



# Spirit and Suspension

The Not-Yet-Drawing as Transport Station

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Rethinking Ernst Bloch's Theories of Surplus Expression in  
Bracha Ettinger's Matrix.

Drawing and the Elucidation of the We Through

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INTRODUCTION

DYSTOPIA ATOPIC, UTOPIA UNIMAGINABLE

The paranoid bachelor-machine prophesies his horizon. Silence; a shy and masturbatory surrender to non-life, obstinate “being” in spite of all our virtual oblivion<sup>1</sup>. He climaxes, writing a hollow jouissance which leads through the déjà vu of word association to a dearth. The little death surrenders nothing of the “We” around and within him; the polyphony of spirit<sup>2</sup>, the inconstruable question of meaning before the word, ‘the utopian star in [our] blood’<sup>3</sup>. Sexual relation foreclosed (and Eden with it<sup>4</sup>), the subject is seemingly condemned to reproduction; not of humanity - the us or the “We” - but of the flaccid subjectivity which ‘rules undisturbed as pure nothingness, as complete demystification, barring the mystery from us’<sup>5</sup>. A nostalgic Orpheus, Eurydice lost, staring down Hades what is there to see but a melancholic hand, held out as if offering to suffocate with him. Dystopia rendered Atopic, Utopia unimaginable<sup>6</sup>. How does one raise the crypt, the repressed, the uncanny hope which might inspire him to sing (and to love) again?

Ernst Bloch saw the light (and the darkness) which comports the dialectic of our mission – a striving without end from our own jaundiced mastery<sup>7</sup>. The glimmer of hope despite our castration, is the heaven-ward impulses of our human becoming which insist below, between, and beyond expression<sup>8</sup>. The artwork exceeds itself, the quivering of the artist’s hand recorded in an abstract line somehow draws us back (impossibly) to the garden, and onward (indefinitely) to a New Jerusalem<sup>9</sup>. But Bloch’s sketches of art’s role in raising a “not-yet-consciousness” - a perceptual readiness to chase utopia’s horizon in its perpetual unfolding<sup>10</sup> - leaves us wanting for some assuredness; it is all, and almost-only promise. Psychoanalysis, as he writes in *Spirit of Utopia*, was (at that time) inadequate to compel his project<sup>11</sup>. If ‘the final thing that absolutely awaits man is woman in form and essence’<sup>12</sup>, then a system which cannot think the feminine, cannot dream a beyond-the-phallus utopia of the “We”. However, with Bracha Ettinger’s matrix, an ethico-artistic paradigm-shift in psychoanalysis’ phallic infrastructure, Bloch’s stravaiging aesthetics might be given new direction<sup>13</sup>. The question then, is how we rethink and expand his thought through the matrixial feminine, and further - especially concerning drawing as a hermeneutics<sup>14</sup> - how this new theoretical frame might fractalize the dawn of creative self-disclosure.

ONE

THE PHALLIC EYE

Today’s (resigned) “realism” was forewarned by Bloch; the fog of an imperceptible blindness drifting as/in the surface-stratum of our gaze, obscures not only the evasive light-of-the-world but its own darkness – naturalizing the master’s stoic image as the face of man imago-dei<sup>15</sup>. This alienation severs the subject from a utopian gnosis which might otherwise guide their spirit<sup>16</sup>; that proper to the empathetic relation of enamoured<sup>17</sup> subjects in communion – the We<sup>18</sup>. Symbolic castration renders our Geist at once hysteric to, and dependant upon, an ethical law which cannot concede its artifice, cannot think the outside or edge-case, and which thereby delimits the Overton window of possible futures toward which we might aspire<sup>19</sup>. Arrested by the phallic master-signifier and imbued with a narcissistic desire for certainty, *we are petrified-before-death*<sup>20</sup>. Like those paintings that posture the timelessness of their scotopic perspective (what Bloch calls dead images of death itself; a rigour-mortis of univocality, totalization *kat eschaton*)<sup>21</sup>, the phallic gaze renders what’s received (and inevitably misrecognised) as eternal truth - its implied trajectory the pre-diction of destiny. The Event and the Thing are murdered or crypted, their indeterminate wake quelled by expectation<sup>22</sup>; hope for anOther future lost with the “lost” object<sup>23</sup>.

The phallic world is ordered, particularised, and autarkic: alterity threatening the brittle structure of identity and its promise of perpetuity<sup>24</sup>. This enucleation is one aspect of Bloch's subjective 'darkness of the lived moment'; a psycho-perspectival enshrouding which leaves the Earth and the Other imperceptible – phallic man caught and capturing the Other within the prison/prism of image<sup>25</sup>. He cannot countenance anything but a cadaverous identity as the negative/negating proof of his mastery. Making stigmatic his occupied territory, he presumes his own omni-potency: obliterating or mutilating what doesn't conform to his cathected heuristics<sup>26</sup>, asserting absolute knowledge despite the narrowness of his vision, even disavowing the uterine to claim his auto-poiesis<sup>27</sup>. The annihilation of the feminine – the "other relation" which is antithetical to the geometric phallus – and the fragmented *méconnaissance* engendered by symbolic particularisation abstracts him from the Other. 'You never look at me from the place from which I see you'<sup>28</sup>. He blinds himself to them in a desire for dominion (domination), their intimacy and radicality in sexual relation muzzled by masquerade<sup>29</sup>.

There is no hope here. No territory safe from the militarized gaze, no memory of the sublime or unspeakable, no encounter with difference without castration, no movement, no life. With the matrixial feminine foreclosed, the future appears a foregone conclusion.

## TWO THE MATRIXIAL WE

Characteristic of both Bloch and Ettinger, the darkness of the lived moment is a paradoxical concept with contradictory facets (fig. 1). Another facet, *another darkness*, is that of our embrace; that of nearness, of the womb<sup>30</sup>. The matrixial gaze (matrice: uterus<sup>31</sup>) is a seeing beyond appearance; not a view *from* blindness, but *as* horizon<sup>32</sup>. It allows 'a glimpse of the forever future created in the Now'<sup>33</sup>, collapsing time in the synthesis of a disjunctive contemporaneity; a new messianism o'erleaping itself in a procreant [non-]seeing. To surrender pre-conceptions of sight a moment, we can talk of this as a "touching" gaze which draws its (minimal, incognizable) meaning from co-poiesis; the [re-]constitutive assembly of I and non-I in their becoming-together<sup>34</sup>. Metamorphosis is the primary sense-making (subjectivizing) procedure of the matrix, describing how we are transformed amongst the We as a pre-symbolic subjective stratum<sup>35</sup>. Beyond castration and indifferent to particularisation (but without sacrifice in specificity), we are joined in a movement of co-affectation – the amorous exchange of trauma – not by the inquisition of a stained, judgmental gaze, but the empathetic wit(h)ness of our *nearly-missed* encounter<sup>36</sup>. In Ettinger's words (evoking Bloch's key concept of the "not-yet"), 'The "becoming" of the matrixial [...] is a mutual transmission of one-less-ness in multiple/plural (several) and partial-subjectivity, among the not-yet-being One-self, the almost-not-being One-self, and the almost no-more One-self.'<sup>37</sup>

How we incite (or are seduced into)<sup>38</sup> this other-relation will become apparent as we develop a conception of the not-yet-drawing. But first, we can use Ettinger's matrix to elucidate the Blochian (matrixial) We. He says that to encounter oneself as/in the We, is to let 'one who loves live completely within his fellow, without subsuming his soul or the soul of him whom he loves but into the We, into the salvation of all these souls, the preserved *And* and *About Us* no longer marked by anything alien'<sup>39</sup>. Supplementing this with Ettinger's description of the matrix, it is 'the We of co-emergence. Not of the total and the global, but co-emergence/co-subjection'<sup>40</sup>. The matrixial-We, then, is the order by which partial-subjects are stripped of pretension towards sovereign individuality, and are woven through inter-relation into (not *méconnaissance*, but) *co-naissance*<sup>41</sup>. We must not confuse our being networked for symbiosis, nor conversational response-ability for "knowing". Although this fragilized transference is almost telepathic (*making the inward become outward*)<sup>42</sup>, the encounter is limited by the extension of our subjective linking, and meaning to the asymmetrical retunings of the



Figure 1: Ettinger, Bracha L. (1988-1995) *Crazy Woman*. Carbon toner, photocopy pigment and ashes, India ink, aquarelle, and colour pencil. 27.1 x 22.6 cm

Ettinger's work addresses both facets through screening: referring to her use of abstract screen-printing techniques which obscures figuration, whilst playing with the psychoanalytic "screens" that mediate the gaze. See: Butler, 97.

borderspace between us<sup>43</sup>. However, it is exactly this non-knowing which allows the matrixial its proto-ethical dimension.

Essential to any utopian gnosis as it subtends the symbolic, this is the wellspring of oceanic feeling from which the imaginary's enclosed<sup>44</sup>. Bloch states that the elucidation of the We is 'ethically productive'<sup>45</sup>, and Ettinger agrees, as we 'can only give witness if we agree to with-ness'<sup>46</sup>. This demands a mutual vulnerability, com-passion, unflinching (unobstructed) respon-dance<sup>47</sup>. The phallic subject is armed, delayed, and distracted by the symbolic machinery through which his gaze is manufactured, busy striking through I/Other, One/Infinity, Pleasure/Pain...<sup>48</sup>. The matrixial, unmediated by the symbolic, can't conceive of such stark differentiation – not because it *cannot* think difference, *but because it can*. Entering into a metamorphic exchange of trauma, each subject is joined in a shared reproduction of the Event; the Event worked-through and transformed in its reproduction-in-difference, the I and non-I each transformed through the re(a)sonances of trauma<sup>49</sup>. It is the distinction between one recounting a memory to anOther, and two crying together as words break down and fail<sup>50</sup>. Each is a means of sense-making; but whilst the symbol keeps the Thing at a distance, crying harkens back to the new-born's primal scream. It turns us into 'participatory witnesses; it enchants and horrifies us, attenuating us into connected particles that participate in a drama wider than that of our individual selves. [...] And it threatens partially to extract its presence via dispersion and diffraction, whether we wish it or not'.<sup>51</sup>

### THREE MOTION BLUR BORDERSWERVING

The cry is all intonation, the movement of inflection which allows a matrix-figure<sup>52</sup> to emerge from dis-figuration. 'We feel: this is us, this is about us, we too would call out like this [...] we also know no better way to express ourselves than through inflection. It goes deep, and where a glance [...] where silence is more eloquent than speech, there especially can singing amplify even the quietest and most indistinct stirring. One might say that song, in order to be presentient, releases inflection, as the most fleeting and yet most powerful thing, from a human being, and gathers it into a continuous, compact construct.'<sup>53</sup> Like the Cubists, their drawing schizophrenic tables subverting the gaze's phallic logic by a 'new-old spatial magic'; or in those expressionist self-shapings which make of those inversions but the flayed exposure of the "space within things" – it is the naked rhythms with which We respond-dance in our traumatic becoming-together that awaken us to the self-encounter (the self qua We)<sup>54</sup>. For Bloch, it is drawing which displays this tendency most freely, as it is 'Movement, but even more: the most unexpected allegorical meaning rises up within drawing, within line, and, as the strongest reaction against every kind of painting seeming to rest within itself, seems mimetic in itself, against every "absolute" painting, reduces even Cubist or any other useful statuary to a mediating, stabilizing formula'.<sup>55</sup>

We might think of three types of movement, each in motion blur into the next – *into the matrix*<sup>56</sup>. First is the 'vague-precise' co-fading which make ambiguous the distinction between subject and ground, and which looses the unbridled force of intention (overcoming figure in its partial loss, its becoming assailant/assailed or thrown<sup>57</sup>). 'Suddenly I see my eyes, my ears, my state: I myself am this drawer and these fish, I am these fish of a kind that lies in drawers; for the difference vanishes, the distance lifts between the artistic subject and the artistically represented object that is to be reborn to a different materiality than a mere thing's, reborn to its essence as the inmost principle of its potentiality, of all our potentiality'<sup>58</sup>. As we struggle for disambiguation (fig. 3), like in the Duchampian anti-retinal which returns the gaze its strange corporeality by reintegrating the body-psyche with the artwork-machine, we meet our own gaze and by it, our being participatory wit(h)ness in desire relation<sup>59</sup>. Borders become infrathin borderspaces, intervals so subtle as to have particularization



**Figure 2:** Turner, J.M.W. (1840) *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying – Typhoon Coming On*. Oil on Canvas. 91x123cm.

Deleuze points to Turner as perhaps the first painter of 'forces' – which is really to say affect. His rupture of figure allows the immeasurable to over-extend itself through the image, becoming less a matter of knowledge, but intensities. We can understand Ettinger as part of this cultural inheritance, the disjunction of formal and exformal qualities a common trait which makes each artist particularly capable in expressing the 'spirit' of the Event. See: Deleuze (1981), 7-8.



collapse (made impossible, or absurd), even facilitating a reflective extimacy<sup>60</sup>. 'The warmth of sunlight retained in a glass window', is also 'the gap between signifier and signified'<sup>61</sup>, and the uncanny difference between ourselves, the work, the artist's hand – the gesture which is but the continuation of an internal stroke<sup>62</sup>.

Which is anOther movement, as 'drawing certainly drives us powerfully forward again as well [...] seems to strive even more deeply. What is being sought is not line in itself [...] unless the line does not smoothly outline, and is dense, and expressively compacted. As when [...] trembling or riding appears as a short, striking curve, or the desire for revenge as a jagged, arrow-shaped formation, or benevolence as a blossoming flower. The outline sharpens and charges to the same degree'<sup>63</sup>. The inflection of the mark 'holds the breath of our spirit'<sup>64</sup>, suspends the Event of its creation like a time-crystal<sup>65</sup>; our meeting ourselves in the encounter (myself and the artist and their myriad influences - *the We*), leads us all the way back through their quivering hand, their sodden shoulder, their teary eyes, to the interim of our being-together in time's vibrant oblivion (fig.3)<sup>66</sup>. 'A painting, when it works, is an [...] affect-form'<sup>67</sup>; the mark 'a superimposition that flattens consciousness in expansion, brain of the hand'<sup>68</sup>; swirling tonalities are amniotic; the line an umbilical link which weaves us in interference<sup>69</sup>.

The image has its place, only it places us forgetfully<sup>70</sup> - the third movement returning the lost Thing by 're-wounding' the Thing itself, that which was beyond our witnessing (or *without* witness). The phallic gaze can only "know" the monumental; the sublime and the tragic. Its retellings are centrifugal, without centre, without a sense of the We and its long shadow<sup>71</sup>. We are addressing something Turner-esque, with his seascapes so affecting because we're raised/reduced to a distance-in-proximity (no difference but difference between us). In the boats and in the waves, in the teary faces and seafoam blooming, in their coincidence and collision and glittering cataclysm; the tsunami winks as our stomachs lurch. Turner, Ettinger, and Bloch each seek an image in movement, a disjunct overcoming of form or figure which situates us in *It's* echo<sup>72</sup>. The phallic gaze cannot comprehend the holocaust or the slave trade, but the matrix's care-full disregard for the statistics which articulate travesty, allow traumatised spirits to breathe/grieve (fig.4)<sup>73</sup>. 'Art then grooves the routes of enactment of erotic aerials of the psyche, conducting and transmitting, dispersing and assembling joint gazes and lost figures between different subjects rendered partial through their very participation in a composite trans-subjectivity'<sup>74</sup>. Reproductive grains are CMB (cosmic background radiation) visible as TV static. This movement is that between multiples, the reverberations which revive/re-Event the Thing in the Now-ness of empathetic re(a)sonance<sup>75</sup>.

It is not only movement in itself (time or difference), but that by 'which one almost always meets the Freudian "uncanny" that belongs to the "I/non-I" dialectic'<sup>76</sup>. To call a Thing unheimlich is to let slip some recollection of a canniness foreclosed by repression, an ex-formal admission which traces the womb<sup>77</sup>. Motion is uncanny to a (futile) phallic stasis, partnership-in-difference a transgression of the incest taboo;<sup>78</sup> the drawing in motion, the artwork which remains unresolved, problematise the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion which contract the imaginary<sup>79</sup> by assuming a posture toward a humane becoming with the symbol-intention beyond the symbol itself<sup>80</sup>. So, if it moves (and moves us), where does it move us to? Where light and dark join in the horizontal infrathin – the borderspace, ebbing only slightly further as we peer future-forward<sup>81</sup>. The artwork is a transport station, at which we might invest in a ticket to nowhere in particular<sup>82</sup>. This is not deliverance, not the messianic [re-]turn to utopia (certainly not through art alone). But the darkness of the lived moment is by borderswerving, *brightened*<sup>83</sup>. The exformal grasps the veiled phallic gaze in an encounter with the sublime light of a co-affective We<sup>84</sup>; this empathetic relationality subtending revelation - the brightening of a sensibility - toward the different through difference.



**Figure 3:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1994-1996) *Eurydice no.9*. Reworked Photocopy with Oil on Paper, Mounted on Canvas. 35.7x29.3 cm

Rifkin writes of *Eurydice no.9*, 'How can we account for the emergence, rhythmic organization, structuring force, and disappearance of the sharp horizontal marks, the shape of fine brush-heads, the shoal of glazings, overpaintings, uncoverings, if not as things that both matter and matter not at all'. Ettinger's use of multimedia cross-fades into an ambiguous indistinction, not only as it concerns figure and ground, but materiality itself. Despite its delicacy, its intricacy, each aspect of the work is woven into the other such that the viewer cannot settle in any one place. Even in works where stark differences appear, it is only to make the gaze attentive to itself as particularizing. See: Rifkin, 25.



**Figure 4:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1992-1994) *Eurydice no.2*. Reworked Photocopy with Oil on Paper, Mounted on Canvas. 41.4x26.5 cm

Ettinger fuses, for example, German war-time maps of Palestine with family photos, building upon them with a tonality recalling Warhol's disaster series. Griselda Pollock points out that, similar to Warhol, Ettinger's colour fields dissolve the (often clinical) photographic image in an almost amniotic, or bloody solution; thereby activating the affective qualities proper to both the imaged Event, and the matrixial substratum of the subject. See: Bucí-Glucksmann, 73.

FOUR  
EURYDICE REFRAGILIZED

She lives between two deaths: the snake bite, and ‘...*respect Orpheus*’<sup>85</sup> - of course she could only survive the former, so absolute is the melancholic annihilation of the (phallic) gaze. ‘Looking at this Eurydice, Lichtenberg Ettinger’s, positions us in Orpheus’ aporia’<sup>86</sup>, ‘When we turned, looking for Eurydice, we thought perhaps we could know she was there by seeing, and so we thought that looking would be a way of knowing and capturing. But it turned out that she was uncapturable in this way, and that, in general, she is uncapturable, that capture will not be the way in which we might experience her.’<sup>87</sup> Ettinger’s (ceaseless) series *Eurydice*, represents her tentative instrumentalization of a matrixial gaze in drawing. Figures co-fade and re-double, appearing gossamer as apparitions glanced in a maelstrom flux, decentred severalties with ‘the distinction and the mobility to be able to travel’<sup>88</sup> through the oblivion of our becoming - *remembering and forgetting, the eternal return of difference*<sup>89</sup>.

As Eurydice oscillates between surfaces, Ettinger brings her up and down the stairs of a studio-clinic; notes and drawings inscribed with the analysand, eyes never meeting to obstruct their working-through, gaze touching only in the rhythms of their discourse, ‘a floating attentiveness’; sketches raised to the top-floor light, new conversations begin between canvases (fig.5);<sup>90</sup> artworks are screened and re-printed, photocopying disrupted halfway through the recollection of its image; works shuffled and replaced even on the gallery wall; traces traced over and writing over-written in a metamorphic montage (fig. 6). This is not strictly “fragmentation”, Ettinger insists, because even as ‘figurative image quasi-disappears [...] all the considerations I make [...] have to work with them - even upon their disappearance.’<sup>91</sup> A surplus of affect emerges from the disjunctive synthesis of co-emergence, Ettinger’s “artworking” flows through her world, her patients, her trauma, her hand, materials, re(a)sonance, wit(h)nessing; all transformed in their reproduction, and allowed to sing out.<sup>92</sup> They reflect upon themselves in a generic procedure (a utopian method),<sup>93</sup> and we are thrown from our feet to be carried in the currents of constellation.

A poetics of transgression sweeps the subject up in eroticized aeries, becoming responsive (rather than reactive) to the rhythms of expression.<sup>94</sup> The militant gaze is disarmed in this [re-]fragilization,<sup>95</sup> image overwhelmed in the intensification of feeling; specific voices rise and fall within the polyphony without allowing us to rest on any One.<sup>96</sup> Phallic mastery is refused but relation isn’t rejected;<sup>97</sup> the spirit’s suspended in a subjective residue as the foreclosed matrixial surges to primacy. The eye is made frantic to establish a ground, the heart set free in the darkness of its squinting to find an unworldly home-without-homeliness in the weave. The vulnerability of the networked subject negates the negation, the phallic impossibility of sharing, opening such that there is an impossibility of *not* sharing. ‘When in art a memory emerges, it captures what has just been born into and from co-spasming, and it opens a lane of fragility. It creates both the scar and its wound, the amnesia and its memory, and it makes sense, as an impossibility, as the impossibility of not-sharing the memory of the oblivion of the veiled Event.’<sup>98</sup>

We can sense these shifts in the stratified fields of her drawing, but Ettinger’s theoretical position is what’s most pressing. The artist’s stroke not only inscribes the surface of the artobject, but in the integration of the body-psyche through the matrix, it enacts a co-inscription tantamount to the reproduction of psychic wounds themselves; the Event is re-Evented in the encounter, even allowing crypted memory to be worked-through and reconciled with-in metamorphosis.<sup>99</sup>



**Figure 5:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1991- ongoing) *Eurydice*. Select Works displayed in *Face à l'Histoire*, 1933-1996 (1996/1997) at the Pompidou Center.

*Serialization is one technique that Ettinger employs to defer the artwork's resolution. Creating a series of works allows for the continuation of the creative conversation, which is only helped further by Ettinger's tendency to rework and reorder the series between exhibitions. This takes De Kooning's infamous inability to designate any work as complete (their being taken to the gallery the only definitive end) to its paralogical extreme. It may then, be better to think of these as works in constellation rather than a typical series, drawings and paintings fading in and out of position. Combined with their diffractive imagery, they take on a dynamogenic quality - which Bourriaud sees as fundamentally ex-formal (and thereby uncanny). See: Ettinger (2006a), 111. Massumi, 90. Bourriaud, 51.*



**Figure 6:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1991) *Matrix Borderline Case no.3*. Indian Ink, Charcoal, Xerox, Paint on Paper. 128x38.5cm

*The work above demonstrates several of Ettinger's techniques in over-writing. Working with her patients, she will write and draw as she listens, Matrix Borderline Case no.3 showing some of these fragments collected and worked-through, with pages of her diaries overlaid with ink, juxtaposed with photographic imagery. This networks the myriad subjective grains which flow through individual works-in-relation; aiding in decentering of the One-subject with a libidinal demonstration of connectivity. See: Huhn, 36.*

Whilst Eurydice cannot be captured in Ettinger's work, she is not completely lost – she is suspended in anamnesis, a phantom. The melancholic artist renders his lost object in the highest visual fidelity, as if attempting to raise them from the dead to reclaim them in image<sup>100</sup>. But Aphrodite is silent – Pygmalion kisses stoney lips and languishes in a yearning for her breath upon his ear. Orpheus' eye condemns him to a similar fate,<sup>101</sup> yet Eurydice insists deep-beyond him – her being-in-herself buried by repression and phallic identification. The Event and the Thing, in their sublimity, are often unthinkable. The offcuts cast off of the subject's cutting Things to size, even its trauma *in toto* - whatever evades cognition (that which is not recognized and repressed but thrust into the unconscious without symbolic regard) is the crypted.<sup>102</sup> Metamorphosis can aid in working-through and reproducing the uncanny, but its therapeutic utility and its empathetic relationality are best exemplified in its being "transcriptum".

"The transcriptum produces an image, a sign, a symbol, or text where the forsaken Event and the Thing that enveloped the trauma and were enveloped by originary repression, will make sense for the first time"<sup>103</sup>. *Make sense*. Like the infantile cry, sense-making does not imply the communication of knowledge, but the working-through of a situation. Metamorphosis, as the retuning of borderspaces through co- weaving subjective links, makes-sense insofar as the matrixial gaze of We-subjects transform or reincarnate the I and non-I by asymmetrical co-poiesis<sup>104</sup>. We are not somehow transported back in time to an Event; instead, time collapses, the repressed affective so long as it insist as subjective re(a)sonance (fig.7)<sup>105</sup>. The artist's traumas are reborn in the artwork as trace; although it is reproduced-in-difference, this process [re-]records the past such that we might change the future Now<sup>106</sup>. The viewer too, inter-woven through the matrixial weave, can empathise with the phantasmatic traces which emerge from the crypt - even, in extimacy - finding their own ghosts haunting its strange plateaus<sup>107</sup>.

In what we will call the not-yet-drawing, its borderswerving motion, the future is freed from the crypt<sup>108</sup>; this the transcriptum potentiality inherent to such radical [re-]fragilization. And I say "[re-]" fragilization, because just as the uncanny womb was once home, fragility is another repressed quality – but which insists as a matrixial residue beyond-the-phallus<sup>109</sup>. The poetic, co-poietic disjunction of form and line in drawing, the musicality and movement proper not to fragmentation but difference-in-relation, as described by Bloch – here elucidated by Ettinger – can awaken a fragilized not-yet-consciousness which, as the empathetic other-relation, may subtend an extended symbolic at once more human, and humane<sup>110</sup>.

#### CONCLUSION THE NOT-YET-DRAWING

The not-yet-drawing is one which lives between worlds; a drifter, surely vagrant if it weren't for its being so intimate and (strangely) familiar to us. The borderswerving affected by its motion blur (its doubling, its spits and starts, its elision) follows Bloch's word to the self-encounter; the ethically productive elucidation of the We, and the realisation of a utopian gnosis founded in an empathetic lightening. These drawings, these three movements (only a provisional trinity), as Ettinger would have it (but in Bloch's words) demonstrate 'the Ways in This World by Which the Inward Can Become Outward'<sup>111</sup>. But the question remains - how can it make 'the Outward Like the Inward'? *It's training a perceptual readiness for the encounter; provisioning a light-touch influence on the directionality of the subject's strivings*. Although subtle, it is important – Bloch's broader project is grounded on the assumption of this not-yet-consciousness; not-yet both in its inherent futurity, and in its being



Figure 7: Ettinger, Bracha L. (2001) *Eurydice No.35*. Reworked Photocopy with Oil on Paper, Mounted on Canvas. 39x27.2cm

*"The structure of memory is [...] visualized in this aesthetic structure, as if multiple passages had been created by way of memory, of forgetting, of repression, and additional corrections added by hand after the fact. The aim is neither faithful reproduction, nor conservation (from 'once upon a time')"* Rosi Huhn, describing the function of memory employed and evoked in Ettinger's *Eurydice*, corrects any misapprehension of its "return" within the work. Rather than a phallic repetition of the image, the artist must pay fidelity to the past as it insists in the Now; not necromancy, but reincarnation. Where memories have faded, become screened, or have taken the form of an unsettling dramaturgy, the artist can riff on these swelling chords through the use of multimedia, mark making, erasure, as is appropriate to the texture and borderspaces of those (living) experiences. See: Huhn, 33.



not-yet born out<sup>112</sup>. When a utopian method is defined in such (black and white, yet ambiguous) terms, those terms are best thought matrixially – lest we find ourselves perpetuating a castrative universalism corrupted by the phallic darkness of the lived moment<sup>113</sup>.

The uncanny, the ex-formal, the infrathin, the gesture – more prescriptions. But the one above all is movement, not only in the picture-plane but as artists ourselves. Keep these rules in a distance-in-proximity, half-forget them. And that erasure is exactly the point; that erasure allowing us to work with the figure of our specific situation, even in its quasi-disappearance. If the artwork isn't "artworking", by Ettinger's definition, it isn't an artobject – its essential quality its capacity to function as a metamorphic desiring-machine<sup>114</sup>. Style is death. Response-ability is vital. A (not-yet) consciousness of the matrixial is generally advised, but other than that - *there is very little certainty*. What the not-yet-drawing looks like is always not-yet known. That is, until it is reborn in rupture and rhythm to shock us with our incessant failure to anticipate it. We can speak around our relation to it; as a partial-object; as a metamorphic, transformative, Evental Thing. We might even mention a general strategy, a methodology for overcoming the image. But the not-yet-drawing is a mobile concept which clashes against any idea of itself, its power derived from self-discovery – its opening itself, artists, and viewers to a matrixial self-lessness (or better, I/eye-lessness). Besides that, 'one should consider that what has just been said must be crossed out each time, so that nothing can solidify. Nevertheless, precisely, the darkness lightens toward evening and its own morning, in the amazement of all these vague-precise symbol-intentions'<sup>115</sup>.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Non-life does not refer to death, but the castrated being of the phallic subject – the foreclosure of the feminine and the Real. Equally, Ettinger's oblivion does not refer to nothingness, but a state prior to the phallic identification of particular objects. See: Ettinger (2013), 23:45 – 24:15.

<sup>2</sup> Guattari, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Bloch, 171.

<sup>4</sup> The invocation of Eden, ties both to Bloch's theological tenor, and the matrixial womb; although Ettinger doesn't directly relate the matrix and Eden, I would suggest that the biblical reference is useful in thinking the matrixial; the biblical fall being analogous of humanities symbolic castration. Žižek (2000), 46.

<sup>5</sup> Bloch, 171.

<sup>6</sup> The issue is that our capacity to imagine utopias is limited by the *darkness of the lived moment*; the ideological/subjective delimitation of the imaginary itself. As Ruth Levitas states, 'If utopia is constrained both by possible imagination and imagined possibility, the political task is to push outwards the limits of both'. See: Levitas, 120.

<sup>7</sup> Light and dark because it is between the light's dialectical relation with darkness that utopia is suspended. This implicates Bloch's conception of hope, which is essential to his method in that it (as opposed to expectancy) emerges from unknowing, and is thereby reflexive – the acknowledgment of our insufficiency to knowledge allowing the utopian subject to retune their means and ends. See: Ibid. 5,18, 188. Bloch, 179,200.

<sup>8</sup> To clarify, my use of "heavenward impulse" should not be misconstrued for my suggesting that utopia is an inevitability. Bloch stresses that our utopian aspirations may indeed lead us to hell. However, he does imply a sort of "love drive" which might be followed to the illuminating self-encounter. Ettinger also marks the matrix as a proto-ethical dimension; the gnosis established thereby, at least transferred though art she says, cannot raise itself to inhumane ends. See: Bloch, 189, 192, 194, 212. Ettinger (2013), 10:40- 12:00

<sup>9</sup> Both Bloch and Ettinger understand that the artwork draws its affective force from its fragilizing us for the self-encounter as/in the [matrixial] We, through – as Ettinger would put it – the return of an uncanny womb-relation. If we accept that the relationality proper to the presence of the artist's hand is matrixial, that the womb is Edenic (in its being an order of unjealous, naked exchange), and that this relation is possessed of a utopian futurity, then the artist's hand draws us both directions through the collapsing of time into a virtual imminence. Bloch himself states that some artworks allow the object[ive] to be 'reborn to its essence as the inmost principle of its potentiality, of all our potentiality' – a potential which Bloch affirms in its utopian capacity. See: Bloch, 32, 200. Ettinger (2000), 98, 111-112, 114-5. Ettinger (2006b), 49.

<sup>10</sup> Bloch, 198. Levitas, 140.

<sup>11</sup> This stems from Bloch's reading of Freud, and his sense that psychoanalysis inexorably linked the subject to base, animal, (death) drives. Further, he felt that the interpretation of dreams – which he saw as one of Psychoanalysis' key methodological components, scarcely lead to the elucidation of the We. See: 188-189.

<sup>12</sup> Bloch, 211.

<sup>13</sup> Ettinger's matrix is not the feminine under the phallus, the femininity which is defined negatively against, or as the shadow of male phallic identification. The matrixial is a pre-symbolic order of subjectivity which precedes castration entirely; although there is a tenuous relation between the matrix and the phallic-symbolic (in that it subtends the expanded symbolic order), the matrixial feminine is not restricted by the phallic law which condemns the feminine to non-existence. This is Ettinger's core contribution, as it allows psychoanalysis to think beyond its orthodox infrastructure in ways other than handwaving at womb fantasies (Freud), or the impossibility of the other-relation (Lacan). See: Pollock (2006), 27

<sup>14</sup> Ruth Levitas characterises Bloch's utopian methodology as hermeneutical, in that it reads images (in an expanded sense) for the traces of a universal spirit. But I would also connect our (Bloch's and my own) with Natalie Loveless' research creational method, which uses the lacanian objet-a as a "lure", allowing the subject to move between (phallic) fascination and (matrixial) "fascination" as they pursue desire-relation with objects of study. See: Levitas, 5. Loveless, 85.

<sup>15</sup> Bloch does not put his point in psychoanalytic terms, but the identification with the phallic master signifier does function as a sort of God-image, establishing a law which the subject takes on and perpetuates, blinding themselves to the earth for a given-reality, and making efforts to align themselves with this image-ideal through disavowal or negation. Ibid, 171. Žižek (2006), 9. Žižek (1991) 27.

<sup>16</sup> When we say spirit in this context, it is with neither theological, nor Hegelian preconception (not strictly). For Ettinger and Bloch, spirit is really a synonym for presentiment, or our being presentient. See: Bloch, 193. Ettinger (2013), 1:30 – 2:00.

<sup>17</sup> Both Bloch and Ettinger describe their (broadly) trans-subjective relations in amorous terms. Ettinger draws this from the Lacanian definition of love, which is sharing one's lack (this essay aligning with Fabio Vighi's reading, as a diachronic movement between phallic identification of the Other as the object cause of desire, and the inevitable rupture of difference which transform them into pure cause). Bloch's understanding of love – in my reading – relates directly to God or Spirit, which he generally describes as being the energy or (similarly dialectical) movement of the subject qua We. In this sense, both thinkers see love as a fundamental movement/motivation of human becoming. See: Ettinger (2013), 4:20 – 4:40. Lacan (2015), 129. Fink (2016), 35-39. Vighi, 80. Bloch, 191.

<sup>18</sup> Similar to a Lacanian analysis, Bloch conceives of the subject's being located in their own blind spot – they are subjects of méconnaissance. The inaugural cut of symbolic castration severs the subject from the Other (exactly in identifying the Other as such). Through the appropriation of the Other's desire, its territorialization/over-coding, and their alienation in language, the subject is rendered blind to the empathetic relationality which Ettinger recognizes as a humane sub-knowledge of our relationality. This empathetic order, which I claim to be essentially matrixial, is the Blochian "We" – that which must be elucidated in order for the subject (and society at large) to anticipate a utopian project. See: Bloch, 197, 200. Lacan (2016), 70. Ettinger (2006a), 102.

<sup>19</sup> Bloch, 175. Ettinger (1996a), 87.12. Deleuze, Guattari, 245.

<sup>20</sup> Loveless,46. Fink (1995),41.45. O'Sullivan,134.

<sup>21</sup> Bloch, 23-24, 28. Ettinger (2006c), 50-52. Ettinger (2006d),183-184.

<sup>22</sup> Bloch differentiates anticipation/love/hope from expectancy, saying that the former brings about change, the latter only gazes at it. See: Levitas, 188.

<sup>23</sup> Ettinger (2006b), 163. Lacan (1977), 114-115.

<sup>24</sup> It out to be noted however, that alterity is only rendered threatening or hysterogenic through castration, and as castration anxiety. See: Copjec, 51. Ettinger (2006a), 98.

<sup>25</sup> 'Captured by the image, I become it' says Philippe Julien. I might add, "and vice versa". Julien, 37. Bloch, 199.

<sup>26</sup> Finding a common flaw between the phallic and the Kantian systems of knowledge, Land states 'Alterity cannot be registered unless it can be inscribed within the system'. Ettinger further states that 'Oedipal castration focuses sight and introduces into the field of vision its ordering, selecting, separating, unifying function, which the becomes dominant. In focus, the "armed eye" can now "take aim at the target" and "claim omniscient and omnipotent knowledge.' See: Land (1988), 87-90. Ettinger (2006c), 51.

<sup>27</sup> Ettinger (1996a), 97.

<sup>28</sup> Lacan (1973), 103

<sup>29</sup> Sexual relation here referring to authentic relation with difference (Lacan's saying that through our alienation in symbolic castration, 'there is no sexual relationship'). The term "masquerade" has additional significance as a theory of performativity through which women perform femininity as symbolically castrated subjects without the phallic organ – articulating an alienation specific to the phallic-feminine (as opposed to the matrixial-feminine) subject. Lacan (2003), 37. Ettinger (2006a), 97.

<sup>30</sup> 'The darkness of the nearness thus perhaps still intensifies the darkness of the secret, which of course would precisely not seem so dark if it were not in the deepest way the darkness of the nearness itself'. Bloch, 201.

<sup>31</sup> 'Sharing with meta- in metamorphosis the reference to the space and doubled structure of the becoming – mother's body with its intimate stranger, the Matrix. Latin for womb, governs a perceptual relations-without-relating between an I and a non-I who are not cast, as in the phallic model, as the one (underside=fusion) and its other (created by the castrative cut), the self and the stranger, subject and object.' Pollock (2000), 61.

<sup>32</sup> 'Images emerge against and as a fractured horizon'. See: Butler, 96.

<sup>33</sup> Ettinger (2006c), 88.

<sup>34</sup> However, we must be careful when saying "touching", that we don't imply symbiosis. Ettinger variably uses "touching gaze" to refer to the phallic and matrixial feminine gaze. See: Ettinger (2000), 98. Ettinger (2006b), 98.

<sup>35</sup> Ettinger (1992), 201.

<sup>36</sup> The matrixial is a subjectivity of encounter. 'I have termed this layer the *matrixial stratum of subjectivisation*, proposing a *matrixial subjectivity-as-encounter* as a beyond-the-phallus feminine field related (in both men and women) to plural, partial, and *shared* unconscious, trauma, phantasy, and desire having imaginary and symbolic impacts (and not only an *ex-sistence* in the Real). I have suggested that if – alongside traces of objects – we conceive of traces of links and relations, from the angle of a *co-emerging I and non-I* prior to the I *verses others*, then there arises a different kind of passageway proper to these *links* (which are not taken for *objects*), attributable to particular processes of *transformation*. This different, other passage I have termed *metramorphosis*. It draws a nonpsychotic yet *beyond-the-phallus* connection between the feminine and creation'. Ettinger (2006c), 64. Ettinger, Horsefield. (2001a), 46.

<sup>37</sup> Ettinger (2006c), 88.

<sup>38</sup> Ettinger generally characterizes borderswerving as a movement of seduction; in part because of its being a form of desire-relation, and because it "dances around the point". See: Ibid, 50.

<sup>39</sup> Bloch, 212.

<sup>40</sup> Ettinger (2013), 0:35 – 1:20.

<sup>41</sup> Méconnaissance, translating roughly to misrecognition, is the Lacan term which describes the cognitive blindness inherent to the subject's identification with/through a symbolic order insufficient to the Real. Ettinger, playing on this term, coins co-naissance as a depingularized trans-subjectivity which corresponds to (and is thereby capable of recognising) the partial nature of all (partial-)subjects/objects. Ettinger distinguishes the Freudian part-object from her preferred partial-object, by identifying the former with the phallic subject's constitutive lack, and the later with the Deleuzo-Guattarian desiring machine; a thing with which the desiring body-psyche networks with in a co-poietic metramorphosis (this distinction is loosely held in Ettinger's oeuvre, but we will continue to use "partial" throughout this essay). There are resonances with Jane Bennet's vibrant materialism, and the broader neo-Spinozism that surfaced in Deleuze's wake. See: Lacan (1977), 2. Ettinger (2006c), 67.

<sup>42</sup> à la the famous Blochian quote. See: Bloch, 231.

<sup>43</sup> 'Matrixial affects index a transformation and an exchange, and matrixial phenomena, like knowledge in/by the other accompanied by affects of compassion or even something like telepathy, testify that such a passage has taken place and that a minimal meaning has been created.' This metramorphic co-affectability is characterized by Ettinger as response-ability (also styled as co-response-ability, an ability to respond rather than react, an indication of simultaneity rather than retroaction), and retuning (the de/reterritorialization of subjective thresholds with accord to the psychic resonances (or re(a)sonances, noting their capacity for sense-making) between I and non-I's in relation. Further, concerning its asymmetry, 'Traces of relation-without-relating are scattered, in an asymmetrical and nonequivalent way, so as to in-form a covenant-in-differentiation based on re-co-naissance-re-joint-birth-as a kind of unthought subknowledge that re(a)sonates the meaning of heterogeneity, or heterogeneity as co-meaning, to the threshold of culture, and by means of webbing digs a borderspace in it'. Ettinger (2006c), 65. Ettinger (1996b), 125-126. Ettinger (2006a), 113.

<sup>44</sup> Bloch also relates this to the pre-symbolic 'one primordial word', which he identifies with God and the inconstuable secret of our nearness. I have read this, within the context of Ettinger, but also through the likes of Christian mystics such as Julian of Norwich, and the pseudo-theological positions of Deleuze, who said that if asked "Do you believe in God?" we should reply [...] 'Of course, but only as the master of the disjunctive syllogism.' See: Bloch, 194. Deleuze, Guattari (1983), 24. Pollock (2006), 15.

<sup>45</sup> Bloch, 172.

<sup>46</sup> Ettinger (2013), 30:30 -31:00.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 4:50 – 5:45, 8:40 – 9:10. Ettinger (2006b), 168.

<sup>48</sup> As Bartlett, Clemens, and Roffe describe, in (phallocentric) psychoanalysis, 'Trauma has always already happened'. This has two implications. First, because of castration, and the subject's relationship with the phallic signifier, the trauma (which is always filtered through castration) has always already happened because it is a reenactment of the inaugural castration. Second, and again, as a result of the translation demanded by phallic identification, the subject must translate there having been assailed by some trauma. Event, etc. if they are to recognise it as having happened. As a result, the present is always subject to a temporal delay as the subject must cognise the Event, which must have already happened if it is to be cognised. As Badiou states, 'In subjectivisation, certainty is anticipated. In the subjective process, consistency is retroactive'. Pollock (2000), 69. Bartlett, Clemens, Roffe, 123,124. Badiou (2009), 251.

<sup>49</sup> 'For where the subject-to-be becomes, its becoming is from the outset a co-becoming with the unknown other whose subjectivity is transformed into a becoming m/Other by this shared eventing at the level of the corpo-Real. That becoming m/Other re-events her own initiating severality, from when s/he was a subject-to-be.' Pollock (2006) 15.

<sup>50</sup> Stone states, 'Even though I had no definite framework at the time for making sense of what was going on, I still did make sense of it, (apparently), by crying loudly and at length - taking 'sense-making', here, in its broadest sense. For nascent, visceral, inarticulate responses are still ways of sense-making, and they provide the starting point on which successive more advanced levels of understanding will be built.' This is an example of a pre-linguistic form of sense-making, which is not governed by language, but which still produces meaning. Lacan sought out an escape from language, resolving that a Joycean "lalangue" was as close as we could get. Lalangue is the sort of babble that a toddler makes, or as in Joyce (or I might suggest Beckett), where language breaks down and becomes more about rhythm and tone - it breaks free of the bounds of the symbolic. He says, 'Lalangue affects us first of all by everything it brings with it by way of effects that are affects', which we can understand to mean that, in lalangue, as well as - trying to - understand the symbolic content, we hear an excess which goes beyond what could otherwise be communicated. I would say that crying is a far more visceral (although not fully pre-verbal) elision of language; a complete inability to express oneself any other way. See: Stone, 108. Lacan (2004), 6.

<sup>51</sup> Ettinger (2006a), 117.

<sup>52</sup> The matrix figure is the child's mother, but also Eurydice – Ettinger adding her to a provisional dyad of mythic-psychoanalytic figures alongside Oedipus. This should not be confused with Levinas' matrix-figure or Larousse' matrix, although Ettinger does refer to both and build from them in her work. See: Ibid, 64. Buci-Glucksmann, 73.

<sup>53</sup> Bloch, 96.

<sup>54</sup> 'Thus does the darkness of the lived moment awaken in the resonance of the amazement that comes over us, and thus does its latency arrive at an initial "visibility," the enjoyment and the superabundance of being affected by the We.' Ibid, 28-29, 202.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>56</sup> It should be noted that these distinctions are not drawn by Bloch or Ettinger, but ones that I gesture toward with absolutely no investment in their actual distinction, only to structure some pseudo-formalization of a method for the not-yet-drawing.

<sup>57</sup> In the Heideggerian sense, which Stone uses to describe our natal vulnerability. See: Heidegger (1962) 36, 37,134. Stone, 144-145.

<sup>58</sup> Bloch, 32.

<sup>59</sup> Guattari, making explicit the function of the artwork as a desiring machine, say 'The work of art, for those who use it, is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment which leads to a recreation and a reinvention of the subject itself'. Correlatively, in an essay about Eve Hesse's drawing, Ettinger states: 'As an example of this resisting, subversive attitude toward "good form" arising within the scope of modernism from the optical unconscious, Krauss cites Marcel Duchamp's project of re-integrating the visual into the corporeal and restoring to the eye – against the disincarnated opacity of modern painting – the role of a participant in the psychic metabolism of the organism, one exposed, like any other zone of the body, to erotic power. This implies a rethinking of visually in art in the context of the eye's integration into the primary body-psyche network.' See: Guattari, 131. Ettinger (2006d), 184.

<sup>60</sup> Ettinger (1999), 89.

<sup>61</sup> Goldsmith, 6,7.

<sup>62</sup> 'The painter's gesture concludes an interior internal stroke that resembles the one that participates in the process of regression that intends to satisfy fixated partial impulses, but instead it creates – as in a backward movement, as in a reversal of the course of mental time – a stimulus toward which the stroke appears already a response.' See: Ettinger (2006c), 95.

<sup>63</sup> Bloch, 27.

<sup>64</sup> Ettinger (2013), 1:30 – 2:00

<sup>65</sup> This conception of art as a time-crystal is derived from Deleuze. Brian Massumi says that 'The time-crystal holds together, as accompanying facets, what in the linear unfolding of things are successive beats, the rising and the falling, in the rhythm of interweaving'. See: Massumi, 11.

<sup>66</sup> A diversion into vibrant materialism is warranted here. Bennet's system is one which views the world as being populated by assemblages. 'Assemblages are ad hoc groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts. Assemblages are living, throbbing confederations that are able to function despite the persistent presence of energies that confound them from within[...].The effects generated by the assemblage are, rather, emergent properties, emergent in that their ability to make something happen [...] is distinct from the sum of the vital force of each materiality considered alone. Each member and proto-member of the assemblage has a certain vital force, but there is also an effectivity proper to the grouping as such: an agency of the assemblage.' I suggest that we take an "assemblage" view of drawing (as we already have in some respect, referring to the Deleuzo-Guattarian desiring machine). Drawing is not only composed of line and form, but of paper, graphite, ink, labor, blood, sweat (often tears), and the artist; themselves assemblages of similarly diverse and obscure matrix of exchangeable (but unequivocal) components. With this view, the drawing opens itself up to any number of connections - they are, like any other artwork, *intermedia* and *intersubjective*. Ettinger affirms this, saying that should the subject's gaze take on a matrixial sensitivity (and should the artwork open itself to such engagement), then 'The gaze calls to the viewer to follow it into a space beyond, yet inside the visible, to abandon defenses and become fragmented and fragile, to become open to sharing and absorbing and a further redistributing of fragments of trauma—all this on the condition of weaving into the artwork one's own matrixial threads and letting the artwork penetrate one's own psychic space of severality'. See: Bennet, 24. Ettinger (2006e), 151.

<sup>67</sup> Ettinger (2013), 2:05 – 2:28.

<sup>68</sup> Pollock (2000),64.

<sup>69</sup> In agreement, referring to Odile Redon, Deleuze states: 'The abstract line acquires all its force from giving up the model - that is to say, the plastic symbol of the form - and participates in the ground all the more violently in that it distinguishes itself from it without the ground distinguishing itself from the line'. Deleuze (1968), 38.

<sup>70</sup> In that space and time (as we understand it in the Euclidian sense) is a phallic construct of the gaze, and only comes about by castrating the Real of that difference which would otherwise make the particularity of the subject's position ambiguous. Out with the mediation of the phallic infrastructure. 'Space - Time ceases to be a pure given in order to become a totality or the nexus of differential relations in the subject, and the object itself ceases to be an empirical given in order to become the product of these relations in conscious perception'. Lacan (2016), 71. Deleuze (1993), 101.

<sup>71</sup> Ettinger (2006a), 102.

<sup>72</sup> Ettinger (2006d), 211.

<sup>73</sup> Massumi, 29, 31.

<sup>74</sup> Ettinger (1999), 89.

<sup>75</sup> Ettinger refers to "subjective grains", the graininess of the reproduced image which is also the graininess and "fragmentation" proper to our own reproduction in metemorphosis. We must be careful saying "fragmentation", as this may related back to the phallic understanding of the fragmented mother – severality, or difference-in-relation may be better terms. Perhaps the best way to understand these grains, is as Barthe's grains of the author, which upon their "death", imbed themselves in the reader-subject to be carried in their dalliness. See: Ettinger, Horsefield, 55. Gallop, 50.

<sup>76</sup> Buci-Glucksmann, 71.

<sup>77</sup> Freud, 245.

<sup>78</sup> Ettinger (2000), 93.

<sup>79</sup> Here referring to Nicholas Bourriaud's concept of the exform, although Ettinger also directly attributes the matrix an exformal relation to phallic identification. Ettinger (1996b), 220. Bourriaud, x.

<sup>80</sup> Bloch believes that all symbols have "ontic symbol intentions", which express something in surplus of the symbol itself which relates to our spirit (circles the pre-symbolic question of being itself). We might relate this to the matrixial's role in subtending the symbolic, or the artist's capacity producing a surplus of expression which links to their inherent being-beyond-language. A clarifying example might be when we say "I love you" for the first time – although that phrase is completely insufficient to the communication of any particular, "true" feeling (an impossible and contradictory thing in itself), there is an ontic symbol-intention which suffices to express love, exactly because it is love which has us say it. In the outburst, the symbol does not contain, but instead gestures toward something which we might tentatively call "true feeling" (assuming the empathetic relation between the speaking-subject and the beloved-witness). See: Bloch, 204.

<sup>81</sup> I suggest that we lean forward in the matrixial We, because 'Woman is the category of the future, the ecstasy of the future. It is that human possibility which consists in saying that the life of another human being is more important than my own, that the death of the other is more important than my own death, that the Other comes before me, that the Other counts before I do, that the values of the Other are imposed before mine. In the future, there is what might happen to me. And then there is also my death.' Ettinger, Levinas, 214, 219-220.

<sup>82</sup> Ettinger (2000), 91

<sup>83</sup> 'Borderswerving dissolves the individual borderlines so that they become thresholds that allow a passage which, for each participant, captivates what I call a *surplus of fragility*. The knowledge of being-born-together – co-naisance – in a matrixial alliance insinuates a crossed transcription of *transcription*.' Borderswerving is Ettinger's term for the way in which the subject moves between subjective strata. See: Ibid, 98.

<sup>84</sup> Both Ettinger and Bloch relate this experience to sublimity, both in (ex)form and (subjectivizing) function. Lyotard also affirms the invocation of sublimity in Ettinger's work, taking the broadly Lacanian position that the sublime 'manifests itself by exceeding and ravishing sensitivity to the point it is lost'. See: Ibid, 112. Lyotard (1995), 6-8, 12-13. Bloch, 193.

<sup>85</sup> "...respect Orpheus" is the title of Adrian Rifkin's essay on Ettinger's artwork, translating roughly to "Orpheus looks back".

<sup>86</sup> Rifkin, 24.

<sup>87</sup> Butler, 96.

<sup>88</sup> This quote is not addressing Ettinger, but is useful in linking her project to the expanded legacy of Barthes' death of the author. Gallop states 'Living with and author is having "fragments" from his text in our dalliness. Barthes specifies that we admire a text because it scatters well [...] it can be broken into fragments which, like the biographeme, have "the distinction and the mobility to be able to travel."'. See: Gallop, 50.

<sup>89</sup> Ettinger takes Deleuze's concept of the eternal return of difference as given, and is essential for her linking the matrix to its partner-concept the Virtual. See: Ettinger, (2006e), 185. Deleuze (1968), 52,161, 272.

<sup>90</sup> Ettinger, Horsefield, 41. Massumi, 12.

<sup>91</sup> Ettinger (2013), 7:45 – 8:36.

<sup>92</sup> Pollock (2006), 8. Ettinger, Horsefield, 37.

<sup>93</sup> Referring to the Badiouan generic procedure which, although neither Ettinger nor (obviously) Bloch invoke it, does reflect the general utopian method that Bloch advocates for. The generic procedure 'establishes a contention between its 'strategic' and 'tactical' dimension such that, for every determinate view of the strategy, ruling what next tactical steps would be in conformity to it, there is an actual tactical step taken whose determination contradicts this general rule - and, just as importantly, this new supplementary tactical investigation must then lead to the transformation of the universal rule, which must become a new strategic vision, to be once more put to the tactical test of also including what still does not belong to it, and so to infinity. [...] it is a generative process: as new versions of the general rule are repeatedly produced through their very application, which look for a case that contradicts the applied rule's determination, thus giving rise to a new general formulation.'. See: Tupinambá, 62-63. Levitas, 188,193.

<sup>94</sup> Ettinger (2000), 91-92. Bloch, 192.

<sup>95</sup> Huhn, 34. Ettinger, Horsefield, 60.

<sup>96</sup> Massumi, 29.

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<sup>97</sup> Within a phallic paradigm, that which cannot be mastered is generally considered to escape into a subjective oblivion, or is annihilated through the negative/negating procedure of castration. This is the strength of the matrixial in art; its solicitation of a matrixial gaze allows for that "Other" to re(a)sonate in the matrix. See: Freud (2005), 89. Ettinger (2006a), 96.

<sup>98</sup> Ettinger (2006b), 168.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> This is the definition of melancholy. Another definition is that 'Melancholy [...] [has] the imaginative capacity to make an unobtainable object appear as if lost. If the libido behaves as if a loss had occurred although nothing has in fact been lost; this is because the libido stages a simulation where what cannot be lost because it has never been possessed appears as lost, and what could never be possessed because it had never perhaps existed may be appropriated insofar as it is lost.' See: Agamben, 20.

<sup>101</sup> Rifkin, 27.

<sup>102</sup> Ettinger (2006b), 166.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 168.

<sup>104</sup> Pollock, 6. Massumi, 32.

<sup>105</sup> Or, in Bloch's words, 'What once was time, is space instead!'. Or, further, in Massumi's words, 'The "memory of oblivion" is not of the dead. It is for the re-living; the still-living (intensely)'. Bloch, 26. Massumi, 31.

<sup>106</sup> Ettinger (2006c), 87. Ettinger (2006b), 167. Ettinger (2013), 5:42 – 6:05.

<sup>107</sup> 'Lacan related to this trace as "extimate": an inaccessible, intimate exteriority that dwells inside the nonconscious self but outside its subjective realm.' See: Ettinger (2006a), 97.

<sup>108</sup> 'it is the same goddess who in craft grants the need, in technology a tremendously successful alleviation, in expression a surplus: a flash of fiery and enigmatic signs, a sudden convergence of every road on an overgrown, insignificant side road that becomes the main road to human progress'. Bloch, 15.

<sup>109</sup> Alison Stone sees our vulnerability as an essential condition of our natality; vulnerable to psychic and corporeal trauma, vulnerable in our dependency amongst the We. Ettinger shares this perspective (although perhaps not in its particulars), tethering her concept of "fragility" to our being-born – the return of this subjective fragility a return to a womb-relation – this co-raissance necessary if we are to open ourselves to the other in the encounter. See: Stone, 3, 5, 86. Ettinger (2013), 24:15 – 24:30.

<sup>110</sup> This is best exemplified through Ettinger's insistence that art is necessarily (proto-)ethical and humane. 'When knowledge is transferred to a human being in a scientific way, and the human being is not yet ready for this knowledge, he might use it for construction and destruction alike. However, when knowledge is transferred to a human being artistically, a careless use (in my view) is not possible, because if the art itself does not raise the consciousness to the problematics it deals with, then this knowledge will not "work"; will not pass-through. [...] the aesthetics offered in art is always already proto-ethical; the art object aspires and lends itself to the humane – it works via affect.' See: Ettinger (2013), 10:40- 12:00.

<sup>111</sup> Bloch, 231.

<sup>112</sup> Levitas, 193.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>114</sup> Ettinger says that 'you are affected, effected, and you are puzzled. If the object doesn't do this job, it is not an artobject'. However, her use of her coined/conjoined "artobject", combined with her insistence that there is no guarantee of an artwork seducing the subject into this relation, would imply that if the artwork fails – it doesn't mean that it isn't art, but that it fails to take up the position of a partial artobject with/in the subject's psychic apparatus. See: Ettinger, Horsefield, 46.

<sup>115</sup> Bloch, 194.



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## FIGURES

**Figure 1:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1988-1995) *Crazy Woman*. Carbon toner, photocopy pigment and ashes, India ink, aquarelle, and colour pencil. 27.1 x 22.6 cm. (Private Collection). Image Edited. Original Image: <https://thewarehouseatdallas.org/artists/bracha-l-ettinger/>

**Figure 2:** Turner, J.M.W. (1840) *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying – Typhoon Coming On*. Oil on Canvas. 91x123cm. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). Original Image: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Slave\\_Ship#/media/File:Slave-ship.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Slave_Ship#/media/File:Slave-ship.jpg)

**Figure 3:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1994-1996) *Eurydice no.9*. Reworked Photocopy with Oil on Paper, Mounted on Canvas. 35.7x29.3 cm. (Private Collection). Image Edited. Original Image: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bracha-ettinger/48374501>

**Figure 4:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1992-1994) *Eurydice no.2*. Reworked Photocopy with Oil on Paper, Mounted on Canvas. 41.4x26.5 cm (Private Collection). Image Edited. Original Image: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bracha-ettinger/48369119/in/album-1022585>

**Figure 5:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1991- ongoing) *Eurydice*. Select Works displayed in *Face a l'Histoire, 1933-1996 (1996/1997)* at the Pompidou Center. 41. (All Works in Private Collection). Image Edited. Image Credits: Ettinger, Bracha L. Original Image: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bracha-ettinger/46867796/in/photostream/>

**Figure 6:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (1991) *Matrix Borderline Case no.3*. Indian Ink, Charcoal, Xerox, Paint on Paper. 128x38.5cm (Private Collection). Image Edited. Image Credits: Ettinger, Bracha L. Original Image: <https://hackelbury.co.uk/exhibitions/117/works/artworks-12411-bracha-l-ettinger-matrix-borderline-case-no.-3-1991/>

**Figure 7:** Ettinger, Bracha L. (2001) *Eurydice No.35*. Reworked Photocopy with Oil on Paper, Mounted on Canvas. 39x27.2cm (Private Collection). Image Edited. Image Credits: Ettinger, Bracha L. Original Image: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bracha-ettinger/47055811/>

**Cover Image:** Ironside, Daniyyel. (2025) *Not-Yet n.1*. Photocopied Drawing with Graphite on Paper (Original Drawing A5).

