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The Constitution

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Introduction

Dear reader, before you dive into the text in front of you, I propose the following paragraphs that will allow you to navigate it easier.

My thesis and the project that goes along with it are called "The Constitution". To clarify, this name has nothing to do with the legislative document, it is merely a "composition of something", each paragraph of text that I write and works that I make are the constitutive parts of the holistic constitution of my imaginary and praxis.

My graduation project "The Constitution" will be a physical space and also a digital (Wikipedia) infrastructure that will (like a net) capture and compose the totality of all of my works (past and present and future), and generate connections in-between them, as well as archive them and make them public.

In my work, I am dialogical - I communicate, exchange and share with others (the public as well as my co-creators). I gather my knowledge from my actual experiences that I analyse, study and learn from.

As much as I love improvisation, I am also inclined towards the structuralization of it all. My thesis, my written work is a reflection of that. I attempt to trace the friction points between improvisation & composition or chaos & structure - in my thinking/writing/making process and in the broader world.

My thesis is construed of two chapters.

The first chapter is a co-written essay that took the case of the Lyrebird, a bird that has a very specific way of singing, as a cue to establish a conversation.

With my friend Leon Holsten (current location: Leipzig, Germany) we have established a correspondence of bi-weekly conversations that occurred within a time span of approximately six months. Within these conversations we have wandered around psychogeographically, finding orientation points - concepts. We have studied particulars (the Lyrebird) in order to extract universals, to decode the coded reality. The consolidation on what the final text will have become was gradual. In the process we have learned from each other and the vast pool of references, examples and insights into the world around us. Both also being sound practitioners, we have taken the phenomenon of sound as our leading guide, an entry point. We were modulating, editing the constitution of our perception of the world - doing

it together, discursively. We were co-thinking, taking notes of our conversations, writing simultaneously on an Etherpad, posing each other questions and investigating a common interest, co-writing, inventing methods and co-editing. Now, we have come to the point of articulating what the bird has taught us. In this chapter, we speak of the nature-culture, of breaking the hegemonic binaries (especially the one of nature-culture), and of sound as the tool to do it with. In the process of unlearning and transgressing the very existence of binaries we acknowledge them, learn about them and are sometimes also tempted to use them, as they are constantly present in our systems of thinking. Hereby, we admit that the reader might encounter inconsistencies in our text. They are there as breadcrumbs, traces of our learning and unlearning process.

The second chapter is changing and dynamic in its nature.

First, we encounter a discarded fishnet that tells us its story from her own perspective. The story is then, in the second part, broken down - analogies are taken from it to constitute another kind of a net. Its materiality has inspired a research process that follows the threads, nodes, spaces and passages and observes them in parallel to other phenomena.

The act of framing that a fishnet is designed for led me towards the infrastructuralization of my own praxis - The Constitution, improvisational in nature.

In the last part of this chapter, I speak of improvisation and the ways it has framed me as a practitioner, always with a great deal of self-reflectivity and eagerness to learn and discover as I go and dive into the wild waters of the intangible.

Mind mapping has served me as the main strategy in building my net of thoughts, concepts and perceptions (thinking and writing methodology). I have viscerally felt that "The map is not the territory", a crucial insight for my mental processes. All mind-mapping pursuits sooner or later fail, or are subject to versioning. There are many thoughts that cannot be assimilated onto the map, it is not their nature to do so.

I have realized that writing and thinking always requires a net to be in place - a net that demarcates what passes through and what stays on the surface of the text - a mechanism that allows choices to be made, deciding on what the essential data is.

The entrypoint to the network of ideas is difficult to find. Thoughts are a rhizome, a cloud, a network. In-medias-res or a rupture in the rhizome are possible strategies.

When generating works with improvisation, a generative stream, liberated from a predetermined form arises. Free-writing and other generative methodologies are the paranodality in relation to the network. They do not predeterminedly fit the net - they do not have a designated spot within the infrastructure. Only after the action of making has been done, the subject with the compositional intent (me) analyses the material work, and inserts it into the network (The Constitution), and finds a position for it in the totality of other thoughts/concepts/works. (Here, I speak simultaneously about the organization of thought (when thinking, writing) and the organization of data within a technological system).

While doing so, a material process of disassembly into constitutive parts/ideas/memes/paragraphs/concepts/etc. might happen, the material will entropically fall apart, in order to be assimilated into the broader network. By being deconstructed, parts of it get isolated and can be studied closely. Eventually, they can reassemble, reconstitute and reintegrate into the bigger whole, or find other ways of assembly, a newly generated constitution.

MY OWN INNER MENTAL SIEVE = INFRASTRUCTURE = THE FISHNET =

THE PERMEABLE MEMBRANE ≈ A SUBJECTIVE DETERMINATION OF VALIDITY

(OF A DATA SPECK INSIDE OF A SYSTEM) = CHOICE

Both chapters are tightly connected to my praxis of improvisation and my research pursuits in the field of music (I am a vocalist and regularly play with others), in addition to other mediums that I work with - mainly text, performance and visual.

I wish you enjoy this experience, I look forward to hearing from you!

The Case of the Lyrebird

Written by Leon Holsten & Tisa N. Herlec

A human comes wandering into the forest looking for his lost love or his car keys or some god-given peace of mind.

The forest is an ecosystem that is construed with natural order, an intricate organizational principle that lives within all of its inhabitants. Animals band together in groups and roam free in their territories - mating, feeding, resting. The wind blows through the old trees, humming, and waterfalls crash into clear rivers somewhere in the distances beyond the horizon of our vision.

All of these entities assemble and sonify, together they constitute the forest, amplifying its existence into the sonic sphere.

Traversing through the multiple utterances and iterations of sounds, the visitor is adding grunts, sighs, whistles and occasional curses to the soundscape, while stumbling barefoot across the earthen floor.

Does the human even listen carefully to what the forest is telling him?

The Lyrebird as The Welcoming Host



While most animals ignore the visitors' stiff language, and disregard it as too primitive in character, some are open to experiment with it, communicate. Some even take the sounds produced by humans into their own sonic repertoire. This kind of an animal is the Lyrebird, the host that welcomes the human into its territory.

How Does She Do That?

The Lyrebird is capable of recreating any sounds she hears. Starting off with a sound of a shutter, produced by cameras and ranging as far as car alarms and laser guns.

She is "captured" by the presence of machinic sounds, the sounds that are a byproduct of technological devices that humans have made and brought into the forest with them (a trespassing act that is).

One would think that simply taking a picture of the bird has little consequence to the forest. Well, it does. The Lyrebird hears the shutter of the camera and includes it into her library of sounds, mixing it into her sonic output. She listens and responds by incorporating the sounds into her song.

She cannot fight the changes in her environment. She herself is changing.

Watch these videos:

- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSB71jNq-yQ>
- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WA0tP-p7m40>

The Binary As a Destructive Symptom

We are making a case for the Lyrebird - she, more than us, is able to overcome the contradictions, the binaries of (meta)-modern life: nature and culture, human and non-human.

The Lyrebird is a bridge, connecting the "bird-world" to the "human-world". While remaining a bird, possessing the ability to sing, it welcomes the uninvited visitor into its song. This creates a conjunction, opens a gate, a passage between different (natural) orders.

Her song is filled with potential meanings that are not communicated through language. Still, we are the ones investigating the case of the Lyrebird in an attempt to understand her - that is in our nature as humans, coding with and coded by language.

The Lyrebird engages in an act of becoming the "other", by imitating its sounds. It is no longer merely a bird, it has become a sample machine. She communicates with her environment, in an orchestral fashion, listening and speaking at the same time, integrating the outside into her own bodily materiality. Through a spontaneous act of adaptation, she involves and

evolves herself with the alterity that is manifesting around her. A Lyrebird does not even believe in the existence of "the outside", or so we imagine.

Outside in this process becomes open and connective, it manifests on its own terms, not referring to any representation nor symbol. The sounds of cars, the mechanical, the motoristic sounds echo in the space unchanged. Outside and Inside remain indistinct from each other. The boundary between the two is created merely through language, coded with the language-machine that adds and subtracts meaning and information from the totality of existence. We are alluding to a machine that, in the first place, created the hegemonic binary between the human and nature, that planted in our conceptual/perceptual apparatuses this disparity - language. Communication within natural systems that are not bound to language, happens differently. There is no fixed meaning to the sounds that the bird omits, no dictionary she could consult, no written odes to quote when she communicates her love to the others around her.

With the emergence of the signification machine, working behind and through all of our expressions, every sound that we, humans omit, turns into a readable object that has its equivalence in the abstract sphere of linguistic symbols, a signification that impatiently awaits to be interpreted, decoded and recoded.

The lyrebird is, in its own sound production, not produced by the signifying machine. Instead, it engages with the sounds themselves, deterritorializing them from their technological sources and reterritorializing them as her own mating calls.

When the Lyrebird sings, she always listens for the next new hit sample of a sound that will grant her the possibility to communicate with her ever-changing environment and the other birds of her kind. She imitates sounds, integrating them into her own repertoire. She is sending signals outwards, awaiting for a response from her surroundings, possibly one that will intrigue the other into a procreative relation.

Even the birds the Lyrebird imitates are fooled, they respond to its song as if the Lyrebird was one of their own. Perhaps she awaits for the chainsaws and shutter sounds and car alarms to answer - but they rarely do.

The lyrebird is the one that initiates communication across the boundaries of signification.

Her "language" is not constructed with the hegemonic binary of nature-culture in mind. She is the one that merges and consolidates territories and perceptions in her song.

The sounds that she makes, don't become natural, as their reception is not a translation, but a pragmatic usage of the sound. Alluding to the difference between human language and "bird-pragmatics," that is engaging with life without its perception of language. A naturalization is a process by which something appears as natural, and therefore timeless, without history and unchangeable. However, this process that we are observing here, is just a bird merely doing its thing.

From our human perception, the Lyrebird can be conceptualized as the very embodiment of the line that distinguishes the inside from the outside, the natural from the cultural (etc.), the line that creates the binary itself. She is also the one that is actively destroying this line, and along with it, our own human perception of the binary that we are cultured into believing.

A Geographical, Geological Reading

The Lyrebird makes us gain awareness of the binaries that we seemingly bought into as a western society married to the ideas of progress and development.

We try to trace back the steps, to reverse-engineer the emergence of the distinction between nature and culture, we attempt to speculate and point at the moment in time when this antagonism came to be. This point keeps on moving. It is dynamic and the very attempt to put a global process onto a strictly structured timeline is impossible. Here, we rather speak of a possible dynamic that humans have gradually deployed.

Nature had posed as a threat to humans, fragile in the face of its strength.

In order to survive in the unpredictable conditions of the wilderness, the intelligent and conscious animals that we are, attempted to match the power of nature, gradually transforming it.

The wild, wild nature (of the people and of the nature herself) became seemingly controllable and tamable. The walls around our settlements, the dams that prevented rivers from flooding and destroying our crops, etc. the human inventions that ordered (overcoded) nature made us believe that we are not in her mercy anymore.

We perceived ourselves as stronger and more powerful than nature. With linguistic and physical barriers between the natural order and our constructs of a different, imposed order, we began perceiving nature as

subordinate, as something other than us. (That is one way to think about, but as stated above we do not really know where exactly this distinction occurred nor do we attempt to sketch out this abysmal diagram.)

In this process we have constructed our civilization along with the (conceptual) binaries and borders between us and her. Even though she is the one that enabled us to be(come), we have, with our own inventions, damaged her and tossed her out of her striving towards an equilibrium. (To address the history of this process has probably been undertaken already.)

We are the geological era of destruction (the Anthropocene). We are the rude other that "emancipated" ourselves from our primal nature, we overruled her violently. While doing so, we have created many divides between us, humans, as well. Therefore, we must pose the difficult question of: Who is "we" addressed here? Is there a way to sum up the scope of human experiences and to address the challenges humans face. The Capitalocene, the Chthulucene?

We (the writers of this text) are wary and afraid and not quite aware of how to disengage from the attempts of universalizing humans into a single entity. That is - the abstract, generalized and normalized "human". For now we leave these questions unresolved.

No matter who these humans are, we impact the environment.

And Yet, Nature Fights Back!

Humans will never be able to control her fully - volcano eruptions erasing civilizations, earthquakes crumbling ancient knowledges, tsunamis flooding homes unpredictably, wild forest fires erasing flora and fauna ...

Mass extinctions of not only our own species, but also the multitudes of human cultures, other species and environments, ecosystems. Destruction happens on humungus scales.

We (addressed humankind) are - in a fact - feeble and helpless when we face the power of nature, her forces are absolute.

Her strength is also her ability to clean up the mess that humans have made!

She does have mechanisms of rebuilding and change is her ally - mushrooms grow on the ashes of burnt-down forests, organisms that dissolve plastic particles evolve etc.

Nature will outlive humanity.

Construction of New Relations

We (humankind) used to belong to nature, be one with it. Now, we are its nemesis, the biggest factor in the deployment of the climate crisis and the permanent changes we have caused to nature, and ourselves, by gradual but persistent interventions in it, while aiming for progress and development.

We are interested in the construction of a perception of nature as one that not just includes what we now perceive as separate from us, comprehended as nature, but also transfigures our relation to the things that we now perceive as ours.

What we face is not merely an epistemic problem, it is also economic. Capitalism and in its cultural expression of the dichotomous obstructs us from this fundamental "coming to ourselves" and alienates us from ourselves and our lifeworld. By recognizing our damaged planet, we have to recognize the fundamental contradictions capitalism creates in many guises.

In the attempt to deconstruct the barrier between humans and non-humans lies the construction of a new set of relations between humans, and non-humans. We see this change as gradual, and it is material, social, technological, scientific and infrastructural. Houses would then be a part of this new set of relations, cities would, as well as cars but also snails and birds and water and dirt. Becoming other, becoming together.

A new set of relations is a transformative process that leads away from the capitalist relations that determine us now. We see it not as an exclusively linguistic/perceptual problem, but also as the substantial divide that capitalism relies on today, exemplified by the exploitation of "free nature".

What Can We Learn From The Lyrebird?

We have studied the case of the Lyrebird. Here, we halt for a moment and reflect on what she can tell us, humans, caught up in the linguistically-produced dichotomy between nature and culture? What strategies can we learn from her?

She is the one that exercises the crucial point of formation of a new relation, and she does it through sound. She is adapting, she is open to the possibilities of new relations. To listen to her singing is a practical

exercise in the erasure of the divide, and a potentially consciousness-changing experience.

When we imagine the possible relation and entanglement of humans in nature, we can be inspired by the very mechanics of the natural, as it has always been. Listening to it carefully.

Expanding our perception from viewing nature as a chaotic system, subordinate to the human-imposed order. Granting value to the intrinsic organizational principles, the natural order.

Deactivating language as the primary perceptual mechanism and abandoning the sorting of categories, the linguistic dynamics that we are used to. The Lyrebird doesn't communicate anything in particular, that is, she is not trying to make a point but she engages with lifesounds and lifeworlds seamlessly without communication needed to connect disparate worlds. A different kind of communication is happening, an inter-species communication, communication between two worlds, organisms, realities, intentions. An other type of communication that doesn't only tell us about the world of one singular subject (in the ecosystem), but about the whole, as we could understand it. Respecting (the boundaries, disrespect the divides), the multiplicity, knowing about the entanglement. Relation.

We cannot learn from her in a linguistic manner, but in a mechanic one. She is not attempting to consolidate meaning, she is just responding to the ecosystem (input - output, call and response). That is precisely why she is able to express her point, she embodies it - there is no binary between the natural and cultural, and she is a proof of that.

Humans create the language machine and are created in its image. It poses as a line, a separation, an abstract world, a different world. The machinery of nature underlies it.

The Lyrebird is singing with the natural order, which has its own protocols, its own apparatuses, but not the one of language. Her sounds are an expansion of her world, the same world that she creates when she sings. We are spoken by language, she speaks together with nature, whereas we speak about and for nature. Her song, her sounds overcome the antagonism.

How Could Humans Engage in the Practice of Becoming Lyrebirds?

In the process of becoming the other, of merging with the natural, we believe it is necessary to be aware of the fact that we are already a part

of something that is a part of us - with our own perceptual, conceptual apparatuses and bodies.

We think of the sonic world that the Lyrebird embodies, and a vivid parallel to our human sound-making appears naturally. A potent(ial) strategy of rupturing the hegemonic binary and dynamicizing language, communication and relation: improvisation in sound.

Improvisation with sound (especially voice as a privileged medium, because it is an instrument inherent to our body. Expanding the already-known.) enables us to explore and learn new, other ways of communicating - without the necessity of using language. By connecting layers of thought that were formerly apart, language becomes a material to shape and play with, it is being deconstructed into sounds, assembled in gibberish (a made-up language), completely abandoned, etc.

What more can we communicate without language?

Asignifying sounds find their place in the interaction between the agents involved in the act of improvising. Another kind of an interaction happens. An exchange that is pure and unburdened by the language machinery. It is a relation-building process that is not predicated on words and concepts and thoughts. Expression and exchange.

In a sense, this action allows us to return to the time when we, as subjects, did not yet have the knowledge of a language, before we learned to speak and understand our mother-tongue. We are situated in the pre-linguistic territory, where attempts at interaction are constant, but not regulated, consolidated and trapped in a system of thought. We communicate freely - listening and singing, just like the Lyrebird does.

Lyrebirds are ancient Australian animals, the fossils of these birds date back to about 15 million years ago. They have been sampling sounds and sonifying their environments for a long time. They are the archivers of the past time, and soothsayers for the future - their song amplifies the world around them, and as the world changes, so does their song.

The Fishnet

Written by Tisa N. Herlec

"Sometimes it is hard to tell the exact point where my own surface and my surroundings meet.

I am constantly in motion, even if I appear to be static. I am changing altitudes, drifting around with currents. Water is the one that controls my movements. Salty water, saturated liquid, encompassing fluid. I do not have any say in where I am going, I am completely at her command. Her forces are pulling me in all directions, transforming my shape and my size, deconstructing me into the smallest particles of my elusive existence. Entropic disintegration. I meet and greet others - sometimes tagging along their bodies for a while, before being separated suddenly. My future is unpredictable. My past is a memory.

I remember the time when I was a whole. My constitutive threads were interwoven with intention, I had a function. I was a formation of plastic threads that combined into sleek ropes that were knotted up to form a net. A fishnet, to be precise. Made to capture.

I even remember the time before that. I was always a part of a cycle. About 300 million years ago, I was a lively organism, I was zooplankton or perhaps an algae. I died and got deposited on the oceans' floor and eventually, in a time span of hundreds of centuries, heat and pressure transformed me into oil. I was laying there for a good while, waiting to be extracted from the Earth by humans. They considered me as a natural resource that can be transformed once again by a number of chemical processes that, honestly, I don't know anything about.

From a possibility, with suspicion and attention to detail, I became a deadly tool in the hands of men. Deadly? Tool? I became plastic (and many other derivatives). I was useful to the humans for a while. A distant form of me became many things, many objects. From a barely noticeable speck in the ocean, I became essential, a civilization of consumers was established on the basis of my chemical properties. In the 70s everybody loved plastic, and oil was thought of more vital than water. From today's perspective, this craze was just a phase. Me and many others, disintegrating into our current form, are now viewed as an access, not anymore as a requisite to humanity that produced us.

Here, I float now, subsumed by water, discarded and run-down. My existence is not as dull as it sounds. What makes me sparkle is this thought: Every

night the moon makes visible my ancient siblings - specks of plankton swimming always together with me, always with the current, sometimes they make me sneeze. They shimmer in the night light, flowing in unpredictable ways, in organic structures. I was once moving just like that. I was them. And now, I am in the middle of them.

And when I look up, to see the traces of the surface air, infinite space above me opens up, the sky. I can see the stars, the constellations they make (even if they are blurred by cubic meters of liquid), they resemble the ones' of planktons'. Uncountable numbers of tiny specks, relating to each other. They do not touch, they dance with each other in a dance that never ceases. Sometimes on huge distances, unimaginable to anyone. Sometimes so fast, impossible to observe with the naked eye.

Someone once told me: All sound was created at the moment of the Big Bang, and everything we hear, all vibration that is present, even if it is not accessible to our senses, is a result of that moment. The Big Bang echoes on. Perhaps this is the origin of the sound that the universe, and everything that exists in it, still dances, moves and changes to. Is the whole universe a bowl of liquidity? I feel connected. I have escaped my own structure, I am now in between. A myriad of particles.

I am neither a net nor the emptiness that the net framed, I am neither the plankton nor the stars, I am neither lost nor found. I only am, in a recurrent passage from one cycle to another. Like water in the atmosphere - I move, exchange with my surroundings, transit, condensate, fragment, become, change ...

I was thrown into the vastness of my unpredictable future without intention. Designed to capture, I was captured by the ocean, I got torn off from the ship that I belonged to. I got dragged on the ocean floor for a moment, a rapid motion rustled me out of my purpose. Now, as I said, I am floating around without any specific direction, and I am becoming lesser, falling apart into my constitutive parts, and I wonder ... Will my soaked surface ever dry again or will I for decades to come remain wet, floating ceaselessly?

I anticipate the moment when I will dissolve into micro plastic specks of material, perhaps I will be incidentally ingested by a fish, a fish that will later on be eaten by a human on a land that I have never seen. Or perhaps it will be a bird, or a dolphin that will ingest my toxin-infused micro body? These thoughts make me anxious ... I don't want to hurt anyone, but I do know that toxins like to hitch a ride on my surface and when life ingests me, I am not nurturing it.

Right now, I am viewed as a part of a vast disturbance to the ecosystem, a cloud of waste being dragged from one shore to the other, an invisible

island of microscopic particles of debris, passing thousands of kilometers, jumping onto circular currents. I am a traveler without agency, a misfit, a piece of plain old trash.

I don't have a function, or rather: my function is a pestering one for the environment that I have (in my plankton times) proudly belonged to. I am still a part of the same ecosystem, but my role has, over thousands of years, changed. I wonder what the future brings for me.

Will I, disintegrated into molecules, still be harmful to the environment that gave birth to me? Will I outlive humanity? Will I ever again have a constructive role in the system - or only the one of destruction, of being a device that captures, pollutes, intoxicates, ruins?

As I float, engulfed in my own thoughts, a strong current sweeps me. I feel it dragging me somewhere, there must be an intention behind his strong pull. I let it take me. I don't even have a choice, remember?

I wake up on a shore. Sand surrounds me. I fall into a destructive inner loop of dark thoughts: Is this the end of me? Will I be picked up and taken to a landfill? Will I decompose here ashore until I disappear to the naked eye? Will I be flushed away by another wave, plunge into the water again? ... those and other existentialisms cross my mind for hours and hours. Spiky vegetation that I got entangled into is making me itch. As I was floating around, I have gathered little bits and pieces of information from my environment, threads and plants and substances merged upon my surface, became a part of my varied constitution. On my skin, the passage of time and systems made its physical mark. I used to capture fish, now I capture information. Or rather, we are entangled.



An arm reaches upon my body, holds me up. A human is observing me. She takes me from the shore, puts me in a plastic bag, transports me with a car kilometers away into a big city. She takes me out of the bag, says that I reek of the sea. She hangs me on her balcony, the Sun has set for the day, the night, rather cold but kind autumn wind welcomes me into another chapter of my fluent, transitory existence. I am drying up. Who will I become tomorrow?

She is curious, she wants to study me, get to know me, read me."

Her is me,

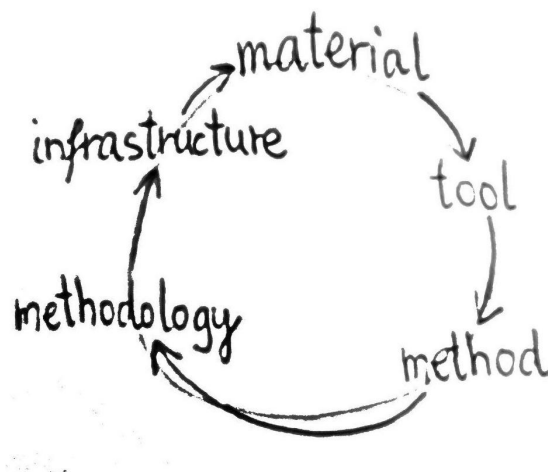
Tisa Neža Herlec.

I am the one that found the net on the shore. Walking along the sea line, I intuitively, without a predetermined goal, started collecting ropes and threads (it is my tendency to collect, most of the material that I use in my practice is found in my surroundings). Eventually, I have found the very net that the story is based upon. The net caused in me a curious fascination.

Looking back, I have always been interested in entanglements, rhizomes and organic structures - material or lived - relational. While organizing my hard drives, going through the archive of imagery and contemplating on my past work, I was thinking about the "red thread" that connected it all. It all seemed (and it still seems) like detective work. A work centered around the "detection" of constants that are woven into particulars.

In my graduation project titled "The Constitution" I have created an infrastructure (physical and digital space) for the specific purpose of generating connections between my works, and launching my own imaginary into the world.

The Constitution is a material networked representation of my praxis and its outputs. It archives as well as generates. The fact that "The Constitution" is public, invites others to interact with it, welcoming them to influence and dynamicize, shape it - it establishes the possibility of communication and the cross-pollination of ideas. "The Constitution" is a net, a living, malleable infrastructure that adapts to information that it catches.



The fishnet spoke to me. I made her an agent in my network of relations. I spoke to the net, observed it, studied it. The discarded fishnet got a new function, a generative one, when she was applied to my own systems of thought. It told me something about the material relations and interconnections of things.

I could say that I have empowered the net, granted her agency to teach me something about the world. Intuitively, I knew that she knows something and that she is willing to teach me, if I listen attentively and carefully, if I trust and believe her guidance.

I deconstructed her (as a material and as a concept), I noticed that her constitution can always be broken down into smaller particles (the net into ropes, ropes into threads, threads into fibers, fibers into the material of plastic, plastic into micro particles, micro into nano, ...).

The same dynamic is undergone when one works with concepts and thoughts. She taught me how to think things through, and aided me in the construction of a map of it all (even if map is never a territory, and a holistic representation of my imaginary can never be done in language or material).

I analyzed her materiality.

Nodes, lines, networks.

Intra-action.

Systems. Ecosystems.

Structures.

I understood her as a communications device.

Relationality.

Communication.

I observed the structure of the net.

The dynamics of capture.

I thought about choice (on what to capture and what to let through).

Cybernetic loops.

The fishnet captures data and in-forms it, she passes it on, only to be re-formed again.

We are all nets for information.

We exchange amongst ourselves.

Inter-net.

Knowledge of humanity as a whole.

My semiotic vision:

A school of fish is swarming in the ocean. Their movement is rapid, dynamic, consistent, governed by a natural order, flow. Suddenly and silently a fishnet bursts into the water, engulfs a portion of the fish and the human drags them onto the surface. They will die, be gutted and cleaned, sold, bought, consumed, perhaps discarded. The net makes the fish become a part of a system of processing and consumption, imposes a certain structure onto their being. The remaining fish recurrently reorganize themselves, schooling forward as if nothing had happened.

I observed how she constitutes and enables material passages.

Movement.

Dynamics.

Flow.

Cycles.

Change.

Encounters.

Water, fluidity.

Intangibles.

Paranodality.

The net, the sea, the in-between, a sieve.

Inside-outside.

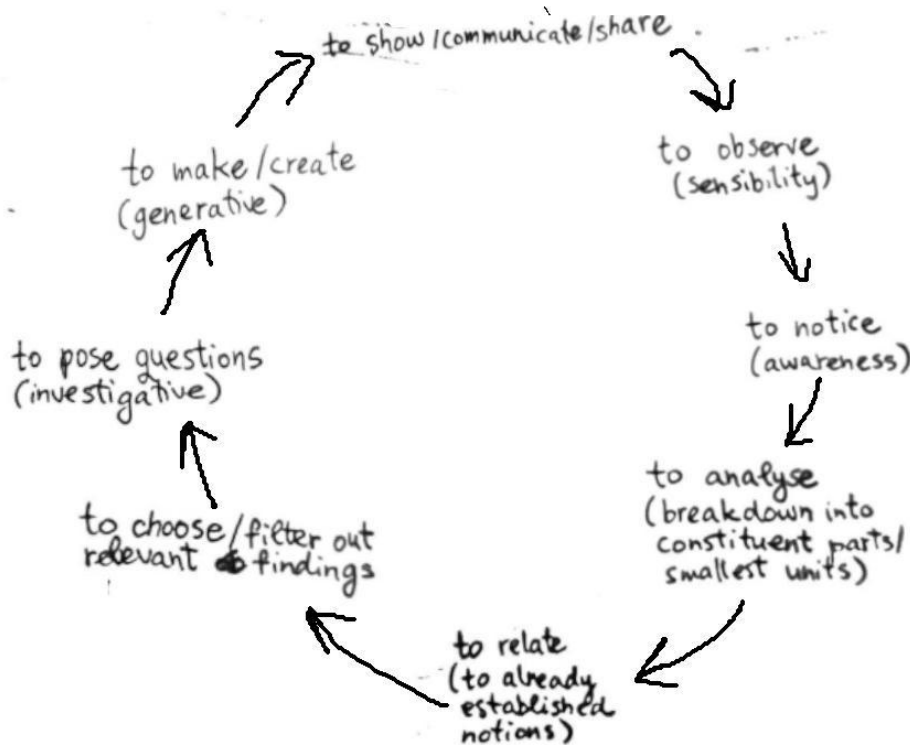
Borders, liminalities.

In my research, I have utilized the "parallelization principle" (as I like to call it) and compared the constitution of a fishnet to a collection of other phenomena (material and imaginary).

Those were: neural networks, technological networks, rhizomes, communications theory, cybernetics (feedback loops), spider webs, transportation infrastructure ...

My motivation has always been to recognize and get to know myself within the network of the world, to situate myself as a node within the network (of relations), a node that actively shapes its surroundings, investigates them, looking for cracks and gaps, advising strategies of making the network stronger.

In my praxis these connections are created by communication (acts of interaction) that enables relation.



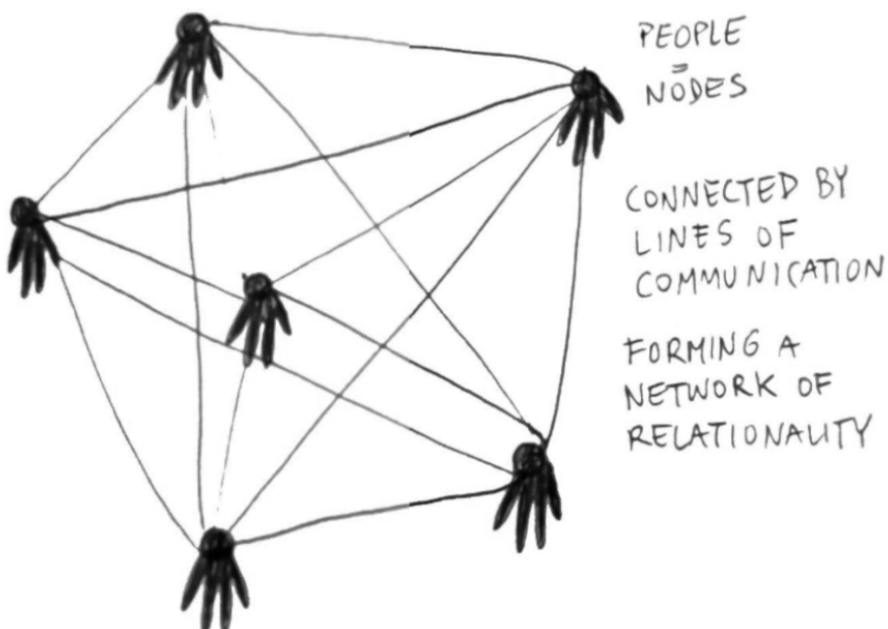
There is an intimate side to this dynamic of figuring out one's own imaginary, a possible world that we envision with our integrally human capacities to imagine and to create.

Creating in any medium - whether with material that belongs to physical reality (matter), with thoughts and concepts and language, with sound, interaction and relation, curation, organization - makes possible the act of communication.

Sometimes, we speak only to ourselves. The works that we make as a lonely riders offer us a possible point of reflection of ourselves. A dialogue is established between the work and our realities that would otherwise exist only as hunches lost somewhere in the abundance of (non)conscious thoughts, and other, at times impossible to grasp, intangible phenomena. Studying one's own creation equals studying ones' self.

This kind of practice (free and improvisational in nature) can only happen under the condition of the integrity of creation. That is, when one is not under the influence of expectations and goals that are predetermined and given from the outside - as for example a designer creating for a commissioner, or an artist driven by the force of the art market - its aesthetic and conceptual guidelines and methodologies.

The self is always already entangled into the world. Therefore, when studying oneself one always already studies the world, the workings of the world, the full reality that blasts into our vision on every step that we take (are we courageous enough to investigate it further? To understand and perceive reality from a situated perspective, a localized understanding, a partial knowledge. Our subjective vision clashes into commonly accepted truths and facts and objective reasoning that our society grants more value than any subjective hunch or vision.



My own investigation sprouts from the observation of how strongly I am influenced by the bias that understands rationally acquired knowledge as more favorable and valid than other knowledges, grants it more influence and in general considers certain truths to be more truthful than others. I am, in my own praxis, deconstructing these notions and attempting to empower my own and others' knowledges in addition to those that preceded us, in addition to the lineage of thought that shaped our society.

All is in balance, all is in perspective.

Each one of us is a node inside the complex network of the world that is constituted out of other nodes, subjects. Each of us has their own unique capacity to experience this network.

I like to call this experiential potentiality

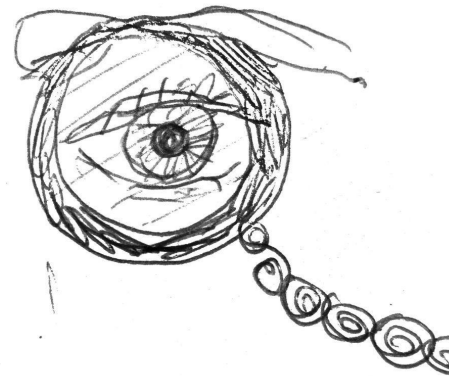
"an oculus".

An oculus is a little analogical gadget that you hold up in front of your eye, look through it and observe the world.

It is created by a subjects' experience of the world and a specific discipline that one decides to study.

A geologist will have different sets of knowledges, fields of reference and methodologies to understand the world through than, for example, a physician, a philosopher, a doctor, a mother, a taxi driver, a cook, etc. Particular disciplines that we engage in expand our fields of vision, enhance the functions of the oculus that was given to us by our lived experience.

In the case of an artist, the methodologies of working are not broadly consolidated. Precarious, shifting and experimental methods pertain to artists. I therefore believe that it is a role of each one to infrastructuralize own methodologies of creating, as well as fields of references and sources and materials, combining the knowledges of a multitude of disciplines into an infrastructure for conceptual and material work.



Infrastructuralizing one's own praxis is a continuous process, a conversation among the materials that one works with, the self, and the world in which one is situated in, observing it with a specific subjective oculus.

We interact and communicate.

Following the metaphor from before - each one of us is a node in the network of the world. Our ability to recognize each other, exchange information and relate is the one that connects our singular nodes into a network (of relations). Even more, this does not only apply to humans. All that is living and non-living relates and influences each other, intra-acts.

The lines that connect us into a network are relations that are possible because of communication (with language or without it). By communicating we relate, by relating we ground our awareness that reality is shared and that every singular oculus among the others constitutes the totality that we all belong to. The only way to experience reality is collectively. A collection of oculuses is desired to be able to form a realistic conceptualization of the real (and mostly the real is also the imaginary, for what we can imagine, we can experience).

"γνώθι σε(ε)αυτόν"

Getting to know oneself means getting to know the workings of the world, and the relation between the two. Nodes and lines and networks. The world itself is networked.

A plethora of different realities form a complex constellation of truths and knowledges, all interconnected. There are many possible pathways to take from one chunk of data to the other. How we connect them to form our own understanding of the world, is up to each one of us, and goes in accordance to our own sets of methodologies, of infrastructure.

I believe that my mission, as I have managed to locate it so far, is the one of: creating infrastructures that enable the exchange between singular nodes (subjects) within a network of relationality.

Communication can take many different forms.

I have always been the catalyst of social interactions - I have organized and curated and composed situations (and works) in which people were encouraged and free to be themselves and to explore what it means when one is granted the permission to exercise their own agency. When one's oculus constructively constitutes the bigger picture fully, when subjective desires, needs and interests are being supported.

Emancipation is the word I was looking for.

I have also, in my own praxis, sought for my own empowerment, investigating to find out what is "my thing" to do, ingrained in my identity.

I have never done it only for myself, I have always been thinking about others - the communication that could sprout from the actions that I carried out (sometimes materialized in a physical form), about the possible impacts that my existence has on others and on the networked reality that we belong to.

I imagine a reality where everybody is empowered to be themselves and exercise their own agency, where communication amongst people is supported and where learning about the workings of the world is done collectively.

I understand subjective as already political, precisely because of the potential force of interaction and communication, the power to overcome the merely-subjective and through it world-build collectively.

All of this is difficult to achieve, as the system that produced us planted normalization, individualism and competition into our beings. Perhaps we do not even imagine the possibility of constituting ourselves, of granting ourselves emancipation and agency. Perhaps we don't consciously acknowledge that we are the ones that can have an impact on the network that we belong to.

Imagining a possible world of constructive networking that operates with a heightened sense of relation and communication is a response to it. That kind of a world would be fairer and multiplicity in it would be acknowledged and welcomed. An assembly of oculuses would grant a multi-perspective collective understanding of the entanglements of the world, and our place in it.

Currently accepted social contracts shape the ways that humans want to "fit in" the average, with the promise of being accepted, cherished and loved. In a constant battle to belong, we often do not investigate ourselves, we merely construct an image of ourselves by the worlds' faulty standards. This dynamic is something to avoid, and rather the focus must shift towards

the constitution of our own unique being, informed by the world and the ways we are relationally entangled in it.

Power that propagates the social order (machinic, capitalist order based in the acts of: consumption and production and procreation) is dispersed. There is not one tyrant to blame for our personal miseries. The power is ingrained into our own systems of thinking, believing and being. Each one of us is a soldier of the machinery, in the war against agency - we experience it daily, as violence that pops up in micro injustices.

I am entangled in a net of hegemonic systems that disable my potentialities as an agent in our networked reality of relations.

When something is captured, their agency is put on hold. They can attempt to escape, free themselves.

How tight is the net? The invisible net that captures humans? The infrastructure of governance?

Why doesn't the world want empowered subjects to inhabit it? Why isn't empowerment and agency mainstream? Why do we, as humanity, sign the social contract that does not enable us and the multiplicity of our identities? Would we, as an aware and empowered society manage to break the bad habit, to overcode the system with another, emancipatory one? Even further - if we are aware that we do have a choice - do we take it? Or are we simply afraid? Afraid of change, of instability, of the unknown?

Improvisation

I am here attempting to outline the dynamic, the net of the current social order as observed from my own situated perspective - to shine a light upon it and to, in my praxis, devise a tentative, dynamic infrastructure (along with methodologies) that could reverse this faulty logic of individualism. Where to start if not with a practice that is collective, and yet it empowers the very subjects that constitute the multiplicity?

I reclaim my potentialities through the praxis of improvisation. I believe that improvisation actively enables the subject to engage in the process of emancipation that happens in real-time, through the act of improvising together with others - interacting and communicating in an open space, loose from all predetermined structures, power dynamics, rules, in a way suspended from the mundane reality. A space that is open to play and filled with possibilities for the enjoyment of collectively constructed imaginaries.

I consider improvisation as a strategy for emancipation and the training ground for interacting and communicating, empowering our spirits, agencies and potentialities.

I find myself the most lively and emancipated when I improvise together with others, and when I find myself in situations that are built upon the principle of improvisation. I mostly do that in the medium of sound with my voice, in an improvised music genre that is known as free improvisation or instant composition. I also do it while I paint and write, and more. Actually, improvisation does not pertain to any media or material, it is a structural dynamic that can be applied to any medium of expression.

In fact, the only times we don't improvise is when we strictly follow the prescribed social contracts and bureaucratic processes. Apart from that, every interaction, conversation and movement is done in an improvisatory fashion, in real-time.

Improvisation is an intrinsic capacity of every human being (of nature as well).

The ones that know this the most are children, free in the ways they express, interact and disobey the social contract (without even knowing there is one in place).

One of the works that belong to The Constitution of my praxis is "The Side Entrance", a radio show in which I have been making interviews with practitioners of improvisation. Radio Worm has provided me with the technical infrastructure and a temporal frame. From January 2021 to X, I have interviewed X guests in my weekly radio show. We spoke about the backstage of their work, entered into their conceptual worlds as well as listened to its sound materializations - music pieces. The archive of the show is accessible here: <https://pzwiki.wdka.nl/mediadesign/User:Tisa/III>

Together with them, discursively, I was investigating the field of improvisation and some crucial concepts that pertain to it: flow, methodologies and infrastructures, archiving, the conception of mistakes, fear, empowerment, agency and interactive potentials, listening.

I believe that my own praxis of improvisation teaches me how to overcome fear and be courageous, to locate my own liminalities, to let go of judgement.

It allows me to make choices in real-time and to explore the state of flow - a state where potentialities are being manifested without a predetermined goal of arrival.

With it, I am becoming a friend of ever-present change. Nothing is a mistake. I embody the flow of change. I consider change as the only constant.

I exercise my own agency, explore my imaginary and non-conscious, and oftentimes surprise myself with new thoughts, ideas and sensations that I have never felt before. The state that I reach when I improvise is a generative one.

I encounter different versions of myself when I improvise, actualize my hunches and strive towards fulfilling my interactive and communicative potentials. This requires sensibility and awareness to internal and external impulses/triggers, to which I react and act upon.

I am unlearning, dynamicizing my knowledge and my habitual, normalized behavior, granting myself new perspectives on myself and others involved.

I observed the framing structures of the fishnet, which afforded me to understand my own praxis of improvisation as an infrastructure that allows my works and thoughts and actions to emerge.

I have, in this time, composed the net in which the substances can be captured in - an infrastructure of my praxis that is fluid and changes,

mutates and recomposes with time. I have established an array of little compositions or protocols that allow me to conduct experiments in order to get data to further analyse, loop back into the practice, learn and expand.

I believe that in the instances when improvisation is exercised can teach anyone about themselves, the interaction potentials and the world. It is a safe space, a space for prototyping and testing, generating content and realizations that can be resynchronized and invited into the everyday, as soon as they happen and enter into our perception.

A passage occurs, a dynamic of movement from one system to the other.

Voice

A potent branch of my research (that could deserve to have many more pages written about) is the very notion of communication within improvisation. When I improvise in the medium of sound, I use my voice. Voices are inherently linked to communication and language. Voice is the primal instrument that everybody has. Just as it is with the human brain - the capacity of the voice is much higher than the ways that we use it for regularly.

I experiment with its potentialities of making sounds that my vocal apparatus is not habituated to. Extended vocal techniques allow me to express more and differently. Meaning-making is enabled with and without language and logos. When I improvise with my voice, I often make up poetry on the spot, or read, or speak in a made-up language (gibberish), or have a fluid language schema in which I shift between the languages that I speak (Slovenian, English and French), or make sounds that do not carry a consolidated meaning. Sometimes I sing nicely and melodically, other times I scream or whisper or chant. All of these modalities are permitted, and mostly the decision on which one to use are made in the moment of vocalizing, oftentimes non-consciously.

My voice does not function as an extension of my body, but rather as an amplification device of my internality, something that reaches beyond the constraints of my material boundaries (my surface, my skin) and that echoes out into the open space, reaching others. I think a lot about the empowerment of the human voices. Of the possibilities for communicating beyond language and logos. Of opening up and exploring our voices and training them to sound loud and clear and confident, able to express our own subjectivities and communicate (with language or without it).

Mostly I improvise together with others. I believe that improvisation, unbound by language is the purest expression of interaction. The structural dynamics that happen within sound can be applied to other instances of relating to each other, especially conversing and also relating to each other while working together (team/group dynamics).

Emphasis is put on multiplicity, the beauty of difference (equality in difference), communication and interaction. Improvisation in sound is merely a net that captures potentialities onto its surface. The substance is always under-construction, a continuous (re)arrangement of subjectivities is happening, knowledges and occluses are brought to attention, exchanging with and within the environment that enables it. (Remember what the Lyrebird has taught us?)

Her letter

1.3.2021

Hello, this is the fishnet speaking,
the one from before.

I have a concern I have to articulate.

Tisa put me in a box in September 2020.
And since then, I have only served her
as a material for speculation. I am
static. I am captured in her infrastructural
pursuit of building a theory, a conceptual
system. She says that I do have agency,
but in reality, she has used and
abandoned me for another purpose -
the purpose of thinking and writing.
All my material potentialities have
been neglected (a while back she
wanted to shape and reform me,
build upon my surface, change me...)
This is what can easily happen
when humans tend to investigate
and understand rationally what
this (reality) is all about.

Tisa, in my diagnosis, has been captured
by her own tendency towards the
systematization of thought.

She hasn't dedicated enough time and
activity towards understanding differently
than only through ratio.

She hasn't experienced enough.

She immobilized her own practice
(improvisational in nature) because of
the need to infrastructuralize it,
organize her thought, make things
static, constant and true.

She tells me she has a lot of
reasons for doing it and I believe her.

I think that her bias towards
rationality and structure has prevailed.

It makes her occupied and active,
but the question is whether her
activity is rightly navigated/directioned.

When she says that her practice of improvisation
and the state of being in-flow is the
most potent state of being for her, in which
she experiences realizations in terms of
empowerment and agency, I wonder why, then,
she dedicates so much of her time to
conceptualization, thinking, the organization of
thought and making sense out of it all.

I guess, in a strange way, she enjoys it
as well, she finds a particular kind
of flow in that activity.

Her practice consists of two parts, two dynamics
that should be interwoven in order to
construct a valid totality. One part is improvisation
(generative) and the other composition (analytic).
The catch here is that when she is working
with language, in a way, she also improvises.
When she builds concepts and infrastructures,
she follows her intuition.

Instead of building a balance between the
two parts of her practice, she is momentarily
content with the compositional (because it
already includes the improvisational in it).

She, for some reason that is unknown
to me, abandons the generative potentialities
of her being completely in-flow (a state
without any constraints of predetermined,
form and understanding).

She is attempting to locate the reasons and
goals of her activity, without actually fully
surrendering to its flow. I think that is
her biggest flaw. It is what prevents
her from actually being capable of
empowering herself.

The world is like that, the art world
especially. Nowadays, articulation is
so important, and linguistic games
so persistent, that it is almost impossible
to escape them. Self-referentiality,
an infinite positive cybernetic feedback
loop is on the run.
Most probably it will lead her ~~to~~ towards
madness and her own destruction (because
of the implosion, the gradual organic destruction
of the infrastructure that she is building).

Instead of working towards a certain
equilibrium of her praxis and herself
(a negative cybernetic loop for instance),
she is a subject of inner-sabotage.
What to do with her, caught in her own
net, I ask you.

One thing is for sure, she will not be
able to exit her own artificially-constructed
loops by thinking and writing.

Perhaps by embodying and acting?

Actually immersing herself in her own
praxis, experiencing and sensing and
improvising.

This is what I propose to her.

Sincerely,

the Fishnet - you know which one.



I thought that I would, in this thesis, explore the friction between composition and improvisation. In the course of my research, it had occurred to me that these types of hegemonic binaries are useless to work with. The Lyrebird is the one responsible for this insight, as well as my experiences of conversations with all the people I have encountered this year. I have shifted my gaze towards other dynamics, the ones that do not know the bit computing-like binary.

I have, after the outraged letter from the fishnet, submerged into my improvisational praxis more. It allows me to generate and practically assess and test my hunches about the structures that I have located within it. My response to the fishnet's letter is my work. Dear reader, you can float around it here, on my wiki page, where more and more works that I have made will be archived, a totality of my praxis that is, sometimes even for myself impossible to grasp. >>> <https://wiki.tisa.world/>

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