

ANIMAL → PROMPTS & PROTOCOLS FOR SOLO EXPLORATION

REMINDER | GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ENGAGEMENT:

Respond to these questions in whatever way feels good and possible to you and/or use any of these mechanisms as a vehicle to pull out a more discrete “piece” of “work.” The notion of “finished” work is not our concern here. Our goals are generative, whatever that means for you. It may happen entirely in the realm of the interior mind and body. Perfect, fantastic. If you would like to use these in a classroom setting and/or do work based on these prompts and decide to share or publish it, please credit and/or tag mindfully, thank you!

MATERIALS:

YOU CAN FIND THE RESOURCES & READINGS FOR THESE PROMPTS [IN THIS FOLDER](#)

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR REFLECTION / ENGAGING WITH PROMPTS:

- Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, excerpts from *The Mushroom at the End of the World: on the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* Ch 1-2, “Arts of Noticing,” and “Contamination as Collaboration,” 16-34
- Bhanu Kapil, *Humanimal* (select at will)
- Cody-Rose Clevidence, *Flung Throne* (selections)
- Brenda Iijima, *Remembering Animals* (selections)

AND/OR PLEASE CONSIDER EXPLORING

- [THE CREATURE FILMS OF JEAN PAINLEVÉ](#)
- ARTIST KAMAU WARE's CURRENT PROMPTS for @WORKS_ON_WATER via IG
- THE WORK OF ARTISTS [MARIE WATT](#) and [PIERRE HUYGHE](#)
- SUNAURA TAYLOR'S TALK ON [LIVING WITH IMPAIRED LANDSCAPES](#)
- YVONNE RAINER'S [COVID SCORE](#)
- THIS RADIOLAB [PODCAST ON ANIMAL COMMUNICATION](#) (transcript also available)

PROMPT I : HUMANIMAL BODY:

Continue our work from in class around the threshold between animal and self in your experience and/or story. OPTION: use the protocol to document your experience of humanimal body / organism that persons this week, in whatever medium works for you. This might be a creative nonfiction work, a movement piece, a poetics, a sound piece. Continue to play with neologism, broken language, guttural utterance, etc.

PROMPT II: ASSEMBLAGE / RELATIONAL / BIOME: NONHUMAN_HUMAN INTERFACE/DIALOGUE:

For this prompt we consider our relationship to animals in our environment immediately, and human relations and communications with nonhumans more generally. How is relating to animals (and moreover, to a polyphonic assemblage of animals, plants, fungi, etc, in our biome) a throughline for human experience, for our experience, and how does it begin to offer transformative possibilities? Consider conversation with nonhuman species, observations and documentation of interactions of self and other, of a different kind of threshold (or lack thereof) between human and biome / other species, etc. As always, documentation could happen across any media.

(Recommended: read from Tsing, listen to animal communication podcast, seek out other data around interactions between species. Explore folder for other materials.)

PROMPT III: ANIMAL AS TEACHER / VEHICLE : ALTERNATIVE INTELLIGENCE:

The ways in which animals (and other non-human kind) enact their bodies / functions in the world hold a seemingly endless trove of intelligence from which we might learn not only about our relationships with these other beings/energies and their relationships to each other but about ourselves.

Choose one or a number of animal species (and/or other nonhuman species) and seek out literal and/or metaphorical applications from their behaviors, skills, interactions, evolutionary adaptations, etc. and work out from here. What do (or can) we learn about ourselves, or about humans, from how these others operate? What do we see of ourselves here?

Note / caretaking / reach: what might it mean to consider our ancestral relationship to animal (both in general and for particular species), and how this might inform our cellular intelligence and/or narrative in untold ways? What does it mean to do this work while taking care around / not ignoring or sidestepping the appropriative tendencies of the “spirit animal” trope?