

# Replacing Donna Haraway. A profanation.

***Gian Luigi Biagini***

*gigibiagini@gmail.com*

*Independent Art Researcher*

## Abstract

In 2022, an Italy located dog breeding house with 100 Labradors was replaced and reimagined as an art research residency for 13 artists of different nationalities. Texts and artworks have been shown in a series of collective exhibitions: in Italy, USA, Havana, Helsinki. The article focuses on the intervention "Contact Zone" which has replaced Donna Haraway's book "When species meet" into a collective interspecies performance with Labradors. The article shows the conceptual, theoretical, spatial and performative replacements provoked by the intervention as profanation; but also all the replacements as re-stagings that have produced a multiplicity of different displays of the same work.

KEYWORDS: replacement, interspecies, performance, installation, residency, contact zone

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In 2022, an Italy located dog breeding house with 100 Labradors was replaced and reimagined as an art research residency for 13 artists of different nationalities. Texts and artworks have been shown in a series of collective exhibitions: in Italy, USA, Havana, Helsinki. The article focuses on the intervention "Contact Zone" which has replaced Donna Haraway's book "When species meet" into a collective interspecies performance with Labradors. The article shows the conceptual, theoretical, spatial and performative replacements provoked by the intervention as profanation; but also all the replacements as re-stagings that have produced a multiplicity of different displays of the same work.

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**“Emplacing”, “Differ(a)nce, “perspective”, “shaping”, “resistance” into a nomadic writing. (Epistemological Guide To My Art Of Writing.)**

As Haraway (1988), Grosz (2011) and Braidotti (2019) would put it a feminist knowledge, especially if it concerns art, should not be abstract but “situated”, “non-anthropocentric”, “embodied” and “nomadic”. A writer is simultaneously situated in an actual ongoing text and into the virtual “écart” of an excessive “ex- post experience” (Foucault, 1998 ). It is into a “here and now” but also in an “elsewhere and after”. Because of this “abyss” of Differ(a)nce (Derrida, 1985) in the “dwelling” (Heidegger, 1971) whatever text (even “scientific”) is

interspaced by fiction and narrative strategies of nomadic “shaping”: plastic choices of placement-replacement-displacement of the sense-experience in writing and their resonances. This condition is intensified in the dispersed, heterogeneous, complicated, multiple, excessive and incomplete ontology of an “art research” project. In this anomalous field also a “weird” affective resonance can be a “descriptive tool” instead of a “negative noise” to expunge like in mathematical disembodied logic-formalisations. Because the art research writing-recollection prevents a fully “metaphysics of presence” (Derrida, 1984), each site-specific, unique and contingent art research event-experience should be written according situated “rules-of-art”, arrangements, styles, creative structures, “perspectives” (Haraway, 1988, Deleuze, 1988) to tactically fill the “gap” and give a shape to the “excess” of the “vibrant materials” (Bennet, 2010). These kind of event-experiences cannot fully fit in the axiomatic, standard, clear, anthropomorphic (head, body, footnotes etc.), centralised narrative-structure required by coded disciplines instituted in the “normative” academic paradigm under the virtual, productive, political and discriminatory “power-knowledge” (Foucault, 1980) spelled by the Enlightenment (Adorno, 2007). However the “excesses” can be handled through situated shaping know-how with ad hoc arrangements. For example: “my” art project is a processual 1 year long collective interspecies becoming intertwined with trans-artistic and trans-national research that requires a long description and selective “shaping” in the midst of a jigsaw of virtuality. My writing is immersed into: a 1 year long context(s) of non- linear process(es) of production, creation, negotiation, exhibition, theoretical and practical thinking, with all the “occurring accidents,” inside an interdisciplinary “theory frame”. However, despite this complexity, my “shaping” is enough “standard”: there is A) a context, B) a description of the general project and theoretical frame, C) a paragraph on the core general

methodology, D-E-F...) a series of more specific articulations. However the “methodology” is atmospherically distributed all along the focus of the text, because the project has several phase-folds. Furthermore, the text has no “conclusion” because concerns a self-generative “exploratory project-process” in becoming; the outputs are insights disseminated along the unfolding description and the large art production that can be shown only in the website (there is a link). This does not mean unintelligibility of the “focus” but the master-patriarchal-Cartesian-signifier has been slightly shifted on the “weird”, “displaced”, “odd-profaned” with small but anomalous Cthulhu-branches (Haraway, 2016) out of its central axis. This uneven “shape” is also due to a “specific anomaly”: the “theme” of “my” processual artwork concerns an interspecies art research experiment, while the “perspective” (Deleuze, 1988) of the article focuses on “replacing”. This slight bifurcation makes the focus of the “topic” (topos, topology, placement) not perfectly aligned and I arrange and fine-tune this oscillation with a narrative of shifting-digressions that sometime produces a “tentacular” (Haraway, 2016) slalom of the “topic”. The unstable “topos” is adjusted “ad art” by my specific situated shaping-orientation in the text-experience. Only my situated sensitivity inside the “trouble” (Haraway, 2016) can feel and make the right “shaping”: placements, replacements and displacements of the experience in a text.. As Foucault (1998) or Feyerabend (2010), but also Haraway (1988), would put it: there is not one narrative “rationality” but “ad-hoc situated and multiple strategic rationalities and tactical epistemologies”. My research project integrates artistic un-discipline into inter-disciplines; it has a general epistemology based on Baumgarten’s “sensuous cognition” (McQuillan, 2021) that resists and slows down a too formal, wholly cognitive automatic reflex of standard control and hierarchisation of sense. This “tiny resistance” is also what art education should teach everyday. Each small

“profanation”(Agamben, 2005) is a gift we make to humans and other species embedded in a planet crushed by an efficient “Cage of Rationality” (Weber, 2013).

### **Replacing my father, who has replaced himself with a dog. (Virtual Cartography)**

Humanimal Community Art Project has been a project of independent art research on the field taking place in the Labradors breeding house of my father in Tuscany in 2022. For the occasion a kennel of 100 Labradors has been replaced with an interspecies art residency. The project was announced in the “Human-Animal Conference” of Turku in 2022 with the paper: “My father, a Labrador breeder.” In that “anti-oedipal” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1999) occasion the figure of my father as Labradors’ breeder has been replaced with the figure of my father as the artist who creates “living sculptures”. Furthermore, as all true artists, my father has tried to reproduce or replace himself in his artworks: this is how artists try to gain immortality. For this reason he has created a line of Labradors looking like himself: with big head and short legs. Furthermore, my father has replaced his name “Roberto” in his favorite Labrador dog “Robertino” (Roberto Jr.) who is also the progenitor of the line. My father has put his own name and signature in this rhizomatic post-human “monster-filiation” (Haraway, 1992), which is a line of Labradors originating in the narcissism of a “human”. However, an artist, in this case an artist of “living sculptures”, is never really a “human”. The artist in its own creative and excessive gestures is inhabited by a more-than-human and a sub-human animist will to power, a multiplicity in becoming, a Dionysian event that is an inhuman “Difference” (Deleuze, 1995) or “Differ(a)nce” (Derrida, 1984). As Elisabeth Grosz would put it “art is bio-expressive” (Grosz, 2011), it catches “more-than-human vibes-refrains”. With this “monster-filiation” my father did not simply replaced himself in a dog to be the monster-father of a breeding line, but also replaced me from a pure line of human genealogy into a “weird” (Ulstein, 2017) “oddkin” (Haraway,

2016) filiation with an origin into an interspecies family rhizome. He has created an intertwined human-animal family where there are also replacements of features, names and characters. In Turku's lecture, I was also showing by photos how my father lives in this "smooth space" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) with his human-animal family (that has stronger ties than a simple human community). Indeed, the 100 dogs eat with him, sleep with him, work with him, swim with him and are scattered everywhere in the space of the kennel where he and his dogs live. This "smooth space" allows a creative circulation of "affects" that produce a becoming-human of the dogs and a becoming-dog of the humans. In this interspecies "smooth space" animals and humans are tied into an "intense rhizome" without a "striated space" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) of separation and hierarchy. If a hierarchy exists, it is the one of the "pack" and probably my father is recognized as the "alpha" leader of the "pack". To make clear with some example this interspecies "chaosmosis" (Guattari, 1992) of my father's pack I have shown a photo of an open dishwasher in the kitchen; which has temporarily replaced a doghouse for one of the Labradors lying and dozing down there. Then I have shown the sofas around the always-on TV where many Labradors are deeply sleeping doing their noises. The small swimming pool intended for humans is also shared by my father and the Labradors and replaced as a human-animal interspecies swimming pool. This is in brief the animist "line of flight" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) of my father as an artist of "living sculptures". A "line of flight" is a singular path that, at least partially, allows a subjectivity to escape the social norms enforced by the abstract apparatuses of power which codes the life of a society according to an anthropocentric criterion. My father has deeply replaced his belonging: from the atom of the society to the open whole of nature. Using Deleuze's categories to talk about domestic animals, such as dogs, could seem out of place. In fact, as Donna Haraway reminds us, the French philosopher had a certain aversion towards pets and the consolatory anthropomorphism that they stimulate; instead he was publicly showing a romantic admiration for wild, rare and ferocious animals together with a misogynist sarcasm for old

women that love pets. Furthermore, for Deleuze, it is not necessary to participate in an actual “contact zone” (Haraway, 2008) with the “molar” animal, but a human, especially an exceptional artist, can enter into a molecular becoming-animal by tapping into the obscure intensities of the rhizome even at distance from the animal; for example through the potential deterritorialization offered by the writing-machine - as in the case of Kafka. In reality, Deleuze usually does not love what is “domestic and servile” as a dog can be, but he does not deny that in certain contexts and situations a dog can be the anomalous that triggers a deterritorializing becoming-animal in a human. And this is the case with my father's intense and spatially chaotomic relationship with dogs; a relation that is anomalous and creative because it produces the passion for making living works of art and unfolds and replaces him into a deep ecology. It produces an uncoded lifestyle and an anomalous mode of living in an interspecies monster-family. For Deleuze it is not so much the definition that makes the animal “domestic”, as the singular type of relationship that is established between the dog and the human. Deleuze is a philosopher of the “singular” and the “anomalous”. This anomaly does not prevent my father from having a normal relationship with his dogs as “companion species” (Haraway, 2003), as most of the people owning a dog do. My art research residency wanted to explore this productive tension between Deleuze and Guattari on one side and Haraway on the other without taking a part in the dispute. This is in brief the “virtual cartography” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) that I presented in Turku University in April and that I have replaced as “actual” (but full of potential virtualities) Art Research Residency in July and August 2022.



*Figure 1 Labrador in the kitchen.*



*Figure 2 My father and labradors swim together.*

## **Replacing artists in an interspecies art research field. (Actual Immanence)**

The first step has been trying to replace a bunch of artists with interspecies art researchers. To reach this goal, I have created a Facebook page to read links with my simplified summaries. I have attached links on “posthuman” theory and invited to read Haraway, Derrida, Agamben, Deleuze and Guattari, Massumi, Bateson, Berger, Abram, Von Uexkull, Kojève and so on...I wanted to give creative stimulation to a group of artists with a little of previous experiences with animals; in order to prepare them for the experimental project of research on the field Humanimal Community Art Project. However, I did not want to exaggerate in imposing a discipline in studying theory; sometimes too many conceptual categories can prevent the artists to be more open to the singular encounter with the immanent new. The 13 artists invited for the residency have been in contact with 100 Labrador dogs and have produced artworks and texts. The artworks resulted better than the texts. The practical problem of research



projects like this it is that some artists, who are not students or professional researchers, are really difficult to engage in an organized work of research. They do not want to be managed by a team leader and revert the situation of power into a disorganized, unproductive mess. Firstly, they do not recognize the authority of the independent researcher as a guide because it is not an official academic research and the team is not an official unit of research. The independent researcher is thrown into many group crises that must solve and mediate (this article should be replaced by a long book with a long story). The independent researcher has no coercive (punishments) or seducing (promotions) instruments or tools to manage the team. (To solve this difficult situation, I have replaced my mortal body with the 3 bodies of Buddha and their “paramitas”). Furthermore, not all artists are good readers and writers and in the contingency of a one-year project I did not have the possibility to find 100% ideal candidates for the project. Nevertheless, an artwork, as an “expressive index” (Pierce, 1949) of mattering matter, can say much more than many words articulated in sentences. In the interspecies “intra-action” (Haraway, 2008) what passes between the human and the other animals (in this case dogs) are “affects” and not “articulated language” as in a human-human relation. The affects pass through a play of contacts such as gazes, touches, inarticulate sounds, colors, smells, gestures, temperatures, salivation and not least “simulated fights” (see the wonderful text of Brian Massumi on the “nipping” as dogs’ metalanguage (Massumi, 2014)). An artwork is already a revealing interspecies cartography of an event of deep communication made of affects and sensations. A long text would be an unjustified replacement of the inarticulate immanence. It would explain too much: making violence to the subtle and inarticulate bundle-cartography of “affective percepts and felt intensities” expressed by an artwork (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, Gregg and Seigworth, 2010). The artwork, because

it follows a “logic of sensations” (Deleuze, 2003), is much nearer to the “contact zone” (Haraway, 2008) experience than the “philosophical concepts” and “scientific perspects” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1996). The residency on the field was also a heterogeneous “fleshy” assemblage in flight of part-beings connected in an animist intra-action. This kind of animist flow is well described in Guattari’s “Chaosmosis” (Guattari, 1992; but also by Haraway’s “When species meet” (Haraway, 2008), which I would like to replace or rephrase as “When species meat”. Actually, I should also replace the rephrase with “more-than-meat”, because the play of differences of the multiplicity in intra-action was constituted also by photographic camera and video-cameras of the artists. The assembling field of expression of the residency has not been only “interspecies” but also “posthuman”; because it included humans, animals and machines caught into an “expressive rhizome” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). This was the eccentric replacement of the residency.



*Figure 3 Residency House.*



*Figure 4 Artist at work.*

### **Replacing humans with dogs through avatars. (Methodology of becoming).**

My art research has replaced a normal human methodology by designing a humananimal methodology related to the graphic design of the homepage of the

website Humanimal Community Art Project <https://sites.google.com/view/humanimalisti/home>. The design of the website and the methodology of research came out by themselves and simultaneously as one thing in a stroke of “intuition”. In my creativity as an art researcher, I am indebted with Bergson’s “intuitive methodology” (Bergson, 1992). Actually, I have simply graphically followed the idea of “Humanimal Community” by putting together in the same page all the faces of the members of the residency, humans and non-humans; and the methodology was already there in the graphic design. Sometimes I have the sensation that “everything unfolds by itself and I must only follow and handle the phylum of the process at the right time” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). As you can see, the homepage of the website displays the faces of the 13 artists and the muzzles of some of the 100 Labradors. Under each face or dog muzzle is a name. By clicking on the name of the artist or the name of the dog, the reader reaches produced-in-the-residency artworks and texts related to the artist or the dog. This methodology allowed each artist to show his or her own research through his or her name/face, but also to speak from the side of the specific dog related to the name/ muzzle of the dog. This avatar-methodology is a mode to replace the anthropocentrism of the art researcher with an eccentric avatar-simulation of a dog. It is a replacement of an actual human in a virtual dog (which, I know, it risks triggering a form of anthropomorphism). As Agamben puts it, human species and individuals are destined to live in a chasmic tension between "anthropocentrism and anthropomorphism". He suggests making this "anthropological machine" (Agamben, 2003) "inoperative" to disentangle our species from its ontological suicidal violence; even if he does not have any idea on how to do it. Or as Derrida puts it: “L’animal que donc je suis” means not only “the animal that therefore I am” but also “the animal that I follow and persecute” (je suis from suivre, poursuivre etc...). As if the human were caught

into a spiralling hunt with the elusive animal that therefore he is, but that also it is not. In this hunt, the human perpetuates a violence against himself as an animal; because he is unable to deal with the abyss of the subtle and fragile “differ(a)nce” that he inhabits. The word “animal” is already objectifying violence against the difference of other species because it establishes, through anthropocentric logo-centrism, a dualism between the human on one side and a generic animal on the other side. Even if I acknowledge this paradoxical interspecies “limitrophy” (Derrida, 2008), my methodology through avatars still can offers a “transition” for a “line of flight” in the experience of a dog’s otherness; before the “anthropological machine” "sutures" or “reterritorializes the deterritorialization” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). “Simulation” (Kallio-Tavin, 2020, Aaltola&Keto, 2017) is a methodology that helps to “de-actualize” the human subjectivity of the art researcher and replace it with a dog-avatar that allows a becomingdog through “writing”. For Deleuze “writing” is a becoming-animal, and he has dedicated a book to Kafka’s Metamorphosis (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986). On this theme it is very interesting also Massumi’s book “What the animals teach us about politics” (Massumi, 2014) that subverts, replaces and profanes the usual Heidegger’s (Heidegger, 2008) conception of the relation between animal, language and writing. The methodological approach of my website, based on becoming-animal, allows replacing a "too human" (Nietzsche, 1999) identity to achieve an indistinct human-animal “contact zone” (Haraway, 2008) through writing. Furthermore, “to stay with” Haraway, but without denying Deleuze as “trouble”, this “becoming- animal” is not purely literary as Kafka’s becoming; because it has been inspired by an “actual” contact with the animal in the residency. There is memory and lived sensations which inspire the writing. In this way an artist can “virtually replace” his voice with the barking of a dog the artist has actually touched and creatively worked with. This kind of

becoming-dog that is also a “becoming with” (Haraway, 2008) concerns the confused intra-action that anticipates the distinct interaction. The intra-action is “molecular” intensities of quasi-identities in play, while the interaction is “molar” because it is about already formed and distinct identities: such as the human and the dog. Interaction emerges from a deeper, indistinct intra-action. This feminist concept of “intra-action” (Haraway, 2008, Barad, 2012) is derived by Whitehead’s process philosophy (Whitehead, 1978). According to Whitehead, who has also largely inspired Deleuze, an obscure pre-cognitive pervasive feeling is triggered and moved by an occasion for the concretion of a phenomenon with a distinct identity; which is only apparently separated from the continuum”. According to Whitehead all the matter is alive because it is pervaded by this “obscure creative feeling”. Someone has also talked of Whitehead’s “panpsychism” (every bit of matter, even a particle, has a mind and a perception that belongs to a cosmic creative field of feeling which is simultaneous to energy and matter in a continuum with no hierarchies). If we replace this ontology in the Deleuzian terminology, we have two realities at work in every event: a creative “res intensa” which is made of imperceptible intensity- becomings in a continuum and a “res extensa” that is made of apparent and measurable distinct identities (Deleuze, 1995). The homepage of the Humanimal Community Art Project is designed to mix and replace one reality with the other and put them in an edge of intertwined communication. Indeed, the design of the methodology allows the artist to be a distinct face, name, identity with a distinct artwork and text and/or replace himself in an improper molecularly confused becoming-dog. However, as I explained this replacement is not completely virtual as the one of the pure writer, because it refers to an actual experience of contact with the dog in the residency-field. All the project of the residency was centered on this underlying practice of imperceptible art

animism on one side and more distinct ethnographic recollection on the other.

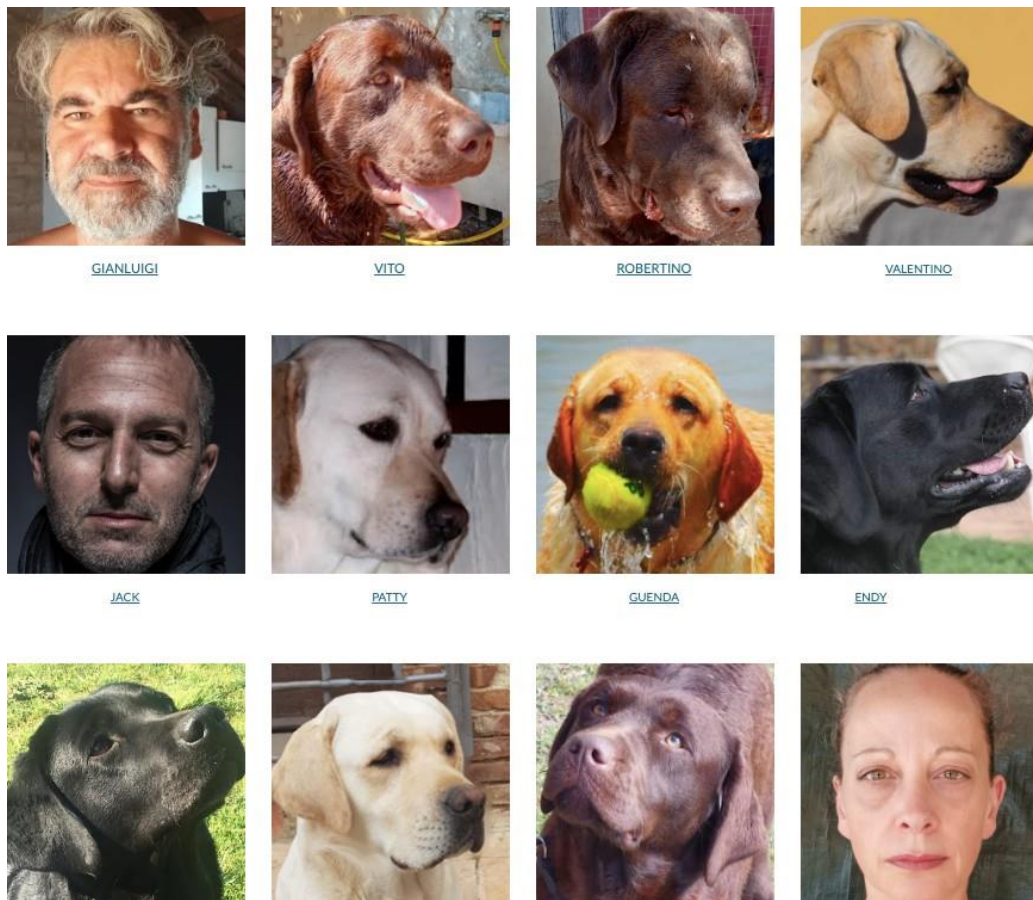


Figure 5 Some members of the Humanimal Community Art Project home page.

Other artists, dogs, exhibitions in <https://sites.google.com/view/humanimalisti/home>



Figure 6 Artwork by G. Biagini, N.Hendrickson.



Figure 7 Artwork by M. Gobbo.



Figure 8 Artwork by M. Gobbo.

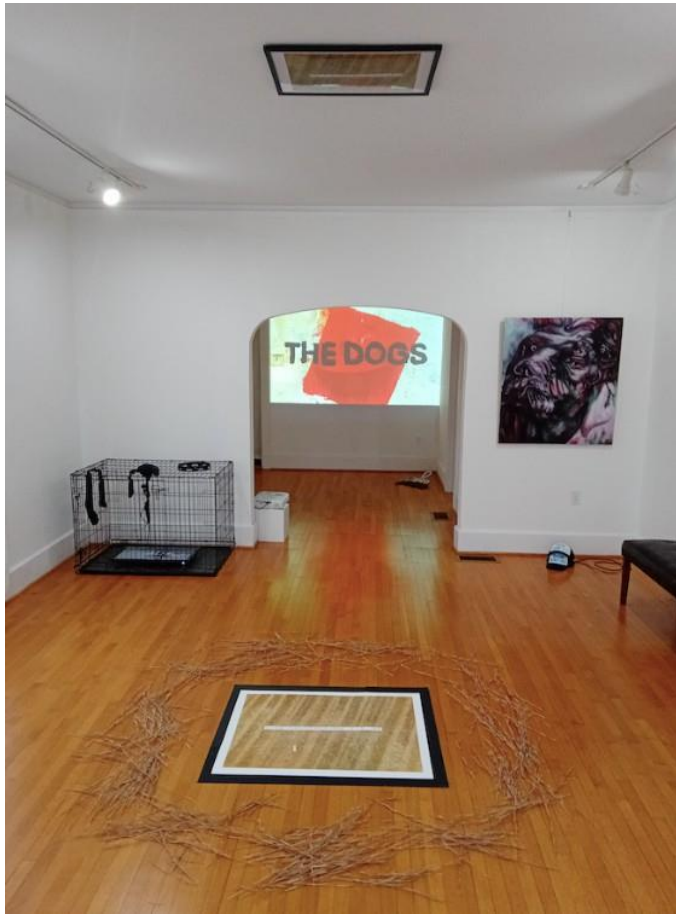


Figure 9 Artworks by S. Passaniti, G. Biagini, N. Hendrickson, A. Casanova.

Smelling smelling OBSESSION.

I have pissed on them.

I can smell it in my memory.

I can smell it now.

Smelling smelling an OBSESSION.

They will be mine.

I need to grab them in my mouth.

I have pissed on them two days ago.



Figure 10 Fragment of text: dog-avatar simulation methodology.



Figure 11 artwork by E. Marano.



Figure 12 Artwork by N. Hendrickson.



Figure 13 Artwork by J. Faber.



Figure 14 Artworks by Elena Casanova.



Figure 15 Artworks by Elena Casanova.

## **Replacing science with science fiction. (Experiencing design)**

I hope at least part of the artists have got a meaningful and rewarding experience from the whole experiment. The experiment in "art research" edges with "qualitative science" but also with "science-fiction" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) because it also has a virtual dimension. The science-fiction experiment designs a new space and a new experience that cuts a slice of outsidership from the ordinary already-signified actuality of normative society, which is sustained by normative fiction, normative experiences, normative habits. It can be seen as a phenomenology and an ethnography of a fiction that becomes actual. In this design process of the art research experiment, I have been helped by my previous long experience as a professional "strategic designer". In my job I was used to designing new experiences because also a "brand", a "multimedia campaign" or an "event of communication" builds and discloses a new phenomenological being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 2008; Schutz, 1967; Merleau-Ponty, 2020) and a multitouch holistic sensorial experience that changes the "distribution of the sensible" (Rancière, 2010). Even if someone could criticize the "commodification" of a "Brand Experience" (this is why I quitted my remunerative profession). Nevertheless now, as a poor artist, I prefer to design experiences that free an "edge of virtual reality" from the actual commodified capitalist space built on hierarchical practices and routines of subjugation and desensitization. I have replaced the goal of my strategic design from capitalism to a virtual something else. My practice does not deny completely capitalism because everybody and everything, willing or not, is thrown into this total phenomenon; but my experiments try to unleash a molecular line of flight that explores, like a "probe-head" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987), the space beyond the capitalist contours. It is an experimental post-capitalist practice which needs the virtuality of "science fiction" to replace and to reimagine the experience of



capitalism with something else. Replacing the “usual scientific realism” with an “SF realism” is agreed both by Doctor Challenge Deleuze (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) and Haraway’s *Speculative Fabulator* (Haraway, 2011). In the Humanimal Community Art Project have also contributed members of MEAM of Liege University and of BIOCULT University of Molise (both of them anthropology research units that incorporate art methodologies). They have participated as on-line consultants through meetings, website, e-mails and textual exchanges. The output of the project was shown in university galleries and university talks, but also in other public talk events in cultural centres. Sometimes with the exchange of a selected public of university students and professors of art, philosophy, anthropology, architects and artists, but in some cases open also to the large public. A long series of exhibitions, workshops and public talks took place in Tuscany, in Finland, in the US and in Havana that have seen a lot of replacements.



Figure 16 Artwork G. Biagini.



## HUMANIMAL COMMUNITY ART EXHIBITION

*Nathaniel Hendrickson, Jack Faber, Gian Luigi Biagini, Matteo Gobbo, Alessandro Casanova, Elena Casonova, Ester Marano, Samantha Passaniti*

Humanimal Community Projects is an art research project and human-animal experiment based on a "contact zone" between 13 artists and 100 Labradors' dogs. The experiment took place in a Labrador breeding house turned into an art residency in Civitella Paganico (Tuscany) in 2022.

**Pence-Chowning Art Gallery - Campbellville University: Nov. 28 - Dec. 2**

**Artist Talk:** Nov. 28th 6 - 7pm EST @ the Ghemns Recital Hall

**Opening Reception:** Nov. 28th 7 - 8pm EST

Campbellville  
UNIVERSITY

HAJ AND TOR  
NECKLING FOUNDATION

Figure 17 Exhibition Poster.

## **Replacing “When the species meet” over a dusty ground. (Performing Difference)**

Donna Haraway convenes that Derrida, in his “The animal that therefore I am” essay (Derrida, 2008), had the ethical merit of having returned his naked gaze to his cat (thus not falling into the scientist reification of the animal). However, she also complains with Derrida for not having taken action to go beyond his philosophical gaze and establish an embodied "contact zone" (or rather intra-action) with his cat. In other words, Haraway's accusation is that the empathic replacing occurred between Derrida and his cat was not a complete replacing; and that Derrida failed to fully deconstruct the abstract philosophical tradition that starts from Descartes, for whom the animal is an inanimate machine, and reaches up to Heidegger who considers the animal "poor in the world". A tradition that according to Derrida would give rise to the current "genocide" (Derrida, 2008 ) against animals carried out by modern Western or Westernized capitalist man. In my video performance “CONTACT ZONE” I replaced Donna Haraway's critique to Derrida with an affirmative and disruptive art intervention on Haraway's famous essay “When the species meet”. The strategy of the intervention has been to push at the extreme Haraway’s discourse on the performative interspecies embodiment versus a bookish philosophical disembodied posture. A discourse on “touch” and “participation” that underlies her critique of Derrida’s abstract and distanced attitude. Indeed, my intervention CONTACT ZONE “accelerates”, “intensifies” and “prolongs” Haraway’s essay by replacing her book over a dirty ground and then between the artistic fangs of a pack of dogs. To put it with the words of Deleuze I have taken Donna Haraway from behind by prolonging the “line of flight” of her book and even if my gesture can look as an obscene “profanation” (Agamben, 2005) it is actually also

celebratory of the book and the feminist philosopher. In the gesture of the artists, the distinction between “profanation” and “celebration” is imperceptible. “Profanation” and “celebration” replace each other periodically in an infinite math asymptotic oscillatory function. Furthermore, even if my intervention CONTACT ZONE is a profanation of a book, it is not a classic poststructuralist intervention on writing. The classic post- structuralism of “Tel Quel” has been replaced by a new post-structuralism rooted into an embodied "gestural performance" (Buttler, 2017). Furthermore, my post- structuralist gestural performance has replaced the ordinary human performance with an interspecies action that has deterritorialized and overpassed Haraway's book in the living flesh of a collective event in becoming. Haraway’s book was already charged with a virtuality, which has triggered the will to power of a becoming. In fact, Haraway’s essay “When species meet”, as “immaterial species or idea” (Guattari, 1992), has met the actual material fangs of the Labradors, as dog species, in the dirty material performance it has “always already” desired. Throwing the abstraction of philosophy in the dirt is a sacred path to reconnect and replace our abstract existences within the flesh of the Earth. In my performance, I have pushed feminist materialism to its higher pitch by the celebratory profanation of one of its masterpieces. The intervention CONTACT ZONE is also a performative replacement of Haraway’ book into an undefined vibratory metaphysic space that generates many resonances inside, above, aside, under, against, toward the content of the essay but also an immediate material deformation and decomposition of the book as artifact explored in its material earthly potentiality. All these replacements of the high in the low and of the inside in the outside are “profanations” of sacred places and can also be read as transgressive “displacements” in and out of the limits of the academia. As Rancière (Rancière, 2010) puts it, western societies are built on the model of

Plato's Republic, where everybody and everything is supposed to be in its own place and into a normative spatial hierarchy. A scholar's book concerning interspecies theory should stay in the sacred library of a university and not in the fangs of a pack of Labradors. I will soon describe in detail my performance, but I must start from the replacement of my usual black costume of Anartist (Anarchist Artist).



*Figure 18 Labrador performing with Donna Haraway's book in "Contact Zone".*

### **Replacing the costume of the Anartist. (Variation Avatar)**

Usually my expressive field is the critical urban intervention, which consists in generating a "disruptive" event in urban space, which usually is subjected to the organizing work of capitalism. The aim of my interventions is opening a critical, but also affirmative, passage to a becoming-other. The protagonist of these interventions is the character-avatar The Anartist (Anarchist Artist) who wears a black balaclava and dresses in black like a "rioter". I have published a Doctoral dissertation and a dozen articles on this character and his adventures that have taken place in many cities of the world. Each intervention of the Anartist is a disruptive replacement of a place of identity into a "play-ce" of difference. Both the emergence of the Anartist as a sacred avatar and the unfolding of his series

of profanations in different cities of the world are based on the intrinsic will to power of a first “anomalous event of difference” (Deleuze, 1995). My interventions are propelled by a first difference in my existence: as “a performative gesture that has become an event and that is still eventing profanations” as Butler would put it (Butler, 2017). For the occasion of the interspecies art research residency, I have operated some replacements in the design of the costume of the Anartist avatar by adding a dog's muzzle to the ordinary black balaclava. The muzzle had the shape of a protuberance in my face built with a piece of plastic bottle inserted into a black sock; then I added two black socks on the sides of the black balaclava like long dog ears. Then I applied a dog tail, made from a black stocking stuffed with paper, to the back of my black jeans. I also have replaced the function of a black rattle tambourine that has become a dog-collar in my neck. This somewhat punkish and noisy replacement of the ordinary costume of the Anartist, which is also an act of self-profanation, had the purpose to help me to tune in to the becoming-dog of my performance by means of an avatar adaptation. Basically, an urban style avatar has been replaced by a more “rurban” version. However, as Lefebvre had announced many decades ago, now the “urban” is a “total phenomenon” (Lefebvre, 1991), which also includes the countryside. And however, it has been a true “jouissance” (Lacan, 1997) to replace (and contaminate and profane) the rural with the urban. A replacement is always a trans-passing of sacred thresholds, a transgressing, a migratory act that carries in itself a pure difference that affects and changes the locus of the replacement with a profanation. A profanation is a re-sacralization because it allows an opening or a crack for the refreshment of life. The profaner do the sacred work of the deterritorialization for an always renewed Earth. The profaner is a saint who accepts the social stigmata of the “pit” in order to make the work of a superior, deterritorializing

conscience. The locus from which the replacement departs (deterritorialization) and the locus where it arrives (reterritorialization) endure a profanation that changes the composition of the places. Even if the new territory will be hostile and it will do everything to not change by repressing the new difference. Exclusion and abjection are strictly connected with the replacement. A place has an anxiety to integrate as homogeneous or to expel the profaner out. Indeed, I must now admit that my migration from country to country has been the first replacement and my first profanation. It has generated the emergence of the Anartist avatar to compensate with the virtual absence of a place where to be replaced. This replacing into a virtual avatar has unleashed a series of replacements and profanations to make space to the virtual. To make space to the virtual is to make space to life and this “affirmative resistance” explains why in Lacan “the jouissance is painful” (Lacan, 1997) Furthermore, the costume of the Anartist itself is a profanation, because it replaces an Artist with an Anarchist and an Anarchist with an Artist by stealing and replacing the costume of the black bloc “rioters”. Each singular replacement implies a cluster of multiple heterogeneous replacements that find a temporary catalysis- equilibrium in a perpetually displacing nomadism. The Anartist is an avatar-machine that builds its own avatar-machine, replacing the spare parts of its costume. Each replacing is also reimagining (virtuality). Because “utopia” is the need of a new place for an impossible replacement that must be constantly reimagined as a radical need to make space for life. The voyage of the pilgrim is a coded saint practice because it is a practice of replacement but I see myself as an uncoded saint because my replacement is anarchist and can produce a contagious infection. At least in my dreamworld that is part of a desire and a virtuality. However the obstacles that the capitalist system, with the help of the state, puts to an anarchist replacement are more and more restrictive of freedom. I am forced to always be

an outsider even as an art researcher; when I simply wish to share my life with the warm feeling of the others. I wish to replace myself in the middle of the World and in the flesh of the Earth but it seems that is not possible. I should renounce my anomalous animality, to my becomings.



*Figure 19 The Anartist performing with his dog-costume in "Contact Zone".*

**Replacing the abstract scholarly writing with the flesh of a collective interspecies performance. (Overpassing Process-Phenomenology)**

The “CONTACT ZONE” intervention can be seen as an uber-process in which there is an overpassing of a book’s writing in the action of a performance. This overpassing is not a simple displacing replacement by opposition, but virtually hints to a beyond and to an inbetween. It is a seismic oscillating replacement. The disruption due to the replacement is not simply a passage from order to chaos, but it is also a simultaneous opening of many directions. However, right now, I am rewriting, replacing and re-territorializing the intervention CONTACT ZONE in the

new medium of an academic Journal. By writing this article I replace again a creative becoming of replacements.



*Figure 10 The Anartist performing with dogs in "Contact Zone".*

A becoming which is a virtually never-ending interdisciplinary uber-process. The video-performance CONTACT ZONE is divided into 3 parts; due to space constraints I will only describe the first and third parts, while everyone will be able to see the entire video online or as a multi- replacement installation in the exhibition linked to the AOR 2023 conference. The main tool-idea of the performance CONTACT ZONE has been to tie the book "When the species meet" with a black leash and drag the book with the famous cover with the stylized black shadow of a Labrador in the middle of a pack of Labradors in a space of the residence used for dog training. After 10 seconds a pack of Labradors, who were roaming free, guessed the game and got excited seeing the book dragged on the ground by a strange masked character with a tail. Haraway's book, which is usually found in university libraries, was therefore actually replaced on the dirty grounds of a kennel and dragged by a leash while the dogs began to hop around, sniff it, lick it, bite it, tear it apart with teeth and paws and chase it with barks, howls, yelps and grunts...I was participating



with my laughter and my gasping. At each bite on the book the flow of the performance became more and more intense, dizzying and exciting; and it turned out to be an athletic proof for an aging man more or less dressed as a black dog. One of my ontologically repeated profanations is to virtually reimagine, reinventing and replacing myself as a 25 years old man. Profanation is the source of youth. Actually, I lacked oxygen and felt my contours as an individual and human vanish as I became part of the pack's spinning play of difference. At one point both the dogs and I felt drunk from the intensity of the play and I sat on a chair built with wooden pallets while the dogs settled in watchfully waiting around me, expecting an exciting surprise. The strange thing is that they looked at me and seemed to laugh like hyenas at my clownish dog-costume. They were especially excited by the bump in my muzzle. So I opened what was left of the chewed book to a random page and the very part where Haraway criticizes Derrida mystically came out; and I started reading the book aloud in an English that wasn't even English anymore, being me completely drunk from lack of oxygen. While I was reading the book my muzzle swayed and some dogs bit me on the muzzle, others bit the book, everyone laughed like hyenas with their mouths open, then they jumped on me, running over me and stealing my book to keep playing elsewhere. They left me behind on the dirty ground: stinking with my own sweat and their salivation smeared over me. After a while I tried to get up and to recover what was left of the book by taking it out by the mouth of a Labrador with my last forces. I took a look at what was left intact of the book after the many parting bites of the pack and I could read the first page of a chapter with the title "Parting Bites". I also replaced the idea of the title with the more funny idea "Partying Bites". There I understood that I had to stop the performance because a circle of revelatory "mystic tautology" had been completed - I suddenly realized that a surrealist interspecies cut-up with the dogs was done during a collective performance. So I collected all the fragments of pages scattered

around on the dusty ground and I brought them into an old disused metal cage where I had placed an empty canvas. I attached the pieces of paper torn by the dogs to the canvas with silicone through a random replacement. Then I approached and opened an organic waste bin and took some dog excrement, which I then placed in an old circular metal trough. After this replacement I diluted the shit with water and glue and with a brush full of shit I painted on the canvas "Bio-capitalism is dog-shit!" Since the opening of the bin, a long series of replacements of the dog-shit had taken place before arriving to the canvas as an absolute "tautology". In the original video-performance the writing did not come out very clear, and therefore I had to go over it with another coat of dog shit to exhibit the shit-painting in the exhibition space of the Medici Fortress of Cassero in Grosseto. (I will skip all the hauntology of replacements of artists' and intellectuals' gestures, concerning the history of theory and contemporary art, related to the specific "scatology" (Bataille, 1985; Laporte, 2000) of my gesture. Contemporary art is in large part an "hauntology" (Derrida, 1993) of gestures, quotations, replacements and profanations.



*Figure 21 Final output of the performance "Contact Zone".*

## **Replacement of the video-performance in different exhibitions (Nomadic Contexts)**

A performative intervention is a “nomadic catalysis” of many displacing replacements that will form “a singular cluster-composition from a heterogeneous multiplicity with different origins” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). But this migratory uber-process never ends and each presentation is a new displacing replacement of the singular in the multiple re-composition of different contexts. So the spatial and temporal intrinsic nomadism of the work of art never ends because the work is pervaded by a migratory will of displacing replacement and replacing displacement. This nomadism is accentuated in a hyper-processual one- year long artwork such as Humanimal Community Art Projects. During the year 2022 many collective exhibitions have been generated with the material produced in the residency: one in Italy, three in Kentucky, one in Havana and an exhibition individual in Helsinki. Another one is programmed for 2023 in Belgium. I will analyze here only the replacements that concern my video-performance CONTACT ZONE.

The first replacement of CONTACT ZONE took place during the exhibition “Becoming-animal” in the ancient 1200 exhibition space of the galleries of the Medici Fortress in Grosseto (Tuscany, Italy). Here there have been various installation replacements and performative replacements. As for the installation-replacement, the video-document of the performance, which happened in the spaces of the residency, was replaced on a digital screen placed on a steel pedestal. Furthermore, the painting with the dog-shit placed in the video has also been replaced in a wall near the video-screen. As regards the performative-replacement, the Labradors that participated in the interspecies performance were transported and replaced from the kennel to the exhibition space during the

opening. There are therefore photos and videos where you can see Labradors roaming free in the exhibition space, and sometimes they stop for watching themselves in the video-screen showing themselves as protagonists of the performance: a replacement watching another replacement. As you can imagine a replacement has an intrinsic humorist charge, because it is also a displacement that opens the door of the comic, the absurd, the grotesque - as also Bergson (2014) and Nietzsche, and Bataille and Deleuze would agree (Amir, 2021)



*Figure 22 Labrador performing as the public of the exhibition in Fortezza Medicea (Tuscany) during the opening.*

The second replacement took place in the white cube of Campbellsville University in Kentucky, where the digital video-screen showing CONTACT ZONE was replaced into a black cage that was purposely designed by the maker for the transport of dogs. The video inside the cage replaced the simple video with an installation. The cage was found by me in the room of the residency where I was sleeping. The cage had been mysteriously left there by someone who had stayed in the room before he or she was replaced by me. So I replaced

the cage found in my room in the White Cube gallery of the University (with the video inside). Replacement has something magic and saint. It provides a saint void that disrupts everyday identity fetish generated by molar habits and allows the “holy hole” of the "Chora" for molecular intrusions, visitations, synchronicities, serendipitous revelations, hauntologies, tautologies, untimely intuitions, gnosis, prophecies. The Greek Oracle was a mantic holy hole. In a displacing replacement, the mantic disrupts the epistemic.



*Figure 23 Replacement of "Contact Zone" during an exhibition in Campbellsville University KY.*

The third replacement took place in the "solarium" of the elegant Art Nouveau villa “Speed Mansion” in Louisville, which houses the exclusive KayCAD school of art and design. In this case, the cage containing the video was suspended from the pavement by two dog leashes hooked to the cage and to the ceiling of the "solarium" which hosted the exhibition. A slightly rusty “Beware the Dog ” sign has also been added which was found on one of the gates of the mansion but which has been replaced as part of the CONTACT ZONE installation in the “solarium”. A replacement is also a post-structuralist

deconstructionist gesture in tension between architecture and “anarchitecture.”

(Hollier,

1992)



*Figure 24 Replacement of "Contact Zone" during an exhibition in KyCAD University KY.*

The fourth replacement took place in the elegant colonial style villa that houses the ArtHaus cultural center in Havana, where the exhibition took place. In this case the CONTACT ZONE video-performance was shown by means of a beamer, but instead of showing it on the white cinema-screen I rolled the screen up and projected the video onto the underlying black cloth with interesting embroideries. I liked the effect because it was increasing the dark gothic pitch of the video. Then I also recorded the video projected onto the embroidered black cloth with a fixed camera. In this way, I produced a David Lynch-like “replacement effect”. The idea was disturbing the retina to replace the video-performance in the mystic mystery genre. For me, the black color has a mystic value. It is the true anarchist flag because it erases every identity definition. It is

the absolute replacement in the placeless nowhere-everywhere of the mystic “myo” (Buddhist esotericism) or the “black sun” (Hermetic esotericism). See for example the use of the black in Malevich or in Debord; artists who largely inspire my profanations. Replacement of Contact Zone in AOR 2013 (Recollection of replacements)



*Figure 25 Replacement of "Contact Zone" during an exhibition in ArtHaus center in Habana (Cuba).*

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