

Given the transdisciplinary character of the show, I would like to briefly investigate some of its constitutive conditions. That is, I'm interested to look into the moments in which the intertwining of different epistemic modalities join together into the production of an aesthetic encounter.

In reference to the meaning that Felix Guattari assigns to the word ethics, I understand this inquiry not only in *aesthetic* terms, but also in *ethic* ones. For Guattari the notion of ethics involves the development of a degree of attention not only towards the artwork as a whole in its finished state, but also towards the *conditions* of its processual creation (Guattari 1995, 107). Here, the question about the conditions of aesthetic creation involves the link between the epistemic content of the diverse fields of knowledge - biology, philosophy, physics and mathematics - at the basis of the artworks presented here, and the artworks themselves. What constitutes the specifics of transdisciplinary experience? What accounts for its transformative potential towards forms of artistic expression? I will attempt to move towards these questions by sketching some basic steps.

This moment of the relation between the work of art and its surroundings has been analyzed by the philosopher John Dewey in his book *Art and Experience*. Dewey defines the relation between the making of art and its perception in terms of an *experience* of art. The moment of perception can be as creative as the active moment of producing art: following the American thinker, it involves a process of transformation of physiological mechanisms into the creation of conditions for participation and communication.

Experience - Dewey explains - occurs continuously, as the relationship with the environment undergoes a continuous change, but the moment of *having an experience*, demarcates an act of singularity. "To put one's hand in the fire that consumes it, is not necessarily to have an experience. The action and its consequence must be joined in perception. This *relationship* is what gives meaning" (Dewey 2005, 44). Thus, it is the relationship between an action and its consequences which accounts for the degree of intensity of an experience". Dewey provides an example: "A man does something; he lifts, let us say, a stone. In consequence he undergoes, suffers, something: the weight, strain, texture of the surface of the thing lifted. The properties thus undergone determine further doing. The stone is too heavy or too angular, not solid enough; or else the properties undergone show it is fit for the use for which it is intended. The process continues until a mutual adaptation of the self and the object emerges, and that particular experience comes to a close" (Dewey, 44)

In order to define the conditions for an experience to become significant, it is thus necessary for the external objects of art, to *resonate* with our past experiences, to connect the present sensations with the material conditions of former neurophysiological states, to transform and reorganize them.

The question is thus that of a metamorphic recombination on many levels: on the level of how an object of art gets to affect the sensual perception of its qualities; how the qualities of objects – such as color, form, shape, odor account for an activation of the qualities of senses, i.e. the ability to *feel* the qualitative relations *between* form, shape and odor. The activation of this ability is what causes the production of moments of intensive attention. These are moments in which the experience is both *artistic* and *aesthetic*, because in those the act of making art is tightly connected with the act of perceiving and enjoying it.

In the moment of intensive attention, a work of art gets produced through its being felt; I understand feeling itself as an act of production, because it generates a different sort of neuronal recomposition at the level of the body and of the brain. Because of this physiological change in the body, I speak of feeling in terms of a process of material recomposition.

The notion of feeling defined in such way, does not only account for a physiological moment of

passage, but also for an epistemic one. It accounts for the generation of the passage between the various backgrounds provided by different epistemologies, the artistic production itself and the further onset of a wider form of aesthetic experience through the works of art. In order to make this argument clearer, I briefly sketch two other definitions: Dewey's concept of medium, and Massumi's definition of technique of existence.

Dewey makes a distinction between a particular *medium*, a special language having its own characteristics, which is the source of every artistic, philosophical and scientific framework. Dewey states that the arts of science, of politics, of history and of painting all have the same *material*: the live creature with its surroundings. Each one transforms some phase of the raw material of experience into new objects according to the purpose, each demanding a particular medium for its execution.

The contemporary philosopher Brian Massumi coins a concept that has some analogy with the idea of medium proposed by Dewey, giving a more graspable account of how the operational character medium is to be understood. Massumi speaks of technique of existence. Operations channeling some not yet there activity into its process of becoming sensible. The notion of technique on one side refers to a specific skill one has developed in accordance to some traditional way of learning, and on the other, by association with the term existence, it refers to a more general existential and epistemological change involving a bigger deal of transformation. A technique of existence involves a series of constraints, defining and regulating the flow of perception and of action. Those constraints can be enabling, producing new moments of intensity. Furthermore, constraints as well as techniques, are not something which is necessarily given, but might instead request lots of precise and obsessive work (Massumi 2011, 87).

The argument which I propose here, is that in an interdisciplinary enterprise, the distinction between the medium and the material proposed by Dewey comes to an interference. An interdisciplinary procedure requires not only the acquisition and the development of skills relative to a topic or to specific materials but involves also the question of how to come to grasp i.e. to connect towards, but also to intimately relate to media situated at an epistemological distance, like it is the case of the distance between an art gallery and a labor of ornithology.

All of the art works show the presence of techniques, which are not only mere tools but have existential connotations, as they are resultant from an intensive artistic research.

Marica Radojčić – REVERIE OF FLYING:

curve -d 1 -p 0 1 0 -p 0 -4 0 -k 0 -k 1 ;
curve -d 1 -p 0 0 0 -p 0 -4 0 -k 0 -k 1 ;
EXPRESSIONS:

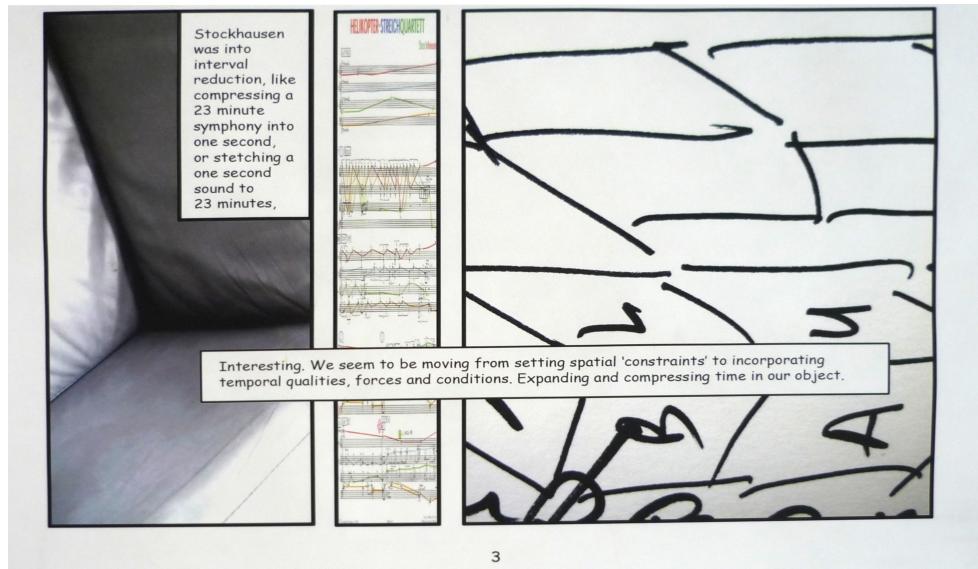
expression material conditions of former
neurophysiological states 1:
rightWing.rotateZ=90*abs(sin(time))
expression2: leftWing.rotateZ=
-90*abs(sin(time))
expression3: bird.translateY=10*time



Marica Radojčić departs from a mathematical formula, in which she reconstructs the trajectory path that the swarms of birds are forming in their migration route. The move to abstraction is

subsequently concretized again into the path of an ephemeral bird in the video.

Sher Doruff – OBJECT ONE:



3

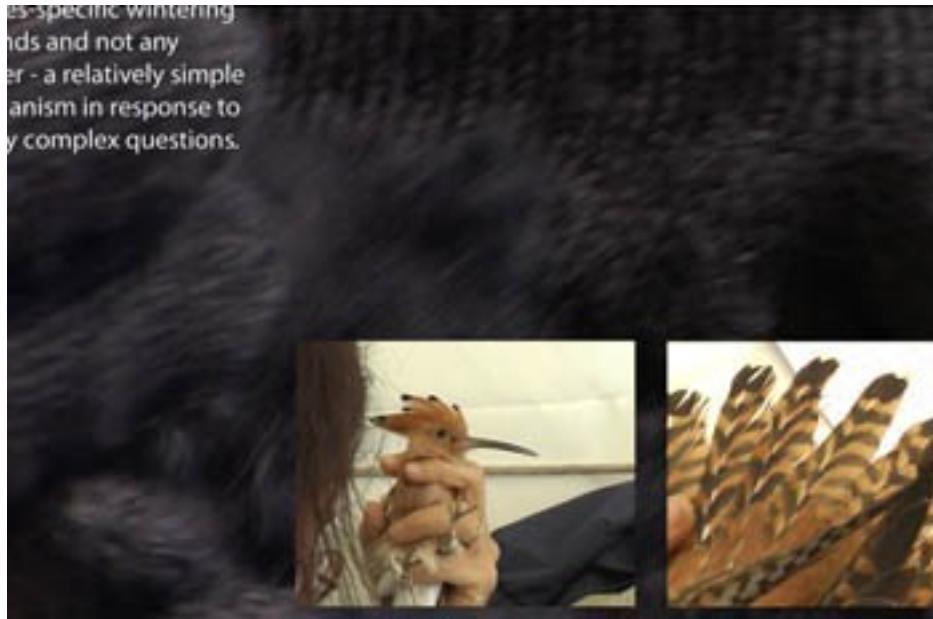
Sher Doruff describes the relations between different forms of abstraction as well as concretized shapes or objects, in a continuous move between different physical spaces, intuitions, objects and diverse forms of abstraction.

Linda Čihářová – LONG JOURNEY:



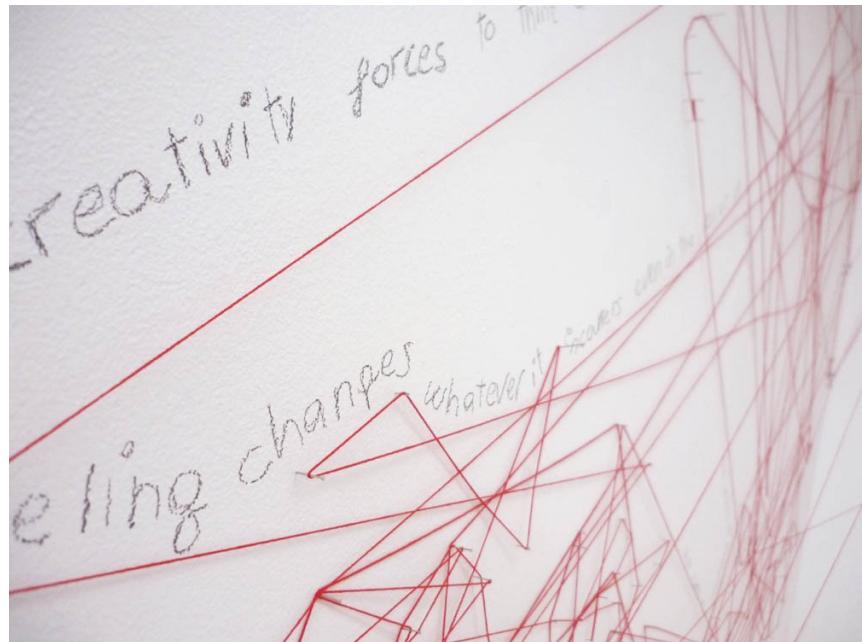
Linda Ciharova molds "bird-people" out of clay. The material allows her to re-compose heterogeneous shapes and forms, but also positions and attitudes into single sculptures.

Gertrude Moser Wagner – PLOT POEMS:



Gertrude Moser-Wagner seeks ways to transfer to an aesthetic medium complex scientific inquiries so to connect them with broader cultural and political questions.

Claudia Mongini – RED THREAT:



Claudia Mongini loosely reconstructs with a red threat a mathematical model she has been dealing with in a series of former artworks. She investigates the possibility of addressing mathematical abstraction, not in terms of a model to follow, but as a creation of a loose path.

In the following I would like to briefly trace the conditions for the opposite experiment of what I had proposed before: what implications can the perception by the works of art, that is, the experience produced by the work of art have upon theoretical concepts?

One concept that all these works come to address, is the concept of nature (Whitehead 2007). They all, in their different means of expression, address the need to overcome a dichotomic description, a separation between nature and culture, but also the split between art and aesthetics, between the act and the perception which Dewey was still holding onto.

The need expressed by these artworks makes me move towards the theoretical reflection upon nature as it is defined by the philosopher and mathematician Alfred North Whitehead. As the science philosopher Isabelle Stengers suggests, Whiteheads definition is bound to the problem of constructing an idea of nature able to include all what we experience during an act of perception. This means that it excludes all the causes of what makes nature bifurcate, all the psychic addictions which we necessitate in order to explain the difference between what on one side we have experience of and on the other, what is part of nature. Nature, and thus all involved human and nonhuman processes, Whitehead states, can be understood as independent of thought. Nature involves a series of complex heterogeneous connections. And thought becomes an entity which proceeds from the object, which discovers the interrelations of nature more than being intrinsically part of them.

What are the inferences of this frameview in relation to art? I will argue that this idea of nature allows to shift the problem of the discordance between art and aesthetics towards the more microscopical questions of the relational combination between creativity and beauty.

Whitehead defines Beauty as “the mutual adaptation of several factors in an occasion of experience.” In the description of these several factors, the term prehension is used. The term prehension accounts for a movement, a passage of time, a vectorial transmission of a molecular entity. It is a process in which a series of partialities come to acquire relevance through mutual interaction. Remarkably here the “inner” and “outer” sources, the subjective or objective ones are treated with absolute equality. The issue at stake, which concurs to the creation of the intensity of the experience, is the development and the unfolding of the relations.

What is the motor generating this notion of beauty? Whitehead defines it in terms of creativity, the factor of activity determining the initial phase of any new experience.

Again, creativity is not defined in terms of a subjective entity. It is a question of conjunction of different actors, an enactment of a process, a factor of production of novel potentiality.

Why is it necessary to move towards this microscopical and abstract plane, leaving aside concepts which are much more familiar to us?

Because this perspective allows to stir away from the dichotomies active/passive, produced perceived, subject object, where one or the other has to be at least temporally dismissed or seen as secondary. It allows us to create a mental space which comes to grasp the artworks in their deeper forms of complexity. To perceive different kinds of multiplicity and to feel the entailed potential of novel creation. And by promoting an understanding of incompatibilities not in terms of mutual exclusion, but of contrasting parts of an entity of greater complexity, it instigates towards an intensification of the feelings at stake.

It creates a sensibility for interstices, for those micro or macro configurations enabling change, producing moments of transformation and of higher intensity. Metamorphoses which are not yet thought of. From this microscopic dimension, novel relations between art and science might arise.

It is not a matter of representing aesthetically or explaining rationally, but of drawing speculative consequences out of the heterogeneous assemblages characterizing our experience, and

producing microdynamic vectors towards novel states of interference, and higher zones of intensity.

Having said this, I invite you to watch again the show (or its virtual documentation) and to engage into new forms of metamorphic participation. Thankyou.

Works cited:

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