

sophia bartholomew

COMPANIONS TO THE BODY

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PREFACE

The following twenty-six texts set out to disrupt the authoritative, encyclopedic structure of *The Oxford Companion to the Body*, and the violent colonialism, ableism, racism, heteronormativity and misogyny that these kinds of documents reinforce and uphold.

My entries respond to the many conversations and events I encountered during a three-month-long residency at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, at 1880 Hollis Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, on unceded Mi'kmaq territory — K'jipuktuk — from January 16 through April 21, 2017. Many of my entries also reference my reading about human anatomy, trauma and somatics, during this period of time.

Each text was originally published as a one-page pamphlet and distributed free-of-charge by The Khyber Centre for the Arts.

The publication developed during what I have heard described as the fall of neo-liberalism, and the rise of neo-facism — within the first one hundred days of Donald Trump's presidency in the United States, and following the forceful dismantling of a powerful indigenous anti-pipeline encampment at Standing Rock. It co-incided with the beginnings of "Canada 150 Celebrations," and with attacks made by both "feminists" and "neo-nazis" to queer people and queer spaces in Halifax.

My studio residency was possible through a Career Development grant from the New Brunswick Arts Board, and this publication was developed in close conversation with Hannah Guinan, the Khyber's artistic director.



A

Under A there's an entry for Aging that spans two pages.

She can't sleep through the sounds of the snowploughs dragging the streets, and in this way bulbous black circles are built up under her eye sockets like dirtied snowbanks.

She's skipped ahead and reads about black and yellow bile under the section titled Humours.

Morning comes in over the bar set by her curtains.

She imagines counting her blessings as she might otherwise have counted small precious stones or coins. Sheets of printed paper, sheaves of plastic bound by leather pockets.

Clean water is among the things that she's thinking of.

(Gratitude)

Physical forms of currency.

(Necessity)

She hears the sound of glass tinkling, encased in mesh metal rattling: a shopping cart travelling every bump in the winter-ashen asphalt road.

If no one has any objections, we'll make this the beginning of the book.

You know the place is not a mess, no matter how many times she apologizes for it.

And a rock becomes a stone through human use, or at least that's the definition afforded us by geologists.

These habits are the things that ease her through each day, though they might be formed differently if she were to attend to them.

(She wonders what to do)

She's been keeping small tokens that remind her of friendship and magic, while also letting things rot so that she'll remember decay.

Children are good reminders of these things, as are the elderly.

Both of them smell different than adult people do, and she wonders if this has something to do with cellular senescence, which is a gradual state change not observed in the cells of perennial plants, sponges, corals, or lobsters.

She eats a warm slice of ham and pineapple pizza and remembers something she read about water clocks, how they were used instead of sundials to keep speeches from going on too long in the law courts of Ancient Greece.

Her friend tells her about a grandmother she met who thinks of her seventies as the best decade of her life. She still subscribes to People magazine so that she can talk to young people about the Kardashians "and stuff."

Not all inheritances are good ones though.

There's white supremacy, misogyny, and margarine, plus a handful of other examples.

Calm quickly edges toward complacency, though being kept in constant crisis like this also feels like a political strategy or a trick.

Civil Disobedience and Resistance to Civil Government are the titles of two lectures given by Henry David Thoreau in 1848.

Ancillary spaces to are to follow.

A Notes

1. Lido Pimienta's artist talk at The Khyber Centre for the Arts on February 6, 2017, titled "Take their money, but not all the space."
 2. David Garneau's exhibition essay "Rocks, Stones and Grandfathers" for the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery in Toronto, November 2015, quoted by Randy Lee Cutler on Facebook, February 3, 2017.
 3. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/cellular_senescence
 4. Kristy Trinier's essay "Second Life" for Jason de Haan's exhibition "Grey to Pink" at the Art Gallery of Alberta in Edmonton, July 2016.
 5. "Flim Flam" panel discussion at The Khyber Centre for the Arts February 4, 2017, with grad class of Gonzago Institute 2016 Merle Harley, Alex van Helvoort, Nick Dourado, Esmé Hogeveen, Jesse Mitchell, and Stephanie Yee, facilitated by Craig Leonard.
 6. Conversations with Hannah Guinan, January 2017.
 7. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/donald_trump#first_100_days
- IMAGE Google image search for "forty and fantastic mugs" thinking of a Hallmark-brand mug owned by Camila Salcedo.

B



Better posture, greater poise, improved health.

She talked about respect. We would treat them like elders, she said. And any real acknowledgement by government of the colonial violence that premises this country is not possible because it would completely destabilize society, she went on.

For they desired a powerful, unassailable start, firmly established on its own principles. Political effectiveness and permanence were the goal toward which they strove.

This is profoundly important for your physical and psychological wellbeing.

(Beautification, authentication) Calamity.

When actually it's about keeping things moving, it's about the circulation of things:

Breath, blood, genes (jeans) money, goods, ideas, (lighters, water bottles) narratives, tools, minerals (stories) and other kinds of stones.

Antioxidants at ocean mist dot com, come on.

Brain and cognitive benefits.

This is what I'm remembering: it was the surprise taking hold of me, you taking hold of my hand. My hair cast down around us like a curtain, shuttering our hot breaths like small clouds. Standing naked out on the deck in the dark, listening to each of the

helicopters as they flew over our heads.

I'm learning to breathe again, body armour.

(w a t e r)

Don't hold your breath he says, but I do it all the time.

(w a t e r)

Pushing some lung full of air backward into my face with my hand,
now in the small moments before my body disappears into the
pool. The fingers pressing my glasses up against the bridge of my
nose, flooding me with the gravity suspension and disbelief,
complete dissolution.

It's like eggs being eased into hot water.

As soon as I say something it stops being true.

B Notes

1. alexandertechniqueatlantic.ca/
2. Discussion on January 19, 2017 at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, as part of the exhibition and publication project "Flim Flam."
3. An excerpt from Friedrich Schiller's essay "The Legislation of Lycurgus and Solon" quoted in the first of six anonymous leaflets published by the White Rose (die Weiße Rose) a non-violent resistance group active in Munich between 1942 and 1943.

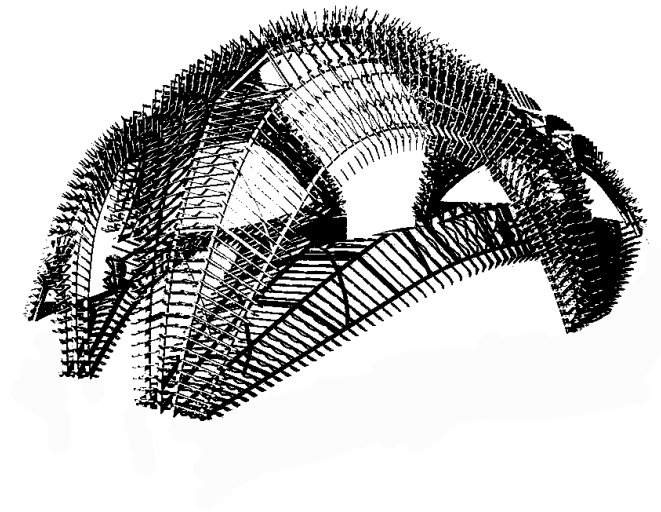
libcom.org/library/white-rose-leaflet-1

4. Michael Belmore describing his sculptural work *Lost Bridal Veil* in a public post on Facebook, February 10, 2017.
5. OBB Pool Party at Pirates Cove, Dartmouth Sportplex, on February 3, 2017, celebrating the tenth anniversary of one block barbershop, a queer-run, queer-positive salon located at 2010 Gottingen Street.

IMAGE Modified found image from Google image search for "bridal veil clip art."

C

human values
planned community
economic changes
artistic hub
culture park
revitalization
aluminum plating
“skin”



It's uncomfortable. She feels she's in the goo stage. Chrysalis.
Is there a skeleton? Is there a nervous system? she asks. *Or has everything turned to liquid?*

She's gathered more years inside her past than I have, and she projects fewer of them into the future. *Is it helping?* This question feels more urgent to her than it does to me. We walk between two art galleries, amid wreckage reaped by the insidious and systemic good will of domination. *Is art helping?*

Tracing the etymology of the term indicates that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries 'coitus' could mean any going or coming together, any mutual tendency of bodies toward one another. It came out from under the Latin words that were carried into English by the Church and Empire — 'co' meaning together and 'ire' meaning to come or to go.

I can never quite believe that I am going to make it much further than this, breathing. Residual bits of past lives, clouding my vision. I'd rather be a cyborg than a goddess, after all, and as we mass together (body) stomping our feet on the floor (body) I recognize my own throbbing rhythms in her music, and in the colours cast by thin sheets of plastic, carefully covering the lights. The air is swollen with heat, condensation on the glass is sweating. For a moment we are mutual (coitus) this coming and going, together.

The first aid treatment for hypothermia is to cover the patient with blankets or other forms of insulation, to keep (body) lying flat, to move (body) to warm surroundings with as little disturbance to

(body) as is humanly possible.

If there is a difference between chastity and celibacy it's lost on me, carried by Empire and by Church, like Latin. I'm just hoping I'll be able to drop this crackling force field: protective electricity, trying to metabolize change.

C Notes

1. waltersgroupinc.com/project/the-chrysalis/
2. Critical discussion among membership of The Khyber Centre for the Arts, following “Social Eyes: A Chase the Space Social” held at NSCAD Art Bar on Monday, February 27, 2017, with particular criticism of the way terms like “community” and “art” were being used by real estate developers and other wealthy “business” professionals present at the meeting.

When asked directly which community they were referring to when describing “community space” in their municipally-subsidized development plans, they replied, “We don’t know!”

3. *The Oxford Companion to the Body*, pages 141 — 167, Celibacy through Cold Exposure.
4. Studio visit with Merle Harley, artist-in-residence at Centre for Art Tapes electronics lab, February 6, 2017.
5. Lido Pimienta in concert at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, with Cousins and Century Egg, February 9, 2017.

IMAGE Drawings and language associated with an “artistic hub” structure being proposed in Columbia, Maryland (USA) found in a Google image search for “chrysalis.”



D

Different skins from the same base form, dropped, deformed differently: bodies. They try to draw it out in diagrams, diaphragm. Each breath you take moves your organs around.

Rubber band, rollercoaster. Massage oil, manipulation. And you know that it's not just the oxygen that's keeping you alive.

She stares at your death rattle, the ghosts that you're giving over. You wonder how long will it take for these ideologies to die out.

Farce tragedy theatre nightmare, they slip out in silences. The TV lies face up and stares at the sky.

You know that comets used to fasten two things together. They forged two holes like eyeballs and they burned you like a sun. *How will you build a new world together?* You ask them, you shout and you whisper them. You make a new normal as you speak a new past.

Nervous and raw endings: douche (shower) dilution doubled. Letting materials obey their own logic (magic) falling down in light wrinkles and folds.

Some people start out there, and they have to climb their way out again. These pockets and pits (compartments full of things) places to fall into — these are the bottomless bellows inside every one's body, and it doesn't matter whether any (one) person ever has any (one, many) causes to visit them or not.

They're there (we agree that they're there) they're there, alive and

shorn

D Notes

1. Alexander Technique instruction with David Langstroth at 633 Purcells Cove Road, in Halifax, January 17, and February 15 & 28, 2017.
2. “Flim Flam” panel discussion at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, February 4, 2017, with grad class of Gonzago Institute 2016 Merle Harley, Alex van Helvoort, Nick Dourado, Esmé Hogeveen, Jesse Mitchell, and Stephanie Yee, facilitated by Craig Leonard.
3. Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens’ exhibition “Putting Life To Work,” curated by Véronique Leblanc, presented by the Owens Art Gallery, and the Galerie d’art Louise-et-Reuben Cohen, January — March, 2017.
4. “I Was Born (A Unicorn)” by The Unicorns, from their 2003 studio album “Who Will Cut Our Hair When We’re Gone?”

IMAGE Google image search for “unicorn emoji.”

E

A conversation with Nick Dourado



Buddhist booty buddy body: *Budi* comes from a place of really wanting to make joyful music, because you know if you don't do that, it's a hard, sad, and stupid life.

I'll play something into the sampler and grab it: an isolated part of a song, or a sound I'm making. There are sixteen numbers and ten banks, total, which makes one hundred and sixty different places to store sound.

The tails, or the tuxedo? You want to? Yeah okay, let's start with that:

You know I've been chasing Duke Ellington my whole life: a large group of people, a big band (structure) (you know) where the contract is the piece of music, something that can be re-negotiated, and eventually overturned. All of the dissonant notes will lead back to their own resolution, through a theory of functional harmony (music) They will show you which direction to follow if you want for them to resolve.

Here, come on, you have to listen to *Black Christ of the Andes* by Mary Lou Williams, because any tradition will only stand the test of time if it embeds itself as such (Discipline). Charles Mingus takes it up another step and turns it counter clockwise, and then it gets dragged forward again through the music made by Sun Ra.

Entropy (The Giver) It all felt very orchestral, orchestrated even.

You don't get ideas of hierarchy from nowhere, you're society informs you of them: like oxygen and hormones you breathe them.

It's the piece of music that becomes the leader now, now that the leader has written themselves out (hierarchy) because Joy is in Discipline, especially when you take up a discipline together.

No, semantic confusions are not uncommon, but the idea of "Discipline" you're thinking of isn't Discipline, or that's not what I mean. What you're thinking of is more like punishment or subservience, they're not the same thing.

It's a fantastically nondescript term (Jazz) a way to sexualize the music (Gizz) because, believe it or not, the category of "Jazz" was something invented by white people so that they could put all of the black music in the same section of the record store, and hide it away, way at the back. Gil Scott-Heron describes that so well.

Does every band have to have a leader? Black music asked those questions, and since then lot of musicians have dedicated a lot of study to Duke: Prince, Frank Zappa, Stevie Wonder "Sir Duke."

E Notes

1. Conversation with artist Nick Dourado, March 8, 2017, whose music-based projects include:

BUDI

budi.bandcamp.com/ (solo)

Eddy

eddyeddy.bandcamp.com/ (with Nathan Doucet)

Special Costello

specialcostello.bandcamp.com/ (with Jeremy Costello)

Century Egg

centuryegg.bandcamp.com/ (with Shane, Tri Lee, Robert)

Nick's residency project "Harmonic Spaces" initiated 3 weekly workshops — *Sound Club*, *Math Jam* and the *Peoples Choir* — at The Khyber Centre for the Arts in fall of 2016.

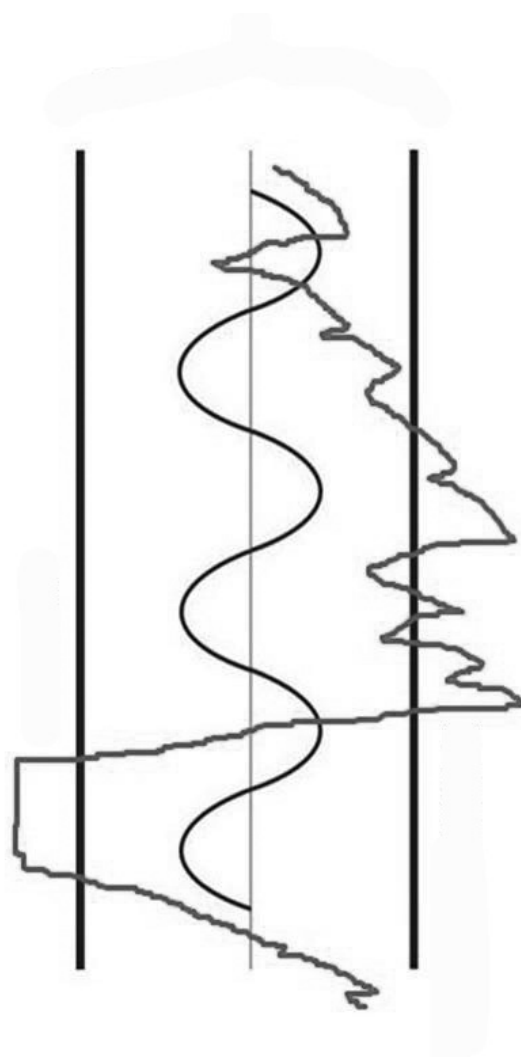
theartsabstract.ca/2016/10/nick-dourado/

2. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Giver

3. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Revolution_Will_Not_Be_Televised

4. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harlem_Renaissance

IMAGE Modified found image of Moomins — the central characters in a series of books and a comic strip by Finnish illustrator and writer Tove Marika Jansson — taken from a smart phone screenshot of an Instagram post made by tess eva cournoywer @t_cour on February 12, 2017.



F

It's about wealth and it's about power: it's about nothing, not life-giving, not flesh, and when people talk about privilege it's because this shit is real.

Protestant framework

Secular white protestant culture. Tension that is stored in the body comes from a public performance of devoted hard work. The art work is validated through struggle, measurable productivity. Self-flagellation, suppression of anger — responses born of well-socialized shame.

Keep your head down. *Keep Calm and Carry On* culture, that's how she described this ever-present thing. Or in other words they are swarms of wasps (WASPS) venomous insects — pressing out of the walls and insisting on silence. Well-meaning faux-dander feathers, synthetic duvet cover, smothering your body, they say — *stop making a scene.*

Middle class, upper middle class framework

Creates it's hold through fear, isolation, displacing structures for community, connection. I suspect it's incompatible with meaningful art practice, but it is always pressing in, pressing down: gold-plated, gilded grip.

The art school teaches us how to constructively critique and consolidate feedback, but now in our life-practices I worry how this gets lost: the on-going, the engagement with process. I worry how I have internalized narratives of impossibility and crisis: economic uncertainty becomes an easy absorption, an attempted erasure of privilege.

Fidelity to framework

Infidelity to framework (alternative framework)

When we are working together we are able to build capacity for self-accountability, soaking in the generosity of both the compliment and the critique.

We work to alter the soft architectures of existing social spaces, with a strong focus on making people feel supported and cared-for. This is what we've been referring to when we talk about "holding space."

There are also the following things, re-negotiable through repetition:

Gender framework

Love, friendship framework

Narrative framework

The power to narrate or to block other narrative from forming (emerging) is active in both cultural practices and imperialism, and questions of land sovereignty have been reflected, contested and decided through strategic use narrative form.

Life framework

Art practice, framework

We will build new ones in community, together, over time.

Window framework

In the central part of the diagram, there is a place of not feeling threatened, from which people are typically able to readily receive, process, and integrate information and otherwise respond to the demands of everyday life.

F Notes

1. Lido Pimienta's artist talk at The Khyber Centre for the Arts on February 6, 2017, titled "Take their money, but not all the space," with particular reference to an image of Bono and Damien Hirst.

2. Kai Cheng Thom's workshop "Love in the Time of Trauma: Building Indispensability Culture" organized by Venus Envy Halifax, and hosted at The Khyber Centre for the Arts on March 5, 2017.

ladysintrayda.wordpress.com/

3. Active Listening workshop at South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre, March 1, 2017.

4. Edward W. Said's "Culture and Imperialism" (1993)

5. goodtherapy.org/blog/psychpedia/window-of-tolerance

IMAGE Google image search for "window of tolerance."



G

A yellow sleet, a tie-dyed beat, a clear blue plastic drawstring sheet: unwittingly nodding to it, tapping your (you thought there was nothing left for you here).

You are looking in through the window and you can see that there are two men working inside, building and disassembling a tent with a continuous rustling sound, using brown kraft paper and synthetic strands of rope, silver survival blankets.

Wrinkles and folds. There's the sound of a metronome as you sit down, blurred in the bathroom, bathing in light.

You start to think about who you share walls with, and you create a situation around yourself to explain who you are.

G Notes

1. Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens' exhibition "Putting Life To Work," curated by Véronique Leblanc, presented by the Owens Art Gallery, and the Galerie d'art Louise-et-Reuben Cohen, January — March, 2017.

2. "Khyber Town Hall: Keeping Ourselves + Our Communities Accountable" event developed in collaboration with Avalon Sexual Assault Centre and South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre held at The Khyber Centre for the Arts on March 7, 2017.

The event was the first in a series of community discussions about building cultures of care within artistic and community-based spaces, facilitated by Carmella Farahbakhsh, Frank Heimpel, Nathan Doucet, and Hannah Guinan.

IMAGE Google image search for "gland."

H



Habits frittered, fettered around me. Delicate deep fryer heating several litres of fat. Palpable starch and stiff collars — they are so materially stubborn as to be my time-worn coat. (straightjacket)

Certainly they were someone else's before they were mine, perhaps they are my mother's grandmother's recycled air following. (oilcloth) Walking, wandering from and away from. Same, just some body brewing itself through different forms of life: shapes of the words and the constellations of love changing. The stars moving like slow explosions.

There were those promises of new worlds, new and better lives (product placement) and golden mountains (someone else said) prosperity. Hands dug deep in uncaded soil, filling out their days building, moving houses, growing flowers and food. Procreating, defecating. Passing through homesickness and regret and what felt like narrow forms of survival. "We lived through it."

"Sometimes I would give them everything and there would be nothing left for me."

Look, lock your eyes in the mirror. (Pep Talk)

Let go of the fear of doing it wrong, and do it wrong. Be okay with doing it wrong. Listen to others when they tell you you've done wrong, and believe them when they say that they hurt. You hurt too, you cry, but these things don't exclude each other. You shift things around in order to value repair over punishment, and you listen to others.

Empathy might exist so long it doesn't slide into a hungered holding, false unification of narratives, universal eyes.

"I don't know what that's like."

(l i s t e n)

Leading the workshop, she asked us to sit with the discomfort we were feeling in our bodies. To take time with it and to hold it in these moments. To hear her question (the question) and to not know the answer, and to breathe and to be okay.

Trauma / awareness /

She spoke of supporting each other as we journey through this uncertain, these unmapped conversations and feelings.

To feel it come, and then eventually to go, only to come again.

(c y c l e s)

H Notes

1. Conversations with my maternal grandmother, who immigrated to Treaty 3 territory (Northwestern Ontario) from the western coast of Norway in the years following World War II.

2. Kai Cheng Thom's workshop "Love in the Time of Trauma: Building Indispensability Culture" organized by Venus Envy Halifax, and hosted at The Khyber Centre for the Arts on March 5, 2017.

ladysintrayda.wordpress.com/

IMAGE Photo taken by sophia bartholomew on March 5, 2017.



In / tension

Infinite content. Wait, I think I may have drooled on this blanket.
Touch open internet portal with the tips of your fingers, follow it.

Pill-form past-times, and the whole rest of our lives are
compressed into one small square.

Devoid of any adjectives or other indicators of opinion, it stands
there limp, sleeping laundry, slowly accumulating — one, two,
three, four, five, six — likes.

12. PROTECTION AGAINST FREE RADICALS

By this point, the antioxidant and overall protective properties of
artichokes should be quite clear to you.

It's this neatness that's a problem, cutting things off before they've
followed their course.

What's the name of that? (Method acting) Like what you and I
talked about, discussing honesty in performance. It's always there,
it's a part of you, but maybe it's just a small part, or it's one that
you
normally work quite hard to hide out (hide away)

And the way I speak in the same voice and always about the same
spectrum of things, speed speaking — exaggerating one shade
of colour along each of my emotional lines, on internet platform —

When we've walked down this street before, and now we turn
around the corner — now what?

*Rubbery false flesh cut open on the screen, standing — in the
police station, standing in the morgue.*

Anxiety bends toward paranoid thought. When I follow this
your long-distance words become only algorithms, churning

I n / f o r m a t i o n

Occasional, but intensely felt / soothsayer))))

Inhibiting automation is the first step in the acronym. After that
comes Primary Postural Pattern, Analysis, Conscious
Communication and Conscious Choice.

I Notes

1. Conversation with Alex van Helvoort, preparing his contribution to the publication "Sustenance vs. Survival" at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, February 2017.
2. oceanmist.com/artichokes
3. Conversation with Jake Klein-Waller, developing his performance-for-video "Elegies of the Cowboy" at Connexion ARC, February 2016.
4. alexandertechniqueatlantic.ca/about/

IMAGE Google image search for "paper tent."



J

A conversation with Carmella Farahbakhsh

April 5, 2017

Do you dream at night or just during the day?

I dream for everyone to access to support systems that suit them and see them and hold them.

Almost everyone (Almost everyone)

I also dream for like an abolition of prisons and borders.

I dream for reparations and reconciliation in tangible, actualized ways.

I dream for like the love that I have for my friends to be valued within societal structure.

I dream for perfect pillows.

I dream for better models of how to be accountable.

I dream for better popular culture that represents myself and my communities.

I dream for alternate ways of rearing children, and like the pushing back of violent education systems.

I dream for time travel.

I dream for another Harry Potter book.

I dream to like know how to go on an anti-oppressive date.

I dream to learn how to love other femmes fully, and with

reverence and devotion, and honestly.

I dream for better access to gender affirming surgeries, and gender affirmation.

I dream for like ways and tools to heal our nations, like our diasporic communities and...

Yeah, I also dream for like, mmm... like I wish that emojis could exist, like you could just throw one at someone? Like you could be like... well, maybe that would be like anti-oppressive flirting! You could just throw a 😏 and then like look away, and then see if the other person threw a 😏 back...

Or you could just throw 😡 and then just like run away, and you wouldn't have to deal with that altercation.

Or someone could be doing a public speech, and you could be like
😡 😡 🔥 ✨ 🤘 and they'd be like
"Oh, I guess I should stop talking."

Just kidding (that's just a pipe dream)

At night I don't really dream (I don't really remember my dreams)

Sometimes I dream of my twin flame.

Other times I dream of being in like an ocean capsule, like I remember sounds —



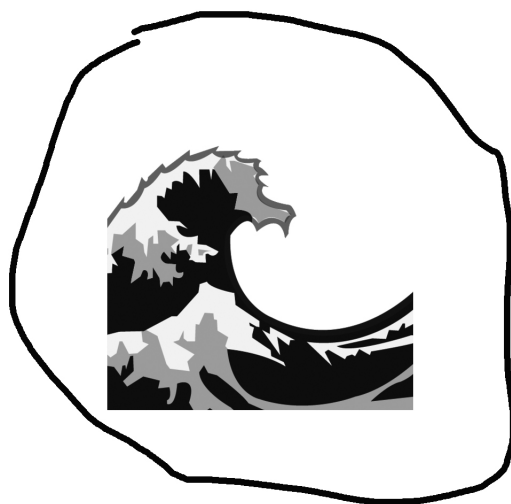
J Notes

1. Conversation with Carmella Farahbakhsh, April 5, 2017

Carmella is a queer, mixed race, Baha'i, Iranian, non binary, femme weirdo. They collaborate and organize with local initiatives with an aim to create wider QTBIPOC community and support systems within Halifax. Carmella is currently the Care Rep on the Khyber's Board of Directors, and also enjoys working at South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre as well as at Venus Envy.

IMAGE Google image search for "perfect pillows."

IMAGE Google image search for "sparkle," "wink," "angry," "rock n roll," and "fire" emojis, plus a modified found image from a Google image search for "ocean emoji."



K

A sense of continuity always comes afterward, in photographs.
And that's what they think is so nice about INSTAGRAM as it gifts
them a sense of cohesion, continuity — life narratives coalescing
in real time —

They create a demonstrable shape for their selves on screen,
a certain kind of salve or maybe it is a salvation, demonstration.
Buildings disappearing, reappearing somewhere else —

They wonder if what he diagnosed as “Junkspace” might not be
such a bad thing after all, through near-constant re-negotiation.
Vernacular aesthetics (ascetics)

TIDAL waves

They throw the remaining food down in the toilet, skip the whole
business of digestion all together: a few leftover Cheerios and
their milk in the bath, boiled again —

Sun sign, moon sign, ascending sign, mid-heaven

Jealousy

Forget Irony

Take the system more seriously than it takes itself.

K Notes

1. [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com)
2. Rem Koolhaas' architectural treatise "Junkspace" (2006).
3. tidal.com/ca
4. Conversation with Alex van Helvoort and Noah Lichtblau in Noah's studio at NSCAD, March 27, 2017.
5. Video of Slavoj Žižek "What the hell is Laibach all about?"
[youtube.com/watch?v=1BZl8ScVYvA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BZl8ScVYvA)
6. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borghesia

IMAGE Modified found image from a Google image search for "ocean emoji."



A conversation with Shaya Ishaq
and Jade Byard Peek

March 29, 2017

This place is like a fire. You can't just keep soaking it. You gotta give the give in order to make it work —

It was very passionate to see that — seeing the gaps that are missing. It's all about the message that is reading, this invisible force —

I'm working through spaces: taking spaces, filling spaces, and also working around spaces, and white spaces, and kind of de-constructing spaces, implanting new forms.

Black methodologies, black epistemologies, black brilliance.

Those things they're intertwined, linked with life-giving and storytelling, embodied.

Sylvester's playing, but wait a sec, it's too loud, I'll turn it down —

Y o u m a k e m e f e e l / m i g h t y

Real, but really it's very interesting seeing people involved in the conversation but also moving their (bodies) with the conversation, moving their bodies to the song.

I hate academia, but I also love the platform that it gives, and really, there must be consensual way of experimenting, researching, exploring new shapes.

This is different.

This is not a space to be defensive, this is a space to learn.

All I can do is... I'll speak for myself, but as a student going to an art school where the majority demographic is white, you're limited to a certain level of criticism (I think) and if you do come into it with your black experience mixed with intellect it is (often times) continually belittled by your peers and by your teachers. And as somebody who just experienced that and was just tired of it... I was like, "I think that having this reading group can be a very powerful tool."

A space that isn't uniquely for and populated by white —

Especially within the arts community, no one wants to talk about it.

LIKE IDENTITY DON'T DO IT —

Like people who roll their eyes when I talk about black history, but like go fucking anywhere. It's called New Scotland, get out of my face.

Y'all should think about this —

Black lives matter.

Black people have been in Nova Scotia for like 400 years.

L Notes

1. Conversation with Shaya Ishaq and Jade Byard Peek, March 29, 2017.

Together Shaya and Jade organized and facilitated a Black Lives Matter, Halifax reading group (BLM HFX) held weekly at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, February — April, 2017.

thecoast.ca/halifax/reading-for-the-revolution-with-black-lives-matter/Content?oid=5997948

2. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sylvester_\(singer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sylvester_(singer))

3. nfb.ca/film/speak_it_from_heart_of_black_nova_scotia/

IMAGE Google image search for “disco ball.”



M

We stay up late thinking up names.

Metonym, autonym.

Asking whole subsets of people to form and inform themselves inside of language (legal structure) that was designed to exclude them from the outset. Worse, designed to kill them, really. To smother them with invisibility and silence.

THE SYSTEM ISN'T BROKEN IT WAS BUILT THIS WAY

Glitter grinding from the ground into your (turn the other cheek) these (gentlemen) jostling folks into fringes, golden pasties. It's a particular set of gestures — swinging hammer, swinging mop.

If he can reduce these things to righteous equations of access (axis) oh industrialized labour, consumption models - well, he's obviously never worked a minimum wage job — missed the point, perforated —

Scrolling past, fast, syncopated. Daily dairy servings, calcium and Vitamin D, darlings. Absurdity is a place of truth, also apocalypse.

do da da da do da da DA DA

She / they build small utopias of art book fairs into oncoming traffic — the strange unwelcoming liminal gardens of the city's scape. Books between on ramps (off ramps, roadways) Books between two hearts pumping palms —

Everything is an opportunity.

She / they try not to waste chances to drop away time-keeping.
Sticks and shadows charting the orbit of the earth —

About how small negotiations toward mutual dignity and respect
are more important to you than some totalizing revolution... I
think that is what you were saying there — late night — our knees
almost touching under the table. How to share space with other
kinds of people, because we are never going to see this world the
same way —

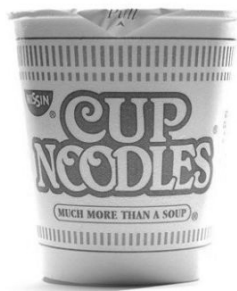
Contradictory truths, holding — “building your capacity” — (body)
filling up interior spaces, looking around (you) and casting out
circles and other kinds of spells.

M Notes

1. Late night conversation with Hannah Guinan and Alex van Helvoort at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, March 13 — 14, 2017.
 2. BLM HFX Reading Group, Week 8 “Black Lives Matter and The New Jim Crow: Rethinking Prisons and Police Violence in America” on April 5, 2017 at The Khyber Centre for the Arts.
 3. Public post on Facebook by Raymond Boisjoly, April 1, 2017, describing an understanding of contemporary Indigenous art as science fiction and cognitive estrangement, and quoting Mark Sinker’s 1992 Afro-futurist essay “Loving The Alien” published in The Wire, ISSUE 96:

“The central fact in Black Science Fiction... is an acknowledgement that Apocalypse already happened...”
 4. stownpodcast.org
 5. Late night conversation with Michael Fernandes and Noah Lichtblau at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, April 9 — 10, 2017.
 6. Late night conversation with Cedric Noel at Flouish Festival in Fredericton, April 19 — 20, 2017.
- IMAGE Modified photo of Jesse Mitchell at the Khyber Centre for the Arts, April 27, 2017, taken by sophia bartholomew.

N



A conversation with Eric Diolola

April 15, 2017

Yeah, it's hard though — personally — I don't want to make music for my job. Of course for me though, if you let people pay for that — for me it's personally — you lost some something — it's hard though — I was actually just talking to myself about this —

I don't want to earn money from it, because the part for me would be taking away, if someone paid me for my passion.

It's more I get more thrill off it, when it comes out for nowhere, and it's going to be alive... something like that!

Somehow, getting paid for it takes some of the life out of it.

But hey, it's going to be fun — also sharing — the cup noodle, the food, like the warm food, such a big deal.

There's just so much to being for us hosts getting in and to our house — it's such a big responsibility. It was incorporated by our culture, ever since we were growing up — taking care of people —

And this is a big part of the Philippines family — if you came up in our house, my mom would feed you so much! Hosting our own event, but definitely imparting our cultural heritage into it, because that's — like hospitality is number one for us Filipinos.

Same thing with cup noodle sessions. Definitely more for the music, not for the idea of entertainment, pavement, payment. Good music, and people, good people, good friends.

You know I feel empty just dancing. You know these other places that they say come here, take drugs and dance, and fuck off —

I've been struggling to answer that question for quite awhile.

Being an artist for me is more a necessity of having creativity as a part of your life — using it to make you see, make you seen, scene — that's what keeps it going for me.

I need this kind of stuff to make you feel present, because... I'm not totally present... Connection, connecting people — making arts in my community — I think for me, just — just it keeps me alive (in a sense)

Having support from those people who totally believes in you — to support each other — that magic — that force that drives you on it —

Because for me as an artist, one important thing is support.

N Notes

1. Conversation with Eric Diolola, April 15, 2017

Eric (SIRI) is one of the organizers of Cup Noodle Session — a DIY non-profitable community initiative focused on nourishing ideas, values and connections through music, culture, art and sounds.

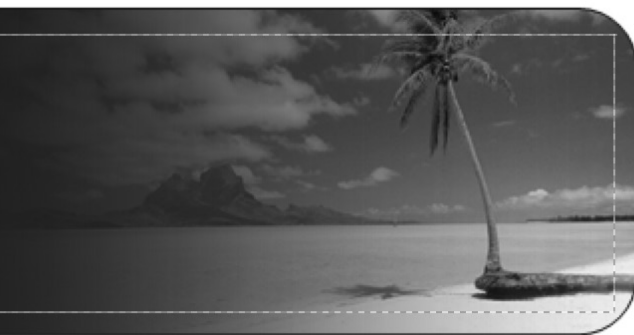
2. “Cup Noodle Session” at Wonder’neath studios, February 23, 2017.

3. “Cup Noodle Session” at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, March 18, 2017: w/ SECRET GUEST / BROWNTOWN / MAXIMATA / ENZO AYCHICO / Hosted By: SIRI.

IMAGE Google image search for “cup noodle.”

Safety Line

Full Name
Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Address Line 3



“objectivity” / abject objections

It's easy to lose track of what's important. Having all of the chairs set up in time for the event, but with no one to sit around in them, for example.

We know that a book has more concrete ties to objecthood, that it's less of an image, so it's okay to give it a number and a name.

Here they're standing around correcting each other's “language.”

Someone relays how object-oriented ontology is a form of theft from indigenous knowledge systems, circulated like new-ness and currency, un-cited.

Something easily done, repeated. Illusions of change, garnered, harboured — passed around as a coveted commodity.

Undergraduate all-expenses-paid vacation.

Whose is it?

Demonstrating a level of education to each other, rather than urgently asking, pressing, pushing, pulling, screaming out, calling for altered states of existence and an entirely different world.

They / them, I say — that was me all along, making mistakes.

Putting the “Oh” in Rev-O-lution.

O Notes

1. Conversations with Hannah Guinan, March 2017.
2. Conversations with Allie Graham, January — March, 2017.
3. Studio visit with OS Diamond, NSCAD Port Campus Sculpture Studio, Monday, April 3, 2017.

4. Dylan Rainforth's essay "How Aborigines Invented the Idea of Object-Oriented Ontology" in Un Magazine 10.1 (2016)

unprojects.org.au/magazine/issues/issue-10-1/object-oriented-ontology-web-only/

5. David Garneau's exhibition essay "Rocks, Stones, and Grandfathers" for the exhibition "Rocks, Stones, and Dust" at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery and the University of Toronto Art Centre in Toronto, October 28–December 18, 2015.

6. Curator John G. Hampton's essay "Contemporary Rock Art" for the exhibition "Rocks, Stones, and Dust."

rocksstonesdust.com/

IMAGE Found image, browsing vistaprint.com.



P

you don't have to think about it
you feel it

Conversation with Alfie Rapsey

April 14, 2017

Yes, ubiquitous and so invisible, like that computer phone that you carry, that you're balancing here — on the chair — between us — cyborg appendage — perched, perfectly precarious — listening — disparity, disparate pieces, data sets — gathering —

I'm writing a manifesto, an ongoing study. So —

Social Medium Ubiquity Impeding Human Discernment.

(Look for that being released in the coming months) Something poised in like an academic structure, but yeah — no, I can't stay inside that rigidity.

We are hybrid creatures now (after all) hybrid world, technologies, and what is the spiritual aspect of what we're doing? It's not really data — it's information, it's life — I mean, there's quantifiable properties, but that's just not all there is.

A real problem (I see) with technological ubiquity in terms of the collective consciousness is lack of context, or how context gets dropped from a lot of things.

The way these platforms are situated (scrolling) enabling you to take in impressive loads of information at a time — you know you're not really retaining in the way that you want to, but you're still absorbing it (body)

Content / creation is about sharing but it's also about feeding the beast, hungry algorithms... Yeah one thing I learned in Business School is that there's a whole lot of fake bullshit jobs that people get paid a lot of money to do.

I'm looking (deep listening) Deep Learning. Yeah, I'm just trying to straddle those two lines —

Yeah — this is another thing that I am working on — you know — trying to express in a large way. Mostly it's just going to be... well, I'll just have to show you (a feeling) like really reconfiguring our relationship to money, how we use money, how it moves in our life.

Money is movement, and if it's not moving, then... it's not really serving the purpose. We all know how money makes people feel (especially when people are hoarding huge sums of it)

I'm trying to create a model that is going to be able to support people who don't necessarily fall into the criteria of being — or like... I just want to put money directly back into the hands.

...also to wrap people in a sonic womb (a feeling)

Could we reclaim the term World Music? I mean in one song I could have seventeen different samples, from seventeen different parts of the world, genres. I don't how you classify that otherwise (a feeling) the sole or soul nature of it, through the selections, the songs

I'm here now, I'm paying attention, but I don't know if this is my battle, or whether this is really a surmountable thing for me. Smiling, soft spoken segregation, formed over several centuries? Or in other words — the winter. I'd rather do without it. Let's just say that.

P Notes

1. Conversation with Alfie Rapsey at Cafe Cempoal, April 14, 2017.

Alfie (DJ Alfalfa Brown) arrived in Halifax by way of Baltimore, New York City, San Francisco, and Oakland. Through “Staying Underground” — a group founded by her partner Thomas Rapsey (Mistah Rapsey) — she has been working with others in Halifax to create meaningful community connections by way of dance and music.

2. “Winter Warmer// Aquarius Ascending” dance party event at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, February 4, 2017: w/ Alfalfa Brown / shyshaya / Almond Breeze / DJ FANCY PANTS / DJ OS.

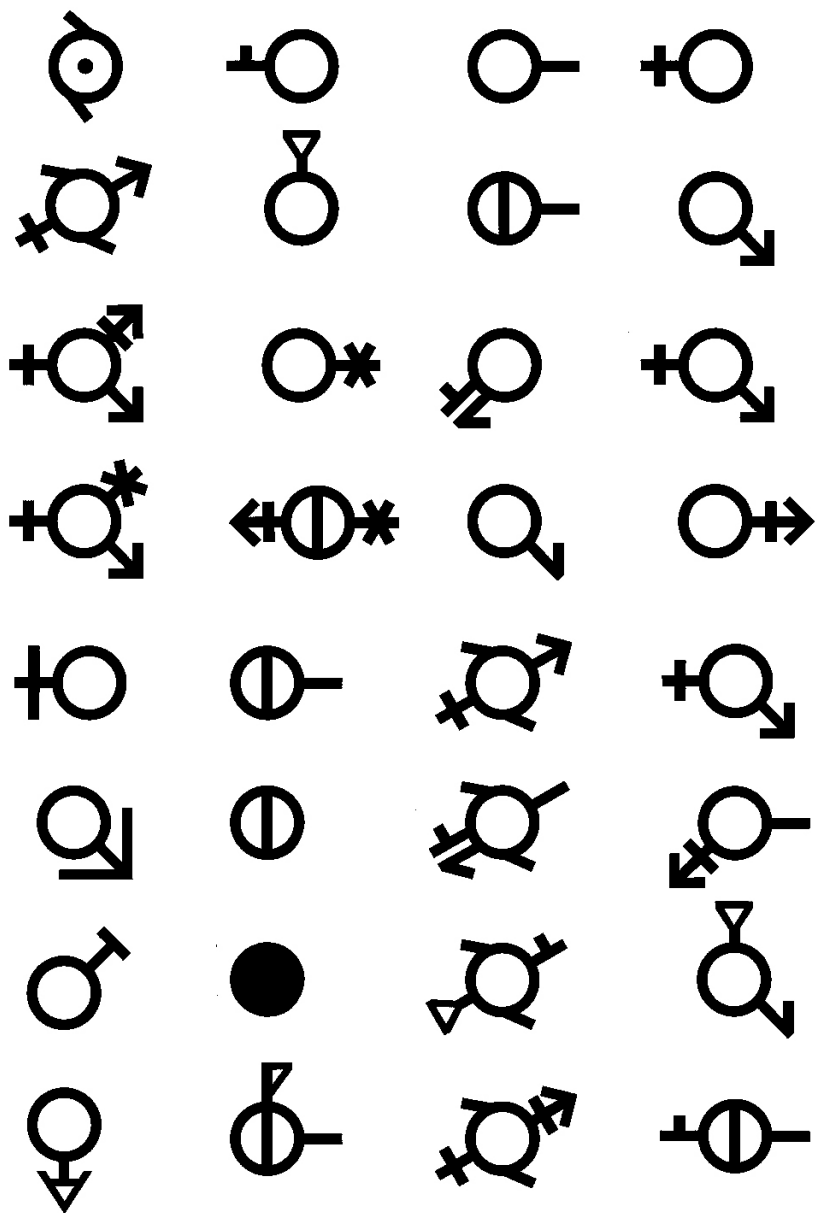
3. “Cup Noodle Session” music event at Wonder’neath studios, February 23, 2017.

4. “Mild Eyes” pop up exhibition by Shaya Ishaq at Lost & Found April 13, 2017, w/ music by Alfalfa Brown.

5. “WarmUp (Sunroom Vibes)” dance party event at Alter Egos Café, April 13, 2017 w/ Mistah Rapsey & Alfalfa Brown.

6. “SUN 004” music event at Alter Egos Café, April 20, 2017 w / Alfalfa Brown / Mistah Rapsey / DJ Douvet.

IMAGE Google image search for “smart phone.”



Premiums paid in periwinkle, fragments. Buttoning down your
caverns with biology notes, diagrams. The bowing floorboards of
your steam and breath, evaporating.

I attempt to retrace myself through different forms of play.

Passing in, passing out —

Passing on —

Passing off, passing up —

Passing down, passing through —

Passing over —

Passing along —

Passing.

Past due.

All those years, I thought there was something wrong with me.

There's no entry for "Queer" in this book you made about bodies.

Q Notes

1. The two entries in *The Oxford Companion to the Body* under the letter Q are Quadriceps and Quarantine, though under the letter T there is an entry titled Transvesticism.
2. “Winter Warmer// Aquarius Ascending” dance party event at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, February 4, 2017: w/ Alfalfa Brown / shyshaya / Almond Breeze / DJ FANCY PANTS / DJ OS.
3. Late night conversations with Carmella Farahbakhsh, Hannah Guinan, and Merle Harley at The Local bar, following BLM HFX reading group Week 7 “Black Lives Matter’s Halifax: 400 Years” and an all-femme stand-up comedy event at The Seahorse co-presented by Pop Halifax, with Cheryl Hann and Sandi Rankaduwa, and with American comedien Aparna Nancherla headlining, Wednesday, April 5, 2017.

IMAGE Modified found image, from image posted by Coral Short on November 10, 2016 to the call for submissions on Facebook for “Genderclear,” their forthcoming curation of experimental films by gender queer people.

R



The following text is a redacted version of an essay by Ed titled "Rehabilitation: A Misconception" written in 2016

What society fails to acknowledge, or for that matter fails to know because of lack of transparency, is that the individual who has been turned over to the Department of Justice will in all forms not be “rehabilitated” but habilitated to conditioning and conforming to this side of society.

Although society means well in their process of rehabilitation, they do not do well, simply because they have no say in the rehabilitation process. This is why the general public cannot comprehend the statistics of re-offending and career criminals. In response to this, they put more unconscious pressure on the system to toughen up on crime, thinking that this is the solution.

The essential things needed to succeed in society (social skills, education, employment, family, support systems) are not enforced or considerably implemented into the prison system, which gives truth to the fact that “rehabilitation” is not a main focus in correctional facilities. If it was, the statistics of re-offenders would not be so high.

For example, when you take a dog into your care, whatever is done with that dog while in your care over the course of its life will be influential to the potential of that dog.

Without internal investigation and community participation, things cannot be what they are perceived to be. The well-being of those incarcerated is bubble-wrapped, and not fully disclosed to the public.

If rehabilitation was the main focus of the Department of Justice, the main focuses would be on quality of food, air, water, exercise, programs, and education. A lack of any of these things can result to an unhealthy environment, making it unhealthy for the individual, making it unhealthy for the process of rehabilitation.

What Corrections [Services Canada] fails to acknowledge is that a relationship between people can only exist when both have dignity. If one is without, then the relationship is something else.

Human dignity is the very ground that a man stands on, if he stands on any, especially in circumstances like incarceration, when he has nothing but that.

The abuse of authority is as old and just as relevant as it was since this form of penalization began, and will always exist because of the human nature of people. The world is overly populated with egotistical, self-centred, instigative people, and they will all continue to work in every occupation in the world.

In CNSCF [Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility] this is very true. Before management thinks sense, it thinks rules/guidelines. It's as if at times that the ones who set the guidelines had no sense, with all due respect.

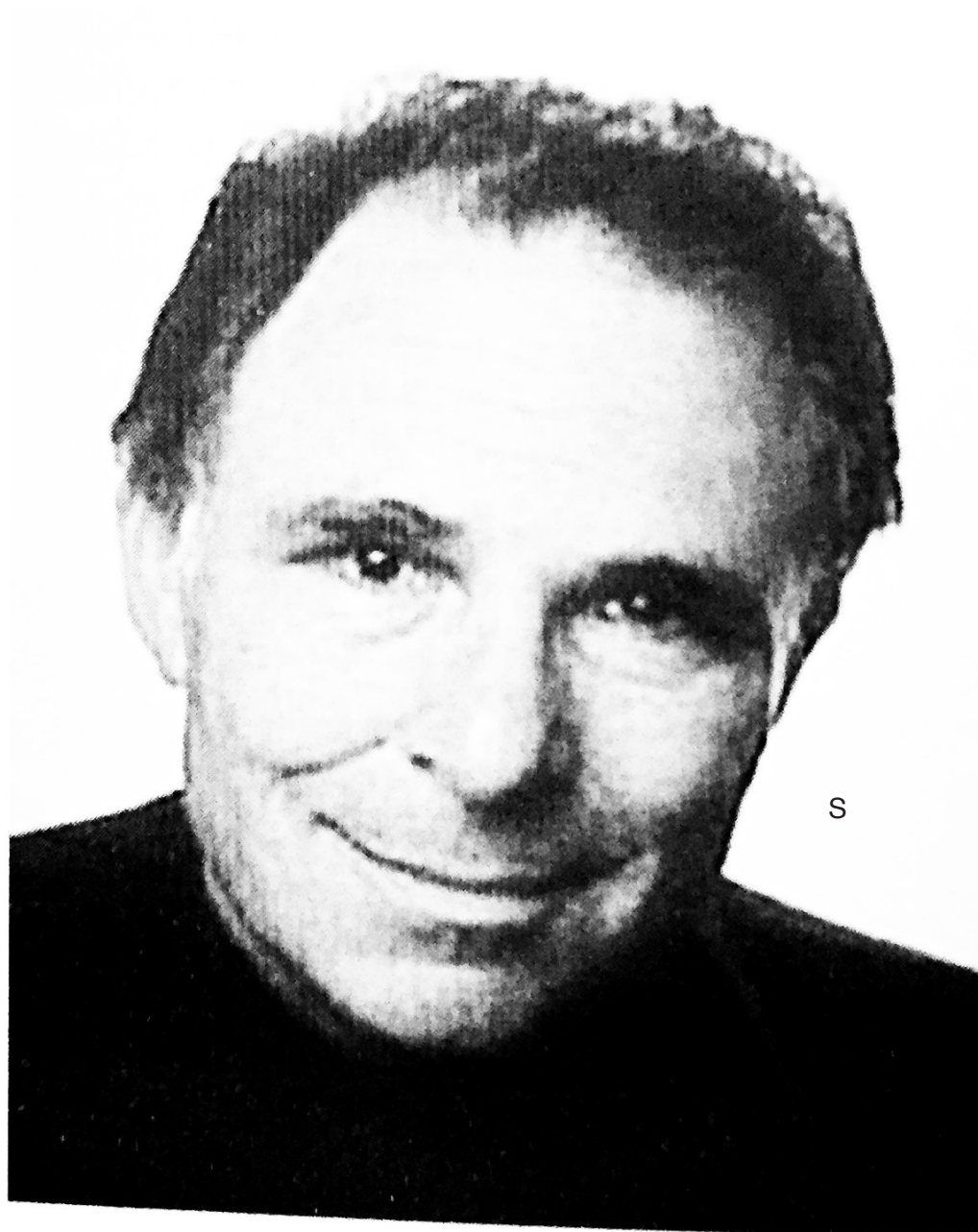
The values of this essay (if taken seriously) have the power to transform not only the justice system, but society as a whole. The term "rehabilitation" needs to either be revised and implemented or reversed out from this misconception.

R Notes

1. Ed's essay was distributed by El Jones and Reed "iZrEAL" Jones as part of the proceedings of "In conversation with Black Lives Matter Toronto" a keynote discussion on Friday, March 31, 2017, organized by the Dalhousie University Student Union to kick off a Racial Justice Symposium they hosted on April 1, 2017, at Kings College.
2. Ed is the co-founder of Black Power Hour, a radio program that blends conscious hip hop with discussions of political, cultural, and social issues relevant to Black people, broadcast by CKDU Campus Radio in Halifax. He is currently an inmate incarcerated at a prison in Nova Scotia.

www.dal.ca/news/2017/05/04/activism-on-the-airwaves.html

IMAGE Google image search for "correctional services canada."



There's something contradictory that I am trying to hold — something about how borders and boundaries and autonomy are enormously good and important, especially in our discussions around consent and cultural self-determination, but also... I'm thinking of how there's this other set of boundaries that exists in the popular imagination, wherein people dominantly consider themselves discrete from other organisms in their environment — separate from the yeast and the air, the bacteria and the water, non-human animals, plants, roots and rocks and other people... going so far as to other anything beyond ones self and ones family unit, ones discrete social circle, ones best friend, ones partner — holding at a great distance anything perceived as difficulty and disorder. Even if these things are experienced in ones self, friends, family unit, it's like we're taught to try and erase it, put on a good face — trying to pass. Pretending parts of our lives don't exist.

Colonial-capitalism rewards conformity. It may not be anymore complicated than that.

We are guilty. We are vulnerable. Our lives are fragile and fleeting.

S Notes

1. Bracha L. Ettinger's essay "(M)Other Re-spect: Maternal Subjectivity, the *Ready-made mother-monster* and The Ethics of Respecting" (2009), referred to me by Kathryn Alder.

2. Phone conversations with my sister Alexandra Moulten about her life, being paid an hourly wage working in homeless shelters in Vancouver, and about the many friends and acquaintances of hers who are dying every week because of the ongoing fentanyl crisis.

"WHAT KEEPS US" is a documentary she made this winter, working closely with community members at The Drug Resource Centre, an important community hub which closed its doors on December 16, 2016, due to loss of funding. The Centre organized a community-run brew co-op, a drinkers' lounge support group, and other programs centred on harm reduction, care, and community support.

IMAGE Modified found image from an illustration in "The Oxford Companion to the Body" under the entry for "Smiling" written by Paul Ekman, an American researcher who co-developed the Facial Action Coding System. The original photograph was used to illustrate an inauthentic smile, which uses the *zygomatic major* only, different from an authentically felt smile, which also activates the *orbicularis oculi*.

instead
let's shoot skeets on your front lawn

i'm sorry if i am
creating awkward situations
for you guys
with my oil spills
and other news stories;
i just didn't want
you guys
to be bored
and have nothing

Kill me a chicken, send me the wing

in the friendly dimension,
you don't have
to stick with the
same
shitty gang,
you can be anything,
go anywhere,
unstuck
like railroad bill

Public post made on Facebook by
Meghan Sivani-Merrigan, May 4, 2017,
following the death of Troy Richter

T

I don't know where to start or how to choose the right words. I can't ever begin to describe what Troy meant to myself and many of his peers. I have been up most of the nights since I received the news, my grief and sadness are running deep in ways I could never have imagined.

However, I care most about spreading Troy's message, which was not only about expressing oneself with wild abandon, but one of love and acceptance, despite the absurdities of life. One thing Gilbert Switzer cared about most was inclusivity and rejecting any and all rules — in regards to songwriting, friendships, performance, art, the written word, life, death, and love.

He once talked about how he wished he could "someday be some one's favourite poet." I ask that if you have an opportunity, to please read his work and listen to his music so that you too can experience his magic, his joy, his sadness, his love, and his desire. It is without exaggeration that I state: Troy's body of work is prolific and astounding.

I want to talk about my time we spent writing, playing and recording music together for our punk band, alongside our good friend and collaborator Derrick Hilltz. How we wrote our songs, my first tours, my first vinyl release... my first of many things! But I haven't got there, although I suspect it will come pouring out eventually. For now I can say that I would never have had the confidence to do what I do now without the ever-present encouragement of Troy Richter.

As the obituary states and many of you know, Tory suffered from schizophrenia which made his existence quite difficult at times. I can't and won't put words in his mouth, but I do know he wished nothing more than happiness and joy for others... his empathy is unparalleled.

Please enjoy most of the Gilbert Switzer discography including an album of unheard and unreleased tracks. A majority of our songs have never been made available online, as our output pre-dates that era of the internet. All of these tracks are available for free, keeping in accordance to Gilbert Switzer's code of ethics.

However, if you are able to, please consider making a donation via our bandcamp with all proceeds going to Laing House in Halifax, a youth drop-in centre for those suffering with mental illness.

Feel free to share.

Thank you Troy, for everything. I love you deeply.

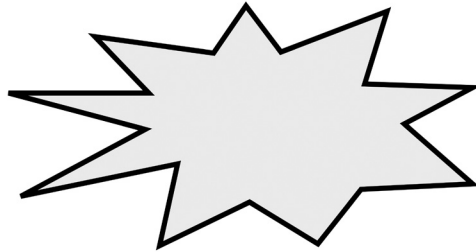
<http://gilbertswitzer.bandcamp.com/>

T Notes

1. Troy Richter was a Halifax-based writer, musician and a crucial member of the CKDU campus radio community who passed away on April 30, 2017. As well as hosting a radio show, Troy wrote poetry and electronic music, and formed and performed with Gilbert Switzer and The Friendly Dimension.

3. Meghan Sivani-Merrigan is a musician now based in Montréal who collaborated with Troy Richter and Derrick Hilltz, playing in the punk band Gilbert Switzer.

IMAGE Photo of Troy Richter's poems posted to Instagram by Meghan Sivani-Merrigan, May 8, 2017.



Notes made listening to Audre Lorde read her
essay "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power"
on YouTube

The erotic has been misnamed and used against us. It has been made into

The confused

The trivial

The psychotic

The pornographic

The plasticized sensation

Please — we are not to confuse the erotic with the pornographic, because it is in fact the opposite: where the pornographic is sensation without feeling, a suppression of all true feeling — it is the direct denial of the power of the erotic. Because of these opposing uses of the sexual in our selves (bodies) the erotic is fraught with fear — fear of feeling — fear of working to our greatest capacity.

The erotic is the nurturer or nursemaid of our deepest knowledge.

(Feelings are facts)

(The language of emotions)

The erotic is a source of power and information — something female and spiritual, though it should not be relegated as women's work. From within that resource each of us can learn to deal from a place where we are most powerful — *from the chaos and power of our deepest feeling.*

A witch's tit — the underbelly of Western eroticism, right?

Whether it is dancing, building a bookcase, writing a poem,
making love, examining an idea... that self-connection shared is a
measure of the joy I know myself capable of feeling.

My capacity for that feeling (joy) — my knowledge that such
satisfaction is possible — does not have to be called marriage, nor
god, nor man, nor an afterlife.

Once we begin to demand from ourselves and from all our lives'
pursuits that they feel in accordance with that joy... our erotic
knowledge empowers us. It alters the relative meanings within our
lives, challenging us to understand them in terms of their erotic
value.

It is not so much the things that we do, but how acutely we feel in
the doing of them. Thus it is through a life practice of feeling that
the erotic is able to encourage our excellence, and also, to give us
the strength the pursue it. (Depth of feeling)

Crying on camera and over the air (waves) Jesse Wente he says,
Do not mistake my civility and my emotion for weakness.

Laiwan in her writing, she says,
she shocks his sense of perfection with tenderness
elle hurle son sens de la perfection par sa tendresse

U Notes

1. Audre Lorde reads their essay “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power” on YouTube, referred to me by Alfie Rapsey.

[youtube.com/watch?v=xFHwg6aNKy0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFHwg6aNKy0)

2. Yvonne Rainer’s memoir “Feelings are Facts” published by MIT Press in 2006, referred to me by Kathryn Alder.

3. The self help book “The Language of Emotions” by Karla McLaren published by Sounds True in 2010, referred to me by John Andrew Milne.

4. Entry for “Witch’s Tit” in The Oxford Companion to the Body, written by Marilyn Yalom.

5. Jesse Wente speaking with Matt Galloway on CBC News Toronto, May 15, 2017, unequivocally denouncing the editorial published in Write magazine by editor Hal Niedzviecki that argued in favour of cultural appropriation. Among other things, Wente articulated:

“To ignore, to pretend now, that we somehow have moved beyond this and that somehow we’re all on equal footing and thus we can all share equitably is to fail in your responsibility as a storyteller.”

[cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/jesse-wente-appropriation-prize-1.4115293](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/jesse-wente-appropriation-prize-1.4115293)

6. Direct quotation from Laiwan’s text “they did not rest in quiet even here” in their artist book “Distance of distinct vision” published by Western Front in Vancouver, 1992, with French translations by Brigitte Angays.

IMAGE Google image search for “explosion clip art.”

V

Notes made listening to a public speech
by Valarie Kaur

({})

If we say their name aloud, if we tell their story — they live.

If we stay silent — they disappear, disintegrating.

In stock images and other formulations of advertizing it's being suggested that all bodies are now equal and segregation no longer structures social reality, when in fact —

Black bodies are still seen as criminal.

Brown bodies are still seen as illegal.

Trans bodies are still seen as immoral.

Indigenous bodies are still seen as savage.

**The bodies of women and girls are still seen as
someone else's property.**

These perceptual problems belong to all of us, intersecting.

Though perhaps this darkness isn't the darkness of the tomb, but
rather the darkness of the womb?

Could we remember what the midwife says?

She says, "breathe," and then she says, "push."

V Notes

1. Black Lives Matter reading group, Weeks 4 “#SayHerName” and Week 5 “#SayTheirName: BLM’s Underpinnings” organized and facilitated by Shaya Ishaq and Jade Byard Peek at The Khyber Centre for the Arts.

2. Civil rights activist and Sikh American justice leader Valarie Kaur’s speech at Metropolitan AME Church in Washington DC on December 31, 2016, speaking with other faith leaders at the annual Watch Night Service.

valariekaur.com/about/

3. Trans advocate and MSNBC host Janet Mock’s speech at the Women’s March on Washington, January 21, 2017, calling for Inclusiveness and Intersectionality within the Women’s Movement.

washingtonpost.com/video/national/janet-mock-calls-for-intersectional-and-inclusive-movement/2017/01/21/99d888b2-dffd-11e6-8902-610fe486791c_video.html

4. Writer, performer, and video-maker Dylan Marron’s video series “Sitting in Bathrooms with Trans People,” made in response to transphobic bathroom laws being passed in the US, and Tumblr blog “Every Single Word,” a video series editing down popular films to only feature the words spoken by people of color.

dylanmarron.com/video/

everysinglewordspoken.tumblr.com

IMAGE Google image search for “vulva emoji.”

W



Wind-up, winsome and whimsical. Banana chocolate whip cream smoothies waffling. Making a market place, milling about — misery in brine and bread products, local ingredients. Imploring its impetus, imploding.

Pleasure is victory, sure, but whose is it?

This place is deeply haunted, she says, as she wanders its insides, wondering. Outsides refinished, made out and over. Still there's the deep ache of material poverty and displacement (here) on this pier. It lives inside ocean moistures, cloaked with clouded air.

There's safety gear for small animals, up there on the construction, grazing. Tangential tangerine flavoured water goggles, piles of concave concrete — debris. Sandbagged and bogged down, filaments. Following them through the threadbare mouth gaping vulva, lagging. Tarps full of rope, pulleys, cultures.

Museums of what?

Why all this emphasis on brash new words like skin and re-invention. Torn down brick bodies re-built with glass and steel beams. What's the half-life of these fibres? Drowned in the ground, decaying. He counts three lower stories, seventeen above that, and a penthouse, long lines.

He watches the men who built these towers standing down here on the ground, holding signs — asking for wages owed to them for their last three weeks of work.

“You can go to the market and not be a part of the market,” she says to them, smiling and singing, serving up food across several generations. She goes to the shopping mall daily, just to enjoy the conversation and company of people —

“You don’t have to follow the market’s thoughts and its rules.”

And if anything, an artwork can be a re-set — a way to start over again, while on a very simple level we do not understand the effect we each have on other people. This also applies to art.

Completion of the work is out of your hands, but it does happen on account of something that you initiated.

Work and the body.

The discipline of keeping a tradition alive always has costs and consequences.

W Notes

1. Visits to the Seaport Farmer's Market and NSCAD University Port Campus at Pier 21 in Halifax.

2. Mural commissioned by real estate developers Starfish Properties, on the under-construction "The Roy" condos in downtown Halifax, at 1657 Barrington Street, painted by "live painter" Jessica Gorlicky on May 13, 2016, with assistance from local artists. The mural reads:

"All Cities Must Reinvent Themselves Otherwise They Risk Turning Into Outdoor Museums - DL"

The quote is taken from a Report on Business article published in The Globe and Mail on Friday, May 06, 2016, titled "'Starchitect' leaves his mark around the world," specifically from a statement made by Daniel Libeskind paraphrased by journalist Eric Reguly.

theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/careers/careers-leadership/starchitect-daniel-libeskind-leaves-his-mark-around-the-world/article29913550/

3. "Safety Gear For Small Animals," ongoing project by Bill Burns.

safetygearforsmallanimals.com/

4. Late night conversation with Michael Fernandes and Noah Lichtblau at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, April 9 — 10, 2017.

IMAGE Google image search for "jesus waffle."

saltywaffle.com/amplify-your-churchs-voice-using-social-media/

X



Plaster, bronze, concrete, and stone things: casting themselves god-like, in golden light, inarguably good and virtuous, always. This is what they (you) have been taught to do, but still. Editing out other actions, unsavoury, and only accountable to the parts that serve them (you) up on a silver platter, silver spoon.

Does this describe you? you ask yourself.

OTHER PEOPLE

PEOPLE WHO ARE CONCERNED WITH ESTABLISHING A PERSONAL LEGACY

You put those headphones back on so you can tune out all of their (your) shouting over top of each other (shouting) grabbing and greedy for remembrance and other accolades.

People who don't concern themselves with Personal Legacy™ may have their words and their work stolen by others, but that's not to say they didn't set their priorities properly. There isn't always a book (body) or archive, but there is the power to care for and bear witness to each other, not to forget it. This is work you (they) know you (they) can do, speaking these stories and seeing.

People lifting the heavy things behind the scenes, watch for it.

Khyber was named for the Khyber Café opened by Amin Nasr in the Barrington Street building, and before that the building was home to the Gay Alliance for Equality and a queer club called The Turret — this part does have a book — it's called OUT.

The first signs of the oral cavity occur in the fourth week of development — there's another life forming inside of the (body) and a small depression appears in what will become the skin of the face.

Speech sounds and songs are formed here inside the series of resonators distributed throughout the base of the skull, and as the separating tissues disappear, the mouth is left in continuity with the rest of the gastrointestinal tract, while the pressure placed upon the lips by a folded fan would often indicate the level of sincerity and passion involved, and an X may be used to mark the placement of a kiss.

X Notes

1. February 2016 Interview with Hannah Guinan on Femme FM, a feminist radio show centering QTBIPOC folks in Halifax, hosted by Shaya Ishaq and Rebecca Stuckey.

soundcloud.com/femmefmhalifax/making-space-moving-toward-safer-music-arts-scenes

2. khyber.ca/about/history/

3. wayves.ca/node/91

4. gay.hfxns.org/The_Turret

5. The catalogue “OUT: Queer Looking Queer Acting Revisited,” published by The Khyber Centre for the Arts in 2014 for an exhibition of the same name that showcased the visual culture of early Queer activism in Halifax, curated by Robin Metcalfe.

6. Entry for “Mouth” in “The Oxford Companion to the Body,” written by William Tyldesley, and the entry for “Kiss,” written by Anne Abichou.

IMAGE Found image from Wikipedia, taken looking back towards the Vale of Peshawar, on the Pakistan side of the Khyber Pass — a mountain pass connecting Afghanistan and Pakistan, through the northeastern part of the Spin Ghar mountains.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khyber_Pass

Y

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(People) OTHER PEOPLE

PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN THINGS (Structures)

THAT EVERYTHING IS WORKING OUT OKAY (Okay?)

PEOPLE WHO ASK YOU TO TAKE OUT THEIR GARBAGE FOR
THEM BECAUSE THEIR CAR SHARE IS GOING TO RUN OUT
(Run out of the room, screaming)

PEOPLE WHO THINK THAT OTHER PEOPLE ARE DISPOSABLE
(Fuck those people)

They want shiny things, amphetamines, and so I guess that we
should all become doctors so we can write each other (per) scripts
— things to say — “Rigorous” and “Critical” things — words from
the mouth hole (body)

COME TO HEEL (Heal, people)

People started doing this for status within popular culture. Ever
only aspiring to the wisdom of someone who has found their own
words.

Cascading ahead without citation. Repeating back the care and
emotional work of someone else is not the same as doing the work
yourself (People) If you do that it's like ants with the aphids, like
Audre Lorde said (You're stealing)

TELL ME WHAT IS IT ABOUT EMOTION THAT MAKES IT
NOT R E A L

World's not fair you know. Wearing your own collection of hardships like armour against the truth and pain of others — this is not how solidarity and reconciliation are gonna work.

(Categories) We can't talk around it anymore, you know, we need to say the things like they are (Oh my god please listen)

OH MY GOD PLEASE LISTEN

Art is always a sort of sideways glancing, but that does not mean that it's not direct. You's using the strangeness of this language, or else you give away your power. Hammer over the head case, hangover —

Really (come on) there must be ways.

Y Notes

1. Opening reception for “Sound Etiquette” an exhibition by Centre for Art Tapes (CFAT) curator-in-residence Amanda Shore hosted at The Khyber Centre for the Arts, March 27, 2017.
2. Conversation with Alex van Helvoort and Noah Lichtblau in Noah’s studio at NSCAD, March 27, 2017.
3. RP Boo (Kavain Space) in conversation with DJ Goldilocks (Cat Abreau) at the Halifax North Public Library, on Friday, March 3, 2017, presented by Obey Convention in partnership with NSPIRG.

RP Boo is a legendary producer/DJ from Chicago credited with pioneering footwork music, a form of high-energy dance music.
4. Conversations with Allie Graham, February 2017.
5. Conversation with Alfie Rapsey, April 14, 2017.
6. Audre Lorde reads “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power.”

[youtube.com/watch?v=xFHwg6aNKy0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFHwg6aNKy0)
7. “It Doesn’t Take A Weatherman To Know Which Way The Wind Blows” CFAT panel discussion hosted at The Khyber Centre for the Arts on April 14, 2017, featuring presentations by Grace Stratton and Nick Dourado, discussing intersections between electronic music and radical politics.
8. Conversations with Hannah Guinan, April 2017.

IMAGE Google search for “shrug emoji.”



16 fentanyl deaths
occured on **one day**
in British Columbia

Fleeting, fading, flash in the pan fabrications of fury and innocence.

Today I felt entirely abject: lipstick mouth-hole mashing all dressed chips clanking voice rasping eyes pouring out insatiable desires, uncertainty — grabbing and asking for things, consolation.

Full moon tonight, tomorrow night I will sleep and the next day I will be new — able to defend myself against the force-fed fallacy of hours passing deadlines and general dread, and instead feel the sun's light travel through my skin and forehead feeding me into being something green and good like soft new leaves or needles.

The book says that there seems to be long sleepers and short sleepers — people who need three to five and others who need eight to twelve to feel rested. There's a quiet sleep, then slow-wave sleep, a fast-wave sleep, and rapid eye movements, as rhythms of body temperature change according to your body clock —

Short sleepers are better adapted to the demands of the post-industrial marketplace and long sleepers are ill-advised to seek professions.

I keep having a sense of breaking the surface of the water, breathing. Moving through layers. Guess that the opposite of this must be some kind of sleep. Awake and a woke, woken.

Femme — inist feminist — intermittent frequencies —

Likely story, like as if it was a nineteenth century neurologist and a twentieth century American who invented the ways we understand facial expressions.

I don't buy it. I don't believe in these words.

Z Notes

1. almanac.com/content/full-moon-june-2017
2. Entry for "Sleep" in "The Oxford Companion to the Body" written by J. Allan Hobson.
3. Entry for "Smiling," written by Paul Ekman.

IMAGE Found image, screenshot taken on September 26, 2017.

THANK YOU

To Hannah Guinan for all of her genuine care and laughter, and the insight and points-of-access to community she gave me during my residency. To Camila Salcedo for easing my arrival in Halifax and lending me her room. To Kate Walchuk for dancing with me and bringing me to a pool party. To Merle Harley for late night walks and learning together to openly identify as queer. To Noah Lichtblau for so many open-ended conversations, and otherwise encouraging me toward absurdity and imagination. To OS Diamond for small jokes and talks and walks, and for the things they taught me about friendship. To Carmella Farahbakhsh for many spells and stories, and helping me to learn about being a femme, all the joy and magic and responsibility that carries. To Alex van Helvoort for sharing their stories and jokes, casually engaging in thoughtful discussion at every opportunity. To Nick Dourado for endlessly and joyfully questioning colonialism, and for always encouraging me in my own learning. To Shaya Ishaq and Jade Byard Peek for catalyzing important anti-oppression learning for myself and others by organizing and facilitating a Black Lives Matter reading group in Halifax. To all of the members of the BLM reading group for being vulnerable in their learning. To Alfie and Tomas Rapsey for the alternate spaces they brought into being through music and with love. To Michael Fernandez for bringing oatmeal cookies, ordering pizza and otherwise challenging the premise of my artistic work. To Eric Diolola for sharing his enthusiasm for art, and for laughing with me and feeding me music and noodles. To Frank Heimpel for teaching active listening, and so openly sharing their questions and doubts. To Allie Graham for working through so many thoughts and feelings together, and otherwise teasing me and making me laugh.

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To the other artists who shared their work at The Khyber during my residency: Lido Pimienta, Kai Cheng Thom, Joële Wallinga.

CREDITS

Publication design, sophia bartholomew

BIO

sophia bartholomew is an artist and a queer non-binary femme of European settler ancestry. Having studied contemporary visual art and theory at UBC in Vancouver, as well as having survived physical and psychological forms of trauma, they continue to search for meaningful ways to practice art and life.

sophiabartholomew.com

vimeo.com/sophiabartholomew

WELCOME TO THE KHYBER and PLEASE READ!

It is a privilege to participate in programs and events going on in this space. The Khyber will not tolerate violence, theft, vandalism or any other harmful acts. Patrons and performers should consume alcoholic beverages in a responsible manner. Impaired and intoxicated guests and those who do not respect the above and following statements will be removed in a prompt and safe manner.

We reserve the right to remove ANY patron who is creating or contributing to an unsafe environment.

We hope people of all genders, abilities, ages, cultures and sexualities feel welcome here. As such, any form of discrimination will not be tolerated.

This can include, but is not limited to:

Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, queerphobia, fatphobia, ableist comments, sexual harassment and bullying.

We wish to make The Khyber a safe, welcoming and fun space for patrons, employees, volunteers and performers. If at anytime you are made to feel uncomfortable or unsafe, please let an employee or volunteer know at the event, or text/call us at **902.817.6620**. Any concern brought to our attention will be taken seriously.

Emails can also be sent to: **info@khyber.ca**

The Khyber Centre for the Arts
1880 Hollis Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 1W6
Telephone 902 817 6620 Δ Website khyber.ca
Instagram @khybercentre Δ Facebook @khybercentre