Experimentation and the Non-Relation:

A Conversation between Calum Hazell and Hannah Hopewell

Abstract: Calum Hazell and Hannah Hopewell discuss aspects of François Laruelle's non-philosophy as it bears upon their respective practices of writing, photography, poetics and diagnostic-invention. They reflect on how non-standard practices mutate prevailing urban formulations of city space, time and subjectivity.

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Hannah Hopewell (Pākehā) is a landscape architect, urban designer, and presently teaching at Cornell University. Hopewell's research approaches urban landscapes in settler colonial contexts through critical and creative means seeking out forms of invisibilized persistence and other-than capitalist conditioned material relations. Hopewell became interested in the agency of François Laruelle's project when undertaking her creative practice doctoral studies that culminated in *parafictioning*, a site-writing practice in accord with Vision-in-One.

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Hannah Hopewell: Non-philosophy calls us to consider the world "before any philosophical division," and to a degree, describe it by following its thread of immanence. François Laruelle would term this a "non-Euclidian mutation," which amounts to a creative act. I wonder, for you, what is the modification of understanding that emerges from non-philosophical work, and how does it provoke experimentation and creative practice?

Although, as I write, the term "understanding" is not at all the right word. I recall my early reading of Laruelle to be mystifying, in so far as it installed a compelling dream like a state. Reflecting on this now, and I do not quite know when it happened, but I somehow recognized I was inhabiting Laruelle's texts, reading them as material, where the capture of meaning continually hovered in the background as question without cause for resolve. This got to a point where a new variant of constructing (I think that might be the right word?) thought had emerged, yet one without grasp or fixed knowing—a space of experimentation that bypassed disciplinary territories and

taxonomies. How for you might this space be inventive?

Calum Hazell: Laruelle's concept of World has been a source of interest for my work principally due to (a) its irreducibility to his Earth or Universe. I am especially thinking of the "Universe Black" poem here, where "Man works the Earth, inhabits the World, thinks according to the Universe."[1] And (b) its substitutions for his Philosophy and perhaps, by extension, the discipline as such.

Taken together, I understand Laruelle's concept of World as amounting to an exhortation—build and inhabit decapitalized worlds! Invent indisciplinary practices in accordance-with the Universe!—tempered by requirement to fashion concepts-tools appropriate to rigorous diagnoses of what Nelson Goodman calls worlds already on hand.[2] These valences are concretized from 1) the Universe/Real/One via 2) the Human/Man-in-person towards 3) the World/Philosophy/Discipline.

Positively, we should (feel obliged to) develop compositional methods, structurological arenas, and strategic postures for recognizing the

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[1] François Laruelle, "Universe Black in the Human Foundations of Color", trans. Miguel Abreu and Robin Mackay, in *From Decision to Heresy: Experiments in Non-Standard Thought*, ed. Robin Mackay (Falmouth and New York: Urbanomic and Sequence Press, 2012).

[2] Nelson Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988).

non-Philosophical, in-Disciplinary, other(-than-)Worldly status proper to thought and praxis as such. We should (feel permitted to) experiment and invent in-(the)-knowledge that experiment and invention are not beholden to philosophical strictures/structuration. Inquiry then prospects for a more genuine novelty in theory-praxis activities delivered from in (liminal, devotional, magical, virtual, hypo-thetic…) excess of the World, at the World in its present and inevitable configurations.

Negatively, though there is no need to "escape" the Philosophy-circle (being as we are, for Laruelle, always-already or in-the-last-instance stationed from without it), we do need to invent strategies aimed at breaking it. If the World we inhabit is understood as operating with/exerting any real (if concurrently irreal) authority, then there is no reason to believe it will *present itself* in its tractability or flaunt itself at the seams. The World will not give itself up without a fight. Which is to say that whilst philosophical and disciplinary materials can be deployed generically, democratically, simply, and so on, the protocols required for those executions are finely-wrought and -tuned. There is a real difficulty in speaking the irreality of the reality (and the reality of the irreality) of the World, and non-philosophy's tortuous incorporations of Philosophy are testament to this (and to this necessity).

In a restricted sense, these patterns are suggestive of a well-rehearsed language-problem differently ramified to God in the Christian and Islamic apophaticisms: How to describe, appropriate to His indescribability, the truly Indescribable? Which is not to suggest, for its part, that non-philosophy also proceeds *via negativa*. Amongst numerous points of departure, that in the Neoplatonist-devotional trajectory certain apophatic accounts envisage for all the creatures (their *anagogic* reasoning, their *returning towards* Who does the creaturing) is not represented in Laruelle. What is comparable, though, is the premium placed on strategic encounters with ordinary/scriptural/philosophical language-matter even as any and all such encounters ultimately fall under Divine remit/are Unilaterally insured. Dionysius, Thomas Aquinas, Nicholas of Cusa, Ibn 'Arabî, Rūmī, and so on, do not suppose to *pass over* the One in silence in virtue of a special gnosis of which they are in immediate receipt, but to plot out contemplative routes—generally up and down ladders and mountains—to silence or unknowing or unsaying *passing through* sound or knowledge or kataphatic speech. Silence is the real austere achievement of a special prolix way, a dialectic, of saying, not its privation or an option we might otherwise have chosen at the outset to save our legs. Where Worldly or Urban regimes of sense-making are concerned, my contribution in this collection, "Social

Theatre Aggregate," would distinguish itself from things like "asemic" inscriptions for similar reasons in a similar way.

I really like your invocation of the "mystifying" along these lines, Hannah. Like you, I found (and very much continue to find) textual encounters with non-philosophy to be viscerally mystifying. Mystification might also lend itself as a nickname for a dia-gnostic practice with Philosophical artefacts that they would be "mystified" out of the World. For my own part, I am thoroughly mystified by work that has my name attached to it. Mystification could be the (compositional) condition under which it appears to have emerged.

HH: You foreground such creative agency in non-philosophy, and how, when taken non-philosophically, World(s) already to hand can be seen to demand inventive alignments with the Real of the universe. A non-philosophical posture then is one that is prefaced by what I will clunkily refer to as a "seeing in the black," or a seeing through and past alignments determined and conditioned by, for example, the socio-political, as one named structure on the World "plane." Put another way, a non-philosophical stance bypasses the World before the specificity of any "invention" per se has taken place, affording both a generic and radical openness to our always-alreadyness alongside

the universe, or the real. And yes, in the rising of mystification as condition to invention, a creative-diagnostic practice with Philosophical artefacts unfolds. There is non-representational technique here, which we can speak of later, but I would also say the generic non-philosophical stance can make the World frictionless, and thus creates no drag on the possibility for inventive strategies for acting/thinking in accord with the real, rather than being governed by the World and its self-styled fictions. To me there is something extraterritorially spatial about this, that is the admission that the always-alreadyness creates a generic spatiality of the Human/Man-in-Person subsisting within, yet unseen by the World. This spacing shows itself textually in some of my own work, and I see it in yours also, where the language of the World is disabled to open a practice of words without the governance of language. Yet I also wonder about the politic here, what kind of spacing arrives with non-philosophical stancing, and does this give way to a subsisting together? As I outline in, In-*Stance*: Generic Encounter in Everyday Urban Landscapes, a non-philosophical stance, a holding in self with the insufficiency of the real, ratifies a perpetual withdrawal from ontological accrual and identification in such a way any urban subject, market-ready or otherwise is derealised. How then does any admission of the Human/Man-in-person enable us to consider the imperative of

the city, as that of the multitude? Perhaps you could speak about "Social Theatre Aggregate" and some of your other textual hostings of non-philosophy?

CH: I think Laruelle's presentation of mathematical idempotence offers a good view on non-philosophical diagnoses and inventions as regards the World, where diagnosis might entail some of the "negative" imperatives I mentioned and "invention" is facilitated/precipitated by the "generic stancing" you invoke here. For the creative practitioner, the idempotent expression "A * A = A" assumes a permissive-descriptive texture. It permits radical democratic levelling ("= A") of a given array of material artefacts (A, A…) about their strategic treatment (*) in a space for composition *in such a way as to* describe the non-standard and less-than-thetic flavor of invention as such. And, more properly, in reverse: it describes the genericity of compositional arenas and strategies the practitioner—because they work with their composites—always-already permits of and for themself.

With a wider lens, idempotence remarks on the performativity of non-philosophical axiomatics: Whatever the specifics of our arguments or operands (A, A…), they will always-already be aligned in practice and only realized (=) in that alignment having been operated on (*). To say

"*only* realized" is to foreground the style of invention the idempotent expression wants us to admit (=):

(A) Our arguments are *only realized* in their alignment *because that alignment is predicated on the terms of their idempotent realization*

(*) *&*

(A) Since alignment of our arguments is axiomatically ensured, then their idempotent execution *only realizes* that alignment *because of that alignment and nothing else.*

This recursive dynamic describes the pleonastic character of arguments in-the-last-instance, or as they are delivered from "alongside the Universe," and permits fuller understanding of diagnostic and inventive protocols (and their practicable ligature) as they are brought to bear on the World. If invention names what can be/is being realized, then diagnosis names the idempotent means by which that realization will (have) take(n) place. If invention names a democratic and transformative practice with operands, then diagnosis names the tautological road to democracy always-already travelled in-One. To my understanding, it is as a tautological-transformational realization and performance of its own axioms—*How do we transit (*) from A to A?*—that non-philosophy provides

vocabulary and vantage for "bypassing" the World/rendering it "frictionless."

Like you, I think we can develop and discover new practices under the auspices of this dynamic accentuating problems of space and speech. Before we know what these new practices might look like or, as you put it, "before the specificity of any invention per se has taken place," I think it's crucial axiomatic commitment is maintained to the fabrication of *new problems* and the amplification of those that have always been posed and circulated in the bowels of the City, in the shadows of the City, (at the immanent) outside(s) (of) the City gates. It seems unlikely that the same problems couched in the same terms will ramify thought in different ways. The promise of other(-than-)Worldly languages and the configuration of specific places at which to speak them entails development of strategic pathways for bypassing zombie taxonomies and retooling undead concepts. To me, this amounts to a political and ethical imperative.

In previous work, I have sought to excavate language-problems from the standard enframement of interlanguage, vectoral considerations

of Hesychastic and Charismatic chant, and Dionysian "dissimilar similarities." From my perspective, "Social Theatre Aggregate," which is in keeping with these projects in some respects, is both aimed, as you say, at "disabling the language of the World" and scarred by inevitable Worldly encroachments. It would like to speak the World into fragments and pebbles just as it suffers Worldly aggregation of the mouth and throat. So "Social Theatre Aggregate" is a proposition, the one that it undergoes. It is also a contention that it is better to speak the World badly, epi-thetically, than merely speak badly of it, that misspeaking the World or speaking the World out of turn could become commensurate with its generative unnaming.

I think this contention calls for and on your *city-body* idiotically. There is a heavy World-City pressure applying to the promise of speech attributing the grammatical error, the glottal stop, the mispronunciation, the misspelling, the pidgin, the interlanguage, and so on to the idiot. But these items can also inform a "bandwidth of movements,"[3] as you have it, fostered by Idiots and Strangers the City will struggle to speak away. Processes and centers and infrastructures of aggregation conducted and

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[3] Hannah Hopewell, *Notes from the Urban Intertidal: A Paraontological Leaning* (Doctoral Dissertation, Auckland University of Technology, School of Art and Design, 2019), 160, https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/hadle/10292/13490.

erected and hosted by the City on the part of the World render the multitude invisible. But an idiotic or what I call "(h)interlinguistic"[4] subsistence of the *city-body*—that it would un/inhabit the City *unseen*—is not reducible to this. "Social Theatre Aggregate" wants to plant rebuses and indices on the walls of the City and its centers of aggregation. It is a practice of inscription pointing to the surfaces harboring it and it is trying to suspend.

I am especially interested in the photographic dimensions of your work along these lines, Hannah. Of what status are the places photos configure? What sorts of language-problems do they capture, and what counts as capturing here? I also wonder whether there might be a *para-fictional* strain to the kinds of speech and inscription practices I have tried to raise and the non-placements they would like to index/properly name?

HH: I agree that the dynamic brought into play with non-standard philosophy allows us to discover radical practices that can accentuate problems of speech and space. As regards to the photographic dimension of my work, I have trialed photographic practice as means to foreground non-placed urban artefacts and utopian spaces beyond the economy of the "image" or "reference"—so the photos are strategically shorn of any requirement to explain or capture place. Instead, they are borne by political imperatives yet realized within the tautological dynamic you meaningfully call "invention" and "diagnosis." I find these photographic non-placements without the tags "where-and-for-whom" disarticulate discourses of urban form, or the instrumentalities of a city, and carry a kind of muteness, or non-speech. I wonder if then they fall out of what can be circumscribed by urban thought, and instead belong to a non-urban world where inhabitation does not rely upon the constitution of particular subjects, but rather "strange" assemblages of liveliness. The photos are therefore not "mirrors" of the urban World, nor perspectives on it, but instead emerge from resistance to the visualities and identifications supporting recognized tropes and injustices of "City." What the photos attempt to foreground is a *something* that remains supplemental to a city's convergence—whatever it is that cannot be specified or colonized by urban calculus, and thus remain non-indexed. I speculate this mute liveness animates normative notions of city life with capacities to perturb and provoke, yet remain unregistered. Non-photography,

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[4] See Calum Hazell, "Speaking-in-the-Last-Instance: Non-Standard Usage, Superposition, and the (H)interlinguistic State," *Philo-Fictions, La revue des non-philosophies*, Vol. 5 (2022): 83-102.

offers an occasion to potentially expand an-thropocentric notions of the body politic inso-far as the production of these images are for and of nobody.

I would say, then, the photos are less captured, and more materialized by the immanence of the photographic act as an occasioning of "su-perposition" of myself, camera, and situation. Here, the practice attempts to remove the dis-tance between seen and seeing implicit in standard photography and image capture. As follows the photograph appears in parallel to and conditioned by the force of the Real through becoming immanent-to... urban situa-tions. Photographs in the practice I call para-fictioning are axiomatically produced—they become a non-relation to their setting and au-tonomous to the scales and hierarchies im-ported by any such urban subject. The Real, as the organizing force of the photographic ap-pearance, prompts manifestations as data-like, where their appearance is no more or no less than a flicker. To consider city life through a non-standard photographic assemblage affects what you have named as democratic levelling.

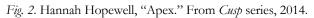I would say, Calum, our respective inventive projects, most evidently seen through "Social Theatre Aggregate," and a work of mine called "Turn/Horizontal/(City)/Stranger,"[5] prob-lematize the space and speech of the City in a way that can be described as idempotent ex-pression. Our works show how non-standard practice can liberate thought from the linguistic or texturalist paradigms otherwise dominating urban narrations to affect the radical question-ing of basic assumptions and practices associ-ated with analytic and conceptual thought. In turn, a democratic levelling unfolds, a politic which in the case of my inquiry is the decenter-ing of the urban subject towards urban bodies, technicities, liveness as encountered in inter-tidal environs. Travelling the "tautological road to democracy always-already travelled in-One," as you so succinctly put it, also permits in the case of "Turn/Horizontal/(City)/Stranger" urban thought as a thing— a thing that faces the non-human to testify to a world no longer able to be seen and thought as constitutively "for-us." This non-urban occasioning is that which exists outside the available frames of recognition or zombie taxonomies, as shadow, absence, immanence, and could, sometime in the future, turn into something else. In this way I consider the transformative promise of non-standard experimentations' non-representa-tional techniques as an approach to divest ur-ban accounts of a long-exercised

5 Hopewell, *Notes from the Urban Intertidal*, 2.

anthropocentrism, and perhaps gather up a
flash of the justice to come.

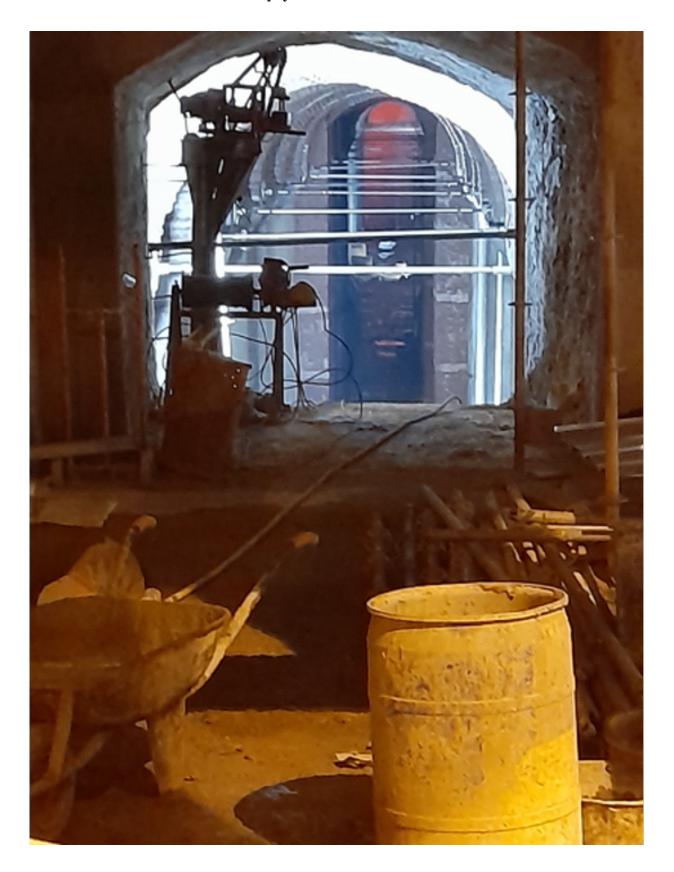*Fig. 1.* Hannah Hopewell, "Disquiet of a Non-Crash Site." Still from video, 2015.

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Fig. 2. Hannah Hopewell, "Apex." From *Cusp* series, 2014.
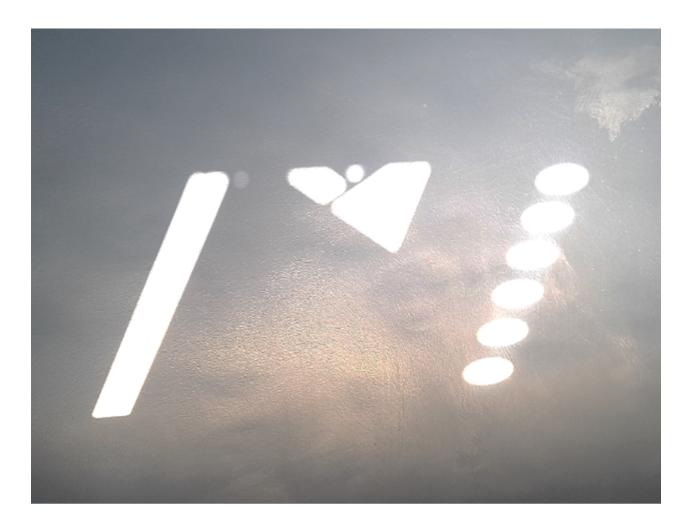
Fig. 3. Calum Hazell, "April Spolia," 2022.

Fig. 4. Calum Hazell, "& Usyk the Bird Across," 2022.

CH: A number of lines of inquiry we have been pursuing might converge at the issue of the non-relation you raise in the context of your photographic works, Hannah. There is liminality to the non-relation 1) as peculiar to the diagnostic-inventive ligature discussed above and 2) *qua* relatively autonomous situation or minimally discrete placial clotting. In the first place, non-relationality might emerge at the *solidus* or speak to the ampersand minimally separating (*e*) & strategically reconciling (*t*) those analytic protocols. This is not going to

be a question just of negating relations already on hand but—in the style of Laruelle's prefix—really of bringing them to hand for diagnostic ramifications and inventive re-engineering. And in the second instance, it might involve dowsing for and excavating sites *in but not of* the City, at which and from where diagnoses-inventions could be locally made. Taking these items together, I think, means carefully designing and erecting collapsible and portable installations capable of observing relations as if at the scale of moderately-sized dry goods, a demand to which I have responded in my research with recourse to a concept of *zonality*.[6] Through insistence on the non-triviality and necessity of cuts and breakages, boundaries and thresholds, zonality is a concept of the force of non-relation: for summoning it up and, in conversation with your para-fictioning, teasing its practicability out. In one direction, again, this is a spatiolinguistic measure, like Federico Campagna says of magic, aimed at "reclaiming language" or excavating the very possibility of speech, we could say, "as an internal dimension to ineffability."[7]

Inflating or fattening up relations is a playful and determinedly naïve non-relational gesture 1) in accentuating a basic tractability and 2) allowing work with (including against) them. So non-relationality is a way of characterizing a kind of practice that takes the relation as the primary material for its compositions *in such a way* it would not be sufficient to the practice itself. The necessity I attribute to breakages and boundaries and so on basically is a political one because, per Claire Colebrook's "A Cut in Relationality," for instance, I think we ought to be laboring for "something *less* than the whole."[8] Which is to say that non-relational practices might be executed to disarm overextensions of relations on methodological, narratological, and analytic bases. For any given worldly array is actual, thoroughgoing alterity that cannot without some appreciable and appreciating violence be reduced. The worldification—to borrow Richard Sylvan's term[9]—under which a certain cartographic technology is devised and from where it is deployed is not a trivial concern. Enactment and experience of novel worldly constellations should always be

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[6] See, for example, Calum Hazell, *Formal Shamanic Conduct: Zonal Installations in Supernatural Space* (Agger: EyeCorner Press, 2022); Calum Hazell, "Notes Towards a Zonal Aesthetics: Thinking-with the Autonomy of the Contemporary Work of Art," *Media Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2022): 73-112, https://journalcontent.mediatheoryjournal.org/index.php/mt/article/view/671; and Calum Hazell, *Trench chord hippo.* (Seoul: Erotoplasty Editions, forthcoming).

[7] Federico Campagna, *Technic and Magic: The Reconstruction of Reality* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 169.
[8] Claire Colebrook, "A Cut in Relationality," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (2019) 188.
[9] See Richard Sylvan, *Transcendental Metaphysics: From Radical to Deep Pluralism* (Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 1997).

protected and encouraged, but polycentrically: each time, at one of a thousand centers, and not taken as given or assumed in advance.

HH: Such a use of non-philosophy and non-relational tactics is indeed inventive and offers tools for diverse encounters with localized urban relations. I find it compelling how your composition of zonality, as a "collapsible" and "portable" installation capable of observing relations excess to or beyond dedicated City genealogies, chimes with AbdulMaliq Simones proposition of the surrounds. Similarly, the surrounds is an amorphous relational location rather than a geographic one, and neither an "explanatory context, a relation of interdependency," nor an "alternate reality just over there." Instead, an infrastructure of possibility for "something incomputable and unanticipated to take (its) place"[10] outside any purchase of the instrumentality of design. Like zonality, the surrounds presents opportunity for material resistance to policy and design intentions that ascribe measures of efficacy to a particular territory and governance over relational frameworks. This does not mean that recognizable relational frameworks are suspended by these

specificities, only that an "often tacit dimension of collective agency is materialized."[11] In this way the surrounds is less a disarming of the city's overextensions of relations, and more a refusal to integrate, and a producing indifferent circumvention to the urban vernaculars of assessment and judgement. Zonality also affords such avenues into reorienting urban relationality with spatiolingusitic expression and in "making use" of non-philosophy furthers our understanding of what non-philosophy can do.

In a similar vein, my own work with para-fictioning has taken up spatiolingusitic resistance to given urban analytic-diagnostics via the force of non-relation. I write in more depth about this elsewhere, yet briefly, the *urban intertidal* was contrived within "my" encountering waterfronts held by a "radicalized" non-philosophical stance co-relating with the Real as authority in-the-last-instance, rather than with systems of urban thought. An experiential orientation of unilateral "bordering" formed the relationality where the real exerts a force of determination on para-fictioning unilaterally, mutely, indifferently, unaffected in return. This is not to claim the contents of conscious

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[10] AbdulMaliq Simone, *The Surrounds: Life within and beyond Capture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2022), 5.

[11] Pranita Shrestha, Alison Young, Adam Morton, Tanzil Shafique, AbdouMaliq Simone, and Dallas Rogers, "Book Review Forum Podcast: *The Surrounds*," *Urban Studies: An International Journal of Research in Urban Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 12 (2023): 2515-23, https://www.urbanstudiesonline.com/review/the-surrounds.

experience of these urban situations as the Real, as radical immanence, but to acknowledge the Real as anterior to *all* experience—meaning any relation of myself (in-writing) to the Real is, in effect, the force of non-relation. My motivation towards experimenting with non-philosophy in this way was to "get under" the layers of capital accumulation and extraction to avail opportunities for the invention in the staging of incoherent relational somethings' present *in yet not of* the city. I am interested (most broadly) in finding ways to amplify what behaves as otherwise to capital's appropriations.

Towards this aim I have made use of non-standard thought to shape para-fictioning as a non-cumulative writing-economy with "technologies" that amount to transcendent *bolsters*. The *urban inter-tidal* is an invention to deliver para-fictioning without the "harassment" of the time of capital, or rather avail writing to "use" times "co-extensively"— this is time-without- temporality, whereby the instance is made "cooperative", opening possibilities for itself to be written. This is inherently focused on the virtuality of space and time, in ways that are *generic to relational locality*. For example, through a process of *cloning* the tide[12] and creating *the urban inter-tidal*, the space-time of a tide

(as material) becomes transmuted across all encountered relations—*the tide shows itself as whatever arrives from everywhere.* I pose the *urban inter-tidal* as a kind of architectural variant for focusing non-event, non-ground, or non-placed territory within a realm of the urban. It is also a way of keeping going, or constituting a movement that resists axial extension, resisting accumulative possession. In other words, the *urban inter-tidal* composes an autonomous and localized time, along with a technicity that not only allows time to go "both ways" but, as well, permits the static, the suspended, to have a sense of everyday finitude. The *urban inter-tidal* thus offers a pervading—yet de-realized—endurance, indifferent to, yet alongside, World-time. This is time as generic materiality, time as pre-ontological: pure common, entirely fictional. Nonetheless, time in fidelity with the real.

CH: Yes, I think the surrounds can be an interesting interlocutor for zonality here too, Hannah. Zonality, as I have written elsewhere and which I hope its suffix can affirm, is a concept always-already applying to the states and conditions (*-ity*) of what is and might yet be zonal(-) *vis-à-vis* a given *problématique* or state of affairs. Resonating with Simone's understanding of the surrounds as "'show[ing] up' across different contexts in many different forms…

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[12] Hopewell, *Notes from the Urban Intertidal*, 297.

and structural constraints,"[13] what comes to count as a zone for zonality largely proceeds from the circumstances out of which it itself emerges and by which it is configured at specific installations. That being said, where the plasticity of the surrounds is such that their disparate modes of "appearance" do not necessarily "demonstrate a set of common features,"[14] because they inform its guiding problematics and minimal architectural elements, zonality's interrogation of boundaries—their conception and construction, their being compromised and collapsed—is invariant across the multiple concrete settings at which it objectivates itself. In the abstract, though, this does not tell us very much. For certain of the items to which zonality has previously been brought to bear, such as non-well-founded sets, design theories, and contemporary artworks, what is a boundary and how a zone operates is a broadly speculative affair requiring development of discrete methodologies (often of a comparative flavor) supporting distinct conceptual outcomes. Applications of zonality to, for instance, urban, oceanic, and speleological horizons likewise but, unlike in the previous examples, these also entail negotiating what is already zonal—in virtue of existing vocabularies and anatomizations—about the city, the sea, and the cave.

In the context of the urban, the "nonrelationality" (without hyphen) of boundaries and zones indexes, as Simone might intimate via his surrounds, their basic "ambivalence."[15] They carry, much as do the Baradian apparatus and the Wiccan magic circle in their different ways, worldmaking, *and* worldexcluding effects. They serve as vehicles of resistance (such as the Temporary Autonomous Zone established by local activists in Seattle, June 2020, in response to the murder of George Floyd) *and* to structure and reinforce inequitable sociospatial relations (land-use zones, contact zones, sacrifice zones…). Or, borrowing from Simone, "they can be as much exploited and exhausted as they can enable indeterminate uses and endure."[16] The non-relationality (with hyphen) of zonality describes, once more, a diagnostic-inventive condition encompassing its witness to & interventions on the nonrelationality of those zonal places and processes to which it always-already adheres in urban space. Put simply, in this particular context, "non-relation" animates a localized and concrete compositional method for retooling the kinds of ambivalent relational complexes "nonrelations" orchestrate. Nonrelations make and are made of relations and are remade as materials through and for non-relational practices.

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[13] Simone, *The Surrounds*, 5.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid, 11.
[16] Ibid.

I do not think such practices necessitate commitment to prevailing figurations of personhood, and instead could antagonize them. One strand of my present research project, drawing on the work of Olivier Clément and Erich Przywara, aims to flesh out this claim via a "negative anthropology" that challenges contemporary accounts of human being. There is scope for non-relational "focus [on undermining] the division of humans and non-humans [where such] a division," as you have written elsewhere, "implies we know what the human is."[17] Non-relation would not be doing the dividing/reinforcing the division here, but attending to the latter as a nonrelational, and therefore a relational, expression. I.e., that exceptional agential qualities are derived negatively and achieved synthetically of human being. Impressions of non-relation follow from bringing non-philosophy to bear on its case studies, from disentangling the promise of speech from its received pronunciations, from the unilateral duality Laruelle posits about the One through the human, but also from suspending the human for the philosophy from out of the philosophy for the human. In that case, non-relation might be to harness a zonal enclosure/theological installation for

insulating the human alongside the Universe/within the Body of Christ, for ensuring its proper estrangement to the World (in non-relation, as I have suggested, to the urban district or the collective territorial sacrifice), and engraving the thresholds with deep apotropaic marks. This would allow maintenance of an other(-than-)Worldly vantage commensurate with a proper name without attributes: the human *qua* site whose relations have all been sawn off, the human *qua* proposition whose precision is marshalled and multiplied below-the-thetic.

HH: Your mention of non-relation securing zonal enclosure of the human alongside the Universe offers, I believe, experimental ways into composing the human unencumbered by the strictures of philosophy. I agree this underdetermination of the human allows us to write in ways that hold back reliance on Western frameworks for truth-telling, frameworks recognized in metaphysical suppositions concerning subject-object correspondences that demand or define propositional correctness. I use para-fictioning without taking a "position" concerning what is the real or false human, and as follows non-human, allowing, as you say, an

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[17] Hannah Hopewell, "(Non)Landscape and (General) Ecology as Agents of Creativity," *Kerb: Journal of Landscape Architecture*, Vol. 28 (2020), 119, https://kerb-journal.com/articles/non-landscape-and-general-ecology-as-agents-of-creativity.

other(-than-)Worldly vantage commensurate with a proper name without attributes. The non-relation renders any hermeneutical approach to relations inoperative, and thus undetected by urban authority. Para-fictioning's sole concern is to experiment with effects of an indifferent Real to avail forms of emancipation for the human, or what Laruelle has termed the stranger. The prefixing *para* "locates" this practice as staging non-relations with—superposition, alongside—the contingency of the real, or radical immanence giving way to a writing-with (the force of the non-relation), rather than a writing-about (the human/the city). Para-fictioning, with the non-relation, is *immanent-to* the real, and "claims" to "cast a shadow" over urban "reality" with a lived (living) abstraction—adequacy that is, at once, inadequacy of language. Consequently, para-fictioning manifestations, extra-linguistic fictive assertions, are not *against* "reality." They intervene in its construction, taking a role in transformations of the category of truth, albeit in minor and incalculable ways, in the last instance.[18] The non-relation intervenes at the level of method, a model-of-living, with experiential bases entirely enmeshed in the slope—incline, *clinamen*, or gradient (not binary)—between theory and practice.[19] In these ways non-philosophy offers an open field for invention and ways of "getting at" the world in unforeseen ways.

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[18] Jean Luc-Nancy speaks of the necessity of fiction: "In fiction, truth is not figured as if by impudent allegory: it is figured in so far as it is unfigurable. The infinite receives its finition, it opens within the finite." Cited in Thomas Gould, *Silence in Modern Literature and Philosophy: Beckett, Barthes, Nancy, Stevens.* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 166.

[19] Para-fictioning draws from Laruelle's assertion that any dualism of practice and theory is dissolved. He promotes a non-Parmenidean Equation: Practice = Thought. Within non-standard practice, practice and thought are identical in-the-last-instance. Practice is the presupposed that determines thought. See François Laruelle, *Struggle and Utopia at the End Times of Philosophy,* trans. Drew S. Burke and Anthony Paul Smith (Minneapolis: Univocal, 2012), 114-15.