

The Artist is Absent: Non-Human Agency in the Situation of the Theatre

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Abstract: The application of non-human agency in theatre is approached through the tendency for anti-humanist works to reproduce misanthropic outcomes within posthumanist, ecofeminist, and transhumanist thought. Alternatives to human supremacy suggest a role for theatre in reconciling questions of agency. This paper proposes theatrical *presence* as an answer, and extends this into social and political spheres, leading to what is called *superhumanism* in this article as a new situation of theatrical spectatorship – in close reference to fandom in superhuman films.

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Surely there is no better way to feel human again than to stare into the all-knowing eyes of performance artist Marina Abramović? Continuing trends in contemporary theatre towards site-specificity, immersion, co-presence, embodiment, and an advanced version of what Hans-Thies Lehmann (2006) called “postdramatic” find mirrors in the world of contemporary art, where the “social turn” (Bishop 2006) has sought to build new forms of collective engagement between artists and audiences. One culmination of the social turn is the often-discussed 2010 work from Abramović, *The Artist is Present*, which saw the performance artist sit across from individual attendees, and interact with them for an undefined length of time. On one level, the work simply undertakes a re-negotiation of the “complex relationship between artist and audience,”¹ and offers a platform for a heightened social situation. The entry of “The Artist,” however, marks a re-insertion of human intervention into the process of art creation and reception – as a singular, exceptional being. The title of the work, supplied by MoMa curator Klaus Biesenbach, announces this re-inscription of the artist into the work of art as specifically a “presence,” implying that the figure of the Artist has generally become otherwise absent from the system of art-making. The title’s proclamatory form – as though triumphantly heralding the entrance of a person of significance² – puts human beings and their authorship centre-stage.

1 See MoMa website for *The Artist is Present* (Abramović 2010) – https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/marina-abramovic-marina-abramovic-the-artist-is-present-2010/.

2 An equally flamboyant announcement was used for activist, philanthropist, and boxing champion, Muhammad Ali: “The champ is here!”

What might this gesture say about the human today? Both artwork and title perform radically human-centred gestures, and in this, *The Artist is Present* (Abramović 2010) is in contradiction with much recent writing criticising the Anthropocene. Such writing seeks to push back against human supremacy by looking to antihumanist theories or groupings – such as Actor-Network Theory, posthumanism, transhumanism, and non-human agency – as mechanisms to radically decentre the human from a position of supreme authorship of environment, narrative, and epistemology. (See Morgan 2016, 2) Of these, it is non-human agency – descended from Michel Callon, Bruno Latour, and John Law’s Actor-Network Theory (see for example Latour 1996) – that contains fundamental challenges to theatre’s explicitly humanist origins.³ Many contemporary works use the moment of Anthropocene to generate new feminisms, post-colonial positions, and ecological activisms, which strike directly at the heart of the patriarchal, Eurocentric practice of theatre. (Pettifer 2017) Nevertheless, these critiques contain their own pitfalls, specifically, a tendency to be appropriated by misanthropic causes which seek to accelerate the removal of a shared vision of humanity, and to ignore inevitable implication with – and re-creation of – the targeted humanism.⁴ Theatre practices reliant on these antihumanist critiques, such as those conceiving a digital or hybrid space, may be embroiled in similar misanthropies, as they attempt to assert agency for non-human subjects without ever zooming out to examine the potential consequences of this relatively specific frame.⁵

From the staged conflict between humanisms and anti-humanisms, and the meeting of non-human agency with theatrical presence, a new orientation may arise – one specific to theatre, and strategically positioned “over” an antihumanist-humanist binary. Rather than the radical humanist gesture re-asserting the human as a “source of authorship, identity, and experience” (Morgan 2016, 2), or Friedrich

3 There are many different theatres. Here theatre is an architectural space descended from Greek and other European sources, and hence intertwined with the Eurocentric historical development of humanism, also acting as a historical source of cultural hegemony.

4 This is what Morgan refers to as the “inescapability of Humanism,” for example, in relation to Derrida. See Morgan 2016, 36–38.

5 One example is performance leaving behind material realities of human struggle, and over-relying on digital technology as a tool to destabilise the human subject. Martin Luther King, quoted in Gilroy 2000 vividly describes this ethical distances with a metaphor of “zooming out” into space: “when we set a man on the moon, with an adequate telescope he will be able to see the slums on earth with their intensified congestion, decay, and turbulence. On what scale of values is this a program of progress?” (Gilroy 2000, 346). Ironically this sentiment is mirrored in *Also sprach Zarathustra*: “I beseech you, my brothers, *remain faithful to the earth (bleibt der Erde treu)* and do not believe those who speak to you of extraterrestrial hopes!” (Nietzsche [1883] 1883, 6).

Nietzsche's "overcoming of human limits," *The Artist is Present* (Abramović 2010) might be read as transformational in that it elevates a situation of human relations itself, and emphasises the infinite possibilities within that situation. It is not the only place we might find such interactions. However, while theatre may actualise critiques of a humanist/antihumanist binary into physical, temporal, and architectural form, particular transcendent power may also be located in the recent explosion of contemporary audiences' interest in superhuman narratives (fandom). Contained in both the work of Abramović and these superhuman narratives is not a fantasy of becoming some super-being with special powers, but of (finally) becoming *ourselves*, as a super-application of humanist terms, via a specific type of togetherness; a simple, pragmatic fantasy of actual human-hood through social relations. *The Artist is Present* (Abramović 2010) can be read therefore not as an endpoint, but an origin story: the first work of an elevation "up, up, and into" a new state of collective being: a *Superhumanism*, with ramifications for collective spectatorship and reception in the theatre.

This paper will act as unwieldy introduction to this *Superhumanism*. Beginning with an examination of the threat of misanthropy in contemporary anti-humanisms such as in Rosi Braidotti's *The Posthuman* (2013), these concerns will be extended into analyses of contemporary thinking around ecological crisis and non-human agency, finishing with an analysis of its implications for the theatre, and in particular considered alongside theatrical *presence*. Finally, the invented category of *Superhumanism* will be proposed as an answer to this predicament, drawing collective power from observations of fandom in various comic book and cinematic universes, and their potential as sites of reception where transcendent theatre situations can arise.

The Posthuman: from anti-humanism to inhumane

Among the eye-catching examples in Rosi Braidotti's extensive study *The Posthuman* is the atrocious Finnish school mass-murderer Pekka-Eric Auvinen⁶ and his T-shirt which reads "Humanity is Overrated." Braidotti's inclusion of this misanthropic example raises a provocative question that is never directly answered in *The Posthuman*⁷: to what extent does her own anti-humanism align with the mass-mur-

6 A white supremacist terrorist is reluctantly named here – discussion would otherwise not be possible. It is worth noting that among the mass-murderer's contrarian self-descriptors, he identifies as an "antihuman humanist," anti-social social Darwinist," and cites Nietzsche as an influence.

7 Braidotti (2013) mentions the mass-murderer's "hatred for humanity" (15) as a caveat to the critique of humanism, and also asks "how does the posthuman engender its own forms of inhumanity" (3) but generally avoids this entanglement, instead simply asserting that "philosophical anti-humanism must not be confused with cynical and nihilistic misanthropy" (6).

der's misanthropy? Is the speciesist self-hate and misanthropic reaction present in Auvinen's dogma,⁸ and cited as his motivation for murder, aligned in some way with the anti-humanisms of the poststructuralists, transhumanists, or posthumanists – not in any explicit objectives, but rather as a type of collateral damage from challenging the structures of power which locate the (white, male) human as the “individual source of authorship, identity, and experience” (Morgan 2016, 2)?

Clear rebuttal to this provocation exists in old conflicts between humanisms and anti-humanisms (see Morgan 2016, 7). To summarise: equating an opposition to humanism with misanthropy can only be done under an assumption that humanity is itself defined by, and inexorably shackled to, humanisms and their associated fallacies of white supremacy, patriarchy, and anthropocentrism. An accusation of “anti-humanist misanthropy” is therefore tacitly reliant on what, for many anti-humanists, is precisely the target. The whole point is that humanism is itself misanthropic in its horrific double-standards: the outcome for Sartre is an “ideology of lies” (Sartre in Fanon 1963, 21), in the sense that, for Tony Davies, “it is almost impossible to think of a crime that has not been committed in the name of humanity” (Davies 1997, 141).⁹ Braidotti, in her “affirmative politics” (Braidotti 2013, 54), sees anti-humanism as not itself constitutive of an ideology, but rather a vehicle to some other “more relational,” inclusive, conception of the human subject (26). Her deconstruction of the Vitruvian Man – Braidotti's symbol of the (tainted) universal sovereign subject – is the dismantling of what some view as the Human, specific in its representation of the ideal form (male, presumably white, and located at the geometric apex of the mathematically-defined reality). Opposition to this definition of humanity, even if it is opposing a “straw man humanism”¹⁰ is not equivalent to the atrocity of the aforementioned mass-murderer. Martin Heidegger specifies in his *Letter on Humanism* that his own anti-humanism is strategic, and merely a response to an inadequacy in humanism: “this opposition (to humanism in *Being in Time*) does not mean that such thinking aligns itself against the humane and advocates the inhuman, that it promotes the inhumane and deprecates the dignity of man (sic). Humanism is opposed because it does not set the humanitas of man high enough” (Heidegger [1946] 1977, 210). An accusation that anti-humanisms are implicitly misanthropic may therefore

8 Dogma which is nevertheless relatively common among hipster culture, which (ironically) asserts a type of giving up as a response to overwhelming social, political, and environmental crises.

9 See also, for example, Janicaud 2005, 7. “Even Stalinists and Nazis could be seen declaring themselves as humanists!”

10 This is a concern that Morgan (2016) sees in a lot of antihumanist argument (see 46).

fall into what Marcus Morgan (2016), citing Rose (1984), describes as, “the anti-humanist project [. . .] misunderstood as a destructive exercise in nihilism” (Morgan 2016, 7).

Nevertheless, we might speculate on an observable phenomenon: a specific burst of misanthropic arguments occurring simultaneously in both far-right ideologies and ecological struggle. The latter more and more frequently casts humanity as a “nuisance to nature”¹¹ which should be erased or curtailed in some way, and the former capitalises on those discourses to advance projects that are directly or indirectly genocidal, in anti-globalist rhetoric covering everything from hatred of immigrants, to advantageous negotiations that will reinforce dominance in trade relationships.¹² Whilst anti-humanists almost never specifically promote a devaluation of the human subject, it is easy to see how it can be appropriated as such, and deployed to the benefit of these “soft” atrocities.¹³

At stake in these discourses are opposition to those for whom the enlightenment humanist project defines humanity itself – those mass murderers, fascisms, and increasingly visible white supremacies, determination that lands are being swamped by immigrants, that the “white race” is evaporating, and so on. In targeting the illegitimacy of this propagandic universe, it is also necessary to view these interests as themselves very real, emerging threats, capable of latching on to convenient arguments and integrating them into an incoherent and circular reasoning, that can be influential without the need for evidence. In this, certain anti-humanisms can be seen to be inadequate in defending against their appropriation to an atrocious end. Anti-humanisms may not even further an agenda in dismantling humanisms: as Morgan (2016) states in the ultimate backhanded compliment, challenges to humanism (transhumanism, posthumanism, other anti-humanisms) may function “not as providing a successive sequence of nails in humanism’s coffin, but rather as useful, critical and provocative conversation partners that have in fact helped determine humanism’s evolving forms” (Morgan 2016, 12). Humanism has a built-in reflexivity and agility that not only incorporates opposition into its own hegemony, but actively

11 This is especially prevalent in arguments over population control, but also in shareable misanthropic social media content – of dolphins reclaiming Venice during the COVID-19 pandemic, or various forms of “ecocide revenge porn” designed to create a certain pleasure in the erasure of humans through a celebration of nature.

12 Possibly the best example of this is Nazi Germany’s environmentalism under the “Blood and Soil” slogan – see Gilroy (2000). However, more contemporary examples include the “Green Wing” of the Greek neo-fascist Golden Dawn party.

13 It is notable that, despite an absence of detectable misanthropy, Gilroy nevertheless pays attention to the potential proximity of Planetary Humanism to misanthropy. See Morgan 2016, 114–15.

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thrives and even depends on it. More radical positions that do not drift into misanthropy may be called for to advance the project of overthrowing historical conceptions of the human subject.

Within these contexts it is worth considering in what ways positions against humanism may manifest in ideologies that appear to constitute their polar opposites, and vice versa. One might read a post-colonial humanist like Frantz Fanon or Steve Biko and sense an awareness of precisely this contradiction, and a conclusion that concrete revolutionary resistance to the atrocious historical outcomes of humanisms may be best formed, not by absolute opposition to it, but by a strategic entanglement with the tools harnessed in the name of that violence – or an insistence on the (super-)application of humanism’s stated principles. Where Kenan Malik cites that historically “Western radicals” – poststructuralist anti-humanists – “were often shocked by the extent to which anti-colonial struggles adopted what the radicals conceived of as tainted (humanist) ideas” (Malik 1996, 240), we might equally critique contemporary performance studies’ fixation on embodiment, co-presence, and non-human performance as actually removing itself from the entanglements of certain struggles, for which humanism is actually synonymous with certain types of resistance. Fanon is often quoted pointing out that humanist principles were seldom actually applied in colonially-invaded lands: “The action of European men has not carried out the mission that fell to them, and which consisted on bringing their whole weight violently to bear upon these elements, of modifying their arrangement and their nature, of changing them and finally of bringing the problem of mankind (sic) to an infinitely higher plane” (Fanon 1963, 314). Although the outcome of these double standards was – and continues to be – atrocious, today these double standards are also identifiable in particular manifestations and extensions of antihumanist arguments, in as much as their stated aim differs from the outcomes of their pragmatic application. We might ask what a productive entanglement here – one that critiques anthropocentric hegemonies while equally concerning itself with atrocity and material conditions of human life – might look like.

Ecological crisis, non-human agency, and ecofascist outcomes

Although *The Posthuman*’s only substantial mention of Actor-Network Theory (‘ANT’) – a precursor to non-human agency – relates to autonomous machines (Braidotti 2013, 45), ANT is also commonly applied in discussions of coming ecological crises. Specifically, ecofeminist arguments such as those offered by Jane Bennett, and (late) Donna Haraway adopt ANT’s direction towards and “agency in things” – or what Braidotti describes as an “assemblage of human and non-human actors” (Braidotti 2013, 45) – to “level the playing field” and encourage what Bennett

describes as “encounters between ontologically diverse actants, some human, some not, though all thoroughly material” (Bennett 2010, xiv). This development of non-human agency extends ANT’s proposals, applying it as part of a diagnosis of humanity’s inability to conceive of, and respond to, present and emerging phenomena such as climate change, ecocide, and the entrance into this period of extreme human influence on the world, dubbed Anthropocene.

In writing on ecological crisis, an adoption of ANT often takes the form of critiques of anthropocentric outcomes, whereby non-human agents threaten the central position of human agents, giving rise to alternative conceptions of environment in which the barriers between human and non-human are dissolved. To the extent that ANT involves a reduction of human subject and non-human object onto the same plane of existence, its application within ecological crisis allows, as Haraway puts it, speculation on a kind of “making kin” (Haraway 2016) between the human and non-human. Relatedly, ANT’s re-conception of action as moving beyond being “limited a priori to what ‘intentional’, ‘meaningful’ humans do” (Latour 2005, 71) is extended and accelerated into the realm of ecological crisis by Timothy Morton in his conception of the “hyperobject” – objects that exist not on an equal plane as humans, but instead are “massively distributed in time and space relative to humans” (Morton 2013, 1). Morton’s hyperobjects aren’t mere equals, but “directly responsible for [. . .] the end of the world” (2) in the sense that, for Morton, they threaten the human conception of time and space, acting outside these boundaries. As a result, the “world” no longer functions as a meaningful signifier: “We have no world because the objects that functioned as invisible scenery have dissolved” (104). Hyperobjects are super-massive ideological constructs that are “rendering both denialism and apocalyptic environmentalism obsolete” (2), as well as, arguably, humans themselves. ANT’s original investment in object agency is here accelerated into a vast scale, so that the hyperobject serves to define an entire metaphysics, and functions as a metaphor for human self-erasure through the over-intervention in nature.¹⁴

A related but distinct co-option of ANT has been enacted by a certain strand of ecofeminism, looking to build an ecologically-grounded assault on the (white, male) anthropocentric subject of patriarchal capitalism. In *Staying with the Trouble* (2016), Donna Haraway describes a state of human and non-human agents definitionally “becom[ing] with each other” (4) via transdisciplinary exchange, denoting “an emerging “New New Synthesis” – an extended synthesis – in transdisciplinary

¹⁴ Other conceptions of time and space to the one Morton uses may not be as threatened by his concept of hyper-objects.

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biologies and arts” that “proposes string figures tying together human and nonhuman ecologies, evolution, development, history, affects, performances, technologies, and more” (63). Here the theorist follows Jane Bennett, who in her 2010 book *Vibrant Matter* elaborates on a horizontal relationship between the human and non-human, stating that “to experience the relationship between persons and other materialities more horizontally, is to take a step toward a more ecological sensibility” (10). Braidotti (not explicitly ecofeminist) expresses this same sentiment in her explanation of the possible new perspectives that posthumanism may open in academia:

In the age of anthropocene, the phenomenon known as ‘geo-morphism’ is usually expressed in negative terms, as environmental crisis, climate change and ecological sustainability. Yet, there is also a more positive dimension to it in the sense of reconfiguring the relationship to our complex habitat, which we used to call ‘nature’. The earth or planetary dimension of the environmental issue is indeed not a concern like any other. It is rather the issue that is immanent to all others, in so far as the earth is our middle and common ground. [Braidotti 2013, 81]

For all three theorists, the focus is a dismantling of human supremacy, a power structure explicitly or implicitly containing white supremacies, patriarchies, and colonial geopolitical systems of state power. Science for these theorists plays the role of authorising the assault on the human subject from the outside, offering evidence of dehumanisation and de-universalisation,¹⁵ and leading logically to its replacement with something like a global commons. This double-movement blurs the concept of human before offering a preferred, reconfigured (inclusive) and fact-based model.

While supporting the project of generating alternatives to oppressive epistemologies, we might ask concrete questions of this process and its outcomes – particularly in their willingness to reconceive the human. Is it possible, for example, to ask the same questions regarding potential misanthropies – levelled earlier at anti-humanisms – of this de-centring described above? Returning to the example of the Finnish mass-murderer, what role does atrocity play in the arena of ecological studies that addresses non-human agency, and fashions from it an argument against “human hubris and our earth-destroying fantasies of conquest and consumption?”

15 The ends of Nazism and ecofeminism are undoubtedly different. However, as ecological crisis advances, the time is approaching where ecofascist proposals may well begin to hold a certain attraction, as the choices become increasingly taken between bad options. These questions may be generalised outside of the authors selected here, who are chosen because of their proximity to ANT and adoption of non-human agency.

[Bennett 2010, ix]. Can certain iterations of non-human agency not ironically serve the opposite to its stated function – facilitating eco-fascism in its severe under-rating of human presence in the world, with the effect of (deeply ironically) dismissing the ethical burden of human intervention in nature? Dehumanisation being the first step to fascism¹⁶ – isn't Bennett's reconsideration of our selves as a "vibrant matter" (xix) articulating a well-trodden slope to atrocity, invoking a dehumanisation with a sunnier appearance?¹⁷ Is the power in Morton's hyperobjects not contained in its manifestation as an all-powerful superstructure, one that renders all human life subservient to its metaphysical demands? Maybe not – but what, then, is the difference, and what if the endpoint would anyway be the same? How might we act to re-insert the human onto the stage of objects in some way, while also acknowledging the premise of de-centralising the impulse towards dominance and supremacy as a necessary step towards respecting that which exists outside the control of humans?

Jaeger's theatrical presence and its technological extensions

The developments of non-human agency in ecofeminism and hyperobjects outlined above have many mirrors in performance studies today, via the use of the stage to destabilise human supremacy, and to strive for human-object equivalence as a means to re-think anthropocentrism through performance. In part, this is a logical consequence of cross-disciplinary fertilisation between ecological studies, sociology, and the arts – which results in a type of de-centred strand of theatre, one that can be seen as a counter to theatre's humanist foundation. These discussions centre on the contested term *presence*, and its capacity to be shaped by the use of technology in the stage. This is further complicated in works more directly deploying non-human agents, where artists might, for example, perform Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* with real seagulls, seek to use robot actors, or incorporate digital technologies to question the authenticity of the stage image, thereby re-distributing "presence" to non-human subjects. Such examples may constitute what Suzanne M.

16 For example, Hannah Arendt describes Eichmann's disqualification of himself as human as occurring alongside his stated need to eradicate humanity. See Arendt (1963) 2006.

17 Although I posit this as new, we might also return here, for example, to ecological protectionist strands of Nazism, and its apparent compatibility with genocide, *Lebensraum*, and totalitarianism (Gilroy 2000, 39), and ask at what point the struggle to protect environment becomes an ecofascist one, and even if, at some point, despite its obvious misgivings, this might be the only justifiable pathway. Rather than fear such questions, I propose them as a critical necessary for discourses around environmental activism, not only to avoid trading one atrocity for another, but to develop comprehensive responses to deepening ecological crises that are capable of concretely addressing real-world scenarios.

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Jaeger proposes are a “rejection of theatrical presence by postmodern performance artists who integrate contemporary technologies of mass communication within live performances” (Jaeger 2008, 124), while also, in their own way, questioning the human role in shaping reality. Presence in the theatre, then, contributes to conversations around non-human agency as something of an intruder.

Jaeger’s discussion of presence in performance (124), frames it in phenomenological terms; i.e., through the perception of both actor and audience. Jaeger’s interpretation incorporates poststructuralist linguistic authors to argue in favour of performance-as-text, where “the subjectivity of the performer becomes a zero point in the production of meaning through gestured and other physical signifiers” (128). The drive to textuality renders elements of the stage equivalent to each other and interacting on the same plane (in surface resemblance to non-human agency) so that presence is “the appearance of something real, here and now; the appearance of a self, an acting, physical body in the world, engaged reciprocally with other real bodies or other real features of the world” (128). Like non-human agency, presence might therefore create a textual equivalency that blunts potential intervention outside the stage: “all of these ideas that relate to notions of stage presence and openness to the real world seem, from a semiotic perspective, impossible to philosophically defend” (128). Jaeger cites Philip Auslander in claiming that this linguistic breaking-down of performance elements into *text* is inexorably linked to their commodification, a process she refers to as a “commodification of presence” (130), and it is easy to see how, slightly extending this argument, technology can act as a primary vehicle of this movement towards textuality on the stage.

Yet presence in the theatre, Jaeger notes, is also something quite other than the sum of its parts, with the main interrupting factor being the “importance of the body” (132) – and it is here that the challenge to non-human agency is most stark. Jaeger cites Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s “phenomenology of bodily being-in-the-world” and the “bodily powers of perception” (131) as the key site of differentiation between the theatre and other text. Within non-human agency’s “flattening out” (Morgan 2016, 40) effect, however, the body becomes yet another object in space, potentially invested with agency, although no more so than other actants. Furthermore, phenomenological perception will only ever situate the viewing experience as reproducing human authorship of the world, on account of its inherent primacy of human perspective. In the face of this kind of evidence, Jaeger’s assertion that “artificial environments require new ways of using the body, and a reconfiguration of the unity of a bodily schema that ties the person to the environment” (Jaeger 2008, 137) seems inadequate: what would be required is an entirely different format of perception which attempts a holistic (bodily) one-ness with the other – something like a

stage version of Haraway's "becom(ing) with." The dividing boundary between self and the world would become erased, and the human basis for perception fragmented, and only exceptional to the extent that it exists in harmony and dialogue with the perspectives of co-spectators – in other words, a type of collective spectatorship.

From Jaeger's analysis of theatrical presence, it is easy to understand why non-human agency is attractive to theatre artists – it offers some reconciliation of the dissonance which arises from attempting to simultaneously de-centre and re-centre the human experience through performance. This apparent problem is resolved for Jaeger in theatre's key differentiating feature – the body – not co-incidentally, the same conclusion reached by many activists and artists looking to destabilise hegemonic structures using the stage. Such works participate in a selective investment of bodies with agency and visibility, whilst denying it to others, usually as an act of resistance against dominant cultural tendency.¹⁸ What are the ethical implications of this selective investment? In the theatre, the result can easily become an affirmation and negation of the human in accordance with certain strategic political ends – the accusation of misanthropy is neatly avoided by the selective investment in humanity where it is politically expedient, and as a counter-measure to violence (i.e. precisely against misanthropy, which is seen here as the targeting of people based on class, race, gender, or other category). Although Jaeger (2008, 126) briefly touches on ramifications of the centralisation of presence outside phenomenology when mentioning in passing the "death of the subject," the ethical implications of undertaking simultaneously a de- and re-centralisation of the human subject on stage are in sociological terms largely avoided. Who gets to be present? On what criteria are subjects to be permitted or refused visibility, agency, and stage power? What happens when these assertions, perhaps equally deserving, conflict with each other? These uncomfortable questions are where choices must be made, understanding that the breaking of categories always creates new categories – and that interacting with such a system of spectatorship to both refute and re-create it contains inherent contradictions.

Similar contradictions persist when the collective political dimensions of theatre spectatorship, such as those explored by Hans-Thies Lehmann in *Postdramatic Theatre*, are examined in relation to non-human agency. For Latour, the social "re-assemblage" is a final project of ANT, whereas Lehmann's postdramatic theatre has "the trivial and banal, the simplicity of an encounter, a look or a shared situation"

18 Such a position is, for example, present in Mbembe's *Necropolitics*, which is itself reliant on Foucault's proposal of the body as a key site of discipline and punishment. See Mbembe 2019.

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(Latour 2006, 181) as its social endpoint. Where ANT's deconstructive approach to ontology necessitates its (healing) re-assembly (see Latour 2005, 247–50), Lehmann's approach is deeply involved in the ambiguities of shared presence and the effect of this on the dramatisation (and commodification) of everyday life: "what is at stake is also the fate of the errors of the dramatic imagination" (Latour 2006, 181). Lehmann specifically targets an observed de-investment in meaningful drama: "drama is increasingly becoming the core of a more or less banal mass entertainment where it is flattened into mere 'action', while it is simultaneously disappearing from the more complex forms of innovative theatre" (Lehmann 2006, 182). In Lehmann's terms, the outcome of non-human agency in the theatre would be a type of hollow performative totality of the (immersive) spectacle, and, as Lehmann puts it in relation to the world outside the theatre, "the 'theatricalisation' of all areas of social life" (183), in other words: a world full of theatre, and without drama. A liberating negation of the human is unleashed by non-human agency on stage, offering a re-inscription of human subjectivity through an erasure of its dramatic (human) elements, and simultaneously, the comforting emptiness of non-human equivalence. What is left to re-affirm the human subject? Presumably, the undeniable presence of the supreme authorial being – the artist themselves. So, surrounded by non-human actors on an otherwise empty stage, bereft of drama, the Artist asserts their power as the last – and only remaining – affirmation of the human subject: the *present* being, through which the world is to be read.

Returning to Abramović, is *The Artist is Present* (Abramović 2010) not an attempt to re-insert, then, the *dramatic* into this situation – without reverting to human authorship of the environment, and instead through a heightened situation of social negotiation? Though non-human agency and its eco-critical and ecofeminist appropriations of Actor-Network Theory both find friends in contemporary theatre, the assertion/denial of human and other agencies – in audience, performer, or some hybrid *other* figure – is, just as in ecological crisis, not necessarily a clear pathway to any kind of resolution of the complications of human supremacy. The varying applications of non-human agency in the theatre gives rise to a question: to what end? If the *levelling out* of human and non-human on the stage results in a spectator's re-affirmation as a centre of meaning-making, then this is nothing particularly new. If, on the other hand, the human is placed in both supreme positions as primary intervener with nature *and* fundamentally at the mercy of limitations over which the only means of intervention is collective – a negotiation takes place which may supersede the humanist/antihumanist binary and the misanthropic traps of both projects. No longer equipped with the tools to reshape our environment, nor predisposed to (give up) supreme control to the elements, the ethical foundation and scope of our

interventions themselves are placed under consideration as part of an act of transcendence, performed together with the actor, within the elevated, fantastic architecture of the theatre. This, I claim, is the *superhumanist happening* – a type of spectatorship deeply involved in the collective overcoming of human limits, where the fallacious trap of human supremacy and its cleansing outcomes (both human (genocide) and a type of non-human (ecocide)) are circumvented or leapt over. In theatre, the flattening out of drama is traded for a high-risk investment in a shared idea of human inside a temporary aesthetic situation, in which spectatorship pins its entire existence on the negotiated presence of each other. The final section will propose that circumvention, in the form of what I will refer to as *Superhumanism* – a floating vehicle for re-conceiving the human, embedded in new human-led modes of spectatorship that gestures towards a collective struggle embodied in everyday mass-culture symbolism of the superhuman.

Superhumanism: an over-view

First let me state clearly what this mock term *Superhumanism* is not. This is not the *Übermensch* of Nietzsche and its positioning of the human being as “something that must be overcome” (Nietzsche [1883] 2006, 5), nor the project of Dominique Janicaud’s “superhuman overcoming” (Jacineau 2005, 56). Instead, Superhumanism follows Paul Gilroy (2000) in the development of his “Planetary Humanism”: a transcendent collective response to the atrocious deployment and outcomes of certain historical humanisms (and, as I have argued, anti-humanisms). Superhumanism’s central accusation, one that comes directly from the popularity of superhuman narratives, particularly in cinema, is that humanisms and anti-humanisms are not fantastic enough.¹⁹ This accusation stems from observations of Fanon that the humanist project was never actually applied – that its entire purpose was to be ideal in theory and atrocious in application – together with the perceived drift of certain anti-humanisms (especially within ecological crisis) toward an alternative misanthropy. The aspirations of humanism, shackled by the *übermenschlich* objective of overcoming human limits, are not nearly high enough, their modest principles applied only in a context of individual aspiration – what the transhumanist Nick Bostrom, in his reading of the *Übermensch*, calls “soaring personal growth and cultural

19 One possible exception to this is the Afrofuturism described in chapter 4 of *Necropolitics* (Mbembe 2019). For example, his assertion that “the Afrofuturist current declares that the category of humanism is now obsolete” (164) is not incompatible with Gilroy’s “planetary entanglement.” Another possibility is the xenofeminism of the *Xenofeminist Manifesto* (Laboria Cuboniks 2015) which adopts an attitude of transcending the humanist-antihumanist binary while retaining humanist undertones.

refinement in exceptional individuals” (Bostrom 2005, 361). The aspirations of the specific anti-humanisms mentioned here are too easily read, in their project of decentring human perspectives and challenging human supremacy, as devaluing the human in their challenge to this fundamental humanist project.

Superhumanism is grounded in our collective reception of and attraction to superhumans, as manifested in culture. The inadequacies and inherent inconsistencies of humanisms are recognised as under-valuing of the human, and in this sense, the “super” in superhuman does not denote a depiction of what the human could be, but rather what it actually *is* – as fantasy. Superhumanism therefore posits, in contradiction with the mass-murderer from Finland, that *humans are fantastic*.²⁰ Contemporary humanisms, in as much as they are deployed in defence of rights anywhere from incel groups’ asserted right to sex, to the border control corporation Frontex, are inadequate to encapsulate the aspirations of today, defending a set of rights that are themselves supremacist delusions. The appropriation of humanisms by various post-colonial and feminist perspectives are acknowledged, as are the goals of anti-humanisms in undermining human will for dominance over the environment. From these critiques and appropriations, we may spring into a futuristic set of engagements that have *the theatre situation* as their primary site for negotiating and articulating new togethernesses.

Superhumanist Anti-Hollywood

What is our fatal attraction to the so-called Marvel Cinematic and DC Comics Universes? Why this unstoppable gravitational pull toward what is surely just a morbid commercial recycling of the same content? Isn’t it that, as the film director Martin Scorsese spat out recently, superhuman films “aren’t cinema” where “nothing is at risk” (Scorsese 2020)? On one level, the superhumans of Hollywood draw out age-old criticisms of a Hollywood conveyor belt, devoid of new ideas, simply regurgitating profit-based content. Yet on the level of reception, as Will Brooker (2002) suggests, it would be a stupid act to rob these films of affording access to a special type of agency, one which floods through a variety of cultural production. Although remaining significantly under-researched, fandom – as well as being now an explicitly commodified practice – is simultaneously a site of fluidity in identifica-

20 This is close to what Bennett (2010) refers to this in a pejorative manner as an “aporetic and quixotic endeavour” that she warns is “too often bound up with fantasies of uniqueness in the eyes of God, or of escape from materiality, or of mastery of nature.” Nevertheless, the claim is not occupied specifically with “the philosophical project of naming where subjectivity begins and ends” (ix), and rather with a state of being together that resists human self-hate, a type of exceptionalism irremovable from collectivity.

tion, wish-fulfilment, and hope for overcoming bleak circumstances through the innate power of the (super-) subject.²¹ Not only do these films turn a profit out of wish-fulfilment, even if they are narratively banal variations (or perhaps because of this), they also point to an existing lack, which is filled by the films “transcendental power” (Brooker 2002, 4). As Jacques Rancière states: “what human beings contemplate in the spectacle is the activity they have been robbed of; it is their own essence become alien, turned against them, organising a collective world whose reality is that dispossession” (Rancière 2009, 7).

The work of Will Brooker on Star Wars fandom *Using the Force* (2002) documents a fan spectatorship that is inherently theatrical, and contains a separation of the commodity of the superhuman film from its *Superhumanist* reception. Chapter 2, titled *Viewing Star Wars Together*, documents the researcher’s visit and participation in a collective viewing of *The Empire Strikes Back* (Kershner et al. 1981), and in particular, the interactions of the “participatory community commenting on and interacting with the film” (Brooker 2002, 29). Brooker documents the spectators’ relentless flow of exchange with the film, offering “sarcastic commentary,” “quoting lines,” performing “rituals of dressing up or drinking,” and “acting out scenes” (35). As Brooker notes, there is a kind of playful seriousness about these interactions, which are characterised by their competitiveness and precision – he quotes Jeff, a grocery manager from Ohio, as enjoying to perform the choking sound Jabba the Hut makes as he dies in *Return of the Jedi* (Marquand et al. 1983), and his brother’s preference for quoting Stormtrooper dialogue such as “look sir, droids!”, or mimicking the swoosh of the lightsabre. It is easy to dismiss these performances as naïve interactions with text (51–54). Yet, at the end of the chapter, Brooker remarks on a specific bond formed with one viewer/participant: “once it was established that I had a similar [. . .] level of expertise and enthusiasm for the saga, we immediately had a vast bank of shrewd references to draw upon” (61–62). Furthermore, Brooker notes the transgressive potential of the shared viewing experience, and that “for one hundred and twenty minutes (of viewing), the hierarchies were so fully dissolved and replaced with new ones” (62).²² Is it not possible that these exchanges, especially when undertaken in relation to superhuman texts, become not only a collapse of

21 Although this type of wish-fulfilment is notably different today than that described by Umberto Eco in relation to Superman, who “embody(ies) to an unthinkable degree the power demands that the average citizen nurtures but cannot satisfy,” it nevertheless retains the feature of emerging out of an identifiable need (Eco 1979, 107).

22 One example of the link between fandom spectatorship and theatre is the similarity between a concept such as this from Brooker and Augusto Boal’s conception of the “spect-actor,” where theatre is a space for the spectator’s intervention, and in which the structures of power can be renegotiated through spectatorship (Boal 1974).

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hierarchies, but the creation of a referential universe that attempts to escape a cataclysmic ecological condition on earth – i.e. the same gesture as Haraway’s “becoming-with”? Can re-authorship from fans be seen as an attempt to re-inscribe the human into the experience of spectatorship – through the creation of a kind of pop-up theatre of “active participants in a shared world” (Rancière 2009, 11)? Can this not be a collective overcoming of human limits, *up, up, and into* a fantasy space, where we might finally meet the ethical demands of being human, and at the same time imagine these not as limitations, but overcomings unto themselves?

Up, up, and into!

From the collision of reception studies, phenomenology, fandom, sociology, and ecofeminism, a new performative philosophical gesture arises. This gesture comes from an identified need for a new conception of spectatorship that identifies a state of being “beyond” the human, a collective transcendence *into* a field of human exchange, material interaction, and interconnectedness. The “over-under” of the *Übermensch* is reloaded as an “up, up, and into” a set of conditions similar to those identified by Gilroy’s Planetary Humanism, and Heidegger’s being-in-the-world or *Dasein*. To this extent, the superhuman is not exceptional individuals achieving what for us mere mortals is impossible. To fans, it is a concrete and repeating reminder of their locked-outness from conceiving the world, from the perpetual movement of philosophy up, up and out of reach. Trapped within an increasingly apocalyptic scenario of material living, the fan plays with a particular contradiction: an inability to re-author their circumstances, and a fantasy of meaningful (collective) intervention in them. The superhumans of Marvel and DC universes are manifestations of a concrete and bodily fantasy: to intervene, at the level of governance, on those conditions that create circumstances of this inhumanity without end. Superhumanism is thus not a suspension of disbelief, but a suspension of spectators themselves into beings beyond belief.

The first Superman could not fly. He was earth-bound, with the exception of his powerful leap. Superhumanism, both in a conceptual and pragmatic sense, lives as a collective aspiration that unleashes its deep, fantastic intervention with material circumstance and the limit of earthly existence. Figures like former Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton, or Kanye West re-naming himself “Ye” become only agents of a collective elevation of the human above the realms of struggle and suffering. While on the level of enlightenment humanism, an article like *Everything Black Folks do is Excellent* (Smith 2016) is impossible to argue, within a superhumanist frame it is the only possible logic, as it concerns humans subject and their collective overcoming – not of themselves (as in Nietzsche), but of the circumstances that ground and control everyday human relations. The superhuman is not an individual

exception, but a fantasy of exceptional collectivity, and an immunisation against prevailing cynicism – a place where our dreams are kept safe from the relentless pillaging and deception of contemporary media, ironically within plain sight of its most advanced systems of cultural mass production.

And yet, cinema itself – with its commodification of text and intertext, and control of consumption obscured behind the emotion of storytelling (Meehan 1991, 61) – is far from the ideal site for collective transcendence. This phenomenon of media interaction, re-authorship, and participation is inherently contradictory within the platform of blockbuster cinema, as it involves giant mechanisms of media commodification, which have become professional at pretending to be on the same level as the fans. When Janicaud observes in sports that “the sole horizon of ‘overcoming’ is the fanatical gain of some tenths of a second in a race, where young sportsmen and women are ready to undergo dangerous (and illegal) courses of treatment in order to dominate in competitions and where, despite this, a champion will be all but worshipped as a superman?” (Janicaud 2005, 49), he overlooks here the potential function of sport as a mass entertainment and participatory spectacle unto itself, where viewers engage in a universe of fantastic narratives and reclaim them from their systems of production. Cam Newton is here as superhuman as Marshawn Lynch: one dancing in the end zone, the other answering an entire pre-super bowl press conference of questions with “I’m just here so I don’t get fined (by the NFL)”.²³ These gestures point to the creation of a resistant, transcendent collective state, away from the proposed escapes of consumerism that serves to define the frame in which the humans-turned-phenomena exist. Agents themselves can know their role in this constellation, and occasionally point to the subversion of their own deployment as “soaring” and “exceptional” within it: is Usain Bolt’s famous “To di world” pose – where he gently leans back and points to the sky with two fingers – not a gentle mockery of Buzz Lightyear’s delusional “To infinity and beyond!” from *Toy Story* (Lasseter et al. 1995)? One points to the world and its conditions, the other gestures at the limitless possibilities of precisely its evacuation.²⁴

It is not my intention to participate naively here in what Gilroy, citing the example of Michael Jordan in *Space Jam* (Pytko et al. 1993), calls “the celebrated sequence of superhuman black physicality,” which has its own white supremacist overtones in commercialisation and promotion of “precisely those forms of solidarity that Nazi

23 This occurred during a press conference prior to Super Bowl XLIX, in which Lynch, one of the NFL’s star running backs at the time, answered in this way to excessive questions from reporters.

24 This is probably not intentional. Bolt’s pose reportedly comes from the Jamaican Dancehall dance culture.

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emblems first sought to impose on a disorderly world” (Gilroy 2000, 348). Superhumanism is not located in any superior physical body, nor any other superiority. Instead there is a discernible pattern around collective spectatorship, in particular those examples attempting to refuse or supersede Eurocentric and inherently racist and/or patriarchal lines of thought, and which offer the most active and potentially transformative situations. Such discourses may strike directly – more directly than the cited anti-humanisms – at the earlier identified Eurocentrism and patriarchy inherent to the theatre itself: its forms deeply embedded in lines of thought and performance that are intertwined with the humanist project. Performance existing elsewhere, and the creation of pop-up theatres around certain situations of spectatorship – particularly in relation to fan performance and interaction around superhuman texts – offer glimpses into what is possible in terms of collective transcendence through spectatorship. Far from marginalised, then, these are the theatres that should be central to any radical transformational discourse – creating, almost incidentally, the chance to free the stage from some specific legacies: of the historical development of humanism, and the under-rating of the human in certain anti-humanist discourses.

Conclusion: towards superhumanist theatre situations

Whilst Abramović can be seen to create a space for the re-negotiation of the human through presence, Brooker’s *Star Wars* spectatorship is the creation of a meta-theatre outside of the permitted spectator experience: it rejects the inherent inaccessibility of theatre by creating its own accessible one – complete with its own textual language built out of the given fan universe, and its own defined *presence* of an audience augmented by their intervention. Fandom points to an absence in theatre, which is re-cast as an improvised architecture, a forum theatre that can spring up anywhere – including, but not only, in the cinema. This theatre is the arena in which the *Super* can be performed and negotiated through the interaction of various present actors (performer and spectator), and their elevation “up, up, and into” a state of radical exchange and togetherness. Yet Superhumanism enacts what the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) achieves only in simulation: where participation in the MCU will always (for profit reasons) be a not-quite fulfilling invitation – the space between involvement and exclusion being where profit is made – the theatre created outside the immersive *universe* is authentically superhumanistic, in the sense that the act of transcendence is achieved necessarily together, as the collected group of individual beings that constitute an audience.

This mobile, flexible *theatre situation* identifies and facilitates a specific kind of community-formation. Whilst Lehmann (2006, 186) cites Bertolt Brecht as picturing

a role for theatre as “elevating feelings to a higher level,” this is not an elevation of emotion per se, but a collective sense of imagined being outside of the limitations of material conditions. Likewise, where for Lehmann the goal may be to connect the spectator with the spectacle by “mak(ing) visible the broken thread between personal experience and perception” (186), the superhumanist theatre situation observes the resistant components of fan response to superhuman texts, and proposes them as a potential site of communal negotiation and collective imagining. In this sense, it is not a case of the “words and images, stories and performance, can change something of the world we live in” (Rancière 2009, 23), but examining the formation of this sense of collectivity, and the nature of the fantasy that fosters it. Constructing that fantasy of change happens through the malleable and intangible bonds of shared human experience – what for Rancière is “the third thing that is owned by no one, but which subsists between them” (15).

What is the artist’s role in the facilitation of this *super*? Taking the lead from Abramović, the first step appears on the surface to be a kind of stripping back of the artwork, a minimalist focus on social relations. And yet, Abramović’s work – a highly visible work among a sea of less visible examples – is loaded with content that becomes visible when all else is removed: the nature, site, and platform of negotiation, herself as an identity and history, the specific spectator and their own experience, mood, feeling, atmosphere, and so on. This elevation, then, is partly a zooming in on the details of human relations and collective authorship – though it is the Artist who is announced in *The Artist is Present* (Abramović 2010), the work is equally contingent on the unstated presence of another person – as a partner to its formation as a site of discourse, and the co-sculptor of a fantastic reality. In announcing this super-inscription of the human into its aesthetic universe, *The Artist is Present* (Abramović 2010) is a beginning – a suggestion, rather than an endpoint. As new digital forms of togetherness are explored by theatre artists, these new formations of being together lend themselves to potential new fantastic states of collective being, constituting a significant new mode of perception that collaboratively discover new agencies, over and into mutual experience, co-reliance, and collective elevation. Superhumanism is not grounded in hope for escape from the crises of the Anthropocene, but instead in our mutual obligation, that facilitates this collective movement “up, up, and into” a situation of active imagining together: of just what it would be like to be human again.

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S U M M A R Y

Puuduv kunstnik: mitte-inimese agentsus teatri kontekstis

Richard Pettifer

Võttesõnad: posthumanism, ökoloogia, agentsus, superhumanism, humanism, digitaalne teater

Mitte-inimese agentsus on teoreetiline suund, mida rakendatakse nii tänapäevastes ökoloogilist kriisi käsitlevates kirjutistes kui ka posthumanistlikes tehnoloogilistes spekulatsioonides, uurides „mitte-inimeste“ võimalikku agentsust. Üha enam kasutatakse seda ka mehhanismina, leidmaks võimalusi „eemaldada“ inimene ajaloolise narratiivi keskmest, et vabaneda kalduvusest pidada inimest ülimuslikuks (eelistades inimese subjektsust teiste olendite omale) kujunevas antropotseenis, ajastul, mil inimesi peetakse planeedi peamisteks mõjutajateks. Viimasel ajal on mitte-inimese agentsus jõudnud teatrisse selliste kontseptsioonide kaudu nagu kaasohalolu ja sotsiaalse kaasamise praktika. Kuid millised on selle anti-humanistliku positsiooni tagajärjed, kui see aktiveerub püsivalt humanistlikus teatris?

Misantroopne korrapäratus Rosi Braidotti raamatus „Inimjärgne“ („Posthuman“) toimib hüppelauana uueks aruteluks igivaval teemal, kas humanismi kriitikud vihkavad inimesi. Selliseid misantroopseid tendentse analüüsivad oma uutes ökoloogilist kriisi käsitlevates kirjutistes näiteks Jane Bennett, Donna Haraway ja Timothy Morton, kes võivad alternatiivseid reaalsuse kujutlemise mudeleid otsides eirata potentsiaalselt kohutavaid tulemusi. Nendest pingetest Inimese selektiivse ülistamise ja eitamise vahel kerkib esile oluline küsimus: kuidas seda inimlikku perspektiivi uuesti kaaluda, säilitades samal ajal need väärtuslikud inimlikud sidemed – mida Paul Gilroy (2000) nimetab „seltsivuseks“ – ühiskondlikus ja poliitilises elus?

Teatri uut rolli inimesubjekti ümbermõtestamisel puudutavad arutelud kohalolu üle teatris. Suzanne M. Jaegeri esinejakeskset artiklit „Kehastus ja kohalolu“ („Embodiment and Presence“ 2008) kasutatakse käesolevas artiklis lavale omase kehalise kohalolu tutvustamiseks ning seda fenomenoloogilist lähene-mist vaadeldakse koos Hans-Thies Lehmanni postdramaatilise teatriga („Postdramatisches Theater“) kui vahendit, mis võimaldab laienemist sotsiaalsetesse ja poliitilistesse sfääridesse, võttes arvesse ka publiku kohalolekut. Küsimärgistatakse kunstniku enesepresentatsiooni ülima autorikujuna läbi jaatamise ja eitamise protsessi.

Kohalolu ümbermõtestamine sünnitab uue teatriolukorra vormi, nn superhumanismi, mis tähistab koosvaatamist, mis väldib humanismi ajalooliselt koloniaalseid pretensioone ja antihumanismi võimalikku misantroopiat. Arutletakse uue „koosvaatamise“ viisi üle, analüüsides Hollywoodi superkangelastele pühendatud filmide fännidest vaatajaskonda. Neis filmides võib tekst toetada teatud kollektiivse vaatamise viise ning olla mõttevahetuse ja vaatajatepoolse tegevuse aluseks. Selline vaatenurk pakub uusi võimalusi ka teatritele. Superhumanism, mille juured on mustanahalisust ja Paul Gilroy „planetaarset humanismi“ puudutavates diskursustes, pakub välja uued vaatamisviisid, mis soovivad koostöös publikuga korraga nii kahtluse alla seada kui ka taaskehtestada inimagentsuse, kuid seda muudetud kujul. Nietzsche kuulus „inimlike piiride ületamine“ teoses „Nõnda kõneles Zarathustra“ on uuesti sõnastatud kui inimlike piiride kollektiivse ületamise akt ühise vaatamise kaudu.

Üks tuntud kohalolu lahkav kunstiteos on Marina Abramoviči „Kunstnik on kohal“ („The Artist is Present“). Selle kunstiteose juurde naastakse (taas), kuna see on esimene näide praegu tekkivast koosole-mise vormist teatris, mis loob uue „super-kollektiivse“ olemise seisundi. Kunstiteos juhib sellele olukor-

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rale tähelepanu, kirjutades humanistlikud põhimõtted ümber etendussündmuseks, täites nii Frantz Fanoni optimistlikke soove, et humanism peab oma lubadustest kinni pidama pragmaatiliselt ja silmakirjatsemata. See kunstiteos pakub selget fantaasiat kollektiivsest sekkumisest situatsioonis, kus etendaja ja vaataja kohalolu on teineteisest sõltuvad, ning on seega eelkäija uuele kollektiivsele vaatamisviisile, mida nimetatakse superhumanismiks.

Richard Pettifer – Berliinis elav Austraalia lavastaja, teatrikriitik ja kirjanik. Alates 2013. aastast on ta hallanud kriitilist platvormi *Theaterstuck*, mis sisaldab tema kriitilisi kirjutisi Berliini ja Euroopa teatri kohta. Tema töö puudutab ökoloogilist kriisi ja teatritehnoloogiat, meie kriitikavaba suhtumist globaalse-tesse rühmussüsteemidesse ning sotsiaalsete muutuste võimalusi teatris ja kunstis.

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