the Freudian Unconscious and Its Relationship to Surrealist Poetry (2000) [1].

I was quite surprised that Conley did not refer to or cite Matthews's seminal work *Surrealism, Insanity, and Poetry,* particularly as he was considered to be "clearly the chief scholarly explicator of surrealism today" [2].

These minor criticisms aside, I believe this book is an important addition to the literature on surrealism and modern art, very well written and an extremely interesting and engaging read.

In her conclusion, Conley suggests, "Surrealist ghostliness naturalized psychological understanding as part of human knowledge, using vivid imagery that captured the latent haunting that subtends manifest Western culture, exemplifying surrealism's force as the most influential avant-garde movement of the twentieth century" (p. 231). I believe she is correct.

References

1. Rob Harle, "The Myth Of The Freudian Unconscious And Its Relationship With Surrealist Poetry," unpublished (2000) <www.robharle.com/pages/thesis.html>, accessed 29 August 2013.

2. J.H. Matthews, *Surrealism, Insanity, and Poetry* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1982).

700 Artists' Processes

by Maxime Chanson; foreword by Alexandre Quoi. Les presses du reel, Dijon, France, 2013. 94 pp. Trade. ISBN: 9782916067889.

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700 Artists' Processes is an art object in itself. Its author, Maxime Chanson, who lives and works in Paris, has developed a singular artistic project that consists of inventorying and analyzing the activity of other artists. He showed the results of his investigation in a solo exhibition in Paris and collated them into a publishing format, the object of this unusual book, which looks like an economic report rather than a book about art.

Having difficulty in identifying his own artistic originality, Chanson researched other artists not only to find his own identity but also to show that there is no hierarchy between them when we simply focus on the drivers of their creation and the means they use to express it. In a concern for clarification pushed to the level of the absurd, his method offers a pedagogical tool for decoding the multiple tendencies and preoccupations that coexist within contemporary creative activity. Hence, this book says as much about Chanson as it does about the artists he studied.

The preface, by art historian Alexandre Quoi, is excellent and sets out the context for the book and its author as well as invites us, the readers, to be open-minded when following through. With economy of words, Chanson thoroughly presents the aims and objectives of his study, his research methodology, his analysis and results that are then laid out into multiple tables filled with words but also statistics. And that starts confusing us. Is it a reliable scientific study or is it something else? And what is this something else? Can we trust these results? If so, how would we know? This uncertainty motivates us to continue our discovery, not necessarily turning the pages in a chronological order. Hence, it may take a bit of time to understand how best to navigate amongst them, but once we have found our way through it is a very pleasant adventure.

Chanson's investigation is based on a system of classifying artists' approaches according to categories that describe the creative process. His core area of study, "the artistic process," is defined as the combined action between *Motors* (what drives an artist to create) and *Means* (the modus operandi the artist employs). The model he developed offers a general map of the concerns driving the most prominent contemporary artists and the processes through which these concerns translate into works of art. We are, then, able to use this basis to further investigate what makes an artistic process original.

In order to select his 700 artists (in fact, 600 international, 148 French), Chanson set up a series of arbitrary criteria, such as the number of solo exhibitions in established venues an artist participated in over a defined timeframe. Artworks, statements and writings by the selected artists (last resort a third party) were studied to define their process. He then analyzed the data collected on each artist in order to identify any consistent elements. Chanson explains "what quickly emerged from the study was that artistic process could be grouped into families of concerns (the *Motors*) and families of modi operandi (the *Means*)." However, it is not clear whether these two categories *Motors* and *Means*, which borrow formulae from cognitive psychology, are the outcomes of the study analysis or are a pre-study decision, i.e. they actually drove the selection and the analysis. More confusion here.

He defines the *Motors* as ideas that emerge prior to the creative process as such. They stem from the artist's deep-seated convictions. *Motors* are never called into question. They are the lifetime explorations that underlie the need the artist is trying to satisfy. Chanson refers *en passant* to cognitive psychology, showing in the Appendix the template he adapted for his own classification—again no information source regarding its authors, but schools of thought are listed. This table is important, however, as it provides a background for Chanson's classification and definitions of sub-sections as well as furthering our insight into what he puts behind the words *Motors* and *Means. Motors* are ultimately broken down into 24 definitions, for example "experiencing one's existence by creating a socially engaged personal myth" that are used to classify the artists. The *Means* are what the artists create, driven by their *Motor,* and appear to become more stable as the artist's practice matures. They are also broken down into definitions, for example "moving image with documentary-style *mise-en-scene*." The artistic process is the combination of a specific *Motor* and a specific *Means*, which are shown in the "artist classification charts," e.g. Jeff Koons and Takashi Murakami have the same artistic process, no surprise here. However, Chanson warns us that this is still a very generic classification, as artists with the same *Motor* and *Means* can still have an artistic singularity but, this requires a more in-depth study.

As to his international galleries/exhibition venues selection, Chanson chose those who participate in shows such as Art Basel, Art Chicago, Art Brussels, FIAC, Frieze London, Art Dubai, etc. Artists exhibiting internationally can be a bias criteria in itself given the influence of a few patrons who have set the contemporary art market trend worldwide, i.e. the British "gang," Charles Saatchi, Tate Modern, Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin, Frieze, etc., who have excelled at marketing and advertising their priorities and, thus, created a certain type of art market. On that note, the U.K. and U.S.A. dominate largely in the venues' selection; only one museum is mentioned for Latin or South America (Mexico); China has only one gallery and one museum listed; Russia has only one museum but no gallery included; finally, Hong Kong, India, Africa and the Middle East

have been forgotten. Guangzhou International Art Fair; India Art Fair; arteBA in Buenos Aires should have been included in there. In some ways, the venues' selection does reflect the contemporary market dynamic to this day, or does it not? Yet again, it raises questions as to how much this study is true to the artistic processes out there, in the society at large. Chanson points out that it is more difficult to determine the criteria for French galleries than that of the international ones due to the sheer number of venues in France actively involved in contemporary art. We need to bear in mind though that he knows the French scene better than the international one and that the cultural sector in France is more dynamic, diverse and less under the control of a few wealthy patrons than, say, that in the U.K. It is not clear if Chanson looked first for the artists or for the venues. We can guess both.

Choosing "traditional" art venues implies that the Street Art form has been excluded. However, Chanson tells us that we can use his charts for artists who are not featured in the study, for forecasting trends or for identifying artistic groupings favored by the different actors in the contemporary art market. We can also access his results via an on-line database <www.artistsprocesses.com/>. If we are looking for a certain kind of artist, say those similar to Peter Doing, who "creates dream-like narratives using the poetic form" (*Motor*) and "still, handcrafted image—painting type" (*Means*), we would come across Verne Dawson, Tim Eitel, Hiroshi Sugito, etc. in the same *Motor-Means* category. Knowing about Huang Zhang and Cai Guo-Qiang, we discover that Do-Ho Suh was driven by a similar *Motor*. There is also a classification by the pair *Means-Motor*.

We can have a bit of fun by trying to read into the statistics comparing the French artists with the international crowd. French artists have a higher percentage than their international peers in the *Motor* sub-section "Understanding" (driven by a need to understand, the main themes are tied to perception or the "system" (society and its codes, politics)), which is not surprising for a nation of philosophers who ask questions. . . . Also the *Means* "Set" (any *Means* that cannot be reduced to either Image or Object *Means*) dominates (45%), while for the international artists, "Objects" is more prevalent (39%). We can notice that the number of artists driven by the *Motor* "Doing," which is about creating and shaping a reality, has increased over the years. Is it a real trend? Figures for 2009–2011 look quite different—does that reveal anything? A shift in artists' perception? Can we trust these numbers? Well, we are now invited to check out for ourselves by going out and looking at contemporary artworks.

The very detailed *Index of Artists* at the end that restates each of the artists' *Motors* and *Means* and points to where to find them in the charts is extremely useful—surprisingly, Anish Kapoor has not had the privilege of being studied.

Weaving together facts and fiction is a thematic object of many artworks lately, crowned by 2013 Turner Prize winner Laure Prouvost. In addition to providing a playful and useful tool to explore artists' creative processes, that is what *700 Artists' Processes* does too very well. The more time we venture through it, the more we discover about the richness and variety of the contemporary art scene. Definitely a book to have on shelves—under which section is not clear—for anyone interested in contemporary art, creativity or the art and science collaboration. There is a sense that this artist's book is alive in that we can use and adapt it for our own purpose and need.

Insect Media: An Archaeology of Animals and Technology

by Jussi Parikka. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN, U.S.A., 2010. 320 pp., illus. Trade, paper. ISBN: 978-0-8166-6739-0; ISBN: 978-0-8166-6740-6.

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In his 2007 book *Digital Contagions: A Media Archeology of Computer Viruses*, Finnish media theorist Jussi Parikka argued that biological concepts can be applied to natural and technological systems—such as biological and computer viruses—because these systems are both based on interactions between bodies and environments that "resonate together" and "infect each other" [1]. Indeed, according to Spinozan-Deleuzian philosophy, there is no difference between nature and technology, as both of these terms refer to the same basic interaction between bodies and environments. The same premise also informs Parikka's 2010 book *Insect Media: An Archeology of Animals and Technology*, which similarly argues that biological concepts can be applied to animals and technologies because both of these entities consist of forces that interact with their environment. In short, *Insect Media* outlines a posthuman media theory that blurs the boundaries between the natural and the technological, the human and the non-human, and the living and the non-living.

The notion that insects and media are similar is certainly not new. In his 1941 essay "On Popular Music," for example, German sociologist Theodor Adorno famously employed insects as a metaphor to describe the passivity of popular music listeners who "are deprived of any residues of free will . . . and tend to produce passive reactions to what is given them and to become mere centers of socially conditioned reflexes." Adorno was particularly interested in a popular dance known as the "jitterbug" because he believed that this entomological term referred to "an insect who has the jitters, who is attracted passively by some given stimulus," and therefore "the comparison of men with insects betokens the recognition that they have been deprived of autonomous will" [2]. More recent critics, like Kevin Kelly (past editor of the *Whole Earth Catalog* and *Wired*), have also used insects as a positive metaphor to describe the sense of connectedness provided by modern media networks: "Networked computers will be the main shaper of humans in the future. . . . Global opinion polling in real-time 24 hours a day, seven days a week, ubiquitous telephones, asynchronous e-mail, 500 TV channels, video on demand: all these add up to the matrix for a glorious network culture, a remarkable hivelike being" [3]. Media theorists have thus deployed insect metaphors in many different ways, yet Parikka explicitly rejects the notion of "insect media" as a metaphor. Instead, he is primarily concerned with how insects can be understood as technologies and how technologies can be understood as living, non-human entities.

The first half of the book focuses on the notion of insects as media by reexamining the discourses of entomology and ethology as histories of technology. Through close readings of works by William Kirby and William Spence, Etienne-Jules Marey, Jakob von Uexküll and Roger Caillois, Parikka explores the concept of "insect technics" or