

A Collective Imaginary and a Proposition for Change

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Abstract: This article focuses upon young people’s negative stress and anxiety in an education

setting through a metamodern lens. The driving question of this project is the recurring issue: given the many factors that stress young people these days, how can we address those stressors? The aim is to shed some light on what educators can do to help young persons who live with anxiety. We also aim to create a short publication of received responses to forward to education authorities worldwide. In discussing the issue, we are drawing upon our personal experiences, creative processes, and recognized research from multicultural practitioners in the disciplines of medicine, education, art, sociology, and philosophy. The focus will not be on theoretical solutions, but on practical, creative ones.

Metamodern attitudes propose that past texts can hold ever renewed relevance for the present. Accordingly, this narrative is told in an epistolary format complemented by a questionnaire and contemporary responses to an essay written in the middle of modernity some 80 years ago by New Zealand born kinetic artist Len Lye in collaboration with British writer Robert Graves, “Individual Happiness Now: A Definition of Common Purpose”. Responding to Lye’s essay “in the now of immediate action” calls for a focus upon “timing” our “position” in the world and an ethics of care, as well as endeavours to “stimulate [the] dormant intensity” of the present.¹

Keywords: Len Lye; agile design; metamodernism; ethics of care; performative pedagogy; stress; anxiety; complexity.

“Physical change [...] – even at a celestial, ecosystem, cellular, atomic, or social level – may involve resonance; the response of one physical part of a system to [movement,] oscillations or vibrations in another part. However, resonance is not a “thing” that exists in space; resonance implies a relationship. This is where imagination becomes as important as rigorous science or politics. The creative arts serve as a metaphor for

¹ A previous version of this article was presented at the Global Forum for Change (May 2022, Birmingham) and concomitantly uploaded onto our website, Metamodern Creatives, as an art poster. [Forum Poster | METAMODERNCREATIVES](#)

social change because art is not about an explanation, but about play, feeling, and relationships. “Art is relationship,” Bateson observes. Art is where we learn about grace, contradiction, and about the integration of apparent opposites. Art is about pattern.

When a society or an ecosystem change, what changes is not the “parts” but the patterns among the living participants. Understanding ecology is not like understanding how a clock or an algorithm work. Ecology takes us into the realms of shifting patterns, living communication, symbiosis, and learning.”²

Introduction

A Māori proverb that has been repeatedly mentioned in an education setting (and not only) in Aotearoa New Zealand in the past three years is “He waka eke noa”, translated as “We are in this together.” This saying is an example of what one can learn from an indigenous culture, and a timely reminder that although our subjective experiences are our own, we are not alone in experiencing them. Within the complex systems of societal groups, people – even though not always like-minded – resonate with one another, and with each other’s ideas or attitudes, as they react to events and situations in their environment. In an academic milieu, such resonance is often mediated by the intellectual discourse of academic prose. However, the days of ivory towers of specialized jargon accessible to but a few are gradually setting, leaving way to more accessible approaches that reach beyond academia. Academic endeavors are valuable in as much as they ripple into communities, framing issues and seeking solutions.

Since our collaboration is meant to reach an audience larger than the usual academic discourse affords, and, in a metamodern gesture that considers the whole self, not just the rational, it addresses imagination and affectivity, too, the epistolary format seemed suited to exploring possible solutions to young people’s negative stresses.

An Epistolary Address

Dear Reader,

There are some worrying facts regarding mental health, some aspects of which we encounter every day as educators and parents: One in four New Zealanders experience anxiety, depression, panic attacks or phobias, while worldwide the statistics are equally alarming. This letter focuses upon young people’s anxiety in an education setting through a metamodern lens, where the metamodern is a paradigm of care, self-transformation, and interconnections (Nirmala Devi 1996, Dumitrescu 2016). The driving questions of this project

² Rex Weyler, “Small Arcs of Larger Circles: a New Approach to Changing the World,” Greenpeace, June 1, 2018, <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/story/16799/small-arcs-of-larger-circles-a-new-approach-to-changing-the-world/>.

are the recurring issues: in multicultural Aotearoa New Zealand and the world, what stresses young people these days and how can we address those stressors?

In approaching these issues, we are drawing upon our personal experiences, creative processes, and recognized research from multicultural practitioners in the disciplines of medicine, education, art, philosophy, and spirituality such as Ramesh Manocha, Barbara Tversky, Roger Horrocks, Luce Irigaray, and Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi.

Within an auto-theoretical frame (Maggie Nelson) and with transformative pedagogy overtones (Patrick Farren), this is a subjective response that is presented as a proposition for change. Questions raised across the following paragraphs consider solutions in terms of the everyday as constellations of meaning, as imagined through the eyes of an artist, teacher, and researcher within the field of gesture (movement) studies and relational aesthetics, as well as a poet's and essayist's explorations at the cusp of the metamodern paradigm.

Propositions for change are presented as *mappings*, or neural network-like patterns, realized through language and storytelling, the non-linearity of which recalls the stream of consciousness of modernist writers like Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. Modernism challenged the entrenched perception that mental processes are or must be linear, conforming to a pattern that mimicked or reflected the accepted conception of progress—as development from undesirable obscurantism, ignorance or underdevelopment to wished-for enlightenment, scientific knowledge, and technical advancement. Turn of the 21st century metamodernism, however, builds on the concept of flow and acknowledges that mental processes could follow network-like patterns, where linearity is supplemented by concurrent trains of thought that might connect with other constellations of meaning. Below are such examples of thought.

A Patterning of Thought (after Bateson)

In *Small Arcs of Larger Circles* (2016) Nora Bateson views society as a living ecosystem that is undergoing intense change at this moment in time. These changes pertain to the relationships between individuals and groups:

“what changes is not the “parts” but the *patterns* among the living participants. Understanding ecology is not like understanding how a clock or an algorithm work. Ecology takes us into the realms of shifting patterns, living communication, symbiosis, and mutual learning.”³

The shifting patterns and other changes that Bateson observes affect young people the most, while their mechanisms of coping with the ever fluid

³ *Ibidem*.

circumstances that contemporary societies afford are still work in progress. Earlier this year, (year2) Bachelor of Media Design students at Media Design School, Auckland were invited to empathize with a social group to identify specific issues in their local community; the aim being to propose, ideate and create design-driven solution(s) through agile methodologies, to address their problem.

Clare Thompson proposed FEMPOP, a digital magazine to inspire and empower young women. Aimed at Gen Y, Thompson's on-line magazine highlighted the need for a digital "safe space" to support young people manage mental health and self-love. Citing insight from Pew Research (2015), Thompson suggests that millennials are "obsessed with self-care" via the daily use of work out apps, regimes, diet plans and life coaching apps. Thompson notes "they've even created self-care Twitter bots."

Perhaps more intensely than previous ones, this generation is seeking out personal improvement, well-being and happiness solutions. In the generation of "emotional intelligence" Thompson observed a trend that points to the use of poetry within the arts — naming key figures such as Cleo Wade, Ruby Core (with a 4 million reach) and influencers or podcasters such as Florence Gibbon and Mica Montana — as the "go-to" form of communication, to make sense of the world, to bridge the gap between daily encounters (stressful or otherwise), and one's inner being.

Thompson's insight is but one example of a growing number of student outcomes that seek design solutions to quality-of-life issues that affect our physical, psychological and social wellbeing. More than ever before, our young generation are seeking answers.

How can we, as educators, respond to such societal change and better support our student body from a pedagogical perspective? Does our response require change at policy level? Or at human level? Or both?

The metaphor of a tangled ball of wool springs to mind. It is a "social mess". In 1974, systems thinker Russell L. Ackoff wrote about complex problems as messes: "Every problem interacts with other problems and is therefore part of a set of interrelated problems, a system of problems.... I choose to call such a system a mess."⁴ In 2007, extending Ackoff, Robert Horn said that "a Social Mess is a set of interrelated problems and other messes. Complexity — systems of systems — is among the factors that makes Social Messes so resistant to analysis and, more importantly, to resolution."

According to Horn, the defining characteristics of a social mess are:

⁴ Ackoff, Russell, "Systems, Messes, and Interactive Planning" Portions of Chapters 1 and 2". *Redesigning the Future*. London: Wiley. 1974.

“No unique "correct" view of the problem; different views of the problem and contradictory solutions; most problems are connected to other problems; data are often uncertain or missing; multiple value conflicts; ideological and cultural constraints; political constraints; economic constraints; often a-logical or illogical or multi-valued thinking; numerous possible intervention points; consequences difficult to imagine; considerable uncertainty, ambiguity; great resistance to change; and problem solver(s) out of contact with the problems and potential solutions.”⁵

Horn’s list could describe the tightly tangled, interrelational complexity of tackling a quality-of-life issue, such as anxiety and negative stress, in an education setting.

In search of answers, let us first note a concurrent train of thought: the growing interest in meditation as beneficial for alleviating stress. A recorded success story was published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* (Chung et al. 2012); it details the positive effects of Sahaja Meditation on quality of life, anxiety, and blood pressure control, where meditation means existing in a present devoid of stressful thoughts:

Simple applications of silent affirmations and breathing techniques assist an individual to achieve a state of mental silence in which the entire attention is on the present moment, and one is free from unnecessary mental activity. The experience is often described by its practitioners as soothing, relaxing, and enjoyable. The tranquility experienced during meditation is marked by change in electroencephalography (EEG) patterns in the cortical activity of the brain, where elevated α and θ oscillating frequencies and reduced EEG complexity mark a better internal attentional control and positive emotional feedback.

In this meditation the physiological indicators of stress leave room to those that indicate deep relaxation, thus offering scientifically measurable outcomes. The authors note the method appears radically different from other practices, as identified in a previously published 1995 report to the Ministry of Health, Alternative Medical Systems and Practices in The United States Washington, DC. The authors insist:

The unique EEG patterns observed in Sahaja yoga meditation distinguishes it from the other two popular meditation practices in the West — the Transcendental meditation (TM), in which practitioners repeat a word or phrase silently to quiet and ultimately transcend the internal mental dialogue, and the Mindfulness meditation, in which practitioners simply observe or attend to thoughts, emotions, sensations, or perceptions without judgments.

The study concludes with a list of the benefits of meditation for one’s wellbeing and related aspects:

⁵ Robert E. Horn and Robert P. Weber, “New Tools for Resolving Wicked Problems: Mess Mapping and Resolution Mapping Processes” (MacroVU(r), Inc. and Strategy Kinetics, LLC, 2007), https://www.strategykinetics.com/new_tools_for_resolving_wicked_problems.pdf.

Patients who receive Sahaja yoga meditation treatment, in conjunction with conventional treatment, benefit in perceived quality of life, anxiety, and hypertension control, recommending the effectiveness of Sahaja yoga meditation for managing such conditions.⁶

In search of a healthy life, practitioners seem to find objectively better positionings of the self in terms of stress, anxiety, and hypertension, through an enjoyment of mental silence and “internal attentional control.”

A second patterning

Attention-as-method can be said to be part of the creative process. Creativity is by nature processual; it is time based. It may capture (then convey) a single gesture, or many. For artists that look to sense-perception as a medium to explore thinking and being as a “making sense of the world”, in time, space, and intimately – with oneself, with others and with a wider “whole”, it is a relational journey

For New Zealand born modernist artist, Len Lye (1901–1980), such “acts of process” took shape across a wide variety of media; from motion drawings to filmmaking, *Free Radicals* (1958), creative writing, *Song Time Stuff* (1938), and sculptural form, *Universe* (1967). Lye extended the self, by making visible internal and/or external attention through sensory awareness and movement.

Like many artists, writers, and thinkers of his time, Lye was motivated by a desire for change during some of the most troubling times that Western society experienced (WWII and its aftermath). In questioning ‘what are we fighting for?’ Lye responded with a written work, (inspired by J. B. Priestley’s questioning of Western values), that took shape with the help of British poet and writer, Robert Graves: *Individual Happiness Now: A Definition of Common Purpose* (IHN).

At first sight we may translate the title (IHN) to mean a position of self-centeredness; in fact, our immediate reaction could well be a negative one. But for Lye, the self was something universal, cosmological one could say, and “centeredness” was about the *now*. In piecing together three words: individuality, happiness, and now, Lye “represented three interconnected values he felt could form the basis of a humane society transcending nationalism, political ideology and religious difference.”⁷ Lye’s theory proposed “a fundamental truth unifying humanity”; a distillation of selfhood that was not solely accessible to artists, but inherent in us all. Lye’s belief originated from a lifetime of living, breathing and studying movement, realized through an

⁶ Sheng-Chia Chung et al., “Effect of Sahaja Yoga Meditation on Quality of Life, Anxiety, and Blood Pressure Control,” *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* 18, no. 6 (2012): pp. 589-596, <https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2011.0038>.

⁷ Len Lye and Tyler Cann, *Len Lye: Individual Happiness Now!* (New Plymouth, N.Z.: Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 2006).

“unique experience of the body and its relation to the external world” – it gave Lye a definite sense of purpose and identity.

For sensory awareness to be *affective*, it must be ground in the present. For Lye, ideas of individuality and happiness (now), proved to be the driving force behind much of his work for the remaining years of his life. At the time, Lye hoped to share his concept upon a global stage, and for its fundamental values to be adopted by governments “as a matter of practical policy”. (Mutatis mutandis, we are taking up the mantle.)

A question of timing

To consider Lye’s ideas within the context of this letter is to respond in the now of immediate action. It is a question of timing and of our position in the world (wherever that may be), and it is about an ethics of care (Nel Noddings) that could be universal without being essentialistic, a sentiment echoed by Lye when he confessed, “I think we could stimulate this dormant intensity” – a suggestion that invites one to consider the awakening of energies.

Traditional and indigenous cultures allude to such awakenings, while complementary medicine techniques, such as Sahaja yoga - as a free and readily available method - could not only help provide health benefits but also a collective method of practice to awaken such energies.

How are we enjoying being alive “in the now”?

“And if you insist on having one, well, it’s like a ball of twine wound around the ‘now’ of the day, age, moment, and life of a human being...Time is a core, and the present, or ‘now’ is the centre from which short-cut lines can be drawn to all circumferences.”⁸

A site of nowness was important to Lye. In recent conversation with Len Lye biographer Roger Horrocks, Boermans has observed multiple points of connection and similar purpose to that of Lye in her own interdisciplinary practice (that of gestural movement, sense perception and interrelational being). Lye’s ideas were not new ideas; he drew from modernism and romanticism. Bringing together the two, together with the notion of sharp, concise form, and an ever-present questioning like “how are we enjoying being alive in the now?”, Lye believed that everything relates to the *now*, which can be also said of world politics today. As Horrocks intimates, “You could call it the ripple effect.” But, as a Buddhist monk may suggest, in the moment of “now”, everything is given up. At that moment, we are devoid of effect (from the ripples). Horrocks gives the example of a president sweeping the floor of his

⁸ Len Lye and Robert Graves, *Individual Happiness Now: A Definition of Common Purpose*, ed. Roger Horrocks (New Plymouth, Aotearoa New Zealand: Govett-Brewster Art Gallery / Len Lye Centre, 2017).

home: at that moment he would be a floor sweeper; the action of sweeping the floor in the now would take precedence.

In this simple example, the *value* of the lived moment is given to the action of “sweeping”. Further examples of similar immediacy and connection (affective resonance) are illustrated in an autobiographical publication of Lye’s texts and notes, *Happy Moments* (2002). Boermans considers Lye’s ability to recognize such energies, musical synergies, or harmonics – inherent in such “minor gestures” – as the strength of his practice.

Horrocks notes: “Lye believed we block out many of these life forces”. Lye sought to articulate the self through the unblocking of such forces (energies), as a means to combat politics. His project was about “an individual life formula”, and, affirming as an artist, about the individual’s conviction that I have something to say “and not leaving it to the politicians”. His was a political campaign of the self.

Now, to return to the social mess

Let us follow the thread of “a site of nowness” and the value of the lived moment in an educational context. What ripple effects spring to mind? If we are to respond today to observations made by learners such as Thompson at ground level, with a desire to make positive change, acknowledging the now – what form could this response take?

Learning is about relational values and sensemaking **in** the world. To reduce the process of learning down to bite-size chunks of information and assessment criteria in a lab or a classroom, online or otherwise, is to not only miss its value, but to ignore changes in society that demand our attention in terms of relational being. In simple terms, learning is about understanding a task, a problem-solving journey, and a (considered) response - it is about relationships - individually, with oneself, with others and with the world.

Dear Reader,

Granted that this generation (Gen Y) has transcended the Western obsession with rationality in favor of “emotional intelligence”, our question to you is how can we co-design more effective pedagogies that recognize this new level of awareness? Every one of us has life-reflections of practice that are invaluable responses to this question. One could take inspiration from organizations such as The Human Library (HLO); originating in Denmark and now a global initiative, it was designed as a “positive framework for conversations that can challenge stereotypes and prejudices through dialogue”. Knowledge exchange could collectively realize the solution to an endemic mental health world problem through data collection, whereby qualitative data is a collection of empathetic responses exchanged, between one another, the trajectories of which establish a collective network that

brings to mind Nick Hornby's character Marcus' aspirations in *About a Boy*: "Suddenly I realized - two people isn't enough. You need backup. If you're only two people, and someone drops off the edge, then you're on your own. Two isn't a large enough number. You need three at least." Or better still, a net to keep you from falling.

Could such a method of "patterning of collectivity" realize a new creative pedagogy in Aotearoa New Zealand and the world?

"Look at the little cell at the tip of a root, how it moves with complete intelligence, understanding and wisdom. Supposing it is hit by a stone, it doesn't feel bad, it goes back. It knows where to recede, where to go further, where to go round the thing and how to use the same stone for making the tree very strong. All this education you have to get through your experiences and by all the time saying humbly: "I have to learn." That is very important, that we have to have that humility to educate ourselves." (Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, Nirmala Vidya, 1982)

Western-centric learning environments, known for their institutional hierarchy, top-down structure and performance-related methods of practice, call for positive solutions to *affect or flatten* structure. A solution appears to come from an increased awareness that non-hierarchical, culturally situated perspectives enrich most conversations. Since 2015, leading from a position of inclusivity, co-design is a method of practice that "has become ubiquitous across government, includ[ed] in significant strategies, reports, engagement models and procurement requirements"⁹.

In 2020, Auckland Council Co-Design Lab commissioned Toi Āria, Design for Public Good and Toi Āria (a research unit based in the College of Creative Arts at Massey University's Wellington campus), to undertake an independent evaluation of bodies of work in the public domain that demonstrate a co-design practice in an Aotearoa New Zealand context. The report observes that co-design when practiced well "and used to refer to culturally grounded participatory and developmental design practices shaped by and with people in place," can provide "the potential for improved community wellbeing"¹⁰.

The report notes, however, that navigating co-design methods of practice (in search of solutions to messy problems) is fraught with risk. To honor the 'co' in co-design requires "conditions for a relational and value-based, culturally grounded practice based on reciprocity and shared decision-making". There is a clear and definite risk of it being an imported process that perpetuates colonial and Eurocentric mindsets and values, rather than

⁹ Simon Mark and Penny Hagen, *Co-Design in Aotearoa New Zealand: a Snapshot of the Literature* (Auckland: Auckland Co-design Lab, Auckland Council, 2020), <https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/media/1900/co-design-in-aotearoa-new-zealand-a-snapshot-of-the-literature-s-mark-p-hagen-tsi-june-2020.pdf>.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

providing a means “to enact the equitable tenets of “Te Tiriti o Waitangi/ The Treaty of Waitangi 2 (“Te Tiriti”) or be understood as related to practice already existing within te ao Māori.”¹¹ Sadly, the report concludes, there is growing co-design fatigue; “from our own experience and from practitioner reports, we know that many in the community already distrust the term co-design [...] and can consider the term to be devalued of meaning.”¹²

In response to concerns voiced by Toi Āria’s findings, we would like to share insight from a number of revealing sources. Firstly, from a recent article published in Design Assembly’s Field Guide series (2020) in which self-confessed “system navigator” Johnnie Freeland, suggests the importance of an “eco-system of actors...and intergenerational knowledge” to navigate (what he refers to as) a “space between spaces” - “in between mātauranga Māori [Māori knowledge systems] and Western systems. Freeland explains, via the analogy of a square, for Western knowledge systems, and a circle, for Indigenous ways of thinking, doing, and being – mātauranga Māori, the key distinctions between the two. Freeland’s observations are striking. It is about “re-circle-iz[ing] our minds, [to] understand our symbiotic whakapapa, our relationships to nature, to the universe to each other, and to this place, of Aotearoa, place of Tāmaki Makaurau, wherever our wahi [location] is.”¹³ Boermans believes the “in-between space” that Freeland refers to, and crucially, the *navigation* of that space, to be the defining factors of a new agile (co-design) approach. To make the shift “from ‘me’ to ‘we’” is about a paradigm of care and transformation that looks to “patterns-of-parts” within “in-between spaces”, in the now, with respect and acknowledgement of what has come before. As Bateson notes “understanding ecology is not like understanding how a clock or an algorithm work”. Ecosystem change is about “identifying *patterns* among the living participants” with an emphasis on “shifting patterns, living communication, symbiosis, and mutual learning.”¹⁴ Put simply, it is about realising a greater sense of self, which leads to our second insight.

Dr Matthew Stevens’ ongoing research project, titled *Rewilding Learning* investigates *nomadic* agile forms of learning across and beyond the boundaries of formal qualification frameworks and educational institutions. (Stevens, 2020). As part of *Rewilding Learning*, students have relevant, edifying experiences by working “collaboratively on ‘real-world’ projects — alongside clients, professional practitioners, teachers and community groups

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ Desna Whaanga-Schollum, “Field Guide: Johnnie Freeland – Systems Navigator,” Design Assembly, 2020, <https://designassembly.org.nz/2020/09/17/field-guide-johnnie-freeland-systems-navigator/>.

¹⁴ Rex Weyler, “Small Arcs of Larger Circles: a New Approach to Changing the World,” *Greenpeace*, June 1, 2018, <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/story/16799/small-arcs-of-larger-circles-a-new-approach-to-changing-the-world/>.

— as instances (or prototypes) of nomadic agile learning situations, out in-the-wild of the wider domain of practice.” Stevens' project re-negotiates the learning *experience*, and so responds in-the-now of immediate action; *relational* boundaries are continually (re)negotiated, strengthening and developing partnerships between and beyond “the self and others”.

Only last week, an article by Peter Stearn (The Chronicle of Higher Education), informed by the data-driven, Healthy Minds Study (2020)), advised us that stress and anxiety disorders among our student population are not in fact trending, they have been long in the making. Turn to the linked report, page 3, and cast an eye over key findings. “The sense of crisis is unmistakable”.¹⁵ It is clear that issues of stress and anxiety at societal level impact student health and wellbeing. It is the social responsibility of education providers to confront the problem, to think beyond the remit of student support services, and to provide support to their faculty (in the form of time), to realize new and effective pedagogy (such as Stevens’) and methods of practice, that prioritize learners’ social health and wellbeing (during their learning journey). It necessitates movement beyond previous boundaries of learning. It requires points of action or global threads of understanding that seek out connection with one another, to actively respond in-the-now.

Dear Reader,

We are hereby asking for your contribution to an intercultural proposition for change that focuses upon:

- an ethics of care for self and for the *other*;
- attention as a method of looking, sensing and being in the world;
- a rethinking of digital and physical learning spaces (“re-balancing”);
- learning through movement (peripatetics), participation (co-action), and storytelling, as well as connecting to our “minds in motion” (after Barbara Tversky);
- a cross-generational learning journey, as a “giving back”, reciprocated in exchange.

We are suggesting a proposition for change that actively embraces multicultural values at several levels. In practice this means responding to insight gained from the sharing of this collective imaginary, embracing interrelational values of care in partnership with indigenous values, and working towards a new, agile, co-design approach with teachers and learners,

¹⁵Peter N Stearns, “A ‘Crisis’ of Student Anxiety? The Challenges to Student Mental Health Are Real. They Are Also Decades in the Making.,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* , September 1, 2022, <https://www.chronicle.com/article/a-crisis-of-student-anxiety>.

to honor “and enact Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi 2 (“Te Tiriti”), that is to be understood as related to practice already existing within te ao Māori.”¹⁶

With interrelational values at its heart, we can perhaps inch closer to the latent intensity that metamodern authors like Luce Irigaray or Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi hope to stimulate, to perceptions of the world and of the self, respectively, that diverge from the traditional Western culture of the gaze (Irigaray 2004, 121), on the one hand, and from a culture of appearance built on ignoring the spirit. Against these, they hope to edify cultures of listening to the *other's* voice and of realizing one's own. Similarly, encouraged to reflect on their metamodern condition, some of the young people that we have interacted with suggest solutions that point in the direction of relationships and interconnectedness, of reinforced connections to one's cultures and family, of self-actualisation or self-realisation.

We look forward to receiving your response at the following link:
www.metamoderncreatives.com

Ngā mihi,
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¹⁶ Rex Weyler, “Small Arcs of Larger Circles: a New Approach to Changing the World,” *Greenpeace*, June 1, 2018, <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/story/16799/small-arcs-of-larger-circles-a-new-approach-to-changing-the-world/>.

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BIONOTES:

LUCINDA BOERMANS is a motion design lecturer, interdisciplinary artist, and PhD candidate at Auckland University of Technology. Boermans' research pathway looks to "atmospheres in motion" to realize new "points of crossing" (affective resonance) that could inform the establishment of a new, intercultural art school outside "the institutional norms", here in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Boermans completed a Master of Fine Arts at Elam School of Fine Arts, The University of Auckland in 2021. Exhibited work and presented research includes: *Towards a Collective Imaginary*, poster presentation, Forum for Global Challenges, Birmingham, UK (2022); *Turning*, solo show, The Malcolm Smith Gallery, Auckland (2022); *Unseen*, group show, The Tuesday Club, Auckland (2022); *Ecologies of Movement*, LINK 2021, AUT, Art and Design Symposium, Auckland (2021); *Iteration 12*, installation with Michelle Mayn, mothermother, Auckland (2021); *Our Symbiotic Habit: Telling Stories of Things That Matter*, Paper Presentation, AAANZ conference, Auckland (2020); *Meeting Half Way*, group show, Projectspace (2020); *Materiality in Motion: Ecologies of Transformation*, installation, San Diego (2019); *Connected Bodies? In Search of the Affective Dimension*, paper presentation, AAANZ conference, RMIT, Melbourne (2018); *Hingespace*, solo show, George Fraser Gallery (2018), *Materiality in Motion*, poster presentation, 13th Conference of Arts in Society, Vancouver (2018); *Performance 2120*, showing as part of Wunderuuma (AAG), The Gus Fisher Gallery (2017); *Akin*, solo show, Objectspace (2017).

ALEXANDRA DUMITRESCU writes poems, short stories, and literary studies. At the start of the millenium she proposed metamodernism as a cultural paradigm and a period term. In 2014 she completed her PhD (Otago, Dunedin) with a thesis about *Metamodernism in Literature*, followed by a Master of Creative Writing (AUT, Auckland) with the novel *Why Don't I Keep a Diary or A Secret Story of Metamodernism*. Her work was published in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, America, and Europe (Czech Republic, Greece, Romania). She taught at the Universities of Cluj (Romania) and Otago (Aotearoa New Zealand). She lives in Auckland, where she teaches at Manurewa High School and is a PhD Adviser for AUT. Garry Forrester called her "mother of metamodernism" in his 2014 memoir *More Deaths Than One*.

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