



BROWSE



## Viva Vivo! Living Art Is Dead

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Leonardo

The MIT Press

Volume 37, Number 1, February 2004

pp. 90-92

ARTICLE

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**In lieu of** an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

## Viva Vivo! Living Art Is Dead

*Adam Zaretsky*

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*Facing page: Scope and Poke*, micrograph of developing zebrafish embryos (19 hours), scoped with standard dissection microscope (40x) and poked with artist's tweezers. We are all congenital malformations that have stood the test of diversity versus time. This poking and jabbing is only a vamping of the creative play of organic mutations. Every day, the flux of morphology continues to reshape and remold concrete concepts of species integrity outside the grasp of command and control.

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What is so sexy about the biological today? Are the technologies of cloning, transgenics and genomics just charismatic suck-holes seducing faux-independent art exploration? Is bioart a gateway drug, the road to harder drugs: psychopharmacological answers to all social problems, more and more creative accounting regimes and cuter new disease designs? One would hope that there are better reasons to scope out undulating living entities than market schemes. Is it naïve to think that aesthetes are not all just echoes of capital-intensive trends? Are there really broad, heterogeneous swaths of ideation coursing outside of the status quo? Can we dream of hunting beauty for pleasure without apology?

By reading this text you are incorporating it into your fleshy repertoire. During a focused semiotic transmission, more than thoughts change hands. Your basic physiology is altered as you read. Protein production is over- and under-regulated by intellectually reactive metabolites. Pride of knowledge, gullible acceptance, the deviant chuckle, these are not thoughts without physicality. There may be an avenue of interplay between communication and inheritance. If so, then this page is a transgenic vector, contagious, infective. Ideas received translate into proteins that have waiting receptors for novel gene expressions. Your children will have more or less bushy eyebrows if you continue reading. You may become too detached to breed! This is intergenerational selection, grammatological eugenics. You are now a transmemic GMO!

## Transhumanism

The feeling of being a morally superior, detached observer is a practice for scientist and art appreciator alike. We often play God, and the very human act of radical detachment produces endorphins. Our futile quest to commandeer universalism provides serotonin rewards. Artists may mock our human ego but only to hook casual observers on their own innate brain chemistry. Feigning anthropocentric distance, transhumanist advocates practice fluidity of self-definition. We are studying machines made of meat, worms on two feet, bacterial bioreactors, overgrown drosophila.

There is no human. Certainly there is no superior spectacularity of essential humanity. We love dross and sculpt to refine our aesthetic and/or anti-aesthetic molecules. That includes sculpting our kindred. We are breeding for pleasure in a world of hurt. Our children will be posthuman but not superhuman. Bodily enhancement suffers the same pangs as other aesthetic qualms; passé-ism includes all future versions of transhuman being. And we are proud not to be proud. **[End Page 91]**

## Germline Onanism

What excites you below the belt? What makes you wet and swollen with

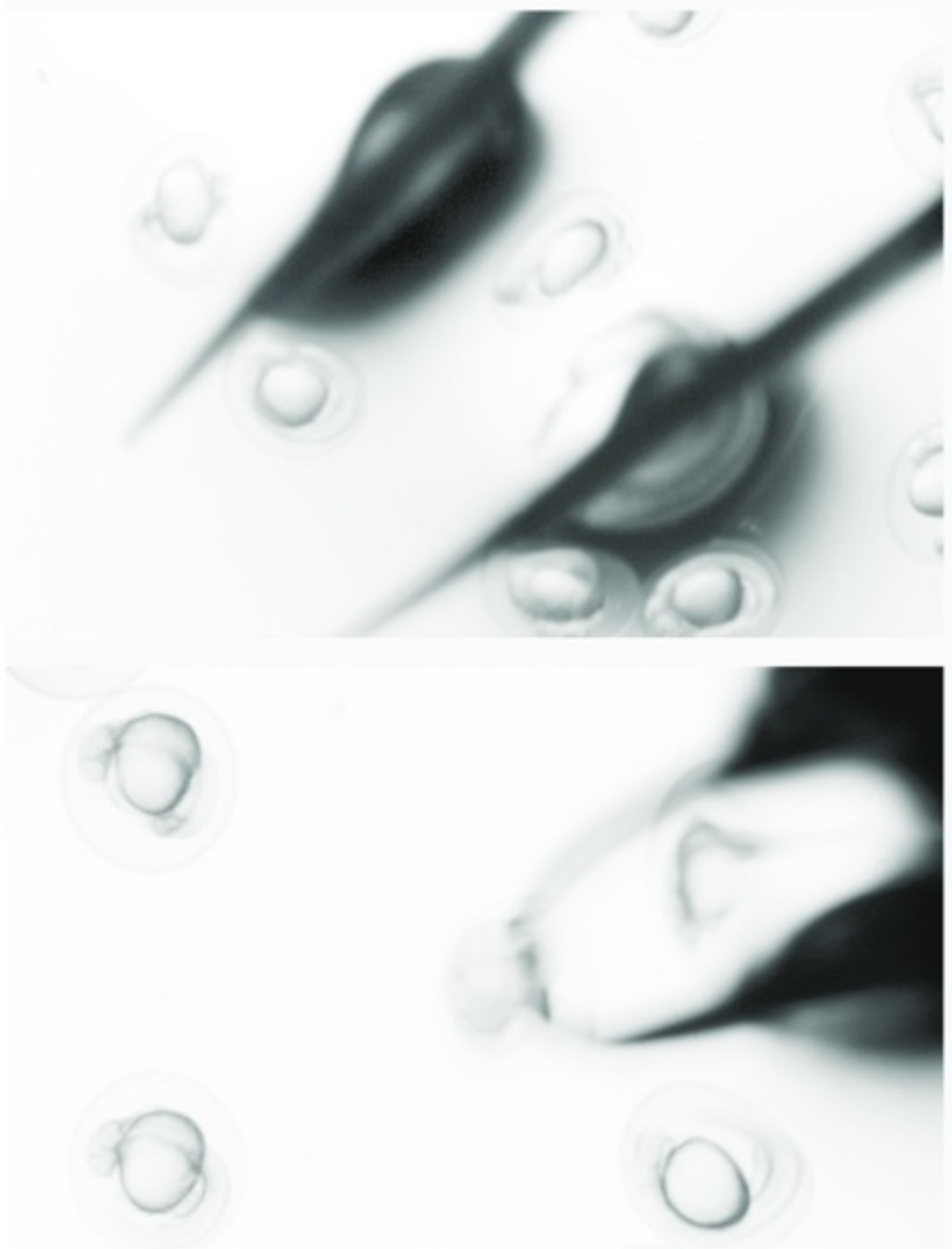
lust? These are the sites of erotic interchange. These are the acts that make you cum. That is life. That is pleasure, even diabolical pleasure. Study lust. Lust drives biotech: fantastic gender trouble. Fantastic taboo. Fantastic victimization. Fantastic biomorphic somnambulism. Fantastic reproduction. Fantastic creations. Our children are children of technolust. Jacking online into the spermbank of antiquated morphology, this is tomorrow's breed.

## Bioporn

Every new protocol creates taboo. What is screened out is an anarchic polymorphic stew created specifically to stabilize the repeatability of what is screened for. We build our foundations on normalized psychosis, which doubles as a cohesive monument to everyday stasis. Pornographic foci, in particular fetish monomanias, are the precursors to our most specific cultural norms. Fragments of social beauty are all in the eye of the monomaniac as beholder. This is culture, from banality to bestiality and back. Seedy imagination is the birthplace of our future bio-cultural norms.

## Artificial Omnipotence

The combination of creative lust and technical prowess has led us only to the realization of autoerotic fantasies: veil after veil lifts, in slippery sheens of translucent tissue. But there is no god for artists and scientists...



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