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ABSTRACT:

The analytic component of the thesis approaches major questions in Cultural Studies, Philosophy and Social Theory through an investigation of various forms of creative practice. I approach the question of agency, for instance, through a study of stage actors, who must recite set lines, and yet feel empowered precisely by the opportunity to act through them. Investigation of the author's own work as a poet and novelist serves to cast light upon ideology, ie. how one might use a constrained language and yet feel empowered to speak new things through it. I apply these investigations to Althusser, whose famous essay on the total power of ideological interpellation is permeated with theatrical metaphor. I suggest that Althusser is repressing the creative component of everyday life, something social theory has ever found hard to theorise. I proceed to suggest that the place where such processes are analysed is in the philosophy of science. The work of Charles Saunders Peirce on the experimental method is, my investigation uncovers, surprisingly geared toward the investigation of creativity. In science one has a method for, and an extensive literature on, discovering new phenomena. My thesis is that the experimental method of modern scientists, and the creative method of modern writers, both geared toward the production of things that are at once new and true, is largely the same. I use Peircean semiotics to argue that creative composition is about listening to the languages spoken all round you, and transcribing their objective contours. So as to have effect on others. Which is just like science. And in both instances we are endlessly spoken through at every moment by the myriad languages which interpellate us. Whence creativity (for those who are open to it). My three portfolio pieces are: *Cube Root of Book*: a series of one hundred and thirty two poems set at intervals along the descending spiral of a Fibonacci number sequence. *The 14th Floor*, an Hypothesis, an experimental novel, written quite literally as an experiment; i.e. having written the novel, I then wrote up a prac-report detailing what I had learnt about the performance of writing, including the above. *Unaustralia*, a Study of Heads, an attempt to show the relevance of these findings to Cultural Studies and other related practices. It centres on my new reading of Althusser, and is flanked by mini-ethnographies of creative practice, including the above. The poetry is presented as a major new creative work. The experimental novel/book of philosophy as a substantial

contribution to knowledge.

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