

The following texts were originally created during the 2016 SPILL WRITING programme, facilitated by Diana Damian Martin. The texts shared here are extracted from larger bodies of writing made during the festival. They have been selected for inclusion here by SPILL Festival in 2021. Thanks to Diana and all contributing writers.

SPILL WRITING 2016

En masse is as much a movement together, as it is a collection of individual bodies. In French, the word *masse* stands for a shot in pool made by hitting the cue ball vertically on the side, driving it around one ball to strike another.

SPILL Writing in 2016 took that year's festival theme of *En Masse*, and its works, as a provocation to reflect on the possibility of collectivity, embodiment, and collaboration in critical writing about, from and with performance. It was led by SPILL Writer in Residence Diana Damian-Martin.

Diana was joined by six exceptional new writers, selected following an open call-out, who engaged, responded and developed their practice throughout the festival. The writers were Mark Aaron, Elisabeth Carlile, Jackie Montague, Phoebe Patey-Ferguson, Claire Ridge and Michelle Sewell.

27 October 2016

COFFEE MORNING: ON LABOUR (IMPRESSIONS)

By Diana Damian Martin

A vocabulary of mass/e:

Assembly
Collective
Gathering
Ceremony
Committee
Community
Kinship
Clan

A series of questions:

How to work together, or, the politics of work, or work-place, or, between structures of work and labour, or, processes of being.

A series of answers, between heritage and place, identity and displacement:

Unlearning dance, re-visiting ceremony, working from the rituals of one's heritage not just as an activist stance, but as a mode of being and learning.

Being identified versus self-identification: this seems particularly pertinent at a time when 'citizen', 'foreigner', 'stranger', are all gaining currency in right-wing political rhetoric – a kind of displacement of sorts.

(I am thinking about Ocean Island Mine, and how it speaks of displacement in a Pacific context, how it unfolds discourses around climate change to a human level, unpacking how communities are affected, and the skewed power structures that sustain necessity and reinforce power)

Labour performed, labour assimilated, labour imprinted- labour showing onto the body, the body showing labour, the economics of labour, the necessity and (in)visibility of labour.

A series of nomadic thoughts, lingering in between

Duration as a mode of unfolding different conceptions of (non-linear) time

Being identified, rather than identifying

Displacement not only as the process of being moved, or moving by necessity, but also being re-contextualised, re-positioned, re-read

Processes of cultural valuation in relation to identity politics, in relation to labour

The displacement, the refugee as a political and social moment, the interweaving of lineage and conflict, the labour of moving ahead, or being moved.

The body as a place of history.

27 October 2016

EN MASSE, A COLLECTIVE BEGINNING

By Phoebe Patey-Ferguson, Claire Ridge, Mark Aaron, Michelle Sewell, Jackie Montague, Lissie Carlile, Diana Damian Martin

The following texts emerged from a process of collaboration between the SPILL Writers; they exchanged texts, asked questions that emerged from them, and were then invited to respond.

What might bind us together, as a people of SPILL Festival, is a commitment to a shared life, a vision of a better way of being together. We can be a stronger, safer and more permissive community. As groups and cultures travel and diffuse through international migration, we realise we are not a fixed people with one history, one story, or one language, but we can be drawn together as a people through a process of constant invention and reinvention. In reaction to exclusionary Nationalistic rhetoric, Kwame Anthony Appiah in his Reith Lecture on Tuesday morning suggested that a people is created through a commitment to creating a 'common life together'. In the wave of right-wing nationalism that is surging across Europe, a pluralistic, accepting and loving space can seem fragile. But perhaps in the Festival we can prove this is possible. – done

Work leaves its stain on you in a way you can conjure up the feelings, pictures, atmospheres and empathy. Like any experience, you can feel a bit alarmed, bemused at your initial reaction so reflection is part of the natural process of thinking which isn't an inhibitor and that kind of self reflection is important for the reader as it humanises the writer. All that certainty can be a bit dull.

To be self aware of how you are looking at something is to be shared with your reader. I don't think that's personal bias, I think that's honesty. When writing about any art is to be subjective anyway. A piece of work written about today will hopefully be different when written about again a year later. I think subjectivity should be embraced!

My recent encounter with queer feminist theorists, and Renate Lorenz at this moment in my practice has led to an interest in disrupting linear, normative representations of time in performance. I come with an interest to develop a queer, feminist durational mode of seeing as writing strategy. I tend to ask, what does the work generate, how does it speak outside of itself, in what ways do the images ignite other thoughts, affects and histories and what strategies do they utilise to do this?

I think that collaborating - introducing what could be very differing voices into a singular text, could be incoherent, formless, jarring, and invite multiple propositions for the reader. I am interested in how this could be a generative strategy, but obviously this would require experimenting with the text, and exploring different

ways of writing with each other. Some ideas: placing texts side by side, cut-up, additions to someone else's text (like an exquisite corpse).

In order to understand Live Art in form, it may be essential to understand the interaction with body art and performance art. It seems odd perhaps to separate these art forms so distinctly when there is a need for one in order to understand the other. It could be questioned whether the work that is produced from those making live art is inclusive to those that are only involved within the live art community. Its inability to be commodified, due to the small scope of financial benefit that is on offer for those makers/performers/producers, creates an inclusivity for those that are able to support themselves through other ways, for example, creating art that fits within a different, mainstream viewed sector in order to provide for experimental non-profitable work.

I begin the piece with notes, with stream-of-consciousness;
I often write very quickly; I deliberately look for a rhythm in what I'm experiencing.
I wrote the questions in anticipation of thinking about En Masse, and imagined them read aloud.

The deliberate flow, interruptions and alliteration are intended to try and create a level of meaning that sits beneath the words, like music.

I'm new to thinking about performance art, although in my practice I've experimented with combinations of code, live data-processing and infra-red feedback to create live visuals from performance. I'm drawn to the 'what if's' of experience, and performance art possesses an immediacy that is not easy to document. More specifically, the lens I'm considering when writing about SPILL is the 'man-made-murmuration'; an assumed, invisible conversation between audience and spectacle.

27 October 2016

TOPOGRAPHIES (DISSONANCE)

By Diana Damian Martin

Dwelling.

(I want to dwell here for a long time, because history dwells here, in the spaces opened up by notebooks, by a revisiting of notebooks)

Dwelling in the vocal resonance, the dissonance, the poetic assonance, the landscapes internal and scraped, emerging and fractured, on the edges, drifting to the side, a shaman of sorts.

(The staccato voice that boils down, the textures of skin, the passing of time

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Of Leonardo is a topography – an operatic experiment in which the voice is flight, recall, prophet; an essay that is sonic and spatial, experiential and conflictual – an arrangement of history, distortion, memories, an arena of history and presence. Dissonance is welcomed to the space; it fights and frets, and bounces, and strips through, an affectation, a kind of search for the passing of time.

It's a brave confrontation, the work of a rationalist and dreamer, splatted in vocal echoes and intonations turned incantations, an operatic essay on ageing and death, somewhere in the dark, where ravens roam and eyes stare blankly as time unfolds.

Fragments of recognition (referential): a section in Da Vinci's notebooks that deals with the perspective of disappearance (undulating, forced out sounds, drowning the body, gestural and faint); another on topographical notes. This is not a process of translation- and what translation is there, in a language that is written and sketched out, visual and introspective? This is a process of travelling – a journey, of sorts. (Interference, an analogue voice, a kind of channelling of, or through, clouds and waves, concrete block grey and eyes, hollow and double)

What emerges at the intersection between the vocal and the visual, the poetic and the embodied- ghosts that cut the present, doubles that reside in between, rhythms and meaning emerging scraped and shaken.

(Image-making, blocks of encounters, drifting through the screen, falling on the body as it searches and shrieks, and shards of words come through, and they fall again in the pleasant abyss of somewhere, here and not quite here)

The sonic gains a different dimension: it rests on the body, it emerges through punctured movement, through dual vocal narratives; this voice and body, they are seismic, shifting, in sync with a projection that acts as a window elsewhere, growing in scale, moving from texture to place, from nature to the body.

(An image growing ever more textured, larger and larger, taking up space, in the same way in which Mitchener's voice hits the ceiling and goes into the depths of history, emerges through the body, contorting and moving)

This amphibian voice is resonant, it fills the space, empties its range, vast and open, in conversation with the absent; and with the passing of time, the body becomes an agent, a mentor through other landscapes, and dissonance our guide – filling the space, hiding within it. The operatic is about what is entered into conversation, what is made tangible.

(what takes you a journey, and where you go)

Of Leonardo is a galaxy of sound and movement, but it's guided by the voice, its tuning in and out of spaces, of communication- an arrangement in suspension, in holding difference through the chords of the body.

[I think about the importance of sound-led work, of the ways in which it calls for a different kind of attention, constructs a space whose shape is dissonant, political for the ways in which it articulates presence, multiplicity, being.

I think of the resonance of this work across the festival, from the immersion of Soundhide, the narratives of the natural in its precarious state, and our attention within it, to the soundscapes in Hom(e)age, in its poetics of containment, of removal of agency and of place. There's a potent, powerful and resonant undercurrent, sound as spatial poetics, a merging of being and listening, of occupying multiples, of claiming some agency]

28 October 2016

ON CARE

By Diana Damian Martin

I recall Ria Hartley's radical softness, an opening up of a space to see one another, to draw connections, until a community takes shape.

This echoes throughout the festival, a slowly-shaping poetics of place and being (from grief and trauma, to history and difference), made tangible through care, as strategy to bring forth the unseen, the intangible, to melt body and place.

Care is the vocal resonance of Mitchener's voice and her recalling of histories. Care is the relationship Montserrat holds with Josephine Baker, dancing her into being, body on body, unpeeling the spectacles of representation. Care is the sound emanating from Laura Burns' stones, a space of ritual and silence, of searching and feeling through place (a place of journey).

Occupation continues; it is not just in the histories that refuse specificity, in the erasure of difference and commodification of bodies, but also in the erosion of the

natural, in the interference of ways of communication. It continues in re-territorialisation, and in erasure (the wrong kind of noise).

There's a lot in Spill that thinks about communication- of being together (en masse), of listening (en masse), of feeling (en masse), of disrupting (en masse), of placing in productive confrontation (en masse).

I think about Burns' breathing as it fills the room, as it converses in unison with stones of elsewhere (some are heavy, others perform their history, change shape, breathe and dry), and how place makes place; the cold, wet stones under my hands, the listening in, mythologies exposed and returned to (Shaun Caton's Rainschemes for Insomniacs speaks to this through action, by creating a visual discordance that makes space for something else to arrive, to be built).

The stones are buzzing in the water; gently, a kind of silent fizzing, as if time is filtering through. They have been carried here, a journey (recalled to me), and I think of territory (of borders again) and of intimacy in meditation (how shape-shifting is that).

I think about Hallow's Eve, and calling to those who are no longer, those who are lost, and the darkness as welcoming space to think. I think about feminism's relationship to care, about queerness and care, about identity and care, race and care, difference and (through) care.

There is also the kind of care that is laborious, affective, entrenched in the politicisation of the social, in the deliberate violent borders between public and private. Care is resistance (and sometimes, aesthetic), it is also slippery and fundamental. (is there such a thing as a pre-colonial mind?)

(I think of messy play this morning with my nine month old daughter, of what was briefly sketched onto her body, of her use of materials; language poets taught me that it is always language that constructs and brings meaning, and there's a potent battle with expression that takes shape, and it echoes in sound and bodies, in poetry and in being).

28 October 2016

ON DISPLACEMENT: DISTURBING HISTORIES

By Diana Damian Martin

This is about borders, the kinds of borders that are etched onto bodies, that mean bodies gather without agency, bodies are moved, and have to move. It emerges from work that crosses borders, or that questions their formation, as much as from

the resonance of borders in post-Brexit Britain, in the midst of forced migration, of the closure of Calais, and of all that rests on bodies that gather in these spaces.

In absentia, I think of the testimonies and stories of those who experienced Hom(e)age, of the strong smell of fish and rituals of entrapment and release, of moving from the sea to the shore, of the political space that opens up through smell, through hearing, through listening (and unavoidability, as the fish begin to move and hit bodies and bodies try to move away, as poetics in performance)

[A border figure is a figural expression denoting the border, creating connotations as to how border is conceived.]

Eg Theresa May recently stated 'We did not leave the European Union only to give up control of immigration again']

The same release emerges differently through Elaine Mitchener's work, both [Names] and Of Leonardo, through the voice as a powerful agent, as a shape-shifting articulation of multiple experiences, residing with each other, concurrent and fractured. Voice as a space of being together, voice as a speaking out, voice as a confrontation, voice as action (dissonance is key, here).

Borders in Shaun Caton's work, between living and the dead, between a mythology in the making, occupying territories that hold a different temporality – taxidermy, shadow play, live, figural painting (and an aesthetics that constantly finds itself, collage as process of remaking). It's a conversation between the ancient and the global, dissolving and re-creating, a question on how we might reconceptualise tradition, how the global and the ancient converse.

This is recurring in so much of the work that tries to access a different temporality, and also stand critically within it – Latai Taumoepeau's Ocean Island Mine also occupies that territory. And it is echoed in Shabnam Shabazi's collective occupation of the Ipswich Museum, where a body is being live tattooed, and others are celebrating, and history stands there in miniatures and taxidermy and representations, objects of performance and objects of experience, blending in, standing out. A kind of ritualising of the museum space, a gathering of difference.

In a different manner, Jade Montserrat's Shadowing Josephine, a transgressive confrontation of languages of oppression and release, seizes hold of something, and places it in productive danger, in conversation with narratives that are not of its own. The work is based on Josephine Baker, one of the first black celebrities to emerge from segregation in 1920s Paris, performer and entertainer, civil rights activist. The most intriguing, and emancipatory narrative surrounding Baker is the Rainbow Tribe, her adopted family of children from Japan, France, Belgium, Venezuela and Finland, a multi-racial, multi-national family that articulated equality through Baker's politicisation of the domestic space. This is about aesthetics and intervention, about race and representation, about movement and resistance. (Baker was awarded

France's highest military honours for her work during the second world war, smuggling messages in her sheet music for the French Resistance. After the war, she travelled often to the US to perform, actively engaging with the civil rights movement there- the NAACP named May 20th Josephine Baker day, in part following her participation in the March of Washington in 1963).

Residing in a chateau, Les Milandes, this social space was also one of activism too, in which children were dressed in their national, ethnic or religious identities, politicising difference as ensemble, a process of performance that had an activist agenda, but was also not dissimilar from celebrity themeparks (think the Neverland Ranch). But this is serious, and important celebrity culture, and it crosses both Europe and the US (Baker's work was influential to the US civil rights movement), as well as sits uneasily with paradigms of visibility which it disturbs. Montserrat brings this complexity of relationships and representations back to the body, as a way of exploring frames and structures that legislate how histories are read, how bodies are read, but also what productive spaces might be opened up through that confrontation. Her naked body is a site of travels, of dislocation, of being there, and here at the same time.

This is a reflection on borders as shifting, as places of in-betweens, an exorcism to the militarisation, and assimilation of territory on the grounds of nationalist agendas, of war. The borders that leave scars, the borders that segregate, the borders that do not enable histories from emerging. This is a reflection on borders that erode too, the kind that break down (not displace), the kind of borders bodies can access.

28 October 2016

BECAUSE OF HAIR (THE DICHOTOMY OF CULTURE AND IDENTITY) (VIVIAN CHINASA EZUGHA)

By Jackie Montague

Yes, I'm here because of hair. Predators, sometimes venomous ones have followed me because of hair. I've been told I can't take a compliment because of hair. So because of hair I am outside Ipswich Town Hall, in the square. Desperately waiting for news because of hair.

I arrive and she is already here. She is here! She is here because of hair and her face is concealed behind it, her body obscured, buried beneath reams of cloth, a human flag of green, white, brown, red and white and orange, pink and brown pinned to her mast like feathers ready to fly. But she is heavily rooted to the earth, because of hair. She is in disguise, I can tell, because of hair.

Because of hair, here is a woman so powerful and commanding, men have to avert their gaze, pretend not to notice. I spy on them, watch them behave like fools,

dangerous fools who disrupt because of hair. But because of hair, she dares to stand alone. She's used to it, because of hair. Because of hair she cries: "This day." Tomorrow she will cry: "This day" because of hair again. She will point to the sky because of hair. And the women will stop, gaze, mirror her hands reaching out; point phones at her; or spit something out. For many, many minutes because of hair.

29 October 2016

RADICAL(ISATION)

By Diana Damian Martin

Where economy meets polity
Where society meets nature
Where production meets reproduction
Nancy Fraser

Activism is not taught in schools; it is a self and community-led education, on the brinks between different kinds of spaces and spheres of life and experience, different languages of civic engagement.

Politics has instrumentalised activism as a superfluous performance of necessity; it has waged a battle against activism as a mode of conversation, of delineating space – a way of creating fault lines in political rationalities, in establishing the demands made on what (and by who, and on whose terms).

Activism seeps its way into identity politics. A way of thinking about how to be together, or about how to navigate difference and heritage in a place you belong to, but are constantly made to feel otherwise.

I am thinking across the works encountered so far, that radicality is not reactionary, it is a meeting point – a destabilisation of terms. I am thinking

of Natalie Raven's process of reinscription, a feminist reclaiming of religious iconography

of Vivian Chinasa Ezugha's public performance on finding identity, of thinking through localities, in conversation with place

of Jade Montserrat's exhaustive interrogation of the body in spectacle, and the body as spectacle

of Tom Cassani's deconstruction of deception, and the power of assertion (in post-truth politics)

of Vijay Patel's interrogation of belonging, of repetition, of the complexity of heritage and immigration and being between two places, situated somewhere in between

of Jack Marcus Elli's meditation on theatricality and magic and identity at the edges

Of the shift from globalisation to multiculturalism, the fall of the Empire and the erasure of history, the sense of threat that radicalises the precarious.

Of performance and its quest of finding ways of being together in this complexity (through representation, through immersion, through conversation, through narrative, through meditation, through exchange, through confrontation, through invitation, through careful engagement with the local and beyond).

29 October 2016

ONCE MORE, SHADOWING JOSPEHINE (JADE MONSTERRAT)

By Jackie Montague

Jade's body shines with sweat. Her naked body, perfectly objectified and bathed in the warm light of Josephine. Her movement creates a muscle memory that is tangible and living, stretching back through time, a glittering umbilical cord connecting artist to artist. Black woman to black woman. Her smile is Josephine. Red. Wide. Eyes. It's alarming, unexpected. Does she know we are watching? Again, again. Jade's body glistens with sweat. Her smile is Josephine. Red. Wide. Eyes. It's alarming, unexpected. She is here.

Again. This time I instinctively smile back, but I know she can't see me very well. I mean that smile. Honestly. I do.

Again, Jade's body glistens. She shines with sweat in time. Jazz music. Josephine dances brilliantly. Confident. She doesn't miss a step. Her smile is Josephine. Red. Wide. Eyes. It's alarming, unexpected. I forget why, now.

Again Again Josephine's body glistens with sweat. She smiles. Red. Wide. Eyes. Josephine's body betrays, just for a moment, a blink that's all, how tired she is of all this. Again. She smiles. Red. Wide. Eyes. Again.

29 October 2016

TERRA NULLIUS (SHABNAM SHABAZI)

By Claire Ridge

I could hear the sound of a party before I entered the museum gallery. Two men, wearing Red T-Shirts with the words Terra Nullius printed on them were playing the steel drums, which, along with the after-hours context of the museum, gave an enlivening affect that traveled through the museum galleries, interrupting how I would normally be invited to navigate the linear chronology and choreography of it's space.

It became clear that there were more Terra Nullius 'late night museum workers', or perhaps guerilla artists, reclaiming the space, a band of them facilitating my access to pop-up art works, spinning poetry and transversing across the divided frames of official histories between gallery spaces. The music infused new life into the taxidermied animals igniting a sense of animism. I felt the potentiality of crossing narratives as spoken word poetry made me linger between gallery walls, before I encountered the histories of old remains displayed in boxes. I noticed a collection of glass cases laid on a table filled with items not usually displayed in a museum.

Someone's Dildos, displayed with care on colored thongs doubling as a cushion base. Boxes with scores of keys, hundreds of matches, cigarette butts, and a make up collection. Each box imbued with a sense of being lovingly placed and chosen, someone's lived belongings. Looking at the keys, of different shapes and sizes, I am reminded of my own collection of keys, (all the keys I had ever owned to different times and places). These forgotten and used items, gaining a new reverence and a place of history amongst the valued items in glass cases picked and chosen for the archive.

As I turn a corner, I see two people in lab coats and blue gloves, performing the task of photographing and labeling an object, adding it to their official records and placing it within a narrative of history. I come across an installation that interrupts one of these narratives. A plaster cast of a woman with an open mouth and her arms held out in front of her, seeming to call out. A woman's voice sings a gentle lament, and family photos, writings, poetry and thoughts are projected, distorting against the plaster sculpture. This is juxtaposed against a museum display of African artifacts with writing on the wall, often seen in museums, explaining their context and history.

These two differing propositions, one an intimate, personal archive and the other an official history, made me look again. I am confronted with the violence of writing history, the objects displayed denying their history of colonisation- what are these objects lives and histories and how did they end up here in the museum?

29 October 2016

PUBLIC SPACE/SOCIAL ARCHIVE

By Diana Damian Martin

Listening in/Archive:

The sounds of nature at midnight in Soundhide

The fizzing of stones in a water bowl in Almanac

The sound of folk tales, retold, of skinned wolves and their skinners in McGillivray

The heavy silence of footage rolling to an empty cinema, a liminal space, a poetics of grief and remembrance in the utterly beautiful presentation of Hourglass

The magician carving out space for thinking about identity and the politics of identification ('I am not historical, I am not futurity) in Because of Hair

The listening in of Scribe, temporarily etched into the pavements and sites of Ipswich, a dispersed democratic records (testimony as poetics)

The collection of social politics in You See... , processes of questioning that are multiple and growing

On finding common ground, on false allies, on the specificity of histories and the way they emerge in public space.

On embracing uncomfortable spaces to shift something forward (on the power of repetition and the body to unveil and unpack)

On ways to approach confrontation and the self/en masse

On the conflation of nationhood with legitimation and policing of identities

On the community that is not bound

On the festival as a cross-pollination of civic, social and political space.

30 October 2016

THIS IS WHAT I SING ABOUT, OUT OF TUNE

By Diana Damian Martin

This is what I sing about, out of tune.

There's ways to talk about class without closing things down or rather, to ask about what kind of encounters happen when we're all together (really, when we're all together), and that toast bread and the singing (acapella), a kind of coming through, but grunt grunt grunt.

This is what I sing about, out of tune, the afterparty.

Samuel Kennedy is reclaiming a space, thinking about its user, karaoke and its politics (poetics), those dicks don't stand a chance, this is beautiful, it's about family and loves and being there again, or maybe coming back there, that's tough.

This is what I sing about, out of tune, let's sing together.

30 October 2016

FORM / DOCUMENT

By Diana Damian Martin

[Diptych (with break)] What strikes you first is the precise, abstract formalism: in the composition of the space (a white box, four block squares of color at the back, a table, a white box on the table, a mic). After that, it's the silence (no object speaks). Then the drop (brown play dough falls from her hands and shoulders, flat to the ground / shit / that's it for representation) Then, the voicing (the politics of appearance and historicisation through four pieces of playdough). Scheuring is no Kandinsky, but she is, an essentialised composition, a private intimacy made public in this space of association. She's no Hilma Af Klint, but there is something politically spiritual about this clinical precision. It's a body that could be no other body, but is also the foreign body or rather, the body with voice.

In Foreigner's Dance, there's neon orange and the word 'patriot', not quite enabled to mean. Another formal confrontation with the figure of the foreign, how it is constructed, and the social tensions that frame it. Scheuring, wearing an ipod and headphones, makes us watch a dance we cannot hear; there's no joining in, but no seriousness either. A volunteer announces the start of her performance by reading out her artist biography, and a scream ends it outside. This is about negotiation: of what this might mean in relation to foreignness, about the movement of cultural identities across contexts, about looking in, from elsewhere.

This is a diptych about migration, about the social tensions and politicisation of the foreign body, about the irresolvable and the unseen. Interval is the pause that sees two performers sing concurrently, in tandem, Polish and, respectively, English songs, from pop to folk, in strange unison, in a precise cross-section of cultural interrogation.

It is unstable; someone is dancing and there's no way in.

This is a regimentation of thought, or rather, the body as a vehicle, an animator in this performative abstraction. Or, to put it differently, this is abstraction, the kind of abstraction that plays on several levels: fundamentally tied to ways of looking and

being together, and resistant to narrativity. This is so much of disposition. This is so much of abstraction as reality.

(the kind of structural pauses of Entertainment Island)

In French, the word *masse* stands for a shot in pool made by hitting the cue ball vertically on the side, driving it around one ball to strike another.

Or, the affect laden landscapes of Umama Hamido's journey in *Hind*, of orange sunsets and stories of those who have fled. A series of portraits, of orange rock deserts and danger as everyday life.

Form / document.

Migration by choice, migration by necessity, foreignness as side-effect, a kind of lateral unpacking.

30 October 2016

ON PLACE

By Diana Damian Martin

Close to Hallow's Eve and the mist is thick and it's staining the faint street lights, the town at night-time, echoes of encounters, zombies and queens and witches, in public squares, outside the park, anticipating a sanctuary, a trip elsewhere, the noise of parties and it's a party, double pussy clit fuck fan club and David Hoyle love anarchy and Snapped Ankles (wolfish).

A glimpse into the abyss that has not yet become, or what spills into the city, en masse.

In 1925, two rooms were reconstructed in Christchurch Mansion. One of these rooms, a wood-panelled merchants room, holds an Eldred overmantle, celebrating the exploits of Thomas Cavendish, a navigator who took a voyage around the world in the 16th century. His vessel was called the *Desire*, and the legend underneath the globe of the world that adorns a panel reads:

He that travels ye world about seeth God's wonders & God's works. Thomas Eldred travelled ye world about & went out of Plimouth ye 21 of July 1586, and arrived in Plimouth again the 9 Swptember 1588.

The other reconstructed room dates from 1932, and belongs to from Sir Humphrey Wingfield's house in Ipswich. The panelling commemorates the marriage of a relative to Mary Tudor in 1515.

I am interested in this practice of reconstruction, what noise of history, layers and there's a plastic sheet covering the Mansion because of renovation works, and it's an exact replicate of the outside of the Mansion, of sorts.

The Mansion was expanded by Huguenot refugees of religious persecution in 1735.

Outside, a group is breaking down wood with pestle and mortar.

Elsewhere, a magician uncovers something tangibly tense, identity and being, in a market, in front of the town's civic centre, close to remembrance Sunday, today, the British Legion are playing bagpipes there (on cultural dichotomies and the specificity of histories and ritual). It's post-Brexit and the air is thick and the histories are all there, clashing, I remember, she asks, what is it like to be a Nigerian black woman in an English school in Birmingham with a shaved head, and I think, what about being British Indian in a corner shop and there's music playing from back home or is there and you're playing Christmas songs and wearing a Santa hat, what is it to be a Romanian immigrant writing about this (there's still shaving foam and shredded paper in my dunagrees from messy play and a Roma woman is selling the Big Issue outside Sainsburys, and who are we to each other).

There is sanctuary to come.

30 October 2016

PUTTING THE BODY FIRST

By Michelle Sewell

What does it mean to put your physical selves ahead of our emotional selves? What does it mean to not connect with someone on an emotional level, but a physical level (**only**)?

But what about your body's needs? Are you to ignore it when you're horny? When you're in a city while your boyfriend or girlfriend is in another and you are horny. And you meet someone. And they're horny. They want you. How does your body react to this sense?

In Load, the red latex gloves creates a bold sense of tactility, which evokes the notion that your body is longing to be touched and to touch others. When the performer caresses the floor you hear the latex rubbing the wood, he lets you imagine him feeling, touching you. You want to know what it feels like. You live in a time of Tinder, of Grindr, where the only touching of the other person you get until you meet in real life is the swiping right on the phone screen. But you can become anyone you want and use your body as an object of desire.

You live in a time where images dominate your sense of normality, what to want, what to love, what to fear, what to look like to belong, what to look like to be desired. You are presented and re-presented in media and social media. Load touches on this with the story about a lover being the photographer, Brandon, from Humans of New York. Using social media currency and the desire to be seen and liked by over fourteen million followers on Facebook, Brandon lures the performer to become an object of desire by anonymous strangers around the world.

The performer's use of a voice-changer head-set microphone, creates a sense of eery anonymity, as you are unable to identify the voice of the real performer. Mixed with his fluid sexuality, you are encouraged to let go of labels of sexuality and heteronormativity in place of a more liberal view, free from societal constraints. Where you allow your body to act on your desires.

But is this simply base and biological? Do you have societal constructs in place to evolve from your reduced, physical needs and self? Or are these constructs there so that you are tamed into conforming in a certain way that fits society's needs and wants? Afterall, society doesn't have a body that needs physical fulfilment.

But humans do.

What if you put your body first?

30 October 2016

WE ARE SURVIVING, AREN'T WE?

By Michelle Sewell

I am surviving; aren't I?

With every breath I take, I continue to survive and inhabit this world. I am an active member within my community and environment. In Breathe, the soundscape of different recorded breaths and breathing rhythms evokes this sense of the different ways in which I am surviving and makes me question: Am I thriving or barely existing? And in order to survive, I must breathe the oxygen around me, created by nature. When I look around at a Western, first world society; it is not only surviving, it is thriving.

I've journeyed to the centre of Christchurch park. It's taken a while (as I got lost twice). But I've reached the hut with hay. I lie on the hay, listening to the recorded birds. I'm at peace with nature.

But it's not nature, is it.

These birds aren't surrounding me. The hay has been put there by humans. It's not natural. This is a virtually constructed realm I'm living in. The real natural world is outside this hut in the park I've just walked through to come here. I'm at peace because I'm listening to a mixture of beautifully sounding birds I want to listen to. They could have been edited. They could have had their tone or their pitch manipulated. So that I feel a certain way.

Right now, I feel relaxed.

I'm beginning to think more and more about the future of the planet. I truly believe that we are on the brink of transformation. That if nothing serious is done now about our natural environment, we will face the extinction of wonderful, natural animals and plant life. I have no doubt that humans will adapt. We do it so wonderfully. As my body sinks into the hay, I can't help but think of myself in years to come perhaps going to a retreat such as this to listen to the birds that once existed. To relive the memories of a past I knew where I would walk on the grass and crunch the leaves under my feet as squirrels pounce around me.

Thinking about this... I find myself back in Rhizome 2.0. I find it peaceful to be there. I've been lured into the corner of the room to watch this woman watch a virtual forest space.

And a strange thing happens.

She pops off her mask and gives it to me. I put it on. And I feel... disorientated. I don't know where the people in the room are and I'm so very conscious that I could walk into them. But I begin to notice things I didn't notice before. Like how barred I am into the area I can walk within. Because this is the only area that has been recorded. I see a person behind a tree watching me. I try to walk towards him (I think it's a him). But I can't. It's not been recorded. I turn around. I feel trapped. I feel watched. I feel judged.

I quickly pop the mask off. And I'm standing right next to the artist. I must have walked right into her. But I didn't feel it. I was in a world of my own. This is the fear. How constricted I might be in the future. The liberating natural environment that I am quickly destroying is being taken over by technology. Technology that is manmade. Technology that is flawed like humans. Technology that has its limits.

I am scared for our future. Of how our lack of environment will create barriers and construct societies that perhaps won't question power structures, but will conform to survive.

Because we need to survive;
don't we?

30 October 2016

ME, MYSELF AND MY OREOS (TANIA CAMARA)

By Mark Aaron

Black.

White.

Black on White on Black on White without Black.

Discarding the White from the Black.

We Stir and Separate and prepare the White for the Black for the White on Black.

Black against Black.

Black Backed.

Black In The Background.

Cupped hands form a cleansing arc, a strigil, a brush brush over Black with White.

White over Black. Bleached, Alabaster, Marbled White, White Dust on Black.

Immaculate. Lathered Milk layered on Black against White.

Do we remember who we are?

Carried. Pushed. Toppled. Cleansed.

White from Black. Black on White. Absolute Black. Revealed Clea and Beautiful Black.

Black on White and Black on Black on White.

Flicker, Zeotrope, Black. Then White then Black and White then Black to Black and White.

White from Black and Black from White and Back.

Back to Black and back again.

Back to Back.

Joyfully.

Remembering, We Danced.

Warm Rain and Gathering.

30 October 2016

EN MASSE (NOT YET AN ENDING)

By Phoebe Patey-Ferguson, Claire Ridge, Mark Aaron, Michelle Sewell, Jackie Montague, Lissie Carlile, Diana Damian Martin

There is singularly nothing that makes a difference a difference in beginning and in the middle and in ending except that each generation has something different at which they are all looking. By this I mean so simply that anybody knows it that composition is the difference which makes each and all of them then different from other generations and this is what makes everything different otherwise they are all

alike and everybody knows it because everybody says it. (Getrude Stein). The festival audience stick out on the streets of Ipswich. Bodies moving differently, meeting each other differently, looking at the streets differently. Images and thoughts are spilling over bodies.

Pain and love; bodies and ideas come together in performances for us to be witnesses of. Bodies have ached and bodies have healed from the eyes of strangers. The division of similarities; the unity of difference. Real connections.

I see the dots that connect you to me and you to history (Martin O'Brien)
What happens in the queue for the show that goes up late? What happens in the bar when you're waiting to order a drink at 2am? What is changed in the way we talk to each other at the sinks in the toilet cubicle?

I heard the incantation of multiple voices across times, Of Leonardo, Echoplasm, Load, revived, and pulsating through the festival.

From the political motivations of the music from David Hoyle, to the exploration of life in We Are All Made Of stars, to the virtual spaces in Rhizome 2.0, we realise how our past effects our identity, and how our identity must continue to change for a better future.

I feel a returning to nature; not just returning to the trees and the stars, but to the gut reaction of the human body. How do I feel in this moment? How does the person sat next to me in a performance feel? How does the stranger on the street feel? Or the artist in the moment?

New friendships, experiences and connections are forged En Masse. I'm slayed by the efforts of all the participants. En Massacre. Before and after. Forever changed. Hanging out, opening spaces, being seen and listening in.

31 October 2016

SANCTUARY

By Diana Damian Martin

Flog.

In honour /the body
In remembrance /the body
In transgression /the body

In pain/the body
In illness/the body
In age/the body
In submission/the body
In dominance/the body
In assembly/the body
In rogues/the body
In asylum/the body
In time/the body
In sex/the body
In art as practice/the body

Scourge.

With urgency/the body
With pain/the body
With memory/the body
With humour/the body
With sickness/the body
With grief/the body
With death/the body
With fighting/the body
With obeying/the body
With excitement/the body
With transformation/the body
With willing/the body

Pierce.

On power/the body
On endurance/the body
On motherhood/the body
On identity/the body
On widowhood/the body
On excess/the body
On the altar/the body
On dominance/the body
On morality/the body
On aesthetics/the body
On endurance/the body
On the inside/the body
On archives/the body

Sew.

For audience/the body
For identity/the body
For being/the body
For pleasure/the body
For loss/the body
For Bob/the body
For history/the body
For autonomy/the body
For us/the body.

Keep breathing.