

I  
THINK  
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THERE  
FORE  
I  
FOLLOW  
:

THE  
SEQUITUR  
PRINCIPLE

IN  
CONTEMPORARY  
CONCEPT  
UAL  
PRACTICES

BY  
CHRISTOF  
MIGONE

## I. FOLLOWING THE PERIPATETIC AXIOM

*At certain times I have preferred walking that is to say walking with my feet to talking that is to say walking with my mouth—but in the end it is the same thing.*

Serge Daney<sup>1</sup>

The inertia engine of language dictates that one word inevitably follows another, lines thereby accumulate, paragraphs fill pages, and so on. Its built-in structuring principle is a powerful funneling force for thoughts that are in and of themselves less prone to hold form, at least for any graspable length of time. As a veritable machine that exteriorizes thought, language follows thought as a fulfillment of its task of providing form. It is always a step after. An articulated concept is already a translation of itself, a concept that precedes its naming.

The epigraph by Serge Daney comes from an essay on Robert Walser, where it is also used as an epigraph. Here it is again again: "At certain times I have preferred walking that is to say walking with my feet to talking that is to say walking with my mouth—but in the end it is the same thing." This time it is self-consciously repeated in order to highlight the doubling, the plethora of pairs which serve as fuel for the Sequitur Principle that I will be road testing here. Walser's legendary walks (not to mention the rich lineage of intellectual and artistic walkers: Kant, Satie, Alÿs, etc.) are not the subject at hand except as a entry way into an ambulation that conjoins feet producing steps and mind producing thoughts with feet producing thoughts and mind producing steps. In his recent book *Richard Long: A Line Made by Walking*, Dieter Roelstraete quotes de Certeau's statement that walking could preliminarily be defined "as a space of enunciation."<sup>2</sup> I take this to mean that walking opens an active discursive space, one where standing still on the sidelines is not an option. As it manifests, here and now, I will principally will be following Vito Acconci's *Following Piece* and Thérèse Mastroiacovo's *Following Following Piece* as instances of conceptual practices with ontological and epistemic reverberations.

## 2. FOLLOWING AN ABSTRACT PROMISE

Following the doubling tactic set up above, what follows are two versions of the abstract and what each promises. Two abstracts embedded in the concrete of the essay, providing descriptive information not found elsewhere in the text; dual synoptic entries to the rest of the text, which thereby presage its unfolding. The former introduces the Derridean wordplay that prompts a philosophy of following—what I am dubbing, the *sequitur principle*. The latter version was written at the behest of the conference convener and shifts the focus to a set of considerations beyond the *Following Following Piece*.<sup>3</sup>

1) Initial draft: In the *Following Following Piece (Montreal, July 8, 2008 to June 2, 2010)*, Mastroiacovo exhaustively researched every instance in which images of Acconci's *Following Piece (1969)* have appeared in print.<sup>4</sup> She then drew these items, rendering the iconic images, following the layout, keeping text indicators such as page numbers, titles and captions but excising any text extraneous to Acconci's own. The drawing hand follows the performer's footsteps. This artistic take on bibliographic research opens a discussion on the legacy of conceptual art broadly stated. It also focuses discussion on the *Following Piece* and how this seminal piece has propagated in publications on performance art, relational aesthetics, architecture and surveillance. In *Following Following Piece*, the transpositions from furtive performances to documents to historicizing prints and then to framed fac-not so-simile durational drawings for exhibition are all at play as they each inflect their unique alterations on the mimetic process. Derrida's 2006 essay "The Animal That Therefore I Am" opens and subsequently riffs with a word play based on the fact that in French *je suis* can mean either *I am* or *I follow*. The conjunction of the verbs 'to be' and 'to follow' offers a springboard to an ontological reading of Acconci's piece (and by extension of Mastroiacovo's additive documentary intervention) in relation to the now doubled Cartesian cogito ergo sum (*I think, therefore I am / I think, therefore I follow*).

2) Revised abstract: Taking Acconci's *Following Piece (1969)* as a point of departure, and passing by Mastroiacovo's *Following Following Piece (2008-2010)*, I will address the genealogical and ontological implications at play in several recurring conceptual practices. From furtive performances to idiosyncratic bibliographies, from renegade citationality to disjunctive lineages, the current field is densely populated

with the ever-widening scope of hyper-referential tactics that deny origin, abrogate expression and swallow its source materials whole. The result is a panoply of unrecognizable forms masquerading as facsimiles. The stark dichotomies, amplified here for polemical purposes, conceal what would be more accurately described as nuanced and fine-tuned projects following tactics that do not push, but nudge. They are panegyric acts that also prick to deflate aura and artifice. One step forward and backward at the same time.

It is too early to say whether I will fulfill any of the promises, or fully explore any of the leads outlined in either abstract, but the question of promise is the one that I would like to turn to now, for Derrida in the aforementioned essay points to Nietzsche's opening of the second essay in *On The Genealogy of Morals* which posits the following query: "To breed an animal *with the right to make promises*—is not this the paradoxical task that nature has set itself in the case of man? Is it not the real problem regarding man?"<sup>5</sup> Stripped of its moral tinge (not without interest, but deferred here), we can interpret a promise to be akin to a plan, a structural principle, a task, a parameter, an instruction, an imperative, a command, an auto-command. A speculative future is addressed and conjured. This is the modus operandi of conceptual practices writ large. Setting out a course of action, the piece performs itself, only requiring, as per Sol Lewitt, an automaton for execution. The work is structurally determined but performatively undetermined. Acconci decides to abdicate decision—once the follower is picked, his path is out of his control. Acconci in his "Additional Note" (on *Following*) from 1972: "Out of the body. What I wanted was to step out of myself, view myself from above, as an observer of my behavior."<sup>6</sup> John Cage's compositional strategies of determined indeterminacy or purposeful purposelessness find echo here.

Whereas Acconci is often reduced to a psychological profile (even by himself), he also did considerable work removing himself from the equation (the 1972 note quoted above moves in that direction). Also, for instance, included in the Halifax portion of "Traffic: Conceptual Art in Canada 1965-1980" exhibition, an Acconci proposal for NSCAD's Mezzanine Gallery titled *Accessibilities* outlines the following: "The Nova Scotia show will be used as a copying device: Schemes of the work - verbal descriptions, diagrams - will be sent to Nova Scotia. Each piece is intended to be duplicated - I would like someone [else] to perform the piece, using my descriptions and whatever medium I have used. The piece will then exist both in original form and in duplicate."<sup>7</sup> While I would debate the implied hierarchy between original and copy, after all, "the history of art is the history of copy rites,"<sup>8</sup> suffice to say that the doubling staged here is a revealing example of Acconci removing himself from the equation—speculatively, at least in part because of the pedagogical context.

## 3. FOLLOWING A PEDAGOGY

Merleau-Ponty in one of his posthumously published working notes to *The Visible and the Invisible* asks:

How does one artist learn from another, of whom he makes copies—to be himself, learn *himself* in the other, with and against him. To sketch, is not to produce something from nothing, that the drawing, the visible work are but the trace of a total movement of Speech, which goes unto Being as a whole, and that this movement contains *my* expression as well as that of other artists. We dream of systems of equivalencies, and indeed they do function. But their logic, like the logic of a phonematic system, is summed up in one sole gamut, they are all animated with one sole movement, one sole contraction of Being. What is needed is to make explicit this horizontal totality which is not a *synthesis* but Wild perception—The Immediate—Cultural perception—learning.<sup>9</sup>

The anxiety of influence which too easily slips exponentially to an anxiety about the anxiety of influence is not the route we need to take with this, rather, it is the learning through copying, citing, appropriating, and referencing that is articulated as an integral component of any and all production as opposed to a mere optional technique or methodology. Novalis outlines a concise and somewhat more enigmatic version of this: "Theory of Irritation. All stimuli must be only temporary, a means to educate, an incitation to auto-activity."<sup>10</sup> The irritant is the trigger, the starting point, the point of no return. Both quotes hint at imaginings of a pedagogy that does not necessarily require institutional legitimization nor acknowledged sourcing. After all, Benjamin reminds us in *Convolute N* (the section of the *Arcades Project* on the theory of knowledge and progress) that, "this work has to develop to the highest degree the art of citing without quotation marks. Its theory is intimately related to that of montage."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, in both versions of *Following* we have a montage, albeit stuck, stuck on repeat. Mastroiacovo describes what her project entailed as "the process of drawing as a feedback loop, repetition with anomalies."<sup>12</sup> With Acconci, the action recurs, everyday, a different take of the same action. The target changes but the hunter follows the same guidelines:

Private piece for Terry Atkinson (Jan. 3, 1970; "world" series):  
Follow-up to a re-activation of a re-activation of an activity  
situation using streets; travelling, following, changing location,  
"going wherever you go" (Street Works IV; New York City; October  
3-25, 1969: "Each day, a person is chosen, at random, in the street,  
any location. I follow him wherever he goes, no matter how long or  
how far he travels. I stop following only when he enters a private  
place (his home, his office, etc).")

October 3: 9:12 AM; In front of the door, 102 Christopher Street.

A man in a gray suit; he walked west on Christopher  
Street, south side of the street.

At 9:17, he got into a car parked outside of the post  
office, Christopher Street and Greenwich, and drove  
away.

November 3: The particular activity re-activated for Lawrence Al-  
loway (New York City).

December 3: The particular activity and its previous re-activation  
re-activated for David Antin (Solana Beach, Califor-  
nia).

January 3: The particular activity and its two previous reactiva-  
tions re-activated for Terry Atkinson.

- Vito Acconci

remain inconspicuous and only follow the engagement  
in the public realm. With Mastroiacovo, in what Derrida  
would dub a "dictated dictation," there is a kind of "learning  
by heart that no longer names pure interiority [but] refers  
to a certain exteriority of the automaton."<sup>13</sup> The learning  
here is by way of the rote action of an extrospective finger-  
walker, a freehand copyist (or scrivener if an allusion to  
Bartelby is useful). The labor involved incites an ingestion  
of the piece, through a kind of metadrawing. In the biblio-  
graphic sourcing, the work is not in the least without  
quotation marks, it is its antithesis. A giant set of quotation  
marks loom over the project. So large that the anomalies  
pinpointed by Mastroiacovo can insert themselves with  
ease (the most glaring of which are the nine unfinished or  
failed drawings that have not been excised but are included  
in the exhibited series of fifty-three drawings). She has  
become a slow scanner with digits. Each copy is (paradox-  
ically) unique, because the hand is never faithful.

The originality of her project is its lack of originality—  
how it convincingly dissociates essence from the original.<sup>14</sup>  
The sources are mass produced tomes, they are eminently  
reproducible and thereby accessible. They are not signed,  
limited or numbered. The drawings perform a pre-Gutenberg  
mode of reading, or at least of gaining access to reading  
through the act of copying. This anachronistic mode of  
copying reminds us of how teaching and studying used  
to correlate. This mode of learning can be correlated to  
the type of copying that Schwartz depicts as occurring  
"s/t/r/o/k/e/-/b/y/-/s/t/r/o/k/e/" as opposed to all-at-once,  
as with scanners and photocopiers.<sup>15</sup> This former method  
is more laborious, and Schwartz recounts how this activity  
was comparatively disparaged and relegated to the "second  
sex."<sup>16</sup> Learning (copying to memory) that is not instantly  
gratified, but is osmotic is made subordinate. However,  
this depiction can be resisted and subverted, especially  
in the realm of art where production need not equate with  
productivity.

Interestingly, in an interview where Acconci was asked  
his thoughts on Mastroiacovo's *Following Following Piece*,  
he responds with a brief deflected discussion on works by  
students that have restaged his performance in various  
ways. His answer mentions the case of a student asking  
for his permission to follow him. In an earlier answer, he  
mentions that Sophie Calle had also asked him for per-  
mission, and his reply to her was that the piece was "up  
for grabs."<sup>17</sup> The answer is telling because it thrusts agency  
and authorship on the student or any artist engaging with  
the frame outlined by the piece. In other words, the frame  
is empty. The original has vacated the premises and  
presumptions of ownership. The pedagogy here is heuris-  
tic, no prior approval is necessary. The door has been left  
opened.

## 4. FOLLOWING

### A FALLOW

Before we forge ahead any further, it is time we retrace  
our steps. On October 2nd 1969, the day preceding the start  
of the twenty-two days of the *Following Piece* and part of  
the same event, *Street Works IV* (in fact at its opening),  
Acconci performed *Standing*: "For the duration of the  
opening I stand in one spot by the traffic light at 65th Street  
and Madison Avenue." In an additional note he states: "By  
standing at the traffic light, I am 'opening up' the opening:  
bringing it into the street, down the block. Standing one's  
ground."<sup>18</sup> Much can be said about this steadfast refusal,  
the enacting of Bartelby-like inaction, the embodiment of  
a silent sentinel, a non-participating witness. Amongst the  
bustle, the fallow spotter is more likely to be conspicuous  
as he obstructs flow like a traffic cone. It is tempting to  
read *Standing*, where the opening is invested and explicitly  
doubled (*I am opening up the opening*), as a means to prepare  
the street for what we will follow the next day. But it would  
probably be more accurate to see it as a pause, for Acconci  
had done quite a few street actions earlier that year that  
involved following as an active component. Namely, in  
August 1969: *Two activity situations using streets, walking,  
watching, losing* where the first was *An activity situation  
using streets, walking, slow walking, watching, losing* and the  
second was *An activity situation using streets, walking,  
standing still, watching, losing*.<sup>19</sup> And in April 1969, for  
*Street Works II*, he embarked on *A Situation Using Streets,  
Walking, Running*.<sup>20</sup> Lastly, in March 1969: *A Situation Using  
Streets, Walking, Glancing* for the first edition of *Street  
Works*.<sup>21</sup> There is no need to enter into details of these  
precursors at this juncture, but we can generally glean  
from them that in these "situations" he used the movements  
and locations of passersby as cues for timing and placing  
himself in relation to them. Everything here is anonymous  
and quantified; it is about surreptitious tracking and using  
pedestrians as locators, spacers, markers. Pedestrian traffic  
is deployed as an aleatory compositional tool.

A mere list of works that have entered through the  
door opened by the *Following Piece* would not be productive.  
Plus it would be misleading to portray the derivations as  
exclusively stemming from a single source. Adrian Piper's  
*Catalysis* series is but one of a number of notable other  
contemporaneous street works that continue to also wield  
considerable influence. That being said, there are cases  
that are instructive in how the follower/followee pairing

is re-considered. The Sophie Calle and Vera Greenwood projects push the structure towards narrative and detective ends.<sup>22</sup> Their tone is not dissimilar to Janet Cardiff's walks where the spatio-temporal doubling enabled by the timed and precisely placed playback, locates and activates the visitor within the work following a kinetic path on one level, and a dramatic arc at another.<sup>23</sup> The visitors observe themselves as both followers and followees. They track the work, the work tracks them. With works by Diane Borsato (*Touching 1000 People* (2003)), Sylvie Cotton (*avec ensemble* (2005)), and k.g. Guttman (*Escorte* (2009 - ongoing)) the compositional ethos shifts.<sup>24</sup> Rather than to follow, the verb becomes to accompany. The movement is not behind, but beside. The action is touch or converse. Anonymity is not fully erased, but diminished. The encounter becomes central to the account, it no longer consists just of times and places and plain description, it moves from sketch to story. A reader may arguably find a nascent humanness emerge from the performances summarily described in these last lines, whereas before a base animality was prevalent. My contention is that it would be facile to subscribe to a dichotomy laid at such an essential level. It would close a door that has already been left (doubly) open.

## 5. FOLLOWING

### A DOOR

Following an open door. Acconci's opening upon an opening leads me to the uppercase 'O' of Open that Rilke introduces in the Eighth Elegy (though notably, the preceding elegy ends with the phrase: "Incomprehensible being, spread wide open")<sup>25</sup> as a way to conceptualize a distinction between human and animal: "With all its eyes the animal looks out into the Open. Only our eyes are as if reversed and set like traps entirely around it, encircling its free exit."<sup>26</sup> The reason this might prove useful is in a closer examination of the duo featured in the *Following Piece*. On one hand, we have Acconci as predator tracking his prey. On the other, there is Acconci as household pet who follows his temporary master. While both versions are in stark contrast, both draw an unrelenting invisible line between both bodies. The work's concept devises and conjures the line; its parameters are set and taut. Now, in *The Open*, Agamben swiftly disabuses us of Rilke's notion of the Open (or at least he complicates it) through Heidegger's caveat that this line of thinking leads to "a monstrous anthropomorphization of the animal and a corresponding animalization of man."<sup>27</sup> Heidegger categorizes the animal as being in a state of *captivation* which causes an "essential withholding of every apprehending of something as something."<sup>28</sup> In this state of nonknowledge the animal would certainly not be able to conceptualize, only able to follow. The performer in the *Following Piece* is captivated by the concept, unable to let go, on auto-pilot, a mono-solo-tracker; the horizon is reduced to the dot of the one being followed. But, expectedly, it is hardly as simple as this, and Agamben's reading of Heidegger follows him to a place where a claim can tentatively be articulated: "perhaps the openness of the human world can only be achieved by means of an operation enacted upon the not-open of the animal world."<sup>29</sup> This operation is characterized by Heidegger as a "fundamental attunement" (*Stimmung*)<sup>30</sup> and while the musical etymology of the word *Stimmung* (*Stimme* - voice) might not be the primary intended element, accenting it here does conveniently prolong the Cagean thread that underscores the discussion.

## 6. FOLLOWING

### A TUNING

*Following Piece* is a work tuned in *re-*, the prefix of return, rewind, repetition. Mastroiacovo's project is predated by Acconci himself through two instances. One, is relatively well known and documented: in the month following the *Following Piece* he wrote letters to a selection of art world luminaries each recounting a single scene of following, spaced exactly a month apart. For instance, on November 9 in a letter addressed to Walter DeMaria, Acconci recounts the October 9 following and designates the letter as a "Private piece for Walter DeMaria" and as a "particular activity re-activated for Walter DeMaria."<sup>31</sup> The re-activation is re-staged thrice, each time a month apart from the preceding activation. Each time addressed to contacts in a broadening geographical area. City series: November: "The particular activity re-activated for..."; Nation series: "The particular activity and its previous re-activation re-activated for..."; World series: "The particular activity and its two previous reactivations re-activated for..."<sup>32</sup> To conceive of *documentation as reactivation* is akin to devising a *performative archive* where a moment's post-mortem condition is not consigned to a file but is the springboard to an endless afterlife of citational possibilities. In one exemplar, Mirza/Butler's film *The Exception and the Rule* (2009) cites Acconci's piece within a narrative accompanied by stills. The images are ambiguous, but the voiceover anchors and frames what is on view. The site is Mumbai and the targets being followed are strictly policemen. Issues of authority, agency, power that were only latent in the original are foregrounded in this variation—the politics become charged when the anonymity and randomness of the targets are compromised.<sup>33</sup> These *follow-ups* to *Following Piece* were preceded with one even more immediate than Acconci's own textual reactivations: once Acconci realized that the piece and the *Streetworks* event had ended but he did not have any images, he did an impromptu restaging of the work for the sole purpose of producing documentation of a work that technically had already finished.<sup>34</sup> The cheat is constructive for it literally spills the work over itself into an open that has a forward propulsion that would suit Kierkegaard's definition of repetition, which is that for it to be authentic, it must be "recollected forward."<sup>35</sup> Finitude here has looped into the infinite.

## 7. FOLLOWING

### A FAMILIAR PATH

Once an angry man dragged his father along the ground through his own orchard. "Stop!" cried the groaning old man at last, "Stop! I did not drag my own father beyond this tree."<sup>36</sup>

A striking way to open a 925 page saga, Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans* begins with this repetition, a familial line locked in a closed groove. The intensity of the scene is further amplified by the recognition that this is a cyclical passage of which this is just the most recent iteration. One way to consider the duplicitous documentation of *Following* outlined in the preceding section and which is the default way to encounter the piece, is to view it as a splice over a cut or break that is henceforth marked but also smoothed over. In that instance, the violence of the cut can be tempered by the curation of the splice. The reconnection, the repair sets up the conditions of possibility for genealogical continuities even as discontinuities lurk and abound. One scaled-up formulation of such transitional phases is Benjamin's prophesy about prophesy in the 1935 *Exposé*: "Every epoch not only dreams the one to follow but in dreaming precipitates its awakening."<sup>37</sup>

## 8. FOLLOWING A TRACK OF SOUND TO THE FINISH

Finally, Cage observed that "almost everywhere in the world now silence is traffic."<sup>38</sup> The ubiquitous urbanscape has produced a de facto perverted definition of silence, one constituted by a noise floor of humming transformers and turning engines. Let us now turn to Foucault's genealogist, who is described as someone who "listens to history" and, significantly, someone who "needs history to dispel the chimeras of the origin."<sup>39</sup> The paradigm of a unique origin stands in opposition to the incessant flux of noise that irrupts, inflects and intermingles. A bed of sound as opposed to a single trajectory—*traffic* is a collective notion. Which brings us back to Kierkegaard, adding him to the mix: "If one does not have the category of recollection or of repetition, all life dissolves into an empty, meaningless noise."<sup>40</sup>

What the Sequitur Principle has attempted to sketch here, in all its provisionality, is the richness of even that *empty meaninglessness*, that state of profound animality, for it contains the kernels of generative repetition. In the case of the *Following Following Piece* it obviously requires the deft hand of a scanner to activate. But more crucially, it requires a willingness to pass *through* the referential (reverential) work. When the dissemination of the referent (Acconci's *Following Piece*) has produced such an ample bibliography, the digestive process entailed will be considerable. The theoretical and the technical method deployed in the series of fifty-three drawings is a muted hermeneutic blended with a mimetic mechanics. In its gallery presentation *Following Following Piece* resembled a line, also one charged with static. The kind of static that is parasitical and noisy, it is an endlessly recombinant line, a followed line to follow. The line drawn is a noisy affair. Saturated and suffused, the line goes far against the grain of honed perfection, hence the inclusion of the unfinished followings, the thwarted drawings. They hang along with the rest in order to further distort the replay. In time, the line circles back onto itself.<sup>41</sup>

To conclude, a different kind of din: in the seminal tome *The Art of Performance: A Critical Anthology*, David Bourdon (one of the addressee of those private follow-ups to *Following Piece*) incensed by Acconci's work, sounded off the following: "Aesthetically, it seems to me, it does

not add up to very much. But sociologically, I suspect, it is of dire importance."<sup>42</sup> That importance is confirmed in *Following Following Piece*, which, given the historical record outlined here, could more accurately be named *Following Ad Infinitum Piece*. Through this cumulation, the piece is amplified and looped to a level we cannot help but hear. Hearing footsteps, aurally and mimetically, paying attention to the steps that they trigger in others, defines the sequitur principle. Not just a tracking of artistic influences but an ontology—to be is to follow, to be is to copy. This is not an argument for a determinism that entraps and paralyzes, quite the opposite. The following meanders, the copy is never exact. Taussig describes the mimetic faculty (following Benjamin) as "the nature that culture uses to create second nature, the faculty to copy, imitate, make models, explore difference, yield into and become Other."<sup>43</sup> Difference and variation run rampant. And they are at play from the onset, at the level of authorship: "In a certain sense, all my books are co-authored. I am the sole author of none of them, I might not even be their author at all [...] Virtually all of my books are born of the desire—no, the need—to continue the work of authors I love."<sup>44</sup> The words that we use are not ours, but we arrange them to say what we think. Or at least we try. In other words, what follows may follow but cannot be fully determined.

<sup>1</sup> Serge Daney in Hans-Ulrich Obrist, "Towards a Promenadology and about Peripheries", *Robert Walser and the Visual Arts*, New York: The Graduate School and University Center, CUNY, 1996, 63.

<sup>2</sup> Michel de Certeau in Dieter Roelstraete, *Richard Long: A Line Made by Walking*, London: Afterall Books, 2010, 13.

<sup>3</sup> This essay was first presented on November 27, 2010 at the *Traffic: Conceptualism in Canada International Conference*, convened by Barbara Fischer and organized by the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery.

<sup>4</sup> The full title of the exhibition was: *Following Following Piece (Montreal, July 8, 2008 to June 2, 2010) Arranged According To Page Numbers (Mississauga, January 12 to March 6, 2011)*. Thérèse Mastroiacovo's project was presented at the Blackwood Gallery and curated by the author. See pages 26-37 in this publication.

<sup>5</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage, 1989, 57. Reference: Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008, 3.

<sup>6</sup> Vito Acconci, *Diary of a Body 1969-1973*, Milan: Edizioni Charta, 2006, 82.

<sup>7</sup> *Traffic: Conceptual Art in Canada 1965-1980* was first presented from September 11 to November 28, 2010 at the Blackwood Gallery, the Doris McCarthy Gallery, the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, and the University of Toronto Art Center. It was curated jointly by Grant Arnold (Vancouver Art Gallery), Catherine Crowston (Art Gallery of Alberta), Barbara Fischer (Justina M. Barnicke Gallery), Michèle Thériault with Vincent Bonin (Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery, Concordia University, Montreal), and Jayne Wark (Nova Scotia College of Art and Design). Organized and circulated by the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery and the Vancouver Art Gallery, in partnership with the Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery (Concordia University) and Halifax INK. The Acconci piece is also cited in Garry Neill Kennedy, *The Last Art College*, MIT Press, 2012, 72.

<sup>8</sup> Hillel Schwartz, *The Culture of the Copy*, New York: Zone Books, 1996, 248.

<sup>9</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*, Paris: Gallimard, 1964, 261. Or *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968, 211.

<sup>10</sup> Novalis, *Le Brouillon Général*, trans. Olivier Schefer, Paris: Editions Allia, 2000, 34 [No. 72]. Translation by the author.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, Harvard University Press, 1999, 458 [N1, 10].

<sup>12</sup> Correspondence with the author, email

August 30, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Jacques Derrida, "Che cos'è la poesia?" in *Poems... Interviews, 1974-1994*, ed. Elisabeth Weber, trans. Peggy Kamuf and others. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995, 295.

<sup>14</sup> Marcus Boon, *In Praise of Copying*, Harvard University Press, 2010, 23-29 and passim. The dissociation I attribute to the project is mine alone, Boon is referenced here because he leads a thorough discussion of essence and essencelessness in relation to the original and the copy in this section and throughout.

<sup>15</sup> Schwartz, 223-224.

<sup>16</sup> Schwartz, 224.

<sup>17</sup> Acconci in interview with author. Published in this volume, 43.

<sup>18</sup> Acconci, *Diary of a Body 1969-1973*, 74.

<sup>19</sup> Acconci, 50.

<sup>20</sup> Acconci, 26.

<sup>21</sup> Acconci, 20.

<sup>22</sup> "Suite Vénitienne" (amongst other works) in Sophie Calle, *Double Game*, Paris: Violette, 1999, 76-121. Vera Greenwood, *L'Hôtel SofiCalle*, Ottawa: Carleton University Art Gallery, 2001, passim. Greenwood's project consisted in following Sophie Calle while doing a residency in Paris in 1997.

<sup>23</sup> Janet Cardiff in *Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works, with George Bures Miller*. New York: P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, 2002. Some of the walks are credited to Cardiff only, others to both Cardiff and Miller.

<sup>24</sup> Diane Borsato in Stephanie Springgay (ed.), *Diane Borsato*, Art Gallery of York University, 2012, 12-13; Sylvie Cotton, *je préfère tout*, Compton, Québec: les îles fortunées, 2006, unpaginated; k.g. Guttman in Claude Cosky (ed.), *Ça et là, This & There*, Paris: Palais de Tokyo, 2012, unpaginated.

<sup>25</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Duino Elegies*, trans. Louis Hammer and Sharon Ann Jaeger, Old Chatham, NY: Sachem Press, 1991, 69.

<sup>26</sup> Rilke, 71.

<sup>27</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. by Kevin Attel. Stanford University Press, 2004, 58.

<sup>28</sup> Agamben, 53.

<sup>29</sup> Agamben, 62.

<sup>30</sup> Martin Heidegger in Agamben, 62. Also see 97 fn. 11.

<sup>31</sup> Acconci, *Diary of a Body 1969-1973*, 108.

<sup>32</sup> Acconci, 133.

<sup>33</sup> The fact that not only is the citing uncredited but the action itself is apocryphal, and these are not revealed as such in the film, amplifies the complexity at play. The scene concludes with the narrator saying that these chase sequences are "related to the distinction between making political films and making films politically." Indeed, a fuller consideration of this fabrication would recognize this deployment as a sobering self-reflexive awareness on the part of the filmmakers of the trappings of the image, in particular in how it assembles history. Also, how the internal logic of the film mixes epistolary, oneiric, dérive-like moves to get to an open-ended praxis.

<sup>34</sup> Acconci in interview with author. Published in this volume, 42.

<sup>35</sup> Soren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling/Repetition*, Princeton University Press, 1983, 131. Full quote: "Repetition and recollection are the same movement, except in opposite directions, for what is recollected has been, is recollected forward, whereas genuine repetition is recollected forward."

<sup>36</sup> Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans*, New York: Something Else Press, 1966, 3.

<sup>37</sup> Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 13.

<sup>38</sup> John Cage in Miroslav Sebestik, dir., *Écoute* [documentary film], Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1992. Accessed June 21, 2012: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcHnL7aS64Y&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcHnL7aS64Y&feature=player_embedded). Cage goes on to say that the quality that he appreciates of traffic, this noisy silence, is that it is always different. Whereas he claims that listening to a recording of, say Mozart, is always the same.

<sup>39</sup> Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, Cornell University Press, 1977, 144.

<sup>40</sup> Kierkegaard, 149.

<sup>41</sup> This is not mere metaphor, but reflects the actual arrangement of the drawings for the exhibition. The drawings, arranged according to page numbers, started in one corner of the main Blackwood gallery space, continued in the e|gallery (located in a different building) and returned to finish at the corner where they started.

<sup>42</sup> Bourdon in Gregory Battcock and Robert Nickas (eds.), *The Art of Performance: A Critical Anthology*, New York: E.P. Dutton, 1984, 183.

<sup>43</sup> Michael Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*, New York: Routledge, 1993, xiii.

<sup>44</sup> Giorgio Agamben in Leland de la Durantaye, "Friendship and Philosophy: An Interview with Giorgio Agamben," *Cabinet*, Issue 45 (Spring 2012), 54.