

mapping  
the  
*trembling*  
paradox  
of  
*essence*

Meg McHutchison  
MFA-IA Portfolio  
July, 2006

---

Daniel Alexander Jones

---

Ju-Pong Lin

## ABSTRACT

This portfolio documents and summarizes the creative work, practice, and research of Meg McHutchison in partial fulfillment of the criteria for the degree of Masters of Fine Arts in Interdisciplinary Arts. It is a revelation of interdisciplinary practice, embodying radical subjectivity, perceptual practices, and conceptual expression within the disciplines of writing, movement, experimental video, and community ritual. Loss, mourning, folly, and the consequences of violence are examined through the theoretical framework of poetics and harmonics. The artist's extensive research into the paradox of mediated forms (digital media) and ephemerality (performative expressions), the mythic terrain of sacred story, the qualities of intimate aesthetic, and the sacred power of authentic voice is included.

### **Key Words:**

Abstraction, activism, choreography, clown, community ritual, conceptual expression, digital intersections and translations, double spiral motion, ephemerality, harmonics, healing, improvisation, movement, mourning, Nietzsche and folly, peace studies, performance studies, perceptual practices in movement, poetics of fragmentary narrative, poetics of Artaud, radical subjectivity, reconstructive post-modernism, sacred story, theater and video.

mapping  
*the* trembling  
paradox  
of  
*essence*



This map is dedicated to

Mark Verley.  
*I carry you with me.*

And  
to the loving memory of  
my sister, Diane E. McHutchison;  
my father, Samuel K. McHutchison;  
and my beloved mom, Elizabeth Snow.

Your love sustains me.



MAPPING THE TREMBLING PARADOX OF  
*essence*

PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

ARTIST STATEMENT	10
INTRODUCTION	13
<i>LAST CHAPTERS OF NOW (a remembrance)</i>	17



THE ALCHEMY OF EVIDENCE	49
-------------------------	----

LEGEND

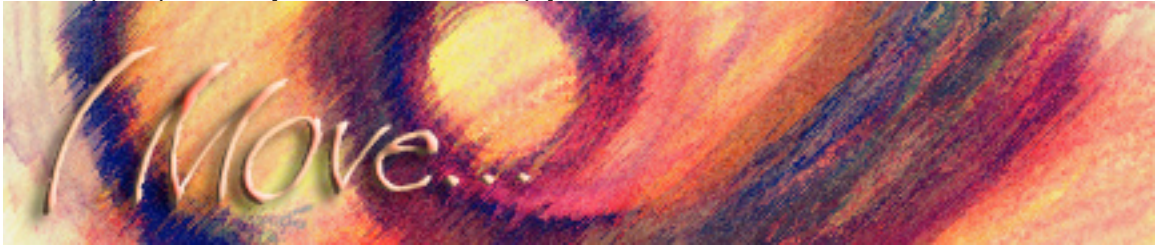
Theory and Process



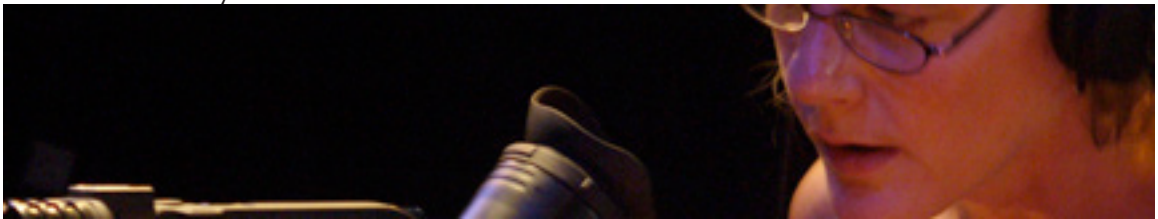
Emerging Voice



**The mystery of the performative in my practice**



**The mediated eye**



**A fool is a riddle**



**Community Engagement**



**Process**



**The Paradox of Fixed Forms and Ephemerality**



**Perception and Reflection**



**Toward a practice of Revolutionary Surrender**



**Harmonic mysteries**





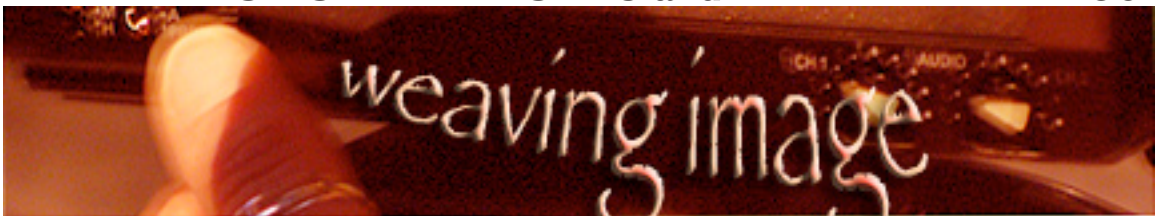
**REVOLUTIONARY SURRENDER**

**210**

A libratory practice at the confluence of forms:

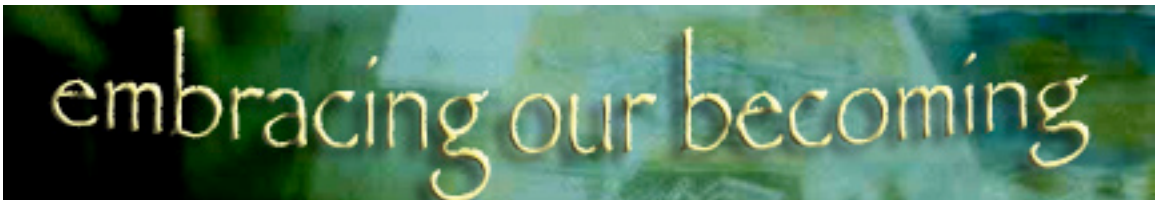


**THE PARADOX OF FIXED FORMS and EPHEMERALITY 256**



**PRACTICUM DOCUMENTATION**

**275**



*Collaborative Art making Rituals*

**PRAXIS: Professional Practices and the Journey With PNB**

**292**

**DVD Menu Contents**

**299**

**BIBLIOGRAPHIES**

**Annotated Bibliography**

**301**

**Comprehensive Bibliography**

**331**

I am here. It is now.

# ARTIST STATEMENT

I am an interdisciplinary artist.

My investigations lie at the harmonic and poetic intersections of text, performance, video, and visual art and embrace a fierce examination of the structures and paradigms of performative expressions.

I am afire, investigating and improvising forms that expand the subversive (sacred) power of imaginative expression. I choose the form that allows the subjective embodiment of perception and voice. I am profoundly curious about the revelation of mystery within the layers that interdisciplinarity invites, and exhilarated by the play in it.

My work is an intimate offering, sharing a context with artists who inquire into the domains of mystery, ritual, abstraction, our shared humanity, radical subjectivity, and hope. The revelation and liberation of this terrain is central to my work.

I draw forward threads of meaning, and through rigorous practice the choice of form is revealed. My work is process-based, which allows for abstraction and fragmentation to illuminate a prismatic web of connection.

My practice is the investigation of the paradoxes and identities that we hold. These paradoxes reveal the terrain of possibility that requires our rigorous investigation in this historical moment of shifting forms within the discourse of art and the discourse of humanity. An integrative practice of radical subjectivity transforms the fabric of relationship. My practice reflects the commitment and responsibility I have, as an artist, to be a participating citizen in our world.



Reflecting on what binds  
essential threads

sacred story returns

interior truth made visible

As an artist  
I am calling out  
the hidden underneath that witnesses

Generosity

Love

Hope

Honoring the tremendous risk

we must take

to become

ourselves.

# INTRODUCTION

I arrive at a delicate place... where investigative practices of revealed receptivity are visible.

My goals in entering the MFA-IA program at Goddard College were to explore the subversive (sacred) power of imaginative expression and haptic (bodily) perception and to emerge with a transformed relationship to my work and its context(s).

I am an investigative explorer mapping the landscape of meaning and discourse through the paradoxical identities that I house.

I write, I move, I make video, and visual art in a spiraling practice that illuminates perception. I listen, with curiosity and discernment, for the content of my work, to guide my choice of form.

My interdisciplinary practice embodies radical subjectivity, perceptual practices, and conceptual expression. I fiercely examine the structures and paradigms in the presentation of performative art. **Through rigorous engagement with process, I continue to transform my interdisciplinary practice, with a confidence emerging from internal guidance and knowledge of context for the particularities of my artistic voice.**

My work engages the paradox of mediated forms and ephemerality based on inner parsing of voice. Whether liberated from my interior, mediated through lens or hand, or through collaborative expression, I embrace improvisation and the qualities of an intimate aesthetic, regardless of scale.

My allies are the artists who risk voicing from what Federico Garcia Lorca calls *duende*,<sup>1</sup> and those who seek to express the ineffable through both

---

<sup>1</sup> Federico Garcia Lorca. *In Search of Duende*. NY : New Directions. 1998. (2,a)

abstract and ritualized forms.<sup>2</sup> I am drawn into work that expresses the interior; Holy Theatre,<sup>3</sup> where the Invisible is made visible; voices that speak in fragments, disrupts narrative, and find new forms for voices breaking the hard silences of internal and external oppression; and the spaces between audience and effort that allow the experience of what Jill Dolan describes as the Utopian Performative.<sup>4</sup>

My interdisciplinary threads are woven into the fabric of artists and thinkers who **resonate** essence/presence, **risk vulnerability** and **transform expression** through layered structures of voicing.

**A practice of deep receptivity is subversive and can transform the fabric of relationship... and the world.**

I am a cartographer of paradox.

I breathe and map the spaces between.

I am bridging,

imagining,

and exploring

the terrain of the possible.

---

<sup>2</sup> The flash point is Antonin Artaud. My inspiration and alignments will unfold as you read *The Alchemy of Evidence*.

<sup>3</sup> Brook, Peter. *The Empty Space*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1968. (2, 7) Brook is masterful at laying out, in this simple little book, the process by which Deadly, Holy, Rough, and Immediate theatre can and do unfold. He also makes the strong point that the questions confronting theatre will be quite different than when he was writing it.

<sup>4</sup> Dolan, Jill. *Utopia and Performance: Finding Hope at the Theater*. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 2005. (7, 10, a)

My work integrates the mythic through the investigation of substance, meaning, and form. My questions remain the paradoxes of being and presence, accessing imaginative voice, and dynamic revelation of form through poetic, harmonic, and haptic engagement.

My practice has been playful, harrowing, and rigorous, mapping the symbolic terrain specific to the stories that are mine to tell. I have tried many experiments, and am grateful to my advisors for the gentle/firm urging to speak. I carry the responsibility of my prismatic identity, which requires both knowing and letting go.

As I walk, they walk with me.

I have followed the threads that have revealed my artistic kinship and lineage. My process is inseparable from the **paradoxical dance of mediated forms and ephemerality**.<sup>5</sup> My portfolio illuminates my practice(s), theoretical journey, performative analysis, and a persistent interest in Clown and sacred Fool through **The Alchemy of Evidence**;<sup>6</sup> maps the terrain of mourning through the transformation of Persephone Suite into the text of **The Last Chapters of Now**;<sup>7</sup> embraces an intimate aesthetic through collaborative art making rituals in my practicum: **Embracing Our Becoming**;<sup>8</sup> and traces my revelatory journey to a radically subjective feminine understanding of the paradoxes of violence, exemplified in the libRARY convergence that is **Revolutionary Surrender**.<sup>9</sup>

---

5 See: Dancing the Paradox between Fixed Forms and Ephemerality. p 256

Also note: Praxis Appendix p. 292

6 See Alchemy of Evidence. p 49

7 See: Last Chapters of Now. p 17

8 See Practicum Report: Embracing Our Becoming. p 275

9 See Section: Revolutionary Surrender. p 210 DVD *Revolutionary Surrender*

I invite you to join  
my spiraling journey  
mapping the trembling  
paradox of  
*essence*







# The Last Chapters of Now

*A remembrance*

# Epilogue

Skeletal remains  
breathe  
Filigree of musculature  
fills

Slowly  
skin follows

My same changed  
eyes  
peer bright

The weave ever stronger

I do not fear  
the fall

These wounds  
still quick to  
bleed

I do not fear  
the fall

exposing this fragile state

Still mute

**bones speak**

*Minnesota Wind/Seattle Ground I*

Hard, hot wind

rages

seething beneath conversation

measured

polite.

Churning it up

Slamming the point

Over and under

Tin doors and wooden slates

Shudder against this

Rustling

Rampage.

We speak

and honor

individually arrived at truths

defending only softly the territories of our lives.

Ancient cover-ups

swept away.

Agreement

no longer

necessary.

In the last of autumn,

her man stands rooted

solid in this bewildering tempest

willing to shelter what he does not understand.

His wisdom

the memory he holds of this land.

He does what must be done

and makes the world whole

in this way.

Another day, no respite.  
fierce gusts  
carry our tears.

We DO know how to fly our kites,  
but refuse the labor required  
to listen with physical subtlety.

We stand instead  
into the gale,  
gleaning small wisdom  
from this raging/swirling  
torrent of dust.

# Minnesota Wedding Story

I arrive at 4 AM my time, exhausted. It's an ordeal getting out of the airport I no longer recognize. But at last I have my car, and I am in it, now wondering which way to go... To the city and my sister Diane, or to the suburbs and my brother Mike?

I had arranged to pick up Diane in Minneapolis, but was suddenly, viscerally, aware that if I did I would be stuck in Minneapolis until late afternoon. I wasn't quite ready to face it, to face her.

So, I turn east toward Stillwater in the flat gray Minnesota morning light. The heat hangs spongy like shredded cotton. I switch on the air-conditioning.

Everything is small in Minnesota. An infinite horizon stretches with no mountains to stop your vision, no water to rest your eyes on. Flat, small and familiar.

*I have never been to my brother's fiancée's house. I drive the highways of my high school days, past the known and miss my turn. As it often happens when I am tired and driving, I lose perspective on where I am going, driving on and on, convinced it will be the next curve or corner that will lead me to my destination.*

I travel all the way through the sleepy town of Stillwater, nearly crossing the Wisconsin border, before surrendering to the knowledge that I have gone too far. I am not exactly lost, but definitely not in the right place. I make my way back to the highway, past the strip malls and subdivisions. This is where my niece and nephew live, where Mike used to live.

Eventually I find the turn. The landmark is a feed store on the corner of the access road. Sixty-fifth Street at last. A short street ending in a cul-de-sac. I drive up the driveway and am met by my brother and his bride-to-be, Deb. Mike beams, ecstatic.

*It's always a pleasant shock to see my brother; I forget how tall he is and how much we look alike. He is ruddy and his reddish hair is now peppered with gray. Deb is the antithesis of Mike's ex-wife. Their only similarity is height. Deb is petite, but robust and blonde! She is effusive and bright, strong, and well, bubbly, by nature... a lovely contrast to the general energy of our family.*

They welcome me in. The house is huge. It's three stories, though only two are visible from the street. It has a comfortable feel, lived-in and cared for. Maysa, Deb's daughter, is gone at the moment, so I have Mike and Deb to myself. We have breakfast outside in the humid, now sunny, morning. There is a pool and a sweeping backyard. This is where the wedding will be. It's good to be here with them, in the calm before the storm.

Everyone else will come this afternoon for the shower: my mom, her salt-of-the-earth farmer husband, Lee; my stepbrother Randy and his family—Julie, Jack and Eldri; my niece, Corey, and nephew John. And Diane. Diane.

I take advantage of a lawn chair by the pool, slipping into exhausted sleep, still aware of activity swirling around me. A shadow falls. I am aware of my mother gazing down at me. I wrestle awake, shaking off dreams to greet her. We linger, grateful for this quiet moment.

I make my way upstairs and am at last face-to-face with my sister.

*I haven't seen Diane in three years, though we talked throughout the year. She has been the source of much worry in these months before the wedding, and I am still unprepared for her physical presence.*

Diane is a redhead, with beautiful coppery hair that is thick and wavy. Envious hair and this alone is how I remember her. As I hug her, I feel the constant tremor so evident in her hands, and smell the drift of alcohol coming through her pores. She is tiny, frail and unrecognizable from the robust and athletic sister I once knew.

Diane always had the most beautiful legs, long, muscular, and freckled. She's struggled since double knee surgery in 1976, but now she is nearly crippled on her atrophied skinny legs. There is no muscle left to support her fragile knees. She's got a short body, and it's always been a struggle for her, but now her belly distends, bloated and puffy. Her arms are as skeletal as her legs.

And then, most devastating of all, is her face. Diane is only four years older than I, but today she is ancient. Her eyes are sunken, a charade of makeup, carefully applied, attempts to hide the astounding shiner she sports. She fell out of bed and... ? hit her eye on something going down, a table corner, or something. I don't ask too much, I don't think I want to know, really. My red-haired, lionhearted sister has destroyed herself so willingly it seems.

*I knew it was bad, it's been bad before with her, but this is different.*

*She is a ghost now... in and out of the hospital more than my mom and dad combined this year.*

Even so, and in spite of this, it is a lovely day with family, and then it's done.

I help with the wedding preparations for a day before driving south to LeSueur, where Mom and Lee live on the land. It is precious time to talk, and we speak mostly of Diane. I spend two nights with Mom and Lee, then visit my Dad and Judy, who live in another small town fourteen miles away. My dad has grown frail in these past three years. I warn him about what it will be like to see Diane. They haven't spoken or seen each other in more than six years. Everyone is uptight about this meeting... Diane most of all.



I leave for the Cities to spend the afternoon with Diane. I want to talk to her, find out where she's at, about treatment, about her life. Diane's idea of a good time is to go to a bar, big surprise. She is welcome in all the downtown haunts. I don't want to drink with her, so we go for a walk down by the river. We stop for lunch and she orders a double vodka and juice. Her comment, "Sometimes I don't want a drink, I need a drink." Uh, huh. I ask, "When did it happen that you slipped from choice to dependency. Do you even know?"

*And I ask myself, does any of that really matter at this point. The problem is the alcohol; everything else is a consequential problem created by it. How do you keep the flame of the person you knew alive, in hopes that they find the strength to return to themselves?*

*Some days I have more faith to face the truth of what is.*

The next day is the wedding. Mike's only request of Diane is not met, but she does the best she can. We wait, as patiently as possible, for Diane's trembling fingers to plait Deb's hair.

The wedding is beautiful. We dance in the grass.

Diane and my father greet each other. My step sisters are all there. Even my father and mother speak. I am stoic, carefully eyeing the interactions.

Diane and I share a room at the hotel. She pulls out the omnipresent bottle of vodka and evaporates before me.

I rise early, heartbroken. I find Lee, Mom, Randy, and Julie at breakfast. I can no longer hold back the flood of tears. I flee to Mike and Deb's. I need to see my brother, to be in the sunlight, with life, with love, with tenderness. I am devastated, but work patiently at the tasks at hand.

The rest of the family arrives. We have a picnic lunch and prepare to part. I stand in the driveway with Diane. I hold her hand and hug her and I say, "You will die if you don't stop drinking right now." She says, in a resigned voice, "I know."

*Diane is in and out of the hospital now, most recently for six days for an unknown back ailment.*

*Time is running out.*

## ***The 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the last chapters of now***

My sister is in a coma—wait, check that.

My sister is in a coma caused by....

Christmas Eve, 2000.

My brother picks me up and we go directly to the hospital. He tries to prepare me.

Walking through the corridors, Mike says, “Take in your environment,” pointing things out to me. This is something that he uses on his fifth graders, but proves useful over the next days and weeks.

We are at Hennepin County Medical Center, the county medical facility.

Terror. No idea what to expect. Up to the MICU.

And there is my sister, Diane.

There is no preparation for this.

Brain blown by the dissection of the carotid artery. Mute. Right side paralyzed.

No recognition, no neurological response, though I believe she can hear us.

More.

Raging blood infection, extreme toxicity.

Her liver is failing fast.

She has Hepatitis C.

Diane’s blood-work lands on my stepsister’s lab bench. She stares at it in shock.

She is silence-bound by confidentiality, which she honors. Thankfully, I’ve reached my father by the time they speak.

We gather. We listen. We learn.

We are guided with compassion through this shattering moment.

We take Diane off the respirator on December 30, 2000 and move with her downstairs.

I spend New Year’s Eve with her and we talk, me filling in her half of the conversation.

I show her my tattoo, still healing.

Friends come and go as we move through the long days and nights. Old friends who loved Diane and had lost touch in these last years of descent.

*Little did I know that this was the 2nd chapter in the last chapters of now.*

There are many blessings and many sorrows. The gift remains that there is no going back from the truth of this mess of relationships that had called itself a family.

We are not without love—that is not it. Love has found its way, but always, until that moment, always guarded, hidden, and rarely expressed in the full exuberance of true feeling.

And so in her lingering good-bye Diane gave us time to face each other and face her. There is no getting around it: she died of alcoholism, of shame, and it had been killing her long before this. A deep long stain, and this was it.

## Losing Diane

*She called me home at Christmas  
after 22 years without snow.*

*She was 46.*

*She could not say goodbye,  
but she gave us time enough  
to forgive.*

# Diane, Diane, Diane

She is my sister, Diane, and she flies free.  
A peace in passing that she found too rarely in life.  
My sister

Diane. Red-haired beauty.

My sister.

Lionhearted, Diane.

Childhood roommate.

My sister

Athlete, Diane

Generous of heart

My sister

Sexy, Diane

Blunt

My sister

Soulful, Diane

Fragile

My sister

Courageous, Diane

Lonely too often

My sister

Deeply loved, Diane

Alcoholic

My sister

Cherished, Diane

Dreamer

My sister

Mother, Diane

Believer in me  
My sister  
A “trial,” Diane  
Fighter  
My sister  
Beloved, Diane  
Proud  
My sister  
Gorgeous, Diane  
Wise  
My sister  
Persuasive, Diane  
Teacher  
My sister

At peace at last, Diane  
Creative soul  
My sister  
Lovely hands, Diane  
With me always  
My sister  
Cradled by God, Diane  
Soul free  
My sister  
Soul Free

*Diane*

*She was profoundly loved.*

# CONTRAST

Shame  
Shredded  
Life  
Departing

Silent  
Mighty flame

Extinguished

*My sister*

Courage born  
of  
Love  
transformed

Commits life...  
to dying

*My mother*

**I listen to the territory**

*Between*



# Moment

*Suspended delicate by impossible threads  
the perfect web of Ariadne at rest.*

*Often when spidery gifts appear  
it is the girl child waiting to be born  
or saying goodbye.*

*This morning it is  
Diane  
resting easy  
in perfection.*

*Diane  
a perfect weave held by  
precarious threads of impossible thinness  
balancing  
holding true  
essential wholeness emerging from difficult truth.*

*I miss you, my sister  
Diane.  
I see in what surrounds me  
your essential light.*

*Divine*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of the last chapters of now**

I am standing on the platform in Berlin with ten minutes to board the night train to Paris. I have been traveling nearly a month, and will fly home in three days on the first anniversary of Diane's death.

The trains in Europe do not wait.

"Hi Mom," I say.

"Hi Sweetheart," she says.

"How are you?"

"I'm fine," she says through clenched teeth, her words trembling, then tumbling out.

"I'm not fine, I have only a few weeks to live."

*Tilt*

The concrete rises to meet me.

*Tilt*

THIS is not possible.

**Tilt**

My shock is complete.

*Tilt*

She learned this today. The doctors let her drive home alone.

*Tilt*

Tomorrow the family would meet and decide what to do.

*Tilt*

"Mom, you have to try." I plead.

**T I L T**

I make my way to my sleeping car and awake shattered in the gray light of Paris.

I flee to St. Brieuç, where friends spirit me to the soft purple beach and a moment of solace, silence, and centering.

I spend my last day in Paris walking, unable to change my flight.

I fly to Seattle on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, as the sun chases me through the sky.

My mom is tucked in to her hospital bed in Minnesota.

My brother reads her *Winnie the Pooh*.

I get there as soon as I can.

## **Last**

### *Acute Myeloblastic Leukemia*

Her bones carried buried knowledge  
Denial of life, refusal to grow, differentiate  
Deeply hidden surrender to infinite ethereal grace.

## **Chapters**

### *Waiting for Transport II*

On this October Monday past Friday and Saturday and quiet Sunday,  
we wait in the room where clicks and beeps no longer sound.  
These days and nights filled with constant noise and  
complicated machines are done.  
The tender transport of familiar faces ferry you away to a  
softer world closer to home.

## **of**

### *Waiting for Transport III*

Machines quiet  
Soft eyes of love  
Red dot on armband  
We say, "I'll see you later."  
I am trusting the familiar drivers  
to ferry you closer to home.

## **Now**

# Last Days

I remember the moments.  
The moment-to-moment grace.  
I remember the dying.  
And more  
the living through to the end.

These were the last days.  
We sorted your clothes among the women.  
Each claiming a soft embrace of you.  
We laughed and cried, missing you already,  
knowing just how near.

I crawled into bed with you.  
Your embrace enfolded me, welcomed me with vast dispensation of grace.  
At last  
Here  
Us

No doubt lingers  
In any dusty corner  
Your love  
Just then  
And in those last two years (before)  
Is enough to know by

I have not forgotten  
The promise I made to myself in your presence.  
The veil drops.  
I emerge on the other side.

Three years this Sunday.  
How I miss your voice.  
Your smile.  
The soft skin of your knotted hands.  
Your fierce abiding love, there at the last.  
Enough.

Your interior doubt, I knew and knew better after.  
In this moment you chose to die, and in that transformation  
Heal that which had come before.  
You cultivated a better place.  
You opened your arms  
And welcomed me *in*.

You said the words I could not say.  
Without Diane, space for me to enter.  
What we each shared with Diane was closed to each other.  
Our common ground, the love of her. The desperate, vast love for her.  
Each relationship orbiting separately, the strain of holding the solar system together  
evident in the gatherings that we rarely required.  
We came together in crisis with Diane. She offered us that gift, that gift of such  
great magnitude that it feels a crime. We came together in the conversation about  
her, the fight, the worry, the terrible recognition that she had slipped beyond us,  
long before she was gone.

These days, I remember you.  
How very glad you were to have me at your side.  
The soft tenderness of knowing how to be with you, physically, in the difficult days  
that echo now.

Each death its own process.

Yours called up the best in me.

*Minnesota Wind/Seattle Ground II.*

The wind blows  
strong today  
Dancing tree outside your window.  
Doors open and shut of their own accord.  
Spirit and love swirls dervish around us as we,  
Moment to moment  
are buffeted like kites in the wind.  
Strong, clear and crisp as this fall day.

## **Last**

I am sitting with you.

Just hours before you said, "Do you have any more questions?"

I shook my head, no.

The day before, with Mike and you and I, had been so much more than is imaginable. How could I ask, at that moment, even knowing this was the day, anything more?

Mike was across the hall. I had brought him lunch.

As you slept, your breathing changed.

I went to get him, and asked—even though I knew—is this different?

Mike said no. It's the same. I left for the farm. Knowing.

Though I had traveled that path many, many times, I found myself lost.

When I finally arrived, the phone rang.

Mike in a calmly panicked voice asked me to come back, to get in touch with the Hospice people. Don't tell Lee, he said.

I looked at Lee. He knew.

I went... he waited.

These were the last moments, before the final labor.

When I arrived and took your hand, doing my best to calm the labored breathing, you turned to me with a ferocious grip and steady eyes and said, "Let's get this show on the road."

I squeezed your hand and in that moment of certain/uncertainty, I heard your desire. And, even knowing that it would mean that I would be without you, without your voice, I said yes. Your clarity, your will...my strength.

We got the morphine drip going, we got your breathing under control, the distress of it. I stayed with you, your wild eyes calming. You shared this only with me.

At four you slipped under and I waited.

I stood on the left side of the bed, and slowly my posture shifted. I stood up straight, and felt my spirit rise through your hand.

Your love absolutely present, I lifted and let go, following the wind out the door to the softly falling snow.

When I returned, it was a full house and you sat up, greeting us and them with a surprised "Hi y'all." We were standing with them, and I now see it was those you were traveling to that you were so delighted to see.

*I felt you go.*

*Minnesota Wind/Seattle Ground III.*

Quiet snow  
Drifts softly

The next few hours were the not-so quiet labor to exit...

as profound a labor as our arrival.

Your certainty, clear.

We waited  
we held  
and we loved.

Just past 8.

Julie and I on either side, holding your hands.

Silence descends.

Randy leans in.

Your breath is quiet  
but not gone.

As Mike and Lee enter the room,  
in the presence of those that you loved  
and who loved you most dearly,  
you made the passage to those who hold you now.

A graceful goodbye.

*Minnesota Wind/Seattle Ground IV*

Behold  
specific voices

(sacred passage)

death

without  
silence

the known  
we carry in our bones

keeps us from

falling

starward

love exits

without ending.



## Intuitive investigation required

In August of 2003, I faced a decision about my upcoming trip to Minnesota. It was the first time in three years that I was traveling without an event or crisis to attend to. The question was: whom am I traveling to Minnesota for? The work of grieving had been acute, sometimes dark, and often hard. I had made plans to be with my brother and my dear step-family over my mom's birthday on August 7, the first without her. But more, I felt a pressing need to look deeper into the circumstances that led Diane to her final days. I wanted to talk to the doctors who counseled us so wisely and compassionately and to anyone who could confirm or deny what I had come to know through my own passage.

*Minnesota Wind/Seattle Ground V*

I turn the soil of my small patch of earth

Scorched by the passages

So many

So fast

I turn the soil

exposing

long ropey roots.

Insidious ivy

creeping underneath.

Turning unearths

long silenced

knowledge.

In July, as a part of cleaning and clearing my house of ghosts, I did some digging, the posthumous detective work left in the strange ephemera of a life. When I was in Minnesota for Thanksgiving, just a month after Mom's passing, I finally had the courage to ship "the box," the one box that remained of Diane's life. My mom had spent much time and effort creating beautiful books for Mike and I, and this I honored in a separate place. THE box contained all that was left behind: Diane's date books from the last several years, her purse, her wallet, her glasses. So very little, when it comes right down to it.

I went back into that box, looking for clues. I examined the steady degradation of handwriting, the shaky lists of odd things... the seven dwarves for instance. And there, in pink ink written across the top of November 2000 was the sentence, "I would rather have three months of wonderful, than a lifetime of nothing at all." And on November 9, "Have to go!" Heavily underlined. I felt the haunt. I sensed, more than ever, that Diane knew her situation. She knew that her alcoholism was fatal, and her only choice was to stop if she wanted to live. I felt an urgency to pursue this, for my own peace, and as another part of letting go.

A sturdy mesh of singular voices  
Bound at the source  
A tangled subterranean flow  
Pushing up  
Transforming as it goes

There was another preoccupation that filled me as well, and this was related to the ephemera of MY life that remained stashed in the attic at my mom's house. I wasn't sure what was there, but I needed to sort through it. This knowing sealed my decision to make the trip.

My first day there, I stayed with Diane's dear friend Liz. We had become quite close in the last two years. She and Diane had lost touch ten years before Diane died, but Liz was there at the hospital in those long days of January 2001. I stayed with Liz a number of times throughout the odyssey of my mom's illness. Her home was a shelter in that storm, and my visit in August felt like the first time that there was just life in front of us. Being with each other, Liz and I, gives us each a piece of Diane. She looks at me and sees Diane, and I listen to her mannerisms and voice and hear Diane, all the good parts of Diane.

From Liz's house, I made the call to Hennepin County Medical Center to see if I could speak to one of Diane's doctors. I left a message, explaining the situation. I said, "I'm not sure that the doctor would remember me but my sister, Diane, passed away in January of 2001 of liver failure, stroke, and a host of other alcohol-related conditions. I want to talk about whether or not there is any information about Diane knowing her status before her stroke. Could he tell me anything about her intention, state of mind? Was this, in fact, a suicide that took three weeks to unfold?" The woman was very kind, and listened well. I did not

have a clear sense whether I would hear from the doctor or not. I had made the effort, which was a start.

I left the next day for LeSueur and the farm. Lee, my step dad, still lives there. It is his place. I passed him on the gravel road, and we stopped for a moment to chat. He was off to his 50th high-school reunion. I proceeded to the farm, and to the attic.

It was an odyssey of return to the richness of my early years. Correspondence collected from the time I left home at 17 to the time I settled in Seattle at 25. I had an astounding recognition that some of my dearest friendships from that time continue as strong threads in my life. And then—the treasure—letters from mom from those troubled years when our relationship was frayed and tenuous. Gifts from the past, reminders of the sincere love she always had for me, even at the times when I could not feel it. And more, things I'd kept of Diane's. A beautiful drawing in her hand, little notes from her. The collection of spoons went to Corey, my niece. I gave the drawing to Mike, my brother, who has such appreciation of Diane's art. I am lucky to have two of her pieces hanging on my walls, pieces from a life not fully lived, a young life full of promise.

I pitched all my college papers and sorted through the books, surrendering to the LeSueur library an odd collection: Diane's, my mom's, and the library of my radical youth. I foisted a few onto nieces and nephews, in hopes that they would share the joy I'd found in those volumes.

I spent two days sorting, sifting, tossing, and turning. I did not read any of the letters from Mom; those are for another time. I did just enough sifting to claim what still belonged to me, and let go of the drift of youth that never returns. Facing this archive, I was brought fully back to myself in a surprising way. This was the evidence of MY journey, a journey separate for many years from the path my sister had chosen.

This gift was unexpected, a gentle and fierce reminder, and I felt my mom's presence and support strongly in this search.

I journeyed north to be with my step family at the lake. Peaceful days, filled with sunlight and swimming, tender conversation, and openness. I told Julie the story of my life in a way that I hadn't, laid bare the bones of that sadness that I have, slowly, released. My brother and nephew joined us for mom's birthday. Over hamburgers and cake we shared laughter and tears. It was good to be with family, blessed by Mom's soft loving presence.

*We are here*

*And we remain*

*Shattered*

*Shaken*

*Shocked*

*Offering*

*New*

*Blossoms*

I returned to the city to be with friends, and to spend more time with Mike and his family. As I was walking out the door, the day before leaving, the phone rang. I answered it and was shocked to hear to the voice of the doctor on the other end of the line. I sat down, my brother nearby. On that sunny, warm Minnesota day, I listened. The doctor had taken the time to review Diane's file, and so we began. I told him what my sense was, and he said with much compassion that "you can never entirely say what a person's motivations are, that suicide is a hard one to call, but that Diane's situation was this: she had been diagnosed with Hepatitis C in June of 1997, and that she had refused treatment at the clinic countless times. She did have a meeting with her doctor at the clinic in November of 2000, and at that time was told that she her health was so compromised that she would die if she continued to drink."

Diane was hospitalized twice between November and her final admission to HCMC on December 19, 2000. In that time, she had managed to have a fight with nearly everyone who cared. Between December 15<sup>th</sup>—the last time my mom saw her—and December 19, Diane told everyone who had invited her that she would be there for Christmas, after months of refusing to commit. She was comatose, when admitted, with no emergency contact information in her file. My mom had to call the hospital to find her. Diane had extreme alcohol toxicity in her system; they estimated that she'd been

drinking for forty hours straight; she had opiates and cocaine in her system as well. She suffered a massive stroke some hours before she was admitted—a dissection of the carotid artery. Literally, she had blown the left side of her brain. My mom had picked up a slew of things from the drug store for Diane that Friday, and the Dilaudid, a painkiller, was the only thing emptied. This was hard. Downers were not Diane. Up was her hook, always.

One night at three am, a pastor appeared. He stood outside the door and wept as he read Diane's file, and then came in and offered to say with me Psalm 13, the psalm for suicides. I could not register the meaning of this at the time, but on this sunny, warm Minnesota morning, I came to an understanding as I listened through the doctor's words. Diane knew her trajectory, and I know that had it been possible, she would have found a way to live. Sometime between 1998 and the time that she died, she lost the will to live, and the courage to face the disease which ultimately took her life.

I love my sister still. Her memory, her story, her lovely intensity is a memory I cherish. I only wish that she'd had the courage to share with us her sorrow and pain, the knowledge that she carried within her. I have a blessed recognition of the generosity of subtle good byes that she found that last year, offering each of us the objects that remained important to pass on. I, like my mother, wonder at how much we could not see. There is no point, any longer, in second-guessing. Diane is gone. Life remains, and I am choosing to live it with Diane's memory as part of me, and her choice to die as separate as our lives as sisters had become.

*Minnesota Wind/Seattle Ground VI*

There comes a time to lay it down.  
To quiet watch as fog sweeps  
fast clearing  
the bridge.  
Stillness descends,  
voices at rest,  
Their work in this life  
done.

There comes a time to lay it down,  
rest the digging  
sorting  
tossing  
turning  
Rawsness heals through quiet seeds  
planted in fiercely  
tended soil.

There comes a time to lay down the questions.  
Answers swept,  
like fog,  
away.

I lay it down on  
sacred ground.  
Humbled by that which grows  
and that which leaves me  
sorrow-ful  
and no longer  
yearning.

I remain willingly.  
Planting  
this  
next  
season  
of  
time.

## Minnesota remnants (*reverence*)

The Snows remain  
in the valley  
tending the land.  
LeSueur became my mother's home,  
blessed was her claiming, at the last.

*And what of the man that was my father?  
His ashes stuck in drawer in St. Peter....*

Lyndale and Lake  
Uptown,  
Blaisdale Avenue,  
Mortimer's  
Champs  
Hennipen County Medical Center  
Shadows of Diane,  
crossing Franklin Avenue.

*She was a wraith  
I loved and had already lost.*

Still water rages as my brother  
Hangs on,  
buffeted by the sorrows of his children.  
I reach out from the west,  
offering small knowledge,  
prayers for spring thaw and calmer days.

I return out of love for what remains.  
The long threads of friendships nurtured over time.

Memories of rivers and lakes  
soft blue skies and whispering  
trees

The fragments of family continue to shine  
through a tangled prism of history.

*Shhhhhhhhhhh ha....*

Persephone's gown  
Rustles  
Quiet bells  
Float  
on delicate strands  
of luminescence.

*Shhhhhhhhhhh ha—*

She is gray  
And golden  
She has lived through  
this season  
of darkness

*Shhhhhhhhhhh ha!*



# Minnesota Remains

Portland whispers

Austin holds

New York sings

Europe beckons

Vermont shelters

**Seattle**

Embodies

**Home**

A mosaic

Of connections

***Within***

# Prologue

*She comes up  
from the center*

*fierce*

*beautiful*

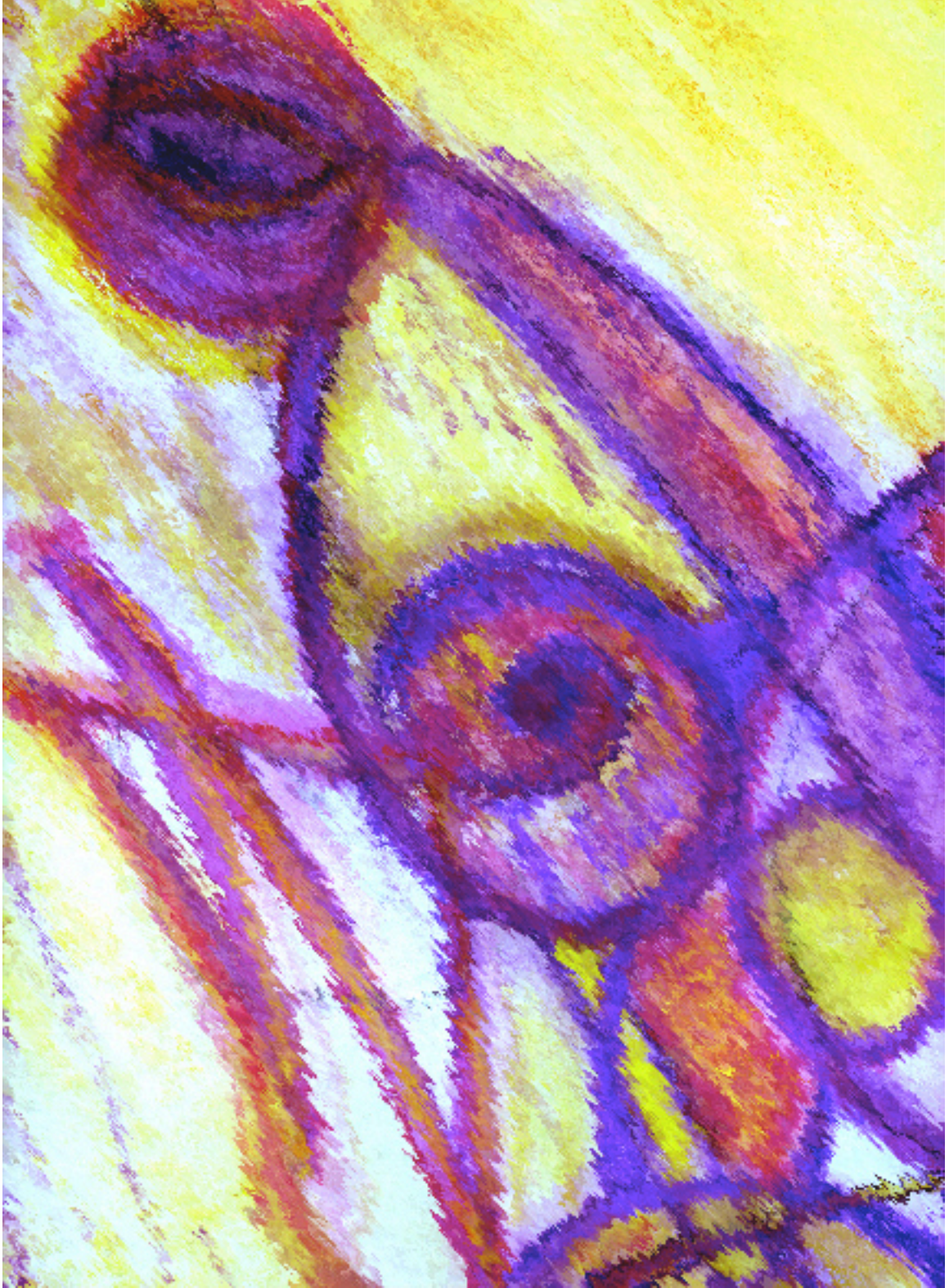
*the aging earth*

*surrenders*

*new*

*pink*

*buds*



Watercolor altered in Photoshop, 2004



# The Alchemy of Evidence

I arrive at a delicate place....



Self portrait November, 2005

I am a cartographer

breathing

between...

imagining the

terrain of the possible.

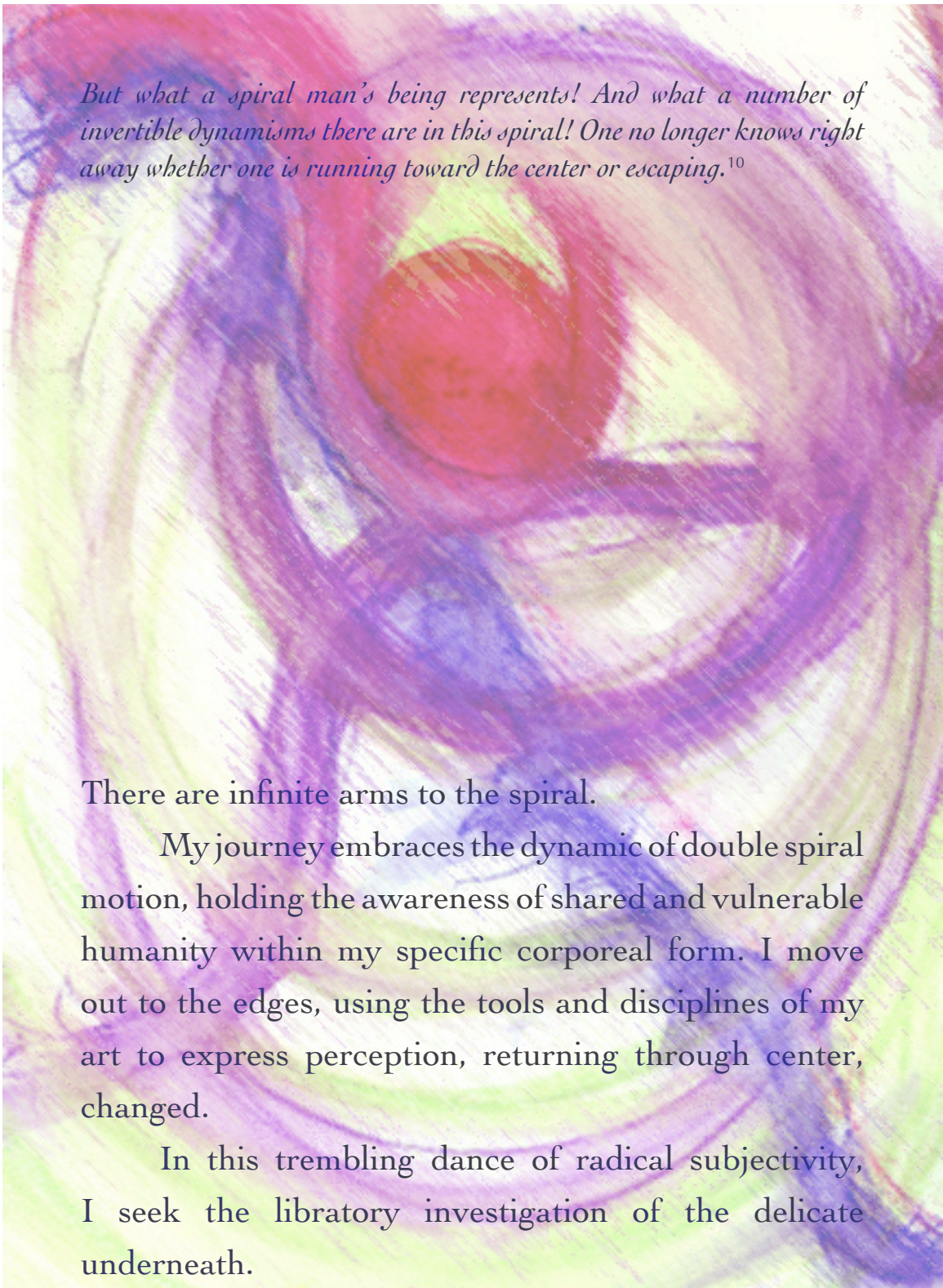




## **LEMNISCATE**

The center point of a lemniscate is our individual incarnation, the specific pressure, identities, that we inhabit on this plane. The arms, if you will, are the connection to the divine flow and the map of our particular history, our ancestors, our sense of time and land.

The compression of history and infinite knowledge that is our incarnate being is significant, specific and unified in the flow of history and life. And in this, the value of the specific in you and me, and faith that, though and because our history marks us, there exists within us infinite capacity for love, transformation, and expansive understanding.



*But what a spiral man's being represents! And what a number of invertible dynamisms there are in this spiral! One no longer knows right away whether one is running toward the center or escaping.<sup>10</sup>*

There are infinite arms to the spiral.

My journey embraces the dynamic of double spiral motion, holding the awareness of shared and vulnerable humanity within my specific corporeal form. I move out to the edges, using the tools and disciplines of my art to express perception, returning through center, changed.

In this trembling dance of radical subjectivity, I seek the libratory investigation of the delicate underneath.

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. Bachelard. p 214



*Art illuminates the specific.*

*Sbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbb*

Ha!



*Sbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbbb*

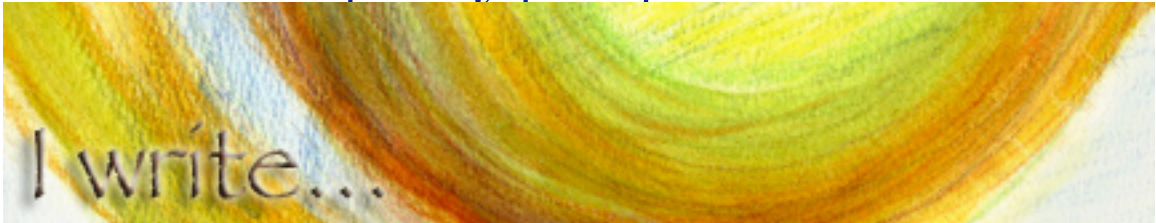
Ha!

*I found my way to the river,  
the marks on my body carefully chosen.  
Into the current that would land me  
here,  
unexpected,  
unforeseen,  
a new shore.*

I am a radically subjective



haptically perceptive



visually performative



conceptual expressionist.



**THIS IS THE TERRAIN....**





## THE POETICS OF INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

In order to find my way in, I needed to go back.

The weave of performance, poetry, ritual approach, and cinematic tools of engagement is one that I share with Antonin Artaud.

His words had burned through me in my youth, and the fact that his words were enough to immolate him led to a confrontation —an absolutely a necessary one—in mapping the terrain of my work. Here I addressed the major intersections, urgencies, questions, and sites of trembling that brought me to Goddard.



## THE PARADOX OF MEDIATED (FIXED) FORMS AND EPHEMERALITY

FACING ARTAUD

Winter 2004/Spring 2006

Antonin Artaud examined the intersections of poetry, theatre, and film—ultimately despairing the use of language, but pushing onward to create a ritual language of the theatre that expresses metaphysical and alchemical layers of reality.

*This is the essence of expression.*

We live on multiple planes of reality, perception, and spirit. As an artist, I am interested in this revelation through expression and translation.

Process reveals underlying truth, and my aesthetic ground is in the abstract and oblique expression of these things.

In my writing, specifically poetry, I feel that the precision is necessary, and also that words are often inadequate to express the fullness of the image.

*Form is guided by internal rhythms.*

Do I need to lay structure onto it, in order to make a more powerful statement?

Is it a sketch for the future or is it a finished expression?

What is the relationship between my poetic work and the work I'm exploring in moving images?

**These are my questions.**

I know, instinctively and intuitively, that poetic connections lie in the process of video editing where precise choices are necessary. The sifting and sorting of images has kinship with sifting and sorting images in words. What I want to make is layered and mysterious.

This aesthetic will speak to some people, but isn't likely to have a broad appeal.

*"Let go" becomes my daily practice.*

In *The Theatre and Its Double*,<sup>11</sup> there is more to contend with.

Artaud makes the argument for a language of gestures that supplants the authority of the text as the only source from which to create theatre. At the time he was writing, a language of gesture within theatre was nascent. Artaud's work was carried on by Jean-Louis Barrault and by Marcel Marceau in the creation of a language of pure form.<sup>12</sup> His insistence on this form is a passionate and, within the context of his time, necessary step.

In the essay, "Metaphysics and *mise en scene*," he writes:

*I say that this concrete language, intended for the senses and independent of speech, has first to satisfy the senses, that there is a poetry of the senses as there is a poetry of language, and that this concrete physical language to which I refer is truly theatrical only to the degree that the thoughts it expresses are beyond the reach of the spoken language.*<sup>13</sup>

Artaud's work on the concrete language of gesture has been continued in many forms through the work of Grotowski, Peter Brook, the Living Theatre, and Richard Schechner.<sup>14</sup> I see it in the work of contemporary choreographers who set

---

11 Artaud, Antonin. *The Theatre and Its Double*. New York: Grove Press, 1958. (4, 7, 2)

12 My ongoing investigation into the performance form of clown, the metaphysics, gestural language, and the paradox between gestural precision, and improvisation weave in this terrain.

13 Ibid. Artaud. p 35

14 Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*. New York : Routledge, 2003. (6)

In the essay "Actuals," Schechner addresses a multi-leveled approach, which describes Actualization in performance. Schechner then makes the correlation that our "localized urban-avant garde belongs next to the worldwide, rural-tribal tradition." (33) Here he describes the abstraction of a confluence of forms and experience. He speaks of tribal rituals, environmental theatre pieces, ritual performance, the work of the Living Theatre's Paradise Now and others. He describes the performer of 'actuals' as having a combination of **risk and mastery**.



up their vocabulary and, with varying precision, communicate their journey.

*I have engaged in rigorous investigation of what occurs in theatrical spaces and at the intersections of performance and video. My research includes an analysis of elements of direction and a thorough examination of choreographic strategies and vocabularies. This analysis has been critical to enhance the muscle of seeing, as well as finding my allies and fellow travelers.*<sup>15</sup>

Artaud's protest against the dominance of text as a basis for theatre stems from the understanding that there are levels of meaning which language cannot convey. He does not entirely dismiss language as a tool in its proper context; he rails against it as the pre-eminent source for drama in his time.

In the essay, "Oriental and Occidental Theatre" he states:

*All true feeling is in reality untranslatable. To express it is to betray it. But to translate it is to dissimulate it. True expression hides what it makes manifest.*<sup>16</sup>

*I find resonance in this statement.*

How can we communicate the language of the mysterious and unknowable except through a many-layered and oblique approach?

*Is it a process of coming through, and not laying on?*

In Artaud's thinking this demands a strict and "cruel" devastating honesty toward the self in expressing these ineffable realities.

Artaud argues for a "translation or transmutation" of words as a concrete part of the possible elements available to reveal and activate the senses on multiple levels. He argues for the "burning projective of all the objective consequences of

---

*S/he is not a shaman, acrobat or athlete, but shares the quality of these.* (p. 45)

Schechner relates practices among tribal "whole-seeking" peoples and part of our own population. He postulates that we are not undergoing a neo-primitive movement but a post modern one.

15 See: Annotated Bibliography, Performances. Donald Byrd, Balanchine (4Ts), Meredith Monk, Deborah Hay.

16 Ibid. Artaud. p 71

a gesture, word, sound, music, and their combinations."<sup>17</sup> This makes sense with regard to what is required to make the fullness of theatrical experience real. It is the type of work I am drawn to work that expresses the mysterious wholeness of intent through all the tools available.

This leads to a question about my performance work, and my preference for silence and a bare stage.

So much performance is driven by music, and I'm interested in exploring compositionally, sound that would express the intent.

*I hear, dimensionally, the tones that make up my idiosyncratic harmonic.*

In "No More Masterpieces," Artaud does away with poetry itself. "Let the dead poets make way for the others."

Which leads into the discussion of "cruelty." Here is where Artaud's time, place, specific genius, and madness remain locked in a fundamentally negative relation to life itself.

His passionate cry for "restoring all the arts to a central attitude and necessity.... or we must stop painting, babbling, and doing whatever it is that we do,"<sup>18</sup> is something I believe and yet, **is there not room for this genuine expression in art that moves through an expression into a transformed understanding?**

*This question is essential for me.*

It is in this ephemeral realm where transformative events for audience and performer can and do occur.

I feel hope that is directly related to Jill Dolan's discourse of the utopian performative. Dolan addresses the concept of *communitas* within a performative setting. She speaks to the possibility that in a moment of collectivity, it is possible to experience a different way of living.

---

17 Ibid. p 71

18 Ibid. p 71

*Utopian performatives spring from a complex alchemy of form and content, context and location, which take shape in moments of utopia as doings, as process, as never finished gestures toward a potentially better future.*<sup>19</sup>

Dolan's expansion of the concept of the utopian performative positions it as a practice which can allow each of us to see and feel more, and, as a result, act from a greater complexity of depth.

*The performatives under consideration...allow fleeting contact with a utopia not stabilized by its own finished perfection, or coercive in its contained, self-reliant, self-determined system, but a utopia always in process, always only partially grasped, as it disappears before us around the corners of narrative and social experience.*<sup>20</sup>

**In these places, magic is possible.**

Artaud expresses something like this in first letter on language:  
*In a word, the theater must become a sort of experimental demonstration of the profound unity of the concrete and the abstract.*<sup>21</sup>

From the third letter:

*The true purpose of the theatre is to create Myths, to express life in its immense, universal aspect, and from that life to extract images in which we find the pleasure of discovering ourselves.*<sup>22</sup>

And this is what is possible, not only through theatre's direct expression but in the transmutation of forms that film requires. I have known it to be true in the realm of poetry, but this rare occurrence happens primarily when the word is met on the page.

---

19 Ibid. Dolan. p 8

20 Ibid. p 6

21 Ibid. Artaud. p 108

22 Ibid. p 116

Having read C.D. Innes<sup>23</sup> commentary on the success/failure of Artaud's actual theatre experiments does not lessen the power his declarations. Paradoxically, Artaud's most coherent and powerful expressions remain in the fixed landscape of text.

## TRANSLATION

In his fourth letter, Artaud talks about the need for authorship to be surrendered to the director. This happens frequently in film. He argues for the liberation of speech as the guiding force, which requires that the director merely translate from one language to another. He addresses this as an imbalance in the power of text over the range of the physical languages of the theatre.

In my use of the term translation, I wonder if I am hitting this same impasse. I know full and well from experience that the ephemeral event cannot be fully represented by straight documentation.

I am intrigued by the notion that a representation of the event can exist, with the creators' original intent, but it requires a manipulation of elements to read across the forms. It also requires a willing collaboration between the performer and the filmmaker, the goal of which is to generate another new piece, using the raw material of the live performance or the improvisation.

*Is this an impossible task? Is this investigation a means of accessing a space that I am afraid to inhabit? I must honor my perception of what flows and falls together in the realm of editing, what elevates and transmits.*

**Through a prismatic approach, I have come to understand why this alchemical process is so important to me. The nexus of this investigation relates to the question of languages present in each form that I work in.**

---

23 Innes, C.D.. *Holy Theatre, Ritual and the Avant Garde*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1981. (7, 5)

I am finding my philosophy/theory about creating into this space between the special demands of performance and choreography and the frame space of video and film.

Videotaping, analyzing performance forms, and interviewing artists has been a primary site of my research. Collaboration has been essential in this investigative process. Initially, I worked with artists who were willing to investigate this space with me, as well as using projects that were dance-based to explore this layering aesthetic within constraints. I continue to find collaborative experiences that will allow me to further this research.

*Shadows, reflections, essence...the experimental ground.*

### **The Instrument of the Body**

*We have everything we need for the life inside of us. If we do not act upon these memories, we fail to live in this transient world. Some live in order to remember and others live because they do remember.<sup>24</sup>*

In Artaud's work/writing on the expression of alchemical and archetypal realms, I find a touchstone. My confrontation with Artaud is also here: he was ultimately unable to come to terms with his own humanity. His negative/harsh/ brutal/cruel judgment of the human condition unnerves me.

*We are called, at this moment in time and history, to find expression through a generosity of spirit that allows us to call forth the mysteries, dark and light. We need to treat ourselves honestly, gently and fearlessly.*

Artaud's insistence on the brutalization of the actor makes my stomach turn. I recognize so much of what he says as prophetic and true, and his conclusions as deeply flawed.

This is where we depart.

---

<sup>24</sup> Somé, Malidoma Patrice. *Of Water and the Spirit: Ritual Magic, and Initiation in the Life of an African Shaman*. New York: Penguin Group, 1994. p 287 (1 1)

Judith Butler<sup>25</sup> reframes, expanding the theoretical terrain of an understanding of the conditions of violence, and the inextricable relatedness of mourning.

A critical aspect of this discourse is the shift in relation to, and perception of, the body as falsely separated, material and somehow separate from mind and spirit (all of western thought), to an active embrace of compassionate, integrated, subjective embodiment. Through my engagement with physical practices, the potential exists to liberate the interior, revealing the vulnerability of connection.

The poems written during Artaud's time in the asylum in Rodez, make clear that the difficulty lies inside Artaud's denial of the body itself. This is strange for a man who spent a good part of his life trying to communicate the language of spirit through the body. This is difficult terrain. Artaud was perhaps a shaman, a holy man, who might have survived this life had he been able to live the life of the complete ascetic. As it was, he was unable to ever find a place of forgiveness for this human condition we all face.

*It is only through living through this life in whatever embodied form we each inhabit that we can find a level of spiritual peace.*

I have come to a visceral, radically subjective, embodied apprehension that I am not exempt. The very instrument that I inhabit, as a woman, in the US in 2006 is implicated in the suffering of others globally. This ethical position informs my practice as an artist and as a human being. I am accountable.

I acknowledge how long it has taken my spirit to be willingly here. I face the

---

<sup>25</sup> Butler, Judith. *Prearious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York : Verso, 2004. (4, 10, 16, a)

lives not lived, and the moment where life nearly fled but was called back strongly. This is where I recognize Artaud, and his divergent path. It is also where I must recognize the truth of his vision and transmission—and let go of his tragic end.

*The terrain within is what my spirit has to express.  
This must happen in this time and place, in the context of the world  
through this form that I have been given.*

As an artist, it is my work to illuminate and dance with these paradoxical tensions of specific time and history, which requires risking visible vulnerability at the prismatic intersection of ephemerality and mediated forms.

**In this practice I find voice.**



**THIS IS THE TERRAIN.**

I AM a ghost dance. That's why I'm here.



*...the Dagara believe that it is terrible to suppress one's grief. Only by passionate expression can loss be tamed and assimilate into a form one can live with. The Dagara also believe that the dead have a right to collect their share of tears. A spirit who is not passionately grieved feels anger and disappointment, as if their right to be completely dead has been stolen from them.<sup>26</sup>*

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. Somé p 57



Perceiving the poetics of practice... I engaged.



## VOICING SILENCE

*I believe that poems are made of words and the breathing between them: That is the medium.<sup>27</sup>*

*I have a deep relationship to silence... I know it and treasure the different qualities of silence. That which comes from the internal censor, that which comes from the culture that would have me not speak, and I am engaged in dialogue with the ways in which I might silence others.*

*The flames rise slowly at first, dancing in my frozen blue eyes. I watch the ancients dance a sweet hot dance of life. Soon the fire roars out of the fireplace, reaching to warm me with flaming tentacles. I enter the fire, in silence, absorbing bitter ashes. I fall into a pool of darkness, thirst quenched by desire to live, uneclipsed.<sup>28</sup>*

I write from depth.

I write a landscape of sorrow and loss.

I write with a desire to connect my specific experience to that which we all share.

---

<sup>27</sup> Rich, Adrienne. *Arts of the Possible*. New York : W.W. Norton & Co., 2001. (2, 4, 10)  
"Defying the Space that Separates." p 113

<sup>28</sup> *TRACKS* is an unpublished novella that was prophetic. It deals with the year of my sister's first time through treatment and my life-shattering car/train accident.

Poetry informs my work in all media, providing focus and flow. Poetic depth guides my relationship to presence, ethical action, spirit, passion, and compassion as I embody this unfolding journey.

### **Prayer poem**

Can you walk with me and not blind me?

Can you walk with me and not bind me?

Can you walk with me and be free?

I am a prayer

Born of blind passion and rape

Yes rape, yes blind passion.

I carry this paradox

at the core.

I am this secret

braid

My gift is love

unbound

a place

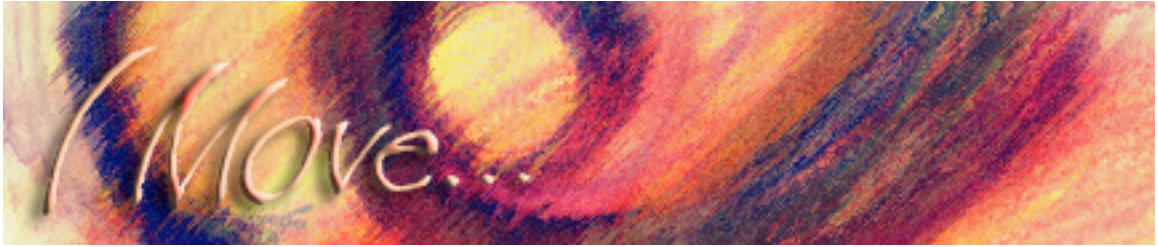
within

of generosity

stellar light

and hard, hard truth

*Mapping identity through shimmering fragments.*



## THE MYSTERY OF THE PERFORMATIVE IN MY PRACTICE

My movement practice is essential to my being here.

Now.

I am late arriving.

My journey began before, and will continue beyond, my work at Goddard. It is through the commitment to movement practices, and the exploration of my relationship to performance that I have emerged with a sense of aesthetic landscape and essentialities.

I re-entered the terrain of movement at time when a vast wordlessness of grief filled me. My commitment to experiential practices, of improvisation and risk, was essential to reclaiming my relationship to life.

I needed to give myself room to heal, to work into a practice that was separate from my professional work in the realms of theatre and video.

I needed to intuitively follow my investigation of translations.

I need time and space to begin again,  
and again  
and again.

I needed to reclaim my bodily perceptiveness.  
(haptic perception)

I needed to acknowledge the profound influence the perceptual practices of Deborah Hay<sup>29</sup> has on my work.

I needed to fully acknowledge the  
depth of my love

for movement,  
improvisation,  
dance,  
and choreography.

I needed to trust visible presence, and **claim my desire** to work in these forms,

I needed to

just

let

go.

---

<sup>29</sup> My work with Deborah Hay was a significant experience in the realm of **perception, performance, and dance**. In 1993, I participated in Deborah's four-month workshop in Austin, Texas. The workshop was called "Playing Awake." It was a transforming experience. It was a profound experience to work with such a seasoned artist and find a return to my performative self. 1993 was the penultimate large-group workshop.

In this unfolding, I sought out a community of artists that value the practice of embodied presence, and had the willingness to journey through it.

I was extremely fortunate to find, in Vanessa DeWolf,<sup>30</sup> an extraordinary ally. Her passionate embrace of improvisation as a form, her honoring practice of authenticity and humor has made her a committed and inspired collaborator.

Vanessa and I have developed a complex dialogue about our work, and our practices that embrace my core investigations of **presence** through movement and text.



Vanessa DeWolf, Improvisational Performer, Video Still

Initially, I held my emerging practice separate from my questions of translating between forms. As my practice unfolded, most significantly through the practice of the score *Revolutionary Surrender*, a convergence occurred.<sup>31</sup>

**In this process, there is transformation.**

---

<sup>30</sup> Vanessa DeWolf is an extraordinary performance artist, writer, and improviser playing at the intersections of text and movement. She is an the artistic director of Studio-Current, a place to develop experimental interdisciplinary art practices, and works-in-progress.

<sup>31</sup> See *Revolutionary Surrender*, p. 210 and *Dancing the Paradox between Fixed Forms and Ephemerality*, p. 256

*I arrive...*



**Why so delicate?**



**April 23, 2004**

Soft desperation  
Longing for ritual

To what do I commit,  
if not to me,  
My work  
here now.

Movement bursts from underneath  
New realms advance/retreat  
I am careful of scatter,  
embracing the flow.

*Ancient frailties:*  
Burning fire,  
fear of immolation.  
An old image  
transformed by  
dancing ever closer  
to the core.





*I am thinking of poems as sketches for films or plays.*

*I am finding the pleasure of crafting a jewel in words.*

*I am feeling the source of the images that flow through me.*

*I am trusting the resonance that occurs.*



## Reflections on *The Improvising Citizen*

Keith's teaching is a weave of improvisational technique, philosophy, and action that reveals what an embodied interdisciplinary practice can be.

On the last afternoon of the workshop, we had some discussion about the myriad ways that we can claim our particular activist ground.

I wrote then:

*I travel lightly and deeply into the terrain of now possible, now hopeful and now tender, and resonant. How can I bring more of this into the world? We ARE joined and we are possible.*

We talked about the responsibility of each of us to **maintain the integrity of our own solo even as we are influenced by those we dance with.**

This extends out as a way of moving in the world. It brought home the truth that I need to value the work that I bring forth and that, despite the shifting ground on which I stand, to stay firm and strong with my **perception.**

In terms of my **practice**, it was an opportunity to expand, opening to new ways of moving, collaborating, and extending into the world.

**MOVEMENT PRACTICE #1**  
**Solos**

**March 2004**

I danced two solos that face the elemental nature of my curiosity. The first was an exercise in swirling frustration. It was an effort to leave the frustrations of my mind and listen to the quieter impulses within my body.

The second solo began with a dance of images and energy reflecting my visit earlier that day with an old friend and her daughter, who had just turned eight. The water was perfectly still as Claire played at the shore, a sunny moment.

I allowed myself to drop into the energy of the day. The bright flow of Claire's bouquet collection on our walk, our spontaneous run up the hill, and the quiet between Loretta and I at the lake. I felt completely present to this flow of energy and images and was reminded that it is **this energetic perception that I am interested in communicating.**

The last line of Vanessa's feedback was "the mountains are not near."

This exercise brought into focus the **WHY of my investigation into translating essence in performance.**

**Reflection**

*Afternoon conversation dance:*

Struck light by dancing spring child presence  
and heavy with thoughts.

Our lives touch again  
acknowledging history,  
that gorgeous flow of remembered  
and present  
connection.





## REVEAL/EXPOSE

Reveal

Invites

Respect

May go quietly noticed or unnoticed

Heart open

Expose

Implies unasked for unprepared uncovering

Body armor descends

Defending

Prying open an oyster

Reveals hard labor within

Exposing hidden treasure

Reveal. Receptivity.

Wholeness illuminated.

REVEAL

Compassion

Humanity

Expanded love

REVEAL

THE SPECIFICS OF THE STORY

THE META LAYERS

THE POSSIBILITY FOR CONNECTION



## EXPERIMENTAL CROSSINGS

November 2004

### The dance between eye and I

It was a challenging process to address, in specific, how the strategies of observation have come about in my work. I felt the pressure to crack through this veil, and to chose the form of voicing.

It was not until I was able to face what I was not claiming that I was able to fully enter the engagement with form. Through a fierce and relentless examination in my first and second semesters I began to see HOW I SEE, and to CLAIM voice from where I am.

I have a deeply practiced observational eye. I am reflecting and expressing what I see. My practice engages a dialogue between what is observed and what emerges from the core. I am asking what is at stake in voicing layered perception, and what is the power of the form that I choose to voice in? Through this dynamic, the connective tissue of **embodied perception** grows.





## EXPERIMENTS IN PERCEPTUAL PROCESSES of TRANSLATION

“Why is the concept of “translation” so important to you?” Asked Bonnie Shock, my first semester advisor.

***The potential of transformation exists within this idea of translation.***

This question had an urgency within it that was complex to unwind. It was a critical passage to engage the questions with camera in hand and collaboration in mind.

In these first experiments with video, I was frustrated by communicating through the lens of the camera.

I approached with only my eye to guide me. I picked up the camera for the first time in years. I was playing with small cameras and the commercial camera that I use professionally. At this point, I began making stills from video. I was intrigued by the layered images that emerged.

I was engaged in a process of examining my eye, developing my visual and interviewing tools, and understanding the language of choreographic seeing.

With *Dance This....inspiring potential through process*,<sup>32</sup> I completed the project from concept to delivery, which expanded my skill base with all the new tools of video production.

***I am interested in the emotional layering that the tools of video can allow.***

---

<sup>32</sup> See *Dancing the Paradox between Fixed Forms and Ephemerality* p 256 (Notes on *Dance This...*)



Holly Hadfield Pist(o)l March, 2004



"Rosa" Video Still. *Split Second*, 2004<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Mik Kuhlman. *Split Second*. Premiered April, 2004 at Velocity Studios. Seattle. See *Dancing the Paradox between Fixed Forms and Ephemerality*, p. 256 (*Split Second Process*) DVD *Rosa*

In this Field session, I sketched my feedback in poems. This poetic process was a freeing practice of playing with the spontaneity of imagistic improvisations.

*Martha* #3

Energetic flow  
Body sense  
Ocean

*Karyn* #2

Sacred possession  
An entering  
A prayer  
The sound of tiny cymbals and voice  
Creating a harmonic that invites the fullness of spirit  
A drawing in  
Extending out  
Sacred  
Serious  
Holy  
Whole

*Grace*

Red shirt  
Black pants  
Shapes in the night  
She sleeps with graceful bells  
She is drawn out of her world  
Slow waking to the sound of lost love  
A journey through  
And beyond



<sup>34</sup> The Field emerged out of the choreographic community in New York in 1985 and was established in Seattle as part of the Field Forward Network, Artistic Director Vanessa DeWolf has extended the work of the Field to include writers, performance artists and choreographers. See Annotated Bibliography: Fieldwork.

I was finding the language of the dance.

.... *The fool is a riddle... that is fundamentally complex.*<sup>35</sup>



---

<sup>35</sup> Willeford, William. *The Clown, The Kingdom and the Stage: A Study in the Forms of our Relationship to Folly*. Excerpt from thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Zurich for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Zurich: Juris Druck + Verlag Zurich. 1967. (12, 7, 11) p 2



## **TRANSLATING ESSENCE: On Clowns, Fools, and Folly**

I have had a persistent research interest in the performance form of clown for several years.

What draws me to clown is the subversive possibilities within it. There is a connection between the practice of the clown and the transgressive archetypes of the fool and the trickster. I followed this investigation through mythic stories, research on the archetype of the fool, and primary interviews with contemporary clowns.

*What continues to hold me is the degree of commitment that the life of the clown takes, and the physical precision and improvisational brilliance that the form requires. Even more: the choice to commit a life to laughter and to the mysterious ephemeral healing that transpires in the presence of the most committed character clowns. Clowns, in this tradition, embody a subjective humanity, reflecting and revealing essence through their discoveries.*

I sensed that there was a richer thread to unravel in this investigation. At significant crossroads in this research, prior to entering Goddard, I had been radically rerouted by the cascade of losses in my family. It took me a long time to return to this investigation, and when I did it was even more compelling.

I did not yet know what I was seeking; I only knew that my desire was to follow.





Sylvestre of Los Excenticos (Josep Ventura), 2004 Video Still

My access to this world is primarily European. I am powerfully drawn to these contemporary practitioners of clown that embody a fully realized persona. I am privileged to know some of these performers, and it is with profound respect for the depth of their craft that I approach this subject.



## **CROSSING THE DIVIDE**

**February 2004**

**The dynamic exchange that emerges from community-based art practices.**

An important aspect of my artistic practice is to work in collaborative and community-based forms and forums. I have examined the assumptions of value placed on, and who benefits from, the separation of artist and organizer. I now embrace the paradox of these practices as an interdisciplinary artist.

Through the lens of the Art of Resistance Conference I have been able to examine this shifting dynamic of relationship.

### **Evolving Definitions of Community:**

2004: Community is where generosity is possible.

Art expands the terrain of generosity.

Coming together, creating together is an act of resistance.

2006: Community forms in a moment of shared desire.

### ***Four things have to occur to make art meaningful in the community.***

*Artists must heal themselves*

*Artists must critique the dominant culture*

*Working in community is a model of cultural democracy*

*Celebrating the good, visioning a future that is beauty-filled and possible.*

Beverly Naidus, from the "Art and Community" Conversation.

## **ART OF RESISTANCE: A POLITICAL ARTISTS CONFERENCE**

The Art of Resistance Conference, produced in Seattle in 2004 and 2005, was an opportunity to engage with a group of artists who are committed to an open process, and a philosophy of resistance. In the last two years, the compression of repression has grown ever more extreme. The expression of love, spirit, beauty, and hard truth is a radical task, and these people have been extraordinary teachers in this regard. Art IS a site of resistance and by working in ways that invite new voices to be heard we find our practice.

In this all-volunteer project there is a commitment to working as team with a lateral leadership approach. It required me to let go of past models of project management and producing, allowing for the organic shape to emerge. It has been beautiful to see this approach work, and I continue to learn from this group process.

We recently held the first in a series of community meetings for 2006, using an Open Space model for facilitation, which engaged new folks and re-inspired the rest of us.

We are currently planning the October 2006 conference at Consolidated Works. With a new artistic director, the space has the possibility of becoming a truly interdisciplinary art space that is engaged with the community. I look forward to exploring the collaborative possibilities with Conworks and I am excited to extend this conversation to the Goddard community and beyond.



## CLOWN LIFE: AN OPENING<sup>36</sup>

Spring 2004

There is a clown character in Teatro ZinZanni<sup>37</sup> that I have always loved. Her name is Linda and she's a security guard. She's all about the rules. I asked the performer, Doloreze Leonard<sup>38</sup> if she would ask Linda if I could interview her. Linda's very, well, surly you could say. She said yes!

What struck me in my 2AM AHA!, was a sense of entry. A vision formed of having the serious discussion with Linda about the world, what she would do if she were president, what she thinks about sex.

This idea is a great relief to me, the sensation of having a clear notion in all of this musing about clowns is liberating.

This is character that I know and who I can risk playing in this process with.

I am excited to explore the art of interviewing and shaping this small story.

I want to make a jewel that is as transcendent as the performances of these people themselves. They carry archetypal weight as well as the traditions of the practice.

---

<sup>36</sup> *Clown Life (or Translating Essence: The Interior Life of Clowns)*, is the title for my research into this form.

<sup>37</sup> Teatro ZinZanni, Love Chaos and Dinner. Teatro ZinZanni played a significant role in my life from 1997-2000. I was the project director for the first run in Seattle, which opened in 1998.

<sup>38</sup> Doloreze Leonard has become a friend and ally in my ongoing investigation of clown.



*Doloreze Leonard/Linda Security Guard of the Beautiful Video Still*

Clowning is often a non-verbal form. Speaking in the native language of the audience is often a detriment to the performance. I'm interested in that. This is a place where language becomes other, and communicates symbolically rather than literally.

*"I think maybe the day I'm gonna die I can say, maybe, I was a clown...  
I am always on a process to be a clown." Doloreze Leonard*

Indeed!





## **MOVEMENT PRACTICE #2**

### **Solos**

**April 21, 2004**

*A witness can discover the difference between an empathetic and a compassionate awareness in the presence of suffering. A compassionate witness accepts what is, remains nonattached, and expects nothing. Feeling completely connected to her mover, she can arrive into a place where she herself is not suffering, even though she is in the presence of suffering—learning to speak clearly from such a place is a blessing.<sup>39</sup>*

### **Solo improvisation**

It was my intention to be as fully visible and present as I could be in a simple, open improvisation.

I settled in, traveling a horizontal line across the room. It was a meditative walk with particular attention to the weakness of my right ankle. My arms moved with the energy of the eights and slowly I tried to balance on one foot and then the other.

The feedback was that I was visible, present, and precisely there. The focus that I was able to bring to that small improvisation is the focus that I hunger for in other aspects of life. It is the focus that allows for expansion, experimentation, and the precision of choosing one image or sensation or sequence over another. It is a focus that guides me internally.

---

<sup>39</sup> Adler, Janet. *Offerings from the Conscious Body*. Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2002. p 79 (6, 14)



## IMPROVISATION IN HONOR OF MY MOTHER

Mother's Day, 2004

A ring, an angel, and a photo.  
A small dance of unguarded openness.  
Acknowledgement of loss, held with love  
Invitation.

### *The feedback:*

Shocking to see such presence that was **inclusive**.

### *Thoughts:*

What is reflecting back is that I have been able to “invite being seen.”<sup>40</sup>

This was a profound moment.

First, I wasn't sure I wanted any feedback. The dance was a gift, a ritual, a prayer.

Second, to receive the feedback that I did allowed me to take in that I have shifted to a place where I can risk this level of revealing in performance.

Several times I have received the feedback that the rawness, the lack of artifice in my performance IS what makes it powerful. It's a strange thing; this undisciplined and untrained energy that persists. I cannot say that I am entirely without devices, but I can say that what remains important to me in a movement practice is working to that place where what I intend can be seen. I'm continually shocked when it is, but I am trusting that I can work with this more.

*I am interested in pursuing other kinds of movement practices that expand my understanding of this way of working on work, developing poems, and moving from image to physical form.*

---

<sup>40</sup> “Invite Being Seen” is one of Deborah Hay's fundamental meditations. I worked with it profoundly in 1993, as part of the Playing Awake Large Group Workshop in Austin, TX.







**AUTHENTIC MOVEMENT**  
***Offerings of the Conscious Body***

**Spring 2004**

Janet Adler articulates the process of slow unfolding that emerges with the disciplined practice of Authentic Movement.

*Diving in*  
*Soft return*  
*To the*  
*Witness*  
*Within*

Janet Adler's book, *Offerings of the Conscious Body*, allowed me to honor my movement practice as a means of arrival. It is this relationship to movement, inner witness, and energetic flow that is essential to me.

*As images move down and into embodiment, toward becoming directly known, the experience of self as one has known it is altered. Such distinctions deserve discernment, deserve words that move closer to the subjective truth. A call toward impeccability becomes apparent. A call toward translating this way of speaking with consciousness into daily life becomes urgently clear.<sup>41</sup>*

To strike upon the use of the word "translating," with respect for the interior ability to discern creates a bridge, strengthening my connection to the world.

*Direct experience is at the core of energetic phenomena. With the discipline of Authentic Movement direct experience is known as unitive phenomenon, occurring when the inner witness becomes clear, silent awareness, when the felt separation between the moving self and the more familiar experience of the inner witness dissolves. There is an awareness of an immersion in the ineffable experience of non-duality. This definition is similar to the descriptions of direct*

---

41 Ibid. Adler. p 35

*experience in the mystical traditions derived from monotheistic religions, from Samadhi in Buddhism. A direct re-union with soul, such experience can be understood as experience of spirit in both a concentrated and expansive way. Like spirit this transpersonal energy has been and will always be part of human experience.*<sup>42</sup>

**Naming this focus is important to my ongoing questions inside a given artistic form and at the intersections. It is this place where the dualities vanish and there is a state of knowing that is internally trustworthy.**

What if I trust that my witness has the capacity to hold my journey, whatever comes up?

The work is just this.

Adler uses the exercise of embodied texts: poems that come out of the witness experience. I'm lead back to questions of poetic process. I can own an internal rhythmic sense, but I cannot say exactly what guides it. I just know where the lines fall, and sometimes that changes when I take a step back or return to it later. I am interested in finding the form that guides it internally.

How much of the canon do I require myself to know? What value is it to me at this juncture—when time feels short. Whose work do I want to understand?

I feel the energy in my body rising, as the panels shift and the reflections of the outer world float, offering a strange sensation of transubstantiating walls.

---

42 Ibid. p 206

I stand at a threshold of time beyond time  
an answer your heart cannot give  
turns me back  
alone

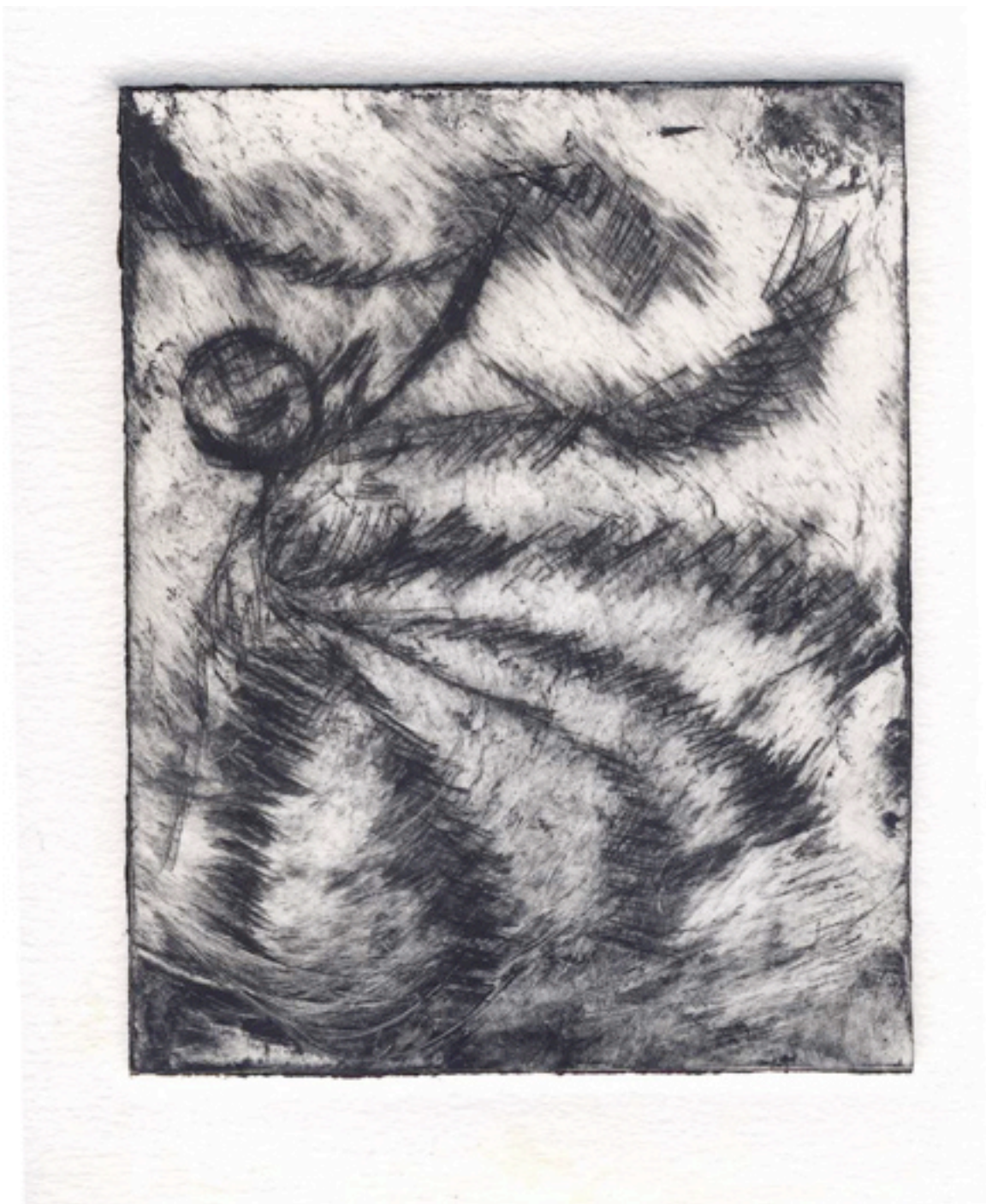
I stand to the left of all that I know  
the formation of ties defines a spectrum on the horizon

the turns we are taking are as night into day into night  
quiet provides  
stealth and ease  
to our movement

having turned once more from easy answers  
I see, in the distance,  
eyes that know mine

we stir the air that surrounds us  
guiding each other through  
what no one  
can pull  
another





Drypoint on Plexiglass. Artist Proof, December 2005





### A REFLECTIVE ASIDE

I have a vision for a short film that would capture the mirrored tent of Teatro ZinZanni in a very dreamlike way. This tent is a round, wooden mirror-tent that has extraordinary reflective properties.

The frame changes EVERYTHING about the experience of content being viewed. It is an extremely powerful tool to make the choice of what falls inside and outside the frame and that must be handled with a great deal of respect for the intent of the live performance and performers (or any subject) involved.

*The flattening of the 3-D world into 2-D requires a continued willingness to make it whole. Wholeness in video and film can only come through the process of fragmentation and reconstruction. In the world of live performance, the piece, the dance, the sketch is built moment-to-moment and works toward completeness within the construct of linear time. Video and film are out of time, and these forms have the capacity to create wholeness through layering.*<sup>43</sup>

I have gone off on a tangent, but an important one. I have been thinking about how I want to construct a piece. Is it done live, or is it a film, a layered poetic film that uses movement and dance? **Perhaps it is all of these.**

---

<sup>43</sup> See *Dancing the Paradox between Fixed Forms and Ephemerality*. Synthesis





## **Dream Circus**

I dreamed of a circus...a large and motley one.  
Vastness of space being slowly prepared.  
Many people working on the floor,  
many more tucked away into offices, grumbling.  
D. as Quasimodo, haunting the halls.  
H. cooking on a rooftop hibachi.  
I am there stealthily.  
People are surprised to see me, but some how I belong.  
My desk had a window to green outside. Pen and paper.

I find B. and we survey the progress, happily.  
A dual trapeze act is doing their tech.  
Two long and beautiful bronze women.  
I am on a third trapeze swinging between them, upsetting their act.  
It is delightful to swing so freely without permission.

We slip into seats and watch with pleasure.  
A woman with a small child appears, a confused look on her face.  
We give up the seats without trouble, giggling as we go.  
We find a place to stand as the band marches on.

Later, we wander off to a big dorm-like room  
Where the circus company sleeps.  
We dive into a lovely fluffy bed and slept sweetly until dawn.  
As the sun wakes us, we gather our things and slip away,  
light in each other's company.



**House Poem**

Six years here...  
and for the first time, the fruit tree blooms  
yielding gentle white flowers.

I am amazed,  
sweetly  
quietly

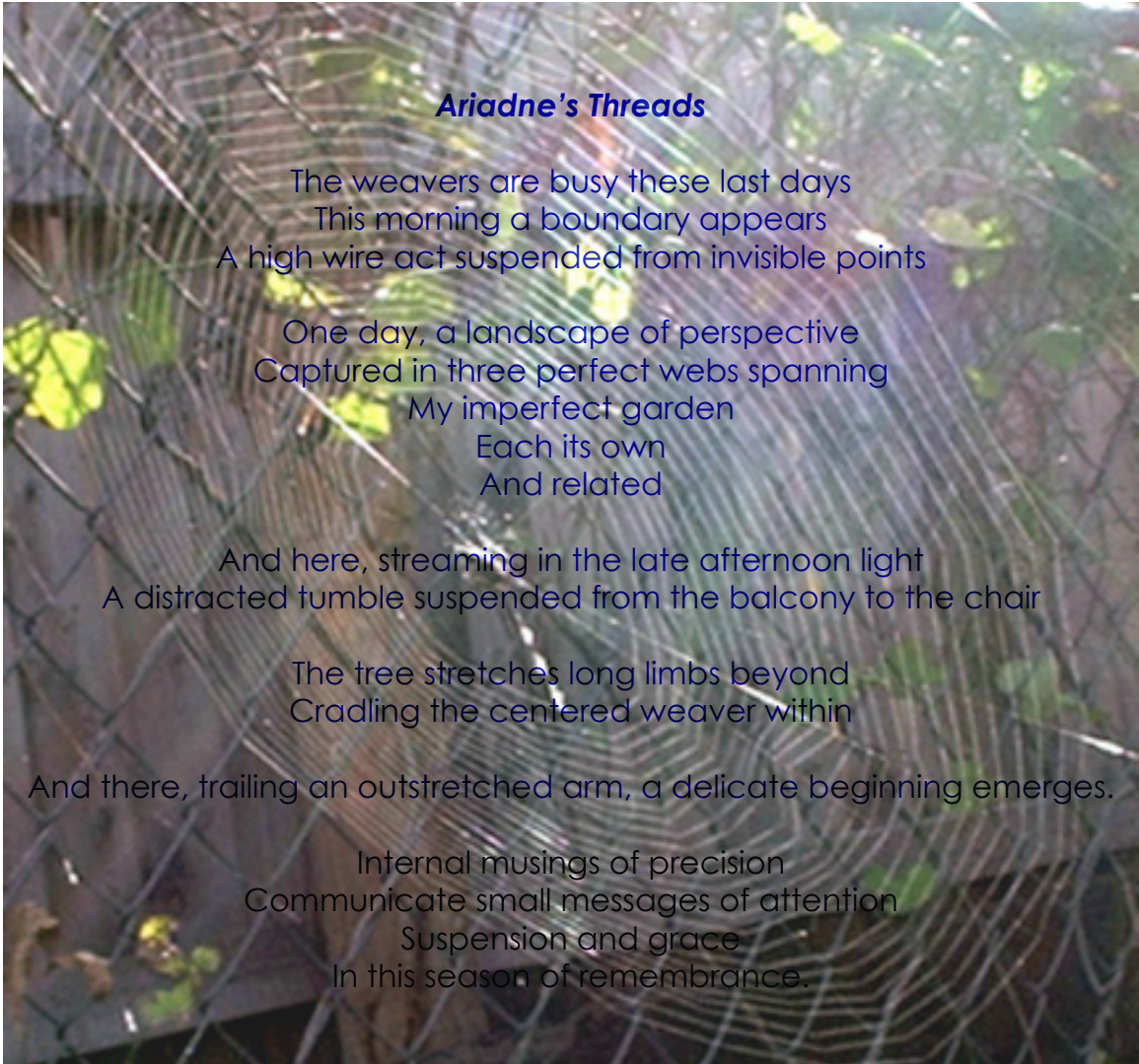
Even the small cherry  
blooms!

Last year a single cherry  
and that was all.

Was it the rich soil I turned over last year?  
The gentle grace and love of god?

I honor the wind  
watching petals fall  
like snow.





***Ariadne's Threads***

The weavers are busy these last days  
This morning a boundary appears  
A high wire act suspended from invisible points

One day, a landscape of perspective  
Captured in three perfect webs spanning  
My imperfect garden  
Each its own  
And related

And here, streaming in the late afternoon light  
A distracted tumble suspended from the balcony to the chair

The tree stretches long limbs beyond  
Cradling the centered weaver within

And there, trailing an outstretched arm, a delicate beginning emerges.

Internal musings of precision  
Communicate small messages of attention  
Suspension and grace  
In this season of remembrance.

Digital Still Rita DeBellis, 2005



*She comes and goes, my weaver.  
Always at the center  
Sometimes amid dew dripped beauty  
Shifting with each drop of rain and wisp of wind.*

*She comes and goes.*

## **Goddard S(u)w(i)e(t)e(e)t**

During my second residency, in the summer of 2004, I engaged in a improvisational poetic experiment with the experience of the residency. It was a practice of being present and fully engaged as well as an opportunity to play with this question of the eye and the I in my work.

## Goddard S(u)w(i)e(t)e(e)t, Fall Residency 2004

1.

Joyous return  
familiar faces  
forgotten names made new  
and new ones made familiar

2.

Pressure rises  
cloudbursts drench us down  
calling up memories  
we carry alone  
Deep  
Fragile

Soon the sky lifts  
and we are warm  
for a moment.

Each moment  
between  
farewell

Surrender

Tender  
reclamation.

3.

Deluge catches  
us short  
Gasping for breath  
Sledgehammer of loss  
crushing  
I stand shaken,  
unsure if I can stay.  
There are two choices  
ever still, shattering allows me to stand.  
Soon  
I will speak

4.  
Sometimes you have to walk away  
to come back

embraced by the collective effort of revealing ourselves

hearing  
the invitation  
steady...

clear

find the threads  
weave the story

5.  
we watch  
we listen  
understanding the effort  
a medium takes  
alliances  
deepen  
revelations

6.  
Sun-filled sandwich  
Foolish conversation  
Dang fine cookie.

7.  
We rise and fall  
Breath  
Still and always  
The return.

Shades of light and shadow  
Nuanced beings doing the slow  
Labor of coming whole.



8.  
spiral of stones in a pool of light

hanging silk

lightning flash

quiet inside

harmonica floats

then rain

9.  
thunder wakes  
we risk presence

small contributions  
an exchange of signs  
and tattoo stories

10.  
compassion made visible in motion

a challenge to the darkness within

the obliteration of women

the risk of being seen

mirror/shadow

spiritual being having a human experience.

Maps of memory

And sprawl

And again the sky darkens  
and soft tears fall  
Reaching out

Reaching beyond

We stretch, finding our way home.

11.  
with history recalled  
discourse breaks free  
accompanied by rattling thunder

clarity emerges in the fog  
parade plans erupt  
under a canopy of soft lightning  
and laughter

12.  
the women sit  
6 of winter  
and a summer crown

the swimmers join  
with marshmallows

we share the goals of community  
the organic shapes of collaboration  
we trust the flow

13.  
Quarry swim  
rolling thunder

Chips and dip  
A silly, soggy romp

Our mothers remembered

Buttery presence

I let go  
into to the muted sunshine of joy

This poem was collaborative effort of the 2004 Summer residency and Meg McHutchison

Where once was a house full of rooms with closed doors, a  
gathering for tea in the parlor occurred. Here poetry was talking  
with video, and playful drawing began to dance with the fool.  
Movement, still shy, dropped a veil.



My practice was unfolding. I found freedom in improvisational practices of movement and visual play.

I was examining my relationship to the content of the projects I was engaged in, both philosophically and technically, acknowledging my love for ritualized spaces, wherever they occur.

In September of 2004, Tony Grob and I began a 9-month video process with Pacific Northwest Ballet (PNB) that resulted in 12 short films honoring the retiring Artistic Directors, Kent Stowell and Francina Russell. The process was a layered opportunity to be in paradoxical tension and engagement with my professional practices, my investigation of presence, and my relationship to my movement practices and choreographic history.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> See Praxis—The Journey with PNB. p 292



## REVEAL/EXPOSE

Reveal

Heart open

Reveals

hard labor within

hidden treasure

Reveal

wholeness

REVEAL

Compassion

Humanity

Expanded love

REVEAL

THE SPECIFICS OF THE STORY

THE META LAYERS

THE POSSIBILITY FOR CONNECTION



## THE SHAPE OF CONTENT

Fall 2004

A pebble in my throat.  
poetic  
spaces  
challenge the day-to-day.

Experimental practices

capture moments.

Body.

It exists.

Another body.  
Family (and not unrelated).

Spiritual

understanding of loss,

a human story.

It is important to make the connections.

Ben Shaun's book, *The Shape of Content* was an odd and surprising find.

Shaun writes about "universality:"

*But let us say that the universal is that unique thing which affirms the unique qualities of all things. The universal experience is that private experience which illuminates the private and personal world in which each of us lives the major part of our his [sic] life. Thus, in art, the symbol which has vast universality may be some figure drawn from the most remote and inward recess of consciousness; for it is here that we are unique and sovereign and most wholly aware."*<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Shaun, Ben. *The Shape of Content*. New York : Vintage Books, 1957. p. 54 (3, 5)

This makes sense.

Maybe it is a question of what happens when it all burns away.

*My hands reveal the shape of change.*



Altered Polaroid. Embracing Our Becoming. November 21, 2005





**PRACTICE #3**  
**Duets**

**Fall 2004**

I developed an improvisational duet practice in collaboration with Vanessa DeWolf. Our investigations centered on the paradoxical tension of abstract/literal.

**November 28, 2004**

The score: We will tell a story.

One will start and by the cue of ringing a bell the other will pick the story up.

Movement can literally reflect the story or abstract it.

A series of memories came flooding through me.

**1976**

Diane

Free of the constraints of casts

Defiant

Frustrated

Committed

Sits on the kitchen counter

Of our late-childhood home

The emptiness reverberates around us

I bend her knees, one and then the other

Day after day.

**Crawling with my brother....**

Funny glasses

One lens and one patch-like...only red.

It was a shameful secret to be crawling at 10 years old.

I would join him as he made his round and rounds...it seemed a lonely thing.

From the warm, bright kitchen through the darkened dining and living room

(I wonder why we never turned the lights on)

Back through the hall and with relief to the kitchen though the floors were hard and cold.

Round and round and round we would go

It was something we did together

Before dad came home.

**Sometimes it is not clear how profound the teaching is, until you have the opportunity to return to the source.**

**KEY CROSSING #2**  
**Deborah Hay Workshop**

**September 2004**

*The Body in Question is the Dance*

This two-day workshop immersed me once more in the practice of Deborah's choreographic questions. Hay works with impossible meditations and her current set is as follows:

The Body in question is the dance (that is me)  
The studio is the lab  
The body is THE SITE FOR THE EXPERIMENT within the LAB  
The MATERIAL necessary to THE SITE FOR THE EXPERIMENT is the question posed.  
The SITE FOR THE EXPERIMENT needs the MATERIAL to sustain its life in the LAB.  
The MEASURING INSTRUMENTS employed at THE SITE FOR THE EXPERIMENT are:  
The perception of self  
The perception of other  
The perception of time  
The perception of space

—Deborah Hay 2004

These were different meditations than those I had worked with previously. It was a new challenge of abstraction, and of using perception and awareness of multiple levels of intelligence, to continue the experiment.

Another layer of the meditation is “everything I see is unique and individual.” A choice to see everything as unique and individual. This practice is an opportunity to let go the voices that keep me/us from moving. And to also allow for it to be “no big deal.” It’s a fascinating way to work. It continually forces me into the moment of what is. Here and gone. Hay’s work has always been brilliant in terms of opportunities to let go of the constructed personality. I find it even more exciting now. By working with these concepts, I am continually returned to the now. Hay invites you to bring “your past, present, future” into the practice of “unique and individual.” Her approach is to provide a framework of impossible choreography and inviting the performer to find their way within the well-designed PATH (i.e. choreography) of the dance.

The first day we learned two of three sections of a solo entitled *The Ridge*. We practiced this improvisation throughout the day in large group and smaller groups. The choreography itself has only to do with a descriptive phrase within which you bring your perception and performance to bear. It's very difficult to describe how complex this process is. Hay's current interest is in transmitting the dance, allowing other people to find their solo expression within the frame of her choreography, offering an incredibly generous invitation. If a dancer/performer chooses to continue the practice of the solo in a committed way for three months, the solo becomes theirs to perform.

The second day, we learned the spatial practice of the solo. It felt easier to move through the sections of the dance. However, it made it even more of a challenge, for me, to stay in the process of perceiving myself as the site of the experiment in the lab. The opportunity to make visible the whole body at once is an amazingly risky place to be, and yet by letting go of what is the constructed personality there is a way to do it.

I was grateful to return to Deborah Hay's work. The rigor of her practice and the way in which her work has evolved allowed me to meet it in a new and intriguing way, as well drawing forward the thread of continuity and connection to her practice.



Video Still from *Beauty*

**DEBORAH HAY**  
**Performance Lecture of “Beauty.”<sup>46</sup>**

**November 2004**

I was privileged to witness and videotape Deborah Hay’s performance of the text of the choreography of her dance *Beauty*. Yes, she performed the text of the choreography.

Witnessing Deborah’s performance and “lecture,” brought about another level of understanding of Deborah’s work and apprehension of my practice.

I did not talk with Deborah in the interview<sup>47</sup> about her process of writing.

---

<sup>46</sup> Deborah Hay. Performance Lecture of *Beauty*, and performance of *The Ridge*. November 20, 2004. On the Boards.

<sup>47</sup> Deborah Hay, Interview. November 2004. Interviewing Deborah Hay gave me insight into Deborah’s process as a choreographer and dancer over time. I am honored by Deborah’s willingness to do this interview. It was a beautiful exchange. It allowed me the opportunity to ask about the evolution of her work over time, and to reckon further into my investigation of essence and presence. I asked Deborah how she arrives at her questions. She has worked with

I did not know what the shape of the “lecture” on the dance *Beauty* would be. The “lecture” was a performance in itself, not of the dance *Beauty*, but the text Deborah wrote in the post-performance period of *Beauty*.

The set: An easel with paper to write on. A hand held microphone. One large RP screen set for two videos running simultaneously. Deborah began by drawing the path of the dance. Her choreography is strict in this way. There is a clear path of the dance, within which she is asking the question....“what if every cell in your body at once were able to perceive beauty and to surrender beauty....” Each segment, each part of the path has a certain shape to it (or unshape) and is sometimes embodied with a quality or not.

In one section she asks... “What if every cell in your body at once was able to perceive beauty and to surrender beauty as you look up. Looking up expands your personal landscape... it isn’t about hope, looking up is about becoming more inclusive in your perception of beauty.” Looking up, in this dance, is the antithesis of narrative gesture.

The layering in this performance was remarkable. As Deborah described the path of the dance in language that completely embodied the dance as the two videos ran behind her. We were watching the same choreography in two different performances while hearing the dance described in Deborah’s unique and encompassing language. Her writing takes you inside the dance, the feeling of the dance.

My response as I was both watching and videotaping was that, ah ha...here it is! Embodied writing...completely gorgeous and poetic.

Toward the end of the dance begins a section that Deborah describes as:

---

impossible questions in the dance for over forty years and I was very curious about this.

She abandoned New York in the 70s and moved to a communal living situation in Vermont. At this time she found she needed a way into the studio for the limited time she had each day and there she found her first question... “What if I surrender to the dance within me at every moment.”

“What if your ability to perceive beauty and surrender beauty as life unfolds on or off the path is your only means of survival?”

Indeed.

Deborah’s work continues to inspire and challenge me. The most amazing quality of Deborah Hay’s work is the commitment to discovery **and perception** that is essential to her work. Hay has said, “Perception is the dance.” This is not an empty phrase in her practice. It is a daily commitment.

*Every day.*

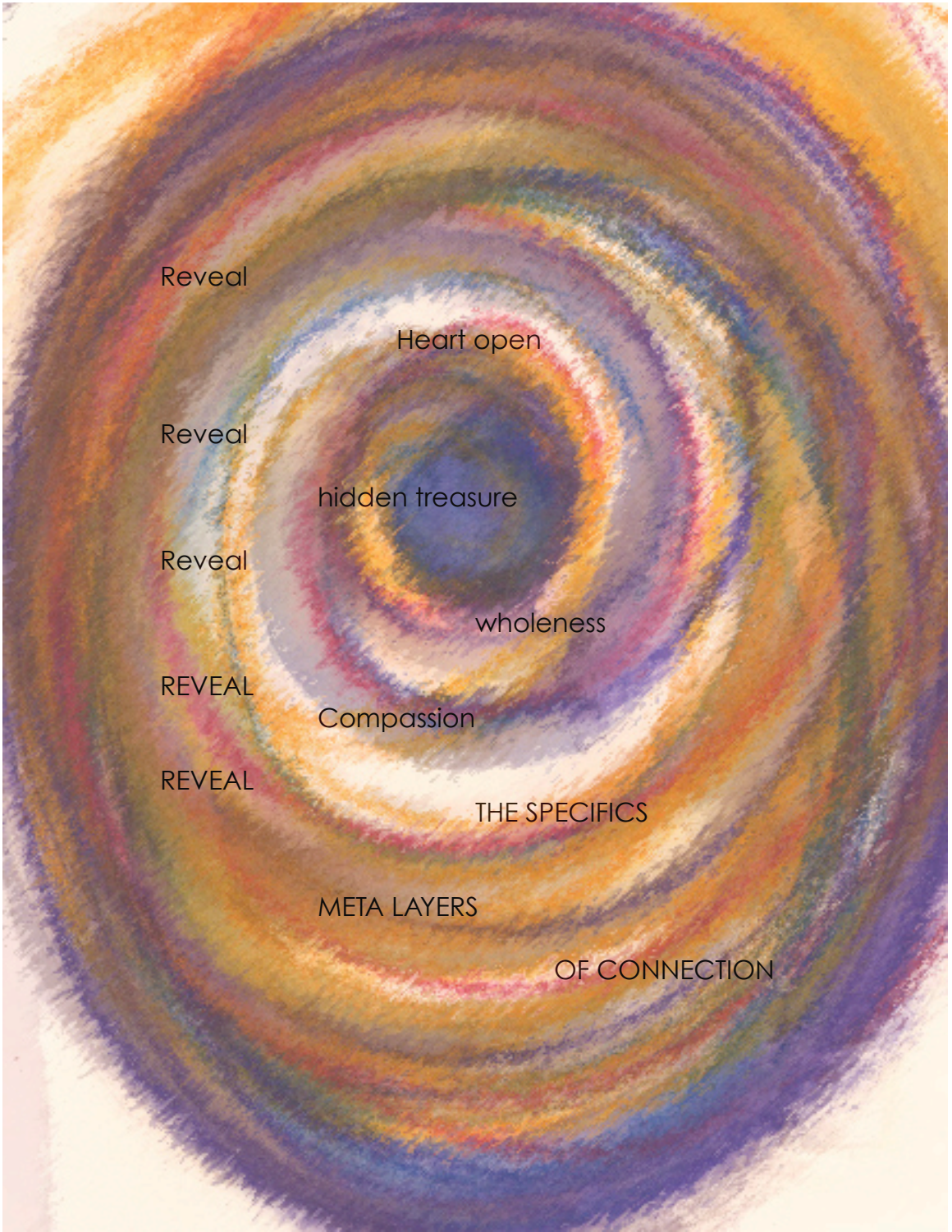
*Notice what is...*



*Without the substructure there is no dance*<sup>48</sup>.  
— Deborah Hay

---

48 Hay, Deborah. *My Body the Buddhist*. Hanover, NH : Wesleyan University Press, 2000 (©, 14)



Reveal

Heart open

Reveal

hidden treasure

Reveal

wholeness

REVEAL

Compassion

REVEAL

THE SPECIFICS

META LAYERS

OF CONNECTION



## ONEIRIC DIALOGUE

Spring 2005

*The raw material of dreams and experimental process revealed.*

1.

I am with a group of women

*Women gather*

We are at a conference somewhere and now we are preparing to leave.

*And part*

There is confusion and waiting for the bathroom, the shower

*Negotiating morning ablutions.*

The place itself morphs from old to new and back again.

*In my hands the light shifts from dawn to dusk and returns.*

I choose my bathrobe carefully.

*I choose my bathrobe carefully.*

A naked woman greets me at the door. She is petite.

*A nymph at the threshold greets me with a soft smile.*

She swings back the door with a small smile to reveal two others in a bubble bath performing (and they seem to be performing) a gorgeous sexual duet.

*Revealing the landscape of desire.*

1.

*Women gather*

*And part*

*Negotiating morning ablutions*

*In my hands the light shifts from dawn to dusk and returns*

*I choose my bathrobe carefully*

*A nymph at the threshold greets me with a soft smile.*

*Revealing the landscape of desire.*

2.

I arrive at the brightly lit salon

*The country of beauty*

Welcomed by smiling red heads

*Is native to redheads*

They are the amalgams of all the beauty, the righteous beauty contained.

*Intimate with the tools of transformation*

*Glittering with laughter*

They sit me down and prepare me for transformation

Hands on my head

Water, a soft shampoo.

There are other moments, a young man I can recognize but not name.

People are moving quickly.

A sense of brightness, happiness.

2.

*The country of beauty*

*Is native to redheads*

*Intimate with the tools of transformation*

*Glittering with laughter.*

3.

*Love dancing*

*Collapses*

*Heart bursting*

*Bird-limbs gathered*

*Find specific weight*

*Rest and relief*

8

*I awake to the words...*

*Look up...*

### **Small dream**

A sense of order and affection.

Phyllis (Fredendall) commented on how lovely I was, that everyone was.

There was a golden light in the room (fire?)

There was a difficulty hanging a cast iron pan.

A nail kept coming out of the wall.

Then there were three of us and I was talking to the 3<sup>rd</sup> woman as the 2<sup>nd</sup> fell asleep beside me. We observed her sleeping. She was young, beautiful and restless in sleep. (*Triple-headed goddess despite having no sense of my own age or the woman's beside me*).

## **ALLY**

Grandma Corey, my mother's mother,  
—One of my namesakes (Mary)—  
appears.  
Small and insistent, she says... "[Let her speak.](#)"  
It is a Christmas gathering. I am a guest.  
I speak and leave as dinner is served.

My grandmother was barefoot, small. She seemed as though she got dressed in a hurry from the other side, and had forgotten the formal attire she was always so elegant in. She was 94 when she passed and in those last years she shrunk from the powerfully tall (for her time) and strong woman that she was, to the lightness of bone and spirit that surrounds the grace-filled before dying. She was like that when I visited with her last, light and light-filled. She left me with stories, half-told as she drifted to sleep in her chair. She believed in me. That is the message. She doesn't often appear to me in dreams. This was a gift.

## **DIANE SHOWS UP!**

1<sup>st</sup> sighting  
I saw her from afar.  
As I approached, she was gone.  
2<sup>nd</sup> sighting  
I was driving.  
A woman went by on a motorcycle.  
I gave chase, but she was gone.  
3<sup>rd</sup> sighting  
I was driving again. I passed by Mike, my brother.  
He didn't see me. I thought to myself, "I will call him."  
Diane on the back of a motorcycle again, speeding by.  
I caught up with her and finally we stopped.  
She was alone then, red hair flying motorcycle rider.  
Perfect.  
I am rummaging through the remnants, searching for my sister's trail.  
Wow. She's free.  
It was beautiful to see her, healthy, vivid, ever angry.  
She was she, lion-heart roaring. Righteously living a separate dream.



## BLUE MOUNTAIN DREAM

Wearing a dress, I climb a long mountain trail as the sun sets blue over the undulating foothills. There is a near star, glowing orange, as our blue sun sets. It is warm. It is another place, like earth but not earth. We are human, but changed. I make my way to the village in the foothills, gathered for the collective purpose of change. I carry nothing in my hands, just a small backpack filled with herbs, and oils, grain, and some clothes.



The blue sun is a luminous fire along the ridge of the mountains, bathing the village in the last of the day's light. I am greeted warmly, and in silence. I am aware, looking at the tents and lean-tos and sleeping bags, that I came without anything that would keep me warm. In a moment of doubt and fear, I realize these nights are cold and I have not thought ahead. My presence there was completely unthought. The randomness of dreams guided me to this place. I approached a liquid fire contained in a huge shallow glass bowl. Here it is warm, and the people welcome me.

I sleep near this place, wrapped in the warm knowledge that I am home.

Just as we came in this world alone, so we remember alone.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. Somé. p 287





## **NOVEMBER 2004**

The days are full.

I am transforming.

I am trusting my voice.

What follows is a piece that deals with the love I've had for the addicts in my life, and the compassionate understanding I have in letting go of what has held me to them.

The gift of my sister's passing lies in this place. I know this. It is resonant to the last 25 years of my life—this burning through to truth, and communicating that the only way out is through. I have been in a constant process of letting go of the parts of me that disappear myself, and I am claiming the space of my life. This evolving shape of it.

It is false to say that this is new, but what is new is the level of integration that I feel. I have compassion for the self that has loved so deeply and held on so long. I am letting go and saying good-bye. What remains is the love in my heart, and my willingness to keep unfolding the expression.

What is different? It's just different.



## **RANT From A Quiet Place**

20/45

OR

*(letting go with love)*

This is the story of one step beside.  
A story of self-preservation nurtured from a once invisible core.  
A soft tale of tragedy set against modern times of excess, apathy and loss.

A tale of abiding, guiding spirit, and love.  
This is a story of long good-byes accompanied by sorrow.  
This is the story of the one who stands beside.  
This is the story of one that takes the rap for love  
    stands up for injustice  
        makes the argument to bring the wounded home.  
This is the one who tells the truth  
    absorbing the misfired accusation when  
        silence would have been the safer route.

This is the story of the dark-haired ally who has the  
    quiet stealth of listening.

She hears the low hollow pain of craving that can never be filled.

This is the story of one who stands beside and tries, following misguided  
wisdom to see, to feel, to love her way to healing those ravenous souls  
that lack internal guidance systems of their own.

She comes by this innately, but not naturally.

This is the story of a life saved by near-death.  
    With a dark shroud cast

    She goes on

        luminous in the search.

This a story for those who stand by darkness, calling it out, doing their best  
to heal it.

This is a story for those who see that they too must make the choice to turn away or die.

This is the story of narrow escapes and careful choices.

This is the story of those who stand as witnesses to the drama, clean up the messes, put out the fires and go quietly and with gratitude that disaster was averted, at least for now.

This is the story of a life lived through other's stories.

This is the story of one who vanishes at an instant's notice.

This is the story of one who travels like water, through and around, making possible great feats and slipping away unnoticed.

This is the story of one who steps aside, out of the blinding light of the redheaded beauty.

Away from the leonine suns that demand constant feeding.

This is the story of the long journey home to the place where life is made and much time has passed.

This is the story of one who chooses the containment of alone,  
seeking herself.

This is the story of quiet reconstruction,  
a tenuous belief and a fiercely held love.

This is the story of pointing it out.

This is the point of making the journey through.

This is the story of surrender, releasing failed illusions of the power to heal through any other means than internally arrived at truth.

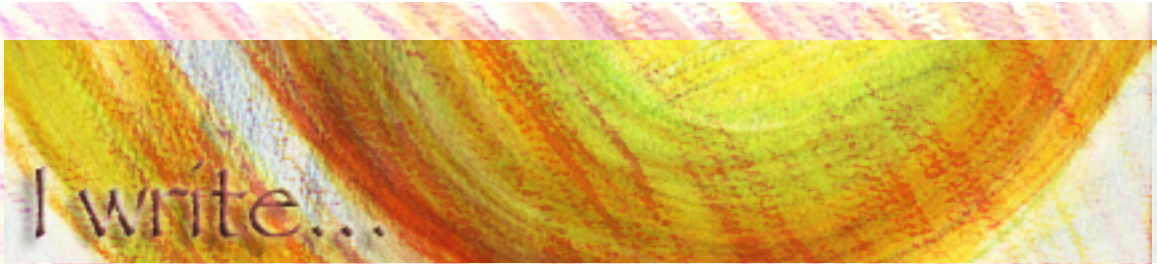
This is the story of moment to moment grace and  
willingness to continue on.

This is the story of one.











Roundness

Webs

Spirals

Nest

Home

**I have entered a new room that is expansive, curious and intriguing.**

Integration is guided by **widening perceptual fields and commitment to the moment.**

My reading of Nietzsche speaks to this in a paradoxical and integrative way.

What I hear in his words is that there is no guide to spirit, other than the one that each individual finds.

Nietzsche is thorough in his step-by-step dismissal of organized religion, and the conclusion of fatalism that he embraces is another path to the Buddhist notion of emptiness. I do not hear an abdication of personal responsibility, but an invitation to a deeper responsibility to life.

In the chapter, "The Four Great Errors, #8," he writes:

*Nobody is responsible for being here in the first place, for being constituted in such and such a way, for being in these circumstances, in this environment. The fatality of our essence cannot be separated from the fatality of all that was and will be.*

*One is necessary, one is a piece of destiny, one belongs to the whole, one is in the whole. That nobody is made responsible*

---

<sup>50</sup> Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Twilight of the Idols*. Indianapolis : Hackett Publishing House, Inc. 1997 (Translated by Richard Polt) (4)



*anymore, that no way of being may be traced back to a first cause, that the world is not a unity either as sensorium" or as "spirit" only this is the great liberation—in this way only, the innocence of becoming is restored....*<sup>51</sup>

I find myself at a paradox. On my wall—for many years—was the phrase:  
*Existential Aloneness...never forget.*

It is a belief that I have held, as I have held connection. There are practices of faith that shape our participation in life.

I have faith in the force of life, and an optimism (however unprovable), in the potential for humans to evolve a compassionate way of living on this small planet. In this, I find resonance in Nietzsche's words. The idea of God, any version of it, and the imposition of a moral system by one OVER another is antithetical to life (to the whole). We are at an evolutionary point, but it is not one that can be imposed from any external dictate. It is each of us doing the work of our lives, inviting the "innocence of our becoming," to unfold.

It is the essential yes! that I embrace in Nietzsche.

What I've gained from his work thus far:

*We carry on, and we seek to create beauty.*

I will leave him for the moment.

---

51 Ibid. p 36



## PERFORMATIVE EXAMINATIONS

Fall 2005

In dialogue with Vanessa, we mused about the apathetic approach that is part of the current aesthetic in dance.

So... we cannot live in the bones of post modernism.

There is tension among post-modernism, identity politics, and humanity claiming art.

We got into a discussion about the re-emergence of circus and new vaudeville as a form, and why it is so resonant for audiences right now. One aspect is that it is accessible to audiences and they are not made to feel that they have to know a certain language in order to “get it.” The form is not as simple as it seems. Another layer is the risk and vulnerability involved in this type of performance. There is a subversive approach to the “theatre” of it that breaks the form down.

None of this is new terrain, but this may be precisely the point. We are in the middle of this shift. It’s hard to see what’s happening.

I am certainly not advocating that everyone abandon choreography and join the circus, but there is a critical aspect of investigation in this **dialogue.**

## THE CLOWN/BALLET CONNECTION

To dance in the ballet is a dream that is narrow and achievable for very few. The form and the discipline is intriguing to me, and I see connections between the skill and discipline **of clowning and the cloistered world of the ballet.**

Both art forms require a life commitment which alter the performer utterly and irrevocably. Each is a contained world with standards that are incomparable to anything other than itself (in purely formal considerations). The context of the performance is an altogether separate issue—though the clown often exists within the prescribed space of the circus tent, it is the specific gift of the clown that he/she transcends this environment, threatening upset to everyday “normal reality.”

There is a dynamic tension in the considerations of high/low culture. Populist art vs. Art (with the capital A). Both remain Eurocentric. My attraction is strong to these somewhat closed and inaccessible worlds that have a specific language of expression. There is also the tradition of the art form, and the break from it, which each generation must discover.

And what of my work as a filmmaker, investigating these forms? I am thinking about the physical focus that shooting requires. It is most engaging to me when I can find within the frame both the composition and movement that is so exquisite.



## **THEORETICAL FOLLY**

My curious investigation of the interior world of clowns informed my investigation of Folly through Erasmus and Willem Willeford, and strangely, Nietzsche and Artaud.

As my exploration of contemporary, archetypal, and historical content about fools/clowns and tricksters evolved, I embraced what continues to spark my passion about this subject.

I am attentive to my personal history and to the questions posed by these people who live **in between worlds**.

### **William Willeford**

Willeford's PhD Thesis was published in excerpted form in 1967, as *The Clown, The Kingdom and the Stage: A Study in the Forms of our Relationship to Folly*.<sup>52</sup> In this small volume, I encountered some keys to the work at hand.

Willeford describes his study as:

*....an attempt to see a wide range of fool phenomena as conforming to a type, that which can be called the fool.*<sup>53</sup>

My investigation is related but travels a different path. I feel joy at

---

<sup>52</sup> Willeford, William. *The Clown, The Kingdom and the Stage: A Study in the Forms of our Relationship to Folly*. Excerpt from thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Zurich for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Zurich: Juris Druck + Verlag Zurich. 1967. (12, 7, 11)

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. p 3

finding these writings. The thread of my inquiry has to do with the fluidity of characterization that practicing and archetypal fools embody.

....*the fool is a riddle and that this riddle is fundamentally complex.*<sup>54</sup> I am drawn to the mutability of persona that slips and slides out of definition. Clowns and fools seem to have that ability at times, despite the fact that they are so visible in their presentation to the world. They raise the question of what is reality and who are/ what are they, and thus who or what am I?

*The fool, like the joker, has no fixed value. However, under some circumstances that card may be taken up and assigned a value.*<sup>55</sup>

Willeford refers to Nietzsche's Zarthustra, "a man [sic] must have chaos within him to give birth to a dancing star."<sup>56</sup>

*Imagine that.*

I have LIVED with this quote for the last several years. I am attentive to these small things that resonate time and again. I smile, willing to travel the next depth.

*The form we see in them [fools] must, they tacitly but firmly insist, be fluid and open enough to accommodate their characteristic life.*<sup>57</sup>

*The fool leads us to other modes of knowledge that both parallel that of drama and have an influence upon it—those of religion, philosophy and the workings of our mother wit..... And since what the fool is includes our reactions to him, the attempt to describe him must take into account both the ways in which he intrudes himself as an object into the act of knowing and the ways in which he influences that act from the complex depths of ourselves.*<sup>58</sup>

My experience with the world of interactive, European clowning, and the contemporary practice of it, is that it is a form that invites the participation of the audience, if they are open and willing. **At its very best, it is a revelation of essence, and a gift of energetic exchange.** This is rare, but is a way in which some of the

---

54 Ibid. p 2

55 Ibid. p 2

56 Ibid. p 24

57 Ibid. p 3

58 Ibid. p 4

performers I know approach their work. **It is an absolutely different practice from actors; these clowns build a life inside their character and work from that place. It is as rich an internal life as their “normal” lives.**

*Both the form and meaning of their affinity is a secret bond that is at the same time a wall of tabu...<sup>59</sup>*

Fools/Clowns also have a relationship to power that is outside the realm of defined conventions. Fools can speak their piece without losing their heads, and this part of the riddle is intriguing.

I have spoken about the ability to speak the truth in troubled times. Who gets to do that, and why?

*The fool is not in progress toward himself [sic], the fool is always himself.<sup>60</sup>*

*This is the endeavor.*

**INDEED.**



Nathalie Tarlet Video Still July 2005

---

59 Ibid. p 24

60 Ibid. p 12



## Entrées

**Nathalie Tarlet** is one of the clowns who inspired me to follow this foolish investigation. She has a deeply spiritual and political practice.

Her discussion of clown as androgenous, or more accurately, without gender was compelling.<sup>61</sup> She walks between; she falls in love with everyone and is attracted to everything because her clown is a pure expression of love and naiveté. Nathalie has a very refined sensibility in her work.

She has created a duet called *Le Chut*, in which her clown, Frapada, falls down from heaven after the angels have placed their finger on her lips to say, "shush." As the story goes, this is the point of forgetting all that is known before birth. The clown must find her way, as we must, collecting ourselves, remembering and awakening. I am following the threads. The deeper I go, the more vast the terrain.

**Merry Conway** is a clown master and an activist artist, an important intersection of consideration. I was introduced to Merry through Goddard colleague Lisa Wolpe. Merry has investigated the fool archetype within Shakespeare and there was a beautiful moment within the interview where she spoke the soliloquy from Hamlet, "To be or not to be," moving in and out of clown.

**Eugeny Voronin** is a magician and primarily a white clown, who came out of the Ukrainian circus school system. He's one of the most brilliant pantomime,

---

61 Ibid. The fool often defies categorization in terms of sexuality and gender as well. They are the ultimate androgyne, regardless of gender presentation.

*...being a clown he is neither man nor woman but both and neither—he contains that encounter and breaks it down within his show as much as he is contained by it and fixed within it. (p. 10) His sexuality, like everything else about him assumes forms expressive of his indeterminate status on the border of cosmos and chaos. (p 11)*

Fool is an embodiment of that which cannot connect in the physical realm (i.e. no family, no children, a life outside). That does not prevent the longing to occur, and it is often part of the fool's story.

silent clowns I have witnessed. We talked metaphysically and philosophically about red and white clowns and the balance between the two in both partnership and performance. The white clowns are always higher status, and impermeable. Activity goes on around them, and they are made fools of without their noticing. The red clowns are nearly always low status, naïve (and/or stupid) and eager to please. Voronin talked about how he strikes the balance between red and white when works alone.

I am inspired. This world gives me a different way to approach the questions of power, intimacy, and vulnerability. It is a different view on the content of my work. **I am drawing on the archetype of the fool. The naïve is able to blissfully, fully, and presently move in the world without fear, without a sense of loss for what is past. It is the archetype of being in the present.**

**For the fool, surrender is not hard work.** So. There is an element of this in clown, and more: the full range of humanity in all its chaos and harmony and poetry.



Zaza of Los Excentricos, Video Still, June 2004

## NOTES ON *THE BIRTH OF TRAGEDY AND THE GENEALOGY OF MORALS*

*But I would rather have you learn, first, the art of terrestrial comfort; teach you how to laugh—if, that is, you really insist on remaining pessimists.*<sup>62</sup>

The gist of the *Birth of Tragedy* is a premise of the loss of tension between the Dionysian and Apollonian modes of expression that came about with the rise of Socrates and “theoretical man.”

What resonates for me in this, indeed, problematical text is the recognition that with elimination of Dionysian ecstatic expression from the equation of the tragedy, the emergence of the illusion, the ideal and the fundamental separation of body and soul. I have used the overlay of the power of feminine receptivity as a replacement for the Dionysian elements. Nietzsche is addressing the split and arguing the need for the tension between two very different ways of knowing: perceiving and expressing.

Nietzsche himself admits that the Dionysian Spirit is something that cannot be pinned down in the frame he has set for himself. Why not reclaim the power of the receptive feminine in this place?

*The difficult relations between the two elements in tragedy may be symbolized by a fraternal union between the two deities: Dionysus speaks the language of Apollo, but Apollo, finally, the language of Dionysus: thereby the highest goal of tragedy and of art in general is reached.*<sup>63</sup>

*To understand tragic myth we must see it as Dionysian wisdom made concrete through Apollonian artifice. In that myth the world of appearance is pushed to its limits where it denies itself and seeks to escape back into the world of primordial reality.*<sup>64</sup>

This requires radical re-interpretation. Nietzsche is arguing for a balancing point and tension between the two energies.

---

62 Nietzsche, Friedrich (translation by Francis Golffing). *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*. Garden Grove, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956 (4, 5)

63 Ibid. p. 131

64 Ibid. p. 132

*Thus the Dionysian element, as against the Apollonian, proves itself to be the eternal and original power of art, since it calls into being the entire world of phenomena. Yet in the midst of that world a new transfiguring light is needed to catch and hold in life the stream of individual forms. If we could imagine an incarnation of dissonance—and what is man if not that? That dissonance, in order to endure life would need a marvelous illusion to cover it with a veil of beauty.<sup>65</sup>*

*When one overwhelms the other, the balancing point must be restored.*

*The spiritualization of sensuality is known as love: it is a great triumph over Christianity.*

In Section #4 he writes:

*--I put a principle into a formula. All naturalism in morality, that is, all healthy morality, is ruled by an instinct of life—....Anti-natural morality, that is, almost every morality that has been taught, honored, and preached up to now, instead turns precisely against the instincts of life.<sup>66</sup>*

The fool speaks from a place of natural morality. Each clown has his or her universe of response to the dictates of the imposed world. The fool and the clown may be the great practitioners of Nietzsche's philosophy!

Why did I bother with Nietzsche? Initially, my desire was to find some relevance to the current discussion about "values" that is taking place in such compromised terms in America right now. How will we reclaim ANY sense of discourse about values if not by tripping and stumbling "lightly," finding ways to engage with those we are so alienated from at this moment?

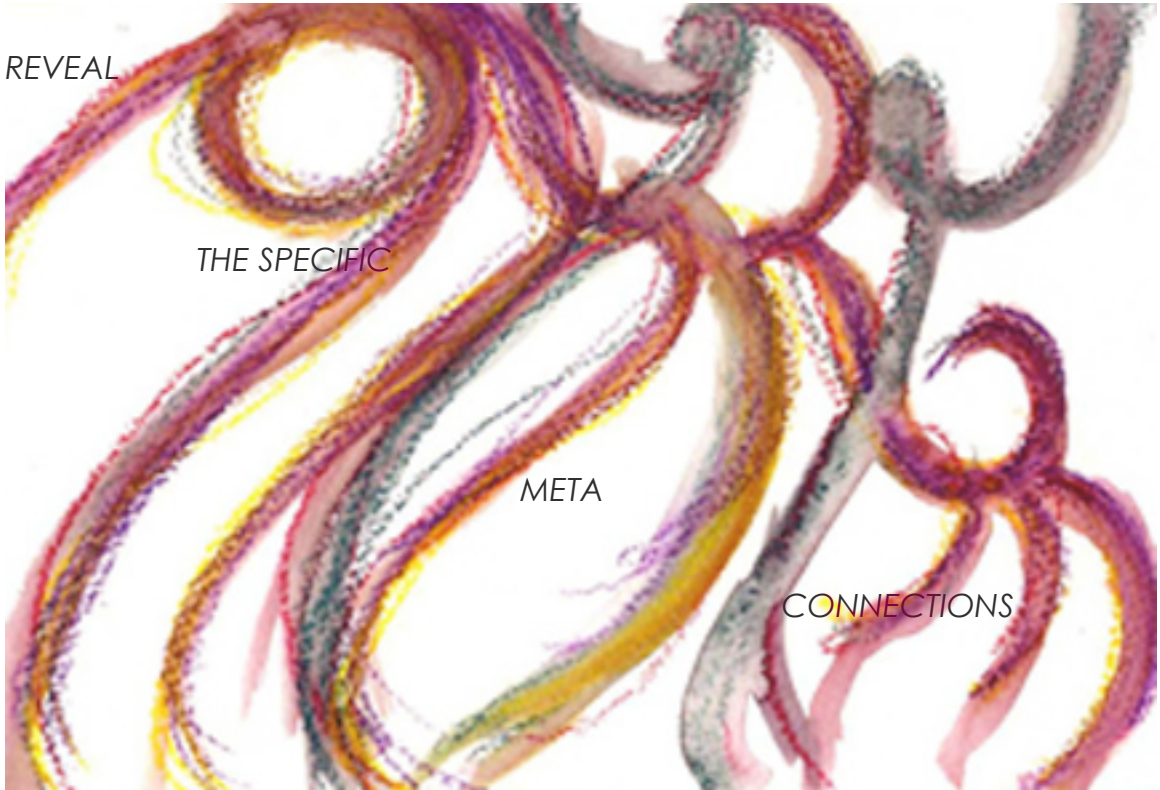
## Clown revolution.

*There might be something to it!*

---

65 Ibid. p. 145

66 Ibid. p. 27



**I am here. It is now.**



Bringing forth by day...



SHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

HA!



**AWAKENING OSIRIS...**  
**Gathering a soft bouquet of layers.**

**Spring 2005**

Each chapter of Normandi Ellis' retelling of the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*<sup>67</sup> is a prayer, a song, a reminder, and a call. A recognizable landscape that is ancient, current, and critical to address at this juncture of history.

The core myth, that of Osiris (that we are gathering the parts of ourselves and our worlds that we have lost) and Isis, who through her passion, sorrow and loss found a way to bring forth life, opened a pathway to engage with courage and compassion the sacred story and mythic relationships within me.

The study of myth, poetics, and story provided me with a counter point to a significant conversation with Frederick Nietzsche. Though I found at the center, a belief in the "innocence of becoming."

I faced into the fragments of the larger work that had been gathering. The metaphor I traveled with was that of Osiris and Isis, and I entered the mythic terrain of Persephone's myth in all her permutations. A weave was forming.

**I let go of trying to escape the telling.**

My investigation at this point was related to questions of meaning. How do I perceive meaning in the artwork of others. Questions of resonance and kinship emerged. This inquiry was ubiquitous and became a dynamic and expansive dialogue with all aspects of my practice.

---

<sup>67</sup> Ellis, Normandi. *Awakening Osiris: a new translation of the Egyptian Book of the dead*. Grand Rapids, MI : Phanes Press, 1998. (1 1)

How does story enter me? What is my way of unfolding meaning?

How do I receive story in the different forms I work in?

Is literal narrative an opening or an obstacle to my access to story?

This compelling terrain engaged the challenge to my structure of judgment about performance-based work that comes from a long relationship to deconstructed narrative and an attraction to abstraction and layering.

For the first time, I could see these things as not mutually exclusive.

I read intuitively and voraciously. I tracked Coyote through Native American Myths and Ananse through African Stories. *The 36 Immortal Women Poets*<sup>68</sup> pulled me in with the beauty of the plates and the spaciousness of the poems, a reminder of the beautiful simplicity of the well-crafted line and the power of consistent meter. I found the poetry, plays, and prose of Federico Garcia Lorca, and returned anew to June Jordan, Adrienne Rich, and Diane DiPrima.

Persephone in all of her incarnations and manifestations was persistently spiraling in conversation with the land of the ancestors. It was an easy/uneasy journeying in between.

---

68 Hosoda, Eisha, Pakarik, Andrew. *The 36 Immortal Women Poets*. New York : G. Braziller, 1991. (2, 8, 11)

I notice that I have been shooting self-portraits in mirrors for years.





**THE POETICS OF RETURN**  
**The Poetry of Rita Dove**

**Spring 2005**

*Thomas and Beulah*<sup>69</sup> is a beautiful book.

In these two sections Dove describes an entire arc of life, an amazing feat.

In the poem, *Straw Hat*, a line strikes me particularly....

*He used to sleep like a glass of water  
Held up in the hand of a very young girl. (p 15)*

Perhaps it distills to this... these few poems are the sum of the story.

The sum of a life, two lives separately lived, and shared.

Specific images take me into a moment of Thomas, a moment of Beulah.

Years pass between moments.

I loved that Dove added a chronology of these lives to the story. It raises the question. What is known when we describe a life by only the “facts”? Inside the story of Beulah, the poem *Pomade* has an entirely different rhythm to it than the rest of the section. Beulah is touched by Willemma, by her world and her life force. She opens up in this poem, finding an ally in her difficult world...what a relief.

*...Barley  
yearned toward the bowl's edge, the cornbread  
hot from the oven climbed in glory  
To the very back lip of the cast iron pan... (p 65)*

Two sides of a story.

Two windows on a shared life.

---

69 Dove, Rita. *Thomas and Beulah*. Pittsburgh : Carnegie Mellon University Press, 1986. (2, 11)



I feel Thomas's love and wandering.

I feel Beulah's scars and her sense of tenuous disappointment in their lives together.

Hmmm. Some voices we understand better than others. Character voices have such specific qualities to them and sometimes I hear one much better, can articulate it better than another. The measured distant tone of "Canary in Bloom," intentionally illustrates Beulah's state of being. She has been hurt too much.

***Mother Love***<sup>70</sup>

*I am the one that comes and goes.*

*I am the footfall that hovers.*

*(from "Missing," p 62)*

*the mystery is that you can eat fear*

*before fear eats you.*

*(from "Narcissus Flower," p 12)*

Persephone's journey, her rape, Demeter's inconsolable grief.

*This book is a dance of voices that are separate from each other.*

Each holds a part of the truth.

Dove's compassion for Demeter's mourning, and her ability to explain the depth of this is powerfully compelling.

She is unafraid of the image: the age-old image of woman gone mad with grieving.

The voice of Demeter is so strong, so absolute and so undeniable.

*Demeter Mourning* and *Mother Love* are poems that speak so loudly they scream.

*I am braiding the threads of descent and return.*

Demeter is vivid to me unlike she ever has been.

I pause.

I want to think about this.

---

70 Dove, Rita. *Mother Love*. New York : W.W. Norton, 1995. (2, 11)

I am sitting with an awareness of the archetypal mother.

Hearts break open in birth, and in death and my path has been through sorrow.

I have no children, but I know this grief and the power of this love.

Maiden, mother, crone.

Blood memories.

My mother's grief, a raging wind that would not quiet in the months after Diane's death.

The phone did not ring anymore. These are things I didn't know.

They spoke nearly every day. The silence was deafening. Hmm.

I can still hear her voice as she said, "hello sweetheart." Just for me.

I breathe with color.



drawing in

filling up

a delicate prayer of the possible.





## APPROACH

Spring 2005

**Image:** A solo improvisation, without words, that moves through a spiraling pattern. My desire to find expression through the body remains a constant. I find pleasure in improvisation.

*But what a spiral man's being represents! One no longer knows right away whether one is running toward the center or escaping.<sup>72</sup>*

This piece comes from my location and identity as a woman, as a feminine presence on this earth. My desire is to express this vastness of the feminine as an energetic vibration that is layered through image. I don't know exactly what this looks like, but I feel that it has many layers of women in it. It is not about a fixed age or time, it looks back and forward to strengths we carry in us, the urge toward life as well as embracing what we are becoming.

I am surprised.

That said, I can claim (and it has been long in coming) that in the subjectively embodied feminine there is the power to heal.

Through receptivity we will continue to shift the war-torn paradigm we are in. I continue to work with my embodied conflicts that make it so difficult to speak and claim this place.

To lose all that has come before, to transmute into new form (i.e. to leave its currently fixed form), to pass on, pass through, to change.

---

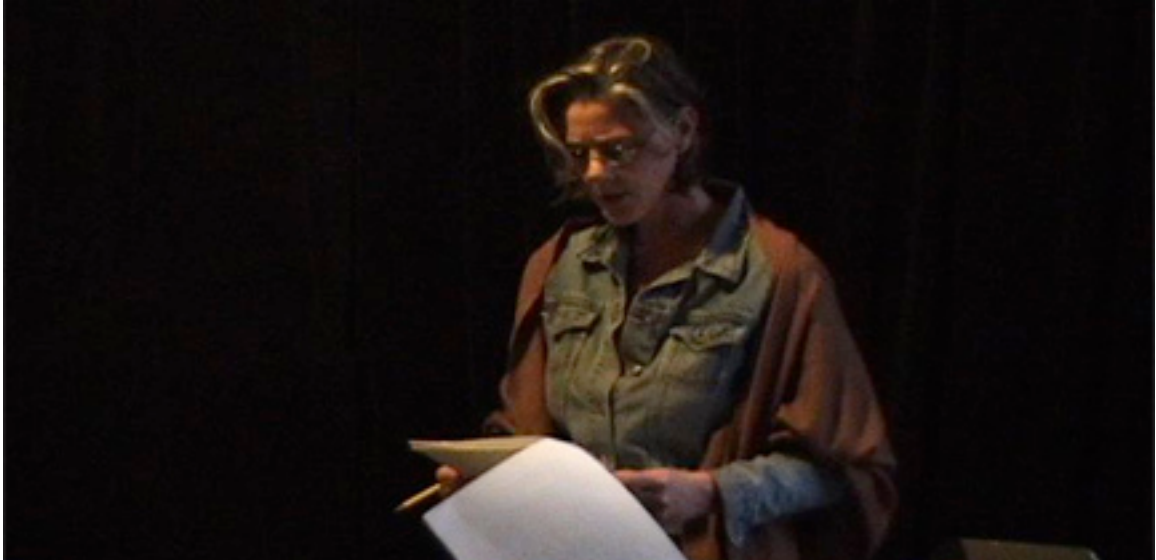
<sup>72</sup> Ibid. Bachelard. p 214

Can you hear her?



## SAY IT OUT LOUD<sup>73</sup>

My first attempt at crafting the whole of what was then, *Persephone Suite*, came near the end of my third semester.<sup>74</sup>



I also decided to read *Rant from a quiet place*.<sup>75</sup> This was difficult. I want the words to carry the force without consuming me. Is this possible? Poetry draws forth, demanding a sacrifice. I was scorched, rekindled, and transformed.

---

<sup>73</sup> Field writing session reading. May 9, 2005.

<sup>74</sup> The Mythic Terrain of PS to *Last Chapters of Now* (process notes)

There is a specific directly voiced body of work about Diane.

There is the work that is abstract/metaphorical and pulls from images of the land and nature (Minnesota suite).

This is more about my mom.

There is the alchemical layer of interior transformation (Persephone suite).

They are all related, part of the fabric. I am very curious to weave it.

<sup>75</sup> See page 133

PAUSE....

breathe...

*47 love poems (an excerpt)*

**A walk in the woods ...**

Luminous light  
surrendering  
lacey moss-jeweled finery  
Deep wet  
auburn caverns  
offer up  
singular beauty

Long-limbed weaver:  
soft  
green  
grand.

Spinning canopy  
meeting stillness.  
A dock, a canoe.  
A perfect kiss.



Digital Still Rita DeBellis, 2005

Blessed  
Unexpected  
Listening heart hands



Shadowheart, 2004

There is stillness, heldness  
and a question.

I close my eyes.  
You are here.

Who and how I love is a political act.<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> I live in the margins, outside the frame of heterosexual hegemony. It's a navigation filled with erasures. Articulating the terrain of this refusal, regardless of the gender of my lover, is a paradoxical tension that requires breaking through a silence that is all too easy to keep.

## **ISIS**

She leads with her hands  
Her lips  
Her hips  
Grey hair falling  
Over eyes  
She seeks the beloved  
They find silence  
And noise  
In sweet embrace

## **WATER BEARER**

Ancient  
container of soul  
Broad reach of history,  
respect for the land  
The river of slow unfolding

We wake to the sounds of children  
Scouting the dawn  
Laughter  
A pause before turning,  
turning  
and sleep.

The water bearer  
finds  
the deepest well

**GOAT**

arrives darkened  
by early sun.  
In time  
our ease returns.

**VASHON MORNING**

The Sound is quiet.  
Wrapped in history,  
I surrender once more  
into now.

I walk between, practicing surrender into the web of relationship that sustains me; it is of our committed making.



***We see through the fragments.***



**SOULSCRIPT: A Classic Collection of African American Poetry.**<sup>77</sup>

The organization of this book is lovely. The poems were chosen by content rather than chronology. Each section holds its own, resulting in a lovely conversation among the poems.

One of the pieces that caught me was in the section, "Corners on the Curving Sky," about spirit. Jean Toomer's, *Brown River, Smile*.<sup>78</sup>

*It is a new America,  
To be spiritualized by each new American.*

*Lift, lift, thou waking forces!  
Let us feel the energy of animals.  
The energy of rumps and bull-bent heads  
Crashing the barrier to man.  
It must spiral on!  
A million million men, or twelve men.  
Must crash the barrier to the next highest form.*

*Beyond plants are animals,  
Beyond animals is man,  
Beyond man is the universe.  
The Big Light  
Let the Big Light in!  
O though, Radiant Incorporeal,  
The I of earth and of mankind, hurl  
Down these seaboards, across this continent,  
The thousand-rayed discus of thy mind,  
And above our walking limbs unfurl  
Spirit-torsos of exquisite strength!*

*...It is a new America,  
To be spiritualized by each new American.*

This poem is a powerful prayer song that made me want to send it out into the world again right now!

<sup>77</sup> Jordan, June (ed). *Soulscrip: A collection of African-American Poetry*. New York : Harlem Moon Classics, 2004. (2, 3, 11)

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. p 85-87



## ART OF RESISTANCE: A POLITICAL ARTISTS CONFERENCE<sup>79</sup>

Spring 2005

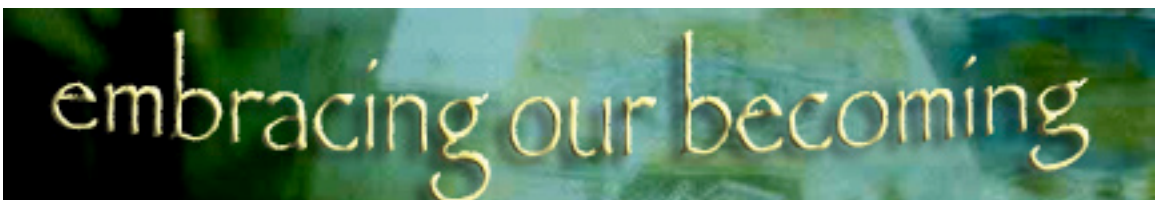
Small acts reclaim.

In this process we resist... like water.

The commitment I made to myself for the 2005 conference was to participate in the art of it and not lose myself in the organizational art of it. I valued my skills and ability, and I was much more expansive with my participation in 2005.

I was encouraged by the efforts of the group. I took on more leadership than I had intended, and was excited about the many folks who stepped in to make the conference happen. This year my attitude was very different. I was breathing fully as an artist.

As a workshop, I began my practicum<sup>80</sup>



### *A Collaborative Artmaking Ritual*

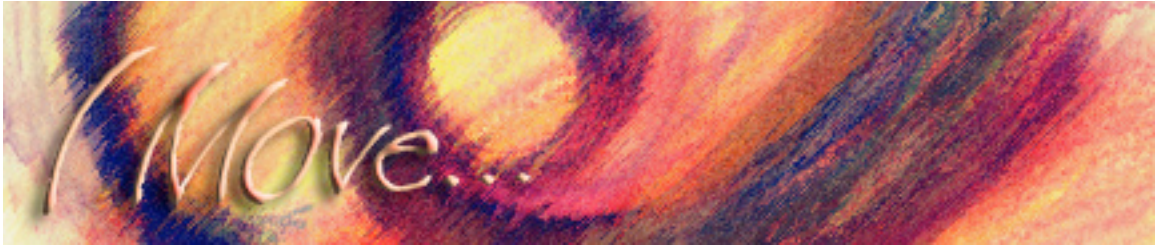
within the context of the conference.

<sup>79</sup> Art of Resistance A political artists' conference Recap 05

This year's conference happened beautifully on May 15-16, in all the ways that are possible when people pull together for a vision. There was much grace. We are now in discussion about how the next year's conference can unfold. We have come to an agreement that we need a process for decision-making that allows more completely for the collective voice to be heard. I am thrilled about this. It is important to me that the voice of resistance continues to unfold openly. I am excited about the idea of new people stepping forward and stepping up.

<sup>80</sup> See Practicum Report: Embracing Our Becoming. p 275

Through my practicum and through collaborative experiments in improvised and durational performance, I fully embraced an intimate improvisational, collaborative aesthetic.



### KEY CROSSING # 3

Spring 2005

#### Embracing an intimate and collaborative aesthetic

*The Nesting Project*<sup>81</sup> and *Oedipus at Colonus*<sup>82</sup>

#### NESTING PROJECT=PROCESS

*homeSpringhome*: a twelve-hour performance with Vanessa DeWolf

Our intention was to use memory to map spaces, and sensations of home through improvisational art making practices.

Preparation: Ritual preparation of space.

7PM An invitation to an improvisational dinner.

Score: Each bite would inform/evoke a memory of a room. There were no constraints that the room was real, but memory is the source.

It was a warm, sunny evening as we began in Studio Current.

There were small dances and many stories.



From L to R: Karl Thuneman (back), Sheri Cohen, Vanessa DeWolf

81 The Nesting Project took place over two weekends in February and May, 2005.

82 Oedipus at Colonus. Presented by CORE, May 21 and at Velocity, June-9-11, 2005.



After dinner, a small group began mapping.



There were five of us (Vanessa, Martha Dunham, Holly Fowers and Milla Kalen), and we were quickly absorbed into silence. After a half hour or so of concentrated drawing, stories began to flow.



At midnight, we said good night to our guests.



Vanessa and I did authentic movement using the model of moving, witnessing, and writing. We then prepared our cozy nest on the floor. I told stories of summer camp triumphs and disasters. We laughed ourselves to sleep.

It was a good experiment that I will engage again. I learned a great deal about stepping in and out of performance, and that my focus is fully present in the intentional shaping of space, ritual, and meditation.

*The Nesting Project* continued throughout the weekend.

In Friday's open space evening, an extraordinary duet unfolded between Milla Kalen and Vanessa.

I was feeling very Midwestern, so I chose to video their improvisation.

It was a beautiful, glitter- and crinoline-filled moment. The experience of videotaping it was a pleasurable performative improvisation.



Video Still and first failed attempt at Photoshop text overlays, 2006

The risk is this simple.

We discover in the moment what is now.



**OEDIPUS AT COLONUS<sup>14</sup>**  
**Process Notes**

**Spring 2005**

In this performance, four women embodied the Eumenidies. The process stretched my performance presence and skills. The group held a range of age and experience, and we found trust and depth among us. The content of the play *Oedipus at Colonus* was aligned with my process of unearthing mythic terrain.

The Eumenides were once the Furies who have transformed into energetic presences. We were invisible to the players as they moved through the space, but they could feel us. The choreography was based on structured improvisation scores. There are four songs, each with a different quality.

This project strengthened my understanding of development of choreography that is generated through collaboration. The process of getting the choreography inside my body and knowing was a breakthrough in the integration of haptic perception, **with the integrity of the age, body and spirit that is mine.**



The First Song is an introduction to the Land of Colonus.  
A hymn to place, and explanation of how this grove came to be sacred.



### **Third Song**

The third song explored the travail of old age broken up by the interjection of the **fool** who explodes out of the line. Each of us had an opportunity to do this improvisation within the song. This was a powerful experience for me. I found that I was able to drop into the slow movements of age with a sense of concentration, compassion, and love for the nearness we will all come to one day. There is dignity, there is sorrow.

Each of us then made the counterpoint to this slow moving dance with the lively freed spirit of innocence and foolishness. The energetic of this improvisation was that we are free of the mortal coil and the consequences of death, able to trip lightly until the next round. My solo involved being caught and sent back into human form to begin again.



The last song is evocative of the tension between Persephone's two worlds.

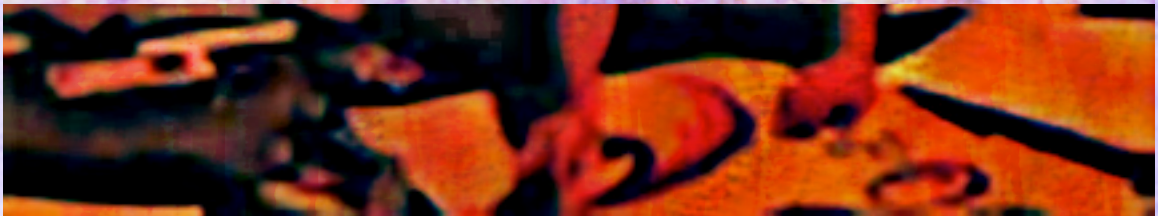
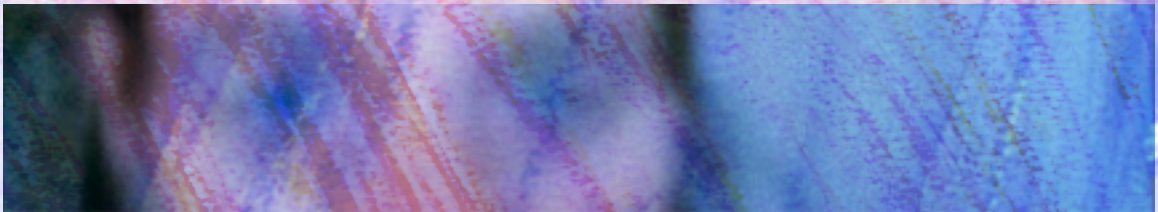
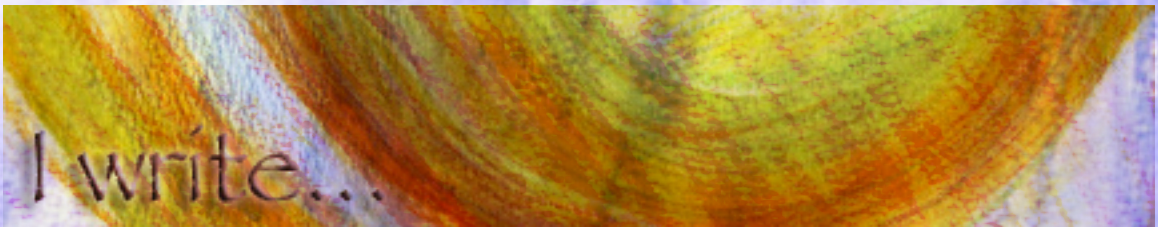
I knew, intuitively, that I would find resonance with this project. This is the way of alignment, of risk, and testimony to my willingness to risk **the fool**. It was a great experience, which gave me further insight into movement-based work. Through being an instrument within the collaborative choreographic structure, I absorbed new language and practices for how images can come together. It is a dance. It was a significant step in further trusting my movement instincts and, a hurdle that was necessary to overcome.

It was moving to work with a group, opening to the quality of movement that can express the energy of the Furies. There is a particular Fury/Eumenidies spirit that I am still bringing forth. I loved using the practices of perception and imagination with this great group of women!

I gather.....



*Letting go into the improvisational moment of now.*







In summer of 2005, I had the opportunity to travel to France, to further my research on clown and videotape Nathalie Tarlet's clown show, *Le Chut*.<sup>83</sup>



I interviewed three significant practitioners of clown that I had been tracing for several years: Philippe Gaullier, Michel Dallaire, and Julien Cottureau. I continue to follow this thread, listening for essence.

---

83 DVD *Le Chut*



As my research continues, I am aware of the subtle terrain of engagement, which is the commitment these performing artist make in dedicating their lives to an art form that brings joy through revealing human foibles, faults, and vulnerabilities.

My quest requires that I call up my own vulnerability and trust which is inextricable from the performance form of clown.

My attraction to the world of performance and to performers who have committed a lifetime to these specific skills allows me to take in the commitment I have made to my work in all forms.

**As an artist, I am vulnerable, willing, and receptive.** Each step of this investigation engages an exchange that deepens my commitment.

**I bridge a deeply held internal world with external expression.**

When I returned from France, I continued my movement experiments, stretching into duets and trios, and trying playful experiments with text. As I prepared for the fall 2005 residency, I intuitively created a document of my work to date, layering video and using poetry as the score.<sup>84</sup> This experiment, though flawed, illuminated a confluence of practices and revealed the poetic possibilities in the weave. It was a convergence of poetry, performance documentation, and a completely experimental approach in video. It was a breakthrough as a proof-of-concept for the possibilities of the poetic movement films I was unraveling.



Layered Still from G3 Documentation (the experiment in confluence of forms)

I had all the threads of the conversation in front of me.







## SUTTON CANADA/SEATTLE RETURN

AUGUST 2005

### PART 1: Sutton, Canada

After leaving the summer residency, I traveled north to Canada, to the small town of Sutton to visit Doloreze Leonard, clown and beloved friend. She lives in the country, and it was a welcome end to the press of people that is so intense at Goddard. I drove the back roads of Vermont, crossing the border without incident.

The quiet of the land enveloped me.

We went for a small splash in the pond and spent a quiet evening catching up. A restorative pause in preparation for the next day's events.

Early rise, hot sun.

We prepared to go to the Art Forge, where an art show was opening and a small action/procession called *The Shadow Project*<sup>90</sup> was planned in commemoration of Hiroshima. A band of artists, with Doloreze embodied as a mourning Geisha, placed cut-outs of their bodies on the pavement, spray painting the outline, leaving a shadow.



This is something I did not know about the bomb... that in Hiroshima and Nagasaki shadows remain of those who died in the blast. The people were

---

<sup>90</sup> DVD *Shadow Project*.

vaporized leaving only the salt and minerals of the bodies behind. These outlines cannot be erased. They are embedded on the surfaces, a reminder of the power of destruction that we unleashed.

I videotaped the performance, and found a rhythm that was satisfying.



Doloreze Leonard, Shadow Project. August 6, 2005

The art opening represented artists from both sides of the border. I was particularly inspired by the work of **Liz Davidson**.<sup>91</sup>

Initially, I was drawn into her creation myth series due to the layered abstraction and repetition of images. There was a swirling, twirling house that was mysterious. One piece was entitled *She Rises From the Ocean of Tears*. I was particularly excited by Davidson's approach to layering, form, and the content of mythic mystery. There was nothing literal about her work; it was evocative and, in series, transformative.

I am blessed by the web of connectivity I find when I leap.

---

<sup>91</sup> Speaking with Davidson about her work, I found that she is manipulating the images through a process of video stills, transferred and further messed with in Photoshop and then printed onto Arches paper, which gives it a very painterly quality. We had a lively discussion about the perils of video and her interest in using it as source, not final image.



## PART II: AUGUST ABSENCE, PRESENCE, AND ENDURANCE

### August 7

I crossed the border to go sailing. It was my mother's birthday, and the third without her presence on this earth.

We take the wind  
to the music of canvas and wood.  
Swimming in warm/cool lake water  
I catch the tail of the rope, pulling myself back aboard.  
A small weaver dances on the sails.  
A new way to honor her  
with joy.

### August 8

I drove to Burlington to visit with two dear friends of my mom's—the Babbots. They are extraordinary people who are facing their last chapter with tremendous consciousness and courage.

Meredith, who is 76, took a bad fall this summer, which she has thankfully recovered from. We stood at the place where she slipped, a ten-foot drop to the rocks at the lakeshore, with trembling recognition of how grace-filled and tenuous these moments are.

We inevitably, gracefully, and peacefully spoke of Mom, and the last chapter of her journey.

Sorrow releases,  
absorbed by the shifting, painted sky  
over Lake Champlain.

It was a deep blessing to visit with them, their encouragement, and their sweet embrace of me as I've travelled to Vermont these last two years.

When I arrived home, I was met with two huge boxes on my doorstep. I hauled them upstairs, opened them, and was met with sixty boxes of slides from 1960 to 1976 (when my parents divorced). I had asked my brother to send the slides to me (at some point!). I was flattened by the monumental presence of these images and what they represent. I still am. My brother (Mike) and his wife (Deb) arrived on the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup>. We spent Friday evening randomly looking at the slides and talking about the contrast between image and experience. We found one which brought us to tears.



There is such love in this image and, though we know what we've come through, this particular moment captures an essence that heals.

At the residency, I wrote a note to myself (during the story circle workshop):  
Do I have any positive childhood memories? I am ready to call them up.

There are images of Diane, young, beautiful and alive.

There are images of me.

There are images that reveal an eye that loves.

I pulled out the interview my Aunt Margaret did with my father about growing up in South Africa. My grandfather followed the work during the depression, from Scotland to the US to South Africa. My grandmother refused the move to Australia, so they stayed until my father left at seventeen to join the US Navy. Mike read it aloud. My father was a terror as a kid. So, there is that. The mischief and rebellion that he and Diane shared—another aspect of the kindred spirits that they were.

I am thinking of taking apart the vast range of vacation slides and using them as collage. I am thinking about scanning some of the images in and integrating them into video.

I am thinking about the evidence that we did exist to my father in the years before he left. Here is evidence that counters the revisionist history that effectively erased us.



**August 15**

My brother's birthday.

Here, with me  
a new way to celebrate.

**August 20**

My father's birthday.

A long walk on Mt. Hood.  
Quiet swim in Boulder Lake  
Super 8 film  
Talus rock  
Softly held conversation  
Shifting light on the water  
Warm

**August 24**

Diane's birthday. She would be 51.

I hold her memory, and let go (again) the why and why not.  
A friend from Goddard (Lisa Wolpe) visits on her way through town.  
We walk the dog on a sunlit day.  
Visit a park filled with hopscotch games from around the world.

I am embracing new experience of these absent August presences.  
Weathering on, inviting in.

The rain sweeps through Seattle skies.  
Autumn calls out emerging calm.  
Motion lifts me into a new dawn,  
unsettling and upending my ways.  
Not without pleasure.  
Not without curiosity.  
Not without the soft terror of love.  
I am willing to stand through.



A.P.

Align

M. Hutchinson '05

Align with Love. Artist Proof, December 2005

**Daniel said<sup>89</sup>:**

**Find your allies and collaborators.**

**Let go the text.**

**Go into the studio.**

**Every day.**

**Take the camera**

**or not.**

---

<sup>89</sup> My advisor, Daniel Alexander Jones.



## **ROSA/ROSA A MOVEMENT SOLILOQUY**

**August 2005**

### ***It could not have been better timing...***

In collaboration with choreographer, Donald Byrd, I engaged in a week-long rehearsal process with Mik Kuhlman's piece *Rosa*.<sup>88</sup> The world of Rosa (Mik's) is a strange and habitual one, as it unfolds.

She is woman who lives in a world haunted by perception, by writing on the wall, by vapors, by visions, and by regret. The crux of the piece is a decision to act that comes through a vision of Rosa Park's action on the bus.

Mik was grappling with the relationship of her character to the image of Rosa Parks. She was having a difficult time finding the relationship and the significance of Rosa Park's action that ignited the bus boycott and this character's world. It is a huge challenge for Mik that this piece has no spoken text. It is based on the haptic language of her character and demands a kind of presence that is new to Mik.

In looking at the piece together, it became clear how strange this character's world is, and we went further into the emotional landscape that is particular to this woman. Donald worked with the idea that the performance was presence and not a particular movement vocabulary.

At one point Donald said, **"think of this as behavior, expression of behavior, not as movement."** This particular note profoundly shifted Mik's ability to access it. She was now inside the character's world, and the more vulnerable the expression,

---

<sup>88</sup> "Rosa" is a piece that Mik Kuhlman developed as part of her show, *Split Second*. *Rosa* was one of my first experiments in video. DVD *Rosa*

the greater our ability to connect. She made visible the ferocity with which Rosa (Mik's character) makes her choice to join Rosa Parks on the bus. She transcended and we felt this as a political act.

**I asked the question of myself:**

**What does it take to make resistance visible?**

There were many layers of conversation, and I was deeply engaged in my own questions about (then) *Persephone Suite*. The concept of a movement soliloquy is a beautiful expression of a poetic reinterpretation that takes the pressure of DANCE out of the equation. This is useful to me.

Donald articulated this beautifully by saying that the idiom of dance (of movement) has a different way of expressing text. It is idiomatic; it is a different way in.

The conversation clarified the tension between text and movement and the languages of each. They have different vocabularies and my struggle is with choosing the most precise language for a given expression. I have more to say as I articulate my process in the studio, but the opportunity to work with and listen to the exchange between Donald and Mik about Rosa has fed me, encouraged me, and further opened up my questions. **It could not have been better timing.**

## ...find your allies

**I read Adrienne** Kennedy's beautiful book, *people who led to my plays*<sup>92</sup>

Kennedy's work is so very simple, spare, and deep in this way. She tracks the landscape of people who inhabited her life, who fueled her dreams and nightmares. It is useful to hunt for those clues myself.

*Seeing Jazz*,<sup>93</sup> was a beautiful textual conversation illuminating the dynamic influence of jazz on painting.

These books offered gifts of expansive seeing, apprehending the interrelationships of source, composition, and expression.

Alice Coltrane's *Translinear Light*<sup>94</sup> and *Astral Jazz* were the soundtrack to my days. I read the philosophy and watched the films of Stan Brakhage.<sup>95</sup> I read Sydne Mahone's resonant anthology, *Moon Marked Touched by Sun*.<sup>96</sup> I was moved by Marc Bumuthi Joseph's stunning performance of *Word becomes Flesh*.<sup>97</sup>

I took every opportunity to expand the harmonic resonances of my affinities and the discourse(s).

These voices fed my search.

---

92 Kennedy, Adrienne. *people who led to my plays*. New York : Theatre Communications Group. 1996. (2, 7, 9)

93 Goldson, Emily (ed.). *Seeing Jazz*. San Francisco : Chronicle Books. 1997. (9, 5, 4)

94 Coltrane, Alice. *Translinear Light*. Verve, 2004. (15)

95 See Section: Dancing the Paradox between Fixed Forms and Ephemerality.

96 Mahone, Sydne. *Moon Marked and Touched by Sun: Plays by African-American Women*. New York : Theatre Communications Group. 1994. (2, 7, 9)

97 Marc Bumuthi Joseph. *Word becomes Flesh*. Bumbershoot, 2005.





## IN SEARCH OF DUENDE<sup>85</sup>

Fall 2005

I read Lorca's small volume as I struggled with the state of the world, Hurricane Katrina, and the deep injustice that continues in America.

It was a dark moment, when I was questioning the value, the need, the necessity, internally and externally, to dive into the difficult terrain of REVOLUTIONARY SURRENDER. I picked up the book, and blessed Gale<sup>86</sup> for recommending it. *Duende* is the place from which I work, must work, and where revolutionary surrender unfolds.

Lorca draws a clear distinction between angel, muse, and *duende*. Angel may be inspiration, the muse is the structuring mind, and *duende* is the force of the story that must be told out of the human experience of loss, of grieving, of living with the paradoxes and the deep ripping doubts that threaten to silence emerging voice.

*The muse and angel come from outside us: the angel gives lights, and the muse gives forms...Loaf of gold or tunic fold: the poet receives norms in his grove of laurel. But one must awaken the deunde in the remotest mansions of the blood.*

*And reject the angel, and give the muse a kick in the seat of the pants, and conquer the fear of the violet smile exhaled by eighteenth-century poetry, and of the great telescope in whose lens the muse, sickened by limits, is sleeping.*

*The true fight is with the duende.*

*...but there are neither maps nor exercises to help us find the duende. We only know that he burns the blood like a poultice of broken glass, that he exhausts, that he rejects all the sweet geometry*

---

<sup>85</sup> Federico Garcia Lorca. *In Search of Duende*. New York : New Directions. 1998. (4, 9, 11)  
<sup>86</sup> My G3 advisor, Gale Jackson

*we have learned, that he smashes styles...<sup>87</sup>*

Lorca writes so beautifully of the power of working from this place.

Here is a beautiful clear depth, singing.

*I hear and heed the resonance.*

---

87 Ibid. p 51

*Let go the text.*

**Go into the studio.**

**EVERY DAY**

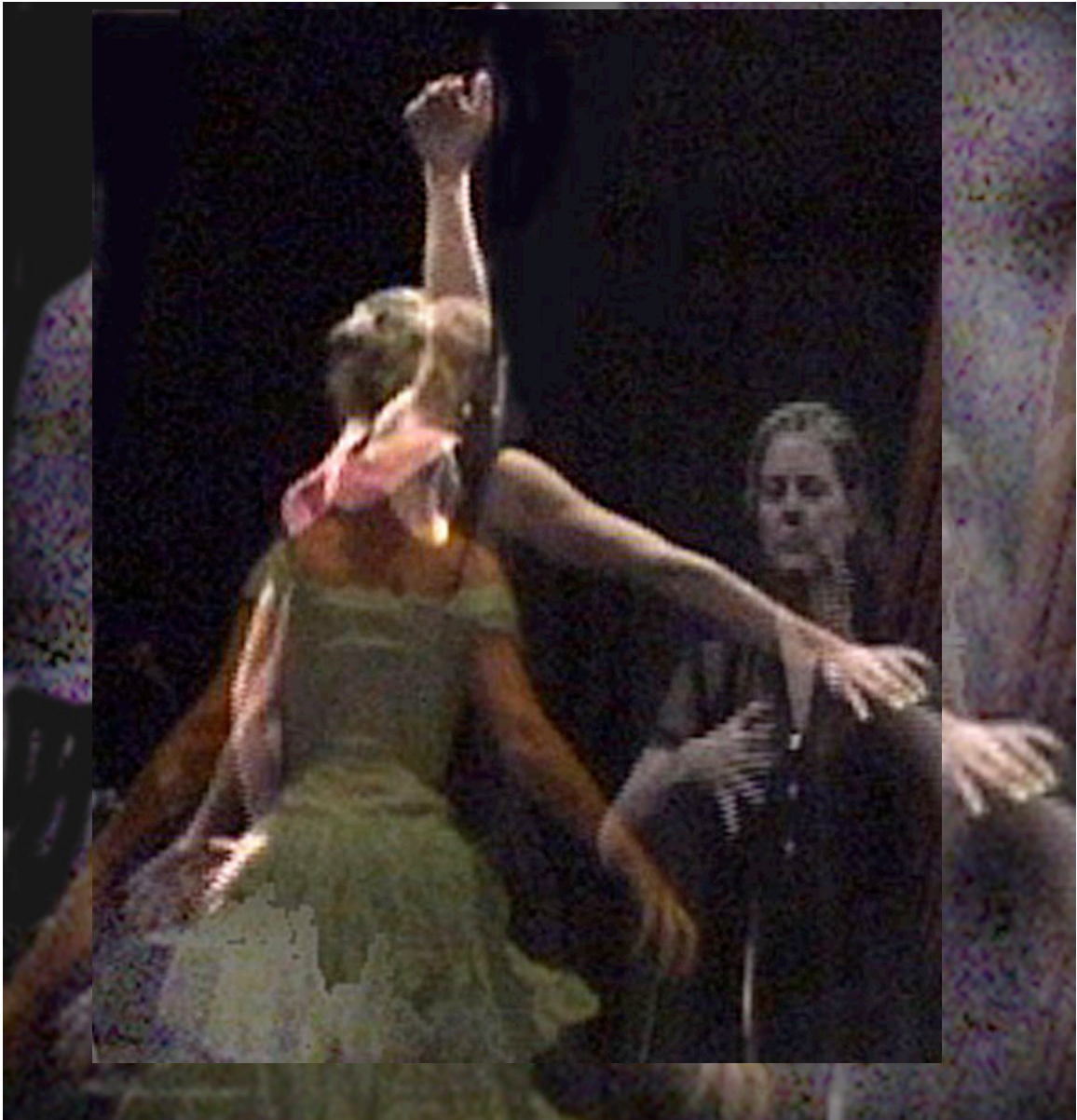
**Bring the camera or not.**

**Go into the studio.**

**I DID**

AND

WHAT HAPPENED WAS



## *rEVOLutionary Surrender*<sup>98</sup>

A libratory performative practice of an improvisational score, mapped by energetics, which is revealed through a confluence of forms.

---

<sup>98</sup> See Revolutionary Surrender. p 210

I was not alone.  
My allies in art, discourse, and the  
prismatic  
dance of humanity  
were walking  
with me.



And what happened was:



The transformation of Persephone Suite into:

# The Last Chapters of Now

*A remembrance*

Images  
flow  
through  
me.

# LEAP (redux)

## Wildfire sunrise

offers up  
dark harbors

The pause, if ever brief  
Provides a necessary quietude  
Inviting the return of  
Leap—not sleeping  
In the forever night  
Of the known

An art...  
To slip outside the I  
Into the stormy sea of  
Marching humanity

Blazing out in bloody rivers  
Reminders of then  
Surfacing electrically.

Pinpoint pain  
arching color into backs, ankles and veins  
Leaving marks of roads taken and  
Exits yet unexplored  
Quiet grief erupts  
In catalytic wildfire igniting  
Again and again

Where now, my deep loves?  
Where now, in the searing  
Dawn swept prairie of our souls.  
Courage to withstand the heat  
And scattering  
Courage spins the web  
Ever wider

Shaping fire as yarn  
charred silhouettes dance  
whispering dark passage  
No lasting pain just

Ashen patterns drifting to earth  
Beheld with new understanding  
The signs and symbols  
Of this now passing.

We push onward  
Wearing our hopes and fears and still we push tender  
Against binding isolation  
Praying our freedom with elusive forms.

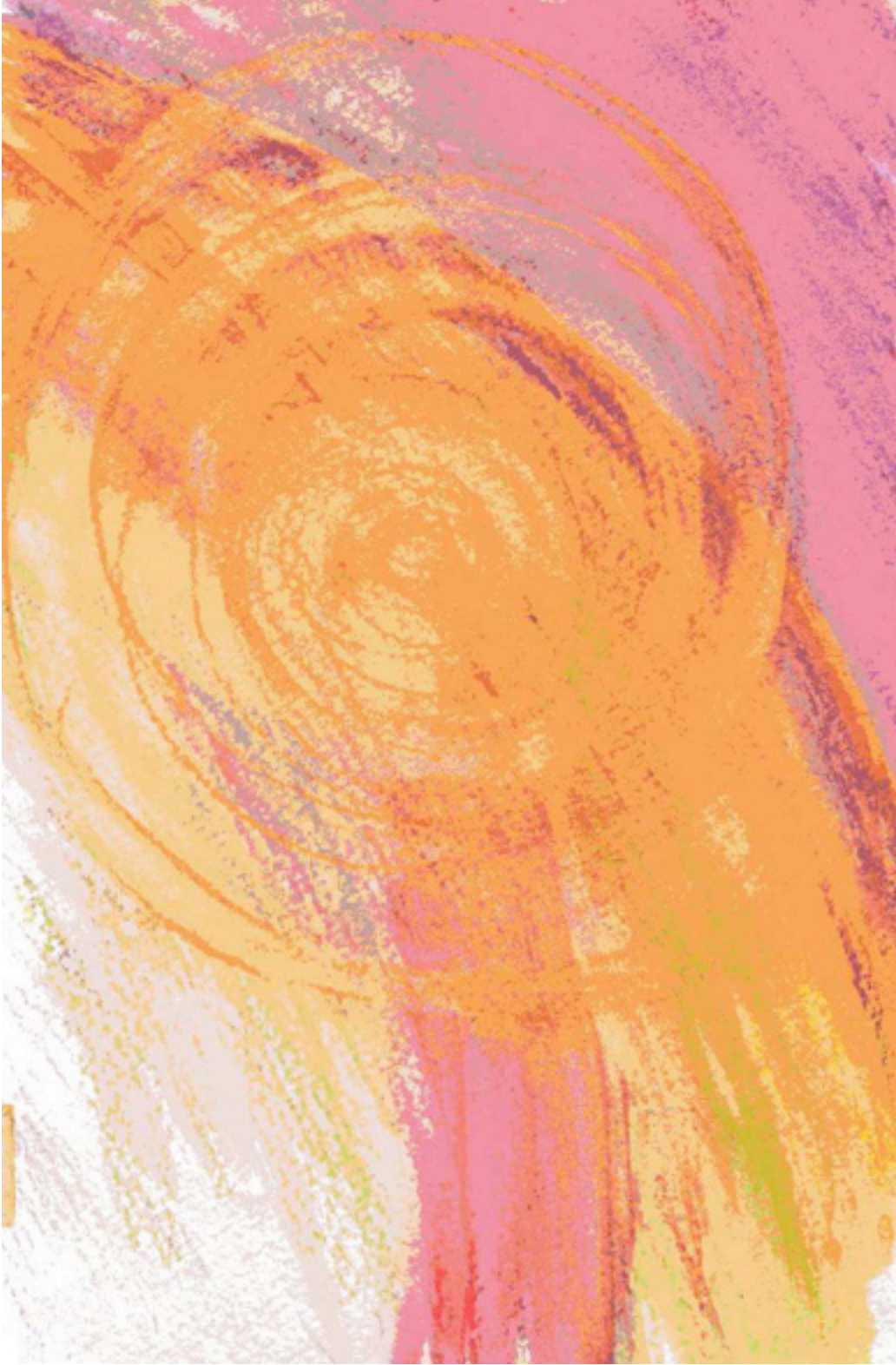
Fire below water  
The smoldering sea  
Rises and carries us  
To unborn dreams and Akashic memory.

The shape of the nebula reveals density at the core, spinning arms of transformation; in this, the revelation of my radical subjectivity breathes, with integrity of intention and hope.



Image JC Schlechter 2005

This is the alchemy of evidence.



Watercolor altered in Photoshop, 2006



*rEVOLutionary*

*Surrender*



*if I could make a hologram to describe rEVOLutionary  
Surrender, I would do it.*

*rEVOLutionary*  
*Surrender*

is

a LIBRATORY PRACTICE

an IMPROVISATIONAL SCORE  
(a MAP BASED on ENERGETICS)

a CONFLUENCE of FORMS

a META MAP

*I propose to consider a dimension of political life that has to do with our exposure to violence and our complicity in it, with our vulnerability to loss and the task of mourning that follows, and with finding a basis for community in these conditions.<sup>1</sup>*



SSSHHHHHHSSSHHHHHHHHH

HA!

SSSHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

HA!

---

<sup>1</sup> Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York : Verso, 2004. p. 19 (4, 10, 16)  
213

*rEVOLutionary Surrender* is a libratory improvisational performance practice and score that requires the haptic, radically subjective presence of the participants.



Video still altered in Final Cut Pro and Photoshop

## INITIAL QUESTIONS

Revolutionary surrender:

What does it take to lay down the guns,

lay down in the face of the guns

I am thinking of Dr. King

I am thinking of Ghandi

I am thinking of how can I

Practice revolutionary surrender

In myriad strata my life.



## Surrender (v.)

*3 b. fig. To give oneself up to some influence, course of action, etc.; to abandon oneself or devote oneself entirely to.*

Interestingly, this is the closest OED definition I can find.

It begs the question of what I mean by surrender.

Is it this?

Yes and it is the giving over. Willingness is the key, it's not in the definition of the word per se.

## Revolution (n.)

- II. 5. a. The action of turning over in discourse or talk; discussion. Obs. rare.
- b. The action of turning over in the mind; consideration, reflection. Obs.
- c. An idea, opinion, notion. Obs. rare<sup>1</sup>.

I have chosen to link the most obscure definitions of revolution (ary) and surrender.

Easily open to misinterpretation.

It holds a powerful paradox.

## NEXT QUESTIONS:

How deeply can one surrender the attachment to outcome?

Is surrender a desirable state?

True surrender can only occur in the presence of love.

True or False or something else?

***The soft terror of love.***

I surrender to the possibilities I imagine.

## IMPROVISATIONAL SCORE/MAP OF ENERGETICS



*Map. Etching on Copper, Altered in Photoshop. January, 2006*

## THE FIVE AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

### **Witness (upstage right corner):**

She has voice, sees all. She is a compassionate presence and brutally honest. Woman 1, 2 and 3 switch places throughout the piece, embodying the energetic of the space they occupy.

### **Woman 1 (off-center toward downstage left):**

This space is bound energy. She can only speak with her hands. She cannot see the others in the space. She wrestles with the dark revelation of horror, terror, doubt. She is not only the embodiment of current life, but she carries the weight of centuries of silencing.

**Woman 2 (stage right):**

Her movement is spiraling. She speaks. She moves freely and she has a strong compassionate relationship to W1 and W3. She feels/hears the witness but does not interact. She embodies meditations on the cellular dance of hope, possibility. Concurrent present, present, future... Now.

**Woman 3 (narrow space stage left):**

Her movement is up and downstage, an alley.

This is the arena of masks. She is young/old.

She is artifice, she is experimentation. She tries on power, she tries on sexuality, she tries on invisibility. She does not see the others. She is of the material world and absorbed.

**Energetic of the Divine Fool:**

Can enter all spaces at any time. She is not bound by the energetics of the defined spaces. She or he moves with the image of spiraling wind.

**NOTES ON STAGING**

Upstage scrim for shadows and projections.

Ground lighting downstage to create shadow.

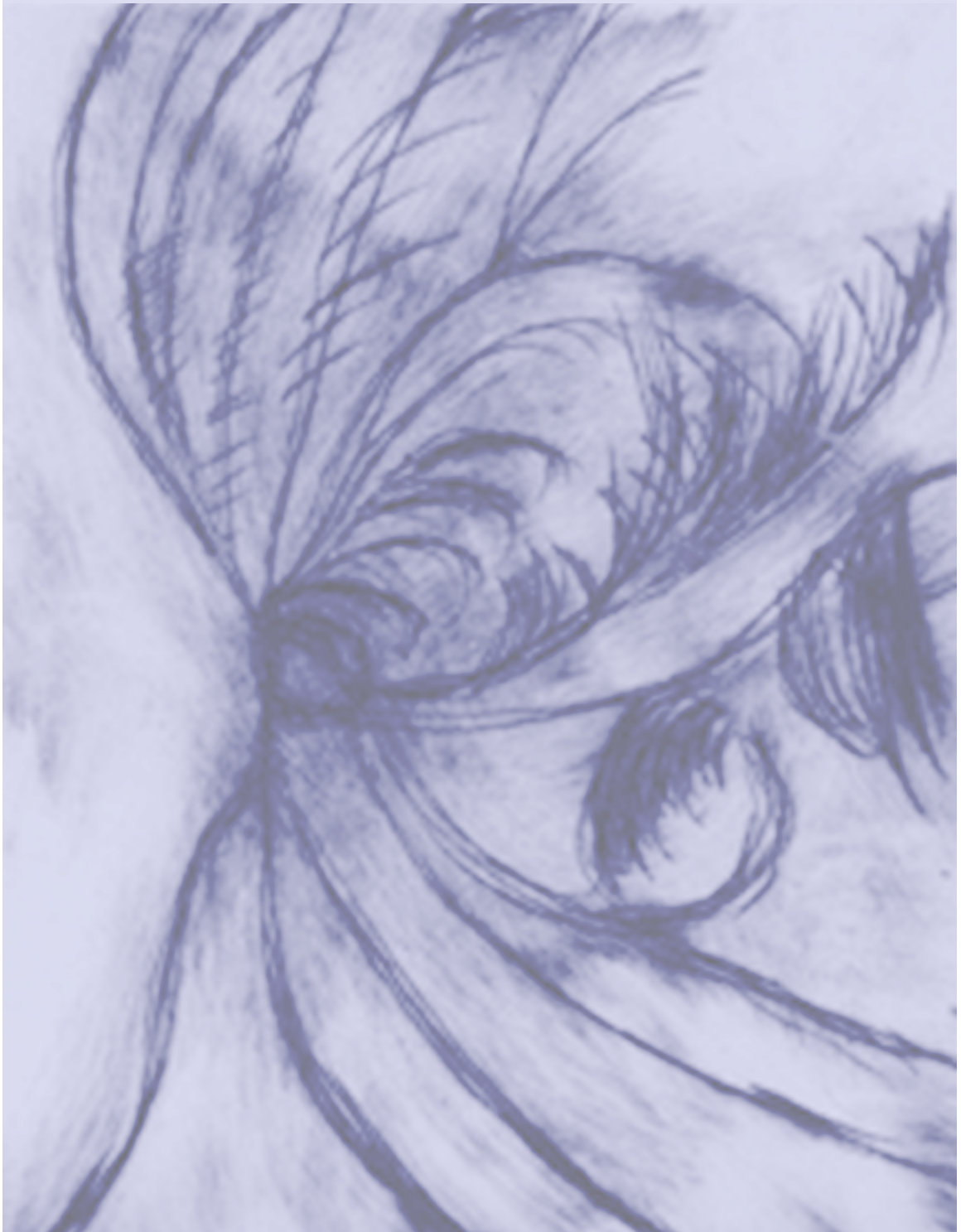
Projector overhead of W1 space

Abstract images of women throughout and beyond time spill onto the floor.

A layered, textural textual score, so that the performers can double it, or respond to it.

In the film, the sonic layering will be intricate.

This performance practice can take place with  
as few as one and as many as are available.



## THE META INQUIRY:

*If the question is between betrayal of self and survival, what gets chosen?*

What is chosen when what is at stake is your life, your children's lives, your family, literally.

What does it mean to speak, knowing that without that act, you and your children will die a death of the spirit?

I am thinking about this microcosmically and macrocosmically. This information comes from this present moment and from long before this time.

The real threat of violence we face, most particularly women and children, across the planet results in a strategy of self-betrayal.

I feel the connection between the specifics of my story (which I have compassion for), and the violence that is systematized into oppression in so many structures that is extremely difficult to get out from underneath. Any conversation that expands the terrain of genuine listening is essential. Right speech, right action. This sense of attunement is refining within me.

**The knot:** I sacrifice myself for you

OR in order for me to live, I carry your death with me.

I don't mean this in a literal, one-to-one kind of sense (though it is true for some of us), but in the larger sense that each day we sit with this in America.

*Our privilege here actively brutalizes and ends lives across the globe.*

*Can I hold this and still move?*

*This is the paradox.*

*This is the practice.*



*In more ways than one, poetry must recall us to our senses—our bodily sensual life and our sense of other and different human presences. The oceanic multiplicities of this art call us toward possibilities of relation still very much alive in a world where violence speaks only to and of it itself....<sup>2</sup>*



Video still manipulated in Final Cut Pro and Photoshop

---

<sup>2</sup> Rich, Adrienne. *What is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics*. New York: WW Norton & Co., 2003. (2, 4, 10) Essay # 29 "Six meditations in place of a lecture." p 273

## NOTES ON MAPPING

My fourth semester began with an urgency to enter a studio process that would allow me to find choreographic shape and structure for the ideas swirling within me. I was working with the concept and the question of *Revolutionary Surrender*. This title brought me into a terrain of risk in terms of questions of content and revelation of form.

I opened to a meta strata, nurturing a practice of non-violence, compassion and painful self-examination that broke through into the libRARY terrain of the improvisational score that emerged.

I used video as a tool for visualization. I listened acutely to the sounds of astral jazz, opening to the subtleties of improvisational form. I participated in a seven-day workshop, entitled *Tuning Scores: Composition and the Sense of the Imagination*, with experimental artist, choreographer, and video maker, Lisa Nelson.<sup>3</sup> This workshop further expanded my understanding of communicating choreographic information through attention to: tools of perception, body mapping, blind learning, and improvisation.

As it became clear that multiple performers were needed for *Revolutionary Surrender*, I invited collaborators into the work. My collaborators were willing to investigate the terrain, working with image, questions, patterns and energetics of the stage space. It was an expansive exploration in the mapping of the score.

---

<sup>3</sup> *The Tuning Score*, a performance research format, asks what do we see when we're looking at dance. The research focuses on the physical base of the imagination. Composition, communication, and performance are the subjects. Much of Lisa Nelson's work has to do with the ways in which image is formed, asking the questions about how it comes...visually? Physically? Sonically? This workshop gave me additional tools for study as I worked in the studio.

## THE POETICS OF REVOLUTIONARY SURRENDER

**Process and evolution**

**Fall 2005**

Returning to the studio at last.  
Allowing the spin and flow to occur.

Everything feeds into this moment of facing in, moving out, finding utterance.

My impulse is to move in spirals.  
It is the action that allows me a way in to both shape and sound.  
I notice when I stop moving and start thinking.  
It happens when I open my eyes.  
I pause.

I think of Deborah Hay.  
I ask what if? Every cell my body expressed noise. I move with that for a while.  
I ask what if?  
Every cell in my body expresses silence.

From there I find sound, tone, rhythm. No words.

I ask myself these questions?

What if?  
Joy

What if?  
Not sorrow and shame? (the legacy of family)

What if our/my human frailty?

Who says what about not allowed?

Why not allowed?

Why not for me? And what? Not for me?

*What do I know from exile?*

**Who could possibly be wronged/betrayed if I live and love to the fullest possible presence?**

**The journey within is the ignition of possibility.**

There, underneath

she reaches

and finds

the power of

*revolutionary surrender*

She is emergent and changed.

In this question myriad strata....

I move again.

I am listening to Gil Scott-Heron (*It's Your World*).

I am moving and speaking with meditations:

*Resist like water*

And

*revolutionary surrender*

**They are distinct.**

Resist like water

Like dew

Like mist

Like fog

Resist like glacial ice

Like steam, the ocean, a fast moving stream

Resist like water

Like sweat

A well

A tear

Like rain

Resist like water

(THIS HAS A WHOLE NEW MEANING THIS WEEK AFTER KATRINA)

## Slowly, a pattern emerges

Scrying hands

Shattering emptiness

The frozen return

*Begin, again and slowly.*

Who speaks?

And why?

Witness

Witness

Witness

A soul fierce enough.

*This is outside of my lifetime.*

## Silence

rebirth

responsibility

forgiveness

courage

commitment

Living on.

Letting go of yearning.

*Yes!*

This is what I know from exile.

*I have returned.*



Video still manipulated in Final Cut Pro and Photoshop, 2006

## PROCESS AND FLOW

Fall 2005

I let go of the text, allowing the voicing to emerge through the practice. In this process, the centrality of my story, my survival, and survival guilt located in my 46- (at that point) year-old woman/self connected with a deeper source.





I loved you that much.

This tie destroyed by multiple tracks in 1979  
This bond unhinged in 1979

This blind love eclipsed by a deeper need.  
To live.  
To heal.

In 1979, a second chance.  
The cost was another's life.

I honored this by honoring my own.  
I left to save myself.  
I left.

Survival.  
Survival guilt.  
Survival.

If you let me love you  
If you let me in  
If I let you in  
I will love you until the end  
Is that true anymore?

*The known we carry in our bones  
Keeps us from falling starward  
Love exits  
Without ending...*

That's the whole thing about letting go when an end is reached.  
Not hanging on when there is no reciprocity.  
What does I do when there is reciprocity?  
Run?  
Stand?

The terrorist within....

*Surrender*

Compassion

*(suffering with)*

Remembrance

*Breathe....*

Let go.

Let go.

*Let go of yearning.*

How much space in the human heart?

*Vast, aching space*

How much light in the human soul?

*Infinite*

Heart

Healing

Whole

*And then it rained....*

No.

*Yes.*

*Silencio....*

She feels the water rising  
Rushing  
Unfooted

New Monster poem

This doubt inside me has a name and it is shame.  
And right now it is winning.

I am terrified that I will not come through this.

But I have been through this and I am here.  
What is this THIS that yanks at me now?

What is this THAT?

What if?  
Why not?

What if?  
Why not?

What if?  
Why not?

Rationality has a wicked bad ass hold on me.

But ya gotta live in this world don't you?

*This world is nothing without subtle body perception.*

She feels the water rising  
Unfooted  
She drowns

Who am I without this pain?

What does pleasure look like?

What does pleasure sound like, what does walking together really mean?

Right now I am running, I am running hard into and away.

*Can you hear her?*

Into and Away, into and away, around and around the same central questions of

Survival.

Survival.

Survival.

*You are wasting time.*

*This cruelty has to stop.*

She feels the water rising.

Who are you?

Who are you that says no to me and why?

You deserve to live.

*You do not deserve to live.*

Who decides?

Decide again.

*Yes.*

Decide again.

The water is rising and  
Unfooted

The voices these voices of doubt have not been so loud in a long time.  
I feel the danger in the rising water.  
I feel the call of sleep, I feel the sleep of dreams.

Is this the ache of living awake?

Why so hard?

Why so cruel?

Remember compassion

remembrance

*(suffering with)*

I feel the water rising  
Spilling over  
Wiping out  
Wiping clean

If I give voice to the negatives will they let me alone?

Shall I try.....

I am afraid of coming out of my body, and I've only just recently arrived.

You let the power of negative speech have room and then what?

*Speaking the unspeakable is a necessary act.*

*And then it rained....*

What is your greatest hope?

Your worst fear?

Your deepest secret?

My greatest hope is that I find a way to stand in this world, revealed, vulnerable, strong, and loving, thriving in reciprocity, integrity and love.

*AIM*

Ready, fire, aim.

I am

Aim

I am

ENDURANCE.....DESIRE

CHAOS.....ORDER

What if?

Why not?

Wanting a little and receiving all.

Why not for me?

Why NOT?

Who is betrayed?

*Not one, but all the force of oppression.*

And one

Me

And one



You  
And one  
All of us who seek to live free.

ISN'T IT ENOUGH?

*She's been lone-walking a long time.*

She sleeps.

Whisper: a very little bit was more than you could take. What makes you think you're able now to receive? Could you handle it?

Break....  
The shattering emptiness  
Glass falls  
Hard silence

*Shhhhhhhhhhhhh. Ha!*

I walk between  
A new horizon  
Fully open

Whisper:  
Now that you are here.

Yes?

Now that you are here

No.

Now that you are here

*Yes!*

Who is betrayed if I/we live and love well?

*There is no one I need to protect  
from my JOY and thriving/love.*

## **Continuing notes in conversation with my advisor, Daniel Alexander Jones**

I see something shaping, the text of multiple voices and the surprise of who is saying what. What appears above is a process of both studio notes and ripping writing.

I have generated a pile of text that I'm shuffling like a deck of cards. Some with lines, some with single words that keep coming up and back and around. So. I will keep playing and see what flows.

My practice is now a daily, sometimes moment-to-moment one of revolutionary surrender. I am present to this, and what it is to embody it, in life and within the arc of whatever this thing is that is trying to be born.

The voice of compassion has returned. Compassion toward listening deep within, and hearing the noise and the silence and the harmony and the ever-shifting ground. Slippage, I like this word. Another word I work with is **hinge**. It speaks of the spiral that connects us to earth and sky, dark and light, the point of change.

Another day in the studio, I brought in a camera. I was alone. I did several things.

I read the text, and I found myself getting heavier and heavier and more filled with despair. That day was the nadir of crippling doubt, nevertheless, I was there.

I also worked with a dress that I had found the day before. It is the dress of the one who is silence. I worked in the center of the space and only with my hands. I just went in. I found some things there, and am curious to work with others and watch what they do with it.

The next thing I did was change clothes and put on a white dress and worked in the center and SR space, with the relationship of witness. There is a bit of this study here.



Layered video still, altered in Final Cu Pro and Photoshop, 2006.

I've been continually drawing the space, listening for what's known.

BOUND SPACE—CENTER

SAFE SPACE—STAGE RIGHT

FREE SPACE—EVERY WHERE on the double spiral

META SPACE—STAGE LEFT? The stage left area has an upstage and downstage boundary in a way that the other spaces do not.

It is my intention to bring a group of women together in October to work with some of the themes, ideas, text, shapes and to improvise into the score.

I am committed to continuing to revolutionarily surrender in the practice of finding voice, trusting myself and the universe to guide the work. That's all I can do right now.

I want to spill out a whole bunch more, but I think I'm going to let it settle in. There is an image, a spiraling image, a double spiral... this dance.



Video Still altered in Final Cut/Photoshop, 2006

I am quiet after working these images. These images make me recognize that I want to go deeper into this terrain. I am deeply curious about what happens when all you have is your hands to speak.

Hmm. Enough for this moment.

**Post-packet return**

**September 24, 2005**

It is 9 PM and I have just taken a shower, oiled my body, and rearranged my altar.

Next is this room. I create a space of listening.

A soft kind wind blows through me, waking up mercy.

I have been absolutely brutal.

I let go again.

I have been hanging onto some things.

I have been hanging onto a need to be in places that no longer fit.

I have been moving inside vastly and there is a need for patience, gendered or no.

I will be as kind to myself as I am to others.

This is yet another practice revolutionary surrender.

I let go with love.

I stand with the knowledge of wholeness.

Easy to say.  
Harder to live

*And not.*

We dreamed we could walk through walls.

We mused about it at night.

Willing ourselves free.

A flat gray morning of exquisite tenderness  
Reveals a new horizon  
This has happened before  
And is again new  
The world  
Reframed

*She is late arriving.*

*No matter.*

No that you are here.

No.

Now that you are here.

*Yes!*

Now that you are here.

**Let go.**

These things come to me after the litany of betrayals is reflected back to me tenderly.

No need to recount them here.  
They are the metatext and known.

*The living of this moment is the practice.*

**The question is:**

Now that they are all here...inside this one question  
Who would I betray, if I, if we, in wholeness loved?

*breathe*

**....I listen to the territory between.**

She has the right, the birthright.

*LET HER SPEAK.*

She has the wrong, the birth wrong.

Twist and shout.

She has the right. The human right.

*LET HER SPEAK.*

She has the wrong, the birth wrong.

*Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.*

She has the right. The right of divine spark.

*HA!*

**She has the right.**

**This is no longer a request, a demand or statement.**



*She is speaking  
NOW*

The wind is up from the south.

Later—

rain.

The work to be done.

**I will witness myself as strongly as I witness others.**

*Begin again and slowly.  
DNA recombining.  
Shapes dancing free of this thunder.*



Layered video still, altered in Final Cut and Photoshop, 2006

## Process Notes:

I sent a post to my advising group, a few colleagues in the Goddard community, and some trusted friends. I have been dancing, waking, listening, and talking. I am asking these questions when I can, and am finding it engages fertile conversation.

Hiya--

I wanted to ask you, my collaborators in this semester, some questions that I hope you'll consider answering in any form and from any place in the myriad paradoxes of identities that you walk within. I'm curious if these questions a) speak to you NOT AT ALL or b) are so cryptic as to be unanswerable.

I'm working with a practice of *Revolutionary Surrender*. It is in this spirit that I invite your participation.

1. What's the most debilitating thing your inner critic/silencer says to you?

2. Who/what do you betray if you live and love visibly in wholeness?

3. What is your relationship to violence?

My answer at the moment: resist like water

This is an easy/hard answer considering recent events of water and wind

I'm actually kind of annoyed that this one came up as a QUESTION.... What is my relationship to violence?

I'd like to say...I have none, or it doesn't touch me, or I don't know it.....(a voice of defense). It speaks directly to the degree to which the crushing voices of doubt wreak havoc with me and the places where I stand up and fight and the places where I acquiesce.

Then there is the violence of nature, of war, of injustice on all fronts. What is my relationship to that? I am searching for answers that address the complexity of complicity and with hope and fierce (violent?) belief that being part of the change to a culture of equality is possible, is happening, is the practice. In me is rising a tension. I would fight for those I love, I would fight for my life, I would fight for a different world, but I do not think this fight can be won with the tools of war.

So how? What are the tools of non-violence that I need to forge a relationship with?

These are the questions I'm dealing with. I write to you in the spirit of not knowing. I throw it out on the wind, trusting the strong, deep limbs of this grove we share to whisper back some rustling clues on an autumn gust.

With love and regard--

Meg

*The question that preoccupies me in the light of recent global violence is, Who counts as human? Whose lives count? What makes for a grievable life? Despite our difference in location and history, my guess is that it's possible to appeal to a "we," for all of us have some notion of what it is to have lost somebody. ....Loss and vulnerability seem to follow from our being socially constituted bodies, attached to others, at risk of losing those attachments, exposed to others, at risk of violence by virtue of that exposure.<sup>4</sup>*

## **THE SHAPE OF THE RESEARCH**

I invited collaborators into the practice of revolutionary surrender as witnesses and investigators on October 21 and 22, 2005. We worked for 5 hours each day.

The risk of inviting people into the process, letting go, and sharing the images was a good practice of navigating how much to say, how little. Some of my collaborators knew the terrain, some less so. It became less necessary to bring it into the work. My intentions were to let the text unfold organically, using key phrases that had emerged in my studio process, and to use video as a source for images and studies.

As I trembled in these open spaces, I felt the strength to weather on. Something had shifted positively. I was moving, dancing the paradox.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Butler. p 20

## COLLABORATIVE PROCESS NOTES

*"I love seeing dance that can express something that no other medium can convey."* Sheri Cohen.

Two different days, two very different experiences, resulting in a tremendous amount of information and substance to work with.

Day 1: Vanessa DeWolfe, Kristen Tsiatsios, Zoe Nijinsten

Day 2: Vanessa DeWolfe, Lucia Near, Loel Cohen, Zoe Nijinsten.

Ever and always, Vanessa is an ally and a guide.

I did a lot of preparation about how to enter this inquiry. How much to say, how much not to say? I shared the images, metaphors, and questions that I have unfolded in my practice.

### **The structure:**

We began with a group warm up. Each of us led a part of it. It made room for each person's gifts to become activated. This was more successful on the second day than the first.

I talked about the qualities of the spaces that have come to me. We collectively agreed that the "bound space" was off center and closer to SL. This created two results. It gave the spiraling space (W2) more room and created the upstage/downstage alley for W3.

## Images and Adjectives that emerged in our research

### W1

Bound Space—off Center toward SR  
Contained, not much larger than a body kneeling.  
Space above. There might be sense of touchable wall.  
Hands are the only means of communication.  
Even with eyes open, there is a sense of blindness.  
The image of a desert. Exile.  
Green blue/dark blue/white

### W2

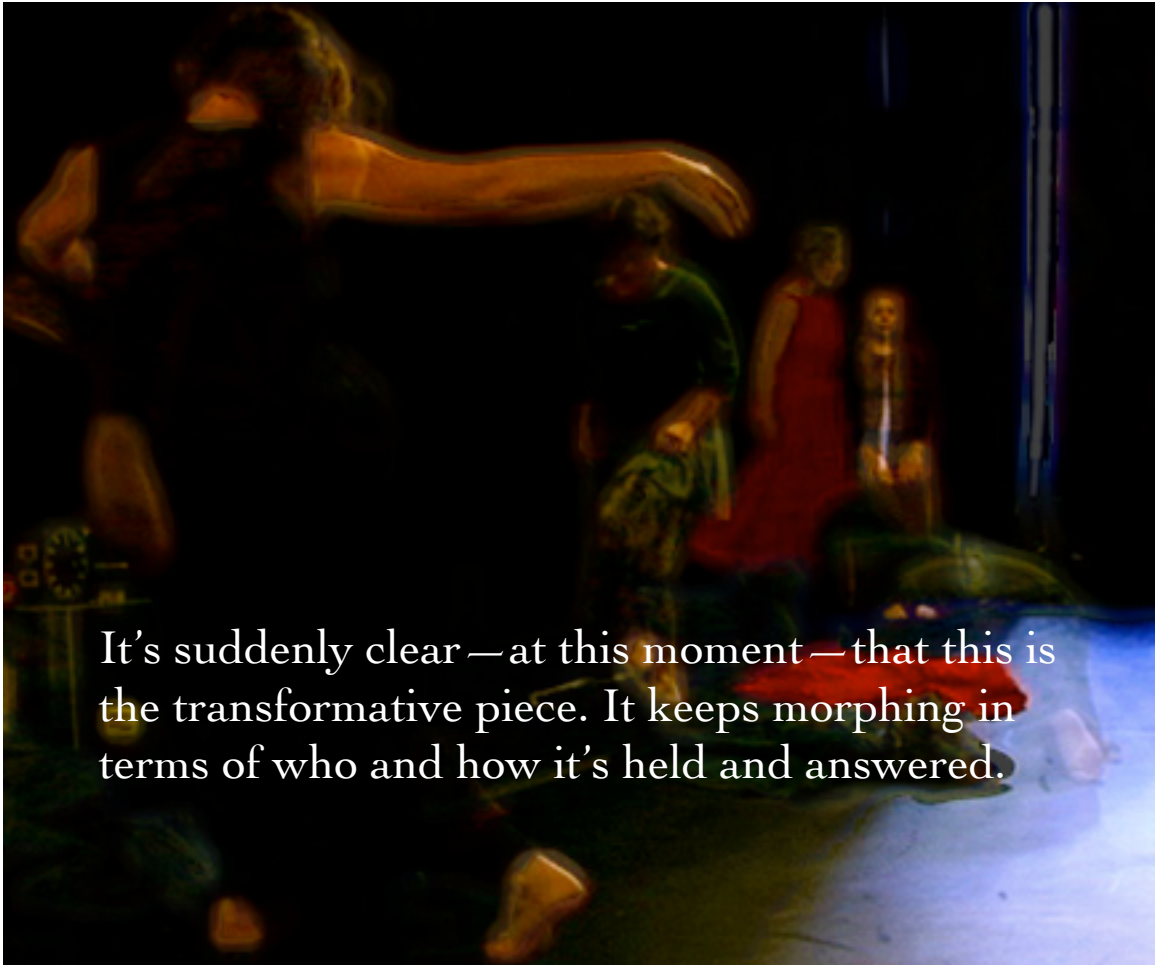
Spiral Space—SR  
The momentum comes from movement and the movement is spiraling at any level.  
There is voice.  
There is perception of both of the other areas.  
Gold/yellow

### W3

What came to be known as the Mask Space—SL upstage/downstage alley.  
Contrivances.  
Artifice.  
Masks (strategies for survival)  
Authentic self, hidden from self.  
Cruelty.  
Green black

That's where we began. I let them know the questions.  
Voice of Inner critic, What is it? (W3)  
Who is betrayed if one lives whole (W1, W2, W3)

Who can speak?  
The answer: (W2 and W3)



It's suddenly clear — at this moment — that this is the transformative piece. It keeps morphing in terms of who and how it's held and answered.

Processed video still from October investigation

I ask with the lightest passion, “what is your relationship to violence?”

Each person could move in and out of any space, or choose to be out.

We began.

I was amazed by the commitment that each person entered with, and moved by the gifts of insight that emerged. I was honest about how absolutely little I know in terms of W3. What it is, what it looks like, what the language of this space is.

This first day in the space of W3, we all manifested power trips and perversions of power and sexuality. Kristen was able to take this on most fully. It was amazing to see what she pulled up. Slut, bitch, haughty, confused. Zoe was an immovable force.

I could not ground here, but when there were two of us in the same space,



it became a game. Who's gonna give in first? Vanessa found the "putting on" of stuff that would let her play in the adult world.

At the end of the day we wound up calling this the **mask space (W3)**.

**Bound Space (W1).**

I am amazed by how deeply people were willing to go there.

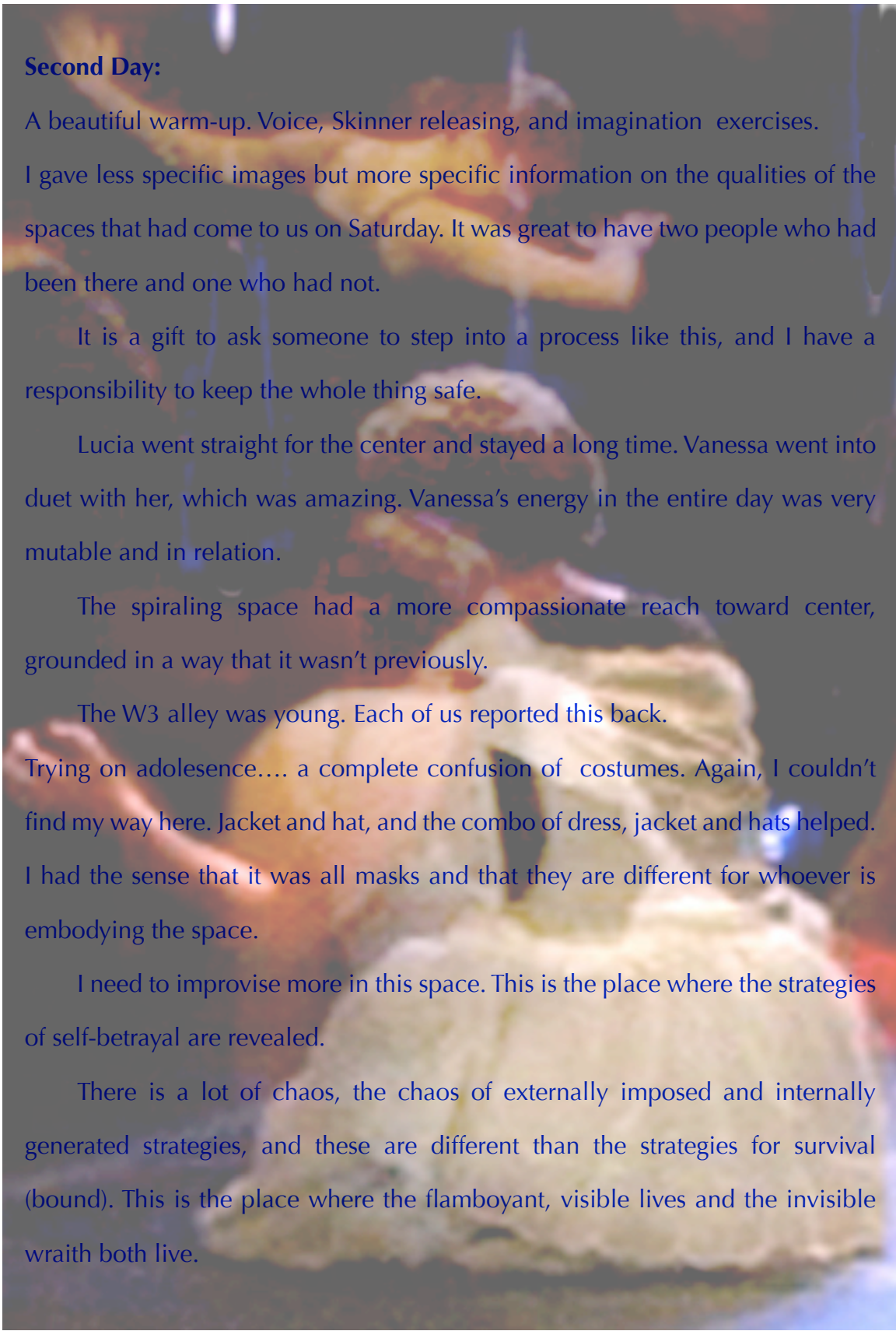
**The Spiraling space (W2).** Relief. Innocence. Youth.

Strong relationship to the bound space, none to the W3 space.

It became clear to all of us that there was a fourth space, which was a witness in the USR corner.

Video dissolve from October investigation, 2005





## Second Day:

A beautiful warm-up. Voice, Skinner releasing, and imagination exercises.

I gave less specific images but more specific information on the qualities of the spaces that had come to us on Saturday. It was great to have two people who had been there and one who had not.

It is a gift to ask someone to step into a process like this, and I have a responsibility to keep the whole thing safe.

Lucia went straight for the center and stayed a long time. Vanessa went into duet with her, which was amazing. Vanessa's energy in the entire day was very mutable and in relation.

The spiraling space had a more compassionate reach toward center, grounded in a way that it wasn't previously.

The W3 alley was young. Each of us reported this back.

Trying on adolescence.... a complete confusion of costumes. Again, I couldn't find my way here. Jacket and hat, and the combo of dress, jacket and hats helped. I had the sense that it was all masks and that they are different for whoever is embodying the space.

I need to improvise more in this space. This is the place where the strategies of self-betrayal are revealed.

There is a lot of chaos, the chaos of externally imposed and internally generated strategies, and these are different than the strategies for survival (bound). This is the place where the flamboyant, visible lives and the invisible wraith both live.

**What we learned:**

W3 ends up in the bound space.

W2 helps W1 out, literally or energetically.

Witness sees the all of it, has and has the ability to speak.

There is a cycling through the spaces.

**Further feedback from my collaborators:**

The pain of falseness that becomes the mask.

The threshold (adolescent) of sexuality where there is confusion and vulnerability.

An element of stillness that is sculptural. Many masks.

I have a sense that a wind blows through the piece, a double spiral wind. It is the energetic of the fool, who moves like water through the space. Wind, water, the elemental that which is untouched; spirit and light. It is the unconscious shift of change. The tender curiosity of love. The innocence of no judgement and no yearning. I am not sure what this looks like at ALL.

There were specifics that emerged in terms of images and combinations of movement. There were indications of color and sound.





I arrive...

What if?

this remains an improvisational score, with structured support in terms of the energetics and staging of the piece. It would require that the performers to commit to the performance practice—be willing to flow with it.

**Further reflection of the W3 space:**

It relates to *Rant From a Quiet Place*. This has been my mask, the ability to shift and change and the adaptive strategies that I have employed and let go of. This has been a place of holding and holding back.

I see how this space might be played with by people who have different skills and strategies. I have a desire to see, in this space, DIVA strategies and loud ones. It is the space where my sister can have voice too. I am curious about stepping into pure character here, working with people who can convey those shifts more dramatically than I can. I will continue to work on this space and my relationship to it. It is a key.

**Transitional Spaces:**

On Sunday, the spaces between opened up as places of true transition and freedom.

The pattern becomes clearer.

It is upstage and into the center and downstage and out.

Or the reverse.

Yes.

The reverse or maybe both.

Yes!

In processing the feedback, I learned how I might better support the process.

Vanessa suggested having people playback the experience, and/or to let people write or draw it out, and/or to do a collective drawing of it as a way of mapping.

**Notes on the text:**

I threw out lines, but didn't work with the text heavily or literally.

We played a lot with

Shhhhhhhhhh HA!

And

Now that you are here.....

No

Now that you are here....

yes!

Improvised phrases:

What if you say

yes?

Whispered:

Can you hear her?

There is laughter in the spiraling place.

I want to get back in the studio.

I am blocked at taking the text further today, so I'm going to let it go for now.

*Improvisation is a  
political act  
of optimism.*



#### **G5 PRESENTATION<sup>5</sup>**

In preparation for my G5 presentation, I engaged in a rigorous solo practice of this multi-bodied piece. This was a specific challenge to commit to a practice of visible presence in the performance of this score. I presented it, along with a layered process video, that is the convergence of my practices. The layering in the video and video stills makes visible that which I believe it is possible to perceive in the performance as well as aspects of my experience in the practice of it.

I continued to expand my knowledge of the score in solo and in collaboration with Goddard students at the Spring 2006 residency, where I offered an experiential workshop. Their generosity in entering the score, and the feedback they continue to offer has confirmed my commitment to the practice.

---

<sup>5</sup> DVD G5 Presentation



## Layers of sound, movement, and image.

In my ongoing practice of *Revolutionary Surrender* as a solo, I have used the text from *Rant from a Quiet Place*<sup>6</sup> to inform my practice in the W3 space, as well as using improvisation with other social masking strategies.

My practice has been to let the text erupt, as if it's a river flowing underneath, allowing the rhythm to inform the movement.

I am engaging an imaginative process of working with studio images and layering them heavily. This is a way of seeing the energetic terrain of the whole.

I am also investigating the score in duet form. I am excited by the emergence of the text organically. I am working with the meta- and sub- text, the energetics of the score, and expansion of collaboration that continues to inform my investigations. I am finding ways to offer the score as a workshop.

It is my commitment to a subjectively embodied practice of haptically perceiving that guides the expression and form. *Revolutionary Surrender* is a liberatory and revelatory practice that makes it possible to continue on, with all that has been, is and will be.<sup>7</sup>

I am mapping the trembling paradox of essence;  
dancing with mediated forms  
and ephemerality with

---

6 See page 133

7 RS Video, ongoing practice DVD



SHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

HA!





## DANCING THE PARADOXICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FIXED FORMS AND EPHEMERALITY

*The key point is that when you're dealing with recording media, you're involved with the transition from unconscious to conscious. Students often have difficulty in perceiving this aspect of the form when they're just starting out. Whether it's film or video, you're working with an instrument, the camera, which is an instrument of conscious perception. It reveals unconscious behavior to us by making that behavior conscious through the act of recording and viewing it. So whether you are aware of it or not your main work as a film/videomaker lives in working with the unconscious areas of our lives. **The medium is an awareness amplifier.**<sup>1</sup>*

I entered the MFA-IA program with a strong grounding in film/video as a writer and producer, and theatre as a producer and project director, familiar with the processes required to execute projects at a professional level.

I wanted to go back to the beginning, which meant picking up the camera and finding the relationship to my own eye through the lens.

My practices at Goddard have been to engage fiercely with questions of radically subjective haptic perception, the sourcing of image, and examination of performative approaches.

Initially, I was only interested in capturing images in performance spaces.

---

<sup>1</sup> Viola, Bill. *Going Forth By Day*. New York : Guggenheim Museum publications, 2002 (Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin)  
Distributed by Harry Abrams. (3, 13, 11) p 105

I move from content, and the content that has held my interest most significantly is movement based. Video is not always my first choice of form, but I have found the poetry in the process and in the result. In the shifting landscape of digital imaging, there is a place for tiny poetic films

Reflecting on this paradoxical intersection, I see that it was essential to privilege the practices that allowed me to arrive at this confluence of forms in my practice.

A significant crossing was the layered and messy third semester documentation of my work,<sup>2</sup> unfolding most vividly in my work on **Revolutionary Surrender**.<sup>3</sup> **Through a committed practice of the improvisational score, I found a way to capture, as a layered process, the intention and essence that I am perceiving.**

I now fully embrace this paradoxical dance, trusting the source and the resonance regardless of the form. It is tremendously exciting to feel the dynamic exchange between visual, performative, and textual engagements.

***I am interested in the emotional layering that the tools of video can allow.***

---

2 DVD-G3 Documentation of Process  
3 DVD Revolutionary Surrender Experiments



## Haptic Assessments

Winter 2005

I want to spend a little time on my relationship to working on the computer (i.e. video and writing), and the profound differences I feel when I am making work with my body (dancing, drawing, painting).

When I am engaged in editing video, spending hours at the computer, the process of decision making and creating image and image flow completely holds me, yet I wind up feeling smashed bodily by the end of a long session. This seems to be truer, by far, when I'm in editing than writing.

My level of mental concentration is fierce, almost as if my body vanishes. I am working with my eyes, my mind, and my hands. Sometimes there is a rhythmic choice to this and an intuitive "flying" that is lovely. Most often this is interrupted by a technical question or problem that I am learning how to solve. It helps to walk away for a few minutes every couple of hours, even though I fear losing the continuity of what I'm doing.

The more I work within Final Cut, the more I trust my choices. I am developing new strategies for completion that now seem necessary. I wanted to work intuitively with video, but there decidedly comes a point, near the end, when the details have to be diligently tracked. This juncture is most tedious, because the work is past the point of shifting. The piece becomes fixed and then done. I understand, in a completely different way, why on-line sessions are so compressed, and I see the value of structuring an on-line session at the finish of a project as a marker of ending.



I struggle less with absencing from the haptic realm when writing, and perhaps this has to do with being at home, noticing the light brighten and fade through my windows... the possibility of having music or silence or the news to keep me company. I can get up and walk around more easily. Up and down the stairs from top to bottom, a diversion here and there. It may also have to do with my relationship to words and my familiarity and love for them. I am not afraid that my ability to structure a sentence will vanish overnight in the way that I hold some fear that my ability to structure visually will. Hmm. This is worth noting!



I am most fully **haptically** aware when I am dancing and when I am making things with my hands. By this I mean artwork that involves drawing or painting. I feel a different kind of concentration forming that involves my whole body, noticing where the energy is coming from and flowing out of. I love to draw in color; this work feels close and pleasurable. I am in the moment, and am able to completely enjoy the expression without any attachment to outcome. The more I bring this sense of freedom and pleasure to the forms that I have more internal pressure about, the greater my sense of improvisation and experimentation becomes.

When drawing and painting, I truly have beginner's mind. I am noting this with delight and recognizing the reminder that it is possible to bring this place of openness with me into the other forms I am working in.



## THEORETICAL SYNTHESIS

The intersection between performance and mediated forms is an emerging discourse. Johannes Birringer's work in *Media & Performance Along the Border*<sup>4</sup> has influenced me in mapping the terrain at this crossing. There is a great deal of tension between forms where technology meets the performative. There is further research to be done in this realm, and I am excited to engage this conversation.

*The digital revolution is essentially the opening up of the unseen dimension, the articulation of the invisible world. Here's a medium that itself is a code. And what is the function of a code? A code is something that can translate between two things. That's what codes do and we are in the midst of another great age of **translation**, this time in a very different form.*<sup>5</sup>

Initially, I was highly invested in a concept of collaborative third space between performer and videographer that would allow for the original intent of the ephemeral to be translated in its essence. Everywhere I turned, in terms of theory, led to an assumption of impossibility of this task. Undaunted, I continued to research and more importantly, persisted in projects that allowed me to investigate this notion, working with performers who gave me space to experiment.

---

<sup>4</sup> Birringer, Johannes. *Media & Performance: Along the Borders*. Baltimore : Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. (1, 6, 9, 13)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Viola p 111(8, 13, 11)

## SYNTHESIS

I have been privileged to see, absorb and make so much work that has resonance for my process over the last few years. It has been essential to my research to examine approaches to this paradoxical intersection, and to fully articulate my responses to work, building a perceptual bridge between these forms.

Over the last fifteen years, I have thought long and hard about the fracturing quality of making moving images and the integrity of building toward a whole moment that defines live performance forms.

What I love about the process of creating performance is the DEPTH of engagement it takes. It is hours in the studio, into the bones rehearsal, and the layering of collaborative thought that comes together in live performance.

*And there is presence.*

The fundamental requirement is that presence be fully visible in the risk of performance. The technique, and the technical toolbox are the foundations to stand on, but the expression has to be realized again and again in the exchange between audience and performer. This may sound fundamental, but my relationship to it is what I'm addressing here.

In my practice as an artist, in this realm, I love what the process requires. The more deeply inside the work, the happier I am. I am thinking about the role of writing, directing, dramaturgy, and performance. I am thinking about the different qualities of work created solo and the openings that can occur in truly collaborative forms. I am thinking about collaborations that invite generosity of exchange and the mixing of ideas. I am thinking about what the challenges to collaboration are if the structure of a project is the obsolete notion of "auteur." It's all about the way in which the work is approached, and how a sense of illuminating the map unfolds.

And it is political too. It has to do with the academy, with the weight of one path of study over another, the significance of the pedagogy and how it informs my relationship to the world and the conversation at this intersection.

In writing film, often the wholeness of a screenplay exists only in the mind of the writer. It is a blueprint that must, of necessity, articulate specifically the terrain of the imagined world. The text gives you this world in sweeping view, the interior emotional quality of the characters and their journey, and the space for collaboration to open up. The collaborative process in film is fragmentary in the way it has traditionally been done.

The need to communicate this world allows it to be literally built and clothed by working with the smallest pieces to create the whole. The unity returns in the editing process. If the map is clear, it provides a through line that allows for the re-emergence of the whole. This is true even in the work that is non-narrative and non-linear, where I find the greatest resonance. It relates to the economy of scale.

For film, the process of fragmenting, and the sheer scale, can sometimes cause it to fall apart completely. The experience of working in this way can be soul-killing, because of the hierarchical working conditions often employed in film. Working small and working in video has fully engaged me in all aspects of process even as it necessarily fragments.

The documentary process is a journey, and I have learned that a map is a good idea so within the process of an interview you can remember where you need to go (if there is a product in mind). A map also helps to create a relational space that supports the emergence of the individual's voice in the process. Interviewing requires a level of listening, openness and presence that I value. It has allowed me to investigate conversations that would not have been possible without that quality IN me.

Mapping the live performance for video is a collaboration between the performer(s) and the camera.

Here, perspective is reversed through the lens, which has the possibility to convey emotional qualities differently than in performance. Presence is essential when videotaping performance. I need to tune into the map and intentions of the piece, and then let go to capture the shapes.

**To summarize:**

- 1. Large-scale film production.** Requires the breakdown of the script to mileposts and then moments.
- 2. The scripted documentary (for hire).** This requires a visual choice prior to beginning and a sense of content terrain. Within this frame it's possible to have authentic expression in an interview, as long as both subject and interviewer are present to and passionate about the subject of inquiry.<sup>6</sup>
- 3. Unmapped documentary.** It took me years of thinking before I began interviewing people for *Clown Life—The Interior Life of Clowns*. The subject is so vast that I had to find an opening, and a deeper understanding of what my relationship is to this world. The connections lie with performance presence, an approach to vulnerability and a deeply committed physical practice. In the interviews for this project, a binding condition has been that of presence—mine and theirs, and a willingness to collaborate into a revealed space about the depth of the work. It has been a practice filled with generosity allowing for a layer of intimacy to unfold.<sup>7</sup>
- 4. Performance documentation built from the outside in.** The map is the cameras and the movement on stage. It is necessarily frontal and generally requires the standard wide, medium and close shots, and the three angles of center, right

---

<sup>6</sup> DVD-*Dance this....inspiring potential through process.*

<sup>7</sup> DVD-Clown

and left. Interesting things can happen in the reshaping of this, but it is generally an approach used for promotional and funding needs. In this case, the art of the video is generally supportive, not collaborative. I've been lucky to work with people who have allowed me to experiment within this type of documentation to create something that DOES exist in the third space of collaboration.<sup>8</sup>

**5. Performance-based pieces that built from inside out.** This is the map I see for Revolutionary Surrender<sup>9</sup> and it is the kind of work that I've been able to do on Split Second (*Rosa/Rosa*), and *The Shadow Project*.<sup>10</sup>

I have embraced this experimental process most fully in my own work through the unfolding experiment with the studio images of *Revolutionary Surrender*. This experimental realm has to do with a sense of layering and the psychic space that can be represented by working in this way. In this I feel a kinship to Maya Deren's groundbreaking work, Artaud's thinking on 'true cinema.'

*And what more could I possibly ask as an artist than that your most precious visions, however rare, assume sometimes the forms of my images.* Maya Deren

*'True cinema' for him [Artaud] was not representation, not story telling. Nor was it abstract or psychologically based. It was the camera's power to focus the attention on apparently insignificant objects that was important to Artaud. This could not only heighten details into images but make the inanimate seem alive; while cutting could create metamorphoses and rhythms through which the physical world became a subliminal image.*<sup>11</sup>

*I am trusting the resonance that occurs.*

---

8 DVD *Le Chut, The Ridge, Beauty the Lecture*

9 DVD *Revolutionary Surrender* G5 process

10 DVD *Rosa, Shadow Project*

11 Innes, C.D.. *Holy Theatre, Ritual and the Avant Garde*. Cambridge [Eng.]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981. p 83 (7, 5, a) (7, 5)





## Encountering Brakhage

Fall 2005<sup>12 13</sup>

I have been swimming in the words and images Stan Brakhage.

The body of Brakhage's work that was created by painting frame by frame, constructing the flow of **image as experience** is most moving to me. There is a visceral response to the flow of images that is evocative and emotional.

I necessarily privileged the media of words and live work over that of film and video in my process at Goddard. And yet what I am drawn to making, regardless of form, is visual, compositional, and experimental. The source is within in me, and ineffable.

In *Telling Time: Essays of a Visionary Filmmaker*, Brakhage covers immense ground. In the essay, "An Exercise in Ineffability," he takes on no less than addressing the paradoxes contained in the terms..."creative process," artistic inspiration, and the act of making.

*How can "creative" be a "process"? It is, rather, the endurance of chaos.*

*"Artistic expiration" is a more apt term than "artistic inspiration" inasmuch as the Self and all its usual suck of Life must sit as if at Death's door, begging a boon, as it were, in sacrifice to the exfoliation of The Unknown emergent from one's body at ground zero, done to the bone."*

Brakhage is an embodied artist working with the very substance of what the medium of film is (light). There is recognition in both his words and his work that the expression is the dance, is the music, and is his interior rhythm. And in this particularity lies its power.

<sup>12</sup> Stan Brakhage, *Telling Time: Essays of a Visionary Filmmaker*. Kingston, NY : McPherson & Co. 2003. (1 3)

<sup>13</sup> *By Brakhage: An Anthology. Volumes 1 and 2*. Criterion Collection. 2004. (1 3)

In a letter to Bruce Elder, Brakhage writes:

*The word “image” has, for me (i.e. this is personal) the immediate connotation of the three wise men—“mages” so to speak, plus the intrusion of “I” (that Greek pillar we each and all share so personally)...yes, the intrusion of “I.” “Image” (or “imagination”) is altogether distinct from “picture”—“a set of namable shapes framed,” as I define picture.....<sup>14</sup>*

Brakhage goes on to speak about the challenge of describing the realm and stream of sensation that goes into the process of his work because it is **beyond**

**language and “beyond the purely visual phenomenon.”** (p. 134)

He continues:

*I very much respond to your “an image belongs to the realm of the caress,” for I sense imagery as prime source of wisdom, which I’ve always felt as a dance, i.e. reciprocal exchanges in the thrall of experience...not that one is impressed (as one can be “picture”) but that one is “called upon” to respond, to be a correspondent, as it were. As I shy away from any definitions of “aesthetic communication,” I tend to locate the aesthetic experience somewhere amidst this enthralling exchange that imagery/caress implies to me.<sup>15</sup>*

This realm of reciprocity, correspondence, communication is resonant.

In reading Brakhage there is a sense of music, visual music, working with the fundamentals of embodied rhythm. He draws his knowledge from all forms (poetry, visual art—specifically abstract—music and more), and turns it back to film with a particularity that is truly singular. I get from this a many-leveled confirmation of the demand of particularity in order to reach beyond. This is exhilarating.

He closes the letter with:

*I do not, however, think of the above possibilities as “power to bind,” but rather the opposite—i.e., that “imagery” (as a concept) leaves the viewer more reciprocally free than is possible with “picture”; the more representational that a set of visibles becomes, the less aesthetic their possibilities.<sup>16</sup>*

---

14 Ibid. p 133

15 Ibid. p 134

16 Ibid. p 135

**Shortly after I returned from the summer residency—a dream.**

Outdoors  
A very Goddard-like place.

A round table  
A request to “do something...”  
Two people made a weird and beautiful chord of sound.  
The next person got up and emitted a series of screeches and words that resulted in collapse.

Then it was to me.  
A large dog approached me.  
It took my throat in its mouth.  
I felt its teeth.

I put my hands in his mouth and moved his jaw away, gently, and he backed down.  
I stood up and went to more of the center of the lawn and said quietly the lines:

*we are infinite possibilities of love.....*

I looked around and realized that no one could hear me.

I said it louder and louder...just the beginning and ending lines of that poem....

*we are infinite possibilities of love...  
binding and freeing...*

A woman stood up, took off her bandana and said....

**That's it...**

We walked for a moment.  
I woke up.

And so....

From “In Consideration of Aesthetics”  
*The artist bending to the necessities of his/her creative process ought,  
for aesthetics’ sake, eschew the strengths of the given medium.*<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup>Ibid. Brakhage. p 47

Spiraling evolutions of thought.

## RESOURCES (FOOTNOTE AND BIBLIOGRAPHY) ENVISIONING DANCE<sup>18</sup>

*Envisioning Dance*, edited by Judy Mitoma, is a tremendous resource and history as well as a technical and theoretical examination of how various approaches to filming/videotaping dance have emerged. The book came out of three-year project that documents the discussions and theory that emerged as a result of the UCLA National Dance/Media project.

The accompanying DVD is a survey of historical reference on Dance on Film. It opens with Maya Deren's groundbreaking experimental work, *A Study in Choreography for the Camera* (1945) and moves through a range of work that is choreographed for the camera and/or has documentary approach to the dance.

Talley Beatty, who was a member of Katherine Dunham's company at the time, beautifully dances *A Study*. Deren uses every experimental film technique available to move the dancer from location to location, both following and leading the movement of the dancer. The leap at the end is a suspended moment that would be impossible to achieve physically, where Beatty lands in a plié on the top of a mountain. Amazing.

Meredith Monk's, *Book of Days* is excerpted and there is a stunning small film called *Hands*<sup>19</sup> that was specifically choreographed for the camera. There is one opening pan of a space that feels ancient before the camera settles on the hands of the performer moving against an aproned lap. This piece is a beautiful gem and made me think of the section of *Rosa* where Mik is doing what I called the hand dance.

More than anything, this book's existence and the research that is going on in the field have confirmed my sense that there is a place for my work within this conversation between forms.

---

18 Judy Mitoma. (editor). *Envisioning Dance*. NY : Routledge, 2002. Book and DVD. (6, 1 3)

19 *Envisioning Dance DVD. Hands*. Choreography and Performance by Jonathan Burrows. 1995 (6, 1 3)

## **EXPERIMENT #1**

*Split Second*<sup>20</sup>

Created by Mik Kuhlman

Premiered April 2004 at Velocity Studios

Working with Mik on *Split Second* was my first effort at translating performance into video. I captured the performance four times with a single camera. It was the first time in many years that I was the eye behind the camera, and my first attempt at using Final Cut Pro editing software.

I was fortunate to be working in collaboration with Mik. Her needs for the material are primarily promotional, but she has generously allowed me to follow my instincts to create pieces that translate her work in video. Mik's generosity and collaboration in my experiment were a tremendous opening of my process both conceptually and technically.

## **ROSA: AN ESSENCE DANCE**

### **Process and technical notes**

With *Rosa*, I took the 20-minute dance and translated it to approximately 5 minutes. This cut of *Rosa* (choreographed by Donald Byrd) attempts to convey/translate the essence of the piece.

There were four pieces in *Split Second*, which I have also edited for Mik.

NOTE: Rosa IMAGE (possibly cut)

## **EXPERIMENT #2**

*Dance This....inspiring potential through process.*<sup>21</sup>

My intention, as part of my MFA-IA, was to expand my hands-on skills of filmmaking, develop an awareness and ability to articulate my specific visual language, and deepen my story telling abilities in this layered medium.

I was able to use the process of filming the *Dance This....* youth training program to build a seven-minute documentary piece which told the story of the

---

<sup>20</sup> DVD *Rosa* (*Split Second*)

<sup>21</sup> DVD *Dance This....*



program, which is produced by Seattle Theatre Group. I shot the entire process, edited it, and did every part of the project except for the motion graphics and the final post-audio mix-down.

This project bridged my professional and artistic investigations. Through it, I was able to find the kinesthetic dialogue with the camera through capturing dance, and further develop a layering approach to storytelling.

## **PROCESS NOTES**

**FALL 2004**

*Dance this...Inspiring Potential through process.*

I have been working intensely on this piece and am finally near happy with the visual cut. I enlisted help with the post-production sound, titles, and motion graphics for the photo/tribute section and end credits.

I learned a tremendous amount about image and color correction. My eye is becoming more sensitive in terms of color and what's possible. It is around these tools that I also ran into the most frustration—I will continue to learn about the subtle choices that can be made using these tools. By working so intently on this piece, my editing instincts have become sharper.

I remain deeply aligned with the content of this piece. It was an opportunity to do a piece that conveyed the transformative power of art in the lives of the youth that participated in the program. The vision for the program came from the community, and in its process of growth the program has evolved to include more and more youth and has intensified the training opportunities available to them. I needed to own this project completely. To shoot it, do the interviews, shape the content and edit the piece. What I hoped to do was to complete the vision from start to finish and come out of it with a better sense of my own visual language and flow.

I have succeeded, and have been able to recognize that there is a time to

enlist more help, more skill and to use that process as well. I have worked through an arc of complete terror at messing up (in filming) to struggling with the footage and the result and making something out of it that I feel proud of. I am ready to create more pieces of my own, AND I am also ready to work again in a larger structure of collaboration. I can now more fully articulate a visual language that makes collaboration possible.

I have returned to (having never really left it) a deep respect for the specific skills of cinematography, graphics, editing and sound. I feel my strength emerging where it has always been concentrated (writing, editing, interviews: content), and I am able to say with clarity and humility that my skills as a cinematographer are adequate but not extraordinary. I love the recognition, in the *moment* of seeing, of the possibilities for layered images. That said, the physical process of shooting, being in the physical moment of it, the dynamic improvisational choices that are required in framing and moving is a lovely dance in and of itself. I will continue to shoot and edit dance as much as I am able.

I have continued to follow opportunities that would allow me to shoot and edit performance-based material, examining the evolution of my layering aesthetic in video and performance stills.

In June 2005, I had the opportunity to follow the thread of my clown investigation to France. I went to videotape Nathalie Tarlet's clown duet, *Le Chut*. I edited this piece in between semesters, and as with Mik, was able to create a piece that bridged Nathalie's promotional needs with my layering aesthetic.<sup>22</sup>

While I was in France, I also had the opportunity to tape Deborah Hay's solo, *The Ridge* at The Montpellier Dans Festival.<sup>23</sup>

Shadow Project: August 2005<sup>24</sup>

I have also been working on an experimental collaboration with place. I have asked permission of a couple of friends to use their footage in my work that deals primarily with landscape.<sup>25</sup>

---

22 DVD *LeChut*

23 DVD *The Ridge*

24 DVD *Shadow Project*

25 DVD *Place and Place Again*





Collaborative Art Making Rituals

## **PRACTICUM REPORT**



**A Collaborative Art Making Ritual  
at The Art of Resistance Conference, May 2005**

My first practicum experiment took place in my third semester as a workshop within the Art of Resistance Conference. It took place on Sunday morning at a satellite venue for the conference.



The relational community was the participants of The Art of Resistance conference who chose to spend Sunday morning in the practice of *Embracing our Becoming*. My intention was to open a space for a collaborative expression of words, dance, and visual art to unfold. I was inspired by the improvisational potential as I set the space with some books, a candle, and some art supplies.



At 9:30 one person arrived, a woman named, of all things, Meg. Slowly, people arrived and when there were five of us, we began. I played the song, *It's your World* by Gil Scott-Heron.

I explained that this was an improvisation and that the moment was open for any form of expression. Some people started drawing immediately. Slowly words unfolded among us: identity, politics, energy, paralysis. More people drifted in and we welcomed them.

A young woman shared her sense of inability to act. Tears flowed. We welcomed them. We danced. We drew. We talked.

The participants were male and female from 19 to 73.





We consciously closed the circle at 11:25, feeling completed. It was an extraordinary coming together. We expressed our hopes of what is possible, shared deeply and trusted that hearing was possible in this held space of connection.

It was beautiful, and everyone who was there was very glad to have participated and expressed that to me.

For me it truly felt like a stretch into the kind of work I want to do. It was an opening, a moment of rest and surrender to the creation of something new.

This first experiment was liberating, and allowed me to examine the transformative potential of improvisational gatherings that form with intention. I wanted to continue to explore the practice of Embracing our Becoming by engaging specifically with communities of women. Over the summer and fall I created two additional practicum experiences.



### **On the threshold of 46/47**

The relational community for this ritual has been women of a certain age. This collaborative art-making ritual continues to unfold through the mail.

I am profoundly curious about this threshold. We do not feel our age, and yet we are here. I am interested in the places that have gone silent in each of our lives, and for those of us who, for whatever reason do not have children are living in time when it's quite difficult to speak about why. I have had illuminating conversations with each woman that I've invited to make a piece related to the specific paradoxes she is currently walking with. This work continues to unfold slowly.



### **Opening to the silence within**

The Invitation:

Hello my dear women friends--

I would like to invite you to join me next Monday, November 21 for a collaborative artmaking ritual focused on where we are now, who we are becoming as women. Think of it as an opportunity to share your wisdom, your questions and your hopes. I am interested in exploring and liberating the places our silences inhabit.

Feel free to extend the invitation to those you might think interested.

This is an analog event. Bring collage materials, poems of your own or others, or make an improvisation. I will have some art supplies and some beverages. Bring something to share if you like, but not required.

When: Monday, November 21 from 6-8PM

Where: Studio Current

(1417 10th Ave #C, btwn pike & union)

Why: This is a part of my studies and a gentle way to join together.

Let me know if you can make it!

Meg

The relational community was the women I invited from diverse corners of my life, and more specifically, those who came.

They were:

Lisa Bade, artist, educator, activist

Margot Boyer, writer, activist, educator

Rose Custer, filmmaker

Vanessa De Wolfe, writer, improvisational performer, visual artist

Martha Dunham, visual artist, sculptor

Beth Kruse, writer, nurse practitioner

Mik Kuhlman, actor, director

Kay Ray, filmmaker

Bernadette Scheller, glass artist, organizer

Kristin Tsiatsios, performer, organizer

Vanessa and I spent the afternoon shopping for art supplies for the evening. As always, the conversation ranged far and wide.

I set up the space and as people arrived I greeted them with a small silver piece of paper and asked them to write or draw or think about a space where they want to open up a silence in their lives.



*Translinear Light* by Alice Coltrane was the soundtrack for the evening.

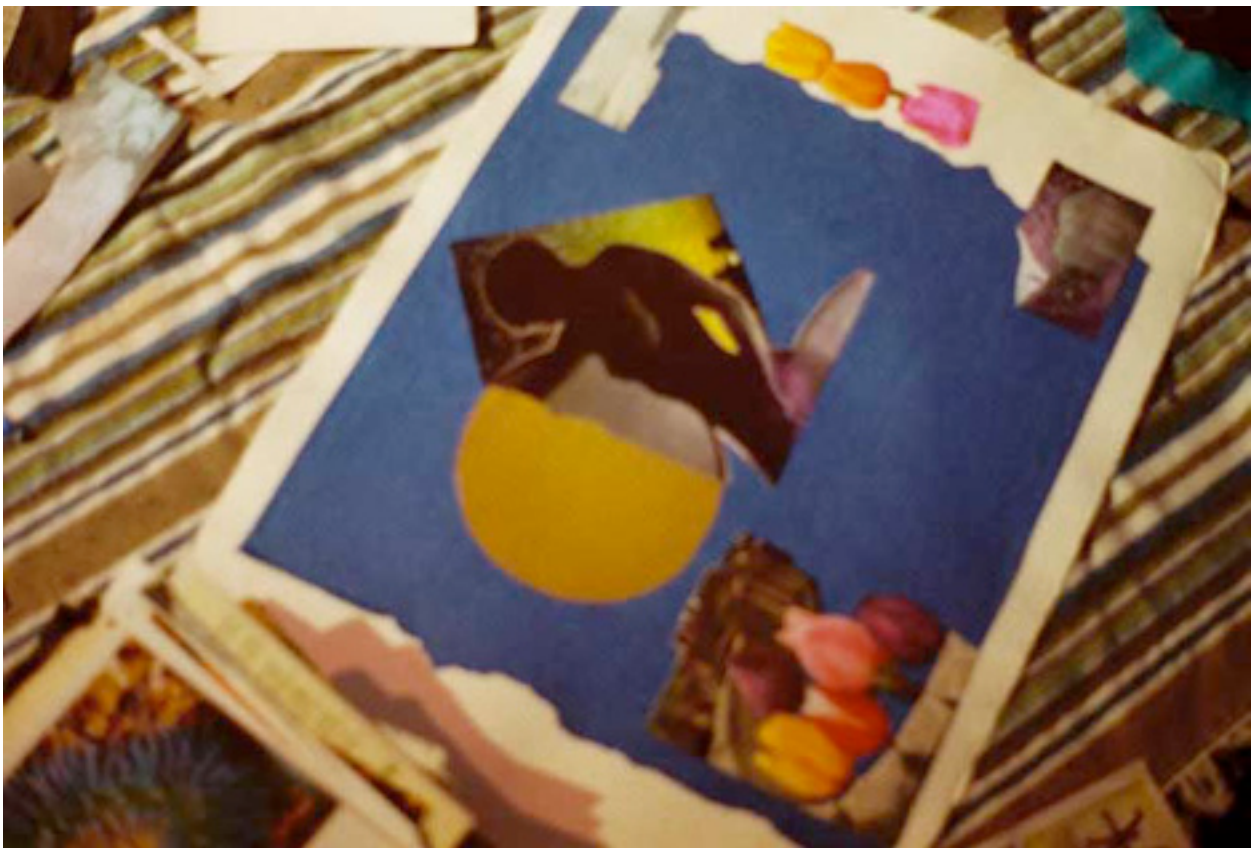
Around 6:30 I opened up the circle and spoke about the process. I asked people to pick up the Polaroid or still camera if they felt so inclined throughout the evening. It was amazing how quickly people dove into the making of the work. Each person finding the materials and images that spoke to them. Many people brought images and other materials to use. We worked quietly at first, and then bursts of conversation unfolded in the tender areas of our lives as women.



Kay said that the question about silence in the invitation made her stop for an hour that day, and kept flying out her head. I asked everyone what the most beautiful thing they say that day was. It was illuminating how many of us said... the ethereal sunlight.



Martha spoke of the fragile place of healing from her marriage just ending, the fact that she is noticing now...that there are moments when she is taking in beauty again. This opened up a landscape of discussion about relationship. We spoke of politics, of what it will take here in this country to elect a woman president (riffing on the news of the election in Liberia).



Margot Boyer's collage in process.







At some point, someone asked me how I knew everyone. They then told each other how they know me. It was a beautiful weave of all parts of my life and practice as an artist. They found the connections among them, which they didn't know of until this gathering.



We worked for a couple hours until people felt complete and then we laid it out together with the Polaroids, and shared our thoughts about the experience.







And so, there it is. I videotaped parts of the evening with everyone's permission and asked to take the work with me to Goddard, which I presented as an installation for the art show in February, 2006.



I am excited about the space that my practicum opens up. It created a space of intimacy and sharing each time that I've done it. It is a process that will continue as source of inspiration, collaboration and improvisational making of work. It is related to the rituals of women coming together that cross the boundaries of culture, history, and time.



Lisa Bade's Artwork

**Embracing our Becoming**  
**Collaborative artmaking rituals as a continuing practice.**

It is my intention to continue to open spaces with small relational communities in my artistic practice.

A relational community that I would like to work with is those who have lost siblings, or more narrowly women who have lost sisters.

Choosing a practicum that was intimate in shape, allowed me to fully participate in a substantive way with each of the relational communities that I engaged with. By creating a container for the improvisational unfolding, I have found a practice of relational aesthetics, and a significant point of resonance for my work.

Video Document: 4:00m









## PRAXIS

I have been privileged to make my living at the intersection of my deepest concerns during my time at Goddard. My professional practices with story-based documentary allowed me to engage a discussion about creative process, community service, and collaboration.

Transitioning from a producing role to an integral creative role has been inextricable from my relationship to the content of the projects I have engaged with. This process also helped to clarify my role as an organizing artist on service-based projects.

Using the lens of our journey with Pacific Northwest Ballet through the 2004-2005 Dedication Season I will address a **convergence of concerns** (praxis) that weave through my work.

Background: PNB's 2004-2005 season marked the retirement of Artist Directors Kent Stowell and Francia Russell, after 28 years. Collaborator Tony Grob and I journeyed through this season in a complex and layered way. We approached the season with the intention to develop a documentary film separate from the series of twelve tribute films for the June 2005 retirement gala that we were hired to do.

With that in mind, we shot a tremendous amount of footage and were in residence at PNB for the entire season.

This process was an opportunity to:

- Develop my aesthetic language of choreographic process through examination of the tension between classically modernist forms and post-modern aesthetics.
- Experience the bridge between theatre and film (embracing my love of the theatre).
- Engage in conversation about creative process with extraordinary artists as I continued to unpack my own relationship to it.
- Deepen of my skills, presence, and passion in the interview process.
- Further develop my eye for of shooting dance.
- Expand the language of collaboration with Tony.
- Examine the dynamic tension between the High Art (with all the elitism this implies) of Ballet and the “low-art” world of clowns and circus, following the thread of presence between these two performance forms.

Working in service to the arts, and the community is a reflection of the belief that I hold that art has the potential to transform our relationship to the world. Through my professional practices, I have come to embrace the paradox that includes both the work that I make (an intimate offering), and the work that I make as a participating citizen artist. I claim both, and the bridge between, as an essential dynamic of my artistic voice.<sup>1</sup>

### **Capturing Balanchine**

The process of getting the Balanchine rep on stage gave me an opportunity to shoot a great deal, and to follow the teaching of the ballets. The day after the election, I was up on the lighting catwalk and taped *Symphony in C* from there, which allowed me to capture the patterns. I had truly been let into the inner sanctum of the theatre. This was a good day.

*I am struck by how deeply my desires to work in the spaces between video and the physical forms of theatre are being answered.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Process Notes Fall 2004: Tony and I approached PNB to do this project, based on our great interaction with them as we made the McCaw Hall opening videos. We followed up with the marketing team, and received the answer just as they opened the first ballet of the season: *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. We rushed in headlong and started shooting the next day. The access that we were handed remains an honor.

## **The Interview Process**

We did several interviews with Kent Stowell and Franca Russell throughout the season. The goal of the initial interviews was to talk about their work as artists. It was a revelation to hear how very different their processes are.

With Kent, I focused in on his approach to ballet using narrative structure and character. He is a choreographer who approached this first out of necessity (trying to get people to come and see the ballet), and found that he had both a talent and a love for narrative. The more I've thought about this in the context of dance discourse, the more remarkable it becomes. Coming out of the NY City Ballet and the Balanchine tradition, this was a remarkable and significant departure. The interview was a revelatory discussion of Kent Stowell's work as a choreographer.

Franca Russell has been staging Balanchine ballets since 1956, through her work with NYCB as a dancer and as ballet mistress. The focus for this interview was necessarily Balanchine and I have to say that it went well by veering off course. She has a concern that her work will only be perceived in the context of transmission of the Balanchine repertory. She has offered so much more, as a teacher, as a leader, and as an intensely perceptive reader of the company. She talked some about the development of dancers and how it is that casting is approached. It is a delicate process to understand when a dancer is ready for the next leap and the implications that roles have on their career. We also touched on how each of them was doing, emotionally, at that stage of transition.

I was honored to work on this project, moving through Kent and Franca's last season with such access and depth was a rare thing indeed.

The Pacific Northwest Ballet project continues to unfold in extraordinary ways. As a part of the tribute films, we had the opportunity to travel to New York and do several interviews with colleagues of Kent and Francia.

Those interviews were with: Maurice Sendak, Ming Cho Lee, Nancy Reynolds, and Suki Schorr. Each one of these was a vastly different experience of their relationship to the art form of Ballet, the significance of PNB as an institution, and to Kent and Francia, personally.

The most significant interview, in terms of my own work, thinking, and emotion was the interview with Maurice Sendak. It was an honor, just on its own, but the way in which the conversation unfolded and my ability to be present in the moment of conversation was a leap forward in this part of my practice. Most striking, was Mr. Sendak's willingness to open us to us (as a camera crew), and to share his process. It helped that his collaboration with PNB on the Nutcracker was a positive and warm one.

It was Mr. Sendak's second theatrical collaboration, and his first with a ballet. He expressed a certain vulnerability about the process of moving from two dimensions, and the realm of print, to the expansion required by the stage.

At PNB, Mr. Sendak found a tremendously supportive environment for the production to unfold. Initially, he had to be persuaded that the Nutcracker deserved another look. In Kent he found a collaborator who shared his misgivings about the thinness of the story and a willing partner to return to the original E.A. Hoffman tale. Sendak is unafraid of the psychological realms of character and approached the Hoffman story from this angle, which resulted in a coming-of-age story for Clara.

The conversation unfolded in a seamless way, and before long we were onto the questions of legacy. Sendak is seventy-six and is thinking about how to pass on what he knows. He is thinking about mentoring, about teaching, and about death. It was a rare moment that I will be processing for a long time to come.



Mr. Sendak, March 2005

Mr. Sendak's archive is in Philadelphia and as I happened to be traveling there, I visited the Rosenbach Museum and Library, where I was able to view a couple of early book manuscripts. One in particular, *Circus Girl*, written by Jack Sendak and illustrated by Maurice Sendak, was very touching. It was a simple beautiful story, and it was a pleasure to view the process of bookmaking. The type was hand drawn, and the drawings were ink, line, and watercolor. I had forgotten how much I love the long process of bookmaking, and was reminded of the tender care that it takes to build a book by hand.





## My Gang

On the left is Tony Grob my collaborative partner on both the PNB projects and much of the video work I do. We work as co-writers/directors and usually one or the other of us edits. Our collaboration has expanded significantly over the last few years. We are able to let each other's strengths shine. In the work that we do that involves interviewing, Tony has supported my growth. My strength in drawing content out and shaping it is one of my strongest skills. My eye behind the camera is still developing and I learn each time I do it.

To the right of me is Andrew Grob, Tony's brother, writer and photographer, and far right is Kirk Miller, a DP (director of photography) from Seattle that joined us for this shoot.

## Summation

Professionally, I had the rare opportunity to move through Pacific Northwest Ballet's artistic Director's retirement year (2004-2005). Kent Stowell and Francina Russell dedicated twenty-eight years to building the Ballet in Seattle. My collaborator, Tony Grob, and I had unprecedented access to the company.

This project culminated on June 12, 2005 in a tribute performance. We made twelve videos for the event, the result of primary interviews that we did over the course of four months. Many aspects of my work have been fed by this project, but the threads most related to my goals at Goddard are:

- depth of story
- integration of presence,
- the power of dialogue and mentorship
- revelation of process.

I have been witness to an extraordinary process of transition and letting go. PNB allowed us inside the rarified world of this institution. I have received a powerful education about choreography, music, the language of ballet, and the intimacy required to create dance. This has supported my process toward embracing an intimate aesthetic.

The process of interviewing expanded my gifts for drawing story out. I have been in the presence of remarkable people, able to connect and unfold with them, interviewing with intimacy and integrity. Understanding this gift that has expanded my growth as an artist.

## DVD MENU CONTENTS

### DVD #1

#### *Revolutionary Surrender*

- #5 February 06 The Ongoing experiment with process
- #4 G5 Presentation
- #3 Mapping Essence Experiment #1
- #2 Mapping Essence Experiment #2
- #1 Mapping Essence: interventions in form
- Processed Video Stills

#### Experimentations at the Paradox of Mediated Forms and Ephemerality

- G3 Work-Progress 7:00  
(failed experiment at the confluence of Forms)
- Place and Place Again 2:00
- Performance Stills
- Rosa Mik Kuhlman 5:00
- Pist(o)l* Holly Hadfield 6:00

#### Embracing Our Becoming: A Collaborative Artmaking Ritual

- Practicum Documentation Video 4:00

#### Clown Studies

- Clown Life proof of concept 2:00
- Interview Stills

#### Visual Play-Slide show

#### Collaborative Performance Documents

- Le Chut*, Nathalie Tarlet 9:00
- Shadow Project*, Art Forge Collective 6:30
- Rosa, Mik Kuhlman 5:00
- The Ridge*, Deborah Hay (Image only on Menu)

### DVD#2

*Last Chapters of Now Reading*, June 2006

### DVD #3

*Dance this....inspiring potential through process*

7-minute documentary piece on youth dance program.



## BIBLIOGRAPHIC LEGEND

- ① INTERSECTIONS (movement and media)
- ② POETRY and POETICS
- ③ PEDAGOGY
- ④ PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS
- ⑤ ART HISTORY
- ⑥ PERFORMANCE/DANCE
- ⑦ THEATRE
- ⑧ VISUAL ART
- ⑨ INTERVENTIONS IN FORM
- ⑩ POLITICS
- ① ① MYTHOLOGY and SACRED STORY
- ① ② FOOLS, CLOWNS, and FOLLY
- ① ③ VIDEO and FILM
- ① ④ PROCESS and PRACTICE
- ① ⑤ COMPOSITIONAL AESTHETICS/MUSIC
- ① ⑥ PASSAGES

- a. Books
- b. Performances/Lectures
- c. Interviews
- d. Article/Thesis
- e. Web Resources
- f. Recordings: Film, Video and Music
- g. Workshops
- h. Exhibitions

## Annotated Bibliography

### Printed Matter (a, d)

Adler, Janet. *Offerings from the Conscious Body*. Rochester, Vermont : Inner Traditions, 2002. (6, 14)

It is Adler's goal to articulate the discipline of authentic movement (AM), which is based on the concept of relationship between witness and mover. Adler takes us through the layers of process and understanding that are required for a mover to develop her witness, and ultimately become the witness within so that the work can expand into a greater understanding of consciousness and energetic flow.

Artaud, Antonin. *The Theatre and Its Double*. New York: Grove Press, 1958. (4, 7, 2)

Artaud burned fiercely bright and committed suicide because the world was not a place he could bear any longer. A simple explanation, but one that has resonance for me. He examined the intersections between poetry, theatre, film—ultimately despairing the use of language, but pushing onward to create a language of the theatre that could express the deeply metaphysical and alchemical layers of reality. The re-reading of this text was a critical re-examination of Artaud's thinking, and his relationship to embodiment. It provided a framework for departure in my theoretical work at Goddard.

Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Thousand Oaks, Cal. : Sage, 2003. (2)

In this volume, Gaston Bachelard explores the poetic imagination as it relates to the phenomenology of intimate spaces. This book is a touchstone of investigation for my poetic weaving among forms. In each chapter, Bachelard engages the question of the imaginative/poetic experience of



spaces such as houses, chests, and drawers, as well as the dialectic of outside/inside and the paradox of intimate immensity.

Birringer, Johannes. *Media & Performance: Along the Borders*. Baltimore : Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. (1, 6)

The intersection between performance and mediated forms is an emerging discourse. Johanne Birringer's work in *Media & Performance Along the Borders*, has been influential in mapping the terrain at this crossing. There is a great deal of tension between forms where technology meets the performative. There is further research to be done in this realm, and I am excited by the possibilities that exist to engage the conversation further.

Brakhage, Stan. *Telling Time: Essays of a Visionary Filmmaker*. Kingston, New York : McPherson & Co., 2003. (4, 5, 13)

Brakhage was a deeply embodied artist working with the very substance of film (light). In this short book of essays, Brakhage covers immense ground. In reading Brakhage there is a profound sense of visual music, working with the fundamentals of embodied rhythm. He draws on his knowledge in all forms (poetry, visual art—specifically abstract— music), and turns it back to film with a particularity that is truly singular.

Bridgforth, Sharon. *Love Conjure Blues*. Washington, DC : RedBone Press, 2004. (2, 9)

Bridgforth calls this a "performance novel." It is truly an intervention in voice and form. It is a beautifully drawn evocation of character and voice.

Brook, Peter. *The Empty Space*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1968. (7, 2)

In this brief volume, Brook describes the Deadly Theatre, Holy Theatre, Rough Theatre, and Immediate Theatre. Brook masterfully lays out the

process by which each of these kinds of theatre can and do unfold. Brook defines Holy Theatre as the theatre of the *invisible-made-visible* (p. 42). My deepest interests lie with Holy Theatre, which helped to frame my performance research.

Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York : Verso, 2004. (4, 10, 16)

In this deceptively small volume, Butler parses the shift in ethics required of us at this moment of history to act with the integrity of our humanity intact and relational. In this set of essays, Butler reframes the discourse, repositioning the theoretical terrain of the conditions of violence, and the inextricable relatedness of mourning.

Dolan, Jill. *Utopia and Performance: Finding Hope at the Theater*. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 2005. (7, 10, 14)

Dolan's expansion of the concept of the utopian performative places it as a practice which can allow each of us to see and feel more, and as a result act from a greater complexity of depth of our humanity. Dolan's work is very clearly situated in the examination of how the utopian works within the context of experiencing work presented live. She offers a new way of seeing how the ephemeral realm of performative work can extend our perception and actions outside of myriad spaces where performance takes place.

Dove, Rita. *Mother Love*. New York : W.W. Norton, 1995. (2, 11)

In this book I found a new appreciation of the sonnet through Dove's retelling of Persephone's journey, her rape and Demeter's inconsolable grief. *Mother Love* is a dance of voices that are separate from each other. Each holds a part of the truth. Dove's compassion for Demeter's mourning, and her ability to explain the depth of this is so powerfully compelling. She is unafraid of the age-old image of woman gone mad with grieving. The voice

of Demeter is strong, absolute, and undeniable. *Demeter Mourning* and *Mother Love* are poems that speak so loudly they scream.

Ellis, Normandi. *Awakening Osiris: a New Translation of the Egyptian Book of the Dead*. Grand Rapids, Michigan : Phanes Press, 1998. (11)

Each chapter of *Awakening Osiris* is a prayer, a song, a reminder, and a call. The core myth is that of Osiris (that we are gathering the parts of ourselves and our worlds that we have lost) and Isis, who through her passion, sorrow and loss found a way to bring forth life. I found a resonance with Ellis' language and my own.

Goldson, Emily (ed.). *Seeing Jazz*. San Francisco : Chronicle Books, 1997. (9, 5, 4)

The poetry, fiction, paintings and the photographs that are inspired by this ineffable music offered me an expanded way of seeing the interrelationships between the source of the story, and composition and expression.

Hosoda, Eisha, Pakarik, Andrew. *The 36 Immortal Women Poets*. New York : G. Braziller, 1991. (2, 8, 11)

*The 36 Immortal Women Poets* pulled me in with the beauty of the plates and the spaciousness of the poems themselves. This spare quality is in part due to the *waka* form. This book reminded me of the beautiful simplicity of the well-crafted line and the power of a consistent meter. It offered me an opportunity to play with both the haiku and waka forms, a very good practice of distillation.

Innes, C.D.. *Holy Theatre, Ritual and the Avant Garde*. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981. (7, 5)

This book was the entry point and connection to a lineage of artists concerned with the sacred in theatre. *Holy Theatre* is a historical and theoretical positioning of Expressionism in the theatre and the relationship

of Strindberg, Jarry, and Artaud to this work. Innes' analysis of Antonin Artaud's work, and specifically the influence of cinematic form on Artaud's work in theatre ignited my investigation of the paradox of fixed forms and ephemerality.

Jordan, June (ed). *Soulscrip: A Classic Collection of African-American Poetry*. New York : Harlem Moon Classics, 2004. (2, 3, 11)

I have a deep appreciation for the way this book is organized. The poems are grouped by content rather than chronology. Each section holds its own, creating a conversation among the poems.

Kennedy, Adrienne. *People Who Led to My Plays*. New York : Theatre Communications Group, 1996. (2, 7, 9)

This book is a literary autobiography. In it, Kennedy maps the landscape of the books and people who fueled her dreams, caused her nightmares, and that were sources for her work throughout her life.

Kennedy, Adrienne. *The Adrienne Kennedy Reader*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 2001. (7, 9)

The work of Adrienne Kennedy is expansive and layered in approach to form and character. This volume offers an in-depth collection of this groundbreaking and experimental playwright. The psychological and mythic terrain of her early plays was particularly inspiring to my fourth semester.

Lorca, Federico Garcia. Graham-Lujan, James and O'Connell, Richard (trans.) *Five Plays: Comedies and Tragedies*. New York : New Directions, 1963. (2, 7, 9)

Lorca's work in this volume is a beautiful weave of poetry for the stage. In "Dona Rosita, the Spinster," the metaphor of a rare rose that lives only one day is embedded into every scene of the play. Lorca is a gorgeously visual

writer, and has a profound mastery of the weave of language and color to deepen the metaphor. I have found an alliance to his sensibility in my work.

Lorca, Federico Garcia. *In Search of Duende*. NY : New Directions, 1998. (4, 9, 11)

In this small volume, Lorca draws a clear distinction between angel, muse and *duende*. The angel provides inspiration, the muse is the structuring mind, and *duende* is the force of the story that must be told out of the human experience of loss, of grieving, and of living with the paradoxes that threaten to silence the emerging voice. This concept and articulation of *duende* was an essential affirmation of unearthing the core practice of *Revolutionary Surrender* in my work.

Mahone, Sydne (ed). *Moon Marked and Touched by Sun: Plays by African-American Women*. New York : Theatre Communications Group, 1994. (2, 7, 9)

This book illuminates the specific and universal power of these African-American women's voices. I was moved by the courage of the stories, the need to break silence and form, and in this found a kinship with my work.

Sydne Muhone's editorial framing creates a rich context for this work. She articulates the difficulties of getting this work produced within existing structures, which I found paradoxically encouraging. These women have found a way to move the margins and make space for their voices to be heard.

Mitoma, Judy (editor). *Envisioning Dance*. New York : Routledge, 2002. (1, 6)

*Envisioning Dance* is a tremendous resource and history as well as a technical and theoretical examination of how various approaches to filming/ videotaping dance have emerged. The book came out of three-year project

that took six years to complete. The book is a document of the discussions and theory that emerged as a result of the UCLA National Dance/Media project.

Nietzsche, Friedrich (translation by Francis Golffing). *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*. Garden Grove, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956. (4, 5)

The gist of the *Birth of Tragedy* is a premise of the loss of tension between the Dionysian and Apollonian modes of expression that came about with the rise of Socrates and “theoretical man.” I have used the overlay of the power of feminine receptivity as a replacement for the Dionysian elements. Read in this way, what Nietzsche is addressing the split and arguing the need for the tension between two very different ways of knowing, perceiving, and expressing.

Popov, Oleg. *Oleg Popov, Russian Clown*. London: MacDonald & Co. Publishers, 1970. (1 2, 10)

An extraordinary illumination of the practice of one of the premier Russian clowns of his generation is presented in this work. In the preface Popov writes:

*But the vast majority wants me at all costs to answer the “insignificant question”: ‘can you tell us how you became a clown?’ p 9*

This book is his answer. Popov articulates the historical context of his journey and the emergence of the human-scale character clown.

Reid, Phyllis Thompson. “The Devil’s Playground.” *Aperture no. 176*. 2004. (8)

This profile by Phyllis Thompson Reid of Nan Goldin’s most recent work struck a resonant chord, furthing my dialogue between my observational eye and the (I) that is within it. Goldin’s commitment to photographing intimately the world of people with whom she has a direct connection is a



window into the sensibility of intimate aesthetics.

Reid talks about Goldin's work as that of "photographing the condition of her relationships with her subjects." I can relate to this sensibility in my performative and interviewing practices.

Rich, Adrienne. *What is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics*. New York : W.W. Norton & Co., 2003. (2, 4, 10)

I appreciate of Rich's clear, consciously dynamic, and oppositional relationship to scholarship. In the final section of Essay # 29 "Six meditations in place of a lecture," Rich speaks of her evolution of thought regarding the construction of poems. This brief section, concentrates on the "loosening of linear thought" and the allowance into her process of the associative, imaginative and subterranean gifts that shape her work.

Finally, she reaffirms the transformative power of art, and its necessary freedom of imagination.

Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*. New York, Routledge, 2003. (6)

In his introduction to the 2003 edition, Schechner describes his approach to the order of content as both a fan and a web, drawing connections between, above and below different types of performance forms. Schechner uses performance as an inclusive term to encompass the range of performance experience from rites and ceremonies to ritualization.

Safer, Jeanne. *The Normal One. Life with a Difficult or Damaged Sibling*. NY: Bantam Dell, 2002. (14, 16, a)

This book offered me some additional insight both into my relationship with my sister Diane and, potentially, a theoretical perspective on siblings that will help guide my path of speaking with others who are "living on" through this specific terrain. My deeper understanding of our "sister-ness,"

and the impact of Diane's life and death, has had a profound effect on my commitment to life.

Turchi, Peter. *Maps of the Imagination: The Writer as Cartographer*. San Antonio, Texas : Trinity University Press, 2004. (14, 9)

Recommended by Daniel Alexander Jones, this book was an opening to thinking about maps as metaphor, practice, and process in relationship to writing. It raised questions about how I use mapping and blanks in my own work (in all forms). A fruitful discussion developed in our on-line seminar about how we reach across our varied disciplines to truly collaborate. This is a book I will read again.

### **Performance Research (b)**

*Accidental Activist, The*. By Kathryn Blume. Art of Resistance Conference. CHAC. May 11, 2004. (6, 7, 10)

The show is the story of Kathryn's experience as an actor and artist being thrown into the role of organizer with the Lysistrata project. Blume's show was powerful in its simplicity, veering from the personal to the big picture view of the ramifications of having created such a powerful movement for women to participate in. It had political bite, it's funny and it's a moving telling of her own struggles as an actor and artist in NYC.

*Anna and the Tropics*. By Nilo Cruz. Dir. Sharon Ott. Seattle Repertory Theatre. October 6, 2004. (7)

This production of *Anna and the Tropics* was the epitome of a Seattle Rep Production. The extraordinary unit set (by Hugh Landwehr) and gorgeous lighting (by Peter Maradudin) completely overwhelmed the direction of this Pulitzer Prize-winning play.

The premise of *Anna and the Tropics* is that a new lector comes to read to the workers in a Tampa-based cigar factory in the 20s. The handsome lector embarks upon the reading of *Anna Karenina*, and thus the multi-layered experience of the workers and Tolstoy's characters are interwoven. It's a brilliant and beautiful literary metaphor and in the hands of another director, might have been more fully realized.

*Diversion of Angels-Lecture demo and performance.* Choreography by Martha Graham. Performed by the Cornish Dance Department. Moore Theatre. October 30, 2005. (6)

Graham has fallen out of fashion and still has so much to give. Through an arrangement with the foundation, the Cornish Dance Department was able to get the rights to present *Diversion of Angels*, which is a piece that explores the different phases of love—youthful exuberance (yellow), passionate/erotic love (red), and the mature compassionate love (white). It's an unusual piece in the Graham repertory, in that it is a more formal/abstract ballet, and not so strongly based in psychological and mythic landscape. That said, the movement is pure Graham in terms of the shape, the contractions and the extremes of (off)-balancing. You can see in this choreography the conversation with the ballet vocabulary of the time (i.e. Balanchine).

I love Graham technique and I feel a connection to the intentions within her work. She was one of the first modern choreographers to reveal, and revel in the psychological exploration of mythic terrain. The intensity in the core of the movement, and the spiraling around the spine is simply gorgeous.

*Frankenocchio.* Created by Brian Kooser. Dir. Scot Augustson. Empty Space Theatre. October 14, 2004. (6)

Frankenocchio was a puppet play in a surrealist circus vein. A lovely set,

the band to stage right, a world of pathos and dreams was the weave of this strange little show.

Poor puppets do not escape the ravages of jealousy, alcoholism and loneliness, as evidenced in the protagonist, Pontevecchio, a sad wretch of a defrocked priest now working as the wild man of Borneo in a down-on-its-luck circus.

I didn't love the text of this play. It was gratuitous and misanthropic for the most part. That said, I did love the details and certain moments of extraordinarily realized illusion.

*How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?* Installation and performance by Lucia Neare. NW New Works Festival. On the Boards, April, 2004. (7, 9, b)

Lucia Neare is a phenomenal talent. She is a classically trained soprano who has studied both the Western and south Indian classical vocal traditions. This piece was developed out of the journals of a pioneer woman and it featured installation pieces (a house, and these odd hanging lamps) that were designed and built by Lucia. The house had a patchwork quality to it. The performance was accompanied by violin and piano and took the shape of a musical journey through this woman's life. It was a riveting performance both sung and spoken. It's rare to see such an evocation of a pioneer woman in the context of contemporary performance. It was beautifully dynamic and full of respect for this woman's life and the hardship she endured, for her courage and her transformation.

Hubbard Street Dance Company. Presented by Seattle Theater Group. November 10, 2005. (6)

There were four pieces on the program of this technically very proficient dance company. Sadly, it was one of those performances where I was

watching the dancers thinking, and as a result their emotive landscape was closed to me. This was particularly disappointing in the piece by Nacho Duato. The choreography is beautiful. It evokes a world unto itself, and this world is ancient. Looking at it from this perspective, I was able to see the beauty in the choreography of the work. It's a matter of presence.

Ink, Joe. *NW New Works Festival*. On the Boards, April, 2004. (6, 9) The intent of this artist was to create a sense of "grace" through the use of performance and live video projection. This was a surprisingly disturbing piece for me. Firstly, there was a the level of pretension in the artist statement about his intent to communicate the divine. It is this kind of literal expression/declaration that makes it very hard to gain access to the piece. We each have a sense of what that looks like, but is it what I'm seeing?

The stage. A multimedia set up SR. Rear projection screen in the back. The performers take the stage. The visual artist to her station, the dancer, dressed in white to the center. Immediately an image forms on the screen of the dancer. It is heavily processed and not clear whether it is live. The dancer approaches the camera and moves in close, making clear that the manipulation is happening in front of our eyes.

The questions that were raised are these: was it necessary to see this happen live? Would it have been equally as satisfying to experience this as visual piece sans the visibility of the technology and process? What is gained by revealing the process as one that is happening live? What is lost?

I understand the impulse. These are new toys being used in new ways, and it is very tempting to make this visible. To bring the wizard out from behind the curtain. What do we gain by knowing that the visual piece is being generated with the content of the dancer's body? I think we would have gained a great deal more if the dancer had been more generous in his

relationship to the audience. It is very disconcerting to watch a performer on a live stage focus solely to camera at the exclusion of the energy of the live performance.

*Match, The*. Deborah Hay Dance Company. TB:A 2004, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art. September 18, 2004. (6)

The program states “*The Match* contains meditation-like exercises that are impossible to achieve, invisibly binding the dancers to the moment and the dance.” The most amazing quality of Deborah Hay’s work as choreographer is the commitment to discovery and perception that remains so essential to her work. Hay has said, “Perception is the dance.” This is not an empty phrase in her work practice. It is a deeply held commitment.

What we saw in the performance of *The Match* was the expression by three individual artists of a score that remained invisible to the viewer. The dance was absolutely unique in each of the three solos. Wally Cardona’s bouncing, vigorous energy was in complete contrast to Ros Warby’s elegant and strange emanations. Hay, herself, in performance is phenomenal to watch. What is visible is her essence, her discovery and the absolutely awakened body that she inhabits.

*Monk*, Meredith. Bumbershoot Arts Festival. September 5, 2005. (6,9)

Single piano stage right, electronic keyboard and two mics stage left. A simple set-up on a beautifully huge stage. The petite figure emerges from the wings. She is fully present, and there is the energy of delight and humor as she begins.

Meredith introduced each piece by contextualizing the time it was composed and theme it addressed, and then she launched into it. Her voice, her unlanguage language of extended vocal technique, was an exquisite return to beauty. I simply absorbed this performance. I listened, I watched. I



noticed the small range of Monk's exquisite gestures when she moved to the electronic set up and her collaborators joined her. Full presence, not dance, purely gesture that had a rhythmic relationship to the voicing(s) in the music.

*One.* Choreography by Erin Mitchell. Studio Current, December 5, 2005. (6)

Erin Mitchell's solo work was a range of work that spans through her process in graduate school to her most recent solo explorations.

The most recent work is entitled *Federspiel* (or Feather play). In this work Mitchell used a framework for improvisational movement. The image was one of a woman in a white full-length petticoat and a tank top. The movement of her back, shoulders and face were visible and the movement in her legs and feet was not. A layer of white feathers was at her feet. The lighting was just enough to cause her shape to be luminous and surreal, ethereal and ghostlike. Mitchell's movement was fairly stationary, and absolutely riveting to watch. She opened with her face to us and I had the image of a marionette but not exactly. This image had to do with both the placement of her arms at angles above her head and the tilt of her head leaning as if the string had been loosened. *Federspiel* is a compelling work with a delicate touch.

*Our Little Sunbeam.* 33 Fainting Spells. On the Boards. May 14, 2004. (6)

*Our Little Sunbeam* is a piece that is collision between Chekhov's *Ivanov* and material taken from the NASA programs of the 60s and 70s. This piece is fascinating in its construction of text and staging.

Each performer took on multiple roles. This precise performance used the artifice of the stage consciously, creating an effective postmodern weave. At a certain point in the performance, Dayna turns and addresses the audience directly, shattering the fourth wall. The transformation of existing text is a powerful tool in the hands of these artists. The juxtapositions of

timeframe and character allowed for spaciousness in the experience of watching it.

Technically, *33 Fainting Spells* was at their best. They remain true to their aesthetic of collage, and the commitment of acknowledging and playing with the artifice of the theatrical space they inhabit.

They used video sparingly in this piece, primarily at the top, which was video of rehearsal, setting the informal, playful tone. Throughout the piece, the video screens were used primarily as backdrops for the NASA images and not as a means to pull focus from the performance. The set design and lighting design fully supported the sensation of shifting time, space and character.

Pacific Northwest Ballet. (6)

–*Balanchine*. McCaw Hall. November 4, 2004.

*The Four Temperaments*, choreographed in 1946, is a thoroughly modern work. It is performed in rehearsal clothes (white tights and black leotards on the women and black tights and white tops for the men), on a blank stage with a blue upstage scrim. The lighting is a simple wash.

I could watch this piece again and again. The movement is abstract and groundbreaking. With music by Paul Hindemith, Balanchine built the ballet in the four segments of the temperaments: Melancholic, Sanguine, Phlegmatic and Choleric. These names have little relationship, truly, to the power of the dance itself. When it premiered in 1946, it made a profound and lasting impact on American dance.

–*Nutcracker*. McCaw Hall. December 4, 2004.

–*Silver Linings*. McCaw Hall. June 2, 2005.

–*Director's Choice*. McCaw Hall. October 1, 2005.

Peter Boal, in his debut as Artistic Director of PNB, has made some very bold choices in both the premiers of Balanchine's *Duo Concertant* and *Symphony in Three Movements* and the inclusion of William Forsythe's *Artifact II*. Also included was a premier of Jerome Robbins', *Into the Night*.

*Artifact II*: This piece is incredible in its architecture and pattern and the complete removal of the personality of the company. By this I mean the choreography of the piece is designed to invoke a mechanical feeling. The music is loud (and recorded), the dancers are all in flat gold unitards, with the exception of the "Other Person," who is in flat gray. The "Other Person" leads the company in their angular moves. A conductor, or a foreman on a factory floor. It reminded me of *Metropolis*.

This was a very intellectual piece of dance, and it fully captured me. It's incredible to see these dancers move in unison in such a different way than I've ever seen them. The curtain was brought in with a mic'd thud several times throughout the piece, commenting on the artifice, and with each rise, revealing a different tableaux.

–*Past, Present, Future*. McCaw Hall. November 4, 2005.

Artistic Director, Peter Boal foregrounded the discourse about the *role of ballet* with the solo piece, *Mopey* in this repertory. It was male solo that Boal premiered in 2004 with his dance company. Jonathan Poretti delivered an amazing performance to the combined music of Bach (live) and the Cramps (recorded). The lighting was stark, a single line across the stage at the beginning. The dancer emerged with his back to us, and the piece was largely performed with this orientation. This NEVER happens in ballet. Using the context of the ballet stage was powerful framing for this piece. Choreographed by Marco Goecke, *Mopey* deals with intensely urban themes (also rarely seen in ballet).

*Jardi Tancat*, choreography by Nacho Duato, premiered with Nederlands Dans Theater in 1983, and is an exquisite modern piece, that is part of the PNB repertory. This piece was also very much about the backs of the dancers and had a quality of a dance embedded in the life of a community. The women were in long skirts and the colors of the couple were gold/green, red/brown and a deep purple. The piece was earth and grounded, and the quality of the movement was just gorgeous. Carla Korbes is a soloist new to PNB (from NYCB), and she shines in this piece. She has the ability to move with a looseness in her hips and upper back that is really rare in ballet dancers. This piece brought out her strengths beautifully. There was a lot of flexed feet, and extended arms. A way of moving with a sense of profound connection to spirit and to the land, which was referenced by the sculptural wooden set pieces that felt both like trees and like ribs of a ship.

–*The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. September 23, 2004.

*Pinkk!* Laura Curry. On the Boards, September 12, 2004. (6, 9)

*Artist Statement: This PINKK is the culmination of over a year of work and planning, and the time and energies of many talented artists and friends. Key collaborator Pamela Gregory has evolved and informed the PINKK! you are seeing tonight.*

Laura Curry's installation/performance at On the Boards in September was an extravagantly layered conceptual experiment working in the "peep-show vernacular."

Approaching On the Boards, I was delighted by the transformation of normally slate gray building into an weird, garish pink that was a cross between Pepto-Bismol and Barbie. Entering the building, a performer in a suit silently directed me to the box office to the left. Behind her was a wall of black with the Pinkk logo at the center. I entered the lobby space from the

far left armed with a program and a map and the following instructions:

PINKK is meant to be experienced in close proximity

This map is your navigational tool

Move around the performers, go where you like

Go back, go forward, buy a beverage, stay a while

The rule... follow your instinct... have fun

Laura Curry's work has a complex conceptual structure that was realized, but not fully.

*Pollen Revolution*. Akiri Kaisai. On the Boards. September 26, 2004. (6)

Akira Kasai is the rightful heir to the legacy of Butoh passed down from Kazuo Ohno and Tatsumi Hijikata. Kasai is a virtuosic performer: compelling, arresting, profoundly expressive within the mask demanded of the Butoh performer.

*Pollen Revolution* had four distinct sections to it.

The most satisfying moment was near the end: a rain of confetti (a certain type that is wide and lighter than most), floated down on Kasai. He virtually disappeared in this and as the lights faded he all but vanished.

At the bow, a bouquet of orange and red Gerber daisies were handed to him and the encore dance was an extraordinary expression of exuberance unleashed.

*Purgatorio*. Ariel Dorfman. Seattle Repertory Theatre. November 2, 2005. (7)

Blinding white light floods the set. It is a delicate white room with a white bed and chair. Behind in forced perspective, you see the rooms just like it, extending mirror-like into infinite space. The performers are Charlayne Woodard (woman) and Dan Snook (man). She is in a soft green dress, he in a lab coat. They begin. The play is circling/cycling around and through the tale of Medea and Jason, dealing with the larger themes that are so resonant

right now. The text of this piece works heavily with the poetry of repetition and circling....it fully reflects the sense that this is a scene that may never end, that there are no easy answers, there is only the moving through, coming around to the questions again and again.

Ariel Dorfman's treatment of this landscape is spacious in the gaps between, the struggle within that is evident in the performance. We need this story, these stories, now. We need the deep claiming of the ways we destroy what is most precious to us, and what the consequences of that really are (for an eternity).

*Shadows of Exile*. By Ed Mast and the community. Art of Resistance Conference. May, 2004. (6, 9, 10)

Ed Mast's concept was to move the audience through the experience of what it is to be a refugee. It was powerfully simple, forcing us through a fence line, separating the audience from the known territory of the conference. The visuals were simple and effective—a small house sawed in half, cups and plates that were eventually taken away, statistics of cities and villages that have been destroyed by arbitrary and forced displacement of people. Up in the trees, a woman shrieked her sorrow and loss. Her story was on the road for us to read. The effect was aching.

Spectrum Dance Theatre. Artistic Director Donald Byrd.

—*Fado, Hip Hop and the Blues*, February 19, 2004 (6, 11)

The three works presented by Spectrum Dance Theatre, choreographed by Artistic Director Donald Byrd, offered an evening full of anguish, oppression, and triumph of spirit. An excerpt from Byrd's artistic statement reads:



*The proposition that ties the music of these three works together is intriguing at least: each of these musical forms emerged as a response to oppressive conditions; each tells story of people of the African Diaspora; and each is clearly influenced by African rhythms and musical aesthetics. In one analysis, these are examples of the musical legacy of the slave trade.*

*Fado*, the last piece of the evening, was a funeral gathering. Old-fashioned chairs placed in a semi-circle defined this ritual space. The piece opened with one of the dancers dropping a handful of earth into a small silver platter. For me, the piece was about mourning; mourning with those that are of you and some how through the expression, moving through enough, enough to carry on.

—*Bhangra Fever*. Moore Theatre. November 6, 2004. (6, 9)

The full title of this piece is *Bhangra Fever* (or I'm in the mood for a kind of diasporic public sphere).

This new work from Donald Byrd and Spectrum Dance Theatre was a lengthy weave of Trance-Indian/Asian music with contemporary modern dance into a dance-theatre evening.

The dance was in several sections. I remember the following ones distinctly: The full group with a soloist. A choreographic explosion of bouncing and jumping that gave the effect of being present at trance dance or rave. The soloist in this section is a classically-trained dancer with virtuosic skill.

Byrd on stage at a microphone. He spoke about imagination as the territory of agency. It was a long rap on the state of mediated experience and a questioning of the possibility that imagination can overcome the state of things. This seemed the conceptual hinge of the piece, and I wanted to be able to hear it better. The ideas were strong, compelling. What was happening in the dance at this point was lost on me. I would like to see this

piece again. I can see in its bones that it is a significant piece of work for our times.

—*Sleeping Beauty Notebooks*. Moore Theatre. October 7, 2005. (6, 9)

The stage is stripped back to the walls, the mechanics of the theater exposed. This is the second piece of Spectrum's I've seen that reveals the theater in this way. In the pre-show discussion Donald talked about his choice to reveal all the artifice of the theater in this piece—to make it visible. In the Moore, this visual is particularly poignant—the building is old, 1906. The back wall is black and a pastiche of brick and doors, and flat surfaces. This alone references the continuity of the conversation that *The Sleeping Beauty Notebooks* engage. The piece is a deconstruction of the Petipa/Tchaikovsky ballet, a conversation with the vocabulary of the classical ballet and an exploration of the themes of vengeance, erotic curiosity and decay.

This is an important piece. I wanted to like it more. Parts of it moved me deeply. This is the kind of piece, and Spectrum's work in general, that brings up some significant questions in the discourse of dance.

*Teatro ZinZanni (Dinner and Dreams; Love Chaos & Dinner)*. Produced by One Reel. Multiple performances 2004-2006. (7, 12, 9, b)

The cathexis of *Teatro ZinZanni*

The question is why does *Teatro ZinZanni* work so well, and so consistently? I believe it is an open form that allows the cast to ebb and flow and the characters to evolve/devolve shift and change. It is fascinating to me that over the course of 5+ years the themes and bits of the shows have continued to morph, but not change too much.

What makes all this continue to work is the alchemy between the environment and proximity/interaction of the performers. The show is set in an antique Belgium Speigeltent that has its own magic. The performance

happens in the round and on a little stage where the musicians are housed. It is a skilled live band, and you feel the difference when the live music is replaced by recorded music for a particular act.

What is conjured at *Teatro ZinZanni* is a unique exchange between the audience and performers. It is the role of the entire cast to engage the audience. This is where the clowns and the level of clowning becomes key. Their virtually non-verbal position requires that they transgress the boundaries using their unique ability to read audience energy.

*The Rich Grandeur of Boxing* . Megan Murphy. On the Boards. April 23, 2004. (1, 6)

Megan Murphy's *The Rich Grandeur of Boxing* was a delightful shift in style, content and meaning. Murphy's aesthetic has grown consistently from her early work as co-creator of Seattle's Run/Remain.

This piece is a post-modern mix of text, dance and film.

It was a relief to be able to make the connections without being hit over the head with it. There is a native intelligence and a generosity in Murphy's work. It dances a tragic/comic edge that at moments reaches the sublime. I left the theatre with a smile.

*Toaster*. Rebecca Brown (libretto). Dir. John Kazanjian. New City Theater/On the Boards. October 30, 2005. (7)

*Toaster* is Rebecca Brown's first play, and was a sweet homage to Beckett with a very personal/universal experience of the loss of a parent.

Brown is a deeply compassionate writer. Here again, I am presented with the possibilities of work that moves, that is outside a standard form (but within a history), and that has found a life in the world.

*Vessel*. Mary Sheldon-Scott & Jared Powell. NW New Works Festival. On the Boards, April, 2004. (6, 9)

This piece was a meditation on dance forms, pushing the boundaries of what seemed possible for these dancers. This company includes some of the most accomplished dancers in Seattle, and it is the technique that is the basis for the success of this work. The set and costumes were earthy, with fringe and fur attached to the tank tops. The work progressed in a series of solo, duet, and trios, each seeming to have their own internal logic and score.

This piece stayed earthbound, and perhaps this was its intent. I had a sense that it could soar, but the force of the limitation imposed was to contain that energy.

*Woman Under the Table*. Installation and performance by Vanessa DeWolf. NW New Works Festival. On the Boards, April, 2004. (6, 9)

Vanessa DeWolf is a singularly idiosyncratic improvisational performer. *Woman Under the Table* was an elaborate installation with an off-kilter Plexiglas table that was 8' x 4' wide. The top was angled down; underneath laid a sea of blue crinoline.

Vanessa is a physical, sonic and verbal improv artist. The piece began with Vanessa buried beneath the rustling crinolines under the table, creating the unsettling sound of live things in unseen places. A gloved hand emerged. The glove had a trail of fur on it, which Vanessa encouraged the audience to pet, to touch. The artist's commentary in this piece was the feminine relationship the animal world.

*Word Made Flesh*. By Marc Bamuthi Joseph. Bumbershoot Arts Festival. September 3, 2005. (6, 9)

*Word becomes Flesh* was a basically a solo piece, accompanied by a three-piece band on stage, a beautiful weave of word, rhythm, dance, and music. The themes within the piece were a very personal journey of the performer's entry and struggle with and embracing of fatherhood. Other themes were

situational and identity facets of gender, race, depth of consciousness and the ultimate call to “freedom as a practice.” The content moved me deeply. This is an artist who is working in the space of expanded possibilities for our humanity.

*Wintertime*. By Chuck Mee. Dir. David Schweizer. 2<sup>nd</sup> Stage Theatre (NYC).

February 17, 2004. (7)

*Wintertime* is a story of layered relationships, and multiple betrayals (real and imagined) and a cascading mountain of miscommunication between sets of lovers. The play’s point of view on love, on commitment, on what are the essentials in life, shift as each character speaks their piece. The writing is rich and deeply layered. Staged as a farcical slapstick at moments, the relational content dives deep into the psyche. David Schweizer’s handling of the staging was well in tune with the pacing of the text.

### **Workshops (g)**

Fieldwork. Performance and Writing Sessions. 2004-2006.(6, 14)

The Field (Fieldwork) is a laboratory/workshop where participants share work in progress, improvisation, and receive structured feedback. Each ten-week session has informal showing.

I have used Fieldwork consistently to develop my movement, writing and feedback practices. The Field has provided me with a community of artists who share a commitment to supporting each other’s work, developing deeper feedback skills and engaging a dialogue about performative art forms.

The Field emerged out of the choreographic community in New York in 1985 and was established in Seattle as part of the Field Forward Network, Artistic Director Vanessa DeWolf has extended

the work of the Field to include writers, performance artists and choreographers.

The Field model for structured feedback works with the main premise that the work you are witnessing is complete in the moment that you see it. This allows the feedback to be focused on what is actually visible in the work

The structure of a session:

- Each artist who has works presents it without comment on the work.
- Feedback is given after all artists have shown and is done in the order of presenting.
- Possible frameworks for offering feedback include:
  - What did you see?
  - What did you perceive the artist's intention to be?
  - When and how was your attention engaged or distracted?

The goal in giving reflective feedback is to engage the work as is, avoiding projections and suggestions.

Hay, Deborah. *The Body in Question is the Dance*. September 26-27, 2004. (6, 14)

This two-day workshop was a moment to reconnect with the practice of Deborah's choreographic questions immersively. The rigor of Hay's practice, and the way in which her work has evolved, was an opportunity to engage in a new and intriguing way, as well as allowing me to draw forward the thread of continuity and connection to her work.

Hennessey, Keith. *The Improvising Citizen*. February 27-29, 2004. (6, 14)

The premise: *The work we do in the studio changes our work in the world and visa versa. We owe a debt to feminism and to studies of the esoteric*



*realms*. Keith Hennessey's teaching is a weave of ideas, practice, and action that reveals what an embodied interdisciplinary artist is. This workshop was an opportunity to expand my movement practice, opening to new ways of moving, collaborating, and extending into the world.

Nelson, Lisa. *Tuning Scores: Composition and the Sense of the Imagination*.

October 8-14, 2005. (6, 14)

The Tuning Score, a performance research format, asks what do we see when we're looking at dance. The research focuses on the physical base of the imagination. Composition, communication, and performance are the subjects. Much of Lisa Nelson's work has to do with the ways in which image is formed, asking the questions about how it comes...visually? Physically? Sonically? This workshop gave me additional tools for study as I worked in the studio on *Revolutionary Surrender*.

### **Lectures and Discussions (b)**

Subtext Collective. *What's Happening with Poetics?* Richard Hugo House.

September 7, 2005. (2)

A rare conversation about poetics. I was intrigued with the framing of the question and appreciated that the presentations were offered as "openings" or "seeds for the conversation."

Each presenter articulated their personal theory of poetics. A variety of interesting theories, which brought home the message that we each create this theory of poetics out of the practice we have as writers.

Meade, Michael. *Tides of Chaos*. Seattle Art Museum. November, 16, 2005. (2,

11)

Michael Meade is a mytho-poetic storyteller. This evening was a deeply woven conversation about water. What it means, mythically, what's going on

with the planet, what has happened with the hurricanes.

Three things that moved me:

1. That myth and reality are not in opposition; myth and literalism are in opposition. Might sound simple but it was a discernment that I REALLY needed to hear.
2. Myth is emergent truth.
3. A reminder of the infinite and specific that each of us are.

### **Exhibitions/Visual Art Research**

Bumbershoot Visual Arts Exhibitions. August 31, 2004. (8)

Jodi Rockwell's *Absorbing and Dissolving* installation was a complete transformation of the room. Upon entering, you were met with a black wall, revealing the title of the piece. The audience was guided to the right and into a ribbed white structure that felt very organic, as if you were entering the body. We were walking on a crystalline substance that was slippery and crunchy at the same time. It took me a minute to figure out if it was sugar or salt (it was salt). As we rounded the bend we were fully contained in the tube. The space opened up into a cavern, which held an extraordinary sculpture suspended in netting. It looked like a large beet (or uterus) dripping slowly into the salt-covered floor, which created an organic design as it slowly dissolved. The emotional impact was powerful and arresting.

*Isamu Noguchi Sculptural Designs*. Installation by Robert Wilson. Seattle Art Museum. September 3, 2005. (6, 7, 8, 9)

Wilson describes this installation as gift to Noguchi in a beautiful sound based poem that plays with Noguchi's name and words.

1. You enter a dark room, charcoal covered walls. Two small spots (1

amber/1 blue) warm the sculptural elements on the wall. The first piece is called "Bone," and is a stage element from *Entrance into the Maze*, by Martha Graham. The pieces are installed in a way that they lift off the wall and swim in the soft light. There are no sharp edges here, only a subtle dropping off, which allows the sculptural work to feel in motion, and eternal.

2. The video of Graham's dances are housed in vitreous. You look down at the monitor and as a result, the spill does not impact the rest of the room. The audio of the dance pieces is area-focused and relates to the set pieces that are part of this room.
3. One of the set pieces, *Jocasta's Bed* (also from a Graham Work) is installed inside a space that mimics a proscenium, with black glass/sand underneath this.
4. Each piece in this room allows an entry into the imaginative space of performance and what the interaction was between the choreography of Graham and the spare, sculptural set pieces by Noguchi.

I paid a lot of attention to the lighting throughout. With few exceptions, the effect of this soft swimming pool of light was achieved by a warm/cool combination of small spots.

## WEB RESOURCES (e)

<http://www.ubu.com/>

This is an amazing website with historical and contemporary resources from rule breakers from Deren and Genet, to Burroughs. (1, 13, 7, 9)

<http://www.ccca.ca/media/index.html?languagePref=en&> (1, 5, 9, 13)

This database of Canada's artists has an amazing range of work from artists working in all disciplines. I found it deeply encouraging to see the range of

aesthetics represented in Canadian's working artists. Specifically, the work of Sylvia Safdie and her piece *Walter Leaves*. Walter Willems *Ekki Verdur Aftur Snúid*, 1999 work has kinship in terms of performative, layered, mysterious work in dance.

<http://www.mouthswideopen.org/main.shtml> (9, 10, 6)

An activist site with a beautiful interventionist project of tiny army men with stickers on the bottom that say, "Bring me home."

[http://www.collections.ic.gc.ca/waic/chdavi/chdavi\\_e.htm](http://www.collections.ic.gc.ca/waic/chdavi/chdavi_e.htm) (1, 9, 13)

Char Davies. Experimental artist working with virtual spaces. She is exploring the PARADOXES of embodiment and being and nature within a virtual environment. This woman's work is so sophisticated and complex that it is both intriguing and disturbing.

<http://www.zodiak.fi/sivuaskel/taiteilijat?english=> (6)

Sidestep Festival 05. Choreographers include Deborah Hay, Lisa Nelson, Steve Paxton.

<http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/02/deren.html> (11, 13)

The filmography of Maya Deren.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC LEGEND

- ① INTERSECTIONS (movement and media)
- ② POETRY and POETICS
- ③ PEDAGOGY
- ④ PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS
- ⑤ ART HISTORY
- ⑥ PERFORMANCE/DANCE
- ⑦ THEATRE
- ⑧ VISUAL ART
- ⑨ INTERVENTIONS IN FORM
- ⑩ POLITICS
- ①① MYTHOLOGY and SACRED STORY
- ①② FOOLS, CLOWNS, and FOLLY
- ①③ VIDEO and FILM
- ①④ PROCESS and PRACTICE
- ①⑤ COMPOSITIONAL AESTHETICS/MUSIC
- ①⑥ PASSAGES

- a. Books
- b. Performances/Lectures
- c. Interviews
- d. Article/Thesis
- e. Web Resources
- f. Recordings: Film, Video and Music
- g. Workshops
- h. Exhibitions

## Cumulative Bibliography and Resources by Alpha and Form

### Printed Matter (a, d)

Ackerman, Diane. *Reverse Thunder: A Dramatic Poem*. New York: Lumen Books, 1988. (2, 9)

Addo, Peter Eric Adotey. *Ghana Folk Tales: Ananse Stories from Africa*. New York : Exposition Press. (11)

Ayala, Roselyn de; Gueno, Jean-Pierre. *Illustrated Letters: Artists and Writers Correspond*. New York : Harry Abrams, 1998. (8, 9)

Adler, Janet. *Offerings from the Conscious Body*. Rochester, Vermont : Inner Traditions, 2002. (6, 14)

Alexander, Jacqui M. *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory and the Sacred*. Durham : Duke University Press, 2005. (3, 4, 10, 11)

Artaud, Antonin. *The Theatre and Its Double*. New York: Grove Press, 1958. (4, 7, 2,a)

Artaud, Antonin. *Anthology*. San Francisco: City Lights, 1965. (4, 7, 2)

Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Thousand Oaks, Cal. : Sage, 2003. (2)

Barthes, Roland. *Incidents*. Berkely, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992. (2, 9)

Barthes, Roland. *Writing Degree Zero*. New York : Hill and Wang, 1968. (2, 9, 14,a)

Beckwith, Carol and Fisher, Angela. *African Ceremonies*. New York : Harry N. Abrams, 1998. (11, 10, 8)

- Birringer, Johannes. *Media & Performance: Along the Borders*. Baltimore : Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. (1, 6)
- Brakhage, Stan. *Telling Time: Essays of a Visionary Filmmaker*. Kingston, New York : McPherson & Co., 2003. (4, 5, 13)
- Brook, Peter. *The Empty Space*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1968. (7, 2)
- Broumas, Olga. *Soi Sauvage*. Port Townsend, Wash. : Copper Canyon Press, 1979. (2)
- Bridgforth, Sharon. *Love Conjure Blues*. Washington, DC : RedBone Press, 2004. (2, 9)
- Budge, E.A. Wallis. *The Book of the Dead: the Hieroglyphic Transcript of the Papyrus of Ani*. New Hyde Park, New York : University Books, 1960. (11, 8)
- Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York : Verso, 2004. (4, 10, 16)
- Carson, Anne. *Autobiography of Red, a Novel in Verse*. New York: Vintage Books, 1998. (2, 9)
- DiPrima, Diane. *Revolutionary Letters*. San Francisco : City Lights, 1979. (2)
- Dolan, Jill. *Utopia and Performance: Finding Hope at the Theater*. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 2005. (7, 10, 14)
- Dove, Rita. *Mother Love*. New York : W.W. Norton, 1995. (2, 11)
- Dove, Rita. *On the Bus with Rosa Parks*. New York : W.W. Norton, 1999. (2, 10)
- Dove, Rita. *Thomas and Beulah*. Pittsburgh : Carnegie Mellon University Press, 1986. (2, 11)
- Ellis, Normandi. *Awakening Osiris: a New Translation of the Egyptian Book of the*



- Dead*. Grand Rapids, Michigan : Phanes Press, 1998. (11)
- Erasmus, Desiderius. *The Praise of Folly*. New York : Walter J. Black, 1942. (12, 4)
- Erdoes, Richard & Ortiz, Alfonso (eds). *American Indian Myths and Legends*. New York : Pantheon Books, 1984. (11, 12)
- Fraleigh, Sondra Horton. *Dancing into Darkness : Butoh, Zen, and Japan*. Pittsburgh : University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999. (6, 15)
- Godfrey, Tony. *Conceptual Art*. London : Phaidon, 1999. (5)
- Goldson, Emily (ed.). *Seeing Jazz*. San Francisco : Chronicle Books, 1997. (9, 5, 4)
- Hosoda, Eisha, Pakarik, Andrew. *The 36 Immortal Women Poets*. New York : G. Braziller, 1991. (2, 8, 11)
- Hay, Deborah. *My Body the Buddhist*. Hanover, New Hampshire : Wesleyan University Press, 2000. (6, 14)
- Innes, C.D.. *Holy Theatre, Ritual and the Avant Garde*. Cambridge & New York : Cambridge University Press, 1981. (7, 5)
- Jackson, Gale P. *Bridge Suite*. New York : Storm Imprints, 1998. (2, 11)
- Jackson, Gale P. *Medea*. New York : Glad Day Books, 2005. (2, 9, 11)
- Jenkins, Ron. *Acrobats of the Soul*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1988. (12)
- Jones, Leroi (aka Amiri Baraka). *Four Black Revolutionary Plays*. New York : The Bobs Merrill Co., Inc., 1969. (9, 10, 7)
- Jordan, June. *Affirmative Acts: Political Essays*. New York : Anchor Books, 1998. (2, 4, 10)
- Jordan, June. *Directed by Desire, The Collected Poems of June Jordan*. Port Townsend, WA : Copper Canyon Press. 2005. (2)

- Jordan, June (ed). *Soulscript: A Classic Collection of African-American Poetry*. New York : Harlem Moon Classics, 2004. (2, 3, 11)
- Keats, John. *Lyric Poems (unabridged)*. New York : Dover Publications, 1991. (2)
- Kennedy, Adrienne. *The Adrienne Kennedy Reader*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 2001. (7, 9)
- Kennedy, Adrienne. *People Who Led to My Plays*. New York : Theatre Communications Group, 1996. (2, 7, 9)
- Kidd, Sue Monk. *The Secret Life of Bees*. New York: Penguin Books, 2002. (11)
- Lorca, Federico Garcia. Maurer, Christopher (ed.) *Collected Poems*. New York : Farrar Straus Giroux, 1991. (2)
- Lorca, Federico Garcia. Graham-Lujan, James and O'Connell, Richard (trans.) *Five Plays: Comedies and Tragedies*. New York : New Directions, 1963. (2, 7, 9)
- Lorca, Federico Garcia. *In Search of Duende*. NY : New Directions, 1998. (4, 9, 11)
- Mahone, Sydne (ed). *Moon Marked and Touched by Sun: Plays by African-American Women*. New York : Theatre Communications Group, 1994. (2, 7, 9)
- Marcus, Ben. "Why Experimental Fiction Threatens to Destory Publishing, Jonathan Franzen, and Life as We Know it. A Correction" *Harpers* (October, 2005) : 39-52. (9)
- Maso, Carole. *Break Every Rule: Essays on Language, Longing and Moments of Desire*. Washington, DC : Counterpoint, 2000. (9, 14)
- Mee, Charles L. *A Nearly Normal Life*. New York: Little Brown & Company, 1999. (14, 7)
- Milosz, Czeslaw (ed). *A Book of Luminous Things*. New York : Harcourt & Brace.

1996. (2)
- Mitoma, Judy (editor). *Envisioning Dance*. New York : Routledge, 2002. (1, 6)
- Mundy, Jennifer (ed.). *Surrealism: Desire Unbound*. London : Tate Publishing Ltd., 2001. Exhibition catalog. (8, 10, 15)
- Niane, D.T. *Sundiata, an Epic of Old Mali*. Hong Kong : Longman Group, Ltd, 1986. (11, 4)
- Nietzsche, Friedrich (translation by Richard Polt). *Twilight of the Idols*. Indianapolis : Hackett Publishing Co., 1997. (First published in 1887) (4)
- Nietzsche, Friedrich (translation by Francis Golffing). *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*. Garden Grove, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956. (4, 5)
- Popov, Oleg. *Oleg Popov, Russian Clown*. London: MacDonald & Co. Publishers, 1970. (12, 10)
- Reid, Phyllis Thompson. "The Devil's Playground." *Aperture no. 176*. 2004. (8)
- Rich, Adrienne. *Arts of the Possible*. New York : W.W. Norton & Co., 2001. (2, 4, 10)
- Rich, Adrienne. *What is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics*. New York : WW Norton & Co., 2003. (2, 4, 10)
- Rothenberg, Jerome (ed.). *Technicians of the Sacred, A Range of Poetries from Africa, America, Asia, and Oceania*. New York : Anchor Books, 1969. (2, 11)
- Safer, Jeanne. *The Normal One. Life with a Difficult or Damaged Sibling*. New York : Bantam Dell, 2002. (14, 16)
- Schhechner, Richard and Appel, Willa. *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1990. (6, 5)

- Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*. New York : Routledge, 2003. (6)
- Shaun, Ben. *The Shape of Content*. New York : Vintage Books, 1957. (3, 5)
- Smith, Branford. *Dear Gift of Life: a Man's Encounter with Death*. Wallingford, Penn. : Pendle Hill Publications, 1908. (14, 16)
- Somé, Malidoma Patrice. *Of Water and the Spirit: Ritual Magic, and Initiation in the Life of an African Shaman*. New York : Penguin Group, 1994. (11)
- Starhawk. *The Spiral Dance*. New York : Harper and Row, 1979. (11, 2, 14, 10)
- Tarkovsky, Andrei. *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*. New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 1987. (13)
- Turchi, Peter. *Maps of the Imagination: The Writer as Cartographer*. San Antonio, Texas : Trinity University Press, 2004. (14, 9)
- Turner, Victor. *From Ritual to Theatre*. New York : Performing Arts Journal Publications. 1982. (6)
- Viola, Bill. *Going Forth By Day*. New York : Guggenheim Museum publications, 2002 (Deusche Guggenheim, Berlin) Distributed by Harry Abrams. (8, 13, 11)
- Willeford, William. *The Clown, The Kingdom and the Stage: A Study in the Forms of Our Relationship to Folly*. Excerpt from thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Zurich for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Zurich: Juris Druck + Verlag Zurich, 1967. (12, 7, 11)
- Williams, Rowan. *Writing in the Dust: After September 11*. Grand Rapids, Michigan : William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002. (2, 4, 10)
- Wolkstein, Diane & Kramer, Samuel Noah. *Inanna Queen of Heaven and Earth*. New York : Harper & Row, 1983. (11)
- Yeats, William Butler. *Selected Poems and Four Plays*. New York : Scribner Paperback Poetry, 1996. (2, 7, 9)

## Workshops (g)

Fieldwork. Performance and Writing Sessions. 2004-2006. (6, 14)

Hay, Deborah. *The Body in Question is the Dance*. September 26-27, 2004. (6, 14)

Hennessey, Keith. *The Improvising Citizen*. February 27-29, 2004. (6, 14)

Nelson, Lisa. *Tuning Scores: Composition and the Sense of the Imagination*.  
October 8-14, 2005. (6, 14)

## Performances (b)

*Accidental Activist, The*. Kathryn Blume. Art of Resistance Conference. CHAC. May  
11, 2004. (6, 7, 10)

*Anna and the Tropics*. Nilo Cruz. Dir. Sharon Ott. Seattle Repertory Theatre.  
October 6, 2004. (7)

*Arcadia*. Tom Stoppard. Capitol Hill Arts Center. April, 2004. (7)

*Bloody Mess*. Forced Entertainment. On the Boards. December 9, 2005. (7, 9)

*Dance This....!* Produced by Seattle Theatre Group. Paramount Theatre, July 2004 &  
July 2005. (6, 14)

Deborah Hay Dance Company

—*The Match*. TB:A 2004, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art. September 18,  
2004. (6)

—*The Ridge*. Montepellier Dans Festival. June 24, 2005. (6)

—*The Ridge & Beauty (a performance of the text of the choreography)*. On the  
Boards. November 20, 2004. (6)

*Diversion of Angels-Lecture demo and performance*. Choreography by Martha  
Graham. Performed by the Cornish Dance Department. Moore Theatre.

October 30, 2005. (6)

*Don Quixote*. The Bolshoi Ballet. Paramount Theatre. October 31, 2004. (6)

*Frankenocchio*. Created by Brian Kooser. Dir. Scot Augustson. Empty Space Theatre. October 14, 2004. (6)

*Goldberg Variations, The*. Choreography: Mark Haim. On the Boards. March 31, 2006. (6, 9)

*How Shall We sing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land?* Installation and performance by Lucia Near. NW New Works Festival. On the Boards, April, 2004. (7, 9)

Hubbard Street Dance Company. Presented by Seattle Theater Group. November 10, 2005. (6)

Ink, Joe. NW New Works Festival. On the Boards, April, 2004. (6, 9)

*Mapa- Corpo: Interactive Rituals for the New Millennium*. Guillermo Gomez-Peña, and Violeta Luna. September 17, 2005. (6, 9)

Monk, Meredith. Bumbershoot Arts Festival. September 5, 2005. (6, 9)

*Mitzi's Abortion*. Elizabeth Heffron. Staged Reading ACT. April 6, 2005. Empty Space Theatre. October 14, 2004. (6)

*Molt*. Choreography: Paige Barnes. Consolidated Works. May 13, 2006. (6)

*O'Conner Girls, The*. Katie Forgette. Dir. Christine Sumption. Leo K Theatre at Seattle Repertory Theatre. March, 2004. (6)

*One*. Choreography: Erin Mitchell. Studio Current, December 5, 2005. (6)

*Onion Twins, The*. Rebecca Brown (libretto). Choreography: Alex Martin. Richard Hugo House. January 26, 2006. (6, 9)

*Our Little Sunbeam*. 33 Fainting Spells. On the Boards. May 14, 2004. (6)

Pacific Northwest Ballet. (6)

—*The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. September 23, 2004.

—*Balanchine*. McCaw Hall. November 4, 2004.  
—*Nutcracker*. McCaw Hall. December 4, 2004.  
—*Silver Linings*. McCaw Hall. June 2, 2005.  
—*Director's Choice*. McCaw Hall. October 1, 2005.  
—*Past, Present, Future*. McCaw Hall. November 4, 2005.  
—*Valentine*. February 12, 2006  
—*Points of View*. March 17, 2006.  
—*Sleeping Beauty*. April 14, 2006.

*Pinkk!* Laura Curry. On the Boards, September 12, 2004. (6, 9)

*Pollen Revolution*. Akiri Kaisai. On the Boards. September 26, 2004. (6)

*Purgatorio*. Ariel Dorfman. Seattle Repertory Theatre. November 2, 2005. (7)

*Rich Grandeur of Boxing, The*. Megan Murphy. On the Boards. April 23, 2004.

(1, 6)

*Rigoletto*. Seattle Opera. McCaw Hall. October 26, 2004. (7)

*Russian Doll*. Theatre Run. Consolidated Works. November 21, 2004. (6, 9)

*Secret in the Wings, The*. Mary Zimmerman. Seattle Repertory Theatre. March, 2005. (7)

*Shadows of Exile*. By Ed Mast and the community AOR. Art of Resistance Conference. May, 2004. (6, 9, 10)

*Some Demented Evening*. Karl S. Monroe. Odd Duck Studios. February 2, 2004.

(9)

Spectrum Dance Theatre. Artistic Director Donald Byrd.

—*Fado, Hip Hop and the Blues*. Intiman Theatre, February 19, 2004 (6, 11)

—*Bhangra Fever*. Moore Theatre. November 6, 2004. (6, 9)



—*Sleeping Beauty Notebooks*. Moore Theatre. October 7, 2005. (6, 9)

SPLIT BILL. Monster Squad and Marty Schnapf. *Island Desk: my teeny tiny knowledge of nothing*. Zoe Scofield, with Juniper Shuey and Morgan Henderson. *There Ain't no Easy Way Out*. On the Boards. February 16, 2005. (6)

*Split Second* Conceived and performed by Mik Kuhlman. Velocity, April, 2004 & Bumbershoot, September, 2005. (6, 7, 9)

STREB. Bumbershoot Arts Festival. September 5, 2005. (6)

*Teatro ZinZanni (Dinner and Dreams and Love Chaos & Dinner)*. Produced by One Reel. Multiple performances 2004-2006. (7, 12, 9)

*The Nesting Project*. Studio Current. February & May, 2005. (6, 9)

*Toaster*. By Rebecca Brown Dir. John Kazanjian. New City Theater/On the Boards. October 30, 2005. (7)

*Vessel*. Mary Sheldon-Scott & Jared Powell. NW New Works Festival. On the Boards, April, 2004. (6, 9)

*Woman Under the Table*. Installation and performance by Vanessa DeWolf. NW New Works Festival. On the Boards, April, 2004. (6, 9)

*Word Made Flesh*. By Marc Bamuthi Joseph. Bumbershoot Arts Festival. September 3, 2005. (6, 9)

*Wintertime*. By Chuck Mee. Dir. David Schweizer. 2<sup>nd</sup> Stage Theatre (NYC). February 17, 2004. (7)

*Wreckage*. Weedman, Lauren. Bumbershoot Arts Festival. September 3, 2005. (7)

### **Lectures, Readings, and Discussions (b)**

Abromovic, Marina. Reed College. March 7, 2006. (6, 9)

Cranky Magazine Poetry Reading. Seattle Art Museum. September 17, 2004. (2, 6)

Etchells, Tim. *On the Boards*. December 6, 2005. (7, 9)

Meade, Michael. *Tides of Chaos*. Seattle Art Museum. November, 16, 2005. (2, 11)

Pacific Northwest Ballet. *The Dedication Season Lecture Series*. September-May, 2005. (5, 6, 14)

Rich, Adrienne. Seattle Arts and Lectures. Intiman Theatre March 22, 2006. (2, 10)

Subtext Collective. *What's Happening with Poetics?* Richard Hugo House. September 7, 2005. (2)

### **Exhibitions/Visual Art Research (h, partial)**

*Anne Kresge*. Portland Print Arts. August 19, 2005. (8)

Art Forge Collective Group Show. August 6, 2005. (8, 10)

*Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China*. Seattle Art Museum. March, 2005. (8)

Bumbershoot Visual Arts Exhibitions. August 31, 2004. (8)

Bumbershoot Visual Arts Exhibitions. September 1, 2005. (8)

*Christian Markley*. Seattle Art Museum. Spring 2004. (8)

*Cy Twombly, Works on Paper; Tim Hawkins; Alexander Calder*. Whitney Museum. March, 2005. (8)

*Diane Arbus: Revelations*. Metropolitan Museum of Art. March, 2005. (8)

*Dance and Art In Dialogue, 1961-2001*. Trisha Brown. Henry Art Gallery. Spring 2004. (6, 8, 5)

Davidson Galleries, Print Exhibition. November, 2005. (8)

*Isamu Noguchi Sculptural Designs*. Installation by Robert Wilson. Seattle Art Museum. September 3, 2005. (6, 7, 8, 9)

Liz Conner. BFA Alumni show. Cornish College of the Arts. November, 2005. (8)  
*Only Skin Deep*. Documentary Photography. Seattle Art Museum. Spring 2004. (5,

8, 10, 14)

*Surreal Calder*. San Francisco MOMA. May 20, 2006. (5, 8)

Student Showings. Portland College of Arts. August 19, 2005. (8)

Cornish Faculty Show. Cornish College of the Arts. October, 2005. (8)

### INTERNET RESOURCES (e, partial)

<http://www.ubu.com/>

This is an amazing website with historical and contemporary resources from rulebreakers from Deren and Genet, to Burroughs. (1, 13, 7, 9)

<http://www.txstate.edu/mcgs/matriarchal.html> (1 1)

<http://www.mouvance.com/>

This is my circus central website. (1 2, 9)

<http://www.ccca.ca/media/index.html?languagePref=en&> (1, 5, 9, 13)

This database of Canadian artists has an amazing range of work from artists working in all disciplines.

<http://www.meredithmonk.org> (6, 13)

<http://www.mouthswideopen.org/main.shtml> (9, 10, 6)

An activist site with a beautiful interventionist project of tiny army men with stickers on the bottom that say, "Bring me home."

[http://collections.ic.gc.ca/waic/chdavi/chdavi\\_e.htm](http://collections.ic.gc.ca/waic/chdavi/chdavi_e.htm) (1, 9, 13)

Char Davies. Experimental artist working with virtual spaces.

<http://www.zodiak.fi/sivuaskel/taiteilijat?english=> (6)

Sidestep Festival 05. Choreographers include Deborah Hay, Lisa Nelson, Steve Paxton.

<http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/02/deren.html> (11, 13)

Filmography of Maya Deren

<http://www.peripheralproduce.com> (13)

Experimental Film and Video Distribution Company

## **VIDEO INTERVIEWS (c)**

### **Choreographers, Clowns, Artists and Educators**

Beatty, Kurt. Artistic Director, ACT. October, 2005. (7)

Bolcomb, William. Composer. April 5, 2005. (6)

Byrd, Donald. Choreographer. June 2004. (6)

Chiarelli, Rico. Lighting Designer. April 7, 2005. (6)

Conway, Merry. Clown and artist. March 19, 2005. (12)

Cottureau, Julien. Clown. July 2, 2005. (12)

Dagraie, Edna. Teacher. September 2004. (6)

Dagraie, Chris. Choreographer and teacher. September 2004. (6)

Dawkins, Sonia. Choreographer. June 2004. (6)

DeMaiers. Clown duo. June 2004. (12)

Dillare, Michel. Clown and master teacher. June 25, 2005. (12)

Gaines, Jamel. Choreographer. June 2004. (6)

Gaulier, Phillipe. Clown and master teacher. July 1, 2005. (12)

Graney, Pat. Choreographer. June 2004. (6)

Harvey, Dyanne. Choreographer and dancer. June 2004. (6)

Hay, Deborah. Choreographer. November 19, 2004. (6, 9)

Lee, Ming Cho. Scenic designer. March 21, 2005. (6, 7)

Leonard, Doloreze. Clown and director. May, 2004. (1 2)

Los Excentricos. Clown trio. June, 2004. (1 2)

PNB Dancers and Colleagues. March-May, 2004. (6)

Perkahadova, Svetlana. Contortionist and comedienne. September 28, 2005. (1 2)

Priester, Julian. Cornish College of the Arts faculty. November, 2005. (3, 1 5)

Reynolds, Nancy. Balanchine Foundation. March 19, 2005. (6)

Russell, Francia. Retiring Artistic Director. PNB. 2004-2005 Season. (6)

Sendak, Maurice. Author, illustrator, designer. March 18, 2005. (6, 8)

Schorr, Suki. Former dancer and teacher, ABT. March 19, 2005. (6)

Scher, Bartlett. (7)

Stowell, Kent. Retiring Artistic Director, PNB. 2004-2005 season. (6)

Tarlet, Nathalie. Clown and director. February 25, 2005. (1 2)

Volmar, Jocelyn. Former dancer and teacher, SFB. April 7, 2005. (6)

Voronin, Eugeny. Magician and clown. September 28, 2005. (1 2)

## RECORDINGS

### FILM and VIDEO (f, partial)

*Callas Forever*. Dir. Franco Zeffirelli. Regent Releasing, 2002. (1 3, 1 5)

*Borrowing Time*. Dir. Web Crowell. NWFF Premiere. April, 2005. 1 3

*By Brakhage*. DVD Anthology. Criterion Collection, 2001. (1 3)

*Dancing and Dating*. NWFilm Forum Shorts program. NWFF. January, 2005. (6, 1 3)

*Divine Horseman : The Living Gods of Haiti*. (Filmmaker) Maya Deren. Original footage shot by Deren (1947-1954). Reconstruction by Teji & Cherel Ito, 1985. (6, 1 3, 1 1)

*Envisioning Dance*. DVD accompaniment to *Envisioning Dance* Text. New York : Routledge, 2002. (6, 1 3)

*Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. Dir. Michel Gondry. Universal Focus, 2004.

(1 3)

*La Strada*. Dir. Federico Fellini. Criterion Collection, 1954.(1 3,1 2)

*From Tugboats to Polar Bears*. Dir. Matt McCormick. Portland, Or. : Peripheral Produce, 2004. (1 3)

*Hello* [short motion picture]. Dir. John Helde. Undistributed, 2005. (1 3)

*Made in China*. Dir. John Helde. Work-in-progress screening, December 2005.

(1 3,1 4)

*Mysterious Skin*. Dir. Greg Araki. TLA Releasing, 2005. (1 3)

*Pretty as a Picture: The Art of David Lynch*. Dir. Toby Keeler. DVD release, 1998.

(1 3, 8)

*Sans Soleil*. (Filmmaker) Chris Marker. United States: New Yorker Films Artwork, 1983.(1 3, 9)

*The Mirror*. Dir. Andre Tarkovsky. Mosfilm 4, 1975. (1 3)

*Yes*. Dir. Sally Potter. London : Sony Pictures Classics, 2004.(1 3, 9)

### **MUSIC (f, partial)**

Coltrane, Alice. *Translinear Light*. Verve, 2004. (1 5)

Coltrane, John. *First Meditations*. MCA Impulse, 1992. Reissue. (1 5)

Coltrane, John. *Spiritual*. Verve : 2001. Reissue. (1 5)

Coltrane, John. *Kulu Sé Mama*. Verve . 2000. Reissue. (1 5)

Monk, Thelonious with John Coltrane. Riverside Records, 1998. (1 5)

Maal, Baba. *Souka Nayo (I will follow you)*. Blue Mountain/Real World Records, 1997 (1 5)

Sanders, Pharoah. *Jewels of Thought*. Impulse! 1969. (1 5)

Sanders, Pharoah. *Izipho Zem (My Gifts)*. Sunspots. 2003. (1 5)

































































































