

WELCOME TO THE ABYSS!

Syllabus by Kristofor Giordano

Foregrounded by vocabularies of opacity that (dis)appear along lines of inquiry, theory, representation, writing, activism, and performance, we will pursue drawing as an interdisciplinary action, a plan of action, and an act; the substrate as a multidimensional ground—or a potential field—in an ongoing process of being written and rewritten.

Ten drawing exercises will engage the slippery undercurrent of thought, language, and action—what might be *underdefined* as a *haunting element*—within our more or less structured daily experience. As opposed to offering oneself up to social networks, we want to underscore the subterranean, meandering, necessarily disorganized material traces carried through the drawing act itself. From here, we may see if anything resembling a *new* language, a language of the dead (or the *undead*) forms to guide heterogenous (chthonic) logics of meaning/exchange.

Another potential undertaking of this meet-up schedule is to recognize efforts to elevate the drawing form's prestige within "time-honored" regimes of art and image-making as a form of counterinsurgency. Instead, we may embrace the petrified status of *drawing*—its supplemental, secondary, efficient, functional, *two-dimensional* operations—as the source of its intelligence. Allowing drawing to remain down-to-earth *where it belongs* may let us consider its insurgent grammar alongside other discursive operators of immateriality—forms like speech and performance—that are characterized by mobility, openness, and transience.

Some of the questions we may ask include: How is drawing (to invoke Amy Sillman) like *speaking and reaching at the same time*—"a formation of relations," "a model for experience," or "a form of manual thinking?" How do drawings *notate*—diagrammatically, experientially, imaginatively—through movement? How do drawings touch *the limits of signification*? Do diagrams dream? How many dimensions can a drawing activate? What are the materials needed *for drawing*?

Our meet-ups/exercises will occur virtually and in-person, across various time zones and backgrounds. At this schedule's conclusion, we will assemble the material, documentation, ephemera, recordings of our ten meet-ups/exercises into a digital archive. We will discuss what other group projects may extend from our engagements: a show, a digital pyre, a database, a time capsule, or other newly-invented arrangement.

Foundation Texts:

The Undercommons - Fred Moten and Stefano Harney

The Poetics of Space - Gaston Bachelard

How It Might Should Be Done - Idris Robinson

The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art - Linda Darlrymple Henderson

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 1: Phantom Life and Cosmic Death

Reading:

The Varieties of Religious Experience: Religion and Neurology - William James

The Psychoanalysis of Fire: Fire and Reverie Empedocles Complex - Gaston Bachelard

Screening: *Sane Man* - Bill Hicks stand-up recording

Terms to consider:

/ Optics / Scientific Theory / Medical Materialism / Bodies of Knowledge / Phantom Life / The Reverie Beneath the Experiment / Spiritual "Excitement" / Dreaming / Faith and Wisdom / Contemplation / The Call to the Funeral Pyre / Cosmic Death /

Drawing act: A SELF-PORTRAIT OF YOURSELF ON FIRE

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 2: Economy of the Soul

Reading:

Psychopolitics: Big Data - Byung Chul Han

To Our Friends: Fuck Off Google - Invisible Committee

The Theater and Its Double: Metaphysics and the Mise-en-scène - Antonin Artaud

Terms to consider:

/ The Quantified Self / An Account and (Re)counting / Optical Unconscious / Digital Unconscious / Syllogism, Ritual, Narration / An Event: Constellation of Being / A Vocabulary Against / Experience: Discontinuity, Subject's Annihilation / An Unwritten Future / Scaffolding / Political Economies / Coding of Pain / Reality of the Soul / Dark Power / Dormant Conflicts / Hieroglyphs /

Drawing act: AN ELEMENTAL UNIT FOR A NEW SYSTEM OF MEASUREMENT

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 3: Rage Against the Root

Reading:

A Thousand Plateaus: The Rhizome - Félix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze

TransMaterialities: Trans/Matter/Realities and Queer Political Imaginings* - Karen Barad

Terms to consider:

/ n Dimensions / Assemblages / Multiplicity / A Map / Body Without Organs / Abstract Machine / Regimes of Signs / Nerve Fibers / Synapses / Abominable Couplings / Deterritorialization / Points and Lines / Antigeneology / Flashes of Things to Come / Frankenstein / Disruption of Categories / Monstrous Selves / The Stranger Within / Polymorphous Couplings / A Desiring Field / Raging Nothingness / Silent Howling /

Drawing act: PLOT A POLLUTED FIELD OF PARTS

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 4: Now You See It...

Reading:

Dark Matters - Simone Browne

Further Considerations on Afrofuturism - Kodwo Eshun

Terms to consider:

/ Nonexistent Records / Against the Dying of the Light / Microresistance / Alienation / Modernity / Night and Day / Epidermalization / Performances of Freedom / Antimatter / Invisible Substance / Imperialized Eyes / Oppositional Gaze / Tallying / Lantern Laws / Biometric Technologies / Body-Borne Camera / Dark Sousveillance / Loophole of Retreat / Estrangement / Coding / Alien Nation / Feedback /

Drawing act: SHINE DARKNESS IN THE DAYLIGHT

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 5: Lexiconic Obfuscations

Reading:

A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None: Insurgent Geology - Kathryn Yusoff

Screening: *Lessons of Darkness* - Werner Herzog

Terms to consider:

/ Concealment / Colonizing Lexicon / Grammar of Captivity / Erasure / Quiet Acts / Disruptive Grammar / Suspension Between Fungibility and Fugitivity / Another Gravity / End of the World / Claim to Possession / Subterranean Subversion / Undercurrents / Poetry of Rocks / Aesthetics of Chaos /

Drawing act: DEFAME SOMETHING QUOTIDIAN

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 6: Plotholes

Reading:

Cyclonopedia: Digging Machines - Reza Negarestani

The Psychoanalysis of Fire: Psychoanalysis and Prehistory: The Novalis Complex - Gaston Bachelard

Terms to consider:

/ Holey Space / More Surface / The New Earth / Archaeology / Earth As Artifact / Surface Inconsistency, Subterranean Consistency / Solid and Void / Tiamaterialism / Complex, Schizophrenia / Hidden Writing / Observation / Exhumation / Ungrounding / Cryptography / Affectivity / Form of Desire / Interior of Things / Naming of Things / Dream Structure / The Blue Flower /

Drawing act: A STORY BUILT FROM OMISSIONS

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 7: Bridges of Darkness

Reading:

The Practice of Everyday Life: Walking in the City - Michel de Certeau

The Practice of Everyday Life: Spatial Stories - Michel de Certeau

Terms to consider:

/ Footsteps / Pedestrian Speech Acts / Resistance to Discipline / Unreadable Tactics / Illegibility / Forests of Gestures / Phatic Topoi / (De)Tours / Poetic Geography / Haunted Places (The Only Places People Can Live In) / Seeing and Going / Elsewhere and Beyond / Theater of Actions / Limits, Boundaries, Bridges / Revelation /

Drawing act: RECORD AN IMPROVISED WALK IN A RESTRICTED AREA

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 8: De-Tourism

Reading:

On Longing: The Gigantic - Susan Stewart

On Longing: Objects of Desire - Susan Stewart

Walkscapes: Antiwalk - Francesco Careri

Terms to consider:

/ Container / Moving through Landscape / Fables, Legends / Completeness / Exteriority, Interiority / Society of the Spectacle / Earth Art / The Sublime, The Picturesque / Rearrangement of Nature / Return to Nature / Nostalgia / Tourism / The Travelogue / The Postcard / Language of the Dead / Souvenir / Deambulation / Wandering / Unconscious Zones / City As Amniotic Fluid / Emphatic Territory / Affective Sentiments / Derive / Psychogeography /

Drawing act: CONTAIN SOMETHING EXPANSIVE AND WITHOUT END

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 9: The Unseen

Reading:

Mapping the Invisible Landscape: A Walk in the Invisible Landscape - Kent C. Ryden

Screening: *The Prison in Twelve Landscapes* - Brett Story

Terms to consider:

/ Walking / The Wild, the Woods, the Wilderness / Human Imprint on Nature / Other Nations of the Planet / Self Exile / Sense and Evocations of Place / World turned into Place / Charged Landscape / Escaping Patterns of Beauty // Thoreau, Imminent Power and Purity of the Natural World, / Thoreau, Higher Truths of Nature / Distracting Human Presence / Invisibilities of Place /

Drawing act: DOCUMENT A LIE NATURE TELLS

Meet-up, Drawing Exercise 10: The Absent Subject

Reading:

Ghostly Matters: her shape in his hand - Avery F. Gordon

Screening: 8:46 - Dave Chappelle; *Shoah: Bystanders* - Claude Lanzmann

Terms to consider:

/ Encountering Disappearance / Haunting / Observation, Measurement, Interpretation / Interdisciplinarity / A New Object / Transformative Recognition / Possession / Metanarratives / Crisis in Representation / All-encompassing Materialism / Post-colonial Ghosts / Visible Invisibility / Pitfalls of Subjectivism and Positivism / Reduction / Countermemory / Margins of the Story /

Drawing act: DEFINE THE CONTOURS OF SOMETHING YOU CAN'T SEE