Brand-New-Life
Magazin für Kunstkritik

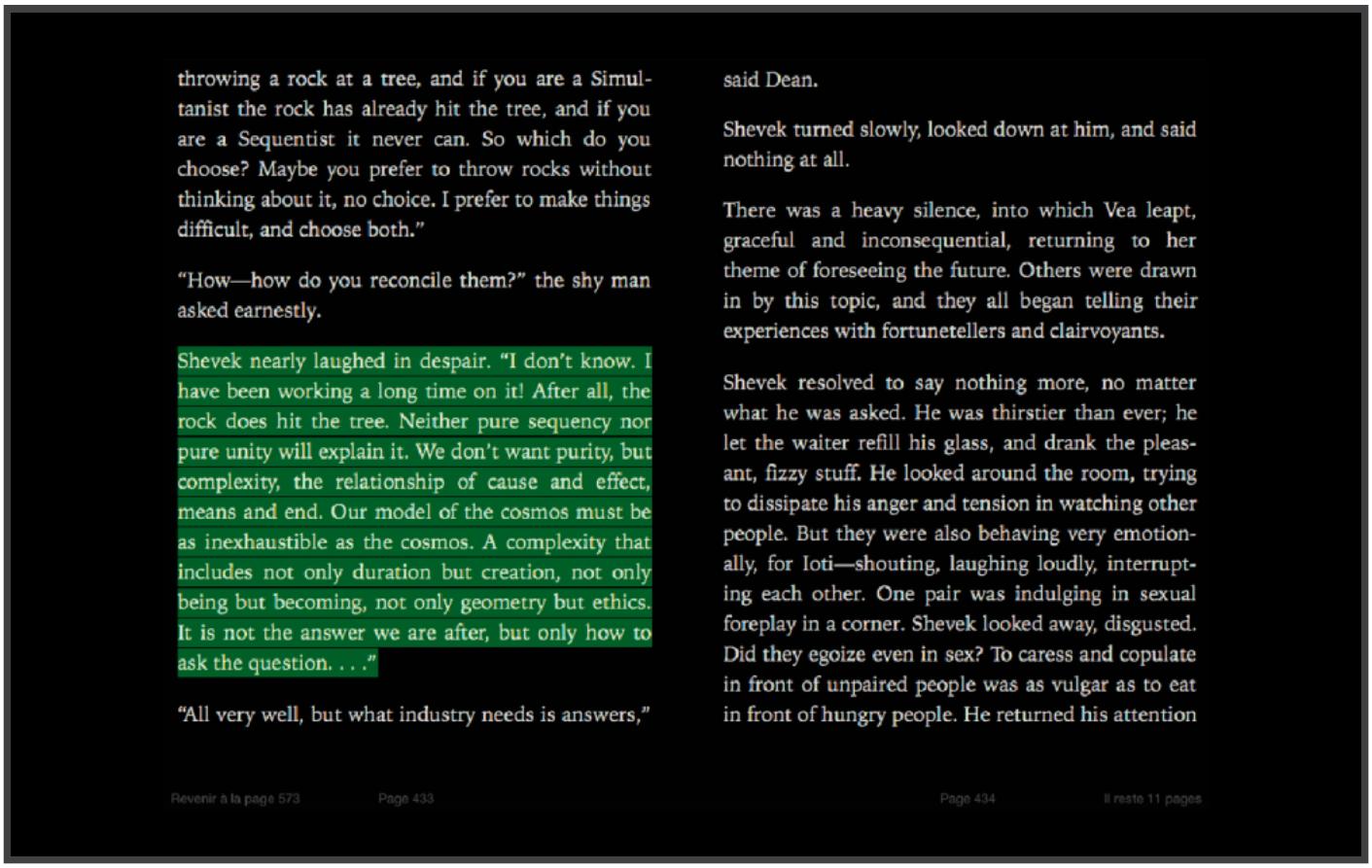
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Above the Abyss

Cherish, Fatima Wegmann

On November 27, 2019 Geneva-based Off Space *Cherish* and Brand-New-Life organized a reading with Fatima Wegmann. The two contributions, titled *Above the Abyss* and *Contradiction is Unity* [b-n-l/contradiction-is-unity/]published here originated from this reading and are published on B-N-L as video- and text-based documentation and an accompanying essay. In her performance Fatima Wegmann explores science fiction and theory - which she sees as closely interrelated - through an audio-visual practice. This allows her to investigate a space of experimentation in search of emancipatory discourse - narratives off-center from patriarchal and imperialist thought. As part of an expansion of the discussion towards French-speaking Switzerland, B-N-L offers a platform to text-based artistic practice. Writing is an artistic practice that is still not comprehensively remunerated and recognized and, in the art context, is too rarely a subject of funding programmes. B-N-L therefore gives artists a framework to develop a new text.


throwing a rock at a tree, and if you are a Simultanist the rock has already hit the tree, and if you are a Sequentist it never can. So which do you choose? Maybe you prefer to throw rocks without thinking about it, no choice. I prefer to make things difficult, and choose both."

"How—how do you reconcile them?" the shy man asked earnestly.

Shevek nearly laughed in despair. "I don't know. I have been working a long time on it! After all, the rock does hit the tree. Neither pure sequency nor pure unity will explain it. We don't want purity, but complexity, the relationship of cause and effect, means and end. Our model of the cosmos must be as inexhaustible as the cosmos. A complexity that includes not only duration but creation, not only being but becoming, not only geometry but ethics. It is not the answer we are after, but only how to ask the question. . . ."

"All very well, but what industry needs is answers,"

said Dean.

Shevek turned slowly, looked down at him, and said nothing at all.

There was a heavy silence, into which Vea leapt, graceful and inconsequential, returning to her theme of foreseeing the future. Others were drawn in by this topic, and they all began telling their experiences with fortunetellers and clairvoyants.

Shevek resolved to say nothing more, no matter what he was asked. He was thirstier than ever; he let the waiter refill his glass, and drank the pleasant, fizzy stuff. He looked around the room, trying to dissipate his anger and tension in watching other people. But they were also behaving very emotionally, for Ioti—shouting, laughing loudly, interrupting each other. One pair was indulging in sexual foreplay in a corner. Shevek looked away, disgusted. Did they egoize even in sex? To caress and copulate in front of unpaired people was as vulgar as to eat in front of hungry people. He returned his attention

EMBED
[https://player.vimeo.com/video/404322290]

I want to start with the proposition that the future is not already set.
I say this because I believe that by changing ourselves
we can also change the world
So anything is possible if we start from there.
The performative is a question of force and effect, and the answer must answer precisely in that mode: Force and effect.

A lot of people have felt the same urgency as I do
the urgency to rewrite and reprogram themselves
And to see this state of emergency as a site of emergence.

How to reveal the unconscious potentialities
waiting to be activated
but hidden by our thinking infrastructure?

Not the potentialities to repair a fragmented past
but to embrace this place of fracture
and accept this is as our state
the state of modernity.

…

I feel that there is something wrong
about this binarity between life and death
this frontier is only a modernist construction
to see the dead as unworthy of care

We must take care of those on the other side.

It is only like this that we can have a future that gives a kind of reparation for the past lives
for the silences that are suffocating us
And to finally make the pain passing from one generation to the next stop.

…

The performance and it's documentation are courtesy of the Fatima Wegmann, Ali-Eddine Abdelkhalek and *Cherish* / James Bantone. The project is made possible with support by Pro Helvetia.

CHERISH

Cherish is a project space in Geneva founded and run by Mohamed Almusibli, James Bantone, Thomas Liu Le Lann and Ser Serpas from their shared living space in 2019. Cherish aims to provide an alternative space of production to the artists invited and hosted; providing them with room and board, a studio, and access to the larger community of its members, as art students and practitioners.

FATIMA WEGMANN

Fatima Wegmann is a Geneva based artist, researcher and DJ. She explores science fiction and theory - which she sees as closely interrelated - through an audio-visual practice. This allows her to investigate a space of experimentation in search of emancipatory discourse - narratives off-center from patriarchal, imperialist thought. In 2019 she graduated from the MA Research Programme CCC (Critical, Curatorial, Cybernetic), at HEAD Geneva.

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doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13930120