INTRODUCTION
This project began in 2009 as a bold investigation into synthesis and collaboration that successfully brought together the projects of Badiou and Negri – alongside Bergson – in a written theorisation of what I called the *loving aggregate*, but which in fact involved nothing less than rethinking the ontology – and temporality – of a radical politics of community today. This project attempted to articulate the common or collaborative identity of community not simply as a nominated socio-political entity but as an affective moment of unity established through a recognition of difference.

However it became clear to me in the writing of this text that the *loving aggregate* and its functions were limited to an abstract philosophical idea, and however audacious its conceptual maneuvers, that without a practical element to test its theorisations, they remained confined to the mind of the reader, on the paper it was written on and thus lacked the lived utility its words aspired to.

Relative to this limitation my current research has taken the form of a series of relationships developed around the desire to test those concepts through the capacities of different forms of collaborative production through arts practice [1] and to discomfort established ideas of the politically or socially engaged within theory and arts practice. By foregrounding the importance of personal exchanges, economies of desire and the commons produced between the individuals involved and the work we developed for exhibition through an on-going negotiation of aesthetics, ethics, and value in dialogue with the thought of Francois Laruelle, Felix Guattari and Antonio Negri.

1. Why arts practice?
1. Because art, as I will discuss later on, is capable of assuming multiple avenues of approach and experimentation across many disciplines while maintaining its own sense of autonomy, principles and purpose and has in its most positive capacity the potential to create new kinds of knowledge and re-envision existing knowledge.
2. Because as a fine art practitioner art and its composites are tools I wish to examine critically.
Over the course of the last year I have been working in remote collaboration with Stars Combine, a group of performing artists and their director Emad Radder, based in Bo Town, Sierra Leone, to produce film and performance works that present an ad-hoc collective physical investigation into our shared interest in the performance of humor and joy as a political position with an aggregative force.

Paying special attention to how platforms for the presentation of such work are negotiated and the effect of the various economies (theoretic, creative, affective, political, monetary), their respective networks and infrastructures are activated to make work possible — Given the absence of a gallery in Bo Town how is it possible to designate space for public display or performance of work, and what meaning can that work take on relative to its platform for presentation? —

Methods

With this new focus on the lived as testing ground for thought I turned my attention to Non-Philosophy and the introduction of a practice defined by François Laruelle as ‘generalised’ rather than ‘restricted’ non-philosophy I have developed a form of research ‘that utilises philosophy as its material or phenomena’ [2]. Taking those theories of community: being-in-common-through-difference developed in my previous research and testing them in the formation of real relationships with other practitioners from markedly different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds.

Together we have produced new works that seeks out the limits of the theory of a community as affective loving aggregation via the location and presentation of instances where such aggregations could think their inherent differences through themselves and through processes of negotiation and co-operation that make use of materials that are available to us respectively rather than through an externalised ontology.

Therefore field-work not just as a research method, but as a gestural site of creative production in itself, developed and performed ‘on the ground,’ objects not just as artwork but as catalysts or actors, film not just as documentation, but as an aggregation of bodies/subjects and objects which form and practice autonomous and relational logics within that media and the diagram as a methodology that acts not as an axillary supplement to written text but produces thought through itself.

It was in the development of these relationships and practice-based methodologies that use philosophy/thought as material for production that I made the exhibition entitled Vector/Attractor at the Goethe Institute Dublin.

This exhibition presented works developed in creative exchange with Stars Combine and Radison Productions, conducted via correspondence and meeting with their producer Emad Radder, to develop scripts and sketches, which began to explore the idea of a sphere of influence.

A sphere of influence to be considered not simply historically but as an opening into a concept of hyper-mobile social or cultural forces, that colonise-cross-colonise-decolonise-recolonise and produce new forms, not just through structures of violence/domiance like that of the colonist or the Rebel soldier but through attractive forces that create new structures.

1. Non-standard aesthetics and the indeterminacy of the transdisciplinary

I will now outline my lines of enquiry and the nature of my work to date by foregrounding my exploration of the idea of (non-)art. This is a practice that defines itself an art that is aware of its self as both a conceptual and material creative practice that carries its own histories, hierarchies, semiotics and economies. It is a practice that seeks to expand, elucidate or cultivate relationships with other materials and concepts in the world, or to produce new ones. The idea of non-art is one that acknowledges the exclusions of what I define as the self-sufficiency of ‘contemporary art’. Contemporary art here is seen as a specific and apparently inescapable movement in arts history [3], and one that carries a resemblance to what Francois Laruelle would call ‘standard philosophy’. That is, an assumed authoritative distance from which to observe and represent aspects of the Real from a position of exteriority to it.

Contemporary art, like ‘standard philosophy,’ maintains a disavowal of the effects of its apparatus, observation and representation on its referents, such as the objects, subjects and situations it seeks to employ in service of its own concepts, at the exclusion of others, which, according to Laruelle cannot be made philosophisable or perhaps cannot be adopted so easily into what the contemporary arts consider familiar.

Relative to this Laruelle’s theory of non-standard aesthetics, as discussed in Photo-Fiction, speaks to the problematic relationship between art and philosophy within what he would call standard aesthetics.

(Standard) Aesthetics was always a carbon copy of art in philosophy and subsequently art was always understood as a deficient modality of philosophy. It is the phenomena of philosophy’s self-modeling with regards to art: where philosophy finds its model in art, but a model, which is philosophically preformed or pre-decided.

One will not be surprised to find reciprocal projections. Their aesthetic rapport can be spoken about within the mode of lack: without art, philosophy lacks sensitivity and without philosophy art lacks thought, but also within a mode of excess, of overlapping, of mixtures and specular reflections [4].

Here Laruelle contests what he sees as pre-decided speculations on the capacities of both art and philosophy, refusing to accept binary relationships of lack, compensation and exchange where one is cast as sensitive rather than thoughtful and the other thoughtful rather than sensitive, linking this toxic relationship to the cultural economies that its logic sustains. Laruelle states:


‘Taken as a whole, aesthetics is a market of theories about art supported by the art market itself’. [5]

In agreement with this, my thesis would contend that the non-standard philosophical position regarding both art and philosophy is that both disciplines are equally capable of thought and sensitivity and it is perhaps the adoption of a style of thinking-sensitivity, of a transdisciplinary approach that produces the kinds of situated and self-conscious practices necessary to undo the hierarchies inherent in such binary structures. This transdisciplinary approach can successfully articulate the existing reciprocity between object/performer/viewer/fiction/history/artwork in a democratic creative process where each discipline or component is treated as a material of singular but equal value.

Through my continued practical engagement with Laruelle’s work on non-aesthetics and photo-fiction I aim to perform this from a position that counts the partiality of its own perspective as part of the situation it envisions and seeks to explore the potentiality in transdisciplinary creative production. My work also seeks to rearticulate what might traditionally have been described as a ‘parallelism’ between practice, discipline and concept through an expanded notion of a state that reflects conceptual and physical matter itself as a matrix [6] coexistent potential that remains indeterminate until the moment of its observation. Relative to this my work is considered just another material component of this moment; an object a, practice, a meeting, a conversation, an agreement between the artists the viewer and the situation, and in so doing exploring the significance of the relationships which underpin the production, presentation and distribution of artworks.

For, if there are indeed things that cannot be philosophisable (or given a standard philosophical treatment), perhaps it is also true that there are things that cannot be made into ‘contemporary art’ or ‘standard contemporary art’. For as Laruelle sees Standard Philosophy, I can see Contemporary Art, that is, I see a self-sufficient system that maintains a sense of radical privilege to subsume any and all aspects of knowledge and culture into the service of its concepts, a system that, even as it claims to get outside itself, to escape its own tropes and shake off its habits, still fails to create anything other than more contemporary [7].

Perhaps (non-)art like (non-)philosophy can only perform itself through a flattened instance where art and its platforms, histories, and notions of privilege are considered just another material or component for creative production and presentation of truths. It may also be where a transdisciplinary practice is one whose components remain in a simultaneous and indeterminate process until the moment of their perception, and in that respect in a state of reciprocity with their instance and the observation of that instance, all of which proliferate thought.

In concurrence with Laruelle this approach to thought is exercised within the limits of phenomenal immanence, of being-given or manifested, it is a real ‘thought’, but (a thought) ‘in-the-last-instance; a thought according to real experience, which reduces objectivity itself rather than possible experience, which I would add remains speculative’ [8].

To reflect on the suffix trans-, meaning across, beyond or through, we see in its essence a movement or the procession of an indeterminate or undefined element. I see this movement to be present in both Laruelle’s (always immanent) relational trans-cendence and, I would contend, in the transitional, relational indeterminacy of the transdisciplinary as a mode of practice.

5. Ibid
6. A matrix is a mathematical mode of organisation and a presentation of the data of a problem, when there are at least two heterogeneous conceptual, and artistic data that are linked in what we will call a matrixial manner. Moreover, philosophy and its objects, such as art, ordinaria direct the matrix but it can also be directed differently toward generic uses or humane ends rather than toward philosophy. There is always a duality of terms or variables in any case and the matrix must be directed by the re-intervention of one of the terms as a new or third function, and it can be toward two opposite directions, either toward philosophy or indeed precisely toward photography. These scenarios, by their inventive and constructive aspects, correspond to veritable theoretical “installations” (Laruelle, 2012, p. 3).
7. Malik, On the Necessity of Art’s Exit from Contemporary Art, 55.
8. It must be noted here that for Laruelle every experience of transcendence which presents itself and describes the experience of transcendence does so under the
To further elucidate the effects of what I will call the processual indeterminacy of the trans-in transdisciplinary, I want to borrow from Laruelle what Laruelle has already borrowed as a model; that is I will present Young’s Double Slit Experiment [9] reflected in Laruelle’s utilisation of the quantum concept of superposition (which I will return to in greater detail), and propose that it can be used to support my revision of how transdisciplinary practice is viewed. This vision is one no longer framed as a coordination of parallels, but rather an indetermination of coexistent potentials whose measurable affects are influenced the partiality of the observer’s position and the methods and platforms of that observation.

Relative to this proposition we must remind ourselves of the practical demand inherent not just in Laruelle’s non-philosophical position but also found at the core of Guattari’s exploration of the transdisciplinary as discussed by Gary Genosko in his 2003 paper entitled ‘Felix Guattari Towards a Transdisciplinary Methodology’:

Guattari’s preferred form of transdisciplinary research was a call to rethink relations between science, society, politics, ethics and aesthetics through the development of a meta-methodology adequate to this new field of relations. Problems of organisation directly entail problems of method beyond the compromise of merely uncritically transporting one method from one domain to another [10].

Here we are reminded that it is only through the development of ‘meta-methodologies’ that the introduction of models from ‘outside’ art can critically be considered of use in the expansion of creative work and that it is of utmost importance to (non-) arts practice that these models are not allowed to become ‘stand ins’ for the hierarchies and exclusions we have sought to remove, not allowed to slip back into what Genosko called ‘theoretical binarisms’ (e.g. between thought and sensitivity between altruism and the obfuscation of power relations.).

Although Guattari was aware that even meta-modelisations can retreat into theoretical binarisms in which fours fall back into twos or threes, or get stuck on an existing modelisation, such methodological innovation is not merely an option – the demand was there in the hyper complex objects of which the object world of interdependent hyper complexity consists [11].

2. An object world of intra-relational hyper-complexity: Superposition and Exhibition

Having begun to articulate the principles of a non-standard transdisciplinary arts practice it is now time to lay out the steps I have taken this year to begin to research what it might look like to bring those principles into practice in the form of a collaborative project and an exhibition.

Using Vector/Attractor, my most recent solo exhibition curated by Georgina Jackson, with works made in collaboration with Stars Combine (exhibited at the Goethe Institut Dublin from Jan-March 2013), as an example, I will present elements of the exhibition as art objects but also as actors that can potentially play the part of apparatus, referent or indeed observer within an indeterminate experimental situation, that is not just the artworks or the exhibition but the axioms and processes operative in their creation.

The exhibition was an experiment in so much as it sought to test my theories of aggregation developed only in the realm of thought and then track in some measure a very particular aspect of the Real.

It was indeterminate because the materials, the politics, the geography and the ecologies of the work remained in an uncertain play within

conditions of an immanence, “in-the-last-instance” or a transcendence relative and according to the Real. Laruelle, The Non-Philosophy Project, 33.

9. Young’s double slits experiment consists of three positions: the referent, the observer and the apparatus. It demonstrated the duality of matter and energy which behaves like both waves and particles and the ultimately probabilistic nature of quantum mechanics where matter and energy can exist in multiple and simultaneous positions/states and where the observer and the apparatus are seen to influence that behavior. Glen, Stark. Light, Youngs double slit experiment (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2014) http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/340440/light/258399/Youngs-double-slit-experiment


11. Ibid, 135.
each object, and concerned itself more with presenting the implications of its own fluidity, rather than presenting a clearly identifiable and perhaps reduced or authoritative vision of its ‘subject matter’.

Relative to nominating the operation of Vector/Attractor as an exhibition, its constitutive components could be identified with what Felix Guattari termed ‘ecosophic objects’, [12] but I would argue that this term and its concept have been expanded in this work towards a notion of a trans-object or one moving between a number of intra-related fields of existence while always remaining decidedly (consciously) part of the Real.

To return to my engagement with Young’s double slits experiment, I would like to present each component of the exhibition as an actor that can play the part of either the referent, the apparatus or the observer within this experimental situation. And in doing so foreground forgone both the positive and negative attributes of a practice that inhabits indeterminacy in the superposition of potential units of force and test the use of this borrowed model from quantum mechanics in the elucidation of a complex point.

In further support of this elucidation I will place emphasis on the exchangeability of roles and the performance of observable coincidences of agency and function that allow each component to be read as equally material and contingent (on both the viewer and each other) and thus all subject to a relational existence as aspects of the one Real.

However, I would contend that what differentiates this project from such discourse is that it is devoid of any notions of ‘altruism’ but rather concerns itself with challenging processes of flattening a creative space through the performance of the unevenness at hand, through nurturing inconsistencies in representation and allowing discomfort to occur in a space where hierarchies of cultural representation and the position of both viewer, subject/object and artist are thought to be established.

Vector/Attractor is not about raising impoverished West African performers to the level of high contemporary art or about sobering contemporary art’s excesses by putting it in proximity to meaningful, politically-charged creativity. Rather, taking art (in a generic sense) as an actor that performs as an externalisation of forces allows for a heightened emotional response to cultural phenomena. The images and objects in this exhibition were chosen and made to ‘stand in’ for artworks, responding to their originary environments and acting in a generic capacity to represent what art might do in a world apart from the gallery and what a film, never before purposed as art, might do in a gallery context. Not in order to disavow or break out of the institution of art but rather to underscore it for what it is and the dynamics active with in it.

I now wish to present the individual works within Vector/Attractor and repurpose Young’s double slits experiment in an effort to articulate what I see as the superpositional potentiality of an artwork produced through collaboration across a number of disciplines.

12. In his book Chaosmosis Guattari proposed that the only way to counteract reductionist approaches to subjectivity was the analysis of complexity starting with an ecosophic object with four dimensions:

1. Material, energetic and semiotic Fluxes,
2. Concrete and abstract machinic Phylums,
3. Virtual Universes of value,
4. Finite existential territories


13. Humor, friendship, shared interest, poverty, difference,
4. Young’s Double Slits Experiment repurposed to see an artwork differently (Art Object as referent; an observer’s description: Banner, 3 kinds of Diamond, and three films).

An art object is most often considered the referent of an exhibition, a phenomenon to be observed and described. One that reacts to the observer and the gallery as apparatus in the sense that its behavior or what it does has the potential to occupy more than one state at any instance of observation. The art object is visible in physical space but superposes multiple behaviors meanings or activities dependent on the observer who is in the words of Karen Barad ‘within the phenomenon’. [14]

The banner (fig.1) fills the gallery. It is 630cm in length and 330cm in width, semi-transparent and backlit. It carries an image of the Bo clock tower, a meeting point in Sierra Leone’s second city Bo (the birthplace of Stars Combine) and an example of those poured concrete edifices that have come to represent African progress in the nineteen-sixties. It is a portable location, a back drop a stage set and a flag, a thing that people can get behind, a thing that draws them together, a site for gathering, weather proof, it is cloth standing in for a concrete and tarmac space and the title piece for the show.

Suspended in the air between two columns behind the banner is the first diamond (fig.2). Cut into a trapezoid and made of foam this object is flecked with colors, reconstituted from other bits of foam [15] the diamond is visible through the fabric of the banner, and can also be viewed directly from the side. This diamond acts as an artwork; the object performs its associated meanings in the space.

The second diamond (fig. 3–4) is on screen, part of the Mumu Language, a comedy filmed in Sierra Leone. The stone is hyperbolic and large. It is another fake but one that performs the role

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15. A material component of furnishings and upholstery it is considered the highest quality available due to the fact that, being bound together or reconstituted with glue and odd shaped offcuts, it keeps its shape for longer and coincidentally makes up something that looks like static on a screen, cut marble, a loud speaker, or a pink, blue, white, black and yellow kind of diamond.
of a real stone in a sketch depicting two men, performers Saidu Temperature and Momoh Ranka, and a Lebanese Merchant who remains nameless. This diamond is the subject of a conversation, a trade and a joke. Its surface is shining and it is semi-transparent, probably plastic or possibly glass. It comes wrapped in a tissue carried by a Momoh who speaks a language only Temperature can interpret. This diamond acts as currency, and performs alongside its human counterparts in a film that does not consider itself ‘contemporary art’ but rather a satirical commentary on the casual trade of alluvial diamonds in Sierra Leone.

The second film continues on this theme. It is a music video that recounts the adventures of Momoh as translated by Siadu in different locations in Bo town. There is religious commentary present and the video (or commentary) is animated through gesture, humorous dancing and consume. It performs various iterations of the concept of *Mumu Language*.

Switching out the human for the objectile actor, this still image (fig.5) from the 2013 film *Object/Attractor* shows a replica of a sculpture that was exhibited in Dublin, on location in Bo Town Sierra Leone, where it was used to reshoot scenes that had previously appeared in *Stars Combine* sketches. These short clips form a series of test shots that were edited together to form part of a two channel video installation that was screened in the Exhibition.

As the third film in the exhibition, this work takes the form of another kind of performance, the human actors now replaced with...
a nonhuman actor, the third Diamond (fig.5), which stands on location replacing Stars Combine’s performance with a performance of its own strangeness in the environment and the contingency [16] of the films production.

5. Art Objects as observers
Can an object be an observer? What does the object observe? In one sense, we cannot know this. Its ‘observation’ is not visible to us naturally. But perhaps what is visible to us is the influence of its observation on the behavior of its referents.

In astronomy we can detect the presence of an unseen distant planet, only via its gravitational field. In the case of the artwork what the Object observes, we experience as the work becoming something in excess of its component materials and their combination, and thus it exerts a shift in our vision of the universe and reveals another form of observation.

For if we cannot know it, then we can only speculate on what the film observes or what its referent might be. The result is what we in turn might experience as the exhibition. This hypothesis makes the demand that we see the film as equally thinking and not simply as an extension of the artist’s knowledge but acts in excess of her knowledge and her intentions in its production.

6. Art Objects and Apparatus
For a viewer who takes the concept of an art work as their referent, the art object becomes the apparatus they look through to gain a (partial) measurement of the matter or material that make up the display of the exhibition.

Here the art object becomes a kind of optic scope where aspects of the Real, that might not otherwise be visible, are brought into view. It is through the particularity of this function that the ‘settings’ of this optic: its agency, its stance or the partiality of its view of the Real/phenomena becomes most apparent.

The obviousness of its bias (the artists subjective representation) enables us to envision the multiple and super-posited potential variants that could be made visible but are not, by virtue of the partiality of both the optic as apparatus and the particularities of observer herself [17] all this indicates that these art objects are set from a particular stance and that that stance is part of the complex intra-action of materials.

The gallery as separate to the artwork should also be considered another form of apparatus, with its own economies, infrastructures, superstructures and networks that affect our vision of the art object in situ. To return to Laruelle ‘the art market supports particular theories about what art is and what art can do’ [18].

In conclusion to this initial experiment it is clear that an artwork can be seen to perform many roles, often simultaneously, in the course of an exhibition being observed, observing and being used to observe in any single encounter. Following Barad, while there are bodies which define the experimental conditions and which embody particular concepts to the exclusion of others, those excluded bodies are of equal but different value and part of one common Real [19].

It is with this awareness, this new vision of art and its composite indeterminacies, that that I propose to go forward and attempt a new way of material negotiation in art and in theory.

My PhD research at the London Graduate School will continue to produce new works in the form of a thesis, fieldwork, images (film and diagram) and objects. Through academic and practical rigor this research will seek to develop both a theory and practice of (non-) art, bringing Guattari’s ideas of the production of individual and collective subjectivity ecosophy and the ecosophic object parallel to Laruelle’s ideas relative to a non-standard position set of principles of resistance and victims, non-Marxism and non-aesthetics to develop a transdisciplinary set of practices that will seek to provide insight into the mechanisms active within the formation and sustenance of affective ‘loving’ aggregates and the position of indeterminacy (for better or worse) occupied by the artist and by an art that attempts to practice/test/produce thought on the ground, an object, relative to the world.

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16. This diamond was sent as a ‘flat pack’ replica of the one in the gallery space and was taken to the locations by the Director Emad Radder and placed and filmed here as part of a collaborative experiment. The transfer of files for this film to me was dependent on an unreliable Internet connection and trusting Emad to come through in time for the final edit.

17. The particularity of the film’s content, the particularity of the sculpture’s shape, its materials and its position in the gallery, the particularity of the image on the banner, the place it presents and its connection to the other works

18. François Laruelle, Photo-Fiction, 4.