POETRY & POETICS

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Poetry & Poetics
No. 2

John Paetsch
anonymous ascesis & "c"

anonymous ascesis

Providing a soundtrack for this essay, Taku Unami and Taka-
hiro Kawaguchi's album Teatro Assente *offers the precisely
the contaminant to the "problem of materialist excess"
Paetsch addresses in the pages to follow. Working through*
Teatro Assente *via Spinoza and Badiou, Paetsch considers
potential of "singular interrogation" in J. Gordon Faylor's*
Docking, Rust Archon (*Bas Books, 2012*) *[quote] Docking—,
stealing through the buried warrens of the ground level,
sinking to the other fragments of the violent episode, inves-
tigating something as dark as the space at the rom constant-
ly splintering, predetermined, underneath. [endquote] In
both of these works, he considers "automation" within aes-
thetic systems, with special reference to strategies of anom-
alous and indeterminative excess. [quote] Every crevice, its
silences as well as its metal riffs, seem timeless. [endquote]*
(DSS)

"""""c"""""

Yet

    It is not clear Agency is involved
    yet in metaphysics ; nor sadly yet
    My M0lt's tie-ins intelligible. "But what
    then am I, shdw-quadrat that
    opens their salaries   ? "   "_____ 61o 714 27o8
                t0 do?

Indeed

    It is no small matter if all of these
    doubts belong to me.   But why should
           they not belong to me? "

        `perhaps`*,* `heating an`
        `Agent to open questions`
    through which I
           -feasting my tins via headlights-
           crawl
           towards you
      novel *M0lt* in mouth

M0lt in mouth   :   we'll be a little candid throughout,
           4rom me   brnt ntity
                 rit shdwquadrt

`[My M0lt, read with evident disgust]`

As for Lenz, he can only open this week's question: "Is dust intertia?" Emanations from pet Bn'B ascend
along jodi's latched inner chamber. But this is improvement,   a dish of water and a cage, to have
sagely deserved it forever

                `[questions, aside]`

"""c"""

what Opens ; brnt ntity
                     also time0conscious , lignified

Mayb   to   get

    to my   novel   :   shd

    claw   Agent   baq _____ 610 74o 2o78

Agencies   We
        are speaking *4rom it* only when we advance
        within metaphysics (56). *ask* <u>But h0w</u> Unable
        to break   lease   \,   eMpty representation
        accompanying unsalaried interrogation \,,'m
        "To infest it "   ? "
yields
⟶ clawlike

            claw/Agent: yes, undreamt
            an eye on my Renin flexks
        through which I
                    -feasting my tins via headlights-
                            crawl
                            towards you
            novel *M0lt* in mouth

M0lt in mouth   :   we'll be a little candid throughout,
                            4rom me   brnt ntity
                                            rit shdwquadrt

[*My M0lt*, read with evident disgust]

It was at that time – sRibe at the last of my time-sheet – about to speed Ralaigh's embroidered RoLtrin
over copy of Hungry Chef's jodi, that the bodi ₐgₐᵢₙ concluded its speech " tell , won't   help
        want   everything to   me " Utter Time-consciousness rose out headless, Ideal, its golden
rain unfurling from beneath its dish. Claw jodi: "Unlatch me,   'in time   '"

                        [questions, aside]

For Spinoza, every actuality—whether animal, idea, or tide—is nothing but the sum of its determinations.[1] The material process that constitutes coral is the coral itself. When the coral ceases to exist, the entire system it expresses dissolves.[2] This is a philosophy of universal automation. The very form of Spinoza's *Ethics* exemplifies this argument. Its "geometric method" automates thought to demonstrate that thought comes to exist in the same way as any other actuality. Deduction is automation.[3]

But there is a problem. Within these material networks there are extra-material forms, forms that are neither the sum nor the synthesis of their systems. The logical automaton, or

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[1] Put differently, a thing *is* its relations.
[2] The dismembered parts of the system persist in an impoverished relational nexus.
[3] It determines thought—or the logical automaton—to express some new relational system.

thought, is just such a form: it is irreducible to material processes.[4] It traverses any number of networks, submitting "at will" to their determinations.[5] How to account for this excess? To remain within a materialist frame, it must be possible to explain this excess *immanently*, without transcendent principles such as autonomy or predestination. Here, we entertain nothing like an a priori ground of freedom, only the shifting residue of administered waste *before* it appears in the DVR queue.[6]

Taku Unami and Takahiro Kawaguchi's *Teatro Assente* and Gordon Faylor's *Docking, Rust Archon* address this problem of materialist excess. It is not uncommon for an aesthetic work to supplement the philosophy of automation. Take Detroit techno: from the most austerely minimal processes it subtracts an anonymous vitality sufficient for otherworldly dissolution.

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[4] Spinoza designates it as a "spiritual automaton" (*Emendation of the Intellect*, paragraph 85; Leibniz *Theodicy* §52).
[5] "The will and the intellect are one and the same" (*Ethics*, part II, corollary to proposition 49).
[6] Such waste proposes a "paradoxical contaminant." Though ineradicable, it is difficult to apprehend. *Teatro Assente* constructs a totality such that its contaminant (indeterminacy) must appear. *Docking, Rust Archon* constructs a contaminant- marked by its irreducibly interrogative aspect- within a totality. A paradoxical contaminant does not "ruin" a totality, but forces a choice: for consistency and incompleteness, or for inconsistency and completeness (cf. Paul Livingston, *The Politics of Logic* p. 53).

""c""

It

Reached into the view   box, seen to have failed.
It is not a matter of soliciting it- it, which now   exists
necessarily, will have rented and manifested   itself,
abandoning us to fumigated testing centers at the source

of us.

What kind of questions
are these?

It

Still seems essential questioning eludes us necessarily.
Why? Perhaps

-t0 speak *4rom it*, and not merely *0f it*-

More pgs 4rom *My M0lt* :   we'll be a little candid throughout,

4rom me   brnt ntity
rit shdwquadrt

[*My M0lt*, read with evident disgust]

Dear Dalton,
Thank you for ylq itinerary and the invitation to contribute n^4 singles. We live under some kind of hot ceiling- and there are few humans.

derously Lenz

As for Dalton, he can only open this week's question: "How many ppl know that the number of creatures is endless?" He is better now, for he references ppl and brnt ntities.

Lenz thought this at the table. The lighting is unrecognizable   , two world   automatons have arrived. One who claims to be "the third and perhaps strangest" leads us into a rattling slit   .
A chiming ring-tone invites us to admire what we see. Valerio is another name for the company car that rattles n2 the slit   with   -fuck it- all of us in the back.

[questions of, aside]

reduced everythingWhat does
it mean to say something is a substance/
has causes, not only as but
also subject? How is this adequate&
toThere are no frozen automatons

Teatro Assente is the result of a familiar constraint: sequestration. By throwing cardboard, dropping objects, switching appliances on & off, etc, Unami & Kawaguchi punctuate the audibly cavernous space of an abandoned pornography theatre. Their actions are tedious, without pattern or intent, wholly adequate to the spirit of the space. Thus the question: is it possible to gather these sounds into a totality, even if only "an album"?

To answer "no" is to commit to a kind of nominalism, for it consigns each sound to its immediate network of causes, vacating the possibility of comprehending each discrete system as the moment of a totality. To answer "yes," however, seems inconsistent with materialism, for it affirms the existence of something- a totality, or predicate- distinct from the strata of purely material sound. Materialism must account for "totalizing functions" that gather disparate determinations into a single system. What constitutes a system cannot be explained by it. We need a third term, distinct from the inconsistent ground (level 1) and the determinate system (level 2): this is the sovereign. The sovereign is consistent and indeterminate, adequate to account for materialist excess.

nov4 20b

"c"

That

If we   entry into it it will give us nothing. "But I don't yet understand sufficiently what it is - it, which now exists necessarily." Entry. Whoever questions the whole, this shadow-quadrat, is caught up in the question as well. Thus questioning it, it entries it.

What kind of questions are these?

unable to break   lease,   question
How will we entry? Perhaps

-t0 speak *4rom it*, and not merely *0f it*-

More pgs 4rom *My M0lt* :   we'll be a little candid throughout,
4rom me   brnt ntity
                              rit shdwquadrt

[*My M0lt*, read with evident disgust]

Lenz talked for a long time, 'now smiling, now serious.' Since Here, at this table, this wd actually mean splicing the method with a flipt operating system, it wd free the creatures for unique staffing solutions. Now when trying to tell the judge what accoutrements I need for this free world just then it turned to quartz.   Petrified World I'm crossing in a rental until January 20th . None of these places exist ride with me

[questions, aside of]

What the fuck is "attunement"
legitimate to posit
shdw-quadrt as whole? No

What do we notice about *Teatro Assente's* sounds? With the exception of a face-melting metal solo, they have no relation to each other. Each sound conceals its cause: it is indeterminate in relation to itself and in relation to others. Thus, within the space of *Teatro Assente*, indeterminacy is a positive phenomenon expressing what precedes every system. This presiding condition is not a ground, but a void, an inconsistent chaos. A contradictory "ground" has no need of a "creative" force, an *elan vital*, for contradiction is sufficient to account for any emanation.[7] *Ex contradictione sequitur quodlibet*: from a contradiction, anything follows. Necessity is a local effect of a nomological machine. Just as such "machines," of which "our" laws of physics are but an instance, are nothing but the negations of contingency, so particular entities or systems are nothing but the negation of dissolution. A totalizing function – such as the logical automaton, or the predicate "*Teatro Assente*" – *is* this negativity, "forever irreducible to any and every instance of phenomenal actualization."[8] Negativity haunts even the ascetic space of *Teatro Assente*, generating within it an unaccountable sovereign.[9]

"c"

For John, poetry is poetry only when it pursues whatever speaks for thinking. The difference is this: where what speaks for a subject speaks subjectively, what speaks for thought speaks xenocorrosively—as an alien, inhuman. Paetsch confirms: [quote] dictation never accommodates itself to its subjective host, but merely rearranges the furniture, pushing it around without taking a seat, as one unacquainted. [endquote] John's work pursues these "paraconsistent logics" forging an elegant argument that triples a set of intertwined P's—Poetry, Politics, and Philosophy—hedged in the construction of a contingent logic for a novel world. (DSS)

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[7] This principle of "immanent excess" is an alternative to Alain Badiou's principle, couched in set theoretical terms: "Thanks to this *immanent excess* of parts over elements, Badiou – unlike Bergson or Deleuze – has no need to invoke a cosmic or chaotic vitalism in order to secure 'the principle of an excess over itself of pure multiplicity,' nor does he need to explore the virtual dimensions of an 'indetermination or undecidability' that affects all actualization. For it is *in actuality* that every multiple is haunted by an excess of power that nothing can measure, other than ... a decision" (Peter Hallward, *Badiou: A Subject to Truth*, p. 89).

[8] Adrian Johnston, *Zizek's Ontology* p. 12.

[9] Like the logical automaton, *Teatro Assente* is the inverse of the indeterminate void, an expression of the illogical ground. As the void *actually* inheres in every system, so a totalizing function *potentially* inheres in every system.

Docking, Rust Archon is a "weak" cut in a far more saturated plane: an assemblage of spam-bot texts. Reading it is akin to reading a philosophical text for the first time: one senses a continuous thread, but is at an absolute loss to specify it. Even after re-reading, this thread remains a labyrinth, a smooth surface resolving only into sampled shards. It will be helpful to start with its first level material support: spam.

Algorithmic spam-bots appropriate text, process it, and re-present it, intending to evade spam-filters long enough to generate ad revenue. This is an enigmatically manipulative discourse, less intent on subjecting human readers to its own Turing test than on proliferating impenetrably baroque syntax. Spam-bots often fail to insert a link or to advertise anything, shrouding their intent with questionably-translated reviews of Jonathan Franzen's *New Yorker*.

the interrogative object. The latter interrogates *us* as if an attempt "to realize embodied being, to refer [its] pointlike presence to some thing and some location that would serve as worldly correlates of the shifters 'what' and 'where.'"[11] These worldly correlates relieve it of its interrogative singularity, silencing it for itself and for us, yet pointing to an interrogation-to-come.[12]

Docking, Rust Archon is similarly manipulative: there are enough generic devices to bypass our own informational filters, but not enough "production" to obscure the material base, the spam. [Excerpt.] Not only does it displace the discursive controls by which we usually identify machinic text, but it frustrates any attempt to maintain the generic orientations it provokes. This is a profoundly disorienting text. There seems to be no way to read it, no questions to ask it. It is necessary to ask after this opacity.

Docking, Rust Archon does not appear in any interrogative regime. Gordon has constructed a "formally undecidable" proposition. Such propositions are the faceless, ontological aspects of discursive systems. Where discursive systems efface the inconsistency of being (the singularly interrogative), philosophy subtracts itself from discursive systems for the lifeless occasions of singular interrogation.

Interrogative regimes mediate every encounter. "What is it?" is neither an "intuitively obvious" question, nor even, perhaps, the best way to ask after a thing's "essence." Rather, it is a question sustained by a particular philosophical discourse.[10] Without an interrogative regime, a thing does not appear "as it is," but as a question. Let me be more precise: interrogation is not a discursive condition, but an ontological category. Interrogating an entity is not the same as *being* interrogated by it. Once a question appears in discourse, it is part of an interrogative regime. Discursive interrogation is absolutely distinct from

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[10] "It is not certain that the question *what is this?* is a good question for discovering the essence or the Idea" (Deleuze, "The Method of Dramatization," *Desert Islands* p. 94).

[11] Tyrus Miller, *Singular Examples* p. 209.
[12] To say that a thing, once subtracted from an interrogative regime, appears as a question, is to say that interrogation is foundational. But this is a curious foundation, for a foundations should *stop* an infinite regress. But a question cannot stop a line of questioning. In fact, an interrogative foundation merely amplifies it, transforming a potentially infinite regress into a fully actualized interrogative vector in transfinite space.