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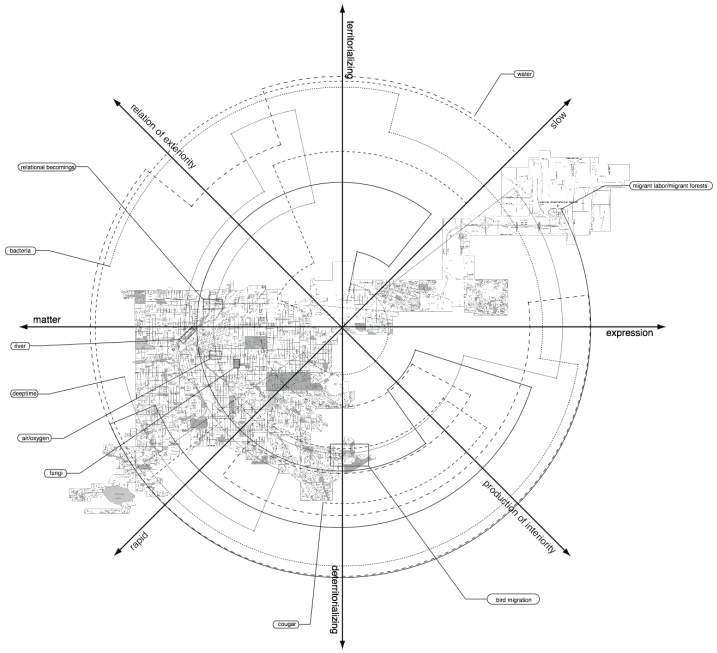

SPURSE DIALOG:CITY PRESS RELEASE

HOW TO LEAVE THE CONVENTION AND ENTER THE POLITICAL: AN EXERCISE IN LEAVING TO LEARN TO LISTEN

On Wednesday August 27th, as the Democratic National Convention wraps up, we welcome participants, citizens, aliens and all others whom through the various circumstances of life find themselves in Denver to engage in a series of exercises in listening.

Now, we understand that listening is probably the last thing you wish to do at the end of many days of listening to all sorts of speeches and discourses by commentators of all kinds. It certainly seems that we spend an inordinate amount of time listening at events like these that make up so much of our political landscape -- and so it is legitimate to ask "When do we get to speak? When do we enter the dialog? Where is the real democratic exchange in being spoken to?" This is a reasonable response and one that, the event we are part of, Dialog:City wishes to address through various opportunities for people to meet face to face and discuss issues -- to gather under large tents, to listen to choirs, and participate in karaoke, and to attend workshops. These are all good, important and quite interesting events and opportunities. We encourage you to take advantage of as many of them as you can.

But we wish to modestly propose something quite different: How can we rethink the space of the political by rethinking our relation "of the world"? (Why is it that we imagine the life of citizens in a democracy should focus on how to be represented every four years?) We are of the world in a manner that is never passive -- all of our actions produce change -- even actions that seem entirely passive, such as listening, are entirely active -- we are changing and being changed continuously by our actions and engagements. In this case, what does change mean? We would like to stress that it means something quite perplexing and something *that our politics is poorly equipped to handle*. It means, quoting the philosopher Karen Barad, that " events and things do not occupy a particular position in space and time; rather, space, time, and matter are iteratively produced and performed..." by "our" actions. This is what we mean by "rethinking our relation of the world": our actions do not just make or change things – it is the underlying fabric of our world that is shifted by action -- space, time and matter are changed by these engagements. Thus politics, and the polis of the political, is first and foremost the creation of modes of *being of* world that take into account the entangled changing of space, time and matter. Secondly, and most importantly, when we say "changed by *our actions*" -- who is meant by this "our"? This polis -- our polis -- is not simply made up of humans -- it is made up of everything -- it is both human and non-human, sentient and non-sentient, organic and non-organic, technological and natural etc. How do we activate a politics on this level of the emergence of space, time, matter and agency? We believe that such a politics of emerging post-human negotiation needs to replace a politics of images and representations.

Through a series of listening experiments, we wish to propose a series of simple exercises that begin to put us in experimental contact with these levels of the political. We are titling these: ***eleven listening posts for an entangled agent: denver***. These experimental exercises will be presented on a map that, with little fanfare, will be distributed to public locations across Denver on Wednesday August 27th -- please find one and try these exercises. More information on the project can be found at: www.11lp.org. Please feel free to email us at: spurse01@gmail.com. More information on Dialog:City can be found at: www.dialogcity.org.

spurse is an open-ended international group of individuals and organizations that work together as a type of experimental consultation service towards the development of new forms of engagement, practices and knowledges. spurse recognizes the necessity today of working collectively to rethink all of the givens of our modes of being of the world so to develop new forms of practices and knowledges. What needs to be done? What are matters of concern? These are collective questions involving the seemingly paradoxical production of an ethics and aesthetics of producing collectivities. Who, as both humans and non-humans, is part of these emerging collectives? How do we create -- recognizing our messy entangled state of becoming within the world? What are these bodies -- these institutions -- these collectives capable of? For more information on spurse please see www.spurse.org