

ACT
OVERGROUND

RESEARCH SPED UP VERSION
&
REFLECTION GRADUATION PROJECT

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rætsel under-grunts
(*to guess affective reasons among-grunts*)

fair-tale
(*under-standing-language*)
(*to stand-among-language*)

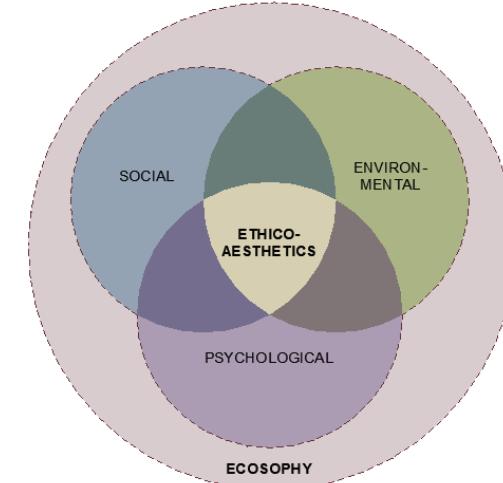
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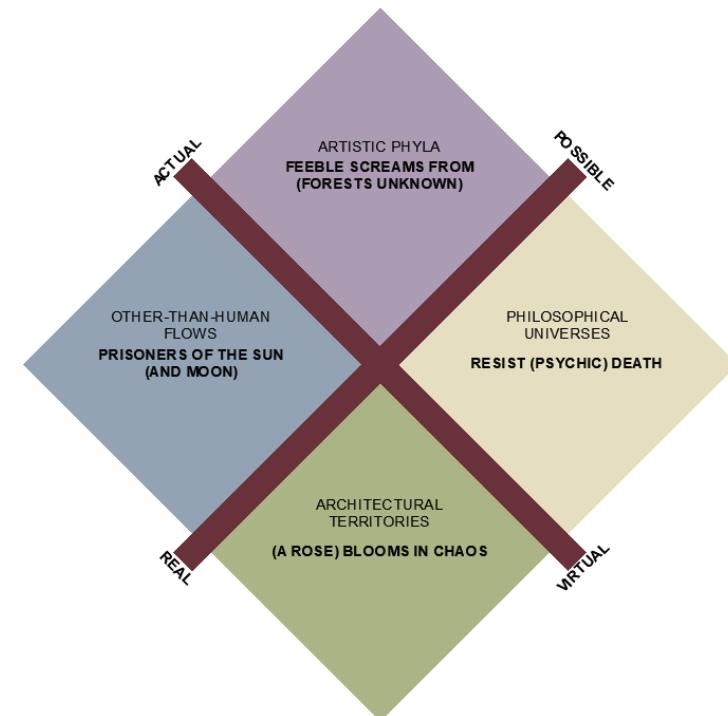
to under-ground riddles: loving [chaosmic flowers]

Dear reader, what could it *mean* to think and talk about the ecological crises of our times with-in architecture and *why* does it matter? How could architects *act* with more sensibility? Grounded in the schizoanalytic meta-modelling and ecosophy (see diagrams) of French psychoanalyst, social philosopher/activist and ecologist Félix Guattari (1930-1992), the ecological crisis in this research is under-stood as not merely environmental, but simultaneously social *and* psychological. Ecological assemblages are therefore approached as both natural *and* cultural, actual *and* virtual. But then, what does that change in *how* we theorise and practise architecture? How do 'we' style the grounds that we act with? What happens under-ground? The aim of this research was by no means to construct an ego-centric conclusion *as if* one could solve such complexity by going against binary, hierarchical constraints while hiding away behind the same rationalised habits. Rather, drawing on the work of Guattari and his attention to the practice of architecture, the seeds of curiosity were planted in questioning the *value* ecosophical and ethico-aesthetic practices could have in relation to architecture and what it could mean to trade the position of the Western European/Dutch architect *under* today's conditions. These curiosities have grown into chaotic flowers by means of linking-together (mapping) trans-disciplinary under-standings on *how to* trans-form the *mentality* (body-mind-soul) under-lying the ethopolitical grounds an architect acts-with and *how to* train an eco-logical response-ability towards heterogeneous worldings; different *styles* of living *and* dying: the *under-ground(ing)* *riddles* of relational architectural existence.

To under-line the importance of a-signifying affects in knowledge production, and transverse the fields of Art-Science-Philosophy, the writing of this research is composed through close, critical and creative readings of new materialistic/other-than-human thoughts and concepts expressed through four (virtually-possible(not real, but actual)) dialectical conversations (dialogues: (the right to-)act-through-word). Each dialogue is



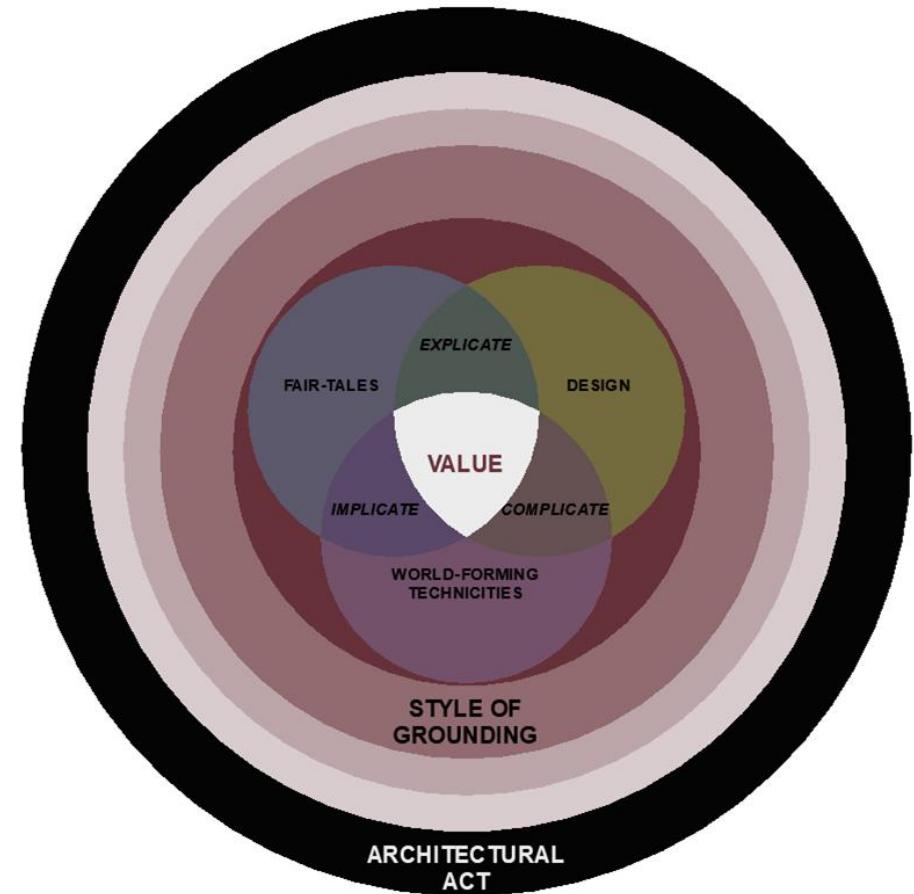
Relational diagram of Guattari's three ecologies with ethico-aesthetic practices at the heart and the encompassing ecosophical logic (science of ecosystems which traverses the fields of Art-Science-Philosophy) Source: author.



Relational diagram of Guattari's multi-headed Assemblage of Enunciation with a twist and the names of each dialogue in bold. Source: author.

named *after* a song and could be understood as a micro-cosmos that takes place in-between the interiorised past of the author, the written work of Guattari, the Body without Organs of an (fictional) architect and the selected work of Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway, Heidi Sohn, Andrej Radman, Gökhan Kodalak and Stavros Kousoulas, and some old Nordic mythology.

In return and relay between theory *and* practice the fifth conversation (results: values/meaningful relations/grounded arguments) is an *act of grounding*, named “X_WHISPERS IN THE ECHO CHAMBER”, towards an externalised future of the author and the position of the architect where they *make-sense* of their new relational under-standings of architectural technicities. With hope and love for sustainable/endurable futures, a multi-folded plan (see diagram and research-design) is composed for a design project on municipality grounds surrounding the collective milieu of Maashaven in Rotterdam-Zuid (NLD) in an attempt to counter-act the ego-logical etho-political choices that under-*lie* (pun intended) the ongoing large over-arching ecological projects and speculate on how it could be different by introducing narratives that are often untold or deemed undesirable in architectural practices: fair-tales that aim at understanding the oppressive powers at play and their affects but attempt to trans-form them towards positive passions by introducing new (architectural) relations -through four small, but affective, design interventions.



Relational diagram of multi-folded plan/architectural act. Source: author.

Reflection on process

Over the duration of my graduation project there have been many conversations between my mentors and me that have co-shaped this research. Eco- logically, it makes no sense to me to go back over all the feedback and reflect, rather I prefer to approach my research as an ongoing more-than-I project -I thank Erin Manning for this insight and Andrej Radman's work for introducing me to her. As such, I assess the value of the style (how) of my thinking-making through the extent that it makes-sense and is deemed valuable to a collective ecology of extended minds, both in and outside the Architecture Master Track. On both academic and societal grounds, I hope my research sparks a curiosity to explore other modes of knowledge and intelligence which are not tied to anthropo-centric and hierarchical value systems and instead empower many different ecologies of (architectural) minds.

With no presupposed framework, albeit goal-oriented, limited by critical selections based on ethico-political implications and guided by my 'under-ground riddles' language-tool, there have been many moments of chaos throughout the research process where the review moments with my mentors functioned as a means of organizing my thoughts, rephrasing my questions and testing whenever my conducted experiments made sense in relation to what my intuition was after, what my research embodied and in what style I chose to make it expressive and how it was interpreted by other minds (ethico-aesthetics). Eco- logically, the writing-making of this research has taken many paths, often with dead ends. However, these "failed" ideas/steps were not useless, perhaps at times monstrous (and due to my interiorised chaos hard to express, track or grasp). Nonetheless, I would argue all of them have been productive in the sense that they allowed for an externalisation of knowledge which in turn resulted in opportunities to sense differently, understand differently, think again, try again, and start anew: to ask different questions, seek different information and to under- stand my practising grounds differently both as a vital individual and through/in relation to the position of an architect; changes in perspective. I've asked myself and had to explain, many times what the sufficient reason was behind the writing of dialogues. What difference does it make? I argue the difference to be in the experience and the capacity to short-circuit closed

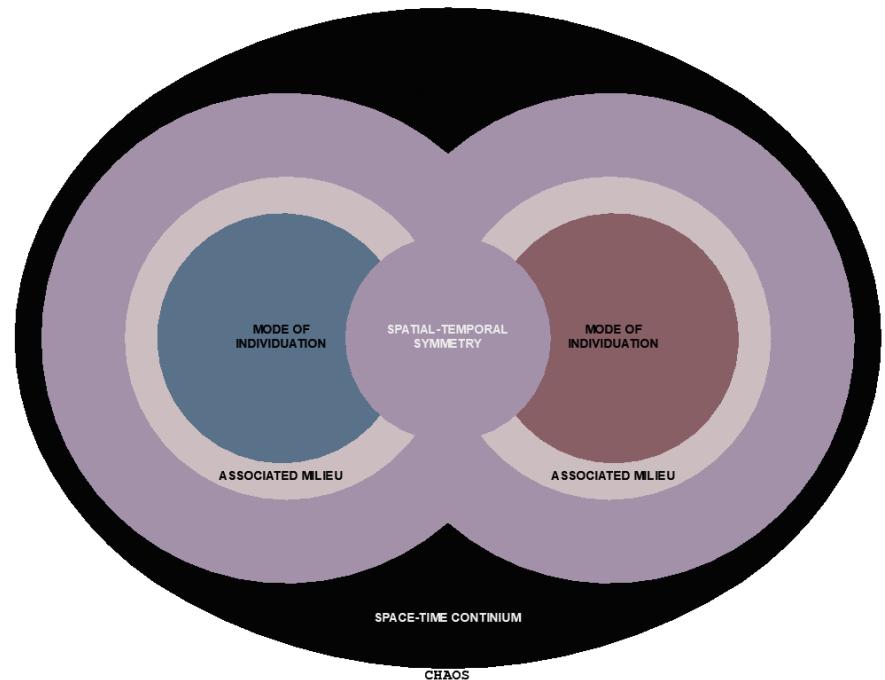
systems. By making the position of an architect (Archi) into a character, I was forced to not only understand the theory but *actively* respond to and invent transitions, "predict" possible misunderstandings and/or defensive responses from other mentalities and simultaneously it allowed for easy switches between different fields of knowledge and experiences from my interiorised past while keeping the aim of the conversations on the understanding of the relation to architecture and the content of the four selected domains.

Many of my choices during the process, or perhaps better phrased, a positive resistance to make close-ended conclusions/*assumptions* about what the design interventions will become, attempt to cut ties with hierarchical value systems and cease to invest in a mode of productivism that has lost all "human" finality, asked for leaps in (trans-disciplinary) knowledge and skills, how to construct/invent a language that allowed me to break down (and translate into Dutch) theoretical and philosophical concepts without simplifying, and the (ongoing) trust and empowerment of my mentors that it eventually will, in fact, make-sense. Since sense and value are not given, nor to be "found", they are made/invented just like discursive time and space. My review moments with Heidi Sohn were moments where I could speculate on and complicate my under-standing of the concepts, find new fertile grounds for ideas to flourish or decide to burn the weeds to de-re-fertilise the soil. My conversations with Roel van de Pas were moments of mediating how such knowledge/different understandings would affect "traditional" modes of practising architecture and to what extent it was within my capacity to experiment-with and defend other content-expression relations. Moreover, my theoretical research is the *ground* for the under-standing of the architectural act and does not merely *influence* the design, but rather the understanding of the act *is* both the research and the design but embedded/applied in different contexts and could be transversed to any other context, it's a *mentality*. It wasn't until P3 that there were some ideas on the designs, as my design project is research-based: they are responses (not reactions) to the lines of individuation and their desiring-machines. Many of my ideas were expressed verbally (not to confuse with, but including, Speech) throughout the review sessions in the sense that they attempted to make-sense of the futurity of the narratives and continue the

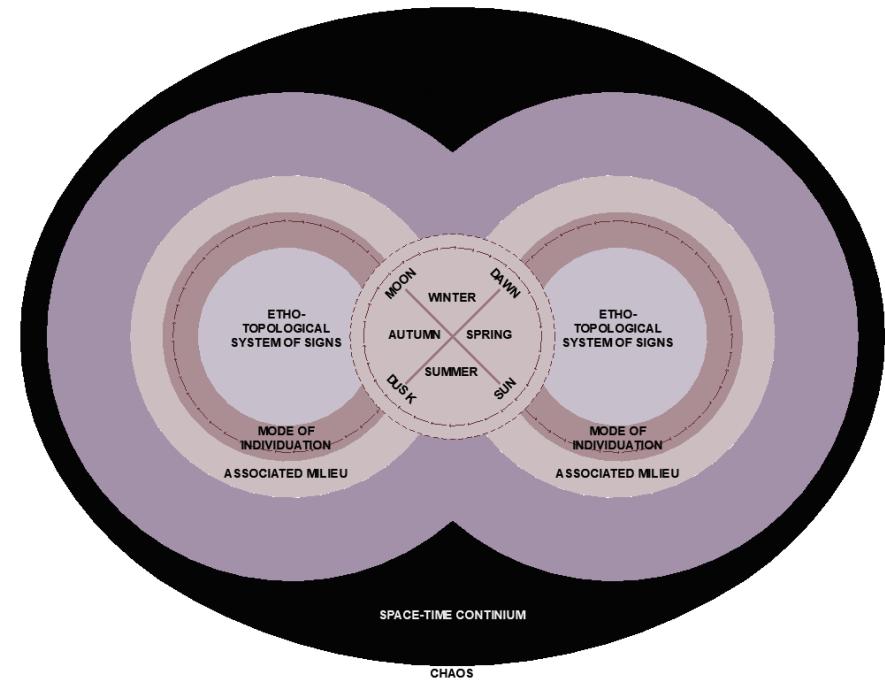
lines of individuation-with the design. My design-focused conversations with both Roel and Pierre Jennen have helped greatly in the shaping of the narratives, how to represent the drawings of the designs and speculations on the material capacities in relation to their sympoietic worldings. The presentations with all mentors together have been very valuable/critical moments to find a middle-ground between the above described the theory-practice relays and how to present the project. I hope it shows that I did not try to passively adopt my mentors' comments but tried to actively work-with their different understandings (of architecture), which has resulted in the design methodology/project described on the following pages.

compatible creatures: under-grounding riddles at [Maashaven]

The research-grounded design project starts from the formation of *four riddles* (to read/guess/interpret) composed of event-centred speculative dialogues (acts-through-word) that embody *and* empower the becoming-with of an actually-possible human-people and an actually-possible non-human who *could be* compatible creatures (who) through a symmetry in place (where) and time (when) of the selected *activities* (style/how, and why): compatible creatures be-cause they are living-with a shared environment/milieu. To implicate and complicate the a-symmetry of their demands on/desires of the milieu -how they *style* of the world-forming technicities of their *associated milieu* (what happens where)- all *eight* modes of individuation are understood as compositions of *etho-topological systems of signs* expressed through story- and fact-telling, cartographies that situate the intensity of the events, and virtual-world-line diagrams to understand the world-forming technicities and their affects. These minor practices assist in capturing the vectors of subjectification (body+sense+duration) of the associated milieus (the what happens where and when, with whom and what) -which escape/cannot be captured in major practices that deal with representational *metric space*. Rather, they attempt to grasp the limits of the individuations by means of the virtual *movement* of their ecological perceptions *in relation* to the environmental affordances (to affect and be affected) that can be extracted from the milieu of Maashaven (understood as the attractor landscape). In a non-reductionist attempt to create images which capture/trace the relational experience between the interiorised past and exteriorised future of the perceivers, multi-media short-films will be used to abstract/archive/express their possible particular technicities. To speculate with other-than-human architectural relations and broaden the social/collective imaginary, the four proposed de-sign interventions build on the information extracted from the minor practices and the selected tension fields. The designs are *responses* to the lines of individuation through the architectural act by following the intensity of (a-signifying) affects and aim at empowering their natural drifts of becoming towards sustainable (read: hope and love for durable) futures by exploring-with new relations



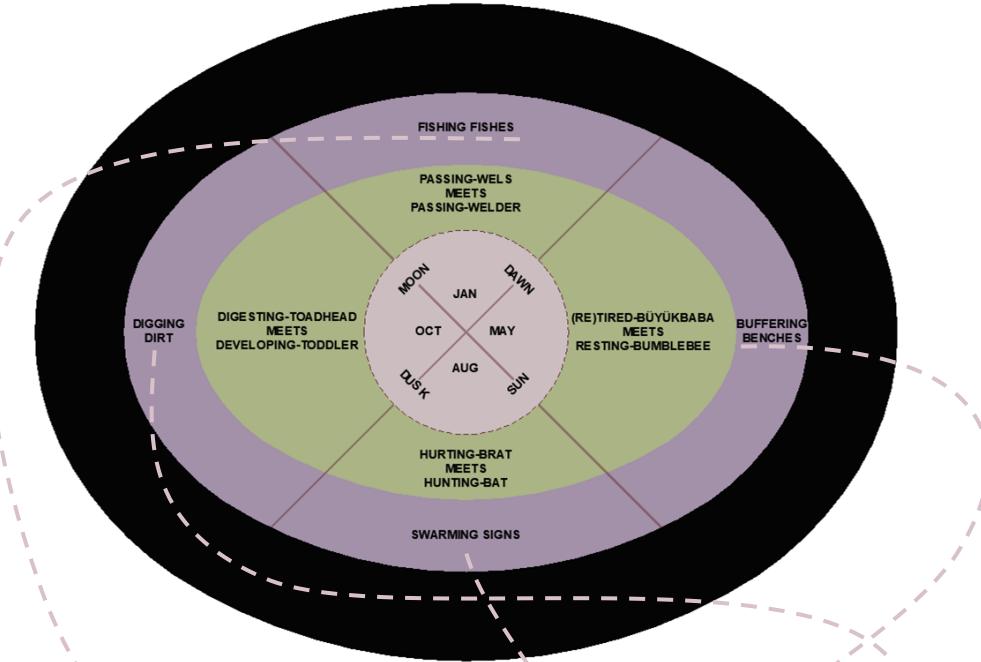
Relational diagram of composition compatible creatures through spatial-temporal symmetry.
Source: author



Relational diagram of composition compatible creatures with a-symmetrical etho-topological systems of signs. Source: author

between *not-yet-there* worlds. Architectural relations that afford novel encounters in-between perceivers (synapses) and already structured individuals- where- and whenever they are welders, grandfathers, toddlers, teenagers, bats, toadstools, bumblebees, catfishes, flowers, our sun, fire, our moon, water, wind, earth, or topological manipulated structures or anybody else.

The structural formations of the four interventions were researched through relays of sketching and model-making in line with the ethno-topological metric dimensions of the selected perceivers and will be *represented* in four fragments with details, axonometric structure overviews and situation (major practices) and photo-renders from all eight perspectives. To stay-with the grounds of 'small change, big affects', all design decisions are constraint-with the *mentality* of spending as little money as possible, with as little new material as possible and with as much lively expression and inclusion from the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods surrounding Maashaven as think- and make-able.



Relational diagram of selected temporal dimensions (red/pink), compatible creatures (green) and new interventions (purple, see map below for situational intensities) Source: author

