

Il faut cultiver notre jardin ... On the need for gardening

Prelude

To approach the work of AnneMarie Maes, an artist working with art-science projects that evolve around nature and ecology, it seems apt to use notions of 'lines of flight' (Deleuze) or 'knots' (Ingold), alluding to respectively the bees and the rhizomatic growth of her garden, but equally to the new networks she continually adds and develops. Similarly the notion of the 'meshwork' (De Landa, Ingold) that could be described as a 3D non-linear field of energy exchanges seems important as is the idea of 'vibrant matter' (Bennett) in all of which the nonhuman is granted equal agency to the human. The following intends to explore these notions and their authors who are strongly interconnected and to interweave several observations into a meshwork about, but also alongside Maes' work. To discover what her art is about and to communicate this by writing alongside it and follow its course like that of a river, create a parallel that sometimes leans over, intermingles and creates together. For this text I have adapted a way of working that chimes with the gradually letting go of a clear position. To ponder about a possible meaning and carry it with you, return to it, take it in a different direction.

Field note - 10/01/2014*

The mice are back and have eaten all the seeds of the winter rye. I am doing yet another attempt with grains... And then suddenly there are snails! Where they come

from I really don't understand. Stranger even is that they - after having glided over the grains - suddenly disappear back in thin air. The compost heap also asks for intervention, a treatment of 15 days. Furthermore the weather is still very soft. The sky is bright blue and bees fly from all hives everyday. Hopefully it will not wintry in February anymore as that could be fatal for the bees...

* From the fieldnotes 'Garden Timeline in Words' (2014) by AnneMarie Maes, translation ED.

On Voltaire/Politics

Having finally settled down after being exposed to the most awful atrocities, Voltaire's Candide and company realise to their big surprise that they are not happy in their newfound peaceful situation but actually rather bored. The old lady for instance muses what is worse, to go through all the miseries they had undergone during their journeys, or to stay in this final resting place and have nothing to do. "It's a great question," said Candide.

Candide thereupon first consults the local Dervish who is however not of much help. He then turns to the 'Old Turk' who seems to be happy nurturing his garden, being unaware of all misery outside of it and Candide comes to realise after his example that rather than being idle he and his company need to work and cultivate their garden. It is the only way to render life tolerable. And so they do.

Although the 'Old Turk' cannot be bothered about what takes place in Constantinople, Voltaire's work,

especially his *Traité sur la Tolérance*, has gained renewed notoriety within the context of recent political turmoil. Candide's tale can be read in a similar manner, be it in a different context, in view of ecological politics, as a certain call to return back to basics and the need for a collaborative effort.

In her preface to *Vibrant Matter - a political ecology of things* (2009) Jane Bennett states that her book is "motivated by a self-interested or conative concern for *human* survival and happiness"; she wants "to promote greener forms of human culture and more attentive encounters between people-materialities and thing-materialities." She is interested in how political responses to public problems would change were we to take the vitality of (nonhuman) bodies seriously. Politics can, and probably must be, also about enjoyment and happiness.

Field note - 11/02/2014
Back from California and in the meantime it has been relatively warm in Brussels, lots of sun and the temperature never below zero. The garden has not changed that much. The *Viburnum tinus* still blooms; all its flowers are now open. The *Phacelia* has not grown and will probably not bloom anymore. Where the *Phacelia* was sown in deeper boxes it is much higher and greener than the seedlings in the lower boxes, which are more brown and red-coloured. I will mix them as green manure into the soil. The garlic - both the one I got from Guy as the one of Shu Lea - has grown a lot. There are also some Brussels

sprouts and green kale. The winter rye is neither a success. After the mice had eaten most of the seeds in late autumn the seeds that I sowed in January did not catch on anymore. The mice seem to have disappeared from the conservatory - let's hope! (...). The three Kempen hives fly plenty but in the Warré hive I see currently no movement. I hope that opening the hive on 17/1 has not been fatal. But maybe they stay inside because they have enough to eat?

On Invisibility/Point of view

AnneMarie Maes called her project for the exhibition *The Green Light District* in Kortrijk 'The Invisible Garden' (2014), which alluded to the fact that it was indoors and could not be seen or even guessed at from the outside of the building it was located in. Something similar is the case with her original *Hortus Experimentalis* in Brussels of which the one in Kortrijk was a copy - it is just as invisible as it is situated high up on the rooftop of a three-storey parking lot in the centre of town where it can't be seen or even guessed at from street level. Yet another connection to an equally invisible garden is that to the medieval cloister gardens, situated once at this exact same location in Brussels, evidence of which now hides underneath the ground and in history.

Maes indicates that it is exactly the making visible of the invisible that lies at the heart of her project. She is fascinated by hidden structures. How it is only through technology, and I would argue also through philosophy or adopting another state of mind, or point of view, that certain aspects of

life can be rendered visible. Maes achieves this by integrating so-called 'hidden poetic memories' in her installation that add both a visible and an audible layer to be discovered.

In her microscope images of pollen Maes reveals yet more views that seem otherworldly. It is surprising to see how much of our daily life is unseen. We explore outer space but know precious little about our oceans. And that what is not immediately visible with the naked eye escapes our attention as well. It is of course not always a case of 'seeing' but of 'sensing' as well. Observing our relation with our surrounding world is obviously one of the oldest subjects of mankind. What fascinates Maes is the aesthetic side of nature, the beauty of the honeycomb that can be related to computational aesthetics or to architecture. This reminds me of my study of art history at the University of Leiden where various brilliant teachers in art philosophy, architecture and medieval studies pointed me to the harmony of the "music of spheres". The idea of the small in the big and the big in the small and the interconnectedness of visible and invisible worlds later became apparent in the wonderful if in the meantime somewhat dated, *Powers of Ten* movie by Charles and Ray Eames. Or in reading Peter Sloterdijk's trilogy *Sphären* (recently fully translated as *Spheres*) in which he weaves an intriguing account of the smaller and larger networks surrounding and underlying our environment.

The structure of the bees' honeycomb is indeed admirably structured with its hexagonal configuration, quite in contrast with that of our own homes.

In his text 'Homes: Meshwork or Hierarchy' (1995) Manuel De Landa asks the question whether homes are planned or self-organized and extends this query also to the nonhuman realm of animals. The home territories of birds turn out to be a matter of self-organisation in "a complex interplay between male and female birds and the expressive affordances of their environment." Affordances or constraints were first introduced by psychologist William Gibson and express the way in which the environment is meaningful for the human or non-human inhabitant. Where the birds of De Landa choose to have their territory is a complex combination of internal drive and external factors – "emerging from the interaction of a non-hierarchical set of brain functions and the expressive qualities of the territorial markers themselves".

The animals that Maes describes in her field notes, whether the bees or the birds, clearly also respond to their surroundings, either in a positive or a negative way. The bees respond to the kind of beehive or available flowers and plants, the birds equally respond to the presence of potential food - dead bees, ripe grapes – and might along the way mistake the conservatory or Maes' apartment as a potential home. But there is of course also the large unseen to which they respond – the air pollution in Brussels can be quite substantial with large amounts of fine dust on bad days. The use of insecticides has diminished the world population of bees at a threatening rate. Little do people realize that without bees there will be no pollination and thus also no food. How habitable will our environment eventually be? The response of nature

– both human and non-human – will probably self-organize itself towards survival, as nature in whatever form always will survive, but there will no doubt be many casualties along the way.

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Field note - 22/02/2014
Worked for the first time in the garden together with David. Moved the hives: the Warré next to the Kempen, ready for monitoring of the next season. The second Kempen hive put next to the first. Even that one-meter of displacement makes it difficult for the bees to find their hive entrance! Strange that these creatures, so good in collaboration, individually have trouble responding to something so simple. We also transplanted the Rosa glauca that stood in the front next to the olive tree and put it in the back, next to the stairs that lead to the UAF. We also cleaned the conservatory, pruned the kiwi and the last grapes and David has increased some strawberry plants. Also cut the grass for the first time so that it is ready to grow with full force. The nasturtiums - that have survived the winter without dying down - already flower just as the Calendula. The buckthorn also is in bloom although two of the four cuttings that I planted last year have died. For the cardoons and artichokes this soft but relatively wet winter has been a true godsend. They look full and happy!

On Meshwork/Fluidity

In his *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* (1997) Manuel De Landa extends the theme he already touches on in the article mentioned above, to a wider analysis of society. The conclusion of the article was that our homes are complex mixtures of self-organized and planned components, or in other words, of hierarchies and meshworks. De Landa in his 1995 article defines hierarchies as structures in which components have been sorted out into homogenous groups, and then articulated together. "Meshworks, on the other hand, articulate heterogeneous components as such, without homogenizing." In *A Thousand Years* the notion of home is extended to a threefold analysis of the period 1000-2000 AD: geological, biological and linguistic, but the basis stays the same. In an intricate interweaving of hierarchies and meshworks everything is related – shifting one thing will eventually result in shifting another. Or as Jane Bennett states in *Vibrant Matter* (2010): "(...) in a knotted world of vibrant matter, to harm one section of the web may very well be to harm oneself."

Earthquakes are the result of tectonic plates that have been on the move for 25 million years. They were in the making all along and something similar can be said about pretty much anything else whether of human or nonhuman origin when one subscribes to the new materialism that philosophers like De Landa, Bennett or Serres allude to in their writing in which the human and non-human are acknowledged as existing and interacting on the same plane or level. Bennett is inspired by Deleuze's and Guattari's experiment with the idea of 'material vitalism' and equally follows

Spinoza in the inherent connection between all human and nonhuman bodies due to the fact that at the basis they are made from the same substance. Bennet tries “to bear witness to the vital materialities that flow through and around us”.

In his book *Being Alive* (2011) anthropologist Tim Ingold introduces his take on the meshwork via a series of chapters or ‘knots’ that form part of this ‘texture of interwoven threads’. The meshwork rethinks the animate and develops a view in which we are no longer surrounded by an environment but are an integral part of a fluid space. It equally acknowledges the human and the non-human as existing and interacting at the same level and thus moves away from an imposing hierarchy. Ingold pulls together ethnologist Jakob Von Uexküll’s theory of *Umwelt* (Environment) that is made meaningful by the organism, and Gibson’s idea of affordance in which the environment is seen as a site of meaning for its inhabitants (human or non-human) via Heidegger’s distinction of captivation (animal) and disclosed (human) to Deleuze’s lines of flight. The difference with Latour’s (initial) idea of the actor *network* theory lies in the difference between “the network as a set of interconnected points” and that of “the meshwork as an interweaving of lines” (Ingold, 2011, 64).

Michel Serres uses the meshwork in yet another way when he writes about the historical network that pulls science and the humanities back together. Latour compares his “generalized comparativism” (Serres and Latour, 1995, 77), using a non-

linear approach to time, to a fly’s flight pattern. As the son of “a fisherman and gravel dealer, a bargeman on the Garonne river” Serres also quite naturally recalls the river and water in general as metaphor, its whirling and streaming both up and down, for how the meshwork operates (Serres and Latour, 6). The images of turbulences, whirlpools and a liquid nature are frequently used and not only originate from his childhood memories around the river but also from Lucretius and ancient atomism in which everything flows and to which Serres returns in his *The Birth of Physics*.

Maes inadvertently relates to this idea of the fluid meshwork when she states about her project ‘The Invisible Garden’ that it “...reverses the relation between nature and art. The transitions between inside and outside, culture and staged nature become fluid and transitory.”

For me personally Serres’ interweaving of ancient and contemporary philosophy and science reads like the ideal puzzle, the perfect novel, and speaks to my inner detective. What else is a researcher in the end?

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*Field note - 20/04/2014
Easter. Erected the small
P2P conservatory in the
Urban Farm together with
Luc. At the start of July
we will have a P2P
workshop in it in the
context of the CAPS-call.
Also checked whether the
operation Warré/Kempen
has yielded some progress
for the bees. This is
disappointing. The bees
have build nothing in the
2nd container; the queen
thus clearly sits above*

the divider in the Kempen container. Decided to remove the divider with Luc so that the bees can slowly descend themselves. But they don't seem to feel like it! It might that the 'old' beekeepers indeed turn out to be right after all and that bees like to stay on the already developed honeycomb instead of get to work themselves! There is nevertheless a lot of action at the entrance of the hive, and the colonies are also well developed. I'll just quietly let them follow their own plan. While checking the Warré hive I wanted to raise one honeycomb to see whether there was a lot of brood and it was so heavy that it broke at the top bar. Those top bars don't seem to be a good system. In the future I will return to using windows but then in Warré format and without wax foundation. Pay attention: with lifting the entire box the snapped piece of honeycomb of course fell down. It was full of brood and honey and I hope the queen was not on it and that she is still unscathed in the hive. Enfin - learned another lesson.

On Oeuvre/Labour

An artist's oeuvre, or work, or labour, is yet another meshwork. Or ecosystem. A garden. That slowly forms itself. As an artist's oeuvre. Or that of a writer. Or of a researcher.

As De Landa implicates in *A Thousand Years* a meshwork does not grow overnight, it is the result of a prolonged activity. The meshwork is

not necessarily overly positive, nature is not kind as someone pointed out to me in a conversation on the importance of soil. The meshwork (and nature for that matter) operates in a constant exchange or inter-change with hierarchies that grow out of it and that later on is subsumed again. It is a dynamic, nonlinear system that operates both on a micro and macro level in which every action anywhere in the field eventually results in a counteraction anywhere else. The art market is not different.

As for writing as labour, this is far from a linear activity. It starts with some points, ideas that are then connected. The text is scanned up and down, revisited, readjusted, added to, (partly) erased. Until finally things seem to fall in place. It actually is quite similar to gardening it seems, not unlike the planting, replanting, redesigning that Maes describes in her field notes. When she writes "It was a good decision to replant the strawberries from the low containers to the high containers, underneath the fruit trees" this is quite analogous to me moving a sentence or a full paragraph to another place, in another combination, closer to a quote or further away. The quotes or the field notes work like specific elements in the garden, possibly the undergrowth on which I build my arguments but they could also be the fruit trees that protect my strawberries. I garden. She writes. I notice how my writing is influenced by her field notes.

Deleuze and Guattari famously introduced the idea of assemblage in connection to a book, or more specifically their *A Thousand Plateaus* in which they also develop the idea of

the rhizome, the “always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*.” Always becoming. In the book as assemblage, or the garden for that matter, as in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or, on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds constitutes an *assemblage*.

Although Maes would possibly see her various websites and the wiki’s that accompany, illustrate or bear witness of her activity in the first place as (collaborative) work material these could equally be seen as integral to her oeuvre. The various strands that one can follow are like books in a library, ready to uncover new worlds, encyclopaedic. They are the strata and territories of the assemblage of Deleuze and Guattari, a rhizomatic growth on its own, with every entry as another potential line of flight, ready for take off. Eco points to the importance of having unread books in one’s library, which makes it into a research tool into the unknown and demonstrates a curiosity for the undefined. The not yet or partly read wiki or strand in a website presents a similar richness.

It seems to me – by the way - that one of the reasons that female artists are underrepresented within the art market and art history in general is the fact that they tend to work along this way. A weaving of sorts that results in a tissue that neither in its entirety nor in its separate threads tends to reveal

its meaning straight away. It can’t easily be categorised or compartmentalised and thus also don’t lends itself to easy marketing. It is also not necessarily interested in hierarchy or can just not be bothered. There is other work to do.

A meshwork thus cannot be read in one glance – one needs to unravel it in order to understand it, spend time with it, like with the garden, a text, an artist’s work. Where De Landa writes *about* meshworks Serres writes *in* and *through* them and implicates that the philosophy that produces his writing needs time as you need to know about everything:

Yes, a philosopher should know everything, should have lived everything and understood everything – the sciences, hard and soft, their history, but also that which is *not* science, the entire encyclopedia, with no exclusions. What underpins philosophy is not this or that partial science but the active totality of knowledge, as a totality. One only becomes a philosopher late in life – unlike scientists, who start inventing in their youth – because one must pass almost all of one’s life in preparation. (Latour and Serres, 26-27).

Like the writer, the artist. Is it not really only after so many years that one truly knows what to say? And even then ...

Field note - 24/05/2014
As nobody came I thus worked on my own in the garden. Which is quite pleasurable especially if it’s not too warm and the

wind blows - it feels just like being at the seaside. I start to get to know the garden better. It was a good decision to replant the strawberries from the low containers to the high containers, underneath the fruit trees. The strawberries look much healthier and give beautifully red fruit that has not been eaten by the birds as it has been hidden under the larger leaves. I had put mown grass under the strawberries so that they could ripen on a nice soft bed. I also picked cherries. They were already ripe on one cherry tree - beautiful and red! I now know how I will redesign the garden next year in context of weight, low labour & low watering. I will bring at least 4 of the fruit trees from the back all the way to the front where they will stand on top of the big pillars from the floor underneath. The long vegetable container of the PermaVille boys will just have to be shortened. And further even more herbs: good for the bees and also to make teas. I will put more strawberries under the trees. In the conservatory I will keep growing tomatoes and peppers, as I like eating them! The intensive work is then limited to 1 part of the garden namely the conservatory. And the rest should be able to do it on their own! That's the plan, to be executed this autumn and next spring so that everything is ready to leave for Berlin! Tonight I will take the strawberries, cherries and basil to

Radha, together with a pot of honey and a bottle of wine. We will eat a nice pasta.

On Gardening/Labour

We need to cultivate our garden, work in, on and with it. The garden is not made by one person alone. The 'Old Turk' has his daughters to help him, Candide the company of the old woman etc. The garden is a locus of several collaborations, human and non-human. In the new garden that Maes develops at various locations, inside, outside, at unexpected levels,

“artists and urban gardeners develop new strategies for sustainable living in the city. An artistic attitude, green technology and the philosophy of permaculture present new opportunities to contribute to sustainable living.”

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Harry F. Wolcott argues in his book *The Art of Fieldwork* (2005) to pursue fieldwork more 'artfully' and to focus on what counts, rather than just count. A systematic work ethic is important but it needs in his view to be combined with a more artful way, paying "adequate attention to its artistic as well as its scientific potential". At the same time Wolcott thinks it's important to view fieldwork as an entity on its own, always incorporating elements of art and science by default. So it is not so much an in-between art and science as an overlapping activity.

Maes' work is fieldwork in that it moves out of the classic studio space, into her extensive rooftop garden with its beehives. Fieldwork is sometimes

defined as situated “outside of a laboratory, library or workplace setting” to collect data. In a way Maes however has made her ‘field’ into a laboratory and one could even say, a library of sorts.

Field note - 03/06/2014
Visit by Xavier Bellès,
Director of the Institute
for Evolutionary Biology
in Barcelona. He’s
totally impressed by the
garden and the bee
laboratory. More plans
for EU projects are made.
The crow family has taken
possession of the garden,
they are lord and master
and sit on anything that
is high, keeping an eye
on everything and not
allowing other birds
(especially the pigeons)
to eat the berries. Every
morning the crows eat the
dead bees that lie in
front of the beehives in
the grass. They attack
pigeons and blackbirds
till they are exhausted,
and tear them apart.

On field notes

Connected to fieldwork is the use of field notes. As Kathleen and Billie DeWalt indicate in their book *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers* (2011) “observations are not data unless they are recorded in some fashion for further analysis”. They also observe how field notes are simultaneously data and analysis. Field notes are a product, constructed by the researcher. They are therefore inherently subjective, complex and biased as participation implies emotional involvement whereas observation requires detachment (DeWalt and DeWalt, 28). The observer is so much implemented that one of the respondents to Jean

Jackson’s survey, quoted by DeWalt, claims “I am a field note”, providing her with the title for her publication on ‘Field notes as a Symbol of Professional Identity’ (1990). The above is related to anthropological observation of the human but it is obviously also useable in an observation of the non-human, such as bees or a garden. Because of their complex identity field notes contain the fluid connection between artist and scientist that Wolcott (see *On fieldwork*) alludes to and are in that respect possibly less problematic for the artist than for the scientist as the artist is used to being subjective and the scientist is normally trained to be objective. The field notes of Maes clearly reveal her personality and her emotional involvement with her subjects, even though they are non-human. It is therefore not surprising to find the phrase “I am a field note” as a working subtitle for one of her texts.

Field note - 02/07/2014
While inspecting the
garden the following
strikes me: fig trees and
strawberry plants are
good partners. The
strawberries are much
thicker underneath the
fig trees than at other
places. The mulberry and
strawberry are equally
good partners. The mange
touts grow very well on
the wigwam structure that
I made with bamboo
sticks. The radishes in
the P2P conservatory are
growing fast and you have
to pull them out fast
before they grow too big
(and tasteless). The
zucchini 'Ronde de Nice'
has finally started and
is beginning to produce
well after I had removed
the broad beans (that

wouldn't grow) from the same container. The Czar' plum tree produces extremely well. At least 300 plums, tasty sweet and delicious both stewed as directly eaten from the tree. The tomatoes in the conservatory have a lot of fruits but it takes them still just as long to ripen (despite the warm spring) as in other years. The tomato plants outside start to grow well now (early July) and the first fruit show. The teasel of last year has spread its seeds all over the roof garden. Everywhere teasels are growing wild! I don't understand how they can develop in 3 cm of lava granules without compost and it nevertheless happens. We have moved the ivy that stood in the green bags on the roof of the parking to some bottomless apple containers. It does well. The plan is to let it quietly overgrow the roof. Another plant that is omnipresent on the roof is nasturtium. It produces seeds in abundance. Once they have flowered they usually attract greenfly and wilt but the new generation is ready to follow. It is remarkable that greenfly usually appears in times of drought. I think it is related to plants that are stressed by not getting water regularly. The pumpkins have also suddenly started. It always takes a while (about 2-3 weeks) when you put pumpkin outdoors but once they take off they grow really fast. The top garden is becoming overgrown with large pumpkin leaves. The lacinato kale that was sown directly outdoors

also flourishes. I hope it will hibernate so we are secured of food in autumn and winter. It does have to be continuously protected from the birds. The chard that the permaboys sowed in the conservatory is super big - much bigger than the one we had outdoors. Although it is a waste of space in the conservatory for a vegetable that can perfectly survive outdoors. The broccoli also has flower heads but they are disproportionate in comparison to the amount of leaves these plants produce. I think this might be due to the amount of horse manure in the earth of the permaboys. It will have to be compensated for next year! Best work with 'poor' vegetables such as carrots and beets and no crucifers next year in the same ground. The cardoons and artichokes are in full bloom. It would of course be possible to harvest the flower heads and eat them but the flowers are so beautiful and good for the bees and other insects that I leave them as they are. The Verbena bonariensis has spread as well and the long purple stems give extra colour to the garden as does the Calendula! The buckthorn gives this year (for the first time after 2 years of nothing) an abundant berry crop. The potatoes of the Burning Ice Festival are doing well and I am curious to see what crop they will give - after having worked with the Sarpo mira it will be a welcome change.

On the garden/Paradise

The OpenGreens site of OKNO – the artist collective co-founded by Maes in 2004 - opens with a quote by Michel Foucault from his book *Of Other Spaces* (1967) in which he makes the connection between flying or magic carpets and traditional Persian gardens (which brings us more or less back to Candide and his garden):

... the garden is a rug onto which the whole world comes to enact its symbolic perfection, and the rug is a sort of garden that can move across space. The garden is the smallest parcel of the world and then it is the totality of the world. The garden has been a sort of happy, universalizing heterotopia since the beginnings of antiquity...

The Persian rug as an image of the world connects us also back to De Landa's text 'Homes: Meshwork or Hierarchy'. The rug is usually part of a home as is the garden, whether used indoors or outside. The rug is literally a meshwork of woven threads and symbolically a meshwork of associations. As is the garden.

Space, place, home – bees and their hives, the garden as an extension but also an equivalent of home. A habitus, in the terms of a social structure, making us think about the habitable.

Field note - 02/08/2014

The end of summer is clearly in sight. It has gone at least 2 weeks quicker than in the years before. It is still very warm. There are

thunderclouds from time to time but no thunderstorms. The water will be finished again soon. The damaged WASP mote meteorostation has been repaired - the solar panel cannot manage more than sending data every 30 minutes. The real wasps are arriving and the bees are looking for food. They are happy with anything they find - every wild flower is being flown at. I have sown again Phacelia in the places where I removed the potatoes and salad. In the conservatory the melon grows incredibly hard and the tomatoes and peppers are doing well. The tomatoes outside finally get ripe fruits as well - it has taken them a while. And there are plenty of pumpkins waiting. Green, orange, yellow...

Family Blackbird is again present all over the place. They are in the conservatory (I have now hung a curtain with brightly coloured plastic strips, maybe this will put them off a bit) and eat the ripe grapes. They also muck about the beehives, both for the ripe grapes as for the dead bees. Regularly a lost bird can be found indoors, today a brown redstart. And the spiders have suddenly returned in large numbers, a sign that summer is ending. I urgently need to drain the honey and start treating the bees against Varroa... Worked with Vincent yesterday on a setup for sound streaming. A shotgun microphone in front of the beehive gives a very special effect!

On language

The word 'experiment' easily causes confusion as it has a different meaning when used by an artist or a scientist. For the artist to experiment means to try, to test, to play. For the scientist this might be the same but the experiment in this case needs to be repeatable and measurable, controllable. For the artist the experiment however incorporates a certain uniqueness, a subjectivity that is related to her personality and way of doing, seeing, observing. What is important however is that both the artist and the scientist have the 'right' to use and claim the experiment from their own point of view and that one – the experiment itself, the artist and the scientist or the outcome - is not better or more solid than the other. A mutual understanding of this aspect lies at the heart of a good art-science project. The artistic view produces knowledge that is equal to that of the scientist. Its meaning might however lie not so much in the word itself as in-between the words. Its subjectivity is a different but equally valuable kind of knowledge.

Field note 05/08/2014

I was busy outside with the bees today. Only prepared 2 hives for winter (those next to the conservatory), it all takes a lot of time. Took honeycombs down, checked how strong the colonies are and how much they need themselves. Started the Varroa treatment. Hive 1 next to the conservatory is super strong and has a lot of frames of (still closed) brood. I will let it go into winter on one and a half box. I left them a full honey super but did

take away the deviders so that they can spread their brood over the 2 boxes. Winter is still nowhere in sight! I put 3 plates of Thymovar on the lowest brood box, as there is no brood in the highest box. The 2nd colony next to the conservatory is a little less strong but has after a very slow start at the beginning of season 2014 gained strength. The colony is however too small to hibernate on 2 boxes. So I took down the honey super and hung the half filled frames in the colony next to it. This colony I will start feeding additionally with sugar water from tomorrow. This evening I still also want to do the 2 Kempen hives down in the garden. I rather do all hives at the same time and then maybe will be ready to extract the honeycombs. I cannot wait too long as the wax moth had almost struck again. I've just outwitted her! The bees are currently very restless. They have no more food, there are no more blooming flowers. They prey on anything that could be food. Robbery is in the air. As are the wasps and the wax moth.

Field note - 08/12/2014

Cleaned the roof and took away all fallen leaves. Properly secured all black cloths on the water tanks as everything was detached by the wind. I'll leave the water in the tanks with the buttons open. Still have to disconnect the pump however. Cleaned half of the conservatory: pruned the kiwi and vines and chopped the rampant butternut pumpkin for the

compost. Now still the other half of the conservatory, the tomato plants. There are still green tomatoes but they will not ripen anymore. Further there are still topinambours, leek, beetroot, lacinato kale, salad, carrots, red cabbage (eaten by the pigeons). The calendula and phacelia still blossom. It has so far not yet frozen.

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