

1959

Off-Broadway

Come play With Me York Theatre Dance Captain (John Will P)
Madrigal of Mgr Living Theatre Stage Manager and Understudy

Loves Labor Living Theatre. Paris (Part of) (FRANK MANA)

1959

BALLET BALLOPS *the reviewed*
Stook Toronto Assistant Choreographer Guys and Dolls
Student Prince Brigadoon Show Boat

*-1960

Katy Litz Company Dracula Henry Street Playhouse

1960

Guber Ford and Gross productions
South Pacific Abner
Student Prince Dance Captain

*-1960

New York City Opera Carmina Burana John Butler, choreographer

*TV-
1960-61

ED SULLIVAN SHOW

* LAMP LIGHT MY PEET - JOHN BUTLER (CHOREO.)

* LOOK UP AND LIVE - BUZZ MILLER - (CHOREO.)

* PLAYED YELLOW FERRYER IN LITTLE MARY
SUNSHINE IN NYC (LAST 2 MONTHS OF THE RUN)

* CHOREOGRAPHED + PLAYED YELLOW FERRYER

LAST SUMMER IN PHILA. (LITTLE MARY)

* JUDSON DANCE - ETC.

FRED HERKO

A COURSE PACKET

PART 2

Edited by Joshua Lubin-Levy

Designed by Alan Ruiz

Image Herko not found

FRED HERKO: A CRASH COURSE

took place on Saturday October 25, 2014, at the department of Performance Studies, New York University.

Participants included:

Gerard Forde (Independent Scholar)
Marc Siegel (Goethe University, Frankfurt)
Danielle Goldman (The New School)
Heather Love (University of Pennsylvania)
Richard Move (Queens College, CUNY)
Ara Osterweil (McGill University)
Julia Robinson (New York University)

Presented by:

The Department of Performance Studies (NYU)
Goethe-Institut New York
The Tisch Initiative for Creative Research (TCR)
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the Department of Art & Public Policy (NYU)
the Department of Art History (NYU)

With faculty sponsor:

André Lepecki (New York University)





Deborah Hay, *All Day Dance*
"Judson Dance Theater Concert of Dance #7," 24 June 1963

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EDITOR'S NOTE

JOSHUA LUBIN-LEVY

This booklet is part 2 of *Fred Herko: A Course Packet*, a publication prepared on the occasion of *Fred Herko: A Crash Course* (an interdisciplinary symposium held on October 25, 2014, at New York University). Part 1, distributed on the day of the event, features an incomplete array of archival materials related to the life and work of dancer and performer Fred Herko – including performance programs, press releases, dance scores and photographs. I describe part 1 as incomplete because it presents only a small selection of the documents and traces that remind us of Herko's past works. Incomplete, as well, because this initial collection of ephemera offered only one point of departure for the range of scholars and artists who spent the day, back in October, trying to navigate the complexities of Herko's haunting presence on the field of queer performance arts.

The archival traces that filled the pages of part 1 are replaced here by some of the writings contributed by symposium participants, as well as a series of dialogues between scholars and dance practitioners (curated by Will Rawls and originally published online through *Critical Correspondence*). If the initial course packet featured ephemera from the performances staged by Herko, the following collection of writing shifts the focus to the event of our symposium – turning us from a limited focus on the history of Herko himself, and towards larger questions about how knowledge is created and performed in revisiting Herko's legacy. From one event to another, how might we pick up the lines of inquiry that emanate from, and return us to, the task of writing queer performance art histories? Part 1 built a window onto the past, part 2 articulates some of what can be seen through that window. Whether or not the writings and conversations published here bring us closer to a complete picture of Fred Herko will be up to the reader.

Contributors to this collection are not necessarily Herko experts, but rather a group of generous thinkers who were willing to take up Herko's legacy and experiment with reading only a small selection of archival materials prepared for them in advance. For their work and willingness to experiment I wish to thank: Gerard Forde, Marc Siegel, Danielle Goldman, Heather Love, Richard Move, Ara Osterweil, Julia Robinson, Will Rawls, Yve Laris Cohen, Kyle Bukhari, Tavia Nyong'o, Raja Kelly, Claudia La Rocco, Jillian Peña, Adrienne Edwards and Jen Rosenblit.

SLIDING AWAY FROM SOME ELEGANT LINES

DANIELLE GOLDMAN

THAT-HAS-BEEN

I remember José Muñoz telling a group of incoming Performance Studies students that Roland Barthes could write like a motherfucker. Muñoz was talking about Barthes's *Camera Lucida*, a painfully beautiful and often cited book on photography that begins like this: "One day, quite some time ago, I happened on a photograph of Napoleon's youngest brother, Jerome, taken in 1852. And I realized then, with an amazement I have not been able to lessen since: 'I am looking at eyes that looked at the Emperor.'"¹ No one seemed to share or understand Barthes's experience with the photograph. "Life consists of these little touches of solitude," he wrote.² Yet Barthes comes to realize that the source of his private amazement had to do with photography's ability to capture something that has been, irrefutably, present. It's a basic yet astounding realization. "That-has-been," writes Barthes.³

When looking at the photographs prepared by Gerard Forde, which were circulated in preparation for this roundtable discussion, one easily could be overwhelmed by the many ways in which they testify to Fred Herko's existence: the angularity of Herko's face, the light reflecting off his hair while performing *Comb Music*, the arch of his back on the rooftop of the Opulent Tower. But when I opened the file of photographs, any reaction that I might have had to Herko's past-presence was compounded by the fact that I had seen the opening images before, in "A Jeté Out the Window" from *Cruising Utopia*. In the chapter, Muñoz talks about his experience in the Judson Memorial Church Archives at NYU's Fales Library, where he spent time considering the ephemera through which "'another history,' queerness's history, can be glimpsed."⁴ And so I was looking at photographs of Herko, while also reckoning with the fact that Muñoz had looked at these same images and selected some but not others for inclusion in his work.

A JETÉ OUT THE WINDOW

“A Jeté Out the Window” is a difficult essay that knowingly risks a romanticization of Herko’s suicide in order to discuss what Muñoz poignantly refers to as “the transhistorical relevance of [Herko’s] queer incandescence.”⁵ Yet, amidst this difficulty, there’s a moment that always catches me off guard. When discussing *Once or Twice a Week I put on Sneakers and Go Uptown*, a solo that Herko performed at the first concert of performance by the Judson Dance Theater, Muñoz cites three people who witnessed and wrote about the performance: Allen Hughes, Jill Johnston, and Bill Paxton. By misnaming one of the most famous figures in postmodern dance, replacing Steve with Bill, Muñoz effectively displaces Judson in order to make way for a consideration of other countercultural and queer movements.

Nevertheless, because there are so few written accounts of Herko’s dancing, Muñoz cites Paxton at length. Here’s what Paxton had to say about Herko’s first Judson performance:

It seemed very campy and self conscious, which wasn’t at all my interest. As I remember he was a collagist with an arch performance manner. You would get some ballet movement, none of it very high energy. Maybe a few jetés every now and then. As a dancer his real forte was some very, very elegant lines. But in terms of actual movement, transitions from one well-defined place to another, he did it very nervously. Holding a position is what he did more than moving from place to place.⁶

I include this quotation not to re-inscribe Paxton’s expertise, but rather to consider the issue of line in dance. Paxton’s observation that Herko produced some “very, very elegant lines” is certainly borne out by the photographs circulated for today’s discussion, at least in the photographs that document the most conventional understanding of what constitutes “dance.” In image after image, one sees Herko executing

balletic lines—arabesques, attitudes, tendus en avant. Even in the photographs of Herko in *Binghamton Birdie*, where one foot is strapped into a rickety metal roller skate, one sees a clarity of extension, a pointed foot, a leg with the outward rotation commonly referred to as “turn-out.” It was not surprising to read that Herko, at the age of twenty, received a scholarship to study at the American Ballet Theater School.

These balletic lines are powerful. As Catherine Lord insists in the catalogue for the 2011 *Dance/Draw* exhibit at the ICA in Boston: “Lines have history. Lines have weight.”⁷ They carry ideology and signal tradition. What’s more, as difficult as they can be to achieve for the dancer, once established, they’re often difficult to move and to see beyond. Perhaps that’s why so many of the documentary dance photographs from the sixties look the way they do. In her recent book, *Being Watched*, Carrie Lambert-Beatty grapples with the tension between spectacular photographs of Yvonne Rainer’s famously unspectacular *Trio A*. Puzzled by the disparity between documentary photographs and Rainer’s famous dance, Beatty asks whether the difference might not just misrepresent *Trio A*, but directs us toward a different kind of analysis. “[T]o follow the hint made by the dance documentation,” writes Beatty, “is not to question the radicality of *Trio A*’s aesthetic relative to the mainstream modern dance of its time, but to clear the ground for a different sort of story: one about the difficulty, rather than the achievement, of oppositional culture.”⁸

I am interested in this sort of story. So, in the face of Herko’s elegant balletic lines, I find myself straining to see the movement that Paxton dismissed as nervousness, and that Muñoz embraced as queer incandescence. But I’m not sure that I can see it in these photographs of dance. By and large, the photographs seem to deny the vibration that is always present to varying degrees and with varied intensities when bodies negotiate form. Perhaps this was what Peter Moore was reckoning with when, in a deviation from his famously flat documentation of downtown performance in the sixties,



Fred Herko, *Dervish*, 18 January 1964
Photo by Peter Moore © Barbara Moore/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY

he attempted to photograph Herko's "Dervish" in 1964. As Moore explains:

Dance is movement. [T]he still photograph forces us to select what is hopefully, a meaningful instant – indicative of the whole. The responsibility is heavy. Herko's *Dervish* was an almost constant movement around the centerline of his body. In the middle of shooting conventional action-stopping pictures, it occurred to me that a time exposure might capture the patterns of his movement. One of half a dozen frames produced this ghost-like tracery of movement. Less than a year later, he was dead tragically. The image seems prophetic.⁹

Fifty years ago, Herko's dervish-like spinning posed a challenge to photography. But there need to be alternate modes of response beyond the evacuation of the dancer. Moreover, it's not just the obvious movements of dance—spinning and leaping and traversing space—that resist capture. It seems to me there's always a way in which bodies exceed or, as Amiri Baraka (or Nathaniel Mackey or Fred Moten) might say, "slide away from the lines proposed" by choreography.¹ Ironically, one of Paxton's major contributions to postmodern dance discourse was the insistence that multiple subtle movements course through apparent stillness. Attending to these vibrations, however slight or fierce, and allowing ourselves to be affected by them, matters; as it offers a way to consider the sometimes gorgeous and often brutal strictures that organize bodies, both on the stage and in so-called everyday life.

1. In his liner notes for Archie Shepp's *Four for Trane*, Amiri Baraka writes: "John Tchicai's solo on 'Rufus' comes back to me again. It slides away from the proposed." See Amiri Baraka, *Black Music* (Akashic Books, 2010), pg. 183. Nathaniel Mackey refers to this moment in *Discrepant Engagement* (pg. 39), when discussing the way in which Baraka's poetry refuses singular meaning. Both Mackey and Fred Moten (in "B. Jenkins") refer to this moment in Baraka's liner notes when discussing understandings of fugitivity.

NOTES

- 1 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1981), 3.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, 96.
4. José Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2009), 149.
5. Ibid, 167.
6. Ibid, 153.
7. Carrie Lambert-Beatty, Catherine Lord, and Helen Molesworth. *Dance/Draw* (ICA Boston, Exhibition Catalogue, Hatje Cantz, 2011), 23.
8. Carrie Lambert-Beatty, *Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s* (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2008), 131.
9. Peter Moore, quoted in Wendy Perron and Daniel J. Cameron (eds.), *Judson Dance Theater: 1962-1966* (Vermont: Bennington College, 1981), 42.

WANTED: FAILURE

HEATHER LOVE

The disappointing or elusive object is the only object that has the capacity to satisfy desire. Is this even a paradox?

Queer for me is still a name for this understanding: that what you want is the experience of incompleteness, dissatisfaction, and distance. I could say *Hurts so good* or *The first cut is the deepest* or even *Put another dime in the jukebox*, but that's not what I'm talking about. Some accounts of loss or longing are actually about presence, though appearances can be deceiving. Another way to put this: some versions of masochism are for the bros.

I am thinking more:

I don't want to get over you.

I'll probably never see you again.

Your love is fading, I can feel your love fading—girl, it's fading away from me.

Or, we can look to the master, Roland Barthes: “The absence of the other holds my head underwater; gradually I drown, my air supply gives out; it is by this asphyxia that I reconstitute my ‘truth’ and that I prepare for what in love is intractable.”¹

I've tried some reeducation plans and in some ways I've loosened the grip of the fascination of *love at last sight*.

But this seems to be a basic template for me.

I find an analogue for this set of feelings in the history of queer experience, where the figure of love barred from expression, from fulfillment, is repeated endlessly.

You might see this as a really pathetic fallacy. But I think there are reasons to call this way of being in the world queer, and to read the queer archive by its black light.

In the case of Fred Herko, the lure is almost irresistible. The image of the beautiful loser, the doomed but endlessly appealing outsider, emits what José Esteban Muñoz calls “burning queer incandescence.”² Add to that the fact that we have so little evidence of Herko’s life, that he worked in an ephemeral medium, that it is so hard to touch him, and you will see why doing queer history might require liking loss more than fulfillment.

It also matters to me that that loss at the heart of queer experience is traditional, that it has deep roots. Diane di Prima suggests that Herko’s suicide/performance was inspired by Mary Renault’s historical fiction about Theseus. Could there be prose more infatuated with death and with death as a quality inhering in the beautiful male body than Renault’s 1962 novel *The Bull from the Sea*?

The book begins with a report of Aegeus’s leap into the sea. The king falsely believes that his son Theseus is dead: “They saw him come out on the balcony that stands above the cliff, and step straight upon the balustrade, and lift his arms. Then he sprang outward.”³

The book ends with Theseus’s own suicidal fantasy: he sees “a walk beyond the living cliff, threading the crag” that will “do well ... The tide comes in. A swelling sea, strong and shining. To swim under the moon, onward and onward, plunging with the dolphins singing ... To leap with the wind in my hair...”

George Haggerty has addressed the imbrication of male homoeroticism and loss in his essay “Desire and Mourning: The Ideology of the Elegy.” In a reading of Bion’s “The Lament for Adonis” he writes: “This lament is melancholy because Adonis is dead, but it is doubly so because it is trapped in a desire that cannot be realized anywhere but in a figuration of loss. That loss is physical, it is castrated, and it is male. The desire that is expressed for this castrated male is a desire that can only be realized in its very impossibility.”⁴ For Haggerty,

“the elegy tradition offers a particularly telling example of the ways in which transgressive desire can be articulated so as to foreclose the possibility of its realization.”⁵

The fact that we can find evidence—of a kind—for this tradition from ancient Athens to downtown New York in the 1960s is important to me, because it suggests that this way of feeling might not simply go away once the historical conditions that gave rise to it are transformed. Furthermore, it suggests, those conditions are only partially or unevenly transformed in the present.

What I want to explore briefly today are the consequences of the fact that the conditions of queer existence are not only historical facts but that they also constitute a situation of desire. But also: that the situation of desiring queer impossibility is also embedded in a historical, material context—the rise of queer studies as an intellectual and institutional force.

In his work on Herko, Muñoz refers to his neoromanticism, and I think he might be talking both about Herko’s experience of impossible desire and his attachment to the idea and aesthetics of impossible desire. I could also use the term neoromantic to describe my attachment to Herko’s life and death, and to the version of queer history he evokes.

So I want to say: Herko is an elusive object, but to the extent *that we like it like that*, he is also ready to hand. In a way, he fits too well with our dark desires: we don’t want to get over him, and we don’t have to.

I want to linger over the question of Herko’s appeal, and his availability to us, by focusing on the résumé that serves as the image on the cover of the program for today’s event. This is a document that Muñoz discovered in the archive. Disordered, crumpled, scratched out, it features a handwritten legend across the top of the page: “Sorry—I’m slow.” Herko’s resume is a monument to the unprofessional. As Muñoz writes:

“[Herko’s] résumé qualifies him for the position of perfect mess and proto-queer icon.”⁶

We not only have this document as evidence, but also Diane di Prima’s recriminations about the decline of Herko’s art: you are late for rehearsal, you are abusing your body, you are wasting time in some grimy bar, you are “off course.” “I think its pretty bad.”⁷

We could simply read di Prima’s words as a betrayal, evidence of a less erotically rewarding form of disappointment or wounding. Keeping the sting of those words at bay would help us to continue to read Herko’s résumé as evidence of his queer anti-heroism, his embodiment of what Muñoz calls a poetics of failure.

However, I want to say something more or different about that failure. I think a lot these days about the fact that what was bad for Herko might be good for us. There is a kind of living for us, today, in Herko’s badness, in his living out of an aesthetics of failure. While I’ve worked hard to build the institutional conditions in which queerness of all kinds might be supported, those investments do not diminish my awareness of a tension between the historical experience of queer failure with queer academic success. While my investment in the impossible might not even count as paradoxical today, the imbrication of that investment with my professional investments is a paradox.

Maybe not today, but someday soon, this talk about Herko and his résumé will appear as a line on my own.

While I was in graduate school, I thought for a long time about getting a tattoo: “Failure.” I had decided to call my dissertation “Failure As a Way of Life.” I thought, failure—that’s my ethics, that’s my erotics, that’s my politics. I didn’t get the tattoo, in part because of a low pain threshold, but also because of my anxiety about how this word might come to signify down the

line. Though it seemed unlikely at the time, I wondered what would happen if failure became not only a way of life but also a way of making a living—a career.

The fact that this is more or less what happened does not negate my investment in failure—failure is, after all, both a queer object of desire and useful term for describing a widespread social experience. But it does make me want to mark the seam between the fantasy or the lure of failure and its actuality, even if I can’t hope to hold them apart for good.

NOTES

1. Roland Barthes, *A Lover’s Discourse: Fragments*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1978 [1977]), 17.
2. José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 155.
3. Mary Renault, *The Bull from the Sea* (London: Longmans, 1962).
4. George Haggerty, “Desire and Mourning: The Ideology of the Elegy” in *Ideology and Form in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, ed. David H. Richter (Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech University Press, 1999): 185-206, 192.
5. Ibid, 193.
6. Muñoz, 155.
7. Diane di Prima, “For Freddie, Fucking Again” in *Freddie Poems* (Point Reyes, CA: Eidolon Editions, 1974), 35.

THE OPULENT TOWERS' FIRST RESPONDERS: CAROLEE SCHNEEMANN'S *TERMINAL VELOCITY AND DARK POND*

RICHARD MOVE

Dedicated to:
Paolo Canevari, Molissa Fenley and José Esteban Muñoz

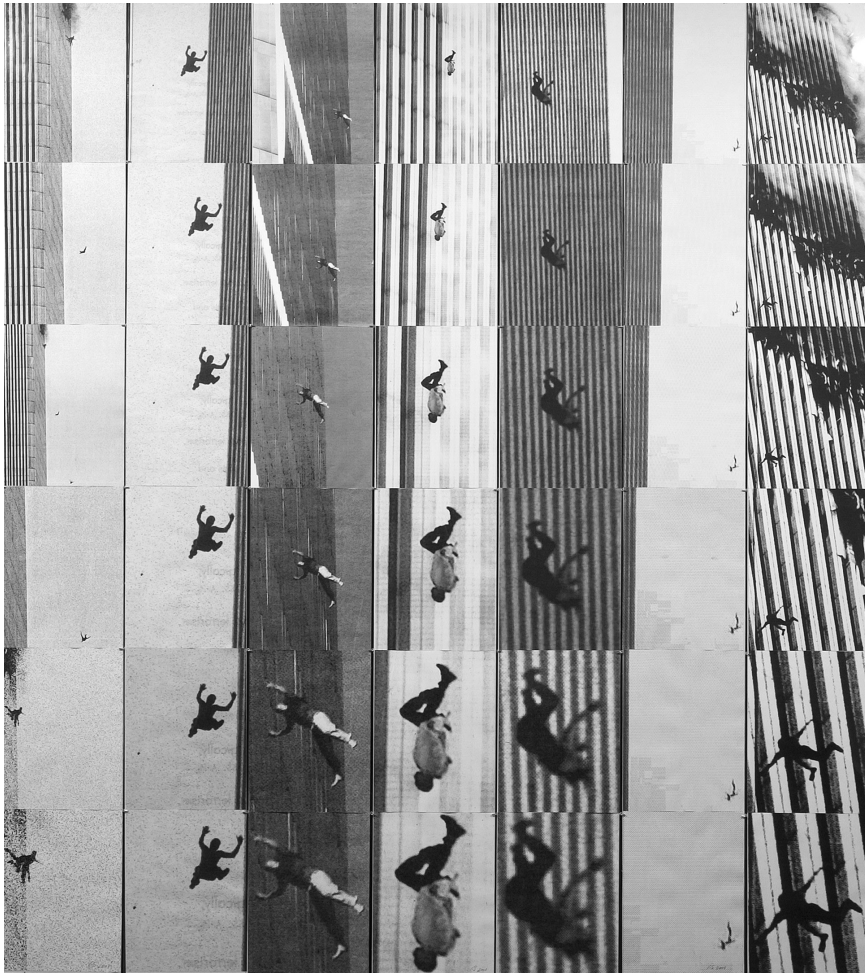
Carolee Schneemann's prolific body of work spans nearly six decades. In the late 50's, she incorporated techniques credited to her male contemporaries, like Rauschenberg, with a three dimensionality achieved by using heavily textural characteristics. In the early 60's, she began exhibiting the embodied self as political territory within the aesthetic. She's linked with Judson Dance Theater, Beats, Fluxus, Happenings, and more. However, she disavows association with such categorization.

In the late summer of 2008, Carolee invited me into her enchanted home and studio near New Paltz. She described the atmosphere of 1963. The air charged with "implacable resistance. I was called an exhibitionist, who really should be working in pornography, not really an artist...critics, gallerists...they, without exception, said my work is crap."¹ Carolee persisted to "reclaim the body from ...pop art, where the female body was mechanized and dead... And then to reintegrate that body from the traditions of art history with a vital materiality related to historical traditions, always determined by masculine aesthetics."

She is habitually labeled a Feminist Performance and/or Body Artist, despite generating substantially more works of film, video, painting, multi, inter, trans, across, through, over, under and inbetween media. As Carolee stated six years ago, "...for the past 24 years or so, I've been doing what I call these morphologies of form. They begin with some basic shape that I can make an affiliation with."

After 9/11, Carolee created *Terminal Velocity* and then *Dark Pond*.

A shamefully vague estimation of several hundred of the equally shamefully vague estimation of three thousand deaths on 9/11 were by falls from the opulent Twin Towers. Bodies rained down on lower Manhattan. Bodies trapped forever in time by the camera's eye and persistent image of collective, traumatic memory. Bodies caught between the



Carolee Schneemann, *Terminal Velocity* 2001-2005
 inkjet on paper
 96 x 84 inches overall; 35 pieces in all, 16 x 12 inches, each
 Copyright: ©C. Schneemann
 Courtesy of C. Schneemann and P.P.O.W Gallery, New York



Carolee Schneemann. *Dark Pond*, 2001-2005
 12 hand colored digital prints with watercolor and crayon
 59.25 x 63 inches overall; 12 pieces in all, 19.75 x 15.75 inches, each
 Copyright: ©C. Schneemann
 Courtesy of C. Schneemann and P.P.O.W Gallery, New York

infinite, picture perfect blue sky and soon to implode edifice. Bodies that externalize others inside the soon to collapse colossus. Bodies that symbolize heroic, horrific acts. Bodies that evoke a formation of self and identification with the other. Bodies demanding immediate recognition. Bodies borne not of fate, or fate's allusion of stasis, but bodies of action. We project upon these bodies anticipated expectations that may have nothing, and everything, to do with the victims. Bodies through which we speak, "It could have been me." Bodies through which we ask, "What would I have done?" Thinking "jump" affirms a sense of self, of free will and an act. A question is predicated on choice.

Carolee's cenotaph is "made from photographic newspaper images because that's the only way I could get closer and closer. I could enlarge it almost to infinity. I concentrated on...With a sense of, well, concentration as a consecration, to show every detail that was possible. To show a progression, almost a filmic progression through time, an implied time."

Carolee's implied time allows viewers to impose upon bodily images a sense of subjectivity and identification. An imposition upon bodies that may have no bodily remains.

In our global nightmare, bodies are forever resurrected by enlargement.

Carolee: "It is this permeable momentum of self into the image. We are inside the image..." She echoes Jacques Lacan's premise that, "the collective is nothing but the subject of the individual."² Carolee: "...their choice was to either to be incinerated or exploded out of the space where they were, because the spaces were blowing out of the windows."

The bodies of *Terminal Velocity* and *Dark Pond* live in the "or." Images enlarged almost, but not yet, to the breaking point of invisible pixilation. Details remain intact. Through repetition and reproduction, Carolee remaps the moment with narrative,

optical sensations filled with meter, momentum, motion and rhythm.

The formal lines in space with a vertical figure, surrounded on both sides by the equidistant columns of the opulent structure, bring the bodies incrementally closer. Carolee: "I'd been doing research on when the body falls at a certain speed. It is this permeable momentum of self into the potential image...It's a threshold on a certain dynamic that's so hard for the living to imagine."

Carolee's bodies repeat repetitive loops of mass media's incessant replay. Rather than dull the senses, these bodies plea for attentive meditation, as she reveals the intervals within a trajectory of time and space.

Carolee gives birth to a multitude of images from few sources with addition, duration and variation. She arrests the captured instant, proposing her own Lacan like, "before and afterness." She focuses attention to subject formation through the process of perception, by working between the before and after.

News reports, viral banter, street level conversations with friends, family, co-workers, colleagues, enemies, frenemies and total strangers, witness and document this "before and after."

Carolee offers Lacan's model of modulation of time, complete with the instant of the glance, the time for comprehending and a convulsive, conclusive moment of subject formation as, "temporal tension culminates here...it is the process of its release... the test of its logical necessity."³

Lacan's address of the inherent rhythm of psychoanalysis calls our attention to the breaks, stammers, stutters and breaks of tempi that occur at the subject and object interface. Like Lacan's temporal pressure cooker, Carolee illuminates moments of the identification of "self" and recognition of

the “other.” It is a temporality of suspended moments that Carolee’s bodies elucidate and magnify.

The artist intervenes with acts that reconstruct, re-imagine and reactivate memory. Her bodies are animated. Animism is hope. She creates an instance of hope.

Leaps from the opulent Twin Towers’ inferno hurtle me backward, forward and sideward to José Muñoz in *Cruising Utopia*, and his “ecstatic unity of temporality- Past, Present and Future.”⁴ There is ecstasy in Carolee’s bodies.

Dark Pond is Carolee’s utopic gift. The same black and white photographs of *Terminal Velocity* provide a canvas for a grid of twelve new works upon which she adds crayon and watercolor with Romantic, deeply rich colors of grass-like greens, hot pinks, scarlet reds, golden yellows and sky blues. Carolee’s strokes of the brush offer soft, flowing lines and squiggly streaks of bold black in direct contrast to the Opulent Twin Towers’ perfect architectural symmetry, pre- implosion. Choice of colors, mediums and strategic placement create landscape with the horizon of that stunningly beautiful late summer morning...until...

Dark Pond creates newness from historicity with pastoral light, an idyllic pond of ethereal beauty with bodies in flight, steering attention away from the brutality of the before and after. Bodies beautifully re-captured in mid-air. Bodies in an aviary to safely land like other species. The archetypal dream-state of human flight becomes realized.

Carolee’s easily criticized transformation of bodies into the art spectacle of *Terminal Velocity*, is even more brazen and more easily criticized with *Dark Pond*. Carolee glorifies bodies in space, not as tragic, but also as beautiful specimens traveling through air, as the unthinkable is not yet here.

Carolee demands a sense of attunement to the presentness of the figures. She exhibits possibility with a palpable desire

to save her bodies by preserving and embalming them with digital animism, painterly color and the formalism of repetition. Each body is granted temporal transcendence and escape from horrific futures past. In the words of Muñoz, “for the purpose of critiquing the present (is) propelled for a desire for futurity.”⁵

Nowhere else in history have so many leaps from such heights as those made by Carolee’s bodies taken place in one space and time to be re- witnessed, and re- witnessed and re- witnessed by the world. The desperate bravery of jumping bodies exhibit agency, making their final gestures utopic, to once again follow the flowing, painterly thoughts of Muñoz. Carolee’s bodies, Herko, and other dancers seek to defy gravity, and transcend the limitations of the body, time and space, by attempting to take flight with leaps.

Leaps of faith.

NOTES

1. Unless otherwise specified, all quotes from “Interview with Carolee Schneemann: August 13, 2008” Interview recorded by Marc Hilton and Richard Move. Transcription by Emily Smith.
2. Jacques Lacan, “Logical Time and the Assertion of Anticipated Certainty; A New Sophism.” *Newsletter of the Freudian Field* 2.2 (1988), 19.
3. Ibid, 13.
4. José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia-The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 12.
5. Ibid, 30.

**VANISHING ACTS:
MEDITATIONS ON FRED HERKO,
ANDY WARHOL, AND WHAT
DISAPPEARS BEYOND THE
FRAME**

ARA OSTERWEIL

The way I know Freddie Herko is as a scene-stealer. In Andy Warhol's *Haircut No. 1*, Herko manages to rivet the audience's attention away from the presumed activity of the haircut. Wearing a white cowboy hat and tight white jeans—and eventually nothing at all—he is a vision of splendor when the film begins. Posing shirtless in the foreground of the shot, and leaning up against the left side of the frame, Herko invites us to admire his physique, chiseled to magnificence. Behind him: a deep, darkened loft space, in which two other men are suspended, soundlessly speaking, like flies in amber. They seem to be directing their conversation to Herko, but as the film is silent, what they say is lost to the ages. Herko does not seem to mind, though, for his attention is directed at capturing ours.

For the opening of a Warhol film, the shot is characteristic enough, and it introduces many of the signature elements of the artist's early films: their frontality, the shattering effect of a direct gaze into the camera, the stillness of a beautiful body, the queering of genre and its accoutrements. It also suggests Warhol's fascination with difference and repetition. Each of the six 100 foot rolls are shot from a different angle, with different looks and desires torquing the now clustered, now disparate bodies. Here is a Western gone decidedly Eastern and downtown, a film that stages a haircut to give us an opportunity not only to admire the beautiful boys, but to ponder relationality itself. How profoundly its dynamics shift with the movement of bodies, and the redirection of a gaze.

But there is something about this deep space that beckons. For an artist who famously advises those who wanted to know about Andy Warhol to look at the surface of his paintings and films,¹ depth summons our attention. Two windows punched like holes in the back of the loft emit a light that paradoxically darkens the rest of the frame. Yet backlit as it may be, deep space changes everything. "So much blackness caresses us,"² Diane di Prima writes in one of her *FREDDIE POEMS*, and it is true that Herko "bend[s] darkness to his use."³

Gesturing towards a beyond rhetorically denied by Warhol, the vast loft makes space for future movement, anticipating traversal and transgression.

The circumstances of Herko's death make it hard not to think of these windows, of the entire film in fact, as some kind of allegory even when you know that of course it is not. *Haircut No. 1* was filmed in November 1963. In *Haircut No. 3*, Billy Name gives Johnny Dodd a haircut in Dodd's apartment. This is the same apartment that Herko, not quite one year later, dances, or swan-dives, or falls out of the window to his death on October 27, 1964. While it certainly does not make for good scholarship, who can help reading these windows as premonitions?

In a later reel from *Haircut No. 1*, Herko appears in the back of the loft. We don't know he is there, until Billy Name, the haircutter, steps out of the way and Herko is suddenly revealed to us, this master of appearances and disappearances. Herko has kept the cowboy hat on but he has lost the tight white pants, and he sits on a chair, his genitals kept out of the frame by his coyly crossed legs. In the next reel, the cluster of men has again shifted, as it does in every sequence. Herko stares into the camera innocently drinking what looks like milk. For the length of a single moment, he uncrosses and then recrosses his legs. We see his penis for a flash, and then it is gone again. Has the entire film been organized around this moment, or has Herko just impulsively stolen the show?

Capturing Herko's movement from foreground to background, from the margins to the center, and back again, *Haircut No. 1* sets the stage for the dancer's vanishing acts. Herko turns the haircut into a dance, as he will turn his suicide into performance. Mastering the art of the gesture, Herko pressures the film frame, reminding us what remains beyond and unknowable. Even in so large a space, it is possible that the architecture of a frame, a room, might not be capacious enough to contain the energies of its performers.

One of the significant differences between cinema and performance lies in the former's repeatability. I can revisit this haircut and imagine the shape of this afternoon. I was not alive when it was filmed and Herko was not alive shortly after. But he is still alive here, in the can. Of course he is also, as Roland Barthes observes about all photographed subjects, already dead.⁴ Such colliding, impossible temporalities make for a queer encounter indeed.

In his essay, "Death Every Afternoon," realist film critic André Bazin insists that in the cinema, the toreador dies every afternoon.⁵ Of the cinematic documentary of a bullfight, he writes, "The tragic ballet of the bullfight turns around the presence and permanent possibility of death (that of the animal and the man)."⁶ Yet what is true for the documentary of the bullfight turns out to be true for all of cinema. Bazin continues:

"Death is surely one of those rare events that justifies the term [...] *cinematic specificity*. Art of time, cinema has the exorbitant privilege of repeating it [...] I cannot repeat a single moment of my life, but cinema can repeat any one of these moments indefinitely before my eyes. If it is true that for consciousness no moment is equal to any other, there is one on which this fundamental difference converges, and that is the moment of death. For every creature, death is the unique moment par excellence. The qualitative time of life is retroactively defined in relation to it."⁷

If cinema's special relationship to death is part of its medium specificity, as Bazin claims, then perhaps suicide epitomizes what Peggy Phelan famously theorizes as the ontology of performance, in that it is an act that cannot be repeated. As she writes, "Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representation of representations: once it does, it becomes something other than performance."⁸ And while Phelan's dictum has been

critiqued many times, suicide both fulfills and problematizes performance's claim to presence. Suicide: the simultaneous act of self-authoring and un-making, the ultimate irreproducible act. If performance depends upon liveness and immediacy, than it also opens itself up to death.

In an act of unflinching immediacy, Herko swan dives out of the window. Approximately eight years later, on the tenth anniversary of Marilyn Monroe's death, on August 8, 1972, Warhol star Andrea Feldman summoned several ex-boyfriends to meet her in front of her parents' New York City apartment on 5th Avenue and 12th Street to witness what she called her final starring role. She left a note that said, "heading for the big time." Holding a can of Coke in one hand and a rosary in the other, Feldman jumped from the fourteenth floor.⁹ Pondering these suicides as performance, I cannot help but wonder if they are also attempts to suicide performance? What kind of theory speaks to this most desperate, devastating art? What ethics? How might this negation of a negation also negate others?

Compare these acts to the historian's, who always arrives belatedly at the scene, and tries to fashion a world from a few sidelong glances at glittering or sometimes dun-colored ephemera. Writing queer history, or writing history queerly, asks us to ponder a series of vanishing acts, and the forensic traces they may or may not leave on the scene. Searching the reels of Warhol's 1963 serial film *Kiss* for the one stolen between Herko and Johnny Dodd, I cannot even tell which of the closely cropped beauties might be Herko. As in Herko's *Screen Test*, the dancer seems to vanish into the darkness, his face transformed into an abstraction.

Andy Warhol was disappointed that he didn't capture Herko's suicide on film. Moreover, he was probably irritated that he didn't think of it first.

Warhol had been making silkscreens of suicides since 1962. Yet haunting as these serial, silvery images are, they cannot

capture this ultimate gesture. Even when it is iconic, suicide defies static construction. The year after Herko's fatal leap, Warhol made a movie called *Suicide*. It was not about Herko.

Dancers played a pivotal role at Warhol's Factory. Yet when confronted with a dancer, one of Warhol's favorite strategies was to try to embalm them in the stillness of his camera, to transform them into a motionless object. So it is with *Shoulder*, Warhol's tightly cropped study of Lucinda Childs.

Diane di Prima's beautiful collection *FREDDIE POEMS* takes a different approach, transforming motion into syntax. Already, in October 1958, six years before his death, di Prima seems to be mourning Herko:

long gone that light behind you
gone
that light
that made the edges of your shoulders live
and kept your face a secret¹⁰

In another poem, entitled "The Animal Trainer," DiPrima again returns to Herko's shoulder:

one of the ways to win you is to leave you
& what a bore that is
to wave goodbye to those almost perfect shoulders¹¹

How much kinder a description di Prima offers of Herko than critic Stephen Koch, who describes him nastily in his account of *Haircut*: "His face and body have the strungout wiriness, the tough, undernourished gracelessness of a slum escapee who survives on street food, on sausage sandwiches bought at greasy open-air stands, hot dogs, Pepsis, and amphetamines."¹²

Even at the height of her frustration with his drug addiction and increasing madness, di Prima's tenderness towards

Herko is legible in the lines of her poetry. In her “FORMAL BIRTHDAY POEM: February 23, 1964” published after his death, di Prima writes:

making fairy tales into not very good ballets

I remember you sat on the edge of the bed & Joan cried
you sat wrapped in a blanket night after night by the fire
you sat by the fire & cried, you played the piano
you were truly lovely then, but a little fat¹³

For Bazin, love was the only thing comparable to death. “Like death,” he writes, “love must be experienced and cannot be represented (it is not called the little death for nothing) without violating its nature.”¹⁴ Of course Bazin was referring to sexual love, though the same may be said of all love, including that hybrid form of intimate friendship, cohabitation, collaboration, and sexual love that Herko and DiPrima practiced. As di Prima writes, “No closeness ever shuts this out.”¹⁵

Reading Diane di Prima’s poems for Herko, I am reminded how little love there is in criticism, how criticality itself is determined by its distance from the object. How much is shut out by such coolness?

I would like to tell you facts about Herko’s life that you don’t know, or can’t find on the internet, but I don’t know any. I can’t say who he is or what he was all about. Of the six or so films by Warhol in which he appears, I’ve seen only half. Perhaps Herko’s reputation might still be redeemed. I hope so, but that’s not the way it pulls on me.

NOTES

1. Andy Warhol, interview with Gretchen Berg. Originally published in November 1, 1966 issue of the East Village Other. Later edited and reprinted as “Andy Warhol: My True Story,” in *I’ll Be Your Mirror: The Selected Andy Warhol Interviews. Thirty-Seven Conversations with the Pop Master.* ed. Kenneth Goldsmith. New York: Da Capo, 2004; 85-96.
2. Diane DiPrima, Untitled poem, “Sept 1957.” *FREDDIE POEMS.* Point Reyes, California: Eidolon Editions, 1974.
3. Diane DiPrima, “Benediction.” *FREDDIE POEMS.* Point Reyes, California: Eidolon Editions, 1974.
4. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography,* trans. Richard Howard. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1981, 96.
5. André Bazin, “Death Every Afternoon,” trans. Mark A. Cohen, in *Rites of Realism: Essays on Corporeal Cinema,* ed. Ivone Margulies. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003;
6. *Ibid,* 29.
7. *Ibid,* 30.
8. Peggy Phelan, “The ontology of performance: representation without reproduction.” *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance.* London: Routledge, 1993; 146-166; 146.
9. Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, *POPism. The Warhol Sixties.* New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1980; 299.
10. Diane DiPrima, “Ode for a Sunday Morning.” *FREDDIE POEMS.* Point Reyes, California: Eidolon Editions, 1974.
11. Diane DiPrima, “The Animal Trainer,” *FREDDIE POEMS.* Point Reyes, California: Eidolon Editions, 1974.
12. Stephen Koch, *Stargazer: Andy Warhol’s World and His Films.* London: Marion Boyars, 1985; 54.
14. André Bazin, “Death Every Afternoon,” 30.
13. Diane DiPrima, “FORMAL BIRTHDAY POEM: February 23, 1964,” *FREDDIE POEMS.* Point Reyes, California: Eidolon Editions, 1974.
15. Diane DiPrima, Untitled poem, “Sept 1957.” *FREDDIE POEMS.* Point Reyes, California: Eidolon Editions, 1974.

THE HERKO DIALOGUES

WILL RAWLS

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On October 27, 1964, Fred Herko leapt to his death from a fourth story window in the West Village, while listening to Mozart's *Requiem*. Or perhaps it was another piece of music. And maybe it wasn't the fourth floor. Beyond the fact of his suicide, and the presumption that it was staged for an unwitting friend, there is much ambiguity around the circumstances of Herko's death and, for that matter, his life and works. Herko's aesthetic entanglements were many—Judson, Andy Warhol, Jill Johnston and more. His dances have been described as campy, romantic, queer, lazy, incandescent, excessive and potentially leading his career nowhere. Or, maybe he knew exactly what he was doing.

In the ensuing five decades since his death, many in his Judson cohort have met with praise and a secured place in dance history. Herko continues to flicker on the periphery, appearing in photographs or films, alone or with other eventual giants of Judson and Warhol's Factory. Herko's elusive status offers unexpected lines of thinking, radicalizing traditional ideas secured within historical narratives. Herko's presence has embroidered the works of a handful of writers and historians, notably, José Muñoz in his chapter devoted to Herko, "A Jeté Out the Window" from *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. Muñoz engages Herko—and his suicide—as a choreographic figure whose movements respond to the contours of queer time, denaturalizing both the theatrical and the quotidian and inviting a kind of utopian performativity into the world. Muñoz points out that this dancer's final gesture of flight indicates apertures through which we might reflect on escapes from capitalist and historic oppression.

Critical Correspondence invited eight relative strangers: choreographers, performers, and scholars to attend the symposium and then pair off to reflect on how that day's discussions about Fred Herko, José Muñoz, Judson and the 1960s coincide with their own artistic and intellectual practices, bodies, and politics today. The meanings of Fred Herko's life, work and death, and whether such meanings can be consistently deployed, is a central question of *The Herko Dialogues*.

**YVE LARIS COHEN
&
KYLE BUKHARI**

Yve Laris Cohen: One of the reasons it was difficult to prepare for this conversation is—well, did I tell you I’m co-teaching a course at NYU with Barbara Browning on Judson? It’s in the Department of Performance Studies where José Muñoz taught. I’m also participating in this Danspace Platform organized around the three poles of dance in the 60’s as described by Edwin Denby—one of them being Judson—and so Judson has been heavily in the brain this fall. Herko in particular has been on my mind as we focus on José’s legacy. I feel very saturated in this material. It’s been a different kind of encounter than just attending the symposium. What about you?

Kyle Bukhari: It sounds like you are deeply contextualized within the material surrounding Herko. My knowledge of Judson comes particularly through my research on Yvonne Rainer, and looking at some of her works within a philosophical context. My recent research has focused on Rainer’s Hand Movie [1967] and Richard Serra’s Hand Catching Lead [1968] looking at them as examples of intermediality encompassing dance, sculpture, and film. That’s what I was doing in London this year which is pretty ironic since I went there to work on Michael Clark’s work but ended up writing on downtown New York postmoderns—that’s how things happen I guess. I’ve also done work on Rainer’s We Shall Run [1963] so that’s more where I’m tying Fred Herko in—to this early Judson work. For me, this symposium was fleshing out an obscured, darkened area, and shining some light, like a flashlight, across it, briefly illuminating the silhouette of Herko.

Yve: I feel like we still don’t have the flesh after that symposium.

Kyle: Yes absolutely, it’s quite elusive still.

Yve: Or not even bone.

Kyle: That’s true. That’s this absence, or rather a sort of absence/presence—trying to make something out of very little in many ways, an act of critical recovery—but on the other hand, he was there; it was substantial. He created work in some of the first concerts at Judson. You probably know more about this than I do.

Yve: But you know, even with Sally Banes's detailed descriptions and her very clinical, deliberate, seemingly matter-of-fact summaries—although her own biases come through—Herko still somewhat slips away from these plodding accounts. But, paired with José's [Muñoz] take on Herko's dances, they give me some sense of his work. The symposium didn't really consider his cultural production as much as his death—although that can also count as production. In many ways I'm more interested in his death and how people take him up rather than being faithful to the person, Fred Herko, and his life. Of course, Gerard Forde would take major issue with that.

Kyle: The precision, the empirical, verifiable fact. Gerard was really fighting for that. So, we had these different speakers, each approaching the symposium from different angles, not necessarily focusing on Herko's work but circumnavigating it.

Yve: Danielle Goldman spoke on the “elegant lines of Fred Herko.” But it was very much building on José's work.

Kyle: I liked this idea of Goldman's that lines have history and weight. So this is building on José's work? I've read his essay “A Jeté Out the Window,” but I'm not familiar otherwise with José's work. Have you gone through it a bit?

Yve: Yeah. You know, I thought this conversation would carry us toward José because, for me, José makes Fred Herko important. And not so much in the sense that Freddy Herko was written out of history and we need to rewrite him back in—that's more Forde's project. For José, Herko becomes this figure that is in support of José's broader project. Barbara made this point in class.

Kyle: He plays a certain role within José's larger project—or he fits neatly into it?

Yve: Well yeah, it's not about rounding out a picture of Freddy or “fleshing out” or connecting the dots. It's more about using ephemera, the bits that we know about, his traces—José

doesn't corral all the dots but picks up a few in service of his work on queer futurity. And that, to me, is more interesting than trying to holistically examine Fred Herko's oeuvre. Herko is now more important to queer theory than he is to dance scholarship.

Kyle: Foucault has this great essay called “The Lives of Infamous Men” and this project has made me think of it, although Herko's work, I mean, he's more than infamous in that there is quite a bit of documentation. Foucault wrote about looking through the archives at the Bibliothèque Nationale—internment records from the 1800s—and discovering a few lines about somebody's imprisonment and then drawing a whole history out of that. I've got a quote here: “[t]he resonance that [one] experiences when he encounters these lowly lives reduced to ashes in a few sentences that struck them down.” And then Foucault talks about using these few lines to think about the institutions and the forces at work that surround this individual prisoner. He has this idea of the beam of light that illuminates—I see it like shining a flashlight into the past—exposing this larger scenario, but at the same time he calls attention to the whole investigative production behind the act of bringing someone from the past to life. There's this creative aspect that is perhaps disconnected from the verifiable, empirical facts that Gerard is rightly concerned with, but which also has its place. They're sort of two different projects right?

Yve: Of course.

Kyle: There's this historical, empirical perspective, and then there's this more theoretical kind of practice. Each with different purposes and functions. So I was just fascinated thinking about that, how the symposium and this reexamination are kind of making the tension between these approaches visible. Also to think about what we are doing within a larger framework in accessing the archive. Derrida's *Archive Fever* is quite on point here which I think you may have read.

Yve: Yes.

Kyle: He does this really cool genealogy tracing the etymology of the word ‘archive’. He traces it back to the Greek word *archeon*, which means house, and how it was the house of the archons, the superior magistrates of the society at the time. They possessed the right to make the laws and it was in their house where the official documents were kept. And this is how Derrida sets up thinking about the archive and its power. So I was thinking about how we’re also dealing with the Judson archive. The power of it, and how it shapes the platform from which order is given in subsequent inquiry, discourse and production. This is the idea that Derrida proposes.

Yve: And so with Judson we have an incomplete archive displaced from its house. Coincidentally, the titles of the four pieces I’ve made for Movement Research at Judson include either the word “house” or “home.” With that I was thinking about how we narrate our origin story as downtown dance people. “Home” necessitates a return. Or escape. Movement Research’s Monday series [at Judson Church] has far outlasted Judson Dance Theater, and I wonder how the accrual of monday performances in the church, since 1991, is recasting the historic Judson Dance Theater. Something Herko illuminates is the asymmetrical treatment of the Judson artists in this moment where that era in dance is being “rediscovered” and rigorously historicized for the first time, and how the active curation of living artists plays a huge role in this reformulation of the 60’s Judson archive. The way the artists are curated now in 2014 affects how we digest their 60’s work and construct the broader Judson story. Yvonne Rainer is making new work at the same time as she’s having a zillion retrospectives. And Steve Paxton—the same thing. And Simone Forti—

Kyle: —in New York, in London.

Yve: Everywhere! And who else? Trisha Brown, certainly. And in the meantime, Fred Herko can only be given a one-

day symposium that talks around him, and his works can’t be remounted, especially given the nature of his ultimate work. I almost said “final work,” but I don’t want to betray José’s idea about the choreographing of a suicide being a queer utopian gesture because it reaches beyond the finality of that moment—that, bracketed as a performance, Herko’s suicide negates the finitude of death through what José calls “radical negativity.” Still, Herko’s inability to be curated is exciting to me as far as the ends of reproduction. Queer non-reproduction is one thing, but then there’s refusal—which is also a queer strategy, and maybe Herko’s meta-strategy within Judson. Even now, his dances are refusing to be revived. So you know, José talks about ornament, ornamentation, and flamboyance, and excess, and those being part of Herko’s queer aesthetic that was in opposition to, or resisting, or other-than the prototypical postmodern dance model of you know, “pared-down”—

Kyle: —the everyday, the minimalist—

Yve: Sure. So, José presents Freddy’s work against this supposed Judson aesthetic monolith. Like queerness, for José, Freddy’s work is “something else.” I think there’s something else happening in Freddy’s work than “something else.” One reason has to do with the assumption of this so-called minimalist monolith. I don’t think that’s what Herko’s aesthetic, with its particular modes of excess, was refusing. Freddy also wasn’t alone in deploying camp: David Gordon, for one, took that tack. Freddy’s suicide does make me go back and read his “ornamented” dance pieces differently, though. That might not be fair. But as an artist, I do think there’s something to the idea of honoring a fellow artist’s full practice. And in this case it likely encompasses his suicide, so we have to talk about it, right?

Kyle: Absolutely.

Yve: But to what extent do we have to honor him, actually? In discussing him.

Kyle: Good question. For me the question right now in thinking about his suicide is does his suicide eclipse his oeuvre? The Italian Filmmaker, Pier Paolo Pasolini, said that death is the final editor—it makes us retrospectively reevaluate a person’s life—it attains this kind of crispness in death and I think this is definitely in effect in Herko’s case. My question still, though, is, does his death overshadow his body of work? Or, in some ways, because there is so little documentation of it—I keep thinking about Yvonne Rainer, you know, she’s got so little video documentation of her work from that period.

Yve: Well—

Kyle: —she told me once after a performance at Dia:Beacon that all the works from that period were lost. But perhaps you’ve seen some things that I haven’t seen!

Yve: But then does the saturation of documentation of *Trio A*, now in its many 21st-century manifestations, overpower the 1960s lack of documentation? We forget that there was no documentation then, you know?

Kyle: Yes, good point.

Yve: And certainly the Judson performances are chronicled in Jill Johnston’s writing, and others’—

Kyle: —of course, and Deborah Jowitt—but I am thinking about what Carrie Lambert-Beatty writes in *Being Watched*, about how our perceptions are informed by the photographic archive, and that we have to consider the double mediation from the work to the film, and back to live work again.

Yve: I’m curious about how Yvonne’s *Hand Movie* ties in for you, especially given that it was post-Judson Dance Theater.

Kyle: Well *Hand Movie* is definitely well after Herko’s death—but there is an interesting connection between Herko and Rainer. I was looking through the symposium program and Rainer and Herko shared concerts where it was just the two of them—I think in 1964. I’ve also been thinking about her so-called “No

Manifesto,” which she of course later refuted—but. there are a few lines that stood out to me when considering Herko’s case: “No to transformations and make believe. No to the glamour transcendancy of the star image. No to trash imagery. No to camp. No to eccentricity.” I’m rethinking to whom or to what she was responding, if Herko’s work might be somehow causal to the aesthetic stance she took. Herko was certainly not the only person that was working like this, but still considering his proximity to her, it is striking.

Yve: I’m so glad you brought that up. This is a question I actually want to ask Yvonne. It occurred to me as I was in class with my students and Barbara: the “No Manifesto” and Yvonne’s work in general are so often read as refusing previous dance traditions, as rejecting ballet, rejecting—

Kyle: —Cunningham.

Yve: Cunningham, but also Graham and other modern forms, but I guess most recently Cunningham. Although, Judson artists certainly took up Cunningham’s project in some ways, mostly via the Dunns [Judith and Robert], of course. But after looking at all the semester’s material I thought, Oh, is Yvonne actually talking about her contemporaries? Is the “No Manifesto” actually a side-eye toward other Judson artists, including Herko? Maybe especially Herko? I mean, what’s so funny about “no to trash imagery” is that the most striking, beautiful footage of Herko is him watering those trash cans in Elaine Summers’ film.

Kyle: Totally!

Yve: And so Herko lets us read the No Manifesto in a more nuanced way, and we can remember Yvonne wasn’t isolated within the Judson era. And that friction amongst your peers is a necessary part of art production.

Kyle: It sounds like, if anything, it makes those early Judson concerts sound even richer and not yet solidified into this conception of Judson postmodernism, but rather as a much

more complicated and pluralistic aesthetic idea. The term postmodern is a contested idea. Susan Manning has really criticized Sally Bane's use of the term, you know, whether you do it with a dash or not, and that postmodernism in dance does not line up with postmodernism in visual art.

Yve: Yes. Dance being out of time with the trajectory of visual art movements, and those being out of time with the progression of capitalism; modernism and modernity being misaligned, and now late modernity and postmodernism being misaligned. So what do you do with Herko, a figure who is out of space and time with dance, which is itself, as a discipline, out of space and time with art, which is struggling in late capitalism.

Kyle: Well that's interesting how you just said that dance is a discipline out of space and time. The materials of dance are space and time, in a way. So is it made of space and time? Or how did you mean that? I'm curious.

Yve: In the way that José talks about Ernst Bloch's formation of temporality, building on Marx. And I'm going to butcher this—

Kyle: —you're not an Ernst Bloch scholar?

Yve: Ha, no.

Kyle: The surplus value produced by workers estranged from their labor and its transformation into the aesthetic, right?

Yve: Right. But Bloch also talks about how people in different subject positions don't just experience time differently in a perceptual way—they are literally in their own time, falling in or out of dominant time. Bloch draws those fault lines mostly around class and age. José brings in race, gender, sexuality, disability. He talks about "straight time" and the bodies that fall out of or slip away from that. It's racialized bodies, it's queer and trans bodies, it's disabled bodies. Straight time isn't just the heterosexual subject's time; it's the stand-in for this normative stricture that governs our lives within late capitalism.

Kyle: It's the hegemonic time.

Yve: Yes. And he talks about a slowing or delay. And while queerness has been thought through as arrested development, José does something much more complex. It's not just this slowing or delay, it's something elsewhere. He brings in space. Queer time has been worked on for a while now, but trans temporality has just begun to be theorized. José mentions transpeople but only in this laundry list of bodies that don't fit into straight time. Transness is folded into queerness, but isn't specifically articulated. In my own work I've been thinking through how time gets curvaceous. How it gets distorted. It's not just a slowing, or being somewhere else in space-time, but there's this bubbling, ballooning, that happens through suspension. Or the ballooning creates the suspension. That's the image that helps me. It's not stretched laterally like taffy. Especially because now the slowing of time has all these new-age associations: Slow Food, appropriated versions of meditation and yoga, "slow down" in Papyrus typeface. You can get a clear idea of the marketing image. Slowing down is not so useful for me.

Kyle: Time is kind of commoditized.

Yve: Totally. Paradoxically, it's become about slowing down in order to more effectively and efficiently consume. Slowing time is super hip within visual art performance discourse right now. And aside from my aversion to the fashion of it, it's not feeling like it has much political potential anymore. What do you think?

Kyle: About slow time? About slowing down? About just the temporal in general?

Yve: Any of it. How does it fit into your work?

Kyle: I mean, I'm interested in the spatio-temporal in terms of aesthetic materials. I'm very interested in the materiality of time and space and how one can crystallize that in a work. It's really incredible when it functions and you're able to perceive

that—how a work can make one aware of time and space in a way that is not normally possible. The poetics of it I guess.

Yve: That’s interesting that you say crystallize because already that implies a kind of physical compression—doing something material to space and time.

Kyle: Yes, I think it is. I saw this great piece by Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker/Rosas, called *Vortex Temporum*. In the piece, she has the dancers and musicians all playing musical instruments together as they slowly circulate around the stage—even the piano is moving. The musical group is called Ictus — fabulous musicians. And the whole thing was circling. At a certain point, the direction reverses and goes the other way. I had a moment there when I really started to understand what this activity was doing to time and space; I was seeing how this aesthetic production was kind of like [makes a screeching noise]. Through the arts, how one can tweak time and space and show that it is a malleable material in a way.

Yve: And one question I have, just in my own work and thinking, is, how can dance’s space-time distortion transcend its role as an experience that an artist is delivering for an audience member, within the parameters of the performance? And I’m not talking about expanding or changing those parameters, although that’s one way to do it. So, the audience has this cool experience of time for an evening and then everyone goes home and everything’s as it was before. How can our work actually restructure the way we live? “We,” including both artist and audience. I don’t know if art can or should necessarily do that, but it’s a helpful proposition for me.

Kyle: Well you’re pointing to the way that the arts are displaced from everyday life. They’re separate. In the visual arts, they’re in a highly commoditized realm, right? You know, sort of luxury goods, luxury market. Dance, not so. It still has resisted to some extent.

Yve: Well, it depends who you’re talking about.

Kyle: I guess the New York City Ballet.

Yve: Judson has currency. Is currency.

Kyle: It’s very complicated and really interesting to think about how experimental performance art—I mean, yeah—at some point resists commodification, and on the other hand, it is brought to the museum to increase foot traffic, to increase visitors, it’s got a real draw. It’s a real draw also for the object-based arts; it really enlivens them in many ways.

Yve: One frustration I have with the way performance is often curated in a visual art context is how it’s just brought in to enhance your experience of the saleable works. Performance is called upon in “activating the space,” or, “activating the objects,” or, what did you say, “enhancing”?

Kyle: Enlivening.

Yve: Enlivening! Yes. This idea that performance provides an ultra-sensorial experience that awakens us to consume better. I told my students last week in class—and this is all hearsay because I wasn’t even at this talk—but there was this performance symposium at MoMA few years ago where Judith Butler and Shannon Jackson were delivering the keynote. I guess, in response to a question about the role of performance now, Judith Butler talked about the “de-deadening of the senses.” David Velasco found that interesting and wrote me about it, but I misread his text as saying the “deadening of the senses.” I was so excited because that sounded like an antidote to all of this yoga talk around being “totally present” and awake and alive in “in the moment”. Coming back to José: he’s talking about the “here and now” as a normative constraint—he actually calls it a “prison house.” He says we need to be thinking, feeling, a “then and there”. There’s a built-in rejection of this impetus to “be present.” Dance pedagogy pressures us to be “in our bodies.” This has a built-in temporality wrapped up in the present, so it really means, “be in your body in the here and now.” Coming from my perspective as a trans person

and my investment in disability studies and crip theory, I find this directive to be incredibly oppressive. It can only really address certain dominant subject positions. But anyway, with my misread of “de-deadening of the senses,” I was thinking, Oh! Judith Butler is talking about a retreat from being the best-sensing organism possible. Here I thought she was valuing degeneration or sensory shutdown. Or getting deader.

Kyle: It’s really interesting how you sketched that out—how you think about the body and these unrealistic and counterintuitive expectations for our senses—and how we force ourselves into the temporal embodiment of these individualized, atomic, separated bodies. One way that I’ve come to understand the body is how it is constituted by the social, how our conceptions of the body are socially and historically constructed. The historicity of the body—this is how Dominic Johnson frames Herko’s suicide in *Modern Death*. And bringing this back to Herko—I don’t know if you had any thoughts on this—but this idea of Herko as a balletic presence within Judson.

Yve: That is exactly what I wanted to talk about!

Kyle: And what about that? That is a very strong position he was taking amidst the everyday aesthetics of his Judson colleagues.

Yve: Yes. And he was very prescient, in a way, with that. He both predicts the ballet boom of the 80’s and also this post-9/11 return to the balletic. In that way, he is kind of the most contemporary figure of the Judson era.

Kyle: The film that we saw at the symposium where he was dancing with Jill Johnston—*Jill and Freddy Dancing* [1963, Andy Warhol].. He is doing tours en l’air, and chassés to a perfect fifth position. He’s not at all trying not to do that. He is totally embracing his ready-made ballet dance vocabulary. I’m thinking of the Raindeers, Yvonne Rainer’s current company, and Emily—

Yve: —Emily Coates.

Kyle: Emily Coates brings in the use of this ready-made ballet genre to Yvonne’s more recent work. In a way, he was also embodying that.

Yve: And it didn’t feel completely parodic. At least in the glimpses we have in *Jill and Freddy Dancing*, his ballet dancing feels pretty sincere. There’s a wink, definitely, but we can detect a kind of love for the form. I could be projecting. Another thing: in José’s essay, when he quotes Steve Paxton, or “Bill Paxton”—

Kyle: Which I still don’t fully understand

Yve: I really love that typo, so much.

Kyle: Is it a typo?

Yve: It’s an oversight that I think is great. So, Paxton says about Herko’s work, “You would get some ballet movement, none of it with very high energy.” This is what interests me most in Herko’s dances. Low-energy ballet. It’s a really exciting proposition, as a kind of resistance. Deflation. Evacuation. Maybe even disembodiment. These can be queer strategies too. They’re certainly trans survival strategies. I’m more compelled by this formal choice of Herko’s than the camp and ornamentation and flamboyance that José foregrounds.

Kyle: This makes me think of the complete reduction and decomposition of the balletic form in [William] Forsythe’s *Decreation* [2003] as the kind of end to this trajectory launched by Herko — he appears to have been absolutely contemporary in that way. But I didn’t mean to interrupt you. What does Paxton say after that? Because I’m also thinking about Paxton—and different queer strategies taken up by Herko vis à vis Paxton. Does he mention camp?

Yve: In the first sentence of the quote, “It seemed very campy and self-conscious, which wasn’t at all my interest.” My last point about the low-energy ballet is just about Freddy Herko

being pre-queer or proto-queer, before the onset of the gay liberation movement. José talks about this at the end of his essay, which is so gorgeous and devastating and—just drops off. That last page gives me chills. His final sentence: “Would being gay have made his utopian and vexed queerness any easier or more painful?” The fact that Herko’s not-yet-gay makes him queerer and more contemporary, in the way that queerness is other than mainstream gay political strategy. And “not-yet” is endemic to queerness anyhow, says José.

Kyle: Also, this proto-queerness that you mention, this ballet dancer descending from the more elite uptown to a more decrepit downtown, this low energy ballet—Herko’s got this one piece *Once or Twice a Week I Put on Sneakers to Go Uptown* [1962] that highlights this interesting uptown/downtown tension, and I think there was a lot at stake for him in the transgresssive movement from uptown to downtown.

Yve: Right. I’m just thinking of how we organize uptown and downtown dance today and how there’s this kind of nebulous category that was encapsulated by Dance New Amsterdam [a dance studio formerly operating in lower Manhattan], rest in peace. DNA was a hub for this dance sensibility that’s not quite uptown or downtown, and I wonder if Freddy would have been engaged with that.

Kyle: That’s a good question. I’m just reflecting on this film with Jill Johnston and Herko and wondering if it predates a kind of disdain for ballet as an elite uptown form. It seems like it was no problem that Freddy was arabesqueing about or chasséing in fifth position. It’s almost as if everything was allowed and novel in a way. I wonder if these kinds of positions between uptown and downtown dance were just forming then.

Yve: Yeah. Doesn’t that film feel like it could have been shot at an AUNTS evening today?

Kyle: Absolutely.

Yve: On a rooftop in Bushwick.

Kyle: What do you think about the camp aspect?

Yve: First, I think it’s maybe a misnomer. Too often, the work of queer artists is pigeon-holed in the domain of camp, even if it’s not their intention. I’m thinking of Susan Sontag’s essay.

Kyle: Yes—her “Notes on Camp”—these are a dense proposition. I pulled one quote which I thought worked for us, which is: “camp, any sensibility which can’t be crammed into the mold of a system, something that can’t be hardened into an idea”. Sontag seems to be saying that camp resists reification; it’s a very protean thing, very shape-changing in a way. And when I think about the force of the minimalist aesthetic, it seems to really have taken a kind of priority at Judson and then I think about—

Yve: —could we pause for a moment on “minimalist”? One thing that gets to me is the way it isn’t correctly transposed.

Kyle: From object arts to performance arts?

Yve: Yeah.

Kyle: Sort of how performance art problematizes the minimalist project. You’re a sculptor also right?

Yve: Yeah. Well just that capital “M” Minimalism within visual art is a discrete art movement with discipline-specific characteristics. The word “minimalism” doesn’t easily move from that context to dance and mean similar things. It can’t map onto dance as a neat transposition.

Kyle: This is something that I’m interested in within aesthetics—how the same concepts and ideas play out in different media.

Yve: Using this same word across disciplines ignores the specificity of the different disciplines’ toolboxes. Many so-called Minimalist sculptors have rejected that word, which art historians applied retroactively. Within music, Phillip Glass says, “I’m not a minimalist composer. I make

repeating structures.” And yet, every fourth *New Sounds* broadcast announces, “Today’s show features minimalist piano works.” Which is essentially Phillip Glass and friends. It’s now accepted as both a form and genre. When I think of the genres that Judson Dance Theater initiated, there are all these ways of working now that have been dislodged from their parent decade. “Task-based” is something that is no longer specific to the 60s—it’s a way of working that anyone can take up now. Working with tasks is just one of many things you can choose from as a dancemaker today, and if you decide to do something task-based it doesn’t mean you’re necessarily quoting Judson. Anyhow, I think we should uncouple “minimalist” and “postmodern” in dance, don’t you think? They’re often said in one breath without any interrogation

Kyle: I think so yes—minimalism is one among many aesthetic propositions within dance postmodernism that in effect let everything in and allowed it to be seen as dance.

Yve: Well, pastiche!

Kyle: Pastiche, right. From what I understand the pastiche comes in later as second stage postmodernism. And the first stage of postmodernism within dance history seems to have tended towards the minimal, the body as material, task-based operations and working with objects.

Yve: *Fantastic Gardens* [a film by Elaine Summers, 1964] involves pastiche, though.

Kyle: That’s true. Stunning film!

Yve: Just one last thought. Coming back to the Derridian trace and how we interpret Herko’s traces; how it’s obviously impossible to read José’s work on Herko without acknowledging José’s death and this essay being one of his traces—albeit a very robust trace—how that makes me think through Herko differently, how I read this essay differently when José was alive than when I read it now—and how their

deaths are kind of paired. What that means, I don’t know. I’m still figuring it out.

Kyle: Well it’s quite recent also. I did not know José.

Yve: He was on my thesis committee when I graduated from Columbia. I had asked him to be on it during a performance and choreographed that proposal. But you know, I was obviously not nearly as close to him as were a lot of NYU students and his colleagues in the Performance Studies department. It’s a heavy thing to be teaching there now and feel the grief of that department; it’s palpable. His absence is really felt right now. It’s weird to read about utopia with this—sadness. And I think that people are misreading his work because of it too. There’s a kind of romanticizing of José’s utopianism that’s happening: a misreading of it as optimism, which is different than utopian thinking. Utopian thinking is politically strategic instead of again, this new-age, “everything will be just fine,” self-help modality, which breeds complicity.

Kyle: So, optimism as a kind of denial whereas a utopian vision is more politically strategic in that you’re voicing this alternative future.

Yve: And he talks about the difference between optimism and hope. As we celebrate José’s life and work, we have to hold on to his own sadness too, and not flatten the complexities of his writing. His own ambivalence is an important part of his work—his book isn’t just a manifesto. And—I think I’m going to end on that.

Kyle: There’s this tragic rhythm from Herko’s death to José’s death and the fact that we’re looking at them both now is quite remarkable.

TAVIA NYONG'O
&
RAJA KELLY

Tavia Nyong'o: I'm here with Raja Kelly to talk about Freddie Herko and some of the questions around the recent symposium at NYU. The first question that we were given had to do with defining queer performance. Someone once told me that definitions are where thought goes to die, so I don't know whether we have to define queer performance. But it's interesting to think about how, whatever queer performance is, it was responsible for making his work hard to categorize or talk about or theorize as it was, whether in terms of dance, art or performance. It seems the queerness of the work is part of what makes it mercurial.

Raja Kelly: Something that always stays with me, since I was in college when I first heard the word "queer," was that it was always attached to the word "questioning." "Queer" was always "Queer and Questioning." Something that I enjoy about my understanding of queer performance and queer anything is that it's still being defined to this day. "The definition of queer" presents an oxymoron. It's something that is still being defined. That's why I personally allow my work and myself to be identified with the word and the idea of queerness or "queer." That's my statement.

Tavia: I wrote my undergraduate thesis on the Ball scene in New York, literally Queer Performance 101, right? And yet I've always been sort of self conscious about trying to pin it down academically. One idea that we've also been asked to talk about is the work of my dear departed friend José Muñoz and his very useful idea of 'the evidence of ephemera,' both ephemeral gestures as well as ephemera in the archival sense, of the material that gets collected that doesn't seem to have a category—the party invite, the hat that ends up in the archive, the t-shirt, the button. These are not proper objects for history making but they become crucial to reconstructing whatever it is, the questioning of categories, the questioning of boundaries, that, for me, is what queerness is about. So, without defining queer performance, what I took away from the event was that Herko's work is exemplifying a certain kind of queerness in its questioning of the distinctions between

dance practice and “being on the scene.” For you, as someone coming out of choreography today but also making work that is drawing on the Factory and Andy Warhol’s tactics of drag and impersonation, how do those ephemeral gestures from the past inspire you?

Raja: When I think of José, his talking and his book, I think about how he encourages creating community, a queer community. This is a direct congruence to the Factory, my work, this event itself, all of those things—the events where we gather to do our work, to talk about queerness. I think that’s always happening, which again allows queerness to stay undefined or be defined in that nature of “still questioning.” What is the event? What is the community you’re building? What other communities do you identify with? That really sticks with me.

Tavia: How did you come to identify with the Warhol scene as a community, if you do identify with it?

Raja: I do. I like that I can present a selection of ideas and have people get into it, sign onto it, surround and submerge themselves beneath it, and allow that to further the work and the ideas, like a factory where the people there are perpetuating ideas and perpetuating images and it becomes a lifestyle. To me that’s fascinating. I also think about culture. What kind of culture isn’t pop culture? What kind of culture is not somewhat popular to someone? How not, if culture describes a mass understanding or a mass recognition, is it popular? Are we really taking numbers on which culture has more followers? I guess we can do that now with technology—these ideas have more followers than those ideas so this would be popular or more popular based on that. Thoughts around communities, building and using culture to tear or rip apart or define ourselves and our communities is what draws me to Andy Warhol and allows me to continue to delve into anything further. It’s endless and it’s always changing so there’s always work to do.

Tavia: I’m interested in what you said about being inspired by Warhol and the practice of the Factory. I’m curious about that method of art making which has, let’s say, at its core an idea of industrial production, the industrial production of mass entertainment, right? When we look at the “screen tests,” for example, taking a practice from the Hollywood studio system, calling your friends and hangers-on “superstars,” it’s taking a mass culture system and producing it at a different scale. I’m wondering about that practice of industrial scale or even “delegated performance” as we might now say, does that interest you as a choreographer in relationship to dance? Is that what you take from Warhol? Or is it some other aspect?

Raja: Yes, if my understanding of what you’re saying about industrial production is correct. I’m thinking about the culture of the dance field. I think that movement research is done, not really, but in a lot of ways. In the Judson era they were really thinking about researching movement. I don’t feel like that’s happening so much anymore. I think that what’s happening now is that people are asking: What are we going to do with all that research that has already been done? There’s Trisha Brown, there’s Steve Paxton, Fred Herko, David, Debbie and Yvonne, along with the list that follows, who have done all of this amazing work so that by the time I finished college, I thought my job was to ask: What am I going to do with that? What am I going to do with that knowledge that has been developed? Knowledge that I can go and look at in order to say that this is an architectural study in the body or this is a somatic study in the body. Now, that is material, research, that’s information. What am I, as a choreographer, as an artist, going to do with that?

I think it parallels Andy Warhol in the Factory in so far as he said here’s a Coca Cola bottle, here’s a Campbell’s soup. That’s already made, now, what I am going to do with it? What am I going to highlight? What am I going to draw people’s attention to? The fact that someone in Pittsburgh who doesn’t have a job but has a Coca Cola can be the same as Jackie Kennedy, it creates an intersection of those two people.

Within that kind of philosophy he's not really making anything new, he's using what's already made in order to comment on, draw attention to, or highlight it. I think that is one of my interests as a choreographer and why I feel connected to a Warholian philosophy.

Tavia: So, for instance, when you take the Drella series, his drag persona, and re-inhabit it in the present, at least part of that is about citing something. Andy Warhol becomes your Coke bottle?

Raja: Exactly, exactly. What was fascinating to me about Drella, this persona, is that Drella never had a performance and they call it a drag persona. So much of what I know and what I've learned about drag is that there is a performance, there is a thing that you do as a drag queen, king, drag person, a drag performer, and Andy Warhol just took pictures, someone just took pictures of him in a wig and suddenly a persona was built? I think it requires a little bit more than that, but we do that. We see pictures and fill it up with what it could be, sort of, or halfway. So, I thought, let's give Drella a show. Who is this character? What would this character do? What am I going to do with this? It's already created. There's Drella, which is Dracula and Cinderella—that alone has history, and then there's me, I'm a black queer guy taking on a white queer artist, taking on being a whiter woman who is a mixture of white whore, rags to riches, princess, and a bloodsucker. The work is done, it's laid out in front of me. I think that Andy Warhol probably felt the same way. Campbell's soup, it's in all of the cabinets, the repetition is in the stores. You see it there; the work is done. Now I'm going to highlight that, bring you closer, and put a magnifying glass to that. That kind of work interests me. If I were walking around New York City, or my life as a landscape, and I wanted to take a magnifying glass to something, what would that something be?

Tavia: That's great. What did Picasso say? I do not search, I find. And also, it's a different way of cutting through the traditional debate around live performance or whether or not

to document performance, in that if you start from the premise that the research has been done, its available, what do we do with this is almost readymade. The character Drella or a set of photographs of Drella, its become a way of actualizing that in the present rather than trying to go back and figure out what that moment was like necessarily, right? Going back always leaves us in a kind of nostalgic mode, in a recuperative mode, where we lament our distance from the past. You seem to have a different relationship to the document, where it becomes itself performative. This offers us a set of questions about how the archive can speak to work in contemporary dance, which is a different set of questions than whether or not dance can ever be captured by a camera. You said something before we began recording which interested me, when you mentioned that you were most interested in party invites. Can you mention again how invites figure in?

Raja: Yes. More than half of the creation of Drella went into thinking about how we would advertise Drella as a performance or, rather, how can we? The question came up from a cast member in the work, "When does the performance start?" s/he asked. That will forever stick with me. So, we talked a lot about performativity and what we were performing. Someone said, "When does that start?" We decided that performances start when you start talking about them. I think Andy Warhol would probably say something like, "it ends when people stop talking about it." The performance of Drella is still going now as we are talking about it. As I started to talk about it with people and developed with my team how we would advertise and invite people to the show, this will serve as the first experiential document. People started deciding what the show was going to be about and we started guiding that, framing. People will think and believe it is about this because that is what we are putting out and that gives us a lot of control, right? What I say to a person and how I present the piece. They'll begin to come up with their opinion of the work and they'll begin to start seeing the work.

I can say confidently that a part of my interest was the bait

and switch. I can create the image of the performance as one thing and then decide if I give that to them and then find if and when I can switch it up. When can I make it something else and what would that something else be? I think in performance that is powerful. Whereas maybe in a screen test Warhol's thing was, "I'm going to make you think that something else is going to happen and you'll wait for that but nothing changes." That's also really wonderful. I think that the document of Drella will still always be that. People will always remember their original feeling, what they felt, and maybe even during the performance they'll have a war with themselves, I thought it was going to be this and now it's this other thing, so they are participating even though I haven't asked them to do anything.

Tavia: I think about the ways Trajal Harrell has developed his proposition about Ball culture and Judson dance, but then, before all the performances I've been to, he issues the disclaimer: don't take this literally. But it's there in your mind and obviously shapes what you experience in the performance. It also makes me think of my own research into this area. My primary point of entry into the Warhol Factory is actually very tangential, Shirley Clarke's film *Portrait of Jason* and, in particular, Jason Holliday, her subject, who later advertised himself as a "superstar" at a moment where that would have been read in the underground as a Warhol superstar. Actually, what I have been able to look at in the archive is the ephemera of his presence on the scene because other than Shirley Clarke's movie, which has been canonical in underground film, there's not a lot of evidence of Jason himself. So, there's always a careful balance between trying to pin someone down whose queerness and obscurity, in the sense of a racial underground, is part of what I need to think about. The filmmaker Stephen Winter is now taking and reimagining and restaging that movie set in which Clarke and Holliday interacted precisely in a kind of sense that we're speaking of. Contemporary artists interested in taking their research materials from the past that are not trying to tell that history truthfully or fill in the gap of the record so much

as take them as provocation for understanding the present, to make new work. But I guess that a question comes up: What emphasis do you place on newness for its own sake? Is novelty a value in your practice?

Raja: In some ways, yes. I believe that I have an attachment to aesthetics and that I really want my work to look a particular way. Choreographers talk a lot about what they're doing and the content of what we're doing yet do they remember that people are going to see it? If they don't see it in performance then they'll see the document of it. How can your aesthetic match also your conceit? That's also something I wonder about you in respect to how you create your work, your writing, and how that in some ways is a product. Do you think any of these ideas play into the subject in your writing? How do you manage the same ideas that are happening in the scene of what you may be writing about, in how you write or how you present your writing? Do you find any parallels?

Tavia: There are some parallels and there are some differences. As a scholar I'm responsible to a certain kind of verity. My claims have to be true at some level even if that truth is always under debate, revision, and contestations. But, in a way, that truthfulness, that verity, is always a bit of a ruse. I conveniently started writing about the distant past without any relationship to any sort of living artist, which made it easier for me because there was no pushback, no one to say "no that's not the way it was" or "that's not how I see my work." But also, even beyond getting it right vis-à-vis artistic intentions or autobiographical memories, there's also the question of how scholarship and criticism works in relationship with artistic contemporary production. I think this is one of the legacies of conceptualism. It's interesting to place it in the field of pop culture and pop art but I think both pop art and conceptual art in different ways have really privileged the discursive surround of artistic production, generally speaking, and that therefore this has also made artists into entrepreneurs of themselves, in terms of articulating the meaning of their work. This has also placed the critic or scholar in an ambivalent

relationship to artistic careers. I find this is another place I can return to.

José Muñoz's work was so influential for me in modeling a critical voice that was very unique in that it set its own research questions in dialogue with the meanings generated by artists. How do you get from Ernst Bloch to Jack Smith, from Giorgio Agamben to Freddie Herko? You don't get there by saying there was some sort of influence that we failed to notice before. Rather, you get there by a kind of theoretical juxtaposition that is in itself a creative contribution to the ongoing dialogue. It adds or expands upon the potential meanings of the artwork and that act is always a necessarily delicate thing. In adding you are inventing. You are no longer in the stance of the objective verifier of truths. I think the anxiety for certain scholars is around precisely that point. Are you bringing something to the artwork or to the life? Some people draw a hard line between what scholars and artists can do. An artist is granted permission to have creative influences, while scholars have a different kind of responsibility. I don't think these roles necessarily have to converge or become identical.

I don't think of my scholarship as a practice in the exact same way as an artistic practice, although I do recognize that there are writers that do think of their writing as part of a creative practice that also can include photography, etc. Me, I'm sort of a non-practitioner. In writing or theorizing, I want to look for the places where my own teaching and my own interpretive predilections can offer something to an ongoing scene. I think that's also, at its best, what queer performance does. That questioning, as you began by saying. I think academics are, if nothing else, here to ask questions.

Raja: What you've just said for me draws what you and I do closer. Meaning, there's the document of what we do, which for me is the performance. I think of performance as a document in a lot of ways, an idea was born in 2009 and in 2014, it's presented and there's all this history of what I've done and where it's been and where it could've gone. Then

there's the document that I call the performance. For you, as well, there's all the research you've done and who you've talked to and your opinions. There's all of that history and then there's the document, the scholarship, the result of that. I think it comes down to these questions. José Muñoz makes me think: Are you going to kill something? Or kill yourself? Or are you going to offer hope? There's everything you did and what became of what you did so what becomes of that? Does it give us hope? Or did you kill yourself or are you killing a subject?

Tavia: José co-wrote an essay with Lisa Duggan called "Hope and Hopelessness: A Dialogue" and they say that the real thing to guard against is neither hope nor hopelessness, but complacency. The resistance to complacency, that's what I take from Herko, from the work that you're doing, and from even the idea of a "crash course" with all the attendant risks of that title. It's all beginning to think about how a performance can reverberate over time in all kinds of unexpected ways that take us out of our complacency. I welcomed the clash of opinion and attitude at the event. I think that it's important not to imagine queer community or collectivity as simply harmonious. It wasn't ever harmonious. People were and are on divergent tempos of aggression and passivity. It's not about all converging in a happy kumbaya moment (although I loved singing "Kumbaya" as a hippie kid). It would also be a mistake to think of things as totally nihilistic or individualistic, it's much more creative than that. It sounds like that's what you're responding to in the work.

Raja: Yes. In this moment of speaking I wondered what would it be like to think of this symposium as a performance. If that were a performance it changes my opinion of what happened or what could happen. Especially with respect to everything we just said. Now going back to the symposium or the idea that there's all this research and the document of that, and so, what is that? What comes first? And where does that leave us? In some ways there must be conflict; there must be more questions. My mind goes on a complete turn around if I start

to think about that. I'm reminded of a moment in a workshop with Miguel Gutierrez. I had said that I have a belief that we're always performing. He challenged me to really know the difference between when we are and when we're not. He definitely knows for himself. However, I think that challenging that can allow us to consider what we can actually learn from thinking about how we shape performance in respect to how we naturally engage with one another, how we engage with history and fact and scholarship. When they're put up against each other, where we go. What if we were presented with the idea that this symposium was actually a performance, with a restaging. Here's this situation that was real and now here's a situation that's performed, in a venn diagram. I want to know what we can think about in reference to that middle section.

Tavia: It is a whole can of worms. We're talking about this a lot in performance studies. One way we're talking about it is through the category of performance-as-research, or performance-led-research, or creative research. On the one hand, there seem to be an additional burdening of artists with the obligations of research that traditionally fell to academic researchers. In order to integrate into the university system and attain teaching jobs, you have to be a researcher. Why should that be? Why can't you make and teach art? Why does research have to be included in the rubric for it to be legitimate? On the other hand, there are artists that do all kinds of research and the research outcome is their artistic work. So there are lots of these conversations. And conversely, as you were just alluding to, I feel in sympathy with what I imagine Miguel was intending by wanting to know when you are and are not performing, because when I said earlier, I don't necessarily think of my writing as a practice, in part that is to allow space in my life for reflection upon art. I want to allow a space for me not to be the performer so that performance can happen and I can be in dialogue with it. That's very important to me, especially as a somewhat introverted and shy person who does not like to be on display. In other moments, like while teaching, I've come to embrace

the idea that I am always performing. The idea that teaching is a kind of performance I can rehearse and get better at, one that can go well or poorly but has to be repeated either way, there are moments when I do very much have performance consciousness in that role.

So, was the symposium a performance? The symposium was very much staged around a set of research aims, one of which was to bring Herko more centrally into dance and performance studies. But what does that mean? Also, how does it accomplish that? Does it accomplish it by making him canonical or by redefining the genres so he becomes newly legible within them? What role does veracity or verity play in all this? I was very struck by how one researcher was very concerned that we know that Herko was 27 and not 28 when he died. Or was it the other way around? Again, that fact matters (and certainly it matters to Herko) but in what sense does it matter? What is the difference of knowing his exact age at death make? Or that so-and-so was not yet divorced when a certain event occurred? This fact only matters in a particular kind of frame, depending upon what you're trying to do. It may matter for a biographer but it wouldn't matter, or would matter differently, for a different kind of scholarly or writerly project. Different facts matter depending upon what you're trying to do with them; they are infinitely perspectival. This is the great lesson of Samuel Delany's memoir, *The Motion of Light in Water*.

Raja: I wrote down a couple things while you were speaking. Namely, intersections and function. This question about when you're performing and when you're not performing for me is about understanding. In my day-to-day life when I'm not performing, when does performativity come up, when does it intersect? If I start performing, for what function am I doing that? In order to understand why or the effect or what can be gained when it's in a situation out of its nest.

Tavia: There's a perfect example of this in the film *Portrait of Jason*, which I recommend highly. Jason, the subject,

is speaking the whole time and he's what you'd call "a character," so he's always performing and telling stories and performing himself. But there's a specific section of the DVD that's titled "Performance" and it's where he does a version of his stage act, because part of what his hustle is is to hustle people for support for this cabaret act that he's forever promising. So, he does a version of it. And it's so interesting to see it framed, not even in the film itself but in the DVD, as that is the performance. There are brackets around brackets around brackets. That is what I mean by saying it's infinitely perspectival. There is always an angle from which something can be seen as performance. The film is such a rich source for thinking about the relationship between authenticity and performance in popular culture because of what Jason is doing at that moment, he's performing Mae West, he's performing Scarlett O'Hara, Butterfly McQueen. He's not in drag but he's doing a queer performance. If you watch the film you'll notice how even now, in contemporary downtown performers, you can see this performance was a template. Jason is visible and audible in Justin Vivian Bond, in any number of contemporary performers who have sort of taken on aspects of his raconteur persona. This question of where is the moment where we stop performing is fascinating.

Raja: First, I think this is exactly where the symposium ended and is where a lot of things should have started. When this woman who had been around in the 60s, everyone in the room knew that and she knew the people we were discussing, mainly Fred Herko, said that we are putting this, meaning the conceits, on top of them. We as scholars and performers are taking information, taking what's not performed and performing it in order to learn and to disseminate information. In so doing, we're naming things, we're defining things in order to dance and talk about it. I think we make templates, and I think that's the "hope" that José discusses when he talks about what queer performance can do; offer us hope. These templates afford way I can explore this side of this thing or that which I couldn't formally put a name to. There

it is; there is my template. Then, it's a matter of, if it's just a template, is it a dead end or a template that offers another template or another pathway?

Tavia: It goes back to what you said about the aesthetic and how important is it for you to think about the aesthetic and how you present your work even before it's performed. It's a template but it's also not a full template. Maybe its more an implement or an example or instance showing what can happen. If that can happen, what else could? That is interesting. You can do ballet or modern dance on one roller skate. It doesn't necessarily mean you're going to do that piece again but it opens up a what if?

Raja: Maybe on a roller skate with one hand, upside down, in whiteface.

Tavia: Yes, very good. Let's let that be the last word.

CLAUDIA LA ROCCO
&
JILLIAN PEÑA

dear jillian—

It is not that I have no past. Rather, it continually fragments on the terrible and vivid ephemera of now.

This is a quote from Samuel R. Delany. Did he come up that afternoon at NYU? I don't think so. But guess what? I'm reading his memoir, *The Motion of Light in Water: Sex and Science Fiction Writing in the East Village*, and on page 12 there was this sentence: "The Coffee Gallery was upstairs from the print shop where Diane Di Prima and LeRoi Jones were producing *The Floating Bear*." ... New York is such a small world, no? I wonder if Delany and Herko ever crossed paths. (Apparently: yes! Just did a Google book search... they were introduced at least.)

But anyway, I have been thinking about Delany (I forever want to write "Delaney"—have had to correct every mention of him in this writing so far) in relation to that Herko afternoon because of the way in which Delany situates himself in relation to his writing and his memories—acknowledging the different levels of fact and truth that rise up and tangle with each other whenever we try to reconstruct the past. Already that contentious afternoon at NYU seems like a distant planet, one that has mutated through my memory of it and (even worse! even better?) my writing [a column](#) on it.

And but so. Here we are. I don't think I'm that interested in facts (except when I am). Are you? Tell me something you like about Herko. Or anything. Or?

Hey hi Claudia,

I love facts. I appreciate how flexible they are. I took all of the competing facts that we heard about Freddie as true. Facts continually shift based on our current desires. I feel grandiose saying that, but please forgive me — I'm listening to Mozart's Requiem...

Freddie danced out the 4th story window to Mozart's Requiem. Or at least that's what Gerard Forde said at the NYU symposium. Other scholars/historians/artists, however, have said that it was to Mozart's Coronation Mass that he danced his last dance. Did I hear him wrong? Probably. This seems like an important distinction that we'll never clarify.

A coronation is a becoming; a requiem is an act of remembrance. To remember is to create facts, possibly for the first time. So maybe a requiem and a coronation are essentially the same thing.

I was recently talking to a dancer at American Ballet Theatre (where Fred was a scholarship student) who listens to Mozart's Requiem when she can't sleep, which is every night. I almost told her that the soundtrack of her

sleepless nights is the same soundtrack as Fred Herko's descent to death, but this seemed inappropriate. (Or maybe it would have been exactly appropriate.) Mozart's Requiem was unfinished at the time of his death, and similar to Herko's death; there are many myths and debates over the work.

I like Delany's (yes, it's painful not to write Delaney!) quote about the past vs. its fragmentation in the now. I feel the opposite - The past keeps on transforming. The present stays the same. I live in the past, it's so much more interesting. You? Do you prefer re-writing the past or imagining the future?

Hmmm.

Facts are flexible. Fact-makers, not so much. (Mythologizers, not at all? That sounds good but I think I might not agree with it at all. As in, I don't believe it's true.)

Really? Really you live in the past? And you live there happily? I think I am forever caroming from past to future, with nary a stop in the present. I hate that. So can I say that I prefer neither, and that instead I am engaged in what often feels like an epic battle to actually land where I am?

I think that's why I like art-making so much; when I'm writing I feel fully engaged, fully deployed. It's on the short list with great sex, great food, strange travel and intense physical exertion.

And I like art-making as a way to fully take advantage of this flexibility you love.

Your poor insomniac dancer makes me think of Toni Bentley's glorious book *Winter Season: A Dancer's Journal*. And also what Susan Rethorst wrote in her memoir *A Choreographic Mind* about her relationship to sleep, to not sleeping, to the relentless and marvelous artistic will^{1,2}

Twenty some years later, when I lived in NYC, I had a loft near the Hudson River. The street was perpendicular to the river and my bed was parallel to the river, placed north-south, with my head to the north. When I couldn't sleep, I would picture my friends in bed all over the city. Knowing their homes and where in their homes their beds were, knowing the streets of the city and its grid, I could lay them all out in relation to me—the river, their streets, the compass and each other, a map of more or less right angled sleepers. This was my insomnia pastime, born of my penchant for "seeing" people in space. While mapping, I was unconsciously including something else, too, in my map—sleepiness, soothingness in the company of those prone friends.

¹ "Will" isn't the right word here. What is?

² Yeah, you're right. "Will" feels both too simple and too grand. The word I overuse but still adore is "desire." Desire feels similarly driven but more playful, nuanced, and magical. Not serious? Still wrong...

Mapping associated emotional consequence that may or may not have been reasonable—projecting through my bodily imagination, looking to 'borrow' some of that sleepiness to help me out.

I guess I should be talking more about Freddy. But what to say? What, specifically, for me to say?

Delany again: "...while 'story' is what we can create, what we can recount, what we can recall, 'History' (as one evokes it in biography, in autobiography), is what most of us do *not* remember, what most of us *cannot* speak of."

I wonder what would have happened to Freddy had he not jumped/danced/etc. out that window. I wonder what would have happened to his story and his History. Maybe he might've built a ballet-Judson bridge. And then he could've jumped from that.

Okay okay, backing it up to your oh-so-proper desire to stay in the present. I know that this is the goal. We are all fighting and working hard to stay in the now. I'm so exhausted by this idea, and at least for this conversation, I'm saying Fuck It. I dispute the now. it is no good to me.

I feel fully engaged and deployed in the past as you do in the present. This covers art-making, sex, food, and travel. (I'm leaving out intense physical exertion because I'm too lazy for it.) It's all those things that make the present disappear. That loss of time and place is exactly what I look for in my work (both in the making and in the actual performance of it), in sex, in meditation, and in sleep.

Great sex is very rarely about the now, and if it is, then it is just a single layer of good physical experience. What makes sex great is layers of past experiences that either happened or didn't happen smashing up against each other. Food and travel are similar, with each bite and step carrying a history that you can taste and feel. The present is only worthwhile because it is looking at the past.

Art-making most of all is a celebration of the past. It's about the perpetual past. What I want to make is a recreation of a place that I think I've been before. I want to make visible and physical memories that may or may not be true. Oh, so maybe this is doing exactly what you're saying - pushing things into the present?

What I believe that I'm doing is more like the work of an archaeologist - I am excavating ideas I'm holding onto, I'm digging through the past to create new truths. I love how things that I believed were true once aren't true today. This is what makes life fun.

Image 600_Herko4 not found

things that I believed were true once aren't true today.
This is what makes life fun.

I like this distinction Delany makes between story and history. But I guess that's exactly what I don't care about. That's why Gerard Forde's insistence about everyone's stories not being true history seemed boring and beside the point.

Freddy *did* build a ballet-Judson bridge. Here we are on it. It feels like a stable bridge. I'm not going to jump and it's not going to crumble.

dear jillian—

once more, & with feeling: Ok. No to being in the present, No to jumping & crumbling. No to any intense physical exertion that isn't part of sex. No to being proper and to boring insistence & to anything beside the point, unless it's so goddamn good that it becomes the point. Digression as usurper, riding in on a pony, with an oversized sword.

I'm in. Or out. Or whatever. Nice talking with you.

As always, & ever, & etc. Love—CLR.

**ADRIENNE EDWARDS
&
JEN ROSENBLIT**

Adrienne Edwards: Maybe we could begin with initial reactions to the symposium? Because that is what we have been asked to discuss, right?

Jen Rosenblit: I think so, about the conversations, or whatever sorts of things were circling around surrounding our reading or thoughts on them.

Adrienne: The first thing that came up for me, for better or worse, is this question that seemed to linger between what constitutes truth and history, versus interpretation—which seemed to be a kind of question of value. What I mean is, I’m going to forget his name—but the historian, the biographer (Gerard Ford) who José spoke to as part of his research for the chapter on Herko in *Cruising Utopia*—seem to put forward. He was insistent about a truthfulness that can be located in the archive, which seemed to be an overly valued estimation about what that archive can hold and therefore what it can do with a certitude that what is located there can be trusted. This was particularly evident in the instances when as he went through his talk and said, “and this person is here, and so in so is in this room” to make a claim, it seemed to me, which I really wanted to trouble or think through or see if you had also noticed this desire for certitude. Then, especially revealing was the last part of the conversation, when there was a dialogue between all the participants in a round table wrap up, there was a kind of sparring around the fact that interpretation is somehow inherently suspect, somehow impermissible and inadequate. And so I was thinking about this from the vantage of my work as a curator, or particularly in relation to my work as a writer and scholar with a particular understanding of where I tend to fall in relation to those kinds of unfortunate binaries. Then I was thinking about it in relation to your work as a dancer, your process and what you value in your work. This question of memory, this question of truth, this question of what does one have permission to do, and the question of how does one interpret. How do you think about interpretation in relation to embodiment? Or working with the body as a tool?

Jen: We tend to talk about embodiment in the dance community in a certain way, as though it has to be achieved. It is as if you're not actually doing the 'right' thing unless you're embodied. I often believe that even though it sometimes feels problematic, and like another kind of systemic virtuosity that I tend to shift away from when I am not so interested in something performance- or practice-wise, it is often that I'm seeing a carving of something or a shell of something but it might not feel embodied in this thrust way. So, I'm waiting for that moment because there is a transcendence that happens when the body is working on the idea versus the idea sort of sitting in a book, or on a shelf, or in the studio. I think it's about being seen, having audience. This is when the question of permission or interpretation comes into play. I'm going to go on a little tangent here, it's not directly related to Herko but more to things that I am thinking about now in my own process that feels aligned with how I am relating to this conversation. I don't know if my research is giving me permission or access to certain cultural or communal knowledge bases (if that is what we mean in terms of permission), but I definitely feel a crack or an opening inside the landscape of 'yes' and 'no', allowed and not allowed.

I'm curious about the consideration of physical matter as a source and substance, of bodies as matter, objects as matter, space as matter, a room as matter and audience as matter. All of the things involved in witnessing and seeing and being seen are sort of participants in this way that is really hard to negotiate and even harder to craft, especially in that singular moment when the audience comes in as the final participant. Considering matter seems to challenge the final nature of that moment, it seems to speak to a multiplicity of moments. Even with Herko, this being seen thing comes so far after his death and, still, questions of right story or wrong fact seem to be important. Knowing what happened, being clued into the cultural moment seems to give us some truth that can reflect back on where we are now. This concept of matter—to start to place a value and an importance on everything as body – seems to create spaces around truth or rightness that allow

for that transcendence that I know exists with a relationship to embodiment. If I have an object that I'm working with like a lemon tree, it is either a prop or an object that's a little lesser than the equivalent to my body, inside of the framework of me making performance. I could also consider it in this excessive way as an extension of my body and so I don't have to dance with it or even touch it to enact or embody that relationship. The consideration of it as substance and nonhuman body is an interesting place to start thinking about relationships both inside of the work itself and to the people seeing it. This exchange or relationship is directly when problems occur. People see things and either permission is granted or not.

Adrienne: How do you think your work is perceived? And then I would like you to think about your work in relation to perhaps how Herko's was perceived.

Jen: My work is received with a lot of questions because I think I also put it out with a lot of questions.

Adrienne: What sort of questions?

Jen: Questions like, what does it take to come together? Heather Love spoke to the dystopia of coming together, this is a real question for me. How do we not idealize and create a situation where everytime you see an arranged thing there's an assumption that it's going to feel good and right and look good and be its whole self? But there's actually a crack in that system, that coming together for me, I have questions around it. How do we come together? How do we organize information? Is it always about assimilation? I feel like there's something that happens when things come together, especially relationships between people that is about 'let's become one.'

Adrienne: Some kind of conflation, or a tendency towards a kind of reduction. Do you feel that in your dances sometimes there is a perception which conflates a dance into a common denominator of 'these things in relation to each other mean x'?

Jen: Yes, meaning is always at the center. It's not anti-meaning or a lack of meaning but I think there's a value system and a tone of that value. Meaning is not always on the top of my agenda. It exists and I don't deny its existence and sometimes I operate inside of it. Sometimes I capitalize on meaning, on inherent meaning, and sometimes I'm trying to poke fun at inherent meaning. That's what my last work, *a Natural dance*, was working inside of. Two male bodies stand next each other and if you squint their similarities blend and they look the same and that's really problematic. People commented on their brotherhood or their sameness, when really they look nothing alike. What is seen is a kind of shell—brown skin, dark hair, light facial hair, masculine gender—that can also be sensitive and soft. We talked a lot about the permission I had to box this, to frame them. It's not like permission was ever granted to do so, and it's not like they didn't have problems with the questions that were coming up. I had problems with the questions that were coming up. Based on what my work leans toward or shows, people think "Oh, Jen thinks they look the same. Jen thinks they look like brothers because she put them together and they look like brothers." There's ultimately always a relationship to me, my views, beliefs, politics and my work and I wouldn't want it any other way. It does limit a kind of permission in the work, however. I am only allowed to explore things I believe in or ways in which I want to represent myself and others. It is another problem in performance and the body relating to other bodies that I am deeply interested in. The way that I craft work is bound to my politics but I'm not always enacting them or reproducing them with dancing bodies. Maybe I'm trying to push them a little bit with the dancing body, but not reproduce them. Then—you were saying in relation to Herko's work?

Adrienne: Yes. Do you remember Gerard going through the various interpretations, recollections about Herko's personality? The question of who is this person illumines a yearning for a kind of biographical knowledge and desire

to continue to circulate it. I think that there was all of this inconsistency around that and I was thinking about Paxton's reaction to Herko's work, specifically when he said "It's not my thing", meaning that it was campy, that Judson was a space, a sensibility that was about a particular kind of aesthetic—minimalist, for example. The understanding was that a minimalist aesthetic meant only certain kinds of movements were acceptable. So, what is it that this queer presence in that context is doing? How is it disrupting, not even disrupting, but playing into a certain kind of factor of significance? For me, this signifies something. Herko was just being in his own world in a particular kind of way, which leads me to wonder what exactly is excess? What is impermissible (as we discussed in relation to Herko's body holding space in a particular way)? I don't know, perhaps you've already answered it.

Jen: Certain people come to mind in my direct community, Greg Zuccolo—I'm thinking that especially during this seminar, when there was a really sentimental nature of talking about Herko with the limited information that we have. Then, especially the older woman's reaction of "I actually knew these people," I just started thinking about people I know and how they may one day be retold and the sorrow in that.

Adrienne: That was really sad.

Jen: It is sad. You cannot retell someone's life. Especially if the life is potentially wrapped up in, I won't say lies, but in alternate realities.

Adrienne: Because he was living in an alternate reality.

Jen: And I'm sure not even just about drug use. This person was especially intelligent in terms of creative process but maybe, as the failed resumé on the cover of the program at NYU shows, not business savvy. Somehow, and this is likely due to his early death, he didn't manage to position his living legacy like Yvonne Rainer or others who have made names for themselves. And their accomplishments are my generation's new standards. We know who these artists

are. My generation feels like the grand child of this time, it is part of our embodied knowledge and so we're also the same. We're exactly the same. Greg Zucculo is this artist who will always be around and for most will always be too much. People will always cast him off as too much, then one day someone's going to curate him and say "the too much-ness is just enough." Then he will be written about. My concern is that the value is only extended in a post sensibility or economy. How do we support and value processes and lives that are deemed as off center, too much, queer. I'm also thinking about Walter Dundervill. His aesthetic contains a lot and I think there's a precarious nature to some people who are really operating not just inside of the craft of the form, like a formalist approach to the medium, but people who are actually inside of performance in this multi-spectrum kind of way. I often find that that's related to the nightlife scene, the queer scene, the gay scene. I might be trying to say that I don't think Herko is especially special?

Adrienne: You know, I credit choreographers like Ishmael Houston-Jones, perhaps one of the earliest people to meld club movements into the experimental downtown dance scene, which I would suggest has spawned the whole tradition that you're talking about. How do all of these things fit together? I find it really interesting that he referenced "form" and then switched to "performance" and that performance somehow has the same kind of capaciousness, meaning an ability to take on all of these things in a way that form would not, I presume. Dance is this really specific particular thing. It has a certain set of presuppositions—it's the body, it's the body doing something whether still or moving—it has a set of parameters. Whereas performance seems to be more open...

Jen: I think this is probably going to sound confusing but I qualify form as something that has an audience, and performance doesn't always. This is the whole glorious debate around Herko's final performance that only one person saw. I think there's such a sentimental thing about that, who sees. And we know that the most transgressive performances have

happened in subversive ways other than this staging and sitting way. I have no desire to think about if his suicide was performance or not, for me that's not of interest.

Adrienne: It's irrelevant. I do think that in some ways that slippage has to do with an immediate knowledge of the most basic things we do, which we think are natural and in fact are not. They are all performances such as the way in which we inhabit our body, the way we figure out what it is that a body can do is deeply performative.

Jen: Considering relations between people to me is deeply performative and at the center of my work. What does it mean that we stand far apart? But really, what is this thing, this standing thing? Why are we doing this together? Or, why are we doing this together and there's no togetherness? What bodies do best is relate or they don't relate. This thing about form—I know this is a cup but it could be so many things or, the cup could be with that excess. And not just what else could it be—could it be a candle? Not "things" like other items, but it can hold so much information. Then when it gets an audience, the audience delineates its form based on what they see and what they don't see and their cultural understanding of cup, or that particular kind of cup, or the aesthetic of that cup, what is around the cup. Whereas, especially in considering the cup as body or as matter or as substance, it performs, it sits still, it holds a space in the room.

Adrienne: It's back to the kind of slippage that you were doing around the word "matter." I want to introduce a third way to think about matter in relation to your work: Is matter a thing? It's a question of value. But it's also matter without one of the "t's. I have been thinking and writing a lot about what I am calling ornamental feminism, and I was reminded of it because we're two women sitting here thinking about this idea of excess, which José actually writes about, though in relation to Herko through Ernst Bloch's formulation of the ornament. Specifically, José was riffing off of Diane di

Prima's description of Herko's dances as neoromantic, which he himself described as excessive, campy. However, his understanding of Bloch suggests that the ornamental is about more than aesthetics but also the promise of an elsewhere and elsewhere not bound by the norms of the present. How do you think about ornamentation in your work? How do you think about the way in which you play with that in terms of notions of femininity? My interest in it came from a critique that Angela Davis did of the Feminist movement in the 70s, when she wrote "the abstract negation of 'femininity' is embraced; attempts are made to demonstrate that women can be as non-emotional, reality-affirming and dominating as men are alleged to be. The model, however, is usually a concealed 'masculine' one." Which is intriguing and I'm thinking of this notion in relation to artists like Lorraine O'Grady, Tracey Rose, Wangechi Mutu, Mickalene Thomas, and so on. Their works have the assertion of a certain kind of spectrum of womanness, even like vamping within what that is—of what that could be. So, I want to talk about through with you, which is José's assertion for a claim of value for excess.

Jen: In the dance field there is a starting place that is simple, clear, clean, efficient, thin and white. It's a starting place. To be anything off center of that, you're already excessive. You, personally, are excessive and your work is too. That's something that in hearing you talk and hearing names of artists I'm thinking. What is the relationship of the artist's body and their work? That's always a major element. Not just the way that they look, but how we imagine them to be. How we place that in the seeing of the work or in the doing of the work. My body will never be separate from my work, even if I am not performing. My relationship to queerness will never be outside of my work. Even if these things aren't named by someone seeing the work, they often perceive offness. They are being tugged away from center.

Adrienne: A thing that's compelling about your work, something commentators seem blown away by, is your presence.

Jen: It's because I don't look like everyone else. But it's also because I'm a good dancer, because I've been training as one just like millions of other people have. Reading reviews that comment surprisingly on my dancing ability gets me fiery. I have to weed through the virtuosity of wanting to prove myself in those moments, not over performing, being inside of the actual work that was crafted and not drifting into territories of delivery that can often over shadow the subtlety of what the work is doing.

Adrienne: Yes. I was really struck by that because what else would you expect? She's a beautiful dancer.

Jen: I've practiced dancing for many years. I've worked with this one performer, Addys Gonzalez, consistently and he couldn't be more different from me physically, so we kind of act as backdrops for each other. We've actually, through the work, had to really fight against that external viewing of form. Very early on it was said "you are the luscious, extreme, maybe excessive performer who whips your hair around." I don't really whip my hair around but I have long hair so it does move when I dance. And he's this Greek God of a body. Writers, and even audience and friends, position us in this oppositional manner. The rebellion coming from Addys is astounding and something I want to witness and something that will keep me curious about his body. He often says "this is not a Greek body, this is a Dominican body and it's strong but it does break and it wants to have long hair too sometimes and flip it around." There's a really quick read that happens. I don't think it is just dance that does this framing. Women who are not thin are immediately read. Women who are thin are read as well. I find interesting the extreme levels that I can never quite understand, or hold onto, of complete invisibility and complete visibility. The relationship between those two for me is a bit excessive but it's there. It's always a wavering participant in the work.

That's why I talk about getting the sentimentality out through writing. Sometimes I have to negotiate my body beforehand

because I don't want the content to necessarily be about the bodiness of the way I look. Even though I won't hide that away and I'll often be very proud of it, but the aboutness of the work might be something else. How do I get to that? How do I then use my body, or embody that as work? The feminine, or feminism, or femininity, are major questions and also confusions inside my work. My deep relationship with this male collaborator who is often negotiating his relationship to femininity inside of the work leads me to look for more ways to support his male body. I'm often negotiating my relationship to masculinity. We're both deeply interested in problems and what we don't quite know yet is. Do we have permission to showcase problems, especially when they most often come out in a problematic way? During one talk in Toronto—I toured with Young Jean Lee's *Untitled Feminist Show* (which is a whole other conversation)—a man in the audience said "What is it about feminism? Why do you all identify as feminists?" My heart started pounding in a real important way. This is not about just the cisgendered female body needing to reclaim their power, although it is also so much about that. This is not about me needing an identity to hold onto, although it feels so important that I can identify with this. This is a really large landscape and set of issues that include this man who wants to know why I identify as something, as if it is outside of something he could identify with or feels as though he needs to. The question directly placed on aggression onto my body.

Adrienne: Constant.

Jen: I was looking through the program from the NYU conversations (I'm jumping now to something else) I saw this Paul Taylor history by Fred Herko. He says, "Love is ultimately beautiful, love is interesting, love is exciting. It was lovely to watch Paul Taylor. Paul Taylor is not lovely to watch. Paul Taylor is not exciting. Paul Taylor is not interesting." He goes back and forth between this positive and negative or this is or is not. I feel like that is so present or maybe truly part of the queerness and truly at the center of a femininity, a feminine source that isn't only negotiated on the female body but in a

way is a lot like queerness. It's a thing we don't quite know yet and it's an 'is' and an 'is not' and I'm often 'not not.' I'm often inside of the space of people saying, "is it or is it not?" Especially in writing, when people edit my writing—well is that this or is that not this? I understand where that clarity can be useful and I also relate when I read and see and feel things that aren't clear, the excessive nature that comes with that. There's something in that that I understand.

Adrienne: Same here.

Jen: That feels deeply feminine to me but can easily be swayed as "you don't know what you want." Or, "you have a lack of clarity around the form."

Adrienne: Fluidity is an issue. It always stakes a claim.

Jen: That whole talk—I became hyper focused on Mark Siegel's notion of gossip. For me it was the ultimate. It was everything for me in that moment of welcome to the body! This is how information passes over time. This is how lives of people pass, how dances get made. It's such a viable form of archive and documentation and I just felt like it was being written off! It's almost like he's not historicizing Herko by talking about gossip. I feel like I got the best account, the most reflection on this conversation, through his singular presentation and proposal of gossip.

Adrienne: It's a beautiful juxtaposition too. On the one hand, a demand for historical fact versus "this is gossip." The thing for me that was really profound was the way in which formulating Herko's life and work through gossip becomes a way in which things actually circulate in the world, right? It always circles back to the fact that it's sort of like history is with a small "h." The capital "H" is just ridiculous. [laughter]. The papers can only tell you so much. You only get the things that were deemed worth saving. What happened with what went in the garbage or was burned? The night of anger with the lover, maybe some things went up in flames.

Jen: Or even what actually did happen, even if these are your first hand accounts. Someone pointed that out.

Adrienne: It is all perception.

Jen: But someone said it in the combat mode of “You trust Carolee’s account of her own work?”

Adrienne: Yes, which I thought was brilliant.

Jen: Yes, it’s brilliant. Of course, my account of my own work is going to be as skewed and as gossip-riddled as anything. In starting this conversation, thinking about the people who I named, Greg and Walter, I think about how they would be renamed and retold and it would be gossip-riddled. How I am retelling them now is trails of stories of, “I saw or I met him here and this happened,” oh yeah, and “the work included some ballet moves.”

Adrienne: Gossip is super productive.

Jen: It really held a space for me of the flamboyancy of what everyone wanted to say. Everyone wanted to say this artist is profound because he was operating in a liminal space and queerness was all over him and his work and it was not supported. I think that’s the whole thing with queerness and being in that minority space; it’s not being supported and it’s still operating. How crazy is that? It’s probably operating with aggression and distaste and discomfort. But it’s operating. I think there’s a push and pull between wanting to celebrate this person, but also an element of how can we celebrate something we don’t know? That’s the center of dance for me. It’s the center of performance. We keep coming together thinking this is going to be it, but what is going to be it? So we have to start thinking about what’s important. Some people think his reference to ballet was really important, some people think that doing a lot of drugs was really important, some people think his suicide was important. Ultimately, I think the glorification of one human being onto the whole form or scenario of potentially queer dance in a non-queer dance

community is a little large. I think he was operating at certain levels and other people are operating at different levels and there is somehow still presence there. That, to me, is the most interesting thing. He was still in the room. Maybe he was too excessive but he was there still, and that seems historical.

Adrienne: I completely agree.

Jen: It’s so interesting how heated everyone got.

Adrienne: I think that has to do with Herko. I’m thinking particularly about this chapter that José wrote, even Herko’s closest of friends were at this point railing against his unreliability. “You’re off-course,” di Prima said. That can singularly describe the work that he did in life and in the afterlife. This kind of off-course, this being off-course. Di Prima’s complaint in some ways perfectly describes the way in which he occupied space and now, gossip or memory or mythology, is off-course. “That’s not the way I remember,” the witness said—It’s so interesting.

CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

Originally from Berkeley, California, **Kyle Bukhari** is a scholar, dancer and choreographer based in New York. He was a 2013-14 US-UK Fulbright grantee at the University of Roehampton, London where he received his MA in Dance Studies. He has a BA in Cultural Anthropology and Aesthetics from Columbia University. His current research looks at the philosophical implications of intermediality in art production in the 1960s with a particular focus on the work of Yvonne Rainer and Richard Serra. More generally, he is interested in the catalyzing potential of the dance medium both aesthetically and socially. While in London he spearheaded a cultural outreach project with the U.S. Embassy that focused on teaching leadership through movement to secondary school students. Kyle has worked as a dancer, choreographer and dance pedagogue in the U.S. and Europe, with companies such as The Joffrey Ballet New York, the Zürcher Ballett, Switzerland, Augsburg Tanztheater and at the Saarländisches Staatstheater with Margurite Donlon in Germany. He was the winner of Alain Platel's "The Best German Dance Solo" in Leipzig in 1998 and in 2002 he was chosen as a "V.I.P." of European Dance in Ballett International Magazine for his work Staging Area created in collaboration with dancers from the now defunct Frankfurt Ballet. In 2013 Kyle choreographed and performed as a solo dancer with cultural anthropologist Michael Taussig in The Berlin Sun Theater at the Whitney Museum, in New York curated by Maïke Pollack and Jay Sanders. He has collaborated with choreographer Jodi Melnick on Solo, Deluxe Version (2011) and Moment Marigold (2014) and they are currently developing a new project together. In February 2015 he will present a new work at the Museum of the City of New York.

Yve Laris Cohen's work has been presented at The Kitchen, SculptureCenter, Dance Theater Workshop, Abrons Arts Center, Murray Guy, Recess, Movement Research at the Judson Church, Danspace Project, Thomas Erben Gallery, and the 2014 Whitney Biennial, in New York; The Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College; and Institute for Contemporary Art, Philadelphia. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Adrienne Edwards is a curator, scholar, and writer with a focus on artists of the African diaspora and the global South. She is Curator at Performa and also a PhD candidate in performance studies at New York University, where she is a Corrigan Doctoral Fellow. Edwards's research interpolates visual and time-based art, experimental dance, critical race theory, feminist theory, and post-structuralist philosophy. She has curated and co-organized numerous performance art projects, including Rashid Johnson's first live work, live work, *Dutchman*, A Performa Commission, Dave McKenzie's *All the King's horses...none of his men*; Senga Nengudi, *Untitled (RSVP)*, Clifford Owens's *Five Days Worth*; Fluxus founding member Benjamin Patterson's first retrospective concert *Action as Composition*; and Pope.L's *Cage Unrequited*; among others. Edwards is a contributor to numerous exhibition catalogues and art publications—including *Artforum*, *Art in America*, "Repetition" in Adam Pendleton's *Time-Based Art* for the Museum of Modern Art, *Clifford Owens: Anthology* for MoMA PS1, *Performa 11* for Performa, *Fore* for the Studio Museum in Harlem, *Better Days: A Mickalene Thomas Art Experiment* for Absolut Art Bureau, "The Crucible of Relation: Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company's Transgressions" in *Dance and Visual Art* for Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, *Wangechi Mutu* for the Museum of Contemporary

(Edwards cont.) Art Sydney, and *Wangechi Mutu: Nguva and Nyoka* for Victoria Miro Gallery—and is performance reviews editor for the journal of feminist theory *Women & Performance*.

Danielle Goldman: In my research, I analyze the social, cultural, and historical conditions that affect how people move. I'm fascinated by critical theories of the body, and I tend to think about dance as an arena for experimental relations between self and other. These interests are informed by my experience as a dancer – taking class, rehearsing, and performing (most recently for the choreographers DD Dorvillier and Beth Gill). Persistent shuttling between dance practice and academic work – two worlds that I've been trying to bridge for as long as I can remember – has shown me that dance and critical theory inform each other in significant ways, revealing much about embodiment, subjectivity, and notions of identity. I hope to make these relations apparent in my classes.

Raja Kelly | *the feath3r theory* is Brooklyn-Based. Artistic Director, Raja Feather Kelly Created the feath3r theory In 2009, After Writing A Novel Of The Same Name During His Exchange Studies In Sydney, Australia. This Novel (In Progress) Explores How We Come Together And Why We Fall Apart, and serves as his creative philosophy. Kelly Holds A BA With Honors In Dance And with zoe | juniper, Reggie Wilson/ Fist And Heel Performance Group, and collaborates with Tzveta Kassabova And Paul Matteson. Kelly Has Been A Guest Artist At New York University, The University Of Virginia, Memphis University, University Of Florida, Dance House In Melbourne, AU. Formerly A Guest Lecturer At The University Of Maryland, College Park, And A Guest Choreographer At Princeton University, Kelly has returned to the University of Florida for his Third Guest Artist Residency. Kelly is a 2014 LMCC Workspace Recipient. Kelly's Work Has Been Shown At Dance New Amsterdam, Triskelion Arts, The Center For Performance Research, Velocity Dance Center ,The Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage, Dixon Place, Movement Research at the Judson Church, Joe's Pub at the Public Theater, and Gowanus Art and Production at The Green Building. the feath3r theory's most recent evening-length production *the feath3r theory Presents: Andy Warhol's DRELLA (I love you Faye Driscoll)* Premiered to sold-out audiences and critical acclaim in December 2013 with a reprisal in June 2014 at The Invisible Dog. Upcoming performances include *SUPER WE*, at Dancespace Project at St. Marks Church January 29-31, 2015 and *the feath3r theory Presents: Andy Warhol's 15 (Color Me, Warhol)* commissioned by and performed at Dixon Place April 10-25, 2015. www.thefeath3rtheory.com

Claudia La Rocco is the author of *The Best Most Useless Dress* (Badlands Unlimited, 2014) a selection of writings encompassing a decade's worth of poetry, essays, performance texts and reviews. Her current collaborations include projects with the choreographer Michelle Ellsworth, the performance company Findlay/Sandsmark and the composer Phillip Greenlief. La Rocco founded thePerformanceClub.org, which won a 2011 Creative Capital/Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant and focuses on criticism as a literary art form. She is a member of the Off the Park poetry press, for which she conceived and edited *I DON'T POEM: an anthology of painters*, and contributes frequently to the *New York Times* and *ARTFORUM*. She is on the faculty of the School of Visual Arts' graduate program in Art Criticism and Writing, teaches at such institutions as Stanford University and

The Kitchen, Danspace Project, The Center for New Music, Abrons Arts Center and the Mount Tremper Arts Festival. She serves on the board of the Poetry Project and is the guest artist curator for Danspace Project's *PLATFORM 2015: Dancers, Buildings and People in the Streets* (February 11-March 28). She is also teaching a Movement Research writing workshop during the American Realness festival this January.

Heather Love received her A.B. from Harvard and her Ph.D. from the University of Virginia. Her research interests include gender studies and queer theory, the literature and culture of modernity, affect studies, film and visual culture, psychoanalysis, race and ethnicity, sociology and literature, disability studies, and critical theory. She is the author of *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Harvard 2007), the editor of a special issue of *GLQ* on the scholarship and legacy of Gayle Rubin ("Rethinking Sex"), and the co-editor of a special issue of *New Literary History* ("Is There Life after Identity Politics?"). A book of her essays and lectures (*Queer Affect Politics: Selected Essays by Heather Love*, ShenLou Press 2012) was published recently in Taiwan. She is spending 2014-2015 as the Stanley Kelley, Jr., Visiting Professor for Distinguished Teaching in Gender and Sexuality Studies at Princeton.

Richard Move is Artistic Director of *MoveOpolis!* a TED Fellow, Ph.D. Candidate (ABD) in Performance Studies at NYU, Assistant Professor of Dance in the Department of Drama, Theatre & Dance at Queens College, CUNY and Lecturer in Design at Yale School of Drama. His commissions include multidisciplinary works for Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project, Martha Graham Dance Company, American Festival of Paris, Florence Opera Ballet, European Cultural Capitol, Guggenheim Museum, Deborah Harry, Dame Shirley Bassey, Isaac Mizrahi and New York City Ballet Principal, Helene Alexopolous. His films include: *Bardo*, Jury Prize nominee at Lincoln Center's Dance on Camera Festival, *BloodWork-The Ana Mendieta Story*, National Board of Review Award at CityVisions/Directors Guild of America, *GhostLight*, Tribeca Film Festival premiere and *GIMP-The Documentary*, Lincoln Center's 2014 Dance on Camera Festival premiere. *Martha@...*, Move's performances Martha Graham, received two New York Dance and Performance Awards ("Bessies") and tours globally.

Tav Nyong'o is Associate Professor of Performance Studies at New York University. His areas of interest include black studies, queer studies, critical theory, popular music studies and cultural critique. His first book, *The Amalgamation Waltz: Race, Performance, and the Ruses of Memory* (Minnesota, 2009), won the Errol Hill Award for best book in African American theatre and performance studies. Nyong'o has published articles on punk, disco, viral media, the African diaspora, film, and performance art in venues such as *Radical History Review*, *Criticism*, *TDR: The Journal of Performance Studies*, *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, *Women Studies Quarterly*, *The Nation*, and *n+1*. He is co-editor of the journal *Social Text*.

Ara Osterweil is an Assistant Professor of Film and Cultural Studies at McGill University, as well as a painter. She has written extensively on cinema in journals such as *Film Quarterly*, *Camera Obscura*, *Millennium Film Journal*, and *Framework*. Her book *Flesh Cinema: The Corporeal Turn in American Avant-Garde Film* (Manchester University Press) was released this year.

Jillian Peña is a dance and video artist primarily concerned with confusion and desire between self and other. Her work is in dialogue with psychoanalysis, queer theory, pop media, and spirituality. Jillian was recently awarded the Prix Jardin d'Europe 2014 at ImpulsTanz Dance Festival in Vienna. She has been presented internationally, including at Danspace Project, the American Realness Festival, The Chocolate Factory, Dance Theater Workshop and The Kitchen in New York, and Akademie der Kunste Berlin, Centre for Contemporary Arts Glasgow, Modern Art Oxford, and the International Festival of Contemporary Art Slovenia. She was a Jack Kent Cooke Graduate Scholar during which she was awarded an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she was a fellowship recipient, and a Practice-based MPhil in Fine Art at Goldsmiths College, University of London. She has been an Artist-in-Residence at Brooklyn Arts Exchange, Movement Research, the National Dance Center of Bucharest, Romania, Archauz in Århus, Denmark, and a DanceWEB Fellow at ImpulsTanz in Vienna. She is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Dance and in the College of Art, Media, and Design at University of the Arts, Philadelphia. www.jillianpena.com

Will Rawls is a choreographer engaging with instabilities of identity and form through live performance, writing and installation. Often courting the ambiguous nature of dance as a medium, his practice employs movement in conjunction with text, objects and other media, to reconsider how personal and cultural histories are embodied, resisted and reconstructed. Among other venues, his work has been presented at Abrons Arts Center, The Brooklyn Museum, The Chocolate Factory, Danspace Project and the Emily Harvey Foundation.

Jen Rosenblit has been making dances and teaching workshops on improvisation, choreography and performance in New York City since 2005. Rosenblit has worked with Young Jean Lee (*Untitled Feminist Show*), Ryan McNamara (*MEEM*), Yvonne Meier (*The Shining*), Sasa Asentic (*On Trail Together*) and currently, Simone Aughterlony (*Uni-Form*) based in Zurich. Rosenblit was a 2009 Fresh Tracks Artist (Dance Theater Workshop), recipient of the 2012 Grant to Artists and a 2014 Emergency grant from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, a 2013 Fellow at Insel Hombroich (Germany), an inaugural recipient of THE AWARD, a 2014-2015 workspace artist through LMCC and a 2014 recipient of a New York Dance and Performance "bessies" award as emerging choreographer for her work, a Natural dance, which premiered at The Kitchen in May 2014. Rosenblit has been a teaching artist at Bowdoin College, Hollins University, Bard, Tisch, Roger Williams and Bennington and has done lecture demonstrations surrounding the queer body and performance at both Yale and Harvard. Rosenblit's *Lunch N Lecture* was curated by BODEGA at the ICA, Philadelphia, as part of their *First Among Equals* series. Rosenblit was in residence at the Minneapolis Institute of the Arts through FD13 and looks forward to residency time at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa as well as Tanzhaus Zurich for the creation of a new work to premiere in NYC in 2016. Recent works focus on an improvisational approach to choreographic thought and ways of structuring bodies as they fall out of relation aesthetically and spiritually while still locating ways of being together. www.bottomheavies.blogspot.com

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New York City Opera Carmina Burana John Butler, choreographer

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* LAMP LAMP MY PEET - JOHN BUTLER (CHOREO.)

* LOOK UP AND LIVE - BUZZ MILLER - (CHOREO.)

* PLAYED YELLOW FERRYER IN LITTLE MARY
SUNSHINE IN NYC (LAST 2 MONTHS OF THE RUN)

* CHOREOGRAPHED + PLAYED YELLOW FERRYER
LAST SUMMER IN PHILA. (LITTLE MARY)

* JUDSON DANCE - ETC.