

Choreographing the Weather— Weathering Choreography



Gerko Egert

Dance is often seen as the art of moving human bodies. Even though nonhuman elements always played an important role in the staging of dance (costumes, light, stage décor) they only worked to foreground the central position of the human body. In recent years, more and more choreographers have begun to focus on nonhuman actors onstage.¹ In her performance *The Artificial Nature Project* (2012), Mette Ingvarsen poses the following questions: “What does it mean to make a choreography for materials where human movement is no longer the center of attention? How can one address the force of things, materials, objects, and matters as something that acts upon humans? What is the relationship between the animate and the inanimate world?” (Ingvarsen 2012). In Ingvarsen’s performance, one barely sees the human dancers onstage through the movement of thousands of pieces of silver confetti. This choreography is not a human choreography, nor is it a choreography of objects; it is a choreography of multiple movements. It is an ecology, or even more specifically, a meteorology of dance. How might one describe these movements without merely focusing on the actions or capacities of the human bodies onstage? How do these movements change the quality and materiality of the nonhuman actors?



Figure 2. *The stage is full of fireflies.* The Artificial Nature Project by Mette Ingvarsen. Rehearsal, Kunstencentrum BUDA, Kortrijk, Belgium, 2012. (Photo by Kerstin Schroth)

Alongside these questions, the performance proposes a broader engagement with ongoing discussions about the shift in the human-nonhuman, nature-culture relations in the face of weather and climate catastrophes. Weather is no longer a force from the outside that enters the human world, but instead becomes part of meteorological choreography that queers the

1. See for example choreographies like Eszter Salamon’s *Tales of the Bodyless* (2011), Eva Meyer-Keller’s *Pulling Strings* (2012), Naoko Tanaka’s *Die Scheinwerferin* (2011) and *Absolute Helligkeit* (2012), and Mette Ingvarsen’s *Evaporated Landscape* (2009) and *The Artificial Nature Project* (2012).

Figure 1. (facing page) *The rain fills up the “pond” in the motel’s parking lot.* Still from George Kuchar’s 1986 video *Weather Diaries I*. (Image © George Kuchar, courtesy of Video Data Bank, www.vdb.org)

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human/nonhuman distinction. Such weather scenarios consist of historic, political, economic, ecological, geological, and meteorological forces in which human actions are still present but radically decentered. These choreographies, then, are “more than human” (Manning 2013:81).

The Artificial Nature Project

The Artificial Nature Project begins with a totally dark stage. Sporadically, little flashes glimmer through the darkness. Gradually, as they increase in number, a whole shower of sparks falls to the ground. Slowly, these little lights increase in size. Are they really sparks? Or perhaps fire-flies? Eventually, they look more like heavy rain, pattering on the stage. But one does not hear



Figure 3. Mounds of silver confetti cover the whole floor. The Artificial Nature Project by Mette Ingvarsen. Rehearsal, Rennes, France, 2012. (Photo by Milka Timosaari; courtesy of Kerstin Schroth)

anything. Myriad silver shimmering drops pour down, forming thick clouds in the air. Mounds of silver confetti pile up on the floor.

The rain stops and the confetti now resembles a soft, white layer of snow covering the whole stage. Some human dancers enter the scene and try to move the confetti around, altering the landscape. Laboriously, they pile up the bits into a mound, which gets bigger and bigger and starts moving across the stage. The confetti turns into a wandering dune that swallows the humans. Who is moving whom? A storm rises, stirred up by the force of several leaf blowers. A fountain shoots up in the air, and the confetti turns into water. But when illuminated with red light, it turns into fire and, again, thousands of little sparks fly through the air.

Dressed in protective masks and coveralls the human dancers transform the stage into a post-apocalyptic scenario. As if threatened by a poisoned world, they cover up and arm them-

selves with shields and air-blowing guns. But as they run around blowing air, they cannot control the confetti; they produce ever-new scenarios: drifting sand, sparking fire, bubbling water, or a whirling storm—catastrophes in silver confetti.

Clouds, fog, rain, and storm turn *The Artificial Nature Project* into a series of weather scenarios, catastrophes that evoke our contemporary situation of dramatic climate change. These dances, in their complex ecology of movement, produce meteorological choreographies, or what anthropologist Tim Ingold might call “weather-worlds” (2011).

Ingold understands the weather as more than a scenario that takes place in the frame of a given and unchangeable landscape. The mussels, the pebbles, and the ripples on the beach are also formations of the weather. For Ingold, there is no material landscape, no object that existed

prior to the weather-world; there is only a meteorology of movement. These movements are not *of* the weather, but instead the weather *is* movement. “We are not required to believe that the wind is a being that blows, or that thunder is a being that claps. Rather, the wind *is* blowing, and the thunder *is* clapping” (Ingold 2011:73). Standing with his students on a stormy day at the beach, Ingold describes the “weather-worlds”: “We had [...] to recognize that the ground on which we stood was not really a supporting platform upon which things rest but a zone of formative and transformative processes set in train through the interplay of wind, water, and stone, within a field of cosmic forces such as those responsible for the tides.” He goes on to describe the movements of the sea and the birds, and then concludes: “we saw a world in movement, in flux and becoming, a world of ocean and sky, a weather-world. We saw a world without objects” (131). This complex interplay of forces, where one cannot differentiate between a given setting (landscape), a number of active players (wind, sun, seagulls, humans), and a set of actions (blowing, shining, flying, watching, moving) produces the choreography of the weather-world.

Similar to the beach, *The Artificial Nature Project* is a weather-world, a “world without objects,” full of movements of raining, of floating, of blowing, and of bubbling. The confetti becomes raindrops by the movement of falling; it transforms into sparks by flying across the stage. The mounds of confetti become as heavy as a sand dune by drifting along the ground, and they become light as leaves by whirling through the air. In all these material configurations, the movement is not performed by the dancers: neither by humans nor by confetti. Rather, the movement is, as José Gil reminds us, the “plane of immanence of dance.”² This plane of

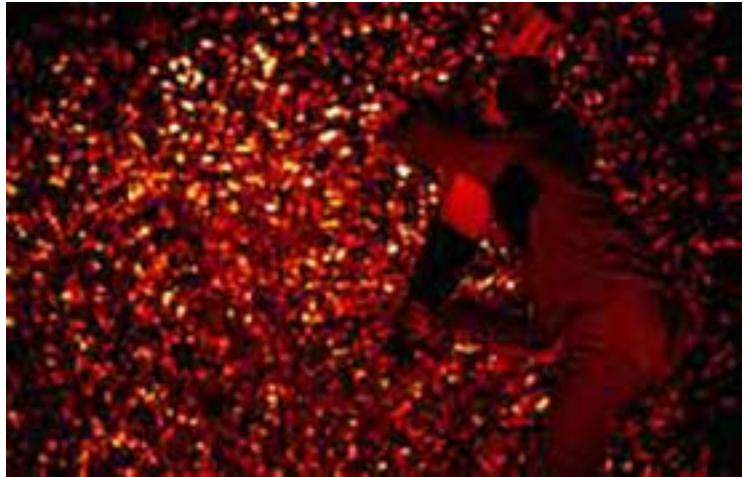


Figure 4. *A fire rises*. The Artificial Nature Project by Mette Ingvarsen. Vooruit, Ghent, Belgium, 2013. (Photo by Peter Lenaerts; courtesy of Kerstin Schroth)



Figure 5. *Whirling storm—catastrophes in silver confetti*. The Artificial Nature Project by Mette Ingvarsen. Vooruit, Ghent, Belgium, 2013. (Photo by Jan Lietaert; courtesy of Kerstin Schroth)

2. Philosopher José Gil offers us a way to think the movement in dance and its relationship to the dancer's body as an autonomous one. The autonomy of movement is not its independency of, but its irreducibility to the human body. He describes movement as something that is not acted out or performed by the dancers, but is—as he terms it in reference to Deleuze and Guattari—a “plane of immanence of dance” (Gil 2002:124).

movement is not immanent to *one* of the particles, nor does it generate *one* piece of confetti. The plane of movement traverses all elements in dance: the myriad little aluminum pieces, the dancers, the stage—all of the human as well as the nonhuman bodies. These bodies are *in movement*; they are bodies in the process of becoming. Their shape, their configurations, and their materialities are constantly in flux. *The Artificial Nature Project* emerges as an assemblage of relational materialities. Unlike the *pax de deux*, which brings together two human dancers in an interpersonal relationship, the elements in Ingvartsen's piece do not connect as already existing entities. These assemblages are the multiple relations of movements with movements. They are artificial *but also* natural choreographies, scenarios that can in no way be reduced to *one* movement, especially not to the movement of one human dancer. In the weather-worlds of the performances, there is no center of action from which the movement starts or ends. These dances are meteorological: weather-worlding choreographies.

How to Choreograph the Weather

The movement of the human dancers onstage in *The Artificial Nature Project* is not exclusive nor is it central to the choreography. The dancers' movements are part of a much broader meteorology—a meteorology of many movements, human as well as nonhuman. The human dancers, however, are not merely replaced by small pieces of silver aluminum onstage. This substitution would be problematic for two reasons: First, it would not question the separation of human and nonhuman, of subject and object. And second, it would remain bound to the logic of a human choreographer who moves and distributes bodies (human or nonhuman) in space. The choreography of *The Artificial Nature Project* is nonhuman not in terms of which objects it mobilizes, but in terms of that mobilization itself. How might one think about nonhuman choreography that is not initiated by a choreographer or performed by a dancer? How might one think of the nonhuman in the choreography as movements that run transversal through all bodies—human and nonhuman, on and beyond the stage? The meteorology of movements in *The Artificial Nature Project* is in no way reducible to the human dancer, nor to the human choreographer.

This choreography is “more than human”: the human bodies onstage do not inhabit a privileged or central position in Ingvartsen's performance; they are part of the multitude of material configurations produced by the interplay of moving forces. This choreography is in the process of the event itself: “Choreography [is] less [...] that which is generated by the human for the human than a practice that foregrounds how the event itself attunes to a relational milieu that exceeds the human or wherein the human is more ecological than individual” (Manning 2013:76). This choreography is the composition of the event in the process of its unfolding. There are no preset bodies, no entities that can be arranged by a person in space and time, only movements diffracting in relation with other movements. *The Artificial Nature Project* is not a choreography of bodies or of materials, but of the weather. This is not the romantic spectacle of a thunderstorm observed from a safe distance, but weather in the times of climate change—weather made by nonhuman as well as human forces: the flow of wind, the beaming lights, and gravity. It happens “beyond the human performer onstage” and “between the elements,” “between material and immaterial forces,” as Ingvartsen explains. This choreography takes place “between the bodies and the actual physical materials but it is also happening in the airflows, in the currents, and fluctuations” (Ingvartsen 2014). By composing all these different forces and movements, the choreography becomes meteorological. Already part of a complex weather-worlding, the interference of movements creates an irreversible inflection and a differentiation of the process. These movements are not representative; they do not strive for the reproduction of a prescribed form, or a set of predefined movements captured in a fixed score. This choreography is diagrammatic (see Manning 2013:80). Immanent to the choreographic event, the diagram alters and produces movements; it lures and suggests alterations, new directions and possibilities. As the interference of multiple forces “[t]he diagram is indeed a chaos, a catastrophe, but it is also a germ of order or rhythm” (Deleuze 2003:102).

Without reducing the notion of choreography to the repression of free and primal movement, its act of differentiation cannot be detached from the forces of power, knowledge, and subjectification. As a concrete setting, choreography unfolds as an interplay of stratifying, territorializing lines, as well as deterritorializing lines of flight. In the act of differentiation, choreography expresses an ensemble of forces: “lines of visibility, utterance, lines of force, lines of subjectification, lines of cracking, breaking and ruptures that all intertwine and mix together and where some augment the others or elicit others through variations and even mutations of the assemblage” (Deleuze 2007:342). In the event, the apparatus (of performance, of film and video, of weather and weather catastrophe) brings forth different modes of subjectification—human as well as nonhuman.³

The operations of the apparatus cannot be reduced to just a single mode: the apparatus of choreography produces difference, and opens up the processes to allow for other modes of subjectification. The choreographic diagram changes the direction, the speed, and the rhythm of the subjectification.⁴ By altering its own meteorological situation, *The Artificial Nature Project* also calls for a different mode of subjectification. Subjectification is not based on the subject as a given entity but a process of becoming, a movement of individuation turning towards itself. Individuation takes place in the turbulent spinning of the whirlwind. It is the movement going in circles, faster and faster, and the relation of centrifugal and centripetal forces that produces the precarious moment of a metastable swirl. The difficult task is not—as the meteorologists in Jan de Bont’s film *Twister* (1996) also know—to analyze the fragile yet devastating unity of the twister from the outside. This would ignore the dynamics of its movements and reduce it to its form. Instead, the central problem is to get into the funnel of the tornado, to move with it, to measure its speed, its pressure, and its radius.⁵ Only by moving with the storm and the whirl of individuation can the choreography of the weather be changed. How can one choreograph the weather to produce new haecceities: new seasons, new winds, new rainfalls, new hotness, new coldness?⁶

The Artificial Nature Project’s choreographic force is an experimental attempt to move into the storm, to move with the storm, to change it, and to change with it. It is the becoming storm of the human dancers as well as of the silver confetti. In the choreographies of the different weather scenarios—storm, rain, and fire—the dancing elements individuate differently: hustling, as on a freezing winter morning; languishing, as on a hot summer afternoon; or nervously buzzing, as in

3. Deleuze describes subjectification not as something reduced to the human but rather as an individuation of an event: “Subjectification isn’t even anything to do with a ‘person’: it’s a specific or collective individuation relating to an event (a time of day, a river, a wind, a life). It’s a mode of intensity, not a personal subject” (1995:98–99).

4. For more on the diagram as the “other side” of the apparatus, see Deleuze’s *Foucault* ([1988] 2006:37–41). In his short text “What is a *Dispositif*,” Deleuze emphasizes that the apparatus, as he understands Foucault, comprises of two different groups of lines: “lines of stratification or sedimentation, lines of actualization or creativity” (2007:347). André Lepecki has conceptualized choreography as “apparatus of capture,” posing the concept in opposition to dance: “dance, once it falls prey to a powerful apparatus of capture called ‘choreography,’ loses many of its possibilities of becoming” (2007:122). This notion of the double-sidedness of choreography as apparatus and diagram—both stratifying and deterritorializing—emphasizes the forces immanent to dance, movement, and choreography.

5. In the film *Twister*, the wish to gain maximum information about the tornado is subject to the phantasmatic goal to dominate the weather and build a better warning system. The techniques used to move with the tornado foreground the relational dynamic of the weather’s modes of individuation.

6. With the notion of haecceity, Deleuze and Guattari describe the modes of individuation that differ from that of a person, thing, or subject: “A season, a winter, a summer, an hour, a date have a perfect individuality lacking nothing, even though this individuality is different from that of a thing or a subject. [...] Climate, wind, season, hour are not of another nature than the things, animals, or people that populate them, follow them, sleep and awaken within them” (1987:261, 263).

the tense moments before a coming storm. These movements and their modes of individuation produce the meteorological event of the performance.

How Do You Make Yourself a Meteorological Body?

In 1986, the filmmaker George Kuchar shot the first video in his *Weather Diaries* series. After that, Kuchar went to El Reno, Oklahoma, nearly every year to spend a couple of weeks filming various weather scenarios.⁷ Though he was often in Oklahoma in May, which is tornado season, Kuchar was only able to film a tornado in the very last video he made before his death

in 2011.⁸ Even though the force of the tornado moves through all the films, they do not focus on it. The time of waiting unfolds rather as a time of various new scenarios. Kuchar takes up the various movements of everyday life to create the video's choreographies. Rather than serving as background for a linear narration that leads to the main event of the tornado, the atmospheric scenarios unfold as choreographies of human and nonhuman forces, desires, and movements.

Kuchar's camera follows the various weather scenarios happening outside and inside the motel, outside and inside his room, and even outside and inside his body. While lying on the bed, strolling through the fields in the back of the motel, or hanging out in the parking lot, Kuchar captures the many



Figure 6. Kuchar's camera follows the various weather scenarios happening outside and inside the motel, outside and inside his room, and even outside and inside his body. Still from George Kuchar's 1986 video *Weather Diaries I*. (Image © George Kuchar, courtesy of Video Data Bank, www.vdb.org)

movements of El Reno's weather-worlds. The meteorological choreographies are not linear; they do not follow the trail of the passing caravan of professionally equipped storm chasers in their pick-up trucks to find the next tornado. One reason Kuchar attends to the micro-weather around the motel is practical: he does not have a driver's license. He does not see the missing license as a lack of movement but the possibility to create a different attention:

And all the books that I read about weather were not about people in cars—in the early days—chasing tornados. They were at home, or on their farms, and the tornado was coming. That was the image that was in my mind. And that was the setting that I wanted to live. To actually experience it, rather than getting in a car, get carsick, open the door, and there's a tornado. You know, it didn't seem right. (in Ziemons 2014:156)

7. The series *Weather Diaries* was filmed between 1986 and 2011. The first 6 of the 23 videos were simply numbered (*Weather Diaries 1*, *Weather Diaries 2*,...); the later ones are titled differently (for example: *Weather Watch* [1991], *Season of Sorrow* [1996], *Cyclone Alley Ceramics* [2000]). For a complete overview of Kuchar's videos, see Video Data Bank (2015).

8. The only direct encounter with a tornado is filmed in Kuchar's last video of the series *Hot Spell* (2011). For a detailed analysis, see Ziemons (2014:109–12).

By staying at the motel and “squatting the storm,”⁹ Kuchar creates an excessive choreography of weather events: the movements of the cornfields and trees, the passing traffic, the broadcast of various media programs, the different lives of all of the inhabitants of El Reno. This weather can in no way be reduced to a romantic notion of nature. The weather becomes a complex interplay of many human as well as non-human movements: the storm interferes with the passing cars, bringing them to a halt or pushing them in the direction of the next forecasted tornado. The rain fills big ponds with water where the dogs and children play. A dog runs inside the room, soaked with water, shakes itself, and brings the rain inside. The TV set, tuned mostly to the weather channel, broadcasts new storms and new warnings on just another dry and sunny day in El Reno. The floating maps of green, red, and yellow cut to the images of other cable TV programs: blockbusters flicker across the screen, jumping from one film to the other. The stream of broadcasting is cut up with images of food and drink, of washing and cleaning, of the toilet and the shower. Some plastic garbage flies through the motel’s parking lot and the rain comes through the air conditioner wetting the carpet of Kuchar’s room. These varied streams produce the meteorological choreography of the *Weather Diaries*.

These movements of weather cut across the division of nature and culture, inside and outside. The meteorological events of the videos cannot be reduced to the sky or the outside world; their choreographies are proliferating: wind and water interfere with the visual and acoustic streams of weather broadcast. Colorful maps show endangered areas awaiting the coming storms or rainfall. Weatherman Gary England comments on pictures of houses that have been destroyed. The TV flickers, and Kuchar readjusts the antenna, but still the pictures of



Figure 7. Inside Kuchar’s motel room. Still from George Kuchar’s 1986 video *Weather Diaries I*. (Image © George Kuchar, courtesy of Video Data Bank, www.vdb.org)



Figure 8. Cutting up the movements of the cornfields and trees, the passing traffic, the broadcast of various media programs, Kuchar creates an excessive choreography of weather events. Still from George Kuchar’s 1986 video *Weather Diaries I*. (Image © George Kuchar, courtesy of Video Data Bank, www.vdb.org)

9. In his book *Aufzeichnungen eines Storm Squatters: George Kuchars “Weather Diaries”* [Notes of a Storm Squatter: George Kuchar’s “Weather Diaries”], Ulrich Ziemons coins the term “storm squatter” in opposition to the highly mobile *storm chasers* who are chasing the tornados by following them around with their cars (Ziemons 2014:16).

devastating storms and England's forecasts are not clear. The rhythmic cutting from warning voices, background noises, and clips from documentaries and action movies builds a tense atmosphere of fear. Again these dramatized weather streams are juxtaposed with the sunny and dry views out the window, producing a strange dissonance. England and his tornado warnings are everywhere in the room, attracting Kuchar's desire: he films the TV set, the radio, the *Safeway* plastic bag showing England's picture, an advertisement for his show, *Those Terrible Twisters*. But

the desire to get more weather also drives Kuchar out of the motel to El Reno's dollar shop, where he buys a plastic "pet tornado," or to the nearby *Pizza Hut* just to find out that Gary England's patented storm maps are sold out. Kuchar films tornados all the time: he films the swirl of the water in the toilet or in the sink; he films himself stirring the milk powder into his coffee. These images of swirling movement, of tornados large and small, create the vortical rhythms of the video's choreography.

This is not a harmonious choreography of continuous flows. Choreography edits the movements, changing suddenly their direction and speed. It cuts the rain into the flow of food supply and splices the storm into the television broad-



Figure 9. Images of swirling movement, of tornados large and small, create the vortical rhythms of the video's choreography. Still from George Kuchar's 1986 video *Weather Diaries I*. (Image © George Kuchar, courtesy of Video Data Bank, www.vdb.org)

cast. The lack of a driver's license cuts up the chasing of tornados. The thunder, the flash, the zapping between TV channels cut up the video. The choking and constipation disrupt the flow of filming. At the same time, these interruptions, these movements choreograph each video and the series of connected yet singular *Weather Diaries*. These moments do not simply disturb the flow's continuity, they are the "schizzes" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983:39) opening up the movements to new possible directions and different connections. These cut-ups do not cut away, nor do they take apart. Instead, they "constitute [...] multiple and even adventitious roots (like a cutting)" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:6). The cuts of movement do not operate in a system of lack. Like the cutting of the video, they also produce new relations: images and movements combine, creating assemblages of difference where new "schizzes" and new chains emerge. By choreographing these dis/continuous movements, the video becomes a weather machine, connecting and creating new diagrams and choreographic apparatuses. The meteorological choreography does not only separate and differentiate the movements, it also connects them in new ways: wind and rain, media broadcast and food, interfere and cut across existing boundaries, between inside and outside, nature and culture, human and nonhuman.

The *Weather Diaries* do not represent meteorological movements; they follow them. Weather is not depicted from the point of a distanced observer; the videos invent, create, and produce new and different weather worlds. By moving and experimenting with many meteorological forces, Kuchar becomes part of the weather's choreography. Filming daily life at the motel week after week, Kuchar not only composes the various meteorological and micro-meteorological

events in his camera — as he shoots¹⁰ — he also composes *with* the weather. Then too, the various movements of the weather relationally flow through his body, turning it into a meteorological scenario as well.

In the daily routines of the motel, food becomes an important part of the choreography. Most of the food comes from one of the various fast food restaurants nearby. When a tornado warning cuts off this supply, Kuchar heats up an instant meal with the small electric hot-plate provided in his room.

Here another weather is emerging: a meteorology of eating, digesting, and excreting. The swirling movement of the stew in the pot or the coffee in the cup. The food-stream floats through Kuchar's body, creates the body, changes the body; it is the body's process of composing with gastric juices and acids. The stream of digestion goes on: images of shitting and puking — swirling movements in the toileting. Kuchar's "gastric distress," as he refers to it (in Ziemons 2014:135), runs like a signature through nearly all of these videos.

The flow of food and gastric fluids, of sweat and excrement, compose new weather-worlds, producing a body that cannot be defined by its form or by its autonomous functions. These meteorological movements are of the body. And yet they are not human movements. In the choreography of human and nonhuman flows, the body consists of changes in speed and pressure, and of differences in temperature, hotness and coldness. The body becomes meteorological. This is not *one* human body; it is a body as a meteorological multiplicity, an interference of multiple movements already exceeding the known form of the body: the flow of the wind and the rain, the circling of the tornados, but also the acoustic stream of the radio, the stream of the TV's weather forecast, the stream of food and digestion, the stream of filming and talking, of wetness and coldness. They all produce the meteorological body of the *Weather Diaries*.

Weathering Desire

The video's choreographies do not create a harmonious composition of movement and forces. The weather is always unstable: clouds that pile up bring on thunder and rain; the rain cools down the air and circulates it; wind blows the clouds away, and the heat of the sun evaporates the water. The rain fills up the pond in the motel's parking lot, satisfying the dog's thirst. But at the same time, the rain wets the dog's fur, and he runs for cover. When Kuchar tries to get him out of his room, they move into the black of the night looking at the stars. None of these movements is without cause, yet none of them can be reduced to a linear process. With every new event and every new inflection, the choreography changes and new scenarios emerge: a meteorology of tension — metastable moments in a process of precarious weathering.



Figure 10. Weatherman Gary England and his tornado warnings are everywhere in the room, attracting Kuchar's desire. Still from George Kuchar's 1986 video *Weather Diaries I*. (Image © George Kuchar, courtesy of Video Data Bank, www.vdb.org)

10. Scott MacDonald writes about Kuchar's filming and editing process: "Indeed, *Weather Diary I* was shot entirely in-camera. Kuchar fabricated his continuity as he shot, and when he left El Reno, the video was complete" (1999:23).

The weather strives toward difference. There is no transformation from one harmonious state to the next. There is always a desire to become different: a thunderstorm is not simply the process between a hot and humid summer evening and a cold rainy night. Thunder and rain are folded into humidity, and humidity expresses its desire in the event of rumbling and pouring. The change of weather is nothing added to or happening between different meteorological states. Weather is not a stable condition, but the rhythm of becoming. Weathering: the meteorological flows of desire, the change of seasons, of temperature, air pressure, wind velocity, and condensation as well as the production of new assemblages of atmospheric intensities. There is no desire *of* the weather; the weather is itself desire. Meteorological desire is not focused on one object; there is no end, no perfect weather equilibrium that can be reached. Desire is the excess of movement, of change and difference—it is pure joy: “The process of desire is called ‘joy,’ not lack or demand” (Deleuze and Parnet 1987:100). Joy cannot be reduced to a human feeling; it is a force of weather itself: “The typhoon is a capacity, it must rejoice in its soul. But it does not rejoice in blowing down houses, but in existing” (Deleuze and Parnet [1988] 2012). Desire is of the world and in the world. It is the weather-worlding force of becoming. Desire is meteorological. To reduce desire only to Kuchar’s wish to encounter a tornado would not only describe desire in terms of lack, but also formulate it as a human concept.

The *Weather Diaries*, in turn, cannot be reduced to Kuchar’s desire for a storm to come. In the process of waiting, many different forces become themselves meteorological events brimming with desire and joy: the rain’s joy at touching the dog’s fur with myriad raindrops, the trash’s desire to swim in the accumulated water, or the desire of sweating bodies lying lethargically on the bed enjoying the flow of humidity. These desires cannot be reduced to the human; they are meteorological. Desire is something more: it is more than human, and it is the moreness of the world. The weather’s desire outruns the human subject. These desires choreograph the various movements and forces of the weather: “Desire constantly couples continuous flows and partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented. Desire causes the current to flow, itself flows in turn, and breaks the flows” (Deleuze and Guattari 1983:5). Desire differentiates and (re)connects the flows and movements of the weather and thereby produces the meteorological choreography of the videos.

The proliferation of forces does not only weather desire; at the same time, it renders the act of desiring the weather impossible. Only by placing the weather at a distance, objectifying it from somewhere outside, could one desire “the weather,” “the storm,” or “the rain.” There is no outside of the weather, only the possibility to move with it. “[W]e always make love with worlds” (Deleuze and Guattari 1983:294).

Every movement of desire is part of the weather. Movements inflect movements and create new scenarios. Kuchar’s practices—the filming of the fields, the playing children, the eating, the shitting, the radio, the TV, the whirls in the toilet and the sink—produce singular flows of desire, and they change the meteorological event. By producing many intersecting relations of human and nonhuman movements and flows, Kuchar moves with El Reno in a meteorological choreography of desire. In the act of waiting for the storm, and in the routines of his daily life, Kuchar becomes the storm. This choreography is not created by Kuchar; it is the co-composition of many different forces. The choreography is both diagram and apparatus. The interplay of stratifying and creative forces alter the weather of the videos and thereby queer the division of the human and the nonhuman. By developing multiple techniques to produce more desire, it becomes impossible for Kuchar to sustain his position as the subject of desire. As part of the meteorology, he moves with the weather—sometimes swiftly, sometimes lethargically. This is not Kuchar’s body moving, but the weather’s movements composing his body. Rotating in circles, the movements fold back on themselves, creating the precarious stability of a twister. Kuchar’s body: a metastable state of fleeing and pulling forces, singular yet related to its meteorological milieu. This is not Kuchar desiring the storm; this is the becoming storm of Kuchar’s body. The pure joy of spinning.

Hurricane Katrina

The *Weather Diaries* create a choreography that cuts through existing categories like the human and the nonhuman, nature and culture. The weather's processes proliferate and create more haecceities: new temperatures, new winds, new seasons. These choreographies do not exclude the human, but render the body itself meteorological. Human history, politics and economics, cities and traffic are all also part of the processes of the weather-worlds. Weathering is the very mode of the world's becoming, its atmospheric choreography. In the dis/continuous process of weathering, meteorological scenarios emerge and perish. New haecceities generate assemblages of relations and differences: a meteorological rhythm emerges, which does not exist in the repetition of the same (the ever recurring summer, for instance) but in the contrasts of temperature, light, and air. Only in moments of change can the hotness, dryness, coldness, wetness, spring, summer, sunshine be experienced. Seasons, extreme dry or rainy periods, ice ages and (probably most prominently discussed) the recent debate on global warming: these express the dis/continuities and shifting dynamics of the weather's processes. In the nonlinearity of differential becoming, and always also forged by forces of preceding scenarios, every meteorological event unfolds in its singularity.

When the meteorological forces of the Gulf of Mexico accelerated and subsequently hit the coast of Louisiana in August 2005, Hurricane Katrina unfolded its own catastrophic force. This force did not cut across the weather's own rhythms; the hurricane was not an event outside an otherwise stable meteorological equilibrium. Rather, Katrina became its own singular process by intensifying the relations of the meteorological diagram from within.

The flooding and devastation of large areas of New Orleans—the breakdown of the levees, the deaths of many people, most of them African Americans, poor and elderly—raised many questions, already discussed on a much more general level in terms of climate change: “Are We Making Hurricanes Worse?”¹¹ Can one detach these catastrophic events from the forces one normally calls human history, politics, and economics? And if not, how do these (human as well as nonhuman) actions relate to each other, creating a meteorological disaster that is more than just “natural”?

The event of Hurricane Katrina makes it impossible to separate human from nonhuman, natural from cultural factors. One cannot directly extract the amount of human impact and thereby ask how to reduce these factors to make the catastrophe “natural” and somehow haphazard. Weather—as I have already argued—is precisely the complex choreography of many movements and forces. “[Y]ou have to understand the land, the river, the sun, the wind (air), and the sea: you have to understand earth, wind, fire, and water: you have to understand geomorphology, meteorology, biology, economics, politics, and history” (Protevi 2009:163). Following John Protevi's account of these movements, the event of Katrina unfolded in its countless relations and its singular force: weather as it had not weathered before.

Starting—where else?—in the middle: the rhythm of the river flows, finding its way through the landmasses to the sea.¹² Its speed changes with every inflection, with every stone. But the stream bed also changes: slowly, water lays down sediment at the river banks, piling up levees, altering the flow of both land and water. The levees were extended by the Europeans who settled both in the area of the Mississippi Delta and also upstream. By straightening out the bed, the river got faster, allowing bigger ships to sail to New Orleans. New levees were built and new rhythms of water emerged. The water evaporated and the sun dried out the banks. The sun also made the sugar cane grow. Europeans brought slaves to Louisiana to work on the sugar

11. This question was asked by the *Time* magazine cover story/special issue “Are We Making Hurricanes Worse?” (*Time Magazine* 2005; see Tuana 2008:210).

12. The following paragraph follows closely the detailed descriptions of Katrina in John Protevi's essay “Hurricane Katrina: The Governmental Body Politics” (2009:163–83).

plantations. The sun heated up the water and the air and caused Atlantic winds. These winds carried the slave ships across the ocean. Air currents converged with the cruel, economic flow of goods, money, and humans. People were brought as slaves by ships from Senegal and central Africa, but also from the Caribbean and the Northern States as part of an internal slave trade. There were the movements of French, Spanish, and American slaveholders, soldiers, and tradesmen. And there was the force of the Haitian revolution of 1791 to 1804, bringing hope on the one hand and fear on the other. These flows cannot be restricted to the air and the water. The land also changes constantly. The coastal line of Louisiana erodes, and with it the possibility of slowing down the storm.

Before and during the moment when the water broke the levees and flooded the city, the choreography of movements changed: people were trying to leave town or seek shelter in the Superdome. Many could not move and hoped for others to rescue them. A choreography of help emerged, immediately stratified, organized, and restrained by the armed forces and private security. The impossibility to move was often followed by FEMA's forced displacement of people to other cities, generating a violent choreography of lines of stratification and deterritorialization. Again and again, people danced at the second line processions bringing the victims to the cemeteries.

It was not only the choreographies of the inhabitants that were radically altered. As Nancy Tuana has shown, the poisons of five toxic waste sites also flowed into the water creating a "toxic soup." But waste, especially polyvinyl chloride (PVC), is not an object that floats alongside humans. PVC molecules create their own choreography. As they are ingested, they mix with the flesh of humans and animals, interacting with the DNA, RNA, and the cells, generating new genetic processes that can lead to cancer (Tuana 2008:198–201).

These (and many more) movements and forces produce the total event of Hurricane Katrina, which cannot be reduced to a merely natural nor cultural choreography. Katrina is neither some natural disaster that strikes humanity from the outside, nor is it a human construction. Rather the categories themselves—nature/culture, human/nonhuman—are called into question by the unfolding of an event the scale of Katrina, showing once again the violence of these concepts at work.

Addressing the racism in the event of Katrina, Protevi's descriptions have shown that one cannot simply reduce racism to the human reaction to an indiscriminate weather catastrophe. And yet the government's reaction, or failure to react, was extremely racist. The events of Katrina have shown that racism is a force that is not only acted out by humans on other human beings. Racism unfolds as a force of composition—a choreographic apparatus—in the meteorology: in the milieu, in the neighborhoods where people live, in the ability and facility to travel, etc. Taking into account that racism is part of the weather-worlds, and that the weather-worlds are part of racism, does not result in racism's relativization. Instead, this perspective points to different regimes of power and how they operate meteorologically. Throughout the events surrounding Katrina, racism unfolded with cruel force in the interplay of human and nonhuman forces: in the nonlinear nexus of an historical fear of the slave's uprising, the rumors of lootings, rapes, and murders (Protevi 2009:173); in President George W. Bush's rhetoric of a war at the "storm-beaten home-front mid-America" (Massumi 2009:154) dependent on help "by land, by air, by sea" (Bush 2005; see also Massumi 2009:154). Together with the combined presence of the US Army and private security companies, Bush's speech created the choreography of a racist apparatus. As Katrina unfolded, racism became a powerful force in its meteorology. Taking racism as a meteorological force, one cannot simply place it on the side of the human; and certainly not on the side of the nonhuman. Racism operates, therefore, at and with the act of differentiation itself by forcefully defining what counts as human and what does not.¹³

13. Critical race and postcolonial studies have repeatedly pointed out how racism works, especially with the power to define what is recognized as human. Scholars from these fields "have continually sought to understand what it

Thinking of Katrina as a meteorology of powers also raises the question of responsibility in a different way. This responsibility is neither attributed to a human subject nor does it stand in *for* somebody or something. By placing violence in the act of differentiation, responsibility does not represent the already defined, but becomes itself choreographic: not a representation of “the human,” “the river,” “the weather,” but a responsibility for the process of the weather’s unfolding. Again, this does not lead to a relativization or even reduction of responsibility of the human, but does lead to an account of processuality and becoming of the human itself. This responsibility includes questioning the act of defining what is human.

Erin Manning calls this choreographic responsibility an “ethics of relations”: “[A]n ethics of relation has concern for the event in its emergence, refuting knower/known hierarchies, preferring instead a horizontalizing milieu of experience where what emerges conditions the stakes of its coming-to-be” (2013:171). It is “movement itself” that “becomes the way the event has concern for its unfolding” (206). A responsibility with concerns for the event, that acts in the event and in the process of its becoming. Moral judgment and representative responsibility act from the outside, placing themselves at a superior distance. In the meteorological event, responsibility acts in the weather. In its concern for the movement, it becomes itself a movement interfering with the event’s choreography. By refusing any presumed subject-object dichotomies, responsibility does not simply play out as the preservation of nature or as one’s preservation from nature. Responsibility becomes the movement of turning towards the force of becoming and to the choreography of the weather. The helpful neighbors and inhabitants, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and the Coast Guard did not act on orders from outside. They acted by attending to the multiple needs of the city’s movements.¹⁴

Only by changing the relations of movements, by altering Katrina’s diagram, could the devastating forces of the event be changed. Katrina has shown that these movements are neither exclusively on the side of the human nor the nonhuman. Politics, meteorology, history, and geology cannot be taken as separate movements; they are more than just human and more than just nature. The meteorological choreographies of the weathers’ becoming are processes of differentiation that cut transversally across categories like nature and culture, human and nonhuman. Each of them creates the “ethico-aesthetic” (Guattari 1995:8, 29) process of a choreography that opens up the possibility to move with the weather, to desire with the weather, and to attend to the precarious movements of the weather.

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means and has meant to be human, given that much of slavery and colonialism operated through—not to mention founded upon—legal, medical, intellectual, economical, and political attempts to demarcate the boundaries among species” (Livingston and Puar 2011:5).

14. Protevi points out the immediate help that was offered from the people of New Orleans and Louisiana. This help was massively disturbed when the governmental aid arrived. “[L]et us not forget the hundreds of volunteer rescuers who came to New Orleans in their trucks and their boats, pulled somehow by that solidarity to rescue strangers. These rescuers, though able to work the first few days on their own, were eventually refused entry to the area by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which gave us the worst of all possible governmental responses: not only did they not do it themselves, they also refused to get out of the way and let the volunteers do the work” (2009:182).

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