

Crip

Magazine #03

Actually, the Dead Are Not Dead.



Imprint

Crip Magazine #3

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Cover: Lorenza Böttner performing *Venus de Milo*, snapshot in the exhibition *Requiem to the Norm*, Württembergischer Kunstverein, 2019

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Design: Toledo i Dertschei

Printing: Print Alliance GmbH, Druckhausstraße 1, 2540 Bad Vöslau

Place of production: Vienna, Austria

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(Disclosure according to § 25 of the Media Law)

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Postal address: Rotenmühlgasse 53/7, 1120 Vienna

Basic orientation: *Crip Magazine* is an art project.

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Thanks to: The team of Bergen Assembly 2019, Dawn Michelle d'Atri, Doris Arzmann, Bidok Archiv, Bildbalance, Irene Böttner, Eva Dertschei, Iris Dressler & Hans D. Christ, Erika Doucette, Feminist Health Care Research Group, Magdalena Fischer, Em Gruber, Emma Hedditch, Lo Hillarp, Hannah Hull, James Leadbitter, Viktor Neumann, Lisa Pfahl, Paul B. Preciado, Johanna Schaffer, Volker Schönwiese, Cordula Thym, Carlos Toledo, Jeremy Wade, Kirsten Wandschneider, Inga Zimprich, and all Contributors.

Coproduced by Bergen Assembly 2019,
"Actually, the Dead Are Not Dead"

Produced in collaboration with DISTA (Disability Studies Austria), Behindert und Verrückt Feiern Wien, Crip Convention Vienna, Sickness Affinity Group, and Sick Press Berlin.

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Accessibility

Crip Magazine is an evolving process. We aim at offering the best possible accessibility. The texts of this issue exist in English. Texts are printed in the typeface Sassoon, a font that was designed by Rosemary Sassoon especially for early readers.

Presumably from 2020 onward, an accessible PDF version of the magazine will be free to download online. If requested, we offer various formats that can be read by, for example, screen readers. Please contact us if you have any questions regarding this. Also, please contact us in case you wish to contribute or get involved.



CITY OF
BERGEN

Bergen
Assembly



KULTURRÅDET
Arts Council
Norway

How great that it was possible to realize a new edition of *Crip Magazine* in the context of Bergen Assembly 2019!

Bergen Assembly is a triennial of contemporary art that takes place every three years in the Norwegian city of Bergen. Its 2019 edition entitled *Actually, the Dead Are Not Dead* was conceived by a group of twelve co-curators.¹ At the center of this project is a preoccupation with life, with an understanding of life beyond the binary oppositions of life and death, human and non-human, subject and object, abled and disabled, healthy and sick: that is, beyond those normative models and constructions of life which are produced by the institutions of medicine, politics, law, and culture. The project explores the emancipatory and political potentialities of art, its capacities to think, conceive, and live life differently. Here, we are interested not in any heroic discourses or gestures, but in aesthetic and emancipatory practices in which strengths and vulnerability, mourning and joy, conflict and celebration, the living and the dead belong together.

Actually, the Dead Are Not Dead comprises an exhibition, a broad discursive, performative, and mediation program as well as various new productions. From the very beginning, we have understood Bergen Assembly as a de-central platform that engages with long-term projects situated across the fields of art, research, and activism. This is why we were not only interested in presenting *Crip Magazine* in Bergen, but also in supporting the production of its third edition.

Crip Magazine inherently relates to two of the major aspects with which *Actually, the Dead Are Not Dead* is concerned: first, the rebellious, dissident, and non-normative body as a tool and object of artistic and political practices; and second, aesthetic forms and formats that make it possible to share the knowledge and experiences of emancipation and resistance: magazines, posters, banners, manuals, and more.

Our interest in collaborating with *Crip Magazine* was free of any requirements concerning content and form. Nevertheless, some of the contributions of this third edition are directly related to *Actually, the Dead Are Not Dead*, especially to the exhibition and to *The Parli-*



Lorenza Böttner performing *Venus de Milo*, unknown photographer, undated, from: *Tonight*, exhibition booklet, Lothringer, Munich, 1988, courtesy: private collection

ament of Bodies: The Impossible Parliaments, the latter curated by Paul B. Preciado and Viktor Neumann.² We are very happy about these correlations that at the same time allow Bergen Assembly to reach out and connect with other contexts and networks.

Iris Dressler, Hans D. Christ, artistic directors of Bergen Assembly 2019

¹ Bergen Assembly 2019, *Actually, the Dead Are Not Dead*. Conveners Hans D. Christ and Iris Dressler in collaboration with Murat Deha Boduroğlu, Banu Cennetoğlu, María García, Hiwa K, Katia Krupennikova, Viktor Neumann, Paul B. Preciado, Pedro G. Romero, Simon Sheikh, and Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa. See: www.bergenassembly.no.

² See: <http://bergenassembly.no/platforms/parliament-of-bodies>.

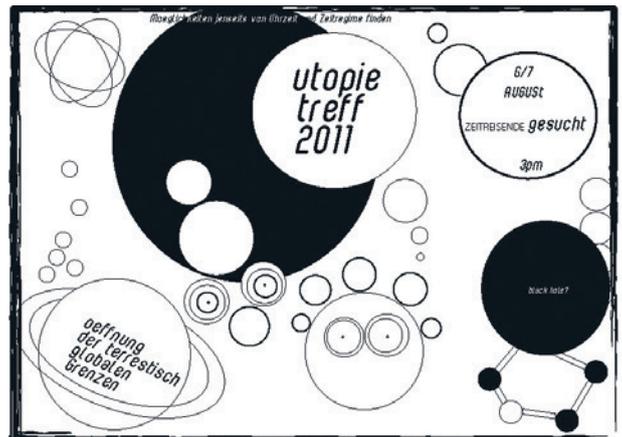
Looking for Time Travelers!

We invite you to take part in the Utopia Meeting.

Again this year on Terra, a team of people from this galaxy will explore the possibilities of actions that will continue to affect change in the future.

The third edition of the Utopia Meeting focuses on:

1. Events that would completely open the existing national borders, globally and intergalactically, and that are far removed from any fear-based scenario. (Keywords: world citizenship, global network card, travel societies, campground on the moon, space colony.)
2. In relation to this, TIME will be a central theme, which is an enormous challenge, especially for those who cannot leave their planet. What possibilities lie beyond normative-linear notions of time and biopolitical time regimes? Along with the ruptures and multitudes in the present time (present scope of action), we are also interested in transhistorical and futuristic actions.



Linda Bilda, Utopieclub Flyer, 2011

This will be accomplished using different approaches that range from producing concrete wishes to creating stories about the most far away future, the deepest past, and other leftist dimensions related to the topics mentioned above. It will also include useful games, unorthodox conversational processes, and minimal interventions in the mind+body.

Those who would like to journey with us into the future are asked to bring a wish/idea about time/speed/future and/or movement/spatiality/borders.

We look forward to coming together,
EVA+LINDA vulgo evalinda 1+2

Editorial

Goddess on the mountain top ...*

Eva Egermann

“The Venus becomes the vortex for thinking about the female body,” writes Lennard Davis in his book *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability Deafness and the Body*. In discourses on disability aesthetics, representations of Venus de Milo became a topic: Tobin Siebers and Lennard Davis have written about it, and artists like Alison Lapper and Mary Duffy (e.g., in her photographic series *Cutting the Ties that Bind*) have referred to depictions of Venus de Milo in their artistic work. Interestingly, this reference also appears in the oeuvre of Lorenza Böttner. The image on the cover of this issue of *Crip Magazine* struck me when I first saw it in the exhibition *Lorenza Böttner: Requiem for the Norm* at the Württembergischer Kunstverein in Stuttgart in May 2019. A black-and-white photograph shows Lorenza posing as Venus de Milo. Later on, she comes down and asks the audience: “What would you think if art came to life?” as Paul B. Preciado describes more closely in his text on page 25 of this issue. I find this picture to be witty and stunning at the same time, and in my interpretation it serves as a critique on the canon of visual art.

The Venus tradition is founded in the idea of mutilation, fragmented bodies, decapitation, and amputation. As Kaja Silverman points out, referencing images of the body in film, society creates a “protective shield” that insulates it against the possibility of mutilation, fragmentation, and castration (Silverman, 14). We bring back the limbs through our imagination. A

phenomenon not unlike the experience of a phantom limb, as Lennard Davis writes, referencing psychoanalytic theory. But the “real” body, the observer’s body, is in fact always already a “fragmented” one. “We all—first and foremost—have fragmented bodies. It is in tracing our tactical and self constructing (deluding) journeys away from that originary self that we come to conceive and construct that phantom goddess of wholeness, normalcy, and unity—the nude” (Davis, 141). “(Queer-)crip perspectives can help to keep our attention on disruptive, inappropriate, composing bodies—bodies that invoke the future horizon beyond straight composition” (McRuer, 155).

With the term chrononormativity, Elizabeth Freeman describes a timeliness that is following a normative regime. A “deviant chronopolitics,” she says, is one that envisions “relations across time and between times” that upturns developmentalist narratives of history (Freeman, 58, 63). Lorenza and many others have become agents in a deviant chronopolitics and the crippling of art history. *Crip Magazine* collects artifacts of this transhistorical crip (sub)culture. It relates to historical struggles, aiming to create trans-temporary connections and communities across time.

Desire, time traveling, and fragmented bodies are some of the themes that connect the different pieces in this volume. Many thanks to all of the people who have contributed their stunning work this time around. This issue of *Crip Magazine* is produced collaboratively in the course of Bergen Assembly 2019. Thanks go to everybody who has helped and supported the process, especially to Iris Dressler. This will be the last issue that has been edited by one or two individuals only. We are about to continue running *Crip Magazine* as a collective. I hope so. (Momentarily exploring ways of doing so ...) Please get in touch if you want to offer support or become involved.

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- * Bananarama. 1986. “Venus.” From the album *True Confessions*.
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Reflections on Critiques of Normalcy

Julia B., Nicole voec

I recently had the pleasure of getting to know Dis/Ability Studies and Crip Theory. In the following, I attempt to reflect upon a few thoughts—and especially feelings—about this encounter. *That means taking, reflecting, shifting, overturning, and further forming. I do this by* clambering along *embodiment*, the body-ness, which connects these thoughts together for me, *shaking it*.

What shook me the most—*meaning, it caused me to reorient for a moment*—is that I had never heard & *seen & felt* anything of Crip Theory before. And that within all the (queer-) feminist, leftist, and antiracist contexts that I have been moving through, there had never been any gesture toward or even a mention of the Crip Movement or “crip” altogether—*or at least, not that I had noticed. (At least nothing that went beyond the multilayered question of accessibility.)* And that was the case, although I had been working precisely at this juncture for a long time, and I feel that my entire work process was intimately interwoven with (*to me now new?*) aesthetics and production of Crip Theory. At least the name Crip (*the label*) and the force (*empowerment*) behind all the positions that we encountered in our discourses were new to me. That is the reason for my direct feedback—*at the workshop/closing brunch, over melting kiwi ice cream and ants on picnic blankets*—for I was just incredibly happy that I now had access to a new wealth of ma-

Julia B, Fur suit (anthropomorphic animal-being costume*) —personality augmentation and processing of identity problems. Altered sensory input (seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling) in a fur suit. Here, identity is a concept and way of emotionally connecting to unfamiliar situations and objects.

I found a great many points where my own trains of thought intersected with Hannah Hull’s talk „Madloving“ I have already sent a video link to a few people I have been working with for a long time, because it entails amazing tools that enable us to understand and negotiate the entanglements inherent in our own ways of working. Hanna Hull & James Leadbitter, *Madloving: Working with Madness* (in the framework of the Festival Take Care, Nov. 2017, HAU Berlin): https://youtu.be/H_1tRxG3fdY

terial and positions and methodologies (*in the form of readers, links, talks, terms, images, stories, and ways of working*). Because this overlaps and is connected to many of my own questions and, on the other hand, it also introduced me a completely new way of thinking differently. This also because, in particular, it reframed my own thought processes and provided me with a (visual) language. *Sticky*. For me, a concrete (*solid*) example that made me aware of this new framing was the method developed by the Access Riders. As a person who has occasionally or even often been invited to produce something in different contexts (*let’s say, a university conference, a performance with garbage and contaminated food, a show at a gallery with champagne and sponsors*), for a very long time I have negotiated the conditions of production and the political entanglements that I feel comfortable working in. This is because I have, unfortunately, also had a lot of bad experiences.

The collective discourses in the seminar also further encouraged me to dig up (*dirty, muddy*) questions and problems concerning ways of working and temporalities, and to make these visible in the different contexts I work in, *to put my finger on them* and *mess around*. And while I had always found these negotiations to be *murky, fluid*, again and again *solidifying* at points of conflict, I now have an easier time connecting them to already existing foundations, tools, and frames, which



Julia B, *fursuit*, 2019 (Images by Eva E., Art University Kassel)

makes them so stable (**manifest**). To a certain extent, this holding on and connecting is somewhat comforting, somewhat stabilizing. **It's like falling into a spider web that had been invisible** and then realizing that you have an entirely new framework for orientation. Crip is perhaps also a building block for constructing one's own identity? Hm. **The feeling when it's so cold that it gives you goose bumps and you bundle up warm, and then later take it all off again.**

This point of empowerment through fixation—when murky, **flickering** ideas manifest as positions of action (and then also as positions of identification)—is when this spider web quickly transforms, and I feel the need to pull myself out of its mechanics. It's also because I am much more interested in **disidentification** than in identity politics. **Ambivalence** rather than manifesting, breaking down, demarcating boundaries. Just as much as I find some positions actually helpful and stabilizing, there are many points (also in terms of aesthetics) that simplify and reproduce images of a pathologized identity (“symptoms,” “taking precautions,” “has suffered”), which in turn convey the entire overall structure of identity politics and of identifying as a patient. In “Weglaufhäuser des Pops” (*Crip Magazine* 2/2017), a conversation with Eva Egermann, Diedrich Diederichsen speaks about the Socialist Patient Collective (SPK) and says, “For a patient collective, identity is based on illness, on being a patient. While, on the other hand, the aim of the [collective’s]

struggle is to do away with the patient status.” How could this paradox of problematic identification and manifestation of identity be dissolved? **Resolved?** In a considerate reversal, I find the answer to this question in the same text just one page earlier. About an image in a publication by the SPK called *Aus der Krankheit eine Waffe machen* (Make Illness a Weapon): “The stone, which someone throws at the capitalist command center, and the kidney stone, which someone else is suffering from, are interchangeable. Let’s protect ourselves from kidney stones!” It continues, “The theoretical and the real blur together, allowing the comparison to remain puzzling and unresolved.” So, the answer is not to dissolve it, but instead to undermine, **to trouble**, its sense of security and certainty. What I find so remarkable about this quote by the SPK is not only its simultaneous ambivalence and strong visual language, but also that it manages to shift the perspective. “Let’s protect ourselves from kidney stones!” Who are we here? Here, the frame of identification becomes **muddled**, and remains “unresolved.”

What I find to be so strong about the space of agency (**action**) of Crip (*Krüppel*) is that—like the 1981 beatings with the police batons (*Krüppel*)—it is completely decisive in the ways that it **disrupts, topples, and overthrows** the mechanisms of **embeddedness** and, in its place, builds up an entirely new field of negotiation, thereby creating new, fluid images of (dis-)identification.

Big Feeling, Big Administrative Effort

Text excerpts by **Ianina Ilitcheva**,
compiled by **Rick Reuther**

music – diary

posted on June 11, 2009

my tits are really shrinking. my beautiful tits. what a shame. for years my body was supplied with hormones like a lynx at the zoo that's used to being fed half-dead mice. now the lynx has been set free, but of course, it has forgotten how to hunt. my appetite also leaves much to be desired, and my desire is as good as gone. self-made orgasms seem to make no sense at all. it's not all that great. it really feels like the system has completely shut down and i need to reboot it all over again now. learn to hunt again. strange experience, but i haven't stopped hoping that everything will be fine and get better. learn to hunt. unfortunately, my mind hasn't rebooted, it still works the same, and even seems more clear and genuine. that doesn't make this any easier, the expectations are high, the lynx won't settle for eating just maggots. it's got to be a fat mouse that make its chaps water at the very sight of it, eyes rigidly set on the prey, appetite peaked and ravenous. it's just too bad that in the woods surrounding me there are only mushrooms to be found.

untitled 72

posted on November 2, 2013

and my body, my body has many rooms, people live in some of them, while others house ghosts and

habits, the lights go on and off without any rhyme or reason. and a waiting lives in one of the rooms, somewhere between lung and diaphragm, and it stands beside the window looking out, watching things happen, but is afraid to go out and no longer be waiting.

a light goes on.

and i am not able to react. i have forgotten how to.

once i did and then there was a breaking sound, i closed my eyes and started feeling around with my hands blindly, and when it was time to react, i rushed in, yelling mantras, to drown out the breaking sounds and the roaring of the katabatic winds, incessantly:

yes, yes, it's a decision, yes, yes, i say.

falling into the light, deep. falling forever. living in the fall and never dying, an eternity of flight and insanity, no ground, and gravity loses meaning, after seven years. nobody can catch up with me, nobody can get ahold of me, nobody can get me, i can go right into the room, hold a gun to the back of the head of waiting, which is standing at the window, and say: it's over, you don't have to go on, get some rest, you haven't slept for seven years.

but something is still missing.

there is a room free, an area, a hall, where the katabatic winds howl, you are welcome to move in. there are a lot of vases inside, old ones. and i'd like it if you would bring some dynamite along, it might come in handy sometime, ach.

finished

i see the loneliness right in front of me and it is light.

hochroth Munich, 2018

6

Welcome to my world. Where there are no unicorns here far and wide.

Where people aren't afraid of thunderstorms anymore. Where no heroines are necessary.

My superpower is being surrounded by amazing people. Sixteen thousand cows live in my zone of peace, I watch over them with a helicopter.

Little boy bawling in a Spiderman T-shirt, I'm like you.

If I am a cuckoo, then I'm stuck inside the egg.

I hoard adolescents behind cheap animal masks.
My army.

THEY SHOULD ALL BE LOVED TO DEATH.

You have to imagine my emotions like this pink toy
poodle that barks five times + does a backflip.

And relevance is important, I was told to learn, and
graciously declined.

I know nothing about theses and theories, about cul-
ture and philosophy. But I do know how to find my
way in the darkness of the self.

I don't just want to play.

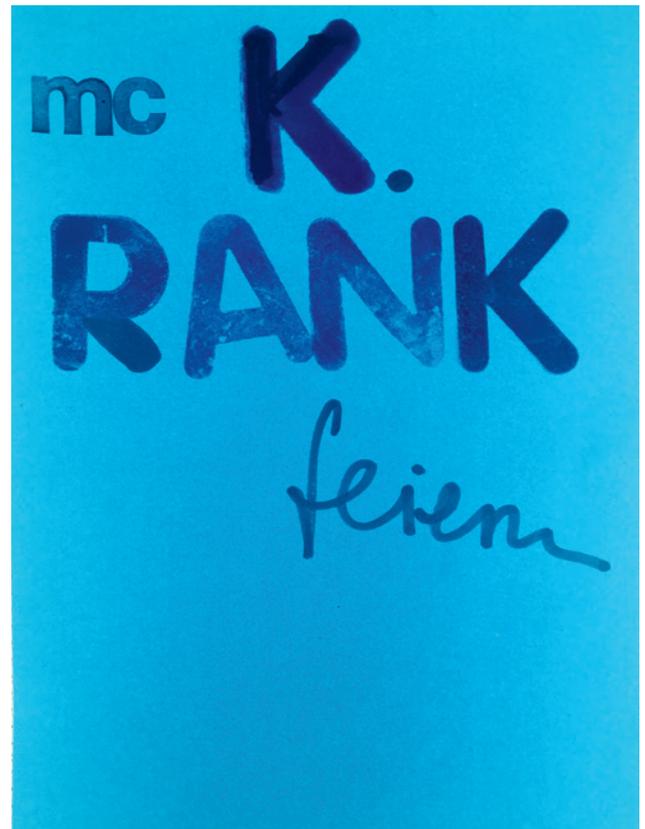
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Dr. Einstein conclusions: there's no new herd, the famil-
iar herd is smaller and more resistant to storage. So,
my friends. How should we celebrate this? Namely,
because: fuck you cancer, I'm stronger than you are.
Everything pays off. The risk pays off, the traveling,
the stubbornness, the anger, the tenacity, the will,
the megalomania. Botch, botch, botchurry *sway
with the hips* Arm bandage open, unable to find the
cuts that should be there, aha, aha. Then someone
finally says it: inoperable. No going home. The head
surgeon would have either paralyzed the whole arm
or removed the tumors. From now on it's just *plus* tu-
mors, but *plus* arm function. Everyone runs around in
a panic in search of new strategies, like good children
hunting for Easter eggs. Cutie doctor beams as he
announces that my hormone levels and hemoglobin
levels are stable. I beam when I hear this. After a week
of radiation and two weeks of a ketogenic diet, of
hanging on the immunotherapy drip, my body fur-
ther improves the levels. I don't really want to jinx
anything, but maybe this little shriveled up body just
might be invincible. More and more signs point in this
direction.

Finished

@blutundkaffee (2012–2016)

Frohmann: Berlin, 2017



Eva Egermann & Der Fahrende Raum, *Cyborg Disko Werkstatt*, 2018

1. a queer crip future grows in the **UNDERLANDS**, the **WASTE-LANDS** and the **FALLOW LANDS**, out of sight and out of mind, Rooting, Spawning and Germinating under the soil, in that moist and fecund undergrowth where we have been forgotten. Limp, Lame and Sick bodies, Queer, Sexy, and Sexless bodies; marinating in the forgotten lands – the sisters of Anzaldúa's Borderlands and Irigaray's Lowlands. WE wait here, Growing and Shifting, Leaking and Mutating, Fucking and Decaying in the **WASTELANDS OF THE SICK**. under your dinner parties and your high houses, your club nights and your art shows, WE are breeding, building up our strength in numbers, pleaching our roots together to form Hybrid, Techno-Reinforced, Ism-Resistant **SUPER-CREATURES**.

WE are WORKING TOGETHER.

WE are KNOCKING.

WE are HAMMERING.

WE are READY TO COME IN.

2. a queer future is a humble future. a queer, crip, and sick future sees the body as it is: Weak, Vulnerable, Fallible, Ever-Changing, Ever-Moving towards SICKNESS DISEASE AND DEPENDENCY.

LET'S CELEBRATE DEPENDENCY!

LET'S HOLD EACH OTHER IN OUR WEAKNESS!

THERE IS NO SHAME IN YOUR WEAKNESS!

THERE IS NO SHAME IN YOUR SICKNESS!

3. You will never find a greater home than the **UNDERLANDS**, the **WASTELANDS** and the **FALLOW LANDS**.

here WE will let you Be, let you Breathe, let you speak what you know of the cycles of life and the **Secrets of the Sick**.

*there is no demand for productivity here.
there is no race to the finish line.*

the Forgotten Bodies do not forget each other.

(there is no need to keep up when you know you will not be left behind)

4. WE speak in Silence, WE speak in Sign, WE speak in Touch, WE speak in dark rooms and forgotten places. WE speak in cracks of light that sneak under the spaces where you do not let us in.

OPEN YOUR DOORS! KNOCK DOWN YOUR DIVIDING WALLS! BULLDOZE YOUR STAIRS AND YOUR INACCESSIBLE SPACES!

you have a LOT to learn.

it is not enough to build a ramp, you must also take a ramp down into the Undergrowth with us.



and who is it who says that the abled body is the better body?

the same people who say that the hetero body is the better body!
the same people who say that the white body is the better body!
the same people who say that the cis body is the better body!

a queer future does not tolerate these LIES!
a queer future is an ACCESSIBLE FUTURE!
a queer future demands that WE ARE ALL INCLUDED!



as we begin to acknowledge the fallibility of our Ecosystem
we also acknowledge the vulnerability of our species.

*(All of the things that we have taken.
All of the things that we have taken.
All of the things that we have taken.)*

all of the ARROGANCE of the ABLED and the ANTHROPOCENE.

these are the Concerns of the Now.
WE are the Cautionary Tales of the Future.

As the planet gets SICKER WE will all become SICKER.
As the future comes for us WE will be stripped of our

**SPECIESIST SUPERIORITY
COMPLEXES.**

WE are not discreet and unique entities.
WE are not all powerful and dominating bodies.
WE are not the keepers of all of the prizes.



the sick are used to living off scraps. WE turn scraps into
Scaffolds. WE manifest **community** from brightly lit white
rooms with only Machines for company. WE build connection out
of discrimination and disinterest. **WE move laterally across your
hierarchies.** WE lean, we support, we inch forward and sideways
and nowhere **Together.** WE collect those who move slowly at the
back.

WE are **SOFT** and **OSMOTING**, pooling our **RESOURCES**, our **BOD-
IES** and our **ABILITIES**, **revelling in our queerness and our sickness.**

Hacking/Self-Medicating/Injecting/Tending/Healing/Celebrating/Commiserating/Mourning

Building the futures that WE know that WE deserve.



WE must all be Included!

make your spaces Accessible.

**make your Minds and your Bodies and your Projects
Accessible.**

EMPLOY US!

PAY US!

LISTEN TO US!

technology offers you so many TOOLS with which to **open up your work and your lives to the ARMIES OF THE SICK***, to those of us fighting with our keyboards, our emails and our internet connections.

So ask yourself:

WHY DOES MY ACTIVISM EXCLUDE THE DISABLED?

Why do I do the BARE MINIMUM or NOTHING AT ALL?

1.

WE are sick.

WE are queer.

WE are here.

WE are a part of your community.

WE are sick.

WE are queer.

WE are here.

WE are a part of your world.

10.

your body is DECAYING Too. your body is getting older as you sit and process this. if you are LUCKY one day you will be sick too, one day someone you love will need you to Care and Tend to their Ailing Body. and **you will not know how**. because **you have not Listened**. because you think that the weak body is Unworthy, Less Than, Unimportant. because you thought WE had Nothing To Offer and Nothing to Share, or maybe You Didn't Think of us at all.

this is a call to action!

you are the ones who can do the work!

WE are the ones who deserve more from you!

11.

**THE EXCLUSION
THAT WE FACE IS
EXACERBATED
ACROSS LINES
OF RACE, CLASS,**

GENDER, ABILITY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL NORMS.

12.

**WE MUST PRIORITISE THE NEEDS OF
OUR MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNI-
TY MEMBERS**

**WE must learn to LISTEN!
WE must learn to ACT!**

it is not enough to tick us off of your Diversity Checklist.
it is not enough for one of us to be the **CHOSEN ONE**.
it is not enough for one of us to have to represent all of us.

WE MUST ALL BE INCLUDED!

these futures that we build are not queer futures if they are not
accessible futures.

a queer future is only progressive if it is inclusive.

13.

WE ride with our CARE-ASSISTANTS, with our MOBILITY DEVIC-
ES, with our OXYGEN TANKS, with our INVISIBLE SICKNESS, our
**UNDIAGNOSED, UNRESEARCHED, UNAPPRECIAT-
ED BODIES**. WE are Resting and Relapsing. WE are Mourning
and Commiserating. WE are Fighting Back and Pushing Through.
WE are Rising Above. WE are MUTATING and ENHANCING, **built
on the WISDOM OF PLANTS and the thresholds
of modern technology**. WE are the Barometers of the
HEALTH of our CLIMATES, the PURITY of our WATER, the
Pollution of our Cities and the DEVASTATION OF OUR ECO-
SYSTEM. WE are **PRECIOUS** and **VALUABLE** bodies! WE are **GLO-
RIOUS** in our **SICKNESS** and our **DIFFERENCE!**

COME WITH US!

LET US COME WITH YOU!

Text and concept: Romily Alice Walden
Editor: LA Warman
Graphic design: Emma Damiani
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Published by SICK TIME PRESS, Berlin

Notes:

This manifesto has its foundations in the work of many other sick, disabled and care-giving artists, activists and theorists whose work I am eternally thankful for: Clay AD, Ruby Allegra, Imani Barbarin, *Ezra Benus, Eli Clare, Leah Clements, Taraneh Fazeli, Feminist Health Care Research Group, Shannon Finnegan, Sharona Franklin, Leora Fridman, Johanna Hedva, Sophie Hoyle, Laura G. Jones, Alison Kafer, Carolyn Lazard, Simi Linton, Park McArthur, Mia Mingus, Alyson Patsavas, Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Susan Wendell and Alice Wong. These groups and individuals are not affiliated with this work but their practices have been an inspiration and source of strength for me. I am indebted to Sickness Affinity Group whose collective friendship, power and support give me hope. I am grateful to be a part of an interconnected and ever-growing global network of sick and disabled artists.

Conventions:

WE is capitalised and smaller <-- this is because WE are together and also POWERFUL. Important words are Capitalised, bold or ALL CAPS or BIGGER <-- because they are IMPORTANT and must be UNDERSTOOD.
unimportant words are not capitalised Even if they start at the beginning of the line <-- because WE do not accept conventions built on the hetero-patriarchal academic system and because WE are free to begin SMALL and get BIGGER, or start BIG and get SMALLER (our growth is not policed).
there is no I <-- because this manifesto Centers COMMUNITY, INTERDEPENDENCE and foregrounding multiple, vulnerable WEs.
direct instructions are strikethrough <-- in anticipation of their timely completion.

The documentary Yes, we fuck! by the filmmakers Antonio Centeno Ortiz and Raúl de la Morena captures six stories about the sexuality of people with functional diversity that challenges how we build relationships with our own bodies and with others through desires and pleasures in a scenario of capacitive and sexist oppression.

In the following text, originally presented during the “Parliament of Bodies” at Bergen Assembly 2019, Antonio Centeno Ortiz takes a closer look at the cost of ableism, political failures, the situation in Spain, and the Politics of Desire that his filmmaking is reflecting on. As he puts it: “The representation of sexuality is important not so much because it shows a reality but because it builds it.”

We Are Here to Transform. We Want Everything. We Demand Desire.

Antonio Centeno Ortiz

“Do you imagine what it would be like to include in the hitherto narrow territories of desire and pleasure all bodies, all forms of moving, feeling and understanding? Here seems to be a pending revolution. We speak about revolution because it dynamites the hetero-patriarchy that hijacks our bodies and desires at the service of capitalist reproduction; a revolution because it claims pleasure for the abject bodies, the same bodies that are unproductive for that capitalist system.”

Those of us with functional diversity know very well that the parliamentary system does not work, and it is high time that everyone knew. In Spain, along with other instances of daily violence, hundreds of thousands of people remain locked up in institutions, and nobody is held accountable for this permanent breach of the law: there are no judicial or political consequences. How is this possible? What is failing with the apparently irrefutable logic of representative democracy? What solutions are there? I would like us to discuss the possible causes for the failure of the system and its alternatives.

Firstly, the lack of material support for living, such as personal assistance, universal accessibility, and inclusive schooling, keeps people with functional diversity living in a parallel universe, confined to residencies, special schools, centers of special employment, occupational centers, et cetera. Good intentions, prejudices, and social inertia isolate us and transform us into extraterrestrials for the majority of the population, who have practically no interaction at all with functional diversity. This general situation of segregation generates a politics of “everything about us but without us.” The political participation of people with functional diversity is prevented and those who claim to represent us lack the vital experience of any aspect of our reality. It is not surprising that they want to believe that the issue of functional diversity is a purely technical one. Yet what is the use of putting ramps in every nightclub if no one wants to dance with us? We have to understand that we are facing a general situation of discrimination and oppression; we need to value the slogan of the Independent Living Movement, “Nothing about us without us.” From this perspective, locking us up in institutions or supporting our families so that we become dependent on them is not a part of the solution—it is a part of the problem.

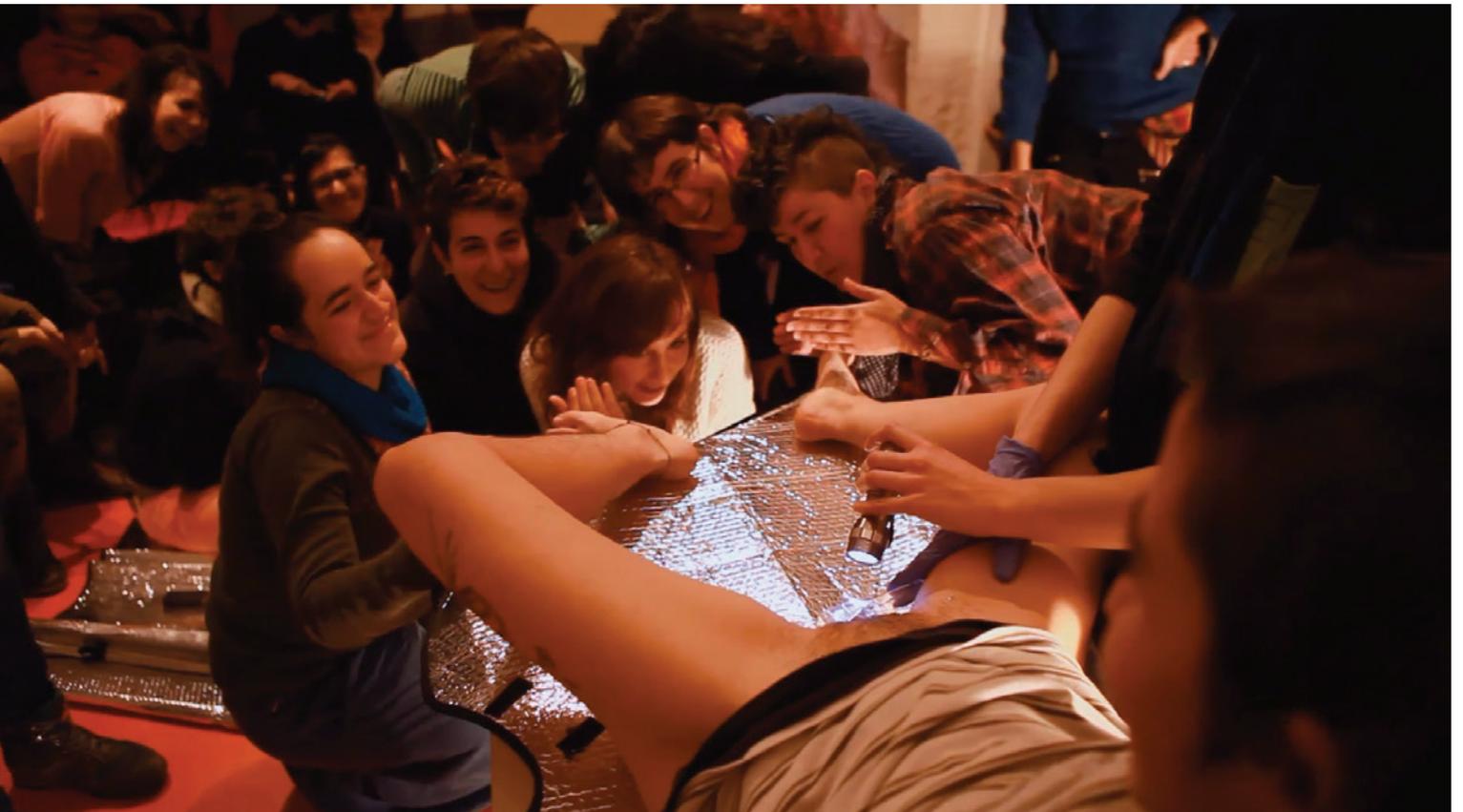
Ableism is expensive, and those who pay for it are primarily those of us with functional diversity. However, the rest of society also foots the bill. We know that including difference in any field is an engine of social transformation that improves life for everyone, while exclusion implies a great loss of opportunities to live better lives. The clearest examples of this are schools, which have better pedagogical tools for all students;

transportation, which is safer and more comfortable for everyone; and architecture and urbanism, which have become more user-friendly for the population as a whole. Given the seriousness of letting this opportunity slip, especially considering the fact that we are living longer and surviving increasingly more diseases and accidents, it should be noted that we pay the highest price in terms of gender. The entire disability and dependency industry functions on the basis of mandatory care by women in the family. The lives of this army of slaves have no value. Meanwhile, the spreadsheets of the public authorities say this work is free. As soon as we understand, as [the Spanish poet] Antonio Machado once said, that “it is foolish to confuse value and price,” then we will realize that ableism is unsustainably expensive.

We need to reclaim our bodies and our lives for ourselves

That is why the independent living model is so interesting. Because it proposes participation and cooperative living. “Independence” is a historical term, which refers not to doing things for ourselves without support, but rather to having the responsibility and freedom to manage the necessary support, thus avoiding situations of dependency. That is, there is a shift in decision-making from the family members and professionals to the person with functional diversity. This means recognizing one’s own autonomy as a result of interaction with others in similar conditions of responsibility and freedom, without relations of domination. Ultimately, we are talking about “interdependence,” although for historical reasons we maintain the word “independence.” It is through this interdependence that both direct participation in politics and cooperative living are possible. We need to reclaim our bodies and our lives for ourselves and stop being extraterrestrials to everyone else.

Often, attempts are made to discredit the independent living paradigm as elitist and economically unsustainable. It must be said that seeing oneself as oppressed



Antonio Centeno Ortiz and Raül de la Morena, Filmstills from *Yes, We Fuck*, 2015

and claiming one's freedom entails a process of empowerment that calls for a certain level of "passing" as "valid"—something that almost always has to do with capacity, class, race, and gender privileges. Nothing new under the sun, the same has always happened across liberation movements. The point is that from this awareness of having privileges, a political process can be articulated—one that is for everyone and is coherent in theory and viable in practice. In this sense, it is important to understand that people with intellectual or mental diversity make decisions in their own ways, with the necessary support. Usually, in collaboration with their guarantor and circle of support, they define a map of decision-making: what they can decide for themselves, what they decide with the support of their assistants, and what they decide through interpretations of their will. Thus, when we talk about deciding, it is implied that we mean that everybody does it in their own way: the independent living model is also for people with intellectual or mental diversity. With respect to the economic issue, all of the experiments and studies indicate that locking us up in institutions is far more expensive than supporting us in our communities with the necessary personal assistance. They don't lock us up for the money; they do it because of their principles.

Indeed, if the laws emanating from parliament, albeit deficient, formally recognize the right to independent living for people with functional diversity, and if the pilot experiments and studies certify that this is possible to implement in a socially and economically sustainable manner, then why do they keep confining us to institutions?

Because there are other more powerful laws, unwritten laws, those that through culture, art, and the media inform us of what the world is like and how we should behave. In addition, these unwritten laws are reinforced without the counterweight of a cooperative living context. The story that is told about functional diversity has been distorted and stereotyped through "everything about us but without us." Only the "absolutely miserable" are represented (in Spain, the film that won the most Goya awards is *The Sea Inside* [2004]). On the other hand, we have "the heroes who surpasses themselves and become inspiring, thanks

to the help of 'normal' people" (in Spain, the last winner of the Goya award for best film was *Champions* [2018]). The first justifies restricting personal freedom, which is what occurs when they lock us up in institutions. Meanwhile, the second blames the person with functional diversity for their situation: if they are suffering, it is not because of discrimination but because they haven't been trying hard enough.

This biased, stereotyping, and polarizing cultural representation of functional diversity also incorporates a permanently infantilizing and asexualizing gaze. And of course, if we are seen as children, then we will be treated as such. An idea is constructed around us that our families are responsible for us and that this dependency is natural. That is why it is necessary to sexualize functional diversity, in order to repoliticize it. The more we become visible as sexed and sexual beings, as desiring and desirable bodies, the more difficult it will be to keep treating us like children, and if we are not children, then it is not natural for us to depend on our families. These situations of dependence are a political question regarding how we organize ourselves collectively to make possible all forms of autonomy, including that which consists in doing daily tasks and making decisions with the hands of another person. This kind of autonomy requires figures of support, such as personal assistance and sexual assistance. The latter, defined as support in sexually accessing one's own body, is key in the process of sexualizing functional diversity. Not because this is our way of experiencing sexuality, but because establishing a relationship with one's own body through desire and pleasure is essential for constructing links of all kinds with others.

It is common now to hear about the debate on whether sexual assistance is a right or not. Those who are against it argue, among other things, that it is not a right as it does not respond to a need. "You can live without sexual pleasure," they say. This is a conception of rights that is disturbing at the very least. My father, who was born poor into the period of fascism, never went to school. So yes, you can live without education. But do we want to live without education? This seems to me the key question: Do we do politics from the perspective of "what I need" or "what I

want”? The politics of need responds only to fear, as in “I cannot live without this thing,” and it removes responsibility by presenting this need as a natural law that exists externally to the person. Perhaps it is time to activate a politics of desire—“What do I want?”—as a means of creating responsibility and forming personal and social commitments.

This kind of politics of desire requires an ethical commitment around one’s own desire. First we must ensure that our desires are definitely our own. Do we want to accumulate capital or do we want to live with dignity? It is essential to build an erotics of dignity, placing it at the center of any desire we construct. On the other hand, we should question our experience of desire. Sometimes, it might seem that the only sense of desire rests on its becoming pleasure, which we might achieve by applying a series of techniques each time. But this would be a dead and repetitive form of desire, unable to move everything necessary to face the complexity of living. We need the feeling of desire to become a form of pleasure, so that the disjointed segments that place desire and pleasure at opposite

ends become virtuous circles wherein desire and pleasure feed each other, keeping each other as alive as everything they answer to.

Finally, we need to know who we are, and who we can count on to open up experiences across this politics of pleasure. From the outset, there are many of us who share vital experiences of having been crushed by the politics of fear and its normalizing mythologies. Women, the LGBTQ+ community, the fat, the mad, the racialized, the people with functional diversity, et cetera. Those who have lived the brief reverie of normality will wake up abruptly when age, illness, or other circumstances expel them from this plastic paradise. So the alliance is open to anyone. Our differences have been pathologized and stigmatized, with a small section of society reserved for us where we are “tolerated,” as a final destination. But we know that nothing but desire is enough. Everything that is not desiring us is assimilationism.

We are here to transform. We want everything. We demand desire.



Requiem to the Norm

Paul B. Preciado

Can an image grant or deny a body political agency? How can a body construct an image so that it becomes a political subject? These are some of the questions that Lorenza Böttner's visual and performative work poses.

Overlooked by the dominant historiography of art until relatively recently, the work of Lorenza Böttner—an artist who painted with her mouth and feet, and who used photography, drawing, dance, installation, and performance as means of aesthetic expression—emerges today as an indispensable contribution to the criticism of bodily and gender normalization in the late twentieth century. As exercises of resistance to a medical and exoticizing gaze that reduces the functionally diverse or trans body to the status of specimen or object, her works are characterized not only by the use of self-fiction, the dissident imitation of visual styles from the history of art, and bodily experimentation, but also by criticism of the disciplinary divide between genders, between painting, dance, performance, and photography, between masculine and feminine, between object and subject, between active and passive, and between valid and invalid.

The Art of Living

It is crucial to start with her biography, understood as a vitalist manifesto, because the most persistent prac-

tice in Lorenza's work is a blurring of the distinction between life and art. Lorenza Böttner was born on March 6, 1959, in Punta Arenas, Chile, into a family of German migrants. Assigned male at birth, she was recorded in the Chilean register as Ernst Lorenz Böttner Oeding. At the age of eight, Ernst Lorenz suffered a severe electric shock while climbing an electricity pylon in an attempt to get ahold of a bird's nest. For several days after the accident, it was touch and go as to whether he would live or die. After the amputation of both his arms, Ernst underwent a long, painful process of hospitalization, during which he unsuccessfully tried to commit suicide. That relationship between pain and death, which subsequently transmuted into hedonism and the exaltation of life, meant that her own body would become one of her main artworks: a vulnerable, neo-baroque monument to life. In 1969, his mother took him to Germany so that he could have access to specialized therapies. An armless body, Ernst Lorenz was first institutionalized as a disabled person in the Heidelberg Rehabilitation Center and then educated at the Lichtenau Orthopedic Rehabilitation Clinic alongside the so-called "thalidomide children." Prescribed to pregnant women as a sedative between 1957 and 1963, the thalidomide-based drug (marketed under the trade name Contergan in Germany) caused hundreds of thousands of babies to be born with modified limbs. The impact that this drug had in Germany led not only to the establishment of specialized learning centers, but also to the emergence of the "Contergan child" as a pop image of the 1960s. The expression "Contergan children," by which the generation of children affected by the drug became known, indicated that the process of bodily modification caused by this drug meant that they were considered neither human nor children of their mothers. Spectacularized as invalids and deformed individuals, the "thalidomide children" were the symbolic bodies of a pharmaco-pornographic capitalist transformation taking place in the West after the Second World War: illegitimate children of the pharmaceutical industry and the media, the "thalidomide children" were the new *lumpenproletariat* of the consumer societies. It was in this damned, subaltern cradle that Lorenza Böttner was born. Lorenza emerged from resistance to the process of transformation from Ernst Lorenz into a "thalidomide child": she rejected

the prosthetic arms that would supposedly have rehabilitated her body into one deemed “normal”; she rejected being educated as a disabled child and spent most of her time drawing, painting, and dancing.

Lorenza's Birth

Going against the medical diagnosis and social expectations that promised her a future of “social inclusion” as a disabled person, Ernst Lorenz was accepted into the Gesamthochschule Kassel (now a school of art and design) as a student from 1978 to 1984. While still an art student, it was in Kassel where Ernst Lorenz changed her name to Lorenza and assumed a public female identity. She then began a visual and performative exploration in which self-portrait and dance served as techniques of experimental construction. Her degree project at the Kassel School of Art in 1984 involved the unprecedented use of the self-portrait as a dissident embodiment of the norm. It was a large oil-on-canvas mural painted using footprints like impressionist brushstrokes. For Lorenza, transvesting herself in images of the norm was a requiem for undoing the norm. The drawings, prints, paintings, and performances she did over the intense sixteen-year period of her life as an artist (1978 to 1994) show her occupying a plurality of positions, not only of sex and gender, but also in history and time: an Elegant Victorian lady, a muscular young man with glass arms, a ballerina, a punk girl, a Greek statue, a flamenco dancer, Batman's bride, Miss World, a sex worker, a model, a traveler, a breastfeeding mother, a young BDSM enthusiast, an ephebe with the wings of Icarus, et cetera. Lorenza was interested in the simultaneity of embodiments and not identity as a static place. Her transvestism was not mimicry of femininity as an identity—it was usual to see her with a beard or naked—but rather an enlargement of the body's gestural repertoire, an expansion of the possibilities of action. In this sense, a photo that can be considered emblematic is the one of Lorenza with a beard and chest hair posing nude in front of a painted self-portrait, in which she had portrayed herself with smooth skin and female breasts. Both faces look straight at the viewer. Both assert: I am Lorenza. Because Lorenza was transition and not identity. Rather than transvestism, it would be more appropriate to speak of transition practices as counterlearning techniques through

which the body and subjectivity deemed “disabled” or “sick” claim the right to represent and invent their own life practices. It would therefore not be accurate to say that Lorenza transvests her feet and mouth into hands, or that the artist transvests into a woman, but instead that she invents another body, another artistic practice and gender: neither disabled nor normal, neither male nor female, neither painting nor dance.

The Politicization of Freaks: From Disability to Crip Pride

Lorenza graduated from Kassel in 1984 with a thesis entitled *Behindert?! (Disabled?!)*, in which she examined the place that the nonconforming body had occupied in artistic representation. The thesis, which included a first-person chronicle of her accident, and the processes of healing and learning to paint and dance, criticized the normative representation of the nonconforming body and advocated for an artistic practice capable of recognizing an armless body as a social and artistic agent. Until the Renaissance, the functionally diverse body, inscribed in a theological epistemology, was deemed to be an anti-natural monster that should be exterminated or could be the object of social ridicule. During the industrial revolution, a change in the politico-visual regime occurred: the functionally diverse body was considered an object of scientific research and institutional internment, a “specimen” for which society demanded remedy and rehabilitation through plastic surgery and adaptive prostheses. The Industrial Revolution invented a new productive body, a new materiality in which the hand—and the male hand in particular—occupied a central place as an organ that enabled an articulation between body—as the productive force—and machine. It was within this context that the model of deficiency and disability emerged: a body whose hands had been mutilated was a body that heterosexual capitalism considered unproductive and asexual. In resistance to this politico-sexual model, the dual process of artistic and gender vindication enabled Lorenza to construct a corporeality that was dissident and desirable at one and the same time: on the one hand, it was about resexualizing a body that had been desexualized by medical and institutional discourse. It was the need to escape from the orthopedy of the norm and to activate the political potential of the different



[Signature]
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Lorenza Böttner, *Untitled*, 1983, pen on paper, 33.8 x 24 cm, courtesy: private collection

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Lorenza Böttner, *Untitled*, undated, photograph, courtesy: private collection

Lorenza Böttner, *Untitled*, undated, vintage print on canvas, 120 x 90 cm, courtesy: private collection

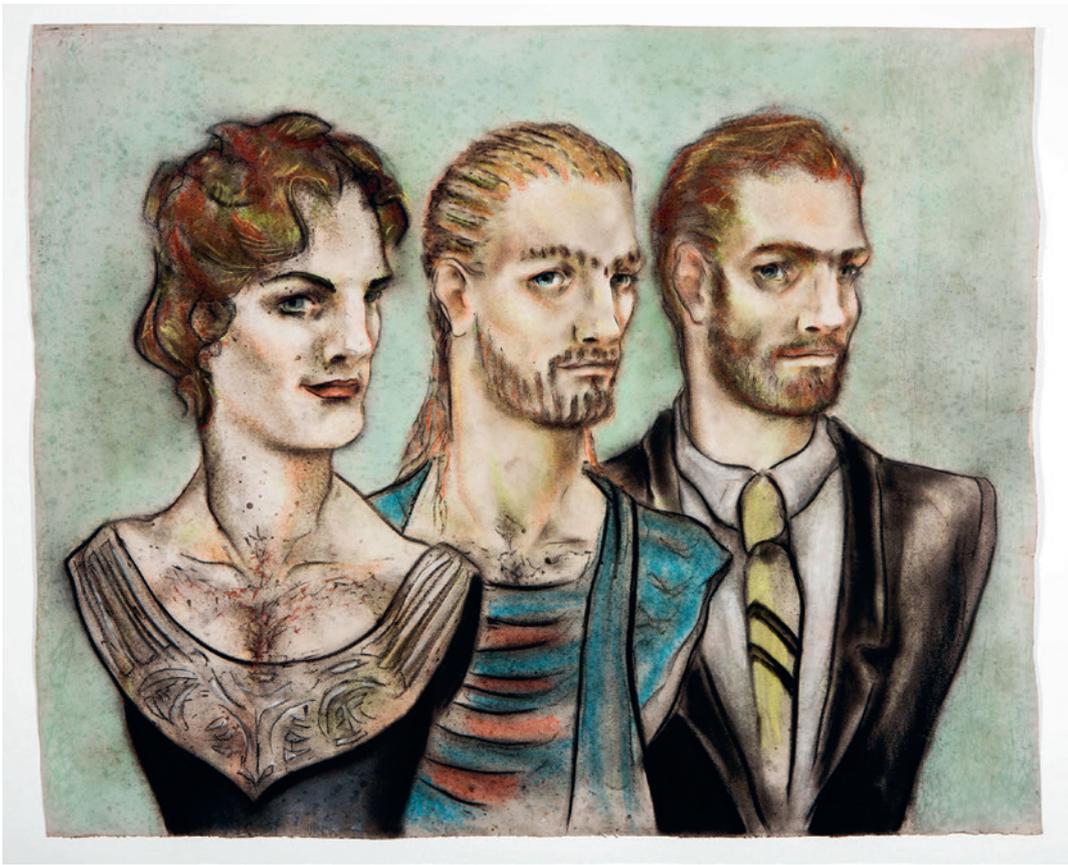
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Lorenza Böttner, *Untitled*, undated, pastel on paper, 137 x 170 cm, courtesy: private collection

Lorenza Böttner, *Untitled*, 1980, watercolor, pen on paper, 32.4 x 23.9 cm, courtesy: private collection

Lorenza Böttner, *Untitled*, 1990, pastel on paper, 154 x 115 cm, courtesy: private collection





gesture of a functionally diverse body that led Lorenza to transition from painting to dance, and even to the creation of her own dresses. On the other hand, Lorenza demanded political equality across all artistic practices, regardless of whether they were done with the hands or with any other living or technological organ. The dissertation was accompanied by a performance project entitled *Lorenza, das Wunder ohne Arme: Freaks* (Lorenza, the Armless Miracle: Freaks). Lorenza researched the freak shows at the Leipzig Fair, the Tivoli in Copenhagen, the Prater in Vienna, the variety of Panoptikums (wax museums) in Germany and Austria, the Egyptian Hall at London's Piccadilly Circus, and the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris, among others. The freak show was a crucial device in the modern invention of disability because it situated the nonconforming body on the boundaries of being human, while at the same time including it as part of a social spectacle. The freak show constituted a moment of transition between the theological regime in which the nonconforming body was seen as a monstrosity and its transformation into the object of scientific research and of the disability industries. It was within that narrow frame of visibility that Lorenza sought to act: between the regimes of popular spectacularization of the body in freak shows and of medical devices rendering the body visible as sick. Lorenza obsessively returned to the images from the film *Freaks* (1932) by Tod Browning, collected freak show posters, and included freak motifs in her performances. During Ernst Lorenz's adolescence in the 1970s, bodily diversity was defined in the Federal Republic of Germany's disability policies as an individual and functional deficit with regard to work and productivity. Integration demanded the reconstruction of the disabled body with the help of prostheses that should contribute to the visual normalization of the body and its adaptation to the productive process. Against this medical narrative, Lorenza sought to inscribe her body, her subjectivity, and her artistic production in a political lineage of armless painters that extended from Thomas Schweiker to Louis Steinkogler. But it was Aimée Rapin, whose work became an attraction at the 1889 *Exposition Universelle* in Paris, with whom she seemed to identify the most. In the 1980s and 1990s, during her trips to New York, Lorenza Böttner actively took part in the Disabled Artists Network with Sandra Aronson, but criticized

the charitable and humanist models that framed disabled people as marginal artists. Unlike them, Lorenza understood the relationship between the hand and the foot, between the medico-pornographic and the artistic gaze, as a power struggle.

The Face That Is Not One

In the same way as Lorenza had turned the ground of the streets into a new pictorial and performative space, she turned her own skin into a canvas that allowed her to rewrite a critical dialogue with the imposed norm and identity. Many of Lorenza's "danced paintings" and performances began with the initiatic act of painting her face. Holding the brush with her foot, she would redraw the contours of her eyes, cover her cheeks and forehead with triangles, or draw lines that divided the face. The notion of transvestism is too narrow and conventionally trivial to succeed in describing the constant erasure and rewriting of the face that was activated by that process. By turning it into a surface of inscription, Lorenza denaturalized the face as the site of identity—of gender, race, humanity—and asserted it as a socially constructed mask that she could help to redraw. In 1983, the year of her graduation from the Kassel School of Art, she created a series of photos called *Face Art* in which the face is the operator of a never-ending metamorphosis: masks of femininity and masculinity, with variations that alluded to other times and places, appeared one after the other. The face is dehumanized, animalized, or transfigured by lines reminiscent of tribal markings. Like Claude Cahun, Jürgen Klauke, Michel Journiac, Suzy Lake, and Jo Spence, Lorenza used the self-portrait as a technique of resistance to colonial, medical and police photography, in which the image served to identify the "other," constructing it as primitive, sick, disabled, deviant, or criminal. With regard to these taxonomies, she experimented with the making of dissident faces: constant variation produced de-identification rather than a quest for a simply female identity. Lorenza's masks criticize the systematic erasure of the transcript body as a political subject, its exoticization, or its reduction to a sickness, while at the same time asserting plurality, transformation, and relationality as profound structures of subjectivity.

The Body as a Social Sculpture

The dual relationship of embodiment and criticism of the norm is present in many of Lorenza's works: the Greek sculptural canon serves as a public signifier through which the ideals of perfection, beauty, and value can be questioned. In different performances in the 1980s, Lorenza produced—taking her mutilation as biocultural material—a sculpture that emulated the classical works *Venus de Milo* and *Winged Victory of Samothrace*. The Hellenic sculptures were called upon because of the tension between a mutilated body and a canon of beauty, between a ruin and a norm. Thus, for example, in New York in 1986, first at an informal meeting of artists in the East Village and then at a charity concert at Hunter College, Lorenza had her body covered in a fine layer of plaster until it was transformed into *Venus de Milo*. According to the Chilean writer Pedro Lemebel, her performance cushioned the blow to the shoulders and transvested the mutilated evidence into Hellenic surgery. Lorenza decided not only to become the armless sculpture, but to embody Aphrodite, molding breasts on her torso and combing her hair like the Greek goddess. The gender tension is clearly visible in the discontinuity between the female torso and the small line of body hair growing from the navel until becoming hidden under the tunic. What is interesting here, however, is not so much the petrification of Lorenza, but rather the process of destruction of the sculpture as a socially normalizing orthopedic mold. The first moment of embodiment of the canon, when the artist transformed herself into a sculpture, gave way to a corrosive criticism of the role of art in the social normalization of the white, cis-gender, valid, heterosexual body. On top of a mobile podium, Lorenza as *Venus* was moved from the back of the stage to the center, seeking a direct encounter with the public gaze. That was when the sculpture's eyes opened, looked inquisitively at the audience, and spoke: "What would you think if art came to life?"—with Lorenza coming down from the podium and dancing in front of the audience. That was a constituent moment when the relationships between power and gaze in the public space were reorganized: against the passiveness and silence imposed on the functionally diverse body, dance and voice are techniques of social empowerment that seek to increase the power to act.

Petra and the Olympics of Normalization

Lorenza first came to Barcelona in the 1980s, where she established links with many of the city's artists. That was how, in 1992, she became Petra, the Paralympic Games' mascot designed by Javier Mariscal. Embodying Petra, Lorenza again played with the tension between being the object of representation of the disciplinary gaze and resisting that gaze through a dissident performance. Lorenza's functionally diverse body, which the Paralympics aimed to represent, paradoxically disappeared under the voluminous disguise of Petra. It was Petra who disabled Lorenza and turned her into an invalid. By hiding her body and face, the Petra mascot was, in itself, infantilizing and desubjectivizing. Petra was the symbol of triumph—in the 1990s—of postmodern diversity inclusion policies, of the charity telethon, and of the disability industries, in which the functionally diverse body was included in society at the price of social submission: personal heroism, prosthetic readaptation, and athletic achievement kept the nonconforming body in a position of political subalternity.

After traveling extensively throughout Europe and the United States, drawing and doing performances, Lorenza returned to Germany with HIV and not feeling well. The last few months of her life were a destruction of the gender transition processes to which she had paid so much attention. Physically weakened and now bodily and financially dependent on her family, Lorenza was—with short hair and dressed as a man—re-masculinized and, for the first time, lost most of her political or artistic agency. At the age of thirty-four, in January 1994, Lorenza died in Germany following AIDS-related complications. A pioneering critic of the hegemony of artists that "paint with their hands" and the frames of visibility in which bodies are seen as normal or pathological, Lorenza Böttner's work is now an indispensable reference for conceiving visuality in the twenty-first century.

Excerpted and adapted from *Lorenza Böttner: Requiem to the Norm*, exhibition guide, La Virreina Centre de la imatge, Barcelona, and Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, 2018–19.

“Swap a Wheelchair for a Theater Seat”

The Dawn of a New Disability Rights Movement in 1974

Volker Schönwiese

It is little known that the social self-representation movement of people with disabilities in Austria has a history that goes back at least 100 years. Since around the time of the First World War, an “old” disability rights movement initiated by individuals with physical limitations was split into several different movements, such as the war victims’ movement, the work-related disabled, and the “cripples,” which is the name they gave themselves (indicating disabled persons without a claim to social benefits and pensions, who are eligible for welfare, see <http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/bibliothek/archiv/krueppel.html>). Under the slogan “Arbeit nicht Mitleid” (Work, not Pity), the “cripples” fought for jobs and social security systems, following the goals of the labor movement. The successes of this movement were minimal under the conditions of Austria’s First Republic; and National Socialist eugenics and extermination policies quickly followed the collapse of the First Republic. Caught between trauma and displacement after the Second World War, such organizations of disabled persons devoted their efforts to the same policies based on labor and welfare. During the period of the postwar “economic miracle” and amid the threatening climate of the escalating Cold War, the systematic institutionalization of disabled individuals took place in a rather incidental fashion. Rehabilitation and institutional individuation (special education schools, sheltered workshops, residential care homes) coined work with

the disabled as a socioeconomic area of growth and thus shaped the everyday life of those with disabilities. Such organizations for the disabled were not taking an antisystemic approach; they were assuming a position of gratitude toward the welfare state while making only moderate demands. In terms of social climate, the year 1968 signified a turning point, and the end of the reconstruction phase after the Second World War gave rise to a climate of resistance. Members of the younger generation began to demand rights in the “new” social movements, both social rights and rights of recognition and participation. In this respect, Austria “slept through” quite a lot, but at some point during the 1970s Austria came to embrace the “1968” issues. Turning points in these developments often entailed individual events whose meaning first became evident in retrospect.

One such event involved the March 1974 demonstrations of students of the Handelsschule für Körper- und Sinnesbehinderte (Trade School for the Physically and Sensory Impaired), namely, the Handelsschule Phorusgasse with the associated school home at Hochheimgasse. The demonstrations played out along the Vienna Ring Road after entry was barred to plays and concerts due to security considerations. This act of demonstration compelled Mayor Gratz to discuss the matter, and the bigger daily papers like the KURIER and KRONE reported on this unusual action carried out by students. They printed photos of demonstration posters boasting slogans like “Recht auf Gleichheit” (Right to Equality) and “Tausche Rollstuhl gegen Theatersessel” (Swap a Wheelchair for a Theater Seat).

An interview with a contemporary witness, Theresia Haidlmayr, details the demonstrations in March 1974: “We initiated a whole new way, or back then, that was actionism ... I think we wanted to go to the concert hall. Yes, I think it was the concert hall. To see “Middle of the Road”—that was a music band back then. And they wouldn’t let us in, because we were in wheelchairs. The opening act at the time was Jack Grunsky. I still remember that. Jack Grunsky lived on Maxingstraße. And he knew all of us by sight. Because we lived on Montecuccoliplatz, up in the 13th [district]. They didn’t let us in, and Jack Grunsky noticed that we weren’t allowed in. It was there that we held



Gerhard Zugmann, protest in wheelchairs, *Kurier*, 1974, Austrian National Library (Vienna)

our biggest demonstration and closed off the Ring Road. And we kept moving along the Ring. Moving, at the time, toward Mayor Gratz. And we filled up his place, pretty logical with so many wheelchairs.” (see the interview with Theresia Haidlmayr in the article on the history of the disability rights movement).

As for Theresia Haidlmayr, actionism was initially evident as a “new” social movement. The idea was to break away from the established structures, to symbolically initiate anger-fueled discourse by disabled individuals in Austria. In terms of methods and emotions, this action was reminiscent of present-day climate strikes by students. In retrospect, we might note that the action by students in March 1974 marked the beginning of a grassroots movement in Austria, known internationally as the “independent living movement.” The early 1970s saw the first struggles of disabled women and men in the United States and Great Britain that could be assigned to the “new” social movements. The disability rights movement was, and still remains, part of a pluralistic movement

The disability rights movement was, and still remains, part of a pluralistic movement scenario focused on self-determination.

scenario focused on self-determination (related to themes like gender, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, ecology, peace, etc.). In research on movements akin to the “old” social movements (“labor movement” and the anti-colonial liberation movements) and to “newer” social movements, the reprocessing of history is just now—very late—taking hold.

Source Analysis and archive on the history of the disability rights movement, available online: <http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/projekte/behindertenbewegung/>.







Sunaura Taylor, *Wildlife*, 2014,
oil paint on wildlife photography book,
approx. 30.5 x 30.5 x 5 cm, excerpts,
courtesy: the artist

Vegans, Freaks, and Animals: Toward a New Table Fellowship

Sunaura Taylor

In September 2010 I agreed to take part in an art event in California. I was to be the vegan representative in a debate over the ethics of eating meat. My partner, David, and I got to the event on time, but spent the first forty minutes or so sitting by ourselves downstairs while everyone else participated in the art event, which took place on an inaccessible floor of the building. Our only company was a few chefs busily putting the finishing touches on the evening's meal—a choice of either grass-fed beef or cheese ravioli.

David and I had been warned prior to the event about the lack of access, but as we sat there waiting, we began to feel increasingly uncomfortable. The disability activist in me felt guilty that I had agreed to partake in an event that I could not participate in fully. My innocuous presence, as I quietly sat downstairs in my wheelchair waiting, somehow made me feel as if I were condoning the discrimination that was built into the event and the art center itself. As if my presence were saying, "It's OK, I don't need to be accommodated—after all, being disabled is my own personal struggle."

David's and my alienation was heightened soon after when we were given our meal—as the only two vegans in the room we were made a special dish by the chefs. The dish was largely roasted vegetables. As I was about to expound to a room full of omnivores on the reasons for choosing veganism, I felt keenly aware

of how this food would be read—as isolating and different, as creating more work for the chefs, and as unfilling in comparison with the other dishes. I entered into the debate with a keen sense of being alone in that room, not only because I was the only visibly disabled individual, but because, besides David, I knew I was the only one with no animal products on my plate.

Michael Pollan writes in *The Omnivore's Dilemma* that the thing that troubled him the most about being a vegetarian was "the subtle way it alienate(d) me from other people."¹ People who write about food often spend a surprising amount of energy deciphering how much feeling of social alienation they are willing to face for their ethical beliefs.

Countless articles in popular magazines and newspapers on the "challenges" of becoming a vegetarian or vegan focus on the social stigma one will face if they "go veg"—the eye rolling, the teasing comments, the weird looks. Jonathan Safran Foer writes that we "have a strong impulse to do what others around us are doing, especially when it comes to food."²

It is difficult to ascertain what role these articles themselves play in marginalizing the vegetarian experience. There are many pressing issues that face individuals who would perhaps otherwise choose to try to become vegetarian or vegan, such as the reality of food deserts in low-income, often largely people of color neighborhoods and a government that subsidizes and promotes animaland fat-heavy diets versus ones with vegetables and fruits.⁵ However, rather than focus on these serious structural barriers, many articles often present the challenge of avoiding meat and animal products as a challenge to one's very own normalcy and acceptability.

Those who care about animals are often represented as abnormal in contemporary American culture. Animal activists are represented as overly zealous, as human haters, even as terrorists, while vegetarians and vegans are often presented as spacey, hysterical, sentimental, and neurotic about food. Even vegetarian foods become "freaked," and alternatives to meats are often described as lab or science experiments.

Since many animal protein alternatives are not traditionally American, the marginalization of these foods as somehow weird or unnatural works both to solidify an American identity (what “real” Americans eat: real meat) and to exoticize the other. However, the abnormality of those who do not eat animals is perhaps best exemplified by the name of a popular vegan podcast and book: *Vegan Freaks*. The title refers to how many vegans feel that they are perceived by mainstream culture.³

My point is not to say that there is no challenge to becoming a vegetarian or vegan, but rather to point out that the media, including various authors, contribute to the “enfreakment” of what is so often patronizingly referred to as the vegan or vegetarian “lifestyle.” Of course the marginalization of those who care about animals is nothing new. Diane Beers writes in her book *For the Prevention of Cruelty: The History and Legacy of Animal Rights Activism in the United States* that “several late nineteenth-century physicians concocted a diagnosable form of mental illness to explain such bizarre behavior. Sadly, they pronounced, these misguided souls suffered from ‘zoophilpsychosis.’”⁴ As Beers describes, zoophilpsychosis (an overconcern for animals) was more likely to be used to diagnose women who were understood as “particularly susceptible to the malady.”⁵ As the early animal advocacy movement in the UK and the United States was largely made up of women, such charges worked to uphold the subjugation both of women and of nonhuman animals.

Disability and disabled people have largely been left out of these conversations, and ableism has similarly been rendered as normative and naturalized. The disability community has had a challenging relationship to the animal rights community, as epitomized by continued debates involving philosophers like Peter Singer, whose work has denied personhood to certain groups of intellectually disabled individuals.⁶ But even in less extreme ways, disabled individuals and the various issues that affect us have largely been left out of the animal welfare and sustainability movements, whether because of the movements’ obsession with health and physical fitness or a lack of attention to who has access to different kinds of educational and activist events.

As I sat in that inaccessible space, waiting downstairs for the debate to begin, feeling like a freak in both my body and my food choices, I thought about Michael Pollan and the numerous other writers who speak of “table fellowship,” or the connection and bonds that can be made over food. Pollan argues that this sense of fellowship is threatened if you are a vegetarian. Would I have felt more like I belonged if I had eaten a part of the steer who was fed to the guests that night? On his attempt at being a vegetarian, Pollan writes: “Other people now have to accommodate me, and I find this uncomfortable: My new dietary restrictions throw a big wrench into the basic host-guest relationship.”⁷

Pollan feels “uncomfortable” that he now has to be “accommodated.” It is a telling privilege that this is a new experience for him. Disrupting social comfort and requesting accommodation are things disabled people confront all the time. Do we go to the restaurant our friends want to visit even though it has steps and we will have to be carried? Do we eat with a fork in our hands, versus the fork in our mouth, or no fork at all, to make ourselves more acceptable at the table—to avoid eating “like an animal”? Do we draw attention to the fact that the space we have been invited to debate in is one of unacknowledged privilege and ableism? For many disabled individuals, the importance of upholding a certain politeness at the dinner table is far overshadowed by something else—upholding our right to *be* at the dinner table, even if we make others uncomfortable.

Pollan assumes you can make it to the table in the first place. I looked around at the audience I was about to speak to and thought about those who were not at the table: people whose disabilities, race, gender, or income too often render them invisible in conversations around animal ethics and sustainability. Safran Foer asks a simple question in his book *Eating Animals*: “How much do I value creating a socially comfortable situation, and how much do I value acting socially responsible?”⁸

In many ways my debate was like many other conversations between vegans and those who support humane meat: we debated the environmental consequences of both veganism and sustainable

omnivorism, discussed whether veganism was a “healthy” diet, and spent a long time parsing out why animals may or may not have a right to live out their lives free from slaughter by humans. We passionately agreed about the atrocities of factory farms, and we both understood animals to be sentient, thinking, feeling beings, often with complex emotions, abilities, and relationships. However, where my opponent argued that it is possible to kill and eat animals compassionately, I argued that in almost all cases it is not, and that the justifications for such positions are not only speciesist but ableist.

As the debate was only an hour, I had previously decided that trying to talk about disability as it relates to animal issues would not be possible. But after being in that inaccessible space, I felt compelled to discuss it. I felt a responsibility to represent disability and animal issues to the best of my ability—to represent a model of disability I politically agreed with in hopes that some of the marginalization I had experienced would be considered.

Throughout the debate I tried to explain how my perspective as a disabled person and as a disability scholar influenced my views on animals. I spoke about how the field of disability studies raises questions that are important to the animal-ethics discussion. Questions about normalcy and nature, value and efficiency, interdependence and vulnerability, as well as more specific concerns about rights and autonomy, are central to the field. What is the best way to protect the rights of those who may not be physically autonomous but are vulnerable and interdependent? How can the rights of those who cannot protect their own, or those who cannot understand the concept of a right, be protected?

I described how limited interpretations of what is natural and normal leads to the continued oppression of both disabled people and animals. Of the tens of billions of animals killed every year for human use, many are literally manufactured to be disabled. Industrialized farm animals not only live in such cramped, filthy, and unnatural conditions that disabilities become common but also are literally bred and violently altered to physically damaging extremes, where

udders produce too much milk for a cow’s body to hold, where turkeys cannot bear the weight of their own giant breasts, and where chickens are left with amputated beaks that make it difficult for them to eat. Even my own disability, arthrogyriposis, is found often enough on factory farms to have been the subject of *Beef Magazine’s* December 2008 issue.⁹

I also spoke about how animals are continually judged by ableist human traits and abilities. How we under-

... limited interpretations of what is natural and normal leads to the continued oppression of both disabled people and animals.

stand animals as inferior and not valuable for many of the same reasons disabled people are viewed these ways—they are seen as incapable, as lacking, and as different. Animals are clearly affected by the privileging of the able-bodied human ideal, which is constantly put up as the standard against which they are judged, justifying the cruelty we so often inflict on them. The abled body that ableism perpetuates and privileges is always not only nondisabled but also nonanimal.

In the end I tried to share what I could about disability studies, how it offers new ways of valuing human life that are not limited by specific physical or mental capabilities. Disability studies scholars argue that it is not specifically our intelligence, our rationality, our agility, our physical independence, or our bipedal posture that gives us dignity and value. We argue that life is, and should be presumed to be, worth living, whether you are a person with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, quadriplegia, autism, or like me, arthrogyriposis. But, I asked, if disability advocates argue for the protection of the rights of those of us who are disabled, those of us who are lacking certain highly

valued abilities like rationality and physical independence, then what are the consequences of these arguments in regard to nonhuman animals?

As the debate ended, I felt a sense of defeat creep over me—not over animal issues but over disability issues. I had a strong feeling that the disability politics I had represented would be misunderstood: instead of people considering their own privilege as human and nondisabled, I would be seen as using my disability to boost animal issues.

The very first person who came up to speak to me introduced herself as the mother of an intellectually disabled child. She was both impressed with me (in a sort of supercrip way) and worried for me—like someone trying to save my soul. “This doesn’t help your cause.” She kept saying, “You don’t have to compare yourself to an animal.”

In some ways I understood where the woman was coming from. Individuals with intellectual disabilities have not been treated well by the branch of animal rights discourse promoted by people like Singer. As the philosopher Licia Carlson writes, “If we take seriously the potential for conceptual exploitation and the current marginalization of intellectual disability in philosophy, we must critically consider the roles that the ‘intellectually disabled’ have been assigned to play in this discourse.”¹⁰ I tried to explain that I was not really meaning to compare myself to an animal, but was rather comparing our shared oppressions. Disabled people and nonhuman animals, I told her, are often oppressed by similar forces. I told her, though, that to me being compared to an animal does not have to be negative—after all, we are all animals.

She told me she did not want to compare her disabled child’s situation to an animal’s situation, that they were not related. Her child was not an animal. I was doing a disservice to myself and others by making these connections. The woman never got mad at me, as I assume she would have at an able-bodied person saying what I was saying. Instead she seemed sad for me, as if I lacked the disability pride and confidence to think of myself as anything more than animal.

If I had demanded accommodation, instead of politely following social etiquette and making others feel comfortable, would my confidence as a disabled human being have come through differently? I wonder whether, if I had arrived at the event insisting on my body’s right to access, would the confidence I have in my embodiment have been so unmistakable that even discussing my relationship to animals would have been recognized as a gesture of my love for disability? Perhaps my behavior would have been seen as disruptive, perhaps it would have made others uncomfortable, but by demanding accommodation I would have insisted on a different kind of table fellowship.

The inaccessibility of the space framed my words that night and led me to focus on the ways in which animal oppression and disability oppression are made invisible by being rendered as simply natural: steers are served for dinner and disabled people wait downstairs.

This article is excerpted from *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation*, published by Feminist Press in 2017. All rights reserved.

Notes

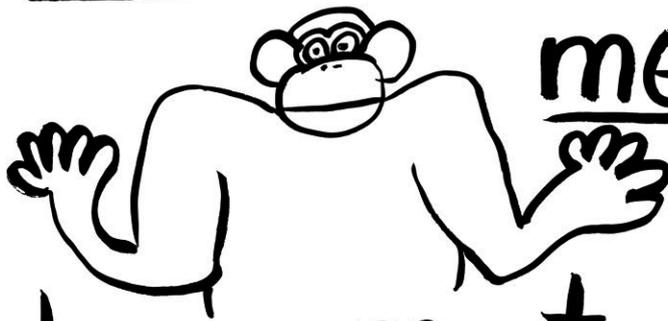
- 1 Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin, 2006), p. 313.
- 2 Jonathan Safran Foer, *Eating Animals* (New York: Little, Brown, 2010), p. 32.
- 3 Bob Torres and Jenna Torres, *Vegan Freak: Being Vegan in a Non-Vegan World* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2010).
- 4 Diane L. Beers, *For the Prevention of Cruelty: The History and Legacy of Animal Rights Activism in the United States* (Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press, 2006), p. 16.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Licia Carlson and Eva Feder Kittay, eds., *Cognitive Disability and Its Challenge to Moral Philosophy* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).
- 7 Pollan, *Omnivore’s Dilemma*, p. 314.
- 8 Safran Foer, *Eating Animals*, p. 55.
- 9 W. Ishmael, “Dealing with Curly Calf,” *Beef Magazine*, 2008, <http://beefmagazine.com/genetics/1201-curly-calf-issue>.
- 10 Licia Carlson, “Philosophers of Intellectual Disability: A Taxonomy,” in Carlson and Kittay, *Cognitive Disability*, p. 318.

Being a Gorilla



as if there never
existed a Gorilla
before...

Do you love
me?



Love me too?

Time is made from
honey slow



and sweet only the
fools know what it means
...

Exhale Riot

Excerpts from *Journal Gentofte Hospital, Spring 2019*

Jakob Jakobsen

Day 4

Got out of bed and went to breakfast at 8 am—and to my first morning assembly at 8.45 am, where most patients and today's staff normally are present. Sometimes there are some patients who are too bad to join, but usually we are all present. The doctors are never there. I said my name and that I had been in this ward before. I was told that Hoda is my contact nurse for the day. One of the patients, let's call him Yusuf, suggested that we should sing a song from the folders with songs found in the common room. I can't recall the song's title, but it was one or another Danish song. It was only Yusuf who sang, with a few others humming a little. It actually sounded as if he invented the tunes as he went along. We wrapped the meeting up with another song, "Det er i dag et vejr," that several people knew and that went a little better.

Got blood samples taken and an EKG. Actually I can't remember if this happened before or after breakfast. I asked whether I could have a brief conversation with the chief psychiatrist, Jens, but Hoda told me that he probably didn't have the time, "he's very busy." Managed to pop my head into his office to ask if there were any trials with Ketamine treatment or similar "positive" medication. He told me that there was nothing like that—and that he was sure I would get better—and waved me away with his hand. Then I sent some more text messages to my friend and col-

laborator Mikkel Bolt. He had promised to help me patch together a text about Asger Jorn that must be finished by Friday. I had asked Bolt for help—I could not give up this job because I would get 1,000 euros in payment. It worries me a bit because I am not able to do it myself. I read a little more of *Fodboldenglen*, a book I am about to finish. Awful read. I chose it at random in the department's book cupboard. Lunch was vegetarian meatballs with couscous and a peculiar green dressing that was perhaps a sauce. I honestly cannot remember if I was listening to podcasts or reading or looking at the ceiling after lunch. I have a single room where I can vegetate in peace and quiet, even though I get nervous just at the thought of the door opening, and a nurse or health assistant poking her head in. They occasionally come by with some message or an offer of an activity, of which there are very few. This did happen later in the afternoon, when one of the nursing students opened the door and told me there was cake and "activities" in the common room. I said it sounded good. I honestly tended to stay in my room because other people generally make me nervous. But the cake still attracted me a little. And then I still have a small health devil in the back of my mind telling me that I should "let myself be exposed" to that kind of social activity even though I do not want to at all. This little devil is probably the result of many years of treatment according to cognitive principles, which tells me that such social activities will be positive and healthy. So after a while I went up to the common room where a huge television normally pumps news into the ward. It's always discouraging, being "exposed" to some idiot politician who is lying once again. Occasionally there is a caring soul who changes the channel to Animal Planet or something else that is not directly about humans. But when I got to the common room, the TV was switched off and Yusuf (from this morning, yes), a larger-than-life guy from Nørrebro, was sitting drawing together with a handful of nurses and some students. Yusuf was telling people about the Islamic State, explaining the names of the various branches of the group. There is Isis, then there is Daesh, and Isil ... The nurses and the young students around him smiled nervously, and he continued to explain that there is actually a difference: Isil consists of smaller commander units and Isis is ... then he looked up, as he might have sensed

the nervousness around him. “It’s not because I support any of them,” he said, and he stopped telling his story. I took a piece of cake and leaned against the back of an armchair to avoid sitting down. The drawing activity was to fill out some photocopied sheets of mandala patterns with crayons. Ida, who was the one who had stuck her head into my room, asked if I wanted to help draw. I shook my head a little without saying anything. She smiled and asked me whether I was involved with “creativity.” I nodded a little and she smiled again.

To get out of there, I asked my contact nurse if I could go for a walk. She asked for how long, and I said for one hour. Now, I had been admitted to Gentofte Hospital for a long period of time some years ago, and I have walked the neighborhood of Gentofte thin, so to speak. So I was a little curious about what feelings would emerge when I was back in this landscape. I usually have a paranoid sense of place. I always know where I am on the map, wherever I am in the world. But in this rich man’s desert, all of a sudden I couldn’t even find my way around. The hospital is placed like a slightly rotated square in the middle of the residential grid. It amazed me that I could not find my way around, but I swept this anxiety away with my standard explanation that it was probably due to “the illness.” Many around me are talking about “the illness” as something that is not me, but something that has made its home inside of me, or something that is stuck onto me that can be torn off if you use the right means. A bit like tearing off a plaster, or pressing a pimple maybe. That explanation was now handy to myself as I drifted down one street after another. I hated all the senseless wealth I saw everywhere. Finally I found Emery’s, the baker’s, on the main square I might initially have thought of as the goal of my trip. It was cold but sunny, so people sat outside with blankets over their legs. When I got closer, my nervousness rose when imagining going into the bakery, probably mainly because the people sitting at the round café tables outside were turning me off completely. Excessively nice hairdos, sunglasses in capital letters, white and well-groomed, just too well-off and too much smooth functionality, similar to what I had just seen in the suburban streets. Fuck and sigh. So I slipped past Emery’s and went in the Netto discount

supermarket. The very reassuring and nice Netto, “we know each other.” There was nothing I needed, so I sniffed around the non-food department and found a memory game for Teo, made of wood. Was just about to buy some magnetic paint that I might be able to use when I come home at some point. But too idiotic and too hopeful, so I left the tin where it was. Bought chamomile tea and wet wipes for my glasses.

When back in the ward I waved through the window of the staff room, where nurses and other professional folks were hanging out. Still wondering what they are actually doing in there, sitting around all over the room. Sometimes the doctor is in there, but not so often.

In the hours up to dinner at 6 pm, I can’t really remember what I was doing. Maybe more *Fodboldenglen*.

Being here at the ward is like being on a journey in a desert with everything slowly running out.

Day 19

Being here at the ward is like being on a journey in a desert with everything slowly running out. Today I have canceled visits from my sister and my parents since I did not have the energy to see them. I have basically been lying on my bed all day, feeling my nervous skin against my clothes. Trembling all over the body. It’s the Lithium.

Today I tried to make a weekly schedule where I was just using colors, each representing an activity for the different weekdays. Like a secret scheme that only I know the code for. It was one of my protecting angels, Hanna, who got me to do this. She gave me a schedule a few days ago, and suggested that I fill it in to provide my days in the ward with some order. As I was slightly confused about what to do, it was actually she who suggested I just use colors. She had noticed my small psychotic obsession is with colored A4 sheets I was putting on the walls and ceiling of

my room. I followed Hanna up to the staff room and she gave me a glue stick and scissors. A rather large and pointed pair of scissors. Back at my table in my room, I cut out different strips in various colors. One for writing in my diary, one for running, one for reading, and so on. I placed all the strips on the schedule and left a lot of white fields with time for me just to recover. When I wanted to paste the small pieces of colored paper on the chart, my hands shook so much that I couldn't control it. Just this minimal emotional commotion made me unable to control my hands. I gave up immediately. Maybe it was just a fucking lie anyway, that schedule. It's just a game to pretend I have an everyday life. It's one thing to be fucked up in my head, afraid and sad; something else to be constantly reminded that I have no control over anything. The tremors are a bit like my own pain seismograph; the more emotionally I am involved with something, the greater the amplitude of the tremors. Writing a text message can take a long time, as I have to slow down, breathe, and try to get into a quieter mood, then try again. I'm not on suicide watch anymore, but I feel more inept than ever, now that I am slowly sinking into the medicine. It takes over all sorts of functions, both bodily and mental. The medicine I get was invented/found in the 1950s and works a bit like throwing a hand grenade in through the door of a room without knowing what was happening in it. No one knows why and how Lithium and Amitriptyline work. For me, these chemicals work first and foremost through their wild side effects: shaking, chills, muscle cramps, tinnitus, trouble peeing, dry mouth, plus all the others I haven't noticed yet.

Thank goodness they will try to find some other medicine for me in the coming week, something which can give me some hope. But it will probably mean that I will be here another month. I am well aware that I am not in a sanatorium or on a health cruise. This is a game of life and death.

Day 43

It is confusing to feel how my mood can change with myself seeming just to observe it. When I was admitted I was sad and scared. Now in the midst of my transition between several kinds of medicine, other emotions emerge. Describing emotions is a very linguis-



Jakob Jakobsen, My room at Gentofte Hospital after 53 days, 2019

tic-dialectical maneuver. Anxiety has arrived on my linguistic palette very late in life. My depressive mind pushed all kinds of sadness and anxiety down beneath the weight of its depression. Anxiety is the feeling of restlessness and nervousness that I often encounter in the evening. At the more concrete end of the scale, I become afraid of being attacked by other people, for example when I pass them in the street. This has never actually happened to me in such a concrete way, which consequently deepens the fear—because it is abstract. There is of course a transferred explanation for this kind of anxiety that I only know the contour of. When hospitalized, there is space and tranquility to browse through the various emotions. It's not nice, in fact it's pretty terrible, but there is some support and security here. Both from the other patients and the general staff. Recently my mood has moved toward desolation. I'm not longer particularly sad. Since the medicine is the only treatment I get, this shift must be due to the drugs and its effects on different areas of the sea of moods. I have also become more indifferent

and irritable, I think. Yesterday I was almost about to tear down all of my colored A4 sheets that I have been setting up on the walls during most of my stay here. One sheet every day. The process has had its presence and pleasure (did I write that?). My eyes can jump between the sheets and scrutinize the colors' minimal dynamics. The different color tones create an interference while my gaze jumps from one sheet to another. It is a form of gymnastics where I almost unconsciously weigh the colors and their differences. The tiny emotional impulses that the colors create stem from small mixtures of pleasure and annoyance: "The green sheet doesn't fit where I hung it, it makes noise in relation to the yellow sheet ..." I have a principle that there is no going back. So those kinds of annoyances can inspire me to hang another sheet of paper that can distract those dynamics that can't settle. Right now I am actually reasonably pleased at the colors' state in my room. It is perhaps also why they don't really touch me at the moment. But it is difficult to describe these kinds of color dynamics. I appreciate this game a lot because it's so simple. Standard colored A4 sheets from the art room, which I found by accident. The room is not in use. Solvej did actually give me five beautifully colored sheets that she bought in London. These sheets break my system a little, but the chief physician has repeatedly told me that I must be flexible in my mind and disciplined in my behavior. So Solvej's sheets are slowly to be integrated into the color scheme.

Yesterday this new sense of desolateness almost cost the lives of all the colored A4 sheets on the walls and

The green sheet doesn't fit where I hung it, it makes noise in relation to the yellow sheet ...

ceiling. They were sucked into the grind of desolation, which makes everything indifferent and uninteresting, no matter what. Desolation is obviously a kind of sadness, but different from the sorrow that I associate with being upset. Just writing this text helps me

differentiate. Between emotions and colors. I do not believe in color symbolism, but the dynamics of the colors also affect the different tones of the emotions. For many years I have been so depressed that I have been unable to describe how I felt, either to the people closest to me or to doctors, psychologists, and other professionals. There was no language. That is probably why I have rarely experienced beneficial effects from psychotherapy. Sometimes I have said to Maria, partly joking, that I could just as well sit at home and talk to a door instead of paying DKK 700 for 40 minutes of therapy with a psychologist. The language and emotions are not separate landscapes—language does shape the feelings, and the whole process of finding words is an important way of becoming conscious. With the old bourgeois parrot Freud on my shoulder, I can say that linguistic articulation is an integral part of being able to live and cope with an unruly mind. Throughout my life, language has been a barrier to me. I grew up with dyslexia and some form of self-chosen loneliness, so I could live with few words.

Being admitted to a psychiatric ward was initially about survival. The experience is in many ways like that of a school, a school of affects. And schools are not designed to please. My co-patients do many different things to survive here: I think the color game is good for me, but not necessarily for my neighbors. Tereza, who lives two rooms down the hall, cleans and sorts out her room constantly. Went past her room when I had to get coffee, and she was standing arranging her pillow with the cold gray morning light shining through the curtains. Very carefully, the cover was smoothed and the pillow put in place inside the cover. Very beautiful and quiet even though she is not comfortable at all. The ceiling light was not lit and the scenery reverberated Vermeer and Hammershøi. Tereza survives by making her room orderly and furnished.

Day 59

A day has been determined for my discharge. May 29. It was to some extent my own decision. I don't feel pressured. My discharge is a discharge into nothing. Everything that made me sick is waiting outside.

Temporalities of Becoming

Trans(chron)normativity and Imagined Hormone Time

Jonah Garde

Time is a funny thing. As soon as we start writing about it, trying to grasp it, it runs through our fingers like sand. But time is all around us and governs our day-to-day life. Normative notions of time provide us with ideas of the appropriate duration of an activity, the right kind of biography, or the relevant milestones in life, but also with memories of a proper past or imaginings of a desired future.

Unlike in any other field, time as a normative structure is highly visible in classical trans* narratives, imagining gender transition as a linear and progressive path from one gender into “the” other. The classical transition narrative constructs a linear timeline in which femininity and masculinity are constructed as points of departure or destination. This narrative is further reproduced and embedded within frameworks of legal recognition, as Emily Grabham has shown regarding the UK Gender Recognition Act and its reliance on notions of permanence and stability.¹

For trans* people who *can* and *want to* medically transition or gain legal recognition, the transition narrative as an autobiographical act begins in the clinician’s office. The linear transition narrative produces a coherent trans* subject by piecing together subjectivity back through time, e.g., through engaging a gender non-conforming childhood narrative typified by the clothes one did or did not wear, favorite toys,

or even the gender of childhood friends and crushes, thus allowing the trans* subject “to appear to have been there all along.”² This narrative is incited through questions such as: “Have you always felt like a _____?” or “Since when did you know you are _____?” Recognition commands that in order to be “real” and “authentic” gender has to be permanent and stable.

The transition narrative—at least in the first encounters in the clinician’s office—also points toward a desired future of “arrival”³ in what is assumed to be “the other” gender which is not here yet. In that way, the narration of the past works to enable the future to come.⁴ Thus, the production of trans* subjectivity relies simultaneously on notions of stability and permanence as well as on progress and futurity.⁵ This narrative maps transition within a time frame that produces a sense of timeliness of trans* experiences, as Natasha Seymour has argued.⁶

It seems that trans* subjectivity and embodiment are made intelligible only through the temporal framing of the transition narrative. Hormone replacement therapies, surgeries, and recognition within the medicolegal complex are, to quote Natasha Seymour, “given or withheld under a restrictive teleological program that writes into the transgender narrative the fantasy of normative futurity.”⁷ That is to say that the temporal framing of the transition narrative reinforces the kind of binary identities that will be recognized by the medicolegal complex in the first place and that can be assimilated into the normative temporalities of the state.

Elizabeth Freeman refers to this phenomenon as “chrononormativity,” a term she uses to describe the way time organizes or binds “naked flesh . . . into socially meaningful embodiment.”⁸ With the concept of chrononormativity, Freeman directs our attention to the ways in which time is implanted into our bodies that make it seem like a somatic fact while simultaneously organizing individual human bodies toward maximum productivity.

Chrononormativity is a central component of transnormativity, producing temporal forms of intelligibility and recognition of trans* subjectivity. In other

words, chrononormativity becomes the condition for recognition and inclusion of trans* subjects into the nation-state. Time not only structures normativity but is also a biopolitical force; it is a technology of “chronobiopolitics,” to borrow from Freeman once more.⁹ In Freeman’s conception, chronobiopolitics refers to the way in which the state creates affects of national belonging, not only through narratives of a shared history, but also through synchronicity, and through “personal histories,” that “become legible only within a state-sponsored timeline”¹⁰ which is marked by birth, marriage, reproduction, accumulation of wealth, and death. Gender transition is increasingly governed by and incorporated into these “state-sponsored timelines.”

Within this dominant transition narrative, synthetic sex hormones play a key role in fostering notions of progress and linearity. Within the trans-chrono-normative narrative, medical interventions and especially hormones are imagined to either reverse that past and propel the body to move toward a different development or, in the case of puberty, blockers are given to trans* youth to stall the effects of time in order to enable a better future and thus to fold trans* subjects into normative temporalities.¹¹

For example, analyzing YouTube transition videos, Laura Horak makes an excellent argument about the way in which hormones operate according to a temporality she terms “hormone time.”¹² She argues that, in an analogy to Christian concepts of time, the transition videos fix the first day of hormone replacement therapy as the starting point against which time or even history is measured.¹³ In Horak’s conception, hormones are imagined to produce linear, progressive, teleological, and even utopian temporalities as they point toward a future embodiment that only retrospectively is framed as achieved.

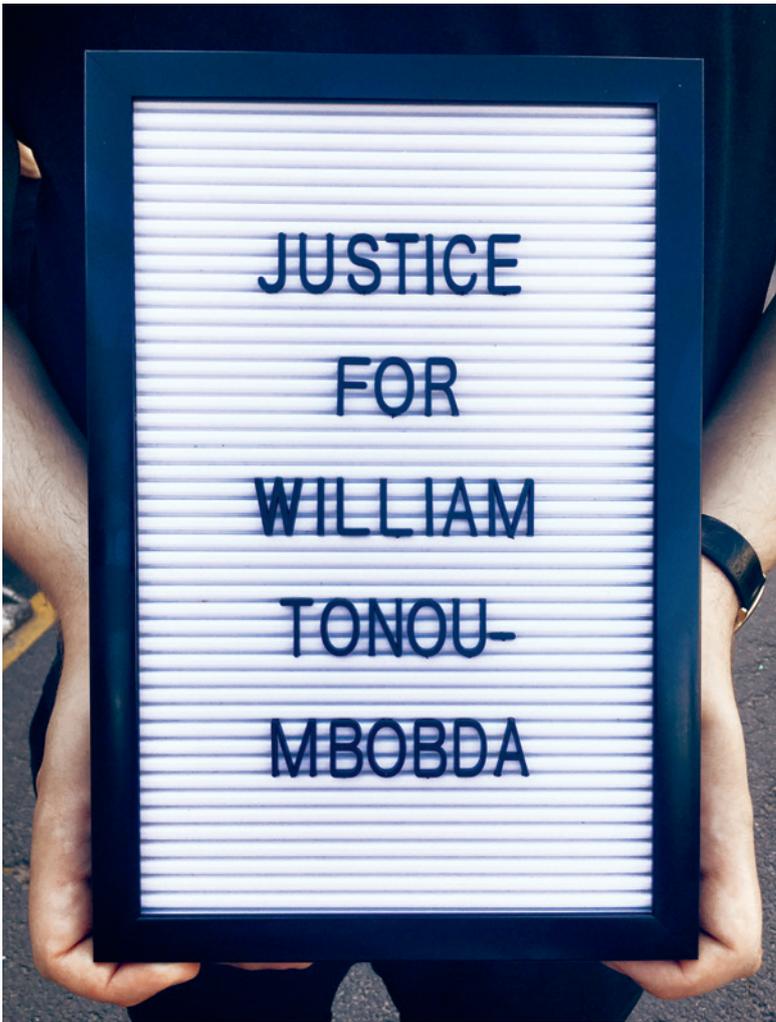
It is important to note, however, that the very same technologies may be put to work in order to produce oppositional temporal effects on bodies positioned differently that might seem less utopian. While the temporalities invoked through hormones are framed as liberatory within normative trans* narratives, this might not be true for other bodies deemed as “out of

time,” for example bodies considered disabled or intersex.¹⁴ They are too often being put on hormones in order to either arrest their development or assimilate their bodies into the racialized Western gender binary and the accompanying normative temporalities. In both of these examples, the violence is legitimated in reference to hegemonic ideas of a “good future”—one that is unambiguous in terms of gender and in which disability does not have a place—and the power ascribed to hormones to bring these futures into being. Viewed in a broader historical and discursive context, the transition videos can be seen as part of a larger cultural archive of hormones in which certain bodies are framed as progressive and moving toward the future, while others are constructed as abject “developmental errors” or as “stuck” in a not-quite-human condition.

A brief glance at the history of so-called “sex hormones” reveals their entanglements with nationalist, colonial, and capitalist endeavors, as well as their racist, hetero-normative, and ableist underpinnings. The term “hormone” was first coined in 1905, and by the 1920s several European researchers were in a race to be the first to isolate so-called “sex hormones.” During this “golden age” of research in sex hormones, they were constructed as the essence of femininity and masculinity. In the scientific and popular imagination, hormones were believed to have the power to revive a “lost masculinity” (especially after the First World War), to restore heteronormativity by “curing” gender ambiguity, queerness, and disability, and to rejuvenate and eventually even to cheat death. In short, hormones promised to secure the future of the nation.¹⁵

To this end, enormous quantities of animal and human urine were trafficked throughout Europe, collected at farms, police stations, psychiatric hospitals, and gynecological clinics. Tons of ovaries and testicles were collected in slaughterhouses in Europe or gained through massive hunting expeditions in the colonies as raw materials, and clinical trials were carried out in psychiatric hospitals and the colonies.¹⁶

Imaginations of time are invested into hormone molecules as they are ascribed the potential to transform, straighten, or disrupt temporalities, moving bodies



Disability and Mad Pride Parade Berlin, 2019

up and down on an imaginary linear timeline, placing them in or out of chrono-normative notions of progress and futurity. But the chronobiopolitical power of hormones goes hand in hand with their potential to invoke resistant temporalities and to imagine futures where gender and bodily autonomy are placed outside colonialist, capitalist, and colonialist timelines.

If, as Julian Carter argues, “[t]ransition pleats time, and in so doing transforms our relational capacities,”¹⁷ then what new forms of relations can occur when we include a critique of normative notions of time and temporality into our critique of power? What might a politics that engages in ideas of temporal justice and resistant chronopolitics look like? What forms of collectivity, solidarity, and being in community with each other become possible when we deconstruct those notions of linearity, development, and progress? In other words, might the revolution be a temporal one? It will for sure be intersectional.

Notes

- 1 Emily Grabham, “Governing Permanence: Trans Subjects, Time, and the Gender Recognition Act,” *Social & Legal Studies* 19, no. 1 (2010), pp. 107–126.
- 2 Jay Prosser, *Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1998), p. 102; see also Atalia Israeli-Nevo, “Taking (My) Time: Temporality in Transition, Queer Delays and Being (in the) Present,” *Somatechnics* 7, no. 1 (2017), pp. 34–49.
- 3 On metaphors of “home” and “arrival,” see also Aren Aizura, “Of Borders and Homes: The Imaginary Community of (Trans)sexual Citizenship,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 7, no. 2 (2006), pp. 289–309.
- 4 See Jake Pyne, “Arresting Ashley X: Trans Youth, Puberty Blockers and the Question of Whether Time Is on Your Side,” *Somatechnics* 7, no. 1 (2017), pp. 95–123, esp. p. 102.
- 5 See also Grabham, “Governing Permanence”; Dean Spade “Resisting Medicine, Re/modeling Gender,” *Berkeley Women’s Law Journal* 18, no. 1 (2003), pp. 15–37, esp. pp. 19ff.
- 6 See Natasha Seymour, “Transgender Temporalities,” in *Gender: Time*, ed. Karin Sellberg (Farmington Hills: Macmillan, 2018), pp. 335–48, esp. p. 345.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 346.
- 8 Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (London and Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 2010), p. 3.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 11 See Ruin, “Discussing Transnormativities Through Transfeminism: Fifth Note,” *TSQ – Transgender Studies Quarterly* 3, no. 1–2 (2016), pp. 202–211, esp. pp. 203–204; Seymour, “Transgender Temporalities,” p. 342; Pyne, “Arresting Ashley X,” p. 103.
- 12 See Laura Horak, “Trans on YouTube: Intimacy, Visibility, Temporality,” *TSQ – Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (2014), pp. 572–85.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 579.
- 14 See Pyne, “Arresting Ashley X,” pp. 96 and 100ff.; Alison Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 2013) pp. 47ff.; Emily Grabham, “Bodily Integrity and the Surgical Management of Intersex,” *Body & Society* 18, no. 2 (2012), pp. 1–26.
- 15 See Rainer Herrn and Christine N. Brinckmann, “Von Ratten und Männern: Der STEINACH-FILM,” *montage/av: Zeitschrift für Theorie & Geschichte audiovisueller Kommunikation* 14, no. 1 (2005), pp. 78–100; Maria Makela, “Rejuvenation and Regen(d)eration: *Der Steinachfilm*, Sex Glands, and the Weimar-Era Visual and Literary Culture,” *German Studies Review* 38, no. 1 (2015), pp. 35–62.
- 16 See Nelly Oudshoorn, *Beyond the Natural Body: An Archeology of Sex Hormones* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 64; see also [Paul] B. Preciado, *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era* (2008; repr., New York: The Feminist Press, 2013).
- 17 Julian Carter, “Embracing Transition: Dancing in the Folds of Time,” in *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*, ed. Susan Stryker and Aren Z. Aizura (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 130–43, esp. p. 134.

Can't Reptiles Eat My Eczema?

An Interview with Pete from C.R.E.M.E. Collective by Saskia Kaffenberger

How did your collective come about? Five friends came together in the spring of 2015 with the aim of providing emotional and financial support to people affected by eczema. That meeting resulted in the formation of the C.R.E.M.E. Collective. The acronym stands for Can't Reptiles Eat My Eczema?

What motivated you to form a collective? The decisive factor was the fact that my condition had been so bad for such a long time. On the one hand, we wanted to collect money for an alternative treatment, because traditional medicine had met its limits and had actually made it much worse. On the other hand, we wanted to create a place for those affected, their loved ones, et cetera, to exchange their experiences. Unfortunately, still today no larger network has emerged.

Is there any way to follow the work you've done with the collective? We are not present on any social media platforms. All information about C.R.E.M.E. is shared by word of mouth, flyers, or friends who post things about it on Facebook.

How would you describe eczema to a person who isn't affected by it? What does this illness mean to you? In contrast to the traditional medical diagnosis, I don't really consider eczema (or *atopic dermatitis*) to be a skin disease, but rather as problems

that show up on the skin. Many factors play a role in triggering and worsening eczema, like one's mental state, stress, climate and environment, diet, constitution, or genetic predisposition. The main characteristics of eczema are unbearable itchiness, moist and/or flaking eczema, and inflammation of different parts of the body, and it comes in phases. Its effects can include: lack of sleep, lichenification (coarsening of the skin), viral/bacterial infections, depression, cataracts, and weight loss. The "key" to "Western" medicine's way of dealing with eczema is to treat the symptoms, because they consider eczema incurable (!). It is commonly treated by therapies of cortisone, immunosuppression, antibiotics, UVA radiation, et cetera. Other medical systems, such as TCM, Ayurveda, and homeopathy approach the body in a holistic manner and aim to treat the root cause of the disease. The cause for eczema is individual, and it should be treated individually. As far as I'm concerned, cortisone into the body is absolutely the wrong approach. At times when it's worse, eczema takes control over me. This means that I have to accommodate it. It's important to keep in mind that constantly scratching one's skin (open) makes one inflict further injuries on oneself. During times when it's not an issue, I sometimes even forget that I have a chronic illness. In any event, it's important to not let oneself become completely consumed by it and to keep a clear head (even if it's difficult at times).

If you see it as a metaphor, what does it reveal to you? The fact that skin is actually a boundary between the outside world and myself. It is extremely important to respect oneself and to know one's own boundaries.

What have you learned from working in a collective? For me, it was a big step to leave the more common treatments behind, and to make myself independent from the (class-based) health insurance system. It was incredibly important to break out of the isolation, because being ill makes one feel lonely, especially when it is visible to the outside world. I would not have been able to do that without C.R.E.M.E. I received tremendous support and solidarity from so many wonderful people. It's not easy to accept help, and it's even more difficult to ask for it. Within the collective, I got the feeling that it's not just about me, which made the work so much easier.

The Future Is Accessible

(Annie Segarra)

Rania Hofer

Türkis Rosa Lila Villa, More Accessible—One Example (Among Many)

The Türkis Rosa Lila Villa (Turquoise Pink Purple Villa) is a community center, a space for counseling and support, a café and bar, and a living space for LGBTIQ+ in Vienna. This widely known and visible building and the projects it houses have been independently run since 1982. Raina Hofer is among the group that made Türkis Rosa Lila Villa accessible.

I am writing this as part of a network, connected to many people, issues, and struggles. Right now, it seems to make sense for me to begin by saying this, because many things I am concerned with—and that I do, or don't do—are only possible because people who have come before me have written, shared, thought, sung, performed, and done things that created a basis for what I do today, just as many different things are happening right now too.

At the same time, I write from my own position and with an awareness of (and lack of thereof) many things. I am excited to keep on exchanging, to argue, to share, and to take action. Here, I will briefly outline various aspects that have accompanied me throughout the renovation process of the Türkis Rosa Lila Villa. I have been a member of the collective that independently runs the building, and I was heavily involved in the renovation work done on the building.

This article is a snapshot in time based on my own understanding and contextualization of the process. I would also like to convey the feeling that change is possible when there is a will to change, and that it is possible to share and utilize resources when questions are asked and people listen, and when people stand behind and support each other.

Violent Circumstances

Elisabeth Magdlener, a theorist and activist living in Vienna, speaks of disability as something that we all have to deal with. Chronic illness, different corporalities, understanding life as a fleeting and ever-changing concern for us all. Some learn this early on, some later on, and others perhaps never. One of Elisabeth Magdlener's texts taught me that the society I live in sees this as a drama.

Disability = drama (A medical model of disability.)

But the equation is somewhat different. There are people. There are bodies. There are bodily constitutions. There are aids (crutches, wheelchairs, etc.). There are circumstances that are disabling.

Circumstances = drama

In her book *I'm a Queerfeminist Cyborg, That's Okay*, Mika Murstein—among others, and like many others have done before—picks apart this medical model of disability to reveal the violent structures that disable people, and that prevent people from living a self-determined life.

Structures of violence run parallel to and potentiate one another, and do harm. Again: some learn this early on, some later on, and others never. It doesn't even take much to learn this. Simply not talking and just listening. Disability justice activist Mia Mingus writes of the importance of telling one's own stories and notes that there also needs to be people who are able to "hold" and "understand" these stories (<https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com>).

I think we need more spaces where we try to do this. Where it is not about being afraid to do violence, but

where there is an openness to listening to and hearing what acts of violence trigger in people. And to listening to what needs to be done in order for healing to take place.

What Spaces Do I Move Through?

The Türkis Rosa Lila Villa has been, and still is, many different things to me. It is a contested place, a place to arrive and a place pass through. It is saturated with mechanisms of exclusion and barriers. It is a place where many struggles have taken place, and many things have been made visible.

For the longest time, there was a *white* majority. For the longest time, it was ableist. Since 1992, attempts were made to alter the building's structural barriers. It was not until 2018 that the first floor, which houses the counseling center and café, was made accessible for people using wheelchairs. What I wish to share by saying this is that the interplay between all kinds of people, during many different times, is what made it possible. It is pretty empowering to know that no one was (and is) alone in this. That being said, **it** also needs to be a priority. Otherwise **it** slips away again and again. And the spaces remain inaccessible

Here, I return to Elisabeth Magdlener, along with many others, when I say that this is one of many barriers—and the barriers are not only spatial, but they are largely in our heads.

Responsibility / Resources

It is up to us to look at who is present and who is absent within these spaces. It is up to us to think about what needs to happen in order for this to change. It is also up to me to look at the privileges I can draw upon, and at the amount of resources I actually have at my disposal. This is true for each and every one of us. Audre Lorde reminds me to consider the importance of remaining aware of and using one's own resources with care. She also reminds me that I often have more resources than I can even admit to myself.

Relationships / Collective Processes

This is directly connected to the relationships in which I live. I become aware of how disparate each individual's resources are. I become aware that every step

I take builds upon and reiterates existing knowledge and struggles.* I also recognize that I am interdependent, that I too need help and can offer help. Donna Haraway calls relations “our most important political construct, a world-changing fiction”. More concretely, if I had not already been part of a collective economy for many years already, I would not have engaged in the process of renovating the Türkis Rosa Lila Villa. From the start, I knew that when I reach my limit, there would be people to help me through the process. I have learned to ask for help and support. Through being involved in other collective processes, I have learned a lot, and learned to trust again. To have trust in working in a collective, in arguments and failures; and to regain momentum and to carry on.

That is what I want to do. I want to continue to remain engaged in processes and to try to make alternative collective structures that minimize violence and discrimination. I want to encourage, to criticize, to be criticized, to argue, and to sleep. I want to be recognized, recognize, to be tired, to join others, and to organize collectively. But right now I just want to sleep.

Note

* This is a rough and extremely incomplete list of people, collectives, and texts that are, and have been, incredibly important for me: Mia Mingus, bell hooks, Mika wMurstein, Kimberlé Crenshaw, quix, Annie Segarra, doing your homework group, Elisabeth Magdlener, Anti*Colonial Fantasies / Decolonial Strategies, Elisabeth Löffler, Cojas. Transfeministas y otras rarezas, Austen P. Brandt, ... the list is endless.



Painting by the artist Iris Kopera

Jemina Lindholm, Photographic diptych (from left to right): *One decade down, a lifetime to go!*, 2017, digital poster, dimensions variable; *Happy Anniversary!* (Portrait of an artist 10 years sick), 2017, digital photograph, dimensions variable

AFTERLIVES

On Crip Temporalities and Zine-Making

Jemina Lindholm

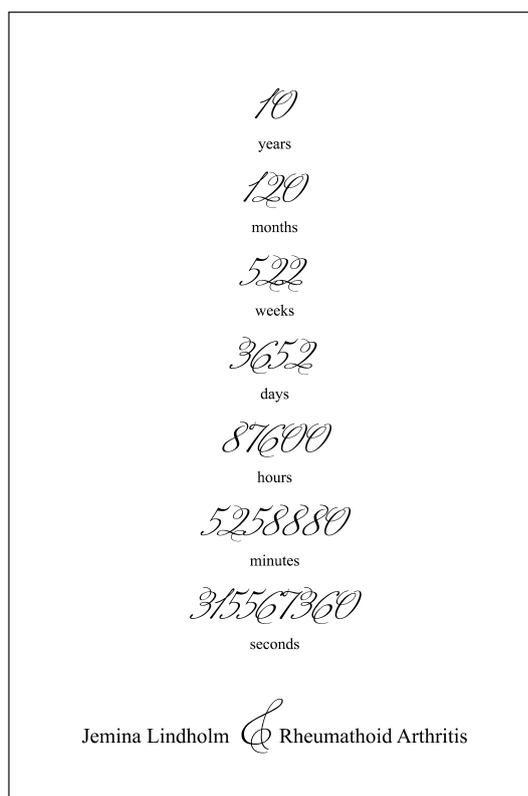
This text was originally performed at the *Parliament of Bodies: The Impossible Parliament* at Bergen Assembly 2019.

My name is Jemina Lindholm and I'm a visual artist, an art pedagogue, and a producer based in Helsinki. I'm the initiator of *nothing/special ZINE*, an art zine for mad/sick/crip art and a feminist platform for discussing madness/sickness/cripness in/as/through/and art. I initiated this project in 2016, but the first issue came out last fall, in 2018. The contributions to the magazine were gathered through an open call with a theme "nothing special." The first issue featured works from eighteen artists.

My background is in the intersection of contemporary art and art pedagogy. According to my own experiences, for example in my university, disability and sickness are still often regarded as "something special," something that is excluded and outside of the normative academic and educational community and everyday lives in general. Perceived as something fixed, something that could be "known" or "mastered" by taking one mandatory course on special art education and only in medical terms. This kind of approach didn't seem appropriate or match with what I was going through as an artist and art pedagogue with a pain-inducing chronic illness. The title of a lecture by Johanna Hedva, an American/Korean writer,

held at the Women's Center for Creative Work in Los Angeles in 2015 summed up my feelings perfectly: "My body is a prison of pain so I want to leave it like a mystic but I also love it and want it to matter politically." The simultaneous hope for relief and cure and the hope for a change are all present in this sentence that implies the complexities and quality of living with a chronic illness or disability.

In relation to the history of disability and the recent theorizations in the field of disability studies about austerity, neoliberal ableism, and biopolitics, I first became interested in action that forms alliances and support structures that aim at addressing or replacing the shortcomings of our current societies. Structures that engage in critical discussions and that question for instance the normative notions of health and health care. These structures include, for example, support groups, social media meme accounts, vlogs, blogs, reading groups, and art platforms. Structures of care that resign and refuse the medical context. I perceive zines as one of these platforms or structures. That provide a channel for alternative discussions, knowledge production and sharing, from a different point view. That aim at making space for things that





are often disregarded, not understood, oppressed, and discriminated against. That aim at working with a different logic, attitude, and edge compared to individual, neoliberal, capitalist, and ableist systems. Hedva promotes vulnerability as a default mode of being and proposes a “politics of care” (p. 68), which suggests that care and interdependencies could be the solution for the hostile environment we are living in, by stating the following: “The most anti-capitalist protest is to care for another and to care for yourself. To take on the historically feminized and therefore invisible practice of nursing, nurturing, caring. To take seriously each other’s vulnerability and fragility and precarity, and to support it, honor it, empower it. To protect each other, to enact and practice community. A radical kinship, an interdependent sociality, a politics of care.”

In my artistic research, which I call “artistic dwelling” according to Eliza Chandler’s notion of crippling as dwelling with disability, my focus is on studying the connections between zine-making, disability, and feminist pedagogy. I balance in between the theorization of disability in a broader, collective social struggle that exceeds identity and the individual, and the validation of and making space for personal embodied experienc-

es of artists with disabilities and chronic illnesses that seek to address disability beyond stigma and tragedy. My hypothesis is that a collective zine can result in a “crip” space that combines critique and creativity as an example of a form of “activism, art and relationality” introduced by Dan Goodley, Rebecca Lawthom, and Katherine Runswick-Cole, and as an expression of the “politics of care” introduced by Hedva. By working collectively, in constant transformation, and looking at our whole existence through disability, we might be able to discuss the indefinite boundaries between embodiments, to step beyond binaries as well as the burden of representation and stereotypes, while still taking into account the multitude of irreducible differences introduced. Thus, zine-making and the *nothing/special ZINE* as a collective zine might work as well as a site of resistance, as a channel for discussion and reimagining the futures and potentiality of our embodiment through art, and as a collective space for feminist learning.

I thus consider zines themselves to be a crip format or a crip form of art, as they are chaotic, ever changing, and inconsistent. It has been suggested that zines as magazines “live very short lives.” It has also been suggested that because of this zines would have so called “Half-lives” or “Afterlives”—with “Half-lives” referring to chaotic forms that the zines took and the lack of consistency in making them. For example, it has been said that changing the name of the zine for every issue or making multiple issues at once concluded in certain zines “disappearing” quickly, in other words having only lived a half a life. Afterlives, on the other hand, refer to zines not actually being dead (after 1990s as a format and a movement, but also when looking at an individual zine). Meaning that Afterlives are like diffraction waves that change and continue their trajectories, for example in the reader, the submitter, or the zinester of a specific zine. These ideas to me resonate with being mad/sick/crip or crip temporalities and with the theme of Bergen Assembly 2019, “Actually, the Dead Are Not Dead.”

Lindholm, Jemina. (2018). “nothing/special ZINE: A Collective zine as an approach to critical disability studies and as feminist art pedagogical practice.” In *Feminism and Queer in Art Education*. Helsinki: Aalto ARTS Books. **Hedva, Johanna.** (2015). *Sick Woman Theory*. Retrieved from <http://www.maskmagazine.com/not-again/struggle/sick-woman-theory>.

Looks that drive me Mad, that drive me away

Elijah Lüthi

– I –

Many years ago, I told you:
I told you of wondering creatures
that wander, full of wonder
through my worlds.

Worlds which make me wide
and draw my nights in magic lights.
They hold me tight, and sometimes too
tight, for me to wonder about *this* world.

I told you about my joys
when they walked me to school.
I told you about my fears
when they took me for a fool,
when they took me over.

I told you and you understood
or did you not?
You looked at me
with a smile and a nod.

And then you said: "Never tell anyone!
THIS should be a secret.
It's not normal.
You're the only one."

I complied and secretly
became locked away
in this secret
alone with me.

I continued to bathe and sometimes drown
in my worlds,
while building a wall around.

I continued to scream for fear, sometimes
but no longer confided in anyone.

– II –

Many and years later,
with new people in new places,
I tried to find words,
to translate my worlds.

I searched for cracks in the stone
surrounding me
to connect with *this* world,
as a way to be.

Sometimes I danced between worlds
here and there.
Sometimes you bathed in my rivers
as a way to share.

Did you hear it?
Did you feel its wondrous width?
Is this the reason why you never
touched my worlds again?

You looked away from me
and never looked back,
when your eyes asked:
"Are they Mad?"

I said: "No!
Mad is not what I AM.
But your questions and looks
they drive me Mad.

They drive me away
from you.

And to stay with you,
they drive me away from me."

I – driven besides myself –
gave myself a sideways glance
and never looked back again.
This is how, over time

the worlds inside of me dried up
and the voices, of the others
taking me apart, became a part
and stayed for good.

– III –

A few years ago, the voices turned me
into a cacophony, a multitude within.

Amidst this spoke to me
a voice from the past
to the present,
entering deep into my presence:

"Never tell anyone!
This should be a secret,
is not normal,
you're the only one."

But I brushed it away,
decided otherwise,
and invited the world
to enter my life.

I thought:
"Everything is going to be different now,
I'm no longer just anywhere, anyhow.
Now I am in Berlin and here
everybody is so leftie and queer.

They throw 'crazy' in every sentence mix
and even music is called 'mad' or 'sick.'
In all this talk of 'mad', 'sick,' and 'crazy,'
could there be a place for me, maybe?"

In groups it's difficult sometimes:
Voices, sounds here and there,
words and questions from everywhere
and then: my answer ...

...
A silence that breaks the rhythm
'cause I heard this question differently.
My answer floats in the room
for everyone to stare at and see:
It trembles and fidgets and falls,
building back up my walls.

With your looks and whispers behind my
back,
I felt myself slowly driven Mad,

driven slightly away from you,
and in order to stay with you
driven a little further away from me.

– IV –

I no longer know where I am,
somewhere else,
besides,
or in the wind?

I look at myself and see:
I am driven away from me,
by all of you a little bite
and a little bit by them.
And a bit and a bite by myself.

And, I know! Exactly –
this I learned –
it's psy...psy...
p...shh – oh logical!

In such a case,
this is the only place.
Oh, logical.
P...shh! aye!

I go there and it seems quite nice,
they ask me what drink I'd like.
I can tell that someone listens
without mockery and secret whispers.

Active, with praise and resource oriented,
but meanwhile happens something,
not intended:
I am being observed, studied, and labeled,
defined in numbers and put in tables.

And in the end they drive me
– p...shh! oh locally –
into a diagnosis
or two or three.

Wrapped up in numbers and letters,
driven to othered space:
far away from them
far away from here
far away from me
loony binned.

My bin says X2120F4
Whoever does this and that, this bin is for.
It's written down
it is recorded
and thus must fit somehow.
That is you now!
er... I mean: me.
Or not?

– V –

After months I got out of there,
got a diagnosis for every resistance,
unlearned my language and existence.
Instead I learned to analyze and label,
to put myself in numbers and tables

The creatures and wonders and rivers are
gone,
instead in my satchel I carry:
A knowledge about me,
oh-logically sorted,
defined from the outside
and assorted.
Cut-off from my experience,
explained instead through a medical lens.

!Self-transformation
in the purpose of integration!

Getting a caseworker and living alone
to bring the control into my home.
To fit in and hide the rest,
“unburden” my friends,
only show them my best.

– VI –

And a few weeks ago there it was again,
the voices grew louder into many,
despite satchel and bin I was not
prepared,
misjudged the games they were playin'.

The walls are closing in on me.
The bridges are breaking down.
They come for me, no matter what,
filling my inner halls.

I know I cannot fight it alone.
They are here to destroy.
But if I tell you, I ask myself:
Will you hear me now?

Can I tell you, with your questions?
Can I word it in this tongue?
No better not! Remember:
“thisshouldbeasecretisnotnormalyou'rethe
onlyone.”

I no longer know where to go
'cause what drove me here are the things
I know.
It's clear, I cannot go back,
but alternatives are what I lack.

I distrust you and all of your places.
This language full of othering phrases.

I'd rather hide behind my walls
for fear of P...shh! and its calls.

The looks are now a part of me
and sometimes I see them in you
and no longer know: is it my projection?
Maybe just my fears' own reflection?

What I am afraid of, that is me
'cause I have long been my own court
and p...shh!...ychiatry

I drive myself away from me
and lock myself up
every time I observe, label, and hide
all the things I've got.

I wish, I could un_drive myself
out of P...shh! oh-logical shelves
bit by bite in what I do
how I see myself and relate to you.

I'm trying to find my worlds again,
connect them with *now* and not with
then.
I'm searching for words which help me
wander
on *this* world here full of wonder.

I begin to connect with all of you
who wander in many worlds too.
And share with you today and here
the beings and worlds and voices I hear.

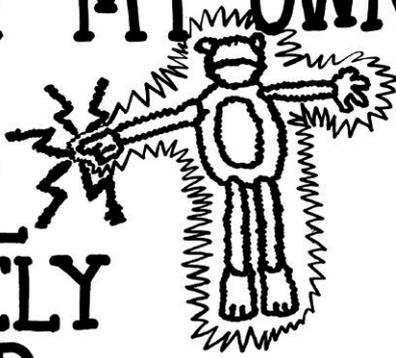
I share them with you who might
recognize
some of your worlds between my lines.
And I share them with you, who might
not have it
but challenge this world in your own
habit.

And while I connect like this with you
and me, I realize that what I do
is slowly overcoming the walls inside
through sharing some of the things
I hide.

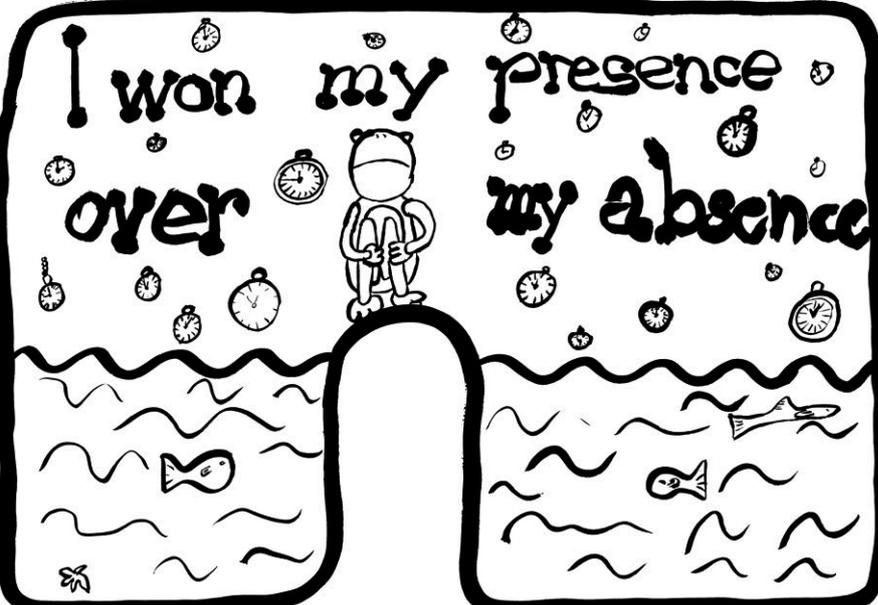
And with what I finish here today
is that I trust in this other way,
on which I rather wander together
– with you and me – than alone.

*Shortened version translated from German
based on an audio interpretation by Tanja
Barbian, englisch-dolmetschen.de*

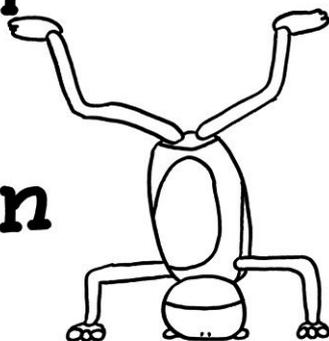
WHAT FASCINATES
ME ABOUT MY OWN
DEATH IS
THAT I'LL
COMPLETELY
DISAPPEAR.



I won my presence
over my absence



I quit to walk in
circles
when
out I found



that circling around myself
is getting me to the same point.

Biographies

Julia B. lives in Kassel as an artist. Julia is interested in identity- and personality-extensions. They are constructing non-human avatars and costumes and working with the creative processes of different materials like metal, ceramics, fabric, printing, and paper.

Linda Bilda († 2019) was an Austrian visual artist and comic illustrator. In her drawings, she explored sociocritical and political topics with an anarchistic and feminist focus. For the first issue of *Crip Magazine* in 2012, she drew the “Cosmic Creatures.” Linda passed away in May 2019 in Vienna.

Lorenza Böttner († 1994) was a Chilean/German artist. In her work, she opposed the processes of desubjectivization and desexualization and fought against the locking away and making invisible of functionally different and transgender bodies.

Antonio Centeno is an activist and cultural producer based in Barcelona. He is one of the founding members of the *Oficina de Vida Independiente (OVI)* of Barcelona. He has been working on numerous audiovisual cultural projects linking functional diversity, including the television series *Trèvols de 4 fulles* (2018) as co-writer and actor, the documentary *Yes, we fuck* (2015) as co-director, and *Nexos* (2014) as co-writer and actor. He leads the sexual assistance project “Tus manos, must manos, collaborates in the collective *En torso a la silla*” which addresses the free and collaborative design of functional diversity aids, and the inclusivity project “*Arttransforma.*”

The C.R.E.M.E. Collective got together in spring 2015 to support people with serious chronic skin conditions. (crème@riseup.net)

Iris Dressler and **Hans D. Christ** have been the directors of the *Württembergischer Kunstverein (WKV)* in Stuttgart since 2005. One of their priorities is the exploration of collaborative, transcultural, and transdisciplinary practices of curating. At WKV they have created an open platform for the activities of local activists and artistic groups. Christ and Dressler both teach regularly and have published widely on contemporary art and its political and theoretical contexts. In 1996, they founded the *Hartware MedienKunstVerein*, which they directed until 2004.

Eva Egermann is a Vienna-based artist who works in a process-oriented manner with different media and collectives (e.g., the *Manoa Free University*). She has been teaching at the Art Academies of Vienna, Linz, Lucerne, and Kassel and was a research fellow at the University of California, Berkeley. She is writing her doctorate as part of the *PhD-in-Practice-Programme* at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her practice embraces a wide variety of media and materials, from artist publications to exhibitions (such as *On Uncanny States and Bodies*, curated in 2013) and artworks in the form of installations, video, or performances (such as *An Outcast Night*, 2013, 2015). She has been publishing *Crip Magazine* (2012, 2017).

Walter Ego is many and yet still an other. He is known as a stand-up comedian, author, artist. He co-initiated the reading series “*Blumenmontag*” and conducts research on Critical Whiteness and on the entanglement of racism, class, and gender.

Valérie Favre is a Swiss artist based in Berlin who works in an openly experimental manner. Her paintings develop over the course of several years in large series and work cycles.



R.I.P. Philmarie, mural, Innsbruck, 2018

Shannon Finnegan is a multidisciplinary artist making work about disability culture and accessibility. She has done projects with Banff Centre, The Invisible Dog, Friends of the High Line, and the Wassaic Project. In 2018, she received a Wynn Newhouse Award and participated in Art Beyond Sight's Art + Disability Residency. She is currently a resident at Eyebeam.

Jonah I. Garde is a PhD candidate at the Graduate School for Gender Studies at the University of Bern. For their PhD thesis on trans* temporalities, Garde is receiving a doctoral scholarship from the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung. Previously, Garde has been a visiting fellow at the Chair in Transgender Studies and the Transgender Archives at the University of Victoria, Canada. They have taught courses in Critical Development Studies, Disability Studies, sexual and body politics, temporality, representations, and aesthetics and published on crip critiques of inclusive development.

Raina Hofer is involved in productions by MAD Dance and activism in the Türkis Rosa Lila Villa.

Ianina Ilitcheva († 2016), alias @blutundkaffee, was an Austrian author and artist of Uzbek/Russian/North Korean descent. She studied painting and the art of language in Vienna. Up until her death, she continued to produce texts, blogs, stories, poetry, performances, and artwork.

Jakob Jakobsen is a politically engaged visual artist, writer, and organizer. In 1998–99, he ran the Info Centre, a project space concerned with urban culture and struggle in East London (infocentre.antipool.org). He was part of the Copenhagen Free University from 2001 to 2007 (copenhagenfreeuniversity.dk), was co-founder of the union Young Artworkers (UKK) in Denmark in 2002, and the artist-run television station tv-tv in 2004–05. He was professor at the Funen Art Academy from 2006 to 2012. In 2017, he opened the Hospital Prison University Archive, a visual archive on social movements and art (hospitalprisonuniversity.net), and most recently the Hospital for Self Medication.

Saskia Kaffenberger studies Visual Communication at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kassel. She has contributed to exhibitions in Berlin and Vienna and has been working in different mediums. Her current research topics are self-organized learning projects.

Iris Kopera is a fine artist, portrait artist, actress, counselor for future planning, and singer in a band. She works at a center where people with learning difficulties represent themselves and is in charge of planning and peer counseling. She is artistically active in ATELIER 10 and Bildbalance.

Jemina Lindholm is a contemporary artist, an art pedagogue, and an organizer based in Helsinki, Finland. Her works revolve around the themes of intimacy, sickness, and health, as well as collaborative processes often taking the form of video, photography, or slightly choreographed encounters. She loves working collectively as togetherness provides effectiveness, radical safety, and immediate feedback. At the moment, her main field of interest is the intersection of contemporary art, sickness, and critical disability studies.

Elia Lüthi: I love to bring some Mad into my own and other wor(ld)s and perspectives, doing so through conversations, everyday life, performances, writing, teaching, and research. Thereby it's important for me to ask: How do my trans-identity and white privileges influence my experiences with psychiatry? Most recently you can find me at the University of Innsbruck, in the book project "BeHindert&VerRückt schreiben_gebärden_zeichnen" and at the Akademie-der-Unvernunft.org.

Philmarie († 2018) was an author, theater-maker, and reader (poetry slams, reading stages, political, radical left-wing events, and sometimes solo readings) from Innsbruck; founder of the theater group "Theater der Aggressionen" (theater of aggression); organizer of the semi-annual "Po.Lit" reading stage "literary coup attempts"; author of publications in various magazines; wheelchair user and overall physically diverging from the norm.

Paul B. Preciado is a philosopher, curator, and activist in the fields of gender and sexual politics. He is the author of *Countersexual Manifesto* (Columbia University Press, 2002), *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics* (The Feminist Press, 2013), and *Pornotopia* (Zone Books, 2014). Preciado teaches Philosophy of the Body and Transfeminist Theory at Université Paris VIII-Saint Denis and at New York University. He has been Curator of Public Programmes at documenta 14 (2017) and Head of Research and Director of the Independent Studies Programme (PEI) at MACBA in Barcelona. He is the curator for the Taiwanese Pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennale (2019). Paul B. Preciado lives and works in Paris.

Rick Reuther lives in Vienna. He studied together with Ianina Ilitcheva at the Institut für Sprachkunst (Institute for the Art of Language), where they became best friends. Now he does things with gender, youth work, demonstrations, sadness, and looks after the artistic work that Ianina Ilitcheva left behind.

Volker Schönwiese, born in 1948, studied psychology and pedagogy in Innsbruck in the 1970s. He is part of the founding generation of the Independent Living movement in Austria, as well of the project Bidok – behinderung inklusion dokumentation, and DISTA (Disability Studies Austria). He has been teaching at the University of Innsbruck since 1983 (active retirement since 2013).

Sunaura Taylor is an artist and writer based in New York. She is currently a PhD candidate in American Studies in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University. Taylor is the author of *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation* (The New Press, 2017). Sunaura Taylor's artworks have been exhibited at venues such as the CUE Art Foundation, New York, and the Smithsonian, Washington, DC. Sunaura Taylor's paintings open up spaces where disability and animality meet.

Nicole voec is living and working in Kassel. They are interested in queer play, perverted lo-fi aesthetics, and hackable materials. Mostly working in the fields of performance art, games, DIY electronics, installation, and divination.

Romily Alice Walden is a transdisciplinary artist whose work centers a queer, disabled perspective on the fragility of the body. Her practice spans sculpture, installation, video, and printed matter, all of which is undertaken with a socially engaged and research-led working methodology. Recent work has shown at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle, SOHO20, New York, and Tate Modern, London. In 2019, she was a Shandaken Storm King resident, and in 2020, she will be a resident at Rupert, Lithuania. She is currently a fellow of the UdK Graduate School, Berlin.



Valérie Favre, *Du bureau des suicides*, 2019, 12 x 16 cm, gouache and type machine

REINVENTING
MY
STRANGENESS
AS AN
ART FORM
THAT ONLY I
AM THE PERFECT
PRACTITIONER OF