Allen Fisher. **Extract from Introduction** to *Imperfect Fit: Aesthetic function, facture and reception,* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2016.

The bases for these essays out of necessity struggle in contradiction, to make clear the argument that opposes the prevalent attention to their perpetuation. One of the prevalent concepts in the collection is that human consciousness includes an aesthetic component that comes to the fore when engaging with an artifact whose dominant function is aesthetic. The dominant function of art is aesthetic. What you are looking at, hearing or reading, may well have social, political, decorative, entertaining or educational functions, and usually does have, but for that artifact to be understood as art its dominant function needs to be aesthetic.

In the comprehension of an artifact, consciousness will have had to engage in perception and proprioception, thought and language, terms that can be summarized as aesthetic facture and reception. The realization of the aesthetic function of art is a consequence of the facture of the artifact coupled to its reception. That reception – viewing, hearing or reading – can be that of the artist who factured the artifact or a different person who is independently attending to what has been factured. This is why the production of art is part of a process that includes, but is not completed by the facture. The artifact is not itself art until someone engages with it, sees or hears or reads it.

The idea of aesthetic function derives from the work of Jan Mukařovský (1970).[1] The dominance of the aesthetic function does not preclude the potential that art practice may have other functions and these functions may operate as dimensions intersecting the aesthetic. Ezra Pound summarized aesthetic function in 1935 using the tenets for artistic intention described by Rodolfo Agricola: *ut doceat, ut moveat, ut delectet*; to teach, to move, to delight: where *ut doceat* may intersect both the political and aesthetic functions, where *ut moveat* may use rhetoric as a constituent of aesthetic function, and *ut delectet* may intersect both the entertaining and aesthetic functions.[2] It becomes then useful to elaborate on what the aesthetic function may consist of.

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[1] Mukařovský, Jan. *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts*, translated by Mark E. Suino

[2] Pound, Ezra. *Make It New* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935); Pound. *ABC of Reading*, (London: Faber & Faber, 1951), p. 50.

The engagement of consciousness with the world and artifacts is through patterns of connectedness. Patterns of connectedness are how consciousness works, how memory operates, how the nervous system and the immune system work. For example, "the innate immune system has a 'hard-wired' memory which is extremely important in defending us against everyday invaders. This memory is the result of millions of years of experience, during which the innate system slowly evolved pattern-recognition receptors that can detect the signatures of common invaders."[3] It is also the case that when we view artifacts that they are understood through the way they or elements of them, connect recognitions and produce an order or patterns. These connections are made possible by different empirical experiences and decisions about recognition of connectedness in the artifact being looked at, that there are patterns that match each other or that there are recurrences of what you are looking at in relation to the world you know or are coming to know or in the process of knowing.

Conscious engagement with an artifact is like a reciprocal understanding of a pattern of connectedness. When you look at something and recognize it for what it is, it has provided you with the patterns of connectedness you could have expected. If I said I will show you an oak tree and then showed you an oak tree, you would see the pattern of connectedness very quickly, you would agree, yes that is an oak tree, because this agrees with the pattern of information that you and I name oak tree. But that, of course, wouldn't give you art. What this recognition does is to give you a straightforward pattern of connectedness, that is exact in some way, it fits. Art practitioners recognize the consequences of this recognition, they set out to facture an artifact that does not exactly fit, so that there is a potential to change from an anticipated pattern of connectedness to a new pattern of connectedness. This is an imperfect fit and this imperfect fit is in a balance between recognitions and lack of recognitions that combine into a new experience as the production of art. Art is produced when the patterns of connectedness found in the artifact do not entirely fit and when this leads to the production in the viewer of a new understanding of what they see.

Aesthetic function may be summarized as constituting patterns of connectedness, patterns that can be given imperfect fit by consciousness. The idea of "patterns of connectedness" in aesthetics and consciousness has been derived from the work of Gregory Bateson, "The Pattern which

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[3] Sompayrac, Lauren. *How the Immune System Works* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p.97.

Connects" and *Mind and Nature: A necessary unity,* from the late 1970s,[4] which is far more general than notions of artistic intention and practice, and which Bateson left without extension at his death. On a simple level, a "life drawing" may fulfill its aesthetic function by providing a pattern of connectedness that reciprocates in the viewer as recognition of shape and a nuance of psychological and physiological movement in a hesitating line, which the viewer apprehends through experience of the perceived world, and which the viewer recognizes to be a representation of the artist's and the subject's conditions. It is a reciprocity that the viewer's production brings to the drawing, a cognition of the sensibility of the artist in choice of subject and posture through the artist's volition, choice of media, use of line and positioning on the paper. This apparently simple level is made complex in painting, particularly where the painting makes use of more than one element, but the basis remains the same for all media. The patterns of connectedness factured by the artist, and the reciprocal production through a second pattern of connectedness in the viewer's consciousness, constitute the elements that produce the art, through art's ability to move, delight or teach the viewer.

Ideas of pattern production have always informed all of the arts. The architect of patterned towns and dwellings, Christopher Alexander noted that "It is possible to make buildings by stringing together patterns, in a rather loose way. A building made like this, is an assembly of patterns. It is not dense. It is not profound. But it is … possible to put patterns together in such a way that many patterns overlap in the same physical space: the building is very dense; it has many meanings captured in a small space; and through this density, it becomes profound."[5]

Gregory Bateson noted, "The pattern which connects is a metapattern."[6] Like an assemblage "it is a pattern of patterns. It is that metapattern which defines the vast generalization that, indeed, *it is patterns which connect.*"[7] Another anthropologist, Carl Schuster, chose to search for patterns of organization underlying traditional arts. "To discover such patterns, he turned

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[4] Bateson, Gregory. "The Pattern which Connects," *The CoEvolution Quarterly,* 18 (Summer 1978); Bateson. *Mind and Nature: A necessary unity,* (Glasgow: William Collins Publishers, 1980).

[5] Alexander, Christopher, Sara Ishikawa and Murray Silverstein. *A Pattern Language. Towns, Buildings, Construction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. xli.

[6] Bateson, 1980: p.20.

[7] Bateson, Ibid.

from historical analysis to pattern recognition. This meant forswearing context in favor of an unflinching look at designs themselves."[8] But a pattern of connectedness does not provide a basis for aesthetic judgment. Julia Kristeva, discussing the work of Hannah Arendt, notes that Arendt "warned against the expectation that the irresponsibility endogenous to poets … could be at all politically relevant: poets are adept at thinking but are incapable of judging."[9] "Of course, authority is also displayed in the handling of theory and interpretation, but in the humanities and the sciences alike, one can have confidence in that only if one can respect the writer's dealings with everyday truths."[10] We are again in the condition Arendt named as "The frailty of human affairs."[11] The patterns of connectedness that have the potential to enhance artistic production are delicate. The patterns are different "from a world structured by boundaries and enclosures" and "a world increasingly dominated, at every scale, by connections, networks, and flows."[12] "The principle of reciprocity – the ancient Golden Rule – is no longer circumscribed in *spacetime*, and its expansion has profound consequences for design, engineering, and planning practice."[13] "The boundaries define space of containers and places (the traditional domain of architecture), while the networks establish a space of links and flows. Walls, fences, and skins divide; paths, pipes, and wires, connect"[14] and of course, break. "Today the *network,* rather than the enclosure, is emerging as the desired and contested object: the dual now dominates. Extension and entanglement trump enclosure and autonomy."[15]

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[8] Carpenter in Schuster, Carl and Edmund Carpenter. *Patterns that Connect, Social Symbolism in Ancient and Tribal Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), p. 9.

[9] Kristeva, Julia. *Hannah Arendt,* translated by Ross Guberman. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), p. 92.

[10] Williams, Bernard. *Truth and Truthfulness. An Essay in Genealogy,* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 11.

[11] Kristeva 2001: p. 45.

[12] Mitchell, William J. *Me ++, the Cyborg Self and the Networked City,* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: MIT Press, 2003), p. 5.

[13] Ibid., p. 6.

[14] Ibid., p. 7.

[15] Ibid., p. 11.

Exaggerating the problem of connectedness, the physicist Vlatko Vedral noted that natural phenomena can actually be better than perfect. "This was first realized when physicists tried to infer the laws governing the behavior of small objects ... in the study of quantum physics ... Electrons are like small spinning-tops, each rotates in its own way depending on the external circumstances. ... Astonishingly, if [the scientists] measure the electron spin at two different times, the correlations between these measurements can actually exceed any correlations allowed by classical physics. ... (with actual electrons) their spin measurements can be correlated in the vertical direction at the same time as in the horizontal direction (and in all directions)... Such quantum correlations that exist between objects and events are known as 'entanglement'."[16] "Connectivity has become the defining characteristic of our twenty-first-century urban condition."[17] But we need planned imperfection, not exactness of match, "...the ultimate network will operate by the quantum-magical means of quantum entanglement and teleportation of quantum states from one site to another."[18] As Arendt put it, "She did not herself want to become entangled again; she wanted to be the immutable soil which absorbs everything into itself."[19]

The paradigms for understanding natural phenomena are shifting. Stuart Kauffman and Brian Goodwin contribute considerably to this debate, both in 1972 and today nearly 40 years later.[20] Kauffman provides salutary caution to over-exactness or prediction, admitting the local restraints, without the need to always anticipate global structures. Goodwin notes that "… the developing or regenerating organism undergoes transformations which produce

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[16] Vedral, Vlatko. "A better than perfect match," *Nature,* 439 (2006), p. 397.

[17] Mitchell, 2003, p. 12.

[18] Mitchell, 2003, pp. 10-14.

[19] Arendt, Hannah. *Rahel Varnhagen: the Life of a Jewess,* ed. Liliane Weissberg, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1997), quoted by Kristeva 2001, p. 50.

[20] For instance, Kauffman, Stuart. "Metazoan's entire control system" in Waddington, C.H. *Towards a Theoretical Biology, 4: Essays,* (Edinburgh University Press, 1972), pp. 229-247; Kauffman. *Origins of Order: Self-Organization and Selection in Evolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Kauffman. *At Home in the Universe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) and Goodwin, Brian. *How the Leopard Changes Its Spots. The Evolution of Complexity* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1994).

ordered, harmonious, and balanced relationships between their cells, tissues, and organs. They do this by the combined processes of differentiation of elements and their cooperative union into the whole which gives meaning to the elements. This is a very remarkable spectacle and not only brings one into a relationship of understanding with the developmental process, but also provides a metaphor for human and social transformation."[21] Art, however, is involved in shifting some of the expectations involved in cultural norms and in so doing is involved in positive damage.

The term "damage" as a positive connotation, as part of artistic practice and as part of self-preservation in neurological function, enables the formation and fluidity of memory and perception. Like breakage, damage may be considered a necessary and positive process. From one perspective initial facture derives from direct breakage of the research. The factured product is a consequence of the breakage that has been involved and this comes to the fore in facture that uses collage or where the facture of the artifact has been possible through a series of transformations or damages. Transformations may be used which deliver word links, patterns of connectedness, through the use of sound (rhyming), comparable meaning (rhetoric), discussion or disruption of meaning (poetics), and collage (found in most genres including poetry and painting). The factured product has thus undergone a series of breakages. Sometimes this series involves transformation, planned breakage and incidental repair, often the pasting together of different parts simulates continuity, sometimes use of collage brings about a disruption of *spacetime*.[22]

That *spacetime* is partly articulated through proprioception. The concept of proprioception has been developed from the poetics that Charles Olson proposed in the 1960s.[23] Proprioception, as developed from Olson's concept, begins in the attention brought to facture by the artist. It is an engagement of the whole being and its context brought to bear on the projected experiences of that engagement and attention. Such attention includes perception and research, but recognizes the awareness of the body through its organs of the minute and large

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[21] Waddington C.H. *Towards a Theoretical Biology, 4: Essays,* (Edinburgh University Press, 1972), p. 274.

[22] Fisher, Allen. "The Poetics of the Complexity Manifold," in *Boundary 2,* New York (spring 1999), p. 117.

[23] Olson, Charles. *Proprioception* (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1965.

context involving at one level the heart and lungs, at another an awareness of gravity and sunlight in relation to the planet.

Proprioception invokes attention to facture and to artistic production as part of aesthetic reception and aspects of that attention are inevitably corporeal. W. Grey Walter noted that, "… the Greeks, seeking a habitation for the mind, could find no better place for it than the midriff, whose rhythmic movements seemed closely linked with what went on in the mind … Old ideas are not always as wide of the mark as they seem. The rhythm of breathing is closely related to mental states. The Greek word for diaphragm, *phren,* appears in such everyday words as *frenzy* and *frantic,* as well as in the discredited *phren*ology and the erudite schizo*phrenia.*"[24] Attention to corporeal experience was further considered by John Cage. After Cage entered a soundproof chamber at Harvard University, he wrote, "I … heard two sounds, one high and one low. When I described them to the engineer in charge, he informed me that the high one was my nervous system in operation, the low one my blood in circulation."[25] It is proprioception that is active when, after Robert Rauschenberg factured his first black painting at Black Mountain in 1951. He applied black matt paint to the canvas with a roller, a process he had used to facture his white paintings the year before. He then experienced what Helen Molesworth named "a sense of an uninteresting failure". She notes, "He quickly returned to texture for a sense of touch, an excitation of the senses. The problem emerged: how to create a texture more bodily in nature than gravel, to register the body more concretely than a shadow?"[26]

The term *facture* has been used in this book to replace such words as "make" or "create", which often imply completions or finished products. Artistic production involves both facture and reception. This idea derives both from many artists' ideas of process in their art and their meanings, but also from the contemporary discussion which wishes to include the viewer in the production process of the art. Patterns of connectedness can be further understood after the developments of facture through assemblage as they developed from the patchwork or cento art of Courbet, Manet and Flaubert to the collages in the constructionist art of Georges

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[24] Walter, W. Grey. *The Living Brain* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1953), p. 40.

[25] Cage, John. *Silence,* Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1961) p. 8.

[26] Molesworth, Helen (1993) "Before Bed" in Branden, Wayne Joseph and Leo Steinberg, eds. *Robert Rauschenberg, October Files* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2002), p. 76.

Braque, Pierre Reverdy and Pablo Picasso. The preference in cento art to simulate a realism from different elements, was transformed by the radical juxtaposition evident in constructionist art named "Cubism" and the various developments that immediately followed it, such as Russian Modernist practice. A different development in facture using collage was then introduced by Dada and the post-Dada, Surrealist art of Max Ernst, Tristan Tzara and André Breton.

Facture has many components, the initiating practices can be thought of as *project schema* or plan, *conceptual programme* within the plan, and *research.* To begin with, consider the concept of the project schema that can be an unscripted notion or a precise plan, both and either of these. Each project has a different schema, furthermore, at another level, each project could be the aesthetic of a different poetics, deliberately or incidentally so. Each project demands its own analysis and comprehension. Application of one analysis on one project can be used on the next, but it may not work, what is more, it may have been designed to deliberately not work. A casual observation can be made, perhaps that's the overall aesthetics, a demanded breakage from the expectation, to trip the self in its own stride. Fracture can lead to meaning that the process of facture, from the constructivist idea of putting together as a process of production, derives from materials that are in a state of aesthetic complexity different from the aesthetic state of the poet facturing. Each project is different in schema, more than one project can be under way during the same place. The complexity of facturing a poem with an unfinished canvas on the easel next door. The activity of painting with the internal energy of the inconclusive research under way, or the half completed verse on the computer down the corridor.

The project may be differentiated from the *conceptual programme* by recognizing that the latter concerns the machine or apparatus for each project. Sometimes this is a deliberate innovation from earlier work, sometimes this has to do with stance, or a second voice, projected as an other vociferated by the poet. Clearly the ideas of project schema and conceptual programme overlap. A conceptual programme which relies on a prefigured structure clarifies the project schema; in another example the schema may be both diagrammatic and epistemological and its limits will be deliberately in a state of proposal and breakage from the proposal, in a process-showing method that quietly works through transformations of the pages already written. A work may be undermined by additions and extractions, and this may result in extra works or large gaps in the main text.

The term *research* is being used for the work in poetry and painting that is carried out in parallel with work in the factory, in the laboratory, and in the process of facture. Irrespective of the different schema and *spacetime* parameters, two or more programmes of research may be underway at once. The results from the research sometimes directly feature in a poetry sequence or painting, sometimes they feature differently in both. Sometimes they deliberately feed each other, sometimes their parity is incidental.

The bringing together of many elements, that might involve a range of periods and places, sometimes referring to a memory of other artifacts or events, sometimes speculating on new outcomes, has been an insistent activity in artistic practice over very many years. This leads to a variety approaches to artistic fruition. In Europe some of these references to earlier artifacts are exemplified by the use of *grisaille* in the Italian Renaissance and the *cento* facture in Victorian History and Orientalist pictures. These features were partly articulated by Aby Warburg through his use of the term "simulation". The practice set up precedents and opportunities which technology, such as photography and multiple-print production, helped to develop. In 1983 Jean Baudrillard published the development of a theoretical expansion combining from these various methods and opportunities into a book he titled *Simulation.*[27] The term can be summarized as reproduction of the already reproduced. Where fifteenth-century *grisaille* had given visual quotation in *trompe l'oeil* stone, Victorian *cento* represented the real through photographic patchworks simulating the paintings of the Realists.[28] This was conceptually radicalized in Max Ernst's collage, where the *spacetime* of inner reality and the *spacetime* of external perception of reality were presented in one *spacetime*, on one picture plane. For Baudrillard this became considerably extended such that "*Counterfeit* is the dominant scheme … from the Renaissance to the industrial era …" "*Production* is the dominant scheme of the industrial era" and "*Simulation* is the reigning scheme of the current phase that is controlled by the code … the arbitrary sign begins when, instead of linking persons in an unbreakable reciprocity, the signifier starts referring back to the disenchanted universe of the

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[27] Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulations*, translated by Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman (New York: semiotext(e), 1983).

[28] For example William Powell Frith's 1858 *Derby Day* (Queen's collection) or Edward John Poynter's 1867 *Israel in Egypt* (Guildhall, London). *vid.* Allen Fisher. "Aspects of Simulation and Discourse in Sir Edward John Poynter's Painting *Israel in Egypt," Talus* 9/10 (London, 1997).

signified … The modern sign dreams of the signs of the past and would well appreciate finding again, in its reference to the real an *obligation:* but what it finds again is only a *reason,* this referential reason, this real … And still today the nostalgia for a natural referent of the sign is still alive …"[29]

There is an extensive use of simulation in artifacts factured in U.S. America and Europe between 1945 and 1969. After the American battle against Japan in the Pacific towards the close of World War II, Joe Rosenthal factured a photograph that simulated the flag raising on Mt. Suribachi, Iwo Jima, in 1945[30]; this became the basis of the sculpture representing that victory in front of the Washington White House. In July 1969, American astronauts planted a plastic simulation of a flapping flag on the surface of the windless Moon.[31] Discussion of simulation could begin here. In 1964, Marshall McLuhan wrote that humankind approaches the final phase of the extensions of the technological simulation of consciousness, when the creative process of knowing will be collectively and corporately extended to the whole of human society, much as we have already extended our senses and nerves by the various media.[32] This recalls Norbert Wiener in 1950, *The Human Use of Human Beings,* and his attention to the human oppression of humankind. McLuhan's sense of simulation scrapes against earlier descriptions from Francis Bacon, but more recently simulations on movie sets and digital sound studios and what the art historian Aby Warburg named, "The style of simulated classical sculpture", by which he means *grisaille* in an engraving or drawing. Warburg recognized that simulation "confines the coinages of the *revenants* [those returning from absence] in the distant shadowy realm of the explicit metaphor which is essentially the same as the triple typology [of Christian art]. … The creation of *grisaille*-men as an act of

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[29] Baudrillard 1983, pp.83-86.

[30] Sandler, Stanley. *World War II in the Pacific: An Encyclopedia* (New York and London: Garland, 2001).

[31] Signature DVD (2005).

[32] McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media, The Extension of Man* (London: Sphere Books, 1971), p.11.

artistic self-control. … The strength of the artist in keeping [ancestral] forces at bay without forfeiting their vitalizing influence is symbolized in the artistic means of the *grisaille*."[33]

Two of the characteristics of American art in the 1950s still prominent today are plurality and simulation. Plurality results from the changing of boundaries and the quantitative increase in geographical awareness and access. Simulation reproduces the already-reproduced in an age of multi-media that fuels the quantitative spread of mass communication. Plurality was contemporary with an acceptance of uncertainty and an active process of boundary breaking and expansion in which the commodity fetish was transformed then and subsequently into a fetish for techniques and precisions or breakages from them. Simulation was most readily achieved through collage in which more than one reality interacted on the same plane and produced a disrupted *spacetime*. American visual art factured in the 1950s provides part of the rich basis for these characteristics still prevalent in the 1990s. The 1950s witnessed the further development of collage art and processes of recurrence in a period which also saw the transformation of gestural and Expressionist modes into new appraisals of figuration and commercial or brand name images.

During the Voyager I journey which took off in 1977, and came close to Jupiter in July 1979, two photographs were issued by Finlay Holiday Films from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory of NASA. They both show the same volcanic caldera venting gasses on Jupiter's satellite Io. The first photograph shows the event imaged in heavy pixilation by the electronics as they were received from the radio signals, the second shows the event re-imaged and simulated so that it can be better read and then used by the news media. Instead of extended discussions of simulation, this book considers that a discussion of assemblage could be advantaged by demonstrating through example how facture occurs or what some of the subsequent results encourage in consciousness. This juxtaposes with the recognition that an engagement with the demands of proprioception could be undermined by assemblage facture. Rather than a disadvantage however, this is a necessary outcome; the idea that methodological concerns should lead to singular focus would be a demonstration of unwanted damage that undermines sensitive thought.

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[33] Warburg, Aby. Notebook (1929) in Gombrich, E.H. *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1970), pp. 247 & 296.

The radical and significant facture of assemblage in the twentieth century has been collage. Collage demonstrates the use of more than one reality on the same picture plane, which thus develops or transforms the understanding of consciousness into a multiple *spacetime.*

A subsequent aesthetic is made clear through the work of Max Ernst, Hannah Höch and their Dada contemporaries. In the preface to his 1920 Paris exhibition, Ernst wrote, "The belief in an absolute time and space seems to be vanishing. Dada does not pretend to be modern. It regards submission to the laws of any perspective as useless. Its nature preserves it from attaching itself, even in the slightest degree, to matter, or from letting itself be intoxicated by words. It is the marvelous faculty of attaining two widely separate realities without departing from the realm of our experience; of bringing them together and drawing a spark from their contact; of gathering within reach of our senses abstract figures endowed with the same intensity, the same relief, and other figures; and of disorienting us in our own memory by depriving us of a frame of reference …"[34]

This was anticipated by Comte de Lautréamont, who in 1868-70 famously demonstrated assemblage and partly introduced collage as a method in *Chants de Maldoror,* "He is as handsome as the retractility of the claws in birds of prey; or, again, as the unpredictability of muscular movement in sores in the soft part the posterior cervical region; or, rather, as the perpetual motion rat-trap which is always reset by the trapped animal and which can go on catching rodents indefinitely and works even when it is hidden under straw; and, above all, as the chance juxtaposition of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissecting table!"[35]

André Breton noted that in Max Ernst's 1920 collages "surrealism immediately received its full vindication. They contained a statement of visual organization that was entirely fresh and yet corresponded to what was intended in poetry by Lautréamont and Rimbaud. I well remember the occasion when Tzara, Aragon, Soupault and I first discovered the collages of Max Ernst; we all happened to be at Picabia's house at the very moment when they arrived from Cologne, and they moved us in a way we were never to experience again. The external object had broken away from its habitual environment. Its component parts had liberated

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[34] Ernst, Max. *Beyond Painting and other writings* (New York: George Wittenborn, Schulz, 1948).

[35] Lautréamont, Comte de. *Maldoror and Poems,* trans. by Paul Knight (London: Penguin Books, 1978), pp. 216-217.

themselves from the object in such a way that they could set up entirely new relationships with other elements, escaping from the reality principle and yet gaining a certain importance on the real plane (disruption of the notion of relation)."[36]

Discussing the work of Réquichot in 1973, Roland Barthes notes "The fundamental form of repugnance is agglomeration; it is not gratuitously, for mere technical experimentation, that Réquichot turns to collages; his collages are not decorative, they do not juxtapose, they conglomerate … their truth is etymological, they take literally the *colle,* the glue at the origin of their name; what they produce is the glutinous, alimentary paste, luxuriant and nauseating, where outlining, cutting-out – i.e., nomination – are done away with."[37]

An understanding of the complexity of assemblage may then be considered through the works of Robert Rauschenberg and William S. Burroughs. Rosalind Krauss wrote, "In the particular way that Rauschenberg enforced a part-by-part, image-by-image reading of his work, he guaranteed that the experience of it would share with language some of its character of discourse. The encounter with one image after another would, that is, demand an attention to a kind of temporal unfolding that was like that of hearing or reading a sentence … What Rauschenberg was insisting upon was a model for art that was not involved with what might be called the cognitive moment (as in single-image painting) but instead was tied to the *durée* [the duration] – to the kind of extended temporality that is involved in experiences like memory, reflection, narration, proposition."[38]

The procedures used in the books by William S. Burroughs, published in Paris in 1959-1962, encompass experiments with film-makers (such as Anthony Balch), artists using computer generation (such as Ian Sommerville) and other visual artists (in particular the work of Brion Gysin and Claude Pélieu). In 1964, recalling the 1958 beginnings, Gysin wrote:

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[36] Breton, André. "Genesis and Perspective of Surrealism in the Plastic Arts" in Breton. *What is Surrealism?* (London: Pluto Press, 1978), p. 223.

[37] Barthes, Roland. "Réquichot and His Body" in *The Responsibility of Forms,* trans. by Richard Howard (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), p. 211.

[38] Krauss, Rosalind. "Rauschenberg and the Materialized Image" in *Artforum* 13, no.4 (December 1974), p. 41.

"While cutting a mount for a drawing in room #25, I sliced through a pile of newspapers with my Stanley blade and thought of what I had said to Burroughs some six months earlier about the necessity for turning painters" techniques directly into writing. I picked up the raw words and began to piece together texts which later appeared as 'First Cut Ups' in *Minutes to Go* …"[39]

Talking to Eric Mottram at the BBC in 1964, Burroughs notes, "Brion Gysin … has used what he calls the cut-up method to place at the disposal of writers the collage used in painting for 50 years."[40] In the *Paris Review* interview, with Conrad Knickerbocker, in 1965, "… if I wanted to make a cut-up of this [*picking up a copy of* The Nation], there are many ways I could do it. I could read cross-column; I could say: 'Today's men's nerves surround us. Each technological extension gone outside is electrical involves an act of collective environment. The human nervous environment system itself can be reprogrammed with all its private and social values because it is content. He programs logically as readily as any radio net is swallowed by the new environment. The sensory order.' You find it often makes quite as much sense as the original … cut-ups make explicit a psycho-sensory process that is going on all the time anyway. Somebody is reading a newspaper, and his eye follows the column in the proper Aristotelian manner, one idea and sentence at a time. But subliminally he is reading the columns on either side and is aware of the person sitting next to him. That's cut-up …"[41] This is further established when he notes, "You remember Korzybski and his idea of non-Aristotelian logic. Either-or thinking just is not accurate thinking. That's not the way things occur, and I feel the Aristotelian construct is one of the great shackles of Western civilization. Cut-ups are a movement towards breaking this down."[42]

The concept of *spacetime* first arose from the mathematical properties of Lorentz transformations, the resulting rhetoric for reality in our *spacetime*, which imply that space and time should not be treated individually but rather as an inseparable whole. This fusion was

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[39] Gysin, Brion, with texts by William S. Burroughs and Ian Sommerville. *Let the Mice In* (New York: Something Else Press, 1973), p. 4.

[40] Mottram, Eric with Burroughs, William S. *Snack* (London: Aloes Books,1975), p. 7.

[41] Burroughs, William S. "St. Louis Return" and "The Art of Fiction" interview, *Paris Review* 35 (1965), pp. 25-26.

[42] Ibid., p. 27.

articulated by Hermann Minkowski, inspired by Einstein's "special theory of relativity". In September 1908 Minkowski said, "Henceforth space by itself, and time by itself, are doomed to fade away into mere shadows, and only a kind of union of the two will preserve an independent reality."[43] This needs further context, because the *spacetime* of collage is not simply empirical or the consequence of perception. Firstly, through the research of M. Merleau-Ponty, "Psychologists often say that the body image is *dynamic*. Brought down to a precise sense, this term means that my body appears to me as an attitude directed towards a certain existing or possible task."[44] And indeed its spatio-temporality is not, like that of external objects or like that of "spatio-temporal sensations", *a spatio-temporality of position,* but *a spatio-temporality of situation*. Secondly, what is actually perceived of a collage by Max Ernst is often that of a flat two-dimensional image, without depth, and which is read, so-to-speak, from left to right, in narrative-time. Thus it can be understood that the *spacetime* of collage in which two realities are together on the same picture plane, is in fact a philosophical or rhetorical concept and not a perceptual, empirical one. "We actually live mythically and integrally, as it were, but we continue to think in the old, fragmented space and time patterns of the pre-electric age."[45]

Erwin Panofsky noted, "Iconography is that branch of the history of art which concerns itself with the subject matter or meaning of works of art, as opposed to their form."[46] This method therefore either contrasts or complements patterns of connectedness. Panofsky describes the differences between *Pre-iconographical description*: "Primary or natural subject matter" (factual or expressional, the world of artistic motifs); *Iconographical analysis* in the narrow sense of the word: "Secondary or conventional subject matter" (the world of images, stories and allegories); and *Iconographical interpretation* in a deeper sense: "Intrinsic meaning or content" (the world of "symbolical" values).[47]

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[43] Minkowski, H. "Space and Time" (1908) in J.J.C. Smart, ed. *Problems of Space and Time,* New York & London: Macmillan and Collier Macmillan, 1976) p. 297.

[44] Merleau-Ponty, M. *Phenomenology of Perception* (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962) p. 100.

[45] McLuhan 1971, p. 12.

[46] Panofsky, Erwin. *Studies in Iconology. Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York: Icon Editions, 1972), p. 3.

[47] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

Charles Olson defines meaning as: "That which exists through itself."[48] "That which exists through itself is … *difference.* This thought, unthinkable in classical logic, indeed this thought which was madness, which could only be posited as the contents of an unconscious or of an absolute [on the presumption that such expressions are still viable], belong to the very surface of the world we now inhabit. Thus, the dialectic of structure and content in dynamic conflict is replaced by another dipolar cognitive pair, the pure structural possibility of the world and the fact of the world created by interest. *The question of value, not the question of knowledge, is fundamental. We are not compelled by [the] logic. The choice in a particular situation depends entirely upon the aim and the interest which generates it.*"[49] "The problem for the writer of poetics is the opposite of the logician's: it is always too soon."[50]

The subject of meaning is enhanced by chapter four in relation to the work of R.B. Kitaj. After a recall of concepts with regard to Kitaj's earlier work, it is then viable to view Kitaj's use of emblematic signifiers through the work *THE JEWISH RIDER.*

The multiple text gives the reader many performance-options and chapter five gives focus to Charles Olson's project with the breadth of types of text it permits. Part of the work proposed as poetry is presented as verse, sometimes this becomes a graphic display. Olson's project also includes essays, letters and research notes. From the first writing of *The Maximus Poems* in 1950, Olson's expansion of the meaning of proprioception into the physicality of his facture and performance deals with many issues pivotal to his post-modern aesthetic. Only the first two pages, of his publication *Proprioception,* and a brief post-script, overtly deal with the subject of proprioception. Aspects of the text, that inform the text for performance, are multiple and not simply stage directions or performance criteria.

Charles Olson paid attention to what we can know, he knew that direct engagement with knowledge involved the complexity of what was being said, both from involvement and imaginative understanding, along with conveyance of energy as part of a process of discovery

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[48] Olson, Charles. *Causal Mythology* (Berkeley: Four Seasons, 1969), p. 2.

[49] Byrd, Don. *The Poetics of the Common Knowledge* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), p. 288.

[50] Ibid., p. 5.

and learning. Olson's flux of knowledge provided the substance for his proposals. These proposals were made in classes and private correspondence, at places of education, public conferences and texts and more significantly in his poetry. To give evidence of this can be difficult, fraught with interpretations of what is said, transcribed and written, fraught with presumption and expectation and made obscure by the shift from its first attention to today's context. Chapter seven addresses the attention given to Olson's ideas of knowledge often by his students and often by those that have followed.

The production of any artifact is a consequence of two activities: aesthetic facture and aesthetic reception. Reception is contingent on the viewer or reader's experience and attention. In engaged human activity perception is combined with proprioception, but more casual or inhibitory activities are as often, if not more often, evident in aesthetic reception. Float perception refers to part of this activity, where a casual attention to an artifact has been involved, that is, instead of an engaged attention to an artifact, the reception is quicker and likely to be cursory. Float perception is the kind of activity that might be characterized as scanning and is likely, generally, to encourage a less than reliable aesthetic judgment. But some lapses in judgment might be as much to do with obfuscation. Many viewers or readers of artifacts they are unfamiliar with, either in terms of the genre or in terms of the artifact's intensity, will make a quick judgment about an artifact's efficacy or its readability. The term "crowd out" can refer to both positive and negative results from this. The cultural malaise, repeatedly alluded to in these essays, is clearly the prevalent mode of "crowd out" resulting from a morass of ill-informed or poor attentions or, more generously, what Paul De Man calls a rhetorical blindness.[51] Yet many artists and poets in the twentieth-century have been involved in what might be thought of as positive crowd-outs, in which the use of partial obfuscation has encouraged a deeper attention or a longer duration, has demanded, that is, an attention through the surface crowd-out that permits an unexpected clarity, what Heidegger named *Lichtung.[52]*

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[51] De Man, Paul. *Blindness and Insight. Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1983).

[52] *Lichtung*, a neologism used by Martin Heidegger for lightening, clearing or lighting-clearing, where clearing refers to a space cleared in, for instance, a woodland, *vid.* Heidegger, Martin. *Poetry, Language, Thought*, translated by Alfred Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1975),

The proposal, eventually, is that aesthetic production can be characterized as a "Complexity Manifold", which gathers the aesthetic at all levels and all functions of an artist's or poet's facture, as well as the subsequent reception in which both consciousness and artifact are responsible for what is gathered and held, ordered, disrupted, retained, and lost. Poetics, in this sense, coheres across the epistemological boundaries of scale and energy. An artist's or poet's attitude to and understanding of quantum field theory will affect that poet's experience of gravity, drawing, and reading. How a poet applies an aesthetic stance contributes to a coherence in that poet's consciousness, which affects that poet's capacity to be active differently elsewhere.

In summary it might be useful to discuss some theoretical and practical underpinnings of these poetics. In 1804 William Blake painted Albion walking into the New Jerusalem carrying one of the glass spheres for making electricity to his partner. In 1817 John Keats articulated "Negative Capability" where a person "is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason."[53] Charles Olson was to paste this against Werner Heisenberg's 1927 "Uncertainty Principle" to clarify his poetics in 1950 and 1956. In 1818 Faraday published his essays in philosophy and aesthetics, followed in 1821 by his first conception of "field". In the nineteenth century a range of understandings of truth were discussed, continuing what by then had become a tradition of questioning finite and golden concepts. Such questioning had already started to promote radical change through the work of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and eventually Gerard Manley Hopkins, project schemas had groundings in ideas of visual planning and geometric configuration that needed radical shift from ideas of Golden Section in Euclid and Vitruvius. Conceptual programmes were beginning to establish a difference from the ideas of proportion articulated by Fibonacci. In the second half of the nineteenth century Riemann, Bolyai. Lobachevsky, Gauss, and others had demonstrated alternatives to the linear geometry of Euclid's *Elements*. Baudelaire and Courbet differentiated between finished and complete. Monet visualized the amorphous nature of position and momentum in an age where report of the fleeting was part of the new science of phenomenology. Before the end of the nineteenth century Medardo Rosso and Paul Cézanne had articulated

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pp. 41, 53 and also Halliburton, David. *Poetic Thinking: An Approach to Heidegger* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981).

[53] John Keats letter to George and Thomas Keats, 21st December 1817 in *Letters of John Keats,* selected and edited by Stanley Gardner (London: University of London Press, 1965), p. 68.

the shifts in perception that paralleled shifts in physics. Braque was reading Henri Bergson and Friedrich Nietzsche.

Ideas of order, planning and exact proportions were developed into ideas of complexity, linking natural constants like the speed of light to indeterminacy in quantum theory. For instance, the ideas of ether and space and time were reappraised following the concepts of field in Faraday then Maxwell then Einstein, Hilbert and Lorentz, and others. Electricity and magnetism became inseparable, but human existence could no longer rely on the certainty that potential led to action. In the 1970s understandings of gravity and its constraints on *spacetime* and existential form matched René Thom's analysis of morphogenesis and biological development (promoted as catastrophe theory). "Catastrophe" signals the qualities in each proprioceptive moment, it marks each heartbeat, each electromagnetic shock wave lost in observation of it, felt at each breath as altitude and thus oxygen affected each conducted bar beat, each brush stroke. It became apparent that process and development, like quantum leaps, are step-like or sometimes better characterized as phase transition activities, that conceptual programmes needed to take this into account. Subsequently Mandelbrot's analysis, published as Fractal theory, partly articulated an array of potential truths. All of these factors impinge on research, and indeed become part of the reading for that research. These factors also impinge on transformation, as each sentence or phrase shifts with the step-like change in words. There is no requirement to be sure or coherent in the Western sense of logic and certainty. Non-linearity, lack of sequence and discontinuous narrative are immediately part of the cognition that factures this aesthetic and what it manifests.

When the plan sets out from the poet's or artist's proprioception, it draws in one direction towards dislocation and simultaneously towards the existential situation. In all the directions operation of the plan encounters an archeological *spacetime*. When the plan sets out from this *spacetime*, it comprehends the planet as home and proposes both a dig down and a dig upwards, by which can be meant an understanding made cogent from both historical perspective and geological information, in tow with a comprehension of the star map and its radio expansion. The fossil record provided the Sumerians, Greeks and Egyptians with the basis for a variety of myths. The evident possibility to read patterns, even animal and human forms, from the positions of visible stars and planets and the shapes of particular cloud formations also provided for these myths. The archeological *spacetime* implicitly fields an ecological understanding in all directions and overtly demonstrates the processes necessary to

define the limits to perpetuate existence beyond 2060 (Rockström *et al's* nine planetary boundaries).[54]

Setting out from this *spacetime* provides a focal choice, but in fact a simultaneous occasion summarized as including the existential situation and dislocation. The occasion, irrespective of focus and *crowd-out*, negotiates the parameters of proprioception with all its efforts and realizations of the tangible, the regional and more exactly its *place.* The existential situation encompasses what was once characterized as *Situationist,* which itself encompasses a critique of consumerism and promotes an open, or open field, aesthetics. The route from dislocation to proprioception involves an understanding of *decoherence*, just as all other routes include a confidence in lack, made explicit by *decoherence*.

Before outset, the plan considers the difficulties ahead in terms of precedents that have for too long encumbered poetry. Expectations of centring, coherence and geometric prediction outline merely an indication of these encumbrances. They are derived from Plato and subsequent dialectic and rational method in the name of logic.[55] They are methods that have

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[54] Johan Rockström et al. "A safe operating space for humanity," *Nature* 461 (2009) pp. 472-475.

[55] The range of discussion here should necessarily be tempered; to give three examples: (1) according to Poincaré, maintaining Euclidean geometry and altering physics as needed will keep our total system of beliefs *simpler* than would adopting a non-Euclidean geometry. Following Poincaré, Alfred Einstein argued that some determinations of simultaneity relations between physical events are conventional (Glymour, Clark. *Thinking Things Through. An Introduction to Philosophical Issues and Achievements* [Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997], p. 232); (2) The visible universe seems the same in all directions around us, at least if we look out to distances more than about 300 million light years, but there are contrary views to this. (Weinberg, Steven. *Cosmology,* [Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008].) Weinberg notes contrary views in Coleman, P.H., L. Pietonero, and RH. Sanders, *Astronomy and Astrophysics,* 200, L32 (1988); L.Pietronero, M. Montuori, and F. Sylos-Labini, in *Critical Dialogues in Cosmology,* (World Scientific, Singapore, 1997), p. 24; Sylos-Labini, F. , F. Montuori, and L. Pietronero, *Physics Reports* 293, 61 (1998); (3) a firm view in favor of dialectic logic can be gleaned from Simon Jarvis. "Spirit Medium: On Hegel's *Phenomenology*," *Cambridge Literary Review,* vol.1, no.2. (2010), pp. 157ff.

aided humankind in a range of positive ways and in many commonplace activities remain useful. The work of Euclid and Leonardo of Pisa (Fibonacci), summated by Luca Pacioli in 1500, gave clear access to wonders exemplified and refined through geometry, to be subsequently developed in paintings by Nicolas Poussin and Jacques Louis David, in music by J.S. Bach and Bela Bartok, in poetry by Philip Sydney and William Shakespeare. The Enlightenment embodied much of these aesthetics, from Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza, and Newton, through Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche and Husserl.[56] In 1978 Jacques Derrida launched "a new phase in the process of deconstruction" which he describes as affirmative.[57] He notes, that Nietzsche, "according to Heidegger … in dealing with metaphysics, Platonism and the Platonic tradition, proceeds most frequently by simple inversion which would consist in turning the Platonic propositions upside down, in standing them on their head".[58] As John Leavey notes in Derrida (1978), "Deconstruction" is less negative in Derrida "than the Heideggerian or Nietzschean terms 'destruction' or 'reversal'; it suggests that certain foundational concepts of metaphysics will never be entirely eliminated …"[59] The late nineteenth-century into the early twentieth signaled significant changes to the premise for much of this grand tradition. Leaving the tradition in place for the requirements of its own context, demanding an alternative to this grand scheme in the new complexity.

Poetry gets written and performed as part of a nexus of activities that do not readily separate. Implicit to this understanding is a broad agreement about what performing means. When performance means realizing or enhancing a text, whether by the reader or the writer, then the paradigm that writing produces a completion, a finite object named poem, becomes a redundant concept. A new paradigm is thus proposed, that the poem is part of a process,

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[56] Particularly Nietzsche after Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Félix. *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* translated by Brian Massumi (London: The Athlone Press, 1992); Derrida. *Spurs. Nietzsche's Styles,* translated by Barbara Harlow (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1979); and Husserl in Derrida. *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction,* translated by John P. Leavey (New York and Sussex: Nicholas Hays and Harvester Press, 1978).

[57] Derrida, 1979: p. 37.

[58] Ibid., p. 79.

[59] Derrida, 1978: p. 4., note 11.

which necessarily involves performance of the poetry by author or reader, as part of its process.

In Britain, France and America (and in many other places in Western culture) this paradigm shifted in the nineteenth century, from a singular belief in completion, to an understanding that completion cannot be demonstrated; or rather, that completion is always in flux. The different descriptions of how consciousness can be understood, and thus how the self might be constructed, are part of this shifting paradigm and this has led to changes in how performance may be understood. The cultural manifold of poetry, performance and the self in the twentieth century interfaces the compositional device and conceptual apparatus of simulation, discussed in this thesis.

Vision and comprehension are contingent on processes of facture, the simultaneous proprioception and the aesthetic component necessary for cognition – these are factors damaged by their own realization and expression – damaged by understanding and communication. In a mobile situation, coherence is made vulnerable by the physics of the situation where participants are in danger of lost confidence and are subject to manipulation and exploitation. I have named this situation *decoherence,* which has been derived from recent theories of quantum mechanics.[60] What so alarmed Hilton Kramer was that the criterion for determining the order of aesthetic objects in the Metropolitan Museum of New York during various re-installations of its nineteenth century collection in the latter part of the twentieth century and indeed throughout, as Kramer named it, "the era of modernism," was that the "self-evident" quality of masterpieces had been abandoned and, Douglas Crimp believes, "as a result 'anything goes.' Nothing could testify more eloquently to the fragility of the museum's claims to represent anything coherent at all"[61] The recognition of the cybernetic and electro-mechanical interfaces that inform cognition are unsettled.

One of the understandings that provided partial solutions and alternatives to the dilemma of coherence developed around the work of C.H. Waddington and were collected in the four-

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[60] For example, Baggot, Jim. *Beyond measure: Modern physics, philosophy, and the meaning of quantum theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 228-237.

[61] Crimp, Douglas. "On the Museum's Ruins" (1980) in Brandon W. Joseph, ed. *Robert Rauschnberg*, October Files (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, (2002) p. 66.

volume *Towards a Theoretical Biology* (1968-1972) and the posthumously published *Tools for Thought* (1977). The former included the work of René Thom and, subsequently from Britain, Christopher Zeeman, exemplified in Thom's *Structural Stability and Morphogenesis* (1972) and then in Zeeman's *Catastrophe Theory: Selected Papers 1972-1977)*(1977). The latter included Waddington's term the *chreod.* The chreod provided the basis for the concept of the necessary path in brain activities and thus cognition. This identifies the complexity of aesthetic practice with a bio-energetic engine, in process with a demand to accommodate determined avenues. Aspects of "catastrophe theory" provided the conceptual tool to comprehend how smoothness engenders a basis for rapid change, how abrupt shifts are an outcome from planned order. In aesthetic practice this has led to understanding how pattern production can engender new aesthetic shifts. The three "qualities" displayed by heart muscle fibers and nerve axons proposed by Zeeman continue to be useful. He summarized them in 1972 as stable equilibrium; threshold, for triggering an action; return to equilibrium. For the heart, the return to equilibrium was named a "jump return", for the nerve, a smooth return.[62] The aesthetic practices that derived so much from idealization of natural proportions and measure, radicalized in late nineteenth-century work by Stéphane Mallarmé and in the early twentieth by a range of writers from Gertrude Stein to Ezra Pound to Kurt Schwitters, can now be rearticulated.[63] Thom's radical observations and recordings of embryonic growth, showed the development equilibrium/jump/return-to-equilibrium process as a conceptual tool for a range of natural phenomena, but also of cognitive activity and thus aesthetic practice.

Roland Omnès provides a good summary for the concept of *decoherence*. "The most worrying difficulty in the interpretation of quantum mechanics is certainly the problem of macroscopic interferences, which are apparently predicted by any linear theory and practically never observed so much so that they would look absurd if we were to see them. Reflection on this problem has led to the idea of *decoherence*, which is certainly the most important discovery of the modern interpretation,"[64] which after a stretch of examples notes, "When a history

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[62] Waddington, 1972, p. 8.

[63] Works as diverse as Stéphane Mallarmé's *Un Coup de Dés*, Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons*, Ezra Pound's *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and Kurt Schwitters' *Ur Sonata.*

[64] Omnès, Roland. *Understanding Quantum Mechanics* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 73-74.

includes a phenomenon that is specified by *decoherence*, *there can be no consistency for a later property that would contradict this phenomenon or its consequences.* One cannot logically deny it. It gives rise to an indelible record that retains its consequences, even if it is erased or dissipates. It remains present in the inward details of the wave functions, *decoherence* forbidding the consistency of its negation. Any history that would try to deny it (or its later consequences) necessarily violates the consistency conditions and therefore the rules of logic."[65]

Coherent states, widely proposed by aesthetics and analysis in most disciplines since the Enlightenment, are analogous to classical trajectories of a harmonic oscillator, approximated by a marble rolling back and forth in a bowl. In the classical analogy, a hot amplitude reservoir behaves as if the bowl is subject to random displacements of its centre, resulting in a random force on the marble. For a superposition of coherent states coupled to such a reservoir, a simple scaling law may be stated: the rate of *decoherence* scales as the square of the separation of the wave packets. The larger the size of the superposition, the faster the *decoherence*.[66]

In figurative terms, we are in a state of *decoherence* when we realize with confidence that some aspects of our knowledge are reliant on an interlocutor, a black box between us and the information. In descriptions of the cosmos or of sub-atomic particles, we are unable to use our perception, but must rely on the information reaching us through machines that transform the data into a form we can then interpret. We can be confident in the truth of that data, but we are in a state of *confidence in lack,* that is we can realize what the mathematician, Kurt Gödel meant when he proved that truth was not demonstrable.[67]

The poetics supporting the thesis in this book are developing and this indicates the need for a follow-up. The openings proposed through Michel Foucault's last lectures (1982-84) regarding *The Government of Self and Others* and *The Courage of Truth,* contribute to this

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[65] Ibid., p.83.

[66] Myatt, C.J., B. E. King, Q. A. Turchette, C. A. Sackett, D. Kielpinski, W. M. Itano, C. Monroe & D. J. Wineland. "Decoherence of quantum superpositions through coupling to engineered reservoirs," *Nature,* 403 (2000), p. 269.

[67] Gödel, Kurt. "Über formal unentscheidbare Sätze der Principia Mathematcia und verwandter Systeme", *Monatshefte der Mathematik und Physik,* 38 (1931), pp. 173-198.

development[68], where "*parrhēsia* is a virtue, duty, and a technique which should be found in the person who spiritually directs others and helps them to constitute their relationship to self." In *Milton*, William Blake proposes "To Annihilate the Self-hood of Deceit and False Forgiveness".[69] In *Proprioception*, Charles Olson interrogated the singularity of the self, contemporary with his debate in *The Maximus Poems*. This poetics, first manifest in the aesthetics of collage and later in the theories of Surrealism, came to a new understanding in his proposal through the "Big Traum", elaborated "between chanting and letting the song lie in the thing itself and there canting off what the poem turns out to be, or to put the same in the words of another dream which makes sense to me as disclosing the scheme of discourse which my own persuasion - or the conviction of the dream - strikes me as being the truth of discourse:/of rhythm is image/of image is knowing/of knowing there is/a construct".[70] A proposal he extended through his practice and theory of the performative in poetry through ideas of the breath, parataxis and proprioception, or that activity of stimuli arising from movement in the body's own tissues as they are affected and bring about a complexed *spacetime*.[71] This is the *spacetime* where the self is other, where as Foucault put it on the last page of his final lecture, "there can be truth only in the form of the other world and the other life."[72] The poetics of this are still in the process of being lost and found, as *Place* noted in 1973, through "a general movement of ideas".[73]

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[68] Foucault. *The Government of Self and Others, Lectures at the College de France 1982-83,* edited by Frédéric Gros, translated by Graham Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) and Foucault. *The Courage of Truth. The Government of Self and Others II, Lectures at the College de France 1983-1984,* edited by Gros, translated by Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[69] Blake, William, *Milton,* plate 15.

[70] Olson, Charles, "The Bezel", *Io,* 8, Cape Elizabeth (1971), p. 81.

[71] The important discussion of parataxis has not been included in this volume. The discussion develops from Eric A. Havelock. *Preface to Plato* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), p. 251, n. 7, where he refers to James A. Notopoulos. "Parataxis in Homer: A New Approach to Homeric Criticism," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association,* Vol. 80 (1949), pp.1-23.

[72] Foucault (2011), p. 356.

[73] Fisher, Allen. *Place,* (Hastings: Reality Street Editions, 2005), p.9.