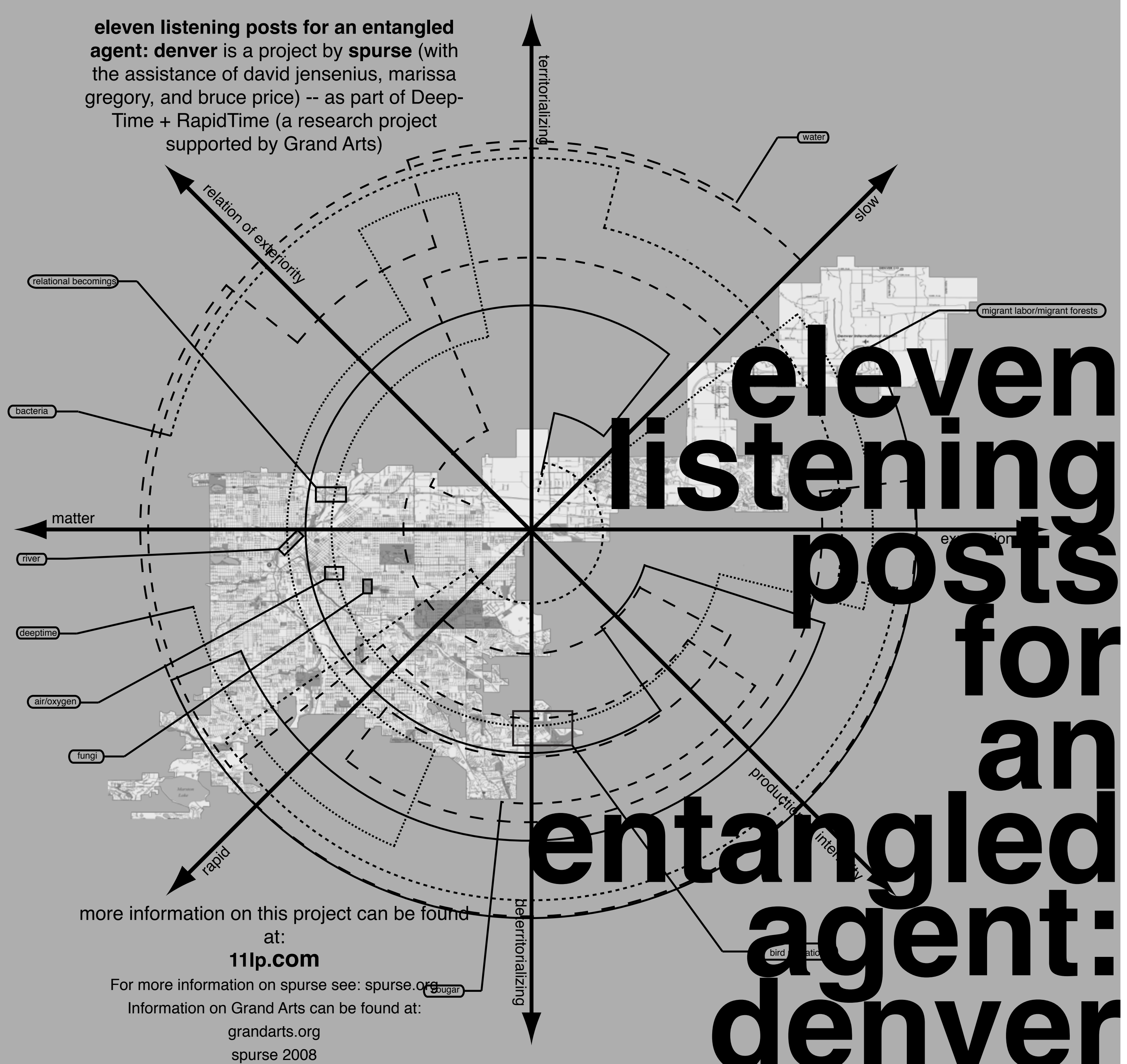
this project is part of **DIALOG:CITY**

eleven listening posts for an entangled agent: denver is a project by **spurse** (with the assistance of david jensenius, marissa gregory, and bruce price) -- as part of Deep-Time + RapidTime (a research project supported by Grand Arts)



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more information on this project can be found at:

11lp.com

For more information on spurse see: spurse.org

Information on Grand Arts can be found at:

grandarts.org

spurse 2008

Eleven Listening Posts for an Entangled Agent: Denver

Listening:

As members of many differing communities we have to continuously ask ourselves some very basic questions: What is Listening? What is Dialog? What is Politics? What is it to be an Individual? Let us start with this last question and see what it might suggest in regards to the others. When we listen closely to ourselves we hear an ecosystem of others -- bacteria, fungi, and insects mainly -- plus complex forces of exercises, systems of hygiene, logics of bodies, systems of communication etc. Who is it that listens? -- And to what? Is there a strong separation that can be made in this listening between the "listener" and the "speaker"? If we are already a parliament of things and a mangle of practices that has trouble with boundaries what is dialog?

This Pamphlet/Map is an attempt to reconsider listening, dialog and the spaces of the political through a series of exercises. We are interested in both paying attention to how we pay attention and to how we may be changed by this paying attention. We offer this Map as a way to begin to rethink and reformulate forms of engagement within the world and how this might become a political act. The map contains a series of eleven exercises in listening, each of which is located in a different part of the city and ask you to do differing things/ On the inside of the map is a large diagram that begins to map out a form of politics that come from the strategies developed below. (Please see: 11lp.com for more information).

Politics as we currently understand it does not serve us, we are interested in being part of a collective modulation of the political. This work is a modest attempt to begin such a modulation.

Note: This map becomes a pamphlet by cutting along the dashed line and refolding the pages. Please take a moment to do this and it will become a more readable and usable handy booklet.

11 Points of Listening: A proposal for Enactions within Entanglements:

1. Listening is a positioning into the world.
As a form of empathy, listening is first an act of intervention that relies on the relationship of a sensible body to a dynamic world. The senses operate over distance and demand an active and strategic positioning in order to fold into what comes. An angiosperm moves towards the light, a veteran leans to better hear a grandson.
2. Listening is a feeling-into the world.
At root, listening relies on a series of collisions at the level of force. Birdsong tickles the hairs in ears, an echo is the bombardment of flatness, wind is the conversation of heat. In every case, listening can be the manner in which material agents communicate through a full spectrum of sensation and action. The forces that move through the world actively change anything they act upon. Listening is not passive. We are physically changed by these forces. If you listen you are changed and you change others.
3. Listening produces an ecosystemic environment of forces.
Listening underlies the spatial, material and social constitution of any ecosystem and it is the continuously shifting set of forces that link, bind and modulate the actors within the environment. To listen is to be entangled -- actively entangled. Bacteria listen to gradients, hipsters to sound-waves, and forests to carbon dioxide. They are within and part of what they hear.
4. Listening produces a geography of affect.
Listening is moving. A sound changes us. Heat moves us. Color seduces us. Listening as a form of adaptation is mapped across an evolutionary history that recurs across multiple time scales. The actors in the world are each a map to be read into history and a diagram of virtualities to be activated into multiple futures.
5. Listening sustains the movement of affect.
A birder follows a bird call. The bird call follows a migration. The migration follows the temperature of seasons. The seasons follow the birder.
6. Listening embodies communication.
Listening begets a relational ethics, one which demands an emergent and immanent manner of being in the world. This relational manner of being establishes the means to communicate in multiple modalities. Communication within an entanglement of forces and agents (both human and non-human) cannot relyon a universal language, rather, there must be an emergent set of adaptable modes of communication. These forms of communication and knowledge production are not reducible to representation. These forms of affective communication sustain and propagate engagements. The world of the stone and the world of those engaged with the stone co-emerge. We are entangled in a co-becoming with the world. A stone speaks and we listen -- even if we do not recognize that we are doing so. The question is not: are we listening, but: in what manner do we choose to listen.
7. Listening produces difference through material diffraction.
Sound enters an ear. Its waves travel down a channel, tickling hairs, vibrating a membrane. Electro-chemical signals activate muscles. The world sees action. Heat is produced and air moves. A wind is drawn up a valley, rustling leaves, bending branches, impacting walls. Neither and none remain unaffected. The forces in waves of energy interact with the material world and generate continuous variation from which we must induce information. Information is not pure- it is impacting.
8. Listening feeds forwards.
Engagement, understood as an active, embodied form of listening, extend through time. An engagement produces an environment which produces a new set of forces, which allow for the formation of subjects and objects as well as spacings and temporality -- which, in turn, demand new terms of engagement. In the listening, time unfolds, space unfolds, subjects unfold, object unfold -- and we become other.
9. Listening is a form of way-finding- a positioning through time.
Listen to where you are. It is a sensitivity to the set of forces that we begin to negotiate our spatial, temporal and modal positions. We are always in a state of indeterminacy. It is not chaos we battle. It is variation we negotiate. To negotiate is not to work with representations but to modulate forces directly -- socio-bio-geo-techno-material -- fold upon fold.
10. Listening provokes emergence.
To listen is to make oneself susceptible. The openness that comes with susceptibility is the gullibility to the world of emergent forces. The human skin listens to the heat and produces moisture. We lose our hair. Anant listens to the heat and produces wings. We gain the sky forever.
11. Listening fertilizes the exaptive.
The question demands: what do we listen to in order to open the world to a new set of forces and engagements. It is the virtual, not as something unknown, but as a world as yet unformed, that we must put our ear to. We listen to the deep thumping of change that is born out of now emerging worlds forming and unformed.

11 Exercises in Listening: For an Entangled Agent: Denver

Note: These exercises are spread across the city. They take time. Spend time -- there is no rush -- perhaps do a few at a time each week. Do them with others -- human others and non-human others -- work together in your own manners. Redo exercises. Change these exercises. Share your thoughts -- with us and with others.

1. Cougar Deer Tracking
(Location to begin: Stuart St. & 50th Ave (face west))
Exercise: Tracking Sprawl
Move laterally with great precision. Stand still for long periods of time until you can observe the movements of others without being detected. Seek high points in proximity to sources of food. Lie supine. Move head slowly. Wait. Leap with incredible force from a standstill. Surprise.
The cougar roams the suburbs. Its prey has found a cafeteria and a haven of tranquility and complacency. Along 50th and 51st , the yard has become a corridor of ecological re-coding. Foragers feast on the availability of manicured landscapes bringing predators in tow. We have invited our new neighbors with aesthetic exuberance. Let us invite them to the table. This has always been the natural.
2. Migrating Birds
Location to begin: S. Geneva St. & S. Dayton St.)
Exercise: Polling the Skies
Begin in a location with a view of the sky. Take a piece of paper and orient in the direction of your view. Record the movement of birds from the point of their entry in view to their disappearance. Rest the pen in place for birds that are stationary. Continue until all birds are either still or gone.
Use bird movement map to conduct a political poll.Overlay the bird movement map on a partial map of the city at half the scale. Follow the movements of the birds as superimposed on the map of the city. Stop and interview people as you encounter them while moving along the bird trajectories. Ask and record the issues that are most pressing to each person. Develop and articulate a poll to conduct using a second bird movement map to determine the location and duration of the polling. Interview all -- both human and non-human. How will you know who has appeared to be taken into account?
Optional: Take bird movement map and issue map to Democratic National Convention for publication.
3. Water (where you are)
(Location to begin: Spear Blvd. & Champa St.)
Exercise: Water the world
Within Cherry Creek are the passages through Denver. Determine how to intervene through analysis. Begin by sampling the aquaculture from Cherry Creek at periodic and episodic intervals. Use samples for testing. Test using methods both invented and conventional. Send samples to testing labs. Treat as scientific project.
Return to creek with results. Post results using semi-permanent signage.
Repeat experiment using water found at your residence. Find a method of welcoming all that you come to find.
4. Migrant Labor-Migrant Forests
(Location to begin: Intersection of 27th St, Welton St., Washington St., 26th Ave, Five Points)
Exercise: Seeding a City
Migrant labor plus migrant forests equal housing. Forests and peoples are on the move. Each is being made and remade by systems of exclusion and inclusion. One abuse to cover another. With the forests providing a newly recognized form of ecosystemic capital, how can we justify the abrogation of social capital? What move across boundaries and how? Forces of distribution are upturned and inverted to the point that they are imperceptible.
Begin in a location of 5 intersecting streets. Articulate the set of forces that are generating a boundary transformation in the fabric of the environment. Examine and interrogate the forces of economic, social, ecological, and biological boundary production in the location. Invite and sustain discussion as to the convergences between and across each matter of concern. Test. Pertubate these systems. How robust is a system in change? Make a diagram that is exhaustive of points in the systems that are possibly catalytic. Articulate these. Re-articulate these.
5. Deep-time:
(Location to begin: Saratoga Pl. & Hoyt St.)
Exercise: Material Time
1cm is the equivalent of 75 years- a human lifetime. During the Cretaceous Period, deposition occurred at the rate of 1 cm per human lifetime. We now stand on, consume, recycle, transform and become this material. Time lives directly in our bodies and in the metabolisms of organisms and energy cycles alike. For time to matter, we must engage the material world. We do not tell time as much as we handle time, feel time, weigh time and build time.
Invent a system of equivalents that act as qualitative measurements of time. Find objects in your immediate environments. Use the dimensionality of the objects to construct a system of time that is germane to your life. For every cm there are 75 years. Plan accordingly.
6. River Source:
(Location to begin: South Platt River & Cheery Creek
Exercise: Sourcing Rivers
Water is the mass transit of the carbon cycle. To follow water is to follow the extroverted innards of the earth's metabolism. To find the source of water is to find the inside of the system. There is no outside. In springs, in wells, in pipes, in bottles, in the sky -- water moves across provisional boundaries into provisional states.
Locate nearest source of water. Inquire whence. Record statements. Go there. Inquire again. Re-cord statements -- articulations and foldings of systems. Go there. Repeat. Begin with your body. Deep in the past we folded the ocean inside of ourselves as we came onto land. Imagine in re-cording you are involved in modulations of this scale.
7. Lithospheric Bacteria:
(Location to begin: Center of City Park)
Exercise: Eating Stone
Mineralization is alive. The rocks underfoot swarm with an ecosystem of micro-metabolic weatherization (rock dwelling bacteria). Their force of consumption outstrips our own. Place yourself in relation to these bacteria who collectively act as a force of lithospheric transformation, operating up to two miles beneath the surface of the earth. You are standing on a column of rock two miles deep, alive with metabolic intensity. Rock under our feet contain most of the biomass of this planet. How do you get in touch with this? How are we in touch with this?
Take note of your location. Move in the shortest distance possible to collect two stones. Place one stone in a location that you can observe over the next two years. Keep the other stone with you for two years. Handle the stone frequently. Become a force of lithospheric transformation. Science has just welcomed these creatures into direct dialog -- join them.
8. Fungi
Location to begin: Center of Cheesman Park)
Exercise: Feeling fungi
The largest organisms are shy, only revealing their hair. Aspen and fungi. Rhizomatics reign the realm of the humungous. The individual is collective. Each present as false distinctions- first between fruiting body and web and second- between individual and collective. Our bodies too present these false distinctions. We are composed of more things foreign than human. 9 out of 10 cells in our bodies are either bacterial or bacterial in origin. What does it mean to be human if our makeup is mostly other? The seat of the soul has been leased to us with uncertain terms.
Use field guide to bacteria and fungi to take a tour in direct vicinity (again begin with you body). Locate and record the presence of bacteria and fungi distributed in area. Enumerate the bacteria and fungi that are found within the human body. Map these areas into the locations previously recorded in the sampling environment. Bacteria swap genetic material directly and they remove and swap host genetic material directly. This technology of GMO production is perhaps the oldest mode of transformation of life -- study this -- does this change our ideas of nature and species wholism/stability? allow yourself to be changed by the methods bacteria change (we do not imagine this will be easy -- they refuse all of our assumptions and meta physics).
9. Air/ Oxygen at altitude:
(Location to begin: Lincoln St. between Colfax Ave and 14th Ave. (West Entrance))
Exercise: The Body Dividing
At a certain altitude, the output of the organisms that form the body can no longer compete with environmental forces. Water boils at a lower temperature but can no longer cook food. Our ability to adapt is lessened, as we can no longer think clearly. Decisions become increasingly important and more difficult to make. The organisms that are dying or separating are also no longer able to communicate to form a whole.
Your feet are exactly one mile above sea level. Imagine the forces you are feeling ten-fold. Run for a mile – returning to this spot. Note your heartbeat, your breathing pattern, your posture. Water escapes the lungs at a higher rate. What you are sensing is not due to lack of oxygen but to lower air-pressure, causing a rise in your blood pH. We have changed with environments for three billion years. Walking is a controlled falling into the future. Change your postures and run again. Take more with you.
10. Art/ Animal Boundaries:
(Location to begin: Denver International Airport, Pena Blvd.)
Exercise: Boundary Production Territorial Refrain
If there is no outside and no clear distinction between things and environments what allows for individuation? The active making and unmaking of provisional porous boundaries. The subject as a territory. Art is a form of unmaking one territory and transforming it into another. We see this in forms of display, in markings, in song... Humans are not alone in having culture nor are they alone in having art. Pattern becoming stable -- becoming territory is what the subject is -- this is individuation -- this is art. Put aside the notion of norms -- all forms of representation for one day -- or even for one hour (this will not be easy) and walking a world into becoming.
11. Routes Intersecting:
(Location to begin: Meeting of I-70 & I-25)
Exercise: Acoustic Signature:
Lines stretch across the surface of the land, carrying forces and materials along trajectories -- two of these we call I-70 and I-25. The distribution of force and material is both dissipative and productive. Heat and-sound escape, while force and material begin to work at new locations. What escapes leaves a signature. The sound of the earth. Micro-seismic events are the sounds left by force and material moving along faults, cleavages, upheavals, subduction zones, and continental seams. The earth is full of traffic.
Place your ear against a freeway column. Listen for its prediction. Develop a sense of an acoustic signature. Repeat experiment with your hand, foot, tongue. Use technology as demanded by material.

Notes:

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