

## **Explicatory Preface**

I have created a single work that is a synthesis of multiple integrated, interconnectable platforms in a range of media. The result is a structure whose very form is a realisation of the ambiguity and complexity of the ideas that it explores. This *Report* is an integral part of the structure, an explication (unfolding) of the theoretical underpinnings of the work.

This Microsoft *Word* copy of the *Report* is deceptively linear and is intended only for submission to Turnitin – the true *Report* is contained in a website (please [click this link](#) to go to the website) and is in the form of a conceptual labyrinth or rhizome in which every idea is connected to multiple others (all of this is explained in full in the *Report*). Intentionally non-linear, it is designed to have multiple entry-points, multiple paths through the ideas and no Conclusion. There is no correct route through the *Report*, for every journey is unique and each reader, each reading creates a different labyrinth; their participation becomes part of the work.

Entry to the website is gained by means of QR codes contained in a digital online book ([click this link](#) to view the book). This digital online book displays the praxical aspects of the work and can also be accessed in turn by links from various pages within the website.

# **Translating (Border)(S)p(l)ace**

by

**Margaret Hastings**

*[Word count 5,475]*

## Introduction

*“In the opinion of many observers, it is the spatialities of connectivity, networked linkage, marginality and liminality, and the transgression of linear boundaries and hermetic categories – spatial ‘flow’ – which mark experience in the late twentieth-century world” (Cosgrove, 1999).*

*“The state of things becomes tangled, mingled like thread .... Imagine ... a web with more than one dimension .... The state of things is creased, crumpled, folded, with flounces and panels, fringes, stitches and lacing” (Serres, 2008, p. 82).*

This work is a complication of fold and knot, labyrinth and language, text and textile, the physical and the conceptual. It explores the third space *in-between* as a pleated place of translation, a tangled web of connection, a manifold multiplicity. This ambiguous *milieu*<sup>1</sup> that exists between and around objects, ideas and realms is both a concrete place and an abstract space, and sometimes but not always a border; thus for brevity's sake I have given it the name of *(border)(s)p(l)ace*.

## PRAXIS

*“Textile is an ambiguous concept. It is material, it is concept, it is language, it is metaphor” (Dormor, 2020, p. 1).*

I have created a single, multi-layered, multi-media, interconnected installation which is a synthesis of (images of) crocheted sculpture, projected film, animated word and virtual web. The piece enfolds and entangles a variety of dichotomies including static/dynamic, single/multiple, inside/outside, paradigm/copy and speech/writing, but most especially the material/virtual opposition, a threshold which is crossed and re-crossed by my practice. So, for example, crocheted sculptures (material and static) act as screens for video (virtual and dynamic); photographed and re-filmed, they are then replaced in the artwork by their digital copies which are contained in an online flipbook.

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<sup>1</sup> “In French the word *milieu* means both surroundings and middle: both centre and circumference, both environment and individual; indeed, both inside and outside” (Lomax, 2000, p. 81).

## Praxis: Crochet

*“The hand ... creates the thread, twists it, threads it through, folds and knots it ... deftly splicing and lashing, unfailingly finding the gap underneath that the eye cannot see”* (Serres, 2008, p. 83)

“Thread intricately crinkled to and fro as the retracing of the labyrinth” (Miller, 1976, p. 62), crochet is a polytropic medium. Inclusive in its activity, through its textility, crochet involutes difference, implicates binary opposition and translates *striated space* into the *smooth space* of *rhizomatic becoming*.

Conceptually rich, nevertheless as a textile, in the world of fine art crochet is regarded as a lesser medium, what Simon O’Sullivan, following Deleuze and Guattari, calls a *minor* practice (O’Sullivan, 2005). Labelled ‘folk art’, and irredeemably identified with the doily, it is tainted by its associations with the realm of the feminine and the domestic. Straddling, “a double-coded space, an ambivalent site” (Maharaj, 2001, p. 9), it is *undecidable*. An outsider, it is the *other* to more traditional fine art media such as painting which inhabit a realm, “oversaturated with maleness” (Larmon, 2018). For these reasons, since the 1970s crochet, like other textiles, has been employed by artists such as Faith Wilding and Tracy Krumm as a way to draw attention to gendered art practices.



Faith Wilding, *Crocheted Environment*, 1972/1995, Woolworth's Sweetheart acrylic yarn and sisal rope, 274.3 × 274.3 × 274.3 cm (variable).

*"In my crocheted environment, I wanted to pay homage to women's useful economic and cultural work, while at the same time producing a piece that was useless (non-practical) to demonstrate the falseness of the traditional distinctions between art and craft"* (Wilding, 1995).

### **Praxis: Web**

*"Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the non-space of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like city lights, receding"* (Gibson, 2016, p. 59)

A QR code stands on the threshold between the material and the digital and

translates between the two realms: it embodies *(border)(s)p(l)ace*. In my artwork

each sculpture is associated with a crocheted QR code which is a portal into this website. In the form of a conceptual rhizome, the website connects each idea to others by a network of multiple hyperlinks in a non-linear narrative.

Through these QR codes my three crocheted sculptures are linked to this labyrinth and are thus interconnected: although on the physical level they appear to be separate, discrete entities, on the virtual level they are actually part of a web, components in a single installation<sup>2</sup>.

### **Praxis: Word**

*“Words and rocks contain a language that follows a syntax of splits and ruptures. Look at any word long enough and you will see it open up into a series of faults, into a terrain of particles each containing its own void.”* (Smithson, 1996, p. 107)

Language straddles the threshold between the material and the virtual. Since the 1960s conceptual word artists such as Robert Smithson, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner have been exploring the physicality of words, of text, treating language, “as a material that can be manipulated with creative freedom, like paint, clay, or any other artistic medium” (‘MoMA | Ecstatic Alphabets/Heaps of Language’, 2012). While working in this tradition, simultaneously I reference the virtuality of language by my use of video. By animating words, I engage with the dynamism of language.

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<sup>2</sup> In a physical exhibition, this installation would be a metaphor for a quantum reality, for the relationship between physical objects and the underlying unified, energetic, quantum realm out of which they emerge. Since circumstances have forced us into cyberspace, instead of physical sculptures I am exhibiting my work as images in an online flipbook.



Lawrence Weiner, *Outside of Any Given Context* (2010), MuHKA, Antwerp, 2011.

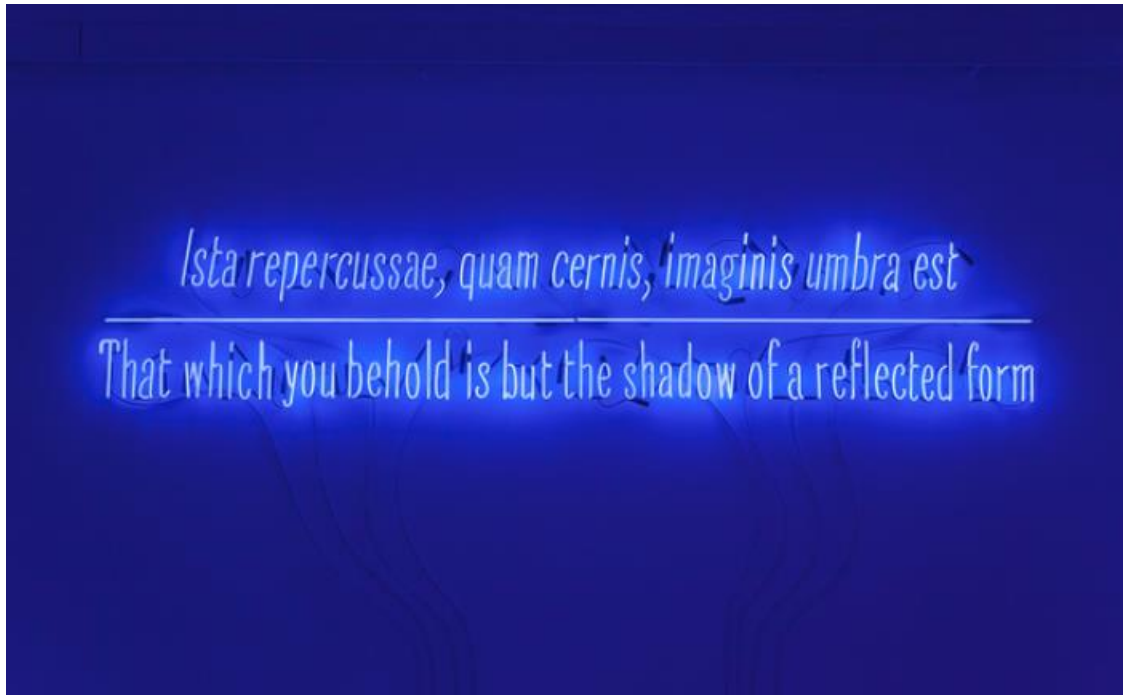
*Lawrence Weiner's, "highly specific and refined practice is concerned with the potential for language to be sculpture" (Selby, 2009, p. 180).*

### **Praxis: Untranslatables**

*"in a sense, nothing is untranslatable; but in another sense, everything is untranslatable; translation is another name for the impossible" (Derrida, 1998, pp. 56–57).*

Certain words reveal the impossibility of the translator's task with great clarity: such words are known as 'untranslatables'.

For this project I have chosen three Ancient Greek words: πολύτροπος, χώρα and ἀπορία. All three are simultaneously "intrinsically untranslatable" (Sallis, 1999, p. 115), and, "endlessly translatable" (Caputo, 2004, p. 43), and two of them have been appropriated in ways that I find interesting. Above all, each one is intricately interconnected with the themes explored in this work.



Joseph Kosuth, *Maxima Proposito (Ovidio) #7*, 2017, Cobalt blue neon mounted directly on the wall, 43.5 × 225.3 cm

*Kosuth pioneered the practice of appropriating and recontextualising readymade texts<sup>3</sup> from other writers; he states, “as artists we all begin to construct with what is given. We appropriate fragments of meaning from the detritus of culture and construct other meanings, which are our own” (Joseph Kosuth ‘Existential Time’, 2020)*

### Πολύτροπος

*“Let us design a polytropic, polymechnistic ramble with a thousand twists, turns and connections, Ulysses' bag of tricks. It resembles a labyrinth, as if the Cretan hero had traced on the sea the maze of the land” (Serres, 2008, p. 270).*

Literally ‘of many turns’, in the world of Classical translation, πολύτροπος (polytropos) is a word famous for its untranslatability. Used in the first line of Homer’s *Odyssey* to describe Odysseus, it has acquired over fifty English translations over the centuries.

The *polytropic* is the principle of twists and turns, of folding together, of complexity.

As it manifests in, for example, non-linearity, multiplicity, undecidability, untranslatability, the knot, the fold and the labyrinth, the *polytropic* principle wends its

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<sup>3</sup> ‘Readymade’ was a term coined by Marcel Duchamp to refer to the art that he made from *found objects* and through which he created, “a new thought for that object.” (1917, cited in Jones, 2008).

way through this project: *(border)(s)p(l)ace* is a *polytropic (s)p(l)ace*, crochet is a *polytropic* medium, this website is *polytropic*.

### **Χώρα**

*“The translations remain caught in networks of interpretation”* (Derrida, 1995, p. 93). Χώρα (chora or khora) means ‘(s)p(l)ace’, that is it means both ‘space’ and ‘place’; it also possesses connotations of ‘receptacle’, of ‘flux’ and of ‘the other’. Plato uses this undecidable word to designate an, “enigmatic and feminine” (Kristeva and Moi, 1986, p. 97), *(s)p(l)ace* between the material and the virtual, and thus χώρα has become the paradigm for a third space between dichotomies. Both the multi-faceted word and the elusive concept have been appropriated in a variety of contexts and by a variety of writers.

### **Ἀπορία**

*“language ... is an ocean alive with aporia”* (Kofman, 2016)

Πόρος (poros) means ‘path’, ‘passage’, ‘way’ or ‘means’; thus ἀπορία (aporia) is a non-path or impasse: “the difficult or the impracticable ... the impossible ... the refused, denied, or prohibited passage, indeed the nonpassage” (Derrida, 1993, p. 8). Since Plato who likened the aporetic state to the confusion of being lost in a labyrinth (1967, sec. 291b), the word has been used in philosophy to mean an insoluble contradiction or paradox.

### **Praxis: Video Sculpture**

*“The liminal space where video or film, and sculptural form meet is an ambiguous threshold”* (Truckenbrod, 2012, p. 76).

Text is filmed and thus made both virtual and dynamic. One method I have used to animate the text is *video feedback*, a technique in which the camera records its own output, creating a labyrinthine hall of mirrors where words are folded together, mingling and overlapping to infinity.

Crocheted sculptures act as screens onto which the animated text is projected and allowed to ripple over the knots and folds. Re-filmed, the material and the virtual are complicated, weaving text and textile into “a tissue of citations” (Barthes, no date, p. 4).

Dynamic video is accessed from static image by means of Augmented Reality.



Joan Truckenbrod, *Seeing from Beneath the Ice*. hand-sewn fibre, video, sound

*“The immateriality of light, juxtaposed with the solidity of form, the temporality of video in contrast with the static nature of object, creates paradoxes that stretch the context of sculpture” (Truckenbrod, 2012, p. 8).*

## THEORY

*“In the age of interface which is now upon us ..., everything is at once inside and outside everything else. Our skins are mingled skins, our skins the milieux of mixed bodies” (Connor, 2004, p. 281).*

Plato was the first to attempt to explicate *(border)(s)p(l)ace*, but after him it lapsed as a subject for philosophical enquiry. It wasn't until the last century, as the Newtonian view of the world was succeeded by the theories of quantum physics and everything gradually became more *undecidable*, that the border and the margin became topics of more general interest.

Not only physicist and philosopher David Bohm but also Poststructuralist writers such as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Jacques Derrida, Michel Serres and Tim Ingold and feminist theorists like Bracha Ettinger, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva have all delved into the ambivalence of *(border)(s)p(l)ace* which they have conceptualised in a variety of different ways. My work is interested in the connections between these theories, rather than their differences.

### **(Border)(S)p(l)ace**

*“what happens if you withdraw attention from the objects in space and become aware of space itself?”* (Tolle, 2005, p. 114)

*(Border)(s)p(l)ace* is ambiguous and ambivalent, complex and paradoxical.

Quantum theory has shown that it is not empty but is rather a field of interrelated energies. The locus of the hybridisation and fluidity which is increasingly a characteristic of contemporary society, it is a dynamic region of inclusion and implication, undecidability and abjection. It is where binary opposition dissolves. It is the outside of identity, the *otherness* that makes identity possible but also undermines it. It is a space of interpretation, translation and appropriation, a pliable place of soft logics and endless unfolding and refolding, of tangles of text and textile, of rhizomatic, non-linear connections.



Simon Hantaï, *Étude*, oil and acrylic on canvas, 1969

*Simon Hantaï knotted and folded huge canvases which he painted and then unfolded, revealing the negative spaces that had been hidden in the folds; he called this technique 'pliage'.*

## Binary Logic

*“On the one side we have Multitude, Motion, Becoming; on the other Unity, Rest, Being. The two rival principles confront each other in sheer opposition, stiff, unyielding, impracticable” (Plato and Archer-Hinds, 1888, p. 9).*

*“We always travel in a spectrum of light and shadows.... We are all travellers of the chiaroscuro” (Serres, 2015, p. 62)*

Western thought is deeply antithetical, creating a dualized reality composed of,

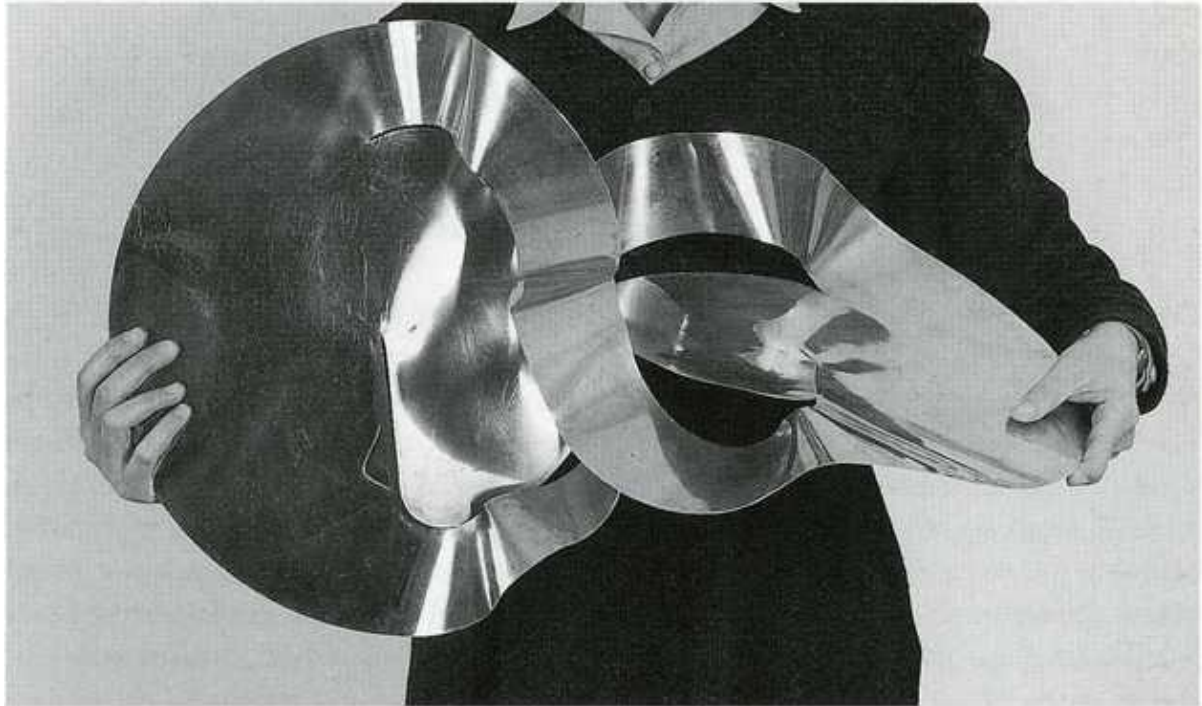
“oppositions that are mutually exclusive and mutually exhaustive” (Grosz, 2001, p.

93), such as inside/outside, mind/body, self/other, masculine/feminine.

(Border)(s)p(l)ace, “seems to defy ... that logic ‘of binarity, of the yes or no’” (Derrida,

1995, p. 89); it, “insinuates itself between the oppositional terms” (Grosz, 1994b, p.

22), and allows them to negotiate, implicate, merge and mingle.



Lygia Clark holding *O dentro é o fora* (The inside is the outside), 1963, exhibition print.

*The Möbius Strip is a paradoxical object which creates a, "moment of umbilical incursion and involution, folding-over, or falling-inward, in which ... an outside suddenly proves to be an inside" (Connor, 2004, p. 39), making it a most, "apposite metaphor for the undoing of dualism" (Grosz, 1994a, p. 117).*

### **Undecidability**

*"We will watch it infinitely promise itself and endlessly vanish through concealed doorways that shine like mirrors and open onto a labyrinth" (Derrida, 2004, p. 130).*

Coined by Derrida, an *undecidable* is a word, a concept that contains a duplicity within its singularity and thus embodies, "meaning in a state of paradox, meaning oscillating perpetually between poles, impossible to pin down" (Richard Harland, 1993, p. 213, cited in Kakoliris, 2013, p. 226). Having its being prior to division and duality, "it holds in reserve, in its undecided shadow and vigil, the opposites and the differends that the process of discrimination will come to carve out" (Derrida, 2004, p. 130).



Tracy Krumm, *Strapped (Funnel)*, 2013, Crocheted bronze and nickel, found and fabricated metal, leather strap, patina, resin

*“Through my choice of a construction technique (crocheting) that is considered a traditional women's handicraft .... the feminine and the masculine are combined and constructed into objects that comment on identity, relationships and beauty” (Krumm, 1994, p. 25, cited in Wilding, 1995).*

## Otherness

*“there is no space for women because taking their place is the specter or simulacrum of woman, man's fanciful counterpart, that which he has expelled and othered from himself” (Grosz, 2001, p. 94).*

Binary logic is inherently hierarchical, privileging one element of the dichotomy. In addition, our Western culture perpetuates a prejudiced system in which “identity ... is formed through opposition, alterity and difference” (Sutton and Martin-Jones, 2008, p. 46). The principle identity, “the screen upon which all identities are projected and found different” (Sutton and Martin-Jones, 2008, p. 47), is white, Christian, heterosexual and masculine; everything else is *other* or *minor* (Deleuze, 1995, p.

173). In this system the subordinated term has no autonomous identity but exists only as, “the receptacle of all that is excessive or expelled from the circuit of the privileged term” (Grosz, 2001, p. 96).



Nick Cave, *Soundsuits*

*Nick Cave's Soundsuits are wearable sculptures designed to act as a second skin, concealing the wearer and protecting them from judgement on grounds of race, class or gender. As a way to express his feelings at being a black man in a Eurocentric society, Cave made his first Soundsuit from twigs, "something that was discarded, dismissed, viewed as less" (O'Grady, 2019).*

### **Plato's Χώρα**

*"She/it eludes all anthropo-theological schemes, all history, all revelation, and all truth. Preoriginary, before and outside of all generation" (Derrida, 1995, p. 124).*

In attempting to elucidate that which lies between the sensible and the intelligible, Plato, "brought into the light...the medium wherein the fundamental antithesis of things was to be reconciled" (Plato and Archer-Hinds, 1888, p. 9). Neither virtual nor material but a, "third kind" (Plato and Archer-Hinds, 1888, pp. 170–171), a, "concept which defies reason" (Kearney, 2005, p. 193), it is known as χώρα (*chora* or *khora*).

As, “the receptacle, and as it were the nurse, of all becoming” (Plato and Archer-Hinds, 1888, pp. 170–172), “the maternal χώρα in all its alien elusiveness, its alterity, its strangeness” (Sallis, 2004, p. 120), is the condition for the existence of the material world but is itself, “an outsider .... without essence, nature, or identity” (Caputo, 2006, pp. 35-36). Thus it has been suggested that, “*chora* may well be one of the earliest models of [the] appropriation and disenfranchisement of femininity” (Grosz, 1994b, p. 27).



Cecilia Vicuña, 'Quipu Womb (*The Story of the Red Thread, Athens*)', 2017

*“My work dwells in the not yet, the future potential of the unformed, where sound, weaving, and language interact to create new meanings”* (Vicuña, no date).

### **Matrixial Borderspace**

*“I don’t usually use the language of objects, ... but rather the language of links.... it is more useful to talk about strings and threads”* (European Graduate School Video Lectures, 2007a).

“Matrix is the Latin for womb. Used abstractly, it means a grid or frame” (Pollock, 2004, p. 34), but the *matrixial* is not a womb in the *choral* sense of passive

receptacle, but is instead, “a pre-natal symbolic space” (Ettinger, 1993a, p. 12, cited in Pollock, 2004, p. 25), a, “*transforming borderspace of encounter*” (Ettinger, 2006, p. 64), between the I and the non-I. A concept created by artist-psychoanalyst Bracha L. Ettinger, the *matrixial* is, “the other of the masculine-feminine opposition” (Massumi, 2006, p. 212), “a non-phallic web of meaning” (Pollock, 2004, p. 11), a, “field of inscription of mental traces” (European Graduate School Video Lectures, 2007b).



Bracha L. Ettinger, *Eurydice* n. 45, 2006

*“To paint is to self-fragilize myself, to make myself vulnerable in accessing the other and the cosmos, to join as I differ, to witness what I give witness to”* (Larmon, 2018)

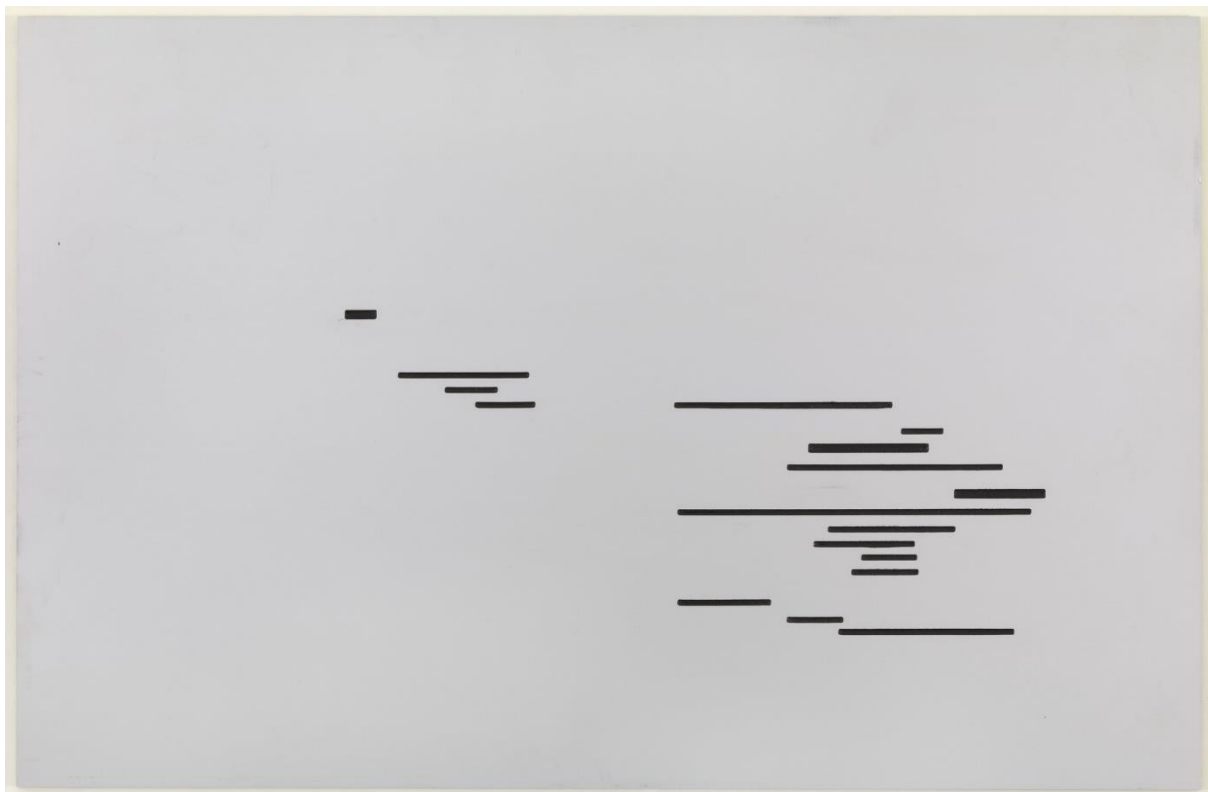
### **Quantum Physics**

*“Nothing will have taken place but the place.... In this region of vagueness in which all reality dissolves”* (Mallarmé and Kline, 2004, p. 105)

With the advent of quantum theory, Newton’s linear, mechanistic world populated by discrete objects and events which are separated by rigidly impermeable boundaries

has been superseded by a space-time that is multi-dimensional, non-linear and full of tangles and connections; existence has become, “an undivided flowing movement without borders” (Bohm and Nichol, 2003, p. 80).

In his attempt to translate the language of mathematics into something more accessible, physicist David Bohm employs the language of soft logics, stating that, “everything is enfolded into everything” (Bohm and Nichol, 2003, p. 85), and is, “in a state of unending flux of enfoldment and unfoldment” (Bohm and Nichol, 2003, pp. 93–4). “We must drop the mechanistic order” (Bohm and Nichol, 2003, p. 84), for our manifest, sensible world is merely derivative; he conceptualises it as an unfolded or *explicate* order abstracted from a more fundamental enfolded or *implicate* order, the situation being analogous to a stream in which the ripples, “are abstracted from the flowing movement, arising and vanishing in the total process of the flow” (Bohm, 2002, pp. 61–62).



Marcel Broodthaers, *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (A throw of the dice will never abolish chance), 1969, mechanical engraving and paint on twelve aluminium plates

*This work is a homage to Mallarmé's 1887 poem of the same name of which it has been said, "the space created by the poem is for Mallarmé no more empty than physical space is for Descartes or for Einstein. It is rather a 'field', a comprehensive realm of interrelated energies" (Bowie, 2008, p. 144).*

### Soft Logics

*"fabric folds, crumples, turns on itself, is knotted at will .... fabrics, textiles and material provide excellent models of knowledge ... the world is a heap of clothes"* (Serres, 2008, pp. 79, 83).

The Cartesian logic of dichotomy, of binary opposition, involves rigid borders and divisions, and, "assumes a space that is not deformable; it sides with the wooden crates, the steel tanks, the marble boxes" (Serres, 2015, p. 149). But Michel Serres suggests an alternative in which, "the state of things is creased, crumpled, folded" (2008, p. 82). He proposes instead a pliable, a supple, a topological gnoseology based on 'soft logics' - "the strange logic of sacks", rather than, "the hard logic of boxes" (2015, p. 149). Such soft logics create modes of thought that are flexible and polytropic, "modes of thought that twist and turn and stretch and fold" (Barnett, 2018, p. 183), modes of thought that *implicate*.

Michel Serres and Tim Ingold both envisage *(border)(s)p(l)ace* as a textile milieu of knotted and tangled threads:

*"the situation 'between' ... deploys a great multiplicity or variety of paths or ways crossing this ... space. ... None of the paths ... runs in a straight line, none remains in the same dimension, all twist and curve.... an inextricable tangle presents itself" (Serres, 2008, pp. 77–78).*

Both agree that, "thinking-through-knotting" (Ingold, 2015, p. 18), enables the resolution of Cartesian distinctions and binary oppositions and makes it, "possible to think without excluding" (Serres, 2015, p. 67): imagine, "a world ... that is knotted rather than assembled, enchained or contained" (Ingold, 2015, p. 18).



El Anatsui, *In the World But Don't Know the World*, 2009, aluminium (liquor bottle caps) and copper wire, 56m x 10m

*"[I am interested in textile because it is] always in motion. Anytime you touch something, there is bound to be a change. The idea of a sheet that you can shape and reshape. It can be on the floor, it can be up on the ceiling, it can be up on the wall, all that fluidity is behind the concept" (Who is El Anatsui?, no date).*

## **Knot**

*"Separation ignores the knot or tangle that lies between separate things" (Serres, 2008, p. 78).*

"Always in the midst of things, while their ends are on the loose, rooting for other lines to tangle with" (Ingold, 2015, p. 22), knots are the epitome of, "dynamic in-between-ness" (Ingold, 2015, p. 148). As, "a gathering of materials in movement" (Ingold, 2015, p. 147), a knot, like a fold, is an operation not an object. It is also like a fold in that it is an abstraction, a virtuality that is realised, often temporarily, in the multiplicity of matter:

The knot is not the rope; it is a weightless, mathematical, geometric, metaphysically conceptual, pattern integrity tied momentarily into the rope by the knot-conceiving, weightless mind of the human conceiver - knot-former (Fuller and Applewhite, 1975, para. 506.01).

A knot is a means of externalising into a spatial medium such concepts as connection, coherence and sympathy in a wide range of contexts from magic to marriage; most recently its polytropic nature has made it, “a model for self-organising, non-linear systems” (Kuchler, 1999, p. 147), a model for connection across multiple dimensions.



Cecilia Vicuña, *Skyscraper Quipu* (Incan *quipu* performance, New York), 2006, rephotographed 2018, cotton.

*In pre-literate Peru, the Incas used a system of knot-records known as quipus, “a form of communication that entangles matter with meaning” (Porter, Elderton and Morrell, 2019, p. 276). Chilean artist Vicuña engages with quipus as part of her work, often using the landscape as part of her quipu: “An object is not an object. It is the witness to a relationship. In complementary union, two opposites collide to create new forms” (Vicuña, no date).*

## **Fold**

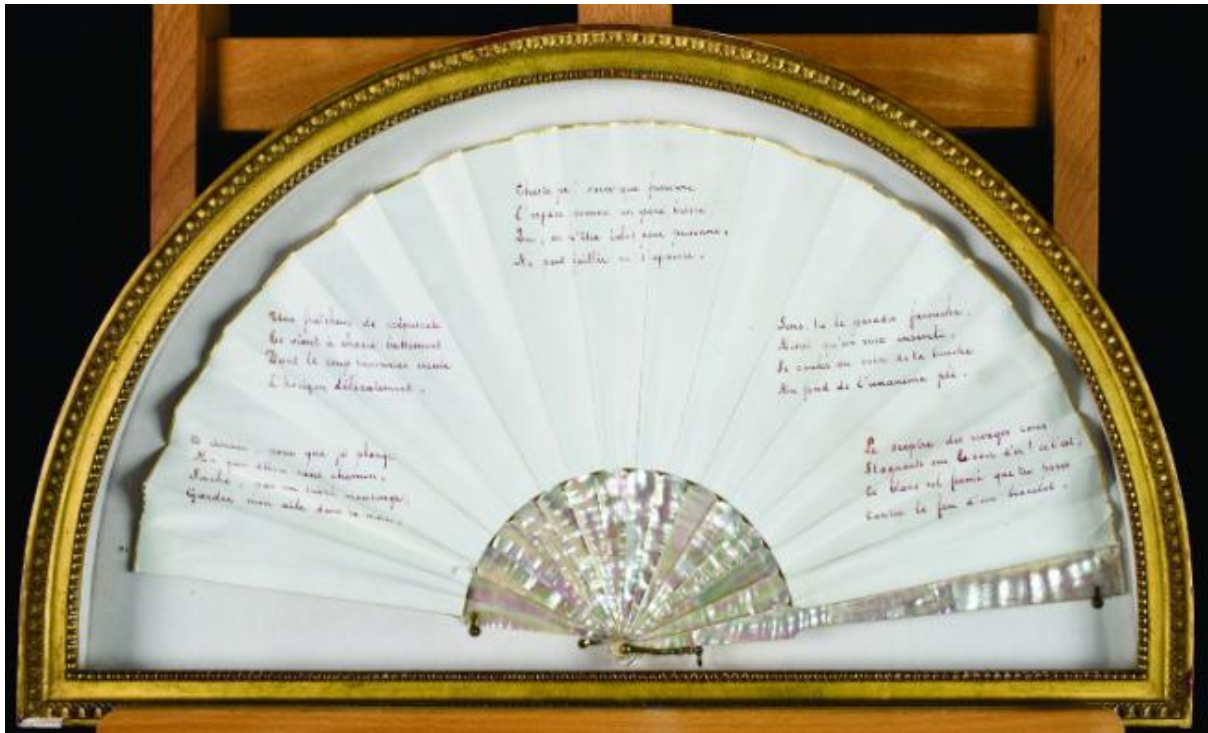
*“the unit of matter, the smallest unit of the labyrinth, is the fold” (Deleuze, 2006, p. 6).*

In *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, Deleuze elucidates a dynamic ontology of labyrinth and fold in which the space between the material and the virtual is

conceptualised as “an infinite fold [that] separates or moves between matter and soul” (2006, p. 39), a duplicitous *Zweifalt* that endlessly enfolds, unfolds and refolds, “in a coextensive unveiling and veiling of Being, of presence and of withdrawal of being” (2006, p. 34).

A fold is not so much an object as an operation, an operative act (Deleuze, 2006, p. 34), that, like a knot, implicates abstraction with materiality. In motion, “constituting and reconstituting itself in an endless breath of opening and/or closing” (Derrida, 2004b, p. 272), of revealing and/or concealing, the fold has become, “a metaphor for expansive thinking, potentialities, and ‘multiple possibilities’” (Hemmings, 2018, p. 182).

Fallen into matter, manifested in materials, a physical fold is movement arrested mid-motion, flux and virtuality given temporary static form. Disrupting linear narratives, linear time and space, the fold can be seen as an analogy for a quantum, a *polytropic* reality that is, “divided into infinite folds or separated into bending movements” (Deleuze, 2006, p. 6).



Fan given by Stéphane Mallarmé to his daughter Geneviève, undated

*The fold, “is a prevailing theme in Mallarmé’s search for a synthesis of and an equilibrium between the polar opposites ‘closed’ and ‘open’, ‘outside’ and ‘inside’ ....[which] is realised in ... the fan and the book” (Ryzhik, 2011, p. 632).*

## Labyrinth

*“the thread and the maze are each the origin of which the other is a copy, or the copy which makes the other, already there, an origin” (Miller, 1976, pp. 67–68).*

Multifaceted and polysemous, the labyrinth is the *polytropic* essence made manifest, made material as a visual image or even as a physical, “structure of sinuosities, twists and baffling turns” (Wall, 2012); simultaneously, as the subject of myth and literature, and as metaphor and archetype, the labyrinth is returned once more to the conceptual, to the virtual.

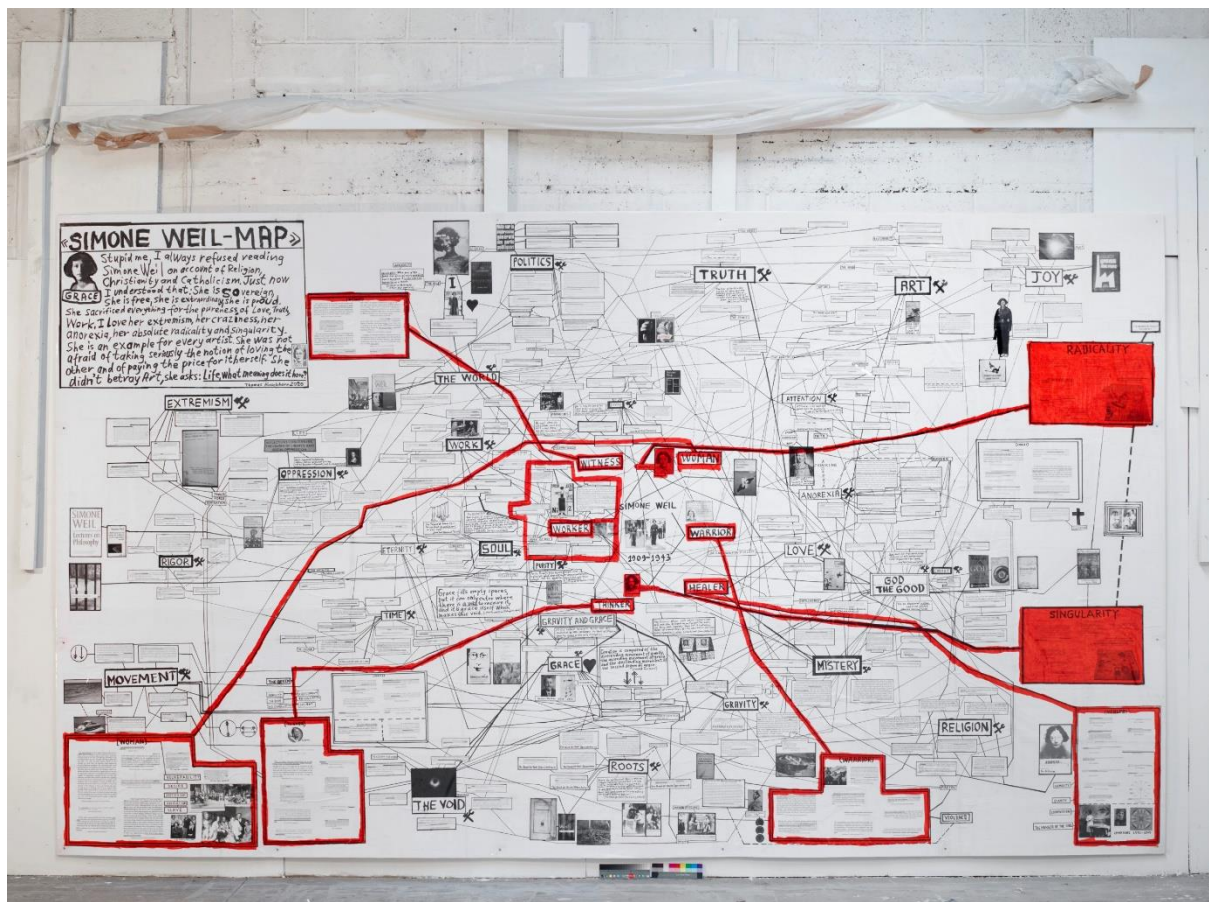
“Always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p.25), the labyrinth creates, “a zone of existential uncertainty where the balance ... can tip either way (Ingold, 2015, p. 144). As a, “form of spatial

theater” (Solnit, 2014, para. 11.11), it, “offers us the possibility of being real creatures in symbolic space” (Solnit, 2014, para. 11.14).

There are three types of labyrinth. The *unicursal* with a single path is the mystical labyrinth which, “thrusts the follower into the presence of the real” (Ingold, 2015, p. 133). In contrast, the *multicursal* labyrinth offers multiple choices and has become the archetypal image for confusion and *aporia*.

The final type, “an ever-expanding labyrinth without centre” (Sutton and Martin-Jones, 2008, p. xiv), is exemplified by Deleuze and Guattari’s *rhizome*.

Heterogeneous and non-hierarchical, with no beginning or end and with multiple entryways, the rhizome encompasses *becoming*, multiplicity, non-linearity and above all, connection: “the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, ‘and... and... and’” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 25).



Thomas Hirschhorn, *Simone Weil-Map*, 2020, 250 x 450 cm

*As the concept of space is being reworked and boundaries become more fluid, so too, the map which has conventionally been a tool for delineating and marking territory has become a rhizome, "open and connectable in all of its dimensions" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 12): "to make a Map is ... a form to make links – because it's all about making links" (Hirschhorn, 2020).*

### **Smooth Space and Becoming**

*"the labyrinth is becoming, the affirmation of becoming"* (Deleuze, 2005, p. 188).

*Smooth space*, "is one that is boundless and possibly oceanic, a space that is without border or distinction that would privilege one site or place over another" (Conley, 2005, p. 258): it is an *aporetic* (pathless) *(s)p(l)ace*. A concept created by Deleuze and Guattari, its counterpart is *striated space*. Their opposition analogous to Michel Serres' hard/soft dichotomy, the two terms are in a continual dialogue:

the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 474).

*Smooth space* is where *becoming* occurs (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 486).

*Becoming* is, "the very dynamism of change, situated between heterogeneous terms and tending towards no particular goal or end-state" (Stagoll, 2005, p. 22); "a becoming ... is the in-between" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 293).



Choi+Shine Architects, *The Urchins*, crochet, 2017, Marina Bay, Singapore

*"Crochet ... draws an open space in all directions, a space that is prolongable in all directions—but still has a center"* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 476).

### **Movement**

"πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει" (Heraclitus cited in Plato, 1903)

*"all things move and nothing remains still"* (Plato and Fowler, 1921).

*"Language ... is the most salient model of Heraclitean flux"* (Steiner, 2013, para. 9.109).

Bodies twist and turn on their passage through the labyrinth. "The hand moves rapidly... twists ... folds and knots" (Serres, 2008, p. 83). The infinite fold, "in an endless breath of opening and/or closing" (Derrida, 2004b, p. 259), continually enfolds, unfolds and refolds.

*(Border)(s)p(l)ace* is a, "milieu of perpetual transformation" (Colman, 2005, p. 233), "an undivided flowing movement without borders" (Bohm and Nichol, 2003, p. 80), "a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 25). In *(border)(s)p(l)ace*, "movement is the primary and ongoing condition" (Ingold, 2015, p. 147); in *(border)(s)p(l)ace*, "there are no subjects, no objects, no subject–object hybrids; only verbs" (Ingold, 2015, p. 152).



Ernesto Neto, installation view of *Crazy Hyperculture in the Vertigo of the World*, 2012, Faena Arts Centre, Buenos Aires

*This work is a crocheted interactive sculpture, a suspended labyrinth which, “places the [moving] spectator at the centre of the creative action” (Stone, 2012).*

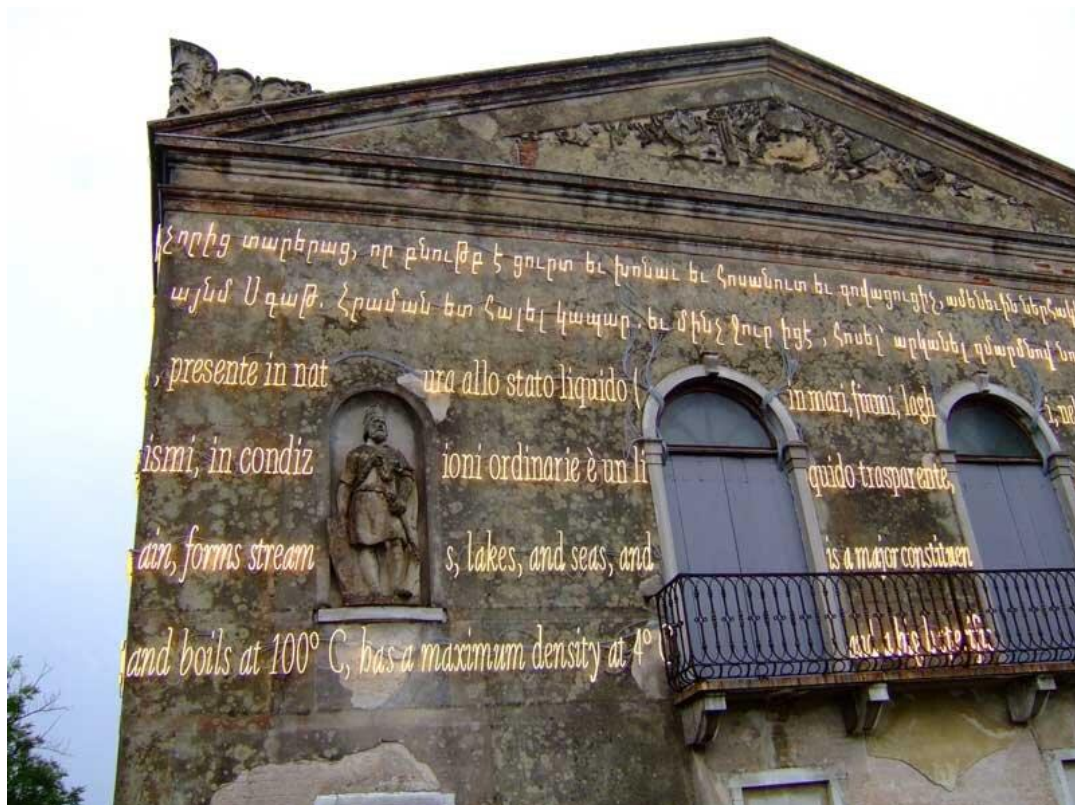
## Language

*“In the illusory babels of language, an artist might advance specifically to get lost, ... seeking odd intersections of meaning, strange corridors of history, unexpected echoes, unknown humors, or voids of knowledge” (Smithson, 1996, p. 78).*

Language is an inhabitant of *(border)(s)p(l)ace*. Straddling the threshold between self and *other*, it is, “like a skin ... between the body and the world, but also of the body, in the world” (Meese, 1992, cited in Flanagan and Booth, 2006, p.1). So too, language implicates matter and thought: “the meridian of language seems to pass through concrete and abstract poles of reality. We cross it each time we speak or recollect speech” (Steiner, 2013, para. 11.32).

Evolving, “by subterranean stems and flows, along river valleys or train tracks” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 6), language is in a continual state of flux. A word is a nexus of meaning and memory and association, a knot of serpentine etymologies

and rhizomatic connections that, “inheres in a labyrinth of branching interverbal relationships” (Miller, 1976, p. 70). Knowledge of the etymology of a word reveals forgotten meanings hidden by the folds of time and history, thus adding to the multiplicity of possible interpretations. Of particular interest in this project are those words that through their etymology contain a textile metaphor of enfoldment, such as, ‘implicate’, ‘complicated’ and ‘complex’, ‘duplicity’, and ‘multiplicity’.



Joseph Kosuth, view of *The Language of Equilibrium*, 2007, Venice.

*Kosuth explains that this work: “engages the cultural and social history of the evolution of language itself, how the history of a word shows its ties to cultures and social realities quite distinct and disconnected” (ART for The World, 2007).*

## Translation

*“translation is not so much an exceptional moment in our lives but a condition of being and becoming” (Hall and Maharaj, 2001, p. 38).*

Translation is, “a mediation between two already constituting worlds” (Hall and Maharaj, 2001, p. 37), and thus it, “entails an exposure to strangeness” (Kearney, 2006, p. xviii), to the *other*. However, “babelization does not ... wait for the

multiplicity of languages” (Derrida, 1993, p. 10), for language, “trembles in an unstable multiplicity as long as there is no context to stop us” (Derrida, 1993, p. 9). And since, “no context is absolutely saturable or saturating” (Derrida, 1993, p. 9), it follows that, “as soon as there is language there is interpretation, that is translation” (Kearney, 2006, p. xvii). Thus we all exist in a state of perpetual translation, a state of, “memory and mourning, of appropriation and disappropriation, of taking up and letting go, of expressing oneself and welcoming others” (Kearney, 2006, p. xx).



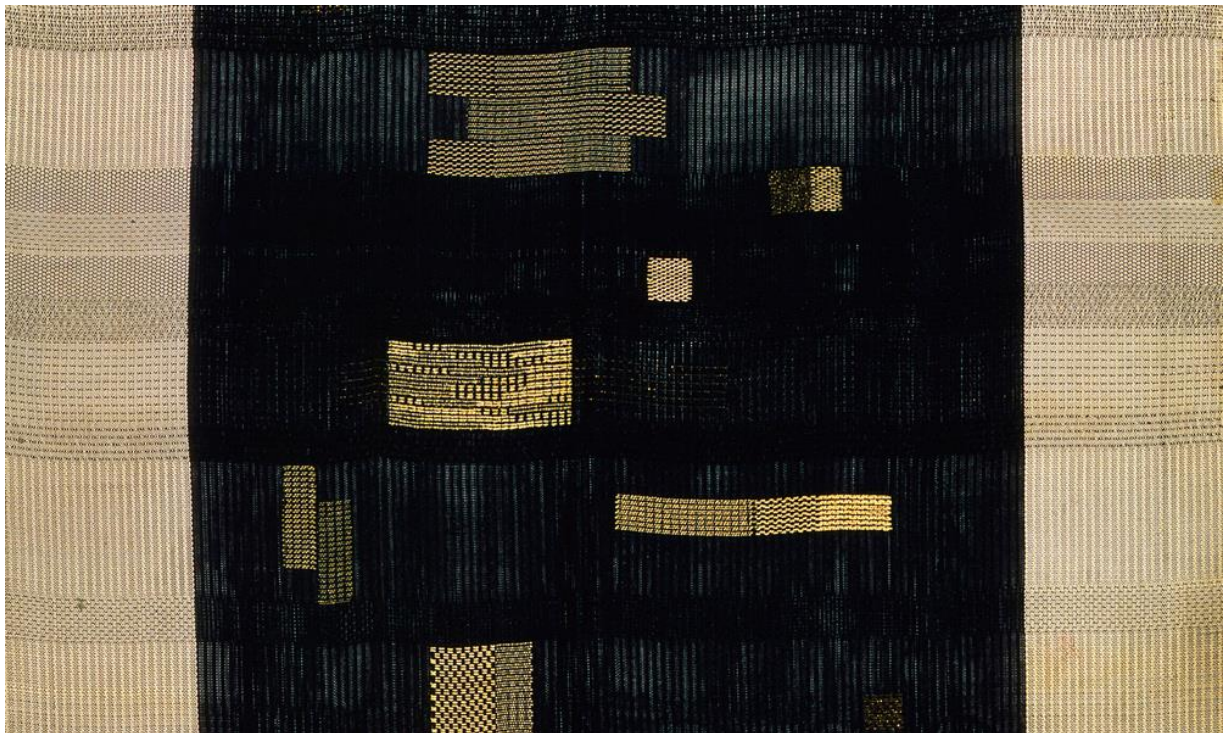
Cerith Wyn Evans, *In Girum Imus Nocte et Consumimur Igni*, 2006, neon lights, steel and glass

*The artist states, “translation is nothing if not an exploration of the slippage between one kind of meaning and another” (Maerkle, 2010b).*

### **Textuality**

*“A text ... hides from the first comer, from the first glance” (Derrida, 2004a, p. 69).*

Like textile, etymologically the text is woven, “a tissue of citations” (Barthes, no date, p. 4). But the post-structuralist text which, “consists of multiple writings, issuing from several cultures and entering into dialogue with each other” (Barthes, no date, p. 5), is metaphorically less a fabric made from woven threads and more a (s)p(l)ace filled with knotted and tangled threads: a polytropic, a rhizomatic, a crocheted, “space of many dimensions” (Barthes, no date, p. 4). For a text is able to, “refer only to other texts” (Sarup, 2006, p. 52), and thus, “an intersecting and indefinitely expandable web” (Sarup, 2006, p. 52) of intertextuality is generated, “a web that envelops a web” (Derrida, 2004a, p. 69).



Anni Albers, *Ancient Writing* (detail), cotton and rayon, 1936, Tate Modern

*Weaver Anni Albers, “was acutely aware of the semantic function of thread and textiles in the context of art and design.... she explored the notion of thread as text” (Gardner Troy, 1999, p. 28), speaking of, “the articulacy of threads” (Mitchell, 2018, p. 10).*

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