

{DYS} FUNCTIONAL

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{dys} functional

OOO¹ talks about things having an inaccessible inwardness. We never experience things-in-themselves directly because of the inalienable distance of being trapped in the conditions of human experience.²

“...there is nothing we can make an object of cognition, nothing that can exist for us unless...it stops being what it is in order to become a shadow or an outline of itself.”³ To hide inside myself rather than risk the disservice of an understanding that is an insensitive shadow or outline feels safer. It also feels like everything is very far away.

To comfort a poet, Rilke writes in his letter, “The nights are still there
and the winds that go through the trees and over the many lands;
among things...”⁴

“A powerful claim of conceptual metaphor theory is that the most central metaphors are grounded in bodily experience.”⁵ This means metaphors, particularly those that reify experiences of perception and emotion, often exist across languages. For instance, “lexical items from

¹ Object Oriented Ontology

² Graham Harman, “Aesthetics is the Root of All Philosophy,” in *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything* (London: Penguin Press, 2018) 68.

³ José Ortega y Gasset, “An Essay in Esthetics by Way of a Preface” from José Moreno Villa’s book of poetry, *El pasajero (The Traveller)* (1914), quoted in Harman, *OOO: A New Theory of Everything*, 70.

⁴ Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet* (London: Penguin Group, [1929] 2013) 28.

⁵ Alice Deigan and Liz Potter “A corpus study of metaphor and metonymy.” *Journal of Pragmatics* 36, 7 (2004) 1231.

the field of light, such as radiant or bright are often used in the field of emotion to describe happiness, realising the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS LIGHT.”⁶ Obversely, the ubiquity of some variation of the conceptual metaphor “ANGER IS HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER suggests we each perceive our own body as a container and when we become angry, we experience physical sensations of heat and internal pressure.”⁷

Alannah Dair is a *artist* based *Djubuguli (Sydney)* working with discarded *Australia* and casting *practice* to form sculptural *intersection*. Negative *painting* inside, around and between *sculpture* are cast in an *installation* to grasp the *issues* where *women’s* resides. By casting these *health* in *illness, order* and *systems, bodies* aims to materially represent and rearrange the affective of discarded material . It might be said that discarded will retain a sense of (, ,). These are the affective aims to transform through to reveal the agentive and potential held by . and cast are intertwined in to form playful, interconnected .These speculate the of these , their affect, our to them and create a for how their may fit together.

To comfort myself, I write a small experimental essay reconceptualising the spaces between everything. They aren’t empty, they’re making room for metaphors.

⁶ Deigan, “corpus study of metaphor,” 1232.

⁷ Deigan, “corpus study of metaphor,” 1232.

Tiana Jefferies *is an interdisciplinary* Meanjin (Brisbane) *based in*
artist objects. *Her current techniques exists at an* installations
between spaces objects and attempt; exploring place regarding
affect spaces and chronic concrete in plaster to challenge the societal
and cultural wax that govern our qualities. objects
objects sense pathos finitude
temporality abjection qualities Jefferies
material rearrangements forces
material objects. Original objects
installations relationships installations
reality objects relationship
map ontologies

I hope words, like wind, can thread through the spaces in everything,
showing where there's room to move but also, touching everything
together.

Metaphors fuse vastly dissimilar entities into an impossible new one by placing one term into a relationship with another. "When they collide with one another their hard carapaces crack and the internal matter, in a molten state, acquires the softness of plasm, ready to receive a new form and structure."⁸ Individually, the words with all their past and possible semantic associations may feel very far away – both from each other and from understanding. Yet, combined, their affectual qualities intimate a meaning for which there is no specific word. The resultant disruption "...provides opportunity for new embodied relationships and

⁸ Ortega, quoted in Harman, *OOO: A New Theory of Everything*, 73.

experiences.”⁹ To return to Harman, it may not be possible to grasp the executant inwardness of things-in-themselves, but metaphor can facilitate contact with the inwardness of a moment – “a touching without touching, so to speak.”¹⁰ Trying to hold two things together that seem separate is difficult, but being fully invested in trying to understand what that new entity would be, that moment of combining with the objects, is a moment of accessing something real. “The successful metaphor... will occur only when the reader or auditor is sincerely deployed in living it.”¹¹ “Even though... [what] we encounter gives us just an outline or shadow of the inwardness of the thing itself, I myself am fully invested in all these experiences, and *inwardly* invested rather than as just a shadow or outline of myself.”¹² Understood like this, every metaphor is continually realised anew. Each constituent part changes the whole as it changes from moment to moment. “To be one is always to become with many,”¹³ feels like a kind of connecting that doesn’t reduce words to outlines. Which makes everything feel much less far away.

Words like wind like a caress.

⁹ Alannah Dair and Tiana Jefferies


¹⁰ Harman, *OOO: A New Theory of Everything*, 82.

¹¹ Harman, *OOO: A New Theory of Everything*, 87.

¹² Harman, *OOO: A New Theory of Everything*, 85.

¹³ Donna J. Haraway, “Part 1: We have never been human,” in *When species meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008) 4.

Outer Space acknowledges the traditional custodians of Meanjin, where this project is carried out, and we pay our respects to Elders - past, present and emerging.

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1/170 Montague Road,
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June gallery hours:
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(during exhibition periods)

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