

Art as “Bodging”

by shy* play

Erin Manning argues that, following process philosophy, "bodging" is a more accurate term than "body". Rather than rejecting the idea of a body, it departs from the notion that forms are not pre-constituted and separate from the ecologies that shape them. Manning emphasises that ecologies always precede bodies and constitute them as "always more than one".

Bodies are formed and transformed anew and always as an effect. The idea that our bodies are the sole source of our thoughts and actions is an illusion which manifests itself as truth. This is not surprising, given that neurotypicality teaches us nothing else. Neurotypicality's obsession with the distinctness of bodies infuses its objects with a descriptive practice of the embodied category of the human. As I always say, ideas of the human are just habits performed non-consciously and consciously. While habits are unavoidable, it is possible to create new habits that diverge from neurotypicality and its other oppressive brothers.

Embodied self-descriptions that swim against the flow of neurotypicality, not as its 'Others' but as its 'fugitives', demand a new and continuous symbiotic investment in the elusive ecologies that precede consciousness. I want to call these practices artful, but not in the way art performs its current centre-oriented tendencies of self-celebratory practices, object and subject-focused obsessions, individualism, and compulsive search for visibility and attention. Fugitive habits skitter around the concretisation of subjects and objects; they dance in dedication to the world and the belief in the world. This belief is not religious, but rather a firm belief that there is a need to "become a target" (Reza Negarestani), not for language, the human, or its 'Others', but as a way of being transformed by the world and its inherent endless potential to engender new habits. An experimental pragmatics of relation, indeed!

Chorus:

Manning, Erin. 2013. *Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Negarestani, Reza. 2008. *Cyclonopedia: Complicity with Anonymous Materials*. Melbourne: re.press.