

Beyond Boundaries of Space and Time: Transmigrations in contemporary art

Andrea Ash

Charles Darwin University

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the dislodging of hegemonic narratives of culture and identity through formations of contemporary art that are spatially and temporally located in a field of uneven material and immaterial flows. This is a position that prompts an exploration of emerging issues in context of conditions of global mobility. In building an argument for an expanded art theory, I draw from a diverse range of artists, curators, critics and theorists to investigate the global networks of relationships influencing discourses of contemporary art and its technologies of production and dissemination. Analysis of art objects and/or events informed by transmigration involves articulating the ways in which they displace and contest established discourses and hegemonic narratives without using, in the process, an alternative narrative which is in itself exclusive and bounded. Such art objects and/or events exceed and surpass any single code, central ideology or static system. The complexity of contemporary art informed by conditions of transmigration is grounded in an in-between space between and across different borders. In the global context, with its transnational networks and transmigration of ideas and people, contemporary art has become so highly multifaceted and mobile that it challenges established definitions, crosses boundaries and calls for new ways of understanding the multiplicities of space, time and potential.

Beyond definition

The instabilities of global flows undermine and make problematic the singleness of an art object and/or event, exposing it to the indeterminacy of multiple origins and spatio-temporal beginnings. In particular, contemporary art informed by multiple sources cannot be reduced back to a source in any singular way, thereby producing 'strange' art objects and/or events that complicate and disrupt the distinction between sites and histories. That is to say, they owe their status as 'art' by a comingling of spatial and historical perspectives. Contemporary art is not simply the expression or acting out of a single context and requires multiple theoretical approaches directly informed by the possibilities made available by transmigrational flows. Such art is characterised by mobility and fluidity across spatio-temporal boundaries; dispersion and disjunction; multiaxial connections; mis/understandings; un-assimilability and 'strangeness' promoting uncertainty.

Contemporary art cannot be placed into neat categories. Artists informed by transmigration often mix painting, sculpture, photography, installation, performance, sound and/or video to disrupt conventions of form. Any singular definition of art is inadequate to the practice. Such artists seem less interested in defining art as in exploring the areas of convergence and collision between

the boundaries of form and media. It is through migrating across forms that a reconfiguration of medium and technique for representation can be seen. There has been a slippage across the generic boundaries of conventional categories. The artists referred to in this discussion demonstrates a broad eclecticism that makes divisions in art redundant. The point to be made about contemporary artists informed by transmigration is that their practice moves across boundaries and uses a variety of media, and thus it cannot be defined using one code, or contained by essentialist categories based on material or form.

The boundaries of traditional media, such as the practice of painting, have been stretched and taken on new directions: “exciting work has pushed painting into areas where it embraces unconventional materials and often overlaps with sculpture and installation art” (Robertson & McDaniel, 2010: 16). The work of Sydney-based artist, Stephen Little for example, combines a range of media and explores a variety of different techniques to free his art objects and/or events from terms such as ‘painting’ by opening up the term beyond its traditional definition based on the medium. Little (2010) contends that “this can lead to a re-reading of painting as an extended discipline whose classification as ‘painting’ is no longer wholly definable in relation to its former material tradition”. In *Vacuum Painting* (2007) Little scattered dried paint on the ground then used a ‘found’ vacuum cleaner to remove it. This performance was videoed then exhibited on a digital wall screen with the actual “Piranha Storm Dual Cyclonic Bagless Vacuum Cleaner” in front of the screening with the paint flakes stored in the transparent dust tank to form a multimedia installation. *A Brush with Painting* (2008) was situated in a small white-walled gallery room with a paint spattered and stained wooden floor. An Apple monitor was placed on a small table in the corner with a plastic broom leaning on the opposite wall. The monitor shows images of hand gestures. Little’s painting-objects are based upon the concept of the ready-made using found objects that reference popular culture and encompass new media. Little’s creative practice moves painting across boundaries that traditionally have been materially defined. The category of ‘painting’ is “nothing more than an inherited construct through which meaning is habitually produced, exchanged, and disputed” (Curnow, 1994: 39). However, Little’s work becomes bound by other material terms such as installation and/or performance; simultaneously decentred as it is recentred.

Terms should not be confining, bound or closed as spatio-temporal limits are being opened up. Thus terminology should be capable of containing many cultures, conditions and histories. This calls for multiple defining strategies to capture expanded practices and ideas in contemporary art where:

Old hierarchies and categories are fracturing; new technologies are offering different ways of conceptualizing, producing and showing visual art; established art forms are under scrutiny and revision; an awareness of heritages from around the world is fostering cross-fertilization; and everyday culture is providing both inspiration for art and competing visual stimulation (Robertson & McDaniel, 2010: 11).

Beyond spatio-temporal borders

Communication technologies foster art communities that are interconnected in ways that defy spatio-temporal positioning. An art object and/or event, in a sense, can be in many places at the same time, and a viewer does not have to go to the original, it comes to them. Emerging British artist, Katie Paterson works to span installation, sculpture, transmission, and sound. Thus she is drawing out beyond the boundaries of what ‘visual art’ might mean as she explores new potentials of media and prescribed technologies and opens her enquiries to new territories—physical, emotional, technological. In *Vatnajökull (the sound of)* (2007/8), exhibited at Modern Art Oxford in 2008, Paterson used cell phones to both create and access the work. Audiences could go to her site to listen to a pre-recorded track of a glacier melting or telephone a number to hear a live transmission from an underwater microphone:

When called, the mobile phone detects and transmits live the sound of Europe’s largest glacier, Vatnajökull, which is currently melting and moving through the lagoon. When Paterson first

presented this work in 2007 for 8 days, over 3,200 calls from 47 different countries were made to the glacier ... The work exists in the space created by calling the number and connecting with the glacier (Burton, 2011).

Art objects and/or events from different parts of the world can be distributed and accessed with ease to make diverse artistic experiences concurrent and relational. This is a key point as artistic practices that may take root in the local also splice into global networks (McGuire & Papastergiadis, 2005). Paterson combines the past and present, the here and there, to disrupt time and space as a complex theoretical construct from which to explore the mediated world in which she lives. In her work, Paterson uses communication technologies, such as television transmission or telephones:

(to) obscure distance and the elapse of time, in order to reverse this effect. By orchestrating encounters with, say, the sound of a prehistoric glacier or images that are 13.2 billion years old, [Paterson brings] the viewer into greater awareness of the expanse of both distance and time (Moss, 2010).

Artists informed by transmigration, like Paterson, compose their work from sampled sounds, remixed images and texts that take the quotations out of context and transmute them to create spatio-temporal conflicts and questions. The mutual influences and tensions between different places and times are multi-directional and this tendency underpins contemporary art informed by transmigration. In this way art is working as a language with multifaceted grounds for articulation and dissemination. Chinese born critic and curator, Hou Hanru who lives and works between San Francisco and Paris, sees a new artistic language emerging: "It may be a language in which time (history) would be reduced to the minimum whilst space (the present) is expanded to the maximum" (Hou, 2002: 113).

Camaroon born, Pascale Marthine Tayou created *Traffic Jam* (2010) using sculpture, video, drawing, photography and installation at Gare Saint Sauveur, an 1861 cargo rail station in Lille, France, now converted to an expansive multipurpose art space. This immense work made up of overcrowded stalls, fragile sculptures, and animated scaffolding is rhizomatic in structure and conception. Visitors can move via multiple pathways experiencing the work as moments and chance encounters with a confusion of histories and cultures. Tayou's work can be viewed as a volatile site characterised by complex action and interaction between and across spatio-temporal boundaries that both link to and resist each other. The transformation from one space or time to another, where art practices are not simply the expression or acting out a single context, requires a new approach to theorising art directly informed by the possibilities made available by transmigration of information and people. Tayou's *Traffic Jam* complicates and disrupts any easy distinction between traditions and cultures:

Tayou is a citizen of the world, as at home in Europe as in the rural and urban districts of Cameroon and beyond. The installation reflected the ironies, benefits and ills of a world in which ideas and goods travel plentifully, if unequally. It also indicated the artist's thorough grounding in Western modernism, with references ranging from Brancusi to Nam June Paik (Kirsch, 2010).

Tayou's unstable art objects and events are decontextualised by attenuating their links with various contexts, in that they take the viewer beyond prescribed boundaries; they can be linked to many-places and many-times.

One of the difficulties in defining a context for contemporary art emerges from the strategic movement across boundaries of space and time. Scott McGuire and Nikos Papastergiadis (2005: 9) point out that communication technologies not only accentuate transmigrational tendencies, but "actively undermine the mode of inhabiting space and organising territory on which the [modern] world was based". Individuals are able to explore and create mobile sites of artistic convergence and collision across the world. There has been "a dramatic

and simultaneous process of both deterritorialization, as well as territorialization where received notions of order, based on associations of citizenship, borders, time, and history, are being actively reworked" (Sundaram, 2003: 292). With the dynamics of global circulation of knowledge, finances, people and ideas, an art object and/or event is located paradoxically as only 'here' by being 'not here' at the same time.

"In these times of apparently unstoppable acceleration we should look to a critique of progress and of definitive ruptures in art, be they ideological, formal, or technical" (Vidal, 2004: 27). The simultaneous compressions and expansions of time and space enabled by travel and technology have opened contemporary art away from any monolinear discourses. The discursal ruptures diverge from and realign with Euro-American modernist connections to express more than one perspective and communicate to more than one socio-cultural group. Contemporary artists informed by processes of transmigration deal with dominant cultures from both the outside and inside as members of multiple communities. Today there is an unprecedented rate and extent of cultural exchange, and a global reach of such processes. Contemporary art is overflowing with varied histories and combinations, as González (1999: 202) points out:

combining signs that should be read against the temporality of other signs present, just as the subject's life is constructed out of constant interruptions, moments of the past appearing in the present (as symptoms), or geographical displacements creating disjunctions of space and an overlapping of visual signs, language, gestures, or artifacts.

Two American artists working in collaboration, Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla reveal their modes of border crossing by combining sculpture, photography, performance, sound and video. They consider time and globalisation in their 2005 video *Amphibious (Login-Logout)* tracking for six minutes the slow progress of a group of turtles on a log floating down the Pearl River Delta in China. The video disorders temporality by showing a vast landscape of pre-modern, modern and postmodern buildings. The immobility of the ancient creatures is contrasted with residential, industrial and commercial activity on the shore. "What Allora & Calzadilla show is that, under the impact of globalization, different temporalities mesh and collide, the tempo of global trade often coexisting with ... the different cadences of local activities" (Verhagen, 2008: 12). The video changes the measure of form and time to make a strong statement. This mixture of old/new or past/present in the video implies temporal dislocation and points to a disruption or diversion of space and time boundaries. Related to a sense of spatio-temporal transience is the artists' capacity to displace the past into the present and there into here.

Dispersion and disjunction

The distribution, decentralisation and dispersion of art and culture in the global sprawl, where cultural forms are moved from one place or time to another provide the raw material for contemporary artists to select, reinterpret, transform, and negotiate production. It is a cut- and-paste art practice that disrupts and dislocates art objects and/or events to function as an alternative to authoritarian or conventional representations. Contemporary art is "becoming a wholly self-referential category defined entirely by circulation rather than by some extrinsic criterion (beauty or truth)" (Mukhopadhyay, 2009). Indeed, the theme of global distribution has gained increasing currency with art theorists who are grappling with emerging practices.

The task for the artist becomes one of "packaging, producing, reframing, and distributing" as artist Seth Price puts it (Price, 2002). The conceptual work of Seth Price, who was born in Jerusalem and now lives and works in New York, encompasses video, installation, sound, sculpture and written text to investigate "different articulations across various mediums between source, object, and redistribution" (Newman, 2010: 29). Price draws sources for his art objects and/or events from the Internet and uses the Internet as a network of mass distribution. A network of trajectories and exchanges is dispersing artistic discourse and ideas across the globe:

Within this field cultural flows circulate in asymmetrical patterns; their complexity is marked by feedback loops and enfolding tactics that can have unintentional consequences, resulting in the dispersal and restructuring of symbols and signs (Papastergiadis, 2005: 289).

A sense of 'location' in Price's art is mitigated by the same content issued in different forms or versions: as a CD, on a downloadable web-site, self-duplicated, or as a limited edition book. A number of contemporary artists, including Price, move their practice from its original context and deploy the same work into other fields of associations (Newman, 2010), emphasising the translocatability of communication and distribution networks. To an extent this confirms the position taken by French curator and critic, Nicolas Bourriaud (2009: 14), who states, "No longer can a work be reduced to the presence of an object in the here and now; rather, it consists of a significant network whose interrelationships the artist elaborates ..." (14). Bourriaud (2009: 13) views the chaos and complexity of contemporary art as "a positive experience of disorientation through an art-form exploring all dimensions of the present, tracing lines in all directions of time and space" (13). Contemporary art objects and/or events informed by transmigration are strangely discontinuous and can be deployed within a whole range of associations.

Multiaxial connections

The networks of spatio-temporal associations in contemporary art that Bourriaud and others reference offers a challenge to art theorists to map in space and time. The works of twentieth century Continental theorists, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari have had a profound influence on contemporary social and cultural thought and offer a conceptual guide to understanding contemporary art informed by processes of transmigration. Deleuze and Guattari (1986) propose a rhizomatic experimentation that immediately detaches art objects and/or events from categorical methodologies that have traditionally organised analysis through a single aesthetic system. A rhizomorphous engagement with art objects and/or events is a process whereby interpretations emerge from a multiaxial experience. Deleuze and Guattari (1986: 3) view an art object and/or event as "a rhizome, a burrow"—a virtually endless, complex, densely connected series of structures and inter-structures with multiple entrances and exits, cul-de-sacs, intersections, dead ends, and transit zones. This interstitial domain can be metaphorically compared to a maze, a vast overwhelming network exceeding any centre that can be accessed from multiple perspectives:

We will be trying only to discover what other points our entrance connects to, what crossroads and galleries one passes through to link two points, what the map of the rhizome is and how the map is modified if one enters by another point (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986: 3).

My intent in alluding to this labyrinthine network is to disorder the presumed universality of knowledge into a confluence of different spatio-temporal perspectives that collide in acts of transition. Multiaxial connections and multiple interactions enabled by transmigration suggest a multi-dimensional and heterogeneous cartography of contemporary art that is forged by chaotic connectivity allowing for new possibilities to be created and unanticipated meanings encountered, in which shifting and 'strange' moments of connections, disconnections and reconnections can be made. Such cartographies are evident in the work of Chinese born artist, Guan Wei who works across painting, drawing, sculpture and installation, incorporating dispersed fragments of Chinese, Australian, Indigenous Australian, popular Western, scientific and Chinese folk cultures into his art objects and/or events. This approach is underpinned by his knowledge and experience of moving between cultures and locations, as well as understanding the political and cultural forces and effects of contemporary globalisation. He recycles, transforms and commemorates a variety of imagery, basing his work on complimentary and contradictory combinations of motifs and symbols to create ruptures and discontinuities that resist easy identification. Although Guan Wei's sources retain a certain singularity, his art objects are not resolvable back to a single source because of the presence of other sources. They open themselves in what could be termed a 'disjunctive synthesis' where each element relates to others in a paradoxical yet productive construction. Guan Wei transforms

one code into another, without any code acting as a master code. His work is full of collected material and varied meaning:

combining signs that should be read against the temporality of other signs present, just as the subject's life is constructed out of constant interruptions, moments of the past appearing in the present (as symptoms), or geographical displacements creating disjunctions of space and an overlapping of visual signs, language, gestures, or artifacts (González, 1999: 202).

Guan Wei typically references the imagery and appearances of other works as a ploy for another level of content. He simultaneously incorporates signs from different places and times that contain within them a multiplicity of other signs, each embodying a series of contrary or competing associations. Thus Guan Wei's work exists in a field of intertextuality made up of implicit references, ideas and experiences. There is no chronology in the way he arranges elements; ideas migrate, clash and settle, influenced by "an intricate, conflictive articulation of forces. Globalization implies multiple contaminations, mixtures and contradictions" (Mosquera & Fisher, 2004: 7). And it is precisely these mixtures that Deleuze and Guattari (1990: 67) highlight when they write, "Even when it is unique, a language remains a mixture, a schizophrenic *mélange* blurring what can be said and what can't be said; one function will be played off against the other, all the degrees of territoriality and relative deterritorialization will be played out".

Transformed versions of an art object and/or event form the basis for continuous reinterpretation, being recreated constantly along with the accrual of meaning. As art objects and/or events circulate through different times and spaces, they accumulate disparate meanings. The global distribution of art can be understood as a complex accumulation of qualities that are as much complimentary as contradictory. This ambivalence has given contemporary art an evasive quality that produces new levels of discontinuity and rupture. Such artworks cause an experience of disjuncture when an equivalent is sought in other times or even other places.

Mis/understandings

Understandings and readings of art objects and/or events are always flawed. In the video *Dialogue* (1996-9), Japanese Shigeaki Iwai builds a fiction of understanding between cultures. The conversations were scripted in English then translated into over 60 different languages and recorded in European, Asian and Australian multicultural cities. 80 people from 58 countries took part in this work (Osaka, 1999). Iwai forges expanding connections across cultural boundaries to resist being identified, codified or contained through undertaking a critique of naming to open boundaries of communication to further nuances of meaning and possibility. Four different versions of the video were created. The artist chose a group of people, each speaking a different language. However, each person appears to understand the language being spoken by the others. In one version of the video he included sub-titles in four languages. The video was about the impossibility of communication. He said, "We have to perceive differences in cultural background which appear in language, to know untranslatable facts, Iwai dauntlessly and flexibly continues to explore the new possibilities— or impossibility—of communication in a multicultural society" (Osaka, 1999: 72).

However, it is in the flaws of interpretation and with the appearance of slight glimmers that the complex nature of an art object and/or event can be explored. This metaphor reflects the evanescence of meaning, which is any state of the moment. Deleuze (1988: 52) states, "Visibilities are not forms of objects, nor even the forms that would show up under light, but rather forms of luminosity which are created by the light itself and allow a thing or object to exist only as a flash, sparkle or shimmer". Creating meaning through translation is like a moving kaleidoscope that continually brings strange and surprising moments into view. Homi Bhabha (1994: 228) elaborates that "the 'time' of translation consists in that movement of meaning, the principle and practice of communication" as an incomplete project. Art objects and/or events exist across fields of references,

ideas and experiences and “because of their continual implication in other symbolic systems, are always ‘incomplete’ or open to cultural translation” (Bhabha, 1994: 163).

American art critic and curator, G. Roger Denson (1996) recommends placing difference in a larger scheme, by “showing difference as settling everywhere, among everything and everyone, and rendering the universal too obliquely and simply to underpin *a priori* criteria for discussing international and cultural modes” (99). The very concept of difference has no exact opposite against which to define it. Meaning is only ever produced *in difference*, and the final closure of meaning is only ever deferred. This is the combination (a state between differing and deferring) which Jacques Derrida (1981) puts forward in his neologism *différance*. Thus rather than seeking definitive explanation or final answers, the process of *différance* is the engendering of different interpretations and reconstructions of art objects and/or events in a perpetually deferred way. Contemporary art informed by transmigration then is indeterminate, with its meaning in deferral. In other words, it is based on the process of movement and differentiation, a differentiation that is not fixed and continuously in motion. It is difference that produces heterogeneous experiences and contested voices that open new dimensions in deconstructing hegemonic narratives.

This multiple coding or juxtaposition of various codes creates something strange and unsettling that cannot be assimilated into one particular code. For the art theorist there is a state of uncertainty and apprehension, that is, an inability to name what such art objects and/or events might reference. This suspension of signification is the result of transforming divergent traditions into a disjunctive synthesis so that the resultant artwork no longer ‘belongs’ to one tradition or culture, despite utilising what seems familiar and close at hand.

Uncertainty and unassimilability

Art objects and/or events that exist across boundaries of time and space enjoy a certain mobility of meaning and thus are transformative as they shift and mutate to take on various nuances in different contexts. This volatile position “does not construct a place or condition of its own other than mobility, uncertainty and multiplicity of the fact of the constant border-crossing itself” (Grossberg, 1996: 92). Contemporary artists informed by transmigration deliberately and strategically express the conflicts and juxtapositions of numerous cultures and traditions but cannot claim to belong to a particular place and time. Such artists freely quote from a number of sources to resist cultural normalisation. The point to be made about such artists is that their creative practice “does not function properly within the institutionalized art context practices which are somehow stubborn and difficult, which resist easy assimilation” (Price, 2002).

Transmigrational art objects and/or events consciously promote or suggest a random field of references that cannot be fixed or reduced to a master narrative or code. In this respect they enable multiple associations and references to many social and cultural contexts while denying assimilation and homogenisation. The heterogeneous references found in such work are a form of “tactical media” used by “nomadic media warriors, pranksters” for cultural resistance (Hou, 2002a: 220). It is by using this plurality that artists can provoke rupture and misunderstanding and these contradictions appear less as a solution to theoretical problems than as a disruption of solutions. Artists’ global interrogations revolve around disorder through the production of ‘strange’ art objects or events made up of seemingly familiar bits and pieces that can induce a state of apprehension and uncertainty in the viewer. In this process the emergence of the ‘strangely familiar’ undermines the autonomy and authority assumed by one artistic practice against another. Contemporary art informed by transmigration throws up issues of indeterminacy because it cannot be assimilated into neat categories, and becomes “a site for infinite experimentation, the location of a quiet resistance against all attempts to codify and systemize the world” (Vergne, 2003: 27).

Contemporary artists informed by transmigration undertake a re-articulation and transformation of fundamental codes by altering and miswriting them. They construct their works

from strangely incomplete constructions that ask to be (re)interpreted, but never in terms of a master code. This can be attributed to the density of allusions and the compression of the artistic forms with which they work. Such work engenders multiple meanings to recover a “genealogy of the mixed times and spaces” (Mirzoeff, 2002: 162). These translocated and scattered forms cannot be transmitted or received intact.

The most challenging aspect of contemporary art informed by transmigration is that by shifting constantly it resists classification within any essentialist discourse. Artists combine heterogeneous ideas gleaned from a variety of sources into critical discourse and yield forms that a viewer can neither name nor point to, with qualities that recover or transcend the conventions of a particular practice. Ongoing processes of translation and interpretation can give rise to something new and innovative, parts of which become unrecognisable in that they cannot be assimilated. Uncertainty, contradiction and strangeness need to be reconceptualised as positive values, not negations but affirmations, in the move towards a ‘transmigrational’ art theory.

Conclusion

Although this essay cannot be taken as reflecting all contemporary art in relation to transmigration, it nonetheless suggests some ways of thinking critically about the direction that debates in art theory could take. Art objects and/or events informed by transmigration are in flux as they move between and across boundaries of time and space transforming and being transformed by both. A major aspect of the art objects and/or events discussed here by artists, Stephen Little, Pascale Marthine Tayou, Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla, Katie Paterson, Seth Price, Guan Wei and Shigeaki Iwai is that they defy definition. The artists’ works, although individual, are so varied and changeable that they span several categories and extend beyond boundaries. However, it is this multiplicity that allows a reading of their work using theories attuned to transmigration and translocation as a way of thinking and communicating in a globalised world.

Multiple artistic spaces and times are being opened through transmigrational negotiations. Art objects and/or events informed by transmigration provide an open terrain for consideration, where the spatio-temporal boundaries of ‘art’ as a category are continually shifting and expanding. It is the infinite nature of networks that illuminate heterogeneous understandings for art theory that challenge any dominant or unified discourse. Indeed, artistic limits are being opened up for further consideration. The transference of different signs and the juxtaposition of alternative perspectives are a recurring feature in art objects and/or events informed by transmigration as well as a strategy that artists use in order to provoke multiple forms of exchange between genres, subjects and fields of knowledge.

The status of contemporary art objects and/or events informed by transmigration has become less clear as they open up spatial and temporal rifts. They call attention to the contested terrain of the global art scene as a shifting landscape by expanding the boundaries of space and time. Such art objects and/or events are generated from multiple spatial and historical trajectories and rhythms to promote multiple interpretations and associations. The rhizomatic conjunction of the objects and/or events, using symbols and ideas from a multiplicity of sources create a rich, material field of relationships, generating metaphors of the displacement of space and time. These tropes are unstable, however, as the resistant identity of the elements create a confused dynamic between literal and implied meanings. Such art objects and/or events frustrate the demand to say what they are—as they are paradoxically familiar yet strange and cannot be named.

The art objects and/or events presented in this discussion can be seen as works-in-transition as they undergo a process of transformation. There are many variations of art objects and/or events depending on where and when they are shown. In this way they are being carried along, in, around and by the technologies for production and dissemination. The significance is in the heterogeneous ways contemporary artistic practice informed by transmigration is to be conceived as de-centered

as it travels between and across different places and times. Dispersed art networks emancipate artistic practice from a place of origin and hence any connection to a single context is attenuated. The effects of increased movement across boundaries provide the source development of an art theory emerging from a mobile experience.

Many contemporary artists mix divergent and contradictory influences and factors that reflect a multiple perspective on space and time. Such artists pursue a systematic transgression of visual and textual codes through insertion of diverse perspectives in an art object and/or event. The work of artists informed by transmigration denies a singular significance to what the viewer sees, ensuring a continuum in which one perspective is steadily displaced by another. If contemporary art informed by transmigration can be seen as a space of transference, translation, and transformation, then art theory needs to provide a compass for navigation through a vast landscape with no stable boundaries. Following the 'rhizomatic' strategy proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (1986), this argument does not endorse any essential or single access point of understanding common to all art objects and/or events informed by transmigration. Multiple methodologies should be employed to understand disparate art objects and/or events where meaning is uncertain. Rather than being fixed and unified, expanded art theories are needed that are capable of accounting for abrupt juxtapositions, linking networks of associations, and opening up multiple spaces and times of understanding.

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