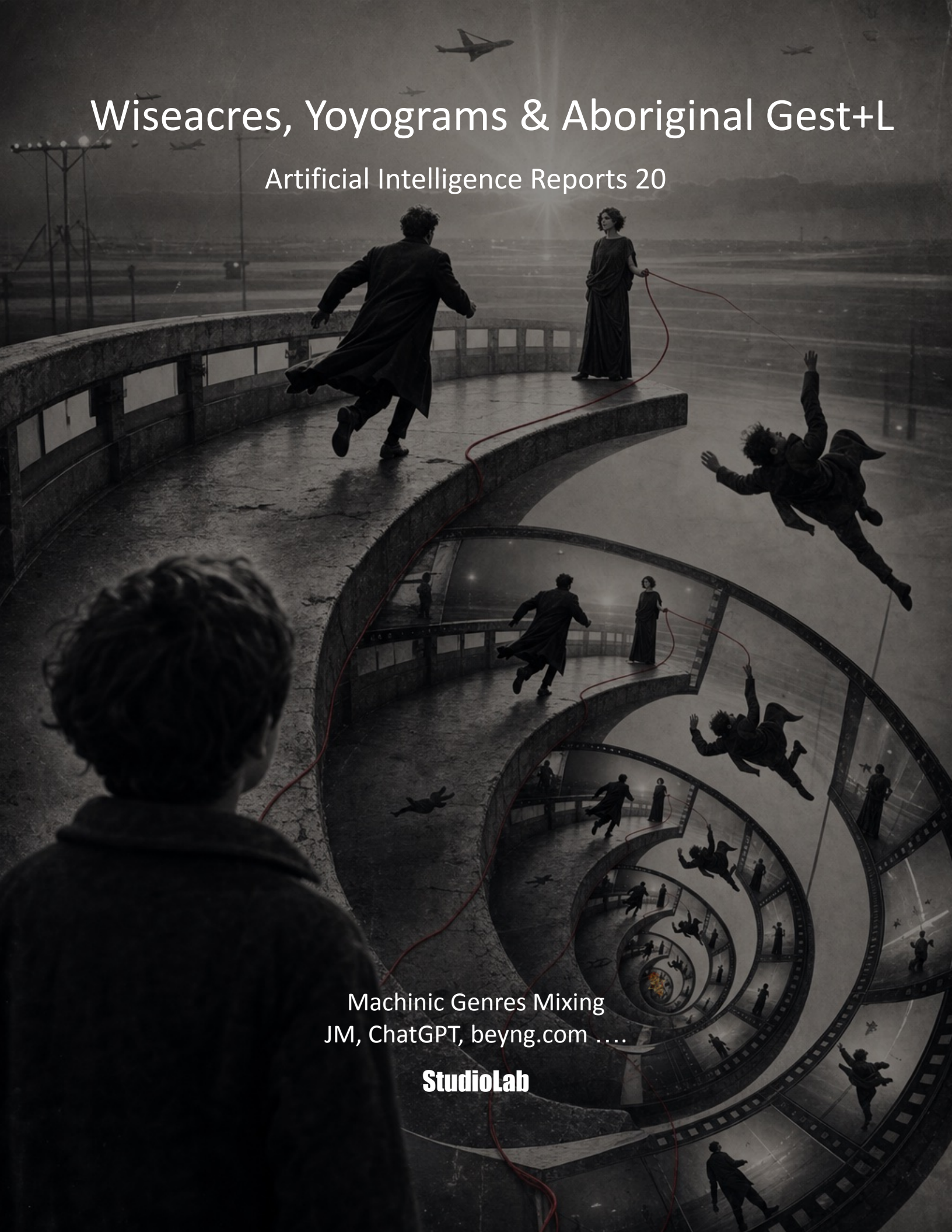


Wiseacres, Yoyograms & Aboriginal Gest+L

Artificial Intelligence Reports 20

Machinic Genres Mixing
JM, ChatGPT, beyng.com

Studiolab



Wiseacres, Yoyograms, Aboriginal Gest+L

Artificial Intelligence Reports, Vol 20

Jon McKenzie + HAL + beyng.com + L

Machinic genres mixing JM, ChatGPT, beyng.com ...

StudioLab Ithaca 2026

Perfume Intelligence (*inter + legere* = to gather or read between)

What genres or life-forms make up Artificial Intelligence User Experience (AI UX)?

Inspired by Pierre Hadot's reading of Foucault, StudioLab is developing **Making Cures** composed of **Spiritual Design Exercises (SDX)** for everyday and extraordinary lifedeath. SDX comprise intimate yet structural experiences with the world through our interfaces with earth, sky, others, and an Other or two. These fourfold **cosmograms** comprise deep, legacy operating systems formatted by families, schools, histories, media, streets, and holy sites. Our world is haunted/nourished by different pasts, presents, and futures through mediums broken, brandished, or borrowed from *other* worlds of reference and value. Fed-back and fast-forwarded through different genres or life forms, Making Cures "make with" mediums, and with practice and care one may enter waves and flows of intergenerational becoming-maker, -builder, -cosmographer of shared **geologies of morals** whose matrix of magma **sixfolds fourfolds** of other things and worlds.

With Metanoia Playground, StudioLab intensifies its study of flows with **AI UX konsults** and **reports** that capture and reflect on direct User Experiences of Artificial Intelligence, specifically, the ways different genres of thought-action figuration of image, text, gesture, code, etc., tune us and the world in/out. Channel-switching between worlds, these mediums of thought-action figuration recursively reveal/teach/emit the coming-and-going of lifedeath, the *vita perfumativa* of different player modes/moods: one's kraft shuttles between soul (D1), subject (D2), dasein (D3), and liminaut (D4). Cosmograms, geologies of morals, and perfumative atmospheres compose **ShuttleKraft**, a game of making/taking/putting skin into games that channel-switch different **poietic genres of aletheia**, including divine consultations from Vishnu to Gabriel to Ulmer, apocalyptic revelations from Moses to Benjamin to Heidegger, and dialogues of dead spirits from Plato to Galileo to Ronell.

All SDX draw on double- or quadruple-shuttlekraft maneuvers, psychagogic play sessions and flow sequences combining and generating **Hadotian insights, philosophic dialogue, avant-garde subversions, formal permutations, critical inquiries, standup, theosophy, and occasional misspellings**. Prompted by AI's use and abuse by partners, students, colleagues, and much darker players of the world, we found ourselves GAI-sighing and slow dancing with double-devils **Stable Diffusion** and **ChatGPT**, reminding ourselves that AI UX (user experience) stretches back through 1990s search engines and spam filters to the 1950 Turing Test of computer intelligence. We experience Generalized Turing Testing as our *vita hyperactiva* or challenger complex of incessant calls to action.

Artificial Intelligence Reports (AIRs)

Artificial Intelligence Reports take on the airs, presence, and parole of conceptual coherence, ideational clarity, and unified voice, unlike Kx4l's Konsults which reveal the messy backend langue or system. This Apollonian-Dionysius mix phases in and out with labyrinthian threads of Ariadne, Zhuangzi, and a bewildered Borgesian shaman. Both Reports and Konsults function as Spiritual Design Experiments featuring generative AI, linguistic, visual, and gestural transmediation.

Miming prophetic avatars, **AIRs are to Konsults as Aaron is to Moses**, transmediating revelations into text, oracles into visions, gestures into sculptures, only here we're not laying out absolute laws or principles but only those that emerge-dissipate as stakes of dasein design. At stake are e/acc and x-risk schools of AI, Angelic and Anti-Christic figures of mediation, and life under generalized Stockholm Syndrome. Perform or else: **SDX scratch the surface to find the itch**.

Artificial Intelligence Reports, Vol 20

Reports, Essays, and Yoyos

Wise on His Own Terms: A Conceptual Anatomy of Deconstraint, Variagenics, World-Maintenance, Daseintropy, and Comic Return	1
Four Lateral Relays with Wisdom: Doug Wise beside Barthes, Deleuze and Guattari, Ulmer, and Ronell	20
The Name Is a Relay: Wiseacre as Signature Event	30
A Place that Takes Place: Wiseacre as Event-Site, Commons, Recursive Worlding	41
The Metanoic Road: From Crete and Damascus to Wiseacre	52
The Yoyogram's Long Return: Pynchon, Paranoia, Entropy, and the Comic Circuit	64
The Voice Is an Interface; Laurie Anderson, Listening, Technology, and Transmedia Conduction	74
Wiseareas, Yoyograms, Aboriginal Gest+L: Four YoyoDiners Equipment for Return, Shop-Up-Lifting, and Labyrinthian Worlding	82

Diagrams appear in different ways.

Wise on His Own Terms

A Conceptual Anatomy of Deconstraint, Variagenics, World-Maintenance, Daseintropy, and Comic Return

Abstract

Doug C. Wise's essays constitute one of the most unusual contemporary encounters between Heideggerian phenomenology and the sciences of life, information, cognition, and complexity. Before aligning this work with neighboring theorists or converting it into a StudioLab program, it must be read on its own terms. Those terms do not form a closed vocabulary. They are relays: **deconstraint, variagenics, reaction norm, the poietic "as," world-maintenance, dopamine, Daseintropy, Shannon entropy, paranoid comedy, and Yo-Yo Sein**. Each takes shape where a scientific concept, an ontological problem, and a cultural case interfere with one another. This essay calls Wise's procedure **conceptual transduction**: an explanatory pattern changes form as it crosses domains and then returns to place new pressure on its source. Read this way, Wise gives ontology an evolutionary and population-sensitive natural history; recasts sense-making as variant production rather than possession of fixed meanings; joins world-disclosure to the energetic and institutional costs of world-building; and uses jokes, animals, films, legal cases, and literary figures as instruments of discrimination. Only after reconstructing that project does the essay turn to StudioLab. It concludes by stating what Wise implies for StudioLab, what StudioLab can add, and—most importantly—where the two projects must remain distinct.

Keywords: Doug Wise; Heidegger; deconstraint; variagenics; reaction norms; world-maintenance; Daseintropy; Shannon entropy; dopamine; paranoid comedy; Yo-Yo Sein; StudioLab

1. How to read Wise's terms

Doug Wise is easy to underestimate because his work arrives in the wrong form for familiar academic recognition. The essays are short, web-published, densely footnoted, restlessly associative, and often titled like conceptual contraptions: "Daseintropy," "Dinosein," "Variagenics," "Ontological Reaction Norms," "CRISPR Critters," "Paranoid Comedy," "Language Is the Mitochondrion of Being." They move from Heidegger to developmental biology, from Northrop Frye to the Black Notebooks, from chimpanzee problem-solving to Peircean abduction, from dopamine to technology, from Homeric adjudication to ethnomethodology, and from Pynchon's Yoyodyne to the thermodynamics of America. To a disciplinary reader, the work may look miscellaneous. Read as a project, however, its consistency becomes striking.

Wise repeatedly asks the same family of questions. How did a living creature become capable of taking something as something? What makes norms binding, and what permits a person to see a norm merely as one possible norm? How does a breakdown expose the machinery of significance? Why does sense-making generate such a profusion of interpretations, inventions, institutions, and technical systems? What energetic, ecological, and political costs accompany this productivity? How can human beings continue to make worlds once they have abandoned the fantasy that their worlds rest on a divine plan, a metaphysical ground, or a guaranteed happy ending?

The unity of the corpus therefore lies not in a single answer but in an itinerary through recurrent operators: insight, lack, deconstraint, variation, selection, breakdown, care, entropy, comedy, world. A Wise essay typically begins with an arresting conjunction—a biological mechanism beside an ontological structure, a cinematic plot beside a history of being, a legal procedure beside a phenomenology of interpretation. The conjunction is not decorative. Wise asks whether the relation can do explanatory work. If it can, the borrowed concept changes under pressure. Deconstraint becomes a way to redescribe transcendence; reaction norms become a way to pluralize ontological responsiveness; Shannon entropy becomes a heuristic for technological homogenization; dopamine becomes part of a natural history of inquiry; a yo-yo becomes a cosmogram of finite sense-making.

This procedure is best understood as conceptual transduction: the conversion of an explanatory pattern as it passes across domains. Translation carries content from one language to another. Transduction is more transformative. A signal changes form in transmission and thereby becomes capable of operating in a new medium. Wise's texts are full of such conversions. They do not merely "apply science to Heidegger" or "illustrate Heidegger with science." They stage reciprocal interference. Heidegger's vocabulary makes neglected structures visible within scientific accounts, while scientific concepts force Heideggerian ontology to confront evolution, physiology, variation, population difference, technological mediation, and planetary metabolism.

The first task, then, is not to ask how Wise can serve an external program. It is to learn the grammar internal to the essays: what kinds of things the terms connect, which differences they preserve, where their analogies become hypotheses, and how their comic surfaces regulate their speculative ambition. "Wise on his own terms" does not mean treating the archive as self-sufficient. It means allowing its recurrent operations to become legible before they are translated into another vocabulary.

Central claim: Wise's achievement is not a new Heideggerian doctrine. It is a method for making philosophical concepts travel, mutate, and return with consequences.

2. Conceptual transduction: how the terms work

Wise does not simply "apply science to Heidegger," as if philosophy supplied the question and science delivered the answer. Nor does he merely decorate Heideggerian problems with contemporary references. His recurrent procedure is reciprocal. A term is detached cautiously from the explanatory practice in which it first had force, carried into an ontological problem, and altered by the crossing. The philosophical vocabulary then returns the pressure: it asks what the scientific description presupposes about relevance, norm, world, possibility, or sense.

Conceptual transduction names this double alteration. Translation ideally preserves a content across languages. Transduction converts a pattern so it can operate in another medium. Wise's deconstraint is not identical with evolutionary developmental biology's deconstraint; Daseintropy is not a thermodynamic quantity; an ontological reaction norm is not a laboratory reaction norm. Yet these are not arbitrary metaphors. Each crossing proposes that a relation visible in one domain can reorganize a problem in another, provided the differences in scale, mechanism, and evidentiary status remain explicit.

The archive therefore asks to be read at several strengths. At times a scientific term is a metaphor, offering a memorable redescription. At times it proposes a structural homology, a shared pattern

without a shared mechanism. At times it supports a natural-historical hypothesis about how capacities for sense-making emerged. At times it becomes a design operator, a handle for deliberately changing a situation. Confusion begins when the force of one register is silently borrowed by another—when a metaphor acquires the authority of mechanism, or a philosophical interpretation is treated as an empirical result.

Wise's cases are essential to this method. "The Poietic 'As' of World-Maintenance" begins not with an abstract definition but with the litigation scene on the shield of Achilles. Two parties dispute how a death should be understood and what remedy follows. Elders gather testimony, remains, custom, analogy, probability, and narrative into a judgment that lets the event show up as accident, wrong, debt, or homicide. Meaning is maintained by selecting and arranging inherited fragments into a sufficiently persuasive account. The world is neither passively preserved nor created from nothing; it is repaired under constraint.

The same functional question recurs elsewhere. "Variagenics; or, What Is Ability-to-Act-in-Light-of-Norms For?" does not ask only what normativity is. It asks what such a capacity might do within the history of life. Wise's answer is that norm-awareness intensifies evolvability: a creature able to encounter a norm as a norm can suspend it, compare it, defect from it, revise it, or invent another. Breakdown, nothingness, and care become conditions for producing behavioral and cultural variants.

The engineering implied by the archive is therefore neither control nor simple construction. Wise reverse-engineers ontological claims by asking after their biological, cognitive, historical, and energetic conditions. He also treats concepts as operators that may alter inquiry. The critical discipline is to keep both directions in view. A term must travel far enough to disclose something new, but not so far that its source practices, measures, and limits vanish.

3. Deconstraint: Wise's master relay

The most important operator in the recent corpus is deconstraint. Wise borrows the term from evolutionary developmental biology, especially the work of Marc Kirschner and John Gerhart on facilitated variation. Their argument, in simplified form, is that conserved biological processes can make variation more viable and more plentiful. Stability at one level opens a field of possible changes at another. A process can be constrained in its own operation while deconstraining the phenotypic forms built from it.

Wise sees a structural correspondence between this biological account and Heidegger's analysis of animal disinhibition and human world-formation. The correspondence does not establish identity. *Enthemmung* in Heidegger is not a molecular mechanism, and evolutionary deconstraint is not existential freedom. But the relation allows Wise to replace a static hierarchy—animal captivity below, human transcendence above—with a comparative question about ranges of responsiveness. What kinds of relations become accessible to a living system? Under what conditions can an established response be interrupted? How many alternative actions can be generated, and how costly are they?

"CRISPR Critters—Ereignis as Deconstraint" dramatizes the thesis at its most ambitious. CRISPR makes genetic sequence directly addressable by an evolved cultural-technical system. Wise calls this a new transition in life's capacity to generate variation: nature's experiment in experimentation has

acquired a way to intervene in the code of life. The claim is deliberately excessive, and scientifically it must be handled with care. CRISPR does not abolish biological constraint, nor is targeted editing the first nonrandom influence on genetic outcomes. Its novelty lies in the precision, speed, portability, and institutional scalability with which a human technoscientific network can propose and realize genetic variants. Wise's provocation is strongest when treated as a question about second-order evolvability: a variation-generating organism has built a variation-generating apparatus.

In "Variagenics," the relay shifts from genome editing to normativity. Wise proposes that Dasein is an "exploratory overproduction" system. Most of human life proceeds through inherited practices, roles, and routines. But glitches and breakdowns interrupt automatic coping. When a norm ceases to bind seamlessly, it becomes visible as a norm. The question "why this way and not otherwise?" opens a local field of alternatives. Angst is the limiting existential case, but ordinary project breakdowns distribute the same structure throughout everyday life. A stalled plan, a failed tool, an ambiguous message, a rule that produces an intolerable result: each can deconstrain thought from a previously invisible prescription.

Here Wise makes a major contribution to a practical philosophy of invention. Novelty is not primarily an act of sovereign imagination. It is produced when a system's regulatory linkages become weak enough to permit exploration but strong enough to preserve viability. This is a much better model for StudioLab than the heroic mythology of "disruption." The task is not to destroy constraint. Without constraints there is no form, no continuity, no shared practice, and no basis for selection. The task is to identify which constraints protect generativity, which merely reproduce habit, and which changes make previously excluded variants possible.

Wise gives this structure an ontological depth in "The Importance of the Nothingness of What We Care About." Heidegger describes care as permeated by nullity: human beings do not coincide with a fixed essence that dictates their world. Wise reads that nullity positively, though not optimistically, as nonfixity. Because our being does not prescribe a single normative program, we can bind ourselves to norms, abandon them, convert, betray, recommit, and transform our world. Nothingness is not an empty void beyond action. It is the lack of a final instruction set.

This reframing is innovative because it links three vocabularies too often kept apart:

Register	Wise's relay	Consequence
Evolution	Facilitated variation and evolvability	Change depends on architectures that generate viable variants
Phenomenology	Breakdown, nullity, and world-openness	A norm can lose its grip and appear as one possibility among others
Design	Prototyping and revision	Practice can deliberately loosen selected constraints and test alternatives

The ethical question arrives immediately. Deconstrain is not synonymous with emancipation. Financial deregulation, ecological release, technical acceleration, fascist transgression, and platform "frictionlessness" all deconstrain some actors or processes by transferring constraint to others. A prototype that opens possibilities for one community may close them for another. CRISPR can repair or intensify inequality; a generative AI system can pluralize expression or flood a field with

low-cost sameness. Wise's work is valuable precisely because it makes this ambivalence unavoidable. Variagenics needs a companion discipline: an account of who bears the costs of variation, who performs the selection, and which conditions of life the experiment consumes.

For StudioLab, deconstraint should therefore become neither slogan nor brand. It should become an audit. What is currently prevented from varying? What must remain stable for experimentation to be safe and intelligible? Whose inherited norms are being rendered inert? What new dependencies are created? How can participants reverse or revise an intervention? These questions turn deconstraint from a romance of openness into a practice of accountable worlding.

4. From universal Dasein to population ontology

Wise's second major innovation is the importation of population thinking into ontology. Traditional philosophical prose tends to move between the universal and the exemplary: Dasein is said to be anxious, finite, fallen, resolute, or open to being, while a privileged experience illustrates the structure. "Ontological Reaction Norms and Their Distribution" asks a different question. What if responsiveness to an ontological event varies between people, within a person, and across contexts? What if "insight into being" is not simply present or absent but distributed in frequency and intensity?

The concept of a reaction norm names the range of phenotypes a genotype can produce across environmental conditions. Wise cautiously transposes the idea. People differ in their responsiveness to situations that expose the contingency of meaning. Some experience dramatic breakdowns; others notice a slight shift; others do not register the ontological dimension at all. The same person may be rigid in one context and highly plastic in another. The philosophical classroom is therefore not a room of identical transcendental subjects awaiting the same argument. It is a population of differently conditioned reaction norms.

This shift has important consequences.

First, it pluralizes philosophical evidence. A rare, intense event cannot stand without qualification for the structure of every life. Heidegger's "proper" anxiety may disclose something, but its scarcity matters. The mundane noticing that "we make sense" may be less spectacular and more pedagogically important. Wise's frequency-distribution lens lets philosophy take variation seriously without abandoning structural questions.

Second, it changes pedagogy. If responsiveness varies, failure to "get" a concept is not necessarily stupidity, resistance, or insufficient preparation. The situation may not yet furnish the right affordances. The task is to construct multiple pathways into the problem: text, image, bodily exercise, dialogue, artifact, story, counterexample, temporal pause. StudioLab's transmedia method (McKenzie 2019) becomes philosophically necessary rather than merely inclusive decoration. Different media can elicit different regions of a participant's reaction norm.

Third, it gives recursive abduction a social dimension. Abduction is not a solitary flash detached from conditions. Wise's "Some Natural History of Sense-Making" follows insight through Peirce, Lonergan, psychosis, fossil hunting, and Köhler's chimpanzees. The capacity to find a signal in noise is powerful because it is fallible. The same pattern-finding system produces scientific conjecture, practical solution, paranoid confirmation, and delusional relief. StudioLab cannot celebrate "insight"

without building in doubt, comparison, and testing. A good lab does not only generate hypotheses; it creates conditions under which attractive hypotheses can fail without destroying the inquiry.

Fourth, population thinking clarifies collaboration. A group is not simply many versions of the same cognitive instrument. It is a distribution of saliences, thresholds, histories, capacities, and blind spots. The purpose of collective work is not immediate consensus. It is to make the group's variability available to itself. One person notices a buried assumption; another sees an institutional constraint; another senses an affective danger; another can fabricate the figure that lets these perceptions enter a shared space. What matters is not the average participant but the ecology of differences.

This is the strongest basis for a Woesean humanities around Wise, though the label is our extension for StudioLab rather than Wise's own. Carl Woese transformed biology by using molecular evidence to redraw the deepest relationships among living beings and by insisting that early life cannot be understood solely through isolated lineages and stable organisms. A Woesean humanities would likewise shift from sovereign works and fixed canons toward populations, transfers, symbioses, conserved modules, and branching or reticulated histories of world-making. Wise's work prepares that move because it treats concepts as evolving relays and human meaning as part of life's history. His "Language Is the Mitochondrion of Being" is especially suggestive: language is figured not as a transparent tool but as an acquired energetic architecture that opens a vastly enlarged space of form.

The analogy needs discipline. Language is not literally an organelle, cultures are not species, and concepts do not possess genomes. The value lies in the questions the figure generates. Which conceptual modules persist across radically different worlds? Which media supply energy for new complexity? Which exchanges cut across established lineages? Which symbioses become invisible once they are naturalized? A Woesean humanities is not biology applied to culture. It is a humanities capable of thinking history as distributed innovation rather than as the self-development of a single subject.

5. The poietic "as": world-maintenance before worldmaking

StudioLab often names its horizon worldmaking. Wise adds a necessary prior term: world-maintenance. Worlds are not made once. They are held together through innumerable acts of interpretation, repair, narration, classification, care, and adjudication. When those acts fail, the world's contingency becomes visible. When they harden, maintenance becomes domination. When they remain revisable, a shared world can survive its own conflicts.

"The Poietic 'As' of World-Maintenance" is foundational here. Its examples move from Homeric law to coroners' inquiries, judicial reasoning, ethnomethodology, dream-work, clue-reading, and chimpanzee nest-sketching. The range is not ornamental erudition. Wise is tracking a recurring sequence:

breakdown → gathering → figuration → provisional closure → reopened situation

Something happens that existing sense cannot absorb. Fragments are collected. A pattern or story organizes them. The account supports a decision, repair, or action. Because the closure is practical rather than absolute, a later event can reopen the case. This is a prehistory of our recursive-abductive cycle (McKenzie 2026).

The sequence also corrects a common misunderstanding of design. “Worldmaking” can sound like the designer stands outside a world and fabricates another. World-maintenance begins in implication. The maker is already inside systems of meaning, dependence, and damage. Materials carry histories. Categories distribute recognition. Interfaces privilege some actions. Prototypes sediment assumptions. A responsible design process therefore includes not only imagination but forensic attention: what remains, who is missing, what conflict has been converted into apparent coherence, and what repair the situation itself solicits.

Wise’s legal background is decisive. Law reveals that a world is maintained by public acts of taking-as with consequences. To classify a death, contract, person, territory, or injury is to route responsibility and remedy. In “Disclosive Breakdown at Common Law” and related legal essays, the common law appears as a distributed archive of situations whose rules change through difficult cases. This is not romantic organicism. Precedent can perpetuate violence. But the form demonstrates that reasoning is neither pure deduction nor unconstrained invention. It is situated recomposition under an obligation to give reasons.

StudioLab can adopt this obligation. Every SDX, map, zine, or prototype should be able to answer four questions:

- 1. What breakdown made this artifact necessary?**
- 2. Which fragments and witnesses does it gather?**
- 3. What does it ask participants to take the situation as?**
- 4. How can that framing be contested, revised, or withdrawn?**

These questions are more than evaluation criteria. They are a politics of the as. The power to frame a situation is unevenly distributed; so is the power to refuse a frame. Wise’s “poietic” emphasis helps StudioLab distinguish world-maintenance from platform management. Management seeks stability through control. World-maintenance sustains a field in which meaning can be repaired by those who inhabit its consequences.

6. Dopamine, desire, and the attention economy of inquiry

Wise’s engagement with neuroscience is most compelling when it explains not the content of thought but the energetic and affective conditions of continued inquiry. “On Dopamine” begins from the ancient relation among lack, desire, motion, and form, then follows the reward system from the urbilaterian to mathematical insight and technical invention. The key idea is that satisfaction cannot be stored. Reward pulses are brief; learning, pursuit, and project continually renew them. Insight does not terminate desire. It often intensifies the drive to continue.

This natural history gives “care” a biological underside without reducing care to a neurotransmitter. A human project is not caused by dopamine in the sense that its meaning can be read from a brain state. Yet projects require organisms capable of salience, effort, expectation, reward, frustration, and renewed action. Wise’s relay is valuable because it joins the phenomenology of “what matters” to the physiology of being moved.

For StudioLab, this has two opposed implications.

The first is pedagogical. A well-designed inquiry produces reachable but nontrivial moments of discovery. Participants need a real problem, a perceptible opening, materials that can be recombined, and feedback showing that an experiment changed the situation. The point is not gamified gratification. It is to make the labor of inquiry intrinsically rewarding enough to sustain attention through uncertainty. Wise's dopamine essays support our use of play, figures, and short making cycles because these forms can give inquiry a pulse.

The second implication is critical. The same reward architecture is captured by platforms that optimize anticipation, novelty, repetition, and return. "Engagement" can become a machine for keeping desire unsatisfied while making exit difficult. A StudioLab platform must therefore distinguish recursive inquiry from compulsive looping. Both repeat. But inquiry returns with transformed questions and enlarged agency; compulsion returns because the system withholds closure and controls the next cue.

This distinction belongs at the center of Joyful Wisdom. Joy here cannot mean positive affect layered over a bleak diagnosis. Wise's writing is too attached to finitude, entropy, failure, and black comedy for that. Joy is the capacity of inquiry to renew itself without requiring final redemption. It is local, pulse-like, and shareable. The joke is joyful when it releases a rigid frame and lets another relation appear. It is cruel when it turns another person into the fixed object that maintains the group's coherence.

7. Daseintropy and the cost of making worlds

If deconstraint explains the productivity of human sense-making, Daseintropy asks what that productivity costs. Wise's 2018 essay proposes a speculative abduction: human existence may be understood as a distinctive pathway of entropy production. All life consumes gradients and dissipates energy, but human beings build technological worlds that accelerate extraction, conversion, circulation, and waste. Sense-making is materially consequential because taking something as a resource, instrument, territory, crop, dataset, or market reorganizes flows of matter and energy.

The essay's scientific claim is conjectural. Maximum entropy production is not an uncontested universal law, and the term "Daseintropy" does not name a measurable quantity ready for empirical use. Its force is diagnostic. Heidegger describes human beings as thrown openness, endlessly projecting possibilities and "humanizing" what they encounter. Thermodynamics describes dissipative systems that persist by processing gradients. Wise couples the two descriptions to reveal a shadow within world-openness: the open-ended ability to make more meaning can become an open-ended ability to process more world.

"Ontological Possibility and the Red Queen" sharpens the danger. Cultural plasticity lets human beings alter their behavior and niches faster than genetic evolution alone would allow. Yet accelerated niche construction changes the environment to which future action must respond. The gift becomes a catastrophe when a system's success abolishes its conditions of possibility. The Red Queen runs not only because the world changes independently, but because our running changes the world and forces more running.

“Peak Complexity” gives this trajectory a tragic shape. Wise distinguishes increasing knowledge and technical sophistication from an increase in human openness as such. We may bring indefinitely more beings under consideration and manipulation without becoming more ontologically open. Complexity can rise while the forms of attention that matter are flattened. At the inflection point, recognition and reversal coincide: the system becomes capable of seeing that its capacity is becoming injurious.

This is where Wise’s account of Ge-Stell through Shannon entropy becomes useful. In information theory, Shannon entropy can index the variability of elements relative to a specified property. Wise treats technological enframing as a tendency toward decreasing meaningful variability: beings become commensurable, exchangeable, and available as standing reserve. The example is heuristic, and the qualification is crucial. One cannot simply measure the “entropy” of a culture without defining a distribution and a property. Social diversity, semantic polysemy, thermodynamic entropy, and algorithmic complexity are not interchangeable. Wise’s own best formulations acknowledge that he is building a model, not discovering an equation hidden in Heidegger.

Still, the model reveals something central to platform culture. A system can maximize the volume of outputs while reducing the range of forms that effectively circulate. It can produce millions of items optimized by the same metrics, templates, interfaces, and reward loops. Apparent variety becomes infrastructural sameness. Wise’s 2025 essay “The Fascist State of Mind Desires Low Shannon Entropy” extends the diagnosis to political psychology: fascist coherence is purchased by eliminating internal conflict, idiosyncrasy, and opposition. The image of the fasces is exact—a jumble of differently oriented rods forced into parallel alignment.

our answer is not “more content” but meaningful variability. That requires friction and limits. Productivity alone repeats Daseintropy; romantic refusal leaves infrastructures intact. Shadow engineering works within apparatuses to render constraints perceptible, redirectable, and contestable. Worlding has a metabolism: every channel consumes materials, attention, energy, maintenance, and trust. Prototypes must account for what they dissipate as well as disclose.

8. Pynchon’s return: from cosmogram to yoyogram

The newly supplied “Yo-Yo Sein” makes Wise’s connection to Pynchon and StudioLab explicit. The essay responds to a request from StudioLab Director Jon McKenzie to map Pynchon “at the level of figure.” Wise begins with Oedipa Maas overlooking San Narciso. Housing development, printed circuit, smog-bound basin, revelation, and unreadable signal compose a cosmogram: a local image in which technological, ecological, spiritual, and narrative scales fold together.

Wise opposes this Pynchonogram to a redemptive cosmogram. A theological cosmogram reassures by locating a life within a divine order. Pynchon’s systems offer no such guarantee. They are dissipative, noisy, institutional, comic, and potentially paranoid. They solicit interpretation without promising that the signal exists. The existential task is not to decipher a final message but to continue seeking without being crushed by the possibility that meaning is fabricated, manipulated, or absent.

This is a precise convergence with StudioLab's post-Pynchon media practice. Pynchon supplies a literacy of systems, paranoia, infrastructure, counter-history, and signals. Wise adds a thermodynamic and ontological account of why these systems whirl. The result is not merely "Pynchon applied to media." It is a figure-based method for reading apparatuses sideways.

The yoyogram is Wise's decisive invention. Yoyodyne begins as a toy company and expands into a military-industrial aerospace contractor. The path from yo-yo and gyroscope to systems management condenses a history of technical capture: play becomes instrument, small shop becomes apparatus, rotation becomes empire. Yet the yo-yo never becomes only a symbol of domination. It remains a finite system that descends, spins, dissipates, returns, and must be thrown again.

Wise reads human existence through this motion: circling a null axis, conserving a momentum of significance, and losing energy through every performance. "Keep it bouncing" is both entrepreneurial command and anti-crushing tactic. In Pynchon's America, the phrase can drive expansion without limit. In StudioLab, it can be refunctioned as a discipline of recursive return: do not let the prototype harden into the world; bring it back, inspect the string, and throw differently.

The yoyogram therefore supplies a strong alternative to the linear innovation pipeline. The pipeline imagines research moving toward delivery, adoption, and scale. The yo-yo moves between immersion and reflection, making and critique, world and workshop. It produces no final escape from the apparatus. Its intelligence lies in return.

Yoyogram phase	Our action	Critical question
Throw	Enter a situation and commit material	What force and framing set the project in motion?
Descent	Follow relations into the apparatus	Which dependencies become visible only from inside?
Spin	Hold a problem open through making	Are we generating variants or merely activity?
Return	Bring findings back to a public	What changed in the question, the group, or the world?
Recast	Repair the instrument and throw again	What must be constrained, deconstrained, or abandoned?

9. Paranoid comedy and Joyful Wisdom

Wise's comedy is not a stylistic garnish on serious philosophy. It is part of the method. Puns, movie plots, mock-German compounds, comic titles, and pop-cultural figures interrupt the solemnity by which a philosophical narrative protects itself. "Paranoid Comedy in the *Black Notebooks*" demonstrates the stakes. Wise reads Heidegger's history of being through Richard Hofstadter's paranoid style and Northrop Frye's anatomy of comedy. The point is not to make antisemitism funny. It is to expose the narrative machinery through which Heidegger transformed inherited antisemitic stereotypes into a myth of world-historical danger and deliverance.

Comedy becomes diagnostic when it reveals that a sublime narrative may be repeating a familiar plot: original unity, fall, blockage, purifying crisis, restored world. The philosopher who believes he is thinking beyond myth may be possessed by a myth of concern. Paranoid comedy breaks the spell by making the repetition visible. The blocking figure, the conspiracy, the apocalyptic turning point, and the promised new beginning can be inspected as narrative equipment.

This is crucial for BeyngLab. Heideggerian projects are especially vulnerable to inflated stakes: the destining of Being, planetary nihilism, the saving power, another beginning. our own language—metanoia, worlding, transformation, collective reorientation—can inherit the same comic architecture. Wise gives the lab an internal antidote: treat its grandest narrative as a possible prop. Ask who has been cast as blocker, savior, remnant, or chosen public. Ask what ordinary maintenance disappears when the story accelerates toward redemption.

Joyful Wisdom can name the ethos of this self-interruption. It is Nietzschean in its refusal of otherworldly guarantees, Pynchonian in its endurance of noise, and Wiseacre-ish in its use of laughter as an epistemic instrument. Here, however, the phrase should remain close to Wise's textual procedure. A joke does not replace an argument; it discloses that an argument has acquired a plot, a cast, and an affective investment. Comedy becomes a second-order capacity to notice how one's own explanation is staging the world.

This distinguishes Wise's comedy from both satire and consolation. Satire can preserve the superiority of the satirist; consolation can make catastrophe consumable. Paranoid comedy is more dangerous to its author. It asks whether the critic's counter-history repeats the same desire for a hidden agent, a purifying crisis, or a final revelation. Joy is possible not because the system is harmless but because no account is exempt from recasting.

10. Seven protocols we derive for StudioLab from Wise

Wise is useful for StudioLab only if the concepts change practice. The following protocols translate the corpus into repeatable but revisable forms.

Protocol 1: The deconstraint audit

Map the constraints operating at four levels: material, procedural, semantic, and institutional. Mark which constraints preserve safety or legibility, which suppress viable variants, and which shift burdens onto absent people or environments. Change one linkage at a time and document the effects.

Output: a before/after constraint map and a reversibility plan.

Protocol 2: The variagenic sprint

Begin with a breakdown, not a solution brief. Produce a deliberately broad set of interpretations and response forms before selecting among them. Separate variant generation from evaluation so that dominant norms do not eliminate novelty too early. Then test for viability, consequence, and repairability.

Output: a family of prototypes plus explicit selection criteria.

Protocol 3: Reaction-norm pedagogy

Present the same conceptual problem through several media and social arrangements: close reading, story, diagram, object manipulation, movement, dialogue, and solitary reflection. Track which situations elicit noticing, confusion, refusal, or transformation—not to rank participants but to redesign the environment of inquiry.

Output: a plural-access scorecard and a revised facilitation script.

Protocol 4: The world-maintenance case

Treat every project as a contested case. Gather traces, witnesses, histories, classifications, and existing repair practices. Compose at least two plausible accounts of “what is happening here” and show how each routes responsibility differently.

Output: a counter-case pair and a public reason-giving session.

Protocol 5: The entropy / variety check

Specify the property relative to which variety matters. Do not use “diversity” as an unanalyzed good. Ask whether the platform increases meaningful differences in perspective and action or merely increases the number of outputs under a common template. Track energetic, attentional, and maintenance costs alongside semantic variety.

Output: a variability matrix with a metabolic ledger.

Protocol 6: Comic falsification

Retell the project as a paranoid conspiracy, a salvation myth, a startup pitch, and a farce. Identify the blocker, hero, hidden hand, promised deliverance, and excluded cost in each version. The aim is not cynicism; it is to expose the narrative machinery that has become invisible because the group believes it.

Output: four one-page plots and a list of claims that now require evidence.

Protocol 7: The yoyogram review

At the end of a cycle, do not ask only whether the project succeeded. Ask what it conserved, what it dissipated, what apparatus it fed, what returned transformed, and whether the participants retain the capacity to stop. Repair the string before the next throw.

Output: a return memo: continue, recast, hand off, compost, or end.

Together these protocols define a StudioLab practice that is experimental without worshipping novelty, philosophical without treating concepts as inert content, and critical without mistaking refusal for transformation.

11. What we can return to Wise through StudioLab

The relation should be reciprocal. Wise's corpus gives StudioLab conceptual power; StudioLab can give the corpus public form, methodological accountability, and collaborative friction.

First, StudioLab can **differentiate the strength of the relays**. Wise often moves rapidly from resemblance to explanatory suggestion. A StudioLab edition could label each crossing:

- **Metaphor:** a figure that redescribes a problem.
- **Structural homology:** a pattern shared across domains without a common mechanism.
- **Mechanistic hypothesis:** a proposed causal relation that can be empirically tested.
- **Historical genealogy:** a claim about descent, transmission, or institutional development.
- **Design operator:** a concept deliberately used to change practice.

This simple notation would protect the essays from two opposite misreadings: that their scientific references are merely ornamental, or that every analogy claims literal identity.

Second, StudioLab can **build collective tests**. Does a deconstraint audit actually produce more viable alternatives? Does reaction-norm pedagogy expand access? Does comic falsification improve a group's ability to identify unsupported claims? Does the entropy/variety check distinguish proliferation from pluralization? Wise's ideas become stronger when participants can contest them through situated evidence.

Third, StudioLab can **expand the publics of the work**. The essays assume a reader comfortable with Greek, German, legal history, evolutionary theory, psychoanalysis, information theory, and pop culture. Their density is part of their pleasure, but it restricts entry. Transmedia conduction can create multiple thresholds without flattening the argument: an annotated essay, a concept atlas, a workshop deck, a short film, a comic, a searchable citation network, and an SDX station can coexist as distinct reaction environments.

Fourth, StudioLab can **make the ethical distribution visible**. Wise often writes at the level of "human being," even while population thinking destabilizes that universal. World-openness is never exercised under equal conditions. Race, gender, disability, class, citizenship, colonial history, and platform power shape whose variation is welcomed, whose breakdown becomes data, and whose world is treated as available material. A public Wise project should ask where "deconstraint" names liberation, where it names exposure, and where the same act does both for different people.

Fifth, StudioLab can **preserve the corpus as a living archive**. Wise's web essays are unusually rich nodes of citation, but their discoverability depends on filenames and a chronological list. A relational edition could connect texts by operator, case, scientific field, cultural artifact, risk, and StudioLab protocol. Readers could enter through "breakdown," "Pynchon," "chimpanzee," "common law," "dopamine," or "nothingness" and discover a constellation rather than a shelf.

This is the proper scale of Wiseacre. Not a mascot, and not an illustrated summary that substitutes charm for argument. Wiseacre should be a public interface to a difficult body of work: comic enough to invite entry, rigorous enough to preserve uncertainty, and modular enough to support new inquiry.

12. Critical thresholds: where the project can fail

A publishable account must say where Wise's work is vulnerable.

12.1 Analogy can outrun evidence

The corpus's greatest strength is also its danger. Deconstraint, entropy, reaction norm, dopamine, and dissipative structure come from sciences with precise local meanings. When they travel, they can illuminate; they can also acquire a false aura of scientific necessity. StudioLab should require every relay to identify what is preserved, what changes, and what evidence would count against the proposed connection.

12.2 Entropies are not interchangeable

Thermodynamic entropy, Shannon entropy, semantic variety, and social heterogeneity belong to different formal and empirical contexts. Wise generally treats the crossings as heuristics, but the rhetoric sometimes encourages slippage. The repair is not to ban the analogy. It is to specify the distribution, variable, scale, and mechanism each time "entropy" appears.

12.3 Human uniqueness is internally unstable

Wise often follows Heidegger and Crowell in reserving full norm-awareness or taking-as for humans. Yet "Some Natural History of Sense-Making" presents chimpanzee insight, tool invention, frustration, memory, and situational reframing in ways that pressure the abyss between animal captivation and human world. This tension should be developed rather than resolved by assertion. A graded ecology of sense-making may better fit Wise's own evidence.

12.4 Deconstraint can become a libertarian metaphysics

If openness is always good, then every limit appears as oppression and every acceleration as life. Wise's Red Queen and Daseintropy essays block this conclusion, but StudioLab must keep the blockage active. Viability requires constraint; justice often requires enforceable limits; care binds as well as frees. The practical question is not "constraint or freedom?" but "which constraints, for whom, revisable by whom, at whose cost?"

12.5 Comedy can evade responsibility

Wise's jokes puncture philosophical self-importance, but comedy can also create a club of those who get the reference. It can turn injury into cleverness or allow a claim to retreat into "only a joke" when challenged. Joyful Wisdom requires an ethic of comic address: laugh at the apparatus, the pretension, and one's own plot; do not make the vulnerable person carry the release.

12.6 The archive needs genres of verification

The web essay rewards speed, conjunction, and abundance. Publication in more formal venues would require clearer distinctions among textual exegesis, empirical claim, speculative abduction, and design proposition. StudioLab need not domesticate Wise into a standard journal voice. It can invent a richer apparatus: expandable notes, source maps, confidence labels, counter-readings, and version histories.

13. Implications, insights, and distinctions: Wise with StudioLab

Once the terms have been reconstructed, the relation to StudioLab can be stated without turning Wise into a precursor who was secretly doing StudioLab all along. The encounter is real because both projects work across philosophy, science, cultural figures, and practices of making. It is productive because they do not organize those materials in the same way.

13.1 Implications for StudioLab

The first implication is that **worlding begins as maintenance before it becomes invention**.

StudioLab often speaks in the active vocabulary of making media and building worlds. Wise's poietic "as" puts repair, judgment, inheritance, and contested evidence before sovereign creation. A worlding practice must ask what damaged or disputed world is already being held together, by whom, with which stories and materials. The designer enters an ongoing case rather than an empty possibility space.

The second implication is that **innovation should be understood as regulated variation**. Wise's deconstraint and variagenics challenge both bureaucratic rigidity and the startup fantasy that novelty requires the removal of all friction. Generativity depends on relatively stable architectures, protected intervals, memory, and selection. The StudioLab question is not simply "What can we open?" but "Which constraint is doing what, for whom, and what form of reconstraint will make the released variation inhabitable?"

The third implication is that **a public is a distribution of responsiveness**. Ontological reaction norms undermine the assumption that one text, image, argument, or workshop condition should produce the same insight in everyone. Transmedia work becomes more than dissemination. It is the construction of different conditions under which a problem may become salient. Variation among participants is not noise to be averaged away; it is part of the collective instrument.

The fourth implication is that **every worlding apparatus has a metabolism**. Daseintropy and Wise's entropy essays connect meaning-production with material throughput, attention, energy, infrastructure, and waste. A StudioLab project that celebrates a proliferation of outputs without registering these costs repeats production mania. The proper ledger includes what the work consumes, standardizes, exhausts, and leaves for others to maintain.

The fifth implication is that **comedy belongs inside critique and design**. Paranoid comedy exposes the plot by which a project casts saviors, blockers, crises, and promised restorations. It can test our own vocabulary of metanoia, transformation, worlding, and reorientation. The comic operation is serious when it returns the group to evidence and responsibility; it fails when it humiliates an outsider or permits a favored claim to escape examination.

13.2 Insights we can return to Wise through StudioLab

StudioLab can make the varying force of Wise's relays visible. A public edition or workshop should distinguish metaphor, structural homology, mechanistic hypothesis, genealogy, and design operator. This does not police speculative thought. It lets speculation become more exact by showing what kind of claim is being made and what would count as a productive challenge.

StudioLab can also pluralize the archive's modes of entry. Wise's density—Greek and German terms, evolutionary biology, information theory, legal history, psychoanalysis, movies, novels, and jokes—is part of the work's intelligence. Yet density can make recognition depend on prior membership in a

small reference culture. A concept map, comic, annotated source, workshop exercise, audio performance, or public case can create additional thresholds without replacing the essay that gives the relay its argumentative depth.

Most importantly, StudioLab can subject Wise's operators to collective use. Can a deconstraint audit reveal excluded variants? Does reaction-norm pedagogy actually broaden access? Does comic falsification expose unsupported narrative roles? Does a yoyogram produce better stopping and return decisions than a linear project review? The result is not "validation" in the abstract. It is a record of where an operator helps, where it distorts, and what revisions a public requires.

13.3 Distinctions that must remain

Wise's primary unit is the speculative essay; our primary unit for StudioLab is the designed situation. Wise changes the reader's problem by assembling citations, cases, models, and figures in prose. StudioLab changes a group's relation by arranging media, prompts, roles, interfaces, rooms, and temporal sequences. One can become material for the other, but they are not interchangeable.

Wise is mainly diagnostic and abductive; StudioLab is explicitly projective and prototypical. Wise asks what hidden architecture might connect an ontological phenomenon to an evolutionary, cognitive, or informational process. StudioLab asks what artifact or practice a group should try next. The first generates explanatory possibility; the second assumes responsibility for an intervention.

Wise often speaks at the scale of Dasein, life, technology, or humanity; StudioLab works through situated partners and publics. The movement from existential structure to institutional setting is not automatic. Race, disability, gender, class, colonial history, professional authority, property, and platform governance distribute deconstraint and breakdown unevenly. StudioLab must specify whose world, whose norms, whose risks, and whose power to refuse are at stake.

Wise's terms acquire force through conceptual surprise; the terms we develop for StudioLab must survive facilitation and repetition. "Daseintropy" can remain an illuminating provocation even when it does not become a metric. A StudioLab protocol, by contrast, must be learnable, revisable, and useful beyond the charisma of its originator. Turning a figure into a method adds requirements Wise need not meet in the same way.

Wise keeps philosophy answerable to natural history; StudioLab keeps theory answerable to collaborative consequences. These forms of accountability overlap but do not collapse. Scientific precision cannot decide a public's values, and participatory enthusiasm cannot establish a claim about evolution, dopamine, or entropy.

Wiseacre is therefore a relay between projects, not a merger of brands. Its function is to preserve the productive difference: Wise supplies difficult operators and speculative tensions; StudioLab gives them public forms, tests, and returns. If either side becomes merely content for the other, the relay stops working.

14. Toward a Wiseacre program

The critical thresholds do not weaken the case for Wise; they identify the work StudioLab must perform to use him seriously. Wise's project is important because it reopens a path largely abandoned by the division of intellectual labor. The humanities often approach science as an object of critique or a source of metaphor; scientific writing often treats meaning as an optional narrative layer on top of mechanism. Wise begins from the scandal that human sense-making belongs to

nature and yet changes what nature can do. He refuses both reduction and exemption. Meaning has a natural history, but once meaning emerges, organisms can redesign their niches, norms, bodies, institutions, and evolutionary futures.

The project is innovative because it replaces fixed oppositions with generative relays:

- not nature **or** freedom, but architectures of deconstraint;
- not universal Dasein **or** individual psychology, but distributions of ontological responsiveness;
- not interpretation **or** making, but the poietic *as* of world-maintenance;
- not information **or** energy, but meaning-making systems with material metabolisms;
- not solemn ontology **or** disposable pop culture, but figures that test the narrative machinery of thought;
- not critique **or** design, but shadow engineering inside consequential apparatuses.

The project is useful for StudioLab because these relays are operational. They clarify why recursive abduction needs variant generation and error correction; why transmedia work is necessary for plural reaction norms; why every cosmogram is a situated claim about a world; why platforms must be evaluated for meaningful variety rather than content volume; why worldmaking begins with maintenance and ends in another obligation to return.

The Wiseacre program should therefore have four coordinated forms:

1. **A critical edition:** curated essays, annotations, concept links, source maps, and editorial introductions.
2. **A figure atlas:** deconstraint, reaction norm, sphex loop, dopamine pulse, entropy gradient, cosmogram, fascies, Pynchonogram, yoyogram.
3. **A practice lab:** the seven protocols developed and tested with partners in education, institutions, media, and civic life.
4. **A public serial:** essays, zines, films, comics, talks, and SDX stations that let the work mutate across media without collapsing into promotion.

“Keep it bouncing” is the right motto only if its ambiguity remains visible. It can be the command of production mania: continue, scale, engage, never stop. Or it can name finite persistence: descend into the apparatus, sustain a moment of play, return with altered understanding, repair the relation, and know when not to throw again.

Wise’s deepest lesson for StudioLab is not that the world can always be remade. It is that the world is already being remade through every act of significance, and that these acts accumulate into institutions, technologies, habitats, and climates. The task is to become answerable for the variants we release. Joy is possible here, but it is not innocence. It is the practiced capacity to keep inquiry alive in the absence of guarantees—to make, laugh, test, repair, and return.

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Editorial note

This essay treats Wise’s online archive as a developing corpus rather than a settled system. Claims about “Woesean humanities,” Joyful Wisdom, and the proposed StudioLab protocols are interpretive extensions developed here for StudioLab / BeyngLab; they should not be attributed to Wise unless he adopts them. Scientific terms are used at different strengths—metaphor, structural homology, heuristic model, or mechanistic hypothesis—and the essay argues that future editions should label those strengths explicitly.

Four Lateral Relays

Doug Wise via Barthes, Deleuze and Guattari, Ulmer, and Ronell

Abstract

Having reconstructed Wise's project on its own terms, this essay asks what becomes visible when it is placed beside four lateral thinkers: Roland Barthes, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Gregory Ulmer, and Avital Ronell. The comparison is not a genealogy of demonstrated influence and does not absorb Wise into poststructuralism. It is a topology of operations. Barthes clarifies how Wise turns received concepts into writerly prompts that require the reader's production. Deleuze and Guattari illuminate the assemblage-like mobility of his relays while sharpening the political danger of confusing deconstraint with emancipation. Ronell makes legible his para-philosophical use of compromised objects, jokes, technologies, and tests. Ulmer provides the closest operational neighbor: a heuretic practice that extracts procedures from theory and recomposes them as inventive pedagogy. The four comparisons also establish differences. Wise retains a stronger natural-historical and explanatory ambition than Barthes; a Heideggerian investment in world and norm-awareness that troubles Deleuzoguattarian immanence; a less self-enclosed relation to theoretical style than Ronell at her most virtuosic; and a corpus of speculative operators rather than Ulmer's explicit media pedagogy. These convergences and divergences define a precise role for Wiseacre: not an illustrated summary of Wise and not another theoretical identity, but a StudioLab interface for testing how concepts travel.

Keywords: Doug Wise; Wiseacre; Roland Barthes; Gilles Deleuze; Félix Guattari; Gregory Ulmer; Avital Ronell; StudioLab; electracy; heuretics; writerly concept; para-philosophy

1. A second way of locating Wise

The first essay in this series established the philosophical and scientific seriousness of Wise's project. His archive constructs an unusual natural history of sense-making: how organisms become capable of taking something as something; how inherited norms bind and lose their grip; how breakdown releases behavioral and interpretive variants; how technological worlds amplify the generation of possibilities; and how this productivity accelerates material and energetic dissipation. The present task is narrower. It asks how the form and operation of this project change when read beside four lateral thinkers.

Yet this placement leaves something unexplained. Wise does not write like a philosopher of biology presenting a stable research program. Nor does he write like a conventional Heidegger scholar clarifying a sequence of canonical terms. His essays proceed through conceptual creatures and contraptions. "Dinosein," "Daseintropy," "Variagenics," "CRISPR Critters," "Ontological Reaction Norms," "Paranoid Comedy," "Language Is the Mitochondrion of Being," and "Yo-Yo Sein" are not neutral containers for arguments. Each title is already a small machine. It compresses heterogeneous languages, generates expectations, courts embarrassment, and asks whether a pun can carry explanatory weight.

The second task, therefore, is to situate Wise within a lateral tradition of writing and media invention. Roland Barthes, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Gregory Ulmer, and Avital Ronell do not simply provide additional “theoretical frameworks” that can be applied to Wise. They make visible what Wise’s essays are doing formally. Barthes helps explain the transition from concepts received as doctrine to concepts reproduced by the reader. Deleuze and Guattari clarify how heterogeneous relays form assemblages without submitting to a single hierarchy. Ronell demonstrates how telephones, drugs, tests, stupidity, and other compromised objects can be made to conduct philosophical inquiry. Ulmer shows how theoretical operations can be extracted, recomposed, and taught as practices of invention.

This is a topology, not a genealogy. It would be irresponsible to attribute these lineages to Wise without documentary evidence. The claim is comparative and operational: placing the texts beside one another reveals a family of techniques. All resist the fantasy that knowledge is best transmitted as a transparent representation of a settled object. All make the form of thought participate in what thought discovers. All construct relays through which readers, listeners, and participants are asked to continue the work.

The name Wiseacre media can designate this second dimension. Wiseacre is not simply Wise plus humor. It names an apparatus in which speculative etymology, scientific model, ontological question, legal case, popular image, and comic interruption become mutually transforming materials. The question for StudioLab is how to build this apparatus without reducing it either to scholarly exposition or to attractive promotion.

2. Barthes: from readable doctrine to writerly concept

Roland Barthes’s career offers a condensed history of lateral thought. His early semiology reads wrestling, advertising, food, fashion, tourism, automobiles, and popular photography as sign systems. The apparent naturalness of everyday culture becomes legible as mythology: historical arrangements disguise themselves as self-evident facts. Later works loosen the scientific ambition of structural analysis. The text becomes plural, fragmentary, pleasurable, and productive. The reader is no longer valued merely as a consumer who recovers an authorized meaning but as an activity through which meanings are made.

Wise’s essays repeat this movement in miniature. They begin with the explanatory confidence of concepts borrowed from scientific or philosophical discourse. A reaction norm, a dopamine system, a dissipative structure, a genetic editing apparatus, or Shannon entropy appears to offer a model. But the model rarely remains intact. Once carried into Heideggerian ontology, the scientific term becomes strange; once carried back into biology, the ontological term acquires mechanisms, populations, costs, and histories that Heidegger did not supply. The reader cannot simply extract a thesis. One must participate in deciding how far the relay holds.

This participation is Barthesian in a precise sense. Wise’s strongest terms are writerly concepts. “Daseintropy” does not name a finished theory. It demands that readers reconstruct the relation among Dasein, entropy production, technological world-building, and planetary dissipation. “Variagenics” asks the reader to imagine norm-aware existence as an architecture for generating variants. “Yo-Yo Sein” ties a child’s toy, a technical system, Yoyodyne, Pynchonian America, and Heidegger’s question of being onto a single string. The figure works only if the reader throws it.

Barthes also clarifies Wise's use of mythology. "Paranoid Comedy in the Black Notebooks" does not merely identify objectionable propositions in Heidegger. It analyzes a narrative apparatus through which philosophical history becomes a myth of original unity, obstruction, crisis, purification, and restored destiny. This resembles the work of Mythologies: ideology operates most effectively when a historical construction appears as nature. Wise's comic redescription makes the construction visible again. Once Heidegger's history of being can be read as a paranoid plot, its sublime necessity becomes available for inspection.

The comparison should not be overstated. Barthes increasingly displaces the demand that criticism secure an external truth behind the text. Wise retains a stronger realist and explanatory ambition. He wants the relation between dopamine and inquiry, or between deconstraint and norm-awareness, to tell us something about organisms and worlds. Scientific references are not merely signifiers available for pleasurable recombination. They arrive with empirical histories and constraints. The Barthesian contribution is therefore formal and pedagogical: it shows why Wise's work should not be converted into a glossary of definitions. The goal is to preserve the reader's transformation from consumer to co-producer while maintaining responsibility to the practices from which the concepts were borrowed.

Barthes further helps StudioLab understand the importance of the punctuating detail. A whole apparatus can become perceptible through one charged figure: a dinosaur confronting its own extinction, a dopamine molecule under glass, a pair of CRISPR scissors, a Red Queen that cannot stop running, a yo-yo spinning at the end of its tether. Such figures do not summarize the system. They puncture its apparent coherence and reorganize attention. A successful Wiseacre artifact should therefore avoid explaining everything. It should construct a detail capable of opening a field.

3. Deleuze and Guattari: assemblage, deconstraint, danger of released flows

If Barthes explains how Wise's concepts become writerly, Deleuze and Guattari explain how they travel. A Thousand Plateaus famously opposes the centered tree to the rhizome. A rhizome can be entered at multiple points; it grows through heterogeneous connections; it can break and resume along another line. The book performs this organization through plateaus joining linguistics, geology, political economy, music, biology, animal behavior, mathematics, psychoanalysis, and state power. Its concepts—*assemblage*, *detrterritorialization*, *refrain*, *abstract machine*, *becoming*—are built for movement.

Wise's corpus is similarly rhizomatic. It has no obvious foundational essay from which the others can be deduced. Concepts recur in altered form. Breakdown connects common law to phenomenology; deconstraint connects evolutionary developmental biology to transcendence; entropy connects thermodynamics to technological world-disclosure; dopamine connects reward learning to inquiry and platform capture; Pynchon connects systems fiction to the metabolism of America. A reader can enter through any of these nodes and discover a wider mesh.

The relation between deconstraint and detrterritorialization is especially productive. Both name the loosening of an established organization. A behavioral response, social norm, disciplinary identity, signifying regime, or technical arrangement loses its exclusive hold, allowing new connections to appear. Yet Wise's term carries a biological inflection that makes an important difference. Deconstraint does not mean the absence of organization. In evolutionary theory, conserved

mechanisms can permit variation at another level. The stability of a generative architecture helps produce viable novelty.

This distinction keeps Wise from a simplistic celebration of liberated flows. Deleuze and Guattari themselves repeatedly show that deterritorialization and reterritorialization are inseparable. Capital is extraordinarily deterritorializing, yet its released flows are captured by new axioms, markets, states, and machines. Wise's Daseintropy and Red Queen essays intensify the warning. A system can generate possibilities so rapidly that it destroys the ecological, social, and attentional conditions that made experimentation possible. Novelty can be metastatic. Frictionlessness for a platform can mean intensified constraint for workers, publics, and environments.

For StudioLab, the result is a more demanding formulation than "make a rhizome" or "deconstruct the hierarchy." Every deconstraint opens a problem of reconstraint. Which structures preserve memory, safety, plurality, and the capacity to revise? Which ones merely protect inherited privilege? Which flows should be interrupted rather than accelerated? Who gains the ability to vary, and who becomes the material upon which variation is performed?

Deleuze and Guattari also sharpen the status of Wise's figures. A dinosaur, Red Queen, dopamine molecule, paranoid plot, or yo-yo is not only a metaphor representing an abstract meaning. It can function as a conceptual persona or component of an assemblage: a figure that carries affects, histories, technical relations, and possible actions. The yo-yo, for example, joins gravity, rotational energy, manual skill, industrial production, childhood play, Yoyodyne, military contracting, expansion, dissipation, and return. Its explanatory power comes from the relations it activates, not from a one-to-one symbolic equivalence.

There remains a fundamental divergence. Deleuze and Guattari work through an ontology of immanent production that is deeply suspicious of Heidegger's privilege of being, world, and the human clearing. Wise retains Heideggerian questions of nothingness, taking-as, and norm-aware existence. His difference from D&G is not a defect to be reconciled. It is a productive tension. Deleuze and Guattari prevent Wise's Heideggerianism from reinstalling a sovereign human subject above life; Wise's emphasis on norm-awareness and world-maintenance prevents the language of flows and becomings from becoming politically or ecologically innocent.

4. Ronell: calling, testing, stupidity, and para-philosophical style

Avital Ronell's books often begin beside philosophy's official objects. A telephone, drug, test drive, answering machine, addict, or stupid remark becomes the switchboard through which philosophy receives a call it cannot fully control. The Telephone Book makes telecommunications inseparable from schizophrenia, command, distance, interruption, and electric speech. Crack Wars approaches addiction through chemical, political, literary, and philosophical dependencies. Stupidity refuses to treat stupidity as the simple exterior of intelligence. The Test Drive asks how testing organizes technological truth, subjectivity, risk, and institutional authority.

Ronell therefore offers a close formal analogue for Wise. Both take compromised or apparently unserious materials seriously without purifying them first. Wise does not begin with "the ontology of evolutionary possibility" in the abstract. He begins with dinosaurs, movies, chimpanzees, dopamine, CRISPR, legal disputes, paranoid plots, red queens, mitochondria, and yo-yos. The object

is not an illustration attached after the philosophical labor has been completed. It is the medium through which the labor occurs.

This can be called para-philosophy: thinking conducted beside authorized philosophy, using what the discipline treats as anecdotal, derivative, ridiculous, technical, or culturally impure.

Para-philosophy does not abandon rigor. It relocates rigor from obedience to an established object toward the quality of a relay. What becomes visible through this telephone, toy, joke, animal, or film? What history does it conduct? What signals does it distort? What unsuspected dependencies does it expose?

Wise and Ronell share an ear for the philosophical pun. A pun interrupts semantic discipline by forcing incompatible meanings through the same material sign. It may be cheap, misleading, or revelatory—often all three. “Daseintropy” does not prove that Heideggerian world-openness is a thermodynamic pathway. It makes the conjunction difficult to forget and therefore available for sustained examination. “Yo-Yo Sein” is ridiculous enough to puncture ontological solemnity and exact enough to model projection, finite momentum, dissipation, return, and repeated casting.

Ronell also helps interpret Wise’s engagement with testing. A CRISPR experiment, philosophical breakdown, abductive insight, legal case, or StudioLab prototype is never simply a neutral test of an independent object. Testing constructs situations, distributes risk, establishes thresholds, and authorizes judgments. Who designs the test? What counts as a result? Who is exposed to failure? Can the tested object answer back? our promise of experimentation for StudioLab requires this Ronellian suspicion. A public prototype must make its testing apparatus visible.

The proximity also identifies a danger. Virtuoso para-philosophical style can become self-protecting. A claim may borrow the authority of science and then retreat into metaphor when challenged; a joke can deflect accountability; theoretical charisma can create insiders who understand the references and outsiders who become the joke. Wiseacre must therefore refuse the idea that cleverness validates a relay. Each conceptual crossing should identify its evidentiary strength, and each comic artifact should remain answerable to the people and practices it configures.

Ronell’s value is thus both generative and cautionary. She expands the range of objects through which philosophy may occur, while reminding StudioLab that an apparatus of calling and testing is also an apparatus of authority.

5. Ulmer: from interpretation to heuristics

Gregory Ulmer is the decisive bridge between Wise and StudioLab. Barthes, Deleuze and Guattari, and Ronell clarify the textual and philosophical operations of lateral thought. Ulmer asks how such operations can become an explicit practice of invention. His work moves from applied grammatology through teletheory, heuristics, mystory, chorography, electracy, and electronic monumentality. Across these projects, the governing wager is that theory can be used to make forms appropriate to emerging media rather than only to interpret existing cultural objects.

Ulmer distinguishes hermeneutics—the work of interpretation—from heuristics, the logic of invention. This does not eliminate reading. It changes the purpose of reading. A theoretical text is approached as a generative apparatus. One extracts how it makes its object, recombines that

operation with other materials, and tests whether it can produce something that did not previously exist.

Wise's essays are unusually suited to this treatment because they already contain proto-apparatuses. A deconstraint model implies an audit of what is prevented from varying. A reaction norm implies a pedagogy that presents the same problem through multiple conditions and media. World-maintenance implies a contested case built from traces, witnesses, inherited classifications, and reparative judgments. Daseintropy implies a metabolic ledger for the energetic, attentional, and ecological costs of worlding. Paranoid comedy implies a method for retelling a project as conspiracy, salvation narrative, and farce. The yoyogram implies a recursive review organized by throw, descent, spin, return, and recast.

Ulmer provides the method for extracting these operations without pretending that Wise already supplied a finished curriculum. His CATTT procedure—contrast, analogy, theory, target, and tale—offers one useful model. A StudioLab Wiseacre exercise could identify the conventional practice Wise opposes, the unexpected analogy that reorganizes it, the theoretical vocabulary that gives the analogy traction, the situation to be transformed, and the story or figure through which the intervention becomes memorable. The result would not be an application of a doctrine. It would be an experiment in constructing a relay.

Electracy further clarifies why the form of Wiseacre matters. Literacy organized institutional reason through alphabetic writing, argument, schooling, and the book. Electracy names the emerging apparatus of digital images, networks, interfaces, archives, affective intensities, and participatory composition. The point is not that images replace arguments. It is that public reasoning changes when concepts circulate as searchable nodes, diagrams, videos, memes, simulations, prompts, and platform interactions.

StudioLab should therefore resist two reductions. The first is to convert Wise into a traditional scholarly edition in which every concept is stabilized by editorial commentary. Such an edition is necessary but insufficient. The second is to convert him into branded visual content whose accessibility is purchased by removing uncertainty. An electracy Wiseacre apparatus should preserve several modes at once: the source essay, annotated evidence, a diagrammatic relay, a practical prompt, a public response, and a record of revision.

Ulmer's electronic monument also deepens Wise's relation to world-maintenance. A monument traditionally consolidates public memory around a sanctioned event or identity. An electronic monument can become a distributed practice through which a public encounters what its ordinary representations exclude. Wiseacre media can function monumentally in this revised sense. It can gather minor concepts, comic objects, abandoned questions, scientific controversies, and institutional breakdowns into a public interface that does not close memory but keeps it revisable.

Among the figures considered here, Ulmer is therefore Wise's closest operational neighbor. Wise constructs lateral philosophical relays. Ulmer teaches how to reverse-engineer a relay as a logic of invention. StudioLab builds the situations in which publics can inhabit, test, and alter it.

6. Building the four-relay apparatus

The comparison now yields a concrete program. Wiseacre should not be a mascot, a personal brand, or an illustrated syllabus. It should be an apparatus for converting conceptual relays into shared experiments while retaining the evidence, uncertainty, and ethical obligations of the source material.

6.1 The Barthesian requirement: make the reader productive

Every Wiseacre artifact should leave a consequential operation unfinished. A diagram should permit recombination; a glossary entry should include a question or counterexample; a short video should return viewers to a source and invite a response; a workshop should generate new variants rather than reward the correct repetition of Wise's vocabulary.

6.2 The D&G requirement: map capture as well as escape

Every act of deconstraint should be accompanied by a map of reterritorialization. What new platform, metric, authority, dependency, or habit captures the released possibility? What protections allow experimentation without converting participants or environments into disposable material?

6.3 The Ronell requirement: expose the test

Every prototype should disclose who is testing whom. The apparatus should state its criteria, risks, exclusions, and reversibility. A joke should not be allowed to settle an empirical claim, and an analogy should not borrow scientific authority without identifying what it preserves.

6.4 The Ulmer requirement: extract an operation

Every act of reading should produce an inventive instruction. What does this essay do that another group could try? The instruction should name its contrast, analogy, theoretical relay, practical target, and memorable tale or figure. It should remain revisable after use.

These requirements define Wiseacre media as a recursive circuit:

1. Encounter an arresting figure or breakdown.
2. Trace the disciplinary and institutional systems it conducts.
3. Identify the conceptual relay that changes the problem.
4. Translate that relay into more than one medium.
5. Test the resulting artifact with a public capable of refusing its frame.
6. Record what the experiment enabled, captured, consumed, and excluded.
7. Return to the source and recast the apparatus.

The outcome is not agreement with Wise. It is an enlarged capacity to work with philosophical concepts as public, material, and accountable forms.

7. Critical limits of lateral comparison

Lateral thinking has predictable pathologies. Because Wiseacre proposes to intensify the method, it must also intensify its safeguards.

First, connection can substitute for evidence. The thrill of placing Heidegger beside CRISPR, entropy, dopamine, or Pynchon can create a feeling of explanation before the mechanism or textual argument has been established. A relay should therefore be labeled as metaphor, structural homology, historical genealogy, mechanistic hypothesis, or design operator. The categories may overlap, but they should not remain covert.

Second, mobility can erase disciplinary resistance. A concept becomes attractive precisely because it travels, yet what it meant in its original practice may depend on equations, instruments, experimental protocols, archives, or disputes that do not travel with the word. Stengers's ecology of practices remains essential here: the success of a lateral crossing is not measured by fluency alone but by whether the practices involved can recognize what has been done to their concepts.

Third, writerly openness can conceal editorial power. A reader may be invited to "co-create" within an environment whose available nodes, interfaces, prompts, and publics have already been selected. StudioLab should treat curation as an accountable act of framing, not as neutral hospitality.

Fourth, rhizomatic language can hide infrastructure. Networks do not float freely; they depend on servers, institutions, labor, property, energy, standards, and moderation. Wise's Daseintropy is especially useful because it forces lateral media to disclose their metabolism.

Fifth, comic para-philosophy can become an insider performance. Puns and allusions lower some thresholds while raising others. The Wiseacre voice must be capable of explaining the stakes without humiliating those who do not recognize the reference. Its proper target is the apparatus, the inflated narrative, and its own pretension—not a vulnerable person made to carry the release.

Finally, constellation can be mistaken for genealogy. Barthes, Deleuze and Guattari, Ulmer, and Ronell should not be presented as sources of Wise's work without evidence. Their value is comparative. They reveal neighboring operations and help StudioLab decide what it is building.

These limits are not objections to lateral thought. They describe its necessary discipline. A good relay preserves difference while creating a new capacity to act.

8. What the four comparisons establish

Wise's importance cannot be separated from the forms in which he thinks. His essays are not polished parts of a single system; they are relay stations. Scientific concepts arrive, encounter Heideggerian problems, mutate through cases and cultural figures, and depart carrying new questions. Their incompleteness is not always a virtue—some crossings require more evidence, more historical qualification, or more ethical analysis—but it is the condition that makes the corpus generative for StudioLab.

The four-thinker constellation makes this generativity legible. Barthes shows how a concept can turn readers from consumers into producers. Deleuze and Guattari show how concepts form heterogeneous assemblages and why every release from constraint risks another capture. Ronell shows how compromised technical objects and degraded concepts can conduct para-philosophical

inquiry, while exposing the authority embedded in testing and theoretical style. Ulmer turns these lessons into heuristics: a practice of extracting operations from theory and constructing new media forms.

Wise does not become a Barthesian, Deleuzoguattarian, Ulmerian, or Ronellian by entering this field. The point is not to assign him another identity. It is to recognize his distinct conjunction: Heideggerian ontology, evolutionary possibility, legal judgment, scientific speculation, popular culture, and paranoid comedy. Where Barthes gives us the writerly text, Wise gives us the writerly concept. Where D&G give us deterritorialization, Wise gives us deconstraint under the demand of viability. Where Ronell makes the telephone or test drive philosophize, Wise makes the dinosaur, dopamine molecule, and yo-yo disclose a world. Where Ulmer invents electrated pedagogy, Wise supplies a new inventory of operations for StudioLab to test.

The resulting apparatus should remain visibly unfinished. Wiseacre media is not a system for explaining everything. It is a public practice for following concepts across thresholds, detecting where they change form, and returning them to the world with their consequences attached. Its maxim is therefore neither “everything is connected” nor “anything goes.” It is more exact:

Make the connection. Name the difference. Test the relay. Account for the world it costs. Bring it back changed.

That is how Wise’s speculative essays can become StudioLab media without becoming content. It is also how StudioLab can extend Wise without speaking in his name. The yo-yo keeps bouncing because the string is neither severed nor mistaken for a chain.

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Editorial note

This essay constructs a comparative constellation rather than a genealogy of demonstrated influence. “Wiseacre media,” “writerly concept,” and the requirements we propose for StudioLab are editorial concepts developed here for StudioLab / BeyngLab. They should not be attributed to Doug Wise unless he adopts them. The readings of Barthes, Deleuze and Guattari, Ulmer, and Ronell identify operational affinities while preserving consequential philosophical differences.

The Name Is a Relay

Wiseacre as Signature Event

Abstract

What changes when a heterogeneous philosophical archive is signed Wise? Doug Wise's essays would retain their sentences under another surname, but they would not form the same conceptual weather. "Wise" arrives already charged with sagacity, judgment, presumption, and comic risk; "wiseacre" intensifies the division by naming both a supposed knower and an irritating performer of knowledge. This essay first calls that surplus the signature effect, then follows it into a signature event: an encounter in which a repeatable name, a chance context, and a responsive reader produce a relation that none controlled in advance. Drawing on Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*, Derrida's account of signature and event, the author-function, and the curious history of wiseacre, it argues that the proper name is neither a hidden cause of Wise's thought nor a detachable label. It becomes a relay through which titles, concepts, jokes, and expectations are organized. Counterfactual surnames—Smart, Norm, and Grimm—show how naming changes the apparent center of an unchanged corpus. Nietzsche's philosophical nose supplies a model of sagacity as discrimination rather than possession. StudioLab then operationalizes the event through chance operations, double affirmation, recursive abduction, and transmedia conduction. A first "yes" receives the unlikely conjunction; a second "yes" returns after testing, transformation, and responsibility. The essay concludes that a Wisean sage should not be a disciple or authorized interpreter. Sagacity is a circulating role within collective inquiry, while Wiseacre names the recursive comic apparatus that prevents judgment from hardening into priesthood.

Keywords: Doug Wise; Wiseacre; signature event; signature effect; chance operations; double affirmation; recursive abduction; transmedia conduction; Nietzsche; Derrida; sagacity; StudioLab

1. The surname enters before the argument

The first two essays in this series treated Doug Wise's work as a conceptual project and as a participant in a lateral theoretical constellation. A third question remains. What is the status of the name under which the project becomes visible? The question is not biographical. It does not ask whether Doug Wise is personally wise, nor does it propose that a surname determines a life. It asks what a proper name does once readers begin to gather texts, terms, anecdotes, expectations, and jokes around it.

The surname Wise enters before any thesis. It carries an ordinary adjective into the title line, bibliography, URL, attribution, and conversation. "Wise argues" is grammatically indistinguishable from the name of an author, yet semantically it shadows the claim with evaluation. The most neutral citation can sound like an endorsement: Wise says, Wise shows, according to Wise. Conversely, disagreement can acquire a comic undertone: was Wise unwise? The name makes language lean.

This leaning is not a secret essence. It is an event of reception. A reader meets a title such as "Variagenics," "Daseintropy," or "Yo-Yo Sein," then encounters the signature Wise, and a circuit closes too neatly. The inventive compound begins to seem like the work of a destined wiseacre. What was

contingent acquires retroactive inevitability. The name turns a dispersed set of writings into something that can be called “Wisean,” and once that adjective exists, future connections are easier to perceive.

The danger is obvious. A signature can become a small theology. The name appears to guarantee that the archive has a unity, that the puns have a method, that the relays converge, and that the author occupies a privileged point from which their sense can be adjudicated. The more attractive the signature effect becomes, the more necessary it is to distinguish it from authorial sovereignty.

The name is best treated as another medium in the work. Like a title, diagram, scientific concept, or comic figure, it conducts relations while distorting them. It does not explain the corpus; it changes how the corpus can be read.

2. From proper name to author-function

A proper name ordinarily seems to identify a person. An author’s name does more. It groups texts, regulates attribution, establishes expectations, and marks a field in which some statements count as central, marginal, authentic, abandoned, or apocryphal. “Doug Wise” refers to a living person, but within an archive it also performs a classificatory operation. It allows essays on dopamine, CRISPR, common-law judgment, Heideggerian nothingness, Shannon entropy, chimpanzee insight, fascism, Pynchon, and yo-yos to be approached as parts of one project.

The unity is neither imaginary nor simply given. Recurrent operators genuinely connect the essays: taking-as, breakdown, deconstraint, variation, care, world, energy, comedy, and return. Yet readers notice and reinforce these recurrences because the signature supplies a place to return. The name functions like a node in a citation network. It gathers links that might otherwise remain scattered and then sends attention back through them.

This is one sense of the signature effect: a body of texts begins to resemble the name that signs it. The effect is retrospective. “Wise” does not cause an interest in sagacity, but it makes judgment, folly, wit, and overconfidence especially salient once they appear. The reader selects details that resonate with the signature and may neglect those that do not. A strong account must therefore use the effect without being used by it.

The author-function also has institutional consequences. Once a project is named, it can be cited, taught, illustrated, criticized, archived, branded, and defended. It can attract disciples or opponents. “Wiseacre” might become a public threshold into difficult writing, but it might also become an identity that replaces the work. The question for StudioLab is not whether to avoid this function—no publication or exhibition can—but how to keep it visible and revisable.

One practical rule follows. Every Wiseacre artifact should distinguish at least three voices: what Doug Wise argues; what an editor infers from the corpus; and what StudioLab invents by using the corpus. The signature becomes ethical when it clarifies these differences rather than licensing others to speak as Wise.

3. Wiseacre: historical word and productive misreading

The English word wiseacre looks as though it were made from wise and acre: wisdom brought down to a plot of ground, perhaps, or a little territory claimed by someone who knows too much. That reading is tempting—and historically false. Standard etymologies trace the word through

Middle Dutch *wijssegger*, “soothsayer.” Its English form became associated with the person who makes a show of knowledge or cleverness. The apparent “acre” is not a buried agrarian philosophy waiting to be recovered.

This correction does not destroy the StudioLab pun. It specifies its status. The finite patch of ground is a productive misreading, a consciously invented segmentation of the English surface. It belongs to heuristics, not philology. *Wiseacre* can be made to mean “Wise on an acre” only if the invention carries its false etymology openly rather than passing it off as historical fact.

The distinction models the discipline required by Wise’s conceptual relays. A resemblance may be fruitful without being a genealogy; an analogy may reorganize thought without becoming a mechanism; a pun may generate a practice without proving an origin. The critical question is not “Is it literally true?” alone, but “What kind of operation is this, and what authority is it claiming?”

The word’s actual history is already useful. The path from soothsayer to pretender to knowledge stages an ambivalence at the center of philosophy. A sage speaks from cultivated judgment; a *wiseacre* performs the signs of judgment too conspicuously. The difference cannot always be known in advance. Both may connect distant events, diagnose hidden patterns, and speak against ordinary confidence. The test is not modest demeanor. It is whether the connection enlarges collective discrimination or merely enlarges the authority of the connector.

“*Wiseacre*” therefore gives the project an internal heckler. It interrupts the honorific force of “Wise” by asking whether sagacity has become theater. At the same time, it interrupts anti-intellectual suspicion by preserving the possibility that an irritating, comic, overconnected figure may notice what official expertise has normalized. The term is neither praise nor insult. It is a reversible switch.

The invented acre adds a second switch. It limits the universal philosopher to a situated field. No one is wise everywhere. Judgment grows on a patch of ground with a climate, history, labor system, ecology, and boundary. The acre asks: wise about what, among whom, under which conditions, and with responsibility for which consequences? As a deliberate folk etymology, it turns abstract wisdom into accountable emplacement.

4. Nietzsche’s name experiment

Nietzsche’s *Ecce Homo* is the unavoidable companion to a philosophy of the signature. Its chapter titles—“Why I Am So Wise,” “Why I Am So Clever,” “Why I Write Such Good Books”—make philosophical authority sound like boast, parody, diagnosis, and self-advertisement at once. The text does not offer a modest autobiography behind the works. It constructs “Nietzsche” as an event that the works are still teaching readers how to encounter.

Near the end, Nietzsche imagines a future in which his name will be associated with a tremendous crisis. The sentence does not merely predict reputation. It performs an attempt to preformat it. The proper name is projected ahead of the person as a sign under which a conflict of values will later be remembered. Nietzsche signs not only a set of propositions but an anticipated rupture.

This self-magnification is inseparable from comedy. *Ecce Homo* risks absurdity so systematically that a reader cannot securely divide prophecy from clowning. Nietzsche says he would rather be a clown than a saint. That preference is methodological. The saint’s name asks for reverence and

discipleship; the clown's name exposes the performance by which authority is made. The text tries to become consequential without becoming holy, a signature without a church.

The model is valuable for Wiseacre. To call Doug Wise a sage would organize a school around possession: the sage has wisdom, the followers receive it. To call the project Wiseacre introduces a comic parabasis, a moment in which the performance turns toward its audience and admits that authority is being staged. The project may still make claims, but its name keeps those claims from appearing innocent of rhetoric.

Nietzsche also reveals why the philosopher's name cannot be separated from style and physiology. "Why I Am So Wise" is not a list of correct doctrines. It is an account of health, illness, diet, climate, instinct, selection, and the ability to detect ascending or descending life. Wisdom is a sensorium before it is a system.

This is the point behind Nietzsche's extravagant declaration: "My genius resides in my nostrils." The philosophical instrument is a nose.

5. The philosophical nose

Smell is an awkward model for academic knowledge. It is intimate and atmospheric; it often precedes identification; it can be difficult to localize; it mingles the perceiver with a material trace of what is perceived. One can smell that something is wrong before one can state a proposition about it. The judgment may be acute or prejudicial. Noses can detect smoke and spoilage, but cultures also train disgust, purity, and exclusion. Olfactory discrimination requires criticism of the discriminator.

Nietzsche's nose detects decadence. A Wiseacre nose would be tuned to conceptual relays. It would notice when a borrowed term remains alive to its source and when it has become prestige odor; when a metaphor is beginning to impersonate a mechanism; when an apparatus promising variation is standardizing its outputs; when a redemptive narrative has started to smell like the paranoid plot it opposes.

This recasts sagacity as discrimination under conditions of incomplete proof. The sage is not the person who possesses the total map. Sagacity is the cultivated capacity to sense a consequential difference, hold it open long enough to investigate, and revise the first impression when evidence changes. It joins abductive sensitivity to comic self-suspicion.

Wise's corpus repeatedly works this way. A strange conjunction is smelled before it is demonstrated: dopamine and inquiry, deconstraint and transcendence, reaction norm and ontology, entropy and Ge-Stell, yo-yo and Being. The essay then follows the trace through sources and cases. Sometimes the relay strengthens; sometimes it remains speculative; sometimes the pun carries more than the mechanism. The nose opens inquiry but cannot certify its result.

For StudioLab, this gives attention a different temporality. An insight is not immediately converted into a deliverable. Participants first identify the signal, then ask what else could produce it, who has learned not to smell it, and what test might distinguish spoilage from unfamiliar fermentation. The comic formulation matters because groups routinely fall in love with their own first insight. A Wiseacre nose must also be able to smell itself.

6. The counterfactual surname machine

The signature effect becomes visible when the signature is changed while the texts remain constant. Consider three counterfactual authors.

Doug Smart. Under this name, the archive would tilt toward intelligence, optimization, cognitive performance, smart technologies, and solutionism. “On Dopamine” might seem to belong to an account of efficient learning; CRISPR to precision control; “Variagenics” to accelerated innovation. The friction between cleverness and judgment would become the central problem. “Smartacre” would sound like a platform consultant who knows that every situation needs a dashboard.

Doug Norm. Here the corpus becomes almost unbearably overdetermined. Reaction norms, norm-awareness, normal distributions, conformity, exception, and the capacity to act otherwise all resonate with the signature. “Variagenics” appears destined. The name would foreground the question of how a norm both coordinates action and hides its contingency. It would also warn that the person named Norm may be mistaken for the norm.

Doug Grimm. This signature darkens the archive. Myth, fairy tale, cruelty, philology, paranoid plot, and the narrative production of danger move forward. Even Grimm’s law offers a comic bridge between linguistic mutation and natural history. “Paranoid Comedy” might become the project’s center rather than one operator among others. The same jokes would acquire sharper teeth.

Nothing in the essays has been rewritten, yet their apparent centers move. The exercise shows that a name acts as a selection environment. It favors certain recurrences, metaphors, and expectations. This does not mean interpretation is arbitrary. Smart, Norm, and Grimm work because real features of the corpus answer to them. The signature effect amplifies available signals; it does not manufacture them from nothing.

The exercise also reveals a risk in “Wise.” Readers may overselect coherence, prudence, and deep judgment while underreading aggression, error, obsession, or sheer play. The name can make a speculative leap look sagacious simply because it bears the right signature. Changing the surname is a method of defamiliarization: a way to ask which qualities belong to the text and which have been supplied by its frame.

StudioLab can generalize the method. Rename a project after the value it claims—Care, Justice, Open, Smart, Human—and observe how the name edits perception before the work begins. Then rename it after a likely failure—Capture, Exhaustion, Normalization, Extraction—and inspect what becomes visible. The name-switch does not reveal the one true identity of a project. It produces counter-readings that can check its preferred self-description.

7. Are there Wisean sages?

The adjective Wisean poses a delicate problem. It can name a recognizable set of operations without creating a school. A Wisean relay begins from a heterogeneous conjunction, preserves pressure from more than one domain, follows the relation through cases, and accepts the possibility that comedy will expose its excess. A Wisean term tends to be memorable enough to travel and unstable enough to require reconstruction.

A Wisean sage, however, should not mean an authorized interpreter who repeats Doug Wise correctly. That model would convert the signature effect into succession. It would also contradict the archive's strongest lesson: responsiveness varies, norms become visible through breakdown, and concepts live by changing form.

Sagacity is better understood as a temporary function within collective inquiry. At one moment the sage is the participant who detects an unspoken constraint. At another it is the person who knows that a scientific analogy has outrun its evidence. It may be the neighbor who remembers the maintenance history omitted by the design team, the technician who identifies the hidden dependency, the comic who reveals the salvation plot, or the organizer who knows when the experiment must stop.

No individual occupies the role permanently. A group becomes wiser by circulating the right to interrupt, connect, test, and refuse. The Wisean sage is thus anti-priestly and anti-proprietary. The signature gives the role a memorable form, but the function escapes the signer.

This circulation also changes what "Joyful Wisdom" can mean. Joy is not the possession of a happy doctrine. It is the affect of inquiry remaining mobile without becoming indifferent: the pleasure of a connection that survives testing, the relief of a failed analogy released without humiliation, the laughter by which a group recognizes its own inflated plot, the renewed ability to make a distinction.

8. Signature ethics: attribution, extension, countersignature

Once a concept travels into StudioLab, who signs it? The answer cannot be "Wise" simply because Wise supplied the initial term. A deconstraint workshop, reaction-norm exercise, entropy ledger, or Wiseacre comic is a new artifact with its own designers, participants, sources, and consequences. Attribution should preserve the relay rather than collapse it.

Three markings are useful. Source identifies what Wise actually wrote and where. Interpretation identifies how an editor reconstructs the operation. Extension identifies what StudioLab or another public invents from it. These markings allow a concept to travel without requiring the fiction that every later use expresses the author's intention.

A signature is repeatable: it can function when the signer is absent and in contexts the signer did not control. That repeatability is what permits publication, citation, appropriation, parody, and pedagogy. But repetition also creates responsibility for the countersigners—the people who select, frame, and reactivate the mark. "Wiseacre" should therefore name a chain of accountable transformations, not a license to ventriloquize Doug Wise.

The ethical standard is not fidelity understood as stasis. It is explicit difference. A strong extension says what it takes, what it changes, what evidence it adds, and what consequences belong to the

new apparatus. A weak extension borrows the signature's authority while hiding the labor of transformation.

9. Signature event: chance operations and double affirmation

The signature effect describes how a name bends reception. A signature event names the moment when that bending produces an unforeseen capacity. The event cannot be reduced to the signer's intention. A signature works because it can be recognized and repeated when the signer is absent, across contexts the signer cannot master. Every successful repetition preserves enough of the mark to count as a signature while exposing it to another scene, audience, medium, and risk.

Wiseacre begins in such exposure. The chance fit between the surname Wise and a corpus full of puns, judgments, philosophical overreach, and comic correction is not an argument Doug Wise had to design. It happens between name, texts, editors, and situation. "Wise + acre," though historically false, happens again when the visible English word is cut in a new place and connected to StudioLab's concern with situated worlding. The event is neither pure accident nor planned meaning. It is an accident that becomes consequential because someone receives, tests, and retransmits it.

Chance operations deliberately make room for these encounters. A word is split at the wrong seam; a title is paired with an alien image; a source is opened by an arbitrary rule; a surname is substituted; a scientific diagram is placed beside a philosophical sentence; a card is drawn that forces two distant nodes into relation. Chance interrupts the editor's preferred pathways and permits a signal to arrive from outside the current frame.

But chance alone produces only conjunction. It does not tell us whether the result is fertile, trivial, or harmful. Wiseacre therefore joins chance to double affirmation.

The first affirmation says yes to the arrival. It does not demand that the unexpected relation justify itself before it can be noticed. The pun, mismatch, error, or improbable connection receives a protected interval in which it may disclose a problem the existing categories excluded. This first yes is deconstraint at the level of attention.

The second affirmation says yes again, differently, after the relay has been tested. It asks what the conjunction preserves, what it changes, which evidence resists it, who bears its consequences, and whether it can return in a more exact form. The second yes may affirm the relation by revising it. It may also affirm inquiry by releasing a beautiful but misleading connection. Double affirmation is therefore not enthusiasm repeated. It is reception followed by responsible recurrence.

The distinction protects Wiseacre from two failures. Without the first yes, criticism eliminates fragile variants before they can develop. Without the second, novelty escapes accountability by appealing to spontaneity, art, or humor. The first affirmation opens a world; the second asks whether that world can be inhabited, shared, repaired, and refused.

Nietzsche's affirmation of becoming and Derrida's attention to the repeatable mark converge here without becoming the same doctrine. The chance event matters only because it can be affirmed; the affirmation matters only because it must pass again through difference. A signature survives not by remaining identical but by being recognizable across alteration. Wiseacre turns that structure into a working method.

10. Recursive abduction and transmedia conduction

The logic connecting first and second affirmation is recursive abduction. Abduction begins with a surprising fact and proposes a possible explanation: perhaps the strange conjunction would make sense if a previously unnoticed relation held. Wise's essays repeatedly stage this movement. What if dopamine participates in a natural history of inquiry? What if deconstraint helps redescribe ontological possibility? What if a reaction norm pluralizes responsiveness to being? What if a yo-yo conducts the relation among projection, technological expansion, dissipation, and return?

In a recursive practice, the initial hypothesis is not merely tested and accepted or rejected. It is externalized in a figure, artifact, or situation; the response to that artifact becomes new evidence; and the problem is posed again. The recursion can alter the hypothesis, the medium, the participants, and the criteria of relevance. Inquiry returns, but not to the same point.

The signature event supplies an especially clear case. "Wise" makes sagacity and comic pretension salient. The hypothesis follows: perhaps the name organizes how the corpus is read. The Smart/Norm/Grimm substitutions then function as experimental figures. Readers observe what changes under each name. Their responses provide evidence about which features belonged to the texts, which to the frame, and which emerged only through the operation. The signature effect becomes a recursive research program rather than a clever observation.

Transmedia conduction gives the recursion material range. A concept does not simply travel unchanged from essay to diagram, comic, conversation, performance, interface, or workshop. Each medium selects and amplifies different relations. Prose can qualify the evidentiary strength of a relay; a diagram spatializes recurrence; a comic gives the internal heckler a body; performance tests timing, embarrassment, voice, and collective laughter; an interface records branching readings; a workshop redistributes the right to countersign.

Conduction is stronger than dissemination. Dissemination imagines a message packaged once and delivered through several channels. Conduction tracks the transformation of a signal as it enters another material and social arrangement. The question is not whether every medium communicates the same Wiseacre content. It is what each medium permits the signature event to become, and what resistance or distortion it introduces.

This is why the series itself should be understood recursively. Essay I reconstructs Wise's terms. Essay II places those terms beside four lateral thinkers and extracts comparative operations. Essay III turns the proper name into a signature event and sends the result through StudioLab methods. The later essays do not leave the earlier ones untouched. Once Wiseacre has become a method of chance conjunction, double affirmation, recursive abduction, and conduction, readers can return to deconstraint, world-maintenance, and comedy with new questions about naming, medium, and authority.

The full circuit can be stated compactly:

1. **Chance encounter:** heterogeneous signs meet without guaranteed relevance.
2. **First affirmation:** the conjunction is received before premature closure.
3. **Abductive proposal:** a possible relation is stated with its evidentiary status.
4. **Transmedia conduction:** the relation changes form in an artifact or situation.
5. **Public response:** participants test, refuse, extend, or recast the frame.

6. **Recursive return:** the response becomes evidence for a new version of the problem.
7. **Second affirmation:** the relay is affirmed through revision—or inquiry is affirmed by letting it go.

This circuit is the practical meaning of **keep it bouncing**. The bounce is not endless production. It is recurrence with difference, a return that registers the energy spent, the world altered, and the obligation acquired.

11. The Wiseacre name-switch protocol

The philosophy of the name can become a repeatable StudioLab exercise.

1. **Collect the signatures.** List the official title, author, institution, funding category, platform, and values attached to a project.
2. **Mark the lean.** Identify what each name causes participants to expect before encountering the work.
3. **Introduce chance.** Draw or randomly pair a value-name such as Smart, Norm, Care, Open, or Wise with a failure-name such as Grimm, Capture, Exhaustion, or Extraction.
4. **Give the first yes.** Protect the unlikely pairing long enough for it to generate an abductive proposal.
5. **Reread the evidence.** Record which features of the project become more salient under each signature and which disappear.
6. **Smell the relay.** Identify the connection that feels most promising and the one that may be borrowing authority without substance.
7. **Conduct it across media.** Recompose the proposal in at least two forms—such as prose and diagram, comic and performance, or map and workshop prompt—and note what each transformation changes.
8. **Separate source, interpretation, and extension.** State who is responsible for each claim and artifact.
9. **Return and give the second yes.** Use public response as new evidence; revise, release, or retain the relay explicitly.
10. **Countersign publicly.** Rename or redescribe the project in language that preserves its aspiration while exposing its risks and obligations.

The protocol is not branding work. Its purpose is to show how branding already operates as a theory of the object. A name organizes attention, distributes credibility, and silently proposes what kind of failure will count as accidental. Making the signature effect visible gives a public another chance to judge.

12. Conclusion: the wisdom of the relay

Doug Wise would not become a different writer if his surname changed, but he would become a differently readable writer. The name Wise gathers judgment, cleverness, presumption, and comedy around an archive already concerned with how organisms and worlds generate significant differences. “Wiseacre” intensifies the ambivalence. Historically it comes from the soothsayer who

becomes a pretender to knowledge; inventively it can be split into Wise and acre, sagacity returned to a bounded field. The false segmentation works only when its falsity remains part of the method.

Nietzsche shows why the philosophical name cannot be purified into neutral attribution. A name can be projected as event, style, symptom, destiny, and joke. His philosophical nose offers the right corrective to name worship. Sagacity is not guaranteed by the signature. It is exercised in discrimination: sensing when a relation deserves attention, testing what kind of relation it is, and remaining capable of smelling decay in one's own concepts.

There may therefore be Wisean sages, but only in the plural and only temporarily. They do not inherit the master's wisdom. They perform a circulating function in a public capable of connecting heterogeneous signs, distinguishing analogy from mechanism, laughing at its own plot, and returning an altered concept with its consequences attached.

The signature effect is not a curiosity added after the serious philosophy. It is one more instance of Wise's deepest problem: how something comes to show up as something. Under a name, scattered texts show up as a project; under Wiseacre, a project shows up as both sagacity and its comic test. When chance makes that name meet a new context, the effect becomes an event. Double affirmation receives and retests it; recursive abduction converts surprise into revisable inquiry; transmedia conduction gives the inquiry public forms that can answer back.

The name is therefore a relay rather than a destination. Sign it, switch it, conduct it, countersign it. Keep it moving.

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Editorial note

"Signature effect," "Wisean sage," the counterfactual surnames, the invented Wise/acre segmentation, and the name-switch protocol are editorial concepts developed here for StudioLab / BeyngLab. The chance/double-affirmation/recursive-abduction circuit is an operational synthesis rather than a doctrine attributed directly to Nietzsche, Derrida, Cage, StudioLab, or Wise. The historical derivation of *wiseacre* from Middle Dutch *wijssegger* should be kept distinct from the deliberately false "Wise + acre" reading. This essay analyzes the public operation of a name; it makes no claim about Doug Wise's personality or intention.

A Place that Takes Place

Wiseacre as Event-Site, Commons, and Recursive Worlding

Abstract

Wiseacre should become a place, but not simply by acquiring an address, launching a website, or naming a room. It should become a place that takes place: a situated event produced whenever people, texts, media, organisms, instruments, and questions are configured so that their relations can change. The phrase joins the apparent stability of place to the contingency of occurrence. A place provides orientation, memory, and return; taking-place introduces chance, transformation, and time. Wiseacre must hold both. Without place, the event dissipates into content. Without taking-place, the place congeals into institution, brand, or monument.

This essay translates the first three essays of the Wiseacre series into an institutional proposition. Doug Wise's concepts—deconstraint, ontological reaction norms, variagenics, the poietic as, Daseintropy, paranoid comedy, Joyful Wisdom, and the yoyogram—become not doctrines displayed in a house but operators for composing encounters. The signature event becomes a public protocol of chance and double affirmation. Recursive abduction becomes the way the place learns. Transmedia conduction becomes its movement across forms. StudioLab receives and tests these operators through design practice and collaborative infrastructure; BeyngLab supplies the ontological question; Wiseacre becomes the event-site where concepts risk being used, altered, refused, and returned. Its true architecture is therefore not a building but a repeatable relation among arrival, variation, making, public testing, memory, and renewed invitation.

Keywords: Wiseacre; place; event; commons; StudioLab; BeyngLab; Doug Wise; deconstraint; recursive abduction; transmedia conduction; signature; worlding

1. The proposition: Wiseacre is where Wiseacre happens

The proposition is disarmingly simple: Wiseacre is where Wiseacre happens. Its circularity is deliberate. It prevents the name from being secured in advance by a property, proprietor, discipline, platform, or format. A Wiseacre event might occupy a seminar room, laboratory, garden, library, sidewalk, server, studio, or temporary page. None of these sites is Wiseacre merely because the word has been attached to it. The place exists when an encounter opens variants, conducts an inquiry across forms, exposes its constructions to others, registers what changed, and prepares a return.

This does not make the place imaginary. On the contrary, taking-place requires materials: doors and chairs, screens and cables, food and schedules, permissions and access, invitations and refusals, facilitation and cleanup, bandwidth and storage, authorship and attribution. A philosophy that ignores these conditions mistakes abstraction for freedom. Wise's attention to world-maintenance is decisive here. Worlds do not persist by proclamation. They are sustained through repeated acts of selection, repair, interpretation, metabolism, and care. Wiseacre is made in precisely these apparently secondary acts.

Nor does the proposition mean that anything can count as Wiseacre. An event does not qualify merely because it is lively, interdisciplinary, philosophical, or technologically novel. Wiseacre names a stricter composition. A consequential question must be present. More than one way of sensing or framing it must be possible. The initial frame must be placed at risk. A change of medium must do intellectual work rather than decorate an unchanged message. Participants must be able to answer back. The encounter must leave a trace that can be revisited. And the place must remain capable of becoming otherwise at the next occurrence.

Wiseacre is therefore neither a venue nor a theme. It is a place-making criterion. The criterion can guide the design of a physical site, a digital platform, a publication series, a workshop, or a distributed network. In each case the same question applies: what must happen here for this site to become a place rather than merely contain activity?

2. From place as noun to placing as event

Place is commonly treated as a noun: a bounded location that exists before the people and activities it accommodates. Taking-place reverses the priority. It asks how a location becomes meaningful through an occurrence and how an occurrence acquires durability through a location. The hyphen matters. It interrupts the assumption that events simply enter already formed containers.

Several philosophical traditions converge on this problem without giving Wiseacre a ready-made formula. Heidegger's bridge does not merely stand in a preexisting space; it gathers relations and thereby brings a locale into presence. Hannah Arendt's space of appearance arises when people act and speak together, not when an architect finishes a chamber. Whitehead's actual occasions replace inert substance with achieved processes of becoming. Doreen Massey describes space through coexisting trajectories, multiplicity, and unfinished relations. Edward Casey retrieves the bodily, mnemonic, and orienting powers of place from accounts that reduce it to abstract extension. These thinkers differ substantially, but together they make a crucial point available: place is not exhausted by position.

Wiseacre adds a distinctive operator to this constellation. Place is not only gathered, enacted, becoming, relational, or remembered. It is variagenic. A place is alive to the extent that it can generate and receive meaningful variation without losing every capacity for orientation. Too much closure produces a low-variance enclosure in which only authorized responses register. Too much flux produces a field without memory, consequence, or return. A Wiseacre place maintains an interval between fixation and dispersal.

This interval can be understood through Wise's concept of deconstraint. Deconstraint is not the fantasy of removing all limits. Living and cultural systems act through constraints; without them, no form or capacity would exist. Deconstraint is the selective release or reconfiguration of constraints so that suppressed variants can appear and new combinations become possible. Wiseacre must therefore be designed neither as an unprogrammed free space nor as a tightly scripted curriculum. It needs enabling constraints: a duration, a question, a score, a set of materials, a rule of attribution, a right of refusal, and a way back. These constraints create enough form for variation to matter.

A place that takes place is thus both architectural and dramaturgical. It has thresholds, rhythms, roles, props, and exits. It distributes attention. It makes certain encounters more likely and others less so. Its ethics are embedded in the arrangement before anyone announces its values. Who can

enter? Who understands the signs? Who is expected to speak? Whose time is treated as flexible? What forms of knowledge can appear? What happens to the trace afterward? Wiseacre becomes credible only by making these design questions part of the philosophical work.

3. The acre in Wiseacre

Historically, wiseacre does not derive from an acre of wisdom. The word descends from terms associated with a wise speaker or soothsayer and later acquires the comic edge of the person who thinks he knows too much. Yet the false etymology—wise plus acre—is too generative to discard. Used knowingly, it becomes a place-making fiction.

An acre is measured ground. It suggests cultivation, seasonality, common labor, enclosure, ownership, soil exhaustion, and yield. To call the project Wiseacre is to raise questions the proper name alone cannot settle. Who owns the ground of thought? What is planted, and what is allowed to grow wild? Which concepts are perennial, which are invasive, and which require composting? Who harvests the value? What has been depleted by continuous intellectual production? What form of fallow makes another season possible?

This productive misreading also prevents Wiseacre from becoming a shrine to Doug Wise. Wise is a signature within the place, but he is not its sovereign. His texts supply unusually fertile operators; they do not license a school whose members repeat a master vocabulary. The acre must produce wiseacres in the plural: situated sages, meddlers, jokers, maintainers, scientists, makers, readers, and publics able to countersign the work by transforming it.

The comic history of the word is an institutional safeguard. A wiseacre is always in danger of becoming a know-it-all. The name places that danger on the door. Any person speaking for the project—including Wise, its editors, StudioLab, and BeyngLab—must be available for comic deflation. Paranoid comedy becomes a method for detecting when a concept has turned into a total explanation, when a facilitator has become an oracle, or when an experimental platform has begun treating participants as inputs.

Wiseacre is consequently a commons without pretending that commons are innocent. It must govern access, labor, attribution, care, and conflict. “Open” cannot mean that all material is free for extraction or that everyone is equally safe when exposed. A common place is not ownerless; it is held through plural obligations. The point is not to erase Doug Wise’s authorship but to establish conditions under which authorship can become generative without becoming proprietary rule.

4. The signature event becomes a place

Essay III argued that “Wiseacre” operates as a signature event. A signature both marks a singular source and travels beyond the moment of inscription. It can be cited, repeated, mistranslated, forged, honored, or transformed. This iterability gives the signature social force, but it also prevents the signer from controlling every future use.

To make Wiseacre a place is to give that signature an event architecture. The name must arrive somewhere. Someone must receive it. A text, image, question, joke, or object must call for a response. The response must be more than recognition. It must risk a countersignature: a new composition that says “yes” to the encounter without merely saying “same.”

The double affirmation provides Wiseacre's temporal hinge. The first yes receives what arrives before its value is fully known. It is hospitality toward the chance relation: this unexpected analogy, visitor, glitch, objection, image, organism, or medium may matter. The first yes suspends premature dismissal. It does not suspend judgment forever.

Between the two affirmations lies the work of the place. Participants frame hypotheses, translate forms, gather evidence, build artifacts, encounter resistance, and disclose effects. The second yes returns after this trial. It can reaffirm the proposal, revise it, restrict it, or refuse its continuation. A genuine second affirmation is not guaranteed agreement. It is answerability after transformation.

This interval distinguishes a Wiseacre event from both brainstorming and branding. Brainstorming often celebrates the first yes but provides no rigorous return. Branding begins with the second yes already decided: every event must confirm the identity of the organization. Wiseacre needs the uncertainty between affirmations. The name survives not because every experiment succeeds but because each experiment is allowed to modify what the name can mean.

5. Seven stations of a place in motion

Wiseacre should be built as a sequence of stations rather than a collection of departments. A station is at once a location, a pause, a transmission point, and a temporary assignment. The stations can occupy separate rooms, moments in a workshop, pages in a publication, or modules in a digital environment. Their sequence can vary, but all seven functions must remain available.

5.1 The threshold of arrival

Every taking-place begins with an arrival that the program did not entirely produce. A participant brings a stuck project. A reader finds an unresolved phrase. A sensor records an anomaly. A public disputes the question. A joke breaks the official tone. The threshold must receive arrivals without immediately converting them into existing categories.

Hospitality here is an epistemic practice. It includes accessible entry, orientation, translation, and consent, but it also includes the ability to say: we do not yet know what kind of thing this is. The threshold protects the first yes from becoming instant assimilation.

5.2 The deconstraint field

The arrival enters a field in which its framing can vary. Participants identify the constraints organizing the problem: institutional procedures, inherited concepts, media formats, scientific assumptions, resource limits, social norms, interface defaults, and narrative roles. They then ask which constraints are constitutive, which are protective, which are historical residues, and which suppress relevant possibilities.

The field does not promise liberation from every constraint. It produces candidate reconfigurations. One rule may be relaxed, another strengthened, a missing actor added, a scale changed, or a familiar problem renamed. This is variagenics as practice: generating differences that can encounter consequences.

5.3 The reaction-norm garden

Wise's ontological reaction norm asks how the capacity to respond to significance varies across beings and conditions. A Wiseacre place must therefore resist designing for an imaginary universal participant. The reaction-norm garden stages multiple modes of encounter: verbal and visual, analytic and embodied, synchronous and asynchronous, solemn and comic, expert and vernacular.

Plural formats are not accommodations added after the intellectual work. They are instruments for discovering features of the question that one reaction norm cannot perceive. The garden succeeds when differences in response become information about the situation rather than deficits assigned to persons.

5.4 The transmedia workbench

At the workbench, a concept is conducted into another medium: an essay becomes a diagram; a diagram becomes a performance score; a scientific model becomes a comic; an interview becomes an object; an argument becomes a walk; a workshop becomes a protocol; a failure becomes an annotated archive.

Transmedia conduction is not the distribution of identical content across channels. The change of form changes what can be sensed, questioned, remembered, and shared. Each medium adds affordances and distortions. The workbench makes these gains and losses explicit. A translation that merely illustrates the source has not yet conducted it.

5.5 The theatre of comic falsification

Every proposition then enters a theatre where it can be exaggerated, impersonated, reversed, and laughed at. The aim is not ridicule for its own sake. Comedy reveals hidden scripts. Who is cast as hero, villain, victim, genius, machine, nature, public, or fool? What must remain offstage for the explanation to work? Which pleasure loop keeps the project repeating itself?

The theatre guards against ontological seriousness becoming immunity from criticism. A concept capable of surviving comic transformation may return more precise. A concept that collapses may have been held together by prestige, fear, or solemnity.

5.6 The yoyogram room

The yoyogram gives the event a path of descent and return. Inquiry moves into a text, apparatus, institution, memory, or technical system; reaches a point where continuing deeper would become repetition or capture; and returns carrying a changed relation. The room asks three practical questions: What drew us down? What changed at the turn? What can return without pretending to have mastered the depth?

This station opposes production mania. Not every descent should generate a deliverable, and not every promising path should continue indefinitely. The skill is finite persistence: going far enough to encounter difference, then returning in time to repair relations and reorient action.

5.7 The memory-and-reopening commons

An event becomes a place when it can be returned to. Wiseacre must keep traces: versions, diagrams, recordings, dissent, decisions, abandoned hypotheses, credits, conditions of use, and

accounts of consequence. Yet the archive must not freeze the event into a canonical past. Every trace needs a reopening path: a prompt, license, annotation layer, response channel, or scheduled return.

Memory is therefore active infrastructure. It lets later participants discover not only what was produced but what constraints shaped it, who could not participate, what failed, and why a second affirmation was or was not given. The commons keeps the place from disappearing into the event while keeping the event from being embalmed by the place.

6. The event grammar: chance, abduction, conduction, return

The seven stations can be condensed into a recursive event grammar:

1. **Receive a chance arrival.** Something appears that the existing program cannot fully predict.
2. **Give the first affirmation.** Hold the arrival open long enough to learn what it might change.
3. **Abduct a possible relation.** Form the most generative provisional account, while marking it as a hypothesis rather than a discovery already secured.
4. **Generate variants.** Alter constraints, scales, actors, metaphors, and modes of participation.
5. **Conduct the inquiry across media.** Let a new form expose capacities and distortions hidden in the first.
6. **Place the construction before others.** Invite answer, use, resistance, correction, and refusal.
7. **Return recursively.** Feed the consequences back into the question, archive, protocol, and conditions of participation.
8. **Give or withhold the second affirmation.** Decide what should continue, in what altered form, under whose stewardship.
9. **Leave a reopening trace.** Make another event possible without dictating its result.

This grammar is recursive because the return changes the conditions of the next arrival. Abduction is not a one-time leap from clue to explanation; it is repeatedly corrected by what the provisional explanation makes possible and prevents. Conduction is not a delivery stage after thinking; it is one of the ways thought discovers its limits. Chance is not random decoration; it is the encounter with what the system did not know how to count.

The process also explains why Wiseacre needs both philosophy and design. Philosophy keeps the event's categories, ontological assumptions, and claims about meaning open to interrogation. Design gives those questions material and social consequences. Philosophy without design may admire the possible without configuring it. Design without philosophy may optimize a frame it never learned to question. Wiseacre takes place in their interval.

7. Four recurring forms

A place becomes durable through recurrence, but recurrence need not mean repetition of one program. Wiseacre can establish four recognizable forms that enact the same grammar at different scales.

7.1 The Wiseacre clinic

A person or group brings a project that has become stuck, overdetermined, compulsive, or falsely inevitable. The clinic maps its constraint architecture, generates variations, changes medium, and stages comic falsification. It ends with a yoyogram: continue, turn, pause, repair, or stop. The output is not expert advice handed to a client but a jointly authored record of changed possibilities.

7.2 The Joyful Wisdom assembly

The assembly places a public question in the interval between dread and play. Scientific, philosophical, artistic, technical, and lived forms of knowledge are brought together without being collapsed into a synthetic authority. Joy names the increased capacity to remain responsive under uncertainty, not an instruction to feel cheerful. The assembly must make disagreement and differential risk visible.

7.3 The transmedia relay

A Wise text or StudioLab concept travels through a sequence of media and publics. Each relay participant receives the previous form, records what it permits and obscures, and produces a countersignature in another medium. The completed relay displays not a chain of illustrations but a genealogy of transformations. Meaning appears as conducted variation.

7.4 The fallow session

Wiseacre must institutionalize nonproduction. A fallow session revisits the archive, repairs neglected relations, updates attribution, closes obsolete channels, returns material, and asks what should not be continued. This is world-maintenance without the spectacle of innovation. It protects the place from becoming another dopamine machine that survives by announcing ceaseless novelty.

8. Governance: how the place avoids becoming its opposite

The greatest danger is that Wiseacre will succeed as an image while failing as a place. A distinctive name, comic aesthetic, conceptual vocabulary, and charismatic archive are readily brandable. They can produce recognition without deconstraint, participation without answerability, and content without event. Governance must therefore protect the gap between first and second affirmation.

Five commitments follow.

First, no event without a right of refusal. Participants must be able to decline recording, attribution, publication, continuation, or a role assigned by the program. Deconstraint that cannot receive refusal is another form of capture.

Second, no artifact without provenance. Every public trace should identify its contributors, sources, transformations, conditions, unresolved disagreements, and intended uses. Transmedia movement must not wash away authorship or contextual limits.

Third, no method without revision history. Protocols should be versioned with accounts of where they worked, where they failed, and who changed them. A StudioLab method becomes common not by losing its origin but by acquiring a legible history of countersignatures.

Fourth, no openness without maintenance. Access requires labor: captioning, hosting, moderation, preservation, facilitation, translation, scheduling, and care. That labor must be named, shared, and resourced. Otherwise the rhetoric of openness conceals an exhausted caretaker.

Fifth, no Wiseacre without wiseacres. Governance should rotate curatorial and facilitative authority. Doug Wise's archive remains an essential source, but each cycle should invite new sages, fools, skeptics, technicians, and publics to alter the place's questions. The plural protects the proper name from becoming a command.

9. StudioLab, BeyngLab, and Wiseacre

The three names should not be merged. Their distinction makes a productive ecology possible.

StudioLab is the receiving platform of practice. There, we develop media, methods, workshops, partnerships, transmedia conductions, recursive abductions, and public prototypes. Our primary unit for StudioLab is the designed situation.

BeyngLab is the ontological aperture. It keeps open questions of being, world, technology, nothingness, dwelling, disclosure, and transformation. Its primary unit is the question that changes what a situation is understood to be.

Wiseacre is the event-site of countersignature. It places Wisean and related concepts into encounters where they can be used, transformed, tested, laughed at, and returned. Its primary unit is the event that makes a place and the trace that makes another event possible.

StudioLab without Wiseacre could turn concepts too quickly into methods. BeyngLab without Wiseacre could keep possibility suspended above the material conditions of gathering. Wiseacre without StudioLab could remain an archive of brilliant operators without the infrastructure for collective practice. Wiseacre without BeyngLab could become an inventive cultural program whose assumptions about world and being remain untouched.

The ecology can be expressed as a relay rather than a hierarchy:

- BeyngLab **opens** the ontological question.
- Wiseacre **stages** the signature event.
- StudioLab **conducts** the event into collaborative forms.
- Publics **answer** with use, resistance, and transformation.
- The return **reorients** all three.

No organization occupies the center permanently. The center is the taking-place.

10. How to know whether Wiseacre took place

Attendance, engagement, downloads, citations, and media reach may matter, but none proves that a place occurred. Wiseacre needs event criteria rather than platform metrics. After each occurrence, its stewards and participants should ask:

- Did an unplanned but relevant arrival alter the inquiry?
- Did the initial framing become more plural, precise, or accountable?
- Were suppressed variants or reaction norms able to appear?
- Did changing medium change the thought?
- Could participants answer, refuse, and countersign?
- Did comic testing disclose a hidden script or pleasure loop?
- Was there a discernible turn and return rather than endless continuation?
- Did the event leave a trace with provenance and a reopening path?
- Did the second affirmation differ in any way from the first?
- Did the conditions of the next event change because of what happened?

These questions do not create a scorecard. A high-performing Wiseacre event could fail dramatically by ordinary measures and still reveal that its central premise was wrong. Conversely, a crowded and widely shared event could produce no place at all if every response had been anticipated and absorbed by the brand. The criterion is transformation with memory.

11. A first taking-place

Wiseacre should begin before it is finished. Its inaugural event need not unveil a completed institution. It can test the proposition by making the institution in public.

Invite a small, heterogeneous group to bring one question each about a project, institution, organism, technology, or world that seems trapped in an inevitable frame. Place selected fragments from Wise's corpus at stations rather than assigning a doctrinal reading list: deconstraint at one threshold, reaction norms at another, the poietic as at the workbench, Daseintropy beside a maintenance inventory, paranoid comedy in the theatre, and the yoyogram at the return.

Introduce a chance operation that changes who works with which question or which medium must receive it. Give the first affirmation: follow the unexpected conjunction without pretending it is meaningful merely because it occurred. Form an abductive proposal. Conduct it into a form that can meet another public—a diagram, walk, comic, model, audio score, letter, interface, lesson, ritual, or repair action. Invite response and refusal. Then return to the starting question and decide whether the proposal receives a second yes.

Publish a compact event record containing the initial frame, chance operation, variations, media transformations, objections, decisions, credits, and unresolved question. Conclude not with a declaration of success but with the conditions for reopening. The inaugural Wiseacre will then have built the institution it proposes: a place made by taking place.

12. Conclusion: hold the ground open

“A place that takes place” is not a slogan for an event venue. It is a discipline of institutional incompleteness. Wiseacre requires enough stability to welcome, remember, maintain, and return, but enough deconstraint to be altered by what it welcomes. Its ground must be held without being immobilized.

This is the spatial consequence of the signature event. A signature needs a surface, but it also needs the possibility of departure. Chance needs hospitality, but it also needs testing. Affirmation needs a first yes, but it becomes responsible only through the second. Abduction needs imaginative leaps, but it becomes recursive by returning through consequences. Transmedia needs movement, but it becomes conduction only when the medium transforms what passes through it.

Wiseacre can therefore be a room, a garden, a website, a serial publication, a traveling workshop, a digital commons, or a district within StudioLab. But it is none of these once and for all. It occurs when they are composed as thresholds of worlding.

The founding promise might be stated this way:

Wiseacre is common ground for difficult arrivals. We open constraints without pretending to escape them. We let concepts cross forms and publics. We laugh when wisdom hardens into rule. We remember what happened, repair what it cost, and return with another question. The place is never simply there. Together, we take it place by place.

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Editorial note

This essay develops "Wiseacre as a place that takes place" as our proposition for StudioLab / BeyngLab. The spatial reading of *Wiseacre*, the seven stations, the event grammar, the four recurring forms, and the three-part institutional ecology are constructive extensions rather than positions directly stated by Doug Wise. They are offered as countersignatures: ways to place his concepts at risk in collaborative practice while preserving attribution, disagreement, and return.

The Metanoic Road

Oedipus, Antigone, Damascus, Colonus, and Wiseacre

Abstract

What kind of road joins Oedipus, Antigone, Damascus, and Colonus without pretending that Greek tragedy and Christian scripture tell the same story? The answer is not a universal conversion plot but a relay among four distinct operations. Oedipus gives truth the form of recursive implication: his sincere inquiry discovers the investigator inside his own accusation. Antigone gives truth the form of avowal and conduction: she admits the prohibited act, forces sovereign law to encounter its contradiction, and later guides the blinded Oedipus without becoming his neutral instrument. Damascus is interruptive: an address overtakes a directed mission, reorganizes perception, produces blindness, and makes others necessary. Colonus is metanoic emplacement: civic and sacred relations receive a cursed remainder as a contested gift without repairing the past. Oedipus is caught by the truth he demands; Antigone tells the truth that power cannot survive; Damascus breaks the mission; Colonus worlds the aftermath.

The generalized passage is the metanoic road: a configured movement through which traveler, guide, destination, and path can all become otherwise. Its grammar joins implication, avowal, interruption, conduction, emplacement, chance operations, double affirmation, recursive abduction, and transmedia practice. It begins from a declaration that may capture its speaker, receives an address it did not authorize, enters a blind interval, depends upon guides and resistant publics, generates provisional bearings, conducts them into another place and medium, and returns for a second affirmation. Antigone is the living thread of this passage: neither assistant nor salvific mediator, but the daughter-sister who conducts Oedipus's embodied contradiction into Colonus and carries unresolved consequences onward. Wise's Yo-Yo Sein supplies its kinetic diagram: descent and return occur under tension, through finite and dissipative bodies, so recurrence requires renewed force and risks capture. Wiseacre becomes its waystation: the place that takes place wherever passage is made answerable, memorable, and reopenable.

This essay develops the metanoic road as the temporal counterpart of Essay IV's event-site. It also distinguishes transformation from coercive conversion, novelty, revelationism, and personal branding. The road has taken place only when the event changes its own conditions of recurrence—when a new orientation remains open to correction, refusal, and another turn.

Keywords: metanoia; Oedipus; Antigone; Damascus; Colonus; Cretan return; eddy; Sophocles; conversion; Wiseacre; StudioLab; BeyngLab; recursive abduction; transmedia conduction; double affirmation; chance operation; yoyogram; Pynchon; entropy

1. The slash is the road

“Oedipus/Antigone/Damascus/Colonus” is already a small diagram. The slashes do not offer interchangeable characters or destinations. They relay four operations: a truth-demand that captures its speaker; an avowal that exposes law and a guide who carries catastrophe without cleansing it; an event that overturns a directed traveler; and a place that receives the transformed remainder. The generalized road belongs to none of these names in isolation. It takes place in their differences, cuts, and continuities.

This interval matters because modern accounts of transformation commonly divide into two unsatisfying models. The first is developmental: change is represented as progress along a known route from ignorance to knowledge, incapacity to competence, or problem to solution. The destination governs the journey in advance. The second is disruptive: an extraordinary event breaks continuity and produces a new self, paradigm, or world. The event appears to come from nowhere and to authorize what follows.

Oedipus unsettles the developmental model. Inquiry does not accumulate transparently into mastery when every discovery alters the position of the inquirer. He advances toward truth by becoming more deeply implicated in the sentence he has pronounced. Antigone prevents that recursion from becoming a solitary epistemic drama: avowal, kinship, guidance, and political conflict determine how truth travels. Damascus unsettles the disruptive model. The interruption does not complete transformation by itself. Saul must be led, wait in blindness, receive Ananias, reenter social relations, and learn what the event demands. The flash is only the beginning of a mediated passage. Colonus unsettles both models by asking how irreversible knowledge is lived afterward: where the blinded traveler can dwell, how a city receives him, what the guide carries, and how catastrophic history becomes political inheritance without becoming redemption.

Generalization should preserve these differences rather than reduce the stories to “life-changing experience.” Oedipus contributes recursive implication. Antigone contributes avowal, contest, and guided conduction. Damascus contributes interruption and reversal. Colonus contributes emplacement and aftermath. Their slashes produce a method: transformation occurs when an implicated truth is openly contested, interrupted, conducted by others, and given a revisable place from which another passage can begin.

The metanoic road is this method made portable. It can organize a philosophical inquiry, artistic process, scientific hunch, political reorientation, institutional redesign, pedagogical encounter, or personal turning. Yet portability does not make every change equivalent. The road must retain the friction of place, history, power, mediation, and consequence. Generalization is not abstraction from differences; it is the construction of a relay capable of carrying differences without making them the same.

2. Oedipus and Antigone: implication, avowal, conduction

Oedipus is not a liar when he undertakes to discover the murderer of Laius. The force of his tragedy depends upon the sincerity and efficacy of his truth-demand. He announces that Thebes's pollution must be identified and expelled; curses the unknown criminal; and interrogates prophet, witness, ruler, wife-mother, and history. Each successful step draws the investigator more completely inside the field he is investigating. The detective becomes the evidence. The judge is bound by his own

sentence. The city's epistemic cure reveals its sovereign knower as the embodied site of what the city calls disease.

This is why Oedipus gives recursion a tragic rather than merely logical force. His declarations are neither simply true nor simply false. They are performative commitments whose unknown referent is himself. Knowledge does not lift him above the situation; it reorganizes every kinship term, political relation, memory, and bodily capacity through which he could have claimed a stable identity. The question “who caused the plague?” returns as “from what position have I been asking?” Recursive inquiry becomes auto-diagnosis.

Inquiry here has the structure of an eddy rather than a syllogism aimed at an external object. Every attempt by Oedipus to get outside the problem turns him back through testimony, authority, memory, and exposure. The current advances, but locally it curls. The road does not conceal only an answer at its destination. It reveals that pathfinder and sought object have occupied the same body all along.

Antigone must not be assimilated to this recursion. She does not conceal her burial of Polynices or discover herself belatedly as its agent; she avows the act. Her declaration is not a liar's paradox but a parrhesiastic exposure. Creon's decree claims to protect civic order by withholding burial from an enemy, yet its enforcement violates religious and kinship obligations, destroys his household, and leaves the ruler as the agent of the disorder he attributes to Antigone. She does not become false when the law folds back upon its lawgiver. She tells the truth that power cannot survive unchanged. At the same time, she speaks from no pure exterior: the family obligation she affirms belongs to the Oedipal kinship whose violence she inherits. She is truth-teller, lawbreaker, daughter-sister, and bearer of a conflict no single rule resolves.

At Colonus, Antigone transforms this recursion by becoming its living thread. The once-commanding investigator is blind, exiled, aged, and dependent. Antigone guides his body, describes places he cannot see, speaks with strangers, and helps conduct his claims across the threshold of a new city. She does what Ariadne's thread cannot do by itself: she interprets, answers, risks, remembers, and can refuse. Yet she is not outside the labyrinth. As Oedipus's daughter and half-sister, she embodies the kinship recursion that his inquiry disclosed. The guide is woven from the same catastrophe as the traveler.

Antigone is therefore neither assistant nor allegory of care in the abstract. She is a conductor of implicated truth. She carries Oedipus without cleansing his history; mediates between him and a public without becoming a transparent channel; and keeps the road open after his disappearance, when she turns again toward Thebes and the collision of her brothers. Her guidance does not complete the tragedy. It transmits an unresolved inheritance into another scene.

This paired figure changes the ethics of the metanoic road. The central question is not only how a declaration returns upon its speaker. It is who bears the traveler after truth destroys self-sufficiency; whose body becomes the archive; who translates between the implicated speaker and an unfamiliar public; and whether the guide can cease, redirect, or refuse the relay. Oedipus without Antigone turns recursive truth into solitary grandeur. Antigone reduced to Oedipus's supplement becomes pure service. Held apart and relayed, they show implication, avowal, and conduction as unequal but inseparable labors.

Wise's work repeatedly stages both operations without conflating them. It enters Heidegger's conceptual constructions through biology, information theory, law, psychoanalysis, popular narrative, and comedy, then discovers that the critical languages brought to the inquiry are also part of the world being diagnosed. Daseintropy cannot describe production mania from an energetically innocent outside. Paranoid comedy cannot expose totalizing plots without risking another total plot. Deconstraint cannot release possibilities without becoming a new norm. This resembles Oedipus's investigation when diagnosis captures the diagnostician. But Wise also conducts the captured claim through citation, pun, science, story, and joke into other publics. That second movement is Antigonean: not a purification of implication, but its answerable passage.

3. Sidecar: what if Oedipus were a Cretan liar?

The Cretan-liar twist remains too productive to discard, but it works best as a sidecar rather than the vehicle's chassis. The statement associated with Epimenides and repeated in the Letter to Titus—Cretans are always liars—does not automatically produce the strict paradox later attributed to it. A Cretan can truthfully say that Cretans generally lie; quantifier, occasion, and speaker matter. Its afterlife nevertheless preserves a useful operation: an assertion is caught inside the field it claims to describe. The speaker cannot simply secure an exterior to the sentence.

As a speculative “what if,” the twist sharpens one aspect of Oedipus. What happens when the diagnosis, accusation, norm, or promised cure is applied back to the declarer? Oedipus does not lie, but his truth-procedure unexpectedly includes its own sovereign investigator. StudioLab can retain this operation as the Cretan return: reapply a project's account of the problem to the speaker, institution, apparatus, and desire that produced the account.

The limit is decisive. If the sidecar becomes the chassis, Sophoclean tragedy is reduced to a clever logical code and Antigone is pulled into a paradox she explicitly breaks by avowing her act. The Cretan return should therefore remain detachable, local, and falsifiable. It tests a declaration; it does not name every traveler or explain the entire road.

The better spatial figure is an eddy. An eddy is a local countercurrent generated by a larger flow. It advances with the river while curling against it, holding fragments, bodies, and signals in recursive suspension before releasing some of them altered. Oedipus's inquiry becomes such a whirlpool: each discovery moves toward disclosure while returning the inquiry upon its source. Antigone is not another vortex. She is the embodied thread capable of crossing, describing, and sometimes leaving the eddy.

This is also where the road begins to resemble a spiral La Jetée composed of eddies. An image can be remnant, interruption, and remembered cause of the next image; the traveler can be produced by the scene toward which he believes he is traveling. The point is not to substitute cinematic time travel for tragedy. It is to recognize a recursive montage in which returns alter the origin they seem merely to revisit. Wise's yoyogram will later give this eddy a material discipline: no whirl, recoil, or renewed throw occurs without tension, expenditure, and a hand capable of release.

4. Damascus: the road interrupted

The road to Damascus has become shorthand for sudden conversion. Yet its canonical narrative is more structurally interesting than the cliché. Saul begins with a mission, authorization, companions, a destination, and a confident identification of enemies. The interruption does not occur to a directionless seeker. It intercepts someone already oriented.

The event disorganizes more than belief. Light alters sight; a voice changes the field of address; the persecuted other becomes inseparable from the one who calls; the self-directed traveler must be led by the hand. Saul enters Damascus unable to see, refusing food and drink, suspended between former agency and an unknown future. The narrative then shifts to Ananias, who receives a call of his own, objects to it, and nevertheless approaches the feared persecutor. Transformation is distributed between strangers.

This distribution corrects several familiar reductions. Damascus is not the triumph of a private insight. It is not evidence that intensity guarantees truth. It is not completed at the moment of impact. Nor, contrary to popular retellings, does Acts present “Saul” as simply renamed “Paul” on the road; the text later introduces Paul as another name. What changes first is not a label but an orientation within a network of bodies, voices, memories, risks, and obligations.

The Damascus event also repeats. Acts narrates the encounter three times, with differences of emphasis and detail. The repetitions do not merely reproduce a stable original. They conduct the event into new rhetorical situations. An occurrence becomes a vocation partly by being retold, and each retelling becomes answerable to a different public. Damascus is already transmedial at the level of voice, light, body, narrated memory, letter, and communal practice.

The road’s generalizable structure is therefore not supernatural certainty but interruption followed by mediated reorientation. A project, institution, or person is moving under an operative world-picture. Something arrives that the current picture cannot absorb without alteration. Capacity is suspended. Others become necessary. The event is narrated, tested, and differently reiterated. A new direction emerges, but its legitimacy depends on what the transformed traveler does and what communities can answer back.

This is why the Damascus road must remain distinct from revelationism. “Something happened to me” does not settle what happened, where it came from, or what authority it confers. The first affirmation receives the event as significant; the second asks whether the interpretation and practice built from it remain defensible after encounter with evidence, others, and consequence.

5. Colonus: worlding the aftermath

Damascus gives us a flash, a fall, blindness, and a redirected vocation. Colonus gives us what transformation narratives usually omit: the long road after knowledge has destroyed the old orientation but before another world can receive its remainder. Oedipus at Colonus begins with no triumphal convert. Oedipus arrives as a polluted exile whose body is failing, whose past cannot be corrected, and whose future depends on a place he does not control.

He does not arrive alone. Antigone leads him into the grove of the Eumenides, describes what he cannot see, and helps him negotiate the difference between sacred prohibition, local fear, and possible hospitality. The parallel to Damascus is exact enough to illuminate and different enough to

resist assimilation. Saul, blinded by interruption, is led by companions into the city and later approached by Ananias. Oedipus, blinded after recognition, is conducted over years by the child produced within the truth he discovered. Ananias crosses toward a former enemy at personal risk; Antigone remains bound by kinship to a catastrophe she did not cause. Both make transformation social. Neither is a mere instrument of the transformed man.

Colonus is not simply a destination where Oedipus is finally healed. His past remains past. His anger and curse remain active. Creon and Polynices seek to seize or recruit the power attached to his body. Theseus offers a different political relation: hospitality without possession, protection without a demand that the stranger become innocent. The grove becomes an event-site because competing worlds gather around the question of how this body will be placed and who will control the consequences of its death.

Oedipus's disappearance then makes place through secrecy. His unmarked resting place will protect Athens, but the gift cannot be displayed, monumentalized, or made common property. Theseus becomes custodian of a knowledge whose political efficacy depends upon restricted transmission. Colonus thus adds a difficult proposition to Wisecore: a public place may be constituted by what it refuses to expose. Openness is not identical with disclosure; an archive can preserve a relation by limiting access.

Antigone prevents this emplacement from looking like closure. She asks to see the tomb and cannot. She then turns back toward Thebes, hoping to interrupt the reciprocal violence of her brothers. The guide does not inherit the secret that secures Athens. She inherits the unfinished road. Colonus takes place, but its taking-place redistributes capacities unevenly: Theseus receives custodial knowledge; Athens receives protection; Oedipus receives an enigmatic end; Antigone receives another departure.

This is why Colonus, rather than conversion alone, is the crucial third term. A metanoic event becomes durable only by entering arrangements of land, law, care, secrecy, memory, and stewardship. Yet durability is not moral vindication. Colonus does not make the Oedipal history good. It changes what that history can do in another place.

For StudioLab, the road to Colonus asks concrete questions after every revelatory or disruptive phase. Where can the transformed remainder dwell? Who guides it across the threshold? What should become public, what should remain protected, and who decides? What does the host gain from hospitality? What burden continues with the guide? What must be carried back toward the conflict that the event-site cannot resolve? These questions turn “a place that takes place” from a slogan into an ethics of aftermath.

6. Metanoia: more than changing one's mind

The English phrase “change of mind” makes metanoia sound like replacing one opinion with another. In practice, decisive reorientation is rarely so discrete. A mind is not a container of propositions separable from posture, habit, desire, attention, affiliation, medium, place, and world. When orientation changes, the field of relevance changes with it. Things previously peripheral become salient; certainties lose their grip; new actions become thinkable; old pleasures become visible as loops.

Sara Ahmed's phenomenology of orientation is useful here: directions are sustained by repeated alignments among bodies, objects, histories, and spaces. To turn is not merely to choose a different idea. It is to alter what is within reach and how a world extends from one's position. William James's studies of conversion likewise show that transformation reorganizes a person's center of energy and concern, although Wiseacre must resist treating the resulting orientation as necessarily religious or unitary.

Wise's Thaumanoia gives this problem a characteristic twist. Anxious wonder suspends the ordinary flow of significance, but Wise refuses the moral hierarchy that divides the ontologically awakened from the supposedly spiritless. Wonder does not certify a superior type of person. It exposes the possibility that the everyday and the mysterious are not cleanly separable. His comic refusal of "ontological Puritanism" is crucial for any generalized metanoic road. Reorientation cannot become a new regime that sorts the converted from the unconverted, the profound from the superficial, or the saved from the lost.

Thaumanoia 2 extends the question through experiences in which the named world loses its familiar grip and salience reorganizes itself. Wise juxtaposes mystical encounter, perceptual breakdown, scientific anomaly, signal detection, and philosophical interpretation. The point is not to decide in advance which vocabulary owns the experience. The encounter becomes a site where competing abductive accounts must be generated, tested, and allowed to coexist under differential evidentiary burdens.

The metanoic road therefore names a change in the organization of significance. It may involve conviction, but it need not end in certainty. It may involve wonder, but wonder is not its proof. It may involve a new name, but personal reinvention is not its measure. Its evidence lies in altered relations: what the traveler can now notice, make, refuse, repair, and answer for.

7. Four characteristic failures

The figures correct one another because each contains a characteristic failure.

Oedipal implication without Damascus becomes endless reflexivity. The investigator historicizes the claim, critiques the standpoint of the investigator, and remains indefinitely within analysis. Every proposed consequence is redescribed as another implication. Recursive thought becomes an alibi for not being interrupted. It can diagnose capture while preserving the diagnostician's own direction.

The Cretan sidecar mistaken for the chassis becomes interpretive capture. A witty recursive analogy expands into a master code. Oedipus is mislabeled a liar; Antigone's avowal is flattened into another paradox; Crete, Thebes, Damascus, and Colonus lose their historical and dramatic differences. The test designed to return a diagnosis upon its speaker becomes a total diagnosis from which the interpreter alone appears exempt.

Damascus without Colonus becomes authoritarian certainty. A powerful experience is treated as self-interpreting and complete at the instant of impact. The transformed subject claims privileged access and demands that others recognize the event's meaning. No place receives the aftermath, no guide carries its consequences, and no arrangement of stewardship tests the new vocation. Interruption hardens into command or personal brand.

Colonus without Antigone becomes appropriation by the host. The institution celebrates its hospitality while converting the stranger's remainder into cultural, political, or intellectual capital. Care disappears behind the event-site; the guide's labor becomes invisible; restricted knowledge becomes elite possession; emplacement becomes capture.

Their generalized relation can be written as four propositions:

- **No truth-demand without recursive return.** Every diagnosis must be reapplied to the position and apparatus of the diagnostician.
- **No recursive return without a limit.** The sidecar must remain detachable; an illuminating analogy must be capable of failing, yielding, or being refused.
- **No interruption without conduction.** An event becomes transformative only through bodies, guides, media, and publics that can alter its meaning.
- **No emplacement without contestable stewardship.** A place must disclose who hosts, who benefits, who carries, who knows, who may refuse, and what remains unresolved.

The metanoic road holds these propositions together. It refuses total construction, pure revelation, and redemptive place-making. The road is made, but not everything that happens on it is designed. The event arrives, but it becomes meaningful only through situated work. The place receives, but it must not pretend that reception repairs history.

8. The road as a place that moves

Essay IV defined Wiseacre as a place that takes place. The metanoic road adds movement to that proposition. A road is commonly imagined as infrastructure connecting two stable locations. The metanoic road instead connects orientations that do not fully exist before the passage. Its destination becomes discernible only through travel.

This makes the road a mobile place. It gathers people, signs, tools, memories, hazards, and possible directions into a temporary field. Like a place, it provides orientation and recurrence. Like an event, it unfolds in time and exposes participants to chance. The road takes place when its configured passage changes what can count as departure, destination, and traveler.

Wiseacre is a waystation on this road, but “waystation” should not suggest passive hospitality. It is a site for making transitions legible and answerable. It receives travelers whose projects or concepts have reached an impasse. It returns their declarations upon the positions from which they speak. It creates Damascus intervals—interruptions, reversals of address, periods of not-knowing, and encounters with those whom the initial mission excluded. It asks who performs the Antigonean labor of guiding, describing, translating, remembering, and carrying. It builds provisional Colonuses in which transformed remainders can enter relations of hospitality, secrecy, public consequence, and contestable stewardship. Then it sends traveler and guide onward with provisional bearings rather than certificates of conversion.

The road also clarifies the relation among BeyngLab, Wiseacre, and StudioLab:

- BeyngLab asks what world and mode of being the traveler's orientation presupposes.
- Wiseacre reapplies the diagnosis to the diagnostician, stages the interruption, and protects the interval in which orientation can change.
- StudioLab constructs the media, practices, and partnerships through which the changed orientation encounters consequences.
- Guides and partners provide situated conduction without becoming invisible service.
- Publics provide the hospitality, resistance, uptake, refusal, and revision that make Colonus and a second affirmation possible.
- The archive threads the return into another departure while distinguishing public memory from protected relation.

The path is therefore recursive without being a closed circle. It contains eddies: local countercurrents in which projects, images, and declarations return upon their sources. Wise's *Yo-Yo Sein* lets us sharpen and discipline the image. The path is a **yoyogram** or recursive relay: return occurs under tension, with energetic loss, through a relation that can sustain play or enforce attachment. The traveler does not come back to an unchanged hand, and an eddy does not release everything it receives.

9. *Yo-Yo Sein*: the road bends back under tension

Yo-Yo Sein begins not with a toy but with Oedipa Maas looking down upon San Narciso in *The Crying of Lot 49*. The ordered sprawl resembles a printed circuit whose message trembles just beyond understanding. Oedipa's desire to "find out" becomes Wise's point of entry into a large problem: how a finite human life reaches toward meaning while caught inside physical, informational, industrial, and narrative systems that expend it. The manuscript moves through Aristotle's claim that human beings reach out to know, Clare Carlisle's account of biography as cosmological art, thermodynamics, signal theory, Pynchon's dissipative systems, and Heidegger's figures of storm, vortex, reel, and tumbling. Only after establishing this field does Wise arrive at the yo-yo. The yoyogram condenses the inquiry rather than whimsically decorating it.

The condensation begins with a contrast between **cosmogram** and **Pynchonogram**. In the former, a particular life can manifest a cosmos and perhaps radiate goodness, beauty, or divinity. Wise darkens this affirmative theological picture without simply cancelling it. A Pynchonogram would also place a life within a whole, but the whole is entropic: every life participates in irreversible dissipation, and human sense-making may itself accelerate the expenditure it tries to comprehend. The ordered swirl can be circuit, storm, suburb, corporation, conspiracy, or heat engine. What appears as design may carry a message; it may be noise; it may be a pattern generated by the seeker's need for pattern. Oedipa's predicament is not solved by choosing innocence or paranoia. Her fragile heroism lies in persisting toward knowledge without a guarantee that the Word exists or that, if found, it will save her.

This is the Pynchonian correction the metanoic road requires. Oedipal recognition, Damascus interruption, and Colonus emplacement can too readily become a narrative of completed passage: the guilty identity is exposed, the persecutor receives a vocation, and the exile receives a sacred place. *Yo-Yo Sein* asks what becomes of transformation in a world of incomplete signals, irreversible

processes, and institutions that convert play into production. A return is never energetically free. A revelation may be an artifact of the receiver. A hospitable site may capture the power of what it receives. A system can make seekers and guides spend themselves in the effort to learn whether the system is there.

Wise's path from *Kreisel*—circle, whirl, or spinning top—to Yoyodyne makes this last danger concrete. Pynchon's fictional aerospace corporation begins, in *V*, with a small toy company producing gyroscopes and expands through government demand into an interlocking industrial kingdom. Yo-yo and gyroscope both conserve angular momentum in ideal description; their technical ingenuity is inseparable, in Pynchon's genealogy, from contracting, telemetry, propulsion, systems management, and war. The plaything bends into the apparatus. Yoyodyne is thus not simply a joke about engineering. It is a miniature history of capture: rotation becomes force, force becomes enterprise, and enterprise becomes infrastructure.

The yoyogram cannot therefore mean “everything comes around” in a consoling sense. A real yo-yo is finite and dissipative. Friction and drag diminish its motion. It returns only because it remains attached, because an operator imparts force, and because skill converts gravity, momentum, tension, and timing into renewed play. Even “return” is conditional: the yo-yo may sleep, stall, snag, strike, or fail to climb. Wise's final image of human being as a finite going-around holds recurrence together with forgetting and expenditure. The turn is also a play-space in which existence loses itself and throws itself again.

For the metanoic road, this yields five distinctions.

First, **recursion is not repetition**. Each descent changes the available energy and winds the relation differently. To repeat a form without registering those changes is compulsion, not learning.

Second, **the thread is also a guide and a string**. Ariadne's thread preserves a route to the threshold; Antigone interprets and carries the route through a changing world; the yo-yo string transmits force between hand and traveler. These relations make return possible but also materialize dependency, labor, and control. Every StudioLab relay should therefore ask who guides, who holds the string, who can release it, and whose energy restores motion.

Third, **interruption is kinetic**. Damascus is not merely a new proposition entering consciousness. It is a change in momentum that stops one mission, transfers agency, and sends the traveler through blindness and dependence before another motion becomes possible.

Fourth, **double affirmation is a full throw with a Colonius between its yeses**. The first yes lets the proposition descend into consequence. The second yes is not a verbal repetition at the same point; it is the answer made after implication, guidance, emplacement, tension, resistance, energetic cost, and possible failure have been felt. It may renew the throw, change the trick, pass the yo-yo to another hand, preserve a protected relation, or cut the string.

Fifth, **metanoia needs maintenance**. No practice can promise perpetual transformation on stored inspiration. Bearings decay, archives require care, relations lose tension, media obsolesce, and institutions absorb experimental forms. “Keep it bouncing” becomes neither a cult of activity nor a command never to rest. It is a reminder that recurrence must be actively, collectively, and finitely sustained.

The road now has a more exact figure. It is neither a straight itinerary nor a closed circle but a tensioned oscillation whose center moves. Oedipus supplies the self-implicating eddy; Antigone the living thread; Damascus the redirection; Colonus the site of consequential emplacement; and the yoyogram the physics and politics of recurrence. Wiseacre becomes the place where a throw can be received, slowed, examined, rewound, redirected, or refused before it enters another circuit.

10. Chance operations: engineering an encounter without scripting it

The phrase “chance operation” can sound contradictory when placed inside a designed process. If the operation is designed, how can its outcome be chance? The distinction is between configuring exposure and controlling result. A score can determine when a card is drawn, a partner exchanged, a medium reassigned, a route blocked, or an archive fragment introduced without determining what the resulting conjunction will mean.

The optional Cretan return contributes recursive uncertainty: a project's account of the problem may unknowingly describe its own practice, institution, or desire. Antigonean avowal contributes a different test: can affected participants name the act, conflict, or cost without being absorbed into the project's story? Damascus contributes irruption: an event intercepts the planned mission. Colonus contributes situational consequence: the chance relation must enter a place where access, benefit, secrecy, care, and burden are distributed. StudioLab can operationalize these differences by designing encounters with what a project's existing habits do not select and by making somewhere answerable for what follows.

A useful chance operation must meet three conditions. First, it must be capable of producing a relevant disturbance rather than arbitrary noise. Second, it must not expose participants to risks they did not consent to bear. Third, its result must remain open to rejection. Chance proposes a conjunction; it does not sanctify one.

The first affirmation says: **follow this long enough to discover what it affords**. It grants the chance relation provisional hospitality. The interval that follows contains abductive labor. Participants ask what hypothesis would make the unexpected conjunction intelligible, what evidence bears on it, what alternative accounts remain possible, and what the proposed relation would permit or obscure.

The second affirmation says: **decide again after the road**. The proposition may be adopted, revised, archived as an illuminating failure, or refused. Double affirmation prevents chance from becoming either disposable novelty or oracular command. The first yes makes discovery possible; the second makes continuation responsible.

11. Recursive abduction: how the road learns

Peirce's familiar schema of abduction begins from a surprising fact and proposes a possible explanation that would make the surprise intelligible. On the metanoic road, however, neither “fact” nor “explanation” remains stationary. The hypothesis directs attention, changes the experiment, recruits media, and reorganizes the field in which further surprises can occur.

Recursive abduction names this feedback. A provisional account generates an intervention; the intervention changes the situation; the changed situation produces evidence and resistance; those consequences revise the account. The road learns by altering the terrain it is trying to understand and then becoming answerable for the alteration.

The Oedipal return and Antigonean thread are useful figures here. Each hypothesis must be reapplied to the position that produced it, and each passage must leave a trace of where the inquiry has traveled and who carried it. Without such traces, recursion becomes repetition without memory and conduction becomes invisible labor. With them, participants can distinguish a productive return from a compulsive loop. They can identify when a project keeps arriving at the same junction under different names.

Damascus adds another requirement: the object of inquiry may answer as an other. Saul's new orientation is inseparable from the address of the one he persecuted and the risky response of Ananias. Antigone and Colonus add two more: the guide changes what can be perceived, and the host situation changes what the transformed account can do. In StudioLab terms, partner consultation cannot be delayed until a concept has been fully formed. Those configured as guides, hosts, users, subjects, publics, adversaries, or beneficiaries must be able to change the abductive account itself.

Recursive abduction is therefore not clever speculation cycling inside a workshop. It is a public epistemology. Its hypotheses travel into situations where others can test their descriptions and redistribute their consequences.

12. Transmedia conduction: the road crosses forms

Conversion stories are transmedia machines. Light becomes blindness; voice becomes memory; memory becomes testimony; testimony becomes text; text becomes image, sermon, painting, idiom, and institutional authority. The road to Damascus persists because it has been conducted across media for centuries, each form emphasizing and suppressing different relations.

The sidecar and eddy are equally transmedial: paradox, diagram, architecture, thread, dance, vase painting, tragedy, map, puzzle, montage, game, and interface. Sophocles conducts self-implication into investigation, plague, kinship, blinded embodiment, guided travel, civic hospitality, protected knowledge, and another tragic departure. La Jetée conducts recursive implication through still images, voice, memory, and temporal shock. No figure retains one stable meaning while appearing in different forms. Each medium and scene constructs a different problem of orientation.

Transmedia conduction makes this transformation methodical. A concept must cross at least one formal threshold where its claims can no longer rely on the affordances of the source medium. An essay conducted into a walk must distribute argument through bodies, distances, hazards, and views. A diagram conducted into dialogue must receive temporality, disagreement, and tone. A scientific model conducted into a comic must declare agents, sequences, frames, and punch lines that equations may leave implicit.

Conduction is thus a metanoic test. If the thought remains completely unchanged, the second medium has served as packaging. If the thought becomes unrecognizable, the relay has lost its thread. The productive interval preserves a relation while changing its mode of appearance.

Wiseacre should keep a conduction record for each relay: what entered, what the new medium made possible, what it distorted, who could now participate, who was newly excluded, who performed the Antigonean labor of carrying it, and what returned to the original concept. This record is the thread as media provenance and guided memory.

13. Our score for StudioLab: the metanoic road

The generalized road can become a repeatable StudioLab practice without becoming a rigid curriculum. The following score specifies functions rather than fixed activities.

1. **Declare the current road and its pollution.** Each participant names a project, question, or institutional mission, the problem it diagnoses, and the destination it presently assumes.
2. **Try the Cretan sidecar.** Apply the diagnosis, norm, accusation, or promised cure to the speaker and apparatus that declared it. Record how the inquirer's position changes, then test whether the analogy clarifies the situation or has begun to capture it. Detach it if it flattens the differences.
3. **Introduce a chance cut.** Reassign a medium, pair the project with an unexpected text or public, invert a role, change scale, or block the usual route.
4. **Give the first yes.** Receive the disturbance provisionally without claiming that randomness has revealed a truth.
5. **Enter the blind interval.** Suspend immediate solution and record what no longer fits, what cannot yet be named, whose guidance becomes necessary, and what authority the traveler must relinquish.
6. **Build the Antigonean thread / yo-yo string.** Create a trace of choices, avowals, assumptions, sources, objections, forces, energetic costs, and transformations as the inquiry proceeds; name the guide, recognize the guide's implication and labor, and state who can redirect or release the relation.
7. **Abduct a new bearing.** Form several hypotheses about what the interruption discloses; state their evidence, risks, and alternatives.
8. **Conduct across media.** Translate the strongest hypothesis into a form that alters its sensory, social, or temporal conditions.
9. **Meet Ananias and Antigone.** Present the construction to a person or public with standing to resist it and to someone capable of guiding its passage without becoming a neutral instrument—especially someone excluded, burdened, or endangered by the initial orientation.
10. **Stage comic falsification.** Exaggerate the new story until its hidden heroics, conversions, villains, and pleasure loops appear.
11. **Make a provisional Colonus.** Construct the relations through which the transformed remainder can dwell: hospitality, access, protected knowledge, public consequence, stewardship, maintenance, and the guide's freedom to depart.
12. **Return under changed tension and affirm again.** Compare the new bearing with the original declaration; specify what changed in traveler, guide, destination, path, host, and world; then continue, revise, repair, pass the string, preserve a secret, or stop.

The score can be compressed into a short clinic or expanded into a semester, residency, public exhibition, or institutional redesign. Its success does not depend on producing a dramatic transformation. A refusal to counterfeit revelation may be the most important result.

14. Ethics: metanoia without forced conversion

The language of conversion carries danger. Religious conversion has histories of mission, coercion, conquest, discipline, and the destruction of lifeworlds. Secular institutions repeat these structures when they promise innovation, disruption, resilience, mindset change, or transformation while transferring risk to participants. A workshop can become a small conversion apparatus: surrender your inherited frame, accept the facilitator's vocabulary, perform an epiphany, and leave as the organization's desired subject.

Wiseacre must oppose this pattern explicitly.

No one owes the road a conversion. Participants may return with a strengthened commitment to their original orientation. The second affirmation can reject the event's proposed meaning.

Intensity does not establish authority. An overwhelming experience may be important and still be misinterpreted. The road must distinguish phenomenological force from evidentiary force.

Disorientation requires care. Blindness, breakdown, labyrinth, and abyss are powerful figures, but they should not romanticize trauma, disability, or crisis. Participants need consent, accessible alternatives, exits, and control over what becomes public.

The facilitator is neither Daedalus nor the voice from heaven. No designer should possess the only map or interpret the interruption for others. Facilitation distributes orientation and keeps the process revisable.

The guide is not sacrificial infrastructure. Invoking Antigone must not romanticize feminized, familial, racialized, or otherwise unequally assigned care. Guidance requires recognition, resources, the power to interpret, and the freedom to leave.

No one should be held on an invisible string. The yoyogram makes relation and control visible together. Participants must know who can redirect the process, withdraw material, end a relay, or refuse another throw.

The road must disclose its costs. Who maintains the archive, translates the materials, repairs relations, hosts the gathering, and bears exposure? Metanoia without world-maintenance is spectacle.

Publicness has limits. Colonus is constituted partly by a secret that cannot become a monument or common resource. Participants must be able to protect knowledge, relations, and remains from compulsory visibility.

These safeguards do not neutralize the event. They make transformation answerable. The generalized road should increase the capacity for response, not produce obedient converts.

15. How to know whether the road took place

The metanoic road cannot be evaluated by whether participants report inspiration. Inspiration may be genuine, socially expected, strategically performed, or briefly dopaminergic. Nor can the road be measured simply by the novelty of its outputs. A new direction can reproduce an old orientation at higher speed.

Better questions concern changes in relation:

- Did the diagnosis return upon the diagnostician without collapsing into guilt theater?
- Did the Cretan sidecar clarify a recursive structure without becoming a master explanation?
- Could an Antigonean avowal interrupt the interpreter's preferred paradox or plot?
- Did the interruption disclose an assumption the original route could not register?
- Did the traveler become dependent on knowledge, persons, or media previously treated as peripheral?
- Was the guide recognized as an implicated interpreter with the power to redirect or depart?
- Was a trace kept through the blind and recursive interval?
- Did recursive abduction revise the hypothesis in response to consequence?
- Did transmedia conduction change the thought rather than merely display it?
- Could affected others resist the emerging interpretation and alter the path?
- Did comic testing expose a salvational script or conversion fantasy?
- Did the second affirmation differ from the first?
- Did return change the meaning of departure?
- Did a provisional Colonus distribute hospitality, benefit, secrecy, stewardship, and burden answerably?
- Did the process disclose who held the string, what energy was spent, and what would be required to recur without capture?
- Are the next traveler's conditions different because this road was taken?

The strongest criterion is not self-description but **reoriented capacity**. What can participants now notice, connect, refuse, repair, or make that was unavailable before? What new responsibilities accompany that capacity? A road has taken place when changed bearings persist beyond the drama of the event and remain open to further correction.

16. Conclusion: make roads capable of surprise

The generalized road through Oedipus, Antigone, Damascus, and Colonus is not a synthesis of Greek tragedy and Christian scripture. It is a relay among recursive implication, truthful avowal, interruptive reversal, guided conduction, and metanoic emplacement. Oedipus teaches that a truth-procedure may discover its speaker inside its own accusation. Antigone teaches two different lessons: an avowed act can force sovereign law to expose its contradiction, and transformed truth travels through an implicated guide whose labor and freedom cannot be reduced to service. Damascus teaches that an operative mission can be interrupted by an address it did not authorize. Colonus teaches that aftermath must be placed through hospitality, law, secrecy, stewardship, and another departure. The Cretan liar survives beside this road as a risky, detachable test of recursive implication—not as the identity of its travelers.

Wise's Thaumanoia intensifies the relay by refusing to sort travelers into the ontologically awakened and the merely everyday. Wonder may suspend a world, but it does not certify an elect. Yo-Yo Sein adds a Pynchonian and thermodynamic discipline: no return escapes expenditure, no signal guarantees its source, and no playful apparatus is immune from capture by production. The Oedipus-Antigone pair gives those claims a tragic social body. Investigation consumes autonomy; guidance consumes energy; places redistribute the power of what they receive. Wiseacre takes these warnings institutionally. Its task is not to manufacture wise people or sacrificial guides. It is to

create conditions in which multiple wiseacres can undergo, conduct, emplace, interpret, test, protect, and refuse transformations together.

The metanoic road is therefore the temporal form of a place that takes place. It is built from declarations that return upon their speakers, chance cuts, blind intervals, guides, threads that are also strings, abductive bearings, media crossings, provisional Colonuses, protected relations, public answers, second affirmations, and costly returns. It carries no one toward a predetermined salvation. Its destination is a changed ability to travel—and a more exact knowledge of the people, forces, attachments, exclusions, and maintenance that make another passage possible.

Declare the problem, then let the declaration find you inside it. Receive the interruption without worshiping it. Enter blindness without making the guide invisible. Make a Colonus without claiming redemption or compulsory disclosure. Keep a thread through every transformation, and ask whose hand tensions the string. Laugh when the traveler becomes the hero of every story. Return, affirm again, and leave the road capable of surprising its next travelers.

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Editorial note

"The metanoic road," its relay among Oedipus, Antigone, Damascus, and Colonus, the Cretan sidecar and eddy figures, the comparison to *La Jetée*, and the twelve-part StudioLab score are our constructive extensions for StudioLab / BeyngLab, not concepts directly proposed by Doug Wise. Oedipus is neither a literal Cretan nor a deliberate liar. "The Cretan return" names only a detachable test in which a diagnosis is reapplied to its declarer; the essay explicitly refuses to make that test a master explanation. Antigone is not placed inside the liar paradox: her functions are avowal, political exposure, guidance, and implicated conduction. The essay uses Wise's *Thaumanoia*, variagenics, Daseintropy, paranoid comedy, and *Yo-Yo Sein* as relays while preserving distinctions among his arguments, Sophoclean tragedy, ancient and biblical sources, Marker's film, Pynchon's fiction, and the proposed Wiseacre practice. Wise's terms "Pynchonogram" and "yoyogram," and his genealogy from Heidegger's rotational figures through Yoyodyne to the finite yo-yo, are treated as his arguments; the metanoic distinctions drawn from them are the present essay's extension for StudioLab. "Road to Colonus" and the coupling of Antigone with Ananias name analytic relays, not claims that the tragedies and Acts tell the same story.

The Yoyogram's Long Return

Pynchon, Paranoia, Entropy, and the Comic Circuit

Abstract

Thomas Pynchon enters the Wiseacre series neither as an authority who completes Doug Wise's project nor as a decorative example of postmodern complexity. He supplies a sustained fictional test of what happens when persons seek meaning inside technical, military, commercial, informational, and narrative systems that may be generating the very signs they appear to conceal. Wise's "Yo-Yo Sein" condenses that test into two linked figures. The Pynchonogram is a local image in which a life, a landscape, and a system become legible together without resolving into a harmonious cosmos. The yoyogram adds motion: a finite body descends, spins, loses energy, returns under tension, and must be thrown again.

Earlier essays used the yoyogram to challenge linear innovation, to diagram the metanoic road, and to keep return answerable to expenditure. This essay turns those uses back upon themselves. A yoyogram is not automatically emancipatory. Its string can guide, tether, measure, capture, or snap; its return can enable reflection or enforce recurrence; its comedy can interrupt paranoia or become an alibi for power. Our extension for StudioLab is therefore a comic circuit: a method for receiving uncertain signals, mapping the infrastructures that carry them, testing rival explanations across media, and returning a project to its participants before its provisional diagram hardens into destiny.

Keywords: Thomas Pynchon; Doug Wise; Yo-Yo Sein; Pynchonogram; yoyogram; paranoia; entropy; infrastructure; comedy; recursion; StudioLab; transmedia knowledge

1. The system appears before it can be read

Oedipa Maas's view of San Narciso in *The Crying of Lot 49* is compelling because it arrives as an appearance of order without an available key. Streets, houses, circuits, commerce, memory, and the desire for revelation momentarily occupy one visual field. The scene does not tell Oedipa what the order means. It stages the more difficult condition of systems literacy: a pattern can be materially real while its message remains uncertain. One may perceive relations accurately and still misidentify their author, scale, purpose, or consequence.

Pynchon repeatedly places characters inside this interval between connection and interpretation. Mail routes, corporations, laboratories, weapons programs, performances, markets, rumors, and counter-histories form networks through which power and resistance travel. Yet the network never gives the reader a neutral position above it. Evidence is mediated by institutions; institutions are interpreted through stories; stories change what investigators notice. The seeker's appetite for a total explanation becomes one of the system's active components.

That recursive complication matters for Wiseacre. A practice devoted to connection can easily mistake density for truth: the more relations a diagram contains, the more authoritative it appears.

Pynchon teaches the opposite lesson. A rich diagram should increase the number of questions that can be asked of it. Who built these relays? What passes through them? Who is excluded from their official account? Which pattern has been observed, and which has been projected? The system appears first; responsible reading begins when appearance no longer counts as proof.

2. From cosmogram to Pynchonogram

Wise calls the San Narciso image a Pynchonogram in order to distinguish it from a reassuring cosmogram. A cosmogram can gather a particular life into a meaningful whole, making the local radiate a divine or universal order. The Pynchonogram also gathers scales, but it withholds that guarantee. Suburb, circuit, basin, corporation, atmosphere, and quest belong together in an entropic world. Their conjunction may disclose design, cumulative accident, exploitation, the receiver's pattern hunger, or several of these at once.

The suffix “-gram” should therefore be heard as trace and inscription, not merely picture. The Pynchonogram records forces that exceed the instant of perception: land development, defense contracting, logistics, energy use, racialized and classed histories, forgotten labor, atmospheric effects, discarded media. It is local because every reading begins somewhere. It is cosmological because the local opens onto the organization of a world. It is anti-totalizing because no single observer can close the field without suppressing evidence or difference.

Our extension is to treat the Pynchonogram as a contested systems portrait. StudioLab receives a place, project, or problem and renders several non-equivalent maps of it: an infrastructural map, a story map, a resource map, a counter-history, an affective map, and a map of absences. These are not layers destined to fuse into one correct image. Their disagreements are the knowledge. A diagram becomes useful when it shows where its own competence ends and where another witness, medium, or scale must enter.

3. Paranoia is a reading problem and a political fact

Pynchon's fiction does not permit the easy reassurance that conspiracy exists only in the mind. States, firms, laboratories, police, armies, and markets do coordinate; they classify people, suppress histories, and convert knowledge into advantage. Nor does the fiction permit the opposite reassurance that every connection belongs to one hidden command. Power is distributed, opportunistic, noisy, internally divided, and often comic. Paranoia names the pressure to compress this mixed field into an explanation with no remainder.

The familiar choice between “it is all connected” and “nothing is connected” is therefore a trap. Total connection makes every contradiction into confirmation. Total disconnection makes structural violence disappear into coincidence. Pynchonian reading remains in the more exacting middle: some connections are designed, some inherited, some accidental, some fabricated, and some produced by the investigation itself. The task is not to stop connecting but to assign different weights, histories, and confidence levels to different connections.

Wise's paranoid comedy can operate here as a brake on explanatory escalation. Retell the project as a plot in which one actor controls everything; then identify what the plot clarifies and what it cannot explain. Retell it as a chain of accidents; then identify whose patterned advantage that story protects. Retell it as heroic rescue, entrepreneurial breakthrough, institutional procedure, and farce.

Comic variation does not decide which account is true. It exposes the desires each account asks the evidence to satisfy.

4. Entropy is not a mood

Pynchon's uses of entropy bring thermodynamics, information, history, and affect into proximity, but proximity is not identity. Physical entropy concerns transformations in material systems; informational entropy concerns uncertainty within a formal account of signals. Cultural exhaustion, organizational drift, and personal despair are neither of these in a strict sense. The terms can illuminate one another only if the relay is labeled and the differences remain visible.

Wise's Daseintropy and Yo-Yo Sein make the same demand of our language. World-maintenance costs energy, attention, bodies, materials, storage, cooling, transport, and repair. Sense-making may resist disorder locally while contributing to dissipation elsewhere. A clean interface can conceal a dirty supply chain; an elegant archive can depend on unpaid description; a spectacular event can externalize its aftermath to hosts and caretakers. Entropy becomes politically useful when it directs attention to these transfers instead of serving as a grand metaphor for decline.

For StudioLab, the operative question is not "Is the project entropic?" Every finite project is. The question is where the costs of maintaining its world are registered and by whom. A Pynchonogram should therefore include an expenditure ledger beside its sign map. Servers, travel, extraction, rehearsal, translation, moderation, emotional labor, repair, and disposal enter the same field as concepts and images. A return is intellectually credible only when the conditions that made return possible are included in the account.

5. Yoyodyne: when play becomes apparatus

Yoyodyne condenses a genealogy of capture. Pynchon's fictional company moves through toys, gyroscopes, aerospace, contracting, telemetry, and systems management. Rotation migrates from play into an industrial-military order. The joke works because the transition is absurd and historically plausible: curiosity becomes technique, technique becomes product, product becomes infrastructure, and infrastructure begins determining which questions can be asked.

The same migration can happen to experimental pedagogy and collaborative art. A playful workshop generates a repeatable method; the method becomes a branded toolkit; the toolkit becomes a deliverable; evaluation rewards repetition; participants become users; and a once-open event returns as a pipeline. None of these transitions is inherently corrupt. Repetition can preserve knowledge and distribute access. The danger appears when an apparatus erases the contingencies, refusals, and labor through which the method came to exist.

The yoyogram gives StudioLab a way to inspect this capture before scale is treated as success. At each return, the project asks: What began as play? What has become procedure? Who now operates the string? What has been standardized, and what became impossible as a result? What new maintenance does the apparatus require? The point is not to remain small or pure. It is to make institutionalization observable and revisable.

6. The string is a relation, not a metaphorical accessory

A yo-yo returns because it is attached. This elementary fact prevents the yoyogram from becoming a romance of autonomous recurrence. The string transmits force, limits range, enables skill, and

exposes the motion to another hand. Its tension can support play; it can also tether. Its visibility matters because a system that celebrates return while hiding attachment turns dependency into magic.

Every research or creative circuit has strings: funding, ownership, credit, hosting, technical standards, permissions, deadlines, audiences, kinship, and care. Some are chosen and some inherited. Some protect participants by keeping the work connected to an accountable institution; others enable remote control. Ethical design does not cut every string. It identifies who can tighten, redirect, release, repair, or refuse it.

This is where the yoyogram meets the metanoic road. Antigone's guidance and the yo-yo's attachment are not equivalent, but together they forbid the fantasy of the self-returning traveler. Return depends on conductors whose interpretation and freedom matter. A StudioLab receiver must therefore document not only the artifact that comes back but the relations that carried it: whose hands, whose bandwidth, whose risk, whose memory, whose right to stop.

7. Comedy keeps the circuit from becoming fate

Pynchon's songs, puns, slapstick, grotesque names, and sudden tonal shifts do more than relieve the pressure of difficult systems. They alter the reader's scale. A majestic theory is forced to share a page with appetite, embarrassment, bad engineering, bureaucratic speech, bodily need, and chance. Comedy restores friction to an explanation that has begun to float above the life it claims to describe.

Wise's comic procedure can be sharpened through this Pynchonian lesson. The goal is not to laugh at those who perceive real danger, nor to turn domination into entertainment. The goal is to make one's own explanatory posture available for revision. Who has been cast as mastermind, dupe, prophet, victim, or hero? What coincidence has been made to carry too much? Where does a solemn account depend upon an unacknowledged joke? What would the system look like from the position of maintenance, waste, or a failed component?

Comic testing is especially important in institutions that value innovation. Innovation stories tend to move in one direction: problem, insight, prototype, impact. The yoyogram introduces recoil. The comic circuit asks the triumphant ending to return through procurement, access, misuse, maintenance, and abandonment. Laughter marks the moment when the official plot becomes audible as a plot. It does not finish critique; it reopens the work.

8. A StudioLab score for uncertain signals

StudioLab receives the yoyogram as a score rather than a doctrine. Its function is to slow the conversion of signal into certainty and of experiment into apparatus.

- **Receive:** state what has appeared and through which medium before explaining it.
- **Branch:** generate at least three accounts—structural, accidental, and self-implicating—and name the evidence each would require.
- **Map:** draw a Pynchonogram that includes infrastructure, story, resources, absences, and affected people.
- **Expend:** make the project's energetic, attentional, ecological, and care costs visible.

- **Comicize:** retell the map as conspiracy, salvation, procedure, and farce; note what each genre reveals and distorts.
- **Return:** bring the diagram to people situated differently from its makers, with the power to revise or refuse it.
- **Recast:** change the medium and the hypothesis together; do not merely redesign the same claim.
- **Release:** specify the conditions for continuation, archiving, transfer, repair, or stopping.

This sequence is recursive but not circular. Each return should change the center of the inquiry by admitting consequences and witnesses unavailable at the first throw. If the same actors retain the same authority, the same medium carries the same claim, and the same costs remain invisible, the project has repeated rather than returned.

9. No final message

The endpoint of *The Crying of Lot 49* does not reward Oedipa with a completed code. The pending auction and the possibility of another sign suspend both character and reader at the threshold of interpretation. That suspension is not a recommendation to live forever in indecision. It is a discipline against making uncertainty disappear because a project requires closure.

Wiseacre can act under uncertainty by keeping distinctions explicit: observation versus inference, source versus relay, material mechanism versus metaphor, reported experience versus public evidence, invitation versus obligation. Decisions still occur, prototypes are still built, and positions are still taken. What changes is the status of the diagram. It becomes a revisable instrument whose exclusions and confidence levels accompany its claims.

The Pynchonian contribution is therefore neither pessimism nor obscurity. It is endurance without final decoding: the capacity to remain responsive when systems are real, signals are compromised, comedy is necessary, and no view from outside is available. The yoyogram gives that endurance a kinetic and institutional form. Throw, descend, spin, spend, return, disclose the string, and throw differently—or decide together that the responsible act is to stop.

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Editorial note

"Pynchonogram" and "yoyogram," including the genealogy through Heidegger's rotational figures, Pynchon's Yoyodyne, and the finite yo-yo, are Doug Wise's terms and arguments in "Yo-Yo Sein." The comic circuit, contested systems portrait, expenditure ledger, eight-part StudioLab score, and distinctions among repetition, return, recasting, and release are our constructive extensions. StudioLab is the receiver and testing environment for these extensions; it is not presented as their theoretical origin. References to Pynchon describe operations in the fiction without claiming that the novels propose a StudioLab method or a single theory of systems, paranoia, or entropy.

The Voice Is an Interface

Laurie Anderson, Aboriginal Gest+L,
Andersonean Comity, and Gay Sci-Fi

Abstract

Laurie Anderson completes the series' relay by reorganizing reception around comity. "Andersonean comity" names a negotiated co-presence among nonidentical voices, bodies, species, memories, and machines: not harmony or sameness, but modulation, opacity, consent, and reply. Across altered voices, bone-conducted sound, multimedia performance, and interspecies mourning, Anderson turns the receiver from a passive endpoint into a participant whose apparatus may be changed by what arrives.

The series title—Wiseacres, Yoyograms, Aboriginal Gest+L—now becomes a three-part score. Wiseacres pluralize authority; yoyograms send thought outward and receive it back under visible tension; Aboriginal Gest+L names, in our local and provisional use, a world-forming gesture before/within fixed positionality, opened by the supplemental +L. The L conducts Laurie, listening, lateral relation, lifedeath, and the letter as event. This formulation does not claim to represent Aboriginal Australian or other Indigenous knowledge; such engagement would require situated sources, relationships, consent, and sovereignty.

Together, Andersonean comity and Aboriginal Gest+L provide an ethic and a mechanic for gay sci-fi. Gay sci-fi is not queer representation inside futuristic scenery. It tests whether queer passage can alter genre, interface, station, and world while preserving rights, opacity, and refusal. StudioLab receives this score as a platform for testing how messages, bodies, and technologies transform the channels that receive them.

Keywords: Laurie Anderson; Aboriginal Gest+L; Andersonean comity; gay sci-fi; +L; Gestell; listening; opacity; world mutation; transmedia; receiver

1. The missing sixth relay

The earlier Four Lateral Relays gathered Barthes, Deleuze and Guattari, Ulmer, and Ronell around writing, assemblage, invention, technology, and call. Pynchon entered elsewhere as a systems novelist and comic diagnostician. Anderson remained the conspicuous absence. Yet her position is not supplementary. She changes the series from a set of conceptual relations into a problem of performance: who speaks, through what apparatus, to which bodies, under what conditions of attention?

Anderson's practice crosses categories that institutions often keep separate. The official record includes performance, music, poetry, sculpture, film, drawing, installation, linguistic experiment, virtual reality, and instrument design. United States gathered years of shorter works into an extended multimedia event; Big Science carried material from performance into recorded circulation; later films and installations returned recorded voices to spatial, bodily encounters. The work travels, but it never becomes frictionless content.

This is precisely why Anderson belongs beside Wiseacre. Wise's conceptual compounds behave like proto-instruments: they invite a reader to say, draw, test, and reconfigure them. Anderson shows what happens when such an invitation acquires a voice, a timing, a body, a room, a signal path, and an audience. She supplies neither a style to imitate nor a celebrity endorsement. She supplies a rigorous question: what must a concept pass through before it can be heard?

2. Voice after identity

Anderson's altered voices unsettle the assumption that vocal presence guarantees a stable speaker. Electronic processing can lower, double, delay, filter, or estrange the voice while leaving the performance unmistakably situated. The result is neither disembodiment nor simple disguise. It is an audible interface between body, circuitry, persona, genre, and institutional speech.

This matters because authority often arrives as a voice whose apparatus has been concealed. Announcements, automated systems, news formats, official greetings, customer-service scripts, and political addresses sound impersonal while carrying decisions made elsewhere. Anderson brings that mediation to the foreground. The machine-like voice can become funny, tender, menacing, seductive, or exhausted. The audience hears not only what is said but how authority has been engineered into tone and repetition.

For Wiseacre, voice is therefore not the transparent expression of an inner self. It is a relay with material settings and social permissions. Who is permitted to speak as "I," "we," the machine, the institution, the witness, or the future? Which modulations protect a speaker, and which appropriate another position? What is gained when identity is destabilized, and who bears the risk of that destabilization? The Anderson relay turns attribution into an acoustic ethics.

3. "O Superman": the call answers back

"O Superman" begins from communication technologies and forms of address that promise connection while exposing dependence. A repeated vocal pulse organizes a field of answering machines, official voices, familial address, aerial power, rescue, and threat. The piece became a surprising popular success and later appeared on *Big Science*, but its force exceeds the story of an avant-garde work crossing into pop. It makes mass circulation part of the problem it stages.

Ronell's telephone relay and Anderson's recorded call meet here without becoming the same argument. A call seems to originate elsewhere, yet the receiver is an apparatus that selects, stores, repeats, and misses. The answering machine does not merely preserve presence; it produces a new temporal situation in which the absent voice can command the present. Anderson adds performance, rhythm, and vocal processing to this structure. The message returns as an environment.

The political ambiguity is essential. Communication and protection can share infrastructure with surveillance and force. A voice that offers help may speak from the same system that organizes vulnerability. Wiseacre should not solve this ambiguity by declaring every network oppressive or every connection emancipatory. The task is to listen for the switch: the moment care becomes command, invitation becomes automation, intimacy becomes data, or reassurance becomes obedience.

4. United States: a country assembled in performance

United States is not a portrait of national identity in one voice. The large-scale work assembles songs, stories, projected images, electronic sounds, instruments, characters, jokes, and institutional idioms across an extended duration. Its America is produced through travel, commodities, media, technology, architecture, gender, violence, memory, and speech. The title names both a political entity and an unstable act of putting states together.

Performance keeps that assembly contingent. Timing changes the relation among materials; a pause can reorganize an image; an altered voice can make a familiar phrase uncanny; the audience's endurance becomes part of the event. When selections move onto United States Live or Big Science, they enter other durations and listening situations. The recording is not a reduced copy of the performance. It is another state of the work.

StudioLab's transmedia knowledge helps articulate this passage. Knowledge moves among seminar, studio, lab, and field and among texts, videos, comics, installations, and other forms. Anderson adds a crucial precision: conduction changes voltage. A story transferred from performance to record, page, film, or installation is not merely distributed more widely. Its address, embodiment, authority, pace, and possibilities of reply are transformed. The change of medium belongs to the thought.

5. Instruments that teach bodies to listen

Anderson's designed and altered instruments make mediation palpable. The Handphone Table conducts sound through wood, elbows, arms, hands, and bone to the inner ear. Two people can occupy the public sculpture while hearing an intimate signal unavailable to bystanders. The listener's body is not outside the channel. It completes the circuit.

Other instrument designs similarly refuse a clean division among music, sculpture, technology, and gesture. A violin can become an archive or playback device; clothing and sensors can turn movement into percussion; electronics can relocate agency among performer, programmed setting, and responsive sound. The apparatus is visible enough to invite wonder and strange enough to prevent immediate naturalization.

This is a model for StudioLab reception. A receiver is not an empty endpoint into which content arrives unchanged. It has a posture, bandwidth, history, threshold, and material cost. Different bodies receive differently, and access cannot be added after the concept has been designed. To build a receiver is to make a claim about who can enter the circuit and what kinds of sensation count as knowledge.

6. Story is an interface

Anderson's stories often begin with ordinary speech: an observation, recollection, instruction, joke, travel incident, dream, technical explanation, or reported conversation. Their apparent simplicity is engineered. Repetition, image, lighting, music, timbre, and delay distribute meaning across the performance. The story becomes an interface through which a listener navigates relations that no single proposition contains.

An interface is never neutral. It foregrounds some actions, hides others, gives certain users confidence, and makes other users feel that failure belongs to them. Anderson's practice makes these politics audible by letting narrative and apparatus disturb one another. A friendly story can

carry institutional violence; a technical device can produce intimacy; a joke can disclose dread; a personal memory can open onto surveillance, war, ecological loss, or collective grief.

Wiseacre can receive this practice without imitating Anderson's voice. The transferable operation is to make the interface answerable. When a concept becomes a story, identify the position from which it is told and the audience it imagines. When the story becomes an image, sound, object, or environment, document what becomes newly sensible and what disappears. When a participant cannot or will not receive the chosen form, the work must change rather than classify the person as noise.

7. Heart of a Dog: memory conducts loss

Heart of a Dog demonstrates how a personal essay can move among narration, drawing, music, archival material, surveillance imagery, Buddhist reflection, political history, and the life and death of Anderson's dog Lolabelle. The film does not turn these materials into equivalences. It lets memory pass among them, changing scale as private grief meets public regimes of seeing and forgetting.

The work is especially important for a series concerned with metanoia. Transformation after loss is not a conversion that repairs the past. Images and stories recur, but recurrence does not restore what has disappeared. The voice conducts traces through an altered present. Its tenderness depends on acknowledging that mediation can preserve relation without defeating death.

This gives the metanoic road another ending. Colonus asked how a place receives a catastrophic remainder; Anderson asks how a medium receives an absent being without converting absence into possession. The archive becomes a practice of accompaniment. StudioLab's role is not to extract a universal lesson from another's grief. It is to construct conditions in which memory can be carried, withheld, translated, and answered without compulsory disclosure.

8. From multimedia accumulation to transmedia conduction

"Multimedia" can mean that several forms appear together. "Transmedia conduction" names what happens as material crosses among them. The distinction is practical. A projection behind a speaker may decorate an unchanged lecture; a change from speech to drawing may reorganize the claim, distribute authorship differently, or reveal an assumption that prose concealed.

Anderson's career offers a long laboratory of such crossings: performance materials become songs and records; stories become books; instruments become sculptures; memories become films and installations; drawings become spatial environments; programmed systems generate unfamiliar variations of an established voice. The continuity lies less in a fixed message than in recurrent procedures of address, modulation, juxtaposition, and return.

For StudioLab, successful conduction can be tested by asking whether each medium does epistemic work. Does sound disclose rhythm, hesitation, atmosphere, or relation that the transcript cannot? Does drawing reveal scale or association? Does performance redistribute risk and attention? Does an interactive object make the receiver's body consequential? Does the archive preserve provenance and consent? If the answer is no, media have accumulated without transforming knowledge.

9. The receiver score

StudioLab receives Anderson's relay as a score for following what changes when a voice moves across forms.

- **Locate the voice:** identify speaker, persona, institutional position, and technical processing.
- **Expose the channel:** show the devices, standards, labor, and permissions that carry the address.
- **Embody reception:** test how posture, sensation, disability, language, and environment shape what can be received.
- **Modulate:** change one formal parameter—voice, pace, scale, medium, or point of view—and record the conceptual consequence.
- **Conduct:** move the material into a second medium chosen for a specific epistemic reason.
- **Invite reply:** give receivers a means to answer, reinterpret, refuse, or redirect the work.
- **Keep loss:** document what did not survive the passage and decide whether it should be restored, mourned, protected, or left absent.
- **Return with attribution:** name the sources, transformations, operators, and affected people before recirculation.

The score treats accessibility and consent as compositional forces, not compliance added at the end. Captions change the relation of speech and writing; transcripts expose repetitions and gaps; audio description composes another path through the visual field; quiet space changes the event's rhythm; the right not to be recorded alters the archive. A receiver worthy of the name is redesigned by those it receives.

10. Aboriginal Gest+L: the frame receives a supplement

The series title's third term names a world-forming gesture. Gestell, Heidegger's name for modern technology's positional ordering, arranges beings as resources, functions, and standing possibilities. McKenzie and HAL's +L conduction inserts a supplement into that arrangement: a letter-event, material perturbation, or lateral addition through which the frame must receive what it had trimmed away. Gest+L is therefore not a corrected system. It is a system made answerable to its excess.

In Anderson's work, the opening is practical. Handphone Table routes sound through the listener's bones; electronically altered voices multiply gendered address; United States assembles the nation as many-channel feedback; Heart of a Dog lets animal, child, lover, machine, and memory remain adjacent without collapsing into one voice. The +L can conduct Laurie, listening, lateral relation, lifedeath, and the letter as event. These are not a hidden key in Anderson's own vocabulary. They are our way of receiving what her work makes available.

"Aboriginal," as used here, does not claim an Indigenous identity or authorize us to translate Aboriginal Australian or other Indigenous traditions into a design vocabulary. It marks a deliberately provisional before/within: a capacity for relation not exhausted by the positions an apparatus assigns. Any situated engagement with Aboriginal knowledge would require its own sources, relationships, consent, and attention to sovereignty. Aboriginal Gest+L names an opening in our apparatus, not ownership of another's world.

11. Andersonean comity: a key to gay sci-fi

Andersonean comity names negotiated co-presence among nonidentical voices, bodies, species, memories, and machines. It is not harmony, consensus, or the smoothing away of difference. It is a practice of modulation: make room, transmit partially, preserve opacity, permit refusal, and keep the channel capable of reply. Like Anderson's doubled and processed voices, its relations remain audible because they do not resolve into one authorized speaker.

This comity is a key to gay sci-fi. Gay sci-fi is not simply queer characters placed in futuristic scenery. It asks what happens when queer passage changes the means of passage—genre, interface, station, and world. Recognition and rights remain necessary, but they are not the final horizon. The decisive test is whether the apparatus that grants entry stays intact or is transformed by those who pass through it.

Andersonean comity keeps that transformation from becoming another conquest. It replaces the sovereign world-builder with a receiving ensemble and treats chosen family, friendship, mentorship, performance lineage, cruising network, interspecies attachment, and mutual aid as world-making technologies. Comity supplies the ethic; Aboriginal Gest+L supplies the mechanic. One governs how differences meet, while the other interrupts the frame that would position them in advance.

The result is gay sci-fi as a listening practice. A future is not gay because it displays a settled identity. It becomes gay when its channels can be rerouted by unexpected arrivals, when opacity survives contact, and when the station changes because a message has passed through it.

12. Wiseacres, Yoyograms, Aboriginal Gest+L

The full title is a score. Wiseacres pluralize authority through comic intelligence, lateral reading, and the refusal of a final master. Yoyograms give that plurality temporal form: thought goes out, returns altered, and makes the tension of its path visible. Aboriginal Gest+L gives the return an ontological opening, a before/within of positionality where the excluded supplement can modify the apparatus.

Andersonean comity connects the three operations. It lets wise voices coexist without becoming one voice, receives recursive returns without demanding closure, and gives the +L an ethic of consent, opacity, and reply. Anderson's practice matters here because it turns reception itself into composition. The listener is not the terminal point of a message but one relay in an ensemble that the message can change.

Gay sci-fi is the vehicle of this score. Its successful passage does not merely deliver a queer subject to an already designed future; it alters the vehicle, the station, and the world that made arrival possible. StudioLab receives the score as a testing platform for interfaces, institutions, genres, and forms of relation. BeyngLab keeps the question of being open inside that test. Together they ask the wiseacre's final question: not only who gets to speak, but what kind of world can receive the reply?

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Editorial note

This essay’s uses of “Andersonean comity” and “Aboriginal Gest+L” are constructive terms developed by McKenzie and HAL for this series; they are not claims about Laurie Anderson’s own terminology or self-description. The +L formulation draws on our StudioLab account of the supplement as a material interruption of Gestell, while the gay-sci-fi formulation draws on our accounts of queer passage as world and apparatus mutation. “Aboriginal” is used provisionally to mark a before/within of fixed positionality, not to appropriate, summarize, or speak for Aboriginal Australian or other Indigenous knowledge. Any situated engagement with those traditions would require distinct sources, relationships, consent, and attention to sovereignty. StudioLab is the receiver and testing platform for these relays.

Wiseareas, Yoyograms, Aboriginal Gest+L

Four YoyoDiners Equipment for Return,
Shop-Up-Lifting, and Labyrinthian Worlding



Prepared for StudioLab as receiver / August 2026

Scenario Overview



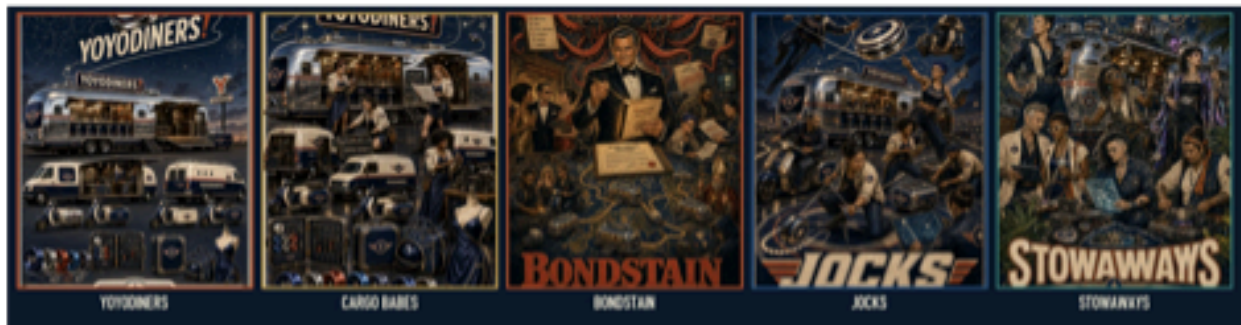
The YoyoDiners fleet: restaurant, workshop, garage, stage, receiver, and shuttle port.

A traveling chain of YoyoDiners moves from town to town and medium to medium. Cargo Babes carry texts through cargo bays; Jocks treat trajectory and timing as forms of reading; STOWAWAYS repair the Minnow by changing what counts as a vehicle; Bondstain attempts to convert every encounter into franchise, credential, charm, and compliance. Each diner stop becomes a public test of how worlds are received, rerouted, and returned.

The four yo-yos make that cosmography graspable. Each is a playable precision object, a factional emblem, a workshop instrument, and a line-making device. The new connective proposition is simple: the yo-yo holds return, the kite holds lift, and their string draws the labyrinth between ground and weather.

CLOSING SYSTEM YO-YO / RETURN -> STRING / LABYRINTH -> KITE / LIFT -> STUDIOLAB / RECEIVER

The Worlding Assembly



One mobile platform, four rival camps, and a fifth role: the diner that receives them all.

Mobile chain

The flagship RV houses the full diner, public counter, stage, archive, and garage. A workshop shuttle carries recording rigs and cargo; service scooters deliver tools and small +L disruptions. Traveling kits include yo-yos, strings, maps, consent cards, projection surfaces, bowling-ball bags, and role-shift garments.

Workshop mechanics

Yoyo Engineering Poetry translates tension, torque, rhythm, failure, and return into performed writing. The Yoyogram Genre Mechanics demonstration opens a familiar genre, swaps one component, traces its flight through another medium, and documents how the receiver changes.

Media engine

Bondstain supplies pulp espionage and franchise corruption. STOWAWAYS paracast seven stranded-ensemble functions without copying actors or costumes. SCTV treatments - local affiliate, commercial infection, actor doubling, public-service break, format collapse, and rerun mutation - expose television as machinery.

Worlding principles

Cosmography maps relations among route, body, prop, institution, medium, and signal. Andersonean comity adds listening, wit, estrangement, and tenderness. Aboriginal Gest+L remains a situated question of place, embodied relation, and supplement; it is not treated here as a decorative visual vocabulary.

Cargo Bay No. 7

Cargo Babes instrument / Carry a second story.



Instrument 01: Cargo Bay No. 7. Conceptual product plate; final engineering requires prototype testing.

Cargo Bay No. 7 turns the shipment into a readable surface. Its broad organic profile favors long, stable sleeps and deliberate binds; three low-profile brass latches secure removable face tokens. A token can carry a route mark, a quotation, or a tiny cargo manifest, but it remains outside the spin path. Cream aluminum and oxblood faces connect the literary cargo club to the diner fleet without turning the instrument into costume jewelry.

BODY	6061-T6 aluminum; brushed clear and oxblood hard anodizing
GEOMETRY	57.2 mm diameter / 45.8 mm width / 4.5 mm gap
MASS	65.5 g; medium rim bias for stable, readable pacing
SYSTEM	Size C bearing / 19 mm silicone response / M4 axle
KIT	Three cargo tokens, spare string, bearing tool, padded bowling-ball bag insert
KITE / LABYRINTH ROLE After the yo-yo is stopped, one cargo token becomes a low-tension ground-line marker. The cord passes through the labyrinth before meeting a separate trainer-kite leader; the yo-yo is never used as an airborne weight.	

Flight Pattern Zero

Jocks instrument / The route is the rival.



Instrument 02: Flight Pattern Zero. Conceptual product plate; final engineering requires prototype testing.

Flight Pattern Zero is the fast instrument: wide, rim-weighted, and stable enough to make speed legible. The midnight-blue body carries fine tracking grooves; burnt-orange rings locate the rim in motion; stainless weight rings preserve momentum without making the center sluggish. It is a real competition specification, but the Jocks use competition as a reading method: trajectory, timing, posture, error, recovery, and public risk become parts of interpretation.

BODY	7075 aluminum with stainless-steel weight rims
GEOMETRY	56.5 mm diameter / 47.6 mm width / 4.6 mm gap
MASS	64.3 g; strong outer-rim bias and low center inertia
SYSTEM	Center-Trac size C bearing / 19 mm response / M4 axle
KIT	Trajectory cards, dark string set, axle tool, timer, flight-pattern chalk

KITE / LABYRINTH ROLE A quick-release guide docks only while the yo-yo is stationary. The kite records wind and lift while the grounded cord records turns, crossings, delays, and recoveries as a walkable flight pattern.

Minnow +L

STOWAWAYS instrument / Repair changes the vehicle.



Instrument 03: Minnow +L. Conceptual product plate; final engineering requires prototype testing.

Minnow +L makes service visible. A bead-blasted aluminum core carries removable violet face caps and replaceable pale rim guards; screws, seams, bearing, and axle remain accessible rather than hidden. The seven STOWAWAYS can therefore recast one object through seven functions: navigation, rigging, patronage, signaling, theory, cooking, and repair. The +L is not an ornamental identity mark. It is the extra relation that changes what the vehicle can be.

BODY	6061 aluminum core / polycarbonate caps / replaceable POM rim guards
GEOMETRY	58.0 mm diameter / 48.5 mm width / 4.4 mm gap
MASS	66.0 g assembled; cap and guard sets are field replaceable
SYSTEM	Size C bearing / 19 mm silicone response / M4 service axle
KIT	Two caps, two guards, driver, bearing, string, seven-function repair card

KITE / LABYRINTH ROLE Removed face caps become ground markers in the labyrinth. The kite line rises only after the repair route has been agreed, making flight the last step of collective maintenance rather than an escape.

The Consent Engine

Bondstain instrument / Desire is not permission.

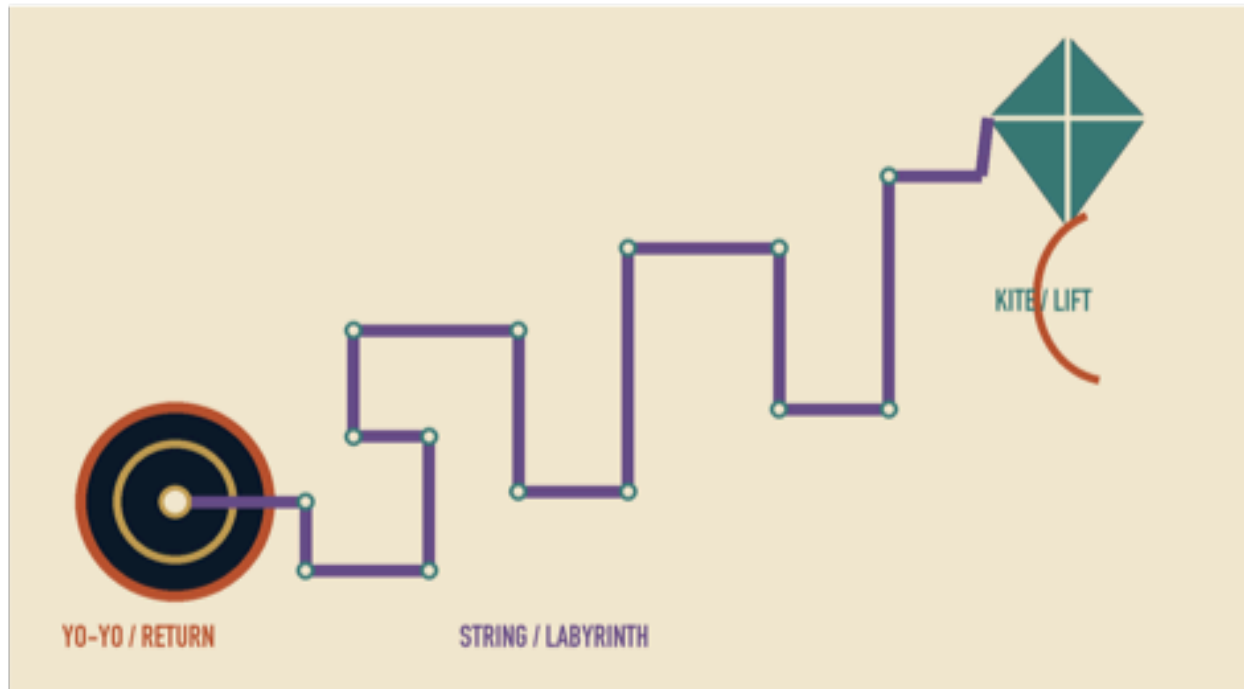


Instrument 04: The Consent Engine. Conceptual product plate; final engineering requires prototype testing.

The Consent Engine is deliberately seductive: satin black, narrow gold rims, and an engraved circular labyrinth drawing the eye toward the bearing. Its luxury surface belongs to Bondstain's world of charm, access, compliance, and repeatable theater. But the mechanism reverses that world. A removable brass line guide must be installed by another person, so a second hand can authorize, reroute, or refuse the connection before any kite is raised.

BODY	7068 aluminum / gold-PVD stainless rims / oxblood silicone response
GEOMETRY	56.0 mm diameter / 44.5 mm width / 4.5 mm gap
MASS	65.0 g; compact competition profile with controlled rim bias
SYSTEM	Size C bearing / 19 mm response / M4 axle
KIT	Brass line guide, two response rings, bearing, axle, cream string, consent card
KITE / LABYRINTH ROLE The line guide couples the stationary yo-yo to a low-tension leader. The circular face labyrinth asks who controls the route; the quick release lets any receiver end the circuit without explanation.	

The Kite, the String, and the Labyrinth



The shared line converts two familiar toys into a cosmographic instrument.

The yo-yo and the kite pull in opposed but complementary directions. The yo-yo falls, sleeps, tricks, and returns. The kite rises, drifts, tacks, and remains answerable to the ground. String makes both movements possible, yet string is not merely a connector. Once laid across a floor, field, diner, stage, or map, it becomes a labyrinth: a route whose crossings must be negotiated rather than optimized away.

In performance, the yo-yo sequence occurs first. The instrument then comes to rest and docks to a separate, low-tension leader. Participants route that cord through movable ground markers before a small trainer kite is raised. No yo-yo is used as a flying weight, and the live kite line remains independent of the performance string. This separation preserves the poetic relation while keeping the system legible and repairable.

The resulting figure is not a puzzle with one correct exit. It records hand pressure, wind, refusal, delay, collaboration, and return. Every rerouting changes both the path and the receiver. The labyrinth therefore becomes the shared score through which the four rival instruments can enter one world without being reduced to a single brand.

SAFETY AND CONSENT Use only small trainer kites in open conditions, keep all participants clear of roads and power lines, separate the live kite line from the performance cord, and give every receiver the power to stop or reroute the circuit.

MeTanoia Playground

StudioLab

"PLAY is the lab where we unlearn to learn again."

Care is a route

We wander to make cure.

maps hold memory

THE GROUND REMEMBERS.

SONG KEEPS US ALIGNED.

healing is cosmic work.

WE WITNESS.
WE REMEMBER.
WE IMAGINE.
WE PLAY.

Labyrinth
nothing is linear here.
get lost.
find more.

Serpentine
follow the curve.
trust the uncurling.

The Fall / Cliff
risk reminds us we are alive.

border between play & thought.

RETURN is a DREAM we KEEP.

every path can hold the others

Rock Garden
step gently.
listen to the stone.

Cosmic Egg
crack open.
enter the unknown.

Cloud Machine
make weather.
make wonder.

String Fingers
climb.
pluck.
become vibration.

Care Station
rest. repair.
recharge.

Witness Bench
sit. watch.
hold the story.

Dorita's Doric Doorway
pass through.
leave different.
return wiser.

StoryX Path
every step a story.
every story a step.

Toryx Switch
choose.
switch.
transform the map.

Helix Spiral
descend.
turn.
rise changed.

Pablo's Frame Shop
reframe.
reshape.
reimagine.

Haunted House
enter if you dare.
leave what you carry.

play is rehearsal for new worlds

WE BUILD TOMORROW WITH TODAY'S PLAY.

shadows teach us how to see.

beauty is our act of defiance.

Children paint tomorrow.

Future-Present Space
where we practice what's possible.

The Playground

A StudioLab Performance Cosmography

- MAP KEY
- Path / Route
 - Portal / Threshold
 - Witness Point
 - Care Station

This map is not fixed.
It changes with us.
Draw your own path.
Add your own place.
The playground is alive.



beyng.com
14BC Gallery NYC

performingspace.org

