

LISTAHÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS
Iceland University of the Arts

Living Through the Gaze

Design Practice For and Without Human

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Final Thesis for an MA-degree

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Abstract

The urge and attempt to escape the author's own *gaze* is the subject matter of this thesis; to go beyond the way a person perceives objects in its environment, being restrained by different values, ideologies, beliefs and other layers of applied *meanings*. One key question of the thesis is: what is the difference between *self* and *other*? First there is a discussion of two particular branches of semiotics: *biosemiotics* and *ecosemiotics*, both of which supply theoretical support to the aim of this thesis, in particular Jakob von Uexküll's *Umwelt* theory. However, there is a need of considering more than only the biotic elements of a given environment. This is done by recourse to *Object Oriented Ontology* and *Process Philosophy*, two different schools of thought that treat abiotic *actors* equally important as biotic actors. Finally, three examples of different practical attempts from the fields of art and design are discussed in order to facilitate theoretical contemplation. These are Thomas Thwaites' *Holiday from Being Human* as a GoatMan, where he escapes the angst of being a *Homo sapiens sapiens*; Pierre Huyghe's *Umwelt* where an attempt is made to bridge the gaps between biotic and abiotic *Umwelten*; and the author's own co-creation with Argitxu Etchebarne called *Symphony for the New Migration* in which the duet explores and *exhausts* different Icelandic environments, and the process of *archiving* becomes a way to spot the unnoticed and look at how everything *mingles*.

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There came the day when this creature realized that it was itself an *umwelt* builder; that its role was, in fact, a role; that other creatures performed other roles and had different kinds of *umwelt*; that the world was one thing, and *umwelt* another; and that, when one died, this *umwelt* would actually disappear while the world as such would carry on. In short this creature perceived its own existential alienation from the world.¹

- Jesper Hoffmeyer “Signs of Meaning in the Universe”

Introduction

Designation of the term *gaze* resembles with the philosophical notions of existentialism and phenomenology, referring to both: the act of “seeing” and “being seen”. In its violent tone, *the gaze* captures the necessity of a human to grasp the essence of accruing phenomena, find the meaning of what there is, how is it existing and in what way it relates to oneself or others. When *gazing* at the entities found in its environment, everything bends toward one’s perceptual possibilities; therefore when talking about what is human, everything around one, applies first and foremost to Human. But what defines *Human*? Is it the biological, sociological or maybe metaphysical aspect of their existence? The following example presents only few of many different binomial names formerly given to the Human species, constantly questioned, redefined, bent in different directions: *Homo sapiens*, *Homo absurdus*, *Homo aestheticus*, *Homo excentricus*, *Homo logicus*, *Homo faber*, *Homo poetica* (...)

One of the present thinkers on the scene of the ongoing debate, Donna Haraway, argues that the name one should use to describe themselves is nothing else, than *humus*; “We are humus, not Homo, not anthropos; we are compost, not posthuman.”² Especially when being present during the Sixth Great Extinction, *humus* realizes the autopoietic systematics³ of their environment and directly experiences the consequences of their most intimate actions, they get closer to see themselves being thrown into the world as dropped onto the compost. In other words, the way one thinks of its organism in the world gets shifted. Perception of *self* is being questioned, paraphrasing Jesper Hoffmeyer, a molecular biologist and one of the leading figures of the biosemiotic field; am I simply an endosymbiotic system comprised hundreds of trillions of bacteria, and so are bacteria the only true individuals in this world, making other forms of life only a combination of bacteria?⁴ Forwardly another question to be

¹ Jasper. Hoffmeyer, *Signs of Meaning in the Universe* (USA: Indiana University Press, 1996), 34.

² Donna Haraway, “Tentacular Thinking: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene,” *E-flux*, no. 75 (September 2016), www.e-flux.com/journal/75/67125/tentacular-thinking-anthropocene-capitalocene-chthulucene/.

³ Through autopoietic systematics of the environment I am pinpointing to the mutual dependance of every element of the given environment, which constantly influences and is being influenced by given factors contained in the environment. This thought will be further developed in the fragments focusing on relations between living and non-living elements of the environment.

⁴ Hoffmeyer, “Signs of Meaning in the Universe,” 31-32.

stated arises: if human is the compilation of other living, and non-living entities⁵, are we for sure the only specie that can read signs, or create meaning?

To better understand this shift in perceiving our *self* and *other* in the world, I would like to introduce Jakob von Uexküll, a Baltic German biologist, whose thoughts are currently going thorough renaissance, both within and outside of the field of biology, and which will significantly contribute to the following chapters of this paper. In his work “Theory of Meaning”, grounding previously mentioned emerging field of biosemiotics, Uexküll introduces the concept of ‘meaning-carriers’, explaining it in the following way:

The habitat of an animal, which spreads out around it, transforms itself before its eyes into its Umwelt (subjective universe), where the most varied meaning-carriers scurry about. The habitat of the plant, which is limited to the area around its location, transforms itself, from the plant’s point of view, into a dwelling-integument consisting of various meaning-factors that are subject to regulate change. The life-task of the animal and the plant consists of utilizing the meaning-carriers and meaning-factors, respectively, according to their particular building-plan.⁶

The meaning-carrier might be anything, for which an object present in given environment carries specific function in the Umwelt⁷ of the one, that in any way intra-acts⁸ with it. An example given by Uexküll is the steam of a blooming meadow-flower, and its role in the Umwelt of a girl who picks the flower to adorn her bodice, an ant that uses its surface to reach the food in the flower-petals, a cicada-larva which uses sap from the stem to construct the walls of its airy house and the cow, which utilizes them as food⁹. Therefore “everything that falls under the spell of an Umwelt (subjective universe) is altered and reshaped until it has become a useful meaning-carrier, otherwise it is totally neglected.”¹⁰ One can not escape their physical limitations, hence it is hard to acknowledge different Umwelten and meaning-carriers of other entities in one’s spectrum. The use of the word *entities* not *organisms*, is worth underlying, as the ones that are constantly neglected and not given enough value are non-living beings. One of the examples of this hierarchization might be the mass production and accumulation of objects usually called *waste*, which ends up deep under the ground, or in the vastness of the ocean, as far from the human gaze for as long it will not flow out in front

⁵ Non-living entities will in this case represent the inseparable relationship of human and technology.

⁶ Jakob von Uexküll, “The Theory of Meaning,” in *Semiotica* 42(1): 25-82, translated by Barry Stone and Herbert Weiner (1982), 36.

⁷ Explication of the term *Umwelt* can be found in the first subchapter of the thesis.

⁸ *Intra-action* is a term used by Karen Barad in her book “Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning”, which “understands agency as not an inherent property of an individual or human to be exercised, but as a dynamism of forces”. This way of looking at the relations will be further explained in the second subchapter of this paper.

⁹ Von Uexküll, “The Theory of Meaning,” 30.

¹⁰ Ibid. 31.

of our feet. When going through this process of unblinding there comes the time, when that which was once out of sight, is no longer out of mind, and so another question which will be raised on the pages of this paper formulates: are living organisms the only *actors* on the stage of evolutionary processes, and what is the role of non-living beings in the ever-fluxing environment?

Should we, as humans, forget about the *significance* of *life*, and focus on relations and communication between *objects*¹¹ in general? As for the most part of the human history we surely tend to share the feeling of being of a higher *significance* in the realm of existing objects. Unquestionably, the highest significance of human which can not stay unnoticed, is their apparent influence on everything around them, including other entities inhabiting the same territory. Realizing this, it strikes me to be a responsibility of an individual, or an endosymbiotic system comprised of hundreds of trillions of bacteria which is *myself*, to undertake what seems to be the impossible attempt to reach beyond the human gaze. I will try to find out in what ways can I intra-act with objects found in my own Umwelt and Umwelten of other objects. Thus, with the designer's approach, by which I mean the translator of the experience, examining the relations between objects of the environment made for and by human, analyzing possible Umwelten of the elements in it; going through the biological, symbiotic, inanimate, semiotics and looking through the lens of the most common media for storytelling; art and design, I intend to pursue on this impossible journey; in search for no gaze of a human in the world dominated by one.

¹¹ I am using the term *objects* referring to the principles of Object Oriented Ontology, which will be further brought up in the second subchapter of this paper.

1. The Gaze: A priori

Many tried to point out what differs human from non-human, drawing the line that divides diverse forms of life, as well as separates the animated from inanimated. Thomas A. Sebeok (1920-2001) was one of the first to include non-human agents into the field of semiotics, focusing on communication and signalling of other animals. In his book *Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics*, Sebeok argued, that what distinguishes life forms from inanimate objects is the ability to signal their existence, communicate within the species and model incoming information from the external world¹². Some of the more radical ideas revolving around the signal communication suggests, that the fundamentals of the world-forming relations are all based on a constant of receiving and interpretation of signs. For example, looking at the micro scale of this phenomenon, Sebeok described the origin of nucleated cells as the symbiotic and semiotic collaboration among single cells¹³. Following this thought, what can be the role of semiotics in understanding the relation of oneself with its environment? One of the propositions of Sebeok are as following thought suggests: “semiotics never reveals what the world is, but circumscribes what we can know about it; in other words, what a semiotic model depicts is not “reality“ as such, but nature as unveiled by our method of questioning”¹⁴.

The circumscription of what we can know about the reality seems unavoidable and necessary to make any statements about positioning ourselves in the world; yet, it might as well be very dangerous. Until quite recently the main focus for studying the processes of semiosis was centred around the Human species, which positioned everything else in the lower level on the pyramid of values. The conviction that *homo* is the only being that can perceive the *thing in itself* and look at the world with the eyes of objective, had not often been questioned. It is hard to get beyond our own systems of values and beliefs, not mentioning our perception possibilities. One could argue that the latter is impossible, at least yet, until emerging technologies solving this problem remain purely speculative. Knowing that, how can we recognize our own *gaze*?

The use of term *gaze* for the particular purpose of this thesis can be better understood when referring it to the concept of ‘semicide’, constituted by Ivar Puura (1961-2012) the

¹² Thomas. Sebeok, *Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics* (Canada: University o Toronto Press, 2001), 3.

¹³ Ibid. 28.

¹⁴ Ibid. 26.

geologist from Estonian University of Tartu, who for many years had been a supporter and a dialogue partner of the Tartu semiotic community¹⁵. Puura describes his understanding of semiocide as a “situation in which signs and stories that are significant for someone are destroyed because of someone else’s malevolence or carelessness, thereby stealing a part of the former’s identity”¹⁶. How I would like to relate to the introduced concept is through looking at it with the eyes of one that is committing semiocide, rather than the one that is a victim of the semiotic abuse. Therefore, committing semiocide, from Ancient Greek *sēma*, ‘mark, sign’ and *-cīda* ‘cutter, killer’, applies to the need to obliterate your own *gaze*, to be aware of how and why you relate to the given environment. It would be desirable to commit the semiocide; on your own values and beliefs in relation to another, in order not to impose any meaning that might not necessarily be there.

Following the introduction of semiocide, Puura argues that what might make humans different from other animals is their ability for mental travel into the past and the future. He asks: “In case this is so – have we tried to appreciate the true wealth that this ability gives us? Are we able to perceive these opportunities and the full responsibility that it brings along?”¹⁷ Because the impact of a human to its surroundings is much greater and often more violent than of any other species existing, the responsibility in application of meaning on someone and something seems crucial to be questioned. *The human gaze*, that bends the reality towards individual perception apparatus, its values, beliefs and memories, results in the negligence in caring for these elements of an environment, which are not of a primary importance to a person. But is not the whole world of the same person constituted primarily of the diversity of everything what is *other* to them?

Since the ability to remember our past and to project our being into the future makes us so eager to preserve our existence over time, semiotics can teach us that we can thrive only in our relations with what is other and different. It is indeed a profound semiotic insight that to have a future, any semiotic sphere needs a realm (objects, partners of dialogue, context) that remains (partially) outside it and that it does not fully perceive, understand or control. We are our memories, but what we predominantly remember, are others – other human beings, animals, places, books.¹⁸

What could be the difference between *self* and *other* and why it is important to be questioned, will be examined more closely in the second following subchapter – but first and foremost the concept of Umwelten must be delved into.

¹⁵ Timo Maran, “Enchantment of the past and semiocide. Remembering Ivar Puura,” *Sign Systems Studies* 41 (2013): 146, doi: 10.12697/SSS.2013.41.1.09.

¹⁶ Ivar Puura, “Nature in our memory,” *Sign Systems Studies* 41 (2013): 150, doi: 10.12697/SSS.2013.41.1.09.

¹⁷ Ibid. 150.

¹⁸ Maran, “Enchantment of the past and semiocide. Remembering Ivar Puura,” 149.

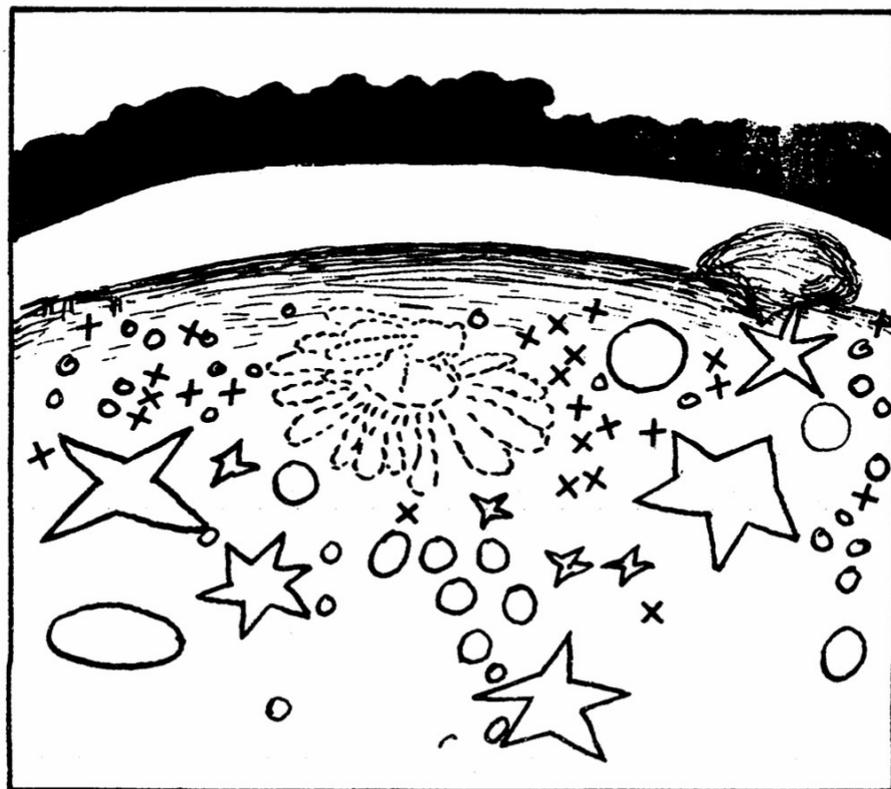


Figure 1: Umwelt of a honey bee as sketched and imagined by Jakob von Uexküll.

1.1 Umwelt

Before human have become more aware of intra-connectivity that bonds all the living and non-living elements constituting the ecological community of Earth, life forms other than themselves had been significantly seen and treated as non-sentient automata – machines¹⁹ with no consciousness. However, every theory generates its own opposition, which in this case led to the conviction that everything *living* has (or in even more radical forms: everything *is*) consciousness. Everything has its own subjective world: its own *Umwelt*.

Jakob von Uexküll (1925-1940) became one of the first contributors to the field of biosemiotics, which challenged the normative, mechanical view on biology and interpreted the biological realm as a study of sign communication. Years later, that theory led to formation of *ecosemiotics*, which pushes the boundary of semiosis even further, being applied to the study of ecosystems and their representation in human culture(s)²⁰. Focusing primarily on the biological aspects of semiosis, Uexküll's theories became an inspiration and concern for many other fields e.g. ethics, phenomenology and zoology but also to art or design, which this paper will be subsequently focusing on. The theory of Umwelt, which nowadays goes through its renaissance, is explained in one of his most famous essays *A stroll through the worlds of animals and men*; "all animals, from the simplest to the most complex, are fitted into their unique world with equal completeness. A simple world corresponds to a simple animal, a well-articulated world to a complex one."²¹ The first task of Umwelt research, Uexküll states, is to identify an animal's perceptual cues among all the stimuli in its environment and to build up the animal's specific world with them²². Thus, the Umwelt of the honey bee, sketched by Uexküll himself (see Figure 1), marks all of the blossoming flowers meaningful to the bee, excluding all of the buds. The same environment unfolds differently to the variety of Umwelten, so where lies the boundary between *my* Umwelt and *yours*? Is it possible to *merge* Umwelten? What is the role of non-living beings in shaping Umwelten of others and could it be said that they themselves have an Umwelt? At this point it is good to

¹⁹ The most representative example of mechanical thinking is dualism of Descartes, where the mind – res cogitans – gets separated from the body – res extensas – to mark the mind as a non-physical entity. Reason found in the metaphysical mind (which Descartes understood as effected by the pineal gland situated in the brain) was to be what distinguishes human from other animals, and that was *inter alia* one of the factors Jakob von Uexküll was opposing to. In reference to Jesper Hoffmeyer, that is as well what biosemiotics tries to deminish, by understanding sign process as decentralized from what is enclosed in "human mind" – and seeing tissues or cells interpreting their own environment and acting accordingly (Hoffmeyer, *Signs of Meaning in the Universe*, 94).

²⁰ Timo Maran, "Two decades of ecosemiotics in Tartu," *Sign Systems Studies* 46 (2018): 630, doi: 10.12697/SSS.2018.46.4.11.

²¹ Jakob von Uexküll, "A stroll through the worlds of animals and men," ed. Thure von Uexküll, *Semiotica* 89 (1934), 324.

²² Ibid. 327.

underline how the term ‘Umwelt’ will be used in the following chapters, revolving around stated questions. ‘Umwelt’ has to be distinguished from the word ‘Umgebung’, which both are necessary to be explained in their English translations. The first means the environment perceived by and meaningful to a particular being, whereas the latter is simply the surrounding and everything that it consists of.

(...) shall we recognize the soap bubble which encloses each of us as well. Then we shall also see all our fellow men in their individual soap bubbles, which intersect each other smoothly, because they are built up of subjective perceptual signs. There is no space independent of subjects.²³

-Jakob von Uexküll “A stroll through the worlds of animals and men”

1.2 Self and Other: Mingling

Through using the *bio* and *eco* branches of the semiotic field, the emphasis is being put on the *relations* between different entities and phenomena within a given environment – rather than to the objects examined in the void, separated from everything around them. It is important to realise this distinction, as it allows to expand the understanding of our own Umwelt, as well as the Umwelten of others. Take Gregory Bateson’s formulation who writes that children “are told that a ‘noun’ is the “name of a person, place, or thing”, that a ‘verb’ is “an action word” and so on. That is, they are taught at a tender age that the way to define something is by what it supposedly *is* in itself, not by its relation to other things.”²⁴

The question that arises when referencing the thought of Gregory Bateson, who next to Uexküll and Charles Sander Pierce shaped the foundation of the field of biosemiotics²⁵, is; how could you know that something supposedly *is* in itself? In the same manner as biosemiotics was a response to the notion of mechanical biology, Object Oriented Ontology (hereafter *OOO*) became the response to the Kant’s Copernican Revolution, in which objects of the environment appear as the result of human cognition; whereas in triple *OOO*-ing everything exists independently from the human mind. What it does imply is the assumption, that no living being has a *better* insight into how things exist than any other entity; no one can enter the realm of Plato’s *ideas*. Furthermore, when implementing this way of seeing the world – *life* itself becomes a part of a bigger picture, and is not necessarily prioritized.

²³ Ibid. 339.

²⁴ Gregory. Bateson, *Mind and Nature* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1979), 16.

²⁵ Each thought of the founders is firmly discussed in the Jesper Hoffmeyer’s *Introduction to Biosemiotics: The New Biological Synthesis* (Netherlands: Springer, 2008).

What do I mean by this oddly sounding thought is: it is not of the biggest importance whether I am referring to *you* or to *me* as the elements of a given environment, but rather to the relation between *us* and what does this relation brings forth: no matter if *you* are a bee, a flower's bud or – I would argue – a non sentient plastic bottle. As for the understanding of different Umwelten and obliterating one's own gaze, the objects cannot be limited by the way they exist, but how they relate to others. There is a difference here in the understanding of *life* worth underlying – the distinction between the existence of a given object and its biological agency. Once the relation of objects intra-acting is brought to the foreground; no structures, values or hierarchies are being implemented into the objects themselves. But why refraining from implementing a meaning onto objects detached from everything around them is in any way essential?

Sebeok underlines that it “is important to realize that only living things and their inanimate extensions undergo semiosis”²⁶, which seems to be a questionable statement. The inanimate extensions *are* actors, the fact that they are put into the context of a *living* is just a change of their agency within a given relation. Undervaluation of the non-living object by a human can results e.g. with the overproduction of the materials, leading to highly polluted lands and accelerated environmental changes. Could it be that the next step in expanding the idea of subjective worlds includes non-living elements as having their own Umwelt? To better understand this hypothesis, which assigns non-sentient existences their own kind of subjective universe, we shall take the insight into the philosophy of process. As for process philosophy “there is no fundamental ontological distinction between subject and object nor subject and predicate; an actor is not ontologically isolated from its environment nor is it ontologically separate from its dispositions (i.e. what it does)”²⁷. To look at an object as constantly *mingling* with everything around it is in fact, to look at it as being inseparable from its surrounding, moreover: to be co-creating it. An example of the non-living entities being important actors and what might be understood as undergoing semiosis, is the study of wild-life use of and adaptation to the human-made materials and *vice versa*. Objects which a human calls and treats as *waste* might become important factors in the world of another life forms. When the marine life must adapt to the highly polluted waters, a plastic head of a

²⁶ Sebeok, *Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics*, 28.

²⁷ Roope Kaaronen, “Reframing Tacit Human-Nature Relations: An Inquiry into Process Philosophy and the Philosophy of Michael Polanyi,” in *Environmental Values* 27, no. 2 (2018): 5, doi: 10.3197/096327118X15162907484466.

Process philosophy focuses on the *becoming* rather than *being*; understanding change as constant, and processes as ontologically and epistemologically more important than independent objects. Nowadays during the acceleration in ecological studies this processibility plays an important role in examination and realization of interconnectivity in different ecosystems.



Figure 2: Hermit crab choosing an old doll's head as their temporary home. Filmed on the shores of Wake Island in the western Pacific Ocean.

human-child doll becomes a temporary house of a hermit crab, as shown on the Figure 2. The Umwelt of an object which used to be a figurative representation of human's head changes as well. An increasing level of the human-made materials co-creating and significantly changing different ecosystems, slowly leads to accepting and embracing the human *techne* as a part of ever-fluxing *nature*; which makes the non-sentient no longer being only an extension of the living, but having an agency of their own.

The line between *self* and *other* appears as very thin and fragile. For the focus of the next chapter I have chosen to look closer at the expansion of one's Umwelt, as the anarchistic way to look at the formation of relations between the objects of an environment, and not the way the objects could exist independently from each other. As the lens for this exploration a few examples from the field of art and design were chosen. These constantly changing and ever-growing fields have the power to blur the boundaries between reality and fiction – so hard to be indicated when trying to grasp the Umwelt of another – through storytelling, critique, abnormative experiments and the way these creations can become the fundamentals for constituting what is known and how to understand *knowledge*.

But those who know what it means to be Man long to be anything but. If I could, I would choose every day another form, plant or animal, I would be all flowers one by one: weed, thistle, or rose; a tropical tree with a tangle of branches, seaweed cast by the shore, or mountain whipped by winds; bird of prey, a croaking bird, or a bird with melodious song; beast of the forest or tame animal. Let me live the life of every species, wildly and unself-consciously, let me try out the entire spectrum of nature, let me change gracefully, discreetly, as if it were the most natural procedure.

How I would search the nests and caves, wander the deserted mountains and the sea, the hills and the plains! Only a cosmic adventure of this kind, a series of metamorphoses in the plant and animal realms, would reawaken in me the desire to become Man again. If the difference between Man and animal lies in the fact that the animal can only be an animal whereas man can also be *not-man*—that is, *something other than himself—then I am not-man.*

- Emil Cioran *On the Heights of Despair* “Not to be a Man anymore”

2. The Gaze: A Posteriori

Where does the need to obliterate your own gaze come from? Why would someone even perform such a gesture, which undermines everything one knows and experiences? The attempt to expand one's Umwelt seems to be a response to recognizing the normative, human-centered gaze, and the need to subsequently *cut* it. The hybridic representations of a human-like figure crossed with different animals can be spotted way back, dating to the beginning of widely-understood *humanity*²⁸. Dwelling into arts and other closely related fields provides an important insight into the parallel presents²⁹ and becomes a way to be *not-man*, or; a way to keep debating *human*. This need might as well be driven by something simple, shared by all; the need “to escape the angst inherent in being a human.”³⁰

²⁸ In the book *GoatMan. How I took A Holiday From Being Human*, which will be introduced in the next subchapter, Thomas Thwaites marks the historical examples of bridging a gap between a man and animal.

²⁹ *Parallel Presents* is a book written by Amelia Barikin. The author goes through the art of Pierre Huyghe, who will become of significant relevance for the matters discussed in the second chapter.

³⁰ Thomas Thwaites, “A holiday from being human (GoatMan)”, accessed November 2019, www.thomasthwaites.com/a-holiday-from-being-human-goatman/.



Figure 3: Thomas Thwaites' process of designing the Goat Man costume.

2.1 Thomas Thwaites: Taking the Holiday from Being Human

On the first sight the project of Thomas Thwaites, through the process of which he takes ‘the holiday’ from being a human and tries to become a goat, appears to be funny. A joke, one might say, as the viral YouTube video with over six million entrances implies, in which the news anchors can’t stop laughing when presenting it to the broader audience³¹. The laugh of the presenters increases when mentioning the motivation of Thwaites for his *becoming*: the need to obtain a simpler life. Something what seemingly may appear funny, is an experiment of a bigger significance, what had been fairly noticed by rewarding the designer with the Ig Nobel Prize³², advertised as acknowledging the “researches that make people *laugh* and then *think*”³³. Among others, two other people had been rewarded for the similar attempts in the recent years: Charlotte Grumm which connected herself to a sheep for five weeks, and Charles Foster, who had tried to live as a badger, an otter, a deer, a fox, and a bird. However, the example of Thwaites’ GoatMan seems to be the best representative for the *becoming* and a subject of this essay – showing different stages of an attempt to alter Umwelt of another species.

The quote from John Stuart Mill’s *Utilitarianism* (1863) opens the book of Thomas Thwaites, in which he wrote down the journey that led him to the possibility of roaming freely on four legs up in the Alps: “It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is only because they only know their own side of the question.” Thwaites describes himself as “a designer (of a more speculative sort), interested in technology, science, futures research & etc”³⁴ and highlights that it is through the use of technology that becoming something else than *yourself* is closer than ever to be possible. The motivation to take a holiday from humanity can be recognized as the way to avoid troubles and worries inscribed in being one. Again the question: what it is to be *human* arises: is it realizing the inevitable entropic nature of the universe? Having troubles in one’s love-life? Not having a steady job and constantly worrying about the economics, living in the complex systems build by and for human? That is what pushed the designer to change not only his mind, but also

³¹ Funny Avenue, “News Anchors Can’t Stop Laughing At Goat Man,” September 2016, YouTube, 1:23, www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJwZMUn7GdQ.

³² The Ig Nobel Prize collects so-called “improbable research”, to support curiosity by asking what is real and what is not; not only in science but everywhere else.

³³ Martin Gardiner, “Becoming with sheep (art project),” accessed November 2019, www.improbable.com/2017/10/09/becoming-with-sheep-art-project/.

³⁴ Thomas Thwaites, “About Thomas Thwaites”, accessed November 2019, www.thomasthwaites.com/about/.

adjust the body for this escapism. Therefore, at the beginning of his project, which originally started with the wish to become an elephant, Thwaites stated that he wants to: “undo 5 million years of human evolution and adapt bipedal anatomy to that of a quadruped (...) develop an artificial prosthetic stomach that would enable him to eat and digest grass (...) adapt the sight and hearing and retrain the senses (...) use transcranial magnetic stimulation to switch off the forward planning and language centres of the brain so as to experience life from the perspective of an elephant.”³⁵ During the research process an elephant became a goat, as this particular species was closer to the Umwelt of Thwaites, who had been raised and brought up in London. It is because first and foremost, one has to *know* an animal which is to be studied. The idea of the *other-than-human* rooted in Thwaites head had proved the anthropocentric naivety, as his “internal mental idea of elephants was heavily coloured by warm feelings from [his] childhood toward Dumbo”³⁶. Following what had been previously introduced in Jakob von Uexküll’s study of Umwelten, Thwaites started with what was closer to his experience, and did a solid research on the lives of goats.

Drawing from various sources the designer discussed the matter with experts from different branches of animal-related studies, starting with a shaman, and was advised to carefully rethink his use of technology: is he trying to make a costume, shaman asked, or to bridge a gap between a man and an animal?³⁷ The use of technological improvements might be extremely helpful in prolongation or distortion of human perception (imagine Jakob von Uexküll having an access to the new technologies!), until it brings one closer to the experience of *other*, and does not serve merely as an aesthetical addition. The focus has to be put on both: the body and the mind equally, to avoid Cartesian’s dualistic division, which would not be of any use in the study of Umwelten. Focusing on the language as a primary factor distinguishing human from a goat, which brings all the worries and regrets associated with the miserable state Thwaites wanted to escape from, the study was conducted on how much could he transform the brain to get closer to the one of a goat. Not to kill these regions of a brain, which would result with the consequences similar to performing a lobotomy, the effect had to be temporary. The brain functions could only partially be suppressed – “maybe in fifty years”³⁸ with the development of new technologies, we will be able to truly get closer to the goat’s state of mind. But for now Thwaites focused on the next step of his

³⁵ Thomas, Thwaites *GoatMan: how I took a holiday from being human* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2016), 5.

³⁶ Ibid. 26.

³⁷ Ibid. 44.

³⁸ Ibid. 85.

transformation – altering his bodily form to resemble the one of the goat better, building different prototypes which could allow him to gallop with his newly obtained kins up the Alps. Studying locomotion of different animals, evolutionary closer and further related to *Homo*, he proved again the human ignorance and conviction, that the idea of galloping as a goat is possible to be reenacted. When making the prosthetics that could possibly allow this to happen, he learned that he could only become a human in a goat walking position, constrained by his own anatomy³⁹. Furthermore, the designer decided to look inside the animal's body, right into the *guts*, and performed a carefully organized dissection in the laboratory environment. All of the odd but necessary turns Thwaites undertook, starting with the need to get out of the system of human rituals and values, ending with the attempt to make kins among another species, is an example of the study of an Umwelt and a way to go beyond your own *gaze*. As far as it is possible to change your own mind and body – for example become more empathetic as a human towards other existences, the question arises: how did the function of a human called Thomas Thwaites changed in the umwelten of the goats?

Studying behaviour of these particular quadrupeds alongside the experts in that matter, and delving into interspecies relations – kin relations, of a goat and a man, the designer points out that not that long ago humans became *domesticated* species. Before that their relationship with other animals as a hunter-gatherer was much more layered, relying on co-dependency and respect. Therefore, once the surroundings of a human changed (for example the farms became automatized, or isolated from the habitats of human), not only the function of a goat in a human's Umwelt changed, but the human had to be associated with different values in the goat's environment. And so imagine this peculiar, hybridic being, composed of parts of a human and its technology, among the herd of goats crossing the Alps. Thomas Thwaites describes it in the following way:

The reaction of the other goats to me isn't all that encouraging. I can see they're bunched up behind me as I clank and huff and puff along, until they get the nerve to get past me (...) I struggle for a few more meters, but I know it's in vain. The bleats of the herd are fading out of earshot, and then I'm the only goat, a lonely goat, high on a hill.⁴⁰

Furthermore, Thwaites does a very humanlike thing and takes a seat on a rock to contemplate the situation. The becoming is harder than it seems to be, so it takes some time to blend in to the goats herd, but when it happens – the goat life begins. He finally starts to realise goat's Umwelt, mostly unnoticed by a bipedal human. The blue-green patches of grass are bitter, the

³⁹ Ibid. 113.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 165.



Figure 4: Thomas Thwaites' becoming of Goat Man

greener-green grass is sweet and preferable⁴¹; *chew, chew, chew* and spitting the grass into tube from the prosthetic rumen bag Thwaites had strapped to his torso. Other goats are becoming curious, getting closer to him, sniffing him and probably having the same reaction to his unusual odour as the smell of fermenting grass from their mouth had on him.

Thwaites starts to realise goat's dominance hierarchies when going too far from the herd up the hill. He finally realizes he's caught somewhere in between of human-goat ways of behaving.

This temporal transformation seems to expand Thwaites' Umwelt, while the goats accepted him as a part of the herd (especially the goat number eighteen, as being gracefully referred to). The very same night after roaming around his new kins, now walking on two legs, the designer indulged in cannibalism during the dinner at the farmhouse. This conflicted state he found himself in, "disturbing but delicious"⁴², even better represented becoming of his dualistic nature. Eating a goat's meat might not be at all disturbing for him in the past. Definitely not wanting to be a GoatMan forever, this transformation became a way to get out of the human systematics and ways of living, and appreciate things that would have seem most trivial. Not very important in the past, started to have a different significance in his Umwelt. "Some man dream of being a bird. I dream of being a goat"⁴³, and so Thwaites' holidays came to an end, but the dream – at least for a short moment in time – got closer to the reality.

⁴¹ Ibid. 169.

⁴² Ibid. 182.

⁴³ Ibid. 183.

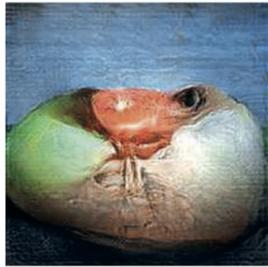


Figure 5: Some of the flickering images appearing on LED screens during Pierre Huyghe's 2018 Umwelt exhibition.

2.2 Pierre Huyghe: *Umwelt*

In opposition to the example of Umwelt expansion by Thomas Thwaites, which was entirely focused on positioning himself towards experiencing the *other*, Pierre Huyghe's projects are directed towards the experience of the spectator. Yet, the subject of what does the 'spectator' means in Huyghe's works is debatable. Most of the times the spectator *is* an actor, when *becoming* a part of created ecosystem; while Huyghe in contrast to Thwaites, remains the mastermind situated outside of the show, at one point loosing control over it. The French artist is known of "building complex systems characterized by a wide range of life forms, inanimate things and technologies (...) constantly changing environment, in which humans, animals and non-beings learn, evolve and grow."⁴⁴ As presented by the description of his artistic practice, creating these experiences challenges the normative forms not only of exhibiting, but more importantly perceiving the norms and regulations, therefore blurring the lines separating reality from fiction. In the essay on semicide, mentioned in the first chapter of this essay, Ivar Puura brings in Claude Lévi-Strauss and his study of 'savage mind' and contrasts it with Jean Baudrillard's world of simulacra. The savage mind is composed mostly of signscape and vocabulary based on the primeval memory and experience of a human, in contrast to being surrounded by artificial environments build by and for human (such as Disneyland or McDonald's)⁴⁵, which are constructed purely up for the human standards, ways of perceiving and utilizing reality. Pierre Huyghe in an interesting way challenges this notion of human-centered hierarchies, at the same time embracing the potential of a human to alter ecosystems. Being inspired by Jakob von Uexküll's theory of Umwelten, the artist creates the *Umwelt* – an un-umwelt, which brings in the idea of connectivity and introduces an attempt to bypass the gap between umwelten of different biotic and abiotic entities.

In the environment where Artificial Intelligence (AI), and other non-sentient existences have an Umwelt of their own, life seems to enclose its cycle over and over again, within the collection of different objects placed in the very human-centered structure – the art gallery. What could be more *human* than art? Entirely basing on aesthetical and ideological preferences of the experiencing subject, the *thing* we call *art* will always be manifested somewhere beyond its representation – in the mind of the creator, performer or the spectator. Being placed in an art gallery, which is built for the standards of human physiology and its perception apparatus, the objects placed inside will always be directed towards the human *gaze*. However, that is exactly what Huyghe tries to disarray. Not without a reason was he

⁴⁴ "Pierre Huyghe," Hauser & Wirth Gallery AG, accessed November 2019, www.hauserwirth.com/artists/2839-pierre-huyghe.

⁴⁵ Puura, "Nature in our memory," 152.

called the conceptual anarchist⁴⁶. The way Huyghe organizes his exhibitions resembles ecosystems, where things are mutually influenced by each other. The word being used often when describing his works is ‘porous’, as things are never isolated, but rather leak and absorb each other’s functions – on the very metaphorical as well as physical level. The anarchistic systematics of these ecosystems are well visible, as the only way to bypass a gap between umwelten is to break the hierarchies separating them. Huyghe’s working process is well presented in the following thought: “you set conditions, but you cannot define the outcome, how a given entity will interact with another... there is a set of elements, the way they collide, confront and respond to each other is unpredictable... I don’t want to exhibit something to someone, but rather the reverse: to exhibit someone to something.”⁴⁷

Umwelt was presented at the Serpentine Galleries in London 2018, and consisted of animal, technological and human agents, being interdependent with each other. Five large LED walls presented millions of images, which are the “mental images” reconstructed by a deep neural network. The visuals represent a brain activity which was captured as the person imagined what was previously being prompted to think of. The *lazy* creation, as referred to by Pierre⁴⁸; one thinks of an idea, and an image output comes out. The configuration of this bank of the flickering snaps is always morphing, sometimes pausing for a moment, but never resulting with a fully relatable picture. Coming from a human mind, going through the machine just to be confronted with a human again, the images are there to remind visitors that “the way we interpret the world is specific only to us.”⁴⁹ This very method illustrates Uexküll’s theory in a way one will always try to make sense out of the abstract image, relatable to ones memories, ideas, believes, values etc. But also to how human eyes are positioned, in what way do they depend on the light, connect to ears on the sides of the head, or being driven by the source of odours caught by the nostrils. This way of expanding one’s Umwelt is more of a reminder, functioning as a stimulus for the reflection on all of the signscape one is exposed to. But as previously mentioned, in this immersive experience, there is another animal present. Constantly being born and dying in this fully artificial environment, it’s the one associated with a compost, excrement and the buzzing sound. The flies are circling around, in the similar way to humans attracted to different lights, sounds and scents set-up in the Gallery. Through merging human, animal and machine, Huyghe puts

⁴⁶ Randy Kennedy, “Conceptual Anarchy,” *New York Times* (September 2014), www.nytimes.com/2014/09/07/arts/design/fall-arts-preview-pierre-huyghes-unpredictable-retrospective.html.

⁴⁷ Pierre Huyghe, *Pierre Huyghe: UUmwelt Free Exhibition Guide* (London: Serpentine Galleries, 2018).

⁴⁸ Pierre Huyghe, “Pierre Huyghe in conversation with Hans Ulrich Obrist,” October 2018, Serpentine Galleries, 1:12:33, www.youtube.com/watch?v=emYOOVRzG8E&t=293s.

⁴⁹ Huyghe, *Pierre Huyghe: UUmwelt Free Exhibition Guide*.

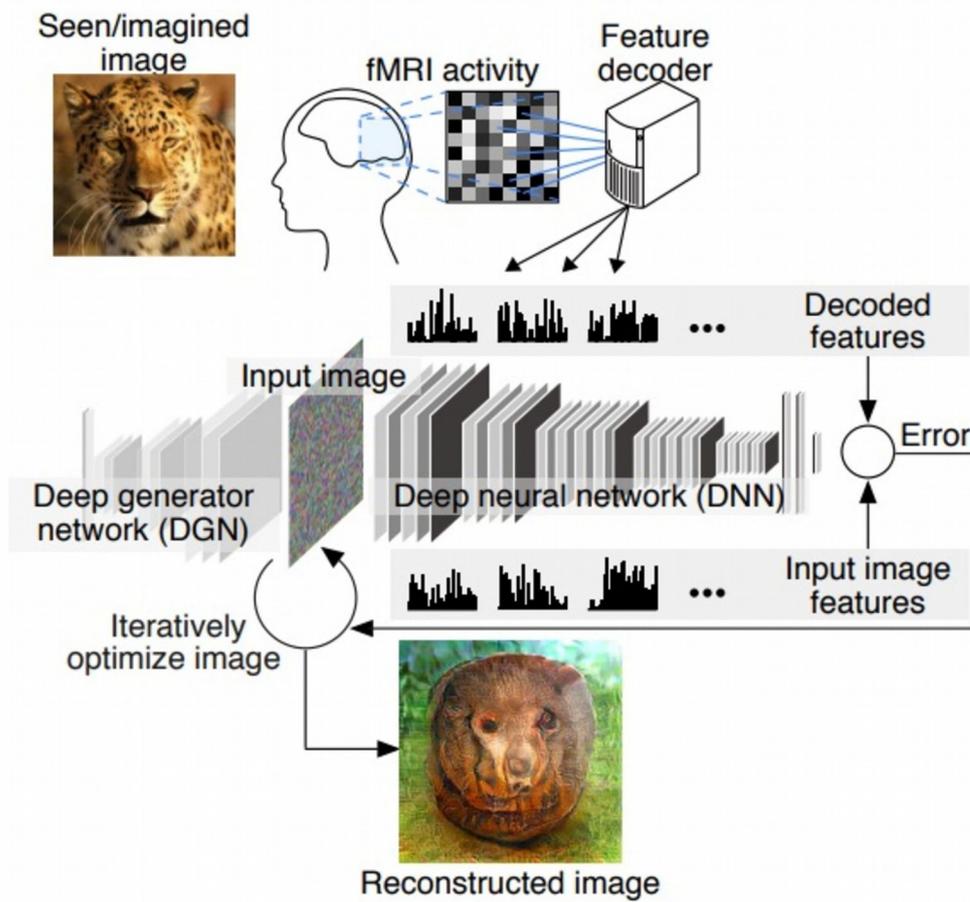


Figure 6: A process diagram showing deep image reconstruction.

forward the idea of non-sentient existences being on equal rights to be seen as having their own Umwelt, capable to intra-act with others and influence each other's signalling. But not only the sentient flies, humans and the AI as the abiotic existence seems to carry the temporal and mutable dimension of the event. The walls of the interior were sanded back, revealing layers of paint which recall rings of the tree, showing off their age and blending with the flickering, unsettling images on the screens. The dust from the sanding was still covering the ground once the exhibition doors were opened. People coming and going every day carried parts of the Gallery's memories on the soles of their shoes, outside, into the city.

In a peculiar way the main actors are indifferent to each other; not really finding a common ground, each of them reading signals in their own way, but none of them occupying the foreground. This situation does not necessarily *need* any of the factors present in the space, but once this odd environment is being formed, all of the elements are becoming porously connected. When dropped into the world of human simulacra, Umwelten of everything and everyone is adapting to the omnipresent artificial environments; some of the people show their need to come back to *nature*, others want to cut their primeval connections even more violently, and others have no choice but to adapt. Pierre Huyghe, treating reality as a source of endless possibilities, playfully encourages to question the relations we are entangled to, recognize our own *gaze*; to bend and flip meanings.



Figure 7: First presentation of the Symphony for the New Migration at the Listaháskóli Íslands in 2019.

Once everything around you has turned insipid, go for a change in perspective, and experience the world the way things would. Feel the play of light on the surface and its influence on your disposition while the wind is moving a few clouds: notice what happens after one bulb goes out and two more turn on. Follow the movements of swaying tablecloth, the autumn haze, the vapor of your breath, exhaling, farting gingerly. Appreciate the company of mosquito. Watch the changes in trees at your eye level. Observe what is ordinary but also dramatic, or grandiose and simultaneously delicate, all the unnoticed but sensational events and changes in perception. Regretfully, the sun and wind equally affect the mind, numbing it to any kind of surprise and marvel. We will not slow down the pace on our walk through the woods but for the things most trivial, a singing bird, for instance.

- Francis Ponge "The Way Things Are" translated by Vladim Bystritski

3. Symphony for the New Migration

Coming from the philosophical background and entering the bubble of design, opened up a spectrum of new ways to talk about and see things. Of course, I had some ideas about what a designer does, but it was quite a puzzle to try and distinguish it well from other fields (as that's what philosopher does). The only thing of which I was quite sure from the beginning was that I had the urge not to produce objects. Seems quite counterintuitive to the idea of designing, commonly perceived as translation of ideas into things. But why was I at first so repelled by this need to produce?

I could spot the overwhelming need to focus on growth and progress everywhere I turned my sight. This need to improve constantly and growth in every field of human activity was taking me further from what I was trying to notice, through the layers of built-up meanings and piles of objects. The state of how things are in relation to what already exists. Of course I was perfectly aware that the way I see the world will always be directed by my own Umwelt. Yet, I wondered how could I use the narrative to point on the way Human species relates to everyone around them, and try to look at the world in the impossible way – *sub species aeternitatis*. Therefore how could I tell a story, which acknowledges my, very human point of view, and at the same time is not centered around it?

My intention in the pages that follow was to describe the rest: that which is generally not taken note of, that which is not noticed, that which has no importance: what happens when nothing happens other than the weather, people, cars, and clouds.⁵⁰

- Georges Perec, "An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris"

3.1 Archiving

During the process of these tedious deliberations I got to know Argitxu Etchebarne, the designer with whom I went on the quest and who had balanced my troubled mind perfectly. The way we started to think about an attempt to exhaust our habitat was focused by my insight into the way human connects to the biosphere and Argi's interest in human-machine relationships. In that way the triangle of relationism was formed: between human, biosphere, and technology.

The closest to the way we imagined our attempt to exhaust specific environments, to revisit them and sometimes even visit for the first time, was the process of archiving. In the times of the increase of eco-driven ideologies, accelerated changes in the perception of our surroundings, archiving seemed like a perfect tool to freeze the time and in a way – forget what we thought we knew, look at where did we come from and where are we going. Thinking about all of the curiosity cabinets created over the centuries, we had decided to create our own, directly connected to our current habitat, Iceland. Starting with the way we imagined all of the environments a priori, before we visited them, we wrote down a long list of places, marking what kind of relations we thought these are essentially centred around. To organise our quest better, we've decided to use one tool kit to explore and archive all of these varied places. Coming from the human Umwelten and perception apparatus, the prolongation of our senses seemed as a logical way for choosing the tools. That is: for vision a camera (2), for sound an audio recorder (1) and blue headphones (1), a plastic bag (1) for collecting one essential object that made us curious in each place or had an oil in it, which through distillation process would allow us to evoke a memory of an environment's smellscape. We've mutually decided that gaining insight through ingestion would probably not be recommended in most of these spots, and haven't chosen any tool for capturing that, except for the last but not least – the notebooks (2) with pencils (2), in which we wrote down our subjective observations, feelings and thoughts triggered by a given surrounding.

⁵⁰ Georges. Perec, *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Wakefield Press, 2010), 3.



Figure 8: A photograph belonging to my and Argitxu's archive, taken by myself in 2019 demonstrating the alliance of animals and technology at the Erpsstaðir Cottage.

With a little time in our hands and much to see we have taken a few days off to set up the appointments where needed, pack our tool kit and prepare for the travel. Some people in charge of the privatized spaces answered to our request, some of them did not – and so there was no possibility to get inside of the more hermetical constructions. With the rejection having the opposite effect on us, it only increased our curiosity, as we've learned on the way that there is much more to be seen, and the places crossed-off the list were replaced with an alternative. Once we've arrived to our destination the process of archiving was always the same, shaping into the almost ritualistic form. We took our time to go inside each of the environments, to look around, recognize our function in it and the relations its built of. What processes occur in this place? What memories and ideas I myself associate with it? What is dominant and what accompanies it? I am sure Argitxu entered the space with a set of different questions, as we didn't talk much to be able to juxtapose our ideas and experiences afterwards, not being biased by our reactions. On the way we've discovered that many places which seemed to function around *human*, were in fact fully automatized. Human was just passing by, either to collect the product, take care of an object or show us around. In one of our visits at the farm in Erpsstaðir, we were allowed to move around the place by ourselves, freely.

“Just don't go near close to the bulls” said the man who let us in, furthermore suggesting to collect a rabbit on our way out – “each of you one rabbit, we had too many of them this year”. We didn't felt like collecting a living animal requiring a bigger amount of care, so the object being collected became a silicone tit. These substitutes of a cow's udder are used to feed the calves, when being early separated from their mothers. Except for the cows and a cat looking at us from the distance, there seemed to be a robot for everything, and the cows spoke its language. They knew when to enter the special compartment where the robot scanned and collected their milk. They moved away once the cleaning robot, living aside the cows in what it looked like the *kin* relationship, *beeped* to signal that it needs to pass through. We started with the idea that we will find humans in most of the places, which were build by and for human needs, but the only constant human in Icelandic landscape was the tourist. And so the position of us towards the visited environments was constantly changing while the archive grew and grew, forming a symphony of noises, values, bodies and odours.



Figure 9: Greetings from Vík! Could this be called the Icelandic nature? From the archive, 2019.

3.2 Translations

With the hard-to-handle archive, thankfully to Argitxu's organisational skills, we were able to systematize it in a way to see where do these environments come together and what separates them. We knew we wanted to build something through the soundscape, as it seemed to be an interesting medium to explore for the narrative, through which the spectator was not handed an image, but had to, basing on the sound, imagine the situation. Using only an audio as the starting point gave us the possibility to juxtapose these environments that would more likely not go together, yet still shared a common quality. The newspaper factory, the gun stock and the biggest forest in Iceland; the rituals of burying human bodies at the cemetery and the burial of human-made objects in the landfills; the exotic silkworms from Grundarfjörður in the powerplants providing inhabitants of the cities the heat...the palette to choose from was wide! Twelve tracks with hybridic Icelandic environments formed the Symphony for the New Migration, and all of that mingling and migrating expanded our perception of the environments which, at the end, couldn't be more related to our everyday lives.

Subsequently, the videos corresponding to the sounds followed, carrying our thoughts from the notebooks rolling on the yellow strips at the bottom of the frame. Resembling a strip on the news channels, the one from our videos brought more of a "the other day and the things are as they were" message. Nothing special one might say, but we thought of it as the reverse of this statement – everything is a *big news*, everything *is happening*. We made a few postcards commenting on what most of the people think about untouched *nature* of Iceland. Like the postcard presenting a recognizable church in Vík (see Figure 8) with a view on the black beach, which happened to be sticking to the dump site unseen by those looking at the sun hiding by the horizon. We've managed to distil a few emblematic scents, one of which was notably called the *bomb*, as the strength of its odour seemed to be almost unbearable (that was the smell made out of the collection of hay and cow food from the creamery). The other objects were 3D scanned, as this form of carrying data seemed to be the future of archives, encrypted into the digital world. Yet, we have still wanted this archive to be carried by some material object, to remind us that everything around us is made up of the *materials* being in constant *processes*. Something tangible, analogue – a vinyl. The next step in the translation of this exploration is still to come, as we are collaborating with numerous of different artists from Iceland which, through the imagined soundscapes, are engaging with the archived environments and the idea of *mingling, hybridity and transformation*. To revisit what already

exists, and place it in the spot most occupied by human – in the Capital.⁵¹ All of the twelve tracks from the album will be played by different artists at the same time, representing the chaos, complexity and variety of this symphony of fluxing environments called *Iceland*.

⁵¹ Argitxu Etchebarne, and Malgorzata Kowasz, “Symphony for the New Migration,” accessed November 2019, www.thenewmigration.com/forcollaborators.

Conclusion

Through dwelling into different branches of semiotics and sign-based communication the attempt to first and foremost *understand* and subsequently *cut* one's own gaze became a starting point for further explorations. Because the way others perceive the world will, at least for the next decades, remain a speculation, it is impossible to completely switch our perception and understanding of the world and the *other*. Yet, it does not imply that one should not try and appreciate the world consisting of differences; different bodies, values, ideas, languages. Currently artificial environments built by human and for human are easily to be recognized through putting the *normative* above the *diverse*, therefore creating the anthropocentric systems and structures in which other beings have no other choice but to adapt. With the need to oppose fetishizing one dominant species, the thoughts of Object Oriented Ontology and Process Philosophy were introduced; to not only look closer at the variety of different living beings existing, but to acknowledge and embrace the abiotic actors in the same way.

The attempt to go beyond my own *gaze*, the way of 'seeing' and 'looking at things', was undertaken through getting insight from bio- and ecosemiotics, as well as Jakob von Uexküll's theory of *Umwelten*; although everyone else's journey might begin in any different point. To explore the examples of expanding one's *Umwelt*, two projects from the fields of art and design were introduced. Thomas Thwaites' GoatMan project, from the time when he took the holidays from being a human and wanted to become a goat, and his book in which one can find the steps to take when transforming the body as well as the mind. Pierre Huyghe's "Umwelt" on the other hand, focuses on more of a collective, immersive experience, and an attempt to bridge the gap between different biotic and abiotic *Umwelten* of an artificially built, *human* surroundings. My own attempt, in which I have worked alongside the designer Argitxu Etchebarne, started with the need to look at the world from my very own point of view, acknowledging that it is not possible to escape it, yet it is possible to notice what usually gets unnoticed. Through exploring different Icelandic environments connected to the relations between human biosphere and technology, and subsequently archiving them with the use of media like: sound, scent, text and image, we've imagined them *mingling*. The Symphony of relations, varieties and *meanings* unfolded in its chaotic harmony. Referring to the goals set in the introduction of this thesis, what seemed to be an impossible mission gained a more realistic form; one that can evolve and morph in accordance to possible

ecosystems, tools being used or binding subjects. Opening the possibility for something radically new to emerge, by growing with or alongside diverse ideas and bodies.

There is no one way of recognizing different processes which constantly drive our surroundings, but there are some tools one can use to expand the understanding of the relations forming a given environment. To change the position of yourself towards others, when looking beyond one's own *gaze*, is necessary. It is also simpler, than changing your function in the Umwelt of another, represented by how you see and act towards it. Should not the latter be equally important? If so, not only perceiving *others* in one's environment is of the biggest importance, but the change that goes with it – the change in *acting*.

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Image 3: Thwaites, Thomas. *Designing the Goat Man costume*. 2016. Photographs from the book. In "GoatMan: How I Took a Holiday from Being Human." New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2016.

Image 4: Bodwitch, Tim. *A Holiday from Being Human (GoatMan)*. 2016. Photograph from the website of the designer. www.thomasthwaites.com/a-holiday-from-being-human-goatman/.

Image 5: Huyghe, Pierre. *Umwelt*. 2018. Digital image. In "Pierre Huyghe: U Umwelt Free Exhibition Guide." Serpentine Galleries, London. www.serpentinegalleries.org/exhibitions-events/pierre-huyghe-u-umwelt.

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Image 7: Etchebarne Argitxu, and Kowasz Malgorzata. *Symphony for the New Migration at the Listaháskóli Íslands*. 2019. Photograph. Author's private archive.

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