

Anik Fournier, *Social Movement Logbook*

The seventh biannual program, dedicated to the field of inquiry Social Movement, departs from the following questions: how can ontologies of performance dedicated to embodiment, affect and the relational, enable a better understanding of the workings and manifestations of social movement? How can an exploration of different forms of social movement help to expand the vocabularies of performance studies? In our closed reading group we aim to approach the thematic through a range of theoretical and artistic perspectives.

November 2017

A Historiography of the Term Social Movement

We began our inquiry into Social Movement with a historiography of the term movement in socio-political thought. What do we mean when we say social movement? A mobilization of bodies in the streets? The social change that occurs as a result of the demands of those bodies? We quickly realized the term has been, and continues to be, used in both progressive and conservative political projects alike. What is the role of infrastructure and support structures in enabling or disabling social movement to happen? In which ways does the term exceed the political realm? Turning to performance and dance theory we began to explore how movement emerges as a force, as an energy that takes root in the body.

Bibliography

Giorgio, Agamben at 'Movement' (trans. Arianna Bove), Uni.Nomade, European Graduate School, March 8, 2005.

Jackson, Shannon, 'Working Publics', *Performance Research* vol.16, no. 2, 2011, pp.8-13.

Martin, Randy at 'The Social Kinesthetic' Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, March 19, 2013.

December 2017

Affect and Relationality

Dovetailing the notion of the body as the site where movement takes hold, we looked into the body's exposure to power as both perilous and enabling. Whereas vulnerability is commonly understood as a site of passivity and inaction, we investigated its potential for being a condition for action and resistance. We asked how can the creative life forces of our bodies be harnessed? Erotics is defined by Audre Lorde as a deeply female and spiritual plane. Moving from the erotics within ourselves outward, provides energy for change in how we connect to, and acutely feel, all aspects of our lives and our relation to others. Can we speak then of a grammar or syntax of bodily movement? Not only of its outer form, but also, of its inner affectual origins?

Bibliography

Buttler, Judith, Zeynep Gambetti and Leticia Sabsay (eds.), *Vulnerability in Resistance*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.

Lorde, Audre, 'Erotics', *Sister Outsider*, New York: Random House, 2007, p.53-59.

January 2018

Technologies of Embodiment

The new year began with looking into technologies of representation and their capacity to capture social movement. We focused on feminist video collectives active in France in the 1970s, working with early portable video technologies that reveal an embodied, dissident, performative gaze behind the camera. How are such intertwined relationships between the body and technology renegotiated with current technological possibilities? How can understandings of sight, touch and hearing that articulate a reciprocity between sensing subjects be extended into regimes of representation? Taking the inscriptions of rural queerness in the work of Charlotte Prodger as a case in point, we asked how certain embodied experiences that have gone unrepresented can use technologies of embodiment to inscribe their position into the field of representation and existing narratives on their own terms.

Bibliography

Baker, Kelly, 'Taking New Directions: How Rural Queerness Provides Unique Insights into Place, Class, and Visibility' *Totem: The University of Western Ontario Journal of Anthropology*, vol.20, no.1, 2012.

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Interview with Hubert Godard by Suely Rolnik, *Archive pour une œuvre-événement – Projet d'activation de la mémoire corporelle d'une trajectoire artistique et son contexte*, Paris: les presses du réel, 2010.

Murray, Ros, 'Raised Fists: Politics, Technology, and Embodiment in 1970s French Feminist Video Collectives', *Camera Obscura*, vol.31, 2016, pp.93-121.

April 2018

The Politics of Movement

Taking social movement literally as the movement of people through spatial terrains, in this cluster of readings we began to map a topography of social movement, starting with Édouard Glissant's concepts of arrow and nomadic movement. If movement is a politics, not a given, what drives people to move across social borders? What are the ethical, political, economic and environmental repercussions of moving in the present and how are these underpinned by narratives of self and other? Karen Barad taught us that at a molecular level, movement always implies a touching and a hosting of the other by the self. And yet, Ayesha Hameed's artistic research into palmistry revealed the violent struggle between the tracing and erasing of finger prints as migrant bodies enter the field of xenophobic phantasies of contagion at play throughout the European Union.

Bibliography

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Boyer, Anne, 'Toward a Provisional Avant-Garde', *A Handbook of Disappointed Fate*, Brooklyn: Ugly Duckling Presse, 2018, pp.130-135.

Glissant, Édouard, 'Errantry, Exile', *Poetics of Relation* (trans. Betsy Wing), Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997, p.11-22.

Hameed, Ayesha, 'A Rough History (of the destruction of fingerprints)', *Bodies of Evidence: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Politics of Movement* (eds. Gurur Ertem, Sandra Noeth), Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 2018, p. 35-51.

May 2018

Afro-pessimism and Social Death,

According to afro-pessimism, black bodies are defined ontologically as non-entities, a violent structural condition rooted in the slave relation. Black American existence is in this light devoid of positive relationality. Following the poet Frank B Wilderson III, we questioned the conditions of possibility of black existence in relation to agency. How can a movement be built and sustained on behalf of the black body that is defined from the outset as a non-entity? Can a rethinking of Western traditions of humanism renegotiate the relation of anti-blackness to white supremacy and begin to think blackness and agency together in an ethical manner? Looking at the artistic practice of keyon gaskin, we explored to what extent the overdetermined black body can resist capture and the re-inscription of existing racial relations.

Bibliography

Wilderson III, Frank B. at 'Irreconcilable Anti-Blackness', Art History Department Pomona College, 19 April 2017.

McKittrick, Katherine (ed.) *Sylvia Wynter, On Being Human as Praxis*, London: Duke University Press, 2015).

Sexton, Jared, 'Afro-Pessimism: The Unclear Word', *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* 29 (2016).

June 2018

Bodily Movement and Cultural Idioms

Our final cluster of material returned to questions of the grammar and syntax of bodily movement, with an emphasis on the histories and vocabularies of black social dance. We looked into how hip hop and funk, for example, have developed as distinct cultural idioms. Encoded in them are gestures and postures of pleasure, power and struggle; bodily attitudes that are communicated and transferred between bodies. According to Thomas F. DeFrantz, however, these bodily vocabularies have both private and public meanings. The black dancing body, he maintains, has the capacity to simultaneously celebrate and protest. Can we then speak of a double consciousness of the black body in movement? What happens to the cultural idioms of movement when they are performed for an audience who cannot access the scattered histories of desire and pain from which they emerge?

Bibliography

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The Fits, directed by Anna Rose Homer, 2015.