Introduction

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Mosaic issue 54.2 is a special archival issue developed as the first part of a collaborative project with the Dutch artist team Bik Van der Pol. Sifting through fifty odd years of old issues and forty times as many published essays, we selected twelve to re-publish. Think of the collection as a reset. Torpor can be deadly for an institution. Movement is key. Becoming something new demands dialogue with the outside.

In short, the institution needs help. We went looking for it to find the problem, which is not the right word for the archival work at hand, but then, finding possibility isn't the crux either. Rather, combing through the archive for an outside intrinsic to it, we sought out moments of repetition. Problems and possibilities are derivative when repetition is originary. All too often, academic essays are read as springboards for our own work, or with a view to know a broad field reading results in a string of substitutions in place of the latter repression. Concrete difference never gains an edge, and as a result, "discursive formations" that line up on a "curve" and exist at the very limit of relation remain undiscovered (Foucault 41). Identifying what Foucault calls "statements," triangulating these between linguistic blocks through the "regularity of statements," and finally, recognizing that if this brings us closer to the point of the archival work at hand, like the swing of a compass, "statements […] inhabit a general realm of rarity within which they are distributed begrudgingly and even inadequately": thus Deleuze in his book on Foucault, titled *Foucault* (3-4).

It is these same complexities—I mean, these discontinuities, figural problems, repetitions, and mediations—that emerge from out of the theory of the archive which make Bik Van der Pol's practice difficult to summarize. Over a thirty year period they have been working with an increasingly complex set of expanding topologies keyed to space and time that make definition, the identification of limits, and the act of pinpointing any one motivating principle a confusing matter. Some very wooden characterizations are helpful to begin. First, Bik Van der Pol is two people: Liesbeth Bik and Jos van der Pol. They are based in Rotterdam, Holland. They have an acutely political perspective on what constitutes an art practice. Tropes adopted from outside the art field are the norm. Their work constantly bleeds off into the everyday, into history and larger processes. They are best known for their artist books, but they have planned an array of public platforms. Their exhibitions are drawn from various histories, archives, libraries, and publishers. *LOOMPANICS* (2001), an iterative exhibition project that variously showcases the subversive publications of the New York based publisher of the same name, stays with me (See Figure 1 at the start of the issue.)

They work collaboratively with institutions, always with a careful sensitivity to site, its wider environs, various constituencies, and so on. They often engage with the collecting practices of museums and work in the field of urban planning. Thus, *Take Part* (2018-20), for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA) and the San Francisco Public Library, where they uncovered a W.P.A. scale model of the city of San Francisco made and realized under the New Deal (Figure 2). They gathered up the pieces of this history and made them accessible to the cities' contemporary publics for reassembly. The old Lacanian trope of rearranging desire may yet have its day, for governmentality at the civic level, always a discursive effect, is put to public discussion. In *Fly Me To The Moon* (2006), they worked with the collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. They found Object N6-1991-4-25, a three billion year old moon rock, which spurred a speculative project on futurity and a reinterpretation of the golden age of Dutch painting (Figure 3). Poor Vermeer. Further back still, they established the School for Missing Studies, an "institution" structured by negation and seemingly propelled by its own redaction as an essentially variable, itinerant, and nomadic form…workshop…road trip…from 2013-15 a temporary master's program at the Sandberg Instituut, Amsterdam…and so on.

Ecology is a constant thread running through their work—thus, a 75 per cent scale model of the Farnsworth House (1945) built to house and sustain an ecosystem supporting butterflies and conversely the delicate system the order Lepidoptera support in turn. But *are you really sure that a floor can't also be a ceiling?* (2010), for the Museum of Contemporary Art, Rome, has a hitch. Mies van der Rohe's modernist

dream of situating human habitation within nature is turned inside out (Figure 4). The once great Roman public looked into this symbolic landscape from the far side of a glass curtain wall where each lived out their quiet cosmopolitan nightmares. And when these same Romans did enter the space of the butterflies, those left outside glimpsed this nightmare as a spectacle of separation. Typically, the health of micro-ecologies is nurtured against invasive species that tend to dominate any one worksite. But the opposite is also true, as in *Life, once more, continues to be free and easy* (2004), an ornithological meet and greet for the city of Terrassa, Spain (Figure 5). Titled after a phrase from Guy Debord's *Society of Spectacle* (1959), the piece amounted to a picnic in the park for a flock of Monk parakeets that had established themselves in the city that was so very far away from home.

And as with so many politicized art practices from Europe in the last twenty-five years, "radical democracy" (Laclau and Mouffe), "the commons" (Hardt and Negri), "micro utopias" (Bourriaud), pedagogies and knowledge production, "usership" (Wright), and "modest proposals" (Esche) for political change have been variously championed against the steamrollers of Neo-Liberalism. Public engagement and art as tool with a tactical use-value is always present.[1] One of their special areas of expertise involves archival politics and activating situations, dialogue, and discourse. To this extent they are especially interested in the gaps and blindnesses that exist within an institution or archive as an accumulated history of surfaces, the slow creep of ideological processes which over time amount to a shifting stratigraphy of power that can be analyzed and potentially breached. Mirroring is a recurrent trope here, but animating alternative narratives, performance, and dialogue are equally pervasive.

Part of what I rather hopelessly spotlight here—and it goes to the heart of the current issue—is that the practice of Bik Van der Pol cannot be neatly contained within a single box. The artist's studio as the traditional site of artistic production has been left behind for other work sites, other material. More specifically, Jos van der Pol's longtime métier as sculptor and Liesbeth Bik's métier as painter fade into the background and the very scene of the other as outside, institution, object, publisher's list, the desire of specific public, a failed utopia, etc., serves as a container to work within, from, and around. Ultimately, what I gesture towards here is that Bik Van der Pol occupy *Mosaic* issue 54.2 and do so by proxy, i.e., by virtue of the academic form of the journal itself and secondly by virtue of the essays reproduced.

To back up for a moment, this collaborative practice is in possession of an extremely mutable notion of the artistic support. The split subject that constitutes Bik Van der Pol constantly loses itself in the archives and institutions it studies. Not completely, of course, and presumably not to the extent of Roger Callois's examples of

"Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia," where exotic insects of Amazonia become completely absorbed in their environment or mime their object of focus, but we are nevertheless dealing with a category of haunting, and a kind of ghost work (Callois).

Take *Eminent Domain* (2015), an installation at The Power Plant Toronto, which is featured on our cover. It represents one of a handful of projects Bik Van der Pol have done in Canadian institutions. *Learning From Vancouver* (2010) at the Western Front and in collaboration with Urban Subjects was their first; *Between a Rock and Hard Place* (2011) with the Musagetes Foundation in Sudbury their second. This issue is their fourth. The image on our cover is an invitation to join other members of a diverse public on the carpet (Figure 6). The carpet itself is soft and warm like lying on a bed of moss in the summer. All around one, woven into the carpet and backwards as if in a mirror image, is the archived list of names of extinct species as counted from the year 1500 from the IUCN Red List. The concept of "Eminent Domain" itself was coined by seventeenth-century theologian, humanist, and political philosopher Hugo Grotius, whereby the state "or one of its agencies has the right to expropriate private property for public use."[2] Never mind the extravagant ends, uses, misuses, and abuses this concept has been put towards in the Canadian context for now, for in lying on the carpet our eyes look upward primarily at our own self-image reflected in a set of suspended mirrors. We see figures beside us and we see the reflection of the rich undergrowth that surrounds us all. In the context of their more recent projects in Amazonia, the reflected carpet is what Paulo Tavares calls "mud-earth […] a radical commonality according to which human and nonhuman rights are mutually constitutive and interdependent" (102)—but importantly, not without "convey[ing] the image of a fractured and disputed territory, sectioned and shaped by power relations and asymmetrical violence" (102).

Present on the literal level and present on the figural level of optical illusion: this is the condition of the subject in all of Bik Van der Pol's works. Embodiment and disembodiment are inseparably correlative. Expropriation is endemic in every language represented, including the privative languages of the self. But what is so very striking about this particular image of the installation is the second or third order of figuration that appears to hover somehow suspended between "floor" and "ceiling." It is a kind of delta wing possessed of tremendous speed, frozen by the camera angle itself. In truth it is a gap or discontinuity in the illusionistic machinery that is at one and the same time identical to the industrial supports, ductwork, and braided cabling present on the ceiling of the Power Plant itself. Let it stand for the interminable processes of modernization of which we are all in the grip: "'Modernity, the time of hell,' reads one of Walter Benjamin's jottings" (Clark 9).[3]

At some basic level—say, on the level of what anthropologists once termed sympathetic magic or "*participation mystique*"—Bik Van der Pol's version of institutional critique begins by assimilating or adopting the institution itself as its medium. In this sense, the first pragmatic step in their process of working with the long list of institutions with which they have bonded is a form of mimetic identity. This process, which operates on the logic of a spatial topology of equivalence, is a constant in their practice and stretches back to their earliest experiments in mirroring, such as *The Kitchen Piece* (1995) and *The Bookshop Piece* (1996) (Figures 7 and 8). What they realized in the aftermath of these early works—the former an exact copy of Jos van der Pol's kitchen built at the other end of his live-in studio; the latter a perfect working copy of the critical theory section of London's ICA bookshop built in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam—is that in spite of no real differences in content, a regularized structure of equivalence spanning various distances could be conceptualized and possessed of a surplus use-value for the unique communities in each case. This meta-theoretical frame that equates the two sets of unique spaces treats each as a reproduction of the other.

Very quickly—and I presume at least as quickly as singularity and surplus use-value themselves came into focus—this topological reproduction of unique spaces or supporting structures led to a range of scaler expansions. From the studio as experimental site, to the circulation and reciprocity of energy hinging between sites (as in the redesign of a lobby in Budapest, based in an installed copy of the bar of KunstVerein Munich designed by artist Apolonija Sustersics, or the re-exhibition in Rotterdam of a collection of works from the Frac Nord-Pas de Calais), onto a range of mobile exhibition platforms and poly-vocal projects grounded in specific sites with invited guests and local interest groups, the projects grow in scope. Extant criticism from the 2000s describes these moves as "displacements" and "deterritorializations" (Lüttiken 93; Attali 126), and more often than not, critics do provide an analytic that distinguishes the hypological problem of use-value from the hyperlogic of trends and theoretical catchwords, but other things go missing in the process. Criticality always goes awry in the face of continuity. In any case, this series of ever more vertiginous leaps from the traditional notion of the artist's blank canvas or block of marble, in their case a generational disposition for conversation and critical dialogue around the work, was made equivalent to the artists' studio and the artist's studio in turn=white cube=museum or institution=book or journal=ecological site=economy=global ecosystem.

For example, in the Japanese iteration of *Sleep With Me* (1997) for the Tokyo Opera Art Gallery in 2000, the group screened Andy Warhol's *Sleep* (1963), a five hour and twenty-one minute film of Warhol's then lover, John Giorno, sleeping. With various

accommodations made for the culturally accepted practice of sleeping in public, Warhol's filmic fiction is re-imagined as spilling out of its rectangular screen or celluloid projection and washing over bemused spectators. Curious workaholics were soon transformed into an inevitably drowsy and sleeping audience that doubled as a live performance of the film. In as much, *Sleep With Me* goes much further than simply promoting "the suspension of disbelief," for these lucky viewers really sleep with John Giorno (Figure 9). *Turning a Blind Eye* (2014), a large "scoreboard" the artists constructed for the much debated and protested thirty-first São Paulo Biennial, consisted of changeable text that expressed the simple opinions of the exhibitions docents and educators who had earlier been suspended of their duties for their overt criticism of the Biennials funders (Figure 10). Bik Van der Pol had to teach them the rudiments of poetic thinking. Thus one could read: "TODO CAMBURÃO TEM UM POUCO-DE NAVIO NEGREIRO" or "QUANTO MAIOR MENTIRA MAIS CRIVEL ELA É." As William Empson once described the ambiguous genre of pastoral art and poetry—in fact, a catch all for the aesthetic *in toto*—in São Paulo "Putting the complex into the simple" was a strategy of formalizing political critique in a way that did not raise the ire of the censors' eyes (53).

The regularization and streamlining of reproductive processes under Neo-Liberalism, which is but one of two cruxes here, demands a brief exfoliation. Almost certainly Bik Van der Pol's interest in form is homemade and practical. It is informed by a generational interest in relational aesthetics and the practices that came in its wake. It is the product of the very politicized art field that has emerged in the Netherlands over the last thirty years, and this edge has been honed over the group's twenty-five years of exhibition making around the globe. No doubt, too, it leans heavily on—as well as critically into—Europe's strong institutional support system for the arts—the Kunsthalle system in Germany, the FRACs of France, their equivalents in Holland like the Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven, or Basis

1. Bik Van der Pol, *Married by Powers,* 2002. TENT., Rotterdam. Photo credit: Bik Van der Pol.

2. Bik Van der Pol, *Nomads in Residence /No. 19,* 2004. Beyond, Leidse Rijn, Utrecht. In collaboration with Korteknie and Stuhlmacher architects. Photo credit: Bik Van der Pol.

voor actuele kunst (BAK) in Utrecht, etc.[4] Though symptomatic of larger processes, this institutional support militates against the necessities of having a commercial gallery. Lastly, in concert with their readings of Foucault and Deleuze, I am sure they gained a critical edge on the problem of form from Alan Sekula's long-term documentary project on the transformation of the mercantile shipping industry in the 1990s (Feiss 69). Rotterdam itself is one important node in the emergence, development, and consolidation of the globally integrated and automated container cargo system, which was Sekula's focus. The artists' own modest extension and twist on this project, which investigated the reuse and recycling of *Ford Boxes* (2005)—an early exemplar of containerized shipping—in Cork, Ireland, where I first encountered their work, is perhaps the best indication of this dialogue (Figure 11).[5]

But again, collapsing the distance that exists between languages is not their thing. The force-field effects of discursive formations are always primary. I overstate formal mimesis merely to make a point. Hypostatizing structural repetition comes at the cost of a second crux, which is primary and always elided. Containerization minimizes difference; misuses, abuses, and uses use; erases organic community; denudes local ecologies; negates the fortress mentality that safeguards the uniqueness of each and every institution. For Liesbeth and Jos—the couple that make up the practice of Bik Van der Pol, which should in turn be understood as a coupling mechanism—mimesis is never complete. Constructing a perfect mirror is impossible, and even forming an attachment to a small institution like *Mosaic* is complicated, porous, and a fraught activity. There are a number of practical obstacles for the prohibition to complete entrance that revolve around collaborative work itself. In the case of issue 52.4, these involve the simultaneously inside/outside relationship that the artists occupied in relation to the journal, the back and forth discussions that took place between them and *Mosaic*'s student interns, my own input that found copy in their thoughts as much as resistance, as well as the pandemic itself that stretched from the artists' first visit to *Mosaic*'s offices in February 2020 in Winnipeg until now.

These factors and many other obstacles had important consequences for the final selection of essays. But all of the latter pale in comparison to the larger problem of equivalence that the journal as ready-made model of spatial topology itself raises. *Mosaic* is a journal with its own unique trajectory, an academic readership all its own, a history stamped by its previous editors, with an origin rooted in the liberal multiculturalism of the Canadian mosaic, and so on. This is very different from the history, trajectory, and work of Bik Van der Pol. Yet our very different histories collide and converge in this special issue. In short, best to think of this convergence as a temporary event on the model of Fragment 91 from Heraclitus—"ποταμῷ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν

ἐμβῆναι δὶς τῷ αὐτῷ"—as well as on the atomistic model of Lucretius, not without its repercussions in the future, and hence with the temporal topology of Bik *Mosaic* Van der Pol in operation, but with each entity maintaining independence and on its singular (though expanded) course. To put it in the *lingua franca* of the moment, mRNA kicks in and the immunological paradigms of our world stumble on, though not without a certain interdisciplinary enrichment at the microbial level, or without necessary booster shots in the future.

All of this is to say that if constantly in operation, mimesis, identification, and mirroring are treated as very serious issues by this practice. That topology is a problem at all is implicit to the double-edged or two-sided critique that all of Bik Van der Pol's projects embody. After all, adopting the model of an automated system that grounds the global supply chain comes with certain worries attached. And they are not about shortages in toilet paper at your local Walmart. If mimetic identification is the very condition of possibility of entering into dialogue with an institution, the group is acutely aware that their model of topology also tends towards conquest, colonization, globalization, corporate raiding, privatization, viral load, etc. It is this predicament that is raised by one of the group's best and closest critics, Charles Esche. In "How to Talk about Things That Have Gone Missing," the curator argues for a version of spatial topology sensitive to difference and underwritten by history, what he describes as a process of decolonization that works hand in hand with demodernization, and specifically what he calls "a process of demodernising museums" (20). This is a proposal which many more institutions require than know. Speaking as a mobile institution or museum with as many dusty objects and thoughts all my own, working upstream is a necessity. Like philanthropists who bully their favourite civic institutions into adopting their names through large donations, spatial topology is a symptom of a much larger set of problems with a deeper and far more troubling history. This implicates colonialism, anthropocentrism, and all manner of resource extraction as the misuse and abuse of use.

Given that the problem of inter-subjectivity or what cognitive science calls Theory of Mind (ToM) is a byline of everyday life, there is no extricating oneself from the fundamental issue of topological projection. One can but minimize the damage, fall back on dialogue as a buffer, and hence reimagine entrance to an institution as taking a stand at the threshold, in a sort of revolving door that is the promise of both proximity and distance. All of this makes the banalities of dialogue that are bandied about far more critical and far more interesting than they are played out in the democratic context. Sven Lütticken, another sensitive critic of Bik Van der Pol, frames this same problem through what he describes as the literalization of dialogue. Characterizing

relational practices and socially engaged art in the 1990s, he talks about "the staging of vague and vaguely social processes," "processes and social interactions becom[ing] their own representations," and finally, "artists [who] present their 'social' practice as an alternate for an art world that is complicit with the culture industry [...] [who] create a spectacle of social participation" (92-93). Social process, discussion, and dialogue are always implicit to Bik Van der Pol's work, but these are folded into the work as backstory, and precisely not accumulated as spectacle, as Guy Debord would have it. One has to walk the walk and not only talk the talk if one wants to rebuild a world from out of the scant remains left in any one site, archive, or institution.

This involves another order of topology based in spatial collapse but governed by chiasmic exchanges that happen over time and ultimately in time. In the first instance, this is an essentially temporal process that operates according to the time worn principles of allegory. This is Bik Van der Pol's forte: working backward they retrace a series of steps that are equally missteps, but which point forward. The gaps and blindnesses that constitute the history of an institution or archive can be brought into visibility. The slow creep of ideological processes, which leave their trace over time, can be reversed. But don't be fooled into thinking the selection of essays here presented is itself the antidote to those missteps, the therapeutic bringing to light of ellipses, or a correction to Ranciere's "distribution of the sensible." Working in time, as Elizabeth Povinelli frames it, is a question of the trace, and hence a problem of affect. She writes, "the *remainder* is not a description of something but a concept acting upon something. *Remainder* forces governance—or figuration—through impression" (31). "Archival power," she tells us, "is a kind of iteration, or 'drive'" (30). In so doing, she provides a handy analytic of distinguishing an archaeology of knowledge from archival fever.

Thus the first and oldest essay selected, Ernst Fischer's "Chaos and Form." The essay appears in the inaugural issue of *Mosaic*, Volume 1, Number 1, which was edited by Kenneth McRobbie and R.P. Hoople in the fall of 1967, the year of Canada's Centennial. When first suggested for republication, I was frankly put off by this antiquated version of art history and literary studies. Too many stratigraphic shifts or discursive breaks lay between. But art as a transformative force clearly touched the artists in spite of these historical shifts. Certainly, human impact and humanity's place in space and time are recurrent tropes. And like Mondrian before them, who also worked in series, form for Bik Van der Pol is constantly in the process of becoming. As Bergson puts it, "Form is only a snapshot view of transition" (302). The very fragile dialectic between order and chaos, which has so shaped the Dutch landscape and imagination—the all is safe behind the dunes worldview—is glimpsed from the other

side. The sea encroaches. We are not in control…the question of art is never resolved…chaos is where we already are. So it is not only mimetic identity and use-value that is at issue, it is the trace. Affect comes from beyond the constitutive categories of the archive, and indeed, hails from within and beyond the singular entry; its "various efforts of embankment […] crumbling, and corroding edges" cannot be contained (Povinelli 31). If mimesis controls, use-value merely re-gifts the drive. "Governance—or figuration—through impression" is already backstory here. Use is a product or question of reading—what Povinelli damningly calls one more example of "settler colonial law" (30). Affect, on the other hand, is "a kind of iteration or 'drive'" with performative futures attached. Judith Leggatt's essay "Raven's Plague: Pollution and Disease in Lee Maracle's *Ravensong*," (*Mosaic* 33.4), first published in 2000, is the best example. For *Mosaic*'s past editor Dawne McCance, "the outbreak of plague provides a site from which to investigate cross-cultural narrative exchanges between Salish and European-Canadians, and, more broadly, 'the problems facing cross-cultural communication in the colonial setting'" (vii). This said, the affective, archival, and performative tailings at stake are different than the tailings left by the technologies of resource extraction so crucial to Maracle's novel and instanced by Leggatt's essay. Now—given Maracle's passing on 11 November 2021—this ghost work that writing performs is more important than ever.

It "dents" us (Povinelli 32).

The issue is shaped by dint of affect, through the force field effects of discursive formations, and a recursive symptomatology whose thresholds of visibility collapse mimetic identity and give way to ideology critique, performatives, use-value, abuse of use, and so on. Thus Donald L. Lawler's "Certain Assistances: The Utilities of Speculative Fictions in Shaping the Future" (*Mosaic* 13.3/4), first published in 1980 with *Mosaic* under the guest editorship of John J. Teunissen. In his general introduction to the issue, Teunissen zeroes in on Lawler's eleventh footnote as a lynchpin where science fiction and myth are joined at the hip. For Lawler, speculative fiction comes into focus as "cultural tell," "early warning system," and through the genres' shaping of a collective dream, the future materialized. Repeating a point made by William James, Lawler writes: "each one of us must contribute utopias (the cheekier the better)." Mythopoetics—the staid, Anglican, and very Canadian critical claim to fame (read: Northrop Frye)—is made to work overtime, and in ways that readers should be far less inclined to dismiss in the future. Charles Molesworth's "The End Once Again: Art and Politics at the Close of the Century" (*Mosaic* 29.1) from 1996 also treats time and history, specifically with an allegorical emphasis on how difficult it is to catch or pin down. Departing from a contemporaneous exchange between Vaclav Havel and Josef

Brodsky about the post-communist world and with incisive remarks on Dewey's Hegelianism, Molesworth links "doubt and good taste" as much as skepticism with "good taste" to anti-foundationalism. First published in December 1999, Cyndy Hendershot's "From Trauma to Paranoia: Nuclear Weapons, Science Fiction, and History" (*Mosaic* 32.4) looks at the durational shock waves of the atom bomb. Appearing at the very close of the twentieth century and prefaced with a requisite millenarianism by departing editor Evelyn Hinz, the trauma of the atomic bomb is shown to shift registers, turning the historical into the mythological, the genre of science fiction against history, and transforming the future through paranoia.

David Lashmet's "'The Future Is History': *12 Monkeys* and the Origin of AIDS" (*Mosaic* 33.4) from 2000 sets the AIDS pandemic against the background of lab produced viruses. In McCance's introduction, "the plague in question here is as much a psychological as a biological phenomenon, and, while it cannot be simply subsumed to the discourse on AIDS, the film, through its recourse to catastrophe, offers a critique of 'the power dynamics of modern medical institutions' in the age, and through the experience, of AIDS" (vii). As in Leggatt's essay on Maracle and "Raven's Plague," Lashmet's "'The Future Is History'" turns around a catastrophic epidemic that effects positive change. Like Leggatt's and Lashmet's essays, Lisa Lynch's "Arrowsmith Goes Native: Medicine and Empire in Fiction and Film" (*Mosaic* 33.4) comes from a special issue titled *Hygieia: Literature and Medicine.* In the issue, McCance brings literature and medicine together in ways that resist the subsumption of one to the other. Of the specific essay, she writes in the introduction, "Lynch reads the novel as a critique of colonial rule and of the American medical practice that serves it; after considering the novel, Lynch shows how the 1931 film based on it was altered so as to make the *Arrowsmith* narrative more palatable to its American viewing audience" (vii).

William V. Spanos's "The Specter of History: Rethinking Thinking in the Post-Cold War Age" (*Mosaic* 34.4) from 2001 reflects upon the repetitious pattern of thought inherent to liberal democracy, especially the cycle of violence that is never quelled. Helen Tiffin's "Foot in Mouth: Animals, Disease, and the Cannibal Complex" (*Mosaic* 40.1) from 2007 looks at the relationship between disease and global capitalism, in particular forced cannibalism keyed to industrial farming practices and the great meat scare of the early 2000s. The essay was featured in a special issue titled *The Animal, Part II*, which interrogated "'apparent transgressions' of certain closely guarded boundaries, and [the] conceptual and ecological failures that stem from a refusal to break these boundaries down" (McCance v). She singles out the threat that the "mad cow" outbreak posed "less to our brains [. . .] than to our identity as 'civilized' humans (rather than 'savages' or 'animals') and to our anthropocentric being in the world" (Tiffin).

Laura Barbas Rhoden's "Ecology, Coloniality, Modernity: Argentine Fictions of Tierra Del Fuego" (*Mosaic* 41.1) from 2008 turns on perspectives from the global South. Two Argentinian novels focused on Tierra del Fuego by Sylvia Iparraguirre and Libertad Demitrópulos are set against the backdrop of nineteenth-century British colonialism and Argentine nation-formation. Matthias Fritsch's "Democracy, Climate Change, and Environmental Justice" (*Mosaic* 48.3) from 2015 is an exceptional piece of writing on the critique of presentism, human exceptionalism, animal rights, and the climate crisis. Taking turns and sharing would seem to be such a naïve thing but Fritsch puts Derrida's thought of democratic sovereignty to work at a very high level, making it arc towards intergenerational solutions existing beyond the discontinuities and shifts of power that define the contemporary moment. Finally, in Thomas Peyser's "Henry David Thoreau on Spontaneous Order and Its Enemies" (*Mosaic* 50.4) from 2017, we revisit the edge of Walden's pond, where a "thawing sandbank […] 'organizes itself as it flows.'" Against the backdrop of the hustle and bustle of modernity these slow processes of melt on the edge of a pond provide another snapshot view of transition.

And if these temporal edges are allegorical, then the essays revisited here, which bring us from the journal's inaugural issue (1.1, October 1967) to the final issue of its fiftieth anniversary year (50.4, December 2017), also present a very literal edge on the journal's publication history, not to mention a very unique experience of working in and out of time for *Mosaic*'s staff. The act of searching through the journal's archive in preparation for Bik Van der Pol's visit to the University of Manitoba in February 2020, conducted by *Mosaic*'s team of student interns at that time (Ifeoluwa Adeniyi, Annah Coleman, Megan Mahon, Sabrina Mark, and Daisy Wu), involved reviewing, reassessing, and reimagining fifty-two volumes and over two hundred issues of the journal's publication history. The act of reassembling these essays into a new issue—in collaboration with Bik Van der Pol as an artistic entity, under a different Editor and production team, removed from the framework of their original issues (many of which were special topic issues and thus shaped in response to specific questions and topologies)—has been to repeatedly confront these texts as existing both in and out of their own times. Thus, for instance, we see Tiffin's essay, which McCance calls "an indicator of the compass of" (v) *Mosaic*'s special issue *The Animal, Part II* (40.1, March 2007), placed into conversation with an entirely different set of essays. Finally, the practicalities of reproducing the final selection of essays in light of changing citational standards and procedures, layout design, and structure (such as the absence of abstracts in the journal's first twenty-seven years of publication) has forced us to repeatedly treat these discrete moments of the journal not just as a dialogue with time in terms of physical reproduction, and the complexities of very singular figural economies, but as a variable set of historical shifts, the majority of which we hope remain visible.

NOTES

1/ They have shaped my idea of what contemporary art is and can do. Often I approach work in the gallery through their optic, with both members of the group on either one of my shoulders whispering into both ears.
2/ bikvanderpol.net/80/eminent_domain/.
3/ T.J. Clark quotes Walter Benjamin, *Farwell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism,* Yale UP, 1999.
4/ *Married By Powers: a selection from the Frac-Nord de Calais at Tent. Rotterdam* (2002) is one example. The artists chose 150 works from the Departmental collection. Criteria included: "if a work generated recognition and discussion between them, if it 'spoke' and appealed to them, if they were eager to see a specific work that they had seen before, again, and last but not least, if they really wanted to use this opportunity to create the possibility to finally see works in real, works that they only knew from images or stories of others." Bik Van der Pol, <bikvanderpol.net/402/married_by_powers_with_frac_nord_pas_de_calais/>.
5/ No less exemplary is their *No. 19/Nomads in Residence* (2004), an artists residency project housed in a mobile studio and based on the dimensions of a standard shipping container: 18x4x3.4 m. Though placed in Leidsche Rijn, a residential district near Utrecht in 2004, the container along with the nomadic residency can be moved. <https://www.bikvanderpol.net/384/nomads_in_residence_no_19/>

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