Voicing on the borders of language

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There are diverse experiences of language and a multiplicity of registers through which it is voiced. In non-verbal communication voicing mainly manifests through *non-vocal* registers, such as body language, rhythm, vibration, gesture and spatial relationship – and 'sonic utterances' beyond exchange centred on words and speech. Voicings at the ends of the spectrum of coherent 'normal' speech tend to be ignored as senseless babble or not recognised as voicing at all. The practices I focus on have developed methods and 'technologies' to open (us) to a wider scope of listening and voicing, so that we can engage with non-verbal forms of language *in and as* communication.

Fernand Deligny (France, 1913 - 1996) was a pedagogue, writer and film-maker. Between 1967 and 1991 he elaborated an experimental living space with non-verbal autistic children, outside institutional and therapeutic frameworks. Phoebe Caldwell (UK) is a therapist and writer who specialises in non-verbal communication, working with non-verbal autistic people individually in contexts of state-run care. Iris Johansson (Sweden) is a therapist and writer, who is autistic. She was non-verbal until the age of twelve and lives in both non-verbal and verbal modes of being. All three practices describe non-verbal autism both in clinical terms as a developmental condition and as a mode of being - as an alternative, 'other' way of living.

Caldwell, Deligny and Johansson emerge as 'go-betweens' between verbal and non-verbal being. My research – as recording situations or film shoots—has developed through personal encounters with them, with non-verbal people close to them and by immersion in their community life. These situations have brought me into closer contact and involvement with non-verbal being and the experience of the 'rub-up' between our different forms of language. The rub-up is the productive friction that arises in grappling with unfamiliar, often 'untranslatable' terms. The go-betweens engage in the rub-up through their practices of Intensive Interaction ('mirroring behaviour'; Caldwell); using the mirror and cinema screen technologies to connect with a sense of self (Johansson); *tracér* – 'mapping', and using the film-camera as a tool to produce a non-subjective gaze (Deligny). These technologies produce different forms of relationship, gather traces of communication in recordings or pencil marks, and sensitise us to registers of voicing which elude verbal listening and word-centred interaction. Cinematic thinking plays a key role for Fernand Deligny and Iris Johansson. They use films and film-making in a *meta*cinematic mode, as channels for shaping exchange between verbal and non-verbal people. In my practice my method is to use cinematic apparatus and recorded materials to shape relationships in a rub-up with different forms of language, in the recording situation and between the work and the visitor. I have formulated this as a metacinematic modality of artistic practice.

Through an examination of the practices of the go-betweens and my artistic work with them, we come into a more intimate grappling with non-verbal voicing. The process produces fresh, challenging listening positions that we have to learn to attend to and wrestle with. Mirroring, indirect attention, dual awareness and multidimensional sensing are amongst some of the array of modes through which this happens and to which these new positions correspond.

I see the research as contributing towards attempts to widen our understanding of the normal, everyday verbal-non-verbal divide and to go beyond its rigidities: it contributes to the search for a more inclusive, expanded experience of exchange and voicing at the borders of language.

Key words: Language, Voicing, Listening, Non-verbal communication, Interpersonal relationship, Metacinematic, Rub-up.
Installation, Video art, Cinema, Image, Non-retinal image, Sound, Mirroring, Mimesis, Post-cinematic Affect.
Autism, Aphasia, Cross-modal sensing, Synaesthesia; Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis, Neurology, Developmental psychology; Infant development, Intensive Interaction, Speech therapy, Auditory surveillance, Forensic listening.

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MADE IN SWEDEN

To the go-betweens

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Abstract

My research engages with the varieties of relationship between verbal and non-verbal forms of language and communication. I approach the issue through three people who live or work with non-verbal people on the autistic spectrum: Phoebe Caldwell, Fernand Deligny and Iris Johansson. Their practices bring singular perspectives to my core question: How can we (re)conceive and engage with non-verbal forms of language and communication in our verbal being?

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Caldwell, Deligny and Johansson emerge as 'go-betweens' between verbal and non-verbal being. My research – as recording situations or film shoots—has developed through personal encounters with them, with non-verbal people close to them and by immersion in their community life. These situations have brought me into closer contact and involvement with non-verbal being and the experience of the 'rub-up' between our different forms of language. The rub-up is the productive friction that arises in grappling with unfamiliar, often 'untranslatable' terms. The go-betweens engage in the rub-up through their practices of Intensive Interaction ('mirroring behaviour'; Caldwell); using the mirror and cinema screen technologies to connect with a sense of self (Johansson); *tracér* - 'mapping', and using the film-camera as a tool to produce a non-subjective gaze (Deligny). These technologies produce different forms of relationship, gather traces of communication in recordings or pencil marks, and sensitise us to registers of voicing which elude verbal listening and word-centred interaction. Cinematic thinking plays a key role for Fernand Deligny and Iris Johansson. They use films and film-making in a *meta*cinematic mode, as channels for shaping exchange between verbal and non-verbal

people. In my practice my method is to use cinematic apparatus to shape relationships in a rub-up with different forms of language in the recording situation and between the work and the visitor. I have formulated this as a metacinematic modality of artistic practice.

Through an examination of the practices of the go-betweens and my artistic work with them, we come into a more intimate grappling with non-verbal voicing. The process produces fresh, challenging listening positions that we have to learn to attend to and wrestle with. Mirroring, indirect attention, dual awareness and multidimensional sensing are amongst some of the array of modes through which this happens and to which these new positions correspond.

I see the research as contributing towards attempts to widen our understanding of the normal, everyday verbal-non-verbal divide and to go beyond its rigidities: it contributes to the search for a more inclusive, expanded experience of exchange and voicing at the borders of language.

Glosses

Preliminary glosses for key terms formulated through this research:

BEING WITH. Relationship and the terms in which it is conceived is implied in my core question. I turn to *being with* as a deliberately open term to evoke relationship with no *a priori* expectations, whether for communication to happen or for some kind of shared experience. In *being with* (no hyphenation) there is an undetermined relation between 'being' and 'with'. It recalls Jean-Luc Nancy's (2000) term *being-with*, while stepping back from the '-': (Greek) *hypo*, 'under' + *hen*, 'one' = under one. Whether there can be 'oneness' in relationship with non-verbal voicing is part of the question. Questioning the first premise of relationship arises, for example, in spending time with Gilou Toche and Christoph Berton, two of the non-verbal autistic children of Fernand Deligny's network (now in their fifties). Listening to their voices in verbal silence, 'communication' – even 'together', seems to assume too much, to reflect my terms far more than theirs. Each of the go-betweens has their own terms for relationship between verbal and non-verbal being. Phoebe Caldwell speaks of *union* and *emerging oneness*. For Iris Johansson, what is needed is a *parenting space* or to overlap (ones) *communication fields.* In Fernand Deligny's network relationship between adults and children unfolded in co-presence rather than living 'with' each other. *Being with* happens in time, whether for a moment or for many years.

DETOURS. There are two kinds of detour in this dissertation: one is a term used by Fernand Deligny, in the vocabulary used to describe the routes of the autistic children, around spaces of his experimental 'network'. The other is in the form of the writing, and the two are related. In Fernand Deligny's network, a 'detour' (FD) was a route from A to B taken by an autistic child as she or he carried out a task (fetching a water bucket, putting away the washing up), which would seem for all practical purposes to be indirect and elaborate. Through the practice of tracing the children's movements using a form of mapping (*tracér* FD), it emerged that the 'ornamented' (*orné* FD) lines of such routes were neither excessive nor meaningless, but absolutely necessary . It is in this spirit that I take detours from the discussions of the go-betweens in each chapter, to trace the steps I have taken in my artistic research with them. They evoke the development of this personal and embodied research with them (or people close to them) within the text; my thinking, methods, modes, practicalities and experiences through which I developed art works which were shaped by them.

GO-BETWEEN. The practices Fernand Deligny, Phoebe Caldwell and Iris Johansson bring us into connection with non-verbal people and or modes of being. By engaging with them we come closer to the languages and voicings of non-verbal people. Each has developed a mode of thinking, techniques and technologies, vocabularies and forms of mediation through which these relationships unfold. They 'speak' both ways, conveying their ideas and 'findings' to wider networks through films, maps and discourse. I examine

how they navigate these channels of communication, their ideas, 'relational technologies' and different forms of knowledge: listening to non-verbal voicing through each of these singular 'listening positions'.

METACINEMATIC.[1] Each of the go-betweens has a strong relationship with the cinema, cinematic thinking and methods. But Fernand Deligny and Iris Johansson also use films and film-making to shape relationship with non-verbal modes of being. The main object is less about cinema than using the camera to 'change the scope of our gaze' towards non-verbal children (FD). For Iris, it is about the cinema screen as a training tool for self-transformation and building connections with the social world (IJ). These *meta*cinematic ways of using cinematic technologies contrast with Phoebe Caldwell's relationship with the apparatus. She tolerates the camera only as a means to communicate her practice, not to shape relationship with her non-verbal 'partners'. In this sense she helps us to better understand its effects. In my artistic practice I use apparatus and methods related to video and film-making in a similar way, in my research and in making art works. I make film, video and sound recordings which become part of the work. But the object in this mode is about producing different modes of reflexive awareness, both in 'recording situations' and between visitors and the art work. In a metacinematic mode the apparatus gathers traces of relationship unfolding *and* produces new modes of awareness and channels for communication between people. Thinking between the practices of the go-betweens and my own in this way has brought me to formulate the metacinematic as a modality of artistic practice.

RUB-UP. The rub-up is the friction produced in encounters between different forms of language.[2] It arises in the bewilderment of not understanding when grappling with unfamiliar forms of voicing. When language reaches its limits our relationship with it can be exposed to us in new ways. In this sense it is inherently reflexive. In the rub-up we attune to different registers of voicing around and beyond our own. Some we may have been unable to conceive of as voicing at all. In each of the practices of the go-betweens and my artistic practice, in different modes and contexts, the rub-up broadens the scope of communication. It emerges in many shades, whose affects are wide-ranging, contingent and unpredictable. It is difficult, arguably impossible, to know how communication or relationship is experienced by another person; in the rub-up our attention is focused on what is happening *between us* and its effects on 'we who speak' (FD).

VOICING. *Voicing*[3] includes the continuum of all communicative registers from the spoken word to sonic utterances, somatic registers of gesture and movement, intangible vibrations and frequencies of communication, rhythms, spatial and temporal forms.

[1] I in my use of the 'metacinematic' I am not referring to the term from the 1950s in film theory. This referred to an approach to film-making through which the viewer is made aware that she or he is watching a fiction film. 'Orthodox reflexivity affirms the role of narrative structure as a transparency; modernist reflexivity seeks to reverse this role.' (Siska, 1979, pp. 285 - 289): metacinematic film-making affects the relation between viewer and the film, which is not the same as using it as a relational tool between people.

[2] Existing definitions of 'rub up' (not hyphenated) refer to 'improving the keenness (of a mental faculty)' and 'reviving or refreshing the knowledge of' (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rub%20up#h1. Accessed19.7.20).

[3] The way I am using the term *voicing* is quite different to its established uses: as a musical term it refers to the placement of notes in musical notation as well as to the placing of voices in a choir or group. In phonetics, *voicing* refers to voiced as opposed to unvoiced speech sounds. CITE

Voicing resonates through the silences between its tangible registers. Through the practices of the go-betweens the broader continuum of voicings can be listened to and heard. *Voicing* is 'calling forth': an address, an impulse to mobilise 'oneself' towards others or with oneself (in 'conversations with the self'.[4] PC). In voicing we may or may not be communicating with another person, whereas in communicating we are voicing *to* – whether to somebody else or ourselves. In relationship with non-verbal people, communication may be happening between us, but we cannot be certain. What we took for communication was perhaps not addressed to us at all ('he missed the voice, or the voice missed him.' FD) – or *was* no form of address. Voicing may take forms I can barely recognise *as* voicing, and so the scope of this term takes account of non-vocal, 'silent' and unknowable registers ('vibrations'. PC). Extending the domain of voicing beyond the vocal opens to different modes of listening beyond the aural.

[4] Phoebe Caldwell's phrase, from our conversations.

Introduction

I first encountered Fernand Deligny's work through his film *Ce Gamin Là* (*That Kid There*) in 2006.[5] The images seemed silent even though there were plenty of sounds. What was extraordinary was not how the film was shot or edited but the image it evoked: a space of intense attentiveness around and between isolated figures turning in a landscape. This was less relationship as 'communication' than as 'being-in-relation' – floating yet forcefully tangible. The image remained with me as an almost physical sensation. In 2008 and 2012 I developed ideas around 'the borders of language' through two exhibitions, *Die Lucky Bush* (2008) and *In the First Circle* (2012).[6] Alongside art works, censored books and musical scores,[7] both exhibitions included presentations of hand-drawn maps made by Fernand Deligny and the adults who were part of his experimental network. They show the children's customary movements and routes and their 'wandering lines', traced in chalk or pencil. They render physical traces of relationship between the verbal and the non-verbal, produced through a practice that resists being situated – between care, social experiment and cinematic practice. The maps, too, resist being situated as images in any clear-cut sense. Despite their cartographic appearance, the lines and signs trace movements of bodies and attention, more the ground over which they loop and return.

Outlines

'How can we (re)conceive and engage with different forms of language and communication, in our verbal being?' Watching and listening to Deligny's films connected me with a practice of relationship with non-verbal being and an engagement with non-verbal autism. It was my starting point for exploring this core question of my doctoral research (ten years later), and a wider engagement with practices on the borders of language in context of non-verbal autism, in a similar mode. I met Phoebe Caldwell in 2016 and Iris Johansson in 2018. Each engages in the rub-up between verbal and non-verbal forms of language as a form of practice. As for Deligny, it is developed *in and as* relationship with non-verbal people on the autistic spectrum, Phoebe Caldwell as a

[5] In 2006, Wim Cuyvers is a Belgian architect and forestier. He initiated the research project 'Traces of Autism' at the Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht (NL) (where I was working as an Advising Researcher from 2006-12). He screened several of Fernand Deligny's films and introduced me to Deligny's practice through his avid engagement with it. Through him I met Sandra Alvarez de Toledo. Sandra is a writer, researcher, editor and publisher of Deligny's writings in France. Following many years of research and bringing together a huge range of Deligny's writings, many unpublished, she published the major collection of Deligny's writings, *Oeuvres*, in 2009. See bibliography and Éditions L'Arachnéen, Paris for this and her other books of Deligny's writings, correspondences and 'maps': http://www.editions-arachneen.fr.

[6] A curatorial project focusing on the idea of the 'borders of language', made up of two exhibitions: in 2008 at MuHKA, Antwerp and 2012 (curated in collaboration with Paul Domela Nieuwenhuis) at Fundaçio Antoni Tapiès, Barcelona (see bibliography).

[7] Including five books by Erasmus of Rotterdam from the Erasmus Huis in Brussels, each containing a different method of censoring: physical traces of a hard 'language border' – here: a theological conflict – black ink lines scratching out offending words so deeply that they cut the page; pasting over the entire page with black parchment, the method known as *papillon* – butterfly – a light, gentle stifling out. Musical scores by the Greek composer Logothetis were presented, courtesy of his daughter Julia Logothetis.

clinician and Iris Johansson as someone who lives with/in relationship between verbal and non-verbal dimensions of her autistic self. In each case how non-verbal autism is approached and how it shapes their practice, plays out in a singular sense. I take my cue from their positions to engage with autism in terms of a developmental and neurological condition and as a mode of being

In encounters with language we do not understand we can be at a loss. Grappling with unfamiliar terms, in the friction that arises, we tune into different registers of voicing, open to different modes of sense-making. I have examined this friction or 'rub-up' and its effects as it arises in each practice: a *productive* friction which widens the scope of (our) voicing. As verbal people we catch echoes of what is happening in non-verbal domains, but cannot verify them. Through the practices of Fernand Deligny, Iris Johansson and Phoebe Caldwell, we come closer to those echoes. In this sense they figure as 'go-betweens' between verbal and non-verbal being through and with whom I have developed my research. In their practices we discover methods and 'technologies' for mediating relationship between verbal and non-verbal people, and catch tangible traces of it happening. In this lie correlations with my artistic practice, in how I engage with people who voice themselves through different forms of language. They connect also on the level of how I use methods, cinematic and other technologies and (artistic) languages for mediating relationship with different forms of voicing. I have met, filmed and worked with the go-betweens (or people close to them). Through this embodied mode of artistic 'research-production' I have engaged with (their) non-verbal voicing directly and experienced the rub-up which is produced between us. This experience is what I bring with me to the process of developing the art work. Through the following chapters, I weave descriptions of moments of my embodied artistic research with the go-betweens, into my discussions about them. In this way I trace an arc between my experience of the rub-up with them and the art work which I produce through it.

Go-betweens

Between 1967 and 1991 Fernand Deligny with other adults and autistic children co-habited in small groups, spread across a spatialised 'network' of farmhouses around the village of Monoblet, in the Cevennes (FR). His purpose was to create spaces outside institutional, diagnostic or therapeutic frameworks, which would adapt to the needs of the children, rather than the other way around (Fernand Deligny was associated with the Anti-Psychiatry movement, although always from a distance (Alvarez de Toledo, p.4). On one level the children were simply let be, wandering around the adults as they carried out the activities of daily life. Fernand Deligny wrote constantly – essays, articles, books, letters – and carried out a deep investigation of the image through forms of mapping, photography and film-making. At the core of his thinking was his belief in not imposing language on the non-verbal children, and relationship between adults and children was characterised by modes of distancing. For Fernand Deligny these conditions were necessary for the near-intangible, immaterial 'network' of relationship between the verbal and the non-verbal to develop. In this relationship, 'we who speak' (FD) could open to the effects of the children's non-verbal being on verbal language and perception.

Iris Johansson[8] is a therapist (1945 -) who lives in Fagersta, Sweden and Dahab Egypt. In her therapeutic practice she specialises in working with groups using her method of Primary Thinking Work. Until the age of twelve she was non-verbal and was diagnosed with autism in her late twenties. As a child Iris developed a sense of connection with herself, with verbal communication and with other people through practices of mirroring, in relation to her reflection in the mirror and in the faces of people around her. Later she used the cinema as a reflexive tool to adapt her gestures to match social conventions. She studied the expressions and body language of actors on screen, to reproduce them in her own face and body in front of her mirror at home. These practices brought her into a *verbal* relationship with the language and helped her to connect with people on social terms. But as Iris says, 'I always be autistic' - she will always exist in and between the verbal and the non-verbal.

Phoebe Caldwell[9] (1933 -) is a therapist and writer who specialises in non-verbal communication with people on the autistic spectrum. She works within the framework of institutional state-run care, mainly in special schools and care homes. Her practice is based on a clinical approach to autism, understood as a neurological and developmental condition and informed by scientific research. Unlike Fernand Deligny, for Phoebe Caldwell the primary aim is 'to help' (PC). She uses non-verbal communication to tune into her 'partner's' body language and develop responsive, affective connection with them. Her 'findings' can transform their lives and those of people around them. Phoebe Caldwell addresses neurological and physical effects of autism, such as sensory pain and lack of proprioceptive feedback,[10] which are often the cause of 'stereotypical' autistic behaviours (rocking and 'stimming' – stimulating). Her main technique, Intensive Interaction, is based on mirroring behaviour between infant and parent or carer, through which the infant develops social relationship and eventually language.[11] Unlike the distanced relationship between Fernand Deligny and the non-verbal children, Phoebe Caldwell's practice involves a physically close, focused and direct one to one bodily engagement.

Rub-up / Metacinematic

In 2014 I worked with two of the remaining non-verbal children of Fernand Deligny's network in Monoblet: Gilou Toche and Christoph Berton (now in their fifties), with the help of Jacques Lin and participation of Gisèle Durand, the first adults who joined Deligny at the beginnings of the network. Through these experiences and with the recorded material, I developed the installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* (2014 and 2018). In 2016 I initiated an ongoing conversation with Phoebe Caldwell about her ideas and practice, which developed into a series of recording sessions and a film shoot. In 2016 I was introduced to Iris Johansson's book *A Different Childhood*. This led to our meeting the following year, and in 2018 I arranged a series of research and production periods

[8] http://irisjohansson.com.

[9] http://thecaldwellautismfoundation.org.uk. / https://www.phoebecaldwell.co.uk.

[10] Proprioceptive feedback: the feedback loop between body and brain by which the brain connects with body movements and sensations, and understands its physical position in space.

[11] Mirroring behaviour is used in developmental psychology in context of language acquisition (see among others, Winnicott [1989] and Stern [1985], both of whose work is referred to in chapters 4 and 5 in relation to Phoebe Caldwell and Iris Johansson).

with her in Dahab and Fagerstå. Through my encounters with her, I developed the installation *Iris – [A Fragment]* (2018). Each of these instances happened through a modality of practice which I have been developing over the past twenty-five years. It is shaped by encounters with different forms of voicing. It involves recording situations and apparatus related to film-making; video and film material, editing and making film or video sequences with them. I work with these technologies to make film and record of course, but rarely in order to make a film as such, in the sense of a single screen work, or a cinematic production. I use them in a 'metacinematic' modality, using the inherently reflexive effects of the apparatus to produce reflexive awareness in the recording situation and, in different ways, in context of the art work. Through these different modes of communication can develop between me and people I work with (in the work: with visitors).

Cinematic thinking, film-making and other forms of cinematic practice run through the practices of Fernand Deligny and Iris Johansson, in terms of film-making and viewing. Each has also developed *meta*cinematic 'technologies' which operate as channels through which they mediate and produce new forms of relationship, between verbal and non-verbal modes of being. Through the following chapters I examine these practices, technologies and the different forms of relationship and communication they give rise to. In this constellation, Phoebe Caldwell stands in stark contrast. In non-verbal communication she is focused with full mind-body attention on her communication partner. In these conditions, the recording apparatus is a distraction from the immersion that is needed to 'tune in'. In this sense, she introduces an anti-cinematic position into my research which opens invaluable perspectives onto the metacinematic practices of Fernand Deligny, Iris Johansson and my own.

Through this research I have built on the correspondences I see between how cinematic thinking and technologies are used in our practices not only as a means to make films or watch them, but also as a tool for shaping relationship between verbal and non-verbal people. When used for this purpose I formulate them as metacinematic modalities of practice.

Between: the method of this thesis

My thesis develops through thinking *with* the go-betweens: examining their terms, methods and thought, and tuning into their different ways of voicing them. It involves thinking *about* them in relation to contexts in which to situate their practices, the influences which shape their work and how they speak to wider networks. And it involves thinking between their practices and my own, to elucidate relationships between their experimental, philosophical, clinical, therapeutic and artistic urgencies. In these modes of thinking with, about and between, in the chapters which follow I focus on each practice in turn. I interleave the discussions of the go-betweens with 'detours' into my artistic research with them (or people close to them) and the metacinematic modality in which it develops, through examples. I describe wider circumstances and practical contingencies around research-production, and the recording situations I have set up with them.

In the next two sections I set out some of the theoretical and conceptual grounds for the two key terms I have developed through this research: the rub-up and the metacinematic as a modality of practice. In 'Voicing on the Continuum' I introduce three people who

embody different forms of voicing, to evoke the wide scope of voicing and language around and beyond the verbal. In chapter 4, I return to two of these voices, with Fernand Deligny, Iris Johansson and Phoebe Caldwell, to discuss the relationship between my encounters with them in context of my artistic research and the art works that I have developed through them.

A note on proper names

In the following chapters I refer to Fernand Deligny, Iris Johansson and Phoebe Caldwell in ways which reflect my relationship to them. Our relationships have had a significant bearing on how my research has developed, and it seems important to let this be visible in the text. Fernand Deligny, a person who died long before I began my research, is 'Deligny' (as he is for all who knew him including his closest companions in the network). I have come to know Phoebe Caldwell and Iris Johansson personally over the past four years and worked closely with them during our meetings and artistic research, and so I refer to them as Phoebe and Iris.

Voicing on the continuum

For the verbal, language is always more than the linguistic and words are forever slipping their semantic skin. They establish their meaning through where and how they are voiced (context), through the body as much as in how they are semantically defined. The verbal is languages as systems of signs and signifiers, grammar and syntax - in all their variations, shaped in time and cultural conditions. Verbal language is commonly referred to as the dominant medium of communication. We test and share different ways of making sense *in-through language* of what is 'around it'. In verbal language, silence is substance no less than words. 'Two people are talking together. They understand each other, and they fall silent – a long silence. This silence is language (…)' (Barrett, 1990, p. 223).[12] Language listens to silence between words not as 'merely a gap in chatter; it is rather, the primordial attunement of one existent to another, out of which all language – as sounds, marks and counters – comes.' (Barrett, 1990, p. 223).[13] Yes, we are used to listening to what is not language within language, but we do so from a place in language. Fernand Deligny worked with this awareness as a driving motivation for the network. This is why the first premise of the network was to for the adults to withdraw from language in the presence of the non-verbal autistic children.

My aim is not to define what language *is* but to engage with the interrelation between different *forms* of language. Interrelation is fluid, produced in encounters between languages brushing with | against and co-constituting each other. The dominant language we grow with into who and how we are, forms thinking physically as well as culturally and subjectively, on the level of neurology: in the confluence of paths and patterns of thought, with the routing of synaptic pathways. The drive to *cohere* – to perceive different dimensions of experience and communication[14] as a *whole* – tends to draw us to what we know rather than the unfamiliar. We engage with the multiple dimensions of voicing – the sonic, the grain of the voice, silences, rhythms, facial expressions, gestures, the semantic edge of speech. How we do so is led by modes of attention shaped in (oriented by, and to) the verbal, and often within a relatively narrow range of communicative registers.[15] Through the question which guides me, the orientation of this research unfolds

[12] Barrett is explaining Heidegger's understanding of language and contrasting it with the 'semanticism now in vogue in this country and in England'.

[13] The term *attunement* used here by William Barrett comes from the field of psychology where it is used in the context of the infant–mother/carer relationship and the state of their being 'in tune' with each other (see e.g. Stern (1985), Winnicott (1989), et al.).

[14] Communication is not necessarily towards others ('outward'). It is also happening in forms of internal 'dialogue', whether in terms of inner voice, or as proprioceptive feedback – the sensory feedback of the body to the mind. The head banging or rocking characteristic of many autistic people, Phoebe Caldwell refers to as how they are 'talking' to themselves.

[15] Janet Gurney defines language in the context of non-verbal being as a 'system of *intentional* communication – any [form of] communication' (from a conversation, March 2017). Her colleague Marina Jurjevic states: 'Whatever people give to us to communicate with, I call "idiosyncratic language"'. (From conversations recorded during meetings between February and June 2017). Janet Gurney is the director of the charity Us in a Bus, she works

through loops (reflections) and necessary detours around and between non-verbal and verbal forms of communication.

> 'By tapping in the same rhythm as his "twirling", I lay down the beginnings of a possibility for a responsive sense of his existence from outside. That's a step in his path to finding an intentional language that might work for him: it might be stopping twirling and looking…'[16]

Continuum

Engaging with different forms of voicing means attending to different registers of (our) language, to forms of sense-making and relationship that are unfamiliar or unknown to us. Among the people I have been engaging with, some voice themselves through sonic utterances and some through body language, rhythm and spatial relationship, for example. How we conceive of a voice and relate to the communicative impulses which gives rise to *voicing* in this context, needs to accommodate such non-verbal and non-vocal registers. It is (verbal) language which produces borders in the spaces between languages, through its very ability to generate readily agreed-upon verbal meeting-points. Yet some forms of voicing leave me completely at a loss. In states of incomprehension a seemingly unbridgeable gap arises between one voice and another. In this moment voicing separates into categorical distinctions, or callibrations of difference along a spectrum. I face a paradoxical task. How to conceive of voicing in all its varieties and forms not in only in terms of difference, and the borders that are produced by (our) verbal terms, but / and as the continuum which emerges when we attune with unfamiliar registers of voicing?

'A place in language' is a topographical analogy, implying a 'here' and 'there', 'inside' and 'outside', 'me' and 'you'. Language produces structures of space and time, segmenting the flow of experience. Erin Manning refers to this as 'chunking' – importantly, with regard to autism, she relates it to 'neurotypical' perception', but not to 'autistic perception'.[17] Language aside, the voice is a most ambiguous material. In hearing oneself at the moment of speaking, outer and inner spaces merge.[18] The voice blurs bodily boundaries, the division between interiority and exteriority through which a self-other relationship is constituted.[19] It resonates tangibly in its immateriality, filling and producing (sonic) space, vibrating (through) the ear-drum. Listening to the sonority and the semantics of speech, one oscillates between sensing and *sense-making*.

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with a team of therapists including Marina Jurjevic using works Intensive Interaction to communicate with non-verbal people.

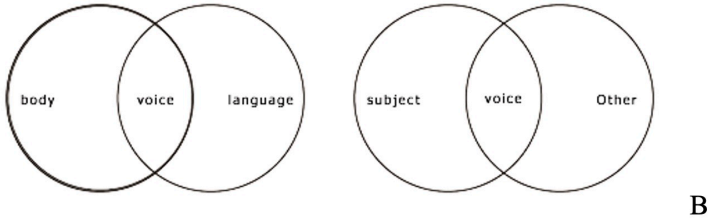
[16] Janet Gurney, from a conversation recorded on 15th March 2017.

[17] Manning (2013) holds that 'neurotypical' perception 'chunks' experience into subjects and objects, and evidences through the testimonies of autistic people that what she calls 'autistic perception' does not. For autistic people, the environment is 'gradually taking form' (from the publisher's summary) – a description which Iris Johansson vividly evokes, in her book, *A Different Childhood*.

[18] As I will discuss in in chapter 2 in context of Iris Johansson, the psychoanalyst Guy Rosolato (1974) points out that the voice is 'both emitted and received' (voiced and heard) at the same time by the speaker, as cited by Kaja Silverman (1988).

[19] This image resonates with Iris Johansson's childhood experiences of slipping in and out of her own bodily boundaries, which I describe in Chapter 2.

It is for these qualities that the voice has been singled out in psychoanalytical and philosophical thinking[20] as existing at the intersection of various boundaries – between the sound and semantics of speech; voice and body; interiority and exteriority; the subject and the other. These discussions have both inspired and provoked my questions of/on the borders of language. How to evoke different modalities of relationship in ways which are not governed by the orders of (verbal) language, with its categories and designations? This problem (which was at the heart of Deligny's project) is in part why the voice holds such fascination, and is to some degree also idealised as a solution. In his short essay, 'Which Voice'[21], Mladen Dolar turns to the Venn diagram to schematise how the voice confounds verbal concepts and binary thinking.[22]



A B

In A the voice issues from both subject and other, but belongs to neither. In B the voice carries both body and language, but it is neither fully part of, nor independent of either (Dolar, 2006).[23]

These sharp lines and distinct borders need to be imagined as zones softly fading in to, out of and between each other with infinite subtlety – as a voice spreads through space and permeates physical materials. But a Venn diagram limits thinking and imagination to two-dimensions. Trying to visualise the continuum of voicing, what is needed is an expansive *form* reaching out across multiple dimensions.

According to standard definitions a continuum changes character gradually, with no perceptible divisions or calibrations – 'although the extremes are quite distinct'.[24] Between the 'furthest' areas on the continuum, difference appears sharply, as a border rather than a zone. How to visualise the paradoxical conditions of voicing on the continuum? I am resorting to the most basic form in the language of topology, which is commonly used to explain what topology is: the *torus*. Every part of the surface of a torus

[20] These ideas are put forward along similar lines and with some cross-referencing, by a number of people whose work I draw on in my research, in particular: Kaja Silverman, Mladen Dolar and Michel Chion (who I reference more precisely where relevant, throughout the dissertation).

[21] Dolar, M., 'Which Voice', in *In the First Circle*, publication for the exhibition curated by Paul Domela and myself, Fundaçio Tapiès, Barcelona 2012.

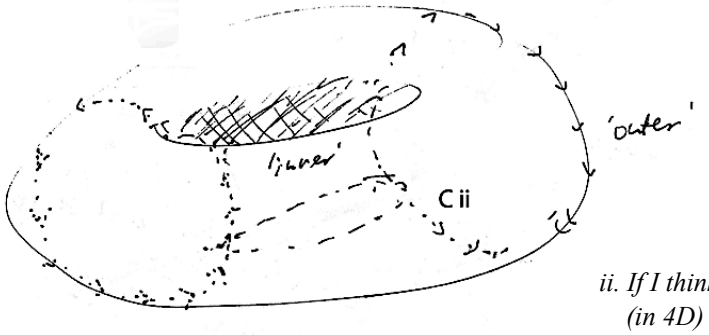
[22] Dolar (2006, p.22) is summarising his argument for the limitations he sees in how both Freud and Lacan conceptualise the voice in binary terms.

[23] Diagrams taken from *A Voice and Nothing More* (Dolar, 2006, p. 73, *left* and 103 *right*).

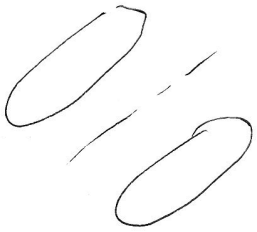
[24] Cambridge English Dictionary (accessed online): 'Something that changes in character gradually or in very slight stages without any clear dividing points'; or, the online (US) dictionary Lexico: 'A continuous sequence in which adjacent elements are not perceptibly different from each other, *although the extremes are quite distinct*' (my emphasis) (https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/continuum accessed 8th January 2020).

is smoothly connected with every other part, and so relationship is continuous and fluid between any position in all directions.

i. Tracing a line around the body of a torus produces a loop.



ii. If I think of this loop – as a movement through time (in 4D) as well as space (in 3D) it connects in/as continuous relationship between the interior space of the hole at the centre and the space around the torus. This multi-dimensional movement merges the binary of interior and exterior.



In cross-section the torus appears as two disconnected and unrelated spaces, with no way to move between them.

Voicing on the threshold

Tony O'Donnell lost the ability to speak following a stroke and slowly learned to speak again over the course of a year. He was articulated fluently and knew what he wanted to say. But the relationship between words, thoughts and concepts was lost or re-organised on a synaptical level, through the brain damage which results from a stroke. Having a conversation with him, absorbed in the process of making sense in unfamiliar ways, effected the patterns of my own thought. I drew on this experience to develop an installation, *The Whisper Heard*.[25] Tony's voice and body permeate the work, but I was not trying to represent him, describe aphasia, or evoke my own experience – although all are part of the work in some sense. This is not about mystifying the situation, but opening out space for a more expansive scope of attention and listening. I set out to produce

[25] Stidworthy, 2003.

another kind of hiatus, a rub-up, between the language of the visitor, Tony's language and the language of an art work which speaks in spatial, sculptural terms, in relationships between the visual and the aural. [26]

Tony

When (my) language is not working one starts to understand how language 'ordinarily' works. For a verbal person, being in dialogue with someone who has lost language is very different to being with someone who has never had a practice of language at all. Tony is highly articulate and knows exactly what he wants to say. As we talk together long silences stretch out between us as he struggles to find words. The order of language is confused – 'mine' and 'yours', 'this' and 'that', 'before' and 'after': subjecthood, space and time – its most basic concepts. 'My f…f… Face. No – no, it's *this*, it's this thing here'; and he brings his hands to his face as though to make the connection manually, externally: 'Yes… *Face*! It's my face!'.[27]

Every time Tony opens his mouth to speak he risks being drawn into a 'fruitless compulsion to search for words',[28] a vertiginous, wordless state. For him to begin a sentence is a brave act. For the unfamiliar listener, it evokes the anxiety of a prolonged, awkward silence in conversation. His hands move in, as though to catch or connect meanings he cannot grasp with words. They articulate one symmetrical gesture after another, purposefully cycling through signs of an unreadable language, apparently unconsciously: a body voicing itself.[29] The silences draw me into his effort and an awareness of my tension in witnessing it (I imagine attention looping in and out between us; the recurving lines of an infinity sign). When speech is a given, such silences feel like a failure in the ad hoc social contract of conversation. Tony's struggle for words triggers my own social tensions – but not his – and reflects them back, exposing me to my own conditions. Tony closes his eyes for long minutes at a time without embarrassment. He voices the movement of thought from word to word, testing and discarding along the way. Time after time he arrives at a word, close in sound or meaning to the one he needs, for the thought he has – and realises it is not quite right. He mutters and moves on. He is acutely aware of the nuances between words. He is a translator working with total concentration.

> "Language roots my thought". We asked her to write it down and she wrote: r-o-u-te-s — which means 'chooses a direction', 'chooses a pathway for my thoughts'. And then she said, "No, no, no! Roots my thoughts" — r o-o-t-s - meaning roots in the ground. And then she said, "Yes, but ... it's more — there's more", and then she wrote, 'Routs' — which is pronounced 'rowts' — 'Language routs my thoughts', which means that it destroys my

[26] I met Tony O'Donnell during research towards developing the installation *The Whisper Heard* (2003). This installation is discussed in Chapter 4, RUB-UP.

[27] Tony O'Donnell, from his words in *The Whisper Heard*.

[28] Salisbury (2008) writing about Samuel Beckett's temporary aphasia.

[29] After our first filming session with Tony I invited him to watch the uncut footage with me at the gallery (Matts Gallery, London, who commissioned the work). He stayed watching it for three hours: until that moment he had been completely unaware of these movements of his hands.

> thoughts, that it blows them to nothing. And all of that was included in what she said. Which is poetry – and it's something very very effective.[30]

Time slows. I notice the flux of expectation between waiting for coherence and abandoning it. I engage with different dimensions of Tony's voicing: gestures of hands, movements of face, the flow of speech sounds, the sonorous substance of voice, rhythms of breathing, variations and silences. Over time a powerful sense of empathy grows; of communication happening in the absence of coherent speech. I follow the path of a narrative flow that never reaches a destination.[31] 'A dramatized deferral of the moment of revelation that one anticipates from the image' – Jean Fisher evokes a comparable suspension of revelation on the visual register.[32] In his translation of thought to words through all the variation and revision, Tony's choice of words is often confusing, but can also be revealing. Some have a striking aptness and poetic efficiency. In these moments, loss of language and the laborious process to find it back, are not only limitations. In the space of rub-up between us - between different ways of voicing and understanding – his translations are part of what is honing relationships with and between thought, language and 'meaning' in new ways, for both of us.

Thinking tends to happen along known lines, it relies heavily on prior thoughts, influences and conditioned responses (Bohm, 2014). We are 'blind to our own blindness':[33] most thinking *happens*, unaware of its own processes. 'We could say that practically all the problems of the human race are due to the fact that thought is not proprioceptive' (Bohm, 2014, p. 29). For Tony, aphasia has forced a heightened awareness of almost every aspect of how he thinks, what he says and how. He re-visits words and their meanings, sifts through all variations, for the *right word*. His words are emphatic and summary as he pronounces/*pounces on* them; they are also tentative and open, since they must be tasted, tested and probed as they form. He embodies translation not as a hunt for equivalents, but as a relationship by which one language 'rediscovers itself in and as another'.[34] Since having a stroke, (his) language has become strange to him; in the rub-up between us, the relationship between meanings and words becomes strange to me too. 'When the tool is broken, it no longer disappears into its use' (Blanchot, 1982, p. 255), and becomes visible, or perceivable. Translation carries a 'double duty' in a sense which is both political and ethical: 'To expropriate oneself from oneself as one appropriates the other from oneself' writes Ricœur (Kearney, 2007, pp. 150-151). His words evoke a process between one person and another through which some form of restitution takes place. I understand this in terms of how, in the space of communication, new forms of relationship can be produced between and for/in us - which carries a certain responsibility. In dialogues on the threshold of language, translation *in this sense* is part of what is happening (rather than something one *does*) through the bewildering effects of the rub-up.

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[30] Speech therapist Judith Langley described this exchange with a woman who had aphasia, following a stroke. She had been a successful poet and lived surrounded by books she could no longer read. From a round-table discussion in context of the exhibition *The Whisper Heard*, held at Matts Gallery, London, day & month 2003.

[31] I am paraphrasing Rosalind Krauss (2003).

[32] Jean Fisher (Fisher, 1993, p. 1). Writing here about James Coleman's slide dissolve piece *La Tache Aveugle* (1978-90).

[33] Maturana and Varela, 1992, p. 26. ('The Embodied Mind') full ref, put in bibliography and delete this footnote.

[34] '(…) *Soi-même comme un autre'* Bohm (2014, p. 151).

‘The aphasic disintegration of the verbal pattern may provide the linguist with new insights into the general laws of language,’ wrote Roman Jakobson (Jakobson, R. and Waugh, L., 1979, p.176). His words resonate with these ideas of translation in Tony’s aphasic speech, from the perspective of a neurologist and linguist. Tony told me that having a stroke was like bomb going off in his head.[35] The physical effect was damage to the synaptical pathways, breaking or throwing them into disarray and changing the neural patterns which underpin our formation as ‘verbal organisms’ (Sacks, 1989).[36] After a stroke the brain begins repairing itself, growing new synaptical connections: new routes for thinking and acting. The trauma of losing language has huge emotional and psychological impact, and on some levels people with aphasia behave differently to their pre-aphasic selves.[37] But the neurological damage tends to be localised; memories, intelligence, humour, the ‘flavour’[38] of a person – these things are not affected. ‘I am the same person but I am not the same person’, Tony once told me. Losing or developing language on this level is not just adding a skill, it shapes a mode of being.

Between Tony’s (aphasic) voicing and my own, however different they were, we (still) shared verbal language. What was produced in the rub-up between us was shaped in and by this encounter between different forms of verbal language. This is very different to the rub-up between verbal and non-verbal voicing. Engaging with aphasic speech brings us to the threshold of (our) language; and I imagine this not only as a space but also as a condition or a state of language and relationship. In the threshold, we engage with forms of voicing in which we can no longer identify *how* or in what way communication is happening, although we can ‘sense’ it and sometimes very powerfully. It manifests as a movement towards each other, to meet in wordless understanding, or reach some common ground for making contact.[39] Through its proto-Indian-European roots, *dialogue* is not tied to the exchange of words or the dualism of twos: *-log* is a collecting or gathering; *dia*: across or between, involving any number of people: ‘dialogue’ is evoked as (a) *movement* of giving out and gathering ‘meaning’, between people.

[35] Speech therapist Judith Langley explained to me that the brain area affected by Tony O’Donnell’s stroke was never established. Aphasia is usually caused by damage to the Broca’s area of the left hemisphere. But Tony’s case was unusual in that he had no motor problems, so his pronunciation was unaffected and though he could not always find his words, he had an extraordinarily rich and sophisticated vocabulary. In 1955, Jakobson and Waugh wrote: ‘The universal and near-universal implicational laws in the sound-patterning of language and the tempting question of their possible biological foundations require careful and critical interdisciplinary research.’ (Jakobson and Waugh, 1979, p.175) They hint at the interrelation between different neurological conditions and different patterns – which would produce different modes – of thought.

[36] Sachs uses this term at several points in ‘Seeing Voices.’

[37] From discussions with speech therapist Judith Langley based on her personal research and work with the Aphasia Clinic at University College London.

[38] In our conversations Phoebe Caldwell has talked about the ‘flavour’ of a person; their quiddity.

[39] I use this term in the sense that Deligny sometimes referred to the physical living space of the network. This bit of land was literally the ground of/for contact with the children. He made no claim for the shared understanding implied by the figurative meaning of ‘common ground’, which for him would be impossible in relationship with non-verbal children. But this physical space made relationship possible.

Voicing at the minimum

Over several months in 2016-17 I met a group of therapists who specialise in non-verbal communication.[40] They work with Intensive Interaction in ways inspired by Phoebe Caldwell and her thinking, but each of them has developed it in their own way to some extent, as every therapist does. As well as discussing their thinking I observed and filmed them in practice, working with people individually and in groups in different care contexts around London. J is one woman they work with regularly; she is non-verbal due to a number of developmental conditions.[41]

J.

J lies very still. Her forefinger is tapping the air in the tiniest movement that could be called a gesture, in time with barely voiced sounds of her throat opening and closing. M is beside her, she is adjusting her breathing to the same irregular rhythm and patting her shoulder gently but emphatically in synch. On the other side of the bed, L is mirroring the movement of J's fingertip with her own finger, so closely that it seems they are connected by an invisible thread. To begin: each time J taps her finger, L's finger hits a key on her electronic musical keyboard. Each note echoes, acknowledges, confirms, amplifies and answers J's voicing. The two therapists are not trying to follow, but to coincide their rhythms with hers, which is much more demanding. At their most tuned-in they seem to sense her impulse to voice *before* it sounds or appears.

Intensive Interaction involves paying the closest attention to non-verbal expressions of communication, to pick up on movements, gestures or sounds which are meaningful in/for your 'communication partner' – in any sense, whether in terms of outward address or of reassurance to self. These might be minutely subtle: an occasional rapid reaching out to touch the fringe of a lampshade; an almost inaudible clicking of the tongue; or dramatic banging of the head against the wall, bellowing, throwing a shoe, repeatedly (Caldwell, 2014). By mirroring or echoing these gestures or sounds, a non-verbal dialogue starts to develop. The therapist sends them back each time *with variation*, first to engage and then to trigger curiosity, to initiate an improvisatory game.[42] Intensive Interaction can be life-changing for non-verbal people and for the people who live with or care for them. What is at stake in this game is the possibility to establish and develop channels for communication where there were none, or where people have been unable to recognise or register unfamiliar expressions of communication. And when it is flowing, the serious play of call and response can be experienced by the therapist as intensely pleasurable, and is responded to by his or her communication partner with apparent joy.

[40] These therapists work for a charity called Us in a Bus which was set up over twenty years ago. The director of the charity, Janet Gurney, is a close associate and friend of Phoebe Caldwell. They occasionally work together professionally (including making informational videos for autistic people, parents and carers, on the Caldwell Autism Foundation website: http://thecaldwellautismfoundation.org.uk).

[41] These recording situations were not geared towards developing an art work, they were part of my research in terms of testing the interplay of its effects on my/our perception, during the sessions.

[42] Phoebe Caldwell refers to Winnicott's notion of potential space in relation to this non-verbal call and response. Potential space is a safe field in which one can be spontaneously playful and remain interconnected with others. In Winnicott's thinking, as I understand it, play emerges as a *medium* for pre-verbal communication between infant and parent/carer, which is a seminal reference for approaches to non-verbal communication; and this 'play' is in part defined by the fact that it is *pleasurable.*

‘The intensity of the flow between us was extraordinarily powerful. It’s very difficult to describe affective states. You lock down on the state itself … A total intensity, a total joy, curiosity, bonding.’ [43]

In the room with J. the sonic space is training our ears and scope of my attention to listen in all directions, to be receptive and attentive at the same time. This listening is alert to the substance of a kind of silence that is completely specific to these three people, and the form of communication they are producing between them. Over time, it is not always clear who is leading and who is following. Voicing and listening open out as a spacetime[44] in which one neither precedes nor leads the other. In the synchronising of breathing and finger tapping, the finger is the visual sign – but in expanding attention around voice and breath, the sonic rather than the visual, it seems they are accessing a different order of relationship with J, and so am I. In this context listening does not impose (as an implicit demand for ‘meaning’, in verbal terms). It sidesteps the frontality of looking and opens up (as) a form of indirect attention, in which the subjective and even physical delineations of our different selves soften**.**

Setting up a camera and microphones in J’s room, I am acutely aware of filming a person who has no concept of a video camera or the images it can record. I focus on the visible signs of interaction between the three women and into the spaces between their bodies. The camera frames what is happening on the level of appearance, but as their relationship develops it increasingly obscures my awareness of what is happening on other sensory registers. The gestures and sounds are narrow band-widths of the multi-dimensional space of communication. They are not a language of signs; their meaning is produced through *difference*, through the variation which is key to mirroring in Intensive Interaction. They evoke in a non-verbal mode how words gather nuance and specificity in the flow of conversation; reveal new facets of meaning when delivered or received in unexpected ways. This flow recalls pre-verbal mirroring behaviour in infants, through which they develop the verbal communication and relationship.

> ‘It is true that words fulfil us. And what is fulfilled, or filled in, is in the extreme case the rift, the fissure, the fault between the inside, where the symbolic functions, and the outside, where the ‘real’ takes place’ (Deligny, 2015, p. 207).

Phoebe does not address people with words when she is practicing Intensive Interaction; as she says, words are only a distraction.[45] But with J, tuning into the different dimensions of her non-verbal dialogue, the intervals between sounds are charged with anticipation. Sounds foreground the silences rather than fill them, as I struggle to let go of an expectation for speech – the ‘letting go’ of language that Deligny asks for, to not fill the space for listening to the non-verbal. J and L greet their communication partners verbally,

[43] Phoebe Caldwell, from a conversation between us, February 2016.

[44] In Manning (2013): In preconscious, pure experience: ‘We have not yet succumbed to the promise of linear time, living instead in the active topology of spacetimes of experience that many adults spend their lifetimes resisting.’ (2013, p. 6). Manning uses spacetimes because she is discussing modes of being in which space and time are experienced in different ways and relationships. In the interrelation of being and languages, we experience and produce different spacetimes.

[45] From a conversation with Phoebe Caldwell, March 2016.

announce the beginning of a session with the words of a song and often use words to acknowledge their non-verbal sounds and gestures. As engagement and concentration build the words thin out, but then return at the end in another song. For M, 'growing up with words' means 'it helps me to use them'. Sometimes words make non-verbal communication possible. 'In that moment I don't have the strength to communicate with no words, and in that moment words will help me to come into a state of communication.'[46] And for her non-verbal partner, M believes, the words will communicate something of their semantic meaning through her emotional tone, on a purely affective level.[47] M uses a keyboard as a kind of third voice in her therapeutic practice, subtly interpolating speech sounds and musical sounds to bring the different registers of musical and verbal tone into continuous interrelation. Speaking voice, non-verbal voice and keyboard tones interweave through rhythmic patterns and merge in their musicality.

How is does (our) language affect a relationship with what is not language? Unlike Deligny or Phoebe, M does not withdraw from language. She uses it as a channel among others to engage more fully, as a verbal person, with non-verbal people. For we who speak, listening to this sonic space between the verbal and the non-verbal softens their respective epistemological framings. For M and her non-verbal partner, the interplay of (their) different forms of voicing becomes a communicative medium in/through which they both meet.

Voicing on the threshold of the visual

Sacha van Loo worked for Antwerp Central Police as a wiretap analyst, until 2019. I met him several times from 2009-11, initially in the context of my research into auditory surveillance. He speaks several languages fluently and recognises dialects with extraordinary precision, which helped to make him exceptionally good at his job. He has been blind since birth, and so his listening is formed in and through non-visual being. In 2011 I developed an installation incorporating film and sound recordings of Sacha listening into architectural structures and sonic spaces: **(.)** (the title is the transcribers symbol for a pause in speech of under half a second).[48]

Sacha

> 'To be listening is to be at the same time outside and inside, to be open from without and from within, hence from one to the other and from one in the other' (Nancy, 2007, p. 14).

The relationship between listening and speaking is one of (con)fusion, intertwined, enfolded. When Sacha is working on a wiretap recording, he is meticulously reading and

[46] M J, from an interview recorded September 2017. She goes on: 'As a human being, sometimes we need words to get to where we don't need words at all.'

[47] M J, from an interview recorded September 2017. 'We process words and music with different parts of the brain. Because I grew up using words, it will help meto use them. Let's say, for example, I say "How wonderful you look today": for me to get across the meaning, and because my words at that moment are completely sincere, he can feel in the same moment what I want to convey'.

[48] **(.)** was commissioned by Matts Gallery, London in 2011. I discuss on element of the installation in Chapter 4.

locating the voice, in various senses. He reads it for traces of geographic and cultural background, layers of criminal code and all the subtle verbal and paralinguistic nuances of speech which carry 'information'. He may listen to a recording for two or three hours at a time, without moving. Occasionally he murmurs a word or a phrase, repeating from the recording, or thinking aloud as he tries to work something out. His words are mixed with breathing and sighs; he speaks as though unconsciously, addressing no one. At his most concentrated, he is fully absorbed by and filled with voice. It becomes hard to delineate between *this/his* listening and *that* voice; to say that Sacha is 'here', or 'there' – or even in what sense, exactly, he is *being Sacha*. This is my experience of listening to Sacha listening. It recalls exactly those attributes which have been attached to the voice in psychoanalytical and philosophical discourses, and why it is placed at the intersection of bodily and subjective boundaries.[49] Just as we experience the interrelation of our own listening and voicing (we hear at the same time as we speak), listening and voicing start to figure as intimately connected or enfolded modalities of relationship with others.

> 'Listening to music with utter absorbed attentiveness, the hearer of such melodious beauty is all ears. If he does not know how to reproduce inwardly, simultaneously, identically, that which his ears hear; yet if by distraction or incapacity, he omits to accompany in himself the sounds of the senses perceived, then he does not know how to listen. Properly speaking, perfect listening implies that the distinction between the soloist on one side and the listener on the other, is no longer true. Through the unique event of the song that enraptures us, one identical being accomplished itself (Schürmann, 1977).'

For Sacha, listening is about survival. He relies on his ears to understand where he is, in terms of sensing the materials and scale of his environment and his spatial orientation, and he has developed an extraordinary level of echo-location. He tunes into people through their voices and all that is embodied in a voice. All comes through sound; and what sound produces in and for him is far more than auditory alone.[50] Sacha's professional listening happens within legal and bureaucratic frameworks, caught up in institutional processes of determining innocence or guilt. On the first level it is highly analytical, he reads the voice with forensic attention. But on other levels it is not easy to make distinctions between his different modes of listening. Listening with utter absorbed attentiveness to the voice of a person speaking, or silent, means opening fully to this voice, this person. And this is how Sacha listens, whether in a professional or a personal mode. In the tensions between his different modes of listening, the relationship between listening and voicing emerges in a singular sense.

'A dark crack in the light'

Sacha listens with his whole body, through his hand rising to his chin, fingers curling around his cheek, head tilting, limbs shifting through one posture to another, and then held suspended – the choreography of listening. In 2011 I filmed him at his workstation. Through the viewfinder, his movements seemed to speak directly to camera – poised,

[49] I will discuss these perspectives in chapter 2, in relation to Iris and her fluid bodily boundaries.

[50] During our conversations it became clear that Sacha is also synaesthetic – for example, he feels the sun on his face as a 'colour' with a subtle taste.

graceful – yet were performed with no concept of his own appearance, or of the visual images he was unconsciously making (although he is passionate about films, on TV and in the cinema).[51] Sacha has never seen how it looks to listen, or the dramatized postures of listening in visual culture, but he seemed to embody the epitome of a listening body. During the filming sessions I felt this disjunction between his being and my seeing, unmistakably, irresolvably. It reflected back to the camera, and shaped how I approached the visual register of the art work which I developed, much later.[52] This rift manifests as another kind of language border: between the visible and the audible; image and sound, like a dark crack in the light (to paraphrase Rilke).[53] To be sighted and to listen with 'absorbed attentiveness' to Sacha's listening, absorbs me into the visual dimensions of (his) listening. It evokes a kind of a *sound-image,* an image on the threshold of the visual. Being immersed in this way opens to a mode of sensing that seems to flicker on / in / between listening and looking, which is also a form of attention.

[51] Sacha has a huge library of film soundtracks as mp3s, taken from digital files and DVDs. He recommended the HBO TV series 'The Wire' as essential viewing for my research, because gives a 'brilliantly researched' and accurate technical representation of auditory surveillance and of what it involves as a job.

[52] I discuss the work and how I worked with the sonic and visual registers of the installation in Chapter 4.

[53] (Rilke, 2011) 'Watch: he walks, a fissure through the city / that is no city in his dark passage – / moving like a dark crack in the light / porcelain of a cup. And like a page / coloured by the towns reflected things / he does not take them in. Only his touch / stirs, and sense, as though it caught the world / up in its wavelets …'.

Metacinematic

In this section I outline the wider context in which I conceive of a modality of relationship with the cinematic apparatus and (more widely) digital image and sound technologies, and their affects, in metacinematic terms. Working with the apparatus in this mode, the object is not so much to make or view films as to use them as 'relational tools': to shape relationships between people. The reflexivity of the recording situation may give rise to heightened modes of awareness and reconfigure attention to different dimensions of what is happening between us. In engaging with non-verbal forms of voicing and sense-making, in the rub-up, we search to connect with their unfamiliar registers. Working in a metacinematic modality, being sensitised by such modes of awareness, can help us tune into a wider scope of registers beyond our usual verbal range. These ideas are developed in the following chapters through detailed examples, culminating in a discussion of how I work with the recorded materials and technological apparatus within art works to shape relationship between the work and the visitor, as part of a metacinematic modality of practice.

Go-betweens

In the living space in Monoblet, analogue cameras and filming were part of daily life. The adults filmed the children to give their parents a souvenir of their days in the network. Film-makers and others came to visit and sometimes to film, and Deligny made many films and had other film-related projects (Deligny, 2008).[54] His use of the camera, his intense discussions with certain film-makers and writings about cinema (Deligny, 2007, 2018), were all part of a far-reaching research around the image in a wider sense. He developed experimental ways of using the camera to shape a gaze which would take account of the non-verbal being of the children. Deligny was wary of how in using the camera one denotes a non-verbal child as a Subject.[55] Through what he called *camerér*, 'cameraing', he used the camera and the act of filming in a *meta*cinematic modality. The adults developed other 'technologies' for gathering traces and producing new registers of relationship between adults and children, such as the mapping (*tracer)* of the children's walking routes in the living spaces, which was sustained throughout the duration of the network. Iris developed practices of mirroring other people's faces and working with her own reflection in the mirror, to connect with the verbal in a communicative sense and develop a subjective sense of self. Later she used the cinema in a metacinematic modality to develop her connection and social relationship with verbal people. It was training tool to learn the expressions of conventional social behaviour by reproducing the expressions of actors on screen. She was not interested in the films in terms of character or plot (in cinematic terms). The screen was a mirroring device for remodelling her own outward

[54] His two best-known films are the semi-fictional *Le Moindre Geste* (1971, directed by Deligny, Jean-Pierre Daniel, José Manenti; producer Inger Servolin), and his documentary study of the network, *Ce Gamin Là* (1976, director Renaud Victor, producer François Truffaut).

[55] I discuss Deligny's relationship to film and his investigation of the image in more depth, in Chapter 1.

expression. As a therapist, she uses films as a channel through which to help people connect with the 'primary' level of being.[56] In these ways of using them Iris' relationship with the cinema and the mirror play out in a metacinematic modality. In Phoebe Caldwell's practice, film-making and cinema play no part. She uses video in a practical sense, as a professional tool to disseminate her techniques. But she is deeply wary of the camera and its distracting effects when she is practicing non-verbal communication. There is no apparatus or other mediation in this relational space – she accepts the camera only if it will lead to a wider understanding and sharing of her methods. In this 'anti-cinematic' position, Phoebe's practice opens invaluable perspectives into how metacinematic dimensions manifest and what they produce in practices on the borders of language.

Dissolving frames

> 'Photography extends and transforms sight for photographers and for the body politic (…). Such perceptual transformations are congruent not only with the technomaterial changes within photographic practice, but also with transformations at the level of aesthetic form. These transformations show that while *sensing* the world is inseparable from, though not identical with, *making sense* of it, the traffic between sense perception and ideation is historically conditioned.'[57]

Like an after-image persisting on the retina, metacinematic dimensions of an encounter between people might have little to do with film-making or the cinematic in any direct sense. They manifest in the dynamics of relationship, in subtle shifts of awareness which effect what we can perceive and the realities these shape. They resonate with and are influenced by the wider conditions produced by cinematic and other media technologies of the time. The contemporary 'media regime' (Shaviro, 2010) produces 'post-cinematic affect'[58] influencing sensing and perception of time and space, of each other and of different realities. Post-cinema includes cinema plus the evolving forms of its 'successor' media, with their miniaturised and individualised forms of recording, screening and distribution; their live-streaming, immersive environments and virtual realities. The effects of this 'new media regime (…) together with neo-liberal economic relations' (Shaviro, 2010, p. 2)[59] produce forms of subjectivity and new ways of articulating experience. In this media regime, relationship with self and others is mediated to some degree by the physical presence of recording and viewing machines, the images they produce and their internalised effects.[60] *Internalised,* because the ubiquity of appearances of ourselves and others across digital spaces and times, permeates consciousness. It

[56] I discuss this in depth in Chapter 2.

[57] Zahid Chaudhary examines in the context of photography and the colonial gaze, in just this sense. 'How might we reorient our understandings of colonial representations, if we shift our focus to that interface between bodies and world that is the precondition for making meaning?' (Chaudhary, 2012, p.61).

[58] Steven Shaviro and Graham Grussin are key voices in the discourse around Post-Cinema. In 'Post-Cinematic Affect', Shaviro discusses the 'structure of feeling' produced by these conditions. (Shaviro, 2010). Here I am only drawing on some of the key points which help to clarify the wider context around the metacinematic.

[59] To clarify what he means here, Shaviro refers to Deleuze's 'control society', characterized by '(…) the relentless branding and marketing of even the most 'inner' aspects of subjective experience.' (Shaviro, 2010, p. 6)

[60] See Shaviro, 2010, p.6, where he is re-thinking Foucault's notion of the surveillance society.

produces new forms of reflexive relationship between people, and with their appearances. 'In this environment, where all phenomena pass through a stage of being processed in the form of digital code, we cannot meaningfully distinguish between "reality" and its multiple simulations; they are all woven together in one and the same fabric'.[61] Post-cinematic affect is characterised as a 'structure of feeling', '(…) a kind of ambient, free-floating sensibility that (…) cannot be attributed to any subject in particular' (Shaviro, 2010, p.2). These conditions evoke a dissolving of the frame; a confusion between realities mediated by technology and those which are not.

Gestures of inclusion and exclusion are the very premise of image making. Visual framing is about excluding what is irrelevant and composing what is key. It involves turning to what was out of sight or peripheral, and bringing it into view. It affirms and it questions. If every act of making visible renders something else invisible (the 'not all of vision' (Phelan, 1993)); how can we perceive what has been lost to view, or never acknowledged? 'All these cinematic techniques serve to emphasise the fragmentary quality of knowledge (…)'.[62] Almost inescapably, our tendency is to organise the manifold layers of our experience of reality, into images and narratives. We seek to cohere it in ways shaped by language; but are rarely conscious of these effects on our seeing or sensing.

Visible and invisible voice

How does the not-all of vision relate to the non-visual space of the voice? In the context of cinema, acousmatic sound is a reminder of what is missing from the visible, somewhere outside the diegetic frame (the frame of the image, the frame of the narrative unfolding in it). The acousmatic voice is not contained; unlike the subject who is objectified within the frame, it sounds from somewhere out of sight, but is just as present.[63] While the cinematic frame reflects and reinforces the 'dualising regime of the visual' (Silverman, 1988, p.7), the voice escapes it. The voice emerges in this discussion as a register in and through which notions of self-other dissolve.[64] It blurs bodily boundaries. We voice and hear ourselves, emit and receive, at the same time. 'The simultaneity of these two actions makes it difficult to situate the voice, to know whether it is "outside" or "inside" (…) The boundary separating exteriority from interiority is blurred by this aural undecidability.' (Silverman, 1988, p.79). Speaking with another person, (recalling Mladen Dolar's Venn diagram on p.24) the voice is 'the element which ties the subject and the other together,

[61] Matthew Fuller (2005), cited by Shaviro (2010, p. 6).

[62] Rice discusses the effects of how Minh-Ha sets up a dislocated relationship between film image and soundtrack: 'whereas a fluid musical score would typically accompany a seamless ethnographic narration (…) all these cinematic techniques serve to emphasize the fragmentary quality of knowledge, the impossibility of translating the meaning of multiple Senegalese cultures into 40 minutes of film'. (1993, p. 2). And in her review of Framer Framed: 'Trinh's book is about the act of 'framing' – that act which conjoins the cultural, political and personal assumptions we project onto the world – and the resistance of the world beyond us to being contained in a single image, a single framed space'. (1993, p. 1)

[63] This discussion draws on Kaja Silverman's (1988) psychoanalytical analysis of the acousmatic voice, to which she attributes a special power. In classical Hollywood cinema only the director's voice is heard off-screen – the voice of power. Female acousmatic voices are those of characters within the narrative, and so they remain (objectified) within the diegetic frame. I make this brief outline as a background reference for later discussions on acousmatic sound in Chapter 1. It resonates with the tension around 'framing' non-verbal forms of 'meaning' according to verbal terms; which speaks of the importance of engaging with unidentifiable or unreadable forms of voicing in their own terms – as meaning 'in itself'. I take up this discussion again in chapter 2.

[64] This passage draws again on these ideas as they are formulated by Kaja Silverman (1988) and in closely related ways by Michel Chion (1994) and Mladen Dolar (2006).

without belonging to either (Dolar, 2006, p. 103). Voicing *moves* on the thresholds of body and language; resonates elusively in and between us.

Modes of metacinematic awareness

> 'In the cinema, a society that has lost its gestures tries at once to reclaim what it has lost and to record its loss' (Agamben, 2002, pp. 52-3).

Agamben identified the moment at the beginning of the 20th century when people's gestures were captured and played back to them as moving image for the first time. He evokes a loss of meaning which was already happening (part of wider societal changes, as Agamben describes). Cinema was not the cause of this loss, but it produced a new gaze through which it became apparent *and* which made it happen in new ways.[65] Gestures lost their relation to 'all naturalness,' just as we lost our ability to decipher them. 'And the more gestures lose their ease under the action of invisible powers, the more life becomes indecipherable.' '(2002, p. 52.3).[66] *Indecipherable*; the word is especially poignant in relation to the stereotyping of the gestures of autistic people as unreadable, or meaningless.[67] In this narrative, nothing is gained through this new cinematic awareness; it only compounds what is lost. Loss of naturalness suggests the self-consciousness of encounters with ourselves via any visual technology, by which we become bound up in our own appearance.

The affect produced by 'media regimes'; the effects of their media/technologies on our perception and sensing, relationship with the visual and the sonic, how we experience our own subjectivity and different realities: these play out in and around us when working in a *metacinematic* modality but, potentially, to different effect. This is demonstrated in Deligny's use of the camera to shape a gaze; Iris' use of the cinema screen as part of her process of self-formation; how I work with apparatus and recording situations to generate different dynamics of relationship with and between the people I work with. They can be used to shape relationship and generate modes of reflexive awareness between people. In encounters with different forms of voicing, these effects can potentially open us to more multi-dimensional modes of sensing and perceiving and widen the scope of communication.

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[65] See Raymond Bellour's discussion of this history (Bellour, 2018).

[66] The scope of these effects is part of the history of post-cinematic affect; of how it emerges in and also shapes contemporary technological and globalised conditions today.

[67] Agamben begins his essay with a description of the spasmic, uncontrolled movements of people with Tourette's syndrome. He suggests that everyone had lost control of their gestures; that 'atonia, tics, and dystonia had become the norm'. His words evoke something of the contemporary phenomenon of 'over-diagnosis' of autism; and the tendency to see signs of autism all around – in relation to social behaviour, cognitive skills in computing or how we behave with our screens (see for example: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5849631/).

Dual awareness

Attuning with non-verbal forms of voicing may open us to letting go of the compulsion to look for verbal meaning. *Losing sense* makes space for listening both ways: enveloping and registering 'my' voicing and 'yours' in awareness of the different dimensions of communication happening. We oscillate between *being in* communication and *being with*. In dual awareness we register the effects of the rub-up on our own sensing and sense-making, with full attention for the person we are with. Dual awareness is not only related to metacinamatic modalities of practice but the inherent reflexivity of the apparatus can heighten its affects, or give rise to it.

> 'In our activity, what is the object? Some child or other, a 'psychotic' subject? Most certainly not. The real object which needs to be transformed is us, us here, us close to these 'subjects', who, strictly speaking, are hardly subjects, which is exactly why THEY are here' (Deligny, cited in Alvarez de Toledo, 2013 p. 1796).

In the living spaces in Monoblet Deligny sought to take account of the effects of the rub-up on (his, our) language. In his acute awareness of the children, he turned attention to 'the real object to be transformed' – us here. The image evokes a movement of (his) attention towards the children and reflected back by their verbal silence, *in and as* a different kind of sense – just as our own voice echoing back is heard afresh and in a different way. In engaging with and tuning in to non-verbal forms of voicing, dual awareness helps us to perceive how it is effecting us. However slight the change, we may come into a different relationship with our own language. Dual awareness can be produced through 'metacinematic technologies' (cinematic technologies used in metacinematic ways) as Deligny and Iris demonstrate in their practices. In my artistic practice I work with the recording situation – the presence of the apparatus and the staging of the encounter – to evoke reflexive awareness which can bring us to go beyond ourselves, speak from a different place or open to others in unexpected ways. In developing the art work I work with the apparatus and recorded media in a metacinematic modality to shape relationships between the elements and with the visitors. The work becomes a space for tuning into different dimensions of voicing, sensing and sense-making for the visitor and in their relationship with the work.

Mirroring

In the living spaces in Monoblet, subtle 'delayed' forms of mirroring emerged between the gestures of the adults and the children. Mirroring is of course key to Iris' practice of modelling her expressions on those of the people around her, and of training herself using her reflection in the mirror. Phoebe's technique of non-verbal communication is based on mirroring gestures and sounds of her communication partner and is based on 'mirroring behaviour'. This is the pre-verbal communication between infant and parent or carer through which we learn language and develop a secure sense of self (this is not the same as what is happening in the 'mirror stage', in which an infant forms a sense of self in

terms of ego/'I' – but they are related).[68] These different modes mirroring run through the practices, 'relational technologies' and 'metacinematic technologies' of Deligny, Phoebe and Iris and myself. They are part of a wider taxonomy of reflexive forms of relationship or awareness in which these practices 'on the borders of language' unfold. Perhaps certain forms of relationship are only possible through metacinematic modalities of practice. They heighten attention to different registers of voicing: the semantics and sounds of the voice, facial expression, the movements and gestures of bodies, spatial relationships, pauses and silences. Tuning into these different registers is at the core of these practices. They call for listening to the *multi-dimensionality* of voicing, expanding sensing and responsivity beyond the usual channels, in the openness that is needed when one does not yet know how or in what form 'meaning' might arise.

[68] I am referring to Lacan's 'mirror stage' and different understandings of infant development in the field of developmental psychology. See Lacan (1949), Stern (1985) and Caldwell (2012), with reference to van Baaren et al (2004).

Chapter 1 Deligny

> 'What seems easier than to let a being just be the thing that it is? Or does this turn out to be the most difficult of tasks, particularly if such intention – to let a being be as it is – represents the opposite of the indifference that simply turns its back upon the being itself? We ought to turn toward the being, think about it in regard to its Being, but by means of this thinking at the same time let it rest upon itself in a way to be.'[69]

The relationship between the adults and children in the living spaces of Deligny's was of living alongside, in copresence rather than 'together'. The relationship was characterised by distance *and* by a vital (indirect) attention of the adults towards the children. For Deligny, withdrawing from verbal language and avoiding direct address with the children were ways to respect their difference. The 'network' was the spatialised constellation of living spaces around the village of Monoblet (mainly farmhouses, the furthest at fifteen kilometres from the rest). The domestic elements (areas for washing up, chopping wood, cooking, etc.) found their place in response to the habitual routes of the children, rather than a given domestic template – with the help of the maps, in which their paths were traced. These were *in*direct routes, in the sense of how to get from A to B (to get from the fire to the washing up area, a child might go via C, Q, I and D, for example). The network was also the immaterial network of relationship – between adults and children, between children and places or objects – existing and growing over time (which the mapping made visible). Relationship unfolding *in and as* spatial relationship. In the responsive and (literally) autistic organisation of the encampment, one can see how the material and the immaterial networks transpire into each other.

> 'It's not about excluding speech from the(se) territories: it is necessary for us. What I'm asking is for the 'other' (and above all the children) to not be spoken for [for the adults not to speak in their place].'[70]

The 'distancing' which shaped daily life in the network gave rise to an enfolded relationship of distance *and* close attention around/towards the children. I see this as a completely *implicit* mode of care (close in a very different mode to the emphasis on empathy in contemporary approaches to care). Deligny's premise was to accept the children as they are: not as autistic subjects, but in terms of their mode of being. Withdrawing from language in their presence was part of the wider endeavour to open a space in which this would be possible – not 'outside' language but despite it. In the verbal silence, it became possible to listen to the children's voices in a less verbal mode and register a wider scope of voicing and relationship. In this endeavour, the locus of attention

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[69] Martin Heidegger, cited in Schürmann, R., *Meister Eckhart, Mystic and Philosopher*, Indiana University Press / Bloomington and London 1977, first published in French as *Maître Eckhart ou la joie errante*, Editions Planète Denoël 1972)..

[70] '*Il ne s'agit pas d'exclure la parole des territoires: elle nous est nécessaire. Ce que je demande, c'est que 'l'autre (et surtout les enfants) ne soit pas parlé!*' Letter to Jacques. Lin, Dec. '69. (Alvarez de Toledo, 2018).

was not on the children, but on the adults: on the effects of the rub-up between verbal and non-verbal being on 'we who speak'. 'In our activity, what is the object (…) The real object which needs to be transformed is us, us here?'[71]

Around Deligny and the network, in France in the late 1960's autism was treated within the framework of psychiatry and psychoanalysis (which Deligny completely refused). Deligny had stepped away from clinical approaches to autism, as well institutional care.[72] The network began in a period of high social and political ferment, in France and in Europe, conditions which grew out of the aftermath of the second world war. Since the 1950's, the neurologist and psychiatrist Franco Basaglia in Italy, the Spanish psychiatrist Francesc Tosquelles in Spain and Jean Oury in France, were experimenting with approaches to psychiatric care and challenging its institutions. Deligny knew each of them and their work. He was close to Jean Oury because he had worked with him at the psychiatric hospital 'L'Armentières', and developed radical experiments in the structures of care. [73]

In his ideas and writing, Deligny took a stance of resistance: towards language, the institution (of psychiatry, of the clinic) and towards the conservative attitudes of French society regarding behavioural and pathological difference. He did his best to ensure that the network and his endeavour eluded any clear framing. He refused to call the network a 'project', which would already determine too much (destroy the possibility for the unforeseeable to emerge). References to Deligny himself tend to be characterised by lists, because no single designation is adequate (educator, writer, film maker, pedagogue, primordial communist, visionary, etc.). The network developed in open countryside, remote from urban centres; an experiment to unfold with the most minimum of a prior map. 'Each living area is a canvas, it being understood of course that we are speaking of a canvas prior to painting' (Deligny, 2015, p.89). In the relative autonomy and verbal silence of the network, the adults could (in their distance) *open towards* non-verbal being just as the children could *openly be* as they were, around them.

The practice of mapping the children's movements on sheets of tracing paper aided this silence, channelling the verbal into visual traces. Mapping was initiated by Jacques Lin as a response to the traumatising sight of the children hitting their heads against the walls, or biting themselves – and prompted by Deligny. 'Instead of talking about it, why don't you draw it?'. For the adults, tracing the children's gestures and trajectories was a form of close attention, at a distance; of *being with* the children without turning their backs (recalling the quote which opens this chapter). '… the opposite of the indifference that simply turns its back upon the being itself?' *Being with, in difference*. (Deligny read Heidegger and playfully reworded one of his titles, translated into French as

[71] Fernand Deligny, from a letter to Louis Althusser, 1976, quoted in full on p. 34. (Alvarez de Toledo, 2013, p. 3).

[72] He moved to Monoblet from *La Borde*, in Paris, the psychiatric hospital where he worked alongside Felix Guattari (who was then director).

[73] Deligny was a close associate of Fransesc Tosquelles and was inspired by his ideas (as is widely documented). L'Armentière is the psychiatric hospital shown in an etching at the start of Deligny's film *Ce Gamin Là*. There, 'Taking advantage of the disorder brought about the war, he drastically changed the organisation charts of the asylum (rather than its hierarchy; his most solid ally being the chief warden Paul Guibert) and enthroned wardens as "educators".' Sandra Alvarez de Toledo, from 'The Untopicality of Fernand Deligny' (Alvarez de Toledo, 2013).

Achèminement vers la Parole – '[On] The Way to the Word' – for his own: *Achèminement vers l'image* – '[On] The Way to the Image' (Alvarez de Toledo**,** 2007, p. 1653).

In avoiding addressing the children directly, the adults also tried not to impose their 'looking', as well as language. Deligny distinguished between the 'seeing' of the children and our 'looking' (formed in verbal being, shaped by language), which is 'at the expense of *seeing*, as I believe an autistic child sees, without even having any awareness of being' (Deligny, 2015, p. 205). His distinction relates to what he refers to as two 'regimes of visibility' (FD), and his 'task', to organize an encounter between them: 'ours, which allows us to see only what we know how to name, and theirs, which reacts to signs, to reference points independent of all language.' (Deligny, 2015. P.17). The difference between *looking* and *seeing* implies different ways of conceiving of the image. In his writings and films, Deligny returns constantly to question the nature of the image in relation to verbal and non-verbal being. These questions shaped Deligny's approach to film-making and the cinema, just as cinematic thinking permeates how he envisages the image in the mind of an autistic child.

Deligny's cinematic thinking developed in dialogue with many film-makers and critics, and was connected with wider contemporary debates about film-making through his contributions to magazines such as *Camera/Stylo*.[74] He was very interested in the work of critic and theorist André Bazin, who saw the cinematic image as 'a mirror of the real'. [75]The idea connects with Deligny's thinking about 'the outside, where the 'real' takes place' (Deligny 2015, p. 207). It also contains a hidden image: 'Serge Daney added (*a précisé*), [a mirror] (…) in which the tain would retain the image.'[76] The tain is the tin or silver layer on the back of the mirror glass which reflects the incoming light waves back to the eye. Daney's refinement evokes the idea of an unmediated image of the real (the pro-filmic event) being directly imprinted onto the tin behind the glass. It is 'retained'. The non-subjective absorbing of the image could be seen as a potential for cinema to achieve on the film (celluloid) or the screen; or it could connect with Deligny's idea of the mental image as an 'imprint', a direct impression in the mind of an autistic child, which I discuss in the following pages.

Deligny was especially close to Chris Marker and François Truffaut. Chris Marker was a constant supporter and interlocutor (and funded the editing of *Le Moindre Geste*,[77] shot several years before the beginning of the network). François Truffaut helped Deligny to make *Ce Gamin Là*, and Deligny helped him in turn with film projects and research, over many years.[78] An early connection between them was Deligny's essay, '*La caméra outil*

[74] Deligny had two essays published in *Camera/Stylo*, alongside texts by or about Godard, Resnais, Straub and Huillet, for example (Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p.1654). Many of his essays and writings related to cinema are printed in 'Oeuvres' (Alvarez de Toledo, 2007).

[75] Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 1659.

[76] '*Dont le tain retiendrait l'image*'. Sandra Alvarez de Toledo's notes Serge Daney's refinement of Bazin's mirror metaphor, in her discussion of Deligny's text *Acheminement vers l'image* (1982), reprinted in '*Oeuvres*', the collected writings of Deligny, edited by Alvarez de Toledo, 2007.

[77] *Le Moindre Geste,* 'The Slightest Gesture' 1963-71 (Deligny, 1971). Chris Marker supported the film with the SLON film-making cooperative in Paris.

[78] *Ce Gamin Là*' (1974), 'Those Kids There'. (Deligny, 1974). Truffaut was inspired to film *L'Enfant Sauvage* in Monoblet. He tried to cast Janmari, the first child of the network, in the role of the wild boy of Aveyron – but found him impossible to manage.

pédagogique', 'The Camera as a Pedagogic Tool'[79] (they influenced his own ideas in making '*Les quatres cent coups'*).[80] In the essay, in context of his work at l'Armentière psychiatric hospital, with adolescent 'delinquent' youth, Deligny describes using the camera as a tool to put into their hands. The camera is a kind of protection, an apparatus (implicitly, he evokes a weapon) to protect the young people against the bombardment of Hollywood and Soviet films, which had no connection with the realities of their lives (a bombardment related to the cultural propaganda of the Cold War). That is: to perform a kind of operation on their own reality. This hints towards Deligny's later use of the camera in the days of the network. In this mode he used the methods and apparatus of filming not to make films, but to shift his subjective relationship with the children, to get closer (indirectly) to their seeing. I see this as the metacinematic modality of Deligny's practice. It emerges in how he used the camera as a tool to change the scope of his looking. It is demonstrated, in ways I discuss in detail in the following sections, in how he took account of the presence of the camera and its effects in his own subjectivity; and in the relationships he made between the apparatus, the act of filming and the image produced on celluloid. He introduced an *indirect* relationship between them, rather than the interconnectedness which produces a film.

> 'The seeming withdrawal of the adults corresponds to a statement that appears at the beginning of *Ce Gamin Là*, as a keyword printed on the film: "It is not a matter of going toward them, of concerning ourselves with them, of addressing ourselves to them." It is a matter, on the contrary, of joining them differently, elsewhere, through detours of which the film offers us the state of the place at a given point in time.'[81]

What did bringing a camera into the living spaces of the network make possible for Deligny, that was not possible in writing, photographing or mapping? What could it make visible of the relationship between verbal and non-verbal being? In *Ce Gamin Là,* Victor Renaud and Deligny offer us the state of the place in 1974 and evoke something of these relationships, through subtle and precise connections made between the different filmic 'elements' registers in soundtrack and visual image: verbal and non-verbal voices, language as text: intertitles and scrolling text, text as image; and different types of visual image: photographs, film-stills, moving film image, an old copperplate etching and shots of the maps illuminated from behind.

[79] 'The Camera as a Pedagogical Tool', 1955. (In: Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 414).

[80] 'The Four Hundred Blows' (Truffaut, 1959). Deligny's relationship with Truffaut is discussed in Oeuvres (Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, pp. 599-606).

[81] Bertrand Ogilvy in Deligny, 2015, p. 10.

Monoblet, 2013. Cuts: Ce gamin là / That kid there.

Deligny in voiceover: 'Unliveable, unbearable, uncurable…'.

Cut to a photograph of Janmari[82] *lost in contemplation of a clay ball in his hands. At first glance it seems to be on a stick, like a planet spinning on an axis, which turns out to be a piece of thick string. Behind Janmari another boy stands at a distance half-out of the frame. In his hands he holds a stick, like a fishing rod. The ball of clay is hanging from the stick. The two boys are connected by it.*

Cut to two enormous rocks.[83] *The camera holds steady, the short rolls on, nothing changes, except that I start to wonder if this is actually two rocks or one? The gap between them is so narrow it might be a split, their edges almost fit, but do not touch. The shot is inexplicable, out of context. Are the boulders an analogue for some inscrutable form of relationship?*

Cut again to one of the maps of the children's movements.

" … (silence) … " The voice of Deligny reading a text, presented at the same time on screen as a bold intertitle – a text-image, or an image of a text.

Cut to silence again and we're focusing on the gestures of a girl: she moves the lid of a saucepan, then lifts her fingers to her mouth, in precise gestures which continue. They look like signs, but maybe they are gestures speaking in and as gesture.

Another sequence, silent, without no edits – we are in sync with the duration of the activity: the camera follows an adult making his way across a field. In the corner is a small shack. The silence of the soundtrack connects synaesthetically with the image – it seems the sound is being muffled by the thick snow that blankets the entire landscape.

The man starts setting up a space to make a fire and then a place to make pancakes…

Deligny in voiceover: '(…) Our language 'grillés' *those kids there …" – 'grille': a grille on the window of an institution, like an asylum or a prison. Using 'grille' as a verb, evokes an image of the child in a room, seen from the outside, bisected by the window grille – a non-verbal child in the asylum – just as it grille bisects the view to the outside, from inside the room. The détourne, turning around, of grammar, turns the grille into a metaphor and conflates language with image.*[84]

'… grillés *…'. As the words fade the film cuts to a still image of one of the non-verbal children. In the soundtrack we cut to a field of non-verbal voices issuing from … – and then (disconnected by a short time lag) - we see them: children gathered around another man who is seated at an*

[82] Janmari's real name was Jean-Marie Jonquet. He was a non-verbal autistic child, son of a staff member at La Borde psychiatric hospital in Paris at which Guattari was the Director. Deligny met Janmari while working at La Borde, when he was 10 years old. He brought him to Monoblet where he lived for the rest of his life. For Deligny, Janmari was a kind of muse. He was the only child in the network who ever lived in the same house with Deligny. After Deligny died in 1996, with Gisèle Durand and Jacques Lin, the first adults of the network, he continued to live in Monoblet until he died in 2005. Janmari appears in my installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* (2014 / 2018), in video sequences shot by Jacques.

[83] The rocks were filmed at Les Rochers, a plateau in the high Cevennes scattered with huge boulders around 70km from Monoblet – the place had no c to the network.

[84] These lines draw on comments made by Wim Cuyvers during a conversation between us in 2008, as I was preparing to present a selection of maps in the exhibition 'Die Lucky Bush' at MuHKA, Antwerp: https://www.muhka.be/programme/detail/172-imogen-stidworthy-die-lucky-bush http://ensembles.mhka.be/actors/imogen-stidworthy

open fire, cooking. He raises his hands demonstratively and, looking straight ahead, claps twice above his head. A non-verbal signal addressed to no one in particular: to signal that the pancakes are ready, or to mark his next action, which is to pick up a tiny mouth harp and start to pluck it.

Deligny, in voiceover; we see Janmari: "(He) turns around himself". Turns around himself: Janmari as a Subject is absent – not present in the sense of 'himself'? "It is us that he's looking for (...)". Now in this sequence we're cutting back and forth between the filmed space of the room, the living areas and full-frame shots of the hand-drawn lines of mapped space - placed over glass so that we see the layers - a map made of the movements of one of the children, with Deligny's voice: "Conjugated and unconjugated persons ..."

We see adults continually busy with some task or other, while the children stand or wander or watch. Occasionally one picks up a tool and repeats the same actions, or picks up what the adult was doing and continues with the task – something immaterial has passed between them; between two regimes of seeing and acting. Wordless interactions.

A field. The rattling ring of a tambourine – an adult walks into view, hitting it against his thigh as he passes; a flute sounds out of sight and goat bells in the distance seem to answer.

The camera catches a boy playing with the sound recordist's cable – right here, next to the point of view. Just for this moment the boy becomes the subject – of the shot, of the film – and then he slides out of the frame again. (A metacinematic moment?).

I hear Deligny's voice and watch him, silent, on screen, tracing the wandering lines on a map with his finger. The commentary in voiceover outside the frame is verbal; the commentary within the frame is gestural, the language in the map is cartographic, traces of non-verbal language.

Gisèle and Janmari are kneading dough. She passes him one ball after another and their movement is absolutely synchronised. At the intersection of their movements – passing the dough from hand to hand in the empty air – repeated over and over, the point of exchange becomes an immaterial but tangible 'contact point' in the empty air.

An adult and Janmari on either side of a two-handled tree saw, silent, engrossed, apart, synchronised in and by their activity.

The soundtrack is full of sounds of the interrelation and exchange of daily life lived together. Towards the end, for the first time sound and image are synchronised. A map is being discussed in detail: 'If you had drawn it in brown (...)'. Cut to a close-up of the map / cut to a cinematic shot of the landscape it depicts.

The camera weaves through the terrain between barrels of water, ice-capped, a man cracking the ice off – cut to a map showing a bucket and a line of movement.

A man is rhythmically hitting together a saw and a hammer as he approaches a pile of logs, as though announcing an activity that is about to start. He puts them down and walks to a roughly carved stone, where he picks up a stick and drags it across the rugged surface repeatedly. For what nothing? For the sound they make, or to prompt the children to follow with the same gestures?

At the start of *Ce Gamin Là*, Deligny's words evoke a shocking sense of violence: '*Unlivable, uncurable, unbearable …*' he says, over an image of an autistic child. '*Can we even call them Subjects?*' He suggests several ideas at once; his constant questioning of how we frame a non-verbal person in – our own verbal terms, taking no account of theirs. He also evokes how the autistic child is not acknowledged as a subject in a political sense, with the promise of certain human rights: the children are *subject to* society's refusal to accept them as they are, and its insistence on removing them to an allotted place in an institution. In the film, the words are followed by a panning shot across an old etching of the asylum at Armentières,[85] with its regimented layout of grounds and buildings. *'… Incurable …*': Deligny repeats his words (in voiceover); he could be referring to the asylum, to society, or to the non-verbal autistic boy on the screen, 'The intolerable fact of his presence, the intolerable fact of his institutional diagnosis'.[86] A third 'intolerable' fact for a society formed in language, is that the child 'refuses' to speak, and in this sense is not tied into the social contract in which all language is bound up, and which language binds me to.

Unvisibility

At the start of *Ce Gamin Là* two ideas of invisibility emerge. One is that imposed on autistic people by a society that insists on hiding them from view: in the asylum, with no alternative way to be part of society. The other is related to the living space and the mode of *being with,* which let them be as they were. It is made possible through the protection from having to *appear* before the objectifying gaze of the institution, or be scrutinised by the diagnostic eye which sees an autistic child in terms of a pathology (as autistic, rather than in their mode of being). The network protected the children from the socio-linguistic order – just as it opened a space for the adults. It was these conditions that, in the rub-up with the children's non-verbal language, the adults were able to step away from their own.

> 'When I say: "to see hands," one must be sceptical. / It would be better to say "to look at." Because there is a clear difference between seeing and being seen. / As soon as there is some SELF, we are dealing with looking. / When looking predominates, it is at the expense of what? / At the expense of *seeing*, as I believe an autistic child sees, without even having any awareness of being' (Deligny, 2015, p. 205).[87]

Deligny was continually seeking ways to change the 'scope of our gaze'.[88] Mapping, photographing and filming were channels he used to broach this through the visual. 'All this is in order to say where our maps are going to lead us: to the discovery of the real' (Deligny, 2015, p. 205). His 'real' relates to Lacan's concept of the real, that which is impossible to symbolise and therefore beyond the scope of language. The primordial Real

[85] Deligny worked at Armentière asylum between 1939-1943 as a teacher for 'severely retarded and ineducable' children.

[86] Bertrand Ogilvie, in 'Living Between the Lines', the introductory essay to *The Arachnean* (Deligny, 2015, pp. 12).

[87] From 'When-the-Human-that-we-are-is-not-there' (Deligny, 2015, p. 201). 'Real': with reference to Lacan, whose essay 'The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the technique of Psychoanalysis' (Le Seule, 1977) Deligny is referring to throughout this part of the text.

[88] 'To change the *scope* of our gaze since we are dealing children living (within) the vacancy of this S [Subject], which allows what is being homonised to be distinguished from the real.' (Deligny, 2015, pp. 133-134).

is the (pre-verbal) which we are all born into and which language (and symbolisation) separates us from. As Bertrand Ogilvie notes, this is exactly where he positions the non-verbal children - and where they place us (Deligny, 2015, p. 16). Deligny had reservations about Lacan's real; psychoanalysis is concerned with verbal people and in this sense excludes those who are non-verbal from its thinking ('consigns to oblivion').[89] For Deligny, the whole purpose of the network was to come close to the children's real, 'If it so happens that we have guides who are waiting for us…' (Deligny, 2015, p. 205). He found his guides with the children he lived with, go-betweens with non-verbal being and with the real.

Image without a frame

Monoblet, 2013.[90] I sat in a landscape of voicing – of Jacques' voice, in the lines and detours of story-telling, and the voices of all the people sitting around us: non-verbal grunts, sing-song bird-like tones; occasionally two word-sounds slipped in – 'Ah non! Ah non!'. And the voice of the body: 'b-w-b-w-b-w-b-w', lips vibrated with the finger; feet rocking back and forth; rhythmic slapping and tapping. Beneath all of this: an undefinable rustle sounding continuously from around the corner, out of sight. My thoughts followed Jacques' stories while awareness wandered from voice to voice and between them, to the percussive interweaving of all voices at once. The rustle slipped in and out earshot; for forty minutes it was coming from somewhere beyond the frames of vision and the architectural space. Perhaps it was its unplaceableness that gave the sound such persistent presence. Eventually a man came in from around the corner with a twig in each hand. Each twig was stuck with layers of torn paper squares. He was sending them spinning on their twig axes with the force of his breath. For a man who does not speak, the rustling paper was a kind of object-voice.

Deligny describes the acoustics of the room where they gathered the maps each day, where he discussed them with Gisèle Durand (to bring their 'findings' back into the living spaces). Here, ten years ago (he wrote), '… the echo of my own voice made me think I was preaching, and the tone changed, it is quite probable that the turn of phrases spoken was effected, and even the choice of words.'[91] With his choice of words in his description, Deligny de-subjectifies his echo – *the* voice, not *my* voice. I recall his use of the infinitive in relation to the children, creating a slight remove. The space between his voice and his echo seems to have changed the scope his listening to himself. Listening back to himself in this way, his language changed. The story is a reminder of how acutely he was sensitive to voicing. Listening to non-verbal voices and voicing in Monoblet in 2013, while reading *L'Arachnean* (Deligny, 2015), made me aware of two things: Deligny does not talk about recording voices – he never used the microphone or thought in terms of the apparatus of audio recording, in the modality of his (meta)cinematic practice with the camera. But his writing is full of voices, discussions about the voice, and evocations of the calling forth

[89] Ogilvie, in Deligny, 2015, p.16.

[90] From my notes following my first visit to Monoblet, a year before beginning research-production visits to develop the installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*.

[91] Translated by me, from *Traces d'être et batisses d'hombres',* 'Traces of Being and Buildings of Shadows' (Deligny, 1983).

of the non-verbal children. (See one example among many: *La Voix Manquée*, *The Missed Voice,* fragments of which I used in the installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*).[92]

When I visited in Monoblet in 2013 and 2014, what struck me most powerfully about the living situation in the farmhouse today was the sound of voices *in their spatial relationship*. Relationship was being described and produced in sonic space far more than through the visual; a space resounding with dimensions of relationship of which some can only exist in and through voicing. In this light the absence of the sonic in Deligny's writings is all the more noticeable. My own work there, and its critical reappraisal here, is in part a means of accommodating or 'unmuting' this sonic absence.

The sound-space of voicing has a physical touch that resonates through the body. To listen to this sonic space is to participate in it and become part of it (understanding aside). I thought of the sound space in Monoblet as a landscape of voicings speaking from different places inside and around language: between fully formed discursive speech, non-verbal sounds and cries and bodily or object sounds.

The appearance of the man from around the corner revealed the source of the rustling sound, and brought it into a framework of (verbal) sense-making. The sound was '*grillé*' in the moment of reveal; an implicit question was answered. But as the sound lost the mystery of its source, it opened to the mystery of its purpose: what could the blowing action mean for the man and why he was doing it? The source of the sound was revealed, and I understood it to be a form of non-vocal voicing - but I could only hear rustling and blowing. I could not tune into its communicative registers. What was revealed visually and logically did not reveal the voicing itself; or rather, it was revealed *in and as* voicing. The movement of sound and voicing between the rooms and my visual frame, between revealing and the impossibility of revealing, evoke an analogue of the acousmatic voice in relation to the cinematic frame (recalling my discussion of the voice and the acousmatic, in *Voicing on the Continuum*). 'To see or not to see the sound's source: it all begins here, but this simple duality is already quite complex' (Chion, 1999, p. 2). Michel Chion begins the first work of comprehensive theory on the voice in cinema with a statement about the elusiveness of the voice (1999, p. 4). Its duality is complex because it is never quite inside and never quite outside the cinematic frame of the visible,[93] just as it is never quite inside or quite outside the boundaries of the body, or of subjectivity. Voice has an uncanny *unplaceability*.[94]

'Acousmatic sound brings to awareness, without exposing it, the presence of something invisible, possibly also unknown, beyond the edges of the crisp-cut rectangle of cinematic reality'[95]. Such presence can change, or even constitute, how and what we see. The voice

[92] *La Voix Manquée,* in: Deligny, 2012. *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* is the installation I developed through research-production with the community in Monoblet. (Stidworthy, 2018).

[93] I am referring to the ideas of Guy Rosalato as discussed by Kaja Silverman in 'The Acoustic Mirror' (1993, p. 70-71) mentioned in earlier in this chapter.

[94] In *Écrits* (Lacan 1966, p. 817), Lacan categorises the voice as *objet petit a*: an uncanny object with 'only a little otherness'. The voice, along with the gaze, the penis, faeces and nothingness, is an object which 'the child had previously experienced as parts of itself'. (Cited in Chion: 1999 p.1).

[95] Barthes' (1977, p. 70) description of Diderot's (theatre) stage. Cited by Manovich (2002, p. 104); he uses Barthes' description to evoke how in all the types of representational apparatuses he has discussed, 'reality is cut by the rectangle of a screen'.

of rustling papers permeated my awareness of everything that was happening around me in the meeting with Jacques, with *unplaceable presence*. The non-verbal voices in the room were unplaceable in terms of their relationship with language – but the rustle around the corner I was not even conscious of *as voice at all.*

Thinking metacinematically draws awareness into the interrelations and spaces between sound and visual image. Listening to voicing, I tune into how it is affecting how and what I see. Moving between the sonic and the visual softens the framing effects of each; opens to the possibility of being brushed by the real of another mode of being.

Image, imprint

Certain events and interactions with the children, which became preserved as anecdotes, signaled to Deligny that they think in images.[96] How did he imagine the image in the mind of a non-verbal autistic child? He calls them 'imprints', some of which function as 'reference images': invisible, unfading templates for activities or spaces, which have a profound influence on the child's behaviour. *Imprint*. What order of image is this, how would it compare to a sight before the eyes, a luminous close-up on screen, a photograph, the flashback visuals of PTSD, an elusive thought-image?

> 'One day I was tapping [the table, with his finger] in response to some surprise or other that had emerged from the wander lines that we scrupulously trace, the person who teaches me the most about what I'm telling you and who was then fifteen years old [Janmari], and autistic – though that particular word seems to be falling out of fashion (…) was passing by. He left, quickly, and reappeared sometime later and deposited a pile of mud on my table not very far from where my tapping had taken place. (…) And yet, there it was, in the dross of damp earth and ash, what in archeology is called a find: all the pieces of a clay ashtray that, four years earlier, had sat on the table where I had been tapping my fingers. (…) a clay ashtray had been broken and the shards tossed into the basket of papers we piled up and used to light the bread oven. (…) And in the blink of an eye the shards buried for five years in ash and earth were rediscovered.'[97]

What Janmari saw in his glimpse of Deligny tapping the table, as Deligny suggests, seems to have been overlaid with a mental image of the ashtray as it was then; perhaps as it *should be*. The past time of the memory and the present moment were folded into one another. This folding evokes the layers of *wandering lines* building up on successive sheets of tracing paper, each of which embodies a layer of time. It was this repetition and layering that made the children's reference images perceivable to the adults, and evoked the 'other orders, other laws' that governed their otherwise mysterious gestures and routes. The visual memory in Janmari's mind was an *imprint* in and of a mode of being

[96] This idea was suggested to me especially by some of the examples I discuss in this chapter: the stories of the ashtray and of the orange peel and the commentary on the 'Map of the Salad'.

[97] (Deligny, 2015, p.135-136): in 'Acting and the Acted', Deligny uses the anecdote to elaborate how such 'initiatives' by the autistic children reveal 'aspects of "ourselves" that escape us.' (2012, p. 137). The apparent mistake in referring first to four and then to five years, is as printed in the text. The story has been retold time and again by people connected with the network and Jacques Lin also writes about it in his autobiographical book, *La vie de radeau. Le reseau Deligny au quotidien* (2019).

in which the dualism of space and time does not exist, '(…) time and space are, in his eyes, the same and only thing.'[98]

> 'Where it is clear that there would be two memories, which I believe, one for which language is sovereign, and the other, in a way, refractory to symbolic domestication. Somewhat aberrant, and which is struck by what says nothing – if we mean by striking, the shock that imprints.' (Deligny, 2007, p. 1744)[99]

Deligny describes the reference images as 'blueprints'. Once one has been struck, when the situation or the scene arises again nothing is more important for the child than that it matches the sequence or organisation of the 'reference'. If something is missing or out of place it can be acutely distressing, mentally and physically. The distress only ends if the scene is 'restored'.

One night when Jacques and Janmari were living alone in one of the houses of the network, Jacques awoke to the sound of Janmari hitting his head against the wall – a bloody scene. Janmari was clearly desperate, but it was impossible to know what the problem was and Jacques tried one thing after another to try to work it out. Eventually Janmari grabbed him by the hand, pulled him outside and up a steep path to the top of Les Jumeaux, a nearby mountain, retracing a walk they had taken that day. Once at the top, through the darkness Jacques saw Janmari picking up some orange rinds they had left behind earlier. They had turned the tough rinds inside-out, which is the easiest way to get at the flesh. In an instant Janmari had turned them the 'right way' around, dropped them to the ground again and apparently in a state of joy, ran back down the hill clapping his hands. The form of the oranges was restored and his agony at the image of them inside-out was over.[100]

The story distils and transmits the image of the orange peels as one of such vivid force, that it persists in my own memory, since Jacques recounted it to me in 2013. Deligny makes a distinction between two kinds of image: domesticated images which are 'fat', 'over-stuffed', 'heavy with symbolism'; and 'the wild image' which is 'non-intentional', 'trembling', 'appearing by chance'. (His words evoke those concentrated memories that can hit us – for known or unknown reasons, some laid down as scenes and narratives, others as vivid images flashed onto and persisting in the mind's eye). One memory is easily integrated with the inner narrative; the other erupts into/out of the given reality and is hard, or impossible to fully process. Sandra Alvarez de Toledo refers to a metaphor Deligny makes between images and wild geese,[101] and notes that he had read the work of

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[98] From a comment about the 'Map of the Salad' – *La carte de la salade* (Alvarez de Toledo, 2013, p. 290). I discuss this map in more depth on p. 56.

[99] '*Où se voit qu'il y aurait deux mémoires, ce que je crois, l'une pour laquelle le langage est souverain, et l'autre en quelque sorte réfractaire à la domestication symbolique, quelque peu aberrante et qui se laisse frapper par ce qui ne veut rien dire, si on entend par frappe ce choc qui fait empreinte.'*

[100] This is another story that has been told many times by Jacques, Deligny and others, and appears in his book *La vie de radeau*. (This story and the story of the ashtray both figure in my installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*, as I discuss in chapter 4).

[101] The passage Sandra Alvarez de Toledo is referring to is in Deligny's essay '*l'acheminement vers l'image*' (Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 1658. Deligny was very interested in research into the behaviour of birds, insects

Austrian zoologist Konrad Lorenz. Lorenz's most important research was the principle of 'imprinting' in Greylag geese; he showed how in the earliest stages of development in animals and birds, critically important stimuli such as the sight of a parent at the edge of the nest, are imprinted into the creature's mind. Deligny seems to have found in this an analogy that enabled him to conceive of a particular form of image almost as a 'take' of reality in the mind of a non-verbal child (a take in filming, less in terms of image capture as of an *impression* recalling my earlier interpretation of the image as hitting the tain of the mirror).

> '(…) It's that an autistic person, one could say, he sees things, he registers things, a bit like a photo. Not a digital photo, heh? But before digital they had a film, a negative, and one could say the autist wanted that the photo of each day would be the same as the first image that was taken – the imprint, the first imprint. And the moment that it changes, if something moves, he's not happy."[102]

Monoblet in 2014. I watched Jacques' video footage of Janmari in 2001: It is early afternoon and the last stages of post-lunch clear-up are happening in the kitchen next door. Janmari is sitting bolt upright, alert, sniffing the air, listening. He will not relax until he hears the almost inaudible brushing sound which tells him that the pan scourer is back in its place, in a little wooden box above the sink. What can my camera and microphone possibly pick up of the consequence of this for Janmari, or of this scope of attention? The main obstacle standing in the way for Jacques to accept me developing a work here, is not an issue of me recording or filming. It is his despair in how limited the recorded image is, including his own recordings - above all: his own recordings. After a lifetime of making photographs and recording film and video of the non-verbal people he lives with, Jacques sees only their failure to capture what he is 'seeing' in them. The 'meaningfulness' of his recordings seems trapped in what he alone can see. In his eyes, the recorded gestures appear in and as *the accumulation of repetitions witnessed over decades. He can see that it is not visible in any video footage.*

Jacques always goes back to anecdotes. His words produce images in my mind. The orange peel and the ashtray are physical forms I can 'see' and almost smell, feel in my hands. It seems they are more effective than any filming, for Jacques – he returns to them again and again, as Deligny did. In my mind/body I turn the peels and assemble the fragments. I do not know why Janmari is so driven but through these mental images, I can connect with that familiar feeling of something being undone, 'restored'. I need the anecdote to situate what is happening with the orange peel and the ashtray – but the image *in my mind is not the anecdote – it is the means to produce it. And this is only possible because of Jacques' relationship with the orange peel and the ashtray, through Janmari.*[103]

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and animals, especially the work of Karl von Frisch. He is described as an ethologist by Anne Sauvagnargues (Sauvagnargues et al, 2016).

[102] Jacques Lin, from a conversation recorded in 2013.

[103] I will pick up this idea in my discussion of the primary, in Chapter 2, in relation to Iris Johansson; and effectively recall it throughout my discussion of the 'image' of the art work: in the relationship between the work as a (metacinematic) technology which produces the *image* – what the work is *about*, which is not the same as its

> 'Here one sees how things are perceived, how a heap of things remain in the memory, which for us – we others who speak – would completely wipe out. In the trace of this ashtray in the head of this mute child, this trace stays permanently, it is there.'[104]

These ways of understanding the image connect with the discussions to come, about the image in the context of art works developed through my experience of the rub-up between (my) language and different forms of voicing. These include art works I developed through research-production with Iris, and the non-verbal children, now grown up, in Monoblet (Chapter 4). This experience of the rub-up is what makes it possible for me to produce the 'image' that is the work (what it is about, rather than the content – people, histories, situations, different forms of information). The art work is the 'technology' for producing the image *in and as* part of the experience of the work. Bringing this thinking back to the anecdote, told and retold by Jacques (and Deligny),[105] it starts to figure as a 'technology' (in a broad sense), for producing an image in one's mind (inside-out orange being re-turned; ashtray being restored). The image persists as an immaterial form of common ground across which one might intersect with Janmari's image-thought. Deligny himself thought in images – cinema, photographs, maps – as non-verbal channels to come closer to the scope of the children's 'seeing'. He engaged with and through the 'technologies' of mapping and 'cameraing' to mediate his (subjective, verbal) mode of address, in relationship with the non-verbal children. (I will describe how these worked in the following passages).

> 'It is possible that by following them, those "wanderings", journeys or gestures whose project escapes us, to follow them with the hand and with the eye, gives rise to a way of seeing that pierces the linguistic covering that our seeing inherits from birth and some say well before.' (Deligny, 2007, p. 812)

Mapping

Mapping: *tracer* is literally 'tracing', but the activity is always translated into English as 'mapping', and Deligny referred to the 'maps'. Mapping was a material practice *for and of* changing the adults' 'view point' (FD); of 'shap[ing] a gaze in order to change habits and allow for a "common" life.[106] Later, film-making took up the endeavour in another mode (in this sense, mapping was a proto-cinematic technology).[107] It involved tracing the lines of movement, 'trajectories', and gestures of children and adults, around the living areas. The scale of ranges from 'washing up', or 'making the coffee' (the children's gestures) to going to collect lettuce from the vegetable patch, or to the water pump to fill buckets. The trajectories were traced over repeated journeys or tasks over several days, on layers of tracing paper. Putting together the layers gathered the accumulated time-

subject matter – and how this image relates to that which is produced in my personal experience of the rub-up with non-verbal voicing and being.

[104] Jacques Lin, lines recorded with him and present in video as projected text, in my installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*, 2018

[105] See extract of Deligny's recounting of this story on p. 53. (Deligny, 2015, p.135-136). There are many such anecdotes which I recorded being told by Jacques and Gisèle, during research production in Monoblet, 2013-14. They run throughout Deligny's writings, as images to bring one into 'contact' with how the children 'thought'.

[106] Ogilvie in Alvarez de Toledo, 2015, p.13.

[107] Ogilvie in Alvarez de Toledo, 2015, p. 16.

frames into one visual frame. This revealed rhythms, patterns and relationships between the traces – between movements and bodies – across space and over time. The maps made tangible the immaterial spatialised network of relationship, in its *spatial* terms - between the non-verbal children and their surroundings, and with the adults. They show the points where their paths intersected, and their interweaving – the 'arachnean' web (FD). Through this cartographic language (rather than an indexical visual representation), a whole vocabulary developed (in *Maps and Wander Lines,* many of the maps are presented alongside commentaries by Deligny and Sandra Alvarez de Toledo; at the beginning of the books is an index of this vocabulary).[108] It was part of the wider project to find a way around the blind spots of verbal looking: to 'see' registers of relationship happening in dimensions (space and time) which are not otherwise perceivable. But I see the activity of mapping as also being a practice of reconfiguring the attention of the adults (towards the children) through the act of mapping itself; as another 'technology' for producing a remove, an indirect address. The traces on paper are traces of relationships unfolding in this mode, lasting for a few minutes or hours. (I describe one particular map in these terms, in Chapter 4). The lines stand as physical traces of the of the attention of the adults in following the children, with minds, hands and eyes.

Photographs were constantly being taken in the living space, from 1969 on (before they could get hold of film cameras). They 'seem at first to be documenting a scout camp' (Ogilvie, 2015, p. 10), but quickly one sees something else: 'children alone, children whose mode of being is pure presence'. For Deligny, the presence of the children with the constant agitation of their repetitive movements, amplified a sense of 'invasive absence (…), absence from 'themselves', absence from the collective project, and absence from normalised human life in general (Ogilvie, 2015, p. 10)'.[109] His photographs show the children's absent presence (in another mode) in the landmarks and signs of their activities in the living space – walls, stones, tubs, posts - 'all of which are objects of intense activity'. These were also locations at which the activities of the adults also converged; Deligny called these landmarks 'binding joists': 'A *Binding joist* in Deligny's vocabulary indicates a point in space where the adults' journeys and the children's *wander line*s crossed each other ("are entangled"); a specific spot where their *acts* coincide. The word can also specify a place that the children rediscover, where time and space are abolished.'[110]

Around these places were objects that the children interacted with for no practical purpose: a coffee pot was picked up, walked with and put down by different children, for 'no reason'. A child might tap a certain tree every time she passed by it. In a sequence from *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping,* we see Gilou Toche tapping the tip of his toe on each step as he walks up into the house, three times, in footage shot over three different days (filmed by Jacques, in 2006). These objects and 'gestures for nothing' prompted the adults to experiment by responding in a similar mode. They made 'handling objects' through they and the children interacted – indirectly, at different times – which produced gestures: a stone ball suspended on a rope, to be struck with a stick when passing by; a wooden die with no numbers in a stone basin, to be rolled so that it rumbled over the roughly carved

[108] *Maps and Wander Lines* (Alvarez de Toledo, 2014). Later in this chapter and in Chapter 4, I discuss the mapping in different contexts and describe certain maps in detail.

[109] This paragraph draws closely on Ogilvie's comments on Deligny's photographs (Deligny, 2015, p. 10).

[110] Extract from Sandra Alvarez de Toledo's Glossary term from: Alvarez de Toledo (2013, p.12).

surface. We see these objects in *Ce Gamin Lá*, and the gestures they produce. In the rub-up between verbal and non-verbal modes of being, the adults adapted their gestural language and their usual terms for interacting with their environment, coming closer to the children's by doing so. In a different mode to the maps, they also working as tools for shaping relationship. In the mapping, these delayed, indirect *co-respondings* between adults and children around these landmarks, signs and objects, became clearly visible. In context of the following chapters on Iris and Phoebe, this could be understood as a form of mirroring, and of attuning between the adults and the children.

Camera / camérer

> 'To camera (*camérer*) would be to respect what does not say anything; to say nothing, not to address, in other words to escape from the symbolic domestication without which, historically, there would be none, either individual or collective' (Deligny, 2007, p. 1744).[111]

'"To film" is strange – why not "to camera" [*camerér*]?', wrote Deligny in his essay *Camerér* (S. Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 1742). In the infinitive, the final product is carried in the noun and becomes a verb: 'Why not say "to camera"?' Grammar attributes: Deligny plays with (French) grammar and how, with a masculine noun, it denotes subjecthood to the camera.[112] Through grammar he designates as a certain independence to the camera, from the operator.[113] He picks it up warily, to work with and to resist its power to make cinematic images – a tension which runs throughout his relationship with the visual image and with filming. In his practice of 'cameraing', he finds a way to use the camera as a tool to produce a non-subjective gaze. This is a metacinematic way of using the camera. Thinking in the infinitive enables him 'to camera' (film) in the infinitive – in this sense, producing a film is no longer the main object. This operation of/with the camera recalls an earlier metacinematic use of the camera, from before the network.[114] During the days of *La Grande Cordée*[115] Deligny was trying to make a film with a group of young 'delinquents', but ran out of money to buy film stock (as often happened). He set up the camera with no film in it and let them put their eyes to the lens, triggering a self-staging by with the camera, and *a film without a film.* What was produced was a

[111] Translated by IS: '*Camérer consisterait à respecter ce qui ne veut rien dire, ne dit rien, ne s'adresse pas, autrement dit échappe à la domestication symbolique sans laquelle, d'histoire, il n'y en aurait pas, faute de conscience, qu'elle soit individuelle ou collective*.'

[112] Referring to Deligny's essay in '*Camerér*'. This paragraph draws on Jean-Francois Chevrier's commentary in his essay on '*l'acheminement vers l'image*', in '*Oeuvres*' (Alvarez de Toledo, p. 1777).

[113] Deligny's had read Althusser's essay, concept of interpellation (Deligny, 2018): interpellation is the process whereby language constitutes people as subjects, through and in terms of how they are addressed.

[114] Told to me by Sandra Alvarez de Toledo (referring to an unpublished comment by Deligny, uncovered in her current research).

[115] 'The Great Cord', 1948-62: an experimental project in which Deligny was instrumental. It involved an informal group, mainly communists, who arranged a constellation of living spaces in youth hostels for juvenile delinquents (spaces outside the institution, and away from their families). After the war, when Deligny worked with the French Resistance, this was his first major *tentative* – 'attempt'. (see: Jeanne, Yves. *Fernand Deligny : liberté et compagnonnage*, Reliance, vol. no 21, no. 3, 2006, pp. 113-118).

certain power, through having the camera in their hands; it became a tool for shaping relationships rather than a film.

Another way of seeing means a potential for another way to perceive reality. If *cameraing* took over from mapping, how Deligny used it and for what purpose, were not the same. With the camera in hand, attention is channelled differently again, and opens the way to different forms of image – in terms of what is laid down ('struck') in memory and of what is imprinted on the film negative. In one way, Deligny was more interested in the act of filming and the effects of the camera than in the footage. Film spools were left lying in a box for eight years after filming, without being printed. Perhaps this was in the spirit of 'a film without a film'; or, perhaps, it was to produce a certain detachment that was needed in order to see the images that would eventually appear, differently. Referring to the maps, Deligny wrote, 'For the most part, we have long forgotten the *by whom* of these traces. This forgetting allows us to see "something else": the remainder, resistant to any comprehension' (Deligny, 2015, p.156). Between the filming apparatus and the mind-set of the one using it; between the moment of cameraing happening, and the seeing of 'something else' in the images produced, years later: what arises is a space of awareness and relationship in a metacinematic modality, in a quintessential sense. The object is to *shape relationship* rather than to make a film. Cameraing is a *response* to the rub-up with non-verbal being, in / for Deligny, and it *produces* effects. This created a slight 'remove' for Deligny, which shaped how he, and the camera, 'addressed' the children; perhaps this shifted something in how he related back.

> 'The unpredictable image, which arises unexpectedly, does not appear to anyone, it is not under the influence of any 'one': it could not be foreseen, since it does not belong to an act of conscience and develops its own movement.'[116]

At the end of his article 'Camérer', Deligny describes the filming of *Le Moindre Geste* as a 'utopia', and as Jean-Francois Chevrier later commented: '(of) the experience of time accumulated and printed on the film at the same time as upon the memory.'[117] He evokes images impressed into memory and onto the negative in the film camera, almost as though without intention. There is neither a focus on the film produced nor on the mediation of reality, that is implicit in recording. The distinction between the film image and the trace in mapping, perhaps potentially in cameraing, becomes clearer. The film image is a product of a culturally and subjectively filtered looking; the traces in the maps and the images through cameraing come closer to what Deligny was searching for: an image, made in the infinitive, of relationship with non-verbal being.

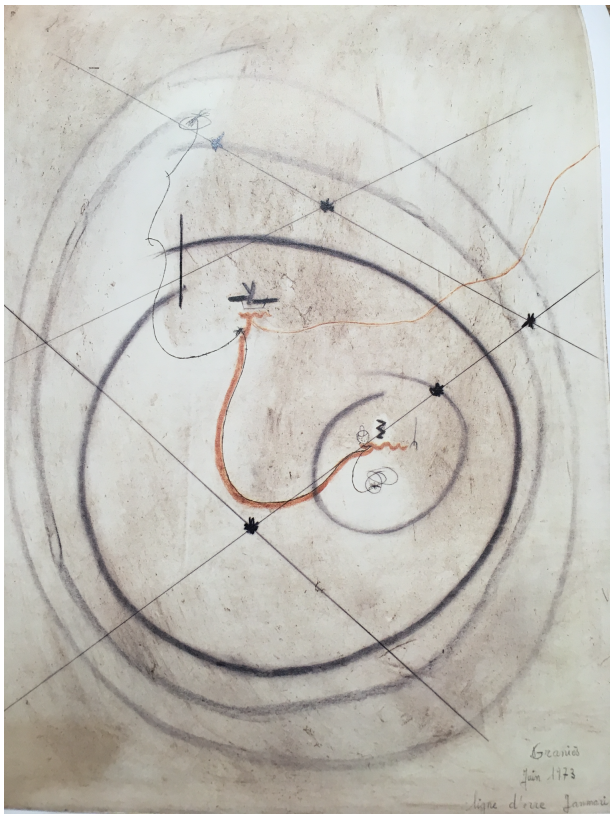
Image mill

In '*Camerer*' Deligny (Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 1742) makes an analogy between the film camera and a windmill. Unlike the windmill the images in a camera do not make the

[116] Jean-François Chevrier, in : Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 1778.

[117] Ibid.

mill turn, 'It turns by itself'.[118] As with his play on *camérer*, Deligny turns grammar upon itself, '"It turns by itself"'. ('*What it says is: "one turns." "One" is the indefinite personal pronoun in the third person – this means the camera is "still acting as a subject": "faisant toujours fonction de sujet."*').[119] As I understand it, the camera brings its own viewpoint to bear on the situation, which Deligny saw not only as a problem but also as another way to open up a slight remove, here between the camera-machine viewpoint and that of 'our' looking through it. The analogy of the windmill evokes a mental picture of the succession of film frames rolling through the image-mill/camera. It carries a kernel of association with the layers of transparent tracing paper on which the maps were made. The vertical layering of the horizontal flow of linear time, gathered and flattened it into a single frame, the negative so that space and time are seen as one and the same thing. This image recalls Sandra Alvarez de Toledo's commentary on a map showing the movements of Janmari going get a head of lettuce from the vegetable plot. It is 'The map of salad' – '*La carte de la salade'* – drawn by Gisèle in 1976. Janmari goes to the vegetable patch from four years ago and stands swaying in the area where the lettuces had been growing.



Graniers Juillet 1976 *La carte de la salade*, 'The map of the lettuce'. (Alvarez de Toledo, 2013, p.290)

[118] Here I draw on how Jean-François Chevrier discusses the implications of Deligny's analogy, in his introduction to *l'Acheminement vers l'image*, in *Oeuvres* (Alvarez de Toledo, 2007, p. 1742).

[119] Note from a discussion in March 2019 with Victoire Barbin-Perron, who translated passages from *Oeuvres* for me (*Oeuvres* is not published in English).

> ‘The three other [lines], placed on the diagonal extending towards the vegetable patch from four years ago (and beyond), are the lines of the “*déjà vu”, “back in time*”, that have brought Janmari there. He is unaware that time has passed; time and space are, in his eyes, the same and only thing.’ (Alvarez de Toledo, 2013, p. 290)

The literal and perceptual folding of time in the map brings us closer to the spacetime of the children’s non-verbal autistic being, makes it tangible. In doing so, it reveals the difference of our (verbal) relationship with space and time, at least in terms of how we tend to conceive of it. But in an analogue film camera, the frames of time are printed along the length of the film reel and roll out as a continuous flow. If the *act* of filming can open to different ways of seeing, the material it produces on the film spool brings us back to a linear perception of time, in which something is lost to view – as Jacques was so aware of.

> ‘Thus the use Deligny was to make of images later on was already announced in 1969: to bring into view what one fails to see, to make visible the power and importance of gestures that usually escape our attention or that we position negatively as forms of meaningless agitation, unplaceable, unusable.’ (Ogilvie, 2015, p. 10)

Monoblet, June 2014. After so many months of wanting to be able to watch Jacques’ DV tapes, of asking and having to put the desire on hold, he unexpectedly passed me his entire collection . They were wrapped up in brown paper with a hand-written index, listing the year, date and contents of each tape. Layers of time. Between his footage and mine, suddenly I can see the whole choreography of Christo’s hand movements and facial expressions, ‘reading’ books in 2002, 2006 and 2013. I can see Gilou’s shudders, with arms hugged around his chest, over a period of 13 years – even longer, because I can spot him at around ten years old, shuddering and hugging in Renaud Victor’s viewfinder in 1974, in Ce Gamin Là. I started to compare Jacques’ footage with mine, moving back and forth between different periods. I imagine developing a dialogue between the two lots of footage – two positions: the insider, Jacques and me, the outsider. But the reality is that it is not only me who feels like an outsider. Jacques said that he has been living with autism for fifty years, and he still doesn’t know what it is.

Christo, Monoblet 2006 video still from the archive of Jacques Lin.

Christo, Monoblet 2014 video still from footage recorded during a mark-making session. From a sequence in the installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*.

'Isolated figures in a wild landscape stand turning quietly upon themselves.'

After Janmari, Gilou Toches and Christof Berton (known as Christo) were among the first non-verbal autistic children to join the network at the age of around ten, between 1968-9. They were the only children who lived permanently in Monoblet (others returned to their parents at the end of the holidays) and they continued to live with Gisèle and Jacques after Deligny died in 1996. What remains of the network is now embodied in this small community, which now includes five non-verbal autistic adults who have come to live with them.

After meeting Jacques, Gilou and Christo for the first time in 2013, I returned to Monoblet in 2014. I wanted to engage with Deligny's thinking through (artistic) *practice*, and to

listen to voicing between verbal and non-verbal people as it emerges in this community, which embodies the traces of the network today. I came with two references in mind: one, a composite image of my impressions of the films *Le Moindre Geste* and *Ce Gamin Là*, and the other, the maps: two technologies for evoking intangible dimensions of relationship, and for Deligny's research in(to) the borders of language.

Life is completely different to how it was in the days of the network. Jacques and Gisèle live with the questions that drove Deligny's research, in the network, but with the momentum and vision he brought to it. The living space is a farmhouse which is designated as a *maison d'acceuil* (a small care home). Gisèle and Jacques, now retired, until 2020 had to cope with the pressure of looking after seven or eight people (the numbers vary), mostly non-verbal and in need of constant attention. During the week, professional care-workers take over in shifts. They bring an institutional regularity around the autistic rhythms of the household – to make the daily routine clear and easier for everyone, but also a restriction. It is difficult to deal with any changes without upsetting a fragile balance. How could I be present here in a way that would open up interesting possibilities for them, as well as for me? How to find a framework precise enough for their expectations of a project, with a more or less defined outcome? What was needed was to spend time here, in the completely unfamiliar situation of engaging with people who have no practice of language at all. I needed to *be with* them, tune in and learn from as well as about this space of relationship; to leave my projections behind and begin to sense the shape of a work to be made. Over several meetings with Jacques and Gisèle we discussed Deligny's thinking, their experiences of the network and their situation in Monoblet now. They were interested in my questions and had no problem with me filming, but they could not see what it could bring me or the work I might make. It was also a practical question, they could not work out how I could be present in the household without disturbing the routine.

At the end of the third day of my second visit, I showed Jacques and Gisèle documentation of my installation *The Whisper Heard* (2003). (This is the work I developed with Tony O'Donnell, who I discuss in 'Voicing on the Continuum'. I discuss the installation in Chapter 4). I wanted to demonstrate how I approach 'filming', with something concrete; how in in the installation, it is less about focussing on what is recorded within the frame of the video sequences, than on what is evoked between several elements and images which make up the work. They saw how voice and body, sound and visual image are organised and spatialised as semi-autonomous elements; and how this opens to different forms of sense-making between them. Jacques responded strongly to this spatialisation and saw how it could produce a different kind of image than the 'film-making' they had in mind. Gisèle saw an opportunity that could be mutually beneficial, to work with me to re-activate an old project of their own on a new footing. It was a chance for her to connect with a sense of research again and gave me an opportunity to spend time with the adults within a clear framework.

Between 2000 and 2005, Gisèle experimented with mark-making sessions with Christo and Gilou using paint and pens on sheets of paper. She wanted to see whether their characteristic marks would develop over time; and whether the time working alongside each other would open up new dimensions of relationship between them and with her. Jacques filmed every session and archived the films. They were looking for something to be revealed, waiting for some new behaviour to develop. Eventually Gisèle lost the sense

of purpose with the project, and shelved it. Gisèle proposed that I could record them, as a way to spend time with the autistic adults, and I would be able to work with the recordings in whatever way I wanted. During visits spread across several months, Gisèle set up marking sessions every morning and afternoon for three hours at a time.

Traces

Gisèle called this activity *tracer* (just as Deligny referred to mapping). Gisèle neither had nor wanted a clear-cut aim; it was an open experiment of initiating the activity – since they would never initiate it themselves – and see what might develop. In Jacques' recordings I see Giséle set up Gilou, Christo and Janmari with paint, brushes and small sheets of paper, then turn away to work on her own painting. She keeps this distance throughout the session, only intervening to replace the materials when they are used up. Each begins making marks almost immediately; occasionally nothing happens until Gisèle prompts with a downward stroke or a circle. In all the sessions they trace intensely, without pause. This was the nature of the original tracing project. Over the years Gisèle started to add her own motifs over the marked paper, after the sessions. The sheets often ended up pinned on the wall and, as though inadvertently, came to be taken for art - perhaps it had become impossible for her to see the marks or the activity as anything else. For Gisèle, the experiment lost the sense of potential to reveal anything new, or as yet unknown.

Monoblet, March 2014. I need to de-frame this marking on paper from the idea of art, to become aware of what is happening here. I stretch sheets of white material to fill the longest wall, so that the marking area is framed by the architecture and not the edges of the cloth. Gisèle used sheets around A2 size; on the scale of the whole wall the 'picture frame' becomes an open space, and Gilou, Christo and Malika[120] can find and take their place anywhere along it. When they are mark-making they shift between fixing intensely on an area and breaking off to circulate in looping pathways around the room, navigating between bodies and things. It becomes clear that, for them, 'mark-making' is about bodily movements and spatial relationships, a proto-choreography, and that the place of a mark in relation to others on the open space of the wall is just as important as its form or colour, maybe more so.

When Jean-Pierre Beauviala, the French cinematographer and inventor, visited Monoblet to film in the network, according to Jacques Lin he felt a strong resistance to training his camera/gaze directly on the children. He responded by developing a device to hold the camera at knee-height, literally at arm's length.[121] For Deligny, the *péluche* was a third eye. In Dharmic spiritual traditions this is a (non-retinal) eye which opens to higher realms of consciousness. *La péluche* moved the point of view from the subjective eye to the level of the body, and closer to that of the children's. Through his encounter with the children, Beauviala became aware of the camera in new ways. This brought him to adapt his customary way of using it, and his cinematic language, to produce a very different kind of image. In precisely this sense, the *péluch*e was a product of the effects of the rub-

[120] Malika Bonseur lives in the farmhouse in Monoblet as part of this community, and participated in most of the marking sessions with Giolou and Christo. She is also autistic and non-verbal.

[121] This device, the *Péluche,* was later picked up by the cinema industry in Hollywood, where it introduced an entirely new view-point to mainstream cinema audiences – one produced directly by Beauviala's encounter with the non-verbal children of the network.

up, between non-verbal voicing and his (cinematic) language. Perhaps Beauviala wanted, like Deligny, to locate his viewpoint 'within their field of "vision" (…) within their "seeing point" (…) which is different from our "viewpoint"' (Ogilvie, 2015, p. 13).

The *péluche* meant that the camera could be present more as an autonomous recording machine than as an extension of human sight and perception. A contemporary version of such a position is maintained throughout the film *Leviathan* (2012), a documentary about deep-sea fishermen off the coast of New Bedford (US).[122] The film-makers attached tiny GoPro cameras to places physically detached from their eyes and hands: the limbs of the fishermen, the fish gasping on deck, the nets, the machinery, the TV in the saloon. They show an object-oriented perspective, embedded in the situation, a 'view from the ground' of/from things rather than people. The effect evokes a desire at least for a form of *asubjective*, non-human seeing, uncluttered by cultural filtering - although inevitably the images remain disjointed, rather than disconnected from the film-makers' retinal or subjective point of view. I first saw this film in 2013 and carried the impression with me of 'de-subjectified' recordings – of filming 'in the infinitive' – into the situation in Monoblet.

Monoblet, May 2014: It was not an option to attach a GoPro camera to the bodies of the autistic adults. I experimented with fixing one around Gisèle's waist, sitting it on different surfaces around the room and attaching it to the wall directly above the surface being marked. But the distorting effect of the lens gives the effect of a surveillance camera and the footage is tainted with a sense of subterfuge. What is needed in the relationship between my viewpoint, the camera and the non-verbal people in the room, is not mechanical detachment. It is a different form of attention. And this is what slowly unfolds over many hours of being with them.

Conditions

Monoblet, May 2014. This is not about recording people as personalities – as the object of the filming. It is about their activities and what is happening through them, between each other and between us. Over hours of being with Christo, Gilou and Malika, the marking of 2D surfaces unfolds into a multiple dimensions. I absorb the percussive rhythms of the marking interspersed with cries and grunts, footsteps and the flutter of pages. Christo moves back and forth between the wall and the sofa, where he sits with a book, absorbed by its weight in his hands, flexing its spine, turning it around, letting the pages brush across his nose and lips – reading with all his senses. When he is marking he turns his ear to the paper as the marker squeals; he turns back to catch another sound – a bird outside the window? He sniffs the alkyl evaporating from the marker nib; his gaze travels across the floor, following a shadow or a change in the light. He senses Gilou approaching and moves to one side, giving him space. Gilou steps in and lands a firm line across an empty area of the paper, as though marking his ground.

The frame of the viewfinder and the scope of the sound-recording positions are far too limited for this multi-dimensional thing that is happening. For long periods I stand still,

[122] *Leviathan*, 2012. Directed by Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel. Lucien Castaing-Taylor is the Director of the Sensory Ethnography Lab at Harvard University and Véréna Paravel is part of the research team. New Bedford is the on-shore location of Melville's novel *Moby Dick*.

absorbing it, the camera running at a distance and directed to the marking wall. The visual frame of the viewfinder works as a fixed reference for the movement of bodies in, around and out beyond its edges. Within these limits what is happening only starts to become appararent over time, in the dynamics and patterns of relationship forming in and through movement and spatial relationship – as well through voices and gestures. To break the fixity of the shot I take the camera and press up against the wall, directing into the intimate space between Gilou and Christo's bodies and the marking surface, and between the point of the pen and the mark being made. The viewpoint oscillates between fixed and detached, hand-held and responsive to the action, each with its own scope for what can be seen and heard in the recordings. Camera and mic produce a kind of indirect attention in me, as dis-located, as off-centre, as the positions I place them in. They multiply viewing and listening positions, in a state of reflexive awareness at the same time as being immersed in the situation. My attention is rejigged by my awareness of the recording equipment and what I see and hear by being conscious of what it might be picking up. And its rejigged by spending so much concentrated with Gilou, Christ, and Malika and the rub-up between the focus of their attention and the focus of mine.

Graniers 1975 *Balayer la cuisine, The map of sweeping.*
(Alvarez de Toledo, 2013, p. 232)

Gestures for nothing.

In the maps, the adults traced the lines of the children's 'gestures for nothing', their 'detours' and the elaborate movements they made when they were carrying out practical tasks, and these were called *orné* – 'ornate', 'ornamented' lines (Deligny's term). The map titled *Balayer (la cuisine)* – literally, To Sweep (the Kitchen), referred to as the Map of Sweeping, was drawn by Gisèle Durand in 1975, and has since been lost. In it she traced the movements of an adult sweeping the floor and around them those of Janmari. The lines flow out and back forming almost-closed loops – *'pétales* – petals (FD). Janmari was drawn outward by his fascination for something he had spotted in the surroundings – an 'image' (FD) – and then drawn back to the centre again by his fascination for the activity of the adult; an oscillation back and forth, as though drawn by centrifugal and centripetal forces. This is how Sandra Alvarez de Toledo explained the map to me in 2014, when I was working in Monoblet. Her description struck me powerfully because it so vividly evoked the movements of attention I was aware of in Gilou and Christo, though not with Malika, in our tracing sessions. The lines are a trace of Janmari's routes and of the movement of his attention as it drew him along, and they are a trace of Gisèle's attention as she followed his movements. Fifty years after the map was drawn, I recognised these kinds of movements happening around me in Monoblet. They appear in my footage of Christo sweeping the floor in 2014 and in shots of Janmari putting away the washing up, filmed by Jacques over the years. The Map of Sweeping could also be a tracing of the movement of my own attention in the recording sessions with Gilou and Christo; and how it wandered between voices in the landscape of voicing, during my first meeting with Jacques in 2013. For all of these reasons, the map became a blueprint for the metacinematic space of the installation I developed with the recordings, *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*, in which a dynamic, spatialised soundtrack draws attention to and between different registers of voicing and gesture, sound and image.[123]

Binding joists

Recording conditions and the dual consciousness they can generate produce a space of slightest remove between different parts of 'me'. They can bring a person to go beyond themselves, to act in ways they would not 'normally' act. During one of the last sessions in Monoblet, while Christo was mark-making Gisèle suddenly stepped forward and started interacting directly with him, for the first time. Christo's marking consists almost invariably of rows of short vertical lines. He continues working between the lines until, given time, there is no blank space left at all. Gisèle intercepted one of his vertical lines with a horizontal one; he hesitated, then joined his next vertical line to the far end of hers. The interaction continued – corners appeared. Gisèle started to flip between vertical and horizontal lines and slowly Christo responded, joining in the game. In the next session Gisèle initiated a similar game with Gilou and from then it developed, spontaneous innovations produced new relationships between their marks – *between them*. Amid the multiple registers of what we who speak called mark-making – sonic, spatial, olfactory, rhythmic, proprioceptive – these points of contact evolved. They recall the 'binding joists' where the customary routes of adults and children intersected.[124] But the intersecting

[123] *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* (2014), re-edited and presented in a new iteration in 2018. I discuss how I developed the installation and the details of its elements in Chapter 4.

[124] 'Binding joists': see the definition on p.53 (Alvarez de Toledo, 2013, p.12).

traces of Christo, Gisèle and Gilou in the game of mark-making were less about revealing something previously imperceptible – the 'entanglement' (FD) between Gisèle and Christo or Gilou was plain to see. But, in another mode, the mark-making was working as a technology for both gathering traces *and* producing relationship, between them – between the verbal and the non-verbal people.

Monoblet, June 2014, mark-making by Gilou (left) and Christo (right) after a during a recording session.

This was the first time during a marking session that Gisèle closed her distance, formed in the network, to intervene directly. Perhaps she was responding to the presence of the recording equipment, or me. Her gesture initiated a non-verbal dialogue embodied in lines changing direction, touching and repeating, each time with variation. The interaction evokes the mirroring behaviour that develops between infants and carers, which is so key to the process of developing language and a sense of social relationship; but this game was non-verbal and there was no expectation for speech: it was acting (FD) or *doing as* meaning rather than as a sign of meaning, or *about* meaning.

Where / when language is bound to unravel

For verbal people, encounters with unfamiliar forms of voicing open us to tuning in and widening the scope of our own. Or, in the bewildering effects of not making sense, they tip us into a state of insecurity. Or we experience these effects at once. In a verbal society, being without language whether as a verbal or a non-verbal person exists in this tension.

Iris speaks of 'the fear mechanisms in people', triggered by her strange behaviour – just as 'the scaredness'[125] was triggered in her by theirs.[126]

When I was developing my artistic research in Monoblet, Deligny was a near-continuous presence. He was a voice to think with, and about, what I was encountering in working for the first time with people who have no practice of language at all. Deligny's presence permeates the community, in the influence and traces of his thinking and as a person who they lived for nearly forty years. But it was through Gisèle and Jacques that I engaged with Christo, Gilou and Malika. With them, I grappled with the rub-up between (my) verbal and (their) non-verbal voicing. My research developed in a tension between the voice of Deligny and the non-verbal voices of Christo, Gilou and Malika. It carried through the process of developing the installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* (bringing in fragments of Deligny's writings; working on the relationships to be made between voices, between image and sound; the organisation of physical elements to produce the space of the installation).

It was only after I finished this version of the work that I began to understand that the tension was not only about the relationship between Deligny's practice, my experiences in Monoblet, and the artistic process of a 'work to be made' (it took me years to disentangle this relationship). It was also about my relationship with language. Deligny called for 'we who speak' to let go of language. But it does not just 'leak away' (*vidange* FD). Eventually I was able to recognise why, although there were many times when no words sounded in the work, and although the sound space was filled with non-verbal voicing, one could not engage with it. When listening is drawn to verbal communication, it is much more difficult to register the communicative dimensions of non-verbal voices. The 'calling forth'[127] of Gilou, Christo and Malika was rendered as background sound. In 2018, preparing for the exhibition 'Dialogues with People', I withdrew nearly all the verbal voices. It takes very few words to catch us in the nets of (verbal) understanding.

Coming to these realisations was - in a long, drawn-out way - similar to the moment in Monoblet when I suddenly recognised that Gilou's grimace was actually a smile. These realisations became clearer as I developed my doctoral research with Iris Johansson and Phoebe Caldwell, and experienced the rub-up and its effects on (my) verbal language with, or through them. They brought me to new ways of connecting with and conceiving non-verbal communication – happening between us *and* in my first experiences of being with non-verbal people in Monoblet. In this interrelation between their practices, Deligny's and my own, I have focused on my doctoral question, of how we (re)conceive and engage with different forms of language and communication, in (our) verbal being.

From here, through my discussions of Iris and Phoebe in the next two chapters, I discuss their practices. I trace relationships between them, my artistic research and the rub-up with their different forms of voicing, through which the 'work to be made' is shaped. I examine how non-verbal voicing emerges in each case, how the rub-up manifests and

[125] Both comments were made by Iris Johansson during filming in Fagerstå, Sweden, June 2018, and are part of the installation *Iris [A Fragment],* which I made with her in 2018.

[126] Aspects of the history of the clinical diagnosis of autism are brought into the following chapters, in context of Iris and Phoebe. (See Silberman 2015). This history is in part one of how verbal people have responded to their verbal silence and it has extremely dark moments.

[127] See 'Voicing' in the Glosses, p. 16.

how it effects or changes (my) language. I examine the metacinematic modalities and ‘technologies’ of their practices to clarify how they work, and what they make possible in these relationships. From these grounds, in Chapter 4 I turn to focus on the art works that I have developed through them. I trace the relationships between my ‘findings’ and the language of the art work, in its conceptual, physical and technical materialisation.

Chapter 2 Iris

> 'To "be there" in the ordinary world but to actually be in what I called the Real world, this was my normal condition. (…) I didn't know that you could be a subject that has feelings. But this started to dawn on me when I was ten, and with that another picture of reality emerged for me. Then I got a glimpse, a first clue about what it was, and after that I have been looking for it my whole life. (…) Just being in contact, togetherness, and communication, living with the ability to feel and react relevantly and having a connection between the outer and the inner, that is life, and the value in life and is what I have constantly been in search of.' (Iris Johansson, 2012, p.55)

Iris Johansson speaks from her experience of being non-verbal as a child, reporting back as an adult whose memory is extraordinarily vivid and constant. Her testimony evokes a space of intense rub-up between verbal and non-verbal being unfolding as dimensions *in and of* herself; and beyond this, she describes her changing relationship with language in others. She developed a sense of herself in a reflexive sense, as a person – an 'I', and learned to communicate with words, over many years (Johansson, 2012). But this is not only a question of the past. Iris will always be autistic, she says, and part of her will always be non-verbal. Fernand Deligny and Phoebe Caldwell live or work alongside non-verbal people whereas Iris Johansson embodies the relationship between verbal and non-verbal being. In her book *A Different Childhood*, she writes about these experiences, and processes of making connection with herself, the verbal and the social. I have been listening to Iris as she speaks through this book and in our ongoing conversations since we first met in late 2017.

Iris used the mirror and the cinema screen as tools to train herself to act 'normally', so that other people would not be alienated[128] by her wild behaviour or odd appearance; so that *they* would be able to connect with *her*. The mirror and cinema were channels through which Iris learned to connect with what she calls the 'ordinary reality' – the reality of social/societal perception and frameworks. In 2018 I arranged two periods of research with Iris, in Dahab, Egypt and Fagerstå, Sweden, where she lives and works. Through these I developed the installation *Iris [A Fragment]*.[129] I arranged a series of dialogues with Iris, revolving around questions I had formulated, in part, through reading *A Different Childhood*. They were set in locations which had some connection to the subjects of our conversations, whether in terms of intimacy, interiority, acoustics, architectural form; social spaces, open landscapes: a private and neutral room, a domestic family situation, in the desert, in a glass-fronted hotel full of visual reflections. *Being with* Iris in these environments, organised around recording situations, I engaged with her verbal and non-verbal modes of voicing and being.

[128] Iris' words. See Appendix 2: transcription of a conversation between Iris and her daughter Anneli, July 2018.

[129] *Iris [A Fragment]*, 2018/19. See the Artistic Submission on p. 147.

Iris age three (from 'A Different Childhood', Johanasson, 2012)

Real reality

> 'I understood very well what Iris was, it was she, it was the one that father was working with; I observed this from the outside. Or else I was in the Real world and there I had no concept of myself. Inside it I was empty, or not empty but quietness… I observed everything and everybody unreflectively.' (Johansson, 2012, p. 35)

As a child, Iris slipped constantly between the 'ordinary reality' and the 'real', or 'real reality'. Although it was mostly out of her control, going 'out' offered her a pleasurable dimension for play as well as escape from the confusion or pain of the ordinary reality. The mirror and the cinema screen helped her to stabilise these escapes and slips. Iris can still inhabit her real, but now mainly as a matter of choice. Iris evokes reality as one among others. The ordinary reality is the domain of language and social relationships; of the symbolic order (when she embarked on 'becoming ordinary', she had to systematically learn 'clock time' and social etiquette). Later in life, refers to this as the 'secondary'. Her 'real reality' is not related to Lacan's real – although like his notion of the primordial Real, it is very much related to her childhood state of being, beyond the scope of language and symbolisation. It is shaped *in and by* being non-verbal and autistic modes of sensing, perceiving and sense-making, which I discuss in this chapter.

The real reality is 'like the wind, *is* the wind'. 'This dimension (…) lacks a concrete anchorage in our civilisation. It can't be converted to secondary because then it is lost. The immaterial plays catch with the ordinary reality and enjoys it heartily.' (Johansson, 2012, p. 210). Her 'real reality' unfolds within the wider condition of being in the 'primary'. In her explanations, the primary and the real seem not to be the same, yet to converge. Perhaps this is because when she describes the real reality, she is drawing on her childhood experiences, whereas when she talks about the primary, she is connecting with her adult terms. The primary is central to her therapeutic practice of Primary Thinking Work: bringing people in touch with the primary. It comes close to Lacan's idea of the primordial Real, the undifferentiated Real we are born into, as a human being.[130] For Iris, the primary precedes the secondary; 'it is a kind of knowledge', 'what counts when nothing else counts'. Being in the primary, 'Nothing stands still, for then it is dead; everything is in motion because that's what life it like.' (Johansson, 2012, p.209).[131] Iris' 'primary' connects with how Deligny conceived of the real of the non-verbal children, glimpsed through practise of mapping.[132] For him the real is 'on the other side of the trench'.[133] Through their practices we see how, like the borders of language, the trench can open as a space in which relationship forms between different reals shaped by different modes of being.

This initial elucidation of Iris' terms lays some ground for the discussions throughout this chapter; these terms are brought up again in context of Phoebe's practice.

Around autism

Iris Johansson grew up on a farm in Sweden in the 1940s and 1950s. There were regularly fifteen to twenty people sitting down to eat along with her family – farmworkers, local youth, visiting students and usually several 'hobos'.[134] They were a community in which anybody could fit in; but around them was social conservatism and fear of difference. Autism was completely unknown and Iris was not diagnosed until her mid-twenties. There were no references to make sense of her behaviour or know how to respond to it, beyond the vague diagnosis of 'developmental problems'.[135] This not-knowing meant that Iris was never in danger of being reduced to a condition alone; but it also produced misreadings, anger and fear in other people.[136] Iris was seen by many as uncontrollable,

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[130] See my discussion in chapter 1 in context of Deligny's way of understanding the real, also in relation to Lacan on p.47.

[131] Iris studied Lacan as part of her university studies in psychology in her early thirties; this was possible because a committed teacher was willing to help her write her essays by letting her speak and then transcribing her words. (Johansson, 2012).

[132] See the discussion of 'Binding joists' in Chapter 1, p.53.

[133] 'What is at issue is law and a certain order in which we are entrenched. On the other side of the trench, there is another order, other laws, those of the real.' (Deligny, 2015, p.207).

[134] In *A Different Childhood* Iris describes this community in the farmhouse, and explains that at that time there were many 'hobos', single men who drifted across the countryside and found work or simply shelter and food, where they could.

[135] Of her father's understanding of her condition, Iris Johansson writes: 'He was sure I wasn't retarded even if in many areas I was underdeveloped and he knew that I wasn't psychotic (…) He knew I could distinguish between the inner and the outer reality, and that I didn't have a split personality like psychotics have. He also knew that there were several among our kin that had different variations of the same problem and that it was probably something in the family genes.' (Johansson, 2012, p. 105).

[136] As Iris this describes in detail in her book *A Different Childhood* (2012).

but she also fascinated and charmed them. As she got older, she surprised people with responses that hinted at an extraordinary intelligence. She shocked them by apparently reading their thoughts, or understanding a complex social situation in ways they hadn't even seen themselves. There was pressure for Iris to be institutionalised, including from her mother.[137] But the absence of any awareness of autism was also a freedom –- from labels, from the destructive practices of institutional care. And Iris was protected from these and from the worst effects of prejudice by her father's absolute refusal of them and his commitment to connect with her on her own terms. In this openness, his care and her development took a unique course.

In her work as a therapist, Iris embodies a completely different position to Fernand Deligny and Phoebe Caldwell. She occasionally works with patients or staff in care institutions, but she is independent of those structures and has never been formally trained. She specialises in working with groups. They meet in regular workshops lasting several days over a three year a programme. Iris' method is shaped by a mode of being which, as she says, will always be autistic. She marks this as a distinct difference from others, in her relationship with the verbal, sense of self, how she relates to people and to the workings of society. It allows her to from places that verbal people do not, or cannot.

Infant development

According to Iris, the extraordinary precision of her memory from early childhood on is related to her acceptance of things being 'just as they are'.[138] She is not affected by the kinds of desires or regrets that usually 'distort' memory, whether unconsciously or not. Most infants learn to recognise their mirror reflection from around six months old (Lacan, 1966, p. 94) but have no memory of the moment, or of the following stages of their earliest development.[139] Established clinical understandings can only be based on how they appear, through observation and hypothesis; on what can be sensed through empathy, or intuition. Iris' memories of her own developmental stages correlate closely with the established narratives of developmental psychology. She describes being in and moving between pre-verbal, non-verbal and verbal states, and the different modes of sensing and relationship she experienced in them. But unlike early infant development, which happens between around six and eighteen months, for Iris the key stages of social interaction and language acquisition happened much more slowly, between the ages of ten and twenty-five.[140] They did not happen organically, but through consciously applied forms of training, at first with her father and later by herself.

I make these connections not to infantilise Iris, but to understanding infant development in a particular light. In 1985 Daniel Stern proposed that infants develop accumulatively rather than in distinct, sequential stages. It is not that one stage will 'fizzle out and be

[137] Here I am drawing on Iris' descriptions in *A Different Childhood*, (Johansson, 2012).

[138] In a conversation with Iris in Dahab, Jan 2018 (from memory), 'I have very, very clear memories from about eight months on.'

[139] There are exceptions, e.g. Augustine (1981), famously: in *Confessions* he lucidly describes the steps by which he came to speak. It is a beautiful passage, ending with '… and after I had trained my mouth to form these signs, I used them to express my own desires.' (Augustine, *Confessions* 1. 8). A different context: Winnicott writes that the analysand is able to recall earliest moments of development 'without insulting the delicacy of what is preverbal, unverbalized, and unverbalizable except perhaps in poetry' (Winnicott, 1971, p. 2).

[140] Iris describes these stages throughout 'A Different Childhood'. (Johansson, 2012).

replaced by the next'.[141] Different modalities of awareness, body-mind relationship and social relationship awaken, add to and persist in and as an expanding scope of possible modes. In certain conditions one can slip, or consciously shift from one modality to another (Stern, 1985).[142] For as much as one commonly experiences one's own body as bounded and 'coherent', sometimes the sense of this fades, especially in *being with* others, just as the pre-verbal infant is understood to be in relationship with her-his mother or carer – when dancing, deep in conversation, or just in a moment of *being wit*h in an open way. Stern's ideas resonate with these experiences, just as Iris' descriptions evoke seeds of recognition of one's own experiences (for all their confounding, paradoxical terms).

Immaterial bodies

> 'I turn around slowly and see Iris sitting where she sits. Her body becomes by itself an independent thing. She becomes essence and I myself and the essence can leave the immaterial body and be between it and the material body sitting on the swing.'[143]

Losing bodily boundaries confuses the duality of inside-outside and self-other relationship; Iris often slips between referring to herself in the first and the third person. Erin Manning (2013), a dancer and choreographer (as well as writer), challenges models of *individual* formation which reinforce duality, in favour of *individuation.* This is not so much about the individual 'I' as being-in-relation with others. Psychoanalytical thinking, and western thinking more broadly, uphold bodily boundaries as essential to developing a 'coherent', 'well developed' sense of self:

> 'Self-self relations depend on a strict boundary between inside and outside […]. Interaction is understood here as the encounter between two self-contained entities (human-to-human or human-to object).' (2013, p. 2)[144]

Without a sense of self containment the infant 'fears that its self will dissolve and, ultimately, leak into a limitless space'. [145] Iris experienced fear, but this thinking takes no account of the pleasure she enjoyed and actively sought in/through the absence of bodily boundaries. As a child she went out to the real reality, or the real, to escape physical pain and confusion triggered in her by the ordinary reality.[146] But just as often, she would go out for fun, sometimes to play with her friends, two 'boys' who flew through the air with her and looked like 'pieces of silk'. She calls them, and herself too when she is immaterial, *sweeps* – and her descriptions are full of joy. In this state they are in continuous

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[141] Cited from the anthropologist Rane Willersev's account of Lacan's model of infant development, in his study of the Yukaghir people of the Sakha Region (RF). (2007, p. 66)

[142] In 'Always More than One', Erin Manning refers to Sterns ideas: 'the tendencies outlined in early infancy do not build towards a contained view of self, but rather lead toward the creation of a multiplicity of strata, each of them differently expressive under variable conditions.' (Manning, 2013, p. 3)

[143] From 'A Different Childhood' (p.212), this passage is read aloud by Iris in *Iris [A Fragment].*

[144] Manning is referring to the work of LeFrance., 'Without self-containment, "the infant fears its self will dissolve and, ultimately, leak into limitless space."'

[145] Manning (2013, p. 2) Citing psychoanalyst Elizabeth Bick.

[146] Sensory pain and 'meltdown' – the autonomic storm – are strongly associated with autism. I discuss this from the perspectives of Iris' personal experience later in this chapter, and in terms of neurological / clinical understandings in Chapter 3 in context of Phoebe's practice.

interrelation with what is around them – 'always more than one'. With these words Erin Manning echoes Iris in building a case for reconceiving subjective and bodily relationship in unbounded, fluid terms. Part of Erin Manning's research draws on writings by and her conversations with autistic people about their bodily perception, which are brought to bear in a mode of choreographic thinking. The unbounded body is a 'becoming-body', which is more a field than a skin: '(…) a complex feeling-assemblage that is active between different co-constitutive milieus. It is individuation before it is self, a fielding of associated milieus that fold in, on and through one another' (Manning, 2013, p. 2).

> 'What was strange was *that something* [Iris' being] was in between these two states - the child sitting on the swing concrete, and the sweep (…) in the atmosphere. This something was aware of both and could register both from the outside. It is still very inexplicable to myself but it is a very, very clear memory and experience of it.'[147]

Iris describes a paradoxical condition in binary, verbal terms; '*that something*' as in *and* without space. But the paradox is not unique to her or to autism. Samuel Beckett evokes the sensation of being through a poetic image of the tympanum. 'I've two surfaces and no thickness, perhaps that's what I feel, myself vibrating (…) on the one hand the mind, on the other the world, I don't belong to either…'. [148] As I have discussed in 'Voicing on the Continuum', voicing and listening happen simultaneously. As the tympanum vibrates with the resonance of the body's own voice, sensory and subjective boundaries blur. Dualistic models of self and other dissolve. Being is evoked as a threshold-state: vibration passing through that membrane which embodies the threshold between voicing and listening.[149] This image reverberates with an image of voicing, as it *co-responds* with listening: '*I have thrust myself up to my throat into two-dimensional space*'.[150] Arsenii Tarkovsky's (2015) words suggest a sense of self in terms of voicing, or just prior to voicing: as the *impulse* to voice. It is a movement, engaging (with) the folds of the larynx, whose rapid fluttering creates a moment-to-moment transformation from space to line and back – recurring. *Being* is neither inside nor outside *and* both at once … different orders of space collapse into each other.

(Struggling to find a simple image for such paradoxical relationship, I press my palms together. I shut my eyes and concentrate on where they meet. I try to discern the fine line of separation, but the more I try the more it spreads as a zone of warmth and pressure, with no centre; the left hand at one with the right. 'Between' is an inside with no surfaces. It is only when the slightest movement rubs skin against skin that one becomes two.

[147] From an email from Iris Johansson to me, September 2019.

[148] The quote begins: '(…) perhaps that's what I feel, an outside and an inside and me in the middle, perhaps that's what I am, the thing that divides the world in two, on the one side the outside, on the other the inside, that can be as thin as foil, I'm neither one side nor the other, I'm in the middle, I'm the partition …' (Beckett, 1979, p.352). Cited in the essay 'The King Listens' by Mladen Dolar, written for the exhibition publication, 'In the first Circle' (curated by Imogen Stidworthy in collaboration with Paul Domela, Tapies Foundation, Barcelona, 2012).

[149] This way of conceptualising the voice returns in different contexts for different purposes, several times in the dissertation, with reference to the work of Kaja Silverman, Guy Rosolato and Jean-Luc Nancy.

[150] From, '*From a Volume of Stone I learn language that is beyond time …*', Arsenii Tarkovsky, in: Hunter Blair, 2014.

Perhaps this can be an image for the rub-up experienced 'in' oneself, between non-verbal thought and conceptual thinking, which is inherently binary.)[151]

Iris' sense of self was transformed when she learned to connect with her reflection in the mirror. This steadied the relationship between her material and immaterial bodies and between the real and ordinary realities, but it did not take them away. They are all (still) states of being that she experiences, which shape how she thinks and relates (as Stern suggests). On the level of language, although Iris relates to words verbally, she (still) experiences them in vivid, visual and multi-sensory ways, independent of semantic meaning, as she did in her childhood. On another level: in her therapeutic practice, for example, she does not believe in working 'on' a person directly, but specialises in working with groups and focuses attention on the spaces between people. With an individual she will work in the space around them and between her body and theirs. This is about a kind of indirect attention, but also seems inherent to her relationship with bodily boundaries.

Fagerstå, Sweden, June 2018. 'You want expression, but I cannot give you expression.'[152]

This place is an old barn in the Swedish countryside, similar to the barns that Iris and her daughter Anneli[153] *grew up in a generation apart. It is the location for a conversation about Iris' training in front of the mirror as a child, with her father. Iris talks in Swedish, and each time she pauses, Anneli translates into English and into her own words on the fly. The two women are sitting close together on a short bench, at right angles to each other. Anneli is facing Iris, her legs either side of the bench framing her mother's body; Iris is looking straight ahead, towards the open doors of the barn and beyond. The awkward staging is not uncomfortable, but it positions them a little more in each other's space than they would be naturally. I am hoping it will produce a more bodily relationship between them and their words.*

Emma and I circle around them as they talk, with cameras held at waist height. We record the distance between them as well as the distance between them and us, as we move around. Through the viewfinders the gap between them widens, narrows, closes and opens up again. The two women slide back and forth across the visual field, eclipsing and revealing each other. (I am remembering the split-screen shot of nurse and patient in

[151] In 1945, Henri Wallon (1879-1962) pointed to the 'vital role of oppositions in the development of children's thought and language' (cited by Jakobsen & Waugh, 1979)): 'The prime of thought is just this primary structure and not the constituent elements (…) Without the initial relation offered by the couple, the whole succeeding edifice of relation would become impossible.' (Wallon ,1945, p. 41). (This thinking is part of the discussion in structural linguistics involving very nuanced notions of *opposition*. I do not suggest it as given, but as a brief reference to this discussion, which would be relevant to expand on in a more in-depth study of non-verbal thought).

[152] Iris, in conversation during filming in Fagerstå.

[153] Anneli Falck, Iris Johansson's daughter, who I filmed with Iris and included sequences of this shoot at the end of *Iris [A Fragment]* 2018 (see Artistic Submission).

Persona (Bergman, 1966)[154] *– the left and right halves of each face spliced together from separate film strips, so that are both split and becoming one).*

Anneli and Iris mirror each other to an extraordinary degree in the rhythms of their voices, their hand gestures, their posture – even their hair looks the same. They mirror in relay, voices picking up one from the other, arms sweeping in lines and loops. Iris' description of her mirror training is happening in a space of mirroring between mother and daughter, two scenarios seventy years apart – we are weaving them together with the cameras. Later, putting the footage from both cameras together in one frame, at certain moments their bodies become completely confused. Our distance is marked in sonic space by the almost imperceptible sounds of our feet, shifting weight across the creaking floorboards, as we circle around their bodies. The video images rise and fall with the movement of our footsteps in pace with the rhythms of their gestures.

After we had finished, Anneli told me that sometimes she forgot that she was being filmed, but that the cameras circling around her had kept her focused on what was going on. *She had found herself lost in thought and at the same time hyper aware of her mother and of herself listening, and of us recording her, in a feeling of 'duality'.*[155] *Her words connected with my own experience of self- and wider awareness, as we were filming. They resonate with descriptions of dual awareness in Iris' childhood – before she had learned to stay in her own skin. Iris' narrative was just one register among the many that were speaking through the situation in Fagerstå: different national languages, voices, bodies, spatial relationships, apparatus, the staging of the recording set-up. This was a very different situation to the filming sessions in Monoblet: the time-frame was much shorter, and we were all communicating through language; and so the rub-up and its effects were happening in completely different ways. But both were set up in the same modality of practice, producing a metacinematic mode of awareness. The dimensions of relationship and communication that we traced in this awareness, and produced through it, shaped the installation I developed later,* Iris [A Fragment].

Mirroring

In Iris' processes of verbal and subjective formation the mirror and *mirroring behaviour* figure in a number of different senses. Lacan proposed that the infant's ability to form a mental image of her or himself 'from the outside' is key to developing a sense of self [156] – this is an essential part of what is happening in his Mirror Stage. In some ways Iris' mirror training reflects this idea so closely, it is almost as though she was staging it step by step as a young girl, through her father's training. Another model of mirroring in this formative sense, is in terms of the infant discovering her or himself through how they are reflected (back) in the face of the mother or carer, in their expressions and responses (Winnicott, 1971). In a second form of mirror training following on from her father's, Iris

[154]Bergman's image of the merging of personalities is inflected with a crossing of boundaries, between the nurse and the patient / actress in the film. The language of his image is a hard-edged split of the celluloid print; a technical operation, which reads as a visual statement.

[155] During a conversation with Anneli shortly after filming, June 2018.

[156] Jane Gallop writes: 'The mirror stage is a turning point. After it the subject's relation to himself is always mediated through a totalizing image which has come from the outside' (1982, p. 37).

turns this image around by searching in her own reflected face for signs of the expressions of other people – as a way to make sense of them and to learn them.

Mirror 1

> 'The father had perceived that Iris doesn't understand that Iris is a person, a child like other children. The environment still consists only of different objects that Iris comes into contact with, and Iris is also an object. (…) He figures he has to teach her that she is a girl. Give her an image of what kind of thing Iris is. How do you bring a person to that insight? How do others get insight? What can you do to bring about the experience of deeply human? He knows that it doesn't come from saying it, talking, explaining. He has done this many ways and it has not worked. It was, as he said: "like asking a blind person to look closer and think that she can see."' (Johansson, 2009, p.183).

As Iris grew up her father noted each anomaly in her development, or problem she encountered, and responded with his own inventive methods to solve or get around them. He was driven by an overriding belief in the importance of being part of the social world. In order for her to be able to do this, he needed to help her connect with herself – to 'be a subject, from the inside out' (2009, p. 44) – 'Since I couldn't understand the dimension where I could say 'I' about myself (2009, p. 44)' He took the mirror as a training tool and it became a portal through which they were able to create this connection. He started putting her in front of the mirror when she was three, but it was not until she was twelve that she learned to recognise her own reflection. There could be many reasons for why Iris could not *see herself*, [157] but rather than looking for explanations, I want to engage with this by examining the different mirroring 'technologies' through which she built a sense of self, and the perspectives they open to self-other relations and social relationship, more broadly.

July 2018, Fagerstå. Iris told me about her father's voice and how first she connected with its sound through the skin on his back, and then connected with his words, and then in front of the mirror, how she connected his words to things – to what she saw in the reflection.

> 'You know, when this black hole was in this mirror moving round, I could not look in the mirror. In the middle it was black like the eye. The pupil in the eye. That was black. And that was like... that was *själ* – that was total nothing. If you look at the television and see a typhoon, and when they have filmed from above the typhoon, down into the typhoon, this was in the mirror. In the middle it was black like the eye. No deep, no height, no… It was vacuum. [158]

[157] During a public conversation with me (Bergen Assembly, Bergen (NO), November 2019) Iris explained that this sudden change was triggered by the hormonal surge of adolescence, which had started early in her at the age of only nine or ten. From one clinical perspective: after reading 'A Different Childhood', Phoebe Caldwell explained to me that the black 'typhoon' Iris saw in the mirror was almost certainly an effect of Irlen's syndrome. This is a neurological condition of overstimulation in the brain which creates visual disturbances, as well as anxiety and other issues. It can affect anybody but is particularly common among autistic people (although for many this is never discovered). Phoebe Caldwell believes that Iris Johansson's mirror training was trained her nervous system to overcome these visual effects.

[158] Iris' words from a conversation in Dahab, in *Iris [A Fragment].*

So my father he often took *my* hand and lifted out my hair and helped my hand to hold it up, and me to look at it. Or he put his hand in front of one eye and let the other eye see [puts her hand over her right eye]. And he often said, "Look at me, look at me", and then I looked up at him; then my eyes came close to this [*whirlwind*] in the middle. Then he took that [*his hand*] away [*from my eye*] and then I reacted on that, and then he put his hand on the other side [puts her hand over her left eye] and I reacted on that, and so on.

'And sometimes he held his hands so I saw a little in the middle of my eyes, [she holds her hands over her eyes leaving a tiny gap to see through] and he said, "Your nose is there! Your nose is there!", and then I saw in the mirror and then there was a nose there, or a mouth, and so on.'[159]

A fragment

When Iris first connected with her reflection in the mirror, after many years of being put in front of it, it was an overwhelmingly terrifying experience. It took months of training sessions[160] before she could control her fear and the black hole she saw was slowly, bit by bit, replaced by the image of herself.[161] Her father put the mirror inside a cupboard so that he could control and frame the image: a proto-cinematic technology – literally, in that it prefigures Iris' use of the cinema screen a few years later. He isolated small parts of her face at a time, so that she glimpsed them through the cracks between his fingers or framed between his hands – a series of close-ups. Each feature was accompanied by the word – '*Ear*', '*Nose*', '*Mouth*', '*Hair*' – weaving connections between the sensation of her face beneath his hands, the image of it in the mirror at a distance, and the word used for it. And so the process unfolded through several sensory and perceptual registers at once: sonic, visual, spatial, bodily, verbal. Through multi-dimensional, multi-sensory modes of seeing and voicing, Iris developed a relationship between her feeling (of) *me*, her appearance, words. She learned to 'meet myself in the mirror'[162] '*and call her 'I', even though 'I' was not 'me'.*[163]

This multi-sensory process connects with Iris' childhood sensing more broadly. She describes moments of vivid, powerful sensation coming alive across her visual field, touch, hearing and proprioception.[164] Rather than the conventional image of discrete sensory channels, she evokes a fluid, cross-sensory field, in ways that connect strongly with pre-verbal infant sensing. Infants have an 'innate general capacity to take information received in one sensory modality and somehow translate it into another sensory modality' (Stern, 1985, p. 51). Daniel Stern conceived new ways of thinking about the structures of sensing, with his concepts of *amodal* and *cross-modal sensing* and *cross-modal transfer (*1985*,* p.66, 52). Cross-modal transfer is when one sense merges with another – seeing infused with the sensation of touch. Amodal sensing goes beyond

[159] Iris recorded in Dahab, 2018: in *Iris [A Fragment]* (2018-19).

[160] Iris' term, during our conversations – she does not use it in 'A Different Childhood'.

[161] 'I saw something fuzzy that moved sometimes and stood still sometimes. I saw two different shapes. Father was like he was, quite distinct, but the other was a peculiar little thing, I don't know what, and it was that he told me to look at.' (Johansson, 2012, p.45).

[162] Iris, (in Stidworthy, 2018-19).

[163] From a conversation with Iris Johansson, Fagerstå, June 2018.

[164] In the following chapter I discuss the neurological basis of synaesthesia and the hyper-sensitive sensory responses, characteristic of autistic neurology (in context of Phoebe's work).

discrete sensory channels in another way. It is 'probably not experienced as belonging to any one particular sensory mode. More likely it transcends mode or channel and exists in some unknown supra-modal form (…). It involves an encoding into a still mysterious amodal *representation* which can then be recognised in any of the sensory modes': sensing experienced as a holistic impression on a supra-sensory level. Stern's work on accumulative, rather than sequential, stages of infant development and the different structures of infant sensing that he outlines, imply a scientific basis in which to situate Iris' sensing. But between them they also prompt me to question how we habitually conceive of and experience our own sensoria. I recall my own intense experiences which correlate with the explanation of cross-modal sensing. They stand out as extraordinary perhaps precisely because of the *awareness* they triggered in the moment of an all-encompassing sensing, not located in any one sensory domain.

> 'Iris crawled under the table and held onto the word. She rocked with it in her lap and … Out. My essence-friends came and I tossed the word up in the air. Slire caught it and let it grow big so that it covered the whole sky. They were red printed letters and they were unbelievably large. We flew up and around the stems of the letters and the stems became round. Successful, successful, it was successful, it was successful, successful it was, successful it was' (Johansson, 2012, p.232).

To think of Iris' relationship with the mirror as a purely visual experience would in part, at least, be a reflection of (my) *seeing* as it is habitually and culturally constructed, in a verbal mode. That is, in terms of channels and discrete registers, sectioning off the fields and chunking[165] the flows of experience. Iris' sensorium, shaped in and by non-verbal being, confronts and also resonates with different sensory modalities inherent to all human sensing. *Being with* Iris in context of our recording sessions, engaged me with an expanding *sense* of (her) sensing, through her words and on an affective level: in/through the reflexive, metacinematic awareness it was producing.

Transsensory words

> 'In the girls world it was the men's words that became movies. (…) The girl loved these occasions when some voices let out words that became films. Especially with serious matters: politics, economics, social problems. The girl sat there and followed along in their discussion. It became images and films. The films came out of the men's bodies and were projected in front of her. Then came the foreign words that she had never heard before: 'rentability', 'creditworthyness', 'excise', words that were said here and now and got the film to continue' (Johansson, 2012, p. 191)

Perhaps Iris' cinematic relationship with words, before she connected with them on semantic or communicative levels, sent an additional charge through her relationship with the screen later on; or perhaps her immersion in watching films has shaped the way she now communicates her past experience in words. For Iris as a child, each word was 'like a movie' – she reaches for a cinematic analogy. She describes words as material things with colour and weight, that she could play with like toys, 'Putting them like cars in long

[165] Erin Manning (2012) uses the term chunking throughout her book 'Always More than One', which concerns the way that perception formed in binary, verbal terms tends to segment the flow of experience into discrete parts.

lines'; some words were like flowers, 'So beautiful!'[166] The merging of 'word – sound' and visual image evokes what Michel Chion (2019) calls the *transsensory perception* of the cinema viewer in the auditorium.[167] The film viewer is responding on a sensory level with more than ears and eyes alone. Their senses are engaging in interrelated ways and in different modalities than have been fully acknowledged in film theory until now. (Chion's ideas here clearly recall Stern's supra-modal sensing):

> Baudelairean one, there is no sensory given that is demarcated and isolated from the rest. (…) When a rhythmic phenomenon reaches us via a given sensory path – this path, eye or ear, is perhaps nothing more than the channel through which *rhythm* reaches us. Once it has entered the ear or eye, the phenomenon strikes us in some region of the brain connected to the motor functions, and it is solely at this level that it is decoded as rhythm' (Chion, 2019, p.134)

Transsensory perception conjures the tactility of vision – to look is also to touch. Seeing is more than the optical, distanced, disembodied sense that Western rationality has tended to relegate it to. Chion evokes a less hierarchised form of sensing – as Stern does. When the film theorist Raymond Bellour discovered Stern's ideas about infant sensing, he found an important conceptual link with the experience of the cinema viewer. He seized on Stern's ideas as a way out of the psychoanalytical approach to the viewer-screen relationship, which dominated film theory at that time. (Bellour, 2018, p.150). '(…) Based on the workings of corporeality and affectivity, emphasising the way in which these early acquisitions remain inscribed in each person during their ongoing human development,' he saw Stern's theory as 'a prototype for the world of cinema'. He goes on: 'This unanticipated encounter was crucial insofar as I was able, thanks to concepts Stern had developed, to envisage and construct a general analogy between the infant and a spectator watching a film, while avoiding an excessively simple equation between the two'. (Bellour, 2018, p. 150).

Speaking in terms of Bellour's analogy, Iris embodies modes of *sensory relationship* with the screen, which 'successfully' inhabit a space between infant and cinema spectator, in ways that certainly elude any simple equation. These kinds of relationship play out in a metacinematic sense, in the mirroring relationship Iris set up for herself with other people around her and later, through the cinema screen, with the actors she modelled herself on. They are technologies for producing sensory-somatic and mimetic forms of relationship.

Co-existing with her extraordinary sensitivity to the 'atmospheres' of other people (through which she sensed their feelings and thoughts), as a child Iris was also socially blind. It was impossible for her to read people's gestures or expressions and she had no sense of her own, or how to engage them in social interactions. Only through her mirror reflection did she become aware of having a 'face' at all. With her awareness of her appearance 'from the outside' and through successive stages of connection with others, she developed a notion of 'inside', of inner experience and feeling, which had not existed

[166] From conversation with Iris Johansson during filming in Dahab, February 2018, which is included in the video installation *Iris [A Fragment]* Stidworthy (2018-19).

[167] This is a recent development in Michel Chion's ideas about the relationship between sound and image in cinema, which he first discussed in his seminal book 'Audio Vision: Sound on Screen' (1994).

for her before. With this, her perception of physical space also changed; sudden transformations of space – flattening into a white milky blur of impressions – happened less often. Hand in hand, a new topology of relationship takes shape, as Iris' conception of self-other relationship was organised in new ways, through/with the visual-spatial-somatic dispositive that is produced by the mirror reflection. The successive stages I refer to unfolded through two other practices of mirroring, in other modes: in the faces and bodies of people around her, and on the cinema screen.

Iris in *Iris [A Fragment]* (2018), explaining her training in front of the mirror (video still, (IS 2018)

Mirror 2: Faces

> "Look at the girl, how she looks. Then go inside and look at the mirror and see if your face looks the same way as hers. If you don't there is something missing in the mirror and you can change that"'. (Johansson, 2012, p. 300)

Not long after learning to connect with herself in the mirror, Iris started using it as part of a process of adjusting her facial expressions to incorporate those of others. Her father had suggested this, but the motivation was hers, triggered by her desire to understand and connect with a quality of relationship she had seen from a distance between a boy and a girl. It was charged with something absolutely compelling for her, as she describes it; it shone through their faces and transformed the girl's expression. Iris began practising in

front of the mirror for 'several hours a day' (2012, p. 302) to align her expression with what she had seen on the girl's face. For a year she observed and adjusted in minute detail. Working in her 'socially blind' way on the surface level of expression, gave rise to a change in perception. It produced a shift from her way of 'seeing' to come closer to their way of 'looking' (recalling Deligny's distinction – from the reverse perspective, on the other side of the 'trench'[168]): she suddenly saw herself as she appeared 'through other people's eyes'. What she saw was a dirty, scarred face, lips torn from biting and tearing at the skin, wild hair, a 'strange grimace' that was her smile.[169] In this moment she realised that there had been a huge discrepancy between how she looked and other people's appearances; and understood that if she wanted to connect with them, she would need to look more like them. She transformed her outward appearance – forced herself to stop damaging her skin, kept herself and her clothes clean, her hair brushed – but she could not muster the look she had seen in the girl's eyes. Then one day a new friend of her brother's came to the house and talked to her in the same way as the boy had talked to the girl.

> 'Then something happened with her body (…) she got warm all over, and her whole body was pulsating. And in the same moment she understood that this is what she had seen in the two young people. She turned around and ran into her closet where the mirror hung and, even before she got there she knew that now her face looked like the face of the girl in love' (Johansson, 2012, p. 302)

Mirroring: a process of structuring space and social relationship *indirectly* via the mirror and copying / mirroring. Iris consciously built up trajectories between her feeling-being and her reflection, via the process of (her father) touching, showing and voicing of what she saw there, to meet herself; to develop reflexivity. Or – another path: from another girls' face to her own face via the mirror, circulating between them, checking, adjusting, checking again, making connections with herself, building relationship with people. As an adult Iris has developed connection between feelings 'inside' and her facial expression. When they are 'not right' she does address her feelings on an emotional level (in any case, she does not think in terms of emotions). She sits in front of her mirror for up to an hour studying the details of her expression, looking for signs of tension – for anything 'wrong'. She carefully adjusts each detail she finds until her face appears calm and grounded and this, in a kind of backwards engineering, changes what is happening on the 'inside'. [170]

In my apartment in Dahab, in 2018, I set up a camera in front of Iris, framing it around her face, as a tight portrait shot. I sat next to it and asked her to show me how her father trained her in front of the mirror. The footage has that effect of seeming to capture and in the same moment lose grip of the person whose face is so clearly and fully present in the

[168] 'What is at issue is law and a certain order in which we are entrenched. On the other side of the trench, there is another order, other laws, those of the real.' (Deligny, 2015 p.207) (also p.69).

[169] From Iris' descriptions in 'A Different Childhood' (2012). Her scarring is related to sensory overwhelm common in autistic people, which I have touched in on this chapter and discuss in some depth in the following one. Biting herself and tearing her skin were a means to anchor herself during the onslaught of sensory overwhelm, and meltdown. See Iris' explanations of why she resorted to these painful actions, and her experience of the autonomic storm (Johansson, 2012) and from Phoebe's clinical perspective in Chapter 3.

[170] Drawing on a conversation with Iris in Dahab, February 2018.

frame.[171] Iris addresses the camera as a mirror, and it functions for the viewer almost like a two-way mirror. This relationship is as much the subject of the sequence as the person shown, or the narrative she is telling. 'Like an object and its reflection, when one moves the object close to a polished surface and the image appears to come closer too, moving through the imaginary space opened up behind the mirror' (Leiris, 2017, p. 77). Like a mirror reflection, the shot opens up a spatial and a relational dynamic between the face and person on screen /mirror and the viewer /reflection. Through the mediation of this one-to-one encounter with the viewer, I wanted to implicate the viewer as part of the dispositive, and to heighten any mimetic connection potentially happening between them.

Each of these forms of reflexive relationship resonates with metacinematic modes of awareness. Attention is turning back upon itself, reconfiguring, attuning to different spatio-temporal dimensions. There is a movement of attention in the *difference* (and distance) which emerges between Iris' embodied self and the image of herself, and the reconciling of these two; an unsettled oscillation between just *being* and being in terms of a subjective 'I'. Thinking through all these scenarios, there seems to be a configuration to the elements of Iris' formation with the mirror, which plays out in different organisations through her later metacinematic practices. It emerges in her relationship with the cinema screen as a form of training which happens through another kind of delayed mirroring.

Mirror 3: Optical tactility

Over an intense period of cinema-going in her teens, Iris watching six or seven films every week. She was using cinema to observe the expressions of the actors on screen to perfect her own social performance. 'One way to learn how one should be, how to act, was to go to the movies. There all possible human behaviours were playing out on screen' (Johannson, 2012, p. 316). The actors' rehearsed and exaggerated behaviour made it all the easier for Iris to memorise; she studied their gestures and facial expressions minutely, and then practiced them in front of her mirror for hours at a time, at home. Her mimicking evokes an image of Iris herself as a mirror, reflecting back to others the conventional forms of social expression and response. The scenario evokes the cinematic phenomena of projection and mimetic identification; and with how the cinema reflects back existing social codes and power relations, as well as reinforcing them.

What is happening in the space between a viewer and the figures on screen, on a sensory level? In the dark space of the auditorium, eyes and ears are drawn to the bright screen and the body seems left behind. But this is not only an optical experience, it is also a multi-sensory one. Seeing is a form of touch*,* through seeing we touch the body we are looking at, or the body we are looking at touches us *almost* as a physical sensation (perhaps arousing one). '*Our eye-beams twisted, and did thread / Our eyes upon one double string*' (John Donne, 'The Ecstasy'). Sight has a certain materiality. In the cinema this emerges in the cross-currents of affect between bodies on and off screen, especially in the phenomenon of *optical tactility*. Michael Taussig connects this closely with the mimetic faculty in relation to cinema, in his anthropological perspectives on how cultural

[171] In 'On Photography', Sontag (1979) theorises the powerful effects of the photograph as an indexical record and container of truth, which in some ways are clearly activated by film and video – even / as part of the most fantastic CGI or VR. See also my discussions of the post-cinematic in 'Metacinematic'.

conditions and belief systems play out in the organisation, as well as the experience, of sensing (Taussig, 1993, p.200). These ideas are reflected on the level of language too, in how different hierarchies of sensing are expressed in different national languages. In Russian, for example, at least until the 1950's, all five senses were understood as forms of touch: *осязание*, 'to apprehend through touching'.

> 'Cinema does not merely show sounds and images. It also generates rhythmic, dynamic, temporal, tactile, and kinetic sensations that make use of the auditory and visual channels. And as each technical revolution brings a sensory surge to cinema, it revitalizes the sensations of matter, speed, movement, and space. At such historical junctures these sensations are perceived for themselves and not merely as coded elements in a language, a discourse, a narration' (Chion, 1944, p. 152).

The eye that 'eats the image' (Taussig, 1993, p. 200)'[172] conjures another image, from Iris' childhood – her urge to bite what she saw.[173] The intention of the earliest of anthropological film-makers, Robert Flaherty, was to intensify the mimetic relationship, 'for the eye to become an organ of tactility than vision'. (Taussig, 1993, p.200). In a commentary, Frances Hubbard Flaherty (his wife and long-time collaborator) wrote: 'The motion-picture camera can follow these movements closely, intimately, so intimately that as with our eyes we follow, we come to feel those movements as a sensation in ourselves. Momentarily we touch and know the very heart and mind of the potter' (Flaherty, 1984, p. 200). Iris told me that she had no emotional connection to the actors on screen, their hearts and minds, and was quite detached from their dramas. She only was interested in the language of expressions and responses and reproducing them or inscribing them into her own. But in her particular modes of sensing (multisensory, cross-modal sensing) and her tendency for dissolving bodily boundaries, she embodies a kind of intensification of these sensory and mimetic dimensions that are attributed to cinema viewing, beyond the optical.

> 'I wanted to reflect the world invoked by Stern, and in this way detail to a greater extent the way in which the body of a film and the body of the spectator mirror each other. I aimed to show that the body of cinema is developed as a continual double exposure of the two bodies, the former being unable to live through the latter for the length of time that the experience of the film lasts (…) the projected film, which alone is capable, in my view, of truly guaranteeing the existence of this experience of the body, a temporal body, a body of memory and forgetfulness that is seized by the body of the film' (Bellour, 2018, p. 151).

In her mimetic relationship, Iris too seized on the bodies of the actors, or was seized by theirs: from the immaterial bodies on screen to incarnation in her expressions in front of the mirror. If she 'did not empathise',[174] she connected through all the senses, evoking mimesis as Taussig describes: 'To get hold of something by its likeness (…) a two-layered

[172] This discussion follows Taussig's argument closely (pp. 200-201).

[173] 'Something comes into the field of view and with that the urge to bite it. The urge to let something come into her mouth becomes so strong, so strong that she can't control it but rushes forward, grabs hold and digs in.' Johansson (2012, p.179).

[174] From a conversation with Iris, Dahab, 2018.

notion of mimesis – a copying or imitation, and a palpable, sensuous, connection between the very body of the perceiver and the perceived' (Taussig, 1993, p. 32). The space of mimetic relationship is a meeting place between verbal and non-verbal modes of being, between the social and (Iris') real.[175] This meeting that she found her way to via the cinema screen made it possible for her to stage it in her own terms, in the relationships of daily life.

> 'All performances in alien kinds of bodies, therefore, share a kind of double negation: the person is not the species he is imitating, but he is also not *not* that species. Taking on an alien body, therefore, does not imply making one person into another in any absolute sense. Rather it permits a person to act between identities. It gives him a new potential for action; as he is freed from the bodily limits of both his own species and the those of the species he is imitating' (Willersev, 2007, p. 95)

This brings me back to my earlier question from a new tangent: Where is 'Iris' in the mimetic space between herself and the people she is observing? It is clear from the discussions of her different mirroring practices, that each produces its own nuanced shape of relationship. And that they are interrelated, one giving rise to another. Between the image of Iris as unlocatable presence, watching her body on the swing, and the image of her incorporating the expressions of actors on screen, she evokes a state between *me* and *not me*. Her 'I' asks that I, we, suspend binary frameworks of identity, body and subjectivity, because relationship between *me* and *not me* is happening in ways which profoundly *con-fuse* them. It is not that there is any kind of muddle, but because there seems no way to delineate 'between' them. This space – as confounding and (rationally) impossible as the space of the voice, or of the tympanum – is 'where' Iris is able to produce her self, through others, as her self.

The copying in mimicry is clearly not a question of duplication (which produces an empty copy) – perhaps it is closer to *replication*, (Latin) *plicare*, to fold: to *re*-fold, fold back again – a folding back of attention. The image is of (Iris') perception reaching out across physical or perceptual distance to what is appearing 'out there'; touching the features, form, expression; taking an imprint, and folding back upon herself.[176] The mirroring and mimesis in Iris' relationship with actors on screen enabled her generate a sense of difference where there was none, and where it was desperately desired: between *being* and being Iris, with a distinct sense of self. They also worked the other way around. The transformative effect of her mirroring training enabled her to normalise her appearance, to erase other people's perceptions of difference *in her*: it opened them to accept her within conventional, 'normal' frameworks.

[175] Here I am paraphrasing from Rane Willersev (2007, p. 9) who describes the mimetic relationship as 'the meeting place of two modes of being-in-the-world'.

[176] This image closely recalls how Stanislav Lem (2003) describes the conscious ocean on the planet Solaris, as it explores the face of the hero while he lies in a half-sleeping state. In the novel, this 'sticky, colloidal mass' (a kind of brain) explores the memories of the astronauts who are studying it from a space station, and manifests them in perfectly replicated living form: copies of loved ones (or figures form old nightmares) which blur all boundaries between 'real' and 'simulation', human and non-human.

> 'Forming grammatically correct sentences is for the normal individual the prerequisite for any submission to social laws. No one is supposed to be ignorant of grammaticality; those who are belong in special institutions. The unity of language is fundamentally political.' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.112)

'The first thing Iris did in order to adjust and become ordinary was learning to speak casually' (Johansson, 2012, p. 291). In Iris' narrative, learning to speak and appear in conventional ways was not a subjection to social laws. By teaching herself as she did, she built up her agency and autonomy where there was very little. Connecting different dimensions of and with her self, also connected her on a physiological level; her relationship with physical, affective and social stimuli and their effects changed, reducing her tendency for sensory overwhelm. Her normative behaviour took away 'the scaredness'[177] and other distancing effects she had provoked in others, making it easier for them to accept her. Frederic Jameson famously referred to the 'prison-house' of language. The speech therapist Judith Langley[178] retorted 'Yes, but when you have no language it is also a prison'. Iris uses normative language and behaviour to undermine the frameworks of difference imposed on her, especially in the conservative social environment that she grew up in. She uses it to verbalise her sense of difference, on her terms.

> 'The external life – what a person normally thinks of as her life, what most people agree on: eating and sleeping, going to school, having a family, and living in a society – the value of all this was I was oblivious of for the first ten years of my life. I called this the ordinary reality or the ordinary world. I had another habitat where I knew the world. This was a condition that was light and colourful and where I was everywhere myself, and which I called Out, or the real reality or real world or the immaterial' (Johansson, 2012, p. 205).

The different reals Iris knew as a child and new ones she has learned to connect with in adulthood, are all (still) realities that she can inhabit. She has not lost her different modalities of sense-perception, or forfeited one reality for another. Her relationship with them has changed over time, but she still moves between them.[179] Each is produced by a different modality of (her) being, with its particular sense-perception and forms of relationship; just as each modality of being produces its own real. Any hierarchy between realities is levelled, as well hierarchies of sensing. 'This inseparability between a particular way of being and how the world appears to us, tells us that *every act of knowing brings forth a world*'' (Maturana & Varela, 1992, p. 26). This idea comes through their study of the *biological* roots of consciousness, which makes it especially resonant in context of Iris' sense-perception, in its neurological relationship to autism.

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[177] Iris, during a conversation with me in Fagerstå, 2018.

[178] Judith Langley, who figures in the installation *I hate* (2007), with British photographer Edward Woodman.

[179] As she has explained to me, Iris has developed methods to help her stay in the ordinary world, including a carefully timed and strictly followed daily 'schedule' (starting at 4am and continuing until the first people of the household are up and their social interactions keep her in place).

Iris perceives the ordinary reality through forms of (autistic) sensing and sense-making already her own *and* shaped by her experiences of the real reality. Here sense-making happens *in and as* different modes of sensory perception which are shaped by her autistic neurology (in ways which I will discuss in the following chapter, in the context of Phoebe's practice). They are also shaped by how she is constituted in being in the real reality. When she is in the real she receives valuable information and knows things that we do not know (or do not know that we know) in the ordinary reality.[180] And as she recounts in *A Different Childhood*, her singular perception has led to her being asked to 'solve problems' by many people, on a personal level and in professional roles: she worked for many years with troubled school children; with 'delinquent youth' (as Deligny did, before he developed the network); with suicidal prisoners and as a Trades Union representative. Over the past thirty years this has developed into a therapeutic practice of Primary Thinking Work. As I outlined earlier in this chapter, these terms do not correlate directly with the real reality, or the ordinary reality, but there are resonances and overlaps between them. Iris' real is a space in/from which she is able to access both the ordinary and the primary, perhaps she is always partly in both. The interplay between them confuses my dualising impulses and my habits of arranging 'real', 'staged', 'fake' and 'authentic' according to a given hierarchy. Each is real and authentic in its own terms: 'real' and 'authentic' become enfolded.

> 'The primary is where nothing else is. It is part of the real world, it comes from the real world, and I have only taken part of that reality which other people can see, and made a concept from it. When I say 'where nothing else is': If I say 'I feel safe inside' – that is where nothing else is. I don't feel scared or anything else, I feel safe. It's the basic.'[181]

The primary and the secondary are 'both empty *and* substance.'[182] Being in the primary is not some kind of ideal state, or objective reality (which is an ideal in its own way); it is of *and* beyond the individual; not personal. Perhaps it is a state of being unmediated, by any terms other than one's own; and in this non-universalist and contingent sense, it has its own truth. Iris' therapeutic method is based on her conviction that all social and emotional problems are produced by fear. Fear arises when a person is unable to connect with the primary, or is stuck in the negative mode, and so Primary Thinking Work is about helping people to connect with the primary in the positive mode. A key principle is that 'you cannot help another person'; if you try to, you may succeed in making him or her feel better, but they will remain dependent on you and will not lose their fear of their own fear. Iris speaks about creating a 'parenting' *around* them, a space of complete safety, in which the person is able to find the strength to connect with her or his own fear. This work happens through a kind of indirect, immaterial *touch* in the space between her

[180] Since she wrote *A Different Childhood*, Iris has written two books in which she sets out proposals for alternative social and economic structures. *En Annorlunda Liv* ('Johansson 2013), and *En Annorlunda Verklighet* ('A Different Reality') (Johansson 2021, forthcoming).

[181] Transcribed from a telephone conversation with Iris, 27-8-19.

[182] From a conversation in Dahab, 2018.

own body and the body of the person she is working with. Side by side, she focuses on their 'communication fields': [183]

> 'I take my field and I put it here. [She sweeps her finger-tip around her body, drawing an imaginary circle: a communication field] and I see if there come out something from my body there [and she draws a second circle around the imaginary body next to her] and maybe there be an ellipse [and she draws an invisible mandorla at the overlap between the two fields]'.[184]

Iris describes the communication field as a space that everybody has around them, 'When one wishes to communicate with a particular person one gathers up the atmosphere and directs it at that person (…) the other does the same thing and so they meet in a mutual atmosphere. In that moment the total atmosphere changes and the situation is redefined' (Johansson, 2012, p. 341). When a person is in a state of fear their communication field is damaged. Part of her Iris' therapeutic work is 'going out into the communication field' and 'mending the tears' (the field is torn).[185] This is part of Iris' method in the workshop format in which most of her therapeutic work happens, with groups of up to twelve people – and watching films together is an important part of the workshops. For Iris, films are made and viewed in the secondary, but certain film directors and actors are able to connect with the primary[186] – their films are channels through which it is possible for others to do so too. Her favourite director is Andrei Tarkovsky – 'He connects with 'something that is essence, especially in 'Stalker' (Tarkovsky, 1979)'. Her favourite actor is Matt Damon, whe connects with his role on the level of the primary, and through *his* connection, he becomes a channel for the viewer to connect with it too; with her or his own real.

What does Matt Damon or Tarkovsky's connection with the primary bring to a film and to the viewer to make this possible? Iris uses the word 'atmosphere', an atmosphere 'full of 'information'. It is not *in* the film or *in them*, but is produced through the whole apparatus of the film/making (its people, processes, apparatus, media). In this scenario, the films or actors Iris works with in Primary Thinking Work, do what they do in and through the atmosphere of the primary, by which we can potentially be imbued. The acting, scripting, staging and framing in/of cinema *in all their artifice*, start to figure as a technology which can potentially connect us with the primary and the real. 'Artifice', from Latin, *ars*, 'art' and *facere*, 'make': 'make art'. In this mode the film is a medium, in the sense of a channel through which the viewer connects with the primary in themselves. Through her method of viewing and talking about specific films, together in the 'atmosphere' of each other's communication fields, Iris helps to bring this about, *in and as* consciously felt, being in the primary. They become a tool for shaping relationship: as part of her therapeutic practice, she works with the *meta*cinematic dimensions of cinema 'beyond' the cultural apparatus of the secondary.

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[183] See Transcript 1, in which Iris is describing the communication fields and how they work. In the Artistic Submission.

[184] From a conversation in Dahab, 2018.

[185] From a conversation with a S. J., a woman with whom Iris Johansson worked for one therapy session while I was filming with her in Fagerstå (July 2018).

[186] From a conversation in Dahab, 2018.

The indirectness that characterises relationship on the borders of language (on the continuum of voicing, in Fernand Deligny's network) runs through Iris' narrative, in connection with the primary, with her self, between people. It seems that indirectness, in these different modes, is necessary for connection to happen at all. Connecting with the primary through the cinematic, as Iris evokes it, is happening neither through something in the film or the actor, nor in the viewer. I see it as that which becomes possible through metacinematic modes of awareness (involving sensing and reflexivity) produced between film director, film, actor and viewer. It arises in subtle interrelation between the cinematic medium and perception. Perhaps it is the film director or the actor themselves working in a metacinematic modality, which produces these modes of awareness with/in the viewer. (The image of the mandorla created by the overlapping of two communication fields, comes back to mind).

These metacinematic dimensions and the interrelation of artifice and real realities, play out in Iris's practices of relationship with herself, through the mirror and cinema screen. As a teenager she watched every film she could, rotating her visits around all the cinemas in town: cartoons, Hollywood blockbusters. These were the same films (in the mid-fifties) that were 'bombarding' the delinquent youth of the *Grande Cordée*, which prompted Deligny to put the camera in their hands as a kind of protection (from their cultural propaganda). Iris was not trying to connect with the primary, but with people in the secondary. She succeeded through the authenticity of her engagement with cinema, in all its artifice, by embodying the expressions of other people (rather than by 'being herself'). Authenticity and artifice are enfolded, as are the binaries of real, ordinary, primary and secondary. In my artistic practice, enfolding or dissolving of binaries is part of what is happening in dialogues, or *being with* different forms of voicing. My awareness of this is produced in the rub-up between us. It is heightened by the metacinematic modality in which the recording situation is set up, effecting each of us in individual ways. As I have discussed in context of my research in Monoblet, this is what helps me to tune into unfamiliar registers of voicing and communication, in immersion *and* awareness of the 'work in the making'. These authentic efforts are made in the artifice and staging of recording conditions, as part of the 'machine' which is needed to produce them.

The indirectness that characterises relationship on the borders of language (on the continuum of voicing, in Fernand Deligny's network) runs through Iris' narrative, in connection with the primary, with her self, between people. It seems that indirectness, in these different modes, is necessary for connection to happen at all. Connecting with the primary through the cinematic, as Iris evokes it, is happening neither through something in the film or the actor, nor in the viewer. I see it more as that which becomes possible through metacinematic modes of awareness (involving sensing and reflexivity) produced between film director, film, actor and viewer. It arises in subtle interrelation between the cinematic medium and perception. Perhaps it is the film director or the actor themselves working in a metacinematic modality, which produces these modes of awareness with/in the viewer. (The image of the mandorla created by the overlapping of two communication fields, comes back to mind).

In the next chapter the interrelation of real or authentic and artificial emerges in another mode, in context of Phoebe's practice. With Intensive Interaction there is a subtle confusion, enfolding – coming very close to each other – between direct and indirect modes of address and channels for communication. What appears as intimacy in an

interaction is happening between a state of being ‘empty of self’ (PC) in Phoebe, and (in Deligny’s terms) the non-subjective being of her partner. Detours and variations of indirect route or personal address emerge again and again in this research: in Deligny’s maps and as effects of his metacinematic modes of using the camera; in Iris’ channels for making connection with herself and others, and in her therapeutic methods. These are verbal, binary terms of course, they have no grounds or meaning in non-verbal forms of language – as Iris demonstrates in experiential terms and is able to put into words. In non-verbal communication we tune into non-binary modes of sense-making. Direct, indirect, real or artificial: we lose our terms for orientation – for coming close to people, or to reality – and open us to others, which can produce quite different modes of relationship and realities.

Chapter 3 Phoebe

Phoebe is hovering in the doorway, her eyes following Olly who is has just passed her and is moving quickly across the floor towards a far corner of the room. His movements are agitated and twitchy, he is panting fast. He spins and twirls by the window, biting his hands, then turns and flies across the classroom again, passing her by; this happens several times so that he is tracing wide loops back and forth. The camera follows unsteadily, trying to keep up, to keep him in the frame. The footage takes on an uncomfortable edge – it's as though we are stalking the boy. The camera is close to Phoebe now and I can hear that she is panting too; and that each time Olly passes her she adjusts her rhythm to echo his. He comes a little closer with each fly-by; she moves into the room. He comes close and bends his head to bring his ear nearer her mouth and she turns her face up towards him. Her body seems to be morphing, concentrating into a panting ball. He brings his cheek close to her mouth to feel the pressure of her breath and a smile starts to spread across his face. Their breathing is synchronised now. He brings his fingertips to the side of her face and touches it lightly and searchingly, as though he is blind – trying to recognise her. His saliva is falling in a thin line, bypassing her mouth and sliding down the front of her jumper. She is oblivious to it. They move around each other with mouths open, inches apart, and she mirrors his gesture directly, touching his cheek and breathing rapidly. His smile opens into an expression of outright joy and he laughs aloud, spins and comes back to her.[187]

> 'Each uses a unique language to make sense of their world. And it's that we're going to use because its so much of an essential part of their life, this is the thing that they really tap into (…). Olly breath-holds and it was when I started tuning in to that breath-holding rhythm that he *really* started to get interested and started to come back for more. And then he was taking my arms and getting me to squeeze his chest (…). I started breathing in his ear and echoing his breathing and he turned around and grabbed both my arms, and looked deeply into my eyes and then he just gave me a huge hug, which he's … I've never seen him do that – not like that. It's as though he says, "*Finally! You are talking to me!*"'.[188]

As a therapist Phoebe Caldwell moves in and out of institutions – psychiatric hospitals, care homes and special schools. Her relationship with people on the autistic spectrum and with their non-verbal forms of voicing, has developed in these contexts of institutional policy, protocols and language. She is with her 'communication partners' for a few hours at most, in intense one to one engagement. She is usually called in during a moment of crisis, when somebody is in the full throes of 'autonomic storm' ('meltdown' caused by sensory overwhelm experienced by many people on the autistic spectrum). She brings to

[187] Description of a video clip of Phoebe Caldwell working with Olly, an autistic teenager, filmed in the special school he attends. ('Autism and Intensive Interaction: using body language to reach children on the autistic spectrum', 2010).

[188] This is Phoebe describing the scene above, during a conversation with her in 2018.

bear her clinical knowledge and study of autism of forty years – but the interaction itself is about immersion, flow, empathy, touch, intuition: the tacit, unthought *knowing* which develops only through embodied experience.

Detours, distance

Detours, indirectness and other modes of distancing which emerge in the practices of each of the go-betweens, start to figure in this research as intrinsic to, even necessary for forming relationship on the borders of language. For Iris, perhaps the therapeutic space she puts between herself and others in her practice is related to her autistic appreciation of indirect attention.[189] This distance produces a powerful sense of closeness that does not quite touch, and does not happen through touch.[190] In such closeness, nobody's autonomy is threatened. Distance and closeness are folded into each other. In Deligny's network, difference between adults and children was a space that the adults must not fill in with (our) language. It was the distance that the children needed, which made *living with* possible between adults and children, and allowed the network of relationship between them to emerge. Phoebe's practice, with its one to one, full-bodied intervention, seems about as far as one could get from the 'indifference' of 'letting be' (recalling Heidegger's word, as I related them to Deligny's practice). But when intimacy develops it grows in / through another form of indirectness, that is inherent to a basic principle of Intensive Interaction, rooted in mirroring behaviour.

Autism, αὐτός, self

In thinking with Deligny and Iris and examining their practices, I have taken my cue from them to engage with non-verbal autism as a mode of being and to a limited degree, in terms of clinical diagnosis. In the process our relationship with autism and how we understand it has been shaped through theirs, and the interrelation between their different ways of thinking about it (I see the perspectives it opens up as a fruitful effect of thinking between this unlikely constellation of positions and figures). With Phoebe, autism comes into the discussion for the first time in terms of a developmental and neurological condition. Her approaches to autism and non-verbal communication open up different ways of making sense of experiences and ideas discussed in context of Deligny and Iris, through the lens of other kinds of knowledge (clinical, scientific, neurological).

Phoebe grew up in the 1940s and early 1950s as Iris Johansson did, at a time when autism was almost unknown among the general public in any country. At that time, autistic people were grouped together with the insane and the 'mentally deficient'.[191] They were almost invariably institutionalised, excluding them from education and family life. In 1943 Leo Kanner (in the US) formulated what has until recently been accepted as the first diagnosis of autism, as a form of a childhood psychosis (autism is confused with

[189] Heidegger: '*…to let a being be as it is – represents the opposite of the indifference that simply turns its back upon the being itself? We ought to turn toward the being, think about it in regard to its Being, but by means of this thinking at the same time let it rest upon itself in a way to be.*' (cited in: Schürmann, 1973, p. 104).

[190] From discussions with people from Iris' Primary Thinking Work group, Fagerstå, 2018.

[191] Recent reports In the UK have documented large numbers of autistic people being held long term in state psychiatric hospitals and privately-run institutions, in inappropriate, effectively destructive conditions - despite these developments. (Special News Report, BBC Radio 4, 12th Feb 2020).

schizophrenic psychosis to this day).[192] In Vienna, Hans Asperger was developing his diagnosis of the condition later called Asperger's Syndrome, publishing his first key paper in 1944.[193] His notion of 'high-functioning autism' is now considered as part of a wider autistic spectrum known as ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorders. From these early beginnings on, medical research into autism has been entangled with social and ideological agendas, mainly related to ideas about the family, reproduction and societal responsibility.[194] All speak of entrenched attitudes to difference. Until the late 1960s, when Deligny was developing the network in France, autism was (still) thought only to occur in children and went undiagnosed in adults until the early 1980s. It was understood in terms of a mental illness and generally treated within the framework of psychoanalysis, an approach that Deligny completely rejected.

From the late 1960s on, what was meant by autism was slowly completely reformulated in context of medical research, new models of child development and, importantly, a growing force among parents and carers of autistic people. They formed communities and associations and engaged in discussions with clinicians. They pressed for new approaches to understanding the condition, based on living with it. Through these changes autism was established to be a developmental condition rather than a psychological illness,[195] which opened very different paths for clinical treatment and care. Since the late 1980s autism has increasingly been understood also in terms of a neurological condition.[196] There is growing consensus about its diagnosis, but there is still hot debate about how physiological, genetic and environmental aspects play a part in its causes and effects.[197] And over the past ten years, there has been a phenomenal rise in the number of diagnoses [198] – how much this is due to greater clinical knowledge or public awareness is impossible to measure. But what it has produced on a socio-cultural level is a huge popular interest in autism and evolving fields of academic research, such as autism

[192] 'Autism' (from Greek, *autos* – self) was first used by Swiss psychiatrist Eugene Bleuler in 1901, in context of defining schizophrenia. More significantly, Russian psychiatrist Grunya Sukhareva wrote the first diagnosis of autism as a condition in its own right in 1925 (20 years before Kanner and Asperger). Her paper was unknown outside Russia until 2013, when it was translated and published internationally. See Manouilenko, I., and Bejerot, (2015). 'Sukhareva – Prior to Asperger and Kanner'. Nordic Journal of Psychiatry, Volume 69, 2015, Issue 6: (accessed 28-7-20). https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3109/08039488.2015.1005022?journalCode=ipsc20

[193] An example of a more ideological aspect is the entrenched belief instilled by Asperger and later Bruno Bettelheim, that autism is caused by emotionally cold mothers; and the link to eugenics which Steve Silberman (2015) traces in his history of autism: 'Neurotribes', which I am drawing on for this section. Silberman's research was triggered his discovery of and curiosity about the high incidence of autism among programmers in Silicon Valley.

[194] Silberman (2015) shows the links between research into autism and eugenics programmes in Germany, Austria and the US, including those run by the Nazi party, in the 1930s and 1940s.

[195] I am referring to attitudes mainly in the US and Europe. Autism research in the Eastern Bloc was pioneering from the 1920's onwards but remained completely separate. Iris alerted me to this extraordinary history, which even today is rarely mentioned in European discourses. (Silberman makes no reference to it in 'Neurotribes').

[196] For example: nearly all autistic people have damage to the *corpus scelosum*, a neural tract which allows communication between the left and right hemispheres of the brain (In Caldwell, P., 2012).

[197] See Caldwell (2014), Manning (2013), Silberman (2015), et al.

[198] In the US 'the diagnosis of ASDs increased roughly 10-fold over the course of a decade, from 4–5 children per 10,000 in the 1980s to 30–60 children per 10,000 in the 1990s' (Szpir, 2006, para. 2).

studies; and many of the discussions they generate are part of wider debates around difference.[199]

> 'Intensive Interaction is about trying to take away boundaries as sensitively as possible, in an incredibly restrictive environment, not of our choosing, predetermined by funding and societies belief in separate living.'[200]

Phoebe's work is happening in context of a broad shift away from preoccupation with the symptoms of autism, towards greater understanding of the 'sensory issues underpinning the condition and its physiological and neurobiological roots.' (Caldwell, 2014, p. 1). This has always been part of her approach: if the reasons for autistic behaviour are better understood, we can respond to them in ways which are meaningful to them, rather than reflecting our own (non-autistic, social, verbal) expectations. This a central reason for why Phoebe places such importance on understanding the neurological effects of autism. She focuses on the relationship 'between physical pain, emotional distress and trauma consequent to developmental deficits and sensory distortions', and on the other hand, 'the responses of society to resulting behavioural outcomes' (2014, p. 1). The pain of trauma or loss is arguably as much a part of autistic experience as sensory pain, whether because of misunderstanding or ignorance.[201] Institutional care transforms the lives of many autistic people and their families, but it can also take away their agency, effect family ties, define the physical environment and the scope for participation in social life and work. [202]

[199] See for example: Silberman (2015) and Murray (2008). See also the work of Dutch curator and theorist Ine Gevers. Her exhibition 'Niet Normaal · Difference on Display' (2009-10) ('Not normal', a Dutch colloquialism) explored attitudes to physical, neurological, sexual and others forms of difference. It involved and generated a great deal of debate around neurodiversity among autistic and neurotypical people.

[200] Janet Gurney, Director of the charity Us in a Bus, from a conversation recorded in March 2017.

[201] Donna Williams (1992)' book 'Nobody Nowhere', like many autobiographies by autistic people, including Iris', is on a one level a narrative of trauma and learning to live with its effects.

[202] This idea has been voiced many times during my research by people speaking from wide range of positions, including ao. Phoebe Caldwell, Janet Gurney, Marina Jurjevic and Jacques Lin.

Phoebe, Settle, 2018 '**And he reached out and touched my face…'** Phoebe describing an interaction with Olly, a non-verbal boy on the autistic spectrum (video still, (IS 2018).

Pain

Phoebe's practice is based on a belief in the possibility for shared experience between verbal and non-verbal people, in stark contrast with Deligny. She is a renowned practitioner of Intensive Interaction (which I will discuss shortly in depth) and her approach to has been an important influence in her field. But her relationship with the institutions of care is nuanced. In some ways she is a lone agent and her independent thinking has sometimes been at odds with their conventions.[203] What has until recently been quite unique in Phoebe's approach, is the importance she places on sensory pain and its effects on autistic behaviour. For decades she has been convinced that this is far more of a problem than has been either understood or accepted,[204] but advances in research have established how significant sensory pain is.[205] For many autistic people sensory pain is part of daily experience. It is often intense and sometimes overwhelming. Intense pain locks one into it and robs one of language.[206] It interferes with cognitive processing and the whole sensory apparatus; and if it is not addressed, it will scupper all attempts at communication.

[203] For example, in the mid-1970s when Phoebe Caldwell was working as an occupational therapist, one of her patients was an autistic man who was obsessed with cars. When he couldn't be near them he became distressed and even violent. Phoebe arranging for a scrapped car to be delivered and put on the hospital lawn in front the man's bedroom window. He became very calm, but she lost her job (from an interview, March 2016, Settle, UK).

[204] Notably from Dave Hewitt, also a leading practitioner of Intensive Interaction, who developed the technique during the 1980s based on the work of his colleague Geraint Ephraim in the 1970s.

[205] In 2019 the (UK) National Autistic Society met Phoebe and agreed that they will now include information about sensory pain in their public information platforms and advocacy work.

[206] See Elaine Scarry's (1985) discussion of the relationship between pain and language.

> ‘Typically in autism, what the non-autistic world sees as behavioural problems relate to anxiety, trauma and pain. We should be focussing our attention on these root causes rather than on better ways of containment.’ (Caldwell, 2017, p. 15)

When non-verbal autistic people are in pain, naturally they cannot communicate much about it. They may not be able to locate it in their own bodies, or have any idea what has triggered it. If there is no way to stop it, one solution is to create a distraction powerful enough to drown it out. Hitting his head against the wall, as Janmari did in Monoblet; tearing the skin on her lips, as Iris did as a child; or throwing himself off the kitchen table, as Phoebe tells of a small boy she worked with: these are desperate measures for relief. Witnessing them can be very disturbing, but effectively they are a form of self care.

Autism is characterised by heightened sensitivity to sensory stimuli. As Iris demonstrates from her own experience, autistic people can have extraordinary levels of sensory responsiveness. But their nervous systems can also respond by filtering or blocking sensory input, to protect it from overwhelm – and both these modes can be part of one person’s neurological responses. Deligny marvels at Janmari’s total absorption, as he contemplates a stream of water for hours at a time. Christo slips into a sensual trance as the pages of a book brush across his lips. Iris, Donna Williams and Temple Grandin all describe the discomfort or pain of clothing touching their skin. Such sensitivity leads to problems in managing and processing information: the strip lighting used in most schools and care homes interferes with cognitive processing for many autistic people, fragmenting vision or thought, or both.[207] Under pressure, the nervous system tips into overload and different streams of information are confused, cross-wiring between sound waves and visual effects, or sound waves and pain. The boy throwing himself off the kitchen table was reacting to his mother’s voice – but only the special voice she used to greet him when he came home from school… every day. Phoebe realised that he was experiencing this high tone as unbearable pain: sound rerouted to the pain centres of the brain. Throwing himself off the table was a means of distraction with a more powerful sensation – a different pain, but at least one of his own making.[208]

The range of effects that autism has on the nervous system includes lack of proprioception, the feedback system from body to brain which reports back on what is happening to the limbs and organs. For some, lack of proprioception only kicks in during sensory overwhelm, or in the overload of multi-tasking. For one man, having to focus on the meaning of a conversation while he is walking, overloads his cognitive processing. He loses proprioceptive awareness of his feet and stumbles, or falls over.[209] Autistic people lacking proprioceptive feedback, ‘turn up the volume’ by heightening sensation – stamping their feet, slapping their hands on their thighs, hand flapping and twirling around. Sometimes the body feels so absent that a more powerful impact is needed to connect with it; hitting the head against the wall is a way to feel fully embodied. These

[207] See also Jones et al (2020).

[208] This discussion of sensory pain and overwhelm, which continues onto p.100, draws on the work of a.o. Phoebe Caldwell (2017), Steve Silberman (2015) and David Eagleman (2015). Regarding the boy throwing himself off the table (from a conversation with Phoebe, February 2017): Phoebe advised his mother to stop using her special voice and let it drop to its natural tone. The boy’s table-jumping stopped immediately and he was able to stop wearing the helmet he had been wearing for several years.

[209] This is a man who Phoebe has worked with, from a conversation with Phoebe in Settle, Yorkshire in 2017.

‘stereotypical behaviours’ are also about activating a sense of ‘inner’ life. Iris describes how a sense of emptiness takes hold ‘inside’ if she is not in contact with people for more than four hours. When it happens it leaves her incapacitated for some time, with a desperate need to set something in motion.[210] With the heightened sensitivity of autism, even social energy can be too much. If the effort it takes to cope with (process) it is too much, it can also trigger physical pain or sensory overwhelm – this is why some people can speak or write only through the cool, inanimate interface of a computer.

> ‘A friend on the spectrum describes the response of her nervous system to any form of emotional warmth as like being “hit with an emotional taser.” (…) Bear in mind that for some individuals on the spectrum, the hair trigger can be set off by such ordinary events as using a person’s name, or by addressing them in direct speech.’ (Caldwell, 2017, p. 12)

Speech and direct address experienced as (sensory) interference – or *noise*. Deligny’s insistence on withdrawing from language and not addressing the children directly, was based on a completely different way of thinking, with none of this knowledge. He came to it through his philosophical-ethical thinking about language and subjectivity – unaware how it was converging with conditions on a neurological level. Phoebe is also looking for ways to reduce the noise through clinical knowledge; to understand the behaviour and symptoms of people who cannot talk about them: sensory pain, motor problems, cognitive and existential confusion and the autonomic storm. Her teaching and writing focus a great deal on how to recognise the signs of these problems, and the sometimes incredibly practical solutions to them.[211] These are all aspects which clear the way for non-verbal communication to happen.

Autonomic storm

> ‘Other people, especially those that are scared, have an ability to say and do things to me and with me that are painful in my body. It becomes like an unbearable fire, as if I am exploding, as if my whole body is torn apart (...) Then I come Out and then the world is good again.’ (Johansson, 2012, p. 215)

> ‘Self-abuse was an outward sign of an earthquake nobody saw. I was like an electrical appliance during a power surge. As I blew fuses my hands pulled out my hair and slapped my face. My teeth bit my flesh like an animal bites the bars of its cage, not realising the cage was my own body. My legs ran around in manic circles, as though they could outrun the body they were attached to. My head hit whatever was next to it, like someone that was trying to crack open a nut that had grown too large for its shell. There was an overwhelming

[210] From a conversation with Iris in Dahab, Egypt, 2018.

[211] For example, for the man who was in danger of falling over when distracted by conversation, as Phoebe explained to me (during a conversation in May 2017) she experimented with highly textured insoles usually used for ‘foot massage’, to amplify his sensory feedback from the soles of his feet. It worked. He no longer needs to stamp his feet hard when he walks (his coping behaviour) and is now able to walk steadily and focus on his environment at the same time.

> feeling of inner deafness – a deafness to self that would consume all that was left in a fever pitch of silent screaming.' (Caldwell, 2012, p. 36) [212]

Autistic meltdown feels life-threatening, and kicks the limbic system into fight or flight mode. In Donna Williams' description her body seems to be acting of its own accord. She evokes the disconnect and the sense of losing bodily boundaries that Iris and many other autistic people describe. Inevitably, loss of bodily boundaries effects the sense of subjective boundaries too. People describe having no sense of self, becoming existentially or sensorily confused with other people or with their surroundings.

> 'Not having a clear sense of my boundaries, what is me and what is not me? My personal space feels threatened, invaded.'[213]

> 'I find myself being fragments of other people. I don't know which bits are me; who I myself am – and who everyone else is, is not clear – the edges between us seem to soften … Until I look in the mirror, I have idea what I look like or who I am. [214]

Phoebe examines neurological as well as subjective factors which contribute to a secure sense of self and how to support it.[215] This is part of what is at stake in her work – just as it is central to Iris Johansson's narrative. The confusion of losing a sense of self figures as part of the wider scope of pain that she addresses through her practice.

Tuning in

> 'When I was a child I was taken to America. And my mother had to go somewhere, and I was left with strangers for … a while. And they were very kind, and I disregarded them completely, and I went down to the gate and I bellowed. And all my self was in that misery and despair of abandonment. And I can still hear that bellow, silently. That silent bellow. She came back of course. I think, touching that despair and abandonment when there is nothing but … but… sort of empty horror, has helped me enormously in reaching … um … in aligning myself with some of the states of the people I see. Because most of the ones I see are very distressed – that's why people ask me to go. (…) I've been changed basically by this … um … experience of other, of not me – of me and not me getting together, you know, in the sense of … ah … deep encounters with… ah… with the quiddity of – ahh… of … of different from self, from not me; knowing in a sense that one doesn't normally know.' [216]

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[212] Donna Williams, writer, poet, artist, singer, activist, b. 1963, d. 2017. She was also a good friend of Phoebe's.

[213] 'Personal communication from an autistic person' (Caldwell, 2017. p. 8).

[214] Ibid. p. 64

[215] In conversation, Phoebe's clinical perspectives on selfhood readily interweave with more existential and philosophical ones. This comes through increasingly in recent books too, eg. Caldwell (2017) and (2019) in which she addresses the nature of consciousness within an autobiographical framework.

[216] Phoebe's words were recorded during a conversation we had in 2017. The recording is part of my video document: *[Phoebe] note towards a future work* (2017).

Describing her memory of a traumatic experience, Phoebe evokes her own non-verbal bellow. She frames it as a resource for her work: the sonic trace of a feeling which enables her to tune in to/with trauma in others. *To align myself* – not to touch, but to *co*-respond: her words evoke the necessary space which Iris holds between herself and others when she is trying to help them. Phoebe's memory is also a grain of (re)cognition which is in itself a form of contact; which produces an imperceptible resonance between one person and another. On the borders of language, sometimes this is all there is between people and sometimes this all that is needed.

The people that Phoebe is called to work with are usually are at their most vulnerable, in the middle of an autonomic storm. Every subtle aspect of her presence and actions risks adding to the chaos. It must be done with the greatest sensitivity, bypassing speech. She strives for the openness that is needed to tune in. When sensory overload threatens, the brain 'casts around for a coherent pattern, something it recognises' (Caldwell, 2017, p.4). Even in the full throes of the autonomic storm, some small part of the brain is searching for an anchor and if it does not find one, it creates its own. A similar process happens in lower gear in daily life. The coping mechanism is known as *stimming* (stimulating) – rhythmic, repetitive movements and sounds which autistic people make to ground themselves, or to activate proprioceptive feedback if the grip of sensory silence gets too much. All these sounds and gestures are what Phoebe calls 'the body speaking to itself'. It is an embodied voicing as individual as any voice. And like any language, it is not just about the shapes and rhythms of gestures and sounds, but also *how* they are voiced. Intensive Interaction comes in as a technique for responding to a person through their own voicing, this voicing, on their terms.

Intensive Interaction was first developed the 1970's by Geraint Ephraim, a child psychologist working in a special school in London for children with autism and learning difficulties (he called it Augmented Mothering and it was later renamed Intensive Interaction).[217] The thinking behind the technique was that many people with autism and learning difficulties have not experienced mirroring behaviour in infancy, whether due to an issue with the infant (sensory or neurological), or with the parent or carer (emotional disconnect due to depression, or drug addiction, for example). As I have described in the previous chapter, mirroring behaviour is an essential process for developing a secure sense of self, language and social relationship. The technique is about exercising mirroring behaviour between the therapist and their communication partner, at whatever age they might be. It grew out of an intuitive impulse forced by a crisis in communication, just as the mapping did in Deligny's network. Geraint Ephraim, failing to connect with a non-verbal child and at the end of his tether, started spontaneously to mirror the child's gestures. The child responded by mirroring back; suddenly for the first time there was connection between them, and a non-verbal dialogue began to develop.

Intensive Interaction involves paying attention to a person's gestures and sounds, to discern their *voicing* from uncontrolled tics, or spasms of pain. When M and L were

[217] At that time there was a movement to democratise the therapist-patient relationship, and many mistakenly assumed the method implied some kind of infantilisation (in fact it is quite the opposite). It was renamed by Dave Hewlitt, Ephraim's colleague and Director of the special school where he worked, when he was developing the technique in the 1980's.

working with J (see *Voicing on the Continuum*), their mirroring[218] developed a triadic space similar to the dyadic space between mother / carer and child.[219] In the interplay between them and J, they mirrored back her sounds and gestures each time *with variation*. *S*ameness captures the attention, but that does not last long – especially when a person is in meltdown. Difference arouses curiosity. Attention turns outward to the source of the voicing and is captivated. A dialogue can start to build. '(…) the effect has been described as like being thrown a life-belt in a stormy sea' (Caldwell, 2014, p. 7).

> 'John is bellowing and biting himself. Because screaming loudly involves putting pressure on the neck muscles, I try putting pressure on his shoulder every time he bellows, a technique that is sometimes effective, but not in John's case. So after a few tries I switch to visual copying, putting my hand in my mouth and pretending that I am biting it, echoing his sounds (more quietly) at the same time. After three bellows, he begins to come out of his world. He looks up, his voice lowers and his eyebrows raise. He gives a sort of gulp and reaches out for his book. Thereafter, every time he looks up I begin to make a growling noise in my throat, so that he begins to realise that if he makes a sound he will get an answer.' (Caldwell, 2012, p. 82)

Many of Phoebe's descriptions of Intensive Interaction reflect how Daniel Stern (1985) analyses mother/carer mirroring behaviour, in his work on *attunement.* Copying is a prelude and a potential opening to making contact, but the essence of mirroring behaviour is '*matching' without imitation.* Attuning involves replicating intensity or rhythm, for example, but not form or appearance. Stern summarises the 'evidence for attunement' (1985, p. 146) by identifying six modalities of matching, in which sameness and difference are interwoven. By responding to a gesture or sound with one that is different, but 'matches', a sense of correspondence and mutual recognition develops. They come into a state of attunement, communicating in non-verbal connectedness. I have heard many therapists describe this as especially intense, or 'pure', or moving, perhaps because (for the verbal) in the absence of language, affective dimensions intensify. *Absolute intensity*; *Intensity contour*; *Temporal beat*; *Rhythm*; *Duration* and *Shape* – Stern's six modalities. The language of attunement is expressed in musical terms.

> 'A nine-month old boy bangs his hand on a soft toy, at first in some anger but gradually with pleasure, exuberance and humour. He sets up a steady rhythm. Mother falls into his rhythm and says, "*kaaaa-bam*, *kaaaa-bam*', the "*bam*" falling on the stroke and the "*kaaaa*" riding with the preparatory upswing and the suspenseful holding of his arm aloft before it falls." (Stern, 1985, p.140)

Phoebe's approach to Intensive Interaction involves these elements of the technique of course, but what really makes it flow is how she engages in intuitive, creative improvisation. All the clinical knowledge that Phoebe works with that I have described –

[218] See the descriptions of this method on pp. 29-30 in 'Voicing on the Continuum'.

[219] In 'Playing and Reality' Winnicott describes the dyadic space as 'potential space', 'The playground ['I call this a playground because play starts here'] is a potential space between the mother and the baby, or joining mother and baby.' (Winnicott, 1971, p.47). Phoebe describes the potential space as a safe field of interrelation in which one can be spontaneously playful and remain connected with others (from a conversation between us in 2016).

of sensory pain, of loss of bodily boundaries, of cognitive overload – gives way to *knowing*. What is learned through experience, perhaps not even consciously reflected, and intuition lead to 'Knowing in a way that I do not normally know.'[220] Only after the session when she returns to clinical, analytical mode is Phoebe able to explain what it was she was responding to in her partner and why she responded as she did.

In verbal dialogue silence can become a space for tuning in to each other more sensitively. In the non-verbal dialogue of Intensive Interaction, absence of words reduces the noise (cognitive and verbal), around tuning into the language of mirroring. The inventiveness of responses grows, as gestures are reciprocated *indirectly* – in the 'matching' sense that Stern uses: taking a grain of what is given and giving it back differently. It is a process of experimentation and testing across different registers, to find out what works. It might be as subtle as the intensity of a voice matching the pressure of a hand. To a detached observer it may seem nothing is happening; or it may play out in full-bodied, large scale interactions.

> '(…) improvisations that are 'hyperaware', improvisations that in their profound concern for the other open up a performative space that is attentive to, responsive to, and, above all, supportive of the mark-making project of the other. At its best, such a pursuit can produce improvisations of great sensitivity and delicacy where every mark is considered, every interjection is carefully weighed and weighted, ensuring that participation in an emerging oneness' (Peters, 2009, p. 53). [221]

Descriptions of actors practicing free improvisation come very close to how Phoebe engages with 'not me – of me and not me getting together (…), knowing in a sense that one doesn't normally know.'[222] Improvisation, verbal or non-verbal, is arguably part of all forms of communication.[223] In Intensive Interaction it is always Phoebe who initiates the interaction, but once immersed in attunement there is no hierarchy. Therapist, patient; neurotypical, autistic; initiator, follower: the roles shift, seem interchangeable, or indistinguishable. When it really works, Phoebe suggests, me and not me become 'one'; the binary of self and other dissolves in 'emerging oneness'. Listening with all the senses

> PC: Well, it's tuning into attention … finding the right wavelength. Aligning oneself. I remember when I was in Kent there were these concrete dishes which were built to pick up the sound of incoming aeroplanes.[224] (…) And they were trying to pick up signs of them

[220] Phoebe's words during a conversation with her in Settle, Yorkshire, 2017.

[221] Peters is describing the practice of 'free improvisation' which was developed by theatre directors such as Peter Brooke, in the 1960's and 1970's. Improvisation exercises aimed at producing attunement between actors to open up new dimensions of relationship between them, as well as with audiences. (Brooke, 1968, pp. 55-69).

[222] From a conversation with Phoebe Caldwell, Settle, Yorks., March 2016.

[223] The Indian screen-music composer Mani Kaul compared the relationship between improvisation and complex rules in Indian raga music, with spoken language. 'I am speaking English, my second language. I have no idea what I am going to say next and nor do you. I am improvising. But the moment I make a mistake you will know it.' From a lecture at the School of Sound, South Bank Centre, London, June 2000.

[224] Phoebe was unaware that the dishes are called *acoustic mirrors,* which is the term used by Kaja Silverman to propose an alternative to the ocular-centricism of Lacan's mirror stage and psychoanalytical theories of subjectivity more broadly (see 'Metacinematic'). Guy Rosalato (1974) initiated the metaphor of the acoustic

coming in. They had an engineer who went out and he was testing them to see if they would work. He went round and round and round and round with his equipment, fine-tuning it. If he got it in the right place they were absolutely smack on, you know. They picked up these planes from a very long distance. The idea of a dish which you can tune into and you can adjust your tuning to, to get the maximum resonance: that's the image I have in mind – a metaphor really.

IS: Which is not an image of flesh and blood. It's made of concrete, architectural scale – so very inhuman.

PC: At the point of focus there's something which is total attention. And it is that total attention that is so critical. It is not something that proceeds from the intellectual power one may have, one's power of thought. It's something that you feel. It's learning to attend, to pay total attention to feeling, to the affective resonance between you, that it is so important.[225]

In another conversation Phoebe compared this focus to the difference between looking (at) and a certain kind of gaze. The eyes relax and soften and their focus falls short of their object, releasing it from the mind's habitual seeing. She referred to a scenario of gazing towards a waterfall without focusing, for a very long time. Suddenly the direction of the cascade reversed so that it appeared to be falling upwards. Perhaps, by softening the impact of its defining appearance, the link between the water and the concept of 'waterfall' was undone, and a different kind of perceiving took over.[226] Phoebe's comparison recalls Deligny's distinction between the *looking* of the adults and the *seeing* of the non-verbal children, which is not shaped by (our) language. In this sense, in Intensive Interaction Phoebe strives to 'see' non-verbal communication in ways which are not geared to making sense in the terms she already knows (according to given frameworks). This means 'seeing' the non-verbal language of her partner each time anew in and as *their* terms.

'Listening with all the senses'; 'tuning in'; 'emptying myself'; 'putting myself to one side', 'letting go of speech'. Phoebe evokes what she is trying to do and the unconditional openness she needs to achieve. It is about putting sense of self on hold and focusing all attention on *not me*. She extends awareness (a vast dish) to pick up even barely recognisable signs of communication 'Listening with all the senses'. This is immersion, but not as *losing* oneself. Her fully embodied listening reaches out to each new sound or gesture as an event, arising in the moment, to be acknowledged and responded to. And it is listening to her own sounds and gestures – attention turning around upon itself. Jean-Luc Nancy wrote, 'To be listening is always to be on the edge of meaning (…)'. He refers to Stravinsky as a six year old boy, listening to a mute peasant who 'produced unusual sounds with his arms which the future musician tried to reproduce.' – a proto-type for Intensive Interaction. The boy 'was looking for a different voice, one more or less vocal than the one that comes from the mouth; another sound for another sense than the one

mirror in psychoanalysis; later Michel Chion (1982) picked up this metaphor in the first theorisation of the voice in cinema:

[225] See Transcript no 4 in the Artistic Submission, via the link on p.147.

[226] Phoebe was referring to a passage in Dillard (1985).

that is spoken' (Nancy, 2007, p. 202). Phoebe's (multisensory, multidimensional) listening and seeing brings her beyond (her) self towards her partner *and* to what is happening between them – which includes them both. Like the boy, she reaches into the edge of meaning between them. The edge opens to/as a relational space, in which it becomes possible for she and her partner to align.

In previous chapters I have discussed how through recording situations, cinematic and metacinematic technologies, the rub-up between verbal and non-verbal voicing produces metacinematic dimensions of relationship. In Phoebe's practice, in the rub-up between different forms of voicing, she and her partner shift between registers of sense-making and different ways of engaging their senses. Different modes of awareness – expanded, moving beyond her bodily boundaries – are produced in Phoebe (we cannot know what is happening for her partner). These conditions resonate strongly with metacinematic dimensions of awareness, but they are not the same. In Phoebe's practice there is no cinematic dimension, no playing out of post-cinematic affect. She has no 'tools for concentration'– like the maps, or cameraing; no metacinematic relationship with the mirror, or the cinema screen. When she comes out of the relational space she leaves these modes of awareness behind, and mediates them through language. Phoebe's tool for concentration is Intensive Interaction, into and through which she pours all attention. In this state of tuned-in mutual awareness, Phoebe herself is a medium between forms of voicing and also between forms of knowledge, or knowing (which will later be translated into communication tools for parents and carers to use, and clinical knowledge). In the rub-up between different forms of body language, Phoebe's body seems to go a physical transformation as it morphs into mirroring and attuning to her partner's. The image evokes what Paul Riceour calls linguistic hospitality, in bodily and gestural terms.[227] Phoebe evokes an embodied response to Deligny's desire to let go of (his) language in the orbit of the autistic children. Listening with all the senses, letting go of (one's) language, putting myself to one side: these are also ways of stepping outside of oneself.

[227] Linguistic hospitality is 'the act of inhabiting the word of the Other paralleled by the act of receiving the word of the other into one's own home, one's own dwelling'. (Ricoeur, 2006, cited by Kearney,2007, p.151).

Phoebe and Olly during Intensive Interaction. 'Well, I breathed in his ear and he thought that was marvelous…'
('video still, Caldwell 2010)

Stepping outside myself

> 'And towards the end we had the most extraordinary engagement and he was inspecting me from about *that* distance away, and inspecting me and curious and laughing and joyful. And I felt similarly warm. We were locked into each other in a sort of duende […] And we had this extraordinarily prolonged gaze, rather than a stare, a sort of mutual gaze. And it was very moving for him, and for me obviously – for both of us.'[228]

In verbal dialogue, the semantic register of meaning provokes thinking, whereas the content of this non-verbal dialogue is the revelation of contact itself – contact which is totally open and intensely close. Wordless communication distils the *sensation* of communication happening. For Phoebe, who thinks and feels in terms of emotion, the pleasure she has in wordless contact with *not me is* 'intimate'; involves 'empathy' and 'understanding'. Many autistic people say that they do not feel emotion; and yet their descriptions of feeling seem no less sensitive or responsive than any emotion (and can clearly be extraordinarily intense). Iris says that she cannot experience emotion or intimacy and that this is part of her autistic condition; but she experiences the greatest pleasure from being in contact with people. How affective feeling is experienced by one person or another, or how the words we use relate to the feelings we feel, is impossible to gauge – especially on the borders of language. Emotion as *movement out* and

[228] See Transcript 2 in the Artistic Submission, via the link on p. 147.

excitement, or (less emotional) *excitation*:[229] Iris describes the movement of feelings and moods, but they rarely feel as though they connect with her 'inside'. And so the vectors of feeling which relate to Phoebe do not necessarily exist in/for her autistic interlocutor in the same sense. 'Emotion comes without the responsibility of owning it' (2012, p. 12), wrote Phoebe, and she chooses the word *affect* in place of emotion. It is important to bear in mind that being completely attuned does not mean people are experiencing the same thing. Between their different modalities of feeling, emotional intimacy confuses with affective distance. Rather like the call and response of mirroring behaviour, the oneness of the *duende*[230] is enfolded with a space of difference in which transformation is happening in both people.

Phoebe is not looking for feelings of love, or the ecstasy that can arise in stepping beyond one's own boundaries, beyond oneself (*ecstasy*, from Greek, *ekstasis*: 'standing outside oneself'/out of place). But she describes these as part of her experience in her practice. Through tuning in, she becomes the erotic equipment which produces resonances and vibrations in her communication partner. They speak of her unconditional openness to them, and the pleasure of making contact, or communicating. Being open to another person to such a degree is another way in which the awareness of bodily / subjective boundaries lifts, opening to the pleasure of feeling less one self.

For Phoebe, unconditional openness is essential for the interaction to 'work', and so it is also related to her therapeutic responsibility (the stakes are high). To be so open is very difficult most of the time. It means letting down social defences in ways which are usually only possible in the trust that comes with love, or the compassion that responds to vulnerability. In this sense Phoebe and her partner are both 'defenceless' during Intensive Interaction. What makes it 'safe' is that her partner has no sense of the kind of social performance that creates a need for social defences. She or he is preoccupied with coping and drawn into the interaction that is happening. And this is all happening within the framework of a therapeutic technique and a very focused intention. The relationship between Phoebe in mode of communication partner and Phoebe in mode of clinician and an authorative voice in her field, is clearly very distinct. Her practice involves switching between these different two modalities; two completely different forms of language and voicing.

Settle, Yorkshire, July 2018. Phoebe was sitting in a high-backed chair and I was opposite her on a low stool, with a camera in my lap, training it up towards her face. Emma moved around Phoebe with second camera, recording us both. I asked Phoebe about the video clip in which she is working with Olly,[231] *wondering why it is so moving to watch. You can see the emotion in the school staff when they talk about it afterwards, one woman has tears in her eyes. I wanted to understand what was happening between Phoebe and Olly*

[229] Latin: *ex*, out + *movere* move; French (16th century): *émouvoir*, excite, but here in terms of a public disturbance, so etymologically 'emotion' in both its Latin and French roots it includes exteriority rather than intimacy.

[230] *Duende:* 'a heightened state of emotion, expression and authenticity, often associated with flamenco.' (Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duende_(art). 'All arts are capable of duende, but where it finds its greatest range, naturally, is in music, dance and spoken poetry, for these arts require a living body to interpret them, being forms that are born, die and open their contours against an exact present.' Federico Garcia Lorca from his lecture, 'Play and Theory of the Duende', Buenos Aires, 1933.

[231] On the DVD 'Autism and Intensive Interaction' (2010), an informational video about for schools, carers and parents showing Phoebe working with non-verbal autistic children. This is the clip I am describing from my perspective, at the start of this chapter.

during their interaction and had asked her about it before. And so instead of asking her to talk about it again, I asked her to see if she could connect with her embodied memory of it – to take away the verbal layer and literally re-member it. 'But it will feel artificial, I can't do it without having somebody to respond to.' I explained that this wasn't a question of acting, but an experiment to remember the interaction in its own terms, through the body. 'But it wouldn't be real!'. Then she looked at me sharply and pointed at me – at my body language –

> PC: Just a minute ago when you responded to me, you know, it just looked very artificial, it felt highly artificial.
>
> IS: … I am artificial?
>
> PC: No, no, no no. [Turning to Emma] She's doing something in order to get a reaction from me rather than it being a spontaneous gesture.
>
> IS: Ah… it's a blurry line, isn't it.
>
> PC: Not really, no. It's a hard line actually. It really feels bad if you are doing something in order to get a response.
>
> IS: But are we not always doing something to get a response?
>
> PC: No, because most of this stuff is unconscious anyway. It's an unconscious expression of our inner emotions. And that was a very conscious one because you were doing it in order to provoke a response from me.
>
> IS: Does that make it bad?
>
> PC: Yes, it makes… it actually hurts inside me.

This was a moment of friction which arose during a conversation between Phoebe and myself, in context of a film shoot, in 2018. It arose quite unexpectedly and seemed, in the moment, to be a failure of the trust that had built up between us. Later I realised how much it spoke of the tensions within Phoebe's practice, as well as in mine. Within the terms of each, these are productive tensions, but here they worked against each other. The sudden hiatus this produced was one of the most valuable moments in my research with Phoebe. It opened to another level of insight into two relational practices, one therapeutic, one artistic.

When Phoebe turned attention from her body language to mine the situation flipped around. I was a subject of scrutiny – and I didn't hold up. 'My body language is artificial!'

When I look at the footage later, I saw that in this moment I lost control of the camera and Phoebe is slipping out of the frame.

This session was part of a two-day film shoot, the first time that our conversations were framed in this way. I had brought a second camera person and we had rearranged the living space. We set up the session as a conversation, but I wanted to move away from verbal description and find a way to engage more directly with non-verbal dimensions of Intensive Interaction. And so I focused on the video clip of what is probably the most transformative moment of Intensive Interaction I have seen, between Phoebe and non-verbal Olly. I asked her if she could tap into her embodied memory of the interaction, to voice what was happening through her body, as though to a non-verbal person. Until this point Phoebe had been comfortable and authoritative as we filmed. Now she became tense and struggled to see the point of the experiment. I explained my ideas again – it seemed important to bring her practice into our dialogue and potentially into the recordings, *on its own terms*: a performative moment in place of more words. This was about using body language to speak *in and of* body language. Evidently, with this step I was broaching something sensitive: for Phoebe to try to embody her interaction with Olly (for it not to be acting), she needed to connect with her affective experience of it. It would mean opening herself in that unconditional sense, putting herself to one side and lowering her social defences. But however open and comfortable this situation was until this moment, it was not happening in the framework of therapy. She was sitting in front of an artist/researcher holding a camera trained on her face.

In the recording situation, part of my work is to build trust and create conditions which make it possible for people to (inter)act in new ways; to make tangible dimensions of voicing, or relationship, which were not. In this situation with Phoebe a boundary was crossed and that possibility was lost. But what is also clear is that it was only by crossing it that either of us became aware of it at all. For Phoebe, the friction my question produced was between her *talking about* and affectively enacting/embodying an experience – even though this was the language of her practice. It made tangible the tension of shifting between one and the other in her work. But this was also a moment of rub-up between (our) two forms of practice as well as of (body) language, which exposed inherent differences between them. In the rub-up, what was produced between us was a kind of breaking point, at which we found ourselves speaking from completely different places – like the two separate circles revealed in the cross-sectional view of the *torus*.

When Phoebe pointed to my body language she flipped the situation around. Her comments stripped me back, and I let the camera fall. It was a defensive move in which she evoked authenticity in the terms of her practice, and brought it to bear on mine. Intuitively tuning into body language, she questioned the 'realness' of what she sensed: a disjunction between my body and my words. In terms of Phoebe's relational practice it read as 'artificial' and this jarred so much that it caused her pain. Real and artificial, being and acting, mirroring and mimicry: these notions, so easily reduced to binaries, all have some bearing on the notion of authenticity. And, just as Iris demonstrates, they mean something different and manifest in their own terms, according to the terms of each practice. What does authenticity mean in my artistic practice; why does it play out so differently in Phoebe's? What Phoebe saw as a false note, I see as a tension in being present in a particular way.

In *being with* people as an artist during my research (in a recording situation or not), I need to connect with what is happening on several levels, to be fully in the situation with the other, perceiving through my embodied self and aware of what is happening via the various devices. Around this is the sense of a work in the making, and its relationship with what is being shaped in our situation. This is somewhere very different to Phoebe; her attention is focused completely on 'not me' with/in awareness of herself. She is trying to produce 'oneness' in a process which she will only analyse later – in the traces of the experience cognitively registered and affectively recorded in her body/mind. I am trying to produce reflexive modes of awareness through which *being with* can become part of an artistic process: metacinematic dimensions of awareness and relationship, which I work with as a modality of artistic practice, as I have come to formulate it through my research. As I have discussed in the previous chapters, the metacinematic arises in the practices of each of the go-betweens. For Deligny and Iris this is related in part to their engagement with cinema itself, and in this constellation Phoebe has an 'anti-cinematic' position. The metacinematic is an anathema to the total focus she brings to *being with*, and for her the camera is always a distraction. It is something she 'puts up with' only because it helps her as a tool in her other work, of teaching people about autism and how to use her techniques. And so this moment of rub-up between us was between two modalities of practice, and was produced through the metacinematic conditions in which I had set up the encounter. It was a cause of the friction but also exposed something of each practice, and the differences between them.

There is another kind of boundary in Phoebe's practice, between the open, resonant state of *being with* and the clinical relationship to her partner, and her self, once outside this space. I compare this with the shift in my own practice between *being with* (in the dialogue at source) and then shifting into a new relationship with the experience and all that happened in it, later on, in and through the process of developing an art work. But in my practice these different relationships mix and intermingle, and distinct borders are rare and not fixed, but contingent. And unlike Phoebe, when I enter into dialogue or *being with* I am present as much on a personal level as on any other; and the experience connects on a personal level too. Part of my work as an artist is to try to be aware and take account of this while the experience is unfolding as well as afterwards. During Intensive Interaction Phoebe is as far from the personal as she is able to be. She moves between sharply delineated states of immersion and reflection or analysis; switches between states. As I have described earlier, this manifests in physical changes in her body and voice; between fully embodied responsive communication and the contained, detached body language of the clinician.

When Phoebe finishes a session her partner becomes somebody who has been 'helped along the way' with their life, an autistic subject, however much she connects with her or him as a person. To the degree that she or he is a subject of clinical analysis, they also become objectified. Phoebe's unconditional openness to her partner in Intensive Interaction makes this delineation especially marked. This does not mean that she stops connecting with them on a human, empathetic level when not *being with* – quite the opposite. As she puts it, 'I'm just interested in the person, not the disability. Because we've all got disabilities of one sort or another.'[232] But the delineation happening here speaks of the structure of her practice and the frameworks set around what is happening

[232] From a conversation recorded with Phoebe in Settle (UK), July 2018.

in it. For Phoebe, the rub-up she experiences in communication with non-verbal people and its effects on her own language are brought into relationship with her partner. She is not in this to be 'transformed', as Deligny wrote, but to 'help' – even if she has been changed by the experience.[233] Phoebe's verbal language is shaped by her desire to convey affective dimensions of her practice in a clear and accessible way, to avoid binaries a hierarchies – which do not bear out in the 'oneness' of the duende – to share her knowledge with wider networks. Compare her voice with Deligny's, whose language bifurcates, loops and detours like the children's wandering lines, as though it has absorbed and been re-formed by them.

> 'Whereas they get tangled up in their drawings in the same way language tangled them up, shackled them in the truest sense of the word, if I took away their sharpened pencils, instruments that are also instruments for writing, they found themselves unharnessed and wriggled their shoulders. Some of them didn't balm at the chance to dip their fingers in the graphite dust, and from the rubbed white paper a shadow would then emerge, sometimes taking the form of something recognizable, which surprised everyone, the author most of all. Which shows that these gray shadows would deserve to be called spontaneous, if the word 'spontaneous' didn't mean, as the dictionary suggests, "what one does by oneself." Because there was not even an ounce of self in these spots rubbed by a nevertheless unconscious finger, but then we are talking about "consciousness of what?" – which is not the same as "consciousness of whom?" (Deligny, 2015, p.146)

Deligny's detours are not a style of writing but the trace of a mode of thinking, so that when I read it affects the organisation of my own. What was produced in him through the experience of the network, through his rubbed-up language, affects my language on a structural level. I recall Tony O'Donnell's slowly looping and wandering prose, his aphasic language in this light. In Phoebe's language the question of how to speak of self-hood and subject is a linguistic and an ethical one, while for Deligny the idea that there is a 'subject' at all is not given. He aspires for a language '(…) without a subject, a language in the infinitive, which would have gotten rid of the "oneself"; of the "myself"; of the "he"' (Ogilvie, 2015 p. 1).

> IS: And the balancing act is that you remain empty so there's no danger of some kind of ego … yeah, of a transference of your own experience onto what's happening …
>
> PC: Well, 'projection' rather. Yes, it's extremely important that one doesn't.
>
> IS: So there is a channel opened up through something which is echoing back in you … and then that channel can only remain open if you make sure you are 'out of the way'...

[233] 'I've been changed, basically …'. Phoebe talking in [Phoebe] *note towards a future work*' (2017).

PC: We share a communication. It's not something I do to them. I think that's very important – a lot of people think, 'What do we do?' We don't, basically: we are, so to speak.

IS: So there's no verb for it because you're not doing, you're being. There's no verb for– what you do –

PC: Yes, that's right.

IS – there's no verb for what you do, which takes what you do out of the whole framework of subject - object relations, which is what grammar is all about as well –

PC: Well, there's no grammar for this really. There's simply openness. [234]

Phoebe's words evoke a non-verbal space in the midst of (her) verbal being. How she performs and conceives it recalls Iris' notion of the primary through other channels.[235] In Iris' thinking the primary is always there; less something to reach out for than to tune into. (She herself is always in the primary – although not always able to be in the secondary). But for the verbal, who are mostly in the secondary, sometimes it needs to be accessed through a medium. In Iris's practice it may be through a movie, an actor or a book; and in her Primary Thinking Work she connects people through the parenting space she makes around them. If for Iris the primary has 'two parts', one secure, the other fearful, then Phoebe's unconditional openness to her non-verbal partner is (in Iris' terms),[236] about bringing her or him into the secure mode of the primary of their own being (compare with Iris' parenting space, described on page 86). In her unconditional openness to 'not me', in the call and response of non-verbal communication she opens to the non-verbal dimensions of her own being. Unlike Iris, she is not always *in* relation with non-verbal voicing but connects as fully as possible with the non-verbal dimensions of (her own) being.

Between the go-betweens

Iris says, 'If you are in the primary you cannot communicate that: It is completely *in you*. You cannot see it from the outside and you cannot communicate it to' other people.'[237] Iris evokes the limits of language in the face of untranslatable dimensions of experience. Yet something of these experiences can be known and felt through indirect channels. Phoebe writes about aspects of her practice which lend themselves to language (or only exist in language, or in the secondary): neuroscientific, clinical, practical knowledge. She works on conveying her practice through speaking and writing, but she cannot convey

[234] From a conversation recorded with Phoebe, 23rd May 2017.

[235] Iris herself suggested this, after watching Phoebe working with Olly and Pranve in clips from 'Autism and Intensive Interaction' (2010).

[236] This discussion draws on a remote conversation with Iris about Phoebe's method of Intensive Interaction, and the interaction between she and me discussed in the previous pages, 22nd April 2020.

[237] From a conversation with Iris in Bergen, 2019.

the significance of intangible, untranslatable parts of her experience. For Deligny, there is no question of writing about non-verbal being directly. He wanders on the periphery of 'images' – in the maps, in the minds of autistic children – gathering traces of the arachnean network of relationship between adults and children, and his writing follows the contours of their paths.

'What you can do is communicate something *indirectly*, not in words but in another form – in a non-verbal way, or in an art work, or in a poem.'[238] Iris evokes indirect forms of address to open space in which something can change 'in the atmosphere' between people. Iris' 'indirect' could be conceived of as a *medium*. Deligny's network was a medium in this sense ('arachnean', as sensitive to movement and vibrations as a spider's web), as were the maps. The art work developed through encounters with different forms of voicing, through experiences of the rub-up, is also a medium, evoking and producing relationship with untranslatable registers of voicing. By way of detours, through non-verbal voicing and multi-sensory modalities, images are evoked in ways which are sensable and knowable.

In the final chapter which follows, I will focus on art works shaped in and through the borders of language, and trace relationships between the 'dialogue at source' and the work which is developed through *being with*. Some of the works I will discuss form the ground out of which this research has developed, others have developed as a vital part of it.

[238] Iris, in an online conversation, 22nd April 2020.

Chapter 4 Rub-up

Dialogues with People

An open space 36m x 36m, with three uninterrupted walls and an entrance in the fourth. Above: a suspended glass ceiling devised by its structural grid, daylight filtering through from the roof. In the floor a circular opening two metres in diameter leading down to the basement. The gallery is a diagrammatic exercise in architectural space. It is big enough for me to install several installations in an open relationship to each other, to develop a landscape of voicing. Features of a landscape are understood in their relationship with a given ground; but a landscape of voicing is immaterial, produced in the interpolation of different voicings over time as well as the physical space between them. To install a landscape of voicing in and through art works, the physical elements need to have an independence from the architectural container, to be placed in relation to some inherence to their terms.

In 2017-18 I developed the exhibition 'Dialogues with People' at Würtemburgischer Kunstverrein (Stuttgart, DE)[239] in tandem with my artistic research with Iris and Phoebe. The exhibition incorporated ten works: several large installations and some smaller ones which engage with different forms of voicing, installed in a field to be experienced as a work in itself, '… moving between dense voices in dispersed fields and single voices emanating from tight forms.'[240]

Each of the installations brings together video and sound sequences in a form of scenography. *The Whisper Heard* (2003), *I Hate* (2007), *A Crack in the Light* (2013) and *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* (v.1 2014, v.2: 2018): each is a constellation of elements in which none are centralised and there is no clear vantage point. There is no particular sequence to the elements, they tend to present a dilemma as to where to turn physically, or to focus attention. They are not parts that evoke a whole, this is not a 'body in pieces' to be put together by the visitor.[241] Most of their audio and video or film elements relate to a situation of *being with* – material observed or staged and recorded. Recorded voices are present as sound in the space or transcribed and edited as text. The video or film

[239] Commissioned and curated by Hans Christ, Iris Dressler and co-curated by Katia Kuprennikova. The installation architecture was designed and built in dialogue with Hans Christ and the technical system to produce the format designed and programmed by Jan Bode (eidotech.de) in dialogue with Hans Christ.

[240] Notes towards the installation, from my notebook, 2018.

[241] Commenting on Lacan's idea of the fantasy of 'the body in bits and pieces', Kaja Silverman writes, '… it seems important to note that the fantasy of the body in bits and pieces is only one way of apprehending the heterogeneity of the corporeal ego, and one which is inextricably linked to the aspiration towards "wholeness" and "unity". Lacan suggests that it is "organic disturbance and discord" which prompts a child to seek out the "whole body-image". However, it seems to me that the reverse is actually true: it is the cultural premium placed on the notion of a coherent bodily ego which results in such a dystopic apprehension of corporeal multiplicity.' (Silverman 1996, p. 20). Her analysis and rejection of Lacan's is a fascinating perspective to bring to Iris' experience of her bodily boundaries, and the way such experiences are received by people who are not autistic, in the wider cultural context (see the discussion of loss of bodily boundaries, citing experiences of other people on the autistic spectrum, in Caldwell, 2017).

images often resist the impulse to identify people and things in them by means of editing, framing, or camera-work so close to its subject that it is impossible to capture a complete picture. Their scale and placing as part of a spatialized arrangement emphasises the object of the visual material over its cinematic qualities. 'One cannot just point a camera at it and catch it: the very effort to do so will kill it.' (Chen, N, 1992). The *image* of the work, what it is about rather than its subject matter, is produced between the elements; moving the attention or the body between one element and another becomes a process of embodied sense-making.

I made the exhibition proposing to work with these aspects of artistic language in individual works on the level of a curatorial language. The art works articulate different forms of (artistic) language and resonate with different registers of human voicings speaking or sounding in them. The spaces between works in the gallery were zones of communication and contamination between voicings through which visitors moved, absorbing and carrying their traces from one work to the next. I worked with the apparatus (video and sound, speakers, monitors, projectors, screens) to generate metacinematic modes of reflexive awareness: to produce a rub-up between the voicings of the works and languages of visitors.

In this space, physical and visual zones are permeable and changeable. The fluid presence of sound creates an impermanent acoustic architecture. Physical elements were designed to modulate audibility and visibility, with screens and walls defined by varying degrees of acoustic and visual transparency. All elements play a role in organising space, lines of sight, zones of sound and the movement of bodies. They form a syntax from the language of individual works which organises the exhibition as a whole. This is especially tangible in the screens. They have different proportions depending on their purpose –16:9 for video image and square for projected text, with structural elements in modular variations. Together they produced a rhythm and punctuation through the space. Most are stretched with semi-transparent cloth with the timber construction visible through it so that it confuses with any projected image. Stand-alone text video sequences – translations, subtitles, stories, commentaries – are presented as white text on black, whether on monitors or projected onto screens. The projected words reflect lightly on the open weave and pass through it into the space behind, where their shapes hit floors and walls, diffused into unreadability. Walking around to the reverse side of the screen, the words appear however as crisply defined, illegible mirror-writing. This visual transparency *con-fuses* appearances, layering different registers of visual information in one visual field. In this way, the 'reading', literally and – figuratively – of the text, the space, the work is unstable and contingent on ones' position and movement.

'(…) *Sensing* the world is inseparable from, though not identical with, *making sense of* it' (Chaudhary, 2012, pp. 1).[242] This idea is very tangible in the practices of Deligny, Iris and Phoebe. Non-verbal communication calls us forth to respond in different modes of sensing *as* sense-making. How I set up the space of the exhibition draws on and is shaped by those specific practices. In 'Dialogues with People' the exhibition as a whole is

[242] In this study of the role and effects of photography in colonial India, Chaudhary goes on to frame the way of sensing as a product of history, quoting Marx: '(…) the 'formation [*Bildung*] of the five senses is the work of all previous history.' [(Chaudhary, 2012, pp. 2)] Contrast with how in Deligny's the 'seeing' of the autist children is evoked as shaped in a real that verbal people can only catch hints of, seeing unfiltered by history, culture or subjectivity.

constituted by the technological apparatus (screens, projectors, monitors, loudspeakers), sonic and visual elements, voices and voicings. It speaks on several sensory and perceptual registers, addressing visitors in a multisensory modality. They interpellate visitors *in and as* their multisensory being, potentially drawing them into other modes of sense-making.

In this gathering of works, it remained important to be able to fully engage with each work without distraction or interference by the others. I developed a technical format in which the constellation of ten works is lined up as a single sequence with only one active at a time. The format carries characteristics of a spatialised feature film, itinerant cinema space, participatory performance and immersive theatre piece. The linear sequence of one hundred minutes plays as a loop which moves across the space as well as in time, and manifests in multiple material and mediatic registers. The order of works in the sequence is fixed, but the point at which a visitor arrives is open, which means that how the sequence begins and ends and the narrative this creates is individual. When one work ends and becomes dark, the monitors and screens of the next light up with bright white matte, drawing people to them. These transitions function as three-dimensional (cinematic) cuts, which are embodied by visitors as they find their way from one work to the next; they have sixty seconds to move and settle before it starts to play. The last work and works in the waiting lay dormant in the surrounding darkness. Awareness of them recedes and they drop out of the perceptual field as one immerses in *this* work. None of the installations have definite boundaries; they are open arrangements, densities within a wider field (more like an archipelago than a landscape). Over time, the spread of light from the active work established a sense of its outer limits somewhere out there where the light fades - an immaterial boundary which establishes a sense of place in / of the work and defines its scale and measure. When the work ends and falls dark again another work lights up and *this* space is instantly, fluidly connected with that one over there. One flows into the other until they slowly separate again, as the next work starts to play.

Tony O'Donnell, 2003. 'My face… It's this, this thing here – is that my face?'
Video still from footage made during research with Tony.

The language of the work

> **'**We come into the presence of a completely different reality which is the presence of the person we are communicating with. This is why it's akin to art. If we try to find art, we would never be able to define it. But this is an absolutely amazing way of searching for this *substance* of the meaning of why we are (…).'[243]

I have been working with the voice and language since 1992, in the first ten years the voices I listened to were close by, starting with my own and drawing in family members, and extending out to people with a practice of working on or with the voice.[244] In 2003 I met Tony O'Donnell during research which eventually brought me to develop *The Whisper Heard*. This was the first time I worked with a person whose voicing and language was fundamentally reorganised from the patterns of 'normal' coherent speech. The experience of *being with* him, struggling to make sense of his voicing and sense-making, opened me to a new awareness of the multiple registers of voicing in ways that (my) language seemed previously to have muted. It brought me into a way of working with people and in making art works which I have come to formulate as a metacinematic modality of artistic practice. In 'Dialogues with People' I presented nearly all the main installations I have made in this modality since making *The Whisper Heard,* and some earlier pieces. *I hate* (2007) was not included for curatorial and practical reasons but is a key work in this sense, which was part of the second iteration of 'Dialogues with People', presented at Netwerk, Aalst in Belgium (2018-19).[245] Each of these works investigate how languages are transformed, undone and emerge in new ways in encounters with different forms of voicing.

The Whisper Heard

Tony O'Donnell breaks down grammar and reroutes relationships between concepts and words. This is not an aesthetic choice, but his aphasic condition pushes him to make surprising links between thoughts, concept and words. They give rise to different ways of making sense and different forms of sense-making, embodied in and between word, sound, silence, gesture, body, facial expression.[246] In losing verbal sense he has found new ways to speak; listening to his voicing activates a tension (in me) between wanting to make sense of his words according to (my) usual terms, and abandoning them, to open out to his.

The organisation of elements which make up the installation were shaped in this space of rub-up, between Tony's voicing and mine. It is and is not about Tony. Parts of his body and different dimensions of speech are present in the work as independent elements. His head and facial expression are captured in a head and shoulders shot, shown on a cubic monitor. The sound of his voice comes not from the monitor from a few metres away, where it is focused by a parabolic speaker and projected onto the parabolic bowl of a

[243] Marina Jurjevic, a therapist who specialises in non-verbal communication, discussing her experience of it. From a conversation with her during research with the charity Us in a Bus, London, December 2016.

[244] Such as the professional ventriloquist in *Dummy* (1998) and Jacob Lieberman, an osteopath who treats professional singers, in *ALEX* (2001).

[245] 'Dialogues with People […], Netwerk, Aalst (BE), commissioned by Els Silvrants Barclay and Pieternel Vermoortel, curated by Pieternel Vermoortel and Piet Mertens. 6th April – 30th June 2019.

[246] Tony's voicing seems to embody what Deleuze and Guattari (1986) describe as a language which 'deterritorialises the dominant social code; it escapes codification.'

satellite dish. It reflects his voice across the gallery as a resonating line of sound, which can be passed through and connects with other elements in the space. The body language of Tony's hand movements is magnified in a video sequence synchronised with his talking head, and projected on the surface of the satellite dish, so that it also serves as a visual reflector. My voice appears as a scrolling text on a second monitor: a transcription of Tony's words as he tries to repeat my reading extracts from a chapter in Jules Vernes' novel *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*,[247] but whose narrative threads are lost in his repetitions, half-formed words and silences.

This is an aphasic space. There is no obvious route to take or place to settle. The body parts which are present do not fit the usual body template. The voice that is speaking draws one along with a sense of narrative momentum, but it seems to have lost track – or rather, is on a track that one cannot follow, it defies regular syntax. And so a new path is to be drawn between the elements of the spoken word in the work, that can be connected any number of ways. In the rub-up with (Tony's) aphasic language, verbal language is in abeyance. The individual route weaves its own sense, perhaps wandering away from coherence or narrative altogether. The image recalls the rhizomic paths of a map, in the sense that Deleuze and Guattari distinguish the map from a tracing: it does not reproduce a route, but is oriented towards an 'experimentation in contact with the real'. [248]

> 'We can see quite well that everything we suppose is established to the detriment of something else that would escape being said. And here we are limited, confined to our universe, with all its 'comprehension'.' (Deligny, 2015, p. 211)

Different forms of voicing call me to listen differently, listen with all the senses,[249] because in engaging with a language I do not know, I also do not know what I am listening for. A certain openness is necessary to engage with the art work to bring one closer to the language in and of the work, requires a letting go of one's own, and an opening out to different forms of ones' own language. This can happen in many ways, such as when the 'meaning' of a word or image refuses to settle, oscillating between one state and another, like the interplay between duck and rabbit in the famous illusion.[250]

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[247] Vernes, J., 2009.

[248] 'What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real.' (1986). Deleuze and Guattari developed their concept of the rhizome based on Deligny's maps. How they conceptualise the map seems much closer to Deligny's term 'tracing' (*tracer*), than the way they conceive of the 'trace', in a way which is actually much closer to the conventional / territorial idea of a map.

[249] Phoebe Caldwell, in numerous conversations and publications.

[250] The duck-rabbit illusion is the drawing which can be seen as a duck or a rabbit – but never both (a 'bistable image'). In 2003, Tony O'Donnell drew it for me during a conversation about Wittgenstein ('That fellow – you know, the honky honky one'), and his use of it to distinguish between interpretation and perception.

I hate

Other kinds of perceptual shifting, more subtle and diffuse, are an intrinsic effect of the rub-up between different forms of language. It happens when a listener's attention oscillates between verbal and phenomenal – 'paralinguistic'[251] – dimensions of speech sounds, and the relationship between them is destabilised. In 2006, I spent many sessions over several months listening to a man working on pronunciation exercises as part of his speech therapy. The pace and repetition of his words pushed the oscillating effect to a sonic extreme, whereby certain word-sounds flickered on the edge between sound and language.

Edward Woodman developed aphasia following a cycling accident. Although his vocabulary was almost uneffected he had lost some motor control of his speech. Edward features in the installation *I hate* (2007) in a video sequence with speech therapist Judith Langley, working on the pronunciation of the word, 'hate'. They are focusing with minute attention on paralinguistic dimensions of the word: tone, rhythm, intonation, shape - refining its form in a continuous flow of repetitions and subtle modulations. In such a process the sound-shape of the word morphs like a sculptural form, and it takes only the slightest difference to completely change its linguistic meaning.

Because Edward cannot hear his voice clearly, he cannot always monitor his speech sounds. In the video sequence he is struggling with the first part of the sound, '*Hhhhh*' and this struggle becomes embodied in the most intimate physical exchange through which word becomes sound object. Judith takes his hand and brings it to her mouth, so he can feel the force of her breath: '*Hhhhhhh…. a.a.a.a.te*' – then returns it to his own mouth so he can compare the pressure. Back and forth between her mouth and his, the sound is literally cupped in her hand, each time slightly adjusted. In their shared project, in the rub-up between their voices, her voicing is changing and adapting as much as his; moving away from its usual crisp articulation to a voice which is no longer quite her own, nor is it 'like' his. Between them they produce a third voice (evoking the Venn diagram which I referred to on p.25); the voice which issues from both subject and other, but belongs to neither). This video sequence is projected in a corner of the exhibition space. A hanging felt screen hints at the privacy of a therapy room; in front of the video, a false wooden floor works as a platform or stage to observe the scene 'from the outside'. In another part of the installation Edward's voice fills the space of a semi-circular wall, big enough to embrace a small crowd. It is one of several structures which evoke in/ter/dependent architectural spaces within the gallery. Black acoustically transparent cloth is stretched around the curve of the wall into a tight resonating membrane with focusing speakers and monitor speakers built into the construction. The physical form and sonorous intensity this produces, wraps one in the voice, which resonates through the body, drawing one from verbal sense to bodily sensation of Edward's words. His silences are dramatized by the hyper-material quality of this voice; they delineate the edges of words and open out as negative spaces. In the oscillation between speech and sound, what one hears shifts fluidly and unexpectedly: '*Haaaaaate ….'* – a sound-shape; and then '*hate*!' with its unequivocal verbal meaning. This kind of tension is something that is

[251] The paralinguistic dimensions of speech are the non-verbal parts – rhythm, intonation etc. (https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/paralinguistic, accessed 7.8.20).

evoked between the musical and linguistic dimensions of words in songs. But unlike a song, whose affective currents carry one away, I try to make the tension between speech and sound consciously felt as a rub-up between sensation and sense-making.

Sacha

> 'Thinking in sound, being an auditive, means thinking in terms of sensations addressed to the ear.' (Chion, 1994, p. 132)

An 'auditive image' is a film image that is experienced in sonic terms. Certain shots have a subtle correspondence (a kind of indirect 'match') between the 'texture' of the visual image and the texture of the soundtrack, they activate the 'ear that is in the eye'.[252] This is another permutation of cross-modal sensing, which resonates with the wider picture of how different modalities of sensing and different sensoria interact, in the rub-up between different forms of voicing. In the installation **(.)** (2010-11) I worked with the wiretap analyst Sacha van Loo to make a space which addresses the borders of language in terms of the rub-up between the visual and the sonic. I have described Sacha's listening in the section 'Voicing on the Continuum' as evoking a *sound-image* – an image on the threshold of the visible. It emerged as an almost physical sensation through *being with* him while he worked on his voice recordings. Being immersed in the space and sounds of his (blind) listening, the rub-up with (my) sighted perception brought a completely unfamiliar reflexive awareness of my own seeing and listening. Being immersed in and making sense through sound and *being with* a person who has no experience of seeing, the notion of the image becomes detached from the visual and the physiology of seeing. In these conditions we open to making sense through the sonic, to impressions pf physical space, bodies places shaped in and described in sound. It is from this sensory/perceptual space that I approached the visual language of the installation - not as a representation of Sacha's listening, or my experience of it, but as an effect of this rub-up.

> … Properly speaking, perfect listening implies that the distinction between the soloist on one side and the listener on the other, is no longer true…[253]

The installation[254] is made up of three main elements, one of which is a video sequence of Sacha listening to a particularly difficult voice-recording. He is seen only from behind or in profile, framed so that the image is about his presence and stance rather than

[252] A term developed by Chion (1994). I will not go into his thinking in depth here (it not essential to the discussion), but summarise what he means with the term. Chion is picking up on how the different biological functioning of eye and ear can seem to converge on certain stimuli. He sees this in relation to certain cinematic shots whose visual and sonic registers have a kind of textural correspondence, for example: 'Combining large sheets of resonant sound with a seemingly visual texture , of which the former can very easily be turned into visual memories (of space) and the latter into auditory memories or verbal phonemes.' (1994, p.132).

[253] (Heidegger) Re-cited from the full quote in 'Voicing on the Continuum' (Heidegger, cited in Schürmann, 1977).

[254] The first full version of this installation was commissioned by Matts Gallery, London and presented in 2011, titled **(.)**. This is the transcribers sign for a pause in speech of under half a second. This version was made up of four elements. Here I discuss just one. (Since 2012 this element has been presented independently several times, titled *Sacha*).

expression or personality. His eyes move as though sighted and from these angles it is not clear that he is blind – it was important that his blindness did not become the subject of the work; what I wanted was to draw the listener into a mode of (listening) attention in which their sight would see differently. The installation exercises different forms of knowledge and information. On the one hand there is Sacha employing his extraordinary skills of forensic listening, connected to a voice in his headphones that we cannot hear. On the other, the video footage picks up on the visual details of the activity, his physical appearance and the technology around him in his workspace. These relationships between the physical, the visual and the sonic are shaped into different zones. In an acoustically insulated listening chamber there is only sound and they are polarised; on the video screen they permeate each other.

Filming Sacha at his work-station, the computer screen lit his face but in doing so messed with the electro-magnetic field of the camera. The resulting footage is granular with digital noise, glitchy and fragile. It is reduced to black and white and projected onto a 3m wide floor-based screen, stretched with acoustically transparent cloth; the semi-transparent screens in 'Dialogues with People' were variations of this, each adapted for a different purpose. The projection filters through the cloth and appears as a hazy secondary image on the wall behind; it reflects off the glossy floor in front; it spills beyond the screen frame, expanding from two-dimensions to three and with time, four. And so, in looking at the projection, one is already drawn to what is around it, attention expands beyond the frame. Hints of what is behind the screen merge with the image playing over it. The lines of the timber construction effectively bisect the it with a structural grid, disrupting its cinematic flow; in these ways, the projected image is compounded with its physical surroundings, as well as with the technology which is producing it. A flat-panel loudspeaker, fixed behind the centre of the screen, is just visible through the projected image. It sends sound out through the front as well as the back, in a highly focused, penetrating sound-beam. This sound is the intermittent machinic voice of Sacha's text-to speech programme on his computer, naming folders and files as he searches through voice recordings. The technological voice of judicial bureaucracy resonates through the body as one moves in front of the screen. Two other loudspeakers fixed behind the screen have a very different sound, warm and full. They transmit Sacha's voice, murmuring to himself as he struggles with the voice recording – a whispering flow of words addressed to no-one, on the edge of comprehension. These two voices embody something of the polarity of Sacha's listening positions: as part of a system of law enforcement, and as part of an extraordinarily sensitive dimension of human relationship. They contrast sharply, but any conceptual duality is countered in the work by the physical conditions in which the voices and images are staged. The screen is as much a sonic apparatus as a visual one; through it, physical, visual and sonic registers interweave and bind together. This is a cross-sensory mode of address to the listener-viewer, which produces a cross-sensory image.

Balayer – A Map of Sweeping[255]

12th March, 2014, Monoblet. Filming the mark-making: Take it beyond the frame, border, edge: DE-FRAME, EXTEND IN SPACE AND TIME. The marking surface should be the size of an entire wall: not composed. Not a picture but a space. Tracing, 'not to reproduce movement but to activate it.'[256]

The percussive rhythm of the marker pens permeates everything, structuring time and space, a sonic space extending in all directions around the tight rectangle of visual image in the viewfinder. Rhythmic, repetitive choreography of bodies; mark-making movements 'with purpose' and ornate gestures 'for nothing'.

Being in the same sonic space implies immersion. Being immersed in the same sonic space does not mean we are sharing the same subjective space.

The 'image' is in the relationship forming and awareness that is / is in and around the mark-making: through voices, sounds and bodies drawing back and forth across the space; centrifugal and centripetal forces of attraction. My attention wanders between voice (close) / image (far) / language (close) / rhythm (far) / mark (close). I have been trying to synthesise what I see with what I hear, but only understand I've been doing this when they fall apart; when what I thought I was watching – mark-making – is not what is happening for anyone else in the room.

'It is the difference between transcribing a sensation and tracing to permit something wholly other than the already felt to appear.' (FD, in de Toledo, S. 2015, p.198)

13th March, Monoblet: The marks in the maps are what remains of an experience of relationship between an adult and a child, between the verbal and the non-verbal. Jacques started mapping as a way to respond to the violence of children hitting their heads against the wall: a non-verbal way to deal with a sight that he found traumatising. Was mapping a substitute in the absence of language; or a response to the lack of (a) language which would be adequate to his experience of this relationship?

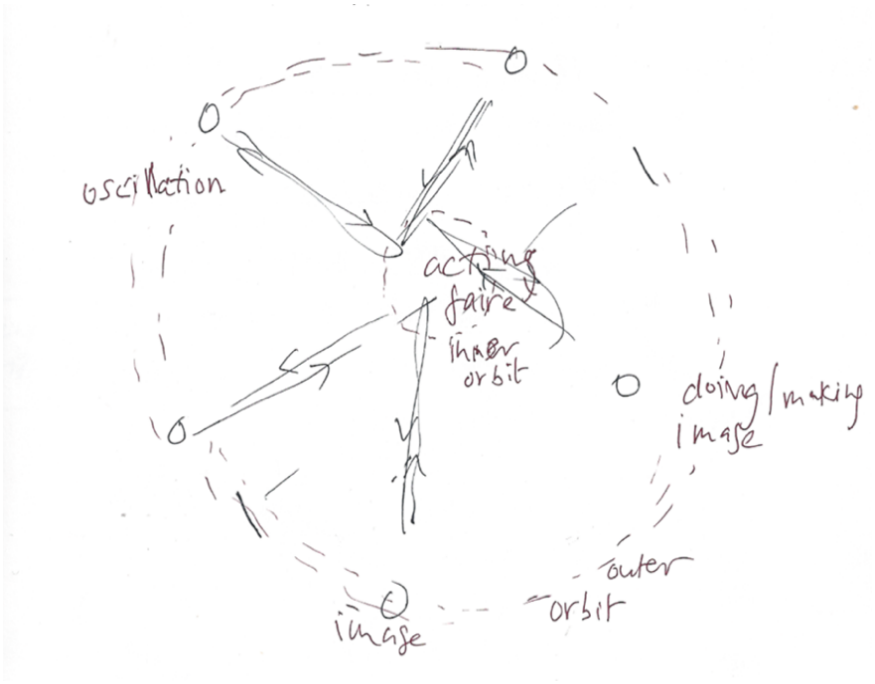
[255] *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* (v. 2018) is included in the Artistic Submission via the link on p. 147: an online version with a binaural mixdown from the Ambisonic.

[256] Deligny, F. 1976, in de Toledo, S., 2015, p. 192. The movement he writes of could be the movement of attention and/as relationship in being with.

The map of sweeping drawn by Gisèle Durand, 1974 (now lost). Video still from *Balayer – a Map of Sweeping* (v. 2018). Gisèle is describing the lines she traced while following Janmari's trajectories.The movements of an adult sweeping the floor are indicated by the small jagged circle in the centre of the map, where the duration of the activity is indicated in seconds. Janmari sweeps around him, indicated by the wider zig-zag 'ornate' lines moving back and forth between centre and periphery, tracing a wide circle around the adult.[257]

In the installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping,* the first element to appear is a sequence of text, a transcription of the words of Gisèle Durand as she explains the lines and marks in a reproduction of the Map of Sweeping. For several moments this is all there is: rows of text floating in the dark. Another screen lights up nearby and an image of the map fills the frame. (Attention starts to flick back and forth across the space, between the image and the text). Gisèle's fingers move silently across the map, retracing the lines she drew forty-five years ago, pointing out details, gesturing animatedly. On the other side of the space a sound arises of bodies moving around an invisible room, somewhere quite different. Their disconnect from the image intensifies the silence around Gisèle's gestures. When the sequence comes to an end the sound space opens up, filling the air. A third screen lights up: a video sequence of Christo sweeping the floor. From one thin line of text to three screens; from a point of sound to full spatial sound: in the first few minutes the work expands from two-dimensions to four, drawing one's attention with it.

[257] See also the further commentary on this map with a reproduction of the original, on p. 64.



My schematic rendering of the map of sweeping: the routes back and forth taken by Janmari, drawn by his interest in the activity of an adult sweeping (centre) and 'images' catching his attention on the periphary, (I.S. Monoblet, June 2014).

(Monoblet, 2013. We sat in a sound space of Jacques' voice, in the lines and detours of his storytelling, and the sounds of the autistic adults: non-verbal grunts, sing-song bird-like tones; occasionally two word-sounds slipped in […] thoughts followed Jacques' story-telling while awareness wandered from voice to voice, between the voices and to the percussive interweaving of all voices at once).[258]

Gisèle's 'Map of Sweeping' could be seen as a tracing of Janmari's attention as well as of his physical movements in and around the activity of the adult sweeping the floor. Recalling my earlier discussion of the map (in Chapter 1): he is drawn to the sweeping at the centre as well as outwards to the 'images'[259] – things happening at the periphery – catching his attention. What is the subject of his activity? Is it the sweeping, which is the practical aim of the adult, or is it about attending to the 'images'? The oscillating lines in the map suggest it is something between the two. They evoke two modes of attention and sense-making: the adult's, shaped by the task in hand and Janmari's, shaped by his fascination for the equally meaningful events happening around it. These movements of attention evoked my experience of the landscape of voicing I heard when I first visited Monoblet. Schematising the map further, the field of movement became a kind of blueprint for the sonic space of the installation *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*, in which

[258] Recalling this image from Chapter 1 in relation to the map of sweeping.

[259] This is how Sandra Alvarez de Toledo explained the lines to me with Deligny's terms.

different registers of voicing would be heard all around the space, drawing and moving one's attention with them.

Framing

In 2014 I set up situations for listening to these voices. In the studio where we arranged mark-making sessions I was confronted with how to place myself – in relation to the people I was with and to the recording equipment. It was clear that most of what was happening would escape what it, or I could register; that would be recorded could only be partial aspects of realities I had not learned to see.

Often I left the camera standing independently to take in another point of view to my own. In the recording situation, camera and microphone produce an awareness of these different listening and viewing positions (in me) as a kind of prosthetic expanding of perception, evoking impressions which combine with my embodied perception. This is happening in the immersion of being part of the situation, tuning into the multiple dimensions of voicings, movements and 'events'. (Smells arising from the marker pens, their percussive rhythms, movements of light and shadow across the wall, sounds outside the window or elsewhere in the house). I cannot perceive the realities of this situation as they exist for Gilou, Christo or Malika do. But in the heightened reflexivity of the recording conditions, I become more aware of the registers of their voicings and the movements of their attention and can begin to follow them with my own.

A detached camera invites interaction. At one point while Christo is sweeping he comes to the tripod with his broom. He tilts it to one side, loosens the masking tape marking its position on the floor and walks away. The careful framing of the video image, aligned with the grid of the floor tiles, is knocked and remains squint until the shot ends. Later Malika wanders into the room and rocks a weaving path up to the lens, filling the visual frame with her body and the sound-space with her melodic calls. In these moments the footage has picked up a tangible trace of Christo and Malika's relationship with the camera. Sound is recorded from widely varying positions, using gun-shot microphones to come in close to the sounds of breathing, marker nibs hitting the wall, the sweep of broom bristles on the floor. Other microphones record events happening outside the image frame; from there they pick up sonic events one cannot see in the image and whose relationship to it one cannot judge.

An eye following something out of sight, hips bending, arms clutching around the chest, an ear alert to a sound I cannot hear; a space opening and closing between one body and another: some filming positions bring the image frame so close to the subject that he or she cannot be identified and figures less as a 'subject' than in terms of the movements, rhythms, spatial relationships and voicings of their activity.

Folding

In the final video sequences shown in the installation, many shots are taken from Jacques' archive of old DV tapes which passed to me on one my last visits to Monoblet, filmed between 2000 and 2008. They opened up possibilities for the work which were far beyond the limits of my time and presence there. They show gestures repeated over many years in almost the same way: a study in variation; movements of Janmari, Christo and Gilou

as they carry out tasks – putting away the washing up or throwing away the vegetable scraps. They show the rhythms of the daily life of the community in ways I could not witness, recorded by someone embedded in and part of it since the first days of the network. Studying the material and talking with Jacques, it seems that he had wanted to continue the project in the network, of using film or video as a form of mapping.

In each of the two video sequences in *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* I intercut between Jacques' DV material, which is in 4:3 format, and my 16:9 high-definition video. They build up a dialogue between two ways of looking and two kinds of seeing, between recording equipment of completely different generations and visual/sonic qualities. His footage enabled me to make relationships between places and times up to fourteen years apart. Editing between them folds these earlier moments into the present of viewing the work, so that they speak to each other across time, unfolding into and as the present of the work. This dialogue embodies something of the relationship between Jacques as an 'insider' and me an 'outsider'. But as has become clear, such dualistic positions are produced by epistemologies which do not hold up in the borders of language. Jacques is an insider who from where he stands will always be on the outside; certain events, recorded as anecdotes, about an ashtray or orange peel turned inside out, are as close as he gets to another mode of being. I am an outsider immersed in the situation which I can never really enter.

'He is unaware that time has passed; time and space are, in his eyes, the same and only thing.'[260] The complexity of the question of where am I looking, listening or speaking from, is worked with in the installation on the level of editing and spatialization. The two video sequences play simultaneously, producing constantly changing relationships within each and between the two. They play on screens set several metres apart so that it is not possible to see both at once. Sitting between them, visitors turns their attention from one to the other, effectively editing her or his own sequence, shifting from one subjective position and temporal space to another. They bring them into new relationships and synchronicities. The converging of different spacetimes happens in another way when the two screens are seen simultaneously. Circling around the space enables me to superimpose the image on one screen next to or over the other, several metres away – to see Christo reading his book in 2000 at the same time as an older Christo doing exactly the same thing, with a different book, in 2014. Like the transparent tracing paper layers of the maps, the semi-transparent screens and the space between them makes visible the repetition of gestures over time, and collapses time into space.

Outdoors in Monoblet, I set up a mark-making situation, pinning large sheets of paper to a shed wall. Gilou and Christo took up marker pens and started to work, Amar sat rocking and singing at a wooden table, Malika stood further away rocking and humming '*Non, non, non, non*!'. After the quiet containment of the studio the rise in the intensity of their vocalising was palpable. It gathered, stimulated by the sounds and vitality in the open air; pulses of bird song, insect drone, wind and voices intermingled. '*Il se déclenche*!', ('They are relaxing'), said Jacques. After fifteen minutes Gisèle looked up suddenly and caught my attention, 'Did you notice?' Something had changed in the field of sound - a subtle but unmistakeable sense of reciprocity. There was a rhythmic call and response that had

[260] Cited in chapter 1, from Sandra Alvarez de Toledo's commentary on Janmari and the *Carte de la Salade*, in 'Maps and Wandering Lines', published by 'L'Arachnéen, Paris 2013, p.290.

never happened indoors: relationship sounding, becoming tangible, between a scattering of people apparently quite detached from each other, absorbed in their own worlds.

Expanding

Monoblet, March, 2014. If I schematise the whole thing – if I schematised the wandering of Deligny's writing: aller et retour from centre to edge and back / lines of flight / wandering lines.

Balayer – A Map of Sweeping does not try to replicate the landscape of voicing I listened to in Monoblet. It is shaped by what I learned through my research there and absorbed in *being with* the non-verbal adults. The elements of the installation speak to and between different sensory and cognitive registers through the interrelation of visual image, text, speech, non-verbal sounds and the ambient sound of interior and exterior spaces. They are worked together through a form of three-dimensional editing into a sequence of different 'events' happening over time and in space: the sounds and acoustics of interior room emerging in the midst of a video sequence showing an outdoor scene; an anecdote unfolding through lines of projected text on another screen; the voice of a woman wandering around the edge of space as she speaks, drawing our attention along with her. In such an environment, as a visitor I become aware of switching between these sensory registers, as well as what is happening through them - their arising, their 'content'. I am also aware that I am constantly missing something. There is no synthesis unless I make it, and this makes me aware of my efforts to create it.

The kinds of tension and movements in this space follow my rendering of the Map of Sweeping through Ambisonics, a full spectrum surround sound format which allows thinking sound in terms of source directions to shape relationships between sounds in space. Conventionally it is used to create immersive sonic virtual reality, but *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* is not trying to create another reality or reproduce an existing one. I used it to compose a space in which the listener-viewer is drawn by different forms of voicing. They overlap and coincide in space as well as time. They move fluidly, connecting with video images or arising independently around the physical elements of the work. Unlike other surround sound formats, Ambisonics is not a speaker-based system (it is 'speaker agnostic') and the spatial organisation of sound is not bound to the physical position of the speakers.[261] Sounds seem to emanate from the empty space around a metre from the speakers like a sonic *fata morgana*. The disjunction is uncanny and produces a subtle disorientation which tips one out of the usual listening habits. As a visitor I begin to listen differently as I navigate between speech and text, visual and sonic, verbal and non-verbal.

This spatialisation of interweaving sounds fills the physical space and resonates around the body. But this is not the immersiveness of cinematic affect in conventional film viewing in which ones *loses* oneself. It is immersion in the metacinematic sense, as a deep engagement in others or in a situation through attuning to unfamiliar voicing, sensory

[261] These explanations were provided by Stefan Kassazoglou who created the Ambisonic programming for the first version of the installation in 2104. In 2018 I remixed the soundtrack, as I describe in Chapter 2, in the current format of 'Third Order' Ambisonics'. As Stefan explains, Ambisonics uses azimuth and elevation to describe the direction of the sound. For further information see: ambisonic.net.

modalities and spatial dimensions. In the Ambisonic mix, this is sustained by the interplay of non-verbal and verbal voices in their different national tonalities.

In the 2014 version of this work the voices of Christo, Gilou and Malika mingle with Gisèle, Jacques and two other verbal voices, artist Dominique Hurth and philosopher Suely Rolnik, speaking in English and Portuguese respectively. The two women were recorded spontaneously translating lines from Deligny's text *La Voix Manquée* and his commentary on the Map of Sweeping.[262] The Ambisonic system made it possible to place each voice in the work in precise spatial relationship with other voices and sounds, so that each voice can be heard as in a polyphony. Visitors might follow the cadences of Malika's non-verbal voice, the striking sounds of a marker pen, or single out the sounds of their own mother tongue. In this movement of attention, the movement itself becomes a modality of sense-making.

> 'So to get back to this little event: when Deligny taps the table – and the ashtray must have once been on that same spot – for Janmari this immediately evokes the ashtray which is no longer there and so off he went and scraped around in the ash, searched for the bits of clay, gathered them up, and put the remains of the ashtray on the table. Here one really sees how things are perceived: how a heap of things remains in the memory, which for us – we others, we who speak – would completely wipe out. The trace of this ashtray in the head of this mute child, this trace stays permanently, it is there.' [263]

Jacques Lin had told me the anecdote about the ashtray as we sat in the landscape of voicing, during my first visit in 2013, and is one of many stories that are repeated about the network again and again over the years. Each story conveys something revealing and forms an image concentrated through repetition in the mind. In 2014 version of this installation was heard telling the story of the ashtray and later, the anecdote about Janmari and the orange peel. I wanted this anecdotal voice to draw a narrative line among the different forms of voicing, which visitors could join or be drawn away by other voicings verbal and non-verbal. Anecdotes have a seductive quality and as personal testimony they are, in a sense, inarguable. In their modesty these stories have a certain hold – perhaps inadvertently they have become a kind of orthodoxy of the network. The vividness with which each story hints at the perception of an autistic child is wrapped in the history of the network and Deligny's attention, which carries through in the voice of Jacques. Eventually I brought lines from '*La Voix Manquée* and his commentary on the Map of Sweeping into the work itself to meet Jacques' voice more directly. To bring the atmosphere of Deligny's language into the sonic space, but to not determine the voice of the work by Deligny's voice, lines from his essay were projected as text in the original French while his written commentary on the map was spoken aloud by the two female voices in and as a process of translation – worked out spontaneously on the fly.

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[262] *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* (2014 and 2018) was commissioned by Sao Paolo Bienal 2014. It included the non-verbal voices of Malika Boulainseur, Christoph Berton and Gilou Toche, and the verbal voices of Gisèle Durand and Jacques Lin (French), French artist Dominique Hurth (English) and Brazilian philosopher Suely Rolnik (Portuguese).

[263] From a conversation with Jacques Lin in 2013, this extract was used as a part of a text sequence in *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*.

But this installation is not about Deligny, or even directly about the community in Monoblet who are present in and have shaped the work. Scenes and sounds of people acting and interacting, their voices and stories: the relationship between the work's filmic subjects and the 'subject' of the work in the wider sense, what I call the 'image of the work', is not direct. The image, in the sense of what the work is about, is produced between its contents and the work's artistic language and in this work it is evoked in the rub-up produced between different forms of voicing *in* the work, and the rub-up produced between the work and the visitor. Developing this art work involved listening to, but also modulating the powerful voices and their ideas arising in my research, to ensure that they would not dominate the *image* of/in the work.

Since making the first version of the work in 2014, my relationship with the voices in the work has changed. I started to understand them as an excess: of language, of my sense of responsibility towards the ideas embodied in the network, and the people who had been part of it. The excess of language was perhaps a symptom of my own difficulty of 'letting go' of it. The effect of this excess was a domination by verbal language. For verbal people, in a field of non-verbal voices, one spoken word displaces the rest to the periphery and they quickly become background sound.

In 2018 I stripped the sound mix of nearly all verbal voices and rendered them as text projected on a separate screen. In this version of the work, prepared for 'Dialogues with People', In this version of the work, prepared for 'Dialogues with People', only the verbal translation of Dominique Hurth remains, speaking fragments of Deligny's commentary on the Map of Sweeping. Removing these verbal voices from the sound-space opened the space for the non-verbal voices to be heard.

Iris

> 'It's about nothing. It's about nothingness which has substance. A nothingness you cannot put your finger on, you can only *touch lightly on things around the edges of it*. And for me this work is totally clear, totally clear: its normal for me. But the art, how you do this (…) people may be very confused by the work, they may not understand a thing, but they feel the substance of the nothingness … the substance of nothingness.'[264] (Iris commenting on *Iris [A Fragment],* Bergen, 2019)

Iris [A Fragment][265] is made up of two synchronised sequences projected on adjacent screens, an image-video and a text-video. Only Iris' voice is heard and all of her words, in her native Swedish and in English, are translated or transcribed (into English and the local language where it is presented) and projected separately. The visual and the textual are set side by side on adjacent screens, each framed in their own space. There is very little synchronised sound and only one shot in which the voice and the body are tied together. The voice is mainly an acousmatic one, Iris is heard speaking from somewhere

[264] Transcribed from a conversation, Bergen, 5th November 2019, during a public conversation with her. I invited Iris for this event in the framework of 'The Dead are not Dead', Bergen Triennale 2019 in which I presented *Iris [A Fragment].*

[265] *Iris [A Fragment]* (2018) is presented in the Artistic Submission, with four Transcripts of conversations with Phoebe and Iris during research-production. See the link on p. 147.

off-screen, more or less unplaceable. This piece is one of the most cinematic works I have made, but not because I wanted to refer to Iris' relationship with the cinema directly. I wanted to work with the visual image and sound in ways which would evoke spaces beyond the visual frame; to produce a simultaneous awareness of different spaces – visual, bodily, subjective – and a blurring of boundaries between them.

The speech which runs through the film is edited from conversations between Iris and myself, and short readings by Iris from her book 'A Different Childhood', which I used as a form of script. This book was my first form of contact with her. In the first instance I drew on her narrative to formulate a set of starting points for conversations, whose main focus was on her relationship with the mirror and formation of a sense of self. Some recording sessions were not about speaking at all, but about spending time with Iris in daily life, or in loosely staged situations in particular environments. All engaged with Iris' relationship with herself and others; how she inhabits her body and space physically and non-verbal dimensions of communication. This was as much a process of learning for me as it was one of production. I was learning about Iris through the metacinematic set-up of the recording situation; engaging with different registers of communication through the rub-up with (my own) verbal being.

The installation is a frontal arrangement of screens, physically shallow in depth, with sound in stereo. I worked with the relationships between image, sound, text, speech and different spaces of time and place that they showed or evoked. I wanted to draw the listener-viewer into perceptual and affective spaces *between* these registers; and to expand the scope of attention through acousmatic sound. On this level the work is almost an inversion of *The Whisper Heard*; instead of expanding in space physically, it draws attention out through immaterial elements – words, sounds and the acoustics of other spaces.

Places

In 2018 I worked with Iris in Dahab, Egypt and Fagerstå, Sweden. They are the two homes where she lives for part of each year, in two completely different cultural and linguistic contexts. In the winter she is in Dahab with her extended (non-biological) family, running therapeutic workshops for people who travel for them, mainly from Europe. For the rest of the year she is in Sweden continuing her therapeutic work and living in another extended social situation. In each place I arrived with my questions and looked for sites in which we would talk about them. Each question was related to a specific aspect of Iris' self-formation, and the relationship between her verbal and her non-verbal being. I was not only looking for spaces in terms of how they would appear or sound in the recordings. This was also about Iris' relationship with them, how she feels in them, how this would affect her and the dynamics between us. It was about *being with* Iris – not only exchanging words – as an essential part of what enables me to make the art work.

My apartment in Dahab: a very neutral space. It could be almost anywhere in the world, any time in the past forty years. And it was a space with no distractions, where we focussed on Iris' formational experiences in front of the mirror. We met here every morning for two hours, each time with a specific starting point. Each of our conversations

revolved around the images and ideas related to the different practices by which Iris developed connections with her self and with verbal language.

A Bedouin camp in the mountain desert: this is where Iris spends time every year. There are a few tents, a sea of dry sand and high arid mountains. Iris talks of the Bedouin way of living here as being close to the Primary. Beyond the tents it is empty to the untrained eye, but it is full of signs of human activity that I am unable to see. When this footage is playing in the work, we hear her voice talking about a state of being 'in nothing' – the nothing which has 'substance', which is related to the Primary.

The veranda of Iris' extended household: a shared space where Iris is completely at home. She is surrounded by the voices of the people she lives with, whose presence she needs to help her to stay in the Ordinary World. A small photographer's studio: I film as Iris' face is captured in the stark bureaucratic mode of a standard ID photo. In the installation I worked with these different environments to evoke different realities, or modes of being in reality. And to develop a cinematic language with the footage, in which the relationships between different times and places lose their edges, become fluid and open to different ways of relating to them. The sites are physical forms of mirroring, interiority and exteriority, place and being out of place. In the context of the work, the physical place is permeated (through sound and voice) with the immaterial spaces of a non-verbal mode of being.

***Iris [A Fragment]* (2018)** Video still.

Shots

> 'One very strange thing was that in the real world I know exactly how everything looks, how everything actually is in reality. But in the ordinary reality all this knowledge disappeared and I no longer saw it as it actually is. Other people didn't do this either. What they saw was the image shaped by their concepts of their surroundings. And that image hid how it actually was.'[266]

Shot 1, 'Glass house': Dahab, Egypt, February 2018. I found an ideal place where different spaces can be confused and Iris can be in several at once. It is a B&B on the beach with a wide picture window. From the outside the reflection of the beach in the glass is so strong that it is difficult to see through it. The salon sits between this transparent plane and a second glass partition in the interior, looking onto an inner courtyard which is open to the sky: an outdoor space in the innermost part of the building. This shot is not about words: I arrange Iris and Ramy in the salon with microphones and leave them to talk. I take position with the camera outside, looking into the salon through the plate glass. From here their appearances are caught and deflected between layers of reflective surfaces. Through the viewfinder, inside and outside spaces interleave and reconfigure between foreground and background, through tricks of the light, the movement of our bodies, a shift in focus, or of attention. The image of me with the camera on its tripod is reflected back to the centre of the frame. My reflection is caught between the physical space of the beach and the sea opening out behind me; and reflecting off the window in front: its virtual double, turned sepia by the tint of anti-glare foil on the glass. Shadow areas in the reflection reveal glimpses of the interior and Ramy and Iris' bodies, as they talk. From here the dialogue is inaudible, embodied in their faces and gestures. In the reflection my image is superimposed over theirs, and the whole scene is interpolated by the reflected vista of beach and sea. The shot ends as I (in reflection) pick up the camera on its tripod and walk out of the frame, turning the image on its head. The vertical lines of window jambs and horizontal line of the sea lurch and definition blurs as the camera swings. The lens pans upwards past the roof overhang and the shot cuts as the sky above slides into the frame.

Shot 2, 'School room', Fagerstå, June 2018: A second shot with Iris, in which there is a similar visual hiatus between focal planes and human appearances. But here the focal depth of the scene is no more than three metres. I set it up in the old schoolroom where Iris holds her therapeutic workshops. I stand behind Iris with the camera on its tripod. She is sitting with in front of a small table, on which my laptop is standing open. On the laptop: video footage shot the day before, in which she was conducting a therapy session with a woman, M. In this footage Iris is on the left facing the camera and M on the right, with her back to it. M is so close to the lens that, with her black hair, she registers only as a dark blur in the foreground – a black hole in the image. As I filmed I had slowly pulled the focus in and out between one woman and the other. In the school room the next day, I ask Iris to watch the footage on my laptop and comment on what she was doing; to describe her therapeutic process as it happens. As I film I again draw the focus slowly back and forth, between Iris' face in the footage and her reflection on the laptop screen.

[266] Iris' words in the opening sequence in *Iris [A Fragment],* in voiceover during Shot 1, with which the work opens.

From my position behind her head, Iris is too close to focus on – she is a pale blur in the foreground. Further away and to the right of the frame, Iris' face is reflected back from the surface of the laptop screen, faintly but sharply defined. In the centre of the frame, Iris' face appears again in the footage of the day before. She is looking towards the woman, in the direction of the camera – the effect is as though she is looking straight into the camera I am holding now. Moving the focus of the lens between these different planes, image and subject position confuse and shift between layers of time as well as of space.

Layers of the installation

Watching each of these shots involves a conscious effort to try to understand how to *see* the image. It is an effort to grasp the subject-matter (its 'content') – a beach scene, and two people talking; Iris watching herself working with a woman in a therapy session. On one level, the optical sensations and mental process of trying to make sense of the image, *is* the content – on the level of the metacinematic. In the installation these shots are playing in a wider context. The sound that accompanies the reflections in the laptop screen is clearly of another space; it is quiet steady breathing, very close by, but in another room to the one we see. Located elsewhere in the sound-space of the installation, Iris is speaking in Swedish – an acousmatic voice with no sense of place speaking about herself in the third person (recorded with her during filming in Dahab, several months earlier):

> 'She talked a lot to herself. Loud. But it did not have any meaning, in the sense of, that it was leading somewhere, to some sort of feeling or action. It did not have any context either. Sometimes father could find a link between the things she said and reality. And he tried to take it up. But then she already had started another conversation and what she had said before was already alien to her.'

Her words appear in translation simultaneously on the adjacent text-screen. The attention of the listener-viewer is drawn three ways, between listening to the stream of Swedish voice, reading the narrative developing in the text on one side, and trying to read the visual image on the other. Together these metacinematic aspects produce an awareness and relationship where attention is drawn to different registers and forms of language - between verbal, non-verbal and visual.

In *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping,* the elements expand across an area of around seven metres square. One of them is an orange carpet five metres across. It defines a common ground where visitors can sit; a space for engaging, with others, with the collective situation in Monoblet. By contrast, in *Iris [A Fragment]* the installation is intimate and focused. It is an arrangement of three screens, all sitting within the 120-degree scope of peripheral vision – close to the conditions of cinema viewing. There is an interplay between them of opaque and semi-transparent layers. The image-video is projected onto super-saturated black paint, where it is physically absorbed into the surface. The image loses the robustness of high-resolution 4K video, becomes fragile, the colour muted. It is literally, minutely, falling away from the eye; only the black areas are strong – rendered as deepest black. The other larger screens hold the space; one behind the image-video and the second the text screen, both stretched with acoustically and visually transparent cloth. The words on the text screen project through from behind, appear on its surface and

continue through onto the floor in front of the viewer, as an illegible pattern of light. They interleave, shift, separate and take over from each other, as the work plays.

In all but one scene in *Iris [A Fragment]*, Iris appears only obliquely or not at all. She is seen through smoke or glass, at a distance, or in reflection. In this scene Iris is in full view: a head and shoulders shot in which she is looking straight into the lens. She is remembering her father's interactions with her in front of the mirror. She puts both hands over her eyes, leaving a tiny gap to peep through, and then she points to the camera. 'You know, when this black hole was in the middle … it was black, like the pupil in the eye…'.With her eyes and gesture she conflates the viewpoint of the camera with the mirror in which she is seeing herself. In the installation, the projection screen takes the place of the camera and the mirror in which I as a viewer am watching Iris looking out towards me, in the process of seeing herself. It opens a space with strong mimetic potential; my watching becomes implicated as part of a geometry of seeing and reflecting back, between Iris and the camera, the screen and me.

With her gaze fixed on the camera / mirror, Iris is situating herself back in time, recalling muscle memory and performing gestures of sixty years ago as she talks through them, bringing them into the present. She repeats how he moved her hands and the words he spoke, to accompany each glimpse of herself. With each 'shot' he produced for her, he was stitching the words to the image of 'nose', 'hair', and 'eyes'. When she has finished, the shot cuts to black and reappears a moment later in the same position; this time she is looking in silence. *I learned to see myself, to meet myself in the mirror*. This is the only scene in the film with synchronised sound – and there is another sound, of breathing, close by. It has been present throughout the film, slipping in and out of perception as other sounds and images draw the attention, or as it blended with the sounds of sea, or wind. In this shot, in the silences between Iris' words, it is quietly but distinctly audible. For the first time during the piece, the acoustics of the breathing sound match those of Iris' voice. They seem to be in the same room, but in physical space of the installation they are in two places at once. Her speaking voice is synchronised her image in the video – within the *diegetic frame*, the frame of the narrative – while her breathing is outside it, closer to me (as listener-viewer) – somewhere in the viewing space in front of the screen. This is where it has been throughout the film, as though Iris were watching herself.

'I know what kind of thing Iris was, but not what 'I' was'.[267]

In the shots and the layers of the installation that I have described, Iris moves between first-person and third-person. This happens on the level of grammar, in her voice and in the projected text. In the image she is seen from a distance as an isolated body; or as a portrait – looking straight into the eye of the camera / viewer; or as an acousmatic voice around an empty landscape. Each shift elicits a change in the visitor's relationship with Iris as a subject; a change of tone, as happens with a different mode of social address. Iris is present as a subject in fluid ways, and in following and responding to these, so is the visitor. The formation of Iris' sense of self, which is part of the subject-matter of the work, resonates through these registers of relationship with the visitor.

[267] Iris, from *Iris [A Fragment],* in voiceover in the second sequence in the film.

Developing *Iris [A Fragment]* was in part a process of ensuring that how one makes 'sense' of Iris' experiences is not framed by autism. Nothing in the work signals that she is autistic, explicitly. This is not about pretending that she is not, but about shaping a space in which her experiences of self-formation, different sensory modalities and different reals are part of the scope of all or any human experience. What is encountered in the work is not readily explained or placed. It is open to the visitor to negotiate with the paradoxical conditions that Iris evokes. Through this openness, potentially, an idea emerges in and as an affective experience: that the intimate enfolding of 'paradoxical' conditions which Iris embodies is no anomaly, but is inherent to *being with*.

[Phoebe] *note towards a future work*[268]

Newlands Hey School, Liverpool, 2018. A young man is hunched in front of a laptop and clicking rapidly, constantly, through something on the screen. Sound effects and distorted voices fill the room. His back is rounded and his head sunk almost to the level of the monitor in front of him, he is fully absorbed. A young woman rises from a sofa nearby and intervenes, first with a word and then a gesture, reaching out towards him. He catches her hand, eyes still locked on the screen; he smiles as she bends down and puts her head onto his shoulders, tickling him under the arms just for a moment, before withdrawing to her seat. All around him are signs of institutional protocols and regimes of the industrialised system of care and education.

I am warned that the boy can get very agitated, he might jump around or attack me. On my first visit to this room I want to give him space, not to impose. I place myself and the camera as far from him as I can, hugging the wall opposite him (can a metre here or there make all the difference?) and find myself constantly tracking back and forth between his face, hands, mouse, laptop, feet through the viewfinder. Before long he becomes agitated and I'm motioned to leave the room. The footage is shaky and nervous, a recording of my state more than his

*When I return the next day I come closer. The camera is at a short distance directly in front of the boy as he works; taking in the table, the wall behind and a window to the left. I try to detach myself from the camera, leaving it steady, allowing things to move in and out of the frame, while I expand my attention to what is happening around and between us all of us. The boy's face is masked by the laptop, only his eyes appear in the narrow strip between the top of the screen and the bottom of his thick fringe. From this position what is recorded shows more about what he is doing than who he is. Who is he? In terms of educational profiles, medical and social classifications, he is autistic, a vulnerable teenager, he has learning difficulties and 'challenging behaviour'. He is 17 years old. He is a young man. As a subject for the camera he could be represented in the mode of a portrait, a genre preoccupied with capturing something essential, evoking the individuality of a person. Or the camera could focus on what the boy is doing: his 'acting' (*agir*, in Deligny's terms), the effects it has on his surroundings and the people around him. What is my subject here – the boy or what he is doing? Resisting being caught up into trying to capture what the boy is, how he might be framed socially, as a pathological subject, I try to keep attention on what he is doing. And what he does is fully described*

[268] *[Phoebe] note towards a future work* (2018) is presented in the Artistic Submission, with four Transcripts of conversations with Phoebe and Iris during research-production. See the link on p. 147.

on the level of sound. After fifteen minutes of observing him through the viewfinder, I suddenly become aware of the repetitive whine coming from the laptop in a new way. It is not the sound of a video game but of cartoons – cartoon voices. The jumble of incessant background noise pushes its way into my consciousness – one voice keeps returning, a voice that has been sounding repeating every few moments for the last ten minutes, 'But I'm different to you guys!', 'But I'm different to you guys!'. I listen to the words, he is talking to me – to us. I move around to stand behind him and watch what he is doing. He is working like a DJ with video clips from Disney cartoons. With several windows open at once he is moving the mouse at lightning speed between their frames and adapting their playback speeds at the same time. He returns over and over again to a scene from the Disney film Hercules, 'But I'm different to you guys!'. He is cutting together his own script and this is how he is talking to all of us in the room.

In February 2018 I made two visits to Newlands Hey school, near Liverpool, to prepare for an opportunity to film with Phoebe Caldwell. She had been invited to meet staff for a consultation about her methods, and to work one-to-one with some of the six students. All of them are autistic and non-verbal. We had been looking for an opportunity for me to film her working with Intensive Interaction for two years. For the first time, the particular conditions of this invitation made it possible: Phoebe agreed to the invitation on the basis that I would be able to film her as she worked. I went alone several weeks before her visit to see the school, to meet the students and staff, and returned the day before Phoebe's visit and was welcomed to move around and film. One student was too agitated to be near; others were leaving for an activity, but I filmed Jamie. The next day during the filming session with Phoebe and the students, not one meeting worked out. The agitated boy walked so fast through the narrow corridors and up and down the stairs that she could barely catch a glimpse of him. Jamie was locked into his screen, Phoebe seemed not to want to disturb him. The footage shows bodies moving rapidly through the frame, while Phoebe sits patiently on a chair. We did not film a single moment of Intensive Interaction.

All ears

To begin with listening, Phoebe is 'all ears'[269] – a resonance chamber picking up vibrations for communication. While her practice is about 'listening with all the senses', how I engaged with her relationship with non-verbal voicing developed through discourse. I met Phoebe around ten times over two years from February 2016 to August 2018, each time for a few hours. I had hoped it would be possible to witness her working with Intensive Interaction, to experience it first-hand. Ultimately, I told her, I wanted to develop a film related to non-verbal communication. But for several years Phoebe has been working in a way that makes joining or filming her while she works seemingly impossible. She focuses her limited energy on responding only in cases of urgent need. They arise without warning when somebody is in crisis and staff need help, and she is called to a situation of high tension, with little time and a great sense of responsibility. So we put these ideas on hold, and the sessions began in interview mode. I asked questions, Phoebe explained her methods and the science behind them, and tried to convey the

[269] See Rainer Schürmann, as I have cited on p. 34: 'Listening to music with utter absorbed attentiveness, the hearer of such melodious beauty is all ears (..).'; and Nancy (2007, p. 4), What it is 'to be all ears' [*être a l'écoute*] 'for a being to be immersed entirely in listening, formed by listening or in listening, listening with all his being'.

affective dimensions of Intensive Interaction. This clinical, scientific knowledge of autism and non-verbal communication was important in terms of making sense of her practice, through her terms. But it also opened up missing perspectives for my understanding of non-verbal communication and of autism, through a completely different form of knowledge to those embodied or practiced in Deligny's network and by, or in, Iris. This was clinical and neurological knowledge as it is drawn together by Phoebe, as it reflects her practice, and which could then figure as a reference for wider research into these huge fields. At our second meeting I introduced the audio recorder and at the fifth, the video camera. The sessions were about learning with Phoebe, as well as thinking between practices and between forms of knowledge – rather than using one to explain another. The discursive conditions set a tone for our meetings which filled the airwaves. Processing the new knowledge that she was sharing with me, I tried to tune into other registers of her knowing, and of our communication. Within the scope of the situation, I wanted to open space within it for the non-verbal and the somatic in Phoebe and her relationship with non-verbal voicing. But speech filled the space for listening.

[Phoebe] ***note towards a future work*** **(**2017). Video still.

Pranve

In a rare video recording filmed by a colleague around ten years ago, Phoebe is seen working with Pranve.[270] He is a non-verbal autistic man, known among his carers for

[270] From Phoebe's personal archive (filmed by an unnamed colleague).

being violent and occasionally dangerous (many refused to work with him). In this clip Phoebe is waiting outside the front door. The door is open, but she is hesitating:

> PC: The first trick is you don't go in. You've got to establish communication before you invade their personal space. So that's rule number one. So what I did was I listened, when his mother opened the door.
>
> [*Pranve: Aaa … aaa … aaa … aaa …. Aaa*]
>
> PC: I will listen for any sound or breathing …. *hhhh* … *hhhh* …. as little as that. That can be the rhythm.'[271]

Phoebe was not waiting outside because she was scared. She hovers on the doorstep with no concern for anything except what she can learn about Pranve from a distance. She is already tuning into his sounds before he is aware of her presence. Listening brings her closer to his voicing and to how he communicates with himself, before broaching the sensitive and more complex issues of connecting with a stranger. She was already attuning with his voicing, before he was aware of her. Attuning with him, coming closer, made it more possible for him to attune to her; a form of communication emerged.

In my short video [Phoebe] *note towards a future work*] (2017), this clip is edited into the beginning of the sequence. In the soundtrack the audio from the clip mixes with the sound of Phoebe's voice commenting on it as she watches it, analysing what is going on moment by moment, in a recording we made during one of our meetings. We had played the clip from her computer and she talked me through it sound by sound, gesture by gesture – a class in Intensive Interaction. 'You see – here – he's hitting the fringe with his fingers, and I haven't seen it, he keeps touching the fringe of the lampshade. I think he wants me to touch the stand, and so I reach out to touch it but he takes my hand to move it up. I couldn't see this at the time, I only realised this much later when I watched the video…'.[272] Phoebe speaking to her non-verbal mode. In … *note* her words articulate a precise, analytical observation of herself and the interaction, mingle with her non-verbal voice as she echoes and experiments with the sounds of Pranve's high-pitched vocalisations.

When we had finished watching the footage Phoebe was tired. Intuitively I suggested that she lie down on the sofa, where we would shortly be filming a conversation. I set up the camera and left the room, telling her that I was leaving it running. Watching the footage later was fascinating. There is a subtle sense of Phoebe performing to camera, and of the sofa as a stage for being present in new ways. She is not acting, but the invitation to do nothing in front of the camera has changed her relationship with it; the recording space is no longer defined by the conventions of 'interview' or 'documentary', or of Phoebe as a Clinician. She is absorbed in her thoughts, her tiredness, contemplating. Her silence draws me into it. I become aware of the weight and form of her body in the light, in its breathing;

[271] Phoebe in voiceover in: [Phoebe] *note towards a future work.*

[272] From Phoebe's commentary, recorded March 2017.

in movements of mood and thought. Within a few moments she becomes autonomous from the camera, settled in her habitus. She is present in ways which are impossible while speaking. The video quality is 'flawed' technically speaking, shot against the window light, the framing quickly composed, but it opens out a non-verbal space of listening to Phoebe and with her. Nothing is happening – a nothing which has substance, and is 'full of information', as Iris says.[273] This is not the same kind of information as what passes between Phoebe and her communication partner during Intensive Interaction. It is about inner communing, not social address, about Phoebe as she is when not addressed by verbal language. The silence produces an affective connection with non-verbal dimensions of her (verbal) self. This pause happened after several visits, when we were had become quite comfortable with each other; it was a moment of time out for Phoebe – outside the frame of the work to be done, outside the common 'project'. Mediated by the camera, one is in her substantial silence. The shot is a small opening to *being with* Phoebe in a different register.

Mediation

This shot of Phoebe speaks quietly of her relationship with non-verbal voicing, and how her role as a go-between is happening in her practice. It also says something about how the experience of the rub-up works in my own practice, as a productive space through which the 'work to be made' is shaped. For Phoebe, her non-verbal mode of relationship and being, needs to stay within the space of interaction with her non-verbal partners. She *can* only 'switch' in their presence, through attuning with them in ways which are not possible with verbal people. In this relational space, in the rub-up, she opens to non-verbal communication in the other and in herself. Afterwards, she comes out of the non-verbal and engages again in verbal mode.[274] In this sense, Phoebe's practice makes explicit the fact that non-verbal communication remains in and with the non-verbal. Phoebe's 'mediation' of the rub-up is channelled into trying to convey the affective experience through words; through analogies and anecdotes. We do not experience the rub-up, but we see something of its effects on Phoebe and her communication partner in the few video documents that exist (shot for clinical and educational purposes. The footage of Olly stands out as for its affective power). And so my experience of her non-verbal relationship was secondary, mediated through language, and I was not able to experience it directly. Instead, we experience a rub-up between different modalities of practice, which demonstrated that language border in a tangible way. By contrast, my engagement with the practice of Deligny and with Iris developed through direct experiences of *being with* non-verbal voicing, through research-production in Monoblet, and with Iris in the embodied sense of her non-verbal being. With each there was an experience of the rub-up between (our) voicings, and of the effects this produces on my own voicing, sensing, sense-making. This space of rub-up is the space in which the work to be made starts to take shape, which carries through into the process of making the art work. With Phoebe, the relationship with non-verbal voicing was extremely indirect. She was a go-between between me and an absence which could not be brought into the space of our *being with*, or into the recording situation.

[273] Iris, from a conversation with Iris about the installation *Iris [A Fragment]*, Bergen (NO), November 2019.

[274] I describe this process of Phoebe's practice in detail in Chapter 3, pp. 97-99.

This indirectness became productive when I tried to draw Phoebe into her own non-verbal body language – and it sparked a moment of friction. This was not a rub-up between different forms of voicing, between us, although it does seem connected with the relationship between two forms of voicing in Phoebe. That this recording situation unfolded through the format of a film shoot, for the first time, with one camera trained on Phoebe's face, heightened the tensions rather than producing heightened awareness. As an artist-researcher, I was attempting to produce a moment of affective connection with non-verbal dimensions of Phoebe's (verbal) being, but for Phoebe, this was a boundary being crossed. I understand this friction as a moment of rub-up between (our) two modalities of practice, one therapeutic, the other artistic (as I have discussed in Chapter 3). It made tangible aspects of Phoebe's practice and her relationship with non-verbal voicing, in ways which our discussions could not touch. And it made manifest a sense of constitutive difference between the modalities in which we each engage with different forms of voicing, as practices on the borders of language. It also demonstrated how key the experience of the rub-up is, in and for my practice; for the different modes of awareness, sensing and that it can produce, as a form of knowledge. This was a marked moment in my research, and the insights it opened to have been critical in informing the discussions in this chapter, especially in terms of the rub-up. There is no default necessity for an art work to be made from this process; but if there is I would build the contours of the work around the moment when this friction arose – a spark was struck – and I let the camera fall.

This work has not yet been made. In the last months of my doctoral research, in the process of coming back to this encounter in language and in thinking between my encounters with Phoebe and Iris, I begin to see how the 'future work' might be put together as an indirect dialogue between Iris and Phoebe – 'indirect', since they have only met each other via my recorded footage.

Dialogues with People

> ' … this other way … this other *manner* … to keep the traces of the wandering gestures of Janmari. In the centre is evoked, in lead – '*mine*' – a large trace, a manner of doing, when it goes for one of us to sweep this place, which – in time – takes us five minutes. Some of the things here evoke gestures that, around themselves … about themselves … repeat themselves, focused on a small pile of floor sweepings that does not move during the operation – placed here, once and for all. If I watch Janmari sweep, the broom is like the handle of a music instrument – a guitar, for instance – so '*sourd*' – *muted* – that it would become speechless … *sound-proofed*. The noise of the friction of the hairs on the tiles is not so different, it seems from the little broom that the drummer of an orchestra rubs on the tanned skin.
>
> Lines from Deligny's commentary on the Map of Sweeping spoken in the installation *Balayer – A Map of* Sweeping as in off-the-cuff translation from the French.

In the exhibition *Dialogues with People*, the expanded form of *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* sits on the far side of the space from the frontal arrangement of *Iris [A Fragment];* among the eight works around and between them are *Sacha* and *The Whisper*

Heard. In Deligny's commentary on the map of sweeping,[275] (part of which is evoked above in the off-the cuff translation from *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*), he recalls the movements of Janmari when he initiates sweeping the floor by himself (rather than when he is sweeping with an adult). As I have described earlier in this chapter, the image of Janmari's attention and the tension in its looping, rhythmic trajectories, served as a blueprint for the immaterial Ambisonic sound-space of *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping*. In this part of Deligny's commentary, Janmari's movements suggest a choreography whose movements are shaped by the task, but led by his fascinations; carried out in a musical rather than a practical way. In the map, Janmari is pulled between '*les deux attirances*', 'the two attractions': the sweeping of the adult in the centre and the various 'images' (as Sandra Alvarez de Toledo described them to me) – events or things that he discovers on the periphery which draw him to them, producing lines of movement 'like petals' (as I describe in Chapter 1). For *Dialogues with People* I drew on these images of the movements of attention and bodies, to think about the relationship between physical elements in the constellation of works. Through the staging of the sequence, the 'elements' include visitors. Each art work draws people to it from across the space with its light: an image on the periphery from where I (as visitor) stand. Each art work is a form of voicing which contains other forms of voicing. As visitors trace paths between the art works, they make physical and conceptual relationships between one form of voicing and another. Forty rolling stools are part of the format, a scattering of loose elements which continually migrates in a slow swarm and messes with the structural clarity of the installations. They also activate different kinds of behaviour. People take them with them as they move between works; over time, they start to travel on them. They become playful, scooting themselves or their friends across the floor, decompressing from the intensity and long duration of the programme.

> 'For in order to be together and to communicate, a correlation of places *and* a transition of passages from one place to another is necessary.' (Nancy, 2000, p.61)

The technical format of the exhibition is an invitation to follow. Rather than disperse among different works, over the course of one hundred minutes the sequence draws people along with it so that they move from work to work as a group. They find themselves joining and being joined by others; sitting together, walking and gathering again in the white light of the countdown screens. Over two, three, four works, people begin to recognise each other. They adjust to the rhythm and pace of each work, engage with different forms of voicing, together.

In these ways the technical format is a generator for a very particular social awareness. In the artificiality of the scenography, wandering and pausing, movements are choreographed by the rhythm of the format and the dispositive of each individual work. In the intervals between works, it is people who activate the space. The physical relationship between them changes tangibly over time. They start to make space for each other and exchange words and glances, as they meet again at the next work. These qualities of social and reflexive awareness resonate with the metacinematic modes of awareness produced in each work and the exhibition as a whole. They play out in and

[275] Deligny, F. 2007, p 1306.

around the immersion of the work: the experience of grappling with unfamiliar forms of voicing, and the rub-up which is produced between work and visitor. Visitors tune into different registers of voicing and communication in the works and with each other more or less indirectly. There is little or no verbal exchange but they experience these different forms of verbal and non-verbal voicing together. Nancy evokes communication as unfolding through movement (which includes time) and place. He conjures the image, for me, of the passage of visitors for whom *being with* and perhaps communication unfolds more or less indirectly between them and between them and the art works in the exhibition.

> 'The passage from one place to another needs time. And moving in place as such also needs time, the time for the place to open itself as place, the time to space itself.' (Nancy, 2000, p. 61).

These are all part of the metacinematic dimensions of the exhibition, produced by the format in its duration and spatialization, and by individual works through their media and elements. In all of this activity, in the simultaneity in which it is happening among people, a way of being together develops.[276] It does not create a conscious sense of community – which would drown out registers of communication that can only exist implicitly. That would be a form of direct address, when what is needed is *in*direct. The exhibition is a material and immaterial common ground, *being with* in a performative sense, which resonates in turn with the art works.

[276] 'Together means simultaneity', as Jean-Luc Nancy notes: (*in, simul*), at the same time. (Nancy, 2000, p. 60).

Conclusion

How can we (re)conceive and engage with different forms of language and communication, in our verbal being?

Through examining the practices of three people who live or work with non-verbal people on the autistic spectrum: Fernand Deligny, Phoebe Caldwell and Iris Johansson, we see how they each shape and mediate the relationship between verbal and non-verbal being, using different methods and 'technologies'. This is influenced by their relationship with non-verbal autism; on whether it is engaged with in clinical terms or as a mode of being. Their methods have developed out of experimentation, intuitive impulses and precise attentiveness, honed by experiences of the 'rub-up' between verbal and non-verbal voicing.

Proximities

Deligny, Phoebe and Iris call attention to a spectrum of proximities in relation to non-verbal being. Deligny and Phoebe find ways to come close, from a place in language. For Iris, who grew up as a non-verbal child and is autistic, the non-verbal is within her in ways not experienced by people formed in language from infancy, and who are not autistic.

In Deligny's experimental living space with non-verbal autistic children, this relationship was conceived as a network characterised by distance: between the living spaces, in the adults' withdrawal from direct address to the children, and even in grammar (the children's mode of being was 'in the infinitive'). These were ways of letting the children be, so that we may discover and co-create with nonverbal people a way of being together, outside the demand to speak. Letting be is not indifference, but rather it is about learning to open to nonvoicing as 'difference', as other capacities and capabilities. For Deligny, the idea of communication *with* the non-verbal children was inherently flawed due to (our) being in language; relationship unfolded in co-presence rather than together. But over fifteen years the adults' relationship to the children developed extraordinary levels of subtle awareness and co-responding, while neither claiming nor believing in the possibility of shared experience with them.

Iris exists in and between verbal and non-verbal realities and forms of language. The delineations between them are fluid. She has spent years developing techniques to manage her movements between them, to not spontaneously go 'out', from the 'ordinary' reality into what she calls the 'real reality'. Having a sense of being in contact with herself, of inner life ('movement'), often happens only through interaction with others, and being in social contact is what she values and desires more than anything else. Her communicative movement is from non-verbal, real reality towards the ordinary and the verbal. In this she comes closer to modes of being formed in language. In her Primary

Thinking Work she works with non-verbal and verbal people to help them come closer to the non-verbal dimensions of their being.

Phoebe's practice involves close physical interaction, at times with the intervention of her whole body, a somatic-centred approach. Her relationship with her partner is one of 'intimate attention' in which she brings all of her awareness to them. But this does not mean that she is *intimate with* her partner, as for some autistic people coming too close has devastating effects. She engages this relationship for several hours. For Phoebe total immersion is a mode of being other than the frameworks of institutional care, therapy and the clinical thinking of her profession that she moves between.

Through Deligny, Phoebe and Iris we connect with non-verbal being in relation to the continuum of all communicative registers they have experienced and bring to our attention *as* voicing.

I gained an understanding of the practices of Iris and Phoebe by engaging directly with them. My relation to the practice of Deligny was indirect, filtered through time in the community he left in Monoblet. In the presence of Gilou, Christo, Jacques and Gisèle, I came closer to their relationship with each other, gathered over many years within the framework of their daily routine. This situation brought a concentration to our encounters and gave depth to *being with* in the conditions in Monoblet today. Our dialogues, or *being with*, unfolded through the many recording situations that I set up with them as part of my (artistic) practice. Through these experiences the scope of my listening, attention and communication widened. I became aware of a wider continuum of voicing including sonic utterances and unvoiced somatic registers of gesture and movement – rhythmic rocking, or tiny taps of the toe (Gilou), interactions with objects (arranging them or returning them to their place – an object voice); voicing emerging in silence of people who have words but cannot speak (Pranve); and the silence which is language, which opens up between words and is full of 'information' they cannot catch (Iris). With this awareness we begin to learn to attend to voicing as sonic vibrations and silent frequencies of tuning in or attuning with, as registers through which we mobilise our communicative impulses towards others and ourselves.

Detours, widening scopes

But expressions of proximity – 'close' or 'distant', 'direct' or 'indirect' – are ideas which only exist in verbal terms. For non-verbal people they may mean something completely different. As the mapping in the network made visible, what seems distant or indirect to me may be the most direct route – possibly the only one – for somebody else. The go-betweens demonstrate how, in relation with non-verbal language, such distancing terms lose common ground. Iris had to consciously develop subjective boundaries in the enfolded and fluid interrelation of her verbal and non-verbal dimensions. For Phoebe, sense of self / difference from the other is lost in the 'oneness' of attunement. We may be bound to stay close to our language and subjective boundaries and experience the rub-up as a friction that scorches – or, we may experience a breach, an empty silence. Or we find ways to open to a wider scope of voicing. In our verbal silence the delineations between us soften, changing how we conceive and experience 'self'. It transpires that in each of these practices some form of verbal silence is essential for the rub-up to happen. This silence may be wreathed with tangible and intangible traces of relationship (the silence

of the network) or full of the gestures, sounds and vibrations of voicing happening. It is a space for 'listening with all the senses' in which voicing is a continuum through which we may connect, or come into communication.

Mediation

From the friction of the rub-up and under the influence of its effects, Deligny, Iris and Phoebe communicate the 'findings' of their practices to wider networks. In their writings and discourse they shape languages to speak about them, in and through the verbal. But in the relationship with the children, communication partners and for Iris, with herself, they developed other (non-verbal) forms of mediation. These 'technologies' gather traces of untranslatable forms of voicing, change or produce new ones in non-verbal ways – pencil marks, recordings, 'relational objects' ('handling objects' in the network, objects interacted with by Phoebe and her partners), and in physical transformations in their bodies. They manifest in Deligny's practice of mapping, which revealed otherwise intangible registers of voicing and relationship, and produced communicative responses in the adults (the 'handling objects', for example). Iris used the mirror as a technology to produce a connection with her self, with language and social life and in the process, she changed physically as well as subjectively. Phoebe works with the technique of Intensive Interaction using her body, voice and full sensory apparatus. She is physically transformed as she mirrors and attunes with her partner with audible and visible 'traces' of the rub-up on her body and voice. They gather in her along with intangible registers of voicing which cannot be translated into images or discourse.

Deligny and Iris turned to cinematic technologies and used them in *meta*cinematic ways, as tools for mediation. They used them to produce different forms of reflexive awareness and change the 'scope of our looking' (FD). Iris used the cinema screen as an indirect mirror through which to build her social face, reproducing the conventions of expression demonstrated by actors on-screen. This is how she tried and succeeded in removing outward signs of a profound sense of difference. It opened the way for people, in the secondary, in 'ordinary (verbal) reality', to be able to connect with her. In the staging of behaviours and the artifice of cinema, she found a channel through which to connect with the secondary in her real and primary being. The films were the necessary medium, but their cinematic aspects were of no great interest to her: her object was the lexicon of normalised social expression.

With the term 'camérer' Deligny described the camera as a tool to 'shape a gaze' – when the film was not the primary object. It was used as an apparatus to shift the channels of an ocular and subjective point of view. He wanted to decontaminate his looking from the effects of verbal terms, before turning it upon children whose subjecthood must not be assumed or subsumed into verbal frames. The apparatus was a tool for shaping a different relationship with the children. In the interrelation of the network, no doubt it also shaped theirs to him. A film made in this way would gather traces of this mode of looking (around the children) and potentially reshape and decontaminate the gaze of the viewer. Such effects evoke a form of rub-up between the language of the viewer and the language of the film. How one is affected when watching Deligny's films – outside any direct experience of the 'network', in different socio-cultural conditions and a 'new media regime' – remains subjective. But like his writing, at the very least they produce an uncertain, restless sense of language on the verge of unravelling, or of opening to its own

fragile constructions in ways that we may be drawn by, wrestle with and absorb into our own.

In this constellation, Phoebe embodies an 'anti-cinematic' position. She uses no form of material mediation of the kind represented by these technologies. Traces of communication and its effects reside in her and show up visibly in her body and her partner's. Intensive Interaction itself is the *immaterial* technology. The few videos that exist give glimpses of relationship growing in exchanges which are sometimes intensely moving. But they are dominated by a narrow visual register. There is no metacinematic use of the camera to widen the scope and it does not shape relationship – it just tries to stay out of the way. 'I've been changed basically by (…) deep encounters with the quiddity of being different from self, from not me'. What is changed in Phoebe by the effects of her 'close encounters' unfolds in the expanding of her somatic, vibrational vocabulary; in her relationship with communication itself and with herself. This sensitisation and cognition resonate through the next (non-verbal) encounter. For the wider world and her professional context she translates these forms of experience and knowledge into verbal terms. Her books are written in a language which seeks to be technically clear, precise and evoke affective dimensions of non-verbal communication. By contrast, Deligny's writing about the network was said to be in 'an other language that is not the language of the other, but a language so that the other can be, and always more, other.' (Ogilvy, in Deligny, 2015, p.15). Phoebe writes in verbal terms. Deligny tries to bring the non-verbal into language (a paradoxical idea), to take account of difference within it and in doing so, let (his) language be changed (its grammar, syntax, silence).

These different forms of mediation interpolate language 'borders' which render non-verbal voicing as difference. They help us to perceive the substance of the vital *interrelation* of languages and to face the bewilderment we must engage with in order to connect. Disorientation, resistances and frictions, contaminations, sudden openings and unexpected attunements; this is the productive space of the rub-up. Productive: because in the rub-up, unfamiliar registers of voicing prompt us to re-tune, discover and attune to them *in and* through our own. For this reason, the rub-up is inherently reflexive. Like an echo, what comes back resonates with registers of (my) voicing I was not aware of. Metacinematic technologies sound this reflexivity and reverberate with it.

In this modality I approach the recording situations of my artistic practice. Our activities or a subject of discussion are specific, whereas the idea of where they might lead is not. This openness is needed because we cannot know what will be generated between us or what its effects will be. Any ideas about a 'work in the making' are deliberately left open; a potential rather than a defining condition. The recording set-up evokes a sense of staging which affects how we are present and present ourselves. We work in the artifice of the 'shoot' (however discrete or elaborate it may be). These conditions and the reflexivity of cameras and microphones affect us in unpredictable ways. They may trigger the self-consciousness that binds us to our appearances and others, or give rise to reflexive awareness that releases us from the bind. By working with these conditions in a metacinematic modality, the scope for different modes of reflexivity and awareness broadens. They can give rise to mirroring or echoing effects by which we voice and listen through slightly different registers. Camera and microphones can open prosthetic channels for perceiving indirectly, at a remove from my point of viewing and listening. They can give rise to 'dual awareness' and 'attention turning back upon itself', in which

we are immersed in voicing and communication while reflexively aware of how it is affecting and potentially changing our own. With the specificities of their voicings and histories, I carry the communicative atmospheres produced with/in me during our encounters forward into the process of developing the art work.

An atmosphere full of information.

I set up recording situations with people to come closer to how they voice themselves, to produce a rub-up between our languages and open to their effects. I work with the apparatus to make recordings but I am also using them in a metacinematic mode to produce and gather traces of rapport and contagion happening between us. The art work contains their voicings and speaks *in and as* different registers of voicing. As a medium it carries traces of the communication that took place in the recording situation, and it is shaped by its effects on (my) language. The art work becomes a technology for shaping relationship with visitors and potentially for creating a rub-up between the voices in it, its artistic language and their own voicing and sense-making.

The art work is shaped by the 'atmosphere' (IJ) of *being with* which Iris refers to as 'full of information'. I see it as a form of 'voicing' (the language of the work). Some of the recordings made during our recording situations are edited into sequences to become part of the work. They are presented as independent 'elements' among others – projection screens, monitors and loudspeakers, architectural elements, objects. They co-relate for the visitor in the tension of there being no clear point of orientation or given place to settle. The installations are open arrangements of distinct structural forms but no clear boundaries or frame. The two art works made within the scope of this research *Balayer – A Map of Sweeping* (v.2018) *Iris [A Fragment]* (2018), and the exhibition 'Dialogues with People' are of course very different, but these aspects are part of a language which runs through the works, articulated in different ways. Their different media draw the viewer in a multi-sensory mode through the sonic, visual, spatial and temporal structures, text, speech and non-verbal sounds, drawing attention to and between them.

The digital material (sounds and images) made during recording situations carries traces of the atmosphere that was produced between us, but they do not 'contain' it. Through the relationships between elements the open spaces are activated as part of the work, as spaces and silences in which I hope a new atmosphere 'full of information' (IJ) will be generated. In this sense the art work is shaped by them, rather about, its subjects and subject matter, their voices, expressions and gestures; their histories and narratives which it contains. In different orders of image and information, these relationships between the material and the immaterial form the artistic language of the work. It produces a rub-up with the visitor which gives rise to metacinematic modes of awareness and communication with them: an 'atmosphere' shaped by the specificities of different voicings, arising in and through the artifice and staging of the situation. This atmosphere is what I think of as the 'image' of the work which may be absorbed by the visitor to makes its distinct impression.

I made the exhibition *Dialogues with People* in 2018 proposing to work with these aspects of artistic language in individual works on the level of a curatorial language. I brought together ten installations as elements of a constellation. They included works made over the past twenty-five years gathered not as an overview of my practice, but to use the

format and curatorial process to re-conceive aspects of these works and relationships between them through new perspectives opened up by my doctoral research. The process unfolded in dialogue with my research with Phoebe and Iris and the recording situations I was setting up with them. Screening the works sequentially produced a metacinematic modality in which social relationship, a form of *being with* between people was enacted in the movement of the visitors as a group from one work to the next. Moving in this way between immersions and transitions they carried with them the traces of different forms of voicing in the art works and in their various forms of artistic language. Adjusting, grappling or attuning between them, visitors were called forth by the works to engage with them through a wider scope of sensing and sense-making in and around the verbal.

Rub up

I have examined the conditions which can be produced by the experience of the rub-up in relation to *being with* in recording situations and in the experience of an art work. In these conditions we are drawn into new listening positions, in dual awareness of our relationships with non-verbal language and (our) verbal language, in which we can speculatively broach the question which has been driving my research: How can we (re)conceive and engage with different forms of language and communication, in our verbal being?

In these conditions we come to 'knowing' in ways that we 'do not normally know' (PC) and are imbued by 'an atmosphere that is full of information' (IJ). Phoebe's knowing comes through communication with non-verbal people and relates to 'knowing' the sensations and vibrations of contact with another person. It is knowing that communication is happening between them in ways which may not be perceivable to others and cannot be translated. The 'atmosphere' that Iris speaks of is related to spaces of communication which are immaterial yet very tangible. She has talked about her practice as 'the art of communication'. Perhaps the atmosphere *is* communication around and beyond the verbal, and the 'information' is its substance. These forms of knowledge are experiential, intuitive and tacit – they arise in verbal silence. Such knowing can potentially develop through any encounter with registers of voicing we cannot address or cannot cope with. In our attunement binary notions of self-self and self-other relationship attenuate. Knowing this through experience can change us in ways we *know* but cannot necessarily communicate.

Recording situations and the presence of their devices can give rise to closing or opening spaces of relationship, to a hiatus between people or a productive friction, or in fact both. I work with people to re-direct the purpose of the recording apparatus towards shaping relationship and changing the scope of communication between us. The 'image' widens from the retinal / aural to intimate the atmosphere of relation. In relationship with non-verbal voicing this can open us to heightened awareness, reflexivity and multidimensional sensing, through which we experience new forms of sense-making in our verbal being. The rig may be adapted or changed but it is my attunement with the recording situation or the setting of installation that enables me to work with the metacinematic affects immanent within the apparatus. Their effects can be felt, permeate the situation and shape what is happening between us. This metacinematic modality of my practice has developed through my artistic research, in my examination of the practices of the go-betweens. It is contingent on the specificities of each practice, each encounter. A metacinematic

modality of practice is not a tool but an awareness which gains precision and potential to help produce fresh, challenging listening positions that we have to learn to attend to and wrestle with, in the search for a more inclusive, expanded experience of exchange and voicing at the borders of language.

Artistic Submission

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Appendix

Documentation of the exhibition ‘Dialogues with people’

Würtemburgischer Kunstverrein Stuttgart (DE), 2018