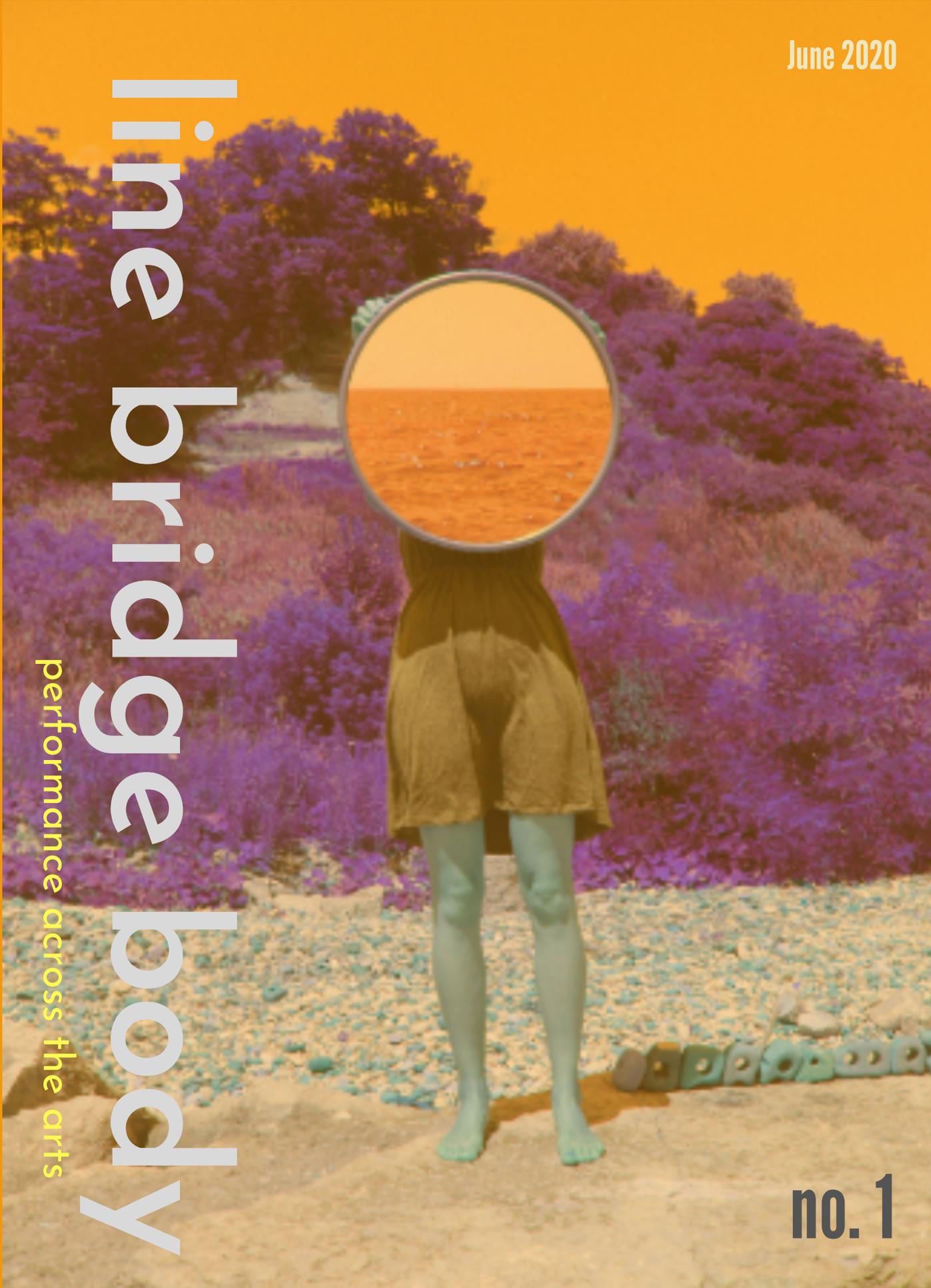


June 2020

line bridg e body

performance across the arts

no. 1



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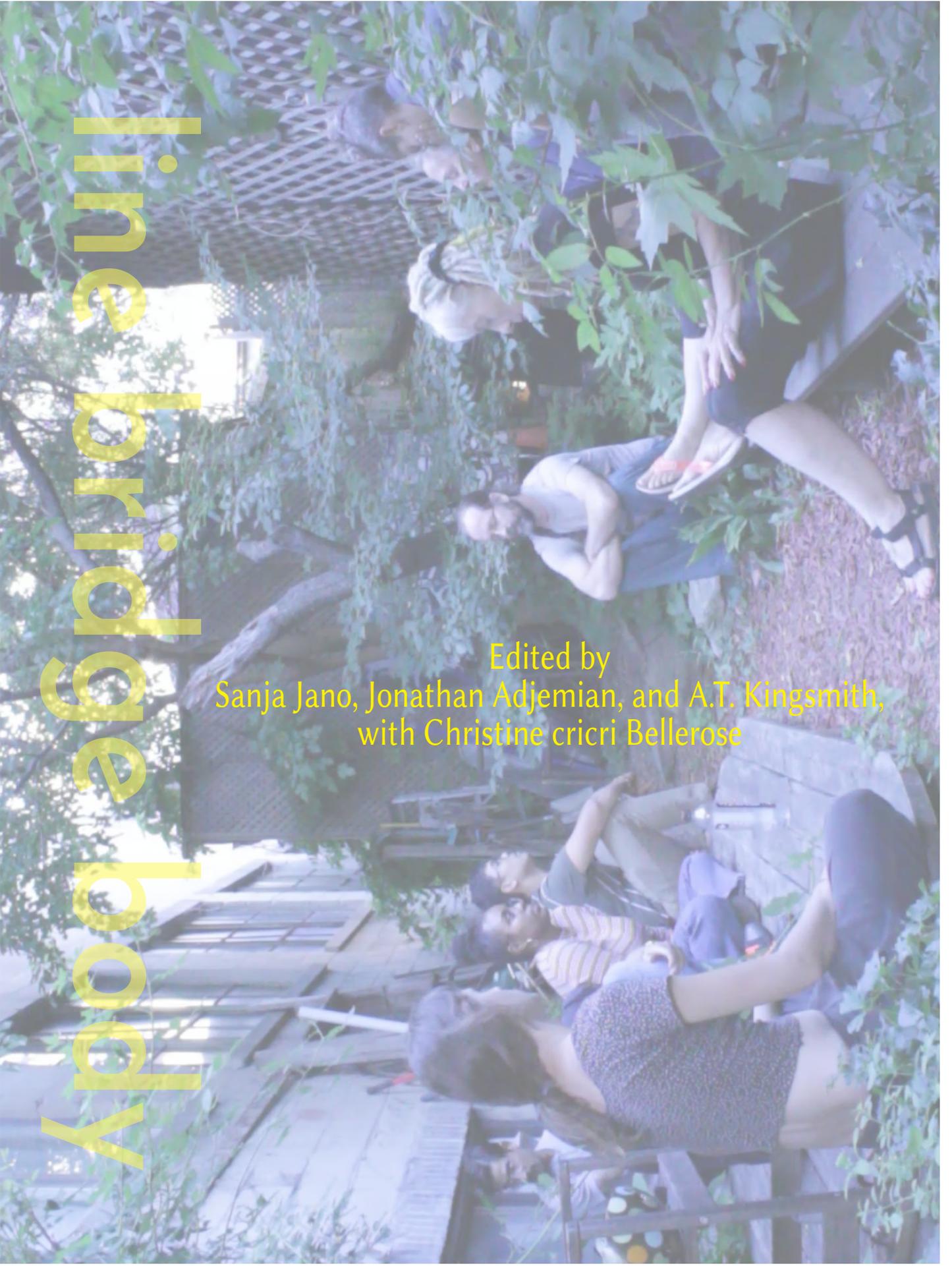
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line bridge body

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DENIS LAFOND is from Lachine, Quebec, specializing in puppetry, sound creation & video mapping. He is passionate about Butoh and Gaga, and has been an adept since 2013. He is also an information systems consultant with Hydro Quebec. Since 2014, he is one half of the duo DENISPÉ with his muse and life partner, Speranza Spir, creating a multitude of multidisciplinary works.

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JEAN-LUC NANCY is a French philosopher. He has authored more than twenty books since his first text published in 1973, *Le titre de la lettre*, a reading of the work of French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, written in collaboration with Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe. Some of these are *The Inoperative Community* (1991), *The Birth to Presence* (1993), *The Experience of Freedom* (1993), *The Gravity of Thought* (1997), with Lacoue-Labarthe, *Retreating the Political* (1997), *The Sense of the World* (1998), *Being Singular Plural* (2000), *The Ground of the*

Image (2005), *Listening* (2007), *Corpus* (2008), and *Multiple Arts* (2006). Nancy collaborates with various artists (choreographer Mathilde Monnier), and has contributed commentaries on contemporary art, including, On Kawara (1997), Jean Michel Atlan (*Atlan: Les Détrempe*; 2010), and his book published in 2001 *The Evidence of Film* on the work of the Iranian filmmaker, Abbas Kiarostami.

HEATHER SINCAVAGE is a multidisciplinary artist and feminist. She uses her own experiences with gender-based violence as a performative case study analyzing what it is to live with trauma. Her work has appeared in the Tate Modern in London and LiteHaus Galerie in Berlin amongst other locations across Spain, Finland, and Iceland. She has performed at the Queens Museum and Grace Exhibition Space in NYC; Alive at Satellite during Miami Art Week; Glitterbox Theater in Pittsburgh; Mudlark Theater in New Orleans; Latvian Center for Performance Art in Riga; Stockholm University; and academic galleries across the United States. Heather is an alumna of The Vermont Studio Center as well as numerous other residencies in the United States and throughout Europe. In 2018, she received the Tanne Foundation Award, a peer-nominated honor. She received her BFA from Tyler School of Art, Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and her MFA from School of Art, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

SPERANZA SPIR is from Montreal, and of greek heritage. She visits Greece frequently, doing land photography and video, collecting historic, and family data which later is incorporated into her performative works. She is a somatic practitioner in Polarity, Craniosacral and osteopathic approaches since 1997. Denis & Speranza have been a collaborative duo presenting multidisciplinary pieces since 2014. Since 2014, she is one half of the duo DENISPÉ with her muse and life partner, Denis Lafond, creating a multitude of multidisciplinary works.

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FOREWORD

line bridge body is an ongoing project initiated in August 2019 with a symposium held at an indoor-outdoor enclosed garden for the performing arts, Majlis Art Garden, Toronto, Canada. We are thankful to our hosts for providing us “a place to sit,” explore, perform, play, listen, and exchange, for our first iteration. And, as we did then, we open this text with an acknowledgement and recognition of the *Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant*.

As various modalities of somatic praxis continue to flourish and others emerge, *line bridge body* seeks experimental works approaching embodiment as a bridge that interconnects and crosses lines severing the arts, disciplines, and ecologies, past, present, and to come. Its creative impetus is encompassing, bringing together critical, clinical, and culturally diverse expressions of somatic being, relating, and processes. This exciting first collection of works heeds that call, involving more than fifteen emerging and established thinkers, writers, and artists engaging psychosomatics, eco-performance and relationship to place, embodied listening, and other parables of bodies. We are thankful for their contributions, insights, and dedication to this endeavor.

line bridge body is especially thankful for the support we have received from some of Toronto’s finest cultural hubs for the arts. Our gratitude to Xenia Benivolski at Sugar for her assistance with this project in its earlier stages. We are very grateful to Theresa Slater at Pleasure Dome for her care, attentiveness, and facilitation each step of the way. As we publish this vibrant anthology during the global pandemic COVID-19, we remain hopeful about its potential contribution to the thriving of the arts locally, and about the resurgence of performance more generally as a means to express our interconnectivity.

PSYCHOSOMATICS

1. EMBRACING THE HUG

JOSE MIGUEL ESTEBAN

“Give your partner a hug!”

It is a simple enough gesture to encounter.

I see my partner standing in front of me with outstretched arms. I hear my partner’s voice calling to me, expecting me to join in the creation of one from two. Commanding me into their wrapping of arms, this entangling of our embodiments, I move toward the invitation as if my body already knows the routine of this gesture. After all, this is a gesture that is not new to me. This is a gesture that I take part in almost every day. I have taken part in this gesture throughout my whole life. This gesture is ordinary. Yet with every step closer to my partner, I question my body’s movement into the hug. I question that natural and innate definition of what this gesture entails. I disrupt an essential meaning, *the* essential meaning behind my every performance of this “ordinary” hug.

With every inch of my arms reaching toward my partner, I find the ordinariness of this gesture slipping away. The distance between my partner and me gets smaller. The gap between us shrinks. My arms reach closer and closer. This hug should now bridge our connection through a mutual acknowledgement and enactment of the ordinary, yet, its definition rises, creating a wall. The wall gestures to a separation from my partner, a separation from the ordinary. I step forward, attempting to return to the expected hug. I step forward and reach out to the normal gesture. But I find myself blocked. I stop and drop my arms. I am con-

fused. In my attempt to participate in the hug, I cannot feel its embrace. I am filled with doubt. Can I ever re-join my partner in an embodiment of the ordinary?



Alvin Collantes Photography (2017).

The choreographer is frustrated with me. I am not meeting his expectations. He tells me:

“Do what is natural.”

“Don’t overthink it.”

“Make it ordinary.”

“Just be human.”

Just be human.

Just *be* human.

Just be *human*.

Be human. How do I meet this expectation? How do I meet his expectation? How do I meet my partner’s expectation, our audience’s expectation ... *my* expectation? Are we not all humans in this dance studio? Do I not step into this task, into this performance, into this hug expecting my partner to be human? Do I not expect *myself* to be human?

As my partner and I encounter this choreographic task, a spectre engulfs us. It haunts our every attempt to interact as two humans. It dances with and through us as we embody the hug, as we reach out to embrace personhood. I recognize its presence transforming our duet into a trio. I question whether this dance has been a trio all along. The recognition that this spectre has always been, and always will be, an actor in our performance unsettles me and disrupts my very notion of the ordinary and its expectations. The appearance of the spectre’s presence disrupts our very notion of humanness. But who is this spectre?

This ghostly presence is inescapable. In my attempts to connect with my partner through the supposedly human gesture of this ordinary hug, I face the vulnerability of my own humanness, or lack thereof. I am forced to give the spectre a spotlight. It begins to dance a solo of the uncertainties of human existence. It gestures to the ordinary hug through an embodiment of everything that such a hug cannot be. It begins to name itself, referring to everything that must be removed from the ordinary so that the “ordinary” can exist. It calls itself the extra to the ordinary or the extra-ordinary. It calls itself the extra to the human or the extra-human. Through this solo I recognize the spectre as the embodiment of everything outside of humanness, everything that is less than human, everything that is not human. It is an embodiment of the non-human being and it is inviting me to join in its solo, now our duet.

The spectre takes my hand and pulls me back to the wall, separating me from my partner. I realize that it was the spectre’s dance that resulted in my first encounter with the wall. I recognize that its rising action was a reflection of my changing perception. What had arisen was my acknowledgement of its presence. It had always been there. The wall’s appear-

ance only occurred because of the spectre's own appearance. Perhaps their appearances and disappearances are intimately linked. As I face the wall, I am forced to encounter my own humanity. This wall objectifies me. It objectifies my partner. It objectifies the spectre. It treats anyone who encounters it as an object to be sorted. We become objects to be valued, and it is our value that determines on which side of the wall we may reside. The criteria for our categorization are already pre-established for us. There is no need for us to be understood or related to. The knowledge of where we must be placed precedes us, and it is clear that one side of the wall is more desirable than the other. One side of the wall represents belonging and security, whereas the other is a space in which we cast away our problems and our vulnerabilities. One side is reserved for the human, and the other for those who cannot be human. One side is reserved for the ordinary, and the other for all that does not fit into the ordinary, its extra. On one side of the wall is my partner, and on the other side is me, hand-in-hand with the spectre.

Standing beside the spectre, I cannot help but desire to climb the wall, to burrow underneath it, or to find some hidden door providing me access to the other side. I want to continue the duet with my partner. I want to return to the hug that I used to know so well. There must have been a mistake. This is a mistake. I do not belong on this side of the wall. Where did this wall come from in the first place? I let go of the spectre's hand. I must find a way to once again embody the hug, to embody the ordinary. I will not let this wall stop me.

I once again attempt to move into the hug. Yet the wall places so many expectations on me, on my partner, and on the spectre. It choreographs the ways in which we can act, the relationships we can form, the spaces we can inhabit. It choreographs the embodiment of our narratives, of our identities, of our relations. It directs the expectations of our gestures. But I am unable to determine the expectations that come with the ordinary hug. I cannot determine a normal proximity between my partner and me. I am unsure of the ordinary length of time allotted to us. I question whether my body will be acceptable for what is expected in this gesture. I cannot find a way to get through this wall. Frustrated, I turn my back to it. Feeling defeated, I feel the spectre take my hand again. I cannot help but blame it for all of this. Without its dance, without its appearance, this wall would have never existed. But the spectre will not let go, and unexpectedly I feel comfort in its grasp.

The spectre pulls me back to the wall. I feel it asking me to step back toward the hug, to step back toward the ordinary. With the comfort of its hand against mine, I do. I embrace its touch and do not let go of its hand. As we step back toward the hug, I find the wall becoming less solid. A blurring occurs as I start to recognize that the line separating the comfort of the ordinary from the vulnerability of the extraordinary is not fixed. I begin to recognize that the wall itself is just an imagined and created border. It is a projection of normalcy that works to separate the ordinary from its extra, the human from its non-human.

Recognizing it as a projection, I find myself moving through the wall. I discover its fragility and understand the vulnerability of normalcy. I find myself moving through this projection that seeks to define humanness. This projection has been cast over my body, inviting me to be a screen for its moving picture. It has engulfed me, forcing me to embody a narrative of being that was never mine. Yet through my performance of this foreign narrative, it now belongs to me. This projection is a part of me, and it has always been a part of me. This projection is me. I have never seen this wall before, yet it has always defined me.



Alvin Collantes Photography (2017).

Its power comes from its ability to evade my perception. Its strength allows it to make the spectre disappear.

But the spectre's presence is inescapable. It has an intimate relationship to the wall. The wall requires its existence. Without an extra to be cast away, how can the wall protect the ordinary? And so, the spectre persists. Its ghostly presence forces me to face the wall. It invites me to recognize that I may fall onto the side that I do not desire to inhabit. Its dance makes me question the desirability and undesirability of either side in the first place, and ultimately allows me to recognize the wall's permeability. It is this non-human presence that has given me access to my humanness and its very nature. I begin to fluidly pass between the realms of human and not, as I recognize that I am at once human and not. I am not human in that I can no longer determine what it means to be an ordinary human. I can no longer distinguish an ordinary that can be separated from its extra. I can no longer embody an ordinary hug.

The choreographer is growing impatient. As I stand in the dance studio with my partner in front of me, I am still expected to embody his gesture. I am still expected to embrace his "human" hug. I am stuck. I can no longer take for granted the notion of the ordinary and its expectations. I have been swayed by my duet with the unexpected spectre. I have been invited to dance through the imaginary boundary into a world of extraordinary potential. I have been given access to a world where the demands of normalcy can be questioned, and where we can begin to reimagine our relationships with one another.

Inspired, I want to step back into the choreographer's task. I want to reimagine my relationship with my partner. But can I engage in this hug? Can I ever engage with the ordinary again? Is it not true that any embodiment of a hug would just work to re-in

scribe the wall of the ordinary that at once works to expel the unexpected, while requiring its spectre to loom over us?

The choreographer tells me to hurry up and just hug my partner. He does not see this internal struggle, or if he does, he does not care. With his command I am jolted back into my role as a dancer with the job of interpreting someone else's choreography, with the job of telling someone else's story. I am jolted away from my creative fantasy and from my imagination. I am brought back into the taken-for-granted narrative that allows the wall to disappear, while simultaneously enforcing its power. I am brought back to a narrative where the spectre is made invisible, yet still haunts our every interaction. I step forward toward my partner, arms once again outstretched. We come closer together and I become nervous, as doubt and confusion once again embrace me ...

This time, however, I notice my partner's face. It is inviting. My partner invites me closer, into a relationship. This relationship I cannot describe, for I have never truly met my partner before. But did we not have a relationship before this encounter? I realize that a relationship did exist; however, it was not with my partner. It was a relationship with my expectations. It was a relationship with the projection of what I expect of my partner. My expectations are shaped by the wall's projection. They are shaped by my desire for normalcy. I wonder whether this same process of projected expectations shapes my partner's encounter with me. Perhaps even my relationship with my own identity is based on the tangled web of projections placed upon me through the wall, with the spectre, from my partner, and by my self.

These projections, the same that imagined the wall between an ordinary and its extra, the human and the not, still drape over us in our encounter. They are draped over every one of our encounters. We cannot eliminate these walls. We can only hope that the spectre will allow us to access a new perception of the ways in which these projections shape our relations. I begin to see through the façade. I begin to realize that I do not and cannot know anything about my partner, for I have never fully come to know my partner. To know anything before we come into relation, before we embrace, would just be an act of costuming each other in the expectations of our normality, or perhaps in the expectations of normalcy that consumes us.

I want to know my partner.

I take a breath, step into my partner's embrace, and embody the hug.

"Give your partner a hug."

It is a simple enough gesture to encounter.

Yet it is *extraordinary*.

Together we embody the ordinary. Together we embody a narrative that has lived before us and will continue to live beyond us. Yet we also embody a disruption to this narrative as we force this story of the human, this story of the normal, this story of the ordinary to embody *our* narrative. This simple gesture must now inhabit our bodies and inhabit our new collective being. *Our* encountering of the expected becomes the unexpected. *Our*

encountering of the ordinary becomes extraordinary.



Alvin Collantes Photography (2017).

The choreographer tells us that our time is up. With that, he puts an end to our task and exits the room. I think he is upset. I think he feels like this has been a waste of time. It has been unproductive for him. He does not recognize our creation.

We have created a new dance and it is now part of the world. It can never be taken back. Our performance of the ordinary gesture, our performance of the hug, may have come from the world which we inhabit, but this repetition of the taken-for-granted acts as a world of meaning, our world of meaning. These meanings work to orient us in new ways toward the wall and its projections, toward the spectre, toward each other, and toward our selves. Through our repetition of the hug, we create new possibilities to embrace. Through our replication of the ordinary, we create the extraordinary.

I begin to pack my bag. I look back at my partner, who is doing the same. We have both stepped back into our everyday routine, a routine that thrives on us taking for granted its ordinary expectations. As I am about to exit the studio, my partner looks up at me with that inviting smile, and I'm reminded of the feeling of our new relationship, a relationship more interested in questioning than in knowing. I look back with a smile of my own. I exit knowing less than I knew before about my partner, about my self, and about the simple gesture. I exit embracing my vulnerability; I cherish my relationship with the spectre. I exit ready to reach out into the ordinary; I remind myself to be aware of the wall's presence. I step back into the world ready to embrace the hug. I step out into the world ready to embrace the extraordinary.

2. THE BURDEN OF THIS

HEATHER SINCAVAGE

As both a performance artist and woman who has experienced emotional and physical abuse, I am my own case study. I perform with the body that trauma created and aim to understand what it is to live in this body; one that has partitioned its physical and mental health into one portion and taken up a performative practice in another. Invoked by gender-based violence, this practice investigates the trauma that many women live silently. Approaching artistic practice as research, my work is an unpredictable, cyclical process of investigation and illness. I often resolve one health issue only to find that another replaces it, or that solutions are temporary. Pushing forward to both understand illness and improve my health, I realize and accept that my practice and illness are interconnected, one informing the other, and that better emotional boundaries are essential to no longer damage my emotional and physical well-being. My performance practice assists by directing me toward areas of emotional (and consequently physical) brittleness, and thus the messy system of resolving that fragility begins.

I perform my trauma for willing audiences, often conjuring crying and a need for comfort for myself and the viewer. The viewer experiencing my work is exposed to my pain and my past, and becomes part of its reconstruction, resulting in collateral damage. In some instances, as I perform, I cannot ignore that I hear sniffles and uncomfortable rustling. I cannot ignore being faced with red, glassy eyes and clinging embraces at the conclusion of performing. In many cases, viewers try to resolve my pain and struggle. I have overheard a spectator say, “I wish I could hug her,” and in another instance one spectator reached out and actually placed his hand on my head, perhaps in an attempt to comfort me. In yet another instance, a family prayed over me in the middle of a market as I struggled, pushing my work through the street, while at a different iteration of the same performance a passerby dropped his things and assisted me by picking up part of my burden.

As a creator of this work, I either trigger these viewers’ existing traumas or become a source for creating them. As theorist Dori Laub states, when experiencing any form of art, written, visual, or performed, the viewer “partially experiences the trauma in himself,”¹ and thus becomes a co-owner of the event. Basing my practice on the recollection of experiences, this notion of empathetic unsettlement emerged as a concern. As someone grappling with how to live with and process trauma, I cannot ethically be a source for it as well, and I have thus addressed this in my approach. In this piece I outline my journey in three original performance works: *the burden of this* (2016–18), 2375 (2018–19), and *The Dividing Line [shifts]* (2019).

ACQUIRING BURDENS

I never imagined something like this could happen to me, as I believe most abused women must feel. What unfolded over two relationships and six years over twenty years ago is something that will remain with me to unravel for the rest of my life. While time passage and therapy helped rebuild my emotional body, I recognize that behavioural responses in all aspects of my life have been conditioned by those six years. I often find myself able to logically deconstruct an upsetting circumstance to better understand my feelings around it. My emotional body no longer has the initial reflex to vomit, cry, freeze. As my emotional health seemed to improve, my physical health became more and more of a concern as years passed, uncovering the complexity of my emotional body, which runs far deeper than I imagined.

In 2014, with little history of physical illness in my past, I was diagnosed with a series of autoimmune diseases that include Hashimoto's thyroiditis, hypothyroidism, adrenal exhaustion, chronic fatigue, and anemia. In 2016, I then had an additional diagnosis of papillary thyroid cancer and, as a result, opted for a full thyroidectomy and radiation treatment. Since that surgery, my body cannot produce the neurotransmitters serotonin, dopamine, or GABA, inhibiting my ability to feel pleasure and have clear memory. While many live with autoimmune disorders, stress factors heavily in the ability to self-regulate.

Many of these physical ailments worsened due to my response to anxiety, and my anxiety was impacted by my physiology – a cruel cycle that feeds on itself. Issues that I thought time and therapy had resolved uncover themselves in other patterns of behaviour, which provokes a subconscious physical response. When I find myself faced with archetypes I have struggled with in the past, particularly critical, controlling, explosive behaviour in men, seldom do I cry, vomit, or freeze like I used to, but I do limit eating, become forgetful, or search for words when I'm talking. Later I encounter overwhelming fatigue, hardly sleep, and ache all over my body. I came to learn that keeping autoimmune disorders at bay is my new emotional body, thus requiring a new response to stress. My performance practice is not a resolution of physical disorder but more a tool to better understand what I am still unraveling and what it is to manage the ongoing response as it evolves. Worse, understanding the emotional body does not happen in a controlled environment, and therefore unforeseen triggers are a common occurrence.

My case is hardly unique. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that one in four women (and one in ten men) experience intimate partner violence within their lifetime, which includes physical and/or sexual abuse, and over 43 million women have reported experiencing psychological aggression. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* published a study in 2018 outlining that those who have experienced trauma are at high risk for forty-one different kinds of autoimmune diseases, including Crohn's disease or rheumatoid arthritis.² Twenty to twenty-five percent of them go on to develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), according to the organization PTSD United. The severity is akin with war veterans, survivors of terrorist attacks such as the events of September 11, 2001, or those who have experienced natural disasters.

The crux of the problem is the body's production of cortisol, the hormone that, amongst many other things, regulates our reaction to stress. Prolonged exposure to stress does not cause autoimmune disorders, but it does dysregulate the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal

(HPA) axis. Amongst other things, this interrupts the circadian rhythm, creates bodily inflammation, and inhibits the production of neurotransmitters. This is the body changing its reaction to stress, becoming permanently impaired, and thus an impetus of autoimmune disorder. It should be noted that autoimmune disorder does not directly result in disease. It does, however, predispose someone with a history of abuse to it.



the burden of this, Heather Sincavage, Duration: 1 hour, performed five times, 2016–18. Image from Tempting Failure Performance Art Festival, London, UK. Photo by Julia Bauer.

My 2016 piece *the burden of this* examines the ongoing negotiation of all of this. The simple performance gesture in the piece is my dragging my body weight in manure. It is symbolic of what my emotional body has created—a difficulty to perform the simplest of actions, such as walking. Instead, I often push and pull myself through a day, often exhausted, often in pain. While it has been many years since I left my explosive situation behind, its ramifications are ever-present. Furthermore, these are silent, inconspicuous ailments, sliced down by comments like “you don’t look sick.” For survivors of abuse, this not only disenfranchises women grappling with physical and mental illness, but also undermines women’s need to care for their mental health, asking them to suffer in silence and not speak about their struggles, normalizing violence against women. I feel comforted that there are studies currently being conducted to further tie illness to PTSD, which shows evidence that we are beginning to change the paradigm. The Tobin Center for Economic Research at Yale University reported that on the onset of the #MeToo movement in 2017,

a 14 percent increase in reporting sexual crimes occurred across twenty-four countries, with a 7 percent increase in the United States. Though research shows that the reporting cut across racial and socioeconomic barriers, it has not meant, however, that justice is served.³

Long-term measures are being taken by the CDC in intimate partner violence reporting. They have created a categorical definition of intimate partner violence (physical, violence, sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression), and are now collecting data through record-based surveillance. The data not only records immediate effects of abuse, but also recognizes that there are long term health issues.

PERFORMING TRAUMA

Trauma memoir recounts discordance, circling around a life shattering event, from which the self-knowledge arrives late, if at all, and with an uncomfortable awareness of the fragility of the Self.

– Roger Luckhurst

I'm not the first to use the method of "practice as research." Nineteenth-century poet Christina Rossetti uses prose as a modern investigation of illness. Her biographer Jan Marsh suspected that Rossetti was a victim of sexual abuse and incest. Rossetti's writing describes symptoms that suggest she suffered from Graves disease, anemia, hypothyroidism, and cancer. She rejects the Victorian understanding of diseases that often were dismissed as "hysteria," a common medical diagnosis for women who experienced anxiety, insomnia, nervousness, loss of appetite, and sexual desire.

This term weaponized the medical field to control (and abuse) women. This is not unlike attitudes today, where women who advocate for themselves are deemed "crazy" or dismissed as shrill and even "nasty." Although women are no longer hospitalized for many of these common health concerns, the stigma exists to minimize or even demonize the health issues that begin with trauma.

In Rossetti's exploration of her illness she writes that "the body fails to recognize the self and the self attacks the self ... [it is] like one work in two volumes."⁴ *the burden of this*, a public intervention where I drag my body weight in manure (a symbol of all my emotional baggage), mirrors this concept. I am "one work in two volumes," performing with my trauma body as a simple somatic metaphor (a term coined by psychotherapist Brian Bloom) that is the physical manifestation of the internal struggle, an attempt at measuring and therefore legitimizing the impact of my trauma. Meant to be a gesture demonstrating how difficult it is to be in my body, the performance of this work attempts to make the intangible tangible.

This is not unlike the concepts introduced by philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who "treats 'measurement' as an ontological concept that concerns the inner scaffolding of the existential field, the 'invisible armature' of the perceived."⁵ Immediate social interaction often underestimates the underlying conditioning for behaviour. That behaviour had to be

learned over time. The emotional body trains the physical (trauma) body as an outward manifestation of PTSD. The result of performing this measurement system is both physically and emotionally taxing. Actions performed by the trauma body paradoxically contribute to the struggle rather than alleviate it.



2375, Heather Sincavage, Duration: 2.5–4 hours, performed four times, 2018–19. Image from Starptelpa-Rīga Performance Festival, Latvia. Photo by Luchana Logina.

A second example is the durational work *2375*, in which I aim to shed trauma that has vexed my mental and physical well-being for two decades. Performed for up to four hours, the performance action holds a symbol of the abject body, ash on my back, and pinches it off into 2,375 piles on the floor, while I count out loud as I go. The number of piles is determined by the amount of days I endured emotional and physical abuse. The ash weighs five pounds, or the approximate equivalent of a cremated woman, which I describe as a “Self” I wish to forget—“one work in two volumes.” This act aims for relief where *the burden of this* could not.

I recognize now that in this equation, in order to shed trauma, I must relive it, and thus am faced with the dilemma of how trauma is perceived and how it might impact myself as the performer and the audience. Discussing abuse automatically unravels from a binary topic of good vs. evil. Outwardly, the victim is perceived as the “cipher of good” who is subjected to evil, though the situation is far more complex. I can attest that abuse often does not unfold as an ongoing terrorization of the victim. The experience relies on the emotional attachments of the victim and abuser, both having different thresholds and

needs. Within the relationship, the victim is often considered the source for the relationship's undoing. Physical and sexual violence are a means to rectify power dynamics, often in the punishment of the victim. Once the victim reports abuse, an exorbitant amount of energy is spent "believing" the victim and proving the abuse. One could argue this is a form of societal abuse of women that perpetuates the patriarchy. As we experience the rise of the #MeToo movement, we are listening to victims, but requiring them to re-experience the crime once again. In that process we find the victims shamed, embarrassed, and treated as evil without any consideration of the physical or psychological impact of trauma.

In *2375*, I count the days/ash piles as they go, varying the inflection and volume of my voice. It's meant as a pathos formula, replaying as an approximate reconstruction of my suffering, registering an effect on the viewer. This, however, lacks accuracy, as it is filtered through loss of memory and moments of disassociation that I experienced when under extreme stress, and simple time passage, as the majority of my experiences happened twenty years ago. The viewer's participation in my reconstruction enacts empathetic unsettlement, where they now find a kinship in their shared experience with me and other witnesses of the work.

At the completion of this work (and other works), I am emotionally drained, which extends over a few days following the piece. In addition (and there is no quantitative evidence of this), viewers tell me that they cry as they observe the performance or feel the urge to comfort me in my anguish, some going as far as to physically touch me. I realize that I have affected them. I have reached a trigger or exposed them to something they did not know was possible. In retrospect, however, I realize that I am potentially causing additional damage by reminding victims of their abuse or creating secondary trauma as a transference of my own.

With this knowledge I decided that it was irresponsible to both myself and viewers to be a source of pain. Not only is rehashing trauma unproductive dialogue in the healing process, it is not an accurate portrayal of it. As psychiatrist Dr. Bessel van der Kolk theorizes, "the history of trauma is a history of repeated gaps and ruptures, with cyclical periods of attention and neglect, of fascination and rejection."⁶ The night of being assaulted, I experienced a disassociation with the event and often, once I remembered it, referred to the assault victim as "her" rather than owning her as "me." One could argue there is probably both a clarity that comes from the not relating with "her," and flaws in recounting the event when I recognize it is "me." This is what makes recounting trauma a difficult task. As an artist, I made work about this, but I was inexperienced in discussing abuse and my work opened the floodgates for viewers to ask for my help in saving their sister/friend/daughter. This became more than I could bear and, as a result, for many years my practice became far more insular and abstract, as I chose to repress and hoped to forget what happened to me. I didn't recognize that I was self-preserving.

Near the end of my marriage, the second abusive relationship, I had been seeing a doctor for a multitude of small physical issues—major fatigue, lack of sleep, upset stomach—nothing that I felt was major, nor anything I would have tied to my relationship. Once I left my husband, my issues improved and my studio practice processed my trauma in allegorical mythology, which actually was a further dissociation from trauma. The work was an abstract attempt at re-establishing my life.

I have spent years building a career as both an educator and an artist. While I spent a tremendous amount of time understanding what it is to be in a healthy romantic partnership, my professional career presented new experiences with misogyny, manipulation, and discrimination. My health issues became more serious and, in retrospect, these unfolded as I began formal proceedings of harassment and gender discrimination against a department colleague. At that point, fifteen years after experiencing assault, rape, stalking, and psychological abuse with two prior romantic partners, it was coming into focus that the anxiety induced by enduring, then standing up to an oppressor was linked to my physical well-being. As Luckhurst states, “self-knowledge arrives late, if ever”⁷; however, he does not suggest that self-knowledge will provide any relief, just an opportunity to unravel the condition, and it may be potentially triggering.



As my autoimmune issues are slow to improve, I cannot ignore that I am contributing to their severity through flawed regurgitation of my past and fighting with how to integrate it into my life. This is a new realization, and *2375* was recently performed for its last time due to these issues.

ONGOING LABOUR

As evidenced by my ongoing autoimmune issues and illness, traumatic memory is an issue of the present. Describing Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), trauma theorist Cathy Caruth observes in her seminal work *Unclaimed Experience* that trauma is not known the moment it happens but instead divulges itself later. This is precisely the stage I am looking to address, using myself as a case study.



The Dividing Line [shifts], Heather Sincavage, still frame from performance to video, duration: 10:43 mins. Recorded at Litehaus Galerie + Projektraum during Centre for Substructured Loss artist residency, Berlin, Germany, 2019.

In 2019, I developed a new structure for building a performance. Where I once began with either my history or my illness, I now establish entry points into my work that begin with questions on understanding where I currently am with my trauma. In doing this, a major theme arose around the creation of boundaries, which stretches across my creative process to the viewer–performer relationship, even to my personal life as a survivor of abuse. Materiality and labour are now beginning considerations in creating somatic metaphor.

I find the public testimony or re-enactment of my abuse less relevant, as it is harmful for me and others to (re)experience. It is, however, underestimated how much we silently labour for normalcy. Instead of a live performance, *The Dividing Line [shifts]* (2019) is pre-recorded.

The relationship of performer to camera is an exploration of the fragile boundaries between abused women and the archetypes they face. As I have outlined, models for behaviour do not begin and end with specific people but instead dictate how we will interact with others in the future. For instance, hearing someone raise their voice, whether it is directed at me or not, causes my heart rate to increase, tensing throughout my body, and tightness in my breathing. My body does not delineate the severity of the situation, it merely reacts out of many years of conditioning. The performance explores the cycle of what it is to learn behaviour, the boundaries we create for self-preservation, and the discovery of when new boundaries are needed.

Creating such a process (and realizing that one needs such a process) requires a challenging self-awareness and being willing to accept one's responsibility in each situation one is faced with. This requires a tremendous amount of emotional labour. Representing labour, the repetition of gestures factor heavily within the work. The performance is conducted over five acts, or "shifts." Throughout the performance I interact with a bowl of eggs and relate directly with the camera as if in dialogue with it. In choosing eggs as my medium, I not only rely on their associations with change, fragility, and vulnerability, but also make connections with cooking, the kitchen, and "women's work."

While the shaping of the self begins in the home, the "shifts" are a progression of discovery of the self, how I apply that discovery, the collapse of fulfilling expectations of my gender, and defiance of gender stereotypes. As a repetitive cycle, the eggs roll and break; the shells are either carefully or anxiously applied to my ears. Their application creates a brittle boundary that is an attempt to regain autonomy from archetypes that influence and shape behaviour. Through repetition, the piece places responsibility on the performer to define behavioural patterns, learning from what the cycle presents.

A significant difference from *the burden of this* and *2375* is that *The Dividing Line [shifts]* directly addresses the viewer, while the previous performances passively interacted with material without concern of the viewer. *The Dividing Line [shifts]* confronts the expectations of gender, trauma, and self. This face-to-face encounter asks the viewer to consider their level of involvement. The sheer fact of viewing the work becomes a political act because not only do they view the aftereffects of trauma, they may choose to engage or dismiss them. This concept is introduced by post-colonial theorist Gayatri Spivak, who writes that "we all know that when we engage profoundly with one person, the responses come from both sides: this is responsibility and accountability. ... The object of ethical action is not an object of benevolence, for here responses flow from both sides."⁸ Whether or not there is response and engagement with the *The Dividing Line [shifts]*, performance becomes the viewer's political gesture.

Performing *the burden of this* or *2375* suggests that I invoke empathetic unsettlement in viewers. I used that knowledge when forming *The Dividing Line [shifts]*. In *The Dividing Line [shifts]*, I focus on the camera, and therefore the viewer. The viewer chooses to watch and be confronted by my actions or walk away. The intention is to regain autonomy in numerous ways: I am attempting to erect or re-establish emotional boundaries for myself, thus taking power away from others who have controlled me; to display the honest work and frustration it takes to be seen as normal—without illness and in command of myself and my body; and to be in full control of my image, not leaving it for the interpretation of a third party.

There is labour in all of this, so the larger question is: To what extent will viewers acknowledge the labour women must perform for normalcy? Knowing the answer will require me to interview the observers, an opportunity that has yet to present itself.

As mentioned, my latest performance also introduces another factor absent in the previous two performances, which is control of documentation. While in the former two pieces, I relied on an outside source to photograph my work, in *The Dividing Line [shifts]* I operate the camera on my own. As the performer, I confront the camera/archetype for the performance, but intentionally edit the video to serve as a stand-in for the internal monologue. No longer is the performance divided between performer and abject body—“one work in two volumes.” It now confronts issues trauma has created, presenting action and emotional response simultaneously.

SHIFTING THE PARADIGM

I have spent twenty years with a lack of control—of my health, of understanding the extent of what happened to me, of how others treat me because I am a victim of violence. My practice, in some cases, uncovers my ongoing vulnerabilities, but universally I aim to be part of shifting the paradigm. As part of this, while I see there is solidarity in consciousness-raising by sharing our experiences, performing them is causing more harm than resolution. Shifting the paradigm means that we are in an age where we cannot punish victims for what happened to them, but we can recognize with empathy that there are ways toward healing and changing how we view victims of violence.

Furthermore, new procedures are required to investigate, prosecute, and research patterns of abuse. Shifting the paradigm requires us as a society to create better strategies for victims to come forward and receive respect for what they have endured. My practice will not solve these issues, but what I do aim to reconcile is that we should not be a society where we encourage our victims to be silent. When we do this, we normalize violence against women, sentencing them to years of unjust emotional and physical pain.

As I move forward with my practice, efficacy is regaining the autonomy over my body, image, and identity that I lost through abuse and illness. The measures I am taking to do so require an examination of the power dynamics of how we view victims and having the strength and clarity to continue to push forward. The very urgent reality, however, is to manage stress and anxiety day-to-day. Unraveling years of learned behaviour is a true hurdle, even though I now have a better understanding of how I acquired my illnesses. Performing, however, ultimately hinges on my physical and mental health, both of which grapple with the unpredictable cycle trauma creates. Deciding not to rehash my past is the definitive boundary between pain and healing. My emotional body requires new patterns of behaviour, and my trauma body a respite from pain and an opportunity for restoration.

3. THE POLITICAL LIFE OF ANXIOUS EMBODIMENT

A.T. KINGSMITH

Sometimes the shaking just won't stop. You take deep breaths, trying to relax each muscle in your body one at a time. You kick the blankets off and then pull them up again. You take sips of the water on your nightstand to keep from throwing up, but it's tough to swallow. Still, no matter what you do, you tremble furiously as you lay in bed, trying to fall asleep. You feel frustrated, helpless, isolated.

In the daytime things get easier, but not by much. You are dizzy and lightheaded often. It is difficult to eat a meal or hold down a conversation. Hypertension, respiratory ailments, gastrointestinal disturbances, migraine and tension headaches, pelvic pain, impotence, frigidity, dermatitis, ulcers and insomnia cloud the horizon. The future feels ambiguous, a constant and intractable weight from which there is little reprieve.

Such is the life of *anxious embodiment*—the variant lines, scars and cracks that colour our bodies like a long drought marks the rings of a timeworn tree trunk. When discussed at all, these markings are attributed to faulty thought patterns, poor adaptation, or biochemical imbalances. Yet the stories our bodies tell are not of personal psychological problems, they are the embodied narratives of neoliberalism—enlivened through contact with non-self-determined insecurities that restrict precarious, gendered, racialised, and otherwise deviant bodies from access to the means to flourish.

By chronicling the psychosomatic trauma of neoliberalism, this chapter explores how modern embodiment is rendered anxious through an affective atmosphere that entrains people to experience certain emotions over others, suggests rules for their expression, and defines what bodies are “allowed” to feel within a given context. “Atmosphere,” as Ben Anderson highlights, refers to a mood or structure of feeling that fundamentally exceeds an individual body and instead pertains primarily to the overall situation in which bodies are entrenched.¹ Anxiety, in this regard, is a singular affective quality that emanates from but exceeds the assembling of bodies under neoliberalism.

The central argument emphasized here is that within the current political and social framework of neoliberalism, our bodies are encircled by an atmosphere of anxiety, which generates a climate of psychosomatic insecurity that cannot be addressed in so far as mental health continues to be framed primarily as a personal deficiency.

By elaborating on the fundamental paradox of anxiety—something that elicited action now engenders paralysis—the chapter pinpoints how people’s intolerance for uncertainty is manipulated (both through conscious and subconscious mechanisms) across everyday life to render bodies as insecure and thus more easily governable. In particular, the concept of “the bruxist body” is introduced to accentuate the psychosomatic and socio-economic feedback loops indicated by the proliferation of bruxism—the multifactorial repetitive jaw muscle activity characterized by the clenching or grinding of teeth.

ATMOSPHERES OF ANXIETY

As an everyday emotion, anxiety—that ominous uncertainty—can be a good thing, prompting us to take extra precautions. For thousands of years, anxious embodiments were important and necessary responses to potential threats in an environment. But the psychosomatic mechanisms that once worked to protect us and assure security—preparing the body for a crisis by putting it on alert—have become twisted and misdirected, no longer capable of eliciting action or responsiveness. When anxiety persists in the absence of a need to fight or flee, it not only interferes with our daily lives, it also undermines our physical and mental health.

So, while anxiousness, as Mark Fisher has noted, can serve important biological and neurological functions, this tells us nothing about why more and more people are gripped by it today.² Understanding the cause, Fisher points out, requires a social and political explanation. The concept of affective atmospheres helps to uncover these social and political forces because it challenges the notion of feelings as the private mental states of a cognizant subject and instead construes feelings as collectively embodied, spatially intertwined, material, and culturally inflected.

The use of atmosphere in everyday speech provides the best approximation of the operations of affect. Following from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s conception of affect as “transpersonal or pre-personal intensities that emerge as bodies affect each other,” anxious embodiments take on the dynamic, kinetic, qualities of the atmos: “no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them.”³ Thus the atmosphere, as Friedlind Riedel highlights, provides a *mereological* framework that helps to focus on both the disparate parts and the wholes they form:

While “affect” refers to the ways in which (emerging) bodies relate to each other (→affect), “atmosphere” describes the ways in which a multiplicity of bodies is part of, and entrenched in, a situation that encompasses it. In this respect, atmospheres tend to be contagious, as they wield authority over the entirety of bodies in a situation.⁴

In his work rethinking environmental aesthetics, Timothy Morton conceives of the saturating characteristics of atmospheres as “renderings”: masses of bodies, forces, infrastructures, and elements rendered in one all-encompassing rhythm or tone.⁵ They cannot be reduced to a single specific source, experience or situation. Instead, affective atmospheres are modes in which the social world coalesces into an indivisible and intensive situation through which groups of bodies come to exist as felt collectives. They not only highlight

palpable shared experiences but can dictate potential futures and render repressed and alienating feelings abundantly present.

Importantly, these felt collectives are not mental projections “into the world” but have a material presence and pertain to embodied processes of involvement. Today, according to the World Health Atlas, anxiety-related disorders, panic disorders, and social phobia are the leading cause of disability worldwide.⁶ What’s more, Google Trends show that between 2004 and 2020 search interest in “anxiety” increased by over 160 per cent.

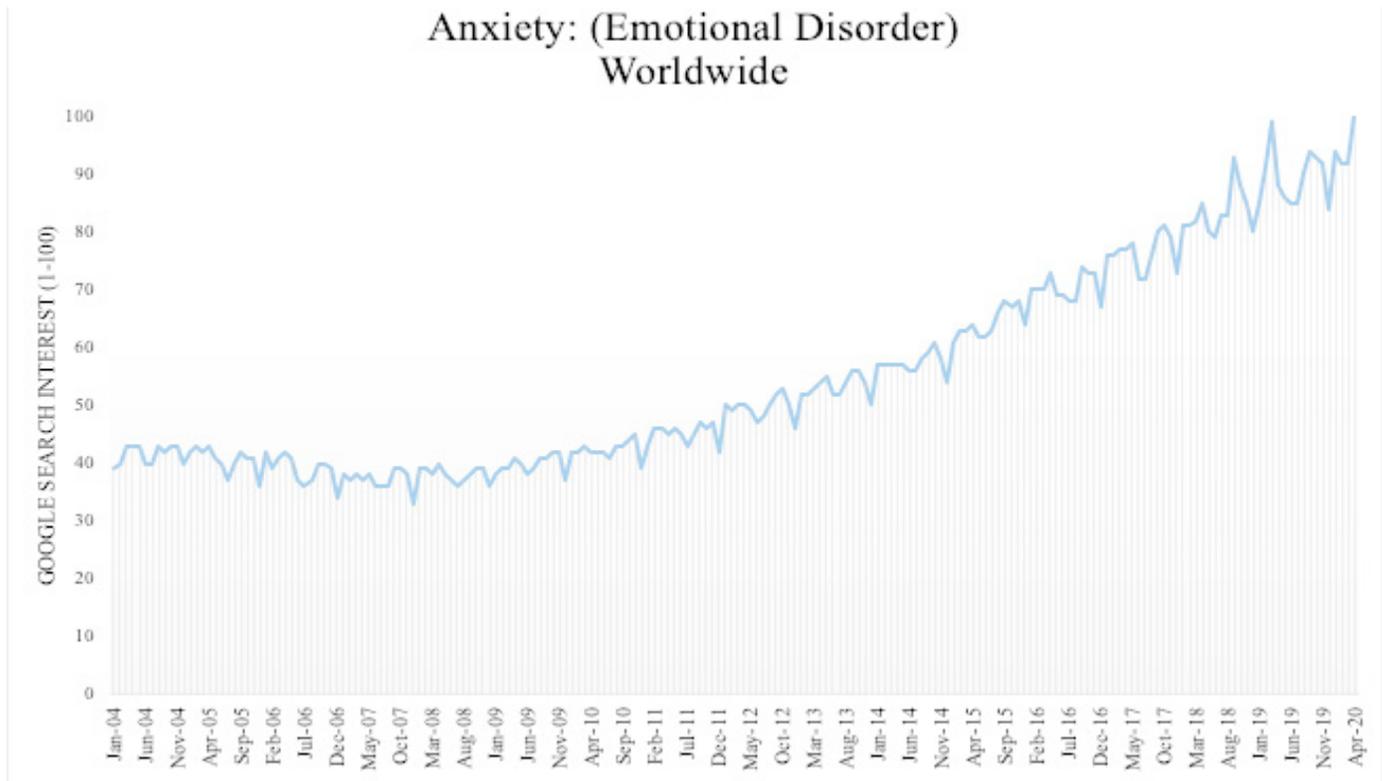


Figure 1: Google Search Queries for Anxiety, Worldwide, January 2004–April 2020

During this same period, relative search term interest in “work anxiety” rose 200 per cent, while “anxiety help” ballooned by over 600 per cent.⁷ While related fears about “panic,” “depression,” and “stress” have remained remarkably consistent for the past two decades, concerns about anxiety continue to swing upwards, couched in qualifiers including “economic anxiety,” “cultural anxiety,” and “racial anxiety” that highlight the increasingly politicalized nature of the problem.

With headlines warning of the unremitting dangers wrought by the global pandemic, the climate catastrophe, and the economic uncertainties that have followed from both, it is no surprise people are feeling more insecure. Around the world, reports of suicide, depression, anxiety, and related disorders have increased exponentially in the decade since the financial crash.⁸ But the extent to which the early years of the 21st century have witnessed a worldwide epidemic of poor mental health and related illnesses remains a “public secret”—a problem that many people experience yet few openly discuss or acknowledge.

As something that is “officially” (de jure) secret and restricted, but also widely (de facto) known and widespread, feelings of anxiety end up further stigmatizing sufferers for suffering that is not only linked to social factors but are initiated and intensified by them. According to David Neilson, this is because people often insulate themselves from the escalating stresses of modernity by dismissing reports of increasing insecurity as exaggerated. Such practices of insulation are driven by a denial that enables us to “go on” despite constant and debilitating anxieties: “The simplest and most complete form of the denial of precarity is to pretend that nothing has changed. Such pretense is reinforced by various forms of forgetting, escaping, deferring, delusion, and diversion.”⁹

In response to deepening insecurities caused by the breakdown of various forms of welfare and security, people tend to disavow the truth of their dependence, interdependence and vulnerability. Yet as an atmosphere, anxiety hints towards the existence of something more fundamental, to a particular structure, which produces anxious bodies. Everywhere we can see the residual effects of this structure, which exacerbate uncertainties about environmental sustainability, financial stability, physical health and social inclusion that permeate our affective condition, intensifying feelings of nervousness towards the future and what detrimental realities it might unfold.

PSYCHOSOMATIC INSECURITY

Such highly unstable, precarious and insecure times escalate our anxieties while governing practices work to channel the resultant psychosomatic insecurities towards particular threats, such as migration, radicalization, the war on terror, austerity, etc. Here the atmosphere of anxiety is fashioned into a governance strategy through various discourses and infrastructures of public, personal and workplace surveillance, policing, and control, which give bodies an illusion of control and safety in return for greater conformity and self-regulation. Importantly, it is this implicit yet mandatory exchange of complacency and compliancy—with norms, institutions, power structures, hierarchies—for convenience and comfort that characterize the public secret of anxiety.

What’s more, the fact that firms such as “Cambridge Analytica” and state surveillance agencies can apply sentiment analyses to ascribe positive or negative emotional valence to social media posts, comments, and shares to detect and diagnose depressive disorders and anxieties brings to the fore new concerns about security, privacy, and the function of digital platforms in deepening our anxieties.¹⁰ Entranced by the modern-day mythology that with more data comes greater worker efficiency, many industries, from health care to education, are repositioning themselves for large-scale data gathering by way of video surveillance, radio frequency identification chips, GPS tracking, keystroke monitoring, AI-directed facial recognition software and more.

All of this points to a fundamental problem. When journalists, public officials, and mental health professionals speak and write about anxiety, they tend to do so in vague and indirect ways. Through a focus on impairment and difference, they often emphasize what is “wrong” or “deviant” with an individual person while bracketing the social, economic, and political factors directly linked to the proliferation of anxiety. By emphasizing the criminal justice system as a frequent consequence of erratic or non-normative behaviours and feelings or regularly endorsing costly drug treatments as permanent solutions such

discourses deny the atmospheric conditions of anxiety.

It is not that psychosomatic insecurities are either present or absent within this atmospheric context of neoliberalism. As a fundamental condition of political and social existence, anxiety is always “here,” but different manipulating strategies make us more or less aware of it. And while it would be an oversimplification to argue that every case of anxiety can be attributed to economic or political causes; it is equally facile to maintain—as dominant approaches to mental health often do—that the roots of all anxious embodiments are reducible to brain chemistry or early childhood experiences.

As a multifactorial response to uncertainty, anxiety can be categorized first and foremost as a psychosocial and psychosomatic disorder—a condition in which one’s psychological stresses adversely affect their physiological (somatic) functioning to the point of widespread distress. Developed in 1994 by researchers at L’Université du Québec à Montréal, the Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale (IUS) quantifies the body’s response to uncertainty by assessing emotional, cognitive and behavioural reactions to ambiguous situations, the implications of being uncertain, and attempts to control the future.¹¹

Published under the title “Why do people worry?” their findings highlight strong links between a high intolerance of uncertainty (IU) and several anxiety disorders as well as less direct correlations with eating disorders and depression. While much of this research has been done on generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), for which IU seems to be a causal risk factor—the conclusions emphasize the lack of a clear-cut break between subclinical or everyday anxiousness and diagnosed anxiety. Thus anxiety is embodied on a continuum: people with GAD are on the extreme end of uncertainty, but their experience of insecurity are not that different from anyone else’s, there’s just much more of it.

Uncertainty is a necessary condition for anxiety of any kind. In this regard, anxiety is different from fear, which is a negatively valenced emotion. Fear is abrupt and focused on the present. It occurs in situations of specific threat, and aids in avoidance or escape. One “fears” or has a “fear” that can be located, represented. If the object of anxiety was completely predictable, or currently happening (so there’s no more ambiguity), you wouldn’t be anxious about it, you would fear it. But anxiety does not require a triggering stimulus. There is no “fight or flight” mechanism, only sustained hyperarousal—a future-focused uncertainty in a world of constant risk assessment.

So not knowing what to do, not knowing what’s going to happen, not knowing what other people are thinking and feeling, while also being held personally responsible for any ailments—these situations are ripe to breed anxiety in anyone, depending on how well they are able to tolerate psychosomatic insecurity. With such uncertainties comes immanent paralysis, protracted worry, and panicked anticipations that animate deep concerns about purpose, debt, love, addiction, loss, displacement, and all the anxieties yet to come. When this persists in the long term, it takes a drastic toll on our bodies.

And so, we return to the central paradox of anxious embodiment. A human trait that originally prompted action now generates troubling feelings of paralysis. Mental health experts postulate that, when anxious, people tend to get trapped in false, limited or otherwise incapacitating ways of thinking. These thought patterns create a debilitating spiral that can take over one's life by convincing them of impending doom and further exacerbating a persistent feeling of helplessness. In this regard, the insecurities wrought by anxiety have been implicated in several serious physical illnesses, including heart disease, chronic respiratory disorders, and gastrointestinal conditions.

Research on the psychosomatics of anxiety-related illness is still young, but there's already extensive evidence of the mutual influence between emotions and physical health.¹² When people with other disorders have untreated anxiety, the problem itself is more difficult to address, physical symptoms become worse, and in some cases they can die sooner. What's more, anxiety often goes unidentified as a source of other disorders, such as substance abuse or addiction, which can result from attempts to quell feelings of anxiousness. And it's also overlooked in the myriad symptoms of chronic conditions like irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or migraines.

When asked to describe what one's negative embodiments feel like, people have lots of different answers. One person might get headaches, another ringing in the ears, a third clicking and locking of the jaw, a fourth pain on the sides and back of the head and neck. What we know is happening when people are experiencing these symptoms is that their body has gotten ratcheted up and has lost its ability to calm back down. But what people are often unaware of is the fact that all these symptoms are also directly connected to a phenomenon called temp-oro-mandibular disorder or "bruxism."

Up to three-fourths of people display one or more signs of the bruxist body, most of which come and go and finally disappear on their own. Yet specialists also estimate 20 percent to 30 percent of people with symptoms need treatment.¹³ Popularly called TMJ, for the joint where the upper and lower jaws meet, the problem was originally thought to stem from dental malocclusion—that is, upper and lower teeth misalignment—and improper jaw position. That prompted a cosmetic focus on replacing missing teeth and fitting patients with braces to realign their teeth and jaws in more conventional ways.

However, recent studies reveal that tooth misalignment itself is an infrequent cause of facial pain.¹⁴ Instead, psychological and social factors play the central role, especially depression, stress, alienation and precarity. We know these anxieties are directly linked to the experience of pain in general. When people feel anxious, they change the way they hold their bodies—they become more tense. In this regard, bruxism functions as a kind of perpetual motion machine, as intensifying symptoms resulting from the anxious operations of the body increase the feeling of being stressed, this drives a feedback loop that worsens jaw-irritating habits like clenching teeth, tooth grinding at night, biting the lips or fingernails, chewing gum or chewing on a pencil.

Bruxism is an important case study on the affects anxious embodiment. As a multifactorial issue—with behavioural, environmental, social, emotional and cognitive factors contributing to the combined development of the signs and symptoms of TMJ—changing

approaches to bruxism highlight some of the ways in which care and treatment are being reoriented towards a focus on the affective atmospheres in which psychosomatic insecurities are managed and produced. At the same time, these shifts are both too slow moving and remain largely focused on the categories of individual bodies. For if we accept our affective conditions are atmospheric and thus collective—and moreover, that negative affective states aggregate through feedback loops that exacerbate the problem—it is clear that we need new ways of thinking about the political life of anxious embodiment.

In “Illusion and Reality: The Meaning of Anxiety,” David Smail observes all the ways in which the neoliberal mantra first coined by Margaret Thatcher—“there’s no such thing as society, only individuals”—finds an unacknowledged echo in almost all approaches to therapy.¹⁵ Strategies such as cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) combine a focus on early life with a self-help doctrine that posits individuals must simply become masters of their own destinies. The idea is that with the expert guidance of your therapist or counsellor, you can overcome everyday social and professional triggers of anxiety, which you are held entirely responsible for, so that you can get back to functioning more “normally.”

Smail refers to this individual diagnosis and treatment fantasy as a sort of “magical voluntarism.” Increased insecurity, as Mark Fisher elaborates, is the shadowy side of this fetishizing of personal responsibility.¹⁶ In this regard, our modern atmosphere of anxiety is what happens when this magical voluntarism confronts the real precarities and limited opportunities of neoliberal capitalism.

Across this entrepreneurial fantasy, we are taught that only the affluent are truly winners and that access to the top is open to anyone willing to work hard, regardless of their familial, ethnic or social background. Everywhere we are reminded that if you do not succeed, there is only one person to blame. This brief catalogue of the political life of anxious embodiment serves as a call to thought and to action—now is the time we must work together to place this blame elsewhere.

4. SERAPHIMA: A SCRIPT FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF ENDURANCE

TATIANA KOROLEVA

I carry you in my body as if you were my child, yet you are a complete stranger to me. Every time I attempt to perform your past, my body starts aching as if I ran a day-long marathon: my muscles are sore and unable to relax, my stomach is tight, and my hands are shaky. Your past, which I know so little about, is stuck in my throat as an old song. I do not know how to sing it.

You were born in 1895 in the village of Zobnino in the Ural Mountains. Your father, Ivan, was a merchant, your mother died when you were four years old. Ivan got married the second time to a woman named Maria—babka Maria, as you used to call her. Maria was too strict and too jealous to love you. You were often beaten up for not cleaning up the house well enough or for over-salting the borsch you cooked ... Maybe for that reason, you fell in love so early and so desperately with a poor worker who was fixing the roof of your father's house one summer morning. Matvei was hardly a match to you, a sixteen-year-old merchant's daughter with a thick braid and enormous eyes the colour of an evening sky in August.

Your father locked you up in your bedroom on the second floor so you could forget that beggar, Matvei. But every sunrise your lover sneaked daisies and wild raspberries to your window. You two were plotting an escape. During your father's daily visits to your room, you screamed, cried, and threatened him that you would jump out of the window. ВСЕ РАВНО ЗА МАТВЕЙКУ ПОЙДУ. ВЫБРОШУСЬ ИЗ ОКНА – ПУСТИ ТЯТЯ, ЛЮБЛЮ ЕГО.

You did jump out of the window and ran away with Matvei in the beginning of the fall, when the leaves on the maple tree by your window were turning copper. You married him secretly without guests and approval of your tyatya. And when you two knocked on the door of your father's house few weeks later, he had no choice but to accept Matvei into the family.



Tatiana Koroleva, *The Bread of My Foremothers*. Sofia Underground Festival, 2017.

Every time I try to talk about you, Seraphima, I feel myself a liar, who has no right to speak of your holy name. Somehow, I know you were so much more than I can ever imagine—more wholesome, more generous, more attractive, more compassionate. And most importantly, you once were ... just like me, embodied, in-bodied, walking the same Earth, looking at the same moon, seeing the same green in the spring and golden in the fall, sleeping, eating, drinking, breathing, just like me. And yet, I cannot imagine you more than a storyline, a fairy-tale ...

Seraphima was your name and you loved a man called Matvei who fought in World War One, and who got captured by Germans. You did not know if he was dead or alive for two years. You spent countless nights praying for him to a holy virgin, drinking your own tears, feasting on your own desperation. ДЕВА МАРИЯ, СПАСИ СОХРАНИ МАТВЕЮШКУ, ПУСТЬ ВЕРНЕТСЯ ЦЕЛЫЙ И НЕВРЕДИМЫЙ, ПУСТЬ УВИЖУ ЕГО ЕЩЕ ХОТЬ ОДИН РАЗ. Please, let me see him one more time, let me touch his unruly curls, kiss his rough cheeks, smell his sweat of hay and melting snow in April. Let me love him one more time ...

And one day in the middle of the winter of 1918 he returned crippled, but alive, carrying a medal on his chest and your smile in his heart. And you had five children, three of whom survived: Klavdia, Valentina, and Anatolyi. All of you lived in a small one-bedroom house you inherited from your aunt, in the village of Zobnino in the Ural mountains, drinking milk from your cow Nochka every morning, eating tyurya and buckwheat all winter, and



Tatiana Koroleva, *The Bread of My Foremothers*. LiveART.US, Queens Museum, NY, 2017.

contemplating the endless green of spruces and cedars around your house. The Ural forest that you loved so dearly.

One week in November of 1932 was particularly rainy and stormy. Your neighbour paid Matvei double to fix the leaking roof of his house. Matvei spent three days working in the wind and rain, rushing to finish the work and to secure some money for a long winter

with no work. He got sick. You thought that his fever and cough were the symptoms of an ordinary cold. But a few days later he started having difficulties breathing. Having no doctor in your remote village in the mountains you could not treat his pneumonia promptly. On November 18, 1932, Matvei didn't wake up; he suffocated in his sleep.

From then on it was a very poor life. Your father Ivan was dispossessed during dekulakization by the new Soviet government, and sent to a detention camp in Western Siberia, the settlement of Surgut. His house was burnt to the ground, and their horses and cows were re-appropriated by the Soviet komitet of Zobnino. He and his wife Maria were taken in the middle of the winter, put on the sled, and carried out in the unknown direction. They were allowed to take only what they were able to put on themselves while running out of the burning house ... Probably a pair of felt boots, a shawl, a coat.

I look at your photo. You are not smiling. Your mouth is tense, the lips pressed shut keeping numberless secrets. Your eyes are talking. A hard look of tremendous hardship you had to go through to survive. I see your forceful will and your determination to keep living no matter what. You look at me from the other side of suffering that I can barely imagine.



Tatiana Koroleva, *The Bread of My Foremothers*. Sofia Underground Festival, 2017.

In the fall of 1933, a new wave of collectivisation began. A group of men came to your house and demanded you give them your cow and six chickens, the only animals you had. They also took all the bags of grain and potatoes you had secured for the coming winter, working day and night in the fields, and cleaning the houses and sewing dresses and trousers for wealthier villagers. You and your children were left with no food for the coming winter. That day you wanted to hang yourself. Your daughter Valentina found you in the cowshed with the rope in your hands. She started crying hugging your knees and begging you not to die. You didn't die. You took Valentina by her hand and, looking into her eyes, you said that you had no food left for her and her siblings, and that from now on you all have no choice but to beg for food on the streets. Valentina didn't understand much of what you were saying, she only saw you being extremely upset and could not disobey. You gave Valentina a cotton bag and sent her out, not being able to hug her before she left.

In 1942, soon after, during another great war, food started disappearing again. In spring you and other women went to the fields and looked for last year's potatoes. Frozen during the winter, the potatoes were soft and tasteless. You used to make flour from those pota-

toes and cook soup that looked and tasted very much like potato starch. Valentina was almost taken to war at the age of sixteen as a sniper, but she was rejected after her eye exam. She was myopic, and instead of being killed as most of her girlfriends, she was assigned to teach physical education at the local secondary school. Soon, she started to receive teacher's food allowance. Therefore, you and you kids ate more than just potato starch, but a potato starch mixed with corn flour and, occasionally, oatmeal. All of you survived the war.



Tatiana Koroleva, *My Predecessors Had a Hard Look*, FAPTR – F.

At the bottom of my sadness, I see your eyes, Seraphima. I see the eyes of all women who had to toughen up to survive, who had to numb their broken hearts for the sake of their children, who stopped thinking about their own self-interest, comfort, and limits of physical and mental survival in order to give—food, shelter, help, support. In order to give life.

I see unresolved pain, deep knowledge of life's unpredictable cruelty, which you, eventually, learned to call God's will; the realisation that there is no escape from the trials that have been planned long before you were born. Where are you now, Seraphima? Do you still walk the heavenly forests of your dear Ural Mountains, singing Kazaks' songs and looking for sweet cowberries frozen after the first September frost? What sky do you see above your head?

... And when I write these words in a language you cannot understand, in a city you don't know exists on the other side of the great ocean, I feel so close to you. I can almost hear you laughing. And then you appear under my closed eyelids. You are twenty, your hair is loose, your eyes, as I can see now, are gray-green, like your favourite gooseberries, your feet are light and fast. You run barefoot through the morning field of clover and dandelions, your arms wide open, and your mouth smiling. You are perfect, because now and forever you are. And you are only beginning to live.

ECO-PERFORMANCE /
RELATIONSHIP TO PLACE

5. TRANSLOCATION, POLYTIME, AND JOY IN ECO-PERFORMANCE SOMADANCE

CHRISTINE cricri BELLEROSE

English: locate

Latin: locus (place / location)

To locate: a relationship between the body and / or mind in the act of *locating* and *geolocation*.

Translocation is the sense of finding (locating) the place where I stand (location) in relationship to finding out (locating) who / what else, through time, stood / stands / will stand in the place where I stand. In defining translocation thus, I assume the echoes of those of the past, and echoes of those from the future co-in-habit the place of my performance. Where I stand, there stood, and will stand. One of the many ways to experience translocation via somatic sensing is to experience an assemblage of polytime in a single place. I explore this dimension through eco-performance somadance.

This piece is a descriptive account of experiencing translocation through sensing across, beyond, and through time, as it manifests in the movements I dance. This manner of movement is a process and an outcome of a lived experience; of a real or imagined felt temporality in one place. Somatic sensing is a methodological approach I adopt in my eco-performance somadance. Somatic is defined as an inner experience. In its phenomenological skin, somatic is the inner experience of lifeworld—the somatic sensing of an experience of the self, the other, and the self as it is located within its environment.

This self-reflective exercise is done through re-viewing (in 2020) four videos from the ones I recorded to document my eco-performance somadance at *La maison aux volets jaunes* (2018).

LA MAISON AUX VOLETS JAUNES (2018)¹

I want to talk about my experience of seeing Sylvie Tourangeau in polytime single-place; my experience of her is as she sat in the hay field with the other workshop participants. Sylvie was looking at me performing. I was performing, not especially engaged in performing for her, but aware of her emplacement.

It is summer in Ste-Agathe-de-Lotbinière. The land is dry. The sun is scorching hot. I survive a heat stroke by spraying myself with a water hose. My wet clothes hang heavy on my body for just long enough to cool me down. My skin breathes.

The wind blows by gusts. When it rolls in uninterrupted, it is a wind that comes from as far as the otherworld.² When the wind dies down, I am not entirely alone.

I am keenly aware that Sylvie is looking at me. I let the wind die down. I attune to the place where I am. I have set a marker on the cut grass. The marker is a bunch of pruned branches arranged in a circle; the branches are thick enough for good wood starter. I have placed an empty nest in its middle.³

Although this is a solo eco-performance somadance, I am in contact with the ecology of this time and place in space. My task to amplify *time* is a co-performance. I begin my performance alone.

On my first try, I end the performance a minute short of what Sylvie has allotted. I say, “J’ai essayer de reprendre contact” (Eng.: *I tried to get back into the contact zone*).

My task is to presence time.⁴ In this task I shape-shift my body into a dance, as time too shifts shapes. Time and me do our own dance; we also dance together. I allow being danced by time. Sylvie tells me to play with the density of my amplitude, and to manifest contour. At the time, I understand manifesting contour as making visible my experience to the audience. Two years later, I understand manifesting contour as an act of owning my experience, but also, giving back the insight I took from the wind / time. In this way, manifesting contour is akin to signaling my presence into the world—a sort of declaration of reciprocity. By manifesting contour, I make clear my position in this time. Once the coordinates of my location stand clear, time can locate me.

Time visits me. This is how I understand practicing harmonizing time:

Harmonizing = making harmonics = poly. Harmonizing time = making time harmonics = polytime.

Right away as I manifest contour, I make visible a sense of presence. This sense of presencing brings a smile to my face. The mix of manifesting contour with an intent to amplify my experience of time allows me to play with rhythmic harmonizing and speed shifts.

Is this joy I experience?

In the second video, the participants are shown to sit closer to me. I am still wearing the fringes from the first video,⁵ but have left my umbrella prop on the ground. It nevertheless is present in the space where I perform, precisely located on the outer sphere of the hexagonal circle of branches. The performance begins. From sitting down, I stand up and look over to one of the participants.

This look I presence is a look of reaching out from across time. In French we say, “*outré tombe*” (Eng.: *from the dead*, but literally, *from the outer-side of the tomb*, i.e., other-world). I know Sylvie’s post-performance critique that what I see on the video (2020), she also has seen live (2018).

In this iteration of the exercise, I am tasking myself to work with an inner and an outer experienced quality of density, in an effort to build presencing amplitude. I begin the performance. Eventually, time harmonizes. I experience a sense of past time in present time. My body shape-shifts in dance. A sense of time shapes-shifts. I pick up my umbrella and begin dancing together, negotiating in alternation, the absent wind and the gusts of wind.

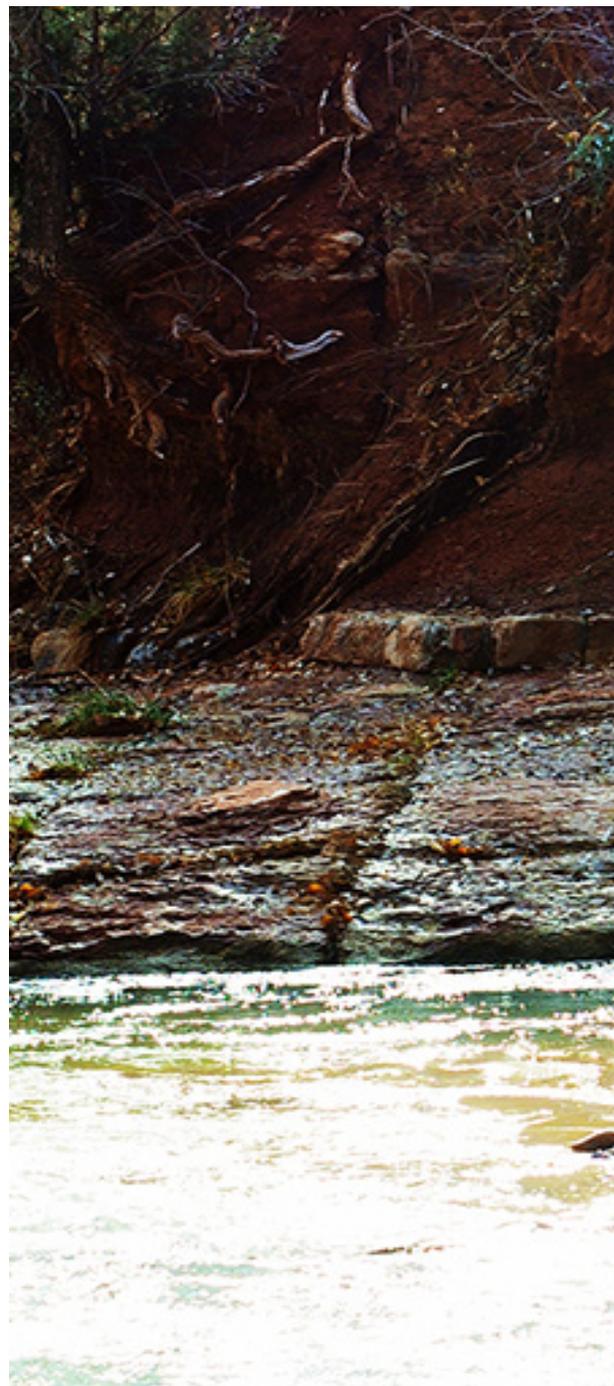
I remain in the performance while also allowing myself a side glance at Sylvie. She sits with the other participants. Presently, I see she sits in a time different from the time the other participants sit in. In that other harmonic of time, Sylvie is wearing a yellow head scarf. It flows in the wind. The fabric is almost transparent. It looks like a ghostly fabric. The wind blows the short triangular fabric away from her face in a straight line behind her.

I stare intently at Sylvie while continuing to twirl my heavy umbrella. I continue to expose my inner experience. It lies on the surface of my skin. It leaps through my body, giving me the strengths to contort, to lift my heavy umbrella, to run, to find the urge to grab a fistful of flowing fabric strands, and to dance my prop and I through this inner experience. My lived experiences manifest as artistically moving gestures.

At that very moment of exploration, I am still on task to work on density. I let amplitude take over density, and the resulting presencing shows a much more animated performance.

Sylvie sits there in a time harmonized five generations past. The experience is so visceral, it is as if a film is being screened on the interior of my skull, showing me, one after another, the families who have lived here, and who have tended to the very hay field I am standing on. I will see that ghostly head scarf for quite some time. Eventually, the vision goes away.

The dance comes to an end. It has not been my most aesthetically articulated performance of the workshop. But I have seen time differently. In her coaching notes, Sylvie confirms my vision without me having told her of my own visions.



In the following experiences, I am calmer and move slower, but move swiftly too. The wind has engaged with me in such a manner that I am being danced by the devil's ghost! I now have such an urge to hold space for polytime phenomena to manifest. My goal now is to maintain the polytime somatic sense, to presence it, and to move, artfully and aesthetically strong, through the experience of it.

At the same time, I have acquired a sense of augmented joy.



Still from archive video, Christine crici Bellerose, Wind Ancestors Translation (performance), *La maison aux volets jaunes*, Ste-Agathe-de-Lotbinière, Québec, July 2018. jaunes QC_2018_

6. PERFORMING ASSEMBLAGE / SELF AS GUEST

lo bil

I am a guest on this land. I “breathe in”¹ the playing field and ask myself, “What is the impulse?” I follow that tiny physical desire and ask again and again until the words fall away, and I feel an energetic flow that extends in space through the indeterminate movement of body parts. My mind is busy with a live-edit of unspoken questions: Is this where I’m going? Is this a word to say or not say? What can I follow here? Is this audience influence? Where is my attention? What have I never done before? How can I disrupt my own internal image? This is a methodology that leaks possibility out of its own parameters. I let the tempest of materials erupt, project, soak, pool, and drain in order to notice inner and outer responses I’m not expecting.

Performance-as-research is a way into relationship with my own stratified knowledges that are submerged by academic anxiety and a personal history of self-deprecation. How can I even begin? My mini performance action “Assemblage” at the outdoor Line. Bridge. Body Symposium² was more than a way to investigate why I am driven to shake my body near a tree branch, repeat spontaneous syntagma to new colleagues and call it an aesthetic. Out of thin air, openings appear. The decomposition of the whole into its invisible parts is a prompt for infinite performative activation. The guest-host model forms a further dive into the relationships at play.

The concept of Assemblage came from Deleuze and Guattari’s 600-page tome *A Thousand Plateaus*. By performance day, the book had shape-shifted into a thirty-foot-tall black box standing in my way. I know there is a way around it, I can press up against it and slide my way along the smooth side, my bare feet digging into the grassy ground. But I feel a necessity to be in the hazy struggle of not really knowing it to (a) understand my relationship to the text as a cultural entity that resonates in academic spaces whether I have read it or not, and (b) to let my fragmented understanding of it transform my relationship with the garden I am in. What has accumulated in the body that I bring today by half reading this text in the state of grief and anxiety that arises whenever I begin to read something new? None of the people present can see this black box; it is something in my own image life. I myself only see that this form is part of the equation four months later in a conversation at Drom Taberna.³ There is the “black box theatre” that has a history I am working against, but the black box in the garden is the inverse of a theatre I might enter into, it is a solid book-shaped tombstone. I imagine chemical interactions that could activate a porousness.

If I believe my body registers all things simultaneously in close-ups and global frames in all seven directions—I can see things have a logic that is outside of my consciousness and yet are recognizable as existing. The unnoticed line on the bridge is a broken twig resting for a moment in the wind, and in what is to come it may be as significant as the physics that allow the bridge to remain standing.⁴ This spacious form of perception opens the possibility for a felt-sense I call the “magic” field—wherein the poetry of each moment in all that is present comes into the song. Between my mind, my body, audience bodies, environmental bodies, other-than-human bodies, scholarly-identifiable-research-bodies, the history of unseen things, the space between us, the unnamed ghosts and unread texts—is the beautiful “we.”⁵ It’s okay to be with it all. The word “distraction” is as useless here as calling crumbs in an ant colony “leftovers.”⁶

If a part of my history were detached from the whole, it would cease to be what it is.⁷ As a testament to the potency of this, I welcome all occurrences into the composition as signs of unacknowledged content. I can’t perform in the garden without calling in its vegetal elements as my interlocutors. We form an “unending body” in Dolleen Tisawii’ashii Manning’s writing on Anishinaabek “mnidoo-worlding” ontologies. She articulates a depth of genealogies we live within and references the mysteries in holding space (to host) for the unknown (the guest) that my felt-sense experiments help me dream about.⁸

As a performance artist I have made a pact with an anti-formed form that is at its most elemental—in transparent relationship with the reality of the beings the composition encounters. While the situational inseparability of what is yours and what is mine, or what is part of the composition or not part of it, presents challenges in terms of aesthetic analysis—the way things fall apart is not random but emergent, based on the logic of parts and the dynamic of inter-relationality of all of us sharing this space and time. There’s a potential analysis based on how this relation of parts makes legible something that was not seen before.

The previous April, I turned my apartment into a residency called “the Gift.” I didn’t know why I decided to host so many people, other than that the idea was so compelling that I had to follow the impulse to see why it was worth following. It was time to write my thesis, but I became too obsessed with hosting to write anything. So hosting became a form of writing by taking place instead, composing a reality through this inter-relationality—what does it mean to be an artist-academic and what does it reveal to label this experience an assemblage? Concretely, it meant a willingness to pile three rooms into my bedroom to clear space for guests, and to live with tiny floor space and an inability to find notebooks. But production was not my goal. As an artist, theory is a diving board for sensory experience. As an artist-academic, to test or integrate language is to filter its resonance through the entire thinking body, to feel what I feel is required to see evidence or relevance. To write or perform—is to open up relationships.

Embodied process has its own unreliable time. The body is an unexpected trove of dynamics. While hosting, I was following rhythms that were not my own. I became parasitic feeding off the gestures of other body-sites to activate my own momentum—they stay with me while I’m stealing their micro-rhythms until I can hardly remember my own. I’m thrown into memories of times when I had met the guest artists in other cities; they activate my past and in this domestic conflation of lives they generate images of realness beyond anything I could have imagined before I met them. I brought this body of multi-

plicity to the garden to coalesce into one visual site. I regard the symposium participants as a whole “characterized by relations of exteriority.” While I am also a component part of the many assemblages of my life, performativity allows me to detach from some, and I am “plugged into a different assemblage in which ... interactions are different”⁹ and meanings can emerge outside of my ability to pre-form thoughts—performance is more than its pre-performance.

The sensory material from this home-host-assemblage continued its durational timeline when I took the performance-baton from Jonathan Adjemian, the presenter before me at Line. Bridge. Body. My performance approach hypothetically allows the continuity of various lines of thought to cross-pollinate. Each presenter activated different areas of the garden. I went to where we had not been, to mark off a jurisdiction that had previously felt like a *terrain vague*, the space between the entrance and the seats, where a tiny table stood with a cash box on it. I invited people to lie on the rough grass because we hadn’t been together in a horizontal orientation. We could smell the earth better from there. The audience created a formation of rows and I envisioned a school classroom. Their collective decision signalled a present-absence that inspired me to run back and forth laughing until I heard the tree branch speaking to me. I’m charmed by these ethereal moments of the guest experience. How can I get better at hosting and guesting simultaneously?

Manuel DeLanda refers to “mutual constitution”:

Agency is constituted by its involvement in practice which, in turn, reproduces structure. Structure is conceived as consisting of behavioural procedures and routines, and of material and symbolic resources, neither of which possess a separate existence outside of their instantiation in actual practice.¹⁰

I insist that this shaky unresolved action is a structure because of the material nature of the component parts in service of a practice of acknowledgement. My body is a boundary and a border that becomes porous in the performance state; sweat seeps out of pores, sounds slip off tongue. In trying to be directed by the psychic space between all bodies, I am vulnerable to any input. There is a weakening of the thinking-knowing state inherent in this vulnerable what-the-f-am-I-doing physical state. There is a potential for change and an insistence on confluence with other energies, other roots of being I could only encounter through this approach to performance. I offer something that is a slice of possible grammar in the why-perform constellation.

This host-assemblage (I attempt to take you on a trip through performance) brings my research into guest-assemblage (not my land) into a new territory of participation. Nodes of intersecting wave-forms are awakened between the trees with a live branch and the wooden fence, risers and staging that contain us for the day—which in turn activate a separate assemblage of art events through time at the Majlis Art Garden, that the tree was here for while we were not.

An assemblage ... is necessary for the articulations of the organic stratum to come about ... necessary for states of force and regimes of signs to intertwine their relations ... necessary for the unity of composition enveloped in a stratum, the relations between a given stratum and the others, and the relation between these strata and the plane of consistency to be organized rather than random.¹¹

I bring desire to find a new-here-now assemblage by noticing my physical responses to being seen by this academic group. These impulses broke off at the June performance in Mexico City,¹² only to crop up here in August on Walnut Street in Toronto. I follow the same instructions. Begin by moving. Enter the flow of energy that forms a continuity of gesture and curiosity. Speak what comes to mind. Move the people, shift my body parts, notice my response to environmental elements. Trust the collection of sensations will generate a complex image. Keep in mind the maxim, "Do only what is necessary,"¹³ even when I cannot describe the seeds of that necessity.

My guest tells me about myself but does not become my mirror. This hosting insight infiltrates what I feel is mine in the performative body. I become addicted to this sickness called care. The component "I" gets sick and sicker, as a way of growing into the nature of the environment I'm immersed in, stripping away what I thought belonged to me. My feet get muddy and I feel degrees of temperature drop in my mind. The confluent research question: I want to know what it means to be with bodies. I hypothesize that damp horrid sensations can reveal the beautiful ones. We don't know where we're going. I admit that. I admit I am taking you somewhere that we have not gone yet, even if it's just to overhear sidewalk sounds near the gate to the garden where no one wants to hang out because it's a crappy grass area. We will never unearth this specificity unless we lie down there. Let's fly on our backs to hear how this patch of land speaks its magic to us.

I'm talking already. I've disrupted any hope I had for something else to happen. The process insists I acknowledge this intuitive offer. If there's a tree branch in the middle of where I want to move, it's because this isn't a solo action. I am dancing with the tree by repeating what I can only hope is a tree kind of language. The branch repeats itself so quickly that it carries an insistent vibration that registers to my eye as stillness. I don't know this when I'm repeating myself, when I'm stuck on words, but I see it now. I kept asking myself why I became so enamoured with this aspect of my reality. Why did I listen to this particular branch to tell me what to do in this classroom moment?

I trust that it's part of the story I've been researching through the body, through readings, by collecting sensations with guests, through my own immersion into what disrupts me, and what undermines the way I see myself. Perhaps it's a way to encounter identity by pushing into the things that I don't know as the essential performative material, letting the "distractions" be elements in the composition without needing to know why in the moment. I won't discover the relevance of thoughts until they erupt publicly in performance. I see these distractions as signals of disquiet in the colonial body, an accumulation of all the momentary sensations and archival resonances I have been trained to ignore. As a colonial guest I'm seeking a ritual to perform at the edge of the woods, for the host to hear me, to invite me into the territory.¹⁴ I'm thinking about the old man who holds respect for both the questioner and the rocks—

Hallowell reports asking an elderly Anishinaabe man, “Are all the stones we see here alive?” Hallowell notes that the man “reflected a long while,” before finally answering, “No. But *some* are!” ... Challenged to make sense of his worldview within the rules anticipated in the question ... [he] must answer in a way that would leave this possibility of “living versus nonliving” open; for in the non-interference pedagogy of Anishinaabe philosophical discourse, it would be harmful to assert his views onto Hallowell and yet, it is also unethical to deny that these metaphysical differences persist. So, he attempts to answer in a way that the question warrants, allowing Hallowell to remain open to his own learning, while respecting these grandfathers (rocks) at the same time.¹⁵

Would it make a difference to the audience if the things I was doing in the performance were in service of hosting and guesting simultaneously, of letting our being together be the content and of generating unexpected images that will lead me into curiosities to investigate in the next performance? Can we be here now in service of future audiences? How can my performances insist on their relevance as a practice of being together in a particular way that might inspire different kinds of conversations? Can this aesthetic have a rigour despite never expecting what comes to be repeated? Can the concept of assemblage provide the basis for critique that supports the multiple functionalities of a spontaneous aesthetic?

Three months later, at College and Dovercourt, all the guests have gone. I am so thankful to have my office back. I undertook an eight-month process of hosting artists in my home. I have been collecting sensations, feelings, images in the vacuum of the empty rooms, and I can now notice what it means to guest myself.

Within a body, the relationships of component parts are not stable and fixed; rather, they can be displaced and replaced within and among other bodies, thus approaching systems through relations of exteriority ... whose components can be “yanked” out of one system, “plugged” into another, and still work ... assemblages characteristically have functional capacities but do not have a function ... they are not designed to only do one thing.¹⁶

This interpretation of Deleuze sounds like colonialism, to appropriate everything into function outside the organic logics we can learn from them instead. It doesn't feel productive to reduce everything to function in the art making space, even if it's a multiplicitous function. The beauty of existence needs to be enough, the reality of the crocus that pushes through. Choosing an acknowledgement of the logics I cannot understand is the decision that makes it art for me.

But I return to reading as performative source, to plug this guest-hosting action into a new assemblage. I find quotes from Derrida: “Being a host means going beyond the abilities of the self and giving more than I think I'm giving.” And Levinas: “Entertaining the Other in

a way beyond the abilities of the Self ... imparts an idea of infinity.”¹⁷

And Deleuze,

Becoming and multiplicity are the same thing. A multiplicity is defined not by its elements, nor by a centre of unification or comprehension ... a multiplicity is continually transforming itself into a string of other multiplicities The self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities ... there is a string of borderlines (*fibre*) ... following which the multiplicity changes. A fibre strung across borderlines constitutes a line of flight or of deterritorialization.¹⁸

And Manning, who refers to “differing ways of being at the same time,” a “simultaneous and refracting dissidence” in the present material moment of air-water refraction that occurs in spearfishing, that can “transmit a single fluctuating pulse—a reverberating wave that is invisible to the direct gaze of human consciousness.”¹⁹ “Conscious apprehension does not follow the other “regions of being” but is caught up in this disorienting confluence—nit Kina ganaa (All my relations/My all/My world-mnidoo-self).”²⁰

Mnidoo refers to energy, potency or processes that suffuse all of existence and includes humans, animals, plants, inanimate “objects” and invisible and intangible forces. Anishinaabe philosophies engage with what I articulate as all-encompassing and interpenetrating mnidoo co-responsiveness. The result is a resistance to cooption that concedes to the heterogeneity of being.²¹

It seems important to show transparently this weighing and weaving of concepts as an action within this paper that cannot resolve itself. By December, a new image emerges: an all-encompassing army of butterflies have swarmed the thirty-foot-tall black box and eaten through the solid form, they have fed on the contents and are able to move through tunnels inside of this newly hospitable porous form.

7. BOG-FRAGMENT 201.983.1

DENISPÉ
DENIS LAFOND AND SPERANZA SPIR



BOG-Fragment 201.983.1 is part of a continuing performance project series entitled FRAGMENTS, addressing questions of ancestral memory, human roots, place, identity, and belonging through land art, storytelling and poetry, performance and visual art, and traditional and butoh dance practices. In this writing, I share with you, readership, a self-reflection of a collective performance. *Italicized sections reveal my internal monologue as well as somatic directives for you to enjoy while reading.*

I, Speranza, initiated the FRAGMENTS project in 2012, greatly inspired by my trips to Greece, and understanding more about my Greek heritage as an adult being a child of immigrant parents. FRAGMENTS reveals stories about different relatives in my family, where and how they lived on the land, and the impact that land has had on my understanding of identity. Today, I am awed at what an impact the natural habitat has had on my reflections concerning my heritage and family roots.

BOG-Fragment 201.983.1 is a work in progress, initiated from our (Denis and my) discussions (circa 2016) about ritual deaths, hidden truths, and human preservation. We discovered how these subject matters have relevance to notions of origins, place, and belonging, and how these three words overlap and run parallel to notions of embodiment and community-root belonging. The desire to nourish and further Denis' and my creative pursuit of bogs led us to search where bogs still exist, and eventually led us out to the closest peat bog, in Alfred, Ontario, in the summer of 2019.

Denis and I researched BOG-Fragment 201.983.1 as a way to see, think, and do art differently. Bogs have also been of high interest in our embracing notions of art having a double status, where art has a designation as art, but also a designation from another discipline. In our case, a calling to connect to ancestral memory is supported through disciplines such as natural history and environmental science. Nature has its own history.

“What interests us about bog?” Denis asks me.

“Butoh,” I reply playfully.



Many years ago, I attended a workshop by contemporary choreographer Eiko Otake. Eiko is part of the dance performance duo Eiko and Koma. Part of their choreographic work has entailed being immersed in water and in earth with plants and other living matter creating a nesting place. Their performative state can be interpreted as representing a natural development of body movement evolving in time, with a duration over several hours. An embodied state. The memory of the body, nature's continuum.

... it carries with it not just the scope and sweep of what we think of as recorded history, but, incredibly, of something even larger: nothing less than all of life moving through all of time. The vastness of such a subject calls for epic means

... slow time down to such an extent that it is almost impossible to be aware of its passing. In fact, we seem to be completely outside of measurable time here, and make the leap into something more closely approximating geological time. All of life moving through all of time ...¹

Through researching my roots, BOG-Fragment 201.983.1 has developed and become part of the performance series FRAGMENTS, just as would the discovery or addition of an ancestor or a relative.

I am grateful that we can commune through nature, movement, and storytelling. This be the poetry of the living, passing on living legacy and co-existence. We live it as one. We live it with distinction.



The matter of butoh dance practice is a medium in search of what is essentially me or you or anyone's identity, just as it was in search essentially of what was Japanese in the face of political and cultural conflict and hegemony; Denis and I believe strongly in how butoh delivers somatic impulse through its imagery of nature uncovering the idea of ancestral memory.

For body is nature.

The cycle of nature self preserving, decaying. Life is intricately connected to decay and death.

Not a one-time event but occurs at every moment of life.

Become aware of your breath, expanding the rib cage, and then shrinking the lungs and organs.

Liquid enters and circulates.

A flower grows amidst the bog. It is one of its kind in the peat bog. For thousands of years it has sprouted and passed. This is its heritage.

I am pleasantly surprised at what lays here. It appears one way. Yet when I interact with it, it is something else. The peat bog is soft and squishy, light and springy. I imagine its depth

after having read specifications online,² about it ranging from one to seven metres. It also feels dense, and its wetness is clean on the feet as there is no earthen residue. It has a welcoming feeling. This peat bog is dome-shaped and has the vegetation characteristics of a boreal forest found farther north. Insects flourish, especially the spider and dragonfly, in summer. Cicadas sing a sustained buzz. One can feel the vastness of this place through their songs.

Denis is already out there barefoot and feeling the bog. He is quite expressive at the sight of the large spiders and how their webs are woven like, draping over the shrubs. I have brought a long piece of red cottony fabric and my pink satin pointe shoes, uncertain of how I want to experiment with them.

Touching your skin and then pinching it in places, begin to listen to your exhale, and feel your belly drop. As you continue to breathe, get more of a sense of this movement growing itself. Like a membrane weaving its texture.

Breath of air

time surrounding

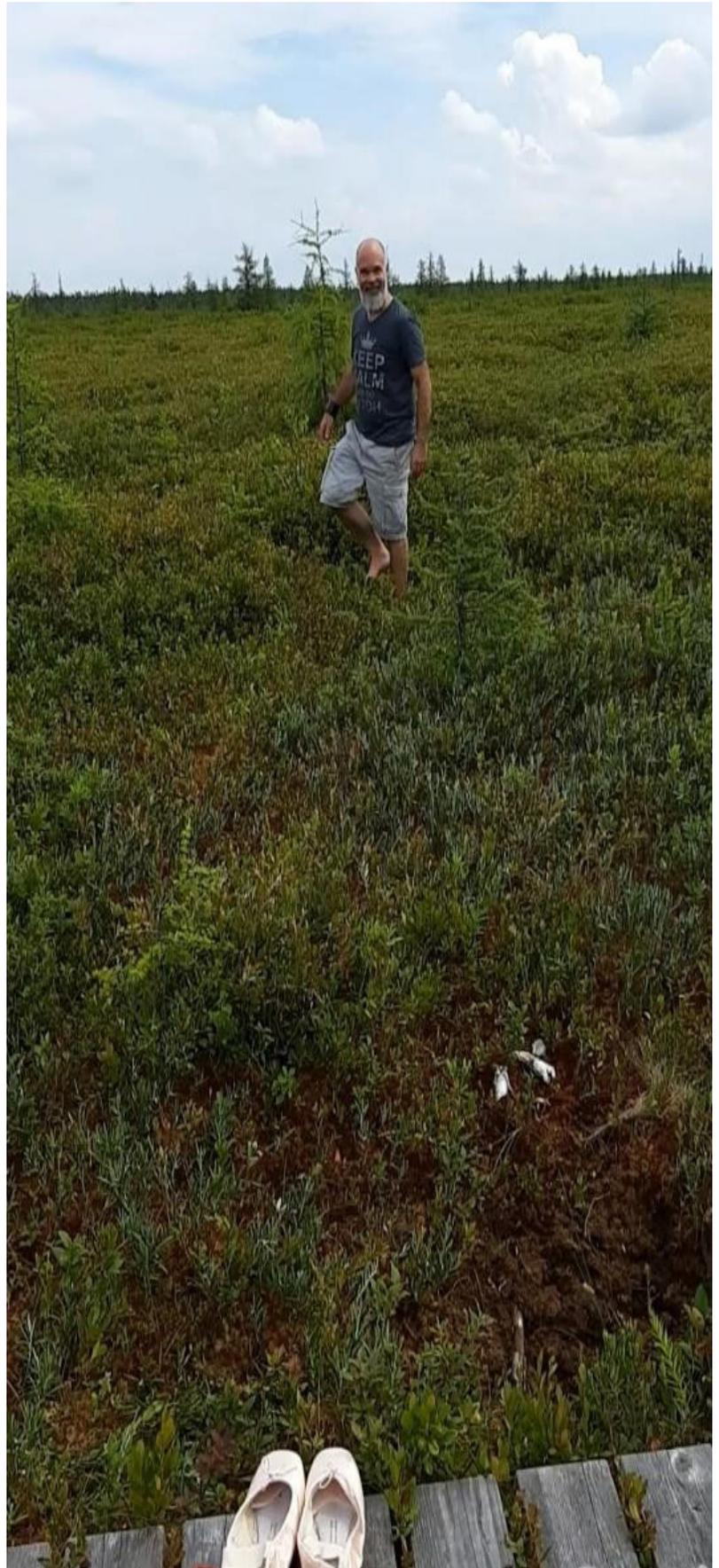
sensori

sees

body

I spread the red fabric on the boardwalk. It flows slightly onto the vegetation. I place the pair of pointe shoes on the fabric near the edge of the boardwalk. I know I would like to move onto the marsh so that its membrane can support my every movement, thought, and sound. Instead, I decide to lay down on the boardwalk next to the peat bog.

Making contact this way is unlike anything I have encountered! It is in itself unique when juxtaposed to its surroundings—that is, landscape as an island. There is vast farmland around it.



Discovering the personality of the bog is central to this work.

The flies don't stop bugging you here. It is an invitation for play. Although the flies want to bite you at first, if you play with them, they'll have an added *raison d'être*! So I begin whipping and circling my legs around, playing with the flies.



Now, if you recall where you touched and pinched yourself, what does it make you feel now?

What is the echo?

I rise and stand from playing with the flies.

Step out onto the land and engage your receptivity and the land speaks, and our ancestors speak to us through the land. And as the sum of the past manifests in this moment.

I want to be like you. To act like you.
To look like you and feel inside your skin.
To learn and understand like you.
I want to live how you live and react just as you would.

8. GREEN AS ETERNAL OBJECT: SHOOTING COLOUR

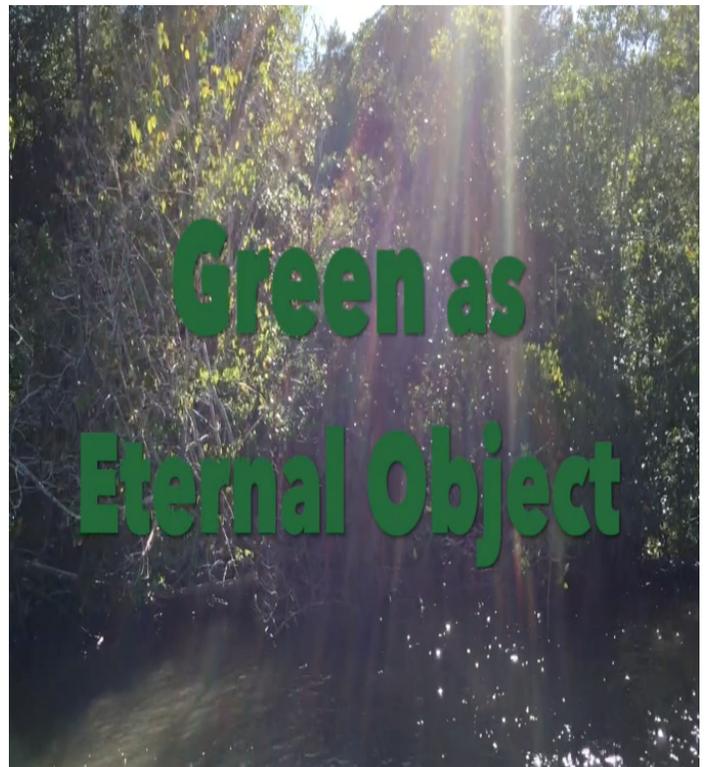
SPECIFICALLY, THE COLOUR GREEN AT THE EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK IN FLORIDA USA

<https://vimeo.com/232585451>

SHANNON BELL AND GAD HOROWITZ

Since 1666¹ philosophers and scientists have been investigating and debating colour. Is colour real? Is colour “out there” or is colour a “subjective” project of the mind?

The Shooting Theory project, currently resulting in fourteen film/texts including “Shooting Colour,” has since its beginning in 2007 aimed at developing linkages of philosophical concepts with the visible object, correcting and supplementing theory with visual images of nature: in *Expenditure in Mount Etna*, Georges Bataille’s concept of “expenditure”; in *Shooting the Elemental* in Alaska, Levinas’s concept of “the elemental.” The educational purpose of Shooting Theory is to bring together digital video technology and print textual philosophy/theory through imaging philosophical/theoretical concepts. The idea is to transpose Martin Heidegger’s claim regarding technology—that you can’t think technology technologically—to the praxis of political thought. The overarching argument is that you can’t think political theory simply within language. Heidegger contended that the place from which to think technology is art. We contend that the sites in which to think, produce, and enliven written theoretical textual concepts are visual images and soundscapes that can be brought forth by digital video technology. “Shooting Theory” combines the technic of digital videography with the skills of philosophical thinking, allowing this artistic endeavor to bring forth a digital materiality of the concept.



Goethe, in his argument with Newton, famously proclaimed: “Gray are all theories, but green is the tree of life.”² In the video “Green as Eternal Object” we use the practice of contemplative photography to initiate a dis-entanglement of the theorizations of colour from the actual perceptual experience of green afforded by the Everglades, which the Seminole Indians called *Pa-Hay-Okee*, Great River of Grass. We appeal to the philosophical formulations of Alfred North Whitehead to argue that colour is real, and that the reality of colour is inseparable from “the passage of nature.”³



The intent of contemplative photography is to see objects and our relation to them with no preconceived conceptual baggage.⁴ The virtue of contemplative photography—that it captures, as it were, a single moment of sensory experience free of conceptualization, in the *augenblink*—is at the same time a limitation; the camera can produce only still shots of the forms (colour, light, pattern, texture) thus inadvertently *freezing* or embalming the image. All photography is cryophotography. The video camera deployed in the practice of contemplative photography adds the form of change, TIME, or movement to the forms of contemplative photography. Shooting theory enacts the movement of the camera eye simultaneously with the movement of the object, bringing to eye the form of colour, the colour green.

Alfred North Whitehead railed against what he called “the bifurcation of nature”⁵ in conventional science and philosophy, that is, the division or partition of reality between “subjective” or “secondary” entities “in the mind” and “real” or “primary” entities “out of the mind.”⁶ “The red glow of the sunset,” said Whitehead, is “as much part of nature as are the molecule and electric waves by which men of science would explain the phenomenon.” The greenness of the grass, said Whitehead, is “an ingredient in nature,” not merely “a psychic addition furnished by the perceiving mind.”⁷ Natural philosophy should discuss

the relations *inter se* of things known. Natural philosophy should never ask what is in the mind and what is in nature. “To do so is a confession that it has failed to express relations between things perceptually known.”⁸ Our task, says Whitehead, is to exhibit “the perceived redness and warmth of the fire in one system of relations with the agitated molecules of carbon and oxygen and ... the various functioning of the material body.”⁹

Whitehead’s disciple Alfred Korzybski clarifies this “system of relations” in terms of the living being’s activity of abstracting perceived objects from the event, “the whirl of sub-atomic particles.”¹⁰ Levels of nature, then, rather than “mind” as opposed to nature. In Whitehead’s words, “nature makes abstractions for us, deciding what range of vibrations we are to see and hear.”¹¹



Unlike contemplative photography, Whitehead emphasizes that we never actually see green, the form of green *per se*, although artists like Mark Rothko have valiantly tried to do so, and came as close as is possible to doing so. What contemplative photography calls the “forms” (colour, light, pattern, texture) is what Whitehead calls “eternal objects,” and colour was Whitehead’s favorite example of an eternal object. Reality happens, according to Whitehead, as process, consisting of “actual occasions.” They proceed in time, or as time, as lived time, but they would not be possible without “eternal objects”: pure potentials that could characterize something actual. Michael Halewood gives the example of the warmth and whiteness of a piece of wax. The “warmth is not essential for the existence of the piece of wax *per se*; it could be cold in the hand. But it is integral to the existence of that piece of wax at that time and that place. Yet, warmth and whiteness are not limited by the existence of that piece of wax. They are in that sense abstract and eternal ... They don’t exist separately from the individual occasions in which they occur.”¹² “Anything that can be abstracted from experience and then recurs is an eternal object. They can have no actuality in themselves ... (because) they do not come into being and they do not pass away ... They do not exist until they are heard, seen, etc.”¹³

At the Everglades we never see green per se. We see only various occasions characterized by various shades of green together with other forms such as shape and texture. And these are almost always accompanied by other colours, especially the *grey* into which green has passed—the grey of dead and dying vegetation. And always in a context or environment that colours share with other happenings, especially birds, alligators, and we ourselves the tourists with video cameras. And the green happenings never stopped. We saw numerous different rates of movement; different speeds at which the passage of green is given to the moving video camera.



And this brings us to an essential inhabitant of the world of form, which contemplative photography could only omit because of its limitation to still shots. That is, the form that is usually called “time.” Whitehead didn’t want to use that term because of its conventional identification with the absolute, empty, clock time of modern civilization. He spoke instead of “the passage of nature”: “It is in virtue of its passage that nature is always moving on ... Each duration happens and passes ... Once duration has passed into another.”¹⁴

Thus, says Whitehead, “the most salient fact in experience ... is evidently something so fundamental ... that we can hardly stand back from it and hold it apart so as to view it in its own proportions.”¹⁵ But Whitehead wrote that before the movie camera had come into its own—so, before the moving image could reveal its full potential as an exponent of the passage of nature.

In the practice of Shooting Theory we have, after all, come very close to viewing the passage of nature “in its full proportions.”¹⁶ The passage of nature involves life and death. And so we must clarify Goethe’s identification of green with the tree of life (as opposed to the grey of theory)—making it explicit that green be-

comes grey. Green is continuously becoming grey, and green keeps becoming grey. Therefore, Pablo Neruda could perform this troubling poem entitled “Nothing But Death”: “Death arrives ... it seems to me that its singing has the colour of damp violets, of violets that are home in the earth, because the face of death is green with the penetrating dampness of a violet leaf ...”¹⁷

The caretaker of the Everglades informs the passerby, in a poster affixed upon the path, entitled "Dead Trees": "Dead Trees have a special place in the forest. As a tree dies insects begin to break down the tree while serving as food for woodpeckers and other animals. The softer wood makes it easy for woodpeckers to make a cavity which will serve as a home and nursery for it and other animals such as bats, bees, and snakes."

If we look closely at our images of the vegetation, we can see seeds of future green, and so, seeds of future grey. Seeds of life-and-death. Whitehead said: "The passage of nature is only another name for the creative force of existence."¹⁸ So, then, green is indeed the tree of life: the tree of life and death.

EMBODIED LISTENING

9. CHOREOGRAPHIC INTERVENTIONS: LISTENING WITH/IN NONHUMAN PUBLICS

MIKA LILLIT LIOR

in collaboration with PHILIP WESLEY GATES AND MALIN PALANI¹

ANCESTRAL SUMMONS SCORE²

Touch things
(e.g., dirt, wind, wall-
paper, carpet) with various
parts of your body,
not just but including the hands.

Find a space to stand, sit, or lie down
and close your eyes. Send your conscious-
ness to a particular part of your body and let it
wander throughout the limbs and through your core, allowing
movement and sound gestures to emerge in response.
Imagine those who came before you mineral, animal, human, for ex-
ample, those you know about and those you don't know about, dead and
alive, and sense their presences.

Gently allow your eyes to flutter open and see/imagine who came before and
what it took to get here. Expand your attention and vision a bit further and
explore the space, moving through it using three options: 1) slow walk
2) run 3) circling at any speed. If you are executing the summons with
others, at this point you have the option of moving together.

Bring the movement to a still in a sitting or lying down
situation and practice listening, trying first to hear all
sounds at the same intensity and then trying to
train your hearing to amplify some sounds
and annex others to the background. Feel
free to vocalize any sounds or sound
attempts that form and want to
emerge, in an experimental
manner.

Use sounds to propel your body gently into motion toward standing, without creating any linear pathways. What if every line or linear trajectory dissolves into a circle or cyclical form? Listen to the spirits that your performance has activated or engaged and feel their resonances.

Free-write for five minutes.

ancestors as more-than-human echoes
OF with-ness

OVER » Leave your traces on the card in the form of musings, words, drawings, questions, folds, tears, etc. and return the card to the station located near the registration desk, where you can select another score, and/or pass the card to another conference-goer for their participation.

In Brazil, fires have increased nearly 80% from 2018 and are occurring along transportation routes, which exposes the interests of cattle and soybean farmers (as well as politicians and others) in clearing land for economic growth.

Deforestation of the Amazon rainforest has reached historic levels in 2019 following a period of decline.

1 in 10 of all known species live in the Amazon and 305 Indigenous groups depend on it for food and shelter.

RAINFOREST SCORE 2.0

Breathe and let your attention drift to focus on your breath. What does the air taste like, feel like, smell like? Where does it enter and leave your body and how? Give the air a colour, if you wish, to help make its presence and actions more palpable.

Play with allowing your breathing to become audible and experimenting with adding sound to your breathing by shaping your mouth. Notice how vocalizing the act of breathing changes the relationship between your diaphragm, pelvic floor, and throat.

Let the sounds dissolve. Notice if any fears have arisen and surrender these into the earth by letting them fall down into your feet and become part of the texture of the floor. Go on.

Leave your traces on the card in the form of musings, words, drawings, questions, folds, tears, etc. and return the card to the station located near the registration desk, where you can select another score, and/or pass the card to another conference-goer for their participation.

OVER »

Let your feet become roots that extend into the earth or whatever material they come into contact with, without becoming stuck or fixed to one spot.

Switch the roles of the limbs.

Notice other tree spirit-bodies in the room, without losing track of your root systems.

Notice tension in your jaw and occipital point (joint between the skull and top vertebrae of the spine) and let your head become lighter.

Let your arms and fingers become branches.

TREE

—

HUMAN

INTERCONNECTIVITIES SCORE

Forests from Virginia to the Arctic Circle and down to the Amazon in South America are interconnected. Tree systems and human circulatory and bone systems have parallel structures; organized around a multitude of roots or bones at the extremities (think feet, hands) and a long stable trunk connecting these and sending resources between them. Our circulatory system follows a similar fractal pattern, as arteries branch out from the lungs, which pump blood to the entire body.

“If the Amazon is the lungs of the earth,
the boreal is its circulation system.”³

“The lovely puzzles, the enchanting beauty, and the excruciating complexity and intractability of actual organisms in real places.”⁴

OVER »

Leave your traces on the card in the form of musings, words, drawings, questions, folds, tears, etc. and return the card to the station located near the registration desk, where you can select another score, and/or pass the card to another conference-goer for their participation.

10. SPEAKING BY THE STREAM: LOOSELY BORROWED THOUGHTS ON IMPROVISATION

JONATHAN ADJEMIAN

THE SCORE

Take a comfortable position.

Listen to your environment, keeping your intention generally neutral. Hear the particular cyclic and almost-cyclic patterns that shape your expectation, the way each piece of sound comes at you. Hear each distinct pattern, and listen diffusely, each rhythm combining into a shifting, unfamiliar but recognizable landscape.

Bring your listening in, closer to yourself, until you're listening right at the edge of your skin. Then bring your attention inside of your body. Listen diffusely at first, maybe notice where your attention goes and how it moves.

Don't worry too much about what "listening" means, whether the vibrations are hitting your eardrum or some other membrane, reaching your brain through the vestibulocochlear nerve or some other pathway.

Listen for patterns, repetitions, rhythms; listen at different timescales; listen to the rhythms of your listening. Listen until one pattern catches your attention.

Focus on that pattern and let it expand. Stay with it and gradually amplify. This may take a long time. If you feel yourself pushing, relax your attention. If you need, let this pattern slip away and come back to another. Let the pattern and the listening fuse. Gradually, let the amplification grow to the level of audible sound.

Once the pattern is established in sound, expand your attention. Hear your sound together with the sounds around you—the sounds of your surroundings, near and distant; if working in a group, the sounds others are making.

Let your attention shrink and expand; notice how this affects your sound; notice how this affects the overall music around you. When it's time, move on.

To date, this score has produced soundscapes of small sounds, something akin to a quiet natural environment; a chaos out of order and order out of chaos.

But the wager is that it could, if performed with confidence and comfort, produce any kind of music. In other words—that any structure could be drawn from the connection between the complex, layered inner rhythms of our bodies, and the improvisational impulse that turns the learned language of musical gestures into flowing, time-based creation.

Under that is a more fundamental, and perhaps less controversial wager: that the difference between an environment or ecosystem, marked by overlaid and interacting rhythms, and a subject or intelligence, marked by patterned expression, is not one of type or ontological status, but one of translation. This could be translation from microcosm (human) to macrocosm (cosmos), from physical impression to intuitive construction, or from breath as wind to breath as spirit.

—

The swamp fumes speak; language brushes the body's receptors as sound. Meaning rises from pattern: the creek's eddies, root structures, garbage and offerings moved from place to place by wind, water, animals. Pattern rises from meaning: repetition of phrases or gestures, loops of fear or attraction, slippage from speech to two-or three-pitched intonation.

And music pours through; whispered, intimated, surging from the buzzing state of limbs and organs, unpremeditated, shaped outside of thinking; or cornering, turning, careening, forming nodes at each corner of decision.

Or else: decision and indecision merge, become undistinguished. The individual organism becomes the swarm; the swarms move from place to place, linking the grass tufts; the tufts are supported by the water, ever replacing itself; the stream rubs against the highway, the ravine's sides, the erosion and chicken wire. If there is freedom here, it lives not only in the individual gnats, mites, water-walkers. If there is constraint here, it is not only in the large-scale engineering. If there is community here, it is better captured by song than by description.

MEANING BY PRESENCE

This score comes from a work in progress/hiatus tentatively called “The Openings at Black Creek.” “Openings” here is the Arabic *futuhāt*, borrowed from the title of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s massive 13th-c CE work, *al-futuhāt al-makkiyya*, often translated to English as the Meccan “Illuminations” or “Revelations.”¹ *fataha* can be an opening, a conquest, an initiation (as with the first surah of the Qur’an, *al-fātihah*, which opens the book and opens the heart of the believer). In my anglo brain, I link *fataha* to another surah, 94, which in fact uses a different Arabic word (*sharaha*) in both its title (*al-sharh*) and its first verse: “Have we not opened your chest?”

Ibn al-‘Arabi said that he did not compose the 500 chapters of the *futuhāt*; rather, he wrote them as they were inspired to him. This massive feat of inspiration produced a highly structured whole;² there is, of necessity, no contradiction here.

It's this sense of *futuhāt* that draws me—an outpouring, from outside the consciousness, that inundates self and world with a content the consciousness would be happy to call its own. Inspiration, improvisation, and instinct can all be different names for this outpouring from an unplaced (or omniplaced) outside. And this ties to the *inshirah*—opening, expanding, widening the chest, which in surah 94 leads to the repeated phrase “with hardship comes ease.” I am no Qur’anic exegete, but along with the text’s many other layers meanings this comfort to the Prophet speaks to me of an ethic and esthetic of improvisation—with the work of structuring and composing (the sound, the world) taken over by the outside, the self relaxes into the ease of flow. Speaking of opening the chest—whether by grace or by stretching—is a metaphoric speaking.

This is inevitable; our inner experience, say of pain or of taste, to use familiar examples in classical Arab-Islamic philosophical and Sufi thought, is not communicable in the same way that our experience of external objects is. More than a thousand years ago, al-Farabi distinguished the faculties through which we know external objects, and those through which we know our own insides. Discussing later developments of Islamic philosophy in Iran, Mehdi Ha’iri Yazdi’s discussion of epistemology focuses on what he calls “knowledge by presence.”³ The key here is not knowledge of an object, equivalence of language and reality—what Ha’iri calls “knowledge by correspondence” —the communicable. Knowledge by presence (like the category of “intellectual intuition” in German Romantic philosophy) opens up huge cans of epistemological worms, but it also speaks on the most banal levels. I can quantify my pain to aid the doctor’s diagnostic software; I can narrate scenarios to give equivalents for my pain; but I cannot share it. Once we convert that pain into, say, a description of a neural state, we frame self as ecosystem. The link to the ineffable is also a reminder that the self teems with patterns that make our understanding without being objects to it. Likewise with inspiration.

MICRO AND MACROCOSM

I’m writing this last section after a longish session staring at a candle flame in a darkened room. This technique foregrounds the mind’s function, which Merleau-Ponty found fascinating, of creating a sensory whole even where information is lacking (for instance, due to retinal damage or amputation).⁴ There are many meditation techniques that, through sensory deprivation or focus beyond usual sensory data, prompt the mind’s creation of phantasmagoria, creating some meaningful whole—however fantastic—out of unfamiliar stimuli. These extreme techniques show an ongoing process. Whether moving through a natural space or through the inner states of what we can experience of our insides, we participate actively (if not necessarily consciously) in the creation of an *environment*.

A unified consciousness, or a sense of a single world, emerges on the basis of that environment. Daoist five phase or element theory, which informs among other things Chinese Medicine and the qigong practice that has nourished my own sense of improvisation, sees the person formed in the balance of the different emotions and spirits associated with the body’s yin organs. Daoist meditation often aims at an awareness of internal elements and structures, and its theory describes whole worlds and levels of this experience.⁵ Maybe we could say this is an opening of perceptive mechanisms to experiences without pre-existing, stored analogues, which the mind translates into recognizable experience. Maybe it’s a point at which something—one could say the mind, but the very embodied nature of emotions in five element theory means that this mind would have to be under-

stood differently than in modern philosophy or contemporary psychology—moves somewhere else, to an unplaced or internal outside. Experience of internal or of external environment brings us into the passageways of our own spontaneous work of composition, our own creation of world out of the world of which we are.

This layering thoughts and practices from different thought systems is not a total translation or a systematization of something called improvisation; it is a filtering and enacting tied my own particular moments and aims.⁶ For my purposes, in drawing on visions that parallel micro and macrocosm, or individual and cosmic texts, what matters is not whether the physical structures as determined through observation resemble each other, but the ways in which both move through us while forming us. And even if micro/macrocosmic thought moves easily to ideas of harmonizing or seeking simple structure, we could just as easily apply it to models of more complex geometries than chains or hierarchies. Leaving aside the question of the possible therapeutic benefits of tuning consciousness to simple structures (as in the practice, popular on YouTube right now, of finding specific audio frequencies said to resonate with specific aspects of the human organism), the trash-strewn stream and variously poisoned earth of the Trethewey wetlands transforms into a livable and lived space much as the stressed, unbalanced rhythms of our everyday internal life forms a known organism, even (the illusion of?) a subject.

On this wager, improvisation would name the activity that dives into, uncovers, gives voice to this ongoing process. Projected inwards through sensation, projected outward through sound (or in other directions through other possibilities), a subject that can never be found knits itself together out of presence *and* correspondence. The sun lights up mind and body, the qi flows from the belly to nourish the organs; pathology runs through the body like exhaust coming off the highway; choice blinks into being somewhere between.

11. LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA

MITCHELL AKIYAMA

A song gets stuck in your head, not out of it.

Rob Davis waits patiently at his Surrey recording studio for the day's session to begin; Kylie Minogue is due to arrive any moment to record an almost-orphaned tune. Kylie finally rolls up and heads over to the vocal booth. Rob hits play; a chugging four-on-the-floor pulse drops down, a classic house organ accentuates the backbeat. Clutching her headphones, Kylie gently sways to the rhythm. "La la la. La la, la la la. La la la. La la, la la la. Can't get you out of my head ..." Rob holds his breath, only faintly aware of what's been let loose. He's alone at the console, so it's to no one in particular that he murmurs, "A song is about melody and lyrics and being able to take something away in your memory that is going to haunt you."¹

An earworm only exists for the sucker in whose brain the hook is set. In its larval form, the earworm is sonic, acoustic, vibrational. Yes, any sound can potentially worm its way into the host's brain, but it's generally only the fittest larval subjects—the most rhythmic and melodic members of this incipient species—that will metamorphose and molt in the silence of the mind. In its mature phase, "The musical earworm actually works more like a virus, attaching itself to a host and keeping itself alive by feeding off the host's memory."² In the mid-aughts, a group of researchers at Dartmouth show that the brain's auditory cortex, which is electrically active when a subject is listening to music, continues to crackle even when the sound is switched off. When a piece of music that is familiar to the listener is interrupted, the brain keeps on listening.³ Let's be careful here, thinks Rob. If music is, by definition, "the art or science of combining vocal or instrumental sounds to produce beauty of form, harmony, melody, rhythm, expressive content,"⁴ then surely what happens between the ears isn't music.

Meanwhile, in New York, Oliver Sacks is wondering the same thing. His patient, Mrs. C., a seventy-year-old woman whose hearing has been declining for some time, reports that she's begun to have incredibly vivid musical hallucinations; Christmas carols and show tunes invading the mind of a woman fonder of Chopin than Jingle Bells.⁵ Mrs. C. speculates: If her hallucinations are evidence of madness, shouldn't she be hearing voices as well? Dr. Sacks suggests it's likely that, because of the decline of her hearing, the auditory centre of her brain has begun to compensate for a lack of sonic input. Mrs. C. is reassured to know that there is a physiological explanation for her condition, that she isn't going mad. Dr. Sacks prescribes a suite of medications, none of which diminish the phantom tunes, but Mrs. C. soon learns to deal with her affliction by developing an ability to cue music she enjoys at will.

What neither Mrs. C., nor Dr. Sacks, nor Rob Davis, nor Kylie know is that at least two individuals have already brought the world closer—one through (pseudo)science, the other through story—to a future in which hearing will be incidental to music. The first, a shadowy engineer named Manfred L. Eaton, shares his vision with the world in 1968 at the First International Electronic Music Congress in Florence. Appearing alongside the likes of Karlheinz Stockhausen, Iannis Xenakis, and Erkki Kurenniemi, Eaton announces that the future of music is cybernetic and will culminate in a human-machine interface.⁶

Bio-monitoring technologies such as the electroencephalograph have already been adopted by composers, including Alvin Lucier and David Rosenboom, but Eaton's proposals are far more probing. Instead of simply harnessing the electrical output of the human body to control electronic music systems, Eaton suggests that the flow must go both ways. His Bio-Music system will afford "physiological parameter control through sensory and electrical feedback stimulation"⁷—that is, it will channel physical and emotional sensation directly to the body via the brain. By 1973, Eaton's Bio-Music system is fully formalized, if only in theory. In its current iteration, the apparatus channels electrical signals into the brain while an array of bio-sensors record the subject's responses, which are then fed back into the system to influence subsequent stimuli.⁸ A Bio-Music system strips musical reception of subjectivity by giving the composer total control over every aspect of the subject's experience:

It follows that through physiological parameter monitoring, biological feedback, and physiological parameter control, we can approach our ideal of controlling the psychological/physiological states of a subject in real time and that we can predict, repeat, and change at will these states in the majority of subjects. The power of such systems is fantastic. The contrast between Bio-Music and any type of conventional music is startling, exciting!⁹

It will certainly be of interest to Mrs. C. and Dr. Sacks that Eaton describes the effects caused by his systems as "hallucinations." Eaton posits that hallucinations occur most readily during one of two opposing sensory states: deprivation and bombardment.¹⁰ Bio-Music capitalizes on the latter, bombarding the brain directly with modulated electricity. What this means, of course, is that Eaton's Bio-Music system has no use for tympanic membranes or cochlea, or ears full stop. Which raises the question: Are acoustical vibra-

tions simply a quaint, anachronistic stimulus for neurological pleasure? Is the dictionary definition of music limited or obsolete? If Bio-Music lets loose a total bombardment of the senses, is this not the ultimate fulfillment and burial of the *gesamkunstwerk*?

But even before Manford L. Eaton decides that the future of music is silent, the man who would come to be known as the Seer of Shepperton understands the shape of music to come. After a rather itinerant life, by 1960 the novelist J. G. Ballard is finally starting to settle into his new home in Shepperton, County Surrey—only a few miles away from where Kylie and Rob will one day record the top earworm of all time.¹¹ Boxes still line the hall. The mail arrives. The writer pulls a manila envelope from the mailbox and tears at the top. He pulls out a garish yellow and pink magazine: *Science Fantasy*, Volume 13, No. 39. Ballard's story, "The Sound-Sweep," has top billing. An airplane hums overhead. An electric lawn mower drones away next door. Noise everywhere, even in the suburbs. He opens the magazine. It's been months since he last read the piece ...

All day the derelict walls and ceiling of the sound stage had reverberated with the endless din of traffic accelerating across the mid-town flyover which arched fifty feet above the studio's roof, a frenzied hypermanic babel of jostling horns, shrilling lyres, plunging brakes and engines that hammered down the empty corridors and stairways to the sound stage on the second floor, making the faded air feel leaden and angry.¹²

The story is about a faded prima donna, Madame Gioconda, and her encounter with Man-gon, an obliging sound-sweep. The world is noisy, so noisy that even the residue of sound lingers, torturing the nerves of sensitive listeners with ghost sounds. The task of cleaning up the city's remnant din has fallen to the sound-sweeps, a caste of mute labourers who nightly purge the soundscape with their sonovacs. Madame Gioconda, whose nerves are shot, blames her affliction on the abundant sonic detritus, but it's her fall from stardom, her denial of a descent into silent obsolescence, that is actually the cause of her torment. Her ability to produce sweet, sonic music with her voice is now an anachronism.

Since the introduction a few years earlier of ultrasonic music, the human voice—indeed, audible music of any type—had gone completely out of fashion. Ultrasonic music, employing a vastly greater range of octaves, chords and chromatic scales than are audible by the human ear, provided a direct neural link between the sound stream and the auditory lobes, generating an apparently sourceless sensation of harmony, rhythm, cadence and melody uncontaminated by the noise and vibration of audible music.¹³

Ballard puts down the magazine, recalling what led him to imagine this dystopian, technological response to the technological problem of noise pollution. He shudders and braces himself for a literal acceleration of popular music into the crash barrier of a cultural cul-de-sac.¹⁴ Eaton feels this impact differently. Steeped in Cold War cybernetic fantasies of command and control, he tingles with excitement at the idea that music will soon be

more than a metaphor for the annihilation of sensorial subjectivity.¹⁵

Maybe music has never been anything but a hallucination, a strange transduction of vibration to neuro-electric activity, an effect whose causes are complex and subjective. The virtuoso percussionist Evelyn Glennie, who developed profound hearing loss at the age of twelve, points out that hearing is implicitly multisensory, a blur of touch, sight, and sound. Glennie *feels* the low-frequency vibrations of a tympani and sees the subtle shake of a cymbal.¹⁶ But Glennie is weary of having to qualify the range or depth of her hearing loss; she's even hesitant to even identify as deaf. "Deafness" connotes an inability to hear, but the ear isn't the only organ that registers vibrations within the "audible" range. Music isn't a category, it's a spectrum.¹⁷ Che Guevara stumbles around the jungle, all left feet and woefully off-key. Rhythm- and tone-deaf, music is no refuge from revolution.¹⁸ Charles Darwin, an apocryphal casualty to amusia, nevertheless posits that music is evolutionarily germane to speech.¹⁹ Another patient of Dr. Sacks, Mrs. L., a hearing woman born to a musical family, can't tell *William Tell* from *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. Evelyn Glennie touches her arm gently in sympathy.

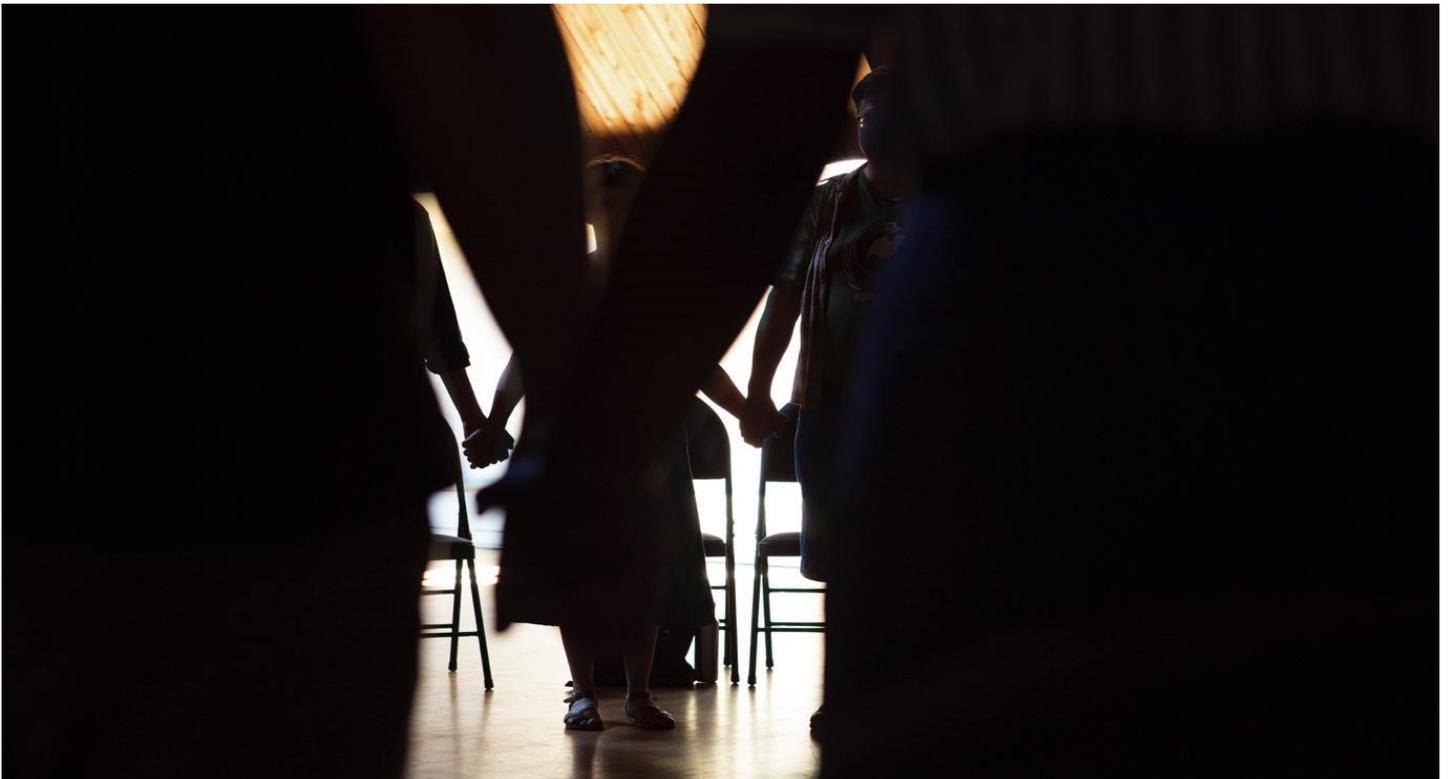
Rob Davis sits down at his mixing desk. The treated room is quiet yet never silent. He pauses for a moment before powering up his gear for the day's session. He starts to tap his foot, but then realizes that his foot is tapping him. Not quite sure where this is going, he hums silently, recursively in his mind: "La la la. La la la la la." And then the door opens.

12. SOUNDING DIFFERENCE: LISTENING TO WATER TOUCH

ANNE BOURNE

all living things are bathed by the same waters and atmosphere,
all the inhabitants of earth belong to a symbiotic union.

– LynnMargulis



Sounding Difference with Anne Bourne Zina's Circle, Pauline Oliveros The Music Gallery 2018 Photo: Claire Harvie

1

Pauline Oliveros' score *Horse Sings from Cloud* asks that you —

*Sustain one or more tones or sounds until any desire to change the tone(s) or sound(s) subsides. When there is no desire to change the tone(s) or sound(s) then change.*¹

Ever since I found this Oliveros score in a play with my mercurial nature, I have started every improvisation in this way. This is how I began at the memorial for Pauline Oliveros (1932–2016) by invitation of Ione, *épouse* of Pauline, at the Park Avenue Armory.² Rachel Koenig lent me Pauline’s grandfather’s cello. I took off my sweater in one gesture, sat down on a chair and lifted up the cello, in the centre of a circle of one hundred people in the portrait room, and more roaming the installations in the halls. Gentle laughter (*the way I took off my sweater*) I began to play then to sing *Horse Sings from Cloud*. My sound brought tears (someone told me later) and then, text spoken, we all toned together *The Tuning Meditation*³ in a dissonance of exquisite beauty.

Pauline was a deep meditator. I see her this way still when I imagine her, sometimes she opens her eyes and grins at me.

It was an effortless task to offer the loving assembly at the Armory steps towards singing Oliveros’ paradigm work *The Tuning Meditation*—there was so much in people’s hearts that wanted to be expressed. That’s how the text scores feel—effortless.

I began initiating improvisational sound choirs after I received my Deep Listening® certificate from the renowned Pauline Oliveros, Ione, and Heloise Gold, in the Sangre de Cristo mountains in 1998. I had attended continuous years of Deep Listening retreats on Rose Mountain in northern New Mexico. I loved sleeping in a tent on the ground, under the stars. It was an immersive experience of nature, a contemplation of particle presence; an attunement to electromagnetic fields and interspecies sound fields. There was a young deer who would come down the mountain and stand nearby while I was writing at my tent. I wanted to soften to a subtle vibratory dynamic and frequency range, to refine embodied perception. I bathed in the silence and *not knowing*.



Sounding Difference *Extreme Slow Walk*, Pauline Oliveros The Music Gallery 2018 Photo: Claire Harvie

Sounding Difference was the name I chose later, when I made the invitation to form a community collective to listen and sound in safe space, at the Music Gallery. Pauline and Ione were in the courtyard by the Grange the first time we gathered in 2016. I recall the first day at 918 when Artistic Director David Dacks showed me the sun shining into the room. We would begin in silence listening then practice the seed techniques and kind language of the text scores of Pauline Oliveros. A different *way in* every time, a different sound emerging every time. You could hear the sound of us deepening.

Oliveros' text scores offer individual agency within a collective creative experience. Improvising together from one piece through simple choreography to the next, with moments of intimate thoughtful engagement, gave us a form for harmonic self-organizing. It was a practice to receive the emergence of a new creative expression, ordered by equanimity, and the unexpected.

I have always felt what is extraordinary about the Oliveros text scores is what arrives from being comfortable with dissonance. Pauline's instructions invoke trust. The beauty of the sound of difference to me is how each individual emanates a sound from their own resonant tonality and set of pulses and is encouraged to sustain their individual tone. When sustained sounds are voiced close to each other, a pulse or microtonal wind becomes audible that is amplified by the architecture of the room. In Helmholtz,⁴ they are referred to as *interference* tones or *difference* tones. Harmonic overtone partials appear in sound like patterns of light. Composer Catherine Lamb describes, "*Thinking, utilizing, and intuiting partial relationships may be the clearest practice towards discovering and understanding [...] musical occurrences.*" Moved by the sound of *difference* tones that emerge from this practice as a resonance of choral sounding, and committed to the resolution of difference as beauty, I named the choir *Sounding Difference*.

2

*"As I lie and look into the pool there are moments of relative quiet, in the intervals when one wave has receded and the next has not yet entered."*⁵

What does it mean to listen inside listening; as if a *symbiont* with presence and a clear definition of my own soft edges? Water moves and I find myself moving. I can recall the sound of footsteps in sand on certain beaches.

When someone asks me, *what is my practice* what comes to mind is— I walk on the shoreline, *litorale*, and observe the play of difference. In the interstitial space a balance is found between nourishing the many species of beings that exist in this place and holding the form of different densities of ground against erosion. And then there is the sky.

Waves arriving on sand appear to me like a caress. The undulation of the rhythm of waves feels polyrhythmic against the sound of my footsteps on sand, against the impulse of my pace. There are many points of focus in the sound of the sea, and thresholds in the quality of light and air touching the surface. A metaphor for interference tones, that you can walk into and perceive with all the senses; shoreline to me is a sphere containing the interplay of *difference*. I walk through the perpetually changing beauty of a shoreline, listening.

The sonic array contained in Oliveros' text scores, has a resonance with natural systems;

they are missives from a deep listener. When the text scores are sung in their beautiful dissonance, caring is expressed in the collective voices, recreating their sense of place. What we all share— the earth we walk on and the weather that troubles us.

In the way the species and elements of the *litorale* organize themselves sonically I imagine a literal model of the way organization can occur in inclusive social space. The line between two differences in relationship, and the space created by many complex differences is held by air and the quality of light. My perception informs me without language when I walk on a shoreline, it provokes all embodied preconceptions about how differences meet. The sound and gesture of water meeting land describes potential for harmonic relationships between individuals, among species. The embodied *knowing*, I return with, as sonic expression, transmits my experience of the ways water touches land, improvised within the sound collective. This is my activism: walking, listening; sonic equanimity as part of the natural world.

3

A cello is visceral, it is tactile. Bow hair pulled across a string creates warmth, rosin on a bow throws the scent of pine trees. Carved from trees in Pythagorean geometry, the golden proportions of a seashell; my cello has a resonance between the interior space and a surrounding architecture and environment. My cello amplifies and transmutes the energy of my body's electromagnetic field, sent through my fingertips, into expressive sound. The sound of my cello can exist without electricity; it could make sound in a blackout.

This is the meaning of my ephemeral presence as an artist. My first gold record was recorded on 2-inch tape. Between the end of tape cassettes and the beginning of CDs as the object created to transmit and commodify music, I made a commitment to *not* record, to *not* add to the plastic landfill. I decided my sound had to be able to exist without electricity and you had to be in the room to experience it. Then the question when at the threshold of technology is—what does “*in the room*” mean?

I entered the world of telepresence more and more deeply once I met Oliveros. Anticipating this shift towards digital media, Oliveros fearlessly determined to bend circuits and adapt technology to be an instrument of creative sound work; improvisation as a way; and listening as both ethical social responsibility, and the seed to cultivating empathy among all sentient beings. The maps are contained in her text scores.

If greater dependence on technology as the way of transmitting sonic experience continues, how can we lighten its footprint? We reach out to each other with a sensory intimacy that crosses the limitations of digital translation and returns signal to the sensory intelligence of the body. Digital streaming has become a lifeline and download formats have made access to recorded sound possible without a separate object for distribution. While in the slow movement, the belief that *slow* gives more weight to a transmission, in response to the mounting mass of superficial communications stored as data, could sonic expression be distributed slowly with an object, a hand-to-hand artist proof, a custom run, a limited edition, two stones?

I sometimes feel that recording sound would *fix* something static in time, like a patterning that atrophies from unimpeded repetition and causes damage, resists change. And at the

same time, I know a listening experience, whether live performance, digital transmission, or a recorded experience, can still allow life, because a listener comes to sound in a different way each time.

Distance listening to performances in real time *through technology* is an essential listening experience now. More than the dissemination of information, creative sound work delivered in real time is the crest of a wave of technology, attempting to bring as many as possible into a new consciousness. It is a remarkable thing to express sound through technology, willing as any to evolve through intention and frequency range, send sound to another place and feel something return. I consider how those with low access can participate in this technological exchange. Sound is change. Can sound be transmitted simply as vibration in air and still reach the listener on the other side, or the butterfly? We would often make sound and offer it from the heart to a location or a person for their wellbeing, as if the sound in our room by its existence would reach the heart of an intended destination.

Listen to the radiant sensation from the body when someone speaks in their mother tongue, as opposed to an impeccable translation. Is there something unique sonically about how the mother tongue rests so effortlessly in a person's body, that changes the way they are perceived as soulful? Does code impede the authentic sensations of the body? The simple act of listening beyond sound can open a space for those who have not been heard.

4

I was sitting at the boulders on Rose Mountain, circle of glacial erratic's, when I transcribed⁶ Pauline speaking her way into a listening meditation for us, at the last Deep Listening retreat she held in New Mexico, in 2009. As I recall now, translate into my own words, most of four parameters were familiar.

Find your place then listen to all there is to listen to; in memory, internally of the body, all around near sound field, and all around distant, where it seems to extend to imagination and memory.

Then, imagine a sound.

Imagine a sound, then listening all around, find a space to make the sound, auralize the sound before making it, place it in relation to the other sonic elements in your imagination, and in the sound field you are listening in.

Then, make your sound.

It suddenly occurred to me that we were exercising mirror neurons, evoking empathy, without it being stated. All in our listening, gradually becoming audible in relation to place, making a sonic relationship to all beings in this sound field. Were we *symbionts* within a natural sound field? Opening more and more to this vibrational perception seemed to offer protection. Listening inside listening, an infinite fractal of being.



Sounding Difference: The Music Gallery at 918 September, 2018 Photo: Claire Harvie

It is exceptional and beautiful that in this place where we gathered to listen, we began each cultural assembly setting a neutral circle of chairs, followed by a spoken land acknowledgement.⁷ I say the words out loud to find my way and it becomes a listening meditation, *Can you imagine the sound of all the footsteps ever taken 15,000 years ago in this place?* evoking a scale of time in relation to human impact, through imagined sound. It is intuitive to speak about time and stewardship rather than ownership of the land and water, and all other species where we live. And considering how to honour our agreement, named the *Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant*, a call to be a protector, I made sound our commitment.

Artists Tanya Lukin Linklater, Erika Iserhoff, and Margarita Soria, with whom I collaborated as cellist and composer under their leadership within Indigenous space, have influenced my sense of time and perception. Soria describes her own process, *I want to reclaim my boundaries. Can I hold space for my shifts in empathy while holding space for another's sharing and expression? I am listening while tuning in to how empathy is moving inside me.*

If time has more breath, can it slow right down, and give weight to an unspoken moment or a phrase of light? As interruption, can quiet convey individual Indigenous truth like a clear sky? *"In general hungry listening privileges a recognition of palatable narratives of difference ..."*⁸ Where is my voice in the political now? Can I listen, with the distinction — *against hungry listening.*

My understanding is that Pauline Oliveros' intention was to compose scores that took all identity markers into consideration; to dissolve imposed boundaries and articulate sonic parameters simply, as tasks that could be shared. To create as a participant in a symbiotic sound field defies fragmentation. With her compositions we share an experience of collective creative expression, that does not privilege one identity not even one species. Listening to our interior selves, to each other, and to place is creative activism for the *non-belonging.*

When I impart the Oliveros text scores and a phrase or instruction signals touch happens, I pace the steps towards the instructions of the score, so that people become accustomed for example, to asking permission before touching. The words I chose were often improvised. *How closely can you hold your hand to a person's back without touching to perceive the sound of their heartbeat?* A collective may feel the steps that were taken together to arrive at safe space. Offering slow momentum towards touch often results in the connection completing itself, as hands arrive on each other's backs and a circuit is born, the frequency of *us.*

Gesture and sound can arrive with sensation and meaning in *telepresence*, in several rooms and several spaces in time. In the atmosphere of distance listening through technology, when real-time sound quality for individuals is a work in progress, can we experience the same waves from intention that is experienced in a room singing with many people, sitting back to back?



Sounding Difference *Back to Back*, with Jashen Edwards, Margaret Christakos, Gurpreet Channa 2018 Photo: Claire Harvie

6

I understood to embrace lo fi as a technique the first time I was invited to play a telematic concert. Lauren Pratt and James Tenney asked if I would join Oliveros in concert with her Deep Listening Band—only they would be at The Kitchen, in NY; a chamber ensemble would be in Paris; and I would be in a lab at the University of Toronto, with some fellow improvisers, including John Oswald.

Sound for this telematic event, 1994, was mono signal and distorted; still, miraculously we connected, with the sensation of collective composition, improvising live across the world, a dynamic performance experienced over distance by the audience in Manhattan.

Another striking memory of telepresence with Oliveros was the International Deep Listening Convergence in 2007. As communications producer I gathered the artists and coined the phrase *a sonic gesture of peace*. We were twenty-one artists across the world, including Ikue Mori and Susie Ibarra.

We formed ensembles online using open-source software and technology for rehearsals. I was invited to join a quartet by Seth Cluett, with another member of the Princeton Laptop Orchestra, and New York-based improviser Kenta Nagai. And I collaborated on a beautiful embroidered textile score by Canadian artist Julia White, for a spontaneous international sound choir with improvising text artist Ione. Distortion sounds randomly interrupting our singing on Skype, were accepted as an evocation of the war we were trying to avert. Our sound was made, and difference overcome in one part of the world.



Sounding Difference: *The Tuning Meditation* Michelle Maklem The Music Gallery 2018 Photo: Claire Harvie

All artists of the online creation process eventually converged in upstate NY, to perform live. Kenta Nagai and I had a memorable rehearsal. We went outside after dark with cello and shamisen, to improvise near a frog pond. Once our dynamic began to overtake the sound field, we were interrupted by a buck deer bringing his hooves down hard on the ground, just beyond visibility in the tree line.

7

Is thought sound? Is intention a way to give sound intelligence? Artists in the performing arts learn from each other about care for the body and body awareness. The ways and means of embodied practice for self-care are shared in community, more essential as we increasingly find ourselves residing on digital platforms. I witnessed relationships forming and dialogues happening between participants in *Sounding Difference* locally, and radiant internationally.

I learn something about language and the threshold for the peripheral every time I make an invitation to sound in inclusive space. tUkU recalls, “*A space is not inclusive if it is not safe ... not just an idea of diversity based on what we think we know about what we see but also a willingness to share and witness the things we cannot see and do not know about each other.*” It is my aim to include all, with perception and equanimity, and it was always free. A certain way of introducing the text is reflected immediately in the sound that follows, or the stillness. I recall the last time we sang the *Tuning Meditation* at 918 we were conducted in by a small child held in his mother’s arms in the centre between us repeating, “*Again.*” The collective intelligence, the shared experience brought a distillation of our community and individual intentions, to honour and include and make life affirming sound from difference.

As a collective endeavour to make political change and art in the same breath, what is the sound of this? What Oliveros named the *sonosphere*⁹ includes all beings, and nature’s vibratory information. By setting performative intermedia work within a site-specific ecosystem, the sea for example, can participate as a voice, as in recent interdisciplinary work by Raven Chacon. Can weather be experienced as creative expression?

In solving the issues of exclusion can the tone of the collective evolution that is already occurring, be influenced? The rapid change that is now needed to let the earth breathe and fall into natural rhythm, has come with sudden heightened awareness towards a new interior. This happened like lightning, expanding our frequency range as we enter a new unknown. *Can you imagine the sound of a synapse firing?*

The year I ventured out on my shoreline research, to make field recordings, I wanted to gather sensory information. Crouching next to boulders beneath the reach of wind to record a trickling tide pool away from the tidal waves, changed my way of listening to water, and my way of composing. My way of being was changed.

“*All beings alive today are equally evolved.*”¹⁰

Imagine concurrent to human evolution, the intelligent mycelial entanglement, the collective of trees. From inside a natural world and time, I make the sound of listening with my voice, my cello, in empathic gesture. I listen to the sounds of *meridian* pulses, the *heartbeats*; from bodies of water, from roots underground, and make sound to let each one know they are heard. There must be a way that all of us can enter a new space together. This is *sounding difference*, the beauty of dissonance encoded with truth, held in acceptance and unconditional listening.

Listening inside listening, can we collectively evolve? Through *symbiotic* listening comes change that is not happening *to us*, but that we are a part of.



Sounding Difference: *Back to Back*. Pauline Oliveros, Zachary Cardwell. The Music Gallery, 2018 Photo: Claire Harvie

8
Afterword

Only in retrospect do I notice the urgency with which I planned a series for *Sounding Difference* to meet, with Johanna Householder at OCADU in early 2020. *Horse Sings from Cloud*, and *Rock Piece*,¹¹ bring two stones. The sound of the ensemble’s voices, including Robin Dann, Felicity Williams, Ivy Mairi, Linseed, Julia Male, Sanja Dejanovic, Jana Vigor, Akash Bansal, Gurpreet Channa, Brendan Jensen, and Zachary Cardwell, sustain now in my memory. Sounding Difference performed Oliveros’ *Rock Piece* much like rainfall clears the air. The sound of time as a fractal occurs in *Rock Piece*; streams of time that intend *not* to syncopate but to evolve. From simple text a release happens, a dissolution of form. Out loud I imagined how someone might hear the stone pulses and memorize them. The poet Margaret Christakos was with us; went home, wrote this, sent it to me the next day, on Valentine’s Day.

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PARABLES OF BODIES

13. Texte inachevé-en cours pour un film
AU-DEDANS DU CORPS ou L'EXPERIENCE INTERIEURE

JEAN-LUC NANCY

« Au-dedans » s'écrit avec un trait d'union et forme donc un mot unique. On pourrait dire « le dedans » de manière presque équivalente. « Au-dedans » évoque pourtant une entrée, une pénétration, un « aller à.. » (comme dans « au-delà »). On va chercher quelque chose. On va y voir, voir ce qu'il y a et même voir s'il y a quelque chose à voir.

Il est frappant que parmi les questions majeures que posent les enfants (d'où viennent les enfants ? qu'est-ce que la mort ? pourquoi je dois obéir ?) et même parmi celles qui portent sur le corps (pourquoi garçons et filles ne sont pas pareils ?) la question de ce qu'il y a dans le corps ne semble pas très présente. Il en va de même en fait pour nos interrogations d'adulte, qui ne sont jamais autres que celles que nous avons formées dans l'enfance. Le corps qui nous intéresse ou qui nous pose question est le corps visible, sa sexuation, son attrait, sa force et sa fragilité. Le dedans du corps se signale par la blessure ou la maladie, lorsqu'il faut y accéder, mais même la douleur ou le plaisir n'invitent pas à considérer pour eux-mêmes les organes qu'ils concernent (l'estomac par exemple, ou l'intérieur des organes sexuels). Il n'est d'ailleurs pas certain que douleur et plaisir aient leur siège dans ces organes, et ne soient pas bien plutôt éprouvés par le corps entier à travers une indexation locale – et de ce seul fait on peut venir à penser que les organes en tant que tels n'ont pas vraiment de part au sentiment du corps comme sentiment de soi ni comme sentiment du rapport avec les autres et le monde. Tout se passe pourrait-on dire au dehors. Nous sommes entièrement projetés à notre surface, à même notre peau et ses variations sensibles (yeux, oreilles, narines, langue, muqueuses) et même les distinctions déjà anatomiques qu'on esquisse en parlant ainsi ne sont pas pertinentes pour parler de notre existence sensible. Parler de la vision, de l'audition, etc., comme de plaisir et de douleur, dès lors du moins qu'on s'intéresse au sensible – sensation, sensualité, sentiment, rapports et renvois au dehors en même temps qu'à nous-mêmes – c'est parler d'autre chose que des organes. Considérer ceux-ci, au contraire, ne peut jamais que préciser les conditions de fonctionnements dont le sens – justement nommé par le même mot – se situe ailleurs que « dans » les organes.

On pourrait dire : les organes ne sont pas le corps. Ou encore : l'organisme est autre chose que le corps. Il en est le dedans – un dedans qui s'étend jusqu'à sa surface externe, puisque peau, poils, ongles, muqueuses, cils, etc. sont aussi des organes – mais le dedans en tant que tel se retire entièrement du dehors qu'en même temps il « organise », il structure, il fait fonctionner, il anime peut-on même dire surtout si on pense à la respiration.

En ce sens on comprend très bien que le « corps sans organes » cde Artaud n'est en rien une invention fantastique ou une expression provocatrice : on peut dire au contraire que c'est simplement la vérité du « corps » et que si on se sert de ce dernier mot c'est précisément pour parler d'autre chose que de l'organisme. Il faut même comprendre que le « dedans » n'est qu'une façon de désigner l'organisme puisque celui-ci s'étend comme on a dit jusqu'à toute la surface, mais en même temps il faut reconnaître que tout se joue précisément sur cette surface, selon qu'on la considère pour elle-même (par quoi déjà on se tourne vers son épaisseur, son dedans) ou bien dans son exposition au dehors, qui est sa destination.

(On peut remarquer que l'allemand « Leib », distingué de « Körper » comme un corps vivant, animé, d'un corps mort ou inerte, note mieux la différence en question. Les Français ont souvent – p.ex. Merleau-Ponty - proposé « chair » pour traduire « Leib », « chair » ayant été le mot choisi à partir de la tradition chrétienne (caro latin, sarx grec, basar hébreu) qui nomme ainsi la nature créée dans sa faiblesse. D'ailleurs il est resté le dicton « l'esprit est prompt mais la chair est faible ».)

Le dedans du corps est donc à la fois l'absent, l'inconnu dans l'ordre du sens ou bien celui qui ne se fait connaître que lorsque le sens se renverse et de rapport au reste du monde devient rapport à un manque ou à un défaut en soi – et le lieu des organes dont l'assemblage constitue la possibilité même de la vie du corps. Le corps vit d'une vie qu'il ignore en tant que corps. C'est pourquoi le dedans apparaît d'emblée tantôt comme étrange, tantôt comme étranger, voire comme repoussant et inquiétant. Et de fait il n'y a aucun sens à prétendre considérer l'organisme comme on le fait du corps : à lui chercher une présence, une beauté, une sensibilité. Même là où nous projetons nos symboles ou nos fantasmes les plus chargés, comme sur cet organe nommé le cœur, nous sommes mal à l'aise à la vision de cette masse rouge hérissée de tuyaux qui a peu à voir avec ceci : 

Cependant un malaise nous prend aussi à la pensée que le dedans pourrait être d'une hétérogénéité complète au regard du dehors et que le corps serait étranger à l'organisme. De fait, cette hétérogénéité ou cette étrangeté tiennent à une conjonction non seulement énigmatique mais proprement mystérieuse qui est celle que nous désignons en parlant de corps et d'esprit ou de psyché et de soma – par conséquent aussi de « psycho-somatique » expression par laquelle on ne fait qu'évoquer des interactions dont pour autant on néglige pas la possibilité même. Rien de moins donc que cette distinction de l'âme et du corps – pour prendre les termes les plus ordinaires – à laquelle le plus souvent nous n'accordons pas aujourd'hui sa valeur religieuse mais à laquelle pourtant nous ne cessons de nous référer plus ou moins explicitement.

Mais la distinction de l'âme et du corps trouve une complexité particulière avec celle du corps et de l'organisme car ici c'est à l'intérieur du corps que passe l'écart entre soma et psyché. En considérant l'organisme ou le dedans, nous comprenons à quel point le corps ou le dehors se laisse peu dissocier de l'âme – ou encore à quel point, selon le mot de Freud, « Psyché est étendue ».

Cela emporte une double conséquence : d'une part nous pouvons encore moins considérer l'âme comme une sorte de substance éthérée enfermée dans le corps – car en examinant l'intérieur nous ne trouvons rien de tel (pas plus que Descartes qui espérait trouver et prouver des mouvements de la glande pinéale (ou épiphyse) par où seraient passées les informations entre l'âme et le corps),¹ et d'autre part nous nous trouvons devant la réalité terriblement complexe, diversifiée, étrangère voire opposée à tout agrément visuel ou tactile, rebutante ou dégoûtante de la matière organique.

En vérité, ce qui nous fait qualifier cette matière de répugnante, c'est précisément le fait qu'elle nous échappe et nous effraie en tant que lieu insituable et innommable en tant que lieu propre de la vie ou de l'être. Elle n'est abordable qu'au titre de la réparation médicale ou de l'inspection policière, et la hantise de l'intégrité du corps – telle qu'elle se traduit entre autres par la résistance aux dons d'organes – traduit cette difficulté à accepter la matérialité irrécusable et pourtant inassignable de ce qu'on peut nommer indifféremment le sujet, l'être, l'existant, la personne, etc.

Ainsi n'avons-nous du dedans du corps qu'une expérience anatomique – une découpe qui remonte vers les éléments, c'est le sens du mot – et chirurgicale – une œuvre de la main, c'est encore le sens du mot – c'est-à-dire un désassemblage expert des organes, obéissant à leur agencement, ne le détruisant pas par blessure et cherchant à le restaurer dans son intégrité. L'expérience en est réservée à une compétence particulière et qui suppose chez ses acteurs une neutralisation de la répugnance ou de l'horreur. A ces techniques se sont ajoutées les techniques de vision pénétrante, radiographie, échographie, scanners, IRM, caméras-sondes, viédocapsules, etc.

C'est entre les images rendues possibles par toutes ces pratiques et le sentiment spontané qui nous rapporte aux images du corps – corps sain, sportif, expressif, séduisant, érotique, n'approchant un peu du dedans que dans l'obscénité et la pornographie – que se joue la possibilité ou plutôt l'(im)possibilité de ce qu'on appellera une « expérience intérieure ».

On fait ainsi allusion au titre de Bataille en le détournant de l'usage pour lequel il est créé – à savoir une substitution de mot et de pensée à ce que désignait l'expérience mystique ou l'extase – mais non sans discerner la présence d'un lien. Ce lien se signale aussitôt si l'on pense à l'obscénité chez Bataille, qui est obscénité du sexe mais aussi, sur un mode très remarquable, de l'anus.² Si Bataille ne va pas jusqu'à l'anatomie, c'est qu'il en reste – si on peut dire – au corps et très logiquement n'a pas affaire à l'organisme : mais on pourrait dire que ce dernier affleure.

Quoi qu'il en soit à cet égard, si l'« expérience intérieure » désigne « pour finir la fusion de l'objet et du sujet, étant comme sujet non-savoir, comme objet l'inconnu »³ elle ne désignerait pas à tort l'expérience que nous faisons si nous tentons l'épreuve d'un rapport non savant, non technique, non informatif avec ces images (ce pourrait être aussi avec les sons du dedans) – jusqu'aux limites où nous le pouvons (il faut penser bien sûr à ce que les organes produisent comme sucs, liqueurs, sécrétions, excréments – et aussi au statut propre de ces organes que sont les fluides, les courants électriques...).

L'expérience veut dire ici non pas l'expérimentation qui repère, essaie, mesure, mais l'épreuve qui s'aventure, qui se risque aux limites (c'est le sens de experire) d'où elle peut toujours ne pas revenir.

Que voyons-nous ? Comment regardons-nous ?

Y a-t-il une autre source d'images que celle de l'observation technique ? L'art peut-il s'aventurer au-dedans ? Il ne le fait pas, ou bien il ne l'a fait que rarement et récemment. On peut trouver plusieurs travaux d'artistes peu ou pas connus – sans quoi il faut se limiter à quelques images de carcasses ou bien plutôt à des allusions formelles comme chez Bacon, Freud et quelques autres qui peuvent traiter le corps sur des modes propres à y faire affleurer l'organisme ou à l'y évoquer. Mais cela ne fait que confirmer l'(im)possibilité de l'expérience dont il s'agit.

N'oublions pas qu'il est possible de considérer les grottes préhistoriques où sont conservées les premières peintures comme des ventres, des espaces intérieurs dans lesquels se serait exprimée la pulsion projective ou visionnaire...

N'oublions pas non plus qu'à côté de l'art visuel l'art verbal approche peut-être parfois d'un peu plus près l'au-dedans parce qu'il évite l'agression frontale de la vision. Pensons à « l'ulcère à l'anus » de Baudelaire ou, d'une autre façon, à l'« Homme qui rit » de Hugo.⁴ Sans doute s'agit-il le plus souvent de descriptions de blessures, de maladies ou d'exams médicaux – voire de cadavres en décomposition. C'est-à-dire toujours de l'organisme dans une désorganisation. Ce qui cerne encore plus le point focal qui est aussi le point aveugle, celui qu'on pourrait définitivement baptiser comme l'inobservable mouvement glande pinéale.

Au-delà encore, on peut s'intéresser à ce qui dans le cinéma, la vidéo ou le théâtre a pu déjà utiliser les moyens d'observation interne pour produire des effets dont il faudrait analyser la spécificité. On peut penser à l'acteur qui parlait avec un micro dans la gorge dont l'image filmée était projetée – dans un « Jules César » de la Compagnie Raffaello Sanzio.

Toujours sans doute on trouvera qu'il s'agit d'images (visuelles, verbales, parfois sonores) qui usent de techniques d'exploration médicales pour produire des effets liés à l'un ou l'autre motif de l'insoutenable, de l'effrayant ou de l'angoissant.

Ce que toutes les images du dedans nous font voir est une impossibilité de regarder, de contempler et d'aller vers l'absence dont toute image est l'apparition. Mais en même temps, l'absentement de cette absence nous fascine, nous étroit de manière poignante et nous fait retrouver l'image du corps comme un apaisement cependant alourdi de l'énigme irrésolue à laquelle la beauté, l'attrait, la force et la vie du corps continuent à adhérer. Cette adhérence pareille à celle qui se rencontre – normale ou pathologique – entre deux organes ou entre deux tissus n'est autre que l'adhérence du corps à l'organisme, du corps à lui-même ou à l'âme, de nous à nous-mêmes dans notre insondable étrangeté.

THE INTERIOR BODY

JEAN-LUC NANCY

Translated by JONATHAN ADJEMIAN

Au-dedans (“inside”) is written with a hyphen and thus forms a single word. We could say *le dedans* (“the inside”) in an almost equivalent fashion. Still, *au-dedans* evokes an entrance, a penetration, a “going to ...” (as in *au-delà* [“beyond”]). We are going to look for something. We will see it, see what there is to see and even whether there is something to see.

It is striking that among the major questions children ask (where do children come from? what is death? why do I have to obey?) and even among the ones that have to do with the body (why aren't boys and girls the same?), the question of what there is in the body does not seem especially present. It is the same with our adult questionings, which are never other than the ones we formed in childhood. The body that interests us or that questions us is the visible body, its sexuation, its attraction, its force, and its fragility. The body's inside signals itself by wound or sickness, when it must be accessed, but even pain or pleasure do not invite consideration in themselves of the organs involved (the stomach, for example, or the interior of the sexual organs). It is also not certain whether pain and pleasure have their seat in these organs, and are not rather experienced by the whole body through a local indexation—and this alone could make us think that these organs as such do not really have a part in the sensing of the body as a sensing of self, nor as a sensing of relation with others and the world. Everything happens, we could say, on the outside. We are entirely projected on our surface, right on our skin and its sensory variations (eyes, ears, nostrils, tongue, mucosae), and even the already anatomical distinctions that we sketch out in speaking thus are not pertinent to speaking of our sensory existence. To speak of sight, hearing, etc., as of pleasure and pain, at least as long as we are interested in the sensible—sensation, sensuality, sentiment, relations and references to the outside, at the same time as to ourselves—this is to speak of something other than the organs. Considering them, to the contrary, can do nothing but specify the conditions of operations whose *sense*—appropriately, this word again—is located elsewhere than “in” the organs.

One could say: the organs are not the body. Or again: the organism is something other than the body. It is its inside—an inside that extends up to the external surface, since skin, hair, nails, mucosae, eyelashes, etc. are also organs—yet the inside as such withdraws entirely from the outside, while at the same time it “organizes,” it structures, it operates—we could even say it animates, especially if we think of breathing.

In this sense we understand very well that Artaud’s “body without organs” is in no way a fantastic invention or a provocative expression: one could say on the contrary that it is simply the truth of the “body,” and that if we use this latter word it is precisely to speak of something other than the organism. We must even understand that the “inside” is merely one way to designate the organism, because this latter, as we have said, extends right up to the entire surface; but at the same time we must recognize that everything plays out precisely on this surface, whether we consider it for itself (by which we turn already towards its thickness, its inside), or rather in its exposition to the outside, which is its destination.

(We can note that the German *Leib*, distinguished from *Körper* as a living, animated body from a dead or inert body, marks well the difference in question here. The French have often—as Merleau-Ponty does, for example—proposed *chair* (“flesh”) to translate *Leib*, *chair* being the word chosen from the Christian tradition (*caro* in Latin, *sarx* in Greek, *basar* in Hebrew) that thus names created nature in its weakness. There is also the motto, “the spirit is willing [*prompt*] but the flesh is weak.”

The inside of the body is thus at once the absent, the unknown in the order of sense, or even that which makes itself known only after sense overturns itself and from being relation to the rest of the world becomes relation to lack or a failure in the self—and the site of the organs whose assemblage constitutes the very possibility of the life of the body. The body lives a life that it is unaware of as a body. This is why at first the inside appears sometimes as strange, sometimes as a stranger, even as repellent and disturbing. And in fact, there is no sense in pretending we regard the organism the same way we do the body: looking for its presence, beauty, sensibility. Even where we project our most charged symbols or fantasies, as onto this organ called the heart, we are ill at ease at the sight of that red mass bristling with tubes which has little to do with this: 

Nevertheless, uneasiness also seizes us at the thought that the inside could be completely heterogeneous to the outside, and the body a stranger to the organism. Indeed, this heterogeneity or strangeness has to do with a not only enigmatic but properly mysterious conjunction, the one we designate by speaking of spirit and body or of psyche and soma—and consequently also of the “psycho-somatic,” an expression by which we merely evoke interactions whose very possibility, even, we cannot elucidate. This is nothing more than the distinction of soul and body—to take the most common terms—to which we do not usually today give their religious value, but to which we nonetheless continue to refer to more or less explicitly.

But the distinction between soul and body finds a particular complexity together with that between body and organism, because here it is in the interior of the body that the

gap passes between soma and psyche. By considering the organism or the inside, we understand at what point the body or the outside can hardly be disassociated from the soul—or again, in Freud's words, at what point "psyche is extended."

This brings a double consequence: on the one hand, we can still less consider the soul as a sort of etheric substance closed up in the body—since in examining the interior we find nothing of the sort (no more so than did Descartes, who hoped to find and prove the movements of the pineal gland or epiphysis, by which information would be passed between the soul and body),¹ and on the other hand, we find ourselves facing the terribly complex, diversified, foreign and even opposed to every visual or tactile agreement, repulsive, or disgusting reality of organic matter.

In truth, what makes us qualify this matter as repugnant is precisely the fact that it escapes us and frightens us, as an unlocatable and unnamable site, as the proper site of life or of being. It can be accessed only in the name of medical repair or police inspection, and the obsession with the body's integrity—as it appears among other things in resistance to organ donation—translates this difficulty of accepting the undeniable and yet unassignable materiality of what we could indifferently call the subject, being, the existent, the person, etc.

Thus, of the inside we have only an experience that is anatomical—a word that means a cutting-up back into the elements—and surgical—a word that means work done by hand—that is to say, an expert disassembly of the organs that respects their arrangement, not destroying or injuring it and aiming to restore it in its integrity. This experience is reserved for those with specific competencies, and assumes of its participants a neutralization of repugnance or horror. To these techniques have been added techniques of penetrating vision: radiography, echography, scanners, MRI, endoscopes, videocapsules, etc.

It is between the images made possible by all of these practices, and the spontaneous sentiment that we give to images of the body—healthy, athletic, expressive, seductive, erotic, only approaching the inside a little in obscenity and pornography—that the possibility or rather the (im)possibility plays out of what we call an "interior experience."

By alluding to Bataille here we divert it from the use for which it was created—that is, a substitution of word and thought for what was designated by mystical experience or ecstasy—but not without discerning the presence of a link. This link announces itself soon enough if we think of obscenity in Bataille, which is an obscenity of the genitals but also, in a quite remarkable manner, of the anus.² If Bataille does not go as far as anatomy, it is because he remains—if we can say so—with the body, and quite logically has nothing to do with the organism: but we could say that the latter shows through.

Whatever is the case here, if "interior experience" denotes to "[attain] the fusion of object and subject, and be as subject nonknowledge, as object the unknown,"³ it does not describe too poorly what we experience if we attempt a non-knowing, non-technical, non-informative relation to these images (this could also be to the sounds of the inside)—up to the limits of what is possible for us (here we should also think of course of what the organs produce as juices, liquors, secretions, excretions, excrements—and also of the

status of the organs that are fluids, electric currents ...).

Experience here would mean not an experimentation that locates, attempts, measures, but a testing that is daring, that risks itself at its limits (this is the sense of *experire*), from which it always might not return.

What do we see? How do we look?

Is there another source of images apart from those produced by technical observation? Can art venture into the inside? It does not do so, or at least it has done so only rarely and recently. One can find many works by little- or unknown artists—but apart from those we are limited to a few images of carcasses or, rather more often, formal allusions as in Bacon, Freud, and a few others, who treat the body in ways that let the organism show through or that evoke it. But this only confirms the (im)possibility of the experience in question.

We should not forget that it is possible to consider the prehistoric caves in which the first paintings are preserved as wombs, interior spaces inside of which would be expressed the projective or visionary impulse ...

We should not forget, either, that alongside visual art, perhaps verbal art at times comes a bit closer to the inside, because it avoids the frontal aggression of vision. Think of Baudelaire's "ulcer on the anus" or, in another manner, of Hugo's "man who laughs."⁴ Most often, to be sure, it is a matter of describing wounds, sicknesses, or medical exams—even cadavers and decomposition. That is to say, always of the organism in a state of disorganization. This fixes the focal point further, which is also the blind spot, the one we could conclusively baptize as the unobservable movement of the pineal gland.

Going still further, we could look at the ways in which cinema, video, or theatre have been able to use the means of internal observation to produce effects that should be examined in their specificity. We could think here of the actor who spoke with a microphone in his throat whose filmed image was projected, in the Compagnie Raffaello Sanzio's "Julius Caesar."

No doubt, we will always find that these involve images (visual, verbal, sometimes sonorous) that use the techniques of medical exploration to produce effects linked to one or another motif of the unbearable, the frightening, or the distressing.

What all these images of the inside make us see is the impossibility of looking, contemplating, and going towards the absence of which every image is the appearance. But at the same time, the absenting of this absence fascinates us, holds us movingly, and makes us rediscover the image of the body as a nonetheless weighty easing of the unresolved enigma to which the beauty, attraction, force, and life of the body continue to adhere. This adhesion, like the one—normal or pathological—that is found between two organs or between two tissues, is none other than the adherence of the body to the organism, of the body to itself or to the soul, of us to ourselves in our unfathomable strangerliness.

14. METAMORPHOSIS: INVENTIONS OF BODIES IN MOTION

SANJA JANO

a body must move,

seeks into its orbit,

it swallows words ...

Movement is one of those mysterious phenomena bridging the perceptible and imperceptible. Ancient thinkers like Nagarjuna have stated that “movement cannot be conceived.”¹ Those who have had trouble moving will have stumbled onto multiple dimensions, maybe even extremes, of movement; movement directs, defines, delimits, arrests, overcomes, surpasses, goes through. It brings together in an unceasing embrace. It is felt relative speeds, processes of transfiguration, and durational qualities. Just as plant life uses photosynthesis, derived from the Greek *phōs*, “light,” and *sunthesis*, “putting together”—metamorphosis of light toward growth—the psyche of animals is of the liminal, involving the transmutation of arising energetic flows or vibrations, at one with the oscillations of breath. Such current of air has been referred to as *anima*.

Without movement there would be inertia, a total state that does not exist as such, for entropy, even with death, is not the finalized state of things. When we say that a body is in motion, we are being somewhat redundant, for there is no way to consider a body as mere matter separate from the continuity of becoming. It is in movement that we find that psyche-soma are but two perspectives upon the same thing. Motion is visible and invisible. Movements carry and convey their own noumenal realities, realities embedded in the

flesh. As we activate and traverse space-times, we are traversed by streams of movements, the *imaginal-real*. These are image-inducing flows on something of a black screen, approaching, as is interestingly put in biology, the *imago* or imaginal stage, which is for insects a finalization of a given metamorphosis.² A mutual imaging is animated and surfaces as bodies touch each other, as they move together, as they invite, repel, give, take, and weigh each other. It is the invisible skin of an interface at the crossroads. Psyche is the organism's capacity for traversal. A body opens the potential for transformation. It is continuously forming and othering itself.



A body is continuously othering itself, stepping into the unknown; it does not invent with a *telos* or form as a beginning. If a form is made as a body co-moves, it is born deforming; a body is living as it is deforming, decomposing, declining, or another way, in taking off from a perceptually unknown, undecipherable, inversion, rotation, turning, an enlivening. There is hesitancy in letting go; a body repels to hold yet seeks escape, to alleviate itself on the outside; to respire, to respite, at some other sought-out place. Such movement is self-purposive. There is always improvisation in movement, meaning that to move is a singular undertaking implying the locality of mixings and enabling the emergence of awareness. As Michel Serres asserts in *Variations on the Body*, “whatever the activity you’re involved in, the body [is] the medium of intuition, memory, knowing, working and above all invention.”³ To the claim that movement is bodily invention we can add that the body is itself an invention. It invents with whatever it is in touch with, elemental and atmospheric forces, stones, animals, weeds, twigs, and insects, among a multiplicity of artifacts that grant bodily measure. The motional specificity of an encounter, its attuning, resounds

throughout the entrails of the body; it is played out by the limbs, organs, fluids, nerves, and joints, where it (dis)organizes, (dis)places, and configures. As artists already intuit, all of this is palpable at the surface, along the skin. Jean-Luc Nancy says the following about the skin in *Corpus*: “Truth is in the skin, it makes skin: an authentic extension exposed, entirely turned outside while also enveloping the inside.”⁴

To return to it, bodily invention must be approached as *learning* and dispute insistence on instinct. In her considerations of the phenomenology of dance, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone writes that “movement is not a pre-given program of proficiencies and capacities, but something we must actively learn—precisely by moving ourselves. Kinesthesia—the experience of self-movement—is the ground on which we do so. In reaching and kicking, we discover particular kinetic possibilities of our bodies and correlative spatiotemporal-energetic dynamics in the process.”⁵ Though this account leaves us wondering as to how self-movement opens onto kinetic possibilities, we can here emphasize Sheets-Johnstone’s contribution that bodies are shaped by movements activated and learned in connection with a plethora of materials enabling experimentations. We get to know our surroundings, and, more than this, make sense of the world, through countless embodied movements. Our bodies are morphed by innumerable surfaces explored and experienced with limbs, muscles, ligaments, bones, and nerves, each and in tandem molded by gravity, density, tension, rhythm, speed, scale, depth. Learning takes place through



Sanja Jano, Still from “Anima, Anima Mundi, Animal,” Scarborough Bluffs, 2019

the multiplicity of *reciprocal actions* bodies perform on each other. In turning, leaping, reaching, pulling, rolling, bending, falling, and so on, fragments of encounters with given phenomena come to compose the chemical elements of bodies, embed sensations, and impress glimpses on our senses. What is more, it is not only the human animal that learns this way. Taking as his focus the flight of birds, David Abrams writes, “birds are not beings of instinct but engage in the thick of the present moment; they could hardly have encoded in advance the exact typology of the present moment. And hence a modicum of creative engagement in its immediate circumstance is simply unavoidable for any organism that moves.”⁶

Movement, we might agree, is a contingent opening and making of spacetime, but how movement happens, particularly its inventive and improvisatory dimension, remains somewhat unclear, despite a great deal of effort exerted to grasp it. Movement implicates a shift in attuning, makes itself of a blind, temporally unknown, turning, always involving, as Michel Serres has written in his work on *The Birth of Physics* after Lucretius, some level of disequilibrium. This he has also aptly framed as a “disquiet of the flesh” or “deviation from quietude.”⁷ In sinking our hands in earth to plant some Tulsi in springtime, gazing at the surface of a gently swaying lake sparkling with countless illuminating suns, or becoming carried away by the flapping wings of birds as they glide across the afternoon sky, we experience that animate matter is in excess of or exceeds itself, that all animate beings call

toward and affect one another. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty writes in *Phenomenology of Perception*, a body “is sensitive to all the rest, [it] reverberates to all sounds, vibrates to all colors, and provides words with their primordial significance through the way in which it receives them.”⁸



Sanja Jano, Still from “Anima, Anima Mundi, Animal,” Scarborough Bluffs, 2019

Relationally, such sensitivity announces itself with sensations, elementary and miniscule movements with the capacity to stir activity. As precursors to awareness and decisive action, sensations, then, are something of a preconscious and proprioceptive experiencing across cells, nerves, and tissues of the body. The emergence of sensations, importantly, is akin to weaving an imperceptible skin that enfolds levels of energetic excitations attributable to neither self nor other. Oriented toward sensations as intensive potentials, in *The Logic of Sensation* Gilles Deleuze reminds us that sensations do not exclusively happen on the side of the subject nor the object, involving, rather, “both things indissolubly, it is Being-in-the-World, as the phenomenologists say: at one and the same time I *become* in the sensation and something *happens* through the sensation.”⁹ Being elementary micro-movements arising in the body, sensations elude conceptual interpretation and representation, and are instead, as Deleuze tells us, an intensive reality. Immediately infusing the body with vibrating, radiating, shuddering, pricking, spasming, expanding, and other subtle variations, sensations do not appeal to the mind. “This is

why,” Deleuze writes, “sensation is the master of deformations, the agent of bodily deformations” and metamorphosis.¹⁰

From one perspective, sensations are approached as “agents of bodily deformations,” agents of somatic invention, while from another they are reexperienced as embodied memories of encounters embedded in muscles, joints, nerves, organs, and awakened by ways of moving.¹¹ Though these sound like diverging accounts, one speaking of transformation, the other pointing to our inability to do so, they are not. Sensations are not triggered because we are conditioned to repeatedly torment ourselves with past experiences, or to revive painful memories still residing in the body. Rather, we move through iterations of troubling sensations under unfamiliar circumstances so that they may be processed, released, or, a better way of saying this, unblock/ed movement. In sensations we hence notice fundamental potential, the unlimited lifeforce as such, weaving itself by an imperceptible connective membrane, and reaching for the freedom of beings with each reiteration. Sensations, then, are gateways to the self-healing capacity of the body. I am reminded here of Serres’ words in *Variations on the Body* where he writes: “Like all trials, pain presents two sides, positive and negative: it tortures and comforts, weakens and increases, diminishes the body and knowledge to the point of destruction, ennobles all we’ve learned and reinvents health. ... Sensation guides life; pain warns of death.”¹²



Sanja Jano, Still from “Anima, Anima Mundi, Animal,” Mono Cliffs, 2019

In a previous work, *The Paradox of Sense*, I sought to outline an aspect of this same pre-occupation by way of Gilles Deleuze’s contributions. I approached this paradoxical event as a doubling line of sense and as in-between time, the meanwhile as Nietzsche would see it, wherein futural action, the subject’s contingent formation, becomes coordinated and selected. It is, among other things, movement-in-the-making. Serres, along with other thinkers such as Brian Massumi in his *Parables of the Virtual*, have captured such transitioning as “passage into act.”¹³ For his part, Massumi also writes that sensations are ten-

dencies, bundles of potential, awaiting extension. This turn relies upon a distinction made by Deleuze, as well as others, between potentiality and possibility. While sensation, as Massumi notes, is potential that is indeterminate, unscripted, and inexhaustible, which also means that it remains latent or dormant, the world of possibilities speaks to us of existing ways of being, doing, perceiving, as well as of the corporeal limits of organisms and the pre-given usefulness of things.¹⁴ For me, potentiality means that sensations transitioning into acts render the sense of any movement always open to transformation. Sense is utter-able as verb. Potentiality remains *in activity* despite countless iterations and does not in actuality reach a completed form. This all the while, to borrow Alphonso Lingis' words, "one makes oneself someone by giving oneself form ... another one of a series. The forms of one's movements and postures, of one's gaits and gestures, ... one picks up from others, passes onto others. One feels oneself a wave on a sea of life that comes indefinitely from the past and extends indefinitely into the future."¹⁵

Sensations are intensive potentials in the making of movement. The potential for movement as such does not have a limit, by which I mean that our capacity for movement is *relationally unlimited*. If you have ever been carried away by the gradations of pebbles on a beach, the mystery of whale song, the inviting scent of a wildflower, the terrible howling of wind, the joyful play of an animal, the steady whirling of a galaxy, or whatever else art may convey to activate sensation, you have experienced, to use a rudimentary topological expression, betweenness of forms. Entanglements with planetary lifeforms and cosmic phenomena afford abundant potential for metamorphosis, without which there is no learning, thought, and awareness. This weaving of one-with-the-other, where me-you-us are spun together without a split in where me-you begins and ends, is not the exceptional circumstance; it is the prevailing way that life generates itself, that is, by the co-creativity of organisms and phenomena. A multidimensional line of life courses through, enfolds, and informs the infinitesimal and immense alike. It is indefinite becoming, leaving nothing behind in its unfolding *and* site-specific mutual coming into presence. In his work on painting, Deleuze writes that where this line "encounters the animal, it becomes animalized, ... not by outlining a form, but on the contrary by imposing, through its clarity and nonorganic precision, a zone where forms become indiscernible. It also attests to a high spirituality, since what leads it to seek the elementary forces beyond the organic is a spiritual will. Spirituality is a spirituality of the body; the spirit is the body itself."¹⁶

In the present moment lies the inventiveness of bodies, their unknown futural orientation. The fabric of life weaves itself through the futural opening implicated in any movement. It summons forward from the deep pool of the dreaming unformed, invoking the highest degree of attunement. This capacity to transmute, to move between forms and become otherwise, speaks to me of the imagination, not as the mental faculty to make images, but the opposite, traversal without a predetermined image and predestined end. There is no



movement without imagination, without taking a step into the unforeseen, inconceivable, invisible. We move blindly, we improvise without vision. To move is to exist, to be an animate being, propelled by strangeness at the edge of the visible. Movement entails crossing the darkness of not-yet potential—poetically said, a womb of the unborn, through which we become motional in encountering otherness, otherness that is affirmed in announcing



Sanja Jano, Still from video “Anima, Anima Mundi, Animal,” Mono Cliffs, 2019

itself. The momentum of this affirmative turn is its energization, vivification, a *mutual letting-be*. We are vortices of dancing relations, levels of intensification, excitement, and potentiation, makers of embodying sites to plunge into and from which to emerge, like flying fish reaching toward the celestial. To imagine a given fish-woman series, the body must become transposed, it must invent, thanks to its kinesthetic sensitivity, with the entirety of its fleshly being.¹⁷ Meanwhile, psyche is the transformation of the self without which there is no self, a turn from one energetic level to another, out of which self is perpetually spewed out. To imagine, Gaston Bachelard once wrote, is to “absent oneself,” to be carried away with whatever flow or flux.¹⁸

But what is one carried away with? What is a zone of indiscernibility? For me, intensive potentiation is itself movement *conveying the other*. Such expression arises *within* the fish-woman series-iteration itself: fish, not as a taxonomic classification, but as a *relational reality* expressing itself through movement. As a fish-woman iteration is co-created, it induces an image that marks its passage, an image that has its corresponding bodily schema—countless fragments of relations with fish, birds, dogs, stones, trees, and everything else, swimming through the skin, organs, tissues, bones

15. BODYLANDSCAPES: GEOMORPHOLOGY

CSENGE KOLOZSVARI

HUMANS AS IMAGINARY PLACES

Imagination, writes Deleuze, is “larval consciousness which moves endlessly from science to dream and back again.”¹ Imagining happens in nomadic ways—leaking, fleeing, escaping—finding ways through and across what is thinkable; vibrating homogeneity apart. For some, building images predominantly happens through ways of seeing; like flickering visuals of potentialities. For others, they appear through felt sensations, opening a window into a memory of the future²—a story that hasn’t happened yet but has already made its mark through a feeling of something yet to come, the reverberation of an encounter-with-difference, a relation just at the brink of unfolding. This inkling of what might emerge infiltrates and alters the lived experience imminently. Whatever the way, these tendencies are in a co-composition in the building of a wandering-wondering somewhere; a walk together into an unknowable topology. Imagination is a creative force that actively reconfigures what is possible in the everyday. It is seeping through our bodily fabrics, perceptions, and sense-making processes.

The way we experience the world (which experience arises through and across the body) has social consequences; it determines what kinds of thoughts, movements, relationships become possible. How do we relate to and affect everything that moves across our bodies, pushes up against our membranes, catches us in their currents? How are we orbiting with those constantly shifting cartographies of relations? What is the expression of life living through us?

How we imagine our bodies matters.

Bodylandscapes: geomorphology is a video piece feeling-with the fascial planes (connective tissues) of bodies; thinking them beyond human scales and temporalities, as constantly emerging fields. It is part of a larger interdisciplinary project called *Becoming-environment* that diagrammatically includes performances, drawings, writing, and video and still images, as well as solo works and collaborations. At the core of these works are the speculative-pragmatic questions: How can we think of the body as a complex, murmuring ecology? How can we agitate the habitual narratives of bodily edges as solid and knowable? An inquiry not only about how we are permeable, but how we are always, inherently, intimately embedded in the environment-continuum?

wondering:

how can we learn to maintain the tactile connection with what is already moving?

attuning

expanding

the body's potential as a membrane to stay in contact with the vibratory forces

that exceed and connect it into a conductive fielding?

this would be a wondering-remembering of belonging to a living field of relations.

Bodylandscapes: geomorphology proposes that by attuning to the constellation of connective tissue, we can feel into topologies across scales that move through and shape us; the vitality of matter, the capacities of weather-patterns for movement and artfulness, the infra-perceptible occasions that are usually edited out by the process of making sense of the world.³ The video is a composition of detailed skin-textures and close-ups of body parts that are constantly, almost imperceptibly transitioning into one another, following creases and swellings of a body, creating a unique choreography. This choreography is a cross-pollination of artistic and somatic practices. The framing of the footage gives no reference for scale, which opens our perception for cross-species topologies. “Topology deals with continuity of transformation. Forms figure less as self-enclosures than as open co-dependencies of a shared deformational field. The continuity of that field of variation is inseparable from the forms populating it. Yet it exceeds any one of them, running across

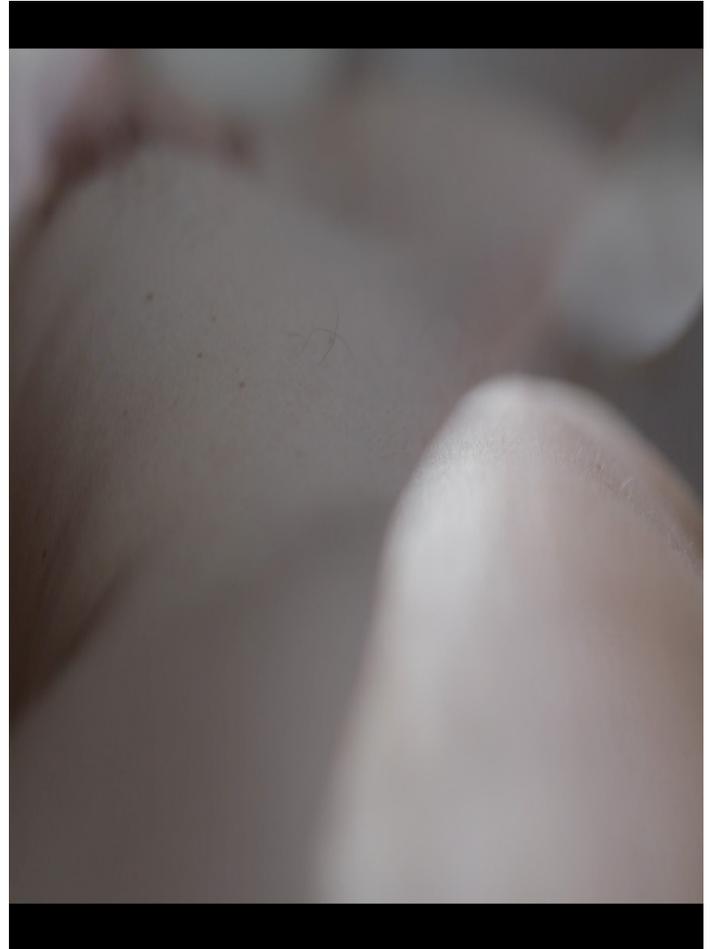


photo credit © Lisa Graves

them all.”⁴ This “running across” movement is one that operates transversally through textures and rhythms, acting in cellular ways, mobilizing touch, sounds, thoughts, and breath—it becomes vibration. The camera in this practice is a listening device for the softness of skin-talk; touching the process of becoming-bodies, the landscapes of constantly shifting environments in-the-making.

FASCIAL TOPOLOGIES

There are many ways of describing the fascial web. It consists of a three-dimensional continuum of soft, collagen containing, loose and dense fibrous connective tissue that permeates the body. Its layers surround and interweave organs, lymph nodes and blood vessels, bones, the brain and spinal cord, all muscles, and even singular muscle-fibres. Its function is multitudinous and sometimes paradoxical; it connects and divides, contains, yet makes

movement possible. Its viscous surface allows these assemblages to slide and glide on each other, extending the reach of motion beyond the length of individual structures. It is essential to the dance between stability and movement, maintaining a balance between tension and elasticity.

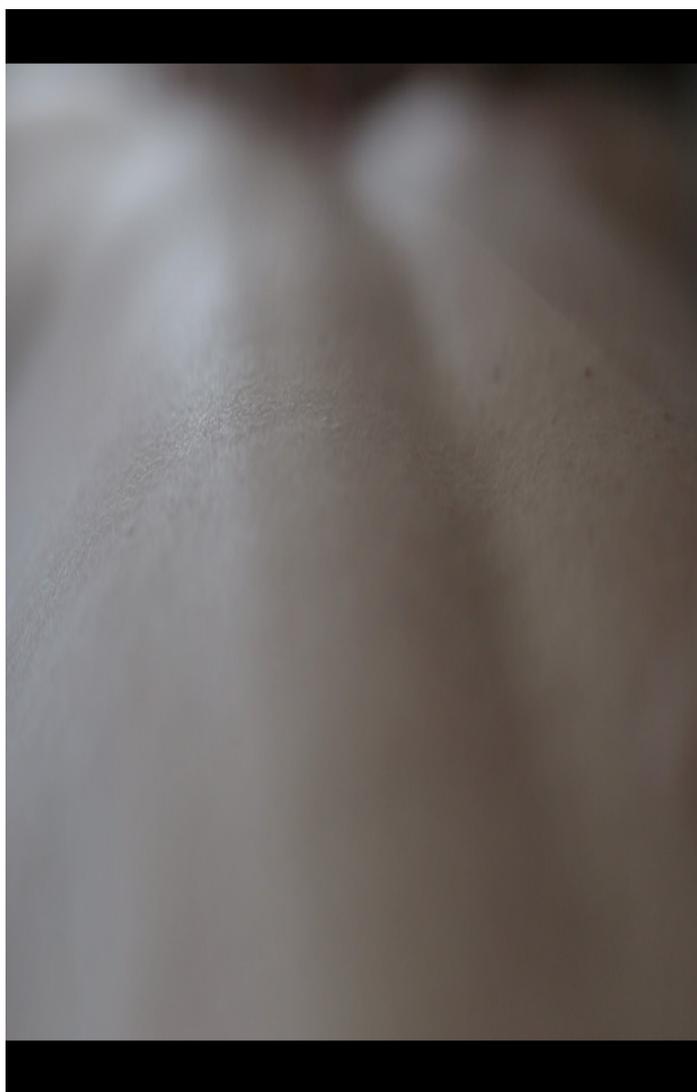


photo credit © Lisa Graves

What used to be thought of as the “leftover” of our bodies (other-than muscles, bones, and organs), turns out to be an “intelligent, active and communicative sensory organ enveloping, permeating and constituting the body.”⁵ Every living cell is linked with and responds to the fascial environment, also called the neuro-myo-fascial net. This inter-related net envelopes nerves that are weaving through the body and carries different kinds of nerve endings called mechanoreceptors that sense the various qualities of touch (depth, pressure, pace, angle, etc.). Fascia functions as a connective membrane between the nerves and the world, and its quality—elasticity, density, viscosity, adherence, fluidity—shapes our sensory experiences. It is literally what holds us together, and it is also a fabric that inherently connects us with life: “a sensorium.”⁶

As fascia guides nerves, arteries, and veins to each muscle, it also links them beyond joints, continuing into the next muscle, and the next one, and so on. There has been

more and more research in the past twenty to thirty years on how fascial lines connect to each other, especially through cadaver dissections. Instead of cutting through these threads of relation, people like Thomas Myers have started to follow them, discovering

what Dumit and O'Connor quote as "lines of tension."⁷

LANDSCAPE OF RELATIONS

These lines of tensions do not stop at the edge of what we often think of as the borders of bodies. They continue on into the world, stretching across everyday encounters. We carry them out in our postures, the way we find points of entries to spaces, experiences, hearts. Through invisible islands—the qualities vibrating with the traces of the lived and the not yet lived, intersecting with our bodies, but not being contained by them. The way words surface like spillages, summoning the ones who came before us, the movements that this intricate tissue-web makes possible—the fluidity, the edges, the curves and breathability: sociality in the making.

Fascia is a relational field that can give us an account of elasticity: How is an organism able to go through constant changes locally and globally, while still nourishing structural integrity? How might it be possible to stretch our perceptual presuppositions that lead to actions that often disregard certain forms of life? How can we foreground that which we are usually missing and re-produce a deeply felt connection with the connective tissue of the world? How might this involve cultivating attentiveness as a practice?

Bodies are in a constant vibratory, processual act of becoming.⁸ They can never be imagined as separate or static. While feeling into the forces that are running across our bodies, we enter into a knowing that we are always in the act of being made by the world. We didn't arrive into it; we grew out of it and continue to do so. The way we see-feel this growing determines how we move with other humans and species, material formations, built environments, weather patterns, and planetary constellations.

How we imagine our relational-bodies-in-motion matters.

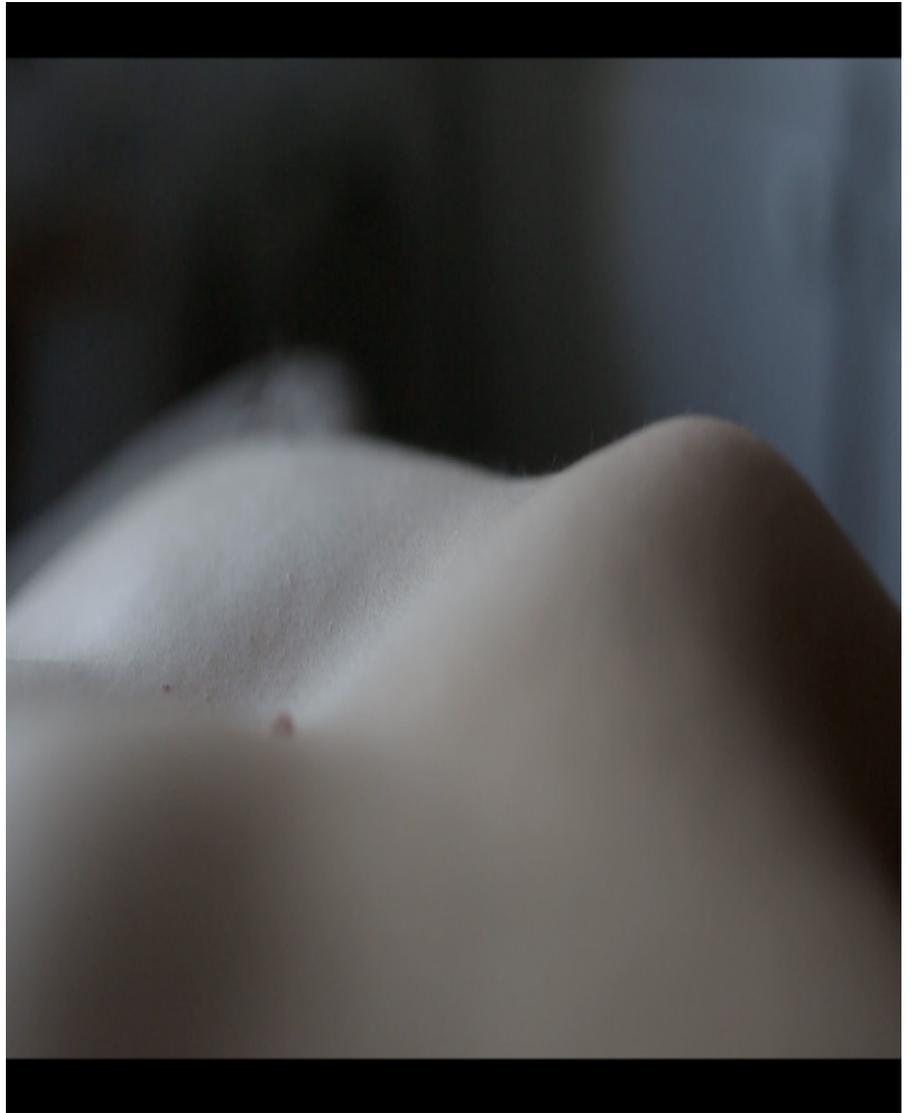


photo credit © Lisa Graves

The learning and the practices we develop must be lived in our tissues and bones, through emergent subjectivities, fabulatory movement-compositions, and our specious relations. We need to build new bodies for these new practices. The socio-political stake of such practices is to re-think our habitual self-centred view of the world, which prevents us from moving-feeling-with other-than-human scales and rhythms. It is a proposition for remembering the ecological ways of belonging to the earth, a feeling into other ways of knowing, connecting into the vastness that surrounds us and moves across us. It convokes becoming-environment once again.

16. FROM THE DEPTHS OF HER ABYSS: AN INTERVIEW WITH TERESA ASCENCAO

TERESA ASCENCAO AND SANJA JANO

Sanja: I am intrigued by the art that you are making and your process. I'd like to begin by talking about the title of your most recent performance, *From the Depths of Her Abyss* (2018–ongoing). Can you tell us about it and what the performance is about?

Teresa: It's a movement for live video work exploring transformation through light, clothing, and movement. I'm interested in what lies hidden in the unconscious mind and the potential for creation to come from darkness.

I recently performed elements of *From the Depths of Her Abyss* in New Orleans as part of Derek Bruechner's project called *Social Improvisations* at the New Orleans Jazz Museum. This was made possible by an Ontario Arts Council grant. Derek and I share an interest in video projection as an expressive medium to explore the human body's movement. Derek's *Social Improvisations* project involves collaboration with contact dancers, musicians, and camera work—all improvised. Dancers played with wearable lights and reflective fabric capes that ranged from shiny transparency with patterns to fake white fur. The shimmering dresses and body suit I brought complemented Derek's capes. This was the first time I wore them to perform.



Teresa Ascencao, still of "From the Depths of Her Abyss," live movement with interactive video (as integrated into Derek Brueckner's *Social Improvisations* Project), A LUNA Fête Celebration of Light & Music, The New Orleans Jazz Museum, New Orleans, 2019.

The way I played with the capes made them appear at times as a super heroine's cape, and at others as large insect wings. I am now thinking about how Derek's twenty-foot-tall projections transformed me into a monstrous size, an element I want to experiment with in the development of my work. His work has been inspirational because he is looser than I am in my creative process. The *Social Improvisations* project in movement, costume, light, and sound, has been liberating to me as an artist. I am grateful to Derek for that.



Teresa Ascencao, still from. "Bugs, Birds and Fireflies," movement for video, (part of *From the Depths of Her Abyss*), Lake Studios, Berlin, 2018.

movement, but the disintegration of clothing as well. For me, the clothing light trails, but also the disintegration of clothing, suggest a kind of turn to the unconscious, which involves a transfiguration of your body through clothing. Here is a way to get to the unconscious as transformation. You mentioned that you are attracted to insects because, together, they are a powerful force. They are also a destructive force, but such destruction, you have noted, figures into creation. What your artistic work is showing is that something must be pulled apart, disassembled, for something else to emerge. Here, you mentioned that you are inspired by moths, which eat clothing.

S: In our previous conversations you talked a bit about your work with insects, a topic that fascinates me. You've primarily discussed how your work with insects is a way to engage the primal unconscious and your embodiment. You embedded this conversation in political, more specifically patriarchal, structures that feminists are seeking to disrupt.

For you, a body is the site of the animalistic unconscious, and embodied movement is a way to access it. You referenced the funnel as a natural formation that influences your movements. How does that manifest in performance?

T: Yeah, the dust devil is a funnel formation I'm moved by. The swirling wind only comes to light once dust is picked up.

S: You spoke about how light manifests that movement.

T: I am playing with the human body in movement with shiny clothing that reflects close-range stage lights. I'm experimenting with how light can reveal authentic and primal expressions through movement. Primal can be animalistic, but also the non-posturing banal.

S: Your work does not only involve playing with shiny clothing to explore and express

T: Within that disintegration there is creation. The moth larva (caterpillar) eats clothing, including synthetic materials if mixed with natural fibers. And termites too, as they are just as destructive, collectively. Termites burrowing holes in a leg of a table create a new form of material and object. Their power to transform material is in contrast to how fleeting their lives are, how fragile their bodies are. Despite their small size and strength, they burrow themselves into the soil in winter and survive. That's amazing.

S: You mentioned that your artistic practice involves a “battle with clothing.” What does that battle involve? How would you describe that battle?



Teresa Ascencao, still from, “Bugs, Birds and Fireflies,” movement for video, (part of *From the Depths of Her Abyss*), Lake Studios, Berlin, 2018.

ing insect mandibles. Through a repetitive process of dressing and undressing that seems to lead nowhere, like the moth larva or termite randomly eating away at things, unexpectedly new formations appear.

I am fascinated by those manifestations because they might be glimpses into my unconscious animalistic self that has been repressed by capitalist patriarchal society, controlling what I am supposed to act and look like. I disrupt those powerful forces through an unas-

T: In an earlier video work called *Dressing* (2015), a friend said it looked like I was fighting with the clothing. Looking back, I feel I was beginning a struggle to understand how clothing has defined me. It was the beginning of trying to grapple with that in my art.

I am still working with clothing—currently with software that messes with the form of my body in the clothing. The software for my current work, *From the Depths of Her Abyss*, has a time delay that multiplies my form. I perform for the webcam, which is somewhat like a dressing mirror. My image gets picked up by the webcam and is enlarged through a wall projection. At times, the software seems to transform me into insect-like beings. While putting on and taking off clothing, suddenly I have multiple arms, my long dress turns into a rattling tail, and my blazer transforms into fluttering wings. When I remove my gloves with my mouth, my fingers appear like fast-moving

suming process of simply dressing and undressing for this artwork.

S: You mentioned that at times you appear to be transforming into an insect, into what one might describe as a becoming-insect. How does that connect with your intrigue of moving through clothing to get to the unconscious? You've linked insects with clothing and the unconscious with embodiment. Becoming-insect seems to potentiate a kind of transfiguration by enabling access to the bodily unconscious. Again, it fascinates me that the insect is providing that opening. Can you say a bit more about that?

T: I'm putting myself through a performative process to become more of somebody or something that I or because of society have not given myself permission to be. I have been making art for two decades, but in the last few years I began making work that directly involves my body for the first time. The work is emotionally and physically vulnerable, involving dressing and undressing, often done live. I don't understand where or what I am moving toward. But I am trusting that I need to go deeper into myself, in a reflective, intuitive, and hopefully later in a more conscious way. I think the creative process in art-making is very similar to transformation in life; when we want to change directions or become something else. Clothing is a symbol of control that I am shedding, and insects guide me through transformative aesthetics and gestures.

S: I am noticing themes like consumption, purging, and elimination as part of your artistic process. There is a process of putting something on or dressing to construct and consume, and then to purge and eliminate. Insects are an interesting way to explore this transformative process because they tend to shed parts of themselves, regrow and regenerate, and can become something other. In terms of self-consumption, it appears that through this process of becoming-insect, I can consume and shed parts of myself, and reemerge as something else. By becoming-insect you become capable of that elimination process or maybe purging of part(s) of self. Putting on and taking off clothing is facilitating that process it would seem.

T: It's a process through which I can purge different aspects of myself through clothing. This is an attempt to clear space for the new—a creative destruction, somewhat like what the moth larva does to the material. I don't think we can create something new without first getting rid of established structures or details. It's necessary to erase a little bit of myself in the process of transformation.

S: I want to delve a bit into this role of erasure in performance. How do you perform erasure?

T: I perform erasure by consuming, then purging, clothing. When we remove clothing, the clothes-related identity is erased. What is left is our skin, our features, and how we move. Perhaps this is a little closer to an authentic self. Through the live video piece, I perform erasure by transforming into different creatures. It is partial erasure, because you can still see me as I perform it. I'd like to push the work much further, and make grander gestures, and use costumes that erase me much more. I don't want to erase myself completely. I am seeking to transform into what's inside that has never come out. You must go through a process of disintegrating an old identity in order to bring out another one. But it doesn't mean complete erasure. I presented this live work to formally trained dancers in Berlin, but my concept was not as clear as I would have liked. I want to make the work clearer,

perhaps by exaggerating the costumes and movements more.

S: What is complete erasure to you?

T: I think it's unhealthy. It means that the mind would be unstable without its history, without having a structure to hold up the self. We need something of the original structure remaining through the process of transformation. There has to be a structure supporting the process.

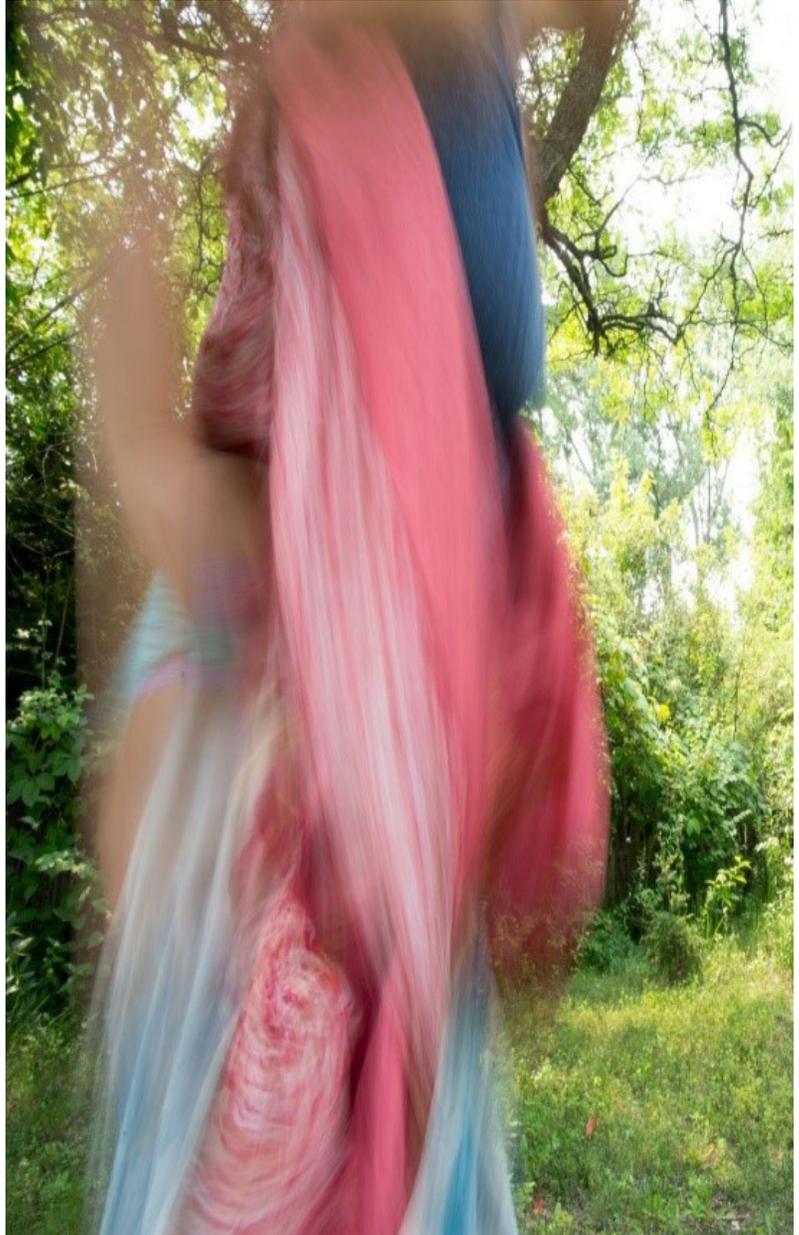
S: What is that structure for you?

T: The structure has been how I have identified as—as a human who is cisgender female, as an immigrant, and as an artist. But there are aspects that I have not allowed myself to surface. I believe these are more primal, animalistic sides, that society says are inappropriate to express. For example, I am not just feminine, as I can also be bold and impulsive. I am not just an artist with philosophical ideas, but also a lay person in context of my heritage and jobs I do to survive—after all, I also work with my hands.

S: What do you perceive are the animalistic sides of self?

T: What is animalistic for me? It's permission, to be more closely expressive of who I am without all the cultural impositions. An animal, by definition, from the perspective of humans, is unhuman. It's uncultivated, unrefined, and uncontrolled. And there I think lies a lot of potential for me to understand who I am at my base, my foundation as an animal.

Animals do cultivate language, rituals, and relationships—that's all learned and cultivated. But I don't think they express individually through materials, such as clothing. Animals are more authentic and express their emotions. I believe humans control themselves a lot more. And that is what I am calling culture—our ability to be controlled by, and control, ourselves, to the detriment of not knowing and being oneself



Teresa Ascencao, still from "Dressings," still image video compilation with sound, (part of The Laundry Series), Lake Studios, Artscape Gibraltar Point, Toronto, 2015.

deeply.

S: To go back to it, I believe you referred to the unconscious as the animalistic aspect of the self.

T: I believe our unconscious is our animal part. It's mixed up with symbols from the cultural domain. But fundamentally our animal self is in the unconscious.

S: There seems to be a kind of risk associated with accessing this animalistic aspect of self.

T: The unconscious is scary. Freud believed that if we unleash our unconscious, we would be destructive, animalistic, and uncontrollable. [S: Are you convinced?] Not completely convinced, because I believe the unconscious is also creative. But it's still scary because it's a large and order-less unknown caldron of self.

S: I am interested in how we gravitate toward certain animals to assist us through a journey of transformation. I am wondering why insects instead of something else.

T: Insects are an animal that is intangible—like the unconscious. They're not like bears, who are so palpably physical and immediate. Insects get lost and disappear into our clothing, into our furniture, into our lives, and we don't know where they go. In art and movies, insects have been used to express threat, fear, and lack of agency (I want to research this a bit).

S: You seem to be developing a relationship with insects that, for me, might itself be an overcoming of the fear of the unknown; a way you are approaching the unconscious. The openness of your creative process suggests this as well.

T: That's a great observation. Perhaps the works face and try to embrace some sort of fear I have.



Teresa Ascencao, still from "Bugs, Birds and Fireflies," movement for video, (part of *From the Depths of Her Abyss*), Lake Studios, Berlin, 2018.

S: Do you think that your process allows you to become more connected to your body? Or, does the artistic process aim to make you feel more embodied?

T: Yeah, I think so. I think it's a process of becoming comfortable with fear—of the unknown, of the disappearing; it relates back to death, my brother, myself aging. And so yeah, becoming comfortable with disappearance is something I am interested in.

S: You mentioned your deceased brother. Is there something you wanted to say about him?

T: My brother suddenly died, and I don't know where he went. It was a couple of years ago, and it's when the insect inspiration started. A dragonfly landed on my leg and stayed for a long time. It made me wonder what my brother transformed into and where he is. I wanted the dragonfly to be him!

I want to believe that my brother transformed into another form. But then, which form is he? Why is it important for me to know exactly which form he transformed into? And why would he only transform into only a single form, such as a dragonfly? Why wouldn't he have become part of a multiplicity of new forms, together with a bunch of other living creatures that have cycled through transformations?



Teresa Ascencao, "Maria," interactive lenticular photography, Toronto, 2003.

We often think of life and death as linear and finite. I am becoming more intuitive, trusting of fear, of the unknown, and wanting to embrace transformation. What is identity if we are going to lose our bodies, all our material goods, and all that we put so much value in? As I get older, I want to know how I can transform my former understanding of self into something more realistic, which is based on what is going to happen to me and everyone and everything around me. Death, transformation, and insects are a strong motivation behind my current practice.

S: Experiencing death lends us another perspective. Seen through that lens, of returning to the earth, the place of objects in our daily lives (and how we interact with materials) becomes open to questioning and reconsideration.

T: About clothing, if I may say specifically around femininity, it is the one and single material/object that has a stronghold on this identity. This is mostly why I am interested in battling with clothing. We use it every day, are intimate with it, and care for it, almost like another being—because we wash it and display it. It's the one thing as a cisgender woman that I want to battle with. In contrast, I like working with light because it's something immaterial and intangible, like the unconscious.

S: I am interested in the trace of light you have returned to. Light is that trace of the material—tracing where our corporality has been, its movement.

T: I'm photo-based, as I started in photography. My grandfather was a photographer. I watched him splice film, and watched these projections, darkroom images, come to life from light. Photographic processes have always been fascinating and send shivers down my spine. I am not a scientist, but I believe light, just as water, is connected to life force or origins of life. In my work right now, what's important is the trace of the material, not the material itself.

S: It is through light that things come into life. The movement of light involves death and (re)birth (or coming into being, yet again); it sounds like light is also connected for you with the coming to life. Light seems to encapsulate the process you are engaging.

T: There is darkness and there is light. But darkness is not necessarily death and light life. I think of darkness as life. A child in the womb is in complete darkness, it emerges from darkness. Outer space is mostly darkness, and from it is born the cosmos. Darkness is not death—it's life, or both. I like to think that light reveals life that comes from darkness.

S: Yes, for me, this is the creative process of the imagination. I'd like to return to aging for a moment. Aging, but also coming to terms with finitude or our mortality, makes us ask what will happen with our bodies and what do we leave behind. What I find interesting and powerful about your work here is that you are asking this question, what do we leave behind? And what is left of us?

T: I am writing down what you said, 'what do we leave behind?' In the context of *From the Depths of Her Abyss*, the light trails are what I leave behind as a mark after performing. Humans are not more important than different living entities on earth, but we seem to think so. We leave marks such as open pit mines, plastics in animal bellies, ocean garbage islands, and tombstone dotted cemeteries.

S: As we wrap up our conversation, I would like to invite you to return to the role of clothing in your work. What role has clothing played in your other works?

T: Clothing has had a presence in many of my works, going back two decades. For the *Maria* series in 2003, I dressed up a dollar store doll in various clothing to play different characters—sometimes cross-dressing. She secretly performed sexual taboos imposed on female-identifying people within Azorean (my heritage) Roman Catholicism. There is one piece where she is naked, and her clothing is floating on the surface of the water. I did not realize until now that I had played with clothing that far back, because I was focused on performance in cultural contexts.

In another work called *Leisure and Labour* (2017), I collaborated with my life partner at the time, Johann. For a month, we photographed each other interacting with the material objects in our apartment, and then compiled the images into a slide show video. There is an image where all my dried laundry is spread over the sofa.



Teresa Ascencao, still from "Adoration," interactive video installation, Trinity Square Video, Toronto, 2007

In another work, *Adoration* (2007), I created an interactive home and clothing makeover video installation. For this, I compiled internet images of rooms and furniture, as well as footage I took of women who performed for a mirror while wearing various clothing. The images were layered one on top of another and controlled with a tv remote from a sofa chair. The women changed into clothes and walked into rooms that resonated with their personal style.

Clothing is associated with how we perform in daily life. They're part of ritualized expressions through which we communicate who we believe we are, and to which communities we belong. I have been grappling with the meaning of clothing in ritual and identity. The works play with the construction of iconographic illusions, both to conform and to subvert cultural expectations of ourselves.

Since then, I have personally transformed from identifying as heterosexual to predominantly heterosexual and sexually non-conforming. What I have created in my art has helped me transform into a more authentic self.

S: Thank you for sharing your work. My last question is a bit of a reiteration. How has bringing your body into it, as in the context of performance, changed your artistic practice?

T: Recently, I gave myself permission to bring my own body into my practice. I have become more trusting as a creative person. Before that, I would pre-plan the concept, as well as the look and functionality of my works in my sketchbook. Since then, my process has become more intuitive, and sometimes improvisational and collaborative. It feels like a rebirth. The creative process, as experienced through my body, is manifesting into a sort of personal transformation. This new process has introduced a "soul" that I was missing. I hope that's what I am bringing into it.

ENDNOTES

2. The Burden of This by HEATHER SINCAVAGE

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3. The Political Life of Anxious Embodiment by A. T. KINGSMITH

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5. Translocation, Polytime, and Joy in Eco-Performance Somadance by CHRISTINE cricri BELLEROSE

1. Sylvie Tourangeau, movement performance artist and coach, part of the TouVA Performance Art & Research Collective. The workshop was “Solidité / Fluidité / Solidarité,” atelier-résidence d’art performance, July 1–9 2018 at La maison jaune, Ste-Agathe-de-Lotbinière. Québec, Canada.
2. Sharon Blackie, in her course “Voices of the Wells,” speaks of the otherworld, also the underworld, as the place where the fairies live. But not only. She speaks of the otherworld | underworld as a place that exists neither “other” nor “under” but together with our world. To see it, then, is a matter of adjusting the *seeing* lens. It took the course online through Hedge School in 2019; see <https://sharonblackie.net/the-voices-of-the-wells/>.
3. The birds’ nest had not been claimed in the three days since I found it, under a pine tree. By the looks of it, no birds would reclaim the nest. I incorporated the found object into my eco-performance exploration.
4. Presencing amplitude is making visible the experience of amplitude. Presencing is how I massage a word to mean making present the experience. It is not about presenting, for it is not about showing. Presencing is opening myself to allow the other to experience my experience. In this way, it is never a show, but rather an invitation to join the dance. Presencing is also a post translation from the French, *présence*, meaning a sense of existing.
5. I perform with a specific costume. Specifically, my research through the costume and prop focuses on augmented sense. I bare skin as much as possible so as to *see* with my skin. I wear a “necklace” of dozens of spongy jersey fabric strands hanging down my knees. Often, but not always, I hold a heavy giant umbrella set with dozens of 12ft long sheer polyester curtain fabric strands. I observe how wind and water elements interrupt and play with my props; interrupt my own performance. The questions then, relate to sensing my body extended through my costume and props. I observe ways the animated fabric communicates movement drives to my human body. And the reverse as well holds true: I observe ways my body communicates movement to the animated fabric. The costume—its fabric, texture, length and knots, heaviness, stillness, pull up (windward) or pull down (drowning)—mediates dimensions of inner and outer by acting its own movements.

6. Performing Assemblage / Self as Guest by lo bil

1. I use this term in relation to the trainings I have taken: Fiona Griffith’s Source Work, and John Turner and Michael Kennard’s Pochinko clown—a mix of ideas borrowed from European and North American Indigenous clown.
2. This symposium was organized by Sanja (Dejanovic) Jano in August 2019.
3. This conversation was with Lindsay Shane, a student of “Mindscaping,” a visioning process that uses unconscious metaphors to solve problems or increase skills.

4. I am referring to adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*: “Small is good, small is all.” As quoted in Hemispheric Dialogue/Diálogo Hemisférico, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z6463PN2qwN08fX HXT-FowZ0UkWvH-3Si/view>, accessed February 15, 2020.
5. My use of the word “we” references the work of Barak adé Soileil in 2019 at 7a*11d International Festival of Performance Art 2018, http://7a-11d.ca/festival_artist/ade-soleil-barak/.
6. I encountered the question of leftovers through the research of Joseph (Pepe) Patricio at Month of Performance Art—Berlin 2015, <https://mpa-blog.tumblr.com/post/51227215846/hot-acts-urban-rituals-by-andrew-caitlin>.
7. I was born here but my family came to Canada from Poland as working-class labourers in 1934. So I am from a settler culture and yet I feel I have no other land. I have never met my ancestors nor been to the land where they are buried. However, I’m trying to develop an awareness around my participation in colonialism by acknowledging the repercussions of my life here—that the land I was born on was stolen from the Indigenous people and that their history was forcibly silenced through law and violence by European settlers. While I have no knowledge of my grandparents enacting violence on Indigenous people, I admit that all Caucasian settlers have benefited from systemic violence and racism even though they themselves have been victim to ostracization and nationality-based prejudice that affected their ability to provide for their family, it was not at the level of violence and erasure the Indigenous people faced on their own land. To participate in the culture as an artist requires me to understand my place in this history to the best of my ability.
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11. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 71.
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14. Jill Carter, *Calling Out at the “Edge of the Woods”: The Protocol as Perlocutionary Event*, *alt.theatre* 15, no. 1: 16: “We waited at the outskirts, building a signal fire and announcing our presence in song, waiting to be welcomed ... this is part of the treaty process between humans.”
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18. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London: A&C Black, 2004), 275.
19. Dolleen Manning, “The Murmuration of Birds,” in *A Feminist Phenomenology Manifesto*, ed. Helen A. Fielding (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 156.
20. Ibid, 172.
21. Dolleen Tisawii’ashii Manning, “Mnidoo-Worlding: Merleau-Ponty and Anishinaabe Philosophical Translations,” Abstract in PhD diss., University of Western Ontario (2017), I.

7. BOG-Fragment 201.983.1 by DENISPÉ: DENIS LAFOND AND SPERANZA SPIR

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8. Green as Eternal Object: Shooting Colour by SHANNON BELL AND GAD HOROWITZ

1. When Newton used a prism to split sunlight into component colours of the optical spectrum.
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11. Whitehead, *Concept of Nature*, 48.
12. Michael Halewood quoted in Horowitz and Bell, *Radical General Semantics*, 48.
13. John B. Cobb, Jr. *Whitehead Word Book: A Glossary with Alphabetical Index to Technical Terms in Process and Reality* (Claremont, CA: P & F Press, 2008), 24–6.
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9. Choreographic Interventions: Listening with/in Nonhuman Publics by MIKA LILLIT LIOR

1. Original formatting by Philip Wesley Gates.
2. These scores were conceived by Mika Lior, Philip Gates, and Malin Palani for the Ecology in/and/of Performance Working Group at the 2019 American Society of Theatre Research conference. Our intervention aims to expand perceptivity of “publics” by inviting participants to engage in sustained encounters with nonhuman bodies that are sometimes pushed to the margins of public and individuated attention.
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10. Speaking by the Stream: Loosely Borrowed Thoughts on Improvisation by JONATHAN ADJEMIAN

1. Sections of the *futuhāt* have been translated to English; the longest selections are in *The Meccan Illuminations*, ed. Michel Chodkiewicz, vol. 1 trans. William C. Chittick and James W. Morris; vol 2. trans. Cyrille Chodkiewicz and Denis Gril (New York: Pir Press, 2002 and 2004), and scattered throughout William Chittick's *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn Al-Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989) and *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn Al-'arabi's Cosmology* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997).
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3. See Mehdi Ha'iri Yazdi, *The Principles of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992).
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11. La la la, la la la la by MITCHELL AKIYAMA

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2. Vadim Prokhorov, "Can't Get It Out of My Head," Guardian, June 22, 2006, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2006/jun/22/popandrock>.
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5. Oliver W. Sacks, *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 49.
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8. Manfred L Eaton, *Bio-Music* (Barton, VT: Something Else Press, 1973), 23–45.
9. Eaton, *Bio-Music*, 13.
10. Eaton, *Bio-Music*, 26–32.
11. Prokhorov, "Can't Get It Out of My Head."
12. J. G. Ballard, "The Sound-Sweep," in *The Four-Dimensional Nightmare* (London: Gollancz, 1963), 42.
13. Ballard, "The Sound-Sweep," 48.
14. "But the final triumph of ultrasonic music had come with a second development—the short-playing record, spinning at 900 r.p.m., which condensed the 45 minutes of a Beethoven symphony to 20 seconds of playing time, the three hours of a Wagner opera to little more than two minutes." Ballard, "The Sound-Sweep," 49.
15. Joseph, "Biomusic," 143.

16. Evelyn Glennie, "Hearing Essay," in *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*, ed. Christoph Cox and Daniel Warner (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 126–7.
17. Jessica A. Holmes, "Expert Listening beyond the Limits of Hearing: Music and Deafness," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 70, no. 1 (2017).
18. Sacks, *Musophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*, 99.
19. Nicholas Bannan, "Darwin, Music and Evolution: New Insights From Family Correspondence On The Descent of Man," *Musicae Scientiae* 21, no. 1 (2017): 3–25.
20. Sacks, *Musophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*, 103.

12. Sounding Difference: Listening to Water Touch by ANNE BOURNE

1. Pauline Oliveros, "Horse Sings from Cloud," in *Deep Listening Pieces* (Kingston, NY: Deep Listening Publications, ©1990). 'Horse Sings from Cloud' © Deep Listening Publications. Printed with permission from the Pauline Oliveros Trust Photograph Text Score Credits: "Back to Back," Pauline Oliveros, in *Deep Listening Pieces* (Kingston, NY: Deep Listening Publications, 1990). "Zina's Circle," "Extreme Slow Walk" Pauline Oliveros, in *Deep Listening A Composer's Sound Practice*, (Kingston NY: Deep Listening Publications, 2005).
2. *Remembering Pauline Oliveros*. February 6, 2017 http://armoryonpark.org/mobile/event_detail/remembering_pauline_oliveros/
3. Pauline Oliveros, "The Tuning Meditation," 1980, in *Deep Listening Pieces* (Kingston, NY: Deep Listening Publications, ©1990).
4. H.L.F. Helmholtz, *On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music*, 2nd English ed. (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1954).
5. Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1955), 121.
6. Anne Bourne, "Dreaming at the Top of the Sky: listen to the memory of listening" in *Anthology of Essays on Deep Listening* (Kingston, NY: Deep Listening Publications, 2012), 288.
7. *Biindigen*, I would like to acknowledge this land on which we now gather. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is territory of the Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit River. This territory was the subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Confederacy of the Ojibwe, and allied nations, to peaceably care for the resources of the Great Lakes.
8. Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 50.
9. Pauline Oliveros, "Auralizing in the Sonosphere: A Vocabulary for Inner Sound and Sounding," *Journal of Visual Culture* 10, no. 2 (2011): 162–8.
10. Lynn Margulis, *Symbiotic Planet: A New Look at Evolution* (New York, Basic Books, 1998), 4.
11. Pauline Oliveros, "Rock Piece," (1979) in *Anthology of Text Scores* (Kingston, NY: Deep Listening Publications, 1990), 81.

13. Au-dedans du Corps ou L'expérience Interieure by JEAN-LUC NANCY

1. Avant et après Descartes la glande pinéale a donné lieu à des spéculations assez remarquables, d'ordre mystique et métaphysique, qui répondent au désir de désigner l'organe de la « jonction » entre l'âme et le corps.
2. Cf. l'étude sur les images du corps chez Bataille par Juliette Feyel.
3. Tome V p. 21.
4. Je ne renvoie pas ici aux textes déjà présents dans le scénario, qui sont très bien. Cf. aussi les recherches du laboratoire « écritures-modernité », dont j'ai l'url.

The Interior Body by JEAN-LUC NANCY

1. Before and after Descartes the pineal gland has given rise to many remarkable speculations, mystic and metaphysical, responding to the desire to designate an organ of the “junction” between soul and body.
2. Cf. Juliette Feyel’s study of images of the body in Bataille.
3. Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience*, trans. Stuart Kendall (Albany: SUNY Press, 2014), 16.
4. Although not listed here, the texts in the film are also very good examples. Cf. also the research by the “écriture-modernité” laboratory.

14. Metamorphosis: Inventions of Bodies in Motion by SANJA JANO

1. Nagarjuna’s Mulamadhyamakakarika. *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, trans. Jay. L. Garfield (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 6.
2. Turn to my interview with Teresa Ascencao in this volume for more about insects.
3. Michel Serres, *Variations on the Body*, trans. Randolph Burks (Minneapolis: Univocal Publishing, 2011), 34.
4. Jean-Luc Nancy, *Corpus*, trans. Richard Rand (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 159.
5. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, “Thinking in movement,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 39, no. 4 (1981): 173. Also see her *Phenomenology of Dance* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2015), as well as discussion with movement theorist Erin Manning.
6. David Abram, *Becoming-Animal: An Earthly Cosmology* (New York: Random House, 2010), 189. See also *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-than-Human World* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010).
7. The notion of disequilibrium and disquiet is found in both Serres’ *Variations on the Body*, 28, and *The Birth of Physics*, trans. David Webb and William Ross (Toronto: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018).
8. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 273, 275.
9. Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 34.
10. *Ibid.*, 36.
11. I am here thinking of various somatic therapies and approaches, one example of which is the Sensorimotor method by Pat Ogden, which conceives of sensation as the principal organizer of experience. The *Hakomi* method from which it borrows is important to establishing a fundamental view of the body as having self-healing properties. This view is shared by other schools of thought and healing practices.
12. Deleuze, *Logic of Sensation*, 39-40.
13. Michel Serres, *Variations on the Body*, 42.
14. Brian Massumi, *Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Duke University Press, 2002), 9.
15. Alphonso Lingis, *Sensation: Intelligibility in Sensibility* (Boston: Humanities Press, 1996), 2.
16. Deleuze, *Logic of Sensation*, 46-7. Here Deleuze is speaking of the *body without organs*. Plentiful are the accounts and mediations on the mutual coming into presence of phenomena; we are certainly not short of traditions and writings in the East and West that have sought to grapple with, to use the Buddhist expression, the interdependence of life.
17. See Christine cricri Bellerose’s writing on translocation in this volume. For a discussion of transposition see the compilation *Moving Imagination: Explorations of Gesture and Inner Movement* edited by Helena de Preester. I have chosen to in this context speak of kinesthetic sensitivity. Other authors also speak of kinesthetic empathy, including Martine Huvenne and Laura Woodward, who in the *Moving Imagination* volume explore Lyé’s kinetic art. Other works suggested in the volume are Susan Foster’s *Choreographing Empathy: Kinesthesia in Performance* (2010), and the collection, *Kinesthetic Empathy in Creative and Cultural Practices* (2012), edited by Reynolds and Reason.

18. Gaston Bachelard, *Air and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Movement*, trans. Farrell & Farrell (Dallas Institute Publications, 2002), 40. My work on the imagination gave way to a symposium I curated at Sense Lab, Concordia, on “Becoming-elemental: the Elements, Senses and Imagination” (2017). On the imagination also see Csenge Kolozsvari’s piece in this volume.

15. Bodylandscapes: Geomorphology by CSENGE KOLOZSVARI

1. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 220.
2. Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (New York: Dover Publications, 2007) 103-106.
3. Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016)
4. Brian Massumi, “Sensing the Virtual,” in *Hypersurface Architecture*, edited by Stephen Perrella. *Architectural Design* (Profile no. 133) 68, nos. 5/6 (May–June 1998): 16–24.
5. Francisco Varela and Samy Frenk, “The Organ of Form: Towards a Theory of Biological Shape,” *Journal of Social and Biological Structures* 10, no. 1 (January 1987): 73–83. Found in in Dumit and O’Connor (2015).
6. Joseph Dumit and Kevin O’Connor, “The Senses and Sciences of Fascia: A Practice as Research Investigation,” in *Sentient Performativities of Embodiment: Thinking Alongside the Human*. ed. Lynette Hunter, Elisabeth Krimmer, and Peter Lichtenfels (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016): 35–54
7. Quoted from Thomas W. Myers, *Anatomy Trains: Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists* (Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 2009).
8. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), particularly chapters 6 and 10.

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