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Xavier de Sousa

IN OTHER WORDS

Through prose, poetry, drawing and photography In Other Words is a collection of urgent reflections, created by artists exploring their hopes and fears at a time of global crisis. It is a clarion call for change from a group rich in wisdom, shared experience, and what it means to be marginalised in the UK in 2020.

In Other Words

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Metal is an R&D space for artists working in all disciplines – providing time, space and resources for artists to explore their practice, take risks and pursue bold ideas through residencies and Labs. We bring these artists and their work into a relationship with the communities in the towns and cities where we work through workshops, discussion, publications, small scale events and large scale festivals. Metal is funded as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England.

The Live Art Development Agency (LADA) is a Centre for Live Art: a research and knowledge centre, a production centre for programmes and publications, and an online centre for digital experimentation, representation and dissemination. LADA is funded as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England.

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The artistic content of In Other Words extends beyond this physical book. We recognise that not all our audience will access the book through the text and visual contributions alone, as such we highly recommend everyone visits www.metalculture.com/projects/in-other-words/ for the audio described version, our aim is not to privilege one version and to acknowledge that they each offer access to the artwork for a wide range of audiences.

Forward

Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.'

Arundhati Roy, April 2020

This collection is not a response to the global coronavirus pandemic. It is not an invitation to artists to make sense of cultural, social and economic chaos. It is a space to gather and gently hold the hopes and fears of a group of artists who live and practice on the margins, to bring them together in all their sameness and differences. To lean into a place where no explanation is required, where we can breathe and not hold our breath for fear of being too much or not enough.

At the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, I quickly became aware of an emphasis on 'normal', getting back to 'normal' or even imagining a 'new normal'. The more I encountered the word, the more it jarred, prodded and poked at my own sensibility. What does 'getting back to normal' mean if you were never 'in it' in the first place?

My instinct based on experience, told me I would be made more invisible. I would be more precarious, surrounded by a medicalised binary of 'sick' or 'well'. I could sense a familiar feeling of being put aside in the clambering to get back to 'normal'. How could I hold onto this moment, to emerge into a new world with hope that maybe lessons will be learnt from a mass experience of the isolation and marginalisation that othered people feel every day.

My wish is that this publication will be a gift, a comfort perhaps to audiences. This is for all of us who know isolation in all its forms, who don't fit or want to fit 'normal'. My hope is that this work will live on beyond this pandemic, that it will signify and speak to the rage of this moment, and act as a reminder that we must rage; but we must also have space to hold each other, to listen and feel that space of not having to teach or explain or make others comfortable about our way of existing in the world. This work is for all of the artists who make it a beautiful, messy, unapologetic thing and it is for you.

Kate Marsh, July 2020



Preparing For and Reflecting On a New Normal: TV Recommendations

I wish you were here. For a dinner, a party, a sleepover. We'd eat and drink and maybe smoke or shag, and then... we'd watch some tv. And when the tv content was exactly perfect for the night we were having or the mood we were in, we would look at each other, raise an eyebrow as if to say "Don't I know it!"; and then go back to watching, in our shared silence. I fucking miss you. And I miss sharing that silence with you.

Here's what I wish we were watching together:

The West Wing, Season 7, Episode 12 (2006)
Duck and Cover

In this episode, a nuclear reactor in California is about to explode. President Bartlett, without playing petty politics, gathers smart people in a room, looks quickly at a few different scenarios, and then takes action. (Almost) Everyone Lives!

Lesson for the future: *The West Wing* was sometimes jingoistic American bullshit, but decisive leadership in a crisis is sexy, as is compassion. Oh, and nuclear power is shit.

Downton Abbey, Season 2, Episode 7 (2011)

In post-WWI England, Thomas Barrow attempts to Get-Rich-Quick by buying black market ingredients. But dammit, as if the only gay in that village hadn't had things hard enough: all of the goods are salt, or drywall, or fucking sawdust. They don't tell us what's actually in the ingredients, but it sure as shit isn't high quality goods. He rages.

Lesson for the future: Don't hoard hand sanitiser. Or toilet paper. If you do hoard toilet paper – just know that I hope it's sandpaper.

Different World, Season 4, Episode 23 (1991)
If I Should Die Before I Wake

Tisha Campbell AND Whoopi Goldberg guest star in this 'very special episode' of *Different World* where, as part of a public speaking class, Campbell's character reveals she is HIV+. One of the first plot lines on tv (and in a *comedy* nonetheless) to feature an HIV+ woman, the episode is so difficult to watch because of how it depicts the stigma of HIV/AIDS and people's cruel responses to a character in crisis.

Lesson for the future: Take a minute to learn how a disease is spread and don't revel in your ignorance about how to care properly for those who are sick. Oh, and unlike HIV, COVID19 *is* spread via coughs and casual contact, so wear a goddamn mask already.

30 Rock, Season 3, Episode 8 (2009)
Flu Shot

Liz Lemon is finally going to take her island vacation, but flu season hits hard on the set of *30 Rock*. When her boss Jack offers her the last remaining flu shot, she refuses it, instead standing in solidarity with the crew who, by this point, are just sniffing, sneezing zombies. She finally agrees to the shot but denies it publicly, and is eventually called out for her hypocrisy.

Lesson for the future: DON'T RATION MEDICINE. DON'T PRIVATISE THE NHS. WE ARE AN ALLEGEDLY CIVILISED SOCIETY, WHY ARE SOME PEOPLE STILL ABLE TO BUY BETTER HEALTH THAN OTHERS?!

Spaced, Season 1, Episode 6 (1999)
Epiphanies

In this episode, the group of friends shake off a difficult day with a night of clubbing. There is a five minute montage in the episode where I actually missed dancing / going out, for the first time in months and months. I missed the sweat and the music and the drinking and the laughing and, fuck, it was emotional. To be together, celebrating, commiserating.

Lesson for the future: Don't forget the importance of a night out with friends.

The Good Fight, Season 3, Episode 1 (2020)
The Gang Deals With Alternate Reality

This episode is worth watching even if you've never seen an episode of *The Good Fight* (a spinoff of *The Good Wife* which is superior to its predecessor). In this episode, Christine Baranski lives in an alternative reality in which Trump was never elected in the USA. It is a straight-up bonkers thought experiment where the Women's March never happened, Harvey Weinstein is still a desirable client, and people complain about how horrible 2020 is. They don't even know, and it's awesome to watch their naivety.

Lesson for the future: Don't wake up from a good dream. Ever.

Brian Lobel



Inanimate Intimacies Noëmi Lakmaier

Hugs & Holds - By Azara Rowena Meghie

I can't wait.

I am extremely excited to be invited into such a world.

An anticipated fantasy

Highlighting the way you hug me,

letting me know I am truly there.

Choosing to hold me around my waist not my neck. Respecting my hair.

Embracing me.

And through your silence knowing that my history was not fair.

NO OUR HISTORY WAS NOT RIGHT.

That your ancestors. Have left us with trauma. That is not seen in plain sight... But I am excited.

Because as unconscious biases are elevating into our consciousness, I become rooted in my power.

Sowing seeds of courage and awakening awareness.

Fear becomes powerless.

Useless.

MY WORTH IS no longer SEEN as less.

It's inevitable.

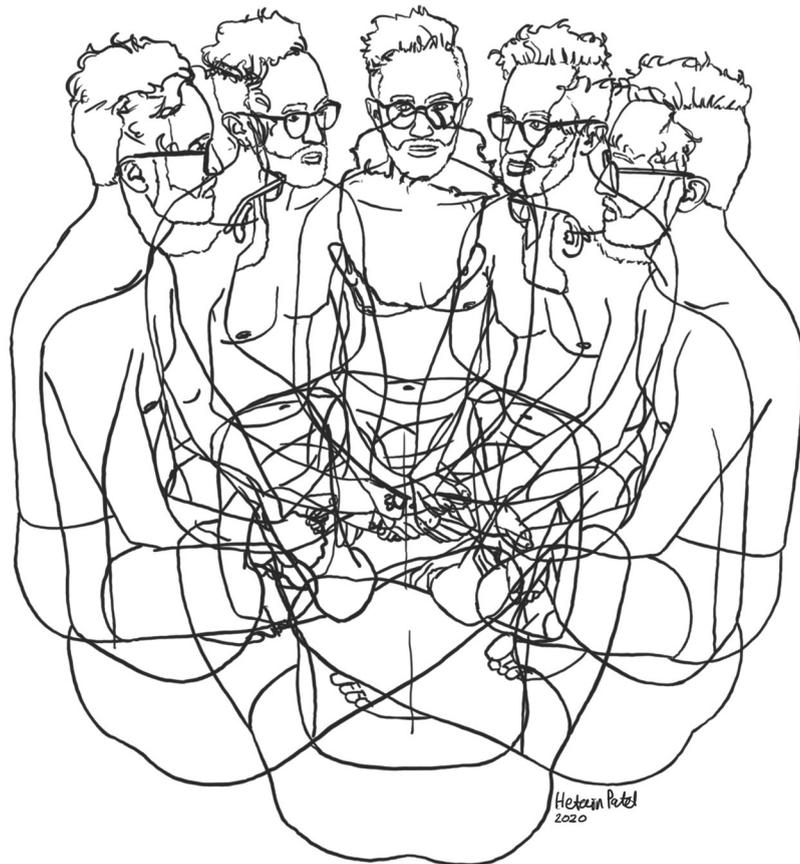
Not intangible, but inevitable that this shift would come good.

That my space & colour will illuminate & be celebrated in all its glory as it should.

So... As you wrap your arms around me, Welcoming ^{my} heart & soul.

You hug me now, with the understanding of how loosely you held me before.

Hugs and Holds Azara Meghie



Untitled Hetain Patel

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* translation of binary here www.uncharteredcollective.com/metal

Unseen code Raquel Meseguer

Answers on a Postcard / Placard / Tweet

Why when Misha B speaks out
about the racism she faced
on X Factor do I suddenly see
that old footage with new eyes?

Why did I believe she could
have been a bully before I saw
that she was being bullied
right there on national television?

(Do Black Lives Matter more than before?)

What was Kelly Rowland thinking
as she heard those words said
by Louis and Tulisa against Misha?
What was Gary Barlow thinking?

What is in celebrity contracts
to prevent them from speaking out?
Why when most of them speak out
it's in viral videos full of hollow platitudes?

(Do Black Lives Matter less if they're poor?)

Why is John Boyega's career seen
as at risk for speaking against racism?
Why is his speaking out glorified
because of possible financial penalties?

Why is 'Black Lives Matter'
treated as a controversial statement?
What does 'All Lives Matter'
really mean when said in response?

Why am I asked by white people
to answer questions about racism?

Why are my white friends and
acquaintances 'checking in'?

Why am I being asked to provide
reading lists and free therapy
for well-meaning white people?
And where's my free therapy?

White colleague, why did you email
to ask if there is anything you can
do to help lighten my load at this time?
Are you not part of the problem?

White colleague, why did you tell me
that your 'type' was mixed race guys?
Why would I feel comfortable having
a conversation about race with you?

Black reader, have you ever slept
with a racist or someone who fetishised you?
Did you feel like you were a shadow
of their own white fear or fantasies?

Non-Black reader, have you ever said
Black wasn't your type? Just a preference?
Do you know that you are racist
regardless of your defence for it?

Queer reader, have you ever seen
Grindr profiles that said: 'No Blacks'?
'No Asians'? 'No fats'? 'No fems'?
Did you always call them out or report them?

White reader, have you ever said
a Black person had a chip on their shoulder?
White reader, did you know that chip
on their shoulder is your knee on their neck?

White reader, do you feel upset
or uncomfortable when I refer
to you as 'White'? Was I talking
to you when I said, 'Non-Black'?

White reader, have you ever said
'Black Lives Matter' out loud?
Not just speaking of the movement
but meaning and believing it?

Do the Black lives sold into slavery
today in Libya matter to you?
Do the black deaths you can't see
any footage of matter to you?

Do Black Disabled Lives Matter?
Do Black Women's Lives Matter?
Do Black Queer Lives Matter?
Do Black Trans Lives Matter?

Do Black Muslim Lives Matter?
Do Black Imprisoned Lives Matter?
Do Black Refugee Lives Matter?
Do Black Asylum Seeker Lives Matter?

Do Black Homeless Lives Matter?
Do ALL Black Lives Matter to you?

Dean Atta

830am. Travis: Mum I just went for a run, are you proud of me?
I'm trying new things!!

915am. Mum: OMG!! Go you!! Work is busy today.
But we got all that gear on. I look good.

1015am. Travis: Love you, Mum.

Time passes.

730pm. Mum: Love u too, Little T!

A deleted text never sent: *what happens when you are worried about the person that has spent their whole life worrying about you? When you want to ask, "how are you?" but this country has told her to never answer honestly ever since she arrived here. Is it patronising to assume you are not doing ok? I wish I knew you could take a holiday "after all of this", as if you were not tired before.*

615pm. Mum: Have you watched 'Feel Good' on Channel 4?

713pm. Travis: Have you watched the new How To
Get Away With Murder episode?

920pm. Mum: Too busy on Killing Eve Season 2.

1013pm. Travis: Is Normal People worth a go?

A deleted text never sent: *I do not want to turn you into an emblem for all that this country continues to fail. You are my mother and not an emblem. Or wasn't that just an emblem too? I wonder if part of growing up is thinking about you more.*

Normalcy is lost

Felt tip rainbows adorning the front windows of two up two downs have started to fade, tattered plastic bunting aggressively shudders under heavy grey clouds but the creased St. George cross flags remain in place, folk convinced their Englishness protected – it wasn't the colour of their flag but the colour of their skin that saved them.

The once punchy catchphrase of 'Stay Home, Save Lives' has now been replaced with 'Stay Alert' – many of us have been trying to unlearn the paralysis of that constant state of fear – the paranoia of virus, of unscrupulous death. The world comes to a stand still when this virus affects the stability of their normal.

Governments sanction an ease in lockdown measures at uneasy times. Oversized cars clutter the roads again, planes begin to rattle in the sky and the well greased machines of capitalism, oiled with the sweat of the working class, the precariat are brought back up to unsustainable speeds.

Those with wealth are caressed – lower interest rates comfort the middle class panic, tax savvy corporations dance with the Chancellor and its business as-almost-usual for those with capital, foundations, land.

Let us not kid ourselves that the labour of these past few months was not placed with those that have worked from home. The labour of this recovery to normalcy has been parked with those that labour. Unwillingly labeled patriots – fighting for their country. Their workplaces are rebranded 'the front line' with daily platitudes worn by ministers on pin badges. The rainbow flag now their symbol.

In return for their lives we offered unfair pay and little but vocation – a free coffee and queue jump at supermarkets is meant to suffice. On Thursdays we clapped, applauding systems that have maintained the pressure despite a decade of dismantling, undervaluing, overpromising, gameplaying – but now apparently isn't the time to make this political.

The powers at large attempt to convince us it was their decision making and readiness that saved – not 12 hours shifts administering care. They told us 20,000 deaths would be a good outcome – 20,000 deaths. We now stare at that figure that is soon to be three times that size.

'Close Friends' on instagram entrust you with their secret displays of what they believe to be a well-earned celebration – prosecco park life of 20 or more whilst our elders die, alone, in care homes, in corridors. The communal pack broken because of alleged failing eyesight – it was one rule for them and another for us.

Amongst this mess and death and anger and loss and protest we are encouraged to regain a sense of normality, a normal – get back to work, stay on our bikes and off buses, wear masks on trains but not in shops, do it quickly and quietly but don't rush back. Keep your distance but see your friends – a manic sense of normal.

The sort of normal that pretends the last three months whilst it suffocates you with a plastic glove of depression and eating disorders exacerbated by the mass hoarding. The normal that ignores the effect this has had on all our brains and pretends it was just something that just happened to our lungs. The normal that shows you months of it being slower and that little bit kinder – this normal wants your body to forget what it's like to be still. The normal that attempts to mask the face of scarcity – throwing you back to a place you fought hard to physically escape. The normal that sees us as the not-working class, that ethic replaced with worry – the worrying class. The normal that asks us to pretend it didn't for a brief moment almost eradicate homelessness as we knew it, that fed its poorest children with government aid that pretends it cannot always be this way.

You see the normal they want us to regain, die for, squabble over is their normal not a remotely socialist one – their shape of corporate normality. They want their normalcy back because they like how it fits, for it to be like how they remember – easier, with ambition, buoyancy, dominance on offer to everyone within their postcode.

For better and worse I fear our normalcy is lost and theirs will undoubtedly bounce back, but perhaps theirs could be held back if we stand collective. But now might not be the time for rabble rousing and ending this with a fist in the air – before we can repaint the future let's sit for a moment and grieve and bury our dead because it was ours that died, not theirs.

Scottee



Only the Brave Jeremy Goldstein

Just

first and last memories
are anchored in each mind
be they kindness or pain
we are witnesses to each other
be-in-human

genuine and manufactured fear
appear side by side
masquerading as Russian dolls
to expose the
raw inhuman nature
that is a global wound
split a-part by pigmentology

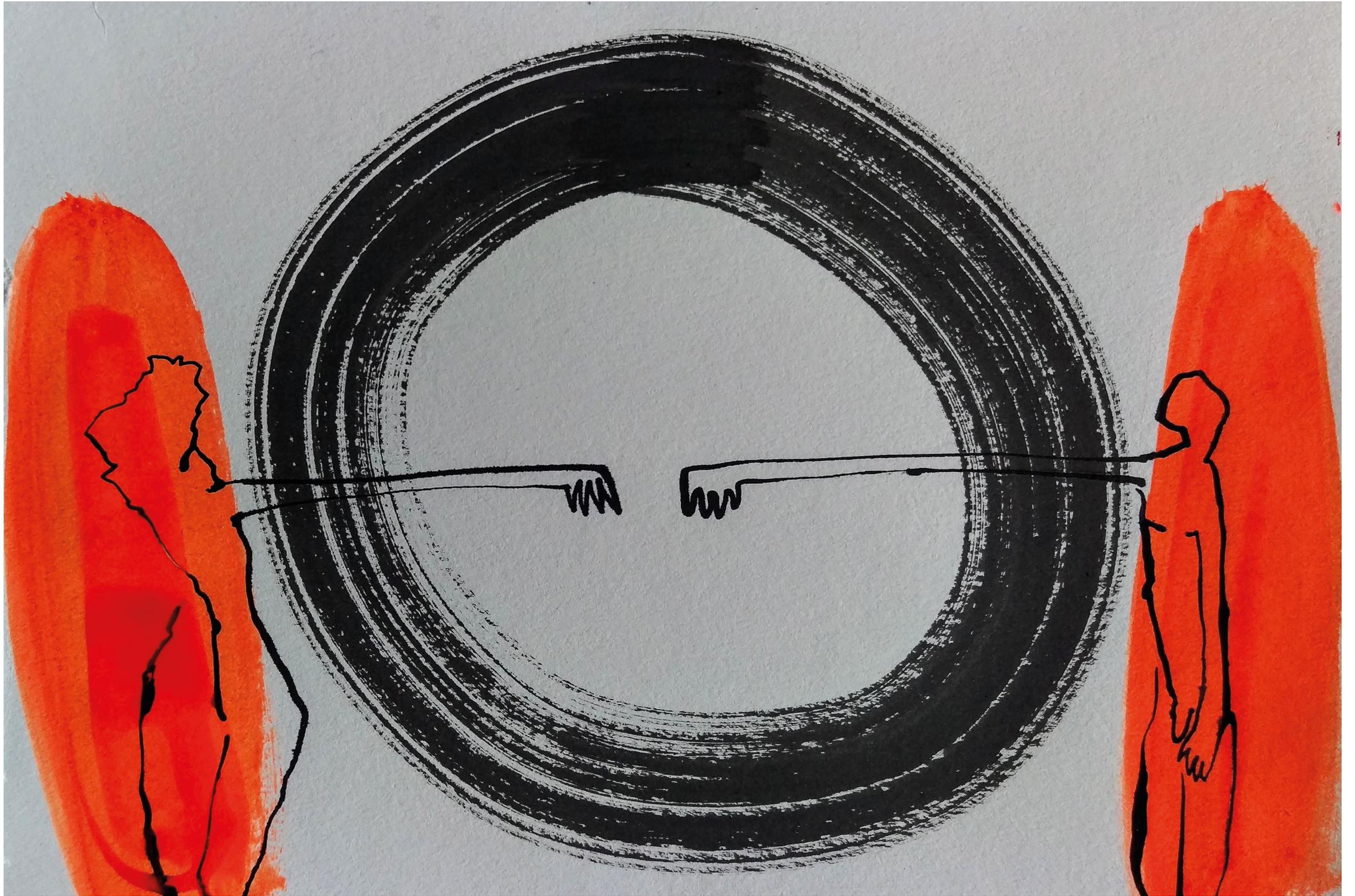
what if ... the new dawn brings the same system dressed in a different shade?

money adored
melanin abhorred
power dictates who is forced to exist in the margins
within chained fences of poverty
while fastened to red boundaries
of infertile valleys
where death is a frequent chalk outline
that stops time
shifts consciousness
resets motion
highlights endings and beginnings
of human beings who dream
of elusive old age
while breaching boundaries between
instinct and extinction
sense and sensibility
during the reclamation of their disinherited station of life
owning self
in a disowned world
of unreconciled contradictions
battered by colluding constant castrations
forced

a d r i f t

by corrupted power
but
what if ...
humankind
human kind
was kind
just human
just being kind
just being just?

Just Marjorie H Morgan



On Touch Katherina Radeva

At first I took solace in my withdrawal from the public eye, only to realize, with startling celerity, how much I do indeed depend on my audience. If they don't see me, do I still exist?



Now, when faced with my imminent comeback I admit to a certain stage fright! I'm trembling at the very thought of appearing before my audience again. Typical Gemini.

I IDENTIFY AS MARTY MCFLY

When I was growing up, I always found it hard to imagine my future. I just couldn't see myself. I didn't have the language or knowledge to describe how I felt. All I knew was that when I grew up, I didn't want to be an astronaut or a ballet dancer, a lawyer or teacher, footballer or some other thing... I just wanted to be **Michael J FOX**

DISAPPEARING & FADING

You know that bit in *Back to the Future*, where Marty looks at that photo and sees himself and his family disappearing? That's what I'm scared of. The future brings loss. loosing people, losing myself. Sometimes I feel invisible a stranger to myself, in a body that's unfamiliar. Sometimes I don't know who I am, and it's scary.

CHANGING & GROWING

You know that bit in *Teen Wolf*, where Scott looks at the mirror and he's changed I love that bit. I hope that one day I no longer have to be on a waiting list, until I can look in the mirror, and recognise myself. Maybe I'll be a bit hairier like *Teen Wolf*, too.

As a trans / non-binary person it's sometimes hard to imagine my future. It feels uncertain, Unobtainable & out of reach. But sometimes looking forward to the future is all that keeps me going. I do a lot of imagining and dreaming. At least I'll still be me. And that's a nice thing to hold onto. "I'm your destiny!" as George McFly would say.

Melody J Sprates

With Pain

The air calls you in. The dust settles you here. The breaths stroke your presence. Welcome. Welcome to the wakeful nights, the unease of daybreak, the hindered steps, the troubled ones. The air calls you in. Speaking in your slowed disenchanted voice: there is space for the unhealed. The touch of breezes and whirlwinds that have brought you here, sound out their bells: booming your validity, vastness and vulnerability. Welcome the unchosen ones, the ones left out; the disruptive, uncomfortable, quietened, shameful ones. The air calls you in. This shimmering of the unbearable – the shadow sides – crisscross the now. We scream come back to me, there is space for you here. This kiss of brokenness and damage, it wets, softens and calms.

There are multiple voices that I write from here: a voice that wants to bring attention to pain; a sometimes stuck voice; a stirred voice that wants to be honest; a voice calling in the pain; a cis woman white queer 32 years-old voice; a sometimes able to speak voice; a voice that needs others; a voice looking for words to describe the paradoxical welcoming in of what is unwelcome; an encouraged, softened, playful voice; an artist voice; a researcher voice; a voice that is patient with its own falterings; a voice whose confidence emerges through opening up to vulnerabilities.

I have lived with chronic back and nerve pain for 18 years. I have, up until recently, related to my pain solely as a hindrance and barrier to my life and work. Over the past two years I have been exploring how I might turn towards my pain differently and work creatively with it. My pain is daily but the amount of pain varies. I experience waves of flare ups, which can mean I am in a lot of consistent pain for days, weeks or months. Often the most painful aspect of having this physical pain is what happens to my sense of self. Without realising it, I inadvertently assume that my voice, perspective, opinions and experiences are less valid than when I am not in so much pain: I view this in-pain body as having less worth, value, relevance and right to speak. I encounter a deeply internalised ableism that a valid body is a 'well' and not-in-pain body.

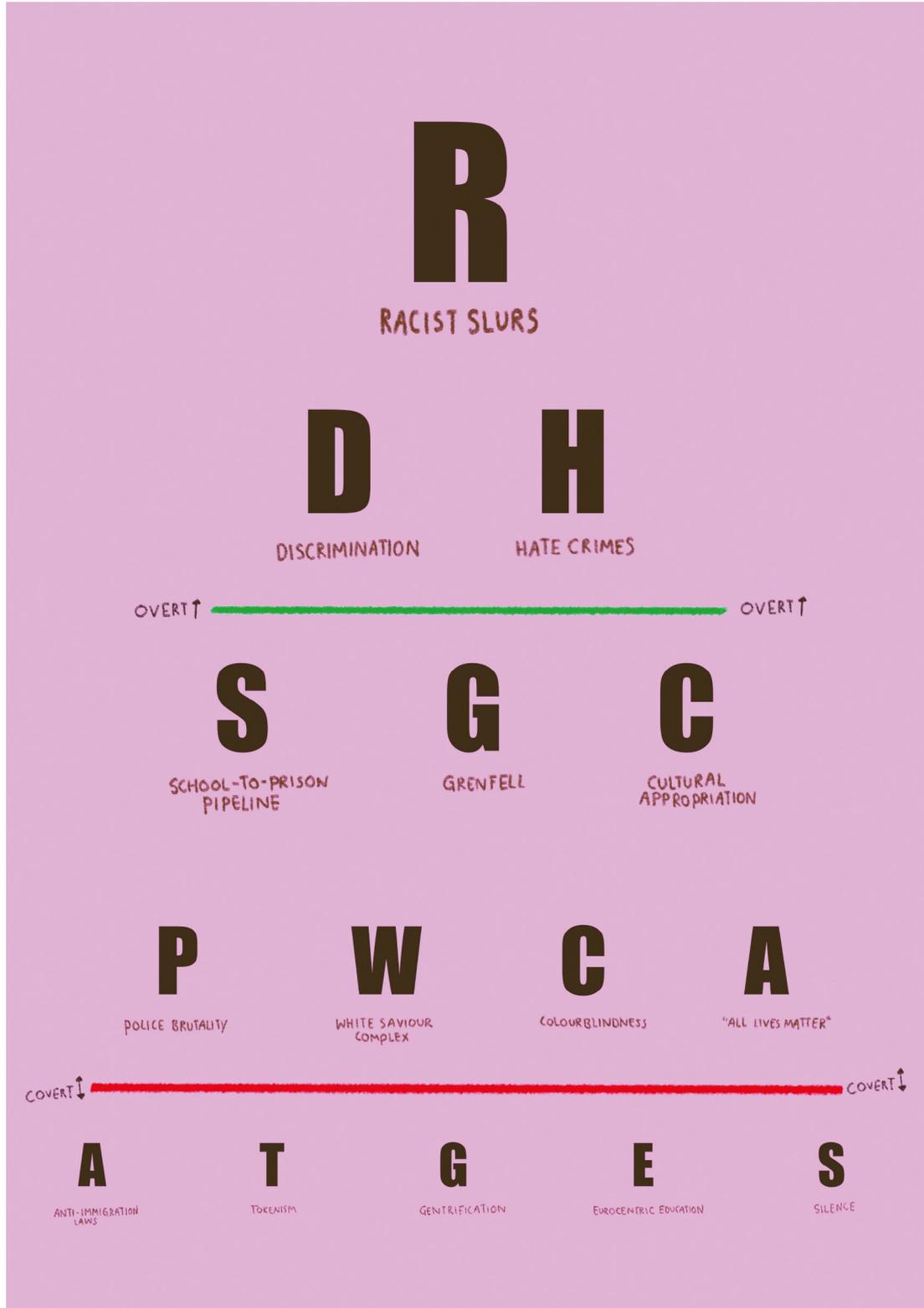
The restrictions on my body that the pain enacts can also perform restrictions on my mind – I become stiffened in my muscles and thoughts. My sense of self, my words and abilities, are inflamed, compressed, undone. There is a shrinking of my world, a stretching of my fear and despair, a lengthening of my discontent, and all this is ached into my identity.

Each time I have another pain flare up I find that I must go on a process of re-making friends with myself, of reconnecting to my body as it is now rather than how I wish it was. I experience this process as an opening up to – even a welcoming in of – the pain, and it is a process of immense relief, calmness, presence, and softening to myself and others. I am not sure how I go on this process – whether I am forced into it, or whether it is something I have tacitly learned from living with pain for so many years. What is contained in this process of making friends with myself over and over again, is an acknowledgement and honouring of chronic pain experience. It is not merely about validating my 'unwell' and in-pain body, it is about celebrating the richness and complexity of that body.

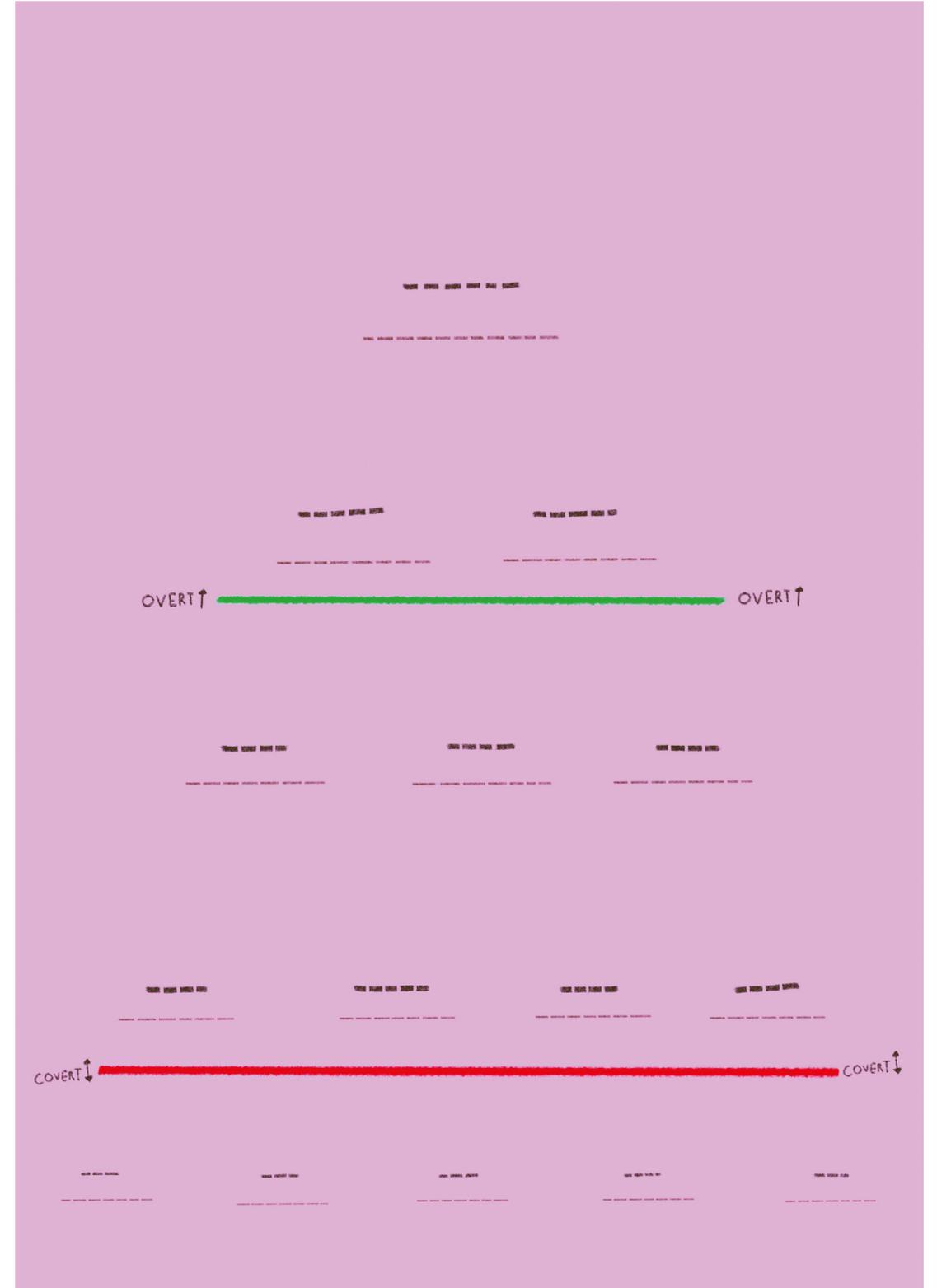
What if the very thing that is needed right now is for us to become more aware of our own and each other's pain? What if the world needs us to share, speak, write, create art, do research, contribute, relate, listen, from those vulnerable soft places of pain? What if, to borrow the language of Donna Haraway, we must 'stay with the trouble' of our 'wounded earth' and its widespread pain and unequal 'suffering'? (Haraway: 2016) What if turning towards pain, and learning to work creatively with and from it, is fundamental to shifting our world?

Sarah Hopfinger





The Racism Eye Test Amber Akaunu



The _____ Eye Test Amber Akaunu

Scene 81: Try Everything (after Karen Finley)

30 walks to the front of the stage. She takes a deep breath and then this all comes out of her, a steady stream. The stage starts with a cold wash, and by the end it is a spot, tightly focused on her face.

30: So I ate until I could feel nothing, and nothing happened

So I scraped at my arms and legs with various knives, and nothing happened

So I lined up the pills, started to take them, and nothing happened

So I slept all weekend, waking only to wank, and nothing happened

So I didn't binge eat, for at least a week, and nothing happened

So I did the yoga, and the meditation, went to therapy, and nothing happened

So I read the right books, and nothing happened

So I watched the right shows, listened to the right artists, and nothing happened

So I abstained from the bad art, cancelled left right and centre, and nothing happened

So I joined Labour and Momentum, voted for Corbyn, and nothing happened

So I vacuumed the living room, kept washing the cat's bowls and tray and toys and all sorts, trying to get rid of the slugs, but nothing happened

And we are petitioning and writing and donating and tweeting and rioting and terrorizing and organising, because we desperately need something to happen. Something has to happen because we are dying, we are dying this year, and the year before that and the year before that and how did our elders do it? How have they survived decade after decade of this shit, and the truth is so many did not survive, are not here, and many of us will not survive, will not be here but we are here and we must not die, you understand? We must live to fight another day, we must not die. And I will wait for my moment because it is summer and the streets are hot and the grief is hot and as all of us, all of us swelter, I will wait for my moment and I will -

Blackout

Possible Album Artwork

Lovechild of X and X etc

Relevant

Licensing Deal?

17th Century death ritual

Negative too weird?

Refs to Neurodivergency
 Finds it hard to be too obscure
 Frequent bouts of depression + anxiety

Not the rit land of black artist?

Overly Fragile

Refs to Rape + sex assault

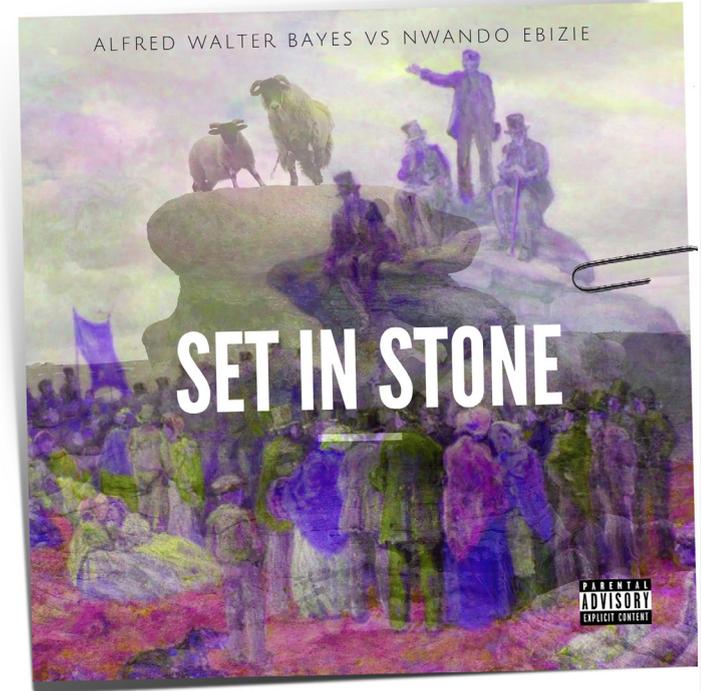
Doesn't understand when to talk in songs of most than 2 people

Doesn't want to tour

Keeps going on about sheep + roads - but not in a quirky, charming way - just kinda boring + obsessive

Plus points:

- ref to Biophilic - Lila Brook
- ref to Chop'd + Screw - George Floyd
- ref to Revolutionary Characterist Mوند
- like BLM
- but cuddly - no sheep
- Not too provocative





“Zigeuner Sauce Pisslotov’s”

Recycled bottles, chip paper, gold foil chocolate wrapping, piss of the artist with cardboard box plinth.

Size: 31.5cm x 45cm x 24.5cm approx.

Installation and durational artwork 15.06.20 Time: 06.32am – 10.59am Total 4 hours & 27mins the approx. journey time from London to Durham the journey taken by Dominic Cummings (Chief Adviser to U.K Prime Minister Boris Johnson since July 2019) that he did on 27th March 2020 while under “Covid-19 Lockdown”

With reference to the artist Betye Saar “The Liberation of Aunt Jemima: Cocktail” 1973 and the “Puputov’s” used in the 2017 Venezuelan Protests “Marcha De La Mierda” or “March Of Shit”. Drawing & collage by Delaine le Bas from Di/esinter-gration sketchbook/diary Worthing-Berlin Start 04.11.17 (Collage/Drawing size: 14.5cm x 21cm)

Photographs by Delaine Le Bas 15.06.20

* the word "Zigeuner" (gypsy) is derived from the Greek Athinganos meaning "untouchable" and refers to the position of Roma within the Indian caste system. www.eurozine.com

The German Zigeuner Sauce is a spicy and classic German sauce that you serve with meat dishes such a schnitzel or pork chops. It is a classic sauce that is very popular with a schnitzel which can be breaded or not. The meat can be veal or pork. It is served not only in restaurants.

www.mybestgermanrecipes.com



Portrait of the artist wearing “Don’t Worry Fuck Brexit” T-shirt by Jeremy Deller & pink & white check knickers by Topshop “Home Lockdown Costume”

Photograph by Lincoln Cato 15.06.20

Courtesy The Artist Delaine Le Bas, Lincoln Cato & Yamamoto Keiko Rochaix London yamamotokeiko.com

Lexicon for Change

Porch Sitting is a time to sit and wonder. I suspect we've all been doing some Porch Sitting recently and, if you're like me, you've probably had a lot of words buzzing in your ears like mosquitoes. Words like: pandemic, lockdown, isolation. I'd like for us to sit on the Porch together, go through the alphabet and reflect on some of these words, consider how they might help us think through to the future, look at them as possible tools for making change. We'll call it a Lexicon for Survival – or the ABCs for Change.

A is Assembly. I hope we maintain our desire for assembly and imagine new and creative ways to gather even in these times. Assembly is also about making things, like assembling a model airplane or our materials for making art. I like its association with making and gathering.

B of course is Bees. Bees have become a symbol for survival but they are also a symbol for how a society might work for the many and not the few. I heard a story about murder bees. In a particular kind of hive when the murder bee intrudes the workers surround the threat with as many little bodies as they can muster and shiver until they create so much heat that the murder bee eventually expires. I love the image of shivering together, generating enough heat to maintain the hive's survival.

C is Care. It's also cake. In these times, cake is a sweet, delicious form of care.

D is what we're all talking about: Distance. Maybe through distance we can learn to step back, get a better look, even listen a little closer.

E has to be Eat. Sustain yourself and nourish others.

F for me is Freedom. Ibram X Kendi has an idea about the difference between freedom to and freedom from. He says people protesting the lockdown are advocating for their freedom to be an individual. Individual freedom, he says, originates from the days of slavery in US history, where slaveowners maintained the freedom to enslave. Whereas the slaves, and the people of color, and indigenous peoples had to worry about the freedom from harm. This distinction seems instructive to me right now. Do we have the freedom to infect? What communities of us are concerned with the freedom from infection?

G is good Grief. We are in a state of mourning. I think it's important to sit with this grief, lean into it and acknowledge it in all forms.

H is Horizontal. Our streets and neighborhoods are full of people lined up and ready to help out as soon as a phone rings or a message pings. This horizontal organizing is a welcome relief from the vertical hierarchies we've been subject to, which have actually made our survival a lot more difficult and our lives more precarious.

I is the Interdependence of horizontal care. But the I word I can't avoid is Infection. Infection can be positive if we think of ways we might infect our community with a sense of respect, love, and commitment.

K is for Kindness, but also Kinship. We find kinship when we come together for a specific amount of time to achieve a common goal. I think that's happening. We are finding kinship in this crisis, a kind of kinship in which we come together around a purpose but maintain the freedom to change, to grow, to move on. Perhaps this kind of kinship could help us untie the knots of family, tradition, and affinity that sometimes separate us.

L I'll leave Love up to you.

M is Mutual. I first heard the term Mutual Aid in the 60s when the Black Panthers formed mutual aid groups to create children's breakfast programs and food banks. Mutual aid is an act of solidarity from within, not an act of charity from without.

Is N for Normal? There's a lot of talk about the new normal. For the most part normal has failed us. So, I would say N-O to normal.

Instead let's skip P and talk about Queer. I've identified as queer for about 40 years, but for me it's not an identity. It's a verb. How can I take what I'm given and turn it into something more inclusive or positive? I want to live in the act of queering.

Reverse R and S and you get Stay in Residence. I have been thinking about what it means to be in residence, to make home in the moment, to find presence where we are. And I love the word stay. Like the firm but gentle command given to a beloved pet to keep them out of trouble, stay relaxes me, gives me permission to pause.

T U The Unprecedented. Whenever I hear 'unprecedented' I think unrepresented, because the most devastating thing about this crisis is

the lack of leadership. How might we reconfigure leadership so that we move away from the patriarchal, macho, non-mask wearing leadership into something that's more caring, more inclusive, and frankly, more capable.

V is going Viral. Going viral can be deadly. But just think, one slip of the tongue could change viral to vital, affirming our lives and our curiosities.

X must be Extra. Staying in has made me realize that I've acquired many extra things. I look at them and ask, 'why do I need all of that?' I hope to take this forward, to undo my need for excess and live simply.

W is Wilding. I've been thinking about rewilding yards and fields and letting weeds grow. How might we rethink the constant cultural pruning and cultivation to allow for the wild that would emerge if we just let this garden grow?

WhY are we Yearning? We are yearning for a better world, for a possibility that this crisis will help us change things.

And Z – how could I not say Zoom? We've entered a world of Zoom which brings us back to the beginning of our ABCs and the need for Assembly. I hope that technology becomes a real tool for change, enabling us to make connections, keep connections, assemble, reassemble, and survive.

Thanks for joining me on the porch. Let's do it again sometime.

Lois Weaver

NEITHER
RISK
NOR
TOKEN

The Last Breath Society (The Way of the Shark)

The corpses are strewn across the landscape. A great rumbling is felt through the cities and towns. Something important is happening. In the church, the ceiling begins to fall on the worshippers. In the morgue, the bodies start convulsing. People feel it in their bones. The end is nigh. A group of people gather together, to breathe together, to mourn their own life and to rehearse for the inevitable. They are the Last Breath Society, a place where mortals can gather and decay together.

We all know the last breath. It is in our lungs, we haven't felt it yet. None of us have felt the air move through our throats for the final time, but we all will. We know what it feels like, somehow, because we know what it is to breathe. In the final moments of life, something known as the death rattle occurs. The person is unable to cough or clear their throats, so mucus builds up. Breathing is transformed. Each breath sounds crackly, wet. Fluids build up in the chest and throat. Then eventually comes the last breath. The final moment of life and consciousness. The lungs empty of all air. There is no final inhale of breath, just an agonising silence. In the end, flesh cannot resist decay.

A woman tells her son to sit quietly. She tells him that he only has a certain number of breaths and when he has used them all, he will die. The child spends the next few hours, sat, holding his breath for as long as possible. He wants to preserve his life for as many years as he can. He hopes that he might never die. He hopes he might find a way to hold his breath for such a long period of time that the end will never come. The boy goes into training, each day he holds his breath longer. He grows into a young man and still practices his breath holding. He becomes a free diver, swimming under the sea with no oxygen. This helps him to spend extended periods of time without breathing. His life goes on, his only thought is to extend life through holding his breath. He remains silent most of his life. He only speaks when he really needs to. He spends most of his time alone, or standing quietly in the company of others. The man is pretty but never takes a sexual partner. He heard that sex makes breathing heavy, something to avoid at all costs. He listens to music and pities the singers, surely this can't be good for their health. He is particularly disturbed by songs that use whistling, a terrible waste of breath.

Swimming under the water is his only pleasure. He swims near the sharks, marvelling at their power, speed and beauty. He is particularly fascinated by the white pointer, or great white as they are commonly known. He watches as it moves. The pointer must continually swim forward in order to survive. It can only breathe when water is running through its gills. The man wonders if the sharks too have a certain number of breaths. He wonders if they are conscious that their life depends upon a movement forward.

One day, the man went out to dive. He climbs off the boat, the water is calm. In the distance, he sees the fin of a shark cutting through the water as if it was a surgeon's scalpel cutting through a human lung. It moves rapidly towards him, and then vanishes underneath. He knows what this means, as pointers always attack from below. He turns towards the boat, but it was too late. He feels a great force below and the water turned red. He is dragged under the surface. The shark vanishes as quickly as it arrived, they do not like the taste of human flesh, and this was a mistaken attack. The man surfaces, his head above the water. He opens his mouth and for the first time since he was a small child, he screams. The breath forces its way out of his body. It is exhilarating. He screams again, and again, all of his energy went into the scream. He is out of breath but continues to scream in a mixture of agony and pure pleasure. And then he passes out. The blood is running from his leg, and he starts to sink. His mouth wide open in a frozen scream, he continues to sink. The water rushes into his mouth and begins to fill his lungs. He coughs, inhales, exhales, breathes. He is breathing in the water.

In this moment, he realised that his life had been for nothing. All this saving breath, it led, not to immortality but to this moment. This moment of drowning. As he breathed in the water, he felt alive for the first time. He imagined he, too, was a white pointer. He imagined that he needed to move forward in order to breathe in the water. He imagined that the water that was killing him, was actually sustaining him. He imagined that the blood in the water was not his own, but a seal he had bitten. This was perhaps the happiest moment of his life. His body stiffens and his heart stops beating.

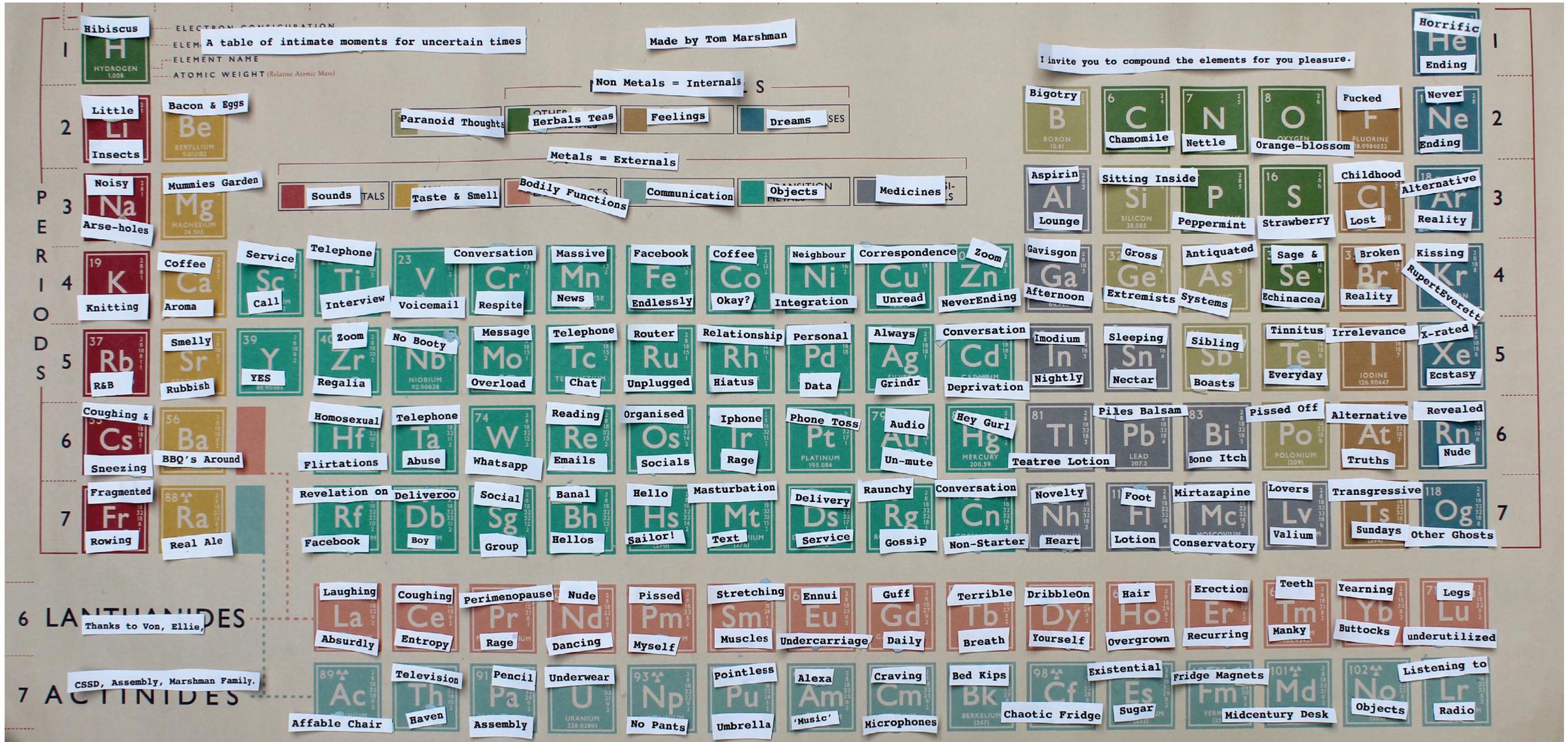
The water continues to enter his body and he sinks further and further down. The corpse sinks forever, it never reaches the bottom. The salt maintains the flesh for longer. Small parasites feed on the slowly decaying body. The death of one sustains the life of others. The creatures in the deep ocean are able to continue breathing because of this body. The shark that caused this event, continues swimming. It glides effortlessly through the water, always maintaining its forward motion, always pushing the water through its gills, always breathing.

Until the last breath is breathed.

Martin O'Brien



The Last Breath Society (The Way of the Shark) Martin O' Brien



A table of intimate moments for uncertain time Tom Marshman

I want to hold your hand
sensation junkie

Home in the soft interior of our bodies
We need no words to hold us
There are no words which can contain us, frame us,
fence us in

We are

Sinking into imagined landscapes
Where no one is explained
Where there is space for us all on long horizons

We are

Where meanness and violence have no meaning
Where colours faint and bold can stretch

Where you and I and all of us are safe

Free to fall into, lay back, lace our
arms around the full verity of
our own way

Drop your armour

Fall into pleasure
uncomplicated

Sliding leaves of our
open faces
Sunlight on closed
eyes

Growing in all
directions
Feet deep in
minerals

Skin to sky
and salt on your
tongue

Shake my insides open
for you to catch,
and let them consume you too
Take you in with my brightness
Find me in another place
Somewhere unexpected
we will recognise once we arrive

our own peace

these hands can
hold you

I have known these steps, this hill, these
branches, rock & root, better
by night

I grew
up in Cosham – no one ever used to know or
care where that was –
beside the bypass, happy
hunting Rainbow Brite
in playground petrol puddles

climbing, panting
puffing

with these weak lungs

I was
always afraid to

t o u c h

this is not new
I was taught
to touch was
death

I grew
afraid
to touch, another, to touch, myself, of being
touched, afraid
of being touched for being self
&
had
my throat
– at home – pressed against walls
squashed silent
– thrice – by men – I once believed
would protect

&
now

I am a quiet creature
in a loud blouse

sometimes
I can
tease it off
down dive &
disappear
– I, get that
choice –
in the spume
rushing back
at such a rate

I know you
may have forgotten

in your eager willing
to drop words of war
with blame &
shame

me –
us – inside alone, in grief
faces pressed in panes
&
in the echo of these hospice months
bladder's broken

k i s s i n g s

do not mistake this flowered hanky
about my mouth for silence
do not mistake this mulch for
lack of substance

my lips are full
my throat is hoarse
my tongue
pink &
parched
is still
long &
fat &
moving

I a m
s o f t
& f i r m &
I
c a r e
h a r d

here on this hill
breathing in
North Sea fret &

iris pawing light
wet
gorse

I am not beside myself, but
bent, together, tight up behind
leaning in, listening, loving
alongside

all those ghosts who got to say goodbye
with grace – and not –

will you watch or feel
taste our mouths
– at last –
straining

singing c a r e h a r d e r

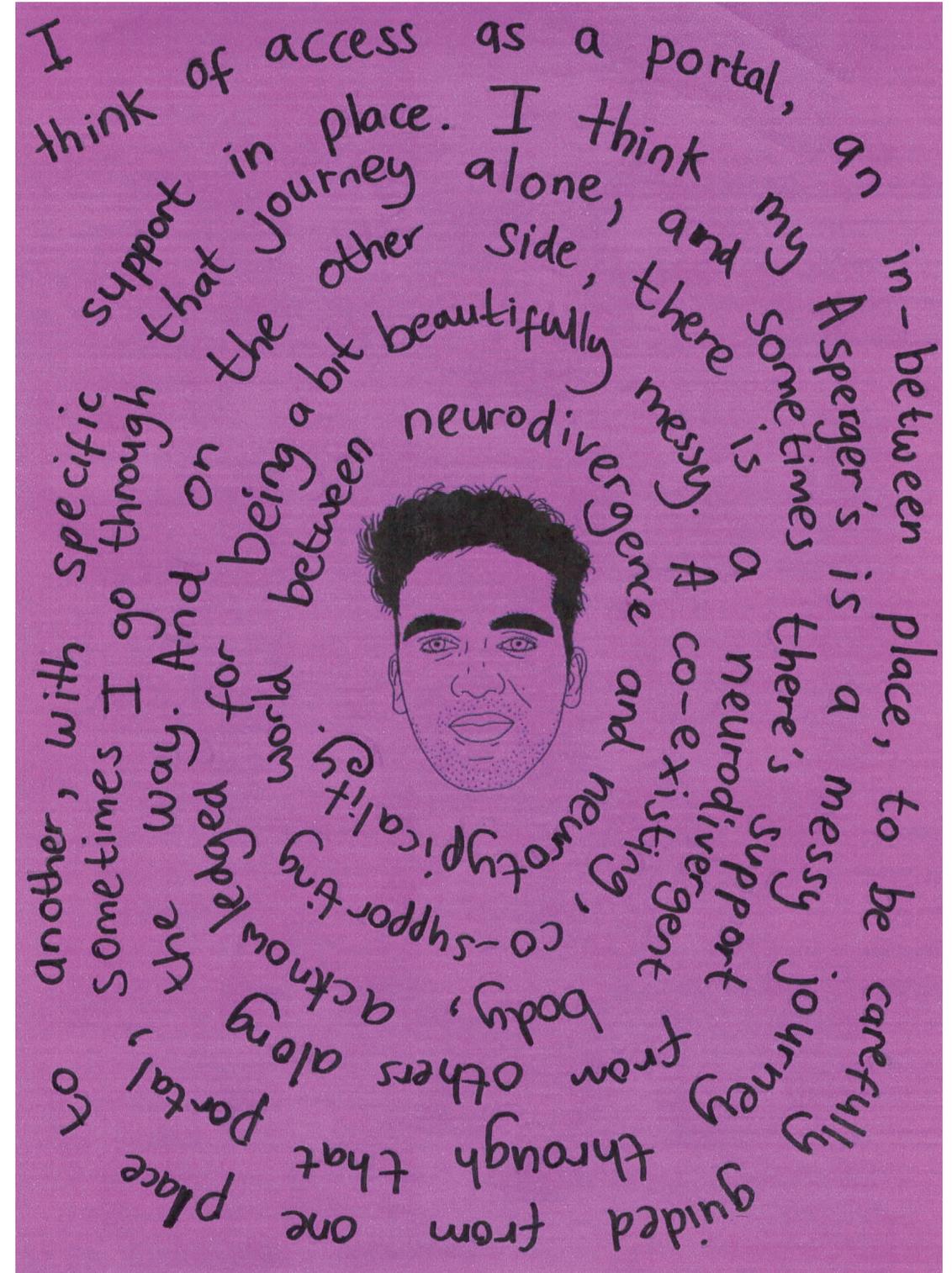
STAY CONNECTED – Talk to your family. Assuming you have a family, and assuming they aren't the source of your poor mental health. During the event you'll be allowed to associate with up to six friends, because even losers have six friends, right? If years of inpatient care have rendered you incapable of forging meaningful relationships, then at least have the dignity to pretend you're doing fine on social media. Make performative pseudo-acquaintances on Instagram. If the excruciating trauma of existence has left you flailing in solipsistic isolation then why not try to claw some validation by posting clumsily enhanced selfies on Facebook. You'll have your data points mined, your negative emotion exploited, your behaviour modified, your politics radicalised and your self-esteem eviscerated; but at least it'll help maintain a fragile illusion of connection whilst you're sipping that fifth anti-meridian "night cap". If you can't even afford a laptop or smart phone, then why not fashion yourself a little effigy out of dried faeces and toenail clippings? You can call it Karen. Is Karen ignoring you? Pop it in that blog you haven't written.

STAY HEALTHY – Assuming you were healthy to begin with. Any pre-existing mental and or physical infirmities will not be tolerated during the event. Work out in the garden that you should definitely own by your age. Stop hoovering up own brand noodles from that awful supermarket where people with bad skin shuffle around in cheap flammable onesies. Buy organic, it's more expensive but you can't put a price on your health. Do the couch to 5K if you're able. I mean, nonagenarian war heroes can do it, but I guess if you say you can't then you can't. I suppose if this really is how you want to look and feel, then that's your choice isn't it?

MAKE POSITIVE CHOICES – Smiles cost nothing. Have you even done a TikTok dance today? You can either be proactive and motivate yourself or choose to be sad, lazy and alone. Is that how you want to end up? In backwater social housing with your charity shop curtains drawn? Your only company the mould on an out of date sausage. Are you even vegan? I bet you're not even vegan. Did your grampa kill Hitler just so you could watch Loose Women on a Bighthouse TV paid for by your DLA?

DOS AND DONT'S – **DO** your utmost to be white. Preferably British (by which we mean English, by which we mean select parts of the South East). **DON'T** be some sort of clog-licking prol. We strongly advise against being born into the lower economic stratum. The science is clear, being a lowborn underclass shit muncher is severely deleterious to a person's life expectancy and should be avoided at all costs. **DO** remain constantly aware of all the terrible things. **DON'T** drown in a latrine of infinitely spiralling thought loops about all the terrible things.





Porch Scenes: Lois Weaver and managing queer space (part 1)

I expressed my envy of the porch, saying, "I wish I had a porch." Mike answered, "You always have a porch. Any time you want to just come by and sit on ours. We're always out there."

Pepper Glass (2012, 707)

From where our bodies sit or stand to hear and see (and gossip), we are moved into the other world, the world of the spirit. This is the meaning of ecstasy, the ancient Greek *ecstatis*: *ecs*, *ex*. out of stasis.

David Kaplan (2016, np)

The anxiety around this not moving, not starting, and so not ending, is nearly too much for me... I make a joke: this sitting is practice-based research.

Jenn Ashworth (2019, 178)

A note on form: This essay primarily uses block quotes to draw attention to the other voices in the scene of the author's argumentation. Other voices are listed alongside key term notes at the end of the essay.

Porches are rather queer

I am inclined to think about how queer porches are right now for two reasons:

1. Since the Covid-19 Emergency and attendant lockdown, I have been longing for outdoor spaces like gardens, fire escapes, stoops, terraces and porches. I have been longing to be with other queers, talking, touching.
2. I have been given an opportunity to respond to the Covid-19 Emergency in these pages and immediately thought of (fellow contributor herein) Lois Weaver's "Porch Sitting" strategy.

As part of her practice-based research, Weaver has developed four systems: Long Tables, Situation Rooms, Porch Sitting, Care Cafés.

On the Split Britches website she offers that:

Systems create spaces that are hospitable and open so that alternatives can be modeled and critical questions staged.

Lois Weaver (Split Britches Website)

These systems, and Porch Sitting in particular (for me), engage in a disidentifactory mode of social engagement that a) draw attention to the privileges of the conventions they model themselves on, b) profit from horizontality over verticality, and c) give space for another time. Said time is one that thwarts what Jack Halberstam has helpfully referenced as *repo-time*: a temporal mode in line with cis-heteronormative ideals around scheduling of daily life and lifecycles. On the porch we can be aimless, amorphous, and hopefully be alarmed by those who we neglected to invite or who couldn't come by despite the desire to share in chatter beside them.

Porch sitting is about adjacency.

It makes space for the things we wonder rather than providing a platform for the things we know."

It does so through "side-by-side, informal discussion inspired by the notion of sitting on the porch, watching the world go by.

Lois Weaver (Split Britches Website)

There are two zones in porch sitting: the kitchen and the porch.

The kitchen has no rules for behavior. The porch rules ask that participants pay due respect to the "silence or the flow of conversation;" a conversation that requires sitting, thinking, dreaming and involvement through first person statements of wonder or feeling: I think, I feel, I wonder, I imagine. You can stay in the kitchen until the sitting is through. You can come and go from the porch.

Weaver notes that the impetus for Porch Sitting was a need to talk to each other outside of hierarchical (vertical) relationships of expert / amateur, analyst / analysand, etc. Adjusting the positionality of our knowledge exchange is a key component to Weaver's Public Address Systems. In each there is an opportunity for non-hierarchical engagement in discourse or lack thereof.

Disidentifactory Strategies

I see Weaver's Public Address system as laboring in a mode of cultural production that provides a unique dramaturgy for minoritarian subjects to share space together and / or to have equity in social discourse that most

spatiotemporal arrangements would disallow. Such a mode is what the queer theorist José Muñoz would call disidentificatory.

Disidentification is a strategy that works on an against dominant ideology... [it] tries to transform a cultural logic from within, always laboring to enact permanent structural change while at the same time valuing the importance of local or everyday struggles of resistance.

José Munoz (1999, 11-12)

Muñoz draws attention to the process of world-making.

Disidentification is about recycling and rethinking encoded meaning. The process of disidentification scrambles and reconstructs the encoded message of a cultural text in a fashion that both exposes and reconstructs the encoded message's universalizing and exclusionary machinations and recruits its workings to account for, include, and empower minority identities and identifications

José Munoz (1999, 31)

Sitting beside Weaver, on the porch, Muñoz would valorise the space made for gossip and wondering thought as equal to that of rigorous enquiry and where zones of hospitality accommodate identities whose space in the world is inhospitable.

Beside comprises a wide range of desiring, identifying, representing, repelling, paralleling, differentiating, rivaling, leaning, twisting, mimicking, withdrawing, attracting, aggressing, warping, and other relations.

Eve Sedgwick (2003, 8)

Managing Zones

My students think maybe I'm obsessed with porches.

In their essays they often refer to my termly lecture where I discuss "the queerness of the punk porch." In this lecture I attend to "the rich dimension of space" (as Sedgwick would have it) that Pepper Glass affords to a porch in a house full of punks in the Midwest of the United States.

Glass invokes Lyn Lofland's work on urban space to understand the management of their house. Lofland organises urban space into three realms:

1. private – the realm of household including friend/kinship networks
2. parochial – the realms of neighborhood and workplace inclusive of acquaintance networks
3. public – the world of street including strangers

Glass deploys Lofland's work to the letter in an extended critical move on the Punk House's porch. For Glass the porch is organised within the public realm; it is a display point for interactions with street goers and socialising space during parties.

I contend that the porch must be understood as parochial (in the context of Glass's analysis *and* Weaver's system). The porch enables a network of acquaintances to intermingle and pass through to temporary inhabitation in private space. As such the porch affords the social scene collected to generate new identities, sites and forms of culture not present in the space/time allocated. The trope of the porch is voyeuristic and theatrical: a queer proscenium theatre that does not have clear audience/performer boundaries. Shifting the zone manages to attend to the rivaling relations that may be at play on the porch (and, it must be offered, those moments when the public zone represses us, shooting its way in and destroying us in the name of oppressive regimes of normativity/law).

Such scenes provide the time/space for those who have assembled to make new opportunities, real or imagined, for each other, for those who did not make it, those who will need to be invited next time, and those wholly satisfied just sitting there beside you, humming a tune in their head, perhaps even holding your hand sweetly, gently.

R. Justin Hunt



Ideation Ideation Matty May

My Future Black Life

In my future Black life,
 I want to own a Black power fist statue,
 and I want it to tell me my melanin is poppin' every day.
 And my 4C hair gives gravity a cut eye and
 represents African consciousness.
 I want to do the 'U Can't Touch This'
 choreography down the street,
 reminding everyone of Black joy.

I'll like my bedroom to play Hard Core era Lil' Kim,
 to reflect whatever mood I wake up in.
 I'll put on her green hair,
 and then make it rain with money paid in reparations.
 Wear diamonds that were stolen but now returned.

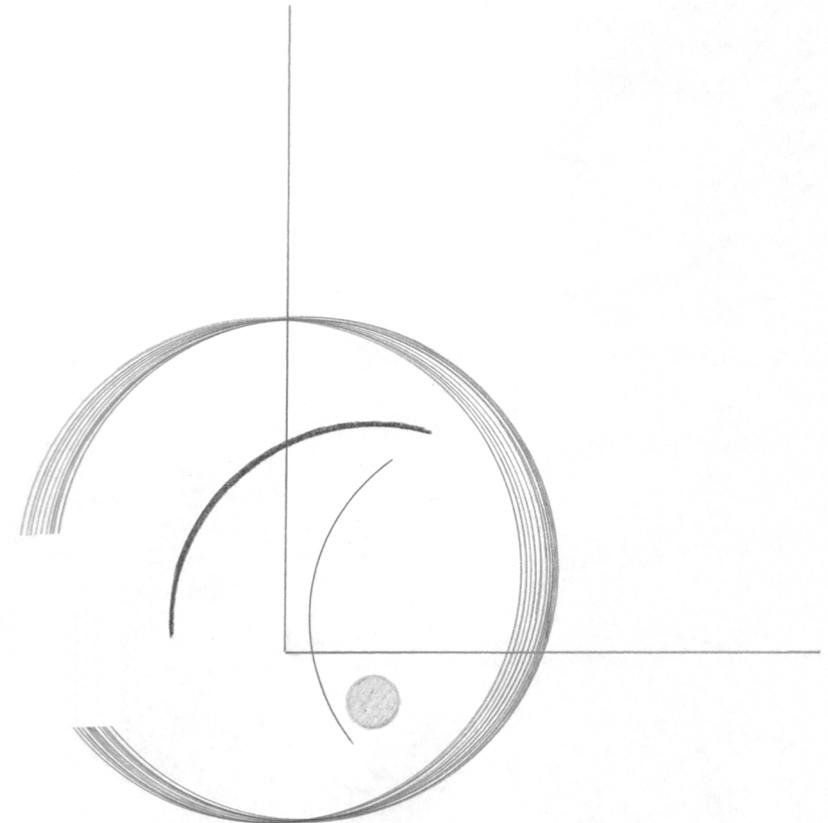
I want to only be around people who speak
 the truth like Pac with Biggie's flow.
 I'll keep an eye out for the gems Lauryn Hill has spoken about,
 and remind them there's no time for being hard rocks.
 By then, I would've learnt how to DJ,
 and I will no longer be that person requesting a song.

I'll like there to be schools teaching
 Black students that their melanin is worth more than gold.
 And me getting away with making mediocre art,
 and to still get praised like my white counterparts.

Being able to write my Arabic name in graffiti
 on some colonial history, and to not get arrested for it.
 And then I'll dress up in Missy's iconic
 black leather blow up outfit to celebrate.
 Imagine my future Black life, being in a world
 where melanated people only go viral for excellence,
 and not for death.

Jamal Gerald

You deserve the fatted calf. You deserve a pat on the back, you deserve a clap, you deserve a slap. You deserve a gin and tonic after the day you've had. You deserve a beautiful wife. You deserve a beautiful house. You deserve your president. You deserve a medal, overcoming all those obstacles, wow. You deserve an apology. You deserve recompense, remorse, commiserations, pity. You deserve love. You do, you deserve love. You deserve a beer. You deserve this, you've worked hard for it, well done. You deserve to speak. You deserve to be heard. You deserve to be shut-up. You deserve dirty water. You deserve a home of your own. You deserve a £40,000 skylight and a swimming pool in your basement. You deserve free school meals. You deserve it, you low life, feckless scum. You deserve a nice lampshade. You deserve minimum wage. You deserve a bonus. You deserve a badge. You deserve a cuddle. You deserve a big send off, really big, glass carriage, 4 black horses, the works. You deserve air. You deserve a statue. You deserve a make-over, an extreme one. You deserve a beautiful wedding dress. You deserve to be tagged in this post. You deserve my humility, my shame. You deserve a strongly-worded complaint. You deserve a phone call to the cops. You deserve a long prison sentence. You deserve a hand out, a help out, a hand up. You deserve a top hat, tails and a cane. You deserve the track and trace contract. You deserve the right to remain, you deserve the right to fail. You deserve the right to choose, you deserve the right to vote, you deserve the right to shelter. You deserve hope. You deserve a thank you from me and all of my people for everything, everything you've done for us. Really. You deserve to live in peace. You deserve to live in fear. You deserve to drown. You deserve the freedom of the city, the keys to the castle. You deserve my risk of contracting Covid-19. You deserve mask, gloves, test and a plastic apron and one of them face shield things. You deserve care, real care, loving touches, respect, dignity, all of that. You deserve widespread fame, with that hair? Are you kidding? Definitely. You deserve a museum, a memorial, a public holiday, a hundred shit tv programmes all about you. You deserve a mansion, many mansions, you deserve a place at the right hand of God. You deserve air, you deserve water, you deserve food. You deserve an early grave. You deserve some fun. You deserve a bunch of helium balloons. You deserve the world and its oyster, its wife and its dog. You deserve that land. You deserve a boyfriend. You deserve some mildly offensive humour, go on though, it's true though init hee, hee. You deserve a pox on all your houses. You deserve an upgrade. You deserve a free pen, thanks for your custom. You deserve a run of bad luck. You deserve a spectacular car crash. You deserve a can of coke, in fact, you deserve a line of coke, I mean what a fucking week, Jesus. You deserve a good night's sleep. You deserve to win. You deserve to win the lottery. You deserve to lose. You deserve a like.



The Simple Act of Breathing

Every black person I speak to at the moment starts each sentence with a sigh. Before anything, a heavy heavy exhale, like their words have been winded.

I'm OK, but it's just a shitter, you know?

Yea, I do.

Yea.

All our words have already been used up long before now. Exhausted on debriefs over being called angry at work, again. Another dehumanising headline. Racial slurs screamed into our faces at random. We've already spoken about it all, dissected all moments under cross examination.

I wasn't imagining it, was I? We are never imagining it. We are unwilling experts able to decipher every folded arm, pinched subtext, the white-knuckle grip of a purse in passing.

At the time of writing, the world is erupting loudly; George Floyd's murder. Global protests. Statues crashing to the ground. I do not know what will happen a month from now. I did not dream of the revolution in this way; chaos in face masks, both social distancing and large crowds marching, everything ripped open and hurtling mid-air – life unsure of itself.

Suddenly more white people are finally asking questions about race, turning to me and others for answers and, on some level, redemption. It is painful, to say the least, to witness white people, both in your life and at large, only paying closer attention to racism after seeing George Floyd on their timelines, struggling for breath at the knee of a murderer. I want to ask those who have had the privilege of ignorance, do you know that they knew each other? Do you think black murder can only be as gruesome and vicious as this? That there are many more silent and slow ways to suffocate black life, here in the UK too? I find myself turning to books already written, speeches already made, art already created – so much intellect and energy used repeatedly to call for the dignity of black life. I ask myself, what does blackness still need to make the case for? At the root of it all there is no big demand – just the simple act of breathing, the thrill of a future, joy.

If this is a moment for us to shift into a new way of being, then now is the time for whiteness to truly reckon with itself. The pathology of blackness; the obsession behind who we are, our behaviours and perceived shortcomings, is in itself a symptom of the insecurity and anxiety of whiteness. In the words of Toni Morrison, *"... What are you without racism? Are you any good? Are you still smart? Do you still like yourself? If you can only be tall because somebody's on their knees, then you have a serious problem and my feeling is white people have a very very serious problem!"*

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests are a call for black life, but they're also a demand for whiteness to face its history, its violence and its stagnancy. The racist backlash in resistance to the BLM protests, accusations of reverse racism and textbook denial of racial injustice in the face of all evidence, only demonstrates that the fear of the truth runs deep; this country's 'greatness' is intimately connected to the exploitation of blackness. What identity and power does this country have without its racism?

A movement is just that; many people taking action and progressing, in any way they can, towards something better. To call for change means to make space for newness; for freedoms more evolved, nuanced and loving. For writers who make work about race and injustice, our work must also be part of this movement, building on the past and playing witness to the present, whilst creating brave language for the new worlds we are marching for. If we have to leave behind the wilfully ignorant and those committed to inaction, then so be it.

Selina Nwulu

For a Theatre of Proximity or how to fuck into the night

Solitude.

It's been a while, old friend.

Often neglected, cast aside or covered with endless streams of others' consciousness and callousness. Or perhaps simply willfully ignored.

Wait. When was the last time I moved through my own skin?

Felt my fingers glide down the side of my ribcage

Or even just place my hand in the crevice between your leg and thigh

To feel the warmth of your flesh

The softness of your skin against mine

Your body hardening and softening as I rush through it

The smell of coffee and cigarettes on your breath.

The taste of sweat as we lick each other's armpits.

The longing from our pulsating assholes.

The hunger in our eyes as we fuck.

I miss it. I miss it all –

I can't remember the last time I enjoyed an orgasm.

Self-care has become a communal experience.

Annie, the neighbor downstairs, needs her shopping done. She gifts me a hand-made mask. Its' soft fabric and Che Guevara pattern bring me a comfort I hadn't known for years. A new armour.

Memories of escaping wondering eyes and pointed fingers come back.

Wearing a mask in public is now a radical act, it seems. It brings purposeful safety and fear in equal measures, and a genuine sense that I will sooner move mountains with my bare hands than having an uncompromised companionship again. I miss fucking.

The shame of it all –

I thought I had escaped this. Where I am from, there's no fucking.

My mother tongue didn't appreciate such marked presence in rural dynamics. I had flown away, far away, to new landscapes, tastes and communities. Together, we tasted the best foods, drank the best wines,

formed our identities, and felt consumed by impossible desires far too many times. A never-ending influx of trains, planes, poetry, manifestos, call outs, warnings, speeches, actions, violence, love, porn, yoga classes, pottery videos, acrobatics and political movements.

Memories of being 14 waking up at dawn to chain the school gates closed with my comrades / mashed with this lingering pain from cardboard cut outs and blooded knuckles over the years. It's all I can see. I miss compassionate violence. Sweat –

A knock on my door. The neighbours have gathered in the front porch. I understand their smells, their dietary requirements, what makes them laugh and their needs. And they know mine, I hope. At the top of the small steps, we read poetry out loud and entertain each other into the night, smoking joints, drinking wine, sharing stories and other dramatisms...

For a short moment, I close my eyes and remember what I always wanted to feel throughout my life: a sense of proximity, if not belonging. I cringe. Do you really travel hundreds of thousands of miles away from everyone you know to 'find yourself'? ...

When this all started, the answer was a resounding 'No'. Today, I am not so sure. Distancing doesn't have to mean a lack of proximity.

Home again. Nina sings of intimate revolutions. Candle lights, a joint and a bath. It is a moody night, bringing our Spring to a close.

Outside, the trees dance with Victorian voracity, constantly leading each other onto new unchoreographed steps. They sing the praises of scouts who built wooden houses on their branches, and sailors who parked their boats in nearby river bays.

The silence is unbearable.

But the theatre is out there, where it should be. In our streets. In you.

I want to run to it and hold it tight.

I want to run to you and fuck into the night.

Xavier de Sousa



I want life not to feel like weight.
 I want to live imposter syndrome and guilt free.
 I want my black and brown family, friends and fellow beautiful humans to feel safe respected,
 equal and loved.
 I want nice clothes, good skin and my eyes done. Poss a face lift.
 I wanna touch people in the street, not in a creepy way. Consensual hugs only.
 I wanna see people's faces, not just eyes but smiles and moving lips.
 I want us to acknowledge and learn from what hasn't been working.
 I want to paddle in the sea and feel the salt on my face.
 I want the world to be more accessible.
 I want there to be more care and love.
 I want to live anxiety free, unknotted and level.
 I want my daughter to be herself and know she is more than good enough. She is fucking excellent.
 I want our industry to do better. In so many ways, DO FUCKING BETTER.
 I want to feel like I have place. I have a group. I belong.
 I want to go clubbing and chat to strangers in the dark.
 I wanna roll around on the grass at a festival with eyes full of love.
 I wanna dance in the sunshine feeling the bass through my body.
 I want not to feel judging eyes and fear being with my girlfriend in public.
 I want to do better, to learn more and educate myself and others.
 I want to not live in fear of an invisible intruder.
 I want people to be more understanding and accepting.
 I want a new government and for statues and buildings to topple and fall and burn to the ground.
 I wanna start again.
 I want to sleep, a nice sleep without surreal and life like dreams that make your head feel
 thick.
 I want to walk in the rain and look up to the sky, blinking the rain tears from my eyes.
 I wanna sit in a beer garden on a Sunday afternoon surrounded by people.
 I want to not have to feel like there is a huge knot in my stomach.
 I want to feel like I don't have to do anything.
 I want to be a bird. They look like they have great fun.

There was a spoilage for the sake of fixing and destruction for the sake of rebuilding.

Isaac Luria, Rabbi, 16th Century.

→ (Kabbalist)

◦ Ritual items for the Pesach plate

I am laying the table. Again. Candles. Salt water. Bitter Herbs. Horseradish. Haroseth. An Egg. A bone. Haggadah.

This year because it's my house

An Orange — a later addition to the Pesach plate, a feminist symbol.

Last year I was doing this on a porch in Texas.

This year in my flat in London and on the internet: — Zoom.

Next Year

It is sometimes said Jews don't have history. We have memory. We don't remember dates or 'important' people so much as we repeat ritual- daily, weekly, yearly.

◦ Passover

It is Pesach and I am here, doing the same ritual the same way I have done it yearly, with slight differences. I am remembering last year when I sang this same song and ate this same food with different people. And next year who will be singing it with me and where will we be and who will be missing.

◦ José Esteban Muñoz — 'Cruising Utopia — the then + there of Queer Futurity'

These repetitions feel like an invitation for concurrent time. Now, ^{past} then and Then. All at the same time. As I dip this bitter herb is this year's Pesach and it is every Pesach that has ever/will ever happen(ed), from far before me to far after.

This Past Time has felt heavy to hold sometimes. Memories inherited from so long ago that are not even mine and yet are absolutely mine. I have wanted to pause this feeling of dragging a leaden past, inevitably stepping forward but with arms stretched behind pulling all that memory through each present step.

These memories won't remember themselves but I'm struggling to imagine the future with all this past to carry.

Surely it is the moment to let it rest.

And yet. Now and then and Then. All at the same time. Can this time collapse be an offer of a space away from the myth of endless forward movement. Can the *then* become lighter, more upward looking, more easily borne.

Last year and last year and last year and last year and this year in my house in London and on the internet and with this new Orange and next year and next year and next year.

Tradition is just peer pressure, from dead people. Jaurie, Medium Feb 16 '20.



The Coconut Dance!

Behold the Coconut

Performing the 'Type-rope'

Presenting Au Natural, dark, hard, hairy.

Desiccated down, soft, white and palatable for your applause

Dance Coconut Dance!

Marvel! Ugly is THE new Exotic

Brown is the New Beauty Beast

Performing her trauma in traditional dress- yes

Dance your Paki Dance!!

Queer is the new Curiosity

Behold! Delusions of Femanine grandeur!

Avert your eyes or adjust your disgust!

Dance Bitch Dance!

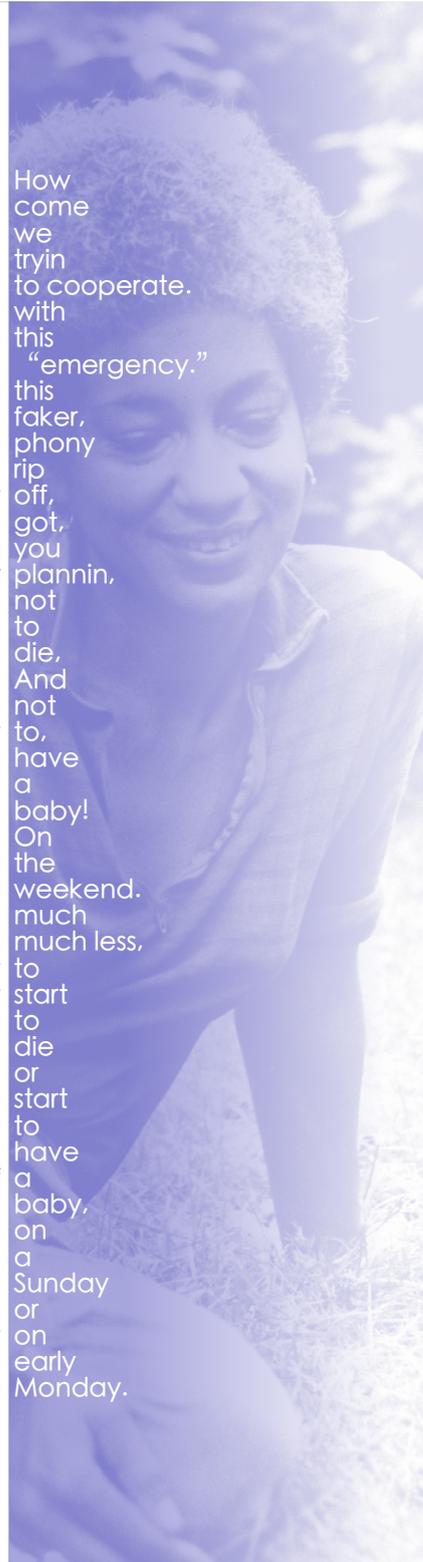
For One Night Only!

Buy your well-being by tickets, buy!

The same Show must go on! and on! and on...

For June Jordan's On the Loss of Energy
(and Other Things)

This is how we come here. As much as we know we are to be here and to cooperate. As much as we try to cope with the weather in this "emergency." God forsaken In this fake faker, this phony country that would rip the heart out of you and sell it off, taking everything that you've got, melting you up, upsetting your plannin, so that you are not able to do what you need. So you die, just a little bit. And you forget that you are not to, that you, that you are not to, you forget that you have a baby! dignity, you forget that you have a baby! swagger and so much style, On Monday morning you rocking the same smile you had on all the weekend. You have coped with much more, and received so much less, than many expect to start receive. And lets not start to die by attempting to predict the moment when you or again the moment when you realise you have a baby, nothing short of a baby, one in a million chance, on and perhaps that chance, is on a million, that God will bless in church this Sunday or maybe you will get it on early with someone sweet and sexy and wake up Monday. or maybe you will get up late and quit your job on



White Walls

Amina Atiq

A pledge to my British Flag

in my tribal name ***I do swear that I will be faithful so help me God*** as I blend in with your white walls
in exchange for democracy
that loots my gran-mother's backyard
strips our young men bare
and supplies arms
in the name of terrorism
to keep our English Borders safe
from men who look like my father

but if I move like you, sing to your anthem
sit at your dinner table cross-legged
lick my mother's spices but

if I move my lips differently
in my Brown language will you tell me
to go back home-

only French men are exotic
when they call their mothers, Germans invest
Spanish dance and Brown people jobs
is a pandemic crucifixion

or we sit passengers at your Tory
bench to add colour

will you cry for *Priti Patel* when she is deported
if her skin is a little dark for your white walls.

I learnt your English and I taught my mother her political rights.

Ménage à trois (COVID breakdown)

Home alone. Or not really. It's the 3 of us here. Me and you. And you. Youse. "In it together" as they say. But some of us are not together. Not in the way they mean. Not in any of the ways they mean. There is worry that this lockdown will damage relationships, people forced to be together with no time away from each other. No escape. That was never our issue. I don't want away from you. I want you close, always....

Wash your hands is the rule. But when hands need to constantly hold and touch crutches, wheels, canes, it's not so straightforward. I can wash my hands til my skin peels off, but I have to touch you. Always. Before. After. Again. Again.

So I try to clean you. Spray sanitizer on you, wipe you down and it feels ugly. And sterile – in every way. Because you become an object again. Separate. Not a part of my skin anymore. Like I am wiping away a little of your life. As if I'm supposed to think of you like my cooker hob....

Weirdly I have hardly ever cleaned you. Maybe I should have. Maybe people will think it's filthy that I never normally cleaned you. And considering you like to lie down most places we go – on the grass, on concrete, on the floors of restaurants, bars, cafes, theatres, dance studios... (that's pretty much all the places we go), oh and airports, and hotels... but I don't put you on the floor in hotel rooms cos well, that's disgusting.

But maybe I have built up a good immune system because of you...? Am I a little bit stronger because of you in that way too? Like a kid that got to play in the dirt? That would be cool.

This sanitizing ritual. Trying to clean you every time I come home. I hate it. It feels like a betrayal. It reminds me of trying to dry off our dog when she came in from the rain. Her reluctance, cowering away. My reluctance at forcing her. "C'mon, you know you have to..."

I try to imagine now rolling with you, caressing you the way I do when we dance. Danced. And I think; how can you trust me when I've treated you as

though you were toxic? Shamed you. How can we be close again? When you smell... wrong. Can we be intimate with this ugly act between us? Wiping away layers of trust...are you clean? Are you clean? (Is this how we will start to look at everyone again?)

I miss your touch. Against my face. Your weight, lightly slipping, rolling down my arm, around my neck, your lift. Strength I can collapse into. To dance close in these days... the only touch I can have... if you can forgive me?

It was what I had wanted, ironically, at this time; a little "time to ourselves". Just the three of us. This body. In glorious isolation. But I didn't want this. To close down the world for this. I am looking, trying to find the love in this act, to see this new ritual as care. Attending to you and your skin and my skin and where they meet in our strange own togetherness. To be able to come close again. To dance with our skins again.

Claire Cunningham

Saint Lucy

This is Saint Lucy. When I made my Catholic confirmation, aged 9, I took her name. Back then I didn't know that she was the patron saint for the blind, on account of her name's translation from Lucia, to Lux, to Light... but I guess the eyeballs should have been a giveaway.

I chose her because they tried to burn her alive three times, without success. In the end they had to kill her with a sword. Growing up in Irish Catholic Coventry, that was the kind of stubborn, kick ass attitude I was in search of.

Catholicism has a lot to answer for, and a patron saint for the blind is pretty icky... but nevertheless I still really like her. And, embarrassing as it may be, I look to her sometimes for guidance. I must have taken our pairing quite literally; I was a very serious child after all.

What she reminds me of still, is that there are alternative ways to look at the world. She tells me that how we see and how we feel are interlinked, that we also see through touch, that our senses rely on each other and that there are other ways of making sense of things.

And, most of all, she reminds me that no matter how hard they try, you will not burn.

Jo Bannon



pleasure.

What makes you feel good?

... joyful, happy, content and satisfied?

I tinkered with a couple of games to find out for myself and want to invite you, beloved readers, to join me in the vivid joy of pleasures A-Z!

The goal is to create your very own pleasure encyclopaedia with 26 words in total. How to? For each letter of the alphabet, find a word you associate with pleasure. Play it by yourself or with other pleasure-seekers. Choose a language – English, German, BSL – and your preferred way of communication – e.g. signing, writing, speaking.

Here is a tasty titbit focusing on my crip identity and lived experiences of being disabled and chronically ill:

● Crip Pleasures A-Z

A ccess Intimacy *	N o.
B aths with Epsom Salts	O rgasmic Yes!
C rip Camp Clamydia *	P etting scars
D ancing Disababe	Q ueer Animacy *
E ar orgasm	R esting
F easting favourite foods in bed	S nuggling, snogging and snacking
G entle (genital) care	T urtles
H ealing rituals for myself and crip folx	U napologetic crip pride
I nterdependence	V oluptuous novels of vulvas
J uicy joint accountability	W heelchairs! Really, anything with wheels!
K inky	X OXO
L ove bites	Y ielding my crip existence
M asturbation	Z onking out

* **A** ccess Intimacy – a term coined by Mia Mingus

* **C** rip Camp Clamydia – is from the 2020 Netflix’ s documentary “Crip Camp – a disability revolution”

* **Q** ueer Animacy – a term coined by Julia Watts Belser

Now, for the next move, let’ s dive deep into our pleasure spheres through the game: pleasure scattergories! You might know this game with categories like name, animal, country, etc. The extra satisfying part in this version is, that all categories relate to the theme of pleasure. For example, my pleasure word for T is turtles, for which I create the category “pleasure animal” . Explaining why you

choose this animal as your pleasure animal, might be some extra fun. Ear orgasm – a “pleasure feeling” or a “pleasure activity” ? Again, your choice!

The basic principles are: pick a letter and find a word for each category. You can play the game with the category template I made, completely make up your own from your pleasures A-Z or create a mix-match. It doesn’ t matter, just one thing is important: Follow your guts and instincts which lead you to the lands of pleasure utopias!

Hope you enjoy playing and exploring what it means to you to feel good. Funnily, by focusing on my pleasures, I not only started to feel good (or better), but to feel more. In my case that could be summed up in the motto: A crip pleasure game a day shows ableism its way and my crip powers at play!

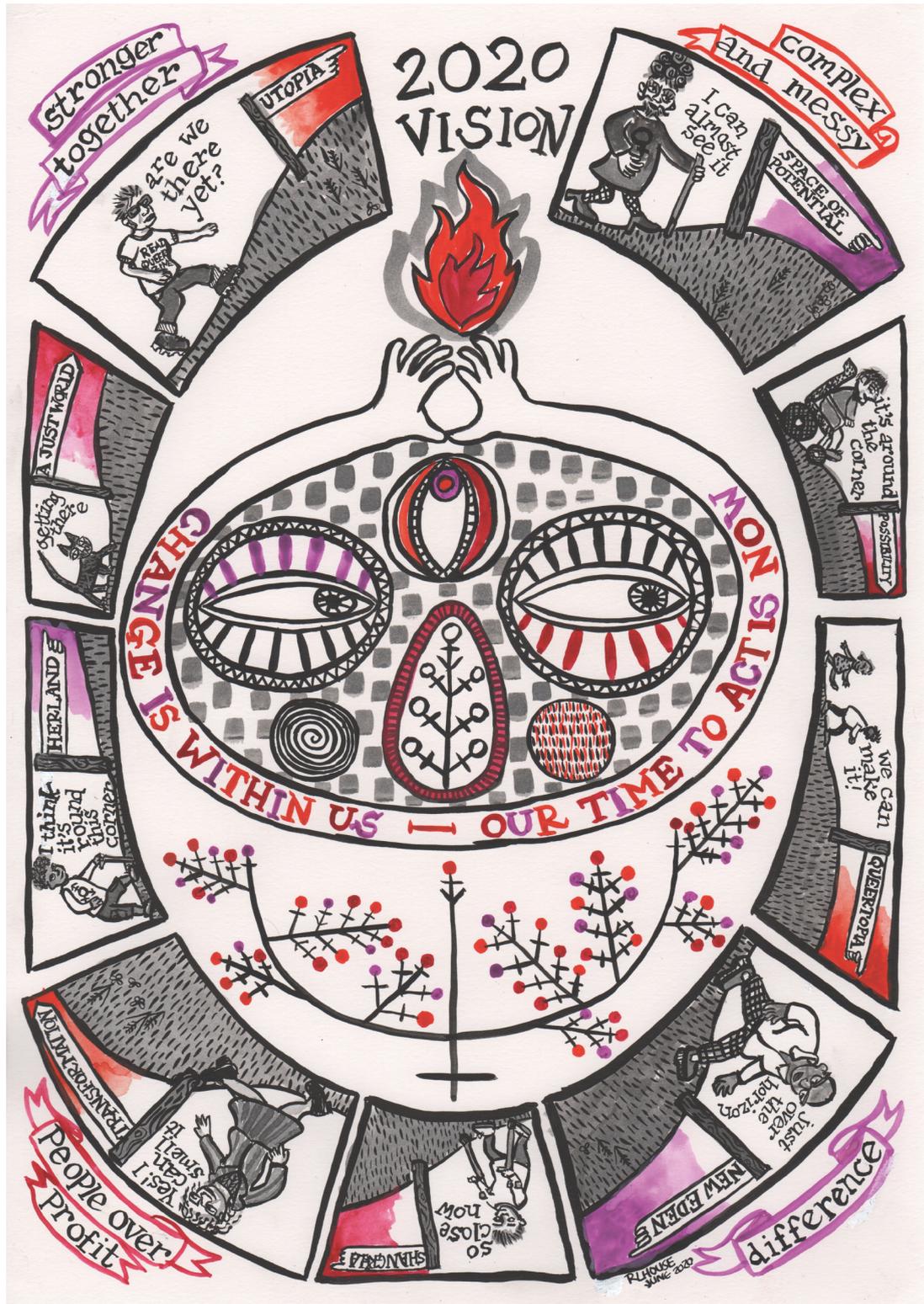
Here’ s to crafting new narratives with a pleasurable twist for a world we truly belong to and long for.

So, let’ s just play and not play games anymore.

Shall we?

● pleasure scattergories

LETTE R	Pleasure animal	Pleasure music & sounds	Pleasure food & drinks	Pleasure activity	Pleasure tool	Pleasure feeling
F	fox - foxy and orange	Freddie Mercury and F*ck yeah!	fluids hot & cold	firepit full-moon cleanse	feather	fun
V	vicuna - mountain dwellers	vaginal fart	vine leaves filled w. rice	vertical bouncing	vulva	vulnerability
S	snail – slimy, mobile home	Scuse Me by Lizzo	sappy nectarine	sex	song	serendipity
* YOUR TURN *						
E						
G						
O						...



2020 Vision Rachael House

Who Cares? (And How They Do It)

It is in the cups of tea I make for myself, brewed a minute or two longer than recommended on the box.

It is in the printed texts by the side of my bed, Lorde, Morrison, Hooks, Butler (Octavia) and Butler (Season)

It's in the scribbles of a journal

It is in the email to say I won't be working this week, and then removing myself from email threads and then removing the application from my phone entirely.

It is

Space

Between

Labour

It is valuing labour in bright and brilliant new ways. It is not making it about money, but it always comes down to that.

It is in choosing to organize in a step free building.

It's a four day working week.

It is disconnecting from social media earlier

It is outside of the spectacle of the arena

It is connecting to something else entirely.

It is knowing that this is resistance.

It is in direct action, and pushing back.

It's shouting, and stomping, banging pots and pans and clapping. It is also in the quiet of the black working class house that is just as disruptive as fireworks at 8pm on a Thursday.

It is in the chants on the concrete roads of the empire, by children of the commonwealth.

No justice, no peace. Stand up, fight back. If not now, then when? If not us, then who? It's in the protest on the streets and It's in the decisions to stay home, because a pandemic won't pause for racism.

It is acknowledging sickness and trauma, and that my voice, screaming for justice from my bed, is as audacious as the one behind the mic in the

middle of the city square.
It is seeing the unseen.

It's in the acknowledgement of time, how it does not function the same
for me, or you, or any of us

It is in the demand for better working conditions.
It is in the demand for better living conditions.
It's mutual aid
It's giving circles
It's counter imagining futures
It is occasionally in new stacks of pillows, and bath bombs with lavender,
and chamomile.
It is in big, lavish, political movements, viral videos and it is in small acts
of kindness.
It is social, not self, communal not singular.
It is a survival strategy, a symptom of radical change.
It is embodied work, tiresome, sweaty, refusing to comply.

It is building something slowly, baked into the cavern, it cannot be removed
with ease.
Something that stains the walls and doors,
ablaze deep in the belly of our new world,
inextinguishable
care

Toni-Dee Paul

THE NECESSITY OF ANGER

Sat trying to pinpoint what it is I'm feeling as I scroll through my feed of
sourdough loaves, scantily clad boys getting hench and emerging digital
practices, I notice I'm feeling excited about a "new normal", curious about
what we're going to leave behind, and a little pissed off that the Covid
experience is being described as "unprecedented".

These times are unprecedented if you are white, able-bodied, middle class,
heterosexual, cis-gendered and living in a developed – although that is
currently debatable – country. These times are unprecedented if you have
no embodied experience of what it is to have to adapt, to make do, to have
to be resilient.

I have built a career out of being resilient, through adapting and often
forcing my othered body into pseudo-normality to move smoothly across a
room, a stage and through the world. This expectation that non-Crips have
of me and my body to fit into their aesthetic is violent, and it is this violence
that has become fuel for the work I make.

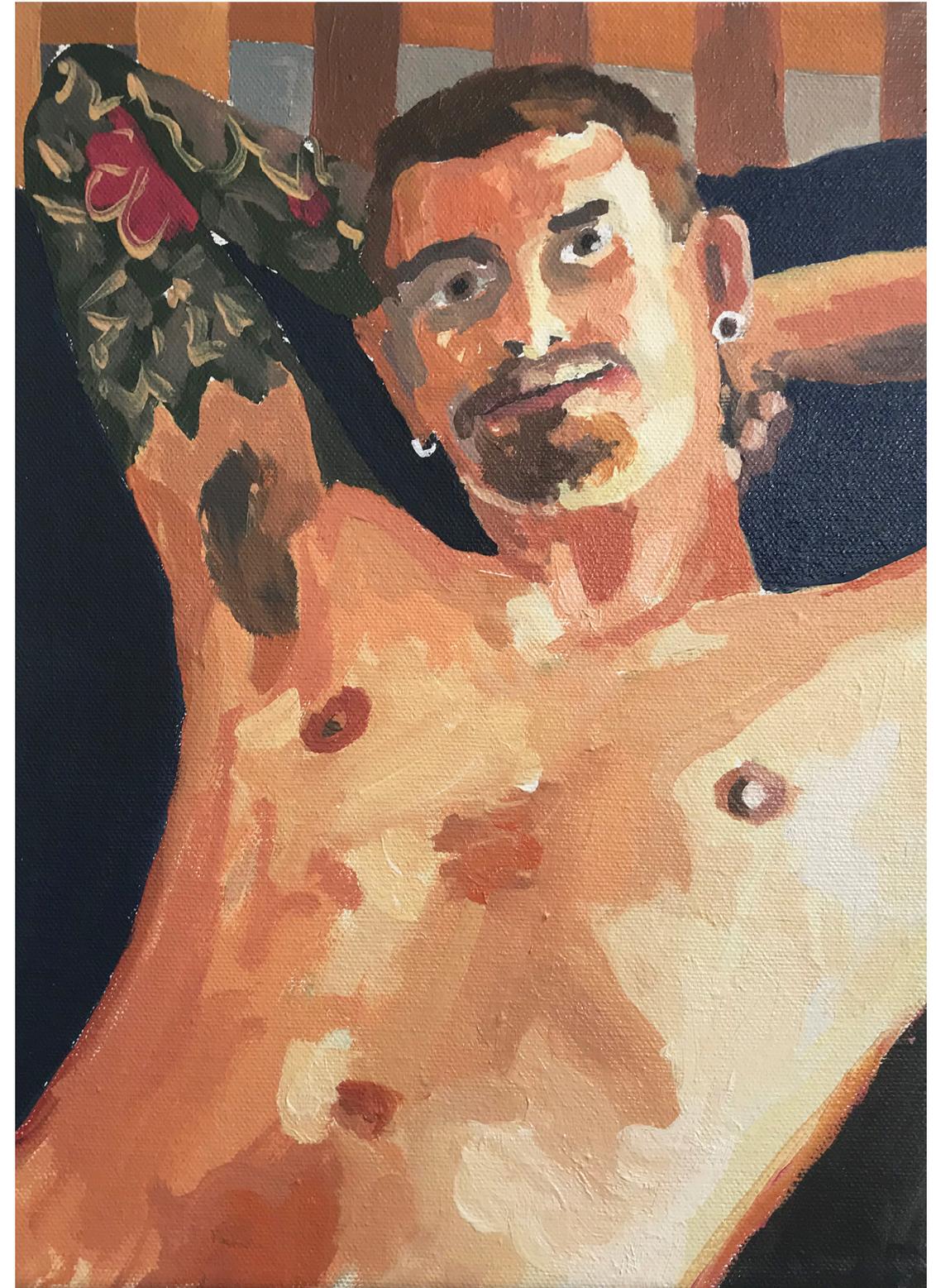
Thinking specifically about non-Crips' resistance to adaptation, pandemics
aside, there have been a couple of key moments in my career where I have
been met by, almost child-like, anger from non-Crip peers at the mere
suggestion that they might have to change their way of doing things to fit in
with, and better support, my Crip reality.

Interested in this inequality of why it is ok for non-Crips to exclude Crips
by not adapting, but it is not ok the other way round, the new normal I
would like to propose calls for a radical shift in how we reenter the world.
It calls for urgency in addressing this inequality by actively encouraging
Crip-led, Crip only spaces where we can collectively process our anger
and our shame caused, on the whole, by how shit non-disabled people
are, to enable us to begin to interrogate this steadfast resistance to change
I know many of my Crip peers, myself included, encounter and have to hold.
Case in point is that my Crip family has been calling for the ability to attend
and run meetings from home and work with flexibility for years and, all of
a sudden, when it becomes a need of the largely non-disabled working
population, platforms are developed literally overnight to make it happen.
Eye roll. Face palm.

It is time for a reframing of the larger expectation around whose responsibility it is to adapt. Whose responsibility is it to fit in with who? It is time for leaders to properly engage with this question, to get better at holding spaces for anger, engage with it and work through it. Without anger, nothing will change and we will all continue working our arses off for this mediocre existence.

We have been told we have the potential to be great, but I've not seen it yet.

Dan Daw



Dan Reclining David Lock

Biographies

Amber Akaunu is a Nigerian-German artist from Liverpool who works across several mediums to explore concepts and ideas of race and identity. Amber's work is heavily focused on context and therefore the research and development stage is crucial. This stage can be in the form of engaging with film, conversations, art, literature, archives and more commonly music.

Amina Atiq is a Yemeni-Scouse writer, a performance artist, facilitator and activist. A young Associate for Curious Minds, BBC Words First Finalist and published *Use Words First*, Wrecking Ball Press.

Annie Hanauer is an independent contemporary dancer, choreographer, and teacher based between London and France, originally from the USA. She is interested in the voices of people who have been 'othered', stemming from her own lived experience as a disabled woman, and wants to dismantle ideas of a normative dancing body. In her choreographic work she is currently researching disability, caring & motherhood, and ideas of utopia & collective imagination.

Azara Meghie is a multi-disciplinary artist working with live art, film, poetry, breakdancing and theatre. Through these forms Azara explores themes of sexuality, gender, racism, classism and homophobia and explores the struggles faced by individuals, highlighting the cultural limitations, beliefs and society's stereotypes

Barby Asante is an artist, curator, educator, occasional DJ & healer in training. She is concerned with the politics of place, space and the ever present histories and legacies of slavery and colonialism. Her work is produced through collective study, and performative dialogical practices of thinking together and breathing together.

Beverley Bennett is an artist-filmmaker. Her practice revolves around the perpetual possibilities of drawing, performance and collaborative experiments with sound. Bennett's work has been shown nationally and internationally

Brian Lobel is an American-summer-camp-counselor-turned performance artist and academic. For the past decade he has been a critical voice in

the world of arts & health, particularly focusing on patient-led projects and expertise. He is a professor of Theatre and Performance at Rose Bruford College, a co-founder of *The Sick of the Fringe* and the winner of an episode of *Come Dine with Me*.

Byron Vincent is a writer, performer, broadcaster and activist. He has toured extensively doing spoken word at music and literary festivals. Byron is passionate social activist with lived experience of issues around poverty and mental health.

Claire Cunningham is a performer and creator of multi-disciplinary performance based in Glasgow. One of the UK's most acclaimed disabled artists, Cunningham's work is often rooted in the study and use / misuse of her crutches alongside a deep interest in the lived experience of disability; both it's choreographic implications and in relation to societal notions of knowledge, value, connection and interdependence.

Dan Daw is a UK-based Queer, Crip performer, maker and activist working collaboratively with a growing network of artists to develop new work for UK and international audiences.

David Lock is a visual artist based in London. A former dancer with Candoco Dance Company he returned to his fine art practice in 2005. Lock's motivations for the use of the male in his work, exposes an underlying uncertainty about its status in contemporary culture and the role he should fulfil within it. He has exhibited his work both nationally and internationally.

Dean Atta was named as one of the most influential LGBT people in the UK by the Independent on Sunday. His debut poetry collection, *I Am Nobody's Nigger*, was shortlisted for the Polari First Book Prize. His Young Adult novel in verse, *The Black Flamingo*, won the 2020 Stonewall Book Award, and was shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal, YA Book Prize and Jhalak Prize. Dean is based in Glasgow, and is Co-director of Scottish BAME Writers Network.

Delaine le Bas is a cross disciplinary artist creating installations, performances, photography and films. Her work deals with issues of exclusion, identity, stereotypes, untold histories, misrepresentation, gender and being the 'other.' As a Romani Gypsy she approaches the notion of the body as a stolen artefact and contested space.

Elsa James is an artist and activist living in Essex since 1999. Her work intervenes in the overlapping discourses of race, gender, diaspora and belonging. Her black British identity ignites her interdisciplinary and research-based practice, located within the fields of contemporary performance, text and language-based art, socio-political and socially engaged art.

Heta Patel is an artist based in London. He makes photographs, videos, sculptures and live performances, usually for galleries and theatres. They have also appeared on the web, on television, in print, in housing estates, and behind toilet doors.

Hwa Young Jung is a multidisciplinary artist and researcher who facilitates collaborative workshops and projects. Based in the Northwest (of England) she has been producing projects with grassroots led community spaces, makers and artists both nationally and internationally for over ten years.

Jamal Gerald is an artist based in Leeds. His work is conversational, socially conscious, a celebration of individuality and focuses on identity and lived experiences. Mostly making the type of work that he wants to see, with the aim of taking up space as a Black queer person.

Jeremy Goldstein is a theatre maker and HIV+ activist with ACT UP London. For three decades he has championed underrepresented voices, and new forms of artistic and political expression. In 2012 he was named in Time Out as among the 100 most influential people in UK culture. His new work 'Truth to Power Café' has been described as "revolutionary" (Guardian) and as "a new kind of theatre" (Yorkshire Post).

Jo Bannon is a UK based artist working in performance, choreography and live art. Jo works as a dramaturg, educator and writer and is a founder member of artist collective Residence. Her work is concerned with identity, sensory perception, and human encounter and explores how our physical bodies experience the world around us. Jo's work is informed by her identity as a disabled woman with albinism.

Katherina Radeva is a migrant from the Thracian Valley, Bulgaria. An award winning theatre maker, space maker (set & costume design) and visual artist she is a co-artistic director of Two Destination Language whose work tours nationally and internationally and explores identity and belonging and celebrating difference.

Kelly Green is a working-class queer single mum, dyslexic academic and performance artist. She is a noisy, feisty, hot mess. Her performance work is fun, interactive and is always about class and gender.

La JohnJoseph is a British born, American educated artist who works at the intersection of artist film and live performance, investigating the convergence of social class, gender identity and religious faith in the matrices of social power.

Lois Weaver is an artist, activist, facilitator, and Professor of Contemporary Performance at Queen Mary University of London. She is a founding member of performance group Split Britches with her partner Peggy Shaw. Lois is a Guggenheim and Wellcome Trust Fellow and has received numerous international awards for her activism and public engagement.

Lu Williams creates cross disciplinary artworks, social practice, events and printed matter with a focus on accessible, labour, DIY culture, intersectional feminism and personal experience of queerness and working class culture. They founded Grrrl Zine Fair in 2015 which platforms womxn, trans and non-binary artists and zine makers through Workshops, events, Grrrl Zine Library and Grrrl In Print Zine.

Luke Pell: Fascinated by nuances of time, texture, memory and landscape Luke Pell is an artist living in Scotland whose collaborative practice – as maker, curator, dramaturg, poet/writer, queer – explores how choreographic and dramaturgical thinking meets with other worlds and realities. Often bringing together seemingly unrelated constellations of bodies, thought and feeling.

Marjorie H Morgan is an award-winning playwright, director and producer based in Liverpool. Her works explore the theme of 'Home,' in particular historic and contemporary migration stories, giving voice to those marginalised in British society.

Martin O'Brien is a performance artist whose work and research is concerned with physical endurance, hardship and excess in relation to illness and medicine. Through an engagement with his body in extremis, as one with a severe chronic illness – cystic fibrosis – he explores issues of pain and medicine, discipline, abjection and body politics.

Matty May is a working class, queer artist from Barking. His first solo show, 'If You Love Me This Might Hurt' is an uncensored look at queerness, men, council estates and suicide. Matty is Associate Director of Scottee & Friends

Melody Sproates is a cabaret maker, binary breaker, lip-syncer and zine-ster. They make challenging and sometimes daft work to help represent the underrepresented and advocate positive well-being for the LGBTQIA+ community through performance and the arts.

Noëmi Lakmaier's work explores notions of the 'Other' ranging from the physical to the philosophical, the personal to the political. The individual's relationship to its surroundings, identity, and perception of self and other in contemporary society are core interests in her predominantly site-responsive, live and installation-based practice.

Nwando Ebizie is a constellation point for a spectrum of multidisciplinary works that call for RADICAL change. She challenges her audience to question their perceived realities through art personas, experimental theatre, neuroscience, music and African diasporic ritualistic dance.

whatsthebigmistry (aka Priya Mistry) is a multidisciplinary artist, socially engaged practitioner and creative producer straddling visual, performance and live art. Her practice adds to discourse on topics of mental health / neurodiversity, feminist politics, identity, sex and queerness, whilst deconstructing language, exploring sensory/non-word-based vocabularies.

Quiplash is a performance project headed by Al and Amelia Lander-Cavallo that exists to take space for d / Deaf and disabled people across the LGBTQIA+ spectrum – AKA queer crips, AKA quips. Their focus is on intersectional representation, providing creative and integrated access from a queer perspective, and “fucking with” perceived norms within LGBTQIA+ spaces and disability led spaces in order to facilitate discussion and change. In short they create, produce and consult on exciting and innovative queer crip content.

Amelia (they / them) is a blind, multi-disciplinary theatre practitioner, academic, access consultant and workshop facilitator. Al (they / them) is a neurodiverse artist, graphic designer and illustrator with a focus on accessible graphic design and comms that don't compromise on aesthetics

Rachael House is an artist who makes events, objects, performances, zines and drawings, and she thinks they are all the same. Recent work has focussed on feminism, communal joy, queer issues and ageing. She works inside and outside of gallery spaces, internationally and locally.

Rachel Mars is a performance maker and writer with a background in theatre, live art and comedy. She explores the idiosyncratic cultural and

political constructs that inform the way we are together, as people, just trying to figure it all out. The work wrestles with female, Jewish and Queer identities and their intersections.

Raquel Meseguer is a UK based dance theatre practitioner. She identifies as dis-abled and works with rest, 'crip' and horizontality as creative impulses.

Dr. R. Justin Hunt is an artist, lecturer, and creative industries professional based in London. He writes about queerness, archives, club culture and sex.

Sarah Hopfinger is an artist-researcher working at the intersections between performance, live art, choreography, ecology, intergenerational collaboration, queerness, crip practices, and disability.

Scottee is an artist and writer that proudly has no formal education. With company Scottee and Friends they create cabaret, circus, drag, live art, dance and theatre that have won awards, toured internationally and got really good reviews babes. The company now operates as a collective of artists, producers, makers and participants creating theatre, activism and community projects.

Selina Nwulu is a writer and former Young Poet Laureate for London with extensive experience of performing internationally and writing for commission. Selina is also a leader within the civic sector working across social and climate justice as an independent consultant.

Selina Thompson is an interdisciplinary artist creating theatre shows, installations, workshop plans and radio for pubs, clubs, shopping centres and performance spaces across the world. She makes passionate, rigorous, political work, full of joy, but with a clear focus on those excluded by society at large, and how the politics of identity define our bodies, lives and environments.

Sheila Ghelani is an artist of Indian/English mixed heritage, whose solo and collaborative performances, social art works, installations, texts and videos seek to illuminate and make visible the connections between race, ecology, science, history and the present day.

Sonia Hughes is an artist, writer, performer. She was a long-standing collaborator with contemporary theatre makers Quarantine and directors, choreographers and artists, Jo Fong, Juliet Ellis, Darren Pritchard, ANU, Jane Mason. Sonia is now making solo work. She recently became Associate

Artist of the Arctic Arts Festival. Sonia has been making art for over 20 years, but you've probably never heard of her.

Tanja Erhart (she / her) is a crip*pleasure activist, dance artist and cultural anthropologist from Austria living in London. Her movement practice explores her three different bodies – “with my crutches, my wheelchair and without assistive tools”. *crip is an activist term used by people who are sick and / or disabled

Tom Marshman is an artist and performer working across many mediums and contexts, including museum audio-tours, theatre & cabaret. An overarching theme of Tom's work is that of the outsider & their story, particularly regarding the LGBTQ+ experience, and stories that have been omitted through archival silence.

Toni-Dee is performance artist, theatre maker, workshop leader, writer and occasional thinker-in-the-room. Her current body of work, made with 'infectious warmth' (Exeunt) is a series of performances & installations exploring identity politics. She makes works with children, messy food and sometimes with her dad.

Travis Alabanza is a writer, performer and theatre maker based in London, via Bristol. Their writing, performance and public discourse surrounding trans and Black identities has had them noted as one of the most prominent emerging trans voices in the arts and beyond.

Vijay Patel (He/him) is a performance artist based in London. His main art forms range from theatre, performance art and cabaret. The work he makes predominantly surrounds cultural identity, making autobiographical / political statements around being a queer, British / Indian, working class, person living with Asperger's syndrome

Xavier de Sousa is an independent performance maker and culture worker based between Brighton and Lisbon. His practice explores personal and political heritage within the context of discourse on belonging, nationalism and migration. Through theatrical, durational performance and moving image, he explores agency and queer methodologies in the performance space.

Kate Marsh is a disabled dance artist-researcher and producer. She is an associate producer at Metal and a research fellow at C-DaRE (Centre for Dance Research at Coventry University.) Kate's interest is primarily in creating and nurturing spaces for marginalised artists to explore and realise their artistic ideas.

Metal is an R&D space for artists working in all disciplines – providing time, space and resources for artists to explore their practice, take risks and pursue bold ideas through residencies and Labs. We bring these artists and their work into a relationship with the communities in the towns and cities where we work through workshops, discussion, publications, small scale events and large scale festivals. Metal is funded as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England.

Notes and References

- P 7 'The Pandemic is a Portal' – Arundhati Roy (Financial Times, 3rd April 2020)
- P 22 An image of and conceived by Jeremy Goldstein at Conway Hall, London photographed by Darren Black for 'Truth to Power Cafe' © Jeremy Goldstein/Darren Black 2020
- P 26 Polaroid: Machine Dazzle
- P 29 'Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene' – Donna Haraway (Duke University Press, 2016)
- P 38 Edited version of a live presentation at the With For About 2020 Conference, Heart of Glass, St Helens
- P 39 Work No. 13: The Gatekeepers' Reminder (2020) is part of 'The Blackness Series' (2016 to date) documenting personal and social commentary in the format of black font on black, as a reminder about who is visible and who is invisible in this world, so is intentionally arduous to read.
- P 43 Image by Manuel Vason. Martin O'Brien in *If It Were the Apocalypse I'd Eat You to Stay Alive*, In Between Time Festival of Contemporary Performance, Arnolfini, Bristol, 2017.
- P 49 The artistic content of *In Other Words* extends beyond this physical book. We recognise that not all our audience will access the book through the text and visual contributions alone, as such we highly recommend everyone visits www.metalculture.com/projects/in-other-words for the audio described version, our aim is not to privilege one version and to acknowledge that they each offer access to the artwork for a wide range of audiences.
- P 53 Illustration by: James Unsworth
- P 54 Drawing of Porch courtesy of Michael Ovaska
- P 57 Voices from the porch (in order of "appearance")
Pepper Glass, "Doing Scene: Identity, Space, and the Interactional Accomplishment of Youth Culture," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 2012.
David Kaplan, *Tenn Years: Tennessee Williams on Stage*, 2016.

- Jenn Ashworth, *Notes Made While Falling*, 2019.
Lois Weaver, Split Britches:
<http://www.split-britches.com/public-address-systems>
<http://www.split-britches.com/porch-sitting>
J. Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time & Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*, 2005.
José Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, 1999.
Eve Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, 2003.
Lyn Lofland, *The public realm: Quintessential city life*, 1998.
- P 75 An image of and conceived by Jo Bannon photographed by John Stephenson. Recreation of a composite digital image inspired by paintings by Jean Auguste Dominique, c2012, artist unknown.
© Jo Bannon / John Stephenson 2020
- P 77 The pleasure games came alive through my reading of the book "pleasure activism – the politics of feeling good"– written and gathered by adrienne maree brown – and listening to the podcast episodes of "How to Survive the End of the World"– by adrienne and her sister Autumn Brown.
Immense love and gratitude to you and your lineages of black people's abundant wisdom!
- Big juicy thanks also to you, disababe Nina Mühlemann and crip-ally Katharina Senk, for helping shape the games by being my first playdates!
- And to everybody who played and is going to – a wholehearted Yes! and Ja!
- With Pleasure!
- P 83 Dan Reclining, 2020, oil on canvas, 31 × 23 cm

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