**Artist-led Practices for the Inclusion of Nonhuman Stakeholders**

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## Abstract

Stakeholder theory has become an influential framework for addressing organizational challenges, including those related to sustainability. Yet, the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders in stakeholder theory is complicated by ontological and epistemological obstacles. To overcome these, we turn to art and posthumanist practice theory and examine artist-led practices by focusing on the projects of two pioneering eco-artists, Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison. In this way we identify the ontological and epistemological challenges that impede the inclusion of nonhumans into stakeholder theory, showing that artist-led practices allow for the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders in two ways: (1) by specifying the temporal, spatial, and outcome distinctions that ontologically hinder their inclusion; and (2) by explicating the reframing of knowing and the emotional and imaginative dimensions of knowing that epistemologically enable their inclusion. We expand on the theorizing of nonhuman stakeholder inclusion by understanding the inclusion of nonhumans, first, not as a fixed state that is to be achieved but rather as one that materializes and gains meaning through specific practices of knowing; and, second, not as merely the absence of exclusion but rather as a dynamic

interplay, where inclusion and exclusion mutually constitute one another. By advancing stakeholder theory's theorizing and understandings of inclusion and exclusion, we also respond to urgent and contemporary environmental challenges.

**Keywords**

Nonhuman stakeholders, artist-led practices, stakeholder inclusion, stakeholder theory, posthumanist practice theories

## Introduction

Stakeholder theory is an influential framework that has delivered considerable insights into how managerial strategy and practice can be converted into forms that consider ethics and sustainability (Hörisch et al., 2014; Freeman et al., 2010; Kujala et al., 2022). While stakeholder theory once included only human entities, that is, "groups and individuals who can affect and are affected by the achievement of an organization's purpose" (Freeman, 1984, p. 54), a stream of research has emerged suggesting that nonhuman stakeholders can, and should, also be included into the stakeholder framework (Driscoll & Starik, 2004; Haigh & Griffiths, 2009; Starik, 1995; Waddock, 2011). Here, we use the terms 'nonhuman nature' and 'nonhuman' to refer to the natural environment, or parts thereof, such as rivers, mountains, and beasts, even while we appreciate the qualities of living and non-living environmental entities, seeking to understand these better without invoking dualism or claiming that humans cannot be understood as forming a part of nature (Heikkurinen et al., 2021; Kortetmäki et al., 2023). Although we acknowledge that 'nonhuman' is not a term without flaws, it nevertheless serves our purpose by allowing for more than merely a unified understanding of nature and, thus, imparts opportunities for acquiring a form of specified knowing in regard to nonhuman stakeholders. Furthermore, the common terms of 'the natural environment' and 'nature' fail to allow for

particularization (Kortetmäki et al., 2023), which renders them inherently anthropocentric and can significantly impact the way in which organizations engage with nonhuman stakeholders.

Expanding stakeholder theory to include nonhuman stakeholders introduces ontological and epistemological conundrums that necessitate explicit discussion and critical rethinking. Ontological challenges arise chiefly due to pre-existing sets of assumptions, belief systems (which are often invisible and taken-for-granted; see Kujala et al., 2022), and an anthropocentric bias within management and organization studies that serves to maintain the distancing of humans from nonhumans (Heikkurinen et al., 2021; Painter-Morland & ten Bos, 2016). For instance, acknowledging nonhumans as stakeholders and defining the boundaries of what constitutes nonhuman stakeholders can be fraught, regardless of whether this concerns individual entities or entire ecosystems (Kortetmäki et al., 2023). Second, determining and interpreting how we know about nonhuman stakeholders, and what drives this knowledge, presents significant epistemological challenges (Tallberg et al., 2022). One concrete reason for excluding nonhuman stakeholders lies not in the assumed lack of nonhuman voices but rather in humans' inability to listen to, or to know about, the needs, interests, and stakes of nonhumans (Kortetmäki et al., 2023). Inclusion of nonhumans through proxy stakeholders and intermediaries, for example ecological organizations (Haigh & Griffiths, 2009; Phillips & Reichart, 2000; Schaltegger et al., 2019), has been clearly criticized (Driscoll & Starik, 2004; Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Tallberg et al., 2022; Waddock, 2011). With this in mind, recent research has suggested that integrating nonhuman stakeholders requires a re-evaluation of established, predominantly anthropocentric paradigms (Allen et al., 2019; Heikkurinen et al., 2016).

The purpose of this paper is to examine how to overcome the ontological and epistemological challenges related to the expansion of stakeholder theory to include nonhuman stakeholders. We build on the argument that a paradigm shift can arise from artist-led practices that facilitate a critical reworking and reimagining of human existence on Earth; and that such practices expand the boundaries of the human intellect and human ways of knowing, thereby challenging prevailing mental frameworks and belief systems (Douglas, 2021; Haraway, 2016; Latour, 2020). In particular, we argue that artist-led practices can dispute and dilate existing ontologies and epistemologies within stakeholder theory to advance research on nonhuman stakeholder inclusion. We situate our research within stakeholder theory and draw from a burgeoning interest in art within stakeholder and, more broadly, organization studies (Barry & Meisiek, 2010; Roulet & Bothello, 2021; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Waistell, 2016) in order to expand our theorizing on the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders. Specifically, we ask: *How can artist-led practices foster the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders?*

Empirically, we examine the artist-led practices of two pioneering artists, Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, who, since 1969, have produced works of art that address ecological issues. Our analysis focuses on eight selected art projects, completed between 1974 and 2021, and draws on various sources of empirical material documenting both the art projects at hand as well as the artists' own descriptions and statements made in interviews. Crucially, our analysis of artist-led practices is situated within posthumanist practice theory, which offers a framework for understanding social phenomena by focusing on practices, that is, socially and materially situated forms of doing and saying (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022; Nicolini, 2012).

We contribute to stakeholder theory, and more specifically to nonhuman stakeholder research (Driscoll & Starik, 2004; Haigh & Griffiths, 2009; Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Starik, 1995; Waddock, 2011), in the following ways. First, we identify the ontological and epistemological challenges that impede the inclusion of nonhumans into stakeholder theory, thereby contributing to prior research discussing anthropocentric biases and the difficulties of nonhuman stakeholder inclusion (Haigh & Griffiths, 2009; Heikkurinen et al., 2021; Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Phillips & Reichart, 2000; Schaltegger et al., 2019; Tallberg et al., 2022). Second, we show that artist-led practices allow for the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders in two ways: (1) by specifying the temporal, spatial, and outcome distinctions that ontologically hinder the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders; and (2) by explicating the reframing of knowing and the emotional and imaginative dimensions of knowing that epistemologically enable the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders. In this way, we revise traditional and dualistic ontological and epistemological assumptions, aiming to increase ontological and epistemological pluralism in stakeholder theory. Third, we propel the expansion of theorizing on nonhuman stakeholder inclusion. We have come to understand nonhuman inclusion as (1) not a fixed state to be achieved but, rather, one that materializes and gains meaning through specific practices of knowing; and (2) not merely the absence of exclusion but, rather, a dynamic interplay where inclusion and exclusion mutually constitute one another.

## Theoretical Framework

Despite promising points of departure for understandings of nonhuman stakeholders, ontological and epistemological challenges persist in the literature, both of which hinder the inclusion of nonhumans as organizational stakeholders. We recognize that ontological limitations are often mixed with epistemological limitations (Heikkurinen et al., 2016).

However, for the sake of conceptual clarity, we distinguish between these different challenges so as to highlight the most prominent issues related to either of these, respectively. We now proceed to detail these challenges, following which we discuss the potential of posthumanist practice theory and artist-led practices for overcoming these challenges.

*Ontological Challenges*

The ontological challenges related to the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders stem from stakeholder theory's anthropocentric bias and relate to the ability of, first, considering nonhumans as stakeholders and, second, identifying and particularizing various aspects of nonhuman stakeholders. Anthropocentrism is an ontological bias that positions humans as primary entities within the hierarchy of existence, making human interests, experience, and existence the focal point of reality (Romero & Dryzek, 2020). This bias results from a set of constructions, assumptions, and belief systems that has been problematized (Phillips, 2019) as it deepens the divide between humans and nonhumans both explicitly and implicitly, thereby exacerbating coexistence challenges (Haila, 2000; Gladwin et al., 1995; Painter-Morland & ten Bos, 2016; Shrivastava et al., 2012). In addition, the Cartesian dualism of mind (subject) versus matter (object) has served to set humans apart from nonhumans, on the grounds that humans possess a unique and separate consciousness which allows them to perceive and interact with the external world as distinct entities (Dussault, 2016). We argue that, in stakeholder research, Cartesian object-subject dualism can manifest as an ontological separation between those who study or manage stakeholders (subjects) and the nonhuman stakeholders themselves (objects), treating stakeholders as external entities to be observed or managed rather than as active participants with their own interest and agency in the process at hand (Orts & Strudler,

2002). This has manifested also in research that perceives the nonhuman world as a single, unified entity—typically referred to as 'the natural environment' (Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Laine, 2010).

Ontological challenges resulting from Cartesian dualism revolve specifically around the question of whether nonhumans can be considered as stakeholders, which is an obstacle related to the identification of stakeholders and constitutes a focal point of debate in stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984; Mitchell et al., 1997; Phillips & Reichart, 2000) based on defining stakeholders' interests and stakes (Freeman, 1984). Anthropocentric bias has culminated in the argument that, in the absence of a human voice, nonhumans are unable to express their interests and, hence, lack stakeholder status (Näsi et al., 1998; Orts & Strudler, 2002). This view has been challenged by suggesting that nonhumans do, indeed, have voices, yet that these differ qualitatively from the human voice (Dryzek, 2002; Romero & Dryzek, 2020). Humanity, however, fails to distinguish nonhumans' voices due to the cacophony caused by anthropocentric, human interest-centered, and development-focused discourse (Wysocki, 2012), thus resulting in a failure to particularize nonhumans' stakes and interests (Kortetmäki et al., 2023). Singular ontology, which assumes a single, human-centered perspective as the only valid way of understanding the world (Ehrnström-Fuentes & Böhm, 2022), can exclude or marginalize nonhumans' unique perspectives, stakes, and interests.

The notion of human-centered assumptions about time and space, particularly a reliance on clock time and its disconnection from space (Mazutis et al., 2021), presents an ontological challenge to the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders. Crucially, nonhuman temporal and spatial realities are part of human-nonhuman distinctions. Organizations' understanding of time and space has been linked to how they conceive of and relate to

social and environmental issues (Bansal & Knox-Hayes, 2013), their approach to sustainability (Mazutis et al., 2021), and stakeholder integration (Grewatsch & Kleindienst, 2018). However, heavy reliance of our communities on clock time—with its artificially structured and standardized units—is a temporal ontological bias which skews seeing reality from a prism of time that is absolute, linear, mechanical, and commodified (Mosakowski & Earley, 2000) and cannot capture the diverse temporal rhythms of nonhumans, the seasons, life cycles, or ecological processes. This temporal structuring creates a belief system wherein processes are erroneously perceived as linear, singular, certain, predictable, and seemingly under control of humans and organizations (Slawinski et al., 2017); and this fosters organizational tendencies towards prioritizing short-term gains, speed, and efficiency in terms of inclusion. In contrast, understanding time as a process—relative, circular, expansive, continuous (Mosakowski & Earley, 2000; Slawinski & Bansal, 2012), fluid, and emergent (Reinecke & Ansari, 2015)—refers to how time obtains meaning through events (Bluedorn & Denhardt, 1988), where past, present, and future are interconnected (Chen & Miller, 2010). This cyclical nature permits connecting actions to their consequences, thus embedding time into a context (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998) and lending it a greater focus on relationships than on efficiency (Chen & Miller, 2011).

Nonhumans often exhibit spatial dependencies that go beyond human-defined boundaries, thereby challenging the anthropocentric separation of space. Urban-rural separation, human-designed city spaces, and the built environment are typically constructed with human needs and conveniences in mind, thus leading to a bias that prioritizes human utility over the complex interdependencies of nonhuman space. These biases manifest as ontological separations, where human-defined spaces are perceived as

more important, valuable, or meaningful, thereby neglecting the existence and significance of nonhuman spaces or nonhumans in those spaces that do not conform to human-centered designs or concepts. Similarly to a clock time that artificially separates time, artificial separations generate divisions in the value and meaning allocated to spaces by humans. There is clearly a need for a relational approach that goes beyond these artificial divides and recognizes interconnectedness and interdependence within the spatial fabric. A sense of place includes the meaning associated with a place, as well as the level of attachment to it, thus implying a continuum that ranges from a complete disconnection from a given place to a deeply connected sense of place (Mazutis et al., 2021). Concretely here, disconnection from space may manifest as a detachment from the local environment (Cresswell, 2004), disregard for the interconnectedness of ecosystems (Masterson et al., 2017), and a perception of space as uniform and devoid of specific meaning (Shrivastava & Kennelly, 2013; Shrivastava, 1994). On the other hand, connectedness is often rooted in emotional bonds formed over time (Masterson et al., 2017) and, therefore, intricately linked to how space is perceived (Cresswell, 2004), as well as an awareness of the organizational fortunes that become interconnected with the destinies of different geographies (Lawrence & Dover, 2015), all of which transport the experience of organizational operations' embeddedness in particular places (Shrivastava & Kennelly, 2013).

*Epistemological Challenges*

Epistemological challenges related to the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders revolve around how we come to know, understand, and interpret signals from nonhumans. Traditional epistemologies, particularly those grounded in rationality, tend to be anthropocentric in that they place human reasoning and understanding at their core.

Anthropocentric knowledge paradigms are human-centered frameworks that often prioritize human agency, rationality, and experiences in regard to the natural world (Braidotti 2019), while marginalizing or disregarding the perspectives and interests of nonhumans (Cozza & Gherardi, 2023). Such approaches may struggle to acknowledge the diverse forms of intelligence and communication exhibited by nonhumans, as rational ways of knowing often prioritize quantifiable and measurable aspects (Barone & Eisner, 2012). According to ecological critics, objectivating knowledge is seen as archetypically anthropocentric because "achievement of objectivity carries with it an enhanced view of the power and autonomy of subjectivity; and this is at the heart of a set of attitudes which privilege human faculties, capacities and interests over those of nonhuman entities" (Hayward, 1997, p. 50). The centrality of human knowing in epistemology concerns the ways in which human beings organize, understand, and validate claims about the world. Here, for instance, Ferré (1994, p. 72) points out that humans "have no choice but to think as humans"; in other words, to some extent epistemological anthropocentrism appears to be inescapable. It follows that the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders therefore requires novel ways of understanding and approaching nonhumans and their voices in organizations (Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Tallberg et al., 2022) due to clear limitations in traditional epistemologies and modes of understanding and interacting.

These limitations are also related to the purpose of knowing about nonhumans. A logic of uncertainty avoidance and short-termism underpins the management of environmental problems, their excessive complexity and multidimensionality notwithstanding (Slawinski et al., 2017). Nonhumans, in all of their complexity, may not fit easily into these frameworks, hence leading to oversimplification as well as an undervaluation of nonhumans' contributions and needs as stakeholders. In stakeholder

theory an example of such complexity avoidance may be manifested through stakeholder identification and prioritization models, based on stakeholder salience, that is, the process through which managers prioritize stakeholders based on power, legitimacy, and urgency (Mitchell et al., 1997). This has been criticized for not paying adequate attention to nonhumans in comparison to other stakeholders (Driscoll & Starik, 2004), chiefly due to the reasoning that environmental claims and values are qualitatively different and difficult to evaluate (Sama et al., 2004). A further example here is the inclusion of nonhumans' views through proxy stakeholders and intermediaries, including environmentally-oriented organizations (Phillips & Reichart, 2000; Schaltegger et al., 2019). This approach has been criticized for directing attention to the proxies themselves rather than the nonhumans they present (Driscoll & Starik, 2004; Haigh & Griffiths, 2009; Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Starik, 1995; Tallberg et al., 2022; Waddock, 2011). To include other perspectives and transcend anthropomorphic tendencies, knowledge production should shift away from reducing uncertainty and towards embracing it and rendering it comprehensible, in addition to developing knowledge tools that transcend lineal epistemologies—a reductionism in knowing that analytically breaks apart wholes into constituents (Bateson, 1972)—in order truly to address the complexity of how humans and businesses are embedded within ecological systems (Mitchell et al., 2022).

In this vein, Mills (2003) refers to a Foucauldian understanding of knowledge production as ingrained within disparities in power relations and as a crucial characteristic for legitimation. Following this understanding, the absences in knowledge production—that which remains unaddressed or suppressed—are as significant as that which is acknowledged (Tregidga et al., 2013). Therefore, we posit that knowing that is inclusive

in terms of nonhumans' stakes and interests needs to be expansive enough so as to cover the absences currently hidden in mainstream stakeholder theory debates.

In Table 1, we summarize ontological and epistemological challenges related to theorizing the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders.

**Table 1.** Ontological and epistemological challenges related to the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders

| **Inclusion of nonhumans as stakeholders** | **Prevailing assumptions and biases** |
|---|---|
| **Ontological challenges**<br><br>- *Can nonhumans be considered as stakeholders?*<br><br>- *What are the ontological assumptions related to nonhuman inclusion?* | - Human is above nonhuman (Haila, 2000; Wysocki, 2012; Heikkurinen et al., 2021).<br>- Cartesian dualism: humans (subjects) manage nonhuman stakeholders (objects).<br>- Nonhuman nature as a single entity (Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Laine, 2010).<br>- Nonhumans do not have a voice and, hence, humans cannot interpret and know nonhumans' signals.<br>- Singular ontology (Ehrnström-Fuentes & Böhm, 2022).<br>- Human-centered assumptions about time and space, including clock time and disconnection from space (Mazutis et al., 2021). |
| **Epistemological challenges**<br><br>- *How can we know about nonhuman stakeholders?*<br><br>- *What drives knowing about nonhumans?* | - Lineal epistemologies (Bateson, 1972) and human-centric knowledge paradigms.<br>- Limitations of rational knowledge frameworks (Barone & Eisner, 2012).<br>- (Unavoidable) Epistemological anthropocentrism.<br>- Difficulties related to interpreting and knowing nonhumans' signals.<br>- The purpose of knowing is instrumental. Stakeholder identification and prioritization is based on stakeholder salience (Mitchell et al., 1997).<br>- Nonhuman voices can be represented ('proxy approach') (Haigh & Griffiths, 2009; Phillips & Reichart, 2000; Schaltegger et al., 2019).<br>- Absences in knowledge production (Mills, 2003; Tregidga et al., 2013). |

In the next section of this paper, we draw from posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022) to argue that artist-led practices carry the potential to unfold, theorize, and rethink the ontological and epistemological challenges related to the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders. To further contextualize this, we first present our theoretical discussion of posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022; Cozza & Gherardi, 2023) and present its ontological and epistemological positioning within the management and organizational literature, before proceeding to draw on the field of art itself.

*Posthumanist Practice Theory and Artist-led Practices*

In management and organizational studies, practice theories have long been employed for examining social and organizational phenomena in novel ways, in particular by drawing on the nexus of saying and doing and their discursive and material actions (Gherardi, 2001; Gherardi & Laasch, 2022; Nicolini, 2012; Orlikowski, 2002). An emergent posthumanist practice theory assumes a relational epistemology that blurs the boundaries between ontology and epistemology (Gherardi, 2022), thereby prioritizing the ever-evolving relations over entities and drawing on a new materialism (Cozza & Gherardi, 2023). Cozza and Gherardi (2023) build on Whitehead's (1978) process philosophy, which elevates becoming, change, and the interrelatedness of all entities over the fact of their static existence. By adopting such a philosophy as their point of departure, these authors ask "[h]ow an actual entity becomes constituted [as] what that actual entity is", thus suggesting that "social phenomena cannot be understood as stable and given entities, but rather materialize and become meaningful through particular knowing practices" (Cozza & Gherardi, 2023, p. 4).

A posthumanist practice theory de-centers the human subject as the seat of agency, challenges the principle of symmetry between humans and nonhumans, reconfigures agency as a capacity realized through the intra-action of humans and materiality (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022), and emphasizes the concept of 'agencement', where heterogeneous elements come together to form a functional whole (Gherardi, 2016). As such, posthumanist practice theory invites rethinking the limits of how our human-ness has been theorized in dualist categories that privilege one term over the other, thereby assuming an enhanced explanatory power to "dissolve or rather resolve" enduring dualisms of "actor/system, social/material, and theory/action" (Nicolini, 2012, p. 2; see also Gherardi, 2022). It is in this way that the dualism related to human/nonhuman and inclusion/exclusion in stakeholder theory can potentially be addressed.

Situated knowing, sensible knowing, and embodied knowing are emphasized as ways of knowing that emerge from practice. Knowing in practice is the fabrication and transformation of the world's contingent conditions and materiality into 'knowing' (Gherardi, 2001). This emphasizes that emergent knowing is situational and bound to context, in contrast to decontextualized knowledge, which is impersonal, detached, asocial, apolitical, ahistorical, and immaterial. Situated knowing brings to the fore the interplay between situated actions, embodiment and corporeal, related to sensible and embodied dimensions. The centrality of embodied knowing in practice theories is crucial: all practice-based knowing is inherently embodied, lived, and enacted, rooted as it is in our bodily experiences (Gherardi, 2016). This perspective recognizes that our sensory and emotional experiences, movements, and interactions with the material world shape how knowing emerges in practices (Gherardi, 2016). Space is an important aspect of socio-materiality and situated knowing. In contrast to the dichotomous theorizing of space,

which proposes an objective space vs. a space that possesses intrinsic value (Shrivastava & Kennelly, 2013), Gherardi (2023) introduces the concept of spac*ing*, which underlines how space comes into being and, thus, understands space as processual, fluid, performative, open-ended, multiple, and practiced.

In relational practice epistemology, knowing figures as the site of practice (Nicolini, 2011), that is, as an activity rather than an object or possession owned by any given individual (Gherardi, 2019). Knowing is not separated from doing and saying, thus positing the primacy of practice over knowing; and this means that, in practice, the knower emerges alongside that which is known emerge. As a site of practice, knowing transgresses through saying and doing, the timing and tempo of practicing, the objects used and process of material mediation, the practical concerns of organizing doing and saying, an accountability regime, working with others, and the expansion of the practice at hand (Nicolini, 2011).

Our conceptualization of artist-led practices is closely related to the practice-led research approach in the arts that aims to generate new knowledge and insights through artistic practices (Mäkelä, 2007), and which is bound to practice theories because "practice connects 'knowing' with 'doing'" (Gherardi, 2001, p. 136). We approach knowing as a process—its performativity—rather than as an object whose possession we claim (Gherardi, 2022). This distinction is critical in developing a non-anthropocentric approach in that it accepts unknowing (Berthoin-Antal, 2013) and embraces the inherent uncertainty and complexity of the web of life (Mitchell et al., 2022), combining this with the idea of the decentralization of humans as knowing subjects and the owners of knowledge (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022). In this context, terms such as 'artistic practices', 'artistic interventions', and 'art-based methods' are employed although, importantly, the meanings

of these terms vary subtly. We use the concept of ‘artist-led practices’ to refer to the acts of artists when producing art. This entails the practice of creating artistic works and making conventional (e.g., paintings) or unconventional artifacts (e.g., growing orchards). Here, we choose ‘artist-led’ over ‘art-based’ because, traditionally, ‘led’ refers to exploring questions or themes within or beyond the artistic domain, hence advancing understandings of a particular inquiry through the creation of artwork (Sullivan, 2009).

Certain boundary conditions of artistic knowledge are foregrounded in this context. An artist’s practice, aesthetic attention, and subjectivity to the context and issue at hand are emphasized, as the artist maintains critical distance from both existing forms of knowledge as well as unchallenged practices and agendas—and this yields unexpected insights and novel ways of seeing (Kestler, 2004). An epistemological unknown or uncertainty is generative and central to artist-led practices (Berthoin-Antal, 2013). The inherent incompleteness of artwork serves as a catalyst for interpretation by opening room for embracing ambiguity, complexity, and unknowing; multiple interpretations allow for the emergence of multiple understandings and realities, thus expanding epistemological and ontological pluralism. Open-endedness, improvisation, and experimentation are the qualities of artist-led practices used as a method for escaping entropy, the status quo, and pre-existing ways of knowing (Douglas & Gulari, 2015; Peters, 2009), thus blurring the boundaries between ontology and epistemology (Gherardi, 2022). This allows knowing to be situational and relational, sensory and emotional, that is, not imposed upon the world but emergent from, and discursive within, an ever-changing situation. This relational epistemology demands a non-judgmental and non-conclusive ontological stance; in other words, remaining as open as possible to the phenomenon for as long as possible (Douglas & Gulari, 2015). In a nutshell, knowing is active and transformative. Sullivan (2009)

argues that artist-led practices produce knowledge that is *not only new* but also has the ability to *reshape our understanding*. This allows us to see artist-led knowing through an onto-epistemological lens, thus demonstrating how such knowledge transforms our foundational beliefs and ways of knowing.

Sullivan (2009) argues that artists emphasize the role of imagination in knowing, and that this allows new insights and understandings to emerge, initially in thought yet subsequently materializing in practices, performances, and artifacts. Posthumanist practice theory approaches imaginative aspects by drawing on Haraway's (2016) notion of 'speculative fabulation', which blends facts and fiction in a multi-species perspective situated within imaginative features (Cozza & Gherardi, 2023). An onto-epistemology of practice extends the interplay of subjects, experience, and reality by incorporating the imaginative aspect so as to assert that reality exists independently of human minds and experiences and can be known, at least in part, by means of imaginative, creative, and speculative methods.

**Method**

In order to explore how artist-led practices can foster the inclusion of nonhumans as stakeholders, we selected the practices of two prominent artists, Helen Mayer Harrison (1927–2018) and Newton Harrison (1932–2022), collectively referred to as the Harrison Studio or 'the Harrisons'. Their work revolved around ecological issues and, from 1969 onward, they practiced art that has deeply benefited nature and informed policy changes at both the local and international levels (Craig, 1992; Douglas & Fremantle, 2016a, 2016b; Kopytin & Levine, 2021). The Harrisons collaborated with individuals ranging from biologists and urban farmers to architects and policy-makers, exploring creative ways to protect biodiversity, endangered meadows, portable orchards, and shrinking

rainforests, in this way foregrounding our co-dependence on living and non-living environmental entities and ecological processes (Kopytin & Levine, 2021). As depicted in Figure 1, their artwork is composed of large maps, where they reframe the issue at stake by posing alternative questions that intertwine human activities and nonhumans' needs, establishing links between subjects across time and space; and poems, a form of creative storytelling that gives voice to the nonhumans accompanying their maps. In addition, the Harrisons frequently wrote about a practice they termed the 'metaphorical flip', which refers to unearthing the dysfunctional metaphor that harms the web of life and replacing it with a guiding, generative metaphor.

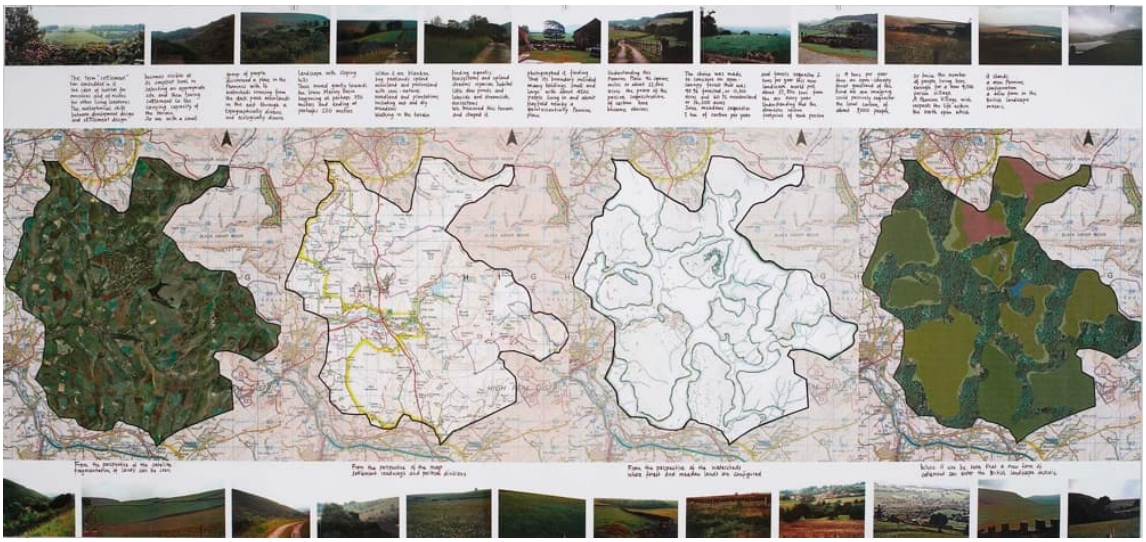


**Figure 1.** Example of an artifact produced by the Harrisons, encompassing maps and poems (Greenhouse Britain Project)

*Selection of Projects*

For our empirical investigation, we selected eight of the over 40 environmentally-oriented projects of various scales produced by the Harrisons over the course of 50 years (Table 2). Our selection was guided by these projects' prominence, including factors such as awards, scale, and reputation. Additionally, we considered the frequency with which the artists themselves referenced these projects in their interviews. We aimed to select projects

spanning all of these decades, from the Harrisons' earliest work, *The Lagoon Cycle* (1974–1984), to their most recent work, *Sensorium for the World Ocean* (2021).

**Table 2.** Selected projects

| **Projects and their significance** | **Source No** |
|---|---|
| **Lagoon Cycle (1974–1984)**<br>Developed to understand the idea of a community of crabs. Best-known early work and considered a model for their approach. | S4, S10, S15, S16, S25 |
| **Sacramento Meditations (1976–1977)**<br>Set in a complex ecopolitical context involving several stakeholders, including farmers, and thematizing the overuse of the Sacramento River for irrigation. | S1, S4, S5, S8, S25 |
| **The Green Heart of Holland (1994–1995)**<br>Addresses housing issues in Randstad, the Netherlands. Received the 2002 Groeneveld Award for the most significant work of the year on the Dutch landscape in Holland. | S3, S9, S15, S16, S25 |
| **Serpentine Lattice (1991-1993)**<br>Addresses deforestation in the temperate North American rainforest, leading to a proposal directed at the US government. | S4, S15, S24, S25 |
| **Peninsula Europe (2000–2004**)<br>Their largest EU-funded project proposes the Peninsula Europe High Ground concept as a pure water generator and buffer against global warming. | S25, S24 |
| **Greenhouse Britain (2007-2009)**<br>An alternative narrative on new settlement patterns and the characteristics, or contents, of a new landscape that responds to global warming. 2010 Chartered Institute of Environmental Management (CIWEM) prize in Britain. | S3, S25, S24 |
| **The Deep Wealth of This Nation, Scotland (2018)**<br>A multiple-stakeholder project addressing the flooding of the rivers Dee and Don in Aberdeen, Scotland. | S14, S21, S22 |
| **Sensorium for the World Ocean (2021)**<br>Most recent work addressing the rising ocean and exploring how humans can give back more than they take. | S4, S12, S13 |

*Research Materials*

To support our investigation of the eight selected projects, we collected various sources of publicly available material. This wealth of resources consists of interviews conducted with the Harrisons, as well as the artists' own available catalogs, videos, and published articles and books (Table 3). Although we were unable to observe the artists in practice or interview them ourselves, we used the extensive material written by the Harrisons on their work, which encompasses the socio-materiality of their work (Gherardi, 2019), thought processes, inspiration, reasoning, and the formation of their artwork as well as the underpinning contexts of their projects (Harrison & Harrison, 2007, 2016). Their rich documentation allows us to examine what their practice is and does. While the purpose of the interview materials[1] (see Table 3) is to articulate, promote, and disseminate the artists' work and thinking, we accept the depiction of their artwork as outlined in the published source material.

**Table 3.** Research materials

| **Type of material** | **Title of interview/author** | **Year** | **Length** | **Source** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Written interviews with H. M. Harrison and N. Harrison | *Case study: Changing our perspectives through art*, by Joe Hughes | 2008 | N/A | S1 |
| | *Newton & Helen Mayer Harrison: How big is here?*, by John K. Grande | 2012 | N/A | S2 |
| | *Beth and Annie In Conversation. Part one: Interview with Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison*, by Elizabeth Stephens and Annie Sprinkle | 2010 | N/A | S3 |

[1] Given that the majority of interviews were produced in the past decade, following Helen Mayer Harrison's diagnosis with Alzheimer's disease, interviews and presentations conducted with Newton Harrison outweigh those with Helen.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Written interviews with N. Harrison | *An interview with Newton Harrison. Ecopoiesis: Eco-Human Theory and Practice*, by Alexander Kopytin | 2021 | 8 pages | S4 |
| | *UCSC art professor on championing environmental change since 1969*, by Calvin Men | 2018 | N/A | S5 |
| Article with interview extracts | *How two Santa Cruz artists changed the course of environmental history*, by Chloe Veltman | 2016 | N/A | S6 |
| Audio interview with N. Harrison | *Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison*, by Brainard Carey | 2017 | 30m 31s | S7 |
| | *Provocateurs: A Conversation with Eco-Art Luminary Newton Harrison pt. 1*, by Janeil Engelstad | 2017 | 15m 21s | S8 |
| Video interview with H. M. Harrison and N. Harrison | *Helen and Newton Harrison*, by Meredith Drum | 2011 | 6m 08s | S9 |
| | *Helen Mayer & Newton Harrison*, by Nada Miljković | 2013 | 48m 02s | S10 |
| | | 2013 | 29m 36s | S11 |
| Video interview with N. Harrison | *Newton Harrison Interview*, by Various Small Fires Gallery, Los Angeles | 2021 | 41m 06s | S12 |
| Project video | *Sensorium for the world ocean*, by N. Harrison | 2021 | 13m 42s | S13 |
| | *Newton Harrison's deep wealth of this nation: Scotland*, by N. Harrison, recorded by the Center for Force Majeure | 2019 | 5m 06s | S14 |
| Other videos with H. M. Harrison and N. Harrison | *A Counterforce on the Horizon: Helen Mayer & Newton Harrison*, by TEDxSantaCruz | 2015 | 17m 07s | S15 |
| | *What is Negentropy?*, by Nada Miljković | 2013 | 3m 46s | S16 |
| | *Helen Mayer & Newton Harrison "On Mixing, Mapping & Territory" Lecture*, posted by Nada Miljković | 2013 | 50m 49s | S17 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Other videos with H. M. Harrison | *What is Empathy?*, posted by Nada Miljković | 2014 | 1m 07s | S18 |
| Other videos with N. Harrison | *The Sagehen Experiment*, by Center for Force Majeure, Nada Miljković | 2015 | 4m 29s | S19 |
| | *The Harrison Studio presents Wilma the Pig*, by Nada Miljković | 2013 | 1m 21s | S20 |
| | *Long video*, by The Barn Arts, Aberdeenshire, UK | 2018 | 56m 04s | S21 |
| | *Newton Harrison*, by The Barn Arts, Aberdeenshire, UK | 2018 | 76m 02s | S22 |
| Own books, catalogs, and articles | *Being there*, by H. M. Harrison and N. Harrison (Self-published) | 2001 | 20 pages | S23 |
| | *Public culture and sustainable practices: Peninsula Europe from an ecodiversity perspective, posing questions to Complexity Scientists*, by H. M. Harrison and N. Harrison | 2007 | 39 pages | S24 |
| | *The time of the force majeure*, by H. M. Harrison and N. Harrison, (Published by Prestel). | 2016 | 465 pages | S25 |
| Website | TheHarrisonStudio.net | n.d. | N/A | S26 |

*Analysis*

We began our analysis by examining how the artists described their practices, artwork, and projects. Having cross-checked with the literature on what constitutes a practice in posthumanist understanding (Gherardi, 2016; Nicolini & Mengis, 2024) and, more broadly, research on artist-led practices (Douglas & Gulari, 2015; Sullivan, 2009), we first identified three prominent practices, namely, *constructing metaphorical flips*, *generating maps*, and *writing poetry*, as practices in the posthumanist sense (see Table 4). In particular, we came to understand the Harrisons' practices as posthumanist practices based on how these practices embedded elements such as doings, sayings, teleo-affective

structures (termed ‘practical concerns’ in Nicolini (2011)), and ways of relating (Nicolini & Mengis, 2024)[2]; in Table 4.

Using the literature on where knowing in practice is embedded (Nicolini, 2011), we noted that, in the Harrisons’ practices, knowing manifests itself in that which is said and done (Martin, 2003), in practical concerns that imbue a particular order of arranging doings and sayings with sense (Lave & Wenger, 1991), in how the artifacts are used as mediators of knowing (Latour, 2005), and from knowing with others (Bourdieu, 1990). Based on such observations and further triangulation against the literature, we identified the Harrisons’ practices as artist-led posthumanist practices that generate knowing about nonhumans.

**Table 4.** Elucidation of artist-led practices in a theoretical posthumanist practice framework

| *Artist-led Practices* | *Doing* | *Saying* | *Practical Concerns / Teleo-affective Structure* | *Ways of Relating* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Constructing metaphorical flips** | Identifying a dysfunctional metaphor.<br>Suggesting a generative metaphor. | “Dikes are saving the city; dikes are imprisoning water.”<br>“Flood control spreads water.”<br>“We have so much information and yet so little understanding. It is a power and control-centered belief | Finding a belief system that excludes nonhumans and questioning that belief system. | Accessing humans’ embodied emotional experiences to build strong affinities for creating new realities where the power positions of nonhumans and humans are reversed. |

[2] A practice involves a set of actions (Nicolini, 2012). The actions that build up a practice are either bodily doings and sayings or actions that these doings and sayings constitute. Here, bodily *doings* and *sayings* stand for “actions that people directly perform bodily and not by means of doing something else” (Schatzki, 2005, p. 56). Dispersed doings, sayings, and ways of relating are held together and organized through *teleo-affective* structure, i.e., *practical concerns* towards which that practice is oriented, or the directionality of practice (Nicolini, 2012), by means of which the elements compose a recognizable practice (Schatzki, 1996). *Ways of relating* stand for relationships with others and with the circumstances that shape practices (Kemmis, 2009).

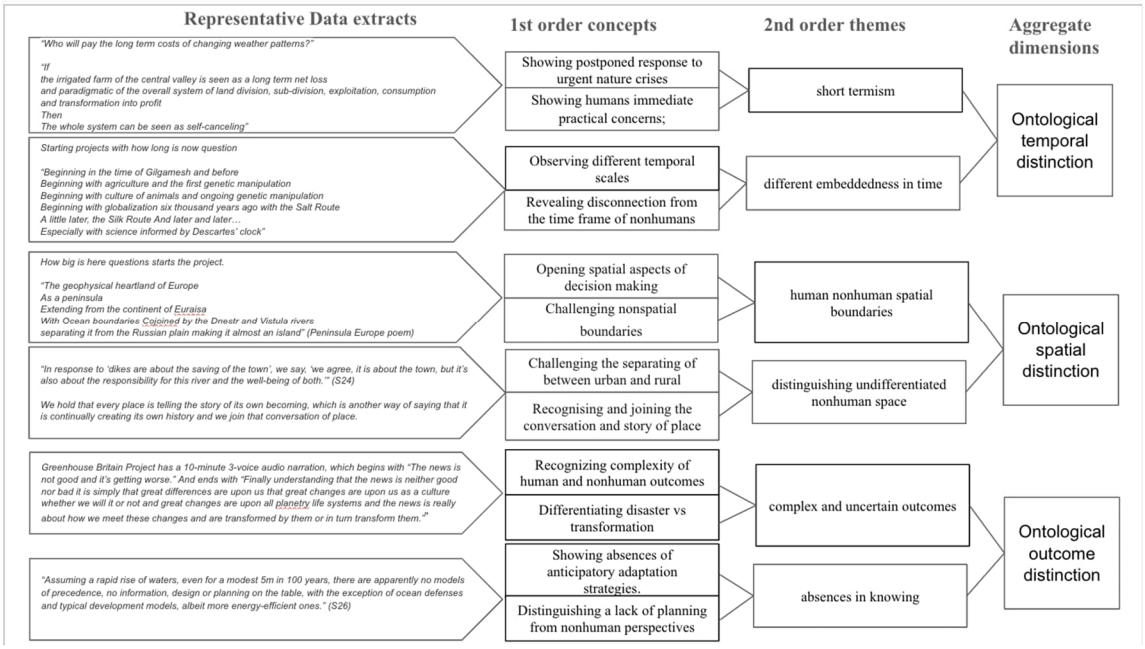
| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | system in immediate need of revision, particularly of its guiding metaphors." | | |
| **Generating maps** | Doing observations; having conversations with local actors and scientists. Printing the map backwards. Visually representing spatial and temporal relationships. | "How long is now?"; "How big is here?" "How many houses can comfortably be developed in the space available?"; and "What is the best way for an urban continuum to end and an ecological continuum to begin?" "Is there a way for this mutual beginning and ending to give advantage to both?" | Gathering the needs of humans and nonhumans<br><br>defining the field of play. | .<br><br>Looking for links between subjects across time and space. |
| **Writing poetry** | Bringing elements of openness, optimism, and proposition. Employing condensed language, accessible to all stakeholders. Translating nonhumans' actions ("The great 'U' formed by the [River] Sava") into a language accessible for humans ("A new continuum, a corridor for wildlife"). | "**If** the forests were left to regrow<br>and the grasslands released from overgrazing<br>**Then** the resulting bio-mass<br>Could help to purify<br>The outpouring of water."<br>"**I asked**, 'Where would you begin?'<br>And **you said**, 'Where the terrain permits and the will exists. Choose your mountain.'"<br>"The shape of catastrophe takes on the quality of opportunity<br>When the great 'U' formed by the [River] Sava within its earthen walls<br>Is understood as a new continuum<br>A corridor for wildlife<br>That in tandem with the corridor for human activity<br>Serpentines through the 500 kilometers of the new topology." | Enabling the understanding of nonhumans' language to re-imagine new scenarios where the activity of nonhumans is positioned equally and alongside that of humans. | Redirecting the conversation between nonhumans and humans to solutions that are more inclusive of nonhumans by clearly verbalizing nonhumans' interests and actions. |

In a second step, we proceeded in our analysis by focusing on 1) the particular type of knowing about nonhumans embedded in the Harrisons' practices; and 2) what that

knowing accomplishes in terms of revising our understanding of nonhuman stakeholder inclusion (see Gherardi, 2016). For this, we followed the Gioia method of analysis, which is a widely used structured and systematic examination and representation of qualitative thought through key themes, patterns, and relationships within the data set (Gioia et al., 2013), and which allows for combining inductive and deductive approaches. By perusing our data with a focus on the particular type of knowing that was evident in the material at hand, we rapidly noticed the Harrisons' frequent usage of the concepts of time, space, and outcome. Based on this observation we generated first-order concepts that reveal disconnectedness from the timeframe of nonhumans, spatial disconnection, and dualism, thereby recognizing the complexity of both human and nonhuman outcomes. Following this, we further sorted our first-order concepts to form broader categories by going back and forth between the literature on studies dealing with the sense of place and time (Gherardi, 2023; Mazutis et al., 2021; Shrivastava & Kennelly, 2013; Slawinski et al., 2017), as well as the literature on complexity avoidance. This resulted in second-order themes that include short-termism, different embeddedness in time, human-nonhuman spatial boundaries, and undifferentiated nonhuman space. We subsequently grouped these themes into the aggregate dimensions of temporal distinction, spatial distinction, and outcome distinction—all of which, taken together, stand for the ontological human-nonhuman distinction.

After examining our data with a focus on the ways of knowing embedded in the Harrisons' practices and what this accomplishes for current understandings of nonhuman stakeholder inclusion, we observed that the Harrisons pose critical questions that shift belief systems by evoking emotions and awakening imaginative thinking. We have marked these observations with first-order concepts, such as 'questioning assumptions in

defining a problem' and 'transferring human emotions to nonhumans'. We cross-checked these with studies on posthumanist practice epistemology, including embodied, situated, and sensible knowing (Cozza & Gherardi, 2023), complementing this with studies on how 'the ways of doing' are discovered in practice theory (Gherardi & Perotta, 2014), as well as the literature on embodied care (Tallberg et al., 2022) and embodied knowledge (Pullen & Rhodes, 2015). Based on this we delineated second-order themes, including 'extending empathy for nonhumans', 'evoking emotions', and 'activating imaginative inquiry'. We subsequently grouped our second-order themes into the aggregate dimensions of 'reframing knowing', 'emotional knowing', and 'imaginative knowing', which, taken together, stand for dimensions of knowing generated through artist-led practices. Figure 2 depicts our data structure and first-order concepts, second-order themes, and aggregate dimensions (Gioia et al., 2013).



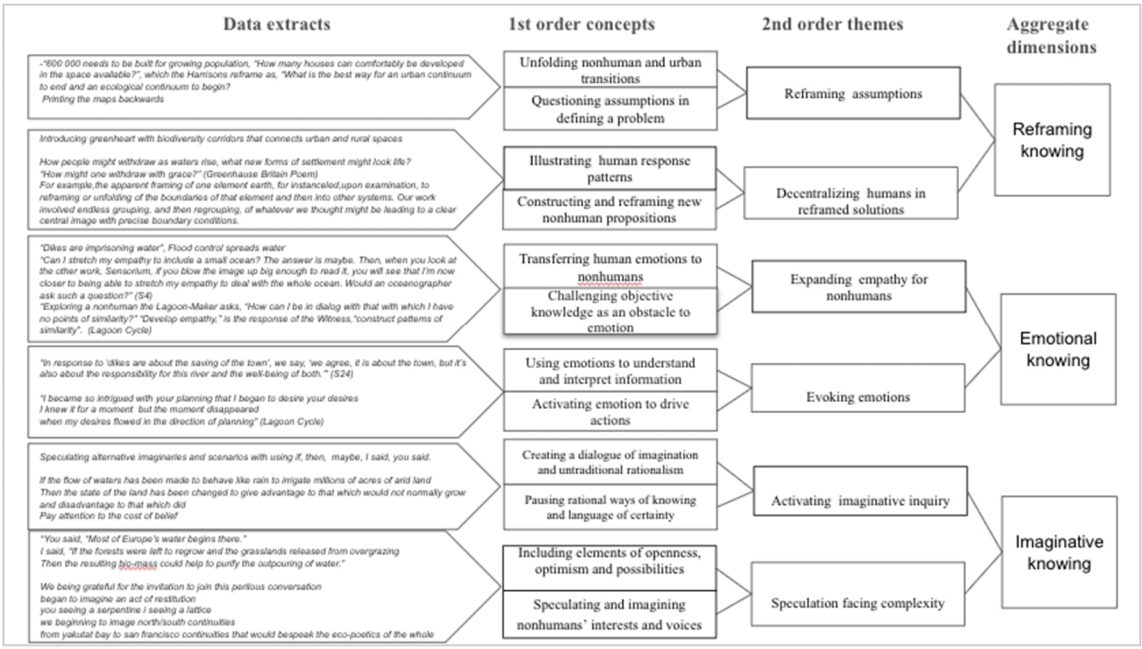



**Figure 2.** Description of the data structure

## Findings

We arrange the findings of our research into two sub-sections (see Figure 3). First, we describe how the selected artist-led practices expose aspects of the human-nonhuman distinction that reveal absences and dysfunctions in the belief systems at hand, and which, when unrecognized, limit ontological plurality and hinder the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders. Second, we outline how artist-led practices enable the reframing of knowing and the emotional and imaginative dimensions of knowing that challenge rational and lineal epistemologies by inviting us to pause in our rational thinking, and to reconsider the language, models, and frameworks we use and how visions and plans for the future are made, thus enabling the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders.

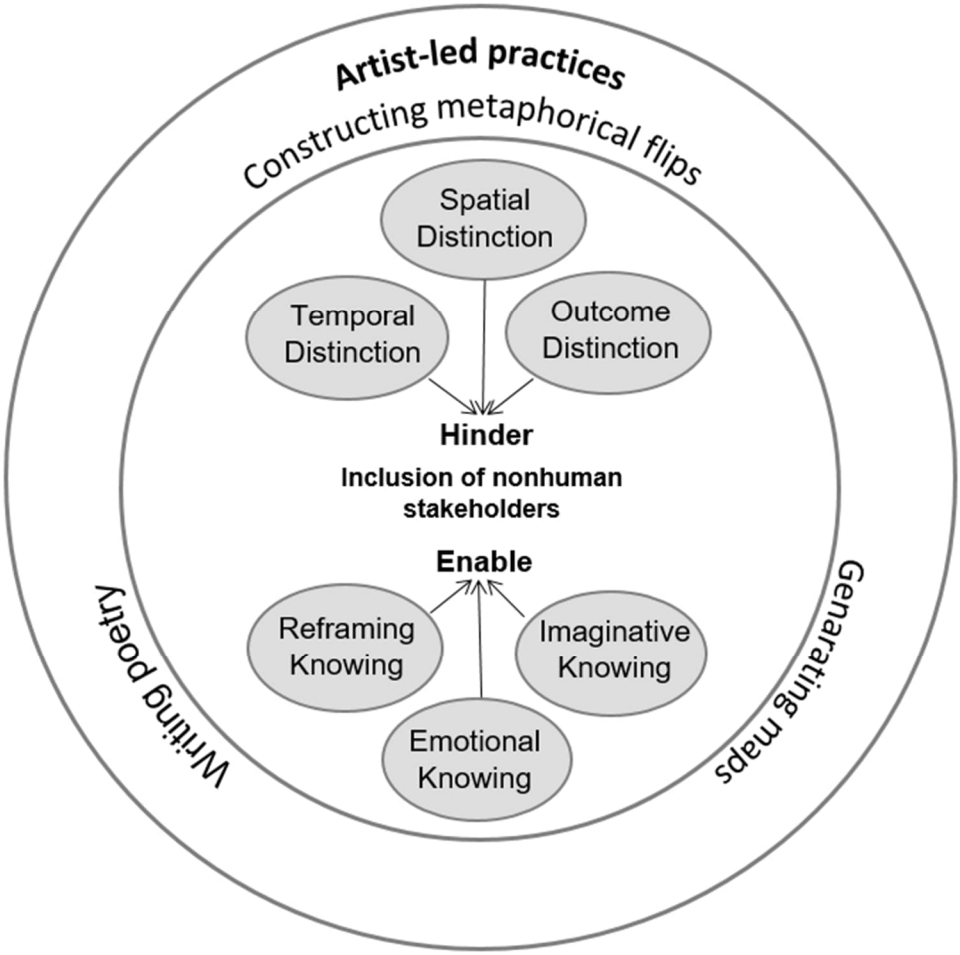



**Figure 3.** Findings

*Human-Nonhuman Ontological Distinctions*

***Temporal distinction.*** This distinction unfolds ontological assumptions about humans' and nonhumans' temporality, exposed in the Harrisons' work by constructing maps and writing poetry. In the practice of building their maps, the Harrisons begin by asking: "How long is now?" (S24). This powerful question— knowing through asking a question—draws our attention to the distinction between humans' and nonhumans' temporality (teleo-affective structure). Time, for nonhumans, is not constrained by artificial divisions of existing human temporalities, calendars, and clock time, but is, instead, more in line with a processual sense of time (Mazutis et al., 2021). Nonhuman

time is imbued with meaning through the intricate interplay of phenomena that occur over eons and across diverse ecosystems (as transfer of energy as demonstrated in a poem extract below). This stands in stark contrast to human-determined temporality, which is concerned with short-term goals and the immediate concerns of how humans perceive reality ("contradiction emerges", S27).

The words of a poem taken from the Sacramento Meditations project (S27) demonstrate this temporal distinction:

> *If*
> *The irrigated farm of the central valley is seen as a long term net loss and paradigmatic of the overall system of land division, sub-division, exploitation, consumption and transformation into profit*
> *Then*
> *The whole system can be seen as self-canceling*
> *Then*
> *Contradiction emerges between socio-economic paradigm (exploit, consume and transform into capital) biological imperative (survival of the species) and the laws of the conservation of energy (transfer of energy from one form to another always incurs a net loss).*

This distinction, revealed in the Harrisons' doing and saying, underscores the need to appreciate time from a nonhuman perspective, thus acknowledging the profound temporal dimensions and intricate interconnectedness of natural systems. For example, in the Green Heart of Holland project, the Harrisons question our perception of time by appealing to the concepts of beginning (of the ecological continuum) and end (of the urban continuum), thus questioning the linear, predictable understanding of a clock sense of time (Mosakowski & Earley, 2000) and addressing the artificial divide between beginning and end (S15). In that particular context, their mapping practice highlights the nuanced processual perspectives of green-heart and biodiversity corridors alongside humans' short-termism (Slawinski et al., 2017), manifest in the urgency to build 600,000 houses.

This ontological temporal distinction is revealed within the practice of the juxtaposition of two socio-material conversations between humans (house development) and nonhumans (farmland and the continuity of the web of life in the Netherlands).

By posing that fundamental question, "How long is now?" (S24), the Harrisons reveal that, from nonhumans' perspective, 'now' is undetermined and ongoing because the past, present, and future are interconnected (Slawinski & Bansal, 2012). The Harrisons' poems reveal the existence of two different ontological stances on time (that of humans and that of nonhumans) in juxtaposition to each other. By opening up the temporal perspective of nonhumans, the Harrisons demonstrate that humans' judgments are trapped predominantly within their own perception of time, which is guided by the avoidance of uncertainty (Slawinski et al., 2017) and a deeply embedded, culturally constructed sense of clock time (Reinecke & Ansari, 2015). Nonhuman time reveals a temporal orientation that is more relationship-focused (Chen & Miller, 2011) situated in practices and can be understood through its performativity (Gherardi, 2023). Nonhuman temporality is an intricate web of interactions consisting of various nonhuman agents, such as ecosystems, species, and geological forces, each with its own temporal rhythms and processes.

***Spatial distinction.*** Through their practice of generating metaphors, the Harrisons uncover the spatial aspect of the human-nonhuman distinction, which is manifested in humans' disconnection from space (Mazutis et al., 2021), as in lack of awareness about the interconnectedness between organizational fates and fates of different geographies that organization operate with. For instance, in the Sacramento Meditations project, the Harrisons identified that "dikes were seen as saving the city" (S24), which is a dysfunctional belief, i.e., an ontological assumption that prioritizes the city yet is costly

to nonhumans. The solution here requires a different belief: “seeing dikes as imprisoning the water”. Thus, removing dikes means freeing water—an alternative ontological positioning that recognizes the river, which, in this alternative belief, is seen not simply as a cartographic site or a commodity for humans but as a felt, interpreted, and understood (Gieryn, 2000) center to which human existence is connected (Gruenewald, 2003). The Harrisons go on to suggest that “flood control is the spreading of waters,” a formulation that shifts the focus away from the space accommodated to serve humans (here, the city) towards the space of nonhumans (here, the river). The Harrisons’ practices illuminate how humans separate between these spaces and prioritize the former in their judgments and decision-making, demonstrating exclusion and inclusion as spatially constitutive.

The spatial aspect also pertains to the distinction between urban and fluvial well-being. The contrasting metaphors of “dikes saving the city” and “dikes imprisoning the water” illustrate how humans differentiate between the well-being of humans and that of nonhumans. In the words of the Harrisons themselves:

> “In response to ‘dikes are about the saving of the town’, we say, ‘we agree, it is about the town, but it’s also about the responsibility for this river and the well-being of both.’” (S24)

Such a shift emerges from saying and doing that provides the socio-material conversation with context and produces knowing, through spac*ing* (Gherardi, 2023) Rather than seeing the river as an undifferentiated, uniform space (Creswell, 2004; Relph, 2009) that looks and feels the same as any other river, now it is particularized into a specific entity with its own emotions and a story about its particular locality by being situated in a practice. Such situatedness allows shifting the vocabulary in relation to space from stasis and representation to flows, intensities, affects and relations (Gherardi, 2023).

Without the particular knowing that emerges from saying and doing, the spatial distinctions of nonhumans go unrecognized, thereby leading to their exclusion from reality. Exposing knowing manifested in what is said and done (Martin, 2003) enables the inclusion of the river as a stakeholder by communicating a way of seeing reality that is more nuanced than that typically perceived by humans, rather than viewing nonhumans solely in terms of their potential commodification for human use. By using generative metaphors in their projects, the Harrisons demonstrate how the choice of a metaphor that can reverse the priorities in any given problem (or what is termed 'practical concerns' by Nicolini (2011)) is critical for reflecting upon specific issues within our perspective on reality:

> "In the first example, the principle is to work with the implicit metaphors that can be seen to guide human design as they affect the ecosystem. The idea is to identify among them those whose grounding (operation in the physical world) is most dysfunctional with respect to a given problem and pose alternative intentional groundings. The object here is to identify and work through the consequences of a new metaphor conceived to result in actual physical work in a cultural landscape." (S24)

In such a process, the Harrisons underline that places cannot be separated from their particular geographies; in this sense, the fates of all specific geographies, and the organizations and communities residing therein, are interlinked (Lawrence & Dover, 2015).

***Outcome distinction.*** This aspect of the human-nonhuman distinction is intimately linked to ontological disparity, which involves how humans perceive consequences and the trajectory of events, emerging from knowing constituted in the practice of writing

poetry. In this way, the stability implications of our ontological assumptions are juxtaposed, particularly in the realm of decision-making processes, as practical concerns sensibly organizing doing and saying in a practice and indicating moral implications (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Importantly, the interconnectedness of ecological systems is not addressed by anthropocentric decision-making processes, which prioritize outcomes that directly benefit human well-being, economic growth, uncertainty avoidance (Slawinski et al., 2017), and predictability. However, through their nuanced and inclusive language of poetry, the Harrisons draw our attention to how the predominant focus on a human-centered ontology has permeated our languages. The Harrisons suggest that poetry avoids the language of policy, science, and all further forms of specialized languages that form barriers to creating connections between nonhumans and humans (S1, S3, S24). For instance, the artists expose in their sayings and doings that the ocean's viewpoint is utterly absent in the wake of rapidly rising sea-levels (ways of relating), thus unmasking absences in knowing and belief systems (Tregidga et al., 2013):

> "Assuming a rapid rise of waters, even for a modest 5 m[eters] in 100 years, there are apparently no models of precedence, no information, design or planning on the table, with the exception of ocean defenses and typical development models, albeit more energy-efficient ones." (S26)

Outcomes are complex, unpredictable, multifaceted, uneven, and entangled for humans and nonhumans. The Harrisons in their practice specify their socio-material conversation with context, as a catastrophe from both humans' and the river's perspectives; and this can be understood through the lens of 'agencement' in practice theory (Gherardi, 2016). Agencement produces a multifaceted and interconnected array of knowing that reflects the complex, dynamic, and situated nature of practices.

Agencement requires an openness to the situation and exposes the multiplicity of realities. By bringing together heterogeneous elements—human and nonhuman, material and discursive—agencement acknowledges that nonhuman and human outcomes are neither fixed nor singular. Instead, they are dynamic and contingent on the specific configurations and interactions within the assemblage (Gherardi, 2016). The Harrisons expose that the outcome of spreading flooding to wetlands might mean purifying the river. Here in the context of the River Sava, through skillful use of vocabulary (what is said) and situated use of the pattern (order of what is said; see Llewellyn, 2008) in their poetry and storytelling practice, they construct alternative future scenarios as the outcomes of ecodisasters that rarely conform to lines of prediction and speculative fabulation (Haraway, 2013)). This speculative approach allows a nuanced ontological stance, an alternative relational, epistemological approach in line with a posthumanist practice theory (Cozza & Gherardi, 2023) that transcends lineal epistemologies (Bateson, 1972). In the Harrisons' poem,

> "The shape of catastrophe takes on the quality of opportunity
> When the great 'U' formed by the [River] Sava within its earthen walls
> Is understood as a new continuum
> A corridor for wildlife
> That in tandem with the corridor for human activity
> Serpentines through the 500 kilometers of the new topology
> Produced by the 7000 sq. kilometer factory." (Excerpt from *Sava River Poem*, S26)

Here, the artists strive to confront humans with ontological plurality in our belief structures and societal arrangements:

> "It is the intention of *Greenhouse Britain* to begin generating the thinking, the design, *perhaps the new belief structure, perhaps even indicating new economic structures* that may be required for the democratic dispersal of support for an upward-moving population within the context of a gradually shrinking landmass." (S26)

The expectation of certainty, as well as a tendency towards human-centric complexity avoidance, often lead to oversimplification, thereby making it challenging to particularize nonhumans, and consequently hindering the inclusion of nonhumans as stakeholders. The inclusive language of poetry exposes how the emphasis lies on human-centric outcomes and the ways in which communication about these outcomes remains pessimistic and passive, in the sense of not exercising opportunities for an ontological plurality that overcomes complexity avoidance.

*Knowing through Artist-led Practices*

***Reframing knowing.*** Reframing the issue at hand allows new knowing to result from social-material conversation with the situation; that is, an understanding to emerge about how human interpretations and activities are embedded in time, social and material space, and power structures (Allen et al., 2019; Gherardi, 2019). This socio-materiality includes the pluriverse of living and non-living entities and ecosystems (Ehrnström-Fuentes & Böhm, 2022; Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Laine, 2010), a dimension that is embedded in the practice of generating maps. In this way assumptions are problematized that limit sense-making, generating a deeper understanding of the connections between the interests and stakes of nonhuman and human stakeholders in order to include the interests of nonhumans (Kortetmäki et al., 2023). Such socio-material conversation is translated in the mediatory work of various artifacts within which knowing expresses itself

(for example in maps), as artifacts are not directly involved in the process of knowing (Latour, 2005) but, instead, actively mediate knowledge and inject it into a scene. Thus, the maps generated by the Harrisons only become meaningful through the process of practicing; and knowing embedded in such practice is neither inherent in the individual nor the artifact, but in the sequence of constructing and using it and in its alignment with other elements of the process (Nicolini, 2011). For instance, maps are crucial for they allow the comparative reading of data on spatial and temporal human-nonhuman relationships, and through this, enable assumptions to be exposed and problematized.

Further, knowing through reframing manifests itself in what is said and done (Martin, 2003); hence, such knowing requires a mastery of discursive tools and specific vocabulary, as demonstrated by the Harrisons' skill in reframing a question in a way that sets new boundary conditions and reshapes the problem area. In the Green Heart of Holland project, the initial question was posed by Dutch policy-makers, who asked: "How many houses could comfortably be developed in the available space?" (S15) By printing the map 'backwards', the artists' doing initiated a provocative turn (Nicolini, 2011) in the development of the project, implying that the Dutch were planning their country backwards and, thus, unsettling the upper hand enjoyed by policy-makers in setting the scope of the project (see Figure 4) (S22, S15). The Harrisons proceeded to reframe the scope by saying, "What is the best way for an urban continuum to end and an ecological continuum to begin?", and, "Is there a way for this mutual beginning and ending to give advantage to both?" (S25, p. 261). Knowing through reframing is translated in the artists' mastery of skillfully applying the concepts of 'beginning' and 'ending', inviting attention to be paid to the consequences of spatio-temporal human-nonhuman relations mediated by the map. Here, "[t]heir reframing of the core question exposed this version of events

as unnecessarily damaging to people and the environment alike" (Douglas & Fremantle, 2016a, p. 3). The last question shows how knowing through reframing comes from knowing together with others, in that it implies the logic that nonhuman stakes and needs are of paramount significance in the process of decision-making (Figure 5). Overall, the order of using maps and posing questions reveals that knowing through reframing also transpires from the broader temporal organization of the activity at hand, that is, understanding when certain things need to be done or not (Nicolini, 2011).

***Emotional Knowing.*** This dimension of knowing relates, first, to an expansion of empathy, and, second, to the subjective nature of this knowing; it makes an individual part of the knowing process and helps to create meaning. Knowing through emotions is embedded in the practices of generating maps, writing poetry, and constructing a metaphorical flip.

With the emotive language of metaphor and poetry, the artists invite us to reflect on our emotionally-laden stakes and interests, and, hence, to regard nonhumans' stakes and interests as comprising the same emotional meaningfulness. Knowing through emotions is manifested in practical concerns, meaning that the pattern of ordering in a certain practice has a recognizable sense and moral implications through such practical concerns (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Here, sense stands for the meaning and direction of the practice' unfolding (Nicolini, 2011). Addressing nonhumans' interests and needs become emotionally relatable and personally meaningful to human beings, and new knowing emerges from the socio-materiality of context (Gherardi, 2022). Such knowing is exhibited through practical concerns, as illustrated in the quote below, as it does not originate from the mind or through beliefs, but rather because certain concerns arise as members engage in a particular practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991):

> "I instantly knew I should make earth. I instantly knew earth was endangered all over. I instantly knew all this stuff and I made a lifetime decision in less than 30 seconds, more like 10 seconds. So the empathy moment is one that has such power that it powers through your prejudices and powers through your concrete mind and your rationalization processes and leads to direct action." (S12)

The metaphors of 'dikes saving the city' versus 'dikes imprisoning the water' are connected to emotional experiences that are associated with the practical concern for finding a belief system that excludes nonhumans and, therefore, induce us to see the river as an entity that shares the same needs as humans. Emotional knowing about addressing the well-being of both (human and nonhuman) is visible in a practical concern of questioning the existing belief system. The cost of constructing dikes and channeling flood water has been redirected to acquiring land beyond the city in order to let the river spread its excess water:

> "The dysfunctional metaphor lies in the observation that if flood control is the engineering process that generates dikes and channelization to save the city, then flood control is the destruction of the well-being of rivers. (I.e., the well-being of the river is traded off for that of the city.) This state of affairs requires a metaphorical flip […]. Put succinctly, the new or emergent metaphor is that if you address the well-being of both the town and the river, then 'flood control is the spreading of waters'. It's not the controlling and the imprisoning of waters but the freeing of waters in a way that not only does not endanger but enhances the well-being of the city as well." (S24)

Acknowledging a responsibility for the well-being of the river, as illustrated in the quote above, also shows that knowing through emotions manifests itself in knowing how

to use the repertoire and vocabulary of accountability, that is, knowing when accountability is warranted (Nicolini, 2011).

Referring to the Sensorium of the Ocean project in 2021, Newton Harrison explains that we can advance our understanding of the ocean by engaging in emotional work, that is, by stretching human empathy precisely far enough to include the ocean:

> "Can I stretch my empathy to include a small ocean? The answer is maybe. Then, when you look at the other work, Sensorium, if you blow the image up big enough to read it, you will see that I'm now closer to being able to stretch my empathy to deal with the whole ocean. Would an oceanographer ask such a question?" (S4)

Inclusive emotional knowing enables humans to stretch their awareness by engaging with emotions to include nonhumans, similarly to emotional qualia (Donavan, 2006) and embodied knowledge that materialize in paying emotional attention (Tallberg et al., 2022), noticing, sensing, and listening enabling agency through embodied events and actions (Pullen & Rhodes, 2015). When we attend to emotions in order to incorporate signals that cannot be fully rationalized with cognitive constructs, and which are otherwise categorized as unknown or unknowable, we interpret the stakes and interests of other (nonhuman) stakeholders by connecting with them through embodied emotions (Tallberg et al., 2022). In other words, once we extend our care to include someone (or something) else, their needs achieve the same importance to us as our own needs. When we care, we truly become receptive to listening to the other, thus recognizing their agency. The emotional dimension is subjective rather than neutral, as emotions are localized, meaning that the object is important for the role it plays in one's life (Nussbaum, 2004). Emotional knowing complements objective ways of knowing, thereby making an individual part of the knowing process and helping to create sense and meaning. While the Harrisons'

practices activate empathy and care leading to include nonhumans, not all artist-led practice evoke emotions that foster inclusiveness. Nussbaum (2004) elaborates on the broad spectrum and connectedness of emotions, from hope to fear or discomfort to love, presenting further nuances of emotions beyond empathy and care. Like positive emotions, the unsettling emotions can also create inclusive knowing for nonhumans by extending the emotional boundaries of humans and nonhumans, fostering a reflection on the ethical and existential implications of being, encouraging human to confront their biases and assumptions. [3] As Nussbaum (2004) explains, emotions in negative cases are seen as tearing oneself apart as they are related to damage to oneself, to one's own plans, goals, and own conception of life well-lived. Thus, negative emotions can reveal belief systems about the way nonhumans and relations with them are conceived as valuable constituents of one's own life.

***Imaginative knowing.*** This dimension allows individuals to imagine things that lie beyond the limits of rational knowing, and it includes an open-ended figurative understanding that aids in thinking of various possibilities in the context of continuously changing conditions and the concomitant issues at stake over time (socio-materiality). An imaginative dimension involves provocation and speculation, that is, seeing that which is neither obvious nor immediate; and it is enabled through the artist-led practice of writing poetry.

In their work the Harrisons purposefully remove the authoritarian voice of rationalization in order to make us see and imagine in other ways (e.g., that the ocean can

[3] Patricia Piccinini's sculpture 'The Young family' (2003) can be an intriguing example. It hyper-realistically portrays a creature that combines features of human and a dog to induce a sense of unease, disgust, or fear in order to unsettle perceptions and reimagine the boundaries between humans and other life forms.

speak) rather than being ensnared by analytical thinking. In the Harrisons' words, "a decision made outside the domain of rationalization is what we lost and what we seek to reestablish" (S13, at minute 10). Poetic language allows artists' thinking to escape the trap of Western modernity, or the "Kantian enigma" (Foucault, 1994, p. 546). In Newton Harrison's recent work Sensorium for the World Ocean (2021), the world of the ocean is given a voice. By pausing rational thinking, the Harrison's poetry draws attention to the cost of the status quo, as illustrated in the following excerpt from the Peninsula Europe poem (S24):

*You said,*
*"Most of Europe's water begins there."*
*I said,*
*"If the forests were left to regrow*
*and the grasslands released from overgrazing*
*Then the resulting bio-mass*
*Could help to purify*
*The outpouring of water."*
*And you said,*
*"Then biodiversity ribbons again can grow across the high grounds from the Pyrénées to the Carpathians."*
*I asked,*
*"Where would you begin?"*
*And you said,*
*"Where the terrain permits and the will exists*
*Choose your mountain."*

Knowing through imagination manifests also through the order of sayings and doings (Nicolini, 2011). Specifically, here, the interaction order "You said", "I said" shows that the dialogic form is something to be expected and that both parties contribute

to its accomplishment. In such knowing, how to write a poem transpires from the accomplishment and situated use of the pattern (Llewellyn, 2008).

Such knowing lies in knowing that is achieved through what is said (Nicolini, 2011), as it comes about through mastery of vocabulary and a particular semantic repertoire that helps to distinguish between practices. Poetic language offers a figurative, open-ended understanding of things, including the abstract web of life that is so challenging to comprehend through other means. Knowing through imagination—enabled here through poetic language—provides space for obscure complexity to be present (for example, through connotations) in our vision of the future, even if we cannot understand it rationally. This, then, leads us to acknowledge the intricacy of the interconnections between humans and nonhumans without the addition of a pragmatic lens. Helen Mayer Harrison comments on expanding possibilities through poetry and avoiding fixed meaning (S3):

> "We chose it [poetry] because the poet has the advantage over the discursive writer. For discursive writers, words mean exactly what they say. But with the poet, you have the connotations of the words as well as their denotation to express your meaning. The connotation has all the possibilities and images that emerge from the use of that word." (S3)

Once the dominant rational voice and language of certainty (Yanow, 2009) are overshadowed by an open-endedness that generates possibilities for interpretation (Douglas & Gulari, 2015; Peters, 2009), a new scenario of reality can be projected (Sullivan, 2009). Such a new scenario permits engagement in novel ways of 'worlding' (Ehrnström-Fuentes & Böhm, 2022), where the values of nonhumans and those of humans

no longer compete but are, instead, connected. Knowing through imagination further relates to an optimism that supports belief in such new positive scenarios.

Knowing through imagination is knowing with, and among, others (Bourdieu, 1990) and includes an interactional order between human and nonhuman elements (Nicolini, 2011). The Harrisons' practice of writing poetry that involves knowing with nonhumans is presented through a dialogic pattern of questions and answers ("I said / you said"), which is a specific interactional order based on the assumption, embodied within a practice, that nonhumans' voices can indeed be heard. An imaginative dimension enables the inclusion of nonhumans by facilitating a novel image of reality, where humans can hear and interpret nonhuman voices and be in dialogue with them, as well as by creating an alternative future scenario in which we plan *with* nonhumans instead of merely devising a plan *for* them.

**Discussion and Contributions**

This article brings three contributions to stakeholder theory, and, more specifically, to theorizing on the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders (Driscoll & Starik, 2004; Haigh & Griffiths, 2009; Waddock, 2011) by using artist-led practices and posthumanist practice theory (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022)—to the best of our knowledge hitherto not used to expand stakeholder theory.

Our first contribution lies in identifying the ontological and epistemological obstacles that impede the inclusion of nonhumans into stakeholder theory. By explicating these challenges as ontological and epistemological in nature makes them more visible and invites more nuanced and targeted explorations, encouraging a paradigm shift towards more inclusive perspectives in stakeholder theory and organizational studies. In this way we contribute to prior research that discusses anthropocentric biases and the difficulties

of nonhuman stakeholder inclusion (Haigh & Griffiths, 2009; Heikkurinen et al., 2021; Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Phillips & Reichart, 2000; Schaltegger et al., 2019; Tallberg et al., 2022). Such a framing prompts a more profound understanding of the inherent and often invisible biases that hinder nonhuman inclusion, thus fostering an awareness of the anthropocentric lens through which nonhumans are traditionally perceived.

Second, we show that artist-led practices allow for the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders in two ways: (1) by specifying the temporal, spatial, and outcome distinctions that ontologically hinder their inclusion; and (2) by explicating the reframing of knowing and the emotional and imaginative dimensions of knowing that epistemologically enable their inclusion, we contribute by theorizing on how artist-led practices add to ontological and epistemological plurality in stakeholder theory. In particular, by unearthing striking absences and dysfunctionalities in extant belief systems in regard to nonhuman stakeholders, artist-led practices allow us to overcome a singular, human-centered ontology (Ehrnström-Fuentes & Böhm, 2022) and invite nonhuman stakeholder discourse to revise its dualistic ontological and epistemological assumptions. Concretely, we have theorized here on those temporal, spatial, and outcome ontological aspects of the human-nonhuman distinction which, when remaining unrecognized, hinder the inclusion of nonhumans as stakeholders (Kortetmäki et al., 2023; Painter-Morland & ten Bos, 2016; Tallberg et al., 2022). Perceiving these aspects through artist-led practices exposes, and calls for overcoming, the ontological separation of Cartesian object-subject dualism between those who study or manage stakeholders (subjects) and the nonhuman stakeholders themselves (objects) (Orts & Strudler, 2002). Even when nonhumans' stakes and interests are formally acknowledged—as, for example, in the Harrisons' Sacramento River and Green Heart of Holland projects—unchallenged human-centered ontological

assumptions result in the prioritization of humans' stakes and interests at the expense of nonhumans. Hence, we regard the inclusion thereof as an ontological expansion that gradually aligns the stakes and interests of humans and nonhumans with each other.

Moreover, our second contribution enhances epistemological plurality in stakeholder theory by explicating reframing knowing, emotional knowing, and imaginative knowing that enable nonhuman stakeholder inclusion. Such reframing, emotion, and imagination shift the purpose of knowledge construction away from avoiding complexity and uncertainty when particularizing nonhumans and towards developing a tolerance for not-knowing, as an active engagement with absences in knowledge formation (Tregidga et al., 2013). Such tolerance can be developed through establishing emotional connection and empathy in stakeholder interaction, through creating alternative scenarios pertaining to our socio-material and ecological embeddedness, and through generating the optimism that solutions can very well be discovered even whilst embracing uncertainty. In doing so, artist-led practices identify the pitfalls inherent in the methods (communication models, project frameworks) used to visualize the construction of human-centered material realities, and they invite us to pause our rational thinking, rethink the language, models, and frameworks we use, and reconsider how scenarios, plans, and visions of the future are constructed.

Our third contribution rethinks nonhuman stakeholder inclusion by scrutinizing epistemological and ontological complexities and assumptions, drawing from artist-led practices situated in posthumanist ontology and relational, process-oriented epistemology (Cozza & Gherardi, 2023). From the vantage point of this revised onto-epistemological position we have come to understand nonhuman inclusion as neither (1) a fixed state that is to be achieved but rather one that materializes and gains meaning through specific

practices of knowing; nor (2) merely the absence of exclusion but rather a dynamic interplay, where inclusion and exclusion mutually constitute one another. The implications of this understanding can inform relational stakeholder research, for example recognitive stakeholder relationships (Kortetmaki et al., 2023; Missonier & Loufrani-Fedida, 2014), where relations are viewed through a process-oriented practice lens as entities in a state of becoming. Such an understanding of inclusion redirects the research agenda of nonhuman stakeholder research more broadly (Driscoll & Starik, 2004; Kujala et al., 2022). In particular, from the perspective of practice, it would be more reasonable to posit questions such as "how does the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders become meaningful through various knowing practices?", instead of "how can nonhumans be included as stakeholders?". The former question can serve to connect various streams in stakeholder research, including those on stakeholder inclusion, stakeholder relations, and stakeholder identification and salience in light of a posthumanist onto-epistemology. Moving away from Cartesian dualism allows us to reassess knowing and unknowing about nonhumans, as well as the inclusion and exclusion of nonhumans through practice theory. Embracing an understanding that the knower and that which is known emerge together in practice allows knowing and unknowing to become mutually constitutive. This challenges the notion that humans must determine what, and how much, can be known about nonhumans, thereby rethinking the appropriate level of information needed for stakeholder identification in a given context (Kortemäki et al., 2023). More broadly, this advances the entire nonhuman stakeholder debate by opening up the concepts of inclusion and exclusion, neither of which have been clearly addressed in prior research. While the inclusion of nonhumans has been touched upon, it has yet to be clarified what this would

concretely entail (as a dynamic practice between exclusion and inclusion) or how this could be achieved (through practices of knowing).

*Managerial Implications*

In terms of the managerial implications of this study, we draw attention to the paradigm shift that needs to take place within organizations in order to include nonhumans as stakeholders. Building on a posthumanist philosophy (Braidotti, 2019) that decentralizes human subjects and positions them in relation to other nonhumans we call upon organizations to recognize and incorporate diverse temporal, spatial, and outcome distinctions, to acknowledge the limitations of anthropocentric views, and to embrace ontological pluralism. (Ehrnström-Fuentes & Böhm, 2022). A more plural understanding that is centered on human-nonhuman relationality would allow organizations to produce knowledge differently, generating benefits from adopting alternative ways of knowing through reframing, emotions, and imagination and, thereby, promoting epistemological and methodological pluralism within their operations. This approach not only enhances nonhuman stakeholder inclusion but also fosters a deeper ethical understanding of complex ecological systems, ultimately contributing to more sustainable and inclusive practices. We argue that instead of the active appropriation and instrumentalization of the arts in nonhuman stakeholder inclusion (the so-called ‘proxy approach’), organizations should focus on understanding how artist-led practices can stimulate fresh ways of knowing for different actors. Such ways of knowing contribute to a better understanding of nonhumans in multifaceted ways and, hence, proffer new organizational narratives, which present an opportunity for transformation by altering deeply embedded cultural assumptions (Mazutis et al., 2021).

*Limitations and Future Research*

While the Harrisons were able to escape from dualistic and anthropocentric modes of thinking in their practices, we are constrained by human language when writing about their practices. We clearly acknowledge the limitations stemming from the inherent anthropocentrism of language. Expressing the nature of nonhumans by using human language is a complex endeavor, laden with cultural and linguistic biases. In addition to these biases, language simplifies complex natural phenomena and falls short of representing the rich intricacies of the nonhuman world. These challenges make it difficult to capture the full depth and diversity of nonhumans by using human language. By acknowledging these limitations, we throw the door wide open to interdisciplinary approaches and a deeper, more imaginative exploration of language itself—both the lexical relations of stakeholder inclusion and the exploration of associative lingua-creative mechanisms expected to materialize in the emergence of new words and terms. This, then, can come to fruition in a more nuanced and ecologically aware form of discourse and sense-making in academic writing.

A further limitation in the context of this study is that although the selected artists' practice is dedicated solely to nature, the non-anthropocentric outcome of art is by no means always guaranteed. As a diverse and multifaceted medium, art can be influenced by various ideologies and perspectives, and history has shown that art can be employed to advance anthropocentric, oppressive, or even hostile ideologies, as demonstrated for instance by totalitarian regimes. Therefore, it is essential to recognize that a straightforward and universal connection between art and non-anthropocentrism does not exist, and that outcomes can be influenced by a wide array of factors and diverse intentions. The success of artist-led practices can be highly contingent upon the boundary conditions that pertain. In other words, what works creatively in one setting may not apply

to another, thereby making it a challenge to establish consistent methodologies and generalizable outcomes. Nevertheless, this limitation provides an opportunity for future research to delve deeper into the boundary conditions of non-anthropocentric, artist-led practices, seeking to understand the contexts where they flourish or fall short and thereby enhancing the effectiveness of artistic endeavors for the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders.

We also recognize that our methodological approach to studying the practices of the Harrisons is limited to relying on historical documentary evidence (that is, accounts of the Harrisons themselves as well as others' reflections on their work). By applying other methods, such as for example ethnography (Gherardi, 2015) or action research (Kemmis, 2009), future studies could delve deeper into understanding the role played by artist-led practices in the inclusion of nonhumans by engaging directly with artists' projects and observing their practices as they emerge.

Finally, in our engagement with practice theories and artist-led practices, we identify how artist-led practices can enrich practices theories (Cozza & Gherardi, 2023; Nicolini, 2012), which is an exciting and promising avenue of research and theorizing.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this paper has illuminated the ontological and epistemological assumptions in the discourse that impede nonhuman stakeholder inclusion within stakeholder theory. By drawing from artist-led practices situated in posthumanist ontology and relational, process-oriented epistemology, our study has contributed to revising these assumptions and reconceptualizing stakeholder inclusion. By means of emotional experiences, imagining opportunities, and reframing, they provide a critical rethinking of visible and invisible anthropocentric assumptions and Cartesian dualism in stakeholder theory.

Throughout this paper we have emphasized the dynamic and mutually constitutive nature of inclusion and exclusion, in which inclusion is understood not as a fixed state that is to be achieved but rather one that materializes and gains meaning through specific practices of knowing. Non-anthropocentric, artist-led practices proffer a nuanced mode of knowing about the web of life and ecosystems that is distinct from rational ways of knowing, and these can be employed as an overdue antidote to anthropocentric knowledge paradigms. Such practices allow us to understand nonhumans on their own terms even as they expand our ontology and reshape our existing belief systems, which is crucial for fostering the inclusion of nonhuman stakeholders. This shift towards embeddedness within posthumanist materialism and practice theories unveils novel opportunities for reimagining the nature of knowledge, questioning the validity and inclusivity of objective and rational knowledge sources in stakeholder inclusion, and redefining the processes by which knowledge is generated. All in all, this reframing emphasizes nonhuman inclusion as an ethically charged and onto-epistemological endeavor.

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