

4 Waters: Deep Implicancy

Denise Ferreira da Silva and Arjuna Neuman
March 9–April 20, 2019

**Correspondence between Denise Ferreira da Silva
and Arjuna Neuman
Introduced by Steffanie Ling**

4 Waters: Deep Implicancy is an experiment in collaboration that traces the striking possibility of a state without value. The artists' research crosses four bodies of water—the Mediterranean, Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans—to connect four disparate islands: Lesvos, Haiti, Marshall Islands, and Tiwi. Each island holds within it stories of tremendous violence, but also the potential for otherwise. The film assembles fragments that touch on a kind of knowledge imbedded in a moment preceding human history or geological timescales—a moment of total entanglement described by the artists as Deep Implicancy. In excavating the link between geological shifts and material realities, they ask, can an earthquake release the knowledge for a revolution in the very way we know the world?

While the artists consider natural disaster, resource extraction, and colonial violence they compose a framework of elements that displaces the privileged role of value in ethics, relations and knowledge. In its place, the film asks what kind of ethical program could exist without time, accumulation, and measurement, hence value.

An accompanying study room contains texts, music and video footage from the past two years of Neuman and

Ferreira da Silva's extensive research, including material on topics such as coral islands, bacterial communication, and earthquake-triggered liquefaction in Haiti.

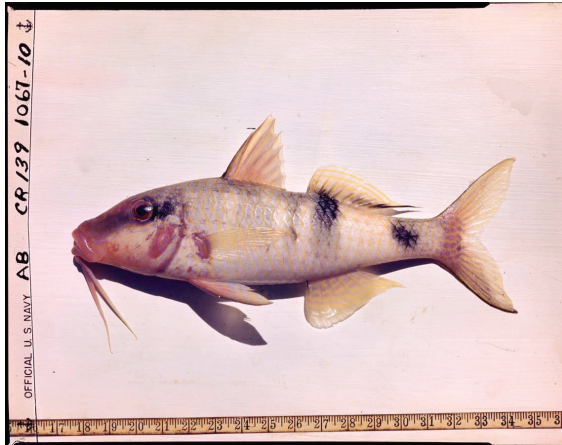
Denise and Arjuna's films *Serpent Rain* and *4 Waters: Deep Implicancy* are the result of research, thinking, and imaging against the authoritative utility ascribed to value and knowledge. In a way, these films recommend thinking against everything we've been socialized to strive for, conceiving of these goals as something that has not reinforced humanity, but has chipped away at it under the pretense of progress.

The following correspondence is a very small cross section of the nascent philosophical propositions that were developed between artists often working in vastly different time zones. Between Arjuna and Denise's initial observations, film shoots, and waiting for funding, the structure of the film and its emergent concepts of Blacklight and Deep Implicancy start to take shape. In their expanded dialogue, their exchanges have had interrelated moods of discovery, ranging from "there is no word for thank you in Tiwi, as everything is shared. i also saw a crocodile eating a turtle!!!" to "in quantum terms thinking about the 'atomic transition' or 'quantum jump' from one orbital to another—although i don't really know what this means." along with affirmative riffs about logistics, grants, and planning travel to meet in person. These particular excerpts, while not included in this

chapbook, demonstrate many ways in which thinking is movement, with or without changing places, proceeding with fundamental kindness and rigor.

Denise and Arjuna's work challenges us not because it asks us to consider quantum mechanics, or frequently refers to a dialectical method, but because it encourages us to wade into opacity without fear of incomprehension. Even while they rally philosophical, historical, and geographical complexities, thinking through their work unfurls pleasure and willingness to relent our expectations of clarity, to acknowledge value in that which is granted inexplicability, instead of seeking stark conclusion (often also inexplicable). I read the fruitfulness of letting someone know: "here I am, this is what I see, this is what I am thinking. Here are some possibilities." and draw courage from their excitement for their work, steady on the path of unknowability.

—Steffanie Ling



From: Arjuna Neuman
Subject: studio visiting
Date: March 28, 2017 at 2:48 AM
To: Denise Ferreira da Silva

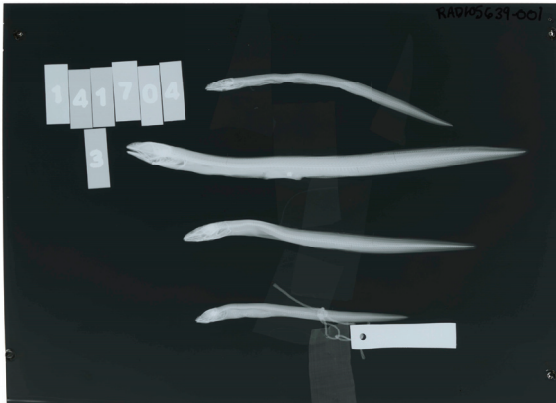
heyy Denise,

so my address is Leipziger strasse, 63, Berlin 10117. to get here take the U6 to Stadtmitte station. find the exit on Leipziger Strasse and walk east, you should pass a building called Atrium on your left. keep walking down Leipziger and you should see a small park on your right. on the left side of the street is the store McPaper. my entrance is next to McPaper on Leipziger Strasse. push all the buzzers (i don't know which one works). and i will come down and let you in. feel free to come after 2, but as you like.

i don't have a phone, but email me if you get lost and i will come find you!

see you later,

Arjuna



All subsequent fish images: sourced from the Smithsonian Institute Archives, Operation Crossroads (1946-55), a US Navy-led scientific expedition to the Marshall Islands and Bikini Atoll to study the effects of the atom bomb testing. Images by Leonard P. Schultz, Curator of Ichthyology, Smithsonian Institute.
https://siarchives.si.edu/collections/auth_exp_fbr_eace0110

From: Arjuna Neuman
Subject: Re: skype next week
Date: May 26, 2017 at 2:46 AM
To: Denise Ferreira da Silva

Hi hi Denise,

yes let's skype one day next week, how about Tuesday the 30th or Wednesday 31st? will you be in Canada or London?

i will send some proposal thoughts to you over the weekend. formally, i like the idea of continuing with the elements. perhaps for this film we focus on water and wind: through the three oceans, through clouds, and the rain relay between them? the film could also start briefly with fire and end with earth as connection points to *Serpent Rain* and other potential works, kind of creating a (time) crystal structure.

just brainstorming: another thought is to use elemental colours as an organizing principle—the way elements and colours correspond with humours in the body: for example, blood is air, spring, sanguine, it is red and warm; black bile is earth, black in colour, melancholy, autumn, dry and cold; and so on. we could make sections that resonate with the different humours' affective qualities/frequencies, this could be a way to bring the body into the framework we already set up in *Serpent Rain*. see the image attached.



Medieval illustration of the theory of the four humours:
<http://medicinethroughouttime.co.uk/history/ancient-greece/theory-four-humours/#.Xlu6C89Kiek>

we also can discuss Marfa, Texas a little. i like the idea of meeting/sitting with some of the Water Protectors; i think this particular struggle against the various pipelines does bring into focus the “knot of ecocide and genocide.”¹

anyway, how was it in London? i was just there, and it seems i am reconnecting to that city slowly. cool you are making videos, i am excited to see!!! i also find editing relaxing, there is definitely something about images and sounds fitting together, it is a bit like cooking or dancing, or maybe dancing while cooking.

yes let’s do some work at PAF [Performing Arts Forum, St. Erme, France] ... thank you for the funding for room and travel (no problem to get a ticket myself). i will go for 5 days from the 17th till the 22nd of July. what are your dates there?

my best,
Arjuna

¹ Gene Ray, “Writing the Ecoside-Genocide Knot: Indigenous Knowledge and Critical Theory in the Endgame,” *documenta 14: South as a State of Mind*: https://www.documenta14.de/en/south/895_writing_the_ecocide_genocide_knot_indigenous_knowledge_and_critical_theory_in_the_endgame

From: Arjuna Neuman
Subject: Re: skype next week
Date: May 30, 2017 at 8:01 AM
To: Denise Ferreira da Silva

hey hi Denise

cool, looking forward to talking later. i will turn my skype on, so just ring or email when you are ready.

here are some notes:

3 Waters: Deep Implicancy

possible sites and histories to shoot—following through and folding together three islands (Marshall Islands, Haiti, Lesvos) in three bodies of water (the Pacific, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean.)

taking water and air as bundled elements... following the geographic notion that all land masses are just more islands in an ongoing chain of atolls—ring-shaped coral reefs.

some possible sites to film and/or think about:

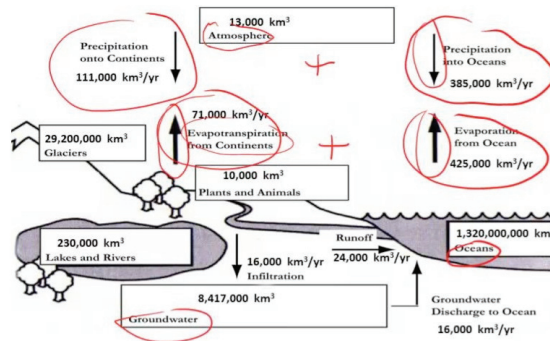
The ATLANTIC:

- residence time²
- Zong slave ship massacre (1781) and the start of finance—the slave ghosts that haunt finance—financial liquidity and its fiction of freedom
- Haiti: black universalism and the rhythms beneath the particle

The PACIFIC:

- Runit Dome, Marshall Islands: the radioactive container built for 1950s-era nuclear testing, now leaking, a metaphor for problematising the singular particle
- the impossibility of containment
- the singular isolate³ at the origin of ecosystem ecology (finance and internet)—the fallacy of ecological entanglement as a method
- Wave Piloting: a Marshall Islands technique for navigating the open waters that involves feeling for wave ridges (the point where refracted waves create a knot—a mimetic method that is undetectable by science)
- the Smithsonian Institute archive of radiated and measured fish

2



² Residence time is the average amount of time water remains within a given reservoir. Oregon State University Ecampus, "Reservoirs, Fluxes and Residence Times in the Water Cycle," Youtube, published June 15, 2012. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2wYPjIDxQQ>

³ "Finally, the myth of isolation is also at work in the way in which the Marshall Islanders exposed to nuclear fallout became human subjects for radiation experiments due to the idea of the biological isolate." Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey, "The Myth of Isolates: Ecosystem Ecologies in the Nuclear Pacific," *Cultural Geographies*, October 2012: p. 169.

The MEDITERRANEAN:

- Thales of Miletus: pre-Socratic philosopher, origin of science, but also understood water as the element of life
- science and derivatives are conceived of together through Thales
- refugees, eaten by fish and entering back into life, or beginning to saturate the Mediterranean (echoes of the Middle Passage) as linked to residence time
- cloud subjectivity⁴: a new way to understand empathy as detached from the human scale, where bacteria are both an agent of feelings and an agent of weather; moving towards climatic empathy

⁴ "Once bacteria is recognized as a double-agent of rain and desire, we can establish an entangled meshhold and living-link between the matter of our subjectivity (our body) and the weather (the planet). Such a rearrangement in terms of geographic and temporal scales, or what I am calling cloud-subjectivity, not only challenges anachronistic definitions of the human body, its local sovereignty and its analogical role in promoting nationalist, racist, misogynist, neo-colonial policies. But it also reveals how our emotions, desire and our (now hyper) empathy could, through the bacterial double-agents of feeling and rain, begin to circumnavigate the planet, and become timeless with the weather." Arjuna Neuman, "Bloodletting," *Hearings: The Online Journal of Contour Biennale*, April 2017: <http://hearings.contour8.be/2017/04/13/bloodletting/>

From: Denise Ferreira da Silva
Subject: Re: skype next week
Date: June 1, 2017 at 3:01 PM
To: Arjuna Neuman

Hey,

I was so distracted trying to get work done before taking a break on my b-day that I missed the message before this one with the notes and confirming Skype. I could talk tomorrow (early morning) or Saturday (after 10AM PDT). Let me know when is good for you.

On your notes:

The title/idea **3 Waters: Deep Implicancy** is absolutely great. But what if we added the Indian Ocean? I'm thinking about it because I've been reading about early migrations from Africa to what is now Australia and South Asia.

In addition to supporting the geographic notion of land-masses being islands, the Indian Ocean also adds some interesting things such as:

- Australia: another, if huge, island
- a past anterior to that of the Mediterranean Sea, but also to philosophical, religious, and other possibilities that were contemporaneous with ancient Greek philosophy (Thales)
- a kind of (ancient) black migration that remains (for the most part) ignored because of the centrality of slavery and which also places black people in Asia and the Pacific (blurring the racial/geographical lines)

- asylum seekers

- there is something beautiful, I find, in thinking about blackness in regards to both slavery and Haiti, and coloniality and Australia, while, at the same time, considering what it would have become had our sense of the ancient been traced to the Indian Ocean, instead of the Mediterranean Sea

- on violence of and indigenous Australians' protests against today's mining in The Kimberley (region in Western Australia) and early colonial violence (see documentary: *Whispering in Our Hearts*, 2001)

There is more, but basically I'm making a case for **4 Waters: Deep Implicancy**.

Some other things:

- When/where to shoot: Turkey/Greece (November 2017); Haiti (January or February 2018); Australia/Marshall Islands (May-June 2018); taking into account cyclone and hurricane seasons

- Blacklight⁵: have I sent you this short piece of mine? I have attached it to this message. Now I am thinking of it as the basis for our method for this and other film essays on

⁵"Everyone knows, whether or not they have actually danced to Donna Summer's *Love to Love You Baby*, on dance floors too small for disco's most expansive moves, that without blacklight the scene would lose eighty percent of its glamour. Though invisible to the human eye, ultraviolet radiation turns opaque things into luminous ones. In other words, blacklight does not illuminate: it makes things emanate or shine. For this reason, it is perfect for the task of imaging a reading procedure which, instead of relying on transparency, moves to dissolve it: a compositional practice designed to decompose the abstract forms (the concept and categories) of the understanding and reflection which both presuppose and rehearse the occlusion of colonial violence and indifference to racial violence." Denise Ferreira da Silva, "Blacklight," in *Otobong Nkanga: Lustre and Lucre* (eds. Clare Molloy, Philippe Pirotte and Fabian Schöneich), Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016.

the elements. Something along the lines of blackness as mediator of experience, as method, for which blacklight—basically ultraviolet radiation—is a tool. But I want to expand the toolbox to include all the other regions of the electromagnetic spectrum, everything except the visible spectrum. It will be interesting to explore the other regions of the electromagnetic spectrum: gamma, x-ray, infrared, terahertz, microwave, radio waves.

It would be good to talk about whether film is a good medium for exploring blacklight—the kind of light that makes certain links shine/visible—and also whether and how it works for tools that refer to other regions of the spectrum, both in terms of how they make things visible but also how they alter things. For instance, ultraviolet radiation changes DNA, creates free radicals, etc.; microwave radiation heats things up...

(...)

I think this is all for now.

Talk soon,

Dx

From: Arjuna Neuman
Subject: Re: skype next week
Date: June 2, 2017 at 4:35 AM
To: Denise Ferreira da Silva

Hey dear Denise, a happy happy birthday too you. i hope it was chill and joyful!!

so let's try for early Friday morning. just give me a heads up, and let me know what time, as i will be in and out of my studio this afternoon evening.

Arjuna x

notes:

i am very happy to include the Indian Ocean. i have done some unfinished research on refugee detention centers in Bintan Island, Indonesia; especially how they are leased and paid for by Australia, while other parts of the island are rented by the Singapore government for luxury accommodation. i also visited one detention centre without much permission, and the warden in charge threatened to “process me” because i was filming. it was pretty frightening, it seemed like he could really do whatever he wanted in this extra-juridical/extra-territorial space.

so yeah, very happy to revisit this region, especially in regard to historic yet under-considered migration patterns in the region and the possibility for different lineages of knowledge emerging from the Indian Ocean rather than the Mediterranean. that all sounds great. later, let's

brainstorm what exactly to see and where to shoot. please share books/articles on this region regarding parallel knowledge lineages as this sounds super interesting.

i also love blacklight as a method, thinking about the things that are outside our range of vision... also things outside our range of hearing, below 20hz we start to hear with our belly or with our dancing feet. i also like blacklight's role in rave culture (pretty much the only visual non-visual aesthetic in basement parties, for example) and various musical subcultures. some of these rhythms we could trace back to Haiti and voodoo. this makes me wonder what frequencies are audible/visible after death? also the frequencies that resonate within our bacteria and our cravings?

it makes me smile, as once again we have a challenge to make a film outside of the supposed visible range.

in terms of other non-visual spectra, i very much like cosmic/stella rays. I understand these create patterns on the closed eyelids of astronauts. i guess in a way they are radiation-induced visions, or particles of light that ignore boundaries of separation (like eyelid skin). they also knock pixels out of cameras, i guess they are a disobedient and

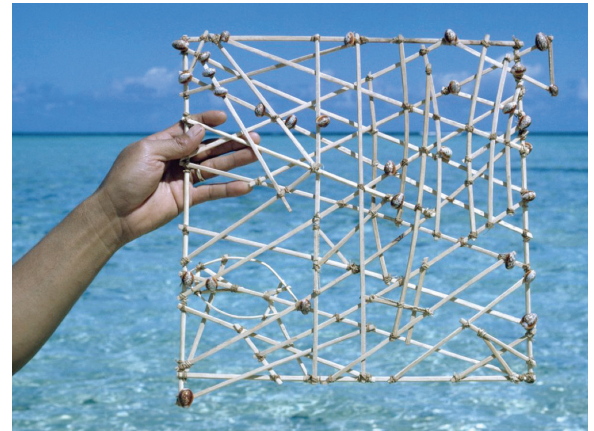
⁶ "Long-lived spin coherence in proteins found in the eyes of migratory birds could explain how the creatures are able to navigate along the Earth's magnetic field with extraordinary precision. This is the finding of researchers in the UK and Germany, who have created a new realistic model of cryptochrome proteins that is based on advanced simulations of nuclear and electron spins." Michael Allen, "Birds Measure Magnetic Field Using Long-Lived Quantum Coherence," Physics World, April 2016: <https://physicsworld.com/a/birds-measure-magnetic-fields-using-long-lived-quantum-coherence/>

disorganizing force on the grid of a camera's sensor, just as they confuse the threshold of the body with a galactic temporality.

in the Marshall Islands, wave piloting marks a practice (not in the European or enlightenment tradition) where the human is more sensitive than scientific instrument.⁶ as i understand it, the navigators can feel wave ridges deep below the ocean surface. these ridges are cause by underwater waves crashing into each other.

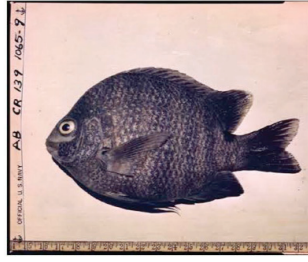
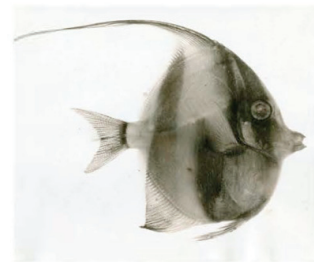
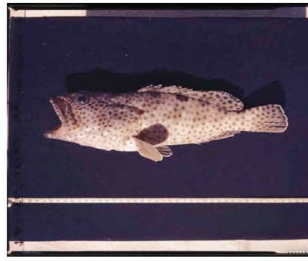
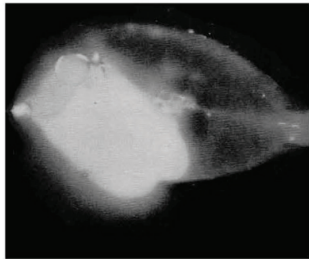
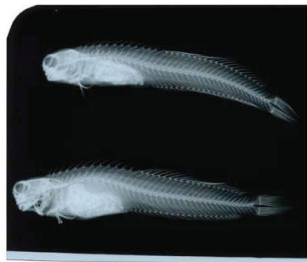
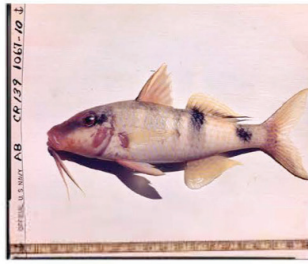
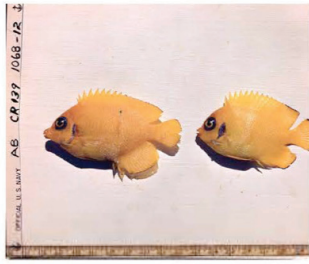
here's a nice article on the practice:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/20/magazine/the-secrets-of-the-wave-pilots.html>



Marshallese Stick Chart, used in wave piloting practices: <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/micronesian-stick-chart/>

Log of
Crossroads Project
by
Dr. Leonard P. Schultz
Curator of Fishes
U.S. NATIONAL MUSEUM.



acoustically, when certain subsonic sound waves crash into each other, the levitation of small things can happen. i wonder what happens when non-visible wavelengths collide?

ok, lots to riff on!! practically speaking:
the dates seem fine. i think late November for Greece/Turkey (depending on Marfa). the rest in 2018 are tentatively good for me. (...)

some images:

—Runit Dome, the radioactive storage facility in the Marshall Islands: possible to shoot with drone. also a curious place to do a tarot reading? as the start of the Anthropocene, or Anthropocene's pandora's box.

—Marshallese Stick Chart, used for wave navigation. these are mimetic/mnemonic devices more than scientific cartography, i think

—atolls as made of coral, the crest of underwater volcanoes.

—tuna fishing in the Mediterranean

—and then i got very interested in the newly-categorized cloud formations, called Undulatus Asperatus. they look like waves in the sky, how to navigate them?



Above: Runit Dome, facility for radioactive waste on the Enewetak Atoll:
<https://www.thecoconet.tv/the-ocean/save-our-ocean/radioactive-waste-leak-imminent-in-the-pacific-1/>
Below: The Moon, Rider-Waite Tarot Deck, image courtesy of Gallery TPW.

From: Arjuna Neuman
Subject: 4 waters thoughts
Date: July 3, 2017 at 2:18 AM
To: Denise Ferreira da Silva

hey dear Denise,

how are you feeling? i'm good, i am looking forward to PAF and doing my homework for it. it seems like a great list of people!!

attached is a loose proposal/treatment for *4 Waters* (i wrote this for Shanghai). let me know what you think? i'm sure i have oversimplified Blacklight and Deep Implicancy, so feel free to make changes etc etc.

attached too is a budget. this is rough (for example i don't know pay rates in the various places), but it should give a ball-park figure for what we are thinking.

also, i re-read the *Blacklight* text. it's great, especially how you bring together the expropriation of native lands and of slaves themselves. i think making this connection explicit, this Raw Material connection, is key. it got me to thinking about rising sea levels as a kind of expropriation (Miami is disappearing). but atolls—as they are made of coral—are alive, as in living islands that have actually been growing with the rising sea level. there is something here about living land and how it resists expropriation/environmental destruction.

warmly from Berlin,
Arjuna x

From: Denise Ferreira da Silva
Subject: Re: 4 waters thoughts
Date: July 9, 2017 at 4:33 PM
To: Arjuna Neuman

Hey Arjuna,

Sorry I have disappeared! In the meantime ...(...)

Proposal: I love it! In particular, I love how it got me thinking about how blacklight exposes light (that is) in/ as matter. Taking us back to the Big Bang's description of the beginning of the universe as we know it. Invisible, blacklight as a tool that reads matter, which is precisely what modern philosophers have rendered irrelevant (as an access) to Truth. We could say that when under blacklight, things are presented not as an object (before a subject) but as matter (mater/materia); that is, presented as raw. Turning to your challenge of making a film below the threshold of visibility, I ask (you) how would film become if we emphasise its aspect as imaging, in Walter Benjamin's sense? I've attached a text I prepared with Valentina on poethical reading; within it there is a short text on reading as imaging, which I wrote for Natasha's e-flux exhibition on Supercommunity.

Entanglement: the concept of Deep Implicancy is an attempt to move away from how separation informs the notion of entanglement. Quantum physicists have chosen the term entanglement precisely because their starting point is particles (that is, bodies), which are by definition separate in space. With the idea of Deep Implicancy,

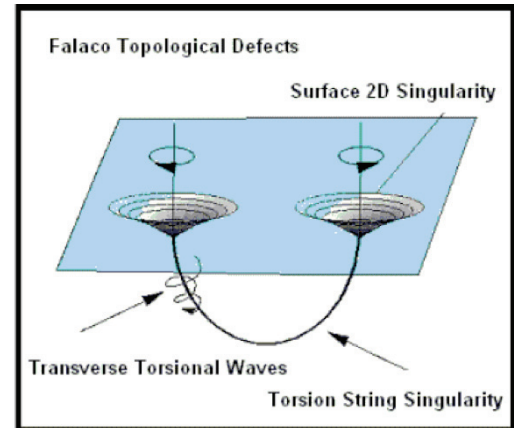
I want to return to *materia prima*: matter—both Plato’s Ideal Forms and Aristotle’s Formal Cause—without form, without separation, without relation. This takes us back to the beginning of the universe, but also to the endless (trans)forming (law of conservation of energy) in Aristotle’s sense, which I think relates to form in the ways that artists talk about it—that is, existence in this universe. More importantly, if we put the emphasis on trans-forming or trans-substantiating,⁷ we could also return to the theme of *Serpent Rain*, but now through a correspondence: phase transition and/or states of matter. Anyway, I have more comments on your proposal. I will try and finish them up before PAF. One more thing:

Interviews: I loved how the interview with the geobiologists made it into *Serpent Rain*. There are three indigenous thinkers who I would like to propose we interview:⁸ (...)

I’ve gotta go now. More soon.

Dx

⁷ Footnote to self: how to write about soot (phase transition from gas to solid)? What are soot aesthetics? Soot tends to disregard boundaries, both the biological filters and the mechanical ones. And yet it is sticky, sticking to lungs, trachea, vocal cords. It sticks to rubber, vulcanizing wheels. It sticks to paper – here even as the colouration of printer-ink toner. From our windpipes to typing then we speak with/through soot. But as a seed for rain, it turns heavy droplets to acid. Soot we know, is a product of burning fuel, the partial combustion of some substrate, a consequence of fire and the engine. This essay, that is yet to be written in soot, could or perhaps must make a distinction between the soot produced en-mass by fossil fuels (slow deadly soot) – and charring, an ancient and multi-local technique of par-burning vegetable and forest matter to help hunt, to regenerate biomes, to repair soil (*terra preta*) and to remember lightening.



Falaco Soliton Diagram: self-sustaining wave packets that maintain constant shape and velocity. *New Developments in Soliton Research*, (ed. L.V. Chen), New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2006: 154.

⁸ “This discussion about the idea is one example of the possibility of all things forming each other. One aim of this book is to understand the oneness that sits at the core of indigenous philosophy as education itself. This oneness is not simply inert or static; it is much more formational.” – Carl Mika, “Chapter 1: Introduction,” in *Indigenous Education and Metaphysics of Presence: A Worlded Philosophy* (New York: Routledge: New Directions in Philosophy Research, 2017): 2.

From: Arjuna Neuman
Subject: Turkey/Miletis update
Date: January 8, 2018 at 4:51 AM
To: Denise Ferreira da Silva

dear Denise,

hope the new year is going great. i wanted to keep you updated: i will go to Izmir, Turkey on Jan 28th. from here, i will drive down to Miletus in Greece to film the ruins there, then i will go to Lesvos to film a petrified forest (<http://lesvos.com/petrifiedforest.html>) and then one day in Chios and back to Izmir. i'm travelling by ferry from Ayvalik, Turkey—this is the refugee route. i don't think i will visit any of the camps, i'm hoping that the migration will be in the atmosphere and background. i will also shoot the first excavated ruins of Miletus, a gate that is housed at the Berlin Pergamon Museum. i like this: the petrification of the west (which is both an end and a phase shift from liquid to solid, a kind of end of earth or chthonic, subterranean horizon). let me know your thoughts about what else to shoot in Western Turkey.

for Haiti, i hope to have a budget confirmed in the next few days. i've been asked to make something for Bold Tendencies in Peckham, and figured i could use some of the budget from this to cover the Haiti trip. are we still on for Feb 24th in Port-au-Prince? let's start brainstorming for Haiti, this phrase [of mine] came to mind "from black universalism to a blackened universe": the way darkness dilates the eyes. what is a dilating universalism? pores becoming porous, borders begin to blur.

this stuff about the magnetosphere is super interesting— it's the region of space surrounding the earth that is still dominated by the earth's magnetic field. cryptochromes are genomic proteins which are sensitive to blue light and help birds "see" the magnetosphere through quantum entanglement (will try to interview related scientists...)

[see footnote 6]

- <http://www.ks.uiuc.edu/Research/cryptochrome/>

for Marshall Islands and Australia: we don't yet have budget from my side. anything from your side? we may have to postpone the Marshall Island section til funding comes in, but i think this is fine, since we will have much to work with between Turkey and Haiti. that said, i'm in the second round for a grant to go to the Marshall Islands, but can't access these funds till later in the year. fingers crossed we get it.

i'm gonna reach out now to Berlin Biennial and to Olivier— can you send me his email?

i think that's it for now. here is a new work i made around a refugee "feeling" and playing with sound. the title *Take My Hand, Take Me Wherever You May Go* comes from *Daughters of Dust* (1991 film, dir. Julie Dash): <https://vimeo.com/245428045> p/w: hand

can you send your new text on Heat⁹ that you presented in Paris? i'm excited to read it!!

my very best, Arjuna

From: Denise Ferreira da Silva
Subject: Re: Turkey/Miletis update
Date: January 8, 2018 at 11:52 AM
To: Arjuna Neuman

Hi again Arjuna,

I'm so sad I can't go to Turkey/Miletus with you. The petrified forest looks amazing, 20 billion years!!

Phase transition (liquid to solid) and petrification are concepts that link *4 Waters* and *Serpent Rain* in a nice way as they recall both the fossil and the rock-bacteria.

Western Turkey: What to shoot?

Air is the element corresponding to western philosophy. In addition to the archaeological sites and objects, let's consider...

+ Sail boats: images of the old boats used for travel across the Mediterranean Sea and images of today's boats and ships as well as of refugee boats (archival)

+ Form/Formal: there is something that is a bit confusing about the notion of form, which has to do with its two meanings. That is, form (as in formal) as abstraction, and form as shape. I don't think that modern thought would be able to claim uniqueness without the prevalence of the former rendering of form. As it turns out, we can expose the ambiguity of the term Form—in a way that also would

⁹ "Experimenting with the Elemental as a metaphysical descriptor exposes how colonial and racial violence is vital to the accumulation of capital in its various (merchant, industrial and financial) moments. Thinking with heat, I find, displaces Universal time (the time of the Human) toward a non-anthropocentric account of what exists or what happens. With heat, it is possible to figure change not as progression but as material transformation." Denise Ferreira Da Silva, "On Heat," *Canadian Art*, October 2018: <https://canadianart.ca/features/on-heat/>

refer to air and to the transition from gas to solid—through Plato's five solids (my cover photo on Facebook) which are images of the elements and the universe (represented by a dodecahedron). It would be fantastic if you could shoot rocks, buildings, or other structures/figures that resemble the other four solids, which Plato links to the elements (tetrahedron [Fire], cube [Earth], octahedron [Air], icosahedron [Water]). This is a transition from the Pre-Socratic¹⁰ material/substantial view of the Elements to Plato's ideal/formal view of the Elements, that is a transformation/transition from Solid to Gas

- + Images of the structures of Frontex (European Border and Coast Guard), drones, military ships
- + Costs: Send me your ticket and original boarding passes as well as hotel bill once you are back in Berlin. I will reimburse you using my research funds

¹⁰ "He seems to me equal to gods that man
whoever he is who opposite you
sits and listens close
to your sweet speaking

and lovely laughing—oh it
puts the heart in my chest on wings
for when I look at you, even a moment, no speaking
is left in me

no: tongue breaks and thin
fire is racing under skin
and in eyes no sight and drumming
fills ears

and cold sweat holds me and shaking
grips me all, greener than grass
I am and dead—or almost
I seem to me.

But all is to be dared, because even a person of poverty"

Sappho, *If Not Winter: Fragments of Sappho*, translated by Anne Carson (New York: Vintage Books, 2002): 63.

Haiti:

+ Travel Dates: unfortunately, we'll have to change our dates for Haiti. I will not be able to go to NYC in February. Instead of the last week of February, let's plan it for the first week of March?

+ "From Black Universalism to a Blackened Universe": I like the move but would like to frame it in terms of a method. It is not that blackness provides a different ontology—a different answer for the question of what the world is—but that it inspires a different way of knowing. For instance, a way of knowing that would not simply call dark matter 'dark' because there is no formal model capable of explaining it, but a way of knowing that would just acknowledge that it exists, it has effects, it affects matter. As such, it is matter like everything else for which there is a model, a name, and a formula.¹¹ With blackness as a method we can bring in blacklight (ultraviolet) but it could also include all the other ranges of the electromagnetic spectrum (gamma rays, x-rays, infra-red, microwaves, radio waves) and ask the following questions: what becomes of the universe when it is figured through blackness? What will become of the world after a Haitian Revolution? (As it would be

¹¹ "When taken not as a category but as a referent of another mode of existing in the world, blackness returns The Thing at the limits of modern thought. Or, put differently, when deployed as method, blackness fractures the glassy walls of universality understood as formal determination. The violence inherent in the illusion of that value is both an effect and an actualization of self-determination, or autonomy. My itinerary is simple. It begins with considerations of the role of determinacy—formal determination articulated as a kind of efficient causation—in modern thought, and closes with a proof of the Equation of Value, intended to release that which in blackness has the capacity to disclose another horizon of existence, with its attendant accounts of existence." For an elaboration of this argument regarding ethics and formalization, see Denise Ferreira da Silva, "1 (life) ÷ 0 (blackness) = ∞ - ∞ or ∞ / ∞: On Matter Beyond the Equation of Value," *e-flux* #79, February 2017, <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/79/94686/1-life-0-blackness-or-on-matter-beyond-the-equation-of-value/>

the only revolution that could also overthrow the colonial structures of global capital.) So, I am thinking here about the decompositional/recompositional (DNA altering) capacity of photons, which is higher precisely on the ranges outside visible light. Anyway, I like dilation (and, yes, blur and porous) as a descriptor for what blackness as a method does to how we can then 'see' the universe.

Marshall Islands/Australia:

Let's see how we do with funding. If we don't get any sponsorships, I should be able to use research funds to pay for your trip to Turkey and our trip to Haiti.

(...)

Congratulations on the new film and thanks for the link. I will watch it soon. Let's plan and talk over the weekend or early next week?

Cheers,
Denise



Partially-assembled implosion device for early nuclear weapons testing:

<https://geopoliticraticus.wordpress.com/2018/04/14/a-meta-implosion-weapon-of-mass-destruction/>

From: Arjuna Neuman
Subject: time muddle
Date: January 16, 2018 at 6:44 AM
To: Denise Ferreira da Silva

hallo Denise,

sorry i missed our meeting - i got the time zones muddled (just now arriving in Berlin after a month away). shall we try again over the weekend or next monday?

i really like all this stuff about the beginnings of (geometric) abstraction, through Euclid to the renaissance and single-point perspective. i guess it's the basis for so much, especially seeking perfection (Michelangelo's David), modernist architecture and symmetry in the world. i wonder if this kind of formal symmetry also drove Marx and the dialectical method?

also, i wonder how a theory of everything can avoid becoming totalitarian? perhaps like you say, using a method rather than something closed and complete. since the universe is expanding/dilating, we ought to develop universalisms which are equally on the move. so how to call on the Haitian Revolution but let it expand in another way? this got me to thinking of charring (burying partially burned organic matter, which returns life into the soil¹²) as

¹² "Terra preta (TP) (black earth) soils, the topic of this chapter, challenge both images as they indicate much more human agency in the landscape in the past, a challenge to the persistent pristine myth image, and they represent a way in which soils of the region can be made more sustainable without external inputs, thereby challenging the idea that the only development in the Amazon is the destructive conversion of rainforest into industrial agriculture and predatory forestry." Antoinette M. G. A. WinklerPrins, "Terra Preta: The Mysterious Soils of the Amazon," Antoinette M. G. A. WinklerPrins, in *The Soil Underfoot: Infinite Possibilities for a Finite Resource* (eds. G.J. Churchman and E. Landa) CDC Press: p. 235.

a method of expanding life, as a kind of long revolution:
fire turning to earth.

let me think some more about it all, especially photons
mutating DNA and biophotons mutating matter.

here is a video-sketch with an icosahedron over the
Atlantic. there is something about the regularity of the
solid and the complexity/irregularity of the waves.

<https://vimeo.com/251282867>

and some more screen grabs from a trip to North Devon/
Atlantic. I was there last week testing new equipment.

my best, Arjuna ■



Images courtesy of Arjuna Neuman.

Dr. Denise Ferreira da Silva is a Professor and Director of The Social Justice Institute (the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Social Justice) at the University of British Columbia. Her academic writings and artistic practice address the ethical questions of the global present and target the metaphysical and ontoepistemological dimensions of modern thought.

Arjuna Neuman is an artist, filmmaker and writer. With recent presentations at Whitechapel Gallery, London; Istanbul Modern, Istanbul; Sharjah Biennial, UAE; Bergen Assembly, Norway; at NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore; and the 56th Venice Biennale.

Steffanie Ling is a producer of criticism, pamphlets, stories, essays, exhibitions, reviews, bluntness, anecdotes, shout outs, wrestling storylines, proposals, applications, jokes, readings, minimal poems, poems, dinner, compliments, and diatribes. She is Artistic Director of Images Festival.

4 Waters: Deep Implicancy is co-presented with the Images Festival, April 11-18, 2019. For more information, visit imagesfestival.com.



During the Images Festival, Arjuna Neuman is a guest of the Goethe-Institut, Toronto.



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