

‘A Tuning’ for the Special Issue: On (Mis)Reading Parallax: Four Introductions to Arts-Based Philosophy

Kristopher Holland, The University of Cincinnati

Caveat

This special issue of the International Journal of Žižek Studies contains multiple introductions. These Introductions revolve around articulating what we refer to as arts-based philosophy. Each introduction places the context and contents of the issue in play, but from different points of view. They can be read in any order, or the one curated for you here, but do *implicitly* reference one another. Meaning if you skip one introduction, or skim another, the overall message or *intro* remains intact. Such a reading however, might also cause mystery - driving a need for a future encounter with the ‘missing’ introduction(s). If pressed we would label the first introduction as ‘empirical’ in nature, the second ‘philosophical,’ the third ‘descriptive,’ and last ‘contextual.’

The ‘*four introductions*’ to this issue serve many purposes. One being to suggest art and philosophy form a *necessary* parallax, a productive space that gives license to those who wish to resist the performance imperative of philosophy in writing, but remain within its productive engagement with the ideas associated with philosophy (hence our arts-based philosophy and ‘new lines of sight’). This performance imperative not only includes the format of the conference held in April 2014 itself, but also, here in this space, the academic journal. ‘Philosophical performance,’ i.e. reading written work at conferences, writing theory in traditional formats, adhering to discourse conventions as ‘styles of exposition’ (of which is being performed now in this written introduction), and the *motions of thought* conditioned by ‘ready-made philosophical events’ needs to be shaken up, turned askew, given new points of view, given *parallaxes*.

A Tuning...



Somewhere better than this place, Nowhere better than this place & untitled¹
- Felix Gonzalez-Torres

I. An Introduction to the Special Issue of International Journal of Žižek Studies Conference Creative Presentations

The standard definition of parallax is: the apparent displacement of an object (the shift of its position against a background) caused by a change in observational position that provides a new line of sight.

– Slavoj Žižek, (2006, p. 17)

This special issue of the International Journal of Žižek Studies grew out of the International Žižek Studies Conference held at the College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning (DAAP) at the University of Cincinnati in April of 2014. The theme of the conference was *Parallax Future(s) in Art and Design, Ideology, and Philosophy* with keynote speakers Slavoj Žižek, Boris Groys, Adrian Parr, and Creston Davis. Within the milieu of guest speakers, normal conference humdrum, and Peter Eisenman's building, the two co-editors of this special issue were tasked with creating space for proposals by scholars who engage in theory articulated in forms other than writing.² That endeavor took seriously two related questions. 1. *'What are the possibilities for theory today articulated in a form other than writing?'* and 2. *What needs to 'happen' in the formatting of an academic conference to accelerate productive encounters to answer the first question?* In short, we wanted to shift the idea of academic conference into new territories by inserting art as a form of philosophical articulation on par with philosophical writing - creating a new 'line of sight' for philosophical inquiry.

This issue represents a selection of the work presented at the conference that engaged in what we have coined 'arts-based philosophy.' Borrowing from literature in qualitative research and art education, we intend to expand upon what is referred to as

¹ Note: These works by Felix Gonzalez-Torres are in co-editor Kristopher Holland's personal collection, acquired in New York City in 2001. Gonzalez-Torres strikes us as an artist of parallax...

² We would like to gratefully acknowledge Adrian Parr for her performative piece, the first keynote address of the conference, that engaged in expanding the practice of 'theory,' and helped establish in the audience a 'resonance' for performative elements in the conference that carried over into the entire event.

arts-based research (ABR). Arts-based research is commonly defined as "... the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all the different forms of the arts, as primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies."³ While we in principle agree with this definition of arts-based research (ABR), the use of the word 'expression' evokes for us 'creative self-expression,' of which art making should not be limited to. Creative expression is only part of the many facets art making elicits (such as inquiry), and thinking of art only via expression seems to exclude the vital collaborative, critical, and political importance of art practice today.

We expand and restate the definition of arts-based research as: (1) *The purposeful use of artistic inquiry in making research (its design, method, presentation, and legitimation).* (2) Given that purpose, *artistic inquiry becomes the primary mode of investigation, articulation, and reflection in research, in order to* (3) *'translate' implicit phenomena into explicit forms of experience.* Lets unpack this definition in reverse order. If research is simply *making an implicit phenomena explicit*, then arts-based research becomes a method, the medium, and/or the 'translation machine' of 'making explicit.' The use of the phrase 'artistic inquiry' is meant to divorce the notion that art has to be an object, activating the 'experiential dimension' of art that is such an integral part of social practice and any discussion of material or materiality in art practices today. Finally the purposeful use of the arts in research renders transparent to the research process its design, methodology, representation-simulation, legitimation, etc. *that is* also art. Art is the research mode of inquiry that produces art as the 'product' of research articulation.

Introducing arts-based *philosophy* then, would be a narrowing and application of arts-based research approaches to what commonly involves 'philosophical inquiry.' Arts-based philosophy, articulated with 'artistic forms' in all phases of the inquiry, makes implicit aspects of *philosophical wondering* explicit via arts-based methods and the modes and styles of articulation associated with art.⁴ This issue is dedicated to shedding light on what can only be considered a 'beginning of the beginning' as far as potential and presently realized arts-based philosophy work occurring here, at the conference, and 'somewhere out there' in the future.

By announcing and laying the groundwork to start an introduction for arts-based philosophy *in writing*, in order to then upset this trajectory with the pieces contained in this issue, we wanted a 'positionality' to begin now. By attracting the 'philosophical gaze'

³ See Shaun McNuff, 'Arts-based research' in *The Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications, (2008) p.29. There are of course many other articulations of arts-based research, but we thought this was sufficient to demonstrate the basic idea.

⁴ We realize defining art is also an issue, and simply 'punt' this question for an in depth discussion at a later time. For now, we would follow John Dewey's description of works of art as 'experiences,' and 'products of art' as 'objects' – what we commonly call art (sculptures, paintings, etc.) We would like to simply note art is not considered simply a literal object in this context *simultaneously* insisting that art is an inquiry method, and way of 'interpreting' the world as experience, as will be discussed later.

this journal assembles, artists *and* experimental theories in philosophy can be confidently displayed, given a place, *and* ‘taken in’ by the productive gaze of a community engaged in the work of ‘interpreting the world.’⁵ In producing philosophical inquiry in forms other than writing it is hoped to add to, expand upon, and *coexist* with philosophical performance – not replace it. We seek to keep parallaxes open – perhaps for now, in this instance, keep philosophy away from art and art away from philosophy just enough to both keep the discourses distance, yet close enough to be able to peer into each other’s room, and to pursue creating partnerships for articulation, legitimation, and dissemination of theory in the future. We, the editors of this journal, love writing – and also see writing as potentially arts-based. In fact, we exist because of philosophical writing, and within it metaphorically and literally as ‘professional’ academics. For all of writings formal and implicit implications we wish philosophy not to ‘loose any’ of its connections to its ‘styles of articulations’ in any exchange with arts-based philosophy we seek merely to ‘shake it up’ a bit. That said, we started and continue the journey into this content of this special issue with our love of writing, and by inverting the contemporary artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres (visually cited above) we begin: “*Nowhere better than this place...*” - to get, “*Somewhere better than this place...*”

II. Philosophically Sifting Art and Philosophy’s Twist

The philosophical twist to be added, of course, is that the observed difference is not simply “subjective,” due to the fact that the same object which exists “out there” is seen from two different stances, or points of view. It is rather that, as Hegel would have put it, subject and object are inherently “meditated,” so that an “epistemological” shift in the subject’s point of view always reflects an “ontological” shift in the object itself.

- Slavoj Žižek, (2006, p. 17)

It would seem somewhat predictable and easy to posit a parallax between art and philosophy, especially given the Western construction of art as ‘fine art’ (within painting, sculpture, photography, etc.) and philosophical discourse as ‘writing.’ One the one hand (perhaps the left) western art, for all its ‘history,’ institutional milieus, and avant-guards which have washed up on the shores of dead ideas, has produced failures and successes in ‘interpreting the world,’ that is *not* philosophical inquiry – *right?* And, on the other hand (perhaps the right) Western philosophy in the general Badiouian description as a ‘universal call to everyone, yet with particular contextual applications’ is

⁵ Seeking a way to generalize the way we *live, experience, make, think, etc.* the world we have chosen the say ‘*interpret*’ here for lack of a better term and to save space – we are aware of the ‘wordsmithing’ and meaning associated with this choice – but make it none-the less.

not painting, sculpture, nor the currency of 'installation art' - that is now fashionably what we call art in this century— *correct?*⁶

And yet, we have the impassioned pursuit of both ways of 'interpreting the world,' seeking permanence in fleeting moments, see(k)ing motions in still abyss. If Gilgamesh was 'the one who (saw) entered the abyss,' then there is a bit of us all in 'the one' as we continue to bask in this age-old question of how/why *the world as it appears* is different than *the world as it is*. Make no mistake about it, we, the people of making theory have possibilities for articulation, for 'making the world' (poïesis). For example, we can paint to investigate the construction of sight (à la Paul Cezanne), probe the boundaries thinking philosophy (à la Derrida), investigate memories in film (à la Malick), or simply marvel at the newest data, visualizations, and explanations of fundamental 'particles' from the CERN laboratory on the Franco-Swiss border. Art, philosophy, film, and science are all, to be blunt, theories of articulation between the *world as it is*, and *the world as it appears*. These tropes of articulation reflect human experience and are full of a range of power, wonder, heartache and joy - if we can 'read' them.⁷

To 'read' the world requires 'literacy,' or the learning multiple forms of *being in the world* - which are connected to 'special combinations' (articulations), resulting in milieus of experience – which we then name 'art,' 'science,' 'philosophy,' etc. As Maryanne Wolf rightly suggests in her research, reading and writing are not natural, far from it.⁸ Humans have existed as a species for hundreds of thousands of years, coping, shaping, making, and enjoying the world without writing and reading, but with 'literacy.'⁹ In terms of evolutionary time the recent development of writing and reading - and the even more recent development of *philosophical writing* and reading - required a specialized literacy that is learned, practiced, evaluated, and performed within a range of 'accepted modes of articulation.' It might be said that in the present moment, *philosophical discourse as a performance* has a 'ready-made' quality, a 'default setting' from which we can enter the conversation, the innuendos of its history and implicit conversations in order to be 'literate' within 'certain tolerances' of course.¹⁰

Philosophy requires a 'certain literacy' if found today, or defined in discourse. A certain *cadence* is required in the production, dissemination and legitimation of its performance as 'philosophical inquiry.' But of course, doesn't philosophy have a deeper

⁶ See Badiou *The Adventure of French Thought* (2005), we would like to explore the notion of *the style of philosophical exposition* (point 6) raised in that work, to suggest philosophy should not only compete with literature, but also with art.

⁷ Without getting too bogged down here, we simply want to evoke the experience of these tropes: science, art, philosophy, film etc. are all part of a matrix of 'reading the world.'

⁸ See Maryanne Wolf's *Proust and the Squid* (2005)

⁹ We are of course sympathetic to expanded definitions of reading and writing the world, but here wish to simply refer to the codified systems of writing and reading in the common usage.

¹⁰ The tolerances are always tested, and perhaps drive philosophical discourse, a la Voltaire, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Deleuze, Derrida, etc. etc.

'previous literacy' as just described in the pre-writing and reading world of our ancestors? Could Socrates and Plato illustrate this gap? What is this gap – the gap of writing? Could arts-based philosophy evoke this implicit universe of philosophy that has been 'lost' since its Platonic turn to writing and reading? Do we want to recover this gap – or leave it open? Have there been clues along the way, or moments when philosophy was 'freed up' from the prevailing articulation of the era, of literacy of the day and returned to a form other than writing? When has the gap opened up? What/when/how is that event? Do we know it when we 'see' it?

One example or moment of a philosophical return *within writing* can be found in Voltaire's *conte philosophique*, or his 'philosophical tales' such as *Candide* of 1759. This episode in the history of philosophy suggests that the style of philosophical articulation is itself a philosophical question. Voltaire's works are made without regard for the required training in the style of exposition one needed to digest a work like Leibniz's '*Monadology*' (which I am sure Voltaire possessed/'processed'). While Voltaire's work can push against the explicit tolerances of styles of writing in his time, understanding the implicit philosophical performance (its questions and concepts) is done without the explicit philosophical performance in prescribed philosophical writing (à la mode Leibniz). In other words, by presenting philosophy with another mode of articulation, outside the 'system' of philosophical writing didn't destroy philosophy, the argument can be made that it made stronger by creating new 'lines of sight' or a productive parallax.

We mean to suggest the same point (productive parallax) if expanded to philosophical moments outside of writing in today's milieu. Philosophy created, even in a mode other than writing, is still philosophical because the implicit nature of seeking wisdom about the world is never completely collected within one singular purview or one way of presentation (such as writing or 'degrees of writing' as demonstrated by Voltaire). Empirically, one can simply look at the story of philosophy itself as a *history of the shifts in its relation to its articulation* as an important benchmark. From the poetic fragments of Heraclitus, to the dialogues of Socrates written by Plato, to the treatises of the Enlightenment, the 'logical styles' of the modern era, and the current 'Cambrian explosion' of writing philosophy in the continental milieu, we see in the micro shifts of philosophical discourse as writing as an explicit practice being conducted and connected to the implicit values of philosophical inquiry itself. The themes of philosophical inquiry have been articulated in numerous ways and continue to be explored via multiple formats of 'writing.' But even more interesting are the means of production that have heretofore escaped the domain of *philosophy as writing*, but not as *philosophy*.

We have created crossroads. We are stating that presently philosophy has within itself the parallax of writing- that there is *philosophical inquiry beyond any style of writing*, and that there is the writing of philosophical inquiry as a 'default setting' for what we call philosophy. We are considering here, in this special issue another path of the articulation of philosophical inquiry via art, not writing (in the common sense), but a writing beyond the default settings of today's philosophical discourse; a writing not to

complete with literature, as Badiou alludes to (see footnote above), but philosophical inquiry as arts-based philosophy to compete with art. The former we have briefly addressed above, the latter we will explore now.

If we are arguing that art is another mode of 'writing' philosophy then we must ask: do art and philosophy have the same implicit values? To this question we must, for the sake of this essay, take the easy way out. They are both ways of 'making' the world, or grasping it in some fashion. But philosophy and art seem to have split in explicit tactical patterns of 'making the world' somewhere in our Western past. Perhaps as the ancient Greeks explored ways out of mythos via logos, where philosophy found its way to begin its story in the 'reflection of life' with reason and establishing the path for 'rationality,' writing gained esteem.¹¹ Art in a sense kept a bit of mythos alive, becoming suspicious of logos and what the 'rational' construction and translation of 'making the world' leaves out. We must leave this exploration of the implicit values and the origin of these rational/ irrational ways of 'making the world' (art and writing) for another time and place.

Implicit values of philosophy overlap with art in terms of 'making' the world. But is philosophical inquiry the roots of art? Or is art the roots of philosophical inquiry? Should we 'level' these terms instead of claiming one can be 'used' by the other? Beyond any implicit domain of 'making' the world, the explicit modes of 'making' the world *have produced* different 'literacies,' or forms of articulation. These literacies become intertwined and embodied acts of being human. They are extension of our thinking and acting in the world of things and once 'becoming discourses' in the modern sense, as in philosophy as writing or art as painting, acquire a literacy that had produced a gap (or gaps), or new point of view to filter and make the world. In a sense homo-sapiens have always done philosophical inquiry or artistic inquiry. We have always added new techniques and layers of performance rituals into widely recognized 'literacies' or ways of making the world. In short, *we have always had philosophy as a species, but now we have philosophical discourse*. And, like art, it emerges out of context(s), reaches our time, and requires *our* literacies to be learned, performed and legitimated in order to concurrently understand today, yesterday, and tomorrow.

The point here is twofold. First we are not suggesting current art discourse is any easier to 'read' than contemporary philosophical discourse, either from the analytic school or continental. In fact, visual arts discourse is just as difficult to master as contemporary philosophy. They both require the careful decoding of historical precedents, the practice of making (visual work or writing) that is constantly evaluated via the literati of the field, and the building of successful experiences in communication to others (a pedagogical imperative) the implicit (values) concepts as one sees them in

¹¹ See Barry Sandywell's Three Volume **Logological Investigations Set** (*Reflexivity And The Crisis of Western Reason: Logological Investigations: Volume One, The Beginnings of European Theorizing: Reflexivity in the Archaic Age: Logological Investigations: Volume Two, Presocratic Reflexivity: The Construction of Philosophical Discourse c. 600-450 B.C.: Logological Investigations: Volume Three*) on the birth of Western thought via reflexivity.

the chosen field of 'operation' – or the way we put the discourse *to work*. One way to put this is that both art and philosophy require certain training in styles, experiences and reflections on the *modus operandi* of the discourses, as well as an internalization of the different 'ways of being' in art and philosophical domains. In a sense these become, as mentioned before, 'default settings' from which one can simply *begin* to be an artist or a philosopher in the current sense of the notions.

Returning to Voltaire, if his works can be said to be a philosophical question about the style of philosophical inquiry, then this connects to a theory of articulation for philosophy and art (or the style of philosophical inquiry demonstrating/ masquerading as a philosophical question) that *moves beyond* the literacy one 'receives' as artist or philosopher to new territories we would like to evoke in this special issue. If art and philosophy, both as styles of articulating answers to questions of the world, as ways of 'making' the world, form a parallax because of the differences in 'literacies' (points of view) required to activate them, then we suggest a new complexity to 'fold' this formation ever deeper into the themes we have been ruminating on here.¹² A truly generative discourse *generates*, seizes upon complexes or 'folds' with others to take the discourse beyond its 'default settings.' It is our desire to suggest that having art face philosophy on its turf, as it did at this conference, results not in a dismissal or 'rejection of its literacy,' but was an opportunity to read back into philosophy (fold) implicit values that can get 'lost in translation' during any building of explicit forms of articulation of implicit ideas when produced in the form of writing. Art as a parallax to philosophy can return it to a pre-writing incarnation – a philosophy before writing - beyond writing – after writing – (or through writing) that is still philosophical inquiry.

Thus, instead of re-inscribing philosophical discourse as writing, each art 'fold' is now part of the philosophical 'fold,' they are folded into each other, and become the nodes of articulation - generators of philosophical inquiry – with the possibility of 'making' the world with writing simply one of many strategies. In a sense, new 'field positions' are created that seek ways to 'interpret the world' as *philosophy re-asserted* as a mode of inquiry that can then be formed into an articulation best suited for the situation. A *tactical maneuver* to and from different styles of articulation as philosophy is part of the fold or 'tool kit' for philosophical inquiry.

It is as if we are embarking on an Eames inspired 'power of ten for art and philosophy,' going deeper and 'zooming out' to view the new parallaxes attempted by multiplying the ways implicit ideas can be made explicit.¹³ In addition, the articulation of new complexities, or creating 'new folds' creates variant 'frequencies' of theory. 'Frequencies' are the forms theory can take - the tactical maneuvers actualized in form, and need to be 'tuned' in by audiences with a 'device' (perhaps the literacies of a field of inquiry, or the styles of writing, etc.). Like the dial of a radio, the differences between

¹² We are evoking the Deleuzian spirit - the idea of 'fold' - see Gilles Deleuze *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (2006).

¹³ See Eames Film 'the Power of Ten' (1977).

'frequencies' reflect different ways to experience (hear) the world. These frequencies are simultaneously 'out there' yet need a 'tuner' or 'tuning device' to 'read' them. These devices are the 'modes of articulation' discussed here - unfolded and refolded – as art, philosophy, science, etc. These ways of making the world are like different 'notes' on a scale or frequencies on a radio dial, creating the music of experience. When viewed holistically the same phenomena which appears as noise to some can be tuned in, or 'modulated' (translated, transformed, transmitted, etc.) for the articulation of an experience for others. A phenomena articulated explicitly as one frequency (say as art), can feedback into, fold into, the frequency of another mode of articulation (say as science). This event has a reaction that creates ripples of the frequencies, making multiple frequencies, from which we as human have been tuning into (and out of) via the modes of articulation of life (art, philosophy, science, etc.). We can experience a sunset as art, science, philosophical meditations all at once, which marks a return to, and evocation of the multiplicity of making implicit things explicit – the multiplicity of inquiry styles.

We have now reached a moment where we can activate the various possibilities put on the table in this essay simultaneously - put into motion new theory. In other words, just as the 'power of ten' announces and 'recedes' certain aspects of a 'field of view,' each unfolding moment, or missed moment (as if we were not tuned into the right frequency) is there, and can be added to each other. As this introduction attempts to show, art and philosophy can become a symphony, 'joined frequencies,' articulated through art or philosophical modes of being. This supports a new set of issues, from which the *cult of neophilia* can take over – a mode of thinking that generates novelty as the experience of inquiry - expanding philosophy itself as *arts-based philosophy*.

In 'reading' the 'moments of fold,' such as those put forth in this special issue as creative proposals, a new strategy or map of outcomes is required. At first it might seem that any points of articulation (art, philosophy, science, etc.) is only brought forth within a modulation of 'frequency' (sort of as in 'powers of ten'). Meaning a 'tuning' or focusing is necessary to read, view, absorb, decode, etc. the moments the 'edge' is defined (as art, philosophy, etc.). This requires a 'receiver' to be built to the right 'specs,' and culture (literati) be created with each fold's edge (what defines it as a fold). With the correct 'heuristic-visual-audio-limits,' much like the Eames film 'power of ten,' a revealing of the world as it appears seems to depend upon which 'factor' from which the world is 'tuned,' from the smallest scales (microscopy) to the largest (cosmology). But what about the in-between spaces- the white noise between frequencies? Is this in-between space the as yet noticed (unknown frequency on the 'radio' dial) project of arts-based philosophy? *Can we begin to build an audience, and select the right frequency to 'tune' for arts-based philosophy? Once noise - now music?*

This is an important aspect for proposing that art-based philosophy has something to 'give' philosophical inquiry, not expecting reciprocation, but instead joining 'in parallax' (creating a new line of sight, a new frequency) the right to 'interpret the world,' from a new point of view. In this parallax of interpretation of the world, art, not as

a mode to supplement philosophical ideas, but as a primary means to conduct philosophical thinking, (its dissemination, articulation, legitimation), suggests a new way of pedagogically anointing the practice of arts-based philosophical inquiry (finding its 'frequency'). This requires a future program that this project, this special issue wants to accelerate.

In the immediate however, it requires a host or a 'hosting' of the possibility for such an encounter or event to be possible. This issue is intended to open the questions arts-based philosophical inquiry might posit. By starting with writing this particular 'philosophical' introduction, and thinking through some of the proclivities of the discourse, an unraveling or a virus is released that will infect the reader and open the conversation for a 'next time.' After all, how long does it take to like new music styles once thought of as noise, complex writing styles once viewed as too abstract, Kierkegaard's self-published tomes, Nietzsche's aphorisms, etc. Given time and effort an audience for arts-based philosophical inquiry can be assigned a 'frequency' on the dial of 'making the world.'

For this special issue, let us (re)suspend the parallax in front of our eyes, on your screen, and 'in your hands,' for reading art and viewing philosophy require nothing less. The sifting of art and philosophy through the debris of its history and 'literacy' deepens as we investigate what it takes to make, read, interpret and reflect upon art and philosophy. Our attunement into the action of seeking, the movement of thinking and making words, lines, forms, concepts, all accompany us on the journey to find the view from which to perch and draw out the new lines of sight, the new parallaxes before us. It is in this sense that Žižek's parallax is evoked, as a mis-reading in the Derrida sense - a productive moment - a binary with hidden relationships (other binaries, trinaries, quadaries, etc.) yet to be made explicit. In a sense the whole issue continues to conduct an introduction in parallax form, as in, suggesting yet another introduction to this issue, forming multiple sides, a new fold in the 'paper' from which to view (or hide) the following essays, descriptive archives, and works for art.

III. The Plan and Event of The Žižek Conference

In short, what we encounter here is the parallax function as it purest: the gap between two versions is irreducible, it is the "truth" of both of them...

- Slavoj Žižek (2006, p. 19)

To reiterate, this 'special' issue of the International Journal for Žižek Studies reflects some of the creative content from the conference held at the College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning at the University of Cincinnati. The 2014 conference was conceived at the 2012 conference as a biennale event in which the work of Žižek would be used to spark encounters, papers, and creative events with wider themes. As the second iteration of the conference began its planning phase, the steering committee wanted to expand upon the ability for creative events to happen and began to re-think

the notion of academic conference. To that end, in addition to situating the conference in a college of design, architecture, and art, there was a special call for creative proposals in addition to the standard 'philosophical papers' invite. In essence, we tried to plan for the encounter between artistic inquiry and philosophical inquiry with the hopes of making new connections and creating the expectations of a new space to 'do' and reflect upon theory.

Once the creative call for proposals was sent and we received the submissions, we then had the task of 'accepting' the creative works to become part of the conference. Immediately questions arose from the steering committee. How to conduct peer review of the submissions? Where would we put the art installations? How do we interface with the standard fair of paper reading and discussion when these works were in some cases ongoing throughout the conference dates?

We decided to select a panel for peer review and create the space for the works to be ongoing throughout the conference, or in special cases schedule performances as paper sessions. But we also wanted these creative works to serve as interruptions and spark dialogue for a future of philosophy that took seriously the question of its style of articulation (writing). Part of the plan was to create a program that announced the creative works as simply part of the conference without being supplemental. In consultation with the programing chair, who also tried to link philosophical papers together to create the right conditions for the *generation of ideas* (in finding productive ground in the papers), rather than simply reporting them (reading the paper in isolation from the others). Or, like Newton's cradle, but with two balls on each side smashing the single middle ball (which we viewed as the DAAP Eisenman building - the immovable object), ideas would 'bounce off each other' creating tensions and perhaps new 'lines of sight.'

That said we tried to weave the creative proposals, the paper sessions, and art installations into a massive event for the conference attendees. It was intended that the conference framed as an event would create a generative space beyond the typical encounter one expects at a conference. The preamble to the conference sums up the intent:

Preamble to the International Žižek Studies Conference 2014

Dear Researcher,

Thank you for writing your proposal and accepting the invitation to present at this conference. By now you might have noticed a slightly different style to the program in your hands - before your eyes. At this conference each presenter has been grouped with other researchers for the presentations. In rethinking what a conference is and could be, we planned each session as an event - a place for ideas to form, to make friends and allies, and to engage in new trajectories of thought face to face – risking inter-subjective horizons. It is our hope that each session generates thoughts, dislocations, discourses, events, etc., - yielding thinking that nurtures

future projects (some of which are in this very program generated out of the 1st conference in 2012).

Of course this strategy risks failure, detachment, power-plays, alienation, fuzziness, etc. But with this risk comes the possibility of ecstasy, collaboration, acknowledgement, breakthroughs, revisions, friendships and family. We choose to side with possibility.

Furthermore, our hope is to raise the specter of parrhesiastic speech within an ethic of care. It is in speaking truth to each other that we begin to change "...this rundown radioactive cop-ridden planet" as William S. Burroughs put it. So we hope the scholars in each session will be parrhesiastes; each bringing perspectives, points of interest, and interesting notions from their papers. But one must not forget the Other of speech – listening. Part of parrhesia is listening to others. In this procession of speech we encourage new directions - convergences, divergences, and most of all possibilities.

In a nutshell, each session is sort of a 'mini-salon' – with the topic not pre-determined directly – but generated indirectly via the papers, ideas, and scholar's milieu. Thus, we envision a conference space of production - not description, of generation -not legitimation. Finally, the integration of artistic research and art inquiry encounters are meant to compliment and push the generation of theory. In this sense, this is not a program, but an event (à la mode Tiqqun).

Did this conference stage an encounter between the philosophies of the past and present with the philosophy of the future? What does philosophy in a form other than writing 'look like? How did it 'look' (how did we *look better*) at this event? Can we 'count on' the new 'capturing' technologies to reinvent the 'philosophical moment' in its re-visitation (as is presented in this issue via the reconstruction of the art installations the events)? Is this *now* the event of philosophy? The event being a set of performances that are captured, retold, re-presented within the tolerances of the discourse. Or better yet, dialed in via the 'discourse radio' that can find the right frequency once established by the literacy, the audience for the experience, 'tone' for the event. We propose to open these trajectories and find inspiration in the works boldly proclaimed here in this issue as well as those 'not captured' but left behind in the event, forever lost/ gained to memory. We now put forth our last introduction to this special issue by way of a *descriptive* enticement of the contents.

IV. Reflections on Event, Content, and Reality: *Introducing Žižekian Acts, Tactical Parallax, & Neophilian Art*

The traditional Platonic frame of reference is thus turned around [in modern art]: the sciences deal with phenomena, events, appearances; while the arts deal with the hard Real—this “Real Thing,” the struggle to portray it, is the proper “object” of art.

- Slavoj Žižek (2006, p. 147)

What happened at the conference to these creative presentations? How were they received once as ‘real’? This special issue of the International Journal of Žižek Studies is divided into three content areas that reflects on the documentation of the art pieces at the conference as well as the written reflections of the researchers as supplements to the ‘real thing’ –the conference installations.

The first section (papers 1 & 2) establishes the ‘scene’ of the conference and delineates what we have labeled ‘**Žižekian Acts.**’ What is a Žižekian performance? How do we know when it is occurring? What do we do when we have taken the floor – when all eyes are on us? Oliver, Mayberry, Gerard, and Merlin have given us clues in their essay ***Off-Kilter Affects and Sublime Split-Subjects.*** By asking each other what this performance might be, the opening of a performance theory and its relevance to rethink philosophical articulation is of great value to rethinking conference and philosophy itself. The second essay is also a ‘Žižekian act’ in the reflection and description of a conference narrative as site of production. Jorge Lucero’s work ***Žižek Conference: I Made It,*** is a place for the thinking the ‘pliability’ of conferences and perhaps the exposition or exhibition of a philosophical ‘looking at Žižek’ and others. Both these essay spark the special issues and move us to the second section.

The next section of the issue we have labeled ‘**Tactical Parallax**’ are artistic reports (papers 3-10) of the installation from the conference. These are short acts of documentation; presentation and archived material adapted from the conference installations (as essay 1-2 are as well) into the format of the journal. Although lost in translation are the scale, size and space of some of these experiences, what is gained in reflection, and succinct presentation in the form of the descriptive writing helps make the case for an arts-based philosophy. It should be noted however that the format of the Internet and journal morph these works, produce an immediate translation, or necessary tuning (as in a radio dial) to the works. This notion of ‘tuning’ or finding the right frequency to ‘understand’ (hear) the work is on the table for any discussion of the dissemination of such works presented here.

The third work, ***Augmented Headspace*** by Garfield Benjamin looks at technological acts and Žižek’s concept of parallax to provoke a new understanding of the ‘digital’ in which we can have parallel modes of thought – much like the ‘folding(ed) frequencies’ of art and science being ‘simultaneously broadcast’ and found in articulation styles, or the right tuning. The next essay in this section of the journal, ***Peace of Ass/Walking the Peace Talk*** by Jon Simmons and Ariel Katz suggests the

act, the Žižekian act, would produce, be productive in 'touching the real' perhaps as an actionable methodology. To echo Žižek above they are touching the 'real thing' in making the work touch upon and beyond the real life issue of Israeli-Arab conflict. Rebecca Weisman's ***Cadere and the Weal***, is a video essay dealing with how we avoid destroying the thing we are trying to capture. Or how do we not cause violence in re-presenting – articulating a phenomena when making it explicit? Andrew Cozzens' ***Simultaneity and the Parallax in Art*** relays a series of works, or frequencies if you will, presented at the conference. He asks how do we find the 'right frequencies' that connect these pieces into a symphony, to play a piece of music as a whole to experience spatial and temporal simultaneously. ***The Roosting Site***, by Nandita Sheth leads us further into the quest for a nonhierarchical space from which to think about articulating philosophical ideas in other forms. Joined with Sue Wrbcian's ***Continue the Temporary and It Becomes Forever***, the exploration of continuity by evoking the notion of parallax as the lynchpin for a structure of a non-hierarchical or rhizomatic experience of material and its temporary nature via the bamboo's and tents ephemeral structure announced the task of making an event into and memory and into a philosophical moment to take hold and grow into something more. One could say the next piece ***Glitch***, by Megan Flocken and Rebecca Weisman 'brokers' a gap in the notion of art and philosophy being joined and articulated as art as this piece explores the inherent contradictions of communication (as technology) – or the glitch as a site of the conditioning of the environment, much like these creative installation 'glitched' the conference in general by not allowing the neat flows of information, the 'straight' river of philosophy to manifest. Finally ***Third Line***, by Sasha Opeiko and Martin Stevens reconstructs the event of their installation and bridges to the next section of the special issue. The haiku structure evokes a third line, the line of affect – the place where one must point to 'something,' point something out – the place of a cutting. This work constructs points of 'cutting off and to' Žižek's work and the work of art as collaboration. In this special issue, the write up of this experience performs this idea again by both cutting *to* the next section (that is simply the 'art-in-itself'), and *from* the previous section (which are reconstructions of the art from the conference). The tactical parallax then is positioned between the conference reflections of art, and the conference art itself – which is represented in the final section.

This 'last' section, what we refer to as **'Neophilian Art'** presents examples of work that can be said to avoid containment within frequencies of writing. Here we have the evolution into perhaps 'straight artistic essays' from the conference translated into the format of the journal. The first work, ***Why That Monkey Washes His Balls in My Whisky***, by Andy Inganmells, is a piece of music presented in audio file and sheet music for your auditory inspection. Following that is the description of ***Cube Living 211A*** by Alex Grunenfelder. Here we have the author presenting his case in the form of sales presentation, promotions, actual and virtual showroom (for purchasing and using Cube objects), for Cube Living. At once a reflection and sales promotion this work opens the gaps for art and its relation to commodity. The final piece is an audio

experience called **Sonic Decay** by Erza Teboul and Sparkles Stanford. An audio file relays part of the experience of their installation, a creation of material and ideological decay via sonic processes. This last entry into this special issue captures the decay of the conference and this journal issues subject matter into a memory or its decomposition into this re-presentation. Finally, this concluding piece unravels the journal format as a literal 'sonic-representational decay' and directs the reader to experience arts-based philosophy as the desire to continue the conversation about philosophy relation to writing as a site of productive parallax (a parallax of arts-based research). So what happened at the conference to these creative presentations? How were they received once as 'real'? They have now taken this form, a form that allows them always to live on, and yet *move on*, move to spark further endeavors and expand the *motions of thought* conditioned by 'ready-made philosophical events,' to shake us up, turn us askew and give us new points of view - give us *parallaxes*.

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