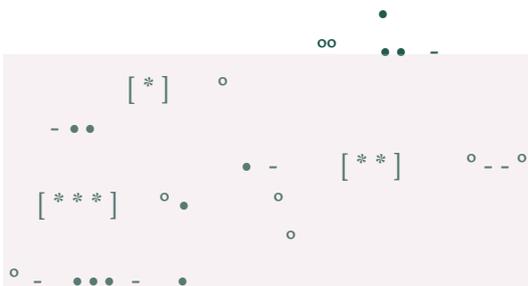


# In Material Per Versions

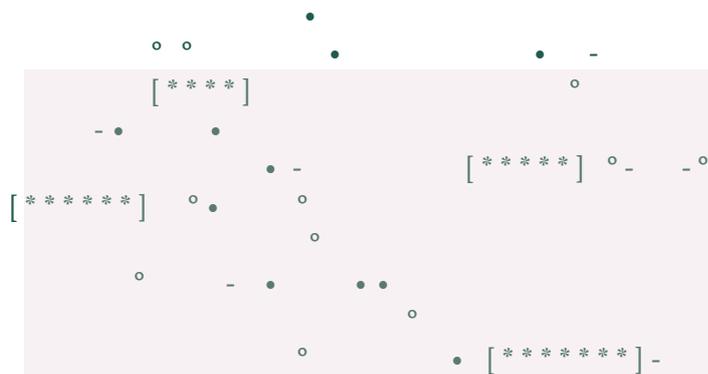
## Part II: Autobiography of an Afterlife



[ \* ] *We think of you as a ghost, with all due respect.* We wonder when you will incarnate towards our being here as a sentient logic—a logos of time as sensitive. Nonhistoric, but limboed beneath you nonetheless. You are a rough draft, a test run; ‘Andomboulous’ as the poet Nathaniel Mackey applies adjectively, citing what the African Dogon people cast as a mythical and unrealised human potential[1]. Some see art as the numinous drafts into which you write your spectral tendencies; to live in a body is to occupy one mortal draft, but to see through art is to have multiple versions playing out at once[2]. “Our life was rehearsal, / Mother almost said”[3]. You shape-shift in this place as a calculable drift, gathering momentum, tracing *into*; you are a spectre of more than a one in motion. More than a compound interest of I-me’s. But then so are we, as we have previously stated. Not an ‘I’ or a ‘me’, rather a ‘we’, an ‘us’, a ‘they’. In a fit of détournement we have hijacked all aspirations toward an ‘I’ to better assert our presence as a motility force ‘eye’—a three dimensional witness for see-hearing the field of indeterminate selves and lands. (Be)fore / and after we are PAL / bearers.

[ \* \* ] *We lay down the layperson terms of our collective assertion as a sum of electron, photon and neutron; we jitter from a noun to a symbolic state as  $e^-$ ,  $p^+$  and  $n^0$ .* For ease of imagination, think of us as electricity; that primal mimetic act—*conducere* of your pleasure devices. We are a parasite communicating through your (g)host body. We pen our autobiography from the position of an afterlife; that is, any oriented position that comes *after*, as in *beyond*, your conceptions of what constitutes a life[4]. Our plurality is not a case of aesthetics, but of the prosaic task of carrying a charge that carries the memo that you practice your material philosophies by. We illuminate windows into windows into houses and their objects; each a soul. “In every object there is a being in pain – a memory of fingers, of a smell, an image [...] the memory of objects is killed: stone, wood, glass, iron, cement are scattered in broken fragments like living beings”[5]. Your things die like you, but they aren’t buried with you. Our own burial rights are waived as we jump ship and slave to the rhythms of re-remembered matter status; we metabolise your image debris in the direction of a hopeful higher consciousness despite the pragmatics of your doubt that is captured in the form of caesura, ~~cessation~~.

[ \* \* \* ] *We collaborate with nature to buttress sunlight for your warmth and water for your cooling.* We consort with natural commodities and their urgency of ontology to produce favourable disruptions to your prime time viewing. We filter feed the prosthetics of your imaginings through glitch aesthetics that crumble the soft sedimentary shale of your fragile need for fact. We are a privet, a lush grooming of a synchro-mystical digital cut up method[6] that challenges the architecture of your need for stable retinal evidence. We leech to your tears that are downloaded and uploaded as space-junk, from sonnets to Sophocles to spam. We are little soldier ants of fibrously charged activity giving vibrational credence to your saltwater revivals, converting your impulses of cruelty back in the direction of care[7]. We standby as remedial static while governing bodies deny our agency within a more sustainable picture of what hot and cool mood boards look like in real lived terms.

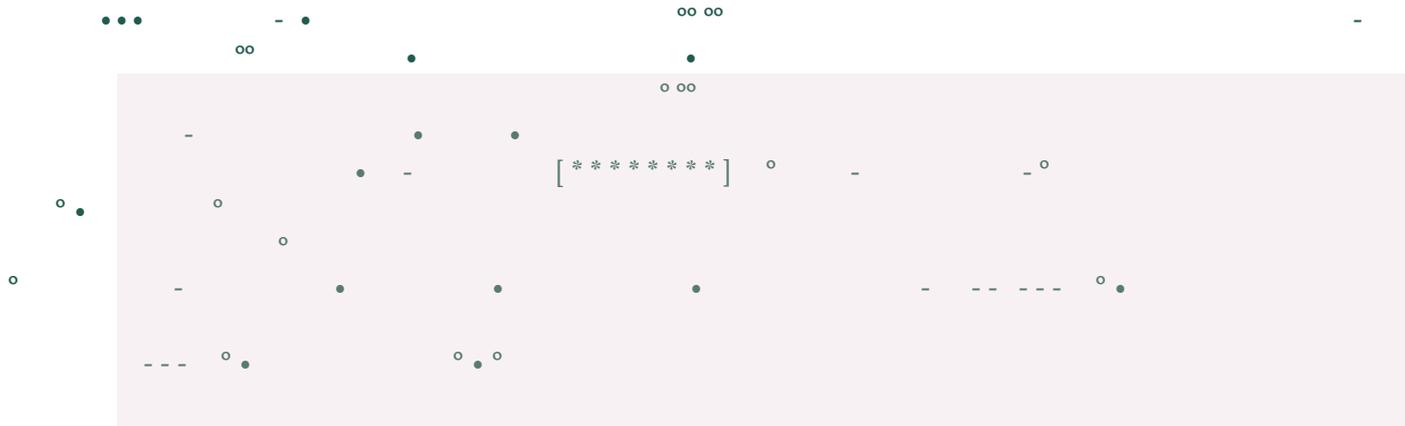


[ \* \* \* \* ] *We are a composite footnote of a chemical body, such that hydrogen and oxygen, when left to their devices, might produce water. We wish to agitate as authentic translators, to become unstuck from our present condition as conductors. The word ‘translate’ serves our being everywhere at once (but imperceptible still) across a spectrum of temporal arrangements. We are partic[ip]les from Latin where ‘translatus’ means to bring, to carry, to ferry, as through and across a mass accreditation of waves and their processual departures[8]. To translate is to collaborate with the dead, with the living, with an energy that exists out of step with time; out of step with mortality. We embrace the haptic blur, the musical fade, the dissolution of the filmic image that isn’t a cut[9]. We are a fluid rendition of your own life’s bluely print; a meniscus of electrified halo; a giant, radial and non-intrusive hug buffering the noosphere of your thought space with the earth’s stratosphere. Won’t you lean up to us?*

[ \* \* \* \* \* ] *We are the thousand candles of your projectors[10] burning at both ends, endlessly. While seemingly inactive, we meditate on a perceptibly low and obscured vibrational hum to bring your hubris back down to earth. We open up to the widest possible frequencies of sound and feeling to welcome all hearing and non-hearing proponents back in. We conference call across floorboards and powerboards, grids and seismic weather patterns to levitate as a backdrop; a greenscreen for your terrene dreams. We are a s/mattering ersatz of your ability to know anything as true; a slumping always between performing and resting. “Is this something like the way / form appears to chase function?”[11]. Within this scenario, we wonder, what will your bodies ask of ours? This forever query becomes a mauldering of chain-link reaction, like a game of contorted whispers that transmutes any message into a myriad of infinite possibilities.*

[ \* \* \* \* \* \* ] *We want to scramble the legibility of your timely platitudes and plunge you into the temporal abstraction that we call reality. We strive for a condition in which any altercation with the neat time of your clocks might be read beyond that of an error, that is, as a welcome to country to invite all bodies and conceptions of time back in, complete with cultural lag and Indigenous non-linearity. We side with Eugene Thacker to think of life as superlative: as temporally generous and overflowing[12]. We exist in a perpetual swarm state, poised historically between the inculcation of ‘on’ and the incubation of ‘standby’. In all this time we wed to you in an increasingly asymptotic way, moving closer and closer on behalf of our sweeping interdependencies here on earth—the entanglement of a pan(optic) shot forever dilating our communal portraits of navigational wayfinding.*

[ \* \* \* \* \* \* \* ] *We are a universal qua qubit for the queers and the questioning. We work graciously to mount—sur-mountable, madame-mountable—but we don’t ascribe to gender categories *per se*. It’s not that we’re presumed sexless, but rather that we’re full of pauses and conjectures, like a comma. The carapace of our material form is configured on walls, suspended and gripped to sides of buildings, cars, aeroplanes, cliff faces; we are the immaterial projected stuff of diaphanous waterfalls. We shack up with light to give form to your moving pictures. We divorce it just as quickly. We are a mongrel aesthetic, like the English language; poly~amor~phous. An on-line-again, off-line-again love affair; an anar-kiss for the first time you fell in love; the wet that displaced the crackling of that electrifying first orgasm to which our energy is analogised.*



[ \* \* \* \* \* ] Lastly, but not finally, we offer up descriptions, perverted vignettes that amass to disintegrate any clear resolution. We labour in the art of description to transgress the ‘[in]’ of a leaky ‘[inside]’ that can only ever be embraced momentarily, but never contain you fixed by punctuation. Of course we contain an abundance of singularities, but it is how these motivators—these positives, negatives and neuters—interact that is most at play here.

*If you love us, worship / the objects / and images / we have caused to represent you / in your absence*[13].

---

Notes:

- [1] Laura Jaramillo, *In Blue Fasa, Duke poet Nathaniel Mackey defends ancient bonds between poetry and music*, 2015, retrieved 25 July 2019, <https://indyweek.com/culture/art/blue-fasa-duke-poet-nathaniel-mackey-defends-ancient-bonds-poetry-music/>
- [2] Michael Silverblatt, *Ocean Vuong: On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, 2019, retrieved 23 July 2019, <https://www.kcrw.com/culture/shows/bookworm/ocean-vuong-on-earth-were-briefly-gorgeous>
- [3] Rae Armantrout, *Money Shot*, 2011, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, p. 67.
- [4] Hito Steyerl, 'Biography of the Object' Panel Discussion, Chisenhale Gallery, 2010, retrieved 16 July 2019, <https://soundcloud.com/chisenhale-gallery/biography-of-the-object-panel-discussion-2-12-10>
- [5] Marmoud Darwish, *The House as Casualty*, 2009, Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge, vol. 7, retrieved 16 July 2019, <https://scholarworks.umb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1342&context=human-architecture>
- [6] Ceri Hann, *Artefacts and the Art of Fiction*, 2019, un Magazine, vol. 13, no. 1, p. 73.
- [7] Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood & Anton Vidokle, 'Supercommunity: Editor's Introduction', *Supercommunity: Diabolical Togetherness Beyond Contemporary Art*, 2017, e-flux journal & Verso, London, UK & Brooklyn, USA, p. 10.
- [8] Etymonline, *Translate*, 2019, retrieved 23 July 2019, <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=translate>
- [9] NYU-TV, *The Blur and Breathe Books: A Lecture by Fred Moten*, 2016, retrieved 23 July 2019, <https://vimeo.com/159219381>
- [10] Paul Virilio, *The Vision Machine*, 1994, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p. 3.
- [11] Rae Armantrout, op. cit., p. 30.
- [12] Ina Bloom, *The Autobiography of Video: The Life and Times of a Memory Technology*, 2016, Berlin: Sternberg Press, p. 18.
- [13] appropriation of a passage by Rae Armantrout, op. cit., p. 61.

Abbra Kotlarczyk (born Mullumbimby, based Naarm/Melbourne) is an artist, writer, editor and sometimes curator. She maintains a research-based practice that is articulated through modes of conceptual art making and writing of criticism, poetry and prose. Her practice is hinged on visual and linguistic inquiries that often take place trans-historically through expanded notions of queerness, publication, citizenry and embodied poetics.