

YEAR THREE

MFA PERFORMING ARTS AT THE
ICELAND UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

2018-2019

CELESTIAL BODIES

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INTRODUCTION

A NOTE FROM THE PROGRAMME DIRECTOR OF THE PERFORMING ARTS MASTER AT ICELAND UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS.

For the 2018/19 cycle of the Master in Performing Arts' programme, there are seven artists graduating.

Each of these artists has developed work over the last twelve months according to their own questions and distinct artistic practices. Works developed in conversation with a vast range of artists, thinkers and curators from across the disciplines, within and beyond the arts, from both here in Iceland and from around the world. With support in the form of residencies, mentoring, peer-to-peer feedback, workshops, labs and seminars.

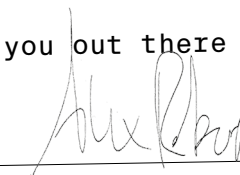
They now graduate together at the end of August 2019, with a festival entitled Celestial Bodies that they have curated collectively – having thought carefully together about where and how their works intersect – and crucially how to illuminate these intersections.

Aesthetically their works are seemingly worlds apart – each derived from the specifics of their own enquiries, wonder and artistic toolboxes, but principally much of what lies under the surface of their works is shared. Namely, a shared and fundamental focus on finding ways – old and new – of practising wonder, empathy, tenderness and care towards ourselves, each other and the world around us.

Together they have composed a programme of performances, events and situations that invite us with them into these practises. It is a significant gesture to situate the festival in a school. It positions that which they share with us as platforms and meeting points for learning. We are invited over these days to think, experience and learn together with them and their work – through the art they share, through the talks, open studios and discussions they host, through the meals we share, as well as through this book.

This publication acts as a satellite to their works. Not so much designed to defend or explain their choices, but to bring added insight into certain aspects of it. We invite you to take time to be with it – and roll softly and tenderly in their ideas with them.

See you out there -



Programme Director MFA Performing Arts
at Iceland University of the Arts

THEIR WORKS

ÍRIS STEFANÍA SKÚLADÓTTIR

BIO

Íris Skúladóttir (1986) is an artist and curator interested in sexual behaviour. In her practice she has been focused on women and their pleasures, taboos, shame and desires. The masturbation is a centre point in Iris's practice. She has collected and published masturbation stories from women and held story circles where stories surrounding the topic are being told. The project is an activist platform fighting for a bigger territory within which female pleasure can be explored on its own terms.

"I used to masturbate in front of a mirror for a period in my life because I was curious to know how my facial expressions were during orgasm. I made many attempts and finally came to the conclusion that my orgasm look wasn't anything to feel ashamed of, and as a consequence I relaxed more during sex and came more often."

"When I masturbate I stimulate the clit, close my eyes and think about my colleagues."

"My life changed when I discovered the Womanizer. I used to almost always use the shower head and therefore only masturbated in the shower but now I masturbate whenever I want, wherever I want, and it's awesome."

"Sometimes I like watching porn when I masturbate. Something that I find is hot - something that does it for me right when I am watching it. But always! Always! Always when I come... maybe two or three times - I feel so ashamed. I have to turn it off right away and I can't understand why I would watch this..."

I'm satisfied but at the same time I feel shame."

"I remember masturbating for the first time when I was about six years old. I laid on a pillow and rubbed against it. At the age of ten I had started to masturbate on a regular basis.

It's always been easy for me to orgasm, both alone and in sex with others and I think the reason is largely because I started masturbating at a young age and had a lot of practice orgasming."

"I started to masturbate as a teenager while taking a bath by letting the soft and thick stream from the showerhead do the job. For several years I only used this technique and hence was an extremely clean youth because I dwelt for hours in the tub. As time has passed I have abandoned this methodology..."

"...The moment right before you come, when everything starts buzzing and you know that nothing can stop what is about to happen, is divine. I masturbate often and regularly and I am very happy with myself as a masturbator. During sex I prefer vaginal penetration but when I masturbate I use my finger and focus on the clitoris. Never really stop after one orgasm but keep on going and make myself surprised by which one of them will be the best one. Love this beautiful invention that the clitoris is."

"I like to masturbate when I'm alone, even if I'm in a relationship I masturbate a lot. I like to lie in bed, naked and let my mind wander. I often think about a scene from a porno that I have seen and I often place myself and my husband in the roles. Sometimes I watch porn. Sometimes I put my satisfier on my clit and relax and let the orgasm come."

"It took me probably a few decades to really get the hang of masturbating. Why? That's a good question. Perhaps it was a fear that it was somehow cheating.

But actually I think it was from a deep-seated fear that if I masturbated then I wouldn't give a shit about my sex partner. They would go crazy trying to give me an orgasm because I couldn't tell them what worked and what didn't.

It's possible I went through periods where I identified more strongly as asexual than as sexual. I'm not sure, I don't know enough about it. When my sex drive was higher, I found it difficult to keep up with. If I had been unafraid of masturbation, maybe I would have been less of a slut in my own opinion. But since my attitude towards masturbation was kind of slut connected, it was probably irreconcilable."

"I had never experienced a vaginal orgasm, and I really wanted to, so I bought a "rabbit" vibrator with a rotating 'dildo'.

The first time I tried it, I came vaginally, and I came so hard that the damned thing broke. Best money I ever spent."

"I have never been able to do anything without thinking of others. It's at least been a long time since. The first time I was horny for real was also the last time. Heart pounding in my vagina. I was alone and didn't know what to do with myself. The Legend of the Ice People in my hand, or something else by Margit Sandemo. Twentieth century teenage girls' saviour. So poetic, so romantic. No porn yet. That came later..."

"For the first time I was probably ten years old. I didn't really know what I was doing. I was just fiddling with myself and then suddenly I came and I remember how good it felt. So I kept on doing it and masturbated every night before falling asleep. And I still do."

For as long as I can remember I have felt like I couldn't express myself freely about my own sexual behaviour. For years, I've had the longing to challenge the taboos around female masturbation and pleasure. So I started to collect stories that I felt needed to be told. Stories told by ordinary women about their own experience of masturbating and self pleasure.

I had no idea what to expect in the stories but I asked the women who shared their stories to focus on their masturbation and thoughts around that topic. I felt it was important to begin with having women share in complete anonymity so they could feel completely safe to say whatever they wanted. And then the stories started to pour in.

Story by story the project grew. And eventually the stories got published in the book "When I Masturbate - thirty something masturbation stories from women". The book received a lot of attention and became a kind of story-magnet. As people heard about the book, they wanted to share their stories too. And so the project continues as a research into female masturbation and female pleasure, exploring how stories can create a platform for confronting the sensitivity and taboo that often makes discussing these things so challenging.

Today I'm using the stories I collected for the book and the stories that are been shared afterwards as the basis for a conversation, a space, a platform... a story circle. I have chosen to use story circles as a way for women to open up and discuss masturbation and other sensitive topics. There are two kinds of story circles that

I am working with. The first is a closed story circle for women only, where women get to listen to the stories of other women, as well as share their own experiences. The second is an open story circle for the public to listen to the women's stories collected in the closed circles.

The story circle has a long tradition. There is even evidence of purposeful ritualised meetings in circles around the fire from Upper Palaeolithic societies. These circles have long since been used to summon topics, questions and concepts which are otherwise difficult for a community to spend time dealing with. In the spirit of this history, my research is exploring how the story circle can be a rich situation for spending time with questions of pleasure, sexuality, shame, desire, bodies, sexual behaviour and taboo specifically through voices of women.

The relation between the open and closed circles is very purposeful. The closed circle is a safe space that creates an all female gaze, where women can listen to the voices of other women, speaking freely about their relationship to pleasure and desire as women living in the patriarchy. The open circles are about giving everyone an opportunity to listen and learn from these stories - and this situation calls for a different kind of care and precision. In the open story circles representation of women and their real life experiences comes into contact with a more aggressively present male gaze - and how that is negotiated has to be engineered with different concerns and priorities in mind. We are more selective about which stories are told, and which are not, we think carefully about the mode of delivery, who it is told by and for whose ears. It is very important that stories still maintain their own integrity as stories told by women for other women - but at the same time become accessible for other ears and gazes.

The project is an activist platform fighting for a bigger territory within which female pleasure can be explored on its own terms. It will simply be called "When I Masturbate" and will travel around the world and the stories collected will end up on a database of stories at www.whenimasturbate.world. Those that want to share or get more information about the circles can send an email to: whenimasturbate@gmail.com.

LONG LIVE PLEASURE!

ZOFIA TOMCZYK

BIO

An artist from Poland, currently based in Iceland. Zofia graduated from her bachelor studies in Composition and Dance Techniques at Poznań School of Social Sciences in 2015. Currently a student of the Master in Performing Arts Programme at Iceland University of the Arts in Reykjavik. She is a co-founder of Kinestrefa Art Foundation in Poznań (Poland), Ambient Sundays collective in Reykjavik (Iceland) and a part of Ciche Nagrania record label in Poznań (Poland). She has worked on various dance-related projects with, among others, Anna Godowska and Sławek Krawczyński, Joanna Leśnierowska and Janusz Orlik, Mikołaj Mikołajczyk and Jan Komasa, Dalija Acin Thelander and Keren Levi. Received "Młoda Polska 2019" scholarship from Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in Poland and granted scholarship Alternative Dance Academy 2015, 2016, 2017 Art Stations Foundation by Grażyna Kulczyk (Old Brewery New Dance programme) in Poznań.

THE DANCE OF THE OBSERVER

YOU DON'T ALWAYS KNOW WHAT CONSEQUENCES AN EXPERIENCE
WILL HAVE ON YOU UNTIL LONG AFTER IT HAS PAST.

A few years ago, I woke from an intense nightmare. This experience has stayed with me ever since – providing me with the core-basis for my on-going dance practice. Lying in my bed awake in the morning, I could feel the dream resonating across the whole of my insides. It stayed with me beyond my sleeping hours deep into my day. The impressions it left on my body were so intense, I began to wonder what dreams are doing to our bodies while we sleep. There are the images that we encounter, but how are our bodies themselves experiencing dreaming at a bodily level. Equally, what about our bodies when we are awake, how do these dreams stay with us? What if we could say that dreams don't stop, but rather we just dream differently during our waking hours? This event, and these questions, acted as the beginning of an on-going engagement with dreaming and my capacity for responding to my dreams through my body which has continued through to today.

Within my work, what I refer to as waking and sleeping dreams I could also refer to simply as phenomena. By calling them dreams I am framing these phenomena as connected and communicative. For me, these phenomena that I am describing are best understood as dreaming because while I am interested in each phenomenon individually – I am equally invested in how each impulse or image connects – and dreaming invites us to listen to relations between things. Thought as dreams – we can say these phenomena are not simply happening but speaking. I also work with dreams as they are often more literally understood, as the thing that happens when we sleep. When I wake up, I write down the dreams that I had during the night. The images that appeared but also the bodily experiences, feelings, smells, sounds, atmospheres.

For me, dreams live through us and our environment during our waking and sleeping hours in fleeting tiny feelings – in images that appear and disappear – in sensations that emerge and submerge. I consider dreams to be happening all the time. And in these dreams there lives knowledge about the worlds around me that I am encountering, as well as insight into my relationships to these worlds.

It was only as my practice has developed, that I discovered that I don't only need to listen to the sensations generated by my body, but equally listen to the environment around me. I consider my environment to be dreaming too – rippling with subtle tremors and vibrations that can be observed, absorbed by the body and amplified; sensations which are there but are often missed because they resonate too softly, quietly, slowly, creakingly, or deeply.

I AM A LISTENER, A GATHERER AND AN AMPLIFIER.

It started with dancing and asking how an observer of dreams might dance their observations. I am asking, what the dance of the dancer's listening could be? This question has been the key that brings me into my dancing, into my body, and into these dreams that my body is encountering. As my practice has expanded in its capacity to listen, I have also begun to experiment with other kinds of listening devices. If my body is one – I have also been exploring how my listening practices translate into sound, video and photography. Regardless of the medium I am working with, I always begin with the body. My body, the body or the camera, the body of the sound recorder.

Something begins to catch my attention and I follow it. I am looking to capture and store it in the body, so it can be returned to later. While I'm archiving I'm not thinking about what and if I will do anything with it later. I just give attention to the moment and the different ways of absorbing it. It is a process based on curiosity and attraction without any projections regarding what is going to happen next.

A moment is almost always something small and quick. It is a fleeting sensation which I give space to, but don't rush to hold on to.

So I gather, I gather, I gather. And then – at a certain moment – I return to all this that has been archived and I start to improvise with it. It's a coming together of things. Here I am busy with listening to it again. The task is to shape the space and time around these dream archives so they can be seen and listened to with a different kind of attention and intensity.

When the moment of coming together is arriving it is important not to force anything. I practice allowing things to emerge from emptiness in its own timing and order. I return to one of these tiny movements, one of these micro-sounds, one of these fleeting images, and wait to see what I hear when I turn the volume up. I listen. I look. I feel. I amplify what attracts my attention. Voluming up and voluming down. Zooming in and zooming out. A feeling / a movement / a sound / listening to / a feeling / a movement / a sound. A dialogue begins between what I am observing and how that which I am observing can be amplified in ways that give it more space to be observed.

When I present these processes as art works, the question is how to extend these modes of listening, looking and feeling to the spectator. How can the conditions through which I share my work, induce a particular state of spectatorship where the audience are invited to listen and watch as I do during my process. The work is in the end all about other modes of giving space to things and through doing so being with oneself and one's environments in ways that otherwise wouldn't be available. A practice that takes us into subtleties, tremors, micro-gestures, tiny noises, silence, shifts and stillness.

ELLEN VANDER- STRAETEN

BIO

Ellen Vanderstraeten is an object explorer who works with performing arts in diverse spaces including but not only the stage, her own home as well as the homes of others, abandoned places and shop windows. Her cross disciplinary performances explore a mix of media from objects, print, costume, music, dance, documentary, storytelling and video. Her work implicates the spectator in a playful and immersive experience in order to connect art, therapy and life. She investigates themes such as the relationship between fiction and truth, body and object, the self and the other. Her work often involves a set up of intimate one-to-one encounters, one-to-one encounters that can be spectated and collective actions. Ellen Vanderstraeten is from Belgium and is based in Brussels.

A few months ago I started to write one letter everyday to three different artists. They accompanied me along my way in the development of my artistic practice as well as personal struggles in my life. Lygia Clark, Adrian Howells and Claude Cahun may come from very different backgrounds and different times but to me their practices are significantly intertwined. Their practice intersects in their immediate way of connecting art making, therapy and life, their approach to total theater and one-to-one performances, always with the greatest attention to the tiniest detail and sensorial qualities of carefully chosen materials. In this book you can find several of those handwritten letters written by me to either Lygia, Claude or Adrian.

04.04.19
REYKJAVIK

Lygia,

I hold a plastic bag filled with water in my hands,
I squeeze a plastic bag filled with air between my hands
on top a stone going up and down.

Exactly one year ago I caressed the back of my hand
back and forth
for half an hour
touching the lips of a person I never met before.

Yesterday somebody asked me so careless
what my relation is like with my mother.

Today I understand the arising of new pulsation
of sensations in the empty-full space and time.

"Is this the nostalgia of being a wet stone,
a stone-being under the shade of a tree,
outside time?"
-LC

I could never have imagined somebody would feel like a mother to me.
ELLEN

04.04.19 REYKJAVIK

Lygia

I hold a plastic bag filled with water
in my hands, I squeeze a plastic bag
filled with air between my hands on
top a stone going up and down.

Exactly one year ago I caressed the
back of my hand back and forth, for
half an hour, touching the lips of
a person I never met before.

Yesterday somebody asked me so careless
what my relation is like with my mother.

Today I understand the arising of new
pulsation of sensations in the empty-
full space and time.

"Is this the nostalgia of being a wet
stone, a stone-being under the shade
of a tree, outside time?" - LC

I could never have imagined somebody
would feel like a mother to me.

Ellen



I need to spill my guts out to you!
CLAUDE!

05.04.19 REYKJAVIK

It's about more than spending too much time with
souls that cannot reply.
I'm still afraid of you seeing me.
with my silly struggles and silly questions.
why always this need to confess the ugly
in beautiful ways?

Editing previous letters on a terrace in the sun,
making them disposable.

I'm a cheap childish artist.

"Above all else I despised
the way I despise myself."
-CC

Today I felt dressing like BUDA but didn't
have the energy to do so.

05.04.19 REYKJAVIK

I need to spill my guts out to you!
Claude!

It's about more than spending too much
time with souls that cannot reply. I'm
still afraid of you seeing me. With my
silly struggles and silly questions.
Why always this need to confess the
ugly in beautiful ways?

Editing previous letters on a terrace
in the sun, making them disposable.

I'm a cheap childish artist.

"Above all else I despised the way
I despise myself." - CC

Today I felt dressing like Buda but
didn't have the energy to do so.



I feel like the boat drove right through me when it left to the Faroe Islands
 All dropped the organs from between my legs towards my seat my intestines
 were stretching out polluting with vibrant yellow green pulp the sea every time it
 bends towards itself, leaving behind my womb dark red brown blue black everything
 is up side down and the neck of my uterus is tightened up with a sailers knot, let
 me live without all these dysfunctional organs, they aren't good to, my lips are
 ejaculating watery white liquids smelling like seaweed that's drying on a stone
 in the sun outside time, an unbearable pain is pulsating on the rhythm of the
 waves in my right upper arm Ooooh I want to squirt my bulimia with the force of
 a volcano all over these freshly white snowed, canvas what a poor portrait gobble
 gobble gobble gobble explode! so I can scrape your lovely chyme with a
 sharp blade. I will gather it all together again, I promise, just
 please please today some creature invite me to talk by walking
 let me run by crying let me regret by sliding let me listen by jumping
 let me drink by sweating let me follow by hurting let me forget by singing let me
 touch by looking let me flex by screaming
 TODAY I will force myself to eat a chicken
 I will clean the bones
 I will gather them in a plastic bag
 I will SHAKE THEM IN THE PLASTIC BAG SQUEEZED BETWEEN MY TWO HANDS
 I will shake the bones in this envelope containing a body
 They will deorganize and organize again on a repetitive beat
 let the organs sink into the bones
 let my soul dissolve into the bones
 let my soul dissolve in the intervals of an ACTION
 let it be an EVENT.
 let my body BECOME A HOUSE
 I CAN LIVE IN.
 AGAIN

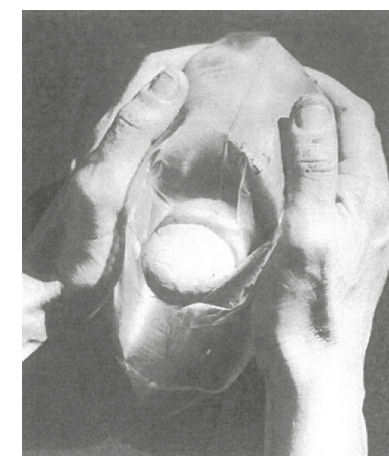
"I AM A MASOCHIST AND I WAS
 SCREAMING SO LOUDLY WITH
 JOY THAT YOUR FEEBLE
 HUMAN EARS COULDN'T HEAR A THING"
 -CC

18.04.19 SEJDISFJORDUR

18.04.19 Sejdisfjordur

Adrian?

I feel like the boat drove right through me when it left to the Faroe Islands



It damaged the organs from between my legs towards my arse my intestines are stretching out polluting with vibrant yellow green pulp the sea every time it bends towards itself, leaving behind my womb dark red brown blue black everything is up side down and the neck of my uterus is tightened up with a sailers knot, let me live without all these dysfunctional organs, they aren't good to, my lips are ejaculating watery white liquids smelling like seaweed that's drying on a stone in the sun outside time, an unbearable pain is pulsating on the rhythm of the waves in my right upper arm Ooooh I want to squirt my bulimia with the force of a volcano all over these freshly white snowed, canvas what a poor portrait gobble gobble gobble gobble explode! so I can scrape your lovely chyme with a blade I will gather it all together again, I promise, just, Please Please Please, today, some creature invite me to talk by walking let me run by crying let me regret by sliding let me listen by jumping let me drink by sweating let me follow by hurting let me forget by singing let me touch by looking let me flex by screaming

"I am a masochist and I screamed so loudly with joy that your feeble human ears couldn't hear a thing."-CC

Today I will force myself to eat a chicken. I will clean the bones. I will gather them in a plastic bag. I will shake the bones in the plastic bag. I will shake the bones in this envelope containing a body. They will deorganize and organize on a repetitive rhythm. Let the organs sink into the bones. Let my soul dissolve in the in between of the execution of an action, let it be an event. Let my body become a house I can live in, again.

21.04.19 sejdísfjörður

CLAUDE, ...

yesterday night I fried the chicken in the pan,
 skin light glazing brown we ate dinner and made
 love in silence. I died inside wishing myself into the abyss between
 folds of clammy sheets and skin.
 I swear I could taste the strong smell of seaweed and
 rotten fish on my tongue arisen from between
 my legs.
 I excused myself by biting my tongue and SHAME away.

"WHAT I CANNOT CHEW
 IS PRECISELY WHAT
 I LIKE TO BITE OFF."
 -CC

He fell asleep.

I cried in the absence of speech when I finally
 went out the bed to smoke a cigarette,
 when I got up again I held the bones in my hands,
 How could I have mistaken their size for
 a chick?
 Tomorrow I will carve them into smaller pieces

before I commit a murder again



"DON'T GO LEARNING OVER
 OTHERS, GUARD
 YOURSELF AGAINST THE ABYSS
 I MIGHT SQUASH SOMEONE
 WHILE FALLING."
 -CC

21.04.19 SEJDISFJORDUR

Claude,

yesterday night I fried the chicken in the
 pan, skin light glazing brown we ate dinner
 and made love in silence. I died inside wish-
 ing myself into the abyss between folds of
 clammy sheets and skin, I swear I could taste
 the strong smell of seaweed and rotten fish
 on my tongue arisen from between my legs, I
 excused myself by biting my tongue and shame
 away.

"What I cannot chew is precisely what
 I like to bite off." - CC

He fell asleep.

I cried in the absence of speech when
 I finally went out the bed to smoke a
 cigarette, when I got up again I held
 the bones in my hands, how could I have
 mistaken their size for a chick, tomor-
 row I will carve them into smaller
 pieces before I commit a murder again.

"Don't go learning over others, guard yourself
 against the call for the abyss ...
 I might squash someone while falling." - CC

MARÍA ARNARDÓTTIR

BIO

María Arnardóttir is an Iceland-based artist who practices across the boundaries of performance and installation. Trained in music and design, she uses her background as a tool to manipulate and create spaces. Since graduating from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam in 2016, she has developed a body of trans-disciplinary solo and collective work in Europe and North America. She regularly collaborates with musicians and scenographers who share her ongoing fascinations with the physicality of both performer and audience. Rituals and time travel are topics currently on her mind.

FJALLGERÐUR

Three young women live in a small wooden cabin by a big lake under a medium mountain. There is no one else around most of the time. No one else to gaze upon them singing, screaming, laughing, crying, listening and running around naked. They are practicing getting in touch with themselves and everything around them. They are together in trust, together in sisterhood.

Of the three of us, I feel the least experienced in practicing witchcraft. Sometimes I feel I'm too rational. I grew up around the idea that there is something 'other' and 'more' that what we can make sense of, but 'let's not talk about it'. I didn't realize the spiritual could be useful – until very recently.

I find it hard to take space. Raising my voice feels rude, even when I'm asked to speak louder. I mostly wear black. Anything to keep attention away from me. I am secretly convinced I'm not supposed to be one-seventy, but shorter.

IT'S CALLED ANXIETY, BUT I'M WORKING ON IT.

Three young women watch the lake transform from foggy to frozen to stormy to still. Each morning they swim further, go deeper, stay longer. They are building stamina.

Some things are only sensed after a certain time.

An older man visits the three young women. He is a healer. Through him, I gain wisdom of how past traumas are stored in the body. Are the traumas the traumas of this life or of past lives? It feels like I remember

something I'm not supposed to remember. I can't explain. So much sorrow. I also seem to remember something else from his visit. Something much more mundane. Was it sexual? Did I imagine the hard on? I try not to remember and I don't mention it to anyone.

Three young women climb a mountain. They've taken a vow not to speak. There is a path but I'm not on it. With every step I feel the ground more and more profoundly. We reach the top and I still don't understand. The other two envelope me in their arms and remind me I don't need to do this alone. I cry my lungs out. Now I understand. So much sorrow.

The three young women visit a clairvoyant. He is also an older man albeit a little younger, tattooed and wearing baggy pants and a T-shirt with spiritual symbols on them. I told him I'm closed to the spirits, locked down. I told him I want to open up, I want to believe. He replied with a laugh, saying 'you're not closed, you've just lost your keychain.' He tells me I have a guide. A master guide. She is a well known goddess but she is also a monster. I don't understand but I understand so much. The more I read about her the more sorrow I feel. Not my own sorrow. This is confusing.

Three young women turning to spirituality as part of an attempt to confront misogyny, violence and inequality. We three in this cabin are not the first. There is a history to women doing this. In 1848, the sisters Margaret and Kate Fox established many of the founding principles of spiritualism for 'rappings' and communicating with spirits.¹ As they became known across the United States, the Quaker community noticed the girls' powers. It was this convergence of an emerging mediumistic phenomenon and a radicalized religious community that linked the spiritualist movement to issues such as the abolition of slavery and equality for women.

Somewhere else I read that the Fox sisters were faking it.² The 'rappings' were a hoax. The more I thought about it the more I found the possibility of them constructing the whole thing as a fiction compelling. Devising a strategy of speaking the words of imaginary dead people in order to say what they couldn't say as themselves could be a useful strategy for an anxious person like myself. At the same time, what I would give for these 'rappings' to be real. I want to live in a world where these things are real. Have I brainwashed myself? Why do I want their story to be real so badly? I seek Meister Eckhart for an answer: "When the soul wants to experience something she throws out an image in front of her and then steps into it."³ In the end what is real and what is fiction doesn't matter as long as it serves its purpose.

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6. "Hallgerda Mons." *Gazetteer of Planetary Nomenclature*. October 1, 2006. Accessed February 15, 2019. <https://planetarynames.wr.usgs.gov/Feature/2332?fsk=-1240839036>.

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When I was a child, I used to think the most important thing in the world was to be good. As I grew up, that belief somehow stuck with me. I focused on being to others what I didn't think I could be for myself. Last fall I discovered Hallgerður langbrók – rediscovered her actually. I knew her from my childhood, not personally but from an old tale.⁴ She is a beautiful powerful woman from the Viking Age. I'm certain most Icelanders are familiar with her. Some describe her as a headstrong woman, others hold her responsible for many wrongdoings. It's not completely certain whether she's a fictional character or real. It probably doesn't matter much. It's what she stands for that matters.

Hallgerður and I are different. As she grew up, she determinedly took the space she needed. However, her subversive behavior had repercussions. Every space she took came with consequences of her community labeling her as stubborn, wayward and disobedient. But despite her harsh labels and bad reputation she stood tall against social norms. Carl Jung supposedly said – "I would rather be whole than good."⁵ Hallgerður wasn't playing the good girl. She stood up for herself.

In 1991, Hallgerður langbrók was accorded divine honors by the International Astronomical Union, an officially recognized authority in astronomy for celestial nomenclature. In an instance she became a goddess. In addition to the deification, the association decided to dedicate a large mountain to Hallgerður langbrók on planet Venus.⁶ I asked Hallgerður to be my guide – my goddess – in my venture to raise my voice and take more space.

Like many deities, goddess Hallgerður is assigned a simple archetypal description. The IAU describes Hallgerður as an "Icelandic goddess of vanity". They reduce her to a single word, a word with a negative meaning. Vanity, by a dictionary definition, is "the excessive belief in one's own abilities or attractiveness to others" but when Hallgerður was alive the word did not have such narcissistic undertones, and merely meant futility, pointlessness.⁷ Once again she's been labelled. This oversimplified rendition of Hallgerður is an affirmation to why I find it hard to take space myself. Labels such as vain, loud, rude, slutty – anything implying I'm not the good girl I want people to believe I am – make me reluctant to take space.

Hallgerður langbrók is a revolting goddess refusing to acknowledge her community having authority over her. She is the Icelandic goddess of taking space. Hallgerður's labels have lived on with her for almost a thousand years. It's time for her to gain recognition

8. "Dirty Dancing." Nobody Puts Baby in the Corner. September 16, 2010. Accessed June 18, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28A-9Jgo92GQ>.

9 "Brennu-Njáls Saga." Wikivitrnun. March 03, 2018. Accessed June 12, 2019. https://is.wikiquote.org/wiki/Brennu-Njals_saga.

for what she stands for. Remember that scene when Johnny gets Baby for the final dance and famously says: "Nobody puts Baby in the corner"?⁸ When Hallgerður is asked to move to a corner, she stands up for herself and says: "Hvergi mun eg þoka því að engi hornkerling vil eg vera."⁹ Both quotes have a similar meaning, but instead of a man standing up for a woman, Hallgerður stands up for herself.

Three young women stand side by side and shout their lungs out. Venus sits low on the horizon, reflecting on the lake. The sounds coming from their bodies are somewhat unfamiliar. Is this my own voice? Doing it feels powerful and liberating. Volcanic release, as if the sound came not only from the bottom of our souls, but from somewhere deeper. Connecting to a place, to layers of time, to the histories, to the futures. Channeling, amplifying a goddess.

ELSA MENCAGLI

BIO

I am a conglomerate of vibrant matter, a body of flesh, bones, and moving thoughts. I believe that I am always becoming, and that the encounters with other human beings, places, and materialities are constantly shaping who I am, and how my work develops.

I am also a multi-media-post-disciplinary artist, currently living in Reykjavik, where I am enrolled at the MFA in Performing Arts at the Iceland University of the Arts. I graduated as a bachelor at the Architect School of Aarhus, Denmark, in 2016. Since then I have been living and working in the US, Norway, Germany and Iceland. The estrangement of when moving to new places, generates a space where to reflect upon the relations between me, as a human being, and the specific environment. The work takes form in the attempt to come closer, to reveal; to create a space where the audience can dwell within those meditations and think of how it might be otherwise.

The work Might yet still be reflects upon the ecological relationships between the human body and the intertidal environment. This version, to be presented in Reykjavik, emerges in the encounter with the specific context of the intertidal environment of this city, in which I have been immersed during the past year.

The work starts with a practice of listening and becoming present at the site. As a body walking, touching, entering the water, thinking, watching, laying on the rocks with closed eyes. And then something sticks with me. The work starts to take form somewhere between me, the materials and the place, in the attempt to come closer, to reveal, to connect. It is a constant negotiation where forms, thoughts, and spaces are shaped and re-shaped, in the entanglement of interrelations and contradictions.

In this work I have been interested in the physicality, processes, and relationships of human and non-human bodies. In how the awareness of being made of slime and spit and flesh, of being matter and breath moving, of decomposing and drying, can bring us closer to other species and to other materialities.

Through different media, as installation, video, and spoken words, I construct aesthetic experiences and ephemeral environments addressing the sensory body. Spaces where the audiences are invited to tune into other modes of listening; a kind of listening that happens between the words, in the vibrant silence of matter. I am interested in exploring how deep listening can create the conditions to re-imagine and re-invent the way that as a human species we relate to our environment.

As I have been engaging in the work, it brought me questions about how as humans we can be with the environment without the urge to hold on it, to grasp it, to own it. How can we belong to it? How can we resist the urge to consume it? How can we be in the space between the inhale and the exhale, as the waves move back and forth, and the tide rises?

Today Monday 4th March, the moon is Waning Crescent with 4% illumination. In Reykjavik it was high tide at 5:39 am, with a height at 3.60 meters. The sunrise was at 8.26 am, and the moonrise was 20 minutes later, at 8:46 am.

The bus nr.11 to Seltjarnarnes leaves at 9.15 from the Þjóðleikhúsið, and drives in a loop around the peninsula. When stopping at Lindarbraut there is a walk of 1,3km to reach the shore. There are dark grey rocks on the edge of the road keeping the land from the sea. There is a pause between every inhale and every exhale, a suspension of breathing before uttering a sound. There is the moment before the wave breaks on the shore.

The mass of water is retracting from the land.

At 11:53 it is low tide at 0.96 meters.

In the shallow waters of Seltjarnarnes bunches of seaweed are moved by the waves. Floating back and forth, rootless. When the tide lowers the seaweed is left on the shore. Entangled, wet and heavy. The kelp blades accumulate on the shore. Some are rugged, like the skin of a reptile, some are smooth, sliding through the fingers trying to hold on to them.

Sometimes words slip away as I try to grasp them.

The wind moves the sand above the ground, the shoulder muscles tense in the cold air.

The shoe sinks into the wet ground as the sea water washes away the thin layer

Slack tides are the time of peak high or low tide. They occur when the sun, the moon and the Earth line up. It will happen on Wednesday 6th March 2019.

Tidal breathing defines the normal respiration of a human body. The typical respiratory rate in humans is within the range of 10-20 breaths per min. Slow breathing is as any rate from 4 to 10 breaths per min. Taking long, deep breaths slow the heart rate and activates a calming parasympathetic nervous system. When breathing deeply, the air coming in through the nose fills the lungs, and the lower belly rises.¹

Shallow from the Old English word sceald, which means 'shoal', the water near a shoreline.² There is something called shallow breathing, when drawing air into the chest area using the intercostal muscles rather than throughout the lungs via the diaphragm.

Kelp (Fucus vesiculosus) is a type of brown seaweed that grows in regions with cold Coastlines, including those of the north-western United States and northern Europe. It anchors itself to rocky surfaces via tentacle-like roots. From these roots grows a slender stalk with long, leaf-like blades.³

of viscous substance from my hands.

At 3:50 pm the moon sets in the daylight.

A bunch of brown yellow seaweed lays in the white bathtub of a bathroom downtown Reykjavik. Some hands, my hands are disentangling the blades. The water running from the faucet is floating over, between, beneath the seaweed; the touch of the blades is wet and slimy.

The sun will set at 6:54 pm.

At 12.00 am it is low tide. The water is a dark, dense at night; the shadows are following the body along the shore. There is no moon, but the white light of a lamppost along the street.

Today Monday 4th March, the moon is Waning Crescent with 4% illumination. In Reykjavik, it was high tide at 5:39 am, with a height at 3.60 meters. The sunrise was at 8.26 am, and the moonrise was at 8:46 am.

The room L221 is situated on the second floor of the building of the Iceland University of the Arts. There is a large window facing towards the ocean. The highway from and to Reykjavik is cutting through the land that is between the building and the water. The cars are driving in a continuous movement back and forth; when the light is red they pause, but the motors are rumbling.

Sometimes only the air moving has a sound.

The walls are white, the wooden floor is light grey; it is 4.99 meters high to the ceiling. The metal frame is standing in the middle of the room, 2.50 x 2.20 meters. The first piece of seaweed is hanging from the frame; wet. The smell inundates the space.

At 11:53 it is low tide at 0.96 meters.

I stand in front of the metal frame engaging in the sewing. The thread goes through two overlapping surfaces of wet seaweed, the hand moves the needle back and forth.

Nature from Latin natura, is the equivalent of the old Greek Phusis. "Phusis (...) speaks of a process of morphing, of formation and deformation, that is to say, of the becoming otherwise of things in motion as they enter into strange conjunctions with one another."⁴ - Jane Bennett.

Being gerund of the verb to be. "What does it mean being as a process? The verb, the gerund that marks an ongoing experience, not a finalized act. It is not a finite verb; it is not a past tense, it is not a future; it is an ongoing present. And as on-going present it is also alive, it is about what happens in real time, which is transformation."⁵ - Laura Pérez.

Liminal from Latin limen 'threshold'. "She talks about how she wanted to write in that space where you prepare yourself to speak, of words at the liminal edge of the body."⁶ - Audra Wolowiec.

Estrangement when removing something from the usual surroundings or set of associations. "In the space created by this estrangement a vital materiality can start to take place"⁴ - Jane Bennett.

Smell occurs when a substance releases molecules into the air, and travels through a process called diffusion. The odour particles move freely in all directions,⁷ and as I breathe deeply they enter into my body. The smell detection pathway within the brain also connects to the amygdala and hippocampus, areas connected with emotion and memory. There is a chemistry to memory. Do you remember when we were aquatic animals?

Rugged, smooth, the texture of the material between the fingers. Nuances of yellow and brown. Daylight floods into the space and moves through the seaweed; backlit the material is dark.

My hands are looking for the next piece, touching, holding, feeling the weight, the wet surface slipping away. Once more, one more to follow the previous one in shape, in colour. A form emerges through the repetition of these gestures.

The weight of the material causes the thread that holds it to tense.

The seaweed slowly dries in the encounter with the air. As it does it shrinks and stiffens; after 10 hours the first pieces are almost dried. The last to be sewn are still wet.

The continuous thread is a trace of past movements, drawing a line between what is present and what is absent.

The bus nr.11 to Seltjarnarnes leaves at 17.45 pm from Þjóðleikhúsið.

40 minutes later the sewn piece lays among bunches of seaweed, floating in the shallow waters. Moved by the waves, back and forth.

The movement sinks into the body.

The mass of water is dense, is pulsing; the light lickers on the dark surface.

A lamppost turns off as I move along. The cold air moves through the nose, inside the lungs, expanding the breast, filling the space between the shoulder plates. The smell of seawater sticks to the gloves, I taste the salt in my mouth.

At 12.00 am it is, it was, it will be low tide.

Modes of time "The work spans three different modes of time here" - tells Rachel Sussman in an interview. "There is the shallow human time, which is biologically rooted. Then there is the scale geologic and cosmic time, which force us to step out of our human time scale. And inally, photography as an almost immediate temporal medium-the split second, the shallowest of shallow time-creates even more tension. But you need the third level, between the instantaneous and deep time, which is the deliberate presence of the person making the image."⁸

Stratification in Geology a structure characterized by a succession of tabular layers, strata. A record of the past movements of the Earth's surface, making possible the interpretation of geologic events. From Medieval Latin stratificationem (nominative stratiatio), noun of action from past participle stem of stratiicare 'to form strata', from stratum + combining form of facere: 'to make';⁹ at the very threshold of the human perception. There are stories we carry in our bodies that are older than us. There are stories that are told in the absence of words.

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NORA TORMANN

BIO

"I try I fail
I breathe I still-
ness I dance I write
I feel I relate I
space I other I
narration I flux"

Nora Tormann is an artist interested in fluctuating states of being. Having a background in political philosophy and in contemporary dance, her practice meanders on the fringes of artistic and theoretical research, pulling into questions the paradigms that constitute each sphere of knowledge. The body of work which has grown out of this circulates around performance, choreography and writing. A major interest that is reflected in most of her work deals with questions of how ideology shapes bodies and vice versa.

I dance with the desire to unlearn my body.
I write with the desire to unmaster my thinking.
I compose images and spaces with the desire to undo my vision.
Each of which is only possible through the other. Always other.
I make work with the desire to fall apart,
to fall together.

Falling. Falling into the chasms of a topic is what propels my practice. I encounter these gaps in the fragmented approach upon which my practice builds: Choreography, writing, video, installation, and painting come with a specific way of looking at the topic, ways that might not be recognizable within other media. They lay bare different aspects, confront me with different questions, make me engage with different modes of thinking and being. A series of attempts unfold. Some of those experiments fade away in nebulous impasses, others stick with me//I stick to them. Those that last, start to shape into arguments; propositions that take a particular attitude and perspective on the question at hand. I think with the experiment - together we think.

With time the experiments grow into a multitude of thoughtsthoughtthoughts. They build a map of contradictions, a map of gaps. From there, the work explores how different propositions can co-exist in a way that gives each component space, space to maintain its own coherence while at the same time bring them into close enough proximity to each other that they speak together. Together we think, together we speak.

Gap - a break, or open space, a break in time, an interval, difference or disparity. A space that can't be entirely bridged, that marks a before and after, a before and beyond. I consider gaps as spaces rather than voids filled with emptiness. It is a practice that doesn't aim for synthesis, but one that finds value in the untranslatable, the unabsorbable. It is a practice of dwelling in friction. It is a practice of unlearning, unmastering and undoing.

In my work I am interested in the ways of how ideology shape bodies and vice versa. It investigates how narratives and everyday practices take part in the forming of idealized bodies. When and how are they revealed as ideologically laden phantasies as they meet physical bodies? How can an ever-changing physical reality be at the base of telling other stories about bodies? In the research, I bring together incongruous propositions, searching for fluctuating knowledge/sensation as they might reside in their difference. A selected account of chapters of chasms as they have accompanied my process:

I. *I write and record a text mapping a genealogy of hygiene.*

As it plays back, I shake for an hour. In the writing of that text, I was interested in different narratives that stretch from mundane hygienic practices to highly gendered, racialized, and classist associations and actions. Shaking makes me re-think and re-experience my body – its inner structures, its shape, its boundaries. As the audio plays, both the beauty and the horror inherent to the discourse of cleanliness/cleansing wash over my shaking body that has started to fall apart into fragments and yet has never been more contained within its own contours. It makes me think about the implicit politics of exhausting ideals and other strategies of subverting them on the basis of alternate approaches like pleasure, refusal, deceleration ...

II. *A video is projected onto the wall in which a multiplicity of my bodies showers in their menstrual blood. I sit next to it and wash myself with water that others have used to wash their hands with.*

Covering the body in its own cyclical fluid makes me engage with questions of taboo and ritual and I try to imagine the immense amount of period blood that has left the bodies of all menstruating people up to this day. As the water runs down my neck and my chest I suddenly feel close to everyone whose hands have been washed clean with that water before; I feel their very recent past running down my body. The presence of liquids, the physical presence of people replaced by liquids – disgust, discomfort, intimacy ...

III. *One after the other, I lay portraits of the same face on the floor. 80 faces look back at me as I try to gather my thoughts to write, to write this text.*

A face that escapes easy categories. A face that is neither someone nor anyone. A repetition of the temple

of individuality until it grows into an uncanny mass of sameness/difference. Writing as a mode of thinking in which thoughts grow gradually with each word added, with each sentence erased. Thoughts unfold with tidal movement, leaving behind lines of attempted explanations on the shore; among them grains of questions. Thinking alone, thinking together...

I find some rest in the disparity of the modes of working and thinking as outlined above. After all, gaps expand time and space. They allow me to dwell with topics and questions that are difficult to be with. Gaps come with space in which relationships and attitudes lose their presupposed structure – gaps are spaces in which they can be refigured. Not that they would suddenly reinvent themselves; rather, it is in the dwelling that they stretch thinking, they stretch affection and they stretch possibilities to relate.

Gaps invite me to investigate a different mode of being. One, in which there is space to moan, space to desire, space to do and undo. I like to be undone by the chasms around us, to be undone by the tensions and frictions of the questions that arise out of them. Gaps are what make me fall apart; gaps are what make us fall together. It is in this tension between the falling apart and the falling together that I think of my work as a dedication to the fragmentized, paradoxical body and its possibilities to relate to other bodies in modes of constant oscillation and affect: It is about the relationship between a body and the social space within which it moves. It is about the relationship between the individual and the many. It is about the power of social norms, the inhibition and the discipline resulting from this and it is about the origins of change and emancipation. It is about the relationship between the ideal body and the physical reality of that body. And it is about the realization that this relationship is different for every body.

IT IS ABOUT HOW TOGETHER WE CAN BE IN FLUX.

PAULA DIOGO

“WALKING IS A MODE OF MAKING THE WORLD AS WELL AS BEING
IN IT.” REBECA SOLNIT, IN WANDERLUST

TERRA NULLIUS ----- or space precedes place

BIO

Paula Diogo (b.1977) is a Portuguese performer, deviser, and director that has been meandering between art making and producing in the last years. Her creative work is based on the desire to develop improbable ideas. She is interested in thinking performance work as a space of shared experiences between the audience and performers where we can propose different ways of looking at the world and of coming together. In the last years, she has been developing Mã-Criação (www.ma-criacao.com).

The first idea for this project was to put myself on the move. To go to an unknown place where I would be alone and not able to control my surroundings.

My first impression from Iceland was that the sky was bigger than the earth. My days were filled with an always moving sky, changing rhythm, color and form at every minute, sometimes second.

I started to walk as a way to get to know the city, as a way to extend my territory little by little. And this territory grew day by day with each new person I met or each new place I visited. I became an urban walker.

Wandering became my work – a work called TERRA NULLIUS.

I also started to write as a way to keep track of things. In a situation where everything is new, every single detail seems an important thing to keep, because you are experimenting with ways to relate to the world around you. Details help you to map spaces and create a sense of a safe environment.

Movement became part of my experience of the place: movement above me, on the top of my head, movement on the ground, on my feet, and movement on my hand and on my writing.

Writing became a natural way to expand my experience of walking. Jumping from space into time, mixing lived experiences, learned knowledge, reflections and memories.

Something funny happened when I walked: at first my mind would start to fast forward immediately, I had the unusual sensation of having to run after my own thoughts. Then little by little, time would just slow down, my body would begin to sweat and my hands would swell. This numbing sensation that comes with tiredness seemed to get me in a state where I could just simply be in the present moment. As Frédéric Gros, the philosopher of walking said in an interview:

...exploring the mystery of presence.
Presence to the world, to others and to yourself... You discover when you walk that it emancipates you from space and time, from ... vitesse.

Speed?

Yes, speediness. It emancipates you from speediness. And Rousseau says in his Confessions, when you walk all is possible. Your future is as open as the sky in front of you. And if you walk several hours, you can escape your identity. There is a moment when you walk several hours that you are only a body walking. Only that. You are

1. Cadwalladr, Carole. "Frédéric Gros: Why Going for a Walk Is the Best Way to Free Your Mind." *The Guardian*. April 19, 2014. Accessed June 10, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/apr/20/frederic-gros-walk-nietzsche-kant>

2. Plato, in *The Republic*.

3. John Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), 54.

nobody. You have no history. You have no identity. You have no past. You have no future. You are only a body walking.¹

Some weeks ago, during a shamanic journey of dreams in a house facing the lake, I wrote down something the shaman said just before starting: 'the intent of a journey is very important'.

I find the metaphor of the journey to be most central to this specific work.

Movement and displacement can be the keywords for a certain understanding of the world to emerge. Allowing a new way of seeing and a reconfiguration of the self by the simple fact of not recognizing a place or having to learn a new language.

Socrates claimed "to be a foreigner in his own city", he became *átopos* (out of place). For him it was absolutely necessary to become foreign in his own city to be able to freely speak, to freely expose everything. For him, foreignness was the only condition that would allow total exposure. To Socrates to be part of a society was to be part of a shared silence. Only the new comer was able to see with new eyes, point out things from a detached and not compromised point of view.²

Routine and habit can put to sleep our capacity to wonder. After some weeks in Iceland, I had to remember myself that the sky was still there and that to see it I just needed to look up while walking instead of looking down.

As I spent more time walking and wandering through the city, I have begun to think about how movement can challenge common understanding of concepts such as 'home' and 'belonging'. Two writers that have fed into this thinking are John Berger and Achille Mbembe.

John Berger refers to the original meaning of the word Home as suggested by Mircea Eliade, Home as the center of the world, the center of the construction of the self where different worlds come together (the divine, the underworld, and the path). Home as "the heart of the real" where the being is never lost.³

The philosopher Achille Mbembe recalls the nomadic nature of mankind and establishes a very beautiful connection between walking the land and owning it. The idea proposed by Achille Mbembe is interesting to me because it relies on the image of crossing, of owning the land by walking it, but also because doing that, the idea of space as we know it dissolves. Cartography and geography have tried to render tangible our notion of space, but it's the subjectivity of places that creates the emotional, intellectual and spiritual

meaningful cartographies that allow the preservation of the self.

4. S. Silliphant, writer, "The Way of Intercepting the Fist," in Longstreet. Paramount Television. September 16, 1971.

5. Gaston Bachelard, Poetics of Space (Beacon P.U.S.), 42.

Home, is no longer a solid place, Home is in this case liquid, is fluid. Home is in constant movement and change. "Be water, my friend, be water".⁴ Home is no longer the solid house from our childhood, to where we will go back one day, or the house as Bachelard says that we will build in the future,⁵ but it is simultaneously our departure and our arrival point, what constitutes us as a person and that is also, and still – a place To Be. Mbembe points out that...

In pre-colonial African societies, movement and flow of goods is the condition and principle of all societies' dimensions: cultures, religions, matrimonial systems, commercial systems, all of that was the product of movement. Movement proceeds space, territory. Movement is the very tissue of space. It is completely different from the European concept, in which space exists before movement. In Africa it is the opposite. Therefore, in the African pre-colonial paradigm of the relationship between space and movement, borders don't exist because, by definition, it is borders which block the transit of vital flow. Movement is at the core of life, not necessarily space. If it is translated into space, this is done by means of space being perceived as movement. Therefore, we are facing two completely opposing philosophies. From this point of view, the African movement philosophy, the pre-colonial one, is similar to a rationale specific to the digital world, according to which, fundamentally, one seeks to create connectivity, using networks, instead of tracing categories, classifying, establishing hierarchies and limiting movement.⁶

6. BUALA, accessed May 20, 2019, <http://www.buala.org/en/face-to-face/africa-is-the-last-frontier-of-capitalism-interview-with-achille-mbembe>.

For Achille Mbembe it is not anymore, the question of the traveler, or the foreign, with a home to where to return to, or a home to build, Achille Mbembe moves forward (or backward) towards the idea of the nomad to whom the land is the Home. With Achille Mbembe space loses materiality and becomes subjective.

In an article in The Guardian newspaper I discovered for the first time someone talking about desire paths. Paths that continuously and stubbornly appear in the big cities as a result of people's necessity to cross over and not obey to the 'naturally designed' routes already existing. We can trace them very easily in parks: a path of grass stepped on over and over again until there's almost no more grass left or a hole that suddenly

appears on the middle of a hedge. Some architects describe it as the city expressing itself, expressing a desire that should be listened to.

The path became important. By walking and writing, I started little by little to establish a territory, exploring the friction between the necessity of a place and the necessity to move.

The questions that this work raises go deep inside of me.

My father and mother met in a hotel called HOTEL PRAIA MAR (Hotel Beach and Sea) where several families coming back from the ex-colonies spent some time before going to more definitive homes. They married there, on a non-place, a provisory place where they started to make plans for the future together when they lost their past. They were married on a border, a frontier between their past and their future. This event formed my way to relate to territory, to words like home, country, nationality, memory.

Writing this I go back to Agnès Varda about memory: "Memory is like sand on my hands. I keep some and some is going".⁷ In fact, for my family, the past became a black hole in which reality and fiction would mix. It started to lose materiality and became a 'story' that someone told once, and all of us remembered in different versions.

On the book *The Argonauts* by Maggie Nelson, I bumped into a quote about a concept of Anne Carson:

Many years ago, Carson gave a lecture at Teachers & Writers in New York City, at which she introduced (to me) the concept of leaving a space empty so that God could rush in. I knew a bit about this concept from my boyfriend at the time, who was big into bonsai. In bonsai, you often plant the tree off-center in the pot to make space for the divine. But that night Carson made the concept literary.⁸

This concept stays on my mind as I try to place it regarding my work and the things I'm busy with. I like to think of it as a model to interpret the world.

When I read *God*, I do not think about any kind of spiritual manifestation, but a larger understanding of what exists in the world that we normally don't perceive. This can go from discovering the poetry hidden in daily life banalities or listening to the diversity of the world that tends to express in many different ways and levels. What is expressing itself when we take time and space to listen?

7. Williams, Richard. "Agnès Varda: 'Memory Is like Sand in My Hand.'" The Guardian. September 24, 2009. Accessed May 21, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2009/sep/24/agnes-var-da-beaches-of-agnes>.

8. Maggie Nelson, The Argonauts (Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 2016), 42.

The act of not occupying the hegemonic center proposes multiple, polyphonic, non-hierarchical realities to co-exist in a sometimes conflictive, sometimes interdependent way. Refusing the idea that everything derives from the center or converges to the center.

Trying to see what's lays beside the center requires some energy and an active desire to do so. Trying to relate to the world not positioning yourself in the center also.

Maybe we need to walk in the ruins, as walking not in virgin land, on new land, but in overexploited land, over violated, over walked on land.

To walk as I seem to talk about here, as the flâneur that wanders through the landscape is a privilege only accessible to some. By forcing myself to recognize that privilege I also have to force myself to recognize the responsibility that comes with it.

In the frame of this research movement has become a way of constituting myself, as well as constituting my environment. Rewriting the places with those I get to encounter. As well as, rewriting the terms upon which I get to encounter them. Recognizing that I will always be a foreign somewhere, that more and more people will be forced to move and change places, by climate changes, by economic and political decisions. Recognizing that there are no safe places, that the only safe place we can provide is the safe place that we decide to create ourselves finding new (or old ways) to connect and to relate. A new territory of shared fragilities and relationships.

APPENDIX

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