Lauren Prouvost and Jonas Staal shared their first collaboration in 2017, as a conceiving performer of the New World Summit at the 57th Venice Biennale. Their propositions differ, but their art practices share a common axis: both artists have been driven by precarity as well as the desire to break open the power structures that have prolonged the conditions of commodification that they are trying to dispel. The Constructivists decided to de-commodify, to unleash the agency of their orientation towards the construction of a politics for a post-human future, one that is equally determined and governed by human and non-human entities. The artist’s ability to think the non-human is a resource for the construction of a world that does not belong to the same class as them. A dependent or vulnerable human is seen as a failure, thus encouraging the neoliberal subjectivities further alienates them from those who are less affluent and fortunate, and those that do not belong to the same class as them. A dependent or vulnerable human is seen as a failure, thus encouraging the neoliberal subjectivities further alienates them from those who are less affluent and fortunate, and those that do not belong to the same class as them. Kara Walker makes visible the epistemologies that remind us of our affinities with other-than-human ecologies. As shown in Christina Kiaer’s study of constructivism, this practice—respective and collaborative—offers imaginaries for our relationship to everything non-human?

The references from which both artists draw to produce their propositions individually are various and manifold, but also shared. Their construction of an alternate reality that scrutinizes prevailing understandings and establishes limits to the political and the aesthetic is guided by the recognition that the regimes of power manifest under the influence of geopolitics, national identity and cultural and anthropological histories. This latter term describes the way in which political power is created and maintained. These power structures are not just institutional; they are also discursive, and therefore fragile and subject to challenge. In her book, Walker has elaborated to describe the regime of necropolitics. This latter term describes the use of social and political power to create, maintain and render visible the structure of the power of life and the power of death. In a world of increasingly state and corporate surveillance, the constructivists are a model for those who believe that the meaning of life and death is not fixed, and that the borders between the human and the non-human are not static but always in flux. As a result, Walker is able to question the very categories that we use to define ourselves and others, and therefore to challenge the very concepts that form the basis of our collective consciousness.

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