TURUN YLIOPISTON JULKAISUJA
ANNALES UNIVERSITATIS TURKUENSIS

SARJA - SER. B OSA - TOM. 349
HUMANIORA

FOLLOWING THE FLOWS OF PROCESS

A New Materialist Account of Contemporary Art

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Turku 2012

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ISBN 978-951-29-5020-1 (PRINT)
ISBN 978-951-29-5021-8 (PDF)
ISSN 0082-6987
Uniprint – Turku, Finland 2012

Layout Päivi Valotie

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... it is matter in movement, in flux, in variation,
matter as conveyor of singularities and traits of expression.
... this matter-flow can only be followed…

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis surely is an outcome of, to quote Brian Massumi, "*many disciplines, many plateaus, many rhythms, multiple subjects, co-varying travellings*": art history, Deleuze studies, feminism and participatory research have moved and elaborated with me on my travellings that have followed and enjoyed the company of many artists, supervisors, colleagues, friends and family. This multiple pack has more or less actually, more or less virtually been present during the ups and downs of the writing process that may have spread across time and places, but that has irreplaceably emerged at certain milieus, at certain meeting points of longitude and latitude, where the singular rhythms, both cultural and natural, of each place have affected the becoming of this work.

It is hard to decide where to start, so I will start in the middle. My fieldwork period, the lengthy middle of my research process, revolved around the artists I have worked with, painter Susana Nevado, sculptor Helena Hietanen and photographer Marjukka Irni. My earnest thanks go to Susana, Helena and Marjukka for sharing their work and working practices with me; for allowing me to follow your flows of process so essential for the making of this dissertation.

My home base during the fieldwork period as well as the whole vagabond writing of my doctoral dissertation has been the department of Art History at the University of Turku. It is there that I have learned the pleasures and pains of being a researcher, teacher, supervisor and an administrator all at once. My multiple position at our department that might be tiny in terms of academic staff but still vast and welcoming in its range of topics and theoretical interests has sometimes been admittedly tough but overall very giving.

My supervisor, docent Tutta Palin, one of the pioneers of feminist art history in Finland, was there when I began my undergraduate studies in 1994 and she returned to the department just in time during the final stages of my project. Her suggestions to smooth the sharp edges of my argumentation have been both patient and simply indispensable. Tutta's widespread services have included decisive structuring advice as well as last minute book deliveries, and everything in between. All the way, professor Altti Kuusamo has been sympathetic for my at times anxious efforts to find time and place for research. Altti is an enthusiastic researcher who shares with me the desire to think and write in warmer climates. He has also written numerous letters of

recommendation ensuring that my travellings were well-funded. Professor emerita Eeva Maija Viljo is an unfailing supporter of my project. Her sharp humour, help in organising my visit to UC Berkeley and interest in the agencies of art-making have been truly important. When I did my BA thesis, senior lecturer Lars Saari encouraged me to contact the artists whose work I had a theoretical interest in and in this manner paved the way for my further explorations of participatory research. Riitta Kormano was an important interlocutor and essential role model in the early stages of my post-graduate studies. My fellow students Mia Hannula, Minna Ijäs, Riikka Niemelä, Marko Gylén, Johanna Ruohonen, Roni Grén and many others also deserve thanks for making our research community so vivid and varied. With Taru Elfving I edited a book on participatory arts research—I regard her writing very highly, and our collaboration has always been enriching for me. Tilda Junko was the last to join our team. I thank her for offering such prompt organisational and administrative help, and of course, for having an eye for beautiful dresses.

During most of my doctoral studies professor Marianne Liljeström led the School of Art Studies with vision and vigour, and greatly contributed to its becoming a place one can truly be proud to be a part of. Also it was in Marianne's research seminar that the first versions of my research plan were discussed in an encouraging manner. During her years in Turku, professor Helmi Järviluoma-Mäkelä joyfully affirmed my effort to combine fieldwork and theoretical ambitions. Helmi became my external supervisor and her nurturing comments are valued very much. Also, thanks to my colleagues and friends across disciplines, Kaisa Ilmonen, Anu Laukkanen, Sari Miettinen, Mari Pajala, Elina Valovirta, Mona Mannevuo and Johanna Ahonen among others, for co-producing such a great working milieu filled with ambition, wit and yearn for having a good time. Kaisa Kurikka and Jukka Sihvonen stand out as an admirable assemblage of Deleuzian co-creation: your wisdom, kindness and care are immensely appreciated.

At the very last steps of my research project, professor Kirsi Saarikangas took on the role of an external assessor, offered astute understanding of my writing and suggested important improvements and further questions to tackle. I thank her for engaging with my work with such intellectual rigour and warmth, and also for accepting the position of the opponent.

During the spring term of 2006, I visited the vibrant department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney, Australia. It was professor Elspeth Probyn's witty, flowing prose so thoroughly Deleuze-Guattarian that led me there. In Sydney I wrote the first chapter of my thesis greatly affected not only by the stimulating research community to which nonhuman agencies were no aliens, but also by daily life by the Pacific where my writing was filtered with an almost imperceptible haze, big swells and clear blue skies. I was also happy to meet the always–bright Margaret Mayhew, a researcher

and an artist who shares with me a passion for the moving materialities of art. Barbara Bolt's outstanding *Art beyond Representation,* that so ingeniously draws on the blinding glare of the Australian sun, is in so many ways the key to my project. Barbara's encouragement, delicate words, and kind support have been nothing less than vital for the writing of this dissertation. Together with Estelle Barrett they form a true power couple for the materialist-performative account of art that I hope to contribute to with my work.

My visit to UC Berkeley during the winter months of 2006–2007 was hosted by professor Anne Wagner, whose eloquent and subtly provocative feminist writing I admire and whose comments and encouragement I appreciate. Infused with scholarly ambition and the Californian wintery sun, I began to write my second chapter that pays respect to the preciseness and evocativeness of Wagner's work.

The three-month residency in the spring of 2008 at the Finnish-African cultural institute Villa Karo in Grand-Popo, Benin provided me with the possibility to fully engage with the research material I had collected. Thanks to the helpful staff, I had all my time to concentrate on the transcription of my recordings, and was interrupted only by the forces of weather and constant electricity cuts. While at Karo, I enjoyed the company of many talented artists among them Tero Nauha and Karolina Kucia, and got to participate in various vodoun ceremonies where things moved on their own. Although working at Karo was admittedly a colonialist privilege, the cultural, artistic and intellectual exchange it offered certainly positively marks the themes of the chapters that I worked on there.

Two extra, or rather trans-academic communities Eetos and Mollecular.org founded with likeminded colleagues have both provided rich milieus for learning the necessary skills of editing, translating and publishing books as well as for organising multiple events with prominent guests such as Bracha Ettinger, Bifo Berardi, Gary Genosko, Erin Manning and Brian Massumi. My thanks go to everyone involved in Eetos and Molle activities.

Jason Grice checked my language. He has been a kind and inventive reader of my work: Jason's ponderings upon beach walking and passive time and following the flows of forest when mountain biking make me happy. Päivi Valotie made my manuscript into a beautiful book and spared no effort in reacting to my special wishes. She has also patiently helped with image-editing in many phases of this project, especially when I curated the exhibition *Zigzagging from Art to Theory – and Back*. I also wish to extend my thanks to Riquelle Small of Oakland and Laura Kanerva Wirén of Turku who made my energies flow when I needed it the most.

I am extremely fortunate to have a beautiful and strikingly brilliant pack of friends to dine, dance and think with: Milla Tiainen, Matleena Kalajoki, Jussi Parikka and Pasi Väliaho, and, of course Ilona Hongisto. Talent and

creativity—academic and otherwise, care and mutual respect in this company are something very special. Nowadays there are often oceans between us, but still once we get together it is as nurturing and inspirational as ever. Teemu Taira has often enriched our gatherings with his presence.

The triangle I form with Milla and Matleena is simply vital for my becoming-researcher. So many fibres of life, academic, aesthetic, feminist and familial just to mention a few, weave us together. With Milla, our teenage fandom of the Material Girl Madonna, the inspiring years of co-studying that developed into ventures in corporeal feminism, radical empiricism and new materialism, as well as the enjoyment of the perfect sunshine on the first days of spring have certainly brought us together even more strongly than our blood ties would suggest. My work fundamentally owes to Milla's ingeniously sharp wit, intensive thoughtfulness and always affirmative attitude—there is no one I trust more in these matters. Likewise with Matleena, who always gets my point and knows all the right words to encourage and comfort me. Her flamboyant being, intellectual imagination, gorgeous designs, and positive yet critical orientation towards the world have taught me a lot and made me a better researcher, no doubt.

I am very happy to have two families in my life to support my academic adventures. The Kontturi-side of my family has been there from the beginning. They have always taken me as I am, and never questioned my choices, whether stylistic, work-related or other. My mother Katve has always stood by my side. She has installed in me the comforting habit of tea-drinking; also I think I am finally developing a yearning for gardening… My sister Heta Teittinen and her family, Mikko, Pyry, Otso and little Toivo have offered another world filled with other pleasures. My brother Janne and his partner Krista I thank for their amicability and good humour. By way of his own example my father Osmo has encouraged me to follow original paths of research. Moreover, he has taught me that the essence of academic life is in conferences and research visits abroad—as well as in teamwork. The Hongisto-side of my family—Annika, Markku, Juho and Julia—is always ready for our little visits: I have found another home with you. I so much enjoy our gatherings filled with warmth, vivid discussion and good food—even pasta pesto!

It is to Ilona who has been with me through every step of this research process, who has travelled with me around the world in search for the perfect writing and thinking conditions that I owe the most. She truly is my everything, the list of the things she shines at even if thought only in the confines of academic work is impressive: she is a brilliant writer and a clear, concise thinker, an editor with a sharp eye for inconsistencies, an unfailing proof-reader and a warm supporter, as well as a co-Deleuze-Guattarian. Nothing makes me more joyful than knowing that she is by my side—especially now that I am writing the last words of this dissertation. This study is dedicated to our co-varying travellings.

I also wish to thank Alfred Kordelin Foundation, Emil Aaltonen Foundation, Kone Foundation, Villa Karo Foundation and Turku University Foundation that have funded my research both in Finland and abroad.

Parts of this dissertation have appeared or are forthcoming in the following publications:

Earlier and considerably shorter versions of the case studies tackled in chapter 1 *Reading and Breathing* and chapter 2 *Work of Painting* have appeared in Finnish in my article, "Luovat, liikkuvat sommitelmat: kaksi kohtaamistapahtumaa" [Moving Assemblages of Creation: Two Encounter-Events] in *Kuinka tehdä taidehistoriaa?* (2010), eds Minna Ijäs et al, Turku: Utukirjat, 179–209.

A shorter version of chapter 2 *Work of Painting* is forthcoming as "From Double Navel to Particle-Sign: Towards the Work of Painting" in *Carnal Knowledges: Towards A New Materialism through the Arts* (2012), eds Barbara Bolt & Estelle Barrett, London and New York: I.B. Tauris, in press.

Parts of chapter 8 *Preaching Mouth,* have appeared in an article in Finnish I co-edited and rewrote with Ilona Hongisto: "Sappho wants to save you: Identiteettipolitiikasta taiteen mikroliikkeisiin" [From Identity Politics to Micromovements] in *Naistutkimus*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (2011): 6–18.

Chapter 9 *Screaming Mouth* is an elaboration of my earlier article "Eye, Agency and Bodily Becomings: Experiencing Breast Cancer in and through Images" in *The Future of Flesh: A Cultural Survey of the Body* (2009), eds Zoe Detsi-Diamanti et al, London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 115–131.

INTRODUCTION

THE WAY OF FOLLOWING

A researcher's body encountering an installation
that continually moves itself. An artist's hand moving the brush
that spreads the paint, and the layers of paint doing work of their own.
Ideas emerging in the heat of a process. Decaying, cracking teeth in their relic
box changing over time; sending shivers on their way. The tiniest movement
of photographic portraits hanging from the ceiling, gently waving in the air.
A poser's body before the camera trying to stay still, trying
to keep the balance—by moving minutely.

These opening lines present multiple aspects of art in process; of bodies and materialities in movement. They map an almost imperceptible movement at the heart of any process of experiencing and making art. What this study advocates is that this intricate material movement traverses every encounter with art, and also those through which art emerges. The opening lines portray the variety of research material I have gathered by participating in a selected set of contemporary art processes including installation, painting, and photography, often in their mixed and undetermined forms. In sum, they are the *flows of process* that I have *followed* at studios, in exhibition spaces, and also later at my writing desk.

How to conceptualise this movement and *how to incorporate it in an art historical analysis* are the core questions of my study. It is in order to draw inspiration for fashioning methodological tools and conceptual devices that I have attended contemporary art processes in various ways: encountered art in exhibition spaces, visited studios, observed processes of making, conversed with artists, and also modelled for some of them. What my followings strive for is a research practice that cherishes the material qualities of art: a *new materialism* that appreciates matter as movement and matter capable of transformation and creation.

Setting the scene: followings, materialisms, questions

As a way of approaching, following indicates movement; two-way, multi-way movement. The follower does not and cannot stay still, she must continuously adjust, attune herself to the movements of that which is followed. In other words, the follower is affected by the followee, and not only the other way around. This makes following a fundamentally relational process: a way of *participating* in a process.[1]

Following, then, does not pertain to the obedient following of great masters be they artistic or philosophical geniuses. Yet the present study would not have emerged without a generous crowd of artists and philosophers. There are three contemporary artists—Susana Nevado, Helena Hietanen and Marjukka Irni—who have shared with me their artworks of different materials and both the public and private processes involved. There are also certain materialist philosophers, such as Rosi Braidotti, Gilles Deleuze, Elizabeth Grosz, Félix Guattari, and Brian Massumi whose lines of thought and ways of making theory have affected my work. The alphabetical order of these philosophers has a double function: on the one hand, it is a way of avoiding unnecessary hierarchies, but on the other, it is useful for it places Deleuze and Guattari in the middle. These two are central figures for my research in the sense that the other philosophers and art theorists I engage with—including Barbara Bolt, Erin Manning, Simon O'Sullivan and Stephen Zepke—are incited by and elaborate on their work. But as said, no obedient following, rather flows of materialist thought and practice that offer a rich source of inspiration for further workings.

As an approach, following emphasises the matter of being *contemporary* to the processes of art whether they are emerging in a studio, in an exhibition space or at one's writing desk. Rather than expecting something of these processes beforehand, taking comfort in conventions and customary understandings, following urges to encounter processes *as they happen*. This contrasts following to the posterior operation of tracing, which refutes immediacy by looking for traces of the passed moment thereby installing an unbridgeable abyss between us and what is happening, and consequently also between us and art (O'Sullivan 2006a, 44–45).[2] Following, instead, aims at being confluent with the present—encountering the world in its immediacy. This is also why the opening sentences are written in the present tense. As it is art emerging and not completed solid objects that are tackled, following welcomes an element of surprise and unpredictability to art historical inquiry.[3] What follows from following is that a researcher's relation to art must be reconsidered: art is no longer an object of knowledge but unfolds as an open and elementally volatile process with which new understandings can become.[4] Following, then, is a mode of *becoming-with* and thus elementally about transformation.[5] Crucially, this transformation applies both to the art process that is in constant movement

and to the researcher, whose understandings and ways of bodily being are negotiated in relation to art. Therefore, in this study, new materialist knowledge and conceptions do not arise from theoretical discussions only, or from the fixed point of view of the researcher alone;[6] it is *with art* that theory-making happens.

But following is no easy task. As Rosi Braidotti (2009, 241) points out, it is a veritable challenge: "*although most of us already inhabit a social world structured by flows and webs of connections … it is difficult to change one's acquired habits—they are so addictive!"* Braidotti refers to the struggles in current critical theory to make way for more radically processual thinking and conceptual creativity that would appreciate complex and ever-changing entanglements of the *present* especially in material, corporeal and affective terms (ibid., 242–243). To paraphrase Braidotti, we are so accustomed to keeping our critical distance that we are pushed away from writing with the sensuous proximity and the complex flows of connection experienced.[7] Similarly, some of the key methods of current art history are still constructed around the position of critical distance that, importantly, comes with an emphasis on preconditioned knowledge: "Look, there it is!" we might chuckle in a burst of contentment when recognising something familiar. And I would claim that we share this chuckle, no matter if we are connoisseurs claiming rather straightforward resemblances or identifications, semioticians with a subtle eye for ever-changing significations, or critical theorists detecting performative re-iterations.[8] In every case there appears to be something more stable, something that we already have a steady knowledge of, a well-defined field of possibilities so to speak, against which the flows of a specific process are measured, and against which they are also easily arrested. In other words, what this kind of praxis can easily lead to is the fixing and capturing of flows of art in the name of the *already-known*. To arouse wonder about this, let me offer glimpses of some of the art processes that this study works with. I will first approach them from the habitual stance of keeping a critical distance, and then pose questions in order to shake the contentment in habits, and to reach out for the flows of process, for the sensuous proximity allowed by following.[9]

Here comes the first glimpse:

> *Listening to an artist explaining her installation, its contexts, the religious vision behind it and her experiences of breast cancer that affected the work in various ways. Reading about the material facts of the installation, of the beams of light guided by a computer animation, of the haze that fills the exhibition space. In a word, acquiring information to make an interpretation. And what a multi-angled reading these sources promise: not only is there oral and written documentation, but also more specific references to breast cancer as well as a religious vision to contextualise the work with. But then a decisive question: what could—seriously—be said about the work without entering the installation, without thinking-feeling through its materiality*

on the move, beams of light and haze surrounding one's body, connecting to it? Are we not in need of some (bodily) experimentation, if not instead then parallel to interpretation?

Now, the second one:

White canvases laid out on a stained studio floor and leaning towards the wall; a desk filled with books and photocopies of paintings of medieval saints; an artist talking about her tentative ideas of creating new kinds of holy cards. So far so good: a set of starting points offered. But the researcher keeps posing questions about what is happening and what will the artist do next—annoyingly, without getting proper answers. A few months later, among other works, a little oval painting now seems carefully executed; complete even. Fifties' pinup girls posing in their pointy corselettes, a figure of a faceless woman also in her underwear, decorated with a black shred of lace and a feminine tribal sort of pinkish tattoo pattern. Yet the artist is not content; she contends that the painting is stuck in a rut and something must be done, but what exactly she claims not to know. When exhibited some months later a transformation has taken place: the painting has lost its recognisable appearance, a girl with a peculiar double navel has emerged. What is it that took the painting there? Obviously not the intention of the artist, or at least not that alone. The suggested starting points do not explain the outcome any better. Maybe, then, there is only the process that can answer the questions. And let me be more clear: not a process as divided into sequences as above, but a flowing process of transformative connections.

And to add yet another angle:

A photographic installation with a video screened to the back wall of a room—two girls reading, preaching a political manifesto, wearing t-shirts with political slogans. In front of the video, at each side, three full-portraits of women staring straight ahead, all standing very determinedly, all wearing the same t-shirts. Everything screaming the same: an openly political work indeed, it is hard to ignore. The words catch one's attention for they are as much revealing as they are insistent: t-shirts declaring that Sappho wants to save you, the manifesto asserting that lesbians are "the rage of all women condensed to the point of explosion"! No doubt, the words ascribe an identity political dimension to the installation; the work takes part in the timely criticism of the early days of sexual revolution. But does it all come to this message—to the textual content of the work? What about the material through which the political message of the installation emerges? It should not be forgotten that language is not a transparent medium, nor are videos or photographs. They do things, they move and matter. So why not let them do what they do?—to matter through moving matter.

Out of these three tentative encounters arises the urge for the present study: the necessity to attend to that which is unpredictable in art processes; that is, to flows that are not reducible to the already-known—be they contextual or technical-material facts of an installation *(1)*, the outspoken and materially evident starting points for a painting process *(2)* or the recognisable political message of an artwork *(3)*. But why such a necessity? Because without attending to these flows, to the *volatility* of art processes, something which is very elemental to art would be left unveiled, and its complexity would be missed. Think of it: what if the moving installation of haze and light was identified exclusively as a religious representation of breast cancer; or if what came out of the long painting process was analysed only through what was there in the beginning––a painting of a medieval saint, or the tradition of holy cards. Or, in the case of the third example, if the installation of moving images and photographic portraits was reduced to its textual content or historical context solely. Yes, I am deliberately overdoing it to make a case: to show how easily art processes are stripped of their sensuous liveliness; that is, how easy it is to arrest volatile flows of process—especially those of the *material* kind—into themes and shapes that are already-known.

For this study it is a burning ethical question that the material subtleties of art be accorded an equally nuanced attention as representations, contexts and textual contents in contemporary critical histories of art. What I am calling for does not come with a refutation of representations and historical contexts, but has to do with positioning them in relation to the material processes of art in which they take form. This, then, is a turn away from the juxtaposition sometimes advocated in the field of *new art history*. Rising, among other theories, from Marxist and feminist art histories of the 1970's, new art history revolves around processual concepts such as ideology, identity, politics and subjectivity. Likewise, its methods produce movement: analyses of ever-changing (critical) representations and textualities, processes of meaning-making, and readings against the grain put their objects on the move. Whilst new art history in an indispensably manner renewed and challenged previous art historical assumptions, it simultaneously placed material subtleties against representational and (con)textual ones: "[*w*]*hen an article analyses the images of women in paintings rather than the qualities of the brushwork, or when a gallery lecturer ignores the sheen of the Virgin Mary's robe for the Church's uses of religious art in the Counter-Reformation, the new art history is casting its shadow*" (Rees & Borzello 1986, 2). Rather than simply reversing this and arguing against representationality or (con)textuality, I want to suggest that material processes

are inseparable from the images of women in paintings and equally traverse the Church's political use of art. Is it not brushstrokes that for their part compose the image? And is it not the sheen of the Virgin Mary's robe that makes the political use of art all the more affective?

In other words, material processes of art interweave with the representational and the (con)textual. They necessarily co-compose the images and messages we read and recognise, even if they might be imperceptible to many current practices of visual analysis that emphasise the power of the *discursive*. Importantly, following material flows may take us closer to transformations that are not that explicit on the discursive level of representations and contexts. Whilst a focus on the discursive has the undeniable advantage of showing how insistent and repetitive power structures are, it easily dismisses the force of art to change and contest that what is already-known.[10] Indeed, it might be claimed even that focus on material movements of art "*may prevent it from being interpreted too simplistically*" (Yonan 2011, 6). To endow the material flows of art with a more active position, in this study, they are regarded as a *transformative force*.

The emerging field of new materialism that has began to take shape simultaneously to the making of my dissertation is one of the few serious contemporary efforts to grasp materiality as force. Generated principally by feminists[11] and political/cultural theorists interested in contemporary issues such as biotechnology and new media, new materialism boasts a theory and a practice that enhances our understanding of the active materialities of the world, which affect us directly and not only through symbolic mediation.[12] In the introduction for the pioneering collection *New Materialisms*, Diane Coole and Samantha Frost (2010, 1–2) outline the paradox at the heart of the practice that seems to grasp matter through mediation only. They formulate a theoretical dilemma: "*There is an apparent paradox in thinking about matter: as soon as we do so we seem to distance ourselves from it, and within the space that opens up, a host of immaterial things seems to emerge…*" (ibid.). Not surprisingly, among the "immaterial things" inhabiting the gap between us and matter figure language, subjectivity as well as meanings. The formulation reflects the textual turn that during the past three decades has radically appraised, for example, the malleability of subjectivity at the intersections of sex, age, race, ethnicity and so on.[13] Today, new materialists suggest, it is time to look at the material world with a similar attitude, with an equal eagerness for detail, movement and emergence.

Moving this discussion back to the field of art history a parallel shift of focus becomes apparent: whereas in the mid 1990's for example Mieke Bal (1996, 27) showed very convincingly that art can be understood in more complex terms through the notions of reading and framing adapted from the linguistic paradigm via semiotics, today scholars are expressing an emerging need for

more materialist modes of analysis.[14] This is what Marsha Meskimmon (2011, 6) does by arguing for engagements that "*resist bland representationalist forms of interpretation and are, instead, linked to concepts … that posit art's agency*" and what Simon O'Sullivan (2006a, 4) describes *"as a further turn from the linguistic, a turn towards matter and to the expressive potentialities of the latter*".

The new materialism I am composing is linked both to the critique of bland representationalism and to the transposition from the linguistic paradigm to a materialist one. Having said that I want to emphasise (as do Meskimmon and O'Sullivan in their own ways too) that in my take matter is not separate from discursive powers often seen as immaterial: material forces flow through discursive formations, structures, making them unstable and prone to change. In this understanding, my account is both influenced by and critical of a number of previous art historical interests towards matter.

As contradictory as it may sound, even new art history fond of representational analysis has been described, not only as critical or radical, but as *materialist*, so indispensably it owes to Marxist historical materialism (see e.g. Pollock 1988; Clayson 1995; Harris 2001). In materialist art history matter refers to socio-historical structures of production such as class, economics and gender, as well as ideologies in and through which these structures are *embodied* (Pollock 1988, 6–7).[15] Hence, there is no direct access to matter or bodies; they are grasped through representations, structures and embodied ideologies. Here, an important bypath followed by feminist art historians and artists alike needs to be mentioned: from the early to mid 1990's French *écriture feminine* aroused a lot theoretical interest in the materiality of the female body. Bodily conceptions such as fluidity, mucosity, tactility, abjection, and the revolutionary power of women's laughter were introduced as transgressive characterisations that positively disturb conventional representations (Betterton 1996; Isaak 1996).[16] All in all, the wide interest the last decades of critical art history have shown in representations of bodies and in body politics summarises the materialist take on bodies and matter. The same ethos is at work in the more recent studies of visual culture operating through such concepts as performativity and re-iteration.[17]

The socio-materialist emphasis of new art history, that dissolves into discursivity in the studies of visual culture, is often formulated as a step away from or an approach against modernist art history, such as Clement Greenberg's, that has become emblematic of the specificity of aesthetic experience, the self-sufficiency of the visual, and the autonomy of art from any social causation (ibid., 14). Greenberg's modernism advocates a formalism grounded on the notion of '*truth to materials*', and as such could be understood as a materialism of sorts (Bolt 2012, [3].) Whereas new art history insists that art cannot be produced or interpreted outside its socio-material conditions, modernist formalism focuses on medium-specificity and praises the autonomy of art.

Whilst the late 1950's and the 1960's might be seen as the heyday of modernist art history, at the same time there was an emerging trend of social art history drawing on Marxist dialectical materialism. The work that epitomises this is Arnold Hauser's *Social History of Art* (1951) that has a strong epochal, and hence generalising view of both art and history as a series of revolutions. Later social art history condemned this earlier phase as reductionism, as 'crude Marxism' (Clark 1973; see also Harris 2001, 64–73). Yet this strand has produced some works that show in great detail, for example, how economic structures influence material matters of art such as colour, in other words, how socio-material conditions have an effect on stylistic choices (Baxandall 1972).[18]

Another interesting tangent to materialism in the field of art history can be found from the beginning of the 20th century in the work of Aloïs Riegl, Heinrich Wölfflin and Wilhelm Worringer. This trio plays an important part in Deleuze's (1999, 2003) and Deleuze-Guattari's (1987, 1994) conception of painting as a transfer of forces through haptic qualities, sensation and affect (see Ionescu 2011). Although Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer can be considered as formalists, their formalism is above all a formalism of forces. By paying attention to the sensuous and haptic quality of artworks, formalism of forces shows interest in perception and reception which is something that new art history has dealt with when addressing the issue of viewership—albeit from a very different angle.

In addition to these materialist facets, there is a long tradition of *material* art history including connoisseur art history and also the empirical one often fervently criticised by new art historians of the 1980's (see e.g. Rees & Borzello 1986, 2–7) but still in practice in various institutions of art. Whereas attribution, categorisation and hierarchisation of material qualities of art (sometimes with the help of technical equipment even) as well as methods of explaining artworks with rich textual sources based on archival work depart from the focus of this study, their detailed attendance to the materialities of art has certainly encouraged my own materialist effort. And so has another material thread that runs through art history: the will to see artworks 'live' if possible, to attend to their presence. In my study, however, this is not so much a question of originality and authenticity than of participation in the complex events of lived relation.

What my bringing-together of facets of materialism aims to evoke is that matter is not non-existent in the art historical debates of the last decades, nor was it in decades prior to that. Yet it is true that although "*materiality* […] *has been an implicit dimension of art historical inquiry for more than a century…* [it] *has suffered at the expense of other artistic qualities*" (Yonan 2011, 2). The insistent emphasis on the *visual* so central to art history from iconography to modernist understandings of pure opticality and from semiotics to studies of visual culture, is of major significance here (ibid., 2–3). While not claiming that art

history would have always privileged "*idea or image over the object as thing*" (ibid., 2), it seems reasonable to acknowledge that materiality has rarely been an essential element of interpretation.

Thus it should come as no surprise either that my conception of bodies and matter is not straightforwardly comparable to any of the materialist viewpoints I have introduced. Whereas I am indispensably indebted to complex analyses of representations of bodies, to consider art as representational is not adequate when aiming at following flows of process and especially those of a material sort.[19] And although I am fascinated with the adaptation of the early formalism of forces by Deleuze-Guattari (1987, 1994; Deleuze 2003), I do not subscribe to the autonomy of art in the sense that was propagated by modernism: art is made not only in and through bodies, but also in conditions that are always on the move.[20] In addition, the new materialism I am proposing is not so much interested in large-scale issues such as how certain ideologies and cultural understandings are reproduced time and again. While not ignoring the power structures at work, I want to focus on how materialities of art both participate in and contest prevailing structures and common understandings making them anew every time.

The emphasis on the new, on the ever-elaborating differences is what new materialism propagates. This newness does not, however, imply autonomy from social conditions. Instead, complex conditions, various registers, and numerous partakers involved always create unique events. What new materialist thinking suggests is that complex moving configurations need (more) complex concepts to attend to their specificity (Coole & Frost 2010; Parikka & Tiainen 2006). A repertoire of methods, such as reading and reading against the grain, or concepts such as representation and discourse are not equally adequate everywhere. This takes us to the specificity of new materialism that defines this study: the desire for concept–creation that derives from Deleuze-Guattarian thinking (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 1994). "*Make a concept for how a given multiplicity of elements come together and hold together*" (Massumi 2010, 13).

At the crux of concept-creation is an understanding that the world poses problems for us and it is our ethical and political task to respond to these problems by converting and creating them to concepts that improve our capacity to address the actual world (Holland 2009, 148). In this study, I adopt the principle of concept-creation to art historical and theoretical practice: the driving force is to fashion concepts, and ways of putting these concepts to practice, that would better address the complexities and movements of contemporary art. Let me now return to my research material to specify questions central to my study.

The three examples I have offered point towards the three parts that this study is divided into.

In my first example, the moving corpus of a light installation called for considering a closer contact with the work than the one provided by contextual interpretation. In the second, the unpredictable emergence of a painting questioned the logic of artistic intention and also showed that knowledge of the images that the artist had studied for her work did not explain it any better. These two examples pose a problem that is tackled in the first part of the study titled *Molecular Encounters: Questioning the Mastery of the Human. Molecular Encounters* shifts the focus from the positionalities of the researcher and the artist to the transformative encounters between the researcher and the artwork, and the artist and her materials. It asks: *How can we study art beyond human dominancy? How can we widen our understandings of what a work of art can do—that is, to grant it an agency even?* And more specifically: *In what ways can we speak of movements of art beyond and parallel to representation and signification? How can we grapple and conceptualise a bodily relation to art? How can we study art's emergence beyond the hold of an artist? How can we value the material aspects of signification taking place in the processes of art-making?*

The second part of the study *Machinic Collaborations: Materialities of Art in the Making* continues with painting processes from the perspective of the artist. It embarks on the problem that was posed when following an artist working at her studio: the artist's obvious unawareness of what will happen to the art process in the making. Relating to this, it further elaborates on the active role of materials in the making of art. As such, *Machinic Collaborations* aims at creating new understandings of art production taking place at the artist's studio by studying the ways in which the painter not only does her work but speaks about it. Questions are the following: *How do painting processes proceed*? *What elements are involved and what is their role in the process? How can we conceptualise human and nonhuman agents participating in the art-making?* Also, *if the artist is not in charge of the process, does it then imply autonomy of art? What about the physicality of art-making?* And moreover, *how and in what terms can we approach the entanglements of the artist and her life?*

The third case I presented concerned the politics of art beyond mere textuality. This glimpse ended with the proposition of *why not let art do what it does—to matter through moving matter.* This line sums the problem of the third part of this study *A Triptych of Affection: Work of Art beyond Meaning* that explores affective relations between art and its viewer-participants. Whereas the first part of this study concerns cases in which art is on the move very concretely, an installation moving its beams of light, and a painting process that took several months, *A Triptych of Affection* works with art processes that

are more or less completed, and more or less still in terms of their medium—they all make use of photography and are obviously representational. Besides, what connects the three encounters is the issue of religion that was present in my third case in terms of preaching. *A Triptych of Affection* asks: *In what ways art affects its viewers beyond textual meaning and recognisable representations? How can the contact between artworks and their viewers be conceptualised? How can religious practices such as relics, preaching and transfiguration help us in finding new concepts for affective connections? What role does the medium or materiality play in affection? How do corporeal, material and representational planes connect in the encounters with art?*

In sum, encounter, collaboration and affection are the three ways of conceptualising transformative connections that my followings offer to contest the critical distance criticised above. To back up these propositions and the questions I have posed, I will now turn to the materialist conceptualisations central to my study, and to the research materials I have gathered. To complete my tentative account of materiality I will also bring forth such grand-scale issues as aesthetics and ontology of art—of course revisited from the viewpoint of moving materialities.

What can materiality do? Concepts, data, onto-aesthetics

We have not yet reached very far and already a variety of material terms have been employed: matter, matter in and as movement, materiality, corporeality, bodies, flows and processes have figured extensively from the first paragraphs on. How to make sense of these diverse terms? To start with, *materiality* is the key term here. It stresses that matter never is, it does: "*Materiality is always something more than 'mere' matter: an excess, force, vitality, relationality or difference that renders matter active, self-creative, productive, unpredictable*" (Coole & Frost 2010, 28). However, sometimes, for the sake of variation, *matter* is also used, and unless otherwise specified, it equals materiality. Often this is indicated by an expression that leaves no room for doubt: matter in, or as movement. Corporeality, for its part, refers to the materiality of a human body, especially so, when it is accompanied or contrasted with the term materiality, which then refers to bodies other than human. In this study a body does not refer only to a human body: "*A body can be anything; it can be an animal, a body of sounds, a mind, or idea; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity*" (Deleuze 1988, 127). What defines a body is what it can do, how it moves and affects and is moved and affected. However, in this study matter and materiality are often preferred over body-related conceptions. This is to avoid confusion with approaches that mainly embark on bodies from the vantage point of representation.

There are many kinds of material movements, processes. There are mechanical and linear, even causal processes—processes that are determined, reactions merely, and hence predictable. But there are other sorts of processes too: here, *flow* assigns a special kind of process, a special kind of way to be in movement. It designates activeness, volatility, self-creativity, productivity and unpredictability. There are, in other words, two planes of material movements. Elizabeth Grosz (2010, 150–151) insists upon this dual character of materiality: at its most contracted and in its most determined form, materiality is easily calculable, regular and predictable, fully actual. It is about fixed entities, about objects that have their extrinsic relations to each other; about isolatable systems even. But in its most indeterminate form materiality exhibits hesitation, uncertainty and openness. It is about flows that come together, connect and diverge in unpredictable ways; of flows that are mutant and tend to elude or escape the systems. In Deleuzian vocabulary, the former is called an extensive realm, and the latter is that of the intensive (Deleuze 1994b, 222–261). To put it in yet other terms: here matter is rather a *force* than a power. As Brian Massumi (1992, 6) sums it: "*Force is not to be confused with power. Power is the domestication of the force. Force in its wild state arrives from outside to break constraints and open new vistas. Power builds walls.*" Matter as force, then, is that which is by definition "*moving, occurrent, affective, qualitative, potentializing, becoming, spontaneous*" (Massumi 2011, 130).

Whereas from the beginning I have underlined that the art processes I work with are unpredictably moving materialities, it is possible to characterise my research material in other terms than creative flows. This way of characterising might be useful or indispensable even to give the reader a picture of the extensive fieldwork material that this study builds on. So for a while I welcome more clearly defined numbers, mediums and themes into the discussion.

The fieldwork material for this study extends over a long period of time, from 2002 to 2007. Within this time my research took its first steps and also found its focus on materialities of art. This is to say that the three artists, Susana Nevado, Helena Hietanen and Marjukka Irni, I have been working with were not chosen because their works appealed to me in some peculiarly material sense. In the beginning, I was interested in artistic processes—I wanted to participate in the processes of art-making, and not to look at processes of art only retrospectively from the viewpoint of meaning-making. Furthermore, I wanted to have enough variety, not to work with a single artist and not to make a medium-specific study that would concentrate only on painters, sculptors, or photographers. It was the practicalities of an art historian's working life that led me to the specific

artists: teaching, earlier research and an invitation to participate in a residency with a focus on artist–researcher collaboration.

I will begin in the middle, as I will do many times in the following chapters of this dissertation. Between the years 2003–2005, in the middle of my lengthy fieldwork period, I worked with painter Susana Nevado (b. 1967) by observing and participating in her seven exhibition processes mostly executed in Finland.[21] The second glimpse I offered in formulating the research questions for this study is part of my fieldwork data gathered by following Nevado's art processes that theme-wise critically address such issues as motherhood, bodily materiality, multiculturalism, family albums and Catholic practices of religion. Materially, her works open painting into installation and make use of recycled materials such as book covers and underwear.

I first met Madrid-born painter Susana Nevado who had lived in Finland since 1994 when I taught a visual studies course targeted at professional artists in the spring of 2002. Nevado was an enthusiastic student yearning for change in her habitual ways of painting—and thus was open to all kinds of new projects, one of which came to be our collaboration. During the following years I regularly visited her studio located in Turku, Finland, photographed her works in progress and recorded our conversations concerning them.[22] This is to say that I did not do any structured or semi-structured interviews—instead, I wanted our conversations to float as free as possible without pre-set concepts or coordinates. I did this in order to offer Nevado a possibility to express her views in an everyday mode, that is, in the way she usually talks about her art-making. However, from the beginning I was explicit that I was interested in the *processes* of art-making. Significantly, the materiality of art-making was not an issue in the beginning—the focus on materiality is a result of my fieldwork period with Nevado and the other two artists.

My collaborations with sculptor Helena Hietanen (b. 1963) are remarkably smaller in number. Yet the two projects, both connected to her experiences of breast cancer and religiosity, have an important role: the first one, a light installation co-produced with Jaakko Niemelä titled *Heaven Machine* (2005–2006) opens my investigation into materialities of art and the second one, a series of photographic self-portraits titled *Sketches* (1999–) concludes it. What characterises Hietanen as a sculptor is her wide-ranging innovativeness concerning materials: she has crocheted lace from light cable and sculpted with light and the flesh of her own body. Experimenting with materials and drawing are central to her working processes. Her works often have political dimensions, but not explicitly so—and less than in Nevado's case. When it comes to my materials, in the case of the installation—that was already partly introduced as the first glimpse of the art processes offered—they include a few discussions with the artist and a participation in the artist's talk event, where I encountered the work in situ. *Sketches* for its part, is a work in progress that

has extended to my research concerning it: I have discussed the work and my papers on it with Hietanen several times both in person and by e-mail, so that it might be claimed that our correspondence has not only circulated around the project but have become part of it.[23] My work history with Hietanen started already during the third year of my studies, so my analyses of her work stretch throughout my academic career. [24]

Photographer and art therapist Marjukka Irni (b. 1971) is the third artist whose art processes are included in this study. Irni's work was introduced as the third glimpse of the art processes this study works with: *Sappho wants to save you* (2006–2010) started as a community art project comprising of a demonstration performance and a preaching event in a public space and subsequently developing into an installation piece including a video and a series of photographic full-portraits. Thematically, Irni's work is about lesbianism and sexual politics. She has read a great deal of feminist and queer theory and has also connected her theoretical interest into her art-making. The materials that I have gathered with Irni offer my study a new angle: whilst Nevado and Hietanen certainly do research work for their art, they are more art- than theory-oriented in their explorations. The art–theory connection was present from the beginning since we started our collaboration as part of a residency program run by the local photography centre *Peri* that in the year 2005 was centred around the theme of artist–researcher interaction. We did not, however, read theory together, after all her interest was more in queer theory and mine in art theory, already steadily Deleuze-Guattarian at that time. Instead, with Irni I got to put both queer and art theories into practice as I participated in the making of *Sappho wants to save you* for example by modelling for it.

Having now brought forward the considerable diversity of my material by representing it in numbers, mediums, themes and forms of enquiry, I must add that by no means does this material attempt to be all inclusive, only varied enough for developing a thorough argumentation. Although I began this second part of my introduction with philosophical definitions of materiality, I want to highlight again that it was not philosophical understandings that made me aware of the moving matters of art. It was art processes themselves that called for new kinds of material-processual understandings. Thus, the material I have worked with does not so much provide me with an array of examples nor some kind of raw material on which art theories could be imposed upon. Rather this materiality in movement has fundamentally participated in all of the conceptual adjustments and creations that I will bring forth. It has incited them by way of its own movements. Looking for conceptualisations that would affirm and respond to my perceptions I came across the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari whose vocabulary seemed to attain something that was missing in many other bodies of work. In their work and in the work of their followers I found the language of movement and matter, as Simon O'Sullivan (2006a, 54) so aptly describes.

Deleuze and Guattari's vocabulary of movement and matter, however, does not cover solely art. Typical for the process philosophies of difference, in their thinking matter is not only the matter of art, nor is movement only the movement of art.[25] In any case, art—not only visual art but literature, music, and cinema as well—is a common reference and source of inspiration throughout their work. Indeed, only rare books, exemplified by such essayistic oeuvres as Deleuze's *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (2003) and their collaboration titled *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* (1986), stay in the realm of art. For example, in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987)—the book that my study owes to the most both in its theoretical underpinnings and in its style—politics, semiotics, linguistics, subjectivity, collectivity, capitalism and war are grasped without hesitation alongside and inseparably from the arts.[26] This is to say that in their treatise materiality is never solely a matter of art, it is far more encompassing than that. In fact, it is all encompassing. This is made clear in the following quote in which Deleuze and Guattari claim that bodies—and here, as was just explicated, bodies are both human and non-human ones, cultural institutions and biological systems—should not be understood principally in terms of ideology, but as matter. Against the dialectics of Marxist materialism that traces ideologies, they claim: "*It is a problem not of ideology but of pure matter, a phenomenon of physical, biological, psychic, social and cosmic matter*" (ibid., 165). For them, matter is not only physical and biological, concrete stuff of bodies and things, it is also psychic and social, even cosmic: it relates bodies to each other, it is relational.

In their *vitalist* understanding that comes with a long history of materialist thinking ranging from Epicurus to Hume and from Spinoza to Nietzsche and Bergson, matter might be ubiquitous, but it is not the same everywhere. It acquires ever-differentiating expressions and appearances that are situational and relational: "[*Y*]*ou do not know what a body … can do, in a given encounter, a given arrangement, a given combination. … So [a body] is never separable from its relations with the world*" (Deleuze 1988, 125).[27] Sometimes matter petrifies into more solid structures, but never is the chance of change completely erased. For Deleuze and Guattari, creativity and change are inherent qualities of matter. Kingdoms fall and dictatorships do not last forever. Even marble sculptures crumble and granite columns deteriorate. And how figural and solid in its representationality a painting might seem, go close enough and you can see that it is all blurred, a somewhat loose aggregate of strokes of paint.

In Deleuze-Guattari (1987, 43), matter is matter even, and especially, when it appears to disappear into thin air: they speak of flows, fluxes, molecules and particles, even subatomic and submolecular particles, of pure intensities, that are often imperceptible. *Affects*, then, are inseparable of their understanding of

matter. For is not affect something that per se disappears into thin air as it is so hard to grasp, always in between, in transition? In Deleuze and Guattari (1994, 169–173) affect stands for a direct (im)material contact, and for (nonhuman) becomings in which humans open their systems to the forces outside them. While affect is elemental to arts—it is expressed as palpable sensations in the arts (ibid.), it is equally elemental for all being as becoming. Affect designates openness and vitality, the capacity to change: "*if there were no escape, no excess…, no fade-out to infinity, the universe would be without potential, pure entropy, death*" (Massumi 2002b, 35). Affect, therefore, is about the capacities of a body to act, to engage and to connect with the world. This understanding owes to Spinoza (1996, 70), who famously claimed: "*by affect I understand affections of the body, by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time the idea of these affections.*"[28] Thus affect is never only a psychological phenomenon or cultural emotion (emotions are captured, grounded, made-known-to-all affects); it moves and transforms bodies in a concrete, yet imperceptible sense.

It is useful to relate Deleuze-Guattarian affect with theories of representation. As Barbara Bolt (2004a, 171) puts it in her book *Art beyond Representation*, representation is a concept and practice that signals a gap and absence. When something is represented, it is *not* here and *not* now (ibid.). The emphasis on affectivity addresses the very gap: affect is the zone of indiscernibility between stimulus and response, content and effect, object and viewer. Deleuze and Guattari's vitalist materialism or material vitalism that foregrounds direct connections and the immediacy of affect is, then, a non-representational theory (see e.g. Thrift 2008).

Deleuze and Guattari's materialism relates to representational thinking also in another sense. In representational theories, the same sort of representations can be identified across different media. For example, in the field of feminism, representations of "fallen women" were identified time and again during the 1970's and 1980's, first in literature, in the visual arts and the media (see e.g. Nochlin 1978; Parker & Pollock 1981; Betterton ed. 1987), and then a bit later towards the 1990's also in music, in operatic works for example (see e.g. Clément 1988). These analyses are often backed up by an understanding of cultural artefacts as texts; it is on the textual surface that representations are detected and recognised. Although they are *re*presentations, images and figures represented again and again in and through different media, representational theories rarely emphasise medium-specificity; rather it is cultural powers, changing understandings at work which are stressed. This is to say that whilst representations are never exactly the same, something stable is assumed, a common ground so to speak, against which its particular variations or re-iterations can be measured. In contrast, the branch of Deleuze-Guattarian materialism that I am evoking, stresses the singularity of each act of expression.

Here singularity is not a synonym for particularity since the latter can only appear in relation to the general.[29]

In this study, singularity signifies that which is not reducible to general meanings or somehow general circumstances. In a word, the singular is irreducible, one of its kind. Here, the singularity and irreducibility of an art process are termed an event: "*There is only* this *event, and* this *one, and* this *other one—none of them exactly alike. … The event retains a quality of 'this-ness', an unreproducible being-only-itself, that stands over and above its objective definition"* (Massumi 2002b, 222).[30] Let us return to the three glimpses of art processes offered in the first pages of this introduction to think this over. I asked: What if the volatile installation of haze and light was interpreted as a representation of breast cancer only? What if a long process of painting was reduced to the images that inspired it in the beginning? And what if the multimedia installation of video and photographs was reduced only to textual content? I then argued that these reductions or identifications missed what made the processes special. In other words, it missed their singularity, their affectivity, their matter in movement. Put differently, it missed the "*actual presentation of lived relation*" (ibid., 221). Thus an event, as it is understood here, is never something that could be reduced to its material structures, contexts or textual message; instead an event co-emerges as an unpredictable complex of materialities on the move—forces.

As we have now approached Deleuze-Guattarian understandings of matter in terms that exceed art, let us move to a terrain that comes very close to that of art-making: that of an artisan producing her work. This is to give an example of what an art-event in its complexity might consist of. In Deleuze and Guattari (1986, 1987), artisans are not technicians but creative workers that collaborate with their materials—as do artists too (see also Deleuze 2003; Guattari 1995).[31] More precisely, artisans are followers of their materials—materials that are essentially "*vagabond, anexact, and yet rigorous*" instead of being fixed, metric, formal essences (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 407).[32] As opposed to imposing a form upon matter, artisans must follow matter: each piece of wood, for example, has its singular fibres—how dense or porous, elastic or resistant it is owes to the piece's singular history, how much sunshine or rain water it has taken in when growing, for instance.[33] Importantly, the artisan would not get far with her work if she did not follow the other flows besides those of the piece of wood (ibid., 409): beyond and before the two-party communion, there are technical skills, the disciplinary system that provides them, a market economy with sellers, suppliers, buyers and transportation, specifically designed tools and also physical capabilities of the carpenter that take part in the material process that may produce a product, such as a wooden chair (Massumi 1992, 15–20).[34] This is to say that no material flow is independent; semiotic and social flows meet with and mould it (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 22–23). The production

of the wooden chair for example, then, is a fundamentally collaborative event. This is what the complexity of an event stands for: there are so many elements, forces, on the move, entangling in surprising combinations, pushing, moving and transforming each other, that it would be truly unfair to interpret the event through its objective definitions only, or as a representation of something.[35] Intriguingly, this does not concern only events of art-making, but for example those of encountering art.

What I have sketched above comes gradually down to the question of how materiality is, and this is, of course, an ontological proposition. But instead of an ontology of being, new materialism evokes an *ontology of becoming*. There is no stable being, whether it comes to materialities of art or anything else. Being is about dynamism, about constant movement no matter how imperceptible this movement might be. In other words, what this study focuses on is how art-events happen—how they become. This sort of ontological thinking is not abstract in the sense that it would offer a general understanding of art-events. As said, being is always situational and relational. So the ontological take as it is understood here could not be further from essentialism. New materialist theorists have developed various ways to emphasise this. To stress the continuous contingency of being, they speak not only of an ontology of becoming, but also of ontologies of chance (Cheah 2010) and change, and even of new ontology (Coole & Frost 2010). In their respective ways these conceptions propose emergences that are surprising by nature, unpredictable and open to change not in terms of linear cause and effect but by complex causality and chance. New ontology, for its part, refers to a world renewing itself continuously. The continual renewing of the world sets the task for new ontology: to create concepts that would "*affirm matter's immanent vitality*" (ibid., 8).

New materialist emergences do not, however, flow undisrupted. Deleuze and Guattari's is not an ontology of ever-fluid, infinite flows, or it is not that only. Disruptions, breaks and cuts are central to it. Changes, renewals, becomings do not take place without them.

How, then, to think this sort of ontological force? The blunt answer is that it is not quite thinkable in itself. But still, it would be wrongheaded to say that it is ungraspable altogether. Whilst unthinkable in itself, it is graspable, often powerfully palpable through things: "*as the becoming-new in things, in art*" (Zepke 2005, 223). This is where Deleuze-Guattarian ontology connects with aesthetics, and indeed this is what makes the two inseparable from each other. An ontology of change and the new becomes graspable in and as (aesthetic) experience only (ibid.).[36] In this study this (aesthetic) experience is called *sensation*, and it will

be defined in more detail in chapter 1. However, I have already referred to it by calling forth the sensuous proximity that is enabled by following. In other words, what my followings reach for is an understanding of art primarily as an ontological event of sensation.

When it comes to studies of contemporary art, I am not alone in taking a move in a more 'aesthetic' direction. In his book, *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thinking beyond Representation*, Simon O'Sullivan (2006a, 38–40) connects aesthetics to the re-affirmation of the specificity of arts. As he puts it, "*in reading we miss... what art does best: the aesthetic*" (ibid., 40). By the aesthetic O'Sullivan refers to the material and ontological forces of art, that is, to the forces that make art processes singular events that may challenge our habitual ways of being (see also O'Sullivan 2010). In the field of feminist art history Marsha Meskimmon has made a turn to aesthetics as well—by connecting it to situated and embodied processes of making and encountering art.[37] In her book, *Women Making Art: History, Subjectivity, Aesthetics* (2003, 133) she endeavours a feminist project of "*re-visiting aesthetics as a field that is intrinsically concerned with the body, the senses and the interaction between perceptual and conceptual understanding*."

What is intriguing about Meskimmon's approach is that it bridges sensation with critical thinking—to be more precise, with *affirmative criticality* as she has recently termed it (Meskimmon 2011, 91–93). Affirmative criticality is not based on the intellectual exercise of negative criticism. Instead, it is incited by artworks that operate in the material registers of affect and sensation. In other words, affirmative criticality rises as works of art *move* us—both bodily and intellectually: "*we cannot predetermine either the subtle shifts involved in the making of artworks, or the full force of their impact upon participant spectators*" (ibid., 92). This brings us back to the intermingling of ontology and aesthetics introduced above. For what we sense, and are moved by, is art emerging, becoming, in other words, the otherwise unthinkable ontological forces. Therefore my new materialist approach may be best described as *onto-aesthetics*.[38]

Thinking-with: methods, contexts, chapters

The third and last section of the introduction explains in more detail the way this study is composed: the principles of working with my materials and how the contemporary research contexts intertwine with the art processes to which my research owes so indispensably.

In *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics*, Rosi Braidotti (2006, 170–173) sketches a methodology that draws on Deleuze's way of approaching both artistic and philosophical works. Braidotti speaks against aiming at too 'truthful' accounts of that which is researched. Her message is that no checking list against the

original is needed whether citing from theory or art (ibid., 171). Paraphrasing Braidotti (ibid., 173), loyalty is not owed to an artist or philosopher but to what their works *can do*. This is to say that art should not be understood in the confines of its objective facts, but by following the connections it suggests. Loyalty, therefore, is not about paying respect to the deeds of certain esteemed figures, about getting their understandings right and correct, about being a dutiful, faithful daughter indeed, but about allowing the work of art—or theory—to work, letting it show what it is capable of. This methodology insists on highly creative and generative interconnections that mix and match, mingle and multiply beyond the truth factor. Whilst this method may be called associative, it is not associative in any superficial sense. Rather it is about elaborating on the sensuous contact, on the potentialities intensively felt in the moment of encounter, that is, about working creatively with the sensuous contact towards new methods and concepts.

In terms of following, this means openness to where art can take us. To follow is a wonderfully ambiguous act; not emphatically active, nor altogether passive. As such it challenges the two methodological standpoints that this study respectfully distances itself from: the tradition of ethnographic observation that was once seen merely as a neutral act of documentation and the 'postmodern' politics of positioning that stresses the situatedness of the reader. Whilst the last decades have shown plenty of well-deserved criticism of the neutrality of ethnographic writing (see e.g. Clifford & Marcus eds 1986; Behar & Gordon eds 1995), critiques of positioning are far fewer, and newer, in comparison (see e.g. Massumi 2002b & 2011; Coole & Frost 2010). In fact, positioning, or the situatedness of the researcher, has itself served as an answer to the problem of neutrality. Whereas 'traditional' ethnographic accounts rely on being truthful to the data, in the case of positioning truthfulness is replaced by the viewpoint defined by the situatedness and the location of the researcher.

Radical empiricism that counters both the objectivism of earlier ethnography and the subjectivism of more recent positionality is what I lean on here.[39] Radical empiricism born out of American pragmatism in the work of William James (1912) and elaborated on by such Deleuze-Guattarian thinkers as Brian Massumi (2002b, 2011) is an indispensable companion on my way to a new materialist account of contemporary art (see also Manning 2009). In radical empiricism collected data is not just discrete data that then needs to be conceptualised, connected in a "*subsequent mental operation*" (Massumi 2002b, 231), in an act of reasoning so to speak. The data, the world, is already connected, relational, and before we cognitively start to process this we have already felt it in our bodies. Data is always more than it appears to be; it is not about facts and truths, but about intensities, potentialities and relationalities.[40] Processuality, then, is fundamental to radical empiricism. But it is not the processuality of changing viewpoints that counts. It is the radical processuality of the world,

the virtualities and potentialities not yet actualised that we must grasp: "*Never the empirical question of 'what' something is… [but] the pragmatic question of 'how' things go*" (Massumi 2010, 13). This has serious consequences for my task of fashioning methods and concepts that affirm the material, corporeal and affective qualities of art. It means that I will not so much be conceptualising that which *has already happened*. But rather, that which *is emerging* is integral to my ways of conceptualisation. However, I am not claiming that my conceptualisations somehow just appeared when I was collecting my field data in studios or exhibition spaces. Far from this. My study is radically empiricist because it takes seriously the intensities, the specificities of process I felt in the field. This is, once again, to say that it was the active materialities of art encountered on the field that before anything else called for new concepts.

The scarce amount of Deleuze-Guattarian ethnographies that already exist could be identified as radically empiricist, although not all of the studies characterise themselves us such. Arun Saldanha's (2007) *Psychedelic White: Goa Trance and the Viscosity of Race* is one of the first endeavours to combine ethnography with Deleuze-Guattarian concept creation. Saldanha offers new concepts for understanding race as a material and intensive event. What impelled Saldanha to think race anew was a specific music culture, Goa trance, and its inseparability from the multicultural but mostly white tourism in the coastal Indian village of Anjuna. Julia Mahler's (2008) *Lived Temporalities: Exploring Duration in Guatemala,* on the other hand, sets itself in Central America and builds on years of participatory observation of local lives to offer alternatives to the capitalist understandings of temporality prevalent in Western modernity. Both studies offer extensive amounts of extracts from their field data, but whereas in Saldanha's book lengthy citations, images and maps are interwoven with the conceptual work, Mahler keeps hers principally separate thus constituting an empirical-theoretical binary throughout her book. My way of constructing this study is closer to Saldanha's than Mahler's method. I will not present methodological tools or conceptual devices without relating them to an art process or processes. In other words, my methodological or conceptual propositions are concretely connected to and also inextricable from the art processes they are inspired by. In this effort, my aim might be understood to be broader than Saldanha's as I do not aim only for conceptual change. Offering both methodological and conceptual insights, I wish to address art history as a discipline and attend especially to its treatise of contemporary art. This is to revise art history from the point of view of art itself by focusing on how art and artists work.[41]

As stressed from the beginning, every methodological approach and conceptual device I propose is incited by an art process or processes I have participated in. In *Molecular Encounters*, it was participation in Helena Hietanen's light installation *Heaven Machine* (2005) co-produced with Jaakko Niemelä that made me question the prevalent understanding of discursivity crystallised in positioning and representation as critical tools suitable for approaching artworks of any sort (chapter 1). Here a *molecular encounter* indicates an approach that contests the distanced, analytical strategy that brings the object of research alive by surrounding it with multiple discursive contexts, framings. Moreover, it challenges the approach in which art is conceived as a representation of something, instead suggesting that art moves and works by itself, beyond interpretive assistance from the researcher. Molecular encounter thus serves as an umbrella term for a method and a variety of concepts that seek for a more material, more transformative contact between matters of art and its viewers than either positioning or representation allows. As the first part of the study, *Molecular Encounters* bears the task of familiarising the reader with a set of Deleuze-Guattarian conceptions that the rest of the study works with.

When I started my research, Deleuze-Guattarian musings on contemporary art, meaning visual art and not cinema, were if not altogether non-existent, then at least rare, singular yet very devoted bursts of interest here and there (e.g. Purdom 2000; Massumi 2002b; Zagala 2002). This probably reflects the fact that Deleuze's and Guattari's and Deleuze-Guattari's own dealings with contemporary art are next to non-existent; they tend to refer, especially in their later works, to refer to artists of the modernist canon such as Paul Klee, Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh for example (O'Sullivan & Zepke 2010, 2). However, the field of Deleuze-Guattarian art studies has widened as my study has proceeded. The last five, six years have shown considerable interest in Deleuze-Guattarian takes on contemporary art. Barbara Bolt's *Art beyond Representation* (2004a), Stephen Zepke's *Art as Abstract Machine* (2005) and Simon O'Sullivan's *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari* (2006a) are pioneering theoretical works that by way of their own example have encouraged and indispensably assisted in the making of *Molecular Encounters*.[42] These books present the first Deleuze-Guattarian approaches to the critical study of visual art, mainly modern to contemporary.[43] They all insightfully introduce and delicately study a plethora of concepts and ideas at the heart of Deleuze-Guattarian machinery. Although at times both dense and intense with examples, these works are mainly concerned with theory and philosophy. My own treatise is more empirically oriented. Since there are already available philosophical accounts that focus on Deleuze-Guattarian concepts useful for studying art, I have taken as my task

to look further: to participate with art to adjust these conceptions and also to suggest new ones based on my participations. In this effort, many of the essays in O'Sullivan's and Zepke's mutual undertaking *Deleuze and Contemporary Art* (2010 eds) have been inspirational. What *Molecular Encounters* does, then, is both introduce the critique of representationalism and promote non-human agencies in the wake of earlier Deleuze-Guattarian studies of art, however, rising not from theory alone but also from problems posed by art. This is writing with art as concrete as it can get. So let us continue with art.

The following of Susana Nevado's painting process that took more than six months offers another angle to my handling of art processes as molecular encounters beyond the mastery of the human (chapter 2). The long-term participatory observation of this painting process made me question the purposefulness of representational analysis as it revealed how unpredictable and unintentional, that is, beyond the hold of the artist and cultural discursive registers, the process was. It urged me to think about the ways and concepts through which art historical analysis could take into account and pay respect to the material transformations that concretely make up what art historians often tend to see if not as the intentional then at least as the discursive aspects of art. Especially Bolt's (2004ab) study that makes use of an artist's experience in calling for a materialist ontology of art has been important here. In this sense, *Molecular Encounters* propagates the understanding of matter as a creative, self-differentiating force in art processes.

Machinic Collaborations: Materialities of Art in the Making continues elaborating a vocabulary that freshens and complexifies understandings of (contemporary) art-making. In short, it is dedicated to various aspects and phases of art's "studio-life". More concretely, it discusses the events of creation that took place at Susana Nevado's studio during a three-year period and within seven exhibition projects by concentrating on the visual documentation of the works in progress as well as on audio-recordings of how the artist explains her processes of working. The overall theme of the four chapters is the material emergence of artworks through a set of heterogeneous collaborations.

My research material of Nevado's studio life suggests a new angle to the art historical research of studio practices that according to James Elkins (2000, 194) has focused on sociality at the expense of the fact that painters mostly work alone, in privacy. In *Machinic Collaborations*, the social is inclusive of or open to the participation of nonhuman collaborators of art-making—energy-flows of bodies, technical capabilities and physico-chemical compositions of paint, canvas and paper scraps among other things. This, in fact, comes close to Elkins' (ibid., 193) understanding of studio-working as "*a kind of immersion in substances, a wonder and a delight in their unexpected shapes and feels*". As contemporary language lacks words to describe such processes, Elkins looks at the tradition of alchemy, which centres around transmutations of matter.

Whereas Elkins speaks for forgetting "real" chemistry because artists often work without scientific knowledge of ingredients and are rather led by blind experimentation or by the feel of the paint, fuelled by Nevado's words and images I will work with Deleuze and Guattari's elaborations of molecular biology beyond exact natural scientific uses. By bringing Nevado's sayings and makings into contact with Deleuze-Guattarian philosophy I will get an exquisite chance to readdress issues such as artistic influences (chapter 3), the autonomy of art (chapter 4), the physicality of art-making (chapter 5) and the art-life symbiosis (chapter 6). When reworked and redefined in a (new) materialist manner these issues once condemned as old-fashioned become central concerns of art-making; of art-making as machinic collaboration.

Although art processes are not as common subjects of art historical inquiry as art objects and their meanings, they are nevertheless not foreign to art history. Whereas the recent phenomenon of artistic research (see e.g. Bolt & Barrett eds 2008) has certainly raised interest in the issue within the field of art history, social history of art has a much longer commitment to the processes of making, albeit more than anything else, from the organisational viewpoint of patronage systems and art education. However, even social history of art has tended to privilege "*consumption over production*" (Doy 1998, 87). What has encouraged my study of art processes the most are the timely tendencies of feminist art history to focus on art-making and questions of agency. In their particular ways Rosemary Betterton's (ed. 2004) *Unframed: Practices and Politics of Women's Contemporary Painting* that strongly gives a voice to the painters themselves, Marsha Meskimmon's (2003) *Women Making Art* in which the materiality of making is constantly present as well as Anne Wagner's (1996, 2005) and Briony Fer's (2006, 2009) inquiries of the processual aesthetics of art-making, have all contributed to my task of re-theorising (women's) processes of art-making.[44] Whilst I am not claiming that the sex of the artist would be the most crucial denominator in women's art-making—remember my insistence on the *complexity* of art-events—there is a political point in studying women making art, especially when engaging with theory and particularly with Deleuze and Guattari. For too rarely has Deleuze-Guattarian thinking, or art-theoretical thinking more generally, been elaborated in connection with women artists' work. Instead, there has been a tendency—an oedipal tendency even—to obediently revisit over and again the work of male artists such as Francis Bacon, Paul Klee and Jackson Pollock whom Deleuze and Guattari themselves consider.[45]

The last part of the study, *A Triptych of Affection: Work of Art beyond Meaning* offers a third angle to understand the materiality of art. With an analysis of the affectivity of art powered by observing, modelling and writing, I propose that these processes, which all take advantage of the 'still' medium of photography can nevertheless be sensed as moving. In their respective ways, Susana Nevado's

D2I (2003) that comprises of fifteen mixed media paintings and a reliquary of milk teeth (chapter 7), Marjukka Irni's *Sappho wants to save you* (2006–2010), an installation that combines life-size photographic portraits and a preacher video (chapter 8) and Helena Hietanen's *Sketches* (1999), a series of photographic auto-portraits of the artist posing as Christ (chapter 9) configure affectivity with reference to religious practices. With their diverse contemporary topics ranging from shedding milk-teeth to queer politics and breast cancer survival the three art processes invoke a reconsideration of the grand question of what art can do.

Whilst my take on the issue owes to Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 4) in its insistence on investigating what art can do rather than what it signifies, the newly raised interest in the presence and agency of art within the field of art history and visual culture has certainly encouraged it too. Keith Moxey (2008, 142), for example, has termed this development as an iconic turn that joins "*the dimension of the presence to our understanding of the image, calling for analyses of media and form that add richness and texture to established forms of interpretation*". What Moxey (ibid., 143) emphasises is that it is the visual objects themselves that demand new methods and understandings as "*they refuse to be contained by the interpretations placed on them*". With this choice of words, he endows images with an anthropomorphic agency that is also implicated in W.J.T Mitchell's (2005) famous question "what do pictures want?" (rather than what we want from them).[46] I share Moxey and Mitchell's fascination with visual agencies, but I carefully try not to anthropomorphise the visual-material doings. Rather than speaking about what pictures want or what they refuse I formulate expressions that do not refer so straightforwardly to human emotional 'dramas'.[47] In this regard, Erin Manning's (2009) ways of articulating movements and actions prior to (re)cognition in dance and other forms of art have been insightful (esp. chapter 8).

But let me return to the iconic turn, which reminds how closely the question of what art can do is connected in western thinking with the Christian religion: whilst bearing reference to the icon in the Peircean semiotic system, it also alludes to pre-reformation Christianity that endowed agency to icons and other religious objects. Method-wise the three chapters make radical moves between the timely undertakings of contemporary materialist philosophy and the various religious practices around images from the late ancient Christianity to the times of Reformation and further to the contemporary era of tele-evangelism. This is not to promote the transcendentalism implicated in Christian understandings of art; quite the opposite. In *A Triptych of Affection*, the sensuous connections at least potentially present in religious practices around relics (chapter 7), preaching (chapter 8) and transfiguration (chapter 9) are elaborated in an admittedly blasphemous manner towards a material-affective understanding of art based on immanence. Thus, rather than offering

three retrospective readings of these processes by contextualising the objects of study in a set framework, I try to carve out what kind of conceptualisations they evoke by way of their own being.

Before engaging with the art processes on a full scale, one last note about the notion of contemporary art. Here contemporary art does not simply signify the art of our times. Whilst contemporary art might stem from current affairs, it does not follow them obediently: it always brings something new to the world—and hence calls forth the future. As such contemporary art is "*an ontological rather than chronological term, marking the emergence of something new as the construction and expression of being in becoming*" (Zepke 2010, 63; see also O'Sullivan 2006b). This future orientation of contemporary art is its most compelling characteristic. It puts forth the following questions: What kind of futures can contemporary art open to us? And more specifically, what kinds of methodological and conceptual futures might it offer to art history?

What now follows are elaborations on my followings of selected flows of contemporary art; methodological choices and conceptual devices that I hope sustain the material-affective movement of art, and *flow together* with it.

PART I

MOLECULAR ENCOUNTERS

Questioning the Mastery of the Human

PART I

INTRODUCTION

> *We cannot help but view the world in terms of solids, as things. But [then] we leave behind something untapped of the fluidity of the world, the movements, vibrations, transformations that occur below the threshold of perception and calculation and outside the relevance of our practical concerns. [Yet] … we have … access to this profusion of vibration that underlies the solidity of things.*
>
> Elizabeth Grosz in *Time Travels*, 136

> *It is … not enough … to propose a new representation of movement; representation is already mediation. Rather, it is a question of producing within the work a movement capable of affecting the mind outside of all representation; it is a question of making movement itself a work, without interposition; of substituting direct signs for mediate representations, of inventing vibrations, rotations, whirlings, gravitations, dances or leaps…*
>
> Gilles Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*, 8 [1]

Let me begin by stepping in the middle of art in action. Two encounters in which artworks slipped out of their commonsensical solidity and in which moving matters of art reigned by means of rotation, vibration and direct signs open access to the dynamics of the following chapters. In an art museum, I encountered a light installation that evolved around its moving material existence, the subtle matters of light and haze filling, suffusing the exhibition space. Helena Hietanen and Jaakko Niemelä's *Heaven Machine* (2005) did not stay still for a moment: its minute molecules of oxygen and nitrogen, water in the form of haze, moved unceasingly, finding their way everywhere. As rotating beams of light traversed the room, *Heaven Machine* immersed the audience into its movement—into its material (com)motion. During my visits to the painter Susana Nevado's studio, I engaged in a material movement of different sorts: a painting emerging through the layers of paint, varnish, lace and paper scraps that reacted and transformed each other—made each other. Whilst this movement included representational materials, such as pin up figures and poses derived from religious imagery, in the end, these did not appear as separate signs inscribed on the canvas, but were themselves active

matters among other matters making the work. The same complexity holds true for the artist's role in the emergence: Nevado surely had her hands in the process and some tentative intentions even, but these did not rule the project. What emerged was a surprise for the artist too.

Questions central to the two chapters comprising the first part of the study arise from the above encounters. First of all comes the methodological question of encountering matter in movement. How to get beyond the binary setting of a subject interpreting art and a separate object of interpretation that so obviously falls short in the case of *Heaven Machine*? In other words, how to find proper expressions to describe the subtle and delicate, yet rather intrusive material existence of *Heaven Machine* and its immersive movement that grasped the bodies of the audience so palpably? In Nevado's painting process, the question becomes: How to conceptualise the matters of art moving the work, making the painting? And also, how to get beyond the binary of an active, mastering artist and a passive material understood merely as a medium for human acts? What brings all these questions together is the issue of reciprocity and movement of bodies involved in art processes, that is, between the human and nonhuman bodies of art. Another conjoining matter is the question of agency: Who or what possesses it in an art process? Or is agency at all a suitable concept for such complex and multidirectional processes? The two encounters also share a certain amount of unpredictability: as these are processes—works on the move—and not completed objects, we never know beforehand what might happen. Thus an approach open to transformations and exchanges of all kinds is needed.

In one way or another, all the questions and considerations drawn from the two encounters come together in the term molecular. Phrased differently, for me, molecularity as it is conceived in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1983 & 1987) and taken to the realm of art-making, for example in the work of Barbara Bolt (2004a, 44–48), forms the most eloquent and convincing account to conceptualise material action and exchange involved in the above art processes. Concisely put, in Deleuze-Guattarian thinking the seemingly rigid borders of things and subjects are continuously traversed and pierced by molecular flows: nothing remains solid, independent, immobile. Molecularity, then, designates a persistent differential movement of the world; and crucially a movement that is not teleological but creative and open-ended.

Whilst one of the major inspirations of Deleuze-Guattarian philosophy of the molecular comes from molecular biology,[2] nature or natural sciences are not the only realms it is applicable in. This is also what Henri Bergson suggested about *élan vital*—a concept central to the development of the molecular.[3] Rather, "*[m]olecular movements … thwart through the great worldwide organization*" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 216). Despite the fact that this citation speaks precisely of political or societal organisation, in Deleuze and Guattari's writing and in the writing of their followers—both dutiful and undutiful

ones—molecularity crosses everything and everybody including the realms of subjectivation and the arts.[4] It is a question of existence, of ontology.

Molecularity lies at the heart of Deleuze and Guattari's materialism that to a great extent is an elaboration of Baruch Spinoza's 16th century monism:

> *Everyone knows the first principle of Spinoza: one substance for all attributes. But we also know the third, fourth or fifth principle: one Nature for all bodies, one Nature for all individuals, a nature that is itself an individual varying in an infinite number of ways.* (Deleuze 1988, 122)

It might be contended that the univocal substance matter of the world—Nature—that endlessly differentiates and individuates in Spinoza finds a new expression many centuries later as molecularity in Deleuze and Guattari.[5] However, today molecularity should not be conceived as Spinoza did, as an "*affirmation of a single substance, but rather [as] the laying out of a common … plane on which all bodies, all minds, and all individuals are situated*" (ibid.). Molecularity is the moving, individuating matter of the world, 'shared' or inhabited by human and nonhuman bodies alike. In art processes, then, the bodies of viewers and the bodies of artworks inhabit and emerge on a common molecular plane. Therefore, a daring claim could be made: it is at the molecular level that the human and the nonhuman encounter in a most fundamental, direct manner.

The molecular is no metaphor, nor does it dwell in the realm of imagination. It is not a representation of movement either. Molecular processes are always real, "social-Real" as Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 215) stress. Molecularity is social-Real since molecules are never separate entities, but assemblages in themselves, the combinations of which are never permanent. The world truly consists of vibrant matter,[6] we have only learned to conceive it in very different terms: as solids, as things, in terms of (binary) organisation and structure. Even the strictest organisation or system, be it political, social, semiotic or natural never stays the same. There is nothing unchangeable. The movement, transformation, deformation—becoming—that a stone, to give an example favoured by Spinoza (see Bennett 2010a, 2) goes through during hundreds of thousands of years might be slower than that of artworks, words or philosophical concepts, but it is a change anyway. This change necessitates an encounter. Something must enter the organism, affect it. Whilst there is no guarantee of the nature of that affection—whether it will be positive or negative and in which terms, it is self-evident that there is no becoming without an *encounter*.

As I have now proposed some tentative definitions for the molecular as a material becoming and argued that an encounter is what a molecular becoming presumes, it is vital also to unfold the joint notion of *molecular encounter* as it encapsulates the dynamism of the first part of this study. Here, the function of the concept is twofold. First, encountering is a methodological

tool for participating in the molecular flows of art processes. In a word, it is a methodology of flowing through or with rather than that of stopping and arresting. But at least equally important is to apprehend that a molecular encounter has its ontological consequences or that a molecular encounter always emerges as an ontological event. Whereas encountering *Heaven Machine* in the exhibition space is a methodological choice of engaging with its material movement, this molecular encounter also fundamentally affects the bodies involved in the encounter—opening them to new modes of being, to new futures. Encountering a painting not only as a completed object but as a long-term process is an interesting methodological experiment in itself. However, this move has consequences besides the methodological: it opens eyes for the emergence, becoming of the painting in and through molecular encounters. Thus, the notion of molecular encounter has both a methodological and an ontological function.

What follows now is an experiment written and fashioned *with* art, through attending to art's molecular motions in order to bring about an art history sensitive to art's material peculiarity—to its matter in motion. Again, the molecular encounter has a crucial function: it is through their material existence, their material becoming, that the encountered artworks both demand and suggest new directions for art historical investigation.

The first chapter titled *Reading and Breathing* takes place in the exhibition space where *Heaven Machine* rotated its radiant beams of light and filled the space with ubiquitous haze. What adds an intriguing plane to this encounter is that simultaneously to the material movement of the work sculptor Helena Hietanen explained the artwork and the conditions of its emergence. An artist's talk event was taking place. The second chapter *Work of Painting* moves to Susana Nevado's studio premises and follows the emergence of a small oval painting which made up part of a bigger installation. At Nevado's studio, again, it is both the artist's description of the creative process that gave birth to the painting and the continuously transforming matters of the painting itself that called for considering molecular encounters.

This is to say that flows of matter rarely flow alone. More often than not, encounters with art are peopled by discursive powers—by understandings, enunciations, representations. This is why in both of the following encounters the artists' verbal descriptions of their works and working processes are taken along. And because milieu matters, as does the direction of speech and the addressee, we encounter art in two circumstances: in the public domain at the exhibition space and at the privacy of the studio. It is with these two processes, these two molecular encounters in which the material and the discursive and the human and the non-human intertwine in a most inextricable manner, that I will now suggest and elaborate a variety of concepts and methodological practices sensitive to art's molecular movement.

CHAPTER 1
READING AND BREATHING

As a light installation made mostly of seemingly immaterial haze rendered visible by a rotating light projection, Helena Hietanen and Jaakko Niemelä's *Heaven Machine* offers both challenging and exciting material for exploring the issue of encountering matter. Here matter is fluid and vital in contrast to the common understanding of solid and mute matters of art made alive only by human touch—be it by sculpting as in the case of the mythical Pygmalion or by the more contemporaneous process of postmodern meaning-making. The lively molecular matter sets a methodological challenge for interpretation: how to attend to this movement, how to follow it? The fact that *Heaven Machine* thematically handles the topic of life and death in light of Hietanen's experiences of breast cancer brings with it the very question of existence, in other words, that of ontology. But the issue of existence does not stay in the confines of Hietanen's life. Also, and crucially, it extends to the discussion about the ontological status of an artwork in art historical inquiry: whether its matter is captured, tamed or let to flow, live in its becoming. Thus, grandiose questions of life and death pervade this chapter in more than one sense: not only thematically but also methodo-ontologically.

[figure 1.1] p. 47

I begin by exploring the possibilities of the practice of reading and meaning-making summoned up by Mieke Bal (1996, 39–40) in a very promising manner as a procedure in which "*image loses its apparent coherence*" and in which art is met "*as an ongoing, live process*". After that, I go on suggesting a variety of alternative or parallel practices and concepts that stress liveliness and processuality in their own way: by means of corporeality and materiality. Whereas breathing is only one of these, it is chosen for the title because of the ontological twist it offers: breathing is essential, vital to all life. Thus, in the following, instead of only considering life and death as discursive or semiotic phenomena intersecting in artworks, I aim to tackle art as a complex motion inseparably interweaving the natural and the cultural, flows of molecules and changes in signification.

Movement of meaning-making

What gives an extraordinary opportunity to deal with reading and meaning-making is that from the very beginning my encounter with *Heaven Machine* was permeated by the sculptor Helena Hietanen's words giving meaning to the artwork from various angles (HM 27 Jan '06).[1] Hietanen, among other things, described the process of making, its conditions, and commented on the technical and material choices made. As mentioned above, an artist's talk event was taking place. Therefore, also the presence of the audience, their bodies moving in the space as well as their comments and questions affected my encounter, which was admittedly quite a populous one.[2] This is not that uncommon in the end: art is seldom encountered all alone. Even if not peopled by humans of flesh and blood, no encounter is free from a set of social and cultural understandings brought by discursive and representational powers. This is what iconology bases itself on, and what also *new art history* has so insistently taught us (see e.g. Pollock 1988; Harris 2001). Today this way of doing art history is epitomised in the acts of reading and framing: in meaning-making. The method might be recapitulated as follows:

> *Reading is an act of reception, of assigning meanings.*
> *[I]t functions by way of discrete visible elements called signs to which meanings are attributed…*
> *[T]he subject or agent of this attribution, the reader or viewer, is a decisive element in the process.*
> *Each act of reading happens in a social-historical context or framework… which limit the possible meanings.*
> *Framing is a constant semiotic activity, without which no cultural life can function.* (Bal 1996, 26, 32–33, 37)

According to Mieke Bal (1996, 27, 40), the benefit of the above method or procedure is that it complexifies our understanding of art, as art is to be comprehended "*as an ongoing, live process*" prompted by various, possibly contesting reader positions with their respective frameworks. What Bal assigns to this procedure is far from humility. Simply put, in her view, framing is a vital activity for without it *no* cultural life can function.[3]

The growing amount of accompanying, pedagogical events that museums and other institutions organise for their visitors might be seen as a noteworthy consequence of this kind of thinking—the necessity of framing. Interestingly, but perhaps not so surprisingly, the particular artist's talk event that I participated in seemed to run quite parallel to the logic of framing, reading and meaning-making.[4] Its function was to situate *Heaven Machine* within a network of changing socio-cultural meanings by making the audience aware of the contexts of the work, in other words, by *framing* the work.[5]

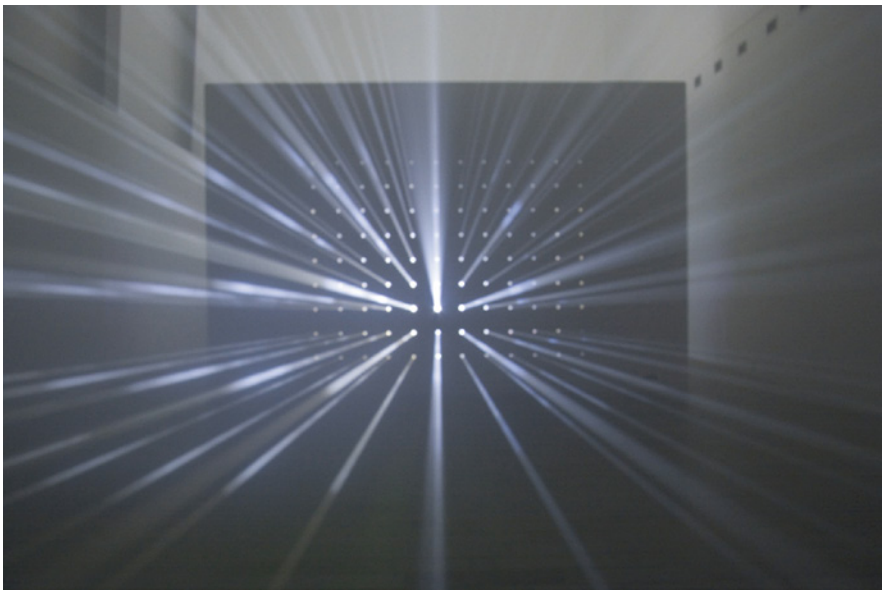


Figure 1.1 Helena Hietanen & Jaakko Niemelä, *Heaven Machine*, 2005, light installation, size variable, *Light Treatment* exhibition at Wäinö Aaltonen Museum of Art (Turku City Art Museum) November 2005–January 2006. Photograph Raakkel Närhi, WAM, The Museum Centre of Turku.

Leading the audience into Wäinö Aaltonen Museum's high-ceiling sculpture room where *Heaven Machine* twirled its beams of light and diffused the air with hazy mist, Hietanen started with what she had done during her career, and also what her collaborator husband had accomplished. She explicated that their collaboration was due to her severe illness—in the early phases of the working process she fell ill with breast cancer for the third time within eight years. Niemelä came to help her, as Hietanen knew from earlier experience that working alone when sick would have been too hard for her, both physically and emotionally. By pointing this out, she indicated the artist's life condition as a relevant context for the work. However, she equally positioned *Heaven Machine* within her artistic history emphasising connections to the light works preceding it, made mostly for public spaces.[6]

Hietanen also highlighted *Heaven Machine's* exquisite relation to its exhibition space—to the sculpture room reserved entirely for the installation. The 'light' spaciousness and the high ceiling of the room brought to her mind (other) sacral spaces such as churches. It was this connection—*analogy*—that encouraged and inspired Hietanen to bring forth her own faith, which for its part strengthens the religious theme of the work.

In her talk, the construction of the installation had a religious meaning: the wall that filtered the light worked as a divider creating an *opposition* between mundane life, life 'here and now' and the hereafter. The wall split the room

in two. The hereafter was situated behind the wall and was unreachable by the audience. From there, a data projector reflected a geometrical computer animation that entered into the installation space through the wall—to the 'here and now'.

She also gave the beams of light that penetrated through the small holes in the wall a meaning related to her personal religious experience. When Hietanen was very sick and feeling hopeless, a powerful vision struck her: as she struggled in the eye of a storm, a light pillar descended from heaven to save her. Through this anecdote Hietanen made it clear that in *Heaven Machine* light symbols God—it is a representation of God. Yet she added that this opinion was hers and not her husband's so as to confirm that there was no right interpretation of the light. Moreover, the holes through which the light sifted got an explanation. They were elaborations of the black holes Hietanen had encountered and envisioned in various connections throughout her sickness. When she was too sick to do anything but stare for hours and hours at the floor, she witnessed its wood grains transforming into black holes. Then the black holes re-appeared in her drawings made in an art therapy class, and lastly in an x-ray image of her cancerous breast. For Hietanen, these black holes symbolised fear, cancer, even death. Thus, beams of light and darkness, redemption and death received clearly *opposite* meanings.

Also the members of the audience contributed to the meaning production. When the time for questions came, a woman asked if Hietanen had ever thought the rays of light could refer to radiotherapy—for that was what they *resembled* in her mind. Hietanen answered that she had not thought of that before, but yes, in fact, when she had her treatment she imagined the imperceptible rays as healing rays of light.

No doubt, explanations offered by the artist and the exhibition audience open intriguing routes for interpretative work. The comments of the artist and the audience are definitely of use as they can be elaborated and formulated into multiple research *contexts* ranging from experiences of breast cancer to medical imaging practices, from Christian symbolism to religious visions, and further, from the institutional critique of the museum as a semi-sacral place to the multimedia aspects of the installation.[7] What I have considered up to now would surely provide enough hints to prepare a multi-angled reading of *Heaven Machine*. Obviously, a change of view from one point to another moves and changes our understanding of *Heaven Machine*: from one angle it represents experiences of breast cancer, from another it appears as a product of collaboration, and from the third viewpoint it can be identified as religious art. What is at stake here is a change in signification caused by the continuous acts of meaning-making. At least in academic circles, this is all common sense; it is commonly agreed that meanings are constructed—that they are in constant making (see Grosz 2005, 44–45).

Within art history, and this is in accordance with other humanist disciplines of art and cultural research, the movement and reproduction of meanings is often conceptualised as *representation*. Feminist scholars have been strong and influential advocates of this approach, as it has been an indispensable part of the agenda that art should be conceived not as a reflection of the world but always as a reproduction of meanings (see e.g. Wolff 1981; Pollock 1988). Representation, so to speak, opens the world for individual and collective *interventions* up to a point that "*radicality itself seemed inherently constructionist*" (Grosz 2005, 45). This feminist work has brought up a tremendously important disciplinary shift of focus from the object-obsessed, strictly history-bound research to a critical process-oriented approach sensitive to repressing power structures of many sorts. But what some feminists have themselves brought up more recently is that maybe constructivism and the politics of representation itself exercised repression of some sorts: only forces regarded as living—cultural, social, economic or historic forces—were seen as creative, ethical and political ones; that is, as ones moving the world (see Grosz 2004 & 2005; Braidotti 2006).[8] Again, it was especially the human agent, and not nature nor matter, for that matter, that mattered when continuous and unpredictable movement was at stake.

Barbara Bolt (2004a) takes this critique of representational practices to the realm of art theory. Grounding the claim in her artistic practice she contends that representation is a vehicle for "*representationalism … that fixes the world as an object and resource for human subjects. As a mode of thought that prescribes all that is known, it orders the world and predetermines what can be thought.*" (Bolt 2004a, 12–13)[9]

What Bolt wants to provoke with this claim is that when dealt solely within the frame of representation, the unpredictable materiality of an art process that looms large for her not only as a theorist but also as a painter, may not receive proper attention (see also Bolt 2010a). In other words, representationalism threatens to reduce the movement of artworks to meanings alone—and often to meanings that are already constituted, already known. Recall, it was Bal who emphasised that the socio-historical framework always *limits* possible meanings. In the practice of reading, then, the amount of unpredictability is strictly limited.[10] In this sense, Bolt's (2004a, 42) remark that even today the model of academic inquiry often operates according to the logic of representation holds true. What she claims more precisely is that the quadripartite logic of representation Deleuze criticises in his book *Difference and Repetition* (1994b) still dominates the analytical practices of art history and theory: volatile meanings are negotiated in terms of *identity, opposition, analogy and resemblance* (*similarity*).[11]

Let me recapitulate what I have suggested above to make the point. Both the comment of an audience member and those of the artist offered several

points of *identification*. On the one hand, Hietanen's outspoken experiences of breast cancer make it possible to *identify Heaven Machine* as breast cancer art. On the other hand, Christian symbolism renders it towards the category of religious art. I have also offered descriptions based on *opposition:* the material structure of the installation was understood as a binary of 'here and now' and the hereafter, and meanings of the installation were likewise constructed by opposing light (God/divinity, life) to darkness (cancer, death). Moreover, I have presented a possible *analogy* between the exhibition room and the sacral spaces of churches indicated by the artist. And finally—when it comes to *resemblance*—I have brought forward a *similarity* between *Heaven Machine's* beams of light and the beams of external radiation therapy as it was proposed by an audience member, apparently a former cancer patient herself.

Bolt argues alongside Deleuze that within the four-part framework of representation *differential movement* is subordinated with negative oppositions, or gridlocked even: "*On precisely these branches, difference is crucified*" (Deleuze 1994b, 139). This suggests that representational thinking is incapable of conceiving difference as such; difference, which is not reducible to binary structures of being different to something else. For example, light as differential movement and not as something different from darkness. Put differently, what representationalism may lead to is insufficient attention to the constant movement of the world. Whilst this might make sense when dealing with meanings, and especially when meanings are grasped as fixed and rigid, it becomes all the more comprehensible when addressing *matter* that so often ends up being categorised, controlled with meanings, with representations, and is not allowed to move on its own.

A question, then, arises: does the construction of oppositions, finding points of identification, drawing analogies and claiming resemblances really offer a sufficient approach to encountering art on the move? And since what I have been considering so far was not really all that happened during my participant observation I am willing to answer: no, it is not. Surely, *Heaven Machine* was in motion without the interpretative acts of Hietanen or those of mine.[12] Whilst my reading and framing experiment has put *Heaven Machine* in motion, it has not adequately attended to the differential movement of the work itself.

For one, my experiment reminds me of Brian Massumi's (2002b, 2) criticism of the tradition of cultural studies that praises positionality: in positionality *"[m]ovement is entirely subordinated to the positions it connects*".[13] Here positionality means taking knowledge positions and 'gridding' the object of knowledge in "*an oppositional framework of culturally constructed significations*" (ibid.).[14] For Massumi, the motivation behind positionality is openly political—to show how locality and situatedness matter (ibid., 2–3). Thus, positionality contests universality of any sort by insisting on local resistance. Noteworthily,

Massumi's discussion focuses on bodies. He worries that in the logic in which every subject-body is so determinedly local, the body gets gridded, boxed in a cultural "*freeze-frame*" (ibid., 3). A theoretical paradox emerges: belief in change in the name of situatedness ends up "*substracting movement from the picture*" (ibid.). The problem is that the body becomes sensed only discursively, as mediated, and never figures *as such.*

In the act of framing *Heaven Machine* according to various positions, movement becomes restricted between the respective viewpoints only. Doing so, bluntly put, *"we are thinking away its dynamic unity, the continuity of its movements"* (Massumi 2002b, 6). It is Donna Haraway's text "Situated Knowledges" (1991) an oft-quoted milestone of feminist politics of positioning that ends with suggestions that come close to Massumi's call for approaching the body as such, the body as movement. For Haraway, critical positioning always requires "*engaging with world's active agency*" (ibid., 199), with its intrinsic movement. As if contesting the practice of actively reading meanings from a chosen point of view, Haraway claims: "*The codes of the world are not still, waiting to be read. The world is not raw material for humanization … the world encountered … is an active entity*" (ibid., 198).

From here on, encouraged by Massumi's and Haraway's critique, I aim at grasping what was hitherto absent in my encounter with *Heaven Machine*, that is, its *matter* beyond symbolism and representation—its matter as movement. We could and should ask: where are its energies, intensities, its capabilities? The rest of the chapter deals with how *Heaven Machine* could be encountered not only as a series of volatile meanings but as a volatile body in itself. From here onwards the question is not only what I am able to do with *Heaven Machine*, how I am able to move it by means of reading and interpreting, but also what it does to me, how it connects to me, how it moves me.

Yet to speak about 'it' and 'me'—in other words, about the thing and the human—might evoke too simple and too solid an image of what was happening. For above all an encounter is a question of relation. And this is not a relation of mastery provided by positioning but a relation that is in constant negotiation and as such open and unpredictable. Brian Massumi (2009a, 10) asks aptly: "*How can 'we' master what forms us? And reforms us at each instant, before we know it*?" He sums up: "*If there is one key term, that's: relation. When you start in-between, what you're in the middle of is a region of relation. Occurrent relation, because it's all about event. Putting the terms together, you realize straight away that the relational event will play out differently every time*" (ibid., 2). Thus an encounter as a relational event entails that both 'the thing' and 'the human' are understood as open processes in perpetual change; this is because it is their changing relation that defines their becoming. Both leak, flow, and transform. Whereas leaking as a quality might connote something negative, it serves here as an opening towards the processuality of being and reciprocity of an encounter that in the following

pages will be given more affirmative expressions. To consider the encounter again, in a more complex a manner, let us re-enter the installation space.

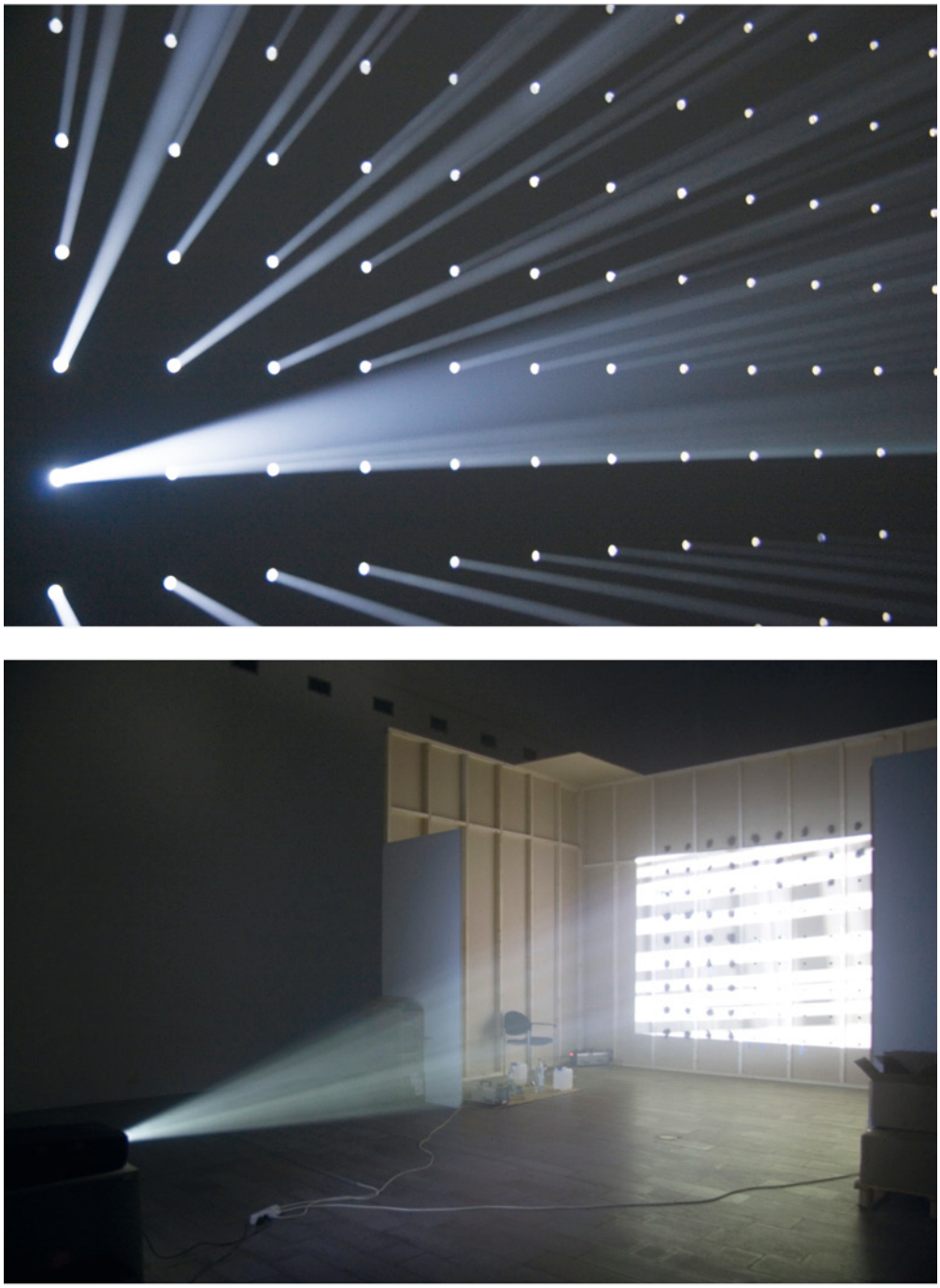
Dismantling divisions, breathing sensations

After entering the installation space through a dark, heavy curtain, I could not see much for a moment as the combination of darkness, rotating light and ubiquitous haze infused my senses and confused me. Simultaneously to the words that gave meanings to the installation as a representation, something else put the work in motion too. The data projector pushed the whirling beams of light with their varying shades of yellow, blue, red and white through the wall pierced with more than a hundred holes, and made them traverse the room. The haze machine that filled the sculpture room with minute molecules of oxygen and nitrogen made the projected light more visible. The movement of light came from a simple computer-animation that was hidden behind the wall, in the hereafter. The mechanic humming of the data projector and the haze generator filtered into the human voices of the artist's talk event and guaranteed that the installation was not mute for a second.

[figures 1.2–1.3] p. 53

What I have described above could be read as an account of how *Heaven Machine* functioned technically or mechanically. But it is far more interesting to consider this action in the confines of the Deleuze-Guattarian conceptual triptych of *machine, machinic assemblage* and *assemblage*. In the writings of Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1986, 1987), we are asked to abandon a commonsensical understanding of what a machine is. Their dynamics of the machinic should not be mixed up with the mechanical or technical. If in mechanics a technological apparatus is defined by a structural interrelationship between discrete parts that work together to perform a task, in a Deleuze-Guattarian scheme machines are not instrumental, not just means with an end or a task to fulfil, but defined by what they *do* in themselves—how they connect and transform.[15] As was the case with the molecular, machines are not metaphorical. They produce real material effects.

But as Simon O'Sullivan (2006a, 22) stresses, it is not just "*art-machine that produces these effects but our art-machine in conjunction with a subject-machine*". What we experience as 'art' and as an aesthetic effect is "*produced by the coupling of the two … machines*" (ibid.).[16] In the Deleuze-Guattarian vocabulary, the coupling of two machines could be called a machinic assemblage (*agencement*)[17]; a linkage that is the consequence of a shared practice, a shared agency. Crucially, "*[t]his is not animism, any more than it is mechanism…*" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 256), which is to say that machinic assemblages are not something that were first basically lifeless and only then became animated, enlivened by a force



Figures 1.2–1.3 *Heaven Machine* and its technical machine. Photographs Raakkel Närhi, WAM, The Museum Centre of Turku. For videos of *Heaven Machine* go to http://www.jaakkoniemela.com/ → Heaven Machine 2005 → videos 1–2.

external, or transcendental to them—a spirit, a god, a human, for example. Instead, assemblages are alive, functioning in and through their connections.

It is to the vitality of the materialities constituting them that assemblages owe their "*agentic capacity*" (Bennett 2010a, 34). In *Heaven Machine's* case these materialities include the beams of light cutting the installation space, haze drifting in the space, the wall with its separating and filtering qualities, and why not the whole sculpture room where the installation was set up. But here comes the interesting part. Deleuze and Guattari (1986, 7) state that "*[t]o enter or leave the machine, to be in the machine, to walk around it, to approach it—these are still components of the machine.*" Therefore, a machine is never a fully closed system, it is rather an open dynamism that "*has to work in order to live, to processualise itself with the singularities which strike it*" (Guattari 1995, 94). This is another way of putting the fact that machines live in and out of connections. And so do machinic assemblages, perhaps even more emphatically as they are themselves combinations of several machines.

All this makes the machinic assemblage a helpful concept to cross or break the binary of a subject interpreting art and an object of that interpretation. If understood in terms of the machinic assemblage, the interpreting subject becomes part of the machine: she connects with the machine and the machine connects to her. Difference to the process of meaning-making in which human subject appears as a connective 'master' bringing together various possible interpretations is obvious. Here the relation is rather an experimental than an interpretative one.

What makes an assemblage even more intriguing a conceptual tool is that it does not repudiate more stable structures; it is not only about connective flows. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 332–337) insist that an assemblage always has two sides: one that is territorial and one deterritorialising. Here, territorial refers to the creation of a territory, a zone of comfort, a sort of home in the middle of chaos (ibid., e.g. 311–312). For an art historian that might mean making herself at home in *Heaven Machine* by constructing a fascinating network of signification, putting up walls of contexts and a roof of discourses, so to speak. In the case of Hietanen, a similar suggestion could be made: in the midst of sickness and fear of death, *Heaven Machine* might be seen to construct a haven of life 'here and now', a shelter of hope where life goes on without the limitations of an organic body. But as said, a machinic assemblage has its deterritorialising function too. And it is this unpredictability, the function to dismantle our being and habits that gives the machinic assemblage its true conceptual force.[18]

I was not untouched by this deterritorialising action, this agentic capacity of assemblage, either. I was taken into it, as *Heaven Machine* connected to me—as the rapid change of rhythm, and the movement of light made me lose my sight momentarily and weakened my sense of balance, and as the haze drifted to my lungs, and further to my blood circulation when I inhaled. What

I felt was "*a kind of collapse of visual coordinates, of orientation, of the separate positioning of the subject at a distance from the object*" (Grosz 2008, 84). According to Elizabeth Grosz, this is what happens when *sensation* is at work. Understood in the Deleuze-Guattarian manner, sensation is an event of direct connection; a connective principle indispensable for an art-machine to work, to function (see e.g. Deleuze & Guattari 1994).[19] Here is how Grosz defines it:

> *Sensation is the zone of indeterminacy between subject and object, the block that erupts from the encounter of the one with the other. Sensation impacts the body not through the brain, not through the representations, signs, images or fantasies, but directly, the body's own internal forces, on cells, organs. Sensation requires no mediation or translation. It is not representation, sign, symbol, but force, energy, rhythm, resonance.* (Grosz 2008, 73)[20]

Working, connecting by sensation, artworks "*do not signify or represent, they assemble, they make, they do, they produce*" (ibid., 75). Here, then, artworks are not so much to be read, interpreted, deciphered but responded to, engaged with.

But in a more concrete sense, what would be the action that allowed such an unmediated connection, engagement to take place in my encounter with *Heaven Machine*? I would suggest the very elementary act of *breathing*. Maybe it was not representations that pierced my mind, but words and meanings intertwined in and absorbed into light haze that I breathed into my body. It was by means of breathing that I molecularly connected to *Heaven Machine* in the most direct manner. This was not a position to fix meanings, to master the work. Instead, every breath I took drew us closer, made us more intertwined. I felt immensely how the human and the nonhuman existed on the same plane. That is what machinic assemblages are all about; in them a human body is but an element in a larger aggregate. Instead of a mastering relationship between separate agents there was co-emergence, becoming-with.

The contemporary philosopher who has most vigorously brought breathing back to theoretical attention is Luce Irigaray (2002). Air as a shared medium and as a necessity for life is central to her thesis that Western cultures should revive their relation to the basic ontological premise of all life: breathing.[21] What Irigaray reminds us of is that living equates with breathing, it is our first and most radical need, preceding other elementary ones such as eating and drinking (ibid., 75). She writes: "*often we confuse cultivation with the learning of words, of knowledges, of competences, of abilities. We live without breath, without remembering that being cultivated amounts to being able to breath…*" (ibid., 76).[22] For Irigaray, shared air is the key to intersubjectivity, to a more communal becoming: "[*W*]*hoever does not breathe, does not respect his or her own life and takes air from the other, others. Breathing is thus a duty toward my life, that of others, and that of the entire living world* (ibid., 50)". Understood in this sense, would not

breathing be quite the perfect proposition for an ethical encounter of art in terms of sensation; for an encounter that crosses the borders of the inside and outside and rather connects than divides?[23]

Dancing vibrations, making BwOs

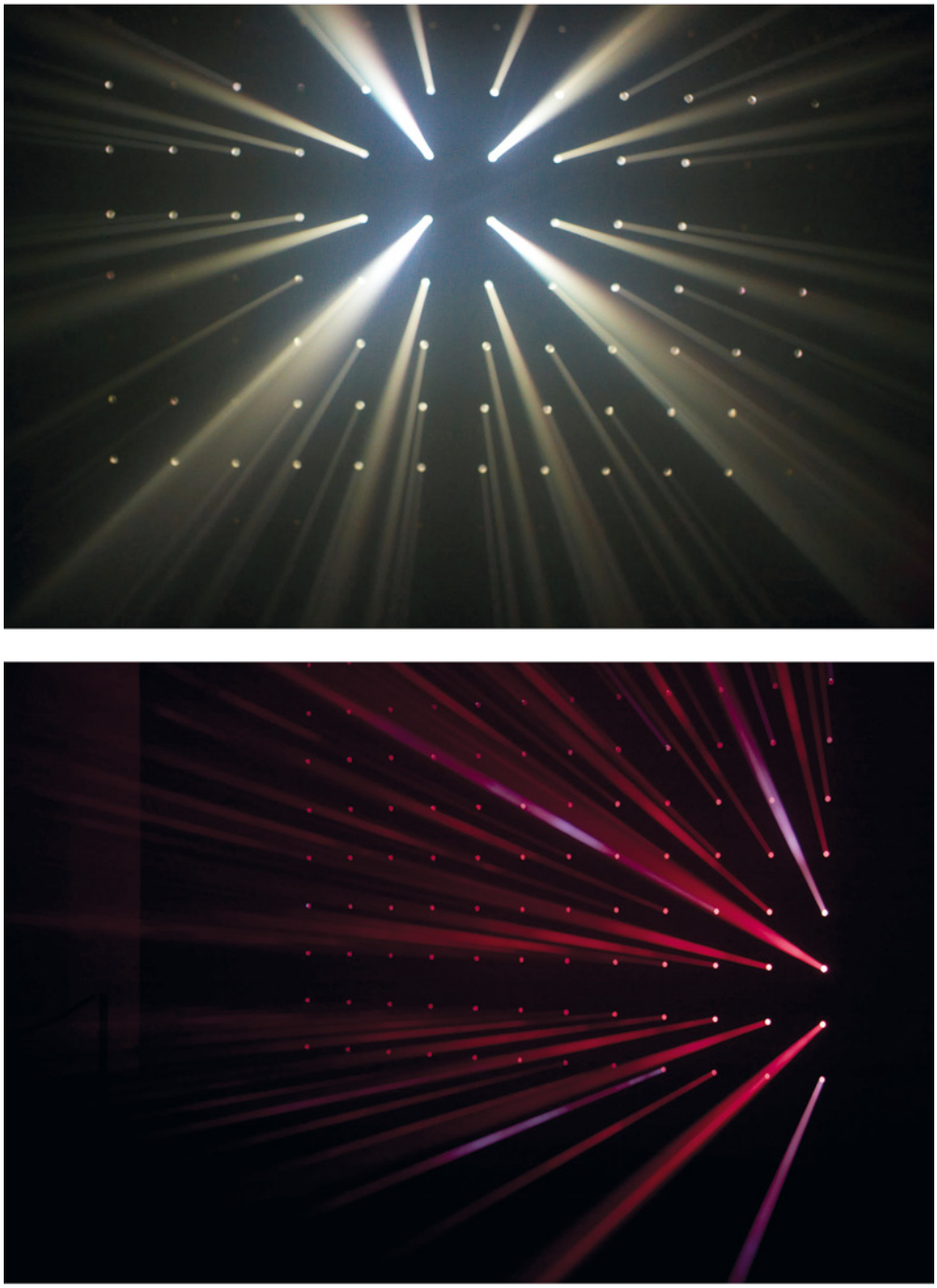
Whereas breathing offers one, and even a fundamental means of connection as proposed above, there are other conceptions worth considering as well. This section introduces them by connecting *Heaven Machine* to techno dance—*techno raves*. Think of pulsing strobe lights, flashes of white, blue, red and purple, ubiquitous, thick, almost moist haze, bodies taken by the repetitive rhythm of music, eyes dazzled moving to the rhythm, and you soon get the connection.

[figures 1.4–1.5] p. 57

For Stamatia Portanova (2005), techno raves with their vibrating rhythm of light, sound and dance are a de-individualising experience, a social nomadic practice, in which the boundaries of self and others, self and the world lose their meaning. Rather than enabling a total overcoming of the body, the techno experience "*allows the body to escape the structures and boundaries that keep it organised*" (ibid.,[12]). For Portanova, techno music (as a machinic assemblage) works like a virus, it intervenes into bodies, it connects them, transforms them: working as a virus, rhythm disrupts habitual bodily movements and modes of being as well as obscures clear perceptions, re-organising them after its own order.[24]

Portanova's virological analysis of de-individualising techno culture comes close to Tamsin Lorraine's (2000) (feminist) mode of self-presentation that is about becoming imperceptible and impersonal, yet by no means transcendental, but thoroughly connected with the world, with life. She indicates: "*all life processes have molecular elements mostly imperceptible to us, whose configurations into larger aggregates are constantly changing. Human existence is but a part of this larger process*" (ibid., 184). The scene Lorraine describes not only connects with Portanova's analysis of techno dance but also with my participation in *Heaven Machine* in which human bodies connect with the rhythms of light, haze and mechanic humming.

It is the constant, often imperceptible movement of the world—of techno dance and subjectivity—that Portanova and Lorraine emphasise rigorously. Both show a delicate understanding of complex cultural processes that more often than not break out of the binary divisions of human–nonhuman, subject–object and organic–inorganic they are conceptualised with. Here we come to one of the central claims of the Deleuze-Guattarian approach: *There is always something that flows or flees, that escapes binary organizations … and the over-coding machine* (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 216).



Figures 1.4–1.5 *Heaven Machine*'s moving beams of light with their varying colours. Photographs Raakkel Närhi, WAM, The Museum Centre of Turku.

In the Deleuze-Guattarian vocabulary, dance is a frequent term with which—this kind of dismantling effect—a molecular escape from the commonplace is detected.[25] If in Deleuze's first works dancing sometimes only appears as a figure for continuously moving life itself (Colebrook 2005, 12), in Deleuze and Guattari's co-authored books dancing is rather an event of life or an event within life that might transform our thinking about life. Dancing might also be said to have a deterritorialising function: in the intensity of dance conventional boundaries are broken and new connections suggested as the human body flows, becomes nonhuman in and through a variety of rhythms, speeds, movements, rests, relations not ordinary or habitual to it. No surprise then that dance was also mentioned in the opening quotation for this first part of the study. In it, Deleuze (1994b, 8) proposed replacing the logic of representation by "*inventing vibrations, rotations, whirlings, gravitations, dances or leaps*".

Simon O'Sullivan (2006a, 50) connects dance with encountering, participating in art. He states:

> *[W]e as participants with art, are involved in a dance with art, a dance in which … the molecular is opened up, the aesthetic is activated and art does what is its chief modus operandi. It transforms, if only for a moment, our sense of our 'selves' and our experience of our world.*

To avoid an understanding of dancing as a theoretical figure of speech only, let me explicate a connection that offers the argument a more empirical ground. It was my experiences of techno dance that re-occurred to me when *Heaven Machine* got into my body; in other words, when the whirling beams of light with their repetitive rhythm and continuously changing colours connected to my body, 'cut' the body, and when the haze surrounded my body and was suffused into the body by means of breathing. In both environments, in the sculpture room's 'white cube' museum space, and in the abandoned industrial spaces where techno parties I participated in were organised, my body started to vibrate, to lose its linearity, its strict borders as the monotonic music/humming, beams of light with their fast but varying rhythm and changing colours connected to me. This connection had more to do with material–corporeal becomings than with visual resemblance as theories of representation might suggest. The question was not if I recognised the spatial or architectonic design of those spaces, but what that combination of space and movement evoked in me. In other words, what kind of assemblages I got to participate *with*.

Portanova (2005) names the kind of re-organisation of matter that happens when rhythm enters the body's bio-cellular system bio-physical.[26] In this process, she explicates, "*matter loses its static appearance and becomes an ensemble of dancing molecules*" (ibid., [3]). Therefore, following Portanova and Lorraine to move, think and transform with *Heaven Machine* is to lose the borders of one's

body as a closed and strictly organised entity and open it to molecular flows, to micromovements enabled and enhanced by rotating beams of light and the diffusing haze that did not obey any borders of inside and outside.

What Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 149–166) call a disorganised, opened body that has escaped its function as a composition of organs only is '*Body without Organs*' (*BwO*).[27] This concept captures a body floating beyond the confines of representation; a body emerging in and through molecular flows. But to transform your body to 'one without organs' does not happen axiomatically. As described above, meaning-making or interpretation are not acts that augment its emergence for they freeze flows rather than further them. Deleuze and Guattari (ibid., 151) encourage to fabricate your body without organs by substituting interpretation with experimentation. For them, this *"is a question of life and death, youth and old age, sadness and joy. It is where everything is played out"* (ibid.).

By opposing BwO to interpretation Deleuze and Guattari (ibid., 164–165) also oppose a (Lacanian) tradition of psychoanalytic reading. BwO contests what they see as part and parcel of the psychoanalytic practice of translating "*everything into phantasies*", and above all, the psychoanalytic tendency to see a body as an image of the body, instead of experiencing it as *a* body.[28] The tendency to recognise an image of the body rather than experience a body is admittedly apparent in my experiment of meaning-making, which suggests that *Heaven Machine* could be understood as a representation, that is, as an image of the breast cancer body.

Then again, if it is not an image, as what should *Heaven Machine* be experienced? Since *Heaven Machine* is admittedly an installation piece, spatiality appears as an appealing option. But Deleuze and Guattari refute this recourse: "*BwO is not a scene, a place or even a support upon which something comes to pass. … It is not a space, nor is it in the space, it is matter that occupies the space to a given degree—to the degree corresponding to the intensities"* (ibid., 153). Accordingly, what *Heaven Machine* as a BwO consists of is flowing, intense matter; matter equalling energy. This is not matter that has a certain given form, but matter in movement, matter in transformation. Crucially, *matter as intensity* is not a calculable quantity, but a quality that can only be experienced—and experimented with. Through its intensive matter *Heaven Machine* offers the human bodies participating with the work a potential for intensification: intensification that is experienced in and through multiple, multisensory connections—as beams of light hit, pierce, cut the body and as the haze gently caresses the skin, suffuses the body, is inhaled to the body's system; in other words, intensification experienced in and through *rhythmic* actions that makes the body *vibrate*.[29]

> *What seems to be transmitted, transformed, located, and relocated in this dance of forces … is nothing but vibration, resonance, the mutual condition both of material forces at their most elementary levels, and of music at its most refined and complex. …Vibration is the common thread or rhythm running through the universe from its chaotic inorganic interminability to its most intimate forces of inscription on living bodies of all kinds and back again.* (Grosz 2008, 54)

Grosz (2006a & 2008, 53) suggests that this kind of rhythm and intensity of life are best appreciated in the arts—not so much in science that creates functions to order the chaos, and not even in philosophy that works with concepts—and of all arts, best in music.[30] Although *Heaven Machine* is a rather modest piece in its auditive output (the mechanic humming), its intensive multisensory rhythm created *vibration*, which is a central quality in Grosz's definition of music.

For Grosz, vibration links with a future. She explains vibration being elemental to all living beings: "[*l*]*iving beings are vibratory beings: vibration is their mode of differentiation; the way they enhance and enjoy the forces…"* (Grosz 2008, 33). Here vibration might be seen as equally fundamental to life as breathing that was introduced in the previous section. But whereas we all have first hand experience of breathing, vibration is a more elusive mode of be(com)ing. Indeed, vibration is not habitually regarded as a common way of transformation. Introducing vibration to contemporary discussions of art and feminism is part of Grosz's (2004, 2005, 2008) materialist project that re-evaluates the work of evolutionary biologist Charles Darwin.[31] According to Grosz, studies of culture might benefit from a dynamised, uncontainable and unpredictable conception of natural life assigned by evolutionary biology, and especially from the attention and preciseness that Darwin has given to these qualities of nature.[32] This is because his work offers a peculiarly subtle and complex critique of essentialism and teleology, which are both long-held targets of feminist criticism (Grosz 2005, 17–18).[33] However, above all comes his antihumanist understanding of life as productive dynamism and endless becoming that is open to otherness and subject to unpredictability and surprise. This, of course, only affirms the guiding theme of this chapter, molecularity.

Bringing the two together, it may be contended that vibration is the pulsing rhythm of the molecular, or the common thread of both organic and inorganic life, as Grosz states. In other words, vibration is about opening the lived body for 'nonhuman forces of the universe': "*Vibrations are oscillations, differences, movements of back and forth, contraction and dilation: they are a becoming-temporal of spatial movements and spatial process, the promise of a future…*" (Grosz 2008, 55).[34] Grosz's vitalist suggestion that art can offer us a new world, a new body makes sense here (Grosz 2006b; Grosz in Kontturi & Tiainen 2007, 256). Accordingly, it can be argued, *Heaven Machine* does not offer us an interpretation and not even an image of the breast cancer body but an experience of *a* body that we do not

yet have—within the limits of our everyday experience. It offers us an intensive body that vibrates, oscillates towards a future.

Although not by any means thoroughly reducible to it, this body certainly has its connection to Hietanen's life conditions during the making of *Heaven Machine*. In her talk, Hietanen even gave a short explanation for the intense vibratory rhythm of the work (HM 27 Jan '06). During the process of making *Heaven Machine* she was living a very intensive period in her life: she had fallen ill with cancer again, and she wanted to live as hard as she could, with all the intensity she could, for she did not know if she was going to die soon. It might be argued, that *Heaven Machine* gave her a new body—a body that was not limited to the 'here and now', a body that was no longer organic or human; a body vibrating towards a future that was not sealed or determined but open. And by transmitting its vibratory resonance to bodies that participate *with* it, *Heaven Machine* opens new futures far beyond the body of its 'author'.

Following lines of (f)light in art history

If we let *Heaven Machine* connect with our bodies, if we let the beams of light and haze transpierce the body, make the body vibrate, we are leaving the terrain that commonsensically belongs to art historical expertise. We are experimenting—if not instead of, then parallel to the act of interpreting. In fact, this is what Deleuze and Guattari encourage us to do. They say:

> *Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through … [this] meticulous relation … that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight. … Connect, conjugate, continue.* (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 161)

In other words, what they urge us to do is to stick not to the limits of recognition, to the already known, but not to surrender to unknown forces altogether either. Instead their lesson is that of dosage: gently deterritorialise your territory, or as they put it, "*have a small plot of new land at all times*."[35] Do not get stuck with the habitual or with the common: search, experiment, try out, but only "*segment by segment*". This is the way to leave one's territory—to free *lines of flight*. And only by taking, or creating lines of flight can we say that we truly *continue*. This links to the vitalism of Deleuze-Guattarian thought: as all being is becoming and in a constant state of differentiation, philosophy as well as theories of subjectivity and art should do their best to appreciate life in motion.

But this is not to say that those clues or connections that were offered in the artist's talk and that might be elaborated to research contexts would not count as important. These elements such as the conception of light as a symbol of God or the black hole as a symbol of death could be understood as *molar moments* that stop the molecular movement of the world for a while but in no way congeal it altogether (Bolt 2004a, 45–47). In Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 213–214, 223–225), the molar or molarity designates stability, rigid segmentarity, a mastering hold of binary aggregates. Moral judgments are molar, just as is an understanding of the two opposite sexes, or nature–culture relation seen not as a continuum but as a duality. Molar act is one that seals, fixes, blocks. However, molar and molecular always come together, they are the two coexisting and overlapping ways of organisation.

The "dos and don'ts" of an art gallery could be conceived as molar moments. In fact, Hietanen explained that to her disappointment most of the exhibition guests tried carefully not to disturb the movement of light, and not to connect with it. People stepped back, trying to find a secure place at the outskirts of the exhibition room, a place where their bodies would not interact with the work in too profound, too intense a manner. This concerned above all adults. Children were more daring, they playfully hunted the beams of flight and some of them even opened their mouths as if trying to *eat* the beams of light. Eating truly is a fascinating subject not only because it is something that we all have to do to keep alive, but also because it so clearly connects us, opens us to other bodies, both human and nonhuman (Probyn 2000, 12–14): "*as we ingest, we mutate, we expand and contract, we change—sometimes subtly, sometimes violently*"(ibid., 18). But adults do know that a gallery space is no place to eat. Perhaps it could be suggested that it is their knowledge of proper behaviour and their willingness to hold onto it that prevents them from *digesting* art in a transformative way.[36]

The regulatory power of the molar is not something inherently bad. To claim so would be a molar judgment indeed! Molarities might, however, get too tight, too overpowering. In art historical practice, one might, for example, stick with the comfort zone or territory of ever-fascinating meanings too tightly to be able to grasp the beams of light as anything but signs of something else. Still, according to Deleuze and Guattari, this is only habitual blindness, not a state of affairs as such: molecular flows traverse through the molar at every level.

> *Molar aggregates … are perpetually being undermined by a molecular segmentation causing a zigzag crack, making it difficult for them to keep their own segments in line. It is as if a line of flight, perhaps only a tiny trickle to begin with, leaked their segments, escaping their centralization, eluding their totalization.* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 216)

A powerful conceptualisation that Deleuze and Guattari (ibid., 3–4, 9) give to molecular movement cracking the molar organisation is a line of flight or line of escape (*ligne de fuite*).[37] In the case of *Heaven Machine*, this line of flight may be found in the movement of the light beams that confuses the senses and disturbs the interpretative event of association forcing the too "well-behaving" members of the audience to the outskirts of the installation. But as John Rajchman (2000), one of the first art historians commenting the Deleuze-Guattarian method puts it, to find such transformative lines is not self-evident, it is meant for those who trust that something may come out, though one is not sure what. Thus, to find lines of flight necessitates trust in change: willingness to reject what is common sense and courage to throw oneself into a state of insecurity. In the end, is that not what all critical thinking should be about? Not just about tracing and tracking down (oppressive) meanings, but about trust in change?

To take *Heaven Machine's* beams of light as lines of flight offers an escape from the restricting oppositions that easily govern the interpretation of an artwork. Following them, one might find a way out of the known facts of the artist being ill with breast cancer and also out of the confirmed Christian references of the work. Yet this is not equal to abandoning cultural meanings. Rather, it means complicating the analysis. Conceived as lines of flight, *Heaven Machine's* beams of light do not solely symbolise the god of a certain religion anymore, but become vibration and the movement of life itself—an affirmation for *a* life.[38]

This means that the beams of light do not affirm a certain life anymore: not the life of Hietanen, or more generally a Christian way of life, but *indefinite* life. What gives an interesting impetus to my claim is that the direction of light in *Heaven Machine* strikingly differs from that of Christian iconography: the direction of God's light is usually vertical or diagonal, and from the top down, but rarely horizontal. Remember, also in Hietanen's vision a light pillar descended *down* from heavens to save her. But in *Heaven Machine* the participant encounters the dismantling beams of light *horizontally*. In this sense, the movement of light (or life!) in *Heaven Machine* disrupts the originary Christian reference as it forcefully streams out of the holes of the wall and connects with the bodies in the installation making them vibrate and lose their commonsensical confines.[39]

Quite fascinatingly, this comes close to Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 71) claim: "*If human beings have a destiny … it is … to become imperceptible by strange true becomings that get past the wall and get out of the black holes.*" They insist that there is no use finding lines of flight or taking molecular escapes if one is not capable of utilising them in *re*-arranging molar structures: "[*m*]*olecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar organizations to reshuffle their segments, their binary distributions*…" (ibid., 216–217). Consequently, it is not enough to be able to dismantle binaries once, or

to be content in getting past the wall separating the subject and the object in one encounter. This argument needs to be moved (back) to the context of art history and theory. So let me get back to the questions central to this chapter. What the encounter with *Heaven Machine* suggests is that when works of art are seen merely as passive 'battlefields' for representation and interpretation, their potential lines of flight, their material capacity to change and move thinking is easily missed. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to that what is singular in artworks, to what is their *modus operandi*, the *material movements* of art, and not to overdrive material and corporeal intensities with textual and discursive powers. This requires giving up at least a bit of the comforting mastering agency that is trained to fix meanings and seal interpretations (if not for good then temporarily). Only then it becomes possible to acknowledge and encounter the artworks as something else than objects; as material processes that move on their own too. This is what my methodo-ontological take on the molecular encounter has pursued by providing a variety of conceptualisations that in their various reciprocal ways dismantle the subject–object binary: proposing breathing rather than reading; sensing and dancing and not only interpreting.

What my encounters with *Heaven Machine* and the pack of Deleuze-Guattarian thinkers also suggest is that it is worthwhile to look beyond the borders of the 'cultural' commonly understood as textual or discursive. Yet the reference to molecular movement does not propose to guide art history into the realm of natural sciences.[40] Instead, I would like to argue that the persistent and perpetual (evolutionary) becoming of nature with all its material agents, often denied and disavowed by cultural theories, might "*provide [us even] more complex and accurate models for the cultural*" (Grosz 2005, 48–49). For it is sure, that the complexity of movement, for example of such an artwork as *Heaven Machine* is flattened by the textual models of framing and representation that have dominated the ways in which we understand the cultural. Practiced in this way art history can join in what Grosz (2004, 189–214) calls the philosophy of life[41]—the project that affirms change and movement of all life whether human or inhuman, material or immaterial—and does not congeal its vitality in interpretations.

CHAPTER 2
WORK OF PAINTING

In the previous chapter *Heaven Machine* moved its molecules of oxygen and nitrogen—water in the form of haze—rapidly around the exhibition space where they literally merged with the spectators' bodies; were breathed into those bodies. The molecular motion or exchange that is at stake in this chapter is not that intrusive or that fast. Here my argument evolves with an artwork made with the seemingly less mobile medium of painting—less mobile if measured against the quantitative speed of haze, but still, no less significant in its qualitative effects and affects. Susana Nevado's altar-like installation *Honest Fortune Teller* (2005) provides a true profusion of matter in movement to be encountered: with their unique layers of acrylic paint, varnish, magazine covers, glitter stickers and wallpaper, its more than ten figurative paintings of variable sizes and shapes compose a strikingly haptic, voluptuous texture. The human figures of the paintings and ready-made sculptures, women in their underwear standing solemnly arms wide open, emerge through this multitude of material layers—through material action.

My attentiveness to the moving matter of the installation results from a long process of observation and participation. The dozens of visits that I paid to Nevado's studio during the autumn of 2004 and the spring of 2005 enabled me to see how the installation was put together in concrete terms. In their respective ways, hours of recorded conversations, an archive of nearly a hundred pictures of works in progress, as well as some field notes, they all witness the force of materiality in the creation of the installation.[1]

Obviously, the observation of the process also made me well aware of Nevado's outspoken aims in the project. These related to the theme 'holy and unholy' of the Turku Biennale 2005 where Nevado's project that reworked the tradition of Catholic holy cards was chosen to be exhibited. Holy cards, paper pieces about the size of a playing card, and small enough to be carried in a wallet usually depict a holy person on the front and bear an instructive note, often quoted from the Bible on their reverse side. The imagery of these popular collectible items can perhaps be best described as religious kitsch. Nevado wanted to study this Catholic imagery and its attitudes towards women's bodies. In particular, she was interested in the glaring contradiction that seemed

to lie between the lived, corporeal experience of (contemporary) women and the disembodied, virgin-like, spiritual appearance of saintly women on the cards. The materiality or thingness of the holy card, its everyday use and commodity nature, was one of the issues Nevado was fascinated with, another being the overwhelmingly rich materiality of Catholic art and architecture that according to severe protestant aesthetics could even be claimed unholy. From the very beginning, her plan was to create a shrine of visual-material wealth to which the new holy cards were integral—the images on the cards were to be reproductions of her paintings in the same installation. The holy cards would also extend the installation beyond the confines of the exhibition space as the exhibition guests could take them home at no cost. But as the cards needed to be printed well before the exhibition opening to assure that they were ready in time, some of the pictures taken for the cards were of paintings *in progress*, and therefore the cards and the paintings did not match completely. This was, however, not a problem for Nevado as it only emphasised the processuality of her working method as well as the visual-material richness of the installation (ARS 27 Mar '05).

The positive discrepancy described above is particularly obvious in the case of the small oval painting I dedicate this chapter. Whereas the exhibited painting was heavy, pregnant with layers of paint, and presented a girl posing with her arms open as did most of the other figures of the installation too, the holy card based on the earlier phase of the painting shows something very different: a light atmosphere of pin-ups striking a pose in the glamorous world of post-war advertising. Whilst this comparison attests to how remarkable changes a painting process can involve, the comparison itself, I would claim, was anything but self-evident in the installation. Rather, to be able to grasp it, observation of the creative process was quite indispensable.

[figure 2.1] p. 67

[figure 2.2] p. 67

Let us now pay a tentative, short visit to the artist's studio to get a glimpse of the stages of the process. This is not so much to merely explain the process or materials involved but to concoct the themes that this chapter shall tackle. At the time when Nevado was beginning the process, she found a big cluster of thrown-away women's magazines and immediately saw a connection between the idealised ways in which women were depicted both in the magazines and in the holy cards, and decided to work with this controversial subject. Furthermore, images from books on sadomasochism, bondage and tattoos entered her working process—she got these as presents from her then partner. An amount of 'real' flesh and blood was taken along as one day in the autumn of 2004 Nevado asked me and a couple of her friends to her studio to model for her. On a Saturday afternoon in October 2004 she photographed us in our underwear while we tried our best to pose in positions that the religious iconography allowed for female saints—positions we derived from the holy card tradition. During the action that stretched over a period of six months these

[figure 2.3] p. 69

Figures 2.1–2.2 The double navel painting and its earlier phase. Details of Susana Nevado's *Honest Fortune Teller*, mixed media, 21 x 30 cm, process documentation of *Holy and Unholy* Turku Biennale exhibition at Ars Nova & Aboa Vetus Museum of Art (ARS), spring 2005, photographs Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

imageries and *materials,* or rather images *as* materials, were brought together and transformed as the installation emerged through its multiple layers.

In the course of the fieldwork, I visited Nevado's studio on a regular basis in order to find out how the works proceeded. Yet I had a disturbing feeling that it was not enough—I could not get a proper picture of what was going on. Therefore I was persistent in my questions about how the process proceeded and what Nevado was planning to do next and why.[2] Time after time she gave me the same answer: it was hard to say exactly what was happening and even more so what might happen (see ARS 24 Oct '04; 5 Dec '04; 6 March '05; 20 March '05; 16 June '05). It became evident that it was Nevado who started the process, but then, so to speak, the process took a course of its own.

The reader might now wonder if it makes any sense to work with an artist who seems rather incapable of sharing information about her creative processes. This is exactly the reason I have to be more precise here. For Nevado is not an artist who refuses to talk about her work altogether.[3] It is only the process, its singular and unpredictable movements, that she finds difficult to express.

Questioning the mastery of the artist

When I visited Nevado's studio in late January 2005, the painting presenting me posing as a Catholic saint laying on a table (ARS 23 Jan '05). It was coated with magazine covers and scraps. My field notes explain that Nevado was compelled to do something since she sensed that the painting was too stiff, too self-evident—that is, too identifiable. This was why she introduced the magazines into the painting: in order to move the painting, to get something to happen (ARS-fn 23 Jan '05). Although they were surely her hands that moved the bits and pieces around and fixed them on their chosen places, what the following extract explains is that Nevado was not in charge of the process in the end; she did not know what would happen next and consequently she did not know where the process would end up either:

[figure 2.4] p. 69

> *I've thrown a lot of stuff over you, all these magazines… I'll glue the magazines, and let's see what happens then… It'll change—I began to think that maybe it's better that I'll break it right now that it [would] not be so clear a picture any more. And then we go on, see what happens. Later, this might become anything whatsoever…* (ARS 23 Jan '05, c 1:40)

It might be tempting to deconstruct Nevado's rather open and obscure account of the creative process by claiming that she was trapped in the 'old games' of

Figures 2.3–2.4 Striking poses, October 2004, and a painting covered with magazines, January 2005. Process documentation of *Honest Fortune Teller*, photographs Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

romanticism and modernism, describing her art-making in sort of mystic if not transcendent terms in the wake of great masters. For she so clearly leaves open what the work will become.[4] However, instead of such a reductive proposition, I would suggest that her choice of words calls for further study. When given a whole new context, or a different understanding of art-making, they might make more sense—and not sound *simply* reproductive of romantic or modernist attitudes, but ones repeated with a difference. In this chapter, Nevado's choice of words serves as a point of departure for my venture to fashion the process of art-making beyond the logic of clear intention and the simple mechanics of doing. This links to granting material processes of art an agency of their own—remember, it was the scraps that Nevado introduced to the painting to get something to happen.

In her book *Time Travels: Feminism, Nature, Power*, Elizabeth Grosz (2005) is critical of the feminist tradition that has put so much effort in the discussions of (human) subjectivity and agency. Calling attention to the transformative material forces of the world, she writes:

> *It is a useful fiction to imagine that we as subjects are masters or agents of these very forces that constitute us as subjects, but it is misleading, for it makes the struggle about us, about our own identities and individualities rather than about the world; it directs us to questions of being rather than doing; it gives identity and subjectivity a centrality and agency that they might not deserve, for they do not produce themselves but are accomplishments or effects of forces before and outside of identity and subjectivity.* (Grosz 2005, 192–193)

Grosz advocates that feminist theorising, and cultural analysis at large, should direct itself towards the world in its complexity and in particular, the non-human issues that precede the formation of identity. The appeal to see what is at stake in the above description of art-making only from the point of view of Nevado's artistic identity, to label it as romantic or modern, serves as an example of such human-centredness. What I shall address in the following is painting as process that does not grant the human all its creative force.

When addressing art, Grosz (2006ab, 2008) explicitly withdraws from aesthetics revolving around the notion of rationality. Instead, her interest lies in art as a celebration of the forces of the body and the forces of life, which are not limited to the human faculty of reason, and not to the human at all, for that matter (Grosz 2006b, 9–11). If, as it often is, rationality—including the capability of designing plans and following them, for example—is seen as characteristic to the human, then the theory, and also the ontology of art Grosz is after is notably (though not entirely), that of the non-human. The contribution of this chapter to the kind of research I understand Grosz to provoke is a focus on the creativity of matter. Then, it is not solely the human—the artist or the

spectator—who re-organises or transforms matter, makes it anew. In the course of the chapter we will see matter itself acquiring expressive, creative qualities.

Not a medium but a *work* of art

Granting matter a creative potentiality is a proposition that clashes with the more convenient and commonplace understanding of matter as medium; as something, which only *mediates something else*—that is meanings—and therefore hardly creates anything in itself. Let us look at *Honest Fortune Teller* with these quarrelling premises in mind. All in all the installation comprises of thirty-five paintings and small-scale sculptures of varying sizes, materials and textures. If glanced through, what an art historically cultivated and iconographically oriented eye probably catches is the repetitive figure of a woman standing with her arms wide open. In Catholic iconography, this figure is known in Spanish as María Madre de la Misericordia (Mother of Mercy) and it is widespread especially in popular prints such as the pocketsize holy cards. Whereas at a quick glance the different material combinations of the installation seem only to mediate the same figure, a closer look raises the question of what it is that has been mediated, or represented.

In this instance, a couple of large-scale paintings as well as a tinier one—the one I will soon grapple with at length—draw attention. All of these paintings present a woman, María Madre de la Misericordia if you will, but dressed in her underwear, instead of a draped gown. The first doubt of 'mere mediation' emerges as it is self-evident that no saintly woman would actually appear in underwear, at least not in any sort of religious imagery. In fact, underwear might be understood as something altogether antithetical to religiousness when images are under consideration. But this hardly creates a problem in terms of mediation: it is common sense in contemporary critical theory that even a medium does not only mediate; it re-mediates (Bolter & Grusin 2000) in a similar manner as a representation does not only present the same. Consequently, something new is introduced in every act of mediation, in every act of presentation. Yet, we do not only have to rely on theoretical propositions as we know it was Nevado's self-named task to contemporise and *transform* the religious imagery by bringing together disembodied saintly women of the holy card tradition and actual bodies of contemporary women. If none of these explanations fundamentally questions the idea of the mediating medium, it is what happened in the *process of painting* that was *not* intentional, not planned, that truly contests the role of matter as merely a mediator.

The smallest of the paintings presents a young woman in black underwear. She has just given birth—the baby was with her when we posed as saintly

women. In the painting her belly appears round, swollen and oddly empty, that is post-natal, but perhaps not so strikingly that one would notice it without knowing. But what is perceivable without pre-conditioned knowledge is the peculiar thing lying in the middle of the painting: the girl[5], the mother, seems to have not one navel but two. Side by side, but *not* in perfect harmony and *not* of a similar shape, exist two navels.

[figure 2.1] p. 67

The lead white-yellowish acrylic paint most of the surface of the piece is covered with appears to be thin and rather fragile: there seems to be too much underneath for it to be fully covered. It is more than clear, then, that the girl was not painted on a blank surface: the painting seems as pregnant as the girl was just a few weeks earlier. In other words, the navels as well as the whole figure of the girl emerge through these material layers the painting is pregnant with.

The much bigger painting presents an almost full-sized portrait of an elderly woman in her white underwear, and there it is again, in her fleshy belly, not one but two navels. This might not be as obvious as in the girl's case, but there are two of them anyway. A careful scrutiny reveals a previous layer beneath the surface of the painting: delicate lines of hips and knickers prove that there exists not only a navel but also a whole figure to which the navel belongs. But when it comes to navels one painting goes beyond the others. This impressive painting portrays a woman with three, maybe five navels. Her whole body seems to be trembling, or shaking, which gives the impression that she does not only have three or so pairs of legs, but also a whole series of navels marking her belly.

[figure 2.5] p. 73

[figure 2.6] p. 73

What the above women with their multiple navels suggest is how intrinsically the matters of art in the making contribute to the 'content' or meaning of art. This calls for reconsidering the understanding of matters of art as 'mere media'. Rather than being neutral mediators matters of art obviously have their own productive force: women with multiple navels are not simply signs mediated by matters of paint and paper scraps—there is no semiotic history of multiple navels to be mediated, it is a dead end to try to trace these peculiar navels anywhere *outside* the painting process. Rather these saintly women with their double and serial navels—or "the sisterhood of multiple navels" if humorously called so[6]—are created in the matters of painting.

The concept and work of medium solely as a mediator has been increasingly called into question during the last decade.[7] For example, W.J.T. Mitchell (2005, 213) contends that in contemporary art and cultural theory a medium does not refer only to a material or a set of materials or even to a code of communication, but also to a complex social institution or contract involving various actors such as artists and their professional skills. According to this view, the medium is nowadays understood as a multiple, interactive network, as a kind of machinic assemblage as Deleuze and Guattari might say.

Figures 2.5–2.6 Paintings with multiple navels. Details of *Honest Fortune Teller*, mixed media, 150 x 81 cm and 70 x 130 cm, process documentation, spring 2005, photographs Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

James Elkins (2000, 195), for his part, reminds of the crucial role of the medium in painting. As he puts it, "[*t*]*here is no escaping medium*" (ibid.). However, in his account the medium is never just something that is, the medium *does*. A sky in a painting is never just a sky denoting something:

> *It is always also a picture of the leaden sky swirling, shining, drying, with dust gathering brown in its crevices… It is a world of paint, where the airiest clouds are resinous smears, the most verdant field is a compound of rock and oil. The streaming air is not air at all, but tracks left by the brush, and their tufts are no cloudy castles but tiny serrations and crescents where the sticky medium clung to the bristles.* (ibid.)

But if 'medium' appears as complex a phenomenon as Elkins so convincingly shows, why still persistently utilise this concept that refers to a clearly more congealed event of communication? To shift the focus from a mediating medium to the creative work of matter I would like to introduce visual artist and theorist Barbara Bolt's (2004ab) concept of the *work of art*. Bolt contrasts the concept of *work of art* to that of *artwork*. She claims that whereas artwork is clearly a noun, *work* of art is rather a verb. In her account, artwork refers more straightforwardly to the object quality of art and *work* of art to its processual nature. She writes:

> *[w]e can identify artworks, classify them, interpret them and make evaluations according to criteria established by the discipline of Art History. We can exhibit artworks and study the reception of them. However does this get us any closer to the 'work' of art?* (Bolt 2004a, 5)

With the concept of work of art Bolt wants to stress the so-called work-being of the work of art as she puts it.[8] In this scheme, the work-being of a work of art stands against the equipmental or instrumental-being of a work of art, that is the artwork as an object before man and a carrier for her or his ideas. Drawing attention to how an art process *works* actively in itself, and not just as a vehicle or instrument for already existing representations or identities, is to try to approach the work-being of the work of art. In the Deleuze-Guattarian account dear to my approach, this leads to a question of capability: to what art is capable of doing rather than what it represents.[9]

Now, if Nevado's paintings are conceived of as *works* of art rather than as artworks, then how they work—that is, for example, how they actively emerge, and how they in their emergence bring something new about—should be the focus point of the analytical encounter. Whilst the *work of art* provides here a basic conceptual possibility to approach art in material terms, it also inspires elaboration of further conceptions. To suggest 'matter-sensitive' conceptions, I will now turn to that small oval painting I mentioned in the beginning and

which raised the issue of the *work* of art with its peculiar, non-representational double navel.

Object of fundamental encounter

> *Art engenders becomings, not imaginative becomings … but material becomings … in which life folds over itself to embrace its contact with materiality, in which each exchanges some elements or particles with the other to become more and other.* (Grosz 2008, 23)

The curious double navel that marks the female figure's stomach in Susana Nevado's small oval painting offers the starting point for the rest of the chapter. What makes the case is that the emergence of the double navel cannot be attributed to the intentional workings of the artist alone, nor is it a mere sign mediated by the means of a medium. The double navel, or navels altogether, do not appear in any of the discussions I had with Nevado concerning the making of the piece recorded during a six-month period of observation of the process. Nor does the theme figure prominently in the photographs I took to document the process. The obscure navel features only in the very last pictures. Besides, Nevado usually studies her subject in the making extensively both visually and through literature as she did this time too, only her subject was not navels. Rather, as we know by now, it concerned creating something new at the crossroads of Catholic imagery of 'incorporeal' holy women, scraps from the 1950's women's magazines and photographs of contemporary female bodies. Moreover, there simply is no history for the double navel as a signifier had Nevado been looking for one; no signifying network, which would occupy various domains from painting to literature and so forth as is the case with many iconographic signs that can be studied from handbooks. Thus, it becomes obvious that the creative process that gave birth to the double navel was not planned or intended: the artist did not master the process. What the following focuses on, then, is not the iconographic history of the double navel, its meaning in the commonsensical sense of the word, but its ontological heterogenesis, and the autopoietic process of art-making (Guattari 1995, 33–57, 110–118).

[figure 2.1] p. 67

Regardless of how fascinating a pictorial puzzle the double navel might offer, it is not something I seek to solve. Here, the double navel serves as an entrance, not to the world of iconography, to the regime of representation, but to the *work* of painting in which matter acquires expressive qualities; in which matter is an active and indispensable participant that scrambles and goes beyond the conventional binaries of painting. The action I am interested in calls for new conceptualisations for in it no image, no sign stands self-sufficiently,

independently of "*actual textures*" of painting that are "*always stamped with the mark of singularity*" (Guattari 1995, 38). Thus beyond the unifying and generalising tendencies that uproot signs from their emergence in and through materials, I hope to attain the complexity of an art process in which binaries of form and matter, content and expression, and also human and non-human collapse continuously. Instead of overpowering or mastering singularities of a material process with socially and institutionally established discourses or approved images of the semiotic canon, I aim to attend to their transformative co-emergence.

As in the case of *Heaven Machine*, the method I choose to engage with is that of encounter. Here, encountering is opposed to interpreting. For one, interpretation as a method maintains the matter/content divide the rest of the chapter seeks to surpass: put bluntly, in interpretation, the work does not speak itself, it is something or someone else that speaks through it (Lambert 2007, 14). Hence content is understood as being independent of matter. In Simon O'Sullivan's (2006a, 1) words, interpretation is a non-encounter. It does not allow the work of art to work but diminishes it to an object of recognition working within the realm of representation.

Whereas the recognisable figure or pose of María Madre de la Misericordia turns the little oval painting into an object of recognition the obscure double navel and the messy cracking surface with its blurred figures and swarming layers of paint and varnish produce uncertainty, perplexity even, antithetical to recognition. Surely the recognition of symbols is not useless, it is convenient in offering the comfort of an explanation. But what Barbara Bolt (2006, 59) claims is that "*in the satisfaction of explanations, something else gets elided*." This something is the *work* of art, or as Gilles Deleuze (1994b, 139) suggests, art as an object of fundamental encounter. According to Deleuze, an object of fundamental encounter forces us to think; it is something that challenges our habitual being in the world (O'Sullivan 2006a, 1). In contrast to the object of recognition, which serves as a vehicle for the already known, the object of fundamental encounter calls for a reconsideration of one's understandings. In my claim the double navel painting forces a reconsideration of the many of the basic understandings of what making art is about: among others, laws of representation and the logic of intention.

I began my encounter with the contention that the double navel was not Nevado's intention. Now I would like to be more specific and suggest that the double navel is an expression of the *work* of art. In her discussion of the work of art, Bolt (2004a, 5) contended that acts of interpretation and evaluation do not allow us to get any closer to the 'work' of art. Bolt's (2004a, 6, 130–131) theoretical undertakings of art beyond representation are informed and inspirited by her experience as a practician of art, as an artist; or by participant observation as she puts it herself. By observing Nevado's processes of art-making and by

participating in them via discussion and modelling for example, I have come to know that her works of art work in layers. So the figure of the girl as well as her peculiar double navel are inseparable of the layers of paint, varnish, and women's magazine scraps from the 1950's involved in the particular process under discussion here. In other words, the figure of the girl with its double navel emerges in and through those layers.

Powers of stratification

The layers are the strata.
Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, 40

To tackle the emergence in and through the layers, that is, the *work* of layers, I suggest turning to the concept of *strata*, and also to a related method named *stratoanalysis* as they are introduced in Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 39–74) *A Thousand Plateaus*. Whilst 'strata' is nowadays widely employed in social sciences to analyse the *sediments* of class for example, it has its origin in geology where it refers to rock formations taking shape in layers, which always come at least in double—as is the case in the double navel painting too.[10] The eclectic array of disciplines including geology and cellular biology that Deleuze and Guattari draw from allows for thinking the impersonal and pre-individual singularities out of which human and non-human worlds are constituted (Lorraine 1999, 113–114).[11] The geological term of strata is one of the concepts they have deterritorialised to give voice to the non-human in humanity, to show how the non-human takes part in becomings such as art often understood as exclusively or principally human.

For Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 40–45, 502–503), there are three major strata that govern the world: the physico-chemical, the organic and the anthropomorphic, of which the first one can be linked to the organisation of matter, the second with life and the third with the human (although it is actually never as simple as this).[12] Thus, strata can be understood as that which regulates movement or halts it to an organic and organised whole if not stops it altogether. No wonder that Deleuze and Guattari describe it as a belt! Identification is a form of stratification as are routines of everyday life and art. When something is stratified, it becomes common and shareable, easy to communicate. Consequently, what was above called 'artwork'—art as an object of recognition and interpretation—is art that is stratified. Work of art, however, escapes stratification.

Stratoanalysis does not look only for organised, stabilised nor petrified strata be it layers of society, signification or something else.[13] Rather, Deleuze

and Guattari explore strata to escape the strata (Goodchild 1996, 156). Yet this might evoke an overly simplified image for like the molar and the molecular, also stratification and destratification always come together. In fact, no strata should be understood as inherently negative. Humans need strata, the world needs strata—art history needs strata in order not to collapse into a state of incomprehensible chaos. To put it in more positive terms: "*Stratification is like the creation of the world from chaos, a continual renewed creation*" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 502).

Stratification also characterises one of the phases in the emergence of the double navel painting. The process in itself lasted for months, and this was mostly because Nevado was very discontent with the earlier layer or phase of the painting, now all but fully hidden under the present figure of the girl. It was because of this layer (that consisted of many other layers in itself) that the painting spent long times 'in arrest', out of sight, separated from other paintings all alone on the kitchen wall of Nevado's studio. Nevado felt that at that phase the painting did not work; it did not have a life of its own. To paraphrase Deleuze's (2003, 86–87) conceptualisation of a similar phase typical to Francis Bacon's art-making, it was all "*given*" and nothing new.

[figure 2.2] p. 67

At that time, the painting was strongly governed by the anthropomorphic strata; by the significance of images or better, scraps of pinup girls and a painted faceless woman, all in their underwear. The pinup girl of the scrap in the lower part of the painting was laughing with her mouth open, another one was more bashful, resting her arm close to her face as if to secure her bearings. Both figures posed arms above the chest line exposing their curvaceous upper bodies tightly controlled by white corsets. These fixed figures were obvious and perhaps all too recognisable as they are part of popular visual culture nowadays infinitely repeated and reiterated in advertising. Also, strong contrasts of light and darkness offered an easy route to interpret the painting in terms of the good and the bad. A diagonal stretch of dark paint crossed the canvas, and another one made from a black shred of lace cut from cheap underwear to the opposite direction.[14] These divided the painting in separate segments: while the pinup girls with their pepsodent smiles appeared on the sunny side, in the middle of the painting where the double navel girl now poses, was a painted figure of a faceless woman as if shadowed by the scraps.

Judging by what is described above, it could be claimed that the whole painting was like a worn Marxist feminist maxim visually declaring that advertising oppresses women by placing 'real women' in the shadow and turning them faceless while celebrating pin up girls eager to please the consumer. As said, it was all given—common and already known—and nothing new, nothing surprising. That is, the painting was stratified. Hence something was needed to *destratify* the powers of representation and the related possibilities for critical feminist evaluation, so as to push the work towards something new.

Forces of destratification

When I visited Susana Nevado's studio on a Sunday afternoon in March 2005, Nevado had, so to speak, stood against 'the powers of stratification'. I was surprised as she announced quite dramatically:

> *See, I've rubbed this one [the painting] completely! This is the one I've been struggling with. … Today I came here and sandpapered it from top to bottom. It has annoyed me so much all the time.* (ARS 20 Mar '05, c 18)

Nevado had rubbed the painting thoroughly with coarse sandpaper so that the figures had lost their obvious forms and referentiality; all that was fixed and easy to recognise was now gone. In other words, the destroyed *artwork,* the object of recognition, gave way to the *work of art.* The action of rubbing resulted in breaking the surface of the scraps, paint and varnish, and thus in making them more porous, more amenable, more open to new connections.

Before scrubbing, it was images and their significance on the anthropomorphic strata that governed the painting. This coincides with Deleuze and Guattari's (1983 & 1987; Guattari 1995) claim that western capitalist culture is based on the imperialism of language and, above all, on the imperialism of the *signifier*. What separates the anthropomorphic strata from the other strata is its tendency to govern the others, to extend its own laws and legacies upon everything else (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 62–63). It behaves like a despot. And in this sense it is a twofold despot. As Stephen Zepke (2005, 120) puts it, "[*s*]*ignifiance implies the autonomy of meaning from materiality in a seemingly free circulation of signifiers, but this freedom hides another despot, that of the subject*". For the signified–signifier binary always requires an individual subject that wants to express something.

Therefore, Nevado's act of rubbing was a way to give up the givens in two respects. It worked towards getting rid of the easily recognisable signs such as pin-up girl figures from the 1950's.[15] Secondly, rubbing was to get rid of painting as a deconstructive, textual activity that plays games with signs thus mainly working within the anthropomorphic strata of significance.[16]

The smooth surface or space that resulted from the rubbing connected the paint and the paper scrap figures so intrinsically that they were no longer separate layers: in the heat of rubbing an *inter*strata was born. What happened was that now the physico-chemical strata of the painting, the strata often seen as *sub*strata, as a kind of raw material or ground for meanings to emerge, connected directly and reciprocally to the anthropomorphic strata, to the semiotics and significance of the painting. In this newborn assemblage "*a semiotic fragment rubs shoulders with a chemical interaction…*" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 69); in other words '[*t*]*he semiotic components are inseparable from material components and are in exceptionally close contact with molecular levels*" (ibid., 334).

From double articulation to a-signifying semiotics

Where the material and the semiotic connect, and are indeed inseparable, content and form are not in a straightforward hierarchical conjunction either. The overcoming of the duality of content and form is part and parcel of what Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 40–72) name *double articulation*.[17] According to them, double articulations form strata. And as they often do, Deleuze and Guattari first offer an easy explanation of double articulation by separating the first and the second articulation but then add that beyond this obvious relation there are always more complex connections. Nevertheless, they contend that whereas the first articulation has to do with molecular flows and their ordering, the second offers a more systematic hold and a functional structure, an overcoding, hierarchisation and totalisation, for example (ibid., 40–43).

It would be tempting to claim that the first articulation is about contents and molecular movement and the second about forms and molarities. This is where representational thinking surely draws us. Deleuze and Guattari's trick is, however, to avoid this duality by arguing that strata are not simply constituted of forms and contents, of certain styles and images or figures, for example. Rather, strata consist of content (first articulation) and expression (second articulation). But this is only half of the trick. Namely, Deleuze and Guattari claim further that there are not only forms of expression and substances of content but also forms of content and substances of expression. In Brian Massumi's (1992, 152 n 36) words, "*both content and expression are substance–form complexes*".[18] The paint made to form certain figures, for example, is *substance of content* that is overpowered by a style of painting—a *form of expression*. Yet, the paint has its *form of content* too: it has a certain chosen order, it is a certain, known–to–be functional mix of water and minerals, oil paint, for example.

But the paint can also be *matter* of content—paint has its chemico-physical *potentialities*, it is also a bundle of *indeterminate affects*. This 'active' understanding of matter resides only *outside* the double-pinchers of articulation: thus in Deleuze and Guattari's vocabulary matter appears as something that is not chosen, tamed, stratified. However, Guattari's (1995, 59–61) elaborated version of the above-described reversible quadripartite model welcomes matter along, which for its part makes it possible to fashion semiotics beyond signification: a-signifying semiotics. In Guattari's model, matter and form connect directly; they do not need the mediation of formed, overpowered matter, that is, substance. This, of course, entails a different understanding of both matter and form, an understanding that stresses their dynamism; matter as material flows and intensities and form as non-stable "*diagram of a process of becoming*" or rather as function (Massumi 1992, 14). A-signifying semiotics operates by directly (and definitely non-communicatively) "*transmitting ideas, functions,*

intensities, or sensations with no need to signify any meaning" (Watson 2008, 8). In a-signifying semiotics, "*form interacts directly on matter*", in other words, there is "*a reciprocal relation between material fluxes and the semiotic machine*" (ibid.).[19] This is where we will now arrive at.

Double navel as particle-sign

When Nevado began to paint a new figure on a thoroughly rubbed, smooth, destratified surface, the emerging figure connected directly to the earlier layers of the painting, to the freed flow of meaning-matter particles. This movement had its autonomy. At a certain phase, certain material layers reacted to each other, and also rejected each other, and a particle of pink paint from Nevado's brush stroke intended to compose the girl's skin did not fasten well enough but fell away. Consequently, the girl acquired a second navel: a double navel.

When I look at a (digital) reproduction of the painting, and this is what art historians often do, the navel appears as a clear signifier, as a challenging detail, maybe a disruption—double as it is and not a regular navel—in the semiotic order of the painting. This calls for tracing its meaning. Elisabeth Bronfen (1998, 3) explains the all-embracing meaning the navel has acquired: "*In the cultural repertory of western imagery, the navel is the firmly privileged representative for the origin of human existence*." Tracing the navel through the stories of the Bible and Freudian psychoanalysis, she concludes that in the common sense understanding the navel signifies lack and forever lost connections with the mother and the immanent pre-symbolical world of the womb. Would the double navel then mean a double lack?[20]

[figure 2.1] p. 67

Navels also have an extensive history as hot spots in theological disputes as well as in visual media. Adam's navel remained a burning subject of theological debates for centuries, and when Adam and Eve are depicted with navels in Christian imagery, the original sin, separation from paradise is stressed (Botting 1999, 3–4). Then there is the more contemporaneous sexualisation and eroticisation of the navel for which the pop icon Madonna, for example, was famous for in the late 1980's when navels hit the catwalks and street fashion alike (ibid., 10). Along the 20th century, navels have also been censored. The Hays code restricted movie production in America from the 1930's to 1960's by stating that women's navels needed to be covered for example with jewels.[21] In addition to visual debates, there are theoretical ones as well. Deconstructive and poststructuralist underpinnings of the navel have brought it to art historical attention. For instance, Mieke Bal (1991, 21–24) has introduced the navel as a 'democratic' metaphor of difference that is at once

loaded with gender connotations, yet cannot be reduced to one sex alone.[22] In sum, there is no denying that the (single) navel has a rich discursive history, both visual and written.

However, in the physical presence of Nevado's painting the fascinating process of tracing meanings loses its purpose since the double navel does not stick out as such. There is no longer a separate sign to which meanings could be attached. Instead, the double navel is inextricable from the girl's figure as well as from the whole painting pregnant with lavish, swarming layers of material action. For example, the pin-up girl's once so seductive pepsodent smile has transformed into a grimace that now gnaws the double navel girl's pink pelvis flesh. The pink painterly skin fuses with the blurred paper scrap figures, with the dense and intense layers of acrylic paint and varnish. As implied earlier, there are no self-standing layers, no independent representations or signs any more but an autopoietic assemblage—an assemblage that creates itself in its own movement.[23] In this assemblage, the double navel is not so much a symbol with a general(isable) meaning as it is a singular expression of destratified matter-meaning flows, of the a-signifying *work* of art.

Put differently, the double navel is a *particle-sign*. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 142, 145, 224) employ this two-part term in plural (*particles-signs*) to emphasise its non-unitary be(com)ing. While not wanting to depreciate this aspect, I will stick with the singular so as to grant the term a clearer conceptual status, and also to make the (positive) difference between sign (of semiology) and particle-sign more apparent. In it, 'particle' stands for material, molecular movement, for the destratified content and 'sign', for sign-expression, for meaning, but importantly, not in any common sense meaning of 'meaning'. Sign in particle-sign does not point towards a signifier, or towards representation. Rather it has an ontological status, it connects directly to material qualities, to matter in movement. Particle-sign, then, is not something that would dwell on the surface of an artwork as a separate, independent sign; it is an integral part of the material becoming of that work of art—the work of painting.[24]

Stephen Zepke's definition of the concept is worth citing here. For him particle(s)-sign(s) expresses:

> *[d]estratification, a radical break with, or a line of flight from the strata that introduces something new. … [It] will appear in painting both as its destratification, as what escapes the stratifying articulations of content and expression, and as a new reality they construct. No creation without destruction.* (Zepke 2005, 122–124)

This is what has been at stake in the cartography of creation I have sketched: "*No creation without destruction.*" But whereas in Deleuze's (2003) understanding art emerges only when the given has been destroyed, overcome, what my encounter with the work of the work of art suggests is that both givens and

their destruction are essential to creation. There would be no double-navel without the givens. As Zepke claims, the particle-sign is not only an expression of destratification; it is a creation, a construction of a new reality as well. What then is this new reality, or in Elizabeth Grosz's terms, new world, new body that the double-navel as particle-sign offers?

Against the lack and the lost connections that the single navel signifies, the double navel as particle-sign offers an entrance to the abundance of material movement: to the world of *radical immanence* where images connect with human bodies directly without the mediating work of representations. This is suggested by that pelvis-flesh biting pin-up girl who does not reside inside or outside the double-navel girl's body but within it, as immanent to it—similarly to the way in which the pose of María Madre de la Misericordia is incorporated into the double navel girl's body. Rather than signifying a 'double lack'[25] the double navel as particle-sign points towards an open corporeality where images and various material and symbolic forces directly connect with human bodies, both modelling and viewing ones, in a continuous movement of transformation. Whilst the double navel caught our attention first, it must be admitted that too fixed a focus on it might prevent us from noticing that it is not only the navel but in fact the whole stomach area that buzzes, swarms with life.[26]

[figure 2.7] p. 84

Quite excitingly this gets us to one of the most disputed debates of materialist feminism: to the ability of women to produce life in them and whether this should be seen as a constraint or as an advantage (see e.g.Firestone 1970; Braidotti 1994). Here, notably, the girl-mother does not carry a baby inside her. Things are not that simple. Whilst we know by now that the girl is becoming a woman as she has already given birth to her child—she is a mother now—this is not something that the painting emphasises, not at all. What the painting pursues does not stay in the confines of a molar becoming. Rather, it shows vigorously how a thoroughly embodied, radically immanent subjectivity works; emerges in and through various kinds of materialities. This is molecular becoming, and not a molar one.

In this kind of becoming, the human and the nonhuman, the material and the meaningful intermingle directly: paper scraps and other media representations, rhythmic brush strokes, acrylic paint, Christian iconography, varnish and the shred of black lace, they all work "*on the same level as the real*" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 141). As such, what the double-navel painting does, is to direct us to stop *the navel-gazing*, the sign-gazing or interpretation, that so often involves making molar and moral judgments. Instead, with its vital layers that intensively extend beyond the double navel itself it calls for attending molecular action of art. This kind of (r)evolutionary politics of painting is underpinned by the peculiar materialist dynamics that epitomises in the concept of particle-sign.

Figure 2.7 Layers making the double navel painting. Details of *Honest Fortune Teller*, 2005, photographs Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

To conclude the chapter, let me get back to the methodo-ontological take this first part of the study works with. My conceptual suggestions—or adjustments—of the *work of painting* and *particle-sign* have both risen in a dense reciprocal relation between art and theory. They are products of neither art alone nor theory only—they have co-emerged through a zigzag movement between the two. As such they inherently possess the quality of movement in them. Both of the concepts draw attention to a movement that is *material*. They are about allowing matter to have *some* agency of its own. This is not, however, an individualist sort of predetermined agency—but rather a shared agency, or a better ability to give out and take in affects. In other words, the work of painting calls for attending to the process of painting in concrete terms: what is it that painting does and what does it produce? Particle-sign, for its part, is a more specific concept that likewise aims at enhancing the focus on matter in movement. It draws attention to how any sign is a product of a material process, thus not residing in the realm of representation only.

Whilst the emergence of both of the concepts is closely tied to the methodological choice of (participant) observation, and they themselves also call for certain methodological choices, I would claim that methodology is not their only or even primary playground. Crucially, these concepts—not a sign but *particle*-sign and not meaning but the *work* of painting—challenge the understanding in which the transformation that takes place in artworks, a transformation that makes them so fascinating, intriguing and subject to multiple interpretations, would happen at the level of the discursive only. Drawing attention to the *becomings* in and through matter these concepts invite the question of (materialist) ontology to participate in the discussions of art-making. This is where the next chapter will take off from. I will continue with Susana Nevado's processes of art-making and extend my scope to several projects to fashion such an account of art-making that places material becoming at its centre.

PART II

MACHINIC COLLABORATIONS

Materialities of Art in the Making

PART II

INTRODUCTION

[T]here is always a collectivity, even when you are alone…
Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, 152

[In an art process,] things enrich other things and themselves; they evolve.
Susana Nevado in conversation WAM-AMA 15–20 Dec '03, c 30

It is style that organizes matter. It is style that produces art.
Simon O'Sullivan in *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari*, 52

The human–non-human continuum in art has been one of the leading themes of the study thus far, and the following four chapters make no exception. They address materialities of art in the making in art processes of a painter whose work we have already encountered in the previous chapter: Susana Nevado. Whereas earlier the emphasis was on the conceptions and workings of active matter, and the artist's effort only a side issue, here their collaboration is the main concern. Yet, the artist and matter are not only two but several in themselves. To quote Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 3) description of their mutual authorship, in the process of creation the two will be "*aided, inspired, multiplied*".[1]

It is these multiple connections—collaborators and collaborations—that are the core *matter* of the following chapters. However, the concept of encounter and the practice of encountering are not abandoned either. Rather, collaborations are both results of fundamental encounters and actualised extensions of them. An image archive of works in progress and audio recordings of my visits to Susana Nevado's studio during all in all seven exhibition processes (2003–2005), both private and group undertakings, provide access to this collaborative action. Instead of focusing on specific art processes as in the preceding chapters, I will work with repetitive themes in Nevado's speech about art-making, and by following her words fashion an understanding of the creative process that places collaboration at its centre.[2] In a way, the chapters offer an artist's angle to what an art process is about. But, by the same token, to deconstruct the myth of an individual artist I will introduce the concept of *painting machine* (Deleuze 1999). It is to remind us that the collaborations at stake are to begin with beyond

the human: even though the 'artist-mechanic' sets the machine to work, it is the connections she enables but does not master that make it work (ibid., 65–66). In other words, this second part of the study is about the collaborations in which Nevado's art emerges, and through which her artistic agency splits into 'a thousand tiny actors'[3]; gradually becoming imperceptible and thus untethered from the notion of unitary authorship.

Deleuze (1999) introduces the concept of painting machine (*tableau-machine*)[4] in his text on Gérard Fromanger's photogenic art, which sketches how a painting (process) *works*. Yet working does not concern so much Fromanger's technical skills or the meaning that the artist would like to pursue but multiple connections: conjunctions, disjunctions, and eventually transformations—"*the change[s] the painting produces in the image*" (ibid., 77). This process, change, is handled principally in terms of colours, "*hot and cold*", photographic residues et cetera: that is, in terms of the non-human *material* in painting. Thus, the painting machine is not a metaphor for, or a replacement of the artist, but rather a more encompassing assemblage in which the non-human joins the human (for Deleuze in no way surpasses Fromanger's actions either). As such it is by definition *non-individual* and *impersonal*. The first of the following chapters will study this in detail by discussing what is often called influences or identifications between artists: it suggests collaborations that go beyond the human, and hence opening the molar into the impersonal, molecular and affective (chapter 3). After this, the theme is elaborated further in close connection to actual art-makings (chapters 4–6). From here on Nevado's art projects will be reflected on continuously: material images, blurring brushstrokes, rhythmic resonances—the painterly qualities enter into the picture.

Susana Nevado's collaborations with material images, layers of paint and brushes of different kinds, as well as painterly ideas taking shape through the multiple actions of art-making—recycling, manual labour and affirmative learning (chapter 5)—all work towards the same point: to disrupt the already known representations, recognition, resemblance. The conception of painting machine promotes this kind of emphatically non-individual style of art-making that cherishes non-recognition. What the painting machine, then, contests and transforms is the conventional, artist-centred and decade-defining approach to style grounded on the question of recognition.[5] In a conventional view, the style of an artwork tells us *when* the piece was made, and above all, *who* made the piece; who is or was the author.[6] Thus in traditional terms, style appears as an apparatus of identification; it differentiates valuable works from less valuable ones. In this way, it produces recognisable artists and artworks that have good market value (Bolt 2004a, 152). The re-iteration of a recognisable style is the principal working method of this 'marketing' machine. Obviously, as such, style has a pejorative connotation. It belongs to the aesthetic molar formation (Deleuze & Guattari 1983, 370) that solidifies art to an object of recognition and

identifies it to an individual who made it, both of which have commodity value in the art market. The Deleuze-Guattarian conception of style, however, sets itself against this capitalistic and individualistic connection.[7]

Tackling the questions of both recognition and style Barbara Bolt (2004a) makes an interesting note. She claims that what actually makes an 'Ana Mendieta' or a 'John Constable' unique is the performativity of the material process, the singular movements and choices (ibid., 153), and not the repetition or even the re-iteration of already known images. In this scenario, style is more than anything else about processing materiality, or as one of the opening citations suggests more concisely, about organising matter (O'Sullivan 2006a, 52). But it is not in his or her particular, personal manner, that the matter is processed. Rather, style is to the painting machine what processes are to matter: it is how the painting machine works. This connects to Bolt's use of quotation marks around the artists' names. They highlight that it is not an individual person that is in question but something more blurred; a strange combination of an art object and a person in which they both dissolve into collaborating material processes.

If the art market fancies machines that produce recognisable products of well-known production processes, in my followings of Susana Nevado's art processes I encountered a machine that produces unexpected products, and the functions of which are ever-changing as well as open for new workforces: collaborators.[8] In the actions that I followed, neither the human body nor human consciousness was privileged. Hence an approach critical of both subjective individualism and anthropocentrism was called forth. It is various materialities of art, both human and nonhuman ones participating and collaborating in process, *in the making*, that I will focus on in the following chapters. Incited by Nevado's sayings and the workings of the painting machine she is part of I will suggest further conceptions that in their own ways emphasise art-making as machinic collaboration; in other words as collaboration that exceeds the limits of the human and the nonhuman.

CHAPTER 3
IMPERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Let us begin by heading to Nevado's studio, to the place where most of the words and practices analysed in this chapter and the following ones were originally spoken, carried out, encountered, and recorded. The controversy between the understanding of an art studio as a most private space exclusively dedicated to lonely creation (Chare 2006, 85; Elkins 2000; Jones 1996) and Nevado's studio as a theatre of multiple collaborations sets a challenging twist for the analysis.[1]

From my very first visits to Nevado's studio it was clear that the place was anything but a closed space of mysterious creation. For example, on Friday the 7th of March 2003 her studio was filled with vivid discussion as besides me being present was another artist with whom Nevado was going to travel to Madrid, Spain to hold a group exhibition of three artists (MAD-pre). I was to join them as part of my field study, and we were at the studio to get acquainted with each other and to discuss their exhibition before taking off for five intensive days together. The artists explained how they decided upon the theme of the exhibition, Azafrán (*Saffron*), and what were the benefits and downsides of working together.

Moreover, the theme of collaboration emerged when Nevado's colleague asked me to talk about my research project. I explained how my fieldwork method was to 'collaborate' rather than only observe the artists working, meaning that it was important for me to stay open to their viewpoints and ways of doing. When she asked if I was going to focus on the social dynamics of artistic practice I told I was more interested in the art process itself, which would, of course, include the socio-political setting. After that they turned to emphasising how important it was for them to reflect on their working process with someone else, to force themselves to interact about their doings—thus clarifying their need to break the solitude and isolation of studio practice.

Whilst Nevado's colleague simply said that she would like to have "*some kind of mentor or supervisor you had when you were graduating from school*", Nevado emphasised reciprocity on a more general level:

> *It indeed helps me if I've worked at the studio many weeks by myself, and an outsider suddenly comes around. I tell [her], I've been thinking, it doesn't*

> *work in this way… Her eyes are different [from mine as] she hasn't stared at the work for the two weeks... Reciprocity, it is always important...* (MAD-pre 7 Mar '03, c 04)

Although it probably was my research setting that inspired them to talk about collaboration, this does not quite explain the fact that practically every conversation I had with Nevado over the years at some point touched upon other people's interference/influence on her work. It was not just a passing theme but a very important part of her art-making. Whether it was about getting a colleague's professionally valuable opinion, a family member's sometimes awkward, even disappointing view on something (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 12)[2], or what someone had said on television or written in the newspaper, my material shows that studio-working in no way divorced her from the world; quite the opposite. Many kinds of people continuously enter her art-making: there are people who visit her studio while others connect to it via e-mails, phone calls, through the news media and pictures in exhibition catalogues, for example.

Feminist collaborations: the double and beyond

The claim that art-making is not a "*free-enterprise conception of individual achievement*" but an act of multiple collaborations has been one of the founding arguments of feminist research since it was expressed in Linda Nochlin's (1971) essay "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?". In the field of art, collaboration is, of course, not only but strongly a feminist issue, exercised both in theory and practice.[3] One of the recent examples of this is *Together, Again: Women's Collaborative Art + Community* exhibition organised at The Brooklyn Art Museum in the summer of 2008. According to the curator Carey Lovelace (2008), one of the constitutive ideas of the exhibition was that "*feminist art laid the groundwork for*" artist teams and groups that have recently become increasingly popular by "*challenging ideas about authorship, particularly the myth of the solo male artist*". The exhibition pursues a celebration of this activist movement, which shook the ways of art-making through the 1970's and 1980's.[4] Feminism indeed was a strong factor when artistic collaboration—to do art together in *collectives*, to share ideas, processes and authorship—became a creative first choice as well as a political act for many women (Stein 1994, 226). Lovelace, however, notes that collaboration did not always happen in concrete collectives; feminist artists also exercised collaboration on what she calls an imaginary plane. As an example of this she mentions Miriam Schapiro's *Collaboration Series* including works such as "*Me and Mary Cassatt* ", a painting "femmage" that had part of Mary Cassatt's impressionistic painting copied in it. The work connects two

women painters of different times, creating an empowering female genealogy of women's art making. The theme of the copied painting reminds of how everyday life in homely surroundings both restricted art-making and gave a subject for it. On the other hand, the long tradition of handicraft is at stake because of Schapiro's quilt-like working method. Hence, collaboration meant emphasising connections with preceding art-makers, to value, and pay homage to their work.[5]

Thalia Gouma-Peterson (1997, 37), who has written extensively on Schapiro's art, highlights the importance of collaboration in her art-making processes. Although Gouma-Peterson understands collaboration clearly in terms of collaboration with other people, with other women to be precise, her descriptions often go beyond personal contacts, connecting women unknown to each other (see also Stein 1994, 228). She writes, for example, about *double collaborations*—stressing the fact that there were not only other women artists Schapiro worked with but also anonymous women who had made the materials they used, in this case, doilies. When writing about Schapiro's *Collaboration Series Mother Russia* (1993–94) she goes even further in arguing for what could be called material collaborations. After listing various human contacts including collaborations between modernist Russian women artists of the 1920's motivated by Schapiro's admiration of Sonia Delaunay's art, Schapiro's own family of Russian background, and also the Russian revolutionary movement's link to American feminism, she brings up what interests me here the most. She contends that "*equally important was the central position that these women gave to fabric as part of an original and empowering formal language of their work*" (ibid., 39).

Beyond individuality and identification

What Gouma-Peterson does is widen the term collaboration beyond the most customary senses of the word, beyond group activity and towards a more open understanding of art practice itself. This makes particular sense in relation to Nevado's art-making and Deleuze-Guattarian understandings of collaboration. Nevado's works are in practice single-handedly made by her; very seldom has anyone else touched the works in progress. And when it comes to group exhibitions, it is mostly only in the beginning of the process and when hanging the exhibition that the artists meet, and not during the art-making process (e.g. MAD-pre 7 Mar '03 c 07). Still, despite the fact that she has spent a lot of time at the studio alone and made the work mostly with her own hands, it is nonetheless obvious that many people have entered into her art-making as described above.

What I would like to suggest is that while feminist ponderings upon art-making have importantly questioned the idea that it is an independent achievement to create art, this kind of critique could actually be even less person-oriented. (After all, individualism is one of the principle targets of feminist critique, as well as of Deleuze-Guattarian thinking.) For collaboration is not always, and in fact it rarely is, direct exchange between two or more people, let alone self-sufficient individuals. To claim that Miriam Schapiro collaborated with Mary Cassatt, anonymous doily-makers and with a league of Russian modernists, or Susana Nevado with her artist boyfriend or Anton Tàpies whose work she admires, draws a more complex and also more accurate image of the creative process than if one just insisted that they created their works independently and graciously alone. It could also be argued that drawing such straightforward connections between two or more individuals is actually to minimise a very complicated process that is more *impersonal* or even *pre-individual* than intra-personal.[6]

To get there, it is first useful to ask what these people such as Miriam Schapiro and Mary Cassatt, or Susana Nevado and Anton Tàpies in fact knew about each other. And when it is obvious that they had not even met in person, then at least try to grasp what could have been their closest contact. To answer this we need to use a bit of imagination—combined with the available cultural and theoretical knowledge. As these people are painters working, 'collaborating' with each other, I would suggest that the closest Schapiro ever got to Cassatt or the closest Nevado will ever get to Tàpies is through their work, through the work of painting. And where this connection would (have) be(en) at its most intimate is where the painters' haptically trained eyes follow the ways of brush-working in the admired paintings. Even then this intimate contact has been affected, if not interrupted, by the institutional and socio-cultural situation in which the encounter took place: for example, by the hand and brush of a museum conservator, or by the light setting or the alarm system of the exhibition space determining the optimal or possible distance for viewing the work. Moreover, this connection is affected by educational and social positions that define the movement of the artist's body: the way the artist has been trained to work with her brush affects what she can see and feel, and taking the discussion further, so does the bare fact that her access to the institutions of art, both schools and museums, might be limited by her class, the country she is lives in, or by the gender even.

This more complex setting lurks behind when Gouma-Peterson (1997, 39) connects Schapiro with her collaborators by utilising the verb 'to identify': according to Gouma-Peterson, Schapiro *identifies* herself with the Russian women artists of the 1920's.[7] Yet the last sentence of the paragraph ending her analysis calls for the fact that it was what these women she identified with *did*—how they connected to fabric, how they used it in their art—that was the

more precise point of connection (ibid., 40). Hence, involved are technical and material handlings in a certain institutional framework of Russian modernism, which certainly points to the influence beyond particular persons. This is not to deny authorship, but to pay attention to singular situations, as well as to the creative events that these entanglements produce. Only at first sight might these complex connections appear as personal.

Technico-intensive encounters

To think further the complex and in many ways impersonal connections, I have only Nevado's enthusiastic, fervent words about the works and working methods, even techniques of certain artists. It is these that call to look for possible consequences, transformations, in the working of her painting machine. During those dozens of hours I spent with Nevado chatting about her on-going art processes she not only mentioned many artists she thinks highly of, but also eloquently described the works she had been struck by.

Nevado told me, for example, how she had encountered Bill Viola's video-installation on the wall of Bilbao's Guggenheim museum so astonishing, so technically perfect, so graciously exhibited that it almost made her burst into tears and gasp for breath (TIT 3 Aug '04, c 1:40). Also she described to me Damien Hirst's *Adam and Eve* installation in Tate Modern, London, so real-life that she could feel their wax bodies vibrating under the hospital gowns (CAI 18 Apr '04, c 21:30). Richard Wilson's *20:50* installation piece with its lake of sump oil reflecting the ceiling of Saatchi Gallery and hold by the iron structures, for its part, created a strange corporeal sensation (TIT 6 Jun '04, c 1:55–59). Moreover, there was the Anton Tàpies exhibition in Reina Sofia, Madrid, about which we had a lengthy discussion, and some impressive old masters' works and their handling of fabric she carefully studied at the Prado for her *Honest Fortune Teller* installation (ARS Jan '05).

Yet, not once did Nevado say that she identified with a certain artist, or that someone's work had a straightforward influence on hers. As if against this kind of discourse, which often conceptualises artists' connections with each other in terms of identification and influence, Nevado avoided making such lines. Instead, she fed my interest with sensations of fascinating *works* of art, but did not give any causal connections between her work and her 'collaborators'.[8] What Nevado expressed was a sort of collectivity, but not collectivity in any conventional terms.

If Nevado's descriptions of her encounters with the above mentioned works of art touch upon anything in Gouma Peterson's (1997) analysis of (Miriam Schapiro's) feminist collaborations it is her quick reference to the

"*position that these women gave to fabric as part of an original and empowering formal language of their work*" (ibid., 39).[9] For Nevado was primarily interested in the works of art, the artists' working techniques and material choices, in the way they *functioned as art*, much more than in the artists themselves. Intriguingly, she also described the bodily sensations of crying and gasping the works of art gave her—the sensations that had to do with "*the formal language of their work*" (ibid.). In fact, Nevado quite clearly underlined the connection between technical eminence and bodily sensations by first praising the technical skills and immediately after that summing her sensations (of Bill Viola's work): "*almost perfect in technical execution—so moving*" (TIT 3 Aug '04 c 1:40).

What I would like to suggest by drawing on Nevado's descriptions that bind together technical execution and sensations is the concept of *technico-intensive*: one could say that the works of art as technico-intensive processes are after all what is most intimate in these artists' encounters. Intensity, as it was characterised in the introduction for this study, is a material movement of art that cannot be quantified, it is not a question of mass, weight or length. Intensity is about pure qualities that can only be felt. Technico-intensive might, then, seem to be a contradiction in terms. For technical details of artworks are something that are often thought to be the measurable, and thus reproducible element of art. Here, however, technical is blasphemously understood as being inseparable of the intensities that the work produces. Here I owe to Gilbert Simondon's (2005) understanding of the technical that contests the normative, technocratic and human-centred view. For Simondon, technology does not refer to human control over nature or matter, and technological innovativeness is not all about human abilities: rather a technical innovation is due to the potential of the force fields brought together by human help (see Massumi 2009b, 40). The force of the technical, then, is more intensive than extensive by nature.

When an encounter between two artists is described as technico-intensive it works beyond representation. This is to say that what are transferred from one work to another are not, or at least not primarily, symbols, images. Another artist is not represented through recognisable representations—she or he does not extend to another work of art. It is at the level of intensities that works are connected. A particular atmosphere, sensation, individuation… is what they might share. Let me offer an example: when I asked Nevado if it bothered her that Anton Tàpies frequently used sexualised, even sexist symbols in his art, she quite easily passed the subject. It did not have that much importance for her, she did not care about the vulgar visuality of high heels, slender legs and penises carved into the matter of the canvas; she said that they belonged to the cultural surroundings and that is it. Instead, she was fascinated about the intensive materiality of his paintings: somewhere bold strokes of paint, somewhere very delicate ones, canvases sometimes gently handled, sometimes ripped, torn apart, and all this inseparably connected to a variety of material

objects, such as kitchen chairs and a washboard, and block letters, and those always powerful earthly colours. And then, above all, Tàpies' critical attitude: how he *connected* things—in an intensive manner (ARS 21 Jan '04, c 2:35).

Towards molecular collaborations

As might be obvious, none of the Tàpies symbols mentioned above—high heels, women's legs or penises—found their way into Nevado's work. If anything changed in her painting machine, it was that more and more different kinds of materials were allowed to connect to it. At the time of our discussion, she was conducting new works in which photographs connected to her daughter's fallen out teeth and to the spices (turmeric and saffron) she painted with (see chapter 7). Thus, 'Tàpies' connected to Nevado's works through the process of painting based on an intensive layering of materials and not via recognisable symbols.

This brings us to what is essential to the Deleuze-Guattarian understanding of art: creation or expression is not so much a matter of authoring subject(s) or even concrete collaboration between humans but of material-corporeal rhythms and intensive connections beyond the symbolic (cf. Kristeva 1984).[10] This understanding calls for rethinking dominant notions of collaboration and collective. Interestingly, Nevado's reluctance to describe her collaborations in terms of identification and causal connections bears resemblance to Brian Massumi's (2002b, 253) criticism of how collectivity has been understood in (postmodern) cultural studies. According to Massumi, cultural studies correctly realises that all expression and every act of expression is collective. He however also claims, "*it takes the collectivity as already constituted, as a determinate set of actually existing persons*" (ibid.). As such, "*it misses the impersonal or overpersonal excesses of ongoing transformation*" (ibid.).[11] In my view, it is these that Nevado aimed at grasping when denying straightforward causal connection.[12]

What Deleuze (with Parnet 1996) says of 'proper names' (such as Tàpies) connects to this:

> *[A proper name] does not designate a person or a subject. It designates an effect, a zigzag, something which passes or happens between two as though under a potential difference…*

A proper name, then, is in itself movement, a contact or collective rather than a person to be identified, a petrified block of characteristics so to speak. The Deleuze-Guattarian argumentation against identifications that Massumi among others have put forward is not moralising, condemning: "*It is inevitable that you*

will identify the other but you must seek to show how this identification is illusory" (Williams 2003, 209). The agenda is not to label causes, not to name them, but to study the action 'behind' the names.[13] In the case I have been putting together here: what happens in an art process when we claim that an artist identifies with something.

This collective zigzag-setting proposes a genuinely more open model of contact and encounter than the dynamics of identification and representation, which is always caught in what already exists. To put this open understanding of an encounter in more practical terms, let us turn to the workings of Nevado's painting machine: the painting machine does not reiterate or communicate signs or ideas; were they heterosexual symbols or not, they do not enter the machine as such. Rather, the machine assembles them at the level of molecular movement: the realm of the painting machine is one of process and action, a world of strokes, lines, colours, and textures, energies and chemical (re)actions. As we can see in the following chapters, Nevado speaks about this repeatedly. Importantly, for her, material movement always comes before representation (chapter 4). There is movement but no person or other paintings to identify with. However, it is not so much an imaginary plane where the artists connect, as Gouma-Peterson for example suggests, but an immanent plane of composition, which is "*a decentered spatiotemporal organisation, a loose network of works, techniques, and qualities, within which particular works of art must be located in order for them to constitute art*" (Grosz 2008, 70). Nor is it a poststructuralist textual jungle of re-iterating discourses,[14] nor some kind of a universal or transcendental plane as suggested in romanticism and modernism. It is, rather, a plane of immanence, the immanence of art-making that is the venue of meeting, the rendez-vous of the forces both exceeding and pre-existing the personal and subjective. These forces may seem very distant in terms of time and place—but this is only when they are too tightly connected to certain individuals and to their *specific* spatio-temporal situations. If measured with the socio-political coordinates of the art world or by counting the kilometres that separate the two for most of the time, Susana Nevado's collaboration with Tàpies would seem a veritable impossibility, or at least very improbable indeed. However, if their connection is not understood extensively but impersonally and technico-intensively, then, there is true potential for an exchange of a molecular kind.

CHAPTER 4
AUTONOMY OF PROCESS

It is a mistake to think that the painter works on a white canvas.
Deleuze in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, 86

Deleuze's comment is directed against those (modernists) who think that a painter is an autonomous actor creating his/her works out of nothing in this world. Instead, Deleuze (2003, 86) insists that the painter has many things in her head, around her, in her studio: in other words, she does not work in a void but on a rich *plane of composition*. What is of importance, he continues, is that "*everything [s]he has [--] is already in the canvas, more or less virtually, more or less actually before [s]he begins…*" (ibid.). This could, however, still be understood as art enfolding into itself and growing from itself. Yet, Deleuze (ibid., 87) emphasises how we are encircled and even besieged by photographic illustrations, newspaper narratives, by cinema and television images alike, furthermore there are psychic and physical clichés, a whole league of ready-made perceptions, memories and phantasms. Thus, he in no way disengages the artist from the world; rather he highlights this conjunction. This, for its part, has an intriguing connection to the feminist politics of art that embraces the importance of the everyday and its significance to art-making. Art does not rise only from its own separate and self-sufficient realm but also from the world of clichés including pictorial, narrative, psychic and physical ones, those repetitive *recognisable* elements, given figures and structures that constitute our everyday life. Hence, the painter never works *alone*; not even in the sense that she would work on a blank canvas (see also Deleuze 1999, 65).

In this chapter, collaboration is more than anything else collaboration with images and other matters of art. As we have already learned given figures such as pin-up scraps and the ladies of the catholic holy card tradition are a crucial part of Nevado's art making—her canvases are full from the very beginning. According to Deleuze (2003, 92), these given figures are not, however, part of the 'real' creative process; they are there in the beginning but just to be gotten rid of, to be destroyed. In this way, Deleuze maintains a problematic binary between the clichés and creation, and thus oversimplifies a complex process. In the case of Nevado's double navel painting clichés are inseparable of the

creation of the new: it was *rubbing, painting, re-painting* and *over-painting* that transformed the recognisable pinup scraps into something else; thus, not a complete destruction of clichés, but their transformation in the act of creation. Indeed, Nevado fabricates her art through layers of image—there are catholic virgins, angry daughters making faces, pin-up girls and pelvic bones, European cityscapes, to give a few examples—paint, and varnish, through a multiplicity of matters. In the following, both the visual documentation of the work of painting and Nevado's words about them offer understandings of *how* these images are in process and what is their task in the creation of the new. We will come up with various terms and formulations that in different ways contribute to the *autonomy of process*. This means placing emphasis on how materials of art contribute to and co-produce the process, in the end making it their own rather than only being a medium for 'ideas' that the artist puts forth. Autonomy of process, then, does not implicate independence from the material processes, nor from images—clichéd or not.

Material images in action

When Susana Nevado describes how she gets a work to proceed, images are definitely there—but even if they are clichés, it is not what they represent that is at stake. It is all about very concrete things: she wants "*to paint a little there, add some layers, and to see what happens then*" (CAI 22 May '04, c 43). The objective of her doings is neither clear nor closed. The thing she yearns for is motion, change; to get those recognisable images to transform into something else. In other words, to get the painting machine to work, to become on its own.

The following excerpts not only describe Nevado's desire for motion—they bring forth expressions that the subsequent analysis will elaborate on. They indicate, for example, that clichéd images are not only a reason for the creative process' state of stagnation, as in Deleuze's study of Francis Bacon's art, but maybe a solution to it, at least if they are understood beyond their cliché function. Also, the excerpts introduce the concepts of *process* and *idea* that are indispensable for the understanding of image that I am evoking here with Susana Nevado.

> *It is now stuck in a bad way. ... I should get that motion to it, something like [I've done] here, to put two or three [images], to have many [of them] as if at the same [place], so that it would move more. It hasn't been processed at all…* (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 03)

When a painting is stuck—still in the realm of easily recognisable images—to get motion to the painting, in this case to a piece in the *Honest Fortune Teller* installation, Nevado layers images upon one another, two, three, even more of them. She applies images to move the clichéd image. Yet she does not say anything about the representational function of these images; nothing about what they represent. And this is not an exception but a recurrent way of speaking: Nevado hardly ever mentions *what* images, that is, images of what she uses. She does not describe their contents; she does not give them any content characteristics. They are just images—projected slides, scraps, whatever. When painting another piece of the *Honest Fortune Teller* installation, she stressed this by actually claiming that it is possible to "*put almost whatever images there*" and then just leave them on their own (ARS Jan '05, c 2). This is what happened in the case of the painting mentioned in the previous excerpt. A couple of months later the painting was still stuck, in other words, motionless. What Nevado did then was to cover it with images, more precisely, with magazine covers. But what would follow then, she had no idea:

> *Well, I suppose it takes shape in the process ... by doing. For example, that first [painting] I started with, I had an idea then. When I began to work I noticed that a problem emerged. And the problem was that it became stuck in a rut. ... And now it is kind of too stiff. [The question is] how I could get motion to it.* (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 07:30)

This second excerpt stresses that the process of making defines what will emerge, and not Nevado herself. What can be concluded from this is that working with too tightly predetermined ideas ends up badly in terms of the process: the process gets stuck. In light of the above excerpts, images are certainly not useless, although their role as a representation of something does not have much value at this stage. It is the material process and not the representational one that Nevado focuses on during the process of making. To emphasise their material becoming, images should probably be understood here as pictures. This comes close to W.J.T. Mitchell (2005, xiii) suggestion of pictures not only as symbolic or representational images but as "*complex assemblages of virtual, material and symbolic*".[1] As pictures images are probably easier to conceive of being equal to any other material elements of art-making, and not above the others in their 'superior realm' of signification.

Nevado's images as pictures are not, however, only virtual images, or ideas inscribed into the matter of the work of art; they are themselves of *moving matter*. This is emphasised further as Nevado describes that what the images do—"*what would happen then*"—is not in her hands, consequently referring to some level of autonomy, to a material agency of its own. The words the second citation begins with are crucial as they grant the process an autonomy: "*it [the*

painting] takes shape in the process", that is, not before the process as an idea, but on the immanent plane of painting.

So quite the opposite of what Deleuze suggests in his Bacon book, images as pictures are not clichéd objects that communicate something. Rather, they are Nevado's *material collaborators* in creating a work of art; they move the process precisely because they have an agency of their own—remember the emergence of the double navel in the project *Honest Fortune Teller*, for example. Yet, it needs to be emphasised that this does not mean that pictures would not have any representational value to Nevado. Surely they were chosen thematically in the beginning. It is only that in a certain phase of the process their material function is stronger than the representational one.

Painterly qualities

Even when Nevado exceptionally describes the images she uses, she does this in the material terms of the *haptic* rather than in terms of what they visually represent. Haptic, according, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 492) who derive it from Aloïs Riegl's art historical thinking, is connected to close vision: it "*invites the assumption that the eye itself may fulfil … the non-optical function*". Hapticity, then, designates the specific function of touch unique to the sight itself.[2] Deleuze and Guattari remind that "*[a] painting is done at close range*" (ibid., 493). At close range, what can be seen and felt are volumes, textures, colours, contrasts. It is only from a distance that representations can be recognised. In Nevado's painting processes, images as representations never come first. They are not privileged: like all the other materials—the paint, varnish, brush(work)—images appear as more or less densely assembled sets of material particles.[3] When beginning a painting for the WAM exhibition Nevado explained:

> *The starting point was … in the beginning, that there'll be a kind of contrast. … But I don't know how that will evolve. I found old postcards of a church in Mallorca. A very frilly kind of a picture of these angels. Everything that has to do with the Catholic religion, it has an overabundance of stuff: gold, statues, and stuff… So, the starting point would be this picture. I've visited this cathedral, but I haven't seen this [painting]… This is just at an early stage, it might be that these [angel figures] will go away and text will appear. The idea would be that there's a lot and that it would be simple.* (WAM-AMA Aug '03 c 38)

What come first are not images, but even more abstract and yet still material partakers: the *contrast*, in other words a *resonance* between different elements

in painting. The way Nevado describes the image of angels is also interesting indeed. Frilliness relating to the visual-haptic plenitude, "*an overabundance of stuff*", is the most important thing, not which angels are in question, whom they represent, or which stories of the Bible they refer to—she had no idea of these issues during the process. Whereas art historians are trained to give these qualities a symbolic meaning, so that visual richness—"*a lot*", "*an overabundance of stuff*"—would refer to the wealth and power of the Catholic church (and through that even to the crusades and imperialism and other forms of robbery and violence perhaps), in Nevado's artistic process they are treated principally as haptic, painterly qualities.

Thus, the idea that there would be "*a lot and that it would be simple*" mentioned in the end of the above excerpt is a *painterly* idea, that is, an idea connected to a material process of making. It is a matter of painterly expression that there should simultaneously be "*a lot*" and "*simplicity*". Interestingly, the completed, exhibited painting still had the angel figures, but they are not painted in a way that one could recognise them easily: gold and brown fold into each other, the brush strokes blurring the scene rather than shaping the figures clearly. Yet, ambivalently perhaps, these painterly qualities and the material action of images have made these blurred figures, representations if you like, to emerge.

What I have sketched above does not entail that Nevado would brush aside the symbolic altogether. A good example of this is provided by an excerpt, which shows, again, how she prioritises the painterly elements of the working process, but does not ignore the symbolic either. The following excerpt is an answer to my insistence on what it is that advances a certain painting in the *Honest Fortune Teller* installation. "*You have, obviously, painted something yourself, transferred certain pictures*" I claimed. "*But what is it that advances the work?*" I repeated.

She answered:

> *There are many stages [in the process]. For example, when I started the first [painting], I wanted to have some kind of colour there. And then when I'd gotten that colour, I needed to get some texture there. … I had painted some decorative details up there, and I wanted to start with that. … I was wondering what kind of solutions I can make now, when there's no contrast at all although there is transparency. Then I thought that these colours should change altogether. … I began to change [the colour of] the drapery, and the first thing after I changed that I had to change the [colour of the] body then, and then that of the bra too.*
>
> *Then I wanted something that would be in front of everything, so that the [figure of a] woman would be behind, and the body on a different layer, and then I wanted a layer again before everything else … and then … yet another layer.*

> *The fourth layer I wanted was these underpants I've put here. These were once bought from a so-called sex shop; I got them as a gift. I was thinking, I'm painting fabric [clothing], and putting that fabric [there too]. Why not?! Of course underwear is, or how do you say, knickers, it is a symbol too, I don't know if it'll be too kitsch. It's somehow a funny idea that a painting has pants. [Laughs.] Suddenly I thought of them as a bit of a joke. There should be a bit of humour. Then, they [the knickers] produce quite a lot of contrast. That red [colour].* (ARS 21 Jan '05, c 2:07)

Whereas Nevado begins extensively with the painterly qualities of colour, texture, contrast and transparency, she is not unaware of and does not deny the symbolic value of underwear. This is particularly interesting since it would be possible to label the painting as figurative: there are many recognisable figures in the painting, but Nevado hardly mentions them. What has relevance here is the rhetorical order of her argument: she both starts and concludes her discussion with the painterly details of texture, contrast and colour, whereas the symbolic value is pondered upon in the middle. She is a bit worried about the knickers being too kitschy, but closes her consideration—as well as seals her choice—stating that the red colour offers the desired painterly contrast.[4]

[figures 4.1–4.2] p. 106

She speaks about layers, in layers. Before mentioning the fourth one, the knickers, she brings up that she wanted something where the arm is, something to the fore, then something, and still a layer more. But these layers are not in any hierarchical order, there are no higher or lower layers in terms of value. They simply add *motion*, density; intensity. They make the work of art move, live. Nevado's role is to assist in this, or to collaborate.

The connectedness of the different layers—that is to say her material collaborators—is also emphasised. A change in one layer often calls for change in the other layers too. This stresses that images do not work alone; there are no images as such, images in themselves, nor are there "more material" elements that mediate somehow more virtual images, ideas. What these layers create are not iconographic puzzles, problems to solve, but events in which painterly elements form new assemblages, which can, of course, later attain representational significance.

Ideas in change

Brian Massumi's (2006, 201–213) essay on Bracha L. Ettinger's art takes up many issues touched upon here. His dialogue with Ettinger's paintings focuses on their process of emergence. Coming close to what I have done here and what I shall continue with, he approaches the works in terms of materiality carefully giving attention to the various events of making: how Ettinger is involved in

Figures 4.1–4.2 Painterly contrast: painting with and without panties. Details of *Honest Fortune Teller*, 67 x 38 cm, process documentation, spring 2005, photographs Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

the becoming of images. What Massumi notes resonates with my perceptions of Nevado's process: during the making of the works the symbolic meaning of the images plays hardly any role. This is emphasised in Ettinger's working method of stopping a Xerox machine in the middle of the copying process, which leads to technically poor-quality copies. The grains of ink have not fastened yet, and the copy becomes suspended in its becoming. Ettinger, however, is not trapped in the binary of 'copy and original'. Instead, her act of stopping the machine, intervening in its usual procedure, creates a space for something *beyond* the binary still haunting the logics of representation and meaning-production.

In Ettinger's project, this deliberate destroying of recognisable representations connects to her conceptual creation of a *matrixial borderspace*. The matrixial refers to the womb, to the intrauterine, but also more generally to a connective tissue, organic and inorganic alike, where meanings dwell in their incipiency. That is, not in a symbolic or identifiable form but in their material, molecular and transsubjective stage.

This makes for an interesting comparison—and companion—to Nevado's art processes, which we have come to see in material terms rather than simply as symbolic motion, in terms of colour, resonance, contrast, texture. What Massumi (2006, 210) claims about Ettinger's works holds true in Nevado's case too: "*As the artistic process wends it[s] way toward the gallery, toward exhibition, it begins to reconnect with existing systems of reference: symbolic and discursive systems such as myth, philosophy, art theory, psychoanalysis, and any number of others*." This does not entail, however, that the studio would then be a place, a sphere, in which everything is de-connected, brushed away, rubbed apart. The paintings' studio life is all about making connections but not connections that are mediated primarily by representation: instead these connections are immanent and imminent, direct. Thus, at Susana Nevado's studio, ideas are not reproduced. Bracha Ettinger's words strike the point: "*Painting does not reproduce an idea, it is an idea*" (ibid., 202).

An idea, then, is not content for expression. In the workings of a painting machine, the two are thoroughly connected: it is an idea in process, becoming content–expression. As Deleuze (2007c, 307) suggests in his text on the creative act: "*Ideas have to be treated like potentials already engaged in one mode of expression or another and inseparable from the mode of expression, such that I cannot say that I have an idea in general.*"[5] This clarifies that although an idea is something Nevado repetitively mentions throughout our conversations, it is always surrounded with a clear amount of indeterminacy, even obscurity: there are no ideas to be represented, only potentials—"*initial*", "*original*" and "*basic*" ideas as she formulates in the following extracts—before they actualise in the course of the process.

When Nevado, for example, described a group exhibition piece that she was working on, she was very careful to stress the vagueness of her idea. As the

following excerpts implicate, for her, an idea is closely connected if not equal to the process of making, to the process of becoming. Notably, almost everything she says about her ideas connects to the ways of making and the materials involved in that process:

> *I've got an idea for that Ama Gallery exhibition. But let's see how it will take shape. There are always these practical problems. That material does not work or the idea is not what I wanted.* (WAM-AMA Aug '03, c 42)

> *It is in the stage of an initial idea, or [rather] evolving from it. At least I know that I want something that'll be torn and that has multiple layers. The multi-layeredness, that is what Europe is about… [I want] that there would be so much of it [layers] that it is confusing. But I don't know how it will evolve.* (TIT 22 May '04, c 35)

> *This is my original idea, but I don't know how it will work out. As you have probably noticed, sometimes these ideas evolve in some other direction.* (TIT 6 Jun '04, c 10)

> *So this is the initial idea and I don't know how it will materialise [itself]. There'll be something beneath that or something. So that basically you don't almost notice anything but you notice that there is something weird. But let's see, I will read and look and [do] such [things]…* (TIT 6 Jun '04, c 30)

> *The idea is that it will become manifold, pictures, planes and then the circle.* (TIT 3 Aug '04, c 1:30)

> *This is the basic idea from which it would then develop forwards.* (ARS 24 Oct '04, c 09:30)

> *The idea is to mould [it], it will probably change and then it will eventually become something else. It is something that you are not able to know in advance.* (ARS 5 Dec '04 c 06:50)

In the above citations, different ways of using the *passive voice* and the repetitive direct expressions of "not knowing where it will end" refer to the same phenomenon. They stress the autonomy of the process: idea as an event that is not solely in Nevado's hands. What Massumi (2002b, 119) says about the performance artist Stelarc's position in the performance events he creates make sense here: "*He has no mastery of the situation, no effective control over which ideas the spectators verbalize, or over how or if they subsequently connect. And he seems entirely unbothered by the fact, even pleased at the range and unpredictability of responses.*" Likewise, in her performance of painting, Nevado does not describe herself as the fully volitional agent of the process—it is ideas that will become,

evolve, change. It is not she alone who makes them become, evolve, change. What she does is to have an initial idea; she also "reads and looks"—and paints too. Hence she does things that obviously connect to the process but do not determine, master it. Her doing, her movement such as reading *can* change the process, bring something to it. But there is no guarantee it will. The process of art-making is a joint, and as such an unpredictable effort.[6]

To underline the specific nature of the process, let me offer one more citation. Nevado says: "*I've been painting and painting, and in this way it has transformed into something altogether different*" (ARS 21 Jan '05, c 2:03). Remark: she does *not* say "I changed it by painting it". And the expression is similar every single time she speaks about the process of creation. She keeps re-articulating: I can do certain things but I do not know where the process goes. "*You cannot paint ideas, or if you want to do it, it is better to write on the canvas in letters 'this is my idea*'" (ARS 16 Jun '05, c 08), she explains and laughs, implicating that "doing ideas" consciously and intentionally will not lead anywhere. It is the process, the workings of the painting machine that transforms the initial idea.

It is important to differentiate the 'autonomy of process' put forth above from the traditional notion of autonomy of art. In the heat of working, in the heat of emerging, all sorts of particles from different strata, chemical, social, and symbolic alike merge, come together, and find their rhythm in reciprocity. It is not, then, autonomy from the social or from the symbolic that I am suggesting with Nevado. It is just that when connected in art-making matters of art create their own mutual movement that might be called autonomous. In short, there is auto-poiesis when something "*starts to work for itself*" (Guattari 1995, 132). This is how ideas emerge through the workings of Nevado's painting machine. They are immanent to the process in the making. There is no guiding idea that would master the process, nor an individual behind it. We might also call this sort of machinic collaboration *co-poiesis*, to cite Bracha Ettinger (2006, 109, 159). Co-poiesis emphasises even more efficiently the aspect of collaboration; it reminds us that there are always multiple participants in the process.

Immanence of art-making

What conversations with Nevado suggest to me comes down to *immanence*. In Nevado's practices, images and ideas, often understood as something that *predetermine* and *direct* art processes through their association with the 'superior' realm of signification turn out to function rather differently: images are not conceived of as a purely representational, visual force in art processes, very strongly it is their materiality, images as pictures that counts; images as material aggregates along with and equal to other partakers in the painting

process. This is not, however, to say that Nevado's paintings would be separate from the realm of representation—it is just that even if there are representations to interpret from her works, these are not only born out of intentional workings to produce certain kind of representations, rather they are immanent to the material process of art-making. Ideas, for their part, are something that do not pre-exist the process but evolve in a specific process; they are tied to its materiality in the making. In other words, ideas are immanent to the process. What comes out of this is that since images and ideas have no predetermined, intentional function but are rather let to work, or put to work on their own, the process acquires a certain autonomy.

Whereas this chapter has now "materialised" both images and ideas often understood in terms of transcendent rather than immanent qualities, there is still a lot to be done in showing how Nevado's painting machine operates on the immanent plane of composition. Already in this chapter, there have been references to various ways of *composing*: of putting images in layers, of painting and reading. Yet how this happens in the actual working process has not been handled in detail. Therefore I will now turn to what Nevado has to say about the action of composing and about the manual work essential to it. Manual labour, I will contend, is as vital in making art emerge as it is in detaching images from their representational task, from their "*visual whole*" (Deleuze 2003, 97–98).

CHAPTER 5

MANUAL LABOURS

Let us begin again with the blank canvas. Although it is of course by now clear that the canvas is never truly blank. On Sunday the 24th of October 2004, I entered Nevado's studio with wonder. There was an impressive series of white canvases of various sizes and shapes leaning down at the floor and standing against the wall. By that time, I had already learned that Nevado usually works in layers, and also on top of her own older paintings. So I was confused. Four months later when those canvases had acquired multiple layers we had the following discussion:

[figure 5.1] p. 112

> K-KK: *But these are special in the sense that they [the canvases] were all white. … I mean, often you've had earlier paintings beneath. Did you have a certain reason for not doing that [again]?*
>
> SN: *In fact, the material I've painted on was recycled, [it was] part of the installation [that was on display] downstairs in Ama Gallery. That is, they come from another work of art. That is, it is recycled material, which is always important! But the reason I wanted them to be white is that I wanted to force myself to start with blank [canvas]. It's somehow difficult, that it is white, and it is pretty funny that, after all, I've done them [the paintings] in a way that I've done a layer, and continued, and continued and changed them. In principle, I've done the same, that is, I've done the same and I've begun far further even. ... If I had had the groundwork done, there would have been one phase less.* (ARS 23 Mar '05, c 05)

For Nevado, behind this interest in layers, in recycling and renewing was a yearlong special course for professional visual artists that she took part in 2003 and 2004 at the Turku University of Applied Sciences. The course had a tremendous effect on her working method. After the course, she explained to her colleague:

> *Every work I've done now I've done with old materials … every single one of them. I haven't bought anything new except from second-hand shops or alternatively I have found something somewhere.* (MAD-pre 7 Mar '03, c 13)

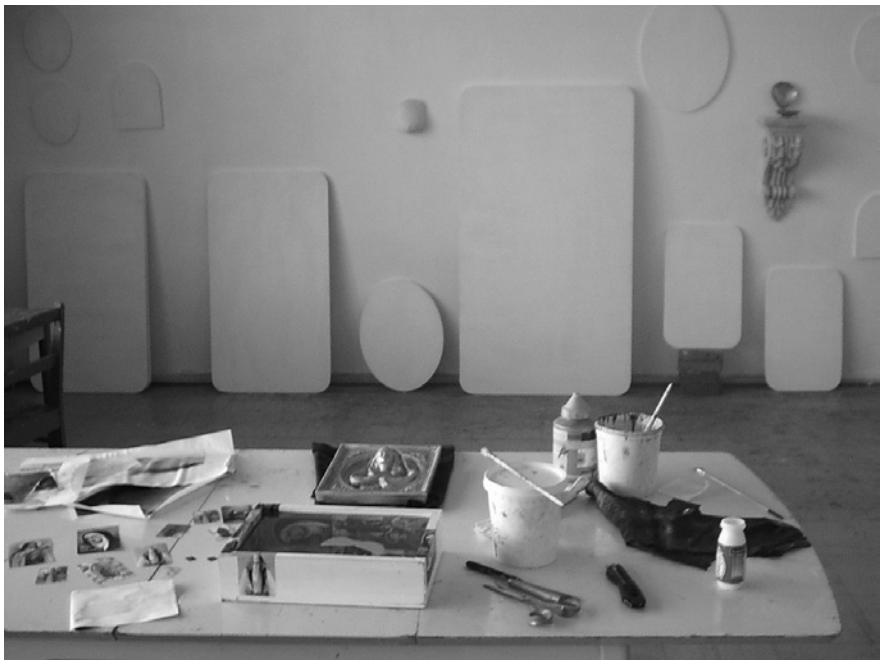


Figure 5.1 Blank canvases at Susana Nevado's studio. Process documentation, October 2004, photograph Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

While the concept of recycling in the first citation explicitly refers to the so-called ground materials, canvases (mdf boards), the second is more widely inclusive: it extends to all materials used in art processes, and this includes images as it was suggested in the previous chapter. For example, in Nevado's *Honest Fortune Teller* installation the varied figures of María Madre de la Misericordia emerged through the poses the bodies took and then through the continuous re-painting, through *painting in layers*, and in case of the Ama Gallery exhibition old family photographs from Nevado's own albums and from those bought at second hand markets both in Finland and Spain entered the painting process again and again.

Ruining recognition

But whereas there is a lot of recycling done, this does not mean that the same figures would be repeated identically over and over again. Nevado underlines this as she pieces together the painting process of *Honest Fortune Teller*:

> *It's about evolving, not about stopping. … It is not repetition [of the same] although there is that virgin [again]… It's about evolving, it continues, in another mode.* (ARS 16 Jun 05, c 15)

Thus, for Nevado, recycling entails transformation. This is also what Judy Purdom (2000, 171) claims in the case of Nancy Spero's dancing, leaping, tumbling women figures on the move: "[*t*]*here is repetition but never duplication*." And it is not because the figures represent the movement of dance, leap et cetera, but because they are on the move, transformed by Spero's manual labour of printing, stamping or collage; printing, overprinting, reprinting—"*inevitably then each piece is singular production with its own peculiar material and composition*"(ibid., 169). In fact, Nevado's reworking of the rather fixed figures of pin-up girls and holy women makes an even better example, for it is obvious that they are on the move *because of* the continuous doing; their composition in layers that group, crowd and sometimes isolate, differentiate the figures. This is not simple reproduction: it is "*the movement of the process(ion) not progression or proliferation*" (ibid., 171). In other words, it is recycling as differential repetition, "*repetition as real movement, in opposition to representation which is false movement of the abstract*" (Deleuze 1994b, 23). In Nevado's case, working in layers is a differentiating tool: painting, over-painting, re-painting, painting with paper scraps and photographs as well as with the paint itself. But is this only physical repetition? According to Deleuze, the answer is no. This repetition is also of an ontological kind (ibid., 293). To change, to crack the fixed image by insisting in its intricate movement is to say no to recognition. In recognition, you halt, belt the figure, you stop the process instead of letting it flow.

As recognition is, however, a repetitive theme in Nevado's descriptions of her art processes, let us take a few examples:

> *Many [people] have said [to me] that you don't need anything else, white wall, the tiles in this way [in circle, marking the countries of the EU], and you don't need anything else. … It could be a symbol, but I'm not satisfied with it.* (TIT 6 Jun '04, c 10)

> *It's somehow a funny colour [purple], 'cause you can't know if it's dried blood or blueberry soup.* (CAI 18 Apr '04, c 48)

> *The layers should be very transparent. I would like to have a bit of abstraction there, if you understand? So that I would get that [yet too] integral body to crack. So that at some point you don't quite recognise what it is...* (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 16)

> *It's a bit like a game, you note that there are various [faces], but you can't know; can't recognise who it is.* (ARS 5 Dec '04 c 1:37)

> *I've been thinking that there would be many figures. Let's see how it will evolve. … If the virgin's body will also appear, that is, the figure from that holy card, if a part of it will emerge... This is a bit like a collage, something's maintained, something's covered—I want to do a painting in the same manner.* (ARS 5 Dec '04 1:37:02–1:37:58)

In the above excerpts, Nevado expresses her interest in ruining recognition—to paraphrase Dorothea Olkowksi's (1999) conceptualisation of ruining representation—and the actual acts of doing it. She explains that it is like a game: you think you can recognise but you are not able to do that after all.[1] To make this kind of an effect emerge Nevado brings forth various acts of non-recognition: to not be satisfied with symbolical signs; to choose colours that do not have clear symbolical meaning, clear reference; to paint with collage-like techniques or to add some abstract elements.

Importantly, these acts of non-recognition only make sense in connection with certain art processes. Thus it is the *singularity* of the process that is at stake here. For purple is not an ambiguous colour in all circumstances. Placed on a recycled antiquity soup plate it, however, gains a more ambivalent resonance. And when the plate is surrounded by a dozen other plates decorated with anatomy book figures such as pelvis bones and muscular tissue as well as photographs of naked women's bodies such as in Nevado's installation that was on display in the Caisa Gallery in Helsinki 2003, the connotation of blood makes more sense. Moreover, colour is always connected to texture; what we see as colour has also a haptic quality—while we can separate these in theory, in practice it is not possible. It is precisely this colour–texture combination that creates confusion. In this case, the purple texture was acquired by transferring a certain photograph via a gel medium onto a white stoneware plate. Hence, to be exact, it was in the conjunction of that 'gel image' and stoneware that the unrecognisable purple occurred.

[figures 5.2–5.3] p.115

Nevado's paintings with faces blurred, transformed and deformed by manual working make yet another case that ruins recognition. The identifiable human face as an irreplaceable arena for ever-persistent interpretation, scrutiny and control is unarguable: there are strict rules for what passport images should look like as they must be recognisable to the authorities that allow access to foreign countries or work places, also numerous political and advertising campaigns based on faces, the long history of analysis of facial expressions, and recently also Facebook as a means of knowing and connecting people. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 167–191) use the term *faciality (visagéité)* to describe this phenomenon that subordinates the human face for the powers of identification, subjectification and representation, in a word, for recognition.[2] Thus, Nevado's eagerness to *de-facialise*[3] in her painting comes as no surprise: in the working of her painting-machine, multiple layers and transferable

Figures 5.2–5.3 Ruining recognition I: layered plates. Details of Susana Nevado's *Invisible Spirit* (*Espíritu Invisible*), mixed media on second hand plates, size variable, process documentation of *On the Other Side* exhibition at the Gallery of the International Cultural Centre Caisa (CAI), Helsinki, April 2004, photographs Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

images not only render models' faces unrecognisable, but put them in constant movement by connecting them to other heads, to that of María Madre de la Misericordia elaborated from a holy card, for example. Again, lively layers ruin recognition.[4] In fact, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 302) provocatively claim that painting is the very deterritorialisation of the face. This basically means that painting must go beyond recognition, that is, to uproot the face from its usual territory (of recognition). And this deterritorialisation always requires at least two territories (ibid., 174, 306)[5] in this case provided by multiple layers connecting, for example, the Catholic holy card tradition and the 'real-life' face of a woman who posed Nevado as María Madre de la Misericordia.

[figures 5.4–5.6] p.115

In Nevado's art, abstract elements that are applied to disturb recognition will not do by themselves either; it is at the crossroads of various 'techniques' such as gluing paper scraps onto the acryl paint filled canvas (as in the case of cracking open too recognisable Virgin figures) that adding abstract elements works. An example of this is Nevado's work that makes various European cityscapes unrecognisable in painting/placing their fragments between partly stripped off wallpaper:

> *I will paint those white empty gaps [which the ripped off wallpaper had left] with something very figurative, but as you will only see a stretch, a fragment [of that picture], it recreates such an image that whilst it is figurative it is also very abstract since … you can't really perceive the whole picture. … I'd like to paint a bit there, to add some layers, and see what happens then.* (TIT 22 May '04, c 42)

Hence, all the excerpts presented have something to do with the *manual* act of layering (Deleuze 2003, 130–131, 155). It is the act of layering and of letting layers working on their own that produces non-recognition, something unexpected:

> *I don't know how many layers I will still do, there [for example] are at least three layers. I will, I guess, still add up to five or six layers, and it will emerge, and become different all the time.* (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 06)

> *I've thrown everything on you [i.e. on a painting that I modelled for], all of these magazines… I'll glue the magazines and let's see what happens then. … It will change from here on; I began to think that it is better that I break [this thing] now so that it won't be too obvious, that image [I mean]. And then we go on, and see what happens. Anything can emerge from this...* (ARS 6 Mar '05, c 1:43)

[figure 2.4] p. 69

Figures 5.4–5.6 Ruining recognition II: The original holy card of María Madre de la Misericordia and the 'de-facialised' holy cards based on paintings from *Honest Fortune Teller*.

Getting physical

But it is not self-evident to get the layers to work. Nevado's descriptions of the painting process underline this as the physical verbs of struggling and battling are used repetitively.[6] It is not an easy job to get the materials to collaborate among themselves, and with the artist.

> *It wasn't an easy job, I struggled with it for almost a year.* (TOP 27 May '03 c 5)

> *I've been struggling with them enormously. … But I really believe that when I've painted more, the paint will begin to speak.* (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 15:00)

> *I've been struggling with it almost for one and a half months. … I've been rather hostile since I haven't been able to gain the rhythm, and also, the hostility in itself causes such an effect that it doesn't come easy…* (ARS 6 Mar '05, c 16–17)

What the above excerpts suggest is that struggling has to do with a kind of physical communication, getting in contact and finding a mutual rhythm between the materials and the painter's mind–body aggregate. This is what collaboration entails. It is not just about applying paint on something but also about getting the paint to work with the artist, with her brush, with the surface.[7] The artist does not just use the paint: "*The model is not one of utility but of struggle—a 'hand–to–hand combat of energies'*" (Massumi 1992, 13).[8] This quotation serves here as a key to the event of 'woodworking' through which Massumi sketches a challenging complex of content and expression, and form and substance (ibid., 10–21), that will help us to rethink the relations of painter, paint and the brush further.[9] Massumi contends that relations of wood, tool and woodworker[10] are far from simple: there is content, expression, form and substance on both sides. The wood is not only a raw material, a substance, but a substance with a determinate form, and not only is it a content for expression executed by the woodworker but it is also an expression of multiple natural (e.g. sun, rainwater, rich soil) and cultural (forestry) forces that contribute to its emergence. The wood is not a passive object of the woodworker's actions. But the force of the wood's qualities is certainly weaker than that of the tool in the hand of the woodworker.

Massumi draws attention to how a woodworker has to be sensitive to the 'signs' of the wood, to its *qualities* of texture, durability and so on. These qualities are not just properties or visible perceptions, instead they envelop a potential: "*the capacity of being affected, or to submit to a force*" (ibid., 10). The woodworker has to have certain knowledge of what a wood can do; otherwise they will not form a functional assemblage in terms of creating a table, for example.

Barbara Bolt (2004a, 84) emphasises how these contacts, linkages between materials, tools and the artist must be made anew every time. Every event is different, *singular*, the dynamism it will acquire cannot be known beforehand. The paint might be more liquid, the canvas more porous, the representations at hand more recognisable, the painter's state of mind calmer and the rhythm of her body faster, or the other way around. Massumi (1992, 15) stresses this too as he introduces various elements that have their effect on the worker and her material: technical skills, education, working environment, intentions and genetics to name a few. In fact, in the encounter of the painter and the paint (and the canvas and other materials) it is not clearly defined bodies that meet but rather *force fields* with particular pasts and potential futures enveloped in them.

The conception of the painter and the paint as force fields consisting of their already moulded but still active *energies* suggests an appealing link with Nevado's words that describe her attempt to get the paint(ing) to work with her in the physical terms of *sports*.[11]

> *I started but it got stuck in a rut. I'll return to it, and it'll probably break down altogether, and build up again bit-by-bit. But it is not that moment yet, since I'm basically still warming up. …* (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 1:30)

Thus the piece in the making has become stuck in a rut. As we know from the previous chapters, in Nevado's vocabulary this means that the art process is still too strongly attached to the realm of the already known. In other words, it is not a *work* of art yet; it is not *working*. Nevado has not been able to release it with her collaborative actions: for she is "*still warming up*". And a warm-up is necessary to succeed in any physical activity. A warm-up usually consists of an increase in (bodily and mental) *intensity*, joint flexibility exercises and stretches that aim at opening the body, activating its energy system, and making it more elastic and more sustainable for the forthcoming effort, so that the body can do even more, go beyond its normal everyday duties. In art-making, the body—the machine—that needs a warm-up is an expanded one, combining the human and the nonhuman elements which makes the elasticity of 'joints', linkages ever more crucial. Whereas in sports a warm-up exercise indispensably including intensification is needed for a top performance, in the Deleuze-Guattarian scheme, intensification is a quality that art, *the work of a work of art*, compels.

Importantly, both in sports and arts a warm-up should be conceived as part of the actual exercise, and not prior to it. In the following excerpt, warming up turns into training—into working out a work of art:

> *It's not easy at all. It takes an awful lot … and not only technically… I've began with these smaller ones… Doing them I could get a bit of training to [deal with] that bigger one; they demand an awful lot of work.* (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 04)

It is almost as if Nevado was pumping iron and not painting; in both cases the task is to get your body to adjust to the movement and to the rhythm that the process takes by starting with the smaller ones (weights / paintings). Rehearsal, time, and patience are needed. Another example of this is provided by Nevado's comparison of taking an aerobics class and practising painting. She explains that if you have not taken an exercise class for a long time, it takes time for your muscles to adjust to the movements, to remember the movement, the rhythm, and the same goes for painting (ARS-fn 23 Jan '05). Thus, for Nevado, painting is a physical task, manual and not only mental labour. This is what was suggested earlier: "*when I've painted more, then the paint will begin to speak*". Whilst Nevado uses a language-bound expression of getting the painting to *speak*, it is the longish period of manual labour of painting that makes the paint speak. This is important since Nevado stresses that in an art process it is often "*the paint that gives a solution*". She continues:

> *… of course I've often felt very irritated if I haven't been able to make the paint speak. For it can be a whole day that nothing happens; the colours don't communicate with each other or with me. Then, it is better to stop.*
> (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 8:50)

Whereas Massumi (1992, 11) writes that a woodworker must follow the grain of the wood, that is to work *with* it, it is a painter's task to follow the qualities of paint. And whereas it is the woodworker's job to bring the qualities of wood to a certain expression such as a table, the painter faces perhaps an even more challenging task: she must collaborate with the paint (and other materials) to create something new. What the woodworker and the painter have in common is that it is not their intention or will that defines the process, the creation. Instead, creation necessitates collaboration with and not a mastery over the material. This is when "a [*wo]man discovers rhythm as matter and material*" and where "*it is no longer inner vision … but manual power*" that directs the process (Deleuze 2003, 108).

[figure 5.7] p. 121

As Bolt (2004a, 84) highlights, the above linkages between the artist and her materials have to be made anew every time. Nevado takes this up as she reflects upon her relationship with different materials. Her exhibition at the Topelius Gallery in Helsinki displayed painting-collages on various materials including canvas, mdf-board and steel. When discussing with an exhibition visitor about her steel works, she said: *I'm probably more courageous, stronger to[wards] those materials* (TOP-op 27 May '03, c 23). When I asked Nevado why she thinks she acts more courageously when painting on steel, she claimed: "*You can do whatever you please with these, they were found in a garbage bin*." In contrast to the steel, she explained that the canvas is so loaded with traditions that it creates barriers for creativity.

Figure 5.7 The woodworker—Susana Nevado at her studio. Process documentation of *Room to Move* exhibition at Titanik Gallery (TIT), Turku, March 2004, photograph Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

Another, perhaps a more personal example of struggling with materials brings us back to the painting with a double navel in the state of stratification. Among the materials that composed the artwork at that time were paint, pin-up scraps and crucially, a black shred of lace that diagonally crossed the painting dividing it into two segments. It made the space *striated* in a literal sense (see Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 475–478, 488). The lace was rough, cheap, of the kind that irritates the skin, makes it itchy. However, Nevado's explanation of keeping the painting in arrest did not draw any particular attention to the lace. Rather, she claimed that it was the overall appearance of the painting that was stuck—the representations of women were indeed too stereotypical (ARS 5 Dec '04, c

1:24). Nevado was frustrated, even angry. It was only a few months later, and in connection to another painting in process, when the role of the lace started to gain significance and the possibility that it could actually have something to do with the maker's anger appeared. Nevado explained that the lace was cut from a corset bought at a so-called sex shop, a disliked gift from a former boyfriend. It was not so much a gift for me, but for him, Nevado claimed (ARS 21 Jan '05, c 2:07). Allowing the lace to enter the process she—voluntarily or not—invited a whole field of affective, material and cultural forces enveloped in that piece of fabric to collaborate with her.

With the pin-up scraps, the black lace created a quite perfect *visual whole* that made a strong reference to the subordination of women in terms of Marxist feminism (see chapter 2). But as the idea was to create something new and not just repeat or reiterate the same, this was not enough for Nevado. As it happened, she ended up *manually* sandpapering the painting and the visual whole, and consequently the lace lost its recognisable character. In this state of destratification the visual—the eye—did not govern the painting anymore. However, it would probably also be too simple to claim that the manual, the hand alone reigned the process now. What the destratification allowed was a new kind of collaboration to emerge, a dynamism between the materials, the hand and the eye. Deleuze (2003, 154–161) calls this the *haptic*: "*if there is still eye, it is the 'eye' … linked to an immense agitation of matter*" (ibid., 137). The painting that resulted from the processes of stratification and destratification was pregnant with matter as the paint, and the remains of paper scraps and lace visibly connected to the (representational) figure as if under its painterly skin. Thus the manual work scrambled the recognisable visual representations, and in collaboration with matters of painting it transformed the visual whole into the haptic where the lace that earlier seemed to create a barrier for creation, was neither tamed or erased but acted as a participant in the work of the work of art.

What 'getting physical' brings forth here is, then, that when it comes to the materiality and corporeality of the painting process, the working procedure is never only mechanical, schematic—it does not somehow reside in the painter's body ready to be applied on whatever surface. No collaboration is self-evident; since every event is singular the collaboration has to always be negotiated, warmed-up, struggled anew.

Affirming, learning

Let us consider Nevado's handling of and collaboration with the black lace a bit further and recap the process. What was it that Nevado did with the lace that had its irritating history both in her personal life, and more widely

in terms of hierarchic gender difference? Interestingly, the lace that most probably caused delays and trouble in the process of making the piece was not completely destroyed or altogether removed as one could assume. Rather, it was transformed, made unrecognisable, and in its transformed form it was allowed to participate in the creation of the piece. It became a material and cultural participant in the emergence of the double navel girl as its remains formed the part of the girl's painterly skin. As such, this exemplifies what is typical for Nevado's art-making: the layers beneath the most recent one are not over-painted for good, left behind forever, but allowed to live their life, to stay active in one form or another. This is painting as an *affirmative practice*.

In her elaboration on Susan Hiller's rather minimalist and abstract *Painting blocks* (1984) cut and sewn from the artist's own earlier paintings, Rosemary Betterton (2004, 83–92) makes an interesting observation concerning affirmation. She suggests that by transforming earlier works into new ones Hiller allows the paintings "*to participate in life*", to continue living. Hence Hiller does not treat the earlier works as objects to be "*entombed*" in museums or in some dusty storage space, but instead lets them work. In the case of *Hand grenades* (1969–1972) filled with ashes from paintings that Hiller has burnt, Betterton (2004, 85) makes another interesting note. She claims that this "*material transformation … enacts a new moment of becoming*". For Betterton, transformation and becoming oppose the modern understanding of painting as melancholic *mourning*.[12] What she contends is that Hiller's practice of remaking her paintings means a refusal to mourn the past and, instead, give it a renewed agency in the present and in the future.

Nevado's painting practice follows a similar dynamism. While the example of Nevado's practice provided above concerned affirmation within an individual art process, there are several events in my material that show how affirmation in terms of differential recycling encompasses her practice more extensively. It also belongs to Nevado's own vocabulary: *I transmit; I affirm… I have a pretty strong will to do things* (WAM-AMA 15-20 Dec '03, 1:03).

Elizabeth Grosz, one of the feminists who have most profoundly argued on behalf of the need of affirmative practice contrasts it not only to mourning and lamenting but also to critique as a negative practice (see Kontturi & Tiainen 2007, 246–256). Whereas Grosz sees art as the realm of affirmation, her argument rises from her own discipline of feminist philosophy. Grosz claims that one can easily read for example Deleuze, Spinoza and Darwin negatively since these 'founding fathers' do not have many positive things to say about women. Yet, she insists that there are many things that would remain unsaid without Deleuze, for example. Following Grosz, there are many things that would not have been possible to emerge if Nevado would not have used stereotypical materials such as lace in her art and, on the other hand, if she would have been satisfied with making critical representations, images that are perhaps

re-iterative but yet stratified, recognisable as such. What affirmation assumes is transformation. To affirm is not to affirm the same (that is confirming!) but to allow transformation to enter and join the process.

Returning to more practical considerations, let us turn to Nevado's own words. In her affirmative understanding, works of art live continuously and this becoming happens, above all, in terms of self-differentiating matter:

> *I think that a work of art lives on continuously. And if you use them again, it is a kind of continuum ... it is about evolving not about stopping...* (ARS 16 Jun '05, c 15)

> *I feel a work of art can live forever [but] it could be that you never have to return to it, or then, for example, you paint something else over it. It never comes to an end; [and] it is never [the same] what it was on my [studio's] wall.* (ARS 16 Jun '05, c 25:20)

However, the transformative continuum, becoming, also extends beyond particular exhibitions:

> *I've been thinking that these works, which are going to Wäinö Aaltonen [Art Museum], have already been there once. They are recycled material, a part of the work, which was exhibited there in the year 2000. It's exciting to know that they are returning there.* (WAM-AMA 15–20 Dec '03, c 29)

Although this chapter has emphasised that Nevado works in layers—even in terms of layered materials from earlier exhibitions as above—this does not mean that she would do nothing but repeat this practice as such again. One of the principle characteristics of Nevado's artistic practice is that she does not cling to what she is used to. She is willing to learn, and for her, learning means trying out new collaborators, working differently, with a different rhythm—it necessitates engagement, elasticity and hard persistent work. In other words, "*learning means composing the singular points of one's own body or one's own language with those of the other shape or element, which tears us apart but also propels us into a hitherto unknown and unheard-of problems*" (Deleuze 1994b, 192). Here learning unfolds as both a fundamentally continuous and essentially bodily process.

Also Nevado's method of working in layers has continuously changed as various materials and techniques have been experimented with: she has concretely continued her old paintings by painting on them, or rather *with* them, but in addition to this and alongside it, she has used, for example, a gel medium called 'Medium' to transfer and connect images to various materials[13] and tried miniature painting when decorating antique plates for the Caisa exhibition.[14] The layers themselves consist of multiple materials: of photographs, spices,

scraps, recipes, varnish, paint and clothes, to give a few examples. Moreover, in Nevado's practice, learning takes place at the level of exhibition planning but also from one exhibition to another.[15]

> *Already in the Ama exhibition, there were these various layers… I'd like to carry this out and bring together my previous thoughts.* (TIT Aug I '04, 1:35)

Interestingly enough, Nevado's description of the connections between her earlier exhibition(s) and a forthcoming one was not a straightforward evolution from one point to another, but something more vague. Thus, even when it comes to learning there were no precise directions, she just wanted to continue, to learn something different, to differentiate: "*It is a step forward, [not] to a next phase, but forwards"* (CAI 22 May '04, c 15).

Although Nevado's method of affirmative and future-oriented layering might be described as being extremely rich if not overwhelming, by the same token, her working method could be perceived in Irit Rogoff's words (2001) as being '*without*'. In Rogoff's use, the term without signifies change and singularity, the courage and capacity to sustain in a situation of continual transformation. This is also what Warwick Mules (2006, 78–79) emphasises in his article on creativity, singularity and techné that discusses how William Turner had to *un*-learn certain techniques to create something new. Nevado's openness to learning is, then, an affirmative and courageous process of continuous change. To close my pondering on Susana Nevado's practices of learning and affirming let me quote Briony Fer's (2006, 285) description of the German-American 'proto-feminist' Eva Hesse's working method: "*The driving economy of all her work is to recycle, to loop back to earlier projects and experiments, sometimes even failed ones, to regenerate them and make them into something new."*

CHAPTER 6

ZIGZAGGING ART AND LIFE

This concluding chapter sums up the workings of Susana Nevado's painting machine, which in the course of the three chapters has turned out to concern not only painting. Whereas the previous chapters have all stressed non-human collaborators, here the human collaborators of flesh and blood, such as Nevado's artist partner, children, friends and colleagues are also brought forth, however briefly. As such this chapter reconfigures the art and life theme typical for traditional art historical writing. While heroic tales of great (male) artists celebrate the extraordinary lives of already passed away geniuses, here life acquires a different reference: life is considered as a continuously ongoing force, becoming in itself. As we have learned, a work of art cannot emerge without life traversing it. Yet Nevado unquestionably has a particular life of her own, at the crossroads of family members, friends, colleagues and others, her history both in Spain and Finland, her work as an artist and as an art teacher. It is this lived life that has so much intrigued and inspired feminist art and theory resulting in the widely spread claim that art is subjective and culture-bound rather than universal or transcendental.

Given the complex situation at hand, at the intersection of different understandings of life, it is perhaps useful to attempt to fashion the entanglement of art and life anew. *Zigzagging* is a verb that I would like to use here to emphasise the mechanically non-causal, non-linear, non-dialectical, in-between conjunction of the two. The image of thought offered by Deleuze (1994b, 119) (who expanded on Nietzsche) as an example of zigzag, is a lightning and a flash or strike of lightning during a thunderstorm: there sure is a connection between them but the connection is not visibly identifiable.[1] Where does the spark of light, the flash, come from? Before the flash there is only potential—an intensive field of charged particles. But the flash never resembles, represents, or even reproduces this field, as Brian Massumi (2002a, xxiv) suggests. Rather it is a culmination (but not the end) of an intensive continuum. In a similar manner, the artist's lived life is not represented or reproduced in her art—and although there might be a seeming resemblance, there is still an intensive transformative process between the two. In fact, according to Deleuze (1995, 141), style is this transformative intensive force that produces sparks not only in nature but also in art.

Not a factory

Let us now take a look at Susana Nevado's exhibition at the multicultural Caisa centre in Helsinki in May 2004 for it assembles art and life in multiple ways. At Caisa, Nevado displayed a wall filled with reworked, redecorated antiquity plates of various sizes. All of the plates were second-hand and many of them were gifts from friends and colleagues who had inherited them for example from their grandparents. Therefore the plates had a long life, a long history even before their newly acquired life as works of art. Whereas at a distance the plates did not appear as anything uncommon—they looked like a set of collector plates, though not part of the same series, a closer look revealed that the plates had unusual decorations: strongly textured images of human body parts, organs, muscular tissue, pelvic bones and ovary tubes more or less covered, linked to the original decorations. Their making had been a long and also technically challenging process as Nevado aimed at being as precise in her work as were the anatomy textbooks she was inspired by (CAI 11 Apr '04, c 21).

[figures 5.2–5.3] p. 115

Figure 6.1 Not a factory—Susana Nevado at her studio. Process documentation of *Invisible Spirit* (*Espíritu Invisible*), spring 2004, photograph Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

Although she had clear models in her use and a kind of series was in question, she described the process as being far from industrial:

> *This is a very slow, time-consuming process … I think that this is not a factory ... [laughs]. They'll [works of art] be born when they'll be born, as quickly or as slowly as they shall.* (CAI 18 Apr '04 c 37)

[figure 6.1] p. 127

How could Nevado's words that obviously deny the factory-like working method, and describe it in terms of birth so easily implicating organic life, be associated with the machinic as has been suggested throughout the three chapters? Deleuze's (2007a, 175–179) ponderings upon the conceptual transformation and the change of focus between the two books of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* he made with Guattari help to figure this out. Deleuze claims that whereas in *Anti-Oedipus* (1983) the political model of factory was released against the clearly defined powers of nuclear-family and unconscious (concept of desiring machine etc.), *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) praises the creative idea of (machinic) assemblage offering a far more complex and also inclusive arrangement that does not stand against some pre-existing forces but aims at inventing new fields. In light of Deleuze's comparison, Nevado's articulation of painting machine rather than factory makes sense: hers is not work of negative critique but of creation by means of affirmative learning. In addition, Nevado's art processes lack the two obvious attributes of the factory: a tightly scheduled production process and pre-determined ideas for the products. Consequently, then, Nevado's machine is rather a creative assemblage than a more disciplined factory machine. In factories, there is no space or time for intensive continuums culminating in flashes whereas creative assemblages thrive on them.

Assembling, extracting life

Back to the plates, which presented something far beyond controlled and formulaic anatomy textbook images, and also something beyond standard factory products: a beautifully contorted female body with multiple sclerosis, a condition eventually resulting in death, and an after-coitus body stained by menstrual blood thus ambiguously presenting both life and death—coitus as a possibility of new life and menstrual blood as a sign of the lost possibility to produce new organic life. These second-hand plates with their life (t)issues offer interesting, inventive assemblages that call for rethinking the theme of art and life. Both of the plates are connected to Nevado's body not only because she has worked them single-handedly, but because the MS women's body is her sister's, thus intimate to her (also in terms of genes), and the after-coitus body is

[figures 6.2–6.3] p. 129

Figure 6.2.–6.3 Assemblages of art and life. Details of *Invisible Spirit* (*Espíritu Invisible*), process documentation, April 2004, photographs Katve-Kaisa Kontturi.

her own. Yet, the knowledge of this close bodily connection, which in my case has to do with the fieldwork, does not explain much in itself. It however directs interest in the question of how Nevado herself sees the connection between her art and life. The following excerpts were recorded just before she started work on the Caisa exhibition and right after the exhibition. Nevado says:

> *I can no longer differentiate between what is my art and what is my life. … I don't think I'm bohemian, perhaps it's about my attitude towards life. … It is such a rich [life] that you can connect many things. … You have something in your mind, a process you're working at. You want to gain something, to assemble these things.* (WAM-AMA 15–20 Dec '03, c 1:07)

> *I think I live in and through art. … They are not at all separate things. And if they would be differentiated by force it would be catastrophic, I reckon, since my whole lifestyle is making art.* (TIT 6 Jun '04, c 52)

In the first quote, Nevado almost celebrates the close connection of her art and life. She praises that it is a richness to be able to connect so many things, and the verb she uses here is to *assemble*—to bring and fit together. If we turn to Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 40, 337) and their definition of an *assembled* aggregate, what they say is that any assemblage always has two sides. On the one hand it is facing strata, in which case the binary of content and expression still holds, but on the other hand there are always creative lines of flight that flee from the pinchers of the strata: assemblages swing in-between. However, the first choice Deleuze and Guattari offer does not fit here, for that would mean that life and art are separated, and that would be against Nevado's words: art forming the expression and Nevado's life the content of art. What would then be such a connection, such an entanglement that would allow both to flee from the strata and a consequent flow between art and life?

Deleuze and Guattari (1994, 170) suggest that it is *style* that transforms lived everyday life—feelings and perceptions—to impersonal affects and percepts. And style is, of course, an assemblage in itself, constituted of energies, ideas, particles and bodies in movement. There are many ways of assembling, and *extracting* and *saturating,* in the chemical sense of the words, are the ones Deleuze and Guattari (1994, 171–173) employ. Both terms allow for transformation without losing the connection to what was before. Or in fact, the molar connection might be lost and gone, but the molecular one is sustained. Elizabeth Grosz (2008, 78) elaborates on this kind of molecular connection in more specific terms. She writes:

> *Perceptions and affections, forces lived in everyday life, can only be wrenched from this ... context to the extent that the natural and lived are themselves transformed, the virtual in them explored and strange connections—that have no clear point or value—elaborated with considerable effort and risk to the normalized narratives of the everyday… The material perceptions—the bodily relations between states of things and subjects—become resources of the unliveable percept; materials of affection—our sufferings, joys, horrors, our becomings, the events we undertake become our possibilities for inhuman transformations.*

Grosz emphasises the transformation taking place on the plane of composition that turns lived experience into something new that in its turn would cast its effects and affects back to our lives, changing them, allowing them to join the non-human (Grosz's inhuman). If we now reflect on the image of Nevado's sister's sick but strangely beautiful, somehow overwhelming and boneless-looking body as extracted and saturated onto the plate decorated with blurred blue lines, it is clear that the connection with Nevado's life is not a straightforward one. In a process of extracting and saturating photographic residues of Nevado's sister's life, Nevado's feelings towards her sister and

her approaching death have both transformed and acquired a permanent material support (the plate, the paint etc.), in Deleuze and Guattari's (1994, 168) words they now form a monument. Yet this is not a personal memory plate, to support memory, to respect or sublimate something gone. And in fact, this particular plate does not stand out as a monument by itself—it belongs to a larger assemblage, it is accompanied by if not countless other plates then in any case so many of them that they cannot be glanced through at once. Over thirty plates with their respective imagery of bodies, body parts, muscle tissues, pelvis bones and organs, such as ovaries, textured and moved—transformed—by acrylic paint, gel medium used for transferring photographs, surface cracks, and traditional picturesque decoration, create their own non-human 'lifecycle': life on those plates, or rather the life of the plates, the life of the work of art, is accumulated from the rhythm that assembles the pieces together. This is how "personal" human life is extracted and saturated, transformed into the non-human life of the assemblage.

Populous art-making

Let us continue further with connections, still within the Caisa exhibition space. The Caisa exhibition that I have so far spoken of as Nevado's exhibition was actually a joint one. In the other part of the exhibition room, Nevado's former partner had his own minimalist, strongly textured, material paintings displayed. The title that brought Nevado's and her ex-partner's works together stated ambiguously *On the Other Side* (Toista puolta) as if to emphasise differences between their styles, and yet to draw them together. Whereas Nevado above clearly suggested that forceful separation of art and life would be catastrophic to her—this still does not mean that she would yearn for a total union, in terms of combining partnership and collaborative art-making, for example. This became obvious when she was amused by a short newspaper critic declaring "*the very active Susana Nevado—this time with Leonardo Nieva*" (TIT 6 Jun '04, c 52), for she knew that the list was a long one, she had surely worked with many people: Susana Nevado *and* Leonardo Nieva, Susana Nevado *and* Heli Kurunsaari *and* Sari Koski-Vähälä *and* Paula Ollikainen—just to name colleagues she had exhibited with in small scale group exhibitions and whose opinion she valued in our conversations. The list could easily be continued with her daughters and their friends who helped to tear off the wallpapers for the installation at the Titanik Gallery, and a professional needed for the background tiling of the *Honest Fortune Teller* installation, for example.[2] So Susana Nevado *and* daughters, Susana Nevado *and* the professional, and moreover, Susana Nevado *and* her mother and numerous other names that continuously popped up in

her explanations of her working process. And of course, Susana Nevado *and* Katve-Kaisa Kontturi, for our research collaboration. Colleagues and friends, family members, partners. In short, art and life—and although Nevado was amused by the critique's choice of words in the beginning of this paragraph, she immediately added more seriously: "*It is really hard to differentiate between your art and life*" (TIT 6 Jun '04, c 53).

This listing certainly suggests that collaboration is a crucial and acknowledged part of Nevado's art-making. Deleuze's (2006, 7–8) pondering upon the conjunction 'and' repetitively employed above grants the collaboration the needed creative twist as well as stresses its ambiguous in-between nature: "*What the conjunction AND is [is] neither a union, nor a juxtaposition but the birth of a stammering, the outline of a broken line which always sets off at right angles, a sort of creative line of flight? AND … AND … AND…*" But as said earlier, despite the number of people entering into her machine, with a few exceptions, she worked alone at her studio without the company of other people. Deleuze (2006, 5) however, points out how this solitude is extremely populated, and this beautifully sums up what has been at stake throughout the three chapters: various transformative collaborations between humans but also and centrally beyond the human.

> *When you work, you are necessarily in absolute solitude. … But it is an extremely populous solitude. Populated not with dreams, phantasm or plans, but with encounters. … You encounter people (and sometimes without knowing them or even without seeing them) but also movements, ideas, events, entities.*

Susana Nevado's installing-machine

For Nevado the creative zigzagging and encountering that Deleuze speaks of is more generally tied to a certain 'medium' or way of making art. Referring to her move from traditional quadrangle painting to painting installations, she states:

> *A couple of years ago … when I [only] made paintings, it was somehow restricted. … It is lovely and enjoyable to work as you can combine many elements/actors and many things, and you can collaborate.*[3] (WAM AMA 15–20 Dec '03, c 3: 30)

For Nevado, installation is a form of art that calls for assembling and collaborating. Interestingly enough, she also speaks of her own position in terms of installing. When describing her attitude towards life, she denies being a bohemian. Instead, she claims, she "*installs [herself] like researchers and artists*"

(WAM AMA 15–20 Dec '03, c 1:07)—there is always something in process, something in her mind, and this something she works out regardless of time and place, at the studio, on vacation, when eating… This is also what she means by a "rich life" as expressed in the beginning of this chapter. Her attitude of constant installing also indicates that she does not want to assume fixed positions such as being an immigrant artist, which was suggested to her in the interview included in the WAM exhibition catalogue (WAM-AMA 15–20 Dec '03, c 54), and also in a television interview about the Caisa exhibition. Rather, installing points towards something more immanent—it is not an epistemic choice of creating a place from which to express oneself. It is an ontological issue: a way of becoming with the world.

In light of 'immanent installing', it is also obvious that Nevado is not likely to be the person in charge of her machine, but to work as part of it. It would make sense, therefore, to rename her painting machine as *installing machine.* For the principal quality of this machine is, after all, not its capability to paint but to assemble and transform by installing different ideas, materials and affects *together*—to create fresh compositions, new life by installing. This is what I have been claiming throughout the present part of the study by writing about various forms of non-human collaborations; about impersonal connections, painterly qualities and ideas, autonomous processes, differential repetitions, and affirmative practices to name but a few. Whereas collaborations beyond the human might be characteristic to the workings of Susana Nevado's installing machine, the events, the processes through which the works of art gain lives of their own, are, however, always singular. This is because each collaborator brings with itself its own immanent field of intensity.

In the next and the last part of the study, the focus will be shifted back to encountering art. The manifold understanding of materialities of art in the making acquired in the four chapters of *Machinic Collaborations* will accompany us to further complicate the conception of encountering art.

PART III

A TRIPTYCH OF AFFECTION

Work of Art beyond Meaning

PART III

INTRODUCTION

A mouth is a way to enter a body, to transform a body, to connect bodies. Think of eating: how junk food moulds contemporary bodies in the documentary film *Super Size Me* (2004), or how Christian people get the Holy Communion, ingest the body of Christ and drink his blood to renew and strengthen their connection to God, or how those children observing *Heaven Machine* quite contrary to the adult audience, so excitedly, eagerly munched its beams of light. But a mouth does not only take in, it gives out, expresses in words and otherwise: grimaces, preaches, screams as do the mouths of the three 'panels' with which the three following chapters form a triptych. Consequently, a mouth is a passage between the inside and the outside, and the other way around, ultimately presenting a *direct relation* between the two.[1]

A mouth is the passage that all the art-encounters of the following chapters begin with and are linked by. It is through open—grimacing, preaching and screaming—mouths that the three chapters initiate a variety of direct relations, that is, unmediated conjunctions and immanent connections, in the events of experiencing and creating art. Mouths lead us to a collection of decaying milk teeth that prompt molecular memories of endurance and sustainability (chapter 7), as well as to corporeal events such as "*an ambivalent effort to pose still by trying to balance the body by moving continuously*" (chapter 8) and "*sculpting flesh by incorporating images into one's body*" (chapter 9)—to give just a glimpse of what will follow.

Why compose a triptych, one might ask, and of *separate* works of art even, to make a claim about direct relations? Obviously, the three complementing examples give a chance to fashion direct relations much more multifacetedly than what grasping only a single art-encounter would allow. But there are other objectives in the tripartite structure of the chapters. One thing that draws me to composing a triptych is the allusion it carries: a triptych tends to be understood as a traditional, religious form of art. Religiosity, or rather spirituality, thematically bonds the works of art that the three chapters tackle. The first, or the left panel of my analytical triptych, Susana Nevado's painting-assemblage 'the grimacing mouth' from the installation *D2I* (2003) gets its affective power in relation to the Catholic tradition of *relics*—the installation

includes a wooden case that displays decaying pieces of the human body through a window frame. The middle panel, 'the preaching mouth' is extracted from Marjukka Irni's *Sappho wants to save you* (2006–2010) installation that not only critically revises the Christian slogan 'Jesus wants to save you', but also revolves around preaching—the most preferred form of revelation since the Reformation. The last, or the right panel 'the screaming mouth', gets us back to Helena Hietanen's art, with which this study began. The panel originates from the series *Sketches* (1999) that includes religious imagery of the artist posing as Christ and was once meant to be exhibited at the ruins of a gothic revival church in Berlin, Germany (SK 16 May '02).

While references to religious art both in terms of form and content might be evident in the above-described works of Nevado, Irni and Hietanen, there are two further incentives to get involved in the act of composing a triptych. One of them affiliates with Deleuze's (2003) conception of the triptych and the primacy it bears in his theory of art as the *logic of sensation*. Following Deleuze, a triptych is not merely a narrative structure that forms a biblical story by bringing together figures and events represented in its three panels. Instead, in a triptych, figures themselves *emerge* through complex forces and rhythms that are distributed across and flow through the whole composition. Put differently, a triptych functions as a machine of sensation producing novel circulations and rhythmic interplays of its figures and forces (Ambrose 2009, 261). As said, triptychs have an important role in Deleuze's (2003, 83, passim) thesis of art as a *logic of sensation*, as does—quite surprisingly perhaps knowing his rather atheist (or if not atheist then cosmic) orientation—religious art in general. El Greco, Giotto, Tintoretto, Michelangelo, they all painted armies of easily attributable religious figures and duteously presented various biblical events. Whilst 'organic representation' is certainly at work there, even more profound is the way in which some of the figures are painted, as if contorted by forces: infernal, celestial, even terrestrial, thus exceeding the limits of their representation, and emerging as sensation (Deleuze 2003, 9–11, 160–161). What I want to propose with Deleuze is that whereas it is often thought that religious sentiment petrified art into figurative representation, from which modernism freed it, this liberation probably happened centuries earlier, and with the help of religious art itself, with its inherent necessity to depict godly forces; forces beyond the human. However, even this suggestion is conditional: perhaps religious art, or art in general was never so strongly bound to figuration as the common sense claim goes—maybe it is only that we modern viewers see it as such.

Thus, what draws me to triptychs has, after all, more to do with *sensation* than Christian religiosity. If there is anything spiritual in Deleuze's (2003) study of triptychs undertaken in his book on Francis Bacon's art, this spirituality tends to be visceral, not transcendental at all but purely immanent. In Deleuze-Bacon,

there is no faith in the almighty God, yet faith in life as a cosmic force that has an aspect of eternity to it. This life force appears to humans as vibratory sensations, and it is visual art, alongside other arts,[2] that makes these direct relations visible, or rather perceptible: forces bigger than the human twist bodies in Bacon, impose a spasm on them in Michelangelo, and elongate them in El Greco.

Although it is Deleuze's claim that art can make sensations visible, this does not imply that art is all about visuality, or about visual facts (representations) either. He insists that sensation appears sensible as *matters of fact*—'facts' (Deleuze 2003, 4, passim) emerging through the material work of art. Art's capability to render imperceptible movements perceptible connects to how art works—not through arresting, abstracting forces into formulas as in science, not through creating concepts to suit the forces as in philosophy, but through sensation emerging in the material processes of art-making (Deleuze & Guattari 1994). In sum, art does not impose a grid on forces; it tries to move with them, to follow them, to put itself in a direct relation with them. But whereas in Deleuze-Bacon the logic of sensation refers explicitly to painting, here sensations work across matters of art from painting installation to community art and to photographic sketches.

As for my second incentive in composing a triptych, it intertwines with the first one: Deleuze is not the only one to point out that there is a special bond between religiosity/spirituality and sensation in the field of art. In those still quite rare occasions when contemporary scholars of art and philosophy have tried to tackle art's capability to produce sensations, their examples are often drawn from religious or spiritual art: icons, relics, totems, aboriginal paintings are the kinds of art objects that have been seen to come equipped with affective powers if not an agency of their own (Gell 1998; Mitchell 2005; Bolt 2004a & 2006; Didi-Huberman 2006; Manning 2009).[3]

Having now laid out a spiritual milieu for the following chapters, I must emphasise that the art-events I work with have a remarkably more mundane spirit to them. They address childhood remembrances from the years when one's milk teeth fell out, a Sapphic manifestation march opening into a queer micropolitics, and finally a process of bodily transformation affected by breast cancer. These events do not evince the interference of heavenly forces. Nor are the bodies involved in these events as contorted as in Bacon's paintings. Yet every one of them, in their singular ways, makes perceptible something that for my understanding is not (yet) commonsensically sensed as such: molecular memories, micromovements of posing and in the end micromovements of the queer movement itself, as well as a body suffering from breast cancer becoming, transfiguring in and through images. My task in composing a triptych of these encounters is not however, in the first place, to laud artists and their works of art for opening unexplored futures neither for memory-working,

GLBT-movement, nor for breast cancer patients. Rather, it is to try to open new vistas for art history to deal with affectivity and materiality in the events of encountering and creating art. As such the following chapters put to work what has been suggested thus far in this study. At the same time, they have their own elaborative focus too: what they offer is a detailed account of the subtle and delicate yet direct relations between human bodies and nonhuman bodies involved in the work of art—images, culturally specific ways of posing, techniques of hanging, and so forth. In these transcorporeal encounters, as I will call them in chapter 7, bodies open to processes, mould and change each other. And as I will emphasise in the same chapter, but particularly in chapter 8, these process-bodies connect and become through affectivity.

My handling follows the Deleuzian-Spinozian understanding of a body in terms of what it can do, how it functions: what are its capacities to affect and to be affected (Deleuze 1988), in other words what it gives out and takes in and how it changes in this process. Here affects are not about culturally determined emotions but about bodies in becoming, in transition (chapter 9). It is to emphasise the affective connection between the works of art and bodies encountering and making those works of art that I speak of affection.[4] In this triptych of affection, art works do not only mean; they work as "*affectual assemblages*" (Zepke 2005, 64).

What I am fashioning also comes close to Rosi Braidotti's (2006, 254–259, 2008a, 1–24) *post-secular spirituality*. Simultaneously both valuing the feminist tradition of secular criticism dating back to the Enlightenment critique of religious dogma and clerical authority and calling for new understandings of spirituality that do not fit in with post-Enlightenment secularity, Braidotti (2006, 257) redefines spirituality as a topology of affects. This topology of affects—the world emerging through affective encounters and interrelations of impersonal forces—suggests a spirituality that is not tied to Christian ideals. There is no personalised God behind it all, yet there are forces bigger than the human, not controllable by the human: gravity might be one obvious example, recent nature catastrophes another. Contesting the popularity of neo-eschatological visions of catastrophe and redemption, post-secular spirituality expresses faith in the future (ibid., 258). Whereas in Deleuze-Bacon the cosmos is beyond the human yet connected to every form of life, Braidotti calls this affirmative, forever continuing life force zoe.[5] However, against her Deleuzian roots, or rather against a popular (mis)interpretation of Deleuze, Braidotti (ibid., 255) persists that the spirituality she suggests does not cherish a mysticist notion of life as pure becoming empty of all meanings. For Braidotti, spiritual practices, and indeed all practices, are always embodied and embedded: "*They do not take place in a flight from the flesh, but through it*" (ibid.). Thus, the abandonment of (Christian-related) transcendence is at the heart of Braidotti's spirituality that instead rests on radical immanence. Radical immanence is about entering in

direct relations, emerging, becoming in those relations that are the subject's future (ibid., 257), or rather its end as a self-contained entity. Surely then, Braidotti's spirituality is a vitalist venture, affirming change, yet sustaining in change.

As a feminist philosopher, Braidotti never ceases to emphasise political agency and the material circumstances in which life is lived. It is just that for her, in the wake of Foucault, the conditions that negatively oppress also offer lines of flight.[6] Instead of the (Marxist-Hegelian) idea that positive change must arise through negative criticism, which is the only avenue for the emergence of oppositional consciousness or counter-action, Braidotti (2008a, 15–16) believes that it is possible to constitute empowering and affirmative interrelations directly and creatively out of the material world and without a need to cling to negative nihilism. In this affirmative work, a future lies not in an overcoded world of representations but in affective inter-relations, which must be created beyond the limits of human otherness (which is an oppositional tactic) thus bringing together human, nonhuman, and post-human forces. According to Braidotti (ibid., 16), there are plenty of forces that thus far have been left untapped when tackled via negative criticism only: these include all kinds of affective and sensuous relations and becomings, that is micromovements hitherto imperceptible.

In what follows, I aim at unleashing these forces in the confines of the three aforementioned works of art by Nevado, Irni and Hietanen. Here associations to or elements of Christian practices of relics, preaching and transfiguration are not dealt with through negative criticism or transcendence; instead lines of immanence are carved out. This means directing attention to the affective, often imperceptible, forces at work in the events of creating and encountering art. However, following Braidotti, I will not be indifferent to cultural powers, meanings if you like, whether they appear in the form of images, poses or as other works of art. Beyond dialectics, I will treat these cultural forces not as preceding powers that determine the works of art I have encountered, but as *parallel body-processes* that while brought in direct relation with other works of art, might together advantage or enhance the opening of our perception to something that was before imperceptible.

After the introduction of spirituality as a topology of affects that motivates my aims in the following let us return to the practices of art history with the issue of spirituality in mind. When formulating a Deleuze-Guattarian take on art history, one of the statements that Simon O'Sullivan (2006a, 28–31) makes is posited "*against theology*".[7] Against theology equates with Braidotti's call for radical immanence, and consequently parallels also her notion of post-secular spirituality. O'Sullivan (ibid., 28) speaks vigorously of the world as "*a plane of immanent connectivity and complexity*" that *"operates without points of transcendence*". This is "*our world 'seen' without the spectacles of representation*"

(ibid.) and without a mastering principle that would order everything in the name of god's law.

The transcendent attitude O'Sullivan abominates, I would like to claim, finds itself still rather well alive in practices of art history, and above all, in a practice that could be called a vertical reading. Here vertical reading means a practice of looking, gazing images, studying art from "(high) above": having a book open or a photograph placed flat on a table, in order to scrutinise it with critical distance and a clear mind. Whilst this might be a too generalised or even unfair crystallisation of more complex analytical practices, I am suggesting it only to make my point clear. If transcendence equates with vertical seeing, immanence is one with horizontal becoming. Thus to exercise art history in the name of radical immanence would necessitate a new relation to art: a more direct relation in which the art historian opens herself or himself to encounter art as a parallel body-process.

CHAPTER 7
THE GRIMACING MOUTH

Let me begin with a quote that offers an understanding of art-making in accordance with the theme shared by all the three chapters: the open mouth. In describing how practically everything she does in her life interacts with her art-making, Susana Nevado employs the verb *ingest*. For Nevado, an act of ingestion—in other words, a bodily process of swallowing that presupposes that something is taken in through the mouth—enables linking and translating everyday experiences to art. As she emphasises, ingestion makes possible the handling of everyday life in a creative, productive way.[1] Whereas it is quite obvious that Nevado uses the concept of ingestion figuratively, her choice of words is still meticulous in its corporeal associations.[2] Here is how she puts it:

> *Of course, everything I do alongside [art-making] interacts with my art-making. Or I translate them to art-making. I don't know, maybe it's the only way I can somehow ingest those things. [That is] in a different way, when there's a possibility of creating something new.* (AMA/WAM Dec '03, c 08)

From one angle, ingesting everyday experiences into art is what the painting-assemblage with the grimacing mouth is all about. The grimacing mouth belongs to the artist's six-year-old daughter Paula, and crystallises something elemental of the process of growing up. There is a burgeoning independence in Nevado's daughter's face, an emerging own will revealed by the protesting grimacing mouth. Also, Paula's startlingly uneven row of teeth catches the attention; it is so severely affected by the process of growing up, by losing teeth and gaining new ones. From the artist's viewpoint, what is swallowed in the grimacing mouth, then, is a changing relation between a mother and a daughter: baby girl is growing up.

[figure 7.1] p. 145

Whereas being a mother is one thing that Nevado regularly ingests in her art-making, an issue that many of her works also deal with is the power of the Catholic church and its continuing influence in the everyday life of the people brought up in secularised Spain.[3] The mixed media installation *D2I* (2003) that 'the grimacing mouth' is part of brings these ingestions together; it digests Nevado's experiences of motherhood and Catholicism into something new.[4]

D2I works with a series of documentary photographs Nevado took when her daughter Paula's milk teeth were falling out. In the installation, the grimacing mouth is accompanied by fourteen other painting-assemblages that come in two rows—like teeth generally do.[5] Each one of these painting-assemblages re-works the documentary photos through a variety of colours, rhythms, and materials. The box-shaped "canvases" made of plywood board are filled with approximately real-size girl heads with their mouths strikingly open showing the row of teeth in transformation. The heads and the teeth gain and lose their form in and through reddish, bloody browns, sturdy, spicy yellows, blacks and whites, strokes at times rough, at times fine, and surfaces worked multi-layeredly. Most of the heads are transfer portraits copied with gel medium once, twice, sometimes thrice, and then elaborated on, fabricated into painting-assemblages with strokes of acrylic paint and repeated acts of rubbing, scratching, ripping and re-painting.[6]

[figures 7.1–7.3] p. 143 p. 147

Both visually and materially the teeth in the painting-assemblages operate as the focal point of the work. Against the black abyss of the open mouths, the white teeth stand out; they catch the eye, and the other senses. Moreover, the title of the installation suggests a focus on the teeth. D2I is a clinical term used by dentists to describe the first upper front tooth on the left (in clinical discourse *D* stands for a tooth, *2* for the upper left quadrant of the jaws, and *1* for the first tooth of the quadrant). When glancing through all the painted D2Is of the installation, what becomes clear is that in every piece, the tooth has a more or less radically different shape and colour. There surely is change, but no completion of the process: the row does not grow perfect. Obviously, the installation refuses to present the growth of D2I in any linear manner.

If the installation 'documents' anything, it is the unruliness and happy unpredictability of the process of growing up presented in the varying compositions of facial expressions and the teeth in transformation. In addition to the teeth of the painting-assemblages, the installation comprises of a vitrine carrying seven milk teeth on a crimson velvet cushion. The teeth in the vitrine are the ones missing from Nevado's daughter's mouth in the portraits, hence offering corporeal evidence of her growing up.

[figure 7.4] p. 147

'To document' or 'to offer evidence' are rather banal conceptions compared to Nevado's own description of how life is ingested into art. Generally speaking, what happens in ingestion is that bodies—the body that eats and the body that is eaten—come together and are transformed corporeally. For once you have ingested something, what was ingested will not stay the same; in contact with the fluids and tissues of the digestive system it starts to transform immediately after its entrance into the body. And this process is reciprocal, it changes the eating body too—you are what you eat, and the other way around (Bennett 2010a, 40–43).[7] The act of ingestion provides a compelling starting point for exploring the *immanent transcorporeality of art* this chapter is

Figures 7.1–7.2 The grimacing mouth and the reddish, bloodish brown one. Details of Susana Nevado's *D2I*, 2003, mixed media, 30 x 21 cm, photographs Marjukka Irni.

concerned with: bodies in reciprocal and transformative connections in which everything happens on the level of the real.[8] Thus, none of the bodies have a higher or more transcendent position than the others. To explore more fitting conceptualisations of rendering life into art, which would also go together with Nevado's suggestion of ingesting, I will look into the Catholic understanding of relics. This move is prompted by *D2I* itself—in what terms exactly, will be explained soon. However, no dutiful following of Catholic conceptions will be conducted. Instead, my take is admittedly blasphemous, and indeed as unruly as the growing row of teeth that the installation presents. In what follows, not only is transcorporeality conceived of in terms of art-making, but also as a relation between the viewing body and the body of the viewed, that is the body of the work of art. Relics as events also inspire what I will suggest about this relation: relics are not mute objects to be looked at or touched upon. They, instead, do things; they have affective powers.

Affective remembrance of growing up

How do the bodies of the installation—the teeth in their box and the ten painting-assemblages—connect to the viewer? In other words, how does transcorporeality work in the encounters with art? It would be tempting to think that the teeth in the box would provide a more direct corporeal contact with the process of growing up than the painting-assemblage portraits that are just representations, and manifold representations as they are themselves based on photographs. Although such a hierarchy is not followed here, there is no reason to deny that the milk teeth—even when seen through the glass window of their box—have an exceptional affective appeal. The bone of the teeth is dense with cracks, some capillary, some more severe almost splitting the teeth in two. Moreover, blood in the root canals has turned brown, and the teeth have acquired a more yellow tone than they used to have when still in the mouth. This subtle and slow material transformation of the teeth, their organic decay, equips the work with a powerful affective connectivity: the teeth in their current stage simply have a more porous contact surface than when they were in perfect shape, shining with plastic-like white brilliance. The way the teeth are displayed only emphasises this connectivity. The lower parts of the teeth once inside the gums are not hidden in the crimson cushion but fully shown in their frail and visceral irregularity as the teeth are arranged in a circle with the root parts pointing outwards, some of them upwards. Furthermore, the smooth dense velvet enhances the effect as it contrasts with the crumbling shapes of the teeth. It rarely becomes as obvious as here: materiality in motion is cracking the form.

[figure 7.4] p. 147

Figures 7.3–7.4 The spicy one and the relic box. Details of *D21*, 30 x 21 cm and 17,5 x 17,5 cm, photographs Marjukka Irni.

Staring at those visceral teeth arouses sensations: the body receives shivers, goose bumps grow. As the teeth connect to the viewer's body, affect the body, they might wake up 'forgotten' potentialities of the body, something that does not actualise itself in everyday duties, something that is not actively re-membered.[9] What are (potentially) actualised in an encounter with *D2I* are bodily processes from the years of transition when one's milk teeth were falling out. The viewer might recall commanding her tip of tongue to excavate a loose tooth, pushing it with preciseness and effort. She might feel her child fingers gently wiggling the loose tooth back and forth—with a bit of frustration as the tooth does not come out but only wobbles—and eventually, when the time has come, boldly pulling the tooth out. What a cracking, violent sound the pullout leaves resonating in the head's cavities! Then an iron tasting burst of blood in the mouth, accompanied with an urgent need to spit the tooth and the bloody saliva out. And after that, a happy, proud feeling that the tooth is finally gone. Look at the little girl's faces in the installation; look at your face. No mourning for milk teeth. No looking back or feeling lack. This is a moment of joy.

[figure 7.5] p. 149

It is crucial to note the change in tense in the above description-encounter. At the end of the paragraph, no past tense is needed any more: this kind of sensuous remembrance creates affects that are in the here and now; affects born, made alive, actualised in the transcorporeal encounter with art. In a Deleuze-Guattarian manner, Rosi Braidotti (2006, 165–169) calls this kind of remembering affective. Affective remembering belongs to the realm of molecular memory that is a counterpart to molar memory. Molar memory, the dominant memory of a majoritarian linear and logocentric subject, or of a nation-state with its milestones, great men and characteristic psychic structures works through the necessity to conform to and identify with existing laws, histories and socio-cultural expectations. Molecular memory, for its part, encompasses an "*empowerment of all that was not programmed within the dominant memory*" (ibid., 167). Molecular memory, then, is fluid, flowing, an unruly transgressive force; a nonhuman agency that "*dislodges the subject from a unified and centralized location* (ibid.)".

Importantly, affective remembrance does not in any simple manner just revive some originary affects that one had (almost) lost. Rather affective remembering is a productive act. It is a re-invention of the self through affective sensations. Art has a crucial role here for it occupies the potential of creating previously unrecognised and unknown affects (Deleuze & Guattari 1994, 175)[10], and makes them felt.

In contemporary western culture, the interpretation of dreams—that in itself connects to a particular understanding of subjectivity for sure—offers a conventional explanation for loose(ning) and falling teeth as symbols. This is no wonder as dreams concerning teeth appear to be remarkably common (see e.g. Freud 2006, 397–403). What the most common interpretations of teeth

Figures 7.5–7.6 The joyful smile and the sandpapered one. Details of *D21*, photographs Marjukka Irni.

dreams persuade is that dreaming of losing one's tooth/teeth connects to the experiences of childhood, and tells about the fear of change, fear of growing up, pressure to act like an adult, reflecting feelings of powerlessness and an inability of being in control. In short, teeth shaking and falling out signal that one's foundations in life are shaking, somehow coming down, failing the subject. Thus, a loosening tooth emerges as a threat; a threat to the "order of things". Ultimately, what these kinds of interpretations suggest is that bodily transformation such as losing teeth stands out not as a positive event, but as one that should be met with fear. At the same time as this interpretation offers a dominant, molar structure for treating one's childhood memories of teeth falling out built around fears and negativity, it also suggests a corresponding subjectivity: a melancholic subjectivity built on losses.

The process of molecular remembering that *D2I* engages the viewer with proposes something very different. The little girl's face gleams with joy suggesting that the orientation towards change has apparently a more positive feel to it than the majoritarian storyline would allow. Importantly, the fallen out teeth are not represented only as lack; as an empty place in the little girl's row of teeth. Instead they are preserved in a box. As said, no mourning for milk teeth. No looking back, or feeling of lack. The teeth are still here.

[figure 7.5] p. 149

If molar memory closes down the possibilities of seeing the wobbling, shaking, and eventually falling out teeth as a positive event by freezing memories into its molar structures of mourning and lack, *"remembering in this nomadic mode is the active reinvention of a self that is joyfully discontinuous, as opposed to being mournfully consistent, as programmed by phallogocentric culture"* (Braidotti 2006, 169).

The question arises, then, how does affective nomadic remembering work in *D2I?* What I propose is that the joyful affects of the installation do not after all stem from the teeth alone but from the transaction between the portraits and the teeth, in other words, as a transaction between portraits and organic things. It is their co-existence that makes the installation rich with affects, or to borrow an expression from Deleuze and Guattari (1994, 167–168), it is their co-existence that makes the installation a veritable monument of those sensations. This understanding of a monument contests its conventional meaning as a monumental object, and often also as a masterpiece of molar, linear history. Rather, this is a monument of a molecular kind: an a-signifying monument.[11] The gentle, joyful, yet at times shy smile will not stop; it is monumentalised there forever, ready to encounter its viewer: "*sensation is now forever tied to this smile, this yellow … in its absolute singularity*" (Grosz 2008, 74).[12] But what are

monumentalised are not (solely) Paula's or her mother's personal emotions—but affects beyond any particular individual, affects created, negotiated in the work of art.[13] These affects, even the joyous smile, are indebted to or, rather, supported by the material qualities of the piece, by the brushstrokes, the re-worked transfer medium, varying thicknesses and fluidities of matter composing the work. Therefore, the sensations that the piece enables are not independent of its material autopoiesis (Deleuze & Guattari 1994, 161, 166).[14] This calls for considering the composition of the piece further.

The portraits and the teeth have a strong relation, dependence even. What is missing in the portraits can in a sense be found in the box. Yet, the teeth are not merely direct references for the portraits. And how could they be? There are seven teeth in the box, but only a few apparent empty 'places' for them exist in the mouths of the portraits.[15] The case becomes even more complex, when it is acknowledged that not only are there too many teeth in the box to fit Paula's portrayed rows of teeth, also, the singular, irreducible character of each portrait makes it difficult to identify the origin for any of those teeth. Not a single portrait offers an easy match either with one of the teeth or a number of them.

The apparent mismatch is caused by the fact that all the portraits emerge in and through multiple material layers worked and elaborated with a serious amount of attention. Therefore, painting-assemblages are far from being just bare documents of what was happening in Paula's mouth at a certain time, at a certain age.[16] They are not just traces of the past. Material layers—some poured over the canvas, bearing resemblance to a heavy liquid like oil, some composed in a patchwork manner, some just slapped on and appearing merely as stains of paint, others sandpapered until almost bare—are working Paula's face; re-working it, working over it, creating it. Strong and sturdy yellows, reddish browns creating a bloody effect, and a crowd of yellowish and greyish shades moulding both facial expressions and features making her anew in every portrait, showing her in constant change. Significantly, the development of Paula's front teeth is not followed in a chronological order. There is more to these portraits than just a capturing of linear time, of what happened. Call it a messy type of remembering that "*does not even aim at retrieving information in a linear manner*" (Braidotti 2006, 167); a messy remembering emerging in and through the sensations of the work of art.

[figures 7.5–7.6] p. 149

[figures 7.7–7.8] p. 159

On a general level, there is nothing too extraordinary about the process Paula is going through in the series of portraits. Every child, every girl, grows up, milk teeth fall out, and new ones grow to re-place them. In one sense, what Nevado's machine installs in *D2I* is an everyday, mundane procedure, something essential for the organic development of a human being; something everyone just has to go through since the process of growing up is partly coded in the body as evolutionary memory (Braidotti 2006, 168), that is, as a molar memory

of sorts. Opening molar memory, conceived both in terms of evolutionary biology and cultural institutions such as the dominant (and often popularised) paradigm of psychoanalysis, to subjective and material remembrances and to 'lived experience' is what many women artists have done in works concerning bringing up their children. For example, both thematically and in terms of its material presence Nevado's installation has something in common with Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* (1974–1978). Kelly's installation studies her son's early development from the mother's point of view—assembling everything from dirty, soiled diapers to chemical diagrams of faeces, and from the baby boy's first fumbling efforts to write letters to the mother's typed diary notes. Issues shared with Kelly's piece, particularly those of bodily experience and material evidence as well as inspiration springing from the feminised sphere of everyday life (Saarikangas 1997, 111–121), link Nevado's installation to the realm of critical feminist art.

But the appearance of the box in which the teeth dwell connects the installation to another order: that of religious practices. The box of teeth indeed looks like a reliquary; a case holding a holy relic, a fragment of a deceased saint. Although Paula's teeth are evidently not as old as relics often are—several hundred, if not thousands of years old—their exposure to time is already visible. They are what is left of something: relics.

Yet, Nevado's daughter is not gone in the same sense as, for example, a medieval saint, whose earthly body was soon after death cooked and whose bones and minor body parts such as teeth and joints separated from the dead meat to be carefully stored in cases specially designed for them. Paula is still here, living her life towards adulthood. Her vitality is not surviving only in the box like that of a medieval saint whose remains—relics—are understood to carry the benevolent power and the spirit of the saint. If relics are something that carry powers of the deceased, what is crystallised in the six-year-old Paula's teeth that needs to be restored, remembered? What are the powers of the teeth relics in their box?

Discussing some defining characteristics of relics will help us address these questions. First of all, throughout the history of Christendom, the ambivalent nature of relics has raised considerable controversy: the double character of having both divine, "transcendent" powers and material existence—the body that before consecration could have belonged to anyone of us—makes a relic a site of contact between the earthly and the spiritual (Miller 2009, 2, 64). Depending on the viewpoint, this transitory, in-between nature has been seen as "*dangerous materialism*" associated with "*a pagan idolatry*" (Belting 1994, 298) or as a possibility in bringing the divine presence amongst the human through a "*sensuous experience*" (Miller 2009, passim). Given my starting points in the notion of radical immanence, I will focus on the latter.

Whereas in Christian practices relics bring together the divine and the earthly, the spiritual and the human, constituting a site of contact between different realms, in *D2I* this mediating and boundary breaking understanding of relics can be made of use when exploring the installation as a site of contact between art and everyday experience, as well as between molar and molecular memory. Another important characteristic of relics is that they rarely come alone: from the late ancient Christianity onwards the cult of relics has been accompanied, and also supported, by rich visual and/or textual rhetorics, such as poetics based on ekphrasis, skilful ornaments and colourful paintings (Miller 2009, 63–81), or in modern times, simply by printed holy cards depicting saints and describing their deeds.[17] In other words, from the beginning, accompanying aesthetic objects such as beautifully carved and detailed reliquaries have been seen to supply the relic at least part of its affective power. Accordingly, Nevado's *D2I* creates affective remembrance through the co-existence of 'teeth relics' and the visual art of painting-assemblages. This connects *D2I* to the multisensory affective workings of Christian relics.

Before proceeding with the issue of relics, it is useful to briefly consider Christian conceptions of the power of art both on a historical spectrum and by comparing Protestant and Catholic viewpoints. This will back up my proposition that the power we grant (or do not grant) to contemporary works of art is not, after all, that alien to medieval or even earlier conceptions of images and objects of the spiritual sphere.

What can art do?

Whereas in the Protestant practice there is no place for relics—the only sacraments allowed are baptism and the Holy Communion, within the Catholic denomination the cult of relics is well alive and rituals connected to it are actively rehearsed. No doubt, the use of "relics" in Nevado's installation is probably more inspirited by her native Spain so affected by the Catholic Church than by the Protestant Finland where she currently lives, works, and also raises her children. However, this juxtaposition may give a false picture of *D2I* as the installation does not explicitly address the difference between the Nordic countries and the Mediterranean, or the Protestant and Catholic practices of Christian religion. Rather their presence is an implicit, suffused one—one entangled into the realm of everyday life; into the ways of experiencing and remembering embedded in such mundane events as losing milk teeth. Yet, according to some authoritative sources (Belting 1994), the difference between the churches structures not only the everyday life and religious practices but

also the way the power and potentiality of the arts is understood in modern art history and visual studies—regardless of the contents of these fields' specific imagery.[18] Thus, this difference also fundamentally marks the question of '*what can art do?*'.

When grasping affective capabilities of art objects, the Christian understandings of the Holy Communion and the differences between Catholic and Protestant practices surrounding it have proven to be important to many scholars (see e.g. Bolt 2004a, 163–164; Belting 1994).[19] What the Catholic church and the Protestant churches agree upon is that the Holy Communion is a ritual that is done in remembrance of Christ to strengthen the connection of the human to the spiritual and the divine, to God. The question they disagree upon is how exactly this connection is created and in what terms it is configured. The emphasis they put on the entanglements of different elements of the Holy Supper—to the Word on one hand, and to bread and wine on the other—varies greatly.

For example, Calvinist Protestantism, that in its most radical form condemned all images as a form of blasphemy, sees the sacramental wine only standing in for Christ's blood and the consecrated bread standing in for his body (Bolt 2004a, 164). It could even be said that they are rather "*figures of speech*" than anything materially real (Belting 1994, 466). Zwinglian Protestantism, for its part, stresses how bread and wine are to be understood as symbolical memorials only. On the contrary, in Catholic liturgy wine does not represent or symbolise the blood of Christ, it is the blood of Christ—transformed to such in a process of *transsubstantiation* in which the Word plays an important but not an overpowering part.[20] Lutheran Protestants, exemplified by the Evangelical Protestant Church of Finland and other churches in Scandinavia, believe that whilst Christ *is* present in the bread and wine—they really are his body and blood—they are simultaneously just wine and bread (*consubstantiation*). For them, the power of making Christ present, however, lies before anything else in the accompanying Word. This is repeated constantly throughout the section concerning the Holy Communion in the *Catechism* (2001, 90–97) that noteworthily takes up the question of "*how bodily eating and drinking can produce such great effects*" (ibid., 93).[21] The answer is, again, in the accompanying words of Christ.

While Protestantism is not a coherent doctrine, it nevertheless emphasises symbolism and the significance of the Word more powerfully than Catholicism. This links with the different ways in which the respective churches endow power to images. While on the Catholic side paintings, sculptures and other religious objects make things, they bleed, they heal and have powers, among the Protestants visual art, if it is not condemned altogether, has power in relation to the Word; it is rarely more than an illustration of the Word.[22]

It is widely held plausible that it was during the Reformation that a shift towards a representational religious art took place. As Hans Belting puts it (1994, 465) "*the Reformation taught the dominion of the word, which suppressed all the other religious signs. Christianity had always been a revelation through the word but now the word took on an unprecedented monopoly and aura*". Barbara Bolt (2004a, 164) claims that in this paradigm shift "*the image came to be conceived of as sign. It no longer had the power of transcendence, but came to stand as a substitute or representation of its object".* Bolt's suggestion actually echoes the words of Martin Luther himself. When describing what a crucifix means, Luther (1522) declares: "*The crucifix standing there is not my God, for my god is in heaven. It is only a sign"* (op. cit Belting 1994, 548). He also explains how images are neither inherently good nor bad. Rather, he contends, whether some images are good or bad depends on people's usage of them. By saying this, Luther strips images of their ontological power.

Astonishingly, Luther's ponderings of the image come close to the poststructuralist understanding of art that positions the power of images in relation to the process of their interpretation; not to images per se—but to how one reads them as signs (the dialogue between viewer and image). Perhaps, then, what is considered as a poststructuralist understanding was born far earlier than in the 1960's; what if it has been embedded in Western understandings of art since their dawn? For what is readily available today are debates on representations and interpretations of their complex significations rather than elaborate theorisations of direct contact and the ontological power of images, whether Christian art or other.

Judging by what is suggested above, it should come as no surprise that Bolt's (2004ab; 2008) critical discussion of art as signification links to her counteract of elaborating a materialist ontology of art that speaks for a mutual reflection and transmutation between image and reality. The image in her account has powers of its own—yet those powers are not transcendental, as Catholics would probably claim them to be. There is no vertical distance, the image does not reach to heavens, or take the viewer there. Here, 'trans' does not allude to something beyond this reality. Instead, it suggests that there is transformative movement across different elements of reality: transaction. In other words, as it was proposed in the previous part of this study, these transcorporeal transmutations, transactions, work across the plane of immanence. Thus, no vertical but rather horizontal connections.

Bolt's (2004a, 15–17, 139–142, 163–165) inspiration for the powers of art that are not transcendental but immanent and transcorporeal come from

religious rituals practiced by the indigenous peoples of Australia but also from corresponding ritual understandings of images from pre-modern Christian eras, which did not model their religious beliefs on representation as we know it today—such as the Middle Ages. As part of these rituals, art functions; it does things, it has powers.[23] Whilst I will not excavate medieval or other pre-Reformation conceptions of religious images or objects much further in the rest of the chapter, this section is here to emphasise that if there is some kind of a continuum between earlier, 'pagan influenced' practices (Belting 1994, 47), and current forms of Christianity, it is Catholicism rather than Protestantism that has maintained them. It also needs to be emphasised, as Belting does too, that in its very beginning Christianity fiercely opposed rituals of 'pagan idolatry' that involved an understanding of images as having their own mode of existence, and thus also an agency of their own. Reformation was to return Christianity back to its roots, to cut off its heretical beliefs in the power of images and other religious objects.

Relics and rituals of transformation

Although visiting Christian views of 'what art can do' offers an enlightening back-up to Nevado's *D2I*, we do not have to go that far to find 'parallel bodies in action'. Rosemary Betterton's (2004, 84–85) account of the ritualistic in the context of (feminist) contemporary art is insightful in this regard. In Betterton's use this term appears in connection to relics—yet these relics are as unholy and probably even more non-religious than the ones in Nevado's installation: Susan Hiller's *Hand Grenade* series of 'burnt relics' (1969–72), that is, her earlier paintings re-created in the act of burning.[24] By burning her earlier paintings to ashes and as such to new works of art, to "ash grenades", Hiller could be seen as a practician of ritualistic transformative remembering—which highlights the practice and process of remembering the past but also opens it in a very concrete sense to the future. Importantly, this kind of future-oriented remembering appears rather as molecular than molar, and as pointed out earlier, rather as affirmative than as mournfully melancholic. For Betterton (ibid.), the ritualistic refers to art objects "*conceived as being impermanent yet as having a presence and material effects in the world*". Hiller's *Hand Grenades* provide an example of this performative function that Betterton identifies not with modern art practices, but with pre-Renaissance (that is also pre-Reformation) and indigenous cultures.

Now, both relics in general and Nevado's *D2I* installation in particular, could be described as corporeal processes that have a strong presence as well as affective powers—think how in the Catholic view relics help people, heal the

sick and save precious lives, and how *D2I* might arouse affective remembrances in the viewer. As processes they self-evidently have impermanent, ephemeral, fading rather than permanent existence in this world—teeth and bones slowly crumbling, their organic composition decaying—and as something that have affective powers they certainly have material effects in the world just as Betterton suggests. The qualities of impermanency and affectivity affirm transformation; they are an antithesis to stability. But relics and *D2I* are also about transformation in another sense of the word: they fashion change from one order into another. Whereas relics negotiate between earthly and saintly bodies, and indeed are of something that was human and then became holy, in Nevado's installation a child is growing up, acquiring adult teeth, entering into a different world, into a different form of existence so to speak.

It probably is a common belief in the Western world that we are free from "primitive" rituals of transition. However, there are ritualistic practices, and one quite widely spread throughout the Western world concerns losing milk teeth. In this ritual, followed in its varied forms both in Protestant Finland and Catholic Spain, the fallen out tooth is placed under the child's pillow or in a glass of water next to the child's bed for a tooth-fairy to take it away during the night. Hence, the tooth is (willingly) given, or taken away for it does not belong to the child's life any more. The tooth must be left behind; otherwise the child does not grow up. Often the tooth is replaced with a coin—hence the child is introduced to the adults' world of monetary exchange: you lose something of your own, but gain something in exchange, something more valuable preferably. Interestingly, *D2I* does not seem to assign or relate to such an exchange practice in any way. Rather, it refers to a different kind of ritual, one inspired by religious practices concerning relics.

What the Catholic understanding of relics offers is not an exchange economy. Rather the relic is a site of continuing contact and reciprocal encounter. This notion echoes ancient Christian beliefs of relics as nodal points linking different realms, the earthly and the transcendental; the sensuous and the metaphysical, hence also subduing the potential dichotomy between matter and spirit (Miller 2009, 2, 64, 102). One could also see a correspondence between the Catholic practice of cherishing the material-spiritual connection that relics allow and the way the milk teeth are stored by Spanish mothers in small boxes designed for them, or even made into artworks in which the child's milk teeth form pedals of a flower as Nevado's Mexican friend told me (MAD-dis 19 Jun '09). Compared to this, and according to the anti-relic views of Protestantism (Michalski 1993, 34), it is no surprise that in Finland the fallen out milk teeth are most likely to be thrown away, or stored for some time and then thrown away usually in a couple of years time. There are exceptions on both sides, of course. Whilst explanations for these ritual habits are necessarily manifold, the fact that in Catholic countries tooth relics, and relics more generally, are part of

everyday visual culture and not just primitive curiosities, provides one likely answer.[25]

Another noteworthy characteristic of molecular remembering is gender-specificity. At least in the western world it is mostly the mother's duty to assist in the rituals involved in growing up. No wonder then that Betterton (2004, 92) as a feminist scholar relates 'ritualistic' to the domestic and the feminine. Bringing up children, caring for them is one of the domestic feminine rituals that Nevado's installation enwraps into itself. However, to document a child's development is also a ritual that in western middle-class societies is considered as every parent's duty but often it is the mothers who in practice take care of it.

So far I have handled *D2I* as a molecular monument that (re-)creates affects in conjunction with acquiring new teeth. But at the age when a child's milk teeth begin to fall out, that is, approximately between the ages of five and seven, there are other major changes in her life too.[26] The child grows more independent, for example as she enters the school system, in which she will learn to read and write, and take on responsibilities of a different kind. And also, if she is a Catholic, the child receives her first communion. Dressed in white as Christ's innocent brides, the robes mimicking wedding gowns, children ingest the blood and body of Christ to become part of his congregation. So the change present in the installation truly marks a manifold shift in a child's—and a mother's—life.

But nothing in Nevado's installation refers as such to the innocent child brides of Catholic communion. The child of the paintings is making faces. Her hair is a bit of a mess, the fringe apparently self-scissored, and the look in her eyes not innocent and obedient but happily unruly. Everything signalling her budding will in the middle of the transformation she cannot but stand. Not so much a sugarcandish bride portrait then. Rather that of a little "monster", but a joyful one. The roughly worked multilayered portraits transform the child's eyes, nostrils and the mouth into black holes, elsewhere the method of rubbing makes her face disappear into the play of shadows; in the process the face is at times de-facialised, sometimes turned almost, sometimes altogether unrecognisable. Mostly, it is her mouth that appears deformed by the processes of transformation she is experiencing. The new teeth that are growing do not form a perfect row. In the portrait that opened my discussion there is brownish red paint staining her mouth like blood, in others black shadows, scratched and ripped off sections all suggesting that losing teeth is a mutilating experience. Yet, insistently, the girl appears to be happy. There is joy in her eyes and in her facial expression; in many portraits her grimace is certainly imbued with a smile. She is not ashamed, not avoiding the camera, turning her head away, but boldly taking pride in showing the change she is going through. There is no evidence of the horror of losing teeth that figures in adult dreams, or at least in psychoanalytical interpretations of them.

[figures 7.7–7.8] p. 159

Figures 7.7–7.8 A joyful little monster. Details of *D2I*, photographs Marjukka Irni.

In the installation, the process of transformation the child is going through appears also through various, hard to read text excerpts. There is, for example, a dirty, more than well-worn book page, and then a dispersed crumbled hand written recipe for empanadillas (*puff pastries*), a dampened, 'swollen', faded out letter with slightly spread ink, some upside down book pages, and lastly an etiquette of some unidentifiable food stuff and a map of Europe. [27] All these textual details in their unclear, obscure, hardly readable, stained and sometimes apparently decayed state, suggest how reading is not a self-evident skill. It takes a lot of effort to make sense of these excerpts, which perhaps proposes the child's difficulty, her awe in entering the new domain of cultural knowledge. In this sense, *D2I* materially fashions the process of stepping into the realm of language that Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document (part VI)* is also concerned with. However, in Kelly's piece, the process of adapting to language is followed stage by stage: there are the boy's first fumbling numbers and letters—drawings merely, then he has acquired the skill of writing his first name, and in the end, at the precise age of 4 years and 8 months he is capable of writing his last name too, that is, his *father's* name (Saarikangas 1993, 110).[28] In Nevado's *D2I* the child stays in the state of wonder, in the state of acquiring new skills.

[figure 7.9] p. 161

Enduring change

The happy, excited expression on Paula's face will not change, it will stay there as longs as the material lasts—*enduring* the process of growing up. She is not lost but sustaining in the change she is going through. Maybe she is here to make us remember that we all have endured such changes ourselves; we have the experience of enduring constant change built in us. It is Rosi Braidotti (2002; 2006) who has perhaps most persistently argued for a subject who could sustain and endure in the contemporary world of fast changes, continuous transformations, metamorphoses and mutations. Most crucially she has argued for a subject who can sustain *without* readily, unproblematically adopting the commercial practices of profit-bound capitalism, to buy this and that, to stock up and cash in to keep up with change, to adjust to change. The ethics of sustainability Braidotti fashions grounds on very different principles, namely on the subject's or any being's propensity for life—for life as a force that cannot be owned but that can be lived by giving oneself "*away in a web of multiple belongings and complex interactions*" without self-destruction (Braidotti 2006, 215). The subject must find balance in giving away and in sustaining, enduring change. If the relic teeth of Nevado's installation with its 15 accompanying painting-assemblages call us to remember something, it is that sustain-ability and endurance are intertwined in the process of growing up. This is suggested

[figure 7.10] p. 161

Figures 7.9–7.10 The one with the recipe and the little girl sustaining change. Details of *D2I,* photographs Marjukka Irni.

by a new figuration acquired in joyous smiles of the little girl sustaining the change.

Whereas this first panel of the triptych, the first chapter, has dealt with relics and therefore with an understanding of art as a transcorporeal process and not as a revelation of the Word, the word of God, as Martin Luther would have it, the second panel of the triptych, the second chapter, takes up preaching, which Protestantism praises as the number one medium of teaching. In line with my materialist account, I focus on how words intertwine with the affective and material forces of the preaching event. Before that, let me sum up the present analysis.

Affective, molecular remembrance that this chapter has evoked through the relics of Nevado's *D2I* installation, but also through the layered material multiplicity of the painting-assemblages, might be contrasted with Martin Luther's (1525) Protestant proposition that a good usage of images is to "*use them for remembrance*" (Luther in Belting 1994, 548). The remembrance that Luther refers to does not involve bodily vibrations and definitely not transcorporeal actions, but the remembrance of Biblical narratives, words that leave less doubt than images might. To highlight this, Luther suggested that to avoid possible misunderstandings, paintings might be equipped with texts summarising the narrative. Affective remembrance, for its part, is not in need of explanatory words affirming or highlighting the transcorporeal exchange. But there is another prerequisite: this kind of remembrance can only occur if the encounter with art is of the material kind—open both to affective and corporeal forces.

It is here that Nevado's expression of ingesting might be brought up again. Unless the viewer 'ingests' the work of art in her, allows her own system of being and thought to open up to it, she is not able to transpose her experience of the encounter into a phrasing of art history writing.[29] To be more precise: without ingestion—both Nevado's and mine—the grimacing mouth would have stayed a grimacing mouth, and the unruly, joyful happiness wrapped into the portraits and encountered in the teeth relics would not have emerged.

CHAPTER 8
THE PREACHING MOUTH

The preaching mouth belongs to a girl with a shaved head and no make-up on. What comes out of her mouth is as stereotypically lesbian as her looks: *The Woman Identified Woman* manifesto (1970) by an American activist group called *Radicalesbians*.

[figure 8.1] p. 167

> *What is a lesbian? A lesbian is the rage of all women condensed to the point of explosion. She is the woman who, often beginning at an extremely early age, acts in accordance with her inner compulsion to be a more complete and freer human being than her society—perhaps then, but certainly later—cares to allow her.*

The manifesto is burst out in its entirety on a television screen at Marjukka Irni's installation *Sappho wants to save you* (2006–2010) of which the preaching mouth is only a detail, but a very precious one to my treatment here. Irni's installation work evolved from a community art project that she put up together with the local Women's Studies department at Åbo Akademi University and the University of Turku, Finland. Many of the employees of the department felt disturbed by the young and fiery Christian converters who preached with a loud voice, ear-splitting tone and irritating message at the pedestrian area in the centre of Turku. The aim of the project was to turn the shared annoyance into something positive and affirmative. The major event of the project was a demonstration performance involving bilingual public preaching in the name of Sappho, and a rally of 15 women that moved through the pedestrian area as a united front so as to claim the space as their own, and also, to take it back from the evangelists. In the installation version of the work there were no marchers but six life-size prints of studio portraits of the women involved in the process. The portraits hung in the air filling the exhibition space quite completely, thus making it dense and intense—the commanding voice from TV-preaching behind the prints only emphasised the effect. All the participants, preachers, demonstrators and posers wore t-shirts with texts that varied from "Sappho wants to save you" to the names of known lesbians and those simply claiming "your mother" or "your sister".

With these elements, manifesto-reading, t-shirts with their texts, and an all women group gathering, that is with all its explicitly lesbian content, what *Sappho wants to save you* appears to be, more than anything else, is political art in the common sense meaning of the word. It is manifestational art that clearly shouts out its political message. Preaching and demonstrating is done in the name of Sappho, a mythic poetess from the Greek island of Lesbos, and one of Herstory's widely read foremothers. While the project did not put special emphasis on this historical aspect, it relied strongly on a more recent episode of lesbian activism of the early 1970's.

Concisely put, the mass movements of the 1960's and the 1970's introduced a new kind of politics that emphasised personal choices—personal as political as the widely famous feminist claim goes (Doy 1998, 106–115). It asked whom you *identify* with, and stressed not only collective identity but also collective effort, everyone counted on, not just politicians, in changing the world. A Finnish radical leftist song of the time crystallises the point when it asks: "[*w*]*hom do you stand for, whose flag do you carry?"* Also, as the song continues to argue: "*There won't be justice without a battle. And no battle without a united front.*"[1] With the preaching of the *The woman identified woman* manifesto and the demonstration taking the form of a Sapphic front, *Sappho wants to save you* summons the spirit of this radical identity politics aptly indeed.[2] Sapphic identifications are offered amply: a shared history, references to both poetics and politics; even the appropriate looks and bodily style are considered. Yet every 'clue' is underlined almost too strongly. As the artist herself says (SWSY-intro), the project was made with a twinkle of an eye.

To understand that *Sappho wants to save you* poses an ironic statement, or parody even, the viewer has to have certain contextual knowledge. Irony always necessitates a distanced, elevated point of view since it requires recognition that an *indirect* expression is in question (Colebrook 2002b, ix–xix). In this particular case, the necessary knowledge and route to awareness of irony is that *Sappho wants to save you* is a critical adoption of a more popular Christian phrase "Jesus wants save you". The very phrase was spread more or less globally by the Christian peace movement, or simply Jesus movement as its was called, in fact quite simultaneously with the heyday of lesbian radicalism.

To acknowledge the irony of *Sappho wants to save you* yet another critical aspect needs to be taken into account: "Jesus wants to save you" is a widespread cultural slogan in the name of which a lot of other business is done than a sincere operation of soul saving. At least from the 1960's onwards a set of commercial mass-products such as t-shirts, stickers and c-cassettes, later videos and dvds, became not only common but almost indispensable accompaniments for spreading the word (and for enhancing property and sometimes personal power) whatever the message was. In other words, there are many entrepreneurs in the business of 'soul saving', and Sappho is just

one of them. Like any spiritual converts, advocates of Sappho are claiming their existence, but their group gathering is not only addressed to the current members; their object is to recruit. And this gets us back to the *preaching* mouth from which the political manifesto with its brave claims and ardent if not angry assertions comes out:

> *To the extent that she cannot expel the heavy socialisation that goes with being female, she can never truly find peace with herself. For she is caught somewhere between accepting society's view of her—in which case she cannot accept herself—and coming to understand what this sexist society has done to her and why it is functional and necessary for it to do so. Those of us who work that through find ourselves on the other side of a tortuous journey through a night that may have been decades long. The perspective gained from that journey, the liberation of self, the inner peace, the real love of self and of all women, is something to be shared with all women—because we are all women.* (Radicalesbians 1970)

Although the manifesto—as well as the Sappho t-shirts the preachers were wearing—might be analysed within the domain of the (inter)textual, for the purposes of this chapter it is necessary to insist that it was not only with *bare words* that the recruiting was rehearsed. To reach the complexity of the performance, and the installation event, neither description nor even analysis of the content of the words is enough no matter how radical and boisterous they were. And neither is the mouth to be taken just as a neutral passage for spreading the word; for reaching 'lost souls' still living in the midst of heterosexual oppression without recognising the situation.

Instead, the mouth is inseparably connected to the body and it is the whole body that affectively reaches for those souls. To be affected—to receive affects—is not a mere mental affair: affects grasp bodies. This is why charismatic preachers are not only famous for their choice of words. It is the affective preaching *event* that makes them powerful and appealing. Whereas recruiting and converting made by charismatic leaders has its serious downsides such as brainwashing, and mental and physical abuse, in what follows the affective work of preaching is affirmatively taken into the realm of art theory. In this second part of the triptych, (1) *affective preaching* offers a means for fashioning a direct corporeal contact between bodies. There are also two other transcorporeal processes that I want to pay attention to. Like in the first panel, these two involve bodies—again, both human and nonhuman—in minute, often imperceptible movement: (2) *the 'passive' bodily resistance* of demonstrators 'just being' and walking through the pedestrian area without any hassle and havoc, and in the installation version of the project (3) *the delicate hanging* of the full-size portrait prints that put the stiff pose(r)s on the move.

It is my suggestion that these tiny, often imperceptible movements, that is *micromovements* (Manning 2009, passim), make *Sappho wants to save you* profoundly ironic in a way that is not so much connected to the contexts and cultural knowledge, to knowing as suggested above, but to being as becoming, to the ontology of a work of art. To get the 'ontological irony', sensitiveness to micromovements of becoming is needed. The political, then, is not so much a question of political ideas or political content than it is a question of dynamic forms—forms that are in constant movement (Manning 2009, 128–130).[3] Although there has been a strong tendency to disconnect the two politics in analytical work—the poststructuralist celebration of content and disinterest in form understood as 'modernist'—these two are, of course, not separable as such. What the following experimentation aims at showing is that when the Spinozist matter of affective input and output (Spinoza 1996, 70) is studied closely and taken seriously, the seemingly fixed message of the project starts to stutter, and the installation has *event value* in its own right.

Affective preaching

To make it more widely shareable, the Radicalesbian manifesto of *Sappho wants to save you* is read aloud both in Finnish and English, by two readers one after the other, sentence by sentence—that is what the Christian preachers on the street did too. This kind of simultaneous translation has its wider context; it is common in spiritual sermons held at religious conferences that aim at spreading the word internationally. Interestingly, in these events of translation, the evangelic idea is translated not only literally or orally; rather the translator mimics or becomes a medium for the sounds and bodily movements of another preacher (Coleman 1996, 121). This highlights the performative nature of the preaching event: bare translation of words is not enough. The word is not a textual thing but a spiritual process emitted directly from God. While faithful mimicking is not an issue that *Sappho wants to save you* shares with mass oriented evangelism, there are other points of connection that shed light on the performativity of a preaching event. Before getting to these points of contact it has to be stressed that actually, quite opposite to the faithful mimicking rehearsed in mass sermons, the consumer-friendly bi-lingual preaching *Sappho wants to save you* offers rather highlighted the singularity of each bodily utterance. This stresses the performativity of the preaching act. It is almost as if the manifesto would not be the same, the 'tempers' of the preachers differ to such an extent. Each preacher's body has its own rhythm, tone and emphasis, its singular support technique for the voice.

[figure 8.1] p. 167

The preacher in Finnish has a fierce look in her eyes and her articulation is clear and strong. Her body does not move much, yet it is full of energy. Only

Figure 8.1 The Preachers. Frame enlargement of Marjukka Irni's *Sappho wants to save you* video, 2007.

it seems to put all its force and give all its support to voice production. As a result the performance looks effortless. The convincing, powerful speech seems to flow through her body at admirable ease. The one who preaches in English (as a second language) struggles lightly; she stumbles in her words. Her output is more theatrical in kind, there are a bit of bodily jerks accompanying the manifesto. She is certainly putting considerable effort into the performance, and it shows.

The two performances make visible that it is not the text *per se* that says anything; without the body that participates in the text the event of preaching would not exist. A body, then, is far from being a transparent medium of the manifesto. Even when a body looks rather fixed as the body of the preacher in Finnish, it does a lot of things; it moves all the time. Muscles, tissues and nerves work hard throughout it, and not only in the area most obviously connected to voice production, that is lips, tongue, larynx, nasal and oral cavities. Eventually, the whole body from brain to toes and everything in between (lungs, diaphragm etc.) is at work; at the top the brain giving and receiving 'orders', analysing, remembering words, at the bottom toes doing their part in balancing the posture. All this and much more is needed to make the message flow.[4]

A body is not just a machine that reacts on impulses that come from its outside—as in seeing objects or hearing voices. There is no strict line between what is outside and inside a body. A body lives, becomes in its connections to other bodies. There are transversal micromovements between bodies (Manning 2009, 29–32). An imperceptible change of molecules carried by the air that we

breathe, intensive atmosphere you might call it, for there is no better word for it, not necessarily recognised by reasoning, yet sensed by the bodies. Affects are bodily capacities beyond mere mechanics, and beyond what is quantitative and calculable. It is affects, qualitative microchanges, imperceptible to common sense(bility) that create an event (Massumi 2002b, 220–223; Manning 2009, 178–183). No preacher without a body, no preacher without surrounding bodies. No event without exchange. No event without becoming.

So a preaching event is far from being only about a mouth that utters and articulates. Rather, spreading the word is a manifold corporeal event (that might lead to incorporeal transformations as well, to changed attitudes, for example).[5] Another example: suppose you do not understand either of the languages the preachers spoke, then you are much more inclined to the affective rhythm of the manifesto, to pay attention to non-verbal qualities of articulation—to the body in motion—to try to follow its emphases, tones, pauses, slowing downs and accelerations. And even if you do comprehend one or both of the languages, that does not eradicate the affective force of bodily articulation. It only renders it more imperceptible.

The power of charismatic orality, as art historian David Morgan (2007, 204, 217, 222–223) contends, is grounded in the body; it is shaped by a theatrical sensibility, gestures, volume, and acrobatics even, to list just a few variables. According to Morgan, face-to-face encounter is the first and foremost register of charismatic orality for it makes direct transmission most feasible. Provocatively he declares: "[*c*]*harisma is a kind of energy that is akin to electricity*" (ibid., 223).[6] He continues immediately with an explanation. Like electricity, charisma needs a circuit and a form of manifestation to exercise its powers; to get its forces to flow. This circuit is an aggregate of bodies attending the preaching event, making its existence possible.

Although Morgan insists that the (human) body is the fundamental medium of charisma, he specifies that today the use of media, television and radio broadcasting and dvds for example, provide the body with multiple extensions. And as a matter of fact, currently dvds and earlier videos and tape recordings of preaching events and services are extremely popular for they grant a possibility—this is what their marketers claim—to revisit the affective event again and again. Thus, it is widely believed that the sacred word retains its affective power when recorded or saved; its power does not suffer from mediation (Morgan 2007, 225; Coleman 1996, 121). This promise of directness is what the phenomenon of *tele-evangelism* rests upon.

Interestingly, the way Irni's documentary preacher dvd was shot shares qualities with religious event recordings, which are the core medium of tele-evangelism. Like in event recordings, in *Sappho wants to save you* the camera focuses on the two preachers and only occasionally a few reaction shots of the audience are included just as in the case of 'real' religious recordings. Also,

there are no interruptions, no discontinuities, no list of credits that would claim that a *re-presentation* is at stake. As Simon Coleman (1996, 120–121) explicates, tele-evangelism provides its recipients with presence, immediacy, and it is kept as such at all cost. In the art world, installation works (and video/dvd screenings as part of them) have gained a similar reputation:

> *Instead of representing texture, space, light and so on, installation art presents these elements directly for us to experience. This introduces an emphasis on sensory immediacy, on physical participation.* (Bishop 2005, 11)

Directness, immediacy, presence and physical participation: in *Sappho wants to save you* qualities of charismatic preaching and installation art meet and reinforce each other. In tele-evangelism, 'direct' physical participation happens by placing hands upon the radio or television receiver presenting the voice and image of the preacher (Morgan 2007, 223). In this way, the viewer touches the spirit; feels its vibe. When it comes to installation art, you are seldom asked to touch the work, rather you are presumed to sense it in your body holistically—in the *Sappho wants to save you* installation, the narrow exhibition space begged for bodily immediacy, literally there was no room for an elevated, distanced gaze.[7] In addition to the similarities there are considerable differences in achieving the directness: whereas it is the duty of the tele-evangelist's technical crew to minimise sound distortion so "that the Word can flow unhindered", *Sappho wants to save you* is happy to let the preacher stumble through her speech. Thus, on the one hand there is an intact and untouched flow of the Word, and on the other, a somewhat jerky and stammering mode of expression. While it would be easy to think that the free flow of words would have a higher affective status, and provide more direct connection than the stumbling expression, according to Brian Massumi (2002b) that could be a mistake.

To make sense of Massumi's (2002b, 39–44) claim, let us look at his analysis of president Ronald Reagan as a politician and leader who attracted immense popularity and won their confidence. Judging by the fact that Reagan was both known and ridiculed for his lack of clear articulation, it certainly was not the unhindered flow of words that was behind his success, but quite the opposite.[8] Reagan's success was not based on his oral fluency or the indisputable content value of his words. What Massumi points out is that Reagan's struggling with words gave way to a variety of points of contact: continuous jerks that opened his speech, and suggested various directions worked so efficiently that Reagan became "*many things for many people*" (ibid., 41). It was not by the power of ideology or coherent political content, but by *a-signifying* means that he won people on his side.[9] Thus it is important not to idealise free flows of preaching, but attend to those tiny movements that disturb the perfect expression, make it more bodily affective, for such a talk resonates more, its singularity has simply more contact surfaces than the polished flow of words.

Passive bodily resistance

Whereas the affective preaching event could be classified as an active endeavour; words bursting out of the preacher's mouth, however incoherently, cutting the air, moving and (ex)changing bodies, *Sappho wants to save you* also provides an event that is rather passive, yet does not lack affective force. The performance started with a slowly moving wall of lesbian women who just walked rather silently through the busy pedestrian area without a particular choreography to emphasise their agenda, without shouting any political slogans to underline their message. The front, the crowd of women had no spokesperson, yet it was coherent but not violently so—if somebody was determined to go through the wall, the front would allow the person to do so, and then immediately unite again.

[figure 8.2] p. 171

This reminds (albeit distantly) of political and religious group gatherings, of people coming out from their private dwellings to the streets to claim their will—think of recent events in Cairo and Athens, for example—to show power simply with their bodies, for together they form a collective body, a mass-body, and can be noticed far better than as individuals. Sometimes group gatherings are known to turn into violent acts, to mass-riots, but this need not be the case.

Above all, what this lesbian front links to is a feminist history of women's passive, non-violent, yet thoroughly bodily way of demonstrating. There are two earlier events of passive demonstration that I want to bring up here.[10] The first one of these has to do with almost two decades of persistent 'passive-action' that a group of women practiced around the U.S nuclear base storing missiles located in Wales (see Rosneill 1995; 2000). From 1982 to 2000 a crowd of women, the Greenham women as they started to call themselves after the location, camped by the fences of the nuclear base to get what they wanted: to get those life-threatening missiles out. The camping was not a planned event. It was a continuation of a peace march against the storing of missiles so peaceful indeed that it did not gain much media attention. To get more publicity for their cause some of the marchers handcuffed themselves to the fence surrounding the base, at that point without any further purpose. However, the women decided to stay until something happened, and soon the women's peace camp became permanent.[11]

The tactics of Greenham women was non-violent: they did not want to beat the violence of war technology by using its own strategy, which they were so profoundly against. What the Greenham women are most famous for are their *passive blockades*. The women blocked the activities of the 'war machine' with their bodies. At its most modest, this meant that they practiced their everyday duties and lived their lives for years and years where it was forbidden to live and where it certainly disturbed the military base's activities. They also organised mass events that in different ways made affirmative use of

Figure 8.2 Demonstration march in Turku, *Sappho wants to save you* community art project with the Women's Studies departments at the universities of Turku and Åbo Akademi, May 2006, photograph Taina Erävaara.

the collective body of women. For example, the *embrace the base* event collected together over 30,000 women who gathered around the base embracing it and each other. Their claim was that "*together we are strong to break the nuclear chain*". Other bodily events included dancing on missile silos.[12]

Although getting constant media attention and therefore keeping their issue in people's minds was the object of the women's passive actions, living at the peace camp "*was also a being-together experience—not too serious*" as one of the protestors claimed.[13] Interestingly, this is also what one of the participants of *Sappho wants to save you* demonstration pointed out when I asked about her experience of marching and kind of blocking the pedestrian area with their 'united front'. She said: "*Oh we just walked and chatted together*" (SWSY-anon, 20 Nov '09). So the collective organisation that aimed at being-togetherness was a crucial part of both events. As the manifesto phrases it:

> *It is the primacy of women relating to women, of women creating a new consciousness of and with each other, which is at the heart of women's liberation, and the basis for the cultural revolution. Together we must find, reinforce, and validate our authentic selves.* (Radicalesbians 1970)

It was this being-togetherness of women that visibly clashed with the rules of their surroundings whether consciously or not. The missile base was run with hierarchical and strict military organisation in which everyone had his clearly defined duties. Also, the immediate surroundings of the *Sappho wants to save you* demonstration, the pedestrian area, was busy with people doing their individual tasks—shopping this and that, running errands to keep up with the system.

What radical feminism, including radical lesbianism suggests is not to obey the rules of a patriarchal organisation that alienates human bodies and emotions by dividing their lives into a series of duties given from above whether the authoritative institution is the army, religion, or capitalist economics (Rosneill 1995).[14] Instead a collective auto-organisation is encouraged as the above citation declares. Rather than being armed with weapons or witty political slogans as their only companions, it could be said that both collectives were armed with their own '*lived temporality*', with the immanence of living. Their time was not split and governed from high above, it was made their own collectively as the Greenham women created their daily camping rhythm with no electricity or running water supply (that are pretty much essentials of modern housewifery), and as the participants of the Sapphic front walked quietly in their own rhythm in the midst of a pedestrian area busy with weekend shoppers.

Passive time, time not governed with the laws of representation or authorities but with immediacy is what this kind of lived temporality could be called (Mahler 2008, 65–78). The concept is an elaboration of Deleuzian passive synthesis of time that basically describes the way in which different time modes—past, present and future—encounter and transform each other, that is how they synthesise through affects and intensity rather than in terms of representation (active synthesis of time) (Deleuze 1994b, 70–85).[15] Passive time is time that can seem to stand still although it is rich with intensive movement. What is essential to passive time is that it cannot be quantified or hurried up; rather passive time is a question of quality, a certain slow mode of becoming to be more precise. It is not the most important thing to know that Greenham women camped next to the nuclear weapon base exactly between 1982–2000, as it does not do much either to know how many meters the demonstrators of *Sappho wants to save you* marched. What counts above all or at least parallel to calculable time is how they did what they did.

The concept and practice of passive time relates *Sappho wants to save you* to ritual practices of non-western cultures sometimes celebrated by feminist critiques that want to emphasise the importance of immediacy and presence, a more 'natural' way of living in contrast to hectic, economy driven lives of many contemporary people. Julia Mahler's book *Lived Temporalities: Exploring Duration in Guatemala* (2008) offers various fascinating descriptions of passive time, and so do many studies of Australian indigenous cultures, for example.[16]

Many of the passive activities that Mahler depicts are connected to everyday duties not accelerated by modern supplies such as electricity or pure tap water. To tend, guard the fire to get wood burning, is one such passive act—first you have to wait patiently for the wood to be affected by the fire, then to get the fire to endure, to last long enough for food to be properly cooked (ibid., 73–78). There are also examples of (Guatemalan) Catholic rituals that connect living people to the dead and the divine, across time and bodies: the singing of very long and repetitive antiphonal songs; slow processions that take hours (ibid., 100–102). There is a certain structure, a certain expectancy involved in the described processes, as they have been repeated time after time, year after year—but not an imposed definite time grid: the fire does not take a certain amount of time to heat up, such as the 30 seconds advised in the wrapping of microwave-food, and in the same manner processions, *posadas* for example, are dependent on singular bodies participating, making the event and thus always somewhat unpredictable in their duration.[17] The passive time of rituals, everyday or other, is extremely sensitive for qualitative changes: affects are everything for it; they make passive time open-ended. Mahler (ibid., 72–73) suggests that the intensive slowness and repetition offer a leap from actual time to passive time which shows life's potentialities beyond everyday experience yet rising from the everyday. And most importantly, in this Deleuze-Bergsonian scheme, passive time does not lack activity. Rather, passive time is active in itself.

It is in the context of passive-active time that I want to bring up the second feminist companion to frame the slowly walking demonstrators of *Sappho wants to save you*. This is an Argentinean women's group called *Madres de Plaza de Mayo* (mothers of Plaza de Mayo). The group was established soon after the first mass-kidnappings during the dictator military occupation in 1976–1983 (aka *Dirty War*). Madres and their sub-organisation *Abuelas* (grandmothers) *de Plaza de Mayo* demanded to get their "disappeared" children and grandchildren returned, and to make their cause visible for political decision-makers they started to gather in front of the main government buildings of Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. As the local policemen pointed out that their group gathering was illegal, the women started to slowly walk one behind the other, and eventually formed a moving circle around an obelisk statue paradoxically erected for peace. The women wore white headscarves and later the square acquired permanent signs of the women, as white headscarves were painted there around the phallic statue. While their symbols stay there all week, speaking for their cause, it is the weekly quiet demonstrations that have made the biggest impact on the public, on the decision makers and fellow citizens. In their practice, the affective, intensive power of bodies, and the representational power reinforce each other.

It is encouraging that through their passive activities both the Greenham women and Madres de Plaza de Mayo have gained a lot. The first missiles of the Greenham missile base were sent for destruction in 1989 and the base was closed in 2000. When it comes to the achievements of Madres de Plaza de Mayo the list is impressive: several hundreds of disappeared children have been discovered, and have been given a possibility to rework their stolen identities; they have also been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and many women's groups around the world have adopted their tactics. Although at the level of macropolitics *Sappho wants to save you* is not, by any means, comparable with these achievements, at the level of micropolitics, the three groups have more in common: the affective (micro)forces that emerged in women's passive group demonstrations as well as in the manifesto preaching might have radical and far-reaching effects. Whereas the long-term passive resistance of the Greenham women and Madres de Plaza del Mayo resulted in crucial structural changes, *Sappho wants to save you* moves its viewer-participants and the identity positions involved in a way that might potentially transform understandings about lesbianism and sexual identities. To consider this, let us now study how the event was transposed into installation art.

Technico-affectivity and the politics of the imperceptible

In the *Sappho wants to save you* installation, the slowly walking front of Sapphics is transposed to six full-body portraits that oscillate in the air, minutely, molecularly moved by passers-by but also by their technical construction: the fabric of the screens is light enough to be affected by the currents of air created by the audience and air-conditioning, their wired hanging system flexible enough to respond to the aerial variation, and the metal laths on the top and bottom of the screen not too heavy to resist the movement. [Fig. 8.3] Yet lightness, flexibility and weight should not be conceived as merely technical or formal facts indifferent to the meaning of the work. Rather they should be regarded as art's two-way bodily capacities: as a capacity of being affected and a capacity to affect (Deleuze 1988, 123). Understood this way, the affect economy of art is related to its *form-bound* affective input and output and not only to its content, to what kind of image—poignant or not—it represents. Obviously, the form concerned here is dynamic, neither static nor a neutral see-through participant in the work (Manning 2009, 15–16).[18] In other words, form is not a fixed construction but filled with incipient potential for movement. Whatever an image is printed or painted onto the movement this image *exists* only in the movement. Thus dynamic form is an ontological issue. To highlight how important it is not to disregard the technicalities of a work of art, but

[figure 8.3] p. 175

Figure 8.3–8.4 Portraits for *Sappho wants to save you*, July 2006, and *Sappho wants to save you* installation at *Zigzagging from Art to Theory – and Back* exhibition, Titanik Gallery, Turku, November 2010, photographs Marjukka Irni.

yet to consider them in terms of movement and change, I suggest calling this ontological quality of art: *technico-affectivity*.

Let us look at the content of the portraits, the figures of women in rather stiff positions. The women stand legs more or less apart to indicate a strong, stable position; two have their hands on their hips, thus posing akimbo, two with their arms crossed. If perceived as representations these figures appear to stand still with all their effort, obviously with the help of cultural stereotypes, and are thus bold, well aware of and well in guard of their place in society. However, when conceived in terms of technico-affectivity their standing still bodies sway despite all the effort. This is, first, because the portraits are in constant minute movement as fashioned above—their technico-affectivity gives no opportunity for such fixed positions to stay still. But there is more to it. As Erin Manning's (2009, 43–47) extraordinary little essay titled *Mover's Guide for Standing Still* discovers, the effort of standing still is a rather hopeless endeavour. Manning's subtle descriptions of what kind of an event *trying* to stand still is make it obvious that we do not actually ever stand still in our lives. To sum up her intriguing and provoking argument, a few more or less direct quotes can be presented:

[figure 8.4] p. 175

> *To stand still you have to move.*
> *Standing still requires constant corrections. These are not conscious corrections. They are virtual micromovements that move through the feeling of standing still.*
> *Posture is not stopping.*
> *Posture is a dynamic that is constitutive of the body's tendencies for reconfiguration.*

So whereas the installation stresses fixed identity positions (although in a manner that is almost too straightforward, and therefore comical), what it proposes as an event is altogether something else. Seemingly stiff posers sway in the air almost imperceptibly. However minute their movement they move in any case. As I happen to be one of the persons posing in the portraits, I begin to re-member my body—remember in my body the uncomfortable feeling of trying to stand still in front of the camera (what may have accentuated my experience is the fact that I had to pose for Irni two times; the photos had to be re-taken as there were some technical difficulties with the camera during the first session). Like Manning writes, the effort of standing still necessitates vigorous balancing, controlling movement, as contradictory as it sounds, by moving. Also it often puts you in contact with other bodily feelings: suddenly you feel your nose itching, hair tickling your chin, a need to scratch your back… no matter how upright one's posture might seem it is not a stiff position; it is a series of movements—an endless process. Thus, the cultural pose of standing still fails you, and it did fail me. It just is not possible. Nor are fixed identity

positions. There is always something on the move, however hard you try to fix your position, your identity.

The politics of *Sappho wants to save you* as conceived within its technico-affectivity, does not, after all, yearn for recognition, for subjects to be recognised and valued for who they are. Rather it is to mobilise and transform the position of women, to show that the very positions we think we have are not stable, but (changing) results of continual movement. As the swaying, quiet movement of the body-screens proposes, this is a politics of imperceptible forces. Elizabeth Grosz (2004, 193–194) defines it as follows:

> *Politics can be seen as the struggle of imperceptible forces, forces in and around us, forces in continual conflict, forces including those mobilizing pleasure, pain, and desire. … Instead of a politics of recognition, in which subjugated groups and minorities strive for a validated and affirmed place in public life, feminist politics should, I believe, now consider the affirmation of the politics of imperceptibility, leaving its traces and effects everywhere but never being identified with a person, group, or organization.*

According to Grosz, this kind of action does not weaken queer politics but only strengthens it. It is not the bodies per se that require recognition or validation of their activities; what must be taken into account are the impersonal forces that traverse any seemingly fixed position or identity thus revealing their permanent instability. Accordingly, what the minutely moving Sapphics of *Sappho wants to save you* call for is queer politics to re-direct its focus on the pre-personal microforces that constitute any subject, or a work of art. For if there would be more focus in these micromovements, it would become evident that "*sexuality, and identity itself, are fundamentally mosaiclike fields composed of aligned but disparate elements, energies, goals, and wills*" (ibid., 195). This would allow for a larger variety of sexualities, thus expanding the horizon of sexual difference. Importantly, in this setting, prevalent understandings of minority and majority are contested. Micromovements are about becoming without a clearly defined goal: this is not about a movement from a minority position to a majoritarian one, or the other way around (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 469–473).[19] What the politics of the imperceptible instead proposes is micromovements traversing both marginal and normative identity positions.

From irony to molecular humour

At the end of this chapter it is worthwhile to re-visit the basic understanding of art labelled lesbian. What lesbian art above all connects to is deconstructive art and its textual practices (see e.g. Hammond 2000; Davis ed. 1994). The

elemental quality of deconstructive art is intertextuality, which is to say that to understand its irony this kind of art requires knowledge of other texts and contexts. This is what I suggested in the beginning of my treatise, but what I have ended up with calls for altogether something else. With the concept of molecular irony I pointed towards a sort of irony that would not demand so much pre-knowledge, but rather sensitivity to micromovements. Also, the texts or contexts I provided *Sappho wants to save you* with, were hardly texts at all but better described as bodies in the concrete sense of the word; body-processes, parallel-bodies that moved in a certain way: passively, collectively, in a united front.

By definition irony, however, might not be the best concept to describe the way in which *Sappho wants to save you* works. Deleuze's (2000) contraposition of irony and humour brings us forward "*irony consist in anticipating the encounters*" (ibid., 101). It is always prepared, humour, whereas humour involves being open to the affective encounter; in humour "*intelligence comes after*" (ibid.). Further, in Deleuze "*irony rises and subverts, but humour descends and perverts*" (Foucault 1977, 165). Crucially: "*humour is an art of pure events*" (Deleuze 2006, 51).[20]

According to this scheme, what I have been fashioning in this second panel of my triptych could be considered molecular humour than irony. Thus what at first looked like a manifestation of molar lesbian identity has by now been suffused into the work of molecular humour that is not language-based, not only human, and that does not rely on an elevated, distant point of view. In this way, the molecular humour of *Sappho wants to save you* suggests fresh questions and problems for queer politics. It does not subvert queer theory but perverts it further by suggesting micromovements and molecular becomings beyond and before fixed, known and recognised sexual identities.

In other words, *Sappho wants to save you* opens macropolitical structures of sexual identity for intensive micropolitical flows.[21] It succeeds in undoing the boundary between the two politics; the boundary between micropolitics that functions in the realm of sensation and macropolitics that sticks with recognisable representations. Its imperceptible politics grounds on and emerges through, "*the formal rigour of the work*" (Rolnik 2010, 40), its physicality and technicality in (micro)movement. This makes it political art of a singular kind: art that is political throughout its form-content-matter in process. This peculiar technico-affectivity does not by any means render *Sappho wants to save you* an uncritical work of art. But its critique is not primarily ironic; rather it is immanent (Zepke 2010, 76–79) to its molecular humour and dynamic form-content-matter.

CHAPTER 9

THE SCREAMING MOUTH

Here we arrive at the subject matter that brings together one of the most influential and widespread analyses that Deleuze (2003) conjured in his book on Francis Bacon's paintings and the dynamics of the three chapters evolving around open mouths: a *scream*. What this final panel of the triptych stages is the very event of screaming. This picture was taken along with the other photographs in the series with a common target in mind: to help sculptor Helena Hietanen process and artistically elaborate on the bodily transformation she was going through due to breast cancer she was recovering from and because of which she had already had a complete mastectomy of her left breast. The series was not meant to be just still lifes; rather Hietanen thought that she would work with them, to use them merely as sketches for further art-making—hence the title *Sketches* (1999). Hietanen trusted this delicate job to Eva Persson, who photographed *Sketches* just before Hietanen was going to a so-called tram-flap surgery. In the surgery, all of her breast tissue affected by a hereditary cell-malformation and thus posing a continuous threat to her life was first removed and then new breasts were sculpted from her abdominal flesh. Hietanen had purposely put on weight for the operation so that there would be enough sculpting material for the surgeon to work with.

[figure 9.1] p. 181

However, after over ten years, *Sketches* still remains as sketches—falling sick again (for the second, and for the third time) ruined Hietanen's plans of elaboration, and then other projects such as *Heaven Machine* (2005) made the handling of these bodily issues possible, though perhaps on a more abstract level.[1] In fact, Hietanen herself claims that she was even too scared to work with *Sketches* because of the feelings that the process had already aroused and might arouse (SK 26 Aug '03). It did not help that Finnish laws and welfare practices actually prohibited her to produce works of her own. As a result of her severe sickness that had damaged the muscle tissues under her arm indispensable for art-making especially in the field of sculpture, she had had no possibility but to retire prematurely. After the retirement any independent (or even co-produced or co-thought) work of hers would threaten her pension and sickness benefits both of which in themselves are especially tricky challenges for an artist dealing with the Finnish welfare system.[2] In this third and last panel of the triptych

Sketches gets to live on as it emerges as an epitome of directness bringing together a material body and images in corporeal conjunction rarely attributed to their medium: photographs. Here, the visual medium of photography opens towards corporeal events of posing and processing bodily change.

Screaming beyond sensationalism

To grasp the series *Sketches* and the peculiar potentialities for direct relations between corporeal bodies and images it provides, let me start with the photograph of Hietanen screaming eyes closed and mouth open. Intriguingly, however, her mouth is not a black abyss, but full of flesh—her tongue seems to fill in all the space. Acknowledging the bodily pain Hietanen had experienced, it would be logical indeed to suggest that she is choking on her own flesh, or more generally on the amount of suffering that her body had put her through—this what she says too (SK 22 May '02, [2]). Also, it would quite perfectly match with the Deleuzian take on scream that I referred to in the beginning of this chapter. For Deleuze (2003, 26), in a scream the mouth *"is no longer a particular organ, but a hole through which the entire body escapes, and from which the flesh descends…"*.

[figure 9.1] p. 181

The captivating phrase "descending flesh" that Deleuze deploys provokes questions and comparisons. What could it mean that the flesh descends? And subsequently: why does it not rather ascend or even transcend? Drawing from both Hietanen's scream and Deleuze's thinking around bodies the following answer may be offered: the descending flesh refers to flesh leaving the body as a closed organic system to connect with other bodies, other forces, also with ones that are inorganic. In Deleuze, and in this case, in Deleuze-Bacon, flesh is never something that should be made into something else than it is. There is no urge to textualise flesh or transcend it in any way. The aim is not resurrection, but a conception that flesh in itself is a source of movement, and not the biological prison of the body; flesh is alive, in Braidotti's (2006, passim) words, full of *zoe*. In relation to this, Deleuze's (2003, 26, 29) proposition that in a scream the mouth works as an artery makes perfect sense. In human and animal bodies arteries pulsate life, get it going. It could also be claimed that by escaping through the mouth, flesh seeks (self)expression, for according to Hietanen, she screamed out the pain her body has been through (SK 26 May '02, [2]). And as we have seen earlier in this study, self-expression or autopoiesis is not a solitary project but a conjoining deed that feeds on forces that were once outside, but are now incorporated in the movement of work of art.

For Deleuze (2003, 60–62), a scream makes invisible forces visible as they are channelled through the body taking form, struggling in the scream.

Figure 9.1 Screaming mouth. Helena Hietanen, *Sketches* 1999–, photograph Eva Persson.

However, these forces made visible do not push the body towards the end—although Bacon's paintings certainly have inextricable, even irrevocable violence in them. Instead, as said, the *descending* flesh expresses vital forces. And for Deleuze, these forces are the forces of the future (ibid., 61). They do not belong to the sphere of the human in the sense that there would be a (mastering) human behind them. Rather they are 'natural', even cosmic forces of pressure, gravity, weight; in short forces of vibration. In Bacon's art something is always happening, a movement of de-formation is at work—the world is not blocked into stability, it is expressing itself. So when in Bacon's paintings "*life screams at death*", there is a future involved: a scream "*is a source of extraordinary vitality*" (ibid.).

The future-oriented scream occurs also in Hietanen's case. Before continuing with this claim, let me explain in more detail what exactly happened during the event of screaming that the photograph presents. According to Hietanen, she could not really act out her will to scream the pain as she was embarrassed about what the other people in the neighbouring studio would think (SK 22 May '02, [2]). Consequently, she burst out in laughter. In the picture, then, the flesh that fills the mouth is her tongue moved by a sudden burst of laughter.

What looks like a scream, is therefore rather an unusual, and perhaps also an incomplete event of screaming intervened by incorporated cultural restrictions. However, despite these restrictions that came on the way, it was her body, the flesh that she felt had a need for self-expression. Also, because of her earlier unsatisfactory experiences of expressing such transformative bodily becoming with language, she wanted to try to communicate the pain precisely through the visual medium of photography (SK 22 May '02, [2–3, 5]. In other words, she hoped that *Sketches*, or its elaborations, would make visible what was invisible for many: sensations of a body with breast cancer. But she was insistent: "*I don't want to just show wounds and flesh*" (SK 16 May '02; SK 25 Aug '03, [7]).

Whilst Deleuze (2003, 38) insists that Bacon does not paint spectacles of violence but *sensations* of violence, compared to Hietanen's *Sketches* Bacon's paintings are filled with torn, struggling, visibly tormented human flesh (though not only human perhaps—Bacon's figures are deformed to such an extent that they cease to be human). Indeed in Hietanen's *Sketches* there is no blood, no bare wretched muscle tissues, no clearly contorted body parts. Still *Sketches* has a violence of sensation in it. Only this sensation is not that visible, not that visibly violent, but rather calmly, quietly ruthless. It could be suggested that *Sketches* is all the more about sensation for it does not wallow in a visible spectacle of violence. "The scream" but also the other pieces of the series—we get to see some of them soon—work through sensation without being sensationalist. There is "*no need to use images of horror or extreme cruelty*" (Chirolla Ospina 2010, 22)[3]; none of the sketches is outrageous, nor imbued with a shock effect. So this is not the kind of breast cancer art that celebrates the victory of a torturous process that your body has put you through, nor does it splatter with blood as do many works in the collection *Art. Rage. Us: Art and Writing by Women with Breast Cancer,* for example. Instead, *Sketches* carefully, delicately probes the sensations of a body sick with breast cancer.

This gentle probing and experimenting take that *Sketches* employs does much more than only show the body (quietly) trembling in the cosmic forces of the future—which, by the way, are not solely positive in terms of organic life. As Braidotti (2006, 259) makes clear "*zoe can be cruel, cells split and multiply in cancer as in pregnancy*". What *Sketches*, I would suggest, visualises is how the cruelties of *zoe* as well as its joys necessarily connect to cultural forces. It is quite evident that Hietanen's scream does not emerge only from her suffering body tortured by forces analogous to Bacon's paintings; also it is cultural images such as Bacon's that participate in her bodily becoming in the same manner as Bacon's scream paintings extract some of their powers from Velázquez's popes and El Greco's wildly moving figures. Moreover, the cultural practices and restrictions such as the one that hampered Hietanen's inclination to scream also mould and partake in her bodily transformation. In what follows, the images partaking in Hietanen's bodily transformation are not, however, merely approached as representations or iconographic signs moving from one surface to another, but

as vibrating material forces that are inseparable from the transformation of the body, and also literally, of the future of her flesh.

New figurations

In one way or another, many pictures of Hietanen's *Sketches*—the photographs of Hietanen's hands and eye, Hietanen laying prone on the floor and posing as Christ—connect to themes of religious art, or to spirituality on a more general level. As in Bacon's paintings of sensation, religious art is a remarkable source of inspiration for *Sketches*. Yet, Deleuze (2003, 24) insists that "*Bacon is a religious painter only in butcher's shops*". In Bacon, there is a perplexing relation between butchering and crucifixion, explicable only in the terms that both of these actions involve meat as their object, meat that has suffered and had to suffer for the sake of mankind. For Bacon the meat, whether human or animal, evokes immense pity (Deleuze 2003, 23, 26). It could be said that Hietanen's body has also been butchered, and not only by cancer but by the surgeon's knife. But this is not the only shared factor between them. As indicated, one of the *Sketches* presents Hietanen posing as Christ: "*When the surgery approached I related more and more to the suffering of Christ… I wanted to photograph myself as posing as Christ / in a position of Christ*" (SK 16 May '02; 25 Aug '03, [12]). In iconography, the image that depicts Christ's suffering most profoundly is the crucifixion.

By posing as Christ, Hietanen's body and the pain it has gone through find expression through other bodies, other images. In other words, her flesh is taking form (Manning 2009, 33) and figured anew through direct contact with cultural representations. This sort of event needs a vocabulary sensitive to its peculiar bodily nature. As was elucidated in the previous panel, posing is a series of micromovements, a continuous balancing act and as such a thoroughly corporeal one. Hence, it is far from just 'pausing', freezing oneself into a chosen pose. Again, I would plea that formulating this sort of bodily experiment in terms of representation, claiming that Hietanen represents herself as Christ, falls short.

[figure 9.2] p. 184

In the place of representational concepts, I would suggest the concept of figuration[4] as defined by Rosi Braidotti (2002, 2–3) in her book *Metamorphosis: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*.

> *Figurations are not figurative ways of thinking, but rather more materialistic mappings of situated, or embedded and embodied positions.*
> *A figuration renders our image in terms of a decentered and multilayered vision of a subject as a dynamic and changing entity.*
> *A figuration is a living map, a transformative account of the self—it is no metaphor.*

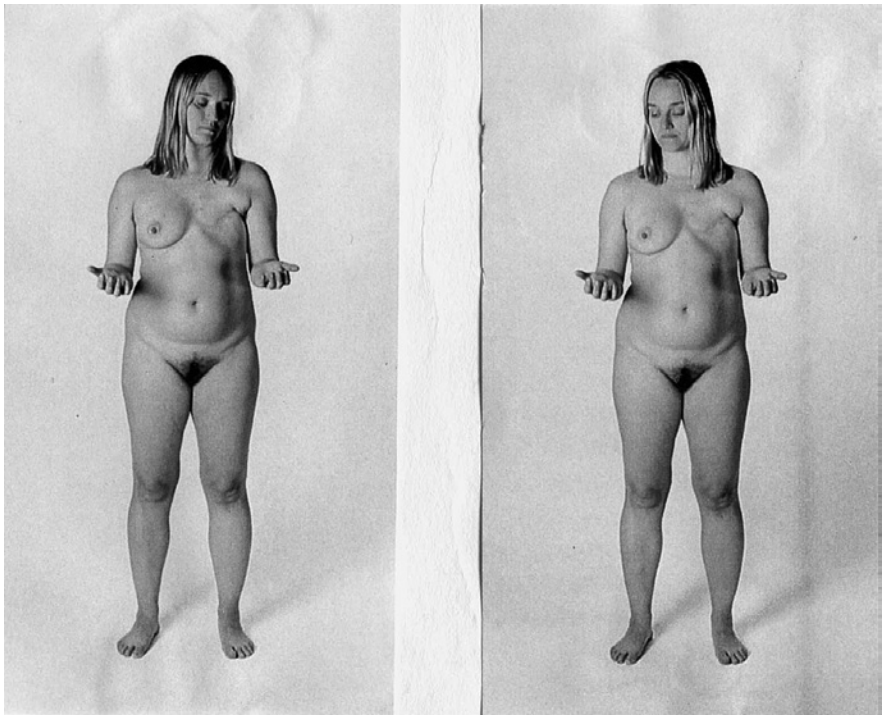


Figure 9.2 Becoming-Christ. *Sketches*, photograph Eva Persson.

In *Metamorphosis*, Braidotti (ibid., 2) sets herself the task of fashioning figurations that would fit in with our time of accelerating changes: "*We live in permanent processes of transition, hybridization and nomadization, and these in-between stages defy the established modes of theoretical representation*." In Braidotti's work becomings do not emerge in a virtual techno-world but in and through bodies that are processes themselves. Accordingly, *Sketches* is not only about representing a body with breast cancer. Nor is it simply a metaphor for bodily change and becoming. It is about what happened and what is happening to a certain enfleshed entity in becoming. Equally important is Braidotti's aspiration that rather than fixing positions and identities, "[*f*]*igurations deterritorialize and destabilize the certainties of the subject*…" (Braidotti 2006, 90). Therefore, rather than somehow representing, depicting the present, figurations map potentialities, bodies in transition to something else than they are. In this respect, what might be most crucial is the act and event of *figuring*: a body taking shape, becoming in its connections to other bodies.

Becoming-Christ, becoming-justice

Following Braidotti, Hietanen posing as Christ is in metamorphosis, deterritorialised and destabilised not only through the cancer and through the spirituality that connects her to God (Hietanen is a believer) but through the direct bodily connection as she poses—gropes, fumbles—the figure of Christ with all of her body. That is, as she tries to figure herself as Christ. This is not only about visually resembling Christ. Nor are Hietanen's acts reducible to the Christ-face system, which is, according to Deleuze-Guattari (1987, 191, 301) so dear to the European visual regime; that is, to faces that render the whole body recognisable: identify it, facialise it. What is going on in Hietanen's posing, is rather a de-facialisation of Christ; re-creation of "*silhouettes and postures of corporeality*"(Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 301). Not resembling Christ, but becoming-Christ. As Deleuze and Guattari put it (1987, 237–238):

> *A becoming is not a correspondence between relations. But neither is it a resemblance, an imitation, or at the limit, an identification. … To become is not to progress or regress along a series. Above all, becoming does not occur in the imagination. Becomings… are neither dreams or phantasies. They are perfectly real.*

Here Patricia Cox Miller's (2009, 148–163) concept of *image-flesh* comes to assist my elaboration of Hietanen becoming-Christ. The concept is developed for religious art per se: it is a contribution to the discussion about icons in late medieval Byzantine Christianity and "the ambivalent ontology" they were endowed with in contemporary debates: whether icons had a being of their own or whether they were just artistic representations. These questions were crucial in apprehending how icons exercised their healing powers. Did icons have powers of their own or were they only mediums? Put differently, were holy, benevolent forces really present in icons, in the images of the holy, or were these images just representations? Whilst this debate did not come to any conclusion, and hence remained a debate, Miller's (2009, 152) apt analysis provides one concept–tool for the purposes of this third panel of the triptych of affection: image-flesh is *"a phenomenon in which the relation of likeness is transformed into one of immanence."*

In my use, the concept of image-flesh does not implicate so much divine healing powers as it emphasises co-emergence of images and flesh: there is no denying that for Hietanen *Sketches* turned out to be a therapeutic process exceeding beyond the conscious limits of studying one's body in process by choosing to pose as certain figures (SK 25 Aug '03, [8–9]). For example, it is quite astonishing to note that although Hietanen assures her identification with Christ—the surrogate sufferer for the humankind—by posing as Christ,

in the canon of western art, it is not Christ but the personification of Justice, who holds her hands in the same position as Hietanen. By way of illustration, Giotto's fresco of *Justicia* (c 1305) in the Arena Chapel in Padua, Italy, reminds of Hietanen's gesture more clearly than the Christ in *Judgment*, the ceiling fresco of the same chapel. Whereas the figure of Justice weighs the two statues with the help of scales, Christ's threatening gesture, and particularly his disapproving gaze, suggests that there are no concrete criteria, such as scales, on which his judgment is to be based. These frescos from the beginning of the fourteenth century may seem to be distant partakers in Hietanen's bodily transformation, but the similarity with her pose and the gestures of Justice, though *non*conscious perhaps, suggests a connection with this long gestural tradition. The questions elemental to justice—choosing, balancing between right and wrong—were not alien to Hietanen at the time she wanted to pose as Christ. For her, the weighing of her hands, looking towards the right one and then towards the left one, was also a question of life and death, and multilayeredly so (SK 22 May '03, [1, 5]. This gesture and the whole pose expressed her dilemma of the future: whether to choose hormone-treatment, which would start her menopause at the age of thirty-five but which would also significantly lower the risk of falling sick again, or to have her healthy but potentially life-threatening breast removed and also to go through tram-flap surgery, that is, to have new breasts made from her own flesh (fat) in order to restore body balance, and to get rid of the scar that was really painful.[5]

In fact, Hietanen's pose comes close to the open poses that Nevado insisted upon in *Honest Fortune Teller* that elaborated and transformed the Catholic figures of María Madre de la Misericordia. For Nevado, the pose in itself was important as it did not implicate passive contemplation before God so typical for female saints, but activeness (ARS 16 June '05): in many versions of the figure, the Virgin shelters people under her arms and under her gown, whilst in others she spreads divine light beams through her palms to the world. By the same token, weighing one's destiny; taking destiny into one's own hands as Hietanen did when posing as Christ-Justice can be understood as an active, affirmative act that contests the conventional passive role of a woman mourning her lost future.

The active and affirmative attitude of the Justice-Christ pose is further emphasised in Hietanen's view of the surgery as a sculpting process she was part of: "*I think of this transformation of my body as a sculptural process*" (SK 22 May '03, [4]). According to her, she was fascinated by surgeons carefully working with their materials like sculptors; both carefully scrutinising and following the qualities of their materials, the way they function (ibid.). If in her previous sculptural work Hietanen had studied qualities of silicone and optic fiber[6]—how flexible they were, how they carried and reflected light—now the

questions were about blood circulation, the enhancement and placing of fat tissue and the scarification of her skin.

A close-up of Hietanen's hands enacts a slight change of emphasis from posing as Christ or Justice to posing as part of art-making. In terms of iconography this photograph could be related to the healing, supporting, empowering hands that in themselves are often associated with those of Christ.[7] The calm, even sacred atmosphere of the close-up of hands may also be seen as a reference to another popular detail of Christian iconography: Christ's crucified hands. But the difference between Christ's hands and hers is that her hands seem to be intact: there are no wounds and thus no blood on them. If there ever were marks of crucifixion, they have all healed. This transformation, which is, however, not visible in the image, creates an interesting connection to Hietanen's argument of art-making as a bodily act:

[figure 9.3] p. 188

> *Being ill is indeed a physical experience … [And] for me working with various materials or photographing my body in a variety of positions is likewise a physical experience, and thereby close to the experience of the body.* (SK 22 May '03, [5])

In connection to Hietanen's words, the close-up of her healed hands takes an entirely another tenor. It links to her will to process her experiences by making art. However, to work with hands does not mean diminishing photography to merely an intermediate phase before 'actual' art-making. Rather, 'the camera eye' or her other eye as she prefers to call it (SK 22 May '03, [1]), enfolds into *Sketches* from the very beginning. One of the *Sketches* embodies this peculiar other eye by presenting a look that probably could not be further from a penetrating, intrusive gaze; it bears no resemblance to the objectifying, classifying medical gaze of examination rooms and laboratories, nor to that of a judging God. This look is understanding and gently approving.

[figure 9.4] p. 188

Crucially, the implicit relation that the gentle look creates is strictly *horizontal*, Hietanen is not gazing downwards, nor is her eye targeted upwards.[8] Again, instead of a transcendental relation, an immanent one.[9] Following Hietanen, the eye, the immanent eye as I would call it, affiliates to her feeling that there are just things that she has to go through, experience and accept (SK 25 Aug '03, [6]), there is no way but looking at them—gracefully. So the eye and the hands are not symbols for opposite actions of optic seeing and manual feeling. Rather they share the common denominator of aiming at an immanent and direct relation with what they are working. They are mutually co-dependent. The immanent eye is present in the way Hietanen moves her hands when drawing or sculpting. Thus cultural imageries do not somehow reside outside technical or physical processes of art-making; they are part of how hands and tools mould the materials as well as how lines are carved.

Figures 9.3–9.5 Healing hands and eyes, the horizontal connection. *Sketches*, photographs Eva Persson.

In a way, the close-up of Hietanen's hands crystallise the entire project. *Sketches* was not meant to be a set of still lifes. Its purpose was not to freeze the moment but rather to further process it and work by drawing if not by sculpting—thus with hands. As we have learned, to work with hands is not only an intentional deed of composing an image; it is a complex event. Rosy Martin (1997, 154) states a similar proposition in relation to phototherapy: "*Photography sessions are not about 'capturing' the image, but rather seeking to make it happen, to 'take place*'." What this performative account means is that, by posing, Hietanen does not merely converse with cultural representations, nor are they inscribed onto her body. She literally embodies, figures them, moves, and transforms with them. In other words, her body changes across and through figures, that is, is *trans*figured.

Figuring transfiguration

Transfiguration, the Christian term for transformation (Miller 2009, 154) sets the terrain for my final suggestions. Whilst the Christian conception of image-flesh and Hietanen's personal devotion are attractive paths for analysis, the fact that the Christian understanding of transfiguration involves enlightenment, or eradiation even, does not quite match with what *Sketches* presents. Rather, the series proposes transfiguration as the transformative process of art-making that occurs through direct relations with matter (see Bolt 2004a 145–146).[10]

In the realm of art-making, transfiguration does not serve escapism from the matters of the material world. Rather it appears as a transformative process without an end; as a process that reaches for the future in and through matter—both bodily and 'representational'. This is what happens in *Sketches* that as a process offers Hietanen's cancerous body new futures in an immanent connection to other bodies. Thus no transfiguration in the Christian sense of the term; no overcoming of the body. But figuration in and through other figures.

In *Sketches*, albeit posing as Christ, Hietanen does not ascend to the heavens. Rather she descends to the floor. Indeed, the series includes an image of Hietanen lying prone on a floor. This image shows the hollow that the cut off breast left behind (SK 22 May '02, [1]) and suggests a horizontal relation to the experiences of the body instead of a vertical, transcendental one. The horizontal connection between Hietanen and the viewer is accentuated by Hietanen's eye that looks at the viewer directly, yet quietly as if asking for a similar sort of responsive look—a look that is not in control but open and sensitive to her transfiguring body.

[figure 9.5] p. 188

If transfiguring through the matter and bodies of images is what Hietanen does in *Sketches,* the light installation *Heaven Machine* that this study began

with seems to ascribe to a more transcendental kind of transfiguration as it involves those radiating beams of light. In *Heaven Machine*, a body connected to the rhythm of the light beams loses its organic structure, in other words, is defigured in radiance. Yet, the claim that *Heaven Machine* immaterialises the body, transcends the body is no longer an option given that throughout this study I have insisted on materialities in movement—on the immanent molecularity of all being.

A FOLLOW-UP

THREE THESES FOR MOLECULAR ART HISTORY

I began this study by folding out matters of art in movement; various materialities that in their own ways of being called for formulating new understandings of art as process. The short descriptions of encountering moving matters of art in the exhibition space, at a studio, in the work of painting and also by way of posing were employed to fascinate the reader, to arouse wonder and excitement for the movements that are often left aside in ideologically and contextually oriented readings of art. Now that I am at the point of closing the study, I hope that the initial excitement has turned into a multifaceted understanding of how materialities of art are in the end *inextricable* of any (political) meaning. This is what *Following the Flows of Process* has persuaded by writing with art, by attending to its matters including affective and corporeal forces as well as representational powers—images circulating and (co)emerging in material movement.

As such, processuality has been an issue dear for critical art history for decades now: today it is customary to study fluid processes rather than solid objects. The meaning of an artwork is a battlefield of contexts and interpretations where viewer-participants make meaning of the work from their respective positions. The artwork as representation is subject to reconfiguration also from the point of view of production: novel images may represent content in new ways. However, as has been indicated throughout this study, representation represents only one level, or plane, of art in process. Whereas critical representational analysis is an irreplaceably efficient tool in tracking down gendered power structures, for example, it might overlay the possibilities of seeing the subtle material changes that are, in the end, inseparable of any political meaning. Representational analysis has a tendency to detach meaning

from the materiality of art. Or, phrased differently, materiality is simply not its central element.

Following the Flows of Process has made an effort to include materiality in encounters of art by suggesting methods of relating to art in more bodily terms and by proposing concepts that help to point out the materiality of encountering and making art. Whilst I do not by any means claim that material experiences of art would not have existed before, I think that their part in the critical study of art has been a rather neglected one. With its methodological and conceptual output, my study, then, hopes to both probe and provoke art historical thinking-feeling about the materialities of art.

To emphasise the volatility and fluidity of material processes I speak of molecularity. This concept was launched in the first part of the study under the title *Molecular Encounters*. Molecularity as Deleuze and Guattari define it, was introduced as an umbrella term that designates the differentiating matter of the world and thus expands well beyond natural sciences to the realms of subjectivity, politics and art. Also, and crucially, it was suggested that it is at the level of the molecular that the human and the nonhuman meet in a most fundamental, direct manner. Molecularity was also paired with molarity that signifies petrified structures such as strictly defined subject–object relations or the female–male binary. Rather than juxtaposing the two, it was argued that molecular movements flow through any molar setting. In the subsequent chapters a range of molecular conceptualisations was brought forward to complexify the understanding of art processes encompassing those of encountering art, making art and writing with it: molecular encounters differentiated into molecular collaborations, molecular memory, molecular humour and molecular sexes.

Given the wide range of molecularities emerging throughout the study it seems suitable to sum up my new materialist account of contemporary art as molecular art history. This is also to separate it from earlier materialist and material histories of art that tend to understand materiality in more solid terms: as persistent socio-political structures, as technicalities and forms, as materials that have an internal logic and essence and that are also hierarchised and valued by monetary means in the art trade for example.

To establish the premises of molecular art history I will offer three theses that revolve around *ontology*, *ethics* and *politics*. As my whole thesis, these theses rise from participations with art. [1]

(1) *Art process is always an ontological process; it is about becoming.*

The new materialist ontology of art that this study promotes argues for understanding art first and foremost *as material becoming*. Rather than being a somewhat coherent object that is rendered moving in the act of interpretation,

art has a peculiar material existence of its own. Even in the case of conceptual art, say, an artwork composed solely of letters, there is always the particular way of how these letters exist. And what makes this material existence—the colour, size and curves of the fonts—crucial, is that it is inseparable of how the work affects us. There is no meaning without the material, which is to say that there is no way of passing the medium either. Thus when I suggest art to be encountered as a process, this does not mean addressing it as a mere process of signification—but *sensing it as a material process in which meanings are immersed*. This necessitates giving up the comfort of positioning, the reliance on pre-conditioned knowledge and a pre-chosen political viewpoint; in a word, it designates giving-up a mastering, molar attitude. Instead of a molar positioning that allows a critical distance to be taken, the researcher should open herself to the molecular movements of art.

In the first chapter, dancing and breathing were suggested as ways of engaging and participating with art's material becoming. These two methodological devices of connecting to the moving matters of art were introduced in relation to Deleuze-Guattarian notions of bodies without organs and sensation. In the case of Helena Hietanen and Jaakko Niemelä's moving light installation *Heaven Machine* dancing and breathing were not metaphorical acts. They were very concrete ways of relating to the material movement, to the becoming of the work: moving one's body according to the rhythm of the installation and breathing its haze into one's body, thus immersing with the work in a most fundamental manner. Importantly, participation with the molecular movement of art contests the understanding of art as an object of knowledge. Rather, art becomes 'an object of fundamental encounter'; that is, something that challenges one's way of being with the world by suggesting new kinds of becomings. *Heaven Machine* suggested beings beyond the restrictive cultural understandings of what it is to be a woman sick with breast cancer and also beyond the 'here and now'. In the case of art history, *Heaven Machine* encouraged a move away from bland representational analysis as it so concretely immersed the researcher into its material movement.

Obviously, the movement of art is not always as perceptible as in the case of installation art that comprises of continuously moving beams of light and ubiquitously spread haze. This is to say that the aim of following the flows of art should not be restricted to palpably moving works only. Even if a painting or a photographic installation appears to stay still, there is nevertheless movement: think of how paint cracks when it ages and is subject to changes in humidity, or how a photographic installation affects its viewer by way of its own materiality interwoven in such things as hanging. Thus it is not that artworks do not move, it is only that our capacities of thinking-feeling them as moving are rather restricted. The work of molecular art history, then, is to render even the most imperceptible movements of art perceptible. For this,

more concepts confluent with the material flows of art are constantly needed. As this study has suggested by its varied research materials, to work on these concepts the choice of artworks should not be restricted to the most obviously moving ones. Whilst I will now proceed to ethics, the concepts presented will continue to contribute to the ontological setting that this section introduced: in fact, ethics and politics both entail ontology.

(2) *Ethics is about attentiveness to the material becoming of art.*

What ethics designates in molecular art history is that attention should not be directed only to completed objects but also to art's processes of emergence. Here ethics is about sensitivity to art's material becoming. The argument goes as follows: most of the analyses that focus on what art represents rarely pay attention to how these representations (have come to) exist. Whilst representational analyses have the advantage of addressing and recognizing power structures implicated in images, new materialist ethics boasts that there would be no power structures, or their variations, to study without that which made the images materially possible. Thus rather than asking what art means, new materialist ethics is fascinated with its material emergence—the crucial but oft-neglected element of any process of representation. Art's material emergence is here understood in concrete terms: it refers to the material processes in and through which art happens. This guides us to study both the *work* of artists and the work of art.

In this study, the *work* of the artist was explored mainly under the title *Machinic Collaborations: Materialities of Art in the Making*. The title is telling in terms of ethics. The artist does not appear as an independent agent or as an autonomous creator; the proposed ethics focuses on the various collaborations that she participates in. In machinic collaborations, the artist dissolves into a thousand tiny 'artists', both *human* and *nonhuman* ones. This does not, however, suggest that her work would not count as important. It must be remembered: there simply would not be an artwork without one or more artists, no representations to be read without her physical-mental work that possibly took days, months, even years. While working with artists and listening to what they have to say certainly helps to acknowledge the work that deserves attention, it is not the only way to pay respect to their work. To pay rigorous attention to the singular subtleties of art, and not only to the general structures it represents, is also to value the artist's labour. It is an ethical choice to consider the work of the artist in a network of machinic collaborations, a network that the artist can operate but never master wholeheartedly.

By studying the painter Susana Nevado's art-making processes I came to understand, for example, how what might be traditionally called artistic

influences dispersed into *molecular collaborations* in which the contact between the two artists is impersonal rather than personal. Moreover, molecularity challenges not only the traditional understanding of intentionality but also the more recent paradigm of discursivity in which the artist's views and desires are considered as products of her cultural situatedness and in which they dissolve into a discursive, socio-historical register. Taking the decentring of the human a step further I addressed art made not by way of conscious decisions or even unconscious, culture-bound ones but in and through *molecular encounters*. Molecularity, then, designates the movement in which the discursive dissolves into the material and the two are indeed inseparable: no more discourses giving meaning to or shaping matters of art, now matter is an active participant in itself. But the "hard work of *manual labour*" and the rhythm of painting appeared as equally important. They were crucial to painting as a defacialising practice that struggles against recognition. While the yearning for something beyond recognition might be considered a modernist ethos (e.g. Greenberg 1960), here it calls for an ethical necessity to value the work of art and the artist. These are not reducible to the modernist purity of truth to materials, but emerge in and through complex assemblages, in a machinic collaboration. In other words, what the observation of Nevado's painting processes opened my eyes to was the volatile materialities of art in the making.

The *work of painting,* my adjustment of the concept of the work of art, is the key to the material forces at work in every act of painting. What this concept means to raise awareness of is that material forces of art have an agency of their own. It is not only that the artist would utilise different matters as mediums for her self-expression; by way of their own qualities matters actively contribute to the emergence of any artwork (that may only later be interpreted as self-expression of the artist). Thus there is no painting, figurative or other, without the work of painting. The concept of *particle-sign* that arose from following one of Nevado's art processes stresses further how the material becoming of painting—the work of painting—always participates in what we might understand as meanings circulating in the realm of signification. This concept points out how a sign has an ontological status as it directly connects to the material movements of art-making. But to insist that the material emergence of signs in art must be attended to with subtleness and care is not to disavow their political affectivity.

(3) *Politics is inextricable of the material becoming of art.*

The politics that my new materialist account of contemporary art praises goes beyond the current understandings that tie the politics of art to readings informed by the situatedness of the researcher. Rather than claiming that

politics derives from an external source be it the researcher's viewpoint or some other political agenda, say feminism with its visual canon already decades long, or the more recent queer-political manifestos, I suggest a kind of politics that with good reason might be described as being art's own. This politics of art is inextricable of the material becoming of art. It is not (only) about what political events, persons or groupings art represents, but about how art works and emerges as well as about the ways of being it incites by its material movements.

In this study politics was most directly addressed in *A Triptych of Affection.* A rather straightforward conclusion could be drawn out of this: the politics of art is about affection, about being affected by art's material movement. To direct attention to affections inseparable from the materialities of art the concept of *technico-affective* was put forward. This concept was created in relation to Marjukka Irni's queer political installation *Sappho wants to save you*. 'Technico-affective' suggests something that might sound contradictory indeed. Namely, that affectivity is connected to such material qualities that are often understood being not only fixed but also apolitical; it is connected to technical and even formal elements of art. Here technical, however, does not designate an unchangeable and determinate structure, rather it is something that for its part makes movement and transformation possible. Nor does form relate to formalism but to a 'dynamic form'. Moreover, in conjunction with the affective, it exceeds the limits of the conventional form–matter binary. What the concept of technico-affective pursues in more concrete terms is, for example, how the delicate hanging that makes photographic portraits subject to subtle movements of air contributes to the politics of the installation in question.

In the case of Marjukka Irni's *Sappho wants to save you* portraits that represent lesbians in pretty recognisable and confronting poses, thus strongly speaking for their identity political position, were in constant, subtle movement allowed and affected by their delicate hanging. Although the lesbians posed in stiff identity positions technico-affectively they were in continuous movement. Put differently, the rigid positions were gently challenged by the micromovements flowing through them. This suggested a peculiar queer micropolitics that contested the radical lesbianism based on recognisable identity positions that the artwork produced in terms of representation.

Whilst the example offered here is quite obviously political in that it addresses sexual politics, new materialist politics of art is more inclusive. In fact, politics is synonymous to the new ways of being suggested in and through art's material becoming. Then, also Susana Nevado's painting installation *D2I* and the series of photographs titled *Sketches* in which the sculptor Helena Hietanen posed with her body affected by breast cancer are political works in their own right. They are, however, not political only because they address issues familiar to feminist body politics, that is, the relation between mother and daughter, corporeal memory, and breast cancer. They are political because

in their material ways they suggest new means of thinking and being that challenge our conventional views, and as such direct us towards a future.

The affective politics that the three panels of *A Triptych of Affection* propose was significantly propelled by Christian practices of religion, both contemporary and ancient. The conceptualisations of techno-affectivity, molecular memory and the act of transfiguration blasphemously elaborate on relics, preaching and icons as image-flesh. Although studies of religious art and objects, especially those of ancient, medieval and non-western societies, surely have in an indispensable and fresh way emphasised the affective agency that is at once visual, material and political, this does not, however, suggest that affective politics would rise in religious surroundings only. Rather it reminds us that it is well worth looking beyond conventional disciplinary boundaries when couching new practices—for molecular art history, as for any other Deleuze-Guattarian branch of practice, the *outside* is an essential source of elaboration.

The three theses for molecular art history both result from and further contribute to my principle of following the flows of process. In the introduction, I defined following as an approach that instead of keeping a critical distance allows for sensuous proximity. I designated it as participation in which multidirectionality plays an important part—meaning that the follower is not only affected by the followee, but also the other way around.

Molecularity as defined above and throughout the study gives these tentative definitions a special character. It stresses that what is followed is by definition in intricate movement although this movement is often imperceptible. Following the flows of process does not, then, embrace well-trodden paths but subtle and surprising ones. In molecular followings, the researcher, the artist, and the work of art dissolve into the human–nonhuman continuum. Still molecular art history is not only about ever-flowing fluxes. As we have learned, sturdier elements are involved: creative flows get into a rut and material-semiotic flows stratify into recognisable representations.

Methodologically, following the flows of process takes molecular movement as its starting point. It would be equally possible to follow molar lines—familiar or customary ones—but then the method's impetus would be radically different. If customary lines were the starting point to following, one could direct attention to the cuts and discrepancies in familiar formations. One could go off-line, get out of line, orient oneself in a manner that does not line up with the established genealogy (Ahmed 2006, 83, 102–107).[2] Whereas following customary lines is a methodology geared for bringing out the breaks in linear

formations and established schemes, following the flows of process emphasises the ever-flowing molecular processes and their momentary solidifications.

In this study, I have made an effort not to follow conventional lines. This is evident in my choice of case studies for this book. When I began my study, there would have been ample choice in artists who explicitly embraced the timely post-structuralist paradigm of meaning-making and made artworks that resonate with it. Moreover, at a later stage in the process, my interest in Deleuze and Guattari's thought could have been met with a selection of artists who make explicit use of their theories or produce rhizomatic or virtual work such as internet art. In other words, I could have chosen artists and artworks that most conveniently "fit" the approach I set out to elaborate.

However, I did not—for this would have been about following conventional lines rather than unpredictable ones. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 372) underline, following is not about the reproduction of what already is from a fixed point of view but about opening oneself to what is in itself still in the making. The art processes included in this study were not completed when I began my work, and most of them were not even on their way. Therefore, I could not be sure what would follow, what themes and materials would be included, or how long the processes would take. As there is not much, if any, academic research other than my own about the artists I have worked with I had no lines to follow, or depart from, in that sense either. Moreover, although the works of art analysed on the preceding pages could be approached from such customary points of orientation as ideology or intertextuality, my methodology of following puts the weight on the emergence of these processes. In this way, the themes and imageries of the works of art are considered in direct relation to the molecular flows in which they emerge. They are actualisations of process, not pre-established ideas reproduced in the artworks. Following the flows of process, then, enables accounting for the materiality and affectivity of even such works that do not advocate them in any explicit or obvious manner.

Whilst this study has followed art processes that have taken months such as Susana Nevado's painting installation *Honest Fortune Teller* or years such as Helena Hietanen's project that revolves around portraits of her body healing from breast cancer, following the flows of process does not necessarily mean following extensive processes, but also intensive ones: in my suggestion to conceptualise art in the making *technico-intensive* connections and *molecular collaborations* played an important part. Nor must following always include extensive spatial movement; it is not always necessary to move around objects, to see the different facets to get the full view. You do not always have to touch to be touched, although this can advance the thinking-feeling with materialities of art. In molecular art history, intensive molecular connections can occur without concrete physical contact or contemporaneity: sensations of joyful endurance of change can work across distance and seemingly separate subjects, and

transfigurations can take place with images of the past one has never seen or touched.

In the end, then, the new materialist account of contemporary art that this study proposes is not applicable to works of contemporary art only. As said in the introduction, here, contemporary art is not solely a chronological term. What my title also implies is that new materialism can make works of art contemporary to us. This study has worked with certain art processes, made them contemporary not only to me but importantly, to art history. Addressing the problems these processes posed, I have made multiple methodological and conceptual suggestions. In their own ways these suggestions that intertwine with ontology, ethics and politics point out the complexities of art in process.

Before closing this study, it is necessary to revisit what Deleuze and Guattari say about following. For them, following is a nomadic venture that does not try to become 'the royal science': "*following is not better, just different*" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 372). But this difference is crucial if we are keen on exploring the subtle flows of process instead of discovering a form. If we wish to engage "*with a continuous variation of variables, instead of extracting constants of them*" (ibid.) then nomadic following is our answer. In a similar manner, what my conceptual and methodological suggestions call for is to continue with the "variation of variables" and not follow them as if they were strict guidelines. Differentiate, find concepts and methods that carve out something special of the processes you are working with. Be inspired.

This emphasises the future orientation of contemporary art that my study has stressed on several levels. The practice of following the flows of process is in itself dependent on the understanding of art as a *field of future*: there would be nothing to follow if there were no movement. The ontological conception of art as molecular becoming crystallises this future orientation. Deleuze and Guattari's insistence that art was never made for contemporary subjects highlights the argument even more. Art addresses what we may become. It keeps offering new flows of process to follow, and therefore also new sensations and conceptions to encounter and create.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION: THE WAY OF FOLLOWING

1 Participation is a timely methodological issue both in the arts and in studies of art. It emphasises both active viewership and art that invites people to participate. See e.g. Claire Bishop ed. (2006) *Participation: Documents of Contemporary Art*; Anna Dezeuze ed. (2010) *The 'Do-It-Yourself' Artwork: Participation from Fluxus to New Media*. See also Taru Elfving & Katve-Kaisa Kontturi eds (2005) *Kanssakäymisiä: Osallistuvan taiteentutkimuksen askelia* [With Art: Steps towards Participatory Research].

2 Tracing refers to the deconstructive and post-phenomenological thinking of Jacques Derrida and Paul de Man who claim that only *traces* of the moment can be experienced: "all we have is a kind of echo, the *re*presentation" (O'Sullivan 2006a, 44–45). For an exquisite art historical research that makes use of tracing see Hanna Johansson's (2004) *Maataidetta jäljittämässä* [Tracing Earth Art]). See also Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 12–15, 20, 24) discussion of tracing as opposed to cartography: "The map is open and connectable…, reversible, susceptible to constant modification." Tracing, for its part, "injects redundancies and propagates them" and always comes back to the same. Whereas "[t]racings are like the leaves of a tree", mapping and here following are rather like rhizomes with no traceable origin or centre point.

3 Following is, of course, not self-evidently a surprise-bound operation. Rather than following a logical order, I will follow "alogical consistencies or compatibilities". "The reason is simple. It is because no one … can say in advance … what will happen; there are always so many heterogeneous elements involved, so many multiplicities that can cofunction, or not" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 250). This is what following *the flows of process* designates here.

4 For writing *with* art see Rogoff (1998, 2005); Meskimmon (2003, 2011); Elfving & Kontturi eds (2005); O'Sullivan (2006a); Elfving (2009, 15–43).

5 For a Deleuze-Guattarian account of following as becoming see Tamsin Lorraine's (2000, 179–194) "Becoming-Imperceptible as a Mode of Self-Presentation: A Feminist Model Drawn from a Deleuzian Line of Flight" that focuses on how a subject and writing must become with the world: "[s]he must follow the lines of flight that run through herself and the multiplicities of which she is a part. This entails betraying any recognizable positioning and ignoring conventional boundaries in order to follow the moving lines of this terrain… For Deleuze the aim of writing is to follow out, rather than stop, the lines that make multiplicities, even if this makes running a risk of becoming unintelligible or unrecognizable" (ibid., 181, 188).

6 Paraphrasing Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 372): if one is in search of subtleties of process, there is no use in watching the flow from the bank; you must flow with it.

7 Feminists have, of course, long criticised this objectifying distance often associated with the so-called Cartesian subject. For Braidotti, it is the combination of Luce Irigaray's philosophy and Deleuze's rhizomatic and vitalist thinking that informs her conception of embodied subjectivity thoroughly connected

with the world. In addition to Irigaray, other practicians of écriture feminine such as Julia Kristeva and Hélène Cixous have proven useful for art historians looking to overcome the critical distance and engage with the materialities of experience. See e.g. Kirsi Saarikangas' (1993) *Model Houses for Model Families*; Barbara Creed's (1993) *Monstrous Feminine: Film, Feminism and Psychoanalysis*; Rosemary Betterton's (1996) *Intimate Distance: Women, Artists, and the Body*; Hilary Robinson's (2006) *Reading Art, Reading Irigaray* and Estelle Barrett's (2010) *Reframing Kristeva: Interpreting Key Thinkers for the Arts*.

8 See, for example, Mikko Tuhkanen's (2005, 4–13) critique that claims how Judith Butler's notion of performativity (to which the vocabulary of re-iteration belongs), enormously influential in visual and queer studies, does not put enough emphasis on change, and has serious difficulties conceptualising becoming as a radically open and unpredictable process. According to Tuhkanen, this is due to her Hegelian inclinations that build on a concept of desire informed by negativity and lack.

9 This two-layered scene is created here for the sake of argument. Moreover, it reflects the change I have gone through as a researcher. My earlier work on feminist imageries has a strong visual–textual emphasis, albeit with a focus on bodies and at times materialities too (Kontturi 2006). Likewise, the scene captures a change termed variably an affective, material, ontological, or iconic turn that art history as a discipline alongside other humanistic and social sciences is suggested to be going through. See e.g. Clough ed. (2007); Moxey (2008); Coole & Frost eds (2010).

10 An example of this political strategy is Griselda Pollock's (1988, 120–154) analysis of 'woman as sign' in Pre-Raphaelitism, Impressionism and Symbolism. When summarising her strategy she explains how "[i]n place of superficial stylistic differences, structural similarities are foregrounded" (ibid., 14). While I do not deny the political importance of her analysis, it is noteworthy that in her account the materiality of art is reduced to the question of style and defined as superficial in contrast to more profound structures.

11 The insight that the root of the term materialism is *mater* has provoked a varied and ambivalent feminist response. On the one hand, this connection has been seen as a positive source of inspiration for further elaboration and even counter-action; on the other, as the repetition of dominant gender hierarchies, see e.g. Betterton (1996, 106–129); Braidotti (2002, 23–28). In the introduction for *Material Feminisms*, Alaimo and Hekman (2008, 1) even suggest that in (many) contemporary feminism(s), this highly disputable issue "requires that one distances oneself as much as possible from the tainted realm of materiality by taking refuge within culture, discourse and language".

12 See e.g. Jane Bennett's (2010a) *Vibrating Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* as well as her article "A Vitalist Stopover on the Way to a New Materialism" (2010b); Jussi Parikka's (2010b) *Insect Media: An Archaeology of Animals and Technology;* John Protevi's (2009) *Political Affect: Connecting the Social and the Somatic.* See also Nigel Thrift's (2008) *Non-Representational Theory: Space/Politics/Affect*.

13 For Deleuze-Guattarian criticism of intersectionalism see Grosz's (2009, 101–110) article "Differences Disturbing Identity: Deleuze and Feminism".

14 In this regard, it is interesting to note that Mieke Bal has herself moved from theory-making to combining theory and art-making (film, installation), see e.g. Holly & Bal (2008, 106–117); Hannula (2008).

15 As Pollock (1988, 6–7) says: "Ideology does not merely refer to a collection of ideas and beliefs. It is defined as a systematic ordering of a hierarchy of meanings... It refers to *material* practices embodied in *concrete* social institutions by which the social systems, their conflicts and contradictions are negotiated in terms of the struggles within the social formations between the dominant and the dominated, the exploiting and the exploited" (italics added). For further elaboration see Gen Doy (1998) who in a rare take on materialist art history emphasises that in fact this understanding of materiality as ideology may be Marxist, but not something that Marx himself suggested. She insists that for Marx paintings/painted forms have "an ontological status of their own" (ibid., 29). It is only that "various forms of Marxist cultural history have been far happier relating content to specific historical, political and economic conjunctures, than analysing both form and content within the theoretical model" (ibid., 30).

16 In the field of feminist art history, the most important figures of the psychoanalytic 'French feminine writing' were Luce Irigaray (1985ab) and Julia Kristeva (1982, 1984, 1985). Rosemary Betterton's (1996) highly influential *An Intimate Distance: Women, Artists, and the Body* is an important source in this regard. Betterton makes eloquent sense of both Irigaray's and Kristeva's complex thinking. It is important to note, however, that Luce Irigaray's (1985ab) morphology of the female body that offers a positive feminine 'formalism' with its imagery of the fluid, mucous, tactile and the sensual (Betterton 1996, 92) and Julia Kristeva's (1982) ideas of abject and abjection do not exactly work in the realm of representation, but rather beyond it. Yet, in the paradigm that emphasises representation they are often interpreted in that way: as offering counter-representations and as tools for the critical interpretation of often oppressive representations. Also, Irigaray and Kristeva were at times accused of essentialism (see Betterton 1996, 93–94). Moreover, it was noted with caution that especially Kristeva's relation to women artists was rather unsympathetic (see ibid., 94). For literature that makes elaborative and positive use of Irigaray's and Kristeva's conceptions see note 7 on page 200. For feminist discussion that relates Irigaray and Kristeva to Deleuze, see Driscoll (2000); Olkowski (2000).

17 A multiplicity of bodies, from female and male bodies to queer and hybrid ones has surely been the object of vivid and ever-elaborating discussions since the early 1970's. See e.g. Betterton ed. (1987) *Looking on: Images of Femininity in the Visual Arts and Media*; Nochlin (1988) *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays*; Pollock (1988) *Difference and Vision*: *Femininity, Feminism and Histories of Art*; Horne and Lewis eds (1996) *Outlooks: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities in Visual Cultures*; Solomon-Godeau (1997) *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation*; Rossi (2003) *Heterotehdas. Televisiomainonta sukupuolituotantona* [Heterofactory: Television advertising as gender-production]; Vänskä (2005) *Vikuroivia vilkaisuja. Ruumis, sukupuoli, seksuaalisuus ja visuaalisen kulttuurin tutkimus* [Bucking Glances: On Body, Gender, Sexuality and Visual Culture Research]; Frigård (2008) *Alastomuuden oikeutus. Julkistettujen alastonvalokuvien moderneja ideaaleja Suomessa 1900–1940* [The Justification of Nudity: Modern Ideals of Published Nude Photographs in Finland 1900–1940].

18 Eeva Maija Viljo's (2003) study "The Bronze and 'Lux', Making a Monument to Alexander II" is an example of contemporary art history that continues the tradition of social art history by paying rigorous attention to multiple actors including economic, material and aesthetic that contributed to the making of the monument. See also Viljo (2006).

19 For a philosophical review of this phenomenon see Claire Colebrook's (2002a) article "From Radical Representations to Bodily Becomings".

20 See also post-formalism, which is a recent art historical take to revive interest in materialities of art. Post-formalism revolves around phenomenological thinking with a focus on spatiality and lived bodily experience, see e.g. Räsänen (2009, 2010). For other contemporary accounts see Germany-based material iconography [Materialikonographie] and material aesthetics [Materialästhetik] that takes a materialist approach to meanings, see e.g. Wagner (2001) and Herrmann (2006).

21 For a complete listing of all the art-events that I participated in see the research material at the end of this study.

22 I photographed Nevado's works in progress practically every time I visited her studio, and later at exhibition spaces too. With the exception of the ARS exhibition, which was documented with a digital camera, I used an analogue good quality pocket camera. Practically all our communication took place in Finnish. Although Nevado is fluent in Finnish, sometimes the language she uses is not idiomatic. I have found this only positively intriguing in terms of my research, for speaking non-idiomatically might give her freedom to look for alternative expressions. See note 2 on page 217.

23 My article "Eye, Agency and Bodily Becoming: Processing Breast Cancer in and through Images" (2009) sums up my discussions and correspondence with Hietanen that evolved around *Sketches* already in 2002. Chapter 9 of this study elaborates our discussions yet further and as such offers new futures for the project *Sketches*.

24 I have worked with Helena Hietanen's art ever since my BA thesis. Both my MA and Lic. Phil. theses concerned her work as she was one of the four Finnish artists involved in a feminist exhibition series that I studied. See also my book *Feminismien ristiaallokossa. Keskusteluja taiteen ja teorian kytkennöistä.* [In the Cross-Swell of Feminisms: Conversations on the Connections of Art and Theory] (Kontturi 2006).

25 The last work by Deleuze and Guattari aptly titled *What Is Philosophy?* (1994) places philosophy in a triptych with science and art. However, rather than separating the three, it connects them by focusing on the different ways with which they make order out of chaos.

26 For a complete list of areas of interest worked throughout *A Thousand Plateaus* see Brian Massumi's (2010, 2) epilogue for the Chinese translation of *A Thousand Plateau*s: "[A]rt, mathematics, geology, biology, linguistics, anthropology, history, ethology, literature, music, religion, political theory, economics. The breadth and diversity seem unbounded. The reader is led to a cliff-edge of bewilderment. Suddenly connections leap out, often between disparate passages in different plateaus, like conceptual flashes of lightning joining earth and sky, briefly illuminating a vista with clarity at once too intense and too fleeting to hold. The flash connections-at-a-distance multiply at each reading, launching the weave of topics into a performative rhythm. Written not unlike a work of experimental fiction, the book reads with the feel of music: in movements. Resonances build at each 'playing', enriching the experience with a self-enhancing sense of variation." Importantly, Brian Massumi is also the translator of the English edition of *A Thousand Plateaus* (orig. *Mille Plateaux*)

27 For a further discussion of bodies inseparable of their relations see, for example, Brian Massumi (2002b, 5) who claims that energy and matter are mutually convertible modes of the same reality (see also Manning 2009). Jane Bennett (2010a, 81), for her part, conceptualises matter as a non-mechanical vital agent that differentiates and individuates perpetually. For individuation and differentiation see Deleuze (1994b); Simondon (2005).

28 In his complex understanding of various sorts of affects and affections Spinoza (1996) differentiates affect from affection. Deleuze (1988, 48–51) addresses this in his book *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. He argues: "It has been remarked that as a general rule the affection (*affectio*) is said directly of the body, while the affect (*affectus*) refers to the mind. But the real difference does not reside here. It is between the body's affection and idea, which involves an increase or decrease of the power of acting, for the body and mind alike. The *affectio* refers to the state of the affected body and implies a presence of the affecting body, whereas the *affectus* refers to the passage from one state to another…" However in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), the book that my study owes to the most, this difference is not so evident; in fact the concept of affection is barely used at all. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the concept of affect is very far-reaching: it includes processes of becoming that happen in the presence of the affecting body (becoming-animal etc.) and more inclusive becomings; affect is a way of being in the world, becoming-with; it is force and principle of all being.

29 See Deleuze (1994b, 1): "Generality expresses a point of view according to which one term may be exchanged and substituted for another. The exchanges or substitution of particulars defines our conduct in relation to generality. Generality as generality of the particular, thus stands opposed to repetition as universality of the singular."

30 *Haecceity* is the concept that Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 260–263) reserve for 'thisness': "There is a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance. We reserve the name haecceity for it. A season, a winter, a summer, an hour, a date have a perfect individuality lacking nothing, even though this individuality is different from that of a thing or a subject. ... It should not be thought that a haecceity consists simply of a decor or a backdrop that situates the subjects, or of appendages that hold things and people to the ground." Haecceity takes place when individuals "cease to be subjects to become events, in assemblages that are inseparable from an hour, a season, an atmosphere, an air, a life." Thus, "[a] haecceity has neither beginning nor end, origin or destination; it is always in the middle".

31 It might be claimed even, as Zepke (2005, 257 n 8) does, that Deleuze and Guattari prefer to use the term artisan to artist.

32 For Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 407–408), this understanding of anexact essences comes from Edmund Husserl's phenomenological philosophy (see Beaulieu 2009, 265–267). For Husserl (1982, passim, see esp. 68), flows of process, however, centre explicitly around the human ego: "The Ego can be concrete only in the flowing multiformity of his intentional life, along with the objects meant—and in some cases constituted as existent for him—in that life. … As ego, I have a surrounding world, which is continually existing for me." It is worth pointing out that despite Deleuze and Guattari certainly criticise the transcendental aspects of phenomenology, it nevertheless holds an honorary position in the Deleuze-Guattarian dramaturgy (Beaulieu 2009, 261). From a

Deleuze-Guattarian viewpoint, (post)phenomenology raises important critical questions of subjectivity and objecthood but the non-human and impersonal forces of the world do not get a satisfactory role: it still revolves around the human viewpoint, whether bodily or mental (see e.g. Beaulieu 2009, 266–269; Deleuze 1994b, 2003; Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 1994). Yet, this claim may be, as Alain Beaulieu (2009, 262) suggests, one that phenomenology considers itself innocent of. There are, however, critical considerations of Deleuze and Guattari on the phenomenological side too, see for example Sara Ahmed's (2008, 23–39) review article "Imaginary Prohibitions: Some Preliminary Remarks on the Founding Gestures of the 'New Materialism'". Nevertheless, there are also studies that bring Deleuze-Guattari and phenomenology together in an affirmative manner such as Laura U. Marks' (2000) *Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* or Barbara Kennedy's (2003) *Deleuze and Cinema: Aesthetics of Sensation*. See also Coole and Frost's (2010 eds) *New Materialisms*.

33 This attentiveness to the material might bring to mind the modernist-primitivist understanding of 'truth to material', which *material aesthetics* of the early and mid decades of the 20th century pursued especially in the field of sculpture (see Lindgren 1996, 21–23). However, there are at least two crucial ways in which the Deleuze-Guattarian approach and the modernist material aesthetics depart from each other. First, materialist aesthetics was not only based on the *sublimation* of the material and the prioritisation of skill as well as an *instinctual* understanding of the material, it also propagated and celebrated natural creativity that would result in bringing the human and the natural into closer harmony—art-making was to remind of the slow processes of nature, such as erosion or corrosion (ibid., 22). Second, whilst the Deleuze-Guattarian approach is not indifferent to nature, it nevertheless emphasises materiality as natural and artificial simultaneously (1987, 406–407). To stress this, they call it a *machinic phylum* (here, machinic refers to the artificial and phylum to the natural sciences; it is a zoological term, but used also in linguistics to refer to a family of languages of which the relations are unclear or loose).

34 In chapter 7, this Deleuze-Guattarian/Simondonian (see e.g. Simondon 2005) example will be worked on in relation to Susana Nevado's art-making. In the philosophical tradition the example of wood and the artisan and/or the artisan and the tool is discussed also, for example, by Martin Heidegger (hammer and the hand) and Karl Marx (1887, e.g. 46) and goes as far back as Plato. Thanks to Marko Gylén for being very helpful in this issue. See also Sara Ahmed's (2006, 42–49) phenomenological discussion of objects that orient and of orientations toward objects in which she refers to Edmund Husserl in addition to Heidegger and Marx.

35 See Massumi (2011, 149): "The event precisely expresses the *coming-together* of its parts, not the parts themselves or their structure. … An event of lived abstraction is strictly speaking *uncaused*. Its taking-effect is spontaneous: experiential self-combustion. It is uncaused but highly conditioned: wholly dependent on the coming-together of its ingredient factors, just so. The conditioning always includes a pragmatics of chance. There is always the odd detail that might unexpectedly assert itself and destroy the effect. Or positively inflect it."

36 Whilst in this study aesthetic experience is principally an issue that concerns arts, it can be understood to traverse all kinds of everyday experiences: see e.g.

Brian Massumi's (2002b) analyses of Ronald Reagan's success among voters, or how the Superbowl Sunday casts its unpredictable effects and affects over bodies across the nation and beyond.

37 For a classic feminist analysis of 'masculine' aesthetics see Christine Battersby's (1989) *Gender and Genius: Towards A Feminist Aesthetics*. Feminist aesthetics is of course a wider phenomenon than that which only includes negative criticism. For example, it comprises artistic practices aiming at creating a 'feminine' aesthetics, such as Judy Chicago's 'cunt art' or 'central core aesthetics'. *Differential Aesthetics: Art Practices, Philosophy and Feminist Understandings*, edited by Penny Florence and Nicola Fosters (2000) is a major work that has informed my understanding of aesthetics as inseparable from the practices of art-making. Also, many feminist scholars have been concerned with aesthetics without making it an explicit case, see e.g. Anne Wagner's (2005) *Mother Stone*; Briony Fer's (2009) *Eva Hesse: Studiowork*.

38 Onto-aesthetics is a term that Stephen Zepke (2005) suggests in the conclusion of his book *Art as Abstract Machine: Aesthetics and Ontology in Deleuze and Guattari.*

39 This formulation owes to Isabelle Stengers' words that summarise Brian Massumi's radical empiricism on the back cover of Massumi's (2002b) *Parables for the Virtual*: *Movement, Affect, Sensation.*

40 Ilona Hongisto's (2011) PhD thesis *Soul of the Documentary: Expression and the Capture of the Real* is a great example in this sense. Hongisto accounts for the document and the documentary from the viewpoint of what the documentary can do and argues that the documentary can imagine, fabulate and affect.

41 For recent studies within the field of arts that in their respective ways bring Deleuze-Guattarian thinking together with an ethnographic or participatory approach see Margaret Mayhew's (2009) *Modelling Subjectivities*: *Life-drawing, Popular Culture and Contemporary Art Education,* Hanna Väätäinen's experimental ethnography of a community dance group involving wheel chair dancers (2009); Milla Tiainen's (2012) *Becoming-Singer: Cartographies of Singing, Music-Making and Opera* and Eva Sturm's (2011) *Von Kunst Aus: Kunstvermittlung mit Gilles Deleuze*.

42 Whereas Zepke stays mainly in the Deleuze-Guattarian gallery of philosophers, that is, he refers to Deleuze and Guattari and their predecessors such as Nietzsche and Spinoza, O'Sullivan and especially Bolt are more eclectic in their take: Bolt theorises art beyond representation with Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, and O'Sullivan's thinking is also influenced by Lyotard and Kristeva.

43 For a widening field of Deleuze-Guattarian studies of (contemporary) art see also the recent works by Grosz (2008); Manning (2009); Massumi (2011). Also see the recent issues of *Deleuze Studies* (Vol. 6, Nos 1 & 2, Feb & May 2012) that approach contemporary art through numerous case studies. For art historical studies that briefly make use of Deleuze-Guattarian insights but might not be considered Deleuze-Guattarian as such, see e.g. Best (2011); Fer (2004, 2009); Meskimmon (2003, 2011).

44 See Anne Wagner's (1996) *Three Artists (Three Women): Modernism and the Art of Hesse, Krasner, and O'Keeffe* and *Mother Stone: The Vitality of Modern British Sculpture* (2005) and Briony Fer's (2009) *Eva Hesse: Studiowork* and especially her earlier essay also concerning Hesse's art-making titled "Sculpture as sample"

(2006). In addition, Norma Broude and Mary Garrard's (eds 2005) collection *Reclaiming Female Agency* with its more expanded focus on the representations of the female agency in art is an important book in this sense. A research project that focused mainly on modern Finnish women artists and designers led by professor Eeva Maija Viljo at the department of Art History at the University of Turku when I was beginning my doctoral studies needs to be mentioned too. For the publication of the project see Palin (ed. 2004*) Modernia on moneksi* [Many Kinds of Modern]. Also the work of Kirsi Saarikangas (1993, 1997; with Johansson eds 2009) focusing on gendered lived spaces has been inspirational in its references to women's agency and the materiality of experience.

45 Some worth-mentioning exceptions are, for example, Bolt's (2004ab, 2008, 2010a) reference to her own artistic work, Elizabeth Grosz's (2008) discussion of Australian indigenous art, Judy Purdom's (2000) essay on Nancy Spero, Brian Massumi's (2006) account of Bracha L. Ettinger's work and Stephen Zepke's (2010) work on Anita Fricek. Also, Simon O'Sullivan (2006a, 5) makes a corresponding, though gender-neutral point *not* to attend to the artists considered by Deleuze himself.

46 See also Alfred Gell's (1998) posthumously published book *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*.

47 Sic! The subtitle of Mitchell's book *What Do Pictures Want* only underlines the anthropomorphism further as it claims that the book is about "The Lives and Loves of Images".

INTRODUCTION TO PART I

1 Part of this citation first struck me in Judy Purdom's (2000, 165) article on Nancy Spero, a feminist artist whose work, despite its figurative content and the flat medium of print, rather dances and vibrates than just simply represents. I will discuss Spero's work briefly under the title *Manual Labours* (chapter 5).

2 In relation to the rather vast contemporary interest in the biological aspects of their thinking, John Marks (2006, 81–97) calls Deleuze & Guattari's thinking a 'biophilosophy'. In his article "Molecular Biology in the Work of Deleuze and Guattari", Marks focuses on two quasi-scientific publications on molecular biology targeted for the general audience that are not only frequently cited in *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* but were also immensely popular in France of the late sixties and early seventies. This molecular sort of neo-Darwinism that Francois Jacob's *The Logic of Living Systems* (orig. 1970) and Jacques Monod's *Chance and Necessity* (orig. 1970) pursue did not find its way to Deleuze & Guattari's work straightforwardly, but was elaborated especially in connection to Henri Bergson's earlier book *Creative Evolution* (1910). As I will argue later in this chapter with Elizabeth Grosz, also Charles Darwin's work prominently affected Deleuze & Guattari's thinking. Gary Genosko (2009, 26–27) suggests that Guattari had a professional connection to molecular biology because of his early studies in pharmacy, and this might have influenced Deleuze and Guattari's work both together and independently. Marks does not bring this up, which is not surprising since his article belongs to the long list

of contemporary work that if not belittles Guattari's part in their collaboration, then solely focuses on that of Deleuze.

3 This concept is central for Bergson's (1910) book *Creative Evolution* that was originally published in French as *L'Évolution Créatrice* (1907). Élan vital is an agent "in the sense of engaging in actions that are more than reflexes, instincts, or prefigured responses to stimuli" (Bennett 2010a, 80). Also it is an agent because it has a "generative power to produce, organise, and enliven matter" (ibid.).

4 For molecularity in the process of subjectivation see e.g. Braidotti (2002, 2006); Lorraine (1999); for molecularity in the arts see e.g. Bolt (2004a, 44–48); Grosz (2008); O'Sullivan (2006a); Zepke (2005).

5 This is not to claim that Spinozian philosophy would have been somehow banned until Deleuze and Guattari came up with it. The materialist tradition of Spinoza has been elaborated earlier in the work of such philosophers as Nietzsche, Bergson and Simondon—who themselves are of central importance to Deleuze and Guattari.

6 See for example the political theorist Jane Bennett's *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (2010a), which discusses, amongst other things, food, stem cell production and general political 'ecology' in terms of vital materialism.

1 READING AND BREATHING

1 The installation was displayed as part of the *Light Treatment* exhibition in Wäinö Aaltonen Museum of Art, Turku, Finland, 27 Nov 2005–30 Jan 2006. The *Light Treatment* exhibition showcased a variety of light works as a sort of artistic treatment for depression caused by the period of reduced day light taking place in the Northern parts of the Northern hemisphere between late October and early February.

2 Not only is the reception of art a populous act, so is the process of making art. I will focus on this question in part two of the study titled *Machinic Collaborations*. See especially chapter six *Zigzagging Art and Life* that has a section titled "Populous art-making".

3 In her article "Working with Concepts", Bal (2007, 2) phrases this a bit differently as she emphasises the importance of the reader's conceptual travels in enlivening the art object, but the message is still more or less the same: "After returning from your travels, the object … turns out no longer to be the 'thing' that so fascinated you when you chose it. It has become a living creature embedded in all the questions and considerations that the mud of your travel splattered on it, and that surround it like a 'field'." What Bal (2007, 7, 9), however, also stresses is that concepts are never fixed and they should be negotiated over and over again in interaction with cultural artefacts.

4 To be more precise, what I mean to claim here is not that artist's talk events would be somehow post-structuralist happenings *per se*. Their structures and practices are not sealed, unchangeable—but guided by prevalent pedagogical understandings—it is the museums' pedagogical units that usually run these events. As my colleague Margaret Mayhew once suggested, a less hierarchical,

less artist/context-focused event would probably have taken my research to different routes. An idea of organising such events as part of my research was raised even, but was never put into practice due to the time limits.

5 What comes next should not be seen somehow straightforwardly reflecting Helena Hietanen's relation to art. The way she explains her work, its contexts and inspiration is strongly connected to the space and situation in which she delivered her talk—the public event in a prestigious art museum. When I have talked with Hietanen in more private circumstances, in her studio for example, she has focused on different things mainly centring around the practical process of making art as well as her personal feelings of the process. We will get to these in the last chapter of this study. The research data I have gathered concerning Susana Nevado's art processes proves the same thing—her topics of speech vary greatly according to the situation, and again it is in the privacy of her studio that the talk becomes a more process-oriented, less fact-based tone.

6 For an introduction to Hietanen's works see, Helena Sederholm's (2008, 82–89) article "Bright Noise—From Light Sculpture to Political Activism".

7 As these are not personal accounts (although more or less presented as such) but shared cultural understandings, at least some of the leads that Hietanen and the members of the audience gave during the event could have been traced without their exact words.

8 See also Elizabeth Wilson's (2004) *Psychosomatic: Feminism and the Neurological Body,* and Myra Hird's (2003) review essay "New Feminist Sociological Directions". Moreover, there are several recently published volumes of essays that tackle this theme such as *Material Feminisms* edited by Alaimo and Hekman (2008) and *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics* edited by Coole and Frost (2010) both of which include texts by Grosz.

9 Here, Bolt's claim is strongly influenced by Martin Heidegger's thinking. Whilst Heidegger's philosophy surely has its part in Bolt's *Art Beyond Representation*, it is her next book *Heidegger Reframed: Interpreting Key Thinkers for the Arts* (2010b) that concentrates on the subject matter more profoundly.

10 This is also the very argument that Deleuzian critiques of Judith Butler's thinking raise. See e.g. Tuhkanen (2005).

11 Bolt makes a comparison between identity, opposition, analogy and resemblance and acts of identification, classification, evaluation and interpretation. It could of course be criticised that the acts of identification, classification, evaluation and interpretation do not dominate anymore in art history as rigid categories or methods, if they ever did. I would not, however, claim that they are altogether absent either, as the fiercest poststructuralists might assert. Rather, it seems to me, that at least for some part, identification, classification and evaluation are infused in current acts of interpretation whether this is exercised in the name of cultural analysis or readings against the grain. But their implicit status does not change the fact that they belong to the logic of representation.

12 See Deleuze (1994b, 138): "The 'I think' is the most general principle of representation—in other words a source of these elements and of the unity of all these faculties: I conceive, I judge, I imagine, I remember, I perceive—as though these were the four branches of cogito."

13 According to Massumi (2002b), these positions are often too predetermined. They move on already known axes such as nature–culture, woman–man.

14 Therefore, taking positions is equal to "the structure or network gridding the possible" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 212).

15 See also Bolt (2004a, 78–83). For the dynamics at the heart of the machinic see Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 257) Spinozist definition of a body: "We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words what are its affects, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with affects of another body…"

16 O'Sullivan (2006a, 22) points out that the art-machine is not the only machine that might offer aesthetic effects: "For some subject-machines it might be the 'drug-machine', for others it will be a 'music machine', or simply the coupling with another kind of 'subject machine'."

17 Note that the English translation of agencement as assemblage does not emphasise 'agency' as explicitly as the original concept (agenger ~ ajuster, arranger, ordonner). For a fine elaboration of this critique see John Phillips' (2006, 108–109) "Agencement/Assemblage".

18 A machine, a machinic assemblage, or simply an assemblage may conceptually remind of 'a thing'. These concepts, however, depart from the thing of 'thing theories' (see e.g. Brown 2001; Daston ed. 2004) at least in the following ways. 'Thing' seems to refer to a severely more coherent, even individual actant—thinginess evokes an image of stability and coherence—than an assemblage the agency of which is always collaborative, co-operative "interactive interference of many bodies and forces" (Bennett 2010a, 21). To be more precise, "[a] figure of 'thing' lends itself to an atomistic rather than congregational understanding of agency. While the smallest or simplest body or bit may indeed express a vital impetus, conatus or *clinamen* an actant never really acts alone" (ibid., 20–21). In fact, for Guattari, 'machinic assemblage' was a concept useful in "trying to break down the ontological iron curtain between being and thing" (op. cit. O'Sullivan 2006a, 26).

19 The concept of sensation has a long history in aesthetics. For the reference of Deleuzian sensation and how it relates to Kantian sensation see Edward Willatt (2010) *Kant, Deleuze and Architectonics*. See also Deleuze's (2003) book *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* that works mostly in the realm of painting. I will discuss the book in chapters 5 and 9 as well as in the introduction for Part III.

20 Grosz (2008, 76) specifies: "Sensations are … midway between subject and object, their subjects and objects, the point at which this one can convert into the other."

21 Irigaray's inspiration for this book comes from her practice of yoga and the involved breathing methods. Whilst phenomenology (especially Heidegger) is an important source of interest to Irigaray, Jay Johnston (2008, 221–231) connects Irigaray's argument also to Hegel claiming that breathing and 'pneumatology' are the forgotten aspects of his thinking.

22 In Irigaray's writing (2002, 85) breathing is something that fundamentally separates the two sexes: whereas man makes use of his breath to build and organise the world *outside* him therefore harnessing air for his uses, woman is in greater harmony with cosmos, and inhales and exhales more naturally thus both sharing air and keeping enough of vital air inside of her. However, Irigaray also thinks that in sexual difference "the split between human and divine identities can be overcome, thanks to a cultivation of energy, in particular a

cultivation of breathing" (ibid., 90). No doubt, these are intriguingly interesting points, especially as Irigaray connects breathing with both Western and Eastern spirituality. It is not, however, my aim to take them further here. For an elaborate take on the subject see Johnston's (2008) book *Angels of Desire: Esoteric Bodies, Aesthetics and Ethics*.

23 My proposition also comes close to what Rosi Braidotti (2006, 178) has suggested: "The activity of thinking in this respect is closer to that of mindful breathing than it is to the exercise of the sterile protocols of institutional reason."

24 Rituality is something that often occurs in the analysis of techno dance. In Portanova's analysis techno dance is not directly connected to '*primitive rituality*' but such 'primitive' dances as Tarantella are tackled alongside it. Saldanha (2007, 70–74) discusses '*techno-shamanism*' exercised by trance DJs of Goa, India. He tells about a DJ who claims that trance rituals are "unlike the hierarchical, patriarchal, traditional Christian ritual which is dominated by a priest", as they are "free for all" and "created by a group of equals". Saldanha, however, is very critical of how the 'Christian' hierarchies are really overcome in a trance ritual: "[T]echno-shamanism and hallucinogenic mysticism belong to a series of white amateur intellectualisms, more often than not concealing rather narcissistic, masculinist feelings of being different, a new stage in human evolution" (ibid., 74). Whilst the 'ritual' *Heaven Machine* offers is obviously not guided by any person and not directly comparable to the techno or dance scenes either, the theme of corporeal rituality is certainly something to think about.

25 This expression comes from Nietzsche. For an elaborate analysis of 'dance' in his philosophy see Kimerer LaMothe (2006) who begins her book *Nietzsche's Dancers* very evocatively: "On the pages of Nietzsche's texts, multitudes dance. Dionysian revelers, satyrs of tragic chorus, and Dionysos himself, medieval Christians, free spirits, inspiring muses, and Zarathustra; god and goddesses, young girls, women, and higher men—all dance. So too do thoughts, words, pens, stars and sometimes even philosophers." (ibid., 1) See also Claire Colebrook's (2005) article "How can we tell the Dancer from the Dance? The Subject of Dance and the Subject of Philosophy".

26 In techno raves, connectedness with the world is often enhanced by drugs, which have acquired much-telling names such as *Speed* and *Ecstasy*. In Deleuze and Guattari's rigorous analysis all molecular 'escapes' do not receive an all-appraising welcome. Instead, they are open about the negative usages of molecularity: fine segmentations can be as harmful as more rigid ones, molecularity in itself does not make anything self-evidently better (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 160–161, 166, 214–215). For example, citing historian Daniel Guérin, they claim: "If Hitler took the power, rather than taking over the German State administration, it was because from the beginning he had at his disposal microorganisations giving him 'an unequaled, irreplaceable ability to penetrate every cell of society', in other words, a molecular and supple segmentarity, flows capable of suffusing every kind of cell" (ibid., 214). In fact, Deleuze and Guattari (ibid., 217–231) use the last pages of their ninth plateau to sum up the dangers of drawing molecular lines and lines of flight by giving a wide array of examples. Using drugs is one of these. However, in the end it does not matter that "risks are ever-present", for "it is always possible to have the good fortune of avoiding them" (ibid., 250). For a fascinating Deleuze-Guattarian study that concerns not only drug use and techno dance but the

political issues of whiteness and race involved, see Saldanha (2007, especially 13, 58–69, 72–73, 86–87).

27 They borrow this concept from Antonin Artaud's play "To Have Done with the Judgment of God" (1947), see Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 150, 158–160, 163–164, 531 n 1).

28 "[T]he indefinite article does not lack anything; it is not determinate or undifferentiated, but expresses the pure determination of intensity, intensive difference" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 164).

29 Importantly, "[d]ismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself but rather opening the body to the connections that presuppose an entire assemblage, circuits, conjunctions, levels and thresholds, passages and distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorializations measured with the craft of a surveyor" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 160).

30 This understanding is Deleuze-Guattarian and probably most clearly articulated in *What Is philosophy?* (1994), the last book that Deleuze and Guattari co-authored (however, in "Of the Refrain" plateau of *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) there are some important sections regarding music, too). Here, the contradiction with the modernist understanding that celebrates music as the highest and most spiritual of the arts must be brought up. This is to say that it is a mistake to couple the two with each other. Whilst the modernist ethos emphasises a spiritual, non-material understanding of music, Deleuze-Guattarians rather stress the corporeal and deterritorialising qualities of music: "Sound invades us, impels us, drags as, transpierces us. … Colors do not move people. Flags can do nothing without trumpets. [Even] [l]asers are modulating on sound" (ibid. 348). For evocative Deleuze-Guattarian analyses of sound and music see Milla Tiainen's articles "Corporeal Voices, Sexual Differentiations: New Materialist Perspectives on Music, Singing and Subjectivity" (2007) and "Towards Intensive Audiovisual Encounters: Interactions of Opera and Cinema" (2009) and her PhD thesis *Becoming-Singer: Cartographies of Singing, Music-Making and Opera* (2012).

31 Darwin can be seen as a source of inspiration for Deleuze and Guattari via molecularity. Despite the fact that there are references to Darwin in their work (see e.g. Deleuze 1994b, 248–249; Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 46–49), today Darwin is rarely regarded as their precedent in the same way as Nietzsche and Bergson, who both were strongly influenced by Darwin's thought. It is Grosz's suggestion (2005, 14) that Darwin's impact on cultural studies and feminist readings should be recognised as being as important as that of, for example, Marx's, Freud's or Hegel's.

32 Neo-Darwinists and sociobiologists, however, are a whole different lot, and their sexist views such as giving raping a biological and evolutionary base (Grosz 2005, 43) obviously harms and violates any sort of feminist politics.

33 Grosz (in Kontturi & Tiainen 2007, 249), in fact, claims convincingly that Darwin was the first theorist of becoming and the first major theorist of differentiation. Grosz says (ibid.): "Darwin is perhaps richer and more interesting than almost all of his commentators. Darwin's work is incredibly rich and open-ended. And feminists have, I think, somewhat foolishly neglected this work because the concept of nature or biology has been so alarming. What Darwin offers us is a notion of life as not only open-ended, but as directed to forces in the future, which we cannot predict in the present."

34 This might remind the reader of the notion of the sublime. And indeed, Barbara Bolt (2007, 43 fn 3) has described this sort of "*flow of sensation producing a collapse in subjective boundaries*" that *Heaven Machine* evokes as 'techno-sublime'. Although Bolt does not take the subject any further, she points out that the techno-sublime can be seen to operate among other things in "*particular forms of immersive art*" (ibid.). Historically experiences of the sublime have been connected to natural events such as great storms or awe before water falls, or images of such events, think of Friedrich's famous *Wanderer above the Sea Fog* or Turner's trembling, bolting skies! Techno-sublime, however, emphasises the blurring of what is natural and unnatural. See also Zepke's (2011) article "The Sublime Ground of Contemporary Art".

35 This is also what Rosi Braidotti (2006, 168) argues as she warns against a total immersion into the flows of intensities: thinking in nomadic mode always requires composition, selection and *dosage*; "the careful layout of empowering conditions that allow for the *actualisations* of affirmative force" (italics added).

36 I will leave the subject for now, but will return to it in the third part of the study when composing a triptych of direct relations in and through *open mouths*.

37 Deleuze and Guattari have also been critical of their conceptual creation of 'line of flight': "Perhaps … the words 'line' and 'segment' should be reserved for the molar organisation, and other, more suitable, words should be sought for molecular composition…" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 217).

38 Note the positive use of the indefinite article again! See Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 164–165).

39 Cf. what Zepke (2005, 130–131) writes about the powers of Byzantine mosaics while elaborating on Deleuze (2003, 128–129): "to ascend into this divine light means transcending our organic form, and the church in this sense was a machine through which we could achieve … transfiguration." A true heaven machine, then, one could argue! Interestingly, if mosaics, and especially, ones constructed on the ceiling provide the viewer with an experience of vertical heavenly light, light shifting through multi-coloured stained glass windows might be experienced as a horizontal one. For my version of 'horizontal' transfiguration see chapter 9.

40 Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 227–228) warn against associating molecularity with the clarity of a microscopic gaze. Molecularity is not about seeing more clearly, about detecting smaller details. Molecularity is not a method that calls for the usage of technical devices such as microscopes or infra red light. In fact, these kinds of devices are often used when the value and the origin of an artwork are at stake—that is, they are used in the making of molar judgments in the name of the art trade.

41 Philosophy of life refers to the materialist-vitalist branch of thinking exercised by such figures as Spinoza, Darwin, Nietzsche and Bergson. Deleuzian-Guattarian vitalism is a highly disputed subject; for the proponents see e.g. Bennett (2010ab); Braidotti (2002, 2006, 2008ab); Grosz (2004, 2005, 2008) O'Sullivan (2006ab); Zepke (2005), and for critical opponents e.g. Hallward (2006).

2 WORK OF PAINTING

1 The multimedia nature of my research data encourages drawing attention to the multiple material forces at play in the process.

2 I have dealt with this issue in an article titled "Process–Matter–Transformation: A New Materialist Aesthetics in the Field" (Kontturi 2005).

3 Neither does Nevado leave her works untitled—an act that is often related to the 'silence' of modernist masters, to their disinclination to verbalise their work.

4 In this scenario, Nevado's role would be that of a mere mediator, of a midwife even as some romantics put it (see Battersby 1989).

5 The figure of the girl is fascinating from the Deleuze-Guattarian viewpoint (see e. g. Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 276–277): "[G]irls do not belong to an age group, sex, order, or a kingdom: they slip everywhere, between orders, acts, ages, sexes; they produce *n* molecular sexes on the line of flight in relation to the dualism machines they cross right through. … The girl is like a block of becoming that remains contemporaneous to each opposite term, man, woman, child, adult." Whilst this is not something that I develop any further here, it is not a coincidence that I address the figure of the double navel painting as a *girl* and not as a young mother for example. For an exemplary study of the figure of a girl *not* as representation but as an event see Taru Elfving's (2009, 44–130) PhD dissertation in which she discusses the girl in and through Eija-Liisa Ahtila's video-installations. See also the recent special issue of *Rhizomes* titled 'Becoming-Girl' (Leandra Preston ed. 2011).

6 Catholic sisterhoods sometimes carry rather awkward names such as the Spanish Sisterhood of Descalzas Reales (royal barefoots [direct translation: sockless]). Thank you to Kari Kotkavaara for insisting on me visiting Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales in Madrid during my field trip to Madrid in 2003.

7 See, for example, Belting (2005, 302–319) "Image, Medium, Body: A New Approach to Iconology". Also in 2006 the theme of the annual conference of the Association for Australian Art Historians was *Re-inventing the Medium*. One of the workshops commenting the theme, *Molecular Aesthetics*, was organised by me and Margaret Mayhew. In her book, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Era of Post-Medium Condition*, Rosalind Krauss (1999, 7, 56) tackles the same problem as she calls for a 'differential' understanding of the medium. See also Nicholas Chare's (2009) article "Sexing the Canvas: Calling on the Medium".

8 For Bolt, the work-being of a work of art is a concept that has Heideggerian roots, more precisely the term originates in Heidegger's essay "The Origin of the Work of Art" (1935) (see Bolt 2004a, 87–122). See also Bolt's recent book *Heidegger Reframed* (2010b).

9 In their respective ways both Stephen Zepke and Simon O'Sullivan have emphasised the 'work-being' of art. Zepke (2005, 9) claims and highlights that in the first place "Deleuze and Guattari offer a philosophy of art-*work"*. O'Sullivan (2006a, 111) utilises a slightly different conceptualisation as he claims to study the *workings* of art that Deleuze and Guattari evoke. See also Jussi Parikka's (2010a) article "Ethologies of Software Art: What Can a Digital Body of Code Do" as an example of a study that addresses how art works rather than what it represents.

10 Geology appears here as an especially interesting companion for at least three (rather curious) reasons. First, because the double navel truly is a work of layers, and as such probably comes closer to the slow process of shaping the bedrock of the earth than to an understanding of creation as a sudden flash of genius. Second, and perhaps a more far-fetched explanation is the fact that geology and painting share the basic elements of water and rock. As Elkins (2000) shows, painting is fundamentally a series of negotiations between the very elements of water and stone: the paint is usually made by mixing certain proportions of fluids (containing water in one form or another) and powdered stone (pigment). Third, if we add to this Barbara Bolt's (2004a, 149–186) concept of "working hot", meaning that it is in the heat of the working process that creation, the emergence of the new takes place, then a link to geology seems almost too perfect. For is it not in the great heat of the earth, in the pressure of the masses, that new stone is born?

11 Whilst Tamsin Lorraine (1999, 114) is truly interested in the potentials of Deleuze and Guattari's transdisciplinary conceptual creations, she also notes that when used unethically they might lead to 'dangerous abstractions' harmful to (feminist) analyses of power relations. But she is willing to take the risk in the name of the potentials that these concepts open in terms of being.

12 For example, the physico-chemical strata is about how different materials react to each other, how they transform each other and form new constellations. It cannot be stressed enough how strata is formed of processes and forces, and not of already complete objects or particles which then move and mingle. Therefore, paper scraps, strokes of acrylic paint of various thickness and colour are not to be encountered as stable pieces of matter, nor as pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that should find their places to make a match. As all strata, they are moving, re- and deforming—becoming.

13 In Deleuze-Guattarian vocabulary stratoanalysis is parallel to the perhaps more widely exercised practices of rhizomatics, schizoanalysis, nomadology and micro-politics (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 43). These are all conceptions and toolboxes for grasping the late capitalist society with all its singularities and generalities in terms of movement and positive difference.

14 I will come back to this shred of lace more specifically in chapter 5 titled *Manual Labours* when discussing Nevado's modes of art-making in the section titled *Getting physical*.

15 Interestingly enough, these are images that second wave feminists accused of distributing submissive gender roles, but which have also made a critical comeback as popular feminist accessories, as magnets and postcards with slogans that challenge those very roles. A whole range of these critical products, "visual wise-cracks", can be viewed at http://www.ephemera-inc.com/ (accessed 9 January 2010).

16 For example, American artists such as Barbara Kruger illustrate well this deconstructive tradition, which critically recycles oppressive imagery. In the early 1980's the deconstructive strategy was introduced as a counterforce to "subjective and essentialist body art" (see e.g. Barry & Flitterman 1987). For a contemporary account of feminist art that runs more parallel to Nevado's material practice see Rosemary Betterton's (2004) edited collection *Unframed: Practices and Politics of Women's Contemporary Painting*, which also includes Barbara Bolt's (2004b) essay "Painting is not a representational practice".

17 Deleuze and Guattari borrow the concept of 'double articulation' from the Danish linguist Louis Hjelmslev—as usual their adaptation of the term is a rather twisted one, that is, not entirely faithful to its origin but rather a bastard take on it.

18 Or as Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 91) put it themselves: "Content is not signified nor expression a signifier; rather both are variables of the assemblage."

19 Powers of a-signifying semiotics are however more than anything else affective. This is why a-signifying signs affect us, our bodies—for better and for worse—without the involvement of conscious interpretation. This has made it very profitable for capitalism. For a range of examples on a-signifying signs varying from pin codes in credit and bankcards to contemporary cinema, see Genosko (2009).

20 More than interestingly, Guattari (1995, 39) attributes the 'double lack' to the Lacanian signifier: "[Which] is too abstract in that it makes heterogeneous, expressive materials translatable, it lacks ontological heterogenesis, it gratuitously uniformises and syntaxises diverse regions of being and, at the same time, it is not abstract enough because it is incapable of taking into account the specificity of these machinic autopoietic nodes..."

21 Elisabeth Bronfen (1998, 4) finds an explanation for this rule in the fact that the navel echoes the vagina therefore transforming the stomach into an erotically exciting place and a cultural taboo zone.

22 For an art historical study that makes use of Bal's conceptualisation of the navel, see Palin (2004, 47–49). For a striking account of navels across history, psychoanalysis, deconstruction and poststructuralism see Fred Botting's (1999) *Sex, Machines and Navels: Fiction, Fantasy and History in the Future Present.* I would like to thank Lynn Turner for this reference.

23 This concept will be deployed in more detail in chapter 4 *Autonomy of Process.*

24 Brian Massumi 's (1992, 11–12) description of the sign and meaning-process might help to understand what these concepts signify in the Deleuze-Guattarian scheme: "Meaning is the encounter of lines of forces, each of which is actually a complex of other forces." Sign, for its part, is "an envelopment of difference, of a multiplicity of actions, materials, and levels".

25 Interestingly, the double navel breaks the idea of a closed organic whole. A navel has an important role in the organic strata of human life: it reminds of the immediate organic connection there once was with the mother. Therefore, it might even be suggested that it reduces the origin of life to one single point, to the other end of the umbilical cord (there once was), that is the mother. In the case of the double navel girl, we cannot be sure of her origin. The double navel ridicules laws of organic strata as well as laws of psychoanalysis (strata of subjectivation) in which a navel marks the lost connection to the mother, that is, lack as a source of anxiety and desire in modern life.

26 I would like to thank Barbara Bolt for pointing out this issue.

INTRODUCTION TO PART II

1 In its entirety, this famous opening quotation for *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 3) goes as follows: "Two of us wrote *Anti-Oedipus* together. Since each of us was several there was already quite a crowd. Here we made use of everything that came within range, what was closest as well as farthest away. We have assigned clever pseudonyms to prevent recognition. Why have we kept our own names? Out of habit, purely out of habit. To make ourselves unrecognizable in turn. To render imperceptible, not ourselves, but what makes us act, feel, and think. Also because it's nice to talk like everybody else, to say the sun rises, when everybody knows it's only a manner of speaking. To reach, not the point where one no longer says I, but the point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I. We are no longer ourselves. Each will know his own. We have been aided, inspired, multiplied."

2 The language used in our conversations was principally Finnish—Spanish was used only in passing to make sometimes necessary clarifications. As mentioned in the introduction, although Nevado is fluent in Finnish, sometimes the language she uses is not perfectly idiomatic. I have found this only positively intriguing for native speakers who are familiar with conventional expressions sometimes use these expressions automatically even though they might not suit their experiences of the processes of making art.

3 This expression is an elaboration of Elizabeth Grosz's (1993) groundbreaking Deleuzian feminist article "A Thousand Tiny Sexes"; see also Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 213, 242, 278) discussion on the subject.

4 Cf. 'writing machine' in Deleuze and Guattari's (1986) book *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. Deleuze and Guattari also mention the concepts of writing machine and musical machine in passing in their *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987, 243); for an exquisite elaboration of the concept of writing machine see Kurikka (2012).

5 Cf. e.g. Comte de Buffon, Georges-Louis Leclerc's famous line from the 18th century: "The style is the man himself" ("*Le style c'est l'homme même*").

6 In addition to Deleuze-Guattarian conceptions, Altti Kuusamo's elaborate criticisms of style since the late 1980's provide a background for my interest to renew the traditional understanding of style. Kuusamo has, for example, re-conceptualised style as a modality of making. See e.g. Kuusamo (2011).

7 See style as the s-word in Deleuze's *Abécédaire*. In dialogue with Claire Parnet, Deleuze highlights style as non-personal by claiming that style is a question of "not stuttering *oneself*, but making language stutter." The phenomenon of stuttering is dealt with in more detail in chapter 8 *The Preaching Mouth*.

8 Thus, the machines that produce works of art are different from those producing artworks: Nevado herself pointed this out when she emphasised that for the Ama Gallery exhibition she preferred doing installation art and art objects that would not sell easily: "I won't probably do any kind of art objects that could be sold there at the Ama Gallery. I'd rather do installations. That is, on purpose." (WAM-AMA Sept 5 '03 c 1:18) In practice, it is however common that the two go more or less together, that they are connected. And eventually the Ama Gallery exhibition included both: an installation of dozens of plaster 'book covers' was after all sold for private customers part by part, but another installation was left commercially intact.

3 IMPERSONAL CONNECTIONS

1 For the reference of theatre see Deleuze (1994b, 192): "[A] theatre of multiplicities opposed in every respect to the theatre of representation, which leaves intact neither the identity of the thing represented, nor author, nor spectator, nor character, nor representation which, through the vicissitudes of the play, can become the object of production of knowledge or final recognition. Instead a theatre of problems and always open questions which draws the spectator, setting and characters into the real movement of apprenticeship of the entire unconscious, the final elements of which remain the problems themselves." For the studies that build on the idea of theatre "in which we experience pure forces, dynamic lines in space which act without an intermediary upon the spirit and which link it directly with nature and history, with the language that speaks before words, with gestures which develop before organized bodies, with masks before faces, with spectres and phantoms before characters" (ibid.). See also e.g. *Gilles Deleuze and the Theatre of Philosophy* (eds Boundas & Olkowski 1994); Alberto Toscano (2006) *The Theatre of Production: Philosophy and Individuation Between Kant and Deleuze*, and Bolt's (2004a, 50–51) conceptualisation of the *theatre* of practice that materialises in the *work* of art.

2 For example, Nevado's mother got very anxious and mad when she first saw a painting her daughter was making in relation to the holy card tradition. She had helped Nevado by buying some virgin sculptures for her. The mother came to Nevado's studio and yelled: "What are you doing?! You can't do that!!" Nevado explained: "My mom is not a believer, but she comes from a very religious family." Nevado then asked her mother: "Can you really say what's wrong with them?" She answered: "You know well that you cannot paint the Virgin Mary like that." Nevado: "Well, it is NOT the Virgin Mary." She said: "Don't you ever bring those paintings to me!" Nevado answered: "These are not meant for you; they're meant for an exhibition." Something similar also happened with the Caisa exhibition (which I will discuss in chapters 5 and 6) that assembled together recycled antiquity plates and pictures from human anatomy textbooks as well as photographs of Nevado's naked sister sick with multiple sclerosis. But, then, later her mother even wanted the plates that were decorated with female genitals. (ARS 5 Dec '04, c 12:00)

3 See Judith Stein's (1994) article "Collaboration" in Broude and Garrard's *The Power of Feminist Art*; Amelia Jones' (2005) critical article of collaborative production of Judy Chicago's Dinner Party in Broude & Garrard's *Reclaiming Female Agency.*

4 See the exhibition catalogues of *WACK: Art and the Feminist Revolution* (Moca, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, CA, 2007, ed. Lisa Marks) and *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art* (Brooklyn Museum of Art, NYC, 2007, eds Maura Reilly and Linda Nochlin).

5 There is, of course a long history for men (and sometimes also women) working together in artistic groups. Rozsika Parker (1987), however, argues that these groups often had strong, sometimes even despotic leaders and this is what feminist groups tried to avoid, although they did not always succeed.

6 See Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 283): "Invoking causalities that are too general or are extrinsic ... is as good as saying anything."

7 Connecting by identifying is not a feminist cliché in itself, rather it is a poststructuralist common sense understanding that somewhat ambivalently personalises and subjectifies connections that are after all far more blurred, and impersonal.

8 One could always argue that by explaining *her* reactions to the works rather than describing them as works by certain individuals she wanted, so to speak, to keep the authorship for herself, to acclaim *her* active role. But then again, the manner she describes her part in creation is in fact modest in terms of authorship. As we will soon see, she rather speaks of the creative process in the passive, and not in the active voice (chapter 4).

9 As we learned from the *Heaven Machine* case, it is the subject or content of the work that connects not only mentally but also materially to human bodies. This is why I would not speak of a formal language: it too easily refers to something that is external to the subject itself, just a simple and neutral means of expression as if the subject, an idea, and the material process of making the idea were separate. And as we have come to see, this connects to the way Nevado's art processes have been conceptualised so far, and this will only deepen in the course of this chapter.

10 The difference Julia Kristeva (1984, 21–106) makes between the symbolic and the semiotic is elucidating here. Whereas the symbolic refers to a sign system that operates through laws and codes, and is a shared and established system, the semiotic refers to material and corporeal processes/rhythms as well as instinctual drives that disrupt and multiply meanings. Importantly, Kristeva writes: "[T]he subject is always *both* semiotic *and* symbolic, no signifying system he produces can be either 'exclusively' semiotic or 'exclusively' symbolic, and is instead necessarily marked by indebtedness to both" (ibid., 24). See also Estelle Barrett (2010, 21) who interestingly claims that Kristeva's account of the semiotic helps us understand that the logic of artistic practice does not function according to the logic of rational thought. Yet, as Kristeva (1984, 81) claims, semiotic functioning is not separate from the symbolic: as in poetry, the semiotic introduces itself through the symbolic, moves through it and threatens it. In other words: "Art—semiotization of the symbolic—thus represents the flow of jouissance…" that cracks the socio-symbolic order (ibid., 79). Put in Kristeva's terms, this is what characterises Nevado's intensive connection to Tàpies. What must be remembered, however, is that even though the semiotic realm is theoretically prior to symbolisation it is not universal, common to all (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 64).

11 Massumi's thinking is largely based on Félix Guattari's (1995, 7) notion of the collective in his book *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm:* "The collective should be understood in the sense of a multiplicity that deploys itself as much beyond the individual, on the other side of the socius, as before person, on the side of pre-verbal intensities, indicating a logic of affects rather than a logic of limited sets." Importantly, then, "collective is not here synonymous with group: it is a description which subsumes on the one hand elements of human intersubjectivity, and on the other pre-personal, sensitive and cognitive modules, micro-social processes and elements of the social imaginary. It operates in the same way on the non-human subjective formations (machinic, technical and economic). It is therefore a term, which is equivalent to heterogeneous multiplicity." (ibid., 70)

12 For an impeccable example of this kind of impersonal collectivity see Rosi Braidotti's (2008b) article "Intensive Genre" that makes a case of Virginia Woolf's and Vita Sacksville's connection in terms of letter-writing. The article is an extended and re-organised version of the chapter "Desire, or the art of living intensively" from Braidotti's (2006, 190–203) book *Transpositions: Towards a Nomadic Ethics.*

13 According to Daniel W. Smith (2005, 182) the initial idea behind Deleuze's essays in *Critical and Clinical* was to explore *how* the names of two writers, literary figures, Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, were constantly used as labels for the perversions of sadism and masochism. For Deleuze, it was not enough to label, but to look for an explanation behind the labelling—to make actual (and virtual) connections.

14 Julia Kristeva's (1984, 59-–60, passim) understanding of intertextuality, however, is more complicated, and as such noteworthy here. Kristeva writes (ibid., 60): "[S]ince this term [intertextuality] has often been understood in the banal sense of 'study of sources', we prefer the term *transposition* because it specifies that the passage from one signifying system to another demands a new articulation… If one grants that every signifying practice [including the symbolic and the semiotic!] is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an inter-textuality), one then understands that its 'place' of enunciation and its denoted 'object' are never single, complete, and identical to themselves, but always plural, shattered, capable of being tabulated. In this way polysemy can also be seen as the result of a semiotic polyvalence…" In an interview, she explains further (Kristeva 1985): "And analysis should not limit itself simply to identifying, texts that participate in the final texts, or to identifying their sources, but should understand that what is being dealt with is a specific dynamics of the subject of the utterance, who consequently, precisely because of this intertextuality, is not an individual in the etymological sense of the term, not an identity. In other words, the discovery of intertextuality at a formal level leads us to an intrapsychic or psychoanalytic finding, if you will, concerning the status of the "creator," the one who produces a text by placing himself or herself at the intersection of this plurality of texts on their very different levels —I repeat, semantic, syntactic, or phonic. This leads me to understand creative subjectivity as a kaleidoscope, a 'polyphony'..." Here, the differentiation of the three levels is important. While the semantic refers most clearly to signification, the syntactic and the phonic refer also to formal and corporeal organisation—and as such to material processes always inseparable of any process of art-making.

4 AUTONOMY OF PROCESS

1 See also W.J.T Mitchell's (1994) earlier book *Picture Theory*.

2 For a discussion of Deleuze's fascination with Aloïs Riegl, and also with Heinrich Wölfflin and Wilhelm Worringer, see Ionescu (2011, 52–62); see also Deleuze & Guattari (1987, 415, 492–493, 495–499) and Deleuze (2003).

3 For another example that prioritises the haptic-visual over the representational-textual see Nevado's description of the making of the installation consisting

of old books displayed at the mentioned WAM exhibition: “In the trash bin, I found more of these books, the Bible, New Testament and stuff. I’ve made some of these myself, but many of these are just books [as such]. The point is that you can’t read the contents.” (WAM-AMA Aug ’03, c 02) Moreover, see the following extract from the TOP-exhibition: When a TOP-exhibition visitor interprets, explains the work by saying that in the painting in question there is not only an image that has a meaning but a text, a quotation that has its own significance, Nevado intervenes and corrects quickly: “You don’t necessarily have to understand the text. It is also visual”, she explains (TOP-op 27 May ‘03, c 01). So not even a text has a solely textual meaning; in the process of painting, it becomes a field of visually charged particles.

4 Another example of the same theme: I’m sure the unconscious is involved in this, the unconscious... It is difficult [to explain], for it’s a kind of a whole—many kinds of things have their influence on the fact that I happened to choose this way. Sometimes it is based on colour, sometimes... the painting doesn’t have too many events, also the colours are even, then you suddenly need something to catch attention. In my opinion, painting has many things in one; one is a surprising factor, another is the balance and there are many kinds of balances, then there are colours and forms, and then the texture. How does the eye move there, you lie to the eyes, to the brain, you confuse eyes, wallpaper—what is it for real? What’s in the front, what’s behind? Has it been torn, or something? It is quite difficult... I can’t explain it any better. (ARS 23 Mar 05, 01:05)

5 See also Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 4): ”There is no difference between what a book talks about and how it is made.”

6 Moreover, see Nevado’s description of process in conjunction to the AMA exhibition: "A Process ... it’s rather exciting. Occasionally you don’t know what you are doing and where you are going. It will emerge little by little, in one way or another. And sometimes it goes wrong, and sometimes you feel better—but never perfect [laughing]!" (WAM-AMA 15–20 Dec ‘03 29:30–31:40)

5 MANUAL LABOURS

1 Another example of this: “And there is a bit of a game: what’s the wall, and what are the tiles” (TIT 22 May ’04, c 35).

2 What is even more interesting is that Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 176–178) connect facialisation to the Christian image tradition, and more precisely to the face of Christ: ”The face is Christ.” And because the face of Christ is that of a white man, they stress that faciality is certainly part of European racism.

3 Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 190) utilise the term *de-facialisation* to describe the movements that ”break through the walls of signifiance, pour out of the holes of subjectivity, fell trees in favour of veritable rhizomes, and steer the flows down lines of positive deterritorialization or creative flight”.

4 Backing this up, there is, of course, the whole history of futurist and cubist painterly expression and sculpture too that emphasises movement and multiple perspectives as well as those photographs from the late 19th century that captured facial movements on film, both on purpose and by accident. For

a discussion that connects the art of Umberto Boccioni, Etienne-Jules Marey and Eadweard Muybridge to Deleuze-Guattarian thinking of movement and relation see Manning (2009, 83–111, 127–131).

5 See Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 174): "One never deterritorializes alone: There are always at least two terms…"

6 In Nevado's use, the verb 'to struggle' should not be understood only in the framework of artistic creation but also in terms of Marxist class struggle: she has a working class background and a politically aware family that took part in the demonstrations against Franco in Nevado's childhood, and later, for example when I visited them in March 2003 during Nevado's Madrid exhibition, in the demonstrations against the U.S. forces and the Iraq war. Thus, in her vocabulary struggling connects to the political and institutional critique, and more widely to expressing one's opinion: "It's probably about being Spanish, but it's about my family too. My dad has always been very political in the sense that you have to struggle for... I find it difficult just to adjust quietly. It is not bad, I don't mean to insult anybody. ... You don't have to shout out loud, but you don't have to be satisfied with everything there is, with everything other people kind of give you either. Oh yes, I've been battling a lot with art museums. Everywhere. In Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao..." (ARS Jan '05, c 2:25)

7 In addition, Nevado stresses that at times when she leaves her studio she is "like a workman ... dusty and all" (CAI 22 May '04, c 26) thus highlighting that doing art is not a clean job – physicality has its consequences. This coincides with Arlene Raven's (1994, 50–51) discussion of building and creating '*Womanhouse*' (1971–1972) a crucial part of one of the first feminist art programs ever taught. Raven claims that by making students build and renovate their environment for art-making they wanted students to learn that 'hard work' is not separated from creation any more than is conceptual thinking: "for Feminist Art Program workers, skills such as carpentry and window glazing became part of the creative process" (ibid, 50).

8 In fact, this evocative quotation of "hand–to–hand combat of energies" goes back to Proust via Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 321). See also Bolt (2004a, 83–84).

9 Although Massumi does not refer to Gilbert Simondon but solely to Deleuze and Guattari, it is Simondon (see e.g. 2005, 40–60) who discusses the complex relations of woodworker and his tools at great length. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 408–409); Deleuze (2004, 4). In addition, see the examples of *metallurgy* in Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 410–415) and Guattari (1995, 40–41).

10 Massumi's choice as a translator stresses this, as he does not use the noun "carpenter", but woodworker also known as a *joiner* and a *connector*! Interestingly, however, Gilbert Simondon (2005) from whom the discussion is derived writes simply about *artisans.*

11 Athleticism is the term Barbara Bolt (2010a, 267, 280) uses to describe "the confrontation with the forces in painting". To emphasise the hard work involved, she adds: "Figured this way… painting is not for the faint hearted" (ibid., 280). The term itself comes from Deleuze (2003) who uses it not so much to describe Francis Bacon's painting processes (ibid., 96–98) than the dynamics of bodies in his paintings (ibid., 12–19, 23, 33, 45).

12 For feminist philosophical criticism of mourning (and melancholia) see for example Braidotti (2002, 52–58); Colebrook (2001, 22–24).

13 When observing the opening of the Ama exhibition in February 2004, I came to note that almost every time her colleague artists approach her to comment on the works, a question of the layering technique was raised. They all seemed to be thrilled about the way in which Nevado had brought together old family photographs, food recipes et cetera in book shaped plaster and paraffin casts and how they seemed to be inseparable. The fellow artists were not satisfied to learn that Nevado had used a gel medium called "Medium" to transfer and connect images to the various materials, but required a precise explanation of the procedure. In a much telling contrast to this, the newspaper critique (by an art historian and museum employee) focused on the family album theme of the exhibition and referred extensively to the exhibition release (*Turun Sanomat* 22.2.2004, "Kaikilla on tarina" ["Everybody has a story"]). The critic Mia Tykkyläinen was disappointed about the theme as it was so common and used, and returned Nevado's application of private photos to the trend that had become popular in recent years. Whereas the critic only quickly mentions that the exhibition is interesting in terms of "handicraft" and "aesthetics", most of the critique handles the theme of family albums disconnecting it from the handling, from "the handicraft and aesthetics", and thus separating form and content.

14 "This is like a miniature painting, yesterday I got all anxious 'cause you have to be very precise, it's a bit like grammar. But you learn quite a lot when you do this!" (CAI 18 Apr '04, c 03)

15 She insisted that it was very important for her to study certain old paintings in an actual museum setting, since studying paintings from books was not enough: "it doesn't give a clear enough picture of how they were painted" (ARS 20 Jan '05, c 2:13).

6 ZIGZAGGING ART AND LIFE

1 For a summarising discussion of zigzagging, the lightning, the lightning's strike and its various references in Deleuze and Deleuze-Guattari from *Nietzsche and Philosophy* via *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* to *Cinema 1*, see Stivale (2006, 25–33). Moreover, see Pasi Väliaho's (2010, 149–156) discussion of the *lightning-image* (see also Väliaho 2008, 72–94).

2 Nevado says: "An artist is almost like an inventor … she needs professional help, I don't know if it's good or bad, but in any case, you cannot put everything in practice by yourself—I want to be precise, it should not be carelessly [unskilfully] done." (ARS 20 Mar '03, c 22)

3 See also: "We were thinking what is happening now within painting and came to a conclusion that the only location/situation where you can interpret things outside the canvas is the installation form. So that the material would be different, and the space would have to be taken into account. … Painting is not tied to a canvas anymore. I don't mean that it wouldn't be enough on canvas; a good painting is enough even though it would be on canvas. But it is not possible to stretch that a great deal, it is just a rather stiff, quadrangle shaped piece [of canvas after all]." (WAM AMA 15–20 Dec '03, c 15)

INTRODUCTION TO PART III

1 In *Chaosmosis: Towards an Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm,* Félix Guattari (1995, 46–48) brings up the animist West African tradition of Legba to promote the heterogeneous registers of object-processes considered commonsensically as only social. He lists that in West Africa Legba—a blobbing sort of ritual sculpture formed of muck and often placed at the entrance of a village or of a house, has at the same time social and symbolic value and its own ontological existence. Guattari gives Legba as an example of how in archaic, primitive societies 'things' were thought to dwell in various registers simultaneously: affective, symbolic, godly, earthly. What Guattari does not say is that a crucial element of Legba is its monstrous mouth into which offerings are often poured to communicate with it. Again, it is the open mouth that serves as passage in entering into direct relation.

2 See e.g. chapter 7 "Percept, Affect, and Concept" in *What Is Philosophy*? (1994, 163–200) in which Deleuze and Guattari claim that "we paint, sculpt, compose and write with sensations"; Ronald Bogue's *Deleuze on Music, Painting and the Arts*"(2003) with its all-inclusive title; Elizabeth Grosz's (2008) *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth* that discusses architecture, music as well as painting; Guattari's *Chaosmosis* (1995, 49–50, 90–93), which considers sensation as elemental to arts from performance to Gregorian chant, and from poetics of Manet and Mallarmé to blues, hip hop and all the 'underground' arts.

3 Furthermore Zepke's *Art as Abstract Machine* discusses religious art at length, see e.g. his eloquent consideration of Byzantine mosaics and Venetian painting (Zepke 2005, 128–139). Although Patricia Cox Miller's (2009) recent book *Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity*, is not written by an art scholar but by a theologian, it has proven to be useful for me in terms of religion, art and sensation (see chapters 7 and 9). Miller's book welcomes its reader in the midst of late ancient Christian practices of religions that were concerned with the agency of images, such as icons and relics. What Miller focuses on, however, are not direct relations themselves, but their literary descriptions, a visual poetics that according to her was needed to encounter 'things' in their full force.

4 See Elena del Rio's (2008) book *Deleuze and the Cinemas of Performance: Powers of Affection.* The way del Rio (ibid., 4) introduces her approach comes close to my aims: "*Powers of Affection* draws attention to the affective intensity of bodies … for other bodies inside and outside a film. … I am concerned with the performative dimensions of bodies in cinema (and of the cinematic image itself as a body) at the ontological level: bodies as doers, generators, producers, performers of worlds, of sensations and affects that bear no mimetic or analogical ties to an external or transcendental reality."

5 The concept of *zoe* arrives to Braidotti (2006, 36–42) via the Spinozism of Deleuze and Guattari and their references to the thought of Simondon, and also via Irigaray.

6 This continental interpretation of Foucault is supported by Deleuze. However, many influential Anglo-American commentators of Foucault have paid much less attention to this positive, affirmative side of his philosophy, and consequently Foucault is more known for his work on disciplined bodies. According to Rosi Braidotti (2002), Judith Butler's influential understanding of

the body falls into this category: "Butler emphasizes performances, but chooses to play the compulsion to repeat back on to the refrain of negativity and bad consciences" (ibid., 52), thus, after all, hers is "a rather static understanding of the materiality of the embodied subject: matter has neither memory nor a dynamic force of its own, certainly none outside a symbolic [realm] that is ruled by lack and negativity" (ibid., 56).

7 Cf. Deleuze (1988, 128): "Any organization that comes from above and refers to a transcendence, be it a hidden one, can be called a theological plan..."

7 THE GRIMACING MOUTH

1 It might be possible to interpret the expression of translating and ingesting life into art as a romantic idea of sublimation. However, whereas sublimation entails transcendence, an act of ingestion does not try to go beyond anything, and least beyond material and bodily processes of everyday life. Rather transformation happens in terms of immanence and at the plane of immanence where bodies meet and transform each other. Then, processes of everyday life are not destroyed in the name of art; rather they are channelled into a different affective form that is not private or subjective.

2 However, it must be emphasised that in the Finnish language, in which Nevado uttered, the verb 'to ingest' does not have a similar figurative use as in English; it might have figurative tendencies but it is not commonly used in such a sense.

3 Nevado worked with these themes especially in her MAD, TOP, AMA, WAM and ARS exhibitions. While the MADrid exhibition put the emphasis on motherhood by portraying Nevado's daughters and the TOPelius exhibition continued with the theme, the AMA exhibition changed the focus towards family albums. The WAM and ARS ones had their focus more clearly on religion, and family was no longer at issue in itself; it formed a kind of background that in the first place provided Nevado with the theme of religion.

4 Made in Nevado's country of residence for over the last ten years, Finland, the installation was exhibited in trans-cultural surroundings at the *Instituto Iberoamericano de Finlandia* in Nevado's childhood hometown of Madrid, which probably allowed and also called for a consideration of cross-cultural aspects.

5 Originally the installation comprised of fifteen painting-assemblages, but at the time of writing this, there were only ten pieces left for me to work with—in Nevado's practice of transformative recycling they had been made into something else; layered, covered, if not destroyed. In February 2010, when this situation came up, Nevado was not quite sure what had happened to these five works that she could not find in her storage space. She could trace one of the 'boxes' to the ARS exhibition—it was exhibited there densely covered with copies of holy cards. The destiny of four others remained a mystery: all Nevado was able to say was "I must have been dissatisfied with them, and re-used them for something else. Since that is what I usually do when I am not happy with what I have done". However, once I was done with this chapter, I got a call from Nevado saying that she would like to come for a visit—she had something she needed to bring me. When she came, she brought the missing painting-assemblages that she had found at her grandmother's place in Spain.

6 See chapters 2 (the case of the little oval painting) and 5–6 (the redecorated second-hand plates) for corresponding layering techniques enabled by the use of 'Medium'.

7 According to Elspeth Probyn (2000, 32), "beyond a model of inside and out, we are alimentary assemblages, bodies that eat with vigorous class, ethnic and gendered appetites, mouth machines that ingest and regurgitate, articulating what we are, what we eat and what eats us". See also Probyn (2004).

8 The origin of this expression is in Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, 65) understanding that writing "flushes with the real".

9 This formulation is meant to emphasise the bodily quality of remembering, as the word member has its origin in the physicality of the body referring to a limb.

10 To be exact, Deleuze and Guattari (1994, 164–165) claim that *artists* create affects and that their biggest effort is to make these works of art stand on their own. Elsewhere, as was suggested in *Machinic Collaborations* they, however, emphasise that the artist is only a component in the makings of a painting or a writing machine.

11 This conceptual proposition is inspired by Braidotti's understanding of molecular memory as a-signifying memory.

12 Here Grosz is not writing about Nevado's work, but refers to Deleuze and Guattari's (1994, 78, 178) discussion of Vincent van Gogh's 'yellow' paintings. The rich, deeply warm and vital yellow colour shared by the Van Gogh painting and Nevado's *D2I* would be an interesting topic of further research. Could it be claimed that this colour is something comparable to Giotto's blue tackled in Julia Kristeva's (1980) essay "Giotto's Joy?" In this essay, Kristeva addresses the triple register of the physical, the psychic and the social, and sees '*jouissance*' escaping and disrupting the laws and codes of the ideological visual narrative of the Christian iconography of thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries (see Barrett 2010, 16). In Kristeva (1980, 231), Giotto's experimentations with this specific blue contests any possibility for realism. Barbara Bolt (2010c, 65–66) has made an intriguing further suggestion: maybe what Kristeva is proposing could be termed *new material realism* that by means of material sensation disturbs realism but does not deny it altogether.

13 A citation from Brian Massumi's *Parables for the Virtual* (2002b, 217) explicates my choice of words here: "Reserve the term 'emotion' for the personalised content, and *affect* for continuation. Emotion is contextual. Affect is situational: eventfully ingressive to context. Serially so: affect is trans-situational."

14 It is hard to say, "where in fact the material ends and sensation begins" (Deleuze & Guattari 1994, 166).

15 The case would be much less complicated if there were only one tooth in the box, a tooth that could be easily identified as D2I. But as there is no such tooth, the viewer unavoidably faces a situation where she cannot know if any of the teeth is actually the D2I.

16 Cf. Hongisto's (2011) Deleuze-Guattarian re-conceptualisation of documentary film beyond the task of merely documenting the actual.

17 A timely example of this would be a holy card containing a tiny piece of cloth relic from the quite recently (1987) canonised St. Giuseppe Moscati's (1880–1927) doctor's gown. Giuseppe Moscati was a medical doctor whose 'cult' is still

active today: the marble statue set up at his grave in the church of Gesú Nuovo in Naples, Italy is visited daily by hundreds of people seeking cure, healing and blessing.

18 Moreover, the understanding of art provided by the church might be considered especially influential since it is the church of all the institutions that has in different ways introduced art to the masses throughout its history, beginning from early Christian symbolism. The church has been a leading patron for art for centuries, and it has also provided access to its acquisitions. Of course, churches have not always been as open to the public as they are today; many churches that attract a lot of visitors and tourists have actually served a rather closed community earlier.

19 Here, the Holy Communion adheres to the theme of the mouth, and even to ingestion, I began this section with, in the end bringing together artistic creation, (Catholic) religion—and transcorporeality.

20 See Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 81) who claim that even though it is words that turn bread and wine into the flesh and blood of Christ in the act of incorporeal transformation [*transubstantiation*], the relation is anyhow direct: "The incorporeal transformation is recognizable by its instantaneousness, its immediacy, by the simultaneity of the statement expressing the transformation and the effect the transformation produces... Eating bread and drinking wine are interminglings of the bodies; communing with Christ is also an intermingling of bodies, properly spiritual bodies that are no less 'real' for being spiritual."

21 This question comes directly from Martin Luther's (1530) *The Large Catechism*: "How can bread and wine forgive sins or strengthen faith? Although they hear and know that we do not say this of bread and wine, because in itself bread is bread, but of such bread and wine as is the body and blood of Christ, and has the words attached to it. That, we say, is verily the treasure, and nothing else, through which such forgiveness is obtained. Now the only way in which it is conveyed and appropriated to us is in the words (Given and shed for you). For herein you have both truths, that it is the body and blood of Christ, and that it is yours as a treasure and gift. Now the body of Christ can never be an unfruitful, vain thing, that effects or profits nothing. Yet however great is the treasure in itself, it must be comprehended in the Word and administered to us, else we should never be able to know or seek it." The same question is tackled in the *Small Catechism* (1529). Both are available at http://www.projectwittenberg.org/ (accessed 30 April 2012). In comparison, these kinds of doubtful considerations of the corporeality of eating and drinking are alien to *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*; see the *Compendium for the CCC* (2005) at http://www.vatican.va (accessed 30 April 2012).

22 The generalisation between Protestants and Catholics is admittedly harsh, and made here only for the sake of the argument and its clarity. Both groups, of course, include and included a variety of different attitudes towards images. Whilst in the Protestant camp Calvinists condemn practically all visual representations and Lutheran Protestants favour 'textual images', that is direct visual translations of the Bible over others, in the Catholic camp Jesuits are the ones who might be most associated with affective imageries. For a reading and text oriented Lutheran Protestant understanding and an optically and affectively oriented Jesuit understanding that were born simultaneously in the first part of the 15th century see Kittler (2010, 72–88). Furthermore, for

an interesting Deleuzian discussion of Gottfried Leibniz's 16th century Jesuit understanding of transubstantiation see Mogens Laerke's (2001, 104–117) article "Deleuzian 'Becomings' and Leibnizian Transsubstantiation".

23 As was brought up in the introduction, Bolt's (2004a, 2006) studies serve here as 'counter examples' that approach affectivity and sensation through the material spirituality of Australian indigenous art (aboriginal art). However, there are some interesting studies of Christianity within art history that might be considered materialist in their own ways. For a recent methodological opening see e.g. David Morgan's (2010) essay "The Material Culture of Lived Religion: Visuality and Embodiment" in which he argues that "[b]ecause embodiment and materiality comprise lived religion and therefore make sensation and feeling the medium of belief, we may regard *aesthetics* as the primary framework for studying religion." Crucially, Morgan (ibid.) sees aesthetics as a study of ways of feeling, forms of sensation, modes of perception. For specific case studies see for example Claire Farago's post-colonialist studies of in-between worlds of New Mexican Santos (2006); Elina Räsänen's (2009, 2010) phenomenologically oriented 'new-formalist' studies of medieval saint sculptures, and Kari Kotkavaara's study of 'immigrant icons' in Orthodox Religion (1999). See also Michael Yonan (2011, 1) who makes a similar kind of suggestion in his essay "Towards the fusion of art history and material culture studies": "I also recognize that certain subfields of art history have embraced material culture perspectives eagerly. Historians of ancient and medieval art in particular have for decades probed objects that fall well outside commonplace definitions of art, as have scholars interested in non-Western societies, and have long posited the medium as a fundamental component of meaning."

24 This example has come up before in connection to Nevado's practice of affirmative recycling but will now be encountered with a different emphasis.

25 It might be claimed that molecular remembering is also making a kind of comeback. Currently more than a couple of websites are offering custom-made jewellery, rings and pendants in which milk teeth are used instead of stones. See e.g. www.toothgems.co.uk (accessed 1 Nov 2011). Interestingly, the owners of *Toothgems* express that they are well-aware of the disgust that their products may convey: "Whilst the concept of this jewellery sounds *slightly creepy*, it is probably true to say that *this jewellery is much more subtle* than the other tooth jewellery we have looked at. A simple necklace is much less noticeable and much more wearable than a diamond encrusted solid gold dental grill; even if the idea of the necklace does sound *a hundred times stranger*. You can have your chosen piece of jewellery covered in precious metal or encrusted with precious stones and gems making it as precious as can be; needless to say though that it will most likely be your child's little golden tooth hanging from the piece that makes it truly priceless" (italics added).

26 Of course milk teeth replaced by permanent teeth also suggests an alimentary transformation, although this has lost its relevance during the long history of evolution. However, the assumption that meat is needed for intellectual growth held long, and milk teeth were not seen strong enough to tear meat. Relating to this, in Renaissance times teeth were used as pendants to prompt the growth of the child's own teeth (Musacchio 2005, 154)—for when the child develops teeth, and is able to eat the same kind of food as adults, there is no need for wet-nurses, so less economic expenses also.

27 Whilst the text extracts signal the first steps to the world of written language (note, first cookbooks for children are targeted for this age group precisely), the recipe also connects her to her maternal family history—it is her mothers' side great grandmother who wrote the original recipe transferred to the painting-assemblage.

28 Kirsi Saarikangas' (1997, 102–126) delicate analysis of the relationship between the mother and the son is informed by Kristeva's and Irigaray's écriture féminine.

29 In the beginning of this chapter, Nevado specified ingesting as her method of bringing everyday life into her art. Moreover, Nevado spoke of this act in more general terms by *translating* life into art. I would, however, suggest that the way in which the act of translation is usually understood does not quite work here. This is because Nevado emphasises that the act of art-making always produces something new. And the production of the new is something that is not supposed to happen in the event of translation: an idea should not be changed, made anew, but only translated. In fact, what Nevado does in her art is actually better termed as *transposition*. According to Braidotti (2006, 5) transposition (a concept that describes transformative and transversal transfers in music and genetics) "indicates an intertextual, cross-boundary or transversal transfer, in the sense of a leap from one code, field or axis into another, not merely in the quantitative mode of plural multiplications, but rather in the qualitative sense of complex multiplicities. It is not just a matter of weaving together different strands… but rather of playing positive difference as a specific term of its own."

8 THE PREACHING MOUTH

1 The song "*Kenen joukoissa seisot*" [Whom do you stand for] (1968) was composed by Kaj Chydenius and lyrics were written by Aulikki Oksanen, who also performed the song. The English translation is mine. See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TvrLV2Glvwo (accessed 30 Nov 2011).

2 These are, importantly, also questions and claims the political art and cultural theory of the following decades was to work hard and persistently with. See e.g. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay eds (1996) *Questions of Cultural Identity*; bell hooks (1992) *Black Looks: Race and Representation*; Judith Butler (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*; Shane Phelan (1989) *Identity Politics: Lesbian Feminism and the Limits of Community.*

3 Manning's (2009) inspiration for theorising *dynamic forms* comes equally from the practice of art-making (dancing, painting, writing, sewing) and from philosophy. The writers she elaborates on are, for example the surrealist sculptor Umberto Boccioni and the philosopher Alfred Whitehead. See also Massumi (2011, 40–46).

4 In fact, a French children's animated television series *Il était une fois... la vie* (Once Upon a Time... Life, 1987) with its tiny creatures doing their tasks to get it all going gives a good idea of the amount of action, or agencies, that a human body necessitates to function. But a body is not only about mechanics like this series seems to propose.

5 For the concept of incorporeal transformation see Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 80–81, 85–87, 108–109). They say: "It is as though an intense matter or a continuum of variation were freed, here in the internal tensors of language, there in the internal tensions of the content… We witness a transformation of substances and dissolution of forms, a passage to the limit or flight from the contours in favour of fluid forces, flows, air, light, and matter, such that a body or a word does not end at a precise point. We witness the incorporeal power of that intense matter, the material power of that language. A matter more immediate, more fluid, more ardent than bodies or words." (ibid., 109) See also note 20 on page 227 for the example of Eucharist, and Tiainen (2012, 97–99) for an elucidating analysis of how incorporeal transformations are involved in becoming a singer.

6 For the materiality and agency of electricity see Bennett (2010a, 28): "Electricity, or the stream of vital materialities called electrons, is always on the move, always going somewhere, though where this will be is not predictable. Electricity sometimes goes where we send it, and sometimes chooses its path on the spot, in response to the other bodies it encounters and the surprising opportunities for actions and interactions they afford."

7 This aspect was especially striking when *Sappho wants to save you* was displayed for the first time in the Turku Biennale 2005 exhibition at the Ars Nova and Aboa Vetus Museum.

8 Another example of Massumi's (2002b, 249–250) affectively contagious cavalcade is Frank Sinatra. Massumi (ibid., 250) writes: "however low-brow it might be in many standards, his singing was a bona fide artistic endeavour because it created a powerful effective new style. *The genius of his style was to personalize a composed singularity of vital movements in a way that could be collectively spread*." Needless to say, this style was intrinsically heterosexual: "Sinatra lyrically invented heterosexuality as a popular cultural virus" (ibid.). (Cf. "He Stuttered", Deleuze 1994a)

9 In a way, this is a point Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 228) make of the unfortunate and fatal popularity of fascism: "[a]s we have seen, microfascisms have a specificity of their own that can crystallize into a macrofascism, but may also float along the supple line on their own account and suffuse every little cell." A-signifying micromovements are not something inherently positive. They can be taken advantage of; there is danger and great risk, but great possibilities too.

10 Both of these examples—the parallel bodies—were introduced in Shannon Roszell's (2009) unpublished paper "The female protesting body" presented at *Inter-auto-prese-turbance-docu-formativity* Symposium at Theatre Academy in Helsinki, 4 June 2009.

11 For information about the Greenham women see the well-maintained web archive including statements, pictures, videos and a songbook at http://www.guardian.co.uk/yourgreenham (accessed 20 Nov 2011).

12 In addition to their passive bodily actions Greenham women went to the civil court in the U.S. Their case was known as Greenham women against Ronald Reagan. Despite their non-violent tactics several of the women got arrested and some of them were even imprisoned because of illegal acts such as the passive-blockades. See the video at http://www.guardian.co.uk/yourgreenham/video/page/0,,2075900,00.html (accessed 20 Nov 2011).

13 For this and other personal statements by the Greenham women, see the video *A Day in A Life* at http://www.guardian.co.uk/yourgreenham/video/page/0,,2071833,00.html (accessed 20 Nov 2011).

14 According to Radicalesbians (1970), "Those sex roles dehumanise women by defining us as a supportive/serving caste in relation to the master caste of men, and emotionally cripple men by demanding that they be alienated from their own bodies and emotions in order to perform their economic/political/military functions effectively."

15 For Bergson's influence on this part of Deleuzian thinking see O'Sullivan (2009, 251): "We might also understand these moments or rupturing events in Bergsonian terms as opening further the gap between stimulus and response that define us as human... This is to identify a certain slowness, even stillness, which might work against the incessant speed of contemporary life. ... It is through this gap that we become creative rather than reactive creatures." See also Bergson (1991, 101–2).

16 For a concept and practice that relates to passive time see 'dreamtime' central to the art and culture of Australian indigenous people. Both Barbara Bolt's (2006, 57–63) essay "Rhythm and the Performative Power of the Index" and Erin Manning's (2009, 157–161, 165–168, 181–183) chapter "Relationscapes: How Contemporary Aboriginal Art Moves beyond the Map" present dreamtime as a challenge for Western art theories of representation.

17 In his essay that dissolves the binary of institutional critique and Deleuze-Guattarian understanding of art as sensation, Stephen Zepke (2010, 70) brings up the 'revolutionary' powers of a procession. He claims that orderly procession can turn into an anarchic autopoiesis when the collective body of the procession begins to work on its own. Zepke's point of reference is Anita Fricek's painting *Zéro de conduite 1933* (2005) that transforms a dormitory's disciplinary architecture into a chaotic, riotic body without organs. Fricek composes her paintings by transforming photographic images of the past into unknown possible futures.

18 In a similar manner, the room in which the installation was set up should not be taken as a form framing the content of the work: in the beginning of this chapter I suggested that the portraits filled the exhibition room at the Ars Nova museum quite completely creating a dense atmosphere. However, the narrowness of the room should not be understood as a premium factor in the creation of the dense atmosphere. In a way, it was the *moving* body of the installation that made the room narrow. This is to say that both contributed to the felt narrowness. For the complex relations of the body and the room, see Manning (2009, 15–18): "The room becomes *configuring* as the body *recomposes*. … The body-room stratum is therefore neither object nor form, but an infinite potential for recombination. … In a space-time of continuous orientation, not only bodies metamorphose, but so does the space created by the incessant re-orientation of the malleable co-ordinates of the stagecraft. Space and body are in continuous shifting dialogue."

19 Here the difference between *becoming a minority* and the Deleuze-Guattarian conception of *becoming-minoritarian* is crucial. Whereas *becoming a minority* is always something that takes place in relation to a majority, becoming-minoritarian is rather a self-differing, differentiating process that is not produced against the majority. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 471) explain: "The power of the minoritarian is not measured by their capacity to enter and make

themselves felt within the majority system, nor even to reverse the necessarily tautological criterion for majority, but to bring to bear the force of non-denumerable sets, however small they may be, against the denumerable sets, even if they are infinite, reversed, changed, even if they imply new axioms, or beyond that a new axiomatic."

20 See also Deleuze's (2004, 153–160) "Nineteenth Series of Humor" in *The Logic of Sense*; Robert Garnett's (2010) article "Abstract Humour, Humorous Abstraction" in *Deleuze and Contemporary Art.*

21 Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 213) say: "In short everything is political, but every politics is simultaneously *a* macropolitics and *a* micropolitics. ... If we consider the great binary aggregates such as sexes or classes, it is evident that they cross over into molecular assemblages of different nature, and that there is a double reciprocal dependency between them."

9 THE SCREAMING MOUTH

1 Also, Hietanen felt strongly discouraged because her gallerist did not approve of the project (SK 16 May '03). I have tackled this aspect in earlier versions of this chapter delivered as papers in Visual Cultures – Finnish National Summer School in Art History (2002) and in *Flesh Made Text* Conference in Thessaloniki (2003) a revised version of which was published as "Eye, Agency and Bodily Becomings: Processing Breast Cancer in and through Images" (2009).

2 In the summer of 2007 Hietanen was not able to properly participate in the three art shows she was invited to because of the risk of losing her pension. Instead of putting their light installations on display Hietanen and her husband Jaakko Niemelä addressed the inequality of the Finnish social security system by replacing the light works with a simple piece of paper announcing: "This is not a work of art". To read more about this project see Helena Sederholm's (2008, 82–89) article "Bright Noise – From Light Sculpture to Political Activism".

3 Gustavo Chirolla Ospina's (2010, 15–33) article "Politics of The Scream in a Threnody" that opens Stephen Zepke's and Simon O'Sullivan's *Deleuze and Contemporary Art* discusses political art that does not fall into the trap of just sensationalistically visualising horrifying events but evokes politics in terms of bodily sensations similar to Hietanen's *Sketches*. According to Chirolla Ospina (ibid., 23), in Clemencia Echeverri's art "the scream is not political because it is discursive, but because it is the signature of the body, it is a speech act signed by the depths of the body". In Zepke and O'Sullivan's book, political art gets a new meaning; politics of art lies in its materiality and affectivity.

4 Whilst Braidotti surely is a Deleuzian philosopher, here her conceptual work differs at times from that of Deleuze's. In Deleuze (2003, xiv–xv), figuration equals representation and the concepts of the Figure and the figural are freed from the laws of representation. Braidotti, for her part, makes it clear that figuration is not a representational concept.

5 See also Marilyn Yalom's (1997, 205–240) proposition that breasts can be viewed in terms of life and death. In medical history, she argues, they are seen both as life-givers and life-destroyers, in reference to lactation and breast cancer.

The hollow that the cutaway breast has left behind could then be understood as a constant reminder of death, not just because it is marked by disease, but because it cannot fulfil its task as a provider of life. Gender roles, however, are at play here in the assumption that specifically women are to be the providers of life as well.

6 Hietanen's breakthrough as an artist owes largely to her first light installation *Techno Lace* (1996) in which she 'crocheted' optic fibre following a traditional pattern (see Sederholm 2008, 82–84); for a feminist analyses of *Techno Lace* see Kontturi (2006, 39–40, 114–116, 155–158).

7 Although the hands of God or Christ appear repeatedly in Christian art throughout the centuries, they do so principally as part of compositions, not as autonomous entities. In contemporary visual culture Christian kitsch represent the hands again and again in the form of plastic figurines and posters inspired by the famous ceiling fresco of the Sistine chapel in Rome by Michelangelo Buonarroti. Perhaps even more globally, the Nokia mobile phone opening visuals play on the same theme.

8 In fact, it could be described as a benevolent and healing eye—a definition given by Jo Spence (1995, 181) to the caring eye of a photo therapist.

9 The same quietly approving gaze can be encountered in the photograph in which Hietanen lies on the floor—I will get to this image at the end of discussing this panel. The connection between Hietanen and the viewer is accentuated by the viewing eye that is almost at the same level with the female body, instead of looking down at it in a controlling manner. This composition is comparable to a picture in Spence's analysis in which a woman in a prone position undergoes alternative Chinese medical treatment (Spence 1995, 117). Both Spence (ibid., 97, 116–121, see also 98–110)—who curated the exhibition in which the photo was displayed—and Jackie Stacey (1997, 207–210) have suggested that this particular non-hierarchical setting challenges the medical expert gaze. The controversy between the gaze and the body emerges only when the gaze is separated from the body, when the gaze looks down on the body. The gaze as a part of the bodily dynamic, directly involved in the experiences of breast cancer, solves the controversy. In Hietanen's *Sketches*, the camera is not an extension of the body; it is interwoven with the experiences of the body. It is the transformative gaze—or rather the immanent eye that partakes in the transformation of the body.

10 In this claim one of Bolt's sources of inspiration is Heidegger's essay "The Question Concerning Technology". However, contra Heidegger's idea of transfiguration as a process of illumination or immaterialisation, she argues that transfiguration occurs through direct relation with matter. In other words, matter is productive (Bolt 2004a, 145–146).

A FOLLOW-UP: THREE THESES FOR MOLECULAR ART HISTORY

1 In the autumn of 2010, I curated an exhibition titled *Zigzagging from Art to Theory – And Back* (Titanik Gallery, Turku, 20 Oct–14 Nov 2010) that put on display my conceptual creations in relation to the art processes dealt with in this study. Working on the exhibition helped in formulating the central ideas of the research project. The theses of ontology, ethics and politics are, hence, actualisations of "art at work".

2 Sara Ahmed's discussion of following and orientation in *Queer Phenomenology: Objects, Orientations, Others* (2006) is informed by phenomenology, most importantly by Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Ahmed is interested in how bodies direct themselves in the world and how the directions taken are bound to our interrelations with objects we either turn towards or from. Objects, people and images are "orientation devices" (ibid., 2). Ahmed focuses on the moments of rupture in familiar spatio-bodily orientations and outlines these as queer moments. She notes that for Merleau-Ponty, these queer cuts are ones to be straightened, and thus proceeds to give straight sexuality a new meaning: in her phenomenological reading heterosexuality is based on straight orientations on familiar lines (Ahmed 2006, 65–67, 106).

FIELD MATERIAL

SUSANA NEVADO CARBAJO (born 1967)
www.susananevado.com

MAD	Group Exhibition *Azafrán* [Saffron] at the Finnish Cultural Institute in Madrid, Spain, 13–31 Mar 2003
MAD-pre	"Before Madrid" meeting at Nevado's studio, 7 Mar 2003
MAD-op	Group exhibition opening at the Finnish Cultural Institute in Madrid, Spain, 13 Mar 2003
MAD-uni	Susana Nevado's lecture at the Universidad Complutence de Madrid, Facultad de Bellas Artes, 14 Mar 2003
MAD-eva	Evaluation discussion in Turku after the Madrid exhibition, 12 Apr 2003
MAD-dia	Discussion with Nevado's friend Diana concerning the installation *D2I* displayed in the MAD exhibition, 19 Jun 2009
TOP-op	Private exhibition opening at the Gallery Sirkka-Liisa Topelius, Helsinki, 27 May 2003
WAM	*60°27'06" 22°16'38"* Turun Taiteilijaseuran 80-vuotisjuhlanäyttely at Wäinö Aaltonen Museum (Turku City Art Museum), 23 Jan–7 Mar 2004
	Process documentation Visits to Nevado's studio, MD-recordings: WAM-AMA Aug '03 WAM-AMA Dec 15–20 '03 WAM-AMA Jan '04
WAM-int	Nevado's interview in the Exhibition Catalogue
AMA	Private exhibition *Family album* [Perhealbumi] at the Ama Gallery Turku, 6–29 Feb 2004
	Process documentation Visits to Nevado's studio, MD-recordings: WAM-AMA 5 Sep '03 WAM-AMA 15–20 Dec '03 WAM-AMA Jan '04 AMA 1 Feb '04
AMA-op	Exhibition opening, 5 Feb '04

TIT	Group exhibition *Room to Move* at Titanik Gallery, Turku, 20 Aug–12 Sep 2004
	Process documentation Visits to Nevado's studio, MD-recordings: TIT 22 Mat '04 TIT 6 Jun '04 TIT Aug 1 '04 TIT Aug 2 '04
CAI	*On the Other Side* [Toista puolta] (with Leonardo Nieva) May–June 2004 at the Gallery of International Cultural Centre Caisa (City of Helsinki, Cultural office)
	Process documentation Visits to Nevado's studio, MD-recordings: CAI 4 Apr '04 CAI 11 Apr '04 CAI 18 Apr '04 CAI 22 May '04
CAI-vid	Videotaped TV-program about the Caisa exhibition
ARS	Turku Biennale exhibition *Holy and Unholy* at the Ars Nova & Aboa Vetus Museum of Art, 7 May–21 August 2005.
	Process documentation Visits to Nevado's studio, MD-recordings: ARS 24 Oct' 04 ARS 5 Dec '04 ARS 15–20 Dec '04 ARS 21 Jan '05 ARS 6 Mar '05 ARS 23 Mar '05 ARS 16 Jun '05
ARS-op	Exhibition opening
ARS-art	Susana Nevado, guided tour of the exhibition, May '05
ARS-fn	My field notes after a studio meeting, 23 Jan '05

HELENA HIETANEN (born 1963)

Heaven Machine (with Jaakko Niemelä) light installation, size variable, 2005
at the *Light Treatment* group exhibition at Wäinö Aaltonen Museum of Art / Turku City Art Museum, 27 November 2005–30 January 2006.

HM MD-recording of the artist's talk event at WAM, 27 Jan '06

Sketches, unexhibited work in progress, photographs taken by Eva Persson (1999–)

SK Hietanen 16 May '02, a recorded conversation at Hietanen's studio, Helsinki
E-mail interview 22 May '02 [6 pages]
Hietanen's e-mail comments to Kontturi's essay, 26 Aug '03 [17 pages]

MARJUKKA IRNI (née Nissi 1971)

Sappho wants to save you -project 2006–2010
Demonstration march & preaching event, a community art project organised with the Women's Studies departments at Åbo Akademi University and at the University of Turku, May 2006.

Installation exhibited at the Turku Biennale exhibition 2007 at Ars Nova & Aboa Vetus museum, Turku and at *Zigzagging from Art to Theory – and Back* -group exhibition (curated by Katve-Kaisa Kontturi) in Titanik Gallery, Turku, 20 October–14 November 2010.

SWSY-anon Discussion with an anonymous participant of Sappho March, 20 Nov '09

SWSY-info Information sheet about *Sappho wants to save you* installation. Text: Marjukka Nissi. Images: Taina Erävaara, [1 page]

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