create necessity; they force the taking of a different tack. Yet, their forcing is not one of obligation. Rather, they compel like the rally cry or call to action; their needs muster or rouse. They will into being. They *dare*.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE MARGINS

Do not turn to the encyclopedia, for its knowledge will not serve you well in this terrain. Its entries are redundant sooner than they are written. This landscape will have already changed. Taxonomies only extend the vocabulary for *speaking* a way through the marshland or mudflats or perilous scrubs. Shifting sands must be navigated with a certain lightness of foot; quickness of the land met with quickness of wit, sharpness of eye. These places will always fall between the gaps in language; leave you lost for words. Knowledge of the margins is not something that can be extracted and stored in dim-lit archives, but rather it is produced *by* them and then returned back. New ways of operating are required when habitual forms of knowledge no longer suffice. Build towards productive knowledge — the capacity to harness the indeterminate potential of a changing situation, the conditions of flux. Cultivate the power *to* not power *over*, attempt not to overpower but rather undertake, intervene. *Make* not take advantage, nurture the art of knowing how (and when) to work the situation well, of harnessing its chances. Recuperate lost and forgotten knowledge(s), those ways of doing things that have become mistrusted or marginalised as we have gradually turned away from knowing how. Practise the cunning of the poacher or the thief. Observe the laws of brinksmanship, of sailing close to the wind. Become a reader of auspicious signs and of the body's unspoken language. Grow accustomed to the dark. Know how to disappear into the night and appear smaller than your size and that it gets colder just before the dawn breaks. Weave. Listen and observe. Lie in wait.

GLIMPING

Pay attention to those instances of rare lucidity that hint towards the interconnectedness of things. The glimpse is always a little otherworldly, for it marks the opening of one world or reality onto the possibility of others. Those receptive to the glimpse thus inhabit a zone between two worlds, between now and elsewhere, between the actual and imagined. Whilst a glimpse or encounter comes unannounced; still, what can be prepared is the capacity for recognising its advent, for noticing. Begin then by practising the art of looking, by honing the forgotten huntsman's skills of watching and waiting, of biding one's time. Linger in a place long after the original reason for being there has faded, for longer than is necessary. Tarry — for necessity has no place therein. Tarrying sets up the conditions of receptivity or readiness; it thus *makes* as much as awaits its chance to glimpse.

REHEARSING SPACES

Look left of the locations most frequented on the map, towards destinations never destined for the crowds, or the places that have fallen out of favour, the last resorts. Pay attention to changes in dialect, to shifts in turn of phrase and the cut of swagger, for these show you to be approaching a border long before place names ever can. Marginal places lend themselves well to the practise of marginal knowledge. They offer optimal conditions for testing one's tactics, critical leverage against which to rehearse one's nascent skills. Inhabit the shoreline as the tide ebbs, or the wastelands of receding industry, the slack of the landscape leftover after innumerable waves of boom and bust. Seek out the new ruins, the evacuated office blocks and empty shopping malls. Linger in those intermediary places that are on your way to somewhere else. Make moves upon the twilight hours of dusk and dawn. Akin to the margins of a page, marginal landscapes are annotated through active reading. They are patterned with the scribbled footnotes of those refusing to accept the authority of the central text, without comment or reflection. Marginalia has its own poetics; it carries the counter-narrative, its voice incisive. Margins leave room for manoeuvre. They are a space for dialogue or for rehearsing a different position. Rehearsal is reciprocal, for landscape becomes practised as it becomes practised upon. Place is capable of being exercised in the same way as the body or mind, is equally malleable. Marginal practices thus simultaneously test the limits of both landscape and self. Their rehearsal produces capacity for further rehearsal, their training creates suppleness rather than control.

FINDING THE GAPS

Obsolescence is the germinal ground upon which new emergence roots. Between one round of development and the next, there is often a brief interval wherein a space or situation exists between contracts, where space becomes momentarily deterritorialised, unbound from its servitude. Urban space is never consistently utilised, for every hothouse of production creates a wasteland in its wake, the fragmented leftovers of gutter-space and of empty lots. The landscape loops to the eternal rhythm of rise and decline, endlessly enacting the cycle of dereliction and regeneration, of ruin and rebirth. Every burgeoning venture has already begun to run its course. Temporal margins open up a window of opportunity. Timely interventions can be made to stall progress, enabling the site to pause and catch its breath. Preoccupy spaces in order to interrupt them from more utilitarian inhabitation. Divert their attention; send them off track. *Preoccupation* points to an illicit species of occupation that insinuates itself before more legitimate or productive forms have taken hold. Its occupation is of an improper, dysfunctional, all consuming kind. It distracts the advent of other more useful or permissible kinds of activity. Preoccupation takes possession in advance of official or designated use. It is the tender trespass of a site that wishes for it to remain *open*.

ON BEING LEFT OPEN

To leave something open is to declare it unfinished or incomplete; a work in progress, still unresolved. Being open can signal towards a neutral state or the capacity for polyvalence, for manifold meaning. It is (a) not shut or closed; (b) having no protecting or concealing cover; (c) carried on in full view; (d) not closely defended by an opponent; (e) not sealed or tied; (f) having interspersed gaps, spaces, or intervals; (g) accessible; (h) free from limitations, boundaries or restrictions; (i) to speak freely and candidly; (j) to open (one's) eyes, to become aware of the truth of a situation; (k) willing to consider or deal with something; (l) ready to transact business; (m) not yet decided, subject to further thought; (n) characterised by lack of pretense or reserve, frank; (o) free of prejudice, receptive to new ideas and understanding; (p) generous; (q) in operation, live; (r) to *undo*, to release from a closed or fastened position; (s) to remove obstructions from, clear; (t) to get (something) going, initiate; (u) to make or force an opening or gap in, to break the continuity of; (v) to make more responsive or understanding; (w) to reveal the secrets of, to bare; (x) to modify (one's stance); (y) to accelerate; (z) susceptible, vulnerable. Open space is that which has yet to be territorialised, brought under private own. However, with openness comes vulnerability, for a space can soon become unruly in the absence of any rule. To leave something open thus carries an attendant risk, for it is an unprotected state whose facing edges remain exposed. An island is the land mass most marginal; its identity shaped by the exposure of its open shoreline and its perception of the risk therein. Danger might be averted by protecting the raw edge; treating it as an open wound or sore. However, the covered wound is often prone to fester; better then to trust it to the good of the air. Resistance is the tolerance garnered through an encounter with minor risk and danger; not the fear fostered in the attempt to maintain one's distance, keep peril at bay. Openness thus cultivates resilience *with* receptivity. It is an operation of affirmation rather than of defense.

THE (NEW) ORDER OF THE DAY

Margins form as two or more states meet but still will to retain something of their singularity. Their patch-worked constitution is hybrid or variegated and not some homogenous weave. Seams become audible in the spoken language of certain districts; in the rub of banter collaged from distant climes, fragmented words preserving the faint lilt of innumerable elsewheres. They are visible too in the elemental blend of shore where the law of the land dissipates towards the sea or as the sprawling tyranny of the city finally tires and older rural codes reinforce another way. Trace a finger along the lines that separate one place from another on the map, remembering that it is through this seemingly innocuous act that certain differences have already been scored. Yet, the new world order is no longer considered in stable categories, for now everywhere appears to be constantly shifting. Contemporary life is often described in marginal terms, characterised by its ambiguity and indeterminacy, its sense of transience, transition and flux. Knowing how to operate along the margins is thus no longer just a marginal practice for marginal places, but perhaps the only way for operating skilfully in these slippery and uncertain times. Marginality is the (new) order of the day.

GET INVOLVED

Every centre is already the periphery for somewhere else; one's locality a distant land when considered from afar. The world is no longer organised according to a model of neatly expanding concentricity, whose circles of influence ripple ever outwards from designated centres of exchange, for global capital's patterning is diagrammed differently, eccentrically. Its filigree networks are inescapably amorphous and fragmentary, centreless and labyrinthine. To navigate a complex system requires a complex of skills, new tactical ways of operating. The task is perhaps one of becoming *more* than the system, of knowing how to work its indeterminacies, survive its whim. Linear pathways do not lend themselves well to the traversal of labyrinthine terrains. Journeys must become convoluted and meandering, able to swiftly backtrack and change tack. Options should be kept open, conceptualised in letters beyond the predictable limitations of A and B. Spoken languages might become twisted and reversed; new dialects intricately nurtured, every turn of phrase elaborated into arabesque coils or folded back mid-flow. New identities can be practised in the space between fact and fiction, between character and self. Performance emerges as a site for testing the potential of other styles of life, for exploring the margins between how things are and how they might yet be. Involvement is not the event of reluctant participation or entanglement in a system that you have no choice but to accept, but rather a move towards involution, towards making oneself slippery or equivocal, the practice of becoming complex.

FIND OTHER MEANS

Rehearse other ways of doing things.

Practise less accustomed verbs.

(1) Absorb; (2) accept; (3) adapt; (4) adopt; (5) affect; (6) amplify; (7) arrange; (8) articulate; (9) assemble; (10) awaken; (11) bake; (12) barter; (13) befriend; (14) borrow; (15) bounce; (16) break; (17) bypass; (18) circumvent; (19) clear; (20) cleave; (21) climb; (22) coax; (23) collage; (24) collate; (25) collect; (26) confront; (27) converse; (28) dance; (29) disperse; (30) distribute; (31) disturb; (32) dodge; (33) donate; (34) drag; (35) drape; (36) draw; (37) drift; (38) drop; (39) edge; (40) elaborate; (41) elude; (42) embarrass; (43) embellish; (44) embroider; (45) enchant; (46) erase; (47) exaggerate; (48) exchange; (49) extend; (50) extract; (51) fall; (52) find; (53) fold; (54) follow; (55) forgive; (56) fragment; (57) give; (58) glean; (59) gnaw; (60) handle; (61) harness; (62) help; (63) hesitate; (64) hide; (65) illuminate; (66) infiltrate; (67) interact; (68) invert; (69) improvise; (70) knead; (71) laugh; (72) list; (73) listen; (74) make; (75) manoeuvre; (76) mark; (77) melt; (78) mend; (79) move; (80) obfuscate; (81) observe; (82) open; (83) pick; (84) pinch; (85) play; (86) pleat; (87) poach; (88) proclaim; (89) prop; (90) pull; (91) puncture; (92) rebuild; (93) record; (94) recover; (95) recycle; (96) redeem; (97) redeploy; (98) redirect; (99) reduce; (100) reflect; (101) regroup; (102) reinforce; (103) repair; (104) resist; (105) rotate; (106) rub; (107) run; (108) salvage; (109) scatter; (110) scavenge; (111) sense; (112) sew; (113) shift; (114) shout; (115) sing; (116) slide; (117) splice; (118) soothe; (119) steer; (120) stitch; (121) stretch; (122) stroke; (123) stutter; (124) swing; (125) swim; (126) target; (127) tease; (128) throw; (129) tickle; (130) touch; (131) translate; (131) turn; (132) undo; (133) unpick; (134) wait; (135) wander.

DRIFT

Wandering operates tangentially — it detours, dallies, takes its time. To wander is to drift. It is a tactic for getting lost. Navigational aids and maps might be misused for wilful disorientation. Guidebooks used as tools for de-familiarisation and misdirection as much as for finding one's way. Drifting is a mode of attention that lags behind the trajectory of more purposeful thought, yet other knowledge(s) become revealed in the slipstream of intention, in its shadows and asides. To catch the drift is to gauge the tenor of the subtext, to become attuned to what is left out or unspoken, to what is said in what remains unsaid. Become practised in the art of wandering and of drifting thought. Follow in the footsteps of others who have wandered from the beaten track. Yet, remember too, that wandering necessarily wanders; it restlessness wills against the delimitation of any single genealogy or definitive theory of its *dérive*. To wander wills towards remaining unfixed, towards the condition of unbelonging.

GLEAN

Drift is the waste and wasted — the washed up or washed out — brought in by the swell and surge of a storm tide or heavy night. It is that which has fallen out of one context or into another, dislocated from its originary place and time. Margins offer refuge wherein drift might gather, becoming home for that which has no proper home. The margin is often considered somewhat peripheral or supplementary, a space of error into which misaligned production might overspill, a surplus to requirement that will be cut or covered up in due course. It is the selvage of the fabric that stalls the fray; the border into which the ink might safely bleed, the contingent hour grasped once allocated time has run over or out. Margins serve a time-bound function after which they become unworkable remnants, scrapped. They are the unusable off-cuts; the remainder left after all value has been removed, the worthless slag. Gleaning is the art of perceiving value within the unwanted drift and unmarketable margin, the scavenger's knack for making do with what has been left, lost, forgotten or ignored. Tactical ways of operating might be gleaned as much as grain; the means for constructing a life assembled from scavenged fragments, disparate parts. New vocabularies can become bricolaged from the remnants of a language that has fallen out of use or circulation; new meanings gathered from signs whose sense has begun to slowly slip and bleach over time. To glean gestures tests the potential of other ways of living a life. Look towards the minor practices of a child for guidance, for these offer clues for how to conceive the world another way. Their playful excesses create unexpected surpluses of energy whose effervescence might be borrowed and applied elsewhere.

BE GUILFUL

Marginal figures are often skilled in the practice of guile. Shifting environments demand adroitness in approach; the capacity to shape shift as swiftly as the tide or whim of weather. Creatures of the margins are known for their capacity to survive on land or sea, marginal fauna adept in withstanding the inconsistencies of brackish waters, of fluctuating climate. Faced with impending peril, those who inhabit the margins know how to take or make their cover. They do not run elsewhere for protection but rather go undercover; their methods are cunning, covert. Marginal figures are masters of disguise, nuanced in the wily application of subterfuge. They transform themselves depending upon the terms of each situation encountered, always appearing more or less differently every time. Their fronts dazzle or distract, conceal or obfuscate from view. Knowing how to blend into the background emerges as a stealth tactic, where the practice of becoming similar to something else is one of camouflage, not conformity. To become indistinguishable from one's surroundings enables the swiftest of disappearing acts, a line of escape once other paths have become impossible to pass. Disappearance is the event of leaving the frame without leaving the frame, of vanishing — like the magician or illusionist — into the shadows, a cloak of thin air.

BETWEEN YOU + ME

Be wary of playing games of hide-and-seek, for there is always the risk that your cover will not get blown, that you will be forever left in hiding. Too effective a camouflage makes for a sad and solitary life. Better your disguise carry some notable insignia or mark, for there are times when you will need to make yourself known, recognisable. Adopt the dress code of the wanderer or gleaner, the shade of the wily fox or early blossoming hawthorn. Rehearse a wayward handshake; smile often and with sincerity, cultivate secret signs. The margins must be navigated collectively, socially. They cannot be negotiated alone. Learn how to spot fellow travelers: listen out for their anecdotes and asides; the eccentricity of their reportage; their tendency towards deviation or digression, for being in two minds. Make links with those who might become your witness or respondent or trusted scribe, who will watch out for you when your back is turned or attention diverted. Implicate others through random acts of kindness, making them the recipient of your unfettered generosity, the gift of your time. Offer strangers the benefit of your doubt, for a marginal community is never exclusive, its membership never barred. Marginal communities become tentatively and temporarily bound within the terms of a shared experience, not by duty or geography or by place of birth. Theirs is a porous constitution whose networks are ever expanding, ever receptive to new recruits. Marginal practices create the permissions for further marginal practices; the errant knowledge(s) they produce are generative and to be shared through practice, practised or forgotten.

STEPPING TOWARDS STEPPING AWAY

The construction of bridges attests to the desire for connection, facilitating movement, communication between. A bridge joins territories, opening opportunities for further dialogue and exchange. Building bridges can overcome obstacles that might otherwise divide and isolate, by creating passageway over rivers and chasms, or by crossing the line of difference that separates here from there, then from now, you from me, the familiar from the as-yet-unknown. A bridge might begin with an invitation, an initial reaching towards the other. Yet, there are inherent risks to bridge building — proposals can collapse before they ever get off the ground; rejection too, for there will always be those who prefer to remain an island. The bridge presents a challenge to one's habitual limits; it requires that one's borders are rendered open, porous. A bridge must be built in good faith — neither in fear of trespass or invasion from the other, nor based on a will to territorialise, control. The bridge is the space where true collaborations are founded, never fully owned by either side. Not just for crossing or passage, the bridge itself can be inhabited as a working zone, a state of temporary suspension that refuses to be bound by the binary logic of either 'this' or 'that'. Bridge — always both *and* between, always *inter*. To step onto a bridge is to abandon something of the *terra firma* of solid ground, as a step towards the other is a step away from oneself, one's comfort zone. A bridge can lead first in the direction of open water before it reaches the far shore. A vertiginous pleasure can be experienced in stepping off, into the brink, away from what is known or certain. A bridge is not always constructed for the purposes of getting to the other side. There are certain perspectives that can be encountered only by inhabiting the points between, by relinquishing fixed positions, through loss of stable ground.

DISTANCING THE IF AND THEN

Whilst *if* is the opening of innumerable possibilities, *then* grounds, returning the flight of the imaginary back to the realm of measurable affect. An ascendant (and affirmative) *if* is thus habitually subjected to the descendent or negating pull of logic, the gravity of the consequential *then*. *If* is like the wind, an auspicious force whose energy keeps the arrow of thinking air-bound, buoyant. Find ways of suspending the logic that would bring the force of *if* to ground; cultivate distance between *if* and *then*. Yet, too many *ifs* and the arrow's flight collapses impotently under the weight of its own potential or against the pressure of unruly turbulence, lost to a realm of pure fantasy. Without caution it is possible to get carried away.

ON NOT KNOWING

Not knowing might well be the ground from which creativity springs, however, to inhabit the experience in affirmative terms is not an easy task. It is not inherently productive or generative nor does it always lead to new and imaginative lines of flight. Not knowing can be paralysing, prohibitive. It can usher in the feelings of anxiety and embarrassment, the debilitating sense of being at a loss or lost, unable to see a way out or forward. From nursery age, we are initiated into the project of converting what is not known into what can be named and classified. The blurry and indeterminate realm of flows and forces in which we spend our early days is swiftly brought to line, once words are learnt to differentiate one thing from another, the self from everything else. The capacity to recognise shapes and sounds is celebrated as a developmental milestone; language grows exponentially in response to new situations needing to be described. Schooling emerges as a discipline for increasing the territory of what is known, an accumulative undertaking where knowledge is thought as information to be taught and duly tested. Here, to not know is treated as a deficiency or failure, as a mark of stupidity, the lack of requisite knowledge. Over time, the pleasurable potential of not knowing becomes squeezed into designated timeslots called play, breaks of unruly abandon where what is known can once again be rendered unfamiliar, the uncertain or unexpected met with rushes of brief wonder and delight. Less sanctioned forms of not knowing often remain hidden, muted, scarcely shared. To attach worth to not knowing is something of a challenge then, for culturally it would seem that we are conditioned away from such experiences, encouraged to view them as marginal or meaningless, as somehow lacking in true merit.

CONTINGENCY HOPES

Or else the experience of not knowing is conceived as the provocation that prompts investigation, further scrutiny. The unknown is taken as an anomalous breach or gap in existing thought that must be filled, bridged by the production of new knowledge. Not knowing is the state from which one might strive to make sense. Yet, the sense of what is *not* known can increase rather than diminish through experience; the limits of one's knowledge become more palpable the more one knows. The pursuit of knowledge is thus an irresolvable quest, endlessly producing new frontiers ever in need of conquest, ever more territorialisation. Here, not knowing reveals a virgin site still to be explored and conquered, or a zone of indeterminacy that thinking attempts to move *from*, ultimately leave behind. To place value on not knowing as generative or productive in itself is to work against the tide of certain teleological thought, which imagines progress as a one-way passage, the move from what is not known towards the goal of knowing more and knowing more. Working against the grain involves a degree of skillfulness and tenacity, a capacity to operate counter to expectation. To inhabit the experience of not knowing in affirmative terms requires some preparation; one's capacity for not knowing might need to be practised, rehearsed or relearned. To prepare for the unknown or unexpected is often considered a preventative or precautionary measure, anticipating the unforeseen future in order to limit its damage, planning a course of action for every eventuality so as not to get caught out. Once again, the not known situation is imagined to harbour some potential risk or threat, which contingency plans attempt to diffuse or neutralise by preparing for the worst. Yet, there are practices that plan for contingency in other ways, whose anticipation of the unknown is hopeful rather than delimiting.

READINESS

The value of not knowing can be recognised, less as the preliminary state (of ignorance) preceding knowledge, but rather as a field of desirable indeterminacy within which to work. Not knowing is an active space wherein one might hope for an encounter with something new or unfamiliar, unrecognisable or unknown. However, the possibility of producing something new is not always about the conversion of the not known towards new knowledge, but rather an aspiration to retain something of the unknown within what is produced, willing it to remain. In these terms, the new is that which exceeds existing knowledge, not by extending its limits but by failing to be fully comprehended within its terms. Paradoxically, perhaps, certain practices might toil towards making something less rather than more known, actively moving towards rather than away from the experience of not knowing. Whilst not knowing plays a generative role in much creative activity, for some it is actively sought and courted at the heart of the work itself. Rather than waiting for the auspicious moment of not knowing to arrive, an artist might actively seek tactics for producing the conditions of uncertainty, disorientation or indeterminacy. Theirs is a practice that sets out in search of the capricious wind or current that will send them sideways or disturb their even keel, for it is in such moments of crisis that new ideas often emerge.

SEEING SHADOWS

Not knowing is encountered as an opening in the fabric of what is known, which requires a reciprocal openness, receptivity to its potential. Not knowing is a state of suspension, comprehension stalled. However, not knowing is an experience easily squandered, for it is hard to override those habits which usher certainty into the indeterminate scene. The tongue shapes words all too quickly, and once named, edges reappear. The eye's glance is incisive; knowing describes the capacity for clarity, of being able to see. Yet the eyes can only see what they have been conditioned to notice. Recognition involves the re-seeing of what is already known. The rest remains blurred, out of focal range. Distractions direct attention elsewhere. We are often quick to fill or close the opening that not knowing affords. Indeed, the experience of not knowing is not always encountered easily: it can be difficult or testing, uneasily endured. We are sometimes swift to look to other things, divert our energies towards more pressing matters, towards tasks which offer a more instant reward. Blind spots are inherently difficult to recognise, often go unseen. An artist might develop tactics for attending to that which is habitually unnoticed, for slowing down their process of observation, for cultivating second sight. To overlook something can also signal towards a form of over-attention, amplified or heightened ways of seeing. Close up the world can appear *less* recognisable. Closing the eyes can be adopted as a critical operation for seeing that which the retina refuses to acknowledge. The faculties of perception by which we come to understand the world might need to be restricted, limited or otherwise impaired. There are forms of seeing which do not belong to the ocular realm, visions produced through rather more experimental means. Some things cannot be viewed directly; sometimes you have to look away. Seeing shadows requires a degree of blindness to the light — not knowing is the condition linked to being in the dark.

OR — WHAT NOW, WHAT NEXT?

Contraction of the word *other*, the interjection *or* does not simply present an alternative to the terms of the existing situation — according to the binary logic of either/*or*, this *or* that — but instead might be considered as a site of repeated and continual intervention and invention (*or ... or ... or*). Less a term for simply holding together a string of options, *or* creates discontinuity by endlessly stopping one flow of narrative whilst simultaneously inviting another. *Or* breaks the illusory continuity of the future conceived as an extension of the present — *all is, as was, as will be* — creating an opening, an interval, the opportunity for new lines of flight. Whilst the practice of imagining the future is often described in relation to metaphors of sight (visions, second sight, seeing the future, even looking forward), an imaginative capacity is perhaps best cultivated in darkness — close your eyes and imagine. An eyelid, an interval or break between what is and what might be, an eyelid — like the interruptive *or* — closing on one world, opening onto another. Yet, this retreat is not to be confused with escapism nor is it to be understood as a permanent separation of oneself from the world, from others. Rather, the temporary withdrawal from or renunciation of the world (*as is*) becomes a practice of estrangement, an act of turning away or even making strange(r), unhinging accustomed or familiar associations so as to see the world anew.

BEING OPEN

To be open to the experience of not knowing might involve doing and being *less*, becoming creatively passive — a touch purposeless or empty at times — so as to remain receptive to possibilities that cannot yet be comprehended or controlled. Tactics for not knowing might strive towards stripping things away, paring them down in order to make manifest a gap or space. An action is begun before knowing what it might enable. A conversation is initiated in the absence of intention; attention given to the pauses and durations breathed between the words. A line is scored in order to conceive of the negative space. To think *beyond* presupposes a line. A frame can create an opening into which something unplanned can then be called or conjured, where what is not known is invited or invoked rather than reached towards or grasped. Submission to the logic of a rule or instruction can operate as a device for not knowing, as a way of surrendering responsibility, absolving oneself of agency or control within a practice in order to be surprised. The rule becomes adopted for its capacity to produce unruliness, for generating outcomes that the conscious mind could never have planned. To follow the rule is thus not always based on obedience or diligence, but rather demonstrates a desire to be led astray.

VOLUNTARY VERTIGO

To develop tactics for getting lost is to practise a form of habituation or conditioning, where the experience of not knowing is entered into voluntarily as a way of cultivating resilience towards its potentially negative effects. Administered in small and controlled doses, it becomes possible to gradually build one's tolerance, augment one's capacity to withstand uncertainty, to become more accustomed to the unsettling experiences therein. However, prolonged exposure can begin to neutralise the efficacy of a given stimulus, gradually making the body unresponsive, a little numb. The intent is not to inoculate against the experience of not knowing, if this means becoming resistant or immune to its charge. Rather, through repeated exposure it is possible to become more sensitised to the experience, more attuned to its risings and falls, its intensities and durations. Practice enables the artist to move beyond the initial phase of not knowing, that first wave of sensation where body and mind feel only at a loss. It is towards this sensation that the artist must turn their attention, rather than turning away. Working against impulse, the challenge becomes one of staying within the experience of not knowing for as long as it is somehow generative, for as long as it allows. Tactics for not knowing are practised as a fall from what is known. The artist develops methods for surrendering to a fall from knowledge, as the dancer practises yielding to gravity's pull. The studio becomes a gymnasium where thoughts and forms like limbs are made to stretch and flex, arc and fold. In time, the initial hesitation met within the act of falling might give way to strange and vertiginous pleasures, the rapturous fall from self and certainty experienced as playful *ilinx* or as syncope's swoon. The fall from what is known requires some loss of power and control, whilst the passivity and apparent weakness often associated with falling are converted into a potential means of strength. Not knowing is thus practised as a kind of alchemy, transforming its own perceived impotency or powerlessness into a productive force.

MOVES TOWARDS THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE WILD

Whilst certain tactics cultivate receptivity or openness to the experience of not knowing, others are used for *making* openings, for rupturing the terms of what is already known. It is tempting perhaps to conceive of such practices only as forms of critique or resistance, working to challenge the authority of various systems of capture and control. Deconstruction serves to unpick and pull apart the regimes of power and order that are used to hold things in place, revealing the constructed or illusory nature of our realities. However, for some artists, the act of undoing or unraveling is instead performed as a ritual reversal, as a practice for not knowing, a move towards the incomprehensible wild. The term 'beyond comprehension' is often used pejoratively. It is synonymous with all that is baffling or beyond one's grasp, all that is impenetrable, inscrutable or unintelligible. However there is also an archaic meaning for the term where it describes the condition of limitlessness, the state of being boundless. It is towards the latter that certain practices might strive, hoping to encounter something unexpected, something insusceptible to capture by existing conceptual frameworks. Yet, the unknown or unexpected is necessarily unpredictable and must be stumbled upon; the endeavour thus remains somewhat aleatory, improvisatory, a little blind. Practice unfolds as a series of endless *maybes*, an interminable set of tests or trials. The studio creates the conditions of parentheses for dislocating its contents from their habitual surrounds. Here, objects, images, words and sounds can be disassembled and reassembled; stretched; compressed; inverted and rotated; pushed into unlikely proximity, and then prized apart. Familiar forms are worried until they begin to break down and recombine differently; materials are pressured towards their limits, categories tilted to the point of slippage or collapse. The challenge is how to prevent these nascent assemblages from being assimilated all too quickly back into meaning, from becoming classified or (re)claimed swiftly by existing knowledge. The artist strives for that elusive encounter with something momentarily unnamable or unclassified, no longer and not yet known.

NOT ONLY WHAT IT IS NOT

It is possible to conceive of not knowing as a space of fleeting liberty or reprieve; a brief interlude of potentiality flanked either side by what is known or certain. In these terms, not knowing might be considered a liminal experience, a transitional state where law and logic seem lost or left behind, where the coded conventions of the structural realm appear up-turned and abandoned. Undoubtedly, the experience of not knowing can be approached as such; its affordances seemingly provide the conditions of freedom *from* with freedom *to*, temporary liberation from the pressures and responsibilities that come with knowledge. Here, not knowing might be embraced for its lawlessness, celebrated for what it refuses and resists, for what it is *not*. Not knowing can serve to rejuvenate one's experience of reality, enabling it to be encountered from a fresh perspective, seen through re-enchanted eyes. Yet, the desire to not know can also signal towards a form of disenchantment with the world. At worst, it might be considered akin to the nostalgic quest for innocence lost, a desire for experience untainted by knowledge. At times, to claim to not know is to pretend towards ignorance, by turning a blind eye, electing to forget that which is troublesome or a burden. Or else, not knowing (better or different) is the condition of the oppressed, the unquestioning passivity of the dumbed down and acquiescent. Indeed, the experience of not knowing is inherently ambivalent; it can be inhabited in radically opposing ways. For the artist, the question perhaps is how the experience of not knowing can lead towards new lines of flight, conceived as new forms of invention and intervention within reality, rather than performed as an escape from it. Not knowing is not experience stripped clean of knowledge, but a mode of thinking where knowledge is put into question, made restless or unsure. Not knowing unsettles the illusory fixity of the known, shaking it up a little in order to conceive of things differently.

KNOWING HOW TO NOT KNOW

To navigate an uncertain ground requires some skill, due care and attention. Against logic, it is necessary to know how to not know. Here, knowing is different to the knowledge of the encyclopedia, for its forms of knowing *of* or knowing *that* are not equipped to cope with the contingencies of this terrain. A different knowing to knowledge then, perhaps more aligned to confidence. Confidence is the knowledge that the right decision will be made when required; it involves trusting that a response will be performed intuitively at the propitious time. Yet, this is not about placing faith in a form of tacit knowledge, if this describes an already embodied know-how. Instead, what is activated is a model of known-not knowledge capable of working within situations that remain indeterminate or that are newly encountered. Or maybe it is a form of ever-emerging knowledge that is activated simultaneously to the unknown situation that it attempts to comprehend, that is alone adequate to the task of comprehending that situation. Like the helmsman sailing a course through the contingencies of the water and the wind, the artist must become attuned to the pressures of contradictory forces, skilful in the art of holding back (the familiar or repeated) whilst ushering in (the unforeseen, the still unknown). Indeed, it is not the chance wind that sails the boat, but the helmsman's capacity for knowing how to work (*with*) it, for exploiting the possibilities immanent therein. Similarly, the experience of not knowing is not always productive or generative in itself; rather, it might become so according to how its opportunities are seized.

INTO THE FRAY

Fray is a torn or worn area of fabric, the point at which a garment begins to collapse and become useless, or the moment where the continuity of a textile surface is broken or put under strain. It is a site of skirmish, a sign of contestation or crisis. Nerves jangling. Tensions rising. Patience stretched. The endured action pushed to the limit. A fray can signal instability of the conceptual as well as physical kind, a zone of working doubt or of irresolution. Akin to the garment cast aside mid-stitch, logic might become frayed, relinquishing its temporary shape to fall formless to the floor in abject tangles. However, whilst seemingly undesirable, the fray remains an irresistible tease — for who hasn't at some point succumbed to the curious temptation of the loose thread, felt the moment of simultaneous violence and pleasure as the weave irreversibly unravels. Or else might have worried at the incomplete and fuzzy edges of a narrative until the hidden secret is finally disclosed. A fray can thus be seen as a gesture of undoing or spoiling the habitual or already known; a period of stress that breaks through the illusory surface of a given reality, an act of disruption that causes the breakdown of substances or situations to reveal their constituent elements, their hidden order. Fray illuminates what remains habitually unseen — the raw substance out of which something is formed, the invisible structures that hold matter together. From the personal to the political, fray is the irresolution signaled when something has been left unsaid, a form of psychological stalemate that results from a social bind that has been left in limbo. A relationship forsaken but not forgotten; a history that has been shelved but not yet archived; traces of disagreeable break-ups and conflicting testimony; the friction of irreconcilable histories, the jarring of incompatible agendas and binary forms.

DETERMINED INDETERMINACY

Meaning tends to privilege the determinate, whilst the indeterminate rest is electively ignored. So, mind names thought as its conscious workings, attending not to the unnamable volitions and desires that affectively steer its course. The more discernible stirrings are labeled as emotion, affections that must be guarded carefully lest they become unruly, too impulsive or errant. Insurgent feelings must be kept under surveillance, managed with the strictest of control. Signification is a nominal regime whose distinctions fail to account for the *suchness* of existence, for the truth of reality *as it is* exceeds the binary categories of this or that. There is always some discrepancy between how life is and how we — as humans — narrate its unfolding, for we are conditioned to conceive things only as they are mediated through the various systems and structures created by ourselves. The turn towards affect might then be imagined to narrow this gap, paradoxically perhaps, by attending to that which is irreducible to language in hope of a new vocabulary for describing the livingness of how life is.

OTHER TO THE WORLD OF THINGS + FORMS

Affect speaks of another reality to that which is named and known. Other to the world of things and forms and functions, it is the inchoate realm of flows and forces — of gradients and intensities, of transitions and relations — which the body senses all too well, yet comprehension struggles to make sense of. Systems of capture — from language to capital — create the illusory conditions in which this truth of reality *as it is* becomes veiled, replaced by constructed representations from which there seems no escape or alternative. We are assured that life's like that, that's how it is. Moreover, we are ourselves complicit in maintaining these illusions. Indeed, regimes of power are the easier targets, for the fiction that keeps us most alienated is arguably the investment in our own sense of self. A critical turn towards affect might then involve the critique of signifying structures or the wrestling of our affections back from capital so as to act rather than simply be acted upon. But there can be no change until we acknowledge that selfhood is itself something of a construct. To conceive life in affective terms is to apprehend the body not as a fixed entity but as a network of interconnected flows. A body's capacity is not determined by the power that it can seize or store, but through the quality of its encounters and interactions. So if affect has an emancipatory potential, it comes at some cost. The loss of bearings — of certainty, stability, even one's anchorage to self — can produce the vertiginous free-fall of both flight and panic. For affect is the reality which cognition works so hard keep in check, the seething field of forces that conscious mind strives endlessly to render still or stable.

SUSPENDED SENTENCES

So suspend certain normative modes of understanding whose explication seeks to fix definitions too hastily, or which cut too quick an argument at its first failing or fault. Words are sonorous as much as signifying units. The soundness of a text tested by tongue and lips as much as by the mind. Certain language must be rolled in the mouth before it can be fully digested. Texts resonate at different frequencies according to their enunciation. New meanings are revealed by changed inflection, in the pauses and durations breathed between the words. Make reading a site of rehearsal, where reader and text negotiate one another's force. Here, reading's affective potential can be amplified by reading in the company of others. Collective acts of reading multiply the felt frictions generated by the rub of one individual's thoughts with those of another. A text that moves one person towards thinking can prohibit someone else. A reader's capacity can be both augmented and diminished through their encounter with the written page. Certain texts are toxins creating exhaustion and fatigue; others have the medicinal properties of a tonic. Reading together helps combat the adverse impact of a troublesome text. A struggle shared is halved. A group can be stronger than the sum of its parts. New meanings emerge in the gaps of prior knowledge. Common understanding is not the product of what is brought to a meeting of minds; rather, it is experientially co-produced through the process of encounter. Less a convivial site for the pleasurable reverie of reading, social interaction around a single text creates the experience of solidarity, the shared labour of sticking at something, working it through. Unexpected collectivities and allegiances are inaugurated in meetings on a page; new constitutions borne in reading's mutual witnessing. To bear witness to another's endeavour makes it an occasion. The ritual presence of observers transforms reading's private act into a rite of passage. The passage given voice dissolves the line between witness and witnessed. To read aloud makes the experience of reader and listener merge as one. Moreover, in spoken text, the voice of reader and writer bleed, becoming indissociable, intimately bound.

CLOSER READING

Understanding is never wholly synchronous to the event of reading, nor is it reliant upon grasping every word. A reader's engagement with a text is often fractured or discontinuous, performed through a series of ellipses, loops and returns. Certain sections are lingered over, whilst others skimmed past. A single passage can become an impasse that leaves the reader stuck, or an opening that leads urgently in new directions. Different methods of reading can generate different registers of affect; there is scope for testing experimental tactics. Under scrutiny, text can be pressured into its component parts (of ink and page), the legibility of a word rendered nonsensical the closer it is apprehended. Close reading might not always attend to the nature of words themselves as signs. *Other* meanings emerge by looking at the materiality of words close up. However, insight is not gleaned by simply getting nearer to a text, for this will only amplify its detail, bringing it closer into range. Close reading can become myopic or shortsighted, blinkered to the bigger picture beyond the page. The act of looking harder, more forcefully, can cause a text to retreat or withdraw, for it might not respond well to such advances. Being open to the true force of a text requires a slower approach, the reader must learn to tarry, take her time. Yet, other meanings can only be glimpsed, caught fleetingly in the corner of the eye. A glimpse can collapse the totality of a text into a single word. Illumination can be kindled from the smallest flame. The significance of a text can take years to unravel; the impact of another can be felt in a lightning flash. The reading group is an assemblage composed of these different speeds and durations. A person's slow engagement with a text might melody unexpectedly with the quick or interruptive tempo of another. Understanding emerges rhythmically. Here, harmony is not the tethering of opinion to consensus, rather the agreement reached as different ideas begin to resonate or chime.

PLUMBING THE DEPTHS

Reading is not bound by the chronology of a text's unfolding. A reader's attention can be activated mid-sentence or half way down a page. Texts do not always need to be read in a linear or logical way, but rather can be dipped into, allowing for detours and distractions. A single sentence might open in one book, close in another. Poetic connections occur through chance encounters as the reader browses, casually thumbing pages in search of a memorable quote or evocative line. Fugitive phrases slip the grip of their original context, becoming lodged in the reader's mind with the insistence of a musical refrain. Textual fragments become imperceptibly grafted into the reader's thinking, or act *as* grafts onto which to suture new thought. One person's imagination provides a germinal ground for another's, for another's, for another's. Yet, affect works in both directions; the reader must also bring. The *now* of an encounter with a written text is interwoven with memories and recollections from elsewhere, lateral interjections and asides. The axis of affective reading is one of verticality, of heights and depths, of uprisings and falls. Poetic or mnemonic forces disturb the horizontal logic of what is present on the page. A single word can become an invocation. Moreover, the written page is always porous, its surface absorbent. Writing can store the circumstances of both its own production and the context in which it is read. Some texts can never be fully dissociated from the situations in which they were first encountered. The pages of every book are invisibly inscribed with life's ceaseless marginalia. Yet, as a text is often inflected by the lived conditions of its reception, the reader's life can be affected irrevocably by what they have read. The impact of a text is impossible to discern in measurable terms; transformations take place at molecular level. Reading augments the reader's capacity for further reading. Yet, it is not so much cognition that affective reading strengthens. Neither is the urge to read based on a craving for the fix of more and more texts. Rather, the action of reading helps to cultivate conation, expanding the reader's capacity and desire to act. Reading is thus a movement towards becoming causal.

PRACTISED LIVING

And so, as it goes — *we don't know what a body can do*. We have not yet realised the true extent of its capabilities. *We*, a force whose power has yet to be grasped, remaining unfathomable, stranger even to ourselves. Yet, there are ways of tending, for attending to this untapped potential. Not that this is an easy task, a task to be taken lightly. But still, lightly must the task be undertaken. So, practise a little levity, *levitas*. Practise with effort, yet without. Exert the self with care. *Askesis*: exercise or training. Yet, not of self-control or self controlled. Not the renunciation or deprivation of the sworn ascetic; (s)he who abandons the living of life in pursuit of higher ideals. Exorcises self. Takes leave of flesh; ecstatic disembodiment. Rather, an art *of* life, *practised* living.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Indeed, it is with and in the body, through the body, that we might escape its limitations. Or instead, *our* limitations, for a body is boundless, it is we who set its limits, determine its perimeter edge. Exercise with the body. Experiment with other bodies. Remember too, that mind is *of* the body, muscle and memory equally receptive to the push and pull of working out. Train(ing) of thought; thinking pressured as limbs tested against the leverage of external force or weight. *Meletē*: an Ancient Greek term meaning meditation. In myth, sibling to the muse of melodic voice and memory, related then to rhythm and remembering. *Meletē*: to ponder, the mental weighing up of an idea or thought, the contemplation of a repeated phrase. Ponder — from *pendēre*, to be suspended, to hang in the balance. Training is never the end, never ends, rather the building of capacity. Capacity is both actual *and* potential, an ability both to yield and to withstand, a measure of both receptivity and resistance.

RESISTANCE TRAINING

Resistance requires strength, to turn away or abstain from *certain* action. Conceived as a form of opposition or confrontation, it requires taking or making a stand, refusing to be moved. To resist is to reject then, to counter-act, to operate contrary to the norm or expectation. External pressures create the conditions according to which the body must acquiesce, contravene or somehow work around. Yet, resistance can also cultivate capacity, empower, augment. Small acts of minor resistance increase incrementally the body's inner strength. With practice, muscle matter can be trained to transform the resistance of other forces into its own. Gradually, greater pressures can be applied and still converted. Care must be taken though, for without caution the body becomes dense and hardened, insensitive to the affects of subtler force. Attuning oneself to the intensity of a force is different to feeling its weight. It is often easier to recognise the greater the impingement, experience that which is felt to be heavy or hard to bear. Lesser pressures often go unnoticed, so are tolerated, not transformed. Attend to the micro level, for it is through the turning of imperceptible forces that true action might then emerge.

MEMORISATION

Acts of minor resistance can be rehearsed daily, practised in quieter moments or under the cover of *other* activity, concealed within everyday gesture. Yet, such practices cannot be learnt, perfected by rote. In time, the body becomes inoculated against the potency of a given move or action. So, memorise not movement's *moves* but rather its affect. Be moved by movement, which is to say transformed. Commit then not to movement's form but in fidelity to the feeling of its force. The disciplined body is good at sticking to the score, impressed with how a given move should look. Discipline sets the mold that shapes that which is unruly. However, affect is unscripted, indivisible, invisible. It is impossible to predetermine how the body will respond on a given day, a given hour. Preparation becomes synchronous to the event. Attend to each situation with new precision, which might mean disobeying the rules. The body must learn to improvise. Conjure each movement as an act of invocation, a calling into life. Cultivate the muscle-memory of intuition. Have courage. Take (to) heart.

REPEATING NOT REPEATING

Practising circuits builds endurance. Practise circuitously then, never a straight course. Practise loops and repetitions. Replays. Reversals. Feedback. About-turns. However, the body must stay focused to avoid slipping towards routine. Pay attention to every loop and return as if encountered as the first. Repetition never repeats, unchanging. The same form can carry different force; the same cause, transformed effects. Yet, the promise of difference — indeed of change — is not always so easy to recognise. Repetition can both dull and sharpen the attention. It can groove lines of habit where the score becomes over-familiar, each loop approached as was, as will be. Yet with practice, repetition might score deeper, where every loop awakens greater understanding, in turn revealing something new. Repeating acts in a vertical key, generating vertiginous difference within what at first glance appears to be nothing but the same.

EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION

To notice the changing within the seemingly unchanging requires the training or re-tuning of the senses. The sensory apparatus of the body has been conditioned to act within a certain spectrum of expectation. Senses conspire to recognise the familiar, to disregard that which differs, falls out of range. Like other muscles within the body, the senses can be made to stretch or extend, reach and strain. Perception can be pressured beyond its habitual limits, to become *extra*-sensory. Begin with the eyes — the most susceptible of the senses for re-cognising only the *thought* known, moreover, for being easily tricked, deceived. Consider the magician's sleight of hand, the slowness of the eyes against the quick of fingers. The eyes often fail to see; instead thinking-a-seeing of that which isn't really there. Work out the eyes, for true perception — perspicacity — requires sharp-sightedness, the art of keen vision.

VIGILANCE

Grow hypersensitive to the smallest of details. Take the light down low. Lower. Lower still. Removed from the usual distractions of the diurnal world, the eyes become sensitised to the play of shadows, as darkness moves. Notice the differing gradients of density, intensity. Avoid assigning names, for the operation of language is a nominal regime that favours the solidity of things; is quick to override the wordless act of sensing. Both thought and gaze must remain somewhat passive to perceive the micro-movements of existence, the vibrations of motion at the verge of action, trembling. Like the stalker or the poacher, practise stillness. Know how the smallest start can scatter one's focus. Remain patient. Keep alert. Be on the *que vive*. On guard, stay watchful.

SEEING BEYOND THE VISIBLE

Foreseeing the unforeseeable is a skill that can be honed. Pay heed to the stalker or the poacher, she who anticipates the direction of flight in advance of its taking form. Before movement is ever actualised it can still be felt or sensed. Even before intention there is intension. Before extension into space, movement has intensity, the rising of energy that precedes resolve. Prescience is the art of knowing of things before they happen. Before the term clairvoyant meant the capacity for seeing into the future (foresight), it referred to a quality of insight, keen perception or clear-sightedness. *Clair* (clear) + *voyant* (present participle of *voir*, to see) — an intuitive ability to see or see-k out things as they really are. So open the eyes. This does not mean look harder but rather more receptively. Cultivate a different retinal attention. Look twice; activate second sight.

MAKING THINGS DISAPPEAR

Magic is a word given to experiences that exceed our habitual ways of comprehending the world; *extra* to the logic of ordinary cause and effect. Less a supernatural power, the art of magic involves learning how to suspend or stall the rules of causal law. This requires practice. The magician practises how to make things disappear. Close up magic eschews virtuosity. The skill is not in showing one's knowledge through flourish or excess, but in paring things back, keeping it simple. Misdirection relies on the viewer not seeing what is happening in front of their very eyes. Sleight is the practice of dexterity. The art of close up is one of making things vanish in clear sight. Attention can be taken elsewhere, momentarily distracted. Focus can be made to shift. Or the invitation can be to look harder, longer, with more intent — to fix the gaze, not to look away. Extended attention — like the process of repetition — can be used to defamiliarise, make strange, where the more something is scrutinised the *less* it becomes known. Through sustained observation, things might begin to shape-shift — becoming light, becoming shadow, becoming time. To make things disappear is not to render them invisible, but rather, that they are no longer recognised. Edges can be made to soften, solids made to melt, names can be forgotten.

ELECTIVE ELASTICITY

The body is inherently polymorphic, yet its capacity for taking manifold forms is often compromised, curtailed. Its movements and gestures are often molded in advance. The body becomes choreographed to the rhythm of habit and routine, bends backwards to the fit of convention and the norm. It takes some effort to move the body in other ways, to convert the experience of *compliance* (the obedient *pli* of being folded by others' force) towards that of *pliancy* — voluntary stretch and flex. Towards elective elasticity then — begin small. Consider the hands. Their idleness does not the devil's work make, but rather is a precondition for self-transformation. Strip the hands of utility; allow them to become empty. Do not distract them with other things. Dislocated from their habitual duties, the hands fold back upon themselves to investigate their own potential. Wring out old habits. Wring in the unaccustomed, the unfamiliar and the new. Twist and turn into unexpected shapes and forms; becoming supple, sinuous, never still. Extend towards other parts of the body. Life too, can be made malleable, approached as material that can be worked and shaped, turned in other ways.

DELIQUESCENCE

Transformation requires some preparation. Before it can be practised differently, the body will need warming up. Turn habits up and over. Invert familiar ways of doing things. Rotate. Reverse. Rehearse an alternative routine. Warming the body's limbs and ligaments can prevent unnecessary strain, caution against the risk of pain or injury. It can also work in other ways, transforming the solidity of flesh and form towards a molten state, towards liquidity. The edges of self can be made to deliquesce; the line of separation between inside and outside collapsed, dissolved. Indeed, the body is already more fluid than it cares to remember. It is often keen to convince itself otherwise, ignoring the swell and surge of its liquid interior, the incessant sway and undulation of its own oceanic force. The body easily forgets that it is always and already moving (*within* itself). Yet, in moments of stillness or slowness, its restlessness can be felt.

MEDIAL REFLEXIVE

Self can be conceived as an interior condition, pitched against the rest of the world that exists without; skin, the line of separation that keeps these two realms distinct. Yet, under scrutiny, the borderline where the body ends and where the world starts is impossible to discern. Self is *of* the world, not identifiable from. Internal and external exist along a continuum, where the skin does not keep the individual protected from the world but rather is the threshold through which they merge, inseparable. Interiority extends far deeper than the centre of the body; can be pressured beyond the limits of the skin to create spaces other than the body's own. The exteriority of the world can be clasped between the fingers. Self is a field of forces, not fixed form. Its capacity is endlessly modified according to how it acts with and against the pressure of other forces. Become sensitised to one's own force, which is always multiple. Experience this by pressing the palms tight. Notice how the balance of power shifts between left and right. Allow one side to dominate, now to yield. Practise between activity and passivity. Feel the point of balance once neither side takes charge. Apply this awareness to other encounters.

AS LONG AS

Experimental practices require time, resistant to being rushed or ushered quickly towards some goal or destination. They take as long as they take, set their own pace. Clock-time measures the passing moments according to what can be accomplished therein — experimental practices might then strive to do as little as possible. Failing to fill or spend time productively draws attention to the passage of time *as* time. Changing the speed of one's action can change the experience of time itself. Slowness and stillness have the capacity to stretch and elongate duration. Time becomes elastic, no longer fixed. Slowing one's habitual responses extends the space of hesitancy, liberating attention from the deliberate (directly purposeful) towards deliberation (weighing up).

QUICK OF THE SLOW

Before a decision is made to act there is an interval of time where the future trembles, hovering in the balance. *Pendēre* — suspend, pending, impending. Threshold between the *as is* of the present and the *not yet* of the still-to-come, the interval is a point of reflection from which things might be steered differently, else remain unchanged. Paradoxically, through experimentation, time can be revealed as continuous (indivisible flux that refuses to be spatialised into minutes and seconds), whilst at the same time as discontinuous (comprising an infinite number of intervals whose fleeting potential is either to be seized or lost). Strange conjunctions materialise: the timely instants of invention within duration; discontinuity within continuity; the infinite within the finite, quick of the slow.

TEST OF NERVE

To encounter time stripped of its familiar beat and meter can be disconcerting to say the least. Dislodged from the tenses of past and future, time is experienced simultaneously as now and forever, inconstant and eternal; or else perhaps, forever now, eternally inconstant. An experimental practice locates itself on the trembling edge as time unfolds, uncertain. No longer scripted in advance, here, every next action has to be called or conjured, summoned into play. The temptation might be to fall back onto a repertoire of familiar forms and practised rhythms. The body wavers at the cusp of action, stalls from making too swift a move. Instead, remains expectant, anticipatory. Hopeful. Intrepid. Not without some unease. For, it takes some nerve to lean into the unknown, to be open or vulnerable to what lies therein. So, test the nerves. Exercise this most fragile of the faculties, for unattended nerve is easily lost. Lean then, into the void; remember — *we don't know what a body can do.*

THIS + THAT

That our human experience often wavers between a sense of wanting more and of feeling overwhelmed is a consequence perhaps of the unstable or even threshold status of a life lived, for paradoxically, we are a finite manifestation of an infinitely unfolding universe. Our sense of individual limitation — our time and space-bound experience of an impermanent self — is contrasted against the potential limitlessness of a world that existed before us and will still endure once we have gone. In order to make sense of the infinite and indivisible duration of the universe of which we are part, we have gradually constructed ever-elaborate systems and structures for rendering it under our control and within the range of our comprehension. The matter of the universe is thus differentiated into categories of named *things*, which can then be organised into dictionaries and encyclopedia and studied by specialists. The myriad durations of the universe are neatly plotted along a single line where its interminable continuum has been divided into more manageable and measurable sections, the abstract tick-tock of sequential, linear time. Fearful of becoming lost and disoriented in a world of perpetual flux and change, we have found ways to stabilise or locate ourselves amidst this sea of uncertain forces. We have created the coordinates 'here' and 'now'; set down the anchor points of 'past', 'present' and 'future'. Across unreachable distances we have scored our own horizon lines. Thus, *becoming* solidifies towards the fiction of *being*; settles for a fixed and stable sense of self. At some point, it seems that we have forgotten the constructed nature of the devices through which we have established this illusory order and control, determined the unknowable known. The classificatory lines between 'this' and 'that' no longer appear arbitrary or accidental. Gradually, certain limits and edges have become naturalised, their artifice passed unnoticed. We have become conditioned to see the world and our place within it according to the narrow gauge of our own limitations; we have cultivated the rules of our own entrapment. And yet, there are certain experiences that refuse to be bound by the frameworks we have made, and it is in these restless instances that we might remember.

OUR OWN PRIVATE UNIVERSE

The infinitude of the universe is endlessly translated and organised from the perspective of our finite body, its singular point in space and time. The immeasurable multiplicity of life's unfolding becomes channeled through the prism of the human eye, whose aperture limits the depth of our focus, producing arbitrary points of clarity whilst leaving the rest blurred or concealed from view. Our own sensory apparatus — our capacity to see, hear, touch, taste, speak — establishes the conditions through which we encounter the world or rather produces the shape of the world that we encounter. We each beat the bounds of our own private universe. Yet, our bodies are not the only filters through which the limits of what is seen or heard or said are set. Rather the project of conversion or translation — the rendering of complexity into simpler form — takes place in a more insidious fashion, at a more prosaic level. In place of a process there is more often a product; instead of a flow, a form; distinctions are determined swiftly between either/or; black and white is generally preferred to grey; the sweep of generalisation is generally preferred to an elaboration of the exceptions to the rule. The wilful use of 'we' and 'they' and 'our' create consensus or collusion by claiming agreement, by speaking on another's behalf. Received opinion is taken for the truth; the truth is edited into a sound-bite, its meaning gradually reduced into a single memorable line. The uncertainty of things-to-come is prepared for with career advisors' help or horoscopes; protected against through life insurance plans. The imagined landscapes of the future are already mapped out and territorialised, planted with the seeds of certain key events. Holidays are booked a year in advance; diaries determine life's itinerary according to regular twelve-month cycles. Life gets coached, steered safely between one goal and the next. Milestones operate as imaginary way-markers against which certain expectations and ambitions become set, where life itself becomes spatialised as a path or route whose course has already been furrowed. Future is a destination towards which our present selves strive, whilst past is a place to which we are encouraged not to return and dwell (too often).

FALSE ALIBI

Time itself is often used as proof or evidence, a means of testing and authenticating facts or confirming things as true. Certain dates are privileged and marked with cakes and cards and parties. Others are forgotten. Dates of birth register the inauguration of a person's life, whilst time of death is the official stamp by which the same is declared over. An alibi vouches for someone's whereabouts, a convention that presupposes the impossibility of them being in two places at the same time. Other dating systems are more slippery still. The date of a book's publication or of a work of art signals towards its completion not inception; it is the somewhat arbitrary means by which the object becomes fixed and located within historical time. To be time-proof is to be impervious or resistant to the effects of time, somehow immune to its ravages. Yet, only the unlived or un-live are truly time-proof for all life is performed in and as time and changes accordingly. Utopian models are often conceived in terms of having 'no place' or 'no time', pitched purposefully beyond the reach and limitations of the lived and livable present. However, once materialised and inhabited, the utopian proposition can no longer stand outside of time, but must learn to evolve or become entropic. There are certain ideologies that fail to withstand materialisation. In their attempt to remain future-proof they never fully align with the timing of the present and instead appear somewhat anachronistic, chronologically misplaced.

LAG

To *lag* presupposes a proper speed against which one's actions might be measured. It describes a failure to keep pace with what is normative, a falling behind and into distraction caused by tarrying or dallying or wandering off track. Lag plays out of sync with progressive time. It is time arrested or else of the arrested, the imprisoned time of a stint inside. Lag is the interval of time between two events, the discrepancy between this and that or then and now or even if and then. Or else it is the distance between stimulus and response or cause and effect, a slowing of attention, the critical spacing of a productive gap.

MAKING ROOM FOR MANOEUVRE

Representation and recollection reorganise the inchoate mess of lived experience into neat narrative blocks, a series of interlocking anecdotes where events move seamlessly from beginning to resolution, where what is superfluous to the story remains wasted on the cutting room floor. There are few strangers in recollected life, for memory casts its main characters and has little interest in filling in the blanks. Boredom and banality are routinely edited out at the whim of an omnipotent narrator. A life remembered thus plays quicker and shorter and snappier than it ever did in 'real time'. It seems that we are compelled to narrate our lives backwards from the present, in order that we might make sense of things that remained insensible at the time. However, in doing so we risk solidifying the shape of our own character, narrowing the future trajectory of our own narrative plotline, cultivating the terms of every next scene in advance. The challenge then perhaps is one of creating modes of description or documentation that do not attempt to erase life's complexity but rather reflect its non-sequential, heterogeneous, fragmentary and labyrinthine tendencies. The dilemma is one of finding the means through which to capture the live and lived experience of a given situation, without simply excluding or ignoring all that is *formless*, difficult to rationalise or render into thought. Or, to follow the Beckettian formula, it is a question of finding a form to accommodate the mess. Accommodation is the practice of flexibility, contracting and expanding one's capacity when called upon and according to the needs of the situation. The accommodation of life's mess is thus less a gesture of management and moderation as the development of a form malleable or mutable enough to host it. Accommodation involves making an opening, allowing room for manoeuvre.

QUICK QUICK SLOW

Too often temporal occurrences are translated through spatial visualisation, fluid processes subjected to the contours of a single image or form. The clock-face epitomises this tendency where the temporal experience of duration is neatly configured according to sixty equidistant marks measured around a circle's edge. Similarly, spatial forms are often considered subject to the effects of time's passing, where the lifespan of an object is determined by its capacity to withstand the wear and tear that each new day brings *to it*. Space and time are thus often perceived according to the terms of a basic dualism that keeps them separate and distinct, moreover, pitches them in opposition. However, spatiality and temporality are irrevocably interdependent, interwoven. Materials have a temporal dimension, they endure; time does not occur independently of or simply effect materials, but rather is part of them. Solid is a flow slowed to the point that its state of flux becomes no longer discernible; every form has a pulse, is shaped as the vibrations of its internal rhythm meet with those of the external world.

WEAVE

Life is woven through space and time; the structure of its weave shaped by the density of its manifold threads and the intensity of its innumerable rhythms or pulses. Unlike the clock, which determines the passage of time according to the regular and measured beat of its own spatial abstraction, the model of a weave acknowledges the effects of different and divergent temporal speeds and flows, the entanglement of multiple durations. A weave is produced through the interplay of vertical and horizontal forces (the *warp* and the *weft*), much as the fabric of a life is shaped by the tension between internal and external experiences of space and time. It is possible to conceive of the warp of life's fabric as *chronos*, the regular spacing of measured or physical time, the thread held taut and still by the structure of the loom. So too, might the weft articulate a sense of inner or felt time, the temporal experience of duration. The production of a weave depends on maintaining the tension or harmony between the horizontal and vertical axis, between the consistency of the warp and the meandering of the weft. Habitually, emphasis is placed on keeping the tension of the two threads synchronised and 'in time' with one another, ensuring the weave remains even. Moreover, the thread of inner time is often conditioned to keep pace with that of chronological time, with its measured and determined rhythm. However, the fabric of lived time is not determined by the mathematical meter of chronological clock time alone for this would produce only the most uniform or utilitarian cloth, smooth and homogenous and lacking in texture. Rather than following any standard beat, the weft of lived time can be made to speed up or slow down — accelerate or reduce its energy — producing different qualities of fabric, a more experimental weave.

THE FABRIC OF TIME

The fabric of time can be made to stretch or pucker, ruche or fray. With experience, it can be pulled thin and sheer as delicate gauze or gathered up into thick and impenetrable creases. In certain states of mind, time seems to pass by too quickly and yet on reflection has produced dense, complex folds. On other occasions, the hour is waited upon impatiently without producing anything much at all. Boredom works time to a standstill, where the slow minutes become picked apart, teased open. Time's fabric becomes unraveled to reveal the nature of its separate threads, as white light fractures towards a rainbow once refracted through a prism's lens. The weave of lived time is not linear or continuous but structured through spiraling ellipses and baroque coils; the thread of the present a loop-stitch always twisting back on itself to reengage with the loose ends of its past. Unlike the irrevocable passage of chronological time, lived time is a process endlessly woven and unwoven. Its narratives are forever unpicked and repeated, undone and rewound. Tactics can be developed for preventing or stalling the teleology of its weave, the ever-forward trajectory of an unfolding (narrative) thread. Akin to Penelope at her loom, memory and dreams work against the progressive pressures of each day's events, perpetually undoing what has been done in the hope of starting over again, trying to change the direction of a future whose course might otherwise seem inescapable.

DO + UNDO

Penelope, wily weaver of Ancient myth, weaving by day and unweaving by night; unweaving and reweaving in act of quiet resistance, so as to thwart the terms of a situation from which there would seem to be no way out. The relentless repeat of again and again skips towards its affirmative variant, towards do and undo, from slavish adherence to the rule or routine towards a restless capacity for daily reimagining. The interminable chain of repetition switches; every stitch becomes a space for contemplating loopholes, those openings or apertures through which unwanted duty or obligation might yet be escaped, new lines of flight arise. Indeed, repetition does not always instill routine; through repeated action familiarity can soon buck back upon itself towards estrangement. Repeating can evacuate meaning from language, rendering it empty and absurd. Choose any word and say it aloud, over and over. How long before its sense collapses into only sound, its signification slips under waves of undulating rhythm? Or maybe opt to write the same word, time and time again. In time, the writing of a word drifts towards the drawing of a line; curve of letters spelt melt with pleasurable twist of the wrist, becoming serpentine. Language hinged between the event of reading and looking. Calligraphic: words borne more of hand, than mind. Yet mindful must the hand that inscribes such words remain, for it is easy to lose focus, skilful repetition dissipating into careless scrawl. Every word might need the same degree of attention then. Performed like a mantra. Ritual repetition: babble of incantation. Words spelled out to rouse, invoke, for calling up or forth. With each repetition, increase in emphasis or amplification, heightened sensitivity. Whilst repetition can homogenise, flattening and eroding detail, repeated engagement with a given subject can also sharpen one's focus or attention, nurturing a more nuanced gaze. Yet, the eyes often see what they want to see. Given even minimal prompt, mind too strives swiftly to draw connecting lines, is quick to fill the gaps when comprehension stumbles. Recognition is often first determined by knowing what one is looking for in advance. Repeated-cognition: the event of seeing again something previously seen or encountered; repetition of the already known and named. It can be difficult to see that which falls beyond the limits of prior experience or knowledge, far easier to conceive the seeing of that which isn't really there.

UNFIXITY

The tighter our grasp upon the world becomes, the greater our need for or fascination with the idea of escape. Escape is a fugitive act where the resulting freedom is only ever temporary, fleeting. No sooner is one boundary breached as another becomes set. There is no place outside of our systems of capture to which to permanently flee. Rather, escape is a practice performed (daily) through the process of finding loopholes within the system, or through affective transformation of the situation from which there might seem no way out. The term inbindable thus not only describes that which is beyond capture — the infinite or boundless — but perhaps also those who, like Houdini, are practised in the art of escape. There are tactical means by which a situation can be rendered open; wily methods by which one might avoid becoming fixed, immobile. Systems and structures can be rendered porous temporally as much as spatially. Escape routes can be conceived by changing the quality of time rather than by trying to free oneself from its grasp. Loose ends can be left wilfully untied. Conclusions do not always need to be drawn. Every narrative can be re-edited to reveal a different ending. Every text can become endlessly modified and reworked. Resolution is an illusion, a moment of pause rather than of completion. Nothing is ever truly finished, for every process always becomes another becomes another becomes [...] Every ending is also a beginning. This is not the end but rather another place from which to start.

RESET, RETUNE,
CONTINUOUS
PRESENT AND A
CONTINUAL
BEGINNING
AGAIN AND AGAIN

CREDITS + ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Build You Have To Build

Script extract from a collaborative performance reading entitled *Re —*, performed by Emma Cocker and Rachel Lois Clapham, in *Afterlive*, Norwich Arts Centre (2010).

The Yes Of The No, Come On, On + On

Extracts from the essay *Permission Granted*, previously published in *drain* journal, *Power*, (2011). *The Yes Of The No* (original title *Non*) was commissioned by Terry O'Connor as a response to the performance *Non* (2008–2009), part of a Creative Research Fellowship funded by the AHRC (2009–2014).

Steps Towards Dancing Solo; Becoming The Cause; If Everything Has Been Done Then What Is Left?; Prepare For The Unexpected; Make Do; Know Your Limits; Embody Knowledge; Fall Beneath The Radar; Am I Bothered?; Going Overboard; Being In Two Minds; Without Rhyme Or Reason; Bide Your Time; Opting In + Hope Springs Eternal

Previously presented collectively as a pamphlet entitled *The Yes of the No*, commissioned and published by Plan 9, Bristol as part of *The Summer of Dissent* (2009). *The Yes of the No* has also been published in *drain* journal, *Power*, (2011). *Being In Two Minds* is also the title of an essay on the work of Ben Judd, published in *Communion*, (Black Dog, 2014).

Between The Water + The Wind

Extract from 'Somehow between the Water and the Wind', essay on the work of Brigid McLeer, published by Lanchester Gallery Projects, Lanchester Gallery, Coventry, in conjunction with the exhibition *Isoli [cont.]* (2009).

Helmsman's Knowledge, Recalibration, Life As Gymnasium, How A City Feels, Looking For Loopholes, Navigating Limits, Fold/Unfold,

Contiguity, Good Company, Appropriate Behaviour, Glimpses Of What If

Previously presented collectively as a text entitled 'Experiments Along the Brink of I', as part of the pamphlet *Performing the City* produced in collaboration with Sara Wookey and Bianca Scliar Mancini, (2012). Also published in *Tripwire: Journal of Poetics*, Issue 8, *Cities*, (Oakland, United States, 2014).

Walk; Stop; Observe; Feel; Trace; Still; Wait; Break; Group

Previously presented collectively as a text entitled 'Pay Attention to the Footnotes' as part of the pamphlet *Open City* produced in collaboration with Andrew Brown, Katie Doubleday and Simone Kenyon (2007–2010).

Social Assemblage

Extract from an essay (of the same title) previously published in French & Mottershead, *SHOPS: People and Process*, Site Gallery, (2010).

Guide Against Guides; Skirting The Centre; Beating The Bounds; As Needs Muster; Knowledge Of The Margins; Rehearsing Spaces; Finding The Gaps; On Being Left Open; The (New) Order Of The Day; Get Involved; Find Other Means; Drift; Glean; Be Guileful; Between You + Me

Previously presented collectively as 'Room for Manoeuvre, or, Ways of Operating Along the Margins' in *Manual for Marginal Places*, (Close and Remote, 2009).

Glimpsing

Extract from the essay 'Glimpsed, Only in Certain Light', published in *Stille Fragmente*, Katja Hock, Djanogly Art Centre, Nottingham, (2012).

Distancing The If + Then

Extract from an essay (of the same title) previously published in *Drawing a Hypothesis: Figures of Thought*, (ed.) Nikolaus Gansterer, (Springer, 2011).

Stepping Towards Stepping Away

Extract from a text previously published in *Feeling It For You* (perspective) with *Seers in Residence* (ed.) Traci Kelly, Nottingham Trent University, (2014).

On Not Knowing; Contingency Hopes; Readiness; Seeing Shadows Requires A Certain Blindness To The Light; Being Open; Voluntary Vertigo; Moves Towards The Incomprehensible Wild; Not Only What It Is Not; Knowing How To Not Know

Previously presented collectively as 'Tactics for Not Knowing: Preparing for the Unexpected' in *On Not Knowing: How Artists Think* (eds.) Rebecca Fortnum and Elizabeth Fisher (Black Dog Publishing, 2013). *Voluntary Vertigo* is also a title used within the work *The Italic I*, a collaborative project with Clare Thornton. *Moves Towards The Incomprehensible Wild* is also the title of an essay on the work of artists Dutton + Swindells, *art+research*, Volume 4. No. 1. Summer 2011.

Or — What Now, What Next?

Extract from 'What now, what next: kairotic imagination and the unfolding future seized', presented conference paper *In Imagination: The Future Reflected in Art and Argument*, University of Sheffield in conjunction with Forced Entertainment's UK premiere of *Tomorrow's Parties* (part of *Art Sheffield: Zero Hours*, 2013).

Unresolved + Into The Fray

Revised extracts from 'Into the Fray' commissioned essay by Site Gallery, Sheffield in response to the 'Platform' series (2006).

As Soon As It Is Named It Is No Longer; Other To The World Of Things + Forms; Determined Indeterminacy; Reading As Constitutive; Closer Reading; Plumbing The Depths

Extracts from the text 'Reading Towards Becoming Causal' published in *Reading/Feeling, (If I Can't Dance... Amsterdam*, 2013).

Practised Living; Capacity Building; Resistance Training; Memorisation; Repeating Not Repeating; Extra-Sensory Perception; Vigilance; Seeing Beyond The Visible; Making Things Disappear; Elective Elasticity; Deliquescence; Medial Reflexive; As Long As; Quick Of The Slow; Test Of Nerve

Previously presented collectively in *Manual*, an artists' publication produced in collaboration with performance artist and writer Victoria Gray, (2014).

On Other Ways Of Seeing; Quick Quick Slow; This + That; Our Own Private Universe; False Alibi; Lag; Making Room For Manoeuvre; Weave; The Fabric Of Time; Unfixity

Extracts from [...], previously published in *Apeirophobia*, Karin Kihlberg and Reuben Henry, (VIVID, Birmingham, 2011).

Do + Undo

Condensation of fragments from a text, 'Sampler of Samplers, Repeating Repeats, Repeats' published in Danica Maier, *Grafting Propriety: From Stitch to the Drawn Line*, (Black Dog, 2016).

Beginning Again + Again

Extract previously published in *The Italic I*, an artists' publication written and produced in collaboration with Clare Thornton (2014).

BIOGRAPHY

Emma Cocker is a writer-artist and Reader in Fine Art at Nottingham Trent University. Operating under the title *Not Yet There*, her research often addresses the endeavour of creative labour, focusing on models of (art) practice and subjectivity that resist the pressure of a single, stable position by remaining wilfully unresolved. Cocker's recent writing has been published in *Failure*, 2010; *Stillness in a Mobile World*, 2011; *Drawing a Hypothesis: Figures of Thought*, 2011; *Hyperdrawing: Beyond the Lines of Contemporary Art*, 2012; *On Not Knowing: How Artists Think*, 2013; *Reading/Feeling*, 2013, and *Cartographies of Exile*, 2016.

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