

Life Finds a Way

A First Manifesto from the Vitalist International

Vitalist International

March 2018

Since the era of revolutions opened over two centuries ago, no greater slogan has emerged than the simple dictum uttered in the fight against the Dakota Access Pipeline: *Mni Wiconi* – Water is Life. It would be perfectly natural, then, if the next revolutionary slogan were more direct. In a kind of advanced concision, it would unleash an even greater and less mediated potential: life.

Vitalism names the resonance between the rivers, the trees and the forests as much as between objects, spirits, the dead and those banished to social death. The depravity that is the desert and the warmth that is the sun we take as simple evidence of the fact that in life, *we are not alone*. The great structures of power – race, gender, private property, the state – are merely the guarantors of separation. Under them, life assumes the form of a machine, with a function, means, ends, and a conductor, to make sure *everything is always working*.

It is telling that anesthesiology – the long-standing science of numbing – has no opposing counterpart. Vitalism is that counterpart: an *aesthesiology*. Vitalism does not mean enhancing one's experiences, but rather choosing to align oneself with the creative forces captured by the present organization of the world. Vitalists are commonly found in the woods, at punk shows, at the beach, in dance parties, in the black bloc, wherever screens do not loom so large.

Vitalism is radiant intuition. The coordination of the human body with bodies of thought, bodies of water, with bodies of buffalo charging at police, of life forms with art forms. This is our calling. A serenity against hyperactivity, a certainty of experience against the so-called crisis of truth, a reception of death against the privation of finitude. To be sure, some days I may not find myself a vitalist: the struggle of life, for life, is never complete. In life, as in music, dance, cinema, and the seasons, finitude is the precondition of and not the foil to power.

A Vitalist International, then – a proposal and provocation. Somewhere between the Olympics and the counterculture, between *Autonomia* and *Bauhaus*, between quantum physics and Sun Ra, between the great Apache warrior Lozen and Audre Lorde. Form groups and clusters to deploy the senses beyond mere economic use. Share vitalist experiments – whether by way of plagiarism, mail, scandal, or a fist fight. There is no distance between us and the cosmos. Heaven is what is already here.

— The Vitalist International
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