

# METABOLIC RIFFTS

METABOLIC RIFTS III  
29 de abril 2018  
Campo Alegre Theatre  
Café-Teatro



2.30pm Opening Statement

2.45pm Helena Rickett, *Acts of Support: Contradictions of Curating and Care*

3.45pm Susana Caló, *Can an Institution be Militant?*

4.45pm Coffee Break

5.00pm Ligia Lewis, *minor matter* (2016)  
Venue: Auditorium

6.30pm Artist talk with Ligia Lewis, Alexandra Balona and Sofia Lemos

7.00pm Matteo Pasquinelli, *The Machines of the Anthropocene: On the Transformation of Labour into Energy and Information*

8.00pm Roundtable discussion moderated by Alexandra Balona and Sofia Lemos

8.30pm Closing Remarks

All lectures will be presented in English.

PROSPECTIONS for Art, Education and Knowledge Production would like to acknowledge the contributors, participants and institutions who supported its first edition METABOLIC RIFTS and its three assemblies.

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Helena Rickett  
*Support Acts: Contradictions of Curating and Care*

From the withdrawal of state funds for cultural projects, to the precarity of life under late capitalism, where care is treated as an infinitely exploitable resource, the crisis of care has become a key preoccupation in the art world. Artists and curators attempt to make visible the unseen and under-valued labour and relationships on which their activities rely. Activists agitate for policies to improve labour conditions in the notoriously unregulated artworld. To compensate for the lack of care they routinely experience, cultural workers establish structures of support and mutual aid. Reviewing some of these artistic, institutional, curatorial and activist initiatives, Helena Rickett highlights the political conditions under which they operate and asks how care in the contemporary arts can be reconsidered, revalued, and more fairly distributed.

Helena Rickett is a curator and researcher with an interest in feminist and queer art, theory, and collectivity. She is Reader in the Art Department, Goldsmiths, University of London, and editor of the books *Art and Feminism*, *Acting on AIDS*, and *Sanja Iveković: Unknown Hero, A Reader*. She has held curatorial and programming positions at institutions including the ICA, London, Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, and the Power Plant in Toronto. In 2015 she initiated the Feminist Duration Reading Group which meets monthly in London to explore under-known feminisms from outside the Anglo-American canon.

METABOLIC RIFTS is a series of events organized by PROSPECTIONS for Art, Education and Knowledge Production, a roving assembly for visual and performing arts research mobilized by Alexandra Balona and Sofia Lemos. By investigating how the logic of capitalist accumulation and neoliberal reasoning ruptures the metabolism of the earth's systems, severing its basic operations of renewal, this programme encourages multifarious approaches to planetary phenomena proposing a forum for discussing their eroding histories and coming perspectives.

Modern and contemporary planetary positions have inscribed the subject in a fractured present of financial governance and climatic disarray—both in its roots to an “enlightened” past and future routes to extinction. In the current global era, our accelerated economies convert mental symptoms into bodily expressions and perpetuate intractable relations that define intentions and affectabilities, while securing the distinction between particular subjects and objects. What schisms and obvious contradictions operate at these narrative boundaries? In what ways can one address contemporary urgencies and protocols of representation where subject matter is confounded?

For its third and final assembly, METABOLIC RIFTS unpacks protocols of representation and strategies of support within techno-cultural infrastructures, and articulates with the presentation of *minor matter* (2016) by Ligia Lewis at DDD – Dias da Dança Festival 2018. Against the backdrop of exhorted nationalisms, increasing autonomy of corporate governance and big data over state control, and the intensification of anxiety underpinning labour deregulation,

Susana Caló  
*Can an Institution be Militant?*

Contemporary concerns with the mounting financialisation of subjectivity, precarisation of social life, and ensuing psychopathologies, increasingly require diverse semiotic frameworks to account for effects beyond the linguistic or the representational. Drawing on methodologies and concepts developed in the context of psychiatric and institutional practices from the 1950s, the institution is considered as an ecology of mental, social and environmental dimensions, and collective militant analysis as transformative, polyphonic, and continuous. By examining the practice of institutional analysis, as explored by psychoanalyst and activist Félix Guattari, Susana Caló will speculate on the value of extending principles of care from clinical settings to the wider community and the city while discussing the emancipatory potential of collective institutional processes.

Susana Caló is a researcher. She holds a PhD from the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy in London. Her thesis concerns the relations between language, semiotics, and politics in the work of Félix Guattari with a particular focus on linking institutional analysis to broader militant, social, and institutional contexts. Having worked in the field of cognitive science and developmental psychology at research centres in Portugal and the UK, Caló has also lectured at various institutions including the Royal College of Art, London; ESAP, Porto; and HKW, Berlin.

we propose to engage with the operating principles that organise energy, matter and information in networked capitalism, foregrounding nuanced forms of attention, of institutional critique, and an ethics of sociability.

A second assembly on February 17 at Rivoli Theatre investigated curatorial methodologies in relation to the legacies of colonial and capitalist systems of governance, and hosted sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos and curators Vivian Zihel and Maria Inigo Clavo, having also premiered Fabrizio Terranova's film *Donna Haraway: Storytelling for Earthly Survival* (2016). A first assembly on October 14, 2017, at Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art invited participants to unpack asymmetries in property law, human rights, environmental economy, as well as processes of singularity and communing, and engaged dramaturge Ana Vujanović, legal scholar Brenna Bhandar, cultural theorist Ana Teixeira Pinto, and political science scholar Nikita Dhawan in association with two performances by Alexandra Bachzetsis, *PRIVATE: Wear a mask when you talk to me* (2016) and *Private Song* (2017).

Through a programme of discursive gatherings, performances, and publications, PROSPECTIONS seeks to unearth designated methodologies in order to re-focus attention on research as an engaged, open-ended and dialogical encounter, while favouring assembly formats, combining theory and practice and inviting inter-disciplinary collaboration to investigate narrative plots and present day struggles at the double origin and fiction of the self.

Ligia Lewis  
*Artist Talk*

In Ligia Lewis' *minor matter* the stage is striped bare to explore the blackness of its limits. In this entanglement between architecture and embodiment, Lewis operates with dense scenic layers of sound and movement, to convey a specific discursive and affective choreographic arena: a phenomenology of anxiety and the somatization of long-term exhaustion. Engaging with affect, empathy, and the sensate, Lewis' choreography considers the social inscriptions of the body while provoking its nuances and potentiality. As practitioners in the visual and performing arts this work reaches out to those discourses that are analytically harder to articulate—the suffused boundaries between affect and energy.

Ligia Lewis works as a dancer, performer, and choreographer. Her work has been presented in multiple contexts including the theater, museums, and galleries. As a dancer, Lewis has performed and toured extensively for artists including Ariel Efraim Ashbel, Mette Ingvarsen, and Eszter Salamon. She has collaborated with visual artist Wu Tsang, musical artist Twin Shadow, and with the DJ collective NON Worldwide. In 2015, She was awarded the Pris Jardin d'Europe for her work *Sorrow Swag* and, in 2017, received a Bessie Award for Outstanding Production for *minor matter*.

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Alexandra Balona e Sofia Lemos

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Matteo Pasquinelli  
*The Machines of the Anthropocene: On the Transformation of Labour into Energy and Information*

The history of industrial civilization can be depicted as a bicephalous chimera whose heads grew out of the same machine, innervated each other and, after further metamorphoses, still attempts to hegemonize each other. The two heads are Energy and Information. They initiated and extended two technological lineages: the civilizations of Carbon and Silicon respectively, the one of energy as a medium of motion and the one of energy as a medium of control and communication. In an attempt to recombine the energy theory of labour (as manual and energetic activity) with information theory as a source of intelligence that gives form to energy, Matteo Pasquinelli introduces two notions—*carbosilicon machine* and *cyberfossil capital*—in order to rethink social autonomy in the Anthropocene.

Matteo Pasquinelli is Professor in Media Philosophy at the University of Arts and Design, Karlsruhe. He recently edited the anthology *Alleys of your Mind: Augmented Intelligence and its Traumas* (2015) among other books. Together with Wietske Maas he authored the *Manifesto of Urban Cannibalism*. His upcoming monograph on Verso Books is provisionally titled *The Eye of the Master: Capital as Computation Cognition*.