

INTRODUCTION TO SAM GILLESPIE

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Sam Gillespie, as Joan Copjec wrote in her moving tribute to him in *Umbr(a)* (2004), was ‘one of the most gifted and promising philosophers of his generation’ and this judgment has only become more pronounced with the posthumous appearance of various publications in the intervening years since his suicide in August 2003.

Sam was a leading figure in introducing Badiou to the English-speaking world. A key member of the original *Umbr(a)* collective at SUNY Buffalo, he instigated the special Badiou issue that published translations of ‘Descartes/Lacan’, ‘Hegel’, ‘Psychoanalysis and Philosophy’ and the hugely influential ‘What is Love?’ His intellectual and aesthetic influence on the journal were profound, and he continued to help set its editorial direction long after he left Buffalo, contributing essays, selecting texts by Badiou for translation, and designing the arresting covers that have helped to make *Umbr(a)* such an outstanding occasion of resistance to what Copjec, in her opening manifesto, named today’s ‘archival racism’.

To re-read his contributions to that first issue is to be struck again by how intensely focused Sam already was on the questions that would later make up the core of his Ph.D.,—the nature and source of novelty in the objective world, the differences between the materialism of Deleuze and Badiou, the limits of thought—paying witness to the remarkable intellectual seriousness with which he approached his early academic endeavors. It goes without saying that what one inevitably misses in such written leftovers is the electric wit and sardonic humour of this anti-democratic but never inegalitarian individual who inaugurated our tradition of numbering each issue of *Umbr(a)* as One—not only as a token of what he once called the ‘arduous’ procedure of counting to Two but also as a formal expression of fidelity to what had escaped the previous issue’s ‘count’. A warm and deeply generous man, Sam was constitutionally unable to tolerate what he perceived to be injustice, and one of the last days of his life was spent protesting the imminent Iraq war with his partner Mike and friend Jason Barker who tells me that long after everyone else had given it up as futile, and the number of protestors dwindling to a trickle, Sam would be on the phone, rounding people up, never ceasing to call power on its abuses.

The essay published here for the first time is a chapter from Sam's dissertation at the University of Warwick which his brother Chris Gillespie, his partner Michael Mottram and I edited and submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, awarded in 2005. The longer work from which it is taken, provisionally titled *The Mathematics of Novelty: Badiou's Minimalist Metaphysics*, is under review at SUNY Press. A full list of his publications appears below, several of which are available as post-prints from the open access archive CSeARCH <http://www.culturemachine.net/csearch>. Electronic copies of Sam's dissertation can be sent on request. Please email sigij@pandora.be

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PUBLICATIONS:

- 'Slavoj Your Symptom!,' *UMBR(a)*, no. 1, 1995, pp. 115-9.
 'Subtractive,' *UMBR(a)*, no. 1, 1996, pp. 7-10, (available from CSeARCH).
 'Hegel Unsutured (an Addendum to Badiou),' *UMBR(a)*, no. 1, 1996, pp. 57-69 (available from CSeARCH).
 'Badiou's Ethics: A Review,' *Pli: The Warwick Journal of Philosophy*, no. 12, 2001, pp. 256-65.
 'Neighborhood of Infinity: On Badiou's Deleuze: The Clamor of Being,' *UMBR(a)*, no. 1, 2001, pp. 91-106 (available from CSeARCH).
 'Placing the Void – Badiou on Spinoza,' *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2001, pp. 63-77.
 'Beyond Being: Badiou's Doctrine of Truth,' *Communication and Cognition*, vol. 36, no. 1-2, 2003, pp. 5-30 (available from CSeARCH).
The Mathematics of Novelty: Badiou's Minimalist Metaphysics, PhD., University of Warwick, Warwick, 2004.
 'Get Your Lack On,' *UMBR(a)*, no. 1, 2004, pp. 9-19.

TRANSLATIONS:

- Badiou, Alain, 'Hegel,' trans. Marcus Coelen and Sam Gillespie, *UMBR(a)*, no. 1, 1996, pp. 27-35.
 Badiou, Alain, 'On a Contemporary Usage of Frege,' trans. Justin Clemens and Sam Gillespie, *UMBR(a)*, no. 1, 2000, pp. 99-115.