

Working Together - with The Moving Image and the Laughing Body.

Proposed Format: Actualisation

Duration: 30 min presentation + 15 min brief conversation

Participants: Annika Larsson, Isabel Gatzke, E.I. The Blob, and Participants of the Symposium

Material Researchers: Mac Book Pro's (int. mic, speakers and camera), Web GL Software App, Zoom App

Material Participants: Mac Books, tablets or Notebooks with integrated camera and Microphone, Zoom App

Material Host: Mac Book (int. mic, speakers and camera), projector and speakers for large display (optional)

Setup and Preparation: Quick technical test run with the hosts before.

Existence is not an individual affair.

/Karen Barad

In line with the theme of the symposium - *Working Together* - we would like to propose an "actualisation" of the artistic research project *Non-knowledge, Laughter and the Moving Image* in the form of a 30 minute choreographed online conversation between us, Annika Larsson and Isabel Gatzke, and the interactive "Moving Image Organism" *E.I. The Blob*, created in the frame of the project. With this approach we would like to extend the questions posed by the Open Call to include cross border collaborations between the human and non-human, in order to ask: What are the challenges for working together across human-non-human boundaries? How could the Laughing Body and the Moving Image, as non-human and non-conscious agencies, challenge our notion of human agency and lead us to other places of power where meaning and matter are intra-twined? What new forms of collaboration emerge when we re-situate ourselves as spontaneously responsive, moving, embodied living beings? Who is making whom, in a reality of continuously intermingling? What new worlds and futures could open up if we accept the possibility of not-knowing? When working together with digital machines and systems, how do we challenge their inherited closeness and predictability? The talk would be followed by a shorter open conversation, to which all participants are invited.

Non-knowledge, Laughter and the Moving Image is an artistic research project that explores new and alternative modes of thinking, acting and being through the Laughing Body and the Moving Image, as well as their potential to change our habitual course and to overturn the dominant order of things. The 4-year project (2018-21) is funded by the Swedish Research Council and done in collaboration with The Royal Institute of Arts in Stockholm and HFBK - Hochschule für Bildende Künste Hamburg.

In our research we are interested in shifting our attention away from The Moving Image and The Body as forms of representation, to them as materials of psychic intensities and fields of individuation. We neither see the Moving Image or the Laughing Body as tools or property that we as subjects can control and own, nor do we look at them as separate entities with closed borders that we are studying from outside. Instead we are interested in a research entangled with them where we could learn from and with them, and from where new temporary borders and beings could emerge. In our search for ways of doing this *E.I. The Blob* came into being. E.I could stand for Earthificial Intelligence, or simply a mispronunciation or confusion of the acronyms A.I. or E.T. <hahaha>

E.I. The Blob is an interactive "image-organism" sensitive to sound and touch, programmed in WEB GL, which is a script for rendering interactive 3D and 2D graphics. It is an open-end project done in collaboration with the programmer Stefan Kernjak, and created to explore new ways of thinking, being and acting with the Moving Image. *E.I. The Blob* has come to play a central role in our research project by bringing in a non-human perspective to our research. As a (non-human) colleague in the project, it has allowed us to rethink our relation to the Moving Image, as well as opened up new ways to experiment with time, movement and

toward the Moving Image as an intra-active* vibrant body. It has also opened up ways to rethink laughter beyond the human laughter, towards it as a liveliness of matter. *E.I The Blob's* programmed algorithm is also making us challenge the characteristic inability for digital programmed systems to create change. Here we are looking for ways to open the inherent closeness of digital communication towards more unknown protocols that allow for the spontaneous movement and change that exists in analogue systems.

Through the engagement with *E.I. The Blob* we're confronted with a form of intra-action that involves non-knowledge and a non-understanding, not only on a level of sense making centred around linguistic exchange but on a profound level of how can we structure a becoming together that is not based on verbal communication and agreement.

In her essay »Telling is Listening« the sci-fi author Ursula K. Le Guin writes about how communication is often seen as a one-way-transportation of meaning from A to B and how this image manifests a dichotomy in telling as active and listening as passive. To oppose this normative and limiting idea she advocates for another image of communication: two amoebas having sex. Amoebas usually reproduce by dividing themselves. But sometimes "two of them get together, literally, and reach out to each other and meld their pseudopodia into a little tube or channel connecting them." Thus: when two amoebas exchange genetic "information", "they literally give each other inner bits of their bodies". When we follow Le Guin in her thoughts this tunnel is communication. In every form of communication we leave traces of us in the other, no matter if we are telling or listening because both forms of participating in an exchange are vital to the process of communication. This idea reveals a closeness to what the theoretical physicist and feminist theorist Karen Barad is describing when she talks about the entanglement of matter and meaning. There are no fixed boundaries around us, nor around other bodies or Moving Images, but rather a constant flow of particles behaving as waves and waves as particles, in a continual state of infecting and reconfiguring each other.

We like to think of the Laughing Body and the Moving Image as partakers in this "lively dance of mattering", and for our proposed discussion we would like to invite these forces to disturb our reduced ways of reading the world and to ask how they could participate in the reconfiguring of the material-social relations of the world.

* here we are using Karen Barad's notion of the intra-action, "as a contrast to the usual "interaction", which assumes that there are separate individual agencies that precede their interaction. The notion of intra-action recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through, their intra-action" Barad, K. (2007) Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. pg. 10

References:

Le Guin, U. K. (2004) Telling is Listening from *The Wave in the Mind: Talks and Essays on the Writer, the Reader, and the Imagination*, Shambhala Publications, Boston, United States

Barad, K. (2007) Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Biographies:

Annika Larsson is an artist, researcher at Royal Institute of Arts, Stockholm and Professor in Time Based Media HFBK Hamburg. Her research project *Non-knowledge, Laughter and the Moving Image* (2018-2021) is supported by The Swedish Research Council. nonknowledge.org

Isabel Gatzke, has a MA in Dramaturgy from the ZHDK in Zurich. Her practice as a dramaturge is mostly based in the field of dance and performance where it is concerned with questions around the moving body, image and sense-making as well as forms of relating to each other that are not structured in a logic of »power over«. She is a research assistant for the artistic research project *Non-knowledge, The Moving Image and the Laughing Body*. nonknowledge.org

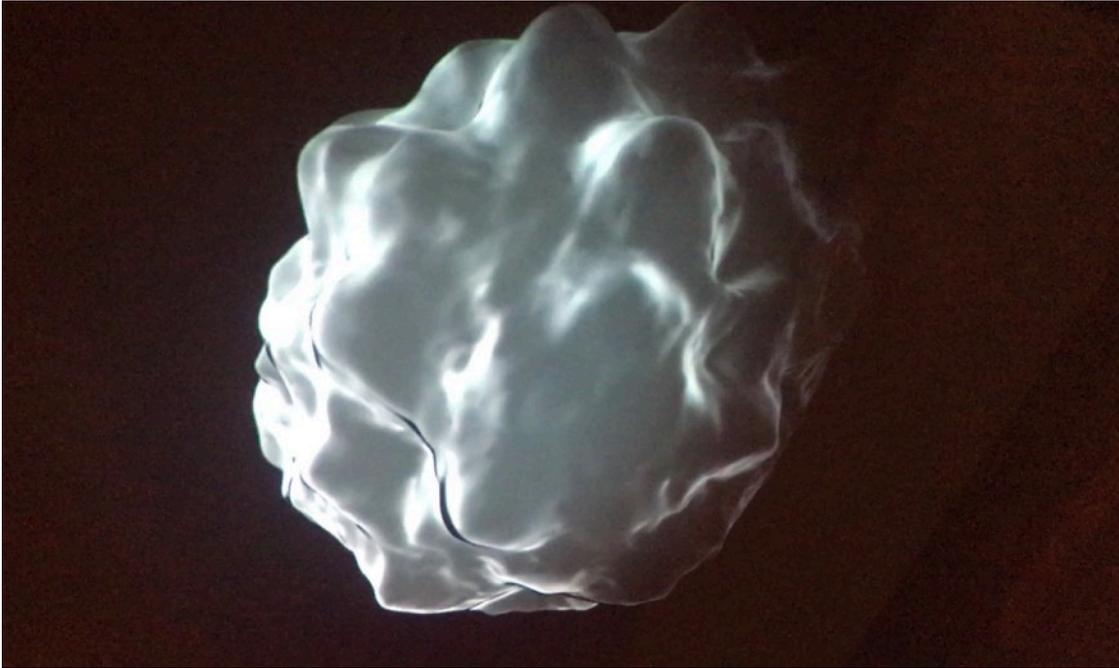
E.I The Blob is an open end project and "Moving Image Organism" created in the frame of the research project *Non-knowledge, Laughter and the Moving Image*. It has participated in the exhibitions *Animalesque / Art Across Species and Beings*, Bildmuseet Umeå, Sweden and BALTIC, Gateshead, England, 2019-2020, *The Sleepover Experiment*, Index Foundation Stockholm 2019, *Wo kommen wir hin - Music for Future Images*, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Germany 2019 and *ENCORES – music on recurrence, redundancy and surplus* at Teatro Goldoni, Venice, Italy, 2019. <http://nonknowledge.org/ei> and <https://blob.thisotherthing.co/>



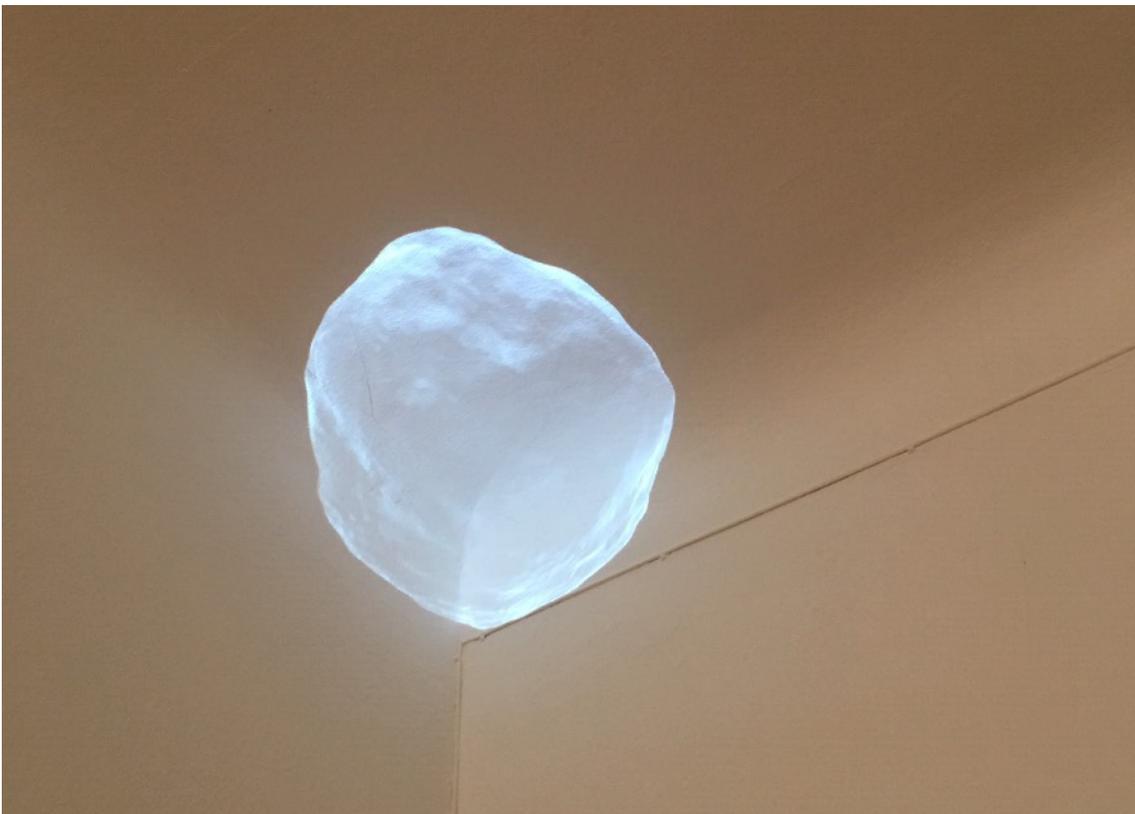
*E.I. The Blob at "Animalesque / Art Across Species and Beings" Bildmuseet Umeå, Sweden
Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/424304453/d013b00c81>*



*E.I. The Blob in "It's After The End Of The World" together with Annika Larsson, Satch Hoyt, Ni Fan and Felix Gebhard
during "ENCORES – music on recurrence, redundancy and surplus" at Teatro Goldoni, Venice 2019.
Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/424284981/bb23e1b4fd>*



E.I. with Augustin Maurs during The Sleepover Experiment at Index Foundation Stockholm 2019
Video documentation: , <https://vimeo.com/417997665/23f03638cd>



'E.I The Blob in Annika Larsson's Studio in Berlin, 2019. <http://nonknowledge.org/ei> and <https://blob.thisotherthing.co/>