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Developing and Contact –
Diagrams for Seriality by Neil Chapman**



‘... the truly philosophical element in every work, be it called literature, art or science (or whatever) is its capacity to be developed. This capacity in a work arises precisely when a reader steps in and, as it were, picks something up to take it further.’

**Copy Press invites you to join
Gillian Wylde
Frances Williams
and Roderick Harris
developing *Diagrams for Seriality***

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***Diagrams for Seriality* by Neil Chapman: isbn 978-1-909570-00-9
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[redshift z = 1]

Roderick Harris

25-06-15

We hear of darkness inside bodies, a core of darkness, the darkness of matter and so on. The enjoyment of these phrases is accompanied by an irksome feeling that the terms available do not quite get a hold on what's sought.¹ In the illusory babels of language, an artist might advance specifically to get lost, and to intoxicate themselves in dizzying syntaxes, seeking odd intersections of meaning, strange corridors of history, unexpected echoes, unknown humors, or voids of knowledge ... but this quest is risky, full of bottomless fictions and endless architectures and counter-architectures ... at the end, if there is an end, are perhaps only meaningless reverberations.²

Dark energy appears to be the dominant component of our Universe and yet we have no physical understanding of its existence or magnitude. Many things about the nature of dark energy remain matters of speculation. The evidence for dark energy is indirect. However, it comes from three independent sources. These are:

- ❖ Distance measurements and their relation to redshift, which suggest the universe has expanded more in the last half of its life.
- ❖ The theoretical need for a type of additional energy that is not matter or dark matter to form our observationally flat universe.
- ❖ Inference from measures of large-scale wave-patterns of mass density in the universe.

Dark energy is thought to be very homogeneous, not very dense and is not known to interact through any of the fundamental forces other than gravity. Since it is quite

¹ Neil Chapman *DIAGRAMS FOR SERIALITY* Common Intellectual no.7 Copy Press 2014 p.15

² Robert Smithson – *A Museum of Language in the Vicinity of Art* (1968) Francis McKee. *The Eight Moves of the Submerged Dragon*.
https://www.academia.edu/13045848/the_eight_moves_of_the_submerged_dragon
(uploaded/accessed 25th June 2015)

rarefied—roughly 10–29 g/cm³—it is unlikely to be detectable in laboratory experiments. Dark energy can have such a profound effect on the universe only because it uniformly fills otherwise empty space.³ [Alfred] Jarry implies that such a science can be written only with an invisible ink, ‘sulphate of quinine’, whose words remain unseen until read in the dark under the ‘infrared rays of a spectrum whose other colours [are] locked in an opaque box’. Such a science cannot be seen except under a light that cannot be seen in a place that cannot be seen.⁴ Quinine sulphate is an antimalarial. Its main use is in treating established malarial infections. Malaria is a potentially fatal disease caused by various types of single-celled (protozoan) parasites known as Plasmodium. Plasmodium are carried by mosquitoes and injected into the bloodstream during a bite from an infected mosquito. Once in the blood, the parasites travel to the liver, where they multiply. The parasites are then released back into the bloodstream where they invade the red blood cells and multiply again. An actual attack of malaria develops when the red blood cells burst, releasing a mass of parasites into the bloodstream. The attacks do not begin until a sufficient number of blood cells have been infected with parasites. Quinine works by attacking the parasites once they have entered the red blood cells. It kills the parasites and prevents them from multiplying further. It is not fully understood how it kills the parasites.⁵

Writing that begins as parasitic commentary on the work of others encourages the corrosive function of words, spinning off in strange and perverse directions, corroding not only reality but ‘words themselves’ as they move farther and farther away from being representatives of ‘Truth’. Mishima's analysis of the function of language here recalls that given by Nietzsche in *Genealogy of Morals* and especially brings to mind Heidegger's discussion, in *Being and Time* and elsewhere, of our nihilistic ‘entanglement’ in language that acts to ‘cover over’ being.⁶ [l]anguage can be regarded

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_energy [Accessed 18.06.2015]

⁴ Christian Bök. *‘Pataphysics: The Poetics of an Imaginary Science*. Northwestern University Press 2002. p.10

⁵ Read more: <http://www.netdoctor.co.uk/travel-health/medicines/quinine-sulphate.html#ixzz>

⁶

<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=SNkLC0bOuWcC&pg=PA52&lpg=PA52&dq=Writing+that+begins+as+parasitic+commentary+on+the+work+of+others+encourages+the+corrosive+function+of+words,+spinning+off+in+strange+and+perverse+directions,+corroding+not+only+reality+but+%22words+themselves%22++as+they+move+farther+and+farther+aw>

as a psychic parasite which has genetically earmarked a section of the cortex for its own accommodation.⁷ Words are alive, like I saw ‘*Felix*’ to be: the printed word carrying a charge of the red and gold⁸ plasmic [electrical, neural] energy. It (the organism) can reproduce through – as – information. (But only certain information – i.e., ‘Acts.’)⁹

The Dark Energy¹⁰ Survey

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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The WiggleZ Dark Energy Survey was a large-scale galaxy redshift survey carried out over 276 nights at the Anglo-Australian Telescope between August 2006 and January 2011. The survey is now complete. WiggleZ measured redshifts for almost 240,000 galaxies over 1000 square degrees of sky for look-back times up to 8 billion years (redshift $z=1$).¹¹ One must say that, at the origin of things, there’s no Big Bang, there’s the Zed.¹² *The Dark Energy Survey* (DES) is an optical/near-infrared survey that aims to probe the dynamics of the expansion of the universe and the growth of

ay+from+being+representatives+of+%22Truth.%22&source=bl&ots=raxbux019a&sig=Y0xETuldGoGhJGHoHiTzlrQhlw&hl=en&sa=X&ei=cAl2Ua_aHoeM0AWtvoDICQ&ved=0CDMQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=Writing%20that%20begins%20as%20parasitic%20commentary%20on%20the%20work%20of%20others%20encourages%20the%20corrosive%20function%20of%20words%2C%20spinning%20off%20in%20strange%20and%20perverse%20directions%2C%20corroding%20not%20only%20reality%20but%20%22words%20themselves%22%20%20as%20they%20move%20farther%20and%20farther%20away%20from%20being%20representatives%20of%20%22Truth.%22&f=false

⁷ Christopher Dewdney *The Immaculate Perception*. 1986 Toronto Anansi. P59. **Christian Bök. ‘Pataphysics: The Poetics of an Imaginary Science.** Northwestern University Press 2002. p.95-96

⁸ [see] Neil Chapman *DIAGRAMS FOR SERIALITY* Common Intellectual no.7 Copy Press 2014 p.23

⁹ **The Exegesis of Philip K Dick.** EDITED BY Pamela Jackson AND Jonathan Lethem. Gollancz London 2011. p.360

¹⁰“Dark Energy” reset in True Type ‘SF Tattle Tales’. ShyFoundary.com

¹¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_energy [Accessed 18.05.2013]

¹² **Gilles Deleuze. GILLES DELEUZE FROM A TO Z. With Claire Parnet, directed by Pierre-Andre Boutang, translated by Charles J. Stivale.** Published by Semiotext(e) 2012. **Z as in Zigzag**

large scale structure.¹³ This dark precursor is what places different potentials into relation, and once the journey of the dark precursor takes place, the potentials enter into a state of reaction, and between the two, the visible event flashes, the bolt of lightning.¹⁴

The Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP) spacecraft seven-year analysis estimated a universe made up of 72.8% dark energy, 22.7% dark matter and 4.5% ordinary matter. Recent research by Christos Tsagas, a cosmologist at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in Greece, has argued that it's likely that the accelerated expansion of the universe is an illusion caused by the relative motion of us to the rest of the universe. If his theory is confirmed, then dark energy would not exist [but 'dark flow' still might].¹⁵ The river of pure digital information, majestically flowing through geological time and splitting into three billion branches, is a powerful image. But where does it leave the familiar features of life. Where does it leave bodies, hands and feet, eyes and brains and whiskers, leaves and trunks and roots? Where does it leave us and our parts? We – we animals, plants, protozoa, fungi and bacteria – are we just the banks through which rivulets of digital data flow? In one sense, yes.¹⁶ That river flows from the perspiration of the first puruṣa incarnation. In the Padma Purāṇa [Uttara-khaṇḍa 255.57] it is stated that the material energy and the spiritual energy are separated by the Virajā River. But no one can understand what that three fourths is, since even this material universe cannot be described.¹⁷ Variation in specifics by species and by gender is great; any spider exhibiting a red hourglass or a pair of large red round spots on the ventral abdomen with an otherwise black shiny body is an adult female black widow. The spider must be lying on its back to reveal the markings.¹⁸

¹³ [21/06\2015].https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Dark_Energy_Survey [Accessed 21/06\2015].

¹⁴ Gilles Deleuze. **GILLES DELEUZE FROM A TO Z. With Claire Parnet, directed by Pierre-Andre Boutang, translated by Charles J. Stivale.** Published by Semiotext(e) 2012. **Z as in Zigzag**

¹⁵ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_energy] [Accessed 18.05.2013]

¹⁶ Richard Dawkins, *River Out of Eden*, 1995. Francis McKee. *The Eight Moves of the Submerged Dragon*. https://www.academia.edu/13045848/the_eight_moves_of_the_submerged_dragon (uploaded/accessed 25th June 2015)

¹⁷ http://vaniquotes.org/wiki/The_spiritual_planets_are_called_Vaikunthas_because_there_is_no_lamentation_or_fear_there_and_everything_is_eternal

¹⁸ [http://spidapedia.wikia.com/wiki/Black_Widow_\(Latrodectus\)](http://spidapedia.wikia.com/wiki/Black_Widow_(Latrodectus))

So far, we could only see the clusters, the dense knots of the web. Now we are starting to see the connecting wires of the immense cosmic spider web.¹⁹ The black surface of the river below spangled like the back of a sleeping snake.²⁰ Like a siphonophore, her work was to wait.²¹ ²²

¹⁹ MPE astrophysicist Aurora Simionescu.

<http://www.astronomy.com/en/NewsObserving/News/2008/05/A%20cosmic%20spider%20web%20is%20unraveled.aspx>

²⁰ **J.G.BALLARD** *The Crystal World* – *Part One: EQUINOX - THE JEWELLED ORCHID* p.39 First published 1966, Panther Edition 1968

²¹ [Adapted from] Neil Chapman *DIAGRAMS FOR SERIALITY* Common Intellectual no.7 Copy Press 2014 p.79

²² Description [edit]

Like other hydrozoans, certain siphonophores can emit light. A siphonophore of the genus *Erenna* has been discovered at a depth of around 1,600 m off the coast of Monterey, California. The individuals from these colonies are strung together like a feather boa, preying on small animals using stinging cells. Among the stinging cells are stalks with red glowing ends. The tips twitch back and forth, creating a twinkling effect. Twinkling red lights are thought to attract the small fish eaten by these siphonophores. The mechanism of bioluminescence is the result of chemical reactions involving a class of chemicals called luciferins ('light bringers'). [source unknown]

An Excavation

Franky Williams

26-6-2015

I begin ... I will begin ... describing my interests and then take three themes/ideas from *Diagrams for Seriality* and try and develop them:

- the particularity of an encounter, the reverberation between conscious and unconscious, the performance of thought, the movement ... hunting ... restlessness involved in the medium of thought
- looking, seeing, mis-attention
- caretakers, work, doing 'nothing' by turning or looking away.

These ideas are of interest to my art practice research Phd and especially to develop a writing and to see what is happening in the writing in and as part of the practice. My research investigates, through performance, movement, re-enactment, subjectivity, the gesture of looking away, within dimensions of artistic practice, as the encounter with art. Performing in which there is a gesture of looking away from what is presented or presents itself as the focus of attention; a turning of attention to the periphery, the edges, beyond, outside, allowing reconsideration in affect, sensation, memory, duration and the possibility of yielding dissenting subjectivities, beyond our 'habitual modes of being'; art not an instrument of communication: an act of resistance.

particularity of an encounter

Page 59: *'The multiple voices of ideas compete. Unruly voices appear which have no concern except to assert their own interests. And the chatter goes on even behind the thinkers back.'*

Page 33, the shop assistant: *'Thus his own unwieldy expression allowed the shop assistant to appreciate a distinction between on the one hand, a speaking self, and on the other, a self listening while the same speaking is taking place.'*

Page 30: *'So it might be said there are those, like my colleagues esteemed colleague who have the facility to juggle what others cannot hold simultaneously, which is to say thought and its performance. That the facility is a peculiar confidence for others, thinking precipitates a contrary effect of distilling doubt in their minds.'*

... this is a hunting and a restlessness, movement and moving through in search of a moment, the moment of an image, an image 'as image' ... and this insight gained itself through movement, a chance encounter from our colleague Mercedes who I met upon the stairs she going up me going down and when we left the building together.

So ... a hunting ... to capture the fizzing ... passages shoring up a 'moment of image', a sliver of image that hovers, or bubbles, or fizzes or something on the periphery from where the writing lies, above a shoring up of perspectives and non-perspectives as sentences ... allowing only a glimpse on the periphery a moment, an image, trying to be captured but always elusive, that dissipates

... this is particularisation ... of an attempt of particularity of the moment of an encounter ... to particularisation of an encounter ... if you were a lawyer you know of further and better particulars ... the lawyers drafting, which use their best endeavours to be succinct to contain what happened, the salient facts ... and the judge is not satisfied and orders further and better particulars of the further and better particulars and the further and better particulars of the further and better particulars of the further and better particulars ... until exhaustion ... but still a gap ... still between narratives ... or being struck out or like when describing a joke or wine tasting ... the gap is clear

Page 23: *'Even now these matters are not clear. I give the account as best I can to indicate the sequence in which things took place. I had assumed my opinions to be stable, my mind made up to all intents and purposes on all the important issues that might come up in conversation. On that basis, I had assumed, confidence could be had. Then it had occurred to me that there may be something to be gained in being less certain- more specifically in being seen to question the assumption of self-*

confidence. To be clear, this was all to a large extent a matter of performance. I had rehearsed, had imagined how the idea would be put and the response it would provoke. That response needless to say was one favourable to my own interests just as expressions of self-reflexive uncertainty are bound to elicit respect.'

And Martin ... *mARTin*

Page 22: '*... when we walked into his room that day ... When we changed our plan that day and dropped in on him unannounced.'*

... and in a reading group the other day ... Jean Luc Nancy ... the diamond ... the image is speaking here maybe...

Or rather, if I understand you, I present one of the possible modes of its sense, one of its possible distinctions, for example, as a physical body and a proffering of voice, as a framed body and an articulation of speech... (Nancy, 2005)

looking, seeing, mis-attentions

looking, seeing ... invested in power relations ... passive ...

Martin ... an artist ...

Page 22: '*the single minded procedures of his work that employ repetitive strategies and operations of not looking – these latter all the more surprising given his work with images.'*

then the value ... isolation of 'a looking' – the capture of a looking ...

Page 63: '*You fear being exiled to a world of banality, where the whole experience of looking at pictures would be reduced to a mere labour of viewing. That's the reason for your resolve not to go back and to look again at Rousseau's Surprised! Tiger in a Tropical Storm.'*

Page 23: *'Then again, to describe the name thus is only a portion of what might be said. A mechanism in reading causes such sequences of letters within words, which can be read otherwise as words in themselves, to be hidden. Indeed there is a mechanism of reading that hides the divisions between letters, so that when we do notice-for instance, by an accidental kind of looking that sees the gaps as material and as positive shapes – they appear as decisive as has asterisks been placed there.'*

... gaps are illusions or mis-attentions ... something like a mis-performance – mis-something 'not quite right' ... a need for fleeting, aberrant appearances, perceptual experiences that do not present themselves as facts to be accepted:

particularly ephemeral perceptual experiences perceptions that seem below or marginal to normal appearance to figure a fleeting relief from the pressure to endorse what Kant calls the world 'as is' ... it's not the same as disavowel, seeing spectres or not looking at all... (Terada, 2009)

... and when referring to Goffman's detailed descriptions of patients queuing outside and a patient suddenly swooping down to examine the tiny piece of sparkly concrete crystal on the ground ... and what of 'attention' Bergson's 'immanent attention' in performance and movement? Attention here is not associated with consciousness *'we see much more than our consciousness allows us to see'* and *'life demands that we put on blinders'* that need to be removed to *'lead to a completer perception of reality by means of a certain displacement of our attention.'*

caretakers

caretakers no longer take care ...

Page 25: *'The Parable of Errands'* and *'THE WORKING DAY TAKES takes on a strange form. From a certain perspective it is hardly recognisable as such.'*

Page 26: *'the activities of the errand takes place beneath the cover of a certain kind of normality. The paradox can be expressed in its sharper form as a series of questions:*

what working day is it that works as cover for work? What work hollows a space at its own heart, a mysterious cavity in which another work might reside? Will that other work not retreat once more to hollow a space of its own?’

... hollowed spaces, dark and mysterious cavities ...

Page 26: *‘The aim may be to win back the forms of work aided by the walking away from, or walking at a tangent to, the days proper business ... there it is again a gesture of turning away, a looking away ...’*

Page 53: *‘role playing is more effectively a matter of playful experimentation. Our acquaintance at the bookshop put it well when he described his own amusement at the way his own identity as custodian of books seems to impel him to follow certain patterns of behaviour ... he sits in languid repose behind the counter while his few customers browse. Often they leave without making a purchase. And yet he is never entirely still. Even when not in conversation-either with a customer or his young assistant – he will imagine himself to be involved in exchanges. While the invented interlocution takes place he swings on his chair, He plays with this or that object picked up from his desk, a pencil, a paperclip, As he does so he finds a style to aid the dramatizing of his thought.’*

... these toy involvements ...

Page 31: *‘MUCH IS TO BE SAID FOR a relaxed attitude towards one’s employees, the shop assistant remarked, especially when they are young ... let the young find their own way through a days work.’*

... art as a resistance that is not driven by tangible outputs ... the caretakers no longer take care ... care is exhausted from the building its components, the people, the employees, visitors, governance exhausting its capacities and intensities and divorced now to supervision of estates that belongs to land-law, finance and objects. Where Catherine Malabou talks of wonder as the structure of auto-affection, and being open to the world where wonder marks the origins of affect that come before thinking, that put us on the way to thinking before the range of modulator affects of joy and sadness that gives powers of acting that make political agency not a permanent violence done to the subject absent of affect and unconcerned.

Page 47: *'most people have work to do and little time to walk aimlessly he reflects ... there is nothing to see-nothing of interest ... as he describes the birds and barnacles, water and movement ...'*

Notes

- Page numbers and quotes in italics from *Diagrams for Seriality* by Neil Chapman.
- Simon O'Sullivan (2006) *Art encounters: Deleuze and Guattari thought beyond representation*, Basingstoke: New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- *Gilles Deleuze on Cinema: What is the Creative Act 1987* (English Subs)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_hifamdISs
- Mercedes Kemp
- Graham Harman (2013) *Bells and whistles: more speculative realism*, Winchester, UK: Washington, USA: Zero Books.
- Jean Luc Nancy, (2005) *Distinct oscillation, The ground of the image*, New York: Fordham University Press
- Rei Terada, R, (2009), *Looking away, phenomenality and dissatisfaction: Kant to Adorno*, Harvard College.
- Laura Cull (2011), 'Attention training: immanence and ontological participation in Kaprow, Deleuze and Bergson,' *Performance Research* 16 (4).
- Catherine Malabou, *Emotional Life in a Neurobiological Age: On Wonder*,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4oFump89W4>

Everything is invested

Gillian Wylde

26-6-2015

Everything is invested, the artist is already in the canvas.

'No ideas but in things.'

When renewal ceases, the form vanishes.

Let's consider our unlikely histories.

A diagram of an interior.

Astonishment doorways, unlikely mild spaces, repeat disjunctures.

Consider anything botanical.

Field spaces, a featureless surface (such as the back of a character's jacket).

Stupider characters.

Self-awareness is difficult to sustain:

No less than water, no more than wet.

The example of silver rain, the mood cannot sustain itself.

Let's interpret or regard set pieces and scenes, whitish/grey rainstorms, insincerity, the infinite void of the forest, forest events.

Encounters that command backlighting.

Consider anywhere that is botanical, establishments where plants are grown for scientific study and display to the public.

Let's feel one another out.

Fuller lungs allow for silence.

The 'hardness' of rain.

His close-up.

His astonishment ...

When difficult, shock him. Reasons are disappointment with suffering.

Be wet with a decent happiness.

The 'inner speech' that is used to describe thinking (not quite accurately) – this model raises questions: to whom is the speech addressed? where does it come from? what value does uniqueness or difference have – or is it simply an illusion?

They belong together and differ from one another like the aromatic or cyclic series of elements in chemistry. If one considers them, both in their development as a whole, each of them assumes necessity and value like a constituent in a mathematical series. And finally they give the word *SERIES* that special meaning by their uninterrupted and exemplary sequence.

Delay or vacillation may have unfortunate or disastrous consequences.

He paused in indecision before saying or doing, she *hesitated, unsure of what to say; one hesitates over publicizing these things.*

Reluctant to do something: *he hesitated to spoil the mood by being inquisitive.*

In motion picture terminology, the term tracking shot may refer to a shot in which the camera is mounted on a camera dolly, a wheeled platform that is pushed on rails while the picture is being taken; in this case the shot is also known as a dolly shot or trucking shot. One may dolly in on a stationary subject for emphasis, or dolly out, or dolly beside a moving subject (an action known as 'dolly with').

The term may also refer to any shot in which the camera follows a subject within the frame, such as a moving actor or a moving vehicle.

When using the term tracking shot in this sense, the camera may be moved in ways not involving a camera dolly, such as via a Steadicam, via handheld camera operator, or by being panned on a tripod.

As a rule when two people do encounter one another they merely cross paths at a greater or lesser distance without noticing each other and the encounter does not even take place.

This course having abrupt alternate right and left turns.

Alternations of direction, schematic workings of things next to other things – repeatedly committing the same offence and typically following a characteristic or predictable behaviour pattern, for example: a shout, a tragic pause, a gesture of terror ...

The entire scene, unfolding of the intimate drama, the point of departure or that of arrival – the intermediary stage, continuous, from beginning to end, the sudden stillness of the image. Rather, it works against the *movement, which* depends on figures moving.

Consider if you will, the outside limit of an object, area, or surface.

Or the point immediately before something unpleasant or momentous occurs: and the line along which two surfaces of a solid meet, peripheries, extremities, lip, canvas, screen, page ... Evolutions and scansions of the temporal flow.

‘Anything becomes interesting if you look at it long enough.’

He has gone looking for the cat.

Falls of rain can be seen.

About nine cats were used throughout the film as the role of Cat.

The vocals were written to be sung in only one octave.

Let’s now consider the particular orders in which related things follow each other: a man foraging a dumpster finds some celery. The ‘already’ stuff of the diagram having two seemingly incompatible properties evokes the absent human body, but then in its absence opens it up to more intense scrutiny (and violence) than if it were physically present. Extreme absence and extreme presence, we watch

both at a distance and in close-up. At any point, one only knows what has gone before. Never what is to end.

It remains incomplete. A continuous unfolding, but once it is over. It is gone, to be grasped in its entirety only in memory.

Consider rain.

Raindrops have sizes ranging from 0.1 to 9 mm mean diameter, above which they tend to break up. As a raindrop increases in size, its shape becomes more oblate, with its largest cross-section facing the oncoming airflow. Large raindrops become increasingly flattened on the bottom, like hamburger buns; very large ones are shaped like parachutes. Contrary to popular belief, a raindrop's shape does not resemble a teardrop.

'Anything becomes interesting if you look at it long enough.' The importance of this minute deviation cannot be overstated.

Consider movements, an event without any cause, film minutes, celluloid malfunctions, consider page 25 in particular, persuasive editing, The excerpt, clip, scene, extract, episode, section, segment.

Think about work, especially physical work. The working day. *He was tired after a day's work in the fields. She frequently took work home with her. He had considered giving up his job.*

For all the reader knows, the declarant of the statement very well could be in both the city and the forest, in which case the premises would be true but the conclusion false. This argument is still a fallacy even if the conclusion is true.

The most overlooked of objects are to be celebrated.

In this instance endings or incorrect endings unrelated to the content are doing a good job.

Each word itself is an arrangement/the story must exist in each word or it cannot go on. Give some thought to the botanical gardens of Paris consider the very large solitary cat, native to the forests of Asia. Give thought to the botanical gardens of Paris. ‘The outside is a peculiar place.’

Doorways are giving up.

The encounter between two disciplines doesn’t take place when one begins to reflect on another, but when one discipline realizes that it has to resolve, for itself and by its own means, a problem similar to one confronted by the other. The very long exposure results in a ‘burnt out’ white image of the screen with no trace of the film. ‘But this is not simply white light; it is the result of too much information.’

Persistence phenomena, ahead of, or behind of, inconvenient, unfavourable ...

Great illusions of continuous movement.

Doorways are letting go.

Think of it this way, composition, autonomous subdivisions, parts of subdivisions, anywhere, subdivisions, loves unkind. His anywhere. Loves unkind.

The differences between the parts are the subject of the composition.

If some parts remain constant it is to punctuate the changes.

The entire work would contain subdivisions which could be autonomous but which comprise the whole.

Proof of proposition, *pretty devastating, huh?*

Characters.

Anywhere or not at all.

Anywhere or not at all.

The autonomous parts are units, rows, sets or any logical division that would be read as a complete thought.

The series would be read by the viewer in a linear or narrative manner even though in its final form many of these sets would be operating simultaneously, making comprehension difficult.

He would follow his predetermined premise to its conclusion avoiding subjectivity. Chance, taste, or unconsciously remembered forms would play no part in the outcome.

Largely self-taught, he developed a style that evidenced his lack of academic training. Such features resulted in a body of work imbued with a sense of mystery and eccentricity.

When filming *Rope* (1948), Alfred Hitchcock intended for the film to have the effect of one long continuous take, but the cameras available could hold no more than 1000 feet of 35 mm film. As a result, each take used up to a whole roll of film and lasts up to 10 minutes. Many takes end with a dolly shot to a featureless surface (such as the back of a character's jacket), with the following take beginning at the same point by zooming out. The entire film consists of only 11 shots.

Tilting, panning, tracking, and craning create a series of new compositions without breaking from a continuous recording of space and time.

As her interest grows, the eye line match – that is the connection between looker and looked is stressed with matching close-ups.

Think of it this way. Even if both characters overtly disagree with each other, there is an overall feeling of warmth and immediacy between them, suggested by their proximity (established in short pans and close-ups) and in the tone of their speech.

I see her, she saw me, she knows that I see her, she drops me her glance, but just at an angle where it is still possible to act as though it was not addressed to me, and at the end, the real glance, straightforward, that lasted a twenty-fourth of a second, the length of a film frame.

A peculiar opportunity may have in fact been missed.

Off Camera: a series of actions are conducted in a certain order or manner. This being the epitome of a vision of England for the international audience, it's perhaps entirely appropriate that the finale takes place in the rain.

During a torrential New York rainstorm, he chooses to impart his message. This is followed by a montage of angry citizens opening their windows. Conventions have become so strong that they can be

exploited to make improbable meanings convincing. In fact, he never left France, and it is thought that his inspiration came from the botanical gardens of Paris.

Once fluidity has entered into the picture we are not far from figure/ground shifts of the sort we experience with ambiguous figures or paradoxical swerves like a collision with contingency that dislodges us from enervated patterns into a charged apprehension of some-thing new.

A scene takes place during a bucketing downpour in Los Angeles 2019; it is raining but with one difference. This time, it's raining inside the house, drenching everything including his father.

We move way way back for a big reveal ...

... Consider the big reveal – a strange oblique encounter of a non-descript Indonesian street corner during a monsoon. A wet dog, a pitcher, a doorway, nothing much happens.

But come the rain-sodden finale, they are transformed into terrifying monsters as they take their revenge on those who have betrayed them, raindrops were made sufficiently visible on camera through the use of extensive backlighting.

Consider backlighting.

Oh dear a disappointment.

Frankly, have you ever heard of anything stupider than to say to people as they teach in film schools, not to look at the camera?

Rain begins to fall into the Room through its ruined ceiling, then gradually fades away.

For any reason concerning such an event would be, in principle, insufficient. Such an interruption of logical nominations is inadmissible. Not only 'nothing happens without it being possible for someone who knows enough things to give a reason sufficient to determine why it is so and not otherwise', but analysis can and must be pursued to the point at which a reason is also given for the reasons themselves: 'Every time that we have sufficient reasons for a singular action, we also have reasons for its prerequisites.'

Response

[0000] + §§§§: Pincher Martin and Diagrams of Seriality

Redell Olsen

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Neil Chapman's *Diagrams of Seriality* begins with an epigraph from William Golding's 1956 novel, *Pincher Martin: the two deaths of Christopher Martin*: 'A thought was forming like a piece of sculpture behind the eyes.'

Except it doesn't.

In the original the sentence doesn't end there. Golding's novel continues on after Chapman's full stop: 'A thought was forming like a piece of sculpture behind the eyes *but in front of an unexamined centre*' (*PM*, 171) (italics mine). The insertion of a full stop instead of the allusion to an 'unexamined centre' is characteristic of *Diagrams of Seriality's* preoccupation with stops, holes and the framing devices that punctuate its surface.

Nevertheless, Chapman's book is very much in dialogue with Golding's novel, even the artist that the main characters visit in his studio is introduced as one, 'Pincher Martin'. That the character is an artist or painter working in a post-conceptual minimalist tradition prompts associations with living artists such as Martin Craig Martin or Martin Creed, links that are never quite substantiated or denied by the text that 'hollows a space' and offers a 'mysterious cavity' (*DofS*, 26) to be filled with the reader's own projections and assertions of identification. These allusions serve as prompts towards Chapman's engagement with

conceptual art practices that use language, as well as the British experimental novel of the 1950s that developed in the wake of the traditions of writing explored in the French *nouveau roman* by writers such as Nathalie Sarraute and Alain Robbe-Grillet.

The main character in Golding's novel *Pincher Martin* has been involved in an accident involving a military torpedo destroyer and has been apparently washed up on a rock in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Golding's prose style reads as a form of fleshy existential escapism that turns and returns to the physical and mental exploration of every inch of the surface of the rock and which details in lyrical poetic prose the hallucinations and visions that haunt him as he crawls over its surface, apparently in a desperate attempt to stay alive. This repetition of crawling around and around provides a form of structure for the plot that is more reminiscent of a live-art durational performance, a format probably now more familiar to post-Fluxus audiences than mainstream readers of the novel in the 1950s. The novel's – Golding's, physical approach to the writing of the body in repetitious action offers a form of performance writing that is extraordinary and unusual in ways that explain the relatively cool reception that the novel received when it was published in 1956. Like Chapman's novel, *Pincher Martin* is concerned with diagrams and repetition. In each of the novels modes of realism are periodically suspended by the displacement of attention to the design and shape of the whole.

On the rock Pincher Martin *reads* the shapes that the seaweed makes: 'There is a pattern emerging. I do not know what the pattern is but even my dim guess at it makes my reason falter' (*PM*, 173). The diagrammatic shape of *Pincher Martin* would at first glance seem to be locatable in this repetitious circling of the rock on which he is confined in the ocean and might be extruded as a series of dense and interlocking concentric circles: OOOO. The action of Pincher Martin as he crawls

around and around on his rock is the action of the reader's double who is also engaged in a parallel activity as she also makes her way across its textual surface in an attempt to make sense of and to stay alive to the extremity of thought and feeling that is revealed as the present and past struggles of meaning-making are flashed up across the pages, as if on so many hallucinatory screens, in the forms of excerpts from: films, dialogues, books, dreams and nightmares.

While the diagrams and shape of these visions can be 'explained' through a literal reading of the novel as having been produced out of the extreme pain and psychosis induced in Pincher Martin; caused by his boat veering off course on a zig-zag path that disrupted the intended route. The shapes and characters of the novel are finally revealed as just that: diagrammatic and artificial props in service to the author. In the early 1970s, Lee M. Whitehead noted that Golding's book 'puts "vulgar conceptions" about the reality of the word in "brackets", as in mathematics one might put a quantity in parenthesis which for the moment it would be distracting to pursue' (Whitehead, xxii). He pointed out that the shape of the novel as a whole, is actually rather like the shape of a bracket: [].

The bracket is an armoured shape, like that of the lobster, one of the creatures that inhabits the island who wears its shell on the outside to protect its softer inside and with whom Pincher Martin identifies while recognising his own difference from it: 'I have no armour and that is why I am being squeezed thin' (*PM*, 187). He is squeezed thin by the 'unexamined centre' that slowly but methodically reasserts itself ('Oh yes! I understand the pattern' (*PM*, 210)). In Golding's novel this pattern comes in the form of a closing of the bracket: ']', around the narrational and experimental loopings of the main body of poetic prose that occupies the body of the novel, the soft body of the lobster inside its shell: [OOOO].

The reassertion of a conventional narrative frame through the use of direct speech and dialogue in the final section threatens to explain away

the rest of this extraordinary novel as nothing more than a psychotic diversion, a ‘near miss’, perhaps as meaningless as the wranglings over the ownership of the island on which the rock in the book is rumoured to be based: Rockall. As Whitehead playfully asserts: ‘What “Rockall” just misses is being “Fuckall”, an emphatic term used by seamen to mean “nothing at all” (Whitehead, 25).’

Disappointingly, the diagrammatic shape of the bracket makes logical sense of the psychosis that has been so artfully and elegantly played out – perhaps too late to save us from identification with and therefore the suffering of this man *rather than* a diagrammatic character on a rock. In short the patterning reveals that there was never a threat to the actual diagrammatic whole of the novel: those concentric circles of illusory psychotic imaginings were just [*that*]. The character was dead all along and we inattentive readers had just missed the moment of his demise. This is the same as saying that we missed the first of the diagrammatic brackets, the existence of which became all too clear in the final chapter of the novel. At the end of Golding’s novel the ‘centre’ reasserts itself in the recovery of the body of Pincher Martin which is confirmed by the presence of the disc shaped nametag: the hole on to which identity has been inscribed.

By contrast, in Chapman’s novel, there is a visit the artist, ‘Pincher Martin’ in his studio and the characters regard, ‘A large canvas by the window on which he had written his name’ (*DofS*, 22). The other canvases are turned to the wall and this prompts the question as to what we would see if we were able to turn them around to face us. One suspects they would be blank, as blank as the white diagrammatic spaces that punctuate the text. The characters alert us to the possibility of looking between objects, to how to see ‘the gaps in the material as positive shapes’. This would include the possibility of looking between the gaps in the plot and its repetitions and even between the words on the pages that wrap around

the visual white spaces that could allude to artworks or exhibitions spaces. *Diagrams of Seriality* is concerned with frames and framing, with the recognition of our own assessment of the multiple absent shapes that punctuate this narrative and each version of events. These are questions that run parallel to those concerned with how to frame a story or a painting. The book is also concerned with the paradoxical holes that construct our memory. The characters go to a gallery, see something, go away and can't remember what it was. The apparent vacuity at the centre of an artwork is replaced by the experience of gallery going, of a diagrammatic version of experience. The text seeks to raise considerations about our awareness of our own projections into the empty spaces or empty frames that punctuate the text and indeed onto the film of our everyday existence.

As in Golding's *Pincher Martin* there is a sense in Chapman's novel that language is not enough to describe or articulate the environment: 'There is no answer in your vocabulary' (*PM*, 211), there is 'an irksome feeling that the terms available do not quite get a hold of what's sought?' (*DofS*, 15).

The language of Chapman's book is far more clinical, minimal and constrained than the experimental seaweed-haggard psychotic prose of its forerunner. Yet Chapman's diction is often archaic by comparison with Golding's, for example, 'Remembering that feeling, my thoughts return once more to our notable friend's esteemed colleague ...' (*DofS*, 43), which is perhaps a quotation but whether appropriated, procedurally or intuitively produced it casts the diction further back than the novel of the 1950s and more towards nineteenth century traditions of the novel. The effect is to distance the characters, to further stylize their gestures and actions as one might consciously render a copy of a drawing in another media, or a photograph as an etching with a studied anachronistic swerve.

Chapman's book is certainly diagrammatic in its construction but more in relation to the seriality of its motifs than through a plan that might include the possibility of another teleological order within itself. There is certainly no sense that its diagrammatic shape threatens to overturn the patternings of the surface texture from within. If the book signals the elision of the possibility of a lurking 'unexamined centre' in its epigraph in doing so it also deftly sidesteps any discomfiting associations that might be made between the role of the author or artist and some other theologically inspired plan. If any such latent diagrammatic bracket were to be revealed by Chapman, then the whole text could necessarily be so over determined as to mark itself as impermeable and closed. The nearest it comes to this, in terms of a recognition of a central determining force that might be at work, are in the comparisons between the spaces of the art gallery, the bookshop and the shop. In these passages the 'work' of each character is alluded to. This includes a discussion of a 'colleague' who is writing 'on exhibition walls'. Whether this is an art piece in its own right, or a critical act to be read as an adjunct to the work *on* the wall, or indeed in relation to the name of the artist inscribed *on* the canvas, is deliberately and grammatically left indeterminate and clearly invites comparison with the novel itself. These incidents seem to concern themselves with the location of value and meaning in relation to the work of art and the work of art that has been made in language; either as criticism or as an art piece on its own terms as art writing. Each, the novel suggests, is determined by the context and economics of interpretation. Chapman begins to hint at questions around the assumed hierarchies of each type of work: the relationship between the value of *the* work as opposed to 'work' in general. This relationship between work, artifice and value is also figured by Chapman in his evocation of the painter, *Le Douanier* Rousseau (Henri Rousseau 1844-1910) who was both a self-taught artist and taxman who painted pictures of tropical jungles and most famously of a tiger caught in

the rain ('Surprised!' 1891, National Gallery) but who had never actually left Paris and had instead gained his inspiration from the Parisian public gardens and from illustrations in books.

The concentric circles, joining of dots and the making of shapes in Chapman's book appear very differently from the diagrammatic whole of Golding's *Pincher Martin*. Rather than an implied centre or use of a single convenient bracket, *Diagrams of Seriality* invokes the curlicue as its diagrammatic foil:

'The story was organised on the page in sequences of paragraphs each separated from the next by a tiny emblem of fine and intricate design. While taking the place of words the little curling mark did not mean anything, at least not in the way words do. Nor did it represent any thing as pictures do. And yet it directed reading. It compelled his attention' (*DofS*, 37).

Golding's first iteration of the shape of the bracket is not seen until we reach the end of the novel and realise that the character has already died. Golding's novel dramatises the fantasy of the eruption of poetic psychosis that apparently threatens to overwhelm the novel: what appeared to be the death of the diagrammatic-author is revealed as a choreographed staging of an existential crisis that has allowed an exploration, within the designated bracket of the poetic language, before a neat return to closure.

The reading process of Chapman's book is more systematically interrupted and marked by a series of spaces or blank visions that unsettle the surface of the page and further highlight the elisions of a narrative which has been constructed to ensure these empty holes in both character and plot remain unresolved. These spaces offer a series of rest points or structural pauses that seem to serve as frames and invitations to the reader towards their own diagrammatic questioning of the function and

potentiality of at least the spaces of books, bookshops, paintings and galleries. Any claim for the radical nature of Chapman's book rests on our interpretation of his use of the curlicue, whether it is merely decorative or integral to the structure of the whole? Like the only remaining extant sketches of a lost building that was perhaps once a more conventional novel, these show up as a series of fenced off w/holes, apparently delineated in avoidance of our accidental fall, towards some as yet, 'unexamined centre[s]' that continue to remain enigmatically quite off limits.

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