

Re: “ Capturing the moving mind “, an EPHEMERA Conference Project

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Subject: Final Presentation (CD's from previous sound works to be brought along for the radio on the train)

We are of the generation of deconstruction. Now, Jacques Derrida is dead. We must overcome “our” aporia. Were it only because aporia is still a binary situation where contradictions are built around opposite terms.

We understand the Ephemera Conference proposal “Capturing the Moving Mind” as one experience which can help bridge over theaporetic consciousness and open our minds to the momentary, the ever-moving, the instant, the ephemeral as a fundamental element in the ecology of our minds.

As visual artists, we translate the ecology of the mind into perceptual and perceivable objects, environments, installations, situations, one step closer to the everyday sense everyday people have of the present developments of the world. A linguistic bridge of sorts, between aporia and despair!

As visual artists, then, we confront violence, exploitation, minority rights, hunger, war for water and shelter, and nourish our art with aspirations and actions for social, economic and ecological justice.

For the last 3 years, we have been developing a project: THE FUTURE IS ON THE TABLE. Right now, we are at :THE FUTURE IS ON THE TABLE #3. A wide-open dialogue about social justice at a global level. We chose WATER and SHELTER as a common subject because so many millions of people, today, are being and/or will soon be displaced by war, hunger, the search for water (food and water are part of the same symbolic realm, but water gets us very close to “Real Politik”, whereas food - legitimately or not - is seen more as a logistic problem ... for a while longer).

We have manufactured 57 three-legged stools. The seats of the stools have been cut out of a sheet of marine plywood on which a map of the world has been painted, like a large 57-piece puzzle. Each seat is a piece of the puzzle. The map is from a north pole projection, which does not privilege one continent over an other. So far, sets of stools have been sent to England (a dancer), India (a woman cooperative), France (a visual artist), South Africa ( an educator/sculptor), and the USA (a painter/performer). Projects have started and, in the process, engaged other artists and youth groups.

Between the two partners at work here, there are varied understandings of “the moving mind”, of what is moving in the mind, of what makes the mind move, of the contemporaneity of the moving mind, of the fact that to “capture” the moving mind is either a recipe for failure, like a dead memorial monument or, more to the point, an impossibility, an algae without water. Of course, objects are impedimenta in this new

world of movement and ephemera. However, Quantum still needs particles and “things” often act as antidotes to angst and philosophical delirium.

There is no nutshell in which to capture any reality, any phenomenon other than a process. So how can visual artists convey such a flux although their media have a degree of permanency? How can they not slow down the flux, using metaphores, analogies, visual puns and such? Our research has brought us to ask ourselves:

(1) Aren't we experiencing a violent, very violent separation of “form” and “function”. Is it possible and legitimate to presume function from form or to deduct form from function?

(2) Is the moving mind a function of our global world. Does the mind move by understanding how infinitely small a part we play on earth? So small, yet so locally anchored (family, friends, working environment or more)? So temporary although potentially amplified by collaboration, mediatization, history, social necessities? We want to use the train ride from Moscow to Beijing as a facilitator for a global dialogue.

(3) Isn't the moving mind influenced by other people's perceptions? If it steps back temporarily, isn't it to intake, accept or reject the plurality of impulses?

From Charleston USA we are bringing with us images, questions concerning the perception Charlestonians and South Carolinians have of themselves and of Russia, Mongolia, China. Then riders in the train will have their say. We will bring back your questions and perceptions. We therefore act as transmitters. All that to affirm the moving functions of the mind.

For the sake of practicality, we are presently building very light structures and props out of cardboard, reenforced with epoxy resin. Indeed there will be “a table”, but subverted to the point of not being identifiable right away as a table, whether in form or function. There will be stools, represented by the way they have been appropriated by other participating groups in “The Future is on the Table #3” in Penn (USA), in Capetown (South Africa), Thane (India), London (England), Villers-le-Lac (France). And there will be a spread of old French lace, as an anchor in a history full of holes.

We will “install” our gear at the Moscow train station, a performed installation, with some reading. Then we will work on various parts with fellow train travellers in an attempt to facilitate the unfolding of a storyboard, generated from the elements we bring (tables of sort, stools of sort, photographs, perceptions of many, questions, desires...), to be performed in progress if possible in Novosibirsk and Beijing and to be completed back home for a final presentation at the Kiasma Museum (Helsinki) or elsewhere.