Original Research

Exploring Ethico-Aesthetic Aspects in the Experience of "Becoming a People to Come": A Case Study of Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's *Border Tuner*

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Abstract: This article explores the interplay between aesthetics and ethics, particularly in their contribution to the production of a new subjectivity. Traditionally, ethics and aesthetics have been perceived as distinct disciplines: ethics primarily addresses "how to act," which is rooted in moral principles, while aesthetics pertains to "how to perceive and appreciate" beauty and art. However, drawing on the concepts of immanent ethics and sensation from Gilles Deleuze, a notable post-structuralist philosopher, this article postulates that both disciplines are underpinned by affectivity: the body's capability to affect and to be affected. In other words, this article views affectivity as a catalyst for generating new sensations and modes of existence during encounters between bodies. A prominent example is Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's large-scale interactive installation, *Border Tuner* (2019), which serves as a platform for dialogue among residents of the US-Mexico border. This interactive installation sheds light on participants' transformative expression of "becoming a people to come" that demands an ethico-aesthetic framework to contextualize such experience. Conclusively, this article seeks to understand how aesthetic experience resonates within ethical contexts and underscores the pivotal role of art in shaping societal perspectives.

Keywords: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's Border Tuner, The Body, Sensation (Affect and Percept), Immanent Ethics, "Becoming a People to Come," Ethico-Aesthetic Framework

Introduction

In contemporary philosophical discourse, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's theory of the production of subjectivity in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) challenges the traditional view of the subject as a fixed, inherent characteristic. Instead, they propose a dynamic process in which subjectivity is continuously produced and transformed through interactions with various social, economic, and political forces. This paper explores how participants in Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's interactive installation *Border Tuner* manifest their expressions and values, thereby resingularizing their existence and embracing collective responsibility. Through this analysis, this study characterizes the participants' experience as "becoming a people to come" and suggests that this phenomenon represents the emergence of a new collective subjectivity within the context of aesthetic and ethical engagement. This process scrutinizes Deleuze's immanent ethical framework, highlighting its approach to evaluating modes of existence in relation to the affectivity of the body. Finally, this study discusses Deleuze's concept of the plane of immanence as an ontological ground for the ethics of becoming.

Analyzing Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's *Border Tuner*

Border Tuner is a large-scale, interactive installation by Mexican-born, Montreal-based artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer. Indeed, it is the artist's thirty-eighth project in the "Relational Architecture"[1] series, which is defined as "the technological actualization of buildings and public spaces with alien memory" (Lozano-Hemmer 1999, 53). The project aims to disrupt the master narratives of a building by adding and subtracting audiovisual elements, thereby affecting, influencing, and recontextualizing it. Through participants' active involvement, relational architecture transforms emblematic buildings with new technological interfaces that incorporate real-time computer graphics, custom-made 3D sensors, electro-acoustic music, and robotic lights.

Lozano-Hemmer (1999) asserts that the real motivation of relational architecture is to modify existing behavior. He creates situations where the building, the urban context, and the participants engage in "alien" modes of interaction that convey a sense of "doesn't belong," indicative of displacement or repositioning (Lozano-Hemmer 1999, 54). Such interventions prompt a reevaluation of the context. He explores these alien relations through a concept of "alien memory," which differs from the sites' historical or functional background (Lozano-Hemmer 2002, 147). Instead, it arises from subtle and minor narratives, shaped by micropolitics, participants' reactions to, or their critiques of, the work (Lozano-Hemmer 2002). This layer of intimate, significant moments can shift an individual's connection to a place. Essentially, "alien memory" brings minor narratives and elements to the fore, enabling participants to recontextualize a place, and imparts a dematerialized quality to buildings. Ultimately, relational architecture aims to transform our living spaces and establish new human and sensory connections by reevaluating contexts, enhancing our perception of the surrounding environment, and challenging the conventional, predictable theories that govern our relationships with it.

In the artist's exploration of relational architecture, *Border Tuner* is designed to interconnect the sister cities of El Paso, Texas, US, and Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, which are divided by a dark and stubborn steel wall. It features eighteen powerful searchlights, distributed among six stations with three each at Juarez's Chamizal Park and El Paso's Bowie High School, straddling the US-Mexican border. Each station is equipped with a microphone, speaker, and large dial. As a participant turns the dial, three nearby searchlights create a beam of light that follows the movement of the dial, automatically scanning the horizon. When the two light beams intersect in the sky, a bidirectional audio

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[1] In discussing "Relational Architecture," Lozano-Hemmer places greater emphasis on the term "relational" as opposed to "interactive." For him, "relational" suggests a more horizontal, networked, and collective way of establishing connections, while "interactive" implies a one-directional action where a person acts, then the computer responds, and the interaction concludes. By choosing "relational" over "interactive," the artist seeks to create environments that cultivate performative experiences of spontaneous, unintended connections among participants (Ponzini 2007).

channel activates, allowing the participants from the two remote stations to converse. Each interactive station can tune into any other; for example, a participant in Mexico can connect to the three US-based stations or to the other two in Mexico. As participants engage in dialogue, the brightness of the light bridge flickers in sync with the pace, timbre, and modulation of the voices, producing a captivating visual light display visible up to ten miles away. The flickering lights resemble the pulsation of Morse code, with the light essentially serving as a medium for connection and communication. If no one participates, the searchlights at each station form an inverted tetrahedron—a flower formation—and modulate their intensity in response to pre-recorded content (Lozano-Hemmer 2019).

Figure 1: *Border Tuner*, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, 2019[2]

Figure 2: *Border Tuner*, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, 2019

[2] Images for Figures 1–3 can be found at: https://www.lozano-hemmer.com

The artist explains that the essence of *Border Tuner* lies in the act of listening to conversations, a process he describes as "tuning," rather than in controlling the lights. He emphasizes the significance of this interactive mechanism by stating that "The idea of this interface of tuning the dial to listen to another is really what we need at this time, politically and culturally" (Lozano-Hemmer 2019). Indeed, the US-Mexico border is often depicted as a liminal region, characterized by "lawlessness" and a "national security crisis" (quoted in Greeley 2020, 16). This portrayal, amplified by mainstream media and notably during the Trump administration, presents the border as a hub of chaos and violence. Such perceptions have influenced US legislation, justifying an escalation of racialized policing, surveillance, and border enforcement.

Contrary to this prevalent border rhetoric, there is an urgent need for authentic voices to be heard. In fact, the sister cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez have long maintained a complex collaboration across various sectors, particularly in economics, culture, and history, together forming the largest bi-national metropolitan area in the Western Hemisphere. In this context, as the artist emphasizes listening to the dialogues of the border residents, *Border Tuner* is designed not so much to create new interconnections between the communities on both sides of the border but rather to make visible the relationships that already exist by magnifying existing connections, conversations, and cultural ties. Ultimately, the work functions as a visible switchboard of communication where people can represent themselves. It aims to provide a platform for a wide range of local voices and to draw international attention to the deep-rooted interdependence and coexistence between the sister cities. In doing so, it seeks to bring the diverse realities of the borderland to the forefront, encouraging the border residents to share their narratives with the world, thus highlighting the unique historical and cultural connection between the two cities.

During the art project, which spanned ten nights from November 13 to 24 in 2019, over six hundred hours of documented audio captured the participants discussing a vast array of topics with strangers. These conversations articulated emotions that bridged and reflected the genuine social fabric of the region. In one recording, a woman asked a little boy about his name, age, and school experience. The clarity and warmth in their conversation belied the fact that they were physically miles apart, connected solely by voices echoing across the border. In other instances, an attorney assisting asylum seekers and a middle school art teacher expressed mutual appreciation for their respective efforts. In a particularly touching moment, two women discovered a shared passion for singing and harmonized together, eliciting cheers from listeners on both sides of the border. Their resonant voices seemed to defy the imposing metal barrier, soaring freely across it. One woman introduced herself, mentioning she lived in El Paso but was originally from Meoqui, Chihuahua. "I have roots there, but it's a struggle to be able to go and visit," she explained in Spanish, "so it makes me emotional to be able to communicate with my country without barriers, a passport, inspections." In a gesture of empathy, a woman from El Paso apologized to her Juárez

counterpart for the actions and attitudes of President Trump, reassuring her, "He is only one person" (Lozano-Hemmer 2019).
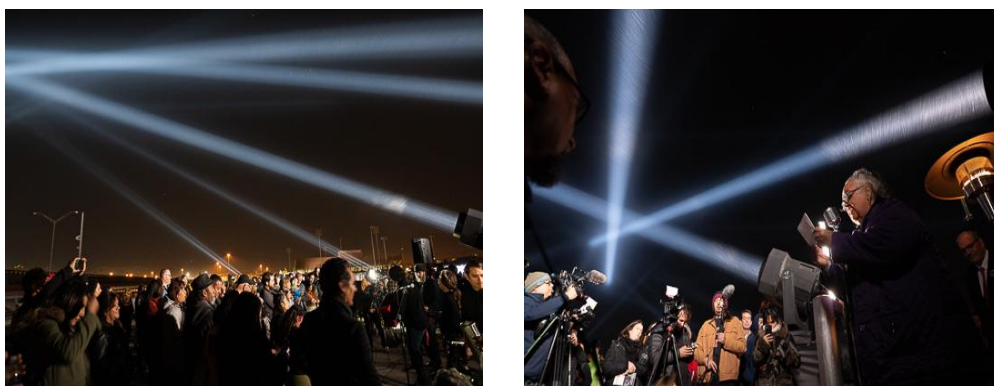

Figure 3: *Border Tuner*, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, 2019

These conversations generated innumerable new connections, serving as nodal points for developing social interlinks. From this perspective, *Border Tuner* vividly embodies what Claire Bishop (2006, 12) describes as "the social dimension" of participatory art, aimed at restoring social bonds through a collective elaboration of meaning. By facilitating transnational channels for listening and speaking, participants actively shaped pluralistic, dialogic spaces that challenged the prevailing rhetoric surrounding the border. In line with the artist's series on relational architecture, *Border Tuner* temporally dematerialized and recontextualized the imposing, dark steel wall of the US-Mexican border through the participants' active performance.

Exploring the Aesthetic Experience of "Becoming a People to Come"

When the participants' voices intensify, a disparity arises between the sounds and the searchlights. Ideally, the luminance of the searchlights should correspond to the vocal intensity; hence, as the voices rise, the lights should grow brighter. In contrast to the intensified vocal sounds, the searchlights effectively counter the prevailing sentiments of unease, fear, and intimidation, despite their intense brightness and placement in the border region. At its core, the interplay between the sound of the voices and the visual spectacle of the searchlights reaches a discordant state, which exemplifies heautonomy.

The term "heautonomy" was first introduced by Kant (1968, 22) in the introduction to his Third Critique, defining it as the self-given law of the faculty of judgment in its reflective capacity. This concept describes how the mind organizes its encounter with the world based on principles that it generates itself rather than those imposed externally. Deleuze (2013) in *Cinema II* adopted and adapted this idea of self-legislation to highlight the autonomy of sound in modern cinema, characterized by disjointed and fragmented narrative structures that defy

traditional sensory-motor logic and linear narrative.[3] Instead of merely accompanying the visual image in classic cinema, sound becomes autonomous, governed by its own self-created logic. He describes their relationship as one of incommensurable complementarity, where each element is distinct, yet interconnected, thereby enhancing each other to produce the overall cinematic effect. He states, "neither of the two faculties is raised to higher exercise without reaching the limit which separates it from the other, but connects it to the other through separating it" (Deleuze 2013, 267).

In *Border Tuner*, the autonomy of the sound of the voices not only allows it to follow its own compositional logic but also affects the perception of the searchlights, changing them from symbols of intimidation to intimacy. This shift is part of the artist's exploration in a series of relational architecture. For instance, the voices of participants interlace to form a collective network, transcending individual expression. This piece emphasizes a broader context where each voice merges into a collective utterance, fostering a sense of community and shared experience. This collective assemblage of enunciation, therefore, captures the power of the participants' statements, shedding light on and potentially transforming their distorted and repressed socio-political circumstances. It is "neither an impersonal myth nor a personal fiction, but a collective utterance—an utterance that expresses the impossibility of living under domination, but, thereby, constitutes an act of resistance and functions as the prefiguration of the people who are missing" (Smith 2012, 214). Consequently, the sound of the voices achieves the status of a pure speech-act, underscoring language's capacity to do more than communicate information: it actively shapes and constitutes reality[4] (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

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[3] Deleuze (2013) explores the concept of heautonomy in Marguerite Duras's *India Song*, focusing on the intricate interplay between sound and visual images. He describes the soundscape as encompassing a variety of voices, both on and off-screen, relative and absolute. These voices, characterized by their multiplicity and independence, compete, plot, and sometimes ignore or forget each other, ensuring that no single voice dominates or concludes the narrative. This anarchic sound landscape operates autonomously from the visual elements, creating a distinct narrative layer. Conversely, the visual component, described as a "silent stratigraphy," features characters whose mouths remain closed even when they speak (Deleuze 2013, 263). This disjunction between what is seen and heard, where the visuals represent a silent, motionless past covering an "old burning stratum," contrasts with the lively but unseen dialogues (Deleuze 2013, 263). This stratification suggests that the visual element unfolds its own independent story. Deleuze (2013, 263) uses the term "metastable equilibrium" to describe the balance between these autonomous systems of sound and image, which exist in dynamic tension and constant adjustment. This complex narrative and temporal structure compels the audience to navigate two loosely connected streams of information, fostering a more active interpretation. Deleuze's analysis of *India Song* demonstrates heautonomy by showing how the film allows sound and image to exist as independent yet interrelated layers of meaning, contributing to a richer, more textured cinematic experience.

[4] The primary function of language is not to communicate information but to impose power relations. Following the line of analysis developed by speech-act theorists, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) insist that language is a mode of action and a way of doing things. Additionally, the condition of possibility of any language is the complex network of practices and material elements that shape a given world. In sum, language is immediately thought to have a force of its own, possessing the capacity and power to intervene in and order our world (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

The collective enunciation, however, is not about representing people in an ideal image of unity that already exists; instead, it is anchored in a concept that enables people to invent themselves, awakening into self-consciousness. In this sense, *Border Tuner* serves as a platform that facilitates the collective utterance, urging the participants toward becoming "becoming a people yet to come." Put simply, the aesthetic experience of "becoming a people yet to come" invites participants to embark on a forward-looking journey of transformation. This fosters the potential creation of a new sense of community or identity, not yet realized but envisioned for the future. In this context the aesthetic experience of "becoming a people yet to come" could imply a political practice in Deleuze and Guattari's concept of a micropolitics, which underscores the qualitative changes in individual and collective identities through sensibility, affect, and allegiance that occur alongside or beneath the public political domain (Patton 2010).

Investigating Deleuze's Notion of Immanent Ethics

The aesthetic experience of "becoming a people yet to come," as demonstrated by the interactive installation, reveals an emergent subjectivity arising from the social and political situation inherent to the border regions. This emerging subjectivity diverges from the traditional view of a subject as a fixed entity; instead, it is perceived as the provisional outcome of a process of subjectivation. Aligning with Deleuze's perspective, subjectivity is not something pre-existing but is in a constant state of construction (Boundas 2010). This production of subjectivity, viewed as an art practice, is involved in reconfiguring the participants' subjectivities. Within this framework, the interactive installation acts as a catalyst for transformation, facilitating the creation of expressive materials through the dynamic involvement of the participants. This art practice, both collaborative and collective, aims to assist the participants in their own processual self-creation. Ultimately, the interactive installation fosters a transformative experience, realized through active interaction with the artistic process by the participants.

This paper argues that the production of subjectivity presents a convergence of aesthetics and ethics, with each realm informing and reinforcing the other. Before exploring the production of subjectivity from an ethical perspective, it is critical to differentiate between ethics and morality, a distinction clearly articulated by Deleuze. He considers morality to be a set of constraining rules that judge actions and intentions based on transcendent or universal values such as "this is good" or "that is bad" (Deleuze 1995, 100). In contrast, ethics consists of a set of optional rules that assess our actions, words, and thoughts in relation to the modes of existence we engage in (Deleuze 1995). This ethical approach focuses not on "what we must do" but rather on "what we are capable of" or "what is in our power;" thus, ethics becomes a matter of power, not merely a question of duty (Deleuze 1978, 11). In this vein, Deleuze sees ethics as deeply connected with the concept of becoming, proposing that it refers to the unknown power of what we might become. Accordingly, ethics, grounded in

the immanent modes of existence, aligns with the ongoing creation of subjectivity, as previously discussed. Meanwhile, morality involves judging ourselves and others based on what we are and should be.

If ethics pertains to the immanent modes of existence, what criteria should be applied to evaluate and assess them? Such criteria need to reflect particularity since ethical rules evaluate each action on its own in contrast to moral rules, which judge all actions based on transcendent values. On this ethical issue, Deleuze (1988) suggests, drawing on Spinoza, that an individual is not defined by its form, organs, and functions but by the affects of which it is capable. Within this framework of thought, Deleuze expands the concept of affect beyond just feelings or emotions. Working as the measure of ethical evaluation, affect is practically applied to a body's capacity to affect or to be affected during encounters with another body or idea. In this context, affect serves as the transitional product of an encounter, distinguished by its ethical implications and experiential dimensions (Deleuze 1998). Examining the relationship between affect and an ethical practice, Smith (2012, 259), in his analysis, distinguishes between a "system of affects" in ethics and a "system of judgement" in morality.

Utilizing affect as a criterion for ethical evaluation emphasizes the body's role, compared to that of consciousness in making moral decisions. This perspective, rooted in Spinoza's concept of parallelism between the mind and the body, as discussed by Deleuze (1988), overturns the traditional view of the mind's superiority over the body, a notion prominently featured in Descartes' *The Passions of the Soul* (1989).[5] In Proposition 7 of Part 2 of his *Ethics* (2017, 52), Spinoza asserts that the mind and the body are two attributes of the same substance, which he refers to as "God" or "Nature," a concept often termed "parallelism." Spinoza posits that everything in Nature exhibits both thought and extension. Thus, the mind and the body are the same entity but understood in two distinct ways: the body as it manifests in extension and the mind as it manifests in thought. According to Spinoza, these attributes do not interact causally but rather operate in parallel, each reflecting the same reality in a different form.

This framework implies that mental and physical events are two parallel series that neither cause nor are caused by each other but instead are dual expressions of the same underlying reality. Spinoza's perspective highlights the necessity of recognizing the interconnection and interdependence of the mind and body, challenging the notion of them as separate, hierarchically arranged entities. Instead, they are components of a larger, interconnected system of causes and effects: "According to the Ethics, on the contrary, what is an action in the mind

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[5] The theme of the mind's superiority over the body is a central tenet in René Descartes' *The Passions of the Soul*. Throughout the treatise, Descartes articulates the capability of the soul to govern and regulate the passions—which include various emotions and desires—and thereby exercise control over the body. This reflects his dualist view that the mind (or soul) and body are distinct entities with the mind holding primacy in the hierarchy of human existence. Descartes contends that by understanding and analyzing our passions, we can harness them, thus allowing the rational soul to master the physical responses of the body. This concept is a recurrent argument across the entire work, underscoring Descartes' philosophical exploration of the relationship between immaterial mind and material body.

is necessarily an action in the body as well, and what is a passion in the body is necessarily a passion in the mind. There is no primacy of one series over the other" (Deleuze 1988, 18).

Ultimately, Spinoza's concept of parallelism elevates the body to a model, marking a shift toward acknowledging the body's significance in areas traditionally dominated by mental considerations and advocating for a more comprehensive understanding of human existence. Spinoza's statement, as discussed by Deleuze (1988, 17–18), "We do not know what the body can do," illustrates that this model of the body does not diminish the value of thought in relation to physical extension. Finally, within the immanent ethics, the body becomes a model for analyzing modes of existence.

Meanwhile, a body in Spinozian Ethics is explored through two questions: "What is the structure of a body?" and "What can a body do?" (Deleuze 1990, 218); a body is defined as any entity composed of various parts that are in definite relations to one another. He perceives the structure of a body as the composition of the relations and its capability as a capacity to affect and to be affected. Namely, the range of relationships a body can form and its consequent capacity for affectivity is determined by the nature of these interactions. This definition of the body, however, includes not only human and animal bodies but also extends to more abstract forms like a body of work, a social collectivity, a linguistic corpus, a political party, or even an idea (Baugh 2010). In other words, a body is defined not by its material composition, spatial extension, or organic structure but rather by the relations of its parts, characterized by relative motion and rest, speed and slowness, as well as its capacity to affect and to be affected.

In this context, when a body interacts with an external body in a manner that increases its capacity to be affected, such an enhancement is manifested as joy for the higher level of activity. Conversely, if the interaction diminishes the body's capacity of being affected, the experience manifests as sadness. Thus, a body's power is proportional to the variety of ways it can be affected. This capacity for affect is elastic, not fixed, capable of increasing or decreasing a body's power to act (Deleuze 1990). Consequently, it is impossible to know in advance which bodies will interact successfully, creating a dynamic synergy from their inherent relationships, and which interactions will lead to the disintegration of a body, causing its components to form discordant relations. It is this conception of the body that forms the basis of Spinoza's classification of modes of existence. Therefore, a mode cannot be classified by the abstract notions of genus and species, as in Aristotelian biology (an arborescent schema of classification) but must rather be classified by its capacity to affect and to be affected (Smith 2012). This concept, which posits that a body's potential can either decrease or increase during an encounter, diverges from traditional moral categories such as good and evil.

Overall, the experience of "becoming a people to come" entails the emergence of a new collective subjectivity. This is facilitated by encouraging the participants to share expressions and values during their engagement with the installation. Essentially, this leads to the formation of a novel subjectivity through a process of resingularizing the participants' existence, further enriched by the embrace of collective responsibility. From Deleuze's

perspective, this reflects an immanent ethical framework that evaluates modes of existence by the pure intensive criteria of "a body's power of what it can do" or, more precisely, by how it possesses or intensifies its power. In this context, Deleuze posits that ethics rejects the idea of a transcendental subject and instead focuses on the immanent processes of subjectivation that give rise to diverse modes of existence. Ultimately, the experience of "becoming a people to come" epitomizes a new collective subjectivity which intricately weaves together aesthetic expression, ethical conduct, and political involvement.

Ontological Basis of Ethical Becoming on the Plane of Immanence

The experience of "becoming a people to come," intersecting both aesthetics and ethics, opens up new possibilities for life along the US-Mexico borders. This raises the question: Under what conditions do aesthetics and ethics cooperatively foster these new possibilities for life, particularly in terms of the body's relational forces and its capacity to affect and to be affected? Additionally, under what conditions are affects (intensities or degrees of power) distributed indifferently among human and non-human beings in relation to sensation or modes of existence?

In response to these questions, this study argues for exploring an ontology that investigates how Being constitutes the existence of beings while examining the interconnections among beings and analyzing their relation to Being. To elucidate the nature of immanent ethical beings, the ontological premise should shift from merely acknowledging a transcendent One as the most fundamental existence to proposing a common plane of immanence. On this plane, all bodies, all minds, and all individuals are situated, each distinguished by their own dynamic motions and affective intensities (Deleuze 1988).

Moreover, this plane of immanence is "not in the sense of a mental design, a project, a program; it is a plan in the geometric sense: a section, an intersection, a diagram" (Deleuze 1988, 122). This means that the plane of immanence is not something created or envisioned in the mind nor is it structured with specific goals or objectives. Rather, introduced with a spatial dimension, the plane of immanence appears to be flat and non-hierarchical, allowing for the coexistence and interaction of diverse entities and forces. Thus, the plane of immanence is defined by encounters through which all forms of life, thought, and matter become interconnected by affective intensities and relational forces. In this sense, the nature of the plane of immanence is differential, as the capacities of our body and mind, still unknown, are defined exclusively through encounters.

> There are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements, or at least between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules and particles of all kinds. There are only haecceities, affects, subjectless individuations that constitute collective assemblages. Nothing develops, but things arrive late or early, and form this or that assemblage depending on their

compositions of speed. Nothing subjectifies, but haecceities form according to compositions of nonsubjectified powers or affects. We call this plane, which knows only longitudes and latitudes, speeds and haecceities, the plane of consistency or composition (as opposed to the plan(e) of organization or development). It is necessarily a plane of immanence and univocality. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 266)

In the context of the plane of immanence, the univocity of being is understood to be a singular mode of existence where all beings express their being through inherent difference (Smith 2002). This means that the way in which anything exists is fundamentally tied to how it differs, changes, and becomes in itself. Here, "difference" implies a process—a dynamic movement that ontologically involves unique characteristics, changes, and transformations inherent to each entity. In this sense of unfolding difference in itself, all entities are ontologically equal, even though they differ in their nature, form, or function. Thus, these differences are essential and intrinsic aspects of how beings express their unique existence, independent of any ontological hierarchy, within the univocal nature of being (Smith 2002).

More importantly, the concept of difference is understood here as what fundamentally constitutes beings; it is not merely a characteristic they possess but the very process and activity of their ongoing self-differentiation and becoming. Thus, the plane of immanence is comprised of haecceities, which are the individual expressions of a mode of existence. Haecceities present the specific "thisness"[6] of an entity—that is, the unique configuration of attributes that defines its essence (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 507). Consequently, beings, individuated through haecceities, are not perceived as fixed essences but as temporal and ever-changing manifestations of difference that arise from the relationships and interactions between their constituent parts. In this context, the plane of immanence, paired with univocity, suggests that an excess of difference is inherent to all beings. This concept aligns with the ontological principle that identity, existence, and reality are fluid, interconnected, and constantly in flux.

Deleuze (2001, 25), on the other hand, describes the plane of immanence as a transcendental field which belongs neither to a subject nor refers to an object. A transcendental field only appears as "a pure stream of a-subjective consciousness, a pre-reflexive impersonal consciousness, a qualitative duration of consciousness without a self." This concept aims to elude all transcendence of both the subject and the object; Deleuze (2001, 26) regards the transcendental field as a pure plane immanence, stating that "Absolute immanence is in itself: it is not in something, to something; it does not depend on an object or belong to a subject." For him, the appearance of a universal subject or any object arises

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[6] The term "haecceities" derives from the Latin "haec," meaning "thisness," and was coined by Duns Scotus, a medieval philosopher and theologian. He challenged the traditional understanding of individuation, which typically distinguished individuals by matter and form. Instead, he proposed an alternative approach, introducing "haecceities" or "thisness," to account specifically for the unique, singular identity of an individual, independent of the general categories of matter and form (Uhlmann 2011, 164–165).

when immanence is distorted by being confined within transcendence. Conversely, he posits, "Transcendence is always a product of immanence" (Deleuze 2001, 31). This underscores the idea that the plane of immanence is not reliant upon nor subordinate to any external transcendent principles or entities.

Overall, the plane of immanence encapsulates a univocal nature of being, embodying a process of constant differentiation while simultaneously remaining within itself. However, to elucidate the nature of immanence, Deleuze substitutes the concept of Being or an Act with that of *a life*. From his perspective, immanence is not merely a static backdrop but rather a dynamic force that drives the processes of becoming and differentiation in all beings. Deleuze (2001, 27) characterizes the driving principle of immanence as *a life*: "We will say of pure immanence that it is A Life, and nothing else. It is not immanence to life, but the immanence that is in nothing is itself a life." The term *a life* does not refer to the life of any particular being; instead, it denotes the pure potentiality and vitality inherent in existence. It underlies and animates the lives of individual beings without being confined to any single form of life. In this sense, *a life* is related to beings as the immanent essence that drives their processes of becoming and differentiation. Thus, *a life* refers to "impersonal individuation rather than personal individualization" and to "singularities rather than particularities" (Rajchman 2001, 8). In other words, *a life* is an indefinite quality, a "virtuality," which may appear in the actual: "A life contains only virtuals. It is made up of virtualities, events, singularities" (Deleuze 2001, 31).

Deleuze (2001) characterizes virtuality as a realm of potentialities, not as lacking reality. Instead of opposing the real, the virtual constitutes a dimension of the real that dynamically interacts with the actual. In Deleuze's view, the real encompasses both the virtual and the actual, manifesting as the actualization of the virtual. However, this actualization is distinct from realization. While realization typically implies a pre-existing plan or design that is brought into being, actualization involves a creative and non-linear process, marked by differentiation and divergence (Deleuze 1994). Consequently, the actual emerges from the virtual in ways that produce new forms and experiences, positioning the virtual as a source of creativity and novelty. Conceptualizing *a life* as the virtual, Deleuze sheds light on new possibilities and forms of existence that are continually and immanently generated.

Ultimately, the aesthetic experience of "becoming a people to come" aims to produce a new subjectivity, differentiated in ourselves. This corresponds to a new mode of existence that is singularized from the virtual. This means we affirm *a life*—a singular, unique life—and actualize its potential in our lives, thereby opening up new possibilities for reality. In other words, to "affirm *a life*" is to embark on virtualities, events, and singularities, driven by our experiences and actions that enable the creation of new forms of existence or ways of living. It involves not just recognizing the potential of *a life* but actively engaging in the process of bringing it into reality through its actualization. In this sense, the aesthetic experience of "becoming a people to come" is rooted in the force of *a life*, where each participant can contribute to the collective experience through their own process of becoming and differentiation.

Conclusion

The experience of "becoming a people to come" sheds light on new aspects in aesthetics and ethics. Aesthetically, it goes beyond a transcendent category by introducing affect that resonates with the body. This approach embodies an ethical practice of materializing the ontological potential, leading to the integration of art with life, thus moving beyond the idea of "art for art's sake." Ethically, it shifts the focus from a stable, transcendent subject toward a subjectivity characterized by becoming and change in an immanent and processual manner. Here, ethics is viewed not as adherence to universal principles but as a matter of becoming—a constant movement toward the creation of a future that is not pre-determined but is always in the process of unfolding.

These changed aspects within the two distinct disciplines converge to produce new subjectivities, naturally opening up new possibilities for life. This article has explored the condition of producing new subjectivities through the concept of a plane of immanence, identifying *a life* as its driving force. In this sense, the experience of "becoming a people to come" embodies the power of *a life*, marked by intense energy and a non-organic vitality. This process involves actualizing virtual potentialities that are not transcendent but inherently immanent. Consequently, the "becoming" in the aesthetic experience does not refer to a literal future. Instead, it denotes the unfolding of virtual potentials into the present, thereby enriching the "now" by exposing it to the inherent openness of what is to come, leading to emergent forms of life. Ultimately, both aesthetics and ethics seek a way of unfolding the virtual potential that can bring something new into our lives. This search for the plane of immanence begins with what Ronald Bogue (2016, 12) terms "belief-in-the-world" rather than with ideal schemas, historical dialectics, or concepts of eternity.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interests.

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