ALTERED ROUTINE

7 – 24 AUG 2019

ANDRE FRANCO + YUSI ZANG

***Altered Routine:* a calculated variance**

Terri Bird

There is a stubborn and persistent demand for art to reveal its relationship to the world, as a connection between its form and the attribution of content or meaning. This demand is further complicated when the resemblance to what is perceived seems so apparent, as in the case of the work by Yusi Zang and Andre Franco. Nonetheless, despite representation’s promise to be a window on the world, the problematic of the sign undermines the veracity of what is presented, such that it can never be fully known or identified.

If sense is not presumed to pre-exist the sign, then an operation that elaborates its coming into being can liberate an image or object from a representational function and chart its productive potential. However, accounting for this potential requires a move away from the habits of interpretation to acknowledge the myriad of forces that are always already at play, unfolding and elaborating before and beyond the human. This shift entails an understanding of art as a relation of forces, and it is this trajectory that Anne Sauvagnargues outlines through the writings of Gilles Deleuze and his engagement with the ideas of Gilbert Simondon. Deleuze argues that art harnesses impersonal and imperceptible forces, extracting and framing them, capturing them as sensation grasped as a range of affective qualities. As Sauvagnargues notes, ‘it is no longer a question of signifier or signified, nor form or matter, but forces and materials, in accordance with Simondon’s principle of modulation’.[[1]](#endnote-2) Modulation allows for the dynamic character of an encounter with a work of art, its spatio-temporal energy and vibrating sensations, which produce the affects that become conditions for sense or meaning.

A continuous process of modulation is one of the components of Simondon’s philosophy of individuation, which he was motivated to develop in response to the limitations he identified in existing understandings of form-matter relations. In place of the idea of form as an imposition on matter, he argues that the processes that actualise an individuation, as a provisional stabilisation, begin with something that is capable of causing a break in a metastable system or triggering communication between heterogeneous orders. This is the generative role Simondon ascribes to information, which is not to be confused with a message, as he points out, information is not what passes from an emitting source to a receiver.[[2]](#endnote-3) Rather, information resonates between two halves of a system in tension or in a state of dissymmetry. The incompatibility between these disparate elements enters into an internal resonance through a continuous exchange, by which information becomes the organising dimension of a process of individuation.

Information, understood as a force-material relation, reformulates the question of forming as an effect of information on the milieu that it constitutes. Deleuze draws on this formulation of individuation to affirm the disparate as the productive potential of difference. Instead of determining difference as a variation or divergence from an already established identity—as a difference in kind—difference is understood as intensity or as a difference in potential. Mobilising this tension between disparate entities, Deleuze argues difference is a differing force, a relation with difference in itself.[[3]](#endnote-4)

As a context or milieu into which an artwork is introduced, a gallery can be understood as a metastable situation predisposed to transformation or becoming otherwise. Within this understanding the artwork can be configured as information, and as Simondon suggests, information ‘is never a given thing’, rather, it is ‘a primer for individuation’.[[4]](#endnote-5) The various relays that compose an artwork, the force-material-information exchanges it triggers, oscillate between heterogeneous orders, enacting movements or repetitions that produce variations that intensify differences.

The intensifying differences enacted by *Altered* *Routine* resonate with its milieu, bringing into tension misalignments or incompatibilities that have accumulated in the built fabric of the gallery. It inhabits the existing metastable situation with repetitions that operate as differentiations, initiating a new individuation. This is the productive potential of art, an actualisation that realigns a movement that passes from one order of difference to another. In opposing representation Deleuze argues, ‘(r)epetition is the formless being of all differences, the formless power of the ground which carries every object to that extreme 'form' in which its representation comes undone.’[[5]](#endnote-6)

**Terri Bird** is an artist and writer, who works in the Fine Art department of the Faculty of Art Design & Architecture at Monash University. Since 2003 she has worked collaboratively with Bianca Hester and Scott Mitchell as Open Spatial Workshop.

1. Anne Sauvagnargues, *Deleuze and Art*, trans. Samantha Bankston (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 39. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
2. Gilbert Simondon, ‘The Position of The Problem of Ontogenesis,’ trans. Gregory Flanders, *Parrhesia* no 7, 2009, n. 21, 15. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
3. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 120. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
4. Simondon, ‘The Position of The Problem of Ontogenesis,’ 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
5. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 57.

**Yusi Zang** is a Beijing born, Melbourne based artist. Her artwork is reflexive, referring to relationships between people, objects and events. Those of attached and unattached, getting and abandoning, visiting and leaving. By investigating these relationships, she focuses on the value of attachment as a way to be present in the work she makes. The work strives for a degree of realism, mimicking the real, which the objects derive from. By conjuring a true likeness, she aims to make the absent, objects or events, present; to activate the value of attachment and make it to be felt and comprehended again.

**Andre Franco** is an Auckland born, Melbourne based artist. Interested in how one navigates the built world that we live in, the works produced by the artist interrogate the over-looked, the well-used and the vernacular, quotidian details of a certain space. Prompted by the parameters and /or conditions of the space, the artist allows these sets of rules to both dictate and open up an experience for the participant. Through the use of fabricated installations and environments, the role of the participant is to both view and be viewed, creating a simultaneous experience, encouraging the viewer to both acknowledge and participate in their surroundings.

 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)