

S/Corona – working with a score

In order to give continuity in times of lockdown, aPass encouraged us participants to engage in a score, online. The score consists of two parts: first I prepare a “gift” – a manifestation of what I am busy with at the moment, regarding my artistic research. Then, the reaction to this is a question by one of the other participants. Out of the question comes a new gift – that will again be answered by a new question, and so on.

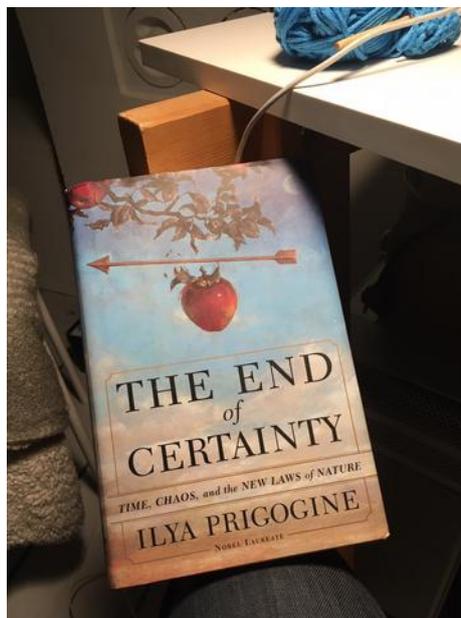
Here I publish the gifts and the questions, collected since March 16th 2020.

Scorona Gift 1_ Close Encounter

audio piece, March 16th 2020

Audio piece:

<https://archive.org/details/scoronagift1closeencounter>



Reaction to Gift 1 – Fede asks

Hi Christina!

WET LAND is the title of a poem book that Lucas de Lima wrote to her best friend, Ana Maria, after her death in 2006. She died in Florida (USA): she was swimming in the same ponds where she used to swim every summer, when an alligator killed her. According to The Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission, since 1948 “only 17 humans had been confirmed killed by the huge reptiles.” but in 2006 three people died that way. The construction of houses and resorts was leaving too little space for the gators, who went into residential areas in search of food and water.

On your Scorona Gift you talk about how the more we restrict wild animals’ environments, the more likely it is that their diseases will attack us. You also wonder about how to achieve a collective response/learning from this global corona crisis.

Under Ana Maria’s death lies the same conflict of the Corona virus but on a local level (Florida). De Lima’s response to her tragical death is a beautiful and complex elegy that merges trauma, myth and ecology, turning the gator into a deity, an adversary, a killer, a victim and a lover. So my

question(s) is:

In the case of this Corona crisis, that shows that we've reached global consumerism but not yet a global sense of responsibility, how simple or complex should the story be? Will we learn better from a manichaeian fable: dark forces of Nature vs Culture? Or will that fable just feed our appetite for epic entertainment? How to build a collective response? How to turn the virus into a deity, an adversary, a killer, a victim and a lover?

Scorona_Gift2_CrocodilesAlligatorsNarrative

text, March 22nd 2020:

Crocodiles, Aligators and Narratives, Christina, 21st of March 2020

Val Plumwood had a conflict with a crocodile. She went alone into the swamps. Her boat was overturned and miraculously, she survived the crocodile's attack. She was rescued by the ranger and brought to a hospital. The ranger and the authorities wanted to kill the crocodile – so it would not harm anybody else, and as a form of revenge. But Ms. Plumwood was against it, advocating that she had intruded into the animal's habitat and not respected the animal's nature. The crocodile was not killed. Many years after she recovered, she wrote about the incident. Prey and predator, meat eater and vegetarian, how can a human be prey and become food for a predator. Plumwood was a vegetarian all her life. After my last gift, Federico suggested a poem by Luca de Lima – about a friend Ana who had experienced an accident with an alligator. She had not survived. Another woman, different ending. If these incidents were only reported by the newspapers, if they had become an event without a narrative that emerged from the event, I might not know anything about Val Plumwood, about the crocodile's strategy to kill its prey, or about Ana whose accident inspired Luca de Lima to write *Wetlands*. The importance of the narrative seems immense. It becomes the essential part, with the event disappearing to the background, almost. So, I have been wondering about the importance of the narrative versus the event. In the case of my work, there is no event at all. The Institute for Relocation of Biodiversity is creating responses, stories, proposals that are inspired by real conditions and situations. However, the aim is never to truly change the real situation – chances that the endangered animal will be saved are low. The aim is more to create a narrative, to embed the knowledge, the care, the worries and the conceptual possibilities and to weave a story. The story is a possible narrative for the future of the planet, and it is utopian. At the same time, it is a process where a thought densifies and becomes a written thought, or a spoken thought or a video or a text fragment. Why is narrative so important for humans? At times, the concept is more important than an activity. Talking about climate change seems enough to be absolved from having to change anything in our behaviour. Is this an ultimate form of denial? Is this a joke or a sarcastic response to an unsurmountable problem that we have manoeuvred ourselves into? Is it group dynamics or peer pressure or a lack of responsibility? And are narratives also important for life forms that are other than human? How do their narratives look like? The other day, I saw a presentation by Vinciane Despret. She was wondering about her dogs and how narratives function in their minds. And if the concept of consecutive actions, of doing one thing after the other in a logical sequence simply does not apply to animal brains. The viral event that came upon us has triggered a new narrative in humankind. Or actually several narratives that are not yet fully developed. We find ourselves in the middle of them and we don't yet know which ones, which main narratives will remain. Meanwhile, we are explaining to each other how it all works, how it came to be, how we will find an exit out of it. And this story telling seems to ease our situation. But it also seems to disconnect us from reality. Does it?!

Reaction to Gift 2 – Andrea asks

Hi Christina! I am struck by this question you pose: And are narratives also important for life

forms that are other than human?

I am very curious, how do you collaborate with that question in your research. Can a human answer that question? I am thinking If humans can assume, at least, how anything humans narrate will only create human story for the sake of humans writing a narrative to hold onto or leave a trace in the world... what other forms can a narrative invoke that could be important for other life forms? And if that is relevant for you, what could be a technique for listening to other forms than human without speaking for them?

Scorona_Gift3_ TheEndOfCertainty

text, March 25th 2020

Christina :: Scorona 3rd Gift, Wed, 25th of March 2020

Yesterday I had a talk with a friend and colleague. We are supposed to prepare for a show in the summer, a big contemporary art festival. The theme is "To Err Is Human". It is not clear if the festival is going through. There are conflicting signals. Maybe it goes through as planned. Maybe it will be postponed. Maybe it will happen in a different form, maybe it will not happen at all. How to prepare for something like this? So, I have been wondering how to future this. Futuring, as in prospecting for different futures. In Futuring we can think of probable futures – a situation that we can reasonably expect to happen. This would then be about forecasting and a quite analytical approach. In this particular case – living in March 2020 - I do not find this a helpful path. Then in futuring, we can think of possible and preferred futures – a more generative approach that has to do with visions and imagination. Could other futures be made happen? What would they look like and what would produce these other futures? For today, I find this practice more interesting, as there is an openness to it and an aspect of how to influence or imagine how a future could happen. For the festival, however, this means something quite technical to me. And to think of all, or many, eventualities. Questions around how to produce an online piece that can be consumed also when socially distanced. Or, if mobility is then not possible, something that can be sent/installed/shown without having to be anywhere specific, except online. And something that we can recycle by avoiding site specificity. If the festival simply does not happen, it can maybe be shown at some other event, later. All seems to point to digital and online work, as a safer option and therefore more predictable. So this approach could create stability, safety in our minds and it is somewhat opportunistic. And, a bit it also is business as usual – trying to make it happen, be it precarious or not, and make it consumable at any cost. But isn't this exactly what we are supposed to re-think, re-evaluate, re-assess? "The present immense crisis, also carries a huge potential - the possibility for fundamental change." And where is this change then? But there is another question that has occupied my mind. What happens with the ideas, the practice, the understanding of the world, the proposals that I had - that used to be my project? Do they have to be reconsidered fundamentally? Embedded in a new context? Is there now a chance or even the expectation to re-think the project with a new view on the world that I am gaining at the moment? I feel I have no overview. My predominant state is one of confusion and disorientation, the sensation of being in the middle of a huge wave that is washing over me. But, honestly – why did I think I had an overview in pre-Corona times? Or was that simply the illusion of navigating known waters, whereas now there is bad visibility, shallow waterlevels and scaring howls from sea-monsters, all at the same time. And there is nothing to rely on, except my intuition. So, dear virus - as you are a quite loud representative of the other-than-human world at the moment - how can we avoid to repeat the narrative that we already know so well, but that did not work so well?

Reaction to Gift 3 – Chloe asks

Dear Christina,

I first goggled "to Err is Human" I found out it comes from an 1711 poem titled 'An Essay on

Criticism' by Alexander Pope... The quotations continue... "To err is human, to forgive divine", "A little learning is a dang'rous thing", and "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread". While there is a lot to unpack there, I will start from the title of the poem; An Essay on Criticism, the quote itself comes from an attempt to respond or to articulate conditions for response. I find it interesting in relation to the questions you pose on how to keep working during a global pandemic where the social spaces and territories have shifted drastically, and bodies are scarcely visible outside of images.

One could think of a critique as a way of making a continuity between something be it an object or event and a discursive space (or a public). I say a continuity in that it connects the object and event, even through disagreement or agreement within a social sphere, criticism recognizes and creates ties.

Maybe this question could be faced as a question of continuity, how can the future you expected be in relation to the future you now need to begin to work with/towards/for. Continuity is a given really, one thing and then the next, as long as we all agree on time (haha), it is the quality that continuity takes that we can have some say on.

In the project and ideas you had prior to the world that knew this pandemic, what are the qualitative ways they continue into the possible futures of the world we are now living in. Maybe before thinking of form—online or media art—one could think what kinds of continuity can be found between art pre-COVID-19 and post? Not a continuity that would say 'lets do it anyway, ignorance is happiness', but to look at the transition from one to the next, how did we do that? what choices were made in this transition? What ideas did we cling to in the shifting paradigm of relations?

Scorona_Gift4_ Room-Park :: Domestication

video piece, April 3rd 2020

<https://vimeo.com/405792749>

Reaction to Gift 4 – Flavio asks

Hi dear, I really enjoyed your gift. This made me think about co-relation and co-living.

I felt addressed by your video. I felt that the interlocution of your video was me. So, I started thinking about the power of death risk in this process of co-evolution.

What levels of domestication we are suffering because of this situation?

It made me read again Starhawk in her book "Dreaming the dark" and I found this:

"Death, in fact, becomes the source of power-from-within – for only when we acknowledge the ultimate limits both of our power and our responsibility can we be free to bring power forth. We can act freely only when we recognize that we are neither powerless nor omnipotent; that our active will, strong as it may be, is tempered by the activity of other wills, that our needs and desires must be balanced with those others".

I started imagining, then, what kind of questions I would address to this virus, if I could dialogue with it.

My questions are:

- What would say, if you could make a video to a community of viruses?
- What kind of dialogue would you keep with this community?
- What would you ask them?

Scorona Gift5_ Infection is Defined as the Communication of a Disease
video piece, April 10th 2020

<https://vimeo.com/406372555>

Reaction to Gift 5 – Muslin brothers ask

Dear Christina

Thank you for your gift.

We were enjoying watching your proposal on Coronavirus, we were intrigued by the information that you convey on issues of time, especially the way we can weave the past, present and future practices, the relationship between the scientific arena of certainty that provides us information based on observing the past and pointing to behavioral patterns of the nature of matter, in comparison to tarot cards and the phenomenon of predicting the future.

The virus however is based much on deviation which creates the mutation, Our question is, what is the mutation of your proposal?

Scorona Gift6_ Terrain and Germ
video piece, April 18th 2020

<https://vimeo.com/409180473>

Reaction to Gift 6 – Lucia asks:

Dear Christina, I wonder about language as reality generator. I wonder about what kind of reality I generate throughout the language I'm using. If I consider language as a frame, I wonder what is the position from which I do frame what I'm interested to talk about, to spend words with, and how this position does something to the landscape, intended as complex ensemble of relationships, including the position of the observer. I wonder what are the power structures I enable when I use specific information coming from a specific context and what they do produce. The use of dialectical and rhetorical tools have a huge power as well. Thinking of your last question where you wonder about the two possibilities, the action of cleaning the tank or vaccinating the fish, meaning, the way I perceive it, taking care of the symptoms or the causes, I

ask you if we could apply the same question to the language you choose for your materialization. The action of cleaning the tank, if we consider it as language, and therefore following my thoughts as reality generator, what kind of fish would make possible? Would this fish ever exist the way we see it from here or it could have the possibility to have different bodies, immunity systems or even become a mermaid?

Scorona Gift7_ Biota

video piece, April 24th 2020

<https://vimeo.com/411723426>

Reaction to Gift 7: Ana Paula asks:

Dear Christina,

I listened to your video (I discovered that it works better for me as an audio than a video) many times, letting the words get in... the repetition allows me to go deep in the words I was listening, in the voices of these two woman, in the sound of the water and the wind.

I found myself very close to the ideas they talked in your video, and coincidentally I am very attracted by the concept of biota. Especially, I find amazing the idea of human microbiome and all that come from it,

To know something like this:

"Humans are colonized by many microorganisms; the traditional estimate is that the average human body is inhabited by ten times as many non-human cells as human cells, but more recent estimates have lowered that ratio to 3:1 or even to approximately the same number"

Makes my mind blow up...

In these days that I have read a lot, many of the things I came across with are (of course) about the way we are reacting to the current corona-crisis,

One of the best articles I've read, reminds me a lot the concerns that I feel through your gift, "Another danger that is off the ledger is the deterioration in immunity caused by excessive hygiene and distancing. It is not only social contact that is necessary for health, it is also contact with the microbial world. Generally speaking, microbes are not our enemies, they are our allies in health. A diverse gut biome, comprising bacteria, viruses, yeasts, and other organisms, is essential for a well-functioning immune system, and its diversity is maintained through contact with other people and with the world of life. Excessive hand-washing, overuse of antibiotics, aseptic cleanliness, and lack of human contact might do more harm than good. The resulting allergies and autoimmune disorders might be worse than the infectious disease they replace. Socially and biologically, health comes from community. Life does not thrive in isolation.

Seeing the world in us-versus-them terms blinds us to the reality that life and health happen in community. To take the example of infectious diseases, we fail to look beyond the evil pathogen

and ask, What is the role of viruses in the microbiome? What are the body conditions under which harmful viruses proliferate? Why do some people have mild symptoms and others severe ones (besides the catch-all non-explanation of "low resistance")? What positive role might flus, colds, and other non-lethal diseases play in the maintenance of health?"

https://charleseisenstein.org/essays/the-coronation/?_page=19

Having this in mind, and your gift and your practice in mind, and also my desire to restore my own microbiome, Do you think that the Institute for Relocation of Biodiversity could help us?

I mean, is clear that we ourselves are destroying our inner diversity, so, clearly we need a tutorial to restore something of the damage we have done so far, isn't it?

Missing you a lot, and looking forward to see you again.