

Interfacial Modulation of Affect: On the Creation of Events in Contemporary Artworks

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This chapter aims to describe the felt intensities of interfaces. These escape the traditional distinctions between subject and object often associated with classical media forms such as books (author/reader), visual art (artist/spectator) and films (director/audience). According to Deleuze the advent of information and computing technology introduces a “third eye” of information, which disturbs the clear-cut distinctions and orientations of subject and object. His term, the “third eye” refers to the “inscribed ‘data’” of information technology that replaces “the brain-city” of modernity (explored amongst others by Walter Benjamin) as well as “the eyes of nature” (Deleuze 1989, 265).

According to Steven Johnson, something like Deleuze’s interfacial “third eye” of data would, in the near future, come to “occupy nearly every facet of modern society: work, play, romance, family, high art, pop culture, politics” (Johnson 1997, 41). In all these situations, an interface “shapes the interaction between user and computer” by means of software (Johnson 1997, 14). The function of the interface and software is to translate the computer’s language of “tiny pulses of electricity, representing either an ‘on’ or an ‘off’ state, a zero or a one” (Johnson 1997, 14) into something semantically understood by humans.¹ It is *not*, however, the aim of this chapter to focus on the translational challenges involved. Rather, the chapter will focus on the potentialities of the affectively felt “tiny pulses of electricity” (Johnson 1997, 14). It takes as its point of departure the

folding capacities of interfaces that, according to Anna Munster, allow for both a “being in the body and [a] representing/ mapping [of] the body from the outside” (Munster 2006, 142). The experience of this folding gives direct access to the intensities of modulation—from the inside of the body out and vice versa. This is central to Munster’s definition of an interface. Neither subjectivity nor objectivity is the primary issue here. Rather, the question is one of the affective intensity of the interfacial folding operations.

Following Munster, I will study the affective modulations produced *with/in* real time forms of folding in selected artworks. In these artworks the intertwining of human and non-human aims to explore the folding capacity of interfaces. Deleuze’s registration of “an omni-directional space” (Deleuze 1989, 265) is especially relevant in real time encounters in which interfaces seem to overcome both spatial and time-zone distances between the human and non-human bodies involved.

A Skype meeting with real-time audiovisual and written data-feed from keyboard, mic and camera is a perfect illustration of the folding operations of the “third eye.” The feeling/seeing/hearing yourself as intertwined with the image and voice of the other(s), includes the movements and sensations of camera, mic and key-board, that operate, filter, record and render sound and image. This affective involvement takes place even if the quality of the sound or image is somehow badly represented: frozen, doubled or interrupted. Classical forms of semantic analysis are inadequate when it comes to grasping these effects in real time encounters. In this chapter I want to hold on to the significance and impact of the “tiny pulses of electricity” mentioned by Johnson (1997). In this chapter’s explorations of contemporary artworks, I will refer to these by Gilles Deleuze’s term: *the signaletic material*. This term points out how the celloid movement-images of film as well as the electronic signal in video and electronic media condition the signs of the language system. Deleuze defines the signaletic material as “a plastic mass, an a-signifying and a-syntactic material, a material not formed linguistically even though it is not amorphous and is formed semiotically, aesthetically and pragmatically” (Deleuze 1989, 29). The definition is an important component of his criticism of a narrative approach to film, since “the language system only exists in its reaction to a *non-language-material* that it transforms” (29, italics original).² So,

rather than transforming the non-language (or signaletic) material to language and narrative meaning, the materiality of the signal becomes key to Deleuze in his philosophical approach to film.

In order to outline the bodily affects of the signaletic material, I will draw upon Deleuze's explorations of 'modulation' and 'spatialization.' Deleuze borrows the term modulation from Gilbert Simondon,³ and in underlining changeability rather than 'content' and 'form' the term is introduced to generate attention to Francis Bacon's use of color. So, modulation here refers to Bacon's manual-haptic modulation of figuration that spatializes in a new way. According to Deleuze, Bacon's color modulations heightens the spectator's awareness to a haptic way of seeing,⁴ away from representation. Instead the pictorial 'fact' comes into focus:

There is neither an inside nor an outside, but only a continuous creation of space, the spatializing energy of color. By avoiding abstraction, colorism avoids both figuration and narration, and moves infinitely closer to the pure state of a pictorial "fact" that has nothing left to narrate. This fact is the constitution or reconstruction of a haptic function of sight (Deleuze 2003, 108).

Deleuze's explanation of how Bacon's "spatializing energy of color" can accentuate a "haptic function of sight" (108) will be my launch pad to discuss electronic and digital circuits and feedbacks as a signaletic material that modulates and affects bodies directly in interfaces. For modulation can both expand and connect planes in depth and contract movement so that "everything is restored to the body, to the mass, as a function of a point of imbalance or a fall" (97).

In focusing on interfacial productions of modulations rather than semiotic constructions of meaning or content, the perspective is set on exploring affects in relation to events. Or rather, the felt intensities of interfacial folding-unfolding modulations enable us to experience new potentials and qualities—or as phrased by Brian Massumi—becoming aware of "the thinking-feeling of what really happens" (Massumi 2011, 67). Massumi explores the immediate prehensions as potentials for change (or events) in whatever happens, and I will return to this below. Meanwhile, in the following presentation of artworks I will use the term 'modulation' to explore whether the signaletic material and the folding capacity of interfaces might give access to qualitative differentials or potentials.

JESPER JUST'S *CADAVRE EXQUIS*

Jesper Just's *Cadavre Exquis* was performed at Theatre Østerbro in March 2019 in Copenhagen. Its title refers to a game of losing control, made famous by surrealists. The rules of the game are simple: on a folded piece of paper that hides former inscriptions, each person in a group sketches a part of a body; once unfolded the co-produced work would compose a 'cadavre exquis,' an exquisite corpse made of diverse features and characteristics. In Just's performance the folding operation was made by placing the audience opposite a gigantic screen onto which real time streamings of the audience were projected mixed with film recordings of audiences to other shows of the same performance. The screened material thus 'folded' past and actual time. Another folding was made up by the floor between screen and audience: separating screen and audience two men in Rococo costumes with cameras mounted onto their bodies slowly followed patterns drawn on the pink floor.⁵ Acting as a kind of numb automata their camera lenses were directed towards the audience at all times. This intermediate pink space between screen and audience became filled at the ending with the 'exquisite corpses' of the two performers—a man and a woman. Their bodies were present in the audience, real time present at the screen and present in the footage from another performance.

These folding appearances created confusion as to whether the actual seen/projected was a past or a present form of liveness. But apart from making the audience aware of its delimited scope of senses when exposed to the instant fusion/folding of recordings between audiovisual layers, the two performers' physical presence actually permitted the audience to wonder about interfacial folding as such. The (con)fusion of past and potentially screened events from the actual performance seemed to proliferate into the real space of the auditorium. Here, the male performer made a move from crying out loud (in past footage) to literally folding his body across the two rows of spectators' seats, separating him from the pink floor. Meanwhile, the female performer who had been sitting anonymously in the audience started a flirt with the camera in real time mixed with past recordings. This interfacial modulation sharpened the audience's awareness toward the signaletic material of the camera-work embedded in the performance. Furthermore, the modulation became literal, as she folded her right leg into one 'leg' of a pantyhose. One-legged she rolled downstairs to the pink floor, where she jumped to heavy sound waves and stroboscopic light until falling to the ground. So, the male performer's folding



Figures 1, 2, and 3. *Cadavre Exquis*. Press release images. Østerbro Teater, 2019.

led from an oral exclamation of anxiety (with/in the projected self-portrait) onto an embodied outburst of energy, while the female performer's folding led from joyous flirtation (with/in projected self-portraits) to a restrained affect pattern of movement. From being an audible, modulatory wave (crying with variations of pitch) of spatial extension, the sound folds back into the male performer's body as jerking jesting-movement until exhaustion, while the female performer's body shifted from facial mood intensities onto restricted extensions of her bodily movements.

To the audience the folding operation's modulation of the visible became key. Enfolded in various projections the audience was prevented from determining, if the visually perceived was 'real,' 'real-time' or past recordings, since locations and backgrounds were blurred. Rather, the spatializing energy was affectively felt in the folding operations. Indeed, Deleuze's description of the spatializing energy of color in Bacon's modulation of color suits this interfacial experience: "[t]here is neither an inside nor an outside, but only a continuous creation of space ..." (Deleuze 2003, 134).

The haptic function of sight staged and performed in *Cadavre Exquis* was bound to affect the audience's bodily sensorium since the interfacial modulation surrounded all visual, oral and tactile activity. The performance's modulation could be felt as a dizzying display of interfacial folds, neither with aspirations to meaning nor to sustaining the position of the audience.

To qualify the affective, folding event of this interfacial performance and before I move to more examples, I will introduce the term 'receptacle' or 'sieve,' as used by Deleuze in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (2006).

THE RECEPTACLE—OR SIEVING EVENTS OUT OF CHAOS

In his chapter "What is an Event?" Deleuze (2006) refers to Leibniz use of 'the receptacle' to underscore how an event, "a One," an "indefinite article that designates a certain singularity" can be sieved out of a "pure *Many*, a purely disjunctive diversity" that would be chaos (86, italics original):

A great screen has to be placed in between them. Like a formless elastic membrane, an electromagnetic field, or the receptacle of the *Timaeus*, the screen makes something issue from chaos, and *even if this something differs only slightly* (86, italics original).⁶

Even though chaos “does not exist” in Leibniz and Deleuze the diversity of “infinite series of wholes and parts [...] appear chaotic to us [...] because we are incapable of following them [...]” (87). The sieving operation underscores how the screening of ‘something’ rather than nothing in a sensed or perceived field is neither in need of subject nor object. Relationality is embedded in perception. But when something ‘issues from chaos’ percepts and affects take a crucial part in the event of perceiving, of becoming. It should be noted here, that percepts should not be compared to perceptions and affects are not feelings or affections. Rather, they exist in the sculpture’s stone, the book’s words or the painting’s canvas as outlined in Deleuze and Guattari’s *What is Philosophy?* Here, they define the things preserved as well as the newness in art as “*a bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and affects*” (Deleuze & Guattari 1994, 164, italics original).

When Deleuze in the *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (2006) expands his reading of Leibniz with the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, he outlines four ways in which events can be sieved out of chaos. These are: extensions, intensities, individuals (prehensions) and eternal objects. To sieve events as extensions means that “one element is stretched over the following ones” so that they relate and connect to each other like a whole and its parts like “a vibration with an infinity of harmonics or submultiples, such as an audible wave, a luminous wave, or even an increasingly smaller part of space over the course of an increasingly shorter duration.” From this follows intensities, the “second component of the event: extensive series have intrinsic properties (for example height, intensity, timbre of a sound, a tint, a value, a saturation of color)” (86). Intensities have limits, mark degrees, and can form conjunctions.

In the above example of *Cadavre Exquis*, the constant mixing and folding extensions of real into real time and past recordings in the very staging created an alertness to perceiving as such. This alertness was intensified by the variations of light and the timbre of sound. The performance all in all created a dizziness as to where things were supposed to be seen or experienced from. The audience was bound to affectively feel disorientation in the folding of facing and interfacing. On the other hand, as presented above, the extensions and intensities felt were certainly not chaotic. They reflected the modulations of the expressions presented by the performers, and thus new forms of orientation were created.

The sieving out of chaos is also due to prehension, that according to Deleuze is the third component of the receptacle.⁷ Deleuze describes prehension thus:

Everything prehends its antecedents and its concomitants and, by degrees, prehends a world. The eye is a prehension of light. Living beingsprehend water, soil, carbon and salts. ... We can say that ‘echoes, reflections, traces, prismatic deformations, perspective, thresholds, folds’ are prehensions that somehow anticipate psychic life. The vector of prehension moves from the world to the subject, from the prehended datum to the prehending one (a ‘superject’); thus the data of a prehension are public elements, while the subject is the intimate or private element that expresses immediacy, individuality, and novelty... (88).

It is noteworthy that prehension as an element of the receptacle is coming from the world to the subject and in each instance takes part in individual becoming (89). In the above description of *Cadavre Exquis*, I underlined how Jesper Just emphasized the folding activity of perception. In her book, *Relationscapes* (2009) Erin Manning explores how prehension works in the unfolding of events: “Perception is not the taking-in of an object or a scene. It is the folding-with that catches the event in the making.” With Manning’s exploration of prehension as “events of perception” (77) it becomes clear that perception is folded into past-future-past experiences. Prehension catches the event in becoming, and the ‘subject’ comes into being in the experience of “immediacy, individuality, and novelty” (Deleuze 2006, 88). Thus, perception is enfolded in shaping relations between the experienced world (the prehended data) and the prehending one (the unfolding of a future-past event).

The fourth element of the receptacle is characterized by Deleuze as eternal objects. They are: “[q]ualities, such as a color or a sound that qualifies a combination of prehensions; sometimes Figures, like the pyramid, that determine an extension; sometimes they are Things, like gold or marble, that cut through a matter” (Deleuze 2006, 90). Eternal objects have the ability to ‘stand out’ or establish remembrance through the folding operation of perception—as qualities, figures or things, relationally felt. The remembrance of eternal objects is explained by Manning as being activated in the actual involving an activation of “relation by bringing into appearance a feltness in the present passing” where it can become “an aspect of the newness of experience” (Manning 2009, 80). Through her discussion of Robert Irwin’s installation *Who’s Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue* (2006), Manning (2009) underscores how the event of remem-

brance “takes form in the present, its hue activated through the contrast past-present, then-now” (80). This installation was a comment on Barnett Newman’s paintings with the same title (1966–1970). Due to the installation format, where colored fields were suspended from the ceiling facing the same colors on the floor, the gallery guests’ perception of color was expanded: “[w]hat we perceive is a strange perceiving-with-color that colors our perception not only for this event but for all future instances of the active perception of red, yellow, and blue” (Manning 2009, 78).

Thus, eternal objects can stand out as qualitative differentials in memory or involuntary remembrance. A specific quality underscoring a tonality of colors or sounds for example can form a pattern or constellation that can become as eternal as a figure (a pyramid) or a thing (gold or marble). The reference to or the use of eternal objects is clearly a preference in art as are the other ways of sieving events out of chaos: by way of extensions, intensities and prehensions.

DIAGRAMMATIC MODULATIONS AND EVENTS IN PROUST AND BACON

Just like the blending of color-impressions can compose eternal objects to sieve events out of chaos, Leibniz exemplifies the event with a choir, while Deleuze exemplifies with a concert. In Deleuze’s case, he quotes (without reference) Marcel Proust’s description of Swann’s perception of a concert: “First the solitary piano grieved, like a bird abandoned by its mate: the violin heard its wail and responded to it like a neighboring tree. It was like the beginning of the world...” (Deleuze 2006, 91). Interestingly, this passage to me qualifies as a very instructive description of an eternal object, since I immediately recognized it. This, even though I read the passage more than 30 years ago in Danish and later worked with it in a newer English version.⁸ Still, I recognized it as exactly this: an activation of a diagrammatic event in Proust’s text.⁹ The quoted passage ends up in a description of synaesthesia, comparing music with colors:

As a rainbow whose brightness is fading seems to subside, then soars again and, before it is extinguished, shines forth with greater splendour than it has ever shown; so to the two colors which the little phrase had hitherto allowed to appear it added others now, chords shot with every hue in the prism, and made them sing (Proust 2003, 500–501).

Thus, Deleuze's text affectively prehended data into my prehension, as I remembered the 'feltness' of Proust's text across different languages, ages, and times. It instantly affected me activating a differential quality of the present. Past and present perceptions of reading this section of Proust's text formed the backdrop of a qualitative differential.

All in all, understanding perception as taking part in a folding and sieving operation of the receptacle within which both a conception of time as crystalline and a becoming is conceived, inaugurates a processual understanding of events. Events can happen everywhere and assume all forms, sizes and qualities. But as Brian Massumi underlines with his term "the thinking-feeling of what really happens," it is in "the gaps between things, and from one moment to the next" that we can experience and explore "their vital, virtual due" (2011, 67). It is this "immediate, lived abstraction" (49) of thinking-feeling that potentializes:

every sight we see [with] imperceptible qualities, we abstractly see potential, we implicitly see a life dynamic, we virtually live relation. It's just a kind of shorthand to call it an object. It's an event. An object's appearance is an *event*, full of all sorts of virtual movement" (43, italics original).

Wrapping up this paragraph, the quote from Proust (citation above) actualized a past reading impression of the same quote in Danish, which to me underlined the event as a qualitative differential—prehending a prehension of an eternal object.

The creation of the new, which according to Deleuze is the aim of both art and philosophy (Deleuze 2006, 89), has to go through eternal objects to create events to be prehended for future activations. This is what Proust mastered so well. He did it through the activation of eternal objects like the madeleine cookie, the grandmother's birthmark next to her kissing mouth etc. The described passage, where a violin's sound creates relations that alters Swann's state of mind completely, so that a synaesthetic sensation is reached, summarizes in a programmatic way his diagrammatic method. The diagram is produced virtually through the textual layers. In the actual reading-perceiving, former descriptions of "the little phrase's" enlivening effect on Swann's melancholic mood are unfolded in the sentence "chords shot with every hue in the prism, and made them sing" (Proust 2003, 501). In the novel this "little phrase" is expanded upon, intensified and resumed in length, until Swann finally falls in love with Odette. In reading Deleuze's passage in *The Fold* (and confronted with the lack of reference to Proust), I

realized that my first reading experience had established an eternal object that actualized an event years after. The affective intensity of this event was partly due to the time span between my two readings.

Furthermore, I propose to see the interface as a diagrammatic modulator that creates intensity. For, even though diagrams do not exactly sieve events from chaos like the receptacle in philosophy, diagrams can intensify perception in granting direct access to extensions and intensities. This is explored by Deleuze in his book on Francis Bacon, published seven years before *The Fold*.¹⁰ Here, Deleuze uses the word 'diagram' in line with Bacon's use of the word (Deleuze 2003, 82). He underlines how diagrams can pave the way for a haptic function of sight:

The diagram is indeed chaos, a catastrophe, but it is also a germ of order or rhythm. It is a violent chaos in relation to the new order of painting. As Bacon says, it "unlocks the areas of sensation". The diagram ends the preparatory work and begins the act of painting (83).

The diagrammatic operation destroys the figurations already inhabiting the canvas (81). In Bacon's case, the diagram "acts not as a code but as a modulator," "liberating lines for the armatures and colors for modulation" (98, italics original). This affects the spectator directly as prehended "events of perception" (cf. Manning, Deleuze 2003, 77). The diagrammatic modulations in Bacon's works form immediate, virtual relations.

The diagrammatic modulations explored in Bacon's works should not be directly compared with interfacial relations, as emphasized by Massumi when criticizing the word 'interaction'. What is normally referred to as interaction by way of interfaces often discards the importance of "discontinuity". Massumi's term for how we "virtually live relation" (Massumi 2011, 43), the "thinking-feeling of what really happens" emphasizes, that relation is not a matter of physical relationality or of relating things or bodies. The 'thinking-feeling' is prehending events as they happen in the "gaps between things" (67).

In the following interfacial sound performances, I will expand on the above definitions and descriptions of receptacles, events and diagrams. Key to the explorations is if and how artworks can explore diagrammatic pulsations of signaletic materials, affect bodies, and create gaps for a thinking-feeling or the experience of how we "virtually live relations" (Massumi, 2011, 67).



Figure 4. *EUSTACHIA—for Two Voices*. Katinka Fogh Vindelev & Jacob Kirkegaard, 2016. Video screenshot.

VINDELEV AND KIRKEGAARD'S *EUSTACHIA—FOR TWO VOICES*

The performance *EUSTACHIA—for Two Voices* (2016) was composed by Katinka Fogh Vindelev and Jacob Kirkegaard. It was based upon a signaletic material, namely recorded sounds from a group of students' inner ears. The recordings were made "with specialized microphones inserted directly into the ears,"¹¹ unveiling that most people have 'spontaneous otoacoustic emissions' (abbreviated to SOAE; Kirkegaard 2016, n.p.). These are different for each person—some in tune, some dissonant. From these recordings Vindelev and Kirkegaard composed a modulation of tones for their own two voices 'singing' into each other's mouth. From the sonic encounter of ear and voice in the eustachian tube an extra layer of tonality emerged and could be heard and sensed by the audience.

Brian Kane's description of the affective interval in the sounding or audiovisual middle of listening (Kane 2014)¹² might give an understanding of the capacities of the inner ear as it is explored in *EUSTACHIA—for two*

Voices. Kane's explanation emerges in reading one of Kafka's unfinished novels, *Der Bau* (1923–24). The German 'Bau' is comprehended by Kane more like a burrow than a construction:

Like an ear, the burrow leads from a single soft and protected entrance into a series of tunnels and passageways of differing (but specialized) size and function. And, as with the ear, sound does not simply travel through the burrow, but penetrates it from various points. Just as vibrations travel through the bones of the skull to be received inside the ear, the burrow is similarly permeable, combining signals from both inside and out into a single resonance (145).

The ear produces—like a receptacle—resonance in sieving outside signals or vibrations inside and in passing them through the nerve impulses of the brain, they are deciphered as sounds with specific qualities and timbres. The 'inner' needs 'outer' to produce hearing. In *EUSTACHIA—for two Voices*, the interface could be sensed as the producing middle, whose techniques were prehended prehensions with/in the recorded SOAE and the two voice's attunements. When performed the voices could even dialogue in a kind of interfacing, reaching dissonance or harmonic overtones.

This operation can be imitated as it happens in the interfacial hearing implant for deaf people, a so-called cochlear. Here, sound is picked up by a microphone and sent to a processor filtering the acoustic signals. Those are sent as digitized signals to an internal receiver/stimulator, and this is again in different frequencies sent to the cochlea. This electrical information/stimulation from the electrodes takes the place of the damaged or missing hair cells in the cochlea. Thereafter the electrical signals produced in the cochlea can be picked up by the auditory nerve and be relayed to the brain interpreting the information as sound.¹³

In the performance *EUSTACHIA—for Two Voices* the inner ear's unheard frequencies were heard in an almost palpable way. The casual attunements of sounds made the audience aware of the interfacial quality of hearing. Listening to the inner ear's sounds in modulation with the sung composition of another inner ear's sounds brought prehension as such to the fore as well as the signaletic material of sound. The (normally unheard) signaletic material of the ear became the prehended data, and in the composition an interfacial folding receptacle was created between the two mounths 'sing-ing' into one another. This 'burrow' (cf. Kafka) is thus experienced by the audience as "permeable, combining signals from both inside and out into

a single resonance” (Kane 2014, 145). The interfacial encounter of the two voices thus qualifies the otoacoustic emissions (OAE) as affectively felt modulations of extensions and intensities on more levels simultaneously.

AUTOGENA AND PORTWAY’S FOGHORN REQUIEM

The chapter’s last example is Lise Autogena and Joshua Portway’s *Foghorn Requiem* (2013). It created a spatializing interface or a landscape–body relation in a sounding refrain, which braced a haptic function of listening. *Foghorn Requiem* was a site-specific concert, performed just once, on June 22nd, 2013.¹⁴ Its local context was that foghorns across the UK’s coastal landscape were being silenced as they were no longer needed as coastal warning systems. In order to mark a farewell to the foghorn’s deep timbre on a bigger scale, the artists’ decided to produce a sounding event for Souter Lighthouse in the North-East—a requiem. The *Foghorn Requiem*’s huge sound installation attracted many generations living in the Souter Lighthouse’s vicinity. Besides three brass bands it involved fifty ships gathered and interfacing with the South-Eastern coast of England. In the ending of the requiem, the sound of foghorn was heard for the last time. An account of the project presented by the artists reads:

Foghorn Requiem highlighted the passing of the lighthouse foghorn from the British coastal landscape. It was an inquiry into the complex interactions of sound, atmospheric physics and landscape, and the combined impact on the experience of the listener. The work focused on the foghorn as a sound associated with time and distance that is uniquely shaped and encoded by the changing atmospheric conditions and innumerable echoes and reverberations of the particular geographic landscape through which it travels. The *Foghorn Requiem* was performed by the Souter Lighthouse foghorn, an onshore brass orchestra and ships horns of fifty vessels on the North Sea. Using custom built technology, sounds originating miles out to sea were remotely controlled and conducted to arrive in time with music performed on land, resulting in an extraordinary sound landscape experience. *Foghorn Requiem* involved atmospheric, acoustic and landscape interaction modeling to incorporate atmospheric conditions (temperature, wind, humidity) and the physics of distance and landscape directly into the musical composition. Custom software simulated all of these effects, allowing the composer to work with the reverberation of the landscape as a timbral element in the composition. The final composition features synchronized, controlled acoustic blending of sounds originating miles apart, with conventional local sounds (Autogena & Portway, 2013, n.p.).



Figure 5. *Foghorn Requiem*. Installation to horns on the DFDS Princess Seaways Ferry. Adrian Don, 2013.

As mentioned, the performance involved the pneumatic Souter foghorn, three onshore brass orchestras and the horns of the ships, positioned on the coastal line where many ship wrecks had taken place. Their combined sounds were modulated in real-time by software to match the composition made by Orlando Gough. The acoustic modulation allowed the artists “to compensate for the speed of sound, so that sounds of ships’ horns [would] arrive in time with musicians playing onshore” (n.p.). This real-time experience, where “normal expectations of physics” were defied, was monitored on each ship by “small computers equipped with radio links and GPS modules” so that “each controller [had] a precise base time signal [...] perfectly synchronized with all of the other controllers and a master computer on shore.” This allowed the ships to “determine their location and their distance from the audience, and therefore the amount of time it [would] take the sound of their horn to reach the ears of the listeners” (n.p.).

The performance was a huge success with more than 10,000 people present. The video documentation of the compositional encounter of onshore and offshore sounds can be perceived as a modulatory spatial-

cles from landscape and wind emphasized the diagrammatic operation of interfacing as such, which paved the way for a haptic way of listening to the foghorn ending the performance. Its overwhelming sound ended an era of foghorn sounding in the UK in accentuating the signaletic materiality of foghorns in interfacing sea and shore.

With this, the sieving or screening function of bodily prehension in the receptacle came to the fore. The modulation of the sound-space in *Foghorn Requiem* embodied the folding intensity of interfaces felt—or rather the bodily enfoldment could be felt as ‘affect-vibrator.’ This artwork made it palpable that it is not the body as such that is folded. The haptic function of sound is a becoming body of sound, of light waves, of moods due to the interfacial folding—just like in listening, where inner and outer is modulated in the creation of the sounds heard.

MODULATIONS OF AFFECT AND THE CREATION OF EVENTS

Although different, the art examples above all deal with how affects can be modulated through interfacial encounters. I have stressed how the signaletic material of sound and visuals have been boosted, intensified or expanded, thereby underlining the interfacial modulations of bodies (human and non-human). Whereas it is often problematized how the interfaces that we use on a daily basis can be disturbing and stressful and affect the body’s capacity to rest, concentrate and sleep, I wanted to underline the potentials of interfaces to affect and bring about events as shown in the descriptions of encounters with/in these artworks. Here, the signaletic material is brought to the fore in stressing its modulatory capacity to intensify the affects leading to processual understanding of events and prehensions. The signaletic material is extended and intensified and the relational qualities of interfaces experienced. Today, when interfacial encounters are mostly regarded as negative in relation to the potentiality of algorithmic manipulation and surveillance, I have found it important to underscore how artworks can indeed pave the way for processual relations and events. The intensification of the signaletic material and the exploration of the folding capacity of interfaces are a uniting feature of the three artworks presented. In modulating the signaletic material of interfaces, these artworks force the workings of affects and percepts to stand out in their haptic functionality. Detached from the production of ‘meaning’ understood as content, information and use value, a diagram-

matic awareness of affect and modulation paves the way for an exploration of the capacity of interfaces to produce ‘the new’; i.e. the immediate thinking–feeling of potentialities and events in virtual, lived relations.

NOTES

1. In his essay, Johnson doesn’t stay at these pulsations but is primarily concerned with showing how the metadata of interfaces can be studied as an interface culture, visible in other media forms like TV. In their recent book, *The Metainterface* (2018), Christian Ulrik Andersen and Søren Pold defines contemporary metadata as networked, no longer engaged in translation nor in enabling transparency: “It incorporates a signal–computer interface that quantifies and datafies, and ultimately turns the whole world into an interface: a large statistical body whose reality deeply depends on the processing and visualizations of data” (36). Andersen and Pold are concerned with showing how especially software art and interface design can obtain critical stances to this new reality, whereas this article is more concerned with how artists work with the felt intensities of interfaces.
2. Cf. newer explorations of the signaletic material in relation to contemporary art and film (Thomsen 2012, Brunner, 2012, Thomsen 2018, Murphie 2019, Munster 2019).
3. In a note, Deleuze quotes Simondon “[t]o mold is to modulate in a definitive manner, to modulate is to mold in a continuous and perpetually variable manner.” (Deleuze 2003, 165, note 20). Simondon deals specifically with the modulations of electrons in relation to the modulating control grid between the cathode and anode of a triode (cf. *L’individu et sa genèse physico–biologique* (1964, 42). In his recent study of modulation in relation to social media, Yuk Hui reaches the conclusion that modulation and the possibility of a common ground is deliberately reduced in software (Hui 2015).
4. The term ‘haptic’ was first used by Alois Riegl (1902) to distinguish a near-sighted ‘touching with the eyes’ from the term ‘optic’ to underline a way of seeing applying to patterns in mosaics, carpets etc. Deleuze develops the term ‘haptic’ throughout his works, and in *A Thousand Plateaus* (with Félix Guattari) the rhizomatic qualities of the concept are clearly spelled out.
5. Besides underlining the faint colors of Rococo, the pink floor painting could be sensed (intended or not) as having similarities with the Baker–Miller pink that was developed to calm down inmates in American prisons.
6. In Plato’s dialogue *Timaeus*, the receptacle functions as a sieve to solve the enigma of how the universe is created out of chaos. Plato makes *Timaeus* distinguish this term from two other ways of conceiving the world. The first way is seeing the world as a “model” that is “intelligible and always changeless”, while the other way sees it as an “imitation of the model that possesses becoming and is visible” (Plato 1997, 1251). So, one is the original model so to speak, while the other is its imitation or copy—a well-known distinction of Plato’s. Compared to these, *Timaeus* draws up the idea of “a receptacle of all becoming—its wetnurse, as it were” (1251, italics

original), explaining to Plato how the sieving mixes or transforms fire, earth, water and air into various forms and elements. The important difference between the world as a model, where everything is everlasting and the imitation of the model, where becoming is the generative principle, the basic principle of the receptacle is the invention of time as a “moving image of eternity: at the same time as he [the creator of the world] brought order to the universe, he would make an eternal time, moving according to number, of eternity remaining in unity” (1241).

7. Deleuze prefers Whitehead’s term ‘prehension’ (to ‘individuals’), since this term underlines that events are in flux between ‘the prehended datum’ and ‘the prehending one.’
8. This (new) edition of Proust’s oeuvre reads: “At first the piano complained alone, like a bird deserted by its mate; the violin heard and answered it, as from the neighbouring tree. It was as at the beginning of the world...” (499–500).
9. Charles Sanders Peirce describes how diagrammatic relations can be seen in art: “The greatest point of art consists in the introduction of suitable abstractions. By this I mean such transformation of our diagrams that characters of one diagram may appear in another as things” (Peirce 1997, 226). Inspired by this, Brian Massumi illustrates diagrammatic operations in art with Marcel Proust’s use of the Madeleine cookie to create relational, virtual event in the fictional remembrances *In Search of Lost Time*. Inspired by Massumi’s readings, I have explored the diagrammatic operations in Lars von Trier’s films (Thomsen 2018).
10. The term ‘the receptacle’ can thus be regarded a philosophical concept, whereas the ‘diagram’ could be seen as an instrument to make the ‘percept’ or the ‘affect’ stand out in relation to for example Bacon’s work as shown by Deleuze.
11. Cf. Jacob Kirkegaard’s webpage: <https://fonik.dk/collaborations/eustachia2voices.html> [Accessed 01 May 2020]. Kirkegaard has experimented with OAE since 2007. In his first work, *Labyrinthitis*, the OAE from his own ear could be heard. In listening to it, the listener’s own OAE would immediately respond. In this way one could hear one’s own hearing tones, and so to speak listen to one’s own listening. Other works with OAE include *Earside Out*, *Stereocilia*, and *Eustachia for 20 voices*. See <http://www.fonik.dk/works> [Accessed 01 May.2020].
12. Kane elaborates on Pierre Schaeffer and Michel Chion’s works on ‘acousmatic’ and ‘acousmetric’ sound respectively, where ‘acousmatic’ refers to the focus or isolation of the listening mode (as in modern audio technology) and ‘acousmetric’ refers to sound that lives like a monster in the visual, haunting it from within (as often seen in David Lynch’s films).
13. Information about the cochlear implant see for example: <https://www.boystown-hospital.org/knowledge-center/how-cochlear-implant-works>.
14. Cf. <http://forhornrequiem.org> [Accessed 01 May 2020].

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