

A series of morning stretches (or strategies for moving energy)

Ric Spencer

As vinyl spins and sixteen tracks overlay and engrain themselves on each other, so too does the object which is sound collapse and rebound in waves, toward our eardrums, beyond and out into the space. As I write this listening to music I imagine Voyager pumping sound waves of greeting out in to the ether; these waves of sound will ultimately find refuge among the 4% of light matter which make up the part of the universe we can see, hear and touch. But there's also much that we can't and we call it dark (matter/energy) ... an immensity of emptiness which hangs there (somewhere), in our knowing but not, in the sub-reaches of our consciousness but not. Quite simply – there is much that ain't. This emptiness can either freak us out (as the nothing descends on Fantasia) or we can see it as a vast landscape of possibility – as a conceptual field of immateriality held together by the force of potential.

Paul's work, seemingly bent through time and space, taps into this medium of emptiness, responding to the gap between immateriality and materiality – through the energy we call potential. His work is full of the boundless energy of potentiality loops or loops of potentiality or the realisation that potential is the energy that constantly moves and transforms. Potential is the force that grabs ideas and translates them into being – it is a poetic energy of necessity and a necessary energy for poetics.

The humour in Paul's work belies a deeper investigation into and engagement with streams of newness, such as sub-cultural currents, locational politics, popular physics, transient spiritualism and the accumulation and residue of overheard broadcasts. Fundamentally – it is concerned with the relationship between the immaterial and the material, the gap in between and how potential shifts energy through this space – into being, or as Heidegger calls it *'the material space of radiance'*, as it becomes something and forms identity. His work is abreast of issues as they relate to life now, but also very aware of how quickly potential moves things along, producing constant slippage.

I think in this space of possibility we see ourselves, our contemporary sense of identity seems to be mixed up in potential, in the potential to be anything, to be anywhere, to be omnipresent, our identity is stretched so far by this potential to be anything that we really fear being nothing and nowhere. The contemporary need to be everywhere at all times and the realisation that we aren't is so bad that we suffer incredible anxiety and ineptitude or FoMO (fear of missing out). We are increasingly tapped in but wired, oh so wired, we are stretched and stretched and barely held together if only by the potential of our own possibility. It's a powerful mantra, a meta-physically spectacular and successful contemporary mantra, we have come from the immaterial, the darkness, to be in the light and it's our time to shine.

Our consideration of who we are is increasingly narrative based, but always tapped into a visual image of our selves over time. But this narrative is full of glitches; potholes in the road constantly disrupt linear time and time/space collapses are inevitable. Memories are abstracted and disjointed, becoming distorted across time and our futures are constantly negotiated by evolving events. Being continually expands and collapses, readjusting, rhythmic like the subtle flow of a lung.

Paul's work articulates this constant flow, engaging with the potential found in spaces, gaps and silences as they collapse and re-define boundaries and distinctions of form and temporality. His work considers whether these apertures and openings are passive voids or charged spaces, full of exchange that constantly develop strategies for moving energy.

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