



REVIEWS

Review of *Speculative Solution*
The Wire, Aug 2011

Hecker*Speculative Solution*

Editions Mego/Urbanomic CD

"There are no constant laws of nature, and anything could happen (or not) at every moment," writes Robin Mackay in the introduction to Hecker's latest project, which comes with a 160 page booklet containing essays by notable contemporary thinkers in both English and French. It tackles the themes emerging from the so-called 'speculative turn' in philosophy, and attempts to follow the principles behind what Quentin Meillassoux calls 'hyperchaos' – "a world where one can only hold on to 'a chronics of things'".

But what does this all mean? The fundamental idea at work in both the music and the essays is radical contingency, what Mackay calls "a necessity-without-entity that eternally dissolves all guarantees"; in other words, no natural laws, anything can happen at any point. What sonic process could possibly reflect this claim? Handily for Hecker, it's impossible: "All you can do is hint at 'hyperchaos' which can sustain apparently endless and stable periods of constancy as much as infinite periods of furious change." In that sense, Hecker can be seen as having achieved this goal. The four tracks here ("Speculative Solution 1-3" plus "Octave Chronics") vary wildly in length, with the first lasting 32 minutes, the next two around three minutes and the final track around 20. But "Speculative Solution 1" provides the key to the project as a whole, veering from gentle robotic rain to screechy glitches, from undead bounces to twitching chirrups.

The idea of fusing a vogueish philosophical genre stemming from a rethinking of objects, order and science fiction with sound might strike some as opportunistic. Speculative philosophy has been all over the internet for some time now (well, at least all over a

few dozen philosophy blogs). Indeed, it is often seen as the first main philosophical discourse to take place online, as thousands of words get generated all over the world by those who flock to its rethinking of objects and contingency. Hecker's own response certainly captures some of the impact of this thinking, at times with a sense of humour. The end of "Speculative Solution 1" converts cheery metallic blips into filthy squelches while "Octave Chronics" splatters digital hyper-fast dance patterns (that no one could dance to, of course) into something that sounds like a woodblock made of titanium. Randomness in music is nothing new in itself, but hyperchaos might just be.

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