

They Rock

REEVE, Hester <<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6540-9171>>

Available from Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) at:

<https://shura.shu.ac.uk/34686/>

This document is the Accepted Version [AM]

Citation:

REEVE, Hester (2024). They Rock. In: HAY, Marie and LEACH, Martin, (eds.) From Heidegger to Performance. Rowman & Littlefield, 81-95. [Book Section]

Copyright and re-use policy

See <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html>



Figure 5.1. Other-Wise Molecule (resting position). *Source:* The artist.

They Rock

Hester Reeve

Setting the scene of these pages

We are still far from pondering the essence of action decisively enough.

(...) Before he speaks the human being must first let himself be claimed again by being, taking the risk that under this claim he will seldom have much to say. Only thus will the pricelessness of its essence be once more bestowed upon the word, and upon humans a home for dwelling in the truth of being.

Martin Heidegger. 'Letter on "Humanism"' 1989ⁱ

In 2018, as an invited performer at the *From Heidegger to Performance* symposium, I made the decision to assign a large rock, a matter-thing not made or shaped by human hand, as the delegate with myself merely in attendance to it. In part this was to renounce any authority I might have to *speak about* performance in relationship to Heidegger's philosophy – in particular the central force of Being – and in part to trust a creative insight that this act in itself might allow for the building of a Heideggerian performance 'at work' within the situation of a gathering of theorists and artists concerned with his work. I manoeuvred the Rock by placing it atop an industrial milk trolley; the two lower shelves housed props from my annual *24-Hour Origin of the Work of Art Lecture* events.ⁱⁱ In short – 'They Rock' was an embodied, site-specific and experimental live art action and this piece of writing is a theoretical and poetical excavation of what was at stake and the role that reading Heidegger plays in that.

The Rock in question is much larger in size than a stone, but nowhere near that of a bolder. I can just about lift it up with both hands if the situation necessitates but for barely more than 10 seconds at a time (and with knees bent). Another artist participating in the symposium – the only delegate to come up close and touch the Rock – informed me that its composition is millstone grit, the term for a number of coarse grained sandstones hailing from the carboniferous age and native to the British Isles. We are speaking here of more than 3 million years ago, of ancient mud in ancient rivers, of waning waters as a shallow sea recedes and silting deposits slowly solidify in a patch of landmass that today we know as the Peak District. This area, very close to where I live, is located in the middle of England but back then, when the Rock started forming, it was positioned close to the equator. There is a small fortuitously formed indentation on the Rock's top surface plane, the size of a finger print, perfect for cradling the 'other-wise molecule' – a small black spherical magnet.ⁱⁱⁱ

I ferried the Rock and the ‘other-wise molecule’ from my studio in Sheffield to De Montfort University and during the day event I did very little that might initially be considered performance. The Rock was trolleyed to each of the paper presentations, to the break-out sessions; it was present at the meals and comfort breaks. The symposium conveners caught on and made space for the Rock to join the platform for the closing panel. In ensuring the Rock’s presence at all sessions, I myself could also, by default, be engaging with the entire proceedings.

Being in attendance to the Rock over an entire day and evening felt both pedestrian, like a non-event, and yet simultaneously dramatic; like an unfolding Wagnerian epic *Gesamtkunstwerk* of yet unknown dimensions. Some ‘non-thing’ started to accrue on the Rock as the proceedings progressed from the morning plenary towards the evening of performance works in the university theatre. During the latter, the Rock was wheeled from the margins of the day time spaces to the centrality of the evening spot lit one. Here, I unpacked the items in the trolley and straight forwardly shared the reasons why I felt teaching art students Heidegger’s essay ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’ demanded a durational, participatory ‘holy day’ (and night) in an art gallery space.

At the performance feedback session, one delegate ventured, ‘You know, we’ve all been well aware of the Rock throughout the day but something else happened there. I could hardly pay attention to what you were saying or rather it didn’t seem to matter what you were saying because the Rock suddenly just kept getting stranger and stranger, like it really was this presence of something completely inexplicable; its presence seemed to infiltrate the entire space. The more I beheld it, the weirder it all got – so much so that it gave me goosebumps.’ Whilst I am unable and unwilling to claim that anything was accomplished through my live art action, a situatedness in a world of meaning (as opposed to anything imposed by human thought) seemed to slowly take place – via the Rock and the symposium participants. They Rock.

I come to writing here as a way to excavate my decision to carry ‘They Rock’ out. No aspect of it was ‘conceptually complete’ before initiated nor was the live art action motivated all-knowingly at the time (and had I known completely, it would never have arisen as a work to be done). In my final section I experiment with writing as a means of performance documentation. So, I am staying close to the symposium performance, attempting to track something whilst still working to enable the Rock to rock – even here, with you now.

Strangify the Rock!

Turning to Stone –The performative demands of reading Heidegger

It is absolutely correct and proper to say that ‘You can’t do anything with philosophy.’ It is only wrong to suppose that this is the last word on philosophy. For the rejoinder imposes itself: granted that *we* cannot do anything with philosophy, might not philosophy, if we concern ourselves with it, do something with us?

Martin Heidegger. *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 1987.^{iv}

Thinking itself is a way. We respond to the way only by remaining underway.

Martin Heidegger. *What is Called Thinking*, 1968.^v

I have been reading Heidegger’s books for some time now although not in order to become a Heidegger scholar. I read these texts for stimulation, to be undergone by them. The performances that I carry out are not indicative of any particular text’s content. Instead, my live art actions arise out of the capacity activated through the reading experience. This philosopher’s texts demand a performativity on the part of the reader – indeed, the term ‘reader’ seems too passive and cerebral an image for the re-orientating experience made possible through an engagement with his writings. This is not to put receptive thinking to one side and active embodied becoming to the other, but to fold both into a certain type of philosophical-creative centrifugal point that stirs ‘being human’. For this to occur, the writer must somehow intend this and the reader must somehow allow themselves to become a ‘be-thinking-thinged’ protagonist of life. That is no straight forward matter; it is muscular, disorientating and not a little intense. Through reading Heidegger you are no longer your everyday self, some other aspect of you is being exercised and as a repercussion something asks to be continued, set into revolution. If such a performative demand through reading is not encountered, I am not sure you are ‘getting’ Heidegger qua philosophical *doing*. Turn on the spot – why don’t you? (The Rock does).

Heidegger’s works are perhaps fated to become an unusual terrain for the reader’s mind to brush up against because the concepts he is conveying are, according to literary scholar Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht in *The Production of Presence*, ‘on the side of a departure into a different epistemological and ontological dimension.’^{vi} Also, Heidegger was himself keenly aware of the paradox and challenge with using words to relay something that is to be experienced first and foremost. The very act of turning from pondering philosophical matter to writing it out risked inserting the pernicious subject-object dislocation of the Western metaphysical mind-set into the affair thus distorting the thinking-resonance of what is fundamentally an act of being, an attunement to being-here.

Nonetheless, Heidegger claimed that it is only via language that philosophy can come alive for us and that, therefore, it is not writing itself that needs abandoning but the common place assumption of language as communication. The task is to let language work at exposing a ‘danger’ through our thinking, an extending out towards the unreachable ‘mystery of Being’. And so the logic of grammar gets refuted, the essences of words are laid bare to allow a different echo of the non-semantic into the page of his texts. Consequently, the habitual ‘who’ we assume ourselves to be when reading such sentences, if we really open ourselves to what the words are doing, will get dislodged somewhat. A strange experience. *Re-cognizing* is at stake if we are to counter calculative thinking and exercise our being-here in relation to our terrigenous core.^{vii}

So, it is not the ideas alone in Heidegger’s texts that move me into performative action. It is as much the very experience of his unusual wording and phrasing, the rhythms that get registered in non-cognitive, affective ways which stir me in the seat from where I consciously experience being in existence. I regard it as no issue that I read Heidegger in English translation. Rather than weaken my point, I think translations can often – albeit unintentionally – amplify the encoded rhythms of the initiating thinking operating behind and through the author’s original script. Certain translations can bring out an ‘other’ touchstone within a writer’s thinking to the fore. As reading their prefaces attests, translators of philosophy need to be committed thinkers in their own right since their task involves wrestling with ideas and words at a most intimate, responsible level. Such encoded affects are no accident of Heidegger’s writing. This is not a question of his writing style but of the particular radicality of his hope for what thinking as a force can bring about. In *What is Called Thinking* he claims, ‘The burden of thought is swallowed up in the written script, unless the writing is capable of remaining, even in the script itself, a progress of thinking, a way’.^{viii}

The use of the word ‘way’ in relation to philosophical thinking is full of care on Heidegger’s part, a way is simultaneously specific and non-specific. Although Heidegger will elsewhere mention paths, less well trodden ones at that, a way is not a path. A way suggests movement but not direction or destination of any sort (those two terms fall into representation, a subject set before the world who knows it and therefore has fixed what it is in advance). A Heideggerian way is a turning on the spot due to and issuing the energy of an opening to Being and our potential being other-wise. In his later writings, Heidegger will write of the ‘sway’ of Being and its significance. To be on the way is to be called into the sway of Being, a fundamental capacity of our being creatures conscious of being an implicit if finite part of an ineffable whole, a whole which is constantly grounding and moving through everything. This is not to arrive at knowledge of something or become complete in anyway, in the thinking of Being, in the turning movement towards the sway, we are simultaneously held back because the fundamental ground of reality is concealed and not guaranteed through human perception. This tension is how we stay dynamically entwined in caring for our being in existence, for questioning after there being something rather than nothing, i.e. for being on the way. We are directly implicated. As Heidegger puts it: ‘We ourselves are this underway, this transition, this ‘neither one nor the other’.^{ix}

Reading Heidegger brings the reader into some sort of ‘non-physical touch’ with the otherness of the very world we generally assume ourselves to be at home in – a strangification process that does not start from inside ourselves but which has to move through us, and this has

repercussions. Again, it is always more compelling to use Heidegger's own words: '...in philosophical knowing a transformation of the man who understands takes place with the very first step – not in a moral, “existentiell” sense but rather with Da-sein as measure. This means that the relation to be-ing and even before that the relation to the truth of be-ing is transformed by way of shift into Da-sein itself. The thinking of philosophy remains strange because in philosophical knowing everything – humanness in its standing in the truth, truth itself, and thus the relation to be-ing – is always exposed to displacement and thus no immediate representation of anything extant is ever possible.'^x

Heidegger does not tell you where to go or how to do this, reading his work opens up a capacity and then you yourself become what I call an 'uncanny compass.' This is to speak of a reorientation on the spot; not a geographical measurement but an opening up beyond linguistic and cultural layers of reality which points oneself to turn towards the unknowable totality of all that is, what Heidegger also refers to as, 'the pre-logical manifestness of beings'.^{xi} This sort of 'getting' or 'wayfaring' is not easy nor will anything concrete be obtained from it, instead some sort of existential effect is in operation, a connection to (our) Da-sein. Think transition rather than direction, chaotic movement rather than discernible destination. But this kind of thinking-engagement is not just cerebral. In effect, your body turns up in a state. No one takes such things laying down.

Heidegger himself wants us to get up, so to speak. In *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* he states the need for attunement to 'become awake'^{xii} in us and that his hope for his words is to stimulate just that. Whilst we are always attuning on some level, what he is concerned after is an openness to a fundamental level of attunement, 'the beginning of an actual living philosophizing' tantamount to our existential occurrence, our Da-sein, being 'gripped'.^{xiii} This is not to expect a lightning bolt but rather something gentler as we turn our capacities to a less logically prescribed type of contact with what is. Thinking, specifically an other-wise initiation into thinking which is grounded in Da-sein and, importantly, is responsive to the 'call of Be-ing', is the key. Since Heidegger is clear that the happening of such an attunement is not something that can be taught nor will knowledge of it or conscious willing help it get activated, maybe it is no surprise that there are rhythms, affects and the echo of 'the call' in his own particular use of language and that these are not registered cognitively?

Intensities such as these, when reading Heidegger, are not exclusive to an artist-reader like myself. The philosopher Janae Sholtz writes evocatively about the powerful sensation caused through reading certain types of philosophical texts. She draws upon a simile in Plato's *Ion* where Socrates likens a poet's channelling of divine inspiration with the force of magnetic attraction. A loadstone, he explains, not only pulls an iron ring towards it but transmits its mysterious power into the ring, transforming its own capability to attract. Sholtz explains that such a force is, 'an affective connection, a channelling of elusive and vertiginous elements and forces' and that whilst, 'maintaining that philosophy is about sober, rational discourse and knowledge,' she nonetheless claims, 'I experienced this vibratory force when I read Heidegger for the first time...'^{xiv}

The philosopher Michelle Bolous Walker also considers the significance of the reader undergoing a certain charge before the philosophical page and calls for a re-consideration of how multi-levelled that reading might work. In her recent book *Slow Philosophy*, she worries over our

current academic reading habits which suffer from being restrained and overly efficient under institutional pressure for measurable outcomes in terms of research productivity. Our reading practices have fallen prey to calculative thinking. Calling for a reading experience which allows for openness to ‘a positive incomprehension’ and the surrender of mastery to the ‘strangeness of the other’^{xv}, Bolous Walker regards Heidegger as significant in this regard: ‘In fact, we can say – with Martin Heidegger – that reading in this attentive and receptive state comes close to the rapture (*Rausch*) of aesthetic experience. Rapture, understood as joy or ecstatic wonder, is a pure receiving that manifests as a non-appropriative desire to reach towards the other.’^{xvi}

Bolous Walker also draws upon the work of Gumbrecht, in particular his advocacy for ‘reading for *stimmung*’ (attunement) whereby he likens the type of reading experience he is actively promoting to an experimental, artistic practice where an immersion into atmospheres of intensity takes priority. He understands that what is key here is an oscillation between moments of meaning and moments of presence for the reader which in turn allow for a movement between losing and gaining intellectual control. Gumbrecht directly likens such an experience to Heidegger’s notion of *Gelassenheit*, the fundamental attunement of releasement, letting be. Bolous Walker explains, ‘In his version, *Gelassenheit* is itself an oscillation, a movement simultaneously between our openness to the aesthetic experience and the existential state summoned by the aesthetic encounter’.^{xvii} In line with Heidegger’s account of fundamental attunements, ‘reading for *Stimmung*’ places no emphasis on understanding, deciphering or analysing the material on the page. ‘Instead,’ Gumbrecht excitingly proffers, ‘it means discovering sources of energy in artifacts and giving oneself over to them affectively and bodily – yielding to them and gesturing toward them...’^{xviii}

But this is not to leave the thinking of concepts behind. Heidegger also impresses upon us that opening up such a potential within us requires ‘the hammer of conceptual comprehension’ and key to this is that, ‘we are dealing with a conceptual comprehension and with concepts of a *primordial* kind’.^{xix} This exposes the reader to non-theoretical dimensions of thinking Being, almost an impossible reaching within a primordial forcefield from which we are born out of. But it is the reach that counts and, again, there is a performative demand on the reader as a consequence, this time directly alluded to by Heidegger: ‘Such awakening may perhaps be a strange undertaking, difficult and scarcely transparentbut in as much as this awakening is an acting, we must *act* in accordance with it’.^{xx} To go with this, to be on the way, is to have to radically question and leave wide open just what such an acting in accordance can be. The temptation is to transfer this action into a new representation or content and whilst it is impossible for us not to do so (and usually enriching) it is not the play but the re-grounding of the players which is at stake since it effects all else.

In this Heideggerian reading-river, we must each of us be open to fluidity, the performative demand is to be open to the consequences; to be moved and to then issue movement. Fundamentally this is a thinking-based movement but, as a grounding-transforming, it has repercussions in the space of living life (Da-sein is not simply an abstract concept). Activating within the existential landscape of reading, each of us is on the way as well as underway. For myself, every time I read Heidegger live-art actions stir inside like a thousand flickerings. I am not performing Heidegger but ‘doing what needs to be done’ – somehow felt out by my mind-in-a-mood. The artistic doings thereafter arise from a conceptual-emotional medium that I cannot put into words. The forms arising are not personal; they are care-full. The etymological root of

'to focus' is flame – to set alight. So, there is light but not clarity, nothing will stand still long enough; I am all consumed in some self-sacrificial exuberance.

The above is a difficult evocation of the setting alight, the strangification process due to reading Heidegger, of the impetus energising 'They Rock'. Playfully, in 'turning to stone', I am not being metaphorical, I being literal, wanting the punctuation of all 'this' with the actuality of the other, in this case the Rock, something not created by or for the human being. So, may these words vibrate and continue the performance I have started (and am still starting). Let those who can, join in. Now, read-y you, read on, but keep my type-face at your face, stay attentive to the rock-face and let it strangify you.

STRANGIFY THE ROCK!



Figure 5.2. Trolley as Temple. *Source:* John Hartley.

Acting Out: Da-sein Signal and Philosophy All-ready?

Whatever in the future and in truth dares to be called philosophy must as its first and foremost accomplish this: first to find the site for thinking questioning of the renewed inceptual question, i.e., to ground *Da-sein* (cf. Leap).

(...) When *knowing as preserving* the truth of what holds true (preserving the essential sway of the truth in *Da-sein*) distinguishes future man (vis-à-vis the hitherto rational animal) and lifts him into the guardianship of be-ing, then the highest knowing is that which is strong enough to be the origin of a *renunciation*...there is a renunciation that not only holds fast but also even gains by fighting and en-during, that renunciation that emerges as the preparedness for the *refusal*, for holding fast to this estranging that in such a shape sways as *be-ing itself*...

Martin Heidegger. *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)* 1999.^{xxi}

Enter the Rock, followed by I.

The books are now closed like hands frozen in applause, carved talismans urging this action on. I arrive late at the symposium, 'They Rock' slips in. The trolley is slightly unwieldy, the Rock stable but liable to stutter, its base is uneven, full of furrows. *Poetry, Language Thought* is packed on board alongside sleeping bag, wash things, victuals, slow cooker and other necessary items; word turns to world.^{xxii} I nudge the Rock gently inside the theatre space, settling at the edge of the front row of seats where the first paper presentation is already in progress ('Careful Audiences: The Politics of Care in Relational Practice'). The other-wise molecule is securely in my mouth where it waits whilst I ferry the trolley around with all the expected rattling and bumps that would likely knock it off its resting spot. This also enables a silence at the centre of where I take place: To be empty of words so voice can feel out the shape of the situation's song (i.e. to be-long). I have come here *in* attendance. I am standing back whilst standing in; grounding not creating. Delegating, I become aware that the Rock is head-like and perched at head-height. Never solo, I am 'under-study' both to the Rock but also via the corner of every other delegate's eyes.

Enter the Rock, followed by I.

‘They Rock’ is a path of wondering to allow something other-wise in on the act of meaning making, to accept that in a deeper locality of this very circumstance what I, as creature, am at gifted base substance and what the Rock, as rock, is at gifted base substance is simultaneously inter-fused and molten, like the planet’s viscous core. This arousing primordial medium that was not mother-made but Earth-grafted is not conceived but truth-trodden by undulations of mind and matter. I unculture and declutter my carnal antenna so that the Rock, as rock, allows my being as passage-way. This is not something I know or understand but somehow a porosity in my wayward thinking that grasps outwards and triggers muscles is underway. The way is not an illustration of theory. The way is not of a prepositional nature. The way finder is trying to avoid the logic of language in how they operate, the logic that blocks out what the Rock – already existing long before any of us and our histories – has to make a-veil-able via this situation. This mood-way is an open questioning, not a cognitive idea (but certainly the result of a decision). I must keep my mouth shut, keep the other-wise molecule safe and sound. In this part of the universe, at this time and on this day of the calendar year, on this occasion, as this particular human, I am as still as stone statue within all the flux of ‘it’. I have stepped aside to allow a different movement to occur. The way ahead is a rite, an activation of a way to be continually arriving here.

Enter the Rock, followed by I.

Peering from the side or from behind, I am coming across as if doing merely nothing but in actuality I am turning on the spot, displacing the participation from my subjectivity, care-taking the Rock as access point, strange hallowed hole that it is; imagining energy from the possibility of primordial situatedness so that the frequency of the room we are gathered within mutates. This renunciation of regular action or everyday participation is to clear space and make room for some other-wise vibration to emerge. I am neither passive nor active; I am mundane. The Rock is extra-ordinary and comes first. And yet somehow, because of this, I am showing up, meaningfully. This matters. Not for the symposium or other delegates but because it safe-guards a type of space that belongs within this gathering and that otherwise may not occur. Such a space needs me and doesn’t need me, I am prepared to be used up in all of this and to be unimportant. I am prepared to wear the ideas, to wear them out, out into the concrete of everyday human culture (grit under my nails). I am attending the event, I am waiting all of the time. I am barely noticed but the Rock is incongruous (but a rock, not a prop or a figure of speech). I am here like this because whatever needs to be done through me cannot be carried out unless I shift away from the systematics of speaking and edge nearer to the thrall of the rocking-swaying.

Enter the Rock, followed by I.

Pivoting as a way to confirm the everyday, this is not a production of content, only an embodied step over into the rearranging of space and self for the question. For the time being my flesh sense of an ontological navel point inscribes me other-wise and via fluid joy into the proceedings. There is a corresponding neural and limbic urge to express in alignment with this ‘am’ of myself and the ‘am’ of the Rock. This is a performing but not as subject, rather as an out-

cast, as in outing my creature-possibility: Da-sein. This is a reverse morphology *per form* for we are each and all matter-in-the-World, an 'am' of-the-Earth before we are an enoused self-willing I. This 'am' links to substance like electrons act as glue within the Rock, movement held in tight from eons ago still present, and yet also dynamically vibrating in some dimension unfathomable and out of reach of any idea. The Rock's otherness works to soften us in our ontological clay, re-member us to the nauseously rotating crystal frequencies growing ever outwards from the centre of the Big Bang. Iron Diagram. A strange turn of events. The curtain goes up on this great urgency of an uncanny compass. For all the weight of the Rock and the violence of removing it from where geographical process last left it, the necessary thrust on account of it becomes even more inevitable. The direction of this wandering is not simply that of my own, it is other-wise and it is also somehow also via you (like, right now, reading).

Enter the Rock, followed by I.

A-voiding and therefore strangifying, there is no specific point in this performance when you should or need to behold what 'I am doing.' And yet, it will not leave you alone. This is not a private entertainment and it needs to be carried out by more than there is of me. It is because we are so caught up in conditioning and representational thought that to perform Being means this risk to turn up other-wise, reverse the expectation, work as loadstone to truth, re-point the energy field. The decision belongs to us all – the dizzying decision of world-turning. Beneath these billions of stars, the Rock is becoming rock-in-situ, gathering point of a potential leap, omphalos, belly point of the worlded Earth-mystery. Can there be a crack in the landscape here, can a differing way of voicing emerge from the vapours? The point is to become exposed by the Rock – eerily, a pulsating strife, a raw matteringness erupts its frenzy. This is Da-sein signal. Together otherness emits an eerie light which only the electrons deep within our bones can channel; energy contact at the microcosmic, a handle, a rotation-winding; we are all orrery now. As I trundle the Rock atop my trolley to the next session of presentations (slightly difficult to manoeuvre into the elevator) I am pushing for a metaphor of my body crescenting and the Rock as a molten lava ball right in front of my eye-line. The singe mark of the question, trail blazing.

Enter the Rock, followed by I.

This incessant arrival is creating friction, not only as a tiny enigma within the shape of the proceedings but also as smoke signal to a search party just forming. Philosophical thinking as a recalibration, the non-human no longer an inert object but an uber-natural agency mutating our minds. Philosophy without words, art without object-things, the refrain of refusal. This is the energy of caretaking other-wise and of being carved back in return. Via strife, Earth juts in, matter starts to find its shine. The trolley as Temple at Mount Parnassus and swerving us away from the footsteps of the departed god and right back into the other-wise stir of the goddess insider. Rock as twinkle in Athena's eye landing hot and singeing in the middle of the lecture theatre floor. Meteorite of eventness, crater of our coming together as the reeling relics of today's infinity cannonball. Breached, my bones feel the chill as if pressed up against the balustrade of cold, crenelated marble (and yet her head pushes up the very column with sky

pushing down). Everything suddening, I follow her gaze out from the edge of the proscenium arch, through ink dark clearing and brushed through auditorium of impenetrable lines of organic growth and there, somehow, the Rock is already a-biding: a boundary stone. The promise of the projected thrust explodes into orbit. Hiss! Hiss sounds the atmosphere's kiss. The Rock has no decision befalling it and is therefore far closer to the emergency of this action than I am. So something is happening in the way that the Rock is something that is happening through this too.

Enter the Rock, followed by I.

Darkening daily, the they would say 'she is off her trolley' and, in the sway, it is a flickering possibility. Resisting this, I act out. It is irrefutable that rock came first: The first theatre was inside rock, the first markings from human world-imaginings were upon rock face, the first ceremonies of existence were in fire-lit cavernous rock and through imagination awed. Living dramas excited through smouldering songs discovering bon-fired branches as fingers of the invisible. Breathed out pigment, touching to greet, marking the ore other-wise: Hear here. The Rock I attend to is not a symbol of this even though I can fit my hand against it for means of a stencil (perfect fit). I will not do this. I want to stay on the edge of becoming artist, allow for the invisible energy between breath and the condensation of an alternative way of concerting through this together to drip down slowly. Let the Rock rock. Let a conduction beam sing through our hard, heavy, lumpen matter; read between the lines, cup your ear to the ground. For we are each of us a site covered over yet connected by this blinking nothing. The Da-sein signal sounds its alarm. Such emittances are secret codes. Not secret as in elitist but secret as in each one of us is struck as tinder box to the Rock, and, in that, each one of us is the key. Brain-body becomes small black dot within the cosmos, pulsating, in, out, light, dark, hot, cold, on, off, is, not and so forth, bleeping. What we are must always be in tow. 'They Rock' equals a re-minding you.

Enter the Earth, followed by we.

Bibliography

Gumbrecht, Hans Ulrich. *The Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey*. California: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Heidegger, Martin. *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*. Translated by Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999.

Heidegger, Martin. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics :World, Finitude, Solitude*. Translated by William McNeill and Nicholas Walker. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995.

Heidegger, Martin. *An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Translated by Ralph Manheim. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987.

Heidegger, Martin. ‘Letter on “Humanism”’. Translated by Frank A. Capuzzi in *Pathmarks*, Martin Heidegger, edited by William McNeill, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Heidegger, Martin. *What is Called Thinking*. Translated by J. Glenn Gray. New York Grand Rapids, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Francisco, London, Singapore, Sydney, Tokyo, Toronto: Harper & Row, 1968.

Sholtz, Janae. *The Invention of a People: Heidegger and Deleuze on Art and the Political*. Edinburgh University Press, 2015.

Walker, Michelle Boulous. *Slow Philosophy: Reading Against the Institution*. London, Oxford, New York, New Delhi, Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2017.

End Notes

ⁱ Martin Heidegger, ‘Letter on “Humanism”’, in *Pathmarks* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 239, 243; translated by Frank A. Capuzzi.

ⁱⁱ The Rock is a central component of my *24-Hour Origin of the Work of Art Lecture* events which I orchestrate for art students interested in philosophical ideas. These always take place in an art gallery, temporarily closed to the public and furnished as a space for experimental study and temporal community building. The Rock features as my co-lecturer. It is always placed on a plinth in the centre of the space. I only make direct reference to it at the very start of the event with everyone gathered around (somewhat apprehensively, they won’t be let out for another 24 hours). Over this duration, the quality of sun light touches and paints itself changeably upon the Rock’s surface, a fluid beauty which largely goes unnoticed, whilst we human creatures study, talk, read, play, eat and sleep in its vicinity. But every hour and on the hour – at least until we sleep –we relinquish the gallery completely to the Rock by disappearing into cardboard coffins or covering ourselves with sculpture blankets; we try and become its throng.

ⁱⁱⁱ My choice to hyphenate this common word, ‘other-wise’, is used throughout this text to indicate another always present possibility for thinking and understanding.

^{iv} Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1987), 12; translated by Ralph Manheim.

A note on which editions/translations of Heidegger’s works I am citing is in order: In many places I quote from older rather than the most recent (and highly acclaimed) translations into English. As an artist-reader I am responding to a resonance generated by the versions of Heidegger’s works which have constituted my reading experience in my studio.

^v Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking* (New York Grand Rapids, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Francisco, London, Singapore, Sydney, Tokyo, Toronto: Harper & Row 1968), 168-9; translated by J. Glenn Gray.

^{vi} Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *The Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (California: Stanford University Press 2004), 78.

^{vii} This reference to Heidegger’s frequent call in later works for autochthony, indigenous dwelling ‘between heaven and earth’, is not to support his narrow and controversial interpretation of this as ‘native soil’ but to register that we are each ‘born from’ a non-human initiated process. Heidegger puts the emphasis on physical territory, I place it on Da-sein.

^{viii} Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking*, 49.

^{ix} Martin Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 1995), 6.

^x Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, translated by Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 1999), 10-11.

^{xi} Martin Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 1995), 353.

^{xii} *Ibid.*, 60.

^{xiii} *Ibid.*, 59, 7.

^{xiv} Janae Sholtz, *The Invention of a People: Heidegger and Deleuze on Art and the Political* (Edinburgh University Press 2015), 1-2.

^{xv} Michelle Boulous Walker, *Slow Philosophy: Reading Against the Institution*, (London, Oxford, New York, New Delhi, Sydney: Bloomsbury 2017), 182.

^{xvi} *Ibid.*, 182-3.

^{xvii} [*Ibid.*, 187. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (California: Stanford University Press 2004), 116.

^{xviii} *Ibid.*, 70. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Atmosphere, Mood, Stimmung: On a Hidden Potential of Literature*, translated by Erik Butler, (Stanford: Stanford University Press 2012), 1.

^{xix} Martin Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 6

^{xx} Martin Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 68.

^{xxi} Martin Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 15.

^{xxii} The trolley that ferried the Rock is where I store my props used in the *24-Hour Origin of the Work of Art Lecture* events.