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Massive/Micro Sensemaking: Towards Post-Pandemic Futures

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Article abstract

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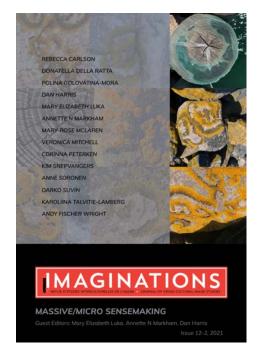


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Image credit: Annette N Markham

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MASSIVE/MICRO SENSEMAKING: TOWARDS POST-PANDEMIC FUTURES

MARY ELIZABETH LUKA ANNETTE N MARKHAM DAN HARRIS

In what ways have forms for engendering the interconnection and materiality required for creative production changed in the time of COVID-19? How and why have our notions of imagining and visualizing cross-cultural production and its modes of research, analysis, and representation shifted? The global pandemic and responses to it through various forms of cultural production have seen an explosion of productivity and collective social actions as well as the reinforcement of entrenched systemic racism and other forms of discrimination and imbalance. In this special issue, authors weave together a series of dialogues, methodological approaches, and materialities that reflect on the visuality of the experiences that were first developed through shared critical

En quoi la façon de produire les liens et la matérialité nécessaires à la production créative ont changé pendant la pandémie de COVID-19 ? Comment et pourquoi nos notions de l'imagination et de la visualisation de la production interculturelle et ses modes de recherche, d'analyse et de représentation ont évolué ? La pandémie mondiale et les manières d'y faire face par le biais de diverses formes de production culturelle ont donné lieu à une explosion de la productivité et à des actions sociales collectives, ainsi qu'au renforcement d'un racisme systémique enraciné et à d'autres formes de discrimination et de déséquilibre. Dans ce numéro spécial, les auteurs entrelacent une série de dialogues, d'approches méthodologiques et de matérialités qui s'interrogent sur la visibilité d'expériences qui ont d'abord été développées à travers des pratiques autoethnographiques autoethnographic practices during and after an international Massive Micro Sensemaking experiment involving 165 people.

critiques partagées pendant et après une expérience internationale de Massive Micro Sensemaking impliquant 165 personnes.

INTRODUCTION: A MASSIVE AND MICROSCOPIC LOCKDOWN

n May and June of 2020, more than 165 researchers, artists, and activists from 26 countries became involved in a co-creative research-creation practice that mobilized critical autoethnography to collectively process individual embodied, affective, political, and cognitive sensibilities that were challenged and made more visible by COVID-19 lockdowns and subsequent events (Markham, Harris and Luka 2020). The goal of the 21-day Massive Micro Sensemaking autoethnography challenge was to use self-guided prompts to build embodied sensibilities toward the material this emergent community of practice was studying. It also enabled a shared practice of autoethnographic forms of writing and making, and transformed personal experiences through the COVID-19 moment into critical understandings of scale, sense-making, and the relationality of humans, nonhumans, and the planet. As the project unfolded, it increasingly engaged with image-based vernaculars, particularly through a private Facebook group (Figure 1), but also in Google docs and on the group's email listserv. Sometimes guided but often unsolicited, this vernacular included shared images, images as responses, videos, and audio clips. In this special issue of *Imaginations*, the authors, editors, and co-editors work collectively to weave together a series of dialogues, methodological approaches, and materialities that reflect on and theorize the sensorial nature of the experiences that were first documented through the shared critical autoethnographic practices during and after the international Massive Micro Sensemaking experiment. These pieces reflect the outcomes of what we retrospectively understand as an emerging and collaborative form of critical pedagogy, as well as the formation of a Community of Practice (CoP) in response to a major global crisis.

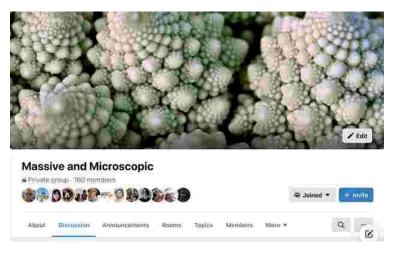


Figure 1: Screen capture of the MMS Facebook private group landing image.

Massive Micro Sensemaking (MMS) came into being in April 2020, just weeks after many of the first national border closures and lockdowns to guard against the growing COVID-19 pandemic were announced. While the World Health Organization (WHO) had declared the virus a public health emergency on January 30 and a global pandemic on March 11,1 border closures and lockdowns only arrived in mid-March in most places around the world. These included Australia (March 13),2 Denmark (March 11),3 and the United States (March 13)4, with the European Union (March 17), Canada (March 20),5 and India (March 24)6 coming a week later—to name just a few of the countries where MMS participants were located. The impulse to generate a community of practice of 165 artists, scholars, and activists grounded in ethnographic visual culture came much earlier. Annette Markham reached out to several colleagues around the world starting in February and March, becoming increasingly aware that (globally) we were about to go through a collective experience that few would have experienced on this scale before. By late March, Dan Harris was involved as a co-lead on the project, and Mary Elizabeth (M.E.) Luka joined shortly after, behind the scenes, to prepare for and help organize the project. Initially, the intent was to use a call for a special issue of a journal (see https://futuremaking.space/callfor-participation/) to solicit a dozen or so expressions of interest and then build an autoethnographic collaboration. Instead, more than 150 people responded to the call, expressing their urgent and often poignant desires to participate with others in making sense of the radical changes happening in their everyday lives as a result of the pandemic. Markham and Harris recognized that MMS had already started to coalesce as a community of practice. MMS as a collaborative autoethnographic creative/critical research response was born. We (Markham, Harris, and Luka) developed a 21-day series of critical autoethnographic prompts (Markham and Harris 2020) in late April and early May that then rolled out over a private Facebook group and an email listserv between May 18 and June 7, 2020. These prompts always included a specific writing, thinking, drawing, mapping, or otherwise performative exercise to be completed in 24 hours if possible, along with the same 'mantra' about the overall goal of the 21-day autoethnography challenge (see Figure 2).

Given that there were people from 26 countries involved from time zones around the world, many of the prompts were designed to be conducted at a time that felt right to individual participants. The prompts were posted and emailed so as to be available first thing in the morning in the southern hemisphere, which meant that it looked like the prompts were circulated the night before in the northern hemisphere. And while some prompts asked group members to deepen an inquiry started in an earlier prompt, there was plenty of leeway to decide how to respond to the prompts. Several of the prompts asked people to use visual imagery and arts, sound, dance or movement, and video recordings, as well as written work, including prose, poetry, and more academic writing (as they chose). One participant responded by creating a painting over the 21 days. Others responded by constructing and assembling quilts as well as in writing (indeed, one of the quilts provides a thread of connection to the articles in this issue). Many participants experimented with the sensorial opportunities offered through the visual and performing arts prompts provided throughout the 21-day period as ways to adapt to their new



MAY 18

Welcome to 21 days of auto ethnography challenge!

Do you have a dedicated notebook or file/folder for your fieldwork? A special pen?

Are you in a state of readiness? We recommend this easy 11-minute wake up by Yoga w/ Adriene (probably the most popular/promoted in North America even before the pandemic): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEEsdXn8oG8from

Every day, we'll provide a task or idea for you to consider in relation to the questions we asked in our initial call for participation:

- 1. In these times, how are we making sense of the Self, the Other, and the World?
- 2. How is COVID-19 helping us think about the relationships between humans, machines, and the planet?
- 3. Through this pandemic, how might we understand the relation between massive and microscopic sensibilities and ways of knowing?

You have 24 hours to complete this task. The goal, as we will repeat daily like a mantra, is to build our embodied sensibilities toward the material we study, practice autoethnographic forms of analysis, and transform our personal experiences through this COVID-19 moment into critical understanding of scale, sensemaking, and relationality of humans, nonhumans, and the planet.

Figure 2: Screen capture of the introduction to the first prompt on the private Facebook group, including the 'mantra,' which was repeated in every subsequent prompt.

Permission of the authors.

realities in the early, frightening days of the pandemic. Prompt 1 reflects the spirit of the MMS experience, including the early and very temporary optimism just weeks after initial lockdowns in the southern hemisphere (see Figures 3 and 4).

For the participants involved in the Facebook group, there was a lot of spontaneous uploading of images or writing, with plenty of peer

May 18 Prompt

When is May 18? Where is May 18?

As we begin this 21 day period, how are you situated, temporally as well as physically? Consider the fact that as we write this, countries are opening up. There is an arc to this pandemic, and we're in the middle of it, trying to explain it.

In Melbourne, where Anne lives, the city is opening up. Two thirds of the way through this 21-day process, Anne will finally be able to go out and have dinner at a restaurant. In Northern Denmark where Annette writes from, the weather is changing dramatically from winter to spring. At the same time as the windows open, flowers bloom, and days brighten, the lockdown lightens.

Since the original call for the Massive_Micro project came out, things have changed dramatically for all of us. And will continue to change. This strong temporal element is likely working in combination with our physicality, locatedness, situatedness. This is something to consider on many levels, not least that we are in the middle of a trajectory and that the 'sense' we made three or eight weeks ago is not the same 'sense' we make today, or will make in other six weeks.

Figure 3: Facebook screen capture of the first prompt, May 18, 2020. Permission of the

encouragement for sharing responses, no matter how raw or revealing-so long as the person uploading the material was comfortable doing so. And while some people knew a few of the other people in the group when the 21-day prompts began, most people didn't know many others. So, this experience of sharing work-in-progress, or more accurately, work-barely-begun-particularly on a visuallyoriented platform subject to American laws of social media surveillance—became quite a vulnerable and protective space for emerging and more established artists and scholars to interact in both supportive and supported ways. These works-barely-begun took many shapes and forms, some of which are represented in Figures 5-8 below.

Of course, this is always the case. But we suspect that our awareness of this temporality is heightened, whether or not we are thinking directly about it. Our work as a group embarks on a journey that marks a particular temporal moment. And at the same time, these continuing changes in our own daily lives will significantly impact how we have, are, and will respond to the call.

Today, we ask you to consider, by writing in your field journal, how time, as well as our consciousness of it, is influencing our lived experiences and our inquiry processes. In your writing, you might think also about matters of scale and place as these relate to time.

Write at least 750 words but no more than 1200 (approximate, not strict), which is recommended as a good length to get some ideas fleshed out but not too long to burn out.

End Prompt



00 41

39 Comments Seen by 143

Figure 4: Screen capture of the first prompt on Facebook, May 18, 2020. Permission of the authors

MAKING SENSE OF CHANGE IN A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

he COVID-19 pandemic upset massive economic, aesthetic, lifestyle, and political systems, among others. At the quotidian level, even the tiniest habits were challenged, including food accessibility or permission to hug someone. The 21-day autoethnographic challenge acted as a locus of activity around which narratives to iteratively explain, analyse, or resist the massive changes demanded locally and globally during the pandemic could be sketched out or practiced. This broader goal was reflected in our shared desires to do something useful and generative during lockdowns and beyond. While we (Luka, Markham, and Harris) have each used arts-based methods in different ways (including for MMS), it is Markham's long-time engagement with microscopic observation and analysis in combination with digital or online ethnographic

methods-as-ethics in communities of practice (e.g. Markham and Buchanan 2015), and as a form of critical pedagogy (e.g. Markham 2019) that provided a global framework for MMS. Similarly, Harris's modelling of critical and caring autoethnographic practices and Markham's engagement with bricolage and the microscopic shaped many of the details of the prompts. Luka's long experience of and research about the considerable behind-the-scenes work of design and planning required to nurture collective projects and to proliferate media-making added a time- and image-based dynamic (e.g. Luka 2018).

The MMS project is a good example of a deliberate attempt to foster a dynamic cohesive community of practice (CoP) during a global crisis. In literature about the composition, processes, and commitments of CoPs, Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) note that CoPs comprise people who come together to examine similar (often complex) problems in the world, particularly emergent or pressing issues. While often mobilized in health-based research and clinical environments, in recent years, finding ways to develop CoPs in other work environments (such as in academia or in private corporations) has been one way to accelerate knowledge-sharing or solutions to problems. By working together or (through periodic interaction) in parallel with one another, a group or groups seek to share tacit and emergent knowledge to better address unexpected developments (Hadjimichael and Tsoukas 2019), to collectively generate new knowledge, or to develop a cohesive way of responding to unusual situations (Dörfler and Ackermann 2012). In addition, as Pyrko, Dörfler, and Eden (2019) note, such learning-together is bounded by ongoing discussions and relationship-building-or as Luka has put it in the context of digital media production, by making something together for use not just by the artists and makers but by the whole community (2022). And while many CoPs develop organically, it is possible to generate a CoP in response to a particular situation. This was the case, for example, for the vaccine-development community that was able to develop, test, and distribute several kinds of vaccines within months of the virus appearing, with the help of billions of dollars of research funding as well as nation-state and global mandates. More

Mahato_25.05 Jenn Erdely Mahato Y Founding Members · May 25 at 7:58 PM Greetings! This is EXC-19 Team 17: Danielle Dilkes, Cathy Fowley, Nike-Irini Romano, and me! 1 Comment Seen by 55 Like Nicola Sum Greetings! This is EXC-19 Team 17: Danielle Dilkes, Cathy Fowley, Nike-Irini Romano, and me! Nicola Sum Greetings! Like · Reply · 2w

Figure 5: Screen capture of the Dilkes, Erdely, Fowley, and Romano Prompt 3 video, as posted on the MMS Facebook group page. Permission of the video makers.

modestly, this was also the case for Massive Micro Sensemaking, a CoP of 165 people whose degrees of separation from one another was no more than two. The CoP built on Annette Markham's extensive international network of (often digital) ethnographic researchers and creative practitioners where it intersected with Dan Harris's equally extended network of critical autoethnographic researchers and artists. These existing networks were augmented by the snowball ef-



Figure 6: Screen capture of Chemi response to Prompt 8, as posted on the MMS Facebook group page. Permission of Tatiana Chemi.

fect of information about this project rolling through other loosely connected networks, and through specific outreach invitations, such as Luka's involvement of 19 graduate students in MMS through a University of Toronto course. While the initial 21-day prompt experience was taken up by 165 people, what is equally remarkable is that more than half of these individuals subsequently participated

Herman_0306



Figure 7: Screen capture of the Herman posting about the radio show hosted throughout the early days of the pandemic, as posted on the MMS Facebook group page. Permission of Andrew Herman

in one of the other MMS publication projects described below (special issues, exhibition, etc.). Each of these smaller projects developed its own way of working together and apart—some at arms-length, some with plenty of coaching from publication editors, and some with more interest in collective ways of working.

To facilitate the richness of a CoP in practice, the 21-day challenge built a curriculum of iterative and connected prompts, and encouraged collaboration through posting and sharing, giving feedback, and working with others on certain tasks. In other words, the prompts were not randomly presented, but sequentially formulated so the later prompts would build on earlier prompts, and the prompts encouraged different types of theoretical and analytical responses. Although this was experimental, this strategy drew on the collective educational expertise of Markham, Harris, and Luka, who each have expertise in teaching analytical and critical thinking through creative practice.

We would argue both these factors aided in the emergence of a large scale CoP—not only did we bring together and build a platform for a network of people interested in a common goal to study the lived impact of a pandemic, we also designed and mindfully facilitated a

Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt_29.05



Prompt #11 Here, There and Elsewhere.

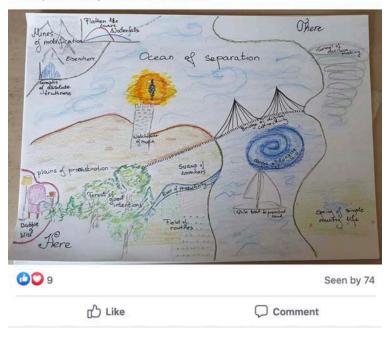


Figure 8: Screen capture of the Pruulman-Vengerfeldt response to Prompt 11, as posted on the MMS Facebook group page. Permission of Pille Pruulman-Vengerfeldt.

critical pedagogical framework to guide how this collaborative and collective study of the pandemic would proceed. This is illustrated, if not discussed in various ways, by some more directly than others, in the pieces of this special issue as well as the other publications with MMS, as we describe below.

PRODUCING, THINKING, MAKING

hile the intensive experience of the 21-day autoethnographic challenge built a generous intellectual and creative CoP, and bridged a significant period of uncertainty, the project also yielded scholarly and creative outcomes. Once the initial 21-day period was over, we focused on generating publications for scholarly journals and exhibition opportunities that would encourage people to find ways to deepen their engagement with the work they had started in response to the pandemic and through the MMS experience. The first of these was a special issue for *Qualitative* Inquiry (see Markham, Harris, and Luka 2020), which included 22 articles. The peer review process was accomplished in less than six weeks, with the issue released by August of 2020. Thematically, the articles focused on primarily micro-level experiences generated through the 21-day autoethnography practice in the context of an exponentially growing global pandemic. Many of the authors referred to how this generated an intense CoP, whose members felt both deeply alone and highly connected to the international cohort of artists and scholars that was still emerging during the 21-day autoethnographic challenge and through the period that they wrote these early pieces. The second project was a series of videos generated in response to two prompts requiring collaboration (Prompt 3 and Prompt 21; see figures 11 and 12 respectively). The videos were curated and introduced by Harris, Markham, and Luka for the Mark De Garmo Virtual International Arts (VIA) Festival for Social Change in the fall of 2020. As Luka notes in this issue: "Many of the videos featured at the October 27 VIA Festival event took a close look at the experience of suddenly enforced isolation, with several using similarly jarring juxtapositions of sound, image and text" ("Resilience in Pandemic Sensemaking: Thinking Through a Community of Practice," this issue). As with the written work featured in the Qualitative *Inquiry* issue, then, these videos presented and reflected on quite raw experiences using time-based media that incorporated static and moving images, and sound design.

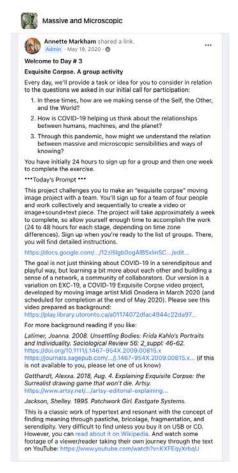


Figure 9: Screen capture of Prompt 3 on the Facebook group. Permission of the

The third project is an anthology focused on arts education and arts-based methodologies employing critical autoethnography approaches, titled Massive/Micro Autoethnography: Creative Learning in COVID Times (Harris, Luka, and Markham, in press). While first drafts for this project were developed concurrently with the first and second MMS projects, at the time of this writing, they are just now

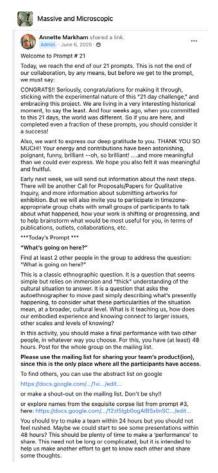


Figure 10: Screen capture of Prompt 21 on the Facebook group. Permission of the authors.

in-press. The longer lead-time has enabled the authors and editors to sift in/through more layers of reflection and development in the year that has passed since the 21-day prompt series ended. The focus on arts education methodologies means that the work presented there looks at the relationships among students, researchers, and creative practitioners in learning environments.

That brings us to this special issue of Imaginations. While a few artists or authors participated in more than one of the four publications/exhibitions for the MMS project, for the most part each person self-selected and then was peer-reviewed into the project(s) that best suited their work. This was accomplished through participant responses to a second MMS call for papers/exhibition materials, which Markham, Harris, and Luka sorted according to the type of publication or exhibition venue that would best showcase and enable each author's research, not just in the MMS context, but more generally around the pandemic itself, and other work underway. This special issue of Imaginations became the space for some of the more enigmatic or productively unresolved work that was developed in this international Community of Practice. Of all the tentacles of work that continue to emerge from the MMS experience, this one mobilizes the use of metaphor, fragmentation, pattern-building, and multidisciplinarity in found poetry, time-based media, and fiction (among other forms), and the oscillation-sometimes the collisions-between scholarly, social, and collaborative work grounded in visual cultural studies and theory, as well as in the digital. Authors involved in this issue use cross-cultural image, autoethnographic, and researchcreation studies to advance learnings from a range of disciplinary and socio-cultural perspectives in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, including its impacts on scholars, artists, and activists. Collectively, they extend contemporary digital, ethnographic, creativity, and cultural studies scholarship by incorporating international reflections on global digital mediation, cultural production, colonization, Black Lives Matter, and other concurrent geo-political issues and frameworks that have marked the pandemic's trajectories and impacts. The extending of such trajectories has also resulted in several conference presentations in spaces that are part-virtual, part-inperson, sometimes highly academic and sometimes wildly exploratory, as 2021 unwinds.

STITCHING TOGETHER THE ISSUE

s the authors involved in this issue began working together, it rapidly became clear that both a metaphorical and analytical stitching together of the themes and research would be crucial for organizing and making sense of the work on offer. Creative and critical autoethnographic engagements in this issue include the use of video-making, quilting, listening modalities, photography, poetry, and other forms of image-making and cross-cultural image studies. The nine quilt blocks produced by artist/author Corinna Peterken during the 21-day autoethnographic experiment became a visual rallying form around which the three groupings presented in this issue could congregate, assemble, disassemble, and reassemble. Indeed, the sequence and focus of each of the three groupings for the issue have been rethought numerous times as the authors sought to exercise collective feedback loops involving other issue participants (co-authors, co-editors, editors, and other authors) as well as through the usual peer review process facilitated by the editors. The piecing together of the issue as a collaborative exercise was a material foundation for the issue's thematics that is echoed in the key visual metaphor of the quilt, further explored in the co-editors' collectively-written reflection (Carlson, Golovatina-Mora, Peterken, Snepvangers, Soronen, Talvitie-Lamberg). The metaphor of-and actual images from-one of the participant's quilts grounds the analysis and presentation of the articles, playing "an active part" in reflection and production (Barad 2003, 803). In a material sense, the boundaries and breakdowns between the self/social, massive/micro, and more complex dynamics are explored in the three groupings of three or four metaphorical quilt blocks (articles) that map changing relations on to one another.

The first four articles are thoroughly grounded in work that emerged directly from engagement in MMS. Corinna Peterken's (USA and Australia) offering delineates not just her use of quilting as a metaphor, but also sets us down the path of using that metaphor throughout the special issue. Peterken examines the fluxes and flexible experiences of time—especially in the early days of lock-

down-that lengthen and collapse (Ingold 2013), with no attention to markings on a clock, which means that it feels like days melt together into a week, or a month. The production of her quilt acts as a sensemaking response to COVID, enabling a more visual mode of re-grounding our notions of time. Kim Snepvangers (Australia) and Mary Rose McLaren (Australia) both acknowledge and respond to some of the broken social threads to which COVID-19 contributed and various ways of coping and repairing these threads, including our responses to colonization, climate change and calamitous weather events, as well as the movement of refugees and devastating political events such as the shootings that precipitated the resurgence of Black Lives Matter protests in the USA and around the world. Such events generate sometimes debilitating and yet clarifying intensities of feelings marked by uncertainty and change. Snepvangers offers a complex piece of writing that theorizes sensemaking, colonialism, and the pandemic in Australia. She introduces the notion of involuntary neighbourhood surveillance (picked up later in this issue by Andy Fischer Wright) and longstanding colonial oppressions in Botany Bay, Australia by examining the repetition of the municipal logo imprinted on the many garbage and organics bins standing to attention in her neighbourhood throughout the lockdown days of the pandemic as a departure point for her reflections and analysis. McLaren creates visually-appealing, powerful found poetry to respond to the seemingly infinite anxiety-producing instances of crisis, from unprecedented bush fires in Australia to the global pandemic and the resurgence of social protest for Black Lives Matter. The section is closed out by a reflection on the notion of resilience—a term that reverberated throughout the pandemic-through Luka's (Canada) analysis of the MMS videos used in the VIA Festival programming in October 2020.

The second grouping of articles traces out a seemingly more distant connection to MMS, exploring complementary (auto)ethnographic experiences. From Japan, Rebecca Carlson puzzles out a series of abstract and yet observable realities and genetic possibilities at an experimental bioscience lab during COVID-19 that took place concurrently with her involvement in MMS. As parallel ethnographic sites of complex interactions, Carlson constantly remakes her relations in the lab with rapidly-changing data at the biological and social levels, springboarding from a consideration of the picture of one grey and white striped mouse. Andy Fischer Wright (USA) narrows the enquiry to the highly local (activating analysis of the microscopic during MMS in his neighbourhood), reiterating anti-racism and territory themes introduced in the first group of articles, above. He develops the concept of "notifictions," based on compulsive neighbourly surveillance that continues to take place on visual and text-based social media apps such as Nextdoor and Neighbors in the USA. Donatella Della Ratta (Italy) shifts the focus to the experience of students online and in the classroom during early pandemic conditions, bringing this into dialogue with some of the underpinnings of the MMS enquiry. Her work on fragmentation theory (Markham 2005) leads us quite nicely into Annette Markham's discussion of pattern-seeking work while homeless in Denmark, en route to Australia during a pandemic, and while co-leading MMS.

The final grouping of articles explores the digital and personal intimacies disrupted and reshaped by the pandemic. This group of authors analyses how our visceral experiences of uncertainty, fear, anxiety, and distraction varied throughout the pandemic. Veronica Mitchell (South Africa) uses her time with a patchwork of imagery and thread in Cape Town, not just as a relaxing distraction separated from her world of research and knowing in the discipline of obstetrics, but also as a way to help make sense of it before, during and after COVID-19. Anne Soronen and Karoliina Talvitie-Lamberg (Finland) trouble a layperson's understanding of what "listening" means during a social crisis, and examine the ways in which the severe health crisis in Finland and the frequent use of different media channels and communication technologies precipitated a deafening range of online listening experiences, and the affective ambivalence that arose from these experiences globally. Finally, Polina Golovátina-Mora (Norway and Columbia) mobilizes new materialisms through the rhizomatic framing of Deleuze and Guattari (2005) and the speculative framing of Donna Haraway (2013) in the neighbourhoods of her mind and emotional states to proffer fragments of feelings, reactions, analyses, and descriptions of the conditions of lockdown in Columbia. She explores the in-between spaces, leaps, ruptures, and skippings involved in her search for an alternative continuity, for a decentralized and decentralizing order that can nonetheless operate at both the self and the social level, and that makes sense by deconstructing and disrupting the sensibilities and observations offered to us by various authorities in COVID times.

Prefacing these three core groupings is a collaborative and contextual offering from the co-editors for this issue: Rebecca Carlson, Polina Golovátina-Mora, Corinna Peterken, Kim Snepvangers, Anne Soronen, and Karoliina Talvitie-Lamberg.

POLLINATING THE FUTURE

he work for this journal issue ranges from research that closely analyses the MMS experience 18 months on, through parallel or complementary autoethnographic experiences that the authors went through at the same time they were engaged in MMS, and on to work that pursues tangents, fragments, and additional foci for (post-) pandemic-based research. What sets this issue apart from prior research reports and outcomes of this project are three things. First, this issue has had time to breathe, time to reflect on more than 18 months' experience with the virus and its impacts, as well as on the way in which research has been generated during that period. Second is the way that this issue represents the ongoing liveliness and potential of the collective imperatives of the MMS CoP. Indeed, this is further reinforced through several reports from MMS members about how the MMS prompts have been adopted or adapted and applied across a wide range of teaching spaces and opportunities (cf. Herman et al. 2021). Third are that the seeds of research, which germinated during the 21-day autoethnographic exercise in May and June 2020, have grown together as a dialogical research-creation and co-writing/co-editing approach that involves not just this specific group of 13 of the original participants, but also the support of the broader CoP. The visual metaphor of the quilt that threads the works together acted as an anchor for linking the separate articles together, but the collective work and discussion that took place for a full year after the first drafts were developed reflected an ongoing commitment to thinking and feeling together. Even the writing, image-making, and analysis that did not make it to final stages for this issue helped to shape the overall sensibility of this particular collection. So, too, did the earlier works from MMS that are referenced in many of the articles included here. This matters because in the time of COVID—or indeed in this time of persistent and complex humanitarian and global crises—we need many examples of generosity and collaboration as well as critique to help us think, feel, and see our way into the future.

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IMAGE NOTES

- Figure 1: Screen capture of the MMS Facebook private group landing image.
- Figure 2: Screen capture of the introduction to the first prompt on the private Facebook group, including the 'mantra,' which was repeated in every subsequent prompt. Permission of the authors.
- Figure 3: Facebook screen capture of the first prompt, May 18, 2020. Permission of the authors.
- Figure 4: Screen capture of the first prompt on Facebook, May 18, 2020. Permission of the authors.
- Figure 5: Screen capture of the Dilkes, Erdely, Fowley, and Romano Prompt 3 video, as posted on the MMS Facebook group page. Permission of the video makers.
- Figure 6: Screen capture of Chemi response to Prompt 8, as posted on the MMS Facebook group page. Permission of Tatiana Chemi.
- Figure 7: Screen capture of the Herman posting about the radio show hosted throughout the early days of the pandemic, as posted on the MMS Facebook group page. Permission of Andrew Herman.
- Figure 8: Screen capture of the Pruulman-Vengerfeldt response to Prompt 11, as posted on the MMS Facebook group page. Permission of Pille Pruulman-Vengerfeldt.
- Figure 9: Screen capture of Prompt 3 on the Facebook group. Permission of the authors.
- Figure 10: Screen capture of Prompt 21 on the Facebook group. Permission of the authors.

NOTES

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