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LIFE, MOVEMENT, AND THOUGHT: DIRECTIONS FOR PERFORMANCE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE AS RESEARCH

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Life activates thought, and thought in turn affirms life
—Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche* ([1965–1995] 2001, 66)

The question of philosophy is first of all that of action
—Bernard Stiegler, "How I became a Philosopher" ("*Passer à l'acte*") ([2003] 2009, 7)

This essay attempts to relate two relatively recent developments in arts scholarship: Practice as Research (henceforth PaR) and Performance Philosophy (henceforth PP). Both PaR and PP seek to combine something embodied and temporal ("practice" and "performance") with something more traditionally discursive and epistemologically established ("research" and "philosophy"), but they have grown separately, with relatively little direct interaction (although certainly individual practitioners/scholars interact with both). These are complex, evolving movements, the identities of which are not only contested but intentionally left open in the interest of maintaining the widest scope of innovative thinking while still providing sufficient structure to thrive. Furthermore, PaR has a number of variations such as Performance as Research and Practice led Research to name just two (see Barton 2018, 4–5 for a more complete list and some discussion of the differences). These variations are sometimes regional but also reflect nuanced differences in the processes and outputs they imply. I will not attempt to disentangle these and will use the term PaR as a general term which has all of these in mind even as I acknowledge that they are not all the same.

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My sense of the importance of this task is informed by Bernard Stiegler's essay "How I Became a Philosopher" (Stiegler 2009) in which he discusses how an act of transgression which resulted in his incarceration led to the development of his philosophical vocation. In the deeply personal nature of this essay in which he conflates his philosophical thought with the actions of his life, I find connections to my own hard-to-define but strongly felt philosophical vocation on which the developments of PP and PaR have had a clear influence. Similarly, the reference to Marx's call for a philosophy of action implied in Stiegler's original French title drives home the social and political stakes of finding a way of addressing this question of action—a question which I believe unites PP and PaR even as they have developed in their own historically and institutionally situated ways. The question of action draws together and renders inseparable epistemology and ethics, and this essay will read PP and PaR as particular instances of this broader drawing together and coupling. As I proceed, however, I will depart from Stiegler, and choose for my companion Gilles Deleuze, whose flashing, evental "life" feels closer to my own vocation than Stiegler's more phenomenological "individuation"—even as I recognize that, united by the common strong influence of Gilbert Simondon, they are probably closer in their thinking than their terminology would make it seem. So Deleuze will guide this essay, but Stiegler will haunt it, keeping his presence felt in the background and returning again at the conclusion.

Deleuze also offers a hopeful method for my daunting task of defining two initiatives as varied and complex as PP and PaR. In the introduction to *Difference and Repetition,* he announces the inauguration of a theatrical philosophy with Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Their writing is populated by characters or personae on whom they comment like a director explaining how the parts should be played (Deleuze [1968] 1994, 9–10). He goes on to clarify that this philosophical theatre is really about movement (10). Deleuze's philosopher-as-director is directing the way his conceptual personae *move*. The differences between Kierkegaard's leap of faith and Nietzsche's Zarathustrian dance are directions or choreography which express philosophy as a function of bodies in space and time.

Instead of describing what PP and PaR *are,* then, I will describe the movements I see them making—directing or choreographing them like Deleuze's Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. The difference, of course, is that unlike the Overman or Knight of Faith, PP and PaR have referents in real life. They are more like characters who are based on current or historical people. I could get them wrong, and something of my own directorial aesthetic will inevitably slip in. Both PP and PaR continue to move and change, and my hope is that my proposed duet, if it doesn't represent everyone's experience with them, will at least give them something to experiment with as they develop.

My starting premise will be that both PaR and PP interpose *action* into the research process. This action has two qualities. It is effective—it accomplishes goals and makes changes in the world. Following earlier performance studies theory such as that of Richard Schechner, Jon Mckenzie has traced the emergence of performance in the second half of the twentieth century as "an emergent stratum of power and knowledge" (Mckenzie 2001, 18), and one way that performance manifests its power is through efficacy. This may involve rendering changes in society or individuals, a manager's effective capturing of profits, or a machine's efficient completion of the tasks set to it.

These models of the power of performance often feature clear outcomes for what constitutes effectiveness, culturally, economically, or technically. Yet Mckenzie's understanding of performance as a stratum of power and knowledge brings into focus the second aspect of the action which PP and PaR interpose in the research process. Consider the postulate in book IV of Spinoza's *Ethics* (IV, P38) in which Spinoza equates power with a body's capacity to affect and be affected by other bodies (Spinoza [1677] 1996], 137). This model of power is not task-oriented but based on interactivity. The action that PP and PaR interpose into thought and research is both effective, in that it changes the structure of the world and affective, in that it interacts in complex and ongoing ways with a variety of bodies and situations. Action is effective/affective. These effective/affective qualities are easy to see in practices involving the movement of biological human bodies through space and time. Speaking of written texts makes this idea of action more obscure, but following on the work of J.L. Austin in performative speech acts, PP has rightly upheld the effective/affective performative potential of writing.

To say, however, that PP and PaR are distinguished from other forms of thought through the interposition of effective/affective action is still not sufficient. There is nothing novel about action within thinking; any epistemological process will have some of it, be it the scientist's experiments and even the philosopher and humanities-researcher's archive and library rummagings. Research and thought involve movement and change, otherwise there would never be any new ideas or conclusions. Yet PP and PaR interpose this action differently—at different times—and in so doing affect the directionality of this movement. It is this difference in timing and direction that sets them apart.

Directional Movement: Equilibrium and Metastability

In Book 7 of Plato's *Republic* (Plato [388–367 BCE] 1989), Socrates directs a movement for learning and thought. His characters are chained in a cave facing a wall on which shadows move as they are cast by a fire. Ultimately, they turn around, leave the cave, and walk up a mountain, where they observe the sun shining constantly and eternally. They move around, up, and out.

As Socrates explicates the allegory in relation to the proposed education of the guardians of the Republic, the movement takes more defined shape. First, the one who is about to leave the cave—let's call him the student—encounters something in his senses which he doesn't immediately recognize, something which calls for further thought. The student inquires about it and so is led down a path of knowledge beginning with arithmetic and ending with dialectics. He moves from the unstable realm of becoming towards the pure Truth of being. In terms of the allegory which begins this chapter in the *Republic*, the student is drawn away from the fleeting moving shadows on the walls of the cave, toward the constant and eternal light of the sun. Deleuze appoints this passage in Plato as the inauguration of what he calls the dogmatic or moral image of thought. Its dogmatism comes from its assumption of a thinker of good will, who even though she may fall into error or other difficulties, and initially is dazzled and confused by the sunlight, has an innate and fundamental affinity with the true.

The dogmatic image of thought builds an epistemological model based on recognition. For Plato, this can be in the form of an immediate recognition which does not require further thought. As he discusses at greater length in *Theaetetus* (Plato [388–367 BCE] 1992), such an immediate recognition is still based on an acquired knowledge which resides in the observing subject—the examples in *Theaetetus* are a ball of wax on which objects of knowledge leave an impression and an aviary in which objects of knowledge are kept captive and called upon as needed to apply to one's observation. Yet Plato also recognizes that some sensual encounters give rise to a deeper thinking. He will return these encounters to recognition through a process which Deleuze describes as "reminiscence."

In Plato's *Meno* (Plato [388–367 BCE] 2011), Socrates leads Meno's slave through a process of articulating geometric principles in order to illustrate to Meno that learning has the character of such a reminiscence. Rather than telling the slave the principles, he asks him a series of questions which lead him through errors and confusion to the eventual articulation of truth. Such a process would not be possible, Socrates argues, if the slave did not already possess this knowledge and thus that the learning was a reminiscence and not a true acquisition. In Deleuze's language, what Socrates provided for Meno's slave was an encounter with a problem which forced thought. Socrates's questioning and the diagramming he and the slave do in the sand are an active thought process, but in the end the slave arrives at a proposition which "answers" Socrates's question. It is this proposition that Socrates claims to Meno that the slave remembers. The slave has gone through a thought or research process—an encounter which is embodied and develops with action through time—and then translates that process into a proposition. To see such a proposition, which is always projected back into a transcendental past, as the "locus of truth" (Deleuze 1994, 167) is characteristic of the dogmatic image of thought. The truth is always already given, and needs only a process of thinking to be transported from the darkness of forgetting to the clarity of expression as proposition.

Plato's upward and outward movement has a clear direction. It passes from one place of stasis—chained in the illusion of the cave—through movement up and out—the actions and dialogues which prompt reminiscence—and into a new stasis—the transcendental past, the constant and eternal light of the sun. Some of the directionality of the movements of PP and PaR are similar to this image of thought, yet the effective/affective actions they insert into the epistemological process upset this. Notably, they don't provide a return to stasis as the outcome of their movement, but instead maintain movement indefinitely. The dogmatic image of thought is not static. It involves clear movement and change, but this movement is circumscribed both in its direction and its duration. It moves, but always *toward* stasis. PP and PaR *resist* this movement—not to the point of suppressing it—but enough to keep it suspended and from reaching its final stasis.

Deleuze grounds onto-genesis and epistemology on a thermodynamic model of the passage of energy between intensities (Deleuze 1994, 117; Beistegui 2004, 265). Seen through this thermodynamic image, the directional movement of the dogmatic image of thought traces a diffusion between two non-reactive equilibrium states: low-intensity unknowing in which nothing arouses the curiosity and high intensity knowledge where the disturbances of sensory stimulus

have been calmed in the eternal solar light of knowledge. Such a movement does not occur naturally. Something must disturb the equilibrium of unknowing and set the process in motion. In the case of Plato, this is the sensory object which forces thought. Unable to account for it by ordinary recognition, the student is forced out of equilibrium and into a process which continues until equilibrium is re-attained in the state of knowledge.

This process seems to be consistent with the second law of thermodynamics, by which all difference cancels over time. Yet such a view does not tell the whole story. Following complexity theorist Stuart Kauffman and physicist Ilya Prigogine, Miguel de Beistegui points out that while near to equilibrium a system will function in linear ways, systems far from equilibrium often manifest varied non-linear potentialities. When certain constraints are in place these systems often maintain metastable situations of non-equilibrium which do not necessarily cancel back to equilibrium. For Kauffman, this kind of behavior accounts for why, even with the second law of thermodynamics in effect, the universe displays creative as well as entropic tendencies, not least the evolution of life (Beistegui 2004, 299–302).

Such is the model for Deleuzian vitalism—a system in which a far from balanced thermodynamic state gives rise to zones of intensity which in turn force movements which generate new forms. This onto-genetic perspective also explains Deleuze's objection to the dogmatic image of thought. While founded on movement, it is a simple movement from stasis to stasis, essentially a form of entropy, a form of death. One of the primary tasks of thought then is not to accelerate the movement toward Truth but to resist it, putting in the constraints that will keep the system out of equilibrium, maintaining not the linear movement toward Truth, but the non-linear movement of life. Deleuze's primary references for this kind of creative, far-from-equilibrium-system are the philosophical descriptions of crystal formations in solutions by Gilbert Simondon and Gregory Bateson's concept of a plateau. Bateson used this term as a way of describing how in his observations of the Balinese culture, social situations reach a certain point and are then diffused before reaching climax (Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987, 22; Bateson 1972, 112–115). In Deleuze and Guattari's hands, this concept describes a system of expressions which attain enough stability to contain meaning, but never reach a climax which would resolve into a dead equilibrium or prevent it from interacting with other systems.

In setting up such plateaus, PP and PaR attempt what Deleuze credits Nietzsche with restoring from the pre-Socratics: "the unity of life and thought" (Deleuze 2001, 66). Yet such a unity is elusive. How do we build and maintain it? We must find the right dance—the proper Dionysian movement to keep the doing and the thinking alive and together. This is a hard problem. It's not simply a matter of breaking the rules or declaring a chaotic anything-goes false freedom. The movement toward stasis must be resisted, but so must the movement toward chaos. The system must stay far enough from equilibrium to maintain its interactive capacity. The setting up and maintenance of such systems is the challenge that PP and PaR must meet, and in their approaches to this challenge their differences begin to emerge. Not surprisingly, it is the equilibrium toward which their methods most nearly approach that each works most vigorously to avoid. PaR has generally taken artistic practice as a starting point and worked toward academic legitimacy through

structures such as PhD submissions. As such it has needed to establish ways in which physical bodies in motion can meet institutional requirements of shareability, referenceability and collective meaning. To do so it contends with the equilibrium of the unexpressive, where practice or performance simply might not *express* enough to enter into discourse, and so simply disappears. PP, in contrast, emerged from a relatively institutionally stable starting point of philosophical thinking in relation to performance and so must contend with the equilibrium brought about by the unstable movement of performance being captured in stable, transcendental Truth.

In seeking to show the differences between PP and PaR in relation to the way they resist equilibrium at different ends of an intensive spectrum, I acknowledge that to effectively construct and maintain a plateau, any piece of research or thought must resist settling into equilibrium in *either* direction. This distinction between PP and PaR, then, relies more on the way in which the historical starting point of each movement has made one form of equilibrium more of a concern and therefore more of a focus than the other. Neither generalization could take into account the range and variety of both forms, but they provide a way of thinking about them that puts their contributions to the larger goal of constructing metastable, knowledge-producing plateaus into focus.

Turning towards Becoming: Performance Philosophy

Performance Philosophy as an organization was launched in 2012—an outgrowth of a conference in Performance and Philosophy in Berlin in 2010 which itself emerged from the Collaborative Research Centre's "Performing Cultures" and the "Performance and Philosophy Working Group" of *Performance Studies international* (Cull and Lagaay 2014, 3). Cull and Lagaay don't describe how the "and" was dropped from "performance and philosophy," in their brief history, but this move seems definitive for the opening of PP as a field. While effective/affective action likely had been interposed into thought before in these communities, dropping the "and" between performance and philosophy explicitly invited them in. An invitation is a long way from a practical method, however. One obvious way in which this interposition could be achieved is by beginning to understand performing artists as thinkers in themselves, but as Laura Cull points out, such attempts can be easily reduced to using performance as illustrations or examples of philosophical ideas understood to stand on their own (Cull 2014, 27). I won't offer a definitive answer to what the proper method should be because that question is at the heart of Performance Philosophy itself. One important theme, though, appears to be an orientation away from fixed knowledge toward something more changeable, experimental, and creative. Cull speculates following Jon Mullarky that PP might be "the practice of a certain kind of openness, or a felt 'knowledge of "unknowing"' in relation to performance as that which perpetually resists conceptualizations of it" (33). Similarly, Will Daddario calls for an approach to PP that approaches thought as something which isn't already known, but which must be worked out through active experimentation (Daddario 2015, 170–171). The implied motion of these stances directly contrasts with that of Socrates's imaginary students.

Socrates saw learning as a turning of the soul from the world of becoming to the world of being (Plato 1989, 209). The orientation towards "felt unknowing" and creative working-out in PP describe

a similar turning, but in the opposite direction. Daddario puts this explicitly: "Performance Philosophers *turn their attention toward* the embodied and verbal/linguistic, sonic, and pictorial languages of these artistic languages [by which he means here practices engaging with a present, ubiquitous "Real"] so as to re-conceptualize what thinking means, does, and is" (Daddario 2015, 169). In this way, PP takes up the gesture of turning from Plato and the dogmatic image of thought but reverses its direction. PP's turning takes its philosophers back toward becoming and all the additional movement and change this implies.

Such a reversed turning is an affirmation in the Deleuzo-Nietzschian sense. It differs fundamentally from the position of those chained and forced to look at the shadows on the walls of the cave because it activates a will or at least a desire. We turn toward becoming by choice, and in so doing affirm our embodied implication into what Deleuze calls "spatio-temporal dynamisms," which we know will transform us. Such an affirmation relates to performance in its imaginative sense of taking on new shapes, movements, and roles—the protean quality of the actor or dancer. Deleuze describes such a protean body as a larva, which plays upon its etymological meaning of something masked or disguised—as an actor in a play—and its biological meaning of an animal in a state of becoming, who unlike an adult animal has the capacity to undergo the forced movements of the developmental process. Daddario characterizes this situation as responding to an imperative, perhaps even a vocation in Stiegler's sense: "doing life is that which we *must* think," and he compares living with this requirement to a people who *must* hug, but lacking an understanding of what this means, end up moving their bodies in new ways and eventually incorporate this new movement into their social structures (Daddario 2015 170–171). Daddario's hugging/thinking without knowing what hugging/thinking is echoes Cull's "felt unknowing" in which what we do know, and in fact affirm, is our own larvality, that we are becoming, that we will constantly be forced into movements which feel strange and transform who we think we might be at any given time.

This kind of affirmation was made clear in a simple and personal way in a keynote conversation from the Performance Philosophy meeting in Prague in the summer of 2017 in which Alice Lagaay spoke with Hartmut Geerken about his lifelong research on Salamo Friedlaender (Lagaay and Geerken 2017). What was striking about Geerken's story was the way in which the phrase "I wrote a letter" coursed through his narrative like a refrain. Geerken's letters always seemed to lead toward unexpected adventures which simultaneously elucidated and brought further and bigger questions into his thought. Most importantly, though, they completely upset his life, forcing him into new movements like Daddario's compelled hugger/thinkers. Geerken's letters are perhaps a concrete example of an affirmative method. They are a clear effective/affective action in the sense that rather than dogmatically making a truth claim about the world they demand a further response. They also blow the imperative to move and change back to the sender, and ultimately establish a metastability through this exchange which resists equilibrium.

Movement and Expression: Practice as Research

Robin Nelson defines PaR by claiming that it "involves a research project in which practice is a key method of inquiry and which, in respect of the arts, a practice (creative writing, dance, musical

score/performance, theatre/performance, visual exhibition, film or other cultural practice) is submitted as substantial evidence of a research inquiry" (Nelson 2013, 8–9). Two aspects stand out in this definition. First, PaR involves a "research project." It is not something someone can do in a more casual way outside of the structure of a specific project. The second is the importance of submitting an artistic practice as "substantial evidence of a research inquiry." In the context of PaR, I believe this second part of the definition implies the first – the methodological importance of artistic practice. It would seem unusual indeed to propose a research project in which no artistic practice was part of the method, but which made up a significant part of the submitted product. This second clause, then, along with the association between PaR and a research "project" appear as the functional part of this definition.

These aspects of PaR are linked to very practical imperatives. Part (though certainly not all) of what PaR "does," is establish a structure by which PhD submissions can be accepted for degrees and texts accepted for publication. Much of its developmental history in the UK has been shaped by efforts of the RAE (Research Assessment Exercise) to develop strategies for evaluating practice, and from the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded PARIP project led by Baz Kershaw to develop modes of research inquiry in the performing arts and ways of evaluating them (Kershaw 2009, 2). This in no way diminishes the depth or importance of philosophical debates raised by and surrounding PaR, but it does condition them in certain ways. Fundamentally, it requires that "research" in Practice as Research be understood as a noun – as something which is sufficiently fixed as to be able to be reviewed. Of course, the first, methodological part of the definition is still extremely important. Nelson goes into extensive detail on questions surrounding the necessity and methods of documenting one's process in PaR. Tellingly though, Nelson is particularly keen to have PaR researchers document "moments of insight" in their process. Such an approach speaks to the often irregular and serendipitous arrival of "insight" within an artistic process but still frames that process as part of a progression toward an ultimate research output of which the insights gained in the process make the constitutive parts. Documenting their arrival clarifies them and bolsters their validity by appealing to their origin. PaR differs from more traditional research not so much in its methods—indeed many different types of research involves carrying out embodied actions—but in its expressive outputs. The essential innovation of PaR is to call into question the forms in which knowledge and understanding can be *expressed.*

Within the dogmatic image of thought, expression works through recognition. The writer finds a way in which to tap into the transcendental past in which the Truth is housed. This might be through a symbolic or linguistic construction but also may be more embodied and processual, such as when Socrates helps Meno's slave to remember the principles of geometry. Expression need not invoke this transcendental past, but it invariably has a relation to time. Some trace of one time makes a difference in another. It is usually a requirement for PaR PhDs that they produce such a readable trace—a "durable record" (Nelson 2013, 26)—which can be housed in the university library. Yet if PaR (or PP for that matter) is going to interpose effective/affective doing into the research process, then it cannot rely totally on these durable products. To do so would risk sidestepping the practice altogether, casting it as a part of a good will movement towards the stable truth. Frequently PaR researchers and their sponsor institutions attempt to mitigate this risk by

insisting that examiners be present for the live presentations of the researcher's practice. Nelson himself speaks to this irreducibility to documentation in his definition by saying that the artistic product is submitted "as substantial evidence of a research inquiry." He appears to suggest that evidence may not point to any concrete conclusion but simply to *a* research inquiry. This use of the indefinite article recalls the way Deleuze uses it to point to singularities which aren't determined (Deleuze 2001, 30). Similarly, Barbara Bolt uses the word exegesis to describe the usually written supplements to her artistic practice (Bolt 2007, 33). Exegesis is a particularly fortuitous word because of its connotations of bringing a sacred scripture to life. The exegesis in this sense truly makes the practice alive even while producing a durable document. Yet the exegesis, even if it is durable, is not the complete research. Ben Spatz offers that repeatable, shareable, and transmissible "embodied techniques" might provide a research-supporting durability to PaR (Spatz 2015, 235–236), and while I certainly agree that such techniques do provide important structures for embodied artistic research just as exegetic texts do, if they are really to sustain the boldness of the aspirations of PaR they must do so not only through their abstract form but also their temporal enactment. In order to generate an expressive action that doesn't appeal to recognition of the transcendental past, the effective/affective action itself must relate to times other than the narrow present in which it appears.

Deleuze frames this problem by describing two forms of time: Chronos and Aion. In Chronos, the past and future are subsumed into a rich and full present. It is not an elimination of diachronous time, but the flow of that change is completely taken into account by an abstracted "present" which sits in relation to the past which developed it and the future which elaborates it. "Being," in Plato's sense of an unchanging reality which underlies the phenomenal flux, aligns with this form of time, in which any becoming in the past or in the future is reduced to what it means for this essential present. In contrast, Deleuze describes Aion as the form of time in which the present is thinned to its mathematical limit between the past and the future. It's the form of time in which one cannot achieve the stability to speak of being but must always speak of becoming. Deleuze speaks of movement as the way in which one achieves a kind of paradoxical present within Aion: "This present of the Aion representing the instant is not at all like the vast and deep present of Chronos: it is the present without thickness, the present of the actor, dancer, or mime – the pure perverse 'moment' [...] It is not the present of subversion and actualization, but that of counter-actualization" (Deleuze [1969] 1990, 168). This idea of counter-actualization is a vital one for Deleuze, and one which he consistently associates with embodied artistic practitioners.

In Deleuzian ontology the real is composed of two elements: the virtual, which are the intensive relations that generate the differential character of reality, and the actual, which are the ways in which these virtual differences unfold in states-of-affairs over time. To counter-actualize is to act in a way which reveals the virtuality of the flow of actualization. Significantly, however, this is not accomplished through a proposition, which in Wittgenstein's definition makes a "picture of the world," creating a deep present of Chronos. Instead, counter-actualization forms moments out of the infinitesimally thin present of Aion. In "the ultimate sense" for an individual to counter-actualize, it is necessary "to attain to the universal communication of events, that is to the affirmation of the disjunctive synthesis beyond logical contradictions, and even beyond alogical

incompatibilities" (178). "The universal communication of events" here refers to the way in which certain events connect in chains of "repetition" which, in the manner of Nietzsche's eternal return are never repetitions of the same but cross-temporal connections which lay bare the virtual structure of the real. This virtual structure is not a fixed eternal picture but a "disjunctive synthesis" by which an event reveals the whole structure not in its completeness but through its continual genesis. Counter-actualization does not arrest the movement of actualization and becoming but resists it, slows it, allowing signs to emerge. The "counter" here can be read not as a direct opposition but as the application of selective resistance which draws expression from the relentless stream of becoming, setting up the productive tension that allows communication between the moments of Aion as the proper tension of a physical frame allows communication between the dancing bodies of ballroom dancers.

Deleuze's Chronos-Aion distinction echoes long standing debates around the temporality of performance. "Without a copy," writes Peggy Phelan, "live performance plunges into visibility—in a maniacally charged present—and disappears into memory, into the realm of invisibility and the unconscious where it eludes regulation and control" (Phelan 1993, 148). Phelan's "maniacally charged present" appears to align with Deleuze's Aion, yet its performance's "plunge into visibility" seems to capture no counter-actualizing traction. Rebecca Schneider offers a more optimistic vision of the temporal expression of performance—one which still affirms its resistance to the stability of the dogmatic image of thought. She sees a metastable intensity in performance that directly challenges the logic of the archive. Following Schechner, Blau, and Phelan, she asserts that performance is not its own archive (Schneider 2011, 98), but contesting Phelan she argues that disappearance is what the archive expects from performance, but that performance uncannily does not oblige:

> When we approach performance not as that which disappears (as the archive expects), but as both the *act* of remaining and a means of re-appearance and "reparticipation" (though not a metaphysic of presence) we are almost immediately forced to admit that remains do not have to be isolated to the document, to the object, to the bone versus flesh. (101)

Put in Deleuzian terms this fleshy non-document is a counter-actualization that rides the difference between the equilibrium of unknowing and the equilibrium of knowledge—within the "maniacally charged present" of Aion while finding the force of the event which connects in disjunctive synthesis across time.

The question again becomes one of method, and similarly to the affirmative method for PP, an expressive method is often the subject of PaR research rather than a starting assumption. Indeed, methodological research in performance has been a particularly fruitful area for PaR, but it raises its own set of questions around what methodological research in performance practice is for. Ian Watson, with high modern practitioners like Stanislavski, Barba and Grotowski in mind, sets the sciences apart from "the creative process being investigated by those concerned with acting. The primary concern for the latter is enriching the act of performance" (Watson 2009, 87). "Enriching the act of performance" sounds like a methodological goal, but it's expressed in vague, aesthetic

terms. Too easily, such an enrichment can be understood as better conforming to a preexisting performance aesthetic—as making "better" public performances. That is, of course, a methodological goal, and it likely inspires some PaR research, which must then be tasked with clearly articulating the aesthetic it is trying to realize. Yet looking at it this way vastly understates the broader potential for methodological research in PaR. If we understand performance itself as method then enriching the art of performance through creative practical research increases its capacity to affect other disciplines, not least philosophy. PaR, with its frequent introspective, methodological researches must always be mindful of the distinction between explicitly methodological explorations and forays into other realms of knowledge. Temple Hauptfleisch articulates a valuable distinction between "arts research as *a study undertaken THROUGH/BY MEAN OF the arts*" and "arts research as *the DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TECHNIQUES AND PROCESSES for making art*" (Hauptfleisch 2009, 44 emphasis original). In a way that echoes Watson, his second possibility seems to consider "making art" to be its own end; yet if we understand art as a process of research or thought it need not be. His two possibilities can intertwine in a renewing circle which like Geerken's letters set up a metastable plateau and resist equilibrium.

Conclusion: Vocation and Remains

In his essay on becoming a philosopher Stiegler argues that Socrates's death inaugurates philosophy by a *passage à l'acte* which links his individuation with the city, setting up an obligation to continue to interpret the laws of the city past his death. "In that regard," Stiegler writes, "Socrates' death *remains* incomplete—charged with 'potentials.' This is his genius" (Stiegler 2009, 5–6). Socrates has acted as a foil in this essay, but in Stiegler's reading, his death affirms not a stable eternal Truth but a radical turning toward the mutable laws of precarious Athenian proto-democracy. Stiegler plays on the two senses in which we could read "*remains* incomplete": the sense of Socrates's death not being completed and the sense of his death remaining in spite of or even because of its incompletion. It remains much like performance *remains* for Schneider, a paradoxical counter-actualization. Socrates in the end performs the ultimate (literally, in the sense of final) interposition of action into philosophy. Like a PaR researcher he submits an embodied action as his research output, slipping out of equilibrium in the final moments of his life. For those involved in PP and PaR, perhaps this is our vocation—to think even to the death. Maybe. But the duet I'm directing for PP and PaR is not so grandiose. The two fields don't seek death but affirm life within thought, and they do so in everyday and practical ways, by asking the questions, writing, performing, developing practices and techniques, carving out institutional structures, and resisting the twin dangers: pure, powerless inexpressivity and stable, changeless Truth. In so doing they act as opportunities, or perhaps as vocations, to adventures which we cannot anticipate but can only affirm.

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Biography

Brian Schultis received his PhD in drama from the University of Kent in 2016. His research built theory around Jerzy Grotowski's Paratheatre and Theatre of sources periods by applying the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari among others. The practical arm of this research, *The Sojourner Project* investigated performative meetings in relation to landscapes based on travel and transition. His current interests involve the relation between movement, threads, and textiles and the attendant questions of tension and release. He teaches at the University of Akron and is an affiliate scholar at Oberlin College, both in Ohio, USA.