THERE IS A DISSONANCE AND DENSITY: DISRUPTING QUEER TRAUMA THROUGH PERFORMATIVE EMBODIMENT PRACTICES

HOLLY TIMPENER

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Abstract

There is a Dissonance and Density within my Body: Disrupting Queer Trauma Through Performative Embodiment Practices

Holly Timpener

This research-creation thesis presents that through performative actions, Queer performers embody and shift both individual and communal traumas. For this thesis, I have created a Queer performance event series entitled Pi*llOry which had five iterations, wherein I and other Queer performers infiltrate different nontraditional spaces and performatively embody trauma. The exploration in and development of Queer cultural values, beliefs, and political identity is fundamental in our personal trauma investigations. Pi*llOry takes an intersectional approach, to discuss gender identity, sexuality, race, class, and ability as a means to understand and work through Queer trauma. Within this thesis I take a selection of performances presented at Pi*llOry to analyze the event, expose its failures and successes in disrupting trauma through embodiment. This thesis demonstrates how Queer performers use their lived experiences to create work concerning trauma, forming, and engaging a Queer community bound by shared trauma narratives. It is within this Queer performance community that trauma is revisited and transformed to reshape the future.

Land Acknowledgment

I would like to begin this thesis by acknowledging that York University, the event Pi*llOry and the research conducted took place on Tkaronto, the ancestral and treaty lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit, First Nation of the Anishinabek Peoples.

As a settler, I acknowledge that I am a visitor on this land both physically and spiritually. Long before today there have been indigenous peoples who have been the stewards of this place and I am forever grateful to all the generations of people that have taken care of this land for thousands of years and continue to do so. In particular I acknowledge the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. I recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this place. I also recognize the contributions that the Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples have forged, both in shaping and strengthening this community, our province and country as a whole. As a settler I believe the recognition of contributions and importance of Indigenous peoples must be made clear by our collective commitment towards making Truth and Acknowledgement real in all communities. I recognize the intergenerational impacts of colonization, attempts at assimilation, and cultural genocide endured by the indigenous people along with the critical roles Indigenous peoples have held in the creation of Canada, their global importance, and every day challenges faced within our colonial borders.

Community Acknowledgment

I would like to thank Glad Day Bookstore for their financial support and for broadcasting Pi*llOry part five. I would also like to thank Tianna Henry for graciously and flawlessly hosting Pi*llOry part five. Writing as a non-binary Queer person, I acknowledge the presence of my own personal experience and embodied knowledge within this work. I would like to thank and send out much love to the Queer people who paved the way for the opportunities and privileges that I have today. I acknowledge the arduous and exhausting work that Queer elders have done and the hardships they have endured so that I could have the space to research, write and make performance art.

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Introduction

Queer history illustrates many repeated violences resulting in individual and communal traumas. The repetition of violent acts in Queer culture emboldens heteronormative structures and authorities in their desire to erase Queer bodies, narratives, and histories. This thesis investigates how Queer performers personally and politically resist their erasure by illuminating trauma narratives within counterpublics. The research demonstrates how Queer performers use their lived experiences to create work concerning trauma and how Queer communities, bound by shared trauma narratives, support the work presented. I argue that through performative actions, Queer performers embody and shift both individual and communal traumas. It is within these Queer performance communities that trauma is revisited and transformed to reshape the future.

For this research/creation thesis, I created a Queer performance event entitled Pi*llOry wherein Queer performers and I infiltrate nontraditional spaces and performatively embody trauma. Commencing July 18th, 2019, until its final event on November 21st, 2020, in total, there has been five Pi*llOry events with twenty-six Queer participants. Over this period to time, Pi*llOry's foundation was created and supported by many group conversations with each events participating artists. During our collective conversations, it was clear that the exploration and development of Queer cultural values, beliefs, and identity are fundamental elements in our investigations of trauma. Working as a collective, Pi*llOry developed an outreach system of curating, where performers were invited by previous Pi*llOrists. This system allowed Pi*llOry to create a diverse network of Queer performers that concentrated not only on our Queer kinship but acknowledges individual differences. Pi*llOry recognizes that Queer trauma differs in consideration to personal experiences of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Thus, our outreach way of curation employs an intersectional approach as we collectively invite artists to perform.

In doing this, we create a discourse of a wide variety of Queer traumas and highlight trauma's lasting affects.

This thesis begins with a literary review of scholarly works. The writings investigated create a road map of terms used throughout the thesis. The critique then turns to the present and describes processes that performance artists engage in while making work. Finally, this thesis provides a critical analysis of works from Pi*llOry by Queer artists Enok Ripley, Racquel Rowe, Brian Smith, Sheri Osden Nault, and Santiago Tamayo Soler. The artists selected for analysis continues to highlight the importance of intersectionality. Each artist represents a different and unique experience of trauma as it relates to their identity. The analysis of their work shows different ways in which Queer performers embody trauma and how trauma is shifted.

Queerness is that which fundamentally links Pi*llOrists together. We take pride in and celebrate our differences as we unify through our lived experiences of being Queer. In recognizing the many ways Queerness is embodied as identity, Pi*llOry's mandate attempts to express our collective interpretation of Queerness and how it is employed in our performative works. In preparation for the premiere Pi*llOry event in July, theatre artist Jean-Paul Parker and I took to the task of assimilating the mandate. The completed mandate reads,

> Pi*llOry's performers are liberating queer bodies as a primary agency that can harness the transformative power of presence, space, politics, shame, and (dis)/ability while refracting their infinite incarnations. Pi*llOry's artists renounce the binary and traditional gender roles, they not only create new ones for themselves, but give space for others to create their own as well. Through oral, visual, and visceral mediums, Pi*llOry explores the depths of fragmented gender/queer identity, pushing beyond labels and classifications. On the edge of complete uncertainty, with only the already structural,

limited, and bound ways of description and discrimination of queerness, Pi*llOrists arm themselves with the unknown in hopes of navigating the surrender that comes with being Other.

This thesis uses the word Queer and Queer community to represent identities of marginalized LGBTTQQIP2SAA[1] people and the coming together of those people. *Queer Theory* by Annamarie Jagose presents a brief history of the word and illustrates the complexities Queerness encapsulates. The Queer community has not always celebrated the word, Queer. Historically Queer was an oppressive word used as slang for homosexuals and uttered as a form of homophobic abuse (Jagose 1). As an act of resistance and resilience, Queers repossessed the word, and it has now become an "umbrella term for a coalition of culturally marginal sexual self -identification" (Jagose 1). Jagose explains Queer to be a term that embraces elasticity in and resistance to definition as it actively resists normativity (Jagose 1). As concepts of identity explode binary representations, Queer has evolved beyond only gay and lesbian portrayal, and thus Queer is unaligned with any specific identity category (Jagose 2).

> Broadly speaking, queer describes those gestures or analytical models which dramatise incoherencies in the allegedly stable relations between chromosomal sex, gender, and sexual desire. Resisting that model of stability - which claims heterosexuality as its origin, when it is more properly its effect - queer focuses on mismatches between sex, gender and desire. (Jagose 3)

[1] LGBTTQQIP2SAA is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual, two spirit, asexual, and ally. I employ this acronym to represent the community that, throughout this paper, is also referred to as 'Queer.' I hope to acknowledge as many kinds of non-normative identities as possible with the use of this acronym and acknowledge that it can forever fluctuate to include others that may have been left out or misrepresented.

Catherine Lord and Richard Meyer's art book *Art and Queer Culture* continues to note the difficulties in defining Queer and further investigates Queer as it relates to many complex identities. Meyers writes towards the robust nature of the word Queer used now to represent Queer people and communities.

> We have chosen the term 'queer' in the knowledge that no single word can accommodate the sheer expanse of cultural practices that oppose normative heterosexuality. In its shifting connotation from everyday parlance to phobic epithet to defiant self identification, 'queer' offers more generous rewards than any simple inventory of sexual practices or erotic object choices. (Meyer 9)

In part, the unstable definition of Queer results from its openness to accept a plethora of identities. Many different people come together with the shared interest of continually and creatively challenging social and sexual norms. Catherine Lord writes that "activism, personal testimony, academic work, and visual culture enabled the word 'queer' to assume the function of describing political and cultural alliances that only partly intersect with the categories of gay and lesbian" (42). This opened the door to have Queer become a personal embodiment and representation of political convictions. Lord further examples the fluidity of the word Queer by quoting David Halperin in his work *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography.* Halperin writes that (qtd. in Lord and Meyer) "Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers*. It is an identity without an essence" (Lord 42).

Queer performers in this thesis embody trauma with the intention to learn from it, provide meaning to it and develop the trauma into something new. I use the term Queer throughout this work as an umbrella term for LGBTTQQIP2SAA people, recognizing these people's lived

experiences as knowledge. I define Queer as an identity that envelopes sexual preferences and individual subjectivity and participates in active resistance practices to heteronormative views and ideals.

Methodology

This thesis focuses on the Queer performance event Pi*llOry (Toronto, Ontario), and the performances that took place within from July 18th, 2019, till November 21st, 2020. I researched with an Interdisciplinary approach entangling disciplines of Performance Studies, Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, and Visual Arts. I choose to focus my research on performance art, as it is, in itself, interdisciplinary in nature, enveloping many disciplines and fields such as philosophy, anthropology, sociology, drawing, painting, sculpture, and dance, to name only a few. The first half of the thesis analyzes academic writing by authors writing in the field of Performance, Gender Studies, and Visual Arts to define trauma, performance, and embodiment; to underscore the engagement of counterpublics within performance events; to discuss the critical relationship between performer and witness, and to illustrate how affect resides in and connects them all.

In the second half, a critical study of five different performances presented at Pi*llOry links scholarly texts to embodied experiences as method. The extensive twenty-six performing cast represented a diverse group of people. Artists identified as Black, Indigenous, and people of colour; they were transgender and non-binary folks, Chinese, Filipino and Michif artists, along with people from Lebanon, Columbia, and Barbados. The performances selected are of five varied identities and experiences of Queer trauma. I choose performances that present an

intersectional depiction of Queer trauma. The selected performances reveal the events' failures and successes in creating a space where queer healing can occur through the embodiment of trauma. As an extension of this thesis, I am personally creating and publishing a book wherein all Pi*llOrists will be presented. Each artist's individual voice will be accounted for as they write towards their own work and experiences performing in Pi*llOry.

In addition to the personal analysis of works within Pi*llOry, I conducted in-depth interviews with all twenty-six Pi*llOrists. Interviews consisted of ten questions and occurred between October 28th, 2020, and February 17th, 2021. Performers were offered the choice of interviewing over zoom as a one-on-one with me or writing their responses to the questions independently. Questions approved by the York University ethics board had Pi*llOrists discuss their experience at Pi*llOry, the affect of Queerness in their work, how they engaged with Trauma in their performance, thoughts on what embodiment is, how affect informs their work, their relationship to the witness, and their thoughts regarding the success of the event in shifting trauma. In addition to each of the artists' own writing about their work and practice, all the interviews will be presented in the Pi*llOry publication to affirm each individual's importance and voice further.

I analyze performances as they use the artist's first-person authority on their own experiences of trauma. I seek to present diversity, recognizing Queer trauma to be a continuous, individual, and communal experience. I also acknowledge my subjectivity within the research presented. My perspective as a Queer, non-binary performance artist and my personal experiences of marginalization influences my opinions in this work. I choose to embrace my subjectivity and my embodied experiences as they guide my curiosity and passion towards shifting trauma by embodiment in performance art. I also recognize that the analysis of work in

this thesis is from my own perspective and that it is beyond the scope of this thesis to continually reference the fact that there can be a divergence between the intention of the artists and interpretation by myself and/or other witnesses.

Outline of Sections

This thesis is written in two parts. As noted earlier, part one of the thesis is a literary review of scholarly works that address trauma, Queerness, counterpublics, embodiment, witness, and affect related to performance art. I examine shifts in trauma through performance art practices. It is imperative for me to note some important differences between performance art and theatre as they are often thought to be the same. As I define it, performance art lives in the moment, is specific to the lived experience of the performer, and does not re-enact, repeat, or reproduce past experiences. A performance can only live once as it is particular to the situation in which it is presented and the parameters in which it is witnessed.

In part one, Queer trauma is defined and considered through works by Kai Erikson, Cathy Caruth, Ann Cvetkovich, Matthew Waites, and Sandy Stone. I consider Queer trauma and how it affects Queer individuals and Queer communities' bodies and mind through events, encounters, systems, and structures that aim to erase Queer narratives and, ultimately, Queer individuals and communities. I example hate crimes, systemic violence (Transgender medicalization, homonormative archiving of Queer narratives, police violence), LGBT-free zones, and the AIDS pandemic as kinds of Queer trauma.

Embodiment is then looked at in two ways. First, as body memory, memories that live subconsciously in the body (Thomas Fuchs and Sabine C. Koch). Then I consider embodiment as

a cognitive and felt experience. In this work, embodiment describes the connection of in, out, and in-between the physical self and the sensed experience. Thus, I argue that the embodiment of trauma involves the performers' lived experience as they interpret trauma and create creative responses to it.

Queer performance art addresses trauma through acts of personal and collective embodiment in public spaces where trauma can be re-examined in counterpublics. Counterpublic refers to publics that form through mutual recognition of a particular oppressed group's exclusions in wider publics. I present that Queer performance events forge Queer counterpublics as we come together to resist and transform our individual and collective experiences of traumas. In these counterpublics, we create and engage with collective embodied social knowledge through shared narratives of trauma.

In these spaces, we also engage with affectual forces that challenge conscious knowing of trauma, traverse beyond its emotional experience, and carry us towards a shift in self, intermingled with time, space, and others. I argue that the embodiment of trauma in performance art intermingles individual and collective affective experiences of trauma. Gregory Seigworth and Melissa Gregg's book *The Affect Theory Reader* guides investigations of affect in the embodiment of trauma. They write that the power of affect lies in "a body's *capacity* to affect and be affected" (Gregg and Seigworth 2). I apply this concept to the embodiment of trauma and to demonstrate that shifts in trauma occur in the body are both an individual and communal act.

The second half of this thesis, part two, focuses on shifts in trauma through five individual performances from three separate Pi*llOry events. The performances example three distinct ways trauma is embodied and how shifts occur within each embodiment practice. Firstly, I present embodiment through repetitive action. I investigate three works, *Forlorn: Stitching*

wings made of tender fallen leaves by Enok Ripley, *Washing Rice* by Racquel Rowe, and *Coming out/in 7 movements* by Brian Smith, all presented at Pi*llOry part two, all working with repetitive actions. Next, I use works by Penelope Brown and Philip Auslander to analyze repetitive actions as embodiment and how trauma is shifted by repetition in performance. I then work with Sheri Osden Naut's performance *miina kawapamitin* from Pi*llOry part four to further example embodiment of repetition through narration. I then employ Naut's work to consider embodiment through Susan J. Brison's concept of 'speech acts of memory'. Lastly, I call upon the video work *spatialhealing.mp4* by Santiago Tamayo Soler shown at Pi*llOry part five to discuss embodiment through technology and the digital image. I investigate shifts in trauma that occur in both the artist and the witness when trauma is embodied by the digital image.

Part One: Literary Review

In part one of the thesis, I investigate trauma as a felt experience that affects individuals and communities' everyday lived experiences. I define Queer trauma as it relates to the erasure of individual and collective Queer narratives. The intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality with their distinct experiences of Queer trauma will underscore the complexities of trauma as trauma differs with each person's unique experience of marginalization. I move on to express that when members of a collective have been subject to an abhorrent event, both the community and individuals within are affected. I argue that individual traumas can create a group culture of trauma, potentially greater than the sum of the individual wound. This chapter illustrates how trauma affects communities, where the individuals within are not always the survivor yet, are greatly affected by the traumas of the community.

I move on to define performance art and detail how artists perform trauma through embodiment. Embodiment is defined as an awareness interconnecting our physical bodies with our emotions. I also consider body memory as an embodied experience of trauma. I then detail how embodying Queer trauma through performance creates counterpublics, employing social and communal practices. I also examine the place of the witness in performative embodiment practices and illuminate the collaboration that occurs between the performer and witness. Affect is also considered in the collective experience between performer and witness. Lastly, I examine different ways affect is used by Queers in performance to transform and shift trauma.

Chapter One: Trauma

Trauma, as it ultimately relates to performance, is the focal point of my research because I see trauma as something that is connected to self and community creation. Trauma and its connection to survivors is considered and defined in many ways. In 1987 the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III-R)* characterized the individual's experience of trauma in this way: "The person has experienced an event that is outside the range of human experience" (250). In 1995, Kai Erikson defines trauma in "Notes in Trauma and Community" as a "blow to the tissues of the body – or more frequently now, to the tissues of the mind that result in injury or some other disturbance" (183). Erikson suggests that trauma invades the survivor and becomes a dominant feature of a person's identity (Erikson, 183). He also notes that trauma involves a continual reliving of some wounding experience (Erikson, 184). As it is relived and reexperienced by the survivor, trauma plays a significant role in the creation of self.

Trauma is a point of interest in many fields of research. Psychiatry is explicitly interested in understanding trauma and human reactions to violent events. The introduction to *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* by Cathy Caruth reports that in 1980, The American Psychiatric Association recharacterized trauma as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which now includes many symptoms thought originally to stem from post-war shock and stress (3). Trauma, as PTSD, currently serves as an umbrella term for the diagnoses of folks affected by war(s), human/natural catastrophes, rape, child abuse, and other violent happenings (Caruth 3). As a category, PTSD refers to the response felt by survivors of overwhelming, violent events (Caruth 4). The official categorization of trauma as PTSD serves mainly as an acknowledgment of pathology, but the phenomenon of trauma is not yet fully explained or understood (Caruth 5).

Medical trauma discourse recognizes a pathology, but it does not consider how the survivor responds to trauma. Ann Cvetkovich's *An Archive of Feelings* challenges the medical enterprise surrounding trauma. She suggests an enhanced, contemporary, Queer approach to trauma, one that emphasizes "ways of thinking about trauma that do not pathologize it, that seize control over it from the medical experts, and that forge creative responses to it that far outstrip even the most utopian of therapeutic and political situations" (3). Trauma is queered when reconsidered in connection with everyday life experience that is social and political (Cvetkovich 3). Occurring in moments of everyday afflictions, trauma is arguably part of an affective realm that extends further than a medical PTSD diagnosis (Cvetkovich 7). Where it is invisible, trauma requires a more profound exploration than is offered up in medical discourse.

Queer trauma is investigated herein as it relates to the erasure of Queer bodies, narratives, and histories. Avery Gordon writes, in *Ghostly Matters*, about the violence of erasure by way of

disappearance, specifically in the cases of *los desaparecidos* (the disappeared) of Argentina. She defines the trauma of erasure wiring, "Since we disappeared you, you're nothing. Anyway, nobody remembers you. You don't exist" (78). To make someone disappear is an attempt to erase their story, to remove their narrative from existence. Disappearance or erasure of this kind inflicts feelings of loss and hopelessness upon the individuals and communities affected (Gordon 78). Although the body may be no longer seen, Gordon notes that there persists a *shadowy knowledge* of that which seems not to be there (79). Trauma by way of erasure may remove the body, but it leaves an affectual imprint of the trauma evoked. The imprint of trauma is felt in other bodies not yet erased.

Theories of genocide are not usually associated with Queer trauma; however, the idea of genocide can pertain to Queer lives insofar as these lives are often subject to a form of erasure. *Genocide and Global Queer Politics* by Matthew Waites examines genocide in particular political and national contexts and its relation to Queer people, demonstrating that although gender, sexuality, and sexual orientation are absent in institutional explanations of genocide, the violence endured by Queers, in fact, is due to acts of genocide (2). Article II of the United Nations *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (1948) defines genocidal acts as "(a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group" (United Nations, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948). An essential element within this definition of genocide is the broad range of erasure strategies it

encapsulates. These strategies demonstrate the ways in which oppressed communities can be eradicated beyond acts of murder.

The creation of the dysphoria diagnosis and the “wrong body” narrative within Transgender medical discourse has led to the erasure of many Transgender histories, experiences, people, and communities. Sandy Stone observes, in *The Emperor Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto*, that The Stanford University Medical Center started the Gender Dysphoria Program in 1968 to investigate: the cause of Gender Dysphoria Syndrome (GDS) or Transsexualism, to determine the criteria for the diagnoses, and to develop a treatment for GDS (Stone, 152). Medical discourse pathologizes Transgender experience, erasing all narratives outside of the male/female binary. Stone writes that the erasure of transgender narratives by way of medical discourse about GDS implies that "the highest purpose of the transexual is to erase him/herself, to fade into the normal population as soon as possible" (164). She notes that insofar as the treatment for GDS is in conformity with heteronormativity, the “complexities and ambiguities of lived experience” are lost (Stone 164). By denying any mixture or dissonance within gender, Transgender experiences are made to disappear, leaving only binary gender narratives to endure.

The medical fascination and desire to surgically "correct" the Transgender body in line with the narrative that Transgender people were born in the wrong body produces individual and collective trauma. In 2000, the *Diagnostical and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fourth ed., text revised (D.S.M. - IV - TR0)* defined Gender Identity Disorder as "[a] strong and persistent identification with the opposite gender. There is a sense of discomfort in their own gender, and they may feel they were ‘born the wrong sex’" (American Psychiatric Association 2000: Gender identity disorder). Then in 2010, the *International Statistical Classification of*

Disease and Health Problems, tenth ed (ICD -10) defined Transgender as "[a] desire to live and be accepted as a member of the opposite sex, usually accompanied by a sense of discomfort with, or inappropriateness of one's anatomic sex, and a wish to have surgery and hormonal treatment to make one's body as congruent as possible with one's preferred sex" (World Health Organization 2010: F6 4.0 Transsexualism). These definitions reinforce binary ways of thinking about the body, denying any kind of in-betweenness that appears in Transgender narratives (Stone, 158). Therefore, based on the normalization of cisgender identity, the wrong body construct perpetuates the erasure of Transgender and other gendered embodiments that are possible.

There is ample evidence that Queer trauma can take many forms that are social, political, and cultural, entailing criminalization, medicalization, murder, and torture. Some examples include the gay purge in Chechnya on January 14th, 2019 (Ingber 2019), Poland's LGBT-free zones (Ash, Lucy 2020), the execution of Harvey Milk (History.com 2009) and Matthew Shepard (Thegardian.com 2014), the notorious mass shooting at Pulse (Ellis, Ralph 2016), Bruce McArthur's racialized queer murders in Toronto, Ontario (Torontosun.com 2020), as well as the historical and current AIDS crisis (Caruth 1991). Che Gossett and Ann Cvetkovich both argue that trauma extends into the homonormative archiving of Queer narratives (Cvetkovich 2017; Gossett 2013). East and West Africa alike have instated anti-homosexual persecution laws with The Anti-Homosexuality Bill introduced on October 14, 2009, in Uganda's parliament (Uganda: 'Anti-Homosexuality' Bill Threatens Liberties and Human Rights Defenders 2020) and The Anti-Homosexuality Act passed in Nairobi, December 20, 2013 (Uganda: Anti-Homosexuality Act's Heavy Toll 2020) which examples current forms of systemic violence.

Chapter Two: Intersection of race, class, ability, and Queer trauma

Individuals within marginalized groups may experience layered or complex traumas that are specific to each individual. Thus, when discussing Queer trauma, an intersectional framework must be applied to consider gender identity and sexuality and factors in race, class, and ability. Intersectionality acknowledges that oppression and discrimination are interconnected within all systems of marginalization. The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in "Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics". Crenshaw examines the problem of considering race, gender, sexuality, and class as mutually exclusive categories in experiences of discrimination (140). She writes that the dominant analysis towards minorities is limited to what she called a s*ingle-axis* framework where only the most privileged group members are taken into consideration: "In other words, in race discrimination cases, discrimination tends to be viewed in terms of sex- or class- privilege Blacks; in sex discrimination cases, the focus is on race- and class- privileged woman" (Crenshaw 140). By limiting analysis to consider only privileged group members, the multidimensionality of distinct, personal experiences of discrimination is deemed negligible, and therefore individual narratives are erased (Crenshaw 140). Crenshaw uses an intersectional framework to include individuals' nuanced experiences to analyze discrimination, arguing that "the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of race and sexism" (140). Thus, without applying an intersectional approach to embrace the entire framework of individual experiences, we cannot thoroughly analyze how oppressed people become subordinate and erased.

Leslie McCall considers intersectionality in “The Complexity of Intersectionality” to “encompass perspectives that completely reject the separability of analytical and identity

categories" (1771). He notes that there are many complexities in examining the multiple dimensions of intersectionality, which demands the use of a wide range of methodologies (McCall, 1772). McCall suggests three approaches that use analytical methodologies to explore the complexity of intersectionality in social life: *Anticategorical Complexity, Intercategorical Complexity,* and *Intracategorical Complexity*[2]. These approaches deconstruct, expand upon, and consider all social locations and experiences between analytical categories to illuminate the complexities within intersectionality (McCall 1773). McCall asserts that different methodologies produce different kinds of knowledge. Thus, intersectionality is best looked at with an interdisciplinary approach (1775). An intersectional approach to trauma allows for the consideration of the social and historical complexities within and surrounding the individual's personal narratives.

Doug Meyer's "Interpreting and experiencing anti-queer violence: Race, class, and gender differences among LGBT hate crime victims" looks at how intersectionality recognizes groups in terms of race, class, gender, and sexuality and their distinct experiences of trauma regarding hate crimes. Meyer writes that "[b]ecause systems of oppression are interlocking, social scientists must account for multiple forms of social inequality to understand patterns of behavior (Meyer 2). He urges the application of an intersectional framework because it improves our understanding of how hate crimes reinforce gendered, racial, sexualized, and class patterns of activity within experiences of social inequality (Meyer 2). Meyer illustrates how violent experiences differ in relation to race, class, and gender by noting that Queer people of colour found it difficult to determine whether the violence enacted upon them was based on their sexuality or race, while he found that white gay men were certain that their experiences of

[2] McCall notes that not all research can be classified into one of these three approaches (1774).

violence were rooted in homophobia (8). Mayer's work reaffirms that experiences of violence are dependent on the complex, nuanced experience and social location of the individual. Thus, intersectionality is a superior approach in consideration to the understanding of trauma.

Individuals' complex experiences of trauma are fundamental in considering what trauma is and how it is experienced. Personal Queer experiences of trauma create communities and often bind Queers to the group through shared narratives of violence. What then is the impact of collective experiences of trauma upon the individual and vice versa?

Chapter Three: Trauma and Community

Erikson looks at how individual traumas can create a group culture that is greater than the individual wounds combined. He defines trauma as a "blow" and looks at two ways in which trauma can impact a community. The first way is individual trauma, in which a 'blow' happens so suddenly that the individual reacts physically and/or emotionally; the second is collective trauma, in which the blow affects the social life of the individuals within a group or community. (Erikson 187). He argues that individuals who share similar experiences of trauma seek out one another, developing a community or common tie based upon the shared experience (Erikson 187). Erikson writes, "the tissue of community can be damaged in much the same way as the tissues of the body…traumatic wounds inflicted on individuals can combine to create a mood, and ethos-a group culture almost- that is different from (and more than) the sum of the private wounds that make it up" (185). As such, trauma becomes collective when others share individual suffering within the group and, in turn, it becomes part of the community's identity.

Members of a collective subject to an abhorrent event that results in a shared trauma that affects both the individual and community experience are defined by Jeffrey Alexander as a "cultural trauma." He writes that,

> Cultural trauma transpires when the components of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrific event that leaves ineradicable marks upon their group awareness, marking their memories forever and changing their future individuality in fundamental and irreversible ways. In connection to the subject, cultural trauma, people have constantly used the language of trauma to explain what happened to themselves and the collectivities to which they belong (Alexander 1).

Alexander demonstrates how trauma that is felt by the collective alters the individual's experience within the group; the community identifies with the existence of suffering in cultural trauma, and individuals within the community define their relation to the group in ways that allow suffering to be shared (Alexander 1). He suggests that in recognizing and sharing the traumas of others, communities practice union and solidarity (Alexander 2). Alexander further notes that "Trauma is not the result of a group experiencing pain. It is the result of this acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity" (7). Alexander concludes that the collective core of trauma, shared by the individuals of a group, holds everyone's suffering within a collective consciousness, which also imbues the community with a particular character: the collective core of trauma is held within a group or shared as a collective knowledge or identity.

Considering external influences on a community rather than that of the individual experience within, there are additional ways to transmit trauma. Lucy Bond looks at memory in a digital age wherein non-biological traumas are transferred through media in *Memory Unbound:*

Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies (1). Bond finds that Digital media memory is investigated through four dimensions: transcultural, transgenerational, transmedial, and transdisciplinary. Assuming that all media memory dimensions work together, she considers the memory of trauma to be active in culture, generations, media, and disciplines (2). For Bond, media constructs the past in the present; thus, trauma can be "triggered and shaped by mediating objects such as photographs, home videos, souvenirs, oral stories, and written documents" (Bond 13). There is a shared sense of togetherness and identity for Bond, which occurs in media memories of trauma. She suggests that there is also a relational experience to trauma wherein a person can situate themselves in traumatic histories through media (16). She regards media to demonstrate the complexities involved in remembering trauma and how individuals and communities can share in and acquire the traumas of others.

When communities experience trauma at large, the individuals within that community inherit that trauma, not biologically but through the encounter and co-emergence of experiences. Meltem Ahiska writes about collective trauma and inheritance in “Memory as Encounter” and contends that the impact of violence is all-encompassing to both the subject and the witnesses of a traumatic event. Ahiska explains that trauma is no longer entirely personal in a *trans-traumatic* (Ettinger 2000) era because it transfers from subject to witness (146). She demonstrates that trauma can be shared between others by encounters of human and nonhuman events as they “transcend the borders of identity and connect through shared traces of intensities” (Ahiska 146). Her view is that encounters with and the co-emergence of trauma is a process of union that traverses time and space, and as a result, not only the descendants of victims but bystanders who have witnessed traumatic events can connect deeply to a trauma encountered by another

individual. Thus, in addition to trauma being inherited biologically, it can also be inherited through the act of witnessing.

Practices of inheritance encapsulate personal and social considerations towards the acquiring of trauma that considers the relationship and responsibility of self and other. Roger Simon writes in his article “The Terrible Gift: Museums and the Possibility of Hope without Consolation” towards the experience of encountering an artifact or piece of art that expresses trauma and how that work makes.

> an unanticipated claim that may interrupt one's self-sufficiency, demanding attentiveness to another’s life without reducing that life to a version of one's own stories. This attentiveness sets out the possibility of learning anew how to live in the present with each other, not only by opening the question to what and to whom I must be accountable, but also by considering what attention, learning, and actions such accountability requires. (Simon 188)

In this encounter, we are challenged to evaluate ourselves in connection to someone else's trauma. Simon further writes, "the work of inheritance is an inescapable consequence of the actions of another who has sent you something...that implicates you in the necessity of a response" (194). Thus, inheritance here positions the inheriting subject as an active participant who responds to or is affected by someone else's experience, placing the self-in-relation to others. Practices of inheritance becomes a personal and social practice in how the subject learns from and takes accountability for an encountered trauma of another.

In her book *Remembering Vancouver's Disappeared Woman: Settler Colonialism and the Difficulty of Inheritance,* Amber Dean further discusses practices of inheritance and the ethics

surrounding these practices. Practices of inheritance call for a shift in how we see ourselves in relation to others that require us to ask how we ourselves are implicated in the violences experienced by others (Dean 7). It is essential in practices of inheritance to acknowledge that the experiences of others do not become our own, even as we may consider how we identify ourselves with*in* the stories of others (71). Dean writes that "empathy alone can (re)colonize the stories, lives, and even the suffering of others. Implicatedness, by contrast, evokes forms of empathetic or felt engagement that necessarily ties feeling to responsibility, leading us towards practices of inheritance" (17). Implicating oneself into another's story allows for "we" narratives that include differences such as race, gender, sexuality, class, and culture (Dean 18). Thus, the sense of being implicated in other stories connects self and other, enveloping both differences and relations to create collectives where practices of inheritance can be responsibly enacted.

Chapter Four: Performance Art

Performance art creates a collective body wherein ritual acts/actions, experimental aesthetics, and resistance to acts of violence can flourish. Performative action employs embodied practices that function epistemologically, offering alternative ways of knowing. Performance art that bears witness to trauma has the potential to produce alternative knowledge, and this is the aim of Pi*llOry: Queer performers use their lived experiences to create works concerning trauma, through which Queers may form a community wherein trauma the meaning and knowledge of trauma is not only revisited but also transformed.

Performance art encompasses processes of visual art that involve the body. It is also known as Art Action, Body Art, and Live Art. Defining performance art entails particular

challenges as each practice is unique to the individual performer and has a range of geneologies that in turn shape its diverse representational practices. Contributing to the challenge of defining performance art is its interdisciplinary nature. It envelops many fields, including philosophy, anthropology, fine art, and dance. David Davies investigates the more traditional and perhaps scholarly aspect of performance art in his book, *Philosophy of the Performing Arts*. Davis writes:

> all performances, in the sense that interest us, are actions, whether individual or collective. In a collective performance, different individuals not only act but do so in a way that aims at coordination of their individual efforts. As actions, performances involve behavior that falls under at least one description specifying a purpose governing that behavior and, implicitly or explicitly, a result at which it aims. (Davies 5)

Performance art, as it is described here, discusses intention channeled through action(s). Given its emphasis on action, I would argue that the body is the primary tool in performance art – it is by way of the body that actions are developed to communicate the performer's intention or purpose.

In her book *The Archive and the Repertoire*, Diana Taylor regards the function of performance art to reside in acts of transfer that transmit "social knowledge, memory and a sense of identity" (2). Everyday life and personal experiences are embodied and guide in acts of transfer. In this way, performance, to some, could be seen as an ephemeral non-event. But engaging with everyday experiences, performers use their immediate environment and experience of it to construct situations wherein personal knowledge can be transmitted (Taylor 3). In doing so, a wide range of traumas may become visible, including histories of cumulative Queer trauma. Taylor suggests that "trauma becomes transmittable, understandable through

performance - through the reexperienced shudder, the retelling, the repeat" (Taylor, 208). As performance art engages with the complexities of personal relations, it functions as the axis in acts of transfer.

In *The 7th Sense*, the performance collective TouVA (Sylvie Tourangeau, Victoria Stanton, and Anne Berube) contend that performance art lives in the invisible and calls upon "intuition beyond the unconscious," bringing the unknown into consciousness (152). They explain that performance materializes affectual potentialities and cannot take place without "vulnerability, self-surrender, and a willingness to question what we think we know and are" (Tourangeau 8). Beatrice Allegranti looks at body based movement praxis as performance through a feminist lens in *Embodied Performances: Sexuality, Gender, Bodies* and describes performance as the relationship between a performer and spectator. She sees performance as a process of embodiment, of lived body experiences, and she examines how we “embody both nature (our biological body) and nurture (our socially constructed body)” (Allegranti 1). *Blacktino Queer Performance* by E. Patrick Johnson and Ramón H. Rivera-Servera considers the social/political interrelations between performance art, blackness, Latinidads, and Queerness. They envision "performance as a key transcendent temporal and spatial trope [that] symbolizes nicely the promiscuous and frisky relations between black and brown" (Johnson and Rivera 6). Jon McKenzie also takes up the connections between everyday life and performance art in "Performance Studies". He examines performance as a central element of social and cultural life, including performance art, ethnicity, race, class, sex, gender, and cultural enactments through living and mediated bodies (McKenzie 726).

Although performance art is defined in various ways by various authors, some connections and parallels can be extracted to better define performance art. Performance art is a

practice that engages with social and cultural life while employing individual and communal lived experiences as knowledge. It involves a personal and political engagement of the body in space wherein lived knowledge's actions may bring intangible thoughts and feelings into being. It encompasses themes of transference, intuition, consciousness/unconsciousness, complexity, that which is visceral, and affect. Performance art examines the relationship between self and other, time and space, while creating communities wherein both witness and performer can be transformed.

Chapter Five: Body Memory and Embodiment

Body Memory and the Unconscious by Thomas Fuchs investigates how memories that live in the body unconsciously animate the past in the present. He writes that "[i]n body memory, the situations, and actions experienced in the past are, as it were, fused together without any of them standing out individually…. Body memory does not take one back to the past but conveys implicit effectiveness of the past in the present" (Fuchs 6). In Fuchs' consideration of body memory, the past resides affectively in the present; past experiences are anchored invisibly and spread out to influence both the self and its relations to space and others (Fuchs 5).

Therefore, the self may not always have cognitive recall of experiences of trauma, even as they are ever-present in the body's memory. The affects of trauma may be continual, interfering with the survivor's sense of self and everyday lived experiences insofar as the body is enveloped by unconscious body memory. The body and the past are in a constant felt communication guided by memories, arguably informing daily experiences and constitution of the self.

Fuchs revisits the concept that body memories play a significant part in the formation of the self in *The Phenomenology of Body Memory.* He suggests that body memories are essential to the experience of self and identity (Fuchs 9). Fuchs demonstrates that manifestations of body memory materialize as habits and behaviors that reveal the uniqueness of an individual and their experiences (9). As body memories traverse beyond the unconscious to take form in everyday life, they are also embodied as a result of personal narratives of the past. Body memories, in conjunction with personal narratives, are a vital component in performance art as they are called upon to inform a transmission of knowledge or to achieve a sort of transformation.

The body holds memories of past encounters and encompasses both the past and present in the creation of self. Body memory also acts as a link to the past through the engagement of actions. Body memory is further explored by Sabine C. Koch in *Body Memory, Metaphor, and Movement*s as Implicit memory. Echoing Fuchs' attention toward memories that live in the body, Koch argues that implicit memory also involves lived experiences that are deeply coded into the body, which, under suitable circumstances, can release their enclosed content (9). Koch describes how implicit memory is connected to body memory in *Body Memory and the Unconscious*. He writes that "[b]ody memory plays a special part here, insofar as it turns a person's bodily and inter-bodily experiences into implicitly affective dispositions, which provide the mostly unconscious basis for day-to-day living" (Koch 5). Implicit memories mirror past experiences affectively through the body's memory; these memories are communicated through the body's engagement with the present and with how the past is implicated in our present.

Trauma and how it occupies the body has been examined through the lens of body memory. The past assumes an unconscious authority over the body that shapes our identities and

daily lived experience. By incorporating the unconscious into the practice of embodiment, past experiences can be reclaimed, allowing for a potential shift in trauma.

Embodiment is a point of interest in many fields, adopting many definitions. It has been examined in the context of Neuroscience (Gallese 2009; Totton 2008), Psychology (Orbach 2004), Psychoanalysis (Orbach 2003, 2004), memory research (Taylor 2003), new media (Britt 2008; Garoian 2008; Keeling 2014), Queer theory (Ahmed 2014), race (Alcoff 1999; Ahmed 2014; Mahendran 2007), race, Queerness and performance (Muñoz 2015, 2019), aging and performance (Schwaiger 2014), ability (Hedva 2016), dance and performance (Allegranti 2015), theatre and performance (Spatz 2015, 2017a, 2017b) and Queer performance (Jones 1998; Warr 2000). This list details only a few scholars who are tackling embodiment theories. Some offer an interpretation of lived experience as a phenomenon wherein knowledge is carried within the body (Alcoff 1999), occurs as a reunion of the mind and body (Allegranti 2015), or is construed as Queer programming of anti-language as transgender embodiment (Keeling 2014). In all of these theories, embodiment is discussed and recognized as a way to create alternative modes of knowledge from personal lived experience.

Embodiment, as it pertains to performance art, engages the body, consciously and unconsciously, to be present and aware of all the resonances inside, outside, and in-between the physical self and sensed experience. Elizabeth Chitty describes the process of embodiment in her essay *Asserting our Bodies* as a "conscious awareness interconnecting our physical bodies with our emotions, thoughts, and spirits." (73). Sylvie Tourangeau builds upon Chitty's description, asserting that a ripple effect happens while being present in embodiment that allows the performer to develop "an active mode of listening, with a more holistic sense of the here and now, encompassing both art and life" (Tourangeau 60). Both Chitty and Tourangeau suggest that

embodiment allows the artist to exist in the present and future. Many visceral and physical resonances of self, other, time, and space are embodied as the conscious and unconscious body is acutely present in performance art.

Stephanie Springgay and Debra Freedman compare embodiment to a Möbius strip in *Curriculum and the Cultural Body*, wherein body and mind are intertwined and continuous. Sringgay writes that "embodiment disrupts the notion that the inside (psyche) and outside (corporeal) are separate but rather flow one into the other and the surface or border becomes a place of interaction and transformation" (xx). The Möbius strip metaphor aids in understanding how the body and its experiences are intertwined in embodiment praxis. For Springgay and Freedman, the embodied experience traverses' bodies beyond physical objects into meaning as the material body and its lived experiences are intermingled (xx). The authors continue to reflect upon embodiment as an "understanding of the interrelations between knowledge, life experience, and social reconstruction" (Freedman and Springgay xxi). The body/mind, consciousness/unconsciousness continuum is central in embodiment praxis, as is our lived experiences as they all work together in the creation of embodied knowledge.

Embodied practices connect individual experiences to experiences of others, shaping a collective embodied social knowledge. Dianna Taylor's book *The Archive and the Repertoire* notes that the creation of embodied social knowledge entails an interconnectedness between *I* and *You* (Taylor 191). Taylor clarifies that *I* and *You* may be intertwined as "products of each other's experiences and memories, of historical trauma, of enacted space, of sociopolitical crisis" (191). Embodied social knowledge engages the interconnections within individual experiences of trauma, experiences of others, and the "cumulative and collective nature of the trauma" suffered by the community (Taylor 193). In this vein, embodiment is a collective act wherein individuals

acknowledge their connections to present, past, and other and thereby illuminate many trauma narratives that create embodied social knowledge.

Embodying Queer trauma through performance is a collective act as it continues to create and inform Queer communities. Springgay calls this "Inter-embodiment". Inter-embodiment engages with public, social, and collective experience of being embodied; "[i]nter-embodiment proposes that the construction of the body and the production of body knowledge is not created within a single, autonomous subject (body), but rather that body knowledge and bodies are created in the intermingling and encounters between bodies" (Springgay, xxi). Being embodied in this sense affirms that embodiment is a collective activity through the interconnectedness of *I* and *You*.

Chapter Six: Counterpublics and Queer Performance

Queer performance addresses trauma communally through acts of personal and collective embodiment in public spaces where trauma can be re-examined through counterpublics. Counterpublics are publics that form through a mutual recognition of their exclusion from or in wider publics. They are publics that resist being excluded and resolve to overcome their exclusion. José Esteban Muñoz's work *Disidentifications* asserts that Queers form counterpublics by engaging in public actions that challenge normative public spheres (1). He also describes counterpublicity as "disseminated through acts that are representational *and* political interventions in the service of subaltern counterpublics" (Muñoz 147) and adds that counterpublic spheres "strive to envision and activate new social relations" (Muñoz 5).

Ann Cvetkovich observes the importance of counterpublics created through Queer performance and the significance of affect. She echoes the idea that Queer performance brings bodies together in public, creating a community constructed by both performer and witness (Cvetkovich 9). Cvetkovich argues that "[t]rauma can be a foundation for creating counterpublic spheres rather than evacuating them" (15). She expands on the formation of counterpublics in light of how Queer performative acts may pursue affective experiences of trauma, collectively understand it, and respond to it (Cvetkovich 10). Embodying trauma in Queer performance counterpublics takes up the affective experience of trauma as the performer refracts their embodied trauma outwards to the community generating collective responses from the witnesses (Cvetkovich 19). Queer performance counterpublics example, the social, collective, and affective experience of Queer trauma as they discuss and respond to trauma through performance.

Performance addresses and recontextualizes trauma through public actions. It does so to provoke shifts in individual and communal trauma. In the chapter "You Are Here", Diana Taylor looks explicitly at performance in protests and the ways in which it reflects and responds to trauma; embodying trauma in performance artworks, arguably, is similar in its aim. Taylor writes that in performing trauma, there is a dialogue between trauma studies, the private experiences on which it focuses, and the public and collective experience of performance that is the subject of performance studies (165). The dialog, focusing on performing trauma, allows us to "explore the public, nonpathological cause and canalization of trauma" by emphasizing "the public, rather than private repercussions of traumatic violence and loss" as a catalyst of cultural change (Taylor 168). Performance communicates trauma in five distinct ways that demonstrate how trauma studies and performance studies are in conversation.

1. Performance protests help survivors cope with individual and collective trauma by

using it to animate political denunciation.

2. Trauma, like performance, is characterized by the nature of its “re-peats”.
3. Both make themselves felt actively and viscerally in the present.
4. They are always in situ. Each intervenes in the individual/political/social body at a particular moment and reflects specific tensions.
5. Traumatic memory often relies on live, interactive performance for transmission. Even studies that emphasize the link between trauma and narrative make evident in the analysis itself that the transmission of traumatic memory from victim to witness involves the shared and participatory act of telling and listening associated with live performance. Bearing witness is a live process, a doing, an event that takes place in real-time, in the presence of a listener who "comes to be a participant and a co-owner of the traumatic event." (Taylor, 165).

The role of the witness plays a vital part in the embodiment of trauma through performative action. When Queers perform trauma as such, it becomes a collective act insofar as the witness and performer intertwine through their embodied knowledge of trauma in the context of the performance. The witness of a traumatic event may be at risk of inheriting the encountered trauma. Encountering an act of violence differs from the act of witnessing an embodiment of trauma performatively. The witness of performance has access to the choice to be a witness; the witness is autonomous in a way that a person who is affected directly by a traumatic or violent event is not.

Chapter Seven: Witnessing Trauma Performances

Witnesses are significant in supporting the self's transformation of trauma in the context of Queer performance. When working with trauma themes in performance art, there is an active process of recalling trauma, working through the memory of it by giving it shape, gaining control over it, and reconstructing it and the self. The position of the Queer witness helps to support the self's reclamation and reconstruction of its trauma. Susan J. Brison writes that in "Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self," that by contributing to the activation of the space, the witness helps the performer integrate a transformed sense of self and creates for them a new place in the world (39). By being present in this process, the witness is also aiding in the survivor's reintegration into a community (Brison 40). Ideally, in Queer performance events, Queers who witness the embodiment of trauma can support the occurrence of such transformations with a compassionate and empathetic view because of their shared link to communal trauma. The interconnectedness of performer and witness strengthens many Queer communities as embodied trauma narratives are shared collectively, broadening understandings of Queer trauma and collectively creating alternative embodied knowledge.

Bearing Witness, or the Vicissitudes of Listening by Dori Laub examines the importance of the witness in testimony and the collaboration that occurs between the listener and narrator of trauma memories. He writes that narratives of trauma become truly known when heard through active listening (Laub 57). The witness becomes a co-owner of the traumatic event by listening and participating in creating knowledge regarding the trauma (Laub 57). In co-owning a trauma by way of witnessing, feelings of injury are shared and must be addressed for the witness to fulfill their job of trauma knowledge creation (Laub 58). Both witness and narrator are working together to know the trauma or develop a knowledge of it.

While the witness takes on the narrator's experience of trauma, Laub argues that the witness does not, in turn, become traumatized. The witness is a separate human being from the narrator, with their own individual complex experience (Laub 58). Laub explains that while the witness shares in the knowledge of the trauma of another, they retain their own autonomy:

> While overlapping to a degree, with experiences of the victim, he nonetheless does not become the victim – he preserves his own separate place, position, and perspective; a battleground for forces raging in himself, to which he has to pay attention and respect if he is to carry out his task properly. (Laub 58)

In remembering their own self, the witness only intermingles with the narrator. They do not surrender their own experiences but use them in relation to the narrator's experience so that they can feel the hurt of the other but not feel overtaken by it. In acknowledging their own experiences, the witness is truly collaborating in the creation of embodied knowledge.

While the witness is an important part of creating shared knowledge, there runs a risk that the witness is absolved of any responsibility toward the violence narrated within this intermingling. Dean writes that these narratives, which arise through bearing witness, are or become a call for "an empathetic or compassionate response to violence, suffering, or loss that stops short of a reconsideration of how we are ourselves necessarily implicated in the violence or suffering experienced by others" (6). The risk in bearing witness, however, is that "the witness, despite good intentions, tends to collapse differences between themselves, and those who suffered violence first-hand" which may lead to "erasing complex histories in ways that make it difficult to see how wider social contexts are related to the injustice of violence being witnessed" (Dean, 3). In this sense, bearing witness can also be a disconnecting experience wherein we forget our responsibilities to each other. As previously mentioned, Dean's solution to the risks of

bearing witness is to create narratives that focus on "we" to better create communities that include and recognize the differences of individual experiences (18), something that I would suggest is practiced within Queer communities that witness performances of trauma. This then produces collective responses and creates an affective foundation for Queer counterpublics and public culture.

There is an affectual relationship that takes place in the collective experience between narrator and witness. Laub confirms that while receiving testimony, there are two conversations taking place: the one that is being said out loud and another that is a whisper (63). He writes that "[a] chord is struck, and an internal chorus of a thousand voices are set free. The other melody, that subtler music, then emerges, suddenly resounding loud and clear. It has always been there, center-stage, waiting to be liberated from its captivity of silence" (Laub, 63). When this subtle, felt account is witnessed, it is as if a door opens to releasing the inner voice that best expresses an intimate knowledge of the self (Laub 64). Acknowledging this felt voice within trauma narratives signals that both witness and narrator "share the knowledge of trauma" (Laub 64). The affective experience in witnessing intertwines *I* and *You* in the creation of alternative knowledge.

Chapter Eight: Affect Theories and its Employment in Queer Performance Art

Many factors take place while engaging in the shared embodying of felt trauma in performance. There is a hyper-awareness in and around the body in embodiment practices that I consider to be a *felt* sense. Beatrice Allegiant describes this felt sense in *Embodied Performances: Sexuality, Gender, Bodies*. Felt sense consists of body awareness, body presence, or inner awareness of an ambiguous sensation (Allegiant 34). She continues that felt sense is

something other than emotion as it is something first unrecognizable, something other than an emotion, yet still felt in and by the body (34). Dian Million exemplifies how one engages with felt sense in “Felt Theory”, which refers to how Indigenous women, specifically Métis, use the inclusion of lived experience and emotional knowledge as vital parts in understanding communal pain—past, present, and future (57). These women engage with felt sense as it applies to lived experience and emotional knowledge. They use felt narratives that live within the body to transform racial, gender, and sexual traumas into powerful experiences (Million 56). As trauma resides in the body non-cognitively, the felt experience is a way in which trauma can be called upon and explored, situating the body as the primary giver of knowledge.

The body has the ability to feel things that cannot be seen. Enlivening narratives of trauma in performance allows us to travel through time and space to access a silenced awareness of what resonates or is felt all around us as a kind of Queerness. Avery Gordon describes this process of accessing felt experience by way of hauntings in *Ghostly Matters*. Gordon writes about hauntings as a felt experience of something that is there and, yet not there – it is what is living in the past and present or the in-between (6). She writes that "being haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against our will and always a bit magically, into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge, but as a transformative recognition" (Gordon 8). To be haunted then is to embody the felt experience of something that is not there but seeks presence (Gordon 22). Being haunted is "not a methodology or consciousness you can simply adopt or adapt as a set of rules or an identity; it produces its own insights and blindness", and it is about "making a contact that changes you and refashions the social relations in which you are located. It is about putting life back in where only a vague memory or bar trace was visible to those who bothered to look" (Gordon 22). When being haunted, a change within the

self is evoked as one develops a new understanding of an embodied felt experience, which creates new knowledge about the source of the haunting and can transform it for the future self.

The embodiment of trauma happens by acknowledging the interconnectedness between self/other, mind/body, past/present/future, and the interrelations between social knowledge and lived experience. In embodiment praxis, the body, as a sense, forces that which resides inside, outside, and in-between the body and its surroundings to engage with this sense to guide performative action. Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg describe this process in relation to affect in "An Inventory of Simmers". They define affect as a "state of relation as well as the passage of forces or intensities" (Gregg and Seigworth 1). They write further that “affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body (human, nonhuman, part-body, and otherwise), in those resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes stick to bodies and worlds, *and* in the very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves” (Gregg and Seigworth 1). Thus, Gregg and Seigworth’s notion of affect refers to visceral forces that challenge conscious knowing, traverse emotion and carry us towards an extension of self (1). Affect demonstrates the capacity of the body to travel in and amongst the world's intricacies, experiences, and matter of all kinds (Gregg and Seigworth 2). The quantum superposition experienced by way of affect exhibits the details of body, mind, space, and time interconnectedness that embodiment acknowledges.

Affect can be organized into two avenues of thought: ontological affect and cultural affect (Theoreticalliving. 2013, October 11). Both avenues can be traced back to two influential texts; *Affect, Imagery and Consciousness: The Positive Affects* (1962) by Silvan Tomkins and *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy"* (1988) by Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze emphasizes the body, whereas Tomkins takes a humanities approach. Both consider the body's non-cognitive

functions, recognize the complexities of experience, and consider the forces within a social realm. Both consider ontological and cultural affect as it pertains to the embodiment of trauma in performance as self (body) and other (community) are interconnected.

Ontological affect identifies the nature of being and the structure of reality in a way that displaces humankind as the essential element of existence. Shaviro writes, in *Pulses of Emotion*, that "[e]ven though the 'thing in itself is unknowable or unrecognizable, nevertheless, *it affects us* in a particular way. And by conveying and expressing 'the way we are affected,' space and time establish immanent, non-cognitive connections among objects, between the object and the subject, and between the subject and itself (Shaviro 7)." He also addresses time, space, and intuition, claiming that they "are modes of feeling *before* they are conditions for understanding" (Shaviro 9). There is a realization here that things are happening all around us, things that the cognitive self cannot quite grasp without the aid of the non-cognitive. Engaging oneself in alternative modes of knowing allows for the connectedness of space, time, object, and subject to be felt and then examined and possibly understood by the mind.

Rather than emphasizing subjective affect, cultural affect focuses on the social world and specific kinds of social and cultural forces. The specificity of drive systems (Sedgwick 2006); activism (Cvetkovich 2017); happiness and objects (Ahmed 2011); depression (Cvetkovich 2012); negative affect, and cross-generational queer history (Love 2009) are some ways that affect is looked at culturally. Patricia T. Clough conceptualizes affect in "Political Economy, Bimedia, and Bodies" as a pre-individual body force. She writes, "I want to argue that focusing on affect - without following the circuit from affect to subjectively felt emotional states - makes clear how the turn to affect is a harbinger of and discursive accompaniment to the forging of a new body, what I am calling the biomediated body" (Clough 207). In a biomediated body, all

kinds of collective experiences are considered, including biomedia, new media, and technologies (Clough 208). Cultural affect refers to the collective rather than the individual. Affect in this consideration is residing in and around the formation and connection of culture. As embodiment of trauma in performance intermingles individual experiences with public, social, and collective experiences, personal and political affectual considerations of trauma can be expressed.

Sylvie Tourangeau, a core member of TouVA and an author of *The 7th Sense*, suggests that the idea of a "seventh sense" encapsulates the importance of presence, awareness, and listening within performance. This sense is found inside the performer and guides their actions as an increased sensibility that emerges in the context of performative action. The seventh sense is similar to affect in the acknowledgment that the body consciousness/unconsciousness contains a magical force. When a performer engages with the seventh sense, the unknown is brought into awareness, and it is reflected in their performative intention. Tourangeau explains this magical process when she writes,

> Thus, the performer carries out an action in full awareness of the impossibility of grasping the entirety of what the action contains and knowing in advance everything it might imply when presented within public space. From the beginning, the performer accepts that the events of the performance will overtake him or her. Based on my intuitions as a performer and my observations of performative actions in progress, I believe that the action always comprises an element of mystery for both the performer and the viewer. (Tourangeau 54)

This illustrates the idea that the performer can access a connection with something greater than oneself and trust in what the body knows. In trusting the seventh sense, the performers' connection to self becomes amplified. It allows them the ability to travel through time and space,

creating new awareness towards memories that reside within the body. The body moves through liminal affectual spaces and becomes itself a liminal affectual space as inner/outer connections and art/life are intertwined.

Affects are involved in transformations in performative action, as discussed herein, within transitions between states of being. When moving from one state to another in performance, the sensations felt involve an awareness of the internal and external forces. Lone Bertelsen and Andrew Murphie write, in “An Ethics of Everyday Infinities and Powers”, that a gathering of forces can open up the possibility of future change as "an erratic and evolving distribution of both coming into being and the power to affect or be affected” (Bertelsen 145). The process of coming into being is an ongoing one. The past and future are embodied in a continuous motion, much like Springgay’s example of the Möbius strip, where the future and the past flow into and out of each other. The awareness of this fluid motion between past and future is developed into a new state of being in the present, thus shifting history and reshaping the future.

In "Taking an Affective Approach to 'Doing' Queer Histories in Performance," Alyson Campbell argues that performance is one of the most productive ways to engage with queer history as it holds the possibility to transform and repair past trauma experiences (Campbell, 224). Performance makes trauma visible and offers it a reparative interpretation, one that may also create the possibility of a social discourse for change. Campbell writes that "[a]ffect is placed as the key to an engagement with the past that can draw on the embodied experiencing of one political-social-cultural moment to open up our thinking about the present one" (225). Through performative actions, many Queers resist the erasures within our history while connecting with the past (Campbell, 224). Merging space/time, historical/contemporary,

performers consider the past's affect on the present and transform it in the present to shift the past, "which allows us to frame historical moments as a way that disrupts the flow of contemporary hetero- and homonormativity" (Campbell, 235). “In this theatre encounter, the materiality of the body of the performer insists on its presence, forcing its way past historical distance and theoretical 'evacuation' to enable a performer/character hybrid to look out, speak, to move: to live" (Campbell, 225).

In the first part of this thesis, I have discussed Queer trauma and how it erases Queer histories, narratives, and bodies. I presented the idea that Queers embody and perform trauma as a creative response to it. Trauma is examined in this thesis as subject to individuality as I recognize each person’s experiences of trauma involves complexities concerning individual experiences. Individual trauma has been discussed as it informs group culture and that collective experiences of trauma can also affect the individual(s) within the group. I have also presented how Queers are connected through individual and collective trauma, and that trauma can be inherited communally through event encounters and co-emergence of experience. Practices of inheritance are introduced to challenge the position of the empathic witness to take responsibility in how they are implicated in the trauma of others without collapsing differences between self and other.

I have shown how performance art events participate in the formation of a counterpublic that draws on life experiences as knowledge, engages in action, and transfers information. I examine how the engagement of the body's trauma can be recalled, reworked, and shifted. I have also established the importance of the body in performative action and illustrated theories concerning trauma as it occupies the body. This chapter defines embodiment as an interconnection with mind, body, time, and space. I have also examined the role of the witness

and explored the witness's role in shifting trauma. Lastly, I offer support that shifts in trauma to occur affectually as self/other, mind/body connect through time and space, allowing the performer to presently experience the past and transform it in the here and now of present time.

Part Two: Analysis of Pi*llOry and Performances

As this thesis is a research-creation project, I have created a Queer performance event entitled Pi*llOry wherein Queer performers infiltrate nontraditional spaces and performatively embody trauma. The premiere event took place July 18th, 2019, in Toronto, Ontario, and has had five iterations with twenty-six Queer participants over the course of my two years at York University. Choosing to name a Queer performance event Pi*llOry was done in the same vein as when Queers repossessed the word Queer; to invert the traditional occupational trauma enforced by pillories. As defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the pillory was used as a form of punishment; to publicly shame and humiliate the subject within (Pillory. Mirriam-Webster). Queer punishment involving the pillory is exampled in Rictor Norton's online essay "Popular Rage (Homophobia)." He writes that in the eighteenth-century, those who were found guilty of an attempted act of sodomy were hanged, fined, imprisoned, or sent to the pillory (Popular Rage).

> The lesser punishment—to be stood in the pillory—was by no means a lenient one, for the victims often had to fear for their lives at the hands of an enraged multitude armed with brickbats as well as filth and curses ... the victims in the pillory, male or female, found themselves at the center of an orgy of brutality and mass hysteria. (Popular Rage)

In reclaiming the word pillory through a Queer performance event, Queer performers embody resistance to trauma and create Queer counterpublics where Queerness can be seen, recognized, and celebrated rather than shamed and humiliated.

I believe that there is a shared knowledge within Queer performance counterpublics where the relationship between performer and witness acknowledges nuances of individual complexities surrounding trauma. Pi*llOry recognizes that experiences of Queer trauma differ in consideration to race, class, gender, and sexuality; thus, we take an intersectional approach when collectively inviting artists to perform. Pi*llOry operates as a collective, expanding with each iteration to embrace everyone's individual, complex experience of trauma. Working as a collective, Pi*llOrists dismantle hierarchies that reinforce traumas concerning class, race, and gender. I observe that in performance curation, hierarchies exist where the most privileged individuals are secured seats of authority to reign in power above others. Performers, in our case, are chosen and invited collectively by Pi*llOry predecessors. Curating as a group creates a system where we can hold each other accountable for remembering our intersectional dedication to illuminate and shift many kinds of Queer trauma narratives instilled within hegemony.

I began the project in deep contemplation regarding my own subjective Queerness and trauma. I examined my performance archives and found that as a Queer, non-binary artist, I repeatedly choose to embody my trauma to communicate it, learn something from it and transform it into something new. I then thought about past conversations and past collaborations that encompassed Queer trauma in the desire to find similar patterns in other Queer performers works. I found myself studying works by past performance colleagues David Frankovich, Leena Raudvee, Matthew Moir, and Sophie Traub. I noted these Queer performers to have all worked with trauma in some way and inquired if they would be up for the task of creating the first group

of Queer performers to explore and embody trauma in Pi*llOry part one. With each individual acceptance of this invitation, our first collaboration began. Meetings were held in homes and bars to discuss the event's potential and our individual interests in embodying trauma. From these meetings, our Pi*llOry mission statement came to life. Our humble group used online and printed poster, designed by artist Jackie Timpener, to personally invite our friends and allies to our event, and to our delight, many people attended our premiere event.

Pi*llOry part one took place Thursday, July 18th, 2019, at the Toronto Media Arts Centre (TMAC). The evening was held with constant performance as Frankovich, and I worked durationally for the entirety of the event, beginning at 7:00 pm until 10:00 pm. There were no introductions to any performances that night. The space was engrossed with suspense as a performance could happen anytime, anywhere. The group and I embodied trauma in ways unique to ourselves and our experiences. Witnesses held the space for acts of urination, negotiating im/mobility, archived persona creation, performative conversations, and object deconstructions within the three hours that our first Pi*llOry took place. The event felt rich and complete with the support of our witnesses in our transformations.

In meetings with the five first PillOrists, discussions centered around individual and communal trauma. A poignant argument was introduced towards the performance community experiencing trauma through the curational process. We PillOrists discussed our desire to challenge hierarchies within the curation process of performance events. As a solution, we decided to move forward, continuing to work collectively to nominate and invite the next group of Pi*llOrists. Enok Ripley, Raquel Rowe, Claudia Edwards, Brian Smith, Nicole Nigro graciously agreed to work as our artists in Pi*llOry part two. Again, we invited our friends and allies to witness this second edition. On the evening of Friday, November 15th, 2019, we

gathered in an old garage down an ally in Kensington Market, Toronto, from 7:00 pm until 10:00 pm. It was unusually cold, and yet there was little space left in the garage once our invited witnesses gathered inside. The artists braved the weather, working to embody trauma through repetition, object manipulation, body manipulation, dance, sex work, and washing.

Enveloping our new Pi*llOists from part two, a collective decision was made to invite six new artists to perform at Pi*llOry part three. Scheduled for Thursday, March 19th, 2020, at an old Toronto church called the Roseneath Theatre; we began to prepare for our next iteration. At this time in early March, whisperings began of a global virus called CORONA-19. Pi*llOrist met at the church eager to press on with our project. But as the whispers grew louder, we could not ignore the severity of the pandemic. As Toronto went into lockdown, Pi*llOry part three had to be postponed.

Months in challenging isolation slowly dragged along. It felt as if performance as we knew it was something in the past and that we would never again perform for live witnesses. However, as numbers of infected folk started to dissipate in the warmer months, I eagerly began getting Pi*llOry part three performers on board. Our plan was not only to present our postponed iteration but have a two-day event curating part three in conjunction with six new artists for Pi*llOry part four. At this time, our collective engaged in many zoom meetings. We began with an agenda to discuss safety protocol as we planned to perform during the pandemic. However, our discussions quickly turned to the many murders of transgender, black, indigenous, and people of color that we recognize as a leading source of trauma in our Queer community and in the world. We took this time to reinforce the importance of intersectionality in performance events such as Pi*llOry and that inclusion and illumination of Queer transgender, black, indigenous, and people of color must be our priority.

Pi*llOrists came together to create COVID safety protocol that would keep ourselves and invited witnesses safe in our endeavor to make live performance art. A little storefront operation at 664 Lansdowne Avenue in Toronto called Collective Studio approved our COVID safety measures which insured only ten people to be in the space at once, and agreed to lend us the space. On Saturday, July 25th, 2020, Randa Reda, Madeleine Lychek, [field] (a collaboration between artist Coman Poon & Brian Smith), Nicole Lynn Deschaine, Amber Helene Müller St. Thomas, and lo bil assembled as our part three Pi*llOrists. The following day Sunday, July 26th, 2020, Pi*llOry part four took place with Simla Civelek, Sadie Berlin, Tess Martens, Johannes Zits, Sheri Osden Nault, and me as the performers. Both days' performances were conducted between 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm. The two consecutive days exampled trauma being embodied through new considerations towards old traditions, the communal gesture of care, ceremonial cleansing, death ritual, object relation, object deconstruction, protest, map-making, and narration. For the first time, we chose to live stream both days of performances from our Instagram. Existing not only in real-time but extending out into the cyberworld, a wider audience was reached than in the previous Pi*llOries, resulting in new online conversations concerning our work of shifting Queer trauma through performance art.

Our spirits had risen with the success of Pi*llOry parts three and four; however, the feeling was short-lived. Another lockdown was ordered for Toronto, placing live performance again on hold. Our Queer collective decided to move forward with Pi*llOry part five, embracing the new parameters in which performance was headed, technology. Pi*llOry partnered with Gad Day TV[3] for technical support and to extend our Queer performance community to that of the

[3] Glad Day Bookstore is a Queer bookstore and hub on the infamous Church Street in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, Glad Day has been fundraising money to aid Queers in need. They also launched their Zoom channel, giving artists and performers who lost employment opportunities to work.

notorious Glad Day Queer community. On Saturday, November 21st, 2020, from 7:00 pm until 10:00 pm, part five P*llOrists B Wijshijer, lwrds, Raki Malhotra, Speranza Spyr, Aisha Lesley Bentham, Santiago Tamayo Soler, and I were broadcasted by Glad Day TV. Some performances were live and streamed directly through the Gad Day channel, while others performed through pre-recorded videos. We were challenged to consider what embodiment is when working with technology. Movement, sound and voice improvisation, cooking, meditation, connection to place/space, naming, and hypnosis were ways in which Pi*llOry part five performers worked to embody trauma.

In the second half of this thesis, I will illustrate theories of embodiment and example their employment in the works of performances from Pi*llOry. I present the works of Enok Ripley, Racquel Rowe, Brian Smith, Sheri Osden Nault, and Santiago Tamayo Soler and analyze these works as they embody trauma through repetitive actions, speech acts of memory, and technology. I will use these works to example that embodiment of trauma involves both the performer and the witness resulting in individual and collective transformations of trauma.

Chapter Nine: Embodiment Through Repetition

In this chapter, I will illustrate how embodiment through repetition shifts trauma. I have chosen three artists from Pi*llOry part two that all worked with repetition in their own unique way. Queer performers Enok Ripley, Racquel Rowe, and Brian Smith have been selected to represent a diverse group in age, gender, and race, yet all employ repetition as embodiment to work through their individual trauma. I will example how in repeating an action, the action continuously transforms. Authors Penelope Brown and Philip Auslander's essays will be

examined as they present thoughts towards the transformation that occurs in repetition and how new meaning is given to the thing repeated within this transformation.

Penelope Brown examines repetition in her essay "Repetition" as patterns in ritual, art, music, and performance that establish fundamental semiotic systems in the development of social culture (223). Brown considers repetition in how it aids in learning an event, provides a variety of meanings to it, and develops it into something new through emphasis and intensity of the thing repeated (223). "Repeating something calls attention to the prior thing, brings it into the now, claims its relevance; repetition is therefore crucial in establishing discourse coherence" (Brown 224). Thus, the use of repetition to transform an event or sensed experience is an essential tool. Brown further examples the ways repetitions are used to shift or transform the original thing repeated:

> People use repetition across turns in responding to a prior utterance to do many different sorts of communicative or conversational management acts, including answer a question; query a piece of information; affectively comment on it or play with it; agree with it, ratify it, or confirm an allusion; convey understanding (of what was said, and of its significance); make counter-claims or matching claims (the "me to" phenomenon); initiate re-pair and collaborate in producing a conversational contribution. One important thing repeating all, or part of a prior utterance can do is transform the repeated item from new into given information which can then be commented upon or further developed. (Brown 224)

The following pages will demonstrate how performance artists employ repetition as acts of communication that inform, actively comment, play with, and make claims upon trauma. Most specifically, this chapter examples how artists engage with Brown's theories to shift trauma

through the use of repetitions as repetitions "[i]nitiate re-pair and collaborate in producing a conversational contribution" to trauma and in that repetitions "[t]ransform the repeated item from new into given information which can then be commented upon or further developed" (224). I will example how the artists from Pi*llOry part one chose to represent trauma in a repeated action. I will then express how, through repetition, the artists are continually communicating trauma, responding to it, and developing the trauma to have new meaning by the repeated action.

Continuing thoughts on new meanings within repetition, Philip Auslander writes in his essay "On Repetition" that "repetition is inevitably a new iteration of the existing thing," as the original thing repeated has already happened, thus no longer exists (88). With the original thing now part of history, the new repletion is not a re-enactment of the original thing but a new thing, changed from its beginning origin. Aulander continues by exampling that in performance, repetition brings about change as the thing repeated is inevitably modified through the very process of repeating (88). He explains that the gap created between the event and its different repetitions is a space wherein new critique or considerations emerge (Auslander 88). This space or distance between each repetition establishes the possibility to create new meanings, thus transforming the past in the present (Auslander 89). The following works example how, through repetition, new meaning is given to the performer's experience for trauma, thus shifting the trauma and transforming themselves.

Enok Ripley (b. 1989) is an emerging performance artist based in Montreal whose work explores themes of healing, ritual creation, and transformation. Ripley has exhibited work in the USA, Italy, Germany, as well as across Canada. As presented on Pi*llOry's Instagram page *www.instagram.com/pi.llory/,* Enok's work focuses on the body and their experience as a transgender and disabled person (pi.llory 2020). They create work that affirms the need for body

autonomy, connecting with self, other, and object. They engage with small relics, memories, fibers, and nature in their intention to explore the bodies' ultimately decay (pi.llory 2020). They work durationally, often with repeated actions that allow the witness to connect to themselves, investigate what the work means and create context within the in-between spaces of their actions.

Ripley performed *Forlorn: Stitching wings made of tender fallen leaves* at Pi*llOry part two on November 15th, 2019. This was a three-hour durational work in which they repeatedly stitched red thread and leaves into what appeared to be their skin. They do so, intending to heal and reassemble themselves from the trauma they endure as transgender, disabled human being. Trauma, for the artist, is a mark, a mark over distorted time (Ripley, 2021). On February 7th, 2021, Ripley completed a written interview from their home, entitled *There is a Dissonance and Density within my Body: Disrupting Inherited Historical Trauma Through Performative Embodiment Practices*. In this interview, Ripley writes about their intention to shift trauma in this work.

> My practice is mark making, and how it can help us find our way through trauma; to heal the injury of the body and spirit, over time, with care and love. The marks of resistance, the stitch of a needle, or the bite of steel are all tools to unlock something more. To find the power within myself to say I am more than the violence and trauma I have endured, this body is still flesh; I am still here. (Ripley, 2021)

In the performance *Forlorn: Stitching wings made of tender fallen leaves*, Ripley sat on a concrete floor encircled by rocks and red leaves, dressed in a white pocketed sleeveless dress with two giant spools of red thread to their right. They remain in this spot from 7:00 pm until 10:00 pm. The performance took place in a garage located in Kensington Market, Toronto, Canada, on a particularly cold November evening. They were in position already before the

witnesses entered the garage. As the space began to fill with the jacketed witnesses, Ripely threaded a sewing needle with the red thread spooled on their right. Beginning on their left arm, they press the needle into what, at first glance, seems to be their skin. Upon closer inspection, the artist's body is concealed by a thin layer of nylon, protecting themselves from the prick of the needle (Figure 1). They sew a zigzag pattern up their left arm and repeat the action onto their right arm. Next, they take a leaf from in front of them and sew it into their false skin. Another leaf is picked up and sewn in. This action continues onto both arms until it appears that Ripley has wings made out of red leaves (Figure 2). They collect the rocks surrounding them and place them in their pockets, then take a moment to acknowledge the witnesses. They scan the room with a deep look of care and compassion on their face. Ripley stands, shivering from the cold, takes the rocks out of their pockets in handfuls, and lets them crash to the ground. The sound greatly shifts the energy in the room and marks the end of this performance.

Ripley calls upon their lived experience as a transgender and disabled human being to conjure an action that represents the trauma that they feel both in their body and in the experiences and expectations of being transgendered and disabled. The artist examples how through repetition, the performed action transforms the physical body and the meaning of the action. Each time Ripley sews into their 'skin,' the witness is challenged to consider what the stitch means. And so, each time Ripley makes a new stitch, they also challenge themselves to question what the action means and how the action might affectively initiate repair. Each time the action is performed, it offers a visual transformation, exemplifying Brown's notion that each time something is repeated, the action inevitably poses something new. The thing repeated is never actually the same. As the artist repeatedly stitches into their sleeve, the physical transformation affects both the viewer and the artist. The moments in-between each mark made

are full of questions that present the artist and the witness with opportunities to consider how each stitch communicates new information about trauma. As Ripley repeatedly stitches with delicacy and care, they reassemble part of themselves. They learn from each stitch and provide meaning to them as the action transforms visually into the formation of wings. As Ripley's quivering body moves from the ground to a standing position, we see that through the repetitive action, they have transformed, and we feel it too.

Racquel Rowe (b. 1997) is an interdisciplinary artist from Barbados who currently resides in Canada. As indicated on her website, *www.racquelrowe.ca*, she has shown work at Ed Video Media Arts Centre, Lumen Festival, Gallery La Centrale, and multiple times at Zavitz Gallery (C.V.). Pi*llOry's Instagram page, *www.instagram.com/pi.llory*, describes that her work explores how black women's lived experiences are affected by historical depictions and perceptions of black women and black culture (pi.llory 2020). On November 26th, 2020, Rowe emailed me her written answers to the ten-question interview *There is a Dissonance and Density within my Body: Disrupting Inherited Historical Trauma Through Performative Embodiment Practices*. In this interview, Rowe says about her work that her performances are processes of uncovering memories that are deeply rooted in herself and, through actions, are embodied and worked transformed (Rowe, 2020).

Washing Rice, performed at Pi*llOry part two, was a two-hour durational work also in the Kensington garage that began at 8:30 pm coinciding with Ripley's performance; Rowe attempted to wash individual grains of rice. This work embodied historical racial trauma as the artist performed a repeated action that commented on "Barbadian traditions that are still very prevalent today in and around black communities when it comes to food preparation and labor"

(Rowe, 2020). Rowe creates a discourse around trauma that not only underscores a history of oppression but offers a narrative of ancestorial pride.

As witnesses take a moment to warm up, connect and converse with each other, Rowe politely inserts herself into the crowd holding a blue tarp. She places the tarp down onto the ground, requesting the witnesses give her space as she unfolds the tarp to declare her performance space (Figure 3). Rowe has a large white bag full of rice, an empty glass bowl, and a metal bowl full of water with her. As she sits on the tarp, she pours the rice out of the bag. She grabs a handful of rice then places her hand in the bowl of water. She then takes her hand out of the water and massages the rice in her hand until she feels fit to put the washed rice into the glass bowl. Again, she takes another handful of rice and washes it in her palm, placing the washed rice in the glass bowl (Figure 4). She continues this action over and over. About an hour into the action, Rowe hums a sweet, strong, and powerful melody for only a moment. We expect the humming to continue with the repeated action, but it does not. We witness Rowe continuously picking out impurities in the rice and washing every piece from the bag until they are satisfied with the washing and then leave the tarp with the washed rice.

This work highlights a history of racial trauma that is inherited into the body memory of black people. As Rowe repeatedly washes rice, she affectively transports past trauma into the present. Rowe embodies inherited trauma in the action of washing rice, and through the repetitive action, she shifts that trauma into a new meaning. Traversing beyond a first inspection that this body is enslaved to the act of washing rice, it becomes clear through the repetition that Rowe is celebrating the rich cultural history involved in the action. As each grain of rice is washed, a part of a traumatic past is washed away. It is not forgotten as the rice and Rowe remain what and who they are but are cleansed of part of the past in the present.

Brian Smith (b. 1974) has a ceramics practice, is a retired architect, installation artist, and workshop facilitator. His pedagogy and artworks focus on the concept of "in-between" spaces. Smith's dedicated post on *www.instagram.com/pi.llory/* reveals that he was 1st runner-up for the Toronto Aids Memorial with a project of LGBTQ tribal totems (pi.llory 2019). Smith has collaborated with his partner Coman Poon in, *How to Survive While in Exile* (Rhubarb Festival, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Toronto); *EcoTOne* (Built for Art/Nuit Blanche, Toronto); *()ound* (Proud Voices Series, Glad Day Bookstore, Pride Toronto); *'A Home for…'*, by [Field]; and *1+1=0:performances in preparation for death* (Dances at MuCCC, Rochester NY) (pi.llory 2019).

Smith performed *Coming out/in 7 movements* at the same event, Pi*llOry part two, as a 3-hour duration work. Smith's performance happened simultaneously alongside Ripley's, beginning at 7:00 pm and concluding at 10:00 pm. Witnesses were presented with a pamphlet at this event with a note written by each of the artists. The writings serve as a guide for the witnesses and to give context to the work shown that night. Smith's writing was:

> The work for Pi*llOry 2 will incorporate a very physical aspect of clay manipulation connected to my LGBTQ experiences at various time throughout my life and career as follows:
>
> coming out/in
>
> 7 movements
>
> Toronto 0
>
> Cornwall 1
>
> Ottawa 2

London 3

Toronto 4, 5, 6, 7

Each movement expresses through the handling of clay the significant experiences of coming out/in emotional, spiritual, and physical ex[pressions. (Smith, 2020).

Each movement identifies a city in Ontario where Smith has lived and numbered with the traumas they hold. The artist intended to embody these traumas, not in a theatrical representational way, but to choose an action that could manifest and transform trauma (Smith 2020). On October 21st, 2020, Brian decided to correspond with me one-on-one over zoom for his interview *There is a Dissonance and Density within my Body: Disrupting Inherited Historical Trauma Through Performative Embodiment Practices.* In his interview, Smith talks about his performance and how he engaged with trauma within that work. He says, "I told the stories to myself about the trauma. So, they were embodied traumas, and the performance kind of brought them out, brought them forward. Powered the energy that I needed to do the work that I was doing, if that makes sense" (Smith 2020).

In this work, Smith stands at a steel table in the chilled Kensington Market garage. On the table rests a large clear bag of clay beside a blank canvas. A thin black desk lamp focuses light onto the canvas. Smith reaches into the bag and takes out a fist-size portion of clay. He holds the clay, begins to work it into a ball, holds it up then throws it onto the canvas (Figure 5). A whapping sound fills the room. Smith gathers the newly formed clay off the canvas and holds it once more in his hands. Again, he throws it onto the canvas, and the sound takes up the space of the room. The clay takes on a new form each time it is thrown, and the sound creates a score that encompasses the whole event. Smith is focused intensely on the clay as he repeatedly throws it onto the table, and with each throw, the sound envelops each corresponding work (Figure 6).

Over the hours of repeating this action, we witness Smith becoming tired, his body is sweating, and the force of the throw becomes less and less fierce. His breathing changes. He changes. The action slows down until finally, Smith lets the clay rest on the canvas and walks away.

Smith is working with clay to represent the numerous accounts of traumas related to being queer throughout his life. He embodies his personal Queer traumas and shifts them from a feeling inside himself outward in an act of throwing clay. The artist engages with the affectual resonances that occur between repetitions. The gap in-between each throw is full of sensations witnessed in the artist and felt within us. The traumas endured by Smith are shifted out of the body/mind and manifested into the present moment where they could be put into the clay, propelled away from the artists, and transformed. As the clay undergoes a physical transformation, the moments surrounding this experience affect the artist and witness both. We are emotionally brought closer to the artist, feeling immense empathy with each booming sound of the clay. The artist is released from the affectual residue of the felt traumas of the past. After hours of this action, we witness the artist's body as physically tired. Tired from the action, but also tired after the emotional experience of embodying trauma and being freed from them.

The embodiment of repetition has been presented here. I have demonstrated that embodiment of repetition possesses the possibility of learning from a repeated action, providing meaning to it, developing it into new meaning, and creating acts of communication. I have presented how repetition is employed in the works of Enok Ripley (mark-making), Racquel Rowe (washing rice), and Brian Smith (throwing clay). All works have demonstrated how trauma has been shifted through object transformation and by affectual forces. I conclude that these works present how repetition can illustrate a shift in trauma.

Chapter Ten: Collective Trauma in Personal Narrative

This chapter will continue discussions on embodiment through repetition from the previous chapter and introduce speech acts of memory. This concept by Susan J. Brison builds on J.L. Austin's speech act theory, which I will introduce more thoroughly later in this chapter. Brison proposes that speech acts of memory reclaim the disruption of the self that occurs in trauma by allowing the survivor to position themselves as subject rather than the object. The performance *miina kawapamitin* by Sheri Osden Nault from Pi*lliOry part four will be analyzed, applying these two concepts to demonstrating how they aid shifts in trauma. This chapter will conclude that embodiment of trauma through repetition and narration (speech acts) call forward both individual and collective trauma and transforms the past in the present.

Sheri Osden Nault is an artist of Michif and mixed European descent. As stated on their website *www.sherinault.com*, their work employs a personal and political context, with research grounded in queer, feminist, and Indigenous worldviews (Bio). Nault is a sculpture, performer, tattooer, zine creator, and community activist. They strive to elicit a sense of social and ecological responsibility and intimacy on a damaged planet, recently focusing on connections between bodies, sexuality, and nature (Bio). Nault obtained a Master of Fine Arts from York University (2017) and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Alberta University (2012). Recent exhibitions include *the body as a fever dream (*Xpace, Toronto 2020*); miina kawapamitin* (Pi*llOry*4, Toronto 2020*); Where the Shoreline Meets the Water* (ArQuives, Toronto 2020*); as well as Off-Centre* (Dunlop Art Gallery, Regina 2019); and *Fix Your Hearts or Die* (Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton 2019). They were a participant in the Ghost Days residency at the Banff Centre Indigenous Arts residency (2019) and was part of the Intergenerational LGBT Artist Residency (Toronto Island, 2017) (Bio).

Nault writes on their website that the performance *miina kawapamitin* (until we meet again, in Michif) created for Pi*llOry part four is "an act of labor, love, and embodiment in the form of ongoing research, beading, piercing, naming. It is a hopeful gesture towards healing for those Indigenous to Turtle Island who have been taken from us in so-called Canada by the violence of policing" (Miina Kawapamitin). Nault works with both collective and personal narration of trauma in this performance as they manifest narrated wounds into their physical body. They work to remove both physical and metaphorical wounds and clean part of their individual and collective trauma.

In Toronto, July 26th, 2020, a few masked risk-takers gathered outside the storefront window of Collective Space at Pi*llOry part four. They are waiting to witness Sheri Osden Naut's twenty-minute performance, *miina kawapamitin*. Nault sat inside the studio topless on a white and red striped blanket, adorned in enormous fox tail earrings and black shorts. Pierced through the artist's tattooed chest, stomach, arms, and legs are 110 beaded emblems. Surrounding Nault are indigenous medicines, a glass bowl with water, a wooden bowl, and a yellow biohazard bucket. COVID-19 has allowed only ten witnesses to enter the room (Figure 7). When we enter, we are welcomed by the smell of burning sage, Nault's warm smile, and an invitation to smudge ourselves. A few of us do so, and Nault slips out of the foxtail earrings. I shut the door to the space, and Nault begins to put medicines into the wooden bowl. They smile again as a few beaded pieces fall out of their skin, like drops of blood. They collect the fallen pieces and tenderly acknowledge the object's autonomy and mischief. Another glance is gifted to the witnesses, then Nault reads a name from a journal resting in front of them. They place one of the fallen beaded pieces into the wooden bowl, disposing the detached needle into the yellow bucket. Another name is spoken, and another beaded bundle goes into the bowl. This naming ritual

repeats as they move from the beads that had fallen to the ones pierced through their body (Figure 8). A heavy silence falls all around us after the last name has been read. Nault arranges some sage in the bowl that now holds the beads and speaks the words "miina kawapamitin … "until we meet again." As the sage billows around Nault, they continue by telling us a story of when their father's alcoholism peaked, and their mother took Nault away from their home. An unanswered question keeps us in suspense about what happened to their father once they were taken away. Nault then shifts from their personal narration to a communal one declaring that,

> The Canadian government keeps no publicly available database of police-involved deaths. Records of ethnicity are not kept. There is no database that includes in-custody deaths or events like starlight tours. We know, though, our minds and our bodies hold each of these wounds, and we remember them. I have named those, whose names I know, from today back to that pivotal night in my life, in 1998 and there are so so many more people that aren't named… but their families know and remember. (Miina Kawapamitin)

Nault then washes their body with the water from the glass bowl, adorns themself once again with the foxtail earrings and a black silk housecoat. They take one last moment to sit and acknowledge us with a carrying gaze as we all feel the shift within the room and ourselves. Nault exits the space, and we sit together as witnesses taking a few more moments to sense how we have collectively changed.

Calling upon Nault's performance for Pi*llOry part four, the artists demonstrate how their personal trauma reaches beyond the self as their experience is connected to that of all Indigenous people's trauma involving police violence. Nault employs embodiment through repetition, blurring the lines between their personal, familial memory and the collective memory of the Indigenous people named in this work. A distance or space occurs between each repeated

name and its accompanied action. This in-between space allows for a new consideration of what the action is communicating. Although seemingly the same, each repetition is indeed a new action as the process of repetition inevitably modifies the thing repeated (Auslander 88). The space created in-between each thing repeated provides a new meaning to the original occurrence. Thus, the trauma embodied through repletion is shifted and transformed with each new consideration. In the repetition of naming, Nault is also placing the names of erased Indigenous bodies back into a space where they have been removed. The felt space evoked in this work exhibits theories of Hauntings (Avery Gordon), Felt sense (Dian Million), and the 7th sense (TouVA). These theories are all connected by their affectual ties, a driving force in the transformation of trauma through repetition. It is exampled in this work in the felt restoration of erased names. We can not see the people as they are named, but we can surely feel them residing in the present moment. The felt sensation evokes an awareness of internal, external, and otherworldly forces at play. Each moment of and in-between the spoken negated names, we are continuously and un-continuously affected. It is within this felt space that we subjectively and objectively sense a shift in trauma.

As Nault narrates, they are actively shifting trauma with their words. The British philosopher J.L. Austin coined this concept “speech-act theory” in his 1955 lecture, published later in the book *How To Do Things With Words* (1976). Austin's theory considers language as action rather than a way to express or convey something. He examines what language can *do;* the actions words perform once they are articulated in a specific social context (Austin 7). A common example of this theory is the utterance "I do" in a marriage ceremony. This utterance is neither true nor false and can not be argued. It does not describe what is being done. What it is

doing, is performing the action of biding oneself to another within the ceremony. This utterance holds a productive force and thus has a performative affect.

The narration of trauma embodies speech-act theory and uses it to transform trauma. In the essay *Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the* Self by Susan J. Brison, the narration of trauma is explained as "speech acts of memory" (SAM). Brison writes that an "undoing of the self" occurs when trauma has been experienced and "speech acts of memory" not only transforms trauma but remakes the self (39). Speech acts of memory occur when a memory is narrated and is an activation wherein the survivor defuses traumatic memory through language, thus aiding in regaining control and remaking the self. When engaging with SAM, there is a shift from being the object of experienced trauma to the subject of one's own story, transforming trauma into a narrative that the survivor has control over (Brison 39). She continues to explain that.

> Narrative memory is not passively endured; rather, it is an act on the part of the narrator, a speech act that defuses traumatic memory, giving shape and a temporal order to the events recalled, establishing more control over their recalling, and helping the survivor to remake a self. (Brison 40)

> Trauma undoes the self by breaking the ongoing narrative, severing the connections among remembered past, lived present, and anticipated future. In telling a first-person trauma narrative to a suitable listener, their survivor is, at the same time and once again, a second person, dependent on the listener to return to personhood. (Brison 41)

SAM allows the survivor to construct a narrative to make sense of the self, express trauma, and have their voice heard (Brison 46). As trauma can feel passively experienced, narratives result from choices, making the trauma feel less intrusive and develop trauma into meaning so that the

rest of individual life is not invaded (Brison 46). Brison writes, "The result of the process of working through reveals the performative role of speech acts in recovering from trauma: under the right conditions, *saying* something about traumatic memory *does* something to it" (48). What is of utmost importance in SAM is not the factuality of the story but that trauma is given a voice and that the voice is heard.

Each word spoken within *miina kawapamitin* is an example of rebuilding the self, engaging in SAM. Each name read out aloud of an Indigenous person who died by police brutality, the declaration of their personal, familial trauma memory, and the disclosure concerning the lack of records kept around police-related indigenous deaths, transfers inherited trauma out of the body, allowing Nault to shift from object to subject and reclaim the self. They are gaining control over inherited trauma by creating awareness of the people lost. The awareness through naming brings the victims back to life. Their names spoken out loud are not a question, do not need an answer, can not be debated. The names give some life back to the Indigenous people taken as they are now received by the witnesses and carried within us all.

The narration of Nault's personal story also engages SAM. When delivering their story, they become the second person, hearing their own tail of being taken from their home and their father. They rebuild the self as they hear their own words. In their performance, they say,

> I knew that my mom had gotten my younger sister and I out of the house, and I thought that she had called the cops on him that night. I know that there were weapons in the house and that he was highly distraught. I recently learned that although she took us away from our house that night, she didn't call the police until the next day. (Pi*llOry video).

What I understand from the narration and subtext alluded by the naming of Indigenous people victim to police-involved deaths is that the night Nault was taken away from their father, he was killed. They have carried the trauma of being removed from their father, of their father's death, and the belief that their mother was partly responsible for their father's death with them all their life. In becoming the witness to their own words, they hear that they did not have the correct information regarding their mother's involvement with their father's death. Through narration, Nault receives all the names of Indigenous people taken by police. They also become witnesses to their trauma, separate partly from it, and begin to gain control over it. They hear that their father's death is not their fault and that the felt deaths of other Indigenous people are not their fault. Through their narration, we all take part of the responsibility, affectively reliving Nault of their trauma and allowing them to rebuild part of themself.

The witness plays an active role in supporting the reclamation and transformation of trauma. Brison writes that, in contributing to the activation of the space, the witness is helping the performer integrate into a transformed sense of self, their place in the world, and community (39). As the self exists and is created in relation to others, one cannot recover alone; one relies on an empathetic community to hear and receive (Brison 48). The witness is then an engaged and willing participant in the work, not merely a spectator or observer. Nault acknowledges the importance of the witness as they are not removed from them but embracing their presence as they involve them in the work. They ask the witness to participate in the performance and speak intimately to them. While the witness receives the narrator's experience of trauma, the witness does not, in turn, become traumatized as Nault is not re-creating a past but narrating trauma as a creative response to it. Their actions are executed with attention and tenderness, creating a calm and caring space wherein all feel safe as participants in this collective happening.

In this chapter, I have further examined how the use of repetition shifts trauma and has introduced the relevance of "speech acts of memory" in the transformation trauma. I have presented Nault's performance *miina kawapamitin* to example the use of repetition in naming and action and their employment of SAM. This work demonstrated that personal trauma is connected to communal trauma as trauma is experienced culturally. It also illustrates how affect is active in both repetition and SAM. I conclude that in narrating trauma, the survivor shifts from first person (object) to second person (subject); thus, becoming a witness themselves, separating from the traumatic experience, and shifting the event from a new viewpoint.

Chapter Eleven: Embodiment of Trauma Through Technology

My final analysis will explore shifts in trauma through the embodiment of technology. Embodiment of technology will be considered in the use of film and the digital image. John A. Weaver and Tara D. Britt's work "Experiencing Life Through the Body of Film: The Convergence of Phenomenology and Cultural Curriculum Studies" describes embodiment through film as a discourse between technology and physical body, wherein the technology extends the body, constructs/reconstructs identities and creates new knowledge of the past, present, and future for both the filmmaker and viewer. I will employ this writing to analyze the film *spatialhealing.mp4* by Santiago Tamayo Soler presented at Pi*llOry part five and to guide investigations towards shifts in trauma that occur through the embodiment of technology. This chapter will illustrate that embodiment of trauma through the digital image places the viewer as both subject and object and transforms the viewer more so than the filmmaker.

Weaver and Britt explain that the physical body is extended to experiences the world through film and the digital image (21). They write that film extends the body into the world as "a means to see and touch the world beyond the physiological limits of our bodies" (Weaver and Britt 23). Working together, film helps the viewer traverse beyond its immediate sensorial knowing and bodily limitation, making past and future something experienced in the present, while the viewer allows the film to have its "cinematic vision shared" (Weaver and Britt 24).

The authors often call upon Vivian Sobchack's work *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* to illustrate embodiment as the multiple connections between viewer and film. Sobchack (qtd. in Weaver and Britt) explains that there is a sensory and cognitive connection between the physical body and film in which "those modes of being alive and consciously embodied in the world that count for each of us as direct experience" are transported into the experienced viewing (22). The film writes Sobchack (qtd. in Weaver and Britt), is an "act of seeing that makes itself seen, an act of hearing that makes itself heard, an act of physical and reflective moment that makes itself reflexively felt and understood" and the viewer empowers the film in the seeing, hearing, and feeling of it (22). Sobchack (qtd. in Weaver and Britt) illustrates the connection between film and viewer in that film expresses a singular embodied experience and "makes it accessible and visible to more than the single consciousness who lives it" (22). A trifecta is now in force as the viewer embodies their own experiences, the expenses of another, and the experience of film. Sobchack (qtd. in Weaver and Britt) further writes, "The viewer … shares cinematic space with the film but must also negotiate it, contribute to and perform the constitution of it's experiential significance. Watching a film is both a direct and mediated experience of direct experiences as mediation" (22). The viewer recognizes their embodied experiences and the embodied experiences of another as received through film.

Embodiment through film then is the connection of both individual lived experiences and sensed experience.

A process in which the embodiment through film occurs is found in the use of the montage. Interpreted by Weaver and Britt, the montage produces specific effects where different parts or pieces of a film are being seen as part of one view developing the desired narrative of the filmmaker (29). The montage produced narrative connections the spectator and film as the process "mimics the speed and rhythm of the experience of the real world"; thus, the spectator relates it to their lived experiences (Weaver and Britt 30). They further explain that a productive montage's motive is to make "something stand out in importance and to evoke a response from the spectator" (Weaver and Britt 30). The montage affectively communicates something to the spectator, and in their viewing, they affectively respond. Weaver and Britt explain how through response, the spectator participates in the montage and claims subject and object position.

> As part of the film's construction, montage challenges the spectator to do more than merely watch the film: montage invites the spectator to participate in the world of film and be enveloped into its body.
>
> We interpret this to mean that the spectator must digest and analyze what it is they encounter in film and then must recognize the ways in which the messages themselves were received. Participating in such a practice requires that the spectator allow the experience of the film to flow over him/her like a wave. (Weaver and Britt 31)

The montage shapes the spectator's sense of self through found connections to the images and their experienced emotional and physical responses to the film (Weaver and Britt 32). As the montage offers similarities of daily lived experiences, the spectator can receive and respond to

the film. The spectator connects their lived knowledge to the experience offered to them by the montage. As these experiences are connected, the spectator becomes personally invested in the film by way of the montage, allowing their sense of self to be affected.

Weaver and Britt conclude that the greatest potential of the digital image is established when considered outside of its digital frame and extended into the human body connecting them as one (34). Recognizing the untapped potential of the digital image, the human body and its senses play an active role in creating the meaning of the digital image as the body is affected by the film (Weaver and Britt 35). Feeling the power of the image, the body creates personal attachments to it, which extends the individual to feel the world beyond their experiences (Weaver and Britt 35). They write that "meaning is made in the material connections between our bodies, the body of the film, and the bodies, animals, vegetables, and minerals recorded by the film" (37). The film's meaning is no longer bound by its digital frame but created by the human body.

I have outlined here these main ideas that will be carried forward to analyze the film *spatialhealing.mp4* by Santiago Tamayo Soler; the physical body is extended through film, the viewer completes the film, embodiment of the film occurs in three ways, montage underscores the films narrative and calls for a response from the viewer and that the human body ultimately creates the films meaning. These ideas will be applied to the embodiment of trauma in film and reveal how trauma is shifted for the viewer.

Santiago Tamayo Soler (b. Bogotá, Colombia) is a Montreal-based interdisciplinary artist working primarily in video, performance, and painting. Soler's website *cargocollective.com/santiagotamayosoler* reports that following a degree in Film Studies at the Universidad del Cine in Buenos Aires, Argentina, he completed a bachelor's in fine arts at

Concordia University in 2019 (About-Santiago). He is interested in the intersection of fictional narratives, cinema, and live action and tries to integrate elements from the cinematic language into ritualistic performance practices (About-Santiago). Tamayo Soler is one of the Céline Bureau artist residency board members in Montreal and is actively creating online content. He has presented his curated works *When did the suffering of 'Other" become so profitable?* (Montréal, Arts Interculturels 2019), *Tonada de Luna Llena* (RIPA, Montréal 2018), and *Heart is out of its chest. It beats, weak and wounded. To bury and let go. Light is coming. The fire* (Champ des Possibles, Montreal 2017) in Montreal over the past years and continues to investigate performance employing technology.

On November 24th, 2020, Tamayo Soler emailed me his written answers to the previously presented interview *There is a Dissonance and Density within my Body: Disrupting Inherited Historical Trauma Through Performative Embodiment Practices*. In this interview, Tamayo Soler details that Tamayo Soler noticed he and the people close to him were dealing with a great deal of anxiety regarding the current pandemic (Tamayo Soler 2020). Lacking resources to therapy due to financial struggles, Tamayo and his friends focused their attention on online mediations (Tamayo Soler 2020). Tamayo Soler became particularly interested in "self-hypnosis videos teaching techniques to 'rewire yourself' physically and mentally, and the poetics and language of meditation scripts" (Tamayo Soler 2020). He works to embody the spiritual and virtual escapism technology offers and addresses trauma through the concept of "rewiring the self" (Tamayo Soler 2020).

Saturday, November 21st, 2020, Glad Day TV graciously hosted our online version on Pi*llOry. In this edition, all works were either filmed or performed live from home and broadcast during the event. Tamayo Soler's film *spatialhealing.mp4* (17:49) was presented here for the

first time. The film, running at 0:17:49, begins with white scrolling words on a black background. A computer-generated voice narrates the words as they travel the screen.

"Short Hypnosis Session to Free Yourself from Spiritual Attachments – Reflections on Architectural Links to Memory/ies. Disclaimer! This recording should not be used as a substitute for any medical care you may be receiving. You should always refer to a doctor when necessary. Do not listen while driving or operating machinery, only listen in a place where you can relax and let go. Welcome. To begin, please get comfortable. Let…"

As the words and narration continue, a distorted image of Tamayo Soler's face appears over the words. The artist's face delivers a second narration over the first that is difficult to make out. After some time, the face disappears and is replaced by a reclined midbody and torso depiction of the artist. The words and narration continue in the background as another forward-facing version of Tamayo Soler appears on the bottom left hand of the screen. The voice reads out the words, "Your checks, your nose, your mouth…"

Both avatars point to those places on their body. The words are always moving in the background while being narrated by the computer voice. The computer voice is now joined with the artist's voice recounting the words in a more leisurely time. The bodies fade into the background. A new image flashes quickly upon the screen. It contains a black and white depiction of the artist's body, sound waves, and boxes that take up the lower half of the screen. Both voices do not hesitate in their narration during this occurrence. Continuing to view the scrolling worded script, Tamayo Soler's voice clashes and conjoins with the computer narration as they speak over each other. There is an image of the artist in the fetal position juxtaposed against the words now. Another identical image appears in the middle of the screen, then one to the left (Figure 9). The bodies disappear. The words disappear. A new distorted face of the artist

takes up the screen. The narration continues, and the words reappear, scrolling up behind the distorted face of Tamayo Soler. The face melts away as the computer narrator states that it will begin to count down from 10 to 1 and that we will be transported to a staircase. The objective is to walk down one step at a time. Tamayo Soler's face is no longer on the screen.

"This is the staircase of trance, and the further down you go, the deeper into trance you'll go."

A staircase with a door at the top appears over the words. A distorted avatar of Tamayo Soler walks through the door towards the descending stairs. As the narrator begins the countdown, the avatar begins his descent. As the narrator repeats "Deeper and Deeper," more of the same avatar appear and walk down the stairs at different rhythms. The image begins to break down and take on a lava lamp-like look. "Deeper and Deeper," the voice continues. Then it stops, and a new Tamayo Soler avatar takes up the screen, dressed all in black, moving as if fashioning for himself in a mirror (Figure 10). This avatar's movements become a dance to the glitching three corded song in the background. The screen turns black. The voice returns, although it is no longer understandable. The words also return, this time curling around each other, making strange and beautiful images. A door appears, and a ghost-like figure appears out of the background. The figure walks through the door and past the screen (Figure 11). As the voice carries on in its trance-like state, ghostly halls appear, and we, the viewer, journey up white steps onto another metaphysical platform.

The image changes to three new Tamayo Soler avatars upon a white background (Figure 12). Then we are brought back to the black background with scrolling white words. A cluster of avatars appear, some upside down, some right side up. These avatars fade away to make room for three others, facing one another. One begins to lower himself and becomes the focus (Figure 13). The words move around each other while the video zooms in and out on the avatar until he

disappears into the background. A computer arrow appears and draws over the words, creating architecture/ landscapes upon the worded environment (Figure 14). At times a ledger appears, and the arrow chooses items, like a bed to occupy the newly created space. The arrow is creating a bedroom furnished with shelves, windows, computer desk, and a chair. The three avatars in the fetal position from the beginning of our journey apar again as the room fades away. One at a time, they also disappear. The narration becomes clear and understandable again as the last avatar dissolves. The narrator is in sync with the written works ending the video by saying, "Open your eyes. Wide awake. Feeling fantastic… Well done."

Tamayo Soler is embodying trauma as an avatar in the video. We see him participating in the hypnosis session, curling into the fetal position, descending the stairs, walking through hallways, and ultimately creating a digital architecture that will cease to exist once the video is completed. He detaches from and shifts trauma by allowing his avatar to take new shapes as he participates in and works through the hypnosis process. The spectator follows the multiple versions of Tamayo Soler's virtual body, also guided by the hypnosis session. In witnessing Tamayo Soler's journey, the spectator is brought into the work and begins to envision themselves in this world. Once in the world, the spectator joins the avatar in its transformations, shifting their self-image and adjoined lived experiences of trauma. The spectator, artist, and video are all connected.

This work calls for the spectator to participate. As they do so (if they choose to do so), the hypnosis requires that individual lived embodied experiences of trauma are summoned so that they can be worked through while embodying the directions in the video. The video requires the spectator's participation so that the hypnosis can have any real meaning in shifting trauma.

The hypnosis comes to life in/through the spectator. The film's potential in shifting trauma is reached only when the spectator embodies the hypnosis.

Although Tamayo Soler is not working with a traditional montage process, I observe the film's narration developed similarly to that of montage. As Weaver and Britt describe it, montage puts pieces of a film together to create a sense of a through narrative (29). Tamayo Soler brings together images and sound and overlaps them in a collage that achieves the same through narrative “despite the sometimes unnatural nature of the scene construction” (Weaver and Britt 29). *Spatialhealing.mp4* constructs an affective connection to the spectator as it presents the collaged images of Tamayo Soler’s body and through both narrations of the text. Although Tamayo Soler’s body is shown in different ways, the effect of collaging the images connects the viewers to the multiple versions they envision of themselves. The spectator can relate to these bodies as they themselves are in a body, and being of a body, I argue, one understands the different ways bodies can be observed. For instance, the image we have of ourselves is not always the image seen by others. Thus, the viewer recognizes the transformative qualities of the body presented in this work and in themselves. The viewer is "responding to stimuli on various conscious and subconscious levels” (Weaver and Britt 32). Having this bodily connection as an anchor, the spectator is transported into the film and can be affected by the narration of the hypnosis. As they hear the voice and feel it in their body, it consciously or unconsciously calls upon the viewer's trauma to be shifted through the hypnosis.

The concept of embodiment through technology by way of the digital image has been exampled in this chapter. I have expressed the viewer's importance in embodiment through film and underlined the multiple connections in the film viewer relationship. I have presented how embodiment is employed in Tamayo Soler's film *spatialhealing.mp4*. I then demonstrated that

the shift in trauma involves a multi-layered embodiment of self, film, and filmmaker. Extension of the body, sensed and cognitive connections, the use of montage/collage, and personal attachment to the digital image have been presented as ways in which embodiment occurs. I conclude that this work illustrates how the digital image can demonstrate a shift in both the artist's trauma and the trauma of the viewer.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have argued how Queer trauma is transformed by embodiment in performance art practices. In section one, I defined Queer trauma as "blows" that affect individuals and communities. That trauma invades and becomes a dominant feature of individual and collective identity. I explain Queer trauma as acts intended to erase Queer narratives. I then present the argument that Queer trauma embodied in performance art shifts trauma so that it can be learned from and transformed into something new that aids in individual and communal communication of Queer development. I present how Queer trauma in performance art events creates Queer counterpublics that support the communication and transformation of trauma. The collaboration of witness and performer in shifting trauma is then underscored in how the witness engages in practices of inheritance where they become part of the performance and are responsible for supporting trauma transformations. Lastly, I argue that trauma is engaged with and transformed affectively in body, mind, past, present, and future when embodied.

In section two, I used three performances by Queer Pi*llOrists to demonstrate three different embodiment techniques that shift trauma. Firstly, I presented how trauma can be shifted through embodiment of repetition. I used the performances *Forlorn: Stitching wings made of*

tender fallen leaves, Washing Rice, and *Coming out/in 7 movements* to example how trauma is manifested into an action that represents the artist's trauma, then through repetition of the action, new knowledge is created, thus a new meaning of the trauma, and so both performer and witness learn something new about it. These works example transformations that affectively occur within the space in-between each repetition of an action. In each work, the action performed becomes part of the past, and the subsequent action becomes something new as it lives in the present; thus, the transformation of trauma occurs in-between each repetition.

I then exampled shifts in collective trauma and personal trauma through repetition and speech acts of memory. I analyzed the performance *miina kawapamitin* as it demonstrates shifts trauma by embodiment through repetition in action and narration. This work also illustrates shifts through embodiment of speech acts of memory. Nault shifts trauma as they regain control of their lived experiences through narration and remake part of themselves that both personal and collective trauma has undone. Through narration, they have the authority to make choices, express trauma, and have their voice heard, exampling how saying something about trauma does something to it.

Lastly, I use the film *spatialhealing.mp4* to discuss shifts in trauma when embodying technology through the digital image. The film uses collage as a method to simulate real-world experiences creating an anchor for the witness to participate in the film; thus, the film becomes a lived experience of the witness—the film examples embodiment of lived and sensed experience that connects filmmaker and witness. When embodied, the film shapes the witness's sense of self as the film's body and mind are extended and affected. Thus, the embedment of the film allows for the witness to participate in the intention of the film. The film's intention to shift trauma is reached when considered outside of its frame and embodied by the witness.

As discussed in this thesis, performance art makes trauma visible to offer a reparative interpretation and create a social discourse around change. I have demonstrated how, through performative actions, many Queers resist the erasures within our history while connecting with the past. Merging time, space, self, and other, performers consider the affects of the past in the present. As they engage with the affects of past trauma in the present, they “frame historical moments as a way that disrupts the flow of contemporary hetero- and homonormativity" (Alyson Campbell 2016). I have argued that Pi*llOrists create new methods of discovery to work through the conditions of trauma and forge creative responses to it within Queer communities and counterpublics. Thus, I conclude that Queer performance events such as Pi*llOry to be successful in creating an accessible language that enables both performer and viewer to engage in transformations of individual, communal traumas.

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Appendix I – Interview Questions

This interview was approved by the York Research and Ethics Bord on September 29th, 2020

Certificate #: STU 2020-095

Study Name:

There is a Dissonance and Density within my Body: Disrupting Inherited Historical Trauma Through Performative Embodiment Practices

Researcher:

Holly Timpener, Principal Investigator

Interdisciplinary Studies, Master, York University

Questions:

1. Can you please state your name and if willing your age?

2. Which edition of Pi*llOry did you perform at?

3. How did you feel working in that particular Pi*llOry event? Did you have a positive or negative experience?

4. How do you feel having only queer performers influence the evening? How has queerness affected you and your work?

5. Pi*llOry has a running theme of TRAUMA, how did you engage with this theme in your performance and/or does it influence you practice at large? How was the witness *implicated* in the violence or suffering they experienced from within your work?

6. How does gender affect your practice, and did it influence your work for Pi*llOry?

7. How would you describe EMBODIMENT? Is embodiment a method you employ within your performance practice and how does that affect your work?

8. The Montreal performance collective TouVA investigates performance in their book *The 7th Sense* and defines this seventh sense as a place inside the performer that guides their actions, creating a kind of pathway for increased sensibility that emerges while in performative action.

Do you feel there is some sort of seventh sense, or ghost like presence that guides you while in performance?

9. Do you feel that within your performance at Pi*llOry you were engaging in an act of memorialization and how do you feel that affects the community witnessing the work?

10. When invited to perform at Pi*llOry you were provided with a mission statement.

Do you feel the event was successful or not in achieving its goal of creating a space where queer healing can be achieved through the embodiment of trauma?

Appendix II – List of Artists

Pi*llOry part one. August 18th, 2019.

David Frankovich (They/Them)
https://www.instagram.com/d_frankovich/
https://www.facebook.com/dfrankovich
Performance title: *Watershed*
Artist Statement: Frankovich is an artist based in Helsinki and Toronto working in performance and experimental media. Their work is based the relations between queer bodies and queer objects.

Leena Raudvee (She/Her)
leenaraudvee.ca
Performance title: *Teetering on an Edge*
Artist Statement: Raudvee speaks from the precariousness of negotiating im/mobility through disability and aging. Stumbling between being visible and invisible she revels in the unwilling body in performance.

Matthew Moir (He/Him)
www.matthewmoir.com
https://vimeo.com/matthewmoir
https://www.instagram.com/maffhewmoir/
Performance title: *NEW BIO!*
Artist Statement: Through queering body politics and gender performance, Moir transcends lived experiences through his work as a filmmaker and multidisciplinary artist. His work envisions queer futurities by considering the affects of change, shifting perspectives, and fractured boundaries.

Sophie Traub aka wisdomfruit (They/Them, She/Her)
https://www.instagram.com/wisdomgrapes/
http://www.beyondboomandbust.com/
Performance title: *"Erotically Leaning In"**
Artist Statement: Traub is a gender-fluid, queer performing artist, scholar and theatre/film creator with extensive strategic artistic leadership experience through their work as Co-Director for The School of Making Thinking. Sophie is invested in impact-focused arts programming, facilitating individual and group transformation through creative engagement towards social change.

Pi*llOry part two. November 15th, 2019.
Brian Smith (He/Him)
Performance title: *Coming out/in 7 movements*
Artist Statement: Smith has a ceramics practice exploring landscape, fragility and transition. He is a retired Architect, an installation artist, and workshop facilitator. His pedagogy and art-works focus on the concept of "in between" spaces.

Claudia Edwards (They/Them)
https://www.instagram.com/claudiaedwards.info/
https://claudiaedwards.info/
Performance title: *Regenesis*
Artist Statement: Edwards is a performance and visual artist based in Toronto, Canada. Of Indo-Guyanese and British descent, their work explores issues of identity, memory, queerness, power, and decolonization. Their approach is conceptually driven, and formally determined by operation and circulation.

Enok Ripley (They/Them)
https://www.enokripley.com/
https://www.instagram.com/enokripley/
Performance title: *Forlorn: Stitching wings made of tender fallen leaves.*
Artist Statement: Ripley is an emerging Performance artist based in Montreal, whose work explores themes of healing, ritual creation, and transformation. Their work dwells within the body and their experience of it as a transgender and disabled person. Ripley has exhibited work in USA, Italy, Germany, as well as across Canada.

Nicole Nigro (she/her)
https://www.nicolebnigro.com/
https://www.instagram.com/nicole.b.nigro/
Performance title: *SHIFT 2019*
Artist Statement: Nigro is a dance-theatre artist with ongoing international collaborations. Her performative work interlaces her interests in behaviour, sensory perception, language, and connection. Nigro work with themes of effort, memory, motivation, and intuition, and examines the contact between body, voice and space, creating performance installations, which are a synthesis of her dance, somatic, vocal, and physical theatre practices.

Racquel Rowe (She/Her)
https://www.racquelrowe.ca/
https://www.instagram.com/kellrowe/
Performance title: *Washing Rice*
Artist Statement: Rowe is an interdisciplinary artist from the island of Barbados who currently resides in Canada. She uses history to represent how historical events and perceptions shape modern day depictions of black wom*n and black culture and thus how these things affect our lived experience.

<u>Pi*llOry Part three. July 25th, 2020.</u>

Amber Helene Müller St. Thomas (They/ Them)
www.amberhelenemullerstthomas.com
www.instagram.com/amberhelenemullerstthomas/
Performance title: *Care Pack*
Artist Statement: Müller St. Thomas' practice involves gestures of interaction and connection. They engage with everyday objects, drawing inspiration from mundane life experiences. They are interested in exploring the implications of collective contact, tactility and desire through the

communal holding and passing of objects or textiles. They primarily employ photography, performance and textiles, frequently questioning and moving the lines between these media within a single project.

[field] a collaboration between Coman Poon (He/Him) & Brian Smith (He/Him)
Performance title: *1+1= O: performances in preparation for death (COVID)*
Artist Statement: Named in reference to an essay by John Berger, [field] is an ongoing collaboration between architect & installationist Brian Smith and interdisciplinary performer and life/art researcher Coman Poon. Smith and Poon are life and artistic partners with a 22 year age span between them. As an intercultural partnership, they inhabit and grow a practice that taps into the embodied wisdom, sensibilities and epistemologies they bring into their conceptual and relational arts practice.

lo bil (She/Her, They/Them)
https://lo-bil.tumblr.com/
Performance title: *21 minute Self*
Artist Statement: bil's work aims for non-repeatability that result in the creation of oddly formed moves and energetic flows that connect abstracted impulses to sublimated images. Bil lets speech affect movement and movement affect speech - hypothetically articulating injuries that were entrenched in states of dissociation and hidden in forms of respectable behaviour.

Madeleine Lychek (She/ Her)
https://lmaoidk.com/
https://www.instagram.com/iamlychek/
Performance title: *Absolving Myself*
Artist Statement: Lychek is a queer Filipino-Canadian performance and video artist. She uses social media as a digital playground to engage with conversations surrounding power and play, exploring how a body and its consumption can be used as a radical act of self-discovery.

Randa Reda (She/Her)
https://www.instagram.com/_randa_r_/
Performance title*: Flesh*
Artist Statement: Reda's work criticizes fundamentalism and traditional culture's judgements on women's behaviours and desires. Through protest gestures, she urges to amplify her personal struggle against paradigms of inferiority and resist being oppressed and exploited. She explores the tensions between her lived bodily experiences as a migrant Arab woman and her cultural meanings and family prescriptions inscribed on her female body.

Nicole Lynn Deschaine (She/Her)
Performance title: *Untitled*
Artist Statement: Deschaine is new to the performance scene with her debut happening at Pi*llOry part three. She is a visual artist, Trans activist and community member of the Glad Day Family and Church Street.

Pi*llOry part four. July 26th, 2020.

Johannes Zits (He/Him)
http://www.johanneszits.com/
https://www.instagram.com/johanneszits/
Performance title: *Working With Wood: Beaver Remnant*
Artist Statement: Zits questions preconceptions of nature that continue to be imposed by dominant histories and reductive, binaristic constructs. Zits believes nature to be more than a passive backdrop in which we live and take from. He immerses himself in encounters with trees, taking time to observe, experience, contemplate and share. Zits works in extended moments that open up spaces for reflectivity, as well empathetic actions and interactions.

Sadie Berlin (She/Her)
https://www.instagram.com/sadiediamorphine/
Performance title: *Untitled*
Artist Statement: Berlin is a theatre and performance artist who documents how social intolerance and oppression shape ever-mutable and fluctuating aspects of self-definition. In her sometimes racialised work, Berlin uses her many intersections to reflect cis-straight whiteness back to audiences. This telegraphing of oppression as an infection that engraves itself onto and inside marginalised bodies, interrogates notions of free will and freedom to create/conjure/imagine without boundaries.

Sheri Osden Nault (They/Them)
sherinault.com/
linktr.ee/so_nault
https://www.instagram.com/so_nault/
Performance title: *miina kawapamitin*
Artist Statement: Nault is an artist of Michif and mixed European descent. Situated within personal and political contexts, their art practice and research are grounded in queer, feminist, and Indigenous world-views. They strive to elicit a sense of social and ecological responsibility and intimacy on a damaged planet, recently focusing on connections between bodies, sexuality, and nature.

Simla Civelek (She/Her)
simlacivelek.com/
Performance title: *Re-constructing De-construction*
Artist Statement: Civelek's performance work is developed out of spatial awareness of various elements: the location, the objects, my body and the audience. She works to remove the emotion out of actions. She is inspired to do so by her personal bodily experiences, her cultural upbringing and her culturally established patterns of behaviour.

Tess Martens (She/Her)
http://www.tessmartens.com/
https://www.instagram.com/tess_martens/
Performance title: *Ashes to Ashes*

Artist Statement: Martens is currently based in Montreal, Quebec, graduated from the University of Waterloo with a Master of Fine Art in 2018. In her art practice, personal experiences are re-contextualized through performances. Humour is often used in her performances to invite and engage the audience. When she is not performing, she is painting in her kitchen and working with seniors at a Montreal senior residence.

Pi*llOry part five. November 21st, 2020.

Aisha Lesley Bentham (She/Her,They/Them)
https://www.instagram.com/missbentham/
Performance title: *Movements with my Ancestors*
Artist Statement: Bentham MA, BFA, is an artist-scholar and vegan chef who's work and research centers ritual, aesthetic and labour. Her love for cooking and performance led her to investigate the many intersections of these disciplines, from ancestral connection, to spatial turn, to spirituality. Aisha's transdisciplinary approach to creating continues to push her to explore the many embodied aspects and possibilities that the work offers. She looks forward to continuing her performance-research by completing a cookbook.

B Wijshijer (They/ Them)
https://www.instagram.com/bwijshijer/
https://www.instagram.com/shrimpychip/
youtu.be/mrlfb_MMbVk
Performance title: *shrimpychip: GUIDED MEDITATION*
Artist Statement: Wijshijer is a research-based artist working within digital media, video and performance. Wijshijer utilizes online trends and subcultures to deconstruct mediated intimacies and personas on digital platforms. Informed by acceleration aesthetics, their work plays with excess and artifice to interrogate the ways in which late capitalism affects our digital lives.

lwrds (They/Them)
https://www.instagram.com/lwrds.art/
https://www.instagram.com/lwrdsss/
Performance title: *cut memory*
Artist Statement: lwrds works in performance, sculpture, illustration, poetics, and remediated mixed-media outcomes. their work as an artist responds to their personal journey of healing sexual trauma at the intersections of gender variance, Blackness and Indigeneity (complicated by an imposed latinidad I vehemently reject due to its colonial underpinnings), and disability for reasons of neurodivergence and chronic illness. Their approach is an intuitive process of learning with other non-human beings, valuing energetic exchanges with all that exists.

Raki Malhotra (She/Her, They/Them)
@rakimalhotra
Performance title: *Performing: Nadee Achambha, a musical*
Artist Statement: Malhotra explores the contemporary biases that they believe are surfacing among us at this time. Collaboration has a major role in this process, and their intention is to

listen and respond. Their collaborator is a witness, a viewer, a group member, another artist, a space, an object, or perhaps something/someone else.

Santiago Tamayo Soler (He/Him)
https://www.instagram.com/santiagotamayosoler/
Performance title: *spatialhealing.mp4*
Artist Statement: Tamayo Soler (b. Bogotá, Colombia) is a Montreal-based interdisciplinary artist working mostly in video, performance and painting. Interested in the intersection of fictional narratives, cinema and live action, Santiago's work tries to translate and integrate various elements from the cinematic language through ritualistic studies and practices.

Speranza Spir (She/Her)
https://journeypagesblog.wordpress.com/
Performance title: *Bush is declaring war, !Ladies wear your Keleb! CONFIGURED/RE/CONFIGURE*
Artist Statement :Spir is a Montreal artist, a somatic practitioner, a poet & multidisciplinary performer. Speranza Spir is interested in overlapping feminist issues with Butoh inspired performance improvisation. Her process is in dealing with the challenges of negative, vulnerable-izing and invalidating present-time issues still present for many women. In addressing many of these issues as a movement practitioner, she connects to the " intelligent body " enhancing cognition and how its relevance informs performance and authenticity, identity and emotional empowerment.

Figures

Fig. 1. “Forlorn: Stitching wings made of tender fallen leaves.” Enok Ripley, Performance from Pi*llOry part two. Toronto, Ontario. November 15th, 2019. Photo by Chris Blanchenot.

Fig. 2. “Forlorn: Stitching wings made of tender fallen leaves.” Enok Ripley, Performance from Pi*llOry part two. Toronto, Ontario. November 15th, 2019. Photo by Chris Blanchenot.

Fig. 3. “Washing Rice.” Racquel Rowe, Performance from Pi*llOry part two. Toronto, Ontario. November 15th, 2019. Photo by Chris Blanchenot.

Fig. 4. “Washing Rice.” Racquel Rowe, Performance from Pi*llOry part two. Toronto, Ontario. November 15th, 2019. Photo by Chris Blanchenot.

Fig. 5. “Coming out/in 7 movements.” Brian Smith, Performance from Pi*llOry part two. Toronto, Ontario. November 15th, 2019. Photo by Chris Blanchenot.

Fig. 6. “Coming out/in 7 movements.” Brian Smith, Performance from Pi*llOry part two. Toronto, Ontario. November 15th, 2019. Photo by Chris Blanchenot.

Fig. 7. “miina kawapamitin.” Sheri Osden Naul, Performance from Pi*llOry part four. Toronto, Ontario. July 26th, 2020. Photo by Tina Bararian.

Fig. 8. “miina kawapamitin.” Sheri Osden Naul, Performance from Pi*llOry part four. Toronto, Ontario. July 26th, 2020. Photo by Tina Bararian.

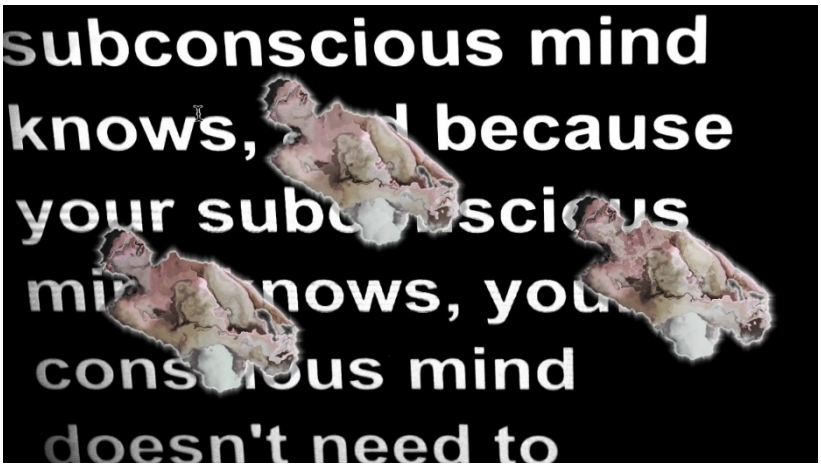

Fig. 9. Video Still (0:04:46). “spatialhealing.mp4.” Reproduced with the permission of Santiago Tamayo Soler. Video from Pi*llOry part four. Presented by Glad Day TV. Toronto, Ontario. November 21st, 2020.

Fig. 10. Video Still (0:09:35). “spatialhealing.mp4.” Reproduced with the permission of Santiago Tamayo Soler. Video from Pi*llOry part four. Presented by Glad Day TV. Toronto, Ontario. November 21st, 2020.

Fig. 11. Video Still (0:10:32). “spatialhealing.mp4.” Reproduced with the permission of Santiago Tamayo Soler. Video from Pi*llOry part four. Presented by Glad Day TV. Toronto, Ontario. November 21st, 2020.

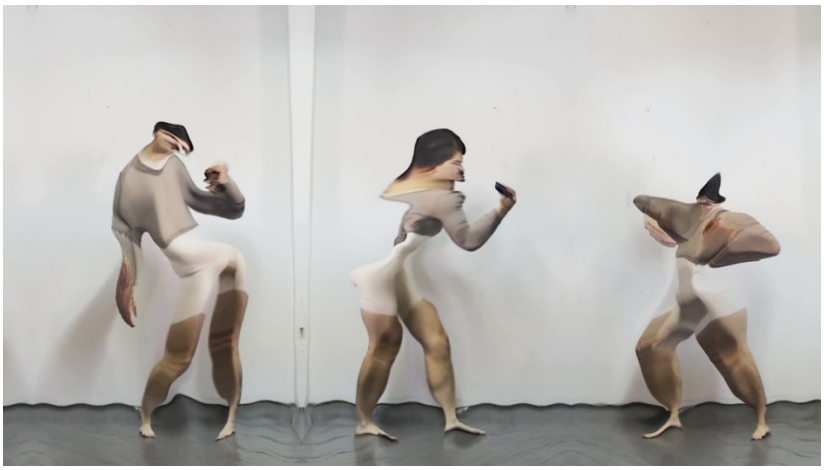

Fig. 12. Video Still (0:12:08). “spatialhealing.mp4.” Reproduced with the permission of Santiago Tamayo Soler. Video from Pi*llOry part four. Presented by Glad Day TV. Toronto, Ontario. November 21st, 2020.

Fig. 13. Video Still (0:13:43). “spatialhealing.mp4.” Reproduced with the permission of Santiago Tamayo Soler. Video from Pi*llOry part four. Presented by Glad Day TV. Toronto, Ontario. November 21st, 2020.

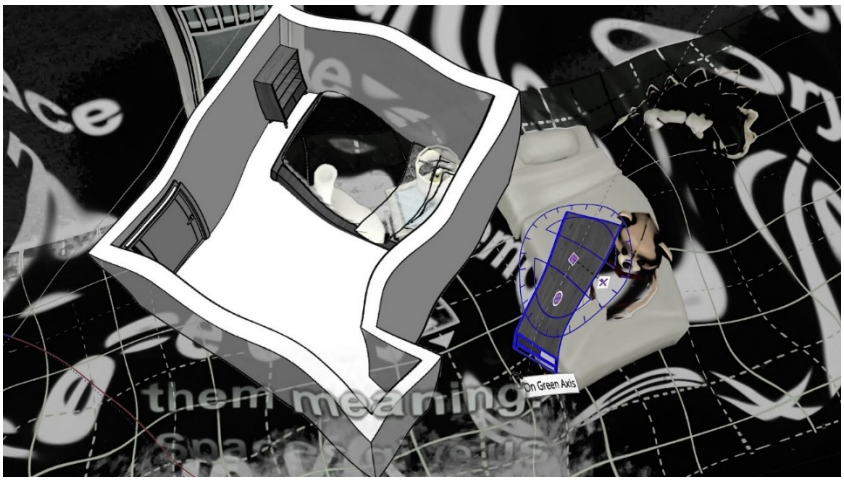

Fig. 14. Video Still (0:15:42). “spatialhealing.mp4.” Reproduced with the permission of Santiago Tamayo Soler. Video from Pi*llOry part four. Presented by Glad Day TV. Toronto, Ontario. November 21st, 2020.