

(Ebook pdf) Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance

Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance

Erin Manning

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Erin Manning : Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Dance, Art and Experience in the MakingBy StreetlightReaderPicking up right where Relationscapes left off, Always More Than One continues Erin Manning's attempt to cultivate a manner of thinking which attends to things in-the-making (rather than things 'already-made'); hence not bodies but 'bodying', not 'the world' but worlding, and not ecologies but 'ecologies of practice' are the

conceptual protagonists that make up the bulk of this delicately written tome. Far from an abstract piece of high theory though, it's dance, art, film and - movingly - autistic experience which provide the touchstones for Manning's intricately woven project. After all, as she so eloquently emphasises time after time, no one thing stands alone apart from the fields of relations out of which it is composed, and this is as true of the book as it is the subjects she examines. A note on that eloquence however: while written in a style that is singularly her own, Manning's prose is by turns both breathtaking and maddening. Breathtaking for its ability to employ the affective charge of language in a way uniquely suited to its own ends, and maddening because, well, see for yourself - On the notion of the 'event': "Think event-time as the foregrounding of the co-compositional infra layering of diagrammatic force form in the now of experience. For the event to dance to attention, the event must create a resonant intensity between the preacceleration of the present futuring and the alignment of a future presenting. Topological time squeezed into the improbable now of movement-moving." Granted, this is a particularly egregious passage, and to be fair to Manning, it's one that comes only after a long and detailed apprenticeship in the poetics she nurtures from the very beginning of the book. But you see my frustration, no? In any case, it's a poetics that's of a piece with exactly what's at stake throughout: nouns turn into verbs, typically dissociated terms are quilted together, and everything once static put into motion. A fragment of the living cosmos presented within turned literary and philosophic. Still, Manning is at her best when held close to the ground by the detail of her subject matter: her discussions of Fernand Deligny's 'movement maps', Bracha Ettinger's formless artworks, Ari Folman's animated quasi-documentary 'Waltz With Bashir', and indeed, the challenges of presenting her own art to different audiences in different spaces all make for engaging, if still demanding reading. Undoubtedly though, it's Manning's empathetic and delicate treatment of autism which constitutes the tender, beating heart of this work. Although clearly stewed in the complex ferment of twentieth-century process philosophy - that of Whitehead, James and Deleuze - *Always More Than One* speaks loudest when simply attending to those among us who "talk without sound, embrace without touching, and dance without bodies." While refusing the all-too-easy gesture of pathologizing autistic experience as a deviation from the norm, Manning finds within the writings of Amanda Baggs, Ralph and DJ Savarese, Tito Mukhopadhyay and others a lesson in the relationality of experience often passed over in the drive to resolve the universe into the 'pre-chunked' and the ready-made. More than yielding a new way of looking (and feeling) the world about us, *Always More Than One* is a study in ethics from another regard - one more than worth pursuing.

In *Always More Than One*, the philosopher, visual artist, and dancer Erin Manning explores the concept of the "more than human" in the context of movement, perception, and experience. Working from Whitehead's process philosophy and Simondon's theory of individuation, she extends the concepts of movement and relation developed in her earlier work toward the notion of "choreographic thinking." Here, she uses choreographic thinking to explore a mode of perception prior to the settling of experience into established categories. Manning connects this to the concept of "autistic perception," described by autistics as the awareness of a relational field prior to the so-called neurotypical tendency to "chunk" experience into predetermined subjects and objects. Autistics explain that, rather than immediately distinguishing objects such as chairs and tables and humans from one another on entering a given environment, they experience the environment as gradually taking form. Manning maintains that this mode of awareness underlies all perception. What we perceive is never first a subject or an object, but an ecology. From this vantage point, she proposes that we consider an ecological politics where movement and relation take precedence over predefined categories, such as the neurotypical and the neurodiverse, or the human and the nonhuman. What would it mean to embrace an ecological politics of collective individuation?

"Erin Manning's book offers a philosophy of neurodiverse perception, encouraging us not to begin with the pre-chunked. How ironic, then, that the impulse to categorize and to pathologize is generally seen as evidence of the normates proper functioning. In Manning's splendid book, autism comes to signify not a disorder but a relational dance of attention, one that refuses to strand any entity at the margin of our concern." Ralph James Savarese, coeditor of *Autism and the Concept of Neurodiversity*, a special issue of *Disability Studies Quarterly*