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Worlding intensity/ies and energy/ies in a portrait of “Ann”

Fiona Blaikie¹ and David Fancy²

Abstract

This visual essay draws on Deleuzian immanence as visual-textual storying, framed by shifting energy/ies and intensity/ies inherent in situated ontologies, the non/human posthuman as non-exceptional, and making practices as documentary, multimodal, participatory, and unfinished. Mutually constitutive relationalities are impacted by subtle energetic interventions drawing on dialogic conceptual exchanges around works of art. Photographs and a portrait series are examined in relation to contemporary art, where immanent unstable energies and intensities transform singular worlding moments, framed by spaces, things, times, place; non/human entities offer their own animating presences that further situate and contextualize. As the painting of Ann progressed, a vital stirring presence materialized. Energy/ies took up space in the portrait series, shifting over time, just as the energy/ies that occupy all materialities including non/humans and spaces are immanent and resonant, and always in the process of un/knowing and un/becoming.

Keywords: Posthumanism; Immanence; Worlding; Visual essay; Making practices

Introduction

This visual essay was written by Fiona Blaikie, with reflexive responses and further theoretical framing offered by her university colleague, David Fancy. Worlding intensity/ies and energy/ies in a portrait of “Ann” draws on and connects: 1) Deleuzian immanence inherent in the notion of worlding as visual/textual reflexive storying, framed by always unfolding situated ontologies; 2) the non/human posthuman as non-exceptional and open to irrepressible im/material shifting energy/ies and intensity/ies; 3) contemporary art as unpredictable, documentary, multimodal, located, participatory, and im/materializing. In experiencing worlding via engagements with storying, artworks, and theorizing, readers are invited to contemplate, inhabit and dwell simultaneously in and across scholarly and artistic spaces and places. As this set of ideas suggests, we proceed here by understanding that visual images—central to this analysis—are entangled (Barad, 2003) with critical commentary and responses in the form of descriptions and scholarly constructs which, in turn, are entangled deeply with posthumanist issues of supremacy, domination, suppression, and submission (Fancy, 2011).

The specific objective of this paper is to demonstrate how worlding—expressed and experienced as complex sets of mutually constitutive relationalities—can be productively intervened in and impacted upon by subtle energetic interventions in the context of dialogic conceptual exchanges around works of art as experiential pedagogy (Dewey, 1938). In framing worlding, posthumanism,

¹ Fiona Blaikie, Professor, Visual Arts, Posthumanism and Pedagogy, Department of Educational Studies, Brock University, Canada.

E-mail: fblaikie@brocku.ca.

² David Fancy, Professor, Theatre Praxis, Dramatic Arts, Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, Brock University, Canada. E-mail: dfancy@brocku.ca.



and contemporary art, photographs are offered as worlding (storying) moments through which Deleuzian (1987) immanence is explored as inherent in the unpredictability of each image, connecting non/humans, place, and each in/complete moment. Opening to consider processes involved and images captured at moments in time in creating a series of portraits of Ann offers contemplation of formal and conceptual qualities. Here, the work of Marina Abramovic and her documentary film created at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), *The Artist is Present*, will be considered in relation to worlding, posthumanism, and participatory contemporary art. As the portrait series continues, making, im/materialities, and place are considered. For Fiona, intensity/ies and energy/ies resonate/d in different and singular ways. They are re/presented, and simultaneously always burgeoning and becoming via their own inherent agency/ies.

Worlding and posthumanism

At micro and macro levels, human exceptionalism continues to exert relentless detrimental impacts on humans, non/humans, and the planet. Contemplating this crisis, Rosi Braidotti's (2019) *Posthuman Knowledge* acclaims expanding zoe rising – inherent in the urgent need to protect the planet and non/human life (Arlander, 2021). The existential threat of the Anthropocene necessarily urges us to contemplate and act. Grounded in the porous uncertainties of a posthuman world, worlding is storying (Blaikie, 2020; Blaikie 2021; Stewart 2008, 2010, 2019). Storying worlding moments are echoes of resonant intensities shaped by affect and impact, situated ontological feminist politics of location (Braidotti, 2019), attendant possibilities and limitations, entangled power relations, im/material aesthetics of place and time, things, words, images, and memories. Worlding evokes attunement to situated ways of being, becoming, and relating to the world through ordinary experiences and affects. It is...

a shifting theoretical paradigm for reorienting human subjects through the nonhuman world of (other/ed) living things, materialities, cultures, places, spaces, and histories, calling into consideration the capacity of the nonhuman (e.g., place) to shape humans, to suggest subsiding alongside burgeoning worlds, creating porous intermingling, and re-forming subjects, objects, and environments...Worlding is situated in micro realms and affective reactions, like an embodied smell that causes feelings of nausea; memories of desire and revulsion; the last words you spoke with someone; and the felt, visual memory of a place, a moment in time (Blaikie, 2020, 331).

In sharing my photographs, the work of contemporary artist Marina Abramovic, and the series of portraits of Ann, worlding is offered as a storytelling construct, rather than a methodology. For Donna Haraway (2016), worlding is “storytelling and fact telling; it is the patterning of possible worlds and possible times, material-semiotic worlds, gone, here, and yet to come” (31). Indeed, for Haraway, characterizing and symbolizing multiple possibilities is always a “risky game of worlding and storying; it is staying with the trouble” (13). In storying worlding moments, spaces, things, places, and non/human entities offer their own animating presences, their own agency. Everything, including materialities and non/humans, has, as Braidotti (2019) puts it, *potentia*, or potential agency. Therefore, everything is potentially participatory in unfolding worlding/storying (Fancy, 2011, 2019).

The idea of entangling worlding/storying with theory is expressed beautifully in *The Hundreds*, a collection of vignettes co-written by Lauren Berlant and Kathleen Stewart (2019). Here, worlding moments are remembered, re-imagined, aesthetically, affectively, and theoretically. Taking worlding into the narrative realm of habitus constructs (Bourdieu, 1984), “we shape and are shaped by the



ideas and people with whom we keep company, as well as by the nonhumans, places, spaces, times, and things with and through which we live and work” (Blaikie, 2021, 1). Drawing on identity politics and intersectionality, we may contemplate the ways in which non/human lives are pre-and re-inscribed in enculturated environments and via worlding moments (Blaikie, 2021; Cho et al., 2013). Time, place, things, affects, human and other-than-human entities are entangled and inseparable. They exist with and alongside one another, linked through the co-existence of “and.” Humans are simultaneously artefactual and other-than-human, while artifacts and spaces are themselves animated and agentic. Consider the ways in which animated presence, occupation, and agency are taken up by an actor or lecturer in performance on a stage, a lion on the loose, a plastic spider, a wax figure at Madame Tussaud’s, prayer beads, a graveyard, a judge in a courtroom, a dog leading a visually impaired person, a cockfight, spaces in a prison, a kindergarten classroom, an animal shelter, a game reserve. They are this, or not this. They are changed by time, context, and by a shifting sense of presence. Indeed, contemporary theorization on critical feminist posthumanism (Braidotti, 2019) affirms that space, place, temporality, affect and materialities are energized, entangled, inseparably and continually re-framing and re-creating one another, expressing their own powerful agency/ies, intensity/ies and energy/ies.

Response from David Fancy³

Worlding is contingent on complex dialogism as well as open-ended processual dialecticism, thus my engagement as an interlocutor here. We can take up Deleuze’s (1996) reading of Bergson’s notion of fabulation as a way of thinking through the ontogenesis and onto-aesthetics of worlding that you’re proposing here. The Deleuzian genealogy of fabulation speaks to the differential generation of new worlds and potentials that can entail what he and Guattari describe as a project “to summon forth a new Earth, a new people” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1996, 99). And yet, such fabulation of a world to come does not necessarily entail a projective/prospective escape from history. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, Hartman (2010) describes a “critical fabulation” that provides the opportunity to engage past and future simultaneously as a means of imagining interventions in histories of supremacy and exclusion, all while worlding different futures not marked by such stains.

First worlding at Durbar Square - a (posthuman) call to attunement

Taking up David’s response, I offer a first worlding fabulation. It was April 2019. I was in central Kathmandu, in Durbar Square, walking about in sunshine, observing still standing temples and rubble. A catastrophic 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal four years earlier, on Saturday, April 25th, 2015. Kathmandu was devastated. An elderly stray dog, brown, scruffy, and gentle, began quietly strolling along beside me. He knew Durbar Square. I followed him to a beautiful stone building surrounded by steps and splashed with warmth and sunlight. Here, we rested together for a while, leaning against ancient warm carved stones, the dog lying quietly and companionably beside me. Workers were rebuilding all around us.

³ The responses of David Fancy are italicized, differentiating them from the main text.

Figure 1. Sleeping stray dog at Durbar Square in Kathmandu, Nepal, April 2019



Image. Photograph taken by Fiona Blaikie

“How lovely you are I said,” stroking his head. I gave him a snack from my bag. The hum of the city and clanging construction noises faded. He looked at me, and gently put his head on my hand.

After twenty minutes, I had to leave to meet up with my human travel companion. The dog had been left many times before. Our worlding moment in the sunshine was evaporating. What is left is my memory of him, captured in the photograph taken as I got up to leave, just before he opened his eyes. He watched me. I saw despair in his downcast eyes. “Goodbye sweet dog” were my last words. I picked up my bag and walked away. He haunts me. The stray dog’s historic and continuing exclusion, loneliness, hunger, need, and our togetherness for a split second in cosmic time, the shattered buildings, my presence as a tourist, on the move, are saturated in and by the stains of human assertion of supremacy, implicit in the work of worlding posthumanism, and in the immanent possibilities of all becoming moments. These moments can be invitations to contemplate first world visitor encounters in the global south (with all their potential resonances of impostorship), where such visitors might become attuned to their own supremacy in the context of poverty, war, and homelessness.

Response from David Fancy

Photographs and other modes of artistic expression can serve as monuments to worlding. Deleuze & Guattari (1996) suggest that in a world of multiplicity and becoming, artistic expression is marked by an aspiration “to create the finite that restores the infinite: it lays out a composition that, in turn, through the action



of aesthetic figures, bears monuments or composite sensations” (197). Art can do this, they argue, because as an artist you have extracted percepts—the essences of perceptions—from the perceptions of your encounter with the dog. Artists also simultaneously extract affects from experienced affections—those shifts initiated by the engagement with percepts—and bundle affects and percepts together within the materials and forms in which they then express themselves: words and paper, clay and figures, bodies and performances, and so forth. These “monuments,” and art’s drive “to raise lived perceptions to the percept and live affections to the affect” (170), take place, as Deleuze & Guattari (1996) suggest, “in the relationship of territory and the earth” (85), so in its fabulation of monuments art can be understood to link “the earth’s song and the cry of humanity” (176).

Second worlding - immanence

Immanence, like making art, like a conversation, a lesson, a journey, a life, a marriage, is unpredictable and irreproducible. It cannot be framed in time. The nightly performance of a play is never the same. Repeated teaching of a lesson is idiosyncratic, situated in immanent becoming moments, in place, time, energy/ies and agency/ies, always rising and subsiding. Here, the rhizomatic porous becoming of the postqualitative turn is at work (St. Pierre, 2019), offering aesthetic and ontological grounding for scholarship, art, and pedagogy as emergent, interwoven, participatory, and unfinished. We are invited to contemplate what was and is in the stillness and silence of our entangled past, present, and future. Reading a novel, teaching a lesson, presenting at a conference, are examples of remembering, hopefulness, hopelessness, anticipation, uncertainty. As we move moment to moment through our lives, each experience takes on its own worlding qualities, energy/ies and becomings, beyond the moment-to-moment lived experiences of im/materialities, spaces, humans, and non-humans: “I/we was/were here and doing this when such and such happened...” Non/humans remember and know, in situated embodied ways. Similarly, places hold and express memory/ies, cultures, sounds, feelings, images, stories, and words. Energy/ies and intensity/ies are always on the move.

Figure 2. Second worlding: The cry of humanity and the earth’s song, India, April 2019



Image: Photograph taken by Fiona Blaikie

When this photograph was taken in mid-April 2019, I was in Agra, beside the Yamuna River. It had rained heavily the night before. Early in the morning, it was a little cooler when we went for our walk, crossing the busy road in front of the hotel, dodging fast cars, taxis, cows, and mopeds, and coming across this scene of resting stray dogs, people, trees listing in a slight breeze, pigeons, and street vendors flipping *bedai* in hot oil over flaming gas stoves, the spices and oils circulating, smelled and tasted through the opaque wetness hanging in the air. Humans and nonhumans rested or went about their business, fleshy, fluctuating moments unfolding across time and space, infused by thoughts, feelings, and immanent becoming (Blaikie, 2020, 335).

Immanence speaks to the conditions of living things, spaces, and places. The weather shifts. Morning comes. Plants, trees, dogs, birds, ants, and humans know instinctively how to grow, reproduce, age, and die, always becoming, in and through internal and external conditions. The stray dogs in the photograph above feel and know when another dog or human is threatening, just as a human often knows and feels intuitively when they are in danger. Worlding moments are themselves incomplete and immanent, and simultaneously sedimented and situated in momentary thinking-feeling-being across species and domains via bios, *zoē*, place, non-linear temporalities, and cultures.

Third Worlding - introducing Ann: Fermenting intensity/ies and energy/ies

Memories are on the move, always being re-made through remembering, retelling, forgetting, and re-imagining. In this third worlding, I introduce Ann. I visited her pre Covid-19, during American Thanksgiving. Ann was a botanist who had studied the subject at Vassar College in the 1940s. Mother of seven children, Ann, in her 90s, was then a grandmother and great-grandmother to 56 offspring. Ann loved to sit in her library with its beautiful vista opening to a feral back garden, with woods and wildflowers in abundance. She liked her lawn cut high to save all the wildflowers from being decapitated.

On this visit, we knew we were saying goodbye for the last time. She sat contemplatively on her lumpy old sofa with her lovely garden visible through the enormous picture window. Fall colours softened in the fading afternoon light behind her. It was a special worlding moment of deep enduring affect that had to be captured, not just in photographs, but also through painting Ann. She invited me to do so. Within three weeks of my visit, on December 17th, 2019, Ann died.

The way Ann sat with me, her contented acceptance of imminent death, and the sense of comfortable benevolence we felt for one another were moments of intimate felt encounter. I knew these were our last moments together. “Well, I guess I’ll be seeing you some other time, some other place” said Ann, as I left her home for the last time. She stretched out her arm in a last wave. Seeing the photographs of Ann on my phone as I flew home compelled me to begin painting, as a way of remembering Ann on that last afternoon.

The first sketch was fresh and lively, and I felt that even though it was incomplete, it captured something about Ann that was evocative and gentle. There is a sense of quiet presence and developing intensity and energy, and a loose, gestural, sketchy linear quality reflected in the reserved neutral colours, the tentative feel, and the way that Ann looks, hesitating, a slight gentle smile on her lips.

Affect is contextualized by the always changing worlding non-neutrality of the ways in which feelings are framed by time, place, ideas, things, and other living beings: in other words, via materialist feminism’s key concept of situated conditions (Bennett, 2009; Coole & Frost, 2010;



Keifer-Boyd, 2018; Garber, 2019; Ingold, 2013; O'Donoghue, 2019). The work of contemplating intensity/ies and energy/ies through my last intimate encounter with Ann remains incomplete; that last afternoon resonates with me. I recall the fading apricot light outside, like a note of music, and the mildewy musty smell of her library.

Figure 3. First sketch of Ann, December 2019



Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

Fourth worlding - an interlude

Energy/ies and intensity/ies in the work of contemporary artist Marina Abramovic

In Marina Abramovic's documentary film, *The Artist is Present*, she engages in intimate encounters with strangers (Akers & Dupre, 2012). Sitting at a table placed in a large gallery at MOMA, Marina Abramovic sat opposite people, who took turns to sit with her, one by one. They had lined up for hours to engage in these encounters. To gaze into someone's eyes for a sustained period, a stranger or not, is necessarily intimate. The act of gazing is steeped in situated affect. These encounters afford a seeing and way of *being with* that is deeply moving; it can feel un/comfortable, intrusive, frightening, moving: One confronts oneself through the other.

Abramovic asserts that "art must be beautiful" not in the conventional sense of art as a material entity, like a sculpture, but through challenging engagements and experiences of intimate encounter and resulting intensity/ies. This genre of documentary contemporary art is participatory, affective, relational, performative, reflexive, im/materializing, unfinished, and immanent.

Figure 4. Marina Abramovic performing *The Artist is Present*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2010



Image: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marina_Abramovi%C4%87,_The_Artist_is_Present,_2010.jpg

Response from David Fancy

A gathering storm: *The connections established between Abramovic and her performance interlocutors speak to the subtleties of relationality, of the many registers of percept and affect, that circulate and crystalize in these moments of encounter. From physical presence to emotional interaction, to the subtle energetic shifts that result from these interactions, these worldings invite a recognition that relationality is complex and always already involves multiple times-spaces. In this sense, fabulation is a risky business: what will be generated, what will be released, what will the result of these interactions be? Fundamentally proliferative and unpredictable, this kind of process has meant that your work on the painting can lead to the generation of potential subtle energetic interactions between you and the subject of the painting: art as a monument of hosting, inhabitation, art as a fabulation of making ghosts.*

Fifth worlding - Ann as fabulation and making ghosts

In the first sketch of Ann, the intensity was quite nuanced. In the next iteration, in the image shown below, there is a burgeoning sense of joyousness. I feel Ann's strength and assertiveness coming through. The light on her left shoulder, echoed in the light on her face, and on the sofa, resonates with me. The uncertain green of the garden through the window behind Ann is unresolved, but the treatment of Ann herself is becoming more robust. For me, there is a feeling of stillness and peace here. Ann's face is more defined, along with the clothed body and sofa, while the sketchy gestural loose quality of brushwork remains.



Figure 5. Second sketch of Ann, December 2019



Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

For anthropologist Kathleen Stewart (2008), affect is implicit in shifts from this to that. Again, like a faraway note of music, the first note of a song, I recall in the image above the fading apricot light outside, and the mildewy musty smell of her library.

As I continued working on Ann's face, I wanted to honour the deep lines around her mouth and cheeks. I sought to enhance tonal contrast, or *chiaroscuro*⁴—to bring her angular face and its expressiveness into greater focus. Boldly, I added deep crevasses around her mouth, and shadows on her face. This made Ann's white bushy eyebrows more noticeable. I found Ann's mouth became much tighter and harsher, with the lips gripping together. The eyes are intense and sad. While the sketchiness of the body is unresolved here, there is a freshness in the sketchiness of clothing, and in the light on Ann's left shoulder. The creamy earthy colours of the sofa, still in progress, connect to the frantic energy in the green zigzag lines in the background.

⁴ Chiaroscuro refers to dramatic light-dark or tonal contrasts, often key in representing form and space in figurative artworks.

Figure 6. Third sketch of Ann, December 2019

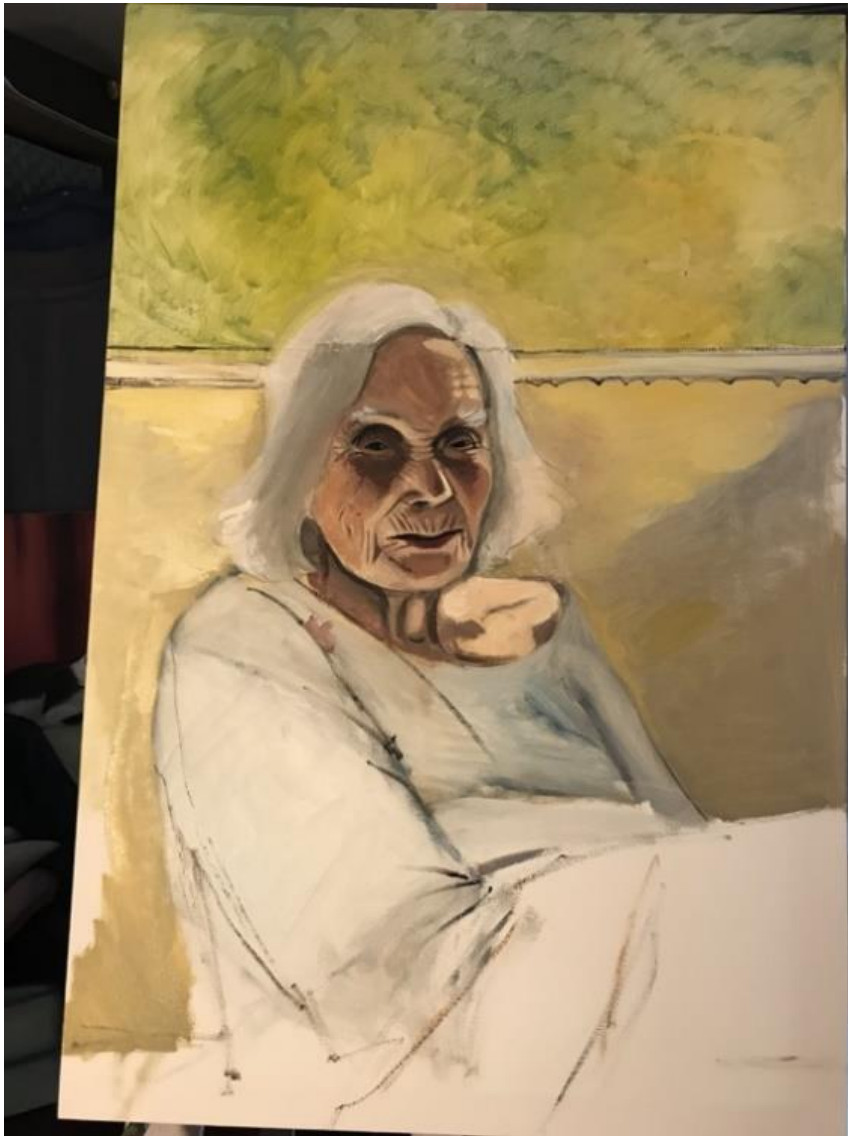


Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

In the third sketch of Ann above, I perceive burgeoning intensity and energy in her face that expresses anger – an energy I have not seen before. It is less recognizable, and offers a very different sense of Ann. Is it Ann? Still, I see Ann, and she sees me.

I aimed to bring the energy level down, to stabilize the unsettling feeling now coming through in the painting. I worked to lighten her face and the deep shadows. I softened and lightened the lines and strong tonal contrast in Ann’s face, especially around her mouth. The face, shoulder and clothing came into clearer focus. However, the treatment of the hair was tight. I liked the treatment of her clothing, but the blanket was tight and stiff. I felt a stronger sense of Ann’s character and strength again. Her intense positive energy comes through.



Figure 7. Fourth sketch of Ann, December 2019

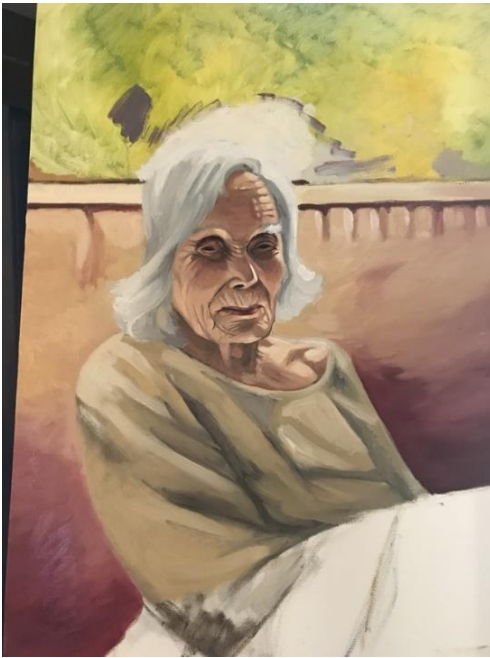


Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

Figure 8. Detail of the fourth sketch of Ann, December 2019



Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

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What I remember about Ann is that she always expressed her opinions directly and assertively. She enjoyed taking chances, especially when playing bridge. Ann did not like spending money at all. She lived in a small suburb, and delighted in helping herself to shrubs from neighbours’ gardens when they were away, especially if she judged that a peony needed splitting. She fought for women’s and civil rights in the US, and once had Jane Fonda in her home, ironing in the family room. The family knew Ted Turner. Jane had just left Ted.

Ann was still so beautiful. In the painting below I see her lovely bone structure, and the amusement and alertness in her face. I like the liveliness of the paint, which re-imagines Ann’s strong intense energy.

Figure 9. Fifth sketch of Ann, December 2019

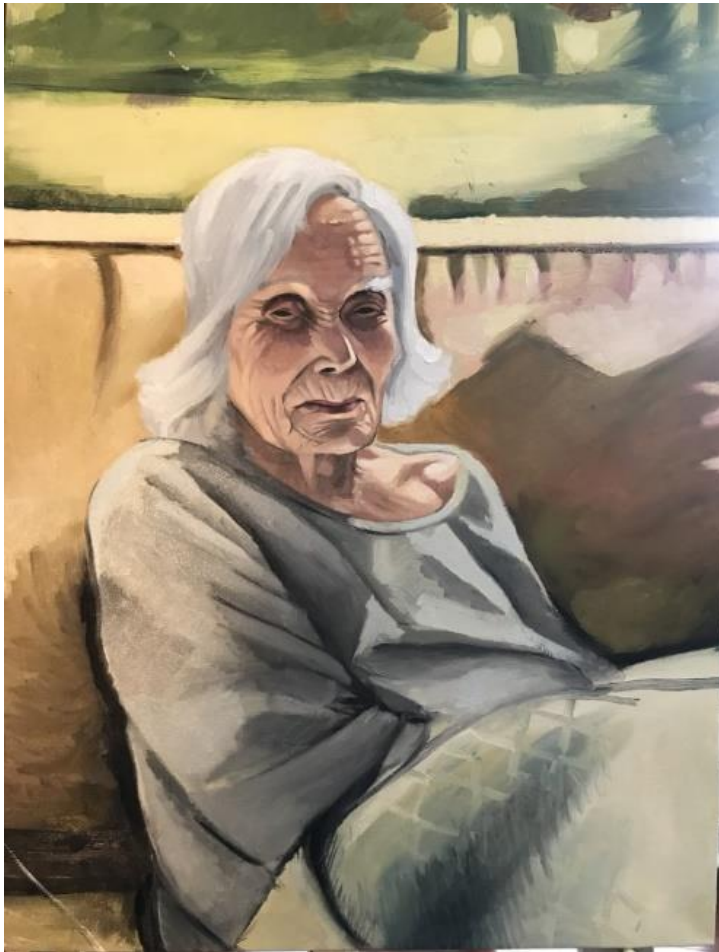


Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

I changed the pink sofa into darker browns with stronger tonal contrasts including the shadow cast by Ann, and here there was more definition around Ann’s body. The treatment of the blanket was unresolved and tight. The background was darkening now. I liked the still sketchy treatment of the top that Ann wore, and the intensity of the face, hidden in her expression of amused contemplation of me.



Figure 10. Sixth sketch of Ann, January 2020



Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

In the sixth iteration above, the wrinkles are worked in fully, and I changed Ann's top to a blue colour. The sofa was being worked in, along with the garden in the background. The body is taking more shape, however, the blanket over Ann's legs is unresolved. I was finding the painting rather frustrating at this stage.

After some days of frustration, I painted out the background entirely. Now, the treatment of the body and clothing became a lot more sculptural—more defined, overworked, and less sketchy. It became tighter and the energy and intensity became contained and confined—I think of clenched teeth with stress on the muscles of the neck and jaw. This idea again evokes Rosi Braidotti's (2019) sense of limitations or *potestas* (entrapment) and *agentic potentia* (empowerment).

Figure 11. Seventh sketch of Ann, January 2020



Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

One day in early January 2020, I entered the room. I realized that the painting felt different; the energy was tighter and more intense, more powerful. The blanket in the foreground had become disassociated from Ann, like a sheet or something else that floats above rather than being draped loosely over her body. While I was pleased with how much this image looked like Ann, it didn't feel like her. The background and her hair were both very overworked and had hardened. Her hair was like a helmet. I worked on the painting, but by mid-January 2020, I had to stop working as I was heavily involved in teaching. The painting remained on an easel.

By late February 2020, the painting had taken on new and different intensity/ies and energy/ies, which made themselves felt to me and others who saw the painting in my home. As an unfolding Deleuzian assemblage, unstable shifting parts were coming together, and coalescing. This is how the painting looked in my workspace.



Figure 12. Portrait of Ann, February 2020



Image: Oil on canvas (2x3 feet) by Fiona Blaikie

The shift in the feeling of the painting was noted by friends and family. There seemed to be a non-benevolent force associated with the painting, occupying it. What was I confronting here? I wondered, was it Ann, an expression of myself, or something else? As noted earlier, one confronts oneself through the other. This type of energy might be a reminder, for example, of a place that feels unsafe or frightening. On at least three occasions, as I worked at my table, I found myself telling the energy/ies emanating from the painting to leave. Then I moved the painting away to a different space. The basement.

In 2021, my colleague David Fancy visited me. David is a scholar of theatre and posthumanism, a healer and a shaman. I said nothing when David entered the room where the painting had been repositioned deliberately, in anticipation of his visit. Quickly he recognized that the painting had been taken up by entity/ies, intensity/ies, energy/ies. The face itself appeared to have a malicious cast, and this was sensed through the bodymind, not just via the work of seeing the painting (see Figure 11). David's clairsentience provided him with an ability to feel points of tension in his body, a feeling that continued until the energy of the painting was later cleared. Overall, we found the shift in the energy and intensity of the painting palpable. We agreed: An entity did seem to be occupying the painting and it felt threatening. It was not Ann. It was a form of energetic attachment. It was something else. There was a stirring resonance between the painting as it was situated on an easel in the space itself, my books, me, and others who came into the space.

No longer did I hear a high pure note of music. The painting crackled silently.

Response from David Fancy

Through the work of posthuman shamanism and a recognition of the need to resolve and engage the subtle energetic presences that inhabited the painting, I engaged a very specific mode of fabulation: that of removing and releasing the unbeneficial entity and energies that the painting had begun to express. This form of artfulness harnesses percepts and affects to make a monument, in this case a monument of absence, of departure. Deleuze & Guattari’s (1987) interests in transpersonal projects that exceed liberal bourgeois subjectivity, and its attendant isolations provide a context for thinking about what they describe as “sorcery” and “shamanism.” With care not to rehearse colonial and/or gendered inflection of the terms by avoiding any intervention which would draw from contemporary Indigenous practices (Tausig, 1987), or to perform psychopompery not befitting a research professor in the (Post)Humanities(!), I can say that, in a way that resonates with Abramovic’s creation of relational space, the subtle energetic work done in collaboration with the painting and Fiona to generate a worlding in the painting no longer marked by the unbeneficial energy perceived by a number of people, was successful.

No longer did the painting seem to make a crackling sound. The agency/ies, energy/ies, and intensity/ies expressed in the portrait of Ann had shifted. Something had been deactivated.

Reflection

Fiona’s photographs, the work of contemporary artist Marina Abramovic and her documentary film *The Artist is Present*, and the portrait series of Ann are contemplated by the two authors in relation to worlding, posthumanism, immanence, and art. All dwell in realms of unpredictability. They are agentic. Here, affect is contextualized by the always variable worlding non-neutrality of feelings framed by time, place, ideas, things, other living beings, reflected in material feminism’s key concept of situated ontological conditions (Bennett, 2009; Coole & Frost, 2010; Keifer-Boyd, 2018; Garber, 2019; Ingold, 2013; O’Donoghue, 2019).

Being with Ann for the last time, I recall the fading light, the mildewy musty smell of her library. Key here is Abramovic’s assertion that art must be beautiful and meaningful, creating intimate encounters and resulting intensity/ies that draw on participatory, relational, performative, reflexive, im/materializing, unfinished, and immanent modalities (Akers & Dupre, 2012). Abramovic’s work expresses percept and affect. Worlding moments become crystalized momentarily and in shifting singular ways via words, images, and memories. As the painting of Ann progressed, what I judged as a non-beneficial force inhabited the painting. There was a vital stirring resonance between the painting, situated in the space, alongside material entities like my books, me, and others who came into the space. When David intervened, he engaged in “energetic fabulation... removing and releasing unbeneficial entity and energies that the painting had begun to express,” as stated above.

Worlding is not a conventional scholarly method. In storying immanent worlding moments, associated spaces, things, times, places, and non/human entities offer their own animating sense of presence that frame, situate, and contextualize. Here, following David, fabulation is a way of thinking through and imagining mediations in relation to what he describes as supremacy and exclusion. For example, the beautiful stray dog in Kathmandu and our moments together are steeped in exclusion and oppression, in futile assertions of human supremacy framed by zoe rising (Braidotti, 2019), made manifest in the devastation of the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, and in the current existential threat being experienced by the planet and all species (del Val & Dedeoğlu, 2023).

Every becoming moment evaporates instantly, dis/figuring, dematerializing. The immanent energy/ies that took up space and shifted over time in the portrait of Ann are, like the energy/ies



that occupy all materialities, humans, non/humans, spaces, and places, immanent, resonant, and always in the process of un/becoming, un/knowing. Nothing is inert or neutral.

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