

# The Adjacent Possible – I

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## Against structure because of movement: A life in the gap

A text by Mayra Morales in conversation with Marx Ruiz-Wilson

\*\*\* Not for or as a counterargument —more as a matter of action \*\*\*  
Ruiz-Wilson

This text is an improvisation of thought around the art exhibition *The Adjacent Possible – I* which *vernissage* takes place on July 8<sup>th</sup>, assembled by self-appointed curator Marx Ruiz-Wilson, in a temporary made-up gallery, at the basement of the curator and his partner's flat and indirectly or directly, the basement of many included neighbours. Montreal, 2017.

Small disclaimer: Uff! This is a text that went out of control! Hehehe. I hope it works. As much of what I attempt to write, it took me by surprise and it took its own way. Mostly and monstrously because I approach writing the way I would approach a work of art, as a creative act. Probably this words work to read this piece? Anyway, I hope this text makes justice to the project of *The Adjacent Possible – I* with which it writes and to the conversations and thoughts around it. And as with art, perhaps it is not about to like it or not but about giving it time. This is my way of making cushions for the reader and for the text. Hahahha. Ok. Here it goes!

Without trying to go straight to the point. Because what's the point in doing that? Because why would we? How else to create a feeling of what's moving? Rather than skipping things that inevitably are around and pretending they're not there. Bugging. More than raising a concrete point and instead of trying to say something specific, this text oscillates into creating a feeling of something that still remains with a bit of vagueness. It does this in the fashion of attempts. As those attempts to grasp with our fingertips those dim edges of a dream that are already leaving us. For those of us who dream. For those of us whom don't dream, picture yourself grasping an edge of a thought with the tip of your tongue the way you would an ice cream which flavour you kind of know and you kind of don't know, both at the same time. Something like that. Like when that that time in Australia when we came up with the "sit on two thoughts at the same time" phrase, remember? (Benveniste et al).

Depending on your tastes as a reader, you are invited to read beginning to end, or to choose some loose fragments or to read one of the many attempts below. I'll stick to seven attempts in honour to my cat that only came with seven lives instead of nine. You can also try reading in more *then* one way (Plumb). Or invent other ways. You may also just read the way that we read that is not so much any of the above but more according to our infinitely different modes of attention. If unlike the writer you prefer to skip the bluff and jump directly to the result, simply go to the section: *A Show's Story* below the 7<sup>th</sup> attempts to get there. *Achú. Salud!*

### Attempt I

#### Movement: the adjacent possible

If we put movement back into the equation. If we let go the idea that there's A way. If we would allow for those movements concealed to the 'it could be'. A simple phrase goes on repeat: There're more reasons to do this than to not do it.

This text could've started differently. It didn't. It went away. It went the way. It went the way it started. More options were sounding. But the finger hits the key and then a line ape-pears. But it is not a matter of choice or a volitional decision. It is more a way. A way's choice. A way that let's the why not in.

And it *marches*. It takes some propulsion and then it rolls. The way a marble would in an inclined apartment's floor. It could have gone somehow differently but now it rolls like this. It inclines towards the fragmented. Towards the line that flies by. It catches it and ~~paces~~ paces it. And moves on. Why not?

What is there to lose? To be understood? As if we were anyway. There's always gaps. Where do they go? Where do we put them? We hide them? We discuss them over dinner? We swallow them? We edit them out? What if we were to open up the door to the gaps to come in? *Cacahuate* would happen.

We've put the gaps in storage in the basement. We keep our lives undisturbed. Or so it seems. Although we know, we feel. We know that not all is *marching* well. We hear it. The gaps are roaring underneath. They plan an unannounced hanging out evening. They come to get us during our sleep. We think we dream of them. Although we don't really sleep. Do we?

How a text writes itself. How an exhibition comes into happening. This one moves with the way that lines come and go. In an unstructured manner. Structure fights back. It asks to be brought in. To make some order. To make openings for the reader. But lines keep flying in. Cutting in the middle. *Rasgando*. Ripping and scratching.

Not behaving the way we'd expect them to. How else can we make sense? If we allow for the movements in between to come through. If we don't keep them on the back room. Imagine you find someone on the street. You say hi. You hear hi back. You are about to say what's up and a thought crosses your mind.

'Green bottles'. You think. A yellow color invades your path. It may be a yellowish kind of day. You think. A grim in your face. ape-pears. 'What's so funny?' your encounter asks. 'Nothing' You say. 'One of those funny thoughts. You know?' 'Oh yeah, I know too well'. 'I know towel' You hear. 'see you later'.

## Attempt II

### Permutations of combinatory mode-ings: the adjacent possible

We grow accustomed to a way of life. We become acquainted with how things go. We know too well the structures that keep in place life as we have come to live it. But life within structure is a life with little room for adventure. We kind of know where things go. And we try to move there. Where we need to go.

Let's distinguish two modes of life. Life in the structure. Life in the gap. This is only for the sake of speculating. If we put movement back into the equation. There's no one mode in one side and another mode in the other. There's mostly a *vaiivén*, a sway. There's mostly permutations of combinatory mode-ings.

We get use to moving in the fields that this structured life has already built for us. We move within the margins of our careers. We become professionals. We save our labour makings and when we get tired of it we go for a holiday. A holiday: an experience that otherwise you wouldn't have. But what if there could be other adventures? Other experiences? Like putting up an art exhibition even if you don't 'properly' belong to the field. Even if it is your first time. Why not?

More than less we go building our lives in a predetermined package according to the career that we have chosen. We become professionals in our fields. We follow the necessary path to become such professionals. We become experts. We do what we do. And then there's the rest, the rest that somehow falls, to the side of the road, somewhere aside the path.

At which point is it decided that what we study is what we do? You know those modern architectures? The designers place a path. A well designed one. But then people start crossing somewhere else, more and more. By not following the path a new path emerges. The movement of passers crafts other paths.

Sometimes these new improvised paths last, sometimes they are temporary. The joy of crossing in a becoming path. Right? Like. Jajajajajajaj jajajajaja jajajaja ja ja jajajajajaja jajajajajajaj jajajajajajaja jajajajajajajaj jajajajaja jajajajajajajajajajajajajajaja jajajajaja jajajajaja jajajajaja jajajaja jajajja jajajaja jajajaja jajajaja. Jajajaja. Hahaha!

## Attempt III

### Distinction of life in the structure and life in the gap: retrocausality of the adjacent possible

But let's keep the distinction for the sake of a feeling. Life in the structure is a life inscribed in a paradigm of the unaffected complete, of the unitary, of closed and clearly discernible demarcated territories, of beginnings and

endings, of an immobile merely sequential linear time, without holes, without gaps. In the structure, a life is made out of stable and separated matter.

Let's keep speculating. Life in the gap is not a life of the unitary but of multiplicity. Multiplicity is the gaps movement's inevitability; a spurring of an "always more than one" (Manning), something that exceeds the sum of its parts (Manning 27). A gap is already many gaps and many differentiated other continuous becomings, other than the stable. It is a life in the making. A life's affected unseparability. Of a purely mobile inconsequential duration, full of holes, full of gaps. "A line that forks and keeps on forking" (Deleuze b, 131). A life of the pure adjacent possible.

If we bring movement back into the equation. If we let the gaps in. A life in the gap is a life that is not inscribed but created. It doesn't move in the realm of the paradigm precisely because it's always growing affective incompleteness; it transmutes a real paragliding of affected incompletenesses, multiples, planes in the making, always creating anew, fields of cross-ability and *impossibility*.

*Incompossibility. [Something] may or may not take place, but that [something] is not in the same world: it takes place in one world and does not take place in a different world, and these two worlds are possible, but are not 'compossible' with each other (Deleuze b, 30).*

An impossible is not an impossible, it is just impossible because it creates another world and with it more gaps. A gap is not emptiness. Perhaps it is all that paces and passes unperceived or ignored because of it not being the main. As such, a gap is fullness. A gap is the fullness of duration. This fullness makes cracks, cracks open up the humdrum of life in the structure, creating new river ramifications filled with whatever waters that don't fit. A gap is all of that which takes place together, next, aside, adjacently, to everything we do.

Don't think the gap as the space between the foot and the metro. Think it, feel it, more the way the London's subway system has a voice on repeat, saying: "mind the gap". I always thought the voice was talking about life and not merely about the concrete gap as a space between the metro and the platform. I also enjoyed the thought that 'mind the gap' didn't refer only to a "be careful with the whole, so that you don't fall" but that it was also perhaps an invitation to "take into account...the gap, to also consider the gap, to don't let the gap unattended, to also consider the cracks!" Or put the sound —of 'mind the gap'— and the image —of the hole between the platform and the door—, together and flicker them out, whatever seeps through the intervals of the flickering, that's nearer to how a gap is felt in this text, in relation to the feeling of the adjacent possible exhibition.

It follows that a gap is the excess of movement. The possible created by the future. Not the future of a linear time. Not the future far away, the future of the now. As we move, future is already creating the possible in the past, the adjacent past in the now. That's Bergson's thickness of duration with movement in the equation.

Let me tell you about Bergson's past of the future. You know, towel? A reporter asks Bergson if he knows what's possible to happen in the future according to his observations of the present. To this, Bergson answers that no, it is not possible for him to predict the future. But he adds, that it is not what's possible what creates the future but the other way round, it is the future, retroactively, what creates the past as possible. It was not possible before it happened. Only once it happens in the future then we can consider it as possible in the past. If we consider time as duration. In a Bergsonian way. If we put movement back into the equation. Bergson stretches this idea even further by saying that it is not the possible which creates the real, but the real which creates the possible. Only by becoming real it "*will have been*" possible (103-106).

This reminds me of what you said the other day about getting cold and getting sick. How I said that he got cold and then he got sick. And then you told me: Do you know that we don't get sick if we get cold but we get cold because we are already sick? That would be an example of Bergson's retroactively created possible.

**RETROCAUSALITY.** It is not about going back. It is more about the fact that something is happening. Something is going on. "Something is doing" (James as quoted by Massumi, 1). And whatever manifests in one, is fed by retrocausality, by that which happens. (in conversation with Ruiz-Wilson) By the actuality of things. On actuality see attempt IV.

"That much we already know. Something is happening . . . [And] we find ourselves in the midst of it . . . There's happening doing . . . Immediately in the 'middle' (Deleuze). What's middling in all immediacy is an 'experience of activity' (James)" (Massumi c, 1).

If we consider time as other than a mere geometrical line, as movement, as a thick duration, as intermingled middling activity, then we can think retrocausality of the adjacent possible: *la posibilidad cercana*.

## Attempt IV

### Affect: The adjacent possible

Affect is what happens in the gap. But also structure is full of affect, in its taking effect on the coming to be of the actuality of things. It injects a difference into how else structure may come into relation with gaps.

In 2002, philosopher Brian Massumi published *The Autonomy of Affect*. Departing from an experimental psychology test—that measured reaction's time to physical sensation which always registered, ironically, an unregistered half second gap in sensation—, Massumi crafts the concept of affect as that which autonomously takes place in that half second, in the gap, he calls it 'the mystery half-second'. *Eso que se sale de*. That which gets out of. Like, out of track. Or perhaps out of our normalized *accustomatization*. Out of our accustomed perception of life in the structure.

This mysterious half-second is the unregistered, un-sensed yet felt, unperceived gap. This is the half-second of discontinuity. This is the gap full of all-that-happens-otherwise-from-the-main, from the direct, from the clear and formed. This is the half-second of the adjacent possible. "The half second is missed not because it is empty, but because it is overfull" (Massumi a, 29).

Massumi takes affect from Spinoza's definition as a body's capacity (not necessarily a human body), a power or a potential to affect and be affected. "For Spinoza, the body was one with transitions. [With movement into the equation] each transition is accompanied by a variation in capacity: a change in which powers to affect and be affected are addressable by a next event and how readily they are—or to what degree they are present as futurities. That 'degree' is a bodily intensity, and its present futurity a tendency" (Massumi a, 15).

But let's not go to fast or simplify affect too much and convert it into a thing. Because precisely it is not a thing, it is more a way in which things as movements come into relation to each other and affect each other. The complexity of affect is in that it resides unregistered yet it affects. In his essay, Massumi invites us to consider experience as a two-sided coin. One side actual, the other virtual, he says. Unregistered yet felt. Felt not as a conscious perception of things but more as a multiplicity of all the nonconscious movements taking place, affecting in the undergrounds of registers.

This is mostly to say, that in the adjacent possible, more than what we know is at work at what we do, and that's why it dances with affect and with a constant collaboration of the actual and the virtual.

In order for the adjacent possible to dance a bit longer with the notion of affect we may need to glimpse into the virtual. As if it would be a flash ape-paring on the corner of our eye or on the blushing of our skin.

The actual being that which actualizes. "Actually existing, structured things live in and through that which escapes them. Their autonomy is the autonomy of affect" (Massumi a, 35). The virtual being that which participates in what becomes yet escapes it. It is more like a propeller. It feeds from what happens, propels more happening and yet remains ready to be in a not yet, yet a capacity for more, at every turn. Affect is a "two-sidedness . . . [a] simultaneous participation of the virtual in the actual and the actual in the virtual, as one arises from and returns to the other" (Ibid). In this way, affect may be understood as collaboration.

In order to glimpse a bit deeper yet shortly into the flash of the virtual let us visit another essay by Massumi titled: *Envisioning the Virtual*. There we find that,

the base definition of the virtual in philosophy is "potentiality." What is in potentiality may come to be; and what has been, already was in potential. The virtual must thus be understood as a *dimension of reality*, not its illusionary opponent or artificial overcoming. The virtual, as allied to potential, belongs specifically to the *formative* dimension of the real. It concerns the potency in what is, by virtue of which it really comes to be. In other words, it connotes a *force of existence*: the press of the next, coming to pass. The virtual pertains to the power to be, pressing, passing, eventuating into ever new forms, in a cavalcade of emergence. (55)

Like this, the virtual is movement, and the actual is in movement, if we put movement back into the equation. *Envisioning the virtual*. The virtual is all of that which is active within experience that exceeds what actualizes in

reality yet participates in its actualization unregistered. A charge of what's not. Always tingling. Always pinching. Not letting us sleep. There're more reasons to do this than to not do it. "The virtual is all about creativity: potential and the emergence of the new" (Massumi b, 65).

The adjacent possible is a ki(n)d of virtual. Although Massumi distinguishes between the possible and potential by saying that the possible is that which is pre-scripted (a, 9), or as Bergson would say, a merely different re-arrangement of what already exists, whereas potential is that which becomes anew, out of what actualizes of course, out of what happens but not so much into a re-arrangement but into an assemblage where you end up with more pieces than what you had when you first started. If that was the case. Imagine the possible as a puzzle, where the pieces for the whole are given to you in advance. Imagine potential as a puzzle, which pieces emerge as you advance; now, add to that, the pieces that emerge and we don't notice much, by moving in life in the gaps.

Since the adjacent possible is what is made out of what is happening and not merely from what happened as immobile, but still in movement, here, the virtual is that possible, and the actual the adjacent.

Why would an adjacent possible be considered or weighted as affect? In talking with the curator's exhibition, it shows thoughts around some of the notions that haunt and sound in its conception. From these notions—revealed below—a resonance emerges: affect. With the intuition of that resonance as an adjacent possible itself, this text plunges into this attempt. It may not be THE way of the exhibition but nevertheless it ape-pears and so, it may be considered. ¿*Qué no?* What is there to lose? There're more reasons to do this than there are to not do it.

## Some Resonances

(in conversation with Ruiz-Wilson)

INDEPENDENT FROM CONSCIOUSNESS. At an atomic level a lot is happening that we don't notice: [we could call this affect]. But despite we not noticing, it is happening all the time. You walk, you see something, even if you don't notice, you are already affected. It is in you. All of that you enter into relation with—mostly non-consciously and some of it consciously—is already loaded in all of what you do or all of what you do already carries it.

ANTIMATTER. It is impossible to undo the things that are already there. It is impossible not seeing it, not knowing it. Once you know something you cannot not-know it anymore. Like when someone tells you something about someone, next time you see that someone you won't be able to see him or her without thinking of that which now you know, be it true or not.

This is similar to what Erin calls the taking consistency of an event in the way that a chocolate cake mix takes once you combine the dust with the liquid. There's no undoing of that batter. What is done is done (Manning, 16-30). In a similar way in experience, Whitehead reminds us, "what we have experienced we have experienced" (b, 6).

ADJACENT POSSIBLE. A concept from biology by which we understand that a cell won't grow from cell to organism or from cell into a whole; instead it will grow little by little by entering into relation with that which surrounds it, not necessarily spatially proximal but in relation. Because sometimes things enter into relation in the intensity of a distance. No?

## Attempt V

### Creativity's $N - 1$ : Or a many plus one

"The multiple ... [is] made not by always adding a higher dimension, but rather in the simplest of ways, by dint of sobriety, with the number of dimensions one already has available [adjacent] —always  $n - 1$  (the only way the one belongs to the multiple: always subtracted). Subtract the unique from the multiplicity to be constituted; write, [create] at  $n - 1$  dimensions" (Deleuze and Guattari, 6).

For Whitehead, creativity is "when the many become one, and are increased by one". Two different approaches to the same thing: creation.

'Creativity', 'many', 'one' are the ultimate notions involved in the meaning of the synonymous terms 'thing', 'being', 'entity' ... The term one stands for the singularity of an entity. The term many presupposes the term one and the term many presupposes the term one. The term many conveys the notion of disjunctive diversity. Creativity is the principle of novelty, the principle by which the many, which are the universe disjunctively, becomes the one actual

[thing], which is the universe conjunctively. It lies in the nature of things that the many enter into *complex* unity. (Whitehead a, 21)

The novel actual thing “is at once the togetherness of the ‘many’ which it finds, and also it is the [*complex*] one among the disjunctive ‘many’ which it leaves; it is a novel [actual thing], disjunctively among the many entities which it synthesizes. *THE MANY BECOME ONE, AND ARE INCREASED BY ONE*” (Ibid, emphasis added).

## Attempt VI

### Undoing the distinction: The shadow of the future

Considering that what is done is done. There’s no way to really undo the distinction above. However, if we pierce up some gaps, then, shadows may come through, creating thus, new relations from which different ways of relating with the distinction between structure and gap may come to light.

Perhaps think of it as actively un-focusing your eyes. The secret is to exercise a kind of blending or mixing—as in the chocolate cake’s mix—of the clear borders that we’ve created artificially to separate what is inseparable to begin with between structure and the gap.

If we bring movement back into the equation, there’s no more one on one side and another one on the other. There’s more mixings. Add plaster to the water into the casting of a shadow, the shadow of the future.

THE SHADOW OF THE FUTURE. There’s something in you that is already happening, from all of those things that are happening. A germ. A shadow of what’s happening is already there. Similarly to how the past makes you do this, whatever you are doing now, takes you somewhere else (in conversation with Ruiz-Wilson.) Toward and with the adjacent possibles.

To understand this confluence of activity is to already be in the shadow of movement. It’s already sensing the activity and the operative functionings of Bergson’s duration. Duration is a SPLASH. It’s full of movement. A feeling of time as a constant intermingling of immediate future and immediate past, the immediate half second—not necessarily in front nor behind—of the so called present, the gap and the gap and the gap in the gap. A colliding. A PLUFF.

“Real duration is what we have always called time, but time perceived as indivisible” (Bergson, 149).

In the feeling of duration time is no longer extensive or a geometrical succession of separated localized positions. In the feeling of duration time is and complex, un-localized because it is in movement, a drawing of tonalities coming into a flicker of sensations. In duration, time moves, and as it moves, it travels in all kinds of directions. Not merely in the path established. It creates new paths, outside of the main one. The gap is movement and structure is in movement.

Because of movement in duration, what we do, constantly casts a shadow for the impossible future to come. And we feel it. In that future to come, movements infiltrate structure and structure infiltrates movement, all the time, in different modes and with different degrees of the actuality of things and the virtual. These two tendencies of life not only get combined with one another, they enter into a more complex relation where sometimes it becomes difficult to differentiate if a movement is structurally closing itself or if it’s *gappily* opening toward other watery configurations, that’s the beauty of it! Then we only perceive shadows and lights but no clear distinction of what’s what. Then things rumble and the excess in the basement goes out and throws a party, a party for a life in the gaps. A life for the other things that otherwise wouldn’t happen when in truth there’re more reasons for them to happen than there aren’t.

Life in the structure and life in the gap become more like (p)layers and they don’t fight each other. And sometimes you find yourself in one layer, and other times you move to another. Sometimes the layers stratify sometimes they de-stratify. In moving, new layers emerge. They don’t longer exist beforehand. They become in complex ways that exceed one or the other, casting all kinds of shadows on themselves.

## Attempt VII

### The force of the outside: the adjacent possible

Not everything is the same and at the same time “everything is everything” (Murphie, 2016). The modes in the gap are multiple ways of happening. Every mode is in movement, at all times, becoming something else and at all times becoming this and not another. That’s the paradox of a world in movement and of a world of difference.

In looking for clues to think the outside we find Foucault saying “a statement necessarily has a specific link with something OUTSIDE of it” (as quoted by Deleuze, 79). The outside is a different mode, one that is not known yet. The outside is that which departs from the regular. It is the world otherwise, created anew.

It is no longer the formal or superficial [structural] syntax that governs the equilibrium of language, but a syntax in the process of becoming, a creation of syntax that gives birth to a foreign language within language. A grammar of disequilibrium . . . And just as the new language is not external to the initial language, the asyntactic limit is not external to language as a whole: it is *the outside of language* but is not outside it. It is a painting or a piece of music, but a painting of words, a music with words, a silence in words. (Deleuze c, 112-113)

## A TEXT COULD BE A PAINTING.

Manning reminds us that, “affect is always and only force. [She invites us to] think affect, as Deleuze would say, as the force of the outside. The outside not [as] juxtaposed to an inside— it is not about containment. The outside is the limit where life as force of form resonates” (29). A force of form “is not process as such, but the differential active in the “taking” of form” (Manning b, 3). The force of the outside is that which affects and is affected.

The force of the outside is in the adjacent possible. The force of form “activates the threshold that disperses it, always anew. To ‘threshold’ is to create a new field, to propel a dephasing ” (Ibid, 28), to open up the door for the gaps to come in or to cross and mingle with the indiscernible fullness of the gaps, or both.

Let’s say it: Sometimes, a field starts knowing itself too much and it starts necessitating a force of the outside to mobilize its capacity to think outside of its limits, outside of its own knowability. It craves the force of the outside to come face to face with its limits and its possibilities to crack them open, to open up the door to the unthinkable.

In short: an opening toward the outside is an opening toward that which is still to come, an opening to move with the adjacent possible, to move with that which gives more reasons to do it than to not, not as a mere viewer but to fully get involved, not for or as a counterargument —more as a matter of action!

## *A Show’s Story*

In the structure, we get used to think the world as closed categories and regions, and therefore in opposites and in hierarchies, as things active and things passive. By bringing movement back into the equation there’s no longer separated categories. In moving with the adjacent possible, we may practice a way to think with the world in composites of interchangeable relations, of things not necessarily clear, of things in activity, in act, things as matter of action.

Disjunctively synthesizing, or once more: If we believe that things are stable and static, if we believe that matter doesn’t move. Then, even if we are not conscious of it, even perhaps indirectly, we are part of a paradigm, the paradigm of life in the structure. This paradigm has become used to the thought that the world is made out of static spatially localized, extensive, linearly temporalized, clear and separated matter. This kind of paradigm would necessitate that movement were not part of the equation. With movement taken back into account, all of the above explodes, we no longer have a clear-cut separation between matter and matter, and all we have are relations and differential ape-pearing shades of gradations of complex temporal configurations, matter is always in movement, perhaps unperceived but always in movement. Within this explosion, there’s an undoing of a division, there’s no longer a separation *between the world and us* (See Coates). With the undoing of this artificially built division other things start taking matter and mattering. With movement into the occasion this story can no longer be about a show, or an exhibition, or of a who of it, there’s no more who of it!

With movement into the occasion, this show story is not even about the show, nor about an exhibition, it is around the show as an event, itself already a movement. But what makes an event? “The event ... speaks of that share of experience which exceeds the sum of its parts. An event is always more-than, always in excess of what registers on the plane of actualization” (Manning d, 1).

Remember that time we were seated in the back alley that the police said: “thanks for not peeing on the wall”, followed by “*Merçi*”? Well, at that time you said: It is not even about this story as the story of a show, “it is not really all about it as an exhibition. It is more about THIS, the *hanging out*. About coming to help to put up the exhibition, to clean, to talk, to get tired together. To laugh in the gaps! To have conversations and silences. To live the process step by step. To learn in the making of it. To *hang out* together!”. (Ruiz-Wilson). This reminded me of that time I read a wonderful book called *The Undercommons* when it talks about the practice of *study* and how it talks about it as

[t]he notion of a rehearsal – being in a kind of workshop, playing in a band, in a jam session, or old men sitting on a porch, or people working together in a factory – there are these various modes of activity. The point of calling it ‘study’ is to mark that the incessant and irreversible intellectuality of these activities is already present. These activities aren’t ennobled by the fact that we now say, “oh, if you did these things in a certain way, you could be said to be have been studying.” To do these things is to be involved in a kind of common intellectual practice. What’s important is to recognize that that has been the case – because that recognition allows you to access a whole, varied, alternative history of thought. (Harney and Moten, 110)

And the plan is to invent the means in a common experiment launched from any kitchen, any back porch, any basement, any hall, any park bench, any improvised party, every night. This ongoing experiment with the informal, carried out by and on the means of social reproduction, as the to come of the forms of life, is what we mean by planning; planning in the undercommons is not an activity, not fishing or dancing or teaching or loving, but the ceaseless experiment with the futural presence of the forms of life that make such activities possible. (Ibid 74-75)

With movement into the occasion we can no longer perceive Montreal’s contemporary art scene as a whole; instead, we start seeing the holes and it starts feeling more as a ‘wild beast’ (Bellmare). In a way, a city’s art scene is always a movement in the making. Sometimes it grows more and more stable and structured, sometimes it re-invents itself through the gaps, through infiltrations and through new path openers and also some can openers too. Sometimes it wanders: sometimes it gets stuck because of its hugeness in the small Montreal back alleys and wonders then how else to keep on moving? Sometimes when it gets stuck, neighbors and pals come to the rescue and aid the beast into becoming many so that it can keep enjoying those alleys too.

As in the case of many beasts, this one-many is made out of a kind of gelatin consistency, to some extents and somehow still a malleable consistency. Or not? And because it transits the world, some of its gelatinous tips are a bit crusted and stiff while other regions of it are thick and wiggly and bouncy, some other parts, sometimes, are still watery and as such the beast is always in the leak. Stiff regions and watery infiltrations sometimes exchange places.

Montreal’s contemporary art scene as a wild beast perhaps is more than its visible and apparently working parts. The working parts sometimes take the forms of galleries, grants, calls for submissions, museums, artists run centers, research centers, universities, cegeps, artist’s studios. There’s also artists, curators, writers, collectors, and other arrangements that -in one way or another- become involved, be it directly or indirectly—like Montreal alleys or like the Montreal winter (come on! a big player in the scene!)— they are affected and become affected in relation to its most adjacent possibles.

But sometimes there are other occasions that move the relation, like apartments, parks, living rooms, basements, unoccupied spaces, thoughts, feelings, conversations, *hanging out practices*. Magazines, blogs, podcasts, social media, the unsaved and unpublished texts wandering on people’s personal computers or notebooks. Visiting a gallery, visiting an artist’s studio, visiting an artist’s house also play a role. It is part of the beast as a matter of action.

In its different gelatinous consistencies this scene, sometimes, moves toward more institutionalized and bureaucratic ways, creating a bit more enclosed facilities with a less than more permeability for what is not planned. But other times other side attempts emerge, popping-up. These side attempts sometimes even come from within.

Or maybe sideway movements are always already there, anyway, even if dormant, rumbling, like a “manifestation of a Universe trying to find itself, which comes to knock at the window like a magic bird” (Guattari 68, as quoted by Marcassa et al.). And maybe every movement will inevitably always create an enclosure and a more or less limited permeability. Perhaps as well that too, and then, all is a matter of action. Of a sensibility for opening the door to the gaps and a sensibility for when the openings create new closures, of a sensibility to put movement back into the equation if the case comes to be that our structures in place have more than less fallen into a non-enabling habit, into something that knows itself too well (towel) to think and act otherwise. *Quizás, quizás, quizás*, if we put that on the table, we won’t need discussing it over dinner, and perhaps we may just eat it, digest it and shit it. Opening a bit toward what crosses in the gaps.



There's a football analogy for this. Sometimes you are more attracted by a local *cascarita* played by an unknown team than by an official match played by the big league and internationally renowned teams (Ruiz-Wilson). They create different feelings. And both are important. No? Or attractions vary like that sometimes, the way some cats come only with seven instead of nine lives.

Another factor to consider into this story is what I sometimes refer to *the portable way* (Gonzalez-Morales). This way moves in the fashion of *hanging out* emergent bundlings and *clusterings*. The portable way has become a way to refer to a life in the gap. A way to account for that which is not in structure, that which is not in time. It is a way that seeks to move differently from the established. It does this not to go against, but because it knows that way. In a way, it knows it too well, the way of the crack, and it practices it in every breath, not so much as a conviction but as a way of life that colors all of what one does. *Sin querer queriendo*.

## A GAP

NW: "Do I want to hear myself? There's nothing worse than listening to your own voice, when you're asked just to say something, no one can do it. It's like: ok just say your name at the recording. And I'm like Naency, or when you have to get a sandwich and you're like: Naaaancy, Nncy?"

MRW: "Yeah. My name, they can't never get it right because it is (spelling) M-A-R-X right? I mean, some times I just say John."

NW: "Ha, so sad, that's the title of your memoir: *Some Times I Just Say John*."

MRW: "That's right, ha ha, that's a great title!" (Ruiz-Wilson and Webb)

One is never one. Moving in the gap, where one is never merely one and where we are not separated from the world, a person, an I, never acts alone. "Since each of us [is] several, there [is] already quite a crowd ... [How] 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. We have been aided, inspired, multiplied" (Deleuze and Guattari, 3). One never acts alone; one is already surrounded with adjacent possible movements. For this reason, and in play with the above dialogue, this text decides to refer to the curator of the show of this story, by the name of John. Although by now, hopefully we all know his name.

In the *portable way* that we were talking before, and in the *clustering* of such way, it happened that John came to the clustering and to walk aside with the multiple extremities of the wild beast's wobbling regions, in its togetherness and in its dispersion. Now, this clustering is in no way a group in which everyone knows everyone, it is a complexity. It configures differently, it grows and it shrinks and it is full of gaps. John as a non-artist and a non-professional in the field of art (whatever that is), immediately grew an insatiable curiosity toward artists, their exhibitions and their talks. Very rapidly, John with the aid and inspiration of adjacent friends, pals, *cuates*, *banda*, started a podcast project called *Into This*. Google it! Duckduckgo it! Listen to the podcasts!

In the podcast's website, John describes being moved by an Art Exhibition at the MoMa by Francis Alys in 2011, and having "a new thought that sprung out of [his] brain at a very high speed: NOT EVERYTHING YOU DO NEEDS NECESSARILY TO HAVE A PURPOSE. Overachieving gets in the way of self-exploration and discovery" (Ruiz-Wilson).

With this thought rumbling at high speed John with the help of co started what he called a

self-appointed opportunity to create a first series of audio files, [in which John has] conversations with artists, curators, writers, collectors, and people who are -in one way or another- involved in the Contemporary Art Scene in Montreal, Canada. [These interviews] explore each individual's personal stories as well as their professional quests, motivations, influences, passions and dreams of and other people related to the artistic scene, all this from a non-artist perspective. These conversations were recorded in John's [self-made] tiny home-recording studio in Montreal. (Ibid)

Still another factor to this story. The exhibition's curator as a self-appointed non-professional in the field. Not of the field. An outsider you would say. What can a non-artist perspective bring back into the field and extrapolate back beyond of its limits? Instead of thinking of John as an outsider, what if we were to think of him as a more-than-one force of the outside? And then the question would be: What can a force of the outside do? And most importantly, what if we started to think this force as a multiplicity, as its adjacent movements, friends, pals, *cuates*, *banda*.

With the same force of the *Into this Podcast* project, you would hear in the air that John had a new self-appointed project. An art exhibition: *The Adjacent Possible – I*. With this new project in mind, John started contacting the people that he met through being attracted to the art scene in Montreal, to the wild beast we were talking before.

This time he had more than a thought, he wrote a show proposal that can be found below this text and which in a way moved the thought for this text to come into a life.

The sounds of the question —what is it to be moved by a highly intensified curiosity, by mere attraction rather than by a defined purpose?— started composing repeatedly as a kind of unwanted mantra, seeping through the gaps of this writer and mobilizing thought. John's thought is contagious: NOT EVERYTHING YOU DO NEEDS NECESSARILY TO HAVE A PURPOSE.

This thought, reminds me of one of my adjacent possibles, a refrain and concept from a dear friend, teacher and colleague, Erin Manning, *politics of the infrathin — for a pragmatics of the useless*. In there, Manning as if blowing some dust away from an old art book gifts us a thought, a proposition, an invitation, a lure:

A politics of the infrathin: a quest, in registers more-than-human, for the most minor of variations. A commitment to the creation of modes of existence that practice a pragmatics of the useless. A care for ecologies of practice that value the effects of what can but barely be perceived, if it can be perceived at all . . . Duchamp's infrathin is summarised by Marjorie Perloff as 'the most minute of intervals, or the *slightest of differences*' [For me, this sings along with the gap]. Yet the concept, Duchamp suggests, cannot be properly defined—'one can only give examples of it'. 'The warmth of a seat (which has just been left) is infra-thin (#4)...' (Duchamp in Perlo , 2002, p. 101 as quoted by Manning c, 2).

Art is the capacity to mobilize [*the slightest of*] differences in the event, the capacity to make felt the force of form that undoes art of its hold on the very object that too often is said to represent it [its hold on structure]. A pragmatics of the useless takes this as [one of its] propositions: that what art can do is always in excess of the object it leaves behind. A pragmatics of the useless: the value does not reside in the form, but in the infrathin of form's incompleteness [in the gaps]. (Manning c, 15)

What moves an exhibition? What moves an adventure? What moves an experience? What moves us? What moves you? What moves a movement?

With all those questions in suspense, and with an approach that moved more within the pragmatics of the useless, our friend John set up a date, July 8<sup>th</sup> and started looking for a space in Montreal that he could rent for a month to host the exhibition. The story goes that John had said at some point that: "if one saves money for a holiday in order to have an experience, why wouldn't one use the saved money for putting up an art exhibition as an experience?" Or something like that.

In looking for spaces John asked his adjacent friends. He started visiting *à louer* places. Soon he realized that this was becoming a very difficult task, landlords wouldn't understand what he was trying to do, his non-professional background with this type of things lesser the credibility, so some doors were closed. Until the *portable way* came to the rescue. Instead of looking far away what if looking closer was the answer, what if looking into his own house? What would it be to open up your own place basement's doors? *Eureka!* He spoke with his landlord, his partner spoke to their landlord and sooner rather than later, the basement of the building where his apartment rests appears. The gap was open and wide open and welcoming. Guess what? Yes! He was always already sleeping on top of this dream. Ha!

The interesting thing is that a bunch of artists and creators were already committed to participate in the show, even if the space was not yet confirmed. You would hear some people talking, "oh, I already know what I will show", others would say "I have no idea but it will work out!" Others just because of the permeable conditions set in place, started dreaming big, "I want to do this and that and also that, or perhaps this?" Our self-appointed curator visited constantly, (in his spare time, remember he has a job in another profession?) artists studios, had coffees and conversations, he invited people over for dinner or for brunch. In the way of the adjacent possible, this became a wild beast of its own, "this thing is real!" rumbled around. What moved this commitment? What moved these movements into moving so wildly? Fascinating!

Now, the first time John walks into the basement, it wasn't comfortable, this space was out of a comfort zone. Perhaps it wasn't what he had in mind. The first time I walked into the basement, after taking brunch at John's flat, I immediately thought "Wow, this place is perfect!" I was immediately in love with the aged walls, the non-

normalized spatiality, the gaps we rarely take an effort to visit. But perhaps this thought of mine has grown with time, perhaps a time ago I once also thought a space like this was not ideal. But with time, in giving different durations to encounters we may come to realize that what at first was what we were used to is not exactly all there is. If we spend time with something we don't necessarily feel comfortable with, it comes a moment when it ape-pears "at ease". Other times it is just a matter of taking a different course of action.

There's always more that we don't see, that we haven't encountered yet, that hasn't been created yet. This may also be similar to when we encounter an art piece, how it sometimes we just don't get it, but it perhaps is more about it getting to us, tingling, pinching, infiltrating its waters in the way of the adjacent possible, through the gaps of our experience, crafting with it, bringing movement back into our own occasions.

Encountering something outside of our comfort zone, finally brings this text to a relevant issue. The formation of zones and privileges within the zones. In resonance with a paragraph above, I repeat: maybe every zoning movement will inevitably always create enclosures and a more or less limited permeability. But let's also say this, most of the times, not always, but mostly, in a majoritarian way, so far, we come to know that merely structured ways with little room for gaps create margins and separations and zones to which many, can't enter. The structures in place establish margins and these margins leave some out; let's say it.

When you live in the gap, you start also living underneath the surface where the lights of the structure rarely come through. But that's ok. Depending. We need to be aware of this right? But that's ok. Because those who live mostly in the gap and who also live in gappiness, much like kids, convince themselves in play, that they develop a *cat's-night-vision* like vision, so they can see in the dark. So that's ok and yet. It is important to have that in mind, no? to *mind that gap*.

I hear myself saying: Oh well, the art world institutions and established structures are an important part of the game. And perhaps they are. But also, honestly, what I mostly want to say, because it rumbles underneath, is that: that's not entirely true. That a lot of who are left out the margins of the structural and institutionalized life of the Art world, are still, in weaker positions, not players, latecomers, not present. And oh well, there're still problems there!

The secret then would be, how to keep the beast alive and in its mobility. And then, it is all a matter of action. Actions with a sensibility for opening the door to the gaps and a sensibility for when the openings create new closures, of a sensibility to put movement back into the equation if the case comes to be that our structures in place have more than less fallen into a non-enabling habit, into something that knows itself too well (towel) to think and act otherwise.

How do we make rumble the privileges and comforts that stagnate in place? How do we make rumble the ledges of our adjacent zones? These questions invite us to take action—not for or as a counterargument— but with a sensibility for a life quarry of structure full of a constant, sometimes less perceivable, malleable collaboration, for crafting and cracking all kinds of adventures of *a* life to come in the gap. *Aptrrrtam Tú! Clac clac. Abdn ta dah. Esto lo soñé.*

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## Marx's Show Proposal Addressed to the Artists

This text is a causality (retrocausality?) of the present context as is understood by the writer. Specifically this text intends to –without for or counterarguments and as matter of action- address the allegedly deprofessionalization and deintellectualization of art as a product of an increasing number of people practicing it -in one way or another- with different levels of expertise.

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In the current climate of information overload, openly expressed xenophobia and international relations instability, identities and beliefs –or the so-called sense of self- gets diluted in the sea of anxieties. Furthermore, these statements are made from a privileged position where the basic needs are met and overpassed. Such privilege is far from being the norm for the majority of the incessantly growing world population.

Consider the following...

Interactions with contexts and environments are –at times- independent of consciousness. For instance, in the basic concept of atomic interactions, the limitations and possibilities lay on the ability of these in sharing and accepting electrons. Upon this occurrence, they become a new entity and this new entity can again be transformed by its own potential interactions with its surroundings, entering a cycle that practically never stops since the notion of antimatter\* is not readily available. In a parallel fashion, drawing a possibility path allows tracking what type of interactions have made this moment be what it is. And hidden behind it, rests the realization –of the underlying consequence- that the actuality of things is shaping the shadow of the future as a persistent cycle of invention and reinvention where all the odds are on creation and annihilation is inconceivable.

In the context that this text attempts to provide the reader with, it is encouraged to focus on the ‘possibility path’, the ‘actuality of things’ and ‘the shadow of the inevitable future’ as exploration handles in the following three realms: personal, professional and socio-political-economic environment. This is both, introspection and extrospection, and a constant speculation of whether the former is a product of the latter or *vice versa*. As a result of this rigorous analysis, the sense of self gets heightened.

The existence of this exercise represents the adjacent possible of the writer at this moment in time as is literally any other thing happening everywhere and anywhere.

\*Antimatter should be understood as exactly the same as matter with the opposite electric charge. When matter and antimatter meet, they both vanish and all the mass becomes energy. This process is called annihilation.

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