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D^{te} Du 9 au 11 février 2016 ●
Obj. Intervention de Christian Nyampeta
Réf. *Workshop A Community of Practices*

Dans le cadre de la plateforme de recherche « Pratiques d'hospitalité » (coordonnée par les enseignants Katia Schneller et Simone Frangi), un workshop avec l'artiste Christian Nyampeta (<http://www.christiannyampeta.com>), intitulé *A Community of Practices*, est organisé du 9 au 11 février 2016, à l'ÉSAD ●Grenoble.

Le workshop, qui se déroulera en anglais, vise à travailler sur la combinaison entre l'indépendance d'un individu et l'appartenance à un groupe. En établissant une « grammaire partagée » à partir de carnets de notes sur le quotidien de chaque participant, il s'agira d'expérimenter un « vivre ensemble seul », ou autrement dit une « communauté idiorrythmique ». Cette notion héritée des communautés monastiques du mont Athos renvoie au rythme de vie de certains moines qui, bien que rattachés à un monastère, vivaient le plus souvent seuls, en marge de la communauté. Elle séduisit notamment Roland Barthes qui l'utilisa dans son cours *Comment vivre ensemble* en 1976-1977, comme une métaphore exprimant le fantasme d'une sociabilité singulière, ou encore le rêve d'une vie où s'harmonise les rythmes de l'individu et de la communauté la fois solitaire et collective.

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D^{te} 9 – 11 February 2016 •
Obj. Workshop with Christian Nyampeta
Réf. A Community of Practices

At nova res ovum vocabulum flagitat. A new reality requires a new word.
Michel de Certeau – The Mystic Fable (Quoting Lorenzo Valla).

Outline

The workshop with Christian Nyampeta draws from his research under the title *How to Work Together*, with a focus on *idiorrhymy*. This is a concept drawn from early monasticism, which institutes communal transformations by making room for the individual liberty. In contrast to the way of life of the hermit, this idiorrhymic community can be summed up as "living together alone". This way of life equally differs from "regular" monasticisms, namely asceticism and coenobitism. For us today, the study of idiorrhymy offers an understanding of the manners, the habits and the intellection of these early artists-philosophers who have worked out personalised methods of collective engagement against the dominant forces of their times.

The purpose of the workshop is to theorise and to practice how individual experiences and reflections might be thought through collectively. The workshops suggest the idea of a "community of practices", brought together by a "shared grammar". Against today's dominant discourse of war making, the workshops will sketch out the figure of the "*idios*" as an ethical dimension and a practice of inhabiting and sharing the world. *Idios* (which means *particular, private, or one's own*, which is also the origin of the word *idiot*), upholds the following qualities: tiredness (inhabiting the horizon of rest) and study (the search of the knowledge of and the attraction to the Other, to the Outside). An *idios* is engaged in an act of loving, in attending to the self as a way of attending to the world. This attendance to the world through an attention to the self produces a "theoretical fiction" and a "practical philosophy". In order to study this theoretical fiction and practical philosophy, the workshop uses specific "exercises" and "techniques".

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The main exercise is “de-scription”: un-writing or or self-writing; and one of our techniques is the making of the structures in which these exercises can take place. We will begin the workshop by making a notebook. As a “public interior” of sorts, the notebook will be used to take notes throughout the subsequent activities.

Preparations and Process

For these individual notebooks, each person in the group is asked to bring material in the form of 10-15 A4 printouts which will be shared by all of us as a “resource” to make our own notebooks. We would like the material to be related to your recent trips, works, activities, holidays, etc. It could be images, found text, text you are reading or your own writing, work you have produced or notes you have made, receipts or recipes, etc. In essence, the printouts should be remnants, traces or recording (either literal or conceptual) of your journeys and encounters. These A4 printouts will be used as the basis for a discussion and reflection of your own practice. For example, what did you draw from them and how have they have informed your thinking, both about your work and your time at ÉSAD? A copy machine and a printer will be available throughout the workshop.

Using this collective resource and a supplement of blank pages, we will make notebooks. The notebooks will be used by each of during the rest of the workshops and seminars, and also take home. We will continue with watching Nyampeta’s film titled *Sequentia*: a fiction as well as a series of conversations with philosophers. We will pay attention to the glossary, the etymology and how to visualise our encounters both as an invitation and as a contribution to knowledge, as a way of making a community of practices and producing a shared grammar.

The second day of the workshop will follow the format of the first day. We will take the liberty to incorporate insights and adaptations from the Day 1, and Day 2 will culminate in the production of a noticeboard. This noticeboard (as well as the notebook) is a “hosting structure” of our ideas and those of others.

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Literature

The suggested reading is Michel de Certeau – *The Mystic Fable*. I suggest to focus on the *Introduction, Chapter 1* and *Chapter 2* and if you manage, please also read *Chapter 3*. The second set of the recommended reading is Christian Nyampeta's *How To Live Together: Idios and the Community of Practices*.

Suggested Outcomes from the workshops

1) Notebooks which contain our own descriptions of the week, new glossaries, and so forth. Focus will be given to the sensibilities of the *idios*: a heightened sensibility to our condition and environment. These descriptions takes into account the ecology of the school: the architecture, the interactions, the course, the seminars, etc, as a model of a community. The description can be in the style of our choosing, as a coming book, as a script, as letter, as a photographic journal, etc.

2) A noticeboard made of individual "posters".

Throughout the seminars, we will pay attention to the technique of "drawing" as a mean of both recording our encounters, and as way of welcoming future encounters; for instance members of the peer groups who are not taking part in the workshops. Each of us will produce at least one A3 poster, and we will mount this to form one collective drawing made of individual posters. We will continue to draw on the posters once this is achieved. We imagine this as both a public square and an interior room. Please read Chapter 2 of *The Mystic Fable* in preparation of this exercise.

Biography

"Art is about imagination. It's a means to give form to what our reasoning or morals do not allow to be. Hence it gives life, movement, a new perspective to the static, rigid, the known or the unknown. From this imaginative position art also criticises the status quo in society, builds unusual kinds of study, and draws up a vision for alternatives. In doing so, art ultimately enables the practice of a way of life that encompasses ethical, aesthetical, social and political dimensions. Christian Nyampeta, through his long-term artistic inquiry *How to Live Together*, shares with us an example of such practice, reminding us that the question of a 'way of life' is in fact always about living together".
– Binna Choi is the director of Casco – Office for Art, Design and Theory, Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Nyampeta is a PhD candidate at the Visual Cultures Department of Goldsmiths, University of London. Ongoing activities include contributions to research programmes of *How We Behave*, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, *Practice International*, *Another Roadmap School* and *Understanding Territoriality*. Recent exhibitions include *Prix de Rome 2015*, de Appel Arts Centre, Amsterdam ; *How to Live Together: Prototypes*, The Showroom, London ; *New Habits*, the research group exhibition organised by Casco – Office for Art Design and Theory, Utrecht ; *How To Live Together* at Casco and at Stroom Den Haag between 2013 and 2014.

