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Interrogating Interpassivity

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The concept of interpassivity as developed by Robert Pfaller and Slavoj Žižek has become ubiquitous throughout many disciplines: media, sociology, technology studies, gaming, public spaces and so on. Interpassivity is pitted against the more common understanding of intersubjectivity to worry the question of agency and belief in the symbolic order as it remains covered over by the glass bell of capitalism. In this essay, I argue that this concept is much too simplistic and restricted in its machinic repetition, borrowing too heavily from the Lacanian understanding of desire as lack, and much too pessimistic for any future thought of challenging capitalism. This essay takes the format of a series of numbered points. Such a structure helps facilitate the multiple issues that present themselves with this concept. Generally, speaking, this essay is more a query into the difficulties with the concept of interpassivity, and some of the possible other directions that this concept can take us, especially away from its deeply Lacanian roots, and into a more Deleuze & Guattarian frame of mind.

1.

According to the genealogy outlined by Robert Pfaller on his website¹, twenty-years have passed since the kernel-concept of interpassivity was born. The idea was developed in Linz, Austria in 1996, from there it travelled to Nürnberg in 1997, and then on to Berlin in 1998. The book's title by the same name (*Interpassivität*)

fortuitously emerged at the turn of the 21st century (2000). Verso published Pfaller's book 'on the pleasure principle in culture' in 2014, and more recently, Edinburgh Press published a collection of seminal essays in 2017, which charts some of the main applications to art, religion, and ritual. These last two books have made the concept more accessible to the Anglo-speaking academics. Generally speaking then, for Pfaller the concept's historical conceptualization emerged in the second part of the 1990s.

As is also well known, *Interpassivität* was equally articulated and developed by Slavoj Žižek's (1997; 1998a,b) Lacanian inflected readings in the 90s, which complemented and elaborated Pfaller's own, by-and-large, Freudian centered approach, although Pfaller has made some nuanced distinctions between his approach and that of Žižek.² Pfaller's own initiative emerged from the position of aesthetics where he argued that interpassivity challenged the claims of interactive artworks. For Pfaller's (2008: 30-33) aesthetically inflected use in 1996, the artwork takes away performative necessity or effort by its onlookers; viewers are released from their obligation to intervene in its completion. Interactivity becomes superfluous as such artwork does not require visitors' active involvement; there may well be interactive engagement when it comes to this interpassive condition on the part of art, but it may be of no consequence in completing the artwork's function. Such artwork is said to relieve the spectator from the burden of interactivity.

The kernel of the idea, at first glance, seems readily accessible and seemingly understandable: "Interpassivity comprises delegated enjoyment" (2017, 18). Pfaller at first develops this in the aesthetic realm, at the turn of the 21st century. The general claim is that such artwork is self-sufficient, not requiring any form of input or engagement with its audience. It does its own 'doing,' or 'thing', so to speak. This stance is rather puzzling given that 'all' works of art should be autonomous. For Deleuze and Guattari (1994), for instance, an artwork is 'monumental' in the sense that it harbours 'blocs of sensation' (percepts and affects). But these have to be 'released' or activated through an encounter. If there is no encounter, then nothing much happens. Pfaller seems to suggest that the artwork has its own encounter despite an audience. The encounter, it seems, is of a different order ... puzzling.

Pfaller (2002: 27-32; 2004: 54) mentions Jenny Holzer's moveable text exhibitions, which can be said to 'read themselves.' Many gallery visitors soon tire of

bothering to actually read every single pithy saying, truism, witticism or anecdote. It's the symbolic order thrown in your face as an everyday banality, a confirmation of such textual circulation that simply leads to cynicism (Yes, that's how the world-for-us 'is.' Live with it; play with it; spit at it; do as you please with it!). If the gallery goer experiences 'enjoyment,' it can only be one distancing the visitor from what these 'sayings' are capable of 'truly' doing: pointing to a harsh reality where 'words do inflict psychic harm' as the spread of bullying in schools and workplaces has become so obvious and widespread. Trump's presidential tweets are perhaps exemplary here, confirming that the highest office in the land is not exempt from such spiteful behaviour.

2.

Questioning the difficulty of difference between interactivity and interpassivity as developed by Pfaller might be illustrated by comparing performativity between two installations. The first is a performance by Marina Abramović, *The Artist is Present* staged in 2010 at MoMA where she sat for 750 hours as one participant at a time was invited to sit across a table from her in silence. Eye contact and facial gestures were all that were allowed. No touching or talking. One would be hard pressed to precisely define interactivity or interpassivity in this endurance work. Neither one seems to easily apply here. There is no relief from interactive burden just gazing into a stranger's eyes. And, just what sort of 'interactivity' is the participant doing to 'complete' the piece? Both the participant and Abramović must cope with the memories that begin to flood the conscious as they look at one another as a transference of some sort does take place. Whose gaze is being captured by the look in this exchange? Abramović cries, participant's cry, spectators cry. Abramović maintains that the emotional outbursts of tears are an indication of loneliness and the distancing that telematic media have 'wrought,' a dubious claim. It is the same argument Nicholas Bourriaud formulated with his 'relational aesthetics' in 1998 that covered the art of the '90s; the same 'art' that Pfaller was addressing with his new term. For Bourriaud, the artist was a catalyst for staging micro-events of conviviality, like Rirkrit Tiravanija cooking in the gallery for his visitors. The 'relationality' between artist and participant in these artworks again suspend any easy distinction between interactive and interpassive involvement.

What critics of relational art pointed out, despite Bourriaud's hype of radicality, was that it was the spectacle of the gallery that made this form of 'relationality'

possible, exchanges between a gallery elite and elite artists. This, too, is the case with Abramović (Jones, 2011). The spectacle of her performance achieved its height when her former lover and co-endurance artist, Ulay (Frank Uwe Laysiepen), sat down across the table from her. Ulay's involvement with Marina in the early years of performativity had all but been erased. The video segment went viral, appropriately dressed up in sentimental background music. Abramović leaned over and reached out with her hands, which Ulay then grasped, saying some incomprehensible words. The audience clapped. Tears followed. The 'presence' of that tender moment was certainly felt by all spectators. What then to make of Ulay suing Abramović five-years latter for breach of contract, winning a quarter of a million Euro settlement?

The second example is by Paul Sermon entitled *Telematic Dreaming*, exhibited in 1992. This is an interactive artwork between two locations: Kajaani Art Gallery, England and the Helsinki Telegalleria, Finland. *Telematic Dreaming* is considered a paradigmatic example of interaction.³ The installation uses a bed in each location to stage a teleconferencing experience whereby participants interact with each other via a projection and television monitor.⁴ A virtual moving body appears projected on a bed from afar via a video camera. Another moving body that is actually on the same bed is then able to interact with this projected body as seen on three television screens that circle the bed. The reverse is also possible making each actual body interact with a virtually projected body as seen on a series of three screens placed around each bed. The tactile sense is exchanged by sight alone. The live figure and the projected figure can interact with each another 'visually' by looking at their dual projections on each other's respective beds that appear on the screens. It's possible, for instance, to superimpose one's projection on top of the other, and intuitively move accordingly. Without the presence of a user, the installation does not 'work.' Otherwise, it's just an empty bed with someone laying on it. A participant coming to the installation can become absorbed 'into' the bed only when there is communication with the projected person. There does not seem to be any possibility to talk to the projected person, only gestures are allowed, at least not from the video of the installation that is made available online; nor was any potential for sexual abuse and exploitation mentioned, although the installation draws on the psychological intimacy of the bedroom environment as well as the disjointed sensory experience of 'touching' a person in their projected image. As Sermon (1992) puts it: "The telepresent image functions like a mirror that reflects one person within another person's reflection (n.p.)."

This early work raises the relationship between the virtual and the visual; and that all perception is embodied; it is physical and visceral. The media theoretical work of Mark Hansen (2004) has developed this insight of late. In immersive art environments,⁵ those that were created around the time of Pfaller's development of interpassivity, we have another picture emerging. Char Davies's *Osmose*⁶ (1995) and *Ephémère*⁷ (1998) present a body experience of interaction where one is hard pressed to identify a symbolic where enjoyment is delegated as the immerse technological environment becomes a way to enhance the *ephemerality of affect*. As Davies puts it, "within this [immersive] spatiality, there is no split between the observer and the observed" (2003a:1). Davies, in effect, redefines and rewrites the usual subject-object correlationalism of technology that stems from a Heideggerian understanding. As she further writes: "the immersive environment could thus be said to harbour a unique convergence, or even an osmotic *intermingling* of spatialities—interior and exterior, mental, physical and social—which can be artistically—constructed, bodily inhabited and performed. ...Virtual [immersive] space is a new kind of conceptual and experiential working space, one that not only paradoxically integrates the virtual and the real, but which potentially (when constructed in a certain way) facilitates a dissolution of conventional boundaries between perceiver and perceived (2003b, np., author's italic).

Osmose utilizes a head-mounted display and motion tracking of the breath and balance, as in the scuba diver's practice of buoyancy control where one breathes in to float upwards, and one breathes out to fall, leaning gently to change directions. Hansen (2006) provides a description of the experience of having no visible body in front of you, but hearing a soundscape of human voices that swirl around the 'immersant' as they navigate this innovative space. In the Deleuzian (1990) sense, it is sensation as affect and percept that is being directly experienced. *Ephémère* is even more dramatic in this attempt to directly feel the sensate of the environment, as it explores the symbolic correspondence between body and earth, and the ephemerality of all life. The visuals and sounds respond to participant behaviours that emerge and withdraw according to the location, proximity, speed, gaze and passage of time as structured by three realms: landscape, earth and body. The immersive experience begins in winter with the landscape flowing day and night, from spring to autumn depending on the location of the 'immersant.' No journey is ever the same.

3.

What is being raised in the emerging 3.0 interactive environment is the in-between space-time that is created within the gap of the virtual and the actual, which is the virtual 'world' that avatars make possible, a third space that is distinguished by its own imaginary, a transmediated 'living between worlds' space. Char Davies follows Henri Lefebvre here. She writes, "Lefebvre calls for the production of 'counter space' as an alternative against the homogenizing effects of absolute space of Western metaphysics and science: I consider my virtual environments as steps towards producing such a space" (2003b, np).

Artists exploring this third space present an array of complex approaches, which would question the simple interpassivity hypothesis. The early work of Char Davies presents an experience from inside the virtual world only, already worrying interpassivity. Litchy (2009) provides a further three approaches that, again make us pause to ask what is this symbolic Other that is delegated enjoyment, as the third space-time generated – where there is movement from virtual to the tangible (physical) – complexifies the issue. 'Evergent artworks' are artworks that 'everge' in their structural and physical origins in the virtual, which are then realized through haptic devices and sensor arrays (Novak, 2002). 'Cybrid environments' (Anders, 1998), on the other hand, simultaneously co-exist in virtual and physical modes, such as Augmented Reality (AR), Physical Computing (PC) and Telepresence. These artworks raise further complications with simplistic psychoanalytic explanations. Evergent technologies and artworks, where only the screen, keyboard and mouse as the physical interfaces are used, do not significantly integrate the physical environment as part of the interface with the virtual. Novak's 'evergence' is the obverse of immersion: "Eversion ... signifies a turning inside-out of virtuality, as casting outward of the virtual into the space of everyday experience" (Novak, 2002: 311). For Novak, eversion is a concept for more precise imagining. Perhaps this is the classical understanding of 2.0 cyberspace, which engages proponents of interpassivity, especially *Second Life* that presents an obvious Platonic duality. It seems easy here to assign delegated enjoyment to the avatars as Mathias Fuchs (2008) does. He explores a wide range of interpassive activities including erotic interpassivity, academic interpassivity, political interpassivity, sexual interpassivity, and artistic interpassivity.

Yet, *Second Life* is much more open environment than many video games where the object is 'mostly' defined, and not as easily modified, suggesting that there is less 'agency' given over to the video game than *Second Life* where the capacity to manipulate the environment is much more open. What to make of interpassivity when considering *Second Life* artist, Scott Kildall's *Paradise Ahead*® (2007)? This is a series of twelve print-performances where avatars, rendered in *Second Life* primitive graphics, stage well known performance artists (like Chris Burden's *Shoot* performance from 1971). A 'zone of ambiguity' opens up that presents a simulated world that still references the familiarity of the body and the iconic artistic performance. Such *remediated* images are autonomous; an image refers to other images and interpretations to the reality it is meant to represent. The image as simulacra (disparaged by Plato as distorted representation, a copy of a copy) implies a distorted or lost reality in the theorizing of Jean Baudrillard (1988), but, directly in opposition, Gilles Deleuze (1990) takes simulacra to be a positive dimension, a vehicle of becoming that creates new extensions of reality, as in Scott Kidall's work; or, as in Eva and Franco Mattes, other *Second Life* artists whose *Thirteen Most Beautiful Avatars* reference Warhol's series of film portraits from 1964-1965; or their remediation artwork that references Joseph Beuys' *7000 Oaks*.

Such works that recontextualize actual conceptual works into the virtual are not without issues. They are examples that push against the symbolic. In this regard, the artist Lynn Hershman-Leeson has created mediated identities (Roberta Breitmore, a work of the 1970s, performed for 4 years in San Francisco where her 'life' was documented through photography and installations, and Roberta Ware, "Life to the Second Power," a cybrid existing in both virtual and actual worlds). Such mediated artistic identities provide ways to introduce different psychic structures, especially schizo-characters as forwarded by Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) idea of schizoanalysis. These become explorations of other simulated worlds of possible living, in Hershman-Leeson's case, actually experimenting with actualized characters.

Impassivity is not easily to maintain with Cybid environments either. A good example is the installation by Perry Hoberman's *Systems Maintenance*® where a furnished room's layout is reiterated in three ways: a full-scale of the furniture layout is presented on a circular platform on a floor, a virtual room of it is displayed on a

computer monitor, and a one-eighth size physical scale is presented on a small pedestal. Each version is imaged by a camera (either via video or virtually). The three images are then combined into a single video projection. The camera position's height, angle, and field of view are matched between the three cameras. The interactor(s) to the installation move furniture on the scaled model or on the full-scale model to match or mismatch the resultant images on the large screen. Issues of order-disorder are always in play; the interactor's position of being inside or outside the installation becomes confused; the impossibility of distinguishing between the three projected images until objects are moved is also at play. The interplay between an 'adjustment team,' who try to put the furniture 'back' in place, and interactants who are constantly shuffling pieces around, cause an ongoing flow of impossible adjustments. These are just some of the complexities of this installation piece as a fourth space is effectively created on the large screen that is constantly flowing and moving as it becomes impossible to have all the furniture from the three projections line up. The pre-subjective realm that is being explored in wholly immersive art technologies, like that of Davies, and artistic variations that are possible with evergent creations and Cybid installations, present challenges to an interpassive position as artists are operating in multiple worlds. The traversal between the actual (tangible) and the virtual provide many possibilities and complexities. They open a third dimensional space that surpasses interpassivity and interactivity. I would argue that that is the potential space of creativity that escapes such dichotomies.

This is a 'virtual Real,' but it has a *marked physicality* and is no longer the Real of a Lacanian- Žižekian-Pfaller void, which is said to distance us from the reality as such. The manufactured psychoanalytic argument by Žižek claims that, in our failed attempts to immediately touch reality, there is a tumble into the void that is the 'limit' of the symbolic order where the Lacanian Real is encountered. For Žižek's Lacan, this is a raw materiality that is true and brutal horror. This argument is extended by maintaining that such horror (the kernel of the Real) is distanced or avoided, especially via interpassivity: sweeteners without sugar enable us to 'enjoy' sugar; like coffee without caffeine, or alcohol free beer and wine, and avatars that do it for us, and so on. The threat of the Real is avoided by acting out through the virtual. The virtual allows an indulgence in a boundless consumption, rather non-consumption without any effects. Computer gaming allows all sorts of violence to be performed but there is no regret or guilt, no one is 'hurt.' In the brief summary of the simulacrum (as developed above, #3), virtual images go much further than a simple escapist

fantasy of interpassivity. The third space generates new worlds, the positivity that Deleuze (1994) advocates with the 'powers of the false.'

Writing around the same time as Pfaller, the distancing effects of the virtual lead to what Stjepan Meštrović (1997) referred to as 'postemotionalism.' Postemotionalism is perhaps a more adequate term to identify the outsourcing of emotions that provides Žižek with his pet examples of interpassivity: canned television laughter, the Greek chorus taken from Lacan's *Ethics* seminar, professional wailers (mourners), the Tibetan prayer wheel, and the general deferral of religions, for instance, to Protestant reformation where the doctrine of predestination provided the excuse and permission to indulge in the worst excesses of capitalism. It is rather odd to say that in these cases one 'gives away one's passivity' so that one may 'enjoy' as one likes; it seems rather confusing if not outright a misrepresentation, as it is not 'passivity' which is being given away, but one's possible 'interactivity,' or one's varied emotions in this particular case. I need not weep, laugh, nor pray as the transfer of emotions to these objects, machines, and institutions, which take care of this so that I can distract myself in other ways, or go about my business as usual. As is typical of Žižek, I can have pornographic thoughts while the Tibetan prayer wheel does its 'job,' or I can coldly settle the estate of the diseased as I am now in control of my emotions given that mourners are at work; or, I can now play at being a hedonistic capitalist as I know my fate is already determined in advance. It's simply a deferral or a disavowal that enables us to go on living, or coping with the way things are, or providing an excuse for my action as the big Other is looking after things for me. Action (or interaction) is staved off, as perhaps nothing can be done about the way the symbolic world is presented to us. Passive action can be justified in just this way. The laugh track of the sitcom simply confirms for me the stupidity of people as they go about living, such comedy is more to do with an ironic stance to the world-for-us than a deep belly laugh that truly exposes me to the stupidity of the big Other wherein I find myself facing my own human limitations, a comic acknowledgment of a palpable sense of impotence, impossibility, as well as inability (Crichley, 2009). Laugh tracks don't appear with stand-up comedians where the absurdity of life is exposed on stage; the sardonic comedy of a stand-up comedian is an exposure of a 'self' that must bear the brunt of the Symbolic Other, the brute force of Law that always place me as a failure as I can never live up to full expectations, confirming that we are fallible creatures.

4.

The body of work by Gjis van Oenen (2004, 2006, 2008a,b, 2011) provides perhaps a third major theorist to apply and articulate the concept of impassivity via an historical account that dwells on the vicissitudes of democratic participation and emancipation that took a turn from their interactive progressive developments in the 1960s and 1970s when institutional civil rites reform took place. Van Oenen maintains that this progressive emancipatory activism quite suddenly turned into assertive liberal individualism in the 1980s and 1990s. Interpassivity became the 'post-emancipatory' condition as fingered by Pfaller in the second half of the 1990s. The concept attempts to capture the withdrawal of an interactive self to one of 'delegating' or 'outsourcing' such interactivity to the institutional sphere, or to artworks themselves. This amounts to the peculiar claim that the object, artwork, or institution is in a sense 'performing' interactivity for the audience, viewers, or participants, who remain 'passive,' and 'enjoy' this turn of affairs, as if content that there is no need to be actively engaged; as if such engagement would be a burden, stressful or overwhelming. Interpassivity replaces interactivity in this view.

This is easy to understand, as George Barrlett (2016) demonstrates through his historical examination of Levi jeans. He ends his analysis with the strong and convincing claim that manufactured ripped jeans one buys today are a perfect example of interpassivity as its wearer no longer performs the rebellion and revolution that belongs to the historical trace of these jeans: the jeans, in effect, experience rebellion for their wearer. The 'rips' symbolically stand for 'passive' resistance to the system. Capitalism enfolds an anti-capitalist stance to maintain the system as it is. Similar to Barrlett's examination of jeans, Markus Waltz et al. (2014) tackle the 'magic of ethical bands,' drawing heavily on the interpassive claims of both Pfaller and Žižek. The research team of Waltz & company from the School of Business, Stockholm University seem to play up the power of advertising. Conrad Lodziak (2000), however, argues that the influence of consumer culture has been exaggerated. What is consumed "can best be explained in terms of practical responses to contemporary living conditions rather than cultural factors" (112). Once basic needs are met, the shift is towards non-commodifiable values such as family relationships, love and friendship. Lodziak maintains that 'institutional consumption' by industries, businesses, shops and government departments are responsible for the manipulation of needs. How resistance is acted out, even interpassively as Pfaller

(2009:180) suggests, is an escape from Althusserian interpellation, a passionate detachment from enjoyment to avoid subjectification. To give up pleasure as a form of painful *jouissance* must surely be a perverse form of resistance?

Much is placed on *jouissance* (enjoyment) and its differentiation from pleasure and desire, but what of affect (sometimes equated with emotions)? 'Enjoyment' seems to do way too much work as there are no nuances to it, no questioning of intensity: no careful differentiation when it is 'phallic' or 'feminine' or *jouir*-sense; that is, *jouissance* as 'enjoy-meant' ... as well as other attempts Lacan tried to make it more 'precise.' It remains a baffling concept that is sexuality and libidinally charged. This is why the Nietzschean notion of forces, as developed by Deleuze (1983) seems much more satisfying. As van Oenen notes, "there are no texts explicitly discussing the possible bodily aspects of interpassivity" (2011, 138). Van Oenen calls on Alain Ehrenberg and Peter Sloterdijk to make his point. Ehrenberg's position seems to be the anxiety that surrounds the neoliberal subject where choice is placed entirely on the self. Sloterdijk, on the other hand, points to the endless training that is required in contemporary life; oddly, van Oenen does not see that this is precisely the flexible subject of capitalism. What van Oenen sees in such over-activity is basically the micro-monitoring that goes with measuring all aspects of the body, it's constant self-surveillance by health care aficionados, for instance. Interpassivity is basically the outsourcing of the *explicit* body into various externalized technologies. Van Oenen accurately saw that this 'outsourcing' not only extends to the cyber-servo mechanisms that, in control societies (Deleuze, 1992) have agency, but also such outsourcing now includes authoritarian figures of populist movements around the world – be it Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey, Trump in the US, LePenn in France and so on. "The populist leader chooses whatever signifier will mobilize the greatest number of people" (2011, 144).

The term interpassivity does too much work by itself; it is overly generalized, as there are any number of differences as to how it is understood and used. It comes across as a universal claim, which is a problem with psychoanalysis in general. It is said to be 'common' for what is often claimed as an uncommon occurrence. Van Oenen (2011), for instance writes: "Interpassivity points to some sort of transfer in which some other entity takes over some activity, or passivity from us – it is active, or passive, in our place, on our behalf. ... part of our subjectivity is transferred to some outside agency" (133). The broadness of this description is indicative of its over

generalization. Žižek's interpassivity differs from Pfaller's. In the 1997 version, *Plague of Fantasies* (144-160) his position still has close affinities with Pfaller in the examples he calls on; the idea that such enjoyment is delegated through the Other where belief is externalized to insure the illusion of ideology, and that there is always a necessary subject (a credulous someone) who is supposed to believe. In Žižek's exploration of interpassivity directed at cyberspace in 1998a, his discussion of cybergames follows what might be viewed as the conventional understanding of interpassivity where, from the Lacanian position, Oedipus plays a dominant role. The desire of the Other is understood as essentially the designed rules of the computer game programmers that are in place; the avatar controlled by the counsel player is 'enjoying' in his or her stead (Pelletier, 2005). Even a more hyperbolic example of interpassivity in this regard is the life led by avatars in *Second Life* as Mattias Fuchs (2009) provides the standard plethora of interpassive agents that are available. As we have seen, this simple mechanism is questionable.

In his 1999 essay on cyberspace Žižek latches on to the Japanese *tamagochi* toy as his primary example. Interpassivity undergoes modification. While enjoyment is delegated to the 'needs' of this toy, as it always has the initiative, but one cannot say, as in Pfaller's case, that there is no interactivity, or that there is no completion without such interaction, or that no interaction does not make a difference. Further, the *tamagochi* toy is not a commodity fetish in the classical Freudian sense, nor in the sense that both Žižek and Pfaller borrow from Octave Mannoni (2003) Freudian modifications where the Other as the one who is supposed to believe does not exist, disavowed by means of the fetish; the place of the gullible Other is now held by the fetish itself. Pfaller (2005) follows Žižek here as well, recounting the 'hamster story' told by Žižek about a friend whose wife dies of breast cancer, which results in the beloved pet animal becoming his fetishistic object as the embodied disavowal of his wife's death. When the hamster dies, his friend collapses and is hospitalized for suicidal depression. When a tamaguchi 'dies,' there are children, no doubt, who are deeply affected, like the death of a dog, or any other pet – but, it's a stretch to see this claim comparable to the hamster story. It is a question of kind, and not degree, unless of course the symbolic order has become a *Blade Runner* cybernetic World of cloned and controlled creatures. The *tamagochi* toy brings into the equation rudimentary AI into the exchange. It seems a disservice to understand all 'smart technologies' as being interpassive, as there is no recognition of the modification that our species undergoes as our brain physiology is being modified via such

technologies, the synaesthetic exchanges taking place between homo sapiens and AI (Weibel, 2009). Such as the speculation concerning the 'bicameral mind' when written language was invented as a technology (Jaynes, 1976). Again, it would be a disservice to call all exo-Darwinist technologies interpassive.

5.

Interpassivity applied to cynical reason presents a similar structure rehearsed by Žižek. Cognitive resistance to structures of normative work and management practices, understood as an obvious form of anti-capitalism that a cynical attitude seems to provide, is reinforced and made possible through a fantasy of becoming an authentic 'autonomous' self. This enables a distancing from the workplace to take place: the idea being that workers know fully well how to play the 'game' within the parameters of the company's ideology by being independent thinkers, 'still' employed, yet achieving some degrees of freedom to make decisions on their own (Contu, 2008; Fleming & Spicer, 2003, 2007; Johnsen et al., 2009). Such distancing, however, strikes me more as a coping mechanism than a 'disavowal.' What choice do they have after all, if they do not want to be let go or fired from their job? In Terry Gilliam's film *Brazil* (1985), the bureaucrat can only dream of an escape as he sits in his cubical. Times have changed in the corporate world of post-Fordism. When the fantasy of an authentic self matches the activity of the corporate self, then a loop of reinforcement emerges: the fantasy of my authentic self conforms with the work self, making work appear 'enjoyable.' Is this still an interpassive structure when the ego ideal and Ideal ego collapse; that is, when the injunction, or order to work, is overcome by over-performing; or when enjoyment is found in challenge and competition, so vividly demonstrated by stock traders in Showtime's television series *Billions*? Is that still an interpassive structure? Or, might we call it something else?

What is often the case, stress from performative competition is found in the outlet of physical sport. Is sport to be seen as a fantasy of the authentic self? Is sport an interpassive activity? It does enable one to cope with work – but where then is cynicism in this structure? The gap between a corporate self and an 'authentic' self does not break down; it is managed. Yet, it is managed because the activity of sport provides the necessary distancing from work. I could, however, very easily substitute more harmful activities for the same mechanism of distancing than sport: alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, substances than might facilitate a breakdown. Yet, even

here there are those who utilize such substances and maintain working lives, as is the case with many physicians and actors, although the quality of such lives may well be questioned. But, when does one disengage from professional work in post-Fordist control societies? When work is overwhelming, that is a different story. Both activities collapse; the so-called authentic self provides no distance but reinforces the work self. It then becomes pathological. The point is that both work place and sport can be places where enjoyment is achieved. All this is to throw at least some doubt that there is one general psychic structure – interpassivity, which fits all. It does seem that high stress work in the capitalist system requires the splitting of the self to increase productivity (creativity). No wonder office designed spaces in Silicon Valley look more like recreational playgrounds with climbing walls, exercise bikes and the like. The collapse between our working and non-working lives, work and play, has turned all activity – be it ‘active’ or ‘passive’ – into calculable energy for profit of one sort or other.

Žižek’s call on the cynical attitude as structuring interpassivity has been predictably applied to cinema as well, including its digitalized shift where CGI effects that generate computer-animated characters (e.g., Jar-Jar Binks, Gollum, Wall-E) are taken to serve the “new ‘canned’ fetish-audience,” according to Tamas Nagypál (2014:182), who closely follows Žižek to the letter. This is taken as the “idiotic” passive enjoyment at the core of modern subjectivity. It our “inability to escape the short-circuit of belief, ... which is now becoming an internal matter of the digital, as a safe distance from the human spectator” (Ibid.) Nagypal seems to think that these CGI figures are equivalent to a glitch aesthetic as the truth of the new media’s automation principle. Such a claim however is not developed. It seems enigmatic, if not outright problematic, as ‘glitch aesthetics’ is very much confined to a specific period in the new media’s past, at the turn of the 21st century when synthesizers where in their technological infancy compared to contemporary models where glitches can be simulated removing ‘accident’. The playfulness of CGI effects as the “powers of the false” in Deleuzian terms are again ignored. The creative exploration of alternate worlds through such CGI effects seem to be dismissed, overridden by the structure of interpassivity. A similar Žižekian follower is Paul A. Taylor’s (2013) questioning hactivism, or the hacker in general. He maintains that what is seen as the height of interactivity is simply meta-level interpassivity. Hackers become the “false alibis for a more general loss of autonomy in the rest of society’s technologically mediated interactions” (248). Claims such as Nagypal and Taylor’s are questionable, as

technology is being too narrowly defined, and the power of simulacra underestimated.

6.

Interactivity and interpassivity may be just too dichotomous when thinking through the changes that technology has wrought. Miya Yoshida (2008), for instance, presents a careful analysis of two (so-called) interactive art practices that were part of her curatorial exhibit called, "The Invisible Landscape." Both of these participatory artworks defy the interactivity–interpassivity labels as theorized by Pfaller and Žižek. The first, *etherSoud* by Swedish musician and sound artist Henrik Frisk (2005), invites an audience to participate in the creation of a new sound event by sending text messages from their mobile phones. For every message sent, the data is downloaded, processed and then analyzed by a controlling program; this data is then turned into control signals, and sent to a sound synthesizer. The 'sonic object' created can last as long as two minutes. Two different modes of this experiment were attempted, one was a stand alone interactive sound installation, and the other involved several performers (Frisk and a drummer) who improvised the sound of the installation along with the audience's SMS text messages. Yoshida's point is that the complexity of the installation surpasses any bracketing within an interactive or interpassive dichotomy; it was closer to a flow, a cluster of anonymous random acts as creative corporeality is never fixed within predetermined conditions. This sonic installation held the potential for a new coefficient of autonomous agency for participation. It seemed impossible to impose pre-existing fixed roles on participants. The sonic installation allowed for every position possible within participation: performer, composer, conductor, and originator. This coefficient of plural roles within a participant appeared and disappeared, differing with each performance. These roles would shift and oscillate with one another, and change freely without any conceptual issues. It was not possible to grasp any specific fixed condition as being either interactive or interpassive. The offered interactivity neither created any confrontation (which is specified by Pfaller, 2004), nor did it demand responsibility of any kind (as Žižek would want it). The quality of the 'becoming' between different positions was quite flexible.

The subject in this sonic installation was not fixed, as found in the structures of interpassivity; there is no confrontation with the Other. In this installation, the "I"

position constantly shifts and replaces the Other as player, conductor, composer, or *all* of these. The 'subject' is in a constant 'becoming', and is not fixed. It is hard to fix who is the interpassive subject and who is the Other; that is, who is the delegated 'subject' of pleasure. In *etherSound* the framework of the Other's objective belief versus subjective or personal beliefs does not seem to function. Yoshida's claim is that *etherSound* opens up an imaginary space (the 'ether') between the relationship of act and effect. This creates an indeterminate space that goes beyond interactivity and interpassivity. It is the point where the *illusion* of interaction can grow. The increased complexity of computer processes creates situations in which there is no way of knowing the full repertoire of what's at stake. Such installations as *etherSound* have no specific idea of a goal, nor any destination or task to accomplish, and, as a sonic installation, it has no idea of generating a better more appropriate satisfaction, placing *jouissance* into question.

In her second query, *CallCutta Mobile Phone Theatre* (a theatre piece organized by the German/Swiss theatre collective 'Rimini Protokoll' in 2005), the idea was to provide personalized guided city tours via mobile phone-based conversations through a call center to locals. The call agents in Calcutta and Berlin operated as guides and actors at the same time to navigate local audiences through their city streets, opening up hidden memories and new dimensions locals perhaps new nothing of. The idea was to have these actors involve locals into more and more personal dialogue, eliciting and talking about their memories. The Calcutta call center actors did this for locals in Berlin, opening up the bizarre incident of an Indian accent guiding locals through their own city. Oddly enough, the distance and cultural backgrounds facilitated dialogue. The absurdity is that remote guiding by an actor who has never been to the Calcutta or Berlin would be able to pull this off, a feat not possible without access to surveillance technology, and a strict script with a given route to follow, with a specific order of visiting sites, contents and points of navigation. Again, Yoshida's point is that this theatre puts interpassivity to question, or perhaps even extends the concept as this theatre performance shows that communicative dialogues produce illusionary spaces such that all telecommunication is a shift towards production and subsumption that surpasses the interpassive-interactive dichotomy. In both of her examples the subject-object positions are not fixed, but are transcended constantly, flipped and twisted, such actions being a symptom of network communication. The processes of realization, production and consumption become inseparable in the realm of mobile

communication. Production-consumption are simultaneous, linked to global networks of communication – the “real subsumption” of social life as theorized by Michael Hardt & Toni Negri, in their influential *Empire* (2000), writing at the same time as Phaller. In mobile, networked communications, the intentions and aims of projects are twisted and flipped in different directions, much different than what artists had intended, making the interactive and interpassive frameworks dysfunctional.

CallCutta by Rimi Protokoll group was meant as a criticism of global exploitation of labour within the structure of the call center industry; as it turned out the theatre piece produced a ‘real subsumption’ of social life. Love, personal memories, individual lifestyles as profiles were exploited. If this was indeed the case, should all media subsumption be called interpassive behaviour?

7.

Gjis van Oenen (2011) makes the claim that interpassivity is an extension of the idea that subjectivity is transferred to some outside agency. “[W]e have *outsourced* some part – whether active or passive – of our subjectivity to some external medium or institution” (133, original italic). Added to this is his second point: “such institutions or media appear to exercise some sort of custody over us; they take *care* of something that we, apparently, cannot or do not want to take care of ourselves. ... They compensate for some lack, or inability, on our side” (ibid, original italic). And, then finally, such interpassivity, if it is to be still called that, “implies some sort of transfer from human to nonhuman entities. Activities, or responsibilities, or ‘ethicalities’ (or passivities) now become the province of nonhuman beings” (ibid). These ‘insourcing’ entities ‘enjoy’ some form of autonomy; “they somehow set their own goals and develop their own strategies” (ibid).

Such a claim, just like the *tamagochi* toy, launches us into an area that both Phaller and Žižek seem to resist by staying with the Freud-Lacanian line of psychoanalysis that remains strongly anthropocentric. Here I am referring to the third development of cybernetics where inhuman machines play a much more significant interactive role than the examples of interpassivity usually developed: canned laughter, prayer rolls, computer games and the like. “The interpassive relation with technology is based on the logic of ‘prosthesis,’ which can be distinguished from the logic of ‘extension,’” writes Svitiana Matviyenko (2015, 133). As modalities, extension and prosthesis are intimately related; they differ according to metonymy (extension)

and metaphor (prosthetics); surplus (extension) and lack (prosthesis); the logic of software (extension) and the logic of application (lack). These are not dichotomous terms but intertwined ones. Extension extends the body; it enhances certain physical or mental capacities. Bodies are in continuous transformation, absorbing or rejecting on a continuous basis, as there is no 'original' form. Such extensions, as surpluses, means that the body can become addicted to them. A prosthesis can also be a surplus, which constitutes self as lack. Matviyenko, calling on the work of Luca Bosetti (2010), points out that 'addiction' and 'prosthesis' have a similar meaning; they both mean something 'added,' and this something that is added to the body refers to signifier of the law in the case of addition and to the signifier as such when it comes to grammatical prosthesis. Technological extension and prosthesis are constantly reversing from one mode to the other. A global network managed by 'smart' technologies are extension devices that are useful and empowering additions as 'addictions,' which lead to a modality of inhuman prosthesis with human collaboration, tending to be addictive in a co-dependency (like apps that are available to serve 24/7).

For Matviyenko, extension is an addition while prosthesis is an addiction. A differentiation needs to be made between users' agency as resistance, disobedience and activity that is facilitated by prosthetic technologies. Activity as a reaction to software programs, and not agency per se, is what cybernetics is able to do in the neoliberal capitalist technologies, thereby making it appear that subjects are being individuated. It is "it-referenced" interaction. The controlling system treats the other like an "it." This can be noted as being classically interpassive, a similar point made by Lev Manovich in 2001 (and again in 2013) where all interactive media enable us "to follow pre-programed, objectively existing associations, to identify with someone's else mental structure," and thereby mistaking "the structure of somebody's else mind for our own" (2001: 61). For Serres (2007), *parasite* is a better term. 'Host' and 'guest' combine within one another to suggest the abuse cybernetics has wrought. Benjamin Bratton (2016) calls the spread of 'appificaton' as a 'reversed panopticon.' Rather being subject to a surveillance machine where authority is internalised, the reverse panopticon makes the subject fully complicit with networks despite risks; such an ideal user is constantly performing for the gaze of the network. The posthuman neoliberal subject is caught by the prosthetic extensions that are addictively attached. If this is then called interpassivity, one wonders just where creativity enters into such an understanding. One of the significant benefits of

changing paradigms to a Deleuze and Guattari position is that becoming, revolved around an event, enables creativity to bloom, rather than some extraordinary 'authentic act' (as in Žižek's case) that changes the coordinates of the social order. Žižek writes often verbatim throughout his publications: "there is no freedom outside the traumatic encounter with the opacity of the Other's desire" (Žižek, 2002: lvi).

van Oenen's use of the concept differs from both Pfaller and Žižek. He explicitly mentions his is not a Lacanian based view but a historical one, which makes things much more interesting (Van Oenen, 2011:134). Dismissing its universalist and transhistorical claims, Van Oenen's own case of historicizing interpassivity's emergence as a phenomenon because of "successful emancipation" (135), and the enlightened subject "having become thoroughly emancipated" (ibid) smacks of Francis Fukuyama's 1992 thesis (first developed in 1989) as to the 'end of ideology,' as if the promised land of neoliberal democracy had finally been achieved. Van Oenen seems to maintain that 'we' (?) "have become interactively complicit in the constitution of most, if not all norms that govern modern social life" (ibid). Such is the "*blessing of emancipation*, the freedom to live only under self-chosen norms" (ibid, original italic). His point is that this progressive movement, came to fore in the 1960s and established itself in the 1970s. Such a development was pervaded by interactivity - emancipated interactive life was the democratic ideal. Capitalism, in this view had its liberatory moment. Van Oenen does not read such self-realization and emancipation as being guided by free decisions within the structures of a meritocracy, rather it appears like an idealization, and this "*blessing*" has now become a "*burden*," a "*self posed one*" at that. 'We' suffer from "*interactive mental fatigue*" (136). Sloterdijk's thesis of cynical reason has no truck here. Rather, because of this emancipatory or interactive exhaustion we "outsource" our actions and responsibilities to act to others, like institutions, supervisory agency and to the government. "We expect others to act, or to take responsibility, in our name, on our behalf" (137). Some would say this is a simple sentence for the meaning of representative democracy. It is surprising that Van Oenen does not see the failure of the democratic state in relation to global capitalism and corporate growth but puts the blame on a nebulous 'we' (the people). It's as though Van Oenen takes the demand to enjoy, which Žižek is best known for, as the people's inability to 'enjoy enough.' In order to enjoy their freedom, they require a break from it – hence interpassivity.

Enjoyment in the capitalist system is always structured by lack; an interpassive displacement of experience seems caught up in an exchange of services rendered by the big Other of one form or another. Any holiday, not just a family holiday, where tourism is concerned already structures interpassivity: rooms are booked, the travel route is marked, buses are rented, restaurants chosen; the journey has been laid out for you. You need only start your adventure on it. If it turns into a flop, it is you who are to blame, not 'them'; and if the sale of the fantasy has been hyped a little too much, just try getting your money back! Sam Burgum (2013) offers a succinct way that so-called 'resistance' in advertising works with the interpassive self to preclude an anti-capitalist stance. In the precarious word of capitalism ('realist capitalism' as Mark Fisher (2009) would say), resentment has arisen as the gap between rich and poor has widened; the recent tax reforms that the Republican party under Trump managed to pass will further increase this divide. What is 'odd' is that the display or outright exposure of social injustices and ills of the social order does not lead to 'action,' rather it becomes a 'mild' form of traumatization. The message is that not much can really be done about the sublimity of the situation.

8.

A somewhat different mechanism of belief and its 'disavowal' is presented by Marshall Alcorn, Jr. (2013) that does away with the Oedipal leanings embraced by Pfaller and Žižek, which Deleuze and Guattari so strongly resist as well. Mannoni's phrase "I know well, but all the same ..." raises many other questions, as the problematic word is "to know." In what way it functions epistemologically (via cognition) or ontologically (does the respondent 'truly' know?) raises more questions that have as much to do with neurological mechanisms of the brain than simply being confined to psychoanalysis alone. It seems that the physiology of the brain is lost on psychoanalysis, and its defenders want nothing to do with it (Samuels, 2017; De Vos, 2013, 2016). There is a rather misunderstood reading of interpassivity for those who question the neurological importance of the brain, summatively put as: "It thinks," rather than the anthropocentric psychoanalytic reading that "I think." The "It thinks" refers to a cerebral unconscious of affects and percepts (discussed above when it comes to totally immersive environments – see section 3 - and below, when it comes to the 'emotional brain'). Neurological insights bring out the intensity of forces from the Outside that are unconsciously processed through embodiment, the "half-second delay" of Benjamin Libet's (1999) experiments, before they are made

conscious and subject to change. The development of the so-called “affective turn” explores just this understanding, making generalizations surrounding ‘enjoyment’ somewhat empty. For Deleuze (2000[1986]), “the brain is the screen,” allowing post-Deleuzian scholars such as Brian Massumi (2002) and William Connolly (2002) to explore the political ramifications of this. In this regard, defenders of psychoanalysis such as Jan De Vos (2013, 2016), who question Connolly and Massumi’s Deleuzian-Spinozian inflected work, go too far in their criticism. Jan de Vos is spot on concerning the dangers of the neurological sciences introducing new versions of eugenics. Yet his reading of Connolly’s work (De Vos, 2013) and Massumi (De Vos, 2016), who develop the logic of sensation in relation to Deleuze, misses the point as he seems to take this direction, not in schizoanalytic terms, but as a psychologizing, self-help turn, avoiding the more radical claims of affect theory as recently articulated by Massumi (2015). Along the same lines of recognizing the emotional brain, Cathryn Malbou’s (2009) work as well questions Žižek’s position in particular, and psychoanalysis in general for overstressing an epistemology of meaning. This course, is quickly defended by Žižek’s (2009), bringing to fore the dispute between the Freudian unconscious and the cerebral unconscious, the later leans toward Spinoza and Deleuze and Guattari explorations of schizoanalysis, which is what I would defend here against interpassivity claims of the former.

Marshal Alcorn’s rethinking of ‘disavowal’ is largely set in a university setting. What to make of first year college physics students who were taught to understand motion from a Newtonian paradigm rather than hold onto their ‘common sense’ understanding of its functions. Despite a year’s course, complete with tests that demonstrated that they ‘understood’ the new concepts of motion, at the end of the semester students did not change how they thought despite the evidence that required a change in logic. Even when they witnessed a physics experiment that demonstrated the falsehood of their beliefs, they continued to insist on the validity of their false beliefs. They performed all sorts of mental gymnastics to avoid confronting and revising their fundamental underlying principles that guided their understanding. Some of these students received high grades in their class. How does disavowal work in this situation?

Alcorn reviews the work of Ramachandram (1999) who works with anosognosia patients. Such patients hallucinate the use of their paralyzed arms. In their belief system, although seemingly ‘psychotic,’ they appear secure in their

emotional belief that their paralyzed limbs are indeed functioning. A most extraordinary phenomenon happens when Ramachandram triggers waking REM by injecting cold water into a patient's ear canal. The patient can then recognize her paralysis as if such information is stored in memory, which is then released during REM making it conscious. Rather than 'disavowal,' or 'denial,' which connotes consciousness,' Alcorn uses the term "the desire not to know." The differential aspect is that this 'desire not to know' is more to do with affect and the emotional brain than the elaboration of Oedipal structures per se. Alcorn uses the term "emotional assimilation of thought" to work out the social, psychological and emotional activities involved in an assemblage. Antonio Damasio (1994) lists five kinds of information that are fully operative but not consciously perceived. Such information can be in the form of internalized images or sensations that remain present in the brain, but are not present to consciousness. Damasio mentions images that are formed but not attended to; neural patterns that never become images; all dispositions that are acquired through experience, and the quiet remodelling and networks that never become explicitly known. The emotional brain thesis also emerged around the same time that Pfaller's thesis came to fore. Alcorn's own position draws on Wilfred Bion's (1961) concept of -K (K= knowledge) as "desire not to know" wherein patients do not want to know the thoughts that are beginning to form in their own mind. While there is an emergent knowledge working itself towards consciousness, there is also a 'sector' of the self that is in conflict with this new knowledge. Anxieties emerge as emotions that accompany memories are in play.

It strikes me these unconscious factors complicate the interpassive structure. Perhaps the point of contention is the linguistic one as Lacan always maintained that the unconscious is 'structured like a language,' which has resulted in all sorts of contortions as to what he 'truly' meant; but of course Deleuze and Guattari called him on this, especially Guattari's developments of asemiotics and their call on the Danish linguist, Louis Hjelmslev rather than that of Ferdinand de Saussure. The mind can comfortably deny visual perception and logic and their impact on truth claims. While, certainly ideology is not false consciousness, it is not simply a distortion but needs to be thought through in topological terms where we have a much more complex picture between conscious –unconscious merging, between their inter-and intra-actions than say via a 'parallax view' or a 'gap' between them, or philosophically dressed up as a difference between Kantian illusion and the transcendental ego. There is a complex interchange between left and right brain processing; between

conscious and unconscious thought; between emotional brain and reason, all of which neurosciences problematize. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) once more come into play. The 'body without organs' (BwO) is organized by a particular emotional structure, an existing state of feeling, structured by memory. The Real is given a physiological basis, as in the psychoanalytic and psychological developments of children in the explorations of Daniel Stern (1985) where the emotional schemas that form the core identity are referred to as "Representations of Interactions that have been Generalized" or RIG's. RIG's are shaped by assemblages of desire, for example, breast-milk-mother. This assemblage involves the interrelations of being hungry, being positioned at the breast, opening the mouth, beginning to suck, getting milk with all the accompanying tactile, olfactory, visual sensations and perceptions, all complexly interacting together to shape memory of the experience. Such an assemblage then become generalized. When an infant has a certain feeling, that feeling recalls to mind the RIG on which that feeling is an attribute. Such memories are retrievable whenever one of the attributes of the RIG assemblage is present. This means whenever a RIG is activated, the originary lived experience in the form of active memory comes into play. These are existential refrains, repeated patterns that establish core subjectivity. The activation of RIG (the physicality of the Real) is a complex mix of the biological, sociological and physiological. The psyche in this paradigm of understanding surpasses the unconscious structured like a language. The Other as symbolic Order is understood as an assemblage, following Deleuze and Guattari, which plunges interpassivity onto another register of complexity shaped by the assemblages of desire, informed by RIG's. It also presents a shift into an ecological thinking that is superior, in my view, to the limitation that a Lacanian inflected Žižekian-Pfaller position. Subjectification are forces that position subjects, forces which are autonomous of one another whether they emerge from groups, assembles, or machines.

The Real register is shaped by amodal perceptions and encodings via the vitality affects of the body. These become linked to the emotional schemas or RIG's. The physical enjoyment (or repulsion) of the Real (here understood asemiotically) is in constant state of becoming, never entirely stable. One can see from such a theory as to why conflicting or uncomfortable information is simply not integrated by memory – the "I", in "I know" is simply dismissed to lead life as usual. All meaning is affectively loaded; ideas are valued in relation to affective consequences. They have affective resonance. The pre-existing affective networks as organized by past

memories cannot be dismissed. Human action is always grounded in emotional networks of hope, fear, suspicion, pride, shame, and enthusiasm. These are manipulated by politicians and by post-Taylorist management strategies alike. Cynical disavowal may well be using one such circuit, but relationships seem to be thinly theorized as simply 'Other,' rather than the complexity of the assemblage that is in play.

To summarize what is a random essay that 'interrogates' interpassivity by questioning its differentiation from interactivity, it seems that both terms are inadequate when tested against contemporary cybernetic art. The psychoanalytic reading seems to avoid grappling with the way technologies can physiologically change the brain responses, following the Deleuzian adage "the brain is the screen." That there is so much resistance to any form of neurological research that identifies the physiology of affect (often confused with emotions), questioning the generalization of *jouissance* (enjoyment) by the psychoanalytic proponents (Žižek, Samules, De Vos) should come as no surprise. Interpassivity, as developed by Van Oenen, seems to finger the historical shift of cybernetic technologies but does not grasp them as part of societies of control, as Deleuze and Foucault had, rather maintains that this is a loss of emancipatory progress. All in all, what remains difficult to adequately articulate is precisely what might be the lines of flight away from global capitalism, given that technologies are not about to 'disappear, and that the World continues to shrink via climate changes and the rise of fascism by way of populist movements.

¹ <https://www.robert-pfaller.com/20-years-of-interpassivity>

² "Whereas Žižek's thesis states: *feelings and convictions can exist externally*, our double thesis states: *1. There are artworks that view themselves; and 2. there are consumers who want to be replaced by something that consumes in their place*" (2014: 20, original italic).

³ Juliana Brunello (2010) mentions this in a post in relation to a talk on interpassivity by Gjis van Oenen, a theorist whom I mention latter. Van Oenen takes Sermon's work as a paradigmatic of interactive art in the 90s.

⁴ Available at <http://www.hgb-leipzig.de/~sermon/dream/videos.html>

⁵ Projects undertaken at the Banff Center, Canada in the early 1990s as documented in Moser (1996) are taken as the earliest such experimentation in this archive.

⁶ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54O4VP3tCoY>

⁷ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCWaMII0leI>

° Available at: <https://kildall.com/project/paradise-ahead/>

° Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sESVN02BbDg>

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