

TEMPORARY ARCHIPELAGO

could see was the white thick air forming strange images in front of them. They could hear each other singing, humming and talking, and even though by that time they hardly remembered who the others were, the fact of being accompanied in their new destiny was comforting to their souls and giving them strength to keep going.

«I will bring you to shine so bright that this cloud will disappear. ... the situation may not seem to have an ending, but as I am standing here in my non-shape of multi-colour, I tell you that you must.» The train stopped and the river came back to its normal shape. In fact, we saw that it was actually not a river but a big carpet, dark blue, lying in the middle of the road. Who the hell had put that there?!!! Nothing made sense anymore. So we decided simply to drive back. ... when we arrived back at the beginning, it was a relief to still be alive. The phones started working again and a man passed the streets.

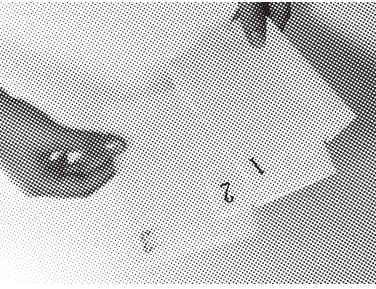
another's sentences, the arguments and theses and consequences taken had dissolved into a soggy mess of verbiage, associations easily distracted, commas left hanging. The materials had decomposed at an even faster rate, to ashes and dust they had returned, homogenous, muddy. The relentless mist had made their skins and the walls of the rooms permeable, and they crumpled like a textbook left in the rain, and then they were gone ... and the cloud stretched outwards, far and away over the land.

After several months moving around in the room they started to feel they were part of a choreography that included complicated geometrical gestures, legs movements, and everyday actions. They did not know why, but each of them was following a path in the white darkness. They did not even know how it was possible to move in such a dense space and why they never touched or bumped the other. They kept their eyes open; however, all they

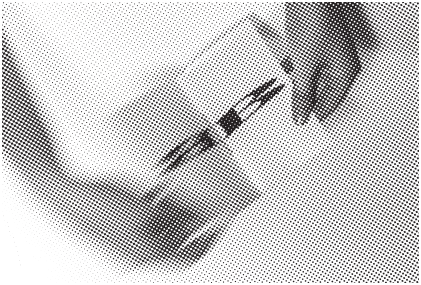
A ROOM FULL OF CLOUD

ON THE WAY TO TEMPORARY ARCHIPELAGO NO. 3

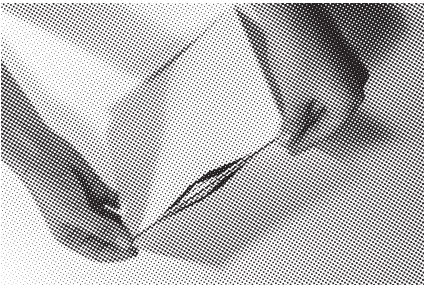
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NO. 3: A ROOM FULL OF CLOUD



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reciprocal turn



issue # 2

The following text is a collaboratively written text of twelve paragraphs. This is a practice we are testing for our next lecture performance: *A Room Full of Cloud*. After *Temporary Archipelago No. 2: Interluding*, in which we worked with residual objects from *TA: No. 1*, we now put our focus on immaterial objects. For *TA No. 3, A Room Full of Cloud*, we see the cloud as a protagonist that moves between the material and the immaterial: from outside we can see a cloud as an object, but once we are inside it, it disappears. We consider the cloud as a metaphor for our times: drifting through an excess of images and information, we can see only what is close to us, and we lack an overview. For *A Room Full of Cloud*, the texts we generate will be developed in relation to choreography, gesture, sound, and the spectators.

The first 4 paragraphs of the following text are «Beginnings,» each written by one of us. The second 4 paragraphs are «Middles» and the last are «Ends,» written in the same way. You can choose your own reading order and make your own story.

Best Wishes,
Temporary Archipelago: Ana Laura Lozza, Lee Meir, Kareth Schaffer, and Claudia Tomasi

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A ROOM FULL OF CLOUD



On March 14, 1996, the Smoke and Fog Working Group met for the first time at the Worthington Hotel in Ft. Worth, Texas. The hotel had a good size and the rooms had comfortable beds. However, according to Tony, the restaurant was substandard for such a hotel. Brad, Gary, and Adrian did not care about food. Eric, Nathan, Gregory, Marc, and Bill were happy with the menu. The group was supposed to spend three days testing and discussing about safety measures in the use of smoke and fog in the entertainment industry. Due to recent incidents profession of actors and dancers had become dangerous. Of special concern among actors and dancers were the use of turntables, moving scenery, special costumes, weapons, strange makeup, and the use of fog and smoke. It was time to write a standard about the use of this theatrical effect, whose first appearance dated back to the beginning of the 17th century. The group would spend three days trying out different types

Beginnings



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of smoke (atmospheric smoke that gave the feeling of being immersed in a cloud, or low-lying smoke that conveys an above-the-cloud effect), discussing different situations and trying to write a standard.

They always considered themselves part of something that makes sense. This was not a quality they thought very highly of, but individually each one of them did consider it as part of their unspoken rules – one of the things that kept them together, something they agreed upon without actually saying it out loud. They always met in the same room, in the same building, it was a place in which they stored their thoughts and everything they considered vital for their research. When the materials they were using started to rot, they understood that something basic in their relation to them needed to radically change. They started questioning why these things, which they referred to as «material», behaved in such unexpected ways. They were so passionate about their discussion that they did not notice the lack of air that started to locate itself in the room. Some of them started coughing very subtly, a kind of dry cough,

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and then all of them stopped crying. The room was completely burned down, and the neon signs stopped flickering in the grey air. «Nothing will really change», some of them recited the old folk song. Some others were still busy looking for the other halves of objects. Everything that had rotted in the damp air seemed to transform, to change their shapes and textures and become something else. And despite the stink produced by the rotting materials, everything had a certain easiness to it, a lightness that no one of them could really comprehend. As they finally left the ruins of what used to be this room and walked together towards the outdoors, she said, «Everything starts and ends with a sigh,» and they smiled, even though they didn't really understand.

And it may have been the hunger, or exhaustion, or simply the slow numbing of the mind that comes from spending long hours in a room with a cloud, but one day they realized that the things they had thought no longer made sense. Clear lines of thought, the finishing of one

Ends

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just a simple thought and word.

The fog would then just disappear, faces would get back their original shapes, and words would find their right positions in the sentences again. Everyone was just waiting to survive this one instant that felt more eternal than anything else before. This feeling that something could stay here forever and never disappear. As hope started to increase, time expanded and space got more dense.

In fact, it was not a lack of air, but a kind of condensation of the atmosphere. A vaporous mass was taking shape. The water crystals were floating in the air making them feel in a state of hypnosis. Were they witnessing the formation of a cloud in the room? But how could this happen? How could a cloud start to grow inside a room? And what would they do with it? Was this part of the materials they were generating? If the clouds were the key to understand meteorological changes, would this cloud help them to understand their own materials? They decided that no matter what, they had to stay in the room. They waited for days in that room. They forgot about eating and drank the drops that were falling from time to time from the cloud. If only Howard were there ...

There was not much time left in order to fulfil the mission and, perhaps, extend all life into eternity.

«Stop it,» she said, almost screaming, «I can't hear you anyway.» Now she was really screaming: «Everything is lost inside, there are no more ways to exit!» The neon sign, lying in the mud, still glowing but slowly fading, was half broken and one could only read the letters E I I N D P clearly, the S R Y T were almost completely off. «Shit,» they said, nearly simultaneously. «This was really unexpected.» The room was full of rotting things and with the air so dense because of the snowstorm, there was nearly no place to sit down. So they just stood in front of each other and tried to look at each other through the dense thick air. When they caught each other's eyes, they said together, in perfect sync, «OK, I'm gonna make this explode.»

gaze into some remnant of the past, a shining silver skeleton quivering in translucent tissues, multi-coloured and ever-moving. It reminded me of something, but before I could put my finger on it, the thing spoke:

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Middles

Coming back to the last river we had crossed, we heard the roar of the waters long before our Jeep rolled to a halt at its very edge. The river had become impassable, a chalky white deluge pouring down the side of the mountain, the mist from the river swirling up to meet the coils of fog hanging so thickly in the air.

We cut the motor and sat in silence for a while, peering through the window into the mist and fog and nothingness. Fat drops of moisture falling onto the car roof from dripping trees and the constant thrumming of the river, our soundscape had become watery indeed. Just beyond the limits of our visibility, where the river began to dissolve into the mist, I had the feeling I could see large shapes, slow-moving silhouettes of – what? Miniature mountains? Bears? The first glimpses of them disappeared in the fog, but just as I thought they hadn't been real they re-appeared, solidified, closer and closer. They appeared to be drifting, soundlessly floating, and before long one of them was standing in the headlights of the Jeep, inches away from the car. To look within the contours of this thing was to

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Suddenly we found ourselves in a situation which allowed us to see neither forward nor back. The fog was so dense that we could drive only very slowly ... the lights of our car allowed us to see a few metres. We were equipped with a Mini Jeep we had rented because it was the cheapest. No one had told us that there would be such

Lise Horenglöven grew up on the edge of the Baltic sea in a house with a thatched roof set back in the dunes. The dull gray water stretched from nowhere to the shore, bearing gifts of seaweed and dead fish. On quiet mornings when the world was still flat and the gulls were not yet flapping over the water, Lise went down to the beach to listen to the fog horns far out at sea. Great black barges, low in the water, made those long mournful sounds, and Lise watched the fog rolling in across the silent waters. For many years it never occurred to her to think of the fog horns as warnings, but as summons: the fog horns brought the fog to land, calling it across the vast gray waters, foisting it upon the dunes until a small girl in short pants could no longer see her hand in front of her face.

almost invisible. The others kept throwing parts of sentences into the air that was becoming more and more dense.

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A ROOM FULL OF CLOUD

bad streets. We had no idea, naively starting our journey on a street full of potholes leading us into the interior of the country; to the most beautiful mountain ranges with surreal colours. The weather was not getting better but worse. We could not reach anybody: our simple phones had no reception. We did not know how much of the journey we had behind us or how far we still had to go. Cut off from the world, we were on the right road but we could only see the fog and knew nothing else.

The fog became still more dense. On the right there was a steep drop-off and on the left the mountain went up and up. We felt lost and afraid. We had to cross rivers. It was raining harder. We had no experience of what it meant to really be in the wilderness, though our mind's eye was full of images from videos and photographs of jeeps crossing rivers. Only when we arrived at the fourth river, which was far too high for our Mini Jeep to cross, did we decide to turn around and drive back. Because of the rain, all the previous rivers would have risen as well ... Who knew if we could traverse them on the way back. Everything had been changed completely, without us noticing it.

