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# Cosmic Hunt, Copper Electroplating, Chaosmic Transduction: Chaosmotechnics of Molecular Collaboration in Matthew Barney's *Redoubt* Project (2016–21)

## ABSTRACT

The article considers Matthew Barney's artistic project *Redoubt* (2016–21) from the point of view of Gilbert Simondon's transductive philosophy of individuation. Informed by Simondon—read here with Félix Guattari, Gilles Deleuze and Yuk Hui—the article performs a case study of Barney's long-term, expansive and multi-layered project. *Redoubt* comprises a feature-length film, metal reliefs, and large-scale sculptures, as well as an intermedial performance. The article focuses on the mythological theme of the Cosmic Hunt deployed in Barney's eponymous feature film as well as on his experimental artistic process entailing cast metals. The goal of the article is to provide a diagram of the functioning of Barney's complex conception of metamorphosis, which plays itself out on many—heterogenous, yet ultimately entangled—orders of magnitude. Consideration will also be given to the political and decolonial implications of Barney's artistic proposal, which liberate the notion of the hunt from its takeover by colonial extractivism in order to reveal it as an intensive capture of forces.

**Keywords:** Matthew Barney, transduction, Simondon, electroplating, Cosmic Hunt, becoming-cosmic.

“The hoops on the other hand represent continuity, constant movement and constant change. Because the hoop dance creates different understandings the more it is performed and viewed, it becomes a symbol of infinite wisdom, and this is evident in the shape of the hoop itself, a shape with no beginning and no end . . .”  
(Lamouche)

“In [Bergson’s] *Creative Evolution*, the intuition of the pure duration of the deep self expands into the grasp of the specific vital impulse [*élan vital*], and finally into the discovery of a cosmic sense of becoming, Life being like a current launched through Matter.”<sup>1</sup>  
(Simondon, *Sur la philosophie 1950–1980* [On Philosophy 1950–1980] 171–72)

“Every operation and every relation within an operation is an individuation that splits and phase-shifts pre-individual being, all while correlating the extreme values and orders of magnitude, which are initially without mediation.”  
(Simondon, *Individuation* 6–7)

“Art . . . does not eternalize but renders transductive, giving a localized and fulfilled reality the power to pass to other places and other moments.”  
(Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence* 211)

## EXPOSITION

The present article engages with the theme of artistic collaborations by interrogating Matthew Barney’s expansive *Redoubt* project developed between 2016 and 2019.<sup>2</sup> It does so from the point of view of metamorphosis understood here in terms of transversal, molecular, sub-representational and a-signifying operations. The *Redoubt* project encompasses (1) the eponymous feature-length film, (2) a series of electroplated copper engravings, as well as (3) large-scale sculptures produced by pouring molten metal into moulds derived from hollowed-out trunks of Idaho lodgepole pines, known for their atypical, spiral grain. Barney conceptualizes the relation between these experimental processes and the film as follows: “I wanted this material transformation to be an integral part of the story. And working through that in the film was an interesting way of making that elaborate and clear and potentially a character of its own” (2021). The goal of this article is to unfold the enfolded layers of what might be called

<sup>1</sup> Translation mine.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to thank Gladstone Gallery for giving me the opportunity to view *Redoubt* (2019) and *Catasterism* (2021), and Sandra Lamouche—for sharing her insights on the project with me.

a *molecular storytelling*. The triptych composed of the film, electroplates and sculptures does not, however, constitute a static configuration. In fact, since 2019 *Redoubt* has undergone numerous changes through the site-specific character of its successive installations at various galleries in the US, UK and China. It was also mutated by Barney's 2021 collaborative intermedia performance *Catasterism in Three Movements* (see Barney and Bepler).

Set in the rugged scenery of Idaho's Sawtooth Mountains, the film directed by Barney is a retelling of one of the Cosmic Hunt myths in which the pursued, wounded prey is eternalized as a celestial constellation, thematizing the process of intensive, qualitative change as a becoming-cosmic. In particular, Barney is interested in Ovid's (see 48–50) mythological tale of Diana, the chaste goddess of the hunt and the Moon, and the young hunter Actaeon, who at midday accidentally trespasses upon her and her nymphs taking a customary bath after the morning hunt. As a punishment, Actaeon is turned into a stag and deprived of speech, only to be chased and ultimately torn to pieces by his own hounds. Barney was especially captivated by the depictions of the myth by Titian (see Franks 18–19 n. 10). *Redoubt* mobilizes the Diana and Actaeon tale to stage its own mythological genesis of the Lupus constellation.

As will be argued, *Redoubt* re-situates the problem of artistic collaboration at the level of molecular transformations encapsulated in the processes—at once electrochemical, technical and cosmological, chemical and alchemical, metallic and chaosmic—at play in electroplated engraved copper plates documenting key moments in the plot of the film's version of the Cosmic Hunt narrative. The article approaches these molecular acts of artistic collaboration in terms of Gilbert Simondon's philosophy of individuation modified by the interventions of Félix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze, as well as Yuk Hui.

The article's initial section outlines Simondon's transductive philosophy alongside its most recent modifications; informed by these interventions the article's middle section launches a case study of Barney's work so as to crystallize conclusions making up the third section.

## I SIMONDON'S PHILOSOPHY OF TRANSDUCTIVE INDIVIDUATION

In his main thesis for the *Doctorat d'État*, Simondon (*Individuation* 1–13) rejects both the monism of (atomistic) substantialism and the bipolarity of hylomorphism: both schemas seek to account for individuation taking the already constituted individual being, separate from its milieu, as the model,

and thus favour static being over becoming. Both posit a prior principle of individuation that subsequently produces and accounts for individuation itself, obscuring the operation of individuation and its complex reality of becoming. Monistic substantialism posits “the being as consisting in its unity, given to itself, founded on itself, not engendered and as resistant to what is not itself,” whereas bipolar hylomorphism construes “the individual as generated by the encounter of a form and a matter” (1). Both, therefore, fall back on previously constituted, individuated terms, affirming the fundamental laws of classical logic: the *principle of identity* [i.e.  $A = A$ ] and the *principle excluded middle* [i.e. either/or] (13). Simondon proposes a radical new way to think individuation through his notion of *transduction*.

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Transduction designates a structuring, individuating operation paradigmatically exemplified by the process of crystallization starting from a crystalline germ inserted into the amorphous milieu of a supersaturated solution. The crystalline seed grows, extending in all directions whereby “each previously constituted molecular layer serves as the structuring basis for the layer in the process of forming,” this results in “an amplifying reticular structure” (ibid.). Simondon extends the notion of transduction beyond this simple image of iterative progression occurring on the microphysical, molecular level.

In the expanded sense, transduction designates “a physical, biological, mental, or social operation through which an activity propagates incrementally within a domain by basing this propagation on a structuration of the domain operated from one region to another: each structural region serves as a principle and model, as an initiator for constituting the following region” (ibid.). Simondon is careful, however, not to formulate a generalized teleological paradigm of individuation. The actual mode and complexity of transductive individuation differs according to the specific domain. If the genesis of a crystalline form consists in progressive iteration occurring at its limit and is completed instantly, vital, psychic and psychosocial individuation occur at variable pace, and varying levels of heterogeneity (7–8).

What makes transductive operation possible is the energetic condition of metastability, i.e. a state of tension between disparate reals (the crystalline seed and the amorphous supersaturated solution, as in the case of crystal genesis) whose incompatibility is rich in potential. Individuation resolves this metastable equilibrium—this phase-less *pre-individual* being (4–7, 15); it corresponds to *ontogenesis*, i.e. “the being’s becoming” (4). Cybernetically speaking, the tension of the metastable system constitutes information. Information is not a pre-existing term but *internal resonance* (7–8) establishing a communication (“mediation”) between heterogenous orders of magnitude (6, 11).

What is at stake in individuation is a split: the articulation of distinct phases and phase-shift (see 360–61). Individuation grasped as the being's becoming corresponds to its “capacity to phase-shift with respect to itself, to resolve itself by phase-shifting; . . . [to] *the appearance of phases in the being that are the phases of the being*” (4, emphasis in the original). Being does not have “a unity of identity” but a “*transductive unity*, . . . it can overflow itself on both sides from *its center*” (12). The (living) individual is not only “the *result* but also the *milieu of individuation*” (361); it is multiple in the sense that it constitutes “a provisional solution, a phase of becoming that will lead to new operation” (ibid.). Individuation is a passage from the pre-individual to the individual, from the phase-less to the phasic. At the same time, it is only retrospectively—after individuation—that the pre-individual becomes a phase, for individuation also corresponds to the creation of temporality, of a past (ibid.). The individuated being is not stable or self-enclosed. The individual is relative: the being has still not exhausted its potential for change; it remains a problematic relay (3–4, 360–61), preserving a “consistency swarming with *tensions* and *potentials* that made it incompatible with itself” (361). In fact, Simondon (360; see also 7) refers to a “*persistence of the pre-individual phase*; . . . [the] *monophasic*; . . . parallel to . . . the individuated being” (360); since it necessarily harbours the *monophasic*, the individual is always already *polyphasic*. Since the living being carries with it this “associated charge of [the] pre-individual” (8), it does not merely constitute “a result of individuation, like the crystal or molecule, but a theatre of individuation” (7), “the theatre of a relational activity that is perpetuated in it” (54). Such theory of the individual underpins the Deleuzoguattarian (*A Thousand Plateaus* 249) philosophy of multiplicity where “the self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities,” theorizing a passage between the virtual and the actual.

Individuation can also be understood on the energetic level as a passage from the potential energy to its actualization (Simondon, *Individuation* 6). This corresponds to the technological notion of a *transducer* elaborated in Simondon's secondary thesis for the *Doctorat d'État*. A transducer mediates between potential energy and actual energy, bringing the former to actualization (Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence* 155–56). Neither on the side of stored energy, nor on the side of actual energy, it is a *modulator* which intervenes as information; information is the necessary condition of actualization. Both technical objects, such as triodes, and living beings are transducers (ibid.), while art itself is bestowed with the power to “render transductive, giving a localized and fulfilled reality the power to pass to other places and other moments” (211).

Transduction is not merely a theory of accounting for physical, vital, psychic and collective individuation because then it would be tantamount

to a principle of individuation prior and external to its emergent terms; rather, it is a philosophy inviting us to think, to identify problems starting from an intuition, to encourage invention (Simondon, *Individuation* 14). Therefore, transduction is a “notion [that] can be used to think the different domains of individuation”; it is a *mental*, and not logical in the classical sense, “analogical operation” (ibid.) corresponding to “a discovery of dimensions whose system makes those of each of the terms communicate” (ibid.). Transduction “expresses individuation and allows for individuation to be thought; it is therefore a notion that is both metaphysical and logical; it *applies to ontogenesis and is ontogenesis itself*” (ibid.).

The present article follows an intuitive, transductive approach to the discovery of Barney’s *Redoubt* as an emergent system whose multiple dimensions enter intricate modes of communication. In order to account for the complexity of Barney’s project, I will mobilize insights not only from Simondon but also from Deleuze/Guattari and Hui, which will serve to diagram the specific constellation of relations that *Redoubt* sets up between the cosmotechnics of hunting, art-making, metallurgy and hoop dancing.

## C(HA)OSMOTECNICS: A BECOMING-COSMIC OF SIMONDON’S TRANSDUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY

Simondon’s transductive account of individuation and the method of analogical transduction is taken over, and radicalized, by Deleuze/Guattari, as well as Hui.<sup>3</sup> Both perform a cosmicization, or a becoming-cosmic, of Simondon’s philosophy (see Przedpeński, “Steppe C(ha)osmotechnics” 118). Hui expands Simondon’s notion of the individual’s associated milieu, which he had extended to the analysis of technical objects in his secondary *Doctorat d’État*, to include its “*cosmic a priori*” (“On Cosmotechnics” 11). In *Recursivity and Contingency*, Hui seeks to decolonize an essentialist Eurocentric philosophy of technics “by resituating technologies in *their* genesis, which means to resituate technologies in various cosmic realities” (278). Hui’s fundamental concept of *cosmotechnics* designates “the

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<sup>3</sup> I shall not consider here influential interventions into Simondon’s philosophy proposed by Bernard Stiegler. While his rethinking of the role of technology in the psychic and collective individuation of hyper-industrialized Western societies remains important (see Bluemink), it nonetheless glosses over the cosmic, and cosmological, dimension of technology thematized by Hui and already implicit in the Deleuzoguattarian reading. Furthermore, the universalizing thrust of Stiegler’s work lacks any decolonial commitment, uncritically drawing on Max Weber’s diagnoses (the notion of “re-enchantment”), which themselves need to be decolonized.

unification of moral and cosmic order through technical activities" (29). If technics is always already situated in a particular cosmology, then there are many cosmotechnics.

Deleuze and Guattari extend the pre-individual to the whole natural-cultural continuum, opening Simondonian transductive account of individuation to the forces of the cosmos. They are concerned with "pure matter, a phenomenon of physical, biological, psychic, social, or cosmic matter" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 165). However, unlike Hui, who focuses on the cosmic order, paradigmatically exemplified by Chinese moral cosmology, Deleuze and Guattari (*What Is Philosophy?* 204) follow James Joyce in conceiving of the cosmos as suffused with chaos—as *chaosmos*. Individuated systems ("territorial assemblages") are chaotic, bounded by and integrating a chaotic unground; they tend towards the absolute deterritorialization of the chaotic, eccentric earth as their limit-point (*A Thousand Plateaus* 509–10), which constitutes their "cutting edges of . . . deterritorialization" (510). The corresponding Deleuzoguattarian notion of the *machinic phylum*—fundamentally diagrammed by metals and the Eurasian Great Steppe Iron and Bronze Age nomadism and metallurgy (411)—is framed as both (1) a determinate, historical "technological lineage" (406), i.e. on the level of individuated technical objects, an approach expressly taken over from Simondon (562 n. 91; see Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence* 26), and (2) as "a continuum that is the conjunction of the set of all deterritorialization processes" (Guattari 380), in other words "a transductive machinic *chain*" that gives rise to new subjectivities (375). I have developed the notion of *c(ha)smotechnics* to capture the relation between cosmos, chaosmos and technics at play in the machinic phylum (see Przedpełski, "Steppe C(ha)smotechnics" 114–22, 144 n. 8; "Chasmotechnics?").

In turn, echoing Simondon's conception of art as a transducer, Deleuze and Guattari put forward an understanding of art as techniques of elaborating a deterritorialized, molecular material capable of "harness[ing] . . . forces of the cosmos" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 342), or "capturing . . . a bit of chaos in a frame in order to form a composed chaos that becomes sensory" (*What Is Philosophy?* 206). Here Simondon's (*Individuation* 88, 93) understanding of the structuring, integrating operation performed by a crystalline germ in the amorphous milieu of a supersaturated solution as the capture of potential energy is transposed to the chaotic dimension. Deleuze and Guattari understand Simondon's *associated milieu* as "defined by the capture of energy sources" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 51). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, this problematic is linked to the Deleuzoguattarian interest in the conjunction of deterritorialization processes aimed at warding off the proto-State and its proto-capitalist axiomatics. In this respect, they are

interested in the invention of nomadism on the Great Steppe, the Early Iron Age steppe metallurgy and the associated invention of metallic technical objects such as harness, stirrup (404), or even ornamental fibula (401), capable of performing sophisticated forms of capture of forces. In particular, nomadism and its associated inventions prompt a rethinking of the distinction between tools and weapons (see 395–403).

A subset of this problematic is the distinction between the hunt and war (395–96). Here Deleuze and Guattari read Paul Virilio through Simondon. The sedentary hunt, based upon the dualistic hunter/prey relation, operates by brute “blow-by-blow violence,” done “once and for all”; the hunter aims at “arresting the movement of wild animality through systematic slaughter,” while nomadic war machine—as exemplified by animal breeding and training, and, paradigmatically, horseback riding—entails a “becoming-animal,” in the sense that institutes a whole “economy of violence,” aimed at “captur[ing] the force of the *hunted* animal” (396). The difference here lies in the energetic regime: hunt exhausts the energy of the prey, ends in entropy, aims at hunting down, and killing, the animal and eating its flesh. In contrast, the war machine aims at “conserv[ing] the kinetic energy, the speed . . . , the motor” of the animal (Virilio qtd. in *ibid.*). As Virilio (*ibid.*) further explains, “the animal breeder [sets about] conserving [the movement of wild animality], and, by means of training, the rider joins with this movement, orienting it and provoking its acceleration.”

Deleuze and Guattari here reprise Simondon’s philosophy. Tools and weapons, alongside their corresponding operations of the hunt and war, are not mere technical objects but encapsulate two distinct modes of individuation (two modes of assembling *machinic phylum*, to use the Deleuzoguattarian concept)—the difference being their associated milieu, i.e. their respective energetic conditions. As Deleuze and Guattari (395) point out, both effect actions at a distance. However, tools are introceptive and introjective, their mode of action: centripetal, concerned with “preparing a matter from a distance, in order to bring it to a state of equilibrium or to appropriate it for a form of interiority” (395). Associated with the nomadic war machine, weapons are in turn fundamentally projective and ballistic, “a projecting and projectile system,” their mode of action: centrifugal (395–96). Tools preserve equilibrium and are related to resistance—weapons break equilibrium and usher in counterattack. They mobilize different passional regimes: introceptive tools are feelings directed at constituted subjects, implying “an always displaced, retarded, resisting emotion,” whereas weapons are affects, “the active discharge of emotion,” framed as counterattack, “relat[ing] only to the moving body in itself, to speeds and compositions of speed among elements” (400). In the hunt, speed is subordinated to the movement of the hunted animal whereas



the war machine launches the free vector of pure speed, an “independent variable” (396). Finally, the hunt is based on the model of the prey, in the sense that the hunted is subordinated to the hunter, while the war machine entails a becoming, the warrior “borrows from [their prey] . . . the idea of the motor, applying it to himself” (ibid.). The distinction between the tools of hunt and the weapons of the war machine recalls Simondon’s distinction between the microphysical individuation of crystals, which is abrupt and happens all at once, and vital individuation, which conserves within it its own associated milieu—its own energetic condition that makes possible its ongoing becoming. For the purposes of the article, in recognition of the fundamental importance of the concept of the hunt in Barney’s *Redoubt*, I shall reframe those two modes of individuation as follows: (1) *substantialised, extensive hunt/capture* operating on the level of the constituted individuals and the stable self/other opposition, whose mode of action consists in performing static exclusion based on this bipolarity, and (2) *transductive, intensive hunt/capture* operating transversally on a metastable, molecular level, whose mode of action consists in performing non-exhaustive dynamic capture of energetic potentials. Barney’s project revolves around the Ovidian problem of metamorphoses reposed both as an encounter and a violent confrontation between those two fundamental modes of liaison of the machinic phylum. As we shall see, through its invocation of animal hunting, art-making, electroplating and comparative mythology, unleashing multiple modes of the hunt—conceptual, filmic and metallurgical—*Redoubt* affirms art as the veritable Simondonian “theatre of a relational activity that is perpetuated in it” (*Individuation* 54).

## II COUNTERATTACK: *REDOUBT* AS AN INTENSIVE CAPTURE OF SUBSTANTIALISM

*Redoubt* is a personal project for Barney (b.1967), who was born in San Francisco but grew up in Boise, Idaho, and as a teenager was captivated by the “mythological quality” (qtd. in Franks 12) of the heated debates surrounding the reintroduction of the near-extinct grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) in the central Idaho wilderness. The population was declared an endangered species in 1974 but it was not until 1995 that thirty-one wolves were reintroduced into the central Idaho wilderness as part of the wolf recovery programme. Due to the swift growth of its population, the species was subsequently delisted, and wolf hunting resumed in 2009 (ibid.). As Barney explains, the eponymous *Redoubt* refers not only to the military fortification and the psychological act of keeping something out

but also to the American Redoubt (17). The latter designates an American survivalist, and separatist, movement which encourages people with religious convictions to emigrate to Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. It is a version of the preppers' movement with far-right overtones. Barney's overarching theme of redoubt might therefore be considered a conceptual figure of staking out a territory with a view to keep its threatening outside at bay, corresponding to a view of individuation based on the principle of monistic substantialism as outlined by Simondon. Simondon emphatically puts forward his transductive theory of individuation understood as "the being grasped in its centre according to spatiality and becoming, and not with a substantialized *individual* facing a *world* that is foreign to it" (*Individuation* 11). Symptomatically, a playbill accompanying the latest instalment of the *Redoubt* project—a 2021 collaborative intermedia performance at Schaulager, Basel—situates it vis-a-vis the substantialism at play in the idea of the American West. The playbill includes a quote from cultural critic Richard Slotkin (qtd. in Barney and Bepler) making an explicit reference to the constitutive ethos of violent conquest founded upon the opposition between civilization and wilderness underpinning the idea of the American Frontier:

In American mythogenesis, the founding fathers were not those eighteenth-century gentlemen who composed a nation at Philadelphia. Rather, they were those who . . . tore violently a nation from the implacable and opulent wilderness. . . . The first colonists saw in America an opportunity to regenerate their fortunes, their spirits, and the power of their church and nation; but the means to that regeneration ultimately became the structuring metaphor of the American experience.

Resonating with Simondon's philosophical endeavour, Barney's artistic project seeks to provide alternative ways of individuation, ones capable of countering the militant substantialism of the (American) Redoubt. It goes beyond the unitary understanding of technics as subordinate to the mission of conquest and control, and instead unfolds a panoply of mutually resonating, and competing, technics and their associated cosmologies. There is an intricate system that develops between the cosmotechnics of (1) sharpshooting and animal hunting, diagrammed by the film's character of Diana; (2) copper plate etching and, in general, fine art-making, diagrammed by the figure of Engraver; (3) electroplating copper plates in an electrochemical solution—a metallurgical practice recalling Simondon's interest in the genesis of crystalline forms—diagrammed by the film plot's character of Electroplater; and (4) Indigenous Bigstone Cree Nation hoop dancing, diagrammed in the film by the figure of Hoop Dancer. Barney's

work is concerned with finding ways of transversal, intensive and molecular metamorphosis beyond extensive transformation. However, *Redoubt* is far more radical than a mere survey of various modes of individuation and their cosmotechnics, confluent with the philosophical project of Yuk Hui. It sets up a charged field, articulates a whole world, between the pole of Redoubt and the pole of Reintroduction, as if between the anode and the cathode of a system. As diagrammed by Diana, substantialist individuation and extensive hunting—quintessentially linked to white settler colonialism—is set in opposition to the molecular transformations invoked by the intricate choreography of Indigenous hoop dancing. What intervenes in-between as a modulator is the mode of art-making and electroplating, both channeling the pan-metallic conductivity of the Deleuzoguattarian machinic phylum, symptomatically conceived as a “subterranean thread” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 407). As shall be shown, Electroplater’s trailer is a point of convergence for the film’s characters, figuratively corresponding to the molecular dance of cosmic milieus unfolded and catalyzed by Hoop Dancer. In the film’s final scene, the trailer’s enclosure will become a Möbius strip of topological transformation Redoubt/Reintroduction where the site connoting the cabin fever of the American Redoubt will turn into the radically open locus of Reintroduction, ushering in a new post-Anthropocentric world where the unleashed grey wolves roam free and chaos reigns supreme. The *Redoubt* project therefore not only dramatizes transduction, constituting a Simondonian “theatre of individuation” (*Individuation* 7) but also performs the Deleuzoguattarian moment of a chaosmic ungrounding of territorialized assemblages. Disparate associated milieus resonate with one another, and co-constitute themselves, but at the same time they tend towards their chaosmic limit. Here the Earth displaces itself in the eccentric movement of absolute deterritorialization, becomes extra-terrestrial amidst a solar eclipse, one that, one may speculate, will make the new Lupus constellation appear in the sky.

### CRYSTALLINE GERM TO COMPLEX SYSTEM: *REDOUBT* AS A THEATRE OF INDIVIDUATION

As was already indicated, Barney’s expansive artwork unfolds a whole system, as if trying to construct a full-scale model of interlocking ecologies of the Sawtooth Valley. Its astounding complexity of dynamic forms, of media, of processes, of site-specific interventions reframes the question of metamorphosis in terms of different modes of the hunt. Through this world-building exercise, substantialism is decentred in favour of a molecular hunt: the transversal mode of capture and transformation of

forces, which in turn catalyzes a becoming-chaosmic of the Earth itself. However, for all its heterogeneity, the *Redoubt* project crystallizes around a single key point, namely, a 134-minute eponymous wordless feature film (2018) narrating a multi-layered, bifurcating, polyvocal story of a wolf hunt set in Idaho's Sawtooth Mountains. The Sawtooth range functions as a mobile frame within the narrative, oscillating between its role as a figure and a (back)ground. It is also what makes the actions of all the film's characters possible, in this sense it is the energetic condition of their individuation, their associated milieu.

Barney's feature film might be called a *filmic hunt*, since as a medium it performs the capture of time in the resonant and sticky "skin of the film,"<sup>4</sup> to riff off media scholar Laura U. Marks. *Redoubt's* filmic hunt in turn acts as a catalyst for three distinctive machinic phyla of artworks: *conceptual hunts*, *metallurgical hunts*, and *performative-sonorous hunts*, respectively.

The film is accompanied by an artist-conceived catalogue (see Barney et al.) featuring an overview of the project, as well as six commissioned essays comprehensively unpacking different aspects of both Barney's artwork and the Idaho wilderness that has inspired it. The essays tackle domains such as topographical maps, mythology, electrochemistry, wildlife ecology, choreography, and visual studies. These *conceptual hunts*, or *concept-works*, respond to the six Hunts that constitute the plot of Barney's feature film.

Completing the project are: (1) a series of copper etchings, and (2) copper-electroplated copper plates (2018); as well as (3) large-scale sculptures (including "burns" such as *Elk Creek Burn* and *Basin Creek Burn*, both 2018). The sculptures were produced by pouring molten brass and copper into the hollowed trunks of fallen 11-metre lodgepole pine trees harvested from a burnt Idaho forest (see Franks for an overview of *Redoubt*). Given that brass is itself an alloy of copper and zinc, one can say that there are copper veins, or copper phyla, running across this particular body of work—these are bifurcating *metallurgical hunts*, or *metallurgical artworks*.

The *Redoubt* project was first exhibited at Yale University Art Gallery in 2019, followed by its ambitious re-arrangement at UCCA, Beijing, later in the same year, harnessing the potential offered by the gallery's vast, hangar-like space; and London's Hayward Gallery, in 2021. This exhibition, too, included a site-specific element: Barney installed one of his ten-metre

<sup>4</sup> As Marks explains, the eponymous *Skin of the Film* "suggest[s] polemically that film . . . may be thought of as impressionable and conductive, like skin. . . . I want to emphasize the tactile and contagious quality of cinema as something we viewers brush up against like another body. The words *contact*, *contingent*, and *contagion* all share the Latin root *contingere*, 'to have contact with; pollute; befall'" (xi–xii). As I see it, the semantic field of *contingere* can be deterritorialized and stretched to signify a hunt involving a trap or a lure.

sculptures on one of the gallery's terraces, thus deterritorializing the Hayward's concrete Brutalist bunker-like architecture. The opening of Barney's London show had originally been scheduled for 2020 but was postponed due to COVID-19.

The latest extension of the *Redoubt* project is *Catasterism in Three Movements* (2021). This Gesamtkunstwerk intermedia performance was commissioned by Basel's Laurenz Foundation specifically for their signature Schaulager combined art museum, research and archive space, and developed by Barney in collaboration with music composer and director Jonathan Bepler. *Catasterism* was performed daily over four days in September 2021; it invited audiences to an installation of *Redoubt's* metallurgical artworks, a concert by Basil Sinfonietta playing Bepler's orchestral suite, as well as carefully choreographed performances reprising the role of Diana (performed by Jill Bettonvil), Electroplater (K. J. Holmes) and Hoop Dancer (Sandra Lamouche), the characters who appear in Barney 2018 film. *Catasterism in Three Movements* might be designated a *performative-sonorous hunt*.

Starting from the crystalline seed of the 2018 film, *Redoubt* has therefore expanded into a complex system. It has become an ever-expanding and self-transforming body of work, setting up resonances between its many constituent levels. Let me now unpack *Redoubt's* constituent dimensions, its machinic phyla.

## FILMIC HUNT'S: ISOLATION—COUPLING—FORCED MOVEMENT

The film comprises an introduction and six parts, called "Hunts." As Barney explains (qtd. in Franks 14), six days constitutes the minimal time to track down wolves. *Redoubt* tracks movements and mutual entanglements of a constellation of six characters, setting up an intricate field of echoes, intercut with shots documenting the trajectories of grey wolves, birds of prey, beavers, elk and mule deer, as well as (extreme) wide shots of the Sawtooth Mountains scenery. For all its many characters, *Redoubt* is fundamentally a series of immobile *shots*. The camera frames a moving object without ever moving itself, functioning as a sniper rifle sights zooming in on a target, which thematizes the hunt's asymmetrical hunter/prey relation—as elucidated by Virilio and Deleuze/Guattari. One can say that these static shots are *introceptive*, i.e. as Deleuze and Guattari explain, "prepare a matter from a distance, in order to bring it to a state of equilibrium or to appropriate it for a form of interiority" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 395). In fact, some of the shots feature a crosshair reticule or the

field of view of a pair of binoculars. (This idea of the extensive capture of movement is emblemized in *Redoubt*'s more recent extension, the *Catasterism in Three Movements* [2021] live intermedia performance at Basel's Schaulager art space, as a block of cast ballistic gelatine which holds a bullet in suspension, indexing its trajectory and impact.)

The film's six characters—Diana, Tracking Virgin, Calling Virgin; Engraver, Electroplater, Hoop Dancer—form smaller clusters, or relays, made up of three characters. Each of these triptychs, let's call them "Series A" and "Series B," respectively, institutes its own internal rhythm. These two previously separate rhythms subsequently become coupled only to be swept away in the forced eccentric movement of the chaotic Earth in the film's final scene. Barney's treatment of *Redoubt*'s filmic figures resonates with Deleuze's 1981 case study of the figural paintings of Francis Bacon analyzed in terms of Simondon's transductive individuation. The eponymous *Logic of Sensation*, paradigmatically at play in Bacon's triptychs, begins with the vibration of a single motif (*force of isolation*; see Deleuze, *Francis Bacon* 84), amplified through the coupling of figures in a single painting (*force of coupling*; *ibid.*); such resonance is then swept away by the rhythmic figure composed by the triptych (*forced movement*; 73), ushering the vortical force of non-human time correlated with the phenomena of metallic lustre (160–61).

*Redoubt*'s first triad, *Series A*, is composed of the huntress Diana portrayed as a sharp-shooter (played by Diane Wachter) on the hunt for the grey wolf, pursuing the linear trajectory of equipment set-up (Introduction), tracking (Hunts 1–4) and target capture (Hunt 6). Diana is accompanied by Tracking Virgin (Laura Stokes) and Calling Virgin (Eleanor Bauer). These are two dancers whose elaborate, constrained movements echo one another as well as their surroundings, and anticipate key plot elements. The Virgins function *in relation to one another* as a "coupled motif," to borrow a term from Deleuze's case study (*Francis Bacon* 65), performing a contact improvisation in the present. However, *in relation to key plot elements*, the *actual* key events, the Virgins form a *virtual* past-future circuit, either responding to *what has just happened* or anticipating *what is about to happen*. Within this relay of Tracking-Calling Forth, the Tracking Virgin has the ability to emulate movements of animals and Diana (one might call it the gift of embodiment, of sympathetic magic), while Calling Virgin possesses the ability to speak animal language: when she utters a howl, it is promptly answered by a wolf pack (the gift of incantation, of divinatory magic). Not only is the Virgins' choreography attuned to zoosemiotics, but their movements also amplify the spatial features of the immediate environment (*contiguity in relation to the milieu*).

The film's second relay, *Series B*, is composed around the daily routine of the Engraver (played by Barney himself), a US forest service ranger

who each day sets off to document the Sawtooth Valley and key moments in the plot through engravings on copper plates (Introduction, Hunts 1–4). Come evening he presents the spoils of his artistic hunt, the etched plates, to the Electroplater (K. J. Holmes), whose trailer houses a mobile electroplating lab. Electroplater then proceeds to dip the copper plates in an electrolytic bath, a solution of copper sulphate (which the alchemists referred to as the “blue vitriol”) and sulphuric acid. A current of electricity launched across the electrolyte causes accretions of copper to form over the plate’s drypoint lines (this process is called *electroplating*).

During one of his daily surveying missions, Electroplater stumbles upon a bloodied elk carcass and promptly installs a camera trap (Hunt 1) to visually identify the predator. The very next day (Hunt 2) the camera trap’s movement sensor registers an image of Diana, who had just discovered the carcass. This visual capture of Diana’s sight via an AI algorithm, a contemporary retelling of Acteon’s accidental intrusion, propels Engraver to stalk Diana and her helpers in order to capture their activities on copper plates grounded with the black layer of asphalt (Hunts 3–5). This complicates the plot, staging the resonance between the hitherto separate relays: *Series A* and *Series B*.

Once Diana catches sight of Engraver, in the process of engraving a cougar perched up on a high tree branch (the copper relief *Cougar in Bearing Tree*, which is also featured as part of the *Redoubt* exhibition), the two figures become engaged in a confrontation progressively increasing in intensity (Hunts 3-4). Locked in this duel, Diana dreams about hitting Engraver’s plate (Hunt 3), and ultimately accomplishes that in Hunt 4. Engraver’s actions, in turn, become even more voyeuristic, documenting nocturnal activities at Diana’s camp at close range (Hunt 4). The convergence characterizing the now open war raging between Diana and Engraver is emblemized by *Cougar in Bearing Tree*; only upper half of this vertical plate, depicting the cougar perched up on a tree, is coated with asphalt, the bottom one is a zone of exposed copper.

Hunt 5 deterritorializes the very idea of a linear plot. Engraver takes a detour from his usual route and drives into a small town. Inside an American Legion hall, he encounters Hoop Dancer played by Sandra Lamouche (Bigstone Cree Nation). Hoop Dancer is wrapping bands of coloured tape around plastic hoops and subsequently performs an intricate choreography, during which the hoops are gradually combined together. The hoop dance resonates with the statue of Nataraja, i.e. a depiction of Lord Shiva as the cosmic dancer, standing at the entrance to CERN, the world’s largest particle physics laboratory located in Geneva. The statue links the figure of Shiva, believed to have danced the universe into existence, to the play of subatomic particles. Similarly, in its radical transversality the

hoop dance ex-poses the series *A* and *B* to a cosmic order of magnitude. As will be shown, the dance acts as a triangulating, problematic, silent catalyst that propels the-yet-to-come.

In the climactic Hunt 6, Diana finally targets and kills a grey wolf, which prompts a solar eclipse. In the eye of this cataclysm, a pack of wolves now enact revenge by sacking Electroplater's trailer while Electroplater herself has ventured outside performing a choreography recalling the arched body of the wounded wolf corresponding to the Lupus constellation. A new post-Anthropocentric era has begun.

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### FILMIC AND PERFORMATIVE-SONOROUS HUNTS: DRAMA OF TRANSDUCTION

*Redoubt*'s plot can be broken down into a number of distinct phases recalling Simondon's transductive account of individuation as a passage from the pre-individual, metastable, phase-less real to the phase-locked reality, entailing the intermediate level of information, which establishes a mediation between the heterogeneous orders of magnitude initially without communication. Accordingly, Hunt 3 marks a convergence, Hunt 4—mutual resonance, and Hunt 5—problematization of *Series A* and *Series B*. The intensifying complication of Hunt 5 prepares the ground for the cosmic eclipse in the climactic Hunt 6. Interestingly, Hunt 5 functions like a *catastasis* in ancient Greek dramatic theory, whereas Hunt 6 can be considered a *catastrophé*.

In fact, Barney explicitly uses the term “catastasis” to designate the final part of *Catasterism in Three Movements*—his live 2021 Gesamtkunstwerk performance developed in collaboration with music composer and director Jonathan Bepler. As Barney and Bepler explain, *catastasis* signifies “the dramatic complication immediately preceding the climax of a drama.” The complex system of *Catasterism* launches a communication between the following four distinct orders of magnitude: (1) a performance by three characters from the *Redoubt* 2018 feature film (Diana, Electroplater, Hoop Dancer); (2) a selection of *Redoubt*'s associated artworks (a series of four 2018 copper-electroplated copper plate reliefs in copper frames titled *Diana: State one* through to *Diana: State four*; as well as the *Elk Creek Burn* monumental sculpture from 2018 made from a hollowed-out lodgepole pine traversed by the machinic phylum of cast copper, brass and lead on a stand made from polycaprolactone—a biodegradable polymer), as well as (3) Bepler's orchestral suite performed by Basel Sinfonietta, and (4) the invited audiences. During *Catasterism*, the performers, the orchestra musicians, as well as the audience come to occupy the three floors of



Schaulager's granary-like interior to varying degrees and in different spatial arrangements and modes of distribution. *Catasterism's* eponymous three movements respectively correspond to:

(1) "Part 1: Cadastre," which sees the initial isolation of performers, audiences and musicians within their respective group and in relation to other groups;

(2) "Part 2: Catasterism Suite (for Orchestra with Sculpture)," which sees the intermediate concentration of the audience and Basel Sinfonietta playing in orchestral formation in a custom-built concert hall, converging on the opposite sides of the centrally-positioned *Elk Creek Burn*; the situation recalls an intimate gathering around the campfire; and

(3) "Part 3: Catastasis," which finally sees the musicians gently surrounding small audience groups, artworks and performers, roaming freely across all of Schaulager's four floors; the situation is suggestive of hunter-gatherers (see Schaulager for the overview of the performance).

This intricate tripartite structure dramatizes metamorphosis as a mediation between three distinct levels:

(1) the individual mode of surveying land, as suggested by the name of Part 1. As Barney and Bepler explain, the eponymous *cadastre* refers to "a comprehensive land recording. A cadastral parcel is defined as a continuous area identified by a unique set of homogeneous property rights." The cadastral regime is re-enacted on the level of live performance: all three performers measure and survey the gallery space with various technical devices. Also, the music assumes a cadastral character: it is composed from isolated sequences of individual notes.

(2) the mode of coupling and concentration calling forth a metamorphosis. In this respect, Part 2 is aptly titled "Catasterism," which, as Barney and Bepler elucidate (*ibid.*), designates "the process by which a hero is turned into a constellation or celestial object; a placing among the stars." This is a mode of ritual incantation and conjuration, amplified by the musical score now assuming lavish, abundant quality of opulence, a drastic change from the sparse notes of Part 1.

(3) the mode of mediation across heterogenous levels, associated with the dramatical concept of *catastasis*, i.e. "the dramatic complication immediately preceding the climax of a drama" (*ibid.*). According to the mode of complication, the performers now dance together. Hoop Dancer performs her dance—Diana performs repeated gestures with her rifle. Electroplater mediates between the two, integrating these oppositional gestural regimes into her own choreography.

*Catasterism's* three movements give rise to three conceptual figures. To paraphrase Simondon, they perform "individuation and allow for individuation to be thought" (*Individuation* 14). Accordingly, cadastrality corresponds to

the sedentary regime of hunt and its tools, as understood by Deleuze/Guattari and Virilio. It also affirms substantialism at play in the logic of the American Frontier. In turn, the opaque, enigmatic mode of catasterism corresponds to processes of gestation in a metastable milieu, rich in potential. Finally, Electroplater's performance in the third part corresponds to the modulatory action of transducer, and to transduction itself as a communication between disparate levels. What is more, taken as a permutational series "Cadastre—Catasterism—Catastasis," *Catasterism* affirms the Deleuzian trifold typology of forces animating the paintings of Francis Bacon: "Isolation—Coupling—Forced Movement." Interestingly, Deleuze's logic of sensation is in itself a transposition of Simondon's transductive account of individuation, expressed as the series "Pre-individual Metastability—Information/Internal Resonance—Individuation," to the domain of aesthetics.

In this way, Schaulager has become a Simondonian (*Individuation* 54) "theatre of relational activity," a machinic phylum prolonging the ongoing activity of individuation that had started in 2018 with *Redoubt*. In an act akin to alchemical distillation, *Redoubt*'s six hunts and six protagonists have undergone a catasterism: they have now become individuated as three movements and three characters. This has a political and decolonial significance: *Catasterism* performs a ritualistic undoing of the progress of white settler colonization.

## CHAOSMIC HOOP DANCE: CATASTERISM OF A BASE PLATE CONDUCTOR

Electroplater and Hoop Dancer are fundamental to the functioning of the universe of *Redoubt*, and yet they elude thought, and cannot be subsumed into a single conceptual figure. In what follows, I am going to home in on the relation between electroplating and hoop dancing in order to tease out the complex material and conceptual transformations animating the very heart of Barney's ongoing project.

In the final choreographical sequence of *Catasterism*, Electroplater mimics and modifies the movements of Hoop Dancer, thereby seemingly suggesting a communication between the microphysical, molecular transduction, emblemized by the process of crystallization, and the transversal cosmic dance of subatomic particles, or order of magnitudes, of milieus unfolded by Hoop Dancer. This corresponds to Simondon's understanding of vital individuation, as exemplified by a plant, as "a mediation between a cosmic order and an infra-molecular order, storing and distributing the chemical natures contained in the soil and in the atmosphere by means of the luminous energy received in photosynthesis" (*Individuation* 384 n. 16).

On the other hand, the figure of Hoop Dancer has a reciprocal and complementary relation to Electroplater. Hoop Dance performs ontogenesis in its double dimension of being and of thinking; it at once unfolds transduction and its thought. As Sandra Lamouche, a Nehiyaw Iskwew (Cree Woman) from the Bigstone Cree Nation in Northern Alberta who performed the role of Hoop Dancer, explains,

The hoops on the other hand represent continuity—constant movement and constant change. Because the hoop dance creates different understandings the more it is performed and viewed, it becomes a symbol of infinite wisdom, and this is evident in the shape of the hoop itself, a shape with no beginning and no end . . .

Lamouche shows that an iterative ungrounding is the fundamental movement of the cosmos. Hoop Dance displaces a simple understanding of Electroplater. Electroplater can no longer be thought of as solely on the side of microphysical, molecular individuation at play in electroplating. It is rather that this metallurgic individuation actualizes a vast cosmos. It is as if a grounded metal plate processed in Electroplater's trailer has now become connected to the cosmic unground, echoing the Deleuzoguattarian gesture of linking the machinic phylum, fundamentally metallic and metallurgical, to the absolute deterritorialization of chaotic Earth. As will be shown, the Hoop Dance functions as *Redoubt's* catalyst for the becoming-cosmic of transduction.

Of course, taken at its most rudimentary, microphysical level, electroplating is already transduction *parexcellence*, evoking the individuation of crystal forms in a supersaturated solution. As Elisabeth Hodermarsky explains, in parallel to the shooting of *Redoubt* Barney produced and electroplated engravings documenting key moments in the plot (140). The process entails the following steps: a copper plate is first grounded in black asphalt; engraver's incisions remove portions of this grounding, revealing areas of exposed copper. Thus prepared plate subsequently undergoes the process of electroplating. It is suspended in a tank filled with a deep blue electrolytic solution. The engraved copper plate, the cathode, is wired to the negative pole of the power source whereas the anode, a bar of impure copper suspended in the solution as well, is connected to its positive pole. Then, "a direct current (DC) of electricity," explains Hodermarsky, "is passed through the anode (copper bar) into the solution, splitting up some of the metal ions and depositing them onto the cathode (copper plate)" (143). Deposited copper ions form accretions over the exposed metal ion. Barney, who plays the role of Engraver in the film, has developed an experimental electroplating process which allowed him to modify different parameters of

the copper plate's metastable milieu: temperature, electric current, duration of exposure, anode placement, use of filter to remove foreign particles, use of leveller to ensure even crystal growth, varied spatial use of grounding (via asphalt coating, or a stop-off plastic mask) (see Hodermarsky 143–44 for a detailed description of these material processes). Barney produced eight engravings in total during the shooting of *Redoubt* in 2018: *Redoubt: Base Plate Conductor*, *Bayhorse*, *Cougar in Bearing Tree*, *Diana*, *Kill Site*, *Bivouac*, *Reintroduction* and *Sawtooth*. All of them except for *Base Plate Conductor* were digitally scanned and copied by a mechanical laser metal engraving machine. Each digitally scanned engraving has been replicated a number of times, thus becoming a structural germ initiating a new series. All identical copies deriving from a single engraving were subsequently electroplated but under different, progressively modified conditions in the electroplating tank. This led Barney (Hodermarsky 142) to call each plate in the series “a state.” The artist discovered that progressively increasing the amperage, placing the anode at close range and removing the leveller makes the electroplating process reach a certain threshold of intensity, upon whose crossing crystal incrustation accelerates considerably, making the growth of copper nodules uneven and unpredictable (see 144–45). For example, the *Reintroduction* series—depicting a grey wolf amongst the trees captured at close distance—demonstrates a dramatic progression of crystal incrustation which gradually obliterates the image. In *Reintroduction: State four*, the portion of the incrustation that has accumulated over the engraving's central motif of the wolf has detached itself from the plate (148).

As demonstrated above, electroplating is transduction while allowing transduction to be thought. It shows how, upon reaching a threshold, the being phase-shifts in relation to itself. The process of individuation is open and unpredictable, always multiple, entailing a burst of the series. Barney's experimental electroplating integrates accidents as part and parcel of the artistic process. Similarly, in the *Creek Burn* series of Barney's (see Barney) large-scale sculptures—where cast metal is poured into the mould created by coring out the trunks of lodgepole pines with a computer-driven mill—the metal's rapid cooling has caused fin-like protrusions to form on the surface. In turn, the titles of Barney's electroplated works indicating their relative state, for example, *Diana: State three* (original spelling), problematize the very idea of an artwork conceived as a separate, already constituted individual, and instead put forward the conception of an individual (artwork) as an intermediate phase of a larger series, a whole body of work.

However, for all its emblematic power, Barney's experimental process alone fails to account for the question of individuation's cosmic ungrounding. Indeed, it is the figure of Electroplater and their choreographed gestures that play a fundamental role here. In *Redoubt*, Electroplater does not simply

function as an attendant to Engraver, bringing his seminal copper plates to fruition: an externalized ovary birthing his seminal works. The film's introduction concludes with a scene that sees Electroplater step outside her trailer and, with a shovel, unearth a dirty copper plate. The surface of the excavated plate bears, as Hodermarsky (140, 152 n. 8) explains, multiple marks of its exposure to both manure and sulfurated potash. This exposure to the acidic and the alkaline, respectively, has in part managed to displace the plate's layer of asphalt ground. Featuring an arrangement of circular green stains appearing in the zones of bright exposed copper inhabiting a black asphalt background, this singular plate is suggestive of the Lupus constellation amidst a starry sky. Called *Redoubt: Base Plate Conductor*, it will serve as an inspiration for the three-dimensional model of the Lupus constellation that Electroplater will set out to construct over the course of the film's plot. This fundamental plate also functions as catalyst for the developments in the film's final scene. Symptomatically, it has not been duplicated in order to become the structural germ of a new series of works; it has not become resolved into a series of *states*. Approached via Simondon's thought, *Redoubt: Base Plate Conductor* thus emblemizes the potential energy of a metastable pre-individual reality before the insertion of a crystalline seed. Corroborating its importance, the copper relief was featured both at Barney's exhibition at Yale University Art Gallery in 2019, and at UCCA Beijing in 2019/2020, where it was presented as *Redoubt (Cosmic Hunt)* (see UCCA). The scene ends with Electroplater extending one hand towards the unearthed plate lying in the ground and the other to the sky, her body forming a conduit between the below and the above.

As we come to learn over the course of the film's narration, Electroplater's ritualistic bodily gesture drawing a diagonal line between the ground—and its freshly unearthed metal—and the sky, which wraps up *Redoubt's* introduction, actually brings forth a cataclysmic cosmic event concluding the film. Electroplater's diagonal gesture indexes a world-yet-to-come; it has integrated Hoop Dancer's dance of chaosmic transduction. The final scene will stage a speculative Reintroduction of the endangered grey wolves. The wolves sack Electroplater's trailer during a solar eclipse while letting a single copper engraving electroplate undisturbed in its electrolytic bath of blue vitriol. Symptomatically called *Sawtooth*, the plate depicts the head of the grey wolf merging with the outline of the Sawtooth Mount range.<sup>5</sup> Left to its own devices, liberated from human control, this

<sup>5</sup> This becoming-grey wolf is but a relay opening up to a becoming-cosmic. In this way, *Redoubt* surpasses a type of reductive logic that demands that we think the wolf motif in terms of Simondon's living individuation. Simondon's understanding of art as transductive—and transduction as an auto-genesis of thought brought forth by an ontogenesis itself—counters such purist claims.

*final* metal plate undergoing electroplating performs a magical action at a distance—the ungrounding catasterism of the film’s *initial* plate *Redoubt: Base Plate Conductor*, its becoming-cosmic-constellation.

### III ELECTROPLATER’S GESTURE: DRAWING DIAGONALS

Electroplater’s ritualistic gesture evokes the Deleuzoguattarian (*A Thousand Plateaus* 407) conceptual figure of the machinic phylum, confluent with metal and metallurgy and framed as a diagonal, conductive “subterranean thread” that deterritorializes territorial assemblages. Accentuated by the scene’s diagonal line formed by the shaft of Electroplater’s shovel now stuck into the ground, the gesture resonates with Beuysian philosophy of molecular metamorphosis conceived as a play of grounding and ungrounding, of metal’s power of conductivity and felt’s power of insulation (on Beuys’s environments peopled with metal tools and surfaces, see Huttenlauch). The diagonal line drawn by Electroplater, making their body a metallic conductor, puts forward a model of operation cutting across the initial and the terminal point, transversal in relation to the bipolarity of the male–female. It is also cutting across the extreme poles of *Redoubt* and *Reintroduction*. The diagonal diagrams the Deleuzo-Hamletian *time out of joint* (see Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 88–89)—a burst of the event whose impact destroys cardinal points of reference. The diagonal describes neither the beginning nor the end; neither the father nor the mother. It is the decolonial rallying call of the Hoop Dance. This cosmic ungrounding overturns the film’s rigid linear sequence (the six-day hunt recalls classic cosmogonic narratives) just as an unleashed pack of wolves sacks Electroplater’s trailer. It is as if West-centric civilization riddled with clichés has violently decentred itself in the spasm of a massive human extinction event. Once in the trailer, the wolves are drawn towards the abandoned copper plates bearing their own likeness, now encrusted with crystalline overgrowth. The wolves’ curiosity draws, in turn, our own attention to this new osmosis of chaos and cosmos. Suspended in the electroplating tanks, these copper plates function like a charm or a talisman; these are *talisman-images* defined by Laura U. Marks as “a kind of image . . . that intervenes in the order of the cosmos in order to effect specific changes here on Earth” (“Talisman-Images” 231). In *Redoubt*’s finale, grand narratives have all been overturned in favour of localized, molecular, a-signifying, non-Anthropocentric processes, which corresponds the cosmogenesis of the Lupus constellation, the emergence of a new Cosmic Hunt myth—an alternative mythogenesis which is at once robustly material and cosmic.

What *Redoubt*'s final scene puts into stark relief is that Sawtooth Valley is not a landscape in which the action happens, a kind of extended enclosure delimiting what is outside and ripe for extractivism. Sawtooth Mountains are decoupled from the substantialist conceptual figure of Redoubt. But at the same time, the artistic project of *Redoubt* is not about the Sawtooth Mountains range ecologies as we already know them. It is rather a case of the emergent articulation of a milieu through relational activity, where *Sawtooth* arises as an unfolding map of intensities. A special role in this respect is accorded to mythogenesis, affirming the double movement of ontogenesis and of thought. Barney's 2018 film functions as a foundational myth of a new decolonial counter-cosmology alternative to the extractivist mythologies of the American West. It gives the phyla of artworks which have since tumbled out of it a cosmological significance. All these heterogeneous works—filmic, conceptual, metallurgical, sculptural, performative, sonorous—are now grounded in the unground of a radical new version of the Cosmic Hunt myth.<sup>6</sup> If, as Barney suggests, "the *Redoubt* project is something like a portrait of a place," then it is the Huian diagram of a new chasmotechnics.

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## INCONCLUSION: BLUE VITRIOL AT THE LIMIT OF THE WORLD

*Redoubt* ends with an image of extreme colour saturation and opacity. Nocturnal close-ups of the Engraver's plates suspended in vitriol's deep blue hue—drawing attention to their nodular crystallizations forming filigree net-like patterns at the same time as a buzz of electricity can be heard—are striking haptic-sonorous motifs in *Redoubt*. Akin to fishing nets awaiting their catch, these are suspended, allusive and cryptic *incubation-images* (or, better still, *transduction-images*) vibrating with inchoate potentials for

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<sup>6</sup> Such phylogenetic, materialist treatment of myth, and storytelling, recalls the work of anthropologist Julien d'Huy. d'Huy has catalogued transformations of the Cosmic Hunt myth across 47 cultures around the globe. As he aptly demonstrates with his comparative analysis of Cosmic Hunt myths, myth is not abstract, static or universal but undergoes punctuated evolution which produces variations in the components of its core story, akin to a species (*mythème*). These phylogenetic variations correspond to the patterns of human migration since the Paleolithic period. Barney's *Redoubt* launches a deterritorialization of the Romanized Greek version of the Cosmic Hunt myth via Hoop Dancer's indigenous Cree choreography. In turn, *Catasterism*'s printable performance program expressly performs a comparative analysis of myths resonating with d'Huy when it juxtaposes the violent Greek myth of Lycaon's turning into a wolf and his subsequent catasterism with the Blackfoot legend of wolves teaching humans how to survive and hunt and their subsequent catasterism as the Wolf Trail, i.e. the Milky Way (see Barney and Bepler).

change. They do not depict any actual growth as in the time-compression aesthetics of a time-lapse, or a montage of snapshots of the progressive phases of copper accretion. These are whirring pre-individual intensities. They lead somewhere—but where?

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